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EDUCATION FOR TRAVELLER CHILDREN. THE IMPACT  
OF LEGISLATION ON TRAVELLERS AND ITS EFFECT ON  
EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR TRAVELLER CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTH EAST ENGLAND

A thesis submitted for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Education  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Durham University

by

Jenny Gunby  
December 1988



25 JAN 1990

No material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any university by the candidate.

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## ABSTRACT

The broad aim of this study is to examine the quality of education provision for Traveller children and the factors which affect it. The twin themes of national policy and local response form the background against which the different aspects of provision are examined. The empirical studies of site and education provision take place in the North East Region of England.

The Gypsies/Travellers are defined as a distinct ethnic group within British society with their own culture and lifestyle. The historical background of Gypsies is used as a base to illustrate the development of their relationship with society today.

Education of Traveller children, as in fact with all children, is linked with a secure place to live. The importance of site provision for Travellers and its effect on their lifestyle is examined as is the ideological intent of site provision by Government and Local Authorities. The relevance of education for Travellers in schools is questioned as are the attitudes and expectations of teachers in schools where Travellers attend. The perception of Travellers by some teachers illustrates the need for the education of teachers.

Examination of the development of education provision for Traveller children from the 19th. Century to the present day reveals the diversity and also uneven spread of such provision. This diversity, including no specific provision, is illustrated in the Study Region. During the period of this research there has been an increasing awareness of the educational needs of Traveller children and a commitment by Local Education Authorities to improve the situation. A matter for concern, however, is that some individual schools and teachers view education as a tool which will assimilate Travellers into the settled society.

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## **PART 1**

## INTRODUCTION

- \* Aims
- \* Hypotheses
- \* Methodology
- \* Structure of the Study

This study is concerned to examine the quality of education provision for traveller children and the factors which affect it, with particular reference to the North East Region of England (Appendix 1 - Map of Study Region).

The work rests on four years of working in the field of Traveller education. During this time valuable contacts were made with parents of Traveller children as well as with the children themselves. The opportunity to travel throughout the study region enabled the writer to observe local authority provision of both education and sites and to note the wide variation in both fields. Through wide reading, membership of a national organisation concerned with the education and the rights of Travellers, attendance and participating in D.E.S. Courses and personal observation the writer studied the national perspective. The use of questionnaires and interviews enabled a comprehensive analysis of data from the study region.

These twin themes of national policy and local response form the background against which the different aspects of provision are examined. The study seeks to establish the basis for a coherent regional policy and to examine this in the context of the good professional practice illustrated in the H.M.I. Discussion Paper<sup>1</sup> (1983) and reiterated in The Swann Report<sup>2</sup> (1985).

1. H.M.I. Discussion Paper, The Education of Travellers' Children (1983).
2. D.E.S. Education for All Swann Report (1985).

### HYPOTHESES

A number of hypotheses are put forward within the context of the study to examine the quality in provision of sites and education, as a means of focussing the study:-

1. The Government policy of providing sites is used by Local Authorities as much for control as for the benefit of the Travellers.
2. Education within schools is not essential to the Traveller who wishes to continue his/her nomadic way of life.
3. Traveller children are more likely to attend school if their parents have had some education than if their parents have not had any.
4. Teachers regard assimilation of Traveller children in school as a positive step in their education.

## METHODOLOGY

There are three important elements to the methodology adopted for this study.

The first concerns the reworking of existing secondary source material in order to provide the cultural, historical and political context for Traveller education in this country.

The second is the gathering of new empirical material through questionnaires and interviews in the North East Region.

The third is the inter-active use of the author's personal day to day experience as a teacher of Traveller children in Cleveland County and as an active participant in several Traveller Education Regional and National Bodies.

Before the beginning of the project contact was made with the local authorities in the study area, (the study area being identified by its geographical location, the writer being based in Cleveland County). Basic information on Local Authority Gypsy Sites and whether there was any specific provision for Traveller education was obtained.

Detailed questionnaires on sites were sent out to local authorities in summer 1987; these went to environmental health departments, social services, planning or housing departments, depending on who was responsible for the sites.

The location of sites determined schools nearest the sites, which had Traveller children on role and these were sent questionnaires. These questionnaires were completed by the headteacher, class teacher or teacher with specific responsibility for Travellers, in the Autumn term 1987. Questions were included which gave the teachers' views of the consequences of having Traveller children in school.

The third part of the research was concerned with the Traveller parents' attitude to education. Interviews with parents took

place in the Spring and early Summer of 1988 and the parents were asked about their own education experiences as well as those of their children.

By approaching the study of Traveller education from the very basic premise of the importance of site provision through to what the Traveller parents want for their children it was possible to gain a wide perspective.

The study was limited by the paucity of literature on Traveller education, and the difficulty in some local authorities to identify any person who could give information on Traveller children in their area. In one local authority, for example, the only person the writer was referred to who could give any information on Travellers was the solicitor responsible for eviction notices.

The nomadic lifestyle of some of the Travelling families in the study region highlighted the difficulty of continuity of education and collection of information over a period of time. Despite this the writer, knowing the pattern of movement of some of the families within the area, was able to collect and collate information to paint a picture of the situation in the area.



## STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study was intended to be concerned with the education of Traveller children. As with all groups it is difficult to isolate education and not look at it in the context of society as a whole. This is even more so concerning the education of Travellers where education is so closely linked with site provision.

The study is divided into three main sections. The first section of the study is devoted to setting the background to the study by examining the pertinent literature and exploring the origins of the different Traveller groups. The discrimination faced by Travellers both historical and today is discussed as is the relevant legislation.

Section two of the study is concerned primarily with site provision within the North East Region and its implications for both Traveller culture and education.

The third part of the study looks first of all at the history of Traveller education in this country and then at the state of Traveller education today both nationally and then in depth in the North East region. Teachers in schools which have Traveller children in attendance are questioned about both the positive and negative aspects of having Traveller children in school. Parents are interviewed about their own educational experiences and those of their children. The section concludes with a discussion on the research undertaken, to draw it together and to show the inter-relation between the various threads. The hypotheses are examined in the light of the original research undertaken.

Throughout the text the writer has used the term 'Gypsy' or 'Traveller' to describe the group studied. Capital letters are used to denote Gypsy or Traveller as is customary when referring to an ethnic minority, but many published texts do not use this form. Although the term 'Traveller' includes Fairground and Circus people, for the purpose of this study they have not been included because the 1968 Caravan Sites Act does not apply to

them. Through the Showman's Guild they are afforded status and protection, and are not as stigmatised as other Travellers and their needs and the ways in which they are met are different. Indeed, the material on circus and fairground people's needs would in itself constitute another study. The word gorgio, sometimes spelt gaujo, (a Romany word) is used by the writer to denote non-Traveller or house dweller. The word 'trailer' is used on occasion instead of 'caravan' as it is in common usage by the Travellers.

## PART ONE

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- \* Review of Pertinent Literature
- \* Origins of the Gypsies
- \* Traveller Groups in Britain
- \* History of Persecution and Harrassment
- \* Racism against Travellers today
- \* Legislation affecting Gypsies in Britain.

## REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE

This section looks at the key texts concerned with the background of Gypsies and developments in the provision made for Gypsies/Travellers. Other relevant literature will be referred to in the study where appropriate. It was noted in the examination of the literature that the overwhelming majority was written by gorgios.

Jean Pierre Liegeois in his book "Gypsies, an Illustrated History" (1986), traces the movement of Gypsies through research on anthropological and linguistic sources. The importance of linguistics and the work by Stephan Valyi in the Eighteenth Century, which showed that India was possibly where the Gypsies originated from, enabled later researchers, who examined the structure of Gypsy dialects across the Middle East, Central Europe and Europe, to give some idea of the routes the gypsies took. Examining also myth and legends about Gypsies, Liegeois shows how these enhanced the mystery which surrounded the Gypsies, giving rise to fear and prejudice in many cases. The persecution of Gypsies, as documented from the Fourteenth Century to the present day, is factually presented by Liegeois, but the centuries of atrocities committed against the Gypsies stands as an indictment against most European nations.

The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies, (1972) by Donald Kendrick and Gratton Puxon, briefly covers the origin of the Gypsies from India and their arrival in Europe via the Middle East. The book concentrates on the persecution of the Gypsies from the earliest documentation in the Fourteenth Century to the present day but concentrates in detail on the Nazi's extermination of Gypsies in the Second World War, estimated at between 250,000 and 300,000 victims. Kendrick and Puxon, like Liegeois, also consider present day restrictions on Gypsies in Europe and Great Britain, which, they argue, illustrate that discrimination is still being widely practised. However, an optimistic view is taken of the future of Gypsies as they become more united internationally.

A controversial view of the historical origin of Gypsies is put forward by Judith Okely in "The Traveller Gypsies" (1983). She suggests that many groups of so-called Egyptians were composed largely of "disfranchised and indigenous persons", who may have adopted an exotic name and parts of a secret "language", either creole or pidgin, which had crossed many countries in Europe. A lecturer in Social Anthropology, Judith Okely, has carried out extensive fieldwork with English Gypsies. Her book examines in detail their family relationships and economic structure, as well as the Gypsies' relationships with gaudos. As with other writers in the last decade she also covers the repressive measures taken against Gypsies, and their ability in this situation to survive. Her comprehensive study is essential reading, giving an important insight into present day Traveller culture.

No historical reference to English Gypsies is complete without Lavengro by George Borrow, first published in 1851, which, although full of romance and exoticism about the Gypsy lifestyle, combines this with a certain authenticity he gained from first hand experience. It is a mixture of fact and fiction. Borrow endorsed and publicised the Indian origin of the Romanies in England. The Wind on the Heath (1930), a Gypsy Anthology by John Sampson, "is an attempt to interpret to gentile readers something of the glamour that enwraps the Gypsy race"<sup>2</sup>. Poems from George Borrow to R.L. Stevenson, Bunyon to Wordsworth, capture the romantic, free spirit which Borrow, and many other authors who have had no contact with Gypsies, tend to stereotype.

A different stereotype of the Gypsy, that of an undesirable, unclean, untrustworthy trickster, is often used by authority as a reason for discrimination and eviction. Gypsies and Government Policy in England, (1975) written by a team of social scientists (B. Adams et al), looks at how local authorities are having to cope with the task of site provision and management under the Caravan Sites Act 1968. One of the main purposes of the Act was to put an end to unauthorised sites, which are regarded as a threat by housedwellers. The expectation was that once on a local authority site they would give up their travelling lifestyle and be assimilated into gaujo lifestyle. From the

study undertaken by researchers it appears that few of the Travellers had any desire for assimilation. David Sibley in Outsiders in Urban Societies (1981) considers the economic and political perspective of the Travellers. The official response from government and local authorities is explored and it shows that in spite of the government's assurances that Gypsies have a right to a nomadic way of life in practice they restrict this.

The Travellers' Handbook by Bill Forrester is a very informative guide to the law as it affects Travellers. Published in 1985 it also gives a concise coverage of site provision and designation after the Caravan<sup>Sites</sup> Act 1968. Covering the law in regard to both education and discrimination it is very useful as a reference book for both Travellers and those who work with Travellers .

The intricacies of Gypsy politics are explored by Thomas Acton in Gypsy Politics and Social Change (1974). He shows the development of Gypsy nationalism to the inception of the Gypsy Council and discusses the difficulties of forming a national movement from fragmented groups, some sedentary, others nomadic. The importance for the Gypsies to have spokesmen from their own groups within the education movement is shown to be of great importance.

The D.E.S. report, Children and their Primary School (1967), under the chairmanship of Lady Plowden, highlighted the plight of Traveller children. A subsequent study by the Schools Council undertaken by Christopher Reiss, Education of Travelling Children (1975), described a project which was set up in January 1971. It was thought that the 1968 Caravan<sup>Sites</sup> Act would result in widespread provision of Gypsy Caravan Sites and that the setting up of these sites would lead to an influx of Traveller children into schools. It was considered therefore that there was an urgent need for information and advice to teachers if they were to cope with children who had been receiving irregular, or in many cases no, schooling. A thorough report, it deals with the practices of teaching Traveller children and recommends examples of good practice, including materials and curricula. Much of it is relevant today and will be referred to later in this study.

Dick Worrall in his book Gypsy Education (1979) also looks at Traveller education and its relationship to the 1968 Caravan Act. This is highly relevant because it is very difficult to isolate Traveller education from site provision. Case studies where there is specific education for Travellers were undertaken and which reflected the success or failure of the schemes depending on the approach to site provision and harassment. This will be explored in relationship to Cleveland's policy and that of other L.E.A.'s in the North East.

In 1983 an H.M.I. Discussion paper "The Education of Travellers' Children" was published by the D.E.S. which aimed to promote discussion in this field by highlighting the problems and giving examples of good practice in some L.E.A.'s.

The report Education for All (1985 Swann Report) will be examined in detail as it devoted a chapter to the education needs of Traveller children. The Caravan Sites Act 1968, with its implications for Traveller education and the Cripps Report (1976), also concerned with site provision, will be covered. Various Traveller organisations, e.g. Gypsy Council, Advisory Committee for the Education of Romanies and other Travellers (A.C.E.R.T.), National Gypsy Education Council (N.G.E.C.), National Association of Teachers of Travellers (N.A.T.T.), have all produced reports on Traveller education, site provision and designation. These will be looked at in some detail. The National Council for Civil Liberty (N.C.C.L.) and Save the Children Fund (S.C.F.) have also produced reports on Travellers including the New Age Travellers. S.C.F. run various projects in England and Ireland to improve the quality of life of Gypsy children. An education pack on Travellers is being produced by the Minority Rights Group for use in schools, to inform both teachers and children alike about the history and lifestyle of the Travellers, and, it is hoped, make people aware of their own prejudices.

There has been a growth of literature, both fiction and non-fiction on Gypsies since the 1970's as is shown in Dennis Binns A Gypsy Bibliography (1982, Supplements 1987 and 1988). Although

only a few of the publications have been reviewed in this text, they will be the main referral points and other books, journals, articles and theses will be referred to when and where appropriate.

1. Judith Okely The Traveller Gypsies (1983) p.15.
2. John Sampson The Wind on the Heath A Gypsy Anthology (1930)  
Preface p. xii.



## ORIGINS OF THE GYPSIES

The history of Gypsies or Travellers has not been written by them because theirs is a non-literate tradition and what few documents or references to their history exist have been written by the dominant non-Gypsy, or gorgio<sup>1</sup>, society. This factor could mean that important facts have been missed out, exaggerated or underestimated and in translations mistakes may have been made.

Legends and myths surrounding Gypsies gave rise to hypotheses which were often taken as certainties. The fact that "Gypsies have often protected themselves from unwelcome enquiries by deceiving their questioners, by inventing stories to explain and facilitate their nomadism"<sup>2</sup>, makes sorting fact from fiction over centuries an almost impossible task. Many legends have used elements of Christianity to explain the perpetual wandering of the Gypsies. One of the legends tells of the ancestors of the Gypsies forging the nails for the Crucifixion and that three of the nails were used but the fourth remained red hot and followed them, and their descendants, so they could not rest. Another that the descendants stole the fourth nail from the cross and were thus condemned to wander for seven years or seven centuries. Yet it has been documented that the Gypsies did not reach the Holy Land until several centuries after Christ<sup>3</sup>.

Baudrimont, a writer in the nineteenth century, believed that the ancestors of Gypsies came from Babylon and the destruction of this led to their movement. Another myth is that they were survivors of Atlantis. Such a variety of legends surrounding the Gypsies' origins give rise to their often exotic and mysterious image.

One popular hypothesis has been that Gypsies come from Egypt or Little Egypt, their name Gypsies, or Egyptians, when they first arrived in Western Europe reinforcing this theory. Two writers in the fifteenth century, Daniel Specklin and Jaques Trausch, wrote of Gypsies arriving in Strasburg, who were said to be wandering, doing seven years penance, came from Epirus or Little Egypt. In medieval times the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean

was known as Little Egypt. One theory of the origin of the "Egyptian" name is given by Clebert that in the fourteenth century, before there was any public record of Gypsies in Western Europe, "all mountebanks and travelling showmen were dubbed 'Egyptians'"<sup>4</sup>. Thomas Acton<sup>5</sup>, although supporting the theory of the Indian origin of Gypsies, explains that so called "Egyptians" found that to feign exotic origins and the apparent fleeing from persecution made them more acceptable.

Linguistic evidence published in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries demonstrated the Indian origin of the Gypsy language. As the vocabulary of the Gypsy dialects was examined in various countries, the paths taken from India across the Middle East to Central Europe could be traced. But beyond Central Europe the dispersion of groups and their movements back and forth through Europe made this more difficult. Judith Okely is somewhat sceptical: "Whether all those persons calling themselves and called Egyptians, from the sixteenth century on were from overseas is a matter of considerable conjecture and controversy."<sup>6</sup> She is referring to English Gypsies. She argues that language is learnt or transmitted and that it is not biologically inherited.

From the mid-fourteenth century onwards there has been documentation on Gypsies, their trades and their dispersion, although these records are somewhat fragmented. In the early fourteenth century groups were recorded in Crete, Serbia and Hungary. The records of movement in the fifteenth century show Gypsies in Germany, France and Switzerland. The "Egyptians" were first recorded in Britain, in Scotland, in 1505, presenting themselves as pilgrims to James IV, and the first recorded evidence of them in England was 1514<sup>7</sup>. Africa, the Americas and Australia had Gypsy immigrants as well but this was mainly through enforced transportation to the colonies from Portugal, England and France in the seventeenth century.

The travels of the Gypsies, many of whom settled, others who travelled over great distances, were usually accompanied by persecution, (this is covered in a later section). The inter-

marriage, cultural and social exchanges which occurred between Travellers of Indian origin and the indigenous population, whether settled or Traveller, produced hybrid groups, with a common culture of travelling.

In the second half of the nineteenth century when an estimated 200,000 Romanian Gypsies were freed from slavery, there was another wave of movement through Europe<sup>9</sup>. In the 1960's there was movement from Yugoslavia to Western Europe and many Irish Travellers came over to England, mainly because of the economic climate in their own country.

It is impossible to get accurate figures of the number of Gypsies in Europe today. There is controversy as to who is a Gypsy, and whether sedentary Gypsies are to be counted. The decision as to who is a Gypsy is often a political one which may depend on the political policy towards Gypsies at a particular time. Figures may be minimised or exaggerated. (Jean-Pierre) Liegiouis<sup>9</sup> roughly estimates the total number of Gypsies in East and West Europe, excluding Turkey, as being between 3,421,750 and 4,935,500.

1. Gorgio - meaning non-Gypsy.
2. Jean-Pierre Liegiouis, Gypsies - An Illustrated History (1986) p.18.
3. Donald Kenrick & Grattan Puxon Destiny of Europe's Gypsies (1972) p.27.
4. Jean-Paul Clébert, The Gypsies (1963) p.20.
5. Thomas Acton, Gypsy Politics and Social Change (1974) p.61.
6. Judith Okely, The Traveller-Gypsies (1983) p.2.
7. B. Vesey-Fitzgerald, Gypsies of Britain (1944) p.21.
8. Ian Hancock, The Pariah Syndrome (1987) p.37.
9. Liégeois, op cit p.47.

### TRAVELLER GROUPS IN BRITAIN

In twelfth century Scotland the name Tinkler or Tinker was given to a group of indigenous metal workers which had its own identity of language and culture. This is supported by the Oxford English Dictionary where Tinker and Tinkler are recorded as being trade names in the twelfth century. The first recorded mention of Gypsies in Scotland was 1505<sup>1</sup>. Social, cultural contact and intermarriage between the Gypsies and indigenous Tinkler population produced hybrid groups which reflected the language and culture of their various origins.

There were numerous groups travelling in England in the fourteenth century. These included tinkers, pedlars, entertainers, preachers and free serfs. To be economically viable they had to be nomadic to find new markets for their skills or wares, or a new audience. Pedlars and tinkers were acknowledged in Roman times in this country. It wasn't until the early sixteenth century that there was the first record of Gypsies in England although they may have immigrated some years earlier. In 1514 an "Egyptian" woman who could<sup>2</sup> "tell marvellous things by looking into one's hand" is one of the first records. Shakespeare in Othello refers to "That handkerchief, Did an Egyptian to my mother give; She was a charmer and could almost read The thoughts of people;"<sup>3</sup> and in Henry IV<sup>4</sup> he makes reference to tinkers and their own language. This illustrates the presence of different nomadic groups of this time.

During pre-Christian times tin and coppersmiths travelled through Ireland. The words tinkler and tynkere were mentioned for the first time in 1175 in connection with such an occupation<sup>5</sup>. In 1500 groups of such Travellers in Ireland were common. As far as is known there were, and are, very few Gypsy families in Ireland as economic competition from the indigenous Tinkers made making a living difficult. The Tinker or Traveller community had and still has its own culture and social order. They have their own "secret" language called Shelta or Gammon, which is a spoken language, not written. According to MacAlister the formation of

Elizabethan racist acts against Gypsies took the forms of expulsion, imprisonment and execution but Victorian racialism, though it often took the form of persecution in a straightforward manner, took its most effective form in the attitude of "sincere benevolence"<sup>9</sup>. In the mid-nineteenth century schools for Gypsy children were set up by the Quakers and various other religious missions. Most of the missions believed in assimilation and many tried persuasion to make parents leave their children with the missions. From the 1870's the Salvation Army became involved in this work.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century there was an increased interest shown in Gypsies from such people as George Smith of Coalville who wrote Gypsy life in 1880, and tried to get a bill passed to register the vans. But it was written of George Smith by Groome, "he (George Smith) had a deep contempt for and insensitivity towards the feelings of the objects of his benevolence"<sup>10</sup>. Apart from charitable institutions or state legislation which tried to convert and assimilate the Gypsies their exotic image was exploited by others like George Borrow, Leland and Groome. The Gypsy Lore Society founded in 1880 contained folklore, examples of the Romany language but some was obviously written by people who had little knowledge of Gypsies. A Gypsy Anthology chosen by John Sampson called "The Wind on the Heath" is a strange mixture of work written about Gypsies and the spirit of freedom and being at one with nature as evoked by their image.

There is very little work published about British Gypsies between the 1930's and 1950's. References can be found about the New Forest Compounds where Gypsies were herded into compounds between the wars. Vesey-Fitzgerald comments on the conditions in these compounds that "the huts and tents were not permitted any floors other than the bare earth"<sup>11</sup>. The treatment of Gypsies/Travellers from the 1950's and the legislation affecting them will be covered in another section as will the culture of Traveller society today.

The definition of who today is a Gypsy/Traveller is still regarded as controversial. Even in the Gypsy community there are arguments as to who is classed as a "real" Gypsy. Thomas Acton by the word Gypsy means "anyone who would sincerely identify himself as such" and the word Traveller "people who are, or have been, or descended from people who were on the road and who maintained certain cultural traits"<sup>12</sup>.

From their origins whether it be rooted in India, indigenous itinerate metal workers or pedlars, the Gypsies of today are identified by their nomadism and separate culture. It was only in September 1981 that the Commission for Racial Equality stated that Gypsies were an ethnic minority and were therefore entitled to protection under the 1976 Race Relations Act. This puts a more positive image on the Gypsies and the emergence of leaders from amongst the Gypsy community gives a voice, although they are often divided voices, which is very important as the Gypsies still have to fight to retain their culture and lifestyle against increasing legislation and the ever-pervading discrimination.

1. Liégios Gypsies, p.44.
2. Vesey-Fitzgerald, Gypsies of Britain, p.28.
3. William Shakespeare, Othello and the Egyptian Spell quoted in John Sampson, The Wind on the Heath, (1930) p.228-229.
4. William Shakespeare, Henry IV Pt. 1 Act 2, Sc. 4, quoted in Sampson op.cit. p.279.
5. West Midland Broadsheet 1982, Traveller Education Service.
6. Thomas Acton, Gypsy Politics and Social Change, (1974) pp.65-67.
7. Acton, op.cit. p.57.
8. Kenrick and Puxon, Destiny of Europe's Gypsies, (1972) p.45.
9. Acton, op.cit. p.103.
10. F.H. Groome. In Gypsy Tents, (1880, 1973 Reprint) ch.8, quoted by Acton, op. cit. p.109.
11. Vesey-Fitzgerald, A Portrait of the New Forest (1966).
12. Acton, op. cit. p.59.

## HISTORY OF PERSECUTION AND HARASSMENT

There has been and still is an uneasy relationship between Gypsies and gorgios. From when Gypsies first appeared in Western Europe in the fourteenth century they often aroused mistrust and rejection. Partly because of their nomadism they were on the outside of mainstream society. Up until the present day the majority of policies adopted towards Gypsies have been negative, whether policies of assimilation or rejection.

The legislation with respect to rejection against Gypsies started in the fifteenth century and spread rapidly throughout Europe (Appendix 2). Repeated offences against the law of expulsion was punishable by death. Germany, Spain, England, Switzerland and the Netherlands all had the death penalty for Gypsies. Switzerland has a very long history of persecuting Gypsies. Gypsy hunting parties were held and a law passed in Berne in 1646 gave people the right to kill Gypsies. In the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark Gypsy hunting parties also took place, even as late as 1835.

Forced labour, whipping, torture, branding, the cutting off of ears were common punishments for the "crime" of being a Gypsy. France, Germany and Portugal sent Gypsies to the Galleys. England and France, in the eighteenth century, transported Gypsies to their colonies. The repressive laws and the failure to rid the country by expulsion of the Gypsies, proved ineffective, as far as governments were concerned. There still remained groups of nomads who were seen as physically threatening and out of control of the state.

Some countries tried to overcome the Gypsy "problem" by enforcing settlement. In Spain the dress and language of Gypsies as well as horse dealing was banned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and they were ordered to settle in communities where there were over 1,000 inhabitants. Nomadism was also prohibited. Failure to comply with these laws could mean the death penalty. Forced settlement and the forbidding of Gypsy lifestyle and culture was also enforced in Hungary in the eighteenth century

and often Gypsy children were taken away from their parents and given to others to bring up. In some countries, e.g. Spain and Hungary, it was also forbidden for a Gypsy to marry a non-Gypsy<sup>1</sup>, a form of apartheid.

In the Romanian principalities from the end of the fourteenth century Gypsies became slaves of the state, clergy or lords. Gypsies arriving from abroad became the property of the state and the children born to Gypsies automatically slaves. Newspapers in the middle of the nineteenth century contained announcements of Gypsy slave sales, for example, in 1845, "By the sons and heirs of Serdar Nicolai Nica of Bucharest, for sale 200 Gypsy families. The men are mainly locksmiths, goldsmiths, bootmakers, musicians and peasants. Not less than five families per lot. Payment facilities".<sup>2</sup> Final abolition of slavery in Romania was only obtained in 1856 and 200,000 Gypsies were freed.

This century Gypsies have faced, and are still facing, oppression and forced assimilation. In Czechoslovakia in 1927 a law was passed which prohibited Gypsy nomadism and way of life. Identity cards were introduced and children under fourteen could be taken from their families. It is not only state intervention that has sought to assimilate the Gypsies. The Swiss charity pro Juventute Foundation in 1926 launched the "Children of the Country Programme" against vagrancy. Records show that over 600 children were abducted, mainly under six years old, and placed in foster homes, psychiatric hospitals etc.. The programme was only abandoned in 1973 (Appendix 3).

It was not surprising that when the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933 they inherited much anti-Gypsy legislation. The "holocaust" brought about the extermination of nearly a quarter of a million Gypsies<sup>3</sup>. No Gypsies were ever called as witnesses at the Nuremberg Trials and as yet no compensation has been paid to any Gypsies in retribution for the war. This compares unfavourably with the treatment of the Jews who have received compensation amounting to many millions of pounds. De-nazification failed to remove deep seated prejudice. Passes for travel only within a certain radius were introduced in some areas



of Germany for Gypsies. Nomadism continued to be outlawed. A law still in force restricts Gypsies with school age children from travelling.

