



Chapter Three

People of Merseyside



PEOPLE OF MERSEYSIDE

Background Information

The first significant influx of people to Liverpool was early in the 13th century after King John issued a charter in 1207 establishing Liverpool as a town. Prior to this, the tiny fishing village of 'Liverpool' and the wild, isolated and sparsely populated area of the Wirral were places that people passed on their way to other places.

It was not until the 1700s when the Industrial Revolution began that Liverpool really started to prosper as a port. The expansion in trade was matched by an expansion in population. In 1810, 75,000 people were packed into one square mile of streets and fever haunted alleys. This pressure on housing for dock and factory workers, who needed to live close to their work, was matched by the fine houses of the "better off" which were built on the outskirts in places like Crosby, Sefton and, into the 20th century, on the Wirral. By contrast late 18th century Wirral was still a wild, undeveloped region with a total population of about 6,000. Most of the people worked on the land as agricultural labourers.

By 1890 the population of Liverpool had reached over half a million – more than 12 times its size a hundred years before. The port had also developed as the main departure point for emigrants on their way to America and Australia. Out of the five million people who left Britain in search of a better life between the years 1860 and 1890 some 95 per cent departed from the Mersey. This is the equivalent of more than ten times the current population of Liverpool.

For every thousand emigrants who left Liverpool another thousand immigrants arrived. The city's strong links with the rest of the country and all corners of the world have brought about a population with diverse roots. Initially comprising of Irish, Scottish and Welsh, the immigrant population was later joined by Africans, West Indians, Chinese and people of many other nations. This mix of people has produced a rich culture and a cosmopolitan city.

The population of Liverpool has decreased dramatically during the 20th century. It is currently estimated at just half a million. The two most likely factors to have caused this decline are the housing policy which encouraged large numbers of people to move out of the city and the introduction of containerisation which heralded the demise and gradual closure of many docks, forcing people to seek work elsewhere.

The Census is an invaluable resource for studying people and population. Censuses have been carried out every ten years in England and Wales since 1801, apart from 1941. This means that every person is counted and information is gathered about where they were born, how old they are and what jobs they did.

Curriculum Tasks for Pupils

POPULATION

The population figures below can be used to examine a number of issues relating to the population on Merseyside (rounded to the nearest 5,000). They illustrate how:

- Liverpool became more densely populated than the Wirral
- Liverpool’s population declined
- Population affected land use

	Liverpool	Wirral
1810	75,000	5,000
1891	585,000	75,000
1931	855,000	310,000
1981	505,000	340,000
1989	465,000	330,000 (1988 fig)

The figures below show the composition of the Liverpool population in 1981. Pupils could calculate the representative percentages of each sector and present them in the form of pie charts. Reasons for the difference in numbers between black British and other ethnic groups could be discussed.

Population Composition 1981	
Liverpool	Wirral
British 476,900	British 339,000
Black British)	Black British)
Chinese)	Chinese)
Arab) 24,500	Arab) 2,131
African)	African)
Asian)	Asian)

“Race and History in Liverpool” – A Research Report Community Relations Council.



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3. Extract from 1851 Census

Occupants of a household living in 12 Court No 2

NAME	POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD	STATUS	AGE	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF BIRTH
Catherine Connor	Head	Married	40	Oakum Picker	Ireland
Michael Connor	Son		16	Clay Pipe Maker	Lancashire Liverpool
Bridget Connor	Daughter		19	Oakum Picker	Ireland
Mary Connor	Daughter		10	Oakum Picker	Lancashire Liverpool
Mary Moghan	Lodger		28	Oakum Picker	Ireland
Anthony O'Connell	Head	Married	48	Dock Labourer	Ireland
Cicely O'Connor	Wife	Married	46	Oakum Picker	Ireland
Ann O'Connell	Daughter		18	Oakum Picker	Lancashire
Bridget O'Connell	Daughter		14	Oakum Picker	Lancashire Liverpool
Catherine O'Connell	Daughter		10	Oakum Picker	Lancashire Liverpool
Margaret O'Connell	Daughter		8	Oakum Picker	Lancashire Liverpool
Anthony O'Connell	Son		12	Scholar	Lancashire Liverpool
John O'Connell	Son		5	Scholar	Lancashire Liverpool
Mary O'Connell	Niece		13	Oakum Picker	Ireland
Dennis Cain	Lodger		28	Dock Lumper	Ireland
James Cain	Lodger		35	Dock Lumper	Ireland



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Use the information in the Census extract to discuss some of the following issues:

- the large families and number of people living in one household
- the reasons why there is no one over the age of 50
- living conditions
- the lack of skilled employment (oakum pickers picked the fibres from rope ends to fill gaps between ships' planks to keep them watertight while dock lumpers unloaded cargo ships.
- birth control
- calculate the ages at which people emigrated.

