

Gypsies and other travellers : a report of a study carried out in 1965 and 1966 by a sociological research section of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

Contributors

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Gypsies and other travellers



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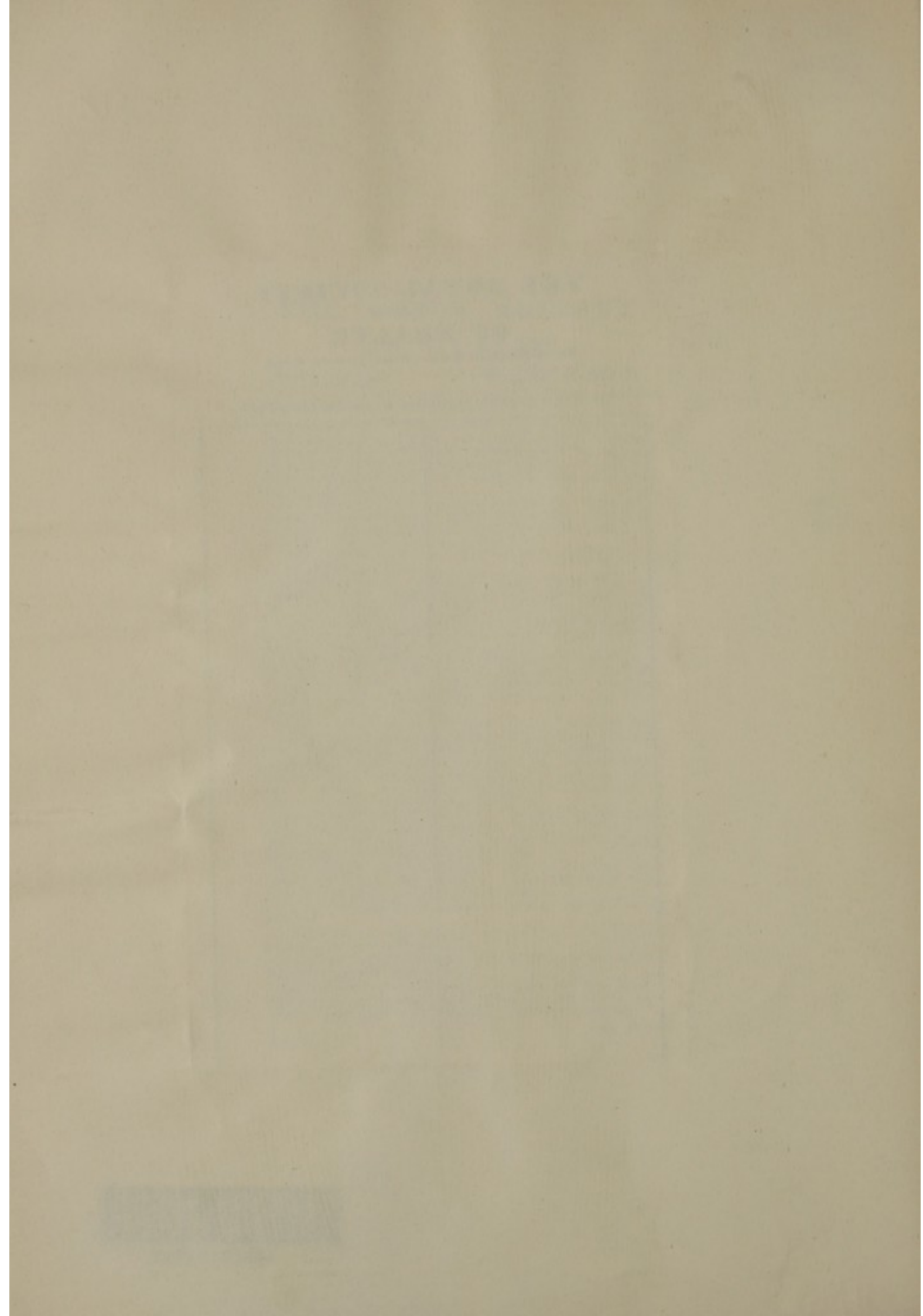
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A report of a study carried out in 1965 and 1966 by a Sociological Research Section of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government

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Ministry of Housing and Local Government
Wellcome Office

**'There are good and bad gypsies
Whether they are good or bad,
they are all human beings'.**

Norman N. Dodds, M.P.
House of Commons, 1st December 1961

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Foreword

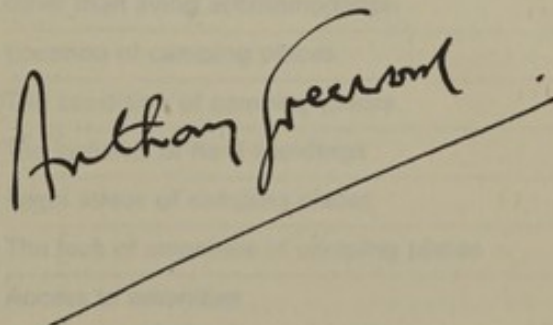
**by the Minister of Housing & Local Government
and the Secretary of State for Wales**

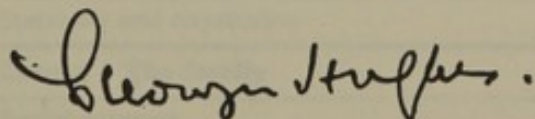
This is the first comprehensive study in this country of the life and problems of a minority group, gypsies and other travellers. The world around them has altered so rapidly that their roving life can no longer be carried on without hardship—indeed the report reminds us of the remarkable fact that for most traveller families there is nowhere they can legally put their home; they are within the law only when moving along the road.

The travellers' way of life, and their attitudes to amenities in both town and country, clash with those of most other people. House-dwellers often find that unlawful encampments are a squalid nuisance. The fact that many travellers are illiterate adds to their difficulties in a complex and increasingly urbanised society, and limits their understanding of a more settled way of life. The children are apt to suffer most.

But all too often the settled community is concerned chiefly to persuade, or even force, the gypsy families to move on—over the boundary to the next district or the neighbouring county. It is no solution to pass on the problem to the village next door. The majority of travelling families who are willing to settle down need more caravan sites, properly laid out and equipped, of the kind we commended to local authorities last year.

They are discussed in this report, and for the sake of everyone involved—residents, local authorities and most of all the travellers themselves—no more time should be lost in providing them.

Anthony Freeman.

Brown Hughes.

by the Minister of Housing & Local Government
and the Secretary of State for Wales

This is the first comprehensive study of the housing
and welfare of a specific group of people and their
needs. The study was carried out by a team of
experts in the field of housing and welfare and
the results are presented in a clear and concise
manner. The study is a valuable contribution to
the knowledge of housing and welfare and is
a must for all those concerned with the
housing and welfare of the people.

The housing and welfare of the people is a
complex issue and one that requires a
comprehensive study. This study is a
valuable contribution to the knowledge of
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knowledge of housing and welfare and is a
must for all those concerned with the
housing and welfare of the people.

They are discussed in this report and for the sake of
the people, it is essential that local authorities and
the public are made aware of the housing and
welfare of the people.

Robert G. Jones

Secretary of State

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Cover design :
Composite scene of gypsy life from
photographs by
John Watney and Stanley A. H. Swain

Chapter 1

Introduction

*The dictionary definition of *gypsy* is 'a member of a wandering race of Indian origin; a Romany'. Although the term has primarily an ethnic meaning, it is often used loosely for all the people described in this report, whether 'true Romanies' or not. Since a recent High Court ruling a *gypsy* is defined, for legal purposes, as a person without fixed abode who leads a nomadic life dwelling in tents or other shelters or caravans or other vehicles; i.e. as a class of person and not a member of a particular race. The people themselves take exception to the term when used by outsiders, considering that it has now become derogatory, and prefer to be known as *travellers*. For these reasons, and because it is difficult to separate these people into distinct ethnic groups, the two terms—*gypsy* and *traveller*—are used interchangeably throughout this report although the latter term is preferred because it is less ambiguous. Strictly speaking, by no means all travellers are gypsies.

The concern of the Minister of Housing and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Wales for gypsies* and other travellers arises primarily from their responsibility for land use planning. The gypsies have for long caused concern in their unauthorised use of land for camp sites and following the second world war the problem has been greatly intensified.

After the war the traveller's greatest difficulty was to find somewhere where he could camp in peace. He was increasingly being made to leave his traditional camping places, some of which were being developed, while others were simply being barred to him. He was not told where he could legitimately go, and the remaining camping places were becoming increasingly crowded. It seemed to him that only when he was on the move was he safe from the law; when he stopped, he was breaking it. But his reasons for constant travelling were declining. He was beginning to want his children to go to school. The demand for traditional gypsy craft work was diminishing and increasingly the traveller was turning to new ways of making a living which did not require constant travelling. In increasing numbers travellers were turning to scrap metal dealing.

It was perhaps on this latter point that the objections of the settled population were centred. They complained that unsightly scrap metal was littered wherever the travellers camped, and that their domestic litter was a danger to health; that they used the fields as lavatories and were generally dirty; that they begged water from householders and intimidated those not giving it readily; that they littered the hedges with drying washing; that they allowed their horses to destroy crops and were not averse to stealing. Their strongest critics considered them social parasites.

The cause of the gypsies was taken up actively after the war by the late Mr. Norman Dodds, M.P., Labour Member of Parliament for Erith and Crayford, who had a large camp in his constituency. In 1950 he asked the first of a long series of questions on the subject which were to end only with his death in 1965. He urged the acceptance of the document *The Gypsy Charter*, the first objective of which was that a survey should be conducted 'under the direction of a government department . . . of the number of Romanies in Britain . . .'. In 1951-2 at the request of the Minister, the first county survey of gypsies and other travellers was carried out by the Kent County Council† who were sympathetic to the plight of travellers in their area. A few others followed but only a small proportion of the counties were covered, and it was not until 1960 that the post war debate had its first practical outcome in the form of a site set up

† Kent County Council; *Gypsies and Other Travellers in Kent*, James W. R. Adams, 1951-2 (unpublished).

for travellers by West Ashford Rural District Council at Great Chart in Kent.

The 1962 Circular

In 1962 the Minister of Housing and Local Government issued a Circular (see Appendix 1) which restated the kernel of the problem, 'Moving people off one unauthorised site and leaving them to find another is no solution, and no answer to the human and social problems involved. These can only be resolved by the provision of proper sites, in which the caravan families can settle down under decent conditions, and in reasonable security'. Authorities were urged to carry out local surveys, to inform the Minister of the results and to take action to provide the necessary caravan sites.

The results of the Circular were disappointing. Only 37 of the 62 county councils in England and Wales reported either that a survey on the lines suggested in the Circular had been carried out, or that investigations had been undertaken by the county planning officer in association with district and borough councils. Of these 37 councils, 13 concluded that new permanent sites were not needed either because existing provision was adequate, or because they considered that settlement did not offer a satisfactory solution to the problem. If travellers were itinerant agricultural workers they did not require permanent sites; if they were scrap metal dealers they would create fresh problems by destroying site amenities and littering the area with the debris of their trade. Many of those councils which admitted to having a considerable gypsy problem and accepted the need for new sites, reported that they had been prevented from carrying out their plans by the difficulty of finding suitable land. In some cases district and borough councils had opposed county proposals; in others, protests from local residents had deterred the district authorities from taking action approved at county level. Altogether, during the next three years, new sites were established in only very few of the 20 counties where the need for special provision had been admitted. County boroughs, although they received copies of the Circular, were not asked to conduct surveys or to consider setting up sites. By the beginning of 1965 it had become apparent that no further response to Circular 6/62 could be expected.

It was also clear by the beginning of 1965 that one of the fundamental difficulties in considering the problems associated with gypsies and other travellers was the absence of reliable information about the number of people involved, their location, occupations, travelling habits and way of living. The national survey or census of gypsies and other travellers in England and Wales was therefore planned and executed in 1965, and forms a basis of this report.

One difficult question had to be settled before a start could be made: which people were to be included in the survey and which excluded? A distinction is frequently drawn between 'true Romanies' or 'real gypsies' and 'the rest', and sympathy is often expressed for the former but not for the didicoi, the mumper or the tinker*. But who exactly are these people, where do they come from and how, if at all, do the groups differ?

The history of the Romany

Linguistic studies leave little doubt that the original gypsy was a descendant of members of certain wandering Indian tribes who, for some reason lost in history, left their native country in about the tenth century A.D. and began travelling westwards, eventually reaching Europe and North Africa. Much of the Romani vocabulary is closely related to languages still spoken in Northern India; they all have Sanskrit as their ancestor. The appearance of these strange nomads was first officially reported in different countries of Central and Western Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first certain reference to them in Britain dates from 1505 (an entry in the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer for Scotland); but they had no doubt crossed over well before then. Although they adopted characteristics from each country through which they passed, they carried with them the language, customs, and occupations of the low caste Indian tribes from which they sprang, and which still survive in a much-modified form to this day.

Their traditional occupations followed closely those which were cursed, or prohibited to upper castes in ancient India—including fortune telling; horse training and dealing; smithery; and entertainment by singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, acting, juggling and acrobatics. In particular, horse dealing for men and fortune telling for women were among the occupations of the first gypsies to arrive in Britain. The immigrants also became noted for their wood carving, from which developed crafts such as peg making, chair mending, and flower making. The gypsies' occupations were suited to their nomadic life and in the early days they travelled on pack-horses or with horse drawn trollies, and camped in tents. It was not until the early nineteenth century that they adopted the covered living wagon.

In the period following their arrival in Great Britain, the gypsies, or 'Egyptians' as they called themselves, travelled in large bands causing consternation among the settled population. Repressive legislation was enacted in England in 1530, 1554 and 1562 and the latter Acts made all immigrant adult 'Egyptians' and others found in their company liable to be treated as felons, to have their goods

*For definitions of these, see page 3.

forfeited, and to be put to death. At York in 1596, 106 gypsies were condemned to death at one sitting of the Quarter Sessions, but most were later reprieved for the sake of their children. Repressive treatment of the gypsies continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but the first Act repealing the earlier legislation was passed in 1783. The romantic and philanthropic interest in the gypsy way of life engendered by George Borrow and others in the nineteenth century, culminating in the founding of the Gypsy Lore Society in 1888, helped to ease their existence. Gypsies are, however, still singled out as a class in modern legislation; the Highways Act 1959, Section 127, states that 'If, without lawful authority or excuse, . . . a hawker or other itinerant trader or a gypsy . . . encamps on a highway, he shall be guilty of an offence . . .'. (Three High Court judges have recently ruled that, in legislation, the term *gypsy*, refers to someone following a particular way of life and not of a particular racial origin.*)

Didicois and other groups

There can be little doubt that over the past five centuries the original Romany blood has been mixed to varying degrees with that of the settled population. It has been suggested that reduced hostility towards gypsies in the nineteenth century caused them to relax the rules against intermarriage with outsiders, so making travellers of mixed blood more common. Groups with no claim to Romany blood have also adopted the gypsy way of life and, in some cases, have followed it for several generations. This latter group are called *mumpers*; *posh-rats* are half Romany and half mumper; *didicois* are of mixed blood but less than half Romany, and it is probable that most travellers today fall into this category, i.e. have some Romany blood. But the term *didicoi* is often used loosely in a derogatory sense to denote travellers who are supposedly not 'real Romanies'. Concerning the origin of the non-Romany element among travellers there have been various suggestions: these include the effects of enclosure, immigration owing to the Irish potato famine, the nomadic casual labour force of the industrial revolution, the disruption of two world wars, and the housing shortage.

Different again are the Irish tinkers in this country. They are reported to travel widely in large groups with as many as ten or more caravans, mainly dealing in scrap metal, not staying in one place very long and frequently leaving a trail of litter and police summonses. Local authorities regard them as undesirable because of their alleged tendency to defy the law and to disturb local residents, while the indigenous travellers despise the low standards and dirty condition of the tinkers which cause trouble for all groups

of travellers. Because of the wild and unruly behaviour of the Irish tinkers some traditional camping grounds have been closed to all travellers indiscriminately. It has been suggested that they visit England and Wales only for a few months before returning to Ireland with their savings. Because of the freedom of movement between the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom there is no check on the numbers involved. Some English travellers think they should be sent home.

The travelling people themselves make a clear distinction between these groups, those families with most Romany blood being accorded the highest status and mumpers and tinkers the lowest. Families who regard themselves as Romany often try to avoid association with mumpers and tinkers. There are signs, however, that this traditional hierarchy is breaking down and is being replaced by one based on wealth, the 'flash' travellers with their expensive lorries, cars and caravans having the highest status, and the less prosperous 'rough' travellers, some still without motorised transport, having the lowest. Although the travellers admit these differences among themselves, the Gypsy Council affirm 'the essential unity of the travelling people, above distinctions of group and origin . . .'.†

Groups included in the survey

From the Ministry's viewpoint these distinctions were of little practical importance: information was needed about the entire traveller population in caravans, huts and tents, who in large measure follow a common way of life, making the same demands on land, and meeting the same obstacles in their search for sites. The 1965 census of travellers therefore adopted multiple criteria to define the people to be covered. The survey was not limited to 'true gypsies' or people with Romany blood. The people included were so-called gypsies and other travelling people living in caravans, huts and tents. Usually these people were isolated from the settled community. Although called travellers, some never moved from their base camp. They usually made a living by dealing in scrap metal, cars and other commodities, seasonal agricultural work, log and fire wood cutting, casual labouring, hawking and begging, and rarely took a regular job. Travellers living on sites already established for them by local authorities were included. Excluded from the survey were those caravan dwellers on residential sites who were typically members of the local settled community, had regular jobs, and perhaps lived in a caravan only because of the housing shortage. Also excluded from the survey were those families living in permanent shack and bungalow settlements who were essentially not travellers but part of the settled community. However, whenever it proved difficult to distinguish

**Mills v. Cooper*, Queens Bench Division, 9th March 1967 (see note on p.1).

†Gypsy Council: *Memorandum* submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, March 1967 (unpublished).

between these groups, a family was included. Others who were excluded were people of travelling stock now living in houses (including those in Hampshire's intermediate housing), tramps, showmen* and circus people who were part of an organised group moving together, and families living on boats. It is important to bear in mind that this report refers only to the people defined above and excludes traveller house-dwellers.

The organisation of the survey

After a preliminary letter of explanation, the survey forms with instructions attached to each were sent to all counties and county boroughs (see Appendix 2).

The aim was to obtain by interview and observation a completed form for every eligible family found within the authority's boundaries on one particular day. It was important that families should be recorded in their winter quarters before they started travelling in the spring, and although it left a rather limited period for organising the survey, March 22nd 1965 was selected as the latest practicable date.

The interviewer sought to discover the composition of each traveller family; the age and occupation of each member; whether the head of the household or his wife had ever lived in a house and why they had left it; whether the family had travelled during the previous year and why; particulars of the family's living accommodation and the vehicles they possessed; the address of their present site and the length of time they had been there; and the local authority area in which they spent most of their time.

The data were collected for family units, which were defined as those members for whom housekeeping and cooking were done communally. Thus a family unit might consist of more than two generations, might comprise more distantly related members than is usual in the settled community and might occupy more than one caravan or other dwelling. The terms *family* and *household* are used interchangeably in this report to mean a group with communal housekeeping.

No-one was under an obligation to answer the survey questions and authorities were urged to adopt a tactful approach. Counties and county boroughs were advised to consider the use of local police officers where possible to carry out the survey, since experience had shown that they had most knowledge of the whereabouts of travelling

people. In different areas, however, staff of different departments proved to be the most knowledgeable and the approximate proportions of questionnaires completed by different types of reporting officer were:—Police 47%, Public Health Inspectors 19%, Planning Officers 7%, Surveyors 5%, Welfare Officers 5%, and other officers of the authorities 17%. The standard of reporting varied.

The County of Kent, which pioneered a study of gypsies, had carried out a limited survey on January 1st 1965, only a few weeks before the national survey. It was considered unreasonable to impose another survey on the Kent travellers and police, and much of the detailed picture presented here therefore unfortunately excludes the travelling families who were in Kent on March 22nd. We do not know exactly how many these were, but on January 1st 1965, 313 caravans were recorded within the present (post 1.4.65) boundaries of Kent. Whenever complete national figures were required, an estimate of 313 families was included for Kent. However, information on the sites and living conditions of Kent travellers was obtained in the later site survey.

Ample supplies of the survey questionnaire were issued to all counties and county boroughs in England and Wales (except Kent) for completion on 22nd March. 3,106 completed questionnaires were returned covering 465 boroughs and county districts, or about one in every three local authorities. It was reported that no gypsies or other travellers had been found in the remaining areas on that day. Of the 3,106 completed survey forms received, 63 were rejected. These rejected families fell outside the terms of reference of the survey. More than half were show or fairground people, a few were families who had been double counted (presumably because they were on the move and appeared in two areas on March 22nd), a few were mobile workmen living in caravans attached to major building projects and a few were travelling people living in houses. A few other completed forms seemed to refer to families which were marginal to the definition of gypsies and other travellers given in the instructions, but rather than exclude them, it was decided to accept the judgment of the reporting officer who had included them.

Limitations of the population survey

In the few areas where it was possible to check the numbers enumerated, a high degree of accuracy had been achieved. However, a few authorities reported travelling families who had disappeared from a camp after the interviewing of other families had started and who were trailed but never found. Other families may have been missed because they were on the move all day. In one or two cases no forms were returned for an area where travellers were reported from another source to have camped on March 22nd. Also the areas of the London

*Almost all travelling showmen who earn their living by touring circuses and fairs, moving from place to place in organised groups, are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain which holds a certificate from the Minister exempting land used as caravan sites by its members from licensing requirements. The Guild owns permanent sites throughout the country for the exclusive use of its members.

Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley were not surveyed, being within the old administrative county of Kent whose survey of January 1965 did not extend into the Metropolitan Police area. It must therefore be assumed that the figures presented in this report understate the true numbers.

Other research and assistance

After the travelling families had been located and interviewed, a second form was sent to the appropriate district council to obtain details of the site conditions (Appendix 3). The aim of this further enquiry was to discover the ownership, the licence position, the amenities available, and the type of terrain and condition of the sites in use on March 22nd.

To supplement the census and the site survey, some sites and their residents were visited and studied in greater detail.

Mr. David H. Smith was commissioned to study a group of travellers, and his report *Travellers on Lodge Farm and other sites in the Leicester area, 1965* has provided much useful material which has been used throughout this report.

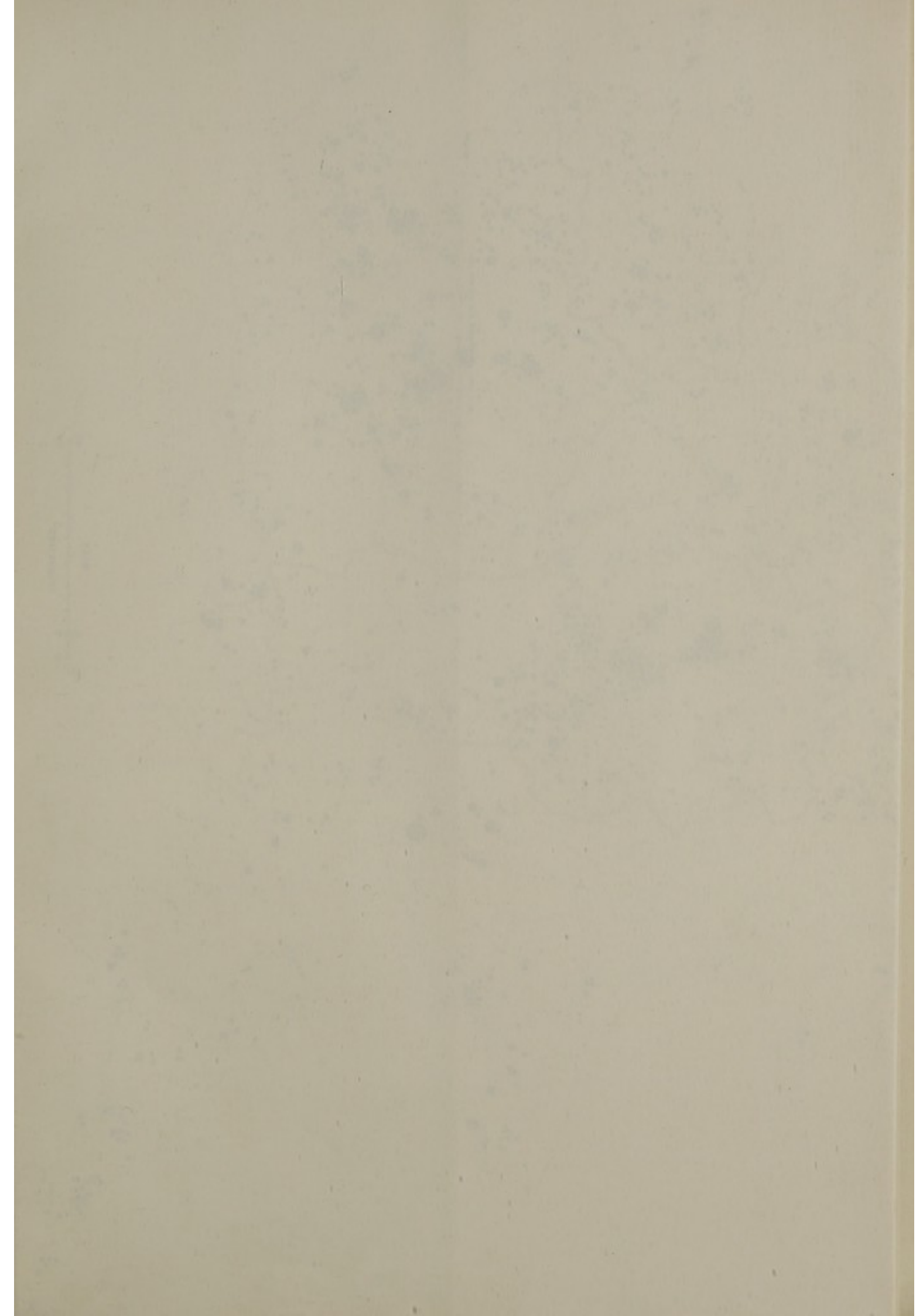
We are indebted to all the authorities who participated in this national study, but especially to the officers of those authorities who worked with us particularly closely. We are also indebted to the informed private individuals who were good enough to give us their views: Mr. Silvester Boswell, Mr. Angus Fraser, Mr. Dominic Reeve and Mr. Richard Wade; and to the travellers themselves who, in spite of their suspicions, provided the greater part of the material for this report.

We did not ask travellers for their opinions, nor did we ask them whether they wished to settle. To gain satisfactory answers to questions of opinion rather than fact would have required highly skilled interviewers and more time than was available. Since travellers have a tendency to give officials the answers they think they want, an element of doubt would also have been attached to answers of this sort, as indeed is the case to some extent with certain of the questions of fact included in the census form.

The 1966 Circular


The main statistical findings of this inquiry were incorporated in Circular 26/66 issued in June 1966 by the Minister of Housing and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Wales* (see Appendix 4).

*The Circular issued by the Welsh Office had an identical main text to that shown in Appendix 4.



Map 1 Distribution of gypsies and other travellers

Compiled from the census of gypsies and other travellers of 22nd March 1965, and other information



 SITES not specially provided by local authorities, including unauthorised sites

 CARAVAN SITES SPECIALLY PROVIDED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

 Still open on 31.3.67

 Closed by 31.3.67

 Established between 22.3.65 and 31.3.67

 (Some Gypsies' caravans are capacity prior to moving into council houses. Each camp has a capacity of 12 families)

Numbers against symbols refer to the list of special sites in table 2.1.

 BOUNDARIES

 Local Authority

 Economic Planning Region

 Area for which comparable information is not available

In some local authorities areas the location of sites can only be shown approximately.



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

 MILES

 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

 KILOMETRES

Chapter 2

The gypsy population

Previous estimates of the size of the gypsy population of Great Britain have varied greatly, ranging from an estimate of 20,000 by Thesleff (who was speaking in terms of 'true gypsies') in 1901 to the 100,000 used by the late Norman Dodds, M.P. (as a measure of the entire traveller population), but until the present enquiry no data of any reliability were available.

On March 22nd 1965, 3,043 traveller families with 13,762 members were recorded in England and Wales excluding Kent. In round figures including estimates for Kent, there were some 3,400 traveller families or about 15,000 persons in England and Wales. These figures are considered to be an underestimate of the true numbers (see page 4).

Distribution

Families were widely but unevenly scattered throughout the country:

Region	Traveller families 1965	
	Number	Per cent
Northern	62	2
Yorkshire and Humberside	200	6
North West	112	3
East Midlands	197	6
West Midlands	583	17
South East* (including Kent)	1,429	43
South West	461	14
Wales	312	9
England and Wales	3,356	100

Over half of all the families were found in the two southern regions, 43% in the South East alone. By comparison, the Northern and Yorkshire and Humberside regions contained only 8% of the families recorded. The distribution of the traveller population was not closely related to the distribution of the total population.

Traveller families were recorded in almost every county (see Map 1 and Appendix 4), the exceptions being Breconshire, Montgomery, Northumberland, Radnor and Rutland. Of the fifty-seven counties reporting traveller families, nineteen had less than 25, fourteen had between 26 and 50 families and sixteen had between 51 and 100

*Throughout this report, with the exception of Map 1, the East Anglia economic planning region is not separately identified, as it was part of the South East region at the time of the analysis of material in this report.

families. The eight administrative counties with over 100 families were:

Administrative county	Number of families
Kent	313*
Worcestershire	197
Essex	145
Surrey	136
Staffordshire	109
Buckinghamshire	109
Gloucestershire	104
Cornwall	100

One in every three local authority areas of England and Wales had travellers within their boundaries, nine tenths being in county districts or municipal boroughs and one tenth in county boroughs. The county boroughs of Cardiff, Leeds, Leicester, Luton, Merthyr Tydfil, Stoke on Trent, Walsall and Wolverhampton were unusual in containing twenty or more families within their boundaries.

Density of traveller population

Appendix 5 shows the density of the traveller population (persons) in relation to (a) the total resident population and (b) the acreage of counties and county boroughs. The five counties and five county boroughs with the highest density of gypsy population are shown in Table 2.1.

'Household' composition

The size of the average traveller household (for definition see page xx) varied little from region to region, the average size being 4.5 persons, considerably above the average household size of 3.0 for the total population of England and Wales at the 1961 Census. Table 2.2 shows the size of traveller households compared with those of the total population and reveals the low proportion of small traveller households and the high proportion of large ones.

In spite of the large size of traveller households only 7% spanned more than two generations. 21% consisted of

only one generation but the great majority were two generation households.

Table 2.2 Size of household

Number of persons in household	Traveller households		All households
	1965	England and Wales	1961
	Number	%	%
1	214	7.0	13.4
2	515	16.9	29.9
3	468	15.4	22.9
4	545	17.9	18.3
5	413	13.6	8.8
6	303	10.0	3.8
7	238	7.8	1.6
8	135	4.4	0.7
9	84	2.8	0.3
10+	128	4.2	0.3
Total	3,043*	100.0	100.0

*Excluding Kent

Two thirds of traveller households contained children under sixteen, compared with only half in the total population, and on average each traveller household had 2.8 children compared with only 1.8 in households in the total population (taking only households with children).

Table 2.3 shows the percentage of families with different numbers of children under sixteen.

Nearly a third of all traveller households contained three or more children compared with less than 10% in the total population. The span of children's ages was considerable among the traveller population: 27% of households had children both under 5 and in the 5-15 age group.

Age and sex structure and projection to 1985

Some significant characteristics of the travellers are demonstrated in the next table which shows the age and

Table 2.1 Areas with the highest density of traveller population

Traveller population per 1000 total population				Traveller population per 1000 acres			
Counties		County boroughs		Counties		County Boroughs	
1	Herefordshire	3.4	Merthyr Tydfil	1.8	Worcestershire	2.0	Wolverhampton
2	Pembrokeshire	2.5	Wolverhampton	1.3	Surrey	1.5	Cardiff
3	Worcestershire	1.8	Cardiff	1.0	Kent	1.4	Luton
4	Carmarthenshire	1.8	Luton	0.6	Hertfordshire	1.2	Leicester
5	Cornwall	1.3	Walsall	0.6	Greater London (excluding the boroughs of Bromley and Bexley)	1.0	Walsall

*Estimate (see page 4).

sex of the traveller population compared with that of the total population of England and Wales in 1965. Males outnumbered females, even in the older age groups and thus differed from the total population of England and Wales. The traveller age structure was also radically different. The high birth rate among travellers is reflected in the proportion of children—twice the national proportion for 0-4's and half as many again for 5-15's. In all, over 40% were less than sixteen years old. On the other hand, the proportion over 65 was less than one third of the figure for the country as a whole.

Table 2.3 Number of children in household

Number of children under 16	Traveller households		All households England and Wales	
	1965	1961	1965	1961
	Number	%	Number	%
None	1,060	34.8		51.3
1	529	17.4		23.0
2	524	17.2		16.2
3	356	11.7		6.1
4	228	7.5		2.2
5	178	5.8		
6	86	2.8		
7	44	1.4		
8	14	0.5		
9	9	0.3		
10+	15	0.5		
Total	3,043*	100.0		100.0

*Excluding Kent

The age distribution of the travelling people bears a marked resemblance to the age structure of the total population of the country in 1841, before the advent of widespread industrialisation. It is also very similar to that of the Irish tinkers* and the travellers of Finland, Sweden†, and Yugoslavia‡.

Perhaps the most interesting figures in Table 2.4 are those showing the traveller population projected forward twenty years to 1985, assuming neither gains from, nor losses to, the house-dwelling population. This projection is based upon mortality rates of the total population of the country as used by the Government Actuary, and it has been assumed that the birth rate for traveller women of child bearing age will remain constant. It is estimated that the traveller population, excluding Kent, would increase over 20 years to 25,300 and that the number of children under sixteen would be almost doubled. This projection must be viewed with caution since we do not know the extent of the future gains from, or losses to, the house-dwelling population.

*Report of the Commission on Itinerancy, Stationery Office, Dublin 1963.

†Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society (3rd series), Vol. XXXVII (1958), p.44.

‡Ibid., Vol. XLII (1963), p.23.

Table 2.4 Age and sex of the traveller population in 1965 and 1985

Age-sex group		Gypsy population		Estimated traveller population		Total population England and Wales	
		1965		1985		1841	1965
		Number	%	Number	%	%	%
Males	0-4	1,166	8.5	2,000	7.9	6.6	4.4
Females	0-4	1,136	8.3	1,900	7.5	6.6	4.2
Males	5-15	1,708	12.4	3,500	13.8	12.5	8.1
Females	5-15	1,676	12.2	3,400	13.4	12.4	7.7
Males	16-34	2,087	15.2	3,900	15.4	15.9	12.9
Females	16-34	2,120	15.4	3,800	15.0	17.2	12.4
Males	35-44	828	6.0	1,100	4.4	5.5	6.7
Females	35-44	771	5.6	1,100	4.4	5.7	6.6
Males	45-64	981	7.1	1,750	6.9	6.4	12.0
Females	45-64	817	5.9	1,800	7.1	6.8	12.8
Males	65+	230	1.7	500	2.0	2.0	4.6
Females	65+	242	1.7	550	2.2	2.4	7.6
Total Males		7,000	50.9	12,650	50.4	48.9	48.7
Total Females		6,762	49.1	12,550	49.6	51.1	51.3
TOTAL		13,762*	100.0	25,300*	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Excluding Kent

Conclusion

The survey findings suggest that the traveller population of England and Wales (including Kent) numbers at least 15,000 persons in 3,400 households. They are widely scattered throughout the country but the majority are in the south. This population is relatively young and families are relatively large, two out of three containing children under sixteen. A projection of the estimated 1965 population to 1985 to show the growth by natural change only, suggests that the numbers will increase to nearly 28,000. However, this projection assumes neither gains from nor losses to the house-dwelling population. Some 12,000 of them will be children. (The recent increase in the number of travellers in certain counties may be partly explained by a natural increase of families as children grow up and marry, rather than by migration from other areas.) It is clear that the growth in population alone will greatly increase the pressure on existing camp sites and will swell the demand for additional sites. The creation of new camp sites by local authorities at the present rate would make only a negligible contribution to this need.

Chapter 3

Living conditions

None of the travellers enumerated in our survey lived in a house since house-dwellers were excluded by definition, but slightly more than two-fifths of the heads of families and their wives said that they had lived in a house at one time. Nearly six out of ten of the heads and their wives reported that they had never lived in a house. Taking travellers of all age groups together, we estimate that about three-quarters had never lived in a house. One young married woman said, 'I could not live in a house. It's in my blood'.