The same anti-Gypsy prejudice is active throughout most of Europe. The policy of constantly moving families on from one town to another, one state to the next, has been condemned by the Council of Europe<sup>4</sup> as depriving them of the basic human rights of security and education.

The East European countries, including Russia, have outlawed nomadism and are attempting assimilation by compulsion. In Czechoslovakia in 1976 the government announced their recommendation that the compulsory sterilization of the Czechoslovakian Romani population would be an act of "socialist humanity". This was reiterated in 1986. (Appendix 4)

France and Italy are just two countries which compel nomadic Gypsies to carry registration cards specifically for Gypsies. Also in Italy every Gypsy-owned vehicle has to carry blue and white number plates for instant identification by police. Gypsy children are being forcibly taken from their parents in some areas of Italy and put forward for adoption<sup>5</sup>.

Britain itself has no need to be complacent. Gypsies are the only ethnic minority group in this country to have a law specifically against them. Section 127 of the Highways Act 1957 prohibits Gypsies from encamping on a highway. If two caravans, one belonging to a Gypsy and one belonging to a gorgio were encamped side by side only the Gypsy would be breaking the law. Further legislation will be discussed in a future chapter which illustrates the assimilation policy of Britain.

The policies now being adopted in many countries of providing sites, usually in unpleasant situations, are an insidious way of trying to destroy a culture. By these means families are then deprived of their mobility, lose their livelihood and become dependant on the state. The forming of such organisations as the World Romani Congress (first congress held in 1971) and in

Britain of the Gypsy Council, the Romani Union and the Romani Rights Association, by the Gypsies themselves and the work done by the National Council for Civil Liberty, Minority Rights Group, Save the Children Fund and the newly formed Labour Campaign for Travellers Rights will, it is hoped, ensure that the Gypsies as an ethnic group will survive and be accepted for what they are. This will not be easy as there are centuries of prejudice to overcome.

1. Kenrick & Puxon, Destiny of Europe's Gypsies, (1972) p.51.
2. Liégios, Gypsies (1986), p.110.
3. Hancock, The Pariah Syndrome, Ch. VIII.
4. Council of Europe, Report on the Situation of Gypsies in the Community (1984).
5. Traveller Education no. 21 (1986). Article Jane Zatta  
'Child Stealing in Italy' p.4.

## RACISM AGAINST TRAVELLERS TODAY

Gypsies/Travellers are still, today, a rejected minority in almost every part of Europe. As has been shown, their mistreatment arises from long ingrained racial prejudice. They lack education and work opportunities and are often denied a place to live. The intolerance suffered by the Gypsies within member states of the Council of Europe is reported by the Swedish M.P. Daniel Wiklund at Strasbourg:

"Many of their problems have been aggravated by the fact that Gypsies often suffer discrimination which does not correspond to all the ideals the European Convention on Human Rights and the Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations. This quite obvious and condemnable discrimination has hampered the Gypsies' development."

The phenomena of discrimination against Gypsies is not new as has been demonstrated in the chapter on persecution and harassment, when by active or passive methods public authorities attempted to destroy the Gypsy way of life. In the nineteenth and twentieth century Travellers have suffered both from authorities committed to moving them from 'their' area and philanthropists seeking to 'civilise' and settle them. Areas where Travellers have traditionally stopped have been built on or enclosed, and twentieth century legislation e.g. 1969 Highways Act, 1968 Caravan Sites Act, the 1980 Planning Act and the more recent 1986 Public Order Act have further restricted their way of life.

Why then have the Gypsies/Travellers been so discriminated against for centuries? One reason may be a fear of a nomadic groups not following the 'norm'. The darkness of skin of many of the Gypsies who first came to Europe marked them out as different. They were often seen as "inferior and evil", a position endorsed and reinforced by the church at that time. The language that they used, because it was not understood, was felt to be a way of deceiving the local population. The Gypsies' apparent lack of roots or any known attachment to any particular country, their 'lack' of religion gave rise to further rejection and contempt. Myths about child stealing, theft, deception,

uncleanliness and sorcery (the ability to place a curse) grew and the more they were repeated and embellished the more they became regarded as fact.

A quite different stereotype of the Gypsy as the "romantic" image has been portrayed by artists, writers and composers, such as Augustus John, Keats, Bunyan, Wordsworth and Bizet<sup>2</sup>. However, this counter image has not had the same strength in public opinion as the destructive stereotype. The fortune teller, free roaming spirit at one with nature, having a secret way with horses, their dancing and musical ability made them popular for a time with the gentry and royalty who regarded them as a novelty and entertainment.

Both stereotypes, the dirty, dishonest, child stealing rogue and the dark, good looking, music loving Gypsy at one with nature, are far from the truth. They reinforce prejudice; the former gives people a scapegoat, someone to look down on, and the latter an impossible model so that when people realise Gypsies do not live up to this image they are classed as not "real" Gypsies.

The debate as to who is a "real" Gypsy and racially pure is as absurd and impossible as trying to prove an Englishman is racially pure. Because the romantic image of the Gypsy persists it is still difficult for gorgios to accept Gypsies/Travellers as an identifiable group, a group identified by continuity of culture, language, family groupings and self identity as a group which gives the groups its ethnicity.

The writers of Gypsies and Government Policy in England, reinforce this view that the "vast majority of families calling themselves Travellers or Gypsies..... have in fact a rightful claim as members of an ethnic group based primarily on descent and with a tradition of travelling".<sup>3</sup>

The question as to whether they are an ethnic group is still in confusion, if the Travellers are identified as an ethnic group does this protect them against discrimination under the Race Relations Act 1976? Section 3 defines the racial grounds on

which discrimination may take place as well as the "racial group" which is suffering discrimination. "Racial group" means a group of people defined by race, nationality or ethnic or national origins.<sup>4</sup>

The Commission for Racial Equality (which operates under the 1976 Race Relations Act) categorises discrimination by its nature rather than by racial groups. The Commission for Racial Equality (C.R.E.) failed to act when a Gypsy child was refused admission to school in Croydon, and also when the National Gypsy Council asked it to act against the Wolverhampton City Council advertisement for a 'Task Force' to evict itinerants<sup>5</sup>. This failure to act made the C.R.E. lack credibility in the eyes of the Traveller organisations. The C.R.E. did however take action in what is known as the Brymbo case.<sup>6</sup> The allegations that the Community Council, a local councillor and two named individuals had tried to prevent the local borough council from allocating a council house to a Gypsy family were investigated under Section 58 of the Race Relations Act (1976). The Community Council and the two named individuals were served with non-discrimination notices.

The case was important in that the C.R.E.'s Report stated,

"We take the view that Gypsies in the U.K., who number about 50,000, constitute an ethnic minority group and as such are protected against discrimination under the Race Relations Act 1976."<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately the C.R.E.'s Report does not have the same legal status as a court decision but can obviously be influential.

The Mandla v. Lee case in the House of Lords 1983 decided Sikhs were an ethnic group. The House of Lords gave certain criteria for 'ethnic groups' which included common origin, culture, language and religion and the belief that the people themselves belong to an identifiable group.<sup>8</sup> Gypsies themselves would satisfy the criteria and other groups within the Travelling community would also be included. The Gypsies would then be protected against direct discrimination and indirect

discrimination, where a condition is applied to something which makes it unlikely that a Gypsy could comply.

Bill Forrester in his book "The Travellers' Handbook" (1985) advocates using the Race Relations Act 1976 to help combat discrimination although it will not immediately bring about that change in attitudes which would make the Act unnecessary.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately discrimination is widely practised and the reluctance of authorities to pursue cases of blatant incitement to racial hatred and discrimination is not encouraging.<sup>10</sup>

Even today many areas of local government policy on Travellers provide examples of institutionalised racist attitudes, which unfortunately reinforce the racism of the settled community. Harsh eviction policies reinforce the idea of Travellers as 'outsiders'. Such policies may alienate some Travellers who may react with anti-social behaviour and this in itself is used to justify the policies.

Sites, which are provided under the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, are often badly designed and in unsuitable locations. Regulations on the site are often more restrictive than for council houses, for example, one dog per plot (See Chapter on Site Provision in the North East). Some sites are managed by Environmental Health Departments, (are Gypsies a health risk?) and some non-resident wardens are ex-policemen emphasising the need to keep them under 'control'. Many of the restrictions placed on Travellers by local authorities illustrate similar underlying attitudes of councils irrespective of political persuasions.

Facilities on official sites may enable the Traveller to have the right to running water, toilet, electricity and an address, but this does not guarantee postal deliveries. Many postal workers refuse to deliver mail to official sites giving their reason as uncontrolled dogs, but teachers, health visitors and others visit such sites without trouble. Without the postal service many Travellers are denied the right to a whole range of services. No mail deliveries are made to unofficial sites.

In some areas there are well established practices of Health Visitors visiting sites both official and unofficial, but in other areas this is sadly neglected. It is also unfortunately common for Travellers to have difficulty in registering with a General Practitioner. In Cleveland (1987) a female Traveller trying to register with a G.P. was turned away by six different Doctors' receptionists. Only through the intervention of the teacher and Health Visitor was she allocated a Doctor through the General Practitioners Committee. The reason given by the receptionists was that lists were full, but the Doctor allocated was one of those originally approached by the Traveller. This illustrates not overt racism but reinforces the Travellers' feeling of rejection by mainstream society. Sometimes Travellers will recommend "sympathetic" Doctors to other Travellers. The difficulty in obtaining medical attention is often overcome by Travellers who go to the casualty departments of local hospitals where they are unlikely to be turned away.

Institutionalised racism prevents Travellers from having basic human rights. As we have seen access to site provision and health facilities are often restricted, as is a Traveller's right to education. This last point is highlighted in the Swann Report (1985).

"In many ways the situation of Traveller children in Britain today throws into stark relief many of the factors which influence the education of children from other ethnic minority groups - racism and discrimination, myths, stereotyping and misinformation, the inappropriateness and inflexibility of the education system....."<sup>11</sup>

The lack of appropriate education opportunity available to Traveller children and often prejudiced opposition from parents, schools and school governors, and the local community denies Travellers vital education. "The extremely negative stereotype which exists of the Travelling community and almost universal hatred which they appear to evoke from most other sections of society also serves to demonstrate the powerful influence of stereotyping."<sup>12</sup>

This negative stereotyping is usually reinforced by the media. The representation of Travellers in the media serves to confirm and strengthen traditionally held racist attitudes. The majority of regional newspapers adopt an aggressive attitude towards Travellers, exaggerating and generalising complaints made by the settled community. The needs and rights of Travellers are often ignored and their views usually unrecorded. Television has produced a few positive documentary programmes but news usually focusses on "problems" unless it is a colourful Gypsy fair. It is rare for Travellers to be newsworthy in the national press, an exception being the phenomena of New Age Travellers in the last three years, at the time of the summer solstice. News coverage of the New Age Travellers has been negative from the Tabloids but more balanced from papers like the Guardian.

The plans to set up local authority sites is often the cause of a surge of anti-Gypsy feeling whipped up by the local press almost amounting to hysteria. Public prejudice is reinforced, councillors and M.P.'s have spoken out against Gypsy sites in the most emotive terms. M.P. for Huddersfield West, Geoffrey Dickens quoted in the Huddersfield Examiner, (18.12.81) "I am against permanent sites," "once Kirklees gets a site going, you are going to attract more Gypsies than you have now. You might as well take pot-luck and keep moving them on. Once you get hard/standing they will gather like locusts".<sup>13</sup> Many politicians, local and national, can create hostility by their anti-Gypsy vote catching tactics. A car sticker produced by the Tory Party in Bradford for the local elections (May 1987) which said "A vote for Labour is a vote for the Gypsies",<sup>14</sup> was a blatant use of prejudice in politics. The stickers were withdrawn after protests. The fact that people in authority are guilty of acts and remarks likely to lead to racial discrimination shows a deep rooted prejudice against Travellers.

The police have a reputation amongst Travellers as being unsympathetic and in many cases downright hostile. Most Travellers can illustrate this from actual experience, for example, knocks on the trailer in the early hours of the morning, being picked up on "suspicion", searches, very frequent police



patrols on the site. There are very few who claim to have had any positive experiences. Travellers are unlikely to make any complaint about the police behaviour e.g. an underage Traveller boy, (taught by the writer), taken to the police station and fingerprinted without his parents' permission. His parents did not want to complain because they thought it might "cause more trouble". Although the arresting officer had recommended a caution this recommendation was overruled and the child was brought to court. One questions if the child had been from a middle class family whether the outcome would have been the same.

The N.G.C. acknowledges that there is a 'criminal element' within the Traveller community but that "there is such an element in every community"<sup>15</sup>. This criminal element has become part of the negative stereotype of Gypsies. All too often the laws, which are designed in the main to protect property and keep the peace, are used almost as a punishment to Travellers for not conforming. Within the state structure, the role of designation (1968 Caravan Sites Act) is seen as state control of the number of Gypsies residing in areas and by many Gypsy and Traveller organisations and support groups as a form of apartheid. Gypsies are the only group in this country restricted by numbers to a particular area. No other ethnic minority group is restricted in this way by law.

Travellers have to exist with types of discrimination, whether it be in areas of health, education, a place to live or the barring from pubs and public places. The lack of a positive image projected by the media and other sources, for example, holiday companies, as the writer has come across<sup>16</sup> does little or nothing to improve public attitudes towards Gypsies. The National Gypsy Council believes that if prejudice towards the Gypsy people is to be overcome the lead must come from those in authority<sup>17</sup>. The formation of Gypsy Support Groups, L.C.T.R. and work such as the N.C.C.L. and M.R.G. do to promote the rights of Travellers has, as yet, had little impact on the deep rooted prejudice in our society. Gypsy groups such as the N.G.C., Romany Rights, and Romany Union are working to break down the negative stereotype of Gypsies, fight for rights and promote a positive image. By

opposing racism Travellers can be supported in their struggle to obtain basic human rights.

The international Romani movement, influenced by socialist ideals though not always approved by communist governments in eastern Europe, sees nationalism as a necessary tool with which to lever up a deeply conservative people.<sup>18</sup> The Second World War Romani Congress meeting in Geneva (1978) brought together delegates and observers from twenty six countries, and now has consultative status with the United Nations.

All this work to eliminate discrimination and break down prejudice will not work from the outside but it might make people think and examine themselves. As Hughie Smith, President of the National Gypsy Council said;

"Blind prejudice is not a trait any individual would willingly accept as a personal attribute".<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps after the struggle as an ethnic minority 'black became beautiful' so we might get 'Gypsies are Gorgeous' - not gorgios.

1. Council of Europe, Report. The Position of Gypsies in Member States Strasbourg 1969.
2. Sampson, Wind on the Heath (1930).
3. Adams et al. Gypsies and Government Policy in England (1975) p.51.
4. H.M.S.O. Race Relations Act (1976) Section 3.
5. National Gypsy Council, Report on Discrimination (1978) p.29.
6. Commission for Racial Equality Report of Four Formal Investigations (September 1981) into Alleged Pressure to Discriminate.
7. Commission for Racial Equality, op. cit.. para. 1.2.
8. Forrester, B. The Travellers' Handbook 1985 p.96-97.
9. Forrester, B. op.cit. p.102.
10. Appendix 5 Letter to Eli Frankham from Attorney General and poster 'Gypsies at Tilney Forever'.
11. D.E.S. Swann Report (1985) Ch.16 Section 26 p.756.
12. D.E.S. op.cit. p.761.
13. National Gypsy Council, op.cit. p.26.
14. Appendix 6 Press cutting from News on Sunday 3rd. May 1987.
15. National Gypsy Council, op.cit. p.11.
16. Appendix 7 Airtours handout 1986.
17. National Gypsy Council, op.cit. p.35.
18. Minority Rights Group, Roman: Europe's Gypsies 3rd. Ed. (1980).
19. National Gypsy Council, op.cit. p.2.

## LEGISLATION AFFECTING GYPSIES IN BRITAIN

According to the Department of the Environment's half yearly figures there were over 10,000 Traveller families in the United Kingdom in January 1986. But these figures are often incomplete because it is not compulsory for local authorities to provide figures of the number of caravans in their area. Teachers of Travellers, along with A.C.E.R.T. and S.C.F. have discovered discrepancies between the number of families they are working with and the local authority returns to the D.O.E.. The figures given by the local authorities are usually an underestimate of the number of Travellers; thus the authority tends to make a lower 'provision' for Gypsies than is needed. A local example is Hartlepool which sends in 'nil' returns to the D.O.E., yet having worked with Travellers for three years in this area the writer has observed between 2-8 caravans in the District. Hartlepool became a designated area, jointly with Stockton-on-Tees on the basis of its 'nil' returns.

In England in January, 1986 between 35-40% of the Travellers were forced to break the law because there were no legal stopping places for them.' Although the 1968 Caravan Sites Act has been law since 1970, progress in providing sites for Gypsies has been slow. The passage of the 1968 Act was not the first time that legislation pertaining to Gypsies had been discussed in Parliament. A campaign for special provision for Travellers was initiated by Norman Dodds (M.P. for Erith & Crayford, Kent) in the 1950's, and he frequently brought the issue before Parliament. There were a number of features which were dominant in the debates, i.e., that the Gypsy problem was concentrated in the South East and that it was a 'rural' problem. No recognition was made in those debates of the urban Travellers and their needs.

Norman Dodds was concerned with site provision and harassment by local authorities. When he accused local authorities and the police of persecuting Travellers the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Local Government and Planning was offended. He claimed there was no persecution and resented the inference<sup>2</sup>.

Throughout the '50's and early '60's there was no special provision made for Travellers by Parliament. In fact two Acts in particular worsened their position. The Highways Act of 1959 specifically discriminated against Gypsies: If "a hawker or other itinerant trader or a gypsy pitches a booth or stall, or stand, or encamps on a highway without lawful excuse, he shall be guilty of an offence."<sup>3</sup> A non-gypsy camping in the same lay-by as a Gypsy would not be liable to prosecution, as would the Gypsy under this Act.

The 1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, and the 1962 Town and Country Planning Act were not aimed specifically at Gypsies but made conditions for them worse. The 1960 Act was regarded as necessary because of the large number of people (other than Travellers) using caravans for permanent homes and for holidays. The Act required planning permission to be obtained by site owners, and also a site licence. It gave local authorities the power to close sites established before 1960 if they were in an unsuitable location, and also to refuse licences if facilities were not of the required standard. The loss of sites where Gypsies may have been encamped for years, some on land owned and run by Gypsies, and the failure of some landowners (notably farmers) with Gypsy encampments on their land to apply for planning permission and a site licence because of cost, caused further hardship for the Gypsies, and there was an increasing number of Gypsies forced onto the roads. The 1963 Act made the obtaining of planning permission for Gypsies to buy and settle on their own land more difficult. The Gypsy Council claimed in 1971 that more pitches had been closed to the Gypsies under the 1960 Act than had been opened by the 1968 Act.<sup>4</sup>

Norman Dodds continued throughout the early 1960's to ask questions in the House about Gypsies, their sites, education, health and employment, and urged the setting up of an inter-departmental committee, but this did not happen. Richard Crossman (Labour M.P.) the Minister of Housing and Local Government commissioned a census of the number of Travellers, their location, travelling patterns and living conditions, in 1964. This census was undertaken by the police. As the National

Gypsy Council pointed out, "Whoever suggested that the Police should undertake this task is responsible for much of the ills of the Travelling Community..... having to suffer constant eviction and harrasment the Gypsy was hardly likely to divulge personal information to a police officer."<sup>5</sup> The figures obtained by the 1965 Census have since been found to be an underestimate of the Travelling population. This had serious implications as the provision under the 1968 Caravan Sites Act was based on the 1965 census figures. The final results of the Ministry census and other studies were published in 1967.<sup>6</sup>

On 11th., December 1966 the National Gypsy Council was formed and the Gypsy Charter (1951),<sup>7</sup> which Norman Dodds, with a group of Gypsies and supporters had put forward, formed a basis of the Council's aims. The N.G.C. acted as a pressure group, putting forward policies to the government, organising resistance to evictions and gaining publicity for the Gypsy cause. The National Council for Civil Liberties was also active in this area. At the A.G.M. of the N.C.C.L., April, 1967 a resolution was passed calling for 'the rights of Gypsies and other travellers to participate in our multiracial society as a minority group with a distinctive culture and style of living.....'<sup>8</sup> The Chairman of the N.C.C.L's Paliamentary group at this time was Eric Lubbock (Liberal M.P. for Orpington, Kent), who introduced the Caravan's Site Bill into Parliament in November 1967. The Bill had all party support and an unopposed second reading.

The National Gypsy Council recognised Part II of the Bill as, "the first positive piece of legislation in favour of the Gypsies to be passed in this country"<sup>9</sup>. In the Bill, which became the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, Section 6 (1), made it the duty of county councils, metropolitan councils and London Boroughs to provide sites for the Gypsies. It would be the responsibility of the county to develop the site but the responsibility of the district to manage the day to day running of the site. Unfortunately no time limit was set down for the provision of such sites. Another disadvantage was that if a London Borough could prove that it did not have enough land available for a site (Section 6 part 2)<sup>10</sup>,

even though there were regularly Travellers in their area, then they could claim exemption and have no need to provide a site. this Section caused great problems for the urban Gypsy population in London and other Metropolitan District Councils, where the requirement under the Act was only to build sites with 15 pitches anyway.

The 'reward' for providing a 'sufficient' number of pitches within a District or County was greatly increased powers to control unauthorised camping by Travellers; such local authority areas would become 'designated'. In an area without designation the local authority can only remove caravans which are parked illegally. If the council owns the land it has the power of eviction. Under Section 143, Highways Act 1980<sup>1</sup>, a local authority can remove a structure from the highways, (includes verges) after the expiry of 28 days. A designated area has the additional powers which relate only to caravans owned by Gypsies. The local authority can secure the removal of Gypsy caravans parked illegally by applying to the Magistrates Court for a Court Order. Any person obstructing the carrying out of this order is liable to a fine of £200 and there is power of arrest without warrant of anyone reasonably suspected of 'intentional obstruction'. Also in a designated area it is a criminal offence for a Gypsy to park a caravan on a highway, unoccupied land or land without the owners' permission. The police may issue a summons and a fine of £20 may be imposed with a continuing penalty of £5 a day until the caravan is removed. The criminal offence will be recorded<sup>2</sup>. It is little wonder that the Act of '68 which was welcomed as being positive legislation has now much vocal opposition from a large number of groups which are calling for the repeal of designation. Many groups regard it as racist legislation.

A number of pressure groups representing Gypsies and Travellers including the N.G.C., N.G.E.C., A.C.E.R.T., N.C.C.L., L.C.T.R., Romany Guild and S.C.F. have expressed their concern and are working for the removal of designation from the statute book.

The '68 Act came into force in 1970 and the rate of new site provision altered dramatically from 15 in 1970 to a peak of 34 in 1974 then down to 1 in 1976.<sup>13</sup> Many authorities are still not fulfilling their statutory role to provide sites. Others are receiving designation on totally inadequate site provision, the figures being taken from the 1965 census. Limiting sites to 15 pitches raises many potential problems. Where are the children to go when they marry and leave home? Many are forced to camp illegally on the roadside, facing eviction and harassment, or have to move to another county where there may or may not be a site. Some may want to move into houses, others may be forced to do so. A Traveller in Hull, who was camped illegally, put his name down for a pitch on the official site and at the same time put his name down on the housing waiting list. He would have preferred to move on to the official site but when the offer of a house came up first, to save further harassment of his family of eight children, he moved in. Within a few days the house had been daubed with anti-Gypsy slogans and he moved out. At the time of writing (April 1987) he and his family are illegally parked on the site at Middlesbrough with relatives, as all the pitches are full and Middlesbrough is a designated area.

When it became obvious that the Caravan Sites Act of 1968 (Part 11) was not working as anticipated in 1976 the Minister responsible for Planning and Local Government commissioned John Cripps, who was then Chairman of the Countryside Commission, to carry out investigation into the '68 Act. The Report was published in May, 1977 and the introduction contains the important recommendation that the right of the Gypsy to a nomadic existence should be accepted, for as long as he wishes to continue with it, with no intention to put pressure on him to settle or assimilate unless he wishes to do so. Cripps saw the main failure of the Act as being due to a number of factors, the main ones being: a) the hostility of the local population to the establishing of sites near them; b) the reputation of Gypsies in regard to the law and property; c) the division of responsibility between county and district; and d) the lack of financial incentives. The main recommendation of the Report included 100% central government grants to cover the capital cost of sites,

local authority assistance for those Travellers with financial means to develop their own sites and the cancellation of all exemptions. Designation, a more complex issue, was seen as important for controlling movement. as the N.C.C.L. and Minority Rights Group have pointed out, the right of a nomadic way of life as embodied in the '68 Act and as stated in the Introduction of the Cripps Report'<sup>4</sup> is difficult to reconcile with designation. No other ethnic group is so restricted in movement. The setting up of a multi-disciplinary team of council officers 'to assist Gypsies in a variety of matters', and the appointment of liaison officers were also recommendations of the Cripps Report, which would bring the Gypsies further under control by the authorities. Cripps also advocated the removal of the 15 caravan limit in each district of London and Metropolitan Boroughs. Finally he urged the Secretary of State to use his powers of direction to compel reluctant authorities to make site provision within a stated period of time.

Circular 57/78<sup>5</sup> was the government's response to Cripps and owing to pressures from local authorities it contained diluted policies. A 100% government grant for site provision was accepted as well as the principle of appointing liaison officers for each local authority. The Circular accepts that powers given to a local authority by designation are severely discriminatory and should only be granted where full provision has been made but they rejected the recommendation in the Cripps Report that designation should be granted on a county basis. In the Circular the rights of Travellers are given greater recognition than in the 1968 Act.

The proposals contained in Circular 57/78 formed the basis of the Caravan Sites Bill '79. Lord Avebury (Eric Lubbock) who had proposed the '68 Caravan Sites Bill took an active part in the debate on this Bill in the House of Lords, but the Bill fell by the wayside because of the election.

The Local Government Land and Planning Act 1980,<sup>6</sup> makes provision for capital costs of sites, the highest priority being given to long stay sites. Exemption for London Borough Councils



and Metropolitan County Councils was removed and all existing exemptions were removed. Under the new Section 12 of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, substituted by the 1980 Act, the Secretary of State needs to be satisfied that the sites provided are sufficiently diverse and suitably designed and managed to meet the accommodation needs, within reason, of Gypsies residing in or resorting to a county....<sup>17</sup>

Therefore some of Cripps' recommendations became law and there has been an increase in the number of sites provided by the local authorities. In January 1986 there were 234 such Gypsy sites in England. There were six sites opened in 1985<sup>18</sup> but two others closed, bringing the total net number of sites developed in England in 1985 to four. Even with 100% funding there are still authorities which are refusing to fulfill their obligation to provide sites under the '68 Act.

These local authorities which have not yet provided sites may be Conservative or Labour controlled; there is no division in political terms. As yet, in 1987, 17 years after the Act became law, the Minister has not used his powers to compel reluctant authorities to make provision.

Recently, (Feb. 1987), the results were announced by Nicholas Ridley, Environment Secretary of the Gypsy Sites Policy Review and he recommends that there is no amendment to the present law. The review expresses the need to improve information on Gypsy numbers and for more progress to be made in meeting targets for site provision, as it acknowledges that there are as many as 3,000 Gypsy families for whom authorised sites are not available. The Government still sees designation as essential but "recognises their serious consequences for Gypsies"<sup>19</sup>. As a sop to Travellers and their supporters 'the machinery for considering applications for designation is being updated to ensure that representations are taken into account'. The Review offers no solutions to the problem of long distance and regional Travellers. It encourages assimilation by making housing more accessible to Travellers. Professor Gerald Wibberly C.B.E. who

assisted in analysing the responses (sent out in December 1985 to local authorities), will be publishing the findings as a report.

