

**The making of a woman's town:
household and gender
in Dundee 1890 to 1940**

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Chapter 1: The making of a woman's town

Introduction

Women in Dundee's history are often portrayed as different from women who lived elsewhere. Their ability to survive difficulty has been praised by some historians (see, for example, Gordon, 1991), while other historians have gone so far as to claim that they displayed masculine characteristics (see, for example, Walker, 1979). Oral evidence suggests that Dundee women seem to have had a much more developed level of gender *and* class consciousness than other women achieved. Some of these women expressed and used this understanding in their own working lives. For example, Bella Keyzer was a woman who fought, in the 1960s, to return to her wartime trade as a welder. In the late 1980s, Bella appeared in a number of television oral histories, in which she was often presented as a feminist, particularly since her critique of gender definitions of skill and wage rates fitted radical feminism so closely. Like others in Dundee, however, she was keen to emphasise that her ideology was recognised as arising out of practical experiences, rather than from theoretical musings. In 1990 she told an American linguist that,

I don't read books, I don't - as regards the feminism and things like that, but actually I work it out in my own mind, and that's the language the ordinary people understand, when you speak to them in ordinary everyday language (MacAuley, 1992, p. 9).

A similar position was developed by the poet Ellie McDonald in a short article, when she noted that,

The attitudes we carry from our childhood are acquired unknowingly. For any woman brought up in the Dundee tradition, there should be no straining for equality, no need for a new consciousness of the power of women. We have inherited a freedom which seems unnecessary to verbalise. We are just waiting for the world to catch up (McDonald in Kay, ed., 1990, p. 159).

How far the rest of the female world lagged behind is hard to judge, given the amount of historical investigation in this field that would be required before comparisons could even be attempted, but it would seem from the oral evidence that women in the city did have a level of understanding about their position in society that developed earlier than elsewhere. Some of the older generation of Dundee women even boasted of their lack of domestication, and poured scorn on concepts of good housekeeping. Mary Brooksbank, in the late 1930s, describes, in her poem 'Hoose Prood', a fictional housewife whose 'hoose was aye in order'. The poem concludes:

For chasing every speck o' dirt
 Jess never took a minute
 And noo tae think for o' her work
 The crater's happit in it (University of Dundee, MS 103/38, p. 24).¹

While accepting that the attitudes of these women may well have been born of waged work, as a number of interview partners (and most historians) have noted, there seems to be something missing from the analysis. Not only did women work for wages elsewhere before the Second World War, but many other localities in Britain recorded more married women in paid employment than there were in Dundee. Dundee's post-

¹ The poem was subsequently amended and published (Brooksbank, 1982, p. 60).

1945 generation of women were to be in paid employment in greater numbers and for much longer periods of their lives, but they did not reach the same perspectives that are present in many of the testimonies of those who worked for wages prior to the Second World War. It will be argued that what is missing from the analysis of gender and class relations is an appreciation of the household and community structures that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in Dundee, and existed through the inter-war years.

Previous histories of the city have tended to concentrate either on the economic background to this development or the industrial conflict that accompanied and resulted from the evolution of the textile-based economy. Most of these histories would suggest that the women's town, in terms of employment, was already coming into existence by the end of the 1880s. The jute industry that was central to Dundee's economy certainly peaked, in terms of the proportion of women and men occupied in the mills and factories, around 1900. These years had also witnessed a growth in shopfloor militancy and, in 1906, female jute workers established a trade union that was willing to reflect at least some of their demands. While the rise of jute has correctly been identified as the basis for the women's town, a trade union, with a specific aim of organising women, was not the only feature in the social history of the city. To end an analysis of gender relations in 1914, even if research is closely tied to labour history, is to underestimate the importance of the development of separate, and distinct, households, along with the community networks that have been identified as central to these gender relations (as in Gordon, 1991). To conclude with the 1923 jute

industry strike, a watershed in industrial relations, is even more problematic (as in Walker, 1979). Not only are the consequences of this defeat, and the subsequent recovery of trade unionism in textiles, worthy of some consideration (see chapter 7), but to conclude with the defeat limits the understanding of the relationship between gender, employment, and organisation in the inter-war years.

The household structures and community life that developed from the 1890s onwards have been of passing interest in some of the previous histories, usually being presented as interesting background material or as illustrations of poverty. This thesis, in contrast, locates household and community at the centre of the making of a woman's town. This is not to deny the importance of earlier economic developments; rather the argument is that the continuing economic dominance of jute textiles in the occupational structure encouraged the emergence of two distinct household structures. The first, headed by men, resembled the households that can be found elsewhere in the industrialised world in this period. The second, with female heads, may have been less prevalent elsewhere, but was as economically viable, better adapted, and was to have at least as profound an impact on community life.

The continuation of a single dominant industry employing women and the development of the dual household structures made for a woman's town in which the somewhat difficult relationships between employers, workers, and trade union organisation continued after the First World War. The dual households played more than a passive conduit between economy and organisation, and contributed to challenging the

The core argument?

dominant ideology of the period. The female headed household denied the necessity of male wage earners' contributions to household income, and promoted the belief that women, including married women, could contribute more than men to household and community. This along with the related collective actions in industrial disputes in the 1890s promoted an awareness amongst women of their status in Dundee. The result was a challenge by women to both patriarchy and capitalism, although this challenge tended to be made outside the labour movement structures that developed during this period, as women found other ways of formulating and expressing industrial and political demands. In other words a new agenda was developed that may seem different from the long march of labour, but was nonetheless effective. It is argued that through an appreciation of the existence of dual households the success of the Scottish Prohibition Party in 1920s Dundee can be better understood, as can the movement for unemployment benefit amongst married women.

Employment and a woman's town

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century Dundee has been described as 'a woman's town' (Gordon, 1991, p. 142; Whatley, ed., 1992a, p. 7) - a description that arises from the numbers of women in paid employment. Using occupation as a basis Dundee was perhaps *the* women's town in Scotland, but was certainly not unique even in Scottish terms, with Paisley, for example, offering almost similar levels of female employment opportunities. In England similar patterns have been identified in a village in Devon (Duquenin, 1984, pp. 40-8), and in the village of Eynsham, Oxfordshire, in an earlier period (Golby, in Golby, ed., 1994, p. 52), and, probably the best known

example, Preston in Lancashire (Roberts, 1984a). The development of places in which the number of women in waged employment was much greater than national averages were also an international occurrence, for example, Peterborough and Paris, in Ontario, Canada (Bradbury, 1987; Sangster, 1994).

High levels of female employment is one indication of the asymmetric rise of industrial capitalism. Patrick Joyce (1990) is one of a number of post-modernist historians who has stressed the importance of the diverse and irregular development of industrial capitalism within Britain. Such an appreciation has been important for both feminist and Marxist historians. Trotsky, for example, applied the idea of uneven development to contrast the different forms of capitalism on a global scale (1930). Sylvia Walby, Elizabeth Roberts, and others investigating the history of women have concluded that while regional differences were diminishing after the Second World War, they were critical in shaping the lives of women before then (Roberts, 1995, pp. 20-1, pp. 115-40; Walby, 1986, p. 241). National averages should therefore be treated with caution (Lewis, 1983, p.17), not only because they obscure the differences between localities, but because these differences for women were so marked.

It is however possible, despite rejecting crude national statistics as a way of understanding gender experiences, to reach general conclusions based on localised studies that limit themselves to employment. For example, Pennington and Westover (1989, p. 44) found four factors present in mid-nineteenth century localities in which a large proportion of women worked in the sweated home industries. These were: (i)

more adult women than adult men in the population; (ii) a marked level of seasonal or casual labour; (iii) low male wage rates; and (iv) little alternative job opportunities for women. These very factors also tended to be present in the those localities where high levels of female employment continued into the twentieth century, and they certainly were present in Dundee. Indeed Eleanor Gordon (1991) attaches the first element, that is gender imbalance, to her description of Dundee as 'a women's town', noting that before 1914, 'women outnumbered men in the town by three to two' (p. 142).² The presence of the second and third factors have been identified by a number of historians including Rodger (in Gordon, ed., 1985, pp. 42-8). The final component, limited opportunities in waged work for women, was, by the late nineteenth century, present throughout the industrialised world. It is worth restating, however, that the two largest sectors employing women, personal service and the textile industry, were extremely unlikely to co-exist in anything like equal numbers in the same locality. Textiles, like the earlier home industries, tended to be clustered and concentrated; dominating local economies and employment structures. A woman's town was often a textiles' town.

Dundee could also be described as a working class town. While the largest single sector of female employment, from the nineteenth century and into the inter-war years in Scotland, was indoor domestic service (McIvor, 1992, p. 146), this was not the case

² This seems a direct, although uncited, quotation from a Dundee Social Union report (1905, p. xii), which actually notes that around 1904, between 'the ages of 20 and 45, Dundee has three women for two men ...'

in Glasgow, Paisley, and particularly Dundee, where women's occupations in the three localities were predominantly industrial. From 1871 to 1911 three quarters to two-thirds of Dundee's working women were engaged in the mills and factories (Gordon, 1991, p. 141). In both the male and female occupational structures, Dundee was the most proletarian of the Scottish cities: 'an almost wholly working class town' (Collins, 1978, p. 184), in which industry employed a greater proportion of the workforce (at 77 per cent) than Glasgow (72), Aberdeen (64) and Edinburgh (63) in the Victorian and Edwardian years (Rodger, 1985, p. 35). Similarly Preston, compared to Barrow and Lancaster, shows the same connections between women's employment, industry, and class. This is perhaps unsurprising given the lack of opportunities outside of the textile sector for women until after the Second World War, and the concentration of this sector in specific localities.

It cannot be denied that industrial employment, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was an important influence in shaping household composition and community (see chapter 3). The impact of waged labour, even after legislation to outlaw child labour, and the responsibility of unpaid domestic duties in the home, appeared earlier in the lives of Dundee women than was the case elsewhere in urban Scotland (see chapter 4). There was a gradual removal of children from the workforce, but it was not until after the First World War that these began to be widely felt, and even then large numbers of children could still be found working illegally, as well as legally, in the textile industry. For women, however, there were other factors that shaped their lives beyond their own working experiences. The low marriage rates

before 1914, resulting from the gender imbalance, can be traced back to the local employment structure. The lack of availability of employment for men, and less skilled men in particular, led to male youth leaving the city (see chapter 6). The result was a pool of unmarried women, which not only provided income for male headed households, but also those households headed by women. It was, however, mainly widows who were female heads, and while large numbers of these were in paid work, many were not, relying mainly instead on the wages of unmarried kin and non-kin (see chapters 5 and 11). After 1914 there was an increase in the proportion of women who married and an increase in the proportion of married women in employment (see chapter 10). In the short-term, at least, these developments were to have little impact on female headed households. More importantly, for gender relations, by the time these changes were happening, the belief that women could live independently from men was established.

One of the most striking features that emerges from contemporary literature and subsequent histories of Dundee is a marked lack of understanding of women in Dundee. From contemporary employer to trade union leader, from reforming Liberal to laissez-faire Conservative, all seemed confounded by the women of Dundee. That 'they are glimpsed as though through a glass darkly' has led historians reliant upon the written sources that survive to be just as perplexed (Cox, 1995). That these were women who were failing to fit late nineteenth century ideological definitions of femininity provides one reason for confusion amongst observers, but another equally powerful difficulty is that as workers they were also failing to conform to the patterns

of developing industrial relations that were expected by employers or trade union organisers (see chapter 7). The overwhelmingly negative image of Dundee women is pervasive and persistent, with the existence of a pool of female labour, and female headed households, linked to environmental degradation, social problems, and even the collapse of civilized behaviour. Contemporaries were apt to define the city's character in terms of the women who were employed in such large numbers; as late as 1934 Lewis Grassie Gibbon described Dundee as 'a frowsy fisher-wife addicted to gin and infanticide' (Gibbon, 1934 p. 95). Lurid contemporary descriptions are repeated by other historians, so that Dundee becomes 'a place of violence ... with frequent brawls and with pavements littered with drunken women and men and stained with the blood of bottle fights' (Checkland and Checkland, 1984, p. 188). A leading historian of Dundee labour, in the late 1970s and 1980s, consistently conceptualised female jute operatives as desexed by work, with a 'reversal ... of economic roles' that 'was complete enough to promote a mode of masculinity among females' (Walker, 1979, pp. 36-9), with a section of these women reduced to 'lumpenproletariat' behaviour that included infanticide (Walker, 1988, p. 70).

Another central feature of much of Dundee's historical literature is that analysis often depends upon the assumption that the relationship between economic and social structures and behaviour are easily perceived. The economic histories produced in the 1960s and 1970s continue to exert such a strong influence on social history, that social histories of Dundee were reduced to the narrow labour history question of organisation and struggle. It is certainly extremely tempting in the case of Dundee to

make direct connections between a local economy that was becoming ever more 'dangerously lopsided', towards the turn of the century (Lenman, et al., 1969, p. 37), with a correspondingly lopsided class structure. It is then only a step away from reaching the conclusion that these developments were detrimental to women.

Economic development, the production and reproduction of life, is however far from being the only determining factor in history. History is made by innumerable intersecting forces, and while the economic situation, so often seen as particularly important in Dundee, provides a basis, social elements, as elsewhere, also exercise their influence upon the course of the history and often can preponderate in determining the forms that change takes (Engels, 1890, in Feuer, ed., 1959, pp. 436-9).

The influence of class ideology amongst employers, for example, should not be understated as an agent of historical change. While the nineteenth century Dutch town of Tilburg was dominated by textile employment, few women, in contrast to both Preston and Dundee, were allowed into weaving, and women were expected to leave the mills on marriage. It has been argued that the influence of the local clergy amongst mill and factory owners in Tilburg played an important part in deciding who worked where (Janssens, 1993, pp. 41-3). The role of ideology is therefore not only evident in employment practices, but attitudes towards women in employment could be more important than judgements about the relative costs of female and male labour. Where female labour was established it was certainly difficult for owners of industry to rid themselves of the idea that the lower wages paid to women were central to their

profits, but even within the Scottish textile sector differences existed, with the woolen industry much keener to adopt, and even promote, legislation limiting female employment than was the case in Dundee jute. Even within the Dundee industry itself there were changes in the practice of employing women, most notably in attempts to replace female with male operatives from the mid-1920s onwards (see chapter 10).

It will be argued that the development of the female headed household in Dundee was, in many ways, even more significant than the employers' attitudes to female labour.

The city's inhabitants were certainly at least as poor as those living in Glasgow, and, if infant mortality rates are adopted as a measure of poverty, it could be argued that poverty from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the 1920s was actually greater in Dundee (see chapters 4 and 9).

An analysis, however, of the occupational structure, size and composition of households suggests that those resident in households with female heads may have been materially better off than those living in male headed households (see chapter 5). Furthermore, male headed households, with larger numbers of dependent children, were not only having to support many more residents, but were much more likely to be overcrowded. It may be concluded that poverty was more likely to strike in the homes of male heads, given the importance of overcrowding to infant mortality rates, rather than in the homes of female heads (see chapter 6). It is also noteworthy that both statistical evidence (see chapter 5) and experiential data (see chapter 11) would suggest that the residents of female headed households displayed a more flexible

approach to waged and unwaged work. In the city economy, so firmly based on a single industry that provided irregular employment, such flexibility could be crucial to household survival.

Household and community

From at least the last decade of the nineteenth century to the Second World War, women, regardless of their conjugal condition, played a central part in family and community life. Spinsterhood may not have 'connoted failure' as has been claimed, and, even prior to World War One, single women did not face a 'lonely and marginal life' (Lewis, 1984, p. 3), nor were widows isolated, nor were wives and mothers without husbands necessarily abandoned women. Instead women drew upon, participated in, and extended the collective community. In short, the formation and substantial presence of female headed households in a community should not be reduced to problematical and vague notions of poverty levels and social isolation. Furthermore, given that the female head was more likely to open her household to both kin and non-kin who were seeking a home, the female headed household has implications that reach beyond household, and impacted on waged work.

Between the 1880s and 1920s, there are fascinating parallels between the ways in which women in Dundee and miners in the Rhur valley are described both in contemporary literature and in subsequent histories. While trade union organisers were condemning Dundee women as immature trade unionists, who often acted in wild protest, Rhur miners were likewise accused of irrational spontaneity and immaturity.

Both have also been seen by historians as maladapted products of extreme and repressive working conditions. The difference in the two localities is that in Dundee the workers under study were women who were said to have somehow taken on 'a mode of masculinity' in attempting to deal with their situation (Walker, 1979, pp. 36-9). In the Rhur it was immigrants who were said to be incapable of dealing with circumstances, but when Franz Brüeggemeier interviewed old miners he formed a different view from that taken by previous historians. Lutz Niethammer noted that Brüeggemeier found that the miners, who worked in 'cooperative multi-functional workgroups, egalitarian in spirit', were 'notable both for their interdependence and independence, and for their hostility to a management that sternly controlled them'. If their public work lives were similar to Dundee women, then their private lives were even more alike, displaying as they did, 'independence, mobility and collective opposition to exploitation from outside' (Niethammer, 1982, pp. 33-4).

Historiographically, the concept of community has developed into both a descriptive meaning, that is a particular group resident in a certain area, and 'an evaluative meaning, indicating a positive neighbourly quality of social relationships' (Dennis and Daniels, 1981, in Drake, ed., 1994, p. 201). How far this concept of community extended, both in geographic and social terms, is open to debate. In Roberts' (1984a) study of Lancashire prior to the Second World War, for example, community never extends beyond a street, or even part of a street. In Dundee the experience of community seems larger, at least geographically, with descriptions of neighbourhoods extending from the tenement block, across yards, to other blocks, through closes and

vennels, to surrounding streets. The sense of space in Dundee may well have been different from a town like Preston simply because of the difference in housing patterns, but there also seems to be wider social implications. A tenement was well adapted for communal life (Faley, 1990, p. 165) and contained many households with residents sharing common spaces. Having more immediate neighbours also meant having social contacts beyond the dwelling; contacts who could provide at least information about employment opportunities and conditions, and sometimes alternative places to live.

For Michael Anderson household structure, and in particular co-residency of the extended family and non-relatives, is of central importance in his investigation of community. According to Anderson, the growth of co-residence, that he identified from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, was based upon calculative, materialistic, dealings amongst kin, where self-interest acted as a guide. An example of this, he suggests, is the reciprocal arrangement of grandparents caring for grandchildren and children caring for parents (Anderson, 1983). In developing his position from an exchange theory of values, Anderson suggested that, only as immigration decreased, and communities became more stable, could a more functional and less calculative attitude to kin begin to emerge. Therefore, it was not until the inter-war period of the twentieth century 'that a really strong affective and non-calculative commitment to the kinship net could develop and "traditional" community solidarity become possible'. There are a number of problems with this analysis, not the least being that establishing when these communities 'began to flourish to the full' remains unclear (Anderson, 1971, p. 178). This lack of clarity may have much to do

with the uneven pace of industrial and urban development in different localities, given that Anderson's methods involve samples that tend to be wider than single communities. In addition change may have been slower and more gradual than Anderson allows for, and, as Patrick Joyce has pointed out, poverty before 1914 may have considerably limited such developments in kin and neighbour relations. The gradual growth of relative affluence, with falling mortality rates, combined with greater stability in the population and community coherence, and the beginnings of State welfare policies, would have led slowly to the formation of the collective non-calculative community (Joyce, 1990).

Rejecting the universality and time-scale of the movement towards the functioning collective community does not assist the proposition that there was change from calculative to non-calculative kinship relationships. Research based on oral evidence further undermines the perceived change in two ways. First of all experiential data, while confirming the importance of extended family in household and community, suggests that the importance of women in extended kin networks has been underestimated in Anderson's research. Thus, significant kinship ties were 'very frequently on the female side of the family and of course, married sisters or daughters had different names to those of their kin' (Roberts, 1984b). Given that tracing kin through census enumerators' books, a source most favoured by Anderson, is an unreliable method, even when family surnames are retained, then such a strategy tends to underestimate female kinship links. This is even more relevant in localities where women, in relatively large numbers, found waged employment with relative ease,

where there was, as a result, more adult women than adult men in the population, and where there were large numbers of female headed households.

A second, and more fundamental, problem raised by Roberts (1984b) is that the exchange theory of values may not be a useful starting point. A major difficulty for oral historians is in the depth of evidence that interviewing generates. Compared to the very limited data that can be extracted from enumerator books, oral testimony provides a much more complex picture of human relations and motives. To make decisions on calculative and non-calculative relationships is much easier from data that is less complete, than it is in oral evidence. This is not a question of memory, but rather relationships are often recalled as both calculative and non-calculative. The points at which emotional ties outweigh material assistance are frequently unclear, and suggest that it is a combination of both that is important. The balance between the two also seems to shift according to changing circumstances that include external conditions (the availability of employment and housing) and the household life cycle (both in terms of needs and ability to assist). The position of female heads and older women clearly underlines these difficulties, for these women, in assisting kin, particularly in looking after children, acted both in a non-calculative way (in that they were seldom paid for this service) *and* in a calculative way (in that they could ask for assistance, including shopping, decorating, and ^{host} other wee jobs, from the kin they helped). Above all else by helping kin and non-kin, women provided themselves with a place in the community.

The continuing presence of the female headed household (see chapter 11) also somewhat undermines the belief that the modern private nuclear family had emerged by the beginning of the twentieth century. Even in localities where almost all households were headed by men the classical interpretation of changing family structures is suspect. As Lynn Jamieson (1987) has noted, previous research 'has left us with a legacy of temptations in the form of too easily assumed relationships between aspects of family life' (in Drake, ed., 1994, pp. 106-7, and p. 125). Instead of the caring mother and the loved child, Jamieson's research in Scotland's central belt found children's relationships with mothers marked by a deference, with mothers who viewed their own role in the family as housekeepers rather than as carers. While accepting much of Jamieson's argument, it would seem that in both classical and revisionist texts there is a generally shared view that children's labour had declined. Earlier critiques argue that the removal of children and women from employment were a part of the State's intervention into family life, an intervention that was supported by parents keen to build boundaries between family life and a hostile world (see in particular Donzelot, 1979). In the revisionist studies child labour too often merits only passing mention. Thus, for example, Jamieson explains that around 1900 only a minority of mothers were in full-time employment, and child labour is seen in terms of unwaged domestic tasks. While the minority of waged mothers was greater in places like Dundee than where Jamieson ^{bases} her study, there is also a danger in the post-classical accounts of underestimating the importance of children's waged work, particularly in localities like Dundee (see chapter 4).

While boarders and non-nuclear kin, in female headed households, were linked to employment networks and a shopfloor culture that extended beyond the workplace, children in the male headed household followed similar patterns. There is indeed some evidence to suggest that children in male headed households began work in larger numbers at an earlier age, than children resident in homes with female heads. The evidence is far from conclusive, particularly because female heads were likely to have fewer children in their homes, but it seems reasonable to assume that male headed households with larger numbers of dependent children would have attempted to find employment for their children at an earlier age. The importance of children's wages to married women with husbands did not mean that they were impervious to the growth of a State apparatus that sought to redefine motherhood in terms of child care. That mothers continued to be, for children, the 'boss that you love' or even 'kindly strangers' (Jamieson, 1987, in Drake, ed., 1994, p. 117), and that the change to what might be called familism was far from complete before the Second World War, should not preclude an appreciation that changes were occurring, with the redefinition of femininity and motherhood making a particular impact on women's lives (see chapter 9). More importantly, it will be argued (in chapter 11) that relationships between children and their parents were not only influenced by the occupational status of mothers, but also by the gender of the heads of households.

Private lives and public spheres

The gender imbalance that arose from the availability of waged work for women (and the lack of availability for men) did not lead to isolated, one-woman, impoverished

female households, but rather to a complex, changing, variety of economically viable households headed by women. The presence of these households had a direct link to waged work, not only in terms of the numbers of women resident in these households who were employed, but also because they provided accommodation for other waged women. This contributed to the often difficult relationship between women workers and their industrial and political organisations. In waged work the relationship between women and their trade unions were complex, even in a town where female participation rates in trade unions were very much greater than in the rest of Scotland (McIvor, 1992, pp. 153-4). Labour historians have investigated these relationships in terms of women's informal resistance from 1850 to 1918 (Gordon, 1991) and trade union organisation from 1885 to 1923 (Walker, 1979). The difficulties that faced trade unionists in organising and leading Dundee women that are identified in these labour histories continued into the 1930s, with shopfloor workers continuing to pursue an industrial agenda that was markedly different from the aspirations and plans of the local trade union leadership. The duality of gendered household structures in the city, including the presence of boarders who were often female textile operatives (see chapter 5), can partly account for this difference.

All this makes a nonsense of Jose Harris's advise to seek the 'collective history of the "working class" in formal institutions such as trade unions and co-operatives rather than in the experience of the shop floor' (1993, p. 148). It is even more ironic that the one textile factory in Dundee, the Taybank works, that insisted on trade union membership and was owned by the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, refused

(advise)

to employ married women. The formal organisations of the working class often marginalised women, and it would be a retrograde step for social history to return to a position that denied informal institutions or networks that changed the labour movement and wider society. In Dundee significant collective actions were taken outwith, often in spite of, formal organisation, in both workplace and community. Shopfloor relationships provided a basis for collective action that could reach beyond the limited, and limiting, perspectives of co-operatives and trade unions (chapter 7). Informal gatherings of women, with some basis in religious organisations, provided the platform for the only Prohibitionist to be elected to Parliament (chapter 8). Street demonstrations and riots were the outward, visible product that provides evidence of married women taking the aims of the emerging State and moulding them to their own needs (chapter 9). All this points to the discussions and debates that were a part of family life, in households, of community life, between households. That these discussions took place in wash-houses, the communal spaces of tenements, in shops, and on the shopfloor rather than in formal meetings in the co-operative or trade union hall might make the historian's job more difficult. The lack of minute books and the other flotsam from the past does not however prevent an investigation that can conclude that informal organisation was as effective as formal institutions.

That women, who had attempted to shape trade union organisation to their needs as female shopfloor workers, were also to perceive and act on the new definitions of motherhood, and femininity, in their own way should not be surprising. For young single women prohibition served as one rallying point that emerged from the earlier

temperance campaigns and was transformed into a political challenge by the end of the First World War. Prohibition had inherited the religious base of late nineteenth century temperance, but it also assumed a political form that addressed issues of class and gender. While the anti-alcohol movement of the 1880s and 1890s had been a part of the redefinition, and attempt to control, women, during the War women began to take a more active part in the movement. Big business, including owners of the textile industry, were included in a socialist critique, but it was a critique that also identified the drunken man, particularly the drunken husband, as a burden on both women and the working class as a whole. Thus the myth of the useless Dundee male, that can be identified particularly, although not exclusively, in the oral evidence amongst residents of female headed households, was articulated in political form. In the process opposition to alcohol abuse was extended from a middle class concerned with working class women's drunkenness to a working class position that identified male drinking and capitalism as interrelated evils.

In a parallel development married women began to engage in a campaign for benefits after the First World War. While it is argued (in chapter 8) that the State's attempts to remove women from alcohol before the First World War was to lead to the politicisation of the temperance movement after 1918, similarly State attempts to redefine motherhood lead to new demands by married women. After World War One ~~X~~ (women) there was growing expectation, and amongst married women in particular, that the National Insurance Act would be extended. These expectations were to be confounded at a time when Poor Law relief was collapsing in Scotland. The

contradiction that married women were expected to care for their children and keep them healthy, and yet were excluded from the benefits, was particularly sharp in a town where women had paid National Insurance. The result was demonstration, protest, and riot. The 1921 and 1931 riots were part of a long campaign for benefits, and, although hidden from most histories, they were much more than simple reaction by those 'who could find nothing' in the way of employment (Whatley, et al., 1993, p. 162). The outcome and achievements of the campaign were complex, with women at points placing class before gender, but the leading position of women in this movement can only be understood against a background of changing attitudes and expectations amongst women.

Part of the change in married women's attitudes can be accounted for by changes in the city's occupational structure. It is argued (in chapter 10) that change in the employment structure, from the middle of the 1920s onwards, placed particular economic pressure on the male headed household. This change, along with the Means Test in 1931, gave an added boost to the viability of female headed households. At the same time, with the opportunities for married women and children to find regular full-time employment reduced, and continuing high levels of unemployment amongst men, part-time and short-term working increased amongst married women. The result was the rise of the kettle-boiler, husbands who were left at home to look after children. This was a temporary arrangement, but may well have further weakened the dominant ideology that claimed that a married women's place was in the home. More importantly the continuing existence of the female headed households provided a

continuing challenge to gender relations within, and between, households (see chapter 11).

Conclusion

The making of a woman's town had implications that reached beyond employment, shaping household arrangements, and community. In reassessing the position of the female headed household, as an alternative to male headed households, new perspectives on the relationship between private and public life can be developed. An attempt has been made to identify some of the most important points of intersection. These include the interconnections between home and workplace; home and politics; and home and protest. This is set against a background of wider changing class and gender relationships. By introducing the concept of gendered households a new appreciation of the making of a woman's town is possible. It suggests that some women were finding a way of distancing themselves from patriarchal relationships, while contributing to the growth of female solidarity in the wider community. The recognition of the female headed household goes some way towards understanding the impact of this solidarity on industrial relations, that cannot be fully explained in terms of either employment or class.

Chapter 2: Theoretical contexts

Social history

This thesis is written at a time when social history is at a cross-roads, with debates that are often marked by confusion and acrimony. Attempts have been made to polarise these debates with postmodernists, modernists, and revisionists on one side, and those who would claim that history is formed by systematic research into primary sources on the other (for example Marwick, 1995, pp. 5-6). Such attempts are far from convincing, not only because of the range of theoretical assertions adopted by those claiming to be postmodernists, but also because the opponents of postmodernism are as varied, with theoretical positions that range from Ellen Meiksins Wood's (1991) Marxism to Arthur Marwick's (1995) anti-Marxian 'professional' history. The first lesson of these debates is that there is currently a range of opinions amongst social historians about theory and method that suggests that there are many ways of producing social history.

A recurring and major criticism of postmodernism is that it moves social history further away from being central to all history that is capable of resisting fragmentation, and towards becoming a compartmentalised, residual, specialised, and discrete area of study. This movement, away from what has been rather loosely called 'total' history, can be interpreted in a number of ways, but is starting to emerge as a rallying point for increasing numbers of social historians. So, for example, Wood condemns what she

describes as 'fashionable intellectual trends', including historical revisionism, that carve up 'the world into fragments' (1991, p. 93). This is echoed by Jose Harris, who grieves the loss of broad perspectives, and deplures historical perceptions that are said to be 'much more nuanced, idiosyncratic, private, and relativistic' than was previously the case (1993, p. 3). Others, however, including critics as hostile to postmodernism as Bryan D. Palmer (1993) have conceded that poststructuralism has introduced specific problems that require further attention. In particular, Palmer, in his defence of historical materialism, points to the way in which postmodernism has brought attention to the difference in historical developments in different parts of the world. Palmer, unlike Wood and Harris, therefore does not see this fragmentation as completely negative; rather he believes that postmodernism has underlined the importance of self, subjectivity, 'identities not reducible to class', of discourse and representation, and the problems of 'knowledge' that exist (pp. 141-2).

Before looking in detail at this argument that has specific relevance to gender, it is necessary to recognise that the movement away from 'total' history is not a new development. At least a quarter of a century has elapsed since 'total' history was identified as an aim for social historians (see for example Thomas, 1966). In the intervening period the notion of 'total' history became more suspect for at least two main reasons. First of all to recover the totality of past events is absurd, given not only the size of the project, but also that a great deal of information was either never recorded at the time or failed to survive subsequently. Second, history is a construction, an approximation, of past events. The 'total' past, even if we knew

everything about the past, is subject to interpretation by historians. History therefore is much less than the past and only fragments of the past can be recovered by historians (Jenkins, 1991, pp. 11-13). This does not of course discredit the social historian who attempts to aim towards an overview that is based upon the research of others, such as the one provided by Jose Harris (1993). The approach does, however, need to be recognised as a sum of past historical interests that include the theoretical positions of previous researchers. This sum of parts can make for a more informed history, but it does not mean that the historian has achieved a more total view of the past. Indeed a reworking of historian's concerns and themes anchored to a historical period, even if it is to challenge previous assumptions, has more to do with history than the past.

As Keith Wrightson (1993) has argued that there has been a gradual process of compartmentalisation, by period, subject, concept, and interpretation. For Wrightson there are a number of different solutions to what he sees as the enclosure of social history, and these solutions include overviews, but do not exclude more narrow investigations. Wrightson's suggestions of ways of rejuvenating social history, is to include making study more explicitly conceptual and making use of more innovative approaches (pp. 70-3). Amongst the pioneers of modern social history, including the historical materialists, there was a recognition that what was needed was a collective effort (Hobsbawm, 1978). This should include different theories, strategies, and methods, but also should be connected by common concerns. There have been recent attempts by historians, from a range of disciplines both inside and beyond social history, to renew these aims around the broad topic of family and community history.

The ways in which local studies can be linked together, and in turn attached to national and international historical perspectives, has been explored in some detail by these historians (see Finnegan and Drake, eds, 1994; Golby, J, ed., 1994; and Pryce, ed., 1994).

While it is now fashionable to reject research conducted in the late 1970s and 1980s, there were some important developments made, particularly by those who initially challenged the dominant historical literature. It is progress that historical perspectives, including those found in Harris's work, are now much more marked by caution with conclusions less likely to be drawn from a single vantage point. Above all else many historical researchers of the 1970s and 1980s were not simply replacing one approach with another, but were explicitly questioning historical writing that denied a presence in history to droves of people. It is perhaps difficult now to appreciate that large parts of the middle and working classes, including women and children, were once missing from social histories that could claim totality. Recovering those hidden from history demanded new theoretical constructs and new methodological approaches. Thus there might be regrets expressed regarding the passing of a golden age that seemed filled with certainties, but what has been gained is more informed, if complex, understandings.

The same excitement that Harris found in attempting to investigate social history as a totality, existed amongst those who set out to challenge grand 'traditional' history. Perhaps the most important of the methodologies that were developed in response to

these new theoretical challenges was oral history. Rather curiously, despite many calls for social historians to look beyond their subject boundaries, few of those engaged in the debates about the future of social history even mention the contribution of oral history. In contrast those beyond the history profession have shown more willingness to recognise the impact of the method. For example the editor of *The Times* newspaper, of 21 September 1993, noted that 'although oral history is one of the great achievements of modern historiography, it has yet to be granted the respect it deserves'. Part of the reason for this is that oral history was developed by anthropologists, sociologists and historians working outside, and even in spite of, the enclosed world of the history men. In this there are parallels with women's studies. In Scotland while histories of women have been undertaken 'often by those outside the academic historical establishment' (Breitenbach and Gordon, eds, 1992, p. 2), it was community based groups who recorded and collated oral evidence.¹

Common amongst those who adopted oral history were the beliefs that the present cannot be isolated from the past, and that history should escape the captivity of existing, or surviving, sources (see Samuel, 1976; Bertaux, 1981; Thompson, 1982, pp. 9-11). In taking this approach sociologists found a historical perspective, and historians developed a sense of theory. There were attempts at producing histories of

¹ The notable academic exception was the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, who were interested in folk and cultural matters.

men and women in their social relations and groupings, and the ability to create sources enabled new examinations of private lives as well public spheres. Private lives have long been of interest for oral historians, and were used to inform their examination of 'the objective, interlocking, patterned, realities of the past', that Harris identifies as important (p. 4). One classic example of this is *Living the fishing*, in which Paul Thompson, with Tony Wailey and Trevor Lummis (1983) investigated how ideological belief and family structure effected the development of fishing communities. Even more recent oral histories that may seem to say less about public, or grand, history, and are perhaps more inward looking, can produce valid interpretations of the past (for example Bertaux, and Thompson, eds, 1993).

The hostility towards oral history from the history profession, that has declined from outright rejection to become a lingering suspicion (Sangster, 1994, p. 6), united oral historians, enabling them to accept a variety of different approaches and to explore different theoretical vantage points. The debate amongst oral historians about subjectivity, relativism, and representation has been influenced by a tolerance that developed from an embattled position. More importantly few oral historians could avoid aspects of this debate given the subjective nature of oral evidence, and the constant concern to address wider issues of history - a concern that includes the totality of human experience that makes compartmentalisation problematic. Unlike the historian who never has to face his or her subjects, those involved in the collection and uses of oral history are constantly reminded that interpretations of the past are

complex multiples. Therefore the relationship between subjective and objective factors in social history remains central to many oral historical investigations (see appendix I).

According to Ken Plummer, amongst others, two broad strategies, that might be described as the positivistic and the interpretative, can still be identified in social history (Plummer, 1990, p. 6). The distinction between the two however is probably greater in theory than in practice, and the gap is more often bridged in social history than is admitted (Drake and Finnegan, ed., 1994, p. 12-3). The starting point for this research was oral history, a method and source that is very much perceived as belonging to the humanistic end of the spectrum. The experiential evidence collected by this method, however, suggested new ways of interpreting the sort of data that would normally be found in 'scientific' or positivist historical research. A major attraction of oral history is that it can provide insights into people as agents, as well as subjects, of change. Oral history adds to, even challenges, how history is made. Just as Diana Gittins (1982) and Lynn Jamieson (1987) found that oral evidence about the early twentieth century raised new questions about women and the family in the nineteenth century, so recorded recollections of household structure in the early twentieth century provided a starting point for reinterpreting the position of women in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In other words the subjective testimony of women and men has been used to investigate evidence that might be seen as objective. The aim is to strike a balance between objective and subjective forces.

Like Joan Sangster in her work, there is a refusal here to emphasise language and narrative form over context, yet there is equally no attempt to abandon experience and move back to a de-politicised social history (Sangster, 1994, p. 22). Additionally while some might claim that the family, or household, structures can provide an understanding of ideological formation on a national scale (Todd, 1985), this crude determinism is rejected here. The attempt is to avoid the isolation of household from wider economic and social change, by viewing household (rather than family) structures as providing the form for consciousness within the wider context of the interaction between gender and class. As Franco Ferrarotti (1981) has pointed out, individuals have no direct connection, or 'totalize directly', with society, rather they experience society through the medium of 'small groups' (see appendix I). It is argued that household is one of the most important of these social contexts. In using household rather than family there is an attempt however to combine both internal and external relationships in both the economic and social spheres.

If social history is to be more than an academic exercise or an amateur hobby, then the central focus must be on analysis of change rather than mere description. This is why household structures are placed in the context of gender relationships that were changing. Change within a textile based occupational structure shaped gender relationships and household structures. The economy created a stable community, by the end of the nineteenth century, (chapter 3) which encouraged the growth and continuity of female headed households through the continuing availability of female rather than male employment and a continuing gender imbalance amongst adults. From

the late 1920s onwards the dual household structures were further reinforced by economic and ideological changes amongst employers that reduced the numbers of married women and children in the textile workforce (chapters 10). This, however, is only one side of the process of historical change. For women achieved a degree of independence from men within the female headed household (chapter 5) and sought status within the male headed household (chapter 6). Women also resisted ideological definitions of femininity and developed their own models: in the community; in the workplace (chapter 7); in the politics of the city (chapter 8); and in relation to the growing intervention into their lives by the State (chapter 9). While there is no attempt to produce a 'total' history with the implications inherent in the work of Harris (1983) and others, there is a rejection of a history based entirely in the sphere of private lives or in the sphere of public actions. The two were intertwined in the lives of both women and men.

Gender in social history

If the promise of earlier social historians seems less certain now, it is only fair to point out that other historical sub-disciplines have yet to recognise the theoretical questions that considerations of gender relations pose. This is particularly so in British labour history, and, while there has been notable exceptions (including John, ed., 1986; Gordon and Breitenbach, eds, 1990; and Gordon, 1991), there is a continuing tendency amongst labour historians to ignore gender as a historical factor. Ross McKibbin has been praised by colleagues for challenging traditional assumptions in

labour history, and taking an important step from labour to working-class history. Yet, in his best known volume of essays (1991), he uniformly fails to provide any analysis of women in history. The working class leaders, voters, gamblers, hobbyists, poor, and unemployed are men. The only women to be examined in detail are three Edwardian 'practitioners of a cultural sociology' (p. 169), and all are from the 'non-working class'. It is no coincidence that this revision of labour history, by largely ignoring working class women and only mentioning them as victims, is imbued with a sense that Britain, while 'no paradise for the working class', was a stable society (p. 301). While, it would be difficult to argue with such a conclusion, McKibbin unconsciously provides the evidence to suggest that this stability was due in no small measure to patriarchal relations within the working class. The cultural, social psychological, and political attitudes of men, so ably explored and used to support his argument, simply proves the importance of men in the relationship between class and organisation. The lack of consideration of women in these processes not only assists his argument, but allows him to deny the possibilities of alternative historical developments.

Up to and including the 1980s' women were largely invisible in a wide range of Scottish historical literature. Often when they were included they were presented as 'passive victims' (Young, 1985, p. 156). Women, inside the family, were portrayed as powerless and willing to sacrifice their own interests for those of demanding brothers and fathers. In waged work they were often said to be equally powerless, docile in the face of the demands of employers (see for example Checkland and Checkland, 1984, pp. 200-1). The neglect of women in Scottish history continued for so long that

Breitenbach and Gordon could note as late as 1992 that women's role in Scottish social history was at last beginning to be addressed. This lack of development in Scotland means that there is much more research required in broadening the analysis of the role of women in the history of Scottish society (McGuckin, 1993, p. 197). It is tempting to believe that a major project for historians in Scotland would be to fill in the missing parts with histories of women. If, however, it is accepted that women should at last be included in our history, then it follows that previous histories that neglected women's contributions have provided partial, and, more importantly, distorted views of the past.

Introducing women as active participants also raises wider questions of gender relationships and then the relationship of gender to other social constructions including class and ethnicity. The challenge therefore is not to just fill in the gaps, but to place gender as a social construct and gender division in history. Otherwise the result is a women's history that can be incorporated into the dominant historiography, and at the same time remain on the margins of historical research. Such a development has already occurred elsewhere and has been identified as 'the contradictory law of the supplement' (Scott, 1991), or as part of a wider 'social-history paradigm' (Wilson, 1993). While the starting point of this thesis is to suggest that the role of gender in households has been neglected by historians and needs to be reassessed, the aims go beyond this and an attempt is made to see gendered households in relation to social class relationships operating in work, community, politics and the State.

The existence of a woman's town, even if the description is applied no further than employment, requires that social historians should go beyond limited perspectives based on a single gender. Otherwise we orientate our focus away from social relations (Bertaux, 1981, p. 37), and run the risk of maintaining women's lives on the margins of history. By including gender as a relationship, this can in turn be placed in the wider context of patriarchy and capitalism. This duality, taken along with the attitudes of employers, suggests a wider relationship between economy and ideology in the period under study. This approach is not however without its problems and critics. Like Iris Young (1981), Sylvia Walby (1986) and Miriam Glucksmann (1990) are critical of a dual approach, that is one based on twin analyses of patriarchy and capitalism, that lead to the allocation of capitalist relations and patriarchal relations to separate spheres. Unlike Young, and to a lesser extent Glucksmann, Walby believes that the dualism is not inherently flawed, but only if one mode is recognised as existing 'in articulation with another' (Walby, 1986, p. 50).

Walby, in *Patriarchy at Work* (1986), therefore constructs a theoretical framework in which capitalism and patriarchy exists in a dialectical way with one complementing and conflicting with, extending and constraining, the other. For Walby patriarchal relations in waged employment 'are necessary if not sufficient' to retain women as unpaid workers in the household (p. 55). At the same time patriarchal relations 'in the workplace and the State as well as the family, are central to the determination of the position of women in paid work' (p. 57). This, however, as Glucksmann has pointed out, does not resolve difficulties that arise from allocating two class positions for

women engaged in waged employment as well as unpaid domestic work. While women labour under two different sets of relations of production, 'it does not follow that men and women form two opposing classes in the accepted sense' (Glucksmann, 1990, p. 271). Like Glucksmann this research does not seek to resolve these theoretical difficulties, but does take a similar approach in the analytical attempt to understand what Glucksmann calls the 'total social organisation of labour' (pp. 257-82). Unlike Glucksmann the focus of analysis is shifted towards household rather than employment. This is not to deny the importance of employment, for work was as basic to gender relations, and gender to the work process, but rather to establish the role of household in these relationships. This is therefore an attempt to move beyond double oppression, or double consciousness, and the labour debate so ably explored by Eleanor Gordon (1991). It is argued that an analysis of household arrangement, and relations between the residents of households, provides another way of understanding class and gender relationships.

Family, household and gender

In many western classical and revisionist accounts there has been a tendency to confuse family and household. Family suggests a primary social group consisting of persons related by blood or marriage, but this definition cannot encompass the complex households containing kin and non-kin living collectively together that historians and sociologists have found in different periods and in different places. Household also provides a clearer connection, than family, to the useful

anthropological concept of the 'domestic group' as an economic (production and consumption) unit that has an internal life cycle shaped by external socio-economic forces. In adopting household rather than family there is however a danger that the social relationship between co-residents becomes understated, and there has been a division in research between those preoccupied with household structure and size and those who have recognised the need to study 'internal family dynamics' (Hareven, 1991, in Drake, ed., 1994, pp. 18-20).

A consideration of life-course (including life cycle) is one way of avoiding the creation of false divisions between household structure and internal relationships; relationships that go a long way towards deciding 'who we have become both socially and personally' (Thompson, 1993, p. 13). It should also be recognised that it is important 'to understand the interrelationship between individual time, family time, and historical time' and that the life-course approach adds 'an important developmental dimension' to the history of the family by focusing on age and cohort comparisons'. The family life cycle has 'proved especially valuable for identifying those stages in the family's development when it was economically vulnerable and prone to poverty'. This is valuable, but, as Hareven (1991) adds, 'the family cycle identifies stages of parenthood rather than the more dynamic aspects of individual transmissions into and out of various family roles.' Thus Hareven has argued for 'an analysis of individuals' and families' timing of life transitions in relation to historical time' (in Drake, ed., 1994, pp. 14-5 and p. 22). If we add households to this argument, then we reach a better understanding of both historical and individual time, since so many individuals find

themselves living in households that contain multiple families, or even non-kin groups, at crucial points in their life courses.

Another major problem with family in history is the acceptance of how family developed. There is a large body of family history, that includes the work of Phillippe Ariès (1960), John Demos (1978), Edward Shorter (1976), and Lawrence Stone (1981), that has emphasised emotional bonds and private inclusion as the defining characteristics of the 'modern family'. Family history can thus be read as a progression towards this modern, conventional, family. There are problems in defining conventional families, but these could be said to be nuclear families composed of legally married couples with one child or more, residing together as a distinct domestic unit. The conventional family is not, however, 'at any given time, the prevailing social arrangement' (Oakley, 1982, p. 123-5; see also Oakley and Oakley, 1979). In this context Lynn Jamieson's (1987) challenge to the 'classical corpus' of sociological and historical investigations that suggest that the modern family was established by 1900 is important. The 'classical' accounts broadly agreed that the family household was by the turn of the century a distinct unit separated from wider society, bound internally by emotional ties, marked by gender divisions that separated off unpaid housework and child care from wage earning, and promoted individualism. Building on earlier research by Gittins (1982) and Harris (1983), Jamieson argues that experiential evidence does not support the existence of the modern family, as described in standard historiography, by 1900. Unlike Gittins and Harris, however, Jamieson is less willing to move the process of the development of the modern family forward in time. What is

raised instead is a suggestion that there is a need for a complete revision how family has developed. Concentration upon family relationships in particular leads Jamieson to the conclusion that 'the development of an emotionally intense, separated-off ... type of family is not tied to the existence of a full-time housewife/mother at home' (Jamieson, 1987, in Drake, ed., 1994, p. 124). Capitalist patriarchy, the cause of change put forward by many, may not have produced, either by itself, or with State intervention and ideologies of child-rearing, the family as conceived in classical accounts.

While Jamieson emphasises the complexity of family relationships, particularly mother and child relationships, that question the movement towards the child-centred family, Elizabeth Roberts' studies have taken a different route. There seems some theoretical distance between the approaches of Jamieson and Roberts, despite both basing their research upon oral evidence, and both being concerned with the family unit. Both also emphasise diversity in family development, up to the Second World War at least, but Roberts is much more attached to the 'classical' account. Roberts, while suggesting that the child-centred family developed after 1940, supports the argument that the spread of individualism and privacy in family life has weakened wider collective action, particularly amongst the working class (1995, p. 14-6). Roberts, however, is more interested in the position and role of women, and has consistently argued that, before 1940, a married woman's place was in the home. In part this arises directly from the 'classical' account of the rise of the modern family in advanced industrial societies, that states that with the organisation of production in factories under capitalism, the

separation of home and work and, more particularly, between work and personal life, produced a new specialist role for women as managers (see Zaretsky, 1976 for example). She does not, however, believe that working-class life can be described as patriarchal, nor indeed as matriarchal. Certainly it 'may have been patriarchal when viewed from the workplace, but not when looked at from the hearth' (1994, in Drake, ed., 1994, p. 129). Roberts (1984a) therefore suggests that from the late nineteenth century to the Second World War the majority of wives, even in areas with relatively high levels of employment amongst married women, were empowered by their position as household managers. This argument has been further developed by others (including Pennington and Westover, 1989) who have emphasised the significant contribution of unpaid work in the home by wives, and their importance as household managers. The common ground between Roberts and Jamieson is their joint suspicion that patriarchy, as an ideology, linked to capitalism, as an economic system was not an all encompassing system that produced uniform changes in family life, in which the rise of individualism was intimately attached to the division of labour along gender lines.

The evidence from Dundee suggests that there was a substantial proportion of households that were headed by women. These households simply do not fit either into the categories of conventional or modern families. This may have hidden these households from history, but it does not make them less important. While arguing that the concept of household is more useful, than the concept of family, there is still an attempt to understand the kin and non-kin relationships within these households. This,

in turn, leads to a new consideration of the conventional family unit as a male headed household (see chapters 5, 6, 10, and 11).

There has been a great deal of research into household composition and the relationship of household structure to paid work. Early studies (Anderson, 1971, Laslett, 1972) were particularly concerned with dispelling assumptions that industrialisation had destroyed extended families and replaced these with nuclear families. One result, of such a fundamental revision of classical views of household and family, was an upsurge in research (see Jamieson, 1987 and Hareven, 1991). A number of the debates raised in previous research are touched upon in this study, including the relationships between household, community, and work, the position of children (in chapters 4 and 11) and married women in the family and work (chapters 5, 7, 8, and 11), and household structure (chapters 5 and 6). Although this research may throw light on a number of generalisations, the main concern here is to recognise the importance of gender relations in, and between, households in the past.

The gender of heads of households has seldom been considered as important in studies of family and household structure in the past. Indeed previous research into the family in history has tended to neglect headship, investigating at most the age, or point in the life cycle, that individuals became heads (for example Anderson, 1983, p. 81).

Contemporary descriptions of who is the head of a household may seem arbitrary at worst, or, at best, is simply a result of patriarchal relations that place husbands at the heads of household. Headship has even been reinterpreted by researchers in such a way

that the original definition has become hidden or fudged. Anderson (1971), for example, despite basing his research on enumerator books that clearly allocate head of household to one person in each household, suggests that married couples headed households (p. 48). By accepting contemporary descriptions and thinking of headship in gender terms, however, new perspectives in the history of households are possible, and, as is shown, not only can structural differences be identified between those households headed by women and those headed by men, but that the role of female heads was different from that of male heads.

Headship and gender have been of greater interest to sociologists, particularly in studies of contemporary female headed households. Joycelin Massiah (1983), as Deputy Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of the West Indies, is amongst a number of researchers who point to the growing incidence of female-headed households in the colonial countries. Like, Kathleen Newland (1979), Massiah believes that this 'increase appears to be closely correlated with processes of modernisation arising from specific forms of economic-development strategies' (p. 9). In the sociological literature, however, such studies have tended to view households with women as heads in a negative way. In the 1960s and 1970s, in Puerto Rico (Icken, 1965), and the Caribbean (Buvnic', et al., 1978), and Brazil (Merrick and Schmink, 1978), the growth of the female headed household is located in the context of women's oppression and poverty against this background of economic change. Most studies agree that women heads of households are in a 'disadvantaged position ... as compared to the female population in general, and to the population of

men who are household heads in particular' (Buvnic', et al., 1978, p. ii). Such unanimity was only broken, from the late 1980s onwards, when investigations turned away from the former colonised world and towards women in the advanced capitalist countries, mainly in the United States, who were establishing and heading their own households. While it is recognised that residents of female-headed households often live in poverty (see for example Mulroy, ed., 1988, p. 3), the treatment is somewhat different.

Instead of the destitute and problematic female headed household created by circumstance, sociologists began to find 'single parents by choice' (Miller, 1992) who were 'confronting institutional barriers in the courts, the workplace, and the housing market' (Mulroy, 1988). While sociologists conclude that households with female heads across the world require State assistance, there is a subtle, but important difference is that the households in the former colonies are described as the creation of circumstance, and are absolutely, almost irretrievable disadvantaged. In contrast the middle class western household is often portrayed as formed through choice, and is disadvantaged by State policies that can be reformed. Gender relations, and the concept of patriarchy, are much less likely to be seen as important, certainly less important than economics, in the former colonies. Researchers have approached Dundee's female headed households in much the same way, although in much less depth, to those who have studied the colonial experience. The suggestion here is that while it would be impossible at this stage to draw conclusive comparisons between the two, the experiential and statistical data from Dundee does suggest that there are

weaknesses in the core assumption that the economic and social position of female headed households can be measured by household income.

The presence of large numbers of female headed households in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Dundee has been noted by a number of historians. These have been characterised in much the same way as sociologists have viewed households with female heads in the colonised world both by historians and past reformers (see for example Dundee Social Union, 1905). William Walker portrays the households in turn of the century Dundee as impoverished, isolated from kin and community, and headed by women who were unable to find husbands (Walker, 1979, p. 49). It has even been said, by Eleanor Gordon, that 'poverty levels' were 'exacerbated' as a result of the preponderance of female headed households (Gordon, 1991, pp. 144-6, and p. 166). This is not to deny that women's wages were lower than men's, nor that a significant section of the population was attempting to survive on the earnings of women, but it proves difficult to square these descriptions of female headed households with either oral evidence from older women or with the data extracted from enumerator books of earlier years. Above all else the views of Walker and Gordon, seemed to encourage too static and simplistic a view of household arrangement and poverty amongst female householders. Furthermore, and like much that has been written about more recent South American and Caribbean households, there does not seem to be much of an understanding of the part played by patriarchal relations.

Poverty cannot be measured by income alone, for household income is only one aspect of household economy. Consumption, and the widespread assumption (and practice) that men need to eat more and spend more income on leisure, tends to be ignored in assessing the relative economics of male and female headed households. That gender relations, beyond demography, can exert some influence on the creation of the female headed household is neglected in research that recognises 'strategies', but fails to understand that even a drop in income can be counterbalanced by the different social arrangements that can exist in female headed households. A comparative analysis of household structures and the occupations of residents also suggests that there is a need to go beyond comparisons of the income of heads. The statistical evidence, drawn from a sample of the 1891 census enumerator books, suggests that while having fewer heads in paid work, female headed households were more likely to contain more waged adults and fewer unwaged dependants. Oral and statistical evidence also suggests that there were social as well as economic benefits for women who lived in the homes of female householders. The presence in these households of more adult women than adult men implies different gender relations, and it is argued that headship itself had a different definition, with a greater recognition of the status of household manager as opposed to the status of principle wage earners. Additionally while women in the male headed household achieved an important degree of status as household managers (Roberts, 1984a), this was not only greater in the female headed household, but was supplemented by household management extending further into the management of wage earners.

Conclusion

The current reaction within social history, to the developments in the 1970s and 1980s, fails to recognise the progress that the subject has made from a time when sifting 'primary' sources through implicit assumptions was thought to be enough. Restating the aim of 'total' history is no more than a nostalgia for a past social history that never existed. The new aim should be to understand that the past has always been a disputed territory in which there are many vantage points, and from this develop the links between the local, national, and international past. This can be done by building upon the advances made in methodology and theory in the 1970s and 1980s.

One of the single most important contributions to social history has been made by feminists. Rather than seeing this contribution as destructive or seeking to marginalise it, social history has much to gain from seeking out the interconnections between subjective and objective pasts. One way of doing this is by recognising the place of household in gender and class formation.

Chapter 3: Community networks

Introduction

Work was central to the formation and growth of community networks in Dundee. In 1851 Dundee's growing economy was attracting workers not only from the surrounding Forfarshire area and other counties across Scotland, but also from Ireland and England. While movement into the city remained significant in 1911, it was nowhere near the level experienced 60 or even 30 years previously. Dundee, by 1911, was a place that was more settled than was the case in the earlier periods of mass immigration. The falling proportion of incomers, from around the last three decades of the nineteenth century onwards, was important in providing community stability. However, the very reason for the arrival of so many, that is employment in the textile industry, continued to shape community in Dundee. With so many continuing to be employed in a single industry up to the Second World War, the social conditions that sprang from that work provided a strong basis for common interests and neighbourhood relations. One of these common interests was gender. Place of birth statistics suggest that most incomers were women, with some, at least, arriving from localities where there were textile industries. There were more women, under 20 years old, than men, in the same age group, born outwith the city in both 1881 and 1911. Within Scotland, Forfarshire, Lanarkshire, Perthshire, and Fife (in descending order) were the main areas of origin for both women and men. During the same period the very employment structure that had been a major factor in attracting women in the first

place, was also encouraging adult men to seek employment elsewhere (see also chapter 6). The result was a gender imbalance within the adult population that was greater than that found in the other cities of Scotland, and was also fairly constant between the 1880s and 1910s. While single women were a significant proportion of the adult population, Dundee also contained large numbers of female householders, and it will be argued that these households, far from being isolated from the wider community, played a central part in the formation of community networks in the city.

The central importance of textiles in employment, however, was to effect life much more profoundly than simply creating disproportionate numbers of adult women and female headed households. If we accept that the state of industrial relations has some influence on the formation of community (Dennis and Daniels, 1981), then in Dundee the connections between comparatively simple labour relations and community were particularly strong. By 1901 a half of all those in waged and salaried work were employed in textiles. Within the jute textile workplaces there was a marked lack of a thrusting philanthropy that could be found in the cotton and woollen industry elsewhere in Britain (Gordon, 1991, p. 166). The earlier faith amongst Dundee's workers, that the masters (if not the managers they employed), 'would be sympathetic to their grievances', was being eroded in the twenty years before the First World War. There was a growing industrial militancy (Whatley, 1992b, pp. 152-4) - a militancy that was to continue during and immediately after the War. Combative industrial relations were, at the same time, providing the impetus for an emerging shopfloor consciousness in the workplaces, a consciousness that, in turn, overflowed beyond

waged work and overlapped into community consciousness. In other words large numbers of women, and a significant proportion of the male population, were working in a single industry in which continuity of employment was uncertain, and disputes were regular. Such conditions encouraged mutual reliance and solidarity not only on the shopfloor, but within the wider working class community. The development of these collectivist attitudes within community life was also somewhat marked by an assertiveness which can also be found amongst female textile operatives in the workplaces (see chapter 7).

Work, kin, and housing.

From at least the late nineteenth century to the Second World War parents, and even uncles and aunts, were often instrumental in finding women and men their first jobs (see chapter 4). The networks of kin and community were further strengthened by the need to find waged work, in an economy marked by high levels of movement by workers between workplaces. Indeed the recommendation of a worker to a manager or foreman could be critical if work was to be found. While this may have led to the initial segregation of incomers in textile occupations, there is no evidence of this happening on the same scale, or in the same way, as can be found elsewhere. In the mills of the Angus town of Arbroath, for example, women from fishing families tended to be concentrated in the preparing end of the industry. The scale of the textile sector in Dundee, and the kin and community networks that developed in response to that industry, ensured that jobs were available, and contacts developed, beyond single occupations. The volatility of textiles ensured that waged work remained for most

irregular and uncertain, but it also created the need for community knowledge of which firms were hiring or firing, and even the conditions and wages of various works.¹

While Dundee was attracting women, because of the occupational opportunities on offer, the reverse was true for men. By the last two decades of the nineteenth century the numbers of adult women outstripped the numbers of adult men in the city, as men sought employment elsewhere. In the early twentieth century the early imbalance in gender amongst adults remained a feature (as shown in Figure 3–1). According to the Dundee Social Union's survey, carried out in 1904, the gender imbalance amongst adults was a 'significant fact' that produced 'the most serious social problems' (Dundee Social Union, 1905). The Social Union and other contemporaries identified the local employment structure as the root cause of this imbalance. They concluded that males were leaving the city in search of work, because the local economy offered at best only limited opportunities of employment for men. There were those, however, such as Dr. David Lennox, who went farther in tautologically linking these limited opportunities with the large numbers of women, both single and married, who were in waged work. Lennox, a former army medical officer in Dundee, made the point that, 'female labour is the best recruiting sergeant in Dundee', because, 'it prevents the

¹ See Arbroath History Project Archive, Arbroath District Libraries. The first colony of fishers were established at the foot of the town in the 1840s, after the textile industry was established.

employment of men in civil life' (Lennox, 1905, p. 71). Certainly more adult women than men were coming to the city, and more adult men than women were leaving, but there is little evidence to suggest that women were impeding male employment. By turning cause and effect into their opposites, a section of the contemporary middle class could argue that the gender imbalance was producing a combination of large numbers of unmarried women and a large female workforce. This in turn was said to be creating city-wide poverty. That a small band of employers controlled such a large single sector of the economy, and chose to employ women in an attempt to keep their labour costs low, was regretted, but was clearly not seen as an analysis that would lead to strengthening the hand of would-be middle class reformers. Instead the poor social conditions identified in Dundee were attributed to women, particularly married women, so visibly working for wages, a practice that was an affront to middle class sensibilities.

Figure 3-1: Number, and ratio, of adult females and males 15 to 44 years of age in Dundee

	Males Aged 15-44 Years	Females Aged 15-44 Years	Approx. Ratio of Females to Males
1891	30847	42142	3:2
1901	32588	44719	3:2
1911	33814	44737	4:3
1921	31650	42942	3:2
1931	34173	40247	6:5

Source: Census of Scotland 1891 to 1931

It might be assumed that the most immediate effect that the gender imbalance had on the women themselves was that it reduced their chances of marriage. Crude marriage rates, expressed as moving averages (as shown in Figure 3–2), would seem to bear this out. For while changes in Dundee's rate shadowed those of the other cities, and Glasgow's in particular, the rate in the women's town was always lower than that found in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Glasgow. It does not, however, follow that changes in the crude marriage rate simply reflect changes in the proportion of women who remain single. In 1881 around 55 per cent of all women in Dundee aged 15 to 45 years were unmarried, a figure that was set to rise to almost 60 per cent in 1901, and then fell in the 1920s and afterwards. The complex influences that resulted in large numbers of women remaining single will be explored further (see chapters 6 and 11), but it is amongst some of these women, along with widows and wives without husbands, that can be found the heads and many of the residents of the female headed households who played a central part in the community (see chapter 5).

Few households, either headed by men or women, contained only a single resident. One of the strongest forces mitigating against single person households was the shortage of housing, compounded by the lack of suitable housing for women on their own. Even rent in the cheapest accommodation in the city - the tenement garret - would have encouraged the sharing of costs, particularly amongst women. Although Dundee had been one of the first towns in Britain to adopt a town improvement scheme with a local Act in 1882, it would be misleading to believe that the city's housing was superior to that in existence elsewhere (Gauldie, 1974, p. 301). Certainly

Glasgow, in terms of one-roomed houses, had in terms of crude statistics a greater problem of overcrowding before 1882 (Walker, 1988, p. 66, see also chapter 9), but little was done in Dundee to at least maintain this position. The subsequent vigorous application of closure orders of Dundee's unfit houses, and the enforced improvement of insanitary houses, did nothing to increase the availability of the housing stock.

Figure 3-2: Crude marriage rates expressed as moving averages

	Glasgow	Edinburgh	Dundee	Aberdeen
1881-90	8.36	7.73	6.75	7.29
1891-1900	8.47	8.44	7.19	8.21
1901-10	8.85	9.08	7.87	8.43
1911-20	9.85	10.82	8.77	10.33
1921-30	8.76	9.11	7.87	9.48
1931-40	10.43	10.21	9.37	10.83
1941-50	9.89	9.59	9.53	10.88

Source: Registrar General, Annual Reports, 1881-1950

Living space was still at a premium in 1911, when 'more than two-thirds of Dundee's population lived in one- and two-roomed dwellings in what were usually three- and four-storey tenement blocks' (Whatley, et al., 1993, p. 106). Indeed the Corporation's programme of slum clearances may have contributed to the shortage in housing, and prompted the Corporation's decision in 1905 to build houses, with the first council

houses being constructed three years later. Even with such a progressive programme, total house building remained between 1900 to 1914 at the same level as it had been in the 1890s (Gauldie, 1974, p.167 and p. 301). Little was achieved in the way of breaking the near monopoly of the private rented sector. There is little oral evidence to suggest that council building made any real impact on working class life until after the Second World War. The impact of work in the creation of a gender imbalance amongst adults and the shortage of housing encouraged two gendered types of households, along with two gendered networks that overlapped.

The inadequate supply of suitable housing had, however, been recognised in the middle of 1918, when the Town Council debated the Local Government Board's objections to the Council building one-roomed houses. One councillor rightly claimed that in Dundee there existed 'exceptional circumstances ... where there were so many single women' (Dundee, *Courier*, June 12 1918). This debate did not, however, establish the building of suitable accommodation for women on their own by the Council. There were charitable efforts, and one of the most frequently recalled was housing in the Hilltown area of the St. Clement's parish, that was said to have been built by a local female bakery shop owner. Such initiatives made little impact outside of popular consciousness, which identified these small projects as 'no-man's lands'. Sharing the cost of rent was important; rent levels were as high as Glasgow and higher than Aberdeen (Young, 1991, p. 366), but the type of accommodation available also encouraged multi-occupancy. Thus, from necessity, widows, single, and unmarried

women often found themselves providing the nucleus for the formation of new households.