Devise a Census and get pupils to carry out their own census in school.

Obtain copies of pages from a street directory from a library. Use these to:

- find occupations of residents
- find where dock workers lived
- try to find any ferry workers

6.1 Working on the Ferry

All staff are provided with uniforms. Below is the clothing issue:

Captain and Mate

Anorak, jacket, trousers and belt, shirt (white), shoes and socks, tie gloves, boiler suit, wellingtons.

Seaman/Collector

Anorak, trousers and belt, shirt (blue), shoes and socks, body warmer, wet suit, boiler suit, wellingtons, woolly gloves.

Engineers

Anorak, boiler suit, polo shirt, shoes or boots and socks.

Discuss the relationship between the uniforms and the jobs that each member of the crew does. Discuss the meanings or messages that uniforms transmit. What other types of people wear uniforms. The children could design a school uniform or redesign the existing school uniform taking into account the various activities they might undertake in the course of a day e.g. painting, PE, cookery, science etc.



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6.2 The following tables show the number of people employed by Mersey Ferries to run the ferries all year round. Use the tables to discuss issues of stereotyping.

Vessels

Position	Location	Male/Female
Ships Manager	Woodchurch	Male
Ships Manager	Mountwood	Male
Captain	Woodchurch	Male
Captain	Woodchurch	Male
Captain	Mountwood	Male
Captain	Mountwood	Male
Engineer	Woodchurch	Male
Engineer	Woodchurch	Male
Engineer	Woodchurch	Male
Engineer	Mountwood	Male
Engineer	Mountwood	Male
Engineer	Mountwood	Male
Mate	Woodchurch	Male
Mate	Woodchurch	Male
Mate	Woodchurch	Male
Mate	Mountwood	Male
Mate	Mountwood	Male
Mate	Mountwood	Male
Assist Engineer	Woodchurch	Male
Assist Engineer	Woodchurch	Male
Assist Engineer	Woodchurch	Male
Assist Engineer	Mountwood	Male
Assist Engineer	Mountwood	Male
Assist Engineer	Mountwood	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodchurch	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodchurch	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodchurch	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodchurch	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodchurch	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodchurch	Male
Seaman/Collector	Mountwood	Male
Seaman/Collector	Mountwood	Male
Seaman/Collector	Mountwood	Male
Seaman Collector	Mountwood	Male
Seaman/Collector	Mountwood	Male



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Terminals

Position		
Terminals Manager	Pier Head	Male
Terminals C/H	Pier Head	Female
Terminals C/H	Seacombe	Male
Terminals C/H	Seacombe	Male
Terminals C/H	Pier Head	Male
Terminals C/H	Pier Head	Male
Terminals C/H	Seacombe	Male
Terminals C/H	Woodside	Male
Terminals C/H	Woodside	Male
Terminals C/H	Woodside	Male
Terminals C/H	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Female
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Seacombe	Male
Seaman/Collector	Pier Head	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Collector	Woodside	Male
Seaman Security	DK	Male
Seaman Security	DK	Male
Seaman/Security	Woodside	Male
Seaman/Security	Woodside	Male
Sales Assist	Pier Head	Female
Cleaner	Seacombe	Female



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6.3 The rota below shows the various shifts which each member of the crew works. Discuss how life at home would have to be accommodated around these hours. Get the class to compile a profile of the hours people work in their family – this could involve interviewing grand parents.

Duty Rota For a Typical Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Captain	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	10-6	RD
Mate	7-2	7-2	RP	7-2	7-2	RD	RD
Ch. Eng.	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	RD	RD
A Eng	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	RD	RD
Seaman	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	RD	2-9
Seaman	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	7-2	RD	RD
Captain	9-9	RD	RP	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9
Mate	RD	RD	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9
Ch Eng	9-7	RD	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9
A Eng	2-9	RD	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9
Seaman	RD	RD	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9
Seaman	RD	RD	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9	2-9
Captain	2-9	2-9	7-2	9-9	9-9	7-2	7-2
Mate	2-9	2-9	RP	7-7	7-7	7-2	7-2
Ch Eng	2-9	2-9	RD	9-9	9-9	7-2	7-2
A Eng	2-9	2-9	RD	7-7	7-7	7-2	7-2
Seaman	2-9	2-9	RD	9-9	9-9	7-2	7-2
Seaman	2-9	2-9	RD	7-7	7-7	7-2	7-2
Captain	RD	RD	RP	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7
Mate	9-7	9-7	RP	RD	RD	Rd	RD
Ch Eng	9-7	9-7	9-7	RD	RD	RD	RD
A Eng	RD	RD	RD	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7
Seaman	9-7	9-7	9-7	RD	RD	2-9	RD
Seaman	10-6	RD	RD	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7
Captain	9-9	9-9	RP	RD	RD	RD	RD
Mate	7-7	7-7	RP	RD	7-7	RD	RD
Ch Eng	9-9	9-9	9-9	RD	RD	RD	RD
A Eng	7-7	7-7	7-7	RD	RD	RD	RD
Seaman	9-9	9-9	9-9	Rd	RD	RD	RD
Seaman	7-7	7-7	7-7	2-9	RD	RD	RD