The Travellers' 'lot' has improved somewhat over the last 17 years in that 65% of Travellers are now on legal sites but that means that there are still 35% without any legal stopping place and they are, therefore, constantly breaking the law.

Having a place on an official site in many cases can cause problems for the Travellers. Those who have previously been independent of the State, and not drawing state benefit, on moving onto an official site cannot afford the rent, for example, in Cleveland rent is £20-24 per week plus £7 electricity. Lack of a work place or rules which forbid work taking place on site take away their ability to make a living and so they have to resort to Social Security payments. The limited number of pitches makes it difficult for visiting relatives as they would usually bring their own caravan. This can again put them in the position of breaking the law as few authorities provide transit pitches. Official sites do not provide the flexibility for Travellers to 'pull on' together, often in extended family groupings. Neighbours could possibly be Travellers with whom they might not normally associate. The positive side of official sites is that the families have security from harrassment and frequent eviction thus allowing the children regular potential access to education and the families to health care.

Travellers on unofficial sites, with the fear of eviction, are often reluctant to let their children go to school because they fear the police will have moved them on before the children come home from school. Police harrassment and the co-operation in harrassment by private landowners (See Appendix 8 for horrific examples in Brent and Manchester) are unfortunately common throughout the country. The Public Order Act 1986,<sup>20</sup> (which came into force in Jan.1987), and notably Section 39 was brought in to restrict the movement and grouping of the 'Convoy People' of 'New Age Travellers' as they are often known, but can and undoubtably will, be brought into force against the traditional Gypsies and Travellers.

When one considers the centuries of physical persecution the Travellers have survived, will it be the increasing restricting legislation which will finally curb their nomadism and culture? Provision of sites coupled with designation, which restricts mobility, certainly seems to support David Sibley's<sup>2</sup> analogy of the Gypsies with the Indians of N. America and the restrictions of the reservation, reducing a once proud and independent people to a 'controlled' group.

1. D.O.E. Report by the Gypsy Sites Branch, Count of Gypsy Caravans in England (Jan. 1986).
2. David Sibley, Outsiders in Urban Society (1981) p.92-93.
3. H.M.S.O., Highways Act (1959) Section 127.
4. Adams et al., Gypsies and Government Policy in England (1975) p.9.
5. National Gypsy Council, Report (1982) p.6.
6. Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Gypsies and other Travellers (1967).
7. Adams et al., op.cit. p.10.
8. Sibley, op.cit. p.112.
9. National Gypsy Council, Report (1976/7) p.17.
10. H.M.S.O. Caravan Sites Act, (1968) ch.52, Part 11.
11. H.M.S.O. Highways Act (1980) Section 143.
12. H.M.S.O. Caravan Sites Act (1968) Sections 10 & 11 as amended by Section 174 of the Local Government Act, 1980.
13. Patricia E. Raymond, Article Travelling People and the Law Social Services Quarterly (1978).
14. Cripps, John. D.O.E. Report, Accommodation for Gypsies (1976).
15. D.O.E. Circular 57/78.
16. H.M.S.O. Local Government and Planning Act (1980).
17. D.O.E. Circular 8/81 Annex 2.
18. D.O.E. Gypsy Sites Branch Gypsy Sites Provided by Local Authorities in England (Jan.1986).
19. D.O.E. News Release Gypsy Sites (Feb.1987).
20. Public Order Act (1986) Section 39.
21. Sibley, op.cit.

**PART 11**

## PART TWO

### SITE PROVISION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

- \* The National Picture
- \* Provision in the Study Area
- \* Site Location and Facilities in the Study Area.
- \* Summary of Results.

### THE NATIONAL PICTURE

The 1968 Caravan Sites Act was regarded by the National Gypsy Council as the first positive legislation in favour of Gypsies to be passed in this country. Unfortunately, as has been shown earlier in this study, the Act lacked 'teeth'. There is still a large deficit in the number of sites provided because of reluctance of some councils to build sites and the proposed number of sites required is based on what are now regarded as inadequate figures.

The figures on which current site provision is projected are taken from a bi-annual count by local authorities carried out on set dates in January and July. These figures themselves are unreliable because the count may be carried out by a council official who doesn't know where to look for unofficial sites. Not all local authorities make a return of the figures of the number of Gypsy caravans in their area, as this is not compulsory. In the counts for 1985<sup>1</sup> in January there were 8783 caravans in England. By July<sup>2</sup> this had risen to 9496. Out of the district authorities nearly fifty did not make a return and fifty returned a nil count. This shows the inadequacies of making policies on partial statistical data. Another factor which has been observed by Traveller groups such as A.C.E.R.T., N.A.T.T., and the N.G.E.C. is that returns from the authorities do not tally with the number observed by other agencies working with Travellers and are usually an underestimate. This may be due to political reasons as a low or nil return means that there is no need for site provision and failure to send in a return may be a positive decision to ignore the situation.

The D.O.E.'s statistics in July 1986<sup>3</sup> were that of the 10416 caravans counted, 4156 (39.90%) were on unauthorised sites. 4467 (42.89%) on council sites and 1793 (17.21%) on private sites. It would be safe to say that on average D.O.E. figures over a third of Traveller families have no legal stopping place 16 years after the passing of the Caravan Sites Act.

#### D.O.E. Memorandum

A Memorandum by the Department of the Environment on present policies and progress made in site provision was produced in 1985.<sup>4</sup> It acknowledges that approximately 35% of Gypsies are without legal stopping places for their caravans and that at the recent rate of progress it will take another ten years at least to make full provision, even with the incentives of 100% Exchequer grants for the building of sites and the designation of Districts not counties.

The Memorandum is concerned with the number of sites and not with the quality. The shortage of sites means that the Gypsy families have little choice but to accept those provided even though they may be inadequate, or camp illegally. The assumption is implicit in the Memorandum that when site provision equals the number of caravans that the problem will be solved. It looks no further, yet young Gypsies getting married require their own pitches, old sites need refurbishing and long distance Travellers have yet to be provided for.

#### The Purpose of the Study on Site Provision

The aim of this study is to look primarily at the educational needs of Travellers' children, but education cannot be looked at in isolation. The issue of site provision is raised by all Gypsy organisations and groups who work with Travellers as being crucial before there is an improvement in education for Travellers' children. The Swann Report observed: "A central factor in considering the education of Travellers' children is clearly site provision..... We would like to see far greater efforts being made by all concerned to increase the number of sites available and to improve the facilities of existing sites."<sup>5</sup>

The survey on site provision within the study region also looks at site facilities and regulations which may affect the

Travellers' lifestyle. The effect of living on an official site may have negative as well as positive implications.

1. D.O.E. Gypsy Sites Branch, Gypsy Sites Provided by Local Authorities in England (Jan. 1985)/
2. D.O.E. op.cit. (July 1985).
3. D.O.E. op. cit. (July 1986).
4. D.O.E. Memorandum 1985.
5. H.M.S.O. The Swann Report (1985) p.756.



### SITE PROVISION IN THE STUDY AREA

For the purpose of this study the area has been limited to the North East of England, the counties being Northumberland, the former metropolitan county of Tyne and Wear, County Durham, Cleveland, North Yorkshire and Humberside. (See map Appendix 1). There are forty districts within the study area and twenty official sites. Questionnaires (Appendix 9) were sent to all the local authorities which have Gypsy sites. Questionnaires were completed for all twenty sites.

### Number of Travellers in the Study Area

There are many reservations about the accuracy of the D.O.E. figures and they are regarded by many organisations as understated but for the purpose of this study D.O.E. statistics will be used because they are the only official figures available. The Years examined were 1978, when the first D.O.E. count was carried out, 1986 and 1987, the most recent count.

#### 1978

The first official D.O.E. count was carried out in July 1978 (See Table 1) when there were found to be 738 caravans 75% of which were on unauthorised sites and 25% on authorised sites; no distinction is made as to whether these are council or private sites. Of the forty districts within the study region ten sent in nil returns.

Table 1: No. of Caravans and type of site provision 1978.

County	Unauthorised	Authorised	Total
Humberside	115	49	164
N. Yorks.	131	52	183
Cleveland	61	0	61
Durham	162	62	224
Northumberland	51	23	74
Tyne & Wear	32	0	32

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Total No. of caravans	552	186	738
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1986

Table 2: Site Provision in Study Area January and July 1986

County	Unauth.		Council		Private		Total	
	Jan.	July	Jan.	July	Jan.	July	Jan.	July
Humberside	71	79	45	47	0	0	116	126
N. Yorks	52	121	67	70	46	41	165	232
Cleveland	43	20	82	34	0	0	125	54
Durham	24	24	145	140	82	48	251	212
Northumberland	13	13	37	34	16	15	66	62
Tyne & Wear*	7	37	44	33	0	0	51	70

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Total	210	294	420	358	144	104	774	756
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\* Returns not made from all districts.

In 1986 (see Table 2) of the forty districts in the study region ten sent in nil returns in January and seven nil returns in July. In January 1986 one district in Tyne and Wear did not send in any returns to the Department of the Environment.

Table 3: Percentage of Caravans on Unauthorised, Council and Private sites in the Study Region and England 1986.

Type of Site	January		July	
	Study	Eng.	Study	Eng.
Unauthorised	27.13%	35.91%	38.89%	39.90%
Council	54.26%	45%	47.35%	42.89%
Private	18.61%	19.09%	13.76%	17.21%

As can be seen from the statistics in Table 3, when most of the Travellers are static in winter, nearly a third of them are on unauthorised encampments, having no legal stopping place. The increase of Travellers on unauthorised sites from 27.13% in January to 38.89% in July is due in the main part to seasonal travelling, movement to fairs, farmwork, visiting relatives or looking for new markets in tarmac work etc. Compared with the statistics for England more Travellers in the Study region have access to council sites and it is only when there is seasonal movement within the summer that unauthorised encampments are comparable to the national statistics.

1987

Table 4: Number of Caravans on Sites in Study Area in January and July 1987

County	Unauth.		Council		Private		Total	
	Jan.	July	Jan.	July	Jan.	July	Jan.	July
Humberside	69	70	48	45	2	2	119	117
N. Yorks.	64	193	75	64	41	59	180	316
Cleveland	15	24	60	48	0	0	75	72
Durham	20	23	169	143	75	47	264	213
Northumberland	5	7	25	43	26	12	56	62
Tyne & Wear	13	33	25	12	0	0	38	45
<hr/>								
Total	186	350	402	355	144	120	732	825

As can be seen in Table 4 of the forty districts in the study region in January 1987 eight districts made nil returns and in July six districts made nil returns.

Table 5: Percentage of Caravans on Unauthorised, Council and Private Sites in the Study Region and England 1987.

Type of Site	January		July	
	Study	Eng.	Study	Eng.
Unauthorised	24.41%	34%	42.42%	38%
Council	54.92%	45%	43.03%	42%
Private	19.67%	21%	14.55%	20%

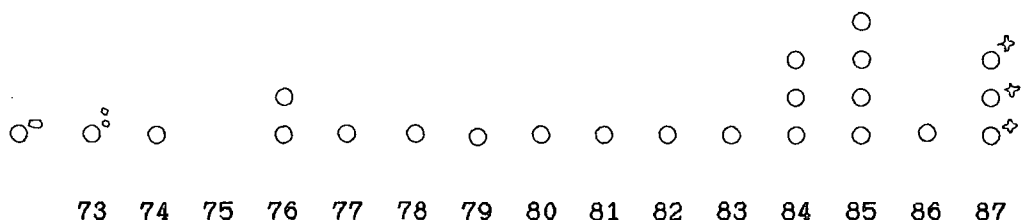
In the study area Alnwick in Northumberland and Holderness in Humberside are the only two districts out of the forty which during the five counts examined consistently sent in nil returns. Therefore thirty eight of the districts officially have had, or still have, Travellers in their district.

A sharp increase in the number of caravans in W. Yorks. on unauthorised sites from 64 in January to 193 in July (Table 4) was mainly due to the situation in Scarborough District when an old Charter Fair at Seamer was reinstated, coinciding with the July count. Numbers in Scarborough District rose from four in January to eighty five in July.

Compared with the total number of caravans in the study area in July 1978 there has been an increase in caravans and in July 1987 there were 825 caravans. The broad picture of numbers of caravans in the study area shows an increase of 87 (10.5%) between 1978 and 1987. The development of official sites has meant a decrease of caravans on unofficial sites from 75% in July 1978 to 42.47% in July 1987.

## Site Provision

Fig.1: Provision of New Sites in the Study Region 1973-1987



### Site

Key: Year site opened.

○ Site used by Gypsies from 1930's planning permission obtained in 1980 only after appeal.

⊕ Durham City site due to open Dec. 1987.

⊕ Gateshead site due to reopen November 1987 after refit.

⊕ Construction started at Catterick, N. Yorks.

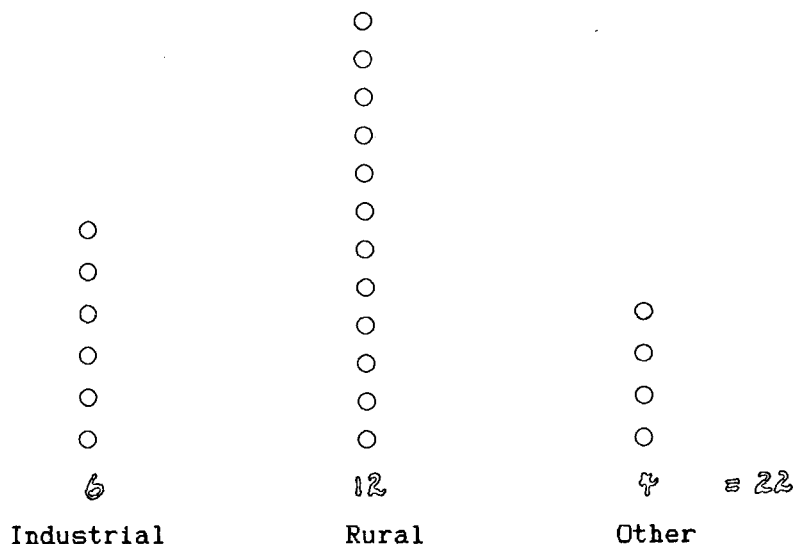
⊕ Work to commence shortly on providing an extra 6 pitches at Newcastle site.

In addition to the above planning permission was granted in May 1987 for a 16 pitch site near Stokesly, N. Yorks.

As can be seen from Fig. 1 only seven sites were provided in the 1970's but twelve have opened between 1980-1986, and another three planned to open late 1987, thus increasing the provision by 200% in the last seven years.

# SITE LOCATION AND FACILITIES IN THE STUDY AREA

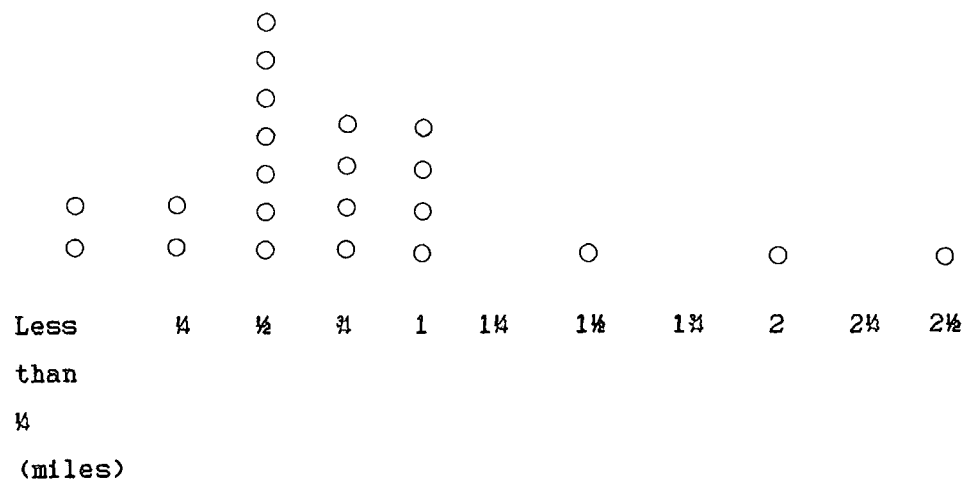
Fig. 11: Location of sites built by Jan. 1986.



As can be seen from Figure 11 the majority of sites opened by Jan. 1986 are in a rural location. Considering the rural nature of the study region, containing such large counties as N. Yorks., Northumberland and Durham this is not surprising. But the majority of the population is urban and that is the area where the majority of the Travellers will find work. Rural sites tend to face less public opposition and are cheaper because of land prices.

The industrial sites are located in Cleveland, Newcastle, two in County Durham and one in Humberside. Those sites located in 'other' are on the edge of urban areas, usually industrial estates.

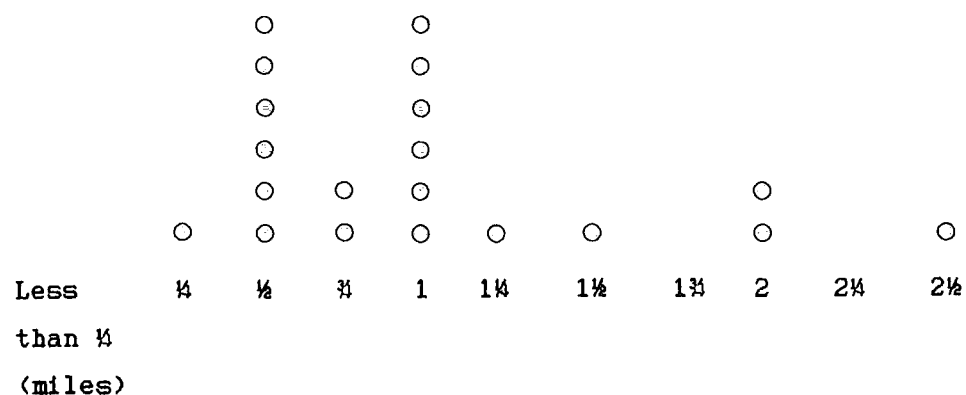
Fig. iii: Distance of sites to shops



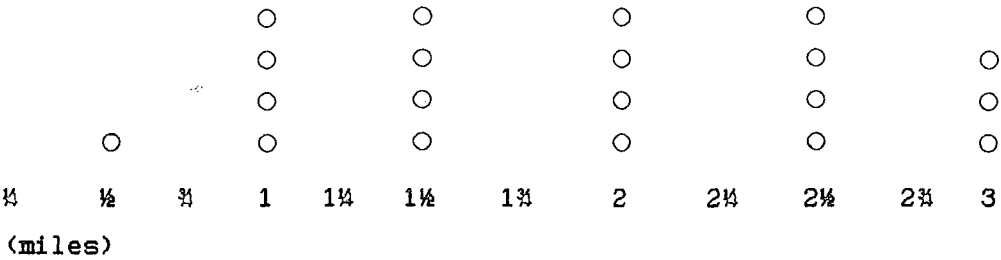
As can be seen from the above figure 75% of the sites are a mile or less from the shops.

Fig. iv: Distance of Sites to Schools:

a) Primary



b) Secondary



As can be seen from figures iv a) and iv b) Primary schools on average are a mile or less from the sites. 95% of Secondary schools are a mile to three miles from the sites. The usual difficulty, lack of transport, the distance from the sites and the need to rise very early to arrive at school on time are not conducive to good school attendance.

Fig. v: Distance of Sites from Public Transport Routes.

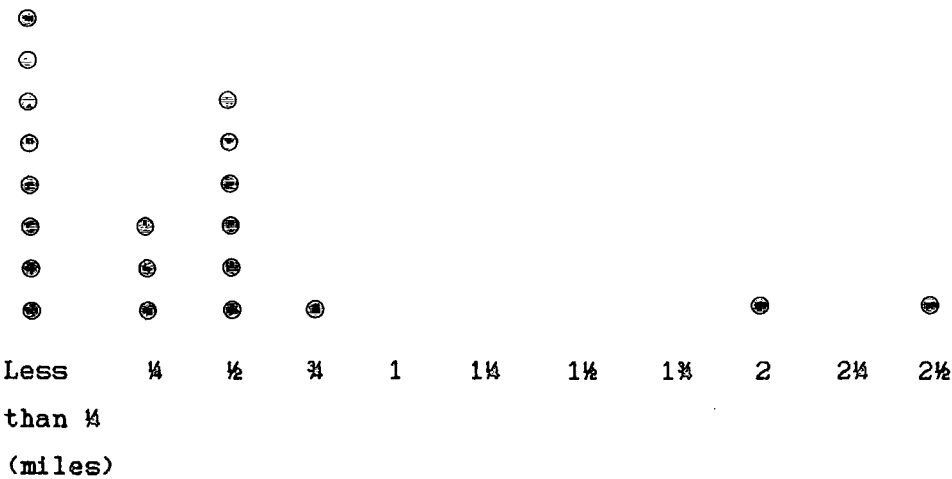


Figure v shows that 40% of sites have good access to public transport. The majority of sites are within a reasonable walking distance of public transport.



### Sites in Designated Areas.

Of the twenty sites surveyed fourteen are in areas which have been designated, three are in areas where designation has been applied for and three in areas which are not designated. It should be remembered that the areas where designation has been achieved enables the local authority to act more promptly against Travellers who are illegally parked and the numbers of Travellers allowed to stop in the district is restricted.

### Rents

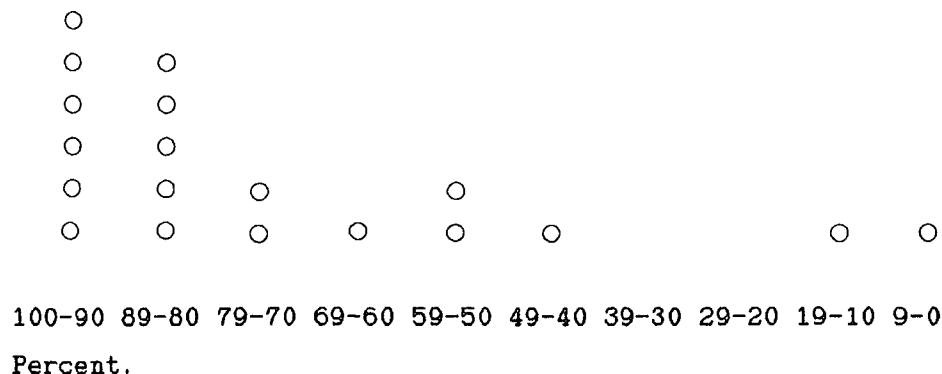
The rent for a pitch which includes hard standing for a caravan, a brick built shed which houses a toilet and washbasin, shower or bath, varies tremendously. For a single caravan in Humberside the rent on April 1st. 1987 was £10.60 a week, whereas in Cleveland the rent was £20.60, almost double. A pitch for two caravans cost £15 in Northumberland and £24.10 in Cleveland. The County of Cleveland charged the highest rents for facilities which were essentially similar to those in other counties where the rent was considerably less. All sites constructed after 1977 were eligible for 100% government grant for construction but management and subsequent repairs are the responsibility of the local authority.

### Housing Benefit

Of the twenty sites included in the survey only one site did not have the number of rents paid by the D.H.S.S. available. This was a site owned by the council and leased to a Gypsy; the L.E.A. was not in possession of the information.

The results can be seen in the graph overleaf.

Fig. vi: The Percentage of Residents on Sites who have their  
Rent paid by D.H.S.S. in the Study Area



#### Other Charges

All the sites except the two in Cleveland and one in Durham have slot meters for electricity. Cleveland charge a standard rate per week for electricity which is adjusted when the meter is read monthly.

Most District Councils charge a deposit on the allocation of a pitch. The deposit varies from authority to authority, the smallest deposit being £20 and the largest £50. One District Council as well as levying a deposit, charges £30.40 if Travellers want electricity connected to their caravan.

#### Site Regulations

The majority of sites have site rules which are much more elaborate than those drawn up as Model Rules by the Joint Working Party of the Local Authorities Association and the Gypsy Council (see Appendix 9) and extend to four typed pages of A4. Site rules curtail many of the Travellers' traditional activities. An example is the prohibition of open fires, which were the social focus of Traveller groups. The strict adherence to the rule of one caravan on a single plot places many families in great

difficulty when their children become adolescents and should have a small trailer of their own. On planning some of the sites this very basic cultural need was overlooked possibly because there had been very little or no discussion with the Travellers themselves.

#### Work Area

Of the twenty sites in the survey fifteen had no work spaces for the Travellers to carry out their work. Some site regulations specify that no scrap metal can be unloaded off the back of lorries. On some sites individuals sort small amounts of scrap on their own pitches in contravention of site regulations and unless it becomes too untidy this tends to be overlooked by the warden or officer in charge. Limited storage on some sites is to a height of three feet, on others, "goods brought to the residential part of the site by vehicles in connection shall not be removed from the vehicle and shall not be stored on site."

Travellers trading in 'antique' furniture, new carpets etc. would find it impossible to make a living if these restrictions were strictly enforced. The need to be able to keep a watchful eye on possessions is a very strong characteristic of Travellers.

#### Play Area

Of the twenty sites surveyed thirteen had no play area for the children, and of the seven sites where there are play areas some are not specific play areas but just grass between pitches.

The figure displays four dot plots, one for each animal type: Poultry, Dogs, Goats, and Horses. Each plot shows the frequency of 'Yes' and 'No' responses. The y-axis for all plots ranges from 0 to 20, with major tick marks every 2 units. The x-axis for each plot has two categories: 'Yes' and 'No'.

- Poultry:** The 'Yes' category has 8 data points (at y=2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16). The 'No' category has 12 data points (at y=2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20).
- Dogs:** The 'Yes' category has 20 data points (at y=2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20). The 'No' category has 0 data points.
- Goats:** The 'Yes' category has 1 data point (at y=2). The 'No' category has 19 data points (at y=2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20).
- Horses:** The 'Yes' category has 2 data points (at y=2, 4). The 'No' category has 18 data points (at y=2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20).

The keeping of animals is very basic to Traveller culture and yet when the sites were designed and rules drawn up very little attention was given to this. Fourteen sites will not allow poultry to be kept but it is not unusual for poultry to be seen running about or caged on such sites as long as they do not constitute a nuisance. All the sites permitted the keeping of dogs as long as they are kept under control but six sites restricted the keeping of dogs to one per family, a restriction not usually applied to council house tenants.

Goats are not allowed to be kept on nineteen out of the twenty sites surveyed but again, depending on the liberal attitude of the warden or site manager goats can occasionally be seen on the grassy mounds surrounding the sites or tethered on rough ground just outside the site.

There are no facilities for keeping horses on eighteen of the sites. Although the vast majority of Travellers do not use horses to pull their caravans many families like to keep them as status symbols, a sign of wealth. Some horses are trained for trotting races and Travellers like to keep ponies for their children to learn to ride. The 'sea coalers' in Northumberland use horses for hauling coal but a field adjacent to the site is provided. Many Travellers will tether horses on rough ground outside the site but some councils are very restrictive about this and horses have been taken to a police pound where it costs the Traveller £50 to retrieve them.

#### Wardens

The importance of wardens or site managers lies mainly in the day to day running of the site. Their tasks may include collecting rent and emptying electricity meters, ensuring the skips and dustbins are regularly emptied, sweeping the communal road, allocating pitches and keeping the key to the site barrier.

Of the twenty sites surveyed only one site was currently without a warden. There were twelve resident and seven non-resident wardens or site managers, and of the nineteen, thirteen were full time and six part time. The number of wardens who were Travellers was ten and these were all resident on sites. There were nine non-Traveller wardens. One large county has a policy of employing resident Traveller wardens, either full or part time depending on the size of the site and it was on these sites that the rules were interpreted liberally. Another county has a policy of employing a worker within the council department, either housing or environmental health, to visit the site at regular intervals. This council worker may have more than one

site to manage and the sites may be a small part of his job. On site visits, it was observed on talking to the Travellers that it was on these sites where the rules were most rigorously enforced. In one instance the worker was an ex policeman. Both systems appear to work satisfactorily on the whole as far as site management is concerned but the Travellers' attitudes to these differing systems were not examined.

