A HISTORY of the SCOTTISH PEOPLE

SUMMARY of ECONOMY AND SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND 1840-1940



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This is Chapter 10 of 10. The others are:

Education, Employment, Health, Housing, Income, Leisure, Migration, Religion, Transport

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1. INTRODUCTION

The hundred years between 1840 and 1940 witnessed a profound change in the economic and social structure of Scotland. Indeed, Scots living in 1840 would have been astounded at the scale and pace of change in the century ahead. In those days Scotland was far from being a land of dark satanic mills, rather it was more a half-way house between the old and the new world. Over two-thirds of the population lived and worked on the land, or in small industrial villages making a living from handloom weaving. Highly religious and reasonably well-educated in the socially mixed parish schools, Scots in the countryside lived a narrow and insular lifestyle, but one which was of a tolerable standard. The only

exception was the Highlands where the people were almost universally impoverished.

The insularity of rural life was reinforced by the primitiveness of the means of transport and communications. The dominant mode of transport was foot or horse and cart along makeshift roads, or by canal or riverway in wooden barges and ships. The railway system was still in its infancy - there was no rail link between Edinburgh and Glasgow until 1842. Factories did exist but they were confined to textiles; indeed, in 1840, nine out of ten workers in manufacturing were employed in this branch of industry. Only in the growing urban centres of Glasgow and Dundee were there signs of the new developments to come as migrants from the Highlands and Ireland crowded in looking for work and accommodation.

Early social problems connected with urban living such as bad housing and ill-health and disease were accelerated by the rapid increase in the population. Those unfortunate to fall into poverty or ill-health had no Welfare State to fall back on. What measure of relief that was available consisted of hand-outs from charities and the Poor Law. Daily life in the first half of the 19th century, outwith that enjoyed by the ruling classes, was monotonous and routine for most Scots with few diversions outside the culture of heavy drinking in dens and taverns. Work was more important than leisure and this was reflected in the length of the working day _ 14 to 16 hours.

The tedium of life was underscored by the diet of the broad mass of the people. In the north of Scotland the population apparently existed on a diet of herring and potatoes. However, in the more prosperous southern half of the country a well-paid artisan might enjoy a varied diet which included meat, but this was still beyond the majority of unskilled workers and their families.

One hundred years later things could not be more different. The vast majority of Scots lived in urban areas, with the highest concentration of people in the Central Belt. Agriculture had declined substantially as an employer of labour and rural depopulation had become a problem in the Highlands. An industrial structure based on coal and steel, engineering and shipbuilding dominated the economy of Scotland. The aeroplane, the motor car, the steamship, the radio and the telephone all improved the ability and speed of people to travel and to communicate. Life was faster and more varied. The commercialisation of leisure had witnessed the growth of professional football, the music hall, the cinema, and other forms of popular entertainment. Concomitant with these developments was the growth of the state and its role in people's daily lives.

The old policy of non-intervention in social and economic matters had given way to an aggressive role for the state in dealing with the social costs of industrialisation. State welfare schemes in regard to health, housing and poverty were well established by the 1930s. Education was freely available and the school-leaving age had increased from ten in 1872 to fourteen in 1901. These developments in social policy laid the basis for the introduction of the Welfare State after 1945. The purpose of the following text is to discuss in a general manner the ways in which these changes came about. The discussion, therefore, is designed to bring out the basic issues and themes of Scottish economic and social history over the period 1840 and 1940, rather than provide a detailed

analysis of specific questions, such as the impact of the 1st World War on Scottish society. To compensate for this broad-based approach, specific themes, including employment patterns, transport, emigration and immigration, health, housing, poverty and wealth and religion will be dealt with in detail in a number of supporting texts.

2. PRE-INDUSTRIAL SCOTLAND 1800-1850

2.1 ECONOMIC CHANGE

2.1.1 INDUSTRIALISATION BEFORE 1840

Around 1760 the Scottish economy found itself undergoing the beginnings of transformation as a shift from agriculture to industry started to take place. However, the transformation occurred at a more leisurely pace compared to that in England; indeed, the first phase of industrialisation in Scotland could be described as not so much a bang but a whimper. Growth was first apparent in linen, but cotton soon overtook the former as it proved more adaptable to the new textile machinery that emerged in the late 18th century. A series of inventions revolutionised the production of textile goods. The spinning jenny of the 1760s gave way under the introduction of steam power to mule spinning in the 1780s. This invention changed the whole nature of production.

The concentration of cotton mills in country districts, where water power was the main source of energy, was broken and the mills were re-located near the new sources of energy _ the Lanarkshire coalfields. This made it possible to bring the work to the workers rather than the workers to the work. Initially, spinning led the way in the cotton industry's technological development, with weaving confined to handlooms worked by literally thousands of weavers in their own homes. However, the introduction of power-loom weaving after 1815 saw things change.