While the level of in-migration was never nearly as high in the twentieth century as it had been earlier, women were still coming to Dundee. Oral testimony suggests that there was a host of subjective experiences influencing the movement of women to Dundee, but almost all were motivated by the availability of waged work for women. The one common thread was, therefore, the attraction of a town that continued to offer employment opportunities for women on a scale that was unique within Scotland. There is some evidence to suggest that young women (around 16 years of age) were arriving in small groups in search of work. Many of these may have moved on, or returned to their place of origin, and oral testimony of this movement is most often of an imprecise, indirect nature. There are much more direct and personal experiences recorded from women who moved with their families. Women, like Mrs MacIntosh, who were not only arriving with other family members, but were moving initially at least to stay with a Dundonian relative. Mrs MacIntosh migrated with her father, an unemployed miner, from Fife, just before the First World War. Her grandmother temporarily housed them, and secured employment for her in the Camperdown Works, before the rest of the family moved into Lochee (ADD 04/A/1).² Areas, like Lochee and Hawkhill, in the west of the city, and the Hilltown, to the east, where there was a

² From the additional personal collection of audio recordings, see Appendix III for details.

concentration of jute works, proved particularly attractive to incomers. These districts offered relatively cheap housing and easily found, if somewhat irregular, employment. By the 1920s there seems to have been not only family networks that could provide the contacts necessary for accommodation and employment for incomers, but networks that extended beyond the family. Jean Lister's mother left Glasgow in 1921, taking her children to Lochee, and leaving behind Jean's father. The family moved in with a local woman, and, according to Jean, 'gave us a room and it wasnae long till we got a hoose in "Tipperary" [a part of Lochee].' The family had met their benefactor in Blairgowrie during the berry picking season that attracted casual female and child labour from across Scotland ('Lochee Lives - The Return', AT 01).³ Although these may not be common experiences, they do suggest some of the many reasons why women were continuing to move to Dundee. They are even more instructive of the character of community networks that were being established by women in female, as well as in male, headed households.

The housing conditions of the inter-war years seemed little better than they had been before 1918, and are recalled as lacking amenities, cramped, often in need of repair. It is often the more oblique recollections of housing that are the most revealing. Above all else, it is the continuing housing shortage that is recalled, a shortage that meant that when neighbours moved away there would be a rush of hopeful applicants to the local

³ See Appendix III for details.

house factor, or sub-factor, particularly by mothers of younger, growing, families. The contemporary view of the outsider was much sharper. One visitor to the city in 1920 admitted to being 'perfectly horrified'. He was, he said, 'well acquainted with the slums of England ... but he had never seen conditions so appalling as some in Dundee.' The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children identified, in the same year, 870 families living in 430 dwellings (Dundee Central Library, MS 54).

Figure 3-3: View from the back of the Town House, undated.



Source: D. C. Thomson photo archive

Finding somewhere to live was no easy matter and younger adults were at least as likely to turn to older kin for help in finding homes as they were in their search for jobs. Private factors, and their sub-factors, were more than willing to provide housing for the kin of existing tenants, and, as in the sphere of employment, personal recommendations carried a great deal of weight. The importance of this practice should not be underestimated at a time when the vast majority of housing was in the private sector. Affordable housing was often in short supply up to, and including, the immediate post-1945 period. The result of this was that neighbouring closes, backlands, and streets, contained households connected by kin ties. Even in a single tenement there could be cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and 'the next close doon the street' could contain 'even more relatives'. For one woman in the late 1920s, 'it was like it was a plan.' It was a plan that included a young cousin, whose mother had died and whose father was an invalid ex-serviceman and the family were given financial and other forms of assistance by the surrounding kin (DOHP 053/A/1).⁴ Similarly, the children of single parent (male and female) families often recall the assistance of relatives, and some even believed that they were better off than their friends whose parents were both alive. This was certainly the case for women who received pensions (Nellie Hanley, BCHG, VT 01),⁵ but even before the introduction of pensions most widows seem to have fewer dependants than many married couples. The continuity in

⁴ Dundee Oral History Project, audio tape recording, see Appendix III for details.

⁵ Barassie Court History Group, video tape recording, see Appendix III for details.

housing provision (or rather the lack of large scale alternative provision), along with the continuing dominance of textile employment, meant that the family networks were encouraged to endure and develop. They not only continued to provide contacts for jobs and homes, but also provided stability in working class communities. These kin connections extended into the wider circles of neighbours and work mates, and, taken together, formed the basis for Dundee's reputation as the biggest village in Scotland.

It could also be argued that the Scottish tenement, and the surrounding areas, encouraged a greater sense of community than that found either in the tenements or the terraced streets of northern England. Many Dundee tenements contained a mix of working class tenants, from the skilled to the unskilled. Above everyone in the smaller top flats (or garrets) lived older people, people on their own, or widows with children, all willing to live high on low rent. As late as 1924 attic rooms could still be rented for less than the price of common lodging house accommodation (Gauldie, 1974, pp. 159-62). There were tenements that could be identified as better-off, but even these were surrounded by others that were more typical. The large concentration of workers, and the need to seek and exchange information (at the very least on employment), ensured that the common spaces, in and between the tenements, were important in women's lives. Tenements contained many of these spaces, featuring pletties, or landings, that connected the flats on either side of a central outside staircase, and overlooked the backyards below. The pletties provided a common meeting place for neighbours, as well as galleries for the travelling entertainers, preachers, and politicians, who might be found in the yards, or backies. Pletties, backies, and the immediate streets provided

space for women to meet together. This was further supplemented by local wash-houses, churches and chapels, where women often met weekly.

On a daily basis local shops linked the streets of tenements and the backlands, and their common spaces. Shops provided central points where information, including gossip, could be passed on (even written messages could be left with shopkeepers). They also served as places where keys, for children as well as tradesmen, could be left. Many shops had boards with hooks for this purpose. Then there was the spectator sport of leaning on the sills of open windows that overlooked the backyards or streets.

'Windae-hinging' was a crucial way for adults, and in particular for women, in Scotland, to keep an eye on, and police, community life. In any one block of tenements around 24 dwellings could overlook one piece of common land. It was not just children's play that was carefully observed, but also the comings and goings of neighbours, visitors, deliveries, gasmen, and hawkers. Secrets, in such circumstances were difficult to keep, and there would always be somebody willing, for example, to note just how sober or drunk some women's husband was on his return from the pub. As in the North East England, the 'powerful medium of gossip' was a means by which conformity, mores and morals, were maintained. The strength of the social function of gossip can be illustrated by the widespread practice of shopkeepers placing the names and addresses of women who had extended their credit in the shop windows. The threat of the shame and disgrace was usually sufficient for women to come to an arrangement to pay off their debt. Gossip, however, also made a positive contribution to community life. It encouraged women to believe they were a part of a wider

collective, sharing 'common traditions and standards of behaviour' (Roberts, 1993).

Above all else it carried news of workplace, community, and kin, and was a visible, everyday affirmation of the interconnection between family, work, and neighbourhood.

Leisure and community

While work and kinship were central to community development, housing and space provided a further influence. It was, however, in leisure that the expression of community can best be found. Perhaps the most striking example of the use of shared tenement spaces was the annual street parties that were organised to mark the end of the seven week school holidays. This was a way of celebrating the end of the need to arrange day-time child-care, and a way of providing an entertainment for the children before their return to school. Organisers of the parties often emphasise the point that all the women who took part brought food along with them, but that contributions were according to means; rather than an exercise in competition between neighbours. There was pride in the feeling of solidarity generated through the collective effort that was required. Women recall these parties continuing into the 1950s in the surviving tenement areas, although not in the new housing schemes. There was some element of competition between neighbourhoods; with Bernard Street often recalled as the outright winners for the provision of spectacular and large parties.

Younger women, both married and single, added to informal neighbourhood life by organising other events, most notably surprise and shilling parties. Shilling parties were carefully planned and involved neighbours clubbing together for food and drink. In

contrast surprise parties would most commonly be organised by women who worked in the same textile mill or factory, with a work mate's home selected as the venue. The hostess would not know of the event until she opened her door and found an assortment of work mates with brothers, male friends, 'cakes or what ever' on her doorstep. To refuse such a party was unknown, and indeed many looked upon it as an honour. The parties provided a place for young men and women to meet, and, in this context, it is worth noting that it seems women rather than men were more likely to arrange these spontaneous parties (Elizabeth Isles, BCHG, VT 03). It might also be deduced that female headed households, with generally fewer occupants, fewer children, and more space were more suitable venues than the male headed households.

The informal leisure of street, shilling and surprise parties provided visible evidence of the growth of the collective community. Parties were, of course, merely an irregular affirmation of the daily support that neighbours, fellow workers, and kin provided. Such assistance came in a number of forms, whether it was lending money, or by looking after young children, or in the sharing of food, and even in some cases offering accommodation. More than one woman has recalled that so often was money borrowed and paid back it became unclear as to who was the original creditor, and indeed became less important as weekly lending became an important source of credit.

Local moneylenders were also approached to supplement income, as were pawn shops, and, increasingly after the First World War, credit and savings clubs. Then there were the department stores that sold almost anything on credit. Even hairdressers set up

clubs, and hairdressers would provide a free service to women who encouraged their friends and neighbours to join the savings club. Borrowing money was so endemic in Dundee that the fear of being in debt, evident in oral testimonies collected from elsewhere in Scotland, simply did not exist. Poverty, and the even more widespread possibility of impoverishment, encouraged both mutual assistance and credit. Poverty and respectability were less closely connected in Dundee - something that was made vividly clear to Bella Keyzer when she went to live in a man's town in the Netherlands in the early 1950s. A product of a woman's town she found in Holland a lack of 'value' in the women she describes as 'willing servants' to the 'papas'. Above all else she recalls that, 'they were very, very, ashamed of poverty', a shame she had not encountered in her home town of Dundee, where, 'nobody was ashamed ... because it wasnae a poverty of their own making, it was something that had been forced upon them, ... there was no shame in saying. "Eh hivnae got twa bob in meh purse"'.

Bella Keyzer also missed playing card games, and was astounded that an evening visiting Dutch neighbours involved men played cards while the women knitted. Knitting, for this former weaver, was work and not a form of relaxation (DOHP 022/C/1). After marriage women in Dundee may have had less time for leisure than when they had been single, and it is often fathers rather than mothers who are recalled as having fun. Men had their hobbies, the pub, and football, filling their free time doing something, while for women, when they 'had a family in these days, between cooking an' washing, [there] wasn't much time' (DOHP 037/A/2). There was, however, time, not only for parties, but also a host of other informal activities that are often hidden

from the view of historians. Playing cards, an activity which could be pursued in the home with young children present, was often enlivened by penny gambling. Illegal betting was popular amongst women, who would place bets with the street corner representatives of bookmakers', known as bookies' runners. It never took very long for a mother, or a child carrying mother's or grannies' line, to place a bet with the local runner (DOHP 017/B/1). Mass gambling was not unknown and a recurring claim is that the district of Lochee held the first housey-housey, or bingo, games that were played for cash prizes, in the backgreens, with look outs posted in case the police took an interest. Visiting kin was also commonplace amongst women: 'meh mother [would] gae down tae see meh granny, that's about all [she did]'. They would 'just sit in around the fire, and telling jokes or haeing a wee sing song' (DOHP 090/A/1). Even more often activities, such as speaking with neighbours, would fill in whatever few moments could be seized from the demands of domestic and child care duties. Although seldom recognised by social historians as important in the sphere of leisure, they were clearly important in the lives of women.

Alongside informal leisure grew the organised, commercial, interests. Both women and men had been attending the music hall in ever larger numbers from the mid-1880s. The popularity of fairs was further enhanced with more sophisticated rides and moving picture shows from 1895 onwards. The first cinema was opened in 1910 and within a year 23 cinema licences were issued. Not all these became permanent venues, but in the 1920s there were around eighteen new picture houses. By 1928 any doubts that the cinema had become established as the premier source of entertainment were swept

aside when the King's Theatre, seating 1000 patrons, became a cinema, although it did continue with occasional live shows, including ice. The conversion of the King's was a serious blow to theatre in Dundee, and as one local theatre historian has noted, with some bitterness, 'the growth of the cinema in Dundee was so amazingly rapid' (Robertson, 1949, p. 33). Nine more cinemas opened in the 1930s, reaching a peak in 1939 when 29 cinema venues provided 32,521 seats and room for another 1,127 standing; in other words there was around one cinema seat for every fifty men, women, and children in the city (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, Cinema Licences).

Cinema owners catering for workers and their families found out very quickly that they were required to fit into the existing cultural life of working class communities. It was the smaller houses that shaped the early industry, and were to premiere the first pictures with sound, or talkies. The success of the cinema was dependent in large part upon women as patrons. Nationally, by 'the late 1930s, 40 per cent of the population were going to the pictures at least once a week and the most devoted attenders were women' (Davidoff and Westover, 1986, p. 27). The situation in Dundee was only different in as much as Dundonians were, like Glaswegians, even more avid watchers of the silver screen (Harvie, 1981, p. 121). Cinema owners and managers joined with enthusiasm 'the battle for patronage' and the music hall, and the 'early picture houses had to compromise - films and turns - to attract support' (Fox, 1963). Variety acts, with 'dancers and a' thing' (DOHP 004/A/2), at film shows mainly drew upon the surrounding district for local talent that could be a source of local pride. The singers,

jugglers, and comics from the neighbouring tenements are recalled enthusiastically, particularly if they were kin, or school friends, or neighbours (see for example DOHP 060/A/1). The appreciation of local entertainers is an indication of a sense of community pride that was reinforced by the performances of the entertainers. The performers themselves would tap into the local culture; for example one of the best remembered acts was the blind entertainer Johnny Beveridge. According to one recollection: 'the burden of his songs was the misfortune of being a henpecked husband', which no doubt appealed to men and women for entirely different reasons (Fox, 1963).

The period between leaving school and marriage was comparatively long for Dundee women, with the standard mean age at marriage that was older than in the other Scottish cities (see chapter 6). There is ample evidence to suggest that the young and single enthusiastically filled this time. Promenading or 'perambulating' along city streets was a pastime in 1876 (Whatley, et al., 1993, p. 123), and the 'monkey parades', that would so worry the authorities in 1913 (Gordon, 1991, p. 163), continued up to at least the Second World War. A third of the city's population was 15 years and younger in the 1890s, a proportion that was to fall around a quarter in the 1920s, and the streets were filled with children playing. The parades were an extension of this play into youth and were a way of meeting members of the opposite sex. Oral evidence suggests that promenade routes, on major thoroughfares, and particularly childhood games, in pends, or closes, and in streets could cover large parts of neighbourhoods. Tracking children's games from the testimony of individuals provides

detailed descriptions of areas of play that could cover half a city district. Children and youth and leisure extended community life onto the streets, although in warm weather adults would join them, gathering at the foot of tenement closes or on street corners.

By the early twentieth century dancing was the most popular of organised leisure pursuits for younger women. Like the picture houses, dancehalls were to be found in every district, but most dances tended to run by, as well as for, the working class. It was the nearest the class was to come to controlling a mass commercial entertainment (see Taylor, 1988, p. 7 and DOHP 050/A/2). In a five month period (August to December) in 1927 there were 43 three-month licences granted for dancing by the Licensing Court. Around 29 of these halls were offering dancing two or three nights of the week. (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, Register of Licences for Dancing). Even a Saturday afternoon was a popular time for dancing, when, as woman recalled, 'the works were finished folk would a get dressed up and awa tae the dancing' (DOHP 004/B/1). The dance hall may have been a major place for the courting rituals of the inter-war years, but it is also clear that young women spent a great deal of time with one another. Young women would gather before the men in the halls, perhaps after a penny shot of perfume at the chemist (DOHP 044/A/2), and dance and chat with their girlfriends. They continued to be gathered together even after the men started to arrive. That the men, at the end of the night, were 'dashing across the hall for a partner to see the ladies home' supports oral evidence that the gender division in the dances could be maintained until after the last waltz had played (Taylor, 1987, p. 9).

Most leisure was divided along gender lines. This division of leisure did not split sporting activities, or even childhood play, as obviously as was the case elsewhere. Sport defined female terrain at least as much in Dundee, as it could be said to have defined male territory in other parts of Britain. There were gymnastic, cycling, walking, and youth clubs, and a textile operatives hockey league, that were exclusive to women. There was, however, as much, if not more gender conflict over leisure. Men had the football (Dens Park the home of Dundee F.C. was opened in 1899) and women increasingly the cinema, but while these could, and did, provoke at least discussion on how leisure money and time should be spent, it was alcohol that would lead to political conflict. While this is explored below (see chapter 8), almost all forms of leisure was collectivistic reflecting and adding to the community networks of work, housing, and kin.

Figure 3–4: Ruby Hart's mother on the plettie



(Source: Ruby Hart, Barassie Court History Group).

Older women and community

The most important networks in terms of community belonged to the women, particularly older women. As amongst the urban poor of England, older women were often 'the guardians of the group consciousness'. They were 'the repositories of intimate knowledge of each family and the means by which was passed on information that might be useful to their families or to their neighbours'. Thus women were transformed into matriarchs, 'albeit matriarchs whose strength was hidden behind a patriarchal facade' (Chinn, 1991, pp. 9-10). Evidence of the considerable presence of such women recurs in the life stories gathered from Dundee. One example of this would be Mrs MacIntosh, who describes her role as historical consultant for younger members of the family (ADD 04/A/2). These were women with strong opinions, attitudes, and beliefs. They were also more than willing to share their views with their families and the wider community, as is underlined in a number of oral testimonies. John Bannerman's story is representative not so much in detail, but in describing the strength of these women. John was born into a family of jute workers. His mother decided to convert to Catholicism in 1930.

If meh granny [mother's mother] had found out she'd a shot, them all. She was a real Highlander. Oh she hated anything to do with the Irish. And meh father was Irish ... Eh remember one night he come home and says to her (he was drunk like), 'Yer an auld cunt.' She lifted a tumbler, 'Eh'm an auld cunt am Eh ? Well here's something fae an auld cunt.' Hit him in the head with a tumbler an split his head, he had to go and get it stitched. Oh she was a real tough one (DOHP 076/A/2).

Older men were more likely to find themselves living in other people's households than older women (see chapters 5 and 11), suggesting that older women were more likely to have a greater degree of independence and to become the heads of their own households. There is little indication from either the statistical or from experiential data that older women were isolated from either family or community. As women grew older, and it was mostly older women who are recalled as central to this context, they were to play an important part in community life. While the gossips are frequently described as 'old', equally so are those who often provided the greatest assistance to family and neighbours. Therefore grandmothers, both married and widowed, are often identified as both the standard bearers for 'good' behaviour, and as a source of support. During times of low and irregular wages their importance increased as young mothers found themselves forced into seeking paid work. When called upon older women would also provide accommodation for the children of hard pressed parents. Elizabeth Bryson in her autobiography, for example, explains that her relatively better-off parents were impoverished in the 1880s after her father lost his clerical job in the foundry, 'during a jute slump'. He then lost the family savings in 'a business venture'. Elizabeth was 'sent', as a result of the family's difficulties, to live with her grandmother' (Bryson, 1966, p. 20 and p. 30). The practice continued into the twentieth century, and so when Donald Christie's mother died, in 1915, his sister went to stay with their widowed grandmother (DOHP 027/A/1). This pattern may have been temporarily reinforced with the introduction of the Means Test at the end of 1931, which made looking after children at home a basis for ineligibility of unemployment insurance (see chapter 10).

While there is much evidence of grannies looking after grandchildren as a duty to kin, at times of family crisis the task was not always carried out well. Some were disciplinarians as the popular song, 'I'll Awa Hame' recorded, the first verse of which states:

Noo I'll no bide wi ma granny nae mair,
 I'll no bide wi ma granny nae mair,
 She skelps ma face an' she pu's ma hair,
 An' I'll no bide wi ma granny nae mair.

The Dundee Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, established in 1890, also reported cases where ageing women were incapable of looking after their wards. Neglect, however, happened in households headed by older men as well. At the same time poor health and old age may have impaired the abilities to care for young children, but child neglect was probably at least as much of a problem amongst the families of younger adults. It should be noted that the Society's records suggest that they were as likely to intervene in cases where children required protection in male headed households with 'fathers drinking', as they were in either grandparents' households, or when parents were living apart. In January 1920, for example, while there were 24 reported cases in which 'parents lived apart', there were 23 cases involving husbands' drinking and nine involving mothers' drinking, 'two of whom were soldiers wives' (Dundee Central Library, newspaper cutting book, 3, p. 35; Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, MS 54; and Dundee Archive and Record Centre MS GD/PC 3/1).

It should also be recognised that a grandmother in Dundee was not necessarily even related to the family she offered assistance to. Indeed the term granny seems to refer to the older woman upstairs, who might look after children after school, or the paid childminder in the next close, as much as to parents' mothers. One woman in a written contribution to a local community history exhibition recalled the central place such women held in the lives of children. After describing in detail her 'Granny's' house, 'Granny's' husband, a refuge collector or scaffy, and the three daughters, who were all weavers, she concludes that:

The fact is that Granny was no blood relation. My natural grannies were all dead by the time I was born. One of Granny's daughters saw me in my pram when I was ten months old and asked my mother if she could take me out, so began an association which is amongst my dearest childhood memories. ('Lochee Lives - The Return').

Both before and after the first world war 'grannies' would provide a service as childminders for younger working women (see for example DOHP 025/A/1, born in 1907, DOHP 090/A/1, born in 1908, and DOHP 016/A/1, born in 1911). This childminding service was supplemented by other women, like Lizzie Duncan's mother, in the neighbourhoods who looked after the young children of waged mothers, usually for no more than a modest fee (BCHG VT 10). Children were, in turn, always a good source of information for 'grannies', and taken together with the general gossip, it is not surprising that these women played a pivotal part in the community. Older women, including older widows, were thus playing a central role in community life both before and during the inter-war years. They continued to be an important element, economically and socially, of community life even when they were partially or

completely retired from textile employment, although most worked on into old age. Some were widowed, but like their unmarried sisters, they were not women isolated in their garrets, including even the minority of those who were living alone. Recollections by kin of grandmothers who lived on their own suggests that these were older women who wanted, and chose to, live alone, particularly if their married children, who might often be living near by, had large, young, households. Such grannies would help their kin-folk out, but not at the expense of their own independence. For example Georgina Keith noted that her granny 'wouldn't stay with meh mother', because her mother 'had a big family and granny liked her attic' (BCHG VT 16). Beyond waged work, the relationship between these older women, including those who lived in female household heads, and the wider community was a positive one. It involved not only child minding, but also caring for relatives, watching over neighbours, and a host of other activities. These women provided cohesion to the life of the collective community.

Conclusion

The link between waged work and the family was particularly strong for women in Dundee in three areas. Firstly, there were the large numbers of women in waged work. Secondly, there were the large numbers of households dependent upon women's wages. Thirdly, the concentration of women in a single industry produced a common and widespread shopfloor culture, which in turn influenced family life (see chapters 7 and 11). Waged work kept women in the city and the lack of waged work encouraged men to leave (see chapter 6). The community networks that grew up around kin were

responding to the need to find waged work, and were also important in the securing of accommodation. That such accommodation was normally to be found in the tenement blocks, with their communal spaces, added to community collectiveness, in which information, morals, and standards were shared, or at least assumed to be shared. This collectivity can be seen in the leisure activities that emerged in this period. Leisure itself was divided by gender, but it is worth noting that leisure space, both in the home and in communal areas, often belonged to women. Men had the pub (see chapter 8), but women were in control of many other spaces.

The central role of older women in the community is another aspect worth noting. These women, in Dundee, were often living independently of kin, and often acting informally policing community life. They were often able to offer assistance to kin, and even non-kin, in terms of childminding and even accommodation. Their position as matriarchs is crucial to an understanding of how households related to community.

Such was the strength of the collective community that elements of inter-war neighbourliness and mutual solidarity survived into the 1960s. Gina Ross arrived in Dundee at the end of the Second World War, recruited and transported from Italy by a Dundee jute firm. She married a Dundonian, who died after 13 years of marriage, leaving Gina alone with five children. She returned to work as a spinner, and the

'woman next door' looked after the 'two wee ones' (DOHP 002/A/2).⁶ The 'woman next door' is perhaps the most visible evidence of the overlap between the household, family and wider community. In the inter-war years, the neighbours might have included kin, possibly workmates, and probably members of female headed households. After the 1930s this was to become less so, and the collective nature of Dundee's 'traditional' community, after a few decades in existence, was set to change. A new stage in the history of household composition and community was set to begin, but some of the earlier developments took a long time to disappear.

⁶ Life was not easy. Gina remembers being tired, 'Eh canno manage to sleep, because on the nerves all the time', and returning from work to dirty dishes and hungry children. She became so tired that on one occasion she turned up three hours early for work at the mill.

Chapter 4: Poverty, child labour and family duty

Introduction

Poverty, the early entry into work, and a deep sense of family duty were major features in the lives of Dundonians. Poverty, it is argued, arose from low wages, irregular employment, and high prices, rather than from a social structure that included large numbers of female headed households. It was the economic conditions that not only created and shaped these households, but also ensured a level of child labour that involved larger numbers and was much more persistent in Dundee than was the case in the other Scottish cities. This early entry into work was to create one of the least formally educated workforces in Scotland, with a large proportion of the industrial workforce continuing to enter employment at a young age even after legislation intended to limit child labour had been introduced.

The continuity in childhood labour also meant that the shift in balance from children as servants of families to children as individuals served by families was more gradual and occurred much later than has been identified by a number of social scientists (including Macfarlane, 1978, p. 59). Even subsequent revisionist accounts, such as Jamieson's (1987), which have challenged the time-scale of this change from family to individual as the important unit, both in terms of class and gender, have tended to under-estimate the variety of experiences between localities. In the woman's town the importance of loyalty to the family, or feelings of family duty, continued up to, and in some cases

beyond, the Second World War. This was particularly so for young women who could enter the labour market, legally or illegally, during periods of household poverty.

Finch (1989) has correctly questioned 'notions of duty to assist kin', and has emphasised 'the significance of the principle of mutual advantage' (in Drake, ed., 1994, p. 95). Family duty, however, can be identified existing in households containing children. This duty tended to be one-sided, and was part of the wider belief that children should serve parents. The importance, and nature, of children's duties to parents is explored further in relation to unwaged work (in chapter 11), but family duty is also evident in relation to waged work, and in the resulting widespread belief amongst older women that they were never allowed to fulfil their aspirations.

That aspirations were frustrated amongst many women in Dundee, as is evident in their testimonies, could simply be explained by retrospective perspectives from a point in time that has seen advances in the opportunities for women that have included a change from family duty to individual fulfilment. On the other hand it is clear that both child and parent aspirations had changed prior to the possibilities of achieving these aspirations, since developments in the employment market meant that opportunities for men developed much more quickly than they did for women. To live with the difficulties of unmet rising aspirations required a powerful notion of family duty amongst female children.

The poverty of labour

The long decline of Dundee's textile industry as charted by a number of historians (see for example Lenman et al., 1969), is more easily perceived in terms of profitability than in employment. Shut out of continental markets in the 1880s and 1890s by tariffs and competition, the Dundee based industry was at the same time losing the extensive export outlets in Asia, Australia, and along the western sea-board of the American continent to the Calcutta industry. The problems of competition were widely recognised by contemporaries (see *Dundee Year Book 1896, 1897*, pp. 91-5, and Wallace, 1909), and any doubts that Dundee's declining fortunes were intimately connected to the industry in India were finally dispelled in contemporary minds in May 1919 with a dramatic demonstration of Calcutta's supremacy when the Angus Jute Works in Dundee was sold and all its machinery transferred to Calcutta (Jones, 1968, p. 288). Such an analysis of the role of Indian jute in the decline of the Dundee industry has been somewhat revised by economic historians, but few would disagree that the success of overseas competition was a clear indication of the problems that faced Dundee jute.

It is also generally agreed that the response of the Dundee manufacturers exacerbated these problems. From as early as the 1880s the jute industry had been caught in a cycle of over-expansion and over-production. Manufacturers attempted to produce more as a way of driving down the costs of production, which, in turn, led to a glut of the product on the market, and a further slump in prices. Productive capacity not only increased in Dundee, by as much as 20 per cent in two years during the 1880s, but at

the same time manufacturers based in India had doubled their capacity in jute production. The 1884 recession in jute was identified at the time as the result of over-production, but was merely the beginning of a 'descending path' upon which Dundee's merchant manufacturers had stepped (Gauldie, 1987, p. 114). The path was to include the building of larger factories, and the employment of thousands of workers. While jute was much less profitable from the third quarter of the nineteenth century onwards (Howe, 1982, p. 12), more families were becoming directly dependent upon the wages of the industry. In 1891 almost a third of all waged and salaried work in Dundee was to be found in the textile sector. This proportion was to rise to a half in 1901, and then to fall back to two-fifths in 1911.

While working class male employment at the turn of the century was much more diverse than female employment in Dundee, the greatest concentration was again in the textile industry. It has been calculated that in 1911, after the ratio had declined, the textile industry was 22.84 times as important proportionately for men in Dundee as it was for men in Scotland as a whole, whereas, in comparison, for female workers in the industry the figure was 11.91 (Rodger, 1985, p. 38). Even after the First World War, and after the middle class suburb of Broughty Ferry was brought within the city boundaries, industrial employment, and textiles in particular, continued to dominate.

While the growth of male employment in the tertiary sector becomes more evident, it ^{female} is not as significant as in other regions of Britain. In 1921 textiles still accounted for 18.2 per. cent. of male employment, compared with 17.2 per. cent. in metal working.

Figure 4-1: Percentage of Females in Selected Occupational Groups as a Ratio of All Occupied Females in 1901

	%
Textiles	73.56
Domestic	8.00
Food, confectionery, etc.	5.20
Professional	2.79
Other	10.45

Source: Census of Scotland, 1901

While noting the importance of textiles to the female job market in 1901 (as shown in Figure 4-1), it is also worth noticing that other sectors were relatively small, and that there was little presence of women in either the professional sector, or in occupations that could be described as 'white blouse'. The liberation, respectability, and even security, that jobs in the professional sector might have offered in some form or other (John, ed., 1986, p. 17), was less of an option for women in Dundee. Similarly, in the male employment market only 2.5 per cent of male jobs could be described as professional, with a meagre 5.6 per cent in the commercial sectors (as shown in Figure 4-2). The failure of the growth of a professional sector is reflected in the numbers of those employed in domestic service in Dundee in comparison with the other cities. In Edinburgh, while domestic service had declined as a proportion of women's employment in the late nineteenth century, it was still around 40 per cent on the eve of the First World War, Aberdeen experienced a similar fall to 25 per cent in the early 1900s, while Glasgow's was around 20 per cent. In Dundee, between 1871-1911, the figure was a steady 8 to 10 per cent.

Figure 4–2: Percentage of Males in Selected Occupational Groups as a Ratio of All Occupied Males in 1901

	%
Textiles	26.06
Metals	14.33
Conveyancing	12.96
Building	9.48
Food, confectionery, etc.	8.33
Commercial	5.63
Domestic	2.53
Other	20.68

Source: Census of Scotland, 1901

The textile sector by the end of the nineteenth century was capable of rapidly swinging from boom to slump, so much so that manufacturers could not identify a ‘normal level of ... trade’; it was ‘either very good trade or very bad trade’ (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/CC, 6, p. 282). The First World War, and the two years that followed, provided large, if temporary, profits for the industry. More importantly, however, the War reinforced the very trends in manufacturing and marketing that were to accelerate the long term decline of the industry. Competition in finer jute goods was abandoned in favour of the course goods suitable for warfare, with any possibilities of improvements in product diversification left unexplored. As early as 1915 almost three-quarters of Dundee’s industrial production was for Government departments,

and it was 'boasted that Dundee was producing one million sandbags per day at this time' (Howe, 1982, p. 12). At the same time Government demand and protection led to a further neglect of the international markets. Only one-third of Dundee jute was exported by 1921 compared to three-quarters in 1900 (Marwick, 1964, p. 158). The jute industry returned by the end of 1920 to a position where manufacturers, such as John Robertson of Unijute, were restating the pre-war complaint that 'the efficiency of production hardly affected profits - all depended on the price of raw materials' (cited in Gauldie, 1987, p. 114).

Another feature of Dundee employment, closely associated with the textiles industry, was the irregularity of waged work both before and after the First World War. The good times of regular employment in textiles, mainly the years of international armed conflict, were unable to compensate for the decades of lay-offs and interrupted wages. Before 1914 the 'entire textile sector in Dundee could be said to be seasonal' (Rodger, 1985, p. 46), and in the inter-war years a depressingly similar pattern can be found with around a half of Dundee's industrial workforce continuing to remain directly dependent on textiles, and continuing to face enforced breaks from waged work. In the inter-war years unemployment in the industry probably exceeded 50 per cent at times, and it was a situation that continued all the way up to the Second World War, with textiles unemployment 'running at about 20 per cent' in 1939 (Butt, 1985, p. 224). The economic conditions in the textile trade may have been different before and after World War One, but the outcome for job and wage security was similar.

If the textile industry was showing signs of difficulty by 1900, Dundee's other industries were displaying the symptoms of crisis. This was particularly true in the maritime sector, but 'the eclectic "other manufacturing" grouping actually fell by 50 per cent in the 1890s' (Rodger, 1985, p. 41). By 1900 Dundee's economy could be described as failing to develop beyond a narrow band of products (Lenman et al., 1969, p. 37). The textile industry itself was now heavily based on jute processing and manufacturing, combining the worst of all possible worlds: a cheap specialised product, which was under threat from overseas competition based on still cheaper production costs. At the same time many other jobs in other industries, including the tertiary sector, continued to rely upon the health of the city's textile industry (see the *Census of Scotland*, 1921, iii, pp. 90-1). The narrow economic base was one in which those industries outside the processing and production of textile products were often dependent upon the textile sector. This dependency was to reach into the inter-war years; in 1921, for example, the leading Dundee engineering combine of Urquhart, Lindsay and Robertson Orchar made 95 per cent of jute machinery.

In short most Dundonians' incomes, by the beginning of the twentieth century, were reliant, either directly or indirectly, upon the increasingly unstable and uncertain jute industry. Poverty in Dundee was neither automatically the lot of single adult women, nor headed female households, nor even married women who worked for wages from necessity (see chapter 6). It was certainly more likely that male headed households with large numbers of dependants experienced a degree of long term financial difficulty, particularly those with young children and wives unable to return to waged

work, because of the associated commitments involved in looking after these children. Even this, however, is too simple an interpretation of the periodic and widespread distress throughout the working class that can be identified in both contemporary and oral evidence. Periods of difficulty could be aggravated at critical points in the life cycles of households, such as when children were young or when adult wage earners became infirm through the ageing process, but the periodic recessions in the textile reliant economy was a much more common factor that could reduce even the better off to destitution.

The family of a relatively well paid bookkeeper, whose children were attending a private school, for example, found themselves in penury during the recession of the 1880s. After the family's furniture was sold from under them, one daughter, rather typically, was sent to live with her grandmother, and the parents, along with their six other children, moved into a two-bedroom tenement house, and so began the 'long, hard, uphill road' to recovery of the family's fortunes (Bryson, 1966, p. 31). Similarly it was no guarantee that a weaver married to jute foremen in the inter-war period would avoid severe financial difficulties (BCHG VT 03). Even those who might be thought as secure from the volatile textiles sector were tied to the fortunes of that sector, including distribution and commerce. Shops traditionally closed down during textile holidays, since unpaid holidays for textile workers meant poor takings, and short-time working, lock-outs, and strikes, could also cut into the living standards of shopkeepers. A pharmacist's daughter recalls her father's shop losing business when the Camperdown Works temporarily closed in 1923, 'Things weren't good at all in

Lochee ... my father had a very hard time', she recalls (DOHP 044/A/2). Suggestions, therefore, that poverty was limited to certain types of household (Gordon, 1991, pp. 144-6 and p. 166), or to an impoverished underclass (Walker, 1988, pp. 56-72), or even to a broader section of the working class, that is mill workers (Walker, 1979, pp. 43-5; Kay, ed., 1980, p. 40; Gordon, 1991, pp. 157-63), are incorrect. Few working class families in Dundee were financially secure in the face of the regular periods of textile recession and wider unemployment.

The high cost of living contributed as much to widespread poverty as irregularity of income. Richard Rodger (1985) has calculated that by 1912, when the differential had already narrowed, for 'an identical basket of food Dundonians paid 10.2 per cent more, and Glaswegians 5.7 per cent more than Mancunians' (pp. 42-3). The Board of Trade's cost of living enquiry of that year concluded that coal and meat in Dundee were more expensive than in the other Scottish major cities, while male wages were lower with the exception of Aberdeen (as shown in Figure 4-3). That prices tended to be higher stemmed from a class structure in which there were large number of low paid workers and a tiny middle class, 'not only far fewer than in Aberdeen or Edinburgh but were also below the national average' (Rodger, 1985, pp. 30-3). The result was that the local demand for a broad range of goods and services was extremely weak in Dundee. This missing purchasing power, necessary to sustain ancillary occupations, including retailing, house maintenance, and clothing, also meant that there was no mechanism for cushioning variations in volume of overall business and no counterweight to the volatility of industrial employment. Complaints about the high

cost of living in Dundee were to continue even after prices fell during the First World War. While discussing lamplighters' wages, the town council was informed in 1920 that, 'Dundee Trades Council had proved their contention to the satisfaction of Mr Churchill, that Dundee was the dearest city to live in with one exception - a dockyard town' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cutting book, 3, p. 174).

Figure 4-3: Index of rents, prices and wages in four Scottish cities, 1912 (percentage change between 1905 and 1912), with London = 100

	Dundee	Aberdeen	Glasgow	Edinburgh
Rents	67 (0)	61 (-1)	67 (0)	70 (-1)
All food	105 (+11)	103 (+16)	103 (+10)	107 (+11)
Meat	114	110	106	110
Other food	102	101	101	105
Coal	97 (+21)	86 (+14)	71 (+31)	79 (+30)
Wages: Building labourer	79 (+1)	71 (0)	81 (0)	79 (0)
Wages: Skilled engineer	89 (+10)	85 (+8)	96 (+8)	93 (+10)

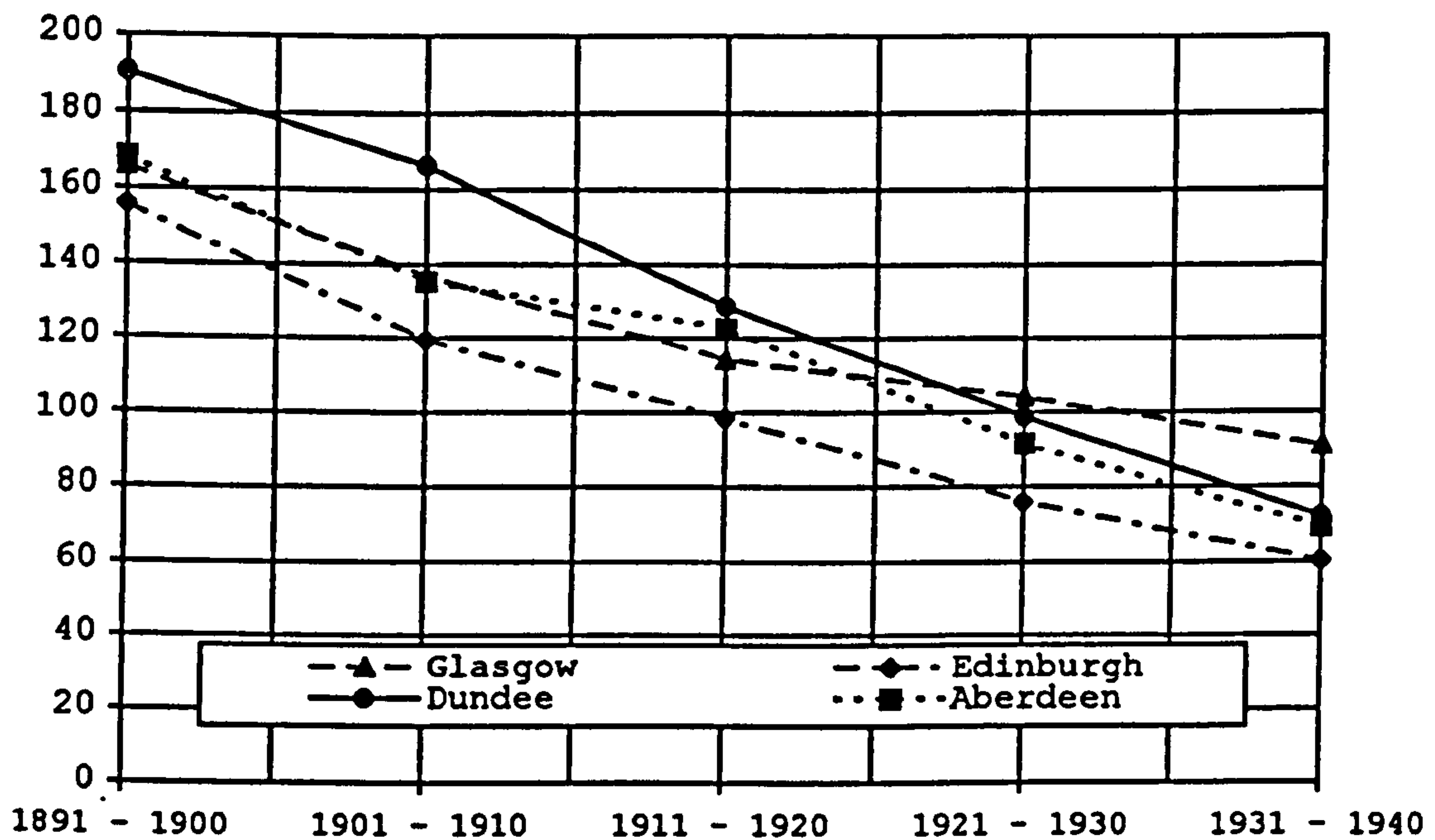
Source: Board of Trade cost of living enquiry, town summaries (BPP, 1913, Cd. 6955, pp. 268-9).

Both before and after the First World War the textile industry could draw upon a surplus of skilled and unskilled labour. This pool of excess labour was regularly replenished by the strategy of textile employers paying off young workers, a procedure that was followed for decades. This affected males in particular, for once they were old enough to command an adult wage they were replaced with a new, and younger,

generation of workers. Many men who remained in Dundee experienced periods of unemployment and spent their working lives in a variety of jobs. This development was to span at least three generations of Dundee males, and the living testimonies of men often include a variety of work experiences. For example in the space of some twenty-seven years one man, who was far from being an extreme case, was in five different occupations as well as being conscripted into the army during the Second World War (DOHP 076/A/1). The pattern of male working life was typically one that included unskilled, insecure, and irregular work with periodic returns to the town's staple textile industry. There was pressure for even skilled male workers to find work outside of the town, during times of deep depression. This tendency was increased by male wage rates in Dundee's skilled jobs being generally lower than in either Glasgow or Edinburgh. In shipbuilding, both before and after the national uniform wages structure agreement in 1929-30, and amongst fitters in engineering from at least 1900 to 1950, male wage rates in Dundee were less than that of Glasgow or Edinburgh (Cairncross, 1954, pp. 163-5).

As a result of low wages, irregular income, and high prices, the most proletarian city in Scotland experienced - on a regular basis - a depth of poverty unmatched in the rest of urban Scotland. Given that the infant mortality rate can be perceived as 'an index not only of child health but also of ... social conditions,' (Hamilton, 1987, pp. 236-7), then the conditions of life in Dundee was for many years much worse than that found in the other Scottish cities.

Figure 4-4: Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 births) expressed as moving averages for the decades between 1891-1940



Source: Registrar General (Scotland), Detailed Reports, 1881-1940.

The decade averages for the period suggest that Dundee had clearly the highest rate in three out of the five decades between 1891 and 1940, and it was not until the 1920s that the rate for Dundee was lower than that for Glasgow. Dundee outstripped the three other cities, between the peak in the 1890s, when almost a fifth of all infants died before their first birthday, to the 1920s, when the figure had sharply fallen to just under 113 in every 1000 (see Figure 4-4). If we accept the infant mortality rate as some sort of crude indication of poverty, then any progress after the 1890s, was never enough to completely reduce the gap between Dundee and the other cities until after the First World War. It is worth noting that although Aberdeen's declining rate was not as

steady as Dundee's, with a shallow fall between 1901 and 1919, even this was not enough to displace Dundee from the city's unenviable position.

In summary, a large number of households in the city experienced life on the edge of poverty, with irregular income in the central sector as textiles ensuring that this poverty was spread throughout the working class, affecting others beyond the industry including those employed in other industries, such as engineering and even the service sector. It is little wonder that many older Dundonians place emphases on the importance of job security, nor should it be surprising that waged work was such an important part of their early life.

Children at work

The belief that male householders should work for enough wages to keep their families, without their wives resorting to paid employment, was often no more than an ideal for most Europeans at this time (John, ed., 1986, p. 7). In a city like Dundee, where many women were earning wages out of necessity, it is not surprising to find that the ideal of the 'family wage' was even less relevant to the working class (see chapter 6). As late as the 1930s J. P. Day (1932), in a 'career guide' for working people, argued that, 'a shipyard labourer's family can much more easily find work ... than they can do in the Clyde towns'. According to Day, 'our mills and factories need a large number of young workers,' and 'if the family went to the Clyde the shipyard labourer might earn a little more, but the family might be earning less' (p. 16). The wages of children, as well as adult women, were critical for the survival of households,

and particularly male headed households (see chapters 5 and 6), in a city marked by deep, recurring, poverty.

During the late nineteenth century the removal of children from waged industrial employment was never one of straightforward progress, indeed, with the exception of Aberdeen, the proportion of children 14 years and under in employment actually increased in the Scottish cities between 1881 and 1891. At a time when overall industrial employment was growing, Paisley and then Dundee experienced the largest rises. In these decades it was the children of Dundee who were the most likely to begin working for wages at an earlier age than their counterparts in the other Scottish cities, and they were also more likely to find themselves employed in the industrial sector. There were actually numerically more children, aged ten to fourteen years, working in the industries of Dundee than in either the industries of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, or even in the textile town of Paisley. Only Glasgow had more children at work, but it was only some hundreds more, and that was out of an industrial workforce some four times greater than that found in Dundee (as shown in Figure 4–5). Child industrial labour was therefore much more marked in Dundee at the end of the nineteenth century than was the case in other parts of urban Scotland. As elsewhere girls were much more likely to fall into this category than boys, and although Paisley's employers seem to have become particularly enthusiastic in employing girls rather than boys, between 1881 and 1891, Dundee had a larger proportion of girls in the overall employment totals for both 1881 and 1891.

Figure 4-5: Children aged between 10 and 14 years (inclusive) in industrial waged work as a percentage of a of the total industrial work force, by gender and location, 1881-1891

		Aberdeen	Dundee	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Paisley
	Male	2.84	6.74	2.56	2.25	2.90
1881	Female	5.30	8.66	4.67	4.84	6.62
	Both	8.14	15.40	7.23	7.08	9.52
	Male	3.39	7.64	2.58	2.39	3.81
1891	Female	7.30	10.13	5.21	5.72	9.97
	Both	(0.69)	17.78	7.79	8.11	13.78

Source: Census of Scotland, 1881 and 1891.

10.09?

Many of the arguments supporting child labour in Dundee had been developed in the decade before 1890, and Dundee's industrial employers' commitment to maintaining child labour can be seen in their resistance in the 1880s to attempts by the national State to free childhood from waged work. The importance of children's employment to the local economy, particularly those children who were working part-time and receiving a part-time education, was constantly emphasised by employers. The case against limiting child labour was often expressed in the most alarming of terms, both by the employers and by those who represented their concerns. In 1884, for example, the local Member of Parliament warned that if half-time work was limited, as the Government intended, up to ten spinning mills would face closure as a result. The local Chamber of Commerce immediately launched a campaign in response to this warning,

arguing that the city's practice of employing children should be treated as a special case, and the next year a deputation was sent to London to meet with government ministers (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/CC, 6, p.234, pp. 246-7, and p. 251). At no point did he, or any later spokesmen for the employers, argue that the pay of adult wages should be increased as a way of alleviating family poverty. That they were given 'no encouragement to any expectation' that the requirement of the Act would be relaxed (*Dundee Advertiser*, 3 March 1885) suggests that even as early as the mid-1880s Dundee's employers were somewhat isolated in their defence of child labour. This was a point underlined two years later, in 1886, when the South of Scotland's Chamber of Commerce proposed that the (1878) Factory and Workshop Act's provision of limiting the time children and women could be employed in non-textile factories, should be extended, to 'woollen and other factories'. The directors of the Dundee's Chamber opposed the move, and stated their disapproval (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/CC, 6, pp. 335-6), but were clearly not going to halt the growing movement against child labour and the advance of legislative measures. Similarly when, two years later, the government proposed an amendment bill to the 1878 Factory and Workshop Act, providing holidays in April and October in place of the abolished fast days, the Chamber directed Mr Robertson MP to tell the government that 'such legislation was unnecessary'. Robertson, however, wrote back to say that the 'Holidays Bill' was a private bill and, he said, 'I do not feel that I could take responsibility of opposing it.' (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/CC, 7, p. 65-7).

Instead of simply outlawing child labour by age, legislation during this period was linked to educational standards; failure of children to reach standards meant that they had to remain in school on a full-time basis. It should not be surprising, therefore, that by the early 1890s the opposition to change within Dundee began to focus increasingly on educational issues. This was to be expressed in the crudest of ways with employers suggesting that children of Dundee families were less able scholars than children in Lancashire. Schools and teachers were also blamed for failing to educate children up to the level of education necessary for them to legally become employees. While there may well have been truth in the claim that there were 'low class adventure schools' taking fees and giving poor education in the city (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/CC, 6, p. 234), providing an education for those children who were most likely to enter work at the earliest age was fraught with difficulties. From the local educationalists' position, half-time working posed severe problems, and some of these were included in a surviving summary of an Inspector's Report for one school in 1891. The Report suggested that while standards were rising, the results 'are still some-what poor in quality', and that, 'with the frequent changes taking place in the pupils ... it is almost impossible that a really efficient education can be given them.' The Half-Time Department Log Book for the school records that, in 1890, 447 children left the school, most going on to full-time employment in the mills, while a further 485 were admitted. By the beginning of 1891 there were only 340 on the school roll. The Inspector concluded his report saying, 'No teacher can be rightly blamed for shortcomings in such circumstances' (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, Cowgate School, Half-Time Department Log Book, 1892-1901, pp. 2-3).

The determination of the local employers to maintain the child labour system was evident yet again in 1891, when the Government was considering raising the legal age of half-timers. The Chamber insisted that the local MP, Robertson, 'support the views of the deputation to the Home Secretary in regard to keeping the limit of age for employment of half-timers at 10 years as at present' (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/CC, 7, p. 208). The move failed and the employment of children under the age of eleven on a part-time basis was prohibited, with the legislation coming into effect in 1893. Despite the new legislation, Dundee's leading position as the Scottish city of child labour remained unchallenged. In 1901 there were proportionally around twice as many children working in Dundee than in Paisley, four times more than Glasgow or Aberdeen, and seven times as many as Edinburgh. Both male and female children were much more likely to be in employment before their fourteenth birthday in Dundee than elsewhere, although the largest difference between the cities was to be found amongst females. While boys were three times as likely to be in waged work in Dundee than in Glasgow, the figure for females was closer to five times, and even ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ the cotton town of Paisley had around 11 per cent of girls in waged employment, compared to Dundee with over 16 per cent. Similarly a larger proportion of children aged fourteen years of age in Dundee were in waged work than in either Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, or Paisley (as shown in Figure 4-6). As T. C. Smout has noted, 'the continuing employment of girls between the ages of twelve and fourteen raised problems more reminiscent of the early days of Queen Victoria than of the twentieth century' (Smout, 1986, p. 96).

Figure 4–6: Percentage of total occupied to total children (occupied and unoccupied) by location and age (between 10 to 13 years inclusive and 14 to under 15 years) in 1901.

		Aberdeen	Dundee	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Paisley
	Males	5.72	17.72	2.74	5.52	6.79
10 to 13 years	Females	3.58	16.36	2.10	3.54	11.17
	Total	4.66	17.03	2.42	4.53	8.94
	Males	72.62	82.79	57.47	73.17	77.49
14 years	Females	56.10	77.28	44.66	56.80	74.19
	Total	64.09	80.00	50.89	64.83	75.81

Source: Census of Scotland, 1901.

In 1901 the school leaving age was raised to twelve years, and the 1911 *Census of Scotland* returns seem to underline the effect of this change. ‘Perhaps the most striking feature revealed,’ the Census report suggests, ‘is the great decrease in the number of occupied children of between ten and fifteen years old’. According to these statistics the numbers of boys and girls, aged from ten to thirteen years, employed in Dundee’s single largest industrial group (Hemp, Jute, Cocoa Manufacture), had dramatically declined in 1911 (*Census of Scotland*, 1901, 1, 3, p. 353; 1911, 1, 3, p. 87). That there was a reduction in the numbers of children 13 years and under in employment after 1901 cannot be denied, but oral evidence suggests that this fall may not have been as great as official statistics claim, and the numbers of working children may well have been underestimated in two ways. Firstly, home working by children tended to be largely unidentified by the contemporary collectors of employment data, partly as a result of the failure of the latter to recognise that, while there were changes in child

labour, there were other ways youngsters could seek wages beyond the textile sector. Impoverished families, before the First World War, staved off starvation by sewing sacks (Kay, ed., 1980 p. 41); after the War, with the development of new technology, sack sewing was removed from the homes of the poor. There were firms, however, in the inter-war years, such as Valentine's - the greeting card manufacturers - who would supply occasional homework. Even historians who believe that half-time working was disappearing by the outbreak of the War concede that children's informal employment as 'messengers or paper sellers' was being described by medical officers as, 'more vicious in its influence than the old half-time system' (cited in Young, 1991, p. 593).

There was a second, more important, way in which the numbers involved in child labour were under-represented in official statistics, and this was through the wide spread circumvention of legislation. Oral and autobiographical evidence strongly suggests that, after the school leaving age was raised, families resorted to defying the law and placed their children in waged textile employment (see for example Stewart, 1967). This was most commonly achieved by children producing the birth certificates of siblings, or even neighbouring children, who were of working age. It would be impossible to calculate how widespread this practice was, but in living memory the term 'false lines' was commonly understood by anyone born before the mid-1920s. While it is impossible to find evidence of employers co-operating with this practice, there was certainly no local drive to stamp it out despite it being recognised by supervisory staff on the shopfloor. Given the employers' record of opposing the removal of children from employment, it might well be argued that any knowledge of

illegal under age working was simply pushed aside. Some children, mainly females, still began work earlier than the legislation intended well into the inter-war period, and clearly foremen and works' managers were aware of the practice.

With so many families dependent upon child wages, the legislation preventing children from working for wages continued, into the twentieth century, to be in direct conflict with the economic realities faced by the working class. Family poverty and early, often illegal, entry into work by children after 1901, particularly amongst women, were recurring themes in the life stories of those born around the First World War. A major reason for this was that underpinning child labour was the relatively high wages that could be made by children and youth. As the *Dundee Advertiser* noted in 1903, 'the female millhand early earns wages much larger than the milliner or housemaid in other Scottish towns' (13 November 1903), but children's rates were high relatively to adult rates, as surviving wages' books verify. For example, a half-timer employed by the Victoria Spinning Company, between 1893 and 1918, was earning at least a third of the pay that an adult women spinner could earn for twice as many hours. Indeed young women between 14 and 17 years could make weekly wages that were not much less than the pay of older women after the First World War (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/Mus 105/1/). The implications of this to household structure in the city is investigated elsewhere (see chapters 5 and 6), but the more general point is that children's wages were high enough to encourage continuing child labour.

While it is correct to note that in 1911, 'the largest single category of workers was women between 25 and 45 years of age', while children and youth under 18 years 'made up about one-third of the [textile] workforce' (Gordon, 1991, p. 150), this tends to obscure the position of youth and children in the earlier decades (as shown in Figure 4-7). In 1891 over 40 per cent of the jute industry were under 20 years of age (over 25 percent were female children and youth), and this was the largest proportion in this age group for all the decades between 1881 and 1911. It was not until 1911 that the percentage of youngsters had fallen to just above a quarter of textile employees. It should be also noted that while the official statistics suggest that the decrease, between 1891 and 1911, in the proportion of younger females (a fall of 9 per cent.) was greater than the decrease for younger males (5.3 per cent.), oral evidence again suggests that it was more common for girls than boys to find themselves in employment before the legal school leaving age.

Oral evidence, while providing examples of women who continued to begin work before they were fourteen after the First World War (see Georgina Keith, BCHG VT 07), does provide impressionistic evidence that there were fewer children under fourteen years in the workforce after 1918 than before. There were fewer families and employers circumventing the laws on child labour, although it should be noted that there were still exemptions from education sought and obtained for young children. It could be argued that legislation was the root cause for this change (see Smyth, 1990, p. 100), but it is more likely that the reasons were much more complex. It is more likely that change involved a growing perception by employers of the dangers of child

labour to sustained production, and, more importantly, the decline in the need for families, particularly those families living in male headed households, to have young children in jute work.

Figure 4-7: Number by age and gender 1881-1911 (percentage of total workers) employed in Dundee jute industry

	Males		Females		Total employees	
	Under 20 years	Over 20 years	Under 20 years	Over 20 years	All under 20 years	All employees
1891	3747 (14.4)	3322 (12.8)	6691 (25.8)	12203 (47.0)	10438 (40.2)	25963
1901	3937 (11.9)	5264 (15.9)	7034 (21.2)	16942 (51.1)	10971 (33.1)	33177
1911	3120 (9.1)	7922 (23.0)	5787 (16.8)	17581 (53.0)	8907 (25.9)	34410

Source: Census of Scotland, 1891-1911.

For the many families who depended on jute wages the First World War could well have been a watershed, at least as important to them as it was to the employers, regarding their attitudes to child labour. During the War, as a result of industrial action, adult wages had significantly increased, and for the first time in the memory of workers these wages were regular, since the war demand for jute products meant full production. Although this period of improving wages lasted only a few years, perhaps five or six at most, it marked a break in the tradition of illegal entry into work. There was also a temporary improvement in employment, which partly produced a new confidence amongst workers in their ability to improve wages, and there was therefore

less need for children to be pressed into the industry at an early age. Renewed insecurity and wage reductions did not lead to a return to the levels of child labour experienced before 1918. Changes in Poor Law (see Levitt, 1988), and the extension and struggle over Unemployment Insurance, including the wider acceptance of relief (see chapter 9) contributed to changing attitudes regarding the age it was generally thought acceptable for children to enter employment. At the same time textile workers continued to be concerned about the removal of juveniles from work; indeed there were instances during the inter-war years when adult workers were willing to accept wage reductions in return for the redeployment of young workers,¹ but the average age of workers in Dundee's textiles continued to rise. This had more to do with the opportunities taken by employers to restructure their workforces by removing children, combined with the break in continuity of the need by many, but not all, families for young children to work, than it had with the legislation that had begun to outlaw child labour in the late nineteenth century.

That a larger proportion of Dundee's children was beginning work earlier, and that the wages they brought home were important for much longer, than was the case elsewhere contributed to the later average age of marriage, and, somewhat paradoxically given the importance of children's wages, a lower birth rate than in the

¹ For example spinners in the Ashton Works in 1934 settled for a 10d reduction in weekly pay for the redeployment of 'girl' shifters as bobbin-setters (University of Dundee, MS 84/5/2).

other cities. These outcomes are explored later (in chapter 6), but to address the central question of the relationship between parents and children, and daughters in particular, we need to further consider the role of waged employment. While there does not seem to be a great deal of difference in this relationship from the findings of Jamieson (1987), at least in the home, waged work did produce some interesting differences. Children's role as workers reinforced parental attitudes regarding the need for child discipline, and the prolonged importance of child labour also meant that the 'balance of loyalties' between 'self versus family' was also prolonged. The question of 'whether the "family" or the "individual" was regarded as the ultimate unit' (p. 120), not only remained much more open in terms of age, but also in terms of historical time. Even with rising aspirations after the First World War, the demands of the family ensured that children's aspirations, and indeed parental aspirations for their children, were confounded by an economy that continued to demand children for employment at the earliest opportunities.

The adults, who sent their children before they were fourteen years old into mill and factory in the years after 1914, were often amongst the most hard pressed; that they were the most likely to seek exemptions from full-time education for their daughters and sons also testifies to this. Thus while youth working alongside relatives in the pre-war years were able to engage in militant action that was tolerated by adults, this was less so in the period after the War (see chapter 7), when the numbers of families depending upon child labour had declined, but dependency amongst the minority had remained at least as great, if not greater, than it had been before. Nor had dependency

on the wages of older children and youth significantly declined in the city. Dundee, as late as 1931, continued to have the largest proportion of those aged fourteen to twenty years in occupations in urban Scotland. There were 85.6 per cent of males in that age group in work, while Aberdeen had the second largest percentage of males, at 83.3 per cent. This difference between the Scottish cities was again even more marked amongst females: 85.2 per cent of women in the same age group in Dundee were employed, while the figure for Paisley, with the second largest proportion of occupied young females in Scotland, was 82.7; and then Glasgow with 76.9 per cent.

Family duty

Low and irregular wages, that were the norm for many adult workers, particularly amongst adult men, acted as an incentive for children to become wage earners as soon as opportunities arose (see for example DOHP 013/D/1 and Kay, ed., 1980, p. 39). Before 1914 the belief in family duty was well established amongst children, who might not have enjoyed working in the textiles, but 'very early ... learned the habit of self-discipline', with 'wishes, desires, hopes, ambitions, ... dutifully suppressed in the interests of those I loved, my father, mother, and brothers' (Brooksbank, 1971, pp. 6-7). This sense of family responsibility amongst children continues to be evident in recollections of the years after the First World War, and was reinforced by the existence of powerful family networks in the city's major workplaces. Eleanor Gordon has correctly pointed out that, 'Dundee's jute industry was not so hierarchically organised as the Lancashire cotton industry'; unlike Lancashire, Dundee did not operate a sub-contracting system, which hired men who in turn recruited their families.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that, 'there is little evidence of a family economy or patrimonialism in the Scottish jute industry'. The importance of family recruitment in the Dundee mills and factories should not be underestimated, and it should be recognised that 'family and neighbourhood connections' had much more than 'a limited role to play in the recruitment process' (Gordon, 1991, pp. 152-3). It is very probable that family systems of recruitment were in existence before the beginning of the twentieth century, since child labour was so important to household income and the easiest way to secure work for children was in the workplaces where family members were already. Many a life story is therefore marked by not only an early entry into textile employment, but also by the part family played in finding work. This continued during the First World War (see DOHP 003/A/1 for example) and afterwards (DOHP 067/A/1 and DOHP 084/A/1 for example).

It should also be recognised that there were even instances of 'patrimonialism'. Husbands and fathers may not have been 'in a position of authority over family members in the workplace' (Gordon, 1991, pp. 152-3), but the small minority of men who worked alongside wives and daughters did not leave their authority at home (see for example DOHP 073/A/1). However, given the large ratio of women to men in the textile workforce, family recruitment networks was not only more important for women than for men, but the authority of women amongst younger family members was much more significant than the role played by men. Such authority was evident in a number of cases where young women worked alongside mothers or other older female relatives including older sisters (DOHP 049/A/1). Many others found that this

supervision was more informal, but no less effective, like Lizzie Duncan, who, in 1915, received an exemption from school, aged 13 years. Lizzie says that there was eventually, 'six of us [children] in the one mill', as well as her mother and father, 'and that's not counting the [other] relatives'. In her recollections of her early years in the mill, as in the recollections of others, it is her mother's authority over the rest of the family that is stressed again and again (BCHG VT 07).

Young women seldom remained working beside their relatives. Often they left for a job in another works at the earliest opportunity, beginning the pattern of employment that would mark the industry as one with a high turnover of labour. The power of older relatives, particularly female relatives, over youth in the workplace was certainly less formalised, and probably operated for less time in an individual work life, than that found in Lancashire, but it is easy to see how family members working together for the same employer, or even in the same industry, could assist in maintaining factory discipline, as well as maintaining the child labour that generated the wages necessary for many a family's well-being. There was another side to this, however, as a number of women pointed out, a family who banded together in a single workplace could 'stick together', both in the face of, and in solidarity with, other workers.

One result of early entry into employment was that for many young women educational opportunities were limited. There was, however, noticeable differences in attitudes between those who left school after the 1918 and those who left before.

While older interviewees accepted the need to leave school at the earliest opportunity,

this acceptance becomes less marked by uncritical compliance the further the informant's year of leaving school is away from the First World War. Many of those women who began work after 1918, later expressed a sense of bitterness at the sacrifices that they had made when they left school for waged work, and recall feelings of frustration that their childhood hopes amounted to so little, with 'talent just lost' (DOHP 064/B/1, see also DOHP 085/A/2). Another discernible change was in the increasing importance in the birth order of children. Before the First World War most children would have been expected to begin work in the mills and factories, but after the war divisions within families begin to emerge, with different expectations for older and younger children. So it was the 'ones who were older [who] didn't have a chance of going to another school - a secondary school,' since, 'the minute they were finished with school they were out at work' (DOHP 066/A/2). The greatest pressure on the incomes of families occurred during the time when the children were too young to work, hence the importance of older siblings leaving school as early as possible and entering paid employment. Oldest daughters were much more likely to 'hand up' all their wages to their mothers and receive pocket money for a longer time their younger sisters. In contrast younger daughters were much more likely to retain their wages and contribute towards rent and food, commonly known as 'being on your board'.

