

Middle class pleasures and the safe/dangers of surf bathing on the English South Coast 1921 -1937

Atlantic rollers are ideal for surf-riding, and this sport is becoming increasingly popular. Due to the perfect conditions Newquay is one of the few resorts in the country where this pastime can be enjoyed to the full. (Newquay on the Cornish Coast, 1936-1937: page unknown.)

This extract from a Newquay guide book could have been written in the early 1960s when, according to established thought surfing was introduced to these shores by Australian lifeguards (Holmes and Wilson, 1994). However, this quotation is taken from Newquay on the Cornish Coast; a guidebook published 1936-1937. Surf bathing was a leisure pastime enjoyed along the south coast of England in the inter war years and up to the early '60s when its popularity waned in favour of the stand up surfing which we know today. The term 'surf bathing' originates from the description of swimming on the in Devon and Cornwall as 'bathing'. Surfing was associated with swimming and therefore became known as 'surf bathing'. 'Surf bathing' was conflated in the 1940s to 'surfing'. Surf bathing was also known as 'Cornish surfing' in North Devon, 'Surf Riding' in Cornwall and paddleboarding.

This paper reports on the results of my research into surf bathing as a holiday pastime between 1921 to 1937¹. These dates are not arbitrary; 1921 is the earliest date for substantial recorded evidence of surfingⁱ. By 1937 political and cultural changes were in motion which would change holidaymaking.

Legislation changed the culture and potential practice of holidaymaking when

¹ Surfing took place before 1921, in 1904, for instance, the Barnstaple and North Devon Museum holds a photograph of Mr Braddock and his surfboard. However there is no supporting material to date to support the premise that surf bathing between 1904-1921 was widespread. My decision to limit research to 1937 results from the complications arising from the onset of the Second World War with the consequent closure of many beaches.

in November 1938, The Holidays with Pay Act came into force. The Holidays with Pay Act enabled nine million workers earning up to £250 per year to take a holiday in principle, although Walton (2000) notes that the holiday making habit took some time to become embedded within British culture (Walton, 2000: p. 60). The changes wrought by World War Two in 1939 also impacted on the beach. Many beaches were closed or mined². So 1937 is a useful cut off date. The complex changes on the British beach after the War would present a different paper. The aim of this paper is to explore the ways in which British surfing was represented in a range of materials produced by the tourist industry along the south coast. To enable a better understanding of the tourist's point of view and of society within this period, I also use materials kindly donated by surfers such as photographs, letters and interviews of surfers' experiences of holidays and day trips to the beach in this era.

The map (Fig 1) shows the locations in which I discovered evidence of surfing. Most tend to cluster around North Cornwall and North Devon, although there is also evidence that surf bathing took place on Guernsey at this time. Most of the holiday materials originate from Newquay which seemed to promote the joys of surf bathing much more aggressively than any other seaside resort. It is not beyond the bounds of possibilities that tourists visiting the south coast might well have attempted surfing in other locales, in fact wherever the waves were suitable. However, to date I have uncovered no evidence to corroborate this notion. It is important to note that many local

² Two surfers corroborated this: "I was picnicking with the family on Fistral Beach when we were turned off as the War Ministry reps. Came to fix poles all across the beach for defence measures." (Kathleen, 5.5.01)

"The war II entirely ended this idyllic period, all huts went and for years too dangerous after WWII (bombs missiles??)." (Pamela, letter 05.07.01)

people surfed and their voices must also be accounted for in any discussion of surf bathing in this era, for it is they who demonstrated what surf bathing on the beach, wrote 'how to...' booklets, hired surfboards, or constructed surf boards to sell to tourists.

Surf bathing in the early twentieth century was an activity supported and promoted by a developing tourist infrastructure, however, it was quite different from modern surfboard riding. First, the surfboards were: 'flat and made from plywood, squared at the body end and rounded at the other end, sometimes this end had a slight upward curve.' (Susan, letter, 26th August, 2001)

Second, one did not stand up on the surfboard:

The expert rider takes off lying prone on his surfboard on the crest of a wave that is just breaking, and providing his timing is correct he will get a run of anything up to a hundred yards, at a speed of ten to fifteen miles an hour.

(Newquay on the Cornish Coast, 1936: page unknown)

Third, the surfer did not surf in deep waters. This aspect of surfing is emphasised in most of the guidebooks, 'Surf Riding makes a particular appeal to non-swimmers as it is never necessary to go into deep water.' (Newquay Guidebook, 1933: p. 17) I argue that this aspect of surf bathing is of crucial importance in its longevity and promotion as a holiday activity. Last, it was not a subcultural activity and was enjoyed by everyone: "...most people surfed – it was just the normal thing to do and accepted by all". (Susan, 24.09.01)

This latter aspect is inferred by the lack of explanation when referring to surfing in most of the guidebooks consulted.

Although there were no lessons to teach the art of surf bathing, local people often promoted surfing by example, holiday makers seeing them wished to try the sport: "...we just 'picked up' surfing by watching our elders and practicing till we got the hang of it."(Susan, letter, 24.09.01), "We taught ourselves how to surf and we were jolly good at it."(Priscilla, interview August 2001). Local children especially enjoyed playing on the beach all day. Surfing was regarded by them as a leisure activity as in Priscilla's "Enid Blyton-esque" account of summer outings in the late 1920s in North Devon:

I started surfing when I was about five or six. We had one bike between four of us with my sister Helen on a carrier. We'd tow a huge pram. My sister [Jane] would sit in the pram and I would sit on her lap. We would go up to Saunton ...and when we finished we had to fill the pram with sticks for my mother. We used to hire a surfboard from the beach café in Saunton...[we would]...stay in the sea for hours and hours. (Priscilla, Devon, 23.07.01)

Surfing was part of a family holiday experience

Generally speaking surfing on North Devon beaches was a family recreation activity popular with holidaymakers in the days when their main holiday of the year would be a couple of weeks by the seaside. (email, James, 1.03.01)

Surfing was also enjoyed by young couples and younger adults on an informal holiday. Dr Dawson and his wife travelled from Blackpool to Porth Bay, North

Cornwall most years in the 1920s and 30s. There they stayed with friends at the Porth Hotel and took part in a range of activities from visiting local historic sights to playing tennis tournaments organised by the hotel. A cheaper option to a hotel might be to lodge with friends, at a boarding house or in a chalet on the beach. Pamela sent holiday photographs of Saunton Sands dated 1936 and featuring, "...my mother aged 26 in the surfboard snap. The others are some of a group depicting a very jolly holiday of friends at the...family hut in the dunes." (Pamela, letter 5th July, 2001)



Pamela's mother aged 26, 1936, at Saunton Sands, North Devon. Copyright courtesy of Pamela, Instow, North Devon.

