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Education, Industry and the Community: Jarrow

Secondary School, 1911 - 1944

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A thesis submitted for the degree of

Master of Education

University of Durham

School of Education

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ABSTRACT

Education, Industry and the Community: Jarrow

Secondary School, 1911 - 1944

Sylvia Davis.

This thesis investigates the relationship between Jarrow Secondary School and the socio-economic life of the district, between 1911 and 1944. In particular, it examines the effect the school had upon the social mobility of those people who passed through its system, and the influence their education had upon the welfare of the community.

To study just what impact this secondary school had upon its community, it was necessary to look at the background of the area, along with the educational developments which led to the building of the school. Both documented evidence and text books provided this vital information. Personal interviews with ex-pupils who attended the school at that time, proved to be both an enlightening and enlivening source of evidence. These interviews not only corroborated documentation and shed light onto the internal mechanism of the school, but also gave tangible evidence as to what transpired once pupils were assimilated into the working environment of the district.

The nature of the educational system operating in Jarrow, with graduated levels in the different educational establishments, mirrored the perceived needs of the district. This allows further research, not only covering the secondary school and its effects on the district but also encompassing the other forms of education available and the roles they fulfilled within the community.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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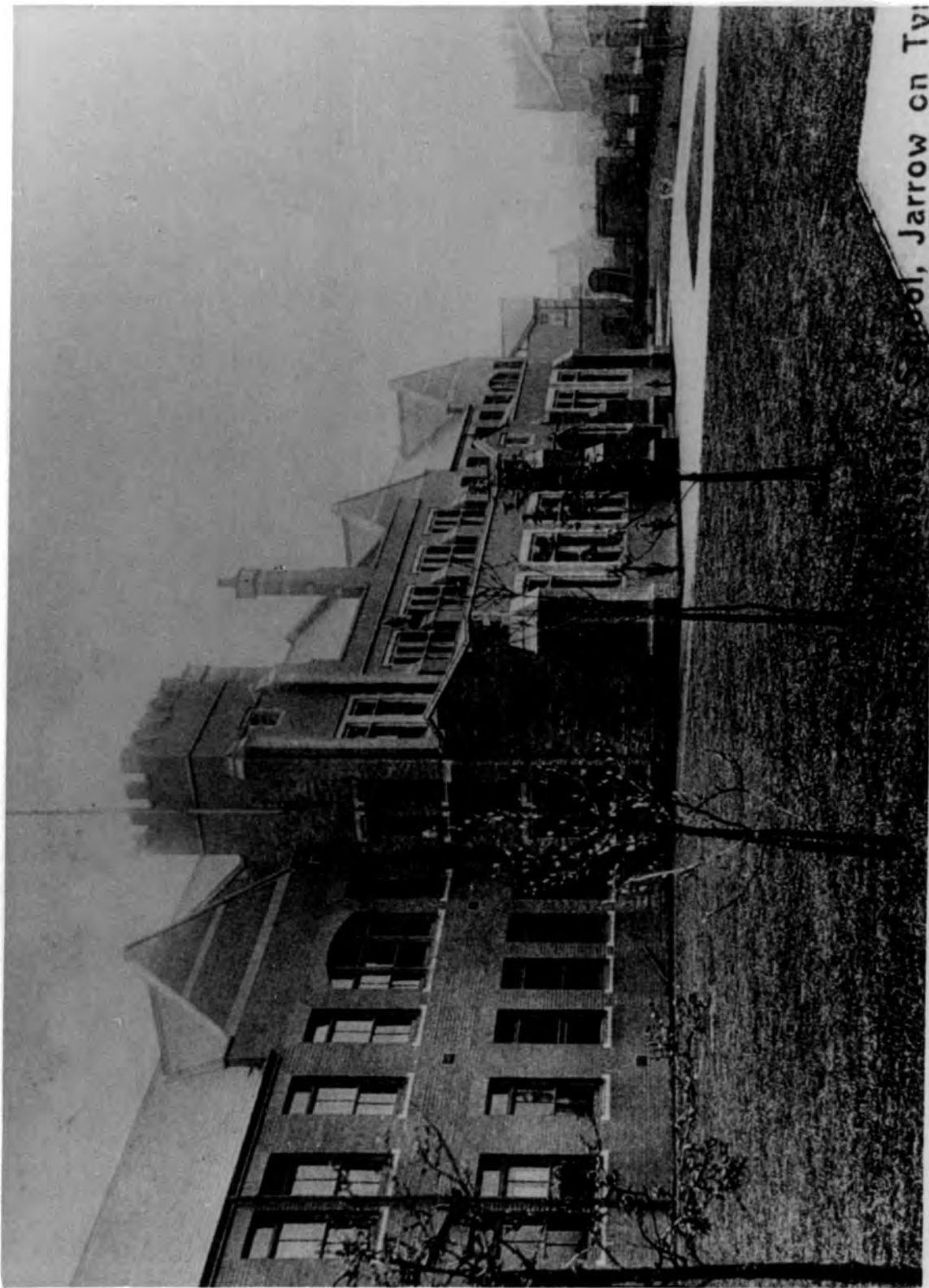
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JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL

c. 1912



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## CHAPTER ONE

### Jarrow Secondary School: the prelusory decade (1901 - 1911)

On the morning of 28th May 1908, a crowd of some seven hundred badly-clothed and ill-shod men, women and children gathered around the rear door of 'The Borough Arms' in Jarrow. They had been told that that morning there would be free food served, provided by the Newcastle Breweries, to relieve their hunger. The Newcastle Breweries Company had instructed their tenants at Jarrow to make soup for distribution to the hungry. This soup was made with beef, hams, mutton and beef bones, all boiled with the best of vegetables. When the meat cooled it was sliced and put into sandwiches. The crowd had been gathering from early that morning, as many had had little food for some time. When the time drew close, tempers became frayed, as people struggled and fought towards the front to gain a better position. At 11.30 a.m. the doors were opened and the distribution began; the children were served at a separate entrance. At the main rear doorway, it was extremely difficult to hold back and control the crowd: all seven hundred people pushing and vying to be served first. It took five strong men, working continuously, more than an hour and a half to supply over 400 sandwiches and about 650 pints of soup.<sup>(1)</sup> In the crush, at least one woman fainted through hunger and the heat in the mêlée. This scene was an example of several such occurrences in 1908, due to the depression and lack of work in the Jarrow area.

It was out of this time of depression that Jarrow Secondary School came forth - the building of the school was underway, and it

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(1) Jarrow Express & Tyneside Advertiser, 29th May 1908.



was announced in October by the Education Committee, that in approximately eighteen months they hoped the school building would be ready for occupation.

The depression in 1908 in Jarrow was not the first that the people had experienced, nor would it be the last, but it serves as a prime example of what happened to a town when it was dependent upon one industry alone. In the case of Jarrow, that industry was Palmer's Shipbuilding Company. The town of Jarrow had grown around this industry, expanding from a village of some 4,000 people in 1851 to an urban community of 34,000 people by 1901.<sup>(1)</sup> People had flooded into the area to find work and the town had sprang forth. Indeed, throughout the North East region, in this period, there was rapid urbanisation; towns becoming highly populated with the development of heavy industry, some in fact increasing in population tenfold. Jarrow, in this respect was not unique but it was said that the town 'put all its eggs in one basket' by becoming so reliant upon the works by the riverside, Palmer's. The poverty experienced by the Jarrow people in 1908 was directly related to the fortunes of Palmer's, which had developed from the mid-nineteenth century along with the other major North East industrial concerns.

Since the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, the North East had become perhaps the most important industrial area for heavy industry in the country. By the end of the nineteenth century nearly a quarter of the world demand for shipping was satisfied by this region.<sup>(2)</sup> If Britain was the workshop of the world, then the North East was the engine-room. Industrial enterprises grew in the region: there were readily available natural resources with iron ore

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(1) E. Allen, N. McCord, J.F. Clarke and D.J. Rowe, The North East Engineers' Strikes of 1871, p.14.

(2) McCord (1979), p.128.

reserves in Cleveland and a plentiful supply of coal from the Durham and Northumberland coalfields. The River Tyne served as a major artery of communication and there was no shortage of entrepreneurs with the necessary drive and ambition to seize the opportunities available.

The two Tyneside giants in Naval Shipbuilding were W. G. Armstrong and C. M. Palmer. Armstrong's enterprise was west of Newcastle on the north bank of the Tyne. Palmer's concern was on the south bank at Jarrow, three miles from the river mouth.

Since 1852, Jarrow had known comparative prosperity as Palmer's flourished. From 1851, C. M. Palmer worked hard building up the business into a successful firm with an international reputation. This engendered a feeling of comfortable security amongst the townsfolk of the area. Palmer, who came from a Newcastle merchant family, began by becoming a manager of John Bowes and Partners but his interests quickly broadened from mining coal when he realised that there were economic advantages in having a rapid and reliable means of transporting coal to the London market. He was the first in the country to produce, in 1852, an iron screw propelled collier that was commercially successful (The John Bowes). This transport method removed the threat to the North East coalfields market in London, by providing a regular delivery of merchandise. 'By 1855 there were about 60 screw colliers based on the Tyne and the number continued to grow rapidly.'<sup>(1)</sup> The 'John Bowes' proved very successful, doing in just five days what it would take two sailing colliers a month to accomplish. It was no wonder the screw colliers increased in number so quickly on the Tyne. Palmer's success in the field of shipbuilding and engineering led to his

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(1) McCord (1979),p.113.

becoming an industrial magnate: owning a mansion, a house in London, becoming Jarrow's first mayor and then M.P. - one could say he 'ruled the roost'. His interests expanded even further into the refining of iron ore and so he built four blast furnaces. He took full advantage of the opportunities presented to him, mining iron in Cleveland and he built a port at Mulgrave in Yorkshire, so his colliers could supply the Jarrow works with iron ore on their return trip from London. Palmer became so powerful in the area that eventually he owned shipyards on both banks of the Tyne and to demonstrate his power he launched four steamships simultaneously. He was involved in building warships for the Admiralty and Foreign Governments, producing rolled armour plates which were superior to the preceding forged iron plates. By 1894 he had built 38 warships. His diversified interests and leading enterprises brought commercial success to the North East, in particular to Jarrow. By 1892 Palmer's had 'built 405 vessels, being about 100 more than had been launched of the same size by any other firm'.<sup>(1)</sup>

However, by the late 1880s Palmer's Company began to experience some difficulties. By 1890 he was forced to relinquish control, passing the control of the company into the hands of new directors. Although maintaining a strong interest in the district, which he continued until his death in 1907, being the sitting M.P. for Jarrow, he was no longer involved in the active management of Palmer's. It was from this time that the company showed weaknesses, although there was some reprieve, such as during the First World War.

Within the Jarrow area, the years of continual prosperity had been replaced by economic uncertainties, which had begun with the difficulties experienced by Palmer's in the 1890s. The first decade of the new century saw the Jarrow district struggling towards an

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(1) F. Whellan and Co., Durham History and Directory 1894, p.1075 .

improved environment. With the news of the death of Queen Victoria in January 1901, the town became caught up in the idea of coronation festivities and change became part of the atmosphere. After the depressions and uncertainties of the preceding years, the Town Council and Education Committee sought to provide improved standards in Jarrow. There were definite moves to cultivate a mood which favoured change for the better - grand coronation celebrations to mark the coming new Edwardian age, the Town Council discussing ideas for health and environmental improvements and a new Education Bill on the horizon. But, notwithstanding the endeavours of the various committees, while the situation was bad in Jarrow in 1900, it became progressively worse over the following years with little respite, until it was pushed to the depths of depression in 1908.

Like many parts of the North East which had rapidly expanded due to industrialisation, the town suffered from overcrowding and the health hazards that went with it. From the opening of Palmer's until 1900, Jarrow had increased in size some eightfold. The town was dirty and unkempt: Dr. J. M. Nicoll, the town's medical officer, said that 'the town well-deserved the appellation of Dirty Jarrow'<sup>(1)</sup> mainly due to the destructive habits of the people, especially those people who congregated in the oldest property. In many parts of the town, it was reported that liquid effluent flowed out from the box-closets and refuse was deposited in the streets. The scavenging of the town was most inadequate. Dr. Nicoll reported that disease, such as scarlet fever, typhoid and diphtheria, was rife and that many epidemics had taken place over the past year. The mortality rate was 17.5 per 1000 and the fever hospital was fully utilised most of the time.<sup>(2)</sup> The

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(1) Shields Gazette and Shipping Telegraph, 7 May 1900.

(2) Shields Gazette, 7 May 1900.

Reverend Holmes, the vicar of St. Peter's, told how he had witnessed such scenes as that of a young girl, who had died of consumption, lying in a room in which four adults and five children were living. He told of whole families in Jarrow living in one room in which a corpse lay, as there was such gross overcrowding.<sup>(1)</sup>

The following year, 1901, Dr. Nicoll reported that the health and sanitation of the town had not improved. He felt even more drastic methods to rectify the destructive and dirty habits of certain sections of the population should be made. He made a plea for property-owners and agents to help the sanitary authority by telling people that if they refused to improve their habits, they would have to find accommodation elsewhere. Many houses in the town were unfit for the working-classes - indeed, many at the Mechanics' Institute meeting of the Reform Association, in November 1901, felt that they were unfit for human habitation and ought to be demolished. Dr. Nicoll reported that the fever hospital was overcrowded as one of the largest epidemics of scarlet fever the borough had experienced was passing through. At one point, in late October, the scarlet fever epidemic reached such heights, that the isolation hospital was full and many cases were scattered around the town. The Reverend Holmes said that the Town Council should do something about conditions as members had 'sat on pot eggs and therefore had not brought forth anything'.<sup>(2)</sup> The Town Council felt they had insurmountable problems - the hospital was overcrowded, nurses were overworked (in fact one nurse had caught typhoid fever), beds were overcrowded (on two separate occasions 8 children had occupied one bed) - but at least in hospital, disease was contained, having less

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(1) Shields Gazette, 29 September 1900.

(2) Shields Gazette, 1 November 1909.



chance of spreading. They had even had to write to Palmer's Works, pointing out that the grit nuisance from the works was having an adverse effect upon the town, yet knowing that the works were the main employment source for the district.

At the turn of the century, whilst the people of the Jarrow area lived in squalid and destitute conditions, the shipyards were prospering and were able to provide employment for a great many people. In fact, for the year ending June 1901, Palmer's Iron and Steel Company had made a total profit of £110,000.<sup>(1)</sup> Palmer's had plenty of work, such as the fitting out of the battleship, H.M.S. Russell, and the reboiling of two, third-class cruisers, the Medea and the Medusa. In 1901, Palmer's Shipyards continued to prosper, even though the health and sanitation of the town became increasingly worse. The shipyards were involved in the refitting of the liner 'Nord America' for the La Veicca Steamship Navigation Company.

Despite such apparent industrial prosperity, the people were engaged in gambling and drinking - there were reports of badly-neglected children wandering the streets, of drunken-brawls, of domestic tiffs and fights, and of houses described as 'filthy and without food, with the children covered in vermin'.<sup>(2)</sup> The Town Council attributed the atrocious conditions to the destructive habits of the people themselves; the Reverend Holmes pointed out that the unfit habitations and the scheming landlords had a crippling effect upon the town. However, both the grimy, polluted environment from the steel and chemical works, pouring out pollution across the town, and the poorly educated workforce that filled their spare-time with frequent visits to the public houses, were probably as much responsible for the poor environment.

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(1) Shields Gazette, 16 September 1901.

(2) Shields Gazette, 16 March 1900.

It was at this time that Mr. C. M. Palmer declared that he felt that the people of Jarrow should take the opportunity to improve themselves and their prospects through education. Palmer urged the importance of education, as a means to improve the standards within the area. As well as doing this, it would no doubt also provide a much more highly technically-skilled workforce for his industry, in turn leading to greater efficiency and innovation. In November 1900, at the opening of the Arts and Industrial Exhibition, Palmer expressed his opinion that something had to be done to get the men away from the public houses. He desired to improve the social and educational position of the town and that had, he stated, been his main reason for opening the Mechanics' Institute. He said that in 1900, with the increased population of the area, he felt that the workers should not depend entirely upon the works at the riverside; their aim should be to diversify and create an attractive town.<sup>(1)</sup>

Despite the attempts of officialdom and even verbalised encouragement from such people as C. M. Palmer, the people themselves seemed reluctant to take the educational opportunities open to them. It was pointed out that it was surprising that there were only 1300 students attending evening classes at the Mechanics' Institute, as in a district like Jarrow, mechanical and naval construction classes alone should have had 1300 students. Maybe drinking, as a leisure pursuit, was easier and far more enticing than studying. Besides, once they had a job paying money, many would probably feel little immediate advantage in taking on extra work in the evening.

At the turn of the century, the Board Schools had a significantly higher rate of regular attendance than the voluntary schools. It was

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(1) Shields Gazette, 15 November 1900.

reported in March 1901 that over the past year, the Higher Grade School had the highest attendance rate of all the schools in the area - of 94%.<sup>(1)</sup> This school was regarded as the most important school in the area. In April 1900, with the Government's publication of a new scheme to encourage Higher Grade Schools by 'generous' grant aiding, more advanced science and vocational teaching for the higher elementary pupils was started. Thus, the Higher Grade, to parents, seemed even more impressive, having tests as an on-going system, vocational teaching as a significant part of the curriculum, costing parents a fee of 3d per week for the privilege of their child attending - hence, regular attendance would be essential. In 1901, due to these new grant rules, the evening-continuation classes, which had been run in the Mechanics' Institute for some 35 years, had to be transferred to the Higher Grade. With this move, the Higher Grade gained even more esteem, taking on an important role which the Mechanics' Institute had so long fulfilled. It was in this period that the School Board became increasingly concerned about the prospect of the forthcoming Education Bill and the changes that it was bound to bring about; their main concern being their probable dissolution and the control of education turned over to the Town Council.

1902 was a major year in Jarrow for change and hope by the leaders of the town for a better future. It was in this year that Edward VII was crowned, the Boer War ended and the new Balfour Education Act was passed. It would appear that these were hopeful signs for a better future - a settled future with peace and improved education leading the way to improved social conditions for the working men.

In July 1902, Dr. Nicoll reported upon the worsened death rate

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(1) Shields Gazette, 6 March 1901.

of 25.3 per 1000 per annum; for that month it was 21.1, the corresponding month the previous year it had been 10.6.<sup>(1)</sup> It was found that the north ward, the area nearest the shipyards, had the highest death rate; Dr. Nicoll remarked that 'it is very evident that the north ward is very far from becoming a health resort'.<sup>(2)</sup>

Mr. Tinkler, the president of Jarrow Municipal Reform Association, spoke of the slums and overcrowding in the area. A census showed that 36% of the borough's population were now living in overcrowded conditions - that denoted 846 overcrowded dwellings in the town.

The insanitary conditions in some quarters of the town produced disease and moral decline in the people. The environment and the bad habits of the people had a worsening effect one upon the other, pulling them further and further into decline. Also, five sixths of the male population worked in a smoky, dirty environment.<sup>(3)</sup> By December 1902, the distress in the town had come to the fore and urgent steps to alleviate the problem were sought. A trade depression was settling on Tyneside. There was a unanimous feeling of wishing to contribute to the less fortunate families. A meeting was held for the purpose of starting a committee, giving first thought to the children of the area.

But despite the hardships of the people, Palmer's business showed a steady increase. In 1902, the annual report stated that during that year Palmer's had won an important contract for the construction of 5 torpedo-boat destroyers, capable of steaming in excess of 25 knots. The yard was also entrusted with the contract of repairs to the battleship Howe. As well as this, the order book for

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(1) Shields Gazette, 11 July 1902.

(2) Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health 1902, p.13.

(3) Shields Gazette, 3 October 1902.

mercantile shipping was very healthy. The output for the year was 61,016 tons; the largest in any year of the history of the Jarrow yards alone.<sup>(1)</sup> Although the health and sanitation of the town was extremely bad, with definite employment such as this, the future would seem rosy for Jarrow and improvement would seem in view. It was in November of that year that C. M. Palmer was elected mayor of Jarrow, 27 years after he had first been elected to this position. The workforce, to show their appreciation, subscribed towards a bronze statue of Palmer in full mayoral robes - the model of which was put on show in the Mechanics' Institute.

It was in this year that the Balfour Act was passed and it was discussed at length by the Jarrow School Board. Implications such as the higher education funds, the Bill not making provision for college-training of pupil-teachers and the fact that voluntary schools would be able to receive funding from the rates without any representation on their Board of Governors from the local authority, were discussed. However, although the School Board had many reservations about the Act, they did appear to accept the principle of one authority controlling all education within the district. By the end of the year the Town Council felt it appropriate to confer with the neighbouring town of Hebburn on the administration of the Bill, to gain insight from another source.

In 1902, there was a low attendance rate which could be attributed to the fact that there was a severe measles epidemic. Outbreaks of infectious disease throughout the community, would undoubtedly appear as a detrimental force at some time. In fact, at one point a class of 63 children were excluded from lessons at Croft

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(1) Shields Gazette, 25 September 1902.

Terrace Infants due to an outbreak of measles. The School Board, to encourage pupils to attend, gave silver medals as an incentive prize to those pupils who managed to attend 5 years without missing a single day.

In the following two years, there was a major turnaround in the shipyards, as it was revealed in 1903 that although Palmer's had the appearance of full books, in reality the order books were nearly empty. The stocks were unoccupied and the H.M.S. Howe would leave in August. Palmer's second son, Alfred Molyneux, stated that he hoped the Government would be forthcoming with more orders.<sup>(1)</sup> Despite the fact that orders were on the decline, there was an extension to the Number One mercantile Dry Dock by 75 feet, which gave it the ability to take ships of up to 425 feet in length, making it the largest dry dock on the river and increasing its capabilities for refitting/refurbishing of ships.<sup>(2)</sup> Also, improvements were made including the entire reconstruction of the blast furnaces to the Talbot Process and the engine-sheds being extended to enable them to produce turbines for ships. And so, whilst the shipyards went into decline, vast amounts of money was still spent to improve facilities and try to win orders - thus, profits must have slumped.

The social well-being of the people gradually worsened as in previous years, but probably more so with the decline in the main industry of the town. The Relief Committee, which had originally been formed in the winter of 1902 for steps towards distress, held a meeting. C. M. Palmer donated £25. The children's fund had given out over 6,000 breakfasts with the Parish Hall used as an 'open house'. By 1904, the schools were involved as distribution centres,

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(1) Shields Gazette, 25 July 1903.

(2) Shields Gazette, 12 May 1903.

distributing breakfasts and dinners 5 days a week for the children. The teachers actively participated in supplying the food, even during holidays.

These two years were of great importance educationally. It was a matter of great discussion in Jarrow as to when actually to implement the 1902 Act - the specified dates varied: 1 July 1903, 30 September 1903 or 31 March 1904. Hebburn had already decided on their date for implementation - 1 June 1903. It was 1 April 1904 that Jarrow adopted the new Education Act, and the School Board was dissolved after 33 years of existence. The new Education Act, when put into practice at the Higher Grade School, meant that the school was split into two parts with the elementary being controlled by the local authority and the secondary being controlled by the county council Education Committee, but still managed by the Jarrow Education Committee.

At the first meeting of the new Jarrow Education Committee on 7 April 1904, Mr. G. Johnson was elected chairman. It was at this first meeting of the committee that it was stated that a new secondary school would be built to cater for Jarrow, Felling and Hebburn, which would allow the Higher Grade School to deal with elementary education. And so education was at the fore as an ameliorating force for the area's population, even though industry and social well-being were stagnating. Under the new Education Act, such a school as this would provide facilities for the educational opportunity which C. M. Palmer and the officials of the town had encouraged for so long.

From 1904 until 1908, Palmer's Shipyards suffered a great decline in orders, and by the end of 1908 the annual general report showed the first loss for 13 years. It was said that at the price

for ships, it was often better to turn orders away than to take them on. They had been investing money in the plant and on machinery which hopefully would enable them to cope with extra business when the upturn came, so that they could expand rapidly. The chairman, Mr. Charles McLaren, M.P. stated that: 'I deeply regret that the state of trade is so bad that not more than a third or half of the men will find employment until an improvement sets in'.<sup>(1)</sup> On top of this the many strikes had delayed the completion of orders and invoked penalty clauses: over the 12 months there had been differing strikes - shipwrights, joiners, woodworking machinists and drillers (approximately 5½ months); engineers (about 7 months); blast-furnacemen (4 months). With the death of C. M. Palmer in June 1907, the announcement in 1908 of the first loss of the shipyards for 13 years and with the statement made by the chairman about employment, the situation must have appeared to the people absolutely devastating.

Between the years 1905 and 1908, the social welfare of the people in Jarrow deteriorated progressively. The unemployment situation caused by the recession in the shipbuilding industry, aggravated the social plight in the district. C. M. Palmer had foretold trade depression at the beginning of the decade, whereby he had stated that this would be inevitable with resulting unemployment if the people did not diversify. The people were dependent upon the shipbuilding industry and once that suffered difficulties then the welfare of the people also suffered. By January 1905, there were approximately 700 men registered unemployed, by the April this had risen by a further 150 men. An Adult Relief fund was set up in 1908 because the

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 25 September 1908, p.8.



unemployment figures had reached nearly 2,000. With the unemployed increasing in number, the Adult Relief Committee determined to provide some form of work for those who were willing. This work involved stone-breaking and quarrying at a price of 3s 3d per cubic yard with a promise of an increase of 3d later. 'On Tuesday morning about ninety men started on the relief work in Jarrow - stone breaking and quarrying - provided by the Corporation in order to assist the unemployed who are in distress.'<sup>(1)</sup> By the end of 1908, the Adult Central Relief Committee had distributed over £835 among the adult poor.

Some members of the Town Council linked the high rate of unemployment to the high infant mortality rate. Dr. Nicoll, reported in 1905 that 61% of all the deaths in the district were children under 5 years old. Dr. Weir of the sanitary committee was surprised at the high death rate saying that he had heard it was bad at Hartlepool but in Jarrow it was worse. At the end of 1908 a report was received stating that since the start of the Relief funds, £7,490 had been spent on relief, with £1,084 having been raised that year alone for the feeding of the children. The poverty Jarrow suffered in the first decade of this century was not limited to the North East areas alone. Many other areas throughout the country were reported to have suffered similar economic distress. For instance, Cheryl Parsons in her study of Carbrook, reports: 'On the 29 November 1904, a free breakfast consisting of one pint of cocoa, margarine and one fifth of a two pound loaf was distributed to 'the needy' at a cost of one tenth of a penny per head.'<sup>(2)</sup> She writes of free dinners with meal centres being set up in the surrounding areas of Sheffield and of clothing

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 8 May 1908, p.8.

(2) C. Parsons, Schools in an Urban Community. A Study of Carbrook 1870 - 1965, p.73.

guilds supplying shoes and clothing to the schools.

Despite the growing depression in 1906, education was seen as the one improving facet of the Jarrow community. Negotiations were taking place with Lord Northbourne for the purchase of 4 acres of land on the east side of Bede Burn Road. This land was required by the Durham Education Authority for the building of the new Secondary School for Jarrow, first mentioned 2 years previously at the inception of the local education committee. It was hoped that a local builder would be employed for the work - obviously creating some immediate benefit via employment once building commenced. As this school would allow the Higher Grade to deal solely with elementary education and take on the more important role of secondary education, it would alleviate the problem at the Higher Grade of having two schools operating within the same premises. It was made apparent that the new Secondary School, thus taking over from the Higher Grade, was to be held in a higher esteem. It would provide the opportunity for the children of working men who showed educational potential to benefit from secondary education. By October 1908, at the time of the greatest depression, it was announced that within 18 months the school would be ready for occupation.

Also in October 1908, 94.9% attendance rate was recorded at the schools in the Jarrow area.<sup>(1)</sup> At the peak of the depression, this would appear an excellent attendance rate, probably in the main due to the fact that the children were being fed two meals a day at school at a time of severe hunger.

In March 1909, there was a managerial shakeup at Palmer's, designed to improve their chances of obtaining admiralty work, with

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 30 October 1908.

Mr. A. B. Gowan appointed in charge of the works.

Since 1875 Jarrow had been a Liberal stronghold, with Mr. C. M. Palmer as the sitting M.P.. In 1906, his opponent was Mr. Pete Curran but Palmer won the election with a majority of 2,954 votes. On C. M. Palmer's death in 1907, a by-election was held at which Mr. P. Curran won the by-election with a Labour majority of 768. Mr. P. Curran seems somewhat strange as a choice for M.P. With his views on disarmament, he was strongly opposed to the building up of the British navy at a time when Jarrow had large unemployment difficulties because of the lack of admiralty and other shipbuilding orders. It was said that perhaps some admiralty orders had not been procured through his stance on armaments production. On 2 March 1908, Mr. P. Curran voted for Mr. Murray MacDonald's motion in Parliament for the reduction of armaments. This appears rather extraordinary as there was a lack of work in the Jarrow shipyards at the time and the depression in Jarrow had reached a peak. In March 1909, Mr. A. A. Harvey addressed several hundred workmen outside Palmer's Works in Jarrow, on the matter referring in particular to Mr. Curran's speech, given at a Labour party meeting, when he had expressed the view that it was unnecessary to maintain such a large navy as they had at the time, and that it was not necessary to continue building warships.<sup>(1)</sup> In June 1909, Mr. Curran attended a meeting in Berlin in honour of the British Labour party; he advocated a disarmament policy for Britain. In the General Election of 1910, Godfrey M. Palmer (C. M. Palmer's youngest son) stood for the Liberals against P. Curran, and won the election with a majority over Labour of 67 votes. Mr. Curran died within 2 months of losing the election. In that year, too, King Edward died

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 26 March 1909.

and it would seem the end of an era, at the close of the decade.