By the 1830s the weaving process in England was almost completely mechanised. However, it was not until the 1850s that machine weaving displaced the handlooms in Scotland. Despite the slow pace of technological change, cotton laid the foundations of industrialisation in Scotland in as much as its development led to the growth of factories, and its sources of energy encouraged growth in the coal industry. Moreover, because cotton mills were expensive to build and run entrepreneurs in Scotland became used to risk-taking which saw them ready to invest in new industrial ventures. This was important for, as the cotton industry began to Page 2.SUMMARY experience difficulties in the 1830s, new industrial developments became an attractive alternative investment for business people. The iron industry was one such alternative. The invention in 1828 by Neilson of the hot blast furnace saw the Scottish iron industry take off in spectacular fashion. By the mid-1840s the struggling iron industry, which in the previous 20 years had accounted for only 5% of British iron production, raised its share to 25%. The growth of the iron industry encouraged greater efficiency in the coal industry and as a result production increased by leaps and bounds. Both industries benefited from the expansion of the railways. The foundations of the industrial structure of mid-Victorian Scotland were being laid. It only took the introduction of iron shipbuilding and

marine engineering, essentially after 1850, to supply the missing parts of the industrial jigsaw.

2.1.2 TRANSFORMATION OF AGRICULTURE

The growth of the industrial economy was, however, dependent on major changes in agriculture. Industrialisation could not be sustained unless agriculture was capable of producing enough to feed that part of the population which was devoted to activities other than growing food. To meet increased demand new labour-saving machinery and improved farming methods were introduced. These also helped industry to expand as less workers were needed on the land, thus more labour could be released for work in industry and the towns. At the same time, the greater efficiency of farming reduced the need to import food. The money saved on the nation's food bill could then be relocated into financing industrial development. For example, a large number of landowners put money into developing the coal industry. Thus, changes in agriculture were necessary to stimulate and sustain industrialisation. The farms of Lowland Scotland largely achieved these goals by concentrating farm land in larger units and employing scientific methods of farming, such as crop rotation and enclosure. However, the Highlands remained a drain on the economy after 1815. The collapse of the kelp industry and the decrease in prices for black cattle created a crisis in Highland society. The solution to chronic over-population and under-employment was found in the migration of large numbers of the Highland population to the Lowlands and other places to make room for sheep.

2.2 URBAN GROWTH AND SOCIAL DISTRESS

The ability of agriculture to feed more people and the capability of industry to absorb the surplus population in work saw the population of the country nearly double from 1.625m in 1801 to 2.896m in 1851. The most rapidly growing areas of population were the industrial cities. Glasgow's population mushroomed from 77,000 in 1801 to 275,000 forty years later. Dundee saw its population in the same period grow spectacularly from 26,000 to 166,000. Equally affected were the smaller industrial towns like Paisley, which witnessed a dramatic increase in population from 4,000 in the 1750s to 24,000 in 1800, before nearly doubling again to 47,000 in 1821. The early growth in the manufacturing population was largely due to the growth in cotton which in 1812 was estimated to employ 150,000 people but, later, heavy industries such as iron-making also opened up employment for many people.

2.2.1 MIGRATION

The influx of rural labourers both from the Scottish Highlands and Ireland as well as the natural growth of the native urban population created unprecedented problems in Scottish cities. Scotland, which ranked tenth in the world urban league in 1700, was fourth by 1800, and by 1850 only Britain was more urbanised. Migration accounted for most of the growth; indeed, of the ten principal Scottish towns in 1851, only 47% of their inhabitants had been born in them. Highlanders already accounted for 29% of the population in Greenock in 1801. Their numbers were soon dwarfed by the influx of Irish immigrants. In spite of the fact that Irish-born residents only accounted for 7% of the total

Scottish population in 1851, estimates suggest that in 1841 almost a quarter of the people of the western Lowlands were of mainly Catholic Irish extraction.

The poverty of the Irish saw them concentrate in and around the areas near the ports they arrived at, in particular Glasgow. Indeed, Glasgow was said in 1841 to have 44,000 Irish-born residents, or 16%, of a total population of 274,000, but if we include those of Irish extraction the figure might be as high as 33%. The social problems arising from such a rapid and unplanned influx of people were manifold. Pressure on accommodation and the environment were obvious outcomes, but equally the education system, the Poor Law and religious institutions found it almost impossible to cope with the new stresses placed on them by explosive urban growth.

The industrial shock cities such as Glasgow experienced the worst incidences of overcrowding, disease and poverty. Indeed, Glasgow was considered to be the unhealthiest city in Great Britain at this time. However, more service-based urban economies, such as that of Edinburgh, were not immune from the social tremors of rapid population growth. Although we know little regarding the number of inhabitants per room until the 1861 census, the degree of overcrowding can be gauged from the mortality statistics. Edinburgh's death rate climbed from 25 per 1000 inhabitants in 1810-1819, to 26.2 in the following decade, reaching 29 in the period 1830-1839. The death rates, particularly from fever, in Scotland were higher than in England, and much of that can be explained by the greater incidence of poverty in the former.

2.2.2 POVERTY

As the able-bodied poor had no legal right to poor relief in Scotland, and since wages were, on the whole, less than in England, the problem of poverty was more acute north of the border. The influx of rural and Irish immigrants in a semi-destitute condition only made matters worse. One contemporary estimate put the number of casual workers in Glasgow in 1831 at a quarter of the total labour force. Half of Scotland's handloom weavers were in poverty in 1834. With such a large proportion of the population in extreme difficulties it is little wonder that multiple deprivation was endemic in Scottish society.

