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**LABOUR MARKETS, ENGINEERING WORKERS, AND REDUNDANCY IN WEST NEWCASTLE**

**BY**

**FRANK PYKE, SEPTEMBER 1984**

**A thesis submitted to the University of Durham for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy.**

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**16. JUL. 1985**

DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this or any other university or other institute of learning.

### ABSTRACT

This is a study of the mechanisms and processes involved in people's distribution to jobs. To this end labour market behaviour of two samples of redundant male engineering workers from the North East of England is contrasted and compared.

The research is set in a framework that recognises the existence of a market structured to induce a complex interplay of both hierarchical and lateral organisation and movement, with certain people tending, at particular times, to lock into a horizontal multi-employer pattern of job change, and others staying immobile within the confines of a single institution. Within this broad framework there may be tendencies for both hierarchical and lateral segmentation to occur inhibiting mobility for different groups of workers. The inhibitions may not, however, be of life-time significance with the consequence that any differentiation may not be a permanent distinction. At particular times in their lives, or in certain circumstances, individuals may switch from a lateral to a hierarchical pattern of movement, or cross over from one segment to another.

A major aim is to specify the nature of any segmentation or sectoral divisions and to look at the role they play in the distribution of labour, particularly by seeing how they affect people's attempts to exercise choice and discretion in pursuit of work objectives. To this end, people's work objectives and orientations are traced through time and different contexts, including redundancy, and changing perceptions and motivations are related to labour market strategies and final destinations in the job structure. Certain factors - such as 'job interest', 'good pay', 'security', etc - liable to rank amongst an individual's scale of employment priorities, and/or feature as characteristic of work-places in Newcastle, are focussed upon and examined, and evaluated for their significance as general labour market 'structuring agents', serving to sub-divide the work-force into different segments. The extent to which the influence of these 'structuring agents' can vary with time and circumstances, as work-place conditions, opportunities in the market, and people's orientations, change, and the consequences this has for hierarchical and lateral divisions and movement, is studied. Research findings are discussed and evaluated in the light of existing labour market theories.



#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the men from Newcastle whose famed friendliness and generosity were sustained even at times of great personal distress.

Equally kind, cheering and helpful were the men from Durham:

Richard Brown and Huw Beynon. I am also grateful for the assistance of Geof Norris of the Policy Services Unit, Newcastle City Council.

Special thanks are also due to Dawn Calmonson, who carried out the typing with particular care and skill.

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## CHAPTER I

Introduction

This study is about the processes and mechanisms involved in the distribution of people to jobs. The overall aim is to produce an increase in knowledge and understanding within the general field of labour market studies, by introducing and discussing empirical research findings from the North East of England. In the process we will also introduce and critically examine existing viewpoints and beliefs and consider ways in which current theoretical positions could be altered. It is intended, therefore, that 'findings' be recorded on both the concrete empirical and the more abstract theoretical levels. The aim will be not only to produce new knowledge but also to generate ideas and suggestions for pointing the way for future research.

Our general perspective guiding interpretation and understanding is one that recognises the significance of both 'action' and 'structure'. That is to say, labour distribution mechanisms and processes will be studied both through an understanding of people's actions - the rationale for their behaviour and the objectives that are sought - and through an awareness of the existence of structural social divisions serving to guide and limit the range of possible options.

It is not always the case that both these forces are recognised as playing a significant part; most approaches tend to concentrate on either one or the other. Thus there may be an overemphasis on voluntarism and unfettered job selection - literature set within the general field of 'Careers Guidance', for example, seemed at one time to be particularly prone to this type of approach, - or, alternatively, people may be assumed to have little or no active influence on the labour distribution process at all; in this latter case people are typically thought of as being structured along paths by forces completely outside of individual control; individual action and choice play no determinate part - other than an illusionary one for the participants concerned.

Sometimes it seems as if subjects are simply thought of as units with consciousnesses that are objectively dependent upon and simply reflect sub-structural changes within the job structure. Actual movement



between job positions arises from economic forces of which the individuals concerned have little or no understanding. Any ideas the subjects themselves may offer as explanations for their behaviour may even be ignored or categorised as inappropriate, mistaken, or simply derivations from a 'false' consciousness. For researchers who take this kind of approach the main objective of the analyst is simply to understand the underlying 'economic' determinants. Empirical research may therefore take the form of an examination of job histories and changes in occupational status without any reference at all to motivation or choice. Indeed it will very often be the case that individuals are thought to have no choice at all and therefore irrelevant to the analysis.

In this research the focus of the study is on the people themselves and not the structures they occupy and by which they are constrained. It would have been possible for us to proceed from a point of view that sought to specify the nature of social structures and then go on to describe the means by which people are moulded and made to fit the strictures of a kind of structural necessity. In our view, however, such an approach would involve a serious risk of objectifying the supposed concern of our study into no more than a residual determination of the structural forces we describe; that is to say, in order that 'people' fit into the theory of structural order we describe it may have become necessary for reasons of theoretical consistency to think their role as active effective individuals out of practical existence. This, we feel, is always the danger when 'objective' structures take on the role of subject and 'subjects' (i.e. people) become objects.

Even where it is recognised that individual action derived from individual thoughtful consideration may possibly have some bearing on eventual outcomes it may be the case that the Social Scientist himself assumes and allots a particular motivation or set of objectives to the subjects of study. Thereby any need to elicit a motivation and rationale from the mouths of the subjects themselves is obviated. Any motivation and reason for action is deemed to be 'understood' - by the Social Scientist. Thus it only becomes necessary to study variations in structural and contextual variables in order to understand the reason for empirical differences in outcome - the perspectives and motivations of the subjects concerned being understood to be common

and constant. Thus, for example, the finding, say, that younger members of a population get jobs more slowly than their older colleagues could simply be interpreted as being a consequence of a greater difficulty on the part of the former in finding work resulting from differences in objective opportunities - any explanation couched in terms of variations in outlook or motivations affecting job search or job acceptance may not be considered. Omission of the subjective side of the picture could give rise to misleading conclusions.