1911 would be a new start with George V having succeeded to the throne, Palmer's sons making headway in the community and business, a new managerial structure at Palmer's striving for increased work and improved efficiency, Palmer's expanding with the purchase of further shipbuilding capacity in Hebburn and a new Secondary School opening aiming for improved educational standards. Throughout the first decade of the new century, officials and hierarchy in the town had extolled the virtues of education as a means to social and economic improvement; despite the fluctuations in the social and economic growth of the area, education was constantly channelled in an improving direction, culminating in the opening of the new Secondary School in October 1911. The new Secondary School, built in an elevated position surrounded by open green fields on the outskirts of the town away from the smoky industrial environment, was given a favoured start. The people were told that it would be even better than the Higher Grade, already a highly respected school. The aim by the Local Education Authority was to provide free education for the working men's children and lead the way to new improvements. Education was seen as the main guide, which would pull them from the depressions the townsfolk were suffering. It was hoped that education would provide social improvement and economic development, but what did the new Secondary School actually achieve in the area? Did it in fact fulfil the aim of socially equipping the people and diversifying the local economy?

## CHAPTER TWO

### Jarrow, between the wars

By the middle of the nineteenth century the North East, like so many places throughout the country, was suffering the twin evils of bad housing and poor public health. From the 1850s, with the rapid growth of industry and the subsequent demand for labour, the situation progressively worsened. The population increased tenfold in some areas of the North East between 1851 and 1901, adding to the social problems. This massive rate of growth must have proved quite a strain upon the social wellbeing of the area. However, although the growth of heavy industry in the North East exacerbated the already adverse social conditions, this cannot be seen as a single, isolated factor. As Henry Mess points out, the very historical and geographical position of the North East throws added social plight upon the regions of Northumberland and Durham in particular. The border counties, having had constant frays with the Scots, became accustomed to a low level of comfort. The tenacious inhabitants had fostered customs which were disposed towards poor social habits. 'The evidence seems to suggest the existence within the region of a low level of housing expectation and provision when compared with other regions, and this too may represent a situation with roots deep in the past'.<sup>(1)</sup> Durham, heavily industrialised compared to Northumberland, had added burdens thrust upon it.

Jarrow, in the mid nineteenth century, was typical of a North East town afflicted by both rapid industrialisation and low expectation. The town quickly developed around its industry becoming

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(1) McCord (1979), p.161.

a shipyard town and very little else. Due to the irregular type of work offered to the population, the working class town tended to slacken and tighten its belt according to the circumstances of the day. Workers were disciplined into basing their expenses on the less remunerative times. Hence, hastily erected cheap housing, just the right size for the family and certainly no bigger, were the order of the day. Living under healthy conditions was of secondary consideration.

The housing stock of the Jarrow area was, for the most part, built prior to the turn of the century. It literally mushroomed with the expansion of the shipyard, to house the influx of shipyard workers. J. B. Priestley described the town as 'a mean little conglomeration of narrow monotonous streets of stunted and ugly houses, a barracks cynically put together so that shipbuilding workers could get some food and sleep between shifts.'<sup>(1)</sup> These homes were of a poor standard, with little improvement made to them over their life.

There were three main types of houses built for the working classes in Jarrow. In the main, there were one-storeyed flats, ground-floor and first-floor only. A common means of access to the first-floor flats was by an outside, uncovered, wooden staircase reaching from the backyard. This staircase was rather dangerous, particularly in wet weather or in winter, when the stair treads became slippery. Another design, quite prevalent in the area, was constructed so that the two first-floor flats opened onto a landing. This landing was reached by a stair running at right angles to the street, one flight from the street to the landing and from there another flight down to the backyard. But probably the worst design was the 'T' type flats. A passageway ran from the front street to the backyard. From halfway

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(1) J. B. Priestley, English Journey, p.295.

HOUSING STOCK. PRE 1930s

LOOKING TOWARDS SPENSER STREET





down this passage, on either the left or right-hand side, a stairway ascended to a landing off which there were two first-floor flats. This stairway, forming the vertical bar of the 'T', was unlighted and unventilated. When visiting an upstairs 'T' shaped flat, it was customary to kick the bottom step until someone opened the door of one of the upstairs flats, so allowing some light to reach the darkened stairs. The ground-floor flats were originally let as two-roomed flats, as the ones above, but many were turned into one-roomed flats. This was achieved by blocking the communicating doorway between the two rooms, thus creating rooms which had only one exit/entrance in either the passage or the front street/backyard. All of these flats described were generally back-to-back dwellings. The watersupply was taken from a tap in the backyard which served all the families who shared that yard. This could be anywhere up to forty people, especially where rooms were sublet.<sup>(1)</sup>

Much of the accommodation was in ill-repair. By 1912, defects included: bad roofs and chimneys, damp foundations and walls, decaying brickwork, dilapidated sculleries, wash-houses and closets. The walls showed signs of heavy capillary action reaching up to 2 feet above floor level due to the lack of a damp-proof course, especially in small off-shot bedrooms which in many cases were only made with  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " walls. The result was that most of these bedrooms were discarded as sleeping rooms and used for storing timber, families sleeping in the kitchen instead.

The available accommodation in the district was limited. This led to overcrowded conditions over the whole district of Jarrow. The density of population was 47 persons per acre. In fact, in Central

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(1) T. F. Powell, Social Conditions in Jarrow between 1919 and 1939, p.63

Ward it was 156.3<sup>(1)</sup> which was the worst overcrowded area; Grange Ward being of a higher residential class, 'a very quiet part of Jarrow, a swanky part because there were no public houses at all to be seen'.<sup>(2)</sup> 47 persons per acre may not appear overcrowded at first glance but the large amount of land given over to industry reduced the land available for housing. The reasons behind the high population density in Jarrow, were several. There was very little full-time industrial employment for women and so many young girls, in order to escape their overcrowded conditions, tended to marry early and have large families of their own. The intermittent nature of the work at the shipyard would lead the people to acquire cheaply rented accommodation and so adoption of lower, crowded standards was quite commonplace. During the boom years for Palmer's, the situation worsened, with single men coming into the area seeking employment and lodgings. Even though the homes had few rooms, many tenants sublet in order to provide additional income. 'The advent of new lodgers invariably meant that the beds would be turned around, me granda and me grandma sometimes having the feather bed in the bedroom and four lodgers sharing the two beds in the front room.'<sup>(3)</sup> Indeed, the acceptance of the deplorably poor standards by the Jarrow people, hampered social improvement.

The Health Reports of the time defined overcrowding as being more than 2 persons per room, and certainly Jarrow had a high percentage of population that fitted that category. In 1921 within Jarrow there were 14,782 people living in these overcrowded conditions. 'The 1921 census computed the following figures for overcrowded housing occupied

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(1) Mess (1928), p. 92.

(2) C. Cookson, Our Kate, p. 79.

(3) C. Cookson, Our Kate, p. 90.

by the inhabitants of various Tyneside communities: at Newcastle a total of 88,000 people or 33.6% of the population were living in conditions of overcrowding; while figures for nearby communities were Hebburn 11,000 (46.9%) Jarrow 15,000 (42.5%) Gateshead 45,000 (37%) South Shields 42,000 (36.5%) Tynemouth 21,000 (43.4%) Gosforth 2,000 (13.8%) Whitley Bay 2,100 (10.4%).<sup>(1)</sup>

With the majority of houses in Jarrow having 3 rooms or less promoting overcrowded conditions, no water or sink in the house, many families having to share an ash-closet in the backyard, an outside tap serving up to 40 persons, slops dumped in the gully of the yard, dirty cobbled back-lanes and damp sub-standard houses, no wonder many diseases were prevalent. Bronchial disease, particularly tuberculosis was endemic throughout Tyneside; Jarrow had the highest rate over the whole of Tyneside. The town's very situation, being close to the river and the shipyards, had a debilitating effect upon the health of the people. This, along with the dampness and poor ventilation, plus the polluted atmosphere in and around the shipyards, all added to the aggravating of respiratory diseases. Whilst throughout the country, pulmonary tuberculosis was being curtailed and within Tyneside it was under control, Jarrow had the worst record, steadily rising since 1902, 'not surprising to anyone who knows the town'.<sup>(2)</sup> Infant mortality was also strikingly bad in Jarrow but unlike tuberculosis it was being reduced, though not as quickly as the national average or indeed some parts of Tyneside. Over three years between 1923 and 1925, more than 5 babies died for every 3 babies who died in Whitley Bay. Between these years there were 101 deaths per

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(1) McCord (1979), p.250.

(2) Mess (1928), p.114.

1000 in infants under one year, as opposed to the national average of 70 per 1000.<sup>(1)</sup> The chief causes of the high infant mortality rate were congenital debility, diarrhoea, bronchitis and pneumonia and infectious diseases such as whooping-cough. Again, overcrowding, along with bad sanitation, dirt and underfeeding were blamed but especially attitudes and ignorance; the 'indifference with which many women regard pregnancy' and the fact that, 'few women realise, as yet, the importance to themselves and to their offspring of a healthy normal pregnancy'.<sup>(2)</sup> When the comprehensive living standards of the people were taken into account, it is little wonder that many women chose to use abortifacients rather than have yet another child in an already overcrowded flat, especially in lean times.

It was certainly a lot more risky to be born and live in the working-class wards of the town such as North or Central Ward, as opposed to the more 'middle-class' areas of Grange or South Ward. Especially bad in the area of North and Central was their back-to-back, tightly-packed housing, and the fact that they were nearest to the shipyards, pouring out pollution. Hence, in 1920, the death rate from tuberculosis was highest in North and Central Wards - 2.5 and 3.1 respectively, as compared to the lowest in Grange of 0.9 per 1000. The death rate in 1925 was worse in North and Central Wards - 19.27 and 19.38 respectively, compared to the lowest in Grange of 9.12 per 1000.<sup>(3)</sup> The worst conditions lay in those wards closest to the riverside works where the lower, working-class shipyard workers congregated, being readily accessible to their job, and choosing accommodation to suit

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(1) Mess. (1928), p.104.

(2) Medical Officer's Reports, County of Durham, 1923.

(3) E. Wilkinson, The Town that was murdered, p.239.

their pockets.

And so Jarrow as a whole, followed the fortunes of the Palmer's yards, being locked in somewhat of a Catch 22 situation. When the yards had plenty of work, overcrowding and pollution reared their heads as severe problems and when in slump, malnutrition and poverty were the order of the day - the latter definitely the worse of the two to experience. From 1912, the former was at the fore as Palmer's, along with the rest of Tyneside, was experiencing an upturn, rearmament and admiralty work increasing in demand. This prewar boom was maintained throughout the war, until 1921 when signs of recession in the ship-building industry became evident. Unfortunately for Palmer's, they had entered into several very costly expansion deals which proved, in the long term, a fatal move. In 1921, Palmer's dissipated their financial reserves in paying boom dividends in excess of their normal dividend, this too proved to be a bad error of judgement. Over the following five years, many men were laid off, as orders became scarce with no admiralty work forthcoming; the navy having sufficient ships to cover its peacetime commitments. During the small boom of 1928 and 1929, Palmer's began making a substantial profit, offsetting the debentures which were issued during the previous five years. The last ship, 'The H.M.S. Duchess' left the stocks in 1931; with this launch Palmer's order books were empty. The managers and directors, over the next three years gained extensions to loans to keep the yards open but it was all in vain. In 1934, the National Shipbuilders' Security Limited, under the guidance of Sir James Lithgow, purchased the yards from the official receivers and commenced the demolition of the works. And so in 1933, with the rundown of Palmer's, there were 7,178 men unemployed in Jarrow. J. B. Priestley, on his visit to the town

remarked, 'one out of every two shops appeared to be permanently closed. Wherever we went there were men hanging about, not scores of them but hundreds and thousands of them.'<sup>(1)</sup> The subsequent closure of the yard had a demoralising effect upon the people but even then many still retained great faith that they would reopen. In 1934 the mayor remarked, 'I cannot bring myself to think that Palmer's are finished.' He went on to say, 'As a result there is still hope for the town which relies for its existence on this shipyard.'<sup>(2)</sup> This small glimmer of hope was reinforced when T. Vasper Salt made plans to build a steel complex on the site of the shipyard, where he proposed to make steel at 65 shillings per ton, as opposed to steel works producing at 83 shillings per ton. Henry Brassert and Co., Salt's consultants in the steel plant construction, predicted that by 1940 a demand of 10.5 million tons of steel per year would be needed by the country; this figure was in fact reached by 1936. However, the financiers insisted upon the provisional company gaining acceptance by the Steel Federation.~~The Steel Federation~~ apparently saw the prospect of steel being produced at 65 shillings a ton undermining their plants and did everything in their power, from delay to prevarication to wreck the proposed steelworks at Jarrow, yet another blow to the raised hopes of the people. This was the last straw and gave impetus to the Jarrow Crusade.

Hence, the thirties became a totally demoralising period for the Jarrow people; there seemed no possible means of escape, even for the skilled craftsmen who had invested in their own homes - ' - buying their own homes at £500. Today these homes would not fetch more than £120 because there is no market for them'.<sup>(3)</sup> At the beginning of the

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(1) J. B. Priestley, English Journey, p.296.

(2) Shields Gazette, 4 January 1934, p.8. Mayor Dodds of Jarrow.

(3) Shields Gazette, 18 January 1934.

thirties there had been thousands of men employed at Palmer's, but by January 1934, a mere 50 men, mostly clerks and watchmen were employed at the yard. On top of this, with the dawn of the thirties, a most hated piece of unemployment legislation came into existence, the means test, and so the people were subjected to a further degrading situation. It put a great many unemployed people in Jarrow under the mercy of the Public Assistance Committee, whereby they had to suffer the indignities of officials prying into their personal circumstances. The effect the means test inspector had upon the households was very distressing:

'He would go into a house and assess the wages coming in; no matter how young (the children), if they were fetching in anything at all it was deducted from what the parents got. Now that meant ..... the breaking up of homes. Kiddies were leaving parents that had been locked together for years and were as close together as could be'.<sup>(1)</sup> This system of payment came into existence at the end of 1931. When the unemployment insurance ran out, they then had to apply to the P.A.C. and be put in the hands of the local Poor Law Authorities. Thus, skilled men, who had for many years paid insurance contributions when they were in employment at Palmer's, obviously felt very strongly about their predicament, whereby officials could question them even on their furniture and would refuse to pay them anything if they had managed to save, until the savings were spent.

At the same time as this occurred, labour camps were being set up at Redcar and Marsden where unemployed men were used to improve the condition of the campsite and were engaged in various heavy manual jobs such as quarrying and road construction. The men had been told this would be a holiday and that they would receive the same money,

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(1) T. Pickard, Jarrow March, p.23.

however the camps were far from holiday camps and many complained of the food and the conditions.

The pawnshop had always been used as a source of quick credit, with the Sunday best suit going down on a Monday and being taken out of pawn on the Saturday, when they received their wages. During the thirties, to many in Jarrow, it became a life-line with them pawning their blankets and clothing. 'In and Out. It was an appropriate name, for you would pawn, say, your man's suit on a Monday to meet the rent and if you hadn't the money to get it out on the Friday you would take in something else to help retrieve it.'<sup>(1)</sup>

Due to the great amount of poverty in the town, there were several charitable organisations. One such charity was the 'boot fund' instituted by the mayor to overcome the problem of the children having to go to school in their bare feet all year round. Collections were made in the town via carnivals and brass bands, collecting from the crowds. However, when times were hard for families it was feared that the boots might find their way into pawn and so before distribution, to safeguard against such a happening, the shoes/boots had a hole cut out of the upper leather, to be made recognisable as non-pawnable goods. This fund originated in 1921; as circumstances worsened soup kitchens were opened by the working-men's clubs and public houses. In 1932, with unemployment reaching a high level (6,793) several towns, hearing of the plight, began to raise funds; Stocksfield, for instance, gave £10 towards the maternity and child welfare, utilised by allowing parents to purchase maltoline at a reduced rate. By 1933 Doctor Mess, the Director of the Tyneside Council of Social Service, addressed a conference at which it was decided to donate £300 per year to Jarrow

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(1) C. Cookson, Our Kate, p.15.



for 4 years in order to found and maintain a club for the unemployed. A disused mill was utilised under this scheme to provide facilities for the men to use their time constructively in the making of furniture. Although the money from the Westminster Grant ceased after 4 years, the Board of Admiralty agreed to take over financially supporting the Jarrow club, for an indefinite period of time. The council made allotments available for the unemployed to supply themselves with a healthy diet of fresh vegetables and give the men a feeling of worth. The commissioner for Special Areas equipped one set of allotments with greenhouses, and the Society of Friends ran a scheme to help the men buy seeds and tools at reduced prices. There were also several, minor charitable funds run by many of the churches. The main charitable scheme, the Surrey Fund was started in 1934 by Sir J. Jarvis, High Sheriff of Surrey. The idea behind this fund was to provide work for the men which would be socially beneficial to the town, rather than handing out money on an individual basis. This fund provided money to pay the wages of men who were engaged in the construction of the Jarvis Park; it also provided materials so that the unemployed could redecorate their own homes. However, Sir J. Jarvis realised that work of a more commercial nature would be needed to get Jarrow back on its feet and so with the help of the Surrey Fund, purchased the ships, 'Berengaria' and 'Olympic' for shipbreaking to provide steel for the tubeworks.

In 1930, the picture at Jarrow was looking bleak: the shipyards were running down to eventual closure and demolition and many people were unemployed and receiving P.A.C. relief, charity work was on the increase and the people were literally living in slums. Nationally, the housing situation was bad, for instance in Birmingham there were 40,000 back-to-back terraces, in Glasgow the slums were far worse with

nearly 200,000 people living more than 3 to a room. This state of affairs induced the Government to introduce various Acts of Parliament dealing with poor housing. The 1930 Housing Act brought in by the Minister of Health, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, provided for slum clearance by local authorities, which was partially financed by a subsidy depending upon the number of families rehoused and the cost of rehousing them. At Jarrow, the Local Authority produced a five year plan for clearing slums, however there was an economy drive in Government spending which started in 1931 and led to a lack of financial resources for the slum clearance and the building of new houses. The North Ward being particularly bad in Jarrow, was the first area proposed for clearance. In 1935, in the Northern Ward, 286 families were rehoused, a total of 1,151 occupants.<sup>(1)</sup> When the people were rehoused in their new, estate council houses, the council insisted that they should fumigate all furniture that they took with them, as many of the old houses had been infested with beetles and bedbugs in bedding, furniture and even walls. Sir E. Hilton Young's Housing Act of 1935 obliged local authorities to put an end to overcrowding; overcrowding ultimately becoming a legal offence. This obviously accelerated Jarrow's slum clearance and housing programme to abate overcrowding in the area, as in 1936, 17.4% of the houses were still overcrowded.<sup>(2)</sup> By the end of 1939 the council's original clearance programme was almost complete however there were still 1,060 houses overcrowded in the district.<sup>(3)</sup> And so although the town had done

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(1) T. F. Powell, Social Conditions in Jarrow between 1919 and 1939, p.68.

(2) Annual Report of the Health Department of Jarrow. 1936, p.27.

(3) Annual Report of the Health Department of Jarrow 1939, p.43.

much to improve upon the housing of the area, there still remained, in 1939, much to be done.

By 1939, with many of the slums cleared and new council houses erected throughout Tyneside, a significant improvement in the living conditions of the working-class population was taking place. In Jarrow, this new housing stock was built mainly to the south of the town in areas known as Primrose, Monkton etc. These newly erected council houses inevitably led to healthier living conditions. '.... the interwar period, with all its difficulties, was a period which saw an increasing attack on the region's social problems.'<sup>(1)</sup> Just prior to the war, Jarrow for the first time was approaching a standard of living more in line with the rest of the country, though it still had its problems. 'Jarrow was at last, with the disappearance of the slums, ridding itself of the squalor of nineteenth century industrialisation and all that it meant.'<sup>(2)</sup>

It was quite ironic that the Jarrow of the thirties experienced both the demolition of the slums and the eradication of the main industry. At the same time as health was on the incline, the main industry was suffering decline. The Crusade of 1936 provided a focus of hope, binding the people together in one cause. It was undertaken with an air of hope that the Government would extricate them from what they saw as their fifteen years of industrial decline. It was intended to draw attention to the plight of Jarrow, fighting for 'the right to work and the means to live'. Just prior to this time, 75% of the population was unemployed with the poor having to support the poor through the local rates and in addition to this having been cheated,

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(1) McCord. (1979), p.250.

(2) T. F. Powell, Social conditions in Jarrow between 1919 and 1939, p.73.

as they saw it, of their steelworks. Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P. for Jarrow, headed the Crusade on its journey to London. The marchers were well received all along the route of their journey, including being accommodated at one point in a territorial drill-hall. Upon reaching London in the rain, their enthusiasm was still high with the idea of presenting their petition to Parliament. On the 3rd November at a meeting in London presided over by Mayor Thompson of Jarrow, Sir John Jarvis spoke of the tubeworks he was proposing to open at Jarrow, saying that he would, 'employ hundreds but it might lead to thousands'.<sup>(1)</sup> His speech came as a surprise to the other people on the platform but made him appear as the saviour of Jarrow. This speech, the day before the presentation to Parliament, knocked some of the shine off the occasion but worse was to follow. On the 4th November, the marchers were taken by members of the House on a tour of Parliament, then according to Special Branch records, at 2 p.m. they were taken on a river trip as far as Tower Bridge and back. Upon arriving back they found the petition had been presented, 'they appeared very disheartened as they anticipated this ceremony would be the crowning feature of their march and that they should have participated in the proceedings'.<sup>(2)</sup> The men became angry on hearing the news that no help was forthcoming from Government and proposed a stay-in strike but were advised to return to their accommodation instead. It would appear that Sir John Jarvis arranged the steamer trip on the Thames<sup>(3)</sup> and that, according to Inspector V. Wright of Special Branch, 'Miss Wilkinson tells me that they are arranging at

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(1) News Chronicle, 4 November 1936.

(2) Metropolitan Police reports on the Jarrow March: MEPO 2/3097.

(3) The Times, 5 November 1936.

the time their deputation is presenting the petition for the rest of the party not to be anywhere near Parliament'.<sup>(1)</sup> Hence, one could say, the men were quite literally 'sold down the river'.

Although the march in itself seemed to achieve very little, it did help publicise the case of Jarrow and bring contributions through charity work, in neighbouring towns, into the district. However, as was said, 'The March produced no immediate startling upsurge in employment in the town; it took the war to do that'.<sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) Metropolitan Police reports on the Jarrow March: MEPO 2/3097.

(2) T. Pickard, Jarrow March, p.26. Letter from Guy Waller.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### Educational Provision and its Effects upon Jarrow

The industrialisation that took place in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, created a demand for large quantities of cheap, manual labour. The heavy concentration of the workers in the poor districts awakened, in some, desires to improve their lot - with Mechanics' Institutes spreading throughout the country since the 1820s and with trade associations springing up in the 1840s. 'The stirrings of new political and social ideals, new ideas about justice, rights and education, helped to formulate new aspirations.'<sup>(1)</sup> 'The hierarchy' regarded these working-class desires as a disruptive element which could upset the ordered balance of society. However, the pressures being generated by the new engineering and commercial enterprises throughout the country, demanded an increasingly educated workforce, perhaps none more so than Palmer's enterprise at the riverside. This powerful shipbuilding concern, in order to satisfy its demands for an educated workforce, focused added awareness upon the advantages of those national educational developments most beneficial to itself and district. This path of promoting educational development in Jarrow eventually led to the building of the Secondary School. Initially, the national demand for education was met by an expansion in the voluntary sector of education, which had always been mainly the province of the churches - Charity and Sunday schools. The voluntary system continued to increase, catering for a large proportion of the working-classes, educating them to a 'level suitable to their station in life'.

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(1) J. Lawson and H. Silver, A Social History of Education in England, p.288.

Jarrow paralleled these national developments. In 1803, Simon Temple opened the Alfred Pit. As part of the celebrations, his son laid two foundation stones, one for a school for the education of the children of his workforce and the second for a building for the education of poor girls 'in offices more suitable to their sex'.<sup>(1)</sup> Both these institutions were designed to educate the working-classes into knowing their place. Temple saw the need for a certain level of education for his workforce. By opening schools he provided that education and at the same time gave himself the air of 'social benevolence'. By 1830, Thomas Hepburn, a primitive methodist preacher and miner, was organising a trade union for the miners. He was particularly interested in the education of pitboys and miners, and so he started a circulating library of books and pamphlets for the Miners' Lodges. Hepburn was viewed by the hierarchy as having 'revolutionary' tendencies, stirring the workers up through his union ideas. After the strike of 1832, the miners were forced back to work through starvation. Hepburn was banished to Felling Pit and prohibited from engaging in any further union activity although he was allowed to continue his religious and educational activities.

In 1849, Solomon Mease, the owner of the Don Alkali Works, opened a Wesleyan Chapel and a school for educating the working people. This was eventually taken over by the School Board in 1878. In 1864, Palmer opened a Mechanics' Institute for the education of his workforce in the shipyards.

Until 1870, this voluntary educational system remained the main source of education for the ordinary working-class. Even the enlargement of the voluntary sector did not satisfy the demands for education. From mid century it became evident that the voluntary

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(1) Jarrow Records, p.2.

system was not large enough adequately to cater for all the children and the increase of population was not being offset by a similar expansion in educational provision. Hence, more and more calls were made upon the government to enlarge the educational provision for the working-classes.

W. E. Forster's Education Act of 1870 aimed to provide elementary education for all children, to bring elementary education 'within the reach of every English home'.<sup>(1)</sup> The Act sought to cater for all those children who were not accommodated within the voluntary school system and where such deficiencies existed School Boards would be set up in those districts, financed from the rates. Forster's scheme was to 'supplement the present voluntary system - that is .... fill up its gaps at least cost of public money, with least loss of voluntary co-operation, and with most aid from the parents'.<sup>(2)</sup> The Board Schools were intended, along with the voluntary schools, to educate the labouring classes and so in this respect were harmonious.

Leading up to this Act coming into force there had been extensive debates about Government intervention. The government had been directly involved in financing elementary schooling since 1833, giving a grant of £20,000 to the two main societies, the National Society (for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church) and the British and Foreign School Society. By the 1840s this grant had increased to £500,000, the larger proportion going to the National Society. But the 1870 Act brought the state into collaboration with the voluntary sector as never before. There was some conflicting opinion concerning this collaboration. The

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(1) Verbatim Report of the Debate in Parliament, p.11.

(2) J. Lawson and H. Silver, A Social History of Education in England, p.314.



voluntaryists were against state intervention in education, as they regarded it as a restriction on freedom of choice and as an intrusive expansion of political control, in an area they regarded as outside the state's realm of jurisdiction. The church saw the secular liberal ideas such as free, compulsory education, as a threat to their organisation and so did their utmost to inhibit the advances of organisations like the National Educational League. This body regarded the voluntary system as deficient, especially in country parishes, and so it pressed for local boards to be set up in all districts, for free compulsory secular education for all. They looked upon voluntary schools as being a law unto themselves, with very little accountability.

However, when Forster's Education Act of 1870 was passed, the voluntary schools were left undiminished and the Act did not institute compulsory free education although it did make it possible. And so many believed that Forster had compromised too much with the voluntaryists, when framing the provisions of the Bill, allowing far too many concessions. Forster's policy resulted in his becoming most unpopular with his former supporters.

The 1870 Act required the School Boards to make available places for children between the ages of 5 to 13, but did not make education compulsory. However, it did allow School Boards to pass bye-laws requiring the attendance of all children in their district who were eligible. It was not in fact until 1880 that elementary education was made compulsory between 5 and 13, under the Mundella Act but even this allowed an exception from the age of 10, if the authorities felt it desirable. By the end of 1871, Jarrow School Board had enacted a local bye-law making elementary education compulsory for children

aged between 5 and 13 years old; it was one of the first School Boards in the country to enact this bye-law.

The 1870 Act's main clause of establishing School Boards to administer state supported education was rapidly adopted in some districts. Jarrow, among the first to do so, had adopted the system and set up its School Board by 1871.

At the inception of the Jarrow School Board, the population of the district stood at approximately 24,000<sup>(1)</sup> and the number of children of school age was 5,946. Educational provision in the area was already catered for by 8 public elementary schools accommodating 1,344 pupils, plus several private adventure schools<sup>(2)</sup> run from peoples' homes. It is difficult to assess the number of these private schools and the number of pupils in attendance at them, due to the lack of records available. However, the 1872 Ward's Directory lists some 8 private day schools as existing in Jarrow; by 1894, there were only 3 such schools listed in Whellan's Directory - hence, the number of these schools would appear to have diminished. In 1871, even taking these private schools into account, a shortfall well in excess of educational provision for 3,000 children would remain. It can be seen from these figures that the Jarrow School Board had its work cut out, in providing the necessary places. The task of the School Board to accommodate the children increased alongside the growth of the population. A building programme was initiated but to alleviate the immediate predicament the first School Board, under the Chairmanship of W. H. Richardson, pressed into service two temporary buildings: the old theatre in Drury Lane (opened 25 March, 1872) and the

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(1) F. Whellan, History of Durham 1894, p.1063.

(2) J.A. Redman, School Board Elections in North East England. A Study in Urban Politics, p.260.

Presbyterian Lecture Hall in Ellison Street (opened 11 November, 1873). Over the 33 years of its life, the School Board erected 5 permanent schools in Jarrow and 3 in Hebburn, accommodating some 8,500 children. The first of these schools was Grange School opened in 1873 at a cost of £5,000 and within a month their second school was opened - Monkton School, at a cost of £2,164.<sup>(1)</sup> Over the next 30 years the School Board oversaw the building of the following schools: Dunn Street, Jarrow (1874), Hebburn New Town (1875), Hebburn Colliery (1881), Hebburn Quay (1886), Higher Grade, Jarrow (1886) and Croft Terrace, Jarrow (1895). It also extended schools as the need arose, for example in 1881 both Grange School and Dunn Street School were considerably enlarged. Throughout its life the provision of places was not the only problem the School Board had to contend with. By the early 1880s the problem of children staying on beyond the basic elementary standard was providing the School Board with a small but growing problem.