Pamela's mother aged 26 at the 'family hut', Saunton Sands, North Devon. Copyright courtesy of Pamela, Instow, North Devon.



In this instance the family hut might be one of the growing number of informal types of holiday provision, 'plotland settlements' which Walton (2000) reports sprang up also on the south coast from the beginning of the twentieth century. These developments were: "...unplanned, self-built knots and straggles of

seasonally occupied dwellings..." facilitated by the break up of large estates (Walton, 2000: p. 36). These types of holidays emphasised healthy outdoor activities without the impositions placed upon the holidaymaker of the seaside landlady.

My first encounter with surf bathing was on a trip to Newquay 2000 when I discovered postcards featuring surfers and their surfboards dated 1921 and 1922 (these are discussed at length below). Intrigued by the revelation that surfing occurred before the 1950s, I decided to research the subject. But how to begin...?

'First catch your surfer...'

Materials used in this study originated from a number of primary sources; holiday photographs, tourist materials and correspondence. The fragmentary nature and lack of cohesive written evidence meant that it was important to interview surfers or surfers' relations about holidaying on the south coast in the early twentieth century. The ahistorical nature of and lack of literature about surf culture suggested that a qualitative study based on extensive fieldwork might be a more appropriate method of inquiry. Surfers were contacted by two main methods: writing to local media and less successfully, snowball sampling which involves making contact with a key informant who might be able to provide other contacts (Gilchrist, 1992). Of the former, emails or letters were sent to local newspapers and radio stations asking people in the area whether they had any memories of surf bathing. This method was more useful than snowball sampling for a number of reasons. Snowball sampling's strength is in its identification of social contacts in

communities which are difficult to access or discover (Kane, *et al* : 1985), however, it soon became apparent that in the early twentieth century surf bathing was not a subcultural activity. Consequently there were few key contacts to identify other surfers. However, Barnstaple and North Devon Museum had the names of some surfers in the area whom I was able to interview. To contain the scope of the research, I interviewed or wrote to twenty surfers. These interviews would be of a non-random nature, research which is not based upon statistics, and in some cases accidental. The use of non-random sampling is the greatest drawback in this research as any conclusions can only be tentative. Interviews were semi-structured using open questions to allow the respondents to elaborate and describe their experiences and culture without too much overt direction. Open questions also allow the interviewer a more flexible approach in which to explore certain areas in depth should the need arise which may: '...result in unexpected or unanticipated answers which may suggest hitherto unthought-of relationships or hypotheses.' (Cohen and Manion: 1989, 313)

Other materials used to sketch in a picture of tourism and surfing in the early twentieth century were obtained from museums and local studies archives and local history societies. Guidebooks and postcards were obtained from second hand bookshops and book fairs. To give as accurate a picture as possible the information presented in this article derives from two or more sources which closely corroborate each other. Nevertheless, there remain gaps in the information; How did surfing arrive in England and at what date? What happened to surfing between 1904 and 1921? Although using a

discursive analysis the question of the historical facts about surfing are less important than how a perception of surfing was constructed through cultural representations. The overwhelming evidence from surfers' interviews and letters tend to indicate surfing was constructed through tourism. The analysis is predicated on the notion of surfing as one activity on offer through the tourist infrastructure on the South coast. Consequently, perhaps the most useful approach is suggested by Culler who proposes:

...the tourist is interested in everything as a sign of itself...All over the world the unsung army of semioticians, the tourists, are fanning out in search of the signs of Frenchness, typical, Italian behaviour...traditional English pubs.³

As Culler notes, tourists who visited these locales collect what they regard as significant about the place. However, it is not just a one-way process, for the place must promote an aspect of itself which is unique or special about the locale. This sign is manufactured to be collected in photographs, postcards or film, or experienced by the tourist. Using semiotic analysis it is possible to argue that surf bathing was a sign connoting either North Cornwall or North Devon. The analysis considers the written and the uttered word but also the image, especially the advertising image, which might be considered as important as the word (Dyer, 1928). In a semiotic analysis it is important to consider the neutrality of the beach as space until it is represented. Once it is represented, it is imbued with cultural meaning, a meaning related to its relationship with ideological phenomena, what Barthes argues is a cultural myth (Barthes,).

³ Culler, 1981: "The Semiotics of Tourism" in American Journal of Sociology 1; 127-140, p127.

Signs, however, cannot be isolated from their historical context. Foucault (1972) warns against limiting an analysis to signs, arguing that signs may be useful, but in a discursive context. Discourses should not be regarded as,

...groups of signs (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Of course discourses are composed of signs: but what they do is more than use those signs to designate things. It is more that renders them irreducible to language (langue) and to speech (parole). It is this 'more' that we must reveal and describe." (Foucault, 1972: p.49)

Foucault argues that a sign cannot be reduced to either a mere utterance or a set of grammatical rules. It is much more than this for it is constructed through institutionally based knowledges. It is useful therefore to study the signs associated with the beach, the sea, and surfing within the context of discursive structures which shape perceptions and understanding of the phenomena.

Surf bathing must be located within discourses relating to tourism and holidays for it is in these discourses that the beach and sea are identified as potential tourist destinations. However, when using a discursive framework to analyse a social phenomenon or object, it is not the historically empirical evidence of the object, but the context of its representation and what is said about it, which is more important. This

enables an identification of the ways in which an object might come into view and once identified, how it is altered. Foucault gives 'madness' as an example in making a discursive analysis:

...the problem arises of knowing whether the unity of a discourse is based not so much on the permanence and uniqueness of an object as on the space in which various objects emerge and are continuously transformed. (Foucault, 1969: 32)

It is not the historical or cultural 'fact' of madness which concerns Foucault so much as how it has been described or perceived within the historical and cultural moment. Similarly, a discursive study of the beach will examine the perceptions and the ways in which this potentially neutral space is represented.

The notion of the beach is of a space;

...in which the pleasure principle is given free rein, the certainties of authority are diluted, and the usual constraints on behaviour are suspended, however provisionally, to give a broader acceptability to, or at least tolerance of, variety of sexual partners and practices, or unscheduled bodily exposure...(Walton, 2000: pp. 3-4)

The beach is therefore a space in which the normal processes of social behaviour are temporarily suspended. In his semiotic analysis of the

Australian beach Fiske (1991) suggests that the beach is a site in which the norms of social behaviour are suspended because of its liminality. Liminality results from the beach's ambiguity as a space which connotes neither land nor sea, work nor play, nature nor culture. However, the notion that the sea might be acceptable as a holiday destination is the result, as Corbin (1992) argues, of an historical shift in cultural values and the perception of the sea. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, the beach was associated with the dangers of sea monsters, divine retribution and disease. Travel was not to be undertaken lightly due to the poor transport infrastructure, little seaside villages were only accessible on a rough track, often down dangerous inclines. Once at the seaside there was little to attract the tourist as it was regarded as a site of work where fishermen plied their livelihood. There were also the dangers of unlawful elements and the harmful effects of the sea. The seaside at this time was constructed through conflicting medical discourses. It was popularly considered to have been responsible for the spread of epidemics and plague, a reflection of Medieval fears. It was also believed that in summer the air of the beach would open up the pores of the unwary traveller making them susceptible to saline effluvia, a moist, insidious mist which would induce minor ailments. Not only was the air of the beach unsafe, as most people could not swim, it was dangerous to venture into the sea.