In this project, then, we have purposively sought to avoid any over-emphasis on 'structural', 'contextual', or 'objective' determinations. We believe that the exercise of choice and the rational pursuit by individuals of valued work objectives play an important part in the normal workings of labour markets. Within the range of alternatives open to them, and in the light of perceived contextual circumstances, men and women will seek to take that course of action believed most appropriate for the attainment of valued goals. This freedom of choice is one that recognises constraint and necessity, but it is a choice nevertheless. It is felt, therefore, that care should be taken to resist the temptation - whether it be for reasons of theoretical consistency, methodological convenience, ideological preference, or whatever - to exclude the subject as human being - and all the problems this invokes for considerations of meaning, interpretation, judgement, etc - from labour market analysis. Subjective perceptions and interpretation of the outside world, and subsequent purposeful actions, have a real determinate effect on the operation of labour markets.

Having said this, it is of course the case that approaches that over-emphasise voluntarism and sheer wishful thinking must just as equally be rejected as much as those that refer simply to the influence of structure and constraint. The degree of structural and external constraint on 'free' action may be extensive, and indeed may in certain circumstances be the more significant influence. Consequently any analysis cannot ignore the circumstances in which action takes place. Bearing in mind, however, that social structures are themselves conditional upon the maintenance of particular actions, the repetitive performance of which gives structures their peculiar quality of semi-permanence outside of the consciousness of any individual person, even a recognition of the important significance of

constraint does not detract from the argument for giving particular attention to the subjective and the rationale behind action.

The approach influencing this study, therefore, is a recognition of the importance of both structure and action - both as significant separate phenomena worthy of in-depth study in their own right, and in the way that they interact and influence one another.

### Research Aims

Labour market analyses, from a variety of perspectives, have left unanswered a number of important questions. To some of these questions we wish to address ourselves in this study.

Of fundamental importance is whether the distribution of workers to jobs is governed by laws of order and rationality; and if it is, what kind of order and rational to what end? Is the labour market worked by Adam Smith's 'hidden hand' - a perfectly competitive market serving to distribute workers and regulate wages according to principles of equal opportunity, productive efficiency, and free choice? Or is this allocatory mechanism spoilt by inhibiting institutional, social, and mental barriers? Are workers aware of the different rewards, including wages, on offer, and, if so, are they able to select any position that meets their aspirations? Or is it the case that there are in fact non-competing labour markets such that opportunities open to some are not open to others?

If we anticipate here that one of our conclusions will be that the real world bears little resemblance to that of the abstract perfect free market, does this necessarily mean that all the assumptions underlying the classical economic model should therefore be abandoned? In particular, should we abandon the notion of the crucial determining effect of worker behaviour on labour market outcomes; it might not be the case that the consequences of worker's actions are those which were postulated by Smith, but this does not mean that they do not act nor that their actions have no consequence; whether or not perfect knowledge and equal opportunity exists the worker may still pursue valued objectives in a rational manner.

An approach such as this, that seeks to establish the regular workings

of the labour market whilst remaining sensitive to the perspectives and behaviour of labour market participants themselves, raises particular sorts of issues and questions. Of importance become the significance and effectiveness of the workers' actions in pursuit of work objectives; how do these actions fit in with the other mechanisms and processes involved in labour distribution? To what extent does the effective allocation of labour require that workers self-select and find their own way to those places where they are most needed? How does this self-selection process relate to changes taking place in the job structure, and to individuals' ideas of what they would like to achieve by working? Can workers achieve their objectives by exercising powers of choice? And if there are choices available are they distributed equally; or is the workforce stratified according to people's range of options i.e. the higher a person's position the less his choice is constrained?

If it was established that the labour market was characterised by stratification and hierarchy we would then consider whether this necessarily implied that all the best jobs were at the top and that the only feasible strategy for somebody wishing to realise a work objective in the most satisfactory way would be to try and climb upwards. To the extent that we found that a person's choice range, and his ability to achieve desired objectives, was related to his position in a hierarchical structure, we would like to know something about the nature of this structure; in particular we would like to know what held it together and whether all had equal opportunity, or desire, to climb it.

Should jobs giving high rewards on some aspects not necessarily do so on others, and should people's work orientations be shown to vary, then there would be grounds for disputing a model of a labour market characterised by hierarchy alone, and a more complex picture of both hierarchical and lateral movements and choices could be argued for. If some jobs poor on one dimension - say 'pay' - were good on another - say 'security' - and if in other jobs the reverse situation occurred, then the possibility would exist for flows to occur to and fro across hierarchical structures as people self-selected according to their orientations.

If in the event both hierarchical and lateral labour market features

are found to exist side by side it becomes incumbent upon us to explain how they relate to one another. Should we find the existence of hierarchical and lateral 'channels' or 'paths' along which individuals might typically travel the question is begged as to when and why people might change 'paths'. Thus, for example, why should individuals locked into a 'lateral' multi-employer pattern be induced to move over to a stable immobile single employer type of behaviour, or vice versa?

To the extent that labour distribution occurs through worker self-selection, and to the extent that the pursuit of particular strategies implies the possession of appropriate orientations, then a change of strategy - or path - suggests the likelihood of a corresponding change in orientation. This 'restructuring' of orientations, in accordance with change in circumstances, would be a significant mechanism in labour allocation were it to happen. It would mean that 'objective' changes in the job structure could take place, making available different sets of work rewards, and still labour could be voluntarily attracted as orientations are adjusted. Any evidence that restructuring occurs, and the sorts of events or changes likely to induce it, then, would be of interest.

In summary, the overall aim is to investigate how the labour market is patterned by relating people's orientations, and changes in orientations, to both the structure, and re-structuring of job opportunities, and to differences in, and alterations in, non-work variables. To this end we compare two work-forces, common in being male, manual, in engineering, and working in closely located plants, but different, primarily, in terms of skill, and distinguish between them their work objectives and patterns of labour market behaviour, both on the internal and external markets, before and after experiencing redundancy, and throughout their work careers. The aim is not only to understand differences between the two work-forces but also variations within them.

In this research the focus of attention was on redundant engineering workers in West Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 'Redundant' men were chosen because it would provide the opportunity to consider whether people's attitudes and orientations to work would in fact remain the same in different contexts or whether a major change in people's employment



status would be accompanied by an appropriate revision or restructuring of objectives. Also redundancy was considered significant because labour market theorists, and particularly Norris<sup>1</sup>, had suggested that the experience of involuntary unemployment played an important part in labour market operations.

At the same time as examining men's attitudes in the context of redundancy we also wanted to elicit information on orientations to work in other contexts and circumstances and to monitor some of the changes that took place through time. Consequently, with this aim in view, we asked our respondents to talk about their relationships towards work, as they remembered it, throughout their work lives. By this means we hoped not only to identify changes in wants and expectations from work according to particular stages in people's work careers and life-cycles, but also to illuminate by comparison any change that took place in the particular context of the post-redundancy situation.