Although School Boards were initially created to allow all pupils to benefit from an elementary education, difficulties quickly arose by pupils passing through the seven standards and progressing even further. In fact, by 1895, approximately a quarter of a million children over the age of thirteen years old were still receiving elementary education;<sup>(2)</sup> hence, the system appeared to be breaking down. To cater for those pupils, some areas chose to establish elementary Higher Grade Schools. Once again, Jarrow was quick to adopt the scheme and by the early date of July 1886, Jarrow had opened their 'Higher Grade School'. Development of education does not come

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(1) F. Whellan, History of Durham 1894, p.1070.

(2) Lowndes (1969), p.44.

easily; although Jarrow was quick to build the school, at a cost of some £5,000, the actual purpose it was to be put to was a matter of some debate, as there had been a School Board election between the start of building the school and its opening. New members of the Board proposed that it could be utilised as a single-sex girls' school or as an Infants and Elementary school; both ideas were dismissed as not those originally intended. The purpose stated for this Higher Grade School, when it was first opened, was to provide a high level of education for the children in the area, equal to that of any of the neighbouring towns. It was said, at the opening of the school, by the Reverend Father Hayes that, 'It is a magnificent school intended to be the Higher Grade School for Jarrow. I might set out by saying that very great things are expected from the school which will undoubtedly be a great blessing to the children of Jarrow and district'.<sup>(1)</sup>

By 1895, according to the list of schools aided by parliamentary grants, there were 67 Higher Grade Schools in operation, containing 24,584 pupils.<sup>(2)</sup> However, of these schools, the majority appear to have been in the North and the Midlands. The Higher Grade School was not universally accepted as being beneficial in all areas, especially in districts where a grammar school was already in operation. The Higher Grades charged lower fees and gave a more practical education than that of the grammar school and so were seen as being in competition with the grammar schools for those children showing ability after standard VII. Jarrow, having no grammar school, ran a Higher Grade which catered for 684 pupils, almost twice the national

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 23 July, 1886.

(2) Lowndes (1969), p.45.

average.

The Act of 1870 limited school fees in the case of public elementary schools to 9d per week. Thus, the Higher Grade at Jarrow charged fees of 9d per week to all pupils in attendance but also a fee of 3d per week for stationery was a fixed charge.<sup>(1)</sup> The people of Jarrow obviously felt strongly about the high fee of one shilling per week for attendance at the Higher Grade but they wanted the superior education and hoped it would be attainable for the working-class people to take fair advantage of the system. Because of the fees, it was debatable whether Higher Grades were for the socially élite rather than the educationally élite. The school shortly thereafter gained a government grant, reducing the fee by 5d per week for each pupil, thereby encouraging working-class parents to continue their children's education beyond the basic elementary level.

Each year more and more Higher Grade Schools were built throughout the country, in order to meet the needs of those children wishing to stay at school beyond the statutory leaving age. Once the School Board provided such a school it tended to take up a prominent and prestigious position in the area, as did the Higher Grade School at Jarrow. By the late 1890s, some regarded Higher Grade Schools as an obstacle to the further development of secondary education. The Higher Grades were acting in the role of 'secondary' schools, under the control of the School Boards.

Robert Morant, Assistant Director of Special Inquiries and Reports at the Education Department since 1895, was one of the people who believed the School Boards were overstepping their authority in providing higher elementary education and saw this as standing in the way of educational development. He had made a study of the Swiss

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 30 April 1886.

educational system and was particularly impressed by their ordered administration as compared to the rather chaotic English educational system. He reported that many of the English School Boards were spending their rates on secondary education in the form of Higher Grades, when the 1870 Education Act specified that they were only allowed to provide for elementary education. At this time Dr. Garnett, the Secretary of the London Technical Education Board, was preparing a case for the County Council as he was at loggerheads with the London School Board over this very matter of responsibility for secondary and technical education. The position of the London School Board in relation to Higher education or Secondary education was judged to be illegal by the Government auditor, T. B. Cockerton, and the members of the Board were surcharged. They appealed against this but the 'Cockerton judgement' was upheld. This heralded the demise of the School Boards and paved the way forward towards the 1902 Education Act which Robert Morant helped draw up.

As a result of the 'Cockerton judgement', the School Boards were prevented from providing secondary education. In order to provide this, the Government enacted an emergency Bill in 1901 which allowed the School Boards to continue providing secondary education until the new Education Act became law. This new Education Act of 1902 was drafted by Morant and sponsored by the Prime Minister, Mr. A.J. Balfour. This Act reduced the number of education authorities from 2,500 School Boards to 300 Local Education Authorities, and simplified the administration of education in the country. Under the 1902 Act, Counties and County Boroughs became Local Education Authorities and Borough Councils and Urban Districts, under Part III of the Act could only be responsible for Infant and Elementary education. Thus,

an area such as Jarrow, being a Municipal Borough became a Part III authority, responsible for Infant and Elementary education. Secondary education, which had been carried on under the umbrella of the Higher Grade school, had then to be financed by Durham County Council through their Local Education Authority. Durham County Council became responsible for higher education throughout the county except in the county boroughs which included South Shields and Gateshead.

The 1902 Education Act was ultimately responsible for the provision of a new Secondary school at Jarrow. Until the new Secondary was built, secondary education was established as a unit within the Higher Grade, obviously thrusting yet more prestige upon its image. The transitional period necessitated many such improvisations, of which Jarrow was just one example reflected throughout the country. After the 1902 Act, Jarrow Higher Grade School continued to accommodate a secondary department financed by the county which was able to levy a 2d rate to support further education. But by 1906, the low charges made upon the pupils for attendance was leading to an extremely difficult financial position for the County Council and so a massive increase in charges to £1 per term was introduced,<sup>(1)</sup> and a new headmaster, Mr. A. R. Stevens,<sup>(2)</sup> was engaged for the Secondary department and evening-continuation classes. The increased fees concerned many people as they felt that the school should be open to working men's children and such fees would prove to be a large burden on the poorer parents. However, Jarrow had been running scholarships since the beginning of the School Board, which enabled those children from poorer backgrounds to take advantage of the educational

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 26 October 1906.

(2) Robinson (1986), p.6.

opportunities available within the area. In 1907, new regulations came into force, insisting that 25% of all school places in secondary schools that were grant aided should be free for children from elementary schools. Candidates for free places were to be selected on the result of an attainment test designed to discover whether they were able to profit from Secondary education.

The Education Act of 1907 gave added impetus to the construction of new secondary schools, with government grants of £5 per head for each pupil in attendance. It also empowered L.E.A.s to make compulsory purchases of land on which to build secondary schools, which would qualify for the Board's Grant. In Jarrow, they were quick to take up this opportunity by pressurising the Durham County Education Committee into siting the County Secondary School at Jarrow. The L.E.A. purchased land from Lord Northbourne in 1907 and engaged the architects, Messrs. F. Rennoldson and Newby of South Shields, to start construction of the school in 1908. The unit from the Higher Grade was transferred, under the headship of Mr. A. R. Steven (1906) to the new Secondary school, officially opened by Alderman G. Johnson in October, 1911. The school accommodated 300 pupils and it was said that 50% of the places would be free, double the figure required by law for schools receiving the Grant. Alderman Curry Wood, Chairman of the County Education Committee stated that, '50% of the places in the school would be free and would give every likely child of working men a chance to embrace the opportunities of life'.<sup>(1)</sup> Doctor J. J. Weir said that the opening of the school was, 'the most important event in Jarrow in an educational sense since 1886, when the Higher Grade School was opened by the then School Board of Jarrow'.<sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911.

(2) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 6 October 1911.



When the Secondary School transferred to the new building, the Higher Grade continued to operate as an elementary Higher Grade School. It changed its status to a Central School in 1919 after the First World War, similar to those which were adopted in London (1911) and Manchester (1912). The Central School was to have a curriculum which was commercially biased towards educating the artisans and skilled workers of the district, unlike the Secondary school which was to provide for the intellectually skilled of the area for, 'those whose future career in life was to depend on their brains rather than on their hands, and it would lead up without a break to the university'.<sup>(1)</sup>

Nationally, after the 1902 Education Act, secondary school construction and the conversion of other schools was greatly encouraged, with 272 such schools recognised by the Board of Education in 1902,<sup>(2)</sup> increasing to 689 by 1906.<sup>(3)</sup> This rapid expansion in the number of secondary schools shows that improved social and economic standing was considered important throughout the country and education was a conducive method of achieving this goal. The function of the Secondary school was to provide pupil-teachers with full-time education, to give liberal education via scholarships to those pupils who showed intellectual promise and to lead the way to the universities.

The training of teachers was an important consideration to the School Board in Jarrow. Since its inception it was greatly concerned with the supply and quality of teachers for the district. Indeed, it was decided to improve the Pupil Teachers System and so in 1879 a syllabus of instruction for pupil teachers in the area was adopted.

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 6 October 1911.

(2) Lowndes (1969), p.84.

(3) Lowndes (1969), p.86.

However, nationally the standards of pupil teachers was being criticised; 'the pupil teachers taught badly and were badly taught'.<sup>(1)</sup> By 1888 further improvements were introduced by the Jarrow School Board to the effect of requiring quarterly examinations for the pupil teachers in order to monitor the standards and raise the level of teaching. However, some authorities had adopted the system of Pupil Teachers' Centres which had been introduced in 1881. It was not until 1898, that the Jarrow School Board decided to investigate the advantages of Pupil Teachers' Centres and so conducted a survey of various School Boards. 48 School Boards replied, 32 of which were already successfully running Pupil Teachers' Centres and 4 in the process of changing to the system.<sup>(2)</sup> With this information the School Board, in collaboration with the voluntary schools of the district, decided to adopt the Pupil Teachers' Centre scheme. After some debate it was decided to create a Centre at Croft Terrace School. This was a relatively new building having just been opened some four years earlier; it was modern and had suitable accommodation to absorb a Pupil Teachers' Centre. In the first year there were 78 pupil teachers attending the Centre: 45 from Board Schools, 33 from Voluntary Schools.<sup>(3)</sup> The pupil teachers from voluntary schools were admitted at a charge of ten shillings per annum. The Centre was opened on 7 November 1898. The Pupil Teachers' Centre remained at Croft Terrace, until 1908 when the pupil teachers numbered only 14, and the Centre had only one assistant teacher and a head. Arrangements were then made for the Centre to transfer to the Secondary school

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(1) S.J. Curtis, History of Education in Great Britain, p.291.

(2) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 12 August 1898.

(3) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 12 August 1898.

based at the Higher Grade School. And so the new Secondary school at Field Terrace, on its opening, was said to fulfil educational requirements within three spheres of educational development: evening-continuation classes, providing pupil teachers and providing 'Secondary' education from the age of eleven.

After the creation of the L.E.A.s with responsibilities for secondary education, the Hedworth, Monkton and Jarrow education committee, appear from the education minutes, to have taken most interest in the Higher Grade School, paying little regard to the development of the new Secondary, under the jurisdiction of Durham County Council. The occasions when they made reference in the education minutes to the Secondary were mainly when it bore direct effect upon other schools or educational matters in the district. Despite the fact that the Higher Grade/Central school still carried weighty importance and great ethos, the Local Education Committee administered the Secondary on behalf of the Durham County Education Committee. The reason behind Jarrow Education Committee's interest in the elementary schools and central school, perhaps lay in the fact that those schools were supported from local rates whereas the Secondary was supported from Durham County rates. However, the governors of Jarrow Secondary School were often co-opted, to a large extent, from the people who were on the local education committee, and so their influences stretched beyond the elementary schools and into the Secondary school. It was said in 1906 by County Alderman G. Johnson, chairman of the Jarrow Education Committee that, 'strictly speaking, the operations of the Borough Education Authority are confined to part three of the Education Act 1902, or what may be described as elementary education; but the County Education Committee have delegated the management of all forms of

education other than elementary to two sub-committees whose personnel practically consists of the Borough Education Committee'.<sup>(1)</sup>

In the Fisher Act of 1918, all fee paying at elementary schools was abolished. It also abolished exemptions from the school leaving age of 14, although this was not enforced nationally until 1921. This Act was introduced towards the end of the war, at a time of great hardship, and was perhaps cast in the role of helping to create 'a land fit for heroes'. It was clear that there was need for reorganisation of education for children over eleven years old. However, the Geddes Committee of 1921 axed spending upon education and set back educational development for at least ten years, with their economy measures. It was first proposed to cut the education bill by £18 million from a total of £50 million. The cut, after a great deal of opposition in the country towards the proposals, was reduced to £6.5 million; still a substantial amount. After the election of the Labour party in 1924, the Geddes Committee's proposals were in effect, neutralised and the educational decline was first slowed and then reversed.

In 1926, the Hadow Report proposed that the elementary schools should be divided into primary and post-primary, transferring to the latter at eleven years of age. It was proposed that for those over the age of eleven years, post-primary education should be carried on in 3 main types: Secondary schools to be known as grammars and Selective and Non-Selective Centrals to be known as moderns. Where it was not practicable to have a separate school for Post-primary pupils, then they should have 'Senior classes'. One of the principal recommendations of the Hadow Report concerned the raising of the

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(1) Jarrow Express and Tyneside Advertiser, 26 October 1906.

minimum leaving age to fifteen years old and secondary education for all children, catering for differences in abilities but having a broad common foundation. Of course, none of these proposals were adopted at the time but they laid the foundation for the later Spens Report of 1938. Although these recommendations were not carried through till some years later, the Durham County Council welcomed the Hadow Report recommendations hoping that they would be implemented as quickly as possible. The situation in Durham was that roughly out of an estimated 15,000 pupils leaving school annually in the area, about 6,000 of the boys were destined to find employment in the mining industry. The authority hoped that if Hadow's recommendations, concerning raising the school leaving age, were carried through rapidly, the unemployment situation at Durham could be alleviated.

The Hadow Report emphasised the 'selection by differentiation' concept, at the early age of eleven years old. The Spens Report of 1938 took the Hadow Report a stage further, proposing that all children should have secondary education in a modern, a technical or a grammar school. It rejected the possibility of multilateral schools, as they would be too large and educationally stifling to the majority of children. The Report recognised the importance of sixth forms in grammar schools, provided the intake was large enough to sustain a sixth form. It further recommended the raising of the school leaving age to sixteen years old. The Report was to have a major influence on the development of education after the **Second World War**, through the 1944 Education Act.

It was stated in the Spens Report that the grammar schools should retain a special importance and character in the future development of education but that they should not enjoy especially favourable

conditions. This seems to suggest that the grammar schools should not be paid more per pupil than that of the technical or modern, except in so far as was justified by the difference in curriculum. This would seem to apply in Jarrow, with the Secondary school being supported by Durham County rates and Central and elementary schools being supported by the local rate.

The Norwood Report of 1943 again pointed the way to secondary education for all, after the age of eleven years, on a tripartite system to be known as grammar, technical and modern schools.

The war stifled the recommendations of the Reports which had been looked upon favourably but the national emergency took precedence. In September, 1939 there were approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million evacuees placed in reception areas. The Government were criticised, due to the fact that the evacuated areas appeared safe at the time and the whole effort therefore appeared to be of little value.

Among the schools evacuated in September 1939 was Jarrow Secondary School. As the area of Jarrow and its surrounding neighbourhood was heavily industrialised, it was considered necessary to evacuate the children. The Secondary School was offered, from Newcastle Education Committee, a chance to evacuate to Penrith in Cumberland but the Durham County Education Committee delayed the decision and suggested that they evacuate to Chester-le-Street instead, not a particularly realistic suggestion. Jarrow Secondary was eventually evacuated to Wolsingham sharing accommodation with Wolsingham Secondary School, for a period of seven months. At about this time, the Secretary of the Local Education Authority reported that a circular regarding evacuation had been issued to 6,000 householders in the Jarrow area. Out of 191 replies, only 41 expressed an interest in having their children evacuated. After initial panic,

the Jarrow people obviously did not regard evacuation as being desirable, and so the Education Authority provided air raid protection at the schools as a precautionary measure; this allowed the schools at Jarrow to function 'normally' throughout the war.

The 1944 Butler Education Act, evolving from the Hadow, Spens and Norwood Reports, established a system of secondary education for all, according to their age, ability and aptitude. The first parts of the Act were put into force on 1st April, 1945. It organised education as three progressive stages: primary education, secondary education and further education. This had the immediate effect of abolishing the term 'elementary'. Within Jarrow this meant the renaming of the schools. 'Secondary', now a term covering between post-primary and further education, meant that 'Jarrow Secondary' was renamed 'Jarrow Grammar', 'Central' became 'Central Secondary Modern' and 'Croft Terrace elementary' became 'Croft Terrace Secondary Modern' etc.

Under the 1944 Act, the number of L.E.A.s were reduced by the abolition of the Part III authorities. This reduced the number of L.E.A.s set up in 1902 by 169. Since the Act of 1902, the Durham County Education Committee had delegated a large proportion of the responsibility for running education in the Jarrow area (including secondary) to the Jarrow Education Committee. When the 1944 Education Act abolished Part III authorities, allowing the L.E.A.s to create district sub-committees, there was little change at Jarrow in the administrative structure within the authority.

From the start of its industrial development, Jarrow has always sought to cater for its high working-class population. 'The hierarchy' in Jarrow have attached great importance to educating the working-

classes, of which perhaps benevolence was not their sole concern. From Temple, educating them into 'knowing their position', to Palmer, encouraging his workers to get out of the public houses and into the Mechanics' Institute so that they could work more efficiently in the shipyards. Acts of Parliament allowed the early adoption of a School Board and the building of a Higher Grade School and a Secondary School. Education in Jarrow was held in high regard as a means of self-improvement, even in times of depression. On the evening of the Jarrow marchers' return from London, Professor B. Stanley addressed a large audience at Jarrow Secondary School's speechday:

'In the old days people were kept in order by their circumstances. They worked 14 hours a day and that did not leave them with much time to get into mischief. They knew who their betters were. They touched their caps to the Squire. They knew all sorts of fixed relationships but all that has changed'.<sup>(1)</sup>

But had things really changed? Or were they still conforming to the same rules, with the educational system serving the same master?

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(1) The Shields Gazette, 6 November, 1936.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Social Mobility. From School to Industry and the Community

'It was a social distinction to get into Jarrow Secondary school'. How many times, when interviewing ex-pupils from the school, did I hear 'standards' mentioned. Parents were proud to get their children into the school. It was a privilege, a distinction to have a child there and they would do without to maintain their children at the school if necessary. In fact, many elementary schools made every effort to place children there, some 'forcing them like rhubarb' to pass the scholarship examination, even though, through such a method, they did not always fare well when they were attending 'the school of the area'. But once at the school, what in fact did the place do for the pupils?

To discover just what the school did for the pupils, it was necessary to understand what the school aimed to provide for the pupil, what the pupils thought, and how they fared after they left. Personal interviews were conducted with ex-pupils to ascertain their perception of the Secondary School and how it influenced them in their subsequent career. Although the interviews were not sufficiently systematic to be scientifically valid, they presented a good indication of the views and achievements of pupils who had attended the school at that time. The opportunity arose to interview over thirty ex-pupils from Jarrow Secondary School within the time period 1911 to 1944<sup>(1)</sup>, plus others educated within the area. The pupils from the Secondary School were spread evenly over the whole of the time period.

According to a report in the 'Shields Gazette and Shipping Telegraph', dated 6 October 1911, the secondary school aimed at three

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(1) See Appendix A, Biographical index of interviewees.

main objectives: to facilitate a liberal education for those pupils who demonstrated sufficient ability, to create pupil-teachers to attend the various training colleges, and to provide evening-continuation classes for the district.

From the interviews conducted, it was found that the second of the aims was carried out thoroughly. Between 1911 and 1944, out of the people interviewed, 55% eventually went into education as teachers. The vast majority of these people in the educational occupations strove to teach in the Jarrow area, some gaining experience elsewhere because of lack of positions in Jarrow and then returning as experienced teachers, others teaching in the catchment locality such as Low Fell. This shows their strong affinity with the area. Most taught in elementary schools, having gained their qualifications at teacher training colleges.

Out of the men who were interviewed who went into education, 5 out of 8 became headmasters and 2 of the remaining 3 were deputy headmasters. Out of the 9 women teachers, none became a headmistress. As the background and educational achievements were about equal between the sexes, the imbalance in educational hierarchy seems somewhat of a comment on the attitude of the people and area. However, this must be seen in the light of the traditional attitudes in the district i.e. the men worked in heavy engineering and the women stayed at home and brought up the children. Most of the ex-pupils' mothers were housewives, and so for their daughters to achieve a socio-economic class II was quite a feat. Between 1911 and 1944, out of 31 ex-pupils, of whom 15 were women who had equal academic opportunities no woman aspired to class I whereas 7 men (44%) attained that class.<sup>(1)</sup> This is perhaps a demonstration of the attitude in

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(1) See Appendix B, Male/Female ex-pupils' socio-economic advancement.

this community, which must have been reflected in the school, conditioning the girls into accepting their role in the community - in this case less than their equivalent male counterparts though more than their mothers before them.

The majority of pupils interviewed who did not go into teaching found the skills they acquired kept them away from the shop-floor environment and fitted them better for office skills. The industries of the area: heavy engineering, shipbuilding, chemicals, were the large employers and so the ex-pupils naturally gravitated towards those concerns upon leaving school. From the interviews, the impression was gained that the employers were glad to take the pupils into the lower management structure, with their having a more academic education, which stood them in good stead. For example, one man started off as a draughtsman working for a local shipbuilding firm, eventually becoming responsible for naval architecture at Swan Hunters in charge of six to seven drawing-offices. It was stated by some that, although they lacked the vocational skills with which Central School pupils were provided, the Secondary School pupils were equipped with a good basic education and with expressive ability upon which to draw in their jobs.

From the interviews conducted, approximately two thirds of the children's parents came from the socio-economic classification III, in jobs such as mining, shipyard work and heavy engineering. That is to say, they were skilled manual workers from the upper end of the working class. The majority of children whose fathers were from class III, advanced to class II (50%) or class I (25%) with only 20% remaining at class III. The pupils who maintained class III status, including the one pupil who moved to class IV, were from the group

of children who did not finish their education for family reasons. With the majority of fathers having a socio-economic status of class III and below (87%),<sup>(1)</sup> basically the Secondary School catered for the children of working-class parents. However, having said that, it appears to have been an upper working-class school. This is most likely due to the fact that parents who were in a 'better' economic position could provide the necessary equipment required of the children by the Secondary School. Obviously, a policeman's son (class III) would have experienced less hardship in getting a school uniform, than a nightwatchman's son (class V). But it was pointed out that the parents felt a 'pride' and made sacrifices so that their children could prosper in a better occupation. Some parents told their children that they did not want them to take up a labouring position when their education offered them more. It was noted by several interviewees that as children they had been unaware of economic difficulties within their family at the time but on reflection in adult life they realised that their families had experienced difficulty. For example, it was recalled that to provide the light for homework, during the dark winter evenings, the family went to bed early the previous nights. Out of 27 class III and below families, 22 children advanced and so, for the majority the education received at the school proved advantageous - worth the struggle and sacrifice. Indeed, it can be seen clearly from Appendix C that the children from the Secondary School aspired mainly to socio-economic classes I and II - certainly living up to their parents' hopes.

Despite the willingness to sacrifice for the future good of the

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(1) See Appendix C, Fathers'/Pupils' socio-economic classifications.

children, circumstances sometimes prevented the children continuing in their education. When a parent died, the child often gave up education in order to look after the family or bring in some wages, especially if the child was the eldest.

Of the 9 children who left early, 5 still managed to advance themselves socially, although they had to take longer through evening-classes, attended whilst doing a full-time job during the day - as in the case of one man who was a pattern maker and eventually through his endeavours became a headmaster. Another, who had to leave early to assist his family economically, took up a position at a bank and sat the various examinations within the service to work his way upwards. There were others who maintained the socio-economic classification of their father, by working in similar positions in the locality in such places as Reyrolles. Some children left early due to the wartime evacuation, feeling that they were more needed at home and old enough to help in the war effort. The authorities appeared to choose to overlook the fact that the children left early, perhaps because of difficulties during wartime.

Little allowance was made by the school for events such as death of the breadwinner and the subsequent difficulties in raising the family. The actual reason for leaving was not important to the school, what was important was the wasted potential of the pupil and the expense. Many early leavers received letters from the headmaster remonstrating with them for leaving and fining them £5. Some letters mentioned the wasted ability and possible wasted achievements. However, in the main the early leavers felt that they had no alternative and so they accepted what seemed to be the inevitable. As one interviewee said:- 'It's no good thinking of what could have been'.

The school always appeared to keep itself aloof from the area. Unlike other schools, it did not encourage parents actively to come to the school, unless by invitation. 'What the teachers did was right'. The school had an aura of respectability and parents thought of it as unapproachable and somewhat intimidating, and this was reinforced by its formal nature and stern, imposing atmosphere. It was not that the school was uncaring, rather it aimed at academic prowess above all else - providing for this liberal education as the first target, and that is exactly what it did - put its pupils into the community as the academic workforce.

One of the objectives of providing this liberal education was the engendering of an attitude towards good conduct and the strengthening of character to enter into the community. The hierarchy of the school in particular were the mainstays of that part of their education. Miss Coates, the senior mistress, was responsible for the girls' discipline, ensuring that they wore suitable clothing (school uniform) with no frivolous adornments. To demonstrate the social graces that pupils were expected to know, at Christmas parties Mr. Stevens, the headmaster, dressed in his best evening attire, met the girls at one door while Miss Coates, the senior mistress, dressed in her evening gown, met the boys at the other entrance. The boys were expected to wear white gloves 'so as not to soil the girls' dresses'. And so although academic prowess was of prime importance, discipline, duty and moral conduct were encouraged to support them going out into the community. The object of this was to give the pupils the opportunity of academic and moral awareness so that they could gain a respectable and responsible position in society.

It is perhaps illustrative of some of the moral values which the

Secondary School set out to encourage that two ex-pupils, who became headmasters in the area, also diversified into local politics. One became mayor of Jarrow (1964 and 1965) and mayor of South Tyneside (1974 and 1975). The other became deputy mayor of Jarrow (1955).

23 people out of 31 (74%) socially advanced themselves beyond the socio-economic classifications of their fathers, 7 (23%) remained constant and only 1 (3%) fell a class.<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, for a working-class population, the Secondary School proved to be an effective means of socially improving the standard of one's children.

If a child attained a position at Central School, regarded as the next alternative to the Secondary, a School Certificate qualification was available though this was a 'junior school certificate'. If any pupils at Central wished to become teachers, a School Certificate from the Secondary School was required. Hence, a transfer was needed in the final years. Thus the qualifications that could be obtained via the Secondary School of Oxford School Certificate and Higher School Certificate were seen as the ultimate in importance throughout the area. It is no wonder that the Secondary School produced such a high percentage of people in education, considering that it was the only school in the area to prepare them for that occupation.

The majority of those interviewed, 23 out of 31, sat the Oxford School Certificate, very few reaching the Higher School Certificate because in those times they felt it better to get into employment by the shortest possible route, which would lead them into their chosen occupation. Those who spoke of the Highers felt it was mainly for those people who wished to go to university. In fact, it was mentioned by one person that the headmaster inferred that they should

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(1) See Appendix D, Ex-pupils socio-economic advancement.

go to university with a Highers rather than take up their chosen career as a teacher by going to teacher training college. Those who had to leave early for one reason or another, and did not finish their course of study, still did well. They took further education courses as they stated that the Secondary School provided 'a good solid foundation of education' on which they could work.

Four of those ex-pupils interviewed had initially attended Central School and had eventually been transferred to the Secondary School. After the first year, all pupils at Central took an examination in English, Mathematics and French. One person recalled that in their year at Central School, five pupils transferred after their first year having passed with high marks at that examination. However, two of the ex-pupils interviewed recalled that Central School placed them in their third year in a direction that they felt best for them; there was a choice of the General School Certificate course, the Commercial course or the Technical course. If pupils chose the General course, in order to go into education as a career, then transfer to the Secondary School was obligatory as the 'Secondary' School Certificate was essential for intending pupil-teachers. Both of the interviewees who transferred for the necessary teaching qualification became Deputy Headmasters, after passing the necessary Oxford School Certificate, and both returned to Jarrow as Deputy Headmasters at Croft Terrace, one in 1960, the other in 1967.

After leaving the Secondary School, the majority of interviewees continued their education; all but four took up further education. One man actually returned to the Secondary School to continue his education there in the evening-continuation classes studying drawing. But the vast majority continued their education at Teacher Training



Colleges; the earlier ones studying as pupil-teachers for a year prior to going to college. One interviewee drew attention to the fact that the pupil-teacher system ended in the Jarrow district in 1927, and from then onwards intending teachers went straight to the Teacher Training Colleges. A popular Teacher Training College for pupils was St. John's Teacher Training College at York. One man remembered that when he attended St. John's there were eleven of his school mates there at the same time. It was felt that this was a popular college because there were regular buses (the Galleys) on the route, to make travelling easy at a reasonable price of ten shillings return. Others took further education in the form of typing classes, inservice examination and coursework, and technical-school classes. All but two of the ex-pupils who went into education raised their social classifications by attending Teacher Training College. The two who did not, both had parents who were shopowners and therefore from class II already. Out of the remaining pupils who took further education, 6 out of 9 raised their social classes. 3 of these attained no School Certificate from the Secondary School but still managed to advance their social standing.

It is interesting to look at this 33 year study in sections as it splits quite evenly, pivoting on major turning points in the economic and social life of the district. Section one runs from the official opening of Jarrow Secondary School, to the end of the boom following the First World War, (1911 to 1922). Section two goes from 1923 with the slump in shipbuilding, through the General Strike of 1926 to the handing over of the final ship from Palmer's in 1933. Then finally, the third section from 1934 finds the N.S.S. taking over Palmer's, a new headmaster beginning Jarrow Secondary in 1934,

the Jarrow March of 1936 and the Second World War. These major factors must have influenced the pupils attending the school at those given times.