Rather more than a third of those heads of households and their wives who had lived in houses had done so within the previous five years; rather more than a third had so lived between 5 and 20 years ago and rather more than a quarter more than 20 years ago. We do not know for how long they had been house-dwellers but the most important explanation they gave for taking to the travelling life or for returning to it was that they had just 'acquired' that way of life; most of the latter were women and had probably married into travelling families. The second most important reason related to housing; either the housing shortage, or eviction, or poor housing conditions. It seems that for these people, amounting to rather more than one traveller family in ten, the decision to take or return to the road was involuntary. (It cannot, however, be assumed that they would necessarily wish to return to a house.) Other reasons given were connected with work or health or with domestic or financial troubles which had arisen while the person was living in a house.

Type of accommodation

Though none of the travellers included in the survey lived in houses, there were very few who lived in the traditional gypsy caravan. The horse-drawn living wagon with its associations of traditional Romany life is now fast disappearing and 93% of families recorded in the census had trailer caravans, designed to be towed behind a car or lorry. 188, or a mere 6% of all traveller families still had a horse-drawn wagon as their home. Rather more families whose accommodation was recorded possessed huts and a few had tents, almost always as additional living quarters. However, in March 1965, 29 families in England and Wales were living in tents only and 47 in huts only. Small numbers were also recorded as living in such accommodation as farm buildings, hop barracks and, in one case, a pig-sty.

There were regional variations in accommodation, the most important of which was that more than a quarter of all families in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, and 12% in the Northern region, still had accommodation of the horse-drawn type, while horse-drawn accommodation in southern regions was rare. Huts were most common in Wales and in the South West region where about a

Table 3.1 Types of living accommodation

Living accommodation	Percentage of families with each type of living accommodation	Percentage of families in each region having each type of living accommodation							
		Northern	Yorkshire and Humberside	North West	East Midland	West Midland	South East	South West	Wales
Trailer-caravan(s)	93	89	72	96	93	96	95	87	97
Hut(s)	12	5	2	1	4	11	13	18	22
Horse-drawn living wagon(s)	6	12	28	5	7	3	4	7	4
Tent(s)	4	2	3	—	2	5	4	5	5
Other types	1	—	1	—	1	1	1	1	*
Combination of types (% included in above categories)	14	3	7	3	4	15	14	19	26

*Less than 0.5%

fifth of families were partly accommodated in this way, and a few families in Wales, the South West and the West Midland regions used tents as additional accommodation to caravans. Most of those living in tents only were in counties north of Greater London and south of Rutland.

Altogether over 400 families used a combination of different types of accommodation; a trailer caravan with a hut or, less often, a tent, being the most common combination.

Ownership of horse-drawn wagons was more common among older travellers; 13% of those families where the head was aged 65 or over, but only 3% of those where he was aged under 35 owned this kind of accommodation. This suggests that the traditional gypsy mode of transport may soon become very rare, as the older people either retire from the roads or die.

Living in a traveller caravan or wagon

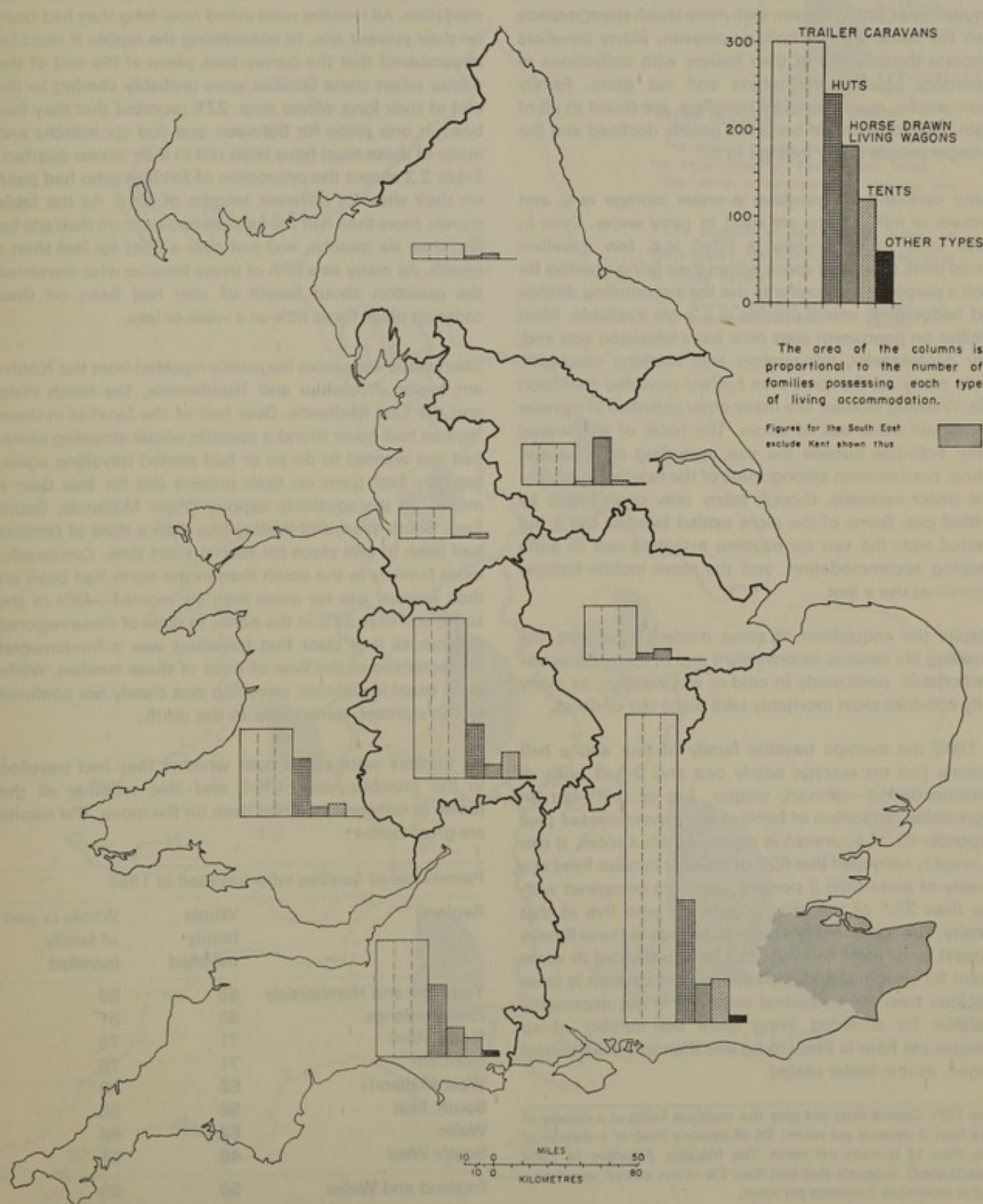
Even before the advent of motorised travellers, the brightly painted gypsy living wagon was the exception rather than the rule. The traditional horse-drawn wagon is usually little more than ten feet long and offers very limited accommodation. A raised bed takes up the back of the wagon, with space underneath for storage. A solid fuel stove is fitted on one side near the door at the front of the wagon, and there is usually a cupboard on the opposite side. Free floor space is small, and as many as possible of the household chores and family activities are carried on outside the wagon whenever the weather permits. Cooking on open fires and eating out of doors are universal even though most traditional wagons are

fitted with a stove. In fine weather, some men and boys sleep under the wagon.

Nowadays the typical accommodation of the traveller family is a slightly battered eighteen or twenty foot motor drawn caravan which gives considerably more living space than the horse-drawn wagon. It usually consists of a small kitchen at the rear, and one large space which in some cases divides into two for sleeping. In slightly larger trailers there is a minute cubicle alongside the kitchen at the rear to provide an extra sleeping space. As there are only lightweight divisions between the sleeping quarters, there is little privacy for any member of the family. Fitted cupboards, wardrobes and seats line the walls and, where there is an infant, in a small trailer a pram or cot may nearly fill the remaining floor area. Typically the floors are covered by linoleum and rugs. Heating is usually by solid fuel stove.

The largest trailers, seen on the settled sites, are 28 feet long. In a typical example, a door two-thirds of the way along the side leads into a well-fitted kitchen. At the rear is a bedroom and at the front, perhaps with a bay window, is a large living room which can be subdivided. Fitted cupboards, chests of drawers, wardrobes and glass-fronted display cabinets line the walls, together with seats which convert into sleeping berths. Some of these trailers are expensively panelled in highly polished figured wood and have fitted carpets. A few of the most prosperous settled travellers aspire to own two large caravans which fit together to form a single unit.

Trailer caravans are usually very crowded, full of fitted cupboards, lockers and drawers, often with piles of



folded bedding in every sleeping space. Many travellers pay a great deal of money for their vans, which they buy from one of a few manufacturers who specialise in their requirements, fitting the van with more lavish storage space than the usual type of holiday caravan. Many travellers decorate the interiors of their trailers with collections of expensive hand-painted china and cut glass. Family photographs, much loved by travellers, are found in all of them. The collecting of brass has greatly declined and the younger people rarely indulge in it.

Many caravans do not have a water storage tank and buckets or milk churns are used to carry water. Even in those vans which possess a fitted w.c. few travellers would think of using a space within their living quarters for such a purpose; they prefer to use the surrounding ditches and hedgerows, unless outside w.c.'s are available. Most families on permanent sites now have television sets and, very occasionally, refrigerators and washing machines, while many on the road own battery-powered television sets. Washing clothes, like many other activities in traveller life, is still done out of doors. The habit of performing many activities outside the van, including cooking and eating, persists even among some of the families in expensive trailer caravans, though many now cook inside by bottled gas. Some of the more settled families use a hut erected near the van for daytime activities and as extra sleeping accommodation, and the more mobile families sometimes use a tent.

Despite the acquisition of some modern amenities, the travelling life remains inconvenient and in many cases uncomfortable, particularly in cold or wet weather, as many daily activities must inevitably take place out of doors.

In 1965 the average traveller family of four and a half persons had on average nearly one and a half units of accommodation—caravan, wagon, hut or tent—but an appreciable proportion of families were overcrowded (see Appendix 6). If a caravan is equated with a room, it can be roughly estimated that 65% of traveller families lived at a density of more than 2 persons per room compared with less than 3%* of the total population who live at that density. The position is not quite so serious as these figures suggest since most caravans can be sub-divided to some extent for sleeping. Although the modern caravan is more spacious than the traditional wagon it is not necessarily healthier for crowded living since the number of air changes per hour is likely to be less than in the traditional wagon, as it is better sealed.

*The 1961 Census does not give the numbers living at a density of more than 2 persons per room: 3% of persons lived at a density of more than 1½ persons per room. The *Housing Situation in 1964* (unpublished) suggests that less than 1% of the settled population lived at more than 2 persons per room.

Travelling

The discomfort of the traveller's life is due as much to its nomadic nature as to the standard of domestic accommodation. All families were asked how long they had been on their present site. In considering the replies it must be remembered that the survey took place at the end of the winter when some families were probably coming to the end of their long winter stop. 22% reported that they had been in one place for between one and six months and many of these must have been still in their winter quarters. Table 3.2 shows the proportion of families who had been on their sites for different lengths of time. As the table shows, more than half the families had been on their site for less than six months, and just over a third for less than a month. As many as a fifth of those families who answered the question about length of stay had been on their camping place for as little as a week or less.

Short stops were more frequently reported from the Northern region, Yorkshire and Humberside, the North West and the East Midlands. Over half of the families in these regions had never found a suitable winter stopping place, had not wanted to do so or had started travelling again, for they had been on their present site for less than a month. In the southerly regions (West Midlands, South East, South West and Wales) less than a third of families had been in one place for such a short time. Conversely, more families in the south than in the north had been on their present site for more than six months—48% in the south and only 22% in the north. In spite of these regional differences it is clear that travelling was a fundamental characteristic of the lives of most of these families. While more usual in summer, travelling was clearly not confined to the summer, particularly in the north.

All families were asked both whether they had travelled in the previous year, 1964, and also whether all the family or only part of it had been on the move. The results are given below:

Percentage of families who travelled in 1964

Region	Whole family travelled	Whole or part of family travelled
Yorkshire and Humberside	85	86
East Midlands	80	81
North West	71	78
Northern	71	78
West Midlands	58	60
South East	58	62
Wales	52	55
South West	46	51
England and Wales	59	63

Map 3 Reasons given for travelling

During 1964: by economic planning regions

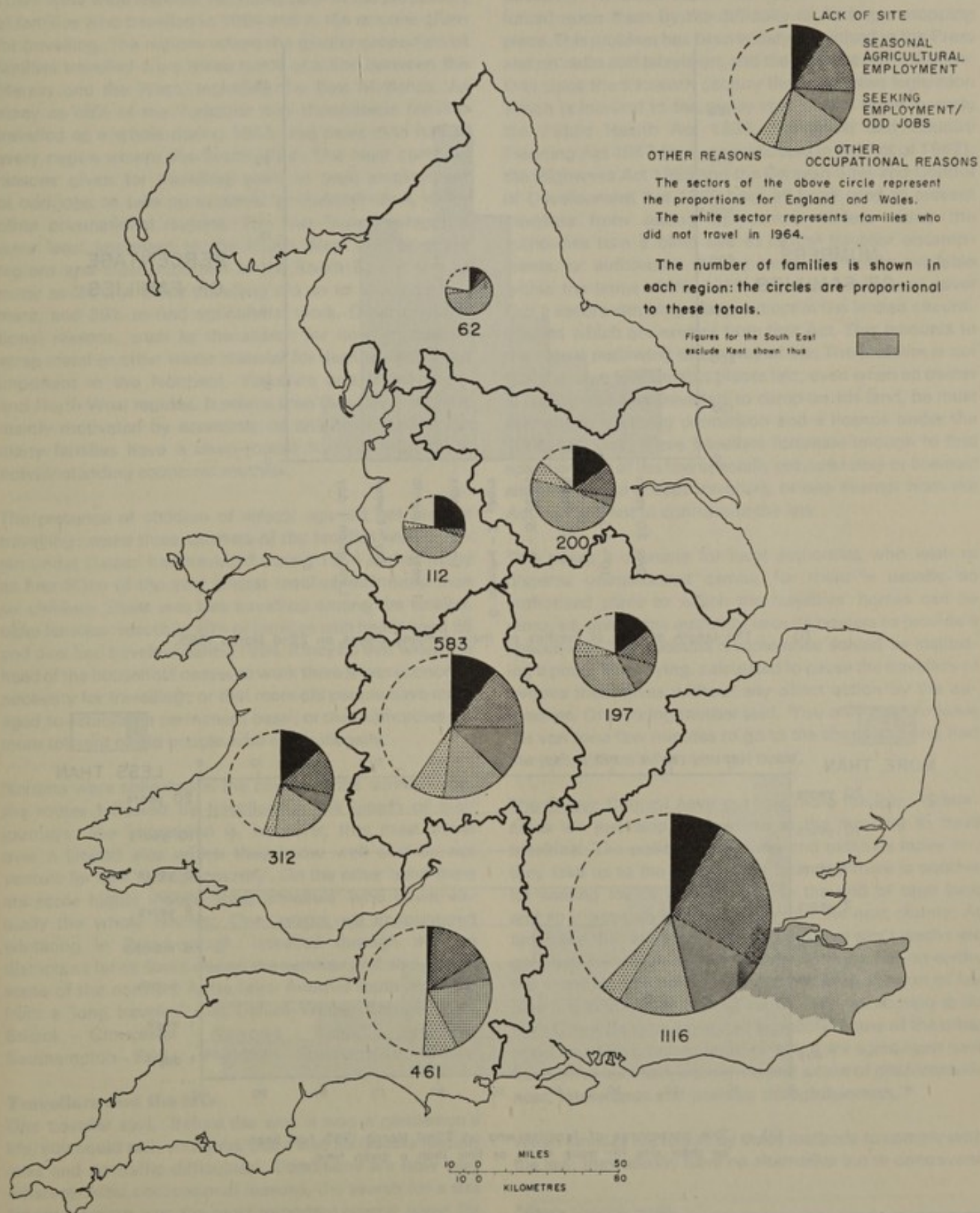
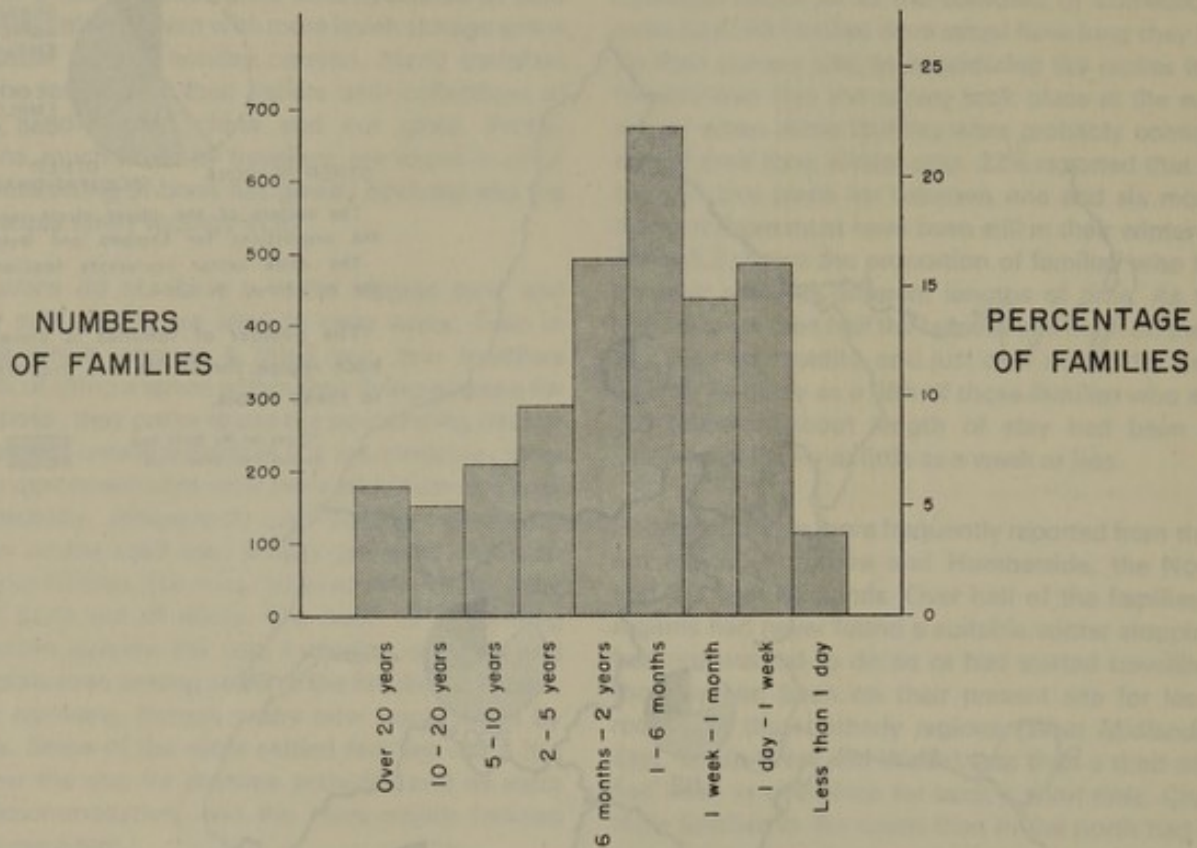
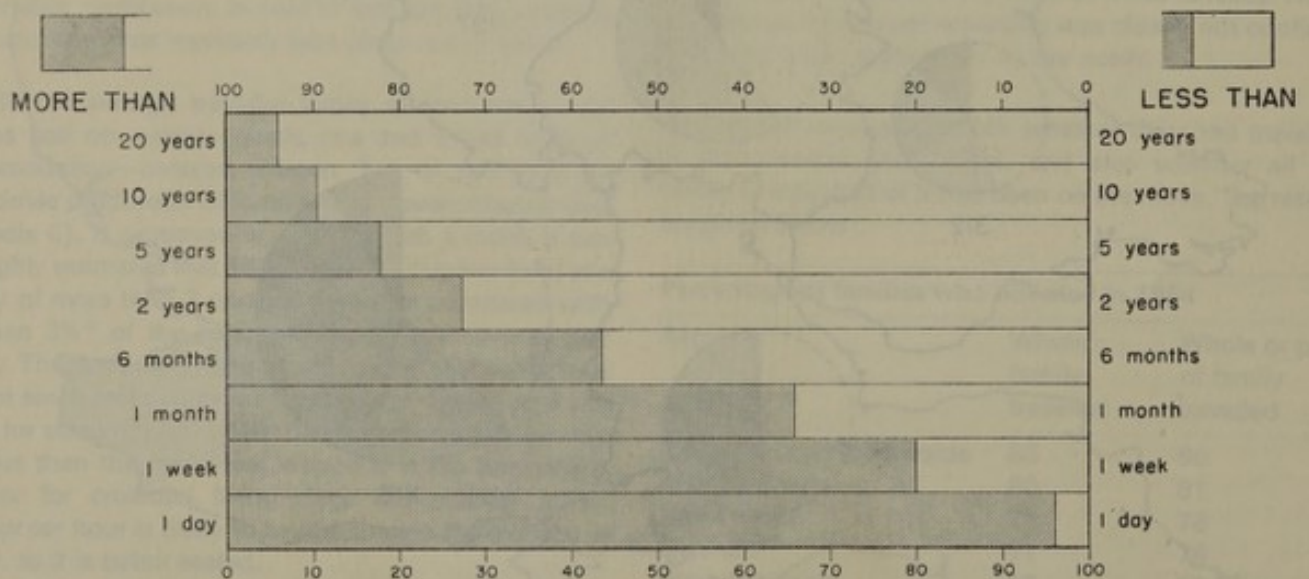


Table 3.2 Length of stay on camping places



(i) The length of stay of families on their camping places on 22nd March 1965.



(ii) The percentage of families who on 22nd March 1965 had been on their site for more than, or less than a given time.

There were wide regional variations both in the proportion of families who travelled in 1964 and in the reasons given for travelling. The regions where the greater proportion of families travelled were those north of a line between the Mersey and the Wash, including the East Midlands. As many as 85% of the Yorkshire and Humberside families travelled as a whole during 1964, and more than half in every region except the South West. The most common reasons given for travelling were to seek employment or odd jobs, to take up seasonal agricultural work, or for other occupational reasons. The two former categories were least important in the North West and Northern regions and most important in the South East where as many as 20% of those travelling did so to seek employment, and 39% to find agricultural work. Other occupational reasons, such as the search for new sources of scrap metal or other waste material for dealing were most important in the Northern, Yorkshire and Humberside, and North West regions. It seems then that travelling was mainly motivated by economic considerations, although many families have a deep-rooted habit of nomadism notwithstanding economic motives.

The presence of children of school age did not prevent travelling: some three-quarters of the families with children under sixteen had travelled during 1964 and as many as four-fifths of the very largest families with more than six children. There was less travelling among the smaller, older families: less than 40% of families with heads aged 65 and over had travelled during 1964. It may be that when the head of the household ceases to work there is less economic necessity for travelling; or that more old people have managed to establish a permanent base; or that authorities are more tolerant of old people who camp illegally.

No data were collected in the course of the survey about the routes followed by travellers or the length of their journeys. The impression is, however, that most travel over a limited area which they know well and do not venture far into 'strange country'. On the other hand there are some highly mobile 'long travellers' who cover virtually the whole country. One, whom we encountered wintering in Peterborough, travelled through the fen districts as far as Essex during the summer and also visited some of the northern horse fairs. Another route recorded from a 'long traveller' was Oxford-Witney-Chippenham-Bristol - Gloucester - Newport - Cardiff - Witney - Southampton - Exeter - Plymouth - Southampton - Dover.

Travellers and the law

One traveller said, 'Before the war, it was a gentleman's life, you could pick your jobs, there was no trouble finding sites and no traffic difficulties'. Conditions are now very different. After occupational reasons, the search for a site for the caravan was the most important reason given for

travelling: in these cases the continual movement was forced upon them by the difficulty of finding a stopping place. This problem has been widely publicised in the Press and on radio and television, and the facts are not in dispute. Ever since the sixteenth century there has been legislation which is inimical to the gypsy way of life. More recently the Public Health Act 1936, the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 (now consolidated in the Act of 1962), the Highways Act 1959 and the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 have all been used to prevent travellers from setting up camps. Unless either the authorities turn a blind eye to casual traveller encampments, or authorised encampments are made available within the terms of the 1960 Act, the traveller can never find a secure stopping place, except in the limited circumstances which are exempt from that Act. This amounts to the virtual outlawing of his way of life. The problem is not that there are few suitable places left; even when an owner is willing to allow travellers to camp on his land, he must first obtain planning permission and a licence under the 1960 Act. Only those travellers fortunate enough to find space on one of the few specially provided sites or licensed sites willing to accept travellers, or one exempt from the Act, are free not to contravene the law.

This poses a dilemma for local authorities who wish to disperse unauthorised camps, for there is usually no authorised place to which the travellers' homes can be removed, unless the authority uses its powers to provide a special site. This dilemma is sometimes 'solved' by instituting a policy of harrying, calculated to cause the travellers to remove themselves without any direct action by the authorities. One young mother said, 'You only have to leave the van for a few minutes to go to the shops and you find the police there when you get back'.

The Gypsy Council have put this more forcibly: 'Sometimes we just stop somewhere in the morning to have breakfast. The police come along and make us move on; they take us to the end of their beat and there is another lot waiting for us who take us to the end of their beat and so it goes on till we are run into the next county. At times like that we can't make a living; we can't wash; we get no chance even to cook and eat. This is a hell on earth; the worst kind of police state and not at all the sort of fair play Englishmen like to brag about. This has nothing to do with Green Belts or a planned economy or any of the other good new Government policies which we agree must limit freedom to a certain extent; it is just a case of plain cussedness, intolerance and perhaps thoughtlessness.*'

When families are forced by these methods to comply with the law, they usually have no alternative but to contravene

*Gypsy Council, *op.cit.*

it once more when they set up camp again. Thus the whole process is repeated. Some authorities, however, especially in rural and sparsely populated areas, are much more lenient and commonly turn a blind eye to illegal camps.

In the site survey, the reporting officer was asked to say whether the authorities had taken any action to prevent the use of those sites occupied by gypsies and other travellers on March 22nd 1965. Excluding sites specially provided for gypsies and other travellers, and those few which were stated to be exempt from licensing control because they were used by seasonal agricultural or horticultural workers, information on whether or not action had been taken was given for those sites on which 85% of the remaining families were encamped.

Preventing the use of unauthorised sites

The kind of action which local authorities reported they had used to remove travellers from unauthorised places, extended from 'informal' warnings to the physical removal of their vans on to the roadway. Among the reported methods of keeping them off these places were the fixing of posts, trenching, the dumping of gravel across the entrance to the land, or the ploughing up of the land to make it unsuitable for camping. Private owners sometimes take similar action, and a case was reported of the ground being churned-up with a heavy tractor.

Where the travellers were camped on publicly owned land, the most common forms of prevention reported were informal persuasion to leave the unauthorised places by public health inspectors and police, often in collaboration. This was sometimes done after a 'permitted stay' had expired or as soon as the travellers' presence in the area was known. One reporting officer spoke of a 'merry-go-round, chasing them over our borders and from site to site within our area'. Apart from the simple eviction of trespassers from council land, where the powers used were detailed, most commonly this action had been taken as enforcement of section 124 of the Highways Act 1959, or of the statutory nuisance provisions of the Public Health Act 1936. Enforcement notices and discontinuance orders under the Town and Country Planning Act 1962 were also used in attempts to end unauthorised camping. Camping on commons is regulated by Commons Schemes set up under the Commons Act 1899, or by orders issued under section 23 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. Some authorities have powers to regulate the stationing of caravans within their areas under local Acts, such as the West Riding County Council (General Powers) Act 1951, though many local Act powers were repealed and replaced by the 1960 Act.

The use of private land for stationing caravans is now regulated by the Town and Country Planning Act 1962

and the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, and this has severely curtailed the number of places available to travellers. When unauthorised and unlicensed sites are used the local authority has to take any enforcing action against the owner or occupier of the land, rather than the caravan occupiers, even when the caravans are stationed on the land against the owner's wishes. In the cases reported, the owner or occupier was often warned informally before any notices were served, and the authority sometimes gave assistance in the removal of unwanted caravans. One case was reported of a traveller who was fined a total of £313 plus costs for parking his two caravans on his own land for which planning permission had been refused. In some cases where the families were employed as seasonal workers, the local authority encouraged or enforced their removal as soon as their employment ceased.

Many authorities have a general policy towards travellers' unauthorised camping. Some discourage caravans on any unauthorised places within their area. One county borough always sends a constable to give 2-3 hours notice to quit; others give longer notice—a day, 48 hours, a week, or, at the most, a fortnight. One borough council, under a local Act, has given approval to the stationing of caravans only twice in the past ten years, following requests from the midwifery service. Another borough appointed a 'caravan removal and general duties officer' who was reported to have succeeded in removing twenty caravans a month.

On the other hand there were several authorities who said they turned a blind eye to many unauthorised traveller encampments, especially when no serious nuisance was being caused. In this way there were some families who succeeded in remaining on the unauthorised places even for several years. One reporting officer, in describing a case of this kind, said that 'Any interference with ... these families would be considered gratuitously officious'.

Many of the powers mentioned above are, in practice, difficult to enforce when there is nowhere the travellers can legally go. The eviction of trespassers from council land, for example, will lead to a contravention of the Highways Act if the families concerned stay on the roadside. It has even been suggested that local authorities who forcibly tow caravans on to the road are themselves guilty of contravening the law. One authority complained that Court Orders it had obtained under a local Act were ineffective in the face of determined use of some land by travellers. For these kinds of reasons many authorities complain that the law needs improving to give them more power. But so long as travellers exist, and so long as there are too few places where they can legally camp, it is difficult to see that extra powers would serve any useful purpose, or that

existing statutes can be effectively enforced in the case of travellers.

The extent of prevention

As many as 60% of all the families found on unlicensed camping places and on the verges of roads or lanes were on sites where the authorities reported having taken action at some time (not necessarily recently) to prevent the use of the site. Similar action had also been taken against travellers on 14 out of the 64 licensed or local authority sites* for which this information was given, and where travellers had been recorded in the census. It is likely that on many more licensed sites traveller families would not have been permitted access at all. In all, action had been taken at some time, either before or after the census of 22nd March 1965, up to the date of the site survey return, to prevent the use of camping places on which well over half of all gypsies and other travellers were recorded and for which this information was given. This is a measure of the insecurity of 'tenure' which faces most traveller families when seeking to establish a home base. Taking all kinds of unlicensed sites alone, including roadside verges, three-quarters or more of those families were subject to the risk of being moved-on in the North West, Northern, and Yorkshire and Humberside regions and in Wales, but less than half of the families on those kinds of site in the West Midlands and the South West.

Examining local authority areas where families are at the greatest or least risk of being moved-on, it is interesting to find that councils differ widely in their approach to the question of camping on unauthorised sites. The authorities where the risk is greatest are county boroughs with a high density of traveller population and, of course, a similar density of settled population and extensive built-up areas. Apart from these there does not appear to be any particular difference between the urban and rural authorities in their prevention of the use of unauthorised sites. The percentage of families on sites where action had been taken to prevent their use by gypsies and other travellers varied from 85% to 20% in different counties.

The camping places with the highest proportion of families affected by action taken to prevent camping, were on land adjoining refuse dumps or cleared for development; sites such as car parks; woods and copses; and common or waste land. About three-quarters of families on unlicensed sites of these descriptions were risking being moved-on. However, it is interesting that the March census showed that about a half of the families found on common or waste land had managed to remain where they were for periods ranging from one month upwards, and nearly a quarter

of them for two years or more. This suggests that the action by some local authorities may be only periodic, or may be restricted to new arrivals while the long-established travellers are tolerated. In some cases it may simply have failed to take effect.

Whatever leniency may be experienced by some families using other kinds of unauthorised camping places, little is extended to most of those found on roadside sites other than on trunk roads. The Ministry of Transport which is responsible for trunk roads will not move on families until suitable alternative sites are provided. However, the majority of families camped on the verges of roads or lanes were in places where the authority took action to clear the site and, indeed, in the census it was found that almost half of the families on this kind of site had been there for only a week or less. In contrast, it was found that families camping on farmland ran the least risk of being moved on. It was reported that action had been taken in the cases of only a little over a third of these families. Some of them would have been on sites exempt from licensing requirements, as seasonal workers. Some, on the other hand, may have been in remote, unvisited, parts of farms and have remained unnoticed by the local authority.

It is difficult for the house-dweller fully to realise the traumatic nature of these enforced moves. Mr. Dominic Reeve, himself a traveller, has described the weary search at the end of a long journey for a suitable pull-in for the night. If the spot is isolated there is more chance of the family being allowed to remain but it will be more inconvenient for the women to go hawking. Then there is the nervous waiting for the inevitable moving-on by some official. There is the sense of unease caused in part by the feeling of not belonging anywhere and by the hostility of local residents, and in part by a sense of guilt at the many small offences committed in order to stay alive—perhaps trespassing in order to find wood to burn; 'The shiftiness, suspicion and wariness of many Romanies is the reflection of the primitive existence they lead.*'

As the Gypsy Council has stated 'when you get shifted around you can't get a permanent job; you can't get your children to attend school regularly; you can't get on a local housing list; you can't get on the electoral roll; you can't draw assistance (but see page 42) and you can't receive mail'†.

Ownership of vehicles other than living accommodation

Over three-quarters of all traveller families owned at least one vehicle other than their living accommodation; nearly all of them motor vehicles. Nearly two-thirds of all families

*Either licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, or exempt from licensing requirements in virtue of being a site provided by a local authority in whose area the land is situated.

*Dominic Reeve, *Smoke in the lanes* (1958).

†Gypsy Council, op.cit.

had a least one lorry, but only 6% owned one or more horse-drawn carts and nearly all these families relied entirely on that kind of vehicle. Motor cars were owned by 16% of families, and more than half of these families also possessed other kinds of vehicle. One family in five had more than one motor vehicle, more among the younger than the older families. On the other hand, of the group where the head of the family was aged 65 or over, only 38% had any motor vehicles at all, and only 16% had two or more. Clearly the travellers are now highly motorised people and likely to become increasingly so as the younger generation replaces the old people who are unable to drive. This enables families to cover a wider area from one base, and may encourage families to settle more readily should permanent sites become available to them.

Location of camping places

We collected information about the camping places of 3,209 families, 96% of the national total, including Kent.

Over a quarter of all families were found camped on farmland or in wooded areas. They were in relatively rural surroundings, on land which was mainly privately owned, and not on roadsides or on derelict sites, but in the kind of place usually regarded as the traditional gypsy camp site. To this number may be added at least part of a further group of 14% of families who were recorded as on 'private land' which was not described in any detail, so that in all, about a third of all traveller families were established in relatively rural surroundings. On average there were only two families on each of these sites. It seems likely that in many of these cases they were working for a farmer.

Another 15% were on common or waste land which, although often similarly rural, tended to have fewer facilities. In these areas, there were, on average, three families on each site. The modern image of the typical gypsy camping place is perhaps the grass verge of a road or lane, but only 16% of families included in the census were on such sites, although this amounts to nearly five hundred families. A further smaller proportion of families were on various kinds of derelict site such as disused gravel pits and quarries, spoil tips, on land adjoining refuse tips, or on sites cleared for development. 10% were on special purpose caravan sites, either those specially provided for gypsies and other travellers or on those provided for the general population. The remainder were either within the curtilage of dwelling houses or on a variety of camping places such as old airfields, yards, car parks, etc.

The ownership of the land on which gypsy and other traveller families were camped was known in the case of nine out of ten of all families included in the census. Of these, 15% were on land owned by a resident on the site, or by a relative of one of the residents; 47% were on other privately owned sites; and 35% were camped on land owned by local authorities, county councils and other public authorities. The remainder (3%) were on sites described as common land where no particular ownership was mentioned in the survey returns.

In the past some families managed to buy and occupy a plot of land but it seems that at present the problem of obtaining the necessary consents deters most families from the attempt to own their own site.

Table 3.3 The location of camping places

Location	Families		Sites		Ratio of families to sites or camping places
	Number	%	Number	%	
Farms, farmland, woods and copses	842	26	448	32	2
Roadside sites and country lanes	493	16	244	18	2
Common or waste land	473	15	165	12	3
'Private land', not otherwise specified	430	14	206	15	2
Disused pits and quarries, sites cleared for development, spoil tips, or land adjoining refuse dumps	349	11	145	10	2
Special purpose caravan sites other than those specially provided for travellers by local or county authorities	174	6	29	2	6
Curtilage of dwelling houses	147	5	80	6	2
Old airfields, yards, and other sites such as car parks	134	4	53	4	3
Sites specially provided for gypsies and other travellers by local or county authorities	143	4	10	1	14
Total with location stated	3,185	100	1,380	100	2
Total in site survey	3,209		1,394		2

The condition of camping places

Local authorities were asked about the general condition of camping places but unfortunately this information was provided for only about a third of all the families included in the census, so that the figures were incomplete. They may also be weighted towards the worst kind of site, the kind that might provoke the reporting officer to comment unfavourably. All figures illustrating the condition of sites must therefore be viewed with caution. Of all families on sites which were commented upon, 55% were on sites adversely described and 45% on those which were favourably described. 17% of families on adversely described camping places were on sites called 'insanitary' or 'filthy' or by some other adjective descriptive of general squalor. For the most part they were merely described as 'untidy'. The locations with the worst conditions were the verges of roads and lanes, common or waste land, derelict or development sites, spoil tips or land adjoining refuse dumps, where more than three-quarters of the families were situated in adversely described conditions. As many as a third of all the families on roadside sites were living in conditions described as insanitary or filthy.