We were interested, therefore, in the kinds of objectives people had hoped in the past to achieve, as well as their hopes and expectations for the future, the reasons they changed jobs and 'chased' some to the exclusion of others, why they decided to 'stick' with some firms rather than others, the factors men saw as restricting their action to achieve preferred objectives, those factors that seemed to the men to be important considerations when making particular decisions and choices, etc. Thus a whole range of issues pertaining to men's relationship to work were covered.

### Methodology

It was decided that the most fruitful methodological approach should be one that concentrated on the use of informal in-depth interviews. Such an approach predictably elicits information of a superior quality to one that relies on the use of more impersonal highly structured questionnaires. The use of a relaxed receptive technique allows and encourages the respondent to express in his own words a variety of often complex and subtle reactions to major life-style changes such as may occur with the onset of redundancy. Many of the long term unemployed are particularly likely to be in a state of emotional stress and may demand of an interviewer considerable tact and

sympathetic understanding. It was felt, moreover, that the type of enquiry should be one that allowed the person being questioned considerable time and latitude to use his own interpretation and supply answers that he felt adequately reflected his particular point of view. Consequently, people were encouraged to talk freely and at length. In this way a serious attempt was made to acquire understanding of how the labour market participants themselves perceived and interpreted events and circumstances pertaining to their relationship to work. Thus the method of data collection in part reflected the decision to concentrate on the effects on the workings of labour markets of individual interpretation, action, and choice.

The main intention was to create the conditions most suitable for encouraging responses of a high quality. But it was also intended that the research be organised so as to facilitate a degree of comparative analysis. Care was taken, therefore, to establish a high degree of meaningful consistency by covering similar topics in each conversation. However, it was not the case that each respondent was confronted with an identical set of similarly worded questions as would normally be the case in questionnaire type surveys. Indeed a method that relied on eliciting relatively short answers to a whole series of questions pre-set by the researcher was specifically rejected on the grounds that such an approach runs the risk of reflecting to an unacceptable degree the particular intellectual perspective of the interviewer. This risk was all the more unacceptable in view of the over-riding objective to achieve an understanding of labour market processes through the eyes of the participants concerned. The basic aim of the interviews was to give people the confidence to speak their minds with minimal influence from the interviewer and in so doing give adequate explanations for their past and present motivations, viewpoints and behaviour. Consequently, less stress was placed on the niceties of the wording of questions or the structuring of interviews than on the acquisition of information that was confidently believed to be honest, accurate, and adequate. So care was taken to ensure that the objectives of the research were not altered or sacrificed to the prescriptions of a particular method - or indeed that the objective did not become 'the method'. Thus it was found that the desired information could be elicited by a variety of questions worded to suit the character and context of the particular interview concerned. At the same time information could

often be obtained simply by allowing people to talk at length answering unspoken questions, as it were, in the process of their replies.

The upshot was that we collected many hours of tape-recorded conversations from which we have extracted data for use in this work.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that an important study of labour markets in the late 1940's used a very similar method. L.G. Reynolds<sup>2</sup> states on page 299:

"The technique used was that of a fixed question free-response interview. The interviewers were provided with a list of key questions to be asked. Once the question had been raised, however, the worker was allowed to talk freely without any prompting by the interviewer. This was found to be more satisfactory than pinning the worker down to minute, specific answers as is sometimes done on attitude and public opinion surveys. It did mean that respondents spent a good deal of time talking about subjects which were irrelevant to the question asked; but embedded in the stream of irrelevancies would be solid pieces of pertinent material. This material, when screened out, seemed to give a more spontaneous indication of actual attitudes than would be secured from brief responses to detailed and highly restricted questions."

We found in our interviews that whilst certain 'key' questions were normally asked to each respondent in turn the nature of 'follow up' questions or prompts could vary according to initial responses. The desire on our part to encourage respondents to talk at length about those relevant issues of particular significance to them introduced a certain degree of flexibility into our conversations; this meant in effect that despite a general thematic consistency in our interviews there were specific topics that were not covered in detail by all our respondents.

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1. Norris, G.M. "Subemployment in Sunderland", (unpublished paper, Essex University, October 1974).  
Norris, G.M. "Unemployment, Subemployment and Personal Characteristics", (Sociological Review, Vol. 28, Nos. 1 and 2, 1978, pp. 89-123, and 327-347).
2. Reynolds, L. "The Structure of Labour Markets", (New York: Harper, 1951), pg. 299.

## CHAPTER II

Review of Labour Market Theory

We propose in this chapter to set out an impression of the more significant perspectives on labour market understanding as put forward in economic and sociological literature in recent years.

In the traditional economic view it is thought that there is a systematic set of relationships between production for profit, the demand for labour, the supply of labour, the level(s) of wages, and the rate of unemployment. Marginal productivity being said to be the principle which, either in the short term or long term, regulates the distribution and level of wages, and people being said to rationally 'follow' those opportunities/wage offers that promise to maximise their earnings, the fundamental mechanism of the distribution of labour is thought to be clear. As Reynolds<sup>1</sup> put it:

"Wage determination and movements of labour (are thought of as) simply different aspects of a single process by which members of the labour force are distributed to the points at which they can make the greatest productive contribution". Thus movements of labour are thought to be induced simply by wage differences, and "the economic function of the wage structure is to ensure an optimum distribution of workers among occupations and industries."

In this view people are seen as a mass of atomistic individuals all pursuing their own interests in the market with a primary aim of maximising their earnings. In view of the significance put on the pursuit of income as a motivating force then the level of wages is seen as the crucial mechanism around which the system revolves. Movement of labour is induced by wage differences. The actual wage level reached for different grades of labour is a function of people's propensity to move towards the highest wage offers, the competitive pressures on rival employers to bid up wage offers to ensure an adequate labour supply, and the calculations employers make of potential workers economic 'worth' to the productive functioning of the enterprise. Thus, providing frictions or impediments are minimised, then the whole system will work - as if guided by a 'hidden

hand' - to produce an optimum distribution of labour. Moreover, since each worker has a free choice, then providing he exercises his rights of discretion wisely and rationally, he will move towards that employment which will most nearly reward him with his true worth. At the same time, since there is a natural tendency for workers of equal quality to be able to command in the market place an equal remuneration, then unless an employer is prepared to offer a wage commensurate with a person's abilities and the going rate in the market then that employer will be unable to attract or hold onto a workforce adequate for his needs. Thus the whole system has a ring of natural justice.