2.2.3 EDUCATION

One way out of the mire of social degradation might have been through education. However, the educational system which had been developed to deal with a rural population and a static urban community found itself unable to cope with the demands on it. It was estimated that in 1834 around 20% of Scottish children between the ages of five and fourteen were not receiving schooling of any kind and in specific areas the problem was even worse. In Old Machar parish, Aberdeen only 1 in 25 children was in school; in industrial Paisley it was 1 in 15. Glasgow had only one-third of its children in school. The low levels of children in education was entirely due to industry's need for child labour; a phenomenon which continued despite the passing of Factory Acts in the 1830s and 40s.

2.2.4 RELIGION

Although Scotland in the 19th century is perceived by some Scots to have been a highly religious society, the figures for church membership and attendance in this period would question this view. The truth is that the spiritual care of the Scottish people was highly deficient as church accommodation fell behind the needs of the population, especially in the urban centres. In Glasgow there were 2,200 inhabitants to every church in 1801, twenty years later the figure had grown to 3,000. Rationing of pastoral care was achieved through the system of pew renting which kept many poor people out of church, as did the need for fine or 'Sunday best' clothes. So, only 25% of Glasgow's and 23% of Edinburgh's population attended church in the mid-1830s, although the figure was higher in rural areas.

The split in the Church of Scotland in 1843 which led to the setting up of the rival Free Church confused the situation among Presbyterians and for a time only served to make matters worse until a church-building programme was underway. However, the existence of anti-Catholicism allowed religion a prominent role in popular culture even among those designated as non-attenders. For Catholics, the poverty of the Irish and Highland migrants made chapel building a very slow process and one which did not take off until after 1840.

2.3 CONCLUSIONS

Thus at the end of the 1840s Scotland was a developing industrial and urban society exhibiting a wide number of social problems for which the solutions seemed far off. Much of the answer lay in broadening the base of the economy beyond textiles and providing more opportunity for work for the thousands of hopeful souls flooding into the urban conurbations of central Scotland from the rural areas of Scotland and Ireland.

3. THE WORKSHOP OF THE WORLD 1850-1890

3.1 INDUSTRIAL CHANGE IN VICTORIAN SCOTLAND 3.1.1 ECONOMIC GROWTH

Scotland's economic progress in the second half of the 19th century was built on the combination of skill, cheap energy supplies and inventiveness. Scots in this period became famous all over the world as inventors and scientists. The greater recognition awarded to science and engineering in the universities of Scotland as compared to England was in many ways responsible for this. However, the key to economic success was to harness the cheap supplies of coal and iron ore in the west of Scotland to new technologies. In the pre-1850 period cotton and the railways had acted as catalysts for change, but their impact was not lasting.

It was the emergence of metal shipbuilding which provided the means with which to tie up all these assets into an integrated economic structure. The inventiveness of the Scots gave them an early lead in marine technology which resulted in iron and, later, steel ships motored by steam power, and this was sustained by the relatively cheap cost of coal and iron ore. The high skill of

Scottish metal workers and their lower wages compared to other parts of Britain also provided a cost advantage to shipbuilders not found anywhere in Britain. The combination of these factors allowed Lowland Scotland to make up ground in a remarkably short time on its southern neighbour, and in some areas actually surpass England in terms of economic performance.

As the economy began to broaden its base and the standard of living increased a greater number of Scots began to enjoy a more respectable and varied lifestyle. Wages increased and the greater prosperity was reflected in the growing popularity of leisure pursuits, such as golf and bowls. Social problems began to be seriously addressed and important advances were made in the areas of education and housing, moreover, the churches were also becoming more conscious of the need to reach the working classes. Scotland it seems was becoming more sensitive to the social costs of industrialisation.

3.1.2 THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRY

The success of the Scottish economy can be seen most clearly in the progress of its major industries. Shipbuilding on the Clyde, helped by advances in marine engineering and its lower production costs, was employing 23% of the total shipbuilding labour force of Britain as early as 1871. In 1913 the area launched more shipping tonnage than Germany and the USA put together. The coal industry saw massive rises in output from 7.4m tons in 1854 to a peak of 42.5m tons in 1913. Output of pig iron increased from 0.797m tons in 1854 to a peak of 1.206m in 1869/70.

The growth of engineering complemented developments in shipbuilding and other transport industries, particularly the railways. The Springburn district of Glasgow became the world's leading manufacturer of locomotives. Textiles, as an employer of labour, was still important to the economy and by the 1850s the powerloom had been introduced to weaving bringing about the demise of the handloom weaver. The jute industry of Dundee rose to world leadership after 1850 as did the thread industry of Paisley.

In agriculture the much heralded disaster following the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 never occurred. The mixed farming system of the Lowlands prospered in spite of the fact that agriculture in Scotland as a whole lost over 100,000 workers between 1851 and 1901. The Highlands, however, continued to be an area for widespread social concern. The encouragement given to migration as the only solution to the problem of underemployment and chronic land hunger did much to ameliorate conditions. The removal of landless cottars eased the pressure on resources and the land and, combined with seasonal work in the fishing industry and lowland agriculture, the crofters were able to support themselves and their families at a tolerable level. A phenomenon which they had not experienced for some time.