Apart from special purpose caravan sites, the best camping places were on farmland, where three-quarters of the families were reported to be settled in camps described as 'clean', 'good', 'reasonable', or 'tidy'. Farmland sites were relatively well provided with amenities, as indicated below, and this, together with the measure of security offered to families employed by farmers, may have encouraged them to work out a satisfactory and sanitary way of living; on the other hand it may be that farmers had accepted on their land only those families with the highest standards.

The benefits of hard standings

Only about a tenth of those families camped on any kind of hard surface, whether purpose-built or not, were on adversely described sites. None of those on purpose-built hard standings were in adversely described conditions, probably because sites of this kind were generally provided with other amenities. On the other hand, nearly three-quarters of those encamped on verges, fields and other soft ground were in adversely described conditions. The primary cause of the particularly unpleasant conditions of camps on soft ground is, of course, the churning up of the ground surface especially in wet weather, resulting from the constant activity round the caravans. Even so, some observers have been astounded by the way many traveller women manage to keep the interiors of their caravans clean, even when living in a 'sea of mud'.

Legal status of camping places

The legal status of the camping place was given for 96% of all families in the site survey (see table 3.4).

Only 19.6% of these families were found on sites licensed or provided by local authorities under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and over a third of these sites were only temporarily licensed. Included in this total are the 143 families who were on local authority sites specially provided for gypsies and other travellers. Nearly two-thirds of the families were on unlicensed camping places, other than the verges of roads or lanes, including an unknown but small proportion who were on sites which were exempt from licensing requirements. Of families on these unlicensed camping places, not more than a third could have been on exempted sites, and the actual proportion was probably much less than that. A further 16% of families were camping on roadsides, which do not properly belong to any of the preceding categories as they are 'unlicensable', being subject to the Highways Act rather than the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act.

The lack of amenities at camping places

For 95% of the families enumerated in the initial survey we ascertained the availability at each camping place of amenities such as mains water, water closets or other kinds of privies, electricity, refuse disposal and hard standings. Of these, as many as 56% had no amenities whatever available to them, and presumably had to collect water from nearby farms, houses or garages and to use the hedgerows as latrines.

For those families with some facilities, the most common ones were refuse disposal and a supply of mains water which were both available to a third of all travellers. Just under a quarter of the families had a hard standing, 18% had an electricity supply on site, though not necessarily connected up to their particular van, and 16% had a water closet available, in most cases shared by two or more traveller families. Other kinds of closets were used by only 3% of families. Only 11% of all families had access to all three basic amenities: mains water, w.c. and electricity.

Table 3.5 shows the availability of the main amenities to traveller families in each region. Refuse disposal facilities and mains water were the most common amenities in almost every region, with hard standings for the caravans following close behind. The East Midlands had the greatest proportion of traveller families with access to a water closet, to electricity, and with refuse disposal facilities and a hard standing. It is also the region where the highest proportion of families had access to three important amenities: mains water, a water closet and electricity together.

On the other hand, the South East region had the smallest proportion of families with these three amenities together, and the smallest proportion with access to a water closet.

Table 3.4 Legal status of camping places

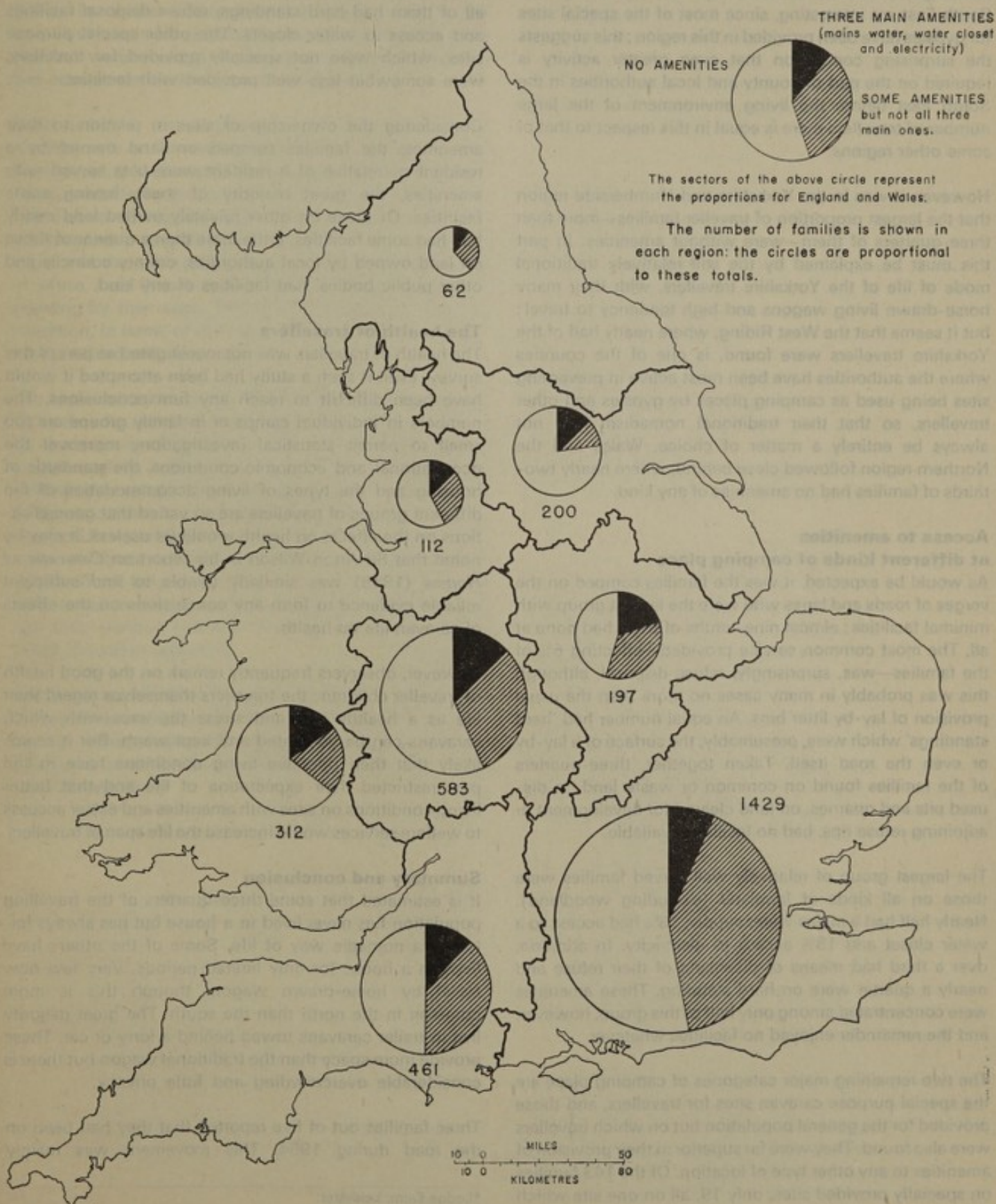
Legal status	Families		Sites		Ratio of families to sites or camping places
	Number	%	Number	%	
Licensed sites or camping places	455	15	139	10	3
including those with:					
(i) permanent licence	236	8	75	6	
(ii) temporary licence	196	6	58	4	
(iii) conditions of licence not known	23	1	6	*	
Local authority or county council specially provided sites	143	5	10	1	14
TOTAL licensed or local authority sites (other than those used by seasonal workers and therefore exempt)	598	20	149	11	4
Unlicensed camping places, including those used by seasonal workers and therefore exempt from licensing requirements, but excluding roadside verges and country lanes	1,973	64	926	70	2
Roadside verges and country lanes	493	16	244	19	2
TOTAL unlicensed and exempt camping places	2,466	80	1,170	89	2
TOTAL camping places where legal status was given	3,064	100	1,319	100	2
TOTAL camping places	3,209		1,394		2

*Less than 0.5%

Table 3.5 Percentage of families in each region with access to each amenity, with no amenities, with access to the three main amenities

Mains water	Water closet	Other kind of closet	Electricity
39 North West	35 East Midlands	10 South West	25 East Midlands
38 West Midlands	34 North West	4 West Midlands	22 West Midlands
36 East Midlands	21 Northern	3 South East	18 South West
35 South East	19 West Midlands	* Wales	17 Wales
32 South West	17 Wales		17 South East
25 Wales	16 South West		14 North West
22 Northern	15 Yorkshire and Humberside		13 Yorkshire and Humberside
18 Yorkshire and Humberside	11 South East		10 Northern
33 England and Wales	16 England and Wales	3 England and Wales	18 England and Wales
Refuse disposal	Hard standing	No amenities	Mains water, water closet and electricity
42 East Midlands	43 East Midlands	77 Yorkshire and Humberside	20 East Midlands
39 North West	37 North West	64 Wales	15 Wales
39 South East	29 Northern	62 Northern	13 North West
36 South West	26 South West	58 North West	13 Yorkshire and Humberside
34 West Midlands	24 West Midlands	57 West Midlands	13 West Midlands
28 Wales	23 Wales	53 South East	12 South West
19 Yorkshire and Humberside	22 South East	50 South West	10 Northern
17 Northern	5 Yorkshire and Humberside	45 East Midlands	7 South East
35 England and Wales	24 England and Wales	56 England and Wales	11 England and Wales

*Less than 0.5%



The region also had relatively few families with hard standings or access to electricity. The figures for the South East are interesting, since most of the special sites for gypsies have been provided in this region; this suggests the surprising conclusion that even greater activity is required on the part of county and local authorities in the South East before the living environment of the large number of travellers there is equal in this respect to that of some other regions.

However, it was in the Yorkshire and Humberside region that the largest proportion of traveller families—more than three-quarters of them—were without amenities. In part this must be explained by the still relatively traditional mode of life of the Yorkshire travellers, with their many horse-drawn living wagons and high tendency to travel; but it seems that the West Riding, where nearly half of the Yorkshire travellers were found, is one of the counties where the authorities have been most active in preventing sites being used as camping places by gypsies and other travellers, so that their traditional nomadism may not always be entirely a matter of choice. Wales and the Northern region followed close behind, where nearly two-thirds of families had no amenities of any kind.

Access to amenities at different kinds of camping place

As would be expected, it was the families camped on the verges of roads and lanes who were the largest group with minimal facilities; almost nine-tenths of them had none at all. The most common service provided—affecting 6% of the families—was, surprisingly, refuse disposal, although this was probably in many cases no more than the usual provision of lay-by litter bins. An equal number had 'hard standings' which were, presumably, the surface of a lay-by or even the road itself. Taken together, three-quarters of the families found on common or waste land, in dis-used pits and quarries, on land cleared for development or adjoining refuse tips, had no facilities available.

The largest group of relatively well served families were those on all kinds of farmland (excluding woodland). Nearly half had a mains water supply, 13% had access to a water closet and 18% access to electricity. In addition, over a third had means of disposing of their refuse and nearly a quarter were on hard standing. These amenities were concentrated among only half of this group, however, and the remainder enjoyed no facilities whatever.

The two remaining major categories of camping place are the special purpose caravan sites for travellers, and those provided for the general population but on which travellers were also found. They were far superior in their provision of amenities to any other type of location. Of the 143 families on specially provided sites, only 19, all on one site which

had since been closed down*, did not have access to mains water. Nearly a quarter did not have electricity but all of them had hard standings, refuse disposal facilities and access to water closets. The other special purpose sites, which were not specially provided for travellers, were somewhat less well provided with facilities.

Considering the ownership of sites in relation to their amenities, the families camped on land owned by a resident or relative of a resident were best served with amenities, the great majority of these having some facilities. Of those on other privately owned land nearly half had some facilities. Little more than a quarter of those on land owned by local authorities, county councils and other public bodies, had facilities of any kind.

The health of travellers

The health of travellers was not investigated as part of this survey. Even if such a study had been attempted it would have been difficult to reach any firm conclusions. The numbers in individual camps or in family groups are too small to permit statistical investigation; moreover the occupational and economic conditions, the standards of housing and the types of living accommodation of the different groups of travellers are so varied that generalisations on the effects on health would be useless. It may be noted that Sir Arton Wilson in his report on *Caravans as Homes* (1959) was similarly unable to find sufficient reliable evidence to form any conclusions on the effects of caravan life on health.

However, observers frequently remark on the good health of traveller children; the travellers themselves regard their life as a healthy one and stress the ease with which caravans can be ventilated and kept warm. But it seems likely that their primitive living conditions have in the past restricted their expectation of life and that better living conditions on sites with amenities and easier access to welfare services would increase the life span of travellers.

Summary and conclusion

It is estimated that some three-quarters of the travelling population has never lived in a house but has always followed a nomadic way of life. Some of the others have lived in a house for only limited periods. Very few now travel by horse-drawn wagon, though this is more common in the north than the south. The great majority live in trailer caravans towed behind a lorry or car. These provide more space than the traditional wagon but there is considerable overcrowding and little privacy.

Three families out of five reported that they had been on the road during 1964. This movement was mainly

*Lodge Farm, Leicester.

economically motivated but an appreciable amount resulted from being moved-on by officials. The constant search for a site where they can legally stop is the travellers' most serious problem, and in March 1965 more than half were recorded on sites on which local authorities had at some time taken preventive action.

Such action is not surprising, since only one-fifth of families were on licensed or local authority sites; the rest were camping haphazardly on farmland, woodlands, commons, roadside verges, quarries and refuse tips. More than half of all traveller families were on sites where no amenities whatever were available. One family in three had mains water and the same proportion had facilities for disposing of refuse. Less than a quarter of the families had a hard standing for their vans. The sites reported as in the best condition, in terms of cleanliness and tidiness, were those best provided with amenities.

The idealised notion of the free traditional gypsy way of life is thus far removed from present day reality, which is, for the majority of travellers, a life lived within a hostile settled society, where they have little opportunity of achieving acceptable living standards. Those with the best living conditions, other than those on specially provided sites, are living on farmland where the family is engaged in seasonal labour and where, for a time, their home base is secure. These families during the winter, and most of the other travellers throughout the year, have to make a home, rear their children and earn a living under the constant threat of sudden uprooting.

The better standards achieved on specially provided sites, on the more traditional kinds of camping place on farms, and on licensed sites generally, indicate the extent to which the travellers' living conditions might be improved. (see Chapter 7)

Family structure

The family structure of travellers has changed since the 1950s. In 1955, 80 per cent of families were headed by a man, 10 per cent by a woman, and 10 per cent by a child. By 1965, 70 per cent of families were headed by a man, 20 per cent by a woman, and 10 per cent by a child. The change in the proportion of families headed by a woman is due to the fact that many of the women who were previously single have now married. The change in the proportion of families headed by a child is due to the fact that many of the children who were previously in the care of the local authorities have now been reunited with their families. The change in the proportion of families headed by a man is due to the fact that many of the men who were previously in the care of the local authorities have now been reunited with their families. The change in the proportion of families headed by a woman is due to the fact that many of the women who were previously single have now married. The change in the proportion of families headed by a child is due to the fact that many of the children who were previously in the care of the local authorities have now been reunited with their families. The change in the proportion of families headed by a man is due to the fact that many of the men who were previously in the care of the local authorities have now been reunited with their families.

It is just true to say that the traveller's way of life is changing, but it is not true to say that it is disappearing. The traveller's way of life is still a part of our national heritage, and it is still a part of our national identity. The traveller's way of life is still a part of our national heritage, and it is still a part of our national identity. The traveller's way of life is still a part of our national heritage, and it is still a part of our national identity. The traveller's way of life is still a part of our national heritage, and it is still a part of our national identity. The traveller's way of life is still a part of our national heritage, and it is still a part of our national identity.

Chapter 4

The family

Social contacts

The typical picture that emerges from the foregoing chapters is of a group of two or three families camping and probably travelling together. Larger groups of families are sometimes found living together including, of course, those on the specially established and equipped caravan sites. The extent of contact between these small groups of travellers and the settled population is limited, probably by the wish of both sides. Men from the travelling families have contacts with farmers, factory supervisors, rag and scrap dealers, garages and some householders in the course of their work 'on the knocker'. The women know the local shopkeepers and some of those who still hawk have a regular clientele, often referred to as 'my ladies'. The great majority of families nowadays make some use of the services provided for the general community. Family allowances and supplementary benefit are usually collected (see page 42) and although herbal remedies are still known and used, the great majority of women use doctors and have their babies in hospital. But they prefer to look after their own chronic sick rather than send them to hospital. It has become usual to register births, marriages and deaths. Churches of several denominations have for decades sent missionaries among the travellers but with limited apparent success. With the exception of the Catholic Irish tinkers, most travellers attend church only for christenings, marriages and funerals, although some have an unquestioning belief in God. One of the most frequent points of contact between the travelling family and the settled population is the hostile relationship with policemen or other officials who come to move them on. Contact with the house-dwelling population is thus generally transitory and limited to these practical activities necessary to find a stopping place, earn a living, acquire food and collect welfare benefits. Few travellers have any friends among the settled population, apart from ex-travellers who have settled down. They are wary of strangers, their inclination is to 'keep themselves to themselves', most are illiterate, ill-informed of the world around them and tend to be resistant to new ideas. They rarely act as an organised group, nor do they usually participate in political activity; exceptions are the Gypsy Committee of 1951 and the recently formed Gypsy Council which sent a deputation to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in March 1967 and has taken steps to prevent evictions.* They sometimes organise under an older and experienced traveller in order to negotiate with local authorities or other people.†

It is not true to say that the travellers have few social contacts, but simply that these are almost entirely confined

*The Gypsy Committee was organised by the late Mr. Norman Dodds, M.P., and produced the Gypsy Charter. The Gypsy Council is a recently established organisation linked to groups in other countries.

†For an account of one such negotiation see *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* (3rd series) Vol. XLV, 'The Saving of Appleby Fair'.

to other travelling people. Kinship ties are strong and the families travelling or stopping together are almost invariably related. Daughters, in particular, tend to stay with or near their mothers, and it is more common for a husband to travel with his wife's relatives than for a wife to travel with her husband's family. There is considerable inter-marriage between and within extended families and marriage partners are in many cases distant relatives. Travellers like to keep in touch with their families and whenever travellers meet there is an intensive exchange of information about other members of the family. Sunday is the popular day for visiting and families drive many miles to spend the day with their relatives. Travellers also meet in large numbers for funerals and marriages and at the various horse-fairs, race meetings and shows which they frequent, such as Barnet Fair, the St. Leger Fair at Doncaster, Appleby Horse Fair, and Ascot Races. Marriages are often arranged at these gatherings. Here they dress in their best, buy horses, tell fortunes, gamble, and retire to the pub for drinks and music. They also spend a great deal of time exchanging anything from a dog to a caravan, by a lengthy process of almost oriental bargaining, the vendor demanding far more than he will ultimately accept and praising the object in an outrageously exaggerated way, the buyer offering far less than he will ultimately pay and at the same time keeping up a steady flow of denigration.

One measure of the social isolation of the gypsies is the survival among them of the Romany language, many dialects of which have been recorded in Europe and elsewhere. This inflected language has in its purer form more cases for a noun than does Latin. Leland, the first president of the Gypsy Lore Society, wrote in 1873 that it was a rapidly vanishing language, but there is no doubt that Anglo-Romani survives, though in a debased form. The inflections and the grammar have virtually disappeared in this country, leaving a variety of Romani words which are freely mixed with English. The language is useful to the gypsy for giving an alarm, for dropping a warning word under the official eye. It is not easy to discover the exact extent of their knowledge and use of the language, since the users are not anxious to communicate it to the non-gypsy. The following exchange illustrates this attitude. A gypsy once said 'When the gentiles enquire of me what is so and so in Romani, I say "Show me your licence". And when they ask "What licence?" I reply, "Your licence to ask questions". Then their mouths are closed.' The impression is that most, if not all, travellers speak some Romani but that older people have a much better vocabulary than do the younger generation. Some pretend not to know the language.

When using English, the gypsies often mispronounce words, such as 'delations' for relations, and sometimes use a word similar in sound but dissimilar in meaning to the one

intended. Isolated from society, they also retain archaic words and phrases: 'We've been a-searching all over the Lordship for them victuals.'

Mispronunciation is, of course, one of the many results of travellers' illiteracy. Adult education would enable them to reduce this handicap and to improve their contacts with the settled community, as well as aiding them in understanding better the complex world of the settled community.

Family rôles

Marriage takes place at an age below that customary for the settled population, usually when both partners are in their teens, perhaps the girl sixteen and the boy eighteen. Courtships are short but the young people have usually known each other for a long time, perhaps for the whole of their lives. Whereas many old people were never legally married, this is rarely the case with young people. The ceremony usually takes place in a Register Office. Knowledge of birth control is limited and families are generally large. Desertion, separation and divorce are very rare: the traveller marries for life.

The head of the family is not the 'gypsy queen' of newspaper mythology, but the husband and father. Though sharing with his wife the rôle of provider, he retains the right to take important decisions alone. He decides when to buy a new lorry or caravan, which route to take, and where to stop. Long term planning is not common among the travellers and they tend to live for the present, with a strong feeling of fatalism and a belief in luck.

The rôle of the wife and mother is rarely purely domestic: on the contrary she is normally expected to play an active part in earning the family livelihood. In addition, all the cleaning, shopping, cooking, and the rearing of the children falls to her. Her activities rarely reach beyond this restricted range, though a few young women are learning to drive. Many of the younger women are not identifiable as gypsies by their dress but some of the older women still wear the long, heavy skirts, bright colours, silk neckerchief, braided hair and gold earrings of the Romany, and can sometimes be seen smoking pipes. Make-up is frowned upon; 'Travellers don't agree with short skirts and a lot of lipstick. Women put make-up on for other men to fancy'. There is an element of Victorian primness and modesty in many of the women.

Old people of both sexes are respected for their wider experience. Only very rarely are elderly travellers found in old people's homes. One adult daughter, usually the youngest, normally stays with her parents, caring for them in their old age. The other adult children visit their parents frequently and help them financially when necessary. When the old people die, all the family gather for the funeral, some travelling immense distances. There is no

uniform pattern of inheritance though occasionally the belongings of the deceased, particularly his caravan, are burned.

A typical day

A typical day in a prosperous traveller family starts with a fried breakfast for the whole family, cooked sometimes over an open fire, but more often inside the caravan. In other families a cold breakfast is taken. Then without any particular hurry the men and boys leave with the lorries or carts to collect scrap or rags, or to do agricultural work. Some women go off to agricultural work in the fields, or out hawking or shopping in the town, sometimes taking their young children. Normal practice, however, is to leave the children at the camp site in the care of the eldest daughter who also has some responsibility for cleaning and keeping an eye on the caravans. All the children are under the general supervision of any women remaining at home. (This perhaps explains why a child will call all the women on the site 'Aunty'). By early tea-time the working women will be home, loaded with groceries (for food is bought daily, sometimes with the day's earnings, thus avoiding storage problems). Then the men return, perhaps between four and five o'clock with a load of scrap metal, and a large meal is cooked for all. Between breakfast and tea little is eaten, even by the children. The impression is that the diet is adequate but contains a great deal of starch and little or no fresh milk.

Until recently it was usual for the men to go out on most evenings, without their wives, either to the cinema (in many cases, several times each week) or to the public house. The advent of television, however, is affecting this pattern, but trips to the pub are still highly popular. 'They always find money for that' said one wife. It is largely from such trips to the pub that the men, and to a lesser extent the women, have acquired a reputation for being rowdy and aggressive, for violent rows are not uncommon, even within families. Not all publicans will admit travellers, who drive considerable distances to reach a pub where they are accepted. They like singing, the music of the mouth-organ and the piano accordion, and occasionally dancing, though the young are less accomplished than the older people. Some have a great capacity for spontaneous gaiety. In the pub they tend to remain in an isolated group, for though some boast that they get on well with the house-dwellers, this is rarely the case. The women usually stay at home in the evening, looking after the children, watching television or talking together round the fire. Mothers and daughters are particularly close.

Children

Children are welcomed, cared for with affection and rarely physically chastised, though they may be verbally abused. 'The kiddies are our life', said one woman simply. Most

travellers are prepared to take in an unwanted child, which perhaps explains the myth that gypsies steal the children of house-dwellers. It is doubtful if any traveller children are ever taken into care by local authorities. One woman said, 'My husband says he'll take three children out of one of them (children's) homes, not the pretty ones but the ugly ones that nobody wants, and I'll give them a bit of home life'.

Babies are the centre of attention. Family names are still frequently given to children although the old Romany names such as Liberty, Wisdom, Soraya, Lavendi, Eldorai, and Amboline are dying out. The new names, however, such as Aly Khan, Pinocchio and Elvis can be equally picturesque. Children seem to be weaned later than is the custom among house-dwellers. Some travellers still dress their young boys in frocks as did the Victorians, though this practice has almost died out in the south. Children are always warmly dressed though many clothes are begged and may be ragged. The combination of colours is frequently bizarre. Some of the children have a quaint old-fashioned air and are shy of strangers.

The children left behind all day have no legitimate playground and rarely wander far from the caravan. They seem to have few toys though there are usually dogs, birds and perhaps horses on the site. Nearly every family has at least one dog, usually a mongrel, though some possess small pedigree dogs such as cairn terriers and poodles which seem to carry a certain amount of prestige. In the past, dogs were used for hunting and poaching, and lurchers are still trained to catch rabbits and hares. There is a 'Romany whistle' that many travellers and their dogs recognise. Nowadays, however, dogs are mainly used to guard the caravan. A few families keep hens, and cage-birds are very popular. Some families breed them and some of the richer families have a veritable aviary of highly coloured singing birds. It is rumoured that families in the north still keep fighting cocks. The children thus grow up with a knowledge of several different types of living creatures.

There is little or no mixing with house-dwelling children. The children's experience is thus severely limited and play tends to be non-projective and often destructive in conclusion. This destructiveness, though caused in part by boredom, may also be due to the ubiquitous activity of scrap-breaking which they watch from an early age.

The children are quick to acquire certain skills. In the past at a very early age they became expert with horses or at making clothes-pegs. Today, children who may be unable to tell their right hand from their left can recognise and separate different metals, and can distinguish valuable from useless rags. Sometimes the older boys of school age

accompany their fathers on the lorries, and sometimes children of both sexes help their parents on agricultural work such as fruit picking and potato lifting. Many are adept at handling money and at playing cards.

Education

As the family is almost the only socializing influence experienced by the traveller child in his formative years, his intellectual growth tends to be inhibited by lack of stimulating experience. The few studies available of traveller children in school suggest that they rarely manage to achieve the standard of their house-dwelling contemporaries.

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. Little attempt seems to have been made by the authorities at that time to get gypsy children into school. This latter situation has not greatly changed, though some of the parents, probably a majority, would now like their children to go to school if only for them to be able to hold their own in a world of increased documentation and form-filling. Other parents had brief and unpleasant experiences at school and are determined to protect their children from similar ones. Since the majority of families still travel, staying either from choice or necessity for relatively short periods in each place, normal education is not attainable. Our evidence suggests that at present less than 10% of the children of school age are attending school, and that the great majority are still growing up illiterate. Some of the children who attend school do so only during the winter months when they are settled in winter quarters.

We have only limited information on the educational experience of traveller children. In 1964 Leicester City Council hurriedly set up a site at Lodge Farm for itinerant families ejected from slum-clearance areas. The site was a large area of derelict land adjacent to the city refuse tips, and at the beginning of 1965 there were over thirty families there. In some families none of the children had ever attended school, in others some of the children had attended but not for any continuous period. While camped at Lodge Farm, no children attended school. The numbers on the site increased to over sixty families, but the site was closed in the autumn of 1965. The city council had abandoned its scheme for a permanent site elsewhere and many families moved from Lodge Farm to a traditional stopping place at Anstey Gorse. In January 1966 none of the 37 (approximately) children of school age on Anstey Gorse was attending school. Four Irish tinker families had attempted to enrol their children at a local Catholic school but the waiting list was genuinely over-subscribed. All families have now been moved off Anstey Gorse; no alternative site has yet been provided.

In 1965 Godstone Rural District Council, Surrey, set up a site with domestic amenities for travellers and other caravan dwellers. The children can go by special bus to the local primary school where they constitute 50% of the school population. There are no special classes for these children but they are sometimes given special coaching in groups. Attendance is not regular and at the slightest excuse they are absent. The headmaster reported that, without the normal home background of play and vocabulary, schooling was very difficult for the children. He is pressing for more equipment for backward children. Although there is no noticeable separation in class, in the playground the camp children often tire of a game quickly, and tend to be withdrawn. It is interesting to note that as the children progress through school their appearance tends to approximate more closely to that of the other children.

South east Buckinghamshire traditionally has accommodated considerable numbers of settled or partly settled traveller families, and at the two-teacher village school at Horton several traveller children of the second generation are now being educated. The staff are sympathetic to them and the school has a strong craft element. One result of the number of these children in the school has been that some house-dwellers have become prejudiced against the school, so that non-traveller pupils are now a minority. The traveller children are wholly integrated into the two classes and to the casual visitor they are indistinguishable from house-dwellers' children. The teachers reported that on arrival traveller children were very withdrawn and that some hardly spoke for three months. They appeared to be able to understand brief verbal communications but not long sentences. Even so, it was usual for them to be able to read by the age of 7. One child had passed the preliminary test for the 11+, but this was exceptional and in most cases attainment was below average. Poor verbal ability persisted, perhaps because few of their parents could read or write.

A successful attempt at settlement has been made by Eton Rural District Council, Buckinghamshire, who in 1964 set up a well-serviced site at Iver for 32 travelling families with local ties. The standards and aspirations of the residents have risen notably since they moved on to the site and now all their children of school age are in school. They are usually taken to and from school by lorry. By chance the site was close to a pair of new primary schools, Parlaunt Park County Infant and Junior Schools, Langley, which had a mixed intake from private and council house areas. At the Infant School, the children were originally kept in a single group in the care of a 'helper', closely supervised by the headmistress. This experiment was unsuccessful and the children were then integrated into normal classes, with several in a small

remedial class. On arrival their environmental handicap was very evident: many had never used a pencil or a knife and fork, and all had a very limited vocabulary. They were clean but oddly dressed. Gradually they have become more interested in school work and stay away less frequently. Though they are still backward, all are making progress and one or two have been strikingly successful. Most of the teachers consider the camp children to be of low intellectual capacity but the teacher of the remedial class considers that by the age of 10 or 11 some will have overcome their environmental handicap and show average performance. The parents are co-operative, increasingly interested in the school, and say that they are anxious for their children to be educated. Some of the credit for this must be given to the sympathetic local Education Welfare Officers. Nevertheless, some parents still take their children away for Ascot week and for several months during the summer when the family goes pea picking, fruit picking or potato lifting.

In parts of Kent, small numbers of traveller children have attended schools for many years. It is reported that their presence need not create any significant social problem in school despite their timidity and slowness to mix with the other children. It has sometimes been found desirable to put them in existing special classes for backward children or, occasionally, to create special classes and appoint special staff where there has been a large concentration, as at Darenth Wood in 1962. Their attendance is usually irregular except during the winter months. It has been found that attendance improves in cases where the parents have settled on a permanent site, and even more where the parents have been housed. The parents' attitudes towards education are regarded as an obstacle in some cases, and not every nomadic family is anxious for its children to attend school, especially when they are of secondary school age and able to contribute to the family income. The introduction of large numbers of traveller children to one school was thought by some to be generally undesirable; it tended to isolate them in their own groups, apart from the rest of the school, and this not only involved at times special administrative provision in the way of extra teachers or additional accommodation, but it worked against the integration of the traveller children into the school community and made it more difficult to improve their attendance.

All the children aged 7 to 11 on the Morfa traveller encampment in Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, attend the local junior mixed school. At first a special class was created for these children, but after a while a new headmaster decided to spread the children among the normal classes, according to their age. Had a special teacher been available, however, he would have preferred to keep a special class for traveller and other children who were a year or more behind in school work. The children have all remained

in the *B* stream and attend, on average, for only 40% of the time, usually because they are scrap collecting with their parents or away with the family doing seasonal work on farms. Sometimes they do not return to Llanelli until after the beginning of the new school year. Special teachers are not used, although a lot of attention has to be given to these children. Difficulty has been experienced in using both verbal and non-verbal intelligence tests. The parents do not seem fully to understand the purpose of education and only desire their children to read and write like other children, and to comply with the law. They are almost all illiterate themselves and so are unable to give any backing to their children's studies. The only contact the parents have with the school is when they visit to complain about some alleged unjust treatment of their children. While the children have settled down well at the school and their behaviour in many ways has considerably improved, they are only tolerated and are not fully accepted by their settled schoolmates. Although their play activities appear to be those of a normal child, they play only with the poorer class of other children and take no part in extra-curricular activities. The headmaster finds them usually polite, generous, and affectionate, willingly sharing what they have, and amenable to discipline. In appearance they are clean and well turned-out, and seem always to be well-nourished. It is hoped that the newest generation of traveller children will show even better results, having attended school from the age of five.

In conclusion, it is important to bear in mind that the accounts given here of experiments in the education of traveller children relate only to the small minority who attend school out of the 6,000 traveller children in England and Wales. These are the children living a relatively settled existence, a considerable proportion on sites provided by local authorities. Even this minority are severely handicapped in comparison with children from settled homes, while the majority, who do not go to school, have little prospect of ever achieving the rudiments of a normal education. They are likely to grow up as illiterate as their parents unless special steps are taken to meet their educational needs. Concerning traveller children the Plowden Report stated that 'They 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 . . . unless action is taken . . . their children will in turn suffer educational deprivations which will become increasingly severe in their effect as general standards of education rise . . . Improved education alone cannot solve the problems of these children. Simultaneous action is needed by the authorities responsible for employment, industrial training, housing and planning* . . . the numbers of children involved are so

**Children and their Primary Schools*, Central Advisory Council for Education, Vol. 1, pp 59-60.

small that we believe a relatively small expenditure of money and effort . . . could rapidly achieve long steps towards a solution. . . †.

†Ibid: Vol. II, Introduction to Appendix 12 'Gypsies and Education'.

Chapter 5

Earning a living

In recent times and especially since the second world war, gypsy and other traveller families have faced a minor revolution in their way of life as they have increasingly been forced by technological advance, especially mass production, to forsake the traditional gypsy crafts and occupations as a means of earning a living. These are now being superseded by trading activities, especially in scrap metal and other waste materials. Horse dealing and fortune telling, which were once among their chief occupations, are now relatively rare, and wood carving is restricted to the making of pegs and flowers. These and other gypsy craft jobs such as knife grinding, chair mending and basket making have declined to the extent that they accounted for little more than 1% of the occupations recorded in the census. There are thus a few families who still rely on traditional work and the hawking of traditional wares for their main source of income. In most cases, however, traditional occupations only supplement earnings from other sources. It is interesting that, while the range of work and skills among the settled population has greatly extended since the industrial revolution, the traveller, by his mode of life and lack of education, is still restricted to a very limited range of occupations, for the most part involving only elementary skills and tools, and taking place out of doors.

The pattern of occupations

The information on occupations gleaned from the census taken on March 22nd 1965, provides only a 'snapshot' of a complex pattern. Traveller families tend to move from one district to another according to the season, or when the opportunities become exhausted in one area. A common pattern is for families to engage in seasonal agricultural or horticultural work in different areas during all or part of the period from April until October, and to take to dealing or hawking, or both, during the remainder of the year. Thus to gain a comprehensive picture of occupational patterns it would be necessary to take several 'snapshots' at different times during the year. The material on occupations gained in the census relates only to winter occupations, although many of those mentioned continue for the whole year, particularly in families relying on a single major means of earning their livelihood, such as scrap metal dealing. Other families have several different occupations: for example, out of fifteen traveller families living on a site in Leicester in 1964, only five concentrated on a single occupation and three families made their living in three different ways.

Most women in the census gave their occupation as 'housewife' or said they had no occupation, although in fact most women perform some task in connection with the work of the family's male members. One informant told us that nowadays women tend to help their husbands more, instead of hawking their own small articles.

Although all the occupation figures from the census for both sexes relate only to those aged 16 and over, in fact most boys do a full day's manual work from the age of 12 or 13, and some girls of school age accompany their mothers when they go hawking.

Men's occupations

Undoubtedly the most important male occupation is dealing in scrap metal and other waste products. 52% of the males aged 16 or over who stated their occupation gave dealing as their means of livelihood. This figure includes a very small proportion who dealt in cars or horses (see page 39). The only other occupation to account for any appreciable proportion of males was agricultural or horticultural* work, for which the figure was 15%.