Few young women, regardless of their birth position, were excused household tasks, and unpaid domestic work was one of the most common causes for the paucity of education amongst females. There were numerous instances of daughters kept off school to undertake other household duties. Often this was a necessity for families

where both parents were in waged work and other relatives were unable to help. Of course this situation existed before the First World War, but was set to continue into the inter-war years. The early socialisation of daughters as family carers was therefore to have an important effect on the education of these women, and was to continue for some women into the 1950s in Dundee. Even in a city where girls often faced additional domestic duties, because of waged mothers, school teachers seldom relaxed their discipline. Mrs Millar, for example, recalled that she was regularly punished for being late for class. She explained that each morning, after her mother had left for work in the mill, she had to look after, dress, and feed the 'babies', wash-up, then take the youngest to a baby minder, and then 'do a little shopping'. Despite these pressures on children to leave school at an early age and to engage in domestic work, parents had aspirations for their daughters, and these aspirations were increasing in the inter-war period. Mrs Millar says of her father and mother, a foundry machine operator and a jute worker, that, 'they had such dreams about the children growing up an going into the professions, they did!'. 'But', she adds, 'they were so anxious to get them from school an' start at work to bring the extra money in'. Eventually her only ambition was 'to get out' of the mill (DOHP 066/A/2).

The gender division of work, inside and outside the home, meant that boys were also more likely to receive more formal education than girls. In the inter-war period parental aspirations for boys were much more easily fulfilled than they were for girls. This can be seen in the popular long-term strategy adopted by working class parents, who attempted to provide the opportunity for their sons to become tradesmen. This

strategy, however, often further restricted the education and employment for sisters. The major problem was that male wage rates tended to be much less for apprentices than those paid in the dead-end mill jobs. It could be calculated that apprenticeships offered between under a half rising to two-thirds of textile work, and it is clear that this short-fall was borne by families, and often by female relatives. While the men, who undertook an apprenticeship, acknowledge the debt they owed their sisters and parents, their sisters continued to wonder whether the sacrifices entailed by the family, which benefited sons, were worth it. This conflict of interests, between family comfort and individual advancement, is often reflected in their recollections. Frances Allan, for example, noted that her family 'never had very much'. Their financial position never really had a chance of improvement until, 'Eh started to work', but then 'oor Wullie [a younger brother] had to go and serve his time, [and] we were never ever any better off, cause when they served their time the laddies didnae hae much [wages]'. Looking back to her childhood she concludes that 'Eh was in the mill whenever Eh was fourteen, so that Wullie could go and serve his time' (DOHP 085/A/2, see also chapter 6). For most families, however, apprenticeships for sons and further education for daughters remained unfulfilled hopes. The local textile economy could offer relatively well paid work for children and youth, but jobs for males tended to be become much more scarce and irregular once they were old enough to command an adult wage. For females the peak of their earning power was reached by the time they were eighteen years of age. The result was that the patterns of child and youth employment, established in the nineteenth century, were sustained, despite rising aspirations, up and into at least the 1940s.

Conclusion

Poverty, the early entry into work, and the continuing importance of family duty, were to shape household structure in Dundee in a number of ways that are further explored in the next two chapters, but some general conclusions can be noted at this point. The local economy's growing dependence on textile work up to 1901 ensured not only the creation of a large proletariat, but also an economy marked by uncertain income and high prices. This in turn underlined the importance of the wages of children, encouraged and defended by employers, to household income up to at least the First World War. While child labour may have declined after the War, the importance of juvenile wages to households remained. Thus the change from a family, or household, centred outlook to a child centred outlook amongst the working class was not only later than classical social historical studies suggest, but was probably even later than Jamieson (1987) suggests in her studies of childhood in central Scotland. The evidence from the woman's town also suggests that any examination of this sort must take into account both gender and class, given that early entry into waged and unwaged work was having a greater impact on women than on men.

Chapter 5: The female headed household

Introduction

The overwhelmingly negative view of the female headed household in historical and sociological research has already been outlined, along with suggestions that such a view has tended to obscure the positive place of these households in both the community and the workplace (in chapters 1 and 3). Above all else, from the historical study of nineteenth century Belgium (Alter, 1988, p. 138) to an investigation of contemporary China (Wolf, 1984, pp. 279-98), female headed households have tended to be perceived as more vulnerable and prone to greater instability, than those with male heads. The apparent universality of such conclusions, that female headed households are poverty stricken and unstable regardless of time or place, is challenged by the findings detailed in this chapter exploring household structure in Dundee in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is further argued that considerations other than vulnerability or instability were more important to the residents of these. Even if the households of female heads were only short-lived, and this was not always the case, this did not lessen their importance for the women who found companionship and shelter in them. Indeed it could be argued that instability and vulnerability were at least as great for male headed households (see chapter 6).

Despite the considerable presence of female headed households in the city, the women in these homes were neither separated from, nor independent of patriarchal

relationships outside their households. Both the rented homes, that most lived in, and the sources of their households' incomes, either from wages, or later from benefits (see chapter 9), were a part of the wider social relationships that placed women at a disadvantage. While recognising this, it must also be noted that female headed households provided an alternative way for women to organise their lives from the more common arrangement of women living in households with male heads. The findings of both Roberts (1984a and 1995) and Harveren (1991, in Drake, ed., 1994, pp. 32-4), which suggest that developments within the patriarchal family around this time include married women achieving a degree of power in their organisation of the household, are supported later (in chapters 6 and 11). It has, however, to be stressed that not only was the female head of household capable of greater empowerment within the home, but that these households provided visible confirmation that women did not need to live in relationship to breadwinning, dominant, males. The conclusions that, 'public conceptions of gender roles ... [were] unrevised' and 'traditional domestic roles persisted despite women's primacy in the jute labour market' (Gordon, 1991, p. 164), are therefore incorrect.

Female headed households were different from male headed households in a number of ways, including their size and composition, the conjugal condition of heads, and in the domestic arrangements within these households. That the relationships within the two types of household were markedly different can be also be seen in the employment patterns of the occupants. There is no doubt that the occupational structure of the city encouraged the formation and continuity of female headed households, but the

complexity of relationships, including kin and non-kin, suggests that female headed households had a greater flexibility towards wage earning than male headed households. This flexibility, including waged and unwaged heads, relatives and boarders, was not only useful in the boom and slump economy of Dundee, but provided important links between households and workplaces. Indeed, before 1918, the proportion of married women in waged work (see chapter 10) may have been less important in terms of the broader gender relationships than the substantial presence of female headed households in the city.

Size and composition of households

There is a great deal of evidence that, by the end of the nineteenth century, a large number of Dundee's households were headed by women. A city wide 10 per cent systematic sample, with a random start, extracted from the census enumerator books for 1891, suggests that around a third (32.62 per cent \pm 1.57) of all households were headed by women. Similar proportions were identified in the *Census* of 1901 (32.4 per cent), and the Dundee Social Union's survey of some three years later (35.2 per cent). The sample of 1891 suggests that similar proportions of female headed households could be found in each of the five districts of Dundee. The one exception to this pattern may have been Lochee, where the presence of the largest jute works in the world may have encouraged a larger proportion of female heads, but, given that this district contained the least number of households, the room for sampling error was greatest.

Following the city wide sample, which extracted the gender and conjugal condition of household heads, a more detailed sample was collected from the single district of St. Clement's. This data included the age, gender, occupation, conjugal condition, and relationship to the head, of all household members. This 10 per cent district sample, generating data on 670 households, is not presented as being a simple reflection of the whole of Dundee, but rather as a way of providing further insights into the composition of both male and female headed households.

Figure 5-1: Number of households sampled, and the proportion of female headed households, and by their conjugal condition, of all household heads.

Districts	Households sampled	Female headed (+/-)
St. Peter's	712	33.29 (3.53)
St. Mary's	590	31.02 (3.81)
St. Clement's	670	31.64 (3.60)
St. Andrew's	1270	31.81 (2.61)
Lochee	305	39.67 (5.61)
All districts	3547	32.62 (1.57)

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - city wide sample

Geographically the St. Clement's district, in the east of the city, ran in a narrow band from the top of Hilltown down to the river. Economically the centre of the district had

been the traditional centre of the textiles' industry as the continuing presence of a small number of male hand loom weavers confirms. Mills and power loom factories were also in existence, but the district also covered a large part of the city centre and the streets adjacent to the docks and harbour. While the district had significant levels of residents occupied in the textile sector, it also provided employment for male dock labour and some commercial employment. Despite the more mixed occupational nature of this district, compared to others, there was a similar gender balance of household heads in St. Clement's to that found in the other city districts (as shown in Figure 5-1).

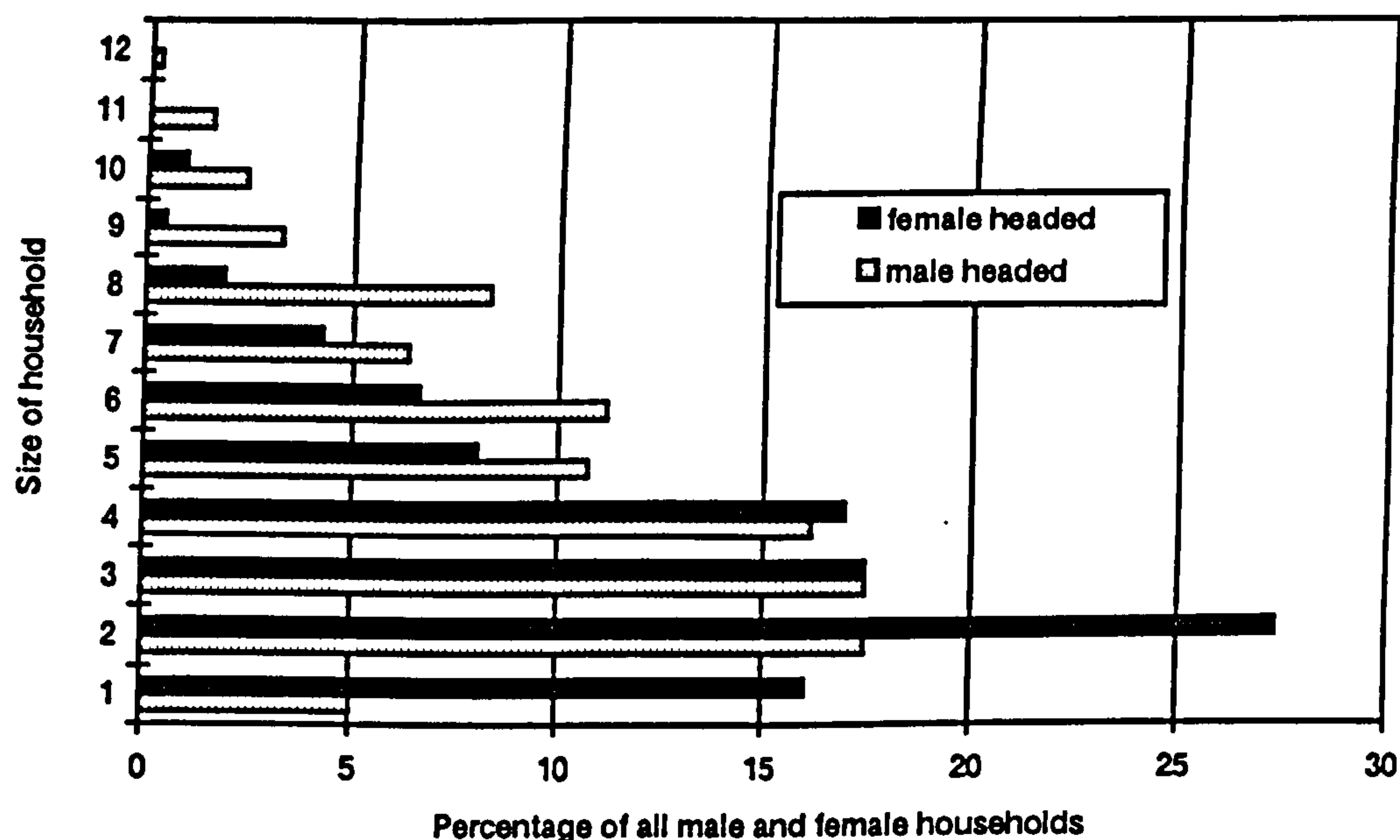
The first notable difference between male and female headed households was in size, with female headed households containing fewer residents than male headed households. Single occupancy, however, was not the most typical arrangement of the female headed household. In 1891 female headed households in St. Clement's contained an average of just over three people including the head, while male headed households had an average of over four occupants. While 16 per cent of female headed households were women living alone, compared to 5 per cent of male households, it was more common for women heads to share their households with another, and over 27 per cent of female households contained two occupants, compared to just over 17 per cent amongst male householders (as shown in Figure 5-2).

There was little difference between the proportion of male and female headed households containing three or four people, but male headed households were much

more likely to contain five and more occupants than female headed households.

Households with six or more occupants made up just over 33 per cent of male headed households, compared to slightly more than 14 per cent of female headed households.

Figure 5-2: Percentage distribution of number of occupants in male and female headed households



Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

Female headed households therefore tended to be smaller multi-occupancy households than those households headed by men. Much of this difference can be accounted for by occupancy patterns (as shown in Figure 5-3). While male headed households tended to be conjugal family units, which included children, households with female heads were non-conjugal, and tended to contain fewer adult men and fewer children.

Although both types of household were likely to have more women aged 12 years and over than men in the same age category - a reflection of the gender imbalance in the adult population - female headed households were more likely to contain an even greater ratio of adult women than adult men. Only 21 per cent of residents in female headed households were males aged twelve years and older. In contrast to this, males, in the same age group, made up 35 per cent of occupants in households with men as heads. The correlative was that more than a half of all occupants of households headed by women were adult females, while the proportion of residents with male heads was closer to a third. Male headed households were also more likely on average to contain twice as many children aged eleven years and younger (almost 29 per cent of occupants) as female headed households (with almost 20 per cent). Of course these are averages, but very few female headed households had large numbers of children present. Most female headed households (65 per cent) contained no children, while most male headed households (52 per cent) had at least one child resident.

Figure 5-3: Numbers and proportion of adults (12 years and over) and children (11 years and younger) in female and in male headed households

	Total households	Total resident	Adult males	Percentage of adult males	Adult females	Percentage of adult females	Total adults	Percentage of adults	Children	Percentage of children
Female headed	212	698	145	20.77	415	59.46	626	89.68	138	19.77
Male headed	458	2124	745	35.08	767	36.11	1512	71.19	612	28.81

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

On average, therefore, the female headed households tended to contain fewer inhabitants, were much more likely to have fewer dependent children, and were much more likely to provide accommodation for women rather than for men. Even before looking at households in relation to employment, the smaller size of female headed households, along with the gender and age differences, suggest that there were fewer demands on household income than those experienced by male headed households with larger numbers of dependent children and adult males.

While male headed households could often display extended family kin-links, this was much more marked amongst female headed households. Thus over 12 per cent of all residents of all female headed households, who were neither the spouse nor children, were related to the head of household. This compares to only 4.5 per cent of residents in male headed households. Female heads were much more likely, than male heads, to have living with them siblings (particularly sisters), parents (particularly mothers), nieces, nephews, and even cousins. The female headed household was therefore an important source of kin support.

Female headed households were also more likely to contain boarders. Whereas around a tenth of male headed households provided a home for boarders, just over a fifth of female headed households contained boarders. However, this did not mean that female heads with boarders had large households. Indeed the male householders who took in boarders were more likely to take in more boarders than female householders. Around 80 per cent of female headed households with boarders contained only a single

boarder, whereas 40 per cent of male headed households with boarders took in two or more boarders. Of the boarders themselves around three-quarters of male and female boarders were unmarried and younger adults. Female heads were more likely to have women as boarders, while the boarders in male headed households tended to be males. So female heads were also more likely to offer accommodation to non-kin, especially female non-kin, and, in doing so, were providing links into a wider community of women.

Occupations and households

That such large numbers of women were household heads was a result of women's ability to find and continue to work in paid employment, including some of those who survived working into old age. Out of the 3,650 households surveyed by the Social Union, 1,062 were reported as being solely dependent on the wages of women (Dundee Social Union, 1905, p. 20; cited in Gordon, 1991, p. 142). It should not be assumed however, that female heads were always in paid occupations, and, although over a half were enumerated as occupied, this was much smaller than occupational levels amongst male heads (as shown in Figure 5-4).

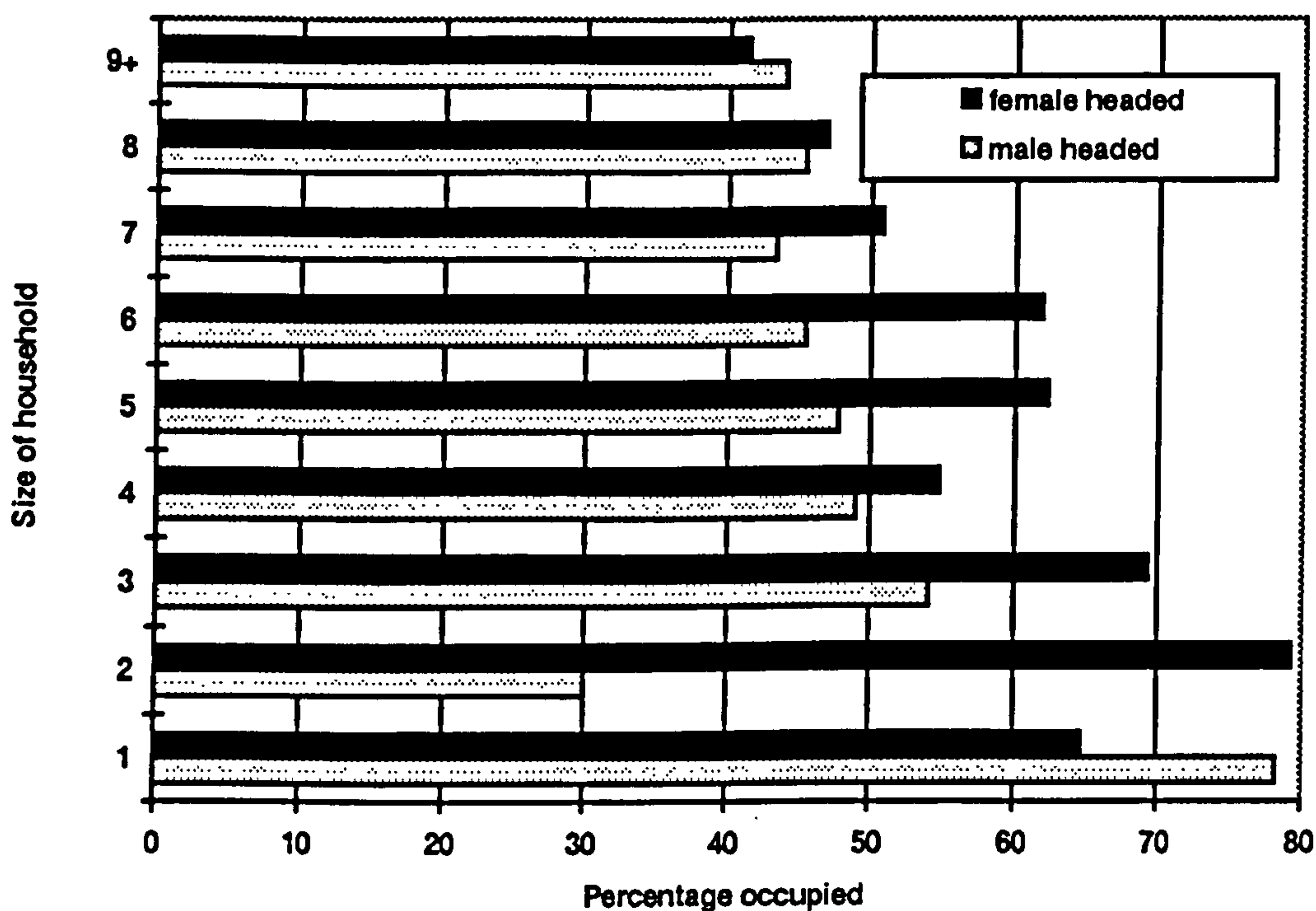
Figure 5-4: Number and percentage with a stated occupation in the two categories of household

	Head occupied	All occupied residents
Male headed	430 (93.89)	1020 (48.32)
Female headed	124 (58.49)	434 (62.27)

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

At the same time the proportion of all residents of female households who were returned as occupied was greater than the proportion of those living in the households with male heads. This, of course, is generally the result of male headed households containing more children, and, given the tendency of female headed households to contain adult women, supports the observation that female headed households were particularly dependent on women's wages.

Figure 5-5: Percentage of occupied residents in different sizes of household



Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

It should also be noted that the ideology of the family wage, despite its relative weakness in Dundee, did have some influence amongst married couples, both younger and older, living in two person households; that is without children, or other kin, or

boarders. The result was that in two person households only around 30 per cent of residents were occupied. The sample also suggests that wives of unoccupied husbands were also often without waged work. In contrast in the dual occupancy female headed household almost 80 per cent of residents were in occupations (as shown in Figure 5-5). Every other size of household from three to eight persons showed a similar, if less sharp, contrast, with female headed households having more occupied residents than male headed households.

It cannot, however, be assumed that the larger proportion of residents employed in the homes of female heads was an indication of poverty. Leaving aside the statistical findings for a moment, a cursory and impressionistic glance at the households themselves supports this conclusion. For example in Hilltown a 33 year old donkey engine driver resided with his unwaged wife and four young children. In sharp contrast, and only two closes up the street, lived an unmarried unwaged woman (aged 23 years), her brother (17) who was a publican's assistant, and three sisters, two of whom worked as jute reelers (aged 21 and 15), and the other as a jute weaver (aged 19). A third example comes from around the corner, in Dudhope Street, where a widow (36 years old) headed a household that contained her son, a 17 year old factory oiler, and two daughters, one of whom was a jute preparer (aged 15), with the youngest enumerated as a scholar (aged 13). Near by, in Rosebank Road, lived a porter (36) and his non-working wife (38), his jute spinning daughter (14), and three unwaged children aged 12, 9, and 6 years old. Therefore, female headed households could, and often were, much more capable of sustaining themselves than male headed

households, a situation reinforced by the high levels of irregular employment amongst men. These few examples also highlight the complexity of residential occupation patterns, and this complex data is drawn from a source that is fairly simple, being only a single snap-shot in time, and incapable, on its own, of showing changes in circumstance including irregular employment.

These comparisons between households also fail to take into consideration the gendered difference of wage rates. Relative rates can be calculated from surviving wages' books, particularly for the textile industry, and these suggest that adult women were paid much less than adult men. In the Victoria Spinning Company in 1891 for example the average weekly wage for a woman in the preparing and spinning departments was around 70 per cent of that of the average unskilled man. Women overseers were paid only half the amount paid to a male overseer, but could make almost as much in wages as an unskilled man in the mill. The highest paid women, weavers, were on average paid about 75 per cent of that paid to unskilled men in the weaving factory, and just under 60 per cent of male tenters' wages. Similar, although more detailed, ratios were extracted from wage rates supplied by a Chamber of Commerce representative to a Royal Commission in December 1891, (as shown in Figure 5–6).

There can be no doubt that inequalities of pay placed the female headed household, with its higher ratio of adult females to males, at a disadvantage. Such calculations, however, have to take into account the irregular and insecure nature of much of the

male employment in Dundee. Most revealingly, however, both in terms of wage inequality and the ways in which this was combated by residents of female headed households, are the patterns of employment within households. The proportion of male headed households containing two residents and more dependent upon a single wage earner was just over 33 per cent. In the same category only 16 per cent of female headed households were dependent on a single wage earner. Even in worst cases of wage differentials two women could make more wages than one man, and the multi income household was much more marked in the homes of female heads than it was in male heads.

Figure 5–6: Average weekly pay in occupations and the percentage wages of women employees of unskilled men in mill and factory

Department	Occupation	Average weekly pay (d)	Percentage
Preparing and spinning	'woman'	135	70.31
	spinner	141	73.44
	female overseer	180	93.75
	winder	168	87.50
	unskilled man	192	100
Weaving	single loom weaver	180	68.18
	double narrow loom weaver	222	84.09
	wide single loom weaver	261	98.86
	unskilled man	264	100

Source: Dundee Year Book, 1891 (1892), pp. 125-38

Equally importantly income is only one aspect of household finances, and it is especially important to consider out goings when considering the relative financial positions of male and female headed households. There was more likely to have been a greater understanding in general amongst women that household management, and the management of household consumption in particular, was critical to household survival. In a town in which the basics of food and heating made up such a large part of household expenditure (see chapter 4) the ability to control income and expenditure would have been important. Female headed households, containing fewer male adults, as well as fewer dependent children, could additionally have found themselves free of the need to attempt to fulfil the consumption expectations of male 'breadwinners', as well as approaching consumption, as well as wage earning, in a more egalitarian way, as the experiential data suggests (see chapter 11).

It could even be argued that, within female headed households, both waged and unwaged domestic work were not seen in the same way, and did not play the same role, as they did in households headed by men. For the status of the female householder had less to do with waged work, and the authority that could be deprived from waged work, including preventing others from working for wages, and more to do with household organisation and the influence that that position brought. The ideal of husbands working for a family wage may have been relatively weak in Dundee in comparison to the other Scottish cities, but the pattern within female headed households suggests that the ideal may have been completely rejected in up to a third of all households; that is the female headed households. This interpretation is further

supported by the different patterns that existed in male headed households in which wives were not present. Widowers were much more likely to be in waged employment than widows, and were much more likely to pass on domestic responsibilities to the oldest female household member, who was often the oldest daughter. This may have less to do with the availability of employment for men in contrast to that of women, than the ideology of the family wage, that existed even in a woman's town, and defined gender roles in male headed households.

There may also to have been a greater flexibility amongst female heads than male heads in their attitudes towards paid and unpaid work. Whereas male headship was closely linked to waged work, this was not the case amongst female heads. Whether female heads were making the best of a situation where irregular employment and a high turnover of labour existed, or were more permanent household managers heading a household of waged workers, depended very much on the life cycles of individuals and households. That women could manage homes and work for wages is evident amongst women in the male headed households; that they could move between the two roles is much more evident in the female headed household.

It is also clear that occupations, and pay rates, were influential in the composition of female headed households. Weavers and other factory workers were more likely than mill workers to be living on their own, a reflection of the higher wage rates that those on piece work could achieve, but, as stated above the single person household was exceptional amongst female heads. While two women living together might be said to

be 'typical of Dundee', it is less clear that this arrangement would normally consist of co-habiting weavers, as the Dundee Social Union reported in 1905 (p. 31, and cited in Gordon, 1991, p. 145). The St. Clement's sample does, however, suggest that women working in the same broad occupational bandings tended to live with one another. Thus textile factory workers, including weavers, could often be found living together, as could mill workers. Indeed around 43 per cent of female headed multi occupancy households dependent on textile wages contained only residents occupied in the mills. This compares to about 34 per cent of those homes containing only those engaged in the town's factories. Around 21 per cent contained workers from both mills and factories, an interesting statistic, given the emphasis placed by many historians on the divisions between factory and mill, and more crudely between weavers and spinners.

The mixture of occupational status of residents further underlines the flexibility of household arrangements in terms of employment, and the broader occupational connections suggests that the relationship between household membership and occupation was probably based on workplace rather than upon specific occupation. These links are most clearly evident in the households that contained boarders. Not all of the boarders in households with female heads were in paid occupations, but many were. There are much clearer connections between the occupation of resident boarders in households headed by women than those headed by men. These occupational links suggest that female householders may have been more likely to be providing

accommodation for fellow workers (who were often women) than male headed households were.

Dundee's female headed households, therefore, often included boarders and kin; at least a quarter contained boarders and/or non-nuclear kin, and often these were workmates. Such households opened up households to a wider solidarity, socialising youth, including boarders, enabling co-residents to combat high rents, and provided a basis for the mobility between workplaces that was used to resist the most oppressive employment conditions. Brüeggemeier (1980), in his research amongst Rhur miners' households, found a similar pattern and developed the concept of the 'semi-open proletarian family'. This description, applied to household structure, can be considered as a way of appreciating the role of female headed household in Dundee in both the public and private spheres. The concept also points the way to understanding of the importance of household structure in the development of collective consciousness. While the connections between waged work and class consciousness, in particular, should not be underestimated, the position of household, and then the interconnection between household and the wider community, was pivotal in the formation of class and gender consciousness.

Conjugal condition

The Dundee Social Union report (1905) identified a larger overall ratio of female headed households than either the city wide sample of 1891, or the 1901 *Census* report. There are also differences between the Social Union survey and the 1891

sample in the ratios of conjugal heads in these households, but these may simply be differences in the way the information was collected. Whether householders were more likely to answer questions posed by the Social Union surveyors than they were to accurately complete the Census forms remains an unresolved question. Nevertheless broad conclusions can be reached, not the least that, by 1891 and into the twentieth century, female headed households made up a significant proportion of all households, and that most female heads were widows, according to the analysis of the 1891 sample, as well as the findings of the Social Union survey of some 13 years later (as shown in Figure 5–7).¹ Both the sample and survey not only show that widows made up the largest proportion, but that single women were the next largest category and the remainder were married women claiming to be living apart from husbands, either permanently, or temporarily.

Figure 5–7: The conjugal status of female heads as a percentage of all households in 1891 and 1905

	Widowed	Single	Married	All female heads
1891 Sample	17.20 (± 1.27)	8.57 (± 0.94)	6.85 (± 0.85)	32.62 (± 1.57)
D.S.U. Survey	22.0	10.1	3.0	35.2

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample, and Dundee Social Union (D.S.U.) survey

¹ Unfortunately the 1901 *Census* report does not provide a breakdown of female heads by conjugal condition.

Whereas male heads were overwhelmingly married men (see also chapter 6), the conjugal status of female heads displayed a much greater variety. This is illustrated in the data collected from the 1891 sample of the five Dundee districts (as shown in Appendix II). It is worth again noting that in global terms St. Clement's displayed a similar pattern to the other districts, and this includes the position of widows and widowers.

Out of the 150 widows identified in the St. Clement's sample, 114 were heading their own households, with the other 36 living in other own households. A smaller number of widowers were heading their own households, although there was a similar proportion of widowers as heads (as shown in Figure 5–8). That there were over four times as many widows as widowers says much about the higher levels of male to female mortality, and the low levels of remarriage, but that so many widows could head their own households also suggests that they could afford to live independently of their kin.

Figure 5–8: Number (and percentage) of widows and widowers as household heads, and as residents in the households of other heads

	Household heads	In female headed households	In male headed households	Total
Widows	114 (76.00)	10 (6.67)	26 (17.33)	150
Widowers	28 (75.68)	5 (13.51)	4 (10.81)	37

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

The 1891 sample of St. Clement's suggests that widows were on average at least 10 years older (around 55 years) than female heads who were either married or single. They were also more likely to provide accommodation for adult men, although as in almost all female headed households there was more than twice the number of adult females to adult males in the homes headed by widows. Widowhood itself also seemed to limit the numbers of dependent children, and less than a fifth of residents in these households were children of 11 years and under, suggesting that widowhood for women occurred at a point in the household life cycle when families were less vulnerable than they might otherwise have been (as shown in Figure 5–9). Out of 114 of widowed female headed households, identified in the district sample, only 20 contained two or more children, and only nine contained three or more children, under 11 years of age. Oral evidence from later years suggests that widowers were much more likely to be left with dependent children, and were subsequently much more likely to send their children to live with relatives. In other words the death of wives would often break apart a male headed household, while the death of a husband often resulted in the formation of a female headed household. A father, for example, in St. Clement's was killed at work in 1906 and his widow returned to the preparing department in a textile mill, while her son, a single child aged 14 years, joined her as a shifter. During periods of unemployment the son went to work on farms rather than claim under the Poor Law, which he saw as demeaning for himself and his mother. He continued to live with his mother until her death in 1943 (DOHP 007/A/1, see also chapter 11).

Figure 5-9: Percentage of residents in three types of female headed households by age and gender

	Average size of household	Males 12 years and over	Females 12 years and over	Children 11 years and under	Boarders
Widows	3.45	23.41	59.29	17.30	10.18
Single	2.46	17.39	72.46	10.14	12.32
Married	3.95	18.07	48.80	33.73	6.63

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

The 56 households with single women as heads, the next largest category of female headed household in both the sample and the later Social Union survey, recorded the lowest proportion of children and the highest proportion of females twelve years and older resident. These households tended to contain, on average, a smaller number of residents, and just over a quarter of these households were single women living on their own. These households more commonly featured, however, female co-workers sharing accommodation, having the largest proportion of boarders and the lowest proportion of males twelve years and older.

In contrast over a third of occupants were eleven years or younger amongst the 42 households in the sample that were headed by married females. These households tended to be larger in size, and yet contain fewer boarders. With the lowest numbers of total residents in occupations, and only a half of married heads occupied, it is perhaps not surprising that children under eleven years were more likely to be in paid

employment (as shown in Figure 5–10). Caution has to be exercised regarding the percentages of those residents under eleven years who were in occupations (8.7 per cent in all female headed households and 5.4 per cent in all male headed households), for the reasons detailed above (in chapter 4). In combination with the other indicators, however, it is not too difficult to conclude that households headed by married women were amongst the poorest of households. That these households were relatively few in number, compared with other female headed households, further suggests that these were less viable than households headed by single or widowed women. At the same time, measuring viability, stability, and poverty is problematic given, that it is not clear, either from the sample, or the Social Union survey, whether these were permanent or temporary arrangements. Furthermore it is unclear if the income of these households was being supplemented by husbands working away from home; four of the married heads were described as the wife of occupied husbands. That a half of married women were in occupations suggests that there must have been some whose marriages had effectively ended. Fifteen of the married women with occupations were working in textile as low mill workers or spinners.

Figure 5–10: Percentage of heads, all residents, and all those eleven years and younger, who were occupied in three types of female headed households

	Heads	All	11 years and under
Widows	49.12	62.85	7.35
Single	83.93	77.54	7.14
Married	50.00	48.19	10.71

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

The largest proportion of female heads by conjugal condition that were in occupations were single women (with 47 out of 56 heads in waged work). The households headed by single women also had the largest proportion of all residents in occupations, and the lowest proportion of young children in waged work. Again a large number was engaged in textiles, but there were fifteen of these working as weavers as well as another twenty in the mills. There were also a further five single heads who were employers or self-employed in Dundee's tiny service sector. The variety of occupations amongst all residents of these households is also marked, with many of the employed women being in the highest paid occupations inside the textile sector, the weaving trades, and, in the wider female job market, including careers, such as teaching, that operated a bar against married women. Economically, these were perhaps the most financially viable of the female headed households, and indeed were probably in a better position than many male headed households.

Just over a half of widows who were heads were without waged occupations, but there were only two of these women whose households contained children in which no-one was in an occupation. Even those widows in households without wages or benefits may not have lived in absolute poverty; much might have depended upon the support that kin living elsewhere could give to their households of origin. Thus older children who had left home would offer their widowed mothers financial support, as at least one interview partner, whose father died in 1906, pointed out (DOHP 010/A/1).

Although both widowed heads and their other household members did not display the same wide range of occupations as single headed households, there was at least some variety. Occupations tended to be towards the lower end of paid employment, with thirteen heads in domestic service, seven in dressmaking, and fifteen in mill jobs. In addition to these occupations there were also twelve weavers, six widows who were self employed, five were annuitants or living on private means, a missionary, a school janitress, and a barmaid. A huge range of occupations existed amongst both the male residents (from a wood sawyer to a piano tuner) and female residents (from a jute preparer to a music teacher) living in the homes of widowed women.

In summary, the census enumerator books for 1891 provide enough evidence to suggest that gender relations in Dundee cannot be adequately assessed without considering the substantial presence of the female headed households. The data also undermines assumptions that these households were more vulnerable to poverty and unstable in composition. What emerges instead are household structures that were often organised by adult women to take advantage of prevailing economic conditions. In many cases this was not simply a matter of survival, but rather the creation and maintenance of households that offered companionship and support for women that were kin and co-workers.

Conclusion

Rather obviously female headed households were mainly the result of the instability of male headed households. As suggested earlier it was not unusual for children to find

themselves living in households of kin other than natural parents, with grandparents, aunts and uncles, and even occasionally family friends providing accommodation for children. This was not simply a matter of family size or even class status. Unskilled parents with large numbers of children may well have been particularly vulnerable, but, given the fragility of the local economy, the practice of farming children out was practiced by many families who found themselves in financial difficulties. Parental deaths also encouraged the practice, although it was much more likely to be the death of a mother that fragmented a family than the death of a father. The fact that over a half of female heads were widows underlines this point, but the presence of both single, and, in particular, married female heads also suggest that the stability of male headed households should not be overstated.

Employment, and later benefits, that offered the opportunity, and helped to create the community conditions, for women to become heads of households were available from at least the late nineteenth century until at least the Second World War. There were both material and social advantages for women to become household heads and there were also similar advantages for the residents of those living in these households (see chapter 11).

Oral evidence suggests, and supports the findings of the samples from the census enumerator books of 1891 (see chapter 10), that the composition of female headed households tended towards multi-occupancy that included widowed, single, and married women with children, grandchildren, other relatives and boarders. In contrast

to the household structures identified, both amongst male headed households in Dundee and amongst Lancastrians born before 1935 (Roberts, 1995, pp. 177-80), these female headed households in Dundee were just as complex, and were capable of lasting through family life cycles.

The presence of large numbers of female householders marked the formation of the collective community in Dundee. For it was in these households that the notion of doing without a man developed, a point that underlined the assertiveness that women found on the textiles' shopfloor. The female head was not isolated from the community. She was more likely to share her home with other adult women who were working for wages, and was more likely to play a role in the wider community, than was the wife living with a husband next door.

Chapter 6: The male headed household

Introduction

One of the central arguments in considering the impact of gender relations on the lives of women revolves around the interconnections between marriage patterns, fertility rates, and the waged occupations of women. Singleness and low marriage rates can be placed in the context of the local employment structure, and, as Gittins (1982) has shown, the connection between marriage rates and the 'the participation of single women in the labour market' is particularly strong. Gittins has argued, from her own research, that these links operate on two levels. First of all, the demographic structure of localities is shaped by the gendered availability or non-availability of employment in these geographic areas. Second, 'at an individual level, the type of occupation in which the single woman was employed had important effects on the formation of her ideals, attitudes to and information about, marriage, sex and birth control' (1982, p. 91). The importance of these conclusions is in the way in which localities with low marriage rates will also tend to contain higher than average ages at marriage amongst women, and therefore it might be assumed smaller family sizes. Set in the wider perspective of historical change in women's waged work - that is the twentieth century has seen a movement away from domestic service and towards factory work - Gittins' conclusions are of particular importance.

While broadly accepting Gittins' findings that occupation and family size were linked, Elizabeth Roberts (1984a) has suggested that fertility patterns have as much to do with the occupations of husbands as they have with than the occupations of wives. Roberts has gone so far to suggest that a woman's fertility rate had more to do with determining her occupation than other way round. Roberts conclusion, that, while 'female occupation ... was obviously significant, other social and economic factors must have been important too' (1984a, pp. 102-3), seems to have ended discussion. In her own later research Roberts (1995) places family size and fertility in a collection of these factors. While the connections between women's work patterns and marriage rates (Taylor, 1977), and, in turn, family sizes have been investigated (Gittins, 1982) and disputed (Roberts, 1984a), the question of who doesn't marry has received little attention (Duquenin, 1984). A systematic treatment, involving a gendered perspective, of marriage, birth, and employment rates, remains under-researched, partly because, statutory records, and much contemporary reporting, has focused on married women rather than on married men.

It has been argued (in chapter 4) that the narrowness of Dundee's local economy meant that poverty was not limited to the unskilled working class, but it should be recognised that there was a development of a better, and more regularly, paid stratum of the class emerging by the end of the nineteenth century. In Britain at this time it has been concluded by a number of historians that, while the status division between skilled and unskilled men was less important than the division between social classes, occupational stratification was important for marriage patterns (see Morris, 1989, pp.

174-6). While any investigation of the relationships between the wives' ages, work, and the number of children they were living with, requires to take into account the substantial influence of the occupational status of husbands, it is also necessary to recognise the effects of the gender imbalance in women's towns. That adult men were leaving women's towns has been noted in most studies of these localities; however, it is proposed here that more attention needs to be paid to which men, in terms of occupation, were leaving. The suggestion here is that less skilled men were more likely to leave Dundee than tradesmen were, and the result was a disproportionate number of tradesmen who were married. That women's age at marriage was partly determined by parental attitudes as well as the choice of marriage partners will be explored later (in chapter 11), but it must be accepted that the availability of, and employment status, of husbands were particularly important to whether, and for how long, married women worked for wages. A comparison of the two largest occupational groupings of husbands, semi- and unskilled workers with tradesmen, reveals the importance of husbands' occupations to the position of women in employment.

Men and marriage

Marriage may have 'altered the socio-economic context of women's lives' (Young, 1991, p. 587), but marriage was important for men. In the city wide sample of 1891 married men headed over half of all households, and almost all male heads of households were married men. For most men marriage was the only way of becoming a head of household. Few men without wives headed households, and the vast majority of single or widowed men lived in the households of others. With more than a half of

Dundee men aged 15 to 45 years either single or widowed in 1891, and in each of the subsequent decades up to the Second World War, the number of adult men living in the households of others was substantial. If being a male head of household was almost synonymous with being married, in contrast women who became household heads tended to do so without marriage, with most female heads being either widowed or unmarried (as can be seen in chapter 5). In every district across Dundee in 1891 there were more than twice as many female heads who were single than there were unmarried male heads, and over four times more widowed heads to widowers heading households. That widowed and single women were more likely to head households, unlike widowed and single men, suggests that adult women had more choice regarding household arrangements than adult men. Marriage for women, in Dundee at least, was not the only way of managing, or, in comparison to men, the most likely way for women to find themselves heading households.

The importance of marriage for men is clarified further by the data extracted from the St. Clement's district enumeration books of 1891. Out of 407 married men only five were resident in the households of others in the St. Clement's sample. Almost all (384, or over 83 per cent) of male heads, had wives living with them at the time of enumeration, with only 18 wives of the married male heads not present when the enumerator called (as shown in Figure 6–1). Even if the sample was larger, reaching a conclusion from this source of evidence, as to whether these wives were temporary or more long term absentees, is problematic. In 15 of the 18 homes headed by husbands, whose wives were absent during enumeration, there were also no children present. Of

course absent wives may have taken children with them on visits elsewhere, but there are other indications that in some cases the wives' absence was more permanent.

These include household arrangements with one husband whose children were present and who employed a servant; one provided accommodation for a sister; and another provided accommodation for three female boarders (a married woman, her mother, and her daughter).

Figure 6-1: Husbands with and without wives, and widowers and single males heading households

	Number	Percentage
Husbands with wives present	384	83.84
Husbands whose wives were not present	18	3.93
Widowers and single men	56	12.23
Total	458	100

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

What can be concluded with some certainty is that husbands were more likely to be missing on a more permanent basis than wives. In the city wide sample there were three times as many wives heading households (enumerated without husbands), than there were husbands without wives. At the same time the enumerators' books suggest that women were at least twice as likely as men to be temporarily visiting elsewhere. This evidence is supported by what is known about the gender imbalance. Dundee was a city where women could find employment much more easily than men could, and, as

a result, more men than women were leaving to find waged work elsewhere. It seems a fair assumption that some of the men who left were married, and, if correct, further undermines perceived notions of the relative stability of male headed households.

An examination of the households headed by widowers and unmarried men in St. Clement's underlines the importance of women's unpaid labour in the homes of male heads. Amongst those men, who were continuing to head households after the death of their wives, almost all had adult women present, and these adult women were not engaged in paid occupations. It can be assumed that these women were fulfilling the household duties that were normally undertaken by wives. Overwhelmingly older daughters were filling this role, while the others, particularly those with young families, relied upon unmarried or widowed sisters. The only exception to this pattern of widowers' households relying ^{up} unwaged female relatives was found amongst a tiny O 1.00A number of the better off, who employed female servants. A very small number of unmarried male heads lived either with fellow lodgers or brothers. Many more, a third of unmarried male heads, were heading households containing women who were sisters, mothers, servants and even female boarders. Again it seems likely that these women were undertaking housework, since few were enumerated with a waged occupation.

While female heads were three times more likely to be living on their own than male heads, there were almost as many unmarried male heads as unmarried female heads in single occupancy households. A half of all unmarried male heads were living in single

occupancy households. This compares to just under a fifth of unmarried female heads, and there were more female than male heads in this category. That unmarried men were more likely to find themselves living alone, than unmarried women were, further exposes the myth that portrayed the unmarried woman as a lonely old maid living on her own.

Almost all men eventually married: between 1891 and 1911 only around 10 per cent of men were still single when they were 45 to 49 years old, while over 90 per cent of men aged 24 years and younger were still unmarried. Of course these statistics do not rule out some men marrying earlier, or some men remaining single longer, but, in a sample that includes married men aged 20 to 77 years, it is perhaps surprising that the St. Clement's sample suggests that, as a proportion of husbands with wives, the number of married tradesmen, who had completed an apprenticeship, was large. Married tradesmen, whose wives were present at the time of enumeration, were proportionally close to a third of all married men living with their wives. This proportion compares to just over a quarter of married male heads who were employed as labourers, porters, carters, hawkers, or mill workers. Differences in marriage rates amongst men may have had some correlation with occupations, but, given the paucity of information in the Census reports, such a correlation is difficult to investigate, particularly over time.

[a] That such a large section of male household heads was in trades, might suggest that they were perhaps more marriageable than those men in occupations that were less well paid. Oral evidence from the years after 1918 supports this suggestion; with unmarried

tradesman being widely perceived by young women as a future husband with a great deal of potential, or, to put it more simply, 'you thought he would make a good catch' (BCHG VT 016). There is, however, a need to look beyond the comparative attractiveness of men as husbands according to their occupation. Since most men eventually married, another factor effecting male marriage rates emerges from the available evidence. Patterns of outward migration by males from the city were crucial to marriage, a factor that was rooted in the local employment structure, but one that begins to explain the high number of married tradesmen. The question of who marries whom might therefore, be better posed in terms of who was available as a potential marriage partner.

Almost a quarter of a cohort of males aged 15 to 19 years in the 1881 Census were missing in the 25 to 29 year age group of ten years later. Their numbers had fallen by a further 17.61 percentage points by the time they were aged 35 to 39 years in 1901, and then by 13.31 percentage points by 1911. Similar patterns amongst male cohorts can be found throughout the years up to 1931, with the largest decreases in the number of men occurring amongst the younger age groups, and in particular amongst those aged 15 to 25 years of age. Although some of these men would have died, the average crude mortality rates of around 18 in every thousand Dundonians suggests that the 2184 males, or almost a third, aged 45 to 49 years, who were missing by 1911 were much more likely to have left the city than died. Given that the singulate mean age at

marriage¹ for Dundee males can be calculated between 27 years in 1891 and 28 years in 1911, then these missing males may well have been important in terms of which males were left in the city as potential marriage partners.

There were fewer adult women than men leaving the city: out of a female cohort aged 15 to 19 years in the 1881 *Census* under a seventh, or 1196, were unaccounted for in 1911. Therefore, by the time both sexes reached the age of 49 years more than twice as many men than women were no longer living in the city. The largest decrease amongst the female cohort occurred when they were 25 to 35 years of age, a comparative age that was around about or greater than the singulate mean age at marriage for Dundee's females. This pattern was again repeated through the first three decades of the twentieth-century. In short, the largest age group of men aged 15 to 49 years were leaving the city before the age they were likely to be married, while the largest group of women, in the same age range, were leaving the city after the age they were likely to marry, and men were leaving in greater numbers than women.

It could be assumed that apprentices were much more likely to remain in the city for at least the term of their apprenticeship, and that less skilled men were more likely to leave at a younger age. Apprenticeships were normally not available to young boys

¹ Means of calculating a mean age from census data that gives the proportions of people married and single in each age group. Method for calculating SMAM follows the guide to calculation in Drake (1994) p. 185. See also Schurer (1989) pp. 67-9.

before their sixteenth birthday, and an apprenticeship would take four or five years to complete. The attractiveness of apprenticeships is fairly obvious, particularly in a town that offered a host of dead end, irregular, jobs, including those in the textile sector. If less skilled males were more mobile than skilled males, then this may go some way to explain the large numbers of tradesmen amongst married men. This is not to deny that Dundee contained a large pool of semi and unskilled male labour, but rather to suggest that this pool was replenished by youngsters, and that at least some of the surplus amongst older workers was being depleted by outward migration. It may also have been the case that the adult men who were arriving in Dundee were those whose skills were required, and, although male inward movement was less significant than that found amongst females, this may have added to an occupational imbalance amongst married men.

It is impossible to conclude that tradesmen were leaving their households of origin to marry, but oral testimony, albeit from later period, does suggest that many did so.

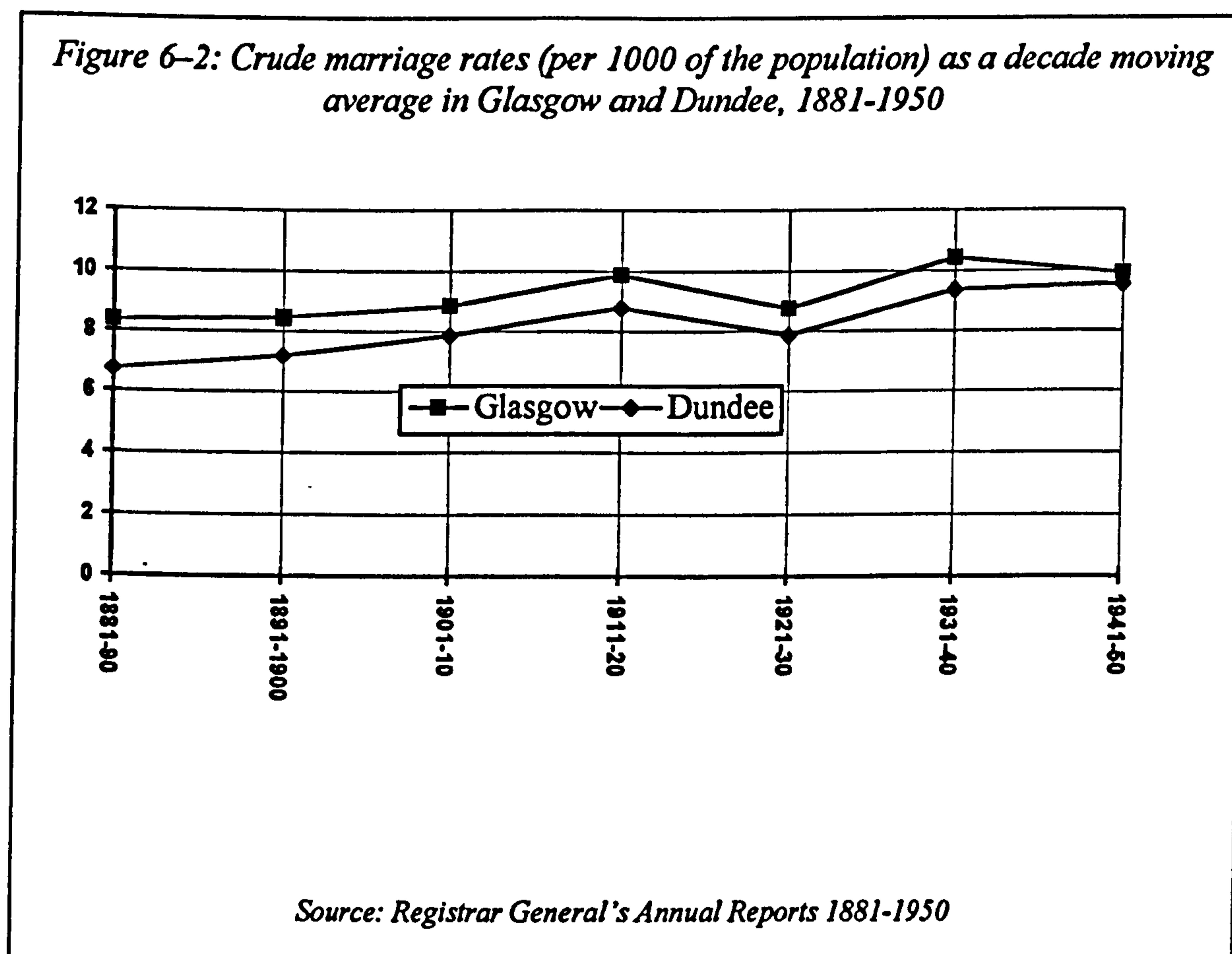
David Jones, is a fairly typical example of the men who became tradesmen. He began his working life in a jute mill and left there when he was sixteen years old to begin his apprenticeship in one of the city's foundries, for which he was paid less than half of his previous earnings. Even after three years his wages were only two-thirds of what he had received in the mill. This short-fall was borne by families, and he notes that it was because his, 'sisters made good money, they were weavers', that he was able to complete his apprenticeship. More revealingly, he adds that, 'meh mother never got a great deal in return for me you know'. It was only after he completed his

apprenticeship, and rearmament increased foundry work, that he found himself able to contribute to his family's income. It was then that David married and left his parent's home (DOHP 068/B/1, see also interview DOHP 085/A/2, and chapter 4).

Experiential data from less skilled men and their wives strongly suggests that marriage was often delayed amongst this section, because of their inability to save enough money to set up home on their own. While apprentices normally waited until they had finished their training, because of the low wages, the less skilled who continued to remain in Dundee seemed to have a greater sense of obligation to their households of origin and less opportunity of accumulating sufficient funds to marry early. The economic pressures on men to remain single were therefore different for those training to become tradesmen and for those who were amongst the less skilled, but the result may have been the same, that is marriages were delayed. However, for unmarried, less skilled, men the possibilities of finding better paid, more regular work, elsewhere meant that for some marriage in their home town was not always possible.

This may account for the differences between the singulate mean ages at marriage of men in Dundee and men in Glasgow. In Dundee in 1891 there were four women to three men in the age range of 15 to 44 years, while in Glasgow there was only slightly more women than men in the same age range. The greater gender imbalance in Dundee was reflected in the differences between the singulate mean age at marriage of men and women in the two cities. While the singulate mean age at marriage amongst Dundee men was around 27.15 years, compared to Glasgow's male age of 28.26 years, it

should be noted that the difference between women was greater, and reversed, at 27.69 years in Dundee and 26.31 in Glasgow. While recognising that gender imbalance was important to marriage rates, it is more accurate to conclude that occupational structures were critical to these rates. The overall outcome was that, from the 1880s to the 1930s, crude marriage rates in Glasgow were consistently higher than they were in Dundee (as shown in Figure 6-2).



Dundee's gender imbalance is evident amongst the unmarried sons and daughters, aged 16 years and older, in the district sample. The proportion of unmarried adult daughters was greater than that of unmarried adult sons in both male and female

headed households. The average age of daughters was also older than the average age of sons in both types of household, although the average age of sons and daughters was higher in female headed households (as shown in Figure 6-3). Thus the female headed household was contributing to the large numbers of unmarried adults in the city, and even to the later ages at marriage noted in Dundee. A larger proportion of female headed households, 102 out of 212 (or 48.11 per cent), contained the heads' own children, aged sixteen years or older. In contrast male headed households returned a figure of 155 from 458 households (or 33.84 per cent). It should be noted, however, that households with male heads had slightly more, on average, older children resident.

Figure 6-3: Households with unmarried children aged 16 years and older

	Households with unmarried children aged 16 years and older	Children aged 16 years and older	Average number of children	Sons aged 16 years and older	Percentage sons	Daughters aged 16 years and older	Percentage daughters	Mean age of sons (median age)	Mean age of daughters (median age)
Female headed	102	169	1.66	74	43.79	95	56.21	22.27 (21)	24.85 (23)
Male headed	155	304	1.96	131	43.09	173	56.91	19.97 (19)	22.27 (20)

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

There was little difference between the gender composition of children in each type of household, with daughters more likely to remain at home than sons after they were sixteen years of age. This is reflected in the average ages of adult children, with daughters tending to be older by at least two years than sons. There was, however, a difference between the ages of both sons and daughters in the two types of household,

with female headed households returning a larger proportion of older children than male headed households. This difference, in both mean and median ages, supports the experiential data gathered from later years that suggests that the sense of obligation amongst children in assisting parents, by remaining in the parental home, was stronger, or at least longer lasting, in the female headed than it was in the male headed home.

The St. Clement's district sample provides evidence that amongst the unmarried sons, aged sixteen years and older, in all households the average age of apprentices and tradesmen was lower than the average age of those in a selection of the less skilled occupations of labourers, porters, carters, hawkers, or mill workers. The difference is only around a year, but this in itself is worth noting since there is some evidence to suggest that tradesmen tended to be older, at the time of their marriages, than unskilled and semi-skilled men. The difference also contrasts with the average age of tradesmen husbands in the district sample, that can be calculated as more than a year older than those in the less skilled occupations (as shown in Figure 6-4).

There were also clear differences in the occupational stratification of sons amongst those living in male and those in female households. Not only was it more likely that an apprentice was to be found in a male headed rather than a female headed household, but the average ages of both those in trades and those in less skilled occupations was greater. As has already been suggested, and is argued later, the sense of loyalty amongst children in female headed households was perhaps greater than in male headed households (in chapter 5 and chapter 11), and is reflected in the comparative

average age of sons in female to male headed households. If this is the case, then again questions of the relative stability of male headed to female headed households can be raised.

Figure 6-4: Number and mean average age of husbands and unmarried sons (aged 16 years and older) who were either apprentices and tradesmen or in a selection of less skilled occupations

	Number of apprentices and tradesmen	Mean age	Number in a selection of less skilled occupations	Mean age
Husbands in male headed households	121	43.11	98	41.38
Unmarried sons in all households	66	19.18	69	20.1
Unmarried sons in male headed households	51	19.06	43	19.84
Unmarried sons in female headed households	15	19.60	26	20.54

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

It should also be noted that opportunities for sons to become tradesmen may have been greater in male, rather than in female, headed households. Whereas there were more sons, aged 16 years and older, who were either in apprenticeships or were tradesmen than those in the selected group of less skilled occupations in male headed households, the reverse was case in the female headed households. This is understandable, given the financial burdens borne by households supporting apprentice

sons, but, it should also be considered that there is little evidence of these sons providing much in the way of reciprocal financial assistance to their households of origin. The number of households in the sample headed by tradesmen contained far fewer ageing parents, 65 years and older, than the households headed by men engaged in the selection of less skilled jobs contained. Despite being more numerous the households headed by tradesmen contained a quarter of the number of ageing parents that households headed by the less skilled contained.

Of course there may have been financial transfers from such sons to parents living in separate households. Studies, from elsewhere, tend to suggest, however, that financial need, 'even on the part of a close relative, has apparently never been seen as a situation that required an automatic response'. Even when this type of one-way support, across, or even within, households, was legislated for, for example in the Poor Law, and in the later Household Means Test, there is ample evidence of avoidance. The very regulation of this form of assistance, in itself, suggests that it was not widely practised. There is little evidence that would support the existence of a widespread practice of financial transfers from sons to parents, whereas there is overwhelming evidence of sharing households, or co-residence, that suggests that this was a more prevalent form of assistance. One reason for the popularity of co-residence in the past may be that it allowed for continuing mutual advantage, and mutual advantage, or exchanges, is a much powerful incentive than sense of duty amongst adults (Finch, 1989).

It may also be that the parents of tradesmen may not have required the type of assistance in later life that others found necessary, but the same pattern of assistance is repeated when extended kin are considered. Almost twice as many households headed by the less skilled men, compared to those headed by tradesmen, provided accommodation for children of other relatives who were aged 12 years and younger. They were again twice as likely to provide accommodation for all other kin. So while 16.33 per cent of lesser skilled male heads provided accommodation to extended kin, the proportion of households of tradesmen providing accommodation to extended kin was 9.92 per cent. Certainly the extended kin of tradesmen may have required less assistance, but this seems less likely than it was for ageing parents, and does little to undermine the impression from oral evidence, that assisting kin, beyond immediate family members, was more marked amongst the less skilled than it was amongst tradesmen.

If there was a move towards the more private, contained, family unit, it was a pattern that was occurring much more amongst tradesmen than amongst the households of semi-skilled and unskilled male heads. Given the proportion of tradesmen husbands amongst male headed households, this development had an impact beyond the numbers of tradesmen in the general population. There was also an inter-generational dimension; with the sons of tradesmen more likely to undertake apprentices than sons of the less skilled. The proportion of tradesmen heading households with unmarried sons aged 16 and older who were apprentices or tradesmen was 14.88 per cent of all households headed by tradesmen, compared to 6.12 per cent of the households of less

skilled headed households, containing sons in this category. Conversely, around 12.24 per cent of households of less skilled male heads had unmarried sons, aged 16 and over, in the same selection of less skilled occupations, while 9.09 per cent households of tradesmen heads contained sons in this category. At least as important, however, was the impact that the large proportion of tradesmen was having on lives of women, particularly in the male headed households.

Women, marriage, and employment

Much has been made of the proportion of married women in employment in Dundee compared to the other Scottish cities (Gordon, 1991; Whatley, 1992a; McIvor, 1992). In 1911, while around 23 per cent of married women (excluding widows) in Dundee were in paid employment, there was just over 5 per cent of married women in waged work in Glasgow and Edinburgh (*Census of Scotland, 1911, City of Dundee, table g, p. 89*). Similar comparisons between Dundee and the English textile towns have, however, attract very little, if any, comment. Yet, Dundee tended to have a smaller proportion of married women participating in the city's workforce in comparison to the rates found in textile towns in England. Five out of the six Lancashire textile towns investigated by Roberts (1984a) had higher participation rates for ever-married (married and widowed) women in paid employment (as shown in Figure 6–5).

General explanations that are based upon the different historical developments in Scotland and in England are of little use in trying to understand these differences between Dundee and English textile towns. There were, first of all, low participation

rates by women, who were or had been married, in non-textile towns both north and south of the border. Secondly, within Scotland there were clear differences, even between the textile towns of Dundee and Paisley. In Paisley most women were removed from employment on marriage by employers, who were noted for a paternalistic approach to labour relations (Knox, 1995) that was missing in Dundee. As a result only 5.3 per cent of married women were in waged work in Paisley in 1911. Unlike Paisley, married women in Dundee, as in most of the English textile towns, were not prevented from entering textile mills and factories by employers.

Figure 6-5: Percentage of married and widowed women in paid occupations in 1911 in Dundee, and in six English textile towns.

Blackburn	Burnley	Preston	Bury	Rochdale	Dundee	Bolton
44.5	41.4	35.3	31.0	27.2	27.03	15.0

Sources: Census of Scotland, 1911, vol. II, p. 112; Roberts (1984a), p. 101.

A further comparison between Dundee and Preston assists in understanding some of the reasons for this difference in the participation rates of married women in at least these two textile towns. The demand for female labour in the two towns was so similar that this cannot adequately account for the contrasting proportions of married women in paid employment. Amongst all women aged 10 years and older in the two towns in 1901 there had been 51.66 per cent in occupations in Dundee (*Census of Scotland, 1901*), compared to 52.36 per cent in Preston (Roberts, 1984a, p. 206). Much more important was the differing marriage rates in the two localities that existed not only

before the First World War, but continued into the first half of the twentieth-century.

There was even a contrast in the numbers of married men between the two towns, although this was not nearly as marked as it was amongst women.

From the late nineteenth-century to at least 1931 there was a much smaller proportion of women who were married in Dundee than there were amongst women in Preston. In 1901 there were more than 22 per cent fewer married women, aged 15 years and older, in Dundee than there was in Preston (as shown in Figure 6–6). While it should be noted that there was a larger proportion of widows in Dundee than in Preston, there were still over 17 per cent fewer women, 15 years and older, who were married or widowed in Dundee. While Roberts (1984a, p. 81) has noted that in the age group 45 - 49 very high percentages of women were married in the textile towns of England, the same cannot be said of Dundee. In 1891, 61.3 per cent of women were married, compared to 84.6 per cent in Preston. Even more striking is that while Roberts also notes that these figures decline throughout the period, this is again not the case in Dundee, for in 1931 the figures were 63.0 per cent in Dundee, and 80.1 per cent in Preston.

Figure 6–6: Percentage of all women and men aged 15 years and over who were married and widowed in Dundee and Preston in 1901

	Women		Men	
	Dundee	Preston	Dundee	Preston
Married	40.22	62.58	52.31	55.93
Widowed	12.80	7.85	5.63	5.79

Source: Census of England and Wales, 1901, County of Lancashire, p. 120, and the Census of Scotland, 1901.

With a smaller proportion of married women in the adult female population in Dundee than in Preston, and a similar demand for female labour, differences in the employment rates amongst married and widowed women becomes less significant. If married women's employment was more prevalent in Preston, it can also be concluded that a larger proportion of single women was employed in Dundee. All this, of course, only partially explains why the percentage of married women in waged work was lower in Dundee than Preston. To reach a more complete understanding it is necessary to return to the analysis of the occupational structure of married men, which suggests that there was a significant proportion of husbands in Dundee who were tradesmen.

In the St. Clement's district sample tradesmen were much less likely to have waged wives than those husbands in the selection of less skilled jobs. Indeed labourers made up the single largest occupational grouping amongst those men whose wives were in paid occupations. This, in itself, suggests perhaps that the largest group of employed wives were working for wages from necessity - with the need arising directly from their husbands' inability to find employment that paid enough to maintain unwaged wives at home. Perhaps one reason why tradesmen may have been more attractive as prospective husbands was that they were much more likely to be perceived as being able to afford to keep their wives at home as household managers than was the case amongst less skilled men. Alternatively, tradesmen may have been more likely to insist that their wives give up paid employment after marriage. While this is explored later

using experiential data (in chapter 10), the end result was that there was a clear connection between the occupations of husbands and the employment patterns of wives. In the sample, just over 9 per cent of tradesmen's wives worked for wages. In contrast over 36 per cent of the wives of semi- and unskilled husbands were in waged employment, almost twice as high as the average for all wives, while the figure for tradesmen's wives was less than a half of that average (as shown in Figure 6-7).