Not all seaside towns, however, were regarded as places of work or sites of dread. As early as 1626 Mrs Farrow discovered the potential curative effects of spring water in Scarborough. This led to the development of Scarborough and a number of other seaside towns as health spas for the rich. In 1667 Dr

Robert Wittie tried the mineral waters and announced their beneficial properties in curing apoplexy, nervous disorders and vertigo amongst other complaints. In History of Cold Bathing (1702) Sir John Floyer recommended sea water to cure scabies and minor skin ailments⁴. By the early eighteenth century medical opinion began to revise its ideas about the dangers of the seaside and medical practitioners recommended the beach as a health-giving environment but only at certain times under specific conditions. November was a favoured month when a 'dip' in the sea – after medical advice - would be beneficial.

It is, however, the romantic movement and the rise in the middle classes which lead to an active seeking out of the beach in the late eighteenth century (Lenček and Bosker, 1999). The romantic sensibility found refuge from the deadening effects of city life in the contemplation of nature, the sublime and the primitive. The beach seemed the ideal location. Romantic poets such as Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron and the French poet Valéry enjoyed the thrill of swimming, likening the sensation to orgasm. This was instrumental in changing attitudes towards the seaside, sexualising the beach, a site of potential social transgression and a place in which one could experience thrills and the danger of the sea.

All that was needed to complete the evolution of the modern notion of the beach was the addition of the pleasure principle. This last element of a modern notion of the English beach was provided when holiday provision and

⁴ A more extensive discussion of medicinal and health benefits of immersion in and drinking of sea water ,may be found in Walton,1983: pp. 11-12.

transport became available to all classes of city dwellers. These two elements developed in the nineteenth century. Walton (1983) lists three ways in which the advent of railways in the 1830s and 1840s boosted the development of seaside resorts, first the journey became faster, cheaper and more comfortable, railways encouraged a holidaying inclination making the notion of going away for up to a week acceptable to poorer or less secure middle classes and they contributed to the democratisation of tourism enabling the working class to afford cheaper transport. The notion of holidaying however, needed legislation to enable more people to take time off work. Regular, if not paid holidays were proposed for everyone in the Bank Holiday Act (1871), which gave a fixed number of holidays over Christmas, Easter etc.

These social changes lead to the organised day trip to seaside resorts such as Blackpool (Walton: 1983). The seaside became the natural choice for crowds of holidaymakers to escape from inner city squalor: 'They came not for their health, to decipher nature's code, or for spirituality, but for sheer delight.' (Lenčeck and Bosker, 1999: p. 109) By the early twentieth century England boasted, "...a system of coastal resorts whose scale and complexity was unmatched anywhere else in the world (Walton, 2000: p.27). In 1911, Walton estimates there were a hundred 'substantial seaside resorts' in England and Wales.

The English seaside resort in the early twentieth century was constructed through medical, romantic, tourist, nationalistic and physiological discourses.

The beach was a space for fun and pleasure: the seaside a luscious juxtaposition of the sophistication and squalor of the city with the beautiful yet primitive conditions of the countryside. However, despite the restrictions on dress and safety, pleasure and hedonism were prominent features of beach culture (Shields, 1990). This was due to similar features of holiday and play discourses. Games and play, according to Inglis (2001), were a central part of holiday discourse. Play and games are voluntary activities, for which specific time and space is put aside:

Games...are a formal, rule-governed family of practices, the meaning of which is to deny the rule of rules and to enjoy irresponsibility. (Inglis, 2001:73)

These notions fit into beach culture very comfortably as they allow different types of behaviour from the social 'norm'⁵. Shields, Walton (2000) and Inglis (1999) note that different behaviour was acceptable on the beach where people dined al fresco, wore less formal clothing, played and did not conform to the routines of everyday life. Yet, at the same time, the beach was an ideal location for a family outing or holiday. However, Morgan and Pritchard (1999) warn that the 'time out' or work time associated with play does not mean that notions of power cannot exist in relation to holiday and beach culture. The beach allows a relaxing of social conventions but there is an element of control by national and local government. This control is explicit in national legislature, the ways in which local government attracted their target audiences to the resorts and once there the ways in which tourists were

⁵ There is a large body of philosophical debate about the nature of play in sport which I am unable to discuss here. However the following articles are of importance in the literature about play and sport: Schmitz, who argues that play is central to an understanding of sport, Johan Huizinga 'The Nature of Play', play is at the root of most forms of cultural life and Caillois who classifies the different types of play.

entertained. Local government tactics encouraged certain people to visit their resorts and class is inextricably bound up with the regulation of the beach:

Tourism thus reflects and reinforces divisions rooted outside the experience itself. Within tourism, the seaside is an arena where middle-class manipulations of access to resorts and the policing of working-class tourism behaviour can be identified and investigated. In particular, access to the seaside was controlled by a number of factors, including development of strategies by local elites to maintain resort 'social tone'. (Morgan and Pritchard, 1999: p. 7)

Beaches in the early part of the twentieth century tended to be class specific, so Blackpool would be associated with the working classes because of the numbers of Northern factory workers who holidayed there in Wakes Weeks in the 19th century⁶. Conversely, Cornish and North Devon beaches tended to be associated with the middle classes who often travelled from London eager to benefit from a healthy environment. This led to the growth of seaside resorts such as Margate and Ramsgate which were more upmarket. Newquay and North Cornwall was a getaway resort first for the upper classes and increasingly for the middle classes at the beginning of the 20th century. The growth of the middle classes was also a factor in the steady increase of tourism at the beginning of the 20th century. However, I would like to stress McKibbin's proviso of the designation of middle class. Middle classes cannot be tied to either an annual income or profession. Contemporary assumptions

⁶ This is extremely well documented in Chapter 2, Walton, 1983.

in the 1920s about what defined middle class in major surveys revolved around income, £250 per annum. Using this figure as the basis for calculation it was estimated that 13-15% of the population was middle class. However, this ignored the notion that many minor clerical workers and tradespeople considered themselves middle class. McKibbon estimate the figure at 21.71% in 1921:

What mattered was occupation and the social aspirations and manners which occupation demanded. On this ground and one other – their very strong sense of not being working-class – those in clerical work must be regarded as middle class. (McKibbon, 1998: 46)

McKibbon uses these figures to argue that the inter-war years was a time when stable income and continuous employment meant that middle class affluence and disposable income was growing. Occupation alone was not the basis for an assumption of middle class status. For instance, one interviewee clearly regarded her background as upper middle class or upper class despite being very poor because her father was an army officer who was killed in the war. Her mother had to exist on a widow's pension with four children to feed. It is within the context of class specificity that the English seaside resort must be considered.