The older men engaged less in dealing than did those under 45 years of age. While retirement and ageing account for part of this difference in the group aged 65 and over, changing needs and preferences are probably the main explanation. Only 3% of men worked in typically settled jobs in the community, such as factory work†. Only a third of those aged over 65 who answered the question about occupation said they were retired, and of this age group a slightly higher proportion than in other age groups said they earned their living by hawking, traditional gypsy jobs, or by doing odd jobs.

Women's occupations

Nearly three-quarters of the 3,665 women aged 16 or over who stated their occupation said they were housewives, or that they had no occupation, or were 'unemployed'. A further 1% said they were retired. Thus three women out of four were not earning a living at the time of the census. This compares with rather less than two-thirds of the total female population in the same age group who were not classified as economically active in the 1961 Census. Some of these traveller women may, however, have thought it unnecessary to report that they occasionally assisted with the work of the rest of the family, or took up some kind of work at other times of the year or with their husbands. In particular, it seems likely that hawking (see page 40), which is a key factor in the daily economy of some families, an accepted part of the daily domestic routine, may have been mentioned less than was warranted. The average traveller woman has a great number of children to look after than does the average settled housewife, has onerous living conditions and fewer labour saving devices, so that it is hardly surprising that relatively few do full time work outside the home. Over the

whole of England and Wales nearly 8% of women gave hawking as their occupation at the time of the census, this being the chief means of livelihood for women. Another 7% were engaged in seasonal agricultural work. Some women who do agricultural work in the summer months hawk during the winter, and the figures above were collected at the time of the year when most hawking is done. The number of women who do agricultural work in the summer might therefore be expected to be considerably higher than our figures suggest.

Table 5.1 Occupations of males and females aged 16 or over

MALES		FEMALES	
Occupation	%	Occupation	%
Dealing (all kinds)	52	Hawking	8
Agriculture/horticulture	15	Agriculture/horticulture	7
Unspecified forms of		Dealing (all kinds)	5
labouring	4	Factory work	2
Roadwork/tarmacadam	4	Traditional gypsy jobs	1
Hawking	3	Other means of livelihood	3
Building work	3	Housewife	62
Timber/logs	2		
Factory work	2		
Traditional gypsy jobs	1		
Other means of livelihood	5		
Retired	2	Retired	1
No occupation	2	No occupation	8
Unemployed	4	Unemployed	3
Sick	1	Sick	*
	100		100

Number of males: 4,019

Number of females: 3,665

*Less than 0.5%

The proportion of women hawking doubled from about 6% for women of child bearing age to 12% for those over 45, but the number in agricultural work declined from about 8% for those under 35 to only 5% for those between the ages of 45 and 64, and to only 1% for women over 65. The proportion of women working in factories or in other jobs in the settled community was highest in the group aged under 35, over 5% of whom were so engaged compared with about 1% of those aged 35-44, and virtually none above that age. While this indicates to some extent a tendency for younger women to seek more settled forms of work, part of this difference must be accounted for by the greater family responsibilities of the older women.

Occupational reasons for travelling

The extent to which families travel varies widely according to the occupation of the head of the family. About 63% of families travelled either as a whole unit or in part during 1964, and travelling was more common among families in dealing. 73% of those families where dealing was given as the occupation of the head of the family, and 58% of the

*For brevity we refer to agricultural work hereafter, meaning all forms of work on the land.

†These included a caretaker, miner, fitter, cleaner, watchman and others.

376 families where agricultural work was given, had travelled in 1964. The group which travelled most, however, was the group of 222 families who (a) still carried on the traditional gypsy jobs as a main source of income, (b) were salesmen or (c) were hawkers, or (d) did roadwork and repairs; 86%, 80%, 77% and 74% of these families, respectively, travelled in the year preceding the census. The latter category included some highly mobile families with 'flash' caravans who travelled widely in large groups, earning their living by laying tarmac drives and paths.

Only half or less of the families engaged in the selling of logs, labouring, industrial work, haulage and various jobs in the settled community had travelled during the previous year. These jobs seem to be conducive to a settled life; they accounted for over 16% of males in the South Western region, and nearly 13% in the South East. On the other hand they represented less than 4% of males in Yorkshire and Humberside and in the Northern region where travelling is more common. All the above figures for travelling include a few families where only some members travelled in 1964.

Regional variations in occupational pattern

There are important regional variations in the pattern of

employment. Dealing of all kinds is most common in the East Midlands and Northern regions, and least common in South West England. Compared with 52% for England and Wales as a whole, it accounts for over 70% of males in the former two regions and only 42% in the latter. The West Midlands is the most important region for agricultural or horticultural work, with as many as 28% of all males so occupied compared with only 15% in the whole of England and Wales, and less than 4% in the Northern region, Wales, the East Midlands, and the North West.

Hawking, which is the chief occupation of all women outside the home, was given as the occupation of as many as 22% of women in the North West and only just under 5% in South East England and the West Midlands. There is a tendency for the proceeds of hawking to be used to supplement the income of families who rely mainly on dealing. For further details of regional variations in occupational pattern see Appendix 7.

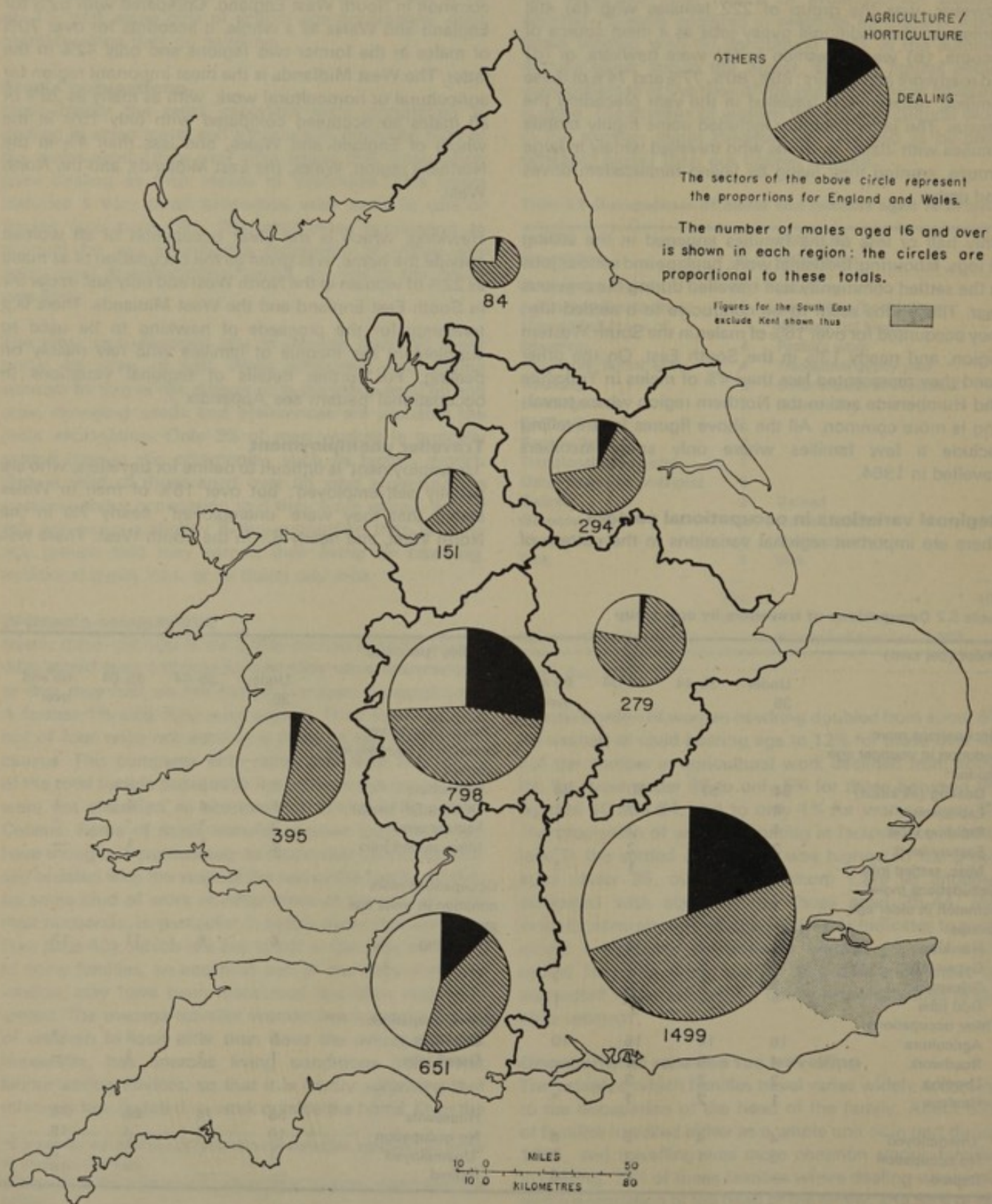
Traveller unemployment

'Unemployment' is difficult to define for travellers, who are usually self-employed; but over 18% of men in Wales stated that they were 'unemployed', nearly 7% in the North West, and nearly 6% in the South West. There was

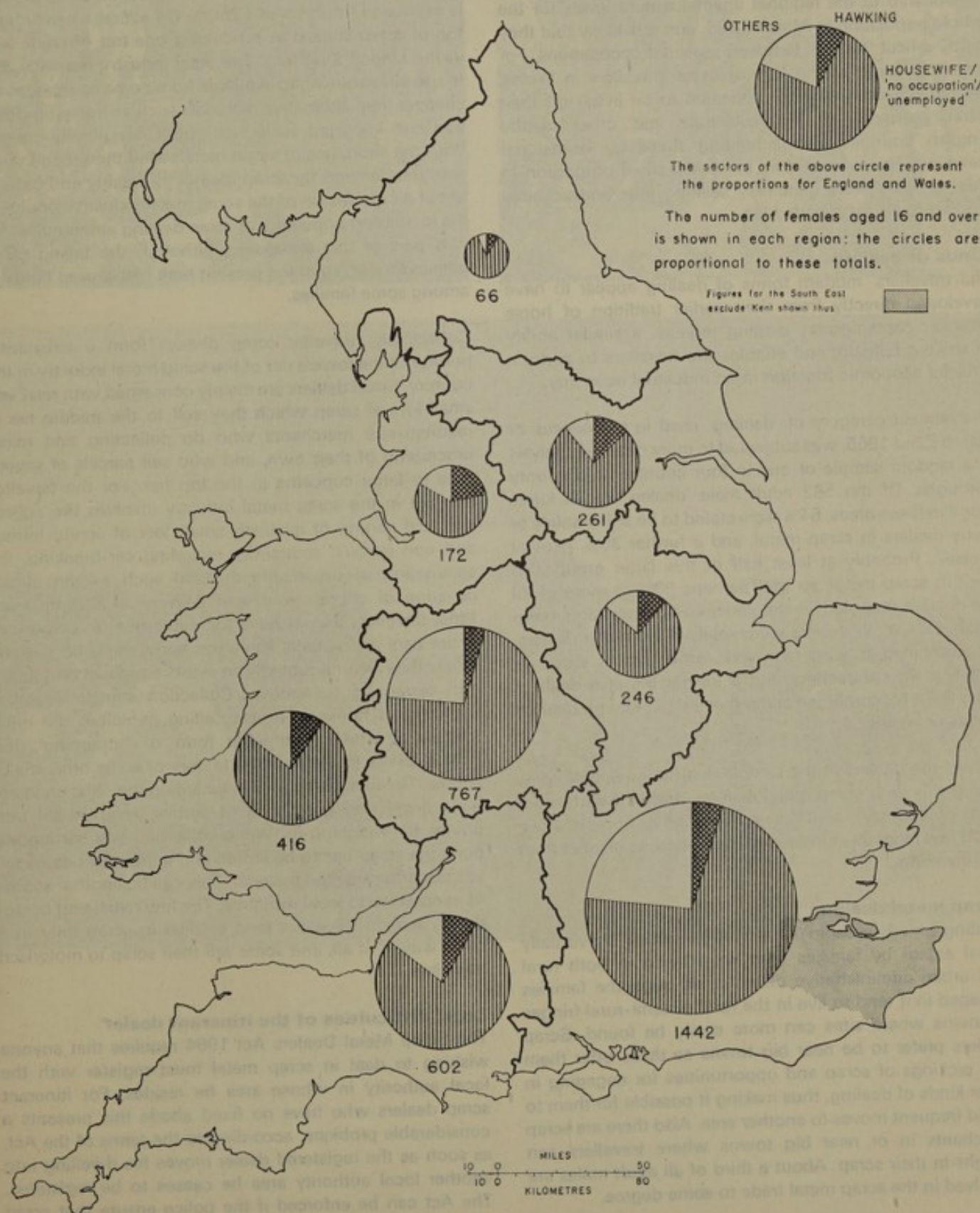
Table 5.2 Occupations of travellers by age group

Males (per cent)					Females (per cent)				
	Under 35	35-44	45-64	65 and over		Under 35	35-44	45-64	65 and over
Occupations more common in younger age groups:					Occupations more common in younger age groups:				
Dealing (all kinds)	54	57	50	28	Agriculture	8	6	5	1
Labouring	4	4	3	1	Dealing (all kinds)	6	4	4	1
Building work	4	3	2	—	Factory work	3	*	*	*
Factory work	2	2	2	—	Misc. settled jobs	2	1	1	—
Misc. settled jobs	1	1	1	*	Occupations more common in older age groups:				
Occupations more common in older age groups:					Hawking	6	6	11	13
Hawking	2	2	4	5	Other occupations:				
Gypsy jobs	*	1	2	3	Salesmen	1	1	1	*
Salesmen	1	1	2	*	Gypsy jobs	1	1	1	—
Odd jobs	*	*	*	1	Housewife	58	74	68	46
Other occupations:					No occupation	10	5	4	18
Agriculture	16	14	16	10	'Unemployed'	3	1	2	2
Roadwork	4	5	3	—	Retired	—	—	*	16
Logging	2	2	3	1					
Haulage	1	2	1	*					
'Unemployed'	4	4	5	6					
No occupation	2	1	2	6					
Retired	—	—	1	36					

*Occupations of 0.5% or less of age group



March 1965: by economic planning regions



less so-called unemployment in other regions. We do not know how many were registered with the Ministry of Labour as unemployed. The figures bear only a slight relationship to the regional unemployment levels for the whole population in March 1965, and it is likely that they partly reflect 'resting' between seasonal occupations. For instance, some of the 'unemployed' travellers in Wales, particularly South Wales, appeared to be living off their earlier earnings in Worcestershire and other nearby English counties, supplementing these by occasional hawking. However, it may be that a small proportion in this category were genuinely seeking jobs and possibly hoping to adopt a settled life.

Kinds of dealing

The travellers' modern forms of dealing appear to have developed directly from their earlier tradition of horse dealing: contemporary dealing requires a similar ability to strike a bargain, and enables the travellers to perform a useful economic function in an industrial economy.

The general category of 'dealing' used in the census of March 22nd 1965, was subjected to more detailed analysis in a random sample of one in four counties and county boroughs. Of the 582 adult male 'dealers' of all kinds found in these areas, 64% were stated to be either solely or partly dealers in scrap metal, and a further 30% 'general dealers'. Probably at least half of this latter group also dealt in scrap metal, so that perhaps 80% or more of all the dealers recorded in the census were handling scrap metal. 52% of all dealers were solely scrap metal dealers, 6% combined it with farmwork, other casual work, or tarmacadam contracting, and a further 5% also dealt in rags. Only 1% combined scrap metal dealing with dealing in cars or horses.

10% of the dealers in the sample dealt in rags, half combining this with scrap metal dealing, and half with other kinds of work. A mere 1% were recorded as horse dealers, and a few more dealt in second-hand cars, as distinct from car-breaking.

Scrap metal dealing

Dealing, chiefly in scrap metal, was carried on to a virtually equal extent by families who were living in both rural and urban administrative districts, although the families engaged in it tend to live in the rural or semi-rural fringes of towns where sites can more easily be found. Scrap dealers prefer to be near big towns as these offer them rich pickings of scrap and opportunities for engaging in other kinds of dealing, thus making it possible for them to avoid frequent moves to another area. Also there are scrap merchants in or near big towns where travellers can weight-in their scrap. About a third of all adult males are involved in the scrap metal trade to some degree.

The importance of scrap metal for the steel and non-ferrous metal industries may not be widely appreciated by laymen. The annual turnover of the whole scrap industry is estimated to be some £250m. On average nearly half a ton of scrap is used in producing one ton of crude steel in the United Kingdom. The steel industry normally aims to use all ferrous scrap available from home sources, as it is cheaper than alternative materials such as home produced iron and imported scrap; its export is normally banned. With the shortages of virgin metals after the second world war, the demand for scrap rose considerably and brought about an expansion of the scrap metal industry. Doubtless the increasing popularity of scrap dealing among travellers was part of this expansion, although the falling-off of demand for scrap at the present time has caused hardship among some families.

Collectively, traveller scrap dealers form a substantial portion of the lowest tier of the scrap metal industry in this country. Small dealers are mainly concerned with relatively small lots of scrap which they sell to the middle tier of medium-size merchants who do collecting and minor processing of their own, and who sell parcels of several tons to large concerns in the top tier. For the traveller, his part in the scrap metal industry involves the collection and sorting of relatively small lots of scrap, ferrous and non-ferrous, sometimes including car-breaking, the elimination of unsaleable material such as the plastic covering of copper wire, and delivery to a scrap yard. Most travellers do not have the equipment to dispose of entire cars and usually leave the body shells on the site where they are undoubtedly an eyesore and can be difficult and expensive to remove. Collection sometimes takes the form of house-to-house calling, which is the most elementary and unprofitable form of 'scrapping', but dealers prefer to trade with a factory or some other major source. The men of the family, including the older children, have developed great skill in sorting scrap metal into grades for weighing-in. While collection and sorting are done the scrap has to be stored and a fire may be needed to burn off unwanted material. This can be another source of annoyance to local residents. The few remaining horse-drawn wagon-travellers tend to deal in scrap only in a small way, if at all, and some sell their scrap to motorised travellers.

Legal difficulties of the itinerant dealer

The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 requires that anyone wishing to deal in scrap metal must register with the local authority in whose area he resides. For itinerant scrap dealers who have no fixed abode this presents a considerable problem; according to the terms of the Act, as soon as the registered dealer moves his dwelling into another local authority area he ceases to be registered. The Act can be enforced if the police ensure that scrap

Gypsies and other travellers have always camped on the outskirts of the metropolis:

Top left Inside a bender tent on Mitcham Common, 1879. A man and a boy are making clothes pegs.

Artist's impression. *Radio Times Hulton Picture Library*

Top right On a site about to be developed at Notting Hill, 1879.

Artist's impression. *Radio Times Hulton Picture Library*

Bottom At the turn of the century, a family with a bow-topped living wagon and bender tent.

Freshwater, Isle of Wight, 1901. *Radio Times Hulton Picture Library*



- Top For some families half a century has seen little change in their way of living. This family in Hampshire still used a bender tent in 1955. *Radio Times Hulton Picture Library*
- Bottom left In 1965 only 6% of families still lived in horse-drawn wagons. This one was at Birstall, Yorkshire in 1963. *Photopress Leeds Ltd.*
- Bottom right The modern trailer caravan provides much more spacious accommodation. This one at Cuxton, Kent in 1965 shows the high standard of space and fittings to which the more prosperous travellers are accustomed. *Christopher Ridley*



- Top left Tents were used as extra accommodation by about 3% of families. The milk churn contains the family's water supply. Anstey Gorse, Leicester, 1966.
Leicester Mercury
- Top right 'All too often travellers end up on sites close to rubbish tips and the like, because there they make no noticeable addition to the existing squalor'. (Chapter 3). These were on Corkes Meadow, Kent in 1951.
Radio Times Hulton Picture Library
- Bottom This site at Salters Heath near Sevenoaks, Kent, in 1965, typifies the damage to amenities and squalid living conditions which antagonise local house-dwellers.
Reproduced by kind permission of the Sevenoaks Chronicle



Top Eviction: A tractor tows away a caravan when the Darenth Woods camp in Kent was closed in 1962.
Press Association

Bottom Families evicted from Darenth Woods were towed onto the verge of the busy A2 road.
London Express News and Feature Services



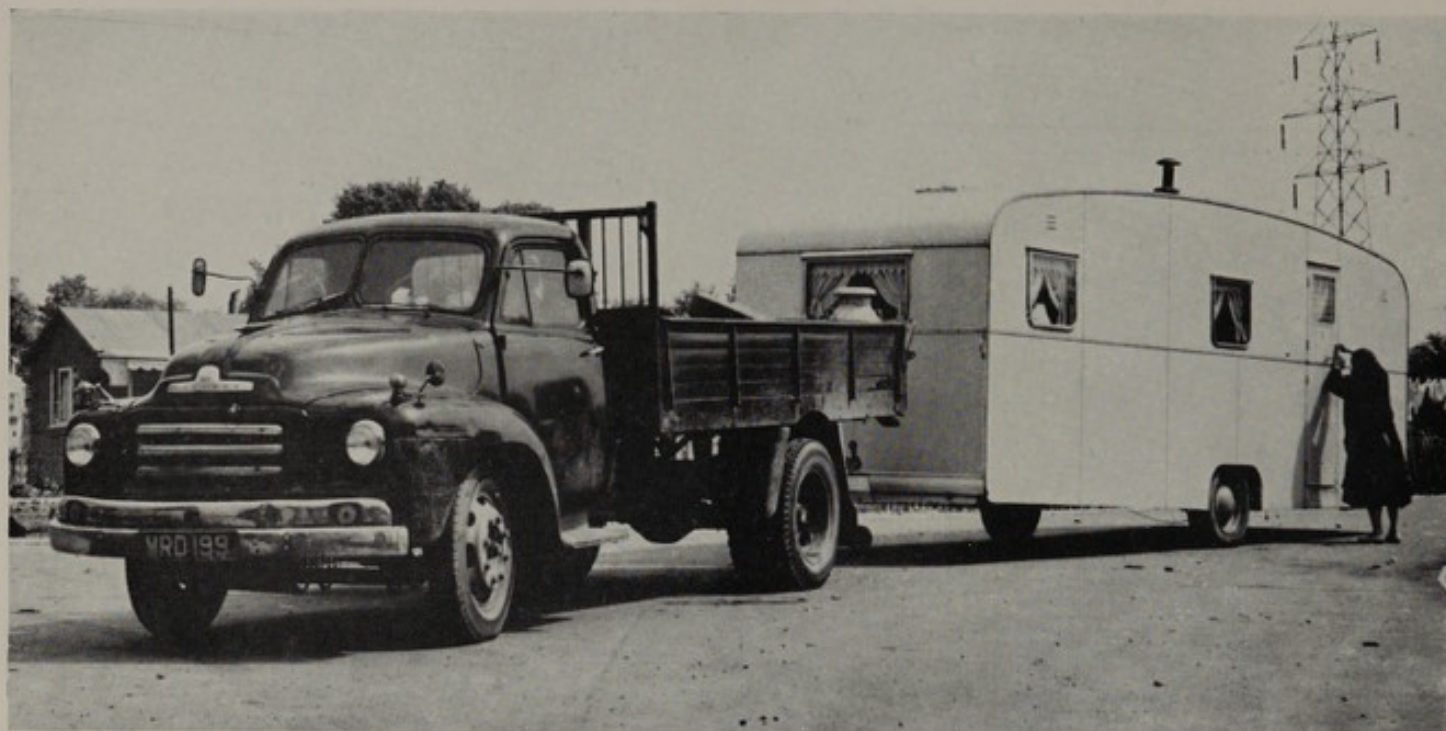
Top Later in the same year, the late Norman Dodds, M.P. brings a family from the verge of the A2 to his camp at Cobham. *Keystone Press Agency Ltd.*

Bottom A bulldozer clears away some of the eighty car bodies which were the debris of a scrap dealers' camp at Dry Hill Quarry near Sevenoaks, Kent, in 1965. In that year about a third of all adult male travellers were engaged in scrap metal dealing. *Reproduced by kind permission of the Sevenoaks Chronicle*



Top A family prepares to move off for the crop picking season, from the Bushey special site in Hertfordshire. 1967.
Crown Copyright

Bottom Children help their parents on the lorry or cart from an early age. This picture was taken in Kent in 1951.
Now only 6% of families use horse-drawn carts. *Radio Times Hulton Picture Library*



- Top left Resting after cherry picking in Kent.
Agricultural and horticultural work was the second most important occupation for men in 1965,
and in many cases all the family take part. *Radio Times Hulton Picture Library*
- Top right Only a very few families now make a living from horse dealing. Striking a bargain at Appleby Horse Fair, Westmorland, 1964.
The Times
- Bottom Chrysanthemums made from wood. This is one of the few traditional crafts to survive.
W. F. Beer



Top 'Children are always warmly dressed though many clothes are begged and may be in a ragged condition'.
(Chapter 4). At Cobham, in Kent, in 1963. *The Observer*
Bottom 'Old people are respected for their wider experience'.
(Chapter 4). Granny Fuller, Outwood, Surrey, 1966. *The Times*



Top 'Desertion, separation or divorce are very rare; the traveller marries for life'. (Chapter 4).
A wedding feast near Swansea, 1966. *Reproduced by kind permission of the Western Mail*
Bottom 'When old people die all the family gather for the funeral . . . occasionally the belongings of the deceased, particularly his caravan, are burned'. (Chapter 4) This burning took place in 1953. *Topix*



Top 'They like singing, playing the mouth organ and the piano accordion . . . the young are less accomplished than the older people'. (Chapter 4) Accordion player near Sevenoaks, 1966.
Reproduced by kind permission of the Sevenoaks Chronicle

Bottom One of the occasions when travellers meet in large numbers; Appleby Horse Fair, Westmorland, 1964. *The Times*



Top The possession of ponies by motorised travellers carries prestige.
These were on an unauthorised camp at Gants Hill, London Borough of Redbridge, in 1966.
John Watney

Bottom Traveller children on their first day at school. Edenbridge, Kent, 1965.
Reproduced by kind permission of the Kent and Sussex Courier



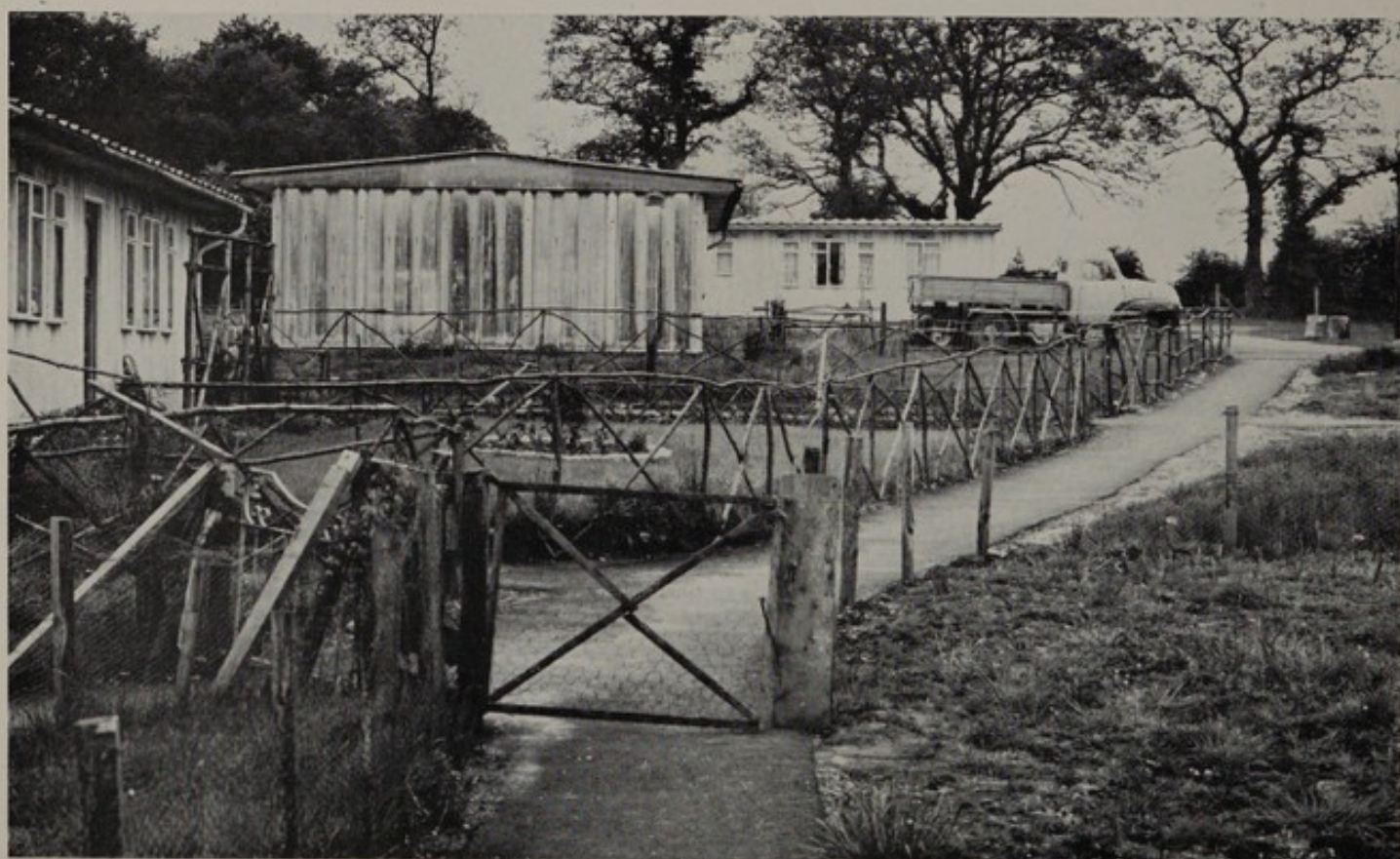
- Top 'Most local authorities which have established sites were hampered to some degree by an influx of families into the area . . .'. (Chapter 7).
An unauthorised roadside camp in Sevenoaks Rural District, Kent, 1965.
Reproduced by kind permission of the Sevenoaks Chronicle
- Bottom Water was brought daily to the Lodge Farm local authority site, Leicester.
This site is now closed. *Leicester Mercury*



- Top The site provided by West Ashford Rural District Council at Chart, Kent, was the first special site for travellers. A washday in 1962. This site is now closed, the residents having been housed by the authority. *The Observer*
- Bottom Washday again—this time in 1966 on the Edenbridge site provided by Sevenoaks Rural District Council. Even on sites with some amenities certain domestic activities continue to be carried on out of doors. *The Times*



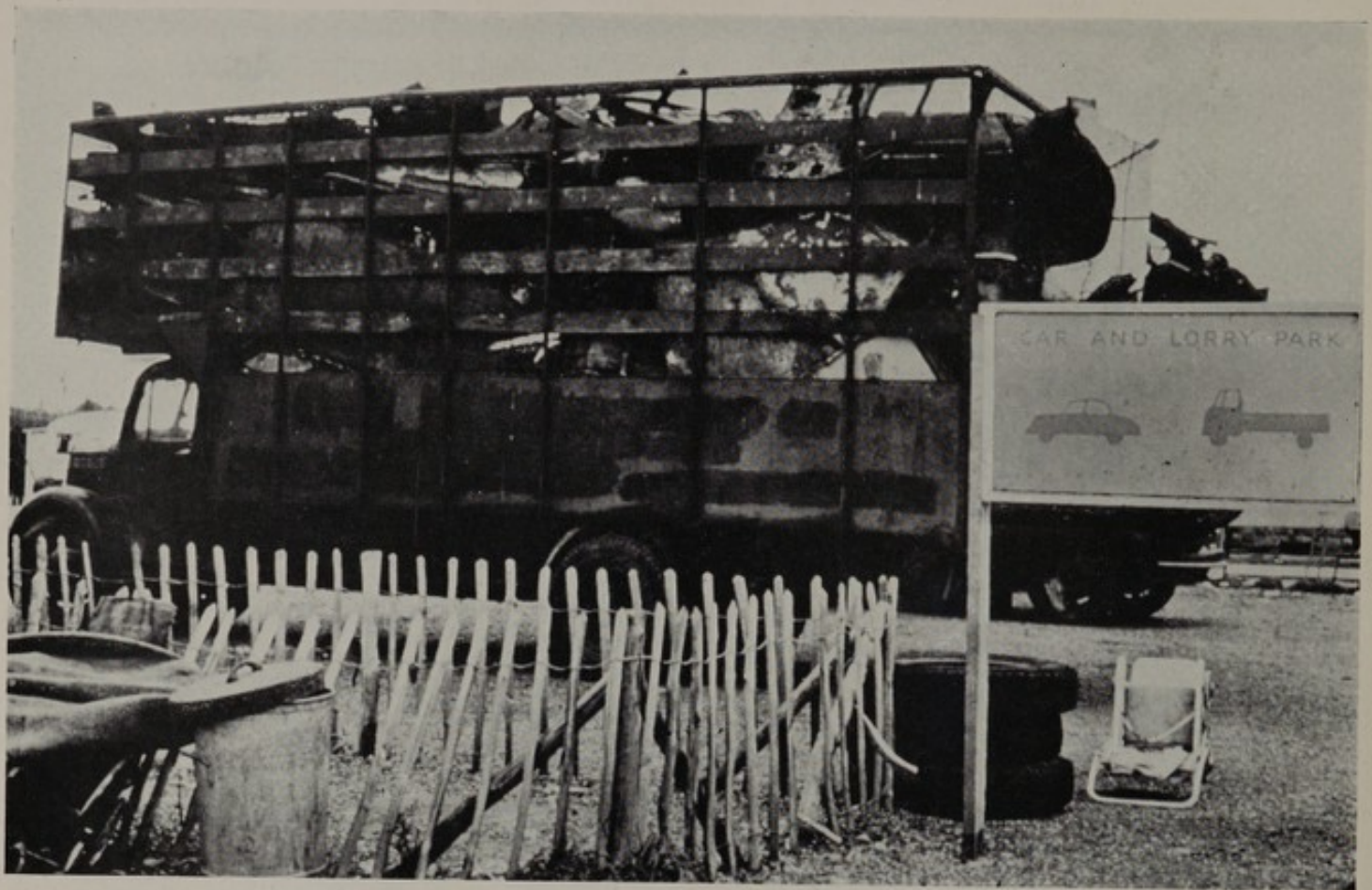
Top These fenced gardens at the Bushey local authority site, Hertfordshire, in 1967, show the standards to which travellers can aspire on specially provided sites. *Crown Copyright*
Bottom Bungalows erected by Hampshire County Council as intermediate accommodation for travellers. This site at North Baddesley is one of four in Hampshire. 1967. *Crown Copyright*



- Top This view of the special site provided by Eton Rural District Council shows part of the car and lorry parking area and one of the blocks containing w.c.'s and washing facilities. 1967. *Crown Copyright*
- Bottom This site at West Malling, Kent, opened in March 1967, has units containing a sink, storage space, w.c. and space for a bath, for each caravan. A space for a lorry or van is also provided by each pitch. *Crown Copyright*



A modern scrap collecting traveller's lorry in the special parking space provided at Eton Rural District Council's site at Iver, Buckinghamshire. The sign takes account of the illiteracy of most travellers.



collecting depots accept scrap only from registered dealers, and such action has been taken in at least one area. Some local authorities doubt the practicability of registering people who remain in the area for only a short time. The Act also requires the dealer to keep receipts for all the scrap he has bought, and this raises problems for an illiterate dealer. However, in most cases there is someone present at a deal able to make out the necessary receipt.

At present most traveller scrap dealers have no authorised place where they can take their scrap, sometimes including old vehicles, for breaking up and sorting. Under section 19 of the Civic Amenities Act 1967 a traveller who abandons a motor vehicle on an unauthorised place or any part of a vehicle removed from it on the site, or any other thing brought there for the purpose of abandoning it, is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £100 for a first offence.

Therefore it seems that if either the Scrap Metal Dealers Act or the Civic Amenities Act are ever enforced in the case of travellers, they will suffer a serious fall in their standard of living unless authorities make some special provision. There is no doubt that, at present, scrap metal dealing is an important element in the income of a large proportion of traveller families, despite temporary recessions in trade. The scrap metal dealers are among the wealthiest travellers. It is possible that, eventually, most travellers will cease scrap dealing after education and permanent housing have had their effect on future generations. But for the foreseeable future many travellers will attempt to earn a living in this way.

It is difficult to predict the effect on the travellers of the arrangements for old vehicle disposal by local authorities under the Civic Amenities Act. If the authorities receive all unwanted vehicles direct from the owners, then some travellers will be deprived of their livelihood and the earnings of others will be reduced. In the short term some travellers might leave for areas where these arrangements were not yet fully implemented. But travellers feel a strong tie to their own locality and would be more likely to stay and to try to find other sources of scrap. One vehicle disposal agent for a large authority has said that travellers would be able to strip a car of the more valuable materials and then take it to the breaking plant where they might be paid for the body shell. But this assumes that the travellers are able to find a site to do the initial breaking without incurring the severe penalties imposed by the Act.