Figure 6-7: Number and percentage proportion of married men with wives present by occupation and the number and percentage proportion of waged wives

	Number of male heads	Percentage of total heads	Number of waged wives	Percentage of waged wives
Tradesmen	121	31.51	11	9.09
Labourers, porters, hawkers, and mill workers	98	25.52	36	36.73
All wives living with their husbands	384	100.00	72	18.75

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

In Dundee, with its low marriage rates, the low levels of participation in paid employment by tradesmen's wives, compared to wives of the less skilled, was important. This was particularly so, if it is accepted that the wives of tradesmen were a significant proportion of married women. The role of the female headed household also needs to be considered. For, while, in the 1891 district sample, only 18.75 per cent of wives in male headed households were in paid occupations, 21 out of 42 of

wives who were heading households were in employment, bringing the percentage of all wives in employment to 21.83. Even including waged wives who were living apart from their husbands, the importance of unmarried women's employment in Dundee remains clear. That a large number of the unmarried and waged, particularly women of marriageable age, was living in female headed households suggests that, in terms of female employment, waged wives were less important to the local economy than unmarried residents of the female headed households.

Household size, children, and parents' occupations

A number of historians have suggested a correlation between fertility rates and the proportion of married women in paid employment (including Gittins, 1975). It has, however, been demonstrated, most notably by Elizabeth Roberts, that if such a correlation existed it is by no means obvious. In her analysis of Lancashire she did find that on average English textile towns, with a large proportion of married women in waged work, consistently had lower fertility rates than non-textile towns in which a smaller proportion of women worked. As Roberts has pointed out, such a generalisation presents some problems, not least, because fertility rates varied considerably even between different textile towns. She concludes that, while female occupation was significant, other economic and social factors must also be taken into consideration (1984a, p. 101). Without repeating the details of Roberts' argument, it is worthwhile noting that by adding Dundee and Glasgow into the analysis of Lancashire towns, it becomes clear that the concerns identified by Roberts are at least as applicable to Scotland as they are in England (as shown in Figure 6–8).

Figure 6–8: Legitimate fertility rates amongst women aged 15-44 in Glasgow, Bolton, Dundee and Preston

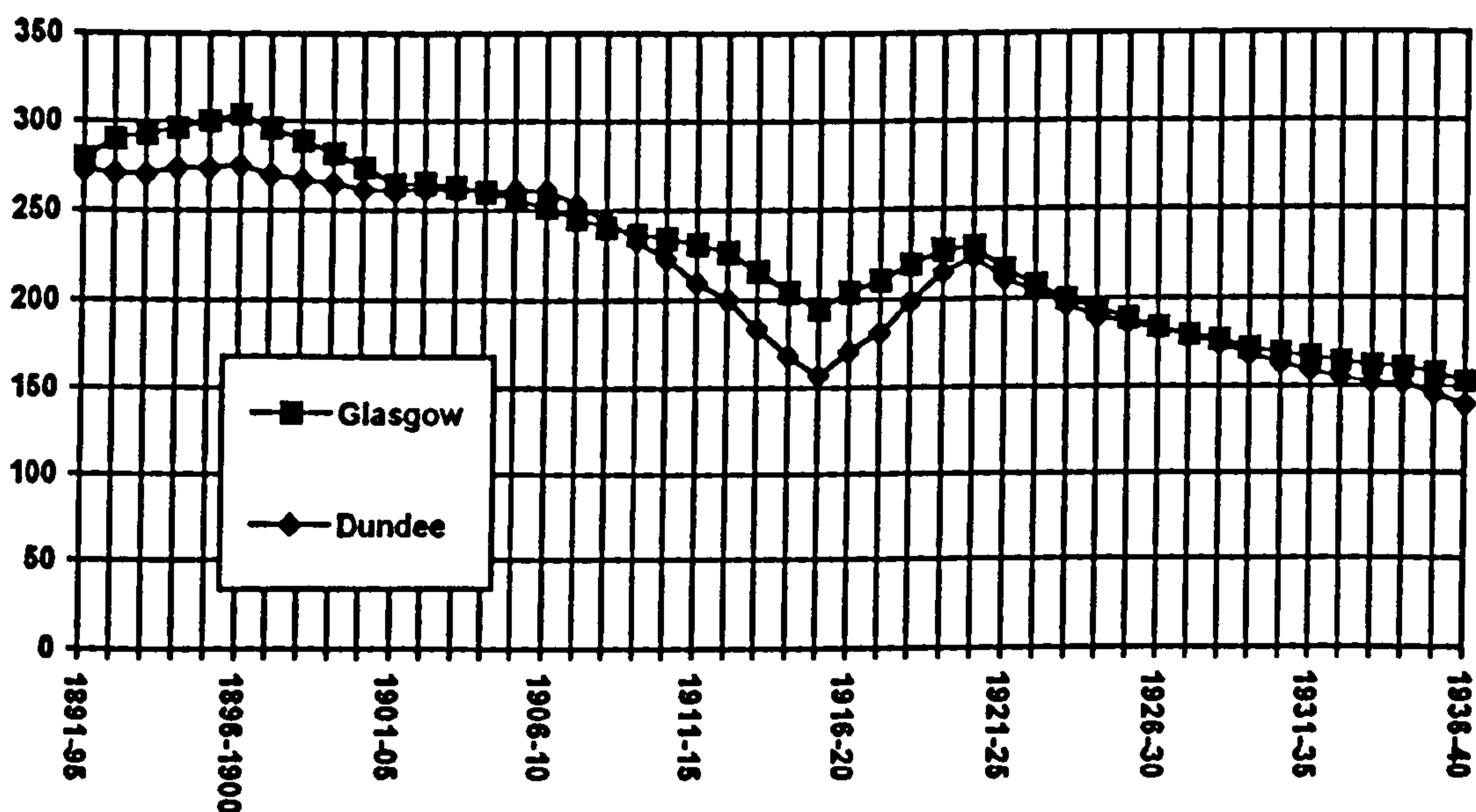
	Percentage of married women in full-time work (excluding widows)	Live births per thousand married women (five year averages)			
		1911	1901- 05	1906 - 10	1921 -25
Glasgow	5.5	265	252	217	184
Bolton	15.0	227	208	152	120
Dundee	23.4	261	261	211	183
Preston	35.3	233	212	152	125

Source: Registrar General's Annual Reports 1901-10 and 1921-30, the Census of England and Wales, 1911, County of Lancashire, table 25, and the Census of Scotland, 1911, City of Dundee, table g.

The legitimate fertility rates for Glasgow and Dundee were consistently greater than those for Bolton or Preston, reflecting the differences in birth rates between Scotland and England (see Coleman, 1988, p. 40). What is important here, however, is the similarity in the birth rates between the two English towns despite the variance in the percentage proportions of married women in waged work. Despite this variance being greater between Glasgow and Dundee, the birth rates in the two Scottish cities are not only similar, but in some years Dundee's birth rate was greater than Glasgow's. This can be examined in more detail (as shown in Figure 6–9), and apart from the final five years of the nineteenth century and the First World War, the two cities rates are very similar. That the numbers of births in Dundee were remaining steady, compared to a rising rate in Glasgow, from 1896 to 1900 could be accounted for by the relative

strengths of economic recovery in the two cities. Textile employers in Dundee in the previous decade had forced five wage reductions, and wages in the industry had fallen to an all-time low (Walker, 1988, p. 68). The wages of textile operatives probably fell by as much as 25 per cent in the 1880s, and, despite subsequent wage rises, it has been calculated that as late as 1912, 'in real terms their [textile workers] living standards were considerably lower' than they had been in the early 1870s (Whatley, 1992b, p. 154). The impact of wage reductions in the 1880s may account for the lowest marriage rates in both that and the subsequent decade for the entire period up to and including the 1940s (as shown in Figure 6-2). Fewer marriages would, of course, be reflected in the legitimate birth rate.

Figure 6-9: Moving five year legitimate birth rate per thousand married women aged 15-44 years, 1891 to 1940, in Glasgow and Dundee



Source: Registrar General's Annual Reports 1891-1940

The differences between the birth rates of Glasgow and Dundee during the First World War may have resulted from greater numbers of men joining the armed services in Dundee than in Glasgow. Whatever the reasons, the otherwise similar rates challenge the notion that the proportions of married women in occupations was the only factor in fertility rates. Indeed in the 1920s and 1930s, when the legitimate birth rates in Glasgow and Dundee, were almost the same, the proportion of married women in waged work in Dundee had increased to over 24 per cent in 1921 and to over 33 per cent in 1931 (compared to 6 per cent and 7 per cent in Glasgow).

It would be incorrect however, to conclude that married women's occupations had no connection with fertility rates. To explore this further, the male headed households sampled in the St. Clement's district were divided into three categories. Instead of categorising male households by the conjugal status of heads, the households were split into those without wives present at enumeration, including unmarried and widowed heads; those households headed by married men and containing non-waged wives; and, lastly, households headed by married men and containing waged wives. Much the largest proportion of these, at 68.12 of all male headed households, were those in which wives were enumerated as being present, but without a paid occupation. The second largest category, at 16.16 per cent, includes households in which wives were not present. Those households with working wives, 15.72 per cent of all male headed households, constitute the third, and smallest, category. By comparing, in particular, the households of non-waged and waged wives some degree

of relationship can be established between the work patterns of wives, their age, and the number of resident children in their households.

As the 1911 *Census* report noted, the largest proportion of waged wives in Dundee were of childbearing age, but, at the same time, married women ⁱⁿ who were in paid employment were likely to have smaller families than those who were without waged work. Wives without waged work belonged, in the 1891 district sample, to households with an average size that was larger than households containing waged wives (as shown in Figure 6-10). The average size of households of non-waged wives was larger than either the average for all male headed, or for all female headed, households. This can be partly explained by the numbers of children of conjugal couples who were present. The average number of these children was greatest in households with non-waged wives, and smaller in all other categories of household.

Figure 6-10: Number and average size of households, and number and percentage proportion of children, 11 years and younger

	Households	Number of residents	Average size of household	Children 11 years and under	Children as a percentage of number of residents
With non-waged wives	312	1638	5.25	514	31.38
With waged wives	72	276	3.83	72	26.09
Without wife present	74	197	2.66	26	13.20
All male headed households	458	2111	4.61	612	28.99
All female headed households	212	697	3.29	138	19.80

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

While most of these wives were residing in multi-occupancy households, around 15 per cent were living in simple conjugal units without others being present. These couple-only households may well have included those wives who remained childless. As has been pointed out, 'some married women would like to have had children, but didn't', and were, as a result in some cases, living better and longer than other wives (Roberts, 1984a, p.103). It is worth noting, however, that over a quarter of waged wives were living in simple conjugal households, compared to just over a tenth of non-waged wives (as shown in Figure 6-11).

Figure 6-11: Percentage (number) of all male headed households with wives, with non-waged wives; and with waged wives, by the number of children, 11 years and younger, resident

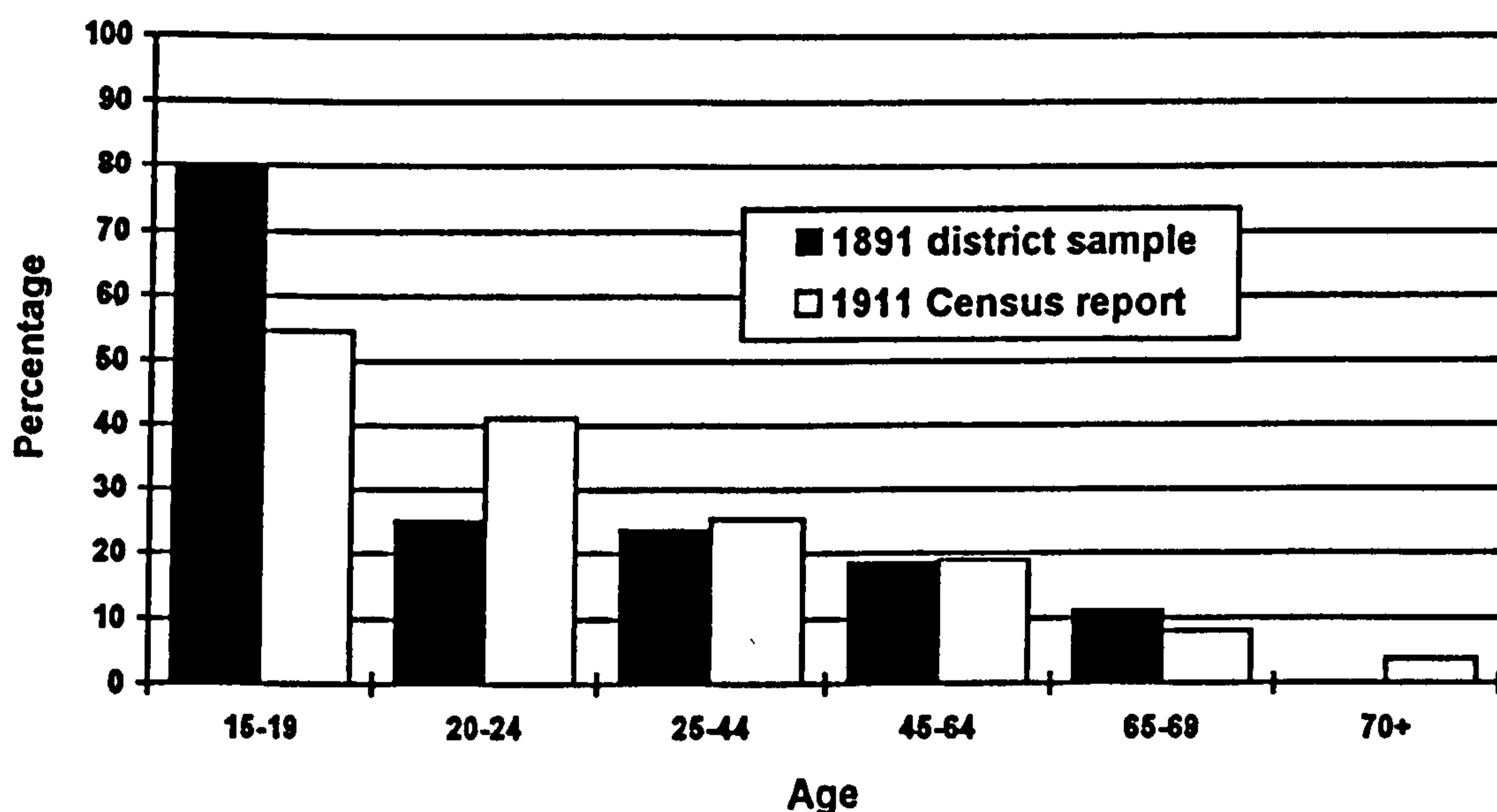
	Without children	With one child	With two children	With three children	With four children and more
All male headed households with wives	34.64 (133)	23.70 (91)	16.41 (63)	11.46 (44)	13.80 (53)
With non-waged wives	32.69 (102)	22.44 (70)	16.67 (52)	11.86 (37)	16.35 (51)
With waged wives	43.06 (31)	29.17 (21)	15.28 (11)	9.72 (7)	2.78 (2)

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

Similarly, there was a larger proportion of waged wives in households without children aged 11 years and younger, than there was amongst non-waged wives - a difference, although not as great, that was repeated in those households with a single child. The difference, between the proportions of waged and non-waged wives, was much more similar in households with two and three children, but increases again in households with four and more children. Almost as many non-waged wives had four or more of

their own children living with them as non-waged wives with two children, but very few wives who were working for wages had four or more children.

Figure 6-12: Percentage of occupied married women of all married women in six age groups in Dundee



Sources: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample and the Census of Scotland, 1911, City of Dundee, table g, p. 89.

The mean age of waged wives in all male headed households was also younger, at 35.93 years, than non-waged wives, at 41.35 years. That there was a relationship between the age of married women and their involvement in waged work was identified twenty years later by the *Census* report of 1911. There were differences between the percentages of occupied all married women (in both male and female

headed households) identified in the 1891 sample and the 1911 report. It can, however, be concluded that before the First World War the younger a wife was the more likely she was to be in waged work (as shown in Figure 6–12). Around a quarter of wives aged 44 years or younger in both the 1891 sample and in the 1911 report were in paid employment, whereas the proportion of women 45 years and older, in both 1891 and 1911, was less than a fifth.

As already noted, the average age of waged wives was less than that of non-waged wives. This difference was present regardless of the number of children who were present (as shown in Figure 6–13). Amongst all households with children, waged wives tended to be younger than non-waged wives. Therefore, it could be concluded that at least a part of the difference between non-waged and waged wives is a matter of individual life cycles. As wives grew older they tended to have more children and tended to give up waged work, and this accounts for the differences in the proportion, and ages, of waged wives and non-waged wives whose households contained their own children. The highest average ages of wives were recorded amongst those who belonged to households without conjugal children. The higher average age of wives in couple-only households, especially non-waged wives, is however, close to the end of childbearing age, suggesting that these were either couples who had remained childless, or, and it is more likely, couples whose children had grown up and left home. The youngest of the waged wives who was living without children was aged 19 years, and the oldest was aged 62 years. Eighteen (out of 31) of these wives were however, aged 35 years or older. It may be, therefore, that, while younger women were more

likely to have smaller families and to be in waged work, some women were either remaining childless and remaining in employment, or were returning to employment after their children left home.

Figure 6-13: Number and average mean age (and median age) of non-waged, waged, and all wives in households without and with conjugal children 11 years and younger in households with non-waged and waged wives

	Without children		With one child		With two and more children		All wives	
	number	age	number	age	number	age	number	age
Non-waged wives	102	49.46 (50)	70	37.31 (37.5)	140	37.46 (37.5)	312	41.32 (40)
Waged wives	31	38.61 (38)	21	32.52 (32)	21	35.35 (36)	72	35.93 (35.5)

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample

Statistically, therefore, wives who were in waged work were likely to have smaller families. Of course the data might also suggest that the larger the number of children present in households, the less likely a wife was to be in waged work. This certainly has tended to be the interpretation by many historians who have pursued this argument, often supporting their analysis with evidence from the Fertility of Marriage Census of 1911. Amongst those factors, however, that Elizabeth Roberts identifies as important is the fertility rate of husbands, and the Fertility Marriage report itself notes that rates of occupied men and occupied women were gathered without reference to the fertility of spouses. In other words, Roberts argues that the combined fertility rate

of couples needs to be considered. In Preston, for example, female weavers, having amongst the lowest fertility rates were marrying general labourers or others appearing in occupations of the most fertile men. The end result was that Preston had the highest rate of live births of the six textile towns studied (1984a, pp. 100-3).

As already noted, in Dundee the presence of married tradesmen was significant, not only in numbers, but also in that they were less likely than many other husbands to have wives in waged work. In contrast the presence of men in the less skilled, and most fertile groups, were four times as likely to be married to waged wives. Thus while tradesmen's wives, with a mean age of 39.16 years, lived in households with an average number of 1.6 children, amongst wives of less skilled husbands, with a mean age of 41.83 years, the average number of children present was somewhat less at 1.41 per household (as shown in Figure 6-14). The wives of the less skilled were therefore on average older and had fewer children than the wives of tradesmen. There are, of course, problems in relating these statistics directly to fertility rates. While it should be remembered that these averages are based on children who are 11 years and younger, that is children who were too young to be independently mobile, it may be that the infant mortality rate was higher amongst the children of the less skilled, and, more significantly, there may have been a difference in the numbers of children who were sent to live with relatives amongst the less skilled compared with the skilled. A final analysis of the occupational patterns of wives in the two occupational groupings of husbands is, however, of some interest here.

Figure 6-14: Number of households, number and average number of children 11 years and younger; number of residents in households and average size of households, with mean (and median) ages of wives and husbands in two occupational categories of male headed households

		Number of households	Number of children	Average number of children	All residents	Average household size	Age of wives	Age of husbands
Less skilled with wives*	All	98	138	1.41	467	4.77	39.16 (37)	41.38 (39.5)
	With non-waged wives	62	104	1.68	330	5.32	41.08 (38)	42.69 (40)
	With waged wives	36	34	0.94	137	3.81	35.86 (34.5)	39.11 (37.5)
Tradesmen with wives	All	121	193	1.60	633	5.23	41.83 (41)	43.29 (41)
	With non-waged wives	110	186	1.69	601	5.46	41.97 (42)	43.88 (44)
	With waged wives	11	7	0.64	32	2.91	32.55 (32)	35.45 (30)

*Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample; * labourers, porters, hawkers, and mill workers*

The youngest wives in the sample were those who were working for wages and married to the tradesmen, and they also had the smallest average number of children. These tradesmen with waged wives were also the youngest group of husbands. Given that this is also the smallest group in all the categories, it can be assumed that the tradesmen's wives were much less likely to continue in paid employment after the birth of children than the less skilled were. The young age of these waged couples suggests that they are closer to the beginning of their marriages, and further from the end of

their completed family size, than others were. The waged wives of those married to the selection of men in less skilled occupations were over two years older than the waged wives of tradesmen. Their husbands were also older and they had a slightly larger average number of their own children living with them. It would seem that the wives of the less skilled were therefore more likely to continue working for wages not only longer, but also were more likely to continue to work after the birth of their children.

The largest contrast in women's employment was amongst couples without children, who made up about a third of all couples in both categories. Just over a tenth of tradesmen's wives, who were living in childless households, were in occupations, compared to between two-fifths and a half of the wives of less skilled husbands. While, just over a fifth of tradesmen's wives were in employment in single child households, two-fifths of the wives of the less skilled were engaged in occupations. The average age of all wives of single child households was similar in the two categories, at 37.1 for tradesmen's wives and 36.5 years for the wives of the less skilled. There was, however, a marked difference between the ages amongst those wives engaged in occupations who were living with one child, with an average of 28.6 years for tradesmen's wives, and 33.7 for the wives of the less skilled. There were no tradesmen's wives with two or more children in waged work, whereas a quarter of the wives of the less skilled with two and more children were in employment. Tradesmen's wives who were in waged work were therefore younger and had smaller numbers of children.

This in itself suggests that the occupational patterns of wives was a factor in family size, in that the number of children resident in households amongst the less skilled husbands, was being limited by the numbers of their wives who were in waged work. Or, to put in another way, the average number of children was greater amongst all tradesmen, because fewer tradesmen's wives were in waged work. Amongst non-waged wives there was little difference in the average number of children present in the households of tradesmen and the less skilled. The average age of non-waged wives was also similar, at 41.97 years for tradesmen's wives, and 41.08 years for those of the less skilled. The employment of married women, however, was not the decisive factor in the numbers of children who were resident, although it does seem to have been more important than the occupational fertility rates of men, which were even less important than those of women in deciding the fertility rates of couples. What was critical was the occupational status of husbands that influenced whether a wife was working or not. In Dundee a large proportion of these husbands were tradesmen, who were less likely than others to have waged wives, and had more children present in their homes. There was also a large proportion of the wives of the less skilled ^{who} were in employment, with a smaller average number of children present. The result was a legitimate birth rate that was similar to Glasgow's.

Conclusion

Sylvia Walby has pointed out that, 'Women's position in the family is largely determined by their position in the paid work force rather than vice versa' (1986, p. 70). It is a generalisation that would be difficult to argue with, and although the size of

a woman's family has some relation to her position inside, or outside, of the labour market, it cannot be accepted that family size or fertility rates determined her occupational status. It is necessary, however, to explore marriage patterns, and to take into account the occupational status and fertility of husbands. While this is difficult, given the lack of statistical information, an analysis of the census enumerator books does allow some tentative conclusions on the relationship between occupation and marriage patterns amongst men. These findings include the idea that a gender imbalance will have an impact on the occupational structures of the married. So, in Dundee, the large numbers of adult unmarried women and the disproportionate numbers of wives who were married to tradesmen were limiting the percentage of married women in employment. The married women, who were in occupations, tended to be married to less skilled men. The suggestion is that the fertility rate amongst unwaged wives who were married to tradesmen was higher than might be assumed, while the fertility rate for the less skilled men was lower amongst those who were married to waged wives. In summary, women's position in the family is largely determined by their position in the workforce, and, if they were married, by their husbands' position in the workforce.

If marriage was almost the only way for men to head households, it is also clear that the presence of wives in these households was of particular importance. The role played by wives in managing male headed households will be investigated further (in chapter 11), but it is reasonable to conclude at this point that men needed the presence of women in the home, more than women needed men. This was often expressed in the oral testimony of a later generation of women with the phrase that, 'without a woman a man wouldn't be standing'. It is also worth re-emphasising that the local occupational

structure, that provided so much employment for women, and was a major factor in gender relationships, provided the opportunity for women to head their own homes without men necessarily being present. Despite the large proportion of female headed households, however, it has to be recognised that most women lived in male headed households (almost 65 per cent of all women aged 12 years and older in the St. Clement's district sample).

Chapter 7: The shopfloor and the relationship to organisation

Introduction

In the middle of the nineteenth century, before the rise of textiles, mothers in Dundee were warning their daughters against entering the mills (cited in Cooke, ed, 1980, p. 9), but for most of the years between 1880 and 1950 there was little choice of paid employment for most women. The textile industry dominated the female job market from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century, with never less than 59 per cent of all occupied females directly employed by the sector between 1891 and 1931. This concentration was even greater for married women, for marriage may not have automatically meant exclusion from waged work for women in the city, but there were very few jobs outside textiles that were open to married women. The result was that most married females who were working for wages were occupied in the textile sector; in 1911 and 1921 over 84 per cent of all the jobs for married women in the city were to be found in textiles (*Census of Scotland*, 1911, vol. ii, p. 418; see also Walker, 1979, p. 86; *Census of Scotland*, 1921, vol. iii, p. x and p. 153). The central position of textiles in the working experiences of so many women was the foundation for a communality of interests that made itself felt beyond the world of waged work. The experiences of waged work brought together single, married, and widowed women, and provided a meeting point for many of the female residents of both male and female headed households.

While there has been little historical study of struggle in Dundee's textile industry in the inter-war period, the decades before the early 1920s have been ably investigated in labour histories by William Walker and Eleanor Gordon. Walker (1979), reflecting the work of earlier economic historians (see for example Lenman, et al., 1969), argued that the 'weaknesses' of the trade unions were a result of 'the circumstances of the textile industry', so much so 'that even an all-male labour force might well have found organisation as elusive as, in the event, a female industry found it to be' (p. 36).

Throughout his history he assumes that the women workers on the shopfloor were generally docile and that any displays of combativeness, mentioned in passing, retarded trade union organisation. In contrast Eleanor Gordon (1991) believes that the women's unofficial disputes were not only widespread throughout the textile industry, but were rooted in a shopfloor cultures shaped by the relationship between employers and workers. Overall Gordon insists that the 'history of Dundee's textile industry was not one of the unfettered control of employers over a passive labour force', even if this was in 'the context of the relative impotence of unionism generally in Dundee' (pp. 169-70). While documentary evidence and oral testimony would suggest a conclusion that is closer to the findings of Gordon than those of Walker, both have tended to underestimate the role played by juvenile labour. Children and youth not only initiated disputes in the decades before the early 1920s, but continued to be a factor in the demands that adult women workers would make in the years afterwards. By underestimating the substantial presence of family and household networks within the textile industry, and the importance of juvenile wages to households and families, the connections between juveniles and women in disputes are too easily overlooked.

Women workers were capable of a militancy that was based in the cultures of the shopfloor, but it could also be concluded that the major weakness of trade union organisation was that it was often at odds with the cultures of the shopfloor. This was a failure of organisation, rather than workers failing their trade union - an important distinction given the widespread condemnation of the shopfloor cultures, and the related assumption that female textile operatives were difficult to organise.

Contemporary hostility to aspects of the shopfloor cultures ranged from the Liberal press, with the exuberance of young women presented as the antitheses of respectability (cited in Walker 1979, p. 45) through to a member of the Communist Party (Brooksbank, 1971, p. 23). While it is easy to recognise the role played by mutual assistance found on the shopfloor in building solidarity (Gordon, 1991, p. 155), it is also necessary to recognise that aggressive attitudes and behaviour were as present amongst these workers as was sisterly comradery. Indeed the these two sides of shopfloor cultures, collective solidarity and an independent individual assertiveness, were equally important in shaping the workers' relationships with their trade union.

Of course, as in other industrial sectors 'there was no straight line running between workplace militancy and collective organisation in the unions', but to conclude, as one investigation of women industrial workers has, that, 'the militancy could not be sustained without institutional structures' (Tolliday, 1983, pp. 53-64) is inaccurate for at least two reasons. The first of these is that a historical review of trade unionism would have to conclude that militancy was not the hallmark of these institutional structures, indeed the leadership of the trade unions have generally been somewhat less

than militant. The second reason is that the link between the shopfloor and trade unions is a complex relationship involving a number of long-term factors, which range from the prevailing economic conditions, through structural changes within the labour force, to changes in the consciousness amongst the workers themselves. There no straight line from the shopfloor to the union, but there is a relationship involving periods of accommodation and conflict between the two. In Dundee there were years when the aspirations and actions of the shopfloor exceeded those of the trade unions, and there were times when the trade union leadership felt that their membership was unwilling to commit themselves to sacrifice and struggle, or even to act as trade unionists.

Gordon's (1991) account ends in 1914 with the outbreak of war, Walker's (1979) in 1923, with a significant defeat for jute workers. Yet the importance of the struggle in textiles to the lives of the majority of Dundonian women continued until at least the Second World War. During this period the relationships between women, the shopfloor cultures, and trade unionism can be charted against a background of change that included attempts by employers to the transform the gender composition of the industry's workforce. By considering oral evidence from those who worked in the inter-war period a more detailed account of the cultures of the shopfloor can be given before, during, and after these structural changes, which, in turn, allows an insight into the relationship of workers with their trade union, the Jute and Flax Workers', as well as with the wider struggle to improve wages and conditions. By placing labour history, in this longer view, alongside the history of household composition and structures, a

new understanding of the hopes and behaviour of women workers is made possible.

This includes a reinterpretation of the evidence gathered by Walker (1979) and

Gordon (1991) for the period before the First World War.

Organisation and disputes, c. 1890 to 1918

Around 40 per cent of the total jute textile workforce was aged 20 years and younger in 1891, and, although this was to fall to just over a quarter by 1911, the presence of juveniles in the industry was a factor both inside and outside of the pre-War industry. For many Dundee households the employment of their sons and daughters in jute provided a crucial contribution to family incomes (see chapters 4, 5, and 6). Inside the industry, the largest category, or a third, of workers may well have been women aged between 25 and 45 years of age by 1911 (Gordon, 1991, p. 150), but juvenile labour continued to be important into the inter-war years. While the proportion of youth and children was falling, their contribution to the turbulent industrial relations lasted at least to 1918. Even before this employers had become increasingly aware, not only of the women workers' ability to struggle, but also of the resistance that was displayed by children and youth. The closing down of the half-time school in Camperdown in 1896, may have been 'on account of the often expensive demands made upon them [the mill owners] by the School Board Inspectors, who made the employers provide books for the pupils and pay them' (Marshall, 1967, pp. 69-109), but this does not rule out the possibility that employers were becoming motivated by a wish to end half-time work, after they had identified half-timers as a radical and troublesome section of the juvenile workforce.

In the late nineteenth century there was a widespread belief amongst textile workers and their families that most owners were ignorant of, rather than unsympathetic to, the problems faced by labour. This was in sharp contrast to the attitude of labour towards the managers employed by companies (Walker, 1979, pp. 292-3). The one section of the workforce that was the least effected by feelings of deference towards employers were the children and youth who were employed in the mills. As a result juveniles were often at the forefront of industrial disputes before 1918. Despite their close supervision by adult workers, who were often family members, the resistance and strikes of children found support from older workers. While youthful larking around was discouraged, confrontations that either fitted into under-age working or were seen as a way of improving wages and conditions tended to be tolerated by adults. So, for example, a typical 'dodge' was for child half-timers to apply for work at the beginning of the school holidays, claiming that they were fourteen years old when they were actually younger, and then at the end of the holidays pick a fight with the foreman, 'get sacked, and return to ... half-time existence'. In the everyday mill routine child shifters would set fire to waste under the spinning frames to shut down the machines, an action that hard pressed spinners might publicly deplore, but privately welcome (Stewart, 1967, pp. 14-5).

Children and youth in the textile sector were capable of organising their own disputes before and during the First World War. In 1889 their militancy took on a national perspective, with a wave of school strikes that began in Dundee and then spread throughout Britain (Humphries, 1981, pp. 95-8). A local newspaper noted that the

school where the strike began had a large number of half-timers, who were demanding shorter hours and fewer lessons. The children, boys and girls, went on strike and began visiting other schools in the neighbourhood, and adopting similar tactics used by adult strikers, the children 'afterwards paraded the streets, shouting and singing popular ditties'. This was initially reported as an isolated incident that would soon be resolved (*Dundee Advertiser*, Tuesday 8 October 1889), but the tone changed the very next day when the same newspaper was forced to admit that, 'school children in Dundee seem to have been fairly caught by the "strike" contagion' (*Dundee Advertiser*, Wednesday 9 October 1889). Within five days of the first strike the movement had spread first to Broughty Ferry, then Forfar, and after that even as far south as Liverpool, Swansea, and East London. The newspaper declared that 'such movements as this do not spring up spontaneously'. There was even a suggestion of panic in the report with the newspaper claiming that the strike was 'evidence of a deep conspiracy against social order.' Seeking a reason which denied children's capacity for organisation, the newspaper claimed, with no evidence to substantiate such a claim, that it was, 'separatist ... Jacobins' who had inspired and even planned the actions in Dundee.

The letter column of the same newspaper suggests that the action was understood by parents, who found little problem supporting demands that would have freed their children from unpaid school work. While such support may have been based upon the notion that children's time might have been better spent making wages or helping around the home, the letters also provide evidence of adult condemnation of the length

of hours and energy that half-time education and half-time employment demanded (*Dundee Advertiser*, Friday 11 October 1889). Such support is also evident in the workplace strikes that were initiated by children. As has already been noted (in chapter 4) it was common for children to begin work in the same mill or factory as an older relative, and in addition the widespread dependence of many households on juvenile wages, together provided an interest amongst adult workers in maintaining and even improving juvenile wages and conditions. The importance of juvenile wages, particularly for women workers, combined with the oppressive conditions that women shared with juveniles, provided a basis for intergenerational solidarity. It should also be noted that the most of the female youth who had engaged in the strikes of the late 1880s and the 1890s were amongst those who would make up the largest proportion of the textile labour force by 1911. This element of continuity, although impossible to quantify, may well have further promoted adult support for juvenile strikes.

Many of the disputes before 1918 therefore began amongst juveniles and then spread to other sections of the workforce. In an industry, that had a high level of interdependence between labour processes, a strike in one section could lead to other workers becoming involved. The textile strike of 1895, for example, began when boy and girl shifters struck demanding a 10 per cent wage rise, a demand supported by other mill workers who clearly understood the importance of children's wages (Walker, 1979, p. 166). The militancy of youth continued into the immediate pre-war period, and when young rove-shifters in Camperdown, in 1913, withdrew their labour the works manager recorded in his notebook that he was forced to close the mill and

factory and send his workers home. In the same works in November 1917 another strike by younger workers broke out, 'caused', according to the same manager, 'by the difference in increase of wages between those under and over 18 years of age' (University of Dundee Library, MS 66/II/9/31). The strike was significant in that it was an attempt to prevent the erosion of the relatively high child and adolescent wages, and was directly supported by adult women who took sympathetic industrial action.

Of course women were capable of taking industrial action independently of youth, just as they were capable of taking action without, even in spite of, trade union organisation. It has been suggested that most strikes in the jute industry were 'spontaneous and unorganised' (Walker, 1979, p. 199), but this is to claim that only union lead strikes are planned. Unofficial, that is non-union, actions certainly had no identifiable leadership, or at least leaders who could be named (Brooksbank, 1967, p. 20), nor was there an easily visible organisation dedicated to building strikes or supporting strikers. This was an advantage to workers whose union often found difficulty in preventing victimisation of individual workers by foremen. Unofficial strikes were also often supported in the wider community, and it is necessary to recognise that the women who took industrial action were reliant upon the networks and gender solidarity outside of mill and factory (see John, ed., 1986, p. 22).

That most strikes in Dundee's textiles were unofficial does not preclude prior discussion, thought, or even informal organisation. So, while few women regularly attended union meetings, discussions took place in the streets, in the corner shop, and

on pletties - anywhere workers from the shopfloor and the collective community met.

Perhaps the single most important places where these women found the space to

report news and air grievances were in the city's wash-houses and back greens. Over

the hours it took to wash and launder for a family numerous topics could and were

covered in this female environment. There ^{was} family reports to be given and received, *(more)*

including judging the merits or otherwise of husbands and children, and there was

information exchanged regarding the state of the textile industry, including 'this or that

bloody foreman'.

Unofficial strikes before 1918 normally began as sectional disputes, reflecting the

stratification of the jute workforce in the various stages of preparing, spinning,

weaving, and finishing, Sectional disputes did not always remain isolated incidents, and

employers, and even groups of employers, could find a dispute in one section could

quickly spread particularly in the larger works. Although not formally linked, the

workforce, from adult male tenters to girl and boy shifters, were reliant upon each

others' labour. This reliance could, and often did, lead to further unofficial disputes

either as the result of mass lock-outs resulting from a sectional stoppage, or in future

wage claims based on maintaining or breaking parity between sections. While disputes

tended to be sectional, women were capable of both seeking and providing solidarity.

In the carters and dockers strike of 1911, for example, women workers found

themselves out of work after the coal supply to the mills and factories was cut. Yet, as

has been noted, by the same historian who has concluded that female operatives were

incapable of a wider solidarity beyond their immediate workplace, 'the locked out jute

workers were not unhappy with the carters and dockers' (Walker, 1979, p. 304).

Indeed photographs of the strike include scenes of women textile workers demonstrating alongside the male strikers.

During both official and unofficial disputes women made the most of their free time, taking to the streets in colourful expressions of freedom, solidarity, and collective power, which both reflected life on the factory floor and helped to galvanise and build disputes. All this is emphasised in Gordon's research (1991) and it is not necessary to recover this ground, but it should be noted that the celebratory tone of unofficial strikes continued beyond 1914. The strike of 1916 not only provides a fine example of these street activities, but also the methods adopted by employers even during a war that had brought temporary economic growth and a degree of certainty to the industry. The strike was sparked by the owners implementing an agreed government pay award for only a single day. As a result 30,000 textile employees went on strike. A newspaper reporter describing the scenes in Dundee city centre on the second day of the strike highlighted the involvement of 'bands of young women parading the principal thoroughfares', and, as in other strikes of the period, the women were 'dressed up with paper hats of various hues'. The report goes on to explain that, 'Many of the gangs are armed with whistles, which they blow lustily at intervals, and the din drowns for a time the melody sung from a hundred throats'. These were women not to be trifled with, and even support from soldiers on leave was sought, for women on sighting a 'Tommy' would 'raise a cheer and start the refrain, "keep the home fires burning"' (University of Dundee Library, MS 66/II/9/3).

While emphasising the militancy of women, and their capacity to find enjoyment in the free time that strikes provided, it should not be forgotten that there were enormous sacrifices required by striking workers and their families. A former member of the Jute and Flax Workers', who joined her mother, father and siblings in the Camperdown Works, Lochee, in 1916, recalls that, in the strike of 1923, 'we were all on strike, we were all off ... the rest of the family they were on strike as well as us'. With the Camperdown Works, employing around 5,000 workers, the whole of the surrounding district of Lochee shared in the suffering (DOHP 073/A/2). In such circumstances it is little wonder that before 1923 sectional disputes may well have been preferred by workers, rather than strikes that immediately closed a factory or mill, let alone industry wide strikes. The financial cost of striking for low income families could be punishing. Sectional strikes, if contained, might effect only one family wage earner at a time, but larger disputes and lock-outs could quickly reduce families dependant upon textiles for their entire income to starvation.

Given the pre-1914 pattern of unofficial action, some contemporary middle class observers concluded that Dundee's women textile workers generally 'lack[ed] the faculty of efficient organisation' (Lennox, 1905, pp. 171-2). There is, however, evidence, including the 1912 Abstract of Labour Statistics, that women were more willing, than men, to join trade unions (Walker, 1979, pp. 49-50). In many ways the formation of Dundee's first established textile trade union, in 1885, can itself be seen as a reaction to shopfloor militancy. It has been argued that the Dundee and District Mill and Factory Operatives' Union was founded, by the Unitarian minister

Henry Williamson, to ensure that there would be no repeat of the strike of 1885 against wage reductions, when broken time meant financial problems for elite male workers in the industry (Gordon, 1991, p. 182; see also Ward, 1987, p. 137).

Throughout the union's existence, up to its demise in the 1920s, it sought, usually without success, to defuse the disputes that arose from the shopfloor, and undermine strikes, specifically abandoning the strikes of 1912 and 1916, and petitioned workers affected by disputes (including those locked out due to strikes elsewhere) with the demand that strikers should return to work (Walker, 1979, p. 182 and p. 186).

Although the union could be compared favourably with other organisations aimed at women members (Boston, 1987, p. 74), Williamson was neither especially sympathetic to women trade unionists nor, as president of the Union, particularly receptive to the views of his membership (Walker, 1979, p. 174).

When Mary Macarthur, assisting in the formation of the Dundee Jute and Flax Workers' Union in 1906, approached Williamson with the aim of merging the two organisations along 'the same lines as those of Lancashire', Williamson replied that she was overlooking the fact that Dundee's textile workforce were 'nearly all women', and that 'you cannot get women to form a real trade union'. Macarthur retorted that a trade union should be 'managed' by workers themselves and that the leadership should be 'the servant of the Union and not its boss' (cited in Walker, 1979, p. 171). From the start the Jute and Flax Workers' followed an aggressive policy towards its rival, including, in sharp contrast to the Operative's Union, encouraging the participation of women at all levels in the union. Although the union was at first less effective in

organising and attracting membership than its counterparts in England, the level of the 'participation of women in trade union affairs - at least upon the executive committee ... more than rivalled what the cotton unions of Lancashire could claim' (Walker, 1979, p. 51).

While the Jute and Flax Workers' provided a more democratic structure than the Operatives' Union, tensions between trade union organisation and women workers on the shopfloor continued in the new union. Unofficial disputes shaped the developing union organisation. For example, in the six week textile strike of 1912 the Jute and Flax Workers' found themselves responding to the actions of non-union members who were proving themselves as militant as their unionised sisters. As in both previous and later strikes, the dispute was started and maintained by workers on the shopfloor, with organised operatives joining the unorganised in dispute after being locked-out. As the strike progressed, with no end in sight, the union, finding itself in financial danger, refused demands by their own members to pay lock-out benefit. William Walker (1979) notes that this 'is testimony to the long road which the union still had to travel in the education of its rank and file' (pp. 304-5). That a section of workers believed the union should protect its membership from destitution during lock-out, even at the risk of that union's collapse, seems reasonable. Above all else, however, the 1912 dispute underlined for the trade union leadership the lesson that unofficial strikes by non-union members could pose difficulties for themselves and their members. It also reminded workers on the shopfloor that unofficial action could be more militant than official action.

In summary, before 1918 disputes conducted by women and juvenile workers tended to be unofficial, sectional, and reliant on wider community networks. The growth of trade unionism can be viewed as one sign of the process of radicalisation, but the unions themselves could be, and often were, less militant than the mood of the shopfloor, even amongst the unorganised. As Eleanor Gordon (1991) has shown, female operatives were not helpless victims, but rather they pursued their grievances by using the strengths they could draw upon, including household as well as community networks beyond the workplaces. Such networks helped to shape the cultures of the shopfloor. That there is a lack of documentary research describing the shopfloor is understandable, but there is a wealth of oral evidence, easily collected from women willing to describe everyday working life. This evidence suggests that the shopfloor cultures were as marked by combativeness as it was by solidarity and goes some way to explain the propensity for unofficial action and the reluctance of women to give up individual actions and sectional disputes for a wider collective strength that, when tested in 1923, would prove inadequate.

The cultures of the shop floor

Women outnumbered men in the textile industry by more than 2:1 in 1911 and 1921, a ratio that increased to 3:1 in 1931. Many male operatives began work as shifters and the first figures of authority they met were women. Never recognised, either in terms of status or wage levels, these women, particularly shifting mistresses in the mills, are often portrayed in oral testimony as harsh task mistresses (see for example DOHP 013/A/1). The women who were in charge of young male and female shifters, are

presented in verse by local poet Dave Taylor, particularly in 'A Shiftin' Wifie's Ghost', as frightening figures. Now older, the ex-shifters celebrate their escape from the shifting mistress, and,

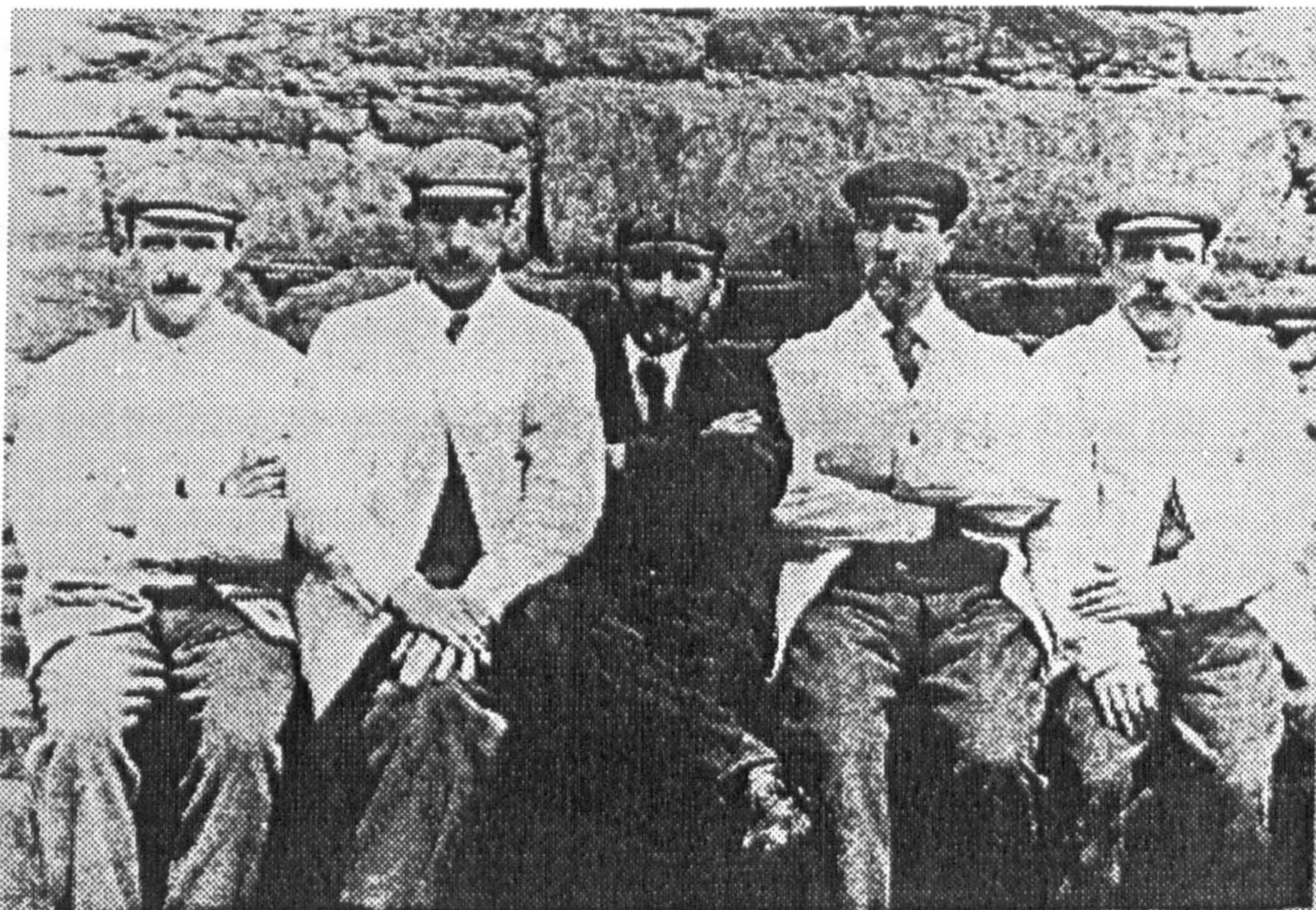
Are never sweir tae tell ye o'
 Their misery an tears
 An how they got awa fae her
 Her tantrums and her throes
 By jinin' up and servin' wi'
 Lochee's Mill Commandos. (Taylor, 1991, p. 6)

Even amongst former shifting mistresses there is a recognition of their hard reputations. Georgina Keith, for example, who worked as a shifting wife in the inter-war years and whose mother worked in the same job before her, confirmed that children were worked hard, but points out that a misteress's job of supervising children was not an easy one (BCHG VT 06).

While women supervised the youngest workers, all other positions of authority and power in industry were concentrated amongst a small male elite. Hiring and firing remained the responsibility of foremen or gaffers even after the second world war. Before the First World War the foremen's loyalty to their employers was such that, during the strike of 1912, foremen in the Rashiewell Works turned the hosepipes on pickets, and in the Camperdown Works the owners were preparing to arm foremen with automatic pistols and 1,500 cartridges (University of Dundee Library, MS 66/II/9/4). While such loyalty may have weakened after the First World War, foremen retained a great deal of their authority and power. A typical rule book, printed around 1930, pointed out that in cases of misconduct 'all Foremen have the power of

summary dismissal' (University of Dundee Library, MS 100/I/9/6). During the inter-war years foremen continued to hire textile workers in a way that is more reminiscent of the way dock labour was engaged, with women gathering outside a firm's lodge house in the hope of being employed. At the Camperdown Works, for example, where there was a foreman 'for the low mill, one for the spinning flat, one for the winding, and one for the weaving', it is recalled that the foremen would come to the gates to find a replacement for an absent worker or for an employee whose work was judged as poor. At the gates there would be a 'crowd' including former employees, but foremen tended to ignore these and engage workers new to the firm (DOHP 003/A/1).

Figure 7-1: Group of employees at Rashiewell Works, left to right: Charles Reoch, foreman; R. England, spinning overseer; James Dundas, foreman mechanic; (-) Stewart, winding foreman; P. Edwards, preparing foreman. c.1910.



Source: University of Dundee, MS 66/V/5.

In response to oppressive working conditions, qualitative evidence suggests that the women employed in textiles displayed camaraderie, consideration, and mutual fun. For many even the noise of machinery, the pervasive smell of jute, the dust, and the sheer hard work could all be compensated for by the chance of having some enjoyment. The shared humour of ribald jokes, and the companionship of other women, gave the female workforce a basis of unity that encouraged mutual help amongst workers. One example of mutual assistance comes from the testimony of weavers who recall helping one another when there were breakdowns in Halley's factory (Gordon, 1991, pp. 155-6); another comes from a former mill worker in Cox Brothers' Camperdown Works remember covering for their pregnant work mates (ADD 04/A/2).

There was more to the shop floor culture, however, for the mills and factories were also workplaces in which women had to assert themselves, and this process could involve attitudes and actions that were both aggressive and combative. The physical fights that periodically broke out between women workers, or 'hair pulling competitions' as one ex-weaver described them (in BCHG VT 10), were often provoked by challenges to an individual's dignity. Mrs MacIntosh, a former mill worker, for example, recalled that in 1918, when she had recently moved from one mill to another, found that one 'lassie' constantly mocked her Fife accent. She explains that, 'it got on ma nerves', and so one day on going into work, 'Ah went tae ma machine, took off ma coat, and a went ower tae her'. Mrs MacIntosh's antagonist simply laughed at her complaints. 'She just kept laughin; I just took ma hand and bashed her (laughs), she started greetin [crying], and the gaffer went tae ask how she

wis greetin.’ When the foreman suggested that such action could result in instant dismissal, she told him that, ‘I’ll wait for her tae come oot at dinner time, and I’ll gae her more than what she’s got now.’ The foreman decided against disciplining her, and Mrs MacIntosh noted that, ‘she never made a fool of me again’.

*Figure 7-2: In the mill,
Mrs MacIntosh (far right)*

*Source: 'Lochee Lives'
(donated by
Mrs MacIntosh's family)*



It is perhaps ironic that Mrs MacIntosh later found out that her victim was ‘ma husband’s cousin ...’ (ADD 04/A/1), but this was in a city where the community of interests, kinship links, and waged work were closely woven together (see chapter 3). The solidarity and collective assistance that were present in the workplaces were not only reflected in neighbourhoods, but were part of the networks that interconnected home, factory, and mill. The same neighbour who borrowed money to pay rent, until her husband arrived home with his wages, might well have a sister in the mill willing to help out her sister’s neighbour. As well as reciprocal arrangements, there was

reciprocal antagonism that could spill over from workplace to home, and home to workplace. In the broad community there was little room for privacy, and assertiveness was a quality that many found necessary, if only to combat the assertiveness of others, but it was also to provide the possibilities for trust and solidarity.

The process of women having to establish themselves in the workplace meant that even the most timid young workers, such as Elizabeth McIntyre, found themselves growing up with a degree of assertiveness that was missing from the informal education of women elsewhere. She recalls that when she first began work that she 'used to stand and greet [cry]' after being told off by a foreman, but this changed when 'you got aulder, and then you'd maybe try and cheek him back' (DOHP 061/A/2). The individual worker, in establishing herself, could be then relied upon by other workers to act in certain ways, but the important shared characteristic was the idea that a worker was someone not to be trifled with by either other workers or by gaffers. The cultures of the shopfloor taught the value of quickness of thought, and a common comment by women textile workers was that the mills and factories were places that required keeping 'yer wits about ye'. The women who failed to assert themselves, or were not 'nippy' enough, or failed to find a way of fitting into mill and factory life, tended to leave, as Jessie Mitchell, for example, recalls. She was employed in a weaving factory in the late 1930s when an older woman who had 'an awfy spite at me, made meh life a misery, and Eh had tae gie up meh job' (DOHP 034/A/1). The women who worked for a period in the textiles and then left the industry, found they had developed a degree of self-belief and strength of character, and, by doing so, an

understanding of solidarity. Bella Keyzer, when she was to later to campaign for her right to work in shipbuilding as a welder after the Second World War, found that her experiences as a weaver in a factory of women, gave her a good basis on which to establish herself, and remain, in the hostile world of male shipyard cultures (DOHP 022/B/2).

It was on the basis of the self-belief and solidarity, promoted by both the conflict and fun of the shopfloor, that daily resistance in the textile mills and factories sprang. One of the most basic acts of resistance to the demands of work was the appropriation of employers' time. This tended to be opportunistic, such as making the most of breakdowns or trying to leave work early, but could also involve celebrations such as an impending wedding, as the following song lyrics, by Mary Brooksbank, illustrate:

The gaffer's looking worried, the flett's a' in a steer,
 Jessie Brodie's getting marit [married] on the morn
 she'll no be here.

The shifters they're a-dancin,
 The spinners singin tae,
 The gaffer's standin watchin,
 But there's nothin he can dae. (from 'The spinner's wedding', in Brooksbank, 1982, pp. 58-9, and in Gatherer, 1986, p. 90)

Another widespread practice was theft of materials from the mills and factories, and jute was acquired for aprons, mats, and jute shoes or roviae, which 'could be sold outside for a small sum' (Stewart, 1967, p. 15). There are even recollections of a small joinery business that did good trade turning out standard lamps from stolen spools, for

those who did not have the skill to do so themselves. Although unorganised, these thefts required somebody to come up with an idea for using unpromising materials, then it would be copied, and for other workers at least to ignore the thefts. The most common form of resistance, however, and one of the most successful ways of improving wages and conditions, was simply for a worker to move from one works to another. Many of the women jute workers who were interviewed remember waiting for vacancies in mills and factories that paid better, or had a reputation for better conditions, and then 'you would tell the foreman what to do with your job' (DOHP 064/B/1).

While there were differences between the shopfloor cultures found in various mills and factories, the stratification of the female workforce should not be exaggerated. The most obvious example of the stratification of the jute workforce was in the division between mill and factory, and more particularly between spinners and weavers (see Walker, 1979, pp. 43-5; Kay, 1980, p. 40; and Gordon, 1991, pp. 157-63). There is no shortage of oral evidence that weavers enjoyed better conditions and better pay. Weavers were on piece rates, while spinners were paid on a flat rate. Weavers even dressed differently from their sisters elsewhere in the industry. All this may have played a part in the sectional nature of disputes, but any suggestion that weavers were incapable of militancy is misplaced. While the advantages of the weaver have often been stressed, there has been a tendency to ignore the weavers' disadvantages as well as their attempts to improve their conditions. The weavers may have been better off than spinners, but it did not prevent them engaging in shopfloor protests.

Weaving frames were maintained on a daily basis by tenters and their apprentices. As a former foreman noted, while tenters had 'no power' over the weavers, at the same time, 'tenters could make their life a misery'. A tenter could delay or improperly 'tune' a weaver's loom, critical for a weaver on piece-work. In some works tenters were also empowered to hand out the pay packets, made up by the foreman, to weavers who belonged to their 'set' (ADD 05/A/1). Weavers were 'tabled' when a fault in their weaving was spotted on the inspection table. Some works operated a system of fines, others insisted that the weaver herself made the repair, and others offered the weaver the choice of the first two options. What seemed to matter to weavers was not so much the loss of pay, but rather the embarrassment of being called away from the frame in front of colleagues (Bield History Group VT 01). The supervision of weavers was at least as great, and probably greater, as the supervision of spinners.

It has been suggested that women in the mills, including spinners, were more likely to be unionised than those in the factories (Walker, 1979, p. 50), but any suggestion that weavers were incapable of militancy is misplaced. Certainly both documentary and oral sources strongly suggest that weavers were more likely to assert themselves at the point of production in factories, rather than through trade union organisation. There were more opportunities to negotiate informally at shopfloor level, particularly over the quality of yarn they were expected to weave - a common source of dispute in the factories where so many of the women were on piece-work . Whether the possibilities of direct shopfloor action made fewer weavers less likely trade union members than their sisters elsewhere in the industry is difficult to say. They certainly were not a

docile section of the workforce, indeed the reverse might have been the case so far as localised disputes were concerned. In November 1917, for example, weavers in the Camperdown Works, according to the employer's records, left their looms, showing 'considerable dissatisfaction' with the long pieces that were being 'woven for some time past'. The weavers requested a meeting with the manager and the matter was quickly resolved (University of Dundee Library, MS 66/II/9/3). This ability to take short, sharp action, and the swift resolution of disputes in the weaving, probably resulted in many factory shopfloor protests going unrecorded. Oral testimony from factory foremen and managers reinforces this interpretation, with weavers described as workers whose complaints, and they were numerous, were listened to and acted upon in a way that was not the case in the mills (see for example ADD 03/A/1).

Women in both the mills and factories not only defended themselves as workers, but also displayed resistance along gender lines. Sexual harassment was widely resented by the women, although Mary Lannan, amongst others, claims that there was, in the factory, 'a lot of that if ye were stupid enough to let it go on,' and 'that' not only involved managers, foremen, and tenters, who might attempt to take advantage of their positions of authority, but also male labourers. Women would retaliate in a number of ways, including engaging in some fairly nasty allegations of a particular trouble maker's sexuality and sexual ability. One former weaver recalls that a 'barra-man' (labourer) and bottom-pincher would often steal the weavers' sweets, which were kept close at hand. He was 'sorted out' after the women left bags of broken-up laxative chocolate lying about. Some women would engage in even more direct action, and

Lizzie Duncan, a mill worker, recalls that she ‘broke a stick ower a fella’s back for puttin his hand up meh claes, Eh up with the broom and bam!’ (BCHG VT 10). This form of resistance was an additional element, that is the women, faced by the twin oppression of gender and class, responded not only as workers, but as women workers, thus doubling the potential for collective solidarity. While spinning departments were particularly noted for their concentration of female operatives, there is also evidence that in other areas of the industry in which younger male workers in particular felt intimidated by women. Apprentice mechanics and under-tenters in the weaving factories could find themselves the butt of crude humour and the victims of practical jokes.

Figure 7-3: In the low mill, Lizzie Duncan (standing, left)



Source: Lizzie Duncan's family

Dealing with male advances, stealing time and materials, and the leaving of one works for another, were the actions of individuals, but they all relied upon a wider collective understanding. Men who attempted harassment received little understanding if they

were verbally or even physically attacked. Stealing time and materials required the complicity of fellow workers, even if it was just to ensure against being reported to supervisors. Similarly the movement of individual workers was dependent upon the community knowledge of which firms were offering improved wages or conditions, and, at the same time a successful move by one worker from one firm to another could provide a lead for others to follow. This occupational mobility, along with the presence of numerous textile workers in working class communities, also ensured that unofficial disputes could find support outside, as well as inside, the industry.

Organisation and shopfloor after 1923

During, and immediately after, the First World War progress was made by the textile unions, including the establishment and retention of the wartime Trade Board with powers of arbitration over wage claims. Between 1914 and 1920 full employment and improvements in wage levels secured by trade union negotiation, albeit against a background of shopfloor militancy, had placed the textile unions in a powerful position. The defeat of the official, twenty-seven week, strike in 1923 was not only a serious setback for female textile workers (Walker, 1979, pp. 486-528), but also undermined trade union authority amongst members. At the end of the strike John Sime, the secretary of the Jute and Flax Workers' Union, publicly stated that the employers had been surprised that they had to fight so long to change one process in one mill, but from 1923 onwards the employers were to introduce new technology and new practices that directly resulted in the shedding of labour. This meant an overall

reduction in the numbers employed, and in particular the numbers of women in the industry (see chapter 10).

The defeat of 1923 resulted in the rhythm of disputes slowing down, although the increase in labour and responsibility required by the new processes, and the resulting unemployment, triggered a number of unsuccessful and unofficial strikes. The defeat of the General Strike in 1926 was to further compound the problems faced by the trade unions in the textile industry, although it should be noted that the effects were even greater amongst sections of the skilled male workforce. The publishing empire of Thomson and Laing, for example, sacked those involved in the strike and banished trade unionists from its workforce, with returning employees only reinstated after they individually signed an agreement to sever links with their trade unions (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 14, p. 53-78). In an official history of the Scottish Typographical Association, it was noted that 'a legacy of the General Strike' was that Thomson's in Dundee would remain a non-union employer for decades afterwards (Gillespie, 1953). In contrast, if the defeat in 1926 could break trade unions within the skilled male working class, textile employers' found the Jute and Flax Workers' a different prospect. There is no evidence to suggest that significant numbers of women were to leave the union in the wake of the strike.

Even when the jute industry was reporting an improvement in trade in 1936, when three mills re-opened, the position of the employers remained one of strength (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books 26, p. 174 and p. 190).

Between 1923 and 1937 workers were faced with the choice of either accepting wage cuts or accepting reductions in the numbers employed. It is worth noting that there were cases where female operatives chose wage reductions in exchange for maintaining employment amongst juveniles. In 1934 in the Ashton Works, for example, spinners accepted a cut in wages, while the employer agreed to re-deploy girl shifters as bobbin-setters (University of Dundee Library, MS 84/5/2(13) and Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 28, pp. 75-121). That such arrangements were accepted in preference to maintaining wage levels provides further evidence of the continuing importance of juvenile wages to household income. Such arrangements also show the gap between union organisation and the needs of the textile workforce.

The tension, and even conflict, between workers on the shopfloor and their trade union leaderships had re-emerged with the 1923 strike. In the early stages of the strike the Jute and Flax Workers' offices had been surrounded by hundreds of workers who had found themselves locked out and refused entitlement to union lockout pay. The 1930s, however, proved to be a decade in which the relationship between the two reached a new low. Mrs Rachel Devine of the Jute and Flax Workers had set the scene in her contribution to the joint trade union women's conference held in Dundee in 1929. Delegates from outwith the city alleged that women were generally failing to make an impact upon trade unions; in contrast Mrs Devine, 'said the difficulty in Dundee was not in getting their women to speak, but in getting them to speak and to hold their tongues at the right time (laughter)' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection,

newspaper cuttings books, 18, p. 222). The problem was that these women were not only willing and able to forcefully articulate their views, but they could act without their union, and even enter direct negotiations with employers over the heads of the union leadership' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 30, pp. 212-34; and Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/JF/10/1). Thus the South Anchor Works strike of 1935, which began as an unofficial dispute, and was then recognised by the Jute and Flax Workers', was broken after the intervention of D.M. Foot, the local Liberal MP, who acted as an 'intermediary' between the shopfloor and the sole director of the firm. The intervention by Foot, along with the offer by the works' owner, that returning weavers and spinners received cash payments to return to work, effectively cut across the union campaign before it could develop (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 30, p. 236).

The union leadership was not always able to judge the mood of the shopfloor, and, in a number of disputes (including the strike of 1923), this was to prove particularly crucial in their attempts to defend wages and conditions. At the end of 1935 Sime, for the Jute and Flax Workers', was warning that his members' patience in long drawn out wage negotiations had ended and if a reasonable offer of wage increases was not made 'there would be trouble ... they would act quickly' (University of Dundee Library, MS 84/5/4-2). Unfortunately for Sime the shopfloor was unprepared for industrial action, and a mass meeting, called to discuss strike action, was poorly attended. The situation was further compounded by the speakers from the platform attacking the rank and file.

The secretary of the male Powerloom Tenters' Society, 'expressed astonishment', saying that, 'I am beginning to wonder if the people of Dundee are really as interested about their wages as they pretend they are'. In attempting to allay what he perceived as workers' fears of strike action the assistant secretary of the Jute and Flax Workers' Union added confusion and turned the leadership's position upside down by insisting that, 'I say in all sincerity it would be most foolish for jute workers to come out in the present state of the market' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 33, p. 56). In a fit of pique the leadership had thrown out the best means by which textile workers could have forced through their wage demands, and had branded their members as unworthy, uninterested, and lacking in courage.