3.1.3 WAGES AND LIFESTYLES

What has been described as Scotland's Victorian economic miracle was also reflected in earnings. In spite of periodic unemployment, the wages of large

numbers of Scots workers rose relative to English levels, although Scotland north of the Tay remained relatively poor. Wages in the building industry reached parity with England in the 1850s; and between 1830 and 1880 stonemasons in the Glasgow area saw their money wages increase by around 35 shillings (£1 75p), or 230%, for a reduced working week of 43 hours. Other trades also experienced rises in real wages.

The general increase in incomes, although for the most part still below those in England, combined with the fall in working hours opened up a whole new world of leisure for workers and their families, particularly those in skilled occupations. Leisure pursuits such as golf, bowls, and, later, football became popular, as did the music hall. There was less emphasis among the working classes on traditional drinking customs and more concern with the family and home. Of course, leisure had to be afforded and this necessitated commitment to thrift.

The mid-Victorian decades witnessed the growth of savings banks, friendly societies and co-operative societies as institutions of working class self-help. The numbers joining temperance organisations also grew in the 1860s and 1870s.. The Independent Order of Good Templars and the Independent Order of Rechabites were the largest societies in Scotland, with the former's Airdrie branch being the largest temperance lodge in the world. However, while things undoubtedly improved for most Scots, the increase in prosperity was unevenly shared.

An assessment of the distribution of income and wealth in Scotland in 1867 by Dudley Baxter showed that 10% of the population received over 50% of national income. Those in the top 1% of income earners annually received 200 times more than the bottom 30%. Some of these men were fabulously rich, with industrialists such as ironmaster James Baird leaving an estate worth £1,190,868 on his death in 1876. The uneven distribution of wealth is also shown in the fact that only 12% of Scots had estates worth making a will for in 1881, and that the yearly wage for a well-paid skilled worker, such as a compositor, only amounted to £78 in 1880. The skilled worker would have had to have worked for over 15,000 years before he could have earned what Baird left on his death. The super-rich were followed by the substantial middle classes whose average annual income was around £145 in 1867. They enjoyed a lifestyle which revolved around work, family and the kirk. Although they did not enjoy the social trappings of the super-rich, which included lavish houses and country estates, they experienced all this on reduced scale. What marked them out from the rest of Scottish society was servant-keeping. Over 55% of female workers in Edinburgh in 1871, although somewhat less in Dundee and Glasgow, were employed as domestic servants.

3.2 SOCIAL PROBLEMS

3.2.1 HEALTH AND HOUSING

The improvement in living standards also coincided with an upsurge in civic pride. The Scottish middle classes after 1850 showed a willingness to confront some of the major social problems in the cities. A ticketing system was

introduced in Glasgow in 1866 to control the numbers living in slum housing, and was later extended to all Scottish burghs. Slum housing itself was attacked with the setting up in 1866 of the Glasgow Improvement Trust. By 1902 the town council owned 2,488 houses. Other reforms in the area of public health were of benefit to the whole of society. In 1859 the Glasgow authorities opened a supply of clean water from Loch Katrine in the Trossachs, at a cost of £1.5m. This was effective in minimising the impact of epidemics of diseases such as cholera. Edinburgh followed Glasgow's example and began to draw in water from St Mary's Loch in the Borders. Both of the leading cities appointed medical officers of health in the 1860s, which set a trend for other large burghs to follow.

3.2.2 EDUCATION

The educational system was also overhauled. The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 made schooling compulsory for those between the ages of five and thirteen with parents liable for prosecution if their children were not attending school on a regular basis. By 1902 illiteracy for both sexes had been eliminated in the Lowlands and the impoverished and isolated Highlands. The Glasgow School Board was able to wipe out truancy by 1900, eliminating a non-attendance rate of 40% in 1871.

3.2.3 RELIGION

Equally, religious institutions were showing themselves more amenable to reaching a wider constituency than the prosperous middle classes and the upper working class. The religious census of 1851 showed that, unlike England, the potential strength of the churches lay in the urban rather than rural areas of Scotland. This was recognised by the churches when in the 1880s under the influence of the new theology the church became more sensitive to the social causes of poverty. Instead of blaming poverty on the moral and psychological weaknesses of the individual as it had done for most of the 19th century, the church was beginning to look to the failings in the market economy. The Glasgow Presbytery's inquiry into housing conditions in the 1890s was an important sign of this new sensitivity, as was the establishment of the Christian Social Union in the early 1900s.

3.3 CONCLUSIONS

By the 1890s the picture might have seemed rosy: economic growth was inducing complementary improvements in the standard of living which, in turn, was actively transforming the social experiences of the Scottish people. Additionally, Scottish society was showing a greater awareness of the social problems created by rapid industrialisation. However, much of this was a delusion.