Future provision for scrap dealers

Many sites used by travellers for storing and sorting scrap lack planning permission and are obviously unsuitable for this use. Few caravan sites specially provided for travellers make allowance for storing and sorting scrap, except on the travellers' lorries. In some areas other occupations predominate and scrap dealing may not present a problem. In places where there are a large number of scrap dealers the local authority may be anxious not to encourage the trade because it both produces litter and can create difficulties when travellers are housed. This view has to be balanced against the fact that many travellers succeed in making a living out of the trade and many are likely to wish to continue doing so. The present generation of illiterate traveller scrap dealers will not easily be able to adopt new means of livelihood with an equivalent income; the older travellers especially cannot become literate and adept at new skills overnight.

It seems probable that some travellers will continue scrap dealing for many years. In order to concentrate the litter in one place and to enable the travellers to maintain their standard of living, some authorities may wish to consider the provision of special compounds where travellers' scrap could be stored and sorted. It would not be necessary for these compounds to be adjacent to the residential sites. Local objections might be reduced if the compounds were set up alongside existing scrap yards or refuse dumps, possibly alongside places provided by local authorities under Section 18 of the Civic Amenities Act. A reasonable rent could be charged which might include the cost of a regular collection of unsaleable material.

The existence of a compound might encourage dealers to become more efficient, to use oxy-acetylene equipment and to build firmer relationships with local scrap merchants. The establishment of residential caravan sites to which no scrap was to be brought would be less likely to arouse local prejudice, the litter problem would be reduced, and when families are housed they would not need to take the hardware of their trade with them.

Rag collecting

Rag collecting is a far less common pursuit among travellers than scrap metal dealing. An increasing number of street collectors are using the 'bagging' method which involves leaving a polythene bag containing a cheap gift outside each front door. The traveller returns later and collects waste which the householder leaves in return for the gift. In some areas, outlets for the sale of rags are disappearing. Rag collecting is another occupation which does not lend itself to house-dwelling. A traveller woman who moved into a council house gave up the trade after neighbours had objected to her dirty appearance. Some travellers still pick refuse dumps for rags which they bring home in prams to wash.

Seasonal agricultural and horticultural work

Agricultural work not only provides the traveller and his family with employment between March and October, but also ensures a secure site for the caravan or living wagon for the period of employment, owing to the exemption of seasonal agricultural workers' accommodation from the provisions of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. But this type of work is nowadays increasingly difficult to obtain as farm mechanisation leads to a demand for fewer and more highly skilled labourers.

The counties with the highest proportions of gypsies and other travellers who gave agricultural work as their occupation were Herefordshire (50%), Worcestershire (47%), the Isle of Ely (35%), the rest of Cambridgeshire (27%) and Dorset (23%). The census did not include Kent, but it is known that a large number of travellers obtain seasonal work in that county, in the hop-fields and during the fruit picking season. Both the West Midlands and the South East regions have a higher proportion of adult male travellers employed in agriculture than the average for the whole of England and Wales. Many of these families engage in other forms of work, including scrap dealing and hawking, during the winter months, and for that purpose migrate to areas close to centres of population. An example is the families who hawk clothes pegs and artificial flowers in the Exeter area after pea picking in the Bridgwater area of Somerset. Others travel from Worcestershire to South Wales, or from Kent to Berkshire. Some, however, prefer to winter in the area where they find their seasonal work, as do some of the families in the soft fruit areas around Wisbech, in the Isle of Ely.

Some families travel from one area to another to find fresh agricultural work, such as those who do potato lifting in Lincolnshire after the end of the hop picking season in Kent. Others, after sugar beet singling in West Suffolk move on to Lincolnshire in August for fruit picking and then back to Suffolk in September for carrot and potato lifting, and there spend the winter. A few traveller families are seen each year passing through Derbyshire on their way to farms as far away as the Vale of Evesham in Worcestershire. Farms in the Maidstone area are able to keep local traveller families employed from April to October in hop training, strawberry picking, cherry picking, apple picking, hop picking and potato harvesting. Apart from gathering hops, fruits and root crops, travellers are also employed in picking beans, peas, and in many other kinds of farm work. In Wales travellers visit some farms annually to paint farm buildings. Although travellers tend to move from farm to farm to find fresh work, in many cases they return each year to the same farms. It sometimes happens that farmers try to arrange for travellers to stay for longer periods, or that families

attempt to retain their relatively secure sites after the agricultural work is finished for the season. In these cases, the local authority may bring pressure to bear on the farmer to have them removed, as they are no longer 'seasonal' workers in the meaning of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act. In the Kent report of 1951-52* it was said that 'the only winter jobs on farms, generally speaking, are for skilled agricultural or horticultural workers. Individual gypsies and travellers who do achieve the necessary skill and experience, almost certainly cease at the same time to be nomads or camp dwellers'.

In agriculture the traveller rarely works for a wage but nearly always agrees a rate for the job and then sets his family to work in the fields or orchards. In this way he maintains his traditional independence and can work at his own pace.

Hawking

Hawking is not only a source of subsidiary income for families where the main earners are mostly engaged in scrap metal or other dealing but is sometimes a winter occupation for seasonal agricultural workers. The women leave the caravan or living wagon after breakfast and return at early tea time. Nowadays, the items hawked include haberdashery such as elastic, tape, combs, charms, lace and household linen. Artificial flower making was reported as a winter stand-by occupation in Kent, Buckinghamshire and Devon, and, no doubt, this traditional craft still supplies goods for hawking in many other areas, although plastic flowers are taking the place of the traveller-made wooden ones. Fresh flowers are sometimes hawked. Wooden pegs are also sold and were reported in the Isle of Ely, Devon, and Leicester, although their sale is probably more widespread than this would suggest. It is usual for the women hawkers to try to persuade the housewife not only to buy goods but to have her fortune told. Hawking requires the proximity of a built-up area where the density of housing makes it worthwhile, most householders being either hostile or distrustful, and generally unwilling to buy. Some householders consider this endless importunity of the gypsy women to be a form of begging. Often the women adopted a fawning 'calling manner', characterised by a whining tone of voice and a well-rehearsed patter of flattery and 'blessings'. Often they dress for the part. It used to be a common habit to carry a young child in an attempt to soften the hearts of difficult householders but this practice appears to be dying out, though piteous tales of misfortune are still common.

Tarmacadam groups

We received several reports of the existence of groups of travellers who specialise in laying or repairing tarmacadam

*Kent County Council, op.cit.

roads, drives and paths for private householders and others. According to one report some travel in gangs fifteen to twenty strong, and are well equipped and highly mobile. Other families work alone. Some immigrant itinerants of Irish stock are engaged in this work. Some of the families engaged in tarmac work are well-off and can be classed with the 'flash' travellers, but others find it more profitable to do agricultural work for part of the year. Berkshire County Council suggested that such families were particularly attracted to developing areas where the population is growing. Roadwork, including mobile tar macadam contracting, was the fourth most important occupation of adult males recorded in the census, accounting for 3.5%. Other travellers work individually as labourers to contractors building or repairing roads.

Travellers in settled kinds of work

Only Hampshire County Council is known to have adopted a consistent policy of trying to wean travellers away from their usual occupations, especially scrap metal dealing, and into settled kinds of work. By July 1966, nearly all of the men living in three of Hampshire's special intermediate housing centres had abandoned their former occupations and were working as general labourers on building sites, or at earth moving, lorry driving (some long distance), as forestry workers, as refuse collectors, or as labourers in parks and open spaces. The experience of Hampshire has shown that the men fare best in jobs which enable them to work either alone or with few other men, or where they are not involved in complicated relationships with workmates, foremen and so on, as would usually be the case in a factory. They do not mix well with house-dwellers, but where some mixing is necessary, it is the ex-scrap dealer who does best, probably because he has more experience of different kinds of men and situations. The less shrewd 'horse and cart' man in Hampshire is best suited to forestry work where he can work more or less on his own, and use his special knowledge of the forest. The London Borough of Bromley has found that illiteracy, apart from the practical difficulties it can create, is one of the causes of rough treatment meted out to travellers by some settled workmates, although it may be enough merely to 'look gypsy'. Their illiteracy makes the travellers feel inferior, and the jobs they do are always menial. Foremen of working gangs are not always sympathetic towards travellers. They are usually given no special training by employers, although Hampshire has attempted to provide classes in the 3 R's. Generally, their lack of vocational training handicaps them in seeking jobs.

In Bromley, out of about 75 traveller families who have been housed in prefabs or permanent dwellings for nearly ten years, only ten persons are in settled kinds of work. Apart from these, not a single traveller in Bromley, including the 32 families on a temporary caravan site, has kept a settled job. Of those on the latter site, 8 have worked

in factories in the past, but all of them left to go fruit picking. The girls are sometimes able to take up settled work again on their return, but the men find it more difficult. Although the younger travellers are more likely to succeed in adapting to settled work permanently, they all follow their parents when they migrate for seasonal work. The borough officers concerned feel that while the younger travellers can still respond to help and encouragement, it is almost a waste of time to find regular work for those over thirty, who are more fixed in their habits. On the other hand, the view of Hampshire officers was that age was not a very important factor in adapting to settled work except for those over fifty years of age. But even Hampshire officers found that the most adaptable were those aged twenty to forty, especially the younger ones. Because the Hampshire travellers have given up their caravans for prefabricated bungalows, they no longer have the opportunity to migrate for crop picking as do those on the temporary site at Bromley.

Earnings

It is difficult to form any clear picture of the earnings of traveller families, but the impression is that the average is rather below that of manual workers in the settled population. Incomes seem to be lower in the north than in the south. Their relatively low incomes have to support larger numbers of children than among the settled population, so that income per head is even lower. Where husbands and wives work separately, it is customary for the wife to purchase food from her earnings, while the man uses his for major items of expenditure, a new lorry or caravan, for clothes and also for his own entertainment. Earnings are uncertain and where possible are hoarded against 'a rainy day'.

The most observably prosperous families seem to be those engaged in tarmac and those scrap metal dealers with established connections with factories. It is possible to earn £20 per day, or nothing at all. In Hampshire, it is said that hardly any self-respecting traveller will be satisfied with less than £14 per week, and he will leave a regular job if his pay is less than what he could earn by scrap metal dealing; this is often as much as £18-20 a week. Many of the more prosperous seem to be 'long travellers'. In the census one family in ten owned more than one lorry, and another one in ten had a car in addition to one or more lorries. Those families collecting scrap from householders are in the main less prosperous but they earn more than those employed in 'ragging', who are usually poor. Agricultural contract work seems to yield a reasonable living in spring, summer and autumn and the large lump sums earned are appreciated, but as this work is seasonal, earnings have to be supplemented from other sources. Near the bottom of the economic ladder are a few families eking out a precarious living by traditional gypsy crafts. However much travellers may differ from the settled

population in other ways, they share with them a realistic appreciation of the value of money. Travellers never use banks but carry their money in rolls of notes on their person. The men invest any accumulated wealth in improved caravans, lorries or cars; the older women buy expensive decorated china, Crown Derby and Royal Worcester.

Eligibility for social security benefits

It is unlikely that more than a few travellers will be eligible for national insurance benefits which are paid in relation to an individual's contribution record during working life. But they may be eligible for supplementary benefit under the Ministry of Social Security Act 1966; these take the form of supplementary pensions for those over pensionable age (60 for women and 65 for men) and supplementary allowances for those who are under pensionable age. The latter are normally required to register for work at an Employment Exchange as a condition of receiving benefit. Although the lack of a fixed abode may create practical difficulties for travellers in the way of collecting benefits, it does not in itself disqualify them from receiving supplementary or other benefits to which they are entitled. Many travellers appear to overcome the difficulties and family allowances, for example, are claimed almost universally.

Income tax and national insurance

When a traveller takes a job (other than casual employment at a low rate of pay) his employer is required to deduct tax from his earnings under PAYE and those deductions will be made under the Emergency code until he is given a code number appropriate to his circumstances. Despite the Inland Revenue's arrangements for the speedy issue of a code number as soon as the traveller has given the Tax Inspector all the necessary details, there will be unavoidable delay if the traveller is unwilling or unable to complete return forms and provide other relevant information. In the meantime the only allowances he will have against tax under the Emergency code will be those for a single man—a situation which may cause hardship to a married man with a family and may even provoke the traveller to walk out of his job.

Although the Inland Revenue do attempt to assess those self-employed travellers who would be liable to pay tax, it is likely that some escape their liability altogether (see page 45). Up to six years arrears can be claimed, but these can be paid by instalments and would not be pressed to the point of causing hardship.

Unless a traveller either has become permanently settled in an area or takes up a wage-earning job, he may be unable to discharge his liability to pay national insurance contributions and thereby be committing an offence. In some cases his income may be so low that he could

obtain exception from liability to pay. In other cases he would be liable to pay the outstanding contributions, but in practice his financial position might prevent his doing so. Non-payment affects eligibility for certain social security benefits.

Summary and conclusion

In March 1965 the traditional craft occupations of the Romanies—horse dealing, peg making, basket making and hawking—were carried on only by a negligible proportion of male travellers, the older men rather than the younger. One man in seven was working in agriculture, a figure which would no doubt have been higher had the enquiry taken place during the summer months. As many as half of all males were recorded as dealers, the great majority in scrap metal, and dealing was considerably more common among young than among older men. Only 3% of men worked in typical settled jobs, such as factory work.

Less than 7% of males were recorded as retired or unemployed. The rest were earning a living, though it seems likely that their average income was below that of a settled manual worker.

Three-quarters of all women were reported as not earning a living, a proportion appreciably higher than among house-dwellers. Hawking has remained the principal occupation of the earning women, though it is clearly declining, being much less common among the young than among the elderly. Agriculture was the second most common female occupation recorded, followed by dealing, presumably consisting mainly of assistance given to husbands. A small proportion of women under 35 years of age worked in factories.

It seems that though the traditional means of earning a living have greatly declined, few workers have moved into settled jobs in the community; instead they have moved into other independent occupations in which they remain their own masters, such as scrap metal dealing and laying tarmac. The great majority neither wish to, nor would readily be able to, move to a more settled occupation and they would be barred from most wage-earning jobs because of their illiteracy. Nevertheless these occupational handicaps have not proved an insurmountable barrier in persuading travellers to settle either on a site or in a house. Once settled, it may be hoped that the children will grow up with aspirations towards settled occupations.

Chapter 6

Attitudes

There is a serious dearth of facts about the traveller population of England and Wales and a great deal of confusion, misunderstanding and prejudice on the subject generally. At this stage it is perhaps useful to consider various attitudes of the settled population towards the travellers and of the travellers towards the settled population.

Attitudes towards the travellers

Attitudes towards travellers vary from friendly sentimentality mixed with condescension at one extreme, through various degrees of tolerance and disapproval, to the other extreme of open hostility. The latter attitude was expressed by one city alderman who is on record as saying of the worst elements among the gypsies '... one has to exterminate the impossibles'.*

The most widespread attitude is typified by the following comment: 'I've no objection to the real Romanies, the true gypsies, but these people are not true gypsies and they must be prevented from living this sort of life in this area'. It is certainly unlikely that many of the travellers today are pure-blooded descendants of those wandering people of Indian origin who first came to this country some five hundred years ago, since a considerable amount of 'marrying-out' has taken place. When speaking favourably of 'real Romanies' the house-dweller seems to have in mind a handsome olive-skinned gypsy family living in a gaily painted horse-drawn caravan hidden away deep in the woods, where the family, proud and resourceful, spend their time on rural crafts and draw their water from a stream, without contact with the house-dweller. Such families do exist, but our enquiry suggests that they are a negligible proportion of all the so-called gypsies, the great majority of whom have now turned to motorised transport, modern caravans and the more profitable occupations of scrap dealing and roadwork. Nevertheless, it is probable that most of today's travellers have some Romany blood. And all, irrespective of the extent of their Romany blood, experience the same difficulties in carrying on their way of life in our society.

The targets of prejudice

There are four main headings under which the most common complaints against travellers can be grouped: fear of criminal acts including theft and physical assault; damage to amenities; fear of hazards to public health; and a belief that gypsies and other travellers are 'social parasites'.

Violence and theft

Children still repeat the rhyme, 'My Mother said I never should play with the gypsies in the wood', and a popular

*Broadcast, 17th April 1964; *Born at the Crossroads*, BBC Home Service.

legend exists that gypsies actually steal children. Anyone wishing to validate this fear that gypsies or other travellers may do violence to children from the settled community who stray near their camps would find any evidence difficult to obtain. Nevertheless, the fear of violence is often one of the reasons put forward by local residents to explain their objections to nearby traveller encampments. In some cases this fear may have been caused by the abusive or threatening manner adopted by certain travellers, in others it may have been aroused by the sight of occasional fights among travellers. In the Ministry files, the single alleged instance of 'violence' by travellers against a member of the settled population was when a local councillor who was inspecting an encampment was pushed off his motor scooter. More recently there have been reports in the Press of travellers' attempts to resist eviction.

Serious thefts are equally unlikely to be the work of gypsies or other travellers, although petty pilfering is not uncommon. Stealing, indeed, is often restricted to items which appear to be 'unwanted' by their rightful owners. The late Norman Dodds pointed out that, in his experience, the arrival of gypsies in an area could be the signal for local petty thieves within the settled community to begin operating, knowing that the itinerant visitors would be blamed. A Hampshire general practitioner who has had many years' experience of travellers has said, 'Their standards of honesty are high among themselves. The 'rogues' of their community may strip a garden of flowers if they don't know the person. They never do wanton damage. They poach as much as the average countryman, more skilfully and more humanely than the suburban car poacher'.*

According to information provided by Chief Constables in 1950, out of seventy police authorities who had any gypsies or other travellers in their areas, only twenty reported that they were suspected of criminal offences; in all these cases, without exception, these were restricted to minor offences such as petty thefts and poaching. The remaining fifty police authorities did not suspect travellers in their areas of any crime. The survey showed that damage to fences and trespass on farmland, often by straying animals, were an important source of complaint although, with the rapid decline of horse-drawn transport, it may be expected that this problem has been reduced and will soon disappear. Apart from complaints about Irish tinkers, more recent information confirms this general picture. A detailed analysis of gypsy crime in Leicestershire between 1961 and 1963 shows the same general pattern, with motoring and camping offences predominating.

Damage to amenities

It is often the despoiling of beauty spots and of the countryside generally, as well as damage caused to trees and hedgerows, which give rise to the strongest disapproval

among those who campaign against travellers' encampments. The sight of roadside verges and fields littered with scrap or unsaleable material is a constant cause of friction between the travellers and the settled population. The traveller, who generally has less respect than the house-dweller for rural or urban amenities, sometimes cannot understand the annoyance which his behaviour causes. Some claim that they are not allowed to stop long enough to clear the site. Many traveller families, in fact, do take care to clear up their sites before departure, hoping this might make their eventual return more acceptable. Inevitably, however, these families suffer from the bad reputation of others. The Irish tinkers have a particularly bad reputation for leaving litter on their sites. But there can be no doubt that many camping places, especially those of the families dealing in scrap metal, are extremely squalid. Scrap metal was found stored on half of all the sites where traveller families were recorded in the census and where the presence or absence of scrap was noted. It remains to be seen how the provisions of the Civic Amenities Act will affect travellers (see page 39).

The popular reaction to this problem is to call for the total removal of the travellers concerned into another area (where the same situation is likely to recur) rather than to put forward constructive suggestions for solving it. The general tendency is to imply that those areas with the best amenities have the least responsibility for travellers, who would be more acceptable in areas which already have their quota of dereliction and ugliness. All too often, travellers end up on sites close to rubbish tips and the like, because there they make no noticeable addition to the existing squalor. The cleansing superintendent of one city proposed that travellers might be offered permanent sites on the municipal refuse tips. It is perhaps not surprising that living in conditions of this kind travellers take little interest or pride in their environment. Where tidiness has been encouraged, as on the better local authority caravan sites, the families have responded well and in some cases have set up fences and established gardens round their caravans. We have also noted how those families on farmland sites live in generally better conditions, possibly owing in part to the relative security they enjoy.

Danger to public health

Objections made by local residents against travellers' uncontrolled camps are often based upon the possible hazards to public health caused by their primitive sanitary arrangements. Epidemics are expected to break out and children are warned not to go to the encampment. The litter, including remains of derelict cars and lorries, frequently forms an attractive playground for local children when the travellers have moved on. The principal source of

*Dr. R. Howard in *Report on Gypsies and Other Travellers in Hampshire*, Hampshire Association of Parish Councils (1961), p.13.

anxiety is the travellers' habit of using hedgerows and ditches instead of w.c.s. or other closets. The vicinity of the site is frequently left in an aesthetically revolting condition but a danger to health only exists when faecal matter has been deposited by some person who is either suffering from, or is a carrier of, the organism of some form of enteric disease such as typhoid or paratyphoid fevers, dysentery, salmonella or other food poisoning, or certain virus diseases. Human infection may then result either by direct contamination of the hands, by fly-borne transmission or by the contamination of food or water with the infected faecal matter. The risk from any one camp site is small but is nevertheless real and everything possible should obviously be done to prevent the fouling of the environment.

The travellers as 'social parasites'

Travellers do not fit into the neat categories of our settled society. They are not householders and so do not pay Rates. Because they are nomadic it is difficult to collect income tax or national insurance contributions from them—a difficulty which is intensified by their illiteracy and social isolation (see page 27). Most make a living by collecting what others throw away. These characteristics of the traveller way of life—the common non-payment of taxes and the trading in waste materials—are sometimes labelled as 'parasitic'. This label suggests that travellers choose to 'live off the backs' of others, whereas, on the contrary, they strongly desire to be independent and self-employed, despite the immense handicap of illiteracy. The extent to which they are forced to depend on the goodwill of the settled population is the result of changes in society for which they cannot be held responsible, and over which they have had no control. Neither is it just to condemn dealing in waste materials as a parasitic means of earning a living since scrap collecting of all kinds serves an economic function in that it recovers useful material for which there is a demand (see page 38). However, the traveller scrap dealer is often guilty of leaving behind a great deal of unwanted material which someone else has the expense of clearing. Many travellers also do agricultural work for part of the year and provide a valuable mobile labour force for farmers and market gardeners.

Attitudes of the travellers to non-travellers

The antagonism between the house-dweller and the traveller is not confined to the house-dweller. The travellers' attitude towards authority arises from the difficulty he experiences in dealing with officials and bureaucratic processes. Being illiterate, he rarely knows the law. It is difficult for him fully to understand the officials who move him out of their area knowing full well that there is nowhere he can legally stop in the next area. He fails to understand why, if he is breaking the law everywhere he camps, there is any point in constantly moving

him on. Many of the rights exercised by local authorities such as the power to close his traditional stopping places, he sees as an attack on his way of life and as an attempt to prevent his making a living. He also resents the attempt to prevent him from collecting together quantities of scrap metal in unauthorised places, the requirement that as a scrap metal dealer he must be licensed, and the serving on him of nuisance abatement notices under the Public Health Act.

The result, over the years, of these continual brushes with authority is that the traveller has developed a deep distrust of other people, a suspicion and resentment that will not be easy to break down. When, for example, the local authority site at Llanelli was established, despite frequent preceding consultations between officials and travellers, the latter were so sceptical about the council's intentions that, late on the appointed day, they sent along a small advance guard to see whether it could really be true that they were to be allowed to live in peace on a permanent site. The closing of stopping places and consequential extreme shortage of them has probably caused more hardship and more bitterness than any other act of the settled community. The reaction of some families has been in effect, 'Since you do nothing for me, I'll do nothing for you', and they have deliberately made no attempt to leave their unauthorised stopping place clean and tidy.

Travellers have a strong feeling of identity with their own community. They have their own particular pride about the nomadic way of life; the free life of the traveller where time is not the master is still an ideal and some shame is felt on abandoning it. An elderly traveller who had settled in a house reported that other members of his family had offered to club together to buy him a caravan; it was assumed that he would prefer to be on the road again. A permanently settled life is considered by many to be extremely restrictive and living in a house positively unhealthy. Nevertheless, possibly because of the increasing difficulties involved in travelling, and also because motorisation enables families to cover a large area from one base, the majority of families now wish to settle.

The traveller is also proud of his ability to make a living independently, without having to work for a boss. 'Put a gypsy down anywhere in the world and he will make a living' is one of their boasts. Those who take jobs at a weekly wage sometimes lose prestige. The factory worker who must clock in every morning, who can take a break only when permitted and who must work until an appointed finishing time is considered less than a man. In Hampshire, even the travellers who have been successfully introduced to wage-earning jobs are said to have a slightly furtive air compared with those remaining self-employed.

The traveller believes that he is despised as an inferior creature and tends to hold aloof from the settled population. He resents the fact that many employers will have no dealings with him, that many publicans refuse to serve him and that other customers object to his presence. Frequently, he suspects that his children are discriminated against at school. In return, he often retaliates by despising the house-dweller.

To compensate for the many humiliations of his daily existence he derives great pleasure from such minor triumphs as the besting of house-dwellers in a deal, or from using abusive language against officials who are trying to shift him, or from moving out of an area without answering a summons or without paying a fine. These sins of omission not unnaturally lead to further police activity, which only increases his sense of being persecuted.

Conclusion

There is little evidence of any general wish by the settled population to improve the primitive living conditions of the travellers, to free them from the injustice of being constantly moved on, to raise them from the position of a despised and isolated minority or to educate their children. On the contrary, the settled population has almost invariably objected whenever measures for the benefit of the gypsies have been proposed (the community of Llanelli was one honourable exception), and many individuals have been discouraged from constructive action by the hostility of the settled population. It is clear, unfortunately, that the attitude of hostility between the settled population and the travellers is so firmly established and so widespread that attempts to alleviate their material conditions are unlikely to enjoy majority support unless a great deal of prior publicity and explanation is given to local residents. Equally it is clear that it will not be easy to break down the travellers' mistrust of the settled population, since this is the result of ill-will experienced over many generations. However, the establishment of an attitude of mutual trust between the travellers and the settled population is of paramount importance. The remainder of this report is a review of actions by local authorities and other bodies in this country and overseas which might provide a foundation for the development of this mutual trust.

Chapter 7

Local authority provision for travellers

Caravan sites

Local authorities have not made provision for traveller families on a wide scale but the majority of authorities who are known to have done so have chosen to set up caravan sites for them. Between the issuing of the 1962 Circular and the present date (March 1967) there have never been more than fourteen of these caravan sites run by local authorities in operation at one time. Only 143 families were catered for in this way in England and Wales at the time of the traveller census.

Camp sites dealt with in this chapter are not the same ten which were classified as local authority special sites in the census, which gave a snapshot picture of sites on that date only. Over the whole period under consideration here, the number fluctuated slightly as new ones opened and others closed (see Table 7.1). For example the pressure of public opinion and the reported bad behaviour of families on the site in the County Borough of Leicester led to its closure. Birmingham accepted no additional vans on its site for a long time and it has now been discontinued. The site in West Ashford Rural District in Kent which accommodated fourteen families has now been closed and the families housed. The recently established site at Star Lane in the London Borough of Bromley is only temporary.

Private individuals in some cases have taken it upon themselves to make provision for travellers. The small Cartland-Onslow site in Hertfordshire and the site at Cobham, Kent organised at one time by the late Mr. Norman Dodds, M.P. are probably the best known examples of privately owned sites. These were set up in the face of considerable local opposition as gestures to encourage local authorities to do likewise.

In March 1967 there were fourteen known sites catering for traveller families for which the local or county authority had responsibility. Three of these were mixed sites catering for non-travellers as well as travellers, and the others were for traveller families only.

Mixed sites

Two of the three mixed sites were originally set up as civic sites for local residents who, mainly because of the housing shortage, chose to live in caravans. Now, however, traveller families have also been given pitches on these sites. Nine out of the sixty-three pitches on the site at Worksop, Nottinghamshire, are filled by traveller families, who keep their lorries in the car park and are not allowed to store scrap on the site. This arrangement seems to work very well, although there is little contact between the traveller families and the other residents. The other site is in Eton Rural District, Buckinghamshire, and is similarly used, mainly as an intermediate stage by those few

families from the same local authority 'all gypsy' site (see below) when they are due to be allocated permanent housing. Problems of mixing families seem to be few, although careful selection may be necessary. On Godstone Rural District's site sixteen of the families are not of traveller stock. After initial dissatisfaction these families settled well on the site and now appreciate its amenities. Originally they had little contact with other families, but now a happy relationship exists between the groups, the travellers having the benefit of seeing at first-hand how other people live and manage their caravans, and even asking the non-travellers for assistance in form-filling and the like. On all mixed sites there are enough of each group for them not to feel isolated. In areas where travellers are few, special sites may be uneconomical and mixed sites such as those outlined above could provide a solution.

Special sites for travellers

Excluding the temporary site in the London Borough of Bromley and the mixed site at Worksop, there were twelve sites set up specifically or primarily for travellers in operation in March 1967.

The Godstone site, though accommodating some non-traveller families, is included here as it was established primarily for travellers. The other sites were set up by Bradfield Rural District Council, Bromsgrove Rural District Council, Eton Rural District Council, Hertfordshire County Council (Bushey and Holwell Court), Llanelli Borough Council, Maidstone Rural District Council, Ringwood and Fordingbridge Rural District Council, Sevenoaks Rural District Council, Strood Rural District Council and Malling Rural District Council. They were set up for a variety of reasons: Godstone felt that they needed to improve an eyesore caused by the existing traveller settlement; some of the reasons given by Eton Rural District Council were that a camp site would reduce the work of police and other local officials, that something should be done to alleviate the conditions of harassment under which most families lived, and to ensure proper education for their children.

Kent County Council and the rural districts of Godstone, Eton and Bradfield carried out fact-finding missions to ascertain the number of travellers in their areas and, in some cases, the ties they had with the area and to collect information on the families. Other authorities felt they were sufficiently familiar with the situation in their areas to recommend the size and type of site to be set up. Without exception, the factor that carried most weight in making a family eligible for a place on a site was the extent of its ties with the district. Godstone provided only for those families already camped on the site acquired. Eton singled out those families who had roots in the area. Bradfield considered those who had associations with the

district lasting at least five years. Hertfordshire were slightly less rigid in their selection, which was done by the warden on the basis of ties with the district and a family's need for a permanent site. Bromsgrove have now accepted one or two Irish tinker families on their site.

Local opposition

The proposal to set up a camp site met with opposition in several cases, notably West Ashford, Sevenoaks and Bromsgrove, mainly from the nearest neighbours and the parish councils. Most of this died down after the camps were established, although it is reported that there are still a few complaints at Bromsgrove and from the farmers at Godstone. Other camps were put into operation without such opposition: Eton enlisted the support of the local Press at an early stage with beneficial results, and the remoteness of some camps stifled criticism from settled residents. At Llanelli, the establishment of a site for 23 families about four hundred yards from the built-up area of the town caused criticism neither from residents nor in the local Press.

Choosing locations for special sites

Locations which have been chosen are in many cases somewhat isolated. The Eton, Godstone, Bromsgrove and Bradfield sites are all situated away from the settled community. The installation of services, especially electricity and main drainage, is expensive on such sites, and facilities such as schools and shops, provided for the settled community, may be out of easy reach of the traveller families. On very remote sites school attendance suffers and women's hawking and shopping expeditions to the nearest town become arduous. Generally the men are sufficiently mobile to reach the town to collect and weigh in scrap, but isolated sites cause difficulties for some of those dealers without a motor vehicle. However, most of the authorities have been prepared to pay the cost of installing essential services on their sites, and Bradfield and Godstone have provided a special bus to take the children to school. It may be difficult to find sites which are neither isolated nor likely to be opposed for their proximity to housing, though, for example, the Sevenoaks site is just on the edge of a small town. Some of the sites chosen were already used by traveller families, for example those set up by Eton, Godstone, Maidstone, and Ringwood and Fordingbridge Rural District Councils. One of the present residents at Eton has lived on the site at intervals for fifty years. Although traditional camp sites are not always ideal because they tend to be in isolated positions, they at least have the advantage of being in areas where travellers are known and accepted. When sites are located in places where they are not known, objections may be raised, not only from local residents, but from shopkeepers, publicans, teachers, and the parents of children at the school which the travellers' children will attend.

Table 7.1 Local authority sites

Number on Map 1	Site capacity (families)	Local authority	Name and address of site	Available on 22.3.65 and still open on 31.3.67	Available on 22.3.65 but closed by 31.3.67	Established between 22.3.65 and 31.3.67
Sites recently closed						
1	†	Leicester C.B.	Lodge Farm, Melton Road		*	
2	†	Birmingham C.B.	Church Walk, Ward End		*	
14	12	West Ashford R.D., Kent	Ninn Lane, Great Chart		*	
Temporary sites						
20	30	Bromley L.B.	Star Lane, St. Mary Cray			*
Mixed sites						
19	63 (9 gypsy families)	Worksop B.C., Notts.	Garside Street, Worksop	*		
§	100 (4 gypsy families)	Eton R.D., Buckinghamshire	Wyatts Covert, Tilehouse Lane, Denham			
11	51	Godstone R.D. Surrey	Green Lane, Outwood	*		
Sites for travellers only						
8	19	Bradfield R.D., Berkshire	Four Houses Corner, Ufton Nervet			*
3	12	Bromsgrove R.D., Worcestershire	Hounsfield Lane, Hollywood, Wythall	*		
7	32	Eton R.D., Berkshire	Mansion Lane, Iver	*		
6	27	Hertfordshire C.C.	(i) Sandy Lane, Bushey			*
5	20		(ii) Holwell Court, Cole Green	*		
4	22	Llanelli B.C., Carmarthenshire	Morfa Camp, Morfa	*		
13	12	Maidstone R.D., Kent	Stilebridge Road, Marden			*
9	12	Ringwood and Fordingbridge R.D., Hampshire	Gravel Pit, Godshill	*		
12	12	Sevenoaks R.D., Kent	Hever Road, Edenbridge			*
10	12	Strood R.D., Kent	Old Birchfield, Cuxton	*		
21	12	Malling R.D. ‡	Teston Road, West Malling			*
Intermediate housing for travellers						
15	12	Hampshire County Council	Monteagle Close, Monteagle Lane, Yateley			*
16	12	Hampshire County Council	Erie Estate, Headley Down, Nr. Bordon			*
17	12	Hampshire County Council	Long Marsh Close, Rownhams Lane, North Baddesley			*
18	12	Hampshire County Council	The Close, Thorney Hill, Nr. Christchurch	*		

† As these sites were not laid out there was no set capacity.

§ This site does not appear on Map 1. It was established before the census date but has only recently been used by traveller families.

‡ As this site has been opened very recently it is not discussed in full in the text.

The size of special sites

The sites which have been established so far have mainly been fairly small compared with the Dutch camps, which provide for about sixty families. Kent sites have room for about twelve families, the site in Bradfield Rural District caters for nineteen, the two Hertfordshire sites at Holwell Court and Bushey have twenty and twenty-seven pitches

respectively. Llanelli has room for twenty-three families, Eton for thirty-two and Godstone for fifty-one. In most cases the size of site was determined by the number of families eligible for pitches, though Kent County Council, faced with having to provide for 120 families decided to recommend ten sites, each for twelve families, because this was felt to be the most manageable number. Since

this decision West Ashford have expressed the opinion that they were overcautious and none of the larger sites appear to have caused serious difficulties. There is evidence that a site larger than twelve pitches would be more economical to equip and run. Small sites however are probably most suitable, as families traditionally travel in small groups, although Irish tinkers form larger groups, and there have been some very large natural groupings like those on Erith Marshes and Corke's Meadow, in Kent. Godstone is the largest existing special site, and the only major problem created by its size is the burden on the local primary school. However, large sites could put considerable pressure on services, they could look unsightly if not well kept, and they could become inward looking communities instead of encouraging contacts between travellers and the settled population. There is also the fundamental economic problem that one area may not be able to support a large number of men seeking a living from scrap collecting.

The attraction of special sites

Most of the local authorities which have established sites were hampered to some degree by an influx of families into the area just before the opening of each site. The families hoped to be given a pitch on the site and many had travelled some considerable distance, showing how difficult is the search for sites in other areas. Bradfield Rural District Council were particularly unfortunate, for a group not regarded as eligible for pitches on the site (possibly Irish tinkers) wrecked the ablutions block just before the site was due to open. Sevenoaks were also faced with a dilemma: they were at first reluctant to force the immigrant families off the unauthorised sites near the established camp and since then they have found it very difficult to do so. It is clear that only when camps are more widely provided will this problem be overcome.

Amenities on special sites

Only four of the sites provide most of the amenities required by the Model Standards*—Godstone, Eton, Malling and Bradfield; the rest provide only the most essential amenities. A comparison of general site tidiness on a well provided site with that on a poorly equipped one suggests that a high standard of amenities helps to promote careful use by residents; the better the provision, the higher the standards achieved by the residents. From the use of equipment installed at various sites it is possible to assess the type of provision that is most successful and most needed.