The Development and Promotion of the Seaside on the English South Coast in the Early Twentieth Century

Morgan and Prichard's analysis of the development of seaside resorts in North Devon (1999) and the ways in which concerns of local government and people shaped the development of resorts, is a useful starting point to an analysis of materials. The perceived difference between resorts catering for the middle classes and resorts catering for the working classes was that "Those who cater for the poor...want widespread publicity, communal services, holiday camps, day excursions, low prices..." (Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey, 1944: The Devon Tourist Trade, cited in Morgan and Pritchard, 1999: p. 62). Working class resources are associated with poverty hence the necessity of cheap mass entertainments and accommodation and this is in direct contrast with middle class desire for exclusivity, individuality and luxury. This sharp demarcation line between middle and working class provision tends to ignore the lower paid middle class worker and arises from the notion that resorts catered for only one class. However, many resorts catered for both middle and working classes, often these classes were scrupulously separated. In Scarborough, for instance there was a gate dividing the middle class district from the working class area. Lower paid middle class workers might also visit a resort such as Newquay but stay in cheaper boarding houses, or camp.

One way in which exclusivity was promoted was in the mention of aristocratic or upper class visitors to the resort. Newquay publicity, for instance constantly stresses the visit by The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Gloucester in 1921. Indeed, Newquay and Cornwall. The Handy 1/- Pocket Guide (1934) sells its attractions to its middle class audience emphasising the

exclusivity of the resort and its attractions whilst constructing a clear demarcation between itself and the working class resort:

This quaint little town which a few years ago was an unknown Cornish fishing village called Towan Blistra, is ideally situated amid all the grandeur of nature's beauty, untouched by the hand of man. People coming to Newquay...and expecting to find a miniature Blackpool or Southend will be sadly disappointed. But what Newquay lacks in the way of Military Bands, Fair Grounds and Ice Rinks is more than compensated for by its unspoiled setting, and its unrivalled sources of enjoyment... (Funnell, 1934: p. 17)

The key selling point of both North Devon and North Cornwall to the middle classes was in physical isolation and the unspoilt coastline. This was partly a desire for the authentic holiday experience of the unspoilt, historic and traditional Devon or Cornwall experience. Whether a resort was developed or not resulted from two factors, access and the underpinning local economy. In North Devon, one of the main obstacles to resort development was in access to and safety on the beach. For instance, Woolacombe was developed but two miles up the coast Saunton Sands boasted a huge, unspoilt beach with one hotel, and remains much as it was in the 1930s⁷. A 1936 touring guidebook notes that Sidmouth, which was as popular as Brighton one hundred years previously, resisted the lure of commercialisation and is, "deliberately "shy" of railways, charabancs and holiday camps"

⁷ Morgan and Pritchard give as examples Seaton, Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton as resorts which were not developed (p. 67).

(Courtney, 1936: p. 35) The second factor in the development of seaside resorts was in their economic bases of local agriculture or the fishing industries. Tourist resorts in North Devon tended to originate from previous fishing villages which turned to tourism when their livelihood went into decline (Morgan and Pritchard, 1999: 65).

Tourism was dependent upon accessibility to resorts either by rail or road. The difficulty of access became a useful means by which municipal government regulated those who visited their resorts. Indeed, some municipal councils prevented the development of transport links in order to attract middle classes rather than the working classes and this 'enabled the district to preserve its character as a remote and secluded area...Until the advent of motor transport...' (The Land's End County Official Guide, 1933, cited in Braggs and Harris, 2000 : p.9). Braggs and Harris note that by the early 1930s car ownership had risen to 1.5 million and this doubled by 1939. Lack of access by rail to some of the more remote resorts attracted tourists in cars searching for the authentic Devon or Cornwall experience. One respondent for instance noted, 'We went [to Polzeath, Cornwall] by car – others would travel on occasional bus excursions. There were no trains to Polzeath (ever) but the nearest train would have been to Padstow.' (Susan, 24.09.01) Catherine also notes that her father, a family doctor in Blackpool, and her mother travelled to Newquay by car most of the early years of their marriage. Cars were catered for by touring guidebooks which listed tourist attractions and good hotels or boarding houses. One touring guidebook, Let's Halt Awhile in Devon and Cornwall (1936), notes the "quaint fishing villages"

between Sidmouth and Colyford whilst bemoaning the commercialisation of Tintagel where : "...King Arthur and his Knights would suffer from perpetual nightmare were they to see what you and I can see to-day – practically every home displaying boards advertising Bed and Breakfast 4/9, Bed and Breakfast 4/6, Bed and Breakfast 4/4..."Selfridges Bargain Basement" with a vengeance." (Courtney, 1936: p. 73.) Exclusivity was encouraged through the roads in North Devon and North Cornwall which were notoriously difficult to manoeuvre and required a: "...car with good brakes and a clean engine, an alert vision, and plenty of patience...because around every corner there is a new surprise – in the shape of either a hairpin bend, coupled with a steep gradient and necessitating a quick gear change.' (Ibid, 1936: p.85) Other perils of driving included bad signposting, gates blocking access to the beach, livestock on the roads and parking costs. Traffic queues were a growing problem in the 1930s and the south west experienced the worst traffic jams in the country (Walton, 2000: p. 80) Indeed, Catherine notes that access to the South West was difficult even in the 1950s because of the bottleneck in Exeter, "We went by car and quite often overnight and it was a long, long journey. We lived at Blackpool at the time and ...Exeter was a main feature point." (Catherine, interview, December, 2001) However, these tended to be positive incitements for middle class travellers keen to escape modern life in favour of the unspoiled and remote rural experience.