Such a straightforward wage-related view of labour market mechanisms, however, has increasingly been questioned. One problem for economists has been the question of explaining away empirical research that shows that different firms within the same geographical labour market may pay very much different monetary rewards for the same grades of labour and yet these differences will not necessarily be reflected by corresponding degrees of difficulty in attracting sufficient manpower. Such findings are difficult to square with labour market theories that rely on the equilibrating mechanism of the wage variable alone - under the pressure of competitive forces - to guide labour as a factor of production to that employment where it can be used to the greatest efficiency. Under conditions permitting free, knowledgeable, and rational choice, workers of similar 'quality' should themselves, by their propensity to move from low wage to better wage plants, force an evening out of wage differences over a local market area. Yet, as MacKay<sup>2</sup> points out in the introduction to his study of variations in local labour market conditions for engineering workers:

"A number of studies have brought into question the extent to which labour mobility is responsive to wage differentials. The existence of substantial differentials within the same labour market appears the common rule rather than the exception."

Robinson<sup>3</sup>, commenting on MacKay's study, said:

"A comparison of the spread of standard earnings in Birmingham and Glasgow does not support the view that earnings levels would tend to get closer together in tight labour markets where the

forces of competition would be felt more acutely. This is a finding of some importance as it suggests that what might otherwise be regarded as 'temporary distortions', which would be removed once the full pressures of a tight labour market within which employers really competed for labour were felt, are more permanent and perhaps a regular feature of local labour markets."

The implication of studies like these<sup>4</sup> was that there was not any simple automatic response by an undifferentiated workforce to changes in wage levels. The problem became, therefore, one of reconciling some of the basic maxims of the theory - notions of free market choice, a natural tendency for the 'market' to distribute resources efficiently, a tendency towards people maximising their satisfactions, etc. - with the fact that there appeared on monetary criteria alone considerable divergencies between the actual level and distribution of income and that predicted by the theory.

The reconciliation was made by an assertion that the distribution of earnings need not reflect a distribution of 'real' satisfactions and payments. What has to be taken into account, it is argued, are the existence of non-monetary rewards and costs. That is to say, in order that workers of apparent equal quality - and therefore 'deserving' equal work-rewards - should receive similar benefits it must be the case that workers receiving lower wages must receive non-wage compensations. Moreover, in order that the competitive forces of worker choice be operative, then workers themselves must recognise these compensations, put a monetary value on them, and 'trade' them off.

Thus to explain labour mobility it became necessary to take into account both wage and non-wage inducements. Firms may offer 'packages' of both monetary and non-monetary rewards, the sum total of which a worker considers, evaluates, and compares to other 'packages'. Thus a low economic monetary offer may be raised into a 'good' package by the addition of 'fringe benefits' - cars, housing, free meals, etc. - and other attractions like good clean working environment, friendly workmates, reasonable supervision, etc.

So, for economists, labour market mobility is now normally explained in terms of people making choices as a result of a comparison of 'net

advantages' i.e. taking into account all the economic and non-economic advantages and disadvantages of working in a particular firm. A particular choice is made as a consequence of a comparison the worker undertakes between the actual range of benefits and costs 'on offer' and that worker's particular scale of preferences. It is always assumed that amongst these preferences is a desire for high income. Economists normally assume that in practice all other preferences can be measured in terms of the amount of income a person would be prepared to sacrifice in order that non-monetary rewards be secured. Thus it is that the wage mechanism is still considered to maintain its basic distributary function; on the demand side employers offer wages sufficient to compensate for non-monetary deprivations (or costs); on the supply side workers self-select suitable employments according to their subjective evaluation of the trade-off they are prepared to make between monetary rewards on the one hand and non-monetary costs and deprivations on the other.

The concept of a 'trade-off', then, forms a crucial pivot of 'new' economic explanations of labour mobility. But the adjustment of the traditional theory to take into account the realisation that wage-related explanations alone are inadequate creates problems for economists who try to undertake empirical research. The main problem is that the 'enlarged' trade-off theory is so malleable that it can 'explain' virtually any set of observations. Thus MacKay<sup>5</sup> came to the following conclusion:

"The (trade-off theory) is difficult to refute (or confirm) by reference to empirical data. If labour should move from a low to a high wage paying plant this can be held to substantiate the model. Conversely, should labour not move towards the high wage paying plant it can be argued that this is due to adverse non-pecuniary factors which offset the inducements of the higher wage. In any situation there are alternative actions each of which may be consistent with the postulate of economic rationality."

In fact, because of the difficulties involved in 'operationalising' the theory economists doing empirical research in practice usually ignore the 'non-wage' element altogether and concentrate on the money variable alone. Often, in fact, recognition of a non-wage element is



only introduced during the analysis stage of research, after the field work is over, as a rationalisation to 'explain' why mobility predicted on wage differences alone did not occur.

There is a further problem for trade-off theory that at times the non-wage element appears to be so large that the relevance of measuring in terms of monetary criteria becomes questionable. If people are assumed to be attracted to a work-place for reasons largely nothing to do with monetary motivations - otherwise, why would people work in a place with low wages when there are high wage plants in the same locality? - then it might not be particularly meaningful to measure in terms of something on which the workers themselves are assumed to put little value. If people choose a place, for example, because they value security and this particular work-place is believed to offer high security, does it make sense to use a monetary measure rather than, say, a measurement of security?

Trade-off theory, however, faces a much greater challenge. Doubts have been raised as to whether in fact a net equalisation of advantages necessarily takes place. Since the theory is practically impossible to confirm or refute it may be claimed that statements about tendencies towards net equalisation may be nothing more than ideological assertion. It is more reasonable, say some researchers, to interpret large differences in wages not as reflecting a tendency towards net equalisation, but, rather, gross inequalisation. In other words, the claim of this rival theory is that the labour market is essentially hierarchically ordered such that there is a general tendency for some jobs to be better than others - and such that there is a general tendency for some jobs to be perceived by the population at large as being better than others - and that therefore a net equalisation does not take place; rather, some people get better jobs and some people get relatively worse jobs. And for this viewpoint there has been some empirical support. MacKay<sup>6</sup>, in his study, pointed out:

"Visits to the case-study plants did not provide any indication that low-wage units enjoyed any advantage over high-wage units with respect to non-pecuniary factors. Indeed, physical conditions of work, social amenities and like conditions were generally more favourable in high-wage units. This is hardly

conclusive evidence, for the assessment which is relevant is not that of the observer but that of the employee. Yet it is worth while noting that our impressionistic conclusion is consistent with that of earlier studies, namely, that there is no indication that non-wage factors are particularly favourable in low-wage units, and there is some evidence which points in the opposite direction."