Those pupils from 1911 to 1922 who were interviewed, appear to have done very well. 8 out of 10 advanced themselves socially.<sup>(1)</sup> When the school was originally set up, there was not a wide variety of occupations in the area through which children could socially advance. Hence, all but two of those interviewed went into education. Going into teaching, at that time, was a highly respected position and 50% of those interviewed who went into education attained head-masterships. Teaching was an attractive career to follow as it offered opportunity for advancement and held a prestigious position within the community. All but one of the teachers from this time became pupil-teachers for one year before attending Teacher Training College, and they all spoke highly of the beneficial experience gained through this system. Although the year was hard - a 17 year old standing in front of a class of sixty 13 year olds, back to back with another class (a somewhat daunting experience) - they still rated it highly, and believed they learnt skills that helped their future careers. They all went into local elementary schools because they had taken teacher training whereas entry into the Secondary School was for university graduates. 8 out of 10 took School Certificates; no-one stayed on for Highers as they did not need them for their chosen occupations.

The parents, for the most part, went to school in the locality although some had been brought to the district as young children, from areas such as Scotland and the Midlands. This will have been at a time when the industry of the area was crying out for labour. Many

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(1) See Appendix E1, Socio-economic groups for parents and ex-pupils, 1911 - 1922.

of these parents had attended the Higher Grade School and therefore received a relatively high standard of education; the Higher Grade being the most important school in the district at a time when their parents were of school age. It is interesting to note that often the brothers and sisters of the interviewees also attended the Secondary School. From the 24 brothers/sisters, 13 (54%) attended Jarrow Secondary, 9 (38%) attended various elementary schools and 2 (8%) went to Central.<sup>(1)</sup> All of those who went to the Secondary got 'good' jobs such as teaching, accountancy, engineering and administration. Those who went to elementary schools tended either to stay at home to look after the family or to take up clerical work. And the two who went to Central became the manager of a company and a civil servant respectively.

Of the second section of pupils, between 1923 and 1933, out of 11 pupils, 10 attained their School Certificate but only 4 went into education. 2 people attained class I status, one through education and the other in industry through naval work.<sup>(2)</sup> Office work was by far the most prevalent occupation. At this time, the majority of pupils seemed to be looking towards jobs that would show a quick financial return. 'We felt we had to repay our parents by getting a job. It would have taken several years to teach.'

The parents were mostly local and many had attended the Higher Grade School, once more showing an inclination to better educational standards. Their brothers/sisters mainly attended Central 13 (38%) and elementary schools 13 (38%) with only 8 (24%) attending the Secondary - 'times were hard'.<sup>(3)</sup> The pattern of occupation that

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(1) See Appendix F, Schools attended by siblings of interviewees.

(2) See Appendix E2, Socio-economic groups for parents and ex-pupils, 1923 - 1933.

(3) See Appendix F, Schools attended by siblings of interviewees.

the pupils took up were still relative to the types of school they attended. At the Secondary they became teachers but there was one stationmaster, at Central they still went into lower administrative professions and from elementary schools they for the most part became housewives, seamstresses etc.

One of the most interesting facts which came from the study was that of the pupils interviewed who were evacuated in 1939, and who were not in their final years running up to the examinations; not one sat the Oxford School Certificate. All efforts appeared to be spent on the examination classes. In fact, three left the school while it was based at Wolsingham and the other two left the school on their return to Jarrow. The feeling expressed by the pupils was that it was not important; everything was 'up in the air'. There was not a settled atmosphere at the school. Despite the fact that they did not attain a School Certificate, they still at least maintained their socio-economic grouping and in two cases increased it. Of those pupils who started at the school after the evacuation, they all increased their socio-economic grouping and all became teachers. The standards of discipline whilst at Wolsingham, with half-time education, seem to have slipped amongst the younger pupils. One notable event was the writing of a letter to the press criticising the food, and a food-strike by the pupils whereby the plates would be dirtied to cause work but no food eaten. Several interviewees reported that many children left Wolsingham to return home; no wonder academic qualifications by the youngsters were relegated to a lower priority. One ex-pupil stated that although she did not officially leave school until September 1941, she 'did not attend school much' in the latter time after Wolsingham. Those pupils who started the Secondary School after the evacuation in September 1940, appear to have achieved, as

they all obtained School Certificates and three girls also sat H.S.C.s. All of the post-evacuation pupils interviewed, went into teaching. Of the interviewees from the 1934 to 1944 period, all achieved class II or III, though none attained a class I.<sup>(1)</sup>

Most of the parents came from Hebburn and other local elementary schools. There were only a few who had an education at Central or Jarrow Secondary. This differs from the preceding two groupings in the educational standing of the schools their parents attended. The majority of brothers/sisters went to local elementary schools 9 (60%).<sup>(2)</sup> Out of the three sections, this section had the highest percentage attending elementary schools, despite being the smallest number of children. Given the period these children attended school, with the closure of the shipbuilding industry, the Hunger March and the war, no doubt this explains the reason for the increasing percentage of elementary school pupils amongst brothers/sisters. The depression prior to this period probably accounted for the fact that fewer parents had Higher School education.

Throughout the whole period 1911 to 1944, many of the ex-pupils had brothers and sisters who attended the Secondary school.<sup>(3)</sup> As is illustrated in Appendix F, the overall percentage of brothers/sisters who attended the Secondary school: was 30% - quite a sizeable proportion. Some parents who received letters to say their children could attend but only as a fee-payer still sought to take up the opportunity if it was at all affordable. Even fathers from socio-economic class III, 'made ends meet' in families where others had

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(1) See Appendix E3, Socio-economic groups for parents and ex-pupils, 1934 - 1944.

(2) See Appendix F, Schools attended by siblings of interviewees.

(3) See Appendix F, Schools attended by siblings of interviewees.

attended the Secondary school if their sons/daughters showed enough cleverness possibly to attend the school. One man who was a wire-rope slicer paid for his son to go to the Secondary school, for instance. If a child was clever enough to get to the Secondary, especially a son, then they would try, even if it meant paying, to give them all the opportunity. For example, in one family all five boys attended the Secondary of whom four became headmasters and the two girls went to the elementary school in order to go into the mother's business. Practically everyone who went to the Secondary school advanced themselves, and all the women worked and achieved careers. The siblings who attended elementary schools, tended to remain at the same socio-economic standing as their father or slipped slightly rather than advanced. For instance, in one family, the father was a shipyard worker and his daughters worked, one as a seamstress and another in service, after attending Croft Terrace School.

Overall, the same number of brothers as sisters attended the Secondary School (11/11). This seems to indicate that the parents considered the Secondary school education just as important for either sex, giving both those boys and girls capable enough the opportunity to advance socially. However, from the sample, more than twice as many brothers attended Central as sisters (14/6); perhaps the science-based curriculum was thought more fitting for a boy. The reverse was found of the elementary schools, whereby more sisters attended than brothers (18/13) - many girls marrying, having children and looking after the home, the husbands being considered 'the breadwinners'. For those girls who attended the Secondary school, it was hoped that they would use their education to take up a career to benefit themselves.

The choice of career by the boys and girls was, according to them, made solely by themselves as the ex-pupils from the whole period

maintained that they had no careers guidance whatsoever at the Secondary school. 'No jobs were mentioned at school. You just decided what job to do yourself.' All the interviewees said that they determined their own future careers but was this in fact so? By the very essence of the school, being dedicated to producing teachers and the academic workforce of the area, and by the nature of the district with its booms and recessions limiting choice and opportunity for careers, no doubt the pupils were channelled into their eventual careers, without the need for formal guidance. Not many ex-pupils appeared to venture into science-based professions, - the arts were foremost unless they had a particular bent towards the sciences. Very few appear to have gone into the medical or legal professions. The pupils tended to go into professions where the education they had received was relevant and none of those interviewed went straight to university as it was not necessary; it was very expensive and would have delayed wage-earning.

The Secondary school operated as a socially élite institution in a working-class district. It offered working-class children the opportunity of a better lifestyle, of elevating themselves to a higher station in life through education. It did this without compromising its very high standards, no matter what circumstances were prevailing in the district at the time.

The sample interviewed shows that indeed working-class parents did get their children to the school, realising the benefits it gave. But in the main, these people were from the skilled occupations and constituted the educated people of the area. The semi-skilled and unskilled workers were far fewer, the cost of maintaining a child at the school being high for them. However, the school did benefit the children. It opened the doors to academic advancement and moral

awareness, turning the children of skilled workers out into the professions and the intermediate occupations. From fathers who were coppersmiths, insurance agents, miners, blacksmiths, shoe repairers, shipyard workers, the children became teachers, headmasters, naval architects, bankers, civil servants and drawing-office clerks.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### Ethos of Jarrow Secondary School

The interviews with the ex-pupils from Jarrow Secondary School offered a special insight into the internal mechanisms of the school and its relationship with the community. These personal interviews proved to be particularly illuminating, as they shed light on the workings of educational provision in the Jarrow area. By recounting their first-hand experience and vivid memories, a more complete picture emerged, bringing the subject to life.

Entry to the Secondary School, was only available through competitive examination. Nationally, 'the original form of this selection examination had consisted of questions in English and Arithmetic supplemented by an intelligence test and perhaps an interview'.<sup>(1)</sup> In Jarrow, considering the large catchment area and the limited number of places, competition was fierce. The scholarship examination for Jarrow Secondary School consisted first of a written paper, taken by the pupils at their elementary schools. The early ex-pupils, who started at the Secondary school before 1940, recalled that this written examination was in two sections, consisting of Arithmetic and English (composition and grammar). It was mentioned that the test was split: one part taken in the morning and the second part in the afternoon. One interviewee remembered that some classmates did not want to take up Secondary education and in fact deliberately failed the examination by truanting in the afternoon. Claude Robinson, in his book 'J'Accuse' states that after 1940 the scholarship examination for entry to Jarrow Secondary School changed, in his

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(1) H. C. Barnard, History of English Education, p.328.

opinion for the worst. 'Ever since 1940, the 11+ examination, the IT, standardised English and standardised Arithmetic, required answers only in pencil, with a mark or a cross'.<sup>(1)</sup> These multiple choice style questions made it easier for some elementary schools to cram their pupils so that a high proportion gained places at the Secondary School. As C. N. Robinson states 'Consequently, we sometimes had a whole form who could scarcely hold a pen or write a sentence'.<sup>(2)</sup> The old style examination of composition and grammar was felt to give a more truthful picture of the child's ability. 'The old English and Arithmetic were, at least, relevant to the work the children would have to do on entry to the school'.<sup>(3)</sup> For those who passed the scholarship examination there was a compulsory interview. This interview was said to be an extremely traumatic experience as it took place at Jarrow Secondary School, in front of a panel of the hierarchy from that school, inclusive of headmaster, senior mistress etc. The pupils nervously entered the headmaster's study in very small groups whereby either the pupils were requested to read a passage aloud (one instance being an extract from 'Wind in the Willows') or in some cases the headmaster read (in one case the poem 'Toll for the Brave'). After the reading, the children were asked questions on the context of what they had just read or heard, putting their hand up if they knew the answer. The questions then shifted to general knowledge, such as asking the real name of George Eliot, and then to practical questions. An example given of a practical question was when the headmaster asked the group 'What is an inch multiplied by an inch?' One girl answered

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(1) Robinson (1986), p.42.

(2) Robinson (1986), p.42.

(3) Robinson (1986), p.42.

'A square inch.' This question was quickly followed by 'And what is a circle multiplied by a circle?' The answer received being 'A square circle.' - how embarrassing for her! Pupils were often asked questions about their background and family, such as 'What does your father do for a living?' Everyone who passed the scholarship got an interview but apparently it was more important for some than for others. For those who passed near the top their interview was felt to be merely for identification purposes but for those on the borderline, passing the written examination by 'the skin of their teeth', the interview was believed to be far more important.

After the scholarship examination a merit list was drawn up. A line was drawn at the free-place entries and parents of these pupils were sent scholarship letters. Those on the borderline and just below were sent letters giving their parents the opportunity to allow their child a place as a fee-payer. These fee-payers paid five guineas per annum. Each term they took their envelope containing thirty-five shillings along to the secretary. For those who narrowly missed getting a place at the Secondary School and instead were going to Central, there was always the chance of a dropped scholarship. A dropped scholarship occurred when a pupil, who had attained a place at the Secondary School, was unable to take up that position for one reason or another e.g. moving out of the district or their parents preferring them to attend the Catholic Secondary School.

The elementary schools, within the catchment area, took a great pride in getting as many of their pupils into the Secondary as possible. According to several ex-pupils, it was stated that some elementary schools actually coached their pupils solely to pass the entrance examination, including the final interview techniques. This system

SCHOLARSHIP LETTER

1910

HEBDORN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Junior Scholarships - 1910.  
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I, the undersigned, DO HEREBY ACCEPT the Scholarship awarded to my daughter KATE E. SAYERS-----by the above Committee, and I DO HEREBY UNDERTAKE that he will remain in attendance at the Jarrow Secondary School during the two years for which the said Scholarship is tenable, namely, the two years ending on the 31st day of July 1912.

Signed -----

Parent (or Guardian)

DATE ----- 1910.

of cramming, adopted by some schools, did not always serve the best interests of either the pupil or the Secondary School. Hence, pupils in the reception class could vividly recall the teacher saying, 'Oh no, not another one from Farrow Park!'

Once a place had been secured at the Secondary, pupils were placed into forms according to their ability. Over the thirty year study period various schemes were apparently tried. The interviewees recalled that there were three forms: A, B and C. For two years (1917 and 1918) a system was tried whereby a small number of children aged ten years old, whose parents wished them to attend the Secondary, were entered into a preparatory class. These children were placed into Form 1, which was small and not split by ability. After the first year, the selected children sat their scholarship at the Secondary School and were placed in their second year into the appropriate forms according to ability. Thus, in these years, there was no Form 1 for any pupils passing their scholarship examination. All eleven year old pupils were placed into either Form 2A or 2B, the A form being considered the higher of the two forms. However, for those pupils who appeared very clever, they were known as 'flyers' and placed a year above in a special class, 3C. Within the C class there was therefore a mixture of first year clever pupils and a few second year 'duller' pupils. Later, when the preparatory class was discontinued, Form 1A and 1B became the reception classes. The flyers still existed and went into 2C, still one year above their age group. If these flyers progressed well, then they would be placed into 3A (the best third year class) however, if they did not show their colours then they were placed into 3C or remained in Form 2 but went into 2A. Some ex-pupils stated that they had doubts about the system, in fact

one felt it was somewhat detrimental to health as it proved quite worrying to have to keep up such standards in advance of one's years. For example, after being placed in 2C as a flyer, by the second year the same pupil could end up being knocked back by being placed in 3C amongst what they considered 'the duds' or 'drifters', even though they were still one year in advance of their peers. As was pointed out, children can be cruel and elder pupils often looked on the younger flyers in 3C as just 'little children still wanting to play with toys'. In the fifth year the high flyers, who were one year in advance of their peers, took the School Certificate. If they wanted to go to college they remained at school an extra year, taking their School Certificate again. Through this flyers system pupils could end up in classes with brothers/sisters who were a year older, as they did two years in one. Many of the interviewees felt that the flyers were mostly made up of those who were older by up to eleven months, depending upon when their birthday fell, and so should not have felt 'out of place' as there may have been as little as one month between them and the older pupils. Others, who experienced the supergroup, felt some reservations as they felt they were thought of as 'kids' by the older pupils. However, some that experienced the express class, enjoyed the system and felt it was beneficial. After Form 2, pupils proceeded into Form 3 depending upon aptitude as well as ability. In Form 3, if pupils were better at Mathematics than French, they did Latin and were placed into 3A. If they were better at French than Mathematics, they did German and were placed into 3B. Otherwise they went into 3C doing neither Latin nor German, only French which was common to all classes. Hence, ability in subjects was used to determine aptitude, and which form the pupil progressed

to decided if they went on to study the Classics. The A forms were felt to have the most pressure on them to do well as they were considered the brightest pupils. In fact it was believed by one or two ex-pupils that other forms were somewhat 'neglected' or at least not sufficiently encouraged compared to the A forms. There appears to have been some experimentation over the thirty year study period as to sexes within the classes, stemming from third year pupils upwards. It was recalled that in some years, 3A was for all the best pupils, 3B was all boys and 3C all girls. Obviously, in these experimental years, flyers from 2C, not making the grade, were placed into 3B/C according to their sex. Also, in one year, there was experimentation of a similar kind in the fifth year - it was recalled that the boys did particularly well the year they were separated from the girls. By fifth year, the number of pupils had dwindled and by then there were only two forms, 5A and 5B. By sixth form, the amount of pupils remaining at school was very small indeed and so practically all of them got the responsibility of becoming a prefect.

On entry to the school, parents were issued with a list informing them of school uniform and equipment necessities. It was essential that all pupils at the Secondary School were kitted out properly. Many of the interviewees said they had been amongst elementary school pupils who did not have boots. Shoelessness appears to have been quite common in elementary schools; as C. Parsons writes of the elementary schools around the Sheffield area 'In the February of 1922 almost one quarter of the children in attendance were in need of adequate footwear'.<sup>(1)</sup> One interviewee from Jarrow recalled that at Dunn Street

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(1) C. Parsons, Schools in an urban community, p.110.



a few of the pupils there had been 'sewn in for winter'. But at the Secondary School all the pupils had to wear school uniform; this was compulsory - and so no-one was seen without boots! A day was set aside at the school to place orders with Isaac Waltons of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Times were hard, and one ex-pupils recalled that the family had to borrow money from an aunt to pay for a uniform.

The uniform in winter for girls consisted of a navy-blue pot-pie hat with red stripes and a badge on the front, blazer with badge, navy gaberdine, gloves, navy gym-slip with no pleats (later a navy pinafore-dress), white blouse, navy knickers, black woollen stockings and black shoes. In Physical Education, girls had to have navy sandshoes and a small red bag to carry their shoes in. They wore their white blouses and navy-blue knickers with white shorts beneath, taking off their tunics for P.E. lessons. The teacher checked the kit was in order at P.E. lessons, and often checked the girls' day attire as they entered the school. Length of skirt was given particular attention; correct length could be checked so that if the girls knelt down, the skirt had to touch the floor, thus be knee-length. The pinafore dress could be purchased from Isaac Walton at a price of £1 9s 6d; if preferred the girls were allowed to pay instalments of 6d per week payable at school to the senior mistress. It was recalled that Miss Coates, the senior mistress, although a strict disciplinarian, was kind at heart, for once when a pupil gave two weeks money, as a holiday was imminent, Miss Coates returned the shilling saying, 'It will be of better use to your family'. There were no concessions made except one small allowance, when during the evacuation period in 1939 the girls were allowed to wear navy and white spotted blouses at Harperley Hall. During the summer months

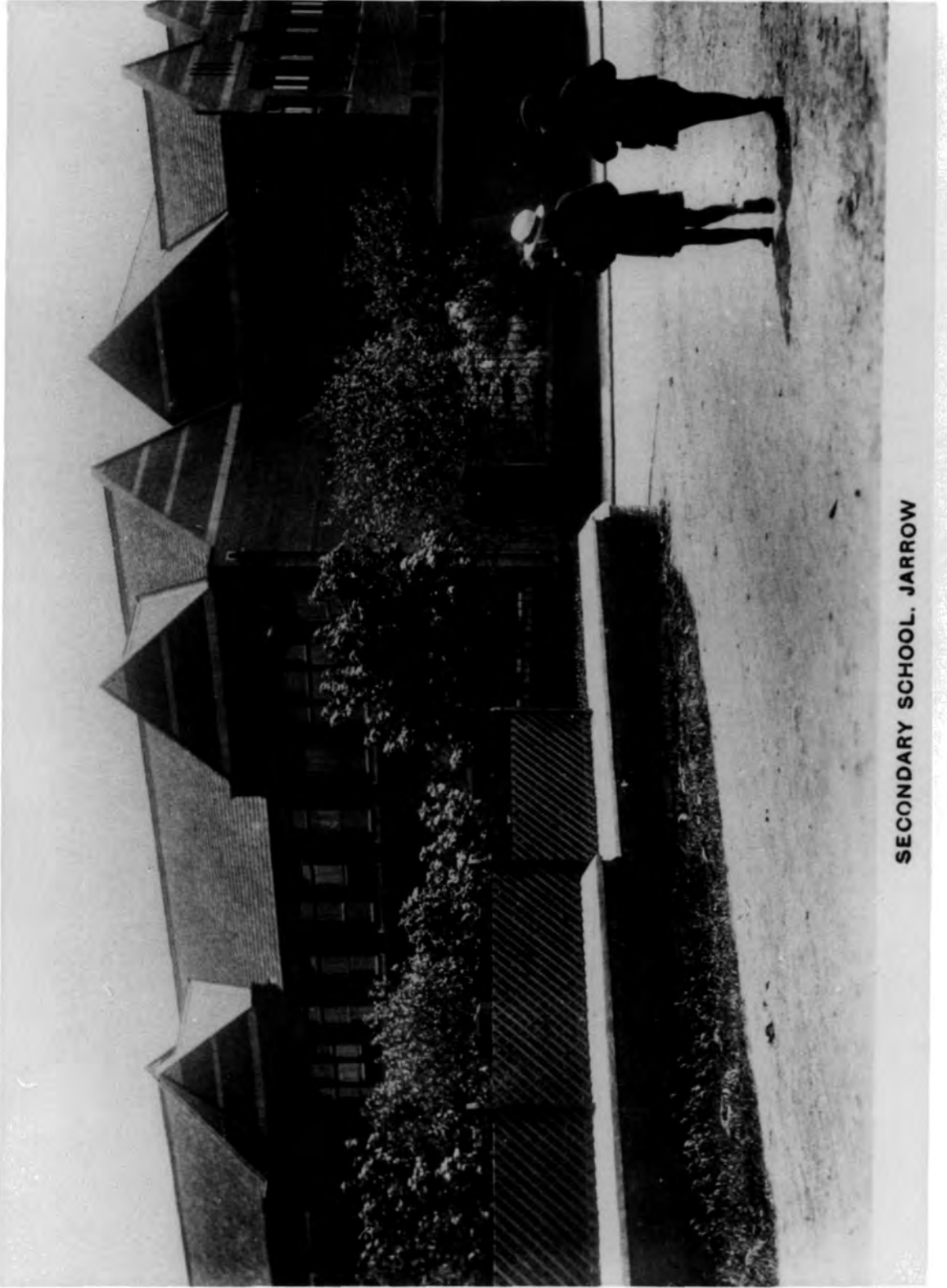
the girls wore panama hats, short white socks and blue summer dresses, the material for which could be purchased at school. However, not all girls possessed summer uniform. Later, the girls revealed that there was a great innovation when Mr. Robinson was headmaster, and that was fawn lisle stockings. They recalled that they were informed by Miss Coates that these fawn stockings cost 'three and thrupence'. One interviewee said that her ambition was to have a blazer with a cord around the edges as this was the height of fashion, however they were dearer to purchase and not many could afford such luxuries. In sewing, the girls made a cookery apron (reputed to be a 'shapeless thing') and they also made navy-blue knickers, appliqueing on a butterfly or some other object of design. In Art, the girls made a design out of their initials so that they could sew them onto their aprons or knickers - a form of early cross-curricular studies. Although pupils were supplied with some equipment, it was believed best to purchase one's own and so it was felt 'essential' to buy a hockey stick, tennis racket, coloured house sash, mapping pens, paint brushes etc. Those who simply could not afford these items were sometimes given them by pupils who had earlier left the school, or they would borrow them from another pupil without informing teachers e.g. borrowing a hockey stick when it was your P.E. lesson. Some pupils were fortunate enough to be able to obtain 'hand-me-down' clothes from big sisters and others said that mothers possessed great innovative powers such as cutting down coats to fit them. One girl, a prefect in the sixth form, was severely reprimanded for daring to venture to school during the summer months in the wrong coloured blue dress. This grave misdemeanour was written into her end-of-year report. Another ex-pupil recalled that in her sixth form she was

actually sent home for wearing a skirt. 'You wore a gym-slip unless you were a prefect!' - obviously sixth form pupils were at a somewhat revolutionary age!

The boys' uniform consisted of a blazer with badge, a cap with badge, grey socks and grey/navy trousers. The main bone of contention for the boys was the wearing of the school cap. Many ex-pupils revealed that by the fifth/sixth form, they stuffed their caps into their pockets once at a 'safe' distance from the school, rather than be seen with the cap perched on their head, only wearing them in the immediate vicinity of the school, in what they termed 'danger zones'. Punishments were doled out if any boy was seen, even outside the school grounds, without his cap. 'You were up before the beak if you were spotted without your cap!' The punishment for such misconduct ranged from receiving 100 lines to getting caned by the headmaster. The Secondary School caps could be purchased for 3s 6d, or by instalments from the school of 6d per week, payable via the Art master, Mr. Scott. Alternatively, boys could buy an ordinary cap priced 6d and buy the Secondary School cap badge price 6d to sew on. (This variety was felt to be somewhat inferior, as those who were not 'well-to-do' had these). It was pointed out that for times when the income for the family may be only 2ls, a cap for 3s 6d was a great deal of money. In fact, one boy had a torn cap for four or five years, whilst at the school. His mother patched it for him, rather than buy another such expensive item. All the pupils at the Secondary wore shoes, even though in the same locality many elementary school pupils went without. However, one pupil recalled that his mother always bought boots two sizes too big for him so that he would grow into them, and his always had 'big, tackety nails in them' so they would not wear out

CHILDREN MAKING THEIR WAY TO SCHOOL

c. 1921



SECONDARY SCHOOL. JARROW

too quickly. The boys' P.E. kit required them to have navy-blue gym shorts, white vests, sandshoes and football boots. One boy recalled his mother making gym shorts from an old overcoat. This was an exercise not limited to Jarrow alone; as C. Parsons points out in her study, 'enterprising mothers had been able to make a wide range of garments out of most uninspiring used household articles such as pillow slips, table cloths etc.'<sup>(1)</sup> At Jarrow Secondary School, another boy remembered enjoying football team matches until he was prevented playing when it was discovered he possessed no football boots. The school tie was only remembered by those pupils who joined when Mr. Robinson was headmaster, and so it appears to have been made part of the school uniform in the mid-thirties.

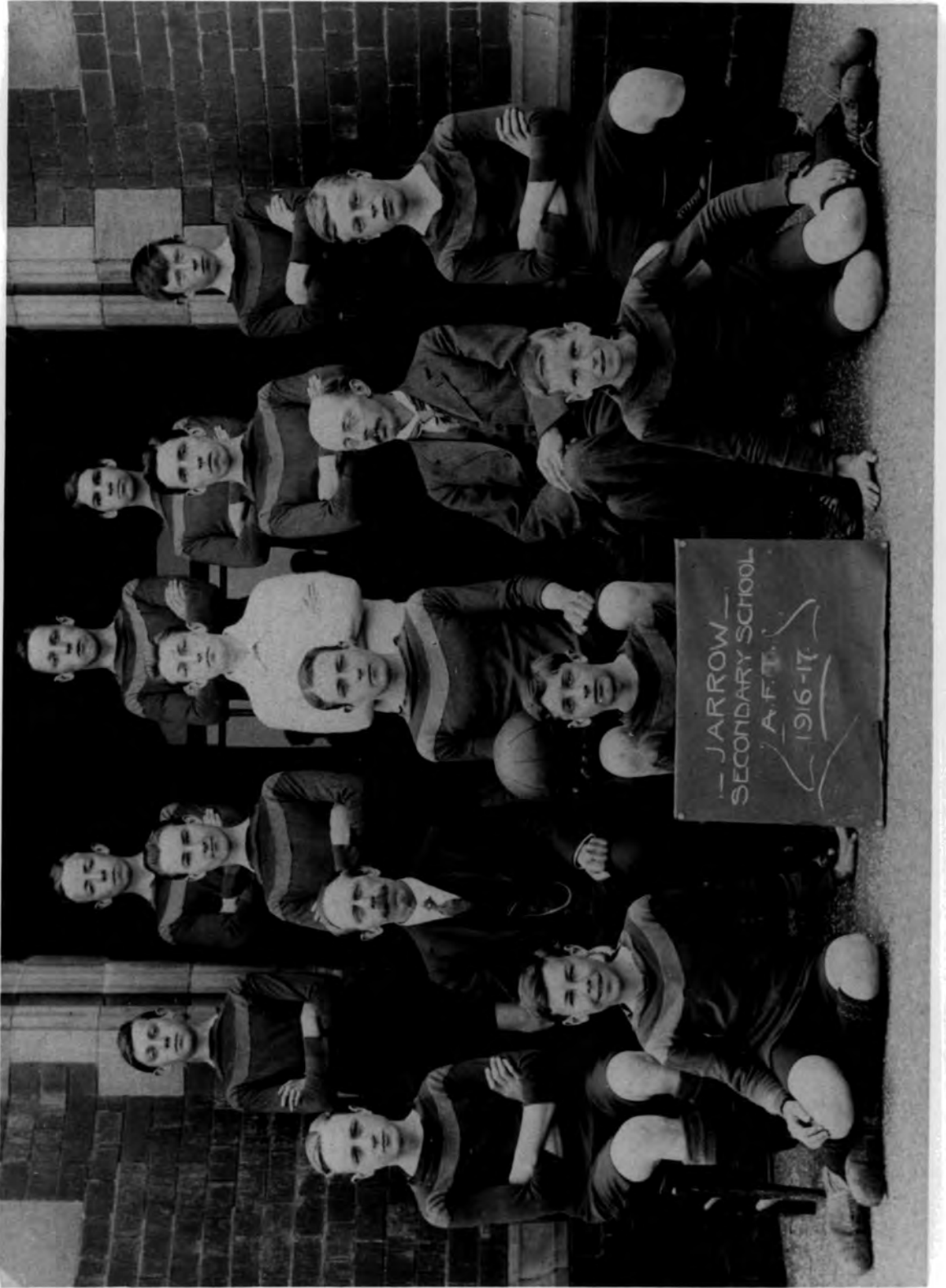
Each morning the whole school attended assembly in the main hall. The staff were dressed in their gowns, looking extremely dour dressed in black from head to toe, without any gown colours. The staff entered one behind the other and either stood on the platform behind the headmaster or placed themselves in strategic positions down the side of the hall to watch over the pupils. The headmaster, Mr. A. R. Stevens, entered through the door from his study and gave the assembly. A prayer was said and a hymn was sang. All the pupils had specific places to sit within the hall: The girls sat on one side, boys on the other. The first year pupils sat above on the balcony at the back with Miss Gaunt and Miss Luddington in attendance, the senior pupils at the very front. Each Wednesday morning there was an extra period for music. Mr. Hughes and Doc Spink played the piano. The ex-pupils believed this period of singing in the hall probably allowed the rest

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(1) C. Parson, Schools in an Urban Community, p.71.

JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

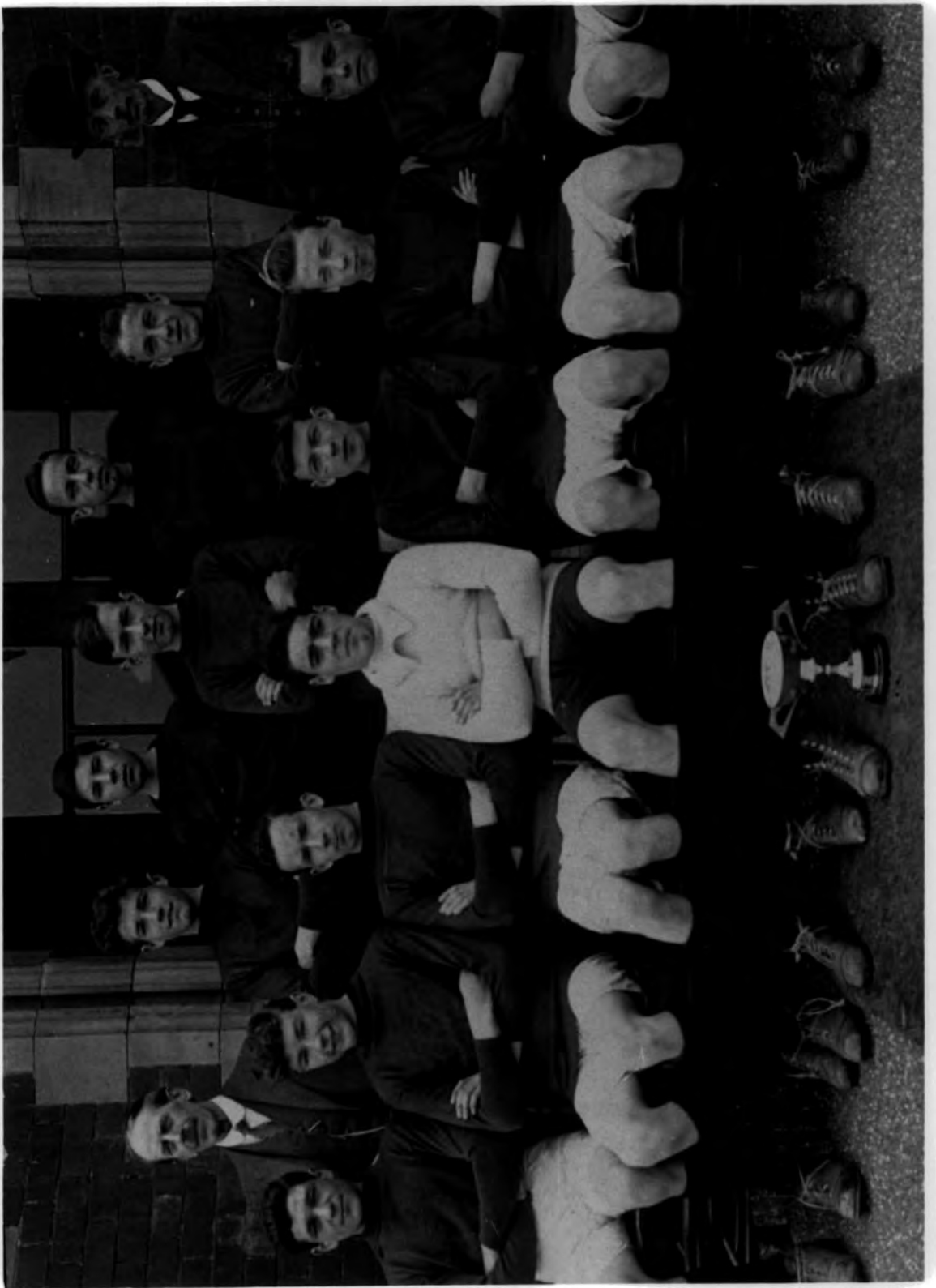
1916-17





JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

1925



of the staff half a free lesson as they quickly 'disappeared'.

Practically all the staff wore gowns and those who did not were recalled by the ex-pupils. Mr. Osborne, the boys' Physical Education instructor, for example, did not wear a gown but he was dressed completely in white. He was said to be a 'first rate gym master', 'a dapper man who was always on his toes'. The boys' P.E. lessons with Mr. Osborne consisted of gymnastics with indoor equipment including a horse, ropes, bars etc., of Swedish exercises and outdoor activities. Outdoor sports such as football could be taken by a variety of staff who were interested in the sport, such as the teachers of French, Mr. J. Wilson and Mr. Hill. Mr. Hill was a distinctive character to the children, as he had only one arm, having lost the other in World War One. No-one was excluded from assisting in games; even Mr. Peacock, the caretaker, had his expertise commandeered. The girls had a P.E. mistress called Miss Willis, who gained renown with the boys as having a 'very well developed figure'. Later in the thirties, Miss Nidd took over the position of P.E. instructress. The girls too did indoor activities, including standing in rows to practise posture and outdoor activities which included hockey, rounders and tennis. Tennis was carried out on the courts in Springwell Park, abutting the school field. The girls passed through the gate from the school field straight into the Park grounds.

The 'big white chief' between 1911 and 1934 was Mr. A. R. Stevens. He lived in Field Terrace just over the road from the school. He was described as 'a real gentleman', 'quiet', 'droopy', 'wishy-washy', 'tall and thin', but all agreed he was to be respected and held great discipline throughout the school. In fact, although he

JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL HOCKEY TEAM

1925



went about his job as headmaster in a very quiet fashion, it was said on numerous occasions that 'he ruled with a rod of iron'. He taught upper fifth, general literature and appeared very knowledgeable.

The senior mistress of the same time was particularly recalled. She was said to be 'a real character!' In fact, she was reported to 'be able to reduce senior boys to tears' and could subdue pupils when they 'heard her keys rattle around the next corner'. She was fondly remembered as 'Carrots' because of her fiery red hair. Miss Coates was in charge of girls' discipline but apparently she still kept the boys in line, even noticing if they were wearing haircream. She taught History throughout the school and was thought to be very strict but a 'good' teacher. Although she was very strict, the majority of ex-pupils agreed that she was always fair and greatly respected. She was spotless in appearance, setting an excellent example to the pupils as she watched over the speech and dress of the girls. She was described as 'a terror', 'a martinet', 'somewhat inhibiting' but also as 'a gem' and 'a godsend'.

Miss Weston, the Geography teacher, was mentioned by almost every ex-pupil interviewed. She appeared to be exceptionally good at teaching; in fact, it was recalled by several that a great amount of her pupils gained distinctions in School Certificates due to her enthusiasm and interest. She was always strict, she maintained high standards, in tests she expected pupils to obtain 8 out of 10 at least, was quiet, made no fuss and was extremely good at actually teaching. She was the kind of teacher all pupils did homework for on time; they would receive double the amount if they forgot. Later, Miss Weston became senior mistress, taking over the position of Miss

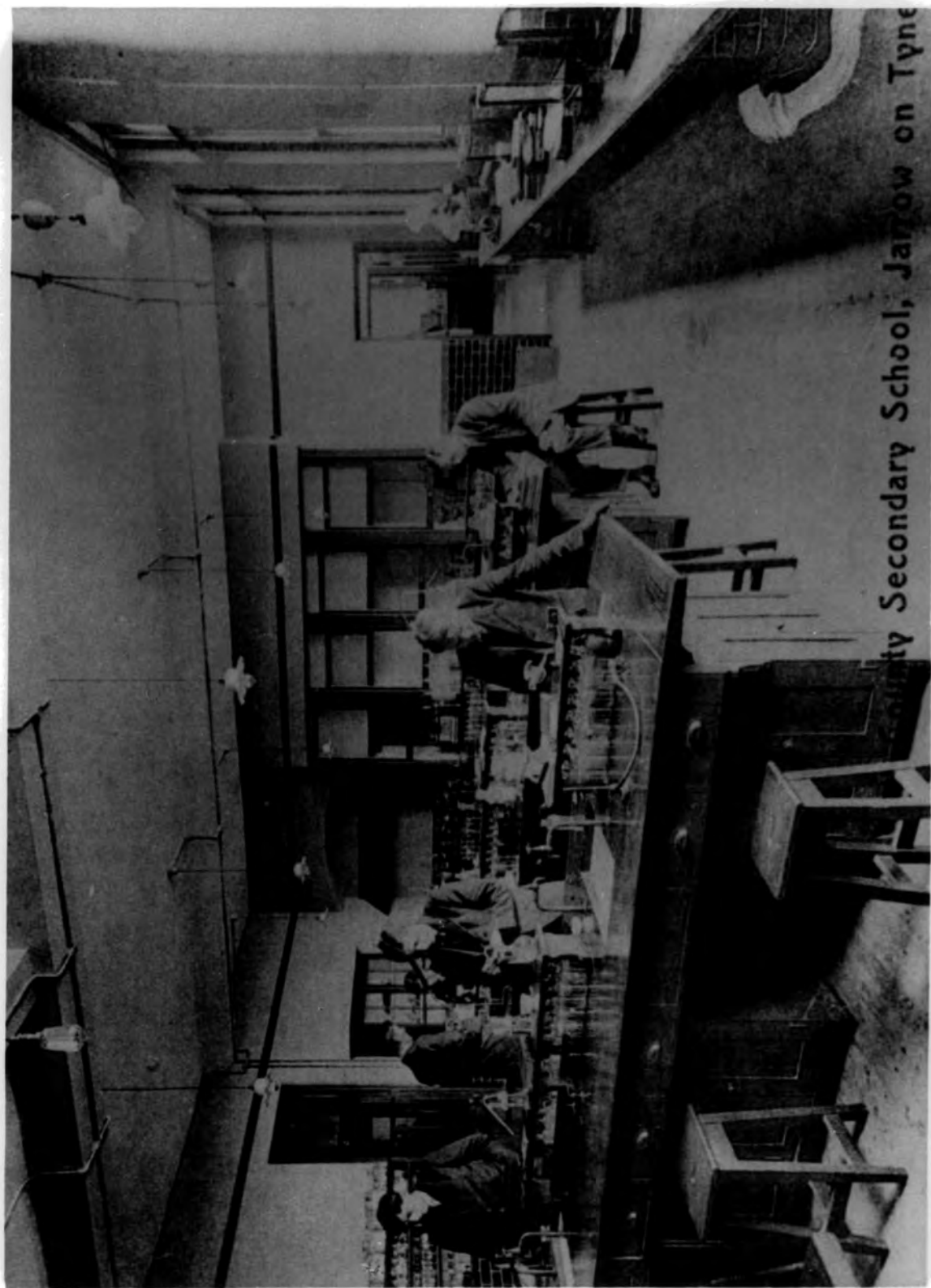
Coates, when Mr. Robinson was headmaster.

Science was spoken of by all ex-pupils. The boys did Chemistry and Physics, taught by 'Pa' Skinner and Mr. Huntley, throughout their time at the school. However, girls just received these subjects for a limited amount of time (one year for each Science). Girls instead had Botany, and recalled the time vividly. Miss Gaunt taught this subject upstairs, while the boys received their Science lessons in the lower rooms. Miss Gaunt was apparently very aptly named; she was tall, thin with her hair drawn back into a tight bun. One interviewee still possessed many of the pressed flowers from her Botany lessons. Miss Gaunt obviously captivated the interest of the girls. Many recalled Botany trips to the beach by train, hip-picking for the war effort and outings to Whittle Dean two or three times a year to collect different flowers in order to build up pressed flower collections. To reach Whittle Dean, early on Saturday morning, the girls caught a train to Prudhoe, then crossed the bridge at Ovingham paying a toll of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Some girls did not venture on the latter outing due to the expense. It was remembered, with some envy, that one girl at the school had a wonderful pressed flower collection for Botany, as her father was the headmaster at Central School and an owner of a car, therefore she travelled far and wide for her collection. Once during a Botany lesson, the girls had to study a cabbage; when Miss Gaunt discovered that the girls had eaten the experimental object, she was furious and made them each pay 1d in order to buy another. A few of the women interviewees pointed out that whilst the boys learnt Sciences, the girls in the Botany lessons 'just played at litmus paper'. It was said that although they enjoyed the Botany lessons, a worthy subject, some felt they were denied knowledge of Chemistry as

CHEMISTRY ROOM

C.1912





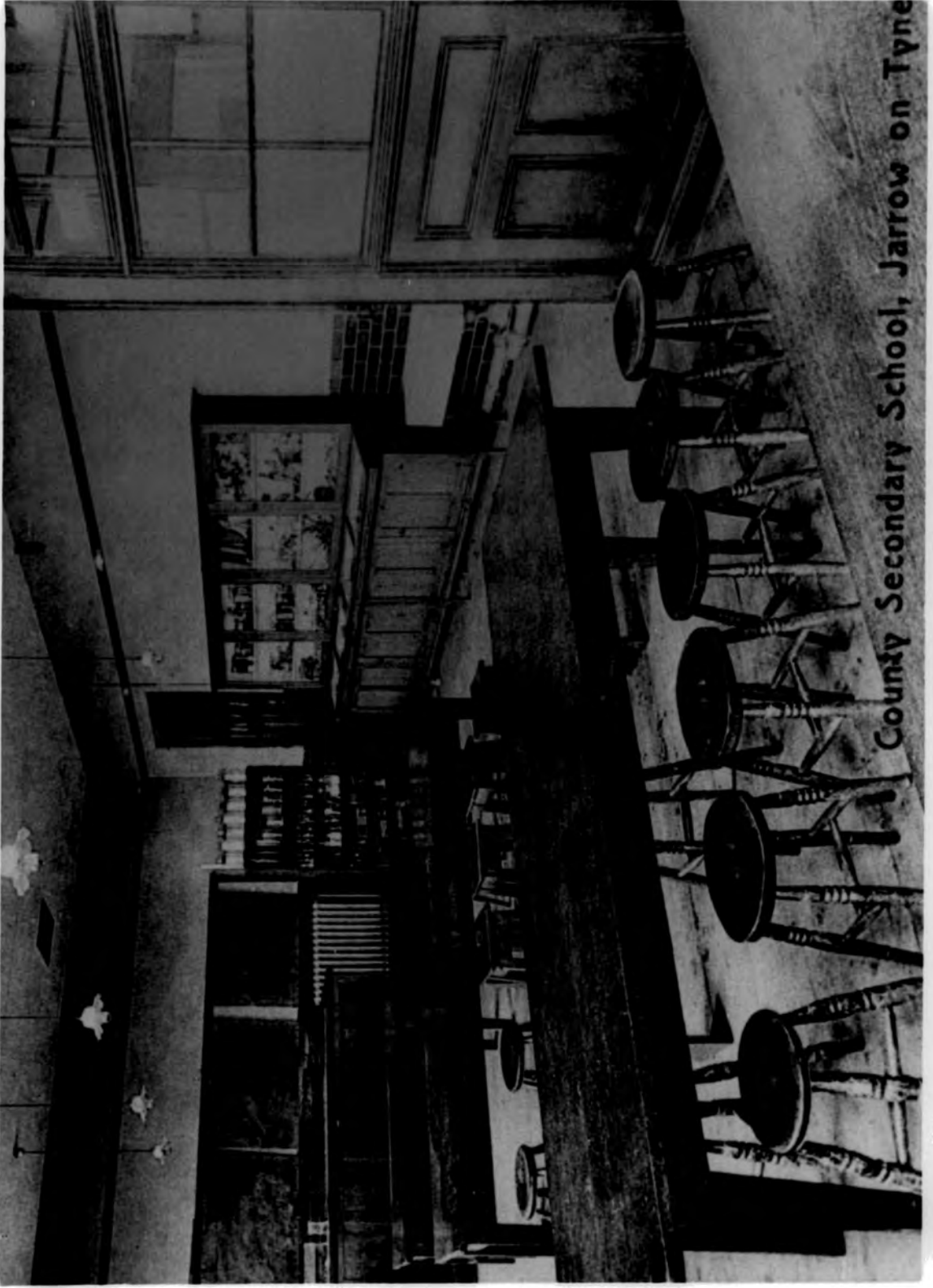
City Secondary School, Jarrow on Tyne

a main subject, even when they were quite good at it, as they had not been taught it for long enough. Even today there still remains a discrepancy in the Sciences. In a letter to The Times, dated 11 July 1990, Donald MacKinnon draws attention to the latest statistics published by the Department of Education and Science: 'Of school leavers in the academic year 1987-88, some 20,000 boys had an 'A' level in Physics compared with 6,000 girls. The discrepancy in Chemistry was less dramatic, but even there 16,000 boys left with an A'level, compared with 10,000 girls. By contrast, 12,000 girls had an A'level in Biology, Botany or Zoology, compared with 9,000 boys.' These results show that although education strives for gender equality there nonetheless remains a tradition of boys taking physical sciences whilst girls opt for the natural sciences; a gulf which though narrowing, still remains.

The girls also did cookery and sewing. Their teacher Miss Whiting, better known as 'Fishy' Whiting, supervised the girls in these subjects. In cookery the girls practised at making basic foods such as macaroni or scones. In sewing they not only made simple garments such as a cookery apron but also it was said that this lesson was used as a laundry period - for instance, one afternoon's lesson consisted of washing a handkerchief. There was a cook/maid employed who used the cookery facilities to prepare the school dinners for those pupils who lived too far to travel home, such as the Felling pupils. In 1936, the school dinners cost 3s per week plus 1d for linen. Girls were served in the sewing room, boys in the Botany room and the staff in the cookery room. Obviously, pupils who had a cookery lesson prior to dinner-time had to tidy away for the dinners to be served. Those who could not afford to purchase school dinners could

BOTANY ROOM

c. 1912



County Secondary School, Jarrow on Tyne

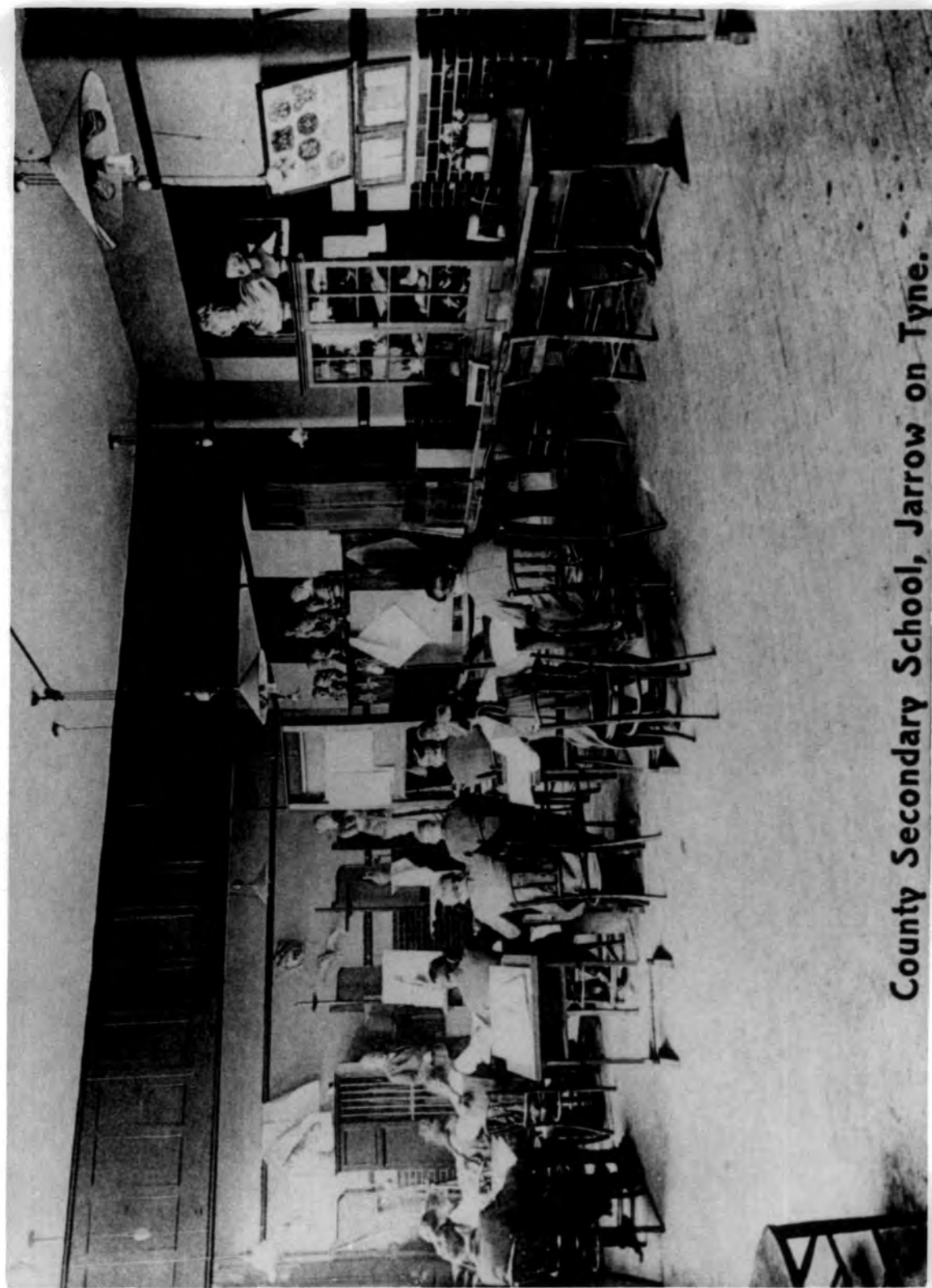
bring sandwiches, which were put onto plates and eaten in the appropriate room. While the girls took sewing/cookery, the boys took metalwork/woodwork. Mr. Adams taught this subject. He was said to be quite a 'hard man'. However, some boys enjoyed the actual subject. One ex-pupil still retained the medicine-chest he had made in his schooldays.

All pupils, no matter what ability level, experienced some form of foreign language tuition. By Form 3, the A class took Latin and for this subject their teacher was Miss Luddington. Miss Tingle, who was said by the boys to be 'a dollybird' also taught Latin. German was taught to the B classes, and the teacher for this was Doc. Spink. All classes received French tuition, and so more teachers were necessary for this subject: Doc. Spink, Miss Tingle, Miss 'Claggy' Clewes and Mr. J. Wilson for the junior French classes. Jock Wilson, a small red-haired man 'with a huge voice like a double bass' taught General Subjects to the lower school. He was remembered to be one of the minority, in that he did not wear a gown and was said by the interviewees to 'have been there since the year dot' being able to direct them to passages from memory. 'Turn to page 32, exercise 1 and answer questions 1 to 6.'

Art was taught in a very regimented fashion. The pupils studied three forms of Art: Freehand, Object and Design. The Art teacher, Mr. Scott, was said to be 'supercilious', 'sarcastic', 'was captain of the Jarrow Cricket Team' and 'had an eye for the maidens'. The pupils said that they were rather scared of him, that he would tweak their ears in lessons and make sarcastic remarks. One boy went to a wrestling match at Newcastle and noticed Scott in the audience. At a heated moment in the bout, according to the story, Scott leapt

ART ROOM

C. 1912



County Secondary School, Jarrow on Tyne.

forward and attempted to reveal the identity of a masked wrestler by ripping off his mask - definitely a man to be feared during lessons! He was also the teacher who collected the 6d instalments for caps and would not part with the cap until the final payment was made. During the evacuation, Mr. Scott collected the girls' mattresses from their homes to take for their stay at Harperley Hall.

For English lessons the pupils had two main teachers. Mr. T. E. A. Acum, or 'Beaky' Acum as known to the children, was a lay-preacher in his spare time. Along with Miss Dowson or 'Towser' he taught English throughout the school. He also had an interest in the Drama Society. Both these teachers were quite liked by the children and helped them to a certain love of the language.

Mr. W. Keagan taught Mathematics. He was said to be gentle but a disciplinarian. Many times the children were puzzled as to whom he told off as he was 'boss-eyed' and they were never sure who he was looking at, when he issued punishments from a distance. Later, Mr. J. Masterman came to the school as a Mathematics teacher. He commanded respect from the pupils.

All the pupils spoke of Lionel Septimus Hughes, or 'Tishy' as they called him. He taught music to the whole school and appeared to have his hands full with that task. Apparently, he had great disciplinary problems, as many pupils expressed the feeling that the subject was not felt to be of importance, as it was not academic. They never learnt to play any instrument and spent their time singing. Hence, the boys especially appear to have enjoyed playing pranks rather than singing.

Teachers, throughout this study period, moved to their classes. Thus, movement by pupils was kept to a minimum. Only for specialist



subjects such as Sciences, Domestic Science, practical and physical education did the pupils move to their lessons. The ex-pupils said that the teachers 'piled on' the homework, particularly from academic subjects. Each night, pupils were given up to two subjects to complete for their homework and at weekends they were given up to four subjects. Inclusive in homework was home readers. At the start of each school year, pupils were told the titles of three home readers; one of these had to be read each term. On the last Wednesday afternoon of each term, the pupils were given a test by their form teacher on the book they had read. For example, the authors in the first year were Dickens, Scott and Gaskell. Once the papers were marked, the teachers then read out the grades, ranging from D\* the highest, to F the lowest, and then the results were displayed on the noticeboard. Some ex-pupils recalled having to recite large passages from their home reader to their teacher. The books had to be obtained by the pupils; they either bought or borrowed them. The home reader system was lauded by the ex-pupils as being extremely useful as it gave them a good grounding in literature. It is interesting to note that nationally by 1935, 'there had been a continuous improvement in the quantity and quality of the reading matter'.<sup>(1)</sup> Certainly, at Jarrow Secondary the children were enthused to read via the home reader system.

Wednesday afternoons were set aside as examination periods. Each Wednesday the children were examined in different subjects, those subjects requiring significant revision being left to the end of term. The papers were graded from D\* (excellent) to B (very weak, failure).

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(1) Lowndes (1969), p.118.

When Mr. C. N. Robinson was headmaster the B changed to an F. This examination system of continual assessment kept the pupils very busy and ensured they constantly revised. The end of term report was based on term work and homework. The pupils each received a stiff-backed report every term, with a grade and a comment written by their subject teacher for each subject.

Those pupils who did well during the year received prizes. To qualify for these prizes depended upon an aggregation of points each term. By aggregating their best position over a year, between 3 and 5 entitled them to a minor prize and 3 attained a major prize. Pupils received their prizes at the Speech Day which took place each November on a Thursday evening. The guest speaker presented the pupils with the prizes. The girls were packed in the balcony, the boys along the top corridor and the parents in the hall itself. After giving a lengthy speech, the guest speaker would then hand books to the prize winners. The pupils were well rehearsed in shaking hands with their right hand and receiving the prize in their left. The prize books had the school emblem stamped on the front and inside had a certificate stating whether it was a major/minor/special prize, and the name of the pupil written on the inside certificate. Pupils said they were extremely proud to receive such a book, leather-bound and linen-backed. The pupils did not actually choose the book title but many ex-pupils still retained book prizes such as 'Gulliver's Travels', 'The Old Curiosity Shop', 'John Drinkwater plays' - all prized possessions and yet another method employed by the school to raise the level of interest in reading. During the wartime, the children received a certificate instead of a book. After the children had been presented with their prizes, the Speech Night continued with a French

play, a gymnastic display and a talk by the headmaster. The first year pupils did not go to **Speech Days** as they did not receive prizes until they were in their second year. One ex-pupil recounted how **Speech Days** were quite exciting events at first but said that they later became 'a bit of a bind with them trotting out French plays every year' and with 'lengthy orations by some of the guest speakers'.

Another important social event in the school calendar was the Christmas party. In fact, there were two parties, the junior party for the Lower school (first, second and third year pupils) and the senior party for the Upper school (fourth, fifth and sixth year pupils). The pupils rehearsed the dances one month prior to the party, dances such as the Gay Gordons, the Dashing White Sergeant and the Valita. The Physical Education teachers taught pupils the steps to the dances. There was much excitement leading up to the party with pupils attempting to select a dancing partner for that important evening. On the night of the party the headmaster, Mr. A. R. Stevens, and senior mistress, Miss Coates, dressed in their finest attire welcomed the boys and girls into the hall at the applicable doors. The trestle tables were set out along the top corridor, laden with food, and the hall was decorated with evergreens. Admittance to the party was only available to those who had paid 1/6d for their supper. The children came to the party dressed in their best clothes; the boys were told to wear white gloves 'so as not to soil the girls' dresses'. In the Physics Laboratory, games such as draughts and ping-pong were set up.

Those pupils who witnessed the changeover of headmaster, from Mr. Stevens to Mr. Robinson, spoke of the difference in atmosphere at the Christmas party. Mr. Stevens changed into his evening attire to

greet the girls at the door, whereas it was said that Mr. Robinson attended the party 'wearing the same clothes he had worn throughout the day - with a dinner stain down the front'. - this was felt to be 'a real letdown' to the young girls. Mr. Stevens was said to be 'a gentleman' but Mr. Robinson was described as 'slovenly' in comparison. There were some similarities between the two headmasters in that they both lived locally in Field Terrace and both taught Classics at the school, having an enlivening effect on the pupils' interest in their subject. However, their personalities and outlooks appear to have been very different. Mr. Stevens was 'a gentleman', quiet, with an interest directly in the moral welfare of his pupils. But, Mr. Robinson devoted much of his time to political matters, apparently preferring to fight battles with the educational authority, thus helping the pupils in a more indirect fashion.