4. SCOTLAND AND RELATIVE ECONOMIC DECLINE 1890-1914

4.1 INDUSTRIAL FAILINGS

Although there were tremendous industrial achievements in this period, weaknesses began to surface which heralded future disaster. The cotton industry, with the exception of the thread sector, collapsed in the 1890s unable to compete on the basis of low wages with Lancashire. The heavier industries likewise were showing signs of slowdown in productivity. The iron industry never again reached its 1870 peak of output as supplies of local iron ore declined and imports grew dramatically adding substantially to costs. The steel industry which had grown between 1880 and 1900 also began to run into difficulties, to the extent that its share of British output fell from 20% in 1900 to 18% in 1913. Even the shipbuilding industry, the jewel in Scotland's industrial crown, experienced falling profit margins. Denny's shipyard on the Clyde between 1909 and 1913 made a loss on 28% of its contracts. There was also a growing reliance on the state to provide warship orders to maintain the buoyancy of the industry; a trend which grew after 1918.

4.2 EMIGRATION

That the economic miracle was unconvincing to many Scots is demonstrated in emigration statistics. In the 1870s emigration from Scotland had slowed to a trickle, but in the years 1901 to 1910 net emigration was running at the equivalent of 52% of the natural increase in the population, or some 282,000 people. Opportunities seemed better in the USA, Canada, Australia and South Africa than in Scotland. Although many of the emigrants to the New World were from the Lowland towns, the numbers leaving the Highlands were still significant. The collapse of the fishing industry in the 1880s had impoverished many crofters and they were unable to afford the rents on their crofts. This led to rent strikes and land grabbing and provoked retaliatory measures in the form of evictions by the landlords. The result was the Crofters' Wars of the mid-1880s. The government intervened and provided the crofters with security of tenure in an Act of Parliament. But in spite of this the population still continued to decline as the attraction of Lowland Scotland and overseas increased in power.

4.3 SOCIAL ISSUES

4.3.1 INCOMES

For many Scots the enduring social problems associated with industrialisation continued to blight their lives. In spite of reform in 1845, the Poor Law still discriminated against the able-bodied poor. Under the 'Law of Settlement' the Irish were singled out for particularly harsh treatment, with regular deportations. Spending on the poor was also parsimonious. Expenditure increased from £740,000 in 1864 to £1,600,000 in 1914, but this was still grossly deficient in relation to need. It was also less than expenditure in England. Indeed, the latter on average spent a third more on its poor than Scotland did. For those in work outside the skilled trades the picture was not much better. Women earned much less than men and there was a large gulf between the skilled and unskilled worker.

The Highlands and Islands remained poor, with agricultural wages in 1907 13% below the British average. Furthermore, the most sensitive indicator of poverty the infant mortality rate - increased as the 19th century wore on. The rate increased from 118 per 1,000 live births in the period 1854-1859 to 122 in 1904-1905; a figure much higher than that for England and Wales. This was primarily the result of poverty but it also had an obvious connection with housing conditions. In Glasgow 32% of all children who died before the age of five in the late 1890s lived in one apartment houses, while those in five apartments only account for 2% of deaths in this age group.

Combating poverty became an important aspect of government policy in the first decade of the 20th century. As most surveys into poverty highlighted unemployment and old age as major causes of poverty, legislation was passed by the Liberal government in the years 1906-1912 to deal with these issues. The most important was the National Insurance Acts of 1911-1912, which provided cover for ill-health and unemployment for workers in a selected range of trades. For the old an Old Age Pension was introduced which gave those over the age of 70 a pension of 5 shillings (25p) a week.

Although progressive, the social programme of the Liberals concentrated on skilled workers in industries subject to periodic unemployment. This still left many vulnerable people outside the scope of state protection and dependent on the Poor Law. Thus, the problem of widespread poverty continued to scar Scottish and British society. 4.3.2 HOUSING Housing, in spite of earlier reforms, continued to remain a massive social problem. The 1861 census had showed that 34% of all Scottish housing consisted of only one room - the 'single end' - and a further 37% consisted of two rooms. Fifty years later the census showed that while the number of people living in one-roomed houses declined to 13% of the total, the number of those living in two-roomed houses remained high at 41% of the total. Of course, in the large cities the situation was much worse. Glasgow still had two-thirds of its population in this type of cramped accommodation, as did Dundee.

A survey of Edinburgh in 1913 revealed that there were over 7,000 one-roomed houses, of which 94% shared a common water closet and 43% a common sink. In Glasgow there were 44,345 such houses and of these 93% shared a water closet, but most had their own sink. The position was not much better in Glasgow's 111,451 two-roomed houses as 62% of them shared a water closet. There was a need for good quality public sector housing let at rents people could afford, but the dominance of property owners and their interests on town councils blocked such a move. The public health measures introduced in the large urban centres in the 1850s and 60s were ignored by smaller towns and villages. Lochgelly in Fife in 1867 had two water closets for a population of 2,000. Sewage was thrown on the streets where it seeped through the ground surface into a mine well from which the public water supply was drawn.

4.3.2 EDUCATION

The slum existence of many Scots made them impervious of attempts to raise them on a moral or spiritual plane. Educational reforms had widened access at all levels, but secondary and higher education was still the preserve of the middle and upper classes. The famous high schools of Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as Perth Academy, had no working class pupils in 1886. The school boards found it difficult to develop secondary education because of limited public funds and this only served to emphasise class.