The site which had no warden and had not had one for a few months was subject to significantly greater instances of vandalism than the other sites. Service blocks on vacant pitches had been totally stripped of contents. The money saved in payment of wages for a part time warden was vastly outstripped by the money needed for property repairs. The District Council advertised for a warden but had no applicants, mainly because of the low wages which would not attract a family man, and the difficulties of the job.

#### Site Layout

Most of the sites are flat and have either a straight access road with pitches each side or a circular road with pitches to the outside and in the centre. The surface tends to be tarmaced or rough stones but a few of the sites have grass between the pitches. Two of the sites visited have flower gardens and vegetable patches between the pitches, reflecting a static population.

The majority of sites have between twelve and twenty eight pitches and each pitch has an individual toilet block, with formal layout. The largest site of forty five pitches is leased to a Gypsy who developed it and the site has communal toilet facilities and a launderette. There is a circular road around the site, with speed humps at regular intervals. Caravans can pull on in family groupings near numbered electricity points. A flat area of the site is being developed for older Travellers who do not wish to travel any longer.

Grassy mounds usually conceal Gypsy sites, sometimes to an oppressive height. A few are surrounded by six foot high link fences. The warden's hut or caravan is usually located at the entrance to the site as is the barrier which restricts access to and from the site. The use of this barrier is controlled by the warden.

#### Transit Pitches

Only four out of the twenty surveyed have specific transit pitches. Two of them were in County Durham and two in Northumberland. Some of the other sites, if they have vacant pitches, are used by Travellers for short periods when they are in transit.

1. Selby District Council, Site Rules for Gypsy Sites.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

From this review of site provision by local authorities and the regulations involved, several conclusions can be drawn. The sites provided by the local authorities are well used and provide for a real need. The 1968 Caravan Sites Act, as intended, aimed for the provision of sites which would give the Travellers a secure base, basic amenities such as running water, toilet facilities, and improved access to education for their children. Although site provision has increased dramatically by the local authorities in the last four years there is still no need for complacency as there are still about 25% of Travellers in winter without a legal stopping place, who are subject to harassment and prosecution.

According to D.O.E. statistics the number of Travellers in the region has not dropped below 730 in the last nine years and with the exception of July 1987 when Seamer Fair was reinstated, has not gone over 800 caravans. This shows that the Traveller population is not declining. The designation of areas and the reluctance of authorities to provide transit pitches, usually because of financial or management difficulties, makes it much more difficult for the Travellers to continue their nomadic way of life. The Government recognises the Travellers' right to a nomadic way of life but the policies made and implemented appear contrary to this.

The majority of sites in the study area are in a rural location, very often on the outskirts of town, as can be seen from the distances to services survey, most sites being in an area ½ to 1 mile from the shops and primary schools. As has been shown 17 of the 20 sites are half a mile or less from public transport, usually a bus route but in most rural or semi rural areas bus services are very infrequent. Travellers however very rarely use public transport; if they have no transport of their own they prefer a taxi, especially when coming back with the shopping.

The sites themselves tend to be unimaginative in layout, giving very little privacy to the occupants. The lack of play areas for



the children often leave them no alternative but to play on rough hard core laid on some of the sites, where numerous accidents can occur, or on barren tarmac. The lack of work space and the prohibition of work on many of the sites takes away the Travellers' right to work in the way their families have for generations. Taking away this right by introducing laws which force them on to sites where they are faced with the expenses of rent and electricity, which together may be in excess of £30 per week, the Travellers find it increasingly difficult to meet these expenses and feed and clothe their families. Increasing numbers of Travellers are having to apply to the D.H.S.S. for assistance. In the county which charges the highest site rent 100% on one site have their rent paid by the D.H.S.S. In another county where the rule of no scrap unloaded off the back of lorries is strictly enforced, thus reducing the Travellers' capacity to work, 100% have their rent paid by the D.H.S.S.

Unfortunately it is policies made by the dominant gaujo community which are drastically altering the way of life of the Traveller and taking away his independence.

The horse is no longer used by the vast majority of Travellers as a means of transport but it remains as a historic symbol of the Traveller identity. Nathan Lee in his poem "The Passing of the Grai" laments the change away from the horse drawn vardo and the fact that sites make no provision for a horse. When most of the sites were constructed very little thought was given to the Travellers' needs; only two made provision for horses to be kept. Most Travellers who have horses are not averse to paying rental for grazing but difficulties in finding such places and high rental sometimes asked are often prohibitive. Fortunately wardens at many of the sites turn a 'blind eye' to horses or ponies tethered on the grassy mound surround or nearby verges, but not all wardens are so liberal.

It is exceptional for a Traveller family not to have at least one dog yet six of the sites restrict the families to one dog and at two of the sites visited dogs had to be chained at all times. On observation it was the non-Traveller wardens who made sure that

the site rules were strictly adhered to. No scrap, dogs chained, no other animals, grass neatly cut, the Travellers looking like a defeated people, no light in their eyes, relegated to a reservation, complete with barrier.

Sites may have provided legal stopping places and therefore increased access to education but they have also moved Travellers from one crisis to another. Though freed from harrassment by residing on a site they are faced with increased restrictions which seriously affect their way of life. Often living with neighbours they would not normally mix with and only able to leave their pitches for four weeks at a time or they lose it restricts their lifestyle. They may have to 'sign on' as they no longer have the facilities to work There is increasing pressure for youngsters to go on Y.T.S. Schemes which will soon be compulsory. All these lead to a fragmentation of Gypsy culture and a move towards assimilation, a move which would be welcomed by most authorities. Most local authorities, in the writer's opinion, look on Travellers as a deviant minority that need to be changed.

1. Nathan Lee, The Passing of the Grai from Lacio Drom (Dec. '86) p.80-81.

**PART 3**

## PART THREE

### EDUCATION

- \* History of Traveller Education
- \* Education Provision for Traveller children in England.
- \* Education Provision for Traveller children in the Study Region.
- \* Results of Questionnaire to schools accepting Traveller children in the Study Region.
- \* Travellers in Cleveland County
- \* Results of interviews with parents of Traveller children.

## HISTORY OF TRAVELLER EDUCATION

### First Schools

The earliest attempts to set up schools for Gypsy children in England and Scotland were in the early nineteenth century. In the 1830's and 1840's schools were set up in Southampton, Farnham in Surrey and Kirk Yetholm in Scotland. There were probably other scattered and less documented attempts in this period, set up by philanthropists and religious bodies. The school in Farnham closed in 1855 and the school in Southampton, set up by the Reverend James Crabb, closed soon after his death in 1851. The Kirk Yetholm mission claimed to have 'settled' the Gypsies by the 1860's.<sup>1</sup> All of these early attempts at education had evangelical intent and in general were very assimilationist. The Salvation Army also encouraged converts to give up their nomadic way of life.

In the 1850's the London City Mission sent teachers to the Gypsy camps. They realised that compelling Gypsies to settle down would only force them into the slums. During the latter half of the nineteenth century Francis Hynde Groome<sup>2</sup> had ascertained that the majority of Gypsies were settled for a considerable time of the year and so, a progressive of his age, he suggested that clergymen and teachers go to the camps and persuade the children into schools. For the more mobile Gypsies he suggested the children be taught at the camps by literate Gypsies and visiting teachers.

Another Victorian philanthropist, George Smith of Coalville, was involved primarily with bargee children, and used his religious zeal to try and better the conditions of the 'van' children, to ensure their education, if only on a part time basis. (A school for bargee children was set up in Runcorn in the 1870's.<sup>3</sup>) His feelings towards Gypsies is shown very clearly in 'Gypsy Life' (Smith 1880), "It is not creditable for us as a Christian nation to have had for centuries these heathen tribes in our midst."<sup>4</sup> George Smith put forward numerous Bills to Parliament between 1885 and 1889, entitled 'Temporary Dwelling Bill' but all were

rejected. George Smith himself said, "But for the opposition to my Bills in 1885-6-7-8-9 the 30,000 English and Scotch Gypsy and van children would in all human probability, by this time have been able to read and write and thus start on the road to heaven." (G Smith 1889 and 1892, p.44-45).<sup>5</sup>

In fact the majority of the proposals in George Smith's Bills were incorporated in a number of Acts by 1936, except the one on the compulsory registration of vans.

#### Education up to the 1960's

The 1908 Children's Act<sup>6</sup> gave powers to local authorities to act against parents who did not send their children to school under the 1902 and 1906 Acts. Paragraph 116 of the 1908 Children's Act forbade the buying of scrap metal from children. This part of the Act is often ignored even in 1987. The fact that the 1908 Act was brought in without extra funds being provided for its implementation meant that it was ineffectual. The 1908 Children's Act also exempted children from attending school between April and September if the child's parents were engaged in "trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,"<sup>7</sup> provided there had been 200 attendances between the preceding October to March. This exemption is incorporated in the 1944 Education Act, Section 39 (sub section 3), "...if the parent proves that he is engaged in any trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place and that the child has attended at a school at which he was a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of the trade or business permits."<sup>8</sup>

There is little recorded evidence of concerted special education for Gypsies up until the Second World War, in fact even until the 1960's. One such recorded provision though was a class for Gypsies which was open from 1926-34<sup>9</sup> set up by the Surrey Education Committee. But although this may be one of the isolated attempts at providing Gypsies with education specifically for their group, many Gypsies/Travellers did not

attend school. Of those that did attend their attendance may have been spasmodic and their experience not a positive one. This pattern of spasmodic attendance was sometimes rigorously enforced by the 'School Board Man', depending on the area, and often complete non-attendance continued up until the late 1960's.

#### Traveller Education after 1960

Traveller parents interviewed by the writer,<sup>10</sup> who were children in the 50's and 60's spoke of their lack of educational experience, whether their pattern of travel wasn't conducive to school attendance or its value was not regarded highly. This attitude is reflected in the H.M.S.O. publications *Gypsies and other Travellers*, 1967, which claimed that "before the war the Gypsies were virtually unanimous in considering education to be a waste of time, harmful to health and generally an experience to be avoided."<sup>11</sup>

One way Travellers did receive compulsory basic literacy was by courtesy of His/Her Majesty's Government, either in the armed forces when there was conscription or in prison and youth custody. The fear and dislike of the 'school attendance officer' by the Travellers is equalled by their feeling of distrust of social workers who are renowned amongst Travellers for taking children into care. Being in care also brought about enforced education. Many of the literate Travellers active in Gypsy politics today received some sort of enforced education.

The gradual change in work patterns and life styles which emerged after the Second World War began to change attitudes towards education..... "factors such as the closure of traditional stopping places and the resultant dependence on council sites which made it necessary for Gypsies to live alongside the settled community."<sup>12</sup> The increased use of motorised vehicles and the growth in urban trade such as the scrap metal dealing and tarmac as the mechanisation of agriculture forced some Travellers into towns for longer periods, and the increasing dependence on the Welfare State all necessitated more contact

with the settled community. The ability (to be able to read and write was seen as advantageous by an increasing number of Travellers but it wasn't until the 1960's when there became an increasing awareness of human rights both in Britain and abroad that there was any progress in this field of education.

The establishment of official Gypsy sites by a few local authorities created a need and a demand for education provision. This was the start of the movement towards access to education for Traveller children when there was security of a site and more stability. Children from official sites in Kent and Surrey were provided with special facilities at Edenbridge (1965) and Outwood (1967). On-site educational facilities were provided but children were also accepted in to local primary schools. By 1969 at Outwood, the local school had "successfully established an uncomplicated and efficient educationally acceptable system for the local families."<sup>13</sup> Edenbridge moved from the unit on site, acting as a bridging system between site and school, to a segregated system annexed to the local school, and finally to an integrated system. Unfortunately the appalling and deteriorating site facilities at Edenbridge caused the site to be less well used.

The interest and growth shown in Traveller education from the late 1960's was influenced by the formation of the Gypsy Council (late 1966), voluntary groups which acted as pressure groups and the increase in pressure on local authorities to provide sites after the 1968 Caravan Sites Act. The relationships between these various groups as well as influencing the growth of Traveller education also illustrates conflicting ideals and a lack of a cohesive national policy.

The secretary of the embryo group of the Gypsy Council was Gratton Puxon, who had been active in promoting Gypsy civil rights in Eire. He was aware of the role that education would have in the overall struggle for civil rights. Whilst Puxon remained an influence in the Gypsy Council education had a political aspect. The promotion of education was used as a



pressure for the building of sites. The majority of L.E.A.s would look at education only after a site had been built.

#### Gypsy Caravan Schools

The first Gypsy Council Caravan School was set up in 1967 at Hornchurch airfield, Essex. The school, originally run by Thomas Acton and a Simon Community worker, was very nearly a disaster because of disorganisation of the finances. Some of the children transferred to the local primary school after initial objections from the L.E.A.<sup>14</sup>. As well as activating a Gypsy civil rights campaign in the area, this, the first Gypsy Council Caravan School, was used as a model for other such schools.

Harry Smith, an English Gypsy and George Marriot of Irish Traveller and Spanish immigrant descent, who was also a Labour Party activist, ran Gypsy Council Caravan schooling with teachers and students in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire in 1968. The police policy of 'moving on' caravan schools was used as propaganda by the Gypsy Council and following the adverse publicity which ensued Bedfordshire Education Department agreed to the caravan school and its teacher being based in the grounds of Kensworth Village school. It was used there as a special Traveller unit for several years. It was closed in 1976, when according to Dick Worrall a new assistant education officer apparently disapproved of the fact that "children over primary school age were also being catered for in the unit."<sup>15</sup> The Kensworth unit is of special interest because it is one of the first examples of provision for Gypsies by an L.E.A. resulting from voluntary pressure.

#### Growth of Gypsy Organisations and Support Groups

The activities of the Gypsy Council and the debate about the 1968 Caravan Site Act activated teachers, students and supporters in the field of Gypsy education. For teachers it was an exciting opportunity in a unique field where there were not the usual

constraints of the main stream school system. The motives of some of these gorgio teachers were questioned by some of the Gypsies. As with any new growth area within education some teachers saw it as a job which would enhance their careers. By 1970, human rights groups in the West Midlands had set up the West Midlands Travelling School. A Schools Council project on the 'Education of Travelling Children' was set up and was based at the West Midlands College of Education, Walsall, directed by Christopher Reiss. As the Gypsy Council was quick to point out this was ..... "despite the fact that Mr Reiss had only eighteen months experience. We the Gypsies had witnessed the birth of an 'instant expert'." The factionalism which was apparent in the 1970's is unfortunately still visible in the 1980's with some Gypsies and gorgios differing on policies and there are clashes of personalities.

The formation of the Gypsy Council Trust in 1969 to deal with education matters became the foundation of the National Gypsy Education Council (N.G.E.C.) in 1970, under the chairmanship of Lady Plowden. During the following year the N.G.E.C. appointed a salaried Field Officer and Adviser. A project at Woodmansy, N. Humberside, which was a segregated unit set up by the N.G.E.C., closed in 1977.

In 1972 conflict within the Gypsy Council caused some of the leaders to break away and form the Romany Guild. The N.G.E.C. split in April 1973, when many of the officers led by Lady Plowden resigned and set up the Advisory Council for the Education of Romanies and other Travellers (A.C.E.R.T.), which unfortunately competed for funds and the support of local groups. Thomas Acton, acknowledging his support for the N.G.E.C. (in 1974), saw the main differences between the N.G.E.C. and A.C.E.R.T. as follows.... "The N.G.E.C. feels that the Gypsy Education Movement should be more democratic involving parents and teachers more in its running, more Romani and Traveller orientated in its educational material and that a closer liaison should be kept up between the struggle for education and the struggle for stopping places. A.C.E.R.T. feels it important not to engage in militancy or unreal strategies for separate

education when the solution shall come from the state."<sup>17</sup> For Thomas Acton's Family Tree of Gypsy and pro Gypsy organisations see Appendix 11.<sup>18</sup>

In this rapid growth of embryonic movements one must not forget the publication of the Plowden Report on 'Children and Their Primary Schools' (1967) with the much quoted .... "They (Travellers) are probably the most severely deprived children in the country. Most of them do not even go to school, and the potential abilities of those who do are stunted."<sup>19</sup> Lady Plowden at a conference held in Carlisle (1979) qualified the word, 'deprived', from the above quotation explaining that "Traveller children come from caring families and had certain advantages, such as those of extended families, often lacked by other children."<sup>20</sup> The Plowden Report was yet another spur to L.E.A.s and voluntary groups concerned with Traveller education, highlighting the needs of this specific group. In 1970 educational work with Travellers started in Bromley, Oxford and York and The Save the Children Fund started a project with Travellers in the Hertfordshire area. The first H.M.I. with responsibility for Traveller Education was appointed in 1973.

Christopher Reiss was a member of the W.G.E.C., and in 1973 was one of the founder members of A.C.E.R.T., and Chairman of the West Midlands Travellers' School until 1972. In his book 'The Education of Travelling Children' (1975) he used as his basis the Schools Council survey of 1970 which relied on questionnaires sent to the then existing 162 local authorities, out of them 40 were nil returns and 20 did not reply. Over an eighteen month period it showed that there were 2,000 Gypsy/Travelling children in school plus 250 housed Gypsy children. Reiss put the figure at approximately 1,500 to allow for movement between schools. The Plowden Report (1967)<sup>21</sup> had suggested that not more than 10% of Gypsy children had been attending school in 1967 and this figure could not be refuted by Reiss. He was only able to "suggest that there may be between 6,000 and 12,000 Traveller children, probably the higher figure being nearer the truth."<sup>22</sup>

In 1973 the Gypsy and Travellers Education Council, (G.T.E.C.) was formed, which was the northern branch of the N.G.E.C., and was composed of Travellers, teachers, social workers, researchers and volunteers. The publication by G.T.E.C. in 1975, 'Gypsy Education, a question of Responsibility', contained the results of a survey of L.E.A. attitudes towards Gypsy education in the north. The survey indicated a "critical lack of knowledge throughout the L.E.A.s in the north in relation to Traveller education."<sup>23</sup> Out of twenty four L.E.A.'s, twenty one saw schooling "as a means to institute conforming behaviour and to eventually integrate them into settled society."<sup>24</sup> The G.T.E.C. wanted a type of education which would support the 'unique' Gypsy life-style but for many L.E.A.'s the desirability of this was questioned and often rejected.

Unfortunately factionalism between various Gypsy groups, not always on policy but sometimes on personalities, resulted in a walkout of the National Gypsy Council, led by its president Hughie Smith, from the A.G.M. of the N.G.E.C. in May 1978. Dick Worrall in discussing both A.C.E.R.T.'s and N.G.E.C.'s "unhappy relationship with 'its' Gypsies" forecast that their "eventual failure seems increasingly possible."<sup>25</sup> As will be shown later in this section both groups have survived and are active up to the time of writing this study.

The N.G.E.C. acknowledges the divisiveness between groups as harmful and at the end of its policy statement adopted in 1977 states: "The N.G.E.C. regrets the fragmentation of organisations concerned with Gypsy welfare and urges all to come together in general principles while recognising the rights of Gypsies and their Gaujo friends to hold different opinions on details."<sup>26</sup>

#### D.E.S. increasing awareness

In 1977 D.G. Buckland, H.M.I. with special responsibility for the education of travelling children, writing in the journal 'Trends', stated that there were, at that time, an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Gypsy children of school age in England and

Wales who were leading a nomadic life style. He wrote "there are however no official estimates of their number nor the number receiving full time education."<sup>27</sup> The fact that there are no official numbers available is indicative of the low priority given to the situation by the D.E.S. and the local authorities' lack of response to the field of Traveller education, it not being compulsory to send in returns of numbers of caravans to the D.O.E.. Although recognising the difficult task of gathering information it is vital if the difficulties of providing the opportunities for all Traveller children to receive adequate education are to be overcome. As Dick Worrall pointed out a ten fold increase in the current level of expenditure by L.E.A.s in England and Wales was needed to give equal opportunity to Gypsy children.<sup>28</sup>

At least part of the financial expenditure on education could be met from the No Area Pool, (to which all L.E.A.s contribute). In 1977 the D.E.S. had informed L.E.A.s that the No Area Pool could be used to fund the education of nomadic children. Avon and Somerset were two areas making use of the fund at this time. Between 1968 (the year the Caravan Site Act was passed), and 1977, at least 100 teachers were appointed to work with Travelling children, and were funded in this way.

In Croydon, in 1977, the L.E.A. refused to take in any roadside children. The D.E.S. said that Croydon was within its rights which meant that Traveller children did not have an enforceable legal right to education in Britain. The 1980 Education Act<sup>29</sup> altered this position and now a local education authority is responsible for the education of all children living in its area, whether they live on official or unofficial sites. This subject is covered in more detail in D.E.S. Circular 1/81 and in the publication Traveller Education 1982, published by the N.G.E.C..

The Warnock Committee Report (1978) on Special Education Needs which resulted in the 1981 Education Act,<sup>30</sup> did not include Traveller children as having special education needs but many of its recommendations could equally apply to them and be usefully used when special education is required. The N.G.E.C. opposed

the inclusion of the problems of ethnic minorities with those of the physically and mentally handicapped but saw the advantage of using the 1981 Act to encourage local authorities into action.

#### D.E.S. Discussion Paper 1983

A discussion paper produced by the D.E.S., 'The Education of Traveller's Children', "in order to stimulate professional discussion,"<sup>31</sup> was distributed to L.E.A.s and other organisations concerned with the education of Traveller children. The H.M.I.'s who prepared the report, Donald Buckland and Arthur Ivatts, had been involved with Travellers for about ten years. The paper covers the needs, types of provision, finance and the importance of in-service training. It estimates that some 50-60% of primary age children and 85-90% of secondary children were not attending school when the paper was produced. Case studies of different local authority practices from a unit on an official site to a unit for secondary age children attached to a primary school were covered. Although cautiously recommending integration in schools as being ultimately preferable for Traveller children it makes clear that there are numerous situations where immediate integration would not be viable. The paper acknowledges, however, that in some areas "poor practice can be identified by the operation of an 'open door' policy."<sup>32</sup> This policy means that the Travellers have to have the confidence, remain in a place long enough and often be persistent to gain access to education for their children. Many Traveller parents have had unhappy experiences when they were at school and are reluctant to approach the education system. Others may not be enthusiastic about the need for education and do not approach schools.

The fact that this discussion paper was forwarded to all L.E.A.s made many aware of the No-Area Pool being used to finance the education of Travelling children. Expenditure on the education of Travelling children in ordinary classes could, and still can, be claimed from the 'pool' at the full Inter Authority Payments Committee in proportion to the weeks of their actual attendance. Special provision such as peripatetic teachers or special units

whether or not the child is on roll at a school is 75% refundable from the pool. Other expenditure such as boarding fees and transport is 100% refundable. Sadly, still not all L.E.A.s are aware of the uses of the No-Area pool or choose not to make use of it. The No-Area Pool is to be replaced in 1990 by a specific grant for Traveller Education and the education of refugees. Local Education Authorities will have to submit bids for any provision they make.

The importance of in-service training and the need to be aware of Traveller culture and make use of it is stressed in the Discussion paper. The need to have close liaison with Traveller families and for there to be a flexible approach at both administrative and school level are all very basic but important factors to consider when approaching Traveller education.

Teachers of Traveller children, who were often isolated in their work, found that the D.E.S. Short Courses broke down their isolation and from contact on these courses the National Association of Teachers of Travellers (N.A.T.T.) was formed in 1981. The members meet once a term, on a Saturday, a different region for each meeting, to exchange information, act as a mutual support group and on occasions act as a pressure group.

#### Response to the D.E.S. Discussion Paper

The publication of the 1983 Discussion Paper was welcomed by the N.G.E.C. and A.C.E.R.T. (which had split from the N.G.E.C. in 1973), and the two groups began to work more co-operatively with each other and with other groups like the Romany Guild and the East Anglian Gypsy Council. Thomas Acton<sup>33</sup> saw the main criticism coming from the West Midlands where there is a well established Traveller education service which covers 11 L.E.A.s.<sup>34</sup> The West Midlands Service is more politically aligned to the National Gypsy Council and together they felt that "their policies provided the best national answer to the problems. They attacked the report for neglecting the West Midlands experience,

and other bodies for endorsing the report."<sup>35</sup> The D.E.S. Report on the West Midlands was published in the same year as the discussion paper and generally praised the Service's achievements but made a number of specific criticisms. The alignment of the West Midlands Service with the National Gypsy Council, and the increasing co-operation between the W.G.E.C. and A.C.E.R.T. again illustrate the factionalism within Gypsy policies and the Traveller education movement. It is difficult to formulate national policy because of the diversity of groups working with Travellers and the different Traveller groups.

The D.E.S. have carried out surveys of the education of Traveller children in the West Midlands, (1983, pub. 1984), Lancashire, (1983, pub. 1984), West Sussex, (1984, pub. 1984), N. Yorkshire, (1985, pub. 1987) and Cambridgeshire, (1985, pub. 1986). All these reports are available from the D.E.S. or the L.E.A. where the survey was carried out. The reports all wish to encourage the recognition of Traveller culture and for it to be reflected in the curriculum. The importance of in-service training is emphasised. This would inform teachers about the cultural background of the Travellers. Positive aspects of the services are acknowledged, as encouragement, and where the services could be improved, where gaps are seen, or new innovations or developments from existing practices are possible, these are pointed out. Unfortunately these are only recommendations and the L.E.A.s are under no legal obligation to follow them.

#### The Swann Report

The most recent major government report which has implications for Traveller education is 'Education for All': the report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups, usually known as the Swann Report, after its Chairman, Lord Swann. The Committee's final report was published in March 1985.<sup>36</sup> The Report covered in depth the nature of racism in our multi-cultural society, achievement, language, teacher education and ethnic minorities. The Report says, "We were anxious, however, to also give some consideration to the



children from some of the smaller ethnic minority communities which have tended to receive rather less attention than the Asian and West Indian minority but which are as much an integral part of society today."<sup>37</sup> When introducing which ethnic minorities the report would study they ..... "were also led by the sheer volume of evidence we received on their needs - to consider the children from the Travelling Community, whose needs have often previously been almost entirely passed over in any consideration of ethnic minority communities..... their needs were if anything even more deserving of attention than the other groups we had discovered."<sup>38</sup> Chapter 16 of the Swann Report is devoted entirely to the Educational Needs of Traveller's Children.<sup>39</sup>

The Swann Report exposes racism in our education, both unintentional racism and institutional racism and shows that the most blatant racism was found in schools with few or no ethnic minority pupils. Although the Swann Report took evidence from Traveller groups there are still aspects of it which Gypsy Associations are not happy with. The N.G.E.C. and A.C.E.R.T., in a joint response to the Swann Report<sup>40</sup> welcomed the advocacy of anti-racist educational practice and agreed that it is institutional racism which is to be tackled. They were very critical of the Report in its use of I.Q. tests to make inter-ethnic comparisons, the concept itself being inherently racist. The criticism extended to the chapter on Travellers where it accused the Report of paying lip service to the culture of Travellers and feared that the chapter may even confirm teachers' existing stereotypes and did not make enough of the positive contribution which Travellers make to schools.

The importance of site provision for Travellers in relation to education provision is highlighted in the Swann Report as it was in the 1983 H.M.I. Discussion Paper. The Swann Report found that many official attitudes favoured the assimilation model for Travellers, for them to cease to be Travellers, but "we (the Report) believe that all ethnic minority groups have the right to retain their distinct identities and to see their way of life and culture respected and valued by the majority community."<sup>41</sup>

Education within mainstream school is recommended with additional education support being provided. Exceptions may be made for short stay Travellers, which may be on-site provision, and where a bridging system might be advantageous. Links with home and school are stressed and it is recommended that the L.E.A. should have a named person to act as co-ordinator in the field of Traveller education in each authority.