However, there is little doubt the most significant factor in the development of resorts was railway access. By the beginning of the twentieth century Walton (2000) notes that the more inaccessible parts of the South coast were being

opened up in Bude (1898), Padstow (1899) and a second line to Newquay (1905) (Walton, 2000: p. 74). Great Western Railways (GWR) also provided two new express services promoting tourism in the South West with the 'Cornishman' (1895) and 'The Cornish Riviera Express' (1904) Walton, 2000: p. 76). In 1923 the one hundred and twenty independent railway companies were restructured into four major companies; London, Midlands, Scottish (LMS), London, North East Railway (LNER), Great Western Railways (GWR) and Southern Railways (SR). It is the promotional materials released by Great Western Railways and Southern Railways that was so instrumental in shaping tourists' perceptions of Cornwall and Devon as for instance in the notion of the Cornish Riviera. At this time the Great Western Railways publicity manager was Felix J Pole who wrote several publications and articles for the press (Wilson, 1970). However, in 1924 the new manager William Henry Fraser introduced some innovative campaigns notably 'Go Great Western!' A scheme to cut expenditure was introduced by sharing publicity costs with local councils⁸. This imperative may have been prompted by the introduction of the 1921 Health and Pleasure Resorts Act which allowed local authorities to use monies generated by admission charges on holiday attractions for publicity. Sharing costs with local authorities, however, was a double-edged sword. On the positive side publicity costs were reduced and this proved beneficial in the early 1930s when poster production was doubled to 100,000 between 1932-1934 to counter an economic slump (Wilson, 1970: p. 76). Posters were the tourist's first encounter with the seaside and its attractions and from 1904 appeared in

⁸ This aspect of Great Western Railways marketing is meticulously documented in Morgan and Pritchard (1999) pp. 110-115.

railway coaches. They also provided prospective visitors in the cold, depressing city environment with the possibility of a golden, sun-drenched beach and all the joys of the hedonistic lifestyle.

However, as the councils shared in the costs they also had a say in the images and poster production and this proved detrimental to the types of images produced which as Wilson asserts were: 'often opposed to anything that smacked of the avant garde' (Wilson, 1970: p. 74). Images also might suffer from poor reproduction by printers prior to the late 1930s. By the 1930s advertising images had become more simplified to increase their impact although the trend for abstraction of the image as for instance in Purves LNER posters, did not reach GWR posters until the late 1930s, as Hewitt (1995) notes:

...resort authorities exerted considerable influence and the Great Western publicity suffered a corresponding lack of distinction. What contributed to GWR's rather mundane publicity decisions was the tendency of the company to leave design decisions to the printers who used their own artists or stock designs. (Hewitt, 1995: p. 299)

Therefore GWR posters in the 1930s tend to present a rather staid picture of the resorts in an often laboured image.

Guidebooks were another promotional tool in marketing strategies and many were published for several years featuring the same text with differing images. Guidebooks were provided for a range of target audiences. For instance railways might promote the attractions of resorts on their lines as in the very successful Holiday Haunts produced by GWR from 1905. Touring guidebooks as described above, were also produced for the discerning car owner, and guidebooks describing coastal paths were produced for ramblers. Guidebooks gave an account of what the local council perceived to be the main attractions of the resort to their target audiences and major themes of Cornish and Devon guidebooks might be the climate, historic past, the new and sports:

...moreover how the town councillors would have liked the rest of the country to perceive their town...A detailed study of this material reveals the features that must have been rated most highly in the minds of tourists in the twenties and thirties. It is quite surprising to learn that most seaside towns had an equable climate all year round. They were warm in winter and had plenty of sun in summer, although the heat was never oppressive.

(Braggs and Harris, 2000: p.12)

Guidebooks were also subjected to council meddling, often resulting in a confusing picture of the joys of the seaside resorts. In a 1930 guidebook Newquay. A short Account of its attractions a conflicting, committee produced description of the Newquay sands attempts to cover all eventualities: "The

cleanliness, the softness yet firmness of these sands is unequalled...”

(Newquay Guide Committee, 1930: p.12)

The climate was a recurring concern in guidebooks to counter the lure of what was regarded as Cornwall and Devon’s major rivals on the continent. On Cornish beaches for instance:

Nowhere else was the sun so strong or the skies so clear. Its climate was ideal. All the guidebooks tell us it was warmer in Cornwall in winter than in most Mediterranean resorts. You can even swim in the sea in winter.’ (Braggs and Harris, 2000: p. 33)

Visions of sun-kissed beaches appealed to the craze for sunbathing which had become more popular in the 1920s. The Chairman of the Sunlight League going so far as to assert that “...sunlight is Nature’s universal disinfectant, as well as a stimulant and tonic.” (cited in Walton, 2000: p.100).

It is possible to identify discourses constructing the beach in guidebooks of the 1920s and 1930s such as nationalism and the medicinal. In The Cornish Riviera (1924) for instance, Felix Pole gives a number of reasons for the superiority of Cornwall over foreign resorts, citing the research findings of Dr. Paris, President of the Royal College of Physicians in 1846-1856 as supporting evidence. Dr Paris asserts the superiority of the climate and sea levels in Cornwall over its continental rivals. Moreover, as Cornwall is in England travel is less tiring for the invalid.

Cornish and Devon guidebooks highlighted the attractions resorts had to offer which were specifically designed to attract the middle classes. Golf and

tennis were invariably on offer in every resort. In this cultural climate English resorts began to promote surfing as a south coast joy.

Surfing on the South Coast 1921-1937: the safe/danger of fun and thrills.

As discussed above, any representation cannot be wrenched from its mythic or rhetorical construction within discourses. Surfing cannot, therefore, be understood except as a part of tourist and therefore global discourses and these elements continuously surface in its representations either through travel texts or surfers' stories. To analyse the construction of surfing on the early twentieth century south coast it is therefore crucial to reflect upon representations of surf bathing within the context of the sea and the beach. Surf bathing is a site in which discourses constructing the sea and the land – usually represented as binary oppositions - clash. Representations of the surfer negotiate the encounter of the opposing binaries of the sea and the land. How tourist discourses negotiate this terrain indicates potential unease in the discourse. The most prevalent juxtaposition is that of the safe/danger. Surfing in holiday literature, representations and surfers' interviews focuses on the safety aspect of surfing whilst playing down the dangerous aspects of the activity. In his study of the seaside holiday Inglis (2001) identifies ten principles constructing our notion of the holiday. These include the desire of a return to nature, return to a well-loved place, anticipation of the holiday experience as different from home (unheimlich), bracketed time, play, improvement of the mind, body and soul, carnival experience, luxury/hardship, the construction of myth/story in the memory and the safe/dangers inherent in the holiday experience. The seaside is the ideal location for the tourist to enjoy these pleasures. However, none is more problematic than the

safe/danger for it must propose an element of thrill whilst making the activity as safe as possible.