Within a year, however, textile workers had moved into action in an unofficial strike, beginning in Jute Industries' conglomerate's Caldrum Works over working conditions. The next day female spinners from the Angus Works, which was also a part of the conglomerate, struck work in support of their fellow workers in the Caldrum, despite a local newspaper reporting that the original dispute had ended. Within three day^{male} night shift spinners had joined them after 300 strikers picketed the gates (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 34, p. 59, p. 63 and p. 73). The strike was then spread to the giant Camperdown Works, but a gradual drift back to work had already begun in the plants where the action had originated. This action, although short-lived and even minor compared to previous disputes, was to prove significant because the strike within the town's single biggest jute employer was to galvanise the shopfloor, and in displaying the combativeness of recently employed

men, along with the solidarity of male and female mill operatives, the dispute also restored confidence amongst the leadership of the unions.

Weavers were also returning to unofficial actions by the mid-1930s. In the Caldrum Works Factory weavers occupied the works on two separate occasions, marking a new development the tactics employed in unofficial disputes. The actions were said to be primarily caused by 'the methods of supervision' (Dundee Archive and Record Centre MS GD/JF/10/4), but also included the poor quality of yarn that the weavers were being asked to work with. Similarly, in 1935, weavers in William Halley's Wallace Craigie Works took strike action, because of sub-standard materials. It was somewhat reminiscent of the period before 1923, when an employer's representative commented that, 'the workers walked out at the dinner hour without giving any reason for their attitude' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 39, p. 39). This was a fairly unlikely event given the reputation of weavers for speaking their minds. As in earlier years these disputes began as unofficial actions and were then recognised by the union.

By the end of 1936 the employers had received a demand from the unions for a 10 per cent wage increase. There had been eight similar requests since 1933 and the employers followed what had become normal procedure when they sent the claim to the Trade Board with the public message that there was to be 'no rushing' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 34, p.127). On December 20 a special meeting of around 200 members of the Jute and Flax Workers'

assembled to receive a report of the strike ballot held earlier that month. Over half of the members who had voted supported action, but the executive noted that, since a two third majority was required by the union's rules, a strike could not be declared on a majority vote alone. According to the union's minute book, the leadership decided to enter 'a game of bluff' with the employers and to take a new ballot (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/JF/1/2). This was a dangerous tactic, given that the employers had met and defeated a similar tactic in 1923, but with the Tenters Society already committed to support strike action, and with at least half of its own membership willing to follow, the executive of the Jute and Flax Workers' calculated that the risk was worthwhile. The employers were then informed that the union executive, 'had agreed that should any action over which they had no control be taken, the members affected by that decision would receive full benefit' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 34, p. 103). In reality the leadership were preparing the way for unofficial action by declaring themselves prepared to financially support a wild-cat strike. At the same time the union leadership was effectively turning over control of the dispute to the shopfloor - a prospect that was to worry the employers.

With 9 January 1937 fixed as the day for the strike to begin, panic had begun to grip the employers in late December. According to the *Dundee Courier*, 'twenty thousand workers involved will hand in strike notices early in the new year if their applications for an increase in wages is refused'. On the day before the proposed strike, employers offered a 4¼ per cent increase, which was promptly accepted by the unions (Dundee

Courier and Advertiser, 21 December 1936; *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 22 December 1936; *Daily Express*, 23 December 1936). Although the wage increase fell short of the union's demands, the very fact that the employers had been brought to negotiations and forced to make concessions, after some 13 years of refusal, was rightly viewed as an important victory by the union.

More importantly, in the longer term, the threat to unleash shopfloor action and the subsequent victory had shifted power away from the employers and towards the workers. This was reflected in the change in the Trade Board's own position. Thus, while the Board had tended to support the employers' position between up to 1937, after this it was the unions' demands that tended to be met, at least in part, including in 1938 and 1939 the rejection of the employers' request for wage reductions, and instead the granting of awards of 10 per cent 'in some cases'. For many workers the greatest visible success was the historic concession of half wages for summer holidays. Sections of the workforce also continued to make progress, so that, for example, when yarn dressers threatened to strike in July 1939, their demand for a wage increase was met by employers, within four days, and without recourse to the Trade Board (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 37, p. 111; 37, p. 252; 38, p. 234; 39, p. 1). If 1923 had provided a watershed in industrial relations, with the defeat of an official strike, in which the unions' leaderships had played a major part, the threat of widespread unofficial actions in early 1937, backed by union support, had provided another turning point.

Throughout the Second World War wage increases continued to be granted, beginning with a 7½ per cent rise agreed by the Trade Board in October 1939, and then 5 per cent in the following January. A further 10 per cent was granted voluntarily by the employers in April 1942, and ratifying the rise in February 1943 the Trade Board added a further 2½ per cent (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 39, p. 73). While recognising that the wage increases of the years from 1937 provided marked improvements for the textile workforce, this must be tempered by understanding that there was a widening of the gap in wages between the different wage scales. The differential between male and female wages was growing in the period and wage inequality between the genders was becoming greater. Before 1939 the Trade Board's minimum rate for adult men (21 years and over) was 1.56 times greater than that of adult women (18 years and over), and after 1939 the difference increased to 1.62. It was not until after the Second World War that this differential began to fall.

Given the problems faced by both male and female operatives in the years between 1923 and 1937, any improvement seems to have been welcomed and wage differentials were less of an issue than they were before 1923 or after 1945. The lessons of 1937, when trade union officials had successfully threatened the employers with unofficial action was not lost on the then Secretary of the Jute and Flax Workers', John Sime. Sime by 1940 was convinced of the importance of developing a closer relationship between the union organisation and the shopfloor, and he was to ask that employers allow Work Delegates to represent the union in each workplace. He argued that such a

development might reduce unofficial actions, but the employers had drawn their own conclusions and replied that, 'they felt there would be a considerable amount of trouble arising from "Work Delegates"' (University of Dundee Library, MS 84/5/4 -2).

While Sime sought to extend union influence at the expense of the shopfloor, the potential of a powerful alliance between union and shopfloor was seen by the employers as too dangerous.

Conclusion

There is ample evidence to suggest that the female textile workforce before 1923 was combative and militant. The acts of assertion by workers in the mills and factories formed a defence against harsh working conditions, which were to mould their forms of resistance, and which, in turn, provided a common basis of experience for women and the basis for unity in their attempts to improve their wages and conditions. Such women cannot be viewed simply as the foot soldiers for trade union leaders; their defensive shopfloor actions suggest a capacity for militancy that might be celebrated amongst sections of organised male workers. As trade union members they did not always act in accord with ideas of the trade union leadership, and the relationship between the shopfloor and union organisation was a complex one often marked by difficulties. That these workers were more likely to resort to unofficial rather than official actions says less about them as trade unionists than it does about the relative ineffectiveness of the trade unions.

From the 1890s until the Second World War juveniles played an important part in the industrial relations of the industry. They were not only amongst the most radical sections of the workforce, particularly in the earlier years, but also their wages were important to household income. As a result their demands were often met with sympathy by adult workers, and their presence was a radicalising factor. On the other hand, the dependency upon their wages by households also meant that their very employment could, and was, used as a bargaining point by employers.

With the numbers of strikes falling after the employers' victory of 1923 the activities surrounding disputes, including picketing and demonstrating, were to become a less common feature of workplace disputes, although they were to feature in the struggle by women for unemployment benefits in the demonstrations and riots in the inter-war period (see chapter 9). The years between 1923 and 1937 were especially difficult for workers seeking improvements. It was during these years that unofficial action re-emerged, and was to be used by the trade unions to win their greatest victories since the First World War. The distinction between official and unofficial industrial action, like the distinctions between sections of the workforce, which became central to previous historical perspectives, seem less important as a result. Female textile operatives, like workers in any other industry, will use whatever means are at hand to improve wages and conditions.

In all the oral evidence available on industrial relations, and relationships between the shopfloor and the trade unions, there is little to suggest that members of male headed and female headed households were behaving differently. The members of female

headed households were at least as assertive, if not more so, than their counterparts in the male headed households. More important, than any differences, was the unity that working in a single industry brought; waged work united women from the two types of household. Employment ensured common interests amongst women, and even those who left textile employment on marriage could understand the conditions and concerns of women who remained in waged work. The relationships with employers, supervisors, and trade union organisers were shaped by gender relationships. Men may not have considered women's concerns, but this did not prevent women from having, and acting upon, those concerns.

Chapter 8: Temperance, gender, and prohibition

Introduction

Women members of the Jute and Flax Workers' Union had participated in a suffrage procession in Dundee in 1907, and working class women had provided the majority of members in the local Women's Freedom League (Whatley et al., 1993, p. 155).

Despite this, evidence of working class involvement in the suffrage campaigns in the city is otherwise scarce. It has been argued that Dundee's working women were a part of the suffragette movement from the assumption that they must have been involved:

'working-class involvement is difficult to prove ... there have been enough hints to indicate that ... working-class women probably formed the bedrock of the movement in Dundee' (Leneman, 1992, p. 95). In contrast there is no ambiguity, no need to hint, about their involvement in the temperance movement before 1914, their place in the Scottish Prohibition Party, or indeed in the struggle for unemployment benefits after 1918 (see chapter 9).

One of the most significant political developments in Dundee in the inter-war years was the election to Parliament in 1922 of a leading member of the Scottish Prohibition Party, Edwin Scrymgeour, who remained an MP until 1931. This development might be interpreted as an aberration in the growth of the labour movement, a temporary halt in Labour's long march, by a Party whose intervention 'dashed' the hopes of Labour in Dundee (Whatley et al., 1993, p. 171). The rise of the Scottish Prohibition Party in the

city can be best understood by setting aside the notion that the history of the labour movement was one of inexorable progress towards the formation of a single working class party. It was not until the later 1920s that labour politics became dominated by an entrenched 'coalition based on an electoral, parliamentary strategy', with trade unions accepting 'that their role was essentially confined to collective bargaining', and that their only involvement in politics was through the Labour Party' (Holford, 1988, pp. 1-2). All manner of alliances and possibilities existed within the labour movement before 1926, and it is therefore possible to contextualise this success in terms of the effects of gender on class consciousness.

Alternatively the Scottish Prohibition Party might be seen as a freak accident of history, a product of a city with distorted socio-economic structures. For one historian, the Party's support was to be found amongst female mill operatives, who were 'captivated by the Prohibitionist vision of hard times come again no more' and easily duped by 'entertaining flights of fancy' (Walker, 1979, p. 30 and p. 535). All this is to misunderstand the radicalism of women in Dundee, the place of anti-alcohol campaigns in gender relations, and the impact of temperance on the labour movement. The Scottish Prohibition Party was one of many strands in labour politics that certainly arose out of local conditions, but was the one Party that provided an ideological and organisational response that women in Dundee could identify with and participate in. Temperance, and associated philanthropic endeavours, were a part of a wider, and evolving, ideological struggle at the turn of the century. This included a redefining of femininity and motherhood, that was intricately bound up with the emerging role of the

State in women's lives. This is partly dealt with later (in chapter 9), but for many Dundee women it was temperance that provided them with their first opportunities of political expression.

Dundee's anti-alcohol campaigns can be broken down into two distinct periods. The campaigns from the 1830s to the First World War tended to be led by, inspired, and based on an evangelical Christianity, and were increasingly concerned with women's drinking. After the War the campaigns against alcohol began to assume a more left-political character and, although continuing to attract Christian support, began to become more concerned with men's abuse of alcohol. A major reason for this shift was the increasing importance of women, as voters, to the movement, particularly with the development of an electoral strategy after 1918. Above all else, the unity amongst women that is evident on shopfloor and wider community found a political expression in the Scottish Prohibition Party. It brought together single women, who actively campaigned for the Party, with older married women, who were concerned with the effects of male drinking on household income. The 'polyphonic chord' that the Party struck with Dundee's voters (Whatley et al., 1993, p. 172) included drawing together female activists and supporters from both male and female headed households.

Pre-war temperance

The temperance movement that had grown from the mid-nineteenth century, to become a force in the city by the 1870s, had close associations with religion, and the Protestant churches in particular. In the late nineteenth century organised religion was

to reach its peak of social significance in Scotland (Brown, 1990, p. 330), and temperance was a part of a range of activities that organised religion promoted to extent its influence on society. Parochial services aimed at relieving distress had included a Catholic Day Nursery and a Working Mothers' Restaurant, as well as a number of missions. By 1886 the Dundee Charity Organisation Society had become established. The Society, like many similar ventures, was concerned with the poor adopting self-improvement, and with distinguishing between the deserving and undeserving poor. (see Whatley et al., 1993, p. 110 and pp. 150-1). These aims not only placed the Society within the ideology of later Victorian charity, but assist in explaining the integral part temperance played in many of the charitable initiatives. Assistance was often unavailable to those whose destitution was the result of drinking, and alcohol was generally viewed as a major obstacle to self improvement.

In the 1870s a number of new temperance organisations emerged in Dundee, including the Independent Order of Good Templars (formed in 1870), the Sons of Temperance (in 1872), the Women's Temperance Prayer Union (1874), and the Dundee and District Temperance Representative Hundred (1879). The efforts and growth of temperance organisers was recognised and rewarded by the Scottish Temperance League, who held a week of meetings in Dundee in 1880. The close affiliation between temperance and evangelical Christianity is evident not only in organisational connections, but also in a shared set of beliefs that included promoting missionary work both at home and abroad. Thus, the speakers who addressed the Dundee Women's Christian Temperance Union's (D.W.C.T.U.) in 1884 included Mary

Slessor, 'a lady Missionary from Africa', carrying a 'saved... black baby'. In turn the D.W.C.T.U. provided evangelicalism with overseas missionaries, including Miss Lizzie Ramsay, from amongst its members. The connection between saving 'natives' in Dundee and Africa was repeatedly made explicitly. There was also a parallel, it was often claimed, between the British government's use of opium to enslave the Chinese people, and the brewery interests attempts to addict the people at home to alcohol. After describing the influence of General Booth's *Darkest England* (after H. M. Stanley's book, *Darkest Africa*), for example, members of the D.W.C.T.U. executive reported their intention to employ, 'a Bible-woman to visit the poor and needy in dark Dundee' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, , Summary Reports, 1884 to 1888, pp. 8-11 and 1888-90, p. 9).

Although very few temperance society records have survived, local archives do contain membership lists and minute books from associated organisations, including the Children's Free Breakfast Mission (Dundee Archive and Record Centre, MS GD/FB). The mission was one of a number of wide ranging philanthropic projects financially supported by textile manufacturers and merchants at the end of the nineteenth century, including ~~the~~ a night refuge that offered temporary accommodation to the homeless. In addition to free breakfasts, the Mission, established in 1889, offered sewing classes and a Sunday School. By making nominal links between a surviving 'register of workers', of this mission, and the census enumerator books of 1891, a little more about some of the activists who were involved in charitable ventures that encompassed temperance.

a little more what?

Most of the 'workers' on the register were unmarried women. These women tended to be younger than the singular mean age at marriage for the city as a whole (see chapter 7), and they were employed. The women covered a wide class spectrum, from the respectable unmarried school teacher in a household headed by her father, a science and arts teacher, to the unmarried jute reeler living with her unmarried mother who was employed as a weaver. There was a substantial grouping who were drawn from families whose male heads were in middle class occupations, particularly in commerce, and were employed as insurance, commission, house and property agents, as well as merchants, manufacturers, and teachers. Amongst the occupations of the women 'workers' themselves there were weavers, spinners, and low mill workers, but the single largest group were employed in the drapery trades.

That so many of the 'workers' were in respectable occupations and not employed by the city's major textile sector is worth noting, but it is also interesting that just over a third belonged to female headed households. In other words there was no significant difference in the possibilities of young women engaging in voluntary work whether they were from households with female or male heads. It is also worth noting that it was from amongst this section that most of the minority of textile employees can be found, and that, in contrast to those from male headed households, their own households were much more proletarian in composition. Therefore the trans-class alliance formed by these young single women was a result of the presence of the female headed household. The significance of this alliance would emerge and make

itself felt after 1918, when the Scottish Prohibition Party's political challenge to alcohol came to the fore.

Increasingly, from the 1880s to the First World War, a central concern of the temperance organisations was the social problems associated with women's consumption of alcohol. While it is difficult to quantify the amount of female drinking, there is certainly no shortage of evidence which displays these concerns of the effects of alcohol abuse amongst working women. Typically, for example, in 1884, the main speaker at the D.W.C.T.U. inaugural meeting made the point that, 'there are fathers broken-hearted because their wives, who ought to cherish and care for the children, are degraded by drink'. Central to much of the temperance literature in Dundee was an equation that linked the large numbers of women in waged work with female alcoholism, and the breakdown of family life. After 1902, that is after British reverses in the Boer War, this ideological position was being expressed more widely; for example readers of one local newspaper, were told that there was, 'no shame to a mill girl to be seen drinking or drunk', and 'drink is resorted to as the readiest means of amusement'. The columnist continued that women's drinking was consuming family income and leading to social degradation (*Dundee Advertiser*, 13 November 1903).

Leading campaigners, as a matter of course, were claiming that drinking amongst women was not only morally aberrant, but also posed a danger to the very future of nation and empire. The evolving dominant ideology began to incorporate elements of eugenics, and this is reflected in claims that 'the future of the race' was at stake, if the

'women of Scotland, the appointed trustees of the race, would be false to their sex, their race, their tradition did they not blot out the public-house which imperilled the home' (address to Dundee Citizens Council, Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, 3/41). In Dundee attempts to define how women should behave were perhaps sharper than that found elsewhere in Scotland, simply because the working women of Dundee were perceived by reformers as a source of social problems. For example, Lady Balfour, addressing a public meeting of the Dundee Women's Citizen Association, provided a list of social concerns that included, 'the problem of surplus women, and the problem of the woman wage-earner - often supporting men - the question of the birth-rate, and the drink problem' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, 200A/55).

It is no coincidence that the most important, and long lasting, impact of organised religion's parochial activities was to encourage the public services that were developing at the turn of the century. In Dundee school provision was accompanied by the building of baths, wash houses, and day nurseries (Whatley, et al., 1993, p. 150).

This local growth of State provision was not unique to Dundee (see for example Lewis, 1983), but, before 1914 Dundee's proportions of municipal officials, police and prison officers were larger in the areas of professional work than they were nationally.

It could therefore be said that, 'the agents of environmental and social control' were better represented in Dundee than they were in other localities (Rodger, 1985, p. 31).

Campaigners hoped that temperance, along with the host of other improvement

schemes, was to be as much a part of the State's responsibility as sanitation or street lighting.

The impact of local government on limiting the provision of alcohol was to be a disappointment to campaigners, and, despite the election of councillors dedicated to the temperance cause, the numbers of drink outlets actually increased. It should not be thought, however, that the influence of temperance in Dundee's municipal affairs had little social consequence. In the late nineteenth century it was not unusual to find women selling alcohol; indeed in 1891 over half of Dundee's 230 publicans, inn and hotel keepers were female. By 1901, while the numbers in the trade had risen to 301, the proportion of women had dropped to under a fifth of the total. The reduction in the proportion of women drink sellers, through temperance influence in the licensing court, gives some indication of the effective removal of women from employment in places where drink was consumed in public. By the 1921 the number of women inn or hotel keepers; publicans and beersellers had recovered to just over a quarter of the total, but proportionally the numbers of women sellers of alcohol was never to be as large in the first half of the twentieth century as it had been in the second half of the nineteenth century (*Census of Scotland*, 1891, 1901, 1921).

Gender and drink

The removal of women as patrons of the public house accompanied their removal as drink sellers. As in other areas of respectability, the exclusion of women from drinking in pubs was maintained by a mixture of community 'gossip' and family pressure. While

public drinking was a topic of discussion, and disapproval, amongst female neighbours, it was often male relatives who prevented women from pub going. Mrs. Macintosh, for example, recalled that the only time she was in a pub in the early 1920s, was when she was taken in by her boyfriend who wanted a pint. Her brother happened to come into the pub and asked her what she was doing there, and what she was drinking. When she replied that she was drinking lemonade, her brother said, 'If I find you in a pub again Eh'll kick your arse as hard as I can kick it' (ADD/04/A). That her mother was heading their household at this time is perhaps important, although it will be argued (in chapter 11) that older daughters of male headed households were more strictly treated than those in female headed households. This threat of male violence was, however, repeated by a number of older women who originated in both male and female households, and says much about men in a city where patriarchal relationships were under some pressure.

Most pubs, for at least the first half of the twentieth century, were places for men, and men attempted to ensure that this was the way they remained. For most men the sight of women 'slipping in the side door' of a pub to the 'side bar', was of little concern, as they themselves monopolised the pub's main bar (DOHP 037/A/2). It was accepted by men that their wives and daughters should be excluded: the public house was a man's place, where the possible restrictions on their behaviour as 'family' men were relaxed. That women were generally excluded from public-houses did not prevent home or 'curtain' drinking, and so while women may have been 'kicked if [they] went tae the pubs', according to Mary Brown in an interview, it is worth noting that she adds that

she 'could take a drink like any ither body' even if she 'didnae go oot drinking' (DOHP 016/B/1).

Licensed grocers, uniquely Scottish outlets, were probably the most popular source of alcohol purchased by women. In Scottish temperance literature it was often the licensed grocer who was held responsible for drunkenness among women. Grocers, it was often reported, would disguise these sales by entering in their accounts a variety of household goods rather than the alcohol bought by their female customers. Contemporaries, such as David Barrie, reported that in the 1880s, 'regular drinking bouts in washing houses, mangle houses and other such resorts', amongst women, who would 'meet together in the forenoon and afternoons, and one really experienced and bad one will soon corrupt all her younger and less experienced neighbours' (Barrie, 1890). It was claimed that such practices continued into at least the inter-war period. Chief Constable Carmichael in 1925 told the Dundee Licensing Court that, 'He had been in the habit of giving private warnings to license-holders in his office, but since offenders had been so numerous he had stopped doing so.' The problem grocers faced was that their female customers had a degree of power over their actions, or, as a solicitor, told the same Court, grocers 'were tempted to supply drink at any hour, especially to customers who ordered groceries from them' (*Dundee Courier*, May 6 1925.). Another popular source of alcohol for home drinking was the public house carry-out. Women would either go themselves, or send young children, to collect jugs of beer and flagons of porter from the public house (Dundee Central Library, Special Collection, 4, p.83; DOHP 043/B/1).

Measuring the levels of alcohol abuse is an extremely difficult task, especially amongst women. Police reports, for example, provide evidence that offenders repeatedly offending made up the bulk of convictions. One individual could certainly distort such statistics. By 1884, for example, 85 men in Dundee had been convicted between 20 and 60 times, and there were 91 women in the same category, plus another 22 women convicted between 60 and 180 times. This pattern was to continue into the twentieth century. By 1938 the police were warning that their annual statistical return was distorted by 'individuals' who 'tend to greatly swell the number of apprehensions.' Rather, belatedly the report adds that, 'what is stated in this connection as regards 1938 is also applicable to previous years' (City of Dundee, *Report of the chief constable, 1936-41*).

The attitude of the authorities was perhaps exposed at its sharpest in the treatment of female drunks. The police would regularly send photographs of convicted drunks to publicans from their Register of Inebriates. Although it has proved impossible to trace many of these photographs, out of forty-two, issued between April and September 1905, only around eight are of men.¹ It is also possible to calculate that, while women were less likely to be arrested for drunkenness than men, they were more likely to be

¹ The Dundee Archive and Record Centre holds copies of these photographs from the Dundee City Police Register of Inebriates. Six originals were in the possession of the late Dr. Walker, Modern History Department, University of Dundee. The photographs were probably originally sent to George Cuthbert, publican, resident of 16 Liff Road, Lochee. The photographs are not available to the public.

convicted. The same cynical observation by one male authority in the 1880s that, 'It will be noted that women seem much fonder than men of their quarters in prison and return there oftener' (*Dundee Year Book, 1884, 1895*), could be have been repeated in every decade up to the Second World War. Arrest rates suggest that the proportion of female to male arrests only significantly narrowed in two out of six of the decades between 1880 and 1939 (as shown in Figure 8-1). That the first of these was in the 1890s, when temperance concerns over women's drinking were emerging, and their influence on the municipal authorities was beginning to peak, perhaps says more about perceptions of the 'women drink problem' than any actual increase in female drunkenness. Similarly, in the decade that includes the First World War, the proportion of female arrests may have been influenced by the removal of potential male drunks to the armed services, and a more repressive attitude taken by the police towards women's drinking in response to the wartime conditions. For all other decades the female percentage of total alcohol related arrests was half that of males as can be seen.

Figure 8-1: Percentage of men and women arrested for drunkenness

	1880 - 89	1890 - 99	1900 - 09	1910 - 19	1920 - 29	1930 - 39
Males	65.39	59.77	63.82	59.37	66.11	68.26
Females	34.61	40.23	36.18	40.63	33.89	31.74

Source: *Burgh of Dundee, Return of crimes and offences and City of Dundee, Report of the chief constable, 1936-41*

The Burgh records suggest that the number of women convicted for drunkenness was only slightly less than that for men, despite the difference in arrest rates (as shown in Figure 8–2). Women accused of drunken behaviour were therefore much more likely to be convicted than men arrested for the same offence. The average percentage totals of all those convicted to the numbers of those accused from 1880 to 1900 suggests that the male conviction rate of those arrested was around 57 per cent, while for women the same rate was closer to 82 per cent. Unfortunately comparative figures for the later decades are unavailable, but these statistics suggest that the courts were taking a much dimmer view of female than male drunkenness.

Figure 8–2: Total convictions of men and women arrested for drunkenness expressed as average percentages

	Males	Females	Total
1880 - 1889	54.72	78.54	62.96
1890 -1899	59.18	83.13	68.82
1900 - 1909	57.83	82.96	66.93

Source: Burgh of Dundee, *Return of crimes and offences*. Comparative figures for the years after 1909 are not available.

It should be re-emphasised that the relatively large numbers of recidivists illustrate that women arrested and convicted for drunkenness were often confined to a tiny group of women who were at risk from alcoholism, rather than large sections of the female population. This seems to have been a general problem across Scotland, and not one confined to Dundee (Williams and Brake, 1980). Indeed, although Dundee's

temperance campaigners constantly complained that alcohol abuse was rife, it should be noted that Dundonians in general were no more drunken than their counterparts in the other Lowland towns and cities. According to one historian of the Edwardian period in Scotland, when middle class concerns began to peak, Dundee was 'statistically twice as sober, or half as inebriate, as [the small towns of] Greenock, Buckhaven or Queensferry' (Hill, 1976, p. 105).

The police returns from 1898 to 1904 provide a breakdown by age and gender for drink convictions. From these statistics men aged 21 to 29 and 30 to 39 years (inclusive) emerge as the single largest age group of those convicted. Women aged 21 to 29 were the next largest group, then men aged 40 to 49 years, and then women in the same age category. Yet, in the popular memory of the years after the First World War, the picture painted of the female drunks is one of old, even aged, women. Either the pattern changed, or it remained the same and experiential data was simply influenced by the possibility that female alcoholics looked older than their years, because of the effects of drinking. Either way local women drunks not only distorted crime statistics, but they also stuck in the memories of policemen, magistrates, and other Dundonians. Most working women, like Elizabeth McIntyre, for example, claimed to have 'never went to the pub', but knew women who did. Like many others she remembers having the impression that,

It wis maistly the aulder women that went into the jug department..., but it was very, very, few women, except the street walkers [prostitutes] - they went into the

pub - but very, very, few respectable women, except the auld wifies, ken your grannies and that (DOHP 061/B/2).²

According to one newspaper reporter, in the Blackscroft district in the 1920s,

One 'lady' whose name I cannot recall now, must have created a record for the number of times she was 'carted' away in the police barrow to the nick in Princess Street. Two young and very red-faced policemen would rope her securely in the barrow, then hurl her away while she poured out a flood of obscenities or indulged in a song, or rather a dirge, such as:

When I've money I'm content
 Poverty aye keeps me toiling.
 Beauty winna pay the rent, no,
 nor keep the kettle boiling ... (*Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 21 October 1960).

Whatever their ages, in all probability, every working class district had at least one women who achieved the doubtful status of local 'worthy'. They were also often cited as examples in the campaigns against alcohol in general, and against female drinking in particular. Such women were pilloried by members of the community, especially by local youth, as Herbert Baxter recalls that during the early 1920s:

There was a woman, an English woman, an old English woman, that worked in the mills, and she took a good drink... and she was a drunkard, what they would call an alcoholic. And the younger folk used to make a right fool of her, and

² Catherine Ellwood's mother was one of those older women who frequented pubs. Catherine says, 'ma mother used to go down every Saturday just before she died, every Saturday for her wee nip', DOHP 060/A/1.

knock a rise oot her. There was one time she was really drunk, she was hardly able to get along the road, and I helped her up to her house and when we got in the house she says how she would like.. she spoke good English, how she would like a cup o' tea. Polly Hargreaves her name was and Eh says, "Eh'll make a cup o' tea". So Eh made a cup o' tea and she had buns in her bag, we hid a cup o' tea and buns and Eh kept doing that for that old lady every time she was drunk (DOHP 045/A/1).

The women who suffered alcohol addiction also suffered the ignominy and problems involved in becoming social outcasts, at a time when class, community and family support was often essential for survival. Their marginalisation was further compounded by the general hostility to women drinking in public. They also served as a warning, in temperance propoganda, to women who might challenge the male right to alcohol, reinforcing in turn the role ascribed to women in society. At the same time such an analysis tends to throw doubt on claims that there was widespread female drunkenness. If their had been then it might reasonably have been expected to find more female arrests and much more experiential evidence of drunkenness amongst all age groups of women.

There is no such shortage of evidence, from both arrest rates and experiential data, regarding male drinking. All this evidence strongly implies that male alcohol abuse was almost absent from female headed households, and was greatest amongst male heads of households. Attitudes surrounding the social roles and rules governing male and female behaviour included the acceptance of consumption of alcohol by men; Georgina Murray, for example, pointed out that families simply had to cope with the results of male drinking. When her father failed to return from the pub, her mother would take

Georgina in search of him, and 'get him to come home.' She says in way of explanation that:

It just seemed to be a way of life; it was very much a way of life in lots and lots of families. At that particular time most of the men just had their ways. Most of the men just didn't bother about going out with their wives (DOHP 030/A/2).

Alcohol presented real problems for a number of families, but this was almost always as a result of male drinking. In 1892 the Registrar General had identified a number of male occupations where alcohol consumption played a significant part in the associated mortality rates. The report listed, among others, building workers, coopers, hawkers, dockers, carters, labourers, inn and hotel servants, as being at risk from alcohol. But the list also includes some skilled working class jobs, such as tailors and law clerks, and even middle class occupations such as doctors, chemists, coal merchants, grocers and most other shopkeepers (Registrar General (Scotland), *Detailed Report*, 1892, 38, Supplement, pp. l-lxxii).

Oral evidence would also suggest that this pattern continued beyond the First World War, and that the scale of abuse was to have a marked effect on the lives of a number of families. There were the financial problems for the families in which male wage earners spent money on drink, but there were also the social effects on such families. For example, a daughter of a bricklayer and part-time barman, could claim that her father's drinking was 'the cause o' all the trouble' in her parent's home' (DOHP 062/A/2). Another women recalled that, because 'the old man went on the ran-dan on the beer (laughing)', although this did not prevent her mother from 'knock[ing] hell

oot of him for being drunk' (DOHP 085/A/2). The very quality of family life could suffer, as a number of informants recalled, including a baker's daughter whose father spent little time with his children, 'for going out boozing' (DOHP 085/A/1); the son of a carter (DOHP 038/A/1); the daughter of a carter (DOHP 061/B/1); and the daughter of a father who owned a fish and chip shop (DOHP 054/A/2). Even caring fathers could be less than thoughtful about their families when they went drinking (DOHP 040/A/1). While the children of male drinkers recall the financial and family difficulties which arose, in contrast some informants could proudly boast that their fathers by abstaining from alcohol meant that the family could be better off. One woman explained that her father was a dedicated Templer, and with the 'result that he had a penny or two in his pocket' (DOHP 052/A/2). Above all else, the most striking aspect of the oral evidence on male drinking are the numbers of older people born before 1920 who recalled excessive male drinking in their own families.

The effects of male drinking on household income and family relationships continued to be present after 1939, but amongst those who provided evidence of excessive drinking amongst fathers in the inter-war years, very few witnessed similar abuse in either their own marriages or in the marriages of others. The strength of revulsion at male drinking could be passed from generation to generation. One father, for example, would tell his children about their grandfather, a shipyard worker in the 1900s, who 'really liked the drink', and could not even take the children out without going into pub and leaving them outside (DOHP 068/A/2). More generally, however, widespread male alcohol abuse does not seem to have been as acceptable after the Second World

War as it was before. Recurring themes in the recollections, amongst the children of fathers who spent a great deal of their leisure in the pub, was how little time these fathers would spend at home and how little time their mothers could spend away from the home. Such relationships became less acceptable amongst the women who were married in the 1930s than those who married in earlier years. However, the single most important challenge to male drinking, and one that would change attitudes within the working class in Dundee, was the political success of the Scottish Prohibition Party. Such success could of course be taken as an indication of the response amongst mothers and daughters to the Party's message that male drinking was a cause of social problems.

Prohibition and gender

By the beginning of the twentieth-century the temperance movement was becoming rooted in working class life and politics, through such organisations as the Good Templers, Rechabites and Sons of Temperance and organisations associated with the labour movement - the Independent Labour Party, Clarion Scouts and Co-operative societies. The years after the First World War witnessed not only the growth of working class political organisation, but along with this growth a further politicisation of the movement against alcohol. In Scotland the emerging political groupings of the labour movement were generally, and often particularly keen, to adopt temperance demands. The Scottish anti-alcohol movement was therefore assuming an even greater proletarian character. In Dundee gender relationships were to become a central factor

in this process, because gender relationships were an important factor in working class life both inside and outside of the workplace.

It would be easy to reduce any analysis of the Scottish Prohibition Party to the level of personality politics, since their leading spokesman, Edwin Scrymgeour, was such an outspoken personality capable of imaginative publicity events. First elected as a councillor in 1905, Scrymgeour identified corruption within the corporation, and promoted himself as a champion of low paid council employees. He first stood for Parliament in 1910, and, as a pacifist, fought Winston Churchill in 1917, in a two candidate election to ratify Churchill's recall to cabinet; Scrymgeour received 22 per cent of the popular vote. His record of opposition to Churchill further strengthened his radical image, for Churchill was rapidly becoming an unpopular politician in Dundee. Churchill was privileged, while representing one of the most impoverished towns in Britain; he attacked the Irish Catholics, in a town with a remarkable level of religious toleration and a strong support for Irish Home Rule; he was identified with a war which had sent thousands of Dundonians to their deaths; and he was seldom in Dundee when his attention was required (Walker, 1979, pp. 439-86). Widely perceived as the major opponent of Churchill, even in the undivided burgh of Dundee, it could be argued that Scrymgeour's future chances were improved simply because of who his opponent was, but all this would be to ignore the basis of his support.

In 1918 Scrymgeour increased his percentage vote in a poll which included Labour, Coalition Liberal, Liberal Unionist, and Conservative candidates. This was in effect his

first sizeable Parliamentary vote and, as William Walker notes, 'it is significant that it came when some women had been enfranchised' (Walker, 1979, p. 26). Four years later he was elected to Parliament, heading all other candidates not only in this election, but also in the elections of 1923 and 1929. Walker (1979) has certainly shown how the Scottish Prohibition Party developed strong support from 'amongst mill girls', and the interconnections between organised religion and the Party have been widely recognised (Brown, 1990, p. 131). It should, however, be recognised that the basis for these victories was the work of activists who were attracted to the Party and who, in turn, were capable of mobilising support amongst wide layers of Dundonians. That these activists were mainly young unmarried women is particularly evident in oral testimonies. Like the 'workers' in the Free Breakfast Mission some thirty years earlier, this generation of activists were drawn from both male and female headed households and included women from beyond the working class.

To celebrate the 1922 triumph the Scottish Prohibition Party hired a train to take those who had organised, leafleted, and canvassed support to witness Scrymgeour's entry into Parliament. Many on board were women, including the future Mrs MacIntosh, who was a jute worker at the time (ADD 04/A/2). Others who assisted in the election included Mrs Duncan, raised in a tradition of middle class evangelicalism, she had come in contact with the Party through her work as an insurance collector for the Rechabites. Despite her parent's disapproval - Prohibition meetings could be rough

affairs that included heated debate - she 'sneaked in anyway' (BHG VT 02).³ The ability of the Party to appeal across class divisions, that has been much remarked upon and even characterised as populism (Walker, 1979) was based on the Party's strength of drawing into activity women from different class backgrounds.

The individual experiences of women in the Scottish Prohibition Party was markedly different from those in other labour political parties. While the testimonies of former Scottish Prohibition Party activists are imbued by a sense of inclusion, the same cannot be said of the experiences of others. Young women often found themselves taking more radical positions than the 'older men' they encountered in the other parties (see for example DOHP 087/A/1, and DOHP 043/A/2). One woman, who later joined the Communist Party of Great Britain, was discouraged from joining the Labour Party by her father; an activist himself, he 'didn't waste time talking to women about it [politics]' (DOHP 066/A/2). Even women who reached leading positions, like Mary Brooksbank, a prison hardened activist, could find herself, 'rather overcome by the number of clever young men I met' (Brooksbank, 1971, p. 38). Brooksbank was to be expelled from the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1933. A former comrade, Duncan Butchart, who argued for her expulsion, was later to claim in an interview that, 'She was no Trotskyist, but she might as well have been one for all the trouble she caused' (ADD 01/A/1). The experiential data from other less well known activists

³ Bield History Group, video tape recording, see Appendix III for details.

in a range of labour political parties suggests that they shared Brooksbank's reputation as trouble makers amongst their male comrades.

Part of the Scottish Prohibition Party's attractiveness was its ability to attach itself to temperance traditions, but in doing so it subtly changed the direction of temperance propaganda. If the campaigns of organised religion were important in the development of class consciousness (Brown, 1990), the opposite was also the case. One of the biggest changes that can be identified in anti-alcohol propaganda before and after the First World War was that concerns over female drinking were matched by a growing condemnation of male drinking. Certainly the leaders of the established temperance organisations continued to highlight the effects of women's drinking, but the Scottish Prohibition Party were emphasising the dangers to home and family that arose from male alcohol abuse. Young temperance campaigners, like Miss Mathews, were to accept that male alcoholism created the greater social problems, and her recollections are filled with apocalyptic tales of male drinking leading to family debt and neglected children. A member of the Band of Hope, who was later to become an overseas missionary, Miss Mathews, for example, recalls that,

One girl I had in my Sunday School class was fond of racing, and the week of the picnic we had some very nice prizes. And she said, 'I would like that painted ball'. So they had their race and she won the ball, and she was delighted. The next time I saw her she says, 'I havenae got my ball ... my father sold it to a woman in the pub'. There were cases like that - pathetic (BHG VT 02).

Above all else, however, the Party programme appealed to Dundee women, since it addressed women, and produced a partial explanation of why women lived in a town

where, as even Mrs. Churchill noticed, 'the misery ... is appalling' (cited in Gilbert, 1975, pp. 879-80). While others all too readily blamed the women themselves for their social condition, the Prohibitionists presented a much more radical case in identifying drunken men and more importantly the brewing interests as retarding women's progress.

While the attraction of an anti-Churchill candidate and the aim of prohibiting alcohol were important, it does not adequately explain Scrymgeour's popularity amongst working class women. In 1920 the first of three polls in the first half of that decade, offering voters the chance to outlaw, keep, or limit alcohol, was held in Dundee. In the campaign, according to one newspaper reporter, prohibitionist activists were 'relying largely upon the women's votes and with a view of whipping up the women electors'. He reported that meetings, 'some of a semi-private character' were being held 'all over the city, using the Church organisation in numerous cases as a basis', although it should be pointed out that there were religious leaders who organised for the 'wet' lobby. His central assertion that 'their [the prohibitionist's] cause will receive strong support from women', was to prove inaccurate (*Dundee Courier*, 31 May 1920). Even the most pessimistic of the temperance campaigners were dumbfounded. This referendum, and even in the later polls of 1923 and 1926 after Scrymgeour was voted into Parliament, showed that around twice as many Dundonians favoured 'no change' to 'no license', with only a handful voting for 'limitation'

That women did not overwhelmingly vote for prohibition did not undermine, or deny, the underlying hostility of many women towards their husbands drinking. For gender conflict over alcohol surfaced not so much in the referenda, but in the licensing court. In 1924 a deputation of women complained to the magistrates that many husbands were drinking their wages away at Saturday lunch-time. The wives persuaded the court to close the pubs at 11.30 a.m. and re-open at 3 p.m. A deputation of men then approached the license court, and, argued for pubs to remain open to 12.30 p.m. on a Saturday afternoon. The deputation 'represented dockers, engineers, blacksmiths, ironmoulders, plumbers, shipyard workers, bakers, jute stowers, mill and factory workers and ex-service men' (*Dundee Courier*, April 8 1924).

The continuing support, after 1922, for the Scottish Prohibition Party can only be adequately accounted for, when it is realised that this support was growing in a town in which women were, at the same time, moving politically to the left (see chapter 9). At a time of wider enfranchisement for women, the Party's radical programme was perceived as being ideologically to the left of the Labour Party. Bob Stewart, who was later to become a national leader of the Communist Party, had been its organiser before the First World War and, along with Scrymgeour, had played a central part in developing the programme. Before 1908 Scrymgeour in his successful council election campaigns had been funded by the trade unions. The Scottish Prohibition Party candidate was as much a part the labour movement as Alexander Wilkie, Dundee's first Labour, but Liberal-inclined, MP. Even as disciplined a Communist as Duncan Butchart could argue that although the election of Scrymgeour was 'the laugh of the

century - a prohibitionist - there wis more pubs in Dundee than anywhere else in the country, Neddy was a good fella, a good working class lad'. Indeed the Party's programme made Scrymgeour, seem 'better than some o' the Labour Party people were, and he was ostensibly Labour' (ADD 01/A/1 see also DOHP 027/A/1).

Women were attracted to the Party's socialist policies, and the Party's orientation towards working people in general, and working women in particular ensured a close, if temporary, bond. For example, the common ownership of industry was presented as a means of ending poverty, and Scrymgeour had first called for the State ownership of textiles as early as 1912. Although at least one historian was to describes this as an example of the Prohibitionist's 'unreality' (Walker, 1979, p. 69 and p. 383), State control was thought to be necessary in the First World War. Ever ready to intervene in industrial disputes on behalf of workers, Scrymgeour, also refuted the idea that women were impossibly difficult to organise; instead he pointed to what he saw as the timorousness of the labour movement leadership and its failure to tackle the power of employers. Thus the re-election of Scrymgeour to Parliament in 1929, with his largest ever poll, was predicted by the local *Courier* in terms of the 77 per cent increase in women able to vote for the first time, and the observation that the 'new women voters' in Dundee 'would be found voting for the Prohibitionist and Socialist candidates' (*Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 1 June, 1929). Scrymgeour was to remain in Parliament until the 1931 election, when along with the Labour candidate, he was defeated against a background of national crisis in the political left. It was not as William Miller has noted that, 'Labour and Prohibition votes became increasingly

resounding joint victory in 1929 they went down together in 1931' (1985, pp. 193-8). Rather both Prohibition and Labour shared a common heritage, that is they were both originated in labour politics, and both increasingly became electoral parties.

Conclusion

Before the First World War the drive to remove women from public drinking was increasingly effective, but attempts to extend restrictions to men in the first half of the 1920s failed. At the same time, throughout this period, and after, male drinking was a far greater threat to household income than female drinking. It is important to consider the impact of this in terms of gendered households, and it will be argued (in chapter 11) that any comparison of relative poverty levels, in male and female headed households, needs to take male drinking into consideration.

That the belief persisted that there were significant numbers of women misusing alcohol, owed more to the general ideology of what women should think and do, rather than what they were doing. The rise of the Scottish Prohibition Party in Dundee, however, should be seen not only in this context, but as the political expression of women who were faced by a dominant ideology that was contrary to their everyday experiences. That male drinking was not restricted by legislation was perhaps less important than the change in agenda that the Party forced, that is in moving concern from female to male drinking.

The temperance movement's proletarianisation after 1914 owed much to the Scottish Prohibition Party's identification with working class women, and an articulation of their concerns about male drinking. By attracting increasing numbers of women to their programme, and retaining wider temperance support, the Party was in a prime position to benefit from the enfranchisement of women. Certainly the Party can be, and has been, perceived as populist, but this does not detract from the analysis that its policies had a particular appeal to working class women. A part of this appeal was to recognise explicitly gender divisions, particularly over alcohol, and at the same time promote policies that were to the left of the emerging parliamentary wing of labour politics. If this was populism, it was of a radical type that captured the votes of Dundonians. In the process it also brought women into political activity, which other parties of the labour movement were failing to do. Above all else, it provided a political expression for large numbers of women.

Chapter 9: Motherhood, welfare, and protest

Introduction

The ideological assault on women consuming alcohol was a part of a wider process of re-defining femininity, and, as an example, provides a rather narrow way of understanding what was a complex development. This development, which was gathering pace by the beginning of the twentieth century, included the growth of State intervention. In the 1980s a body of historical and sociological research emerged that explored the connections between women and health and welfare provision from the late nineteenth century onwards. The work of Jane Lewis (1983, 1984, 1986, 1992), is of particular importance, but has been supplemented by others who have either attempted to provide overarching theories, such as Sylvia Walby (1986) and Fiona Williams (1989), or have produced additional investigations into aspects of this provision, such as Chamberlain and Richardson's (1983) study of midwifery, or Woolcott's (1994) study of industrial welfare supervisors. A large part of this research has been concerned with the impact of provision on women's lives, but little has been written to suggest that after the First World War women made much impact on the shape or content of that provision.

There is little evidence to suggest that national welfare and health policies were ever designed with women's towns in mind. Much medical and welfare thinking in Dundee, as elsewhere, 'epitomised contemporary concepts of "womanly" duties' as well as a

concern for women 'as mothers of the race' (Woollacott, 1994), with infant mortality identified as some measure of motherhood. Married women were supposed to be as financially dependent upon their husbands in the city as they were elsewhere, and waged wives were perceived as an oddity by policy makers (Lewis, 1983, pp. 17-35). Yet in Dundee the proportion of married women engaged in paid employment was increasing from the 1890s onwards, by 1911 under a quarter of married women were in waged work, but by 1931 this ratio had almost reached a third (see chapter 10), and a section of these became the chief breadwinners for their families (see chapter 11). There were contemporary suggestions that married women's employment and child care were incompatible, and that high levels of infant mortality were the result, although this has been challenged by historians (see Gordon, 1991, for example).

There remains, however, the suggestion that Dundee's mothers were not only failing their children, but may even have been causing the deaths of infants. William Walker has suggested that there is evidence, from around the turn of the century, that challenges both historical and contemporary beliefs and argues that deliberate 'suffocation [of infants] in Dundee was not a myth but a grim reality', and that there was a 'significant element of wilful murder'. It is important that this should be re-examined, and, in doing so, reassess the claim that the statistical evidence of infant suffocation in Dundee was 'staggeringly disproportionate' in comparison to the other three Scottish cities, along with the idea that 'officialdom' in the city was a part of 'a pact of semi-secret knowledge straddling class' (Walker, 1988). In doing so, however, it must be recognised that infant mortality rates were generally higher in Dundee than

in the rest of urban Scotland up to at least the 1920s. A comparison of crude overcrowding rates, with Glasgow in particular, might suggest that the connections between household density and infant mortality rates were tenuous. It will be argued, however, that the presence of female headed households has hidden Dundee's actual overcrowding rates where they matter - that is those households that contained infants.

Most Dundee women who were employed, whether married, single or widowed, continued into the 1930s to be employed in textiles (see chapter 10). These women were part of the national insurance scheme, unlike women employed as domestics elsewhere. The Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance may have stated in 1931 that married women in employment could not be regarded as 'the normal condition' (cited in Lewis, 1983, p. 26), but at least a third of married women in Dundee considered otherwise. The National Insurance Bill in 1911 raised expectations, that, for Dundonians at least, were partially realised with the Act in 1920. Attitudes had changed after the First World War, with State intervention viewed in a much more positive light than was previously the case. The inter-war period, and particularly the 1920s, is however also recalled by the women as a time of difficulty, of struggle for personal and family survival. That unemployment tended to be higher in 1921-2 than for most of the years of the 1930s (Peden, 1985, pp. 65-6) probably accounts for recollections that suggest that in many ways the 1920s were a great deal more difficult than the following decade proved to be. It will also be argued, however, that real progress was made in the campaigns to encourage a more generous position by

the local Parish Council, and that by the 1930s additional relief from this source was being made available.

As well as remembering the sense of achievement of simply surviving, there is also the pain, and the feelings of inadequacy and injustice. Yet detailed recollections by women of the public struggle are few and far between. The protests and riots of 1921, 1923, and 1931, have become telescoped, often along with the General Strike, to such an extent that even direct participants are often unsure when these took place and in what order. The 'how' of history has become, in popular memory, submerged in the 'why', with reasons that justify political action and disturbance often covering the events. The continuity of irregular employment assisted this process, and the treatment of the unemployed, effecting almost every family in Dundee, became a vindication for individual actions, that range from joining a political party to taking part in looting. Individual life stories assist in uncovering the sociological roots of protest, but surviving contemporary sources, particularly newspaper accounts, seem to offer a much clearer historical context. It is, however, in discussions amongst older people recalling in groups that the two come together, develop, and join with other major concerns. By taking this approach the links between health and welfare in the consciousness of mothers are seen as a complex interaction of the private and public experience. Health and welfare, unemployment relief and medical care were linked in women's lives in a way that is perhaps more difficult to understand today. For women, especially for mothers, there was little point accepting lectures on public hygiene and

child care, that were a growing part of local authority provision, if there was simply too little income for the basic necessities of household survival.

The health reformers' dream of improvement without social struggle is sharply broken by the voices of the women who lived in the period. Certainly women believed that hygiene was important, that children should be cared for, but they rejected the notion that waged work should be given up either on marriage or in motherhood. In doing so they were not only confirming their need to work, but they were also maintaining their position and sense of solidarity as women workers. What did change after 1918 was the acceptance of the role of the State, including health reforms, in everyday life.

Women, however, did not passively accept what the State could offer; instead they fought, struggled, and shaped that intervention. Deborah Dwork has suggested that, 'while it is true that physicians never radically addressed the problem of poverty, we can only accuse them of being conservative at most, and a bit less than some of their peers' (Dwork, 1987, p. 228). That is, however, merely to note shades of reaction amongst a group of middle class, mainly male, conservatives. The married women of Dundee retained at most a sceptical view of medical and health professionals, although married women were so keen to follow medical advice that child cleanliness became a fetish. This did not, however, prevent or distract married women from engaging in open hostility when it came to fighting for welfare benefits. Somewhat surprisingly there is little in written history regarding the role of women in these protests, particularly when set against histories of the earlier struggle for the vote.

Infant mortality and infanticide

In Dundee, from the 1880s to the 1920s, infants were more likely to die before their first birthday than they were in Glasgow, Edinburgh or Aberdeen (see chapter 4 Figure 4-4). Surveying these high rates of infant mortality in 1912, the city's Medical Officer of Health, concluded that they were 'a result of the exceptional industrial conditions prevailing in Dundee'. He further suggested that low male wages and 'the large number of women (including married women) employed' were major factors. Neither he nor his successor (in 1918) were to say much more about wage levels, but both were to argue enthusiastically that mothers should remain at home for the good of their children. In doing so, both were entirely in step with a wider ideology that sought to remove and exclude married women from paid work. Similarly, in 1919, the local branch of the British Medical Association 'agreed unanimously ... that the industrial employment of mothers is medically undesirable' (Dundee University Library, MS 61/3[46]). Such beliefs were in direct contradiction to the economic realities facing most working mothers, who, if they were to leave paid work would have found themselves, and their families, reduced from poverty to destitution. The infant mortality rate itself does not reflect changes in the proportion of mothers in waged work, but does suggest that there may be some connection with levels of income. The wage cuts of the 1890s, followed by wage rises, before and during the First World War, and then the successful protests for unemployment relief in the inter-war years, are worthy of consideration when thinking about Dundee's infant mortality rate in relation to other cities.

At no point did the medical officers of health attribute the high levels of infant mortality to infanticide, although it has been suggested that this was because the officers themselves were part of an elaborate attempt to ignore the effects of infanticide on the infant mortality rate (Walker, 1988). As elsewhere there is very little direct evidence, either qualitative or quantitative, of infanticide. Authorities found it difficult to prosecute cases of possible infanticide, and even the most suspicious causes of infant death, often described as 'overlaying', proved problematic. It was widely recognised that juries were reluctant to find defendants guilty, as one Scottish lawyer told the 1893-4 Select Committee on Death, 'one could not lose an overlaying case if one was defending a woman' (cited in Rose, 1986, p. 178). Although Dundee's Chief Constable, David Dewar, believed that drunken mothers, or mothers 'otherwise culpable', were responsible for these deaths, he reported, to the same Committee, that the prosecutor fiscal opposed prosecution (cited in Walker, 1988, p. 57). The lack of prosecutions neither proves nor disproves whether overlaying, or suffocation, was a deliberate attempt to end the lives of infants.

The statistics collated on behalf of the Register General identified 'suffocation' as a cause of infant death in the 1880s, distinguishing between suffocation 'in bed' and suffocation 'otherwise' in the 1890s, and from 1901 onwards introduced the term 'overlaying'. Leaving aside suffocation 'otherwise', a rate that was statistically insignificant (Walker, 1988, pp. 62-3), it has been calculated that between 1881 and 1910 a total of 1,012 infant deaths had been attributed to suffocation, suffocation in bed, and overlaying in Dundee. Compared to Glasgow's 928 registered suffocations in

the same categories over the same period, Dundee's do seem to be proportionally large, providing what seems to be a shocking indictment of the value of infant life in Dundee. A comparison with the other Scottish cities simply underlines the point (as shown in Figure 9-1). These statistics suggest not only that Dundee's rate of suffocations and overlayings was higher than elsewhere, but was also more sustained, and that even between 1921 and 1930 Dundee's infants were almost three times more likely to die from overlaying than those in Edinburgh, more than three times than those in Glasgow, and almost six times more than those living in Aberdeen.

Figure 9-1: Annual average infant mortality rate per 1,000 births from 'Suffocation' 1881-1890; from 'Suffocation in Bed' 1891-1900; and from 'Overlaying' 1901-1910, 1911-20, and 1921-30

	Suffocation 1881-1890	Suffocation in bed 1891- 1900	Overlaying 1901-10	Overlaying 1911-20	Overlaying 1921-30
Dundee	7.71	7.33	6.24	1.78	1.38
Edinburgh	2.99	3.62	1.85	0.70	0.49
Glasgow	1.57	1.77	0.87	0.69	0.41
Aberdeen	1.77	1.83	1.20	0.60	0.23

Source: Registrar General (Scotland), Detailed Reports

These statistics must, however, be treated with some degree of doubt, particularly when they are used in a comparing one area with another. The statistics are based upon death certificates, prepared most often by doctors, and are flimsy basis of evidence (Rose, 1986, p. 150). Variations in causes of death occurred not only from

place to place, but also from doctor to doctor, and returns tended to be idiosyncratic, if for no other reason than the lack of regulation, and doctors not only favoured general medical diagnoses, but also favoured certain causes of death over others. It is not too difficult to believe that at least one doctor in Dundee was convinced that a number of deaths of sleeping infants were caused by overlaying. Given the small numbers of infants overlayed compared to the high infant mortality rate, it certainly would not have taken much to inflate suffocation or overlaying rates. More significantly, with little control over the recording of specific causes of death, the room for error increases as the numbers of deaths increase. Thus in Dundee, with the highest levels of infant mortality of all the Scottish cities up to around 1920, there was a greater likelihood of mistakes by those providing causes of death, indeed a number of entries in the death registrars of overlaying were registered without a doctor's certificate. As Walker (1988) notes, some Dundee parents entered the premises of district registrars to report overlaying without first troubling to secure a doctor's certificate endorsing overlaying or proposing a more innocuous description of death (p. 70). It would seem therefore likely that errors would especially occur in general diagnoses, including those as broad as 'suffocation in bed' and even 'overlaying'. In other words there was more of a chance of false positives in Dundee for a large part of the period.

The statistics for suffocation and overlaying are small in comparison to the overall infant mortality rate, and this is particularly so for the years after 1910. The category of 'overlaying' was discontinued in 1931, and the years after 1921 provide particular

problems for an analysis that might conclude that Dundee's children were being systematically murdered. Between 1921 and 1928 there was an annual average of just under seven registered cases of overlaying in Dundee, but in 1929 and 1930, the last two years that such statistics are reported, there was not a single case in Dundee. In Glasgow, however, there were ten such cases in these two years; seven in Edinburgh; and three in Aberdeen. It would seem unlikely that the number of cases should drop so quickly to zero in Dundee, the city having sustained such a comparatively high level of overlaying even up to and including 1928, unless there were problems with the recording of such deaths. In this light, Walker's assertion that officialdoms 'interest lay in a curtailment of registered suffocations and not in a paper inflation of them' (1988, p. 69) seems less convincing.

This classification of deaths of sleeping infants not only reflects the state of medical knowledge, but also dominant ideological beliefs amongst doctors and registrars. By 1901 the conviction that an infant dying in bed when their breathing had stopped was caused by an older person lying on top of them (overlaying) was more likely to be the result of changing class perceptions, than scientific evidence. It is perhaps no coincidence that the change in categorisation - from suffocation to overlaying - occurred at a time when middle class concerns for the state of the nation's health, including, most importantly, the health of infants and children, were emerging. More certain is that there could have been a hundred different reasons for breathing failures amongst infants, which were subsequently recorded as suffocation in bed or overlaying. The covering of infants by older members of a family sleeping in bed may

have been one possibility, but deliberate or accidental overlaying may have been as likely to have been confused with over-heating, and with breathing disorders, including bronchitis, asthma, tuberculosis, whooping cough, or diphtheria - all of which could choke a baby's life. Historians have noted the importance of such diseases in infant death rates, and the connection to suffocation rates. Higher levels of suffocations in urban areas, compared to those in rural areas, for example, have been explained as the generally poorer health amongst urban children, and their 'greater susceptibility to bronchial disorders' (Rose, 1986, p. 181). The increase in the numbers of infants suffocated in bed in the 1890s, in all four Scottish cities, occurred at a time when the incidence of some diseases, including, most notably, those affecting the respiratory system, were also increasing (Levitt, 1988, p. 191). Furthermore, oral evidence from nurses supports the Register General's belief that breathing disorders were particularly problematic in Dundee. A retired nurse typically recalls that:

At that time Ward 17 in Dundee Royal Infirmary was children's medical ... and quite a number of babies - a lot of them - were asthma babies, as we said, which were poor wee things. They had faces like old men you know. They were wizened, if you know what I mean, all wrinkled. And a lot of toddlers of course, and older children up to the age of about ten or there about, but mostly babies and toddlers (DOHP 015/A/2).

As already noted, comparative infant mortality rates strongly suggest that until at least the 1920s Dundee's infant health tended to be poorer than in the rest of urban Scotland. In addition the local economy was marked by a high cost of living that included Dundonians paying substantially more, than other urban Scots, for coal (see

chapter 4). Since coal was the major means for heating homes, it seems reasonable to assume that houses in Dundee were less likely to be as warm as houses elsewhere.

There therefore may have been a more widespread practice of swaddling infants in layers of clothing that could cause overheating, and thus increasing the possibilities of suffocation.

More importantly, it has been concluded that a 'crucial component in explaining local variations' in infant mortality trends is overcrowded homes (Cage, 1994, p. 77). A major problem with this analysis is that Glasgow had, in terms of housing density measured by persons per room, the worst record in Britain. So while Dundee had a higher infant mortality rate into the 1920s than Glasgow, Glasgow's overcrowding rate was, at the same time, greater (Walker, 1988, p. 66). All this, however, is to ignore the substantial presence of female headed households in Dundee (see chapters 5 and 6), and the way in which these households were distorting the city's overcrowding rate. Thus comparisons, based on crude statistical calculations of population figures in geographic areas, that are made between the Scottish cities are problematic, and tend to underestimate overcrowding in Dundee's male headed households. The St. Clement's district sample suggests that male headed households tended to be larger than female headed households. While the most common household size amongst male headed households was four residents and more (60 per cent), the most typical number of residents amongst female headed households was three and fewer (61 per cent).

Around 20 per cent of residents in the St. Clements sample lived in one room, a slightly higher percentage than that found in the city as a whole, with just over a half of these containing households headed by men. The average number of persons resident in households living in a single room was not only greater amongst male headed households (at 2.76), compared to those with female heads (at 2.39), but there were also more male headed households living in a single room with at least one child eleven years and younger (40.28 per cent), than amongst the female headed households (29.69 per cent). This difference increases in households with more than one child, and male headed households (at 20.83 per cent) were almost twice as likely to contain two or more children, than were female headed households (at 10.94 per cent). In summary, while female headed householders tended to live in smaller households, male headed households were more likely to have larger numbers of children, including infants, and a substantial section of these, greater than average overcrowding rates would suggest, were living in overcrowded conditions. More research is required before a definitive comparison could be made with density rates in Glasgow, but it would seem reasonable at this stage to conclude that the presence of the female headed household has led historians to underestimate overcrowding in Dundee. The high infant mortality rates in Dundee were therefore more likely to have arisen from overcrowding allied with the high cost of living, than infanticide.

Cleanliness and child care

Dundee's Medical Officer of Health, introducing the city's first Health Visitors in 1911, outlined their duties as, 'house-to-house visitation in the poorer quarters of the

city to induce cleanliness of house, person, and clothing'. The Health Visitors during these visits were 'giving instructions to mothers on infant feeding and on the steps necessary for keeping children in good health' as well as 'calling attention to bad clothing and neglected conditions' (Templeman, 1912, pp. 144-145). This emphasis on cleanliness was to continue into the inter-war years, and yet, as early as 1911, a school inspector's report found that out of 5,693 children almost 91 per cent were clean and 72 per cent were fit. Nine per cent of the children were reported as wearing 'dirty clothing', with around the same percentage hosting body lice, and less than 7 per cent were described as 'verminous'. In contrast 98 per cent of children inspected were found to have insufficient clothing (cited in *Dundee Year Book, 1911, 1912*, p. 97). Local health officials continued, therefore, knowingly to concentrate on an area of hygiene that was less important in health terms than were the more general effects of poverty. This was perhaps a matter of simple expediency, for mothers constantly struggled to keep their children clean, and were easily shamed by any suggestion that their children were less than clean.

Oral testimony suggests that, while keeping children clean was no easy matter, given that few households had exclusive use of water-closets or baths, the ideal of keeping child hygiene was shared by most working class mothers across Britain. Dundee was no exception, with young children washed in solutions of sulphur, carbolic, and vinegar, and older children sent to municipal baths. It was common for mothers to inspect their children on a regular basis, 'every week ye had yer hair checked and ye had a bath every Friday' (DOHP 066/A/1). Mothers were particularly conscious of the

need for their children to have clean hair, and this involved the use of bone combs, sassafras oil, and various degrees of pain. Obsessions with hygiene included flushing young bowels with laxatives, and was as a common a part of the rhythm of childhood in Dundee as it was elsewhere in Britain. Amongst mothers, a clean healthy child was as important a sign of respectability, as was spotless tenement close stairs, or the whitest washing possible, for all were on public display.

Figure 9–2: Lizzie Duncan, standing, left, and friends, Sunday School Picnic c. 1911

Source: Lizzie Duncan's family



In Dundee the healthy child was as important for mothers who worked wages as it was amongst those who worked in the home for the family. Mothers employed in both the best and the worst paid jobs, including weavers and low mill operatives, attempted, for example, to restrict their children from playing with 'verminous' or 'dirty' children (DOHP 021/A/1). One daughter of a mill worker was told to keep away from certain children, 'because if they had beasts or anything, well they could crawl aff of them onto you, and then you'd finish up with a dirty head.' Such a practice amongst mothers, although largely ignored by sons and daughters, was reinforced, along with

hygiene generally, by home visits from women employed by the local health authorities. By the late 1920s and early 1930s the 'clinic lady' is recalled as a regular visitor. Elizabeth McIntyre remembered that, 'She used to come round quite often, because there was a lot of dirty kids, and dirty heads', but she tellingly adds: 'I mean it wasnae to us, it was to the folk that was needing' (DOHP 061/A/2). Few would later admit being 'dirty' not only because of the shame involved, but because so many were kept clean. The dirty child was more of a myth necessary for public health, than a reality amongst working class families.

By connecting hygiene and health so closely together mothers often would feel at least a degree of guilt, if not feelings of failure and despair, when children were ill. One woman recalled having ringworm: 'Eh was very ashamed of it, because ye had t' go t' the school board doctor.' The doctor, 'took all yer clothes, and put them in a disinfectant thing, and we were kept off school.' She repeated that 'Eh was very ashamed, because meh mother was a very, very, clean woman, very fussy and instilled it into us' (DOHP 067/A/2). Recalled emotions of guilt and shame can even be found amongst those who suffered epidemic diseases. During outbreaks of scarlet fever, for example, the district nurse would come round and 'capture' children for hospitalisation. 'I thought I was in there [hospital], because I thought I'd done something wrong', said one retired school teacher (BHG VT 03). Another woman remembered her older brother and sister being treated at home for diphtheria. Her mother, 'thought that she looked after her children properly, with cleanliness, good food - what she reckoned was good food'. Clearly confused the mother asked her

doctor, 'Look at these children across the road, they've no' stockings, they've no footwear; why is it my children take these things and they don't?' And the doctor, answering honestly, said that, 'The difference is your children will survive, but if these children take it they will die.' Commenting on this the interviewee notes, 'So that was the position - poorer children didn't get over the sicknesses, they died' (DOHP 022/A/1). While mothers often blamed themselves at the times of their children's ill-health, there was a widespread understanding that poverty, particularly caused by low and irregular wages, was not good for children.