Although the Swann Report highlights the racism and discrimination, myths and stereotyping of Travellers both in society as a whole and in the education system, it is no further advanced in offering a solution than the 1983 H.M.I. Discussion Paper. The importance of the Swann Report is that it recognises Travellers as an ethnic minority group and in the context of education acknowledges Travellers' children face a greater degree of hostility than the racism encountered by children of other ethnic minority groups. Only by the education of the general public, including teachers, government officials both local and national, police and those in every strata of society to make them confront their own racism will the recommendations of the 1983 H.M.I. Discussion Paper and the Swann Report be achieved.

### Summary

So what has been achieved in the field of Traveller education over the last 100 years? The attitudes of the early philanthropists in the nineteenth century to encourage children away from their nomadic way of life and 'civilise' them are still reflected in the views of some L.E.A.s and teachers today, although the views may be couched in different terms. There is still a large proportion of the adult Traveller population illiterate and in 1983 the H.M.I. Inspectors suggested from evidence gathered that as few as 40-50% of primary aged children and 10-15% of secondary age Traveller children attended school and that their attendance is not regular.

There are many L.E.A.s which do not make any special provision for Travellers and have no 'key person' as recommended by both

Discussion Paper and the Swann Report. The Save the Children Fund is involved with pre-school Traveller children and runs various projects, mainly in the south of the country and it takes an active interest in site provision. The N.G.E.C. and A.C.E.R.T. continue to act as pressure groups for both site and education provision. In 1986 the Labour Campaign for Travellers Rights was formed, bringing a more political element on the scene. N.A.T.T. is still thriving as a haven for isolated teachers in Traveller education and acts as a resource centre for information. The organisations such as Shelter, M.C.C.L. and Minority Rights Group play an active role in the campaign for better provision for Travellers. The National Gypsy Council still fights for Traveller children to be educated in the state system but policy and personality differences still split the Gypsy movement causing energy, which could be used to further the Gypsy cause, to be diverted. Traveller education is inextricably linked with site provision as is emphasised by both the D.E.S. Discussion paper and the Swann Report. Site provision is still inadequate and until this is remedied Traveller education will remain a grey area of the education system.

1. Thomas Acton Gypsy Politics and Social Change, (1974) p.104.
2. Dick Worrall, Gypsy Education: A Study of Provision in England and Wales, (1979) p.56.
3. Durham Research Review no. 27 (Autumn 1971).
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5. Acton, T. op. cit. p. 112.
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11. Ministry of Housing and Local Government 'Gypsies and other Travellers' (1967) p.34.
12. National Gypsy Council, Report (1982) p.17.
13. National Gypsy Council, Education Report (1978) p.9.
14. Acton, T. op.cit. p.17.
15. Worrall, D. op.cit p.61.
16. National Gypsy Council, Report (1978) p.9.
17. Acton, T. op.cit. p.278.
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19. D.E.S. Children and their Primary Schools. Plowden Report (1967) volume 1 para. 155.

20. Binns, D. (Ed.) Education and the Gypsy (1983) p.12.
21. Plowden Report op.cit. Volume 2 Appendix 12 para. 13.22. Christopher Reiss, Education of Travelling Children (1975) p.21.
22. Christopher Reiss, Education of Travelling Children (1975) p.21.
23. Phil Scratton (Ed.) Gypsy Education: A Question of Responsibility (1975) p.10.
24. Scratton. op.cit. p.9.
25. Worrall. op.cit p.70.
26. N.G.E.C. Traveller Education No. 14 (1979) p.6.
27. Don. G. Buckland. Article Education of Travelling Children Journal Trends in Education (1977) p.3.
28. Worrall. op.cit. p.82.
29. Education Act 1980 Section 6.
30. Education Act 1981.
31. H.M.I. Discussion Paper. The Education of Travellers Children (1983) opp. p.1.
32. H.M.I. Discussion Paper op.cit. p.33.
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34. D.E.S. Report A Survey of the West Midland Education Service for Travelling Children (1983).
35. Acton, T. op.cit p.6.
36. D.E.S. 'Education for All': The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups (1985) known as the Swann Report.
37. Swann Report (1985) p.649.
38. Swann Report (1985) p.650.
39. Swann Report (1985) ch. 16 pp.739-759.
40. N.G.E.C./A.C.E.R.T. Response to the Swann Report (1986).
41. Swann Report (1985) p.756.

## EDUCATION PROVISION FOR TRAVELLER CHILDREN IN ENGLAND

### Introduction

The fact that nearly a third of the Traveller population are forced to camp illegally because of a shortage of sites means that access to education for many is limited. Since Traveller children were identified in the Plowden Report<sup>1</sup> (1967) as the most educationally under privileged group and reiterated in the Swann Report<sup>2</sup> (1985) in Britain, some L.E.A.s, national government, and voluntary bodies have worked towards remedying this situation. In this section of the study the different types of education provision for Travellers are briefly outlined, as are the ultimate aims of the provision, to provide a frame work for the survey in the region conducted by the writer.

### Aims of the Education Provision

1. Assimilation is where the Traveller children are totally absorbed into mainstream education. To make reference to the child's culture and accommodation would make the child 'different from the others' to quote from one primary school Headmaster and by implication is better avoided.
2. Segregation is where the Traveller children are educated in isolation from mainstream children, either by on-site provision in a mobile or permanent classroom, or in a separate unit within the school. Reasons for this type of provision often given are that the Traveller children and parents prefer it.
3. Integration is where the Traveller children are educated in the mainstream school and given equal access to the full curriculum. To facilitate this the Traveller children require support in the classroom.

Types of Education Provision which may be provided by L.E.A.s for Traveller children.

1. On Site Provision

This provision may be in the form of a permanent building where a teacher is based, who will probably teach the full age range from pre-school to secondary.

Mobile units may visit both official and unofficial sites and provide education for all school age children, but this may only be once or twice a week.

Individual home tuition where the teacher works with pupils in their own home, on official or unofficial sites, also means that the pupils are only receiving part time education.

2. School Provision

Units may be situated within the school grounds and have a teacher specifically for Travellers. They may be completely segregated or there may be some integration into mainstream school, the unit acting as a bridging agent.

Other units may be within the school from where the children are partially or wholly integrated into the mainstream school. The Traveller children are in mainstream school but are withdrawn for remedial work either as individuals, a group of Travellers, or as an integrated group. Alternatively the Traveller children may be fully integrated within the classroom but have the assistance of a support teacher.

3. Peripatetic Teachers

L.E.A.s may employ peripatetic teachers who have responsibility for the Traveller needs. The teachers may act as liaison between parents and schools, support children in school and act in an advisory capacity to schools and staff.

4. Open Door Policy

The L.E.A. relies on the Traveller parents taking their children to school to enrol them, there being no active part played by the L.E.A..

Those L.E.A.s who have a positive approach to Traveller education may adopt a combination of the above mentioned types of provision, depending on the number of Travellers in the area, the size of the region to be covered and facilities available. The need for a flexible approach at both administrative and school levels is identified both in the H.M.I. Discussion Paper<sup>3</sup> and the Swann Report<sup>4</sup> as being necessary for successful education of Traveller children.

The Open Door Policy which places responsibility of the child attending school on the Traveller parent is highly criticised in both the H.M.I. Discussion Paper and the Swann Report. "The schools are there so the policy (open door) goes, let the Traveller use them; that is if they remain long enough, are bold enough, confident enough, keen enough and persistent enough to seek and gain admission."<sup>5</sup> Traveller parents, who themselves have no educational experience or if the experiences they have had are negative, will be reluctant to go knocking on school doors. In the writer's experience, one Traveller mother who was keen to have her children educated approached four schools but when they found out she was a Traveller from an unofficial site they were suddenly surprisingly 'full'.

#### Attendance

The percentage of Traveller children who attend school is difficult to assess. Christopher Reiss in 'Education of Travelling Children'<sup>6</sup> estimated that between 10-25% attended school between 1969-70, the majority being of primary age and only one third of those children attending on a regular basis. In the Plowden Report<sup>7</sup> it was estimated that less than 10% attended school. Don Buckland H.M.I., writing in Trends (1977)<sup>8</sup> gave the following national estimates (Table 6). Monica Taylor in Worlds Apart (1988)<sup>9</sup> draws together numerous estimates of Traveller children's attendance at school. Although varying slightly they all confirm poor attendance but show primary attendance as being the most consistent.

Table 8 Estimated percentage of Gypsy children receiving education nationally.

Pre-school	5.7%
Primary	40%
Secondary	10-12%
Adult	1-2%

Enforced attendance by some L.E.A.s has been found to be counter productive; for as soon as legal proceedings are started the Travellers move on. Any younger siblings which may have been in school are thus taken away from education and the family will connect education with enforcement, a very negative but understandable response.

Attendance at school is governed by many factors in the Traveller lifestyle and will vary within the different communities. Factors which affect school attendance by some, not all, and in different combinations are as follows:-

1. Unofficial sites. The Travellers on unofficial sites are less likely to attend school for fear of eviction while the children are at school. The position of the sites, usually on industrial sites or disused land and the journey to school may be long as well as hazardous and inhospitable.
2. Position of Official Sites. They are often on the edge of industrial estates and the journey to and from school is often along roads with heavy industrial traffic. The distance from school is such that it inhibits attendance, this especially so for secondary pupils where they may have a long walk before catching a bus. Travellers are usually protective towards their children and do not like them away from home.
3. Reception at school. The staff at school, whether it be the headteacher, classteacher, secretary or dinner lady, can greatly influence the Traveller parents' and children's perceptions of school, as can happen with any house dwelling family. The parents of Traveller children will more than likely have faced rejection themselves by the education system as well as by other agencies and a fear of rejection for their children



may prejudice their attitude when faced with school. A positive response from school staff is necessary to facilitate good attendance and the learning process.

4. Parental attitudes. These may vary, often depending on the parents' own previous experience of education, if any. On one side there are demands that children should receive the same education as other children, as this statement from the Conference held by the Centre for Information and Advice on Educational Disadvantage implies: "Traveller representatives at the conference argued that the major educational objective was that children should attend ordinary schools."<sup>10</sup> The other side may view education much more narrowly and although parents may view formal education positively the basic skills of reading and writing are seen as the prime aim and the broader curriculum seen as irrelevant, also possibly as a threat to the Gypsy culture.

5. Economic. From a very early age Traveller children are expected to have an economic role within the family. The boys, from about the age of eleven, are expected to work with their dads and the girls are expected to look after younger brothers and sisters, taking on a domestic role.

This last factor, combined with many Traveller parents' fears of the negative influence of schools means that secondary attendance is usually very low. Many parents do not approve of mixed sex comprehensives, fearing also the influence of drugs and glue sniffing which they believe are prevalent in the system.

Attendance patterns vary throughout the country, affected by the above mentioned factors and seasonal movement. They vary with the different age groups, and are subject to casual absenteeism usually condoned by parents.

#### D.E.S. Response to the Educational Needs of Traveller Children

The H.M.I. Discussion Paper 'The Education of Travellers' Children', published in 1983 by the D.E.S. "in order to stimulate professional discussion",<sup>11</sup> was an attempt to promote good practice in the education of Traveller children and make

authorities more aware of the needs of the children. Between 1973 and 1983 seven D.E.S. courses were run by members of the Inspectorate. A D.E.S. course held in 1986 brought together over one hundred teachers, advisers, administrators, inspectors, welfare officers and Travellers. Another such course is planned for July 1988. The D.E.S. still see the need for separate courses specifically for Traveller education because of the specific issues concerning Traveller education which need to be addressed and taken on board by all L.E.A.s.

### Summary

As can be seen from looking at the national provision of education for Traveller children the services provided vary throughout the country. There is no set national policy for Traveller education only recommendations laid out for good practice in the H.M.I. Discussion Paper and reinforced by the Swann Report. Poor school attendance is a problem especially with secondary age Travellers and the link between adequate site provision improving access to education is again emphasised.

1. D.E.S. Children and Their Primary Schools (1967) known as Plowden Report.
2. Swann Report (1985).
3. H.M.I., Discussion Paper. The Education of Traveller's Children (1983).
4. Swann Report (1985).
5. Swann Report (1985) p.747.
6. C. Reiss. Education of Travelling Children (1975) p.22.
7. Plowden Report op.cit. p.589.
8. Buckland, Article. Education of Travelling Children Journal Trends in Education (1977).
9. Monica Taylor, Worlds Apart (1988) p.355.
10. H. Steyne & D. Derrick. The Education of Travellers' Children (1977) p.52.
11. H.M.I. Discussion Paper op.cit. inside cover.

EDUCATION PROVISION FOR TRAVELLER CHILDREN IN THE  
STUDY REGION

The Local Education Authorities in the Study Region were approached by letter asking them for the authority's policy on Traveller education and whether claims were made from the No Area Pool (Appendix 12). Out of the ten L.E.A.s only two did not reply and information about these two was gained from personal contact with teachers working in the area. These areas are indicated by asterisks.

Northumberland

Northumberland has three Gypsy Caravan Sites, one private and two council, the most recent and largest being at Lynemouth on the coast in the south of the county. The Education Committee in the county recognised that Traveller children "commonly require more teacher time and attention as individuals in school can generally be made available by schools within their usual resources." On 1st. January 1988 a support teacher for Traveller children was appointed to be deployed in Lynemouth First and Newbiggin Middle School. The teacher, as part of her role, is able to visit the site and make invaluable contact with the parents. A car allowance is payable and a car loan or lease from the County Council is available. The L.E.A. is claiming from the No Area Pool for the teacher and other appropriate costs. The council is also considering whether to provide transport from the site to the schools, and if implemented this would also be claimed from the No Area Pool. As yet no extra provision has been made at the other two sites but this may not be needed as they are well established and have a relatively settled population.

North Tyneside

This authority has an 'open door' policy, although not a written policy, whereby Traveller children have access to schools and education services on the same basis as any other children. Although acknowledging that there are at times Traveller children

in North Tyneside the numbers may be small and no special arrangements have so far been found necessary by the authority.

#### South Tyneside

The Borough Council has no set policy for the children of Travellers as they state that they have not found it necessary. They acknowledge that in the event of Traveller children attending the Borough's schools they would probably claim from the No Area Pool. There is a Fairground in South Shields but it is not a Travelling one, the workers living in static caravans and their children attending the local schools.

#### Sunderland

There are no Gypsy Caravan Sites in Sunderland but there is a wintering site for Fairground people at Houghton-le-Spring. The children from the site attend the local school.

#### Gateshead

A new Gypsy site opened in Gateshead in December 1987, replacing the old site which had been closed for over a year. Gateshead is now aware of a need for a policy on Traveller education in the Borough. A working group is being set up to formulate an agreed written policy to submit to members of the Council. At the present time (since January 1988) an unwritten policy of support for Traveller children in mainstream education is being followed. Finance for this support will be claimed from the No Area Pool.

#### Newcastle<sup>2</sup>

The primary school nearest to the Gypsy Site in Newcastle has recently appointed a new Headmaster who has been instrumental in the appointment of two 0.5 teachers on temporary contracts to work with Traveller children. The school has had as many as twenty seven Traveller children on roll and in February 1988 had eighteen on roll. There has previously been no extra help for Traveller children within this school. The Headmaster is now

investigating the use of the No Area Pool and is hoping to place information before the Education Committee in the hope of making the appointments of support teachers on a more permanent basis.

#### Cleveland

Cleveland has two official sites and a variable number of small unofficial sites. It has an established Traveller Education Service of two full time peripatetic teachers, of which the writer is one, working from a well resourced base. The teachers, resource base and running costs, for example, telephone, are funded through the No Area Pool.

Teachers visit official and unofficial sites to make useful liaison with parents and to encourage children into school. Support in mainstream school is given to Traveller children if they need it. In addition to the two full time teachers if a school has five or more Traveller children on their roll extra support is given on a sliding scale of 0.3 teacher for five children to 1.0 teacher for fifteen Traveller children. This extra support is reviewed half termly. The two peripatetic teachers may also occasionally teach on site or at their resource base if they feel the circumstances require it, whether the Travellers are to be moved on in a few days or the site they are on does not have easy access to school. As well as teaching and liaison work the two full time teachers attempt to break down the negative stereotype of Travellers often held by giving talks to schools and other relevant institutions. Culturally relevant material is also produced by the teachers. Two workers, a graphic artist and resource worker, who are employed and funded by the Manpower Services Commission to work with the Traveller Education Service and Multicultural Centre, also produce culturally relevant resource material.

It is hoped that a 0.5 Education Social Worker, to work specifically with Travellers, will shortly be appointed. This post will be No Area Pool funded.

A Working Party, chaired by a County Councillor, consisting of representatives from education, health, education social workers, housing, meets twice a year to discuss relevant issues.

#### Durham

In November 1987 there was a full H.M.I. inspection of the county, which included looking at the education provision for Traveller children. Prior to the inspection, and at the present time, the county operate an open-door policy whereby the parent is expected to present the child at school. In certain areas of the county where the education welfare service is most active the children may be encouraged into school by an officer. The Traveller child when in school is assessed and if found to be in need of support is allocated remedial help. In the past this has resulted in some schools having remedial groups consisting entirely of Traveller children.

The Durham Education Authority is now considering providing education support for Travellers which would be No Area Pool funded. It is also looking at the need to recognise the rich ethnic background of Travellers and acknowledge it as part of the wider ethnic curriculum. The input of the Education Welfare Service in conjunction with Social Services in the monitoring of school attendance is also being considered.

Durham, in the light of the H.M.I. inspection, sees the need for change and a more positive attitude to Traveller Education.

#### Humberside

Humberside uses the No Area Pool to support teachers for Travellers, teaching aides (auxiliaries) and their resources. The teachers used to be allocated to schools on a pro rata number basis but now they are allocated in response to the needs of the child. The teachers are on temporary contracts as are the teaching aides. The teachers for Travellers liaise with parents and schools and one teacher is the link between primary and secondary school. A Working Party consisting of the Professional

Assistant for Special Needs, headteachers and teachers meets regularly to assess the changing needs.

Pre-school children are catered for by on-site provision. There is a classroom on each of the two official sites. There is liaison between these units and the Heads of the Infant Schools to facilitate the children's move into mainstream school. These units are No Area Pool funded. The No Area Pool is used to fund transport of Traveller children when circumstances warrant it.

#### North Yorkshire\*

A survey of the educational provision for Travelling children in North Yorkshire was undertaken by the H.M.I. inspectors in February 1985 and the report, following the inspection, was published in 1987.<sup>2</sup> The report commends the L.E.A. for responding over the years to the Traveller children and their specific needs but it identified some areas of current practice which could be improved. These included the need for greater co-ordination between the agencies involved and the need to review the distribution of resources both of staff and materials. The use of advisory support was recommended so that schools could obtain guidance concerning all aspects of admissions and records and the ethnic minority status of Travellers could be recognised in teaching approaches and materials.

The appointment of a peripatetic teacher for Travellers to act as a co-ordinator, as recommended by the Report, was implemented in September 1987. The teacher is responsible for co-ordination of staff, resources and in-service training. The full role of the teacher has still to be identified and as yet there is no written job description of county policy.

The No Area Pool is to fund support teachers and resources. The fund has been used for transport of Traveller children when necessary.

## Summary

As can be seen from the reports on the L.E.A.s in the Study Area responses to the educational needs of Traveller children are as numerous as the areas covered. Responses, which may be L.E.A. directed or have developed from headteachers, working with Traveller children, who felt that agitating for better resources, are all aimed at providing a better service for Traveller children. Many of the responses are still in a very embryonic stage, the authorities only recently being aware of the use of the No Area Pool for funding Traveller education. Three of the L.E.A.s in the study region state that they very rarely have Travellers in their area and if they do the child has equal opportunity to attend school as any other child. There are no key persons for Traveller education in these authorities and they operate an open door policy which has been shown by both the H.M.I. Discussion Paper and the Swann Report to be inadequate.

One authority has recently appointed a teacher to support Travellers in school at the instigation of the Headmaster and the use of the No Area Pool funding for this is being investigated. Support teachers for Travellers, in two L.E.A.s were appointed in January 1988 and these will be No Area Pool funded. These two authorities are monitoring the situation with a view to further developing their services is necessary. An education authority, which recently had an H.M.I. inspection has reassessed its open door policy and sees the need for more positive action. It is currently holding discussions (Feb. 1988) to formulate a policy. The authority will make use of No Area Pool funding.

Of the three authorities who have a more established response to Traveller education and use the No Area Pool funding for many projects, the situation is not static. The Traveller population is itself changeable and the services themselves that provide education for Travellers have to be flexible to meet these variable needs. As more sites for Travellers are built, patterns change, Travellers may become less nomadic, which facilitates access to education. In the three L.E.A.s where a good pattern of primary education and support is established, then the



services place more emphasis on developing pre-school and secondary education, as well as the important work of in-service training of staff who have Traveller children in their schools and work in school where there are no Traveller children but where there is need for a wider multi-cultural education.

Traveller education, as has been shown, is not standing still in the study region. Each year sees more recognition of the needs of Traveller children and this can only be to the benefit of the children given the responses we are now seeing in the study region.

1. Correspondence from Assistant Director of Special Needs Dec. 1987.
2. D.E.S. Report by H.M. Inspectors. A Survey of the Educational Provision for Travelling Children in North Yorkshire. (1987).

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO SCHOOLS ACCEPTING  
TRAVELLER CHILDREN IN THE STUDY REGION

Methodology

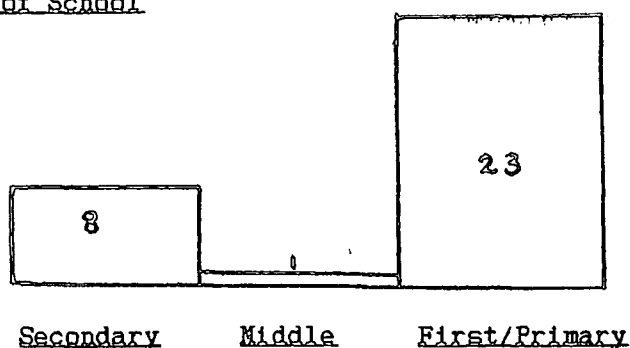
The Questionnaires (see Appendix 13) were sent to schools in the following L.E.A.s; Northumberland, Newcastle, Gateshead, Durham, Humberside, Cleveland and N. Yorkshire, where it was known that Traveller children attend. None were therefore sent to North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland where there are no Gypsy sites. Of the forty questionnaires distributed thirty two were returned completed (80%). The teachers and Headteachers who completed the questionnaires were not asked their names or name of the school but their status in school and the type of school. This was to preserve confidentiality and to encourage open answers.

Aim

The aim of the questionnaire was to ascertain how the teachers perceive the Traveller children and whether the children are seen as an asset to the school.

Results

Type of School



The predominance of questionnaires received from primary schools reflects both the proportion sent and the pattern of school attendance of Traveller children. Twelve questionnaires were sent to secondary schools, twenty seven to primary schools and one to a middle school.

### Number of Travellers in School

The number of Traveller children from questionnaire returns in primary and First school ranged from two to thirty as a maximum. Eight of those have had twenty plus maximum children in attendance at any once time.

The Middle School has had a maximum seven children but at the time of the survey had none on their roll.

The Comprehensive schools number on roll ranged from none to sixteen. It must be noted that it is unusual for a Comprehensive school to have as many as sixteen children on roll. The Comprehensive school with 16 on roll may have strong links with the primary school where there has been a good pattern of attendance and positive experience or the Traveller parents see the relevance of the curriculum offered to their children. Alternatively the Education Welfare Service may have a strong policy of enforcement, but in such cases many Travellers would have moved on rather than face prosecution.

### Contact with Parents

In all types of school it was found that Traveller parents supported school functions only occasionally and in the majority of cases not at all.

It was encouraging to see that the vast majority of Traveller parents made contact with the school if there were any problems.

Where there were peripatetic teachers of Travellers and liaison teachers good contact was maintained with the Travellers on site visits.

### Attitude to Work

The question 'Do you find the children have a positive attitude to work? Answer Yes or No' was in retrospect not the correct question to ask. Only 2 answered No and 14 Yes. 16 of those

answering the questionnaire answered Yes and No, often they found there was no direct answer depending on the individual child. It would have been better to offer more diverse categories of response, such as a gender split or an age category.

#### How the children's positive attitude to work is shown

The positive attitude of the children to their work was characterised by their enthusiasm which was highlighted in the responses by the majority. This enthusiasm was demonstrated in many ways, by their co-operativeness, keenness to ask questions and willingness to discuss matters was matched by their positive reaction to praise received.

#### How the children's negative attitude to work is shown

Response such as 'Don't turn up' (Primary teacher) and 'frequent absences' (Secondary support teacher) highlight the extreme negative reaction to work as interpreted by the teachers. If in school, the pupil's negative response to work was in the main recorded as disruptive behaviour, this was qualified by one Primary Headteacher as 'probably it was an unsuitable task' Surliness, stubbornness, refusal to communicate with teachers, were all expressions of the pupils' negative attitudes.

#### Problems in regard to the children

Only 2 of those completing the questionnaire stated that they had no problems in regard to academic attainment, behaviour and ability to learn of the children. The majority (30) had problems of varying degrees and the types of difficulties they faced are referred to below.

##### a) Academic Attainment

All the respondents who found problems acknowledged that there was a wide range of ability. The children's academic achievements are generally low, especially in literacy. One secondary teacher highlighted the lack of relevant material

suitable for older illiterate children. The lack of motivation to develop beyond a simple mastering of basic skills and lack of confidence in the Traveller children themselves were also quoted as reasons for lack of academic achievement, although some made reference to the fact that the lack of the necessary language and experiences in infancy caused the problems. The children were classed by a minority as being 'slow learners' or of 'limited ability'.

b) Behaviour

Replies on behaviour varied from 'normal' to 'naughty in all areas'. The word 'aggressive' was used by a number of teachers and this was shown by the use of bad language to staff, dinner supervisors, towards each other and to other children. The dinner supervisors were picked out by many teachers as a group from which the Travellers would not accept authority. The Traveller children were referred to as 'untamed' in two responses from different areas. Prejudice from peer groups which resulted in name calling was common on both sides.

One primary school headteacher in his comments on behaviour said, 'Lying seems to be part of their lifestyle,' but was the only respondent to state this.

c) Ability to learn

Virtually all the responses referred to the short concentration span of Traveller children, the children's span being shorter than others in mainstream education. Two teachers referred to the Travellers' ability as limited and that 'some of the children definitely seem to be retarded.' Only one teacher when referring to the ability to learn acknowledged this varied but that as a general rule they (Traveller children) were quick to learn if interested/motivated.

d) Any other problems

These were varied but could be roughly placed into four categories, namely, attendance, prejudice, social and taboos.

i) Attendance. Poor and somewhat erratic attendance, which in some cases was felt could be ameliorated by the provision of transport, caused resentment in some teachers as the children were seen to be 'getting away with it' (Secondary support teacher). They felt that the lack of enforcement was a bad model for other children.

ii) Prejudice. One primary school teacher acknowledged his own prejudice and so found it difficult to balance between positive and negative discrimination towards the children. Local prejudice by which parents of other children blamed Travellers for head lice and stealing had to be faced in some schools. The Traveller children often isolating themselves as a group at break time, as a protective unit, possibly encouraged prejudice from their peers. The negative attitude of some Traveller parents in isolated cases caused concern.

iii) Social. The use of four letter words and other expletives in school, lack of toilet and other social training was a cause of concern to some teachers.

iv) Taboos. Attitudes of some pupils to discussing topics in Biology related to sex and changing publicly for P.E. caused lack of understanding in some instances between pupils and staff.