Reynolds<sup>7</sup>, also, found a similar situation occurring in the United States. He said:

"While dispersion of company wage levels is ... less than appears on the surface, it is still very substantial. These wage differences, moreover, seem to be accentuated rather than offset by differences in non-wage terms of employment. It was noted ... that there is a positive correlation between a plant's wage level and the size of its supplementary or 'fringe' payments to workers. While conditions of work cannot be measured with the same precision, our visits to plants throughout the area left a strong impression that the larger plants (which tend also to be the high-wage plants) have better physical conditions than most of the small plants. The larger plants also have more adequate personnel procedures and exercise greater care in selection and training of supervisors, though there may be some offset to this in the more informal atmosphere and closer personal relationships in a small plant. For the most part, then, the companies which can afford a high wage level can also afford to make the jobs pleasanter in other ways."

Economic theory is predicated upon the notion of free choice whereupon people with differing preferences or orientations will select those jobs most nearly satisfying individual wants or objectives. Where a job opportunity offers only some of a person's ideal scale of wants, or where a job promises definite 'costs' in the form of unpleasant attributes, then it is assumed a person would be prepared to weigh up the 'pros' and 'cons' of the alternatives on offer and then make a selection on the basis of a trade-off; a job unattractive on one dimension may be compensated for by offering valued rewards on another. So it is that people working in low paid firms may in fact be as satisfied as those working in higher paid firms because the

former may be compensating for the difference in pay by offering some particularly valued non-monetary reward. Thus it is on this view that the economist may assume that individuals working in a lower paid plant do so through choice.

Such a theory has a resonance in the sociological work in the mid-Sixties of Goldthorpe et al. Goldthorpe argued in "The Affluent Worker"<sup>8</sup> that when it comes to explaining the actual distribution of people to jobs individual preference and self-selection has to be taken into account. People with similar preferences, or orientations, would tend to end up at the same jobs - i.e. those jobs offering the most desired returns. Thus, for example, people who were particularly economically orientated would gravitate towards those jobs offering high monetary rewards, even if it involved the 'price' of other unattractive consequences.

In Goldthorpe's sample it was found that semi-skilled workers were 'trading off' non-economic rewards, like sociability, autonomy, skill content, etc, for economic maximisation, the more so the more they had an instrumental economic orientation. Goldthorpe:

"A majority of the machinists and assemblers have in fact entered their present employment not for want of any real alternative, but, rather, as the result of some more-or-less calculated decision; that they have in effect chosen to abandon employments which could offer them some greater degree of intrinsic reward in favour of work which enables them to achieve a higher level of economic return."

Under the right conditions, it was said, workers will develop preferences over time and using their discretionary powers of choice will self-select those employments offering rewards most nearly congruent with their aspirations. Thus people with similar orientations will compare the advantages and disadvantages of a range of objectively available jobs, make similar choices, and end up at the same, or similar, place of work to form an homogenous labour-force.

Using a similar 'trade-off' approach another 'Sixties' writer - Ingham<sup>9</sup> - gave support to Goldthorpe's thesis. In his study Ingham found the following:

People with what he called a 'Non-Economic-Expressive' orientation found their way to the work environment that best allowed for the achievement of 'intrinsic' work-rewards i.e. they freely chose to work in small firms rather than large firms. The small firms paid less well, but because of lower levels of bureaucratisation - allowing for more flexible use of labour - greater variety within work roles, and greater opportunities for moral involvement - they were attractive work-places to those who place less importance on money rewards.

People with an 'Economic Instrumental' orientation gravitated towards the high paying large firms. These firms deprived their workers of the rewards to be found in the small establishments but because the workers were relatively indifferent to non-economic rewards the economic incentive was sufficient to form bonds of attachment.

Variations in orientation to work resulted in the workers making different types of choices in their selection of employment. The majority of the workers in the large plants had left their previous employment because of what they considered to be poor pay and had chosen their present organisations because of the high level of remuneration they offered. On the other hand, the workers in the small firms had given priority to non-economic factors in their job choices. It would appear, then, that there had been a trade-off and some degree of self-selection had taken place.

Other writers have offered evidence that workers tend to rationally weigh up the pros and cons of a job offer, often expecting that certain types of work generally associated with undesirable 'costs' will offer compensatory rewards on other dimensions such as pay. Mann<sup>10</sup>, for example, suggests that managements operating foundries, test-shops, paint-shops etc - where work is unusually noisy, dirty, hot etc - have to offer higher than average pay if they are to attract sufficient labour. Shift-work and assembly-line work may be further examples. Reynolds<sup>11</sup>, in his study in N.E. America, found that the amount of money workers expected varied with the degree of effort involved, the working conditions, safety-hazards, degree of responsibility etc. Also, Blackburn and Mann<sup>12</sup> found that in Peterborough men were prepared to sacrifice income for the high autonomy of 'outside' work.

Thus in situations like the above we may expect workers with appropriate orientations to 'trade-off' one type of benefit for another. To the extent that one side of the balance involves the rate of pay then we might expect that as predicted by economic theory that where the public perceives certain jobs as inferior, and where there is a choice of other otherwise better jobs, then in order to attract sufficient labour those inferior jobs will likely offer a compensatory higher rate of pay. Where, however, there is high unemployment and/or there are social barriers restricting alternative choices then we might expect a tendency for compensatory differentials to break down.

To the extent, then, that the opportunities for choice exist we might expect that the forces of supply and demand will tend, as predicted by 'new' economic theory, to result in generally perceived worse jobs offering a compensatory wage differential. But to the extent that social barriers operate to close off opportunities and restrict choice we may expect the 'wage rate' to lose its distributory function. Economists usually work from the assumption that perfect markets and competition are the 'normal' state of affairs to which the real world would return if 'artificial' structural impediments were removed. Sociologists now generally argue that there is no evidence that the 'perfect' economic world ever existed and that in fact the 'normal' situation is one of closed opportunities and non-competing labour markets. Just as in some circumstances wage differentials might reflect equalising tendencies, in other circumstances they might reflect structured inequality.