Most professionals recall their shock at the conditions encountered in the working class areas of the city. In some cases this shock wore into the cynical belief that mothers were in some way responsible for these conditions. In others the impact remained. One woman recalls what happened when she trained as a nurse in the early 1930s.

Well up until then I had led a very sheltered life, and it opened my eyes to what other people were putting up with. Not that it made me a socialist in any way, but I was astounded at these poor people coming in, compared to the life that I led. And especially when I took meh maternity, because we had to do take ten cases out in the district (DOHP 056/B/1).

Another, who was employed as a district nurse, recalled:

One house I went to there was bird cages around all the walls, bird cages and the baby. Another house I went to I was sitting bathing the baby at the far side, I said, 'Oh dear there's a mouse'. 'Oh' she [the mother] says, 'It's a good job it's not a rat'. It was terrible ... and some of the houses! There was one house I went to and you could have taken your food off the floor, it was so clean it was. And then another place I went to there was one iron sink ... one of these on a wee landing place to do six families, not six people! The conditions were pretty awful, terrible ... and another thing you used to watch where you put your coat; you tried

to hang it up, if you could, because there was an awful lot of creepy crawlies in those days.

In recognising the importance of poverty, but placing it at the fringes of medical practice, the professionals were at odds with the very sections of society who were at the greatest risk from illness. While the medical profession was generally respected amongst mothers, there were also underlying doubts about medical expertise. Even as late as the 1920s some women preferred the local howdy wife to trained and registered medical practitioners during births. Even when State registered midwives had replaced these handy women, 'the old midwives, ... very often the granny was there you know giving advice', as the former district nurse complained (DOHP 015/A/1). Medical professionals were not always believed, and the idea that they were 'not wise' was repeated in a number of women's life stories. After all, while many of these professionals sneered at the knowledge of women, they themselves often seemed powerless in the face of ill-health and medical complications, particularly at times of birth and early childhood. Health Visitors and baby clinics, while regarded as helpful, were not regarded as giant steps forward by mothers. Thus Elizabeth McIntyre recalled the Health Visitor as 'pretty good', but added that, 'You listened to her and then after she went away you said she was a blethering bugger', because 'yer ain common sense telt you what to dae.' She also noted that she, as a child, became 'a bitty weary' of the visits, and added that, 'you didnae fall over them or anything like that, you just answered her, if she asked you any questions' (DOHP 061/A/2 and B/2). Other oral testimony suggests that mothers in Dundee showed less deference towards

medical professionals in this period than was perhaps the case in other parts of Scotland.

High levels of unemployment amongst men, and the availability of employment for mothers, ensured that women took as little time off from paid work as was possible, and while, 'You got six weeks before and six weeks after you had the bairn ... a lot of them couldn't afford to stay off.' As a result pregnant women often tried to work for as long as possible, and were aided in this by their workmates. 'I saw them cleaning their [spinning] frames, go home on Saturday and had the baby on Monday morning - some of them were hardy.' After the birth, 'You were supposed to get six weeks, but the gaffers let them in because they knew they needed the money', and child minding was inexpensive (BCHG VT 03 and 10). For many women the breaks from employment for pregnancy and birth were no longer than the enforced periods of unemployment caused by all too frequent lay-offs and short-time working. While the journalist James Cameron may be guilty of exaggeration, he gives some sense of the scale of unemployment, when he recalls that Dundee, 'was a community with an insured population of seventy thousand people, with more than forty thousand of them on the dole' (Cameron, 1967, p. 29). This must also be set against the background of the city's proletarian character that included large number of insured women (as shown in Figure 9-3). In such circumstances it is not surprising that unemployment benefits, particularly for married women, was a burning issue. Family poverty, aggravated by frequent periods of irregular employment, was a much more immediate concern, than was the creeping progress of public health and medicine.

Figure 9–3: Percentage of insured population aged 16 years and over in five localities in 1931

	Male	Female	Both sexes
Edinburgh	70.2	35.6	50.8
Aberdeen	76.7	34.5	53.3
Glasgow	77.5	34.6	54.9
Dundee	78.5	53.9	64.5
Paisley	80.2	40.3	58.6

Source: Census of Scotland, 1931

Motherhood and welfare benefits

If district nurses were aware of the housing conditions mothers often found themselves in, then mothers were aware that poverty was a major threat to the lives of their children. After 1911 mothers were also looking towards the State to alleviate that poverty, with the National Insurance Act opening up new possibilities for benefits. By 1918 large sections of workers, both female and male, were viewing welfare provision in a different way than they had previously. In Dundee, government intervention into the textile industry during wartime had underlined the wider role of the State. State orders, and a degree of control, allowed for higher profits, a degree of stability that had been unknown earlier, and opportunities for successful campaigns for wage increases. That the War had changed the attitudes of mothers, was evident even before the last shot was fired. In Glasgow this was most noticeable in the women's rent strikes that forced the government to pass the Rent Restrictions Act of December

1915; in Dundee it took a different route. In August 1918 women seeking permission to make street collections, in support of increased allowances for soldiers' wives, formed a lobby of the Town Council. Councillors decided that the matter was not relevant business, and the building was occupied by 'a seething mass of hysterical femininity' according to one newspaper report. So taken was the reporter by the scenes that followed he remarked that he was 'reminded ... of a cameo from the Commune'. While those inside the building are described as rough types, in contrast, 'outside there was a waiting crowd of demonstrators - for the most part decent, well dressed women' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 1, p. 130). This protest marked the beginning of a wider campaign by mothers for welfare benefits. The decent, well dressed, women of 1918 were to find themselves pushed to greater protests, a mere three years later, when unemployment amongst women was the highest of all the districts in Scotland (*Dundee Advertiser*, 30 April 1921), and the Dundee communards had grown in numbers and determination.

At the same time as public health initiatives were beginning to make an impact in working class life, unemployment was growing, and, with it, a crisis in the Scottish Poor Law. In Scotland, unlike in England, 'the able bodied as a "class" had no right to relief' (in Levitt, 1988, p. 110), and when, in 1920, the Government decided to limit the national insurance system, the situation in Scotland became much more problematic for both local Parish Councils and the new Health Board dealing with National Insurance. In July 1921 unemployment benefit was refused to married women whose husbands were also in receipt of 'out-of-work' pay. This 'brought a large

crowd of angry women to Dundee Town House ... to see about it'. A local newspaper report, under the bold typeface: 'Married Women In A Rage,' went on to say that there, 'were lively scenes, in which married women played the most prominent part'. After an hour or two of furious protest the police were called, and 'a deputation of disappointed females visited the Town House' (*Dundee Advertiser*, 22 July 1921).

While, in 1921, Poor Law Relief remained more limited and inadequate in Scotland, the Board of Guardians in England were given extra borrowing facilities. In Dundee 12,000 of the unemployed were facing a stoppage in national insurance payments. The Town Council called on Winston Churchill, the local MP, to assist, and Churchill raised the matter with his cabinet colleagues. The Cabinet concluded that Scots seeking Poor Law were 'in a less favourable position than similar persons in England', but this was little consolation to those struggling to survive, and plans to end the anomaly fell far short of the widespread expectations of a new National Insurance Act (Levitt, 1988, pp. 112-3). Churchill's intervention also sparked rumours that the Parish Council had been empowered to give relief to able-bodied persons. As a result large numbers of married women arrived at Dundee Council offices to demand relief, and were infuriated when they 'were informed that they must send their husbands to make application' (*Dundee Advertiser*, 30 August 1921).

Rioting and looting followed within 18 days with women playing a leading part.

Amongst the unemployed charged with smashing the windows of the Parish Council offices and injuring a police inspector on 6 September (*Dundee Advertiser*, 7

September 1921), was a jute spinner, who was subsequently tried 'for malicious mischief'. Found guilty, the 'accused stated that she did not know what made her do it, as when she left the house that afternoon she had no intention of smashing windows' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 5, p. 65). The next evening hundreds of demonstrators marched from the centre of the city to the home of the Lord Provost. Led by 'a great red banner', the marchers smashed windows en route, and, 'with every crash the rioters cheered' (*Dundee Advertiser*, 8 September 1921). Even policemen, recruited from the country districts, understood the cause of the upheaval. 'It all started', one was later to recall, when, 'some of the people werenae getting enough money to keep them ... and they went to the Parish Council and the Parish Council refused to entertain them' (DOHP 012/B/1). After a fruitless discussion with the Provost the procession returned to the centre of the city, looting until after midnight. While it was noted that 'many of the window breakers were young girls' (*Dundee Advertiser*, 8 September 1921), oral evidence also suggests that women of all ages were present. Nellie Hanley was with her mother on a street corner that night when the window of a nearby grocer was 'put in'. Cans and packets were thrown from the shop.

So then a tin of either corned beef or soup rolled over to my mother's feet, well in those days they all wore those black knitted shawls, meh mother just bent down and put it under her shawl (laughs).

Nellie also recalls that many of those who took part in the three days of unrest were women; she adds, 'Eh think the men were scared'. One of Nellie's friends comments on this, saying that the women were 'desperate for the bairns to get food and that' (BCHG VT 01). Nellie's evidence is interesting in that her mother was a leading female activist in the Labour Party, for the local male Party leadership was quick to condemn the action in a manifesto entitled 'Stop This Fooling' (*Dundee Advertiser*, 10 September 1921). The Parish Council certainly did not perceive three days of riot as fooling and decided to make relief immediately available without the usual investigations. This was against the advice of their officials, who informed the Council that they would be responsible for such unauthorised payments, and not the officials.

In such circumstances Dundee provided the National Unemployed Workers' Movement (N.U.W.M.) with opportunities. The organisation was established by the Communist Party of Great Britain, but oral evidence suggests that the N.U.W.M. attracted members from beyond the Party, and tends to support revised estimates that claim that the N.U.W.M. was capable of mobilising hundreds of thousands of people nationally. The evidence also supports the conclusion, drawn from a statistical analysis of national records, that the N.U.W.M. had 'a massive turnover in membership'. While such an organisation offers a greater challenge to historians than organisations with a more static or sustained membership, the impact on class consciousness, and more broadly upon society, is too easily understated. That there was a constant stream of people moving through the N.U.W.M. meant that, at any one point in time, 'the standing membership will be only a small proportion of the *total* number passing

through' (Davies, 1992, p. 32, *his emphasis*). While Dundee may have had less in common with other localities in which the N.U.W.M. were present, the experiential data lends credence to the perspective that individual membership tended to be short-lived, and collective membership was unstable. The oral evidence also suggests that such a fluid membership also meant that the N.U.W.M. was influential beyond the size of its standing membership.

Figure 9–4: Dundee hunger marchers set off for London in 1922



Source: Photograph archive, D. C. Thomson & Co. Ltd.

Few, if any, records of the N.U.W.M.'s Dundee branch seem to have survived, but there is a photograph of hunger marchers setting off from Dundee for London in 1922 (as shown in Figure 9–4). A number of women appear in the photograph, as well as a child. The child is Nellie Hanley, and she is holding her mother's hand (Figure 9–5). Walking next to Nellie is her uncle, who was active in the local Unemployed Workers'

Committee, dispensing advice to and representing the unemployed in their claims for relief. According to Mrs Hanley, neither her mother nor her uncle were ever members of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Perhaps more interestingly, at the time this photograph was taken, Nellie's mother, who was widowed during the First World War, was the head of a household in which Nellie and Nellie's maternal grandmother were also present. That Nellie's mother was an active member of the Labour Party, not only supports the proposition that labour politics was inclusive of a wide range of opinion at this time (see chapter 8), but that female heads of household were able to play an important part in the labour movement.

Figure 9-5: Nellie Hanley holding her mother's hand. They are seeing her uncle Peter, and the other comrades off on the 1922 Hunger March from Dundee



Source: photographic archive, D. C. Thomson & Co. Ltd.

By 1923 the Parish Council again found itself facing a difficult situation. Around a quarter of the workforce were unemployed, with 10,500 already claiming benefit (Stewart, 1967, p. 131), when a textile strike broke out and the employers responded with a general lock out. The Council refused benefit to those locked out. A

demonstration was called, and between 30,000 and 50,000 women and men packed the streets around the Council offices, forming 'walls of people' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 8, p. 185, and 9, p. 16).

According to Bob Stewart, one of the protest leaders,

The demonstration was the largest, noisiest and possibly the most successful in Dundee's history ... All traffic was completely halted ... there was the contradictory spectacle of the marchers being women and those on the sidewalks men. The call went up from the women marchers: 'Get the kettle-boilers on the march!' So there was a rush from the sidewalks into the road (Stewart, 1967, p. 133).

After negotiations a new benefit scale was set and the action was heralded as a victory by Stewart, who reported back to the demonstration, and the crowds cleared peacefully (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 8, p. 185). Duncan Butchart, who was to later become a leading local member of the city's Communist Party, claims that as a result of the protest Dundee 'was the first town in Scotland' to get able-bodied relief for men (ADD 01/1/A). Whether this was true or not the result of the protest was only a partial victory for the unemployed, although it may have been one that reflected local employment realities. The new scales set by the Council meant increased allowances for unemployed married men, dependants under 14 years of age, and single men and women in lodgings, but there were deductions for married women and dependants over 14 years (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 8, p. 185). The very section of the unemployed who were at the heart of Dundee's protest against unemployment found that their kettle-boiling husbands could collect an extra 2/6 a week, while their benefit was

reduced by the same amount. While this arrangement had been reached beyond the control of the women, there is some evidence to suggest it was viewed as acceptable given that married women in Dundee were continuing to secure employment more easily than their husbands could.

Ten years later disturbances broke out again, only two months before the Means Test was due to come into operation in November 1931. This time the authorities were better prepared for the confrontation. Their heavy-handed approach, however, propelled protest from a small demonstration, where there were six arrests (including Bob Stewart), to full scale riot. Days and nights of marching and torch light processions followed the first arrests. The 'crowds got bigger and bigger every night ... it seemed to gather momentum, until the police realised that they had to take action' (ADD 01/A/1). Most observers agree that the charge made by mounted policemen on the city centre rally, after three days of peaceful protest, was unprovoked (see for example Brooksbank, 1971, p. 33 and *Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 25 September, 1931). The crowd broke up, but fighting resulted with police officers 'running about in a frenzy'. Demonstrators spread to both sides of the city with incidents of rioting and looting reported in the western and eastern districts of the city (*Dundee Free Press*, 25 September 1931).

One young woman caught up in the disturbances was later to become a leading trade union official, but she never forgot that day:

The mounted police just come right in front of where we were, and the batons were swinging left, right and centre. It was like all hell let loose. Oh my God!

Now if you were in the way it didnae matter who you were you just had had it. There was damned big horses coming belting after ye ... chasing the crowd, the sparks were flying from hooves. Ah was on the road to hell, and that's something Eh'll never forget (laughing), because it was like a great big elephant to me, oh what a size of a horse. But ye know we were only about eleven years old (laughing). Oh it was frightening (DOHP 040/A/1).

According to Mary Brooksbank, revolutionary, mill worker, and poet, the protest of 1931 was a victory: 'The Women's Anomalies Act, depriving married women of their right to unemployed pay, was rescinded, and extensions of payment periods went into operation'. While it has been impossible to confirm this, clearly in 1931, unlike in 1921, a leadership could be identified and punished. Brooksbank was amongst the thirty or so Communists and National Unemployed Workers' Movement (N.U.W.M.) members arrested. Five were kept in custody for three weeks without trial. Brooksbank recalls that during these weeks she was examined by the prison doctor with the chief constable present. They asked questions such as 'the date of the Battle of Waterloo', and she felt that they were 'questioning my sanity'. A petition of 10,000 names was collected, women workers protested, including the Railway Women's Guild of Perth (who provided meals for Brooksbank in prison), and two MPs put the matter to the House of Commons. Then the last five in prison were eventually tried and sentenced to three months each (Brooksbank, 1971, p. 33). The repression may have assisted in preventing further mass protest between 1931 and 1939, but there are also signs that in Dundee unemployed married women were treated more sympathetically by welfare agencies in the 1930s than had been the case in the 1920s.

Conclusion

Walker's conclusion that, 'Dundee's working women were guilty of behaviour which Marxist sociology prefers to restrict to a *lumpenproletariat*' (1988, p. 70) is simply not borne out given that infanticide was not significantly contributing to the local infant mortality rate as he suggests. Rather the high price economy in combination with overcrowding in male headed households, where most infants were concentrated, offer a much more likely explanation.

After 1911 motherhood and waged work were becoming presented by the State as separate and exclusive options. This was not a new development for many communities where employers had sought to prevent married women from working, but it was certainly new in the places where the demands of capitalism outweighed patriarchal considerations. Instead of discouraging employment amongst mothers, public health concerns reinforced the belief amongst married women that family survival was a woman's responsibility, and part of that responsibility was to bring home wages. Indeed, while patriarchy in women's towns may have lost out to capitalism's demands for women's labour, there is evidence to suggest that the role of women as carers, of children in particular, was actually strengthened in this period.

Dundee mothers may have accepted most of the advice of those promoting public health, but they were neither about to give up paid work nor their fight for benefits. That wives were driven to protest says much about the levels of poverty in male headed households. Women's involvement in the inter-war demonstrations and lobbies

was reported by local newspapers much more soberly than had been the case in 1918 - their presence indeed was almost taken for granted. Even someone who described 'millgirls' as placid creatures, who sought 'relief from anxiety ... in entertainment and not agitation', was forced to conclude that in Dundee 'riot proved eminently successful' (Walker, 1979, pp. 427-8 and p. 536). In the short-term, riot forced concessions from a parsimonious Parish Council, but it was also part of a wider shift in consciousness amongst married women towards benefits. This shift was complex, and somewhat contradictory, for while the growing belief of the importance of caring motherhood underlined the need for benefits, such demands could, for example, be cut across by demands for benefits for married men. Local circumstances, even when met by local protest, could result in policies that were in tune with national ideology. That the women now tend to make the link between inter-war struggle and post-war reform is understandable, if we except that their perspective was generational rather than simply a reaction to immediate difficulties. It also serves to remind us of their place in private and public historical change.

Above all else the struggle of married women workers stripped the State back to its essential core: an armed body of men who exist to protect the interests of capitalism. This is a lesson that would live with some Dundonians for the rest of their lives, but it was also a part of documented history that, in the interest of the State, has been and continues to be marginalised. In popular memory the struggle for unemployment benefits is being forgotten, and, if we decide to explore such a fundamental part of the Welfare State we still need to consider both the surviving memories and the wealth of local documentary detail that has survived.

Chapter 10: Change and continuity in employment and household

Introduction

There was a degree of economic diversification in the local economy in the inter-war years as well as a decline in numbers employed in textiles. Yet, in many ways, Dundee's labour market in the 1930s was very similar to the labour market of the pre-war years. Diversification beyond textiles might be summed up as fleeting hopes and false starts (Whatley et al., 1993, p. 162), and, although alternative jobs were emerging only slowly, journalism and jam were 'never adequate substitutes' (Butt, 1985, p. 216). Jute textiles remained the city's principal employer, particularly for women, and the irregular nature of that employment was similar to that experienced by operatives in the pre-war period. Even with rearmament, and the increased demand for textile products during the Second World War, it is worth noting that one major textile firm did not report a labour shortage until 1943 (Whatley, 1992b, p.192). In the inter-war years unemployment in the industry probably exceeded 50 per cent at times, and even 'just before the outbreak of war in 1939 unemployment [in textiles] was running at about 20 per cent' (Butt, 1985, p. 224). It is also worth noting that during Jute and Flax Workers' membership campaigns of the 1930s, the Union stressed its ability to represent members in claims for unemployment benefit. Improvements in unemployment benefits, particularly after relief became available for able-bodied men, and falling prices, particularly of fuel and food, did mean, however, that poverty in the inter-war years was neither as deep nor as widespread as it had been in the 1890s.

One of the most significant changes in the period was in the proportion, and numbers, of women who continued in paid work after marriage. This may well have resulted from a change in the occupational status of husbands, and the large section of skilled husbands identifiable in the 1890s (see chapter 6) was no longer present. More adult men were staying in Dundee, because of a combination of male unemployment benefit, and, more importantly, a reduction in the demand of male labour in other localities that had traditionally provided employment for Dundee's men. A narrowing of the gender imbalance and a rise in the marriage rate followed.

Despite the rising marriage rate, the presence of the female headed households continued to be significant in the inter-war years. Indeed the emerging benefit system, that might have encouraged earlier marriages on the one hand, seems to have also assisted the continuity of female headed households in two ways. First of all, benefits for widows, particularly after the introduction of the widows pension in 1925, may have discouraged widows from remarrying. Second, the Means Test of 1931 assisted in breaking up male headed households, and experiential data suggests that female headed households could be formed as a result. At the same time, the economic basis for female headed households, that is the availability of female employment, while experiencing some contraction, particularly in textiles, still existed.

Economy and employment

Dundee's employment structure remained dominated by industrial occupations. Even after the Second World War, the proportion of occupied labour employed in

manufacturing remained higher than in any of the other Scottish cities (Butt, 1985, p. 224). A large part of this manufacturing was susceptible to slump and slow to recover, but even amongst the export industries of 'outer' Britain, that were to produce unemployment rates that were greater in the North and West than in the South East and Midlands (Baines, 1992, p. 191), Dundee's manufacturing base was in a weak position. A study of location quotients of employment in the United Kingdom in 1929 underlines this. The quotients, derived by dividing Scotland's percentage shares of total employment in different manufacturing industries by its percentage share of total manufacturing employment in the United Kingdom, suggest that jute manufacturing was to return a quotient of 9.2 in 1929. That is Scotland had a proportionate share that was over nine times greater than the rest of the United Kingdom (Buxton, 1986, pp. 547-8). If the degree of concentration of employment was retarding recovery in Scotland, then Dundee's economy, within its continuing dependence on jute textiles, an industry almost completely concentrated in this one city, was in a particularly weak position.

Demand for textile products between 1914 and 1920 secured high, if temporary, profits for the Dundee industry, but also, and more importantly, reinforced the very trends in manufacturing and marketing which were to accelerate the long term decline of the industry. In 1915 around 70 per cent of the industry's output was for government departments, and 'it was boasted that Dundee was producing one million sandbags per day at this time' (Howe, 1982, p. 12). Competition in finer jute goods was abandoned in favour of the course goods suitable for war, with possibilities of

improvements in product diversification left largely unexplored. The result was that competition from the Indian mills and factories made further inroads into the international markets that were neglected in favour of government orders and protection. After 1920 the industry's fortunes were marked by 'tumbling prices and a declining demand' (Board of Trade, 1948, p. 9). Only one-third of Dundee jute was exported by 1921 compared to three-quarters in 1900 (Marwick, 1964, p.158). Manufacturers, such as John Robertson of Unijute were to note later that, 'the efficiency of production hardly affected profits - all depended on the price of raw materials' (cited in Gauldie, 1987, p. 114), but this did not prevent employers from attempting to reduce production costs. One result was that there would be around 13,000 fewer employed in textiles by the eve of the Second World War than there had been at the end of the First World War.

It would be incorrect to believe that there was an even, or uniform, decline across the jute industry in the 1920s. The largest firms continued to make profits and new firms were established. In October 1920 a number of established firms amalgamated to form Jute Industries and in 1924 Low & Bonar was formed. These amalgamations produced two companies that accounted for over half of Dundee's jute production, but rationalisation, restructuring and amalgamations in the 1920s did not stem the problems facing the industry, and the period after 1931 was one of further restructuring and job losses. While remaining a major employer of labour, the textile industry was under pressure to contract further, with the decade of 'modest disappointment' followed by a decade of losses (Whatley et al., 1993, pp. 161-2). It is

striking that during the 1930s the export of output in jute was always below 20 per cent, compared to 75 per cent in 1900, and in 1937, for the first time ever, the industry reported that imports exceeded exports (Howe, 1982, p. 15).

While over 25 per cent of occupied men were employed in the textile sector before the First World War (see chapter 4), by 1921 the proportion was closer to 18 per cent. By 1931 the numbers of men engaged in textile manufacture had fallen to 7,099, from 9,335 in 1921, and the proportion of men employed in textiles was just over 13 per cent of all occupied men. The decline in male employment in textiles was not, however, reflected by uniform increases in the numbers employed in other areas, and indeed in some sectors growth was stalled and even reversed. Particularly notable in this context was the metal, machine, implement, and conveyance building sector, which had increased its proportion of the overall male workforce from around 14 per cent in the years before 1914 to 17 per cent in 1921, but had then slipped back to 12 per cent in 1931. Other sectors were displaying a continuing growth, especially the commercial sector that provided around 6 per cent of occupied men employment in 1901, just under 9 per cent in 1921, and over 17 per cent in 1931. Male employment, however, continued to be concentrated in the industrial sectors, and, in 1931, there were still 74 per cent of waged men in industrial occupations - a fall of a mere 4 per cent since 1921.

There were fewer younger workers in textiles after the First World War, than there had been previously, and the average age of the textile workforce was increasing

during the inter-war years. Child labour was finally declining (see chapter 4), and although youth was beginning to find alternative employment beyond the textile sector, textiles remained important. Thus, while almost 19 per cent of jute operatives were aged 17 years and younger in 1924, by 1934 the percentage was just under 15 per cent, with the largest reduction in juvenile labour in jute recorded between 1930 and 1934 (Board of Trade, 1932, p. vi; and 1937, p. ix). The impact, of this slow diversification, would only emerge after the Second World War, when the youth of the late 1920s and 1930s came to form their own households.

A similar pattern, to that found in male employment, was occurring in women's employment, although the changes were even less significant. There had been a growth in the numbers of women in the food and drinks sector, and in commerce, as well as a slight increase in typists and clerkesses, but the proportion of women in the professions remained stuck at around 3 per cent. There was a marked growth in the proportion providing personal services, and domestic service had actually increased from around 8 per cent before the war to over 12 per cent in 1921 and over 13 per cent in 1931. The proportion of occupied women in textiles had fallen from a pre-war peak of over 70 per cent to just under 60 per cent in 1921. In spite of a further fall in the numbers women in textiles, from 22,969 to 21,932 operatives, there were still around 52 per cent of occupied women in this sector in 1931.

The introduction of new technology in textiles brought job losses amongst women.

The effects of new technology across the sector began in the mills, where new spinning

frames were adopted, but spread to the factories, where new looms, with larger shuttles and beams, were becoming more common. The time scale for the introduction of new technology may have differed from company to company, but there was a common aim of reducing the cost of production by increasing productivity. Fewer operatives processing more material was to mean job losses. At least one firm was also transferring their jute spinning operations out of Dundee. Whether this was an attempt to avoid the 'prejudice' that existed amongst the purchasers of Dundee jute products, as has been suggested (Whatley, 1992b, p. 171) is rather unclear. What is more certain is that changes in the industry also included the placing of male operatives into work that had previously occupied women. According to one historian, there ^{was} a fall of 32 per cent amongst all those employed in textiles between 1924 and 1938, but it can also be observed there was a more rapid decline, of 39 per cent, in female employment over these years (Howe, 1982, p. 123). So, for example, while the average annual numbers of females employed as jute operatives had fallen by 52 between 1934 and 1935, the equivalent figure for males showed an increase of 683 (Board of Trade, 1937, p. ix).

The rationale for replacing women with men is perhaps best understood in the context of the employers' desire to increase productivity and profit, although it is worth noting that interpretations of this change by historians often extend beyond this. It is stated, for example, that much of the new machinery 'utilised the labour of males', because of day and night shift working (Whatley et al., 1993, p. 164). Certainly women were prevented from working night shifts at the time, and restructuring the gender composition of individual workforces was initially carried out through the introduction

of male night shift working. A Home Office report in March 1930 was to note that one firm had fitted out an entire mill with the automatic spinning frames. The company had intended at first to employ women by day and men by night, but, the report explains, 'it was felt to be unfair to keep men on the permanent night shift, and the mill is therefore now being run entirely by male labour, with the exception of six women winders who work on a day shift' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 20, p. 197). Throughout the 1930s spinning works increasingly introduced night shifts, and, according to one former manager, the same pattern was to be set in motion in the weaving sector during the 1940s (ADD 03/A/2), although other firms did not automatically follow this by replacing women with men on day shifts. Another historian has suggested that the reason men were replacing women in the labour force, was, because of 'the use of new machinery demanding more skilled operatives' (Howe, 1982, p. 13). There is little evidence however, to support the supposition that female textile workers were less skilled than males (see for example Gordon, 1991, p. 157), and earlier attempts to introduce men into power loom weaving had been hampered, according to employers, by the men's inability to learn the techniques required.

It certainly could be argued that employers believed that the employment of men rather than women might prove more profitable, but for rather different reasons than men's ability to either work day and night, or that they were inherently more skilled. From the late nineteenth century complaints of absenteeism amongst women operatives were often made by works' managers (Dundee University Library, MS 66/II/9 [3]), and

continued into the 1940s when a local MP noted that 'avoidable absenteeism in jute is higher than it ought to be' (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 43, p. 159). Over and above this, the widespread practice, commented upon by a number of historians, of women moving from one workplace to another as a means of improving wages and conditions, added to this concern amongst employers. In addition there is some evidence to suggest employers believed that women were much more likely to engage in industrial disputes than men (see chapter 7).

It should also be recognised that males were replacing female operatives at a time of technological change and that this restructuring has a number of historical parallels. It has been suggested for example, that mechanisation had reinforced occupational segregation in an earlier period (John, 1986, p. 6). Closer to the present day there have been suggestions that women are more likely to lose their jobs because of new technology (Huws, 1982), although this has been challenged by the observation that, in situations that involve the shedding of labour, 'women are often disadvantaged relative to men' (Walby, 1986, p. 228). These disadvantages might include women's structural position in the workforce, but in inter-war Dundee it could be added that women, whether waged or unwaged, were still expected to be carers and managers in male headed households. This in itself could lead to irregular time keeping amongst women workers, particularly when the numbers of occupied married women was growing. Finally, it should be recognised that the earlier calls by social reformers, including the Dundee Social Union and the British Medical Association, for women's labour to be limited were continuing to be expressed. Replacing women with men fitted into the

dominant ideology of the period - an ideology that included preventing women from working on night shifts.

Changes in the local economy and labour market in the inter-war period were leading to job losses at a rate that could not be matched by limited diversification. The result was unemployment rates that were high, both amongst men and women, but, in spite of this, marriage rates were increasing and more married women were entering the labour market. It is somewhat ironic that just when moves were being made to replace women with men in the textiles, so many women who married would remain in textile employment. There was some diversification in married women's employment from 1918 to 1939 that included part-time jobs, both in personal service and the rising food and drink sector, but an even larger section can be found in full-time occupations particularly in the textile sector.

Marriage and the male headed household

One of the biggest changes in employment, and one that was much more significant than changes in the gender composition of textiles, was in the growing numbers of married women in waged work. In all of the Scottish cities the proportion of married women in occupations increased slightly from 1911 to 1921. This was followed by a further increase in the next decade, but while Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, were recording a rise of less than two percentage points between 1921 and 1931, the ratio in Dundee had grown by over 9 percentage points. Whereas under a quarter of

married women were engaged in employment in Dundee in 1921, by 1931 this proportion was closer to a third (as shown in Figure 10–1).

Figure 10–1: Percentage of married women in occupations in four Scottish cities

	Aberdeen	Dundee	Edinburgh	Glasgow
1911	3.01	23.43	5.11	5.50
1921	3.91	24.05	5.65	6.12
1931	5.59	33.16	7.33	7.37

Source: Census of Scotland, 1911, vol. II, p. lxxiv; 1921, vol. II, p. x; 1931, vol. II, p. xxv.

In the inter-war years, apart from textiles and personal service, very few other sectors offered employment to married women. Indeed, many firms (including those in the printing trades), local government, and the civil service continued to deny employment to married women. By far the largest proportion, over three-quarters, of married women who were employed were in the textile industry, and personal service, the next largest occupational grouping, employed less than a tenth of all occupied married women (as shown in Figure 10–2). It should also be noted that, within the category of personal service, charwomen and office cleaners were much more numerous than indoor domestic servants. As in Glasgow, women in personal service in Dundee were much more likely to be cleaners than servants than they were in either Edinburgh or Aberdeen - a pattern that was as evident before the First World War (Rodger, 1985, p. 33).

Figure 10-2: Percentage of occupied married women in selected occupational groupings in Dundee in 1931

Occupational group	number	percentage
textile workers	8584	78.26
personal service	859	7.83
commercial, finance and insurance occupations	290	2.64
makers of textile goods	224	2.04
makers of food, drink and tobacco	54	0.49
professional	44	0.40
other	914	8.33

Source: Census of Scotland, 1931, 3, pp. 155-62, table 4.

It is also worth noting that the jobs outside of textile were not always seen by women as more favourable alternatives to those found inside the textile industry; indeed textile work could compare favourably with other employment options. For example, domestic employment, both in the private and public sector, involved long hours, including working evenings, at a time when women were winning an improvement in hours and conditions in textiles. Even amongst those who enjoyed domestic work, and these were more likely to be in public institutions rather than private houses, there were criticisms of the strict regime and the sheer hard work. Ruth Anthony, a domestic at Kings Cross, recalled the following song:

Oh a nurse or doctor I'd like to be,
 I took myself to bonny Dundee,
 On a place on the hill I did apply,
 Occasionally known as the D.R.I. [Dundee Royal Infirmary].
 Oh they gave me a cap and an apron of mine

I felt most important I started to cry,
 But by night-time I almost was ready to die
 My feet were so sore in the D.R.I. (BCHG VT 06).

The young women who began work as domestics especially in private homes often sought to move as quickly as they could into mill or factory jobs. A typical comment by a former domestic in a private house was that, 'Eh would have dyed meh hair to get into a mill' (see for example BCHG VT 15). Many viewed domestic jobs as temporary positions that would be abandoned as soon as employment could be found in the textiles.

The importance of part-time work such as cleaning and childminding to married women in Dundee, should not be underestimated, particularly since there is a strong possibility of this type of employment being under-reported in *Census* returns. Not only were these often temporary jobs, they were perhaps even further hidden from the eyes of the State, and subsequently from history, because the unemployment benefit system discouraged the declaration of occasional or part-time waged work. In Dundee such jobs were popular ways of making a little extra money particularly amongst married women with young children. With many husbands in insecure employment, large numbers of married women were cleaning and childminding for wages that were an important source of income to many of Dundee's households (see for example DOHP 058/A/1 and Lizzie Duncan, BCHG VT 10). The informal community network of women (described in chapter 3) was essential in supporting these endeavours. Thus a woman marries a jute labourer in 1929 and works in a variety of jobs. These include cleaning jobs in the 1930s; jobs that were shared amongst women with, 'one pal telling

the women like', and this ensured 'a lot a cleaning jobs' for her (DOHP 062/A/2). Similarly Jessie Ewan, married in 1933 to a labourer who was unemployed for the first eight years of their marriage, comes to an arrangement with the 'woman along the road' whereby 'we used to take turn about at minding [the children] ... and we both started going out cleaning' (DOHP 071/B/2). These very arrangements through an informal job network, that involved sharing jobs, would have made official recording of such employment more difficult. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly these were jobs that women recall with some pleasure, although, just as amongst those in domestic service, the part-time cleaner usually continued to seek full-time employment in textiles.

In the food and confectionery sector, which was to survive the worst of the inter-war depression, and grow after 1931, conditions and wages could also be compared unfavourably with textiles. In the inter-war years some married women were employed in retailing and in the food and confectionery sector, and a small section of these women was employed in reasonably secure jobs with reasonable conditions, such as in Andrew J Kydd, the chain of bakers. Another firm, James Keillor & Son, who made confectionery, marmalade and jam, and had become part of the Crosse and Blackwell Group in 1918, was by the late 1930s beginning to have an impact on female employment. In 1936 Keillor's were claiming that both their output and staff had trebled, with an additional 300 workers employed. The firm successfully applied to the Home Secretary to grant to permission to employ women on two day shifts (Dundee Central Library, Lamb Collection, newspaper cuttings books, 32, p. 224; 33, p. 240).

This suggests that Keillor's were not only seeking to recruit women, but also married women, since the shift patterns that were established were tailored to avoid the times when husbands and children were at home.

While Keillor's were able to offer reasonably secure employment, other food and drink firms were not in a position to do so. Indeed many more firms involved in the growing food processing sector, often offered poorly paid and repetitive jobs, in conditions that were at least as bad as those that existed in the low mills. Women workers in the food and drink trades often arrived with experience of the textile industry; indeed, during lay-offs and short-time working in textiles, the Labour Exchange would direct unemployed textile workers, including weavers, to the city's canneries. While historians (including Whatley et al., 1993, p. 162) may welcome the diversification in employment that firms, including Smedley's Ltd, brought, oral evidence suggests that those who worked for the canneries thought otherwise. Women in these plants, particularly Smedley's, found that the hours worked tended to be greater than those found in textiles, particularly during periods of peak production, such as during the annual berry harvest. If the harvest, whether it was raspberries or rhubarb, was delayed, then processing workers would have to wait unpaid. Many of the women stood longer, were allowed fewer toilet breaks, and found the labour to be more intensive than they had in their former jobs in the textiles. It was often wet on the cannery floor, a fruit harvest could contain stones, excrement, urine, and water, the work was tedious and conversation was restricted. Workers were expected to sit on

the floor during meal breaks, and in at least one cannery, the women were expected to go out and pick berries if there was a shortage of fruit for processing.

The growth in numbers of married women in paid occupations, can be partly explained by the rising marriage rate amongst women. For at least five decades the crude marriage rate, and the marriage rate amongst adult women of childbearing age, suggests that Dundee was recording fewer marriages than the other Scottish cities, apart from Edinburgh. This difference was especially marked between Dundee and Glasgow (see chapter 6). In 1911, for example, the percentage of women aged 15 to 44 years who were marrying in Glasgow was around 44 per cent and rising to 45 per cent in 1921, while the percentage for Dundee was just over 39 per cent for both 1911 and 1921. Then in 1931 this ratio in Dundee, at 42 per cent, began to close with that of Glasgow's (that had remained at around 45 per cent). By 1951 a larger proportion of women in this age group was marrying in Dundee (almost 60 per cent) than in Glasgow (just over 56 per cent). Marriage in Dundee between the 1920s and 1940s, was therefore becoming more of a popular option for women.

A more detailed exploration of these suggests that while Edinburgh's marriage rate was less than that found in the other four Scottish cities, Dundee's rate displayed much less variation, and was fairly constant in the years before the late 1920s. It was only in the late 1920s that the marriage rate amongst women in Dundee began to rise, and in the 1930s the increase in the rate was greater than the three other cities. By 1940 the gap between Dundee, Aberdeen and Glasgow had begun to close, while the gap

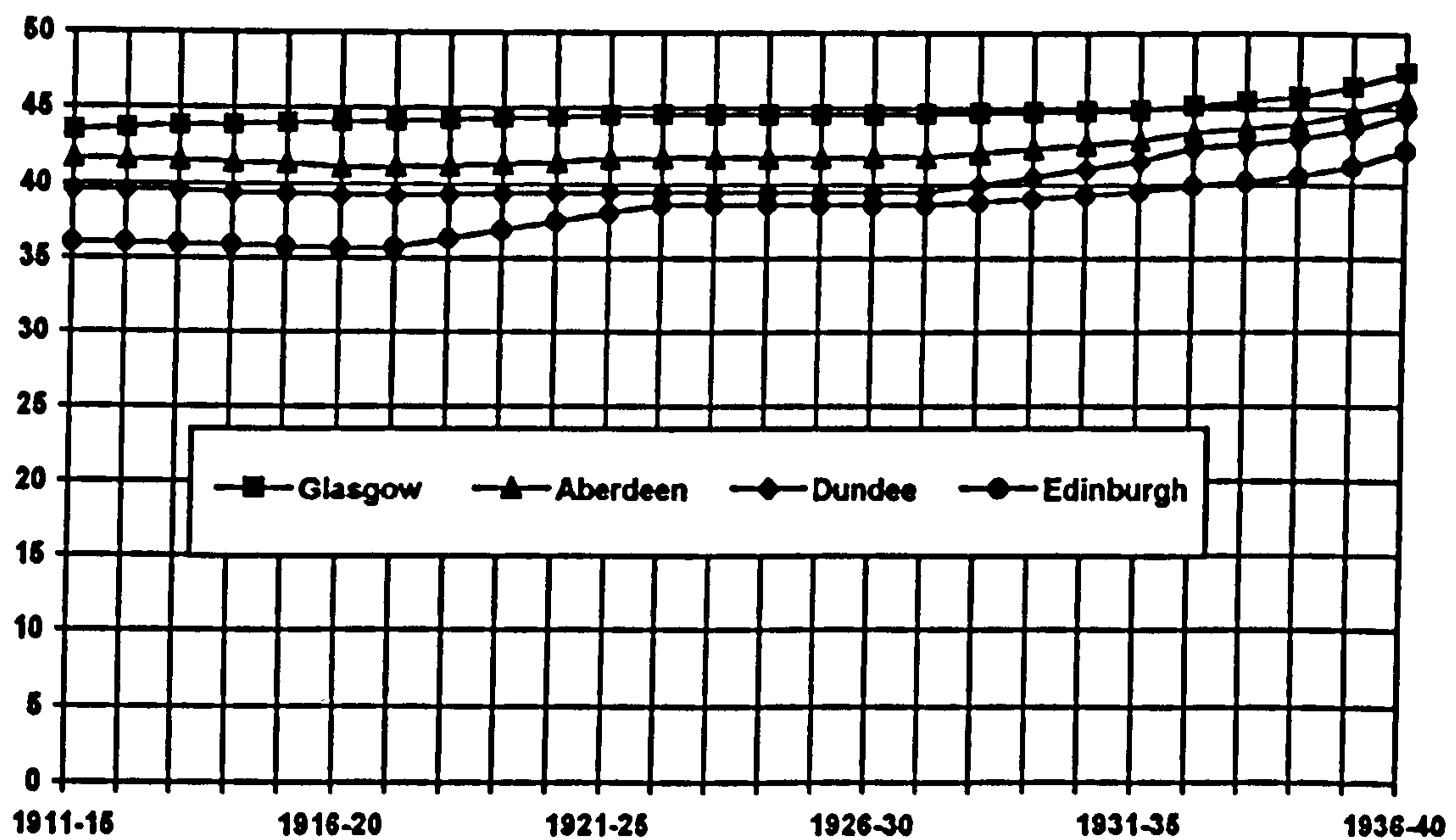
between Dundee and Edinburgh began to open (as shown in Figure 10–3). During these years the Dundee's singulate mean age at marriage, for women was also falling. By 1931 the singulate mean age at marriage was 26.26 years for women, a reduction from 27.05 years in 1911. Thus, not only were more women marrying in Dundee, but women were marrying at a younger age. The singulate mean age at marriage of men was remaining the same, at slightly over 27 years, for 1891 and 1931, but there were almost 3,000 more married men in all age groups in 1931 compared to 1891, and amongst those aged 15 to 44 years, there was a slight increase in the proportion who were married from 43.21 per cent in 1891 to 47.42 per cent in 1931.

Experiential data suggests that women were marrying, despite parental reservations and even hostility, men whose prospects of employment were far from certain. Aside for the reasons explored later (in chapter 11), parents, many of whom were married around the turn of the century, may have felt that the fashion for marriage, and earlier marriage, amongst their daughters lacked appropriate caution. Most daughters waited, usually in vain, for an improvement in their future husbands' prospects, but often the desire to marry and leave the parental home eventually proved too great. It also clear from a number of these daughters that they were expecting to continue in waged work after their marriage. This seems to be different from the expectations of earlier generations of married women. The following is a reasonably typical recollection of marriage plans:

So we were going together for a while, about four years. But you were on your board at that time. The situation was dodgy in the mills, the gaffer would come in and say, 'We're going on three days'. Well with being on your board you had to stump up, you didn't get off with not paying your board. With the result that the

banky was coming up fine then it was bashed down again, so we had to wait another wee while. Well it was 1927 [aged 23 years] when we were married - that would be four years after Eh met him (BCHG VT 03).

Figure 10-3: Percentage of married women aged 15 to 44 years of all women aged 15 to 44 years expressed as moving 5 year averages, 1911 to 1940



Source: Registrar General (Scotland), Detailed Reports, 1911-1940

Saving for marriage remained important in the inter-war years, but benefits, for able-bodied men in particular, were beginning to play a part in encouraging earlier marriage amongst women. Those couples who found difficulties in saving during their courtships, were often to find later that their marital finances were effected by unemployment. Couples tended to delay marriage until the prospective husband, and

often his future wife, were in employment, but, while regular employment remained uncertain, benefits ensured that concerns of unemployment after marriage, that once would have delayed marriage for a longer period, were blunted. It would not be appropriate to portray this as love on the dole, since very few planned to live off benefits after marriage, but in many cases this was the end result.

Figure 10–4: Males and females in age groups of 15 to 19 and 25 to 29 years, and the percentage change between decades 1901 to 1931

Year and age group	males			females		
	Number	Change from previous decade	Percentage change from previous decade	Number	Change from previous decade	Percentage change from previous decade
1901 15-19	7957			9180		
1911 25-29	5486	-2471	-31.05	7984	-1196	-13.03
1911 15-19	7728			8605		
1921 25-29	5512	-2216	-28.67	7576	-1029	-11.96
1921 15-19	7793			8764		
1931 25-29	6440	-1353	-17.36	7893	-871	-9.94

Source: Census of Scotland, 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931

The ratio of adult women to men, aged 15 to 44 years, in Dundee was also narrowing, from 1.4:1 in 1921, to 1.2:1 in 1931. One reason for this was that more men, aged 15 to 25 who were remaining present in the city than was the case in earlier decades (as

shown in Figure 10–4). Thus, the percentage change in the numbers of males aged 15 to 19 years in 1901 and males aged 25 to 29 years in 1911 was a reduction of 31 per cent. Similarly, between 1911 and 1921, the same age ranges recorded over 28 per cent fewer males. In contrast between 1921 and 1931 the reduction between the two age groups was only slightly over 17 per cent. In other words there were fewer men missing, having in all probability left the city, aged 15 to 29 years in the later part of the period (see chapter 6). Although a very crude measure, this does provide a way of beginning to understand the decline in Dundee's historical gender imbalance.

One reason for the increased presence of young men in Dundee in the 1920s, was perhaps because fewer were leaving as a result of the limited diversification that was occurring in the male labour market. Even as late as 1931, however, young male labour continued to be concentrated in textiles and in other less skilled work. Textiles accounted for a fifth of occupied male youth under 20 years of age, while almost another seventh was in transport. Over 16 per cent of male youth were in labouring and other unskilled jobs. The only sizeable occupational orders offering those under 20 years skilled employment were in the metal working, wood working, printing and photography, sectors. In total these employed under a fifth of all jobs occupied by youth, and even then not all of these jobs could be considered as skilled. In addition, *Census* data suggests that those employed in textiles were much more likely to be unemployed. Almost 40 per cent of all males returned as 'out of work' were in textiles. Amongst all those men, in textiles, over a third were without waged work at the time

of enumeration, while almost a third of all labourers and other unskilled workers were 'out of work'. (*Census of Scotland*, 1931, vol. II, p. 256).

More importantly, if many of Dundee male out-migrants had been young less skilled labour at the end of the nineteenth century (see chapter 6), then after the First World War the opportunities for these men to leave the city were more limited. There were fewer unskilled and semi-skilled jobs of the type that male labour in Dundee could migrate to in Britain after 1918 (see for example Price and Bain, 1988), and the armed forces, the traditional escape for less skilled labour, was neither as viable, nor as attractive, an option as it had been before the First World War. Even the more skilled were finding that the chances of employment beyond Dundee were reduced.

Employment in the shipyards of Clydeside and Tyne and the Wear, that were once available to those who had completed their training in engineering in Dundee, were far from insulated from the effects of inter-war depression. Further afield, the Calcutta jute industry, that provided a career path for Dundee's mechanics, mill foremen and overseers, was a less reliable option by the 1920s than it had been previously, and, at the same time, the United States was restricting immigration.

Fewer young men were leaving the city, at a time when the employment opportunities in Dundee for these men were not radically different from the pre-1918 period. For the women that most of these men would marry changes in the female employment market were at least as slow to develop. The result was more married women in occupations, with most of these in textiles. If the overall decline in the numbers of women in textiles

was accepted as the only measure of the sector's importance, then the contribution of female textile wages for many families could be easily understated. The proportion of Dundee's married women in waged work was increasing throughout these years, and the importance of wives' wages from textiles to the income of male headed households was also growing. So, while married women employed in textiles as a proportion of all occupied married women had fallen, from just under 90 per cent in 1911 to under 80 per cent in 1931, there were 2,786 more married women in textiles in 1931 than there had been in 1911. That so many more married women were in full-time textile employment also suggests that wages were a necessity, rather than a source of additional income to top up husbands' wages.

While the growth in numbers of married women in employment can be partly explained by the rising marriage rate, the increase in the proportion of women marrying was less than the increase in the proportion of women who were entering the workforce. In other words it was not so much the narrowing of the gender imbalance, and changes in the marriage rates, that led to an increase in the numbers of married women in occupations. Rather the increase in wives' participation in the labour market owed more to the increase in the proportion of married men in less skilled jobs, against a background of diversification in employment that was so limited that textiles remained a principal employer. It is striking that so many of the occupied married women in these years were married to men employed in textiles or in other low paid employment. A frequently made observation that was made by women who continued in employment in the inter-war years was that, 'one wage was no good to get a decent

living'. Given the irregular pattern of textile employment in particular, with the introduction of three day weeks in the late 1920s and 1930s, the increase in the numbers of couples in male headed households who were pursuing a dual income is understandable.

Even the weaving wives of foremen, who were much better paid than the majority of textile workers, felt the need to return quickly to work during times of financial difficulty. During the early 1930s Robert Knox's father was a 'mill foreman', with his mother working in the same carpet factory. Mr Knox recalls that his mother was only off work for 'two or three months' while she was having the children. He went on to say that, 'the bairns had been more or less months old; [it was] not like nowadays where they more or less don't go back to work until the children are pretty well up you know' (DOHP 081/A/1).

Lesser skilled husbands, including labourers and jute operatives, remained, however, more likely to be unemployed than husbands in skilled occupations, and, as a result, lesser skilled husbands were still more likely to have wives who were working for wages. Other male heads who were in regular, relatively well paid, employment continued to aim to afford to keep their wives at home. The following recollection is from the daughter of a storeman who effectively decided to withdraw his labour rather than allow his wife to work outside the home.

Meh father was dead against a woman working. You know many times she [mother] could hae got a job, because she was a spinner, so she could hae got a job, but he put his foot down. Eh remember one time especially, she said, 'We're going to have a holiday this year, we're going to save up and Eh'm going to get a

job'... He says, 'Now Eh'm telling you, you work Eh come home'. So she took the job, she was going in, and that morning he said, 'Don't bother getting me up'. So he just lay in bed ... He was a man of his word ... So the next day she sent in word that she wouldnae be in that day, and meh father was away back to work. But that was the way he worked it. (DOHP 072/A/1).

In at least one marriage such beliefs persisted, despite the father - a tradesman - being frequently unemployed as a result of his wounds from the First World War. As his son recalls, 'Meh mother never worked, my mother always kept the house, we didn't believe in these things that your mother had tae go oot tae work', because that was, 'meh father's principle, always was' (DOHP 050/A/1). The attitudes of wives were less important in the households of male heads who were, or even once were, a part of the upper stratum of the working class. Defining a 'proper' family (as expressed by Finch, 1989), often remained the prerogative of such husbands.

Other mothers continued to work, because their husbands were choosing to spend an inordinate amount of their wages on themselves. The problem of male drinking was particularly important in this context and has already been explored in some detail (in chapter 8). It is, however, worth reiterating that male addiction to alcohol was a factor in a number of the life stories that were collected. In such homes, and these included better-off families, children often undertook housework at an early age, and domestic violence was often a feature of family life.

Mother was out all day. You see, though my father was a grocer, anything he got just went into a pub. With the result, my mother never got any money, and she had tae work tae keep us. That was his daily work, in the pubs. If he'd lived now [1987], he would've been an alcoholic, you know he would've been under care. But then in those days, you could be drunk every day, and nobody bothered. My mother was one of the beaten women (DOHP 087/A/1).

More married women were seeking employment in the inter-war years, because more women were marrying men who were likely to be in irregular employment. These husbands tended to be from the lesser skilled end of the employment market, but given the widespread unemployment in textiles this was not always the case. It should also be recognised that male attitudes towards their wives working for wages, and male demands on household income (see chapter 11) could also influence married women's employment.

Change and continuity of the female headed household

It might be assumed that rising marriage rates meant that the basis of the female headed household, that is large numbers of single and widowed women, was being undermined. The proportion of single women was falling, particularly as a proportion of all women 15 years and older, but in 1931 there were still close to 54 per cent of women aged 15 to 44 years who were single, compared to 58 per cent in 1911. Over these three decades the percentage of single women aged 39 years and younger was decreasing, there was an increase in the percentage of single women aged 40 years and older. Although these changes were slight, it should be noted that household heads who were single women were more likely to be older than younger, and that the increasing marriage rates were less likely to effect the numbers of single women heading households in the shorter term. There was also a degree of continuity amongst the proportion of widowed women (as shown in Figure 10–5). Between 1891 and 1931 the proportion of widows to all women aged 15 years and over hardly changed, with the smallest percentage recorded in 1911 (at 12.45 per cent), and the largest in

1921 (at 13.32). The carnage of the First World War did add to the number of widows, but did not substantially change the proportion of widows amongst adult women.

Figure 10–5: Women aged 15 years and older by conjugal condition as a proportion of all women aged 15 years and older 1891-1931

	Single	Married	Widowed
1891	46.40	40.48	13.12
1901	46.98	40.22	12.80
1911	46.04	41.51	12.45
1921	42.99	43.68	13.32
1931	40.03	47.19	12.78

Source: Census of Scotland, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921 and 1931

Since the census enumerator books for 1901 and after remain unavailable to date, it is not possible to assess continuity and change using this source beyond 1891 (see chapter 5). One source that might yet prove useful to a quantitative study of household and community structures in Dundee is the Valuation of Lands and Heritage Rolls (more commonly known as valuation rolls) that have survived for every year from the 1870s to the 1980s. Two small area 10 per cent random samples, that covered the St. Clement's district, were taken for two of the inter-war years. These suggest that there were just over 30 per cent (of the 694 households extracted) named women as the named tenants and occupiers in 1920/21. A similar sample of the same ward for 1938/39 suggests that (out of 638 households in the sample) just over 33 per cent of

the households had women were identified as the named tenants and occupiers. There are some problems of using this source to assess the proportion of female headed householders (see Appendix I), but it might still seem remarkable that as late as 1938-9 a third of those named as tenants and occupiers were women. Further investigation of the rolls, particularly by cross referencing through nominal linkage with the census enumerator books, would be worthwhile, but outwith the scope of this study.

One difficulty of using the valuation rolls is in extracting information on the conjugal condition of householders. While the earlier rolls tended to identify widows, the later rolls do not. It is, however, possible to identify those who were single in both samples. Again there is a remarkable similarity in the proportion of single and married or widowed women to all female heads, as in the case of the census enumerator books, and women occupiers in the samples from the land valuation rolls (as shown in Figure 10-6).

Figure 10-6: Numbers and percentages of female heads of household

	single	married or widowed	conjugal condition not stated	total
1891 census enumerator books	56 (26.42)	156 (73.58)	-	212
1920/21 land valuation rolls	47 (22.17)	145 (68.40)	20 (9.43)	212
1938/39 land valuation rolls	62 (28.84)	146 (67.91)	7 (3.26)	215

Source: 1891 census enumerator books - St. Clement's district sample; and female tenant and occupiers in Ward 4 1920-1 and 1938-9 samples

It is also much easier to accept that there was continuity in the proportion of female headed households, when it is realised that up to the Second World War women continued in large numbers to find waged work. In 1931 over half (55.1 per cent) of all women aged fourteen years and older were in occupations in Dundee, and this was actually more than the 43 per cent in 1891 for all occupied females. This change does include an increase in the proportion of married women in occupations, by about 10 per cent from 1911 to 1931, but the general point, that the availability of employment for women in 1931 was not dissimilar from 1891, remains valid. Even if the number of women occupied in textiles was falling, both before and after 1931, it also has to be realised that the numbers of women in other sectors were rising.

Oral evidence, for the years after the First World War, also strongly suggests that the largest proportion of female heads continued to be widows, and that female headed households would often include widowed and single women. While the experiential data does identify a continuation of the importance of waged work amongst widows and their household members, it is also clear that income from pensions and benefits were becoming increasingly important in the period after the First World War. The Old Age Pensions Act of 1908, and the National Insurance Act of 1911, both had an impact. According to the *Census* in 1911, 39 per cent of all widows were in occupations compared to just over a half of all widows identified in the 1891 St. Clement's sample. That 54 per cent of widows under 64 years of age were reported as employed in 1911 underlines the importance of the Old Age Pension to widows who were 64 years and older, of whom only 16 per cent were occupied for wages by 1911.

The Dundee Social Union had taken up the issue of poverty amongst widows with the Poor Law Commission in the 1900s, although it should be noted that the example the Social Union's Secretary chose was 'of two old infirm women' (cited in Levitt, 1988. p. 181). While recognising that there was destitution amongst widows, particularly amongst aged widows, the vast majority of widows living in the communities of Dundee would not have proved suitable examples for the Social Union's campaign. With the First World War the poverty that widows could experience across the country was recognised and their position amongst the deserving poor established beyond doubt. War widows' pensions were followed by a general widows' pension, that became fully effective by 1928, and was amended in 1929 to include widows with no dependent children.

It should not be thought that female headed households were free of financial difficulties. Widowed heads in households containing a number of young children seem to have faced the greatest problems. These, however, continued to be a tiny minority of female headed households. Indeed widows with one or even two infants found it easier to survive as independent householders than was the case before the First World War. Nellie Hanley's childhood home, for example, was headed by her mother, who was in receipt of a war widow's pension and did not find it necessary to seek paid employment. Indeed her mother could offer assistance to her blind grandmother (BCHG VT 01). Other widows did find waged work, but their children tended to be older. The widowed mothers who managed to raise their families from waged work,

such as cleaning, mill work, or in one case as a shoe buyer, were a source of much pride for sons and daughters

Despite the proportion of single women falling between 1911 and 1931, many women remained single. This may have had less to do with gender imbalance at this time, than with parental pressures on daughters to remain single, in a section of households, for as long as possible (see chapter 11). Certainly, by the inter-war years, the gender imbalance, just as it was beginning to disappear, had entered popular consciousness, as is reflected in the song 'Auld Maid in a Garret'.

Oh, come Tinker, come Tailor, come Soldier
 come Sailor,
 Come ony man at a' that'll tak me fae my faither,
 Come rich or come poor man, come wise or come witty,
 Come ony man at a' that'll marry me for pity.

For it's oh dear me whit will I dae
 If I dee an auld maid in a garret.

Noo I'll awa' hame for there's naebody heedin,
 Naebody's heeding tae puir wee Annie's pleadin',
 I'll awa' hame tae my ain wee garret,
 If I canna get a man then I'll surely get a parrot!

For it's oh dear me whit will I dae
 If I dee an auld maid in a garret (in Kay, 1980, p.38).

Despite the evident levels of parental control, triggered by material need, the relevant reminiscences of older women who did not marry, however, are often marked with heavy irony that mocks self-pity, an attribute that exists in the song cited above. More than once older single women described themselves as 'unclaimed treasures' (see for

example BHG VT 01). Such irony also may be seen as a part of a wider belief amongst women that they could be 'better off without a husband'

I stayed single. I saw enough around me (laughs). Yes, spent my life hanging from the shelf. I just made up my mind that I wouldn't get married. Eh'm better off the way I am. Eh set up house on my own after my mother died. I was thirty-nine (BCHG VT 10).

Such a belief may not only have been held by those who remained single, but may also have been shared amongst the largest and smallest category of female householders, with widows who did not remarry, and married women whose husbands had temporarily or more permanently moved out of the family home. Amongst these women there was the constant theme that the material gain to be had from having a husband, and even continuing in waged work, was too uncertain to be worth the gamble. While the financial position of the female headed households could have been favourably compared with that of the households of married women, the problems faced by sisters living in male headed homes were known to those who lived in female headed households. Married women in male headed households were not only faced with the burden of providing for children, but, in the frequent periods of high male unemployment, there was possibility of having the additional financial encumbrance of an idle husband. There is also some evidence that suggests that hostility towards men, and in particular to the perceived weaknesses of men, was particularly strong amongst members of female headed households. This must be understood against the

background that Dundee women were quick to see men as unemployed 'kettle boilers' (see chapter 11) and willing to organise politically against the curse of the drunken male (see chapter 8). Indeed both myths may have had some foundation amongst the female members of households headed by women.

Male unemployment after the First World War, followed by the Means Test in 1931, may have provided a temporary increase in the number of married women who found themselves heading households while their husbands sought work elsewhere. If marriage opportunities for men were less tied to their occupational status, the need to find employment after marriage remained the same. The change from the pre-1914 pattern of men remaining single and moving away for work, may have been included some men marrying and then leaving. What is more certain is that husbands who left the city in turn provided opportunities for younger workers to leave home to become boarders in the homes of married women. Francis Baxter, for example, left her parent's household when her father was out of work, and she felt herself overburdened with helping her mother to look after the home, that included five younger siblings, and working in a local mill. So she moved 'around the corner' to board with a married neighbour, whose husband was working with a touring fairground. There she lived for three years, and for part of that time, looked after the woman's only child. After this she left to live with a widow in the same tenement community of the Hilltown (BCHG VT 12).

Conclusions

While there were changes in the local economy in the inter-war years these did not significantly alter the shape of either the male or female job markets. The loss of textile jobs was not compensated for by the new employment, and there was a return to irregular employment. While the numbers dependent on textiles for wages had fallen in these years, there remained large numbers of households in which the main wage earners continued to be employed in the textile industry. The most important change was in the numbers of married women who were in occupations, and this could have been due to a growth in the proportion of married men in lesser skilled occupations during and after the First World War. Certainly the increased numbers of married women in waged work, and oral evidence, supports the suggestion that there was a parallel growth in the importance of wives' wages to household income.

The basis for the female headed household, widows, single women, and married women without husbands, remained after the First World War. Oral evidence not only suggests that there were still large numbers of female headed households in the inter-war years, but that these households continued to boast of a degree of independence from adult men. That there was this degree of continuity suggests that gender relations in Dundee also continued to be partly shaped by the presence of such households.

Chapter 11: Gender relations inside the household economies

Introduction

Elizabeth Roberts has identified three models of marital relationships in her investigations of Lancashire before 1940. The most common marital arrangement, according to Roberts, was the separation of employment from unwaged domestic duties, with husbands responsible for wage earning and wives responsible for household management. The second type of arrangement was where wives and husbands were both in full-time employment, and childcare and housework were shared. The third, and least common marital arrangement, was where roles were separated, but differed from the first and most widespread arrangement, in that husbands dominated wives and children (Roberts, 1984a, pp. 110-24; and 1995, pp. 76-84).¹ While broadly accepting much of Roberts' analysis, there were two additional groups of households in Dundee, both of which displayed distinctly different arrangements between household members. The first was a small number of households in which husbands temporarily assumed the responsibilities for childcare and housework, while their wives engaged in full-time employment. While this arrangement may have been the experience of only a minority of male headed

¹ After 1940 Roberts (1995) introduces a fourth model. This is an arrangement in which roles are separated, relationships are again marked by power inequality to the detriment of wives, but, in these relationships, wives are not being 'bullied or ill-treated' by husbands.

households, and was, in most cases, short-lived, it will be argued that such an arrangement assumed a wider importance amongst Dundee women. This is particularly so, when taken together with the existence of the second, and much larger, group of households, that is those headed by women.

While the largest group of wives, in both Lancashire and Dundee, were unwaged, Roberts (1984a and 1984b) has argued that the majority of these women were empowered by their position as household managers (this empowerment will be compared to the position of female heads in Dundee). Roberts' analysis of gender relationships is also extended beyond exploring the marital division and non-division of work, and, in particular, the relationships between parents and children. This builds on the earlier considerations of childhood (especially in chapter 4), and draws on the research of Lynn Jamieson (1983 and 1987), Hareven (1991) and Gittins (1982), and, in doing so, suggests further insights can be gained into how gender relations were influenced by paid and unpaid work in the male headed household.

Hareven (1991) has sought a reinterpretation of 'sentiment and privacy as the defining characteristics' of the family that can be found in most (classical) accounts of the family (p. 15). Similarly, Lynn Jamieson's interpretation of experiential accounts from a generation brought up in Edinburgh and the Central belt in the 1900s has questioned the findings found in these histories of the 'modern family' (1987, pp. 106-28). The families interviewed by Lynn Jamieson did not look towards the family as a 'haven in a heartless world'. Since few mothers in Jamieson's sample were working for wages, she

concludes that 'the development of an emotionally intense, separated-off ... type of family is not tied to the existence of a full-time housewife/mother at home' (1987, p. 116). The testimony from Dundee, in the inter-war period, provides even less evidence of child centred families amongst male headed households, but also suggests that there was a difference in these relationships not only within male headed households, according to the occupational status of wives, but that a different pattern also existed inside female headed households.

These differing relationships are further explored into the early adulthood of children, and in particular an examination of parental attitudes to the courtship of daughters is suggested as a critical point in the life cycle of households. While supporting Roberts' (1984a) suggestion that Gittins has over-emphasised sexual knowledge amongst young female textile operatives, there is evidence to sustain Gittins' assertion that parental intervention into courtship delayed early marriage, or even prevented marriage, especially in households in which the financial contributions of daughters were important (1982, pp. 69-94). Again, however, it will be argued that the nature of these interventions also depended upon household type. Similarly, households with ageing kin resident provide evidence of qualitatively different relationships in male and female headed households.