Three themes of the safe/danger binary may be identified in texts concerning surf bathing: the social, the moral and the physical. These are linked with notions of the sea or the beach and then become located in utterances concerning surf bathing. The origins of surfing in the Pacific Islands posed an implicit moral danger in its inclusion into tourist discourse. Surfing is believed to have originated from the Pacific Islands, most notably Hawaii where it was a part of the religious, hierarchical and social fabric known as kapu. Within this system surfing was associated with gambling, sex and social hierarchy. (Olsen: 1989). However, missionaries arriving in Hawaii from the 1820s onwards disapproved of the association of surfing with licentious behaviour. In Kepelino's Traditions of Hawai'i, Kepelino Keauokalani described the Hawaiian attitude to surfing prior to Christianity:

All thought of work is at the end, only that of sport is left.
The wife may go hungry, the children, the whole family,
but the head of the house does not care. He is all for
sport, that is his food. All day there is nothing but surfing.
Many go out surfing as early as four in the morning-men,
women, children. There is fine sport; then from innocent
pleasure they turn to evil pleasures; so it goes! (SurfArt.
Com The History of Surfing: 5.07.03)

Surfing is associated with pleasure and irresponsibility and these two associations develop in the representations of surfing and surfers in texts up to the present day, although, they are represented through different discourses. In Hawaii, surfing is constructed through religious and mythic discourses. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, surfing was subsumed into consumer, global and tourist discourses. This was the result of its revival in Hawaii as a tourist attraction from the late nineteenth century and subsequent commodification within consumer culture. Surfing as an activity was developed by the activities of individuals such as George Freeth and Duke Kahanamoku who promoted surfing especially in California and Australia. Freeth and Kahanamoku gave surfing demonstrations in California and Freshwater, Australia in the early part of the twentieth century. Surfing became an integral part of beach culture in California and down much of the eastern coast and Perth in Australia by the early 1920s (Booth, Young, Pearson).

In Britain stand up surfing happened only in a few isolated cases⁹. Most people travelling to the south coast would have known about surf bathing from their first encounter with surf bathing images on railway posters and in guidebooks. Indeed, the connection between Hawaii and surfing is acknowledged in a guidebook published by Southern Railway, Devon and Cornish Days by E. P. Bennett c. 1930. An extract devoted to Woolacombe, North Devon asserts:

⁹ Indeed there is also an English connection with Duke Kahanamoku. Jimmy Dix wrote to Duke Kahanamoku in the 1930s asking him about the dimensions of surfboards. In response Kahanamoku sent a twelve foot wooden board, 'To the people of Great Britain...'. The board was copied by Papino 'Pip' Staffieri a resident of Newquay.

Given reasonable luck, when the tide is behaving itself and is “in”, there will be breakers about noon. Don’t know why we get the breakers in this quiet place, but we do...It wouldn’t be half so much fun if we didn’t get them because it would mean no surf-bathing. All very well for those Hawaiians, or whatever they call themselves, to imagine they hold the field for surfbatics. You should see some of the fellers – and the girls. They’re marv’lous.

(Bennett, c.1930: p.24.)

The earliest images and references of surfing in Britain originate from photographs relating to colonial discourse, travel posters and guidebooks. The earliest images discovered feature surfers at Newquay 1921-1922. The images show surfers in what was to become an iconic image in surf culture; featuring the relationship and centrality of the surfboard. In the photographs surfers stand on the beach with their surfboards either by their side, behind them or they peep out from behind their boards. Their boards, however, are coffin lids. It is not known whether these surfers rode the boards standing up or on their stomachs. The three photographs are dated 1921-2 and have been issued as postcards for sale around Newquay. According to the postcards surfers learned how to surf from Australian soldiers World War One – this has yet to be corroborated.

Stories of surfing on coffin lids, however, is a recurring theme in these early representations of surfing. Interviewees recount stories of surfing on coffin

lids from the late 1920s, again these stories feature cross cultural and colonial links. Jane writes that she began surfing in North Devon, 1928 when:

Some old friends returned to Braunton (from either Malta or Gibraltar) and found to their horror that there was no surfing at Saunton or Croyde Bay, so, full of “Good ideas” we children cycled to the local undertakers and borrowed coffin lids. (Jane, letter 2001)

The colonial cross cultural link is noted too by Susan (Tunbridge Wells) who holidayed in Croyde, North Devon 1927-8 with her mother and sister when:

... who should turn up but a couple of cousins from Australia who took one look at the breakers in the sea and were amazed to see no surfing. Without any loss of time they went to see the local village carpenter and supervised the making of two wooden surfboards and took us all down to learn how to surf...it is my belief that this effort was the origin of British surfing. (Susan, 1999)

By the 1930s the references to Hawaii and surfing's exotic origins and stories of coffin lids are erased in favour of pleasure and play aspects. The tourist industry began to market surfing with more intensity, featuring pictures of happy surfers on posters and describing the joys of playing in the water in

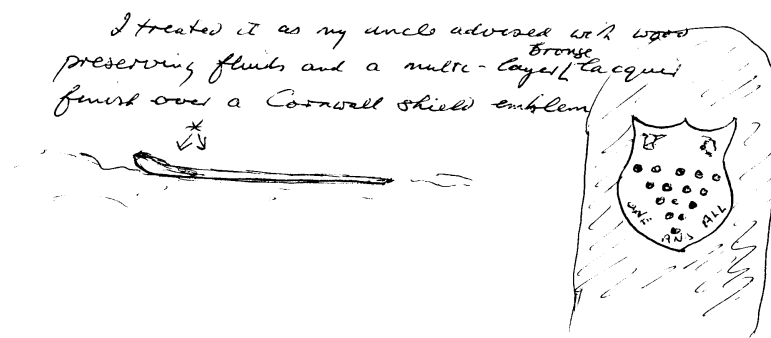
their guidebooks. Explicit advertising was augmented by supporting the activity in affiliation with resort facilities.

Surfing was promoted as an attraction of a seaside resort and the tourist infrastructure promoted the activity by the accessibility of surfboards and advertising materials. Local shops and hotels hired out boards for approximately one shilling in the early thirties to ten- fifteen shillings in the fifties. Mrs Osmant and Barrie from Plymstock mention Keats, the Beach Shop at Croyde which looked like a garden shed, sold ice creams and had surfboards for hire propped up against the wall. Susan writes:

Plain plywood boards were available quite cheaply, possibly ten shillings or fifteen shillings in those days...Some people just varnished them but many painted them, as we did with patterns or initials. The guests of some hotels would have the use of the hotel boards which had the hotel name painted on it." (Susan, 24.09.01)

Often local people would get a relative, the village carpenter with a steamer or blacksmith to make them a board. Barrie writes that, "for a modest fee he [my uncle] made me a full-size board from 4 or 5 ply wood, beautifully crafted and bevelled with...an upward curving "prow", which was all the rage at the time¹⁰." Barrie waterproofed the board and finished it off with a bronze lacquer finish over the Cornish Shield (Fig).