The degree of objective choice, and the extent to which a trade-off must be faced, varies; and it tends to vary in a systematic consistent fashion. Whilst Goldthorpe explained people's distribution to jobs in terms of choices and trade-offs, it was at the same time explicitly recognised that (a) not everybody would be faced with the same options, such that some would not exercise choice through lack of alternatives and some would not exercise choice through lack of necessity i.e. more than one objective could be achieved, by some, in the same job, and (b) the general availability of jobs, and therefore options, would be sensitive to the general demand for labour.

The necessity to make a choice on some dimensions was thought to be related to a person's position in the hierarchy of skill.

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Goldthorpe divided his sample into five categories\*

1. Craftsmen - Highly Skilled
  2. Setters - Relatively Skilled
  3. Process Workers - )
  4. Machinists - ) Semi-Skilled
  5. Assemblers - )
- 

\* These categories correspond closely to those we have used throughout this thesis.

The more skilled you were the less likely you would have to consider sacrificing 'job interest' for 'high pay' or vice-versa. This point Goldthorpe made in 'The Affluent Worker' on page 25:

"The relatively high job satisfaction of the Setters is then to be understood as a result of their having been promoted from the ranks of the semi-skilled - whose expectations regarding work they presumably once shared - into jobs which are more directly rewarding as well as being better paid ...; this upgrading has meant not only a higher rate of pay but, at the same time, more opportunity for these men to satisfy expressive needs - to use skills, exercise initiative, and so on ... - in a way which their previous jobs did not permit."

and also on page 142:

"Both promotion and self-employment did have some strong attraction for a number of men, notably as a possible means of escaping from a situation in which they were able to gain high level economic rewards from their work only at the cost of sacrificing more direct satisfaction."

Ingham, also, noted that those lower down the skill hierarchy were more likely to be faced with an objective choice. Ingham page 127-8:

"We have seen that one group of workers have tended to define 'adequate' pay at a relatively low level in order to gain some of the non-economic rewards to be found in small firms. On the other hand, other workers have chosen to pursue high earnings almost exclusively. This contrast is most marked between the semi-skilled workers in the sample. Skilled workers can usually combine fairly complex work and high pay; but high pay in semi-skilled work usually involves monotonous or physically arduous activity. To be sure, the skilled workers in this study exhibit differences in their levels of economism and instrumentalism but their work situations are more similar than those of the respective semi-skilled groups. In other words, the alternatives involved in their choice of employment did not form the sharp dilemma faced by the semi-skilled man."

Blackburn and Mann, moreover, found that any opportunities to exercise choice and trade off the costs and benefits of alternative jobs "were set within the context of a predominantly hierarchically ordered labour market" i.e. jobs which seemed to be better than most on one characteristic tended to be better on others. Any trade-off, their evidence showed, they said, took place amongst the unskilled and semi-skilled section of manual workers. It was not possible to trade off rewards (including wages) for a skilled job. The more skilful jobs, they found, tended to be situated at the top of internal labour markets and, at the same time, these jobs tended to be better paid. Thus the only way to obtain a job that was better all round, they found, was to wait to be internally promoted.

It would seem, then, that jobs that offer both good pay and high interest are only likely to be obtained at higher skill levels. A worker who is particularly motivated, to seek high wages, however, can either try and rise to higher levels, or, move laterally as it were and take a job that may be intrinsically poor but with high economic compensation.

Thus, it would appear to follow, that men will follow different strategies according to both their particular aims and the objective

possibilities.

Although it was the case in Goldthorpe's sample that it was possible to attain the objective of higher earnings by waiting to be promoted, few men, in the semi-skilled situation, in fact thought this to be a realistic possibility. Thus, these men were attached to their firm primarily because within the range of jobs available to them this firm for the time being was offering the highest returns on the reward that was most valued (i.e. in this case 'income'); and whilst the high economic motivation prevailed and whilst the differential (on this particular reward) between this employment and alternative perceived employment was high, then the men would be highly attached to their present employment.

If a person following a 'trade-off' strategy can become highly attached to one particular employment so can someone following a 'promotion' strategy.

Mann, pointed out that it was not always possible for a person doing a job in one firm to change and move to a comparable job, at a comparable hierarchical level, in another firm - even if the latter job should become vacant; this was because of the existence of job structures internal to employing organisations. As Mann put it:

"Jobs within organisations in the broad band of unskilled and semi-skilled occupations (and sometimes within skilled occupations as well) are normally organised into an organisation hierarchy in which the higher positions are filled by workers who have previously worked in lower positions ..., often promotion depends on how long you have been with the firm."

Reynolds said that in his study the practice of internal recruitment was widespread and that it was widely felt by workers that the best strategy was to stay with one company where there was a chance of upward movement. Leaving the Company was a risky business, particularly for the older men and/or those with job-specific skills, especially in view of the prevailing custom of hiring workers for the lowest jobs only. Reynolds believed that less than 20% had a propensity to move.



Strong support for the pervasiveness of internal labour markets in America came from Doeringer who demonstrated in his study of 24 U.S. manufacturing plants that internal labour markets were exerting a strong influence on entry and that consequently a change of employers might typically mean a retrogression on the occupational scale. Thus every worker except the very newest might possibly have something to lose by changing jobs.

In Mann's study of a company relocating some of its workers from Birmingham to Banbury he came to the following conclusion:

"In their comparisons between the company and the external labour-market, most of the workers could see that in the internal labour market they had reached a hierarchical level above that available to them outside the company. If they left the company they did not envisage themselves 'trading-off' the costs and benefits of 'Birds' versus alternative employment, but falling down the hierarchy ...; wages, security, and status seemed to them to be distributed hierarchically both within Birds and between Birds and other firms."

The effects of the internal labour market were such that workers near the top of the hierarchy could not consider choosing to go to a job at a similar level in a different firm. If they wanted to continue to receive the level of benefits they were receiving from their present job it was necessary to stay with their present firms. Thus, if they were highly economically motivated, for example, and changing firms would mean a drop down the hierarchy and/or a drop in pay, then we might expect them to make a rational decision to stay where they were with their present company.

Mann found that people who by the above argument had most to lose by dropping down the hierarchy were in fact the ones who stayed with the firm and moved with it from Birmingham to Banbury.