Household arrangements

An analysis of experiential data from Dundee before 1940 initially suggests that Roberts' (1984a) three marital models of household arrangements were present, and

that they followed a similar pattern to that found in Lancashire. Most male headed households could be divided between those in which housework and childcare were the responsibility of wives, and those in which housework and childcare were clearly shared between married partners. Evidence from the interview partners describing their parents' relationships in the Dundee Oral History Project Archive suggests that 46 out of 68 male headed households fell into one of these two categories (as shown in Figure 11-1, see also Appendix II, Table 3). At the same time the connection, as argued by Roberts, between the occupational status of wives and the approach taken towards domestic tasks in the home also seems to be present.

Figure 11-1: Male headed households in which domestic duties were strictly divided by gender or were clearly shared

	strictly divided	clearly shared	other	insufficient detail	total
with waged wife	15	13	12	-	40
with unwaged wife	15	3	10	-	28
all	30	16	22	7	75

Source: Dundee Oral History Project Archive

There is also ample evidence to support Roberts' contention that the largest proportion of marriages, or 'most usual' of marital arrangements, were partnerships based on the division of waged and unwaged work into separate spheres. The division of labour along gender lines within the home was most sharply drawn in households in which wives were full-time house managers, while male heads were wage earners. As a

daughter of a cabinet maker and a housewife recalled, her father and his friends, 'went out to work, other than that they did nothing, it was the mother who did everything more or less' (DOHP 035/A/1). In some homes jobs were 'divided up', with, as a daughter of a cabinet maker remembered, 'certain things that were women's work, and certain things that were men's work'. Her father would repair shoes and look after the garden, 'planted tatties ... but he wouldn't be seen dead pushing a pram' (DOHP 041/A/2).

Roberts' second model, said to involve a much smaller group of families, was amongst wives who were in full-time employment. A typical arrangement in these households was that, 'mother did the cleaning and the cooking but meh dad helped when he came home from work, they both worked at nights [in the house] (DOHP 066/A/1). It should also be recognised that the husbands with waged wives, who were less likely to participate in housework in these homes, were more likely at times of necessity to offer some assistance. Thus, while one father was recalled as a man who would 'sit at the fire after he'd finished his work', he 'occasionally helped', but, like others, 'would lock the door', because, he 'didn't like anybody to see him doing anything like that' (DOHP 058/A/1). Households with wives in employment were therefore more likely to have husbands prepared to undertake housework, and even sometimes childcare, than those households with unwaged wives.

While broadly accepting Roberts' argument, there are a number of problems with the three models of marital relationships. The first of the difficulties is to be found in the

ambiguities present in many testimonies. The oral evidence here is mainly from childhood recollections of parental relationships, but there is a very similar problem in gauging the division of housework from the evidence of spouses. The 'other' category (in Figure 11-1) not only includes those testimonies that are too imprecise in detail, but also households in which fathers assisted around the home only on an occasional basis. This assistance often tended to be of the type that men were more willing to accept and included mending shoes, decorating, and general repairs. Apart from filling the coal bunker, most of these tasks were more hobby type activities than housework. Thus there was probably a greater proportion of the 'other' grouping that had more in common with those households in which domestic duties were strictly divided than clearly shared between spouses. If this is the case, it should also be noted that a strict division of domestic duties is evident in many, perhaps most, of the homes including those in which wives were employed for wages.

Amongst those homes with wives in full-time employment, just as in those homes with wives who were full-time housewives, there were gradations in the gender division of domestic duties. There were also men in secure employment who did not assist waged wives with housework. This included the wife of an engineer, who was advised by the family's doctor to seek employment after the death of her two sons. Their daughter recalled that, 'mum was the proper slave to the man' (DOHP 055/A/1). Another daughter, whose mother was a jute mill batcher, and 'a fussy woman' in the home, recalls that her father, a labourer, 'didnae do anything much', and was 'pretty useless' around the house. In contrast 'meh mother did it all, with a little help', including 'the

worrying'. It should therefore be recognised that while waged wives were more likely to receive assistance from husbands, than unwaged wives, most husbands, whether their wives were waged or unwaged, took little part in housework, and even less responsibility for child care.

The second difficulty is that domestic arrangement in male headed households must also be placed in the wider contexts of household change and female kinship support. Husbands were less likely to assist waged wives, if their children, and in particular daughters, were old enough to assume household responsibilities. Typically a daughter, whose father provided little assistance in the home, found herself acting as her waged mother's 'second in command', which was 'pretty helpful' (DOHP 067/A/1). Similarly there were those waged women who relied upon their unwaged married sisters (DOHP 042/A/1), and even unmarried sisters-in-law (DOHP 013/B/1). Husbands were more likely to share domestic duties with waged wives if female kin assistance was unavailable. The combination of household cycles, amongst those who received and those who offered assistance, is not only important here, but there is also evidence of mutual and reciprocal assistance that spanned generations. Additionally women moved in and out of the labour market, suggesting that the waged wives whose husbands helped could be unwaged wives without this assistance at a different stage in their life cycles. Young waged mothers were as likely to be assisted by female kin as husbands, and the same wives as they grew older, and their children were leaving home, could find themselves unwaged and without assistance. Certainly Roberts argues that there were exceptions to the broad premise that waged wives received more assistance from

husbands with housework compared to unwaged wives, and in particular married women who only participated in the labour market for short periods. In Dundee, however, these temporary workers were not working for wages that were 'usually small and casual' additions to family income, as was the case in Lancashire. This was partly due to the continuing concentration of married women's employment in full-time jobs (see chapter 10), particularly in the spinning and weaving departments of the textile industry. A trained weaver or spinner could fairly easily find employment, and could even more easily give up that employment. The wives who re-entered waged work on a temporary basis were, in addition, often married to men who were in seasonal or irregular employment. A mother's re-entry into the labour market was usually when a father was 'idle', as a daughter of a quarryman recalled. Her mother went to work in a jute mill, 'to keep things going', but this daughter cannot recall her father helping with housework, and the children would be looked after by neighbours who kept the younger children. Apart from the times her father was unemployed, her mother would take waged work, 'if she needed anything', but 'she never worked what you would say an awful lot' (DOHP 073/A/1).

As already noted, however, (in chapter 10) the years after 1914 in Dundee witnessed not only an increase in the proportion of women who were marrying, but at the same time a rising proportion of married women in waged employment. Experiential data suggests that the increase in those wives in waged work was greatest amongst younger wives who were remaining in employment after marriage, and even after the birth of children, rather than older married women returning to waged work. If this is the case,

then not only were household life cycles important in the gender division of labour, but wider historical change was as well. More married women remaining in the workforce for longer may have increased the necessity for assistance from husbands or from female kin.

Roberts has further suggested that the position of married women as household managers was important in shaping marital relationships. That wives, and in particular unwaged wives, were controlling households is a tempting analysis, since it challenges narrow perceptions of patriarchal oppression. The oral evidence collected in Dundee would support this aspect of Roberts' argument. One of the most striking testimonies of the power of household management, for example, comes from a daughter of an unwaged house manager and a joiner's mate who was in 'steady employment' with the 'Electric'. The daughter was placed in 'charge of the house', when her unwaged mother was hospitalised.

Eh always had that fear that we would never hae enough money, probably because [of] what Eh saw round about me. Eh wanted oor hoose to be the way it always was: with security. And meh mother gave me her purse to look after. So meh father handed up his pay, give him his due, and Eh gave him his pocket money.

Lan In attempt to save money, and provide additional food for her mother, she reduced the amount of food that was bought for the household, to the extent of even diluting milk with water.

And meh father used to go up to the hospital and say, 'Look we're starving' ... Anyway she was ill for about a year, and then she got hame all right, and then Eh got back to normal again. And meh father said he would never give me the purse again (laughing), but Eh did hae a lot a money saved up for her (DOHP 053/A/1 and A/2).

Such an example is perhaps unusual, given the individual household's specific circumstances, but it does underline how the division of work into separate spheres provided women with a degree of power through their positions as household managers. This power was rooted in the control of household expenditure and budgets, and wage earners handing over their pay and having pocket money and returned, was a feature of many of these households. It could be argued that if household management was a source of empowerment, then the exclusion of husbands from domestic tasks may have been practised by wives as a means of maintaining their position. This may also explain why alternative female assistance, that included daughters, mothers, sisters, aunts, nieces and even neighbours, was often preferred to husbands participating in domestic duties.

Again, however, there were those whose empowerment was somewhat less than others, and while Roberts accepts that there were differences here, she does so only in the extreme. She describes a third model of marital arrangements, that is one in which there is a total division in roles, as in the first model, but with an inequality of power, where husbands are said to dominate and domineer wives and children. There is no disagreement that this involved the smallest group of families, and normally occurred in households with unwaged wives. Men, 'never did nothing', observed one daughter of a father who physically abused his unwaged wife (DOHP 062/A/1). In separating out abused wives from other household managers, there is, however, a danger of

providing too sharp a division within households with unwaged household managers.

If the argument is that managing households was a source of empowerment for wives, then there were degrees of empowerment. Many households fall between those in which unwaged managers maintained a dominant position within the home, and those in which unwaged household managers were dominated by their husbands.

More importantly, in all three types of male headed households, husbands continued to influence consumption levels. The eldest of six children recalls that his unwaged mother while balancing an insufficient budget was expected to provide his 'hard man' father with 'the best steak and the best mince', adding that 'he was full of his own importance ... meh mother and the rest of the family had to take what was left, you know, the leavings.' (DOHP 009/A/1). Even amongst the most powerful of household managers, however, there was a belief that waged husbands required more food than other family members. So great was this belief that it was shared by those with medical knowledge, including former nurses (see for example BCHG VT 03). While husbands, who handed over their wage packets might have only expected pocket money, the expectation also included a level of return that was certainly greater than the pocket money received by other wage earners in the household. It should be considered that the control of budgets may have been empowering on the one hand, but involved responsibilities and sacrifices on the other. It is difficult to calculate how much unwaged wives spent on themselves, but experiential data suggests that it is reasonable to accept that many wives were willing to reduce their own demands on the household income so that they could provide more for their children and husbands. The

widespread practice of money lending and borrowing between female neighbours and kin (see chapter 3) also implies that for women to remain in a powerful position of managers entailed an ability to finely balance income and expenditure.

It was also often noted by both daughters and wives that bread winning husbands were often ignorant of the cost of food, fuel, and even rent. Even more notable are the numbers of wives who did know how much their husbands earned, along with an even larger group of women who suspected that their husbands were failing to hand over all their wages. A number of stationery outlets were known to sell single wage packets, suggesting that some husbands were breaking open and making up new wage packets. There were also attempts by married women to limit the hours of public houses (see chapter 8), and married women who would arrange to visit their husbands' workplaces to pick up their husbands' pay. All this suggests that empowerment, particularly over wages, was contested territory in at least some households.

To sum up so far, the three models of marital relationships identified by Roberts in Lancashire were present in Dundee. Unwaged wives were also found to be less likely to share domestic responsibilities with husbands than waged wives, but found degrees of empowerment from their position as household managers. The husbands of waged wives were more likely to lend assistance in the home, but were perhaps more likely also to share in household management. While accepting Roberts' arguments, there are a number of reservations, not least that both life cycle and broader historical change influenced marital arrangements concerning the division of labour. In addition the

position of the married woman as household manager was often determined by household income, her own abilities, her relationship with her husband, and her husband's attitudes towards how household income should be divided.

More significantly, in the light of Roberts' arguments, there are two additional, and distinct, domestic arrangements present in Dundee. Even before 1914 there was a large proportion of female headed households, and the arrangements in these homes will be considered later, but in the inter-war years there was also a development within some male headed households that reversed gender roles amongst spouses. These were homes in which unwaged husbands undertook the bulk of housework, and, even more unusually, childcare, while their wives were in paid employment. These might have been only temporary arrangements, but household arrangements were more significantly changed than in those households in which wives re-entered waged work, while their husbands endured seasonal, or short-term, unemployment. The long-term unemployed husbands, who accepted household, and even childcare duties, while their wives entered waged employment, were known locally as kettle boilers. This reversal of roles in households, in which husbands were unwaged and wives were waged, is evident in a number of other life stories, including a son, whose father was a boxmaker and mother an unwaged household manager. When his father was unemployed his mother returned to waged work, 'meh mother didnae have to dae any of the housework', because 'we thought it was unfair to think that she should do housework and working' (DOHP 020/A/1).

Another example, from around 1928, can be found in the oral evidence of a daughter of a 'cropper in the jute works' who was unemployed for a number of years. Her mother 'had to go back to work' as a spinner.

Meh dad was unemployed and he had to look after myself and meh young brother ... He would do the housework and prepare the dinner ... he just took everything in his stride ... Father did the chores, father made the bed.

Kettle boilers were often, although not always, lesser skilled men, while their wives were more skilled and who easily found themselves able to return to former employment, most usually in textiles. These unwaged husbands would often undertake casual work to supplement family income, such as minor repairs or decorating, collecting and selling shellfish, or even, in at least one case, assisting female neighbours with their domestic duties. The unemployed cropper, 'used to go about half past eleven in the morning and boil kettles for ladies that were working' (DOHP 083/A/1). In some of these homes even the gendered patterns of consumption were changed. As already noted, the rewards for men's waged work often included the right to consume alcohol and tobacco, as well as the right to consume a greater proportion of the food provided by wives. In some households, headed by kettle boiler, the popular meal of broth, kail and boiled beef, was divided so that, 'the person that was working got the beef, and you got the broth'. The father would only have the beef if he was working, 'when he did get started to work again he would get it, after meh mother gave up and he got a job.' (DOHP 020/A/1).

By 1937 the kettle boilers were revealed to a national audience in the documentary film *Dundee*. The film's narrative is provided by the conversation between an inquisitive, if naive, Englishman, and four Dundonians, two men and two women, travelling on the ferry from Fife to Dundee. In a sequence on shipbuilding one of the men says, 'That was a man's job: building ships'.

First woman: But the women had tae work in the mill.

First man: How the hell should they no?

Shot of men leaving shipyard after work.

Second man: All that meant more work for the men, but they still said, 'Marry a Dundee wife and give up work'.

First woman: Aye, marry a Dundee wife and be a kettle boiler.

Second woman: Eh mind when Eh was a lassie you had tae leave the bairns shut up in the hoose when you went tae the mills or were dain the shopping. And like as no when you got hame we found the bairns had strangled themselves with the blankets ... (Scottish Film Productions Ltd., 1937)

While the numbers of kettle boilers may have been small, and the arrangements temporary, they were having a wider impact on the consciousness of Dundonians. Recollections of the inter-war years often include the belief that, 'Dundee men were well known as kettle boilers' (DOHP 020/A/1 and DOHP 054/A/2), but there were many more who used this description than the minority who reported living with men who assumed complete responsibility for childcare and housework. The impact of the kettle-boiler was not so much in how people lived, but rather was an ideological statement that says much more about gender relations in the city. The call of women protesters demonstrating for unemployment benefits to 'Get the kettle-boilers on the march' (Stewart, 1967, p. 133, see chapter 9) is one example of this. It was used in this context to underline the responsibility that married women were taking for wage

earning, and their central position in the struggle for benefits. On a broader front the term kettle boiler was also used as an implicit criticism of many a husband's lack of domestic ability and skill beyond boiling a kettle. While they may have assumed domestic duties they were kettle boilers rather than houseworkers.

Despite the perceived dangers involved in allowing husbands to look after children, and it was a perception encouraged by philanthropic organisations and local State representatives, the kettle boilers were also much more likely to be carers than waged men married to waged wives who shared housework. During the periods of high unemployment it was more common for childminders to be unpaid relatives including older children, grandparents, and even unwaged husbands. The use of paid childminders seems to have been more widespread when unemployment was falling, or at least when both husbands and wives could find paid employment. The son of a couple who were both jute spinners recalls that his mother would employ a young neighbour, for 'coppers', to look after him and help with the housework (DOHP 076/A/2). Similarly when kettle boiling husbands found employment their wives would often remain in waged work and pay 'the lady up the next stair' for child care (DOHP 083/A/1). Whether waged wives returned full-time to work in the home, after their unemployed husbands found employment, depended mostly on the wage levels that their husbands could command in their new jobs, and it was usual for the wives of the former long term unemployed to continue in waged work.

The experiential data from sons and daughters of kettle boilers does suggest that even amongst those wives who returned to the home there was continuing assistance from husbands with childcare and housework. If the reality of women's position in society often confounded ideological beliefs about gender roles within the conventional family, then the same could be said for some men. In most households with unemployed husbands there was no evidence of men 'refusing to touch "women's work" at home', as an attempt to assert masculinity in response to their inadequacies as breadwinners (Gowler and Legge, 1982, p.158). It should also be noted, however, that, in contrast, those husbands who found themselves unemployed, or under-employed, as a result of illness or disability (rather than redundancy), might even prevent their wives from engaging in paid work (as already noted in chapter 10).

The kettle-boiling arrangement also suggests a flexibility in attitudes towards gender roles that was perhaps less present in other localities. It does seem possible, however, that similar temporary household arrangements may have been as present in other places, as well as at other times. It may therefore be that there have been too few local studies in this area, and the kettle boilers were perhaps a much more widespread phenomenon particularly in inter-war textile areas where there were high levels of male employment and continued availability of female employment. It might elsewhere have been the 'social custom' for women during economic downturns to 'quietly disappear back into the family and home' (Walby, 1986, p. 173), but in the textile areas this was not the case. The arrangement, of husbands assuming domestic responsibilities while their wives were employed, was only temporary, but it does also indicate that changes

in employment patterns can alter the gender division of work. It could be argued that the post-war rise in married women's employment was 'not reflected in a commensurate change in male domestic roles, precisely because the sex-role ideology remains conventional' (Davidoff, et al., 1976, p.130). It could also be argued, however, that the patterns of work in Dundee between the wars implies that the key to change within male headed households is not necessarily increases in married women's employment alone, but rather a rising proportion of married women in waged work and, at the same time, an accompanying decline in the levels of employment amongst married men.

There were similarities in the household arrangements of female headed households, although it should be recognised that these households were much more numerous than those with unwaged male heads. Female headed households also displayed household arrangements that were much more stable and longer lasting. While the relatively large amount of employment that was available to women made both the arrangements in the homes of kettle boilers, and the presence of female headed households possible (see chapter 5), it also contributed to a gender imbalance that depressed marriage rates (see chapters 6 and 10). One important result was that the gender balance, in turn, virtually ruled out re-marriage amongst widows, and, as already noted (in chapter 5), the largest number of female heads was widows.

The children of female headed households provide testimony of a collective approach to domestic tasks within the home, that was similar to that found in the male headed

households with waged wives. The degree of collective co-operation could be dependent upon the number of children, their order of birth, and the differences of ages of the children. Thus a son recalls his older sister, the eldest child in the home, having a huge range of responsibilities, concluding that, she, 'sacrificed her young life to help meh mother to look after the other four of us plus meh Aunt and her twins' (DOHP 077/A/2). The division of household duties between children might also depend upon the ages of sons when their father died or left home, or the ages of boys when they joined a female headed household. The older the male the less likely he was to accept a share of the domestic tasks, particularly if he had spent a number of years in a household of a male waged head. After the death of one male's father, for example, the son, aged ten years, along with the younger children, accepted the household duties they were allocated, while his two older brothers did not (DOHP 045/A/1). It was, however, notable that domestic duties were much more marked by gender in male headed households, where girls were more likely to be expected to help mothers than boys were. In female headed households there was a much more even distribution of domestic labour that depended less on occupational status of the head than was found in male headed homes.

It was in the households of the unwaged managers that daughters were most often expected to assist around the home and, on occasion, take over mothers' duties. It was usual for these daughters to find that after work, 'you went home and got your tea, and your mother had a job for you to dae' (DOHP 013/D/2). There is ample evidence that, while husbands were less likely to share with domestic tasks with unwaged wives,

the gender division of these tasks was also more pronounced amongst children in these households than it was in others. Sons were generally not expected to assist around the home; 'never the laddies, they got away with murder, they didnae hae to dae anything, ever' (DOHP 013/D/2). Sons are recalled, by their sisters, as having 'nothing to do, they had the time of their lives, they just had tae go out and play all the time'. In contrast, 'the mother and the daughter had to do the housework,' (DOHP 053/A/1, see also DOHP 036/A/1). It was more usual for male children to assist mothers in households with male heads and waged mothers, than it was in the homes of male heads with unwaged mothers. A typical recollection by a daughter of a waged mother and father was that, 'meh brothers had their own jobs to do ... they had all to muck in and help, whether it was a girl's job or not, they had to learn to do it' (DOHP 065/A/1). While sons might take a share of housework in the households of waged mothers, it was, however, still more likely if daughters were present, for a daughter to find herself in the position of being the 'second in command' (DOHP 067/A/1). In contrast, boys in the homes of female heads were often expected to learn a much wider range of household duties. Generally, widowed heads had fewer young children present, and there was less of a possibility in those homes that domestic tasks could be divided by gender amongst children.

Female headed households also tended to share their homes with non-kin, as well as kin - a pattern that researchers identified as continuing in the post-1945 period amongst single parent families (Eversley and Bonnerjea, 1982). Experiential data, and evidence from earlier years (see chapter 5), strongly suggests that sharing was often

with other female adults. Along with older children, and female headed households were at least as likely to have older children remaining in their homes, these other adults were more likely to contribute to household duties as any husband was, regardless of the occupational status of his wife. Even in those homes where there with only a widow and her children present, it was not unusual to find additional support, often on a daily basis, being offered by daughters, sisters, and mothers who were living elsewhere. Few widowed mothers were left with all of the household duties. This collective approach taken within female headed households, can not only be found in the sharing of unwaged domestic tasks, but also in the distribution and consumption of income from waged work.

The empowered position of the unwaged wife in the male headed household as household manager, can also be identified amongst female heads. The descriptions, of unwaged household managers and female heads, collecting household members' pay packets as they arrived home, are identical (SLHG, AT 7).² In the inter-war years children in female headed households were still more likely to 'hand up' their wages to their mothers, regardless of their birth position (see chapter 4), than those living in male headed households were. In contrast, in some of the homes of unwaged household managers, and many of the homes with waged wives, children could be on their 'board' (paying a contribution towards food and rent). Even those who

² St. Leonard's History Group, audio recording, see Appendix III for details.

contributed their whole wage, with some receiving pocket money back, in two parent families, tended to do so for a much shorter time than those in households headed by female heads. Of course family size, order of birth, and birth spacing are all important variables here, and the eldest children of large male headed families also tended to hand over their wages rather than be asked for board. The relative merits of the two arrangements can inspire complex debates amongst older people, and it should not be assumed that one arrangement was more advantageous to children than the other. For example, 'board' could involve the drawback that in periods of short-time working children might still be expected to pay in full their normal contribution. Those who handed over their wages were also not expected to make their own purchases, whereas the 'boarder' was often in position of buying her or his own clothes. The difference between the two arrangements in male headed households often seems to arise amongst those mothers who decided to offer children the responsibility of budgeting for their own needs. This was less of a concern amongst female heads of households, than it was amongst the wives of male heads, because of the more collective approach taken in female headed households.

The collective pooling of wages not only involved immediate family members, but also the frequently present other residents of female headed households. That the practice of handing over all wages to the household head was widespread amongst female headed households provides evidence of the co-operative approach taken in these homes. Often these households were formed on this basis. A typical example, from the 1930s, is recalled by one woman, who was born in 1920, the eldest of twelve children.

As her childhood home became ever more overcrowded, it was decided that she should leave her parent's flat to stay with her grandmother, where she ended up living on a permanent basis. A widowed aunt, who had been living with her parents, was soon to join this evolving household, in which there were now three generations of female relatives. This was not just a matter of sharing rent, for all income was 'pooled', with her grandmother contributing 'a war pension for her son', and the aunt handing over 'her war pension for her husband' as well as working as 'a winder in the [textile] works' (DOHP 055/A/1). Amongst the female households the pooling of wages could provide an income that was at least as comparable to that of married couples, with or without children. As one daughter of a widow noted, she never felt deprived, since her granny, who lived with them, was willing to provide her with clothes (BCHG VT 11).

In short, female heads were household managers, who expected other members of their households to participate in household tasks. The occupational status of married women living with their husbands was more important to the division of domestic tasks inside male headed households, than the occupational status of female heads was to the division of housework was in their households. The pooling and, often equal distribution, of household labour and income, that they organised was the source of their empowerment. This is not to deny the importance of waged work to these households, but rather to suggest that there was a different, and more equitable, arrangement present in female rather than male headed households. This difference of approach was also, as we will see, present in attitudes towards children.

Parenting, discipline, and the life cycle

A theme in the life stories, amongst those brought up in female headed households, was the respectability that female heads strove for, and a part of that was their strong belief in maintaining discipline amongst their children. Thus one widowed mother was typically described as a 'pretty strict old dame' (DOHP 010/A/1), and almost all the children of female heads testified that their mothers were capable of physically punishing their children. Another child of a female headed household recalls being dressed in her best clothes for a school inspection. Unfortunately, on her way home she decided to visit a neighbour's wash-house, and put her new hat through the mangle, 'four times or five'. The result was that the hat now resembled 'a soup plate', and her mother 'nearly killed me, oh Eh got a licking, Eh couldnae sit for quite a while after it (laughs)' (DOHP 091/A/1). It would, however, be incorrect to read too much into this, because of the more general and widespread parenting attitudes that prevailed (see Humphries, 1981, for example). Children, no matter their household circumstances, were recognised as having few rights; parents expected 'respect', and children 'didnae get leave to enjoy to talk with the elder people, you were [sent] out.' Adults would warn one another, if they thought children were listening by remarking that 'little cuddies [horses] have ears' (DOHP 067/A/2). Children were, 'seen and not heard' (DOHP 008/A/2), and were often physically disciplined.

It should, however, be noted that the influence of the perceptions of the conventional family also has to be considered here (see Oakley, 1982, p.123-5). Children, who belonged to households that failed to conform to what was perceived to be the norm,

including female headed households, find it difficult to compare their childhood with the childhood of others. Similar difficulties exist amongst children who found themselves in conventional families by unconventional means, including orphans and step-children. Interviews conducted on a one-to-one basis will often result in the early period of their life stories bounded by unconventional circumstances. It is only in group discussion (see Appendix I) that the orphan, or child of a female headed household, becomes aware, by listening to other contemporary accounts, that their own upbringing, in respect to discipline, had much in common with those children raised in conventional male headed households (BCHG VT 10 and SLHG, AT 7). It should be emphasised that parental control over daughters, in all households, tended to be greater than that exercised over sons.

Indeed, in comparing life stories, severe parental discipline was less present in the evidence of the children of female headed households, than it was amongst those who had belonged to male headed households. It should be also recognised, however, that, in inter-war Dundee, the discipline of young children tended to be left by husbands to wives in male headed households, regardless of the occupational status of wives. There were homes in which husbands accepted, and even revelled in this role, but these were in the minority. Indeed, it was reported that mothers would intervene to prevent fathers from physically disciplining children. This was not, however, because mothers were opposed to physical discipline, but rather, because mothers perceived their children's discipline as their responsibility. In most of the childhood recollections, whether these children were from households headed by men or women, discipline

normally involved mothers or other adult women. Amongst many of the recollections, from those who spent their childhood in male headed homes, there often exists a connected, powerful and recurring theme that draws a contrast between fathers and mothers. A daughter provides a typical example of this, when she recalls that, 'sometimes you got a rap round the ear (laughing)' from her mother, a jute worker, while her father, a labourer, is described as a 'a lovely father', and a 'very quiet, respectable sociable man' (DOHP 090/A/1). Another daughter, of a jute spinner and labourer, commented that 'Meh mother wasnae above taking her hand about your ears, but meh father never lifted his hand' (DOHP 067/A/2). Mothers in the recollections of early childhood from male headed households could often be seen as unduly harsh, while fathers were often perceived as being more even tempered.

Oral evidence strongly suggests that the relationship between waged mothers and their children was more marked by physical punishment, than that found in other households. One daughter recalled that her waged mother 'was a law unto her own' (BCHG VT 16). A son recalled that his step-father 'never chastised us, it was meh mother that always did'. His mother, another who worked as a jute spinner, 'was only a wee woman', but she was capable of severely disciplining her children.

She used to stand on your feet, stand on your toes, grab your jersey, and hit you with her hand. That's all, unless she had something in her hand. Me and meh brother were sitting arguing at the table one day, and he was nearest her, it got on her nerves, and she lifted the bread knife an hit him on the arm, she cut his arm, she didnae mean to cut him, but he had to go and get stitched. Never argued at the table after that (DOHP 076/A/2).

There was at least one interview partner who explicitly made this connection in recognising that the stress of her mother's dual role as a wage earner and a household manager.

Most mothers, unless their man had an awfy good job, had a hard time. Eh've often thought about it. Eh say to myself, what a terrible life they must've had, trying to make ends meet and control a family like. Because meh father never ever had to raise his voice, never, but meh mother kept shouting at you and hitting you, when you didnae dae what you were telt. Eh often think, nae wonder she done it, because she was over tired and overwrought, and worried about this, and worried about that, where the men didnae; they never, Eh think, worried. ... She would really clout you. Well it was violent when you thought about it ... but when you think on it, if you've twelve wee ains, Eh'd have thrown them all oot the windie [window] (laughs) (DOHP 013/B/1).

There is little evidence of this level of punishment in the life stories of those brought up either in households with male headed and unwaged house managing wives, or in households headed by women. This was particularly evident in the testimony from waged mothers whose husbands provided little, or no, assistance around the home. It is therefore tempting to accept the argument these mothers' actions were at least partly due to their responsibilities as wage earners and house managers. This, however, is to ignore the continuing role these mothers played in their children's lives as the life cycle of their households progressed.

It should be recognised that a key point in the household life cycle occurred during the courtship of daughters, and was present in many of the recollections of parental control regardless of the occupational status of wives, It has been noted, in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century, that courtship was often marked by a 'high degree of ritualised parental intervention and interference', with the result that there

was 'often left little room for sexual experience' (Humphries, 1988, p. 97). In the testimony of older Dundonians the prohibitive role played by parents in courtship has particular emphasis. Even going out with a young man could be viewed by some parents as 'terrible' (DOHP 053/A/2). Just as Roberts (1984a) found that, in Lancashire, women were 'bedevilled ... by inhibitions, ignorance and reticence about sex and sexuality' (p.85), similar conclusions could be drawn from Dundee's experiential data. Even the eldest daughters of the largest of families gleaned little knowledge of sex from mothers despite their younger sibling's births taking place at home. Even those families who lived in the close confines of a two roomed flat, where the lack of privacy meant that, 'there was nae place where you could go and feed the bairn', nursing mothers were still expected to 'go away and hide yourself someplace where naebody would see you' (DOHP 061/B/2). Very few mothers would discuss sexuality with daughters, and information about sex gleaned from fellow operatives in mill and factory was often more colourful than useful. So, as late as 1940, it could be claimed that, people 'never talked about sex, that was never spoken about, not in the company Eh was in'. Even the most basic knowledge was not passed on: 'When you took a period you didn't know what it was, Eh ran through and Eh says, "Oh, Eh've cut myself". She [mother] said, "Stay away fae the laddies", and that was your education' (DOHP 036/B/1). The advice that daughters should avoid boys was repeated in many households, and certainly was partly due to concerns that daughters might fall pregnant, yet there was a wider concern. Many also recall their mothers' and fathers' attempts to delay or prevent their marriages.

There was a striking change in the patterns of parental control in male headed households with unwaged mothers, as children, and in particular as daughters, grew older. In these households, fathers began to interest themselves much more in intervening in their daughters' lives after their daughters reached puberty and began courting. Given the importance of mothers to childhood discipline, this change was remarked upon by a number of informants. So while mothers might prevent the wearing of make up (DOHP 043/B/1), fathers could be even more strict. Dancing, one of the most important leisure activities where young men and women could meet, often provided the an issue in conflicts between fathers and daughters. This might range from strictures on being home by a certain time, that could be as early as nine o'clock (see for example DOHP 054/A2), to complete bans on dancing. Some of these fathers attempted to stop daughters from attending dancehalls, and recollections of dances often contain telling phrases, such as 'meh father never knew you went tae the dancing, you werenae allowed' (DOHP 073/A/2). Returning late from a dance one morning, a daughter, whose parents both worked in the mill, was caught by her mother, who, 'in fighting mood', hit her with a coal bucket, blackening her eye (DOHP 085/B/1). Others explained that fathers were deliberately kept unaware of their daughters' youthful activities by mothers. One woman explained that, while her father had forbidden her from dancing, her mother would not only give her permission to go, but advise her to tell her father that she was going to the cinema. As a result she, 'always had to leave early and come home, and Eh always had to look to see what was on the pictures' (DOHP 029/B/2).

As children, of all households, became older their resistance to parental discipline also increased. One daughter, for example, on reaching her eighteenth birthday, recalls that she began to refuse to accept her mother's physical punishments (DOHP 067/A/2).

There is ample evidence, however, that waged mothers continued to attempt to control their children strictly. In addition to intervening in their daughters' courtship, these mothers also continued to exert influence in other areas often closely associated with work. The importance of children's wages to the income of these households would often mean that children were sent to work even when they were ill. For Jo Keith, an eldest child, this meant that even, 'if your heid was hanging off you still had to do your work'. Even after she married and ^{was} pregnant, her mother would continue to insist on her going to work in the textile mill (BCHG VT 16). Unwaged mothers could also exercise a similar influence, although their concerns seemed to have more to do with respectability and house management than the necessity to make wages. One woman recalled, for example, that after she was married she remained unable to go dancing, since her husband, 'kent [knew] meh mother wouldnae let me dae it, so if he'd have let me dae it, she'd come down an fought with him' (DOHP 003/A/2). Another married daughter of an unwaged mother bitterly remembers her mother, who lived in the tenement across the backyard, shouting across that she was not hanging out her washing properly (BCHG VT 03).

Fathers were therefore more likely to assert their authority over their daughters' courtship in homes with unwaged mothers, while waged mothers were more likely to continue to maintain their authority over daughters. For many women the result was

the same in that their marriages were delayed, or even prevented. One major reason underpinning this interference by parents was that marriage removed daughters from the parental household, and their removal meant a loss of an often important contribution to household income (see chapter 4). That the evidence suggests that waged mothers were more likely to exercise control over courtship, reinforces the impression that waged women in male headed households sought employment from necessity. More interestingly the evidence suggests that, in households in which wives were not employed for wages, there were daughters whose financial contribution was necessary to maintain their mothers' status as unwaged household manager. That male heads were more likely to intervene in their daughters' courtship, than their wives were, suggests that they were at least as interested in maintaining their wives as unwaged household managers as the wives themselves were. While accepting the empowerment that household management brought, it should also be accepted that in at least some of these homes the status of wives depended upon the presence and occupational status of daughters.

It might be assumed that female heads with children were even more likely to attempt to prevent their daughters, and even their sons, from marrying, especially since statistical data, from earlier years, suggests that the average age of children was older in female headed households in comparison to those living in male headed households (see chapter 5 and chapter 6). The relationships of adults and children in female headed households were, according to oral evidence, different from those found in almost all types of male headed household. If discipline was strict, it seemed to have more to do

with maintaining outward signs of respectability, than forcing children to contribute to their households through either waged or unwaged work. Indeed the recollections of children of female heads are often marked by their willingness to help out. For example one man recalled that in 1921, three years after his father's death, he was employed 'delivering rolls' for a baker's shop, 'in the morning'. He added that, 'it did bring money in, but Eh was never forced, the job was there and Eh went and got it - it wasn't easy getting up five o'clock in the morning' (DOHP 021/A/1). Another theme that emerges from the oral evidence is the importance of the contribution that the children could make. This often took the form of an emphasis upon self-reliance and recurring comments included, 'I just looked after myself', and 'we [the children] just carried on' (DOHP 018/A/1). Whereas children in male headed households undertook work that was expected of them, children in female headed households often sought this work out, and this is particularly obvious when unwaged work is considered. While the sense of family duty was present amongst children of all households (see chapter 4), it was even more marked amongst youngsters in female headed households.

The relationship between children and mothers was also often imbued with an emotional intensity that was missing in many households with male heads. The smaller number of young children in these households, compared to male headed households, may have been one reason for this. The presence of other adults in the household, particularly female adults, that included aunts, grandmothers, older sisters, even lodgers, seems to have provided alternative emotional and material support for children. There was also, however, a belief present in many life stories that close bonds

were necessary. The world seemed a hostile place to many inhabitants of these female headed households; whether this was based on reality hardly matters. It was assumed that non-conventional families faced a greater struggle, and this seems to have reinforced collective and emotional ties. Nellie Hanley, for example, recalls a very close relationship with her mother, who would, on occasion, forgo paying the rent and use the money for a bus trip for the two of them. There is no sense of deprivation in her childhood recollections, but, like others, there is pride in the abilities of all household members, including herself, to work together (BCHG VT 11).

The sort of discussions reported to have taken place in the homes of female heads have few parallels in the memories of those brought up in male headed households. The following is one such description from the early 1930s:

My mother looked after the house [she was also employed], she never thought of getting married again. We used to say, 'Here, what about producing a little sister for us?' But we didn't really get the idea that unless there is a male around it can't be done by spontaneous combustion.

From her wages, 'such as they were, they were fairly small', she would give her three sons pocket money, once they had handed over their wages. As a result they had money to buy 'fags', 'a few sausages' to go camping at weekends, and even, 'if lucky ... to go to the pictures once or twice a week' (DOHP 001/A/2). This was no less, and, in many cases, much more than children in male headed households received.

As the children of female headed households grew older it was their sense of collective belonging and duty that prevented early marriage, rather than interference by mothers

or other adults in their courtship. Often this was expressed in terms of repaying mothers for their earlier support. Lizzie Duncan, for example, says that she was reluctant to leave her mother, who had kept the family together after the death of her father, to cope through old age and ill-health on her own (BCHG VT 10). The son of a widow, who remained unmarried, and cared for his mother in her later years, makes the same points (DOHP 007/A/1). That these children were willing to care for ageing parents, including male children, reinforces the suggestion that there were strong bonds between the occupants of female headed household. Some female headed households could therefore display a remarkable degree of stability. Of course some were only temporary arrangements, particularly those who took in lodgers, but those with widowed heads and children were more stable than many other households, if stability is measured by the length of time that members of a core household lived together.

The burden of caring for kin was not, of course, any greater for those in female headed households, than it was for those living in male headed households. Adult women were generally expected to take on this responsibility, as an analysis of employment registers makes clear. There are many incidences of women taking breaks away from waged employment in order to care for their mothers, fathers, aunts, husbands and children, particularly in the winter months, when people were more likely to be ill. Between October 1933 and January 1934, the register reports that one woman temporarily left to look after a sick husband, and an additional four women were absent and nursing mothers. There was, however, another five who were away from the works, because

their children were ill. It is almost impossible to ascertain the type of households these women were living in, let alone their households of origin. In the workers' register of one textile firm, from 1931 to 1939, however, there is not one reference to a man leaving work to look after a relative who was ill, and this is overwhelmingly supported by oral evidence that suggests that men, apart from some male residents of female headed households, were very reluctant nurses of sick kin. It therefore seems fair to assume that adult women in male headed households were as likely to find themselves caring for kin in ill-health, as those adult women, often living with other adult women, were.

Ageing relatives may have provided greater difficulties for unmarried women than married women, and it was not uncommon for unmarried daughters to be expected to look after their parents in old age. The exclusion of married women from almost all full-time employment outside of the textiles' sector, including the emerging white blouse sector, and the demands on single women to provide care for ageing parents, seems to have caused single women in careers particular problems. The death of a mother, for example, meant an unmarried industrial nurse, giving up her career, and looking after her father, she comments, without bitterness, that, 'it was your duty' (BHG VT 01). Even in a male headed household in which a father assisted with domestic tasks, an unmarried daughter, who had left home, was expected to return, to 'keep the house', when her mother was ill. It was only after the death of her father, and the household became female headed, that she returned to employment as a part-time office worker with a stocking firm (DOHP 069/B/2). While daughters of female

headed households could face similar problems, it is worth noting that there seemed to be a less inflexible attitude towards their paid employment. For example Miss Rita Ramsay, whose father, a house factor, had died when she was thirteen years old, had just completed her training as a nurse, in 1934, when her mother, the household head, became ill. Rita recalls that, 'my mother didn't keep very well for a year or two, and I wanted a job that was maybe nine to five, so that I could be home'. She found employment in the public health department, and, after six months, became a health visitor (DOHP 056/B/2). It would seem, therefore, that parental illness in homes of male heads would often end the employment of single daughters, whereas this was not the case of those caring for older kin in female headed households.

The presence of female headed households offered older women the possibility of living as valued members of households. The oral evidence suggests that those older mothers, and, even more so, older fathers, were viewed as dependants in male headed households. In contrast the same data provides evidence that the collective approach taken in female headed households encouraged even infirm older parents to continue to assist in running the home. There seems to have been a different attitude towards caring and dependency in the female headed home. Even after Nellie Hanley's grandmother was too old to care for herself on her own, and this was some years after she had become blind, her assistance, with minor domestic tasks, in Nellie's mother's home was appreciated. Above all else, members of female headed household understood the importance of household management, in ways that were obscured in male headed households by the gender division of waged and unwaged work.

There also seems to have been a continuation of the flexibility in the household structures and composition of homes that were headed by women. Widows, single women, and married women without husbands continued to display a willingness to share their accommodation with extended kin and non-kin, that was not present amongst widowers and single men. Female heads, capable of managing a household and able to find employment, could achieve and maintain a degree of autonomy and empowerment, that wives, even those who were unwaged household managers, could only aspire towards. It might be concluded that a woman's place might well have been in her home, but her status depended upon whom she shared her home with.

Conclusion

While accepting that the three models of marital arrangements identified by Elizabeth Roberts (1984a) in Lancashire existed in Dundee, their application as measures of women's empowerment, particularly amongst the largest section of wives (the unwaged) is problematic. Changes during the life cycle, and wider economic change, including male unemployment, could alter the status of women. The presence and age of children influenced household arrangements, as could the entry into employment by more married women, and the growth of mass unemployment amongst men.

Arrangements in male headed households were therefore not static and unchanging. Amongst the homes of waged wives, and indeed even in the homes of kettle boilers, there was a more pronounced gender division of housework amongst children, than there was within female headed homes. As daughters, particularly in male headed households with unwaged wives, reached an age to begin waged work they faced what

could be described as a 'double burden' (Jamieson, 1983, p.158). This does not seem to be the case in female headed households where there was a more equitable sharing of both income and domestic duties. That the disciplining, and interventions into courtship, was more likely to be undertaken by fathers, than mothers, significantly suggests the importance of daughters' employment to maintaining a central plank, that wives should be unwaged and at home, in the dominant ideology of patriarchal relationships. Employed mothers, on the other hand, seemed to have attempted to maintain their discipline over their daughters for longer than unwaged mothers.

More important, however, are the findings that suggest, not only that the connection, between unwaged wives and emotionally intense mother and child relationship is suspect, but that there is more evidence of the existence of such 'modern' relationships within female headed households. Of course these were not based upon the child centred development, which has too often been assumed to exist in male headed homes by 1900, but rather a collective approach that existed in domestic duties, the consumption of income, and in the caring of other, particularly older, household members. All this supports the challenge to the rather simplistic approach to classical accounts that have tended to emphasise a direct line of development from the pre-industrial household unit to the modern nuclear family. It suggests instead that household development was not uniform, because patterns of industrialisation were not unvaried. The existence of the female headed household, above all else, seriously undermines the belief that a study of family and household in the past should concentrate on the conventional family.

Chapter 12: Conclusions

Empiricism and positivism remain potent forces in British social history (see for example Marwick, 1994 and 1995). Indeed, there is much to be said in favour of deriving knowledge from experience and perception, but the past that historians study is not complete. It is a past that is a jumble of surviving artefacts, interpretations and memories, that the historian then shapes according to his or her perspectives, and, as a result, histories often inform more about the time and place they were produced in than the time and place they are investigating. This thesis, for example, is a partially a result of working with older people, mainly women, many of whom, along with their daughters, continue to see the world from socialist and feminist perspectives. They themselves would argue that these vantage points are a result of their everyday experiences.

Theory, however, is important, not least, because it can lead to a better understanding of our beliefs and actions. An understanding of gendered households can provide a vantage point to understanding of social history. In the context of the woman's town, it is argued that gendered households can assist in exploding the myths that surround female headed households. These households were neither poor, nor isolated, nor, in the main, single occupancy arrangements. Conversely, it is suggested that male headed households were more likely to suffer poverty, overcrowding, high levels of infant mortality, and, as a result of patriarchal relationships, an inequality of consumption absent from female headed homes. Work itself was much more strictly divided

between unwaged and waged labour in the households of the 'conventional' family than it was in female headed households. In short, an appreciation of gender and household encourages a rethinking of how people lived.

Above all else theory can provide a means of assessing perceptions and assumptions. It is worth considering for a moment a perspective common to all historical disciplines, and one that is particularly visible in those disciplines rooted in empiricism. A prime example of this is palaeontology, hardly surprising given the scientific and medical expertise required to find and interpret fossils. The image of human development that palaeontology firmly established, in both the scientific and wider community, was a time-line that begins on the far left with an ape-like creature, bent double with jaw jutting out, and ends, on the far right, with Cro-Magnon man, upright and almost completely modern. In between the two there is a procession of evolving males, who become less hairy and more human. Anything that failed to fit, such as the Neandertal, was rejected as an oddity, and if links were missing they were invented and accepted as authentic, such as Piltdown man.¹ The march of evolution has gradually been challenged as interest has switched, from an obsession with forming links between points on the time line, to understanding evolution as a process. It is only recently that practitioners of the discipline have realised that two sexes are required to make a

¹ Piltdown, the alleged first Englishman, whose skull was half modern human and half modern orang-utan, was 'discovered' in 1912, but was not exposed as a hoax until 1953.

population grow (Shreeve, 1995, p. 26), and, as result this has opened up major questions of species definition, and assisted in unlocking rigid notions of linear ancestry that were central to marked palaeontology's homo-centrism (Walker and Shipman, 1996).

Modern history has had its own time lines, progressions from one stage of human development to the next. Some are as broad in time as the movement from feudalism to capitalism; some are as narrow as the development of particular political parties. As in palaeontology, the concern has been to make links based on the assumption that by handling primary evidence, with care, time lines can be filled in. As in palaeontology, the problem is that, no matter how scientific the approaches taken towards sources are, the historian who does not consider the presence of theoretical frameworks remains a prisoner of existing perceptions of how the past developed.

It is not enough to consider the reasons for the existence *and* presence of source material, although this is important (see Appendix I), but, in addition, theoretical structures also require re-examination. One obvious example is the classical account of the development of the modern family, that was so ably exposed by Jamieson (1983). She found the theoretical assumptions of these accounts wanting, when 'interrogated by translation into empirical reality' (Jamieson, in Drake, ed. 1994, p. 125). Similarly when the family is placed in the context of a social reality that includes household composition, internal relationships, and time, both historical and life course time, then

the very usefulness of thinking about family as an important social unit begins to be questioned.

The revisionism of earlier views of family involved a fragmentation in interpretation, with unconventional families becoming sub-divided into categories that include single, or lone parent, families, step-families, and a variety of extended families. Conducting exercises in taxonomy and assumption testing have tended to weaken the challenge to traditional perceptions of the family in both the past and the present. Considering household, rather than family, allows for a clean break from much of the political and emotional baggage that surrounds family, including the conventional nuclear family, that picture of modernity incorrectly based upon the assumption that this was the majority experience for residents of the advanced industrial countries.

Using households as the basic social unit is not, however, without problems. The research of Michael Anderson provides a solid basis for investigating size and composition of households, and has assisted in undermining assumptions about changes in family living. However, as Roberts (1984b) has pointed out, one obvious weakness is Anderson's (1971) tendency to underestimate co-residency on the female side of the family. A broader problem has been the failure to consider that the gender of the head of household is important. The reasons why the gender of household heads have not been considered as important are partly to do with the fragmentation of unconventional families, as noted above, and, more importantly, the persistent belief that female headed households were temporary, unstable, arrangements. That the male

headed household seems so solid and unchanging owes much, of course, to the lack of appreciation of life cycles and life courses within these households. By making female headed households visible, and comparing them to male headed households, findings suggest that these were no more prone to instability than male headed households.

More exciting than this, however, is the realisation that there is a direct correlation between the gender of the head of household and the structure, size, and gender profile of these households. Female headed households had much more in common with each other, than simply the gender of the head. Female headed households were different in aspects, one from another, but these differences were not as great as those found between female and male headed households. Even more clear was that male headed households had so much in common, not least that the vast majority were based on a marital relationship. The gender of the head of household was therefore much more important than previous researchers had allowed for, so much so, that households themselves could be said to be gendered.

The findings also suggest that the female headed households' size, composition, and internal arrangements were much more consciously controlled than male headed households, which were following a set of conventions rooted in patriarchal beliefs. Few female headed householders and their cohabitantes chose to live in poverty, yet in the male headed household, very often conventional families, the presence of larger numbers of children, combined with a desire to keep wives unwaged and at home, could exacerbate levels of poverty. In addition, it is recognised that the growth of a

partnership approach between spouses in male headed households was rather weak, and less universally present, compared with the collectivist, egalitarian, approach taken, particularly in unwaged work and consumption, in female headed households. Indeed, oral evidence suggests that this was a crucial basis for the formation and success of households with female heads.

This leads to a re-examination of the male headed household, and who married whom. It is argued that, under specific economic conditions, more skilled men were more likely to stay in their places of origin and marry, whereas lesser skilled men were more likely to leave. This, of course, will require to be considered in the light of new research that stresses the importance of 'company men' and 'rolling stones' (Lummis, 1994), but in Dundee, at least, the suggestion is that this influenced gender relations, between husbands and wives, and fathers and daughters, in many male headed households.

An examination, and appreciation, of gendered households also offers the social historian another way of understanding change. It moves the analysis of why women remained single, or did not remarry after widowhood, beyond simple occupational and demographic structures, that focus upon gender imbalance, towards the development of a gendered class consciousness.

This approach encourages a different interpretation of the history of organised labour from the one that still dominates and describes the development in terms of a time line that ends with presence of the modern (and new) Labour Party. The relationship

between shopfloor and trade union organisation, the success of the Scottish Prohibition Party, and the protests by women over unemployment benefit, may seem, to some historians, as developments that are against the grain of national historical developments. This, however, is simply another example of the way in which simple time lines limit perspectives to such an extent that leads to a failure to appreciate that women in a woman's town were, and are, capable of action that provides an alternative tradition to the orthodox history of the British labour movement.

The element of class consciousness, it has been argued, was derived from waged work. This, given the importance of textile employment on occupational structures, was particularly influential in Dundee. The large number of single and widowed women in employment was significant in itself, but moreover the shopfloor cultures that developed were to have an uneasy relationship with trade union organisation both before and after 1914. In short, the consciousness that developed out of industrial relations was also shaped by a hostility towards traditional (or male) forms of organisation.

An understanding that the history of the leadership of trade unions in Britain is one generally imbued by patriarchy and the desire to accommodate capitalism is useful. Useful, not only to historians seeking to understand the relationship between women on the shopfloor and their industrial organisations, but also to women workers themselves, as the 1992-3 Timex strike in Dundee showed. Evidence of this understanding can be seen in the speed with which female shopfloor workers moved to

establish representation on the strike committee, the way the national union leadership was challenged, and the women and children's fairs that became central to the strikers' fund raising efforts (see *Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 12 February 1993, for a summary of the strike).²

It is also suggested that the presence of female headed households provided a cadre for the growing temperance movement in the late nineteenth century, and the basis for the post-1914 success of the Scottish Prohibition Party in the city. It is recognised that much more research is called for here, but it is hoped that the approach suggested provides at least a starting point for a reassessment of the anti-alcohol campaigns that is sensitive to gender relations. The success of the Scottish Prohibition Party has tended to be explained by historians with a dozen different reasons, except the most obvious, that is that the Party was tapping into a widespread concern about male drinking. This is not to say that men were any more drunken in Dundee than they were elsewhere, but rather that women were taking a conscious stance to limit the effects of male drinking, including supporting the Prohibitionists. Such support, and the earlier involvement by women in temperance, is, however, an indication of the wider state of gender relations in Dundee. Without the importance of women as breadwinners and/or as household managers, certainly in male headed households, but even more so in female headed households, the Scottish Prohibition Party might never have enjoyed the

² Chapter 7 was written before the strike.

progress it made locally. At the same time the concerns expressed regarding male alcohol abuse suggest that men's drinking was having an impact on those households that contained adult men. Since more adult men resided in male headed households, than in female headed households, it is fair to assume that male drinking was directly effecting male headed households more than those households headed by women.

If consciousness was shaped both in terms of class and gender amongst women in the female headed household, the same can be said of women in the male headed household, particularly after the First World War. The numbers, and proportion, of married women in employment increased after 1918, but, at the same time, it is argued, that there was an increasing pressure for them to extend their role in the home in relation to childcare. It is suggested that this redefinition of motherhood provided the impetus for the protests by women in male headed households over unemployment benefits.

The fragmentation of social history should be a concern in itself (as expressed by Harris, 1993, and Wrightson, 1993), but this portioning up of life is even more problematic for oral, or life, historians. While an attempt has been made to re-establish connections between work, gender, household and consciousness here, it is recognised that much more research is required before broader conclusions can be reached. Here the specificity of the locality somewhat undermines general conclusions, but there is no reason why the same approach taken here cannot be refined and adopted for use with

other localities. Even studies of the man's town may benefit from an approach that rethinks household in terms of gender.

Appendices

Appendix I: Approaches, research strategy, methods and sources

Approaches and strategies

The research draws on a range of strategies from across history and the social sciences. Qualitative strategies, especially those from oral/life history, are more fully utilised than are quantitative strategies, but there has been an attempt to include statistical procedures, particularly those found in demographic history. While much has been made of the differences in these approaches (see for example Plummer, 1990), there continues to be some convergence between humanistic and positivistic methods. This convergence is often driven by the central question for historians of the 'knotty but fascinating relation between the personal, local or unique on the one hand, and the more general, national or aggregated on the other' (Drake and Finnegan, eds, 1994, pp. 8-13). Overall, however, while paying attention to issues raised by social science (including the importance of memory, narrative, and the power relationships of research), the research orientation is from an historian's perspective.

By stressing the history in social history some areas of fruitful research, including a more complete exploration of 'the nature and processes of remembering' (Thomson, et al., 1994, pp. 33-43), have been limited. More analysis however may mean less history, or as Samuel noted,

Precisions can often only be achieved by narrowing the field of vision, perspective by widening it, and the historian should make the reader aware - and recognise himself [or herself] the loss which inevitably accompanies either gain (Samuel, 1976, p. 205).

The application of some of the new approaches, particularly in memory, has been made, but it is intended that the wider historical perspective has remained paramount. What is primarily attempted is the placing of the contents of recorded recollection in an historical context. Some of the central concerns of historians have therefore taken precedence over those of social scientists; in particular an understanding of the connections between the subjective and objective factors that operate within historical change and continuity. There is an attempt to adopt a sociostructural understanding of social relations and their 'ongoing transformations' (Bertaux, 1981, p. 34). This is one way that the context, in which the relation between personal and public history (a concern amongst social scientists as well as historians), can be understood. It is also hoped that this research will further encourage those social scientists who study the past to continue with their 'increasing appreciation of historical specificity' (Finnegan and Drake, eds., 1994, p. 13). This is therefore a conscious endeavour to combine 'the two crafts of history and sociology' (Elliot, 1990, p. 44) and to create a social history that endeavours to investigate the historical movement of social relationships in relation to the lives of working class women in Dundee from around 1890 to around 1940.

In the 1990s two developing strands have been of some influence in social history. First, the influence of feminist history has encouraged a movement from 'recognising the personal' to 'recognising different subjectivities', as well as encouraging a reassessment of the bald claim that history could be written 'from below' (see for example Thomson, et al., 1994, and Stuart, 1994, pp. 57-62). Second, across the

social sciences there has been an increasing interest in the complex process of recollection, even to the extent that the process becomes as important as the historical data that is collected. The two strands have been seen as separate, and there are those who have adopted one over the other, but elements of both strands can prove useful, particularly at the point where the two come together. The most obvious connection being the twin questions of why and how people remember certain details of the past.

One strategy adopted in this work is the recognition that different methods produce different, even conflicting, results (see for example Goldthorpe, 1980, pp. 139-40), but that a social history approach can provide ways of resolving these differences. This means applying a degree of sensitivity to the choice of sources and methods, and understanding that some sources and methods are more useful in certain areas of social history than others. So, for instance, the collection and use of primary data, such as newspaper reports, when investigating the riots of 1921 and 1931, has proved to be more directly valuable than oral evidence. Conversely the studies of community and home life are based more on recollection than on primary material. This is a different position from the one taken by Arthur Marwick who believes that there is a 'golden rule ... never to use a tangential source when there is likely to a more central one'. Instead it is a recognition that all sources require corroboration, and that the most 'relevant' sources should be treated with the greatest caution. By recognising the relative strength and weakness fusion is made possible, and by combining methods and sources their relevance to the topic under study is determined. History is much more bedevilled by 'central' sources that seem to choose themselves, and in the process

reduce the topic under investigation to much narrower sub-topics, than it is from historians using 'visual sources', for example, that encourage 'snap, smart-alec judgement' (Marwick, 1994, p. 21). The emphasis is therefore on comparative activity, 'into the place of that instance of knowledge at the particular time being considered'. The question, however, of whether this process takes the historian closer to 'objective knowledge', even when other histories are taken into consideration, remains less resolved than others seem to believe (Bevir, 1994, p. 344).

Methods and sources

It should be noted that while some historians seem satisfied in simply restating the tried and tested, others are seeking to fine tune their strategies. Arthur Marwick's guide to using primary sources, published in 1994, is very similar, for example, to the directions he originally provided some 24 years before (Marwick, 1994, and Marwick, 1970, pp. 133-7). In contrast Paul Thompson, in the revised edition of *The voice of the past*, and since then, has attempted to absorb some of the more recent methods involving narrative and memory. There is much to be said for the continuity that can be found in historical methods, but an awareness of the contribution of oral historians would be of some benefit. On the other hand, while earlier methodological debates in oral history may have been 'naive', as Paul Thompson recalled in 1989, a survey of the previous methodological positions shows a degree of understanding amongst advocates of oral history that went much further than the 'enthusiasm for testimonies of "how it really was"' (Thompson, 1989, p. 2). By 1976, for example, Raphael Samuel was already pointing out that oral history carries 'its own characteristic

biases', and memory 'has its own selectivity and silences just as the written record has its bureaucratic biases and irrecoverable gaps' (Samuel, 1976, p. 205).

Combining different sources is usual in historiography, even if methods remain restricted. In contrast to the 1970s it is no longer unusual to find the use of oral evidence in a range of histories. Often, however, oral testimony is applied in an illustrative, rather than an analytical, manner, and this can prove problematic, as can be seen in Eleanor Gordon's *Women and the labour movement in Scotland, 1850-1914*. Gordon draws on two oral sources: the *Odyssey* interviews conducted by Billy Kay in the late 1970s; and the recollections from a reunion of weavers from one factory collected by herself. The problem with the first source is that these interviews were not full-life histories, but were very partial interviews gathered for the specific purpose of a radio programme in the belief that oral evidence could be 'undisputable' (cited in Smith, 1985). The second source is even more suspect, since there are so few details of either the interviews or the interview partners, and any problems that might arise from using this evidence remain unrecognised. Gordon, for example, concludes that there was a 'friendly atmosphere in the factory', and uncritically uses quotations, such as, 'If anybody got married ... it was an awful slur if they had to go back to work' (Gordon, 1991 pp. 156-61). Not only is it likely that these women were employed later than the period she is investigating, but the evidence presented is of the type that would be expected from a group of ex-weavers who would voluntarily come together some decades later to talk about their early employment in a single factory.

A major aim of this work was therefore to combine oral with other sources, but in a way that goes beyond the illustrative. This involved comparing and contrasting primary material with recalled life experiences; using oral evidence to provide new areas of interest that are missing in existing written evidence; and identifying new areas of potential investigation from documentary sources that could be pursued in oral interviews. Oral sources, therefore, can challenge and support primary sources, as well as opening up new lines of historical investigation. The dynamic interrelation between the family and work is only one area of investigation which benefits from the use of oral history. While, for example, the wages books of textile firms can give some indication of the high turnover of labour, the low wage rates, the insecurity of employment, and the long hours, oral evidence can illustrate all this and also provide details of how such circumstances effected family life.

(a) Employers' records

The reasons why primary sources of certain aspects of our past are so deficient were explored by the pioneers of oral history who were keen to engage 'in that uncharted limboland between the territories of the conventional historian and social scientist' (Thompson, 1994, p. 2). Samuel was amongst those historians who aimed to guide historians beyond detailed studies that presented 'people ... at one remove'. More importantly he raised the concern that such histories were often dependent upon the 'survival of records', a position that was subsequently refined by Paul Thompson

(Samuel, 1976, p. 193 and p. 205, and Thompson, 1978, p. 97).¹ Many other historians continue, however, to stress the 'fundamental' distinction between primary and secondary sources, and in doing so far too easily underestimate the importance of the reasons for the survival of the artefacts that are destined to become primary sources. To claim that this occurs 'in the ordinary course of events ... perhaps with an eye to the future' indicates that at least at the point of origin the creation of artefacts has some purpose for the future as well as the present. It is not, however, merely the origin of the source (the how and why of its creation) that historians should be concerned with. The process that turns data into an historical source, even before the historian brings his or her skills, needs to be considered (Marwick, 1994, p. 18).

The point that primary sources survive by design rather than by historical accident can be shown by looking at a source that has been central to a number of histories of Dundee. The textile industry minutes, production statistics, accounts, plans, and photographs, survive, from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in an archive that historians continue to research. Even some wages books survive, although it is noteworthy that these are not in the same numbers, and are very much less complete, than company minutes. This archive, however, not only depended upon the economic position of the nineteenth century men who created the original material (University of

¹ Curiously Arthur Marwick (1994) continues to ignore this.

Dundee Library),² but also upon their sons and grandsons who chose to deposit the material in the twentieth century. This decision to make the records available for an archive was taken by individuals who have a strong sense of history reinforced by the generational loss in their families economic and social position - a position that was closely connected to the decline of jute as an industry (University of Dundee Library, MS 84, and ADD 02). The industry's long term problems were analysed by the generation who inherited their companies around 1945 and were later to donate the records that makes up the archive. Their analysis can now be found repeated as history. This 'new generation', as they viewed themselves, believed at the time that increased government protection from overseas competition, along with improved industrial relations, were essential for the industry to continue operating. It is no coincidence that histories of nineteenth century jute, based on these records, have painted a bleak picture of increasing foreign competition, and debated the degrees of oppression and resistance in the industry (see for example Whatley, et al., 1993). That such attractive material is archived, such as a scrapbook (and a notebook) of industrial disputes in the nineteenth century, as well as a scrapbook of joint trade union-employer initiatives in the period after 1945, should not lead the historian to easy conclusions.

² The University originated as a College that was very much the result of bequests drawn from textile industry profits.

Nor should such a source be ignored, but some thought, beyond internal analysis, is required in using this rich, if flawed, set of records.³

(b) Newspapers

Another primary source that has been collected and analysed was drawn from the Lamb Collection's accumulation of local newspapers and cuttings from the nineteenth century to the present day (Dundee Central Library). An understanding of the political affiliations of newspaper owners and editors may assist the historian here, but there are other considerations (see Thompson, 1978, pp. 92-3). While recognising party political bias, historians who have utilised this source have often failed to acknowledge either the use of the index, or the very local nature of newspapers whose ownership was closely integrated into a social class that was very compact, united by kinship, by business interests, or both, and yet stratified. The index to the cuttings would in itself make an interesting study of the material generations of local librarians have chosen to preserve and categorise. For example, the very thin folder of newspaper reports and letters on the late nineteenth century school strikes that were to have national ramifications are indexed under the heading of 'Boys, School Strikes' despite the reality that the schools involved were not single sex institutions. Avoiding use of the

³ The survival of bits and pieces of our past, such as the records of the Dundee Chamber of Commerce, occurs more systematically than 'naturally'. The Chamber of Commerce records are held by the Dundee Archive and Record Centre, but can only be used after permission is granted by the current Chamber's Director, who is also responsible for selecting records for archive.

index removes one level of bias, but more serious problems remain. For example, more than once textile strikes in the period after 1923 are prematurely reported as having ended in local newspapers, and while the local liberal and conservative press were ever supportive of employers in disputes, their national counterparts often took a longer view and offered different advice.

(c) *Census enumerator books and Valuation of lands and heritage rolls*

The systematic sample, with a random start, of the gender and conjugal condition of household heads that were drawn from the census enumerator books of Dundee in 1891, posed a number of methodological problems. Such evidence is limited in a number of ways, including the 'snapshot' nature of Census data; the reporting skills of individual enumerators; and the question of typicality of the district studied with reference to the other four districts that constituted the city of Dundee. While recognising these limitations, by interpreting the extracted data alongside other later evidence, including the aggregated 1901 *Census* returns, the Dundee Social Union survey of 1905, and oral recollections from 1914 and after, some understanding of the typicality of the area in relation to the other Dundee districts.

Comparisons, between the 1891 sample and the Dundee Social Union's survey (1905), suggest a number of difficulties, not least because the methods applied by the Social Union in the collection of their data are not clear. In addition, whether, householders were more likely to answer questions posed by the Social Union surveyors, than they were to accurately complete the Census forms, remains an unresolved question.

Certainly the sample of 1891 taken with *Census* ten years later suggests that Social Union's survey identified a larger percentage of female heads than the enumerators did, but this may be simply a result of the ways in which the data was collected. It would therefore be dangerous, based on these two different sources, to draw assumptions that the proportion of female heads and their conjugal status had changed between 1891 and 1904.⁴

In constructing the sample the definition of a household followed the suggestion of Michael Anderson (1972) that, 'the co-residing group should be defined as comprising all the names listed in the enumerator's book from one entry "head" in the column headed "relation to head of the family" to the last name preceding the next entry "head"' (pp. 136-7). Along with schedules of empty properties, there were, however, a small number of households which failed to make a return, or the enumerator had failed to record the form at the appropriate point in the books, but had left a space (these are often added at a later point in the books). In these cases the schedule immediately before was taken as part of the sample, in other words, the sample included replacement. Institutions, such as hospitals, homes, and the jail, were not included.