4.3.3 RELIGION

The social gospel of the churches was also failing to reach the 'godless poor'. A survey carried out in 1900 showed that the unskilled did not attend church in large numbers. In mining areas evangelists found it difficult to win converts; in industrial Hamilton the presbytery found that from one-fifth to a half of Protestant families did not attend church in the 1890s. Ten years earlier in one area of Glasgow noted for its unskilled working population only two out of every seven men surveyed had any connection with the church. In spite of the abolition of pew rents, the working class was still alienated from the church and its ministry. The exception was the Catholic Church, but its constituency was always largely lower working class.

Although working class attendance at church was not high, religion still played an important part in people's lives. Birth, marriage and death were important life cycle events for which the presence of a minister or priest was sought. Religion also divided Scotland on sectarian lines. Catholic Irish families suffered from the prejudices of presbyterian Scotland. They were depicted by the media and the pulpit as uncivilised and drunken, idle and lazy. The same did not apply to Irish Protestants who migrated in large numbers in the 1870s and 1880s to Clydeside. The growing large Irish Protestant population increased religious tensions as they brought their Orange Lodges with them. By 1913-1914 Glasgow had 107 Orange Lodges out of a total of 400 for the whole of the United Kingdom, and certain occupations, such as boilermaking, were recruited for on a religious basis. Prejudice and discrimination combined to keep the Catholic Irish at the bottom of the heap.

4.4 CONCLUSIONS

On the eve of the 1st World War Scotland, in spite of the growth of its economy, was still a country marked by deep inequalities in the distribution of wealth. Many of its citizens were condemned to stunted and unfulfilled lives as they were caught up in a seemingly never ending cycle of poverty and despair. There were also signs that the industrial base was too fragile and narrow. The poverty of many of its inhabitants inhibited the growth of consumer-based industries and this intensified the reliance on heavy industry, whose markets were international rather than domestic, and because of this subject to wild fluctuations in demand. However, the armaments build up in the years preceding war covered up the cracks in this increasingly outdated economic structure and the social problems were forgotten about as patriotic fervour gripped the Scottish population when war broke out in August 1914. Voluntary recruitment was proportionately higher in Scotland than anywhere else in the UK.

5. WAR AND ECONOMIC DEPRESSION 1914-1940

5.1 THE IMPACT OF WAR

The 1st World War brought a number of far-reaching economic and social changes. The most important were the enhanced role of the state in everyday life and the shift of women out of the home into industry. Because of high voluntary recruitment rates labour shortages became a problem in the munitions factories and shipyards. The government with the agreement of employers and unions introduced women on jobs previously the preserve of skilled male workers. Women also found themselves employed as bus and tram conductors. Housing was also affected with rent controls being introduced in 1915 following a rent strike on Clydeside. In addition licensing of public house hours were introduced, particularly in areas which had munitions factories. Industry was also affected as the government took into temporary ownership not only the munitions factories, but also the coalfields and the railways. Scotland, like the rest of Britain, was increasingly subject to state regulation and the success of the venture convinced many of the need to nationalise major industries. However, this had to wait until the 1940s.

5.2 ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

5.2.1 UNEMPLOYMENT

Following the end of hostilities in 1918 the Scottish economy enjoyed a brief period of expansion as a re-stocking boom occurred. However, the honeymoon was soon over as the economy plunged headlong into depression in 1920 where it remained until the rearmament boom of the late 1930s. The return of industry to private hands meant the end to state subsidies and the restoration of Page 9.SUMMARY competition. As a result the Scottish economy experienced lower rates of growth, performed more poorly over a range of industries, and endured a level of unemployment much higher than the rest of the UK. Scotland paid the price for its overcommitment to heavy industry. Indeed, most of the unemployment was concentrated in these occupations and trades with devastating results for those made redundant.

At a national level unemployment in the 1920s never fell below 14% of the insured workforce, however, in the 1930s the figure reached 20%. Some areas were worse hit than others, particularly those associated with the staple industries. Industries such as shipbuilding, steelmaking and textiles lost thousands of workers as orders dried up and markets were lost. The total size of the labour force contracted in Lanarkshire by 55% between the end of 1920 and the end of 1938, while in the more mixed economy of Fife it fell by 27%, and in the service-based economy of the Lothians it was 21%. Although unemployment was more concentrated in the west of Scotland, in the east the figure was still high and in Dundee Scotland had one of its worst employment blackspots.

Mass unemployment was a reflection of poor industrial performance. Output fell in most branches of industry. In shipbuilding production fell from 650,000 tons in 1919 to 74,000 tons in 1933, a figure lower than the 1850s. Coalmining was equally hard hit with output falling from a peak of 42.5m tons in 1913 to an

average of 30m between 1919 and 1938, while exports of coal fell by 20% between 1913 and 1935.