Thus the greater the extent that firms are internally stratified and differentiated and the less the extent that jobs on a similar level elsewhere are directly open to outsiders from the external market the more the worker who is above the bottom rung is likely to become dependent on his present employment - given that his wants and

expectations from work have not changed.

So movements up and down hierarchies and relative positions in hierarchy are as important a factor in labour distribution as is lateral movement and the effects of compensatory trade-off mechanisms. Gaining access to a hierarchy or job ladder could be a crucial determinant of a person's life chances; to the extent that people would be excluded from such opportunities, of course, then a significant division in a 'perfect' labour market occurs; excluded from certain, possibly better, positions some people would not have the luxury of choosing not to accept the worse jobs; this could affect the need for such jobs to pay a 'compensatory' wage differential.

The greater the extent that job opportunities are systematically closed off to some and/or 'reserved' for others, then the less effective can a wage level be as a general distributor of labour. Economic theory can still be applicable in those areas where there is an open market and movement of labour, but the greater the extent that markets are segmented and stratified then the less the extent that variations in non-wage benefits are likely to be compensated for by appropriate monetary differentials.

Once it was accepted that labour markets are systematically structurally divided, and that these divisions are 'normal', then attention was turned onto the nature and determinants of these divisions.

#### Dual Labour Market Theory

In recent years there have been attempts to combine the phenomena of differentially oriented work-forces, the effects of lateral and hierarchical segmentation, and the existence of active internal labour markets, through the perspective of a range of approaches which collectively have come to be known as Dual Labour Market Theory.

The basis of this view is that the labour market is structurally bisected into 'good' and 'bad' jobs, and that the labour force is correspondingly divided into those who are restricted to the sector with the worse jobs and those who have access to the better jobs.

The authors most well known for developing D.L.M.T. are Doeringer and Piore<sup>13</sup>. They describe the jobs in the 'good' (or Primary) sector as possessing the following characteristics:

1. Relatively high wages
2. Comparatively good working conditions
3. Employment stability
4. Chances of advancement
5. Equity and due process in the administration of work rules
6. Possibilities for training

Jobs in the 'bad' (or Secondary) sector are thought of as having the opposite characteristics; but it is the opposite to (3) above, i.e. High Labour Turnover, that Doeringer considers "may be taken as the salient characteristic of the Secondary market".

Jobs in the 'Primary' sector are thought to be attached to structured hierarchical internal labour markets to which Secondary sector job occupants are denied access.

There has been no overall consensus on the exact nature of 'dualism' nor the rationale and processes involved in its creation; however, at risk of simply reproducing inconsistencies and portraying all positions inadequately we will set out what we hope is a reasonably coherent description of what we take to be the crux of most arguments.

Large capital intensive monopolistic firms face problems of coping with the effects of changing product demands on their technological and labour requirements - whether due to overall demand deficiency or simply changes in consumer taste. As a consequence, it is argued, many organisations purposively organise their production in such a way that fluctuations in product demand can be accommodated, and expensive capital equipment used to full capacity, by confining adjustments to specific 'least cost' areas. That is to say, certain workers will be recognised as marginal and dispensable and treated in a separate and qualitatively different way to the rest of the work-force. Such marginal workers may be confined to certain sections, working less costly fixed equipment, working on batch work.

Alternatively, and perhaps more typically, the monopolistic company may minimise its risk by sub-contracting its smaller orders - or work threatened by sudden changes in consumer taste - to small satellite firms, firms located in much more competitive markets. The large firm comes to rely on its dependent satellite as a 'least-cost' safety valve. The small firms are given orders as demand increases and the opposite as demand drops. Correspondingly, the small firms take on 'temporary' labour to cope with sudden orders and then just as suddenly reduce their labour force as work drops off. In this way flexibility is introduced into the system.

In this way certain employees are confined to those areas where instability is less costly to the dominant firm. These marginal workers are the Secondary workers. It would not be a prime objective of a management to retain these men and reduce turnover. Consequently, in this Secondary sector, where incentives to stability are not necessary, wages remain low, security of employment is not assured, and promotion prospects are few.

At the same time that Secondary workers are marginalised into 'bad' jobs, the monopolistic employers will try to ensure that certain key workers are retained - in 'good' jobs attached to internal labour markets. These are 'Primary' workers and are thought typically to be found in large employing organisations.

Where a large amount of capital is invested in a plant, such that it is - or parts of it are - largely automated (and/or a continuous process plant) - then the effects of work shortages, or worker mistakes, strikes, or absences, can be very damaging. Where this is the case, it is argued, managements will wish to ensure on the one hand that workers are steady (i.e. not prone to moving jobs - 'chopping and changing'), responsible (i.e. will respect and look after the expensive machinery), and, possibly, not prone to taking sudden strike action.

The men attached to the internal labour markets in the Primary sector are men who in keeping with the nature of the advanced technology are not traditional craftsmen. Modern specialised equipment needs not conventional general skills but simply particular experience. The technological trend towards the replacement of craftsmen with various

forms of unskilled and semi-skilled workers who work with the aid of specialised machinery results in a need for men with special 'narrow' skills, highly specific to the context in which they are acquired. This tendency for skills to be 'plant specific' and the shortage of men with adequate experience and knowledge on the external market increases their value to the employer. Replacing such workers can be costly.

Much of the cost and uncertainty of taking on new workers is avoided by recruitment from within the Company. Internal recruitment is a quicker, easier, cheaper, and more reliable method, mainly because the possible candidates are already known through personal supervisory knowledge and formal records. At the same time, the potential candidates already know what the job involves and whether it is likely to suit them. Consequently, time and expense is saved.

For these reasons - skill specificity, the need to keep expensive plant running continually, the cost of specialised recruitment, etc - the employer retains his 'Primary' workforce by promoting them through more and more specialised jobs. Thus these key workers are offered the chance of advancement. At the same time they may be given security, an earnings and status differential, and, possibly, the tying of things like sickness pay, holiday pay, and pensions, to length of service.

In this way, by creating a structured internal market with an appropriate promotion policy, with a corresponding system of hierarchically arranged rewards, the turnover of key personnel in this Primary sector may be reduced.

At the same time the employer may try to concentrate any lay-offs in areas where least damage could be caused. Thus whereas the employer may try to hang on to key workers through a recession and wait for a return in demand, he may decide that less important replaceable 'Secondary' workers could be paid off. In this way a definite division between relatively secure high waged Primary workers and insecure low waged Secondary workers may arise.