¹⁰ A surfer and director of a timber business in Guernsey wrote a letter about the manufacture of boards. If the board was made in a factory or by a tradesman a steamer might be used to curve the end of the board. The steamer, "...held approximately one third of the strip of



Local shops also sold books on how to surf to the holidaymaker. There is a good example of an early attempt at cross media promotion in the tie in between a book and a surfboard in Newquay and Cornwall: the handy one shilling pocket guide in which the tourist is exhorted to buy a copy of The Art of Surf Riding from the Cornish Bookshop. This book is free, however, if you buy the “Crest Rider “ surfboard. The Crest Rider’s credentials are impeccable for it is, “Made by Surf Board specialists”. The advert boasts that it is, “A Surfing-board specially made to beat the Atlantic breakers.” (Funnell, 1934: p. 30) In addition to the home grown surfboards, in 1934 the surf plane was introduced to the beaches of North Cornwall. Its arrival was heralded in the Newquay Express:

The new surf plane [sic] is a new surfing device invented by a Sydney doctor and used with great success on Bondi Beach. It was introduced into England for the first time last Sunday on Tolcarne Beach. The surf plane is of rubberised fabric, a rubber oblong 'bag' corrugated and designed scientifically so that it can do all the work of a

plywood normally no more than 3/8 inch thick with the round end in the clamp to induce a curve...steam was injected for a period of approximately twelve hours.”

surfboard, and more. (Newquay Express, 21st June 1934)¹¹

Significantly, although the Surfplane was readily introduced to Newquay at this time, the more prevalent surfboard riding in which the surfer stood on the board, so popular in Australia at this time did not travel to Newquay. A tentative argument for the prevailing popularity of surf bathing might be that tourist discourse deterred the adoption of stand up surfing.

In addition to the implicit promotion of surfing from tourist infrastructure, there is advertising but not of surfing itself, rather it is an oblique promotion linked with the seaside resort, area or railway. Advertising representations of surf bathing in the 1920s to 1930s tend to fall into two types; family activity or young people's activity. In North Devon, the family holiday is stressed, however, in Newquay and North Cornwall in the 1930s, target audiences appeared to be young people. Newquay in particular seemed intent on associating itself with surf bathing. In the early 1930s surfers appear on the covers of guidebooks and GWR posters. The images tend to stress women surfers, although within the discourse of advertising in this era, this is of little surprise. In the early 1930s Newquay publicity material was generated by local artist William Burbidge. Burbidge was a surfer as noted in The Newquay Express, 25th August 1927:

The Surf Bathers have been having a great time at
Newquay recently, the fine great curling waves have

¹¹ The Surfplane was invented by Dr Ernest Smithers of Bronte, Sydney in December 1933. It therefore appeared on the Newquay beach soon after its introduction in Australia. (Thoms, 2000: p.40)

issued a very alluring invitation to make use of their power and ride of them on planks. The consequence is that the trade in surf boats [sic] is booming tremendously and the surf bathers are gaining recruits daily. It is possible that Mr Burbridge's capital pastime of surf bathing at Newquay has acted as a stimulus.

The last sentence of the quotation infers that Burbidge had more of a link to the surfing industry than as an artist. It is likely that Burbidge used his knowledge of surfing to impart the freedom and carefree nature of the activity, using mainly pretty girls as the main emphasis in the image to attract younger people.

Poster and guidebook images represent surfers as young, healthy, happy and active. Often the composition favours a healthy looking young girl either about to enter the water, surfing or leaving the water. Often the surfer gazes out at the audience as if in invitation as in the double page spread of the 1932 Newquay guidebook (see below). The stress on the images is in the enjoyment of surfing and the pleasures of the ocean. Often the same image, is used for the poster and the guidebook as in 1931 and 1932. William Burbidge also recycled images as in a double page spread in the 1932 guidebook in which he uses the same image but updates the swimwear. In the 1931 painting the surfers wear costumes dating from the 1920s with brightly coloured headscarves tied at the back. The 1932 image is much cleaner. The old fashioned swimwear covering the shoulders is replaced by a

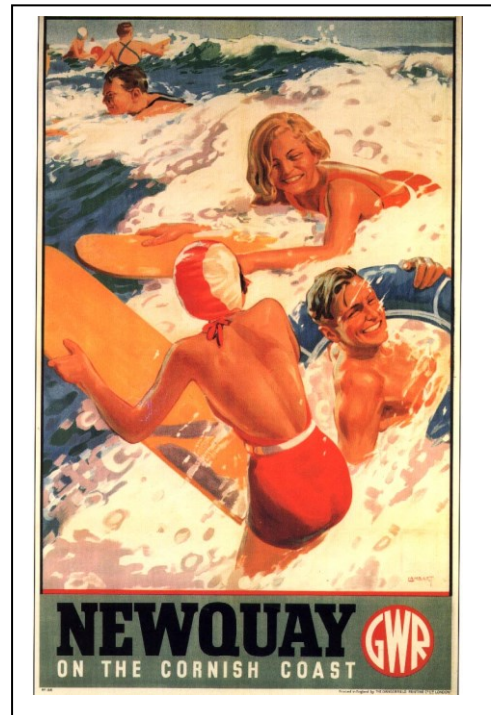
simple red costume with shoulder straps. The surfers' bandanas have been replaced by swimming caps and the surfer in the foreground, sporting a jaunty bob, turns her smiling face towards the imagined audience as if inviting them to join her. The double page spread demonstrates a much more relaxed attitude in its execution.

A more creative image was produced in 1937 by Alfred Lambart who designed materials for GWR, LNER and LMS and was a book illustrator. Lambart produced an image of surfbathers in Newquay which is much removed from Burbidge's stiff surf maidens. Here the surfers are lightly suntanned, wearing modern swimwear.

The picture is a close

cropped, diagonal composition which

emphasises the spontaneity and vertigo of surfing. It is perhaps an indication of GWR's greater commitment to publicity materials that they seemed now to be employing more accomplished artists.



However, an image from the Newquay guidebook of 1933, by an unknown artist infers another element of holidaying other than hedonism and fun. The image depicts a pretty, impossibly long-legged surfer girl wearing a figure hugging red costume emerging from the water. Burbidge's images of surfers were fairly staid, their bodies virtually enveloped by the ocean. Here the

surfer's body is on display. This image of the semi naked body on the beach would be risqué at this time when the notion of the undressed body and the dangers associated with the carnivalesque elements of beach culture were only recently being revised. At the beginning of the twentieth century there was debate on whether segregation of the sexes on the beach was advisable. Indeed, bathing machines and gender segregation at the beginning of the twentieth century was already in decline. By the late 1920s informal dress on the beach was increasingly accepted. In 1927 a call for laws preventing undressing on beaches by MP Colonel Day in the House of Commons was mocked (Walton, 2000: p. 99). By the late 1920s the emphasis in the law regulating indecent exposure on the beach, the Town Police Clauses Act (1847) was amended to cope with the prevention of physical rather than moral dangers. The cult of the healthy, tanned body on display became the vogue. The notion that sunlight was good for the body (as discussed above) was also mooted at this time. In 1924 Dr Saleeby, of the Sunlight League proposed that: "...sunlight is Nature's universal disinfectant, as well as a stimulant and tonic." (Cited in Walton, 2000: p.100)