5.2.2 ECONOMIC INTIATIVES AND POLICIES

Initiatives from industry and government were forthcoming to try and deal with massive economic problems of these decades but on the whole they were half-hearted and only contributed to the numbers out of work. In shipbuilding an organisation _ the National Shipbuilders Security Company _ was set up in 1930 to purchase and close down shippards regarded as obsolete or empty. As a result of its activities 35% of Scottish shipbuilding capacity was sterilised, but only a meagre 5% improvement in costs was achieved. These measures failed to achieve the radical overhaul of structure and working methods that the architects of the plan hoped for and the outbreak of war in 1939 brought its activities to an end.

The failure of private initiatives was paralleled in government industrial policies. During the period 1934-1938, using tax relief schemes, loans and other incentives, attempts were made to encourage industries to move from areas of high unemployment to depressed regions. The Hillington industrial estate in Glasgow was one product of government regional policy. The total number of jobs created in the whole of the UK as a result of these policies was only 50,000, while in 1938 there was still 1.8m people out of work. Scotland's unemployment rate was still running at a remarkable 15.9% in 1939, 5.1% above the UK average. Firms were reluctant to move to areas of high unemployment and low demand and this simply intensified Scotland's dependency on traditional industries.

5.2.3 EMIGRATION

In the past emigration had been seen as the answer to the problem of unemployment and this traditional remedy was seized on in the 1920s by thousands of desperate people. In the period 1921-1931 Scotland lost 400,000 of its population, or 8%, compared to only .5% in England. The Highlands suffered disproportionately as the collapse of the white fishing industry in the 1920s, and the decline in the demand for seasonal labour in agriculture, saw many Highlanders, mainly young, leave their crofts for a future elsewhere. However, by the 1930s many of these families who had emigrated in search of a better life had returned home, especially from the USA where the economic depression was even more severe, and the out migration rate fell to under 100,000. Added pressure in the job market came from a rise in population some 30% higher than in England. With large numbers already out of work returning migrants and the growing population helped to increase social tensions in Scotland.

5.2.4 SOCIAL WELFARE

The state had assumed since the passing of the National Insurance Act of 1912 that unemployment was a temporary phenomenon and that only workers at most risk from cyclical trade depression needed cover. The unstated intention of

the reform was to keep the skilled respectable male worker and his family from falling into the under class of Edwardian society. However, with demobilisation and the downturn in the economy in 1920 more workers had to be included in the state scheme, particularly those excluded from national insurance schemes or who had exhausted their right to benefit. Rather than provide public works schemes to deal with the problem of unemployment, low cost benefit the 'dole' was the government's preferred option. Even this became too expensive as the Wall Street crash of 1929 intensified the economic depression and the numbers out of work rocketed.

In the early 1930s 25% of the insured workforce of the west of Scotland found themselves out of work. As a cost cutting measure the National Government introduced the hated means test, which reduced the incomes of many people and caused families to split up. However, although harsh in its operation, the welfare provided by the state did allow families a modicum of respectability. A symptom of this was the fall in infant mortality in the inter war years.

5.2.5 HOUSING

The government commitment to Lloyd George's election slogan 'Homes fit for Heroes' led to the passing of the Addison Act of 1919. This began a programme of house building in the public sector. In the 1920s and 1930s the local authorities with the support of central government built 6,500 new dwellings in Aberdeen, 8,000 in Dundee, 15,000 in Edinburgh and 51,000 in Glasgow. Local authority building in Scotland was responsible for over 50% of new housing in 1934, while in England it was only around 20%. This began a trend in public sector housing which was to intensify after the 2nd World War and leave Scotland in the 1960s with a higher state ownership of housing than most Eastern bloc countries under communist rule. However, in spite of the general expansion of the public sector, it was still a fact that most of the population of the leading cities were living in one or two roomed houses, with Dundee and Glasgow by far the worse.

Those in most need of re-housing were put off applying for a new council house because of the high cost. In Dundee the yearly cost in 1926 of a four apartment house on the Craigiebank estate was estimated to be 52% of the average textile wage, and a three apartment at the Logie estate was 46%. As a result most of the new tenants tended to be from the white collar salariat or the skilled working class.

5.2.6 EDUCATION

The expansion of education continued to provide an improved service for children. The Education Act of 1918 brought Roman Catholic schools into the state system. The school leaving age had been increased to 14 in 1901 and it remained at this level until after the Second World War. Basically, the nineteenth century division between social classes remained. The belief still persisted that only a small talented proportion of children would benefit from further education.

5.3 SOCIAL ISSUES

5.3.1 SECTARIANISM

The poverty and unemployment that was the lot of many Scots at this time had a profound impact on social life. Insecurity fuelled sectarianism rivalries which had become rife in certain parts of 19th century Scotland. Reacting to the decision in 1918 to provide for Catholic schooling out of local taxation, the Protestant churches led a racist anti-Irish Catholic crusade. In 1923 the Church of Scotland issued a pamphlet condemning the Irish as a 'menace' to the Scottish race and kept up a stream of anti-Irish propaganda throughout the 1920s. This set the tone for more extremist Protestant organisations to make headway as the economic depression grew worse after 1929. At a time when the main churches were losing members in droves, the Scottish Protestant League in Glasgow and the Protestant Action Society in Edinburgh made spectacular gains in local elections, with the latter also carrying out a policy of attacking and harassing Catholic gatherings. Glasgow also faced the problem of sectarian gang warfare which emanated from football. The Billy Boys supported Glasgow Rangers FC, while their rivals the Norman Congs identified with Glasgow Celtic FC. However, the approach of war in the late 1930s saw this kind of extremist politics and gang warfare dissipate itself as Catholics joined the services to fight for their country with as much enthusiasm as Protestants.