⁴ A better comparison could be between the 1891 and 1901 enumerator books, when, and if, the latter are made available.

One problem encountered in identifying heads of households was with lodgers. Despite instructions to the contrary (Drake and Finnegan, eds., 1994, p. 46) some enumerators in Dundee in 1891 tended to continue the earlier practice of separating lodgers from the family that they lodged with. This may have proved problematic elsewhere, but in Dundee there seemed to be a sharp distinction between 'lodgers' and 'boarders' amongst those who rented rooms. That lodgers, as distinct from boarders, looked after themselves and did not share a table with the family they lived with, is further supported by the entries in the final column 'windowed rooms', which almost always indicated that lodgers occupied a space that was separate from the rest of the family. In only two cases was there a problem with this, and both of these were treated as boarders, that is as part of a household, since there was no indication that these 'lodgers' were living apart in any real sense from the family they lodged with. In general, therefore, lodgers were assumed to be living in separate households in the sample, unless there was clear evidence to the contrary, whereas boarders were included in the household.

More data were extracted from the 10 per cent sample of the enumerator books for the St. Clement's district of Dundee, and generated more detailed evidence from 1,030 households. One major difficulty here was the lack of clarity of occupational status in the enumerators' books. An enumerator's job involved more than simply delivering and collecting census forms. Transcribing these onto the householder's schedule was a major part of the job of being an enumerator, but enumerators may also have either continued to offer advice on the filling in of forms, or changed details during the

process of transcription. This can be deduced from the differences in the detail in the schedules, particularly in returns for occupation. While one enumerator's schedules may list, household after household, all types of mill hands as mill workers, his colleague working across the road returns batchers, preparers, shifters, and sweepers. Fortunately, for this study, all enumerators made a distinction between factory and mill operatives, but this does not resolve the wide range of jobs, and the correspondingly wide range of wages, found in millwork.

While the incomes of the retired, annuitants, and those living on private means are impossible to measure, an even greater difficulty exists in that the Census is a very poor method of identifying irregular employment or even unemployment. Certainly, those occupations susceptible to seasonal or irregular employment can be identified, and sufficient wages' books have survived to compare wage rates in the textiles sector at least, but the number of variables involved makes any calculation of household income suspect.

In the local context of Dundee it seems that if female householders were responsible for completing the form, then they were quite likely to return either themselves or another female resident as 'housekeeper' in the column detailing profession or occupation. Given that these tend to occur only in individual enumerator's returns, it can be assumed that certain enumerators were more willing than others to transcribe this directly. At least one enumerator so regularly and consistently transcribed this

description that it may be assumed that he was responsible for using the description of 'housekeeper'.

The sample did not identify, however, the type of curious entries that can be found in the 1871 census enumerator books for Dundee, including at least one wife whose occupation was described as 'domesticated'. That there is often an absence of a mark in the subsequent three columns that detailed whether the individual was either an employer, employed, or '... working on own account', suggests either that the householder directly provided this additional information, or that the enumerator interpreted 'housekeeper', for example, to mean that they were unwaged.

Despite these difficulties the census enumerator books are particularly useful for identifying composition, size, and the relationships within households. They provide a wealth of information covering almost the whole population in 1891, and, in addition, the Social Union survey was useful, if somewhat lacking in detail. All this posed the problem of identifying a comparable source in the period after this 1905. Valuation of lands and heritage rolls do provide information about property, its use, rateable values, and the names and occupations of proprietors and tenants (Drake and Finnegan, eds., 1994, pp. 112-3). The rolls for Dundee even provide, in many cases, the conjugal status of female occupiers and tenants, including identifying widows in earlier years.

Two financial years were chosen, 1920-1 and 1939-9, and a systematic sample, with a random start and replacement, was used to extract data from these rolls. The existing occupier was always included, rather than previous occupiers who were crossed out.

This involved a great deal of careful reading, since changes in occupiers even within a single year were fairly common, and a concentration of commercial properties tended to make the sampling of households problematic.

More importantly, there is an assumption that the tenant or occupier was the same person as the head of household, and this may not have been true in every case. For example, a wife may have held the rent book in her name, rather in her husband's name. Oral evidence, however, suggests that this would have been very unusual, but such an arrangement cannot be discounted. This is a major reason why the analysis of headship in the later part of the period relies more upon experiential, rather than statistical, data. Although the process of sampling is time consuming, and there are inherent difficulties in interpreting the data, the valuation of lands and heritage rolls may yet provide the basis for further research into female headed households in the city. Some of the problems could be resolved by using earlier rolls in conjunction with the enumerator rolls.

(d) Oral Sources and Methods

'Oral sources', as John Tosh (1991) has noted, are 'particularly appropriate materials for the exercise of the historian's traditional critical skills', and by examining for internal, as well as external, consistency and corroboration the audio and video

recordings were treated in the same manner as primary sources.⁵ The recordings, like other sources, however, have a number of limitations. These limitations often arise from the ways in which they were created. The greatest limitation of the Dundee Oral History Project's interviews, for example, is that most of the one hundred interviews only cover the lives of the informants up to their marriages. This has proved an irritation in terms of the additional information that could have been collected, but there is the more fundamental problem of trying to assess individual recollections of parts of the informants' pasts in the context of incomplete lives. This limitation arose, because the Project spent too much time and resources in attempting to apply a strict statistical approach (including a rigid sampling strategy) in an attempt to produce a representative archive (Dundee Oral History Project, 1987, pp. 16-7). There was a failure to appreciate Daniel Bertaux's argument that the saturation of knowledge in oral history not only confers a different meaning to representivity, but also suggests that after the point of saturation is reached there are diminishing returns from asking the same questions of ever increasing numbers of people (Bertaux, 1981, pp. 37-8).

While the source offers only partial lives, the areas of life that are covered are virtually the same from interview to interview, and this does allow the Project's oral evidence to be analysed between individual interviews. The interview schedule used by the Project was an updated version of the one provided in *The voice of the past*, and

⁵ Profile summaries of the interview partners, based on data drawn from audio and video recordings, are provided in Appendix III.

included recording the basic information, such as date and place of birth, parents' occupations, education, and first jobs, and this further assists the analysis between different, if partial, life stories (Thompson, 1978, pp. 241-52). The interviewing techniques of most of the interviewers followed Paul Thompson's early advice. This included avoiding leading questions, prompting for more details, and adopted naïveté - the interviewers tended to be young people, very young people in the eyes of informants (Thompson, 1978, pp. 165-85.). The interviewers were more openly challenging of some of the recollections, than Thompson suggested, but this seemed to work well in most of the interviews. In other words most of interviewers tried extremely hard to encourage informants to speak about their past lives with a degree of self awareness. This was not always accomplished, but it did work often enough to produce a set of interviews that can collectively be used to shed new light on Dundee's recent past.

One of the most useful ways of pulling the Project's mass of oral evidence together was to recognise the importance of 'small groups' in society. As Franco Ferrarotti (1981) has pointed out, the 'individual does not totalize directly a whole society, he [or she] totalizes it by way of the mediation of his [or her] immediate social context, the small groups of which he [or she] is a part'. In other words social influences operate for most people at the level of family, friends, workmates, or neighbours (pp. 19-27). Sorting out the evidence by looking for common and uncommon experiences of life at the level of the small social group provides a valuable starting point for further analysis, particularly because it allows a judgement to be made regarding the

adequacy, or otherwise, of the evidence in the different areas under investigation (or where there was a saturation of knowledge). There is a growing need to develop methods of analysing oral archives, that are under used at present, but are becoming increasingly important to the research of more and more historians. In 2001 the census enumerator books for 1901 should become available, and historians researching this source may well wish, for example, to reassess the oral evidence of the large Edwardian archive in the University of Essex.

The research for this study began with a twin approach of gathering data from primary sources and from the Dundee Oral History Project's recordings of one hundred older people collected between 1984 and 1989. This inductive process allowed meaning and interpretation to be informed by the contents of each source. The process also suggested more tightly focused oral interviews on specific concerns. Thus five additional one-to-one interviews were conducted after this first analysis. These interviews were therefore taken as an opportunity to explore some of the themes that arose from listening to the original recordings and reading a selection of the primary material. Additional data was generated including information on the inter-war labour movement (ADD 01); management and control in the textile industry (ADD 02, ADD 03, ADD 05); and women and the shopfloor (ADD 04). One of these interviews with a former jute weaving foreman was conducted with a group of older people that included former mill and factory workers. The result was to suggest a more collaborative method of interviewing that could not only produce new, and informed, questions and areas of interest, but serve as a reminder that history is as disputed a

territory amongst those who lived through the past, as it is amongst historians and social scientists.

(e) *Working in groups*

'Making history' groups were established and operated by myself in St. Clement's Sheltered Housing (Lochee), in Bield Sheltered Housing (Ardler), St. Leonard's Residential Home (St. Mary's), and Barassie Court Sheltered Housing (Ardler). The three initial aims for doing this were: to provide another possible source of oral evidence for this research; to raise awareness amongst Tayside Region's Community Education staff of the possibilities of life history approaches in work with older people; and to explore ways in which histories could be produced by groups of older people in the community.

Collecting data from the groups demanded different methods from those employed in the one-to-one interviews. These group sessions involved a life history approach (see Wright, 1986, pp. 58-64), and, while many of the interviewing methods remained relevant, additional skills in group work had to be adopted. These included inviting participation by every member, developing the listening skills of members, and promoting the discussion of historical themes. Other methods from the practice of reminiscence were also utilised, including an awareness that different participants have different abilities of recollection and expression (Gibson, 1994).

Out of the four groups the Barassie Court History Group arrived much more quickly to an understanding that a collective story could emerge from their own individual life stories. The membership of the Barassie Court History Group included eighteen women born, between 1903 and 1925, and one man born in 1922. That the other groups tend to have both more participants that are male, and display a more varied occupational and class profile, are perhaps two reasons for the group's progress, for the group has contained more people whose lives have more in common with each other than the other groups have had. The majority are women who have in the main been employed in industry, and the textile industry in particular.⁶ After meeting together for about two years and telling their life stories around set topics the Barassie Court History Group decided to analyse these life stories in a more systematic way. Together we developed an approach that seemed to satisfy the different needs and expectations of the group's members. Each member presented a half hour of recollection on an aspect, of their own choice. Only short prompts and questions were allowed during this time, and only if thought to be necessary by the other group members. Then for the next hour the group analysed the story, comparing and contrasting it with their own life experiences. By debating parts of the recollection the attempt was made to arrive at a consensus about the meaning and value of the story as a whole. The process was video taped, and the tapes played back for further comments.

⁶ For details of membership of groups see Appendix III.

While the argument has been strongly made for researchers to involve themselves in groups, many of the ethical questions, remain unresolved (Stuart, 1994, p. 59). This has not, however, prevented the production of histories by groups, as the upsurge of community history and publishing shows (see for example Bornat, 1992 and 1993).

The reason why research with groups persists is that it remains a rewarding method for researchers. So, before looking at what has become seen as a central problem in group work, it is worth noting some of the advantages that working in groups can offer the historian. The first gain of group work is that it alerts the historian to the differences and similarities between the lives of individuals, and in doing so assists in contextualising these lives in the wider world of sociostructural change. Group recollection that encourages the comparison of individual life stories is often a positive experience for the people whose lives are under discussion. A major reason for this is it allows both for life assessment, or review, which promotes an understanding of how a life relates to lives of others. One of the leading practitioners in 'making history' group work has pointed out how our fragmented lives can be given a wider meaning by using this method. Lily Clark, a member of a group of retired retail drapery trade workers, in which Jane Mace was involved, concluded that she had particularly enjoyed understanding how large stores operated as 'a whole', especially since her previous perspective had been limited by her experiences of working in one job, in one department (Mace, 1994, p. 66). The enjoyment of overcoming the fragmentation of life, inside as well as outside of employment, is closely associated with the attraction of reconstructing individual histories, or as some feminists have pointed out oral history is a way of 'constructing self' out of normally 'fractured lives'. This, however, is

extended beyond the individual life and into the wider social world. By beginning with particular lives and involving analysis in group work, the historian has an opportunity to achieve a better understanding of how and where lives interacted. Group recollection emphasises, even more than individual interviews, that people live their lives as part of groups, of 'families, peer groups of co-workers, neighbours, classmates, or my chums' (Ferrarotti, 1981, pp. 19-27).

Group work also provides 'a more complex, more dynamic and more sympathetic framework for understanding' (Niethammer, 1979, p. 29). This includes witnessing the depth of struggle 'over the possession and interpretation of memories' that reconstructing the past and constructing present identities involves (Thelen, 1990, p. xvi). Recollections in groups are often expressed as specifically individual experiences, but confrontations often result when a participant insists that other group members should recall similar events and details. For example, one of the most common, and often most serious, conflicts amongst older people today stems from memories of the Home Front during World War Two. Undeveloped reminiscence groups can head into irreconcilable conflict when discussing 'what mum did in the war', with allegations of sexual immorality often sharply made. In contrast a making history group can resolve this sort of conflict. When the only other male participant (that is, other than myself) in the Barassie Court History Group chose to speak of sexual exploits during World War Two conflict broke out between those who understood such behaviour and those who uttered angry condemnation. After about fifteen minutes debate it became clear to the Group that the two opposing sides consisted of those who had been young, freed

(from parental control) and single, and those who were slightly older, and mainly married, when the War began. The consensus was reached that people's attitudes to the War were shaped by age and conjugal condition. Such a consensus not only informed us as historians, but also resolved a conflict of opinion that had simmered for about 50 years and thereby provided a new historical insight.

It has been noted that in recall women will more often make more use of 'we' rather than the 'I' more readily employed by men, with the use of 'we' denoting 'the particular relationship which underlay this [or that] part of their life' (Bertaux-Wiame, 1981, pp. 256-7). To research the lives of Dundee women, in particular, it was realised that an interpretation of individual interviews would be strengthened by a method that might allow a glimpse of how these relationships operated in the past. This opens up a more general question as to whether oral historians who are wedded to one-to-one interviewing should perhaps reflect further on the problems inherent in isolating an interview partner in the act of recollection from family, neighbours, friends, and fellow workers. Certainly enough one-to-one interviews will provide the basis for some sort of collective account, but it will be made with only a single point of interaction, that is between the interviewer(s) and the interview partners, and normally involves a single individual's analysis of the evidence that is gathered. The weakness of taking only this approach was fully exposed when it came to working with the groups whose life stories are included in this investigation.

Working with groups of people, whose lives are under investigation, has become the focus of attention for a number of historians. There are at least two major contributions to group work that can be identified. The first is from feminist historians involved in community projects (see for example Mace, 1983). The second, and often understated, contribution has emerged from reminiscence initiatives. Recalling the past in groups has, in the main, been undertaken by those involved in using reminiscence for recreational, therapeutic or social purposes. A growing awareness amongst reminiscence workers, that the life stories that were being told in group sessions were significant to the wider community, provides the impetus for a growing rejection of reminiscence for its own sake, and a re-examination of how histories are produced. Thus reminiscence has become a method for providing resources for community history, *as well as* continuing to provide a therapy (see Smith, 1993, and Dick, 1993 for a more complete critique). Whatever the starting points, however, the ethical problems involved in group work remain and the dilemma involving the relations between researcher and researched continues to be unavoidable.

The Barassie Court History Group has made it impossible, as well as being undesirable, for this researcher to dominate either the topics under discussion or the paths of recollection. Indeed the Group now want to produce their own historical account. This has taken us towards Michael Frisch's argument for 'a shared authority', and towards a project that takes seriously the task of involving people in exploring what it means to remember', as well as 'what to do with memories to keep them active and alive as opposed to mere objects of collection and classification' (Frisch, 1990, p.

189). Working in this manner still means that decisions (about how, and for what purpose, the past should be interpreted) need to be addressed, and issues of 'professional neutrality' or 'disengagement,' still remain (Thomson, et. al., 1994, p. 34). The strategy, however, does offer possibilities for a collaborative approach between the oral historian and the people whose lives are being investigated. The partial resolution for the Barassie Group and me is that there should be at least two histories: one produced by group members other than myself; and one by myself.

New challenges from oral history

This social history was made with few illusions about objective truth; rather the aim was to combine a variety of sources and methods that each provides their own fragmented, and biased, views of the past. In an additional chapter in the revised and updated *The voice of the past* ('Memory and Self') Paul Thompson, while arguing that, 'every historical source derived from human perception is subjective', claims that, 'only the oral source allows us to challenge that subjectivity: to unpick the layers of memory, dig back into the darkness, hoping to reach the hidden truth'. One of the most obvious strengths of oral history is that it allows a reinvestigation of the past. The notion, however, that objective 'truth' can be found beneath layers of memory and subjective darkness is misplaced.

Research by psychologists and biologists suggests that memory is a process of 'creative construction' rather than an inert repository tapped from time to time by recall (Thelen, 1989, pp. 1117-29). This will come as no surprise to those historians

who have always claimed that the use of oral testimony is problematic given that the reminiscences of childhood from an eighty year old, for example, are not the same as observations she may have made at the time. There are seventy or so years of accumulated personal experiences between now and then. Certainly Thompson's strategy of attempting to probe back through these experiences is valid, but at best it will be further layers of subjectivity that will be found. Add to this the interviewer's influence, even if it is simply the areas of interest that he or she is pursuing, and the notion that using oral sources is a search for a core truth becomes redundant. Another, perhaps more useful approach to the oral history is to abandon the search for objectivity through oral testimony. It is the very layers of subjectivity that allows us to learn about the past. The subjective reconstruction involved in remembering is an attempt to make sense of life, even to create a self, and can provide a source where the dynamics of time, reality, and perception are interwoven and can be read by the historian. This is not to deny either the validity or the range of oral evidence, but it provides another way of thinking about how the past is reconstructed, not only by interview partners, but also by historians. This might include not only what people believe happened, but also how they felt, then and now, about what happened. These might be as important, even more important, than what actually happened. This approach serves to assist rather than detract from the historian's ability to sort out events of the past, either through a number of interviews, or by using the evidence with other sources. What it also does is to offer a way of understanding consciousness that goes beyond simplistic models of past reality.

There is an attempt in each chapter that relies on oral evidence to point out some of the ways in which the subjective nature of recollection is relevant to the topic under study. As already stated, although a more in-depth analysis has not been carried out, it is hoped that there is enough to suggest that the use of oral evidence is no more beyond the skills of the historian than the use of primary sources. Other fascinating examples of subjective, and thus selective, recollection could be investigated, including husbands' and wives' apparent lack of detailed recall of the occupations of spouses. Many of the Project's informants failed to report their spouses' jobs even when they were directly asked. In subsequent interviews there was a similar trend, even when the focus of the interview was on life after marriage.⁷ These omissions occurred more frequently amongst male interview partners than it did amongst female, but happened often enough across the genders to suggest that both male and female informants found it difficult to answer specific questions about their spouses' occupations. Workplaces were often reported, but job descriptions remained vague, particularly when compared with the details they reported regarding their parents' jobs. An extract from the interview with Mrs Margaret Robinson's provides a fairly typical example of the problems of under-reporting in this area:

Since you were married aha, what did your husband do for a living?

He was in, Eh canna mind, the jute works in Dundee anyway he was in there, an' eh, Eh canna mind the name. Then he was in the fire service... an' then he was in N.C.R. when he died, he was in N.C.R. (Aha) so ...

⁷ Almost a half of the Project informants provided insufficient information to determine their husband or wife's employment

Do you know what he did exactly in the mill?

Eh ehm Eh think it was eh ... Eh canna mind what he was, nut.

No. It's okay.

Canna mind (laughing). So long ago mmmh (DOHP 062/A/1).

One of the reasons why female informants found difficulty in reporting this information was that they simply had been told more about their parents' jobs by their parents, than their partners had told them about their jobs.⁸ The details of a partner's employment seem to be less important than were the wages of this employment. This, however, may be distorted in that the period of marriage for most of those interviewed began around 1939. It may also be possible to argue that childhood is easier to recall than early adulthood, but it seems more likely that changes in work in the period after 1939, including full employment and the gender division of employment, meant that there was less need to know what a spouse specifically worked at than was the case in earlier times. Further research is required to resolve this problem, but it is one crude example of the way in which the subjectivity of memory can be useful to the historian.

Some of the areas previously included in the broad category of significant silences or confusions have begun to be rescued by more sensitive and more precise strategies of interviewing and interpretation. The silences, and confusion, of interview partners recalling totalitarianism in Nazi and Communist Europe in particular are being slowly uncovered. Given the importance of this area of investigation, few would complain

⁸ There also seems to be a reluctance by informants, especially amongst male informants, to speak about spouses where the informant had married more than once.

about the possibilities for research that the new strategies offer. Finding new ways of making more of the evidence generated by the methods must, however, be balanced with an understanding that methods can become fetishes. There are dangers of oral historians becoming servants rather than masters of methodology, creating research that has little 'autonomous validation' in a 'world ... utterly enclosed' by 'constructs' (Samuel, 1976, p. 205). Instead of oral sources informing the historian's approach, as Samuel, Thompson, Neithammer, and others have argued, oral history could become engaged in a tightly focused study of the structure of historical presentation, or narrative, or even memory itself. This could be the historian's loss.

Appendix II: Tables

Table 1: Female heads by conjugal status as a percentage of all households

Districts	Sampled households	Households headed by widows		Households headed by single women		Households headed by married women	
		No.	Proportion of all households (+/-)	No.	Proportion of all households (+/-)	No.	Proportion of all households (+/-)
St. Peter's	712	125	17.56 (2.85)	67	9.41 (2.19)	45	6.32 (1.83)
St. Mary's	590	91	15.42 (2.98)	50	8.47 (2.30)	42	7.12 (2.12)
St. Clement's	670	114	17.01 (2.91)	56	8.36 (2.14)	42	6.27 (1.87)
St. Andrew's	1270	211	16.61 (2.09)	108	8.50 (1.57)	85	6.69 (1.40)
Lochee	305	69	22.62 (4.80)	23	7.54 (3.03)	29	9.51 (3.36)
All Districts	3547	610	17.20 (1.27)	304	8.57 (0.94)	243	6.85 (0.85)

Source: census enumerator books 1891- city wide sample

Table 2: Male heads by conjugal status as a percentage of all households

Districts	Sampled households	Households headed by widowers		Households headed by single men		Households headed by married men	
		No.	Proportion of all households (+/-)	No.	Proportion of all households (+/-)	No.	Proportion of all households (+/-)
St. Peter's	712	33	4.63 (1.58)	28	3.93 (1.46)	414	58.15 (3.70)
St. Mary's	590	25	4.24 (1.66)	17	2.88 (1.38)	365	61.86 (4.00)
St. Clement's	670	28	4.18 (1.55)	28	4.18 (1.55)	402	60.00 (3.79)
St. Andrew's	1270	48	3.78 (1.07)	57	4.49 (1.16)	761	59.92 (2.75)
Lochee	305	10	3.28 (2.04)	1	0.33 (0.66)	173	56.72 (5.68)
All Districts	3547	144	4.06 (0.66)	130	3.67 (0.63)	2116	59.66 (1.65)

Source: census enumerator books 1891- city wide sample

Table 3: Division of domestic duties and occupational status of mothers

Interview number	Gender of interview partner	Household	Year of birth	Husbands helped around the house?	Waged mother?
1	male	female headed	1919	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
2	female	male headed	1923	parents in Italy	parents in Italy
3	female	male headed	1902	no	no
4	female	male headed	1918	yes	yes
5	male	male headed	1912	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
6	male	male headed	1893	yes	no
7	male	female headed	1902	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
8	male	male headed	1917	insufficient or conflicting data	no
9	male	male headed	1913	no	yes
10	female	female headed	1904	insufficient or conflicting data	no
11	female	male headed	1906	yes	yes
12	male	male headed	1895	yes	yes
13	female	male headed	1916	no	no
14	female	male headed	1914	yes	yes
15	female	male headed	1908	no	insufficient or conflicting data
16	female	male headed	1911	no	yes
17	male	male headed	1909	no	no
18	male	female headed	1903	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
19	female	male headed	1905	servants	no
20	male	male headed	1913	yes	no

Interview number	Gender of interview partner	Household	Year of birth	Husbands helped around the house?	Waged mother?
21	male	male headed	1911	no	yes
22*	female	male headed	1922	no	yes
23	male	male headed	1910	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
24	female	female headed	1908	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
25	female	male headed	1906	yes	yes
26	female	female headed	1906		died 1918
27*	male	male headed	1904	no	yes
28	male	male headed	1919	no	no
29	female	male headed	1912	no	no
30	female	male headed	1904	yes	yes
31	male	male headed	1904	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data
32	male	female headed	1913	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
33	female	male headed	1908	yes	no
34	female	male headed	1911	yes	yes
35	female	female headed	1908		no
36	female	male headed	1921	no	no
37	male	male headed	1907	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
38	male	male headed	1915	yes	yes
39	male	male headed	1892	no	no
40	female	male headed	1919	no	yes

Interview number	Gender of interview partner	Household	Year of birth	Husbands helped around the house?	Waged mother?
41	male	male headed	1921	no	no
42	female	male headed	1909	no	yes
43	female	female headed	1916		yes
44	female	female headed	1911	no	no
45	male	female headed	1910	no	yes
46	male	male headed	1908	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
47	female	male headed	1896	insufficient or conflicting data	no
48	male	male headed	1914	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
49	female	male headed	1901	no	yes
50	male	male headed	1911	no	no
51	male	male headed	1909	insufficient or conflicting data	no
52	female	male headed	1899	no	insufficient or conflicting data
53	female	male headed	1920	no	no
54	female	male headed	1911	no	yes
55	female	male headed	1920	no	yes
56	female	female headed	1905	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
57	female	male headed	1904	yes	yes
58	female	male headed	1900	no	yes
59	female	male headed	1899	insufficient or conflicting data	yes

Interview number	Gender of interview partner	Household	Year of birth	Husbands helped around the house?	Waged mother?
60	female	female headed	1913	insufficient or conflicting data	no
61	female	male headed	1917	no	yes
62	female	female headed	1907	insufficient or conflicting data	no
63	female	female headed	1916	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
64	female	female headed	1914	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
65	female	male headed	1913	yes	no
66	female	male headed	1914	yes	yes
67	female	male headed	1910	no	yes
68	male	male headed	1912	no	no
69	female	female headed	1921	all women	no
70	male	male headed	1907	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
71	female	female headed	1915	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data
72	female	male headed	1910	insufficient or conflicting data	no
73	female	male headed	1902	no	yes
74	male	male headed	1924	no	yes
75	male	male headed	1928	insufficient or conflicting data	no
76	male	male headed	1918	no	yes
77	male	female headed	1907	insufficient or conflicting data	no
78	male	male headed	1904	no	no

Interview number	Gender of interview partner	Household	Year of birth	Husbands helped around the house?	Waged mother?
79	female	male headed	1919	no	no
80	male	male headed	1899	no	no
81	male	male headed	1927	yes	yes
82	female	male headed	1911	no	insufficient or conflicting data
83	female	male headed	1924	yes	yes
84	male	male headed	1909	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data
85	female	male headed	1915	yes	yes
86	male	female headed	1926	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
87	female	male headed	1899	no	yes
88	female	male headed	1929	no	yes
89	female	male headed	1908	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data
90	female	male headed	1908	no	yes
91	female	female headed	1895	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data
92	male	female headed	1904	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
93	female	female headed	1911	insufficient or conflicting data	no
94	female	male headed	1915	insufficient or conflicting data	no
95	male	male headed	1915	insufficient or conflicting data	no

Interview number	Gender of interview partner	Household	Year of birth	Husbands helped around the house?	Waged mother?
96	female	male headed	1918	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data
97	male	male headed	1912	insufficient or conflicting data	no
98	female	male headed	1906	insufficient or conflicting data	yes
99	female	male headed	1904	insufficient or conflicting data	no
100	male	female headed	1912	insufficient or conflicting data	insufficient or conflicting data

*Source: Dundee Oral History Project Archive. * Brother and sister*

Appendix III: Interview partners

Additional interviews (ADD)

ADD 01		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	Duncan Butchart	Father's Job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Gender	male	Mother's Job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Montrose)	Own Job(s)	mill worker
		Notes	arrived in Dundee in 1905
ADD 02		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	Lewis Robertson	Father's Job(s)	director jute merchants and manufacturers
Gender	male	Mother's Job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1922 (Dundee)	Own Job(s)	director jute merchants and manufacturers
		Notes	
ADD 03		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	Alexander Grossett	Father's Job(s)	foreman tailor
Gender	male	Mother's Job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1898 (Clydebank)	Own Job(s)	jute mechanic, jute manager
		Notes	arrived in Dundee in 1900

ADD 04		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	Margaret MacIntosh	Father's job(s)	miner, labourer
Gender	female	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1898 (Fife)	Own job(s)	mill worker, calender worker
		Notes	arrived in Dundee in 1918

ADD 06		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	John Bruce	Father's job(s)	policeman
Gender	male	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1921 (Dundee)	Own job(s)	apprentice mill tenter, mill tenter, mill foreman
		Notes	

**Barassie Court History Group, 'Work or want' project (BCIIG),
group interviews**

Recorded in Barassie Court Lounge, between 9 October 1992 and 19 January 1996.¹

BCHG VT 01, VT 11, VT 15, VT 16		Interviewers	
		Graham R. Smith and Bill Peattie	
Name	Nellie Hanley	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	made pit props
Year of birth (place of birth)	1916 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	rope mill worker, domestic, cannery worker, cleaner
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	mill worker
		Own children	2
Year of marriage	1942	Notes	father died 1916

¹ Almost all group members participated in almost all of the recorded group sessions. The video (VT) number indicates that they were asked or volunteered to lead off on a subject during that particular session.

BCHG VT 02		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	Willie Cowan	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	coal merchant
Year of birth (place of birth)	1922 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill can tramper
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	seaman Royal Navy
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
		Own children	1
Year of marriage	Single	Notes	

BCHG VT 03		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Name	Elizabeth Isles*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	cassie layer (Corporation)
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife and mill worker
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	spinner, housekeeper
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	millworker, barman
		Own children	1
Year of marriage	1927	Notes	

BCHG VT 04, 06, 16		Interviewers		Graham R. Smith and Ally Black	
Name	Georgina Keith	Age left full-time education	13		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill worker		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1907 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	shifting mistress		
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	shifting mistress		
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	scavenger (Corporation)		
		Own children	2		
Year of marriage	1927	Notes			

BCHG VT 05, 09, 12		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith and Ally Black	
Name	Ruth Anthony	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	miner		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1923 (Fife)	Mother's job(s)	housewife		
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	hospital domestic		
Sisters	7	Spouse's job(s)	dispatch clerk		
		Own children	1		
Year of marriage	unknown	Notes	arrived in Dundee c. 1938		

BCHG 06		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Gina O'Donoghue	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill worker		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1925 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker		
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	weaver		
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	labourer (shipyard)		
		Own children	2		
Year of marriage	1946	Notes			

BCHG VT 07		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Mary Lannan	Age left full-time education	15		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	iron turner		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1912 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver		
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	weaver		
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	jute tenter		
		Own children	4		
Year of marriage	1940	Notes			

BCHG VT 07, 11		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Lizzie Duncan	Age left full-time education	13		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	casual labourer		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1903 (Perth)	Mother's job(s)	jute preparer		
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	jute preparer		
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)			
		Own children	0		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	arrived in Dundee c. 1904		
BCHG VT 08		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Ruby Hart	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	storekeeper, head mail clerk		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1923 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner		
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	weaver, cook, waitress		
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	work study engineer		
		Own children	6		
Year of marriage	1945	Notes			

BCHG 09		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Elizabeth Petrie	Age left full-time education	18		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	minister		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Edinburgh)	Mother's job(s)	housewife		
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	nurse, sister		
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	chauffeur		
		Own children	1		
Year of marriage	1933	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1935		

BCHG VT 09		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Davina Henry	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer (roads)		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1922 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife		
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	shop assistant		
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	shop manager		
		Own children	1		
Year of marriage	1946	Notes			

BCHG VT 10	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Name	Evelyn Lindsay	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill foreman winder
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	winder
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	winder
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	winder
		Own children	1
Year of marriage	unknown	Notes	father died 1917

BCHG VT 10	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Name	Henrietta Samson	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer (sawmill)
Year of birth (place of birth)	1920 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill drawer
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	bobbin setter
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	
		Own children	
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

BCHG VT 12, 16		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Frances Baxter	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill worker		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker		
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill setter		
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	mill heckler		
		Own children	8		
Year of marriage	1934	Notes			

BCHG VT 13		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith	
Name	Edith Gouick	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill dresser		
Year of birth (place of birth)	1921 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife		
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	shop assistant		
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	railwayman		
		Own children	2		
Year of marriage	1943	Notes			

BCHG VT 13	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Name	Letitia Morrell	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	coal miner
Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Fife)	Mother's job(s)	farm maid
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	domestic service
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	plumber (shipyard)
		Own children	1
Year of marriage	1936	Notes	arived in Dundee 1928

BCHG VT 14	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Name	Christina Simpson	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	sign writer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1922 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	weaver, laboratory assistant
Sisters	3	Spouse's job(s)	bus driver
		Own children	6
Year of marriage	1943	Notes	

BCHG VT 15	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith and Bill Peattie
Name	Nellie Thomson	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	french polisher
Year of birth (place of birth)	1915 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	weaver, waitress
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	electrician
		Own children	1
Year of marriage	1938	Notes	mother died 1915, father died 1917

Bield History Group (BHIG), group interviews

Recorded in Bield Sheltered Housing Lounge, between May 26 1992 and June 4 1992
on video and audio cassette. All interviews by Graham R. Smith.²

Name	Betty Brand	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	riveter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1916 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shop assistant
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	footballer, engineer
		Own children	1
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	

Name	Ena Bruce	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	ropemaker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1915 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	domestic service, canteen worker
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	painter
		Own children	4
Year of marriage	1935	Notes	

² Almost all group members participated in almost all of the recorded group sessions.

Name	Margaret Buick	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	joiner
Year of birth (place of birth)	1906 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shop assistant, clerkess (garage)
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	motor mechanic
		Own children	4
Year of marriage	1925	Notes	
Name	Mrs. Duncan	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Year of birth (place of birth)	1902 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	industrial nurse
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
		Own children	3
Year of marriage	insufficient or conflicting data	Notes	
Name	Zena Foley	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1919 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill worker, canteen worker
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	engineer
		Own children	3
Year of marriage	1943	Notes	

Name	Miss Mathews	Age left full-time education	Insufficient or conflicting data
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	shipyard worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1900 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	missionary (Dundee - Children's Free Breakfast, and India)
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	
		Own children	0
Year of marriage	single	Notes	
Name	Joan O'Neil	Age left full-time education	18
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	barber, newsagent
Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	school teacher
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	school teacher
Sisters	8	Spouse's job(s)	baker
		Own children	4
Year of marriage	1945	Notes	

Dundee Oral History Project (DOHP)

DOHP 001		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	31-Oct-84		
Name	Syd Scroggie	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	army officer, farmer in Canada,
Year of birth (place of birth)	1919 (Canada)	Mother's job(s)	shoebuyer
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	junior sub-editor Hotspur, telephonist
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	unknown
Birth position	3 of 3		
Year of marriage	1949	Notes	father died c.1922, family returned to Dundee 1923
DOHP 002		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	12-Nov-84		
Name	Gina Ross*	Age left full-time education	11
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	transported fruit
Year of birth (place of birth)	1923 (Italy)	Mother's job(s)	dressmaker
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	composer, dressmaker, jute spinner
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	mill mechanic
Birth position	1 of 7		
Year of marriage	1951	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1951

DOHP 003		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	04-Dec-84			
Name	Kezia Gattens*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	porter	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1902 (Glasgow)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	jute weaver, shop broker	
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	traveller/salesman	
Birth position	1 of 5			
Year of marriage	1922	Notes		
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DOHP 004		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	17-Jan-85			
Name	Diane Wood*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	foreman road labourer	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1918 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill cop winder	
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill worker, waitress, card painter	
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	grocer	
Birth position	1 of 3			
Year of marriage	1939	Notes		

DOHP 005		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	24-Jan-85			
Name	Walter Rivers*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	mill tenter	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1912 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver	
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	painter and decorator	
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	unknown	
Birth position	unknown			
Year of marriage	1938	Notes		

DOHP 006		Interviewer		Harvey Duke
Date of interview	06-Feb-85			
Name	Alex Simpson*	Age left full-time education	13	
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	tailor	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1893 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	6	Own job(s)	mill worker, ship rigger	
Sisters	6	Spouse's job(s)		
Birth position	1 of 13			
Year of marriage	single	Notes		

DOHP 007		Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
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Date of interview	05-Feb-85		
Name	David Burton*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	dock engine attendant, railway labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1902 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	jute drawer
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	jute shifter, dock labourer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	father died 1916

DOHP 008		Interviewer	Chris Ward
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Date of interview	18-Feb-85		
Name	Bert Hartley*	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	painter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1917 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	fireman (fire brigade)
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	secretary
Birth position	2 of 2		
Year of marriage	1948	Notes	

DOHP 009		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	19-Feb-85			
Name	Fred Tennant	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	fruit and fish seller, money lender	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1913 (Fife)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	jute mill frame setter, professional boxer, machine operator, leisure attendant	
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	unknown	
Birth position	1 of 6			
Year of marriage	1936	Notes	remarried 1951	

DOHP 010		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	13-Feb-86			
Name	Elizabeth Cooper*	Age left full-time education	13	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	stoker	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Glasgow)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	clerical assistant, jute cop winder	
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	inspector in Post Office	
Birth position	6 of 6			
Year of marriage	1925	Notes	father died 1906	

DOHP 011		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	21-Feb-86		
Name	Ruby Inglis*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	coal merchant (self employed)
Year of birth (place of birth)	1906 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver, cleaner
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	clerkess, weaver
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	pattern maker, labourer
Birth position	3 of 8		
Year of marriage	1926	Notes	lived in Australia 1926 to 1932

DOHP 012		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	24-Feb-86		
Name	Robert Jackson*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	watchmaker, mill spinning foreman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1895 (Montrose)	Mother's job(s)	hotel keeper's assistant
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	mill worker, cleaner, policeman, pipelayer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	housewife
Birth position	4 of 4		
Year of marriage	1920	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1918

DOHP 013		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
Date of interview	18-Sep-85		
Name	Jean Small*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill bundler
Year of birth (place of birth)	1916 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	6	Own job(s)	spinner, weaver
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	baker, factory worker
Birth position	6 of 12		
Year of marriage	1937	Notes	
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DOHP 014		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
Date of interview	02-Oct-85		
Name	Joan Wilkie*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	farm labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Angus)	Mother's job(s)	farm maid
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	farm maid, mill worker
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	farm labourer
Birth position	2 of 2		
Year of marriage	1937	Notes	worked in Dundee c.1930

DOHP 016	Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	15-Oct-85		
Name	Margaret Campbell*	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	caretaker (school)
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shop assistant, nurse
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

DOHP 016	Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	17-Oct-85		
Name	Mary Brown*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	fireman, coalman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	weaver
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	carter
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1932	Notes	

DOHP 017	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
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Date(s) of interview(s)	18-Oct-85		
Name	Wolf Rothman*	Age left full-time education	16
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	trader, shop owner
Year of birth (place of birth)	1909 (Glasgow)	Mother's job(s)	boarding house keeper
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	bookmaker
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	housewife
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1949	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1910

DOHP 018	Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
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Date of interview	21-Oct-85		
Name	W. Anderson*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	salesman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1903 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	shop assistant
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	2 of 2		
Year of marriage	1926	Notes	father died 1905

DOHP 019

Interviewer

Eliz Feeney

Date(s) of interview(s) 29-Oct-85

Name	Isabelle Timpson*	Age left full-time education	18
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	ADC Indian Civil Service
Year of birth (place of birth)	1905 (India)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	housewife
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1920

DOHP 020

Interviewer

Graham R. Smith

Date(s) of interview(s) 29-Oct-85

Name	David Jones*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	boxmaker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1913 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	tram driver
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	3 of 6		
Year of marriage	1938	Notes	

DOHP 021	Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	12-Nov-85		
Name	Norman Lyle*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	mill foreman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	Joiner
Sisters	3	Spouse's job(s)	teacher
Birth position	4 of 6		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	father died 1918

DOHP 022	Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	14-Nov-85		
Name	Bella Keyzer	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	baker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1922 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	weaver, welder, assembly worker, welder
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	naval officer, engineer
Birth position	3 of 3		
Year of marriage	1949	Notes	sister of DOHP 028

DOHP 023		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
Date of interview	26-Nov-85		
Name	Norman Robertson*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	mill foreman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1910 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	joiner
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	2 of 3		
Year of marriage	1935	Notes	

DOHP 024		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
Date of interview	27-Nov-85		
Name	Mary Thom*	Age left full-time education	12
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	riveter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	draper, weaver
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	mill worker, draper
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	builder
Birth position	1 of 3		
Year of marriage	1942	Notes	father emigrated early 1920s

DOHP 026	Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	16-Dec-85		
Name	Mary Cook*	Age left full-time education	23
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	gas fitter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1907 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	dressmaker
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	teacher, headmistress
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	2 of 3		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

DOHP 026	Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	18-Dec-85		
Name	Helen Dewar*	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	yarn dresser
Year of birth (place of birth)	1906 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	drawer (carpet factory)
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	cinema manager
Birth position	1 of 3		
Year of marriage	1931	Notes	father died 1915, mother died 1918

DOHP 027		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	08-Jan-86		
Name	Donald Christie*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	bus driver, labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	soldier
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	3 of 5		
Year of marriage	1934	Notes	

DOHP 028		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	08-Jan-86		
Name	Thomas Lenin Mitchell	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	baker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1919 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	mill dresser
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	nurse
Birth position	1 of 3		
Year of marriage	1946	Notes	brother of DOHP 022

DOHP 029		Interviewer	Eliz Feeney
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Date of interview	27-Jan-86		
Name	Bertha Smeaton*	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	bar manager
Year of birth (place of birth)	1912 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	shop assistant
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	hairdresser
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1936	Notes	

DOHP 030		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	04-Feb-86		
Name	Georgina Murray*	Age left full-time education	12
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	owned fish shop
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver, howdy wife
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	shop assistant
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	1 of 10		
Year of marriage	1925	Notes	

DOHP 031		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	11-Feb-86		
Name	John Forbes*	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	tailor
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Aberfeldy)	Mother's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	marking boy, platers assistant (shipyard)
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1928	Notes	mother died 1911

DOHP 032		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	26-Feb-86		
Name	Charles Robson*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	foreman moulder
Year of birth (place of birth)	1913 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	domestic servant
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	upholsterer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	4 of 4		
Year of marriage	1937	Notes	father died 1924

DOHP 033		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	03-Mar-86		
Name	Dorothy Gibson*	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	crofter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Angus)	Mother's job(s)	crofter
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	shop assistant, owned florist shop
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	hairdresser
Birth position	1 of 2		
Year of marriage	1932	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1923

DOHP 034		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	04-Mar-86		
Name	Jessie Mitchell*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	calender worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Perthshire)	Mother's job(s)	drawer
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	drawer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1913

DOHP 036	Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	10-Mar-86		
Name	Evelyn Orr*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	cabinet maker, pattern maker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	wages clerkess
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	5 of 5		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

DOHP 036	Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	15-Mar-86		
Name	Jenny Grant*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1921 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	mill worker, calender machinist
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	craneman (dockyard)
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	

DOHP 037 **Interviewer** **Carla Ritchie**

Date of interview **31-Mar-86**

Name **Edward Travis*** **Age left full-time education** **13**

Gender **male** **Father's job(s)** **baker**

Year of birth (place of birth) **1907 (Brechin)** **Mother's job(s)** **weaver**

Brothers **4** **Own job(s)** **grocer**

Sisters **2** **Spouse's job(s)** **insufficient or conflicting data**

Birth position **1 of 7**

Year of marriage **1936** **Notes**

DOHP 038 **Interviewer** **Carla Ritchie**

Date of interview **03-Apr-86**

Name **John Foster*** **Age left full-time education** **13**

Gender **male** **Father's job(s)** **carter**

Year of birth (place of birth) **1915 (Dundee)** **Mother's job(s)** **winder**

Brothers **3** **Own job(s)** **milkman**

Sisters **0** **Spouse's job(s)** **dance teacher**

Birth position **4 of 4**

Year of marriage **1938** **Notes**

DOHP 039

Interviewer

Carla Ritchie

Date of interview 18-Apr-86

Name Braithwaite Lloyd* **Age left full-time education** 16

Gender male **Father's job(s)** boat builder

Year of birth (place of birth) 1892 (Dundee) **Mother's job(s)** housewife

Brothers 3 **Own job(s)** boat builder, music teacher, actor

Sisters 6 **Spouse's job(s)**

Birth position 10 of 10

Year of marriage single **Notes**

DOHP 040

Interviewer

Jack McRae

Date of interview 25-Apr-86

Name Margaret Fenwick **Age left full-time education**

Gender female **Father's job(s)** gas fitter

Year of birth (place of birth) 1919 (Dundee) **Mother's job(s)** cleaner

Brothers 2 **Own job(s)** weaver, trade union official

Sisters 1 **Spouse's job(s)** mill worker

Birth position insufficient or conflicting data

Year of marriage 1937 **Notes**

DOHP 041		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	29-Apr-86		
Name	Gordon Bain*	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	cabinet maker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1921 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	electrician
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	nurse
Birth position	4 of 5		
Year of marriage	1944	Notes	

DOHP 042		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	07-May-86		
Name	Jane Dobbs*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	cabinet maker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1909 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	reeler
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	fur trade, assembly worker, telephonist
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	engineer, telephonist
Birth position	2 of 3		
Year of marriage	1940	Notes	

DOHP 043		Interviewer		Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	13 May-86			
Name	Mary M. Whyte*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	french polisher	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1916 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	domestic	
Brothers	7	Own job(s)	spreader, weaver, nurse	
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	soldier	
Birth position	5 of 9			
Year of marriage	1944	Notes	father died 1936	

DOHP 044		Interviewer		Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	16-May-86			
Name	Florence Coates*	Age left full-time education	17	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	chemist	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	clerkess, secretary	
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	jute company director	
Birth position	twin			
Year of marriage	1953	Notes	father died 1939	

DOHP 045

Interviewer

Carla Ritchie

Date of interview	21-May-86		
Name	Herbert Baxter*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	brass moulder
Year of birth (place of birth)	1910 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	spinner, salesman, lorry driver, owned sawmill
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	weaver, owned shop
Birth position	4 of 8		
Year of marriage	1932	Notes	father died 1920

DOHP 046

Interviewer

Carla Ritchie

Date of interview	23-May-86		
Name	Tom Clarke	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	french polisher
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill sweeper
Brothers	7	Own job(s)	jute tenter
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	1 of 9		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	

DOHP 047		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	09-Jun-86		
Name	Betsy Cameron*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	farmer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1896 (Angus)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	6	Own job(s)	domestic, bookkeeper, shop assistant
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	postman
Birth position	9 of 9		
Year of marriage	1918	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1918

DOHP 048		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	18-Jun-86		
Name	A. W. Steele*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	moulder
Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	owned shop
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	engineer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1935	Notes	

DOHP 049	Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	23-Jun-96		
Name	Christine Harold*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer, foundry
Year of birth (place of birth)	1901 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	winder
Sisters	3	Spouse's job(s)	mill mechanic
Birth position	3 of 5		
Year of marriage	1925	Notes	

DOHP 050	Interviewer	Graham R. Smith
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Date of interview	20-Jun-86		
Name	James Johnson*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	unemployed (disabled)
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	grocer
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	2 of 6		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	

DOHP 051	Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	26-Jun-86		
Name	George C. Wright*	Age left full-time education	18
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	lawyer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1909 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	senior company director
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	housewife
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1937	Notes	

DOHP 052	Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	01-Jul-86		
Name	Elizabeth Keith*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	manager cattlemarket
Year of birth (place of birth)	1899 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	weaver
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	4 of 7		
Year of marriage	1926	Notes	

DOHP 053		Interviewer		Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	04-Jul-86			
Name	Ann Stewart*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	joiner's mate	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1920 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	cinema usherette	
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data	
Birth position	1 of 3			
Year of marriage	1949	Notes		

DOHP 054		Interviewer		Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	08-Jul-86			
Name	Carla Franchi*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	owned fish and chip shop	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Italy)	Mother's job(s)	shop assistant	
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shop assistant	
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	taxi driver	
Birth position	1 of 2			
Year of marriage	1938	Notes	arrived in Dundee c.1919	

DOHP 055	Interviewer		Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	09-Jul-86		
Name	Mary Forsythe*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	engineer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1920 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	5	Own job(s)	dance teacher
Sisters	6	Spouse's job(s)	milkman
Birth position	1 of 12		
Year of marriage	1938	Notes	

DOHP 056	Interviewer		Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	10-Jul-86		
Name	Rita Ramsay*	Age left full-time education	17
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	house factor
Year of birth (place of birth)	1905 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	house factor
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	district nurse
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	2 of 4		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	father died 1918

DOHP 057		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	14-Jul-86		
Name	Mary Swinton*	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer (calender)
Year of birth (place of birth)	Dundee (1904)	Mother's job(s)	spinner
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	weaver
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1929	Notes	

DOHP 058		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	17-Jul-86		
Name	G. McKay*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1900 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	market stall trader
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	4 of 10		
Year of marriage	1927	Notes	

DOHP 059		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	22-Aug-86		
Name	Agnes Rafferty*	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	grocer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1899 (Aberdeenshire)	Mother's job(s)	cleaner
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	mill worker
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	2 of 6		
Year of marriage	insufficient or conflicting data	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1899
DOHP 060		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	26-Aug-86		
Name	Catherine Ellwood*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	toilet clerk
Year of birth (place of birth)	1913 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	insufficient or conflicting data	Own job(s)	calender worker, canteen worker, pea tester
Sisters	insufficient or conflicting data	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	12 of 14		
Year of marriage	1933	Notes	father died 1931

DOHP 061		Interviewer	Shirley Allardyce
Date of interview	03-Sep-86		
Name	Elizabeth McIntyre	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	docker, carter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1917 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	domestic, mill worker
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	mill worker, porter, gardener
Birth position	1 of 5		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	
DOHP 062		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	10-Sep-86		
Name	Margaret Robinson*	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	bricklayer, barman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1907 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	telephonist
Sisters	6	Spouse's job(s)	mill worker, engineer
Birth position	1 of 10		
Year of marriage	1929	Notes	mother left father for a period of time

DOHP 063		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	11-Sep-86		
Name	Jessie Smith*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	warehouseman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1916 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver
Brothers	6	Own job(s)	weaver
Sisters	3	Spouse's job(s)	mill worker
Birth position	5 of 9		
Year of marriage	1939	Notes	

DOHP 064		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	17-Sep-86		
Name	Brigitte Hoskins*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker, cleaner
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill worker
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	2 of 2		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	father died 1916

DOHP 065	Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	17-Sep-86
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Name	Jean Jarvis*	Age left full-time education	14
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Gender	female	Father's job(s)	miner
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Year of birth (place of birth)	1913 (Airdrie)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
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Brothers	9	Own job(s)	cleaner, mill worker
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Sisters	8	Spouse's job(s)	farm worker, spiritualist
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Birth position	9 of 18
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Year of marriage	1935	Notes	moved to Dundee 1950
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DOHP 066	Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	17-Oct-86
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Name	Anne Millar*	Age left full-time education	14
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Gender	female	Father's job(s)	foundry machine operator
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Year of birth (place of birth)	1914 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
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Brothers	3	Own job(s)	mill shifter, auxiliary nurse
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Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	aircraft fitter
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Birth position	1 of 8
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Year of marriage	1939	Notes	lived in Dundee until 1939
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DOHP 067	Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	20-Oct-86		
Name	Esther Jardine*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1910 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	spinner, weaver
Sisters	3	Spouse's job(s)	blacksmith
Birth position	2 of 8		
Year of marriage	1939	Notes	

DOHP 068	Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	27-Oct-86		
Name	David Jones*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	craneman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1912 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	5	Own job(s)	blacksmith
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	spinner
Birth position	4 of 11		
Year of marriage	1939	Notes	

DOHP 069		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	04-Nov-86		
Name	Mary Clark*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	Insurance Inspector
Year of birth (place of birth)	1921 (Newport)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	clerkess
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	moved to Dundee 1926, father died 1947

DOHP 070		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
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Date of interview	05-Nov-86		
Name	Andrew Mann*	Age left full-time education	16
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	printer, newsagent
Year of birth (place of birth)	1907 (Aberdeen)	Mother's job(s)	owned shop
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	composer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	shop assistant
Birth position	1 of 2		
Year of marriage	1932	Notes	moved to Dundee 1908

DOHP 071	Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	06-Nov-86		
Name	Jessie Ewan*	Age left full-time education	16
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	clerk
Year of birth (place of birth)	1915 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	domestic servant
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shroud maker, cleaner
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	labourer
Birth position	3 of 3		
Year of marriage	1933	Notes	father died c. 1916

DOHP 072	Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
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Date of interview	11-Nov-86		
Name	Jean Downes*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	storeman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1910 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	confectioner
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	3 of 4		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

DOHP 073		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	14-Nov-86		
Name	Christine Laing*	Age left full-time education	12
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	quarryman, lorry driver
Year of birth (place of birth)	1902 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	spinner, cleaner, calender machinist
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	french polisher
Birth position	5 of 9		
Year of marriage	1927	Notes	father died 1926

DOHP 074		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	03-Dec-86		
Name	Peter Baird*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	mill worker, barman
Year of birth (place of birth)	1924 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	batcher
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	plater's assistant
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	calender machinist
Birth position	1 of 4		
Year of marriage	1946	Notes	

DOHP 076		Interviewer	Carla Ritchie
Date of interview	18-Dec-86		
Name	W. F. M. Duncan*	Age left full-time education	23
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	doctor
Year of birth (place of birth)	1928 (London)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	doctor
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	nurse
Birth position	1 of 4		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1928
DOHP 076		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	03-Feb-87		
Name	John Bannerman*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	spnner, ice-cream man
Year of birth (place of birth)	1918 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	labourer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	heckle machinist
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1941	Notes	

DOHP 077		Interviewer		Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	04-Feb-87			
Name	Alex Scott*	Age left full-time education	16	
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	soldier	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1907 (Aberdeenshire)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	accountant	
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	grocer's assistant	
Birth position	2 of 5			
Year of marriage	1937	Notes	arrived in Dundee 1913, father died 1916	

DOHP 078		Interviewer		Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	16-Feb-87			
Name	Dave Valentine*	Age left full-time education	16	
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	turner	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	dental engineer	
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	housewife	
Birth position	1 of 1			
Year of marriage	1933	Notes		

DOHP 079		Interviewer		Gary Buick
Date of interview	25-Feb-87			
Name	Kate Mellow*	Age left full-time education	15	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	overseer Post Office	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1919 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	civil servant	
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)		
Birth position	4 of 4			
Year of marriage	single	Notes		

DOHP 080		Interviewer		Graham R. Smith
Date of interview	12-Apr-87			
Name	Gordon Walls*	Age left full-time education		
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	paper cutter	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1899 (Tayport)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill worker	
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	mill worker	
Birth position	2 of 3			
Year of marriage	1922	1	moved to Dundee 1922	

DOHP 081		Interviewer		Gary Buick	
Date of interview	13-May-86				
Name	Robert Knox**	Age left full-time education	14		
Gender	male	Father's Job(s)		mill foreman, newsagent	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1927 (Dundee)	Mother's Job(s)		mill worker	
Brothers	3	Own Job(s)		engineer	
Sisters	1	Spouse's Job(s)		housewife	
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data				
Year of marriage	1960	Notes			

DOHP 082		Interviewer		Gary Buick	
Date of interview	14-Apr-87				
Name	Mary Jack*	Age left full-time education	16		
Gender	female	Father's Job(s)		carter, policeman	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Dundee)	Mother's Job(s)		insufficient or conflicting data	
Brothers	4	Own Job(s)		shop assistant	
Sisters	5	Spouse's Job(s)		soldier	
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data				
Year of marriage	1938	Notes			

DOHP 083		Interviewer		Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	18-May-87			
Name	Nora Allen*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	mill worker	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1924 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner	
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	weaver	
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	greenkeeper	
Birth position	1 of 2			
Year of marriage	1945	Notes		

DOHP 084		Interviewer		Gary Buick
Date of interview	19-May-87			
Name	Jack Stein*	Age left full-time education	14	
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	french polisher, mill worker	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1909 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data	
Brothers	3	Own job(s)	mill worker, labourer	
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	weaver	
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data			
Year of marriage	1933	Notes		

DOHP 085	Interviewer	Lynne Dalgarno
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Date of interview	20-May-87		
Name	Frances Allan*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	baker, mill worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1915 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	shifter, winder
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	soldier
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1938	Notes	

DOHP 086	Interviewer	Gary Bulck
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Date of interview	26-May-87		
Name	Gordon Boner*	Age left full-time education	15
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	master mariner
Year of birth (place of birth)	1926 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	bootmaker
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	printer
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	solicitor
Birth position	1 of 1		
Year of marriage	1962	Notes	father often away at sea

DOHP 087		Interviewer	Gary Buick
Date of interview	27-May-87		
Name	Peggy Soutar	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	grocer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1899 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	weaver
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill worker, shop assistant
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	electrician
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	insufficient or conflicting data	Notes	

DOHP 088		Interviewer	Charlie Robertson
Date of interview	02-Jul-87		
Name	Sarah Blaine*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	carter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1929 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	spinner
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shop assistant, laundry assistant
Sisters	4	Spouse's job(s)	welder
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1947	Notes	

DOHP 089		Interviewer	Ruth Forbes
Date of interview	29-Apr-88		
Name	Joan Morris*	Age left full-time education	Insufficient or conflicting data
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	policeman
Year of birth (place of birth)	insufficient or conflicting data	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	music teacher
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	
Birth position	1 of 2		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

DOHP 090		Interviewer	Ruth Forbes
Date of interview	02-Jun-88		
Name	Anne Birrell*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	4	Own job(s)	mill worker
Sisters	3	Spouse's job(s)	bricklayer
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1928	Notes	

DOHP 091		Interviewer	Scott Clark
Date of interview	03-May-88		
Name	Minnie Way	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	actor
Year of birth (place of birth)	1895 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	actress
Brothers	Insufficient or conflicting data	Own job(s)	mill worker
Sisters	Insufficient or conflicting data	Spouse's job(s)	sailor
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1915	Notes	father died 1900

DOHP 092		Interviewer	Scott Clark
Date of interview	10-May-88		
Name	Robert Park*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	baker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	2	Own job(s)	baker
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	housewife
Birth position	1 of 4		
Year of marriage	1928	Notes	father away from home 1914-18

DOHP 093		Interviewer	Scott Clark
Date of interview	14-Jun-88		
Name	Agnes Rico*	Age left full-time education	13
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Year of birth (place of birth)	1911 (Glasgow)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	Insufficient or conflicting data	Own job(s)	mill worker, shop assistant
Sisters	Insufficient or conflicting data	Spouse's job(s)	owned chip shop
Birth position	15 of 15		
Year of marriage	1935	Notes	arrived in Dundee c. 1918, father died c. 1911

DOHP 094		Interviewer	Scott Clark
Date of interview	23-Jun-88		
Name	Linda Cobb*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	packer, caretaker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1915 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	laundry worker
Sisters	5	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1945	Notes	

DOHP 095		Interviewer		Scott Clark
Date of interview	30-Jun-88			
Name	Bill Wainwright*	Age left full-time education 14		
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	Salvation Army officer	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1915 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	housewife	
Brothers	0	Own job(s)	fish canner	
Sisters	2	Spouse's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data	
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data			
Year of marriage	insufficient or conflicting data	Notes		

DOHP 096		Interviewer		Scott Clark
Date of interview	01-Aug-88			
Name	Sarah Page*	Age left full-time education 14		
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data	
Year of birth (place of birth)	1918 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	insufficient or conflicting data	
Brothers	insufficient or conflicting data	Own job(s)	mill worker	
Sisters	insufficient or conflicting data	Spouse's job(s)	labourer	
Birth position	insufficient or conflicting data			
Year of marriage	insufficient or conflicting data	Notes		

DOHP 097		Interviewer	Scott Clark
Date of Interview	08-Aug-88		
Name	Jim Flight*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's Job(s)	fitter
Year of birth (place of birth)	1912 (Dundee)	Mother's Job(s)	housewife
Brothers	4	Own Job(s)	mill worker, fitter
Sisters	3	Spouse's Job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1935	Notes	

DOHP 098		Interviewer	Scott Clark
Date of interview	29-Aug-88		
Name	Meg Rutherford	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's Job(s)	mill worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1906 (Dundee)	Mother's Job(s)	mill worker
Brothers	1	Own Job(s)	mill worker
Sisters	1	Spouse's Job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1927	Notes	

DOHP 099		Interviewer	
		Scott Clark	
Date of interview	08-Sep-88		
Name	Jane Whyte*	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	female	Father's job(s)	fish merchant
Year of birth (place of birth)	1904 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	shop assistant
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	shop assistant
Sisters	1	Spouse's job(s)	electrician
Birth position	Insufficient or conflicting data		
Year of marriage	1930	Notes	

DOHP 100		Interviewer	
		Graham R. Smith	
Date of interview	12-Dec-83		
Name	Patrick Rice	Age left full-time education	14
Gender	male	Father's job(s)	labourer
Year of birth (place of birth)	1912 (Dundee)	Mother's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Brothers	1	Own job(s)	mill worker, professional boxer, labourer, night watchman
Sisters	0	Spouse's job(s)	Insufficient or conflicting data
Birth position	1 of 2		
Year of marriage	1932	Notes	father died c. 1916

** Pseudonym requested; Note: date of interview is the date first interviewed; year of marriage is year of first marriage*

‘Lochee Lives’ and ‘Lochee Lives - The Return’

Lochee Lives provides a more recent example of the use of community history. The event was designed, in the first half of 1993, to encourage interest in local history in Lochee; provide an introduction to reminiscence for older people and carers in sheltered and residential housing; establish contacts for a local history group.

The initiative began with the *Lochee Lives* exhibition exploring the history of the local Boys Brigade 6th/8th Hall and the surrounding area. The exhibition encouraged recollections based on photographs and artefacts. Morning sessions brought carers and older people from local sheltered and residential housing to reminiscence sessions. The afternoons were open to the public. Numerous photographs and items were lent to the Exhibition. In total around 400 people attended, with around 50 contacts generated for future work. The original Exhibition was then shown in Dundee Central Library.

In July 1994 the exhibition was re-shown in Lochee along with the additional material gathered from the local community. Future plans, supported by around 200 of those who attended the second event, include investigating the possibilities of a *Lochee Lives* publication.

Both exhibitions generated six video cassette recordings (6 hours) and three audio cassette recordings (4 hours).

**St. Leonard's History Group, 'Working Lives' Project (SLHG),
group interviews**

Audio tapes 1 to 7. Recorded in St. Leonard's Residential Home, between 14 February 1996 and 8 May 1996.¹

Name	Susan Carstairs	Father's job(s)	railway train driver
Gender	female	Mother's job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1908 (Dundee)	Own job(s)	mill shifter, mill spinner, bakery assistant, cleaner in cinema
Brothers	3	Spouse's job(s)	iron moulder
Sisters	3	Own children	6
Birth position	3 of 7		
Year of marriage	1926	Notes	father died in 1916

¹ All group members participated in every group session.

Name	Nell Cousens	Father's job(s)	tenant farmer, farm worker
Gender	female	Mother's job(s)	farm worker
Year of birth (place of birth)	1923 (Gauldswell)	Own job(s)	domestic servant, farm maid
Brothers	1 (step)	Spouse's job(s)	airgunner RAF
Sisters	0	Own children	1
Birth position	2 of 2		
Year of marriage	1943	Notes	mother died 1923; husband died in 1943

Name	Vince Fagan	Father's job(s)	stone paver
Gender	Male	Mother's job(s)	mill work, cleaner
Year of birth (place of birth)	1910 (Dundee)	Own job(s)	mill heckler, hotel porter
Brothers	5	Spouse's job(s)	bus conductress
Sisters	7	Own children	1
Birth position	9 of 13		
Year of marriage	1936	Notes	wife left him c.1938

Name	John Grant	Father's Job(s)	railway train driver
Gender	male	Mother's Job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1923 (Dalwhinnie)	Own Job(s)	motor mechanic
Brothers	0	Spouse's Job(s)	
Sisters	1	Own children	0
Birth position	2 of 2		
Year of marriage	single	Notes	

Name	Ruby Lorimer	Father's Job(s)	carter
Gender	female	Mother's Job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1927 (Dundee)	Own Job(s)	path blower in mill, cleaner in light engineering factory
Brothers	2	Spouse's Job(s)	butcher, assembler in light engineering factory
Sisters	3	Own children	5
Birth position	5 of 6		
Year of marriage	1943	Notes	

Name	Annie Tod	Father's Job(s)	mechanic, manager
Gender	female	Mother's Job(s)	housewife
Year of birth (place of birth)	1901 (Tayport)	Own Job(s)	shop assistant, waitress
Brothers	3	Spouse's Job(s)	chief steward in merchant navy
Sisters	2	Own children	0
Birth position	6 of 6		
Year of marriage	1927	Notes	

Name	Mary Wright*	Father's Job(s)	unknown
Gender	female	Mother's Job(s)	unknown
Year of birth (place of birth)	1905 (Glasgow)	Own Job(s)	domestic servant
Brothers	unknown	Spouse's Job(s)	domestic servant
Sisters	unknown	Own children	0
Birth position	unknown		
Year of marriage	unknown	Notes	she was abandoned as a baby

** Pseudonym requested*

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