From the discussion above it is possible to identify themes emerging from representations and stories of surfing ranging from colonial links to the exotic 'other' of the South Pacific. Danger is inferred explicitly and implicitly from these representations. There is the moral danger associated with the hedonistic aspect of surfing linked with the engagement of 'civilization' and the primitive. There is also the exoticism of surfing on coffin lids and its association with death. Linked with the dangers of the sea, surfing had to be made safe in order for it to be a useful promotional tool attracting families and

young people by the tourist industry. So here was a dilemma – how could the implicit and explicit dangers of surf bathing be alleviated in promotional materials? How was it possible to promote the thrills and yet infer they were safe? The romance of the holiday experience must also be tempered with the possible dangers of the beach. Danger is one of the elements constructing a perception of the holiday, but it is a very specific type of danger, it is a ‘safe’ danger. Danger on holidays is only permissible under controlled conditions. This is the crucial component of holiday discourse which has implications for the development of surf bathing on the South coast of England in the early twentieth century.

The sea as discussed above is linked with medicinal/health, and romantic discourses which form uneasy alliances in tourist discourse. The tourist industry’s dilemma is that it should represent the thrills of the ocean, whilst ensuring the safety of the tourist. In the early twentieth century there were no lifeguards on English beaches, although there were flags indicating treacherous tides and currents. In this era there were few or no resources in place with which life saving could be facilitated. Priscilla, for instance notes there were no lifesavers on Saunton in those days, Mrs Preston mentions red flags but again no lifesavers on Fistral Beach. Representations of the sea and surfers in posters do not hint at the dangers preferring to dwell upon the crashing waves and the Mediterranean-coloured waters in which surfers play. Nor is there much emphasis on the coastline or beach.

Guidebooks reflect upon the romantic passion of the sea going into paroxysms of description reminiscent of Daphne du Maurier's novels, about its beauty and ferocity. Always the safety aspect of the sea is emphasised. It is a safety in which families, more importantly children may enjoy the thrills of the ocean but in relative security. A guidebook published by Southern Railway in 1927, for instance, describes Trebarwith as, "...a paradise for child bathers and surf-riders..." (Mais, 1927: p. 16) Newquay on the Cornish Coast (1936-7) extols the safety of surf riding: '...the non-swimmer can "surf-ride" as easily as the swimmer.' because surfing takes place in shallow water. However, the novice is warned to: '...confine himself to shorter runs made in waves that have already broken.' (Page unknown) These descriptions unwittingly hint at the dangers of the sea and therefore must be tempered by assurances of its safety as in this description of the sea around Padstow, North Cornwall:

On other coasts the water is grey, black or blue, but nearly always opalesque. On the North Cornwall coast it is pure emerald or pure azure, so clear you can see the remains of wrecks fathoms below, every rock however, far submerged, and always, even on the stillest day in summer, it rises to gigantic breakers and swirls and eddies among the rocks... Luckily this untameable monster has eaten its way into countless creeks where on white shiny sands the huge breakers split up into genial, white haired atoms of surf on which even children

ride triumphantly on their wooden polished surf-boards.

(Mais, 1927: p. 8)

A number of binaries emerge from this picture: Mediterranean sea/British sea, danger/safety, age/youth, nature/culture. This extract simultaneously refers to the Mediterranean colour and transparency of the waters, whilst tempering the dangers of the wrecks and the rocks with the romance of the sea's beauty.

The sea, an untameable monster, is restrained and transformed becoming 'genial white haired' when it is broken up by the coastline. The picture painted is of children playing with their genial white haired grandfather. Consequently nature/the sea is controlled by culture/the land. This enables a commodification of an uncontrollable landscape by the tourist industry.

Tentative Conclusion

In the early twentieth century most British seaside resorts had in place comprehensive and sophisticated promotional strategies to target their chosen markets. Other cultural factors such as the eugenics movement predisposed holidaymakers to enjoy healthy activities and sports. The notion of the sea and sun as healthy encouraged holidaymakers to enjoy sea activities which were targeted towards the family and young people. In addition an institutional relaxing of attitudes towards the carnivalesque elements of the beach changed perceptions of the body and transgression on the beach. All of these elements of the seaside holiday impacted on the construction of surf bathing within tourist discourse. Using semiotics to analyse the binaries which construct notions of the sea and the land, and the surfer's place within this cultural space enables a clearer understanding of

how surf bathing was perceived in this time. However, semiotics must also be used in association with discourse analysis as this enables an identification of the way in which surf bathing is constructed through historical and cultural phenomena. It is the subsuming of surf bathing into consumer and tourist discourses that contain the roots of contemporary surfing. The rapid adoption of the Surfplane in Newquay, 1934 suggests that cross cultural links with Australian beach culture were healthy and it is entirely plausible that stand up surfing could have become popular on English beaches in the 1930s.

However, surf bathing maintained its place in the popular imagination as the definitive way to enjoy the sea until the early 1960s. One might propose that tourist discourses prevented stand up surfing from becoming the prevalent surfing form until the tourist's safety could be assured. This did not happen until the 1950s with the advent of the British Surf Lifesaving Association. In 1962 Newquay town council employed four Australian surf lifeguards at Watergate Bay. Bob Head, Ian Tilney, John Campbell, and Warren Mitchell from Sydney introduced the glamour of stand up surfing to the English beach and the act of surfing in Britain was redefined.

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Surfers

Catherine, Colne, Lancs, Interview December 2001.
Priscilla, Devon, Interview August 2001
Susan, Liskeard, Cornwall, letter 26th August, 2001.

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6. Culler, 1981: "The Semiotics of Tourism" in American Journal of Sociology I; 127-140, p127.
 7. A more extensive discussion of medicinal and health benefits of immersion in and drinking of sea water ,may be found in Walton,1983: pp. 11-12.
 8. There is a large body of philosophical debate about the nature of play in sport which I am unable to discuss here. However the following articles are of importance in the literature about play and sport: Schmitz, who argues that play is central to an understanding of sport, Johan Huizinga 'The Nature of Play', play is at the root of most forms of cultural life and Caillois who classifies the different types of play.
 9. This is extremely well documented in Chapter 2, Walton, 1983.
 10. organ and Pritchard give as examples Seaton, Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton as resorts which were not developed (p. 67).
 - 11.This aspect of Great Western Railways marketing is meticulously documented in Morgan and Pritchard (1999) pp. 110-115.
 12. Letter from Hillary, Tunbridge Wells, 1999.
 13. S. P. B. Mais My Finest Holiday, 'Do you know North Cornwall?' Southern Railway, 1927, p.8.
 14. Ibid. p.16.
 15. Fowler, c.1950 'A Practical Guide to Surfing.'