Attributes children bring to school

Approximately 22 of the responses in the section of the questionnaire found that the cultural dimension the Travellers brought to school was an asset, helping the other children to be more aware of differing roots. In some this brought out the positive caring side, children wanting to help the Traveller pupils face new situations.

Inquisitiveness, overriding freshness, spontaneity and a 'slightly different outlook on life which is stimulating' (Primary Head), were all attributes teachers welcomed. Knowledge of wildlife,

artistic talent, buying and selling were mentioned in responses and were obviously regarded as positive.

On the other hand one primary school headteacher stated "some of these children are quite biddable and 'normal' but I have not found them to be in the 'asset' category."

#### Children's Interests

Many of the teachers who responded said the interests of Traveller children were similar to those of other children. Where specific interests were named television, videos, nature (including dogs, horses and pigeons), money and art and craft were those most frequently mentioned.

"Don't seem to have any particular interest except one family has an interest in causing trouble if you can call this an interest" and "self interest" were comments from two primary head teachers from different areas. In answer to this question teachers were prepared to use the question to express their negative views.

#### Special Education Provision

The majority of the schools had extra educational provision for Traveller pupils. These varied throughout the study region. Peripatetic teachers employed specifically for Traveller children in one area, other schools had extra teaching support allocated to them for Travellers and in some schools the children received remedial support provided by the Special Needs Department. One area provided a teaching aide to help with the welfare of the Traveller children in the classroom, at breaks and at lunchtime. Only one respondent had no specific educational provision for the Traveller children.

#### Cultural Materials

Schools which have recently been visited by the H.M.I. with responsibility for Travellers have ordered culturally relevant books for the school library and use of staff. Where peripatetic

teachers of Travellers and support teachers are employed special reading books may be used, for example, Cleveland Reading Scheme and West Midlands Reading Scheme.

Some teachers felt that the children and parents "do not want to share their culture with us" and that the children "want to do and use the things other children do" (primary support teachers). The general feeling in some areas of "now that the Travellers are settled their culture has become diluted" and the need for recognition of Traveller culture does not arise. As one Special Needs teacher said there was no need to include Traveller culture, "now that the children have been assimilated into other groups." One primary head teacher felt that it was a waste of resources to spend money on culturally relevant material for children who may be in school for only a short period of time and he felt that in his opinion only one of the families in school could be classed as real Travellers. He gave no basis on which he made this judgement.

#### Additional Comments

Very few responded in this section of the Questionnaire but those who did had very wide ranging comments. In the educational field more work was seen to be necessary with the under fives. Transport as a means of improving attendance was seen as a priority. One primary school deputy head saw it as "a moral duty to welcome all children into our school."

One Special Needs teacher to illustrate the change in culture as she saw it wrote "the video certainly comes before the Crown Derby now!" There was obvious welcome expressed by a primary school head, "they are more aware of what we expect in school and make more effort to conform to school requirement," illustrating the teacher's desire for the children to conform

#### Summary

The responses from the teachers reflect, in some part, the individuality of the children in their care. It must be noted



however that many teachers responding may have had little experience of teaching Traveller children and this may be reflected in their replies. It is encouraging that the majority of teachers recognised the enthusiasm of the Traveller children as being the all important key to their learning. Poor attendance of some of the Traveller children was obviously resented by some of the teachers and would unfortunately reflect in their attitude to the children when in school. Positive moves in some areas could be made to improve attendance by fostering links between parents and schools, encouraging parents into school and by providing transport from site to school. This transport could be 100% refundable from the No Area Pool if applied for by the L.E.A..

The children's negative attitude to work may well reflect the unsuitability of the curriculum, as mentioned in the section on Education provision in England and it is to be hoped that the more relevant the curriculum, the more the pupils' interest will be stimulated and problems in behaviour diminish. Teachers may overlook the fact that some Traveller children in their care may have had very little school experience and so will not have the history of conditioning to conform which house dwelling children, who started school at five, may have.

Almost all the teachers found problems in at least one area of working with Traveller children. Poor attainment in literacy may be linked to numerous factors, poor attendance due to mobility or lack of enforcement, lack of early learning skills, illiterate parents, no reading material in the home and unsuitable curriculum at school. It was disturbing to find that some teachers regarded the Traveller children as of low academic ability. If the expectation of the teacher is low then the possibility of the child achieving academic success is itself limited. In P. Shine's' survey of twelve head teachers of schools which accept Traveller children, two thought of Traveller children as children with Special Educational Needs, one as being from an ethnic minority and the remaining nine saw them as children from an ethnic minority with Special Education Needs.

The survey did not specifically ask if the heads regard Traveller children to be of low academic ability but the implication is there.

Prejudice from teachers, peer groups and dinner supervisors within schools, often based on myth or lack of accurate information, inhibit the learning process. Travellers themselves may have misconceptions about school and to protect themselves against what they see as a threat they may keep very close to each other as a group during breaks. This in itself may cause prejudice. Accurate information, suitable literature and improved relationships through home/school liaison should help to alleviate this problem.

The positive attitude from many of the teachers on the cultural dimension which the Traveller children bring to school is most encouraging. The spontaneity coupled with enthusiasm brings a freshness into schools and as one primary head teacher commented, "it makes me reflect on what we do in schools."

Comments from teachers when asked whether cultural material was used in school reflected the assimilation process which can be the policy in some schools. In reply to the question whether cultural material is used in school answers which reflected this policy were "No, we always try to teach the children regardless of background", "No, since settled Traveller culture has become diluted." Further references to Traveller children, "they try very hard to fit in" (specialist teacher) and "now that the children have been assimilated" (special needs teacher) and "make more effort to conform to school requirements", all support the hypothesis, 'Teachers regard assimilation of Traveller's children as a positive step in their education'.

1. P. Shine. Traveller Education - How it is seen by Teachers and Travellers (1987). Unpublished dissertation for B.Ed. Manchester Polytechnic.

## TRAVELLERS IN CLEVELAND COUNTY

It was felt by the writer that an in depth report of the different Traveller groups which resort to the county would be appropriate because all the interviews with parents (see following section) took place within the county.

The south bank of the Tees, where a thriving steel industry grew and flourished at the turn of the century, developed its own group of urban Travellers. Their livelihood is linked to the urban economy and population. Scrap metal dealing is a recognised occupation amongst urban Gypsies and involves skills in identifying different metals, dismantling and isolating the most saleable items. It also requires specially developed skills both to acquire the metals and to sell to dealers. The majority of the adults have not been to school, or if so only for a limited time, which means many of them are illiterate. To be successful they have had to develop memory for such things as instructions, routes, places, prices.

With the decline of the steel industry, designation and site restrictions, economic survival of the Gypsies has become more difficult in this situation. The growth of unemployment amongst gorgios is also reflected in the number of Travellers who have to rely on the D.H.S.S. to pay the rent.

The majority of South Tees Travellers now rely on D.H.S.S. payments but may carry on a little scrap metal dealing "on the side". The women who used to hawk lace, pegs, paper flowers etc. round the houses to supplement the family income no longer have the economic necessity to do this, since a regular, if small income is received through social security.

Strawberry picking in the York area for two to three weeks in June is for many of the South Tees Travellers their summer break. The children earn pocket money which they tend to save to spend at the fairs. For all the family it is a break from industrial Teesside to a more rural setting. Although they are working it is still looked on as somewhat of a holiday.

As in most areas where there are Travellers there tend to be large family groupings and names which are predominant. In the South Tees area familiar surnames are Smith, White, Farrow, Bird and Wardle.

The Travellers north of the River Tees, who stay semi-permanently on the Stockton side, tend to be wealthier than those Travellers who are south of the river. They have a multiplicity of occupations, dealing in scrap, new farm gates, horses, seasonal trades, for example, christmas trees and some of the women hawk new linen usually using vans and calling door to door. As Judith Okley stated in her book, "The Traveller Gypsies", "...the wealthiest most successful families were those with a greater spread of occupations than the poorer ones." This is certainly reflected on Teesside when looking at Travellers on the two official sites, north and south of the river.

Those Travellers on the official sites north of the River Tees tend to move off the site for the fairs, notably Appleby in Cumbria (the large horse fair), Stokesley and Yarm Fairs, two local fairs. These movements are largely for social reasons, it being an opportunity to meet relatives and friends in a relaxed situation.

'Local' Travellers make up about fifty percent of Travellers on the official site north of the river. The remainder of the pitches may be occupied by more mobile Travellers. They may be 'tarmacers' so when they have worked an area they need to move on to find more work. Alternatively they may be dealing in antique furniture, or new three piece suites, selling on the residential estates. On the whole these tend to be the long-distance Irish Travellers who travel in large groups. These Travellers are distinct from the local families in the sense that there is little social interaction between the two groups and usually their economic interests differ. In fact there is often open hostility between the groups. The Irish Travellers have a reputation amongst the 'local' Travellers of being dirty and hot-tempered.

The 'local' Travellers were "swamped" by a large group of long distance Irish Travellers in the winter of 1985/86 and the official site became very overcrowded. In the Autumn of 1986 there was a notable increase of 'local' Travellers on the official site, most of them relatives of those who were already on the site, so that if the long distance Travellers arrived to "over-winter" there would be no space for them. Thus the 'local' Travellers have found, they hope, at least a temporary solution to what they regard as an "Irish problem".

Familiar surnames of Travellers on the official site north of the River Tees are Tyers, Lowther, Harker and Teasdale.

Apart from the two official sites in Cleveland, one north and one south of the River Tees, there are small pockets of Travellers who "pull-on" unofficial sites. These sites may be where Travellers have traditionally pulled-on, be it a country lane or near the centre of the town, but over the last two years the number of regular unofficial sites of Travellers has markedly decreased. Travellers on the unofficial sites are generally very transitory, staying anything from a few days to a few weeks, and just passing through the region. Their length of stay will depend on a number of factors. If the site is in an obvious position, for example, a public car park or near houses, then there are usually numerous complaints and the authorities act swiftly to move them. If the site is on a country lane or tucked away unobtrusively on an industrial estate and not thought to be causing an obvious nuisance then they may be left undisturbed for a longer period. These Travellers may be passing through on their way to fairs, to visit relatives, to take part in seasonal work, for example, fruit picking, or have short stay occupations like tarmaccing.

Just before the Yarm Fair (October 1986) a group of seven trailers "pulled-on" ground just outside the official site north of the river. They burned off cable, which is now illegal because of the toxic fumes produced and they were soon visited by environmental health officers and the police. Before the legal



procedure of eviction could be completed the Travellers had completed their work and moved on to the fair.

There are also small groups of Travellers, even individual families, who move from unofficial site to unofficial site within the Cleveland boundary. These, in some cases, wish to remain independent of the state system and unless they received D.H.S.S. payments they couldn't afford to pay the rent on the official sites and provide food for their families. The site restrictions tend to take away the Travellers' ability to make a living since no work is provided and there is only limited space for storing goods, and this is often at the discretion of the site warden.

A family in Cleveland who are frequently harassed from unofficial site to unofficial site refuse to go on an official site because of the site restrictions. They own three trailers, a lorry and a car and therefore for that number of vehicles they would have to rent two pitches. Even if they applied for social security because of the ages of their children the rent would only be paid for one pitch. The father of the family deals in scrap and there would be no room for him to carry on with his work on the site.

Another small group of Travellers of Irish origin consisting of three families and usually five or six trailers, travels within the Cleveland area. They have not been accepted on the official sites because of their anti-social behaviour. The Council would have let them on the site but the Travellers already on the site have said that they would refuse to pay their rents if such an element were allowed on the site and some have actually threatened physical violence to prevent them coming on to an official site.

There is also a small number of former house dwellers who have moved into trailers, usually because they have been unable to cope in a house and run into debt. They feel that life in a trailer will be cheaper, and in some cases that they will be less easy to trace. These families tend to find it difficult to cope in a trailer whether it is on official or unofficial site. Their

trailers are often dirty inside and out and rubbish accumulates on the surrounding area. This living in "filth" alienates them from the regular Travellers. It is from this category of Travellers, the former house dwellers, that the writer has come across her only case of suspected non-accidental injury. Travellers who were born to travelling place great value on the child within the family and on cleanliness, even in the most difficult of situations.

Some house dwellers who have become Travellers do adjust to the way of life and become accepted. In one case a family with three children, aged five to nine, recently moved out of a house into a trailer. The grandparents were Travellers but the head of the household was born in a house and had always lived in one until he felt the urge to travel. His wife was born and brought up a house dweller and apart from her connection by marriage had no other experience of Travellers. At first they were on an unofficial site for two or three months and then moved onto an official site. They have been accepted to an extent by the Travelling community because of his family connections and her willingness to accept and learn about the Traveller way of life.

So Cleveland, although a small county, has an almost complete spectrum of Travellers from poor to wealthy, both English and Irish. The Scottish Tinkler is the only clearly definable group of Travellers that rarely appears in Cleveland. The romantic stereotype of colourful people in both dress and music, bow top wagons pulled by horses is not often seen. Dark haired, swarthy skinned Travellers are rare; more common are the fair haired, blue eyed Travellers. In fact the Travellers of today cannot be identified by physical appearance or dress and rarely by speech unless they want to be, as different from any other member of the community.

1. Judith Okely, The Traveller-Gypsies (1983) p.56.

## RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS OF TRAVELLER CHILDREN

### Methodology

Interviews were conducted with ten Traveller families all known to the interviewer for between one and four years and who were residing in the County of Cleveland at the time of the interviews. The interviews were carried out within the Travellers' homes and either were recorded (transcript taken later) or answers were taken directly onto the interview sheet (see Appendix 14). Since the interviews took place in the home environment there were inevitable interruptions from people calling or from younger members of the family but this did not materially affect the interviews. All the interviews were carried out with the mother of the family. This was not intentional but the interviewer's contact with the family was mainly with the mother and children because education is seen by many Travellers as part of the woman's role. One father left the trailer while the interview took place, returning as soon as he could see it was finished, saying, "the wife sees to that," (referring to schools).

Of the ten interviews undertaken five were carried out on official sites, four on unofficial sites (one family having just moved from an official site, was waiting to be housed) and one with a housed Traveller family.

The names of the parents and children have not been used in this script to assure anonymity.

### Aim

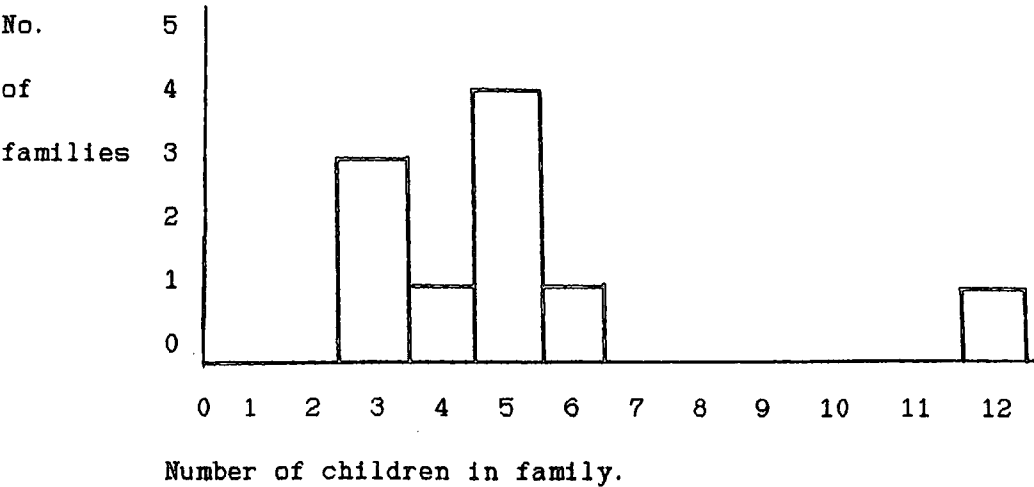
The aim of the interviews was to try and establish whether the Travellers' own experience of education, or lack of it, was reflected in what they want for their own children.



Table 7: Type of accommodation, size of family and ages of children of families interviewed.

Accom.	Int. No.	No. of children	Ages of children in family				
Off. Site	1	5	15	14	11	8	6
Unoff. Site	2	5	7	6	5	3	1
Unoff. Site	3	5	15	14	13	8	7
Off. Site	4	3	15	12	11		
House	5	3	12 (2 over school age)				
Off. Site	6	12	15	13	12	11	
			(8 over school age)				
Unoff. Site	7	3	11	9			
			(1 over school age)				
Unoff. Site	8	5	14	12	8	5	2
Off. Site	9	6	12	9	7		
			(3 over school age)				
Off. Site	10	4	12	8	7	5	

Figure viii: Bar Chart to show the number of children per family.

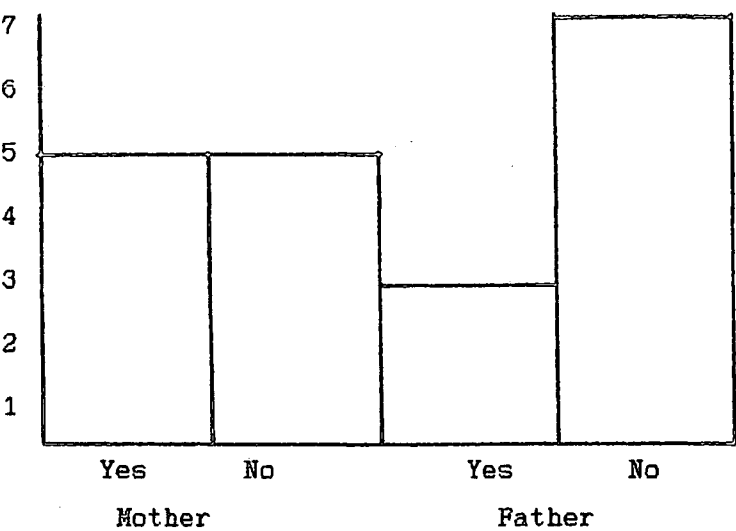


All the families interviewed had more than the national average of 1.8 children per family, and at the time of the interviews at least two of the mothers were known to be pregnant.

The following results of the interviews are shown by summarising the responses to each question, where appropriate.

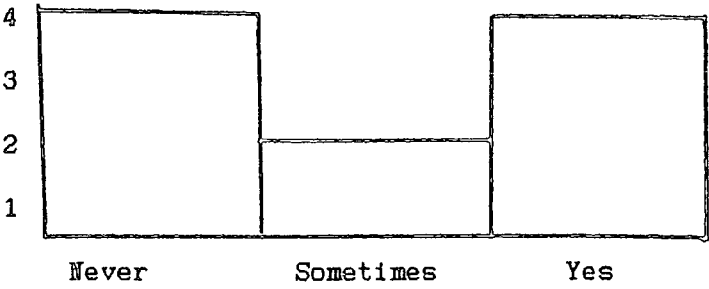
Could your parents read and write

Figure ix: Bar Chart to show whether parents of those interviewed could read and write.



The results of the question show that half of the mothers of those interviewed could read and write and half could not. There were only three of the fathers who could read and write and seven who could not. Although the question was asked, "Could your parents read and write?", there was no indication as to what standard they had reached where the answer was yes. The ability to write one's name, in the eyes of some Travellers warrants the answer 'yes'.

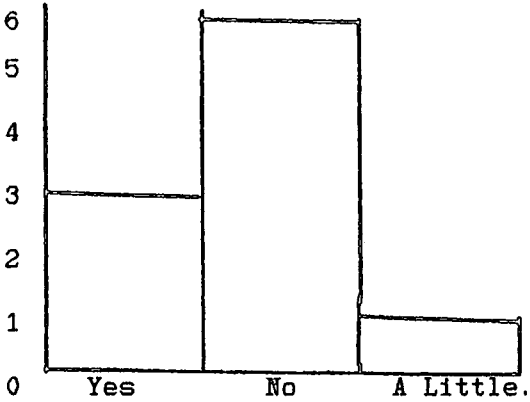
Figure x: Bar Chart to show the school attendance of those interviewed.



Of the ten mothers interviewed four had never attended school. Two answered "not a lot", "odd times" and four answered yes. Of the four who answered yes one went to school only until she was twelve and that was only "half and half" because she was travelling. Another only went to school in the winter months and didn't attend after the age of eleven. The third stayed at home after the age twelve or thirteen to help her mother. The fourth mother in this group had been brought up in a house and had attended school regularly. She only moved into a trailer a few years after she was married to another house dweller and had been living in a trailer for twelve years.

All the mothers, except one, had no, or very limited, experience of school. Such experience as there was related mainly to the early years before twelve and was often irregular. This pattern of education is reflected by many of the Travellers the writer has come into contact with in the course of her work.

Figure xi: Bar Chart to show whether those interviewed could read or write.



Of the ten interviewed three said they could read and write; two of these had spent long periods in a house, but six said they could not read and write, though all had learnt to sign their name. The other mother answered "half and half" in answer to the question. To the writer's knowledge she can write her name and has limited reading skills, is unable to fill in forms unaided but can print in capital letters such items as shopping lists for her daughter. Of the ten Traveller mothers interviewed 3 said they were literate, six said they were not literate and one claimed to be partially literate. Compared with their own parents where eight said they were literate and ten not, the situation has changed very little from one generation to the next. As has been said earlier no overall conclusion can be drawn from these figures because of the small sample and the fact that it was not possible to test the level of literacy.

#### Those Who Attended School

Of the six who attended school three felt that the teachers had treated them like the other children. Two of these had spent their childhood in houses, and the third's background was not revealed. Of the other three one couldn't remember, another thought they treated her all right but they didn't give her work she could do. She had to sit all the tests and so had to sit for hours at a time with a blank piece of paper in front of her because she couldn't read and write. Her school reports read 0 0 0. The sixth Traveller said the teachers knew she was a Traveller and they never bothered with her much, "but I still felt out of place" (Int. 3).

Five of the six mothers felt that the children at school treated them the same as other children, but the sixth felt she was the odd one out and kept getting "stared at" (Int. 2).

Subjects which the Travellers enjoyed most at school were, in order of priority, painting or drawing, nature, reading, sums and history. Only one Traveller enjoyed "nothin" (Int. 3) at school and admitted to never having liked school at all.

### Those Who Did Not Attend School

Of the four mothers who did not attend school all said that they would have liked the opportunity to have attended school but they were prevented through travelling. "I would have liked to but there never was no places. You was always moved on off a place" (Int. 4).

### Children's Educational Experience

Most families could not be put into any firm category of school attendance so the families for this section will be treated individually.

#### Interview 1. Ages of children:- 15, 14, 11, 8, 6 (Official Site)

The three youngest children attend primary school but have missed a lot of schooling because they were travelling. The two eldest boys have only attended school for about two months in their lives. The fifteen year old would be "too embarrassed now" and the fourteen year old had basic literacy lessons with a teacher of Travellers twice a week.

In reply to the question, "Do you want your children to attend school?" "If they're good enough, I hope so, depends if we're here or not."

#### Interview 2. Ages of children :- 7, 6, 5, 3, 1 (Unofficial Site)

The three eldest children attend school and the three year old is due to start at the nursery. Attendance has been regular because transport has been provided. The mother could see no objection to their attending secondary school but it depended where they were.

#### Interview 3. Ages of children:- 15, 14, 13, 8, 7 (Unofficial Site)

The eight and seven year old attend primary school. They have only recently started, having been travelling. The thirteen year old girl has started secondary school part time, and it is hoped that within a few weeks this will be full time, when she has

adjusted to the size of the building and built relationships with other pupils and staff. The fifteen and fourteen year old boys have virtually no school experience. They are attending a centre for basic literacy skills and are about to join a 'links course' at the local college of further education to do fabrication and welding half a day a week. The mother anticipates their being housed in the very near future and therefore feels the three youngest ones will "have a go" at secondary education.

Interview 4. Ages of children:- 15, 12, 11 (Official Site)

All the children attend school. The eldest is at a residential school for the physically disabled and comes home for the holidays and some weekends. As regards the school leaving age the mother said, "I'd like them to go 'til they're 16 'cos I never 'ad no education."

Interview 5. Ages of children:- 12, and 2 over school age  
(house)

All the children attended school. The eldest until he was 12, the middle one until she was twelve and the youngest one until he was eleven. Th eldest one was taken out of school, "because his name was H.... (a recognised Gypsy name) they (the other lads) used to be always challenging him to fight." The girl was taken out of school because the High Schools were "bad schools - too dirty goings on - filthy ways.... I just wanted her to be my way, nice, clean, old fashioned." The youngest boy was attacked by a boy who attended the secondary school, spat on, his trousers pulled down, "so you see it was no use him going there. He's learning his dad's business (scrap dealing), he'll make good not like a lot of those when they leave school." He is receiving home tuition.

Interview 6. Ages of children:- 8 over school age, 15, 13, 12,  
11 (Official Site)

The eleven and twelve year old attend primary school. The twelve year old has been kept on at primary school because her first school experience was only when she was ten plus. The two older children attend secondary school part time when one of the teachers of Travellers takes them. "They only go to the big

school when the teacher takes them, it's too big and too far, I wouldn't let them go on their own."

Interview 7. Ages of children:- 1 over school age, 11, 9

(Unofficial Site)

The youngest children do not attend school because the parents are unofficially parked, waiting to be allocated a house, and do not want their children to chop and change schools. One of the teachers of Travellers supplies them with books and tuition and the parents help them as well, both being literate. When settled in a house they see no reason for the children not to attend secondary school, but hope that the eleven year old would be allowed to stay an extra year at primary school because he had missed a lot of schooling.

Interview 8. Ages of children:- 14, 12, 8, 5, 2 (Unofficial

Site)

The children were not attending school at the time of the interview. They have attended schools in the county at various times, but also frequently move out of the county. They are usually unofficially parked and the mother did not like the local school of the area in which they were stopping at the time of the interview. Although she did not articulate her reasons it was implicit that it was because of the school's large Asian population. They were due to move very shortly. Work and tuition for them has been provided by the peripatetic teacher of Travellers. The mother and twelve year old girl help the others with their school work as they can both read and write proficiently.

The mother does not like the idea of her children going to secondary school as she regards them "as not good places, too much swearing and carrying on." The eldest boy works with his father most of the time dealing in scrap.

Interview 9. Ages of children:- 3 over school age, 12, 9, 7

(Official Site)

The children all attend primary school. Two have been statemented and are definitely in the special need category and

attend a school for children with learning difficulties. The twelve year old has been allowed to stay on at his mainstream primary school to compensate for formal education missed through travelling. He is expected to start secondary school shortly and his mother is very keen for him to continue his education if they are in the area.

Interview 10. Ages of children:- 12, 8, 7, 5 (Official Site)

The three youngest children attend primary school regularly. The mother will not let the twelve year old girl attend secondary school because it is such a long distance from the site. At the time of the interview the girl was receiving tuition from the peripatetic teacher of Travellers but it is hoped that if they stay in the area an education pattern may be established at the secondary school.

The most important subjects at school

The most important subjects for the children to learn in school, in the parents' opinion are reading, followed closely by writing, and then sums. ("reckoning up" Int. 1)

The Children's Experience of School

When the children are attending school seven out of ten of the mothers felt that the teachers treated them as other children, one with the proviso that if "they didn't she'd be up" (Int. 8). Of the remaining three, Int. 3 was unsure and replied "You don't know do you?". Int. 1 had problems when her children first started school and felt that the teachers were picking on them. Additionally there was name calling by the other children. The mother went to school to talk to the teachers and to explain the problems and she felt that after this things improved. The Headmaster. Int. 5, felt, picked on her son and punished him more harshly than his peers.

All the mothers felt that their children enjoyed school, four felt that they enjoyed everything and couldn't identify anything specific. Of the others nature, drawing, maths and sport were



identified as enjoyable school activities. This is a similar list to that enjoyed by the mothers. It may be the mothers' reflecting what they enjoyed at school and assuming that their children enjoy similar subjects. Maths is the exception on this list. It may be that mothers feel that their sons enjoy maths, reinforcing the stereotype that maths is a boys' subject, but this is only conjecture.