5.3.2 LEISURE

While the inter-War depression escalated social tensions it would be wrong to view the whole period as one of conflict. Many people tried to avoid the harsh social and economic realities of life in Scotland by indulging in escapist fantasies. The cinema and radio provide a cheap means of escape, while alcohol did the trick in a different but no less pleasurable way. However, the problem of female drunkenness which existed before 1914 seemed to have become a thing of the past as pubs became all-male preserves in the inter-war years. Dreams of affluence were catered for by street bookmakers, dog tracks and the growth of the football pools. Then there was sport itself. Professional boxing and football captured the imaginations and fuelled the dreams of many a young working class male. The sober and respectable skilled worker and the middle classes could only look with horror at the growth of instant cheap pleasure fixes.

The Labour Party press condemned jazz as 'jungle music' and took a firm stand against professional sports such as boxing seen as a corrupting influence on the young. In contrast, Labour preached the gospel of good clean outdoor life for the young and waxed lyrical on the rich trappings of family life. Some workers heeded the call and hill-walking, or 'Munro bagging', became a popular activity with the unemployed of Glasgow in the 1930s. Draughts as opposed to chess became a popular game with workers and Scotland produced a world champion in the 1930s a miner from Kelty in Fife. But most workers ignored the advice and condemnation of their betters and made the best they could of what little pleasures life had to offer them.

For the rich lifestyles were still informed by the social preoccupations of the landed gentry. Hunting, shooting and fishing and the social trappings, such as

balls, and so on, which surrounded these activities were still the dominant form of relaxation for the rich. As much as 34% of the total land area of the crofting counties of the Scottish Highlands was given over to deer stalking in 1914. Hunting lodges proliferated costing anything between £10,000-£70,000 for the more palatial to £3,000-£6,000 for the more modest. Although activity in this respect created employment for builders and gamekeepers, the gains were more than offset by the decline in the number of shepherds. Spending was of little benefit to local suppliers as the rich brought their supplies of food and wine from Glasgow or London. As one contemporary put it, the popularity of deer stalking turned the Highlands into the happy hunting grounds of the rich.

6. CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Life in Scotland in the 1840s has been described by TC Smout as "competitive, unprotected, brutal and, for many, vile". Those on the receiving end of a punch drunk economy and a parsimonious public purse in the 1930s might have argued not unreasonably that things had changed very little as they trudged the streets in hunger marches or in demonstrations against the means test. That, however, would be to miss the significance of the last hundred years. What Scotland experienced in the 1930s was the death pangs of an industrial order that was passing. That this process of transformation produced economic casualties cannot be denied, however, unlike the 1840s, the inter-war poor and unemployed had entitlement to support from society. The level of that support may not have been generous but it allowed for a standard of decency unthinkable in the 1840s. Few of the unemployed or poor were evicted or lost their possessions.

The Poor Law authorities could not report the kind incident as they had done in 1843 of a factory worker, who had been out of work for eight months, weeping uncontrollably having just sold the last of his furniture. The attendances at the cinema in this period also show that some entertainment was within the reach of the unemployed. Dignity was, therefore, made possible in difficult circumstances. The guns and bombs of the 2nd World War heralded the dawning of a new chapter in the social and economic history of Scotland. Although the war kept intact the industrial structure of Scotland for a short time, the decades that followed the ending of hostilities in 1945 brought profound upheaval perhaps of an even greater degree than that of the century 1840-1940. These decades were the years of industrialisation in which Scotland grew from a small, semi-agricultural nation to a major industrial power.

The decades that followed 1945 witnessed the destruction of that industrial structure and it's replacement with an economy based on services, light industry and consumer trades. Although these changes have brought about the destruction of old communities and settled ways of life - and because of this have been the sources of social tensions - they have undoubtedly resulted in increased living standards for nearly everyone in Scotland.

The consumer society was born in the wake of these changes in the economic structure. Mass ownership of former luxury goods such as cars, televisions and other durables became a reality as living standards took off in the 1950s and 1960s. Economic growth created the conditions for the Welfare State to address

in highly meaningful ways the incidence of poverty and bad housing. Inequalities remained but as the years wore on they manifested themselves more between those in work and those out of work, rather than between social c in the wake of these changes in the economic structure. Mass ownership of former luxury goods such as cars, televisions and other durables became a reality as living standards took off in the 1950s and 1960s.

Economic growth created the conditions for the Welfare State to address in highly meaningful ways the incidence of poverty and bad housing. Inequalities remained but as the years wore on they manifested themselves more between those in work and those out of work, rather than between social classes. As a consequence Scotland's economy and society has come to closely resemble that of the rest of Britain and Western Europe. In destroying its past Scotland has created a future for itself.