Nationally, there was a growth of 'societies and clubs of every kind, ranging from young farmers' clubs to stamp societies (which) had begun to stimulate the imagination and cultivate the hobbies of the children'.<sup>(1)</sup> This was true of Jarrow Secondary School where the school arranged several extracurricular activities for the children, although these were stifled during wartime. There was a Debating Society held during schooltime. There was a football team but for this the pupils had to be able to afford their own football boots to get onto the team. For the girls, there was a hockey team and many of the ex-pupils recalled travelling to events held at other schools, playing against a school at Blaydon for instance. It was said to be quite exciting to leave early Saturday morning, catch a bus to Newcastle, a tram to Scotswood Bridge and walk the distance to Blaydon school. It

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(1) Lowndes (1969), p.137.

was reputed to be 'a great game to count the public houses along Scotswood Road as there must have been about 80 pubs then'. For these away-games, the pupils were reimbursed with travelling expenses. There was a music/choral society and a dramatic society; these practised towards *Speech Days*. One interviewee recalled playing 'the Cheshire Cat' in a performance of 'Alice in Wonderland' one *Speech Day*, and another recalled being in the choir and having to sit on the forms at the front provided for them during *Speech Days*. There were also school camps and trips. One year Miss Gaunt took pupils to Blanchland. Another year just before the war pupils camped at Deal and had a day trip to Boulogne. Another time, pupils went to Yorkshire equipped with dark glasses, in order to view a total eclipse. The children themselves came up with an idea whilst sitting chatting at the tuck shop opposite Kitchener Terrace (a favourite haunt over the years as a meeting place for Secondary School pupils): that of starting a drama club for ex-pupils. In 1926 the Old Jarrowians' Amateur Dramatic Society was formed whereby old students from Jarrow Secondary formed their own dramatic society, acting their plays at the Mechanics' Institute in Ellison Street, Jarrow. Plays such as 'Tilly of Bloomsbury' (1927), 'The Torch Bearers' by George Kelly (1933) and 'Barnets Folly' by Jan Stewart (1937) were performed - each year something new. Mr. Stevens was greatly in favour of this and teachers over the years showed an active interest in the project. Miss Clewes, a young teacher of the time, helped on occasions for instance. Mr. Neville Binns, one of the interviewees, stated how he produced many of the plays and maintained a strong link with the school. One year for example, when acting 'The Enchanted Cottage' the young pupils at the school were auditioned for the parts of fairies.

PROGRAMME OF 'SHE PASSED THROUGH LORRAINE' PERFORMED  
BY THE OLD JARŮVIANS' AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY. 1935

President :  
A. R. STEVENS, Esq., O.B.E., B. Sc. (Lond.)  
Honorary Secretary :  
MISS M. J. DIPPIE, Ivyhurst, Jarrow.  
Honorary Treasurer :  
L. BRAMLEY, 19 Bede Burn Road, Jarrow.

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS :

1926—"Tilly of Bloomsbury."  
1927—"The Irresistible Marmaduke."  
1928—"Mrs. Gorrings Necklace."  
1929—"Hawleys of the High Street."  
1930—"Marigold."  
1931—"Yellow Sands."  
1932—"Dear Brutus."  
1933—"The Torchbearers."  
1934—"The Enchanted Cottage."

Trains to Newcastle..... 10.2 & 10.28 p.m.  
Trains to South Shields ..... 10.21 & 10.41 p.m.  
Buses to Newcastle or South Shields every 15 minutes.

**YOU ARE INVITED TO**  
**A WHIST DRIVE & DANCE**  
to be held in the  
**Park Church Hall, Jarrow,**  
on  
**Friday, April 12th,**  
at 7 o'clock  
**Tickets 1/6d. inclusive.**

WILLIAM SCOTT, PRINTER, JARROW.

**THE OLD JARROVIANS' AMATEUR DRAMATIC  
SOCIETY**

(Old  
Students of



Jarrow  
Secondary School)

PRESENTS

**"SHE PASSED THROUGH LORRAINE"**

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS  
BY  
LIONEL HALE.

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY,  
9TH, 10TH & 11TH APRIL, 1935.  
CURTAIN AT 7.30 P.M.

MECHANICS' HALL, ELLISON ST. JARROW.

Nationally, the house system was encouraged in schools as it was felt that they gave 'the capacity to live and work with one's fellows for a common object'.<sup>(1)</sup> The houses could be named in different ways such as 'after possibly national historic figures - or local people who had given special service to the community, or the house might merely be named after colours - red, blue, green, yellow'.<sup>(2)</sup> Jarrow Secondary was split into four houses: Bede, County, Grange and Tyne; children being placed in them depending upon the area in which they lived. The teachers were each assigned to a house. There were also four House master/mistresses, whose overall responsibility was for the pupils in their House. In conjunction with the Captains of the House (one girl, one boy) the Housemasters/mistresses were in charge of picking teams for Sports Day. At Sports Day, the competitors wore colour sashes to represent their Houses: red for Bede, yellow for County, green for Grange and blue for Tyne. The boys and girls participated in activities such as running, football/hockey matches, and novelty ideas such as the plantpot race (whereby pupils ran with plantpots of water on their heads), egg 'n spoon races, the three-legged race and the slow bicycle race. Sports Day was a big occasion; the whole school turned out to participate and cheer on their Houses. On this day, parents were invited to the school as spectators. At the end of Sports Day, the winning House was presented with a trophy and then the children were allowed to give their parents a tour around the school.

The school was always run along very disciplined lines. For small misdemeanours in the class, teachers could give lines to the

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(1) Lowndes. (1969), p.139.

(2) J. H. Higginson, A School is Born, p.66.



children. Alternatively, the pupils would be stood outside the classroom in the corridor. This punishment was feared because of the possibility of the headmaster, Mr. Stevens, catching the offenders and whisking them off to his office. The headmaster was the only person who could administer corporal punishment. There were isolated cases of extreme misbehaviour; it was recalled that once Mr. Stevens sent a boy home for a week because he was caught smoking in the toilets. However, some boys still risked smoking but tended to be more surreptitious by sneaking into the Fives Court in the boys' yard for a crafty smoke. The most outstanding case of misbehaviour was that of a girl who was expelled for stealing. She was made to walk down the corridor, past the watching children, and out of the school. However, such cases as this were very rare indeed. In the main, the discipline problems were of a trivial nature and received punishments that the teachers regarded as being appropriate i.e. having to learn and recite the poem 'Ode to Duty' for being late. Some teachers experienced more discipline problems than others. For instance, no pupil would dare oppose Miss Coates or Mr. Masterman but they would disobey Doc. Spink and 'Tishy' Hughes. They felt these latter teachers were unlikely to report them as they would feel it was an admission of failure to keep discipline if they did so. On one occasion, it was reported that, whilst on a nature ramble one boy leant on a wall which fell over. Doc. Spink ticked off the boy, who was much bigger than him, and so the boy lifted Doc. Spink off the floor and calmly said 'If you were my size I'd hit you!' It was rumoured that a boy reported himself to the headmaster for hitting a teacher, as the teacher had not done so himself.

Ex-pupils who were interviewed recalled many events vividly,



remembering small colourful details. They had fond memories of the school and the teaching staff, though they did not appear to view it through rose-coloured spectacles, as when they looked back they acknowledged certain deficiencies. They expressed mixed feelings about some of the methods employed by the staff but in the main tended to agree with the aims of the school. Upon reflection they realised that their education had stood them in good stead and they felt a certain affection for the school.

The Secondary School established a firm foundation built upon discipline and academic achievement. Pupils felt duty-bound to behave, having achieved a position of some standing. The school presented them with the opportunity of a brighter future through the Oxford School examinations, giving pupils 'the chance to embrace the opportunities of life' and to become 'the leaders of the future'.<sup>(1)</sup> The school went on to reinforce its position in the community by constructing an image of high importance through demonstrating their superior facilities, academic staff, achievements and social events. The ex-pupils felt that they had received the best level of education the area could offer. Their schooldays, even after more than half a century, appeared to be still vividly alive within them; the influences of this time being so strong that it continued to give direction to their lives.

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(1) Shields Gazette, 6.10.1911 - Alderman Curry Wood and Bishop of Durham.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 'Not by navvies alone'

Palmer's Shipbuilding and Iron Company, by 1865, covered an area of about one hundred acres and had a river frontage of approximately three-quarters of a mile. It was said by the townsfolk of Jarrow that while the great cranes of Palmer's stood, they knew that their futures were secure. Over the years, Palmer's Industry acted as an almost magnetic force, pulling people into the area and establishing a firm foundation for the community to grow. With the dismantling of the cranes in 1934, the people's main source of employment went. At one point, 74% of the workers in Jarrow were unemployed but even then many of the people retained a glimmer of hope for the restarting of industry at Palmer's and could not see it as an end. 'I knew one old boy who used to go down there, he'd had something to do with transport and he used to go down there to the shipyard every day and he was pulling grass out from under the lines and oiling the points because he had this deep faith and belief that it would all live again. He couldn't accept it had been murdered ... dead'.<sup>(1)</sup> Despite the closure of the district's main industry, there still lingered for the townsfolk a deep affinity with the area, creating a tightly-knit community of people. It is apparent that the roots of the Jarrow people run deep.

The National Shipbuilders' Security Ltd. had closed Palmer's but they could not destroy the community feeling, especially when a new steelworks appeared on the horizon. When this prospect was dashed by

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(1) T. Pickard, Jarrow March, p.49/50. quote from Bill Sternberg.

the North East Coast Ironmasters, the economic stuffing was knocked out of the community but faith in the eventual resurrection of Jarrow still remained. A march to London was organised with the express purpose of bringing work to Jarrow. Though having little success, it remains one of the most potent images of the area. The march also symbolises the community spirit of banding together in a common cause. It was not uncommon in speeches to personify the town:- 'Jarrow is like a man who has lost both arms'<sup>(1)</sup>; 'The town that was murdered'<sup>(2)</sup>; 'The Jarrow Steelworks is dead .... strangled at birth'<sup>(3)</sup>. By giving human attributes to the town and banding the community together in a common cause, its unity and its identity were reinforced. Hardship tends to bond and accentuate community spirit, and so the Jarrow people, to this day, appear to feel a oneness with the town, built up over the years. Although the march was said to 'produce no immediate starting upsurge in employment in the town; it took the war to do that'<sup>(4)</sup>, the march did achieve something, it showed the nation an assemblage of men brought together for one belief - the right for work, the right for survival of their town, Jarrow; a kinship between town and people.

Life in Jarrow had never been easy; it had experienced boom and recession alongside its main industry. Even when Palmer's Industry was at the height of its prosperity, the town suffered overcrowding, poor housing, pollution and drunkenness. There was no real escape from the Jarrow environment whether there was money in your pocket or not. It was pointed out to the Jarrow people that they were

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(1) D. Dougan, Jarrow March. 1936, p.10. Alderman Thompson.

(2) Ellen Wilkinson.

(3) D. Dougan, Jarrow March. 1936, p. 76.

(4) T. Pickard, Jarrow March, Guy Waller 1976, p.26.

'putting all their eggs into one basket' by continuing to regard Palmer's as their one and only source of employment. Even Palmer himself spoke of the necessity to diversify, speaking of education as a means through which they could achieve this. In 1900, Palmer promoted education in the area, saying that instead of the men frequenting the public houses they should go into the Mechanics' Institute, provided by him, and improve their prospects. ' - He considered something to be done to get men away from the public houses. He desired to improve the social and educational position of the town and he had commenced the movement to start the Mechanics' Institute. - Jarrow now had a large population which should not depend entirely on the works at the riverside. His aim was for an attractive town. Every member in the town should become a member of the Institute.'<sup>(1)</sup> There were 1300 students at classes in Jarrow when there should have been 1300 students on mechanical and naval construction classes alone. Education was seen as a means of social and economic development and this was pointed out to the people at a very early stage in the town's growth and on numerous occasions. Indeed, the town had a strong tradition of education right through its history from Bede, the Father of English learning, to Tommy Hepburn, educating the pitboys and miners, through to the adoption of one of the first School Boards in the country. Throughout its life, the School Board had triennial elections for members which were always fiercely contested, demonstrating some interest by the people in educational matters or at least interest in how their money was spent from the rates.

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(1) Shields Gazette, 15 November 1900, C. M. Palmer's speech at the Opening of the Art and Industry Exhibition at Jarrow.

Jarrow's strong connections with education, reaching back to the times of its being the seat of learning in Europe, was often echoed in speeches made by councillors, industrialists etc. These speeches generally extolled the virtues of education and all that it could do. Although educational opportunity in the district was made available for the working-class population, through for instance the Mechanics' Institute, the early formation of the School Board, the establishing of a Higher Grade School etc, the working-class community have not always reciprocated by taking up the opportunities offered. In Jarrow, where money was earned through hard graft in the pits and shipyards, the labourers understandably tended to relax in one of the many local public houses rather than spending time in the school-room.

Jarrow was a working-class community; the town had been completely dependent upon its industry. Originally, it had been built around Simon Temple's colliery started in 1803, with salt pans being a thriving industry too. In 1851 the brothers, George and Charles Mark Palmer, commenced the shipbuilding industry which flourished and grew. Hence, the people of Jarrow were, in the main, labourers in heavy industry, who experienced great hardship in times of depression. C. M. Palmer was revered as being responsible for putting Jarrow on the map. Houses had mushroomed in the district to house all the workers for this expanding industry on the riverside, and Irish workers were shipped in to man the many positions. Between 1852 and 1933, Palmer's built over a thousand ships, inclusive of the first screw-propelled collier, 'The John Bowes'. In fact, Jarrow became known as having 'built colliers by the mile and cut them off at

required lengths.<sup>(1)</sup> No doubt, the people felt secure in their jobs, even in lean times, believing that an upturn would be imminent. In fact the people so respected Palmer that they erected a statue to him which was unveiled in 1904, many referring to the town not as Jarrow but as Palmerstown.

Education in a town such as Jarrow was of great importance because it offered the working-class population the opportunity to improve themselves. The 1870 Education Act, which brought into existence the School Boards, was taken up by Jarrow at the earliest time possible, in order to give a voice to the working-class people through education. The School Board was created in 1871 and in its time had eleven contested elections for members. All its members served for at least six consecutive years. It established a Pupil Teacher Centre and this in effect got over the problem of procuring teachers with the required qualifications. In 1886, the School Board opened a Higher Grade School; its use and name were at the time most contentious. Letters were received and meetings held to decide upon the Higher Grade's future. Members of the old School Board had the school erected for the purpose of educating the senior scholars without any increased fee, thus giving the working men the advantage of a superior education being given to their children at very little cost. But a new Board had been elected, one which was Sectarian, which passed a resolution for the school to be opened for girls of all standards. The working people of Jarrow called a public meeting in the Mechanics' Institute to protest and a deputation of the Mayor Councillor Salter, Alderman Dexter and Mr. G. Johnson were appointed

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(1) E. Wilkinson, The Town that was murdered, p.63.

to wait upon the Board with three resolutions: against opening the school as a girls' school for all standards; no departure from what the school was originally intended for; and to urge them to open the new schools at the Grange for standards V, VI and VII. The School Board felt they could open it as a single sex girls' school, a senior school, an elementary school or a Higher Grade. From the results of the last election it seemed that the ratepayers did not want the school opened as a Higher Grade as it could increase the rates. It was stated at the Board meeting of 29 April 1886 that 'in conversation with working men who had taken an interest in educational matters of late (and) the only thing that they thought was scarcely in accordance with their point of view, and was not entirely as they wished, was the matter of fees, which were to be 9d for all standards. They thought that it was in a manner shutting them out - '(1) Mr. McGrorty member of the School Board said, 'The working-classes would receive a benefit from the school.'<sup>(2)</sup> After a heated debate it was evident by the representations made at the meeting that the people wanted a Higher Grade school, so the School Board eventually acquiesced. Over the 33 years of the existence of the School Board, it was felt that the School Board had carried out its duties well and had proved most successful. It had run educational establishments throughout Jarrow, Hebburn and Monkton opening new schools to benefit the high working-class population of the area.

With the 1902 Education Act, and the dissolution of the School Board seen on the horizon, it was no wonder that there was much discussion in the local press on this subject. In Jarrow, the School

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(1) Jarrow Express, 30 April 1886, Mr. Cameron.

(2) Jarrow Express, 30 April 1886.



Board was thought to be successful and change from a successful organisation to the unknown, as it were, was something to be regarded with suspicion and reticence. They had reservations in Jarrow as to any change from a good working system. The old School Board was felt to have proved progressive, having control over elementary schools and having made provision for higher education in the shape of the Higher Grade School. Although it was considered a good proposal to create one authority to have control in the district, they had reservations about entrusting the higher education to committees of the County Boroughs, nominated by the Council; the School Board was directly answerable to the electorate. With this in view, Jarrow decided to hang on to the School Board for as long as possible. The situation was aggravated by Hebburn wishing to pull out. Hebburn had set aside a date to implement the new Education Act in Hebburn - 1 June 1903. The new education committee for the Borough of Jarrow was discussed at great length. It was to consist of 17 members: 11 to be members of the council and 6 co-optive.<sup>(1)</sup>

It is interesting to note that Mr. Charles Mark Palmer took a keen interest in the 1902 Balfour Education Act. He stated, at a prize-giving meeting at the Higher Grade School, that although he was somewhat old-fashioned and conservative in regretting the displacement of the old School Board, the change seeming very sweeping, he still believed, after attending an educational session in the House of Commons with experts contending their opposing views, that the people were well versed in education and could steer through the Act putting it into force. If anything went wrong, he felt the law would be remodelled by those versed in educational matters. Prosperity in

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(1) Shields Gazette, 24 April 1903.

Jarrow, he felt, had been brought about by Science and Art, and 'the large works employing thousands of people depended entirely on improved education which enabled workmen to appreciate the fact that in development, machines must prove a great part. Machines had improved the possibility of workmen, they had more money to spend on social comfort. Owners and employers ought to have a higher view of education than many of them had.'<sup>(1)</sup> Once again, Palmer pointed the direction of the workforce towards embracing new educational policies so that they could utilise their educational advantages and turn it to commercial and industrial improvement in the community.

It was not until 29 March 1904 that the Jarrow School Board held its closing meeting. The School Board had run for 33 years and over that time had provided accommodation for approximately 8,000 children at a total cost of some £59,000. At the closing meeting, it was stressed how grateful the local ratepayers should be in that twenty years prior the rate had been 10d in the £1, and in 1904 it was only 11d or 11½d. During the past year the attendance rate in the district had been 91.1% over the whole of its departments. 'That was a condition of affairs that any school authority might be proud of, but it was one which in an industrial area might be regarded as very remarkable.'<sup>(2)</sup>

On 1 April 1904, the old School Board was superseded by the new Education Committee, and their first meeting was held on 7 April 1904. One of their first observations was to point out that there were two departments running at the Higher Grade School and until 31 July the committee were to act as managers for the county council until future management was arranged. At the outset of this committee, the

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(1) Shields Gazette, 1 August 1903, Sir C. M. Palmer.

(2) Shields Gazette, 30 March 1904, Chairman.

intention of opening a fully-fledged Secondary school was also mooted. And so on establishing a new education authority for the area, a new system of education was announced. The promise of a new Secondary School for the district would be some recompense to the people of Jarrow for the demise of the old School Board which had proved successful and had kept rates low. The School Board had been successfully running a senior department at the Higher Grade for some years and this had been serving the Jarrow area. Now however, the Durham County Education Authority were being prevailed upon to fund a Secondary School at Jarrow; this news placated the people to some extent.

The school spent the next six years enhancing its reputation at the Higher Grade under the headship of Mr. A. R. Stevens. However, Durham County Council now laid plans and proceeded with the building of the new Secondary School. Unlike the Higher Grade, which was surrounded on all sides by tightly-packed terraced houses and with only a small playing yard, the new Secondary School was built on a large piece of land bought from Lord Northbourne and surrounded by fields on an elevated site with plenty of room for expansion. The building of the school commenced in 1908, at a time when soup kitchens were not an uncommon sight in Jarrow, as shipbuilding was going through a lean time. A local builder was employed and this must have alleviated some of the unemployment in the area. The school, like many buildings, was in use prior to its official opening in 1911 and must have proved very impressive to the townsfolk. The official opening took place in October 1911, with a great deal of civic pride and publicity. The Secondary School was built for the Durham County Council on the south side of Field Terrace. The Chairman of Durham

County Council, who expressed regret at being unable to attend the opening, wrote: 'I hold a very high estimate of the possibilities of the new school in effecting powerfully the intellectual life and wider outlook of the entire district from generation to generation.'<sup>(1)</sup>

Amongst those who attended the opening ceremony were the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Moule), Lord Northbourne, Sir A. M. and Lady Palmer and G. M. Palmer Esq. M.P. and Mrs. Palmer. In all there were some 162 official guests present at the opening of the new Secondary School. The description of the school was given: it was an impressive building, two storeys in height, which accommodated some three hundred students. It had well-equipped classrooms inclusive of specialist rooms such as laboratories, lecture theatre, gymnasium, cookery room and workshops. Another innovation for the time was indoor lavatories. The contractor for the school buildings was Mr. Thomas Lumsden of Jarrow and the architects Messrs. Fred Rennoldson and Newby of South Shields; the cost of the building was about £25,000. The school was indeed extremely modern, well-equipped and boasted some of the most highly qualified staff in the county - the pinnacle of education in the district, at this time. Indeed, Lord Northbourne, in his speech, pointed out that 'Jarrow that day confirmed and celebrated its reputation as being the first seat of learning'.<sup>(2)</sup> At its opening, Alderman Curry Wood, chairman of the County Education Committee, stated that: '50% of the places in the school would be free and would give every likely child of working men a chance to embrace the opportunities of life'.<sup>(3)</sup> Mr. G. M. Palmer, M.P. stated that he felt

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(1) Jarrow Express, 6 October 1911.

(2) Jarrow Express, 6 October 1911, Lord Northbourne.

(3) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911.

that the new Secondary School's purpose was to develop the education of the people as intelligence had to be developed for the furtherance of the country. The school would, as the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Moule) expressed it 'produce the leaders of the future'. This school's main purpose was to provide 'a complete course of secondary education to the boys and girls of the area; to provide them with a liberal education'.<sup>(1)</sup>

As stressed at the opening ceremony, the Secondary School was for the children of the working-classes, to enable them to find positions in the professions. Again, the opportunities for the working-classes of Jarrow were enhanced for those who were willing and capable of taking the opportunity offered. From the interviews carried out in the study, it is evident that the vast majority of those in attendance at the Secondary School between 1911 and 1944 were in fact children from working-class backgrounds. However, to judge from those children interviewed, the majority of working-class parents were of socio-economic classification II and III. Mostly only the skilled-manual workers and shopkeepers could actually get their children into the school. Manual labourers from classifications IV and V tended to send their children to local elementary schools even if they received notification that their children had passed the scholarship examination. As has been pointed out, all children at the Secondary School had to wear school uniform and come fully-equipped. Many children were shoeless, nevermind owning a uniform, and so hardship denied those members of the working classes positions in the school. Although the Secondary School fulfilled its aim of providing education to the

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(1) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911, Alderman Johnson.

working-class children of the district, it failed, in the main, to educate children from homes of socio-economic classifications IV and V where parents could not afford the high costs of kitting out their children in a suitable fashion. Some children of parents below classification III managed to attain a position at the school, but these children tended to feel that their parents must have struggled to maintain them there. In fact, some interviewees said that they felt under an obligation to their parents. They therefore had to leave as early as possible to find a job that earned them money, rather than forcing more financial burden upon their parents by their venturing on to college or university.

Throughout the period of the study, the Secondary school has fulfilled its desired purpose of educating the working-class population giving them the opportunities of careers. As Arthur Barton said in his book, parents hoped that their children 'would do something cleaner and better that would justify (their) handful of culture and smattering of Latin and French'.<sup>(1)</sup> As C. M. Palmer had advocated, there had always been a place for diversification of industry at Jarrow, and the Secondary school, through the education offered at that establishment, gave just that. It enabled the children to seek jobs in other more professional capacities such as architecture and managerial fields. 'It was not only by navvies that the country must be able to hold its position; they must develop the intelligence of the nation.'<sup>(2)</sup> The Secondary school, 'met the want of those whose future career in life was to depend on their brains rather than on their hands'.<sup>(3)</sup>

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(1) A. Barton, Two lamps in our street, p.153.

(2) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911, G. M. Palmer.

(3) Jarrow Express, 6 October 1911, G. Johnson.

One of the aims of the Secondary school was to provide teachers 'to facilitate the continuation of students' education in the presentation of those who wish to become pupil teachers for the entrance examinations to the various teacher training colleges'.<sup>(1)</sup> This objective was fulfilled by the school. In fact, 55% of those interviewed had become teachers and all of those had, at some stage in their career, taught in Jarrow or its surrounding catchment area of the time. Hence, the educated individual became the educator in many instances within the same area, teaching ultimately the same ideals and beliefs bestowed upon them into the same district. This would no doubt have saved the authority searching for people with suitable qualifications as they had trained candidates to their own specifications. This, however, can be looked upon in two ways; the teachers would have great empathy with the children, having been reared in the same environment themselves knowing what was wanted, or the lack of fresh ideas could lead to reluctance to change - not an unknown feature of Jarrow.

The third objective was 'to assist in carrying on a thoroughly organised system of instruction in evening-continuation classes adapted to the needs of pupils leaving or about to leave elementary and secondary schools'.<sup>(2)</sup> These evening classes were a further important aspect of education in the district. They had been formally started at the Mechanics' Institute and had transferred to the Higher Grade school. On the opening of the new Secondary school building, the evening classes once again moved, to be housed at this new establishment. The classes were important within the Jarrow community

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(1) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911, G. Johnson.

(2) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911.

to enhance the skills of the artisans, and they were held at the most prestigious educational establishment at the time. They continued under the auspices of the Secondary school until the opening of the South Tyneside College in 1948, though this was housed in prefabricated buildings on the site of the school and also took over one of the original buildings of the Secondary School. It was not until 1974 that the new Hebburn Technical College opened, that it transferred.

Education from the Secondary School maintained and probably raised the level of culture attained. It not only educated the children intellectually but also educated the manners, customs and expectations of the children that attended the school, aiming them towards a 'better' social life and helping to raise the level of the immediate environment. 'A Secondary school aimed as its main duty at educating, enlarging, equipping the mind and the character - . Such an education was of enormous importance to the individual and to the community.'<sup>(1)</sup> All the interviewees stressed the fact that the Secondary school had educated them not just intellectually but morally too. The girls for instance had had posture lessons in the gymnasium and all had been taught etiquette for the Christmas parties, how to behave properly and the correct dress to wear. Miss Coates, the senior mistress, in particular had been a strong influence upon enlarging character. The fact that she and Mr. A. R. Stevens had met the children at the door, greeting them to the Christmas parties, had had a lasting effect upon them. The many home readers had not only enlarged upon the intellect of the interviewees but had taught them self-discipline.

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(1) Jarrow Express, 6 October 1911, Bishop of Durham.



The Secondary school provided the means for the children of the working-classes to gain access to both intellectual and social improvement. Unlike other schools in the area, it gave pupils the chance to gain academic qualifications alongside a high level of insight into social activities, that they could transfer into their adult lives. The Higher Grade school offered a form of qualification though this was considered somewhat 'inferior' in that it was a 'junior' school certificate, whereas the Secondary school examinations were the Oxford School Certificate and Highers, leading to college or university. The Secondary school became regarded as the working man's main opening to advancement, a chance of 'a leg-up' in the world. Even though the price was high parents recognised the benefit that the education could give their children. In fact, the lower their socio-economic grouping, the greater the gain for the child, even though the greater the sacrifice for them, as parents.

Pupils who had attended the Secondary school expressed how they felt a certain warmth to the area. Indeed, many of the interviewees spoke of their strong affection for the Jarrow district; many still residing within the area. Several ex-pupils stated how they had felt a longing to return to their area, as they had a strong feeling of belonging to the district. Many who were not associated with education expressed keen interest in the school's development. At Secondary school many pupils had taken part in extra-curricular activities such as the debating society, performing in a play for speechnight, going to camp or even abroad for a short trip. Activities such as these raised the social conscience of the pupils, taking this further into their adult lives. After leaving school, some became involved in 'The Old Jarrowians', a drama society for ex-secondary school pupils. Mr.

A. R. Stevens became involved in this venture, being president of the club. The plays were performed at the Mechanics' Institute. 'The Old Jarrovians' was an enterprise which evolved from the children themselves and demonstrated their lively interest in the cultural life of the district. This group not only performed plays but kept in close contact over the years, went on various trips together and took part in various social events. One of the Secondary school's objectives was to build up social awareness in the pupils and to give them a wider social outlook. This it did, by raising pupils' aspirations. Miss Coates and Mr. A. R. Stevens in particular set an example to the pupils, aiming them towards good manners and social advancement.

The vast majority of ex-pupils interviewed, had improved their socio-economic classifications from that of their parents. In particular, those from classes III and below had raised their social levels. With one of the main criteria of the school being the production of educators, the school fulfilled this task admirably, producing many future teachers. These teachers tended to serve the catchment area in elementary schools, having taken college courses - university being an expensive route to take. Although the majority of those interviewed became teachers, many who went into local industry achieved substantial success in their occupations. Most started at the bottom and worked their way up through the ranks into the higher management structure. Some told of how their communicative skills, developed at school, enabled them, at the beginning, to impress their employers. Their taste of education, in their younger years at the Secondary School, had given them a foundation to build upon later in life, as they saw the need for further education. Some ex-pupils progressed into careers which gave them a life-time's service to the

country e.g. Rear Admiral Sir John Fleming and Sir Fergus Montgomery M.P., perhaps demonstrating that the school gave a broad outlook that gave pupils the basic skills they could develop in their own individual ways, for their own benefit. To produce such people, the school obviously did not solely encourage intellect alone, but developed character, talents and a keen sense of duty, responsibility and ambition. This would account for the success of many ex-pupils, not only put into intellectual positions but into positions of great responsibility.