Should the history of Travellers, the Romany language and customs be taught to Traveller children?

In all three areas the answer was emphatically no. They felt, some more strongly than others, that what the Traveller children learnt of their history, language or customs should come from the family. "They know our ways and goings on without being taught" (Int. 2), "I think that automatically they learn it from their parents" (Int. 5). One mother made the point that "I've only got boys and they've got to learn the things from their father" (Int. 4).

Should other children in school learn about the ways of Travellers?

Three of the replies were against anything about Travellers being taught to other children in school. Int. 7 thought that it would make them notice Travellers more but Int. 5 and Int. 8 felt that the Travellers' life was very private and they wanted to keep it that way.

Three of those interviewed were indifferent to the question and thought that the other children could learn about it if they wanted to, "we can't stop them" (Int. 9) and "I suppose so, they might find it interesting" (Int. 2).

The remaining four thought that teaching other children about Travellers was a positive way in which discrimination against Travellers could be countered. The importance of the cleanliness of Travellers they felt ought to be stressed because some "Kids generally say mucky Gypsies, I mean what do they know what we are

or aren't. I don't know what their homes are like, they don't know what our homes are like" (Int. 1). Children in schools being taught to "see what Gypsies do and do come from" (Int. 4) will give the Traveller children the chance "to be proud, luv." (Int. 4) All the mothers appeared to feel that their culture would be of no interest to the gorgio community.

### Summary

The Traveller mothers who were interviewed were very keen to answer questions and appeared pleased that someone was asking their opinions and thought them of value. It is difficult to assess whether any of the answers given were to please the interviewer, believing that it was what she wanted to hear. Four of the mothers had never attended school but all of them had put their children in school, recognising the benefits for their children if they could read and write, and not because they were forced into the situation.

Although the sample of Travellers interviewed was small, the proportion living on official sites, unofficial sites and housed reflects the situation in Cleveland County.

The problem of secondary school attendance is highlighted, there being a variety of reasons for irregular or non-attendance including distance from school, what the schools are like, the apparent irrelevance of the curriculum and the fact that the children are expected to become part of the family economic unit at the age of eleven or twelve, being given. Apart from the problems concerning secondary school attendance it is mobility and the consequent interruption in school attendance which affects the group interviewed. These findings are similar to those made by Pat Shine in his research in 1987<sup>1</sup> and in earlier publications by C. Reiss<sup>2</sup> and the 1983 H.M.I. Discussion Paper<sup>3</sup> 'The Education of Traveller's Children' where seasonal absence is highlighted as well as post-secondary attendance.

Prejudice from teachers or other children was not a major problem for Traveller children in schools. The fact that many of the

children are in schools which have had Travellers for many years and that there are peripatetic teachers of Travellers to overcome any problems may have eased the situation.

Traveller culture, language and history is seen to be very important to the Travellers and they see it as very much an area where they and not gorgios should be the teachers. They want to teach the children by example, telling stories of previous generations and by using what form of language they wish, whether Anglo-Romani, English or Shelta to pass on their inheritance.

If the teaching about Travellers in schools is to take place, accurate information should be used and great care taken to avoid stereotyping, or isolating them as a topic. Travellers are not isolated from society but are by necessity interdependent with it in order to survive.

The Traveller may feel at times isolated, neglected and rejected by gorgio society but those interviewed and other Travellers known to the writer would not want to change who or what they are.

One of those interviewed encapsulates this point:-

"I've taught my kids never to be ashamed of what they are. Tell them what you are and you're proud of it. You've been born a Traveller, You always will be a Traveller and you're proud of it." (Int. 1)

The Situation of the ten families interviewed, six weeks after the original interviews took place.

#### Family No. 1

The family moved out of the county shortly after the interview and are unofficially parked. None of the children are attending school now whereas the three youngest had been attending primary school. Work had been sent to the family, at their request, from

the teacher of Travellers, via a relative who is on a permanent site in Cleveland County.

Family No. 2

The family situation where the three eldest children attend school has remained the same, though an eviction notice has been obtained by the owner of the land where they are unofficially parked. This may affect what has been very good school attendance by the children.

Family No. 3

The family is now housed and the eight and seven year old are still attending the same primary school as they were housed in the area where they were unofficially parked. The thirteen year old girl who was attending secondary school part time went to stay with relatives for four weeks and had to start adjusting to secondary school again. The two boys aged fourteen and fifteen went to stay with the same relatives when the girl returned and so were unable to start the Links Course on Fabrication and Welding, which they were keen to start.

Family No. 4

The family situation has remained the same, the eldest attending a residential school for the physically disabled and the other two children attending a special school for children with learning difficulties.

Family No. 5

The boy aged twelve is still not attending mainstream school and is receiving home tuition.

Family No. 6

The family have moved out of the county and their whereabouts is unknown.

Family No. 7

The family is now housed and the children are attending primary school full time. They receive some in-class support from the Traveller Education Service. The father is very unhappy in the house and so they may not remain long in this situation.

Family No. 8

During the six weeks after the interview the family moved out of the county for Appleby Fair, moved back into the county for five days, on an unofficial site, and have now left the area, whereabouts unknown.

Family No. 9

The family have now left the area and moved to the county they came from nine months ago. The children are attending schools in that area.

Family No. 10

The family situation has remained the same. The three youngest children attend primary school and the twelve year old receives tuition from the peripatetic teacher of Travellers.

Summary

Of the families interviewed only four family situations remained the same, both in educational circumstances and location. Of these one family is housed, two are on official sites and one on an unofficial site. The family on the unofficial site had received an eviction notice and within a few weeks their situation will have changed.

Two families out of the six families whose situation had changed have moved into houses. Family No. 7 were housed because they were tired of being harrassed from one unofficial site to another and didn't want to move onto an official site. The children have

benefitted educationally from the move as they are now attending school, but the father is unhappy in the house and would like to move back into a trailer, putting pressure on the rest of the family. Family No. 3 were housed because the mother, separated from her husband, found it difficult to cope with five children in a trailer, without transport. She is housed in an area where other members of her family are housed and so will probably settle. The three eldest children are finding it difficult to settle and so have started making prolonged visits to relatives.

For three of the families who were on official sites their situation changed. Family No. 1 moved out of the county onto an unofficial site because they found the official site they were on was too dirty. The children no longer attend school. Family No. 6 moved out of the county and will not be allowed back on the official site because of problems with the site warden. Family No. 9 returned to the area they had originally come from to be closer to sick, elderly relatives. The children have continued their education.

The situation of Family No. 8 is continually changing and over the last four years the family has moved in and out of the county on numerous occasions, always on unofficial sites. Sometimes the children have attended mainstream school, depending on the area of the site or the length of their stay. The mother is literate and keen for her children to be able to read and write. She tutors them herself when she has the time.

Of those six families whose physical situation has changed one family's education was improved and another family was no longer receiving education. Two families' educational circumstances remained the same and two were unknown. It must be remembered however that the number of families interviewed was small and that their situations may not reflect what is happening in other parts of the region or nationally. What it does show however is the difficulty involved with the changing situation of many of the Travellers to provide adequate and suitable education with continuity, and the difficulty of breaking down the prejudice many Traveller parents have about secondary education.

1. Shine, P. Traveller Education - How it is seen by Teachers and Travellers (1987) B.Ed. Dissertation, Manchester Polytechnic.
2. Reiss, C. Education of Travelling Children (1975) p.23.
3. H.M.I. Discussion Paper (1983) p.6.

## CONCLUSION

- \* An Overview of the state of Traveller Education in the Study Region.
- \* Hypotheses Reviewed
- \* Comparison between the good practice identified in the D.E.S. Discussion Paper and the provision in the Study Region.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF TRAVELLER EDUCATION IN  
STUDY REGION

The examination of a region in depth concerning the provision of facilities and education for Travellers over a period of two years has illustrated the many changes taking place within this field. Three new council sites have been opened, giving 51 new pitches but unfortunately there is no record of the number of traditional unofficial sites, used as stopping places by Travellers for generations, which have been built on or blocked off.

The provision of these three sites does not however mean that there are enough pitches for the Travellers that resort to the area, nor does it mean that the sites are situated where the Travellers would prefer them to be. There is often much public opposition to the positioning of sites. Nobody wants a site near them and so usually the sites are at the edge of industrial estates, some distance away from facilities such as schools and shops.

The regulations on official sites may prohibit or severely restrict the Traveller from working on the site. The keeping of hens, goats and horses, which is important to some Gypsies, is forbidden on the majority of sites. Prohibitive site rents in some areas also means that Travellers may lose their financial independence and have to apply to the D.H.S.S. to be able to afford to live on a site. It is no wonder that there are still some Travellers who prefer harassment on roadside verges to the restrictions on lifestyle which there may be on official sites. Many Travellers, personal contacts of the writer, lament the lack of freedom they now have and refer to themselves as living on reservations.

The problem now lies with ill-planned sites planned by gorgios not Travellers, location of sites by gorgio pressure not Travellers' requests, and restrictive measures implemented by gorgios on Travellers. Although these measures are in force, it is not too late, if the situation is to be improved, for

Travellers to be more actively involved in decisions which are made concerning them.

As has been stated earlier in the text, one cannot look at education of Travellers' children, nor for that matter of any child, in isolation. To educate the child knowledge of that child's culture, home circumstances and the expectations of the parents must all be taken into consideration. The writer in working with Travellers for four years was privileged to make firm contacts with some families which remained in the Cleveland area for that period.

These Traveller families, the majority of whom were on official sites, recognised the need for their children to acquire the skills of reading and writing. The increasing amount of paperwork, forms and agreements to complete, that need understanding before signature so one is not to be cheated, has influenced the Travellers in their recognition of the needs, and indeed demands, for these skills.

Although the demand for education may be there, access to it may not be easy. The location of the sites may make the walk to school hazardous and in bad weather uninviting. The availability of No-Area Pool money for transport is used by some L.E.A.s and not others. Where transport is provided attendance is more regular, which benefits both school and pupils. When Travellers have moved from an area where transport is available to one in which transport is not provided difficulties arise because the logic of why one authority provides transport and another does not is not easy to explain, nor is it in the writer's experience very logical. The fact that money for transport for Travellers is 100% refundable from a central government fund illustrates that there is a recognised need for this provision. One county in the study region will not provide a service for Traveller children, even after receiving petitions from the Travellers, recommendations from the teachers of Travellers, letters from heads of schools with Traveller pupils and Education Social Workers, because they do not want to make Travellers a special case. The fact that the same L.E.A. uses the No Area Pool

Funding to provide teachers for Travellers and resources seems immaterial to this argument and makes it difficult to understand the logic of such conflicting policies.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the location of the site and whether or not transport is provided access to a school may still be fraught with difficulties. Unfortunately there are still some headteachers, governing bodies and parents who do not want Travellers in their schools. Travellers who have approached schools to enrol their children, after giving their address, whether it be on an official or unofficial site, have been told by the head or secretary that the school is full. This does not encourage parents who may have had unhappy school experiences or had no schooling themselves, to persist in trying to get their children into school

The 'poor practice' identified by the operation of the 'open door' policy, in the H.M.I. Discussion document is still in evidence in the study region, but the situation is changing. In the two years 1987/1988 three L.E.A.s started to use the No Area Pool Fund to provide extra teaching assistance and resources for the children of Travellers and another L.E.A. is in the process of making new appointments in this field. This only leaves 3 L.E.A.s out of the 10 in the Study Region which have no specific provision for Travellers but none of these has any official Gypsy sites in their area and they do not feel they need any provision. Unfortunately none of these L.E.A.s has a key person with whom to identify if Travellers do resort to that particular area.

Traveller parents may be keen for their children to go to school but fear losing their children to a system which has different cultural and value systems. Illiteracy is not longer a protection against a rapidly developing society where there is increasing emphasis on paperwork, indeed it is a disadvantage. Traditional trades have to adapt to modern times and literacy may be an important aspect of this. The tool of literacy facilitates adaptation and it is natural for parents to both fear and welcome

this and the changes this may bring about. School plays a significant part in these developments.

How the Traveller parent and child are received at school by all staff from the Headteacher to the dinner lady will greatly influence their attitude towards the education system. In the writer's experience, where there has been liaison by the teacher of Travellers between the school and the incoming family, there has been a positive image on both sides. Where a Traveller family has presented itself at school unannounced it has been observed there has been a panic reaction. Fear of the unknown, stemming from a history of negative stereotyping, colours the school's expectations, which may be of uncleanness, thieving and uncontrollable behaviour. These reactions illustrate the necessity of good liaison between the schools and Travellers to break down the negative images both have of each other and to promote genuine understanding. The importance of a wider approach in the education of teachers, other agencies who may be involved with Travellers and in schools where there are no Traveller pupils to break down these negative images cannot be stressed enough if the Travellers are to receive equal and appropriate treatment.

In-set work in schools with both staff and pupils, in schools with or without Traveller pupils, has begun to be tackled by some L.E.A.s in the region. The provision of teachers for Traveller education and the links which have been formed in the Region between these staff enable staff development to take place. The N.E. Region was also well represented at the D.E.S. Course on Traveller Education held in July 1988 when eight out of the ten L.E.A.s in the study region had representatives present.

Though there have been improvements in provision in the N.E. Region, there is no need for complacency. There are still some gaps and poor practice, as well as issues such as poor secondary attendance, pre-school provision and irrelevant curriculum in some schools, to be tackled. Increasing regional co-operation, linking in with national groups, a very supportive H.M.I. and a

commitment by many to improving the provision so that it equals the very best is very positive.

In all the new initiatives and improvements taking place in the region there is increasing emphasis on the importance of liaison with Traveller parents.

## HYPOTHESES REVIEWED

Each hypothesis as stated at the beginning of this study is examined in the light of evidence and arguments brought to bear in the course of this research.

1. The Government policy of providing sites is as much for the control as for the benefit of Travellers.

The 1968 Caravan Sites Act which came into force in 1970 stated that ... "it shall be the duty of every local authority...so far as may be necessary to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies residing in or resorting to their area."

The carrot held out to Boroughs and Counties of designation, whereby they were given increased powers to control unauthorised camping by Travellers if they provided enough pitches, encouraged some authorities to provide sites to control the number of caravans in their area. The law, therefore, is used as a means of limiting the number of caravans within a certain designated area. This is the only law in the country which restricts the numbers of an ethnic group, the Gypsies, who reside in an area.

That there are not enough official sites provided in the country means that many Travellers are continually forced to break the law. If they cannot find a place on an official site, Travellers on unofficial sites may 'escape' into a house to avoid continual harrassment.

The Traveller on an official site has a controlled existence, which is usually very different from the cultural lifestyle he would choose. For the price of running water, electricity, an amenity block and freedom from harrassment the Traveller loses a lot of his independence. The freedom to choose his neighbours, to keep animals, a place to work and often financial independence may be lost.

The barrier at the entrance to the site may be strictly controlled by a site warden who will keep the key. Lorries may

be restricted from entering the site after 5 o'clock if the barrier is down. If the barrier is locked at night and the warden isn't available emergency vehicles such as fire engines and ambulances do not have access. No other group is so restricted.

Sites in the Government's eyes may be giving the Travellers the basic human right of somewhere to live but are also making sure that it is a secure place where numbers and lifestyle is restricted as has been illustrated in the section on Site Provision in the Study Region.

2. Education within schools is not essential to the Travellers.

The low school attendance of Traveller children in the United Kingdom estimated at between 10 and 25 percent in 1969-70<sup>1</sup> and between 20 and 70 percent in Europe<sup>2</sup> does not necessarily mean that the children attended school regularly. Although the statistics do not show this the writers experience of national and regional figures suggests that the majority of children would be of primary school age.

The attendance of the Traveller child in school may be determined by the chance for the family to have a secure stopping place. The Traveller, even though he may wish education for his child may have to stop travelling to ensure a continuous education which will affect the family's whole lifestyle, or still travel, which could have a detrimental effect on the child's education.

A Traveller who sends his child to school is concerned about the influence school has and the values which he may not want his child to acquire. The non-attendance at school of Traveller children mainly of secondary age, is usually a conscious decision on the part of the parents who do not want their children to be formed and altered by the education process. The Traveller parents and indeed children wish to be economically viable, the children acting as apprentices to other members of the family. In the Council of Europe's publication "Gypsies and Travellers"

some British Travellers reject school saying that "school has a bad effect on memory and that the 'educated' are rarely able to commit songs, addresses or telephone numbers to memory without writing them down."<sup>3</sup> As other Travellers have said in regard to education, "what they lack in education they make up for in common sense."<sup>4</sup> In the writer's experience this is invariably true, the Traveller children showing aptitude in practical matters and having a strong sense of responsibility towards other members of the family.

The study found that the majority of Traveller parents see education solely in terms of the acquisition of literacy and numeracy. Until the parents are satisfied that the education schools provide is relevant to their children's lifestyle and economic viability, then school will not be a dominant part of Traveller life.

3. Traveller children are more likely to attend if their parents have had some education than those who have not had any.

The sample of parents interviewed for this study was small but it covered the spectrum of accommodation from unofficial sites to housed Travellers. As was stated earlier in the study only four mothers interviewed had attended school regularly, two had been occasionally and four had never attended school. Compared to the educational experience of their parents attendance was very similar. The children of those interviewed showed a much stronger pattern of school attendance with children of seven of the families attending school at the time of the interview. Of the other three families one had attended primary school until he was twelve and was at the time of the interview receiving home tuition. The remaining two families were on unofficial sites and their children were receiving on-site provision from a peripatetic teacher of Travellers. The children of both families had received some education in schools when they were on sites more conducive to school attendance.



Although no firm conclusions can be reached from this information it would appear that from the data collected all the Traveller parents are keen for their children to have school experience even though many did not have this opportunity themselves. In the county where the interviews took place positive approaches are made to the families by the peripatetic teacher of Travellers to encourage the children into school, which may have influenced this trend.

4. Teachers regard assimilation of Traveller children in school as a positive step.

This hypothesis was too narrow in its inception and should have encompassed society as a whole in regard to the assimilationist views. As was discussed in the first hypothesis the legislation passed by government and implemented by the local authorities was intended primarily as a measure of control. Sites are seen as a short term expedient with integration into the dominant society being the long term objective.

Access to Education is one factor which may encourage Travellers to prolong staying in one area. As has been shown earlier in the study parents have an interest in their children's education, although this may be expressed exclusively in terms of the value of reading and writing. But education is much wider than that and is a means by which the ideology of the state is imparted to the children. The ideal that hard work will be rewarded with qualifications and hence a privileged place in our hierarchical society is promoted. School also instills competitiveness in children and reinforces the ideology of the dominant society as being the 'right' one. Any groups outside the mainstream society as the Travellers, are regarded as deviant.

It is the teacher him/herself who is in the front line, when it comes to perpetuating the educational philosophy of the state. The teacher's perception of Travellers and their culture greatly influences the approach and aim when educating Traveller children. Many teachers see Traveller children as being socially and culturally deprived with no real culture of their own. They

see it as their duty to instil in Traveller children the values and aspirations of mainstream society. A child who 'fits into' the class is a success in most teacher's eyes, conforming to the norm. Teachers may fear Traveller children because of the openness of approach, questioning what they are taught and inquisitiveness they bring into the classroom, as illustrated earlier in the study. Unfortunately in schools there are still many myths and stereotypes which are embodied in teacher's minds and attitudes. Until there is a recognition of Traveller culture and a respect for the beliefs and values these children bring into school teachers will continue to suppress these qualities and work towards assimilation, the achievement of which is success in the eyes of most teachers.

Increased education of teachers to make them aware of and to value other cultures, as recommended in the Swann Report is essential if there is to be equality of opportunity for all children. Unfortunately the implementation of the National Curriculum in 1989 may restrict individualism amongst both teachers and children and make conformity even more valued.

### Summary

The four hypotheses were chosen to give a structure to the study and they posed questions in areas where very little research has been done. In the development of the study and collection of data questions arose which went beyond the hypotheses and the hypotheses became a smaller part of the whole. The original hypotheses were kept as they were helpful in the way the study was planned and formed a firm basis for the original research.

1. C. Reiss, Education of Traveller Children (1975) p. 22.
2. Jean Pierre Liegeois Gypsies and Travellers (1987) p. 140.
3. Liegeois op. cit. p.142.
4. Education for All Swann Report (1986) p. 744.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE GOOD PRACTICE IDENTIFIED IN THE  
D.E.S. DISCUSSION PAPER AND THE PROVISION IN THE STUDY REGION

The quality of education provision for Traveller children in the North East Region is compared with the good practice in this field which is highlighted by in the D.E.S. Discussion Paper and reinforced by the Swann Report.

The Discussion Paper acknowledges the need for a variety of structured responses to the educational needs of Traveller children. Although the needs may differ for the different Traveller groups the Paper feels that the underlying principles should be the same.

- i "arrangements to obtain up to date information about the needs for provision and the extent to which it is being made"

One of the purposes of this study was to obtain information about both the need for education for Traveller children and the extent to which it is being made in the N.E. Region. There was no liaison between L.E.A.s on Traveller education or provision. Some authorities were unaware that the No Area Pool could be used to finance such provision and were made aware of this by the writer. Since 1986 there have been rapid changes within the Region which had been a desert for Traveller education provision compared with the rest of the country. Two counties which hitherto had no special provision for Travellers, apart from remedial help where necessary, now have appointed teachers with a liaison role. This will overcome the poor practice of the 'open door policy'. Two boroughs have appointed teachers both of whom are school based but are also responsible for liaison. (See Section on Education Provision in the Study Region). A large county L.E.A. has appointed a co-ordinator to oversee provision made within the county. Another county, although it has a school based staff, is hoping to appoint a co-ordinator. Thus there have been dramatic changes within the N.E. Region as to the amount of provision but there is no cause for complacency; as yet

the provision is sparse in some areas and needs to be further developed.

- ii) "designation of key personnel who will be responsible at administrative, welfare and school levels for Traveller education,"

At the onset of this study the writer had difficulty in identifying personnel in seven out of the ten L.E.A.s who were responsible for Traveller education. Three of the L.E.As stated that they had no Gypsy sites in their area and so had no problem. But it is interesting to note that one of those L.E.A.s allowed an adviser to attend the D.E.S. Course held in Nottingham in July 1988. It is known to the writer, through Traveller contacts, that one of these areas regularly has unofficial encampments of Travellers. Of the other four L.E.A.s all have now made or are in the process of making specific education provision for Travellers and have key personnel in administration and in teaching able to represent their interests.

- iii) "the development of a comprehensive policy for staffing, administration, professional support and in-service training, liaison with parents, the provision of adequate resources and co-ordination between the education service and other statutory and voluntary agencies."

Each authority within the study region has different needs and situations to contend with. All the authorities that provide support for Traveller children now have a liaison element, which means links with parents are strengthened. The services provided may come under special needs, multicultural or primary administration. It is hoped that this liaison with parents also allows for co-ordination between other agencies. In one county there are regular termly meetings between education, health, E.S.W.s, site managers and treasurers to discuss pertinent issues. Unfortunately no Traveller is invited to be present at these meetings. In the same county, site agency meetings are held, when teachers, health visitors, environmental health representatives, site managers and Travellers attend. These

meetings are to co-ordinate services on the site. Other authorities also hold co-ordinated meetings between agencies.

In-service training may be difficult to arrange in such a minority field but regional meetings for teachers of Travellers have now been established. The first meeting, held in Cleveland (Spring 1988), was historic in that it brought together teachers of Travellers in the N.E. Region for the first time. The consensus was that the termly meetings would be beneficial giving opportunity for self development, exchanging of ideas and materials, support and co-ordination. Meetings have since been held in Humberside (Summer 1988) where the Bradford team of teachers illustrated how they worked, and Gateshead (Autumn 1988) where Travellers attended and there was an open forum followed by a discussion on records. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in N. Yorks (Spring 1989). These meetings are supported by all seven L.E.A.s which make specific provision for Traveller education.

- iv) "arrangements to ensure contact with parents of traveller children at the pre-school stage."

This age group is one which is neglected in the region. Apart from nursery provision on one site, which has close links with the local primary school and another area where a play bus goes on the site two half days a week there is no specific provision. teachers who have a liaison role will promote nursery attendance, if there are places available as will E.W.O.s. But nursery schools often have waiting lists and by the time a place is available the Traveller will have moved on. Obviously more emphasis needs to be placed on pre-school education which means redirection of the teacher's time or increasing resources in the way of both staff and facilities.

- v) "arrangements to promote attendance of children at school, or, alternatively, participation in some form of full time intermediate provision, irrespective of the legality of the parents' place of residence"

The emphasis in the region is of positive encouragement into education rather than coercion. There is still debate within the region, and nationally, as to whether the law to make children attend school is viable or not. One county within the Study Region has made a positive decision to avoid the use of law to make the children attend school. E.S.W.s work closely with teachers of Travellers and families to encourage the children into school. This does not happen in all L.E.A.s. Although not always successful it is felt more would be lost through prosecution because any siblings would be lost from the education system if families moved on and relationships of the authorities with other Traveller families would be impaired. It is a very difficult situation where authority does not want to be seen to be treating one section of the community differently from any other.

- vi) "a willingness on the part of schools to respond sympathetically and flexibly to the special needs of traveller children."

Schools which are situated close to official sites are used to having Traveller children attending but this does not mean that all such schools are able to meet their needs or always have good practice. In the writer's experience some schools, because of occasional behaviour, attendance or cleanliness problems do not welcome Traveller children. Although the teacher of Travellers may try to ameliorate the situation, the concerted prejudice of an entrenched, established staff, in the writer's experience, will not be overcome in a short space of time. In such a situation, where there is a rigid system the teacher may be positively encouraged to segregate the child for teaching. To illustrate the differing responses of schools to the situation two ten year old Traveller boys, both virtually illiterate, moved into a county. One became housed (A) and the other moved onto a residential site (B) for the winter, so both boys were settled for at least a few months. A was placed in a fourth year class. Each morning he attended a special needs unit in the school building as his teacher could not cope with him. He had support from a teacher of Travellers one afternoon a week who found there

was no liaison between the class teacher and special needs teacher as to work covered or planned programmes. The teacher of Travellers tried to facilitate this but found difficulties in an entrenched staff and with an indifferent Head teacher. The child when in his mainstream class was given the same work as the other children including a spelling test where he got 1 out of 50. The next child up got 23 out of 50.

Child B was also placed in a 4th. year class. The head teacher called in the teacher of Travellers and there was good liaison between the class teacher and teacher of Travellers who supplied materials and gave in-class support. The child participated at all times within the mainstream class.

Children A and B both had supportive parents who were keen for their children to receive education. Both pupils were clean, punctual and good attenders, yet the responses of the staff and school to their needs were very different.

Unfortunately the responses of the schools to situations cannot be generalised, nor should it be, but the good practice of being flexible to the special needs of Traveller children, indeed any children, must be encouraged at all times. In-service <sup>training</sup> for all schools to promote good practice and cultural awareness is important, whether as part of multicultural awareness or to illustrate the special needs of some children.

vii) "the encouragement of receiving schools and teachers to acknowledge the distinctive features of the travelling way of life; to devise programmes through which traveller pupils can reveal their strengths and in which they are not exposed without support to hostility or rejection."