Hard standings

As some camps are sited on old refuse tips, gravel pits, or quarries, and some on grassland, hard standing is essential. All the sites have provided some hard standing but it is often inadequate, being only of hard core or not extensive

enough to cover the regulation three feet in front of the caravan entrance. Where hard standings are inadequate and roads and footpaths non-existent the site degenerates into a morass of mud in the winter. Faulty drainage on a few sites adds to the problem. Good drainage and adequate hard-surfacing make an outdoor way of life much easier for the housewife, especially in winter, as well as greatly improving the appearance of a site. Hertfordshire sites and the sites at Llanelli and Eton are examples of adequate surfacing which encourage families to take a pride in their homes.

Sanitary facilities

Varying standards of sanitary facilities have been provided. It has been found that individual w.c.'s are much more satisfactory than a communal block. Communal facilities tend to be regarded as no-one's responsibility and to be fouled and damaged, possibly, but not certainly, by children playing. Llanelli originally provided communal w.c.'s but now each family has a key to a w.c., two families sharing, and standards of cleanliness have risen, though children still continue to do some damage. Similarly, Bromsgrove are installing individual w.c.'s to replace the communal ones. Wash basins, showers or baths, and deep sinks for clothes washing are all provided communally at Eton, Godstone and Bradfield, and all are well used. Even facilities of this kind have been provided individually at Malling. Hot water is sometimes provided in some cases on a meter, and can be carried to individual vans, which is a great advantage. Where outdoor fires are prohibited, it may be difficult to heat up large quantities of hot water on a small caravan cooker. At Godstone a washing machine has been installed which is greatly appreciated, though there are maintenance difficulties. On most sites a limited number of standpipes are provided and shared, but Bradfield and Maidstone have provided standpipes on each pitch. Malling have grouped their caravans in pairs and between each is a building containing three compartments for each family—a w.c., a store and a washroom with a sink, an electric wash boiler and space for a bath which is soon to be installed. This provision has been made within the limits of Kent County Council's grant of £1,000 per standing.

Electricity

It is costly to carry electricity to each pitch, but several authorities have taken it to the site. Where individual pitches were not connected many families have themselves borne the cost of installation. Residents seem to have little difficulty in paying for the supply and it is a greatly appreciated amenity. Demand from those on sites without it is high. It enables travellers to have mains television which helps broaden their knowledge of the settled population.

*Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960; *Model Standards*, (MoHLG) HMSO, 1960.

Storage provision

Maidstone, Godstone and Eton Rural Districts have all provided small sheds to be used as stores for each pitch, and Godstone charges a rent of 3s. 6d. per week for each store. Where the store is optional the demand is high, probably because storage space within a caravan is extremely limited. It has been noticed that children's prams suffer particularly from lack of a place to store them, so that any out-building provided should be large enough to accommodate a pram, together with other items.

Fire precautions

Fire fighting equipment is provided at several points on the Bromsgrove, Godstone and Eton sites. At Bromsgrove this equipment is subject to damage from vandalism but the cost of repairs is added to the rent, and this is proving to be an effective method of prevention. At Maidstone, Eton and Bradfield it is insisted that each caravan owner provides his own extinguisher. This is not a matter which is considered on all sites.

Refuse disposal

Adequate arrangements for the disposal of domestic refuse have been made on all sites. Either the local authority provides a dustbin for each pitch or residents are required to do so, and these are emptied by the authority's refuse collectors.

Vehicle parking

As most families have a lorry, parking provision is essential and has been made in a variety of ways. At some sites all parking is on one separate area. The disadvantage of this is that generally the lorry or car is not visible from the caravan and is open to damage or petty theft. At Eton the car parks are so situated that they can be seen from most of the pitches. At Bradfield also there are two or three small parking areas so that vehicles are always within the owner's view. Another solution is to allow parking immediately adjacent to the vans. At Maidstone this has been done, each pitch being large enough for a caravan and another vehicle. At least six of the eleven camps have no difficulty in charging parking fees ranging from 2s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per week per vehicle, but in other cases the rent of a pitch includes the right to park a vehicle.

Travellers' special needs

Apart from the Model Standards and these other extremely desirable requirements, there are a few special amenities which traveller families need.

Thirty per cent of families have more than one unit of living accommodation and provision must be made for extra units if overcrowding is not to be encouraged. The need may not always arise. Strood, for example, reported that none of their families had more than one caravan.

Eton limits families to one caravan, provide concrete pre-fabricated stores on every pitch, and do not permit additional sheds to be erected as extensions to living space. At Maidstone, only one family needed two caravans and they were allocated two plots. On some sites where pitches are large enough, for example at Bradfield, Llanelli and Sevenoaks, families have been allowed to erect other dwelling units. These are generally used for daytime living and are usually smaller caravans or sheds. Some are little more than shacks and they are rarely sited on a hard standing. Given the opportunity, most families seek to extend their living space in this way. The Godstone arrangements seem satisfactory: an extra rent of 10s. is paid for a second hard standing and accommodation is permitted only if it is up to a certain standard.

Authorities have also provided other amenities; places to store scrap, grazing for horses, fire-lighting areas and children's play areas. The principle followed on most of the established sites is that scrap metal may not be sorted or stored anywhere on the site but a lorry full of scrap ready for weighing-in may be kept in the parking area for a limited time. This rule is hard to enforce and pieces of scrap metal can be found on most sites, although rarely in large quantities. Bromsgrove, however, have provided a piece of land at one end of the site for scrap sorting and Bradfield have fenced off a part of the site for this purpose. They realise that unsaleable material will be left there and are prepared to clear it periodically, although operations such as this add to the cost of running a site. In another area a blind eye is turned to the use of an adjacent field for scrap sorting.* At Godstone a few of the families were traditionally engaged in logging, so that when the site was set up, special logging pitches were made. These are larger pitches surrounded on three sides by fencing with a hard standing for the caravan and sufficient space to saw and stack logs. The rental for a pitch of this sort is 10s. above that of a normal sized pitch, and they have proved extremely popular.

Both Eton and Bradfield provide special areas for tethering horses. There is not a great demand for this provision on these sites but the areas are used and prevent horses from damaging adjacent farm land. In the north of England, where horses and horse dealing are more common, the need is more acute.

At least three camps are known to prohibit the lighting of fires, but this regulation is hard to enforce because there is a sentimental attachment to an open fire and if no other way of heating water is provided on the site, families

*The problems created by scrap metal dealing are also considered in Chapter 5.

must fend for themselves in this respect. Whenever hot water is required in large quantities it must be heated over and open fire as most caravans have only small cookers. Eton have set aside an area away from the caravans for fire lighting to minimize the danger of accidents, but it is rarely used as the need is small due to the provision of metered hot water.

To date none of the sites make special provision for children's play although Godstone, Holwell Court and Bradfield plan to do so. As traveller children have very little experience of creative or constructive play a few carefully selected pieces of play equipment might help to overcome this. Moreover these might divert their activities away from the site amenities which they might otherwise damage. The Gypsy Council has suggested the provision of a recreation hut.

Management of sites

In the case of Hertfordshire and Hampshire the county council have taken the initiative in setting up sites and intermediate housing centres respectively. They have continuing responsibility for management. Kent County Council at a very early date initiated the search for sites and now make substantial financial contributions to the cost, though the sites are operated by the district councils. In all other cases, sites were established and are managed by district or borough authorities.

A variety of departments of the local authorities concerned are responsible for sites, but usually they come under the Public Health Inspector or the Housing Manager, who in turn is responsible to a committee or sub-committee of the local council. At Godstone a part-time official responsible to the Clerk's department was appointed to deal with the site, and the ultimate responsibility lies with the caravan committee. At Eton, responsibility has been transferred from the Chief Public Health Inspector, who established the site, to the Housing Manager, as the problem is now considered to be primarily a housing matter. At Llanelli the camp was initiated by the Medical Officer of Health, and is considered to be best administered from his department because of his responsibilities for enforcement, health and welfare.

Half of the local authorities have appointed wardens to be responsible for part of the management of the site. At Godstone, Eton and Maidstone the full-time warden is one of the traveller residents of the site. All three receive a rent-free pitch, and two are paid a wage. At Sevenoaks, Bushey and Holwell, wardens are not resident and an ex-policeman with an assistant has been appointed to manage the Bushey and Holwell sites. The appointment was made because the individual concerned was well known and respected by travellers in the area, and it is

considered successful. In other areas the police are not held in high regard by the travellers, and it cannot be assumed that similar appointments would be well received. A warden's responsibilities usually include day-to-day management, the enforcement of the rules of the site, organizing the cleaning of communal blocks and general tidiness of the site, and acting as a link between residents and all branches of the local authority, especially with the department controlling the site. Some authorities found it very difficult to find a suitable resident warden and some decided not to do so because they could find no one who was respected by a majority of the families, and accepted by the rival clans on the site.

On all sites a set of rules is issued to ensure some sense of order. These include regulations prohibiting the lighting of fires and the keeping of unruly dogs, encouraging the care of facilities, and providing for eviction should any resident fail to obey site rules or to pay his rent. The threat of eviction is used with varying frequency, but there is no evidence to suggest that eviction is often actually used as a means of rigidly enforcing rules: generally, officials are prepared to turn a blind eye to many breaches of the regulations.

Rents

The general impression is that rent arrears are few, though Llanelli reported that a slump in the scrap metal trade had made rent collection difficult in some cases. Godstone have also found problems in rent collection. Rents vary from 14s. 6d. per week (Llanelli) to 30s. per week (Eton and Bradfield) with extra charges for parking and stores. Generally there seems to be no reason why realistic rents should not be paid though on occasions a few families may be unable to pay even a modest rent.

When families are away doing seasonal agricultural work the full rent may be charged (as at Eton, Godstone and Strood) or simply a proportion of the rent as a reservation fee. At Llanelli this is 5s. per week, at Bromsgrove 10s., at Bradfield £1 and on the two Hertfordshire sites half the normal rent is charged. On some sites there is a limit to the time a family can be absent. At Eton it is four weeks and on the Hertfordshire sites full rent is charged after eight weeks. It is generally reported that there is little or no difficulty in collecting these retaining rents.

A fair rent can considerably reduce the burden of the running and capital costs on the rates, although few authorities hope completely to cover their outgoings. Bradfield Rural District Council hope to break even over a ten year period although to do so they may have to raise the rents. Eton consider that what they lose annually is far less than what it was costing in manpower chasing travellers about the district and cleaning up after they had gone.

Effect of site provision

Virtually all the authorities who have put on record what they consider to be the ultimate purpose of their site have expressed the hope that it will be one step towards the integration or assimilation of traveller families with the settled population. Sevenoaks Rural District Council hope to encourage their families to become 'useful members of a more static community'.

The residents' appreciation of these local authority sites cannot be doubted. Very few leave and in most areas there is a waiting list of families wanting to move in. Some actually wait near to the site entrance.

The second step will be housing. All the families on the former West Ashford site have now been housed, but most of the sites in existence have not reached this stage. Eton have already housed a few families, Bradfield have two on the waiting list and consider that it will be ten years at least before the majority are ready for housing. Hertfordshire, similarly, hope that the camp residents will become council house tenants, but feel it may not happen until the younger generation have grown up. Only Godstone did not originally intend the site as a step to housing but it may prove to be so as some residents are already on the housing list.

Further details of some of these sites provided by local authorities, and the recommendations of the Ministry and Welsh Office on the establishment of sites, can be found in Circular No. 26/66 which is reproduced in Appendix 4.

Transit pitches

It should not be assumed that all families want to settle down and to give up travelling. Nearly two-thirds of all traveller families now travel, and it is not known how many of them would want to settle permanently on a site. The proportion wishing to settle will vary from area to area and seems to be much higher in the south than in the north. In the northern regions especially, the problem is not simply one of providing permanent site accommodation. A low proportion of families are static, and many travel for long periods, only stopping during the cold winter months. So far, no special provision has been made for such travellers: few authorities recognize that the need for temporary resting places is as great as the need for sites for settled families. In some regions a few transit pitches at each site would ease the problem for the occasional passing traveller. In the northern counties, however, it seems that many pitches would be needed for short-stay families, although many older couples would be happy to stay in one spot, and few families like to move in winter. It is possible also that when sites are available, families will increasingly stay in one place.

Intermediate housing

We know of two authorities who have provided intermediate accommodation before housing traveller families in permanent council houses. At Bromley, 105 families were allocated prefabricated bungalows on an estate adjacent to their traditional site when that was developed. This move was not part of a planned policy, but was a stop-gap measure until permanent council houses in a suitable location became available. However, it did serve as a training period and in the early stages a church minister acted as warden, helping families with their problems. Thirty of these families eventually left their accommodation, and forty of the remaining families have now moved into permanent council housing. The thirty-five families remaining in intermediate accommodation will soon be housed. Some keep their dwellings in excellent condition, but some have let them fall into disrepair.

Hampshire's intermediate accommodation is part of a carefully planned policy of gradually housing their traveller families after a period of training and adaptation. They considered that caravans were too small for their families, and that caravan sites would tend to 'legalise' the gypsy way of life. It was assessed by survey how many families had ties with the area, and so far four 'rehabilitation centres', each comprising twelve prefabricated bungalows for families and two for staff have been opened. Each centre is supervised by a resident male warden and a female social worker who, in addition to ensuring the smooth running of the centres, help families with their problems, teach them homemaking, organise classes in such subjects as reading and writing, sewing, use of electricity and cooking. Attendance at these classes is irregular and progress is slow. A community hall is provided at each centre and is used for baby clinics, youth clubs, film shows, demonstrations, and for social and recreational purposes. Children are encouraged to attend school and men are helped to find regular wage-earning jobs. Their traditional occupations are discouraged. It is too early fully to judge the success of the centres but many families have benefited. Most of the earliest tenants keep their houses and gardens well, although there are still a few who have little idea of homemaking. The men who take regular work appreciate a steady income, providing it is as good as they could earn as independent scrap dealers. They have to withstand the rebuffs of other travellers who have remained self-employed.

It is expected that all families will be housed, over a fairly long period, but four have been housed already. Unfortunately some of the rural district councils with responsibility for housing families from the centres are now finding that they have a shortage of houses and have had to apply for extra allocations. It is hoped that the community spirit that develops on the camps, and the protection

afforded by such intensive social work, will not leave families at a loss, or dependent on others when they are rehoused. The particularly poor condition of some of the families originally in the New Forest compounds and Hampshire's desire to change their pattern of occupations is considered to justify the expenditure and the amount of social work put into the scheme. Such effort may not be necessary elsewhere. The Gypsy Council have expressed strong disapproval of this scheme. Generally, however, some families need help from welfare officers when they settle on a site.

Traveller families in council houses

Many local authorities have at some time housed traveller families in the normal course of their work but from most of these we have no evidence of the resultant success or failure. A few authorities who have considerable numbers of traveller families within their areas have housed families directly from their caravans rather than set up sites or any sort of intermediate accommodation. This has been the policy, for example, of Mere and Tisbury Rural District Council, New Forest Rural District Council and Sedgley Urban District Council.* In these cases either housing was readily available or the number of families was too small to justify a site. Eton Rural District Council, West Ashford Rural District Council, Bromley London Borough and Ringwood and Fordingbridge Rural District Council have housed some families direct and have also provided sites or made other intermediate provision which has resulted or will result in further housing.

On the whole, the housing of travellers seems to have been fairly successful; the majority seem to have settled well and initial local objections from neighbours appear to have been overcome. At West Ashford only two families who were directly housed are considered unsatisfactory and one has now moved away from the house. Of the fourteen housed from the site, half have settled well, but the rest are in serious rent arrears and receiving help. At Bromley the cause of many complaints has been the parking of scrap and tarmac lorries in gardens and on verges. Several families were housed outside their own locality, and because they were not fully accepted by schools, shopkeepers or neighbours, have moved out of their houses. However, Bromley report that the majority are quite capable of managing a house. The picture from Eton is much the same; generally families have settled well if attention was given to certain details. Two years ago a group of families from shacks in extremely poor condition were very successfully housed. Eton officials say, however, that families do like to be housed in the immediate vicinity of their previous dwelling, near

relatives and friends, and here, as in Bromley, pre-war houses were preferred. This may be because they are in the most convenient areas, or because they have more privacy, open fires, or larger gardens, or because the rents are lower. The parking of lorries on council estates was also a problem at Eton and it was felt that this difficulty may deter families from putting their names on the housing list. Other problems were that some families repeatedly threw useless scrap into the garden, or received noisy visitors. Furnishing a house initially did not pose a problem—furniture collected by the housing department was always refused—and one family furnished from the proceeds of selling their caravan. It is presumed others were able to do the same.

At Sedgley, Staffordshire, five families who formerly travelled frequently, applied to be housed and now have no wish to return to the road. Mere and Tisbury have housed two families, one very successfully.

In Hampshire, Ringwood and Fordingbridge Rural District Council have housed 61 families since 1949 and fifteen are unsatisfactory tenants, the main problems being shouting and foul language. New Forest Rural District Council have also housed a considerable number of traveller families and have a similar 'hard core' who need continual attention from welfare officials, but it has been necessary to evict only one family. However, out of almost a hundred families housed from extremely poor conditions in the New Forest compounds most have settled very well, and the local authority is convinced that direct housing can be a satisfactory solution.

It seems that housing within an area where families are already known causes the least difficulty, and minimises initial local objections. In many cases careful attention from housing management and welfare officers is necessary to ensure successful adjustment to living in a house, and if help in finding lorry parking and storage space for scrap could be given, problems would be further reduced. It is interesting to note that some families still go away for seasonal agricultural and other work: the tenancy of a council house is not regarded as any great tie even though the rent must be paid.

In areas like Eton where direct housing from caravans has been successful there seems to be no need for intermediate accommodation in the form of low standard houses. In the two Hampshire areas the majority of families also settled well but Ringwood and Fordingbridge expressed the view that if the County Council's intermediate housing centres had been set up earlier more of their problems would have been overcome.

*Now amalgamated with Dudley and Wolverhampton County Boroughs.

Conclusion

From the experience of the relatively few authorities who have made provision for traveller families, valuable conclusions may be drawn. The provision of sites or other accommodation for these families gives them amenities not otherwise available to them, not only domestic facilities which the rest of the population take for granted, such as running water, electricity, drainage and sanitary facilities, but also schools, and health and welfare services. Higher living standards develop on these sites or can be enforced: on established sites there is a steady noticeable sale of battered caravans and purchase of newer larger ones. On well equipped and well managed sites fewer objections are raised to the travellers as neighbours. Families become more inclined to settle; authorities report that fewer families travel for seasonal work, once they are installed on a site. A few men get steady jobs and probably the younger generation will be more inclined to do so. Perhaps most important of all, the children are able to attend school regularly.

In addition to the widespread establishment of sites for travellers wishing to settle, there is evidence of a real need for transit pitches for those on the move. These may most economically be provided on the main sites. In some areas, particularly the north, the proportion of transit pitches would need to be high to cater for the high proportion of travellers on the move.

Generally, the sites in existence do not cater separately for the different travelling groups and this could pose problems. Irish tinkers, for example, are likely to prove much less amenable to site discipline than the more co-operative indigenous travellers, some of whom greatly resent them. Where the groups are mixed, sites need to be large enough for a measure of segregation.

Some families who enjoy the amenities of established sites do not want to be housed. Nor will housing appeal to most of those families who are still on the move. However, some families do wish to move directly into a house and direct housing has been proved practicable. Where the number of traveller families is small or they are widely scattered, direct housing may be a better solution than the establishment of a site.

A variety of provision is probably the best answer: housing for those who wish to be housed; permanent pitches for those waiting to be housed or who prefer site life and do little or no travelling; and short stay pitches for those who travel continually from place to place, and have no wish to settle. If these measures were readily adopted the administrative problems created by traveller families would be eased. There would be no need for any authority continually to spend money and effort moving families on;

beauty spots would no longer be turned into makeshift camp sites; the public would no longer be pestered for cans of water; and a harassed minority would find a resting place.

Chapter 8

Travellers

in other countries

A comparison of travellers from different countries is necessarily limited because some governments have been interested only in the Romany. The concern of others has been for a wider group of people and the information collected by each country and used here, covers variously defined populations. The *Report of the Commission on Itinerancy* of the Republic of Ireland from which most material on travellers in that country is taken, defined the population with which it was concerned as those 'who had no fixed place of abode and habitually wandered from place to place'. Travelling show people and entertainers were excluded. The report goes on to state that 'Few of the itinerants in Ireland are of Romany or Gypsy origin'. In the Netherlands too policies are directed towards all those who still travel, and true gypsies represent only a small proportion of those to whom government measures extend. The French census was concerned with all those living permanently in caravans or tents, all those carrying nomads' registration cards and settled people 'whose behaviour is different from those among whom they live' (sic).

However, information collected in most other countries, namely those of Eastern Europe, Sweden, Finland, Italy and Greece, concerns a racial minority group regarded as being of Romany origin, only a proportion of whom are nomadic. Because of these differences in definition the data in this chapter are not strictly comparable as between one country and another.

Nevertheless, there are many similarities between these groups who are variously described as gypsies or travellers and who are found in most countries of Europe and beyond. With few exceptions, for example where gypsies are welcomed as entertainers, settled majorities generally dislike the way of life and habits which the image of a gypsy bring to mind—nomadism, begging, petty larceny, and squalid living conditions. In varying degrees in all countries, traditional gypsy life has become much harder to follow as a result of increasing industrialisation and urbanisation, and in many countries a gypsy following a traditional occupation has become less able to support his family adequately. Crafts have been outmoded by mass production, and more intensive land use planning has made it difficult for nomads to find stopping places. Traveller minorities have not participated equally in the rising standards and affluence in the countries under review, so that the gulf between these people and the settled population has widened.

The extent of the 'problem' thus created has depended partly upon the size of the traveller minority. In countries where a recent census has been conducted the size of the traveller population is known with some accuracy. Where this is not the case, only very rough estimates are available.

The size of gypsy or traveller populations

Table 8.1 gives an indication of the situation in those countries where a census has been carried out or where an estimate is available. These estimates give only an approximation of the true numbers and even where a census has been taken a strict comparison between countries cannot be made as definitions vary. Even where the ethnic definition of 'gypsy' is used this is so. For example in the Italian census only those who could speak Romani were included; elsewhere definitions were not so limited. Moreover, the efforts to contact families were pursued with varying degrees of vigour and did not always meet with complete success. In Yugoslavia and Bulgaria many gypsies preferred to pass themselves off as Serbs or Turks.

As Table 8.1 shows, the percentage of traveller families in the total population varies widely between countries, in some representing a minute proportion, in others a fairly important minority group. Bearing in mind the limitations of comparison, it can be seen that England and Wales with a traveller population of some 15,000 (·03% of the total population) has proportionately fewer than some countries across the Channel, especially those in Eastern Europe.

Travelling

Gypsy traditions in many countries manifest themselves in

almost all aspects of daily life as well as in the more obscure rites attached to ceremonial and special occasions. The habits and customs frequently attributed to gypsies seldom apply to all traveller groups in all countries, but the evidence we have collected shows that there are several common traits, of which the most important is nomadism.

In the past probably almost all traveller families moved from place to place throughout virtually the whole year. However, nomadism has now become less of a necessity in the traveller economy and modern pressures—deliberate or otherwise—towards settlement are strong, so that in most countries a proportion of settled travellers is found. Of those who travel, a proportion stay in one place during the cold weather, but move from place to place during the warmer months. With the possible exception of those places where assimilation is widespread, or where nomadism is effectively prohibited by law, there are gypsies in all countries who travel. In only a few countries, however, have any figures on this aspect of gypsy life been collected.

It can be seen in Table 8.2 that the percentage of travellers who have settled varies from a quarter to almost one half. This compares with over one third of the traveller population of England and Wales who said that they did not travel during 1964.

Table 8.1 Estimated number of gypsies or travellers in other countries

Country	Number of gypsies or travellers	Census or estimate	Date of census or estimate	Approximate percentage of total population	Source of information
Belgium	Very few	Estimate	1965	—	Embassy
Denmark	Very few	Estimate	1965	—	Embassy
Norway	Very few	Estimate	1965	—	Embassy
Northern Ireland	309	Census	1966	·02	Census report
Austria	500	Estimate	1965	·007	Embassy
Sweden	1,000	Census	1965	·01	JGLS*
Finland	4,000	Census	1954	·09	Census report
Republic of Ireland	5,880	Census	1961	·2	Census report
Greece	7,429	Census	1951	·09	Embassy
Italy	9,395	Census	1963	·02	Census report
Netherlands	20,000	Census	1959	·2	Census report
Federal Republic of Germany	30,000	Estimate	1965	·05	Embassy
Poland	30,000	Census	1949	·09	Embassy
U.S.A.	50-100,000	Estimate	1954-5	at least ·02	JGLS†
France	80,000	Census	1961	·2	Census report
Yugoslavia	85,000	Census	1953	·5	JGLS‡
Rumania	104,216	Census	1956	·6	Census report
U.S.S.R.	132,014	Census	1959	·06	Census report
Hungary	190,000	Estimate	1965	1·9	Embassy
Czechoslovakia	200,000	Estimate	1958	1·5	Embassy
Bulgaria	230,000	Estimate	1965	2·9	Embassy

* *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* (3rd Series), Vol. XLVI (1967), p.26.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXIV (1955), p.29.

‡ *Ibid.*, Vol. XLII (1963), p.23.

Table 8.2 Travelling

Country	Percentage of gypsy or traveller population		
		Travelling most or part of the year	Settled
Poland (1949)	75		25
France (1961)	60		40
Finland (1954)	55*		38*
Italy (1963)	52		48

*These figures do not add up to 100% owing to a number of refusals and unclassified answers.

Travelling takes different forms. In the Republic of Ireland it was recorded that 60% of the families travelled only short distances over regular local circuits, while most of the rest travelled over much longer circuits taking in several counties. In France 8% travelled only in the Department in which they were recorded on census day, 38% travelled also in neighbouring Departments and 52% travelled further afield.

Living conditions

The type of accommodation travellers use varies according to the type of life they lead rather than between countries. In the Irish Republic and Poland only a small minority live in permanent buildings, even for part of the year. In the Irish Republic such families usually provide themselves with this permanent shelter. In Poland some are accommodated as part of a national housing policy. Many settled or partly settled travellers do not find accommodation in houses or flats (they mainly resort to huts, immobile caravans, etc.), but where they do, these units of accommodation are often slum dwellings in the poorest neighbourhoods of big towns. This happens in the U.S.A., Spain, and in those eastern European countries where many gypsy families have now become settled. The stationary families among the French and Finnish travellers also gather together in this type of area, although a small proportion in each of these countries has better accommodation. Very recently the Swedish government has provided good quality housing for virtually all travellers.

Less permanent accommodation is, of course, used by the remainder of the traveller population, the ones who are usually on the move. In the Irish Republic and Poland most travellers live in tents or in horse-drawn caravans. In Italy, 55% live in caravans or huts and 6% in tents. In the Netherlands, where tents are prohibited, the main form of accommodation is the motorized caravan. It seems that the English travellers have a rather higher standard of accommodation than most of their counterparts in Europe.

Social contact

In the few countries where travellers are assimilated it is almost invariably into the lowest groups in the social scale. In most countries, as in England and Wales, travellers tend to be isolated from the settled population. In the past their mode of living, the gypsies' use of the Romany language, and their illiteracy have all contributed to their isolation. In some countries there are still many who speak Romani—in Finland the figure is put at 71%, in Italy 14% of the families use it daily, and in the U.S.S.R. 39% consider it their main language. While the settled population are attaining higher standards of education, traveller children on the move rarely attend school, or at least very rarely benefit greatly from it. In Sweden 70% and in Italy 73% of all travellers were found to be illiterate. In France illiteracy is general. In the Netherlands 49% could neither read nor write while the Irish Republic's illiteracy figure is put at 88%. In Finland, however, 68% claimed to be able to read and 57% to write. These figures compare with a very small minority of travellers in this country who are literate.

Occupations

In very few countries have reliable and comparable statistics of occupations been collected, so that no clear pattern emerges, though there are certain factors common to several countries. In the past, many travellers derived their living from trading in horses and rags, but now dealing in second hand cars, mattresses and scrap metal is more common. Also peg making, flower making, basket weaving, entertaining, tinkering and small-scale metal work can no longer compete with modern methods of production and distribution. Begging (especially among women) and petty larceny are said to be a feature of the life of travellers in most countries, though we do not know to what extent. Also, women usually contribute to the housekeeping by sewing and crocheting, and by hawking flowers or small articles. In Finland, a few women said they were factory hands and it seems probable that in other countries there is a small proportion of traveller women in factories. It seems therefore that everywhere occupations are in a process of change, reflecting the extent of industrialisation in each country.

Table 8.3 shows the main occupations of working males. Where actual figures are not available, the number of stars indicate approximately the relative significance of each occupation.

Compared with the occupational structure of gypsies and other travellers in those European countries for which data were available, the travellers in England and Wales have abandoned to a much greater extent their traditional crafts and occupations such as horse dealing, smithery, music, and fortune telling. Fewer here have moved into

Table 8.3 Occupations

Country	Dealers in scrap, cars, rags, food, etc.	Horse and cattle dealers	Metal workers	Other craftsmen	Entertainers and showmen	Paid employees, usually labouring in industry	Agricultural workers
Bulgaria (1956)	—	—	—	—	**	***	—
Finland (1954)	—	14%	2%	—	—	23%	6%
France (1961)	***	—	*	**(rushes mainly)	**	**	—
Greece (1966)	—	—	**	**(tapestries and wickerwork)	—	—	—
Irish Republic (1961)	***	*	*	—	—	—	***
Italy (1963)	10%	16%	14%	4%	25%	3%	5%
Netherlands (1959)	***	—	—	**	**	—	**
Sweden (1955)	7%	—	16% (mainly copper)	—	53% (of these 25% = musicians 28% = fortune-tellers)	19%	—
Yugoslavia (1953)	—	—	—	**	—	**	**

* a few carry on this occupation.

** a fairly common occupation.

*** a very common occupation.

paid employment, but a much higher proportion have become dealers, mainly in scrap metal.

Demographic characteristics

Other characteristics which have been documented in a few cases, and which seem to transcend nationality, are the large size of family and the abnormal age structure when compared with the settled populations. In the Irish Republic the average number of children per traveller family was between six and seven as against the national average of 3.5. In Finland, the corresponding figure was 2.8 compared with 2.2 children per family for the total population. The tendency among travellers towards relatively large families has also been recorded in France.

Government policies

Reports by official or semi-official bodies in several countries convey the antagonism which exists between the settled population and the travellers. In the past, policies towards gypsies and other travellers have tended to be of a repressive nature. It is encouraging, therefore, to note that some government policies are now more enlightened and are helping to break down the antagonism between the travellers and the settled population. Some governments are beginning to take the initiative in improving the living conditions of travellers, and encouraging them to integrate into the community and to become a productive element in the economy. However, this has not been attempted everywhere. Portugal, for example, has followed a laissez-faire policy and it is left to the police to enforce laws against vagrancy. The idea of special measures was rejected as being class discrimination and

in conflict with the constitution, by favouring one sector of the community over another. The statutory situation is similar in Spain where most of the gypsy population seems to have settled mainly in the shanty areas which surround the big cities. In Greece, no effort has been made to persuade gypsies to give up their nomadic way of life since the government feels that all attempts would fail. In the United States there is no special provision for travellers, but many States require licences for, or impose taxes on, horse dealing, fortune telling and camping by itinerants. Some travellers in the United States may be benefiting from measures designed for seasonal agricultural workers. Farmers, for instance, are required to erect temporary dwellings for their workers and schools for the children are being started.

Other countries have no positive policy towards gypsies and other travellers but have enforced negative measures to control their movement. In France, for example, apart from a law requiring the carrying of a detailed pass book, measures have been left to local authorities and voluntary bodies. Local authorities have not set up sites as was hoped, because they had little desire to do so, or because they have encountered local opposition, or because of the expense involved; a few municipal authorities, however, have rehoused some travellers from shanty towns. Catholic bodies, and other organisations have carried out isolated welfare and housing projects, and the Church does much welfare work in camps around Paris. There is now a national committee to collect information and propose action for nomads in France, and a central government official is concerned solely with their affairs.

At the other extreme are the countries with policies of integration and assimilation. In some cases this policy merely encourages an already apparent trend, in others integration is open to families if they desire it, and in yet others pressure is brought to bear on families to change their way of life.

Eastern European countries seem to have adopted a conscious policy of assimilation. In the U.S.S.R., even though the gypsy culture is apparently fostered as, for example, in the Moscow Gypsy Theatre, nomadic life is subject to considerable restraint as nomadism was prohibited by decree in 1956. The great majority of gypsies, with the exception of some groups in traditional gypsy locations, had settled by 1963 when it is reported that the decree was repealed. In 1958 a law passed in Czechoslovakia required travellers to give up their nomadic life. The government is beginning a large-scale programme to build houses for gypsies or to help them to build their own. Special schools are being set up to combat illiteracy and gypsies are being encouraged to work in factories. In Hungary, where travelling is prohibited, about one-third of all gypsy families have settled, and it is claimed that they have reached the point of integration. Most of the children attend school, and although the majority still lead a difficult life, infant mortality levels have fallen and epidemics have been wiped out. In Bulgaria measures have been undertaken on a very wide scale because the gypsy minority is second only in size to the largest minority group, the Turks. Itinerancy has been prohibited and it is claimed that a third of the families have been housed and that about a fifth of the gypsy population, including many women, have regular jobs. The laws governing compulsory education are being strictly applied and adult education is being attempted, but with limited success. Poland is hoping to achieve assimilation by the example set by a number of families who have been persuaded to take regular work in new towns, but progress is slow. Housing is allotted and allowances provided to encourage families to settle, but many stay only a short while, despite the fact that travelling is illegal.

A commission on gypsies in Finland proposed the provision of housing, that education should be strictly enforced, the establishment of a department in the Ministry of Social Affairs to deal with gypsies, that they should be found opportunities to obtain employment, that employers should be encouraged to use gypsy workers, and that the younger people should be given vocational training. Gypsy families are now awarded full citizenship and a gypsy mission receives financial aid from the government and the church.

Sweden

A Swedish government commission in 1954 suggested the

provision of suitable dwellings for each family without adequate accommodation, and that camping sites with water, electricity and sanitary facilities might be provided for those who still wished to follow a nomadic life. These proposals were not immediately or wholly adopted by the government. In 1958 there was an unsuccessful attempt to solve the gypsy problem in Sweden by providing the gypsies with settled jobs. It was hoped that with a steady income gypsy families would be able to provide themselves with houses and send their children to school. However, it became clear that before any of the men would be fit to work they would have to be trained and housed. Municipalities were approached to undertake this task, but they refused, mainly on financial grounds. In 1960 the State was forced to declare that it would undertake all costs of assimilating those gypsies who were not already settled. Families were to be housed where dwellings were available or, alternatively, new cottages were to be built. For these the parish would be able to collect a rent according to the tenant's means. Each family was eligible for a loan to buy furniture and also for free adult and child education, costs being borne out of public funds. Assimilation was on a purely voluntary basis but by 1965, 96% of families were housed. In the big cities some families have been housed in flats and tend to disturb neighbours by noisy behaviour. Children's school attendance is still irregular. It has proved almost impossible to find settled jobs for the men, and young people tend not to stay very long at occupational training centres. Most families still rely on typical gypsy occupations for their income. Nevertheless, the scheme is regarded as successful.

The Netherlands

Since 1918 the Netherlands have had legislation to provide sites and to regulate the living conditions of caravan dwellers. The Caravan and Houseboat Act of that year contained three major provisions: itinerants' caravans had to conform to certain stringent requirements as to construction, size and amenity; caravans had to be licensed and a licence could be refused on the grounds not only of non-conformity with the caravan requirements but also if the applicant was considered an unfit person because he had broken the law or failed to send his children to school, etc.; local authorities were compelled to allow caravans within their territory and enabled to set up a site and levy a fee for parking. When a site was provided, parking elsewhere was forbidden. The first provision in particular did a great deal to raise the standard of living accommodation used by travellers so that tents and other poor structures virtually disappeared. Sufficient sites, however, were not provided, and where provision was made the location was in some cases remote and the facilities inadequate. To encourage better camps, an amendment of 1957 allowed regional camps to be set up to cater for wider areas. This sought to make the pro-

vision of better facilities an economical proposition. In 1959 there were 47 camps with an average of about 15 caravans each. Some big regional camps are very well equipped, for example at Hertogenbosch the accommodation comprises a school, a communal building with a church, clubroom and welfare rooms, five water taps, showerbaths, a laundry room, thirty toilets, and an office for the camp manager. There is a stand for each of the 75 caravans and an electric point at every stand. A sports-ground is provided and the whole camp is surrounded by a screen of trees. However, some small camps had no water, electricity or hard standing. In 1964, therefore, legislation was again revised and the provision of properly equipped camps by local authorities is now mandatory. A subsidy is available from the central government. The location of a camp must be carefully considered. A school, water supply, electricity points, refuse disposal and sanitary facilities must be provided at each camp and the usual social welfare services made available. Powers to ensure that caravans are licensed have been strengthened and housing is to be made available where a caravan is unfit or not available. It is recognised that the camps will cater for fairground people and families suffering from the housing shortage as well as travellers. It is intended that travelling families should ensure that there is a vacant pitch at their next stopping place by making a reservation by 'phone or letter. The main aim of all these measures is to make available to the traveller the same facilities and services enjoyed by the settled population, thereby, it is hoped, promoting his social and religious well-being.* A criticism of the provision of large sites in the Netherlands has been that residents have shown a tendency to become inward looking and even more isolated, instead of improving their contact with the settled population. This has happened especially where a site is large enough to be a self-contained community with its own church and schools, and is far from a town.