Those pupils who did not raise their socio-economic grouping from that of their parents tended to fall into two categories. The first category was those pupils whose parents were of socio-economic classification II e.g. shopowners. These pupils finished their secondary school education and then went into an occupation which gave them the same socio-economic classification as their parents e.g. teacher, or they followed their parents into the business. After all, for those of class II parents, there was less opportunity of aspiring to a higher status than for those of IV or V, and all of class II maintained their high standing. The Secondary school offered these class II pupils an alternative to following the careers of their parents e.g. a shopowner's daughter becoming a teacher. The second category was those pupils who did not finish their course of secondary education because of family circumstances e.g. a parent dying. For instance, in a family where the breadwinner died, the son often felt obliged to bring in some money for the upkeep of the family; where a mother died, the daughter may have left school to look after the younger children, whilst the father went to work. However, even after such adverse circumstances, some of these ex-pupils had gone on to

improve their socio-economic grouping through further education in later life, having already received a good grounding in education from their Secondary school days.

Education in Jarrow has always been geared towards the working class, simply because it is a working-class community. Though the working-class people have not always taken up the opportunities presented to them, opportunities nevertheless have been there. The very background of the area has given emphasis to education and the philanthropic industrialists have given added emphasis to the importance of education. As in most communities there is always a certain reluctance to change, as long as everything is 'going alright' they see no need to do anything about it. And so they ended up reliant on the works by the riverside; further education being 'too much of a bind'. The Secondary school was the pinnacle of educational provision for the working-class children of the district. To be offered a place at the Secondary school was an honour which almost every parent would try and see that their child took up. As the number of places were limited, because of the small size of the school and the large catchment area, the Secondary school enhanced its ethos by only taking the 'best'.

Over the period of study, Jarrow has undergone much change, from the days of post-war boom, through the industrial <sup>r</sup>stife of the <sub>n</sub>twenties, to the economic depression of the thirties. In this working-class community, education developed in support of industry, responding to its requirements. Jarrow Secondary School created a skilled workforce for the area, giving the working-class children greater opportunity than they had had to obtain academic qualifications and greater social awareness. In turn, industry was provided with the

makings of a skilled managerial workforce. Palmer forewarned that as machines became more complex, industrialists had to realise the importance of education, for their own benefit. Those interviewed were happy with their lot saying that they had benefited from their education. But, perhaps the greatest beneficiary of education is industry.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### The Height of Ambition

In the early nineteenth century, few working-class parents could afford to send their children to school and those who could found it imperative that they should leave at an early age to supplement family earnings. There were insufficient schools and only a small percentage of children of school age received organised education. However, as the population moved to the new centres of industry and industry pressed for a more skilled workforce, so education developed to satisfy these demands. Forster's Education Act was the first major step towards achieving an educational system which would provide places for every child and create an educated populace. Forster clearly pointed out the necessity of educating the workforce: 'Upon the speedy provision of elementary education depends our industrial prosperity'.<sup>(1)</sup> Not only would the working-classes gain a state educational system but industry would attain a more skilled workforce and the country would improve its economic power.

The North East region was at the fore of heavy engineering and shipbuilding. Of all the towns in the North East, Jarrow was one of the most unvarying in nature; it was almost entirely working-class, a shipyard town and little else. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century Jarrow lived in relative prosperity with industry thriving and growing and the population expanding. Between 1851 and 1901 the town's population increased some eightfold, as people flooded into the area seeking employment. On the banks of the River

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(1) J.S. Maclure, Educational Documents. England and Wales 1816 - 1967, Speech by W.E. Forster, 17 February 1870, p. 104.

Tyne, Palmer was one of the leading shipbuilding giants; he 'built ships by the mile and cut them off at required lengths'.<sup>(1)</sup> However, although the town prospered industrially, many of the workers lived in appalling conditions. The housing, which mushroomed to accommodate them, was of poor stock, the smoky atmosphere from the heavy industry was not conducive to good health especially in the Northern ward nearest the river, and overcrowding and disease were prevalent features in the area. But despite this, the workforce accepted the atrocious conditions because most importantly they had employment and an income. It was pointed out in 1900 by the Town Council that the poor conditions could be attributed to the destructive habits of the people themselves. Evidence suggests that the North East region generally had 'a low level of housing expectation'.<sup>(2)</sup> Thus, it would appear that the dreadful conditions did not lie entirely at the door of industrial development and overcrowding, but that the workers themselves contributed to their own plight.

With industrial concerns expanding and becoming increasingly complex, the education of the working-class people became more pressing, for the nation's economy was becoming more dependent upon a larger skilled workforce. Palmer, being one of the main forces in industry in the North East, realising the benefits that education offered, urged the people of Jarrow to make use of the provisions available. At the opening of the Art and Industry Exhibition at Jarrow (14 November, 1900) C.M. Palmer said that he desired to improve the social and educational position of the town and that he wanted the Jarrow population not to depend solely on the works by the riverside.

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(1) E. Wilkinson, The Town that was murdered, p.63.

(2) McCord (1979), p.161.

There were only 1300 students attending evening-classes, when there should have been at least 1300 attending naval construction classes alone. However, after a hard day's work, the workers were disinclined to spend their time in a classroom, when it was more pleasurable at one of the many local public houses. For the workers to be induced to educate themselves, they had to be convinced of the benefits it would give them as individuals. In 1903, C. M. Palmer declared that many men had passed from the Arts and Science classes at the Mechanics' Institute to become managers and owners of large industries both in England and overseas; they had, he stated, achieved this through educational ability. He went on to say that the prosperity of Jarrow had been brought about by Science and Art, and that machines had improved the possibilities of workmen, enabling them to have more money to spend on social comfort. At a time when many workers in Jarrow were living in dreadful conditions, this no doubt would arouse some interest in education as a possible gateway to success and financial security, if not for themselves, then for their children. Workers in Jarrow, as in many other parts of the country, would have aspirations that education could perhaps, 'lead to better opportunities in life - better competitive efficiency in securing a job'<sup>(1)</sup>; a career which would offer significant financial security - in fact, a means to extricate themselves from the poor conditions in which they lived.

As Jarrow was predominantly a working-class community, it was essential that the town grasped the opportunities available through education for its working-class population, so as to become a prosperous, industrial town - the educating of the workers to attain

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(1) Lowndes (1969), p.99.



social improvement and the prospering of industry, going hand in hand. This would explain why Jarrow was so quick to take up educational reform. 'In the adoption of new educational methods and the development of higher forms of education, Jarrow has always been to the fore'.<sup>(1)</sup> In April, 1871, Jarrow adopted one of the first School Boards in the country; by the November they had enacted a local bye-law making education compulsory between the ages of 5 to 13 years old, predating the Mundella Act by almost ten years. By 1886 the Higher Grade was built to provide a higher level of education than that offered at the many elementary schools in the area, and at the first meeting in April 1904 of the new Education Committee, created under the provisions of the Balfour Act, it was stated that a secondary school would be built. This secondary school was established with the express purpose of 'giving every likely child of working men a chance to embrace the opportunities of life'.<sup>(2)</sup> All of these things demonstrate the importance attached to educating the workers of the area.

Jarrow Secondary School, which first operated as a department of the Higher Grade, provided opportunities, albeit guided along certain lines, for the working-class of the area. Originally, the school, which had places for approximately 300 children and a large catchment area covering Jarrow, Hebburn, Felling, Washington, Wrekenton and Boldon, could receive only a very small proportion of the children from Jarrow. This system of secondary school education, creamed off the brightest pupils to train them for managerial positions, to become the skilled workers of the area, for 'those whose career in life was to depend on their brains rather than on their hands'.<sup>(3)</sup> The vast

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(1) Borough of Jarrow Jubilee Celebrations 1875-1925, p.73.

(2) Shields Gazette, 6 October 1911. Alderman Curry Wood, Chairman of County Education Committee.

(3) Jarrow Express, 6 October 1911.

majority of children at Jarrow, attended either the Higher Grade, catering for those who would become the artisans and skilled labourers, or the elementary schools. It should be borne in mind, that the Secondary School catered for only a small number of the very academic children and that due to economic circumstances and the limitation on places available at the Secondary School, many able children ended up at an elementary school. By 1908, from a population of 90,000 in the catchment area, only 178 children (85 paying, 93 scholarship) were able to be placed in Jarrow Secondary School, then housed at the Higher Grade.

It is indisputable that Jarrow Secondary School did cater for the working-class people of the area. From those interviewed, the majority were from working-class homes. However, it became apparent that most had parents who were from the middle of the socio-economic classifications, rather than from classes IV and V. Out of 31 interviewees, only 6 came from homes of below socio-economic class III. Many children from the lower socio-economic classes, even though capable, were denied access to a secondary school education due to economic pressures. Even when a child won a scholarship, the additional expenses involved with attending the school, such as uniform and equipment, proved excessive for some parents.

One of the purposes of the school was to provide teachers and many of those interviewed had taken a career in education. Nationally, 'in 1906 approximately half of the scholarships in secondary schools were held by pupils pledged to teaching' and there was a 'need to provide more secondary school places for intending elementary teachers'.<sup>(1)</sup> All of those interviewed who went into education worked in schools

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(1) J. Lawson and H. Silver, A Social History of Education in England, p.381.

which at that time were elementary, none became secondary school teachers. There was a difference in status between the two types of teacher: universities developed courses for training teachers in secondary education, whilst local authorities provided training through pupil-teacher centres and colleges for elementary school teachers. Many ex-pupils told of how they chose to go to college rather than university because 'it had quicker returns and was cheaper' and so the universities were substituted by teacher training colleges or degrees taken later in life at a local polytechnic. If financial circumstances had been more favourable, ambition and achievement may have been higher.

The Secondary School at Jarrow opened its doors to girls as well as boys. The school building in 1911 was planned to hold 125 boys and 125 girls<sup>(1)</sup>, an equal number. Many of the parents of pupils at the school had received a higher level of education themselves, and because of this they felt they would make sacrifices for their sons and daughters alike to attend the Secondary school as a matter of course. The girls had equal opportunity in Jarrow to gain a place at the Secondary School, but from those interviewed the women, although equally academically successful, appear not to have had equal career opportunities for advancement. Out of 15 women interviewed none achieved socio-economic class I, whereas out of 16 men interviewed 7 achieved a class I. Out of 17 ex-pupils (7 men/9 women) who went into education, 5 men became headmasters, whereas no women managed to become headmistresses. This is not to say that women fared badly, however, as most of those who attended the school, attained an equal socio-economic class as their father e.g. a shopowner's daughter becoming a teacher. In a North East

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(1) Robinson (1986), p.6.

region where social pressures dictated and opportunities for 'career women' were few, the women did attain 'good' positions. The Secondary School served its purpose well, giving both girls and boys academic qualifications but career opportunities for girls were narrower. Perhaps the biggest benefit to the women of the working-classes was the putting out into society of women who had experienced a higher level of education and so creating an atmosphere which would benefit later generations. Entry to the Secondary School was equal for boys and girls, the opportunity to obtain academic rewards were equal for both sexes, however the curriculum within the school differed in that girls did not have the same opportunities to study the sciences; many of the interviewees told of their dissatisfaction with this aspect. However, most parents appear to have considered the Secondary School as offering girls a better opportunity than attending the Higher Grade, as there the curriculum was technically-biased and therefore considered more male-orientated. From the interviewees, the ratio of brothers to sisters attending the Higher Grade was 14/6, whereas the ratio was more balanced at the Secondary School 11/11.

The realisation that brains were not a monopoly of the higher classes and the necessity of industry having an educated workforce made it essential that the workers should be given the opportunity of educational development 'in the interest of the state as well as of the individual' <sup>(1)</sup>; thus serving a dual purpose. Jarrow Secondary School provided the opportunity for those children from working-class homes, who showed sufficient ability, to benefit from the educational system. It enabled those who attended not only to broaden their horizons, so as not to depend entirely upon one industry but it also gave increased

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(1) Lowndes (1969), p.96.

social awareness of those it put back into the community. Therefore the Secondary School helped not only the individuals who attended but also the community into which they returned.

Although Jarrow Secondary School provided the opportunity for the children of the working-classes in the district, it could only cater for a very small minority for several reasons. The catchment area was huge taking pupils not only from Jarrow but also Hebburn, Hedworth, Felling, Wrekenton, Boldon and Washington: The intake was small, The economic situation in the district was hard and finance was a necessity at the school for additional facilities hence this excluded many from families of classes IV and V. Also only the smallest percentage of the most intelligent could attend. This narrowed the chances of educational success for entry to the school. Both boys and girls could benefit from the school but only if they passed on all counts; therefore the vast majority of those boys and girls in the district attended local elementary schools, even if only one of these factors was missing.

Those pupils, with ability, who attended the elementary schools, could have either, if they had the drive, become as successful as their peer group in attendance at the Secondary School, or alternatively, they may have been socialised into accepting a lower station in life. Although the different levels of education in Jarrow, with elementary, Higher Grade and Secondary Schools, reflected the perceived needs of the community, surely there were exceptions. Some elementary pupils could have aspired to higher positions, especially in an area such as Jarrow, with a limited few gaining Secondary School places and with some intelligent pupils missing a place at the secondary. The reverse was certainly true with some Secondary School pupils accepting lower

manual positions i.e. domestic service.

Despite the fact that only a small proportion of the Jarrow schoolchildren obtained a place in the school, those who did manage to get that chance were almost guaranteed, if they completed their course of education, at the very least to maintain the socio-economic classification of their fathers, and if a boy probably supersede the class. It is little wonder it was felt to be 'the height of ambition to get a child into the school provided you were not too poor or at least showed appropriate humility on that account'.<sup>(1)</sup> With the clearcut certainty of education of this standard offering a lift in socio-economic class, many working-class parents were determined, even if it meant doing without, to send their child to the Secondary School.

One of the goals of the school was to 'lead up without a break to the university'<sup>(2)</sup> - this it achieved but only for a small number who attended. Some of the lucky few from the Secondary School obtained and took up a position at university. Between 1934 and 1940, at a time when Palmer's had closed and the Jarrow March took place, 'Half a dozen students got into Oxford University'.<sup>(3)</sup> The number of pupils who attained positions at the older universities with social standing was obviously a measure of the academic success and prestige the school held in the community. The working-class people of Jarrow regarded such success as a way forward to a better status in life and an opening to good career opportunities.

A minute proportion of ex-pupils from the school, even managed to permeate through to the higher orders of society to become the

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(1) C. Robinson, These we have loved, p.164.

(2) Jarrow Express, 6 October, 1911.

(3) D. Dougan, Jarrow March 1936, p.42.

decision-makers themselves; such people as Sir Fergus Montgomery, M.P. for Altrincham, and Rear Admiral Sir John Fleming. But the vast majority of those from the Secondary School managed to become the skilled workforce and held managerial positions, many becoming the educators of the future. However, the majority of the children from the working-class homes of Jarrow were educated at the Higher Grade or elementary schools in the district - not all could receive the highest education. It was necessary to educate the lower classes of society for social improvement, for the industry and for the benefit of the state, but as Mrs. Sarah Trimmer, authoress of childrens' books and Sunday School teacher during the early 1800s stated, 'it cannot be right to train them all in a way of life which will probably raise their ideas above the very lowest occupations of life, and disqualify them for those servile offices which must be filled by some members of the community -'.<sup>(1)</sup> Afterall, the balance of society depends not only upon the higher orders of industrialists and politicians but on the equally necessary tradesmen and domestic cleaners too. Therefore, only a small section of the working-classes can ever break free from their social boundary.

Although only a small proportion who attended the Secondary School managed to break through into the upper realms of society, the Secondary School at Jarrow did achieve what it originally set out to do. It created the thinkers of the district - the brains rather than the brawn. By taking the best of the working-class population, and giving an education which heightened academic prowess and social awareness, it was able to plough back into the area a section of people with more cultured and refined attitudes, and to cultivate

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(1) N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, A Place for Everyone, p.27. Quoting Mrs. Sarah Trimmer.

higher expectations towards better social standards. This education removed the old working-class attitudes and gave a fresh outlook, so allowing the community to ultimately reap the benefits. When Alderman Bartlett, Chairman of Durham County Council, foresaw 'the possibilities of the new school effecting powerfully the intellectual life and wider outlook of the entire district from generation to generation',<sup>(1)</sup> he could not have been closer to the truth.

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(1) Jarrow Express, 6 October 1911.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX OF INTERVIEWEES

KEY

b.	born.
br.	brother.
B.Sc.	Bachelor of Science.
C & G.	City and Guilds.
Elem. sch.	Elementary School.
F.	Father.
F.E.	Further Education
H.N.C.	Higher National Certificate.
H.S.C.	Higher School Certificate.
J. Grammar.	Jarrow Grammar.
J.S.S.	Jarrow Secondary School.
M.	Mother.
O.N.C.	Ordinary National Certificate.
Q.	Qualifications.
s.	sister.
School Cert.	School Certificate.
Tech. Coll.	Technical College.
T.T.C.	Teacher Training College.

JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL

1911 - 22

BINNS, Charles Neville, b. 3.7.04. Hebburn (1916), Lemington (1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn; J.S.S., 12.9.16 - 31.5.21. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: Institute of Bankers' Examinations, Part I and II. Banker. F. Policeforce, M. Housewife; F. Durham schooling, M. South Shields schooling. Siblings - 2s., one Croft Terrace, one Jarrow Grange; both Clerks.

BINNS (née DIPPIE), Mabel Johnson, b. 22.3.09. Jarrow (1921), Lemington (1990). Elem. sch., Bede Burn; J.S.S., 13.9.21 - 28.7.26. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: pupil teacher, Durham T.T.C. Teacher. F. Angle-Iron Smith, Shipyard Worker, M. Housewife; F. Higher Grade, Jarrow, M. Higher Grade, Jarrow. Siblings - 2 s., one J.S.S., one Central; both Civil Servants.

CAMPBELL, Archibald McAlonen, b. 23.8.05 Jarrow (1917, 1990). Elem. sch., Jarrow Grange; J.S.S., 11.9.17 - 28.7.20. No Q. F.E.: Cheltenham T.T.C., C. & G. Headmaster. F. Foreman labourer, Hebburn Chemical Works, M. Housewife; F. Ellison school, M. Jarrow Grange. Siblings - 3 br., two Grange school, one Central as well, one elem. sch., Scotland; one Manager, Bede Metal Co., second Post Office, third Railway Inspector.

JONES, Harold, b. 29.1.10. Jarrow (1921, 1990). Elem. sch., Jarrow Grange; J.S.S., 13.9.21 - 27.7.27. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: pupil teacher, Chelsea T.T.C. Headmaster. F. Shipyard Worker, M. Housewife; F. Higher Grade, Jarrow, M. Higher Grade, Jarrow Siblings - 1 s., J. Grammar; Telephonist.

LENNON, Martin Gouldburn, b. 7.1.08. Hebburn (1920, 1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn Colliery; J.S.S., 14.9.20 - 30.7.25. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: pupil teacher, St. John's T.T.C., York. Teacher. F. Wire rope splicer, Miner, M. Housewife; F. Hebburn schooling, M. Hebburn schooling. Siblings - 1 br., J. Grammar; Electrical Engineer; 2 s., one Hebburn Colliery, one J. Grammar; one Insurance Officer, second Clerical work.

NELSON, Joseph, b. 14.11.07. Heworth Colliery (1920), Low Fell (1990). Elem. sch., Windynook mixed; J.S.S., 14.9.20 - 30.7.25. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: pupil teacher, City of Leeds T.T.C. Headmaster. F. Winding engineman, Miner, M. Housewife; F. Felling schooling. Siblings - 1 s, J.S.S., Uncertificated Teacher.

PATTIE, Hilda, b. 27.1.11. Jarrow (1922, 1990). Elem. sch., Bede Burn; J.S.S., 12.9.22 - 31.7.29. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: St. Hilds' T.T.C. Teacher. F. Shopowner, M. Housewife; F. Ellison School, M. Higher Grade, Jarrow. Siblings - 1 br., J.S.S., Chartered Accountant; 1 s., J.S.S., Teacher.

SCORER, Marion Sheldon, b. 13.2.10. Hebburn (1921), Jarrow (1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn Colliery; J.S.S., 13.9.21 - 27.7.27. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: pupil teacher, Sheffield T.T.C. Teacher. F. Clerk, M. Housewife; F. Jarrow schooling, M. Central. Siblings - 2 s., both J.S.S.; one Shorthand typist, one Headmistress.

SMITH, Edmund, b. 23.12.09. Felling (1921, 1990). Elem. sch., High Felling; J.S.S., 13.9.21 - 27.7.27. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: pupil teacher, St. Johns' T.T.C., York. Headmaster. F. Miner, M. Shopowner; F. Stoke-on-Trent schooling, M. Stoke-on-Trent schooling. Siblings - 4 br., all J.S.S., three Headmasters, one Engineer; 2 s., both High Felling, both Family business.

WARDLE (née NICHOLSON), Mary Elizabeth, b. 15.3.11. Hebburn (1922), Jarrow (1990). Elem. sch., St. Oswald's, Hebburn; J.S.S., 12.9.22 - 9.11.25. No Q. or F.E. Domestic Servant. F. Miner, M. Housewife; F. Jarrow schooling. Siblings - 2 s., both St. Oswalds' Hebburn; one Landarmy, other Housewife.

JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL

1923 - 33

ALLEN, Robert, b. 15.6.18. Jarrow (1929, 1990). Elem. sch., Ellison Street; J.S.S., 17.9.29 - 25.7.34. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: Newcastle College, H.N.C. Group Manager, Naval Architect. F. Shipyard Worker, M. Housewife; F. Jarrow schooling, M. Jarrow schooling. Siblings - 1 s., Central; Shop Assistant; 5 br., one J.S.S., four Central; one Master Mariner, one Chartered Civil Engineer, one Clerk, one Manager and the other an Analytical Chemist.

CLOUSTON, George, b. 31.10.17. Jarrow (1929, 1990). Elem. sch., Croft Terrace; J.S.S., 17.9.29 - 13.6.33. No Q. F.E.: Newcastle College, Higher National in Building. Technical Assistant in Public Health. F. Shipyard worker, M. Housewife; F. Jarrow schooling, M. Croft Terrace. Siblings - 3 br., J.S.S., Central, Croft Terrace; first, Shop Manager, second Clerk, third, Shipyard Worker; 3 s., one Higher Grade, two Croft Terrace, one Clerk, one Tailoress and one Housewife.

CORRADINE, Agnes L., b. 29.8.16. Jarrow (1928, 1990). Elem. sch., Jarrow Grange; J.S.S., 11.9.28 - 19.12.34. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: Inservice training. Telegraphist/Assistant Head Postmaster. F. Shop Assistant, M. Housewife/Nurse; F. Ellison, M. St. Peter's. Siblings - 2 s., J.S.S., Central; one Teacher, second Secretary; 1 br., Central; Fitter.

FRANKS (née PEACOCK), Doris, b. 7.5.22. Jarrow (1933, 1990). Elem. sch., Jarrow Grange; J.S.S., 12.9.33 - 23.9.38. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: C & G. Clerk. F. Blacksmith, M. Housewife/Cleaner; F. Jarrow schooling, M. St. Peter's. Siblings - 2 s., one Hebburn New Town, one Jarrow Grange; both Shop Assistants.

FRANKS, William, b. 4.11.18. Hebburn (1930), Jarrow (1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn Colliery; J.S.S., 16.9.30 - 27.3.36. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: Inservice training. Civil Servant. F. Shoe repairer, M. Housewife; F. Boldon Colliery, M. Hebburn schooling. Siblings - 1 br., Hebburn Colliery; Chartered Secretary; 2 s., both Hebburn Colliery; one Secretary, one Clerk.

LARGE, John Edward, b. 30.4.08. Jarrow (1924, 1990). Elem. sch., Dunn Street; J.S.S., 16.9.24 - 30.7.25. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: pupil teacher, York T.T.C. Deputy Headmaster. F. Antimony Smelter, M. Housewife; M. Jarrow schooling. Siblings - 2 br., Central, local elementary; one Joiner, other Butcher, 1 s., Central; Clerk.

LARGE (née BELL), Nancy, b. 19.3.14. Jarrow (1925, 1990). Elem. sch., Jarrow Grange; J.S.S., 15.9.25 - 27.7.32. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: Nevilles Cross T.T.C. Teacher. F. Office Work, M. Office Work; F. Whitley Bay schooling, M. Higher Grade. Siblings - 2 br., both Higher Grade; one Consultant Engineer, other Assistant Borough Engineer.

MAUGHAN (née OVERTON), Charlotte Mabel, b. 18.11.16. Jarrow (1928, 1990). Elem. sch., Croft Terrace; J.S.S., 11.9.28 - 15.6.33. Q.: School Cert. No F.E. Health Department. F. Shopowner, M. Shopowner; F. Higher Grade, M. Ellison. Siblings - 1 br., J.S.S.; Headmaster; 1 s., Croft Terrace.

OVERTON, Albert Fairhead, b. 24.3.14. Jarrow (1925, 1990). Elem. sch., Ellison School, Croft Terrace; J.S.S., 15.9.25 - 27.7.32. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: St. John's T.T.C., York; King's College, Newcastle. Headmaster. F. Shopowner, M. Shopowner; F. Higher Grade, M. Jarrow schooling. Siblings - 1 s., J.S.S., Health Department.

STOKELD, George S., b. 2.6.11. Jarrow (1923, 1990). Elem. sch., Croft Terrace; J.S.S., 11.9.23 - 27.7.27. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: South Shields Marine College, Chief Engineer Certificate. Chief Engineer ESSO. F. Shipyard Worker, M. Housewife; F. Seaham schooling, M. Higher Grade. Siblings - 1 br., Central; Financial Clerk; 2 s., both Croft Terrace, one Domestic Servant, other Factory Worker.

THOMPSON, Frederick Irving, b. 10.8.12. Jarrow (1927, 1990). Elem. sch., Ellison; J.S.S., 13.9.27 - 29.7.31. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: King's College, Newcastle; B.Sc. Deputy Headmaster. F. Shopowner, M. Housewife; F. Cumberland schooling, M. Cumberland schooling. Siblings - 3 br., two J. Grammar, other Ellison; one Stationmaster, one Health Officer, one Surveyor.

JARROW SECONDARY SCHOOL

1934 - 44

BERRY, Joan D., b. 22.4.29. Jarrow (1941, 1990). Elem. sch., Bede Burn, Croft Terrace, Valley View; J.S.S., 16.9.41 - 25.4.47. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: Derby T.T.C., Sunderland Polytechnic. Teacher. F. Factory Worker, M. Housewife; F. Higher Grade, M. J.S.S. No Siblings.

BRUMBY (née THOMPSON), Marjorie, b. 6.2.24. Hebburn (1935, 1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn Quay; J.S.S., 10.9.35 - 29.7.42. Q.: School Cert., H.S.C. F.E.: Darlington T.T.C. Teacher. F. Miner, M. Housewife; F. Hebburn Colliery, M. Morpeth schooling. Siblings - 1 s., J.S.S.; Teacher.

DUNN (née MASON), Catherine, b. 30.7.26. Jarrow (1937, 1990). Elem. sch., Monkton; J.S.S., 14.9.37 - 3.10.40. No Q. F.E.: typing classes. Clerk. F. Insurance Agent, M. Housewife; F. New Town, M. Hebburn schooling. Siblings - 1 br., Central; Flight Crew, B.O.A.C., 1 s., Central, Laboratory Work.

EDGECOMBE (née JOHNSON), Irene, b. 16.3.23. Jarrow (1934), Hebburn (1990). Elem. sch., Valley View; J.S.S., 11.9.34 - 30.7.41. Q.: School Cert. F.E.: Yorkshire T.T.C. Teacher. F. Electrical Engineer, M. Housewife; F. Hebburn schooling, M. Hebburn schooling. No Siblings.

ELLIS, Muriel D., b. 26.10.29. Hebburn (1941, 1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn New Town; J.S.S., 16.9.41 - 25.7.47. Q.: School Cert. with matriculation. F.E.: Yorkshire T.T.C. Teacher. F. Foreman, M. Housewife; F. Central, M. Hebburn schooling. Siblings - 1 br., local elementary, Fitter.

FORSTER, James, b. 9.4.24. Hebburn (1935), Jarrow (1990). Elem. sch., St. Oswald's, Hebburn; J.S.S., 10.9.35 - 4.11.39. No Q. or F.E. Electrical Tester. F. Blacksmith Striker, M. Housewife; F. Hebburn schooling, M. St. Oswald's, Hebburn. Siblings - 1 br., local elementary; Electrician.

GIBSON (née STOCKMAN), Isabel, b. 15.4.26. Jarrow (1937, 1990). Elem. sch., Valley View; J.S.S., 14.9.37 - 25.9.41. No Q. or F.E. Clerk. F. Coppersmith, M. Housewife; F. Jarrow schooling, M. Stenton, Scotland. Siblings - 1 br., Central; Engineer; 1 s., Croft Terrace; Shop Assistant.

MAIN, William, b. 26.11.23. Hebburn (1936, 1990). Elem. sch., Hebburn Colliery; J.S.S., 15.9.36 - 21.12.39. No Q. F.E.: Rutherford Tech. Coll., Work Study. Rate Fixer. F. Watchman, M. Housewife; F. Hebburn schooling, M. Jarrow schooling. Siblings - 2 br., Hebburn Colliery, Central; both Factory Workers.