RD = Rest Day



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- 6.4 The extract below shows the number of people employed on a privateer ship. Privateers had permission from the government to attack any ship on the high sea that did not belong to an ally of Britain. The information could be used to compare the crew and working life of a privateer ship with a modern ferry.

Privateer Ship

On the quarter deck

The captain to command and whole
The Master to assist and work the ship accordingly to orders
A Midshipman to pass the word of command fore and aft
A Quarter-master at the gun and another at the helm
The First Marine Officer and two Musketeers
Three men for the two 3-ponders and a boy to fetch powder

Main Deck of Privateer Ship

On the main deck

The First Lieutenant to command the ten foremost guns

The Second Lieutenant to command the after most guns

A Gunner to assist and attend the fore top sail braces and work the ship forward according to orders

The Boatswain's Mate with two seamen to assist in working the ship and to repair the rigging

The Carpenter and his crew to attend the wings about the waters edge, fore and aft

Six men at each of the ten guns and a boy to fetch powder

The Boatswain to command, with two seamen to work the ship and repair the fore rigging.

Three men and a boy to fetch powder for the two 3-ponders

The second Marine Officer with nine Musketeers

In the barge upon the booms, the Third Marine Officer with eight Musketeers

In the maintop, five men with a midshipman at small arms to observe the conduct of the enemy

In the foretop, five men at small arms to repair the rigging

In the mizentop, three men at small arms to repair the rigging

In the powder room, the Gunner's Mate with an assistant to fill and hand the powder to the boy

In the cockpit, the Doctor and his mate

Extract from Gomer Williams, "History of the Liverpool Privateers" 1897



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- 6.5 The passage below illustrates the dedication of Mersey Ferries employees, some of whom worked for the ferries for many years. Use this information to promote a discussion among the children about working conditions and job satisfaction.

“Now let us briefly recall a few of the officials and employees of Woodside Ferry. A great record of service some have reached, and the boats have been manned by men able and loyal in the discharge of their duties – so perilous on occasion. Captain W Rome has now been retired some six years after putting in 40 years of service. He rose to be commander, then commodore. He took to the sea when a lad of 13 years, becoming an apprentice on a sailing ship of 778 tons, owned by Mr J Beazley of Birkenhead. He travelled far before joining the ferry service and had exciting experience during the Great War, when the Mersey was full of battleships, destroyers, camouflaged vessels and torpedo boats. It has been calculated that during his long ferry service he voyaged approximately 1,002,240 miles and carried upwards of 50,000,000 passengers without loss of life or limb, this sometimes in the teeth of northerly and southerly gales and through blinding fogs. Captain Milne is another, still hale and hearty, Woodside veteran, who put in over 44 years of service. Then there is Captain White, recently retired, who can boast of crossing the river 4000,000 times. He joined as a deck hand and rose to be commodore. Mr and Mrs White recently celebrated their golden wedding. Only recently has he passed away. Another veteran employee is Cullen of the luggage stage. He can boast of over 60 years service. Mr George Ryan too was a familiar figure at the pay gates. He died a year or so ago, aged 74 years. A great record his. He put in over 50 years at the ferry, working under no less than seven ferry manager. And before that his father put in twenty years service”.

Additional Information

Site Visits

The Merseyside Maritime Museum has a comprehensive exhibition on “Emigrants to a New World” which features a reconstructed ship with costumed actors in role play situations. A teacher’s pack relating to the exhibition is also available.

The Museum of Labour History features on audio visual display entitled “Merseyside – the People’s story’ and other displays concerning the history of the ordinary people of Liverpool.

Publications

Merseyside Maritime Museum – “Emigrants to a New World
National Museum & Galleries on Merseyside, 1986

Street Directories – available from both Wirral and Liverpool City Libraries

Population statistics can be obtained from the Planning Department of the local Council

Census returns can be consulted in the City or County Record Office

George Chandler “Victorian and Edwardian Liverpool and the North West from old photographs”, Batsford 1972.

Fictional:

Helen Forrester, “Twopence to cross the Mersey”
Bodley Head 1974

Helen Forrester, “By the Waters of Liverpool”, Bodley Head, 1981