The Irish Republic

The Irish Republic's Commission on Itinerancy reported in 1963. Its main recommendations concerned living accommodation. It was suggested that living conditions might gradually be improved by prohibiting tent dwellings and by granting licences only to caravan owners whose caravans complied with minimum standards. It was realised that the provision of housing would not be immediately possible, especially in urban areas with a housing problem. To bridge the gap, therefore, it was proposed that approved camping sites should be set up. Local authorities should ascertain how many families were in their area and if housing was not available, a site

of a size sufficient to accommodate them all should be set up. Hard standings, water, electricity and sanitary arrangements should be installed, and part of the site should be set aside for animals and part for the itinerants' stock-in-trade, perhaps with storage provision allocated to each pitch. Layouts might be designed to be adaptable to housing at a later stage. Compulsory purchase might be necessary and a subsidy from central funds should be available.

However, the main proposal was that any measures taken should aim at housing all itinerants who wished to settle, the remainder to be housed at a later date. Priority on housing lists should be given to itinerants. Vacancies should be brought to their notice, and care taken in placing them. They should not be housed in remote places, and not more than two or three families should be placed together. Regular contact would be necessary to assist the integration process, aided by the right of entry on the part of officials.

The Commission also made recommendations on education, proposing that children should attend local schools and that a special teacher should be appointed if necessary. Schools might be set up on the larger sites. Where families continuously wander, successful education would probably not be possible as it was considered undesirable to separate the children from their parents by placing them in boarding schools.

With regard to employment, the Commission recognised that scrap dealing was of positive value to the community, and suggested that a licence should be issued to each dealer giving him a virtual monopoly over an area large enough to provide a reasonable living for one man. Other itinerants should be helped to find employment. Financial assistance should be available to itinerants while they learned new skills.

Further recommendations were that begging should be prohibited, that mothers be encouraged to have their children vaccinated, and to stay in hospital for longer periods than they do after childbirth. It was also agreed that attempts should be made to alter the attitude of the settled population towards itinerancy and it was proposed that some central co-ordinating body should be set up.

A great part of these recommendations were embodied in a Government policy statement in November 1964. Pending housing, authorities were advised to provide sites, for which two-thirds of the cost would be borne by the central government. Tent dwelling was discouraged by offering a subsidy of two-thirds of the cost of immobile accommodation. Educational facilities were to be made available and any difficulties in receiving welfare allowances removed.

*New regulations for the encouragement of social welfare for the caravan population in the Netherlands (The Caravan Act; Explanatory Memorandum No. 3)

Progress in providing caravan sites has been slow due, mainly, to local objections to particular sites. At present only two sites, for four and fourteen families, are in operation. Dublin Corporation are developing a site for forty

families and some other councils are seeking land for the purpose. The Dublin site will provide, in addition to the hard standing for the caravan, toilet, washing and cooking facilities for each family.

Table 8.4 Summary of current policies

Policy	Country	Comments
(1) Countries <i>without</i> special legislation to control or help gypsies and other travellers	Denmark Italy Portugal Spain Norway	They are affected by police regulations on vagrancy.
(2) Countries with central or local legislation designed to <i>control</i> the way of life of gypsies and other travellers.	Belgium	General policy of combatting itinerancy and illiteracy.
	France	Stays limited. No itinerants allowed to enter country. Identity cards must be carried, and each family registered. (Recently local anti-gypsy resolutions have been annulled by the central government.)
	Switzerland	Strict system of registration and identity cards. Length of stay limited. Need consent to follow peddling as an occupation. Restrictions vary from canton to canton.
	Federal Republic of Germany	Bavaria, Bremen and Hamburg forbid children to travel and adults need a permit.
	U.S.S.R.	Itinerancy prohibited by 1956 decree, which was reported as repealed 1963.
	Czechoslovakia	Itinerancy prohibited.
	Hungary	
	Bulgaria	
	Poland	
	U.S.A.	State laws regulate camping, horse dealing and fortune telling.
(3) Countries in which governmental policy (<i>either proposed or implemented</i>) is directed towards the gradual assimilation of gypsies and other travellers into the settled population.	Bulgaria	Following a law of 1958 it is claimed that many now have stable jobs. Housing is provided or help given under a self-build scheme, and compulsory education laws are strictly applied.
	Czechoslovakia	A programme is going ahead to house gypsies, give them special schooling and encourage them to take work in factories.
	Republic of Ireland	Government adopted policy in 1964 of subsidizing sites and accommodation provided by local authorities for itinerants. All welfare help is to be given to settlement, and educational facilities provided.
	Finland	It was recommended that houses should be provided for those in need of accommodation and help given in finding suitable jobs to raise the standard of living of itinerants.
	Hungary	It is said that about one-third are settled and many have steady jobs or good seasonal ones. In 1961 a campaign was started to increase educational and housing provision.
	Netherlands	Regional camp sites in existence. More to be provided and all brought up to standard.
	Northern Ireland	Tightening up of sanitary measures and vagrancy Acts. Censuses twice yearly. The Ministry of Development has drawn local authorities' attention to the desirability of providing housing for those gypsy families who want it.
	Poland	Gypsies encouraged to settle by the offer of work which is accompanied by housing provision and other benefits.
	Sweden	Housing has recently been provided for the great majority of travellers.
	U.S.S.R.	Practical measures for settlement and employment are only partly effective or are not applied vigorously. A few large towns offer courses of instruction using Romani as well as Russian. Formal encouragement of gypsy culture.
(4) Countries having isolated projects in operation to help gypsies and other travellers.	France	Domestic science school for gypsy girls at Montpellier. Special primary schools at Cannes and Nice. Mobile adult instruction centre in Paris. Voluntary bodies and the Church often initiate such projects.
	Italy	Special classes for gypsy children in some towns.
	Spain	Special school in Sacre Monte, Granada and in a few other towns.
	Federal Republic of Germany	Bremen and Munich have experimented with projects to aid settlement. Cologne has set up a special site where gypsies are housed in railway carriages. (Some monetary compensation was paid to the gypsies following their harsh treatment in World War II.)

Some local councils are making good progress in the housing of itinerant families and there is a perceptible growth of interest in the welfare of itinerants locally on the part of voluntary organisations, some of which have been engaged in this field for several years. The efforts of voluntary workers are normally directed towards the provision of educational facilities for the children and the placing of suitable persons in employment. In some cases improved accommodation has been provided for tent-dwelling families.

A Central Advisory Committee on Itinerancy, representative of official and voluntary interests, was appointed in 1965 to advise government departments on measures to promote the rehabilitation of itinerants.

Conclusion

A Swedish report suggests the following policy—'the gypsies shall be given the same opportunities as members of the (settled) community to earn their living in an honourable way; the same chance of getting their share of benefits enjoyed by a cultured community; the same certainty of having their status as human beings acknowledged, and of feeling security, freedom and responsibility'.

The extent to which various countries have moved towards this ideal has already been considered. It seems doubtful whether a laissez-faire policy will make rapid progress towards the realization of this ideal but it has been adopted in some European countries where many travellers have already been assimilated into the lowest strata of the settled population. In these countries any measures designed to benefit the poorest house-dwellers also benefit gypsies, as for example the new housing being built for very poor slum dwellers in Spain.

Compulsory settlement has been adopted as a policy in some countries where the gypsy minority is large and voluntary settlement has been slow. Such policies, which virtually prohibit the gypsy's way of life, have caused resentment; Polish gypsies have been reported passing through Austria. Polish authorities recognize that, of those who have ever started on a regular work project, few have stayed for any length of time. Also it has been estimated that in Czechoslovakia only 10% of gypsies lead a settled life despite constant attempts to prevent nomadism.

Less forceful assimilation policies have met with most success where provision has been made mandatory and the central government has made substantial financial contributions. Only Sweden, the Irish Republic and the Netherlands have implemented large scale policies of voluntary assimilation. In Sweden this has taken the form of housing and very few families have failed to take advantage of the offer of permanent accommodation. Housing, however, may

not be a possibility in places with an acute housing shortage. Judging by Sweden's experience of trying to find settled jobs for the male population it seems that it will be difficult to implement a policy designed to change occupations. Possibly only time and education will change the occupational pattern of travellers.

In the Netherlands an intermediate policy of more gradual settlement has been in operation for some time. This allows travellers to follow their own way of life, but at the same time offers them the benefits available to the settled community. They can travel freely and can follow their traditional occupations, while enjoying the advantages of equipped sites and social and educational facilities. It seems likely that such a policy will be more readily acceptable in countries where the majority of travellers are not settled. It can be sufficiently flexible to cope with seasonal fluctuations in travelling and can allow for the possibility that most families will eventually live in houses. A similar policy has been adopted in the Irish Republic.

In all three cases experience has shown that most local authorities were unwilling to act alone. In Sweden and the Netherlands the central governments have been forced to legislate and to subsidize costs, which are considerable. A regional camp in the Netherlands for about 70 families, with adequate facilities and paid social workers, is estimated to cost approximately £150,000. The Netherlands Ministry of Social Work subsidises local authority sites to the extent of £250 per caravan standing, and up to £6,000 for a social welfare centre, and pays the salary of a municipal officer. In addition, private organisations which provide social welfare activities and staff, receive a government subsidy of 75% of the cost. In Sweden £650,000 has been spent over a period of five years in the settlement of nearly one thousand families. In the Republic of Ireland the central government has promised subsidies of up to two-thirds of the cost of the sites.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

The nature of the problem

This study suggests that there are in England and Wales at least 15,000 gypsies and other travellers, including some 6,000 children. This is rather more in total than the population of Truro. It has been estimated that the numbers are likely to increase over the next twenty years (assuming neither losses to, nor gains from, the settled population) to about 28,000, including perhaps 12,000 children. The majority of these people live a primitive existence without any secure base for their home, living mainly on unlawful sites and in constant fear of being moved on. Inroads have increasingly been made on their traditional camping sites, and in some areas these have now virtually disappeared. Only a minority—mainly those living on the few specially provided caravan sites—enjoy security and minimum modern amenities. For the rest eviction from one unlawful stopping place leads inevitably to a further contravention of the law when next they stop for any length of time. A negligible proportion of the children go to school and the younger generations are growing up as illiterate as their parents. It is clear that most of them lack the conditions for optimum growth and development.

The case for immediate action

The dangers are that (i) as a result of the increasing affluence of the settled population, the social and economic gap between them and the travellers will widen, so that the task of raising the latter to the general level, or of giving them the opportunity to reach that level, will become increasingly difficult; (ii) in twenty years' time, if no large-scale action is taken, the problem will be numerically twice as great; and (iii) in the same period the spread of ordinary residential development will make even more difficult the finding of casual stopping places, or the establishment of special caravan sites.

The combination of these factors makes the case for immediate action designed to free the travellers from continued harassment and to give this deprived group the opportunities available to the general population, as well as to alleviate the widespread nuisance that the travellers cause to settled people. To repeat the terms of Circular 26/66 (see Appendix 4)—

'In the Minister's (Secretary of State's) view, this situation, in which numbers of men, women and children have no homes and few of the amenities of life, should not be allowed to continue. They must be helped to improve their living conditions and encouraged to settle down and send their children to school. Many of them no longer need to move from place to place for their livelihood and are anxious to settle; most of those who still wish to travel need permanent winter quarters'.

Social change and the travellers

It is frequently asked why the authorities should have to

take action. Why do not the travellers simply forsake their inconvenient way of life, move into a house, and adopt a more conventional settled existence? How is it that, in the face of extreme difficulties and with every official discouragement, their traditional mode of life persists? It is hoped that this study has demonstrated that the travellers have a distinctive, inherited way of life, with deep-rooted traditions. They are not failures rejected from settled society, but a separate group overtaken by conditions in our society which are increasingly unfavourable to their way of life. Most travellers have never *chosen* to live as they do. Only about one quarter have ever lived in a house; the rest were born into a caravan dwellers' existence and have never known any other way of life. But for the particular difficulty of finding a stopping place, it is doubtful whether many would want to give up the travelling life. From some standpoints, theirs is a poor world, lacking many cultural and material assets; but it is a world complete in itself, rich in human feeling and relationships. Other travellers are often the only friendly people a traveller knows. Settled life in a house would be foreign to them, and it seems likely that, usually, the only houses available to them would be the worst urban slums, since few have the residential qualifications for a council tenancy. A conventional mode of life in a house would involve entirely new habits and social skills. To make a change of that magnitude unaided and successfully would require a level of adaptability and perceptiveness which would do credit to the most educated, literate and intelligent members of the settled community. It is a useful exercise for the house-dweller to imagine how he would arrange his life if he were forced to give up his job and his home and take to a caravan, where he might possibly find himself among hostile caravan dwellers, probably without benefit of an assured site, and trying to make his living by some means not requiring reading and writing. This exercise gives some idea of the extent of adjustment necessary, in an opposite direction, when a traveller gives up his way of life and his usual occupation and moves into a house.

The travellers have insufficient resources to solve their problems unaided, though they have begun to form their own central organisation. Help is needed from outside—in particular, in finding a secure home base. The Ministry and the Welsh Office have already acknowledged in Circular 26/66 that only the local authorities—including counties and county boroughs—are in a position to act and have the necessary powers.

Local authority action

The prime need is for camp sites to enable travellers to avoid the use of unlawful sites. This view is shared by the Gypsy Council. Until a wide network of special sites is provided there should be an end to the present system of perpetually moving the travellers from one unlawful

stopping place to the next. In Circular 26/66 the Minister and the Secretary of State urged local authorities to make plans for the establishment of such sites on the basis of the number of families recorded on March 22nd 1965. They stated that sites for between 12 and 20 families are the easiest to manage satisfactorily. Experience has suggested, however, that in some circumstances rather larger sites can prove successful, though regard should be paid to the number of families who wish to camp together, as well as the other points discussed in Chapter 7. The size of sites should also allow for those families which possess more than one caravan, and for all families to expand their accommodation, perhaps by erecting a hut. The main recommendations of the Minister and Secretary of State concerning sites were:

'Location of Sites. Sites should not normally be provided a long way from settled communities. Apart from the cost of providing services in out of the way places and the inconvenience to the caravan dwellers, it is undesirable to isolate them from the rest of the community. Where possible, sites should be chosen close to towns and where the people are already known. Few sites will however be entirely suitable and most will be open to objections of one kind or another. These will often have to be faced. Local objections to a proposal may prove to be unfounded when a well laid out and well run site is established and the people have settled down. The most objectionable course of all is to do nothing to remedy the nuisance of the present unauthorised settlements and the human problems they create. Separate sites for gypsies may not always be necessary. Some sites now in operation already contain gypsies as well as ordinary caravan dwellers, and this may be a useful way of helping the gypsies to fit into the settled community. Some local authorities, particularly where there are only a few gypsies to be accommodated, may find this is the best solution.

Services and Facilities. Local authorities are obliged by section 24(2) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act to have regard to the model standards specified under Section 5(6) when providing caravan sites. The sites established for gypsies should not be inferior in this respect to others; good site conditions may indeed be instrumental in raising their standards of living and behaviour. But they will need help and advice in the use of facilities.

Although more gypsies are now taking regular employment and this trend is to be encouraged, many are self-employed as scrap metal dealers or on casual jobs such as farm work, laying tarmac, gardening and fruit-picking. For many of them a lorry is a necessity. At the census three-quarters of all the families had one or more vehicles. It would be desirable to provide space for these vehicles on the site.

Resident Warden. There should be a warden for each site, who should if possible be resident. His tasks would include

ensuring compliance with site rules, collecting rents, ensuring that the site and buildings are looked after and helping the residents with their various problems. They may, for example, be unable to read or write, and have difficulty in managing their business with public offices or even their ordinary domestic tasks in unfamiliar surroundings. The warden would act as a link on the site between the residents and their neighbours, the staff of services concerned with the site and any co-ordinating centre or officer that may be thought necessary.

Rents. Reasonable rents should be charged for the use of pitches. One local authority who have already provided a site for gypsies have had no difficulty in collecting rents of 30s. a week per pitch. Extra charges may be made where special facilities such as washing machines and hot water are provided'. (For the full text see Appendix 4.)

Provision must also be made for those who do not wish to settle permanently, but who need either winter quarters or a secure stopping place for short periods. Circular 26/66 contains the statement 'In some instances it would be desirable to provide extra pitches for short stays by families on the move'. This need is very real, for some families can make a living only by moving constantly, in many cases on a particular circuit. Others may simply have travelling 'in their blood'. It is an interesting legal and moral question whether there should be any attempt by the settled community to compulsorily prevent this travelling. The travellers themselves believe that the choice should be left to them. In any event, such an attempt would be unlikely to succeed. If lawful sites are not made available, the likelihood is that many of these families will continue to camp for short periods in unlawful places. It may be that the attractions of living on a site with amenities will exert a growing pull on the persistent travellers, so that they will choose gradually to settle down, first on a site and eventually in a house.

Where the construction of a properly equipped caravan site is delayed, local authorities should consider the benefits of setting up temporary sites.

In the Circular, solutions other than camp sites were also mentioned which will be applicable to some areas. Apart from the allocation to travellers of some pitches on ordinary residential caravan sites, these included moving families first into intermediate accommodation, and housing families direct from the nomadic life. It is important that varied and flexible provision should be made to suit the varied needs.

As families on provided camp sites grow accustomed to a settled life, it is expected that they will increasingly demand permanent housing, and for the first time they will have the necessary residential qualifications for such accom-

modation. The first local authority site in West Ashford Rural District, Kent, has been closed and the residents housed.

It is important that action should be taken at the same time by all authorities if an undue burden is not to be placed upon the few. It is also important that no authority should attempt to transfer the burden to others by moving travellers from unlawful sites over the district boundaries, or harassing them so much that they leave the area voluntarily. There is evidence that, on occasions, such action has been taken.

Consideration should be given to the travellers' means of making a living when they settle on a site. When travellers settled on sites are earning a good living, the tasks of the local authority officers are eased. When encouraged, travellers tend to strive for a position of equality in the community, but financial hardship can provide a barrier against this, and jeopardise attempts to help them. Despite the collapse of the market for many of their traditional crafts, and despite the handicap of illiteracy, most travellers have managed to adapt to these changes sufficiently to earn a living, albeit usually a substandard one. It is important that no action of the authorities, such as the prohibition of lorry parking or scrap sorting should prevent them from continuing to earn a living. Special compounds where scrap dealing travellers could break, sort and store metal, are discussed in Chapter 5.

Many travellers find it both unnatural and difficult to work for an employer and some have proved unsatisfactory employees. If this largely illiterate generation is prevented from making a living in their own way, there is a danger that some will be deterred from settling, and that others will become over-dependent on public aid (as have the remnants of the indigenous Indians in the U.S.A.). If the present children can be educated they are likely gradually to move to other, settled, occupations.

Education for the children

Education is perhaps the greatest single benefit to be obtained from a policy of settlement. The Plowden Committee said that gypsy children 'are probably the most severely deprived ... in the country'. Evidence suggests that once they are living a relatively settled life, most parents are keen to send their children to school. Even when attending school regularly these children have to contend with a severe environmental handicap. Nevertheless, though they represent a formidable educational challenge to their teachers, there is no reason to doubt that if they once get to school and can be persuaded to attend regularly, the next generation of travellers will be literate. It can be expected that they will develop that broader understanding of society and its opportunities that their parents have lacked, and that they will themselves wish to put an

end to the social isolation in which they now live. This is an instance where, to use the Plowden Committee's concept, there is a clear case for 'positive discrimination' in allocating educational resources.

Need for co-ordinated action

In Circular 26/66 the Minister and the Secretary of State emphasised the need to make the normal range of social services available to residents on all sites, and for all official and voluntary agencies who may be concerned to work closely with each other and with the person in charge of the site. County councils were asked to take the lead in promoting this co-ordination and to consider appointing a liaison officer for the task. The Plowden Committee also emphasised that simultaneous action was required by the authorities responsible for employment, industrial training, housing and planning. It is clear that there must be co-ordinated action in all these fields as well as in education, health and welfare if the efforts of local authorities in providing sites and houses are to be fully effective.

Costs and benefits

In considering the cost of provision for travellers, it is important that a local authority should attempt to add up all its previously hidden costs of coping with travellers in order to estimate the true cost of setting up a properly controlled site. Simply deducting the annual rent from the annual outgoings on the site itself disguises the saving in time of a variety of officers and other employees of the authority, as well as of the police. Over and above these kinds of benefits, there will be the less tangible, but nonetheless real, effects on the community at large stemming from an improvement in amenity and reduced social friction, and on the travellers themselves as they begin to play a fuller part in community life.

Attitudes and understanding

Just as necessary as official action will be a change of heart on the part of the public. It is not only the travellers who will need to adapt to the new conditions; the settled population will need to accept the travellers as their new neighbours and to learn to understand them. Tolerance and good-will will be needed by all concerned if the travellers are to lose their impression of widespread discrimination against them, and are to move towards social equality with the settled population. The Press can make a valuable contribution to the development of a better understanding between house-dwellers and gypsies by providing accurate and unbiased reports of traveller camps and of events among the travellers, rather than concentrating on the sensational aspects of traveller life. In relation to the Eton and Llanelli sites, the local Press gave sympathetic and encouraging publicity to the proposals, winning positive public support.

No one will question that at present many travellers are a nuisance to house-dwellers and leave litter on roadsides, commons and even beauty spots. But the constant re-iteration of this aspect of the problem, which is a feature of many newspaper articles and complaints to local authorities and others, does not affect the roots of the issue which the whole of this report attempts to explain. Simply moving on travellers shifts the problem elsewhere, and whenever a local authority clears one littered site, inevitably there will be another one created a little way down the road or in the next district. Unless more constructive steps are taken, such as those proposed in Circular 26/66 and in this report, the problem will continue not only to exist, but to grow.

The rate of progress

Sufficient facts are now available to bring to an end the present harassment of travellers and the inconveniences they cause for the settled population. It remains for more local authorities to take the action already called for by the Minister and Secretary of State. It is to be hoped that some sites will be ready in time to ease the situation in the winter of 1967-68: very many more are urgently required if the intensification of present difficulties is not to out-strip attempts to eradicate them.

Circular No. 6/62

8th February, 1962

Gypsies

Sir,

1. I am directed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to state that his attention has been drawn to the problems which arise in certain areas in connection with gypsies and other caravan dwellers who have no fixed abode.

2. Many of the sites which gypsies have been accustomed to using in the past have become closed to them owing to the spread of development and other causes, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to find proper sites for their winter quarters or for their permanent settlements. The true gypsies, or romanes, have the right to follow their traditional mode of life, and they have a legitimate need for camping sites. At the same time, the romany way of life is changing: new occupations and new opportunities are making it less necessary for gypsies to move about in search of work and many are now more ready to settle down. They need help and encouragement in their attempt to find a settled way of life.

3. There are other caravan dwellers who present similar problems. These are usually people who are either self-employed or dependent on casual work, and who for lack of regular sites put their caravans on unauthorised sites on commons, waste land and roadside verges. These unauthorised settlements are usually without sanitary facilities and generally unsatisfactory, and they sometimes cause serious complaint on grounds of nuisance and unsightliness. As some local authorities know from experience, action to secure their removal may result in severe hardship unless the caravan families can be directed to acceptable sites. Moving people off one unauthorised site and leaving them to find another is no solution, and no answer to the human and social problems involved. These can only be resolved by the provision of proper sites, in which the caravan families can settle down under decent conditions, and in reasonable security. This is probably the only effective way of preventing the persistent use of unauthorised sites, continuing trouble, and hardship.

4. Where a need exists which cannot be met by the use of ordinary licensed sites, the provision of a site by a local authority is probably the only satisfactory solution. Local authorities now have power to provide such sites under section 24 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960. At least one local authority has tackled the problem successfully in this way, and a note on its experience is appended. The provision of sites is being considered by other authorities.

5. I am to suggest that county councils who have this problem in their areas should review the position generally in consultation with the district councils and ascertain the number of gypsy and similar caravan families now in unauthorised settlements for whom permanent sites are required. These surveys should if possible be carried out in the next few weeks before people start to leave their winter quarters in the spring. The councils of neighbouring counties will no doubt wish to arrange for surveys to be done simultaneously where it is known that caravan families are likely to move from one county to the other. The Minister would be glad to be informed of the results of the surveys in due course.

6. Where it is found that sites are needed, the county council will wish to consider, in consultation with the district councils, how the need can best be met. It may be found that a single suitably placed site would be sufficient to meet the needs of several districts, and in that case the Minister would expect the county council to take the lead in securing the collaboration of the district councils concerned. He hopes however that no authority will hold back merely

because others are not ready to move. He asks every local authority in whose area this problem arises to consider how it can best be tackled.

7. The Minister believes that this is essentially a problem to be dealt with by the local authorities concerned. They alone know the extent of the problem in their area, its make-up, where it is most acute and, above all, the best way of tackling the difficulty of settling these families down in an around local communities. This is a problem in which local circumstances must very largely determine the way in which it is to be approached. He recognises that proposals to provide sites for this purpose will as likely as not meet with local objections. But he believes that in some areas this problem must be faced now and, where necessary, positive action taken to see that sites are available on which these families can live in reasonable conditions. The provision of even a small number of sites in several counties would go a long way towards meeting the problem.

8. The Minister will willingly assist the authorities in any way he can. If the councils concerned feel that discussion with the Department would be useful, that will gladly be arranged.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
S. G. G. WILKINSON,
Assistant Secretary.

The Clerk of the Authority.
Local Authorities England and Wales

**West Ashford Rural District Council Caravan Site,
Great Chart, for Gypsies and Other Travellers**

1. My Council was faced with the desecration of one of its local beauty spots by the camping of gypsies and other travellers. When an attempt was made to evict the gypsies, they explained to the Council that their traditional sites were being closed one by one and that there was nowhere else for them to go. Because they were being kept constantly on the move they were unable to send their children to school, and to share in the normal welfare facilities. Most of them said they would like to live in a council house.

2. The Council came to the opinion that their conditions were in many cases worse than those of the occupants in the unfit houses which were being demolished, and decided to make some attempt to offer them a sense of security in the way of a winter camping site. It was decided to limit the number of caravans to 12 in order to make sure that full control could be exercised over the occupants.

3. The site chosen was at Great Chart, a deserted quarry, three-quarters of a mile away from the village. The Council then fenced it and provided it with the minimum amenities namely, main water, an ablutions block, hard standings, lorry park at the rear and a cess-pool. The planning authority gave its consent to the site, but imposed numerous conditions, one of these was that no trade or business should be carried on from the site, apart from the usual crafts which could be carried out within the caravans themselves. In view of these planning restrictions, and because the site was to be only for gypsies and other travellers, there was no development value in the land, and it was purchased at existing use value.

4. There was violent opposition to the provision of the site from the local Parish Council and the neighbouring residents.

5. As the initial planning consent is only for 7 years, the capital cost of £3,000 is being written off over this period. Running expenses are rates, repairs, cesspool emptying and administration. The rent is 12s. per week per caravan, plus 5s. per week for each lorry. The annual loss to be charged to the Rate Fund for the first seven years is about £400 per annum. This is subject to the Rate Deficiency Grant. If planning consent is renewed at the expiration of seven years, the receipts from the tenants will be greater than the running expenses, and a credit will be made to the Rate Fund.

6. One of the carvanners was appointed as resident warden, and he, together with the Housing Manager, and the Council have been able to exercise full control over the residents. There have been no complaints at all about sheep chasing by the dogs, or from any of the neighbouring farmers. At a subsequent meeting with the Parish Council, the members of that Council said that they had no complaints about the conduct of the caravanners, and they admitted that their earlier fears had not, so far, been justified. The tenants (and especially their wives) are grateful for all the Council has done, and all of them are now hoping in the future to have the chance of a council house. The rent has been paid promptly and the planning conditions religiously enforced. The Housing Manager has power to evict any resident who does not comply with these conditions or pay his rent promptly. To date only one family has been evicted. The people are courteous and the Council's officers are received in a friendly manner. A subtle, but none the less high pressure programme of re-education is put over by the various officers of the Council. The head master and local police are co-operative; and in general the caravanners seem to be accepted in the village community in a much greater way than was originally thought possible.

7. One of the big objections to the site was that it would act as a magnet for gypsies and travellers from all over Kent. This has not proved so. Applications have been received from families outside the district, but the Council has decided only to admit families who have had some connection with, or who have previously worked within the Council's area. There has been no difficulty at all with families who have not been granted tenancies.

8. The major difficulty has been the parking of the lorries. The Council, so far, has insisted that the planning conditions be enforced and that lorries must be parked in the lorry park. The tenants have a sense of grievance on this point, as they cannot understand why they cannot park their lorries by their caravans, where they would like them to be.

Appendix 2

Preliminary letter, explanatory notes and sample questionnaire for the Survey of Gypsies and other Travellers, 22nd March 1965.

A similar letter was sent to local planning authorities in Wales

SC4



MINISTRY OF HOUSING & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Whitehall, LONDON S.W.1

Telex: 22806 Telegrams: Locaplan, London, S.W.1

Telephone: VICTORIA 8540, ext. 143

Our reference: P2/AY/9

Your reference:

17 February 1965.

Dear Sir,

Gypsies and other Itinerants

In Circular 6/62 issued on 8th February, 1962, county councils were asked to conduct a survey of the gypsy and similar caravan families in their areas and to consider, in consultation with the district councils, how the need for sites could best be met.

Some progress has been made in establishing sites for these people in some counties, but there still appear to be a considerable number for whom no provision has been made. This is causing concern and it has been decided that in the first place an up-to-date survey should be made to ascertain the size and nature of the problem. I am to ask for the co-operation of your authority in undertaking this.

The individual surveys conducted by counties in 1962 were no doubt satisfactory in ascertaining the local position, but it was difficult to derive a national assessment from the figures then produced since the basis and extent of the surveys varied very greatly from authority to authority. A more accurate picture can obviously be obtained if a uniform questionnaire is used and the information obtained analysed centrally. Such a questionnaire is now being prepared and sufficient copies will be despatched to you as soon as possible. I am to ask you to make arrangements to have these completed for every gypsy or similar itinerant family in your area on Monday, March 22nd 1965. It would be appreciated if you would let me know as soon as possible approximately how many questionnaires you will require. You may wish to seek the co-operation of the police authorities in conducting this survey since their local knowledge will be of great help in obtaining the required information.

The questionnaires should be returned immediately after completion to the department under the above reference, where they will be analysed. The results of the analysis, both nationally and on a county or county borough basis, should be available in a few weeks after all the forms have been received and will be sent to you; the completed forms will also be returned to you for retention.

Your co-operation in this matter would be much appreciated and I am to say that if you or any of your officers would like to discuss details and methods of this survey, a meeting will gladly be arranged.

Yours faithfully,

(W. C. KNOX)

Local Planning Authorities
in England.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Survey of Gypsies and other Travellers, March 22, 1965

Explanatory Notes

1. Purpose of survey

The government is concerned about the number of gypsies and other travellers who often have nowhere satisfactory to live. Accordingly this survey is being made to find out the number of these people, their location, and some essential facts about their way of living, in order to gain some idea of the sites which may be needed.

2. Approach

There is no obligation on anyone to answer these questions and some of these people may be suspicious. A tactful approach is therefore essential and it is highly desirable that informants should not be antagonised.

3. Scope of the survey

The survey is not limited to true gypsies or people with romany blood. The people to be included are so-called gypsies and other travelling people who live in caravans and possibly huts and tents. Usually these people are isolated from the settled community. Although called "travellers", some never move from their base camp. They usually make a living by dealing in scrap metal, cars and other commodities, seasonal agricultural work, log and firewood cutting, casual labouring, hawking and begging, and rarely take a regular job. Gypsies and other travellers living on sites already established for them by local authorities should be included.

It is not intended to include in the survey caravan dwellers on residential sites who are typically members of the local settled community, have regular jobs, and often live in a caravan only because of the housing shortage. It is also intended to exclude from the survey those families living in permanent shack and bungalow settlements who are essentially not travellers but part of the settled community. However, it may be difficult to distinguish between these groups and where any doubt arises, a family should be included. Others who should be excluded are: people of travelling stock living in houses, tramps and showmen and circus people who are part of an organised group moving together, and families living on boats.

4. Filling in the form

A specimen completed form is attached for your guidance.

It is important to discover every family of the type described above and to complete a form for each family by asking questions and by observation.

The first essential is to determine the family unit. This may be difficult. As a general rule a family unit should be regarded as those members for whom housekeeping and cooking is done communally. They may occupy more than one caravan or other dwelling and may consist of more than two generations. The family may comprise more distantly related members than is normal in the settled community.

Please ask the questions of either the head of household, his wife or other responsible adult member of the family. Please return a form for every family in your area on March 22nd, even if few of the details can be obtained and the form is incomplete. You will always be able to complete some questions (e.g. 11 and 12) even without an interview. You may prefer to make notes in a notebook first rather than fill in the form in your informant's presence; if so, please make a note of all the questions so that none is missed. Where there are more than ten persons in the family, a second form should be firmly attached and completed in respect of questions 2 and 3 only. Any comments you may wish to make or any additional information which is volunteered in the course of the interview will be welcomed and should be written on the back of the form.

Ignore all bracketed figures on the form. These are needed for the analysis.

Question 1. "Name of head of family". This is intended to be the head of the immediate family unit (not an aged head who is not part of this immediate family). The head of the family could be a woman. If the person recorded is known to you by another name, please record this too.

Question 2. "(a) Age, (b) sex and (c) relationship to head". Please start with the head of the family and complete one line for each member of the family, including children. If the actual age is not known, please give an estimate in one of the following age ranges: "under 5", "5-15", "16-34", "35-44", "45-64", "65 and over".

Under "Sex" enter "M" for male or "F" for female. Under "Relationship to head" enter "wife", "son", "brother", "friend", etc., as appropriate.

Question 3. "Present occupation." Please complete the line for each adult (aged 16 or over) you have recorded in question 2. Give as much detail as possible, e.g., "scrap metal dealer" rather than "dealer". We want to know how the person earns his living at the moment rather than an occupation perhaps followed in other seasons. Please be sure to ask this question for women as well as for men.

Questions 4(a) and (b) and 5(a) and (b). If the head of the family or his wife has always lived in a caravan/hut, enter "never".

Question 6. "How many caravans, etc. is your family living in?" Please ask about each type of dwelling. A hut should be counted only when it is used as living accommodation. Enter a number opposite the type of accommodation the family is occupying. Some families have more than one dwelling.

Question 7. "How many other vehicles does your family have?" Please ask about each type of vehicle. Enter a number opposite the vehicles used by the family.

Question 8. "Did your family, or some members, travel during 1964?" The aim of this question is to discover whether the family was static on one site or moved with the caravan from place to place. A dealer who travels around every day in the course of his work but returns to the same site every evening should not be counted as travelling.

Question 9. "How long has your family been living on this site?" You may find some families on the move: enter "on the move".

Question 10. "In which area do you spend most time?" If you cannot give a local authority, try to give a wider area, e.g. county.

Questions 11 and 12, concerning the site, can be completed from observation. Please give the total number of families on the site, including those with whom no interview is obtained. A map reference is required only for a site without a specific address. In question 12 please tick the appropriate site description. Where none is appropriate, describe the site as precisely as you can, under "Other".

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE COMPLETED FORMS SHOULD BE SENT OFF ON THE DAY FOLLOWING THE SURVEY.

YOUR CO-OPERATION IN THIS SURVEY IS GREATLY APPRECIATED

All inquiries should be addressed to:

Mrs. B. Adams
Ministry of Housing and Local Government
Caxton House
Tothill Street
LONDON S.W.1
Telephone No. VICTORIA 8540
Extension 153

SPECIMEN

SURVEY OF GYPSIES AND OTHER TRAVELLERS, MARCH 22nd, 1965

(1-5)

1. Name of head of family Joseph Lee

Ad (6)

Ch (7)

Sc (8)

2. For every member of family :

3. For persons 16 or over :

(a) Age	(b) Sex	(c) Relationship to head	Present occupation
1 45-46 (9)	M	Head	haulage contractor
2 57 (13)	F	wife	housewife
3 35 (17)	M	son	helps father
4 34 (21)	F	daughter-in-law	hawker
5 30 (25)	F	daughter	none
6 14 (29)	M	grandson	
7 12 (33)	M	grandson	
8 8 (37)	F	grand-daughter	
9 2 (41)	F	grand-daughter	
10 (45)			

4. (a) When, if ever, did the head of your family last live in a house?

never

IF EVER (b) Why did he leave and come to live in a caravan/hut?