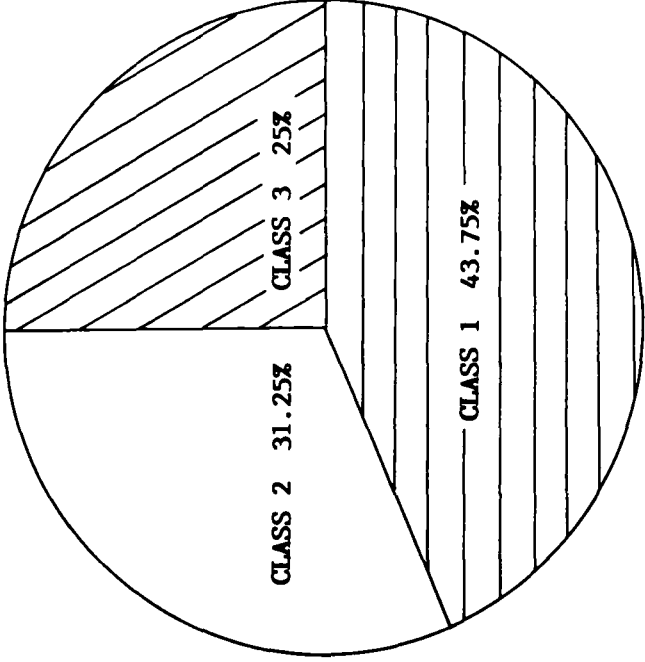
PORTER, Alfred James, b. 1.4.24. Hebburn (1935), Jarrow (1990).  
Elem. sch., St. Oswald's, Hebburn; J.S.S., 10.9.35 - 1.2.40. No Q.  
F.E.: O.N.C., Mechanical; O.N.C., Electrical; C & G. Draughtsman.  
F. Watchman, M. Housewife; F. Castle Eden schooling, M. Castle Eden  
schooling. Siblings - 1 s., Hebburn Colliery; Domestic Servant;  
4 br., three St. Oswald's, Hebburn, fourth Hebburn Colliery; Foreman,  
Shipyard Worker, Storekeeper, Lorrydriver.

WALKER (née THOMPSON), Norma R., b. 13.3.25. Hebburn (1936, 1990).  
Elem. sch., Hebburn Quay; J.S.S., 15.9.36 - 28.7.43. Q.: School Cert.  
with matriculation, H.S.C. F.E.: Durham T.T.C. Teacher. F. Miner,  
M. Housewife; F. Hebburn Colliery, M. Morpeth schooling. Siblings -  
1 s., J.S.S., Teacher.

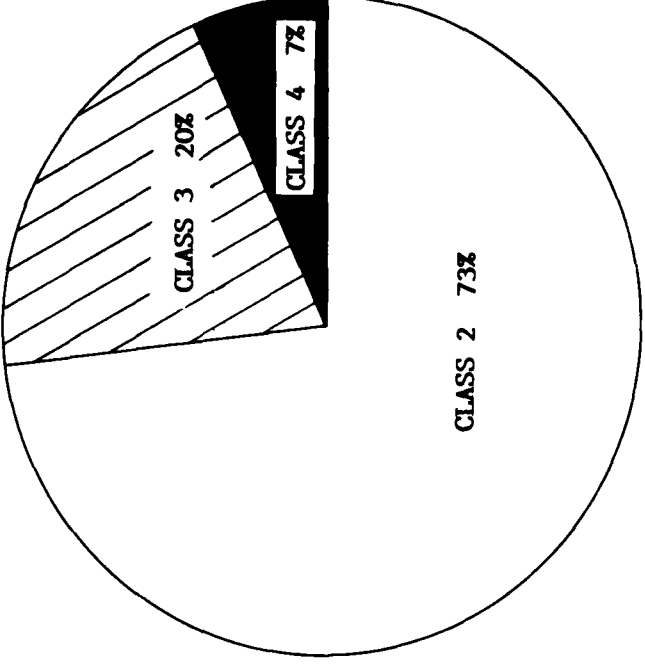


APPENDIX B

MALE/FEMALE EX-PUPILS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT



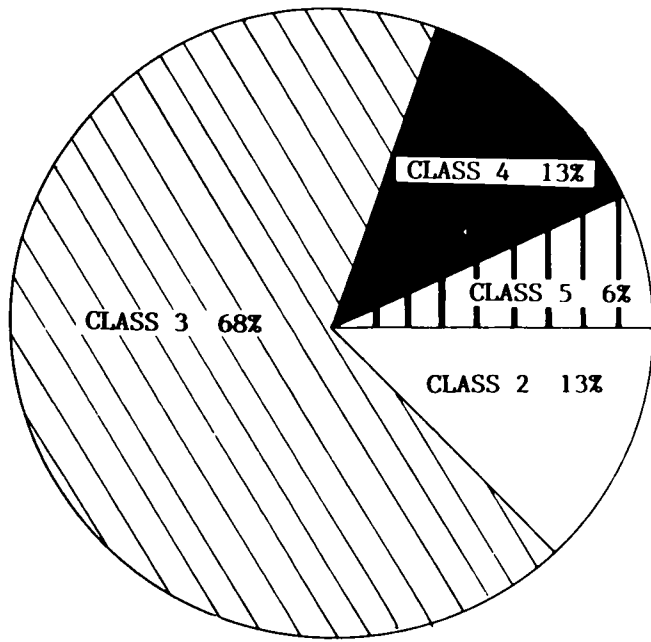
MEN



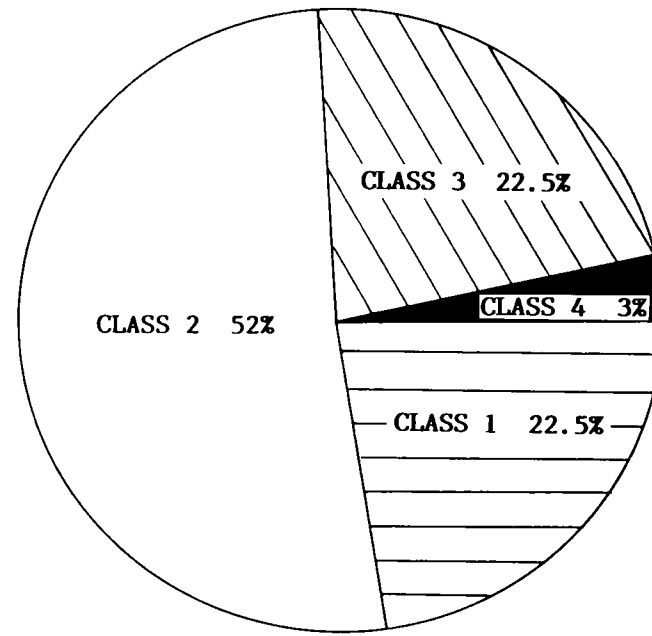
WOMEN

APPENDIX C

FATHERS' / PUPILS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATIONS



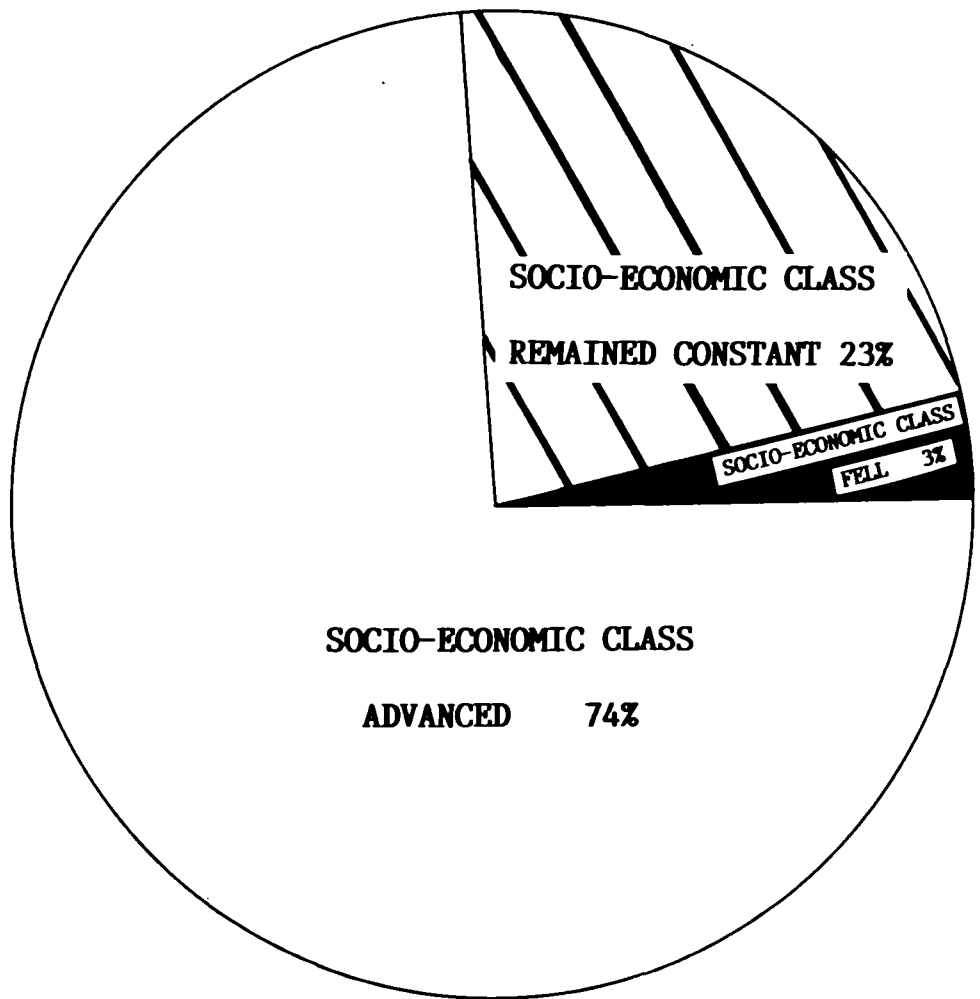
FATHERS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS



PUPILS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS

APPENDIX D

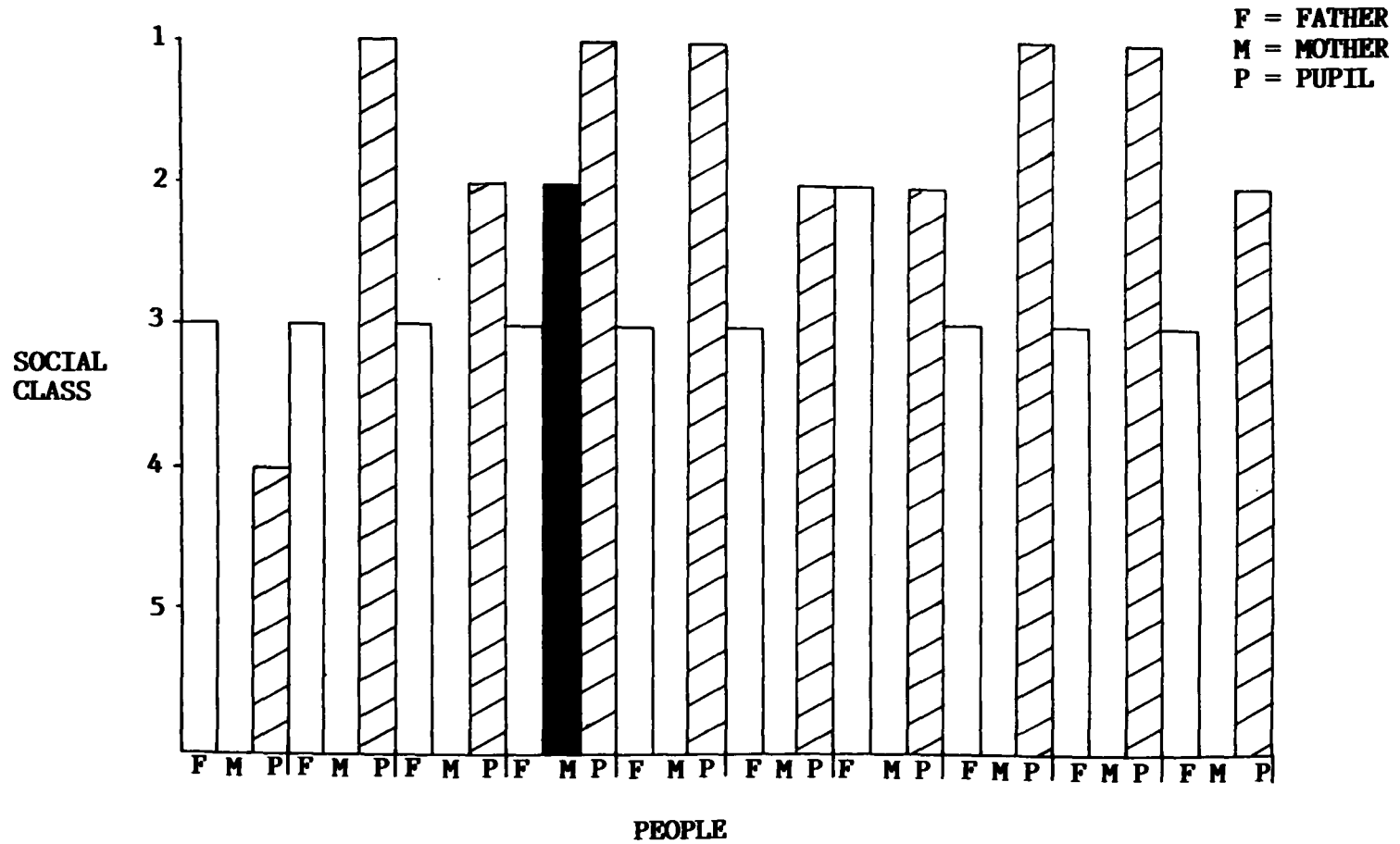
EX-PUPILS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT



APPENDIX E1

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS FOR PARENTS  
AND EX-PUPILS, 1911-1922

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS. 1911-1922

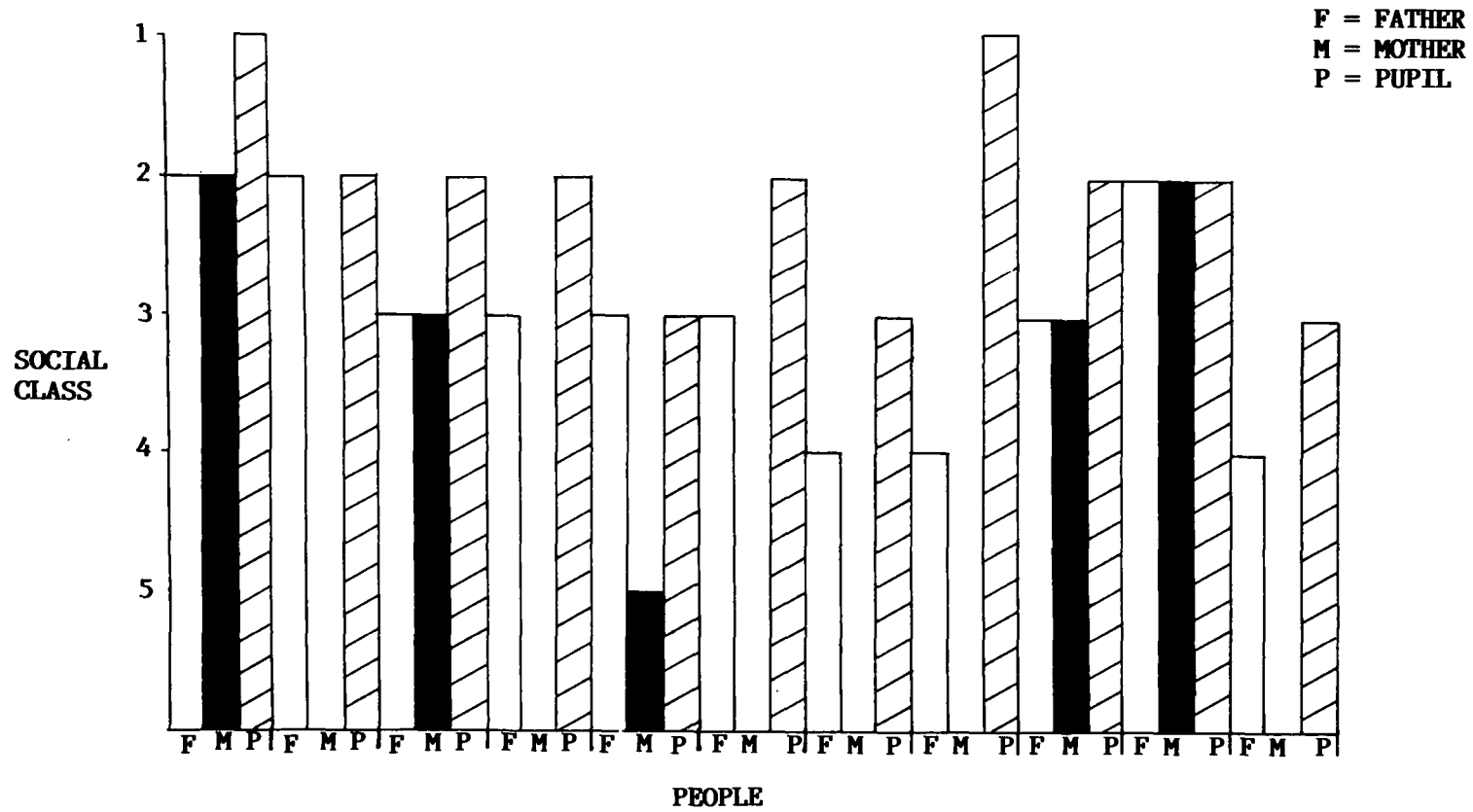




APPENDIX E2

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS FOR PARENTS  
AND EX-PUPILS, 1923-1933

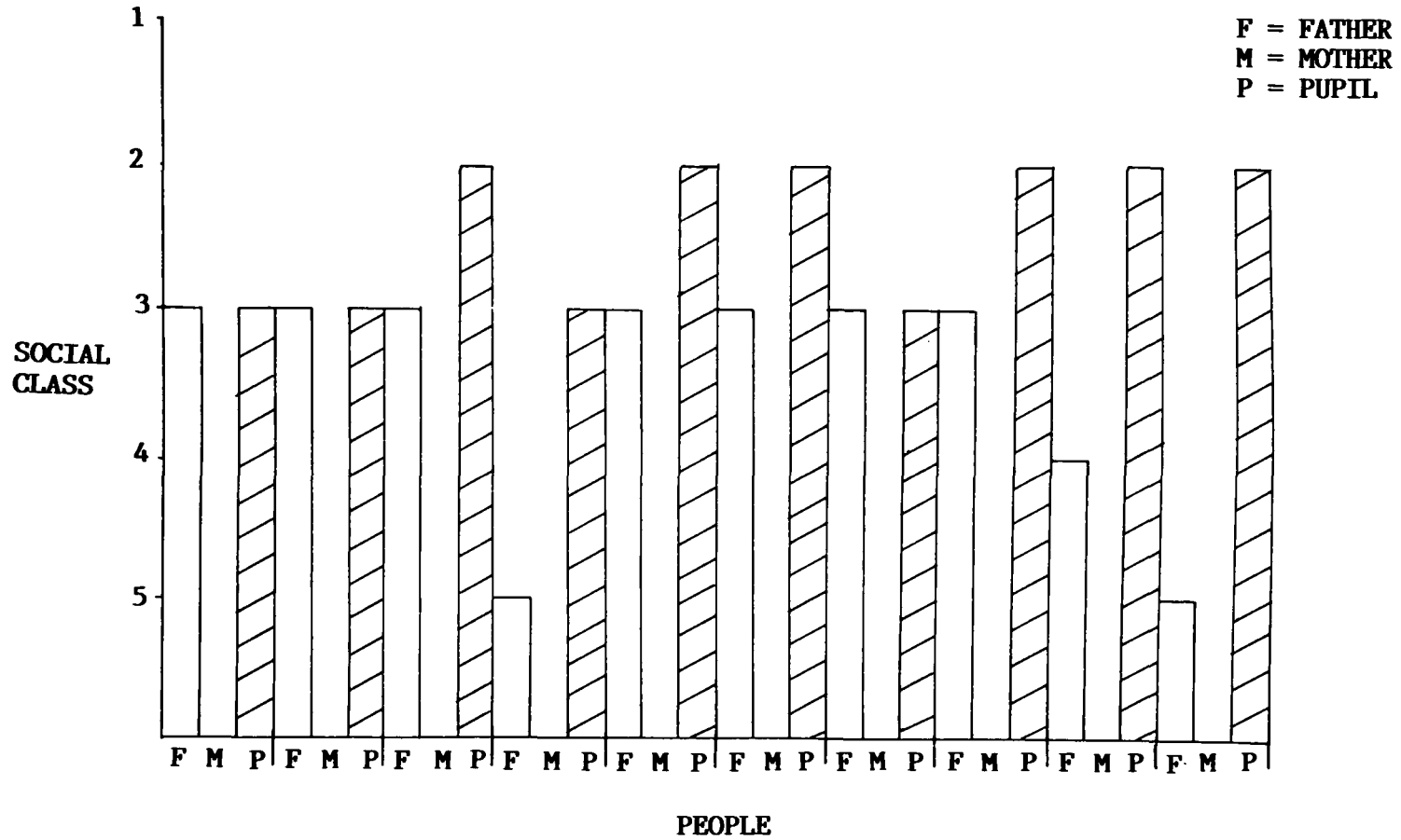
SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS. 1923-1933



APPENDIX E3

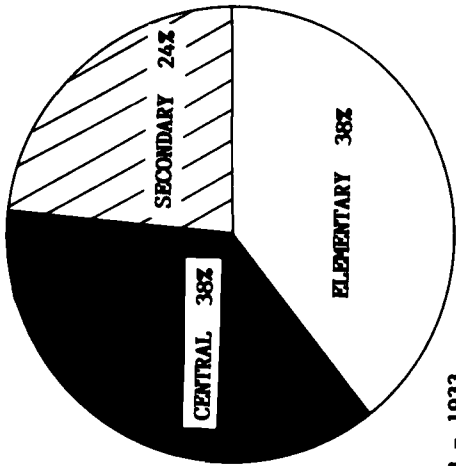
SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS FOR PARENTS  
AND EX-PUPILS, 1934-1944

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS. 1934-1944**

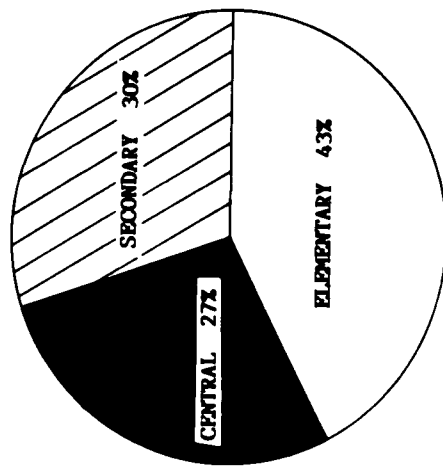


APPENDIX F

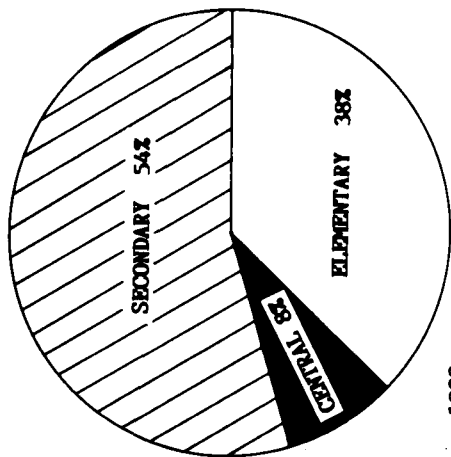
SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY SIBLINGS OF INTERVIEWEES



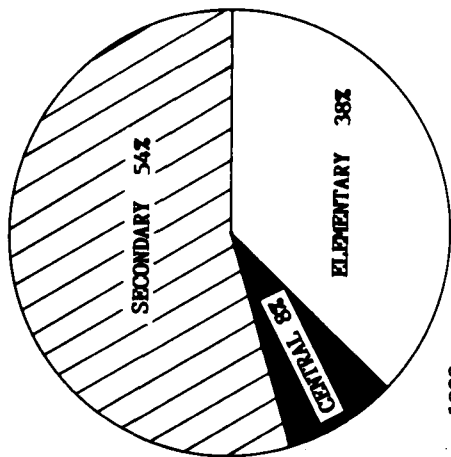
1923 - 1933



TOTAL BETWEEN 1911 - 1944



1934 - 1944



1911 - 1922

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The place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

J.S.S. is used as an abbreviation for Jarrow Secondary School and its successors.

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1. ORAL EVIDENCE

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Berry, Joan D.  
Binns, Charles N.  
Binns (née Dippie), Mabel J.  
Brumby (née Thompson), Marjorie.  
Campbell, Archibald M.  
Clouston, George.  
Corradine, Agnes L.  
Dunn (née Mason), Catherine.  
Edgecombe (née Johnson), Irene.  
Ellis, Muriel D.  
Forster, James A.  
Franks (née Peacock), Doris.  
Franks, William.  
Gibson (née Stockman), Isabel.  
Jones, J. Harold.  
Large, John E.  
Large (née Bell), Nancy.  
Lennon, Martin G.  
Main, William.  
Maughan (née Overton), Charlotte M.  
Nelson, Joseph.  
Overton, Albert F.  
Pattie, Hilda.  
Porter, Alfred J.  
Scorer, Marion S.



Smith, Edmund.

Stokeld, George S.

Thompson, Frederick I.

Walker (née Thompson), Norma R.

Wardle (née Nicholson), Mary E.

Wright (née Tarn), Edith.

## 2. MANUSCRIPTS

Register of Admissions, J.S.S. 1908-44 (Springfield Comprehensive School, Jarrow).

## 3. PRINTED PRIMARY SOURCES

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Jarrow and surrounding Area, showing location of Jarrow Secondary School.

1938.

PROVISIONAL EDITION.

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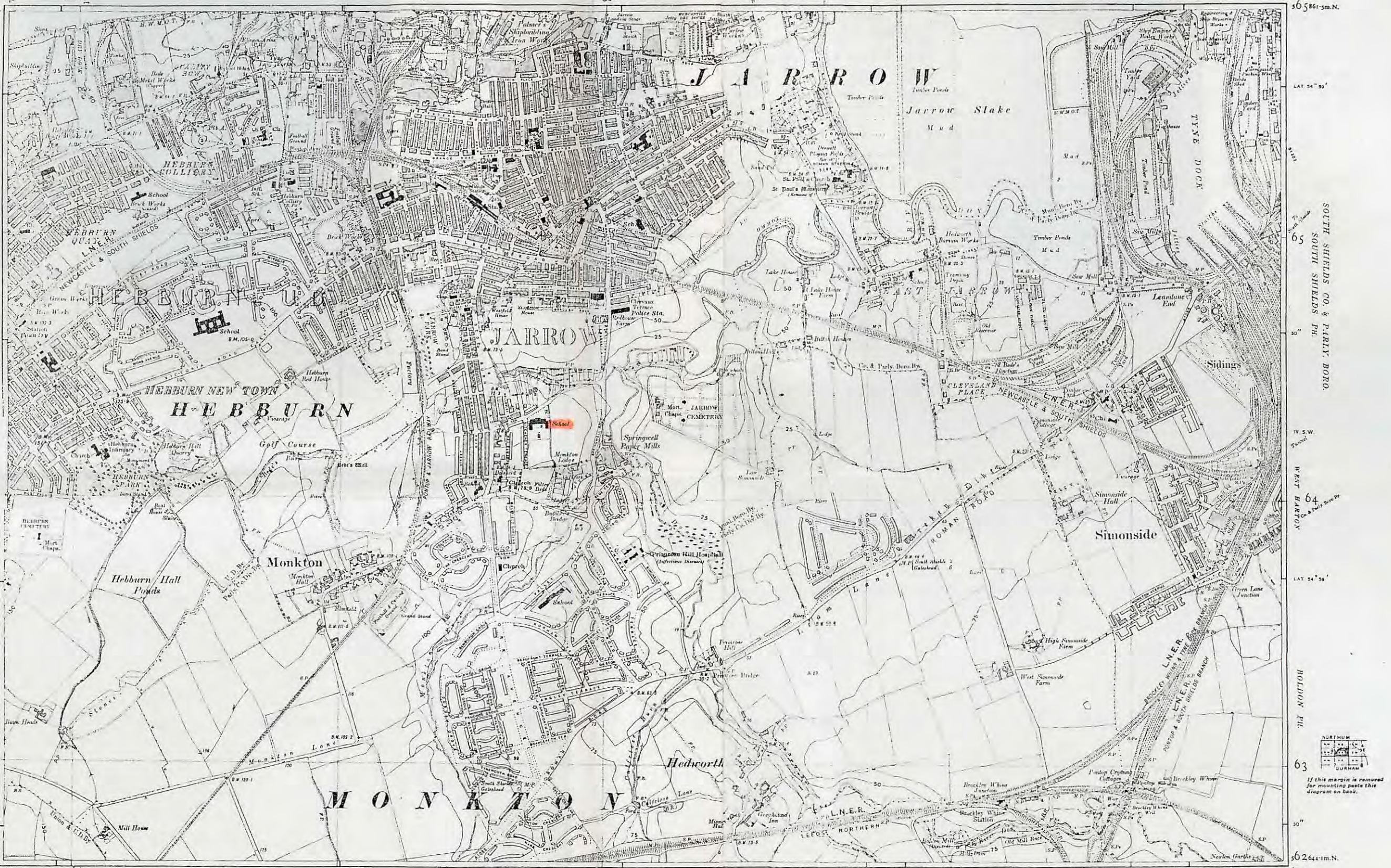
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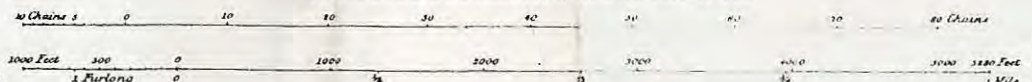


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