So much depends on the philosophy of the school as to whether there is a positive acknowledgement of a child's culture or not. Teachers of Travellers have an important role to play in their work in schools. That there are now more teachers of Travellers employed within the N.E. Region is encouraging. Traveller children bring many skills to school, such as good manipulative

and co-ordination skills which can be built on given the right educational environment. A rich culture can be explored in language and art and can be shared with others. There are a number of good children's books, which are suitable for schools whether primary or secondary and should be part of any school library. Again the in-service <sup>training</sup> of teachers is important whether the teacher for Travellers goes in to work with staff or time is set apart for a course.

viii) "a policy to ensure assessment and evaluation at every stage, is respect of educational progress and the quality and effectiveness of policy and provision"

There is much debate both nationally and in the region about the keeping of records specifically on Traveller children. In July 1988 a meeting organised by N.A.T.T. at the request of the D.E.S. involved voluntary organisations, Gypsy representatives and Traveller teachers, to discuss education records for Traveller children. At the meeting a national system was rejected in favour of a regional system, with client-held records. It was proposed that there should be pilot schemes which would be evaluated and monitored. Fears at the meeting were expressed by some Gypsies and Gypsy support groups that detailed record keeping could be used against the Travellers as social surveys carried out in Germany were used to identify and discriminate against Gypsies in the Second World War,

The North East Region as a newly cohesive group has had preliminary discussion on record keeping and is to formulate plans at the next meeting, but at each stage there should be consultation with Travellers locally and the plans kept in line with national developments.

### Summary

None of the L.E.A.s in the study region make exactly the same provision for the education of Traveller children but most are now making significant provision. With the firm basis now



established of regional co-operation between L.E.A.s it is hoped that the quality of provision will become equal to the best. Although site provision is not within the brief of the L.E.A. the inextricable link between adequate, secure site provision and education should encourage liaison with housing authorities and action to promote the building of enough sites within the region.

Education of Traveller children needs to be founded on the dynamism of their culture. At all times there must be necessary consultation and co-ordination between the numerous bodies concerned, not last the Travellers themselves. The nomadic lifestyle of the Travellers necessitates a flexible, realistic approach from all agencies involved. No system can be said to be perfect. As with the lifestyle of Travellers the situation can rapidly change but at each stage in the development there must be time for reflection and assessment and, if necessary, adjustment.

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APPENDIX 1



## APPENDIX 2

The list shows the spread of anti-gypsy laws in Europe. Each date is when the first anti-gypsy law was passed in each country or state.

1471	Lucerne
1482	Brandenburg
1484	Spain
1498	Germany (Freiburg Diet)
1524	Holland
1526	Portugal
1530	England
1536	Denmark
1539	France
1540	Flanders
1541	Scotland
1549	Bohemia
1557	Poland and Lithuania
1637	Sweden

List compiled by Donald Kendrick and Grattan Puxon

Destiny of Europe's Gypsies (1972)

# Swiss to compensate 'persecuted' gypsies

By a Correspondent  
A SWISS charity has offered to pay compensation for its part in a state-subsidised campaign against "the evil of vagrancy", in which at least 600 gypsy children were abducted from their families.

The Pro Juventute Foundation pledge to act "honestly, openly and correctly" in settling the affair marks a partial victory for the gypsy community. Its leaders however, are still pressing for a chance to examine the files on an issue which has raised charges of racial persecution.

The Children of the Country Roads programme was launched by Pro Juventute in 1928, and was only abandoned after details were published in 1973.

In its early years, the programme was masterminded

by a senior charity official, Dr Alfred Siegfried, an avowed supporter of theories of racial purity later adopted by the Nazis.

His goal, sanctioned by a since-repealed law of vagrancy, was to destroy the gypsy way of life and integrate their children into "normal" Swiss society.

In his first report, Dr Siegfried wrote of the gypsies as "dangerous community with a profoundly abnormal way of life" and spoke of the need for "vast action aimed at the children to suppress the evil of vagrancy." Records show that Pro Juventute succeeded in abducting at least 619 children—mainly under the age of six—with the active support of the police as well as financial backing from the

Government and some cantons. Some were successfully placed with foster parents; many others were sent for "psychiatric treatment or re-education" in state institutions.

All attempts by their families to maintain contact were blocked. Brothers and sisters were separated, letters were intercepted and parents, trying to trace their children, received police threats.

In some cases, names were changed and the children were offered for adoption without their parents' consent. Many ran away, only to be recaptured and returned to institutions. Some ended up in prison.

Since 1973, the country's 35,000 gypsies have been de-

manding access to Pro Juventute's files to help attempts to reunite families. A formal apology and some form of legal redress was also sought.

One gypsy leader, the writer, Mariella Mehr, was herself a victim of the campaign, together with her mother and son. Her experiences—including rape, electric shock treatment, suicide attempts, and spells in prison and mental homes—became the basis for a novel and a play, which recently ended a successful run in Berne.

She told a Pro Juventute press conference in May: "We are talking about injustice. We are not talking about mistakes but about Switzerland's brown past." A reference to the Nazis' exter-

mination of an estimated 500,000 gypsies.

President Alfons Egli last month offered a Government apology for the campaign, which was described in Parliament as "a sad chapter in the nation's history". Mr Egli, who is also Interior Minister, ordered his department to seal Pro Juventute's files pending possible further Government action.

Pro Juventute has refused so far to make a formal apology, allegedly on the grounds that an outright acknowledgement of guilt could prompt a flood of legal actions.

The charity now faces mounting public criticism and a widening boycott of its health stamps which are a main source of funds.

## NEWS IN BRIEF Ugandan rebels kill nine

UNIDENTIFIED gunmen yesterday opened fire on a morning parade at Uganda's government ideology centre near Kampala, killing nine people, official sources said.

The attack was the first on a government installation since Mr Yoweri Museveni took power in Kampala in January after a civil war.

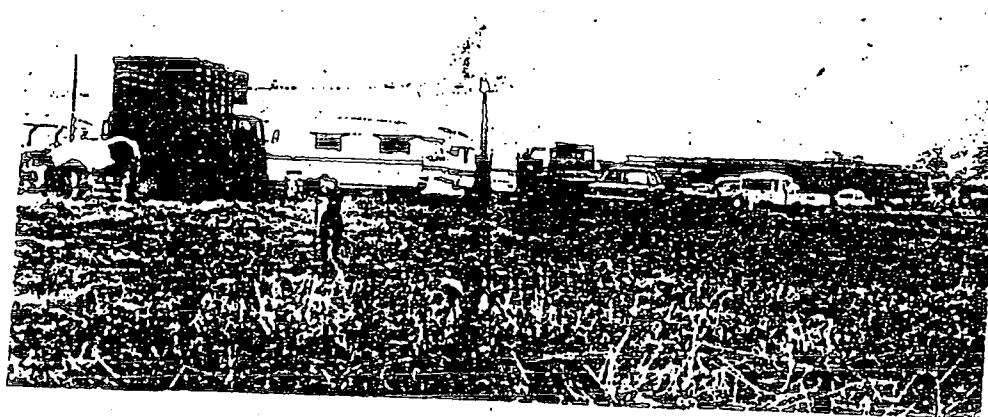
Four political workers and

# UNION

(141)

# GIPSIES AT TILNEY FOREVER!!

WITHOUT CONSULTATION NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL IS PROPOSING  
A PERMANENT GIPSY SITE AT WESTFIELDS HOUSE TILNEY



IT MAY NOT BE AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR GARDEN  
BUT IT WILL EFFECT YOU AS IF IT WERE

YOUR PROPERTY WILL BE DEVALUED AS MUCH AS 50 PER CENT  
WILL YOU BE HAPPY ABOUT LEAVING YOUR PROPERTY UNATTENDED  
WILL YOUR SCHOOL REMAIN AT THE SAME HIGH STANDARD  
THE DOGS - THE RUBBISH - THE SMELL - THE SCRAP - THE RODENTS  
WHO IN TILNEY EMPLOYS GIPSIES  
THERE IS ALREADY AN EXISTING SITE CLOSE ON THE A47  
GIPSIES DON'T WANT TO LIVE NEAR US EITHER

## HOW CAN YOU HELP

COME TO THE MEETING AT  
TILNEY ALL SAINTS VILLAGE HALL on TUESDAY 13th AUGUST at 7.30 p.m.  
AND AT  
TILNEY ST. LAWRENCE VILLAGE HALL on WEDNESDAY 14th AUGUST at 7.30 p.m.

WRITE TO NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL (ADDRESS BELOW)  
FOLLOW YOUR LETTER WITH REGULAR TELEPHONE CALLS TO YOUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR  
AND YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLOR - THEIR PRIVATE TELEPHONE NUMBERS ARE:-

J. COUTTS, ESQ.,  
NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL,  
COUNTY HALL,  
NORWICH,  
NORFOLK,  
Tel: Norwich (0603) 611122  
Private: Attleborough (0953) 850722

Cllr. H. GOOSE NCC PLANNING Wisbech 583421  
Cllr. H. ROCKLIFFE NCC King's Lynn 810788 202  
Cllr. S. DORRINGTON NCC Wisbech 880421 or King's Lynn 773529  
Cllr. B. HOWLING CHAIRMAN PLANNING WEST NORFOLK  
DISTRICT COUNCIL King's Lynn 328428  
Cllr. E. GARNER WNDC Wisbech 880247  
Cllr. J. WRIGHT WNDC King's Lynn 828285

REMEMBER IF WE DON'T HARASS THE COUNCIL NOW  
WE SHALL BE HARASSED FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES

## Appendix 5(cont)

GTN 2921-  
Direct Line 01-936-  
*Communications on this subject should  
be addressed to*  
THE LEGAL SECRETARY  
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS,  
LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT,  
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,  
LONDON, WC2A 2LL

Our Ref: 13/35/444

24 October 1985

E Frankham Esq  
The Bungalow  
Roman Bank  
Walpole St Andrew  
Wisbech  
Cambridgeshire

Dear Mr Frankham

I refer to my letter to you of 4 September 1985. I should also like to acknowledge receipt of your further letter of 9 October.

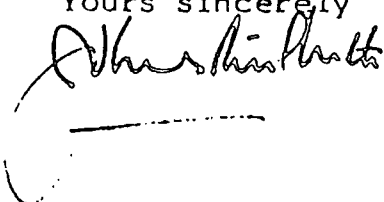
The Solicitor General, in the absence of the Attorney General, has considered the poster which you referred to him. He has also had the benefit of advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions about this matter.

Section 5A Public Order Act 1936 provides:

"A person commits an offence if he publishes or distributes written matter which is threatening, abusive or insulting in a case where, having regard to all the circumstances, hatred is likely to be stirred up against any racial group in Great Britain by the matter or words in question."

The Solicitor General is not satisfied that this leaflet infringes the Act and in these circumstances does not propose to have enquiries made about it. Nonetheless he is grateful to you for taking the trouble to write to him about it.

Yours sincerely



J S RINGGUTH



## APPENDIX 6

3.5.87

# It's a stick-up for the law

By DIANE MASSEY

A CITY'S Conservative leaders have been accused of inciting race hatred in the campaign for this week's local council elections.

Tory officials in multi-racial Bradford were seen handing out car stickers with the message: "Keep the gipsies out . . . vote Conservative." They also posted leaflets through Asian homes, saying that Labour Party policies on gays, lesbians and sex equality were against moral teachings.

But the campaign has backfired. The 500 carstickers have been withdrawn after protests.

And Tory agent Richard Hughes, Roland MBE, whose name appears on the, has been reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Last night, Mr Eric Pickles, Conservative leader on Bradford Council, admitted the stickers were "rude and offensive."

But he added: "I think the DPP will take into consideration the lack of malice or racist thoughts behind them."

Tommy Docherty, chairman of the Society of Travelling People, said: "Gipsies are being used as a big election issue in Bradford and this sticker is an insult."

IF IT'S  
NEWS  
Phone the  
**NEWS**  
ONSUNDAY  
0161  
236 7414



In Mallorca as in all tourist locations all over the world we have a problem with thieves. Here, the gypsies are the offenders.

DON'T buy any jewellery, or flowers or clothes from them.

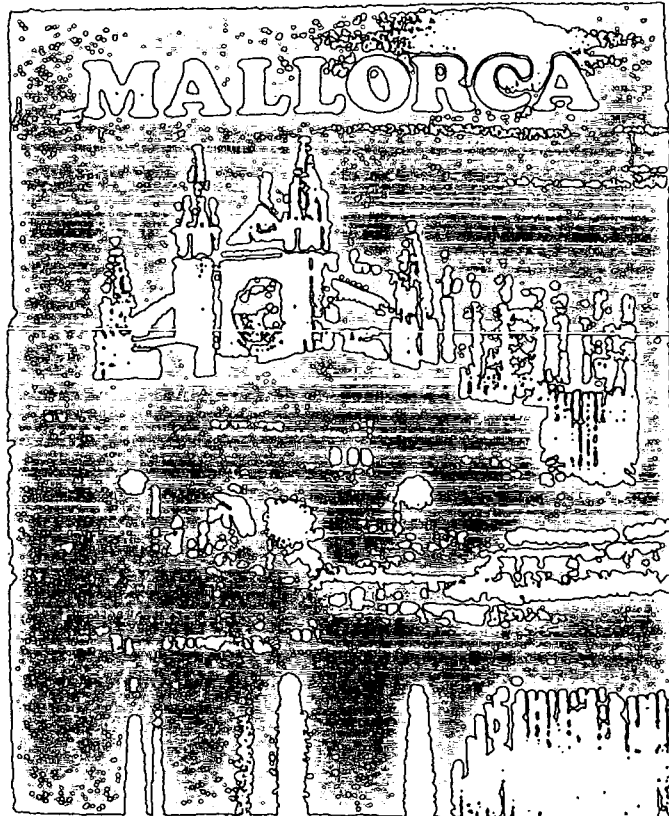
DON'T carry wallets in your back pockets.

DON'T carry precious or valuable possessions in your handbags, use the safety deposit boxes in the reception of your hotel.

DON'T leave bags or towels unguarded on the beaches.

Be careful in busy market areas and busy bus stops.

° GYPSIES IN MALLORCA ARE ALL PROFESSIONAL PICKPOCKETS

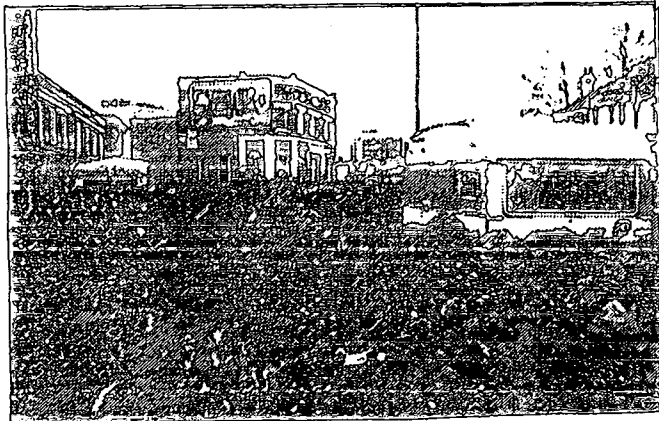


Labour Campaign for Travellers' Rights.

Newsletter No 1.

# Evicted from Brent...

Brent Council's Labour Group decided in November to reverse its enlightened policy of non-eviction and provision of sites for Travellers. The reasons for this tragic policy reversal, both known and suspected, will be reported in a future Newsletter. However the result is that Brent is now evicting families from encampments in the Borough, and is trenching and blockading the vacated sites. But there's more . . .



Some of the Travellers evicted from Brent's Fryent Way were under siege only hours later in adjoining Hammersmith for trying to find a stopping place on a derelict factory site Scrubs Lane.

On Saturday afternoon, 14th February 1987, 20 families pulled onto the site, and by Sunday morning (15th) the owners had sent fleets of lorries to tip clay and rubble into the gateway trapping the Travellers inside. The siege went on for three days and three nights. Each time the Travellers tried to dig themselves out, the lorry returned, 20 loads at a time.

On Tuesday night (17th Feb) the lorry returned for a fifth time. The owners and the Police directed the lorry and bulldozers as they tipped more clay and rubble this time inside the site and around individual caravans, cutting them off from each other. Two babies

6 weeks and 15 months old were nearly buried alive in their caravan as the machines inched forward and piled the clay and rubble higher and higher. Their terrified young mother was only just able to open the caravan door to plead with the drivers, who left her caravan completely surrounded by eight- to ten-foot high mounds that could be touched from inside the 'van'. The 6 week-old baby had been due to receive treatment at hospital, but her mother was unable to get out, and the doctors certainly couldn't get in.

In another part of the site seven other children under 5 were similarly entombed in their own homes.

The Travellers attempted to reason with the posse of the owners and the Police, at least to let them get their families out in their cars, pointing out that emergency services would not be able to get to them should there be a fire. The response that came back was: "Let the buggers burn!".

Only after Hammersmith Council had made threatening noises about breaches of the Health and Safety Acts did the owners relent and on Thursday afternoon 19th February, the families were dug out, and could obtain water, bottled gas for heating, and other essential services.

Now these Travellers yet again face Court action to evict them, with no legal or secure place to go.

These horrific scenes are a direct consequence of the decision of Brent's Labour Councillors to change their policy and evict the families, forcing them to find somewhere else to live. Local and national government cannot be allowed to shrug off their duties towards this minority ethnic group. Within the Labour Party each of us must take the responsibility to ensure that the Party and its representatives do not fail in this duty.

Ian Holding

Labour Campaign for Travellers' Rights.

Newsletter No 1.

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# *Salford adds insult to injury*

Travellers in urban areas face massive political and local opposition to their camping. Those in Salford, next door to Manchester, have had to face the fierce prejudice of the local council for 20 years at least, and nothing, repeat nothing, has yet been provided in the way of legal accommodation for Traveller caravans. Salford Council has preferred to spend enormous amounts of the public's money on legal proceedings against Travellers, trenching, earth mounding and other negative measures. But then this is the same Council that tried, in the mid 1970's, to evade their liability to council tenants in unfit houses, and they lost in every Court up to the House of Lords.

It is now nearly 17 years since the Caravan Sites Act came into force. The legal duty to provide sites was on Salford Corporation from April 1970 to April 1974. It was then on Greater Manchester Council from 1974 until March 1986; now the Tories despicable removal of Metropolitan Counties has put the duty back on shameful Salford Council.

Have things changed? Or will they?

Early last year (1986), large groups of Travellers were evicted from Manchester, after staying there for many months. They then moved to Bolton, where they were again evicted. These two towns had both provided the obligatory 16-slab site, and were using their powers of designation to evict all other Travellers. These Travellers then moved to Salford, which, although it has some sites for Fairground people, had still provided no accommodation for Travellers.

The City of Salford tried to take the Travellers to Court, but the National Gypsy Council objected because the City had failed to make the necessary provision. At present the Council are are trying to make some provision for Travellers, but it's not because the Travellers have nowhere to go, and it's not because the Council wish to conform to the 1968 Act. It is to get a free hand in evicting any remaining Travellers, using tough extra designation powers. Travellers have suffered injunctions banning them, indefinitely and by name, from camping on any land owned by Salford Council. Adding designation powers, even with a site, would be to add insult to injury.

Most children of these Travellers now attend local schools. The Manchester & Salford Health Care Team provided many of the necessary health facilities. Once the site is erected and there is a lot of local opposition, then those Travellers unlucky enough not to get a site will lose their school places, their doctors and their health visitors, their work contacts, and any legal place to stop. Another local authority will then call them their 'problem' to be eliminated, just like a TV advertisement for a detergent, which prides itself on what it removes. If these powers come to Salford, all the efforts that have been made by local Health, Education and Traveller Support Groups, in providing them with some form of access to their rights, will cease.

Dennis Binns and Bill Forrester.

# APPENDIX 9

Chart to Show Site Provision

County	
District	
Site	
Site Owner	
Site Opened	
Designation	
No.Pitches	550
Rent per Wk.	
Electric per Wk.	
Other Charges	
Work Area	
Play Area	
Allowed on Site:	
a Poultry	a
b Dogs	b

# Appendix 9(cont)

c Goats d Horses	c d
Distance to:- a School b Public Transport c Shops	a b c
Site Location: a Rural b Industrial c Other	a b c
Site Warden:- a Res/non-res. b Full/part-time. c Traveller/non-Trav.	a b c
How many rents paid direct by D.H.S.S.?	

## APPENDIX 10

Model Rules Recommended by the Joint  
Working Party of the Local Authority  
Associations and the Gypsy Council

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1. The site must be kept clean and tidy.
  2. Rubbish must be put into the bins provided.
  3. Damage must be paid for.
  4. Dogs and other pets are permitted only if they are kept under control.
  5. Sheds, television aerials, fences, and other erections can only be installed with the consent of the council, which will not be unreasonably withheld.
- (Note: Model Standards (No.14) require at least 30 square feet of covered storage space per standing - we feel that this minimum should be provided and that there should be no restrictions on its use. However, we accept that some families may need additional space and whilst ultimately they may achieve this by obtaining a larger caravan there should be no objection to the Gypsy providing an approved hut for this need subject to space being available).
6. Speed limit of 5 m.p.h. applies to all site roads.
  7. (a) Sorting or storage of material in any business is permitted on, or alongside, a lorry, but the area must be left tidy when finished. Unwanted material must be put into the large containers provided. (b) Work must be carried out in the work area.
  8. Burning of scrap and other public nuisances are forbidden.
  9. Car breaking and similar work can only be carried out in the work area provided.
  10. Advice on fire prevention and simple instruction on procedure in case of fire should be included.

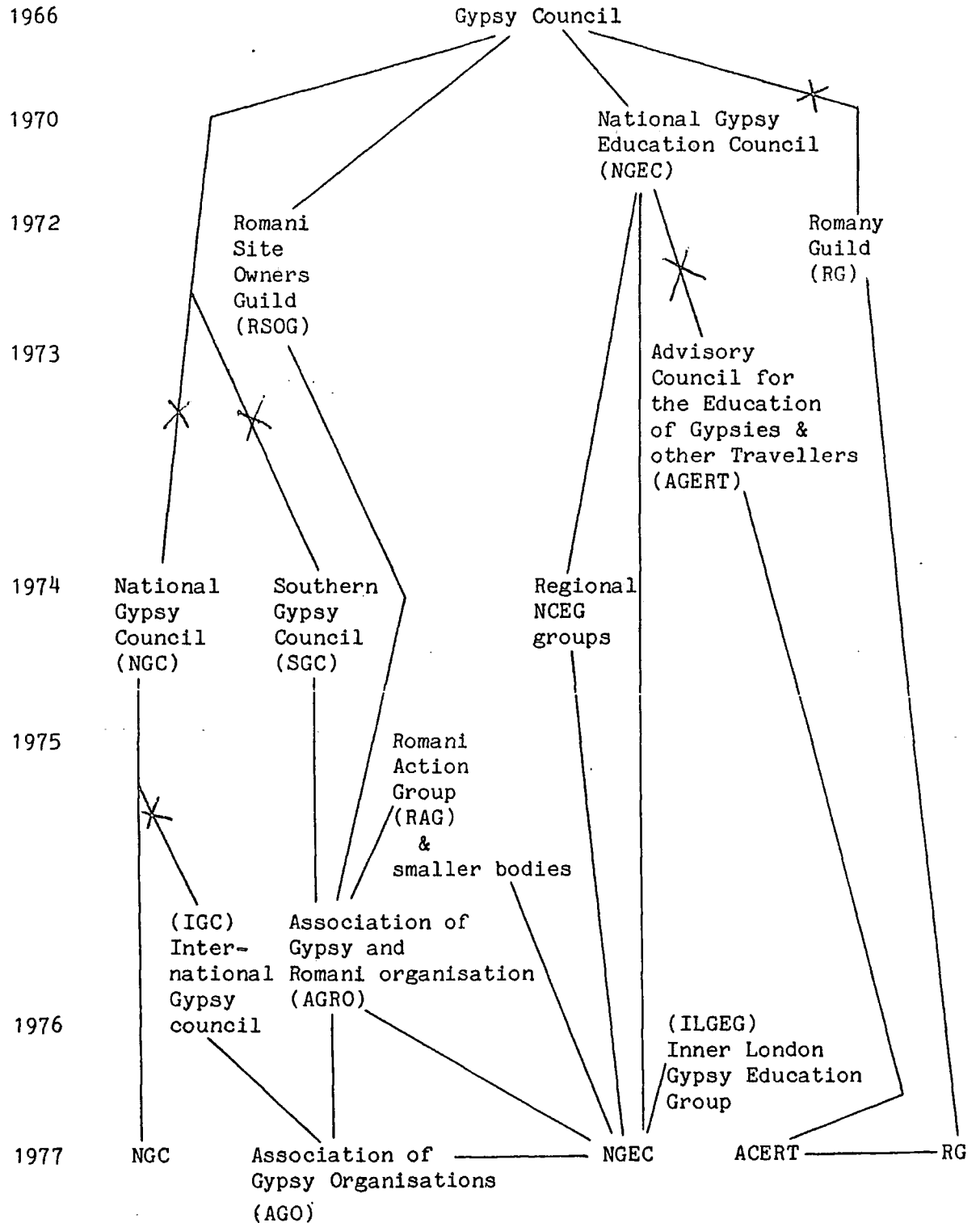
And such other rules as are particular to any site.

# APPENDIX 11

Paper by Thomas Acton Seven Wasted Years (1977)

## FAMILY TREE OF GYPSY AND PRO-GYPSY ORGANISATIONS

\* = schism





## APPENDIX 12

Centre for Traveller Education,

Old School.

Victoria Road,

Middlesbrough,

Cleveland.

TS1 3QF

1st., Dec., 1987.

Dear

I am currently undertaking a research study into Travellers and their educational needs. I have already received co-operation from the local Authorities on site provision in the North East Region, and would appreciate it if you, or members of your staff who teach Traveller children could complete the enclosed questionnaires.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be pleased if the questionnaires were returned before the end of term.

Yours sincerely,

Jenny Gunby

## APPENDIX 13

Questionnaire to schools accepting Traveller children.

Type and size of school.

How many children of Travellers do you have in school at the moment?

What is the maximum number of children of Travellers have you had in school at any one time?

What contact do you have with the parents?

Do they; a) support school functions?

b) contact you if they have any problems?

c) never make any contact?

d) any other comment.

Do you find the children have a positive attitude to work?

YES

NO

If the answer is yes how is this attitude shown?

If the answer is no how is their negative attitude shown?

## Appendix 13(cont)

Do you have any problems in regard to the children?

YES

NO

If your answer is yes please answer the following question.

Types of problems:

a) academic attainment, literacy, numeracy etc.,  
please comment.

b) behaviour e.g. toward staff, other children,  
dinner supervisors, in the playground.

c) ability to learn, concentration etc..

d) any other problems.

What attributes, if any, do you find the children bring to s  
school?

## Appendix 13(cont)

What do you find the children's interests are?

Is any special provision made for the Traveller children in your schools, e.g. remedial groups, special unit. Please state.

Is recognition made of Traveller culture in the materials they use at school? If the answer is yes please elaborate? If the answer is no please state why.

Additional comments.

Person completing questionnaire.

Name

Position

School

## APPENDIX 14

### Interview Schedule.

Mother /Father

How Many Children in the Family?

Ages

Did you go to school?

If the answer is yes, give school experience.

Would you have liked to have gone to school?

Could your parents read and write?

Can you read and write?

If you attended school

- a) Did you feel the teachers treated you the same as other people in the class.
- b) How did the other children treat you at school.
- c) What did you enjoy most at school?

## Appendix 14(cont)

Children's own educational experience

Do your children go to school?

If the answer is no why don't they attend school?

Have they ever been to school?

If your child/children attend school what subjects do you think are the most important?

Do you think the teachers treat them as they do other children?

Does the child/children enjoy school.

If the answer is yes what do they enjoy most.

If your child does not enjoy school do you know why not.

Do you want your child to attend secondary school at the age of 11?

If not, why not?

Would you like your child/children to be taught about:-

a) the history of travellers?

## Appendix 14(cont)

b) The Romany language?

c) The customs.

If not why not?

Would you like other children in the school to learn about the way  
of travellers?

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The following abbreviations are used in this section:

A.C.E.R.T. Advisory Committee for the Education of Romany and other Travellers.

C.R.E. Commission for Racial Equality.

D.E.S. Department of Education & Science.

D.O.E. Department of the Environment.

N.G.C. National Gypsy Council.

N.G.E.C. National Gypsy Education Council.

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