(a) When, if ever, did the wife of the head of the family last live in a house?

early 40 yrs ago

IF EVER (b) Why did she leave and come to live in a caravan/hut?

got married

6. How many caravans etc. is your family living in?

- Ask about each
- Trailer caravan 2
 - Caravan with engine
 - Horse drawn caravan
 - Hut
 - Tent
 - Other
 - (specify)

7. How many other vehicles does your family have? (excluding motorcycles and bicycles).

- Ask about each
- Car 1
 - Lorry or van 1
 - Horsedrawn cart
 - Other
 - (specify)

8. (a) Did your family, or some members, travel during 1964?

All travelled

Some travelled

None travelled

	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
	3

Tick in box as appropriate

If all or some (b) Why did you/they travel?

fruit picking

9. How long has your family been living on this site?

2 yrs

10. In which area do you spend most time?

Local Authority

Cherkerbridge R.D.

11. Address of present site

Smith's quarry

London Road

Local authority Cherkerbridge R.D.

County Southshire

Map ref. (if necessary)

Total families on this site 10

12. Description of present site

Family on the move

Roadside verge

Pit or quarry

Common or waste land

Private land (e.g. farm)

Other (specify)

	1
	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3
	4
	5
	6

Tick as appropriate

Reporting officer

S. Peters

Telephone No.

Cherkerbridge 321

Official address

Police Station, Cherkerbridge.

Appendix 3

Preliminary letter and sample questionnaire for the Site Inquiry, 1965.

Ministry of Housing and Local Government letter 28th May, 1965
Gypsies and other Travellers: Sites

Dear Sir,

As you are aware, a national survey of gypsies and other travellers was carried out on March 22nd. The Minister is most grateful to all officers who contributed to the success of this survey. In your area the sites listed on the attached sheet were recorded as in use on the day of the survey.

The Minister wishes to obtain a complete picture of the nature of these sites, their ownership, the facilities provided (if any) and your authority's policy regarding them. I should therefore be grateful if you would ask your Chief Public Health Officer (or any officer you consider more suitable) to answer the questions on the attached sheet. We anticipate that from his day to day experience, he will be able to complete the questionnaire in a few minutes, and will not need to visit the site.

It would be helpful if the completed forms could be returned by June 11th. Your co-operation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. Barbara Adams
Senior Research Officer

The Clerk to the Local Authority.

Gypsies and other Travellers: Site Inquiry

L.A.

County

Map Reference

Description of site as recorded in the survey of March 22nd

roadside verge

pit or quarry

common or waste land

private land (e.g. farm)

other

1. Please give a more detailed description of the type of terrain and the usual condition of the site.

2. Is scrap material of any kind stored on the site? Yes
No
(Please tick)

3. Is the site owned by:
the local authority
any other body (please specify)
a resident on the site
any other individual?

4. (a) Is the site licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960? Yes
No

If Yes

(b) Is the licence permanent or temporary? Perm.
Temp.

(c) For how many caravans is the site licensed?
If No to Q.4(a)

Has the authority taken any action to prevent the use of the site by gypsies and other travellers? Yes
No

5. Please put a tick against any of the facilities listed below that are available on the site:

mains water

w.c.

washbasin and/or bath

electricity

refuse disposal facilities

hard standing

other (please specify)

6. (a) Has your council decided to set up a (any other) site for gypsies and other travellers? Yes
No
If yes (b) For how many families? Please give details Number of
families

Your further comments will be welcomed

Signature of Reporting Officer

Official address

Telephone Number

Circular No. 26/66

14th June, 1966

Gypsies

Sir,

1. I am directed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to say that the results are now available of the census of gypsies and other travellers in England and Wales taken in March, 1965, and of the inquiries subsequently carried out by the Department into the camping sites occupied at the time of the census. The results of these inquiries may be summarised as follows:

(a) The 'gypsy' population of England and Wales is now approximately 15,000 (about 3,400 families). This includes all the so-called gypsies and other travelling people who live in caravans, tents, or huts, and who make a living by trading and casual work; but not gypsies living in houses, showmen, boat-dwellers and members of the settled caravan community.

(b) The gypsy population is widely scattered through the country. At the time of the census there were some in almost every county, and in one in every three local authority areas.

(c) About 60 per cent of the families had travelled from place to place during the previous year. Much of this travelling was for purposes of work or trade, but in many cases it was involuntary and due to site difficulties.

(d) Two families out of three had children under the age of 16 numbering over 6,000 in all. Few of these children get any regular schooling; many have none and are growing up almost illiterate.

(e) Only 19 per cent of the families were on licensed or local authority sites; the rest were camping haphazardly on farm land, woodlands, commons, roadside verges, quarries and refuse tips.

(f) Only 33 per cent of all the families had access to mains water and only 16 per cent had access to w.c.'s. Less than a quarter had hard standing for their vans. The majority of families had no sanitary or other facilities whatever.

2. In the Minister's view, this situation, in which numbers of men, women and children have no homes and few of the amenities of life, should not be allowed to continue. They must be helped to improve their living conditions and encouraged to settle down and send their children to school. Many of them no longer need to move from place to place for their livelihood and are anxious to settle; most of those who still wish to travel need permanent winter quarters.

3. Only the local authorities—including county and county borough councils—are in a position to act. They have the necessary powers, as well as responsibility for the planning, health, welfare, education and housing problems which arise. Some authorities have already taken effective steps to tackle the problem by housing gypsy families who wish to settle in houses, or more often by providing properly equipped caravan sites under Section 24 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. The Minister now asks all authorities to consider the need for similar action in their areas as a matter of urgency. He suggests that each county council should take the initiative in assessing the need in its area and in deciding, in consultation with the district councils, how the need can best be met.

4. The schedule at Appendix I, which shows the number of families recorded in each county and county borough on 22nd March of last year, will, together with the completed census forms which each local planning authority already has, provide the basis. Most of the families were then in their winter quarters, and thus in areas in which they spend the larger part of the year; so it is suggested that accommodation for at least this number of families should be provided in

each county (though not necessarily in the same district), or county borough concerned, unless the council is able to make satisfactory arrangements with an adjoining authority. The Minister expects all authorities concerned to collaborate in seeing that the necessary sites are provided. This will generally be the first need and a necessary step towards full rehabilitation of the itinerant families.

5. County councils are reminded of their power to give financial assistance to district councils under Section 56 of the Local Government Act 1958. County borough councils and district councils can also assist other local authorities under Section 136 of the Local Government Act 1948, as amended by Section 2 of the Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963. The Minister hereby consents to the making of contributions by any local authority to any other local authority exercising their powers in Section 24 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 for the provision of caravan sites for gypsies and other travellers.

6. *Size of Sites.* Experience suggests that sites for between 12 and 20 families (or a rather larger number of pitches to allow for families occupying two caravans) are the easiest to manage satisfactorily. In some instances it would be desirable to provide extra pitches for short stays by families on the move.

7. *Location of Sites.* Sites should not normally be provided a long way from settled communities. Apart from the cost of providing services in out of the way places and the inconvenience to the caravan dwellers, it is undesirable to isolate them from the rest of the community. Where possible, sites should be chosen close to towns and where the people are already known. Few sites will however be entirely suitable and most will be open to objections of one kind or another. These will often have to be faced. Local objections to a proposal may prove to be unfounded when a well laid out and well run site is established and the people have settled down. The most objectionable course of all is to do nothing to remedy the nuisance of the present unauthorised settlements and the human problems they create.

8. Separate sites for gypsies may not always be necessary. Some sites now in operation already contain gypsies as well as ordinary caravan-dwellers, and this may be a useful way of helping the gypsies to fit into the settled community. Some local authorities, particularly where there are only a few gypsies to be accommodated, may find this is the best solution.

9. *Services and Facilities.* Local authorities are obliged by section 24(2) of the Act to have regard to the model standards specified under Section 5(6) when providing caravan sites. The sites established for gypsies should not be inferior in this respect to others; good site conditions may indeed be instrumental in raising their standards of living and behaviour. But they will need help and advice in the use of facilities. Communal lavatories, in particular, have caused trouble on some gypsy sites, so that it may be best to provide a separate unit for each family.

10. Although more gypsies are now taking regular employment and this trend is to be encouraged, many are self-employed as scrap metal dealers or on casual jobs such as farm work, laying tarmac, gardening and fruit-picking. For many of them a lorry is a necessity. At the census three-quarters of all the families had one or more vehicles. It would be desirable to provide space for these vehicles on the sites.

11. *Health, Welfare and Education.* The Minister has consulted the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Education and Science about these aspects of the problem. They think it most

important that the normal range of social services should be available to residents on all sites. Efforts to raise general standards will help to make sites and their occupants more acceptable to the local community and help each family to fit into the life of the neighbourhood. Families who show a capacity for a settled way of life should be given every encouragement to move into permanent dwellings. It is essential for success that all official and voluntary agencies who may be concerned with a site should work closely with each other and with the person in charge of the site. County councils are asked to take the lead in promoting co-ordination in their area. It may be desirable to appoint one person to act as liaison officer between sites and the various services.

12. A permanent well established site makes regular school attendance possible. Interrupted schooling often leads to inadequate intellectual development and to insufficient command of basic skills to sustain normal employment. Education authorities should take steps to ensure that children from caravan sites start school when they reach compulsory school age and attend with some degree of regularity and they should pay particular attention to children, whether or not they have reached compulsory school age, who require special educational treatment.

13. *Resident Warden.* There should be a warden for each site, who should if possible be resident. His tasks would include ensuring compliance with site rules, collecting rents, ensuring that the site and buildings are looked after and helping the residents with their various problems. They may, for example, be unable to read or write, and have difficulty in managing their business with public offices or even their ordinary domestic tasks in unfamiliar surroundings. The warden would act as a link on the site between the residents and their neighbours, the staff of services concerned with the site and any co-ordinating centre or officer that may be thought necessary.

14. *Rents.* Reasonable rents should be charged for the use of pitches. One local authority who have already provided a site for gypsies have had no difficulty in collecting rents of 30s. a week per pitch. Extra charges may be made where special facilities such as washing machines and hot water are provided.

15. A number of authorities have already taken action and provided caravan sites, rehabilitation centres and houses for gypsies. Notes on some of their experiences, which may be of value to other authorities, are given in Appendix II.

16. Ministers will want to know of the progress made generally in dealing with this problem. The Minister of Housing and Local Government asks all county councils, and every county borough council which had gypsies in its area at the time of the census, to send him a report in six months' time of the action they have taken, or propose to take, in response to this Circular. He hopes that by then proposals will be well advanced for the provision of at least one site in each county affected. Meanwhile Ministers would ask that nothing should be done to add needlessly to the difficulties of gypsy families.

17. The Minister is communicating separately with the Greater London Council and the London Borough Councils about the position in Greater London.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. HOPE-WALLACE,
Under Secretary.

The Clerk of the Authority.
Local Authorities England

Appendix I to Circular 26/66

Number and age of gypsies recorded in counties and county boroughs on March 22nd, 1965 and the number of families on sites reported licensed or provided by local authorities

Area	Number of Persons (by age)				No. of Families	Families on sites reported licensed or provided by local authorities
	0-4	5-15	16+	*Total		
Northern Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Cumberland	9	23	41	73	16	6
Durham	13	17	43	73	17	—
Westmorland	2	—	2	4	1	—
Yorkshire, N. Riding	14	20	38	72	18	1
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Darlington	10	2	24	36	9	—
Sunderland	1	1	2	4	1	—
Total	49	63	150	262	62	7
Yorkshire and Humberside Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Lincoln, Parts of Lindsey	20	51	150	221	53	18
Yorkshire, E. Riding	1	3	24	32	6	—
Yorkshire, W. Riding	66	110	256	432	96	8
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Barnsley	3	15	14	32	3	—
Bradford	10	6	25	45	8	—
Doncaster	—	8	10	18	3	—
Huddersfield	5	8	15	28	4	—
Leeds	30	41	47	118	21	—
Rotherham	—	1	5	6	2	—
Wakefield	1	3	5	9	3	—
York	—	—	4	4	1	—
Total	136	246	555	945	200	26
North West Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Chester	18	35	91	144	29	11
Lancaster	50	54	147	251	55	25
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Birkenhead	—	—	4	4	2	—
Bury	—	—	8	8	1	—
Liverpool	7	11	28	46	10	—
Manchester	4	4	8	16	3	—
Oldham	14	—	19	33	8	—
Preston	2	1	2	5	1	—
Wallasey	—	3	4	7	1	—
Wigan	4	—	12	16	2	—
Total	99	108	323	530	112	36
East Midland Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Derbyshire	7	11	48	66	21	3
Leicester	30	51	120	201	38	2
Lincoln, Parts of Holland	3	2	22	27	5	—
Lincoln, Parts of Kesteven	11	24	36	71	14	—
Northamptonshire	23	41	73	137	29	3
Nottinghamshire	37	51	119	207	50	34
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Derby	5	2	10	17	4	—
Leicester	31	37	75	143	31	19
Nottingham	6	8	22	36	5	—
Total	153	227	525	905	197	61

Area	Number of Persons (by age)				No. of Families	Families on sites reported licensed or provided by local authorities
	0-4	5-15	16+	*Total		
West Midland Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Herefordshire	76	104	279	459	96	26
Salop	28	57	115	201	38	—
Staffordshire	58	93	293	446	109	4
Warwickshire	22	32	103	157	34	3
Worcestershire	148	201	517	866	197	26
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Birmingham	—	—	17	17	6	3
Coventry	4	2	6	12	3	—
Dudley	2	2	2	6	1	—
Stoke-on-Trent	29	35	88	152	33	—
Walsall	17	2	49	68	23	19
Wolverhampton	45	56	94	195	41	—
Worcester	3	1	2	6	2	—
Total	432	585	1,565	2,585	583	81
South East Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Bedford	20	39	90	149	35	3
Berkshire	72	108	219	414	85	14
Buckingham	75	82	264	421	109	71
Cambridgeshire	42	52	158	252	60	13
Essex	99	196	456	754	145	4
Hampshire	61	97	215	373	85	22
Hertfordshire	75	145	252	481	98	22
Huntingdon	20	25	66	111	21	1
Isle of Ely	16	23	74	118	34	—
Isle of Wight	3	6	8	17	3	—
Kent†						
Greater London	70	92	239	406	97	—
Norfolk	18	23	89	130	35	5
Oxford	26	38	85	151	33	16
Soke of Peterborough	3	2	18	23	7	—
Suffolk, East	15	17	57	89	23	10
Suffolk, West	17	38	93	148	28	8
Surrey	133	152	346	634	136	37
Sussex, East	21	36	66	123	28	3
Sussex, West	24	27	84	135	31	—
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Luton	23	25	44	92	20	—
Norwich	—	1	5	6	1	—
Southampton	4	7	21	32	7	—
Total	840	1,234	2,941	5,057	1,116	229
South West Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Cornwall	58	111	282	451	100	12
Devon	43	63	177	283	73	13
Dorset	42	64	141	247	41	—
Gloucestershire	57	105	243	405	104	34
Somerset	51	75	220	346	82	14
Wiltshire	32	60	168	260	53	3
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Exeter	—	—	5	5	1	—
Gloucester	3	1	3	7	2	—
Plymouth	3	8	14	25	5	—
Total	289	487	1,253	2,029	461	76

Area	Number of Persons (by age)				No. of Families	Families on sites reported licensed or provided by local authorities
	0-4	5-15	16+	*Total		
Wales and Monmouthshire Region						
<i>Counties</i>						
Anglesey	—	5	10	15	3	—
Caernarvon	8	5	23	36	9	6
Cardiganshire	8	15	25	48	9	3
Carmarthenshire	46	82	176	304	66	41
Denbigh	17	18	48	83	11	2
Flintshire	9	13	29	52	12	—
Glamorgan	5	7	37	49	12	—
Merioneth	3	8	11	22	5	—
Monmouthshire	37	52	108	197	45	—
Pembroke	42	69	123	234	45	—
<i>County Boroughs</i>						
Cardiff	57	61	137	255	58	—
Merthyr Tydfil	27	32	44	103	24	—
Swansea	4	7	40	51	13	—
Total	263	374	811	1,449	312	52

*This total includes a few children whose ages were not known.

† Kent County Council carried out a survey of gypsies on January 1st, 1965 and the county was therefore excluded from the national census. Their survey records 313 caravans (about 1,300 persons). 30 families were on sites reported licensed or provided by local authorities.

Summary

Region	Number of persons
Northern	262
Yorkshire and Humberside	945
North West	530
East Midland	905
West Midland	2,585
South East (excluding Kent—see footnote above)	5,057
South West	2,029
Wales and Monmouthshire	1,449
Total (England and Wales)	13,762

N.B.—The figures for Greater London exclude the boroughs of Bromley and Bexley (see page 4).

ERRATA—Delete the first five figures for Hertfordshire above, and substitute 78, 148, 244, 479 and 93 respectively.

Hampshire

In Hampshire the County Council have tackled the problem by setting up four rehabilitation centres, at each of which twelve gypsy families plus a male warden and a female social worker are housed in second-hand prefabricated dwellings which were purchased from housing authorities and re-erected. The bulk of the gypsy population in the county are either fairly static or have permanent winter quarters, and most of those with children are willing to settle permanently if given the chance. The County Council decided that merely providing caravan sites for gypsies would only help to perpetuate their unsettled way of life, and that it was essential to employ a form of intermediate accommodation which could be provided with all the services and domestic appliances normally found in a council house so that the women could be taught to use them and helped to improve their domestic standards as a first step towards permanent rehousing. While the social worker deals mainly with these domestic matters, the warden exercises overall supervision of the centre and is responsible for helping the men and any school-leavers to find suitable permanent employment instead of continuing with their traditional trades and casual or seasonal work. It has been found that most of those capable of work, apart from a few older men, soon learn to appreciate the advantages of earning a regular wage.

The County Council as welfare authority works closely with the local housing authorities who undertake to rehouse the families when they reach a satisfactory standard, and already four families have been permanently rehoused after a period of training at one of the rehabilitation centres. Family welfare officers continue to visit and supervise such families until they no longer need support.

An account by New Forest Rural District Council appears below.

Hertfordshire

Two camps have been established, each for about 20 families. These are planned to provide hard standing for the caravans, a lavatory for each family, water supply and communal wash places. Rents of 25s. per week per caravan and 7s. 6d. per week for each additional vehicle are charged when all the facilities are available. Families are allowed to reserve sites for up to 16 weeks a year whilst on periodic work elsewhere, paying half rent for the first eight weeks and full rent thereafter.

Families are selected by the warden on the basis of their association with Hertfordshire and their need.

The warden is full time, non-resident, and supervises both camps with the aid of an assistant. He is an ex-policeman with long experience of gypsies, he is accepted by them and is used by all officers of the social welfare services as their initial point of contact; these officers will achieve little in most cases unless the warden has prepared the way for them with the individual.

A pragmatic approach has been found to be essential and a flexible application of the normal rules and procedures, particularly in the initial stages, has been adopted.

The first objective has been to establish the orderly running of the camps, no easy task in itself; any families who do not co-operate fully are required to vacate the site. This has been done on several occasions. No car breaking or sorting of scrap metal is allowed on the camp sites, although residents can bring in a lorry load for an overnight stay provided it is not removed from the vehicle.

The ultimate aim is to assimilate fully into the community those families who wish it when they are able to cope with traditional

housing, although it is thought that in many cases this will not be until the younger generation has grown up.

London Borough of Bromley

In 1957, the former Chislehurst and Sidcup Urban District Council (now part of the London Borough of Bromley) rehoused 105 gypsy families from a site where they were occupying caravans, huts and shacks. Ninety-three of the families were housed in prefabricated bungalows on one estate, although dispersal was intended.

Since that time, 30 families have left their houses for a variety of reasons; 40 families have been rehoused in permanent accommodation; and 35 families who remain in prefabricated bungalows will shortly be rehoused to enable the site to be redeveloped.

The main problems of either housing, or rehousing, gypsy families have sprung from the occupations they follow, e.g. breaking old cars and collecting scrap metal and old clothes. Lorries and vans add to the problems.

There has been initial resentment from neighbours when gypsy families are settled in an area, but they have become generally accepted over the years in one particular area, particularly by shopkeepers and in the schools.

An endeavour to settle a few of the more suitable families on post-war housing estates away from their usual locality failed mainly because a social barrier was set up against the children out of school hours. The families reverted to caravans.

The majority of families are capable of looking after houses, but prefer the pre-war type.

The Education Department reports encouragingly on the efforts to settle the families and comments on a marked improvement in school attendance and the standard of cleanliness of the children. Where men were helped to find employment, however, the jobs were not held for very long, partly because of the inability to read or write and partly because of departures for seasonal work.

If, however, settlement of families enables the children to attend school regularly it is believed that many will become capable of earning a normal living and wish to do so.

It is in this more than any other way that the real benefit of a local authority's efforts must be found.

In the meantime, it has become necessary to provide a temporary caravan site for about 30 gypsy families who have been moving from site to site within the district, without permission or facilities.

Most of the families are related to the families originally housed in 1957. Endeavours are being made to provide a permanent site for 12 caravans.

Another permanent and private camp is run satisfactorily by the owner who lives on the site and enforces strict control.

Eton Rural District

There were in the rural district a number of families of gypsies or travellers mostly living on scrap metal dealing who had lived there many years. Action taken against them served only to move them from one part of the district to another.

The Council in 1964 established a site for 32 families to provide them with a permanent home and to bring them to a settled way of

life. There was no discrimination in their selection. Gypsies wishing to move from a caravan into a council house will have the opportunity to do so.

The site is designed in accordance with Model Standards. A lorry park is provided where lorries loaded with scrap stand overnight; sorting on site or other storage of scrap is strictly prohibited.

Occupiers pay 30s. per week, which includes constant hot water in ablution blocks and vehicle parking. The cost for the coming year, i.e. the net loss, is estimated at £1,990.

Occupiers make use of welfare services and all children go to school. It has not been necessary to put the site under a social worker or to make special provision for the site. The Council found a suitable gypsy as warden, who held the post for two years. He has now relinquished it and another gypsy has been appointed. The warden has a rent free site and is paid £9 per week.

Some dozen families of gypsies belonging to the area have been housed during the past few years and a similar number provided with pitches on other Council caravan sites designed for non-gypsy families. No particular difficulties have been experienced.

Godstone Rural District

The Outwood site was bought in 1945 by some gypsies, each of whom owned a separate part of the site. In 1960 there were a large number of caravans, shacks, old 'bus bodies, second-hand prefabricated dwellings etc. on the site, mostly grossly overcrowded, and providing only a very low standard of housing accommodation. Sanitary arrangements at the site were very primitive and the land was littered with miscellaneous refuse and debris etc. A number of businesses were carried on including log sawing and dealing in scrap metal of which there were considerable and unsightly accumulations on the site. Frequent burning of old motor-car bodies caused serious nuisance from time to time.

There was little evidence of any efforts to improve conditions on the site, and in view of the large number of different owners and occupiers and the cost of providing facilities, it was considered that the occupiers were incapable of improving conditions and having a proper site with proper facilities. With the coming into operation of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960, the Rural District Council decided to acquire the site and lay it out with proper facilities, such as hard standings, washing and lavatory blocks, and children's play space. It was decided that owners and occupiers at present on the site would be allowed to stay, provided they could equip themselves with a satisfactory type of caravan. Provision would be made for logging businesses to be carried on, but not for any of the other businesses at present being carried on.

A compulsory purchase order was duly made by the Council, and confirmed by the Minister. The debris was cleared with considerable difficulty, and the Council ultimately laid out one half of the site as a caravan site, leaving the other half clear and divided from the developed half by a high chain link fence.

The present number of caravans on the site is 54, and there are some 204 persons living there. There are 51 prepared sites with concrete bases and drains, and this number includes seven sites set apart for logging. The majority of the residents were living on the site prior to 1st April, 1965, when the re-developed site was more or less completed. Several residents of the gypsy type have moved in from Kent and Sussex and other parts of Surrey since the site was re-developed. Several non-gypsy families from the Godstone Rural District and other areas are now resident also.

There are 100 children living on the site. So far as the ages can be ascertained, 65 children are of school age and 45 attend fairly regularly.

The Rural District Council have installed an electric washing machine in the toilet block, and this is operated by insertion of 2s. 6d. in the meter. Between £3 and £6 is collected from this machine weekly; but it requires considerable maintenance. Also in the toilet block (which provides men's and women's w.c.'s) are hand basins and men's and women's shower baths, which for 6d. in the slot meter supply hot water for six to seven minutes.

The weekly rent for each logging site is £1 15s. There is considerable demand for these sites, although the rent is 10s. per week higher than for the residential sites.

The residents have, generally speaking, accepted the Supervisor, but full and constant supervision is difficult; the residents tend to act in their own interest and to disregard rules and regulations. The most difficult day-to-day problem is trying to stop fouling of the toilets by both men and women. The general tidiness of the site is also difficult to maintain. The parking of motor cars and lorries is also a problem, as all the residents want to park their vehicles beside their own particular van because they fear the theft of petrol and movable parts.

New Forest Rural District

During the war the traditional New Forest gypsies were compelled to live in compounds and the New Forest Committee in 1947 reported to Parliament that 'a group is allowed to live in the Forest which has hardly reached the standard of the Stone Age'. The compounds provided no proper form of shelter, 'dwellings' were formed of tarpaulins, etc., suspended from trees and stove pipes and there were no sanitary facilities or main water supply.

The establishment of requisitioned hutted camps provided the opportunity to transfer a few of the best of these families and between 1951 and 1957, 47 families were put into council houses via the hutted camps. In 1957 the hutted camps ceased to be available and only nominal progress was made in the next two or three years. In 1959, however, the Council resolved to adopt a programme of clearing the compounds completely within five years. Between then and 1965, 51 families were housed direct from the compounds in spite of serious misgivings about the ability of some of the hard core to adopt a settled life. By 1965 the problem was completely solved since only two families remained unhoused and they were left only because of the special circumstances of their work.

Some of the families rehoused have needed continued attention from the Housing Manager and from the County Welfare Officer, but this problem has been no greater than with other problem families. Of the total number rehoused it has been necessary to evict only one family. Even in this case, the reason was not particularly the inability of the family but their total unwillingness to co-operate.

On the whole the policy of spreading the gypsies throughout the estates has led to them being reasonably well accepted by other tenants and in quite a high proportion of the cases the families are now indistinguishable from other tenants.

Density of traveller population (a) per 1,000 total population and (b) per 1,000 acres, in each county and county borough (*=less than 0.05 per 1,000 persons/acres)

(a) per 1,000 total population

Administrative Counties

Herefordshire	3.4	Leicestershire	0.5
Pembrokeshire	2.5	Hampshire	0.4
Worcestershire	1.8	Monmouthshire	0.4
Carmarthenshire	1.8	Staffordshire	0.4
Cornwall	1.3	East Suffolk	0.4
Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely	1.3	Flint	0.3
West Suffolk	1.1	Nottinghamshire	0.3
Kent	1.0	Cumberland	0.3
Berkshire	0.9	Norfolk	0.3
Cardiganshire	0.9	West Sussex	0.3
Buckinghamshire	0.8	East Sussex	0.3
Huntingdon and Peterborough	0.8	Caernarvonshire	0.3
Dorset	0.8	Warwickshire	0.3
Gloucestershire	0.8	Anglesey	0.3
Essex	0.7	Lincolnshire (Holland)	0.3
Oxford	0.7	Yorkshire, West Riding	0.3
Surrey	0.7	Isle of Wight	0.2
Shropshire	0.6	Yorkshire, North Riding	0.2
Lincolnshire (Lindsey)	0.6	Cheshire	0.1
Somerset	0.6	Yorkshire, East Riding	0.1
Merionethshire	0.6	Lancashire	0.1
Wiltshire	0.6	Derbyshire	0.1
Bedfordshire	0.6	Durham	0.1
Hertfordshire	0.6	Westmorland	0.1
Devon	0.5	Greater London†	0.1
Lincolnshire (Kesteven)	0.5	Glamorganshire	*
Denbighshire	0.5	Breconshire	Nil
Northamptonshire	0.5	Montgomeryshire	Nil
		Northumberland	Nil
		Radnorshire	Nil
		Rutland	Nil

County Boroughs

Merthyr Tydfil	1.8	Bury	0.1
Wolverhampton	1.3	Plymouth	0.1
Cardiff	1.0	Nottingham	0.1
Luton	0.6	Gloucester	0.1
Walsall	0.6	Dudley	0.1
Stoke-on-Trent	0.5	Worcester	0.1
Leicester	0.5	Rotherham	0.1
Darlington	0.4	Wallasey	0.1
Barnsley	0.4	Liverpool	0.1
Swansea	0.3	Exeter	0.1
Oldham	0.3	Norwich	0.1
Leeds	0.2	Preston	*
Huddersfield	0.2	York	*
Doncaster	0.2	Coventry	*
Wigan	0.2	Birkenhead	*
Southampton	0.2	Manchester	*
Bradford	0.2	Sunderland	*
Wakefield	0.1	Birmingham	*
Derby	0.1	(All others)	Nil

(b) per 1,000 acres

Administrative Counties

Worcestershire	2.0	Warwickshire	0.3
Surrey	1.5	Yorkshire, West Riding	0.3
Kent	1.4	East Sussex	0.2
Hertfordshire	1.2	Lancaster	0.2
Greater London†	1.0	Northamptonshire	0.2
Berkshire	0.9	Shropshire	0.2
Buckinghamshire	0.9	Cheshire	0.2
Herefordshire	0.9	Lincolnshire (Lindsey)	0.2
Essex	0.8	Denbighshire	0.2
Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely	0.7	Isle of Wight	0.2
Staffordshire	0.6	Devon	0.2
Pembrokeshire	0.6	East Suffolk	0.2
Monmouthshire	0.6	Lincolnshire (Kesteven)	0.2
Gloucestershire	0.5	Durham	0.1
Cornwall	0.5	Cardiganshire	0.1
Carmarthenshire	0.5	Glamorganshire	0.1
Bedfordshire	0.5	Derbyshire	0.1
Huntingdon and Peterborough	0.4	Lincolnshire (Holland)	0.1
Hampshire	0.4	Norfolk	0.1
Nottinghamshire	0.4	Caernarvon	0.1
Dorset	0.4	Anglesey	0.1
Leicestershire	0.4	Cumberland	0.1
West Suffolk	0.4	Yorkshire, North Riding	0.1
Somerset	0.3	Yorkshire, East Riding	*
West Sussex	0.3	Westmorland	*
Oxford	0.3	Breconshire	Nil
Flint	0.3	Montgomeryshire	Nil
Wiltshire	0.3	Northumberland	Nil
		Radnorshire	Nil
		Rutland	Nil

County Boroughs

Wolverhampton	21.4	Bradford	1.8
Cardiff	14.1	Liverpool	1.7
Luton	8.6	Wakefield	1.6
Leicester	8.4	Dudley	1.4
Walsall	7.7	Gloucester	1.3
Stoke-on-Trent	6.6	Wallasey	1.2
Merthyr Tydfil	5.8	Bury	1.1
Darlington	5.6	Worcester	1.0
Oldham	5.2	Preston	1.0
Barnsley	4.1	Norwich	1.0
Wigan	3.1	Rotherham	1.0
Leeds	2.9	Coventry	1.0
Southampton	2.4	Manchester	1.0
Swansea	2.4	York	1.0
Doncaster	2.2	Exeter	1.0
Derby	2.1	Sunderland	*
Huddersfield	2.0	Birkenhead	*
Nottingham	2.0	Birmingham	*
Plymouth	1.9	(All others)	Nil

†Excluding the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley

Overcrowding

To provide a rough comparison between the degree of overcrowding of traveller families and that of the settled population, we have used the 1961 Census measurement of households by persons per room*, and taken a caravan to be the equivalent of a room. In the Census a room is defined as '... any covered space surrounded by walls, doors or windows and used by the household for living, eating or sleeping'. This would seem to cover most traveller accommodation other than tents, and, even when the latter are included, would provide a suitable comparison. But it should be borne in mind that the typical traveller 'room' may be smaller than the average room in a proper house. The table below shows this rough comparison of density of occupation.

Overall, the crude average ratio amounts to about three and a quarter persons per unit of accommodation, while the average traveller family consists of 4.6 persons; so, on average, each family has nearly one and a half units of accommodation. If one attempts approximately to apply the statutory overcrowding standard, in which children under one year of age are not counted at all, and the rest under ten years are counted as half a person, the average number of *equivalent* persons per unit amounts to 2.7. But this average exceeds by 0.7 *equivalent* persons the maximum number permitted under the statutory standard, and ignores the floor area of the average unit of accommodation, which were it less than 110 square feet, would reduce the permitted number; but this is unlikely to be the case except in horse-drawn wagons and the smallest trailer caravans. Although this is a crude measure of overcrowding, there is little doubt that gypsy families live in much more crowded conditions than house-dwellers.

*Census 1961, Housing Tables Part 1, Table 13, p.150.

Traveller families and settled households living at different densities of occupation (per cent)

Persons per unit of accommodation/room	Traveller households	All households (1961 Census)
Over 5	13	3
Over 3½ and up to 5	26	
Over 2 and up to 3½	26	
Over 1½ and up to 2	21	
Over 1 and up to 1½	4	8
Number of persons equal to number of units/rooms	9	15
More than one unit/room per person	1	74
	100	100

Analysis of occupations by economic planning region

Occupational variations between counties

The predominant occupations varied from county to county within regions; for example in the West Midlands where, overall, 46% of males dealt in scrap metal or other waste, this figure conceals the important difference between Staffordshire, which is predominantly urban and where nearly three-quarters of males were dealers, and Worcestershire and Herefordshire where only a little over a quarter of males followed that occupation. In these latter counties nearly half the men were engaged in agricultural work for at least part of the year. Similarly, in the South West, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire have a higher proportion of scrap metal and other dealers than Dorset, and while nearly a quarter of the males recorded in the latter county were employed in seasonal agricultural work, only 7% were so employed in either Gloucestershire or Wiltshire. Not more than 5% of men in any region were employed in roadwork, including the laying of tarmacadam drives and paths, but in Staffordshire alone as many as 8% of men were engaged in this way.

(a) Regions in descending order of importance for each principal occupation

Males aged 16 and over

Dealing			Agriculture and horticulture		
Region	Number	Per cent	Region	Number	Per cent
East Midlands	205	76	West Midlands	214	27
Northern	60	72	South East	278	19
Yorks. & Humber.	189	65	South West	77	12
North West	91	62	Yorks. & Humber.	20	7
Wales	199	51	Northern	3	4
South East	714	50	Wales	13	3
West Midlands	362	46	East Midlands	6	2
South West	266	42	North West	2	1
England & Wales	2,086	52	England & Wales	613	15

Females aged 16 and over

Housewives, those with no occupation and the unemployed			Hawking		
Region	Number	Per cent	Region	Number	Per cent
Northern	56	85	North West	37	22
South West	440	78	Yorks. & Humber.	33	13
Wales	293	76	East Midlands	25	11
Yorks. & Humber.	189	76	Wales	37	10
East Midlands	173	75	Northern	6	9
South East	928	72	South West	46	8
West Midlands	515	72	South East	60	5
North West	102	61	West Midlands	33	5
England & Wales	2,696	74	England & Wales	277	8

(b) Principal male occupations in each economic planning region (3 per cent or over of males aged 16+)

Northern		York. & Humber.		North West		East Midlands	
72	Dealing	65	Dealing	62	Dealing	76	Dealing
6	Hawking	7	Agriculture	12	Hawking	4	Roadwork
4	Roadwork	4	Roadwork	7	Unemployment	3	Industrial
4	Haulage	4	Showman	5	Industrial	3	Labouring
4	Agriculture	4	'Gypsy jobs'	3	'Gypsy jobs'		
		4	Hawking				
		3	Labouring				
West Midlands		South East		South West		Wales	
46	Dealing	50	Dealing	42	Dealing	51	Dealing
27	Agriculture	19	Agriculture	12	Agriculture	18	'Unemployment'
4	Labouring	4	Logging	7	Hawking	6	Labouring
4	Roadwork	3	Building work	6	Labouring	6	Salesmen
3	Building work	3	Roadwork	6	Unemployment	4	Retired
		3	Haulage	5	Roadwork	3	Roadwork
			Labouring	5	Logging	3	Agriculture
				4	Building work	3	Building work
						3	Industrial





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