'Greater turnover' is considered to be the most salient distinguishing characteristic of Secondary workers, a distinction that is thought to largely follow from the type of jobs on which they are employed rather than be a consequence of some inherent human personality trait

inducing instability. Because of the opportunity structure provided for them Primary workers will tend to progress up an internal promotion ladder, will exhibit low rates of mobility between employers, and will experience little unemployment; typically, then, Primary workers will exhibit long term stability with a tendency to move upwards in the same organisation to jobs requiring higher skill levels and offering greater rewards. Secondary workers, in contrast, with little internal opportunities for promotion, and only a tenuous hold on their jobs, are characterised by frequent changes of employer and high levels of unemployment; workers move between jobs of broadly similar status, skill level, and reward level; both involuntary and voluntary changes in jobs are much more frequent.

For Norris<sup>14</sup>, a particularly significant element in the process of segmentation is involuntary unemployment. The experience of unemployment has an effective influence on who ends up in which job, and whether that job is likely to be a stable one. Of particular significance is thought to be the established fact that people who have suffered one bout of unemployment are much more likely statistically to suffer further bouts than those who have never suffered any at all. This phenomenon of re-current unemployment is thought to be, at least in part, a consequence of the prevalence of the redundancy rule: 'last-in, first-out'.

Once a person has acquired a history of irregular employment and recurrent unemployment, it is argued, he will find it increasingly difficult to establish for himself a secure reasonable job given the recruitment preferences of many or most Primary employers for men with evidence of long term commitment to one job or one employer. Thus certain groups may be excluded from Primary employment because they appear to be 'unstable characters'. Thereby they are restricted to the Secondary sector, experience of which on the one hand is likely to increase a person's involuntary unemployment through being 'dispensable', and on the other hand encourage voluntary job change because of the nature of the jobs and opportunity structures. Thus secondary workers demonstrate to potential Primary employers that they are unstable types, and the cycle re-occurs.

In this way, by identifying likely stable and unstable types, employers effect by their recruitment practices the dual segregation.

Where there is limited information about potential job applicants it is thought that employers might make use of relatively visible individual characteristics which are thought to correlate highly with the qualities of reliability and stability. Thus an employer may use 'screening devices' which tend to discriminate against women, youths, racial and ethnic groups, with the consequence that the better, Primary jobs should be filled by relatively older, native-born, white married males.

So whereas the stable employed men may well be climbing away from an insecure Secondary sector into more secure and higher skilled employment, the re-current unemployed, the multiple job changers, and those of the 'wrong' sex, colour, marital status, or age, may be forced to take jobs which do not offer such opportunities for upward movement. Thus they may be confined to the Secondary sector.

By this means, not only is the market 'objectively' bisected into 'good' and 'bad' sectors but the labour force is correspondingly segmented into 'Primary' and 'Secondary' workers, restricted to the appropriate parts of the market.

Empirical evidence for the existence of some kind of labour market segmentation comes from Blackburn and Mann<sup>15</sup>; they reported that female manual workers in Peterborough were segregated in both production and the labour market from male workers:

"They were almost never interchangeable", Blackburn and Mann said, "and the employment conditions of women are considerably worse; women use even more debased job skills, receive lower wages, and are largely denied access to internal labour markets".... "the internal market", they claimed, "exists on the backs of a secondary labour force, and in this country that means largely on the backs of women."

Further evidence of some kind of 'Primary/'Secondary' division came from Castles and Kosacks.<sup>17</sup> Writing in 1970 they said:

"Immigrant workers in France, Germany, Switzerland and Britain, are usually employed in occupations rejected by indigenous workers. In a situation of full employment the nationals of the

countries concerned here take advantage of opportunities for moving into better paying more pleasant jobs, usually in the white-collared or skilled manual sectors. The immigrants have been left with the jobs deserted by others. Typically, such jobs offer low pay, poor working conditions, little security, and inferior social status."

Empirical support for the notion that 'dualism', as measured by instability, may follow lines of division between big and small firms came from Curran and Stanworth<sup>18</sup> who found in their study that small firm workers showed greater employment instability (ie more job changes over a given period) than large firm workers, regardless of industry; they came to the conclusion that "small and large firm workers should be seen as two distinct, albeit overlapping, groupings with different market situations". Norris,<sup>19</sup> at the same time, gave empirical support to the view that on the dimension of instability significant labour-market differences could occur within firms.

There is clearly evidence that some kind of structured division of the labour market serves to channel people to 'better' or 'worse' jobs. However, within the general arena of the debate on labour market segmentation a number of criticisms of Dual Labour Market Theory have been voiced. These criticisms can be broadly divided into those that disagree fundamentally with the nature and determinants of labour market divisions, and those that whilst accepting the usefulness of some of the insights provided by D.L.M.T. would like to see some amendments.

The main source of criticism (within Sociology) in the first category is a school (or largely American) thought adhering to what has come to be known as 'Radical' theory.<sup>20</sup> This school questions the dominant emphasis placed by D.L.M.T. on the influence of economic and technological factors in bringing about segregation. The Radicals argue that the present structural labour market divisions are largely to be explained by recourse to the historical process whereby capitalists as a class consciously, and successfully, overcame the formation of a hostile proletarian class consciousness through the creation of an 'artificial' division of interests. Thus, it is claimed, recognising the potential threat of a united proletariat capitalists resorted to the time-honoured strategy of 'divide and rule', and set about stratifying and segmenting the labour force.



Blacks were divided from whites, women from men, etc. Consequently, those members of the proletariat situated at the foot of the stratification created by the introduction of 'artificial' promotion structures no longer had common interest or common identification with those at the top. Thus the potentiality of an increasingly de-skilled class conscious homogeneous labour force was effectively thwarted.

The Radical view, therefore, whilst agreeing with D.L.M.T. that there is a significant division between a stable and unstable sector resulting from the needs of capitalism to have on the one hand a stable labour force for the efficient functioning of complex technology, and on the other hand a marginal workforce to respond to fluctuations in demand, also argued that there were further crucial sub-divisions both within and across these sectors created purposively to divide the Working Class. Those hierarchical job structures explained in D.L.M.T. as being largely a consequence of economic and technological factors were in Radical theory seen as artificial creations of a Capitalist class that needed to exert its control. The need to control, therefore, is the main principle involved and not the need to produce efficiently and at a profit.

In response, it has been argued that the individual employer's primary objective is to produce and sell at a profit and not to act as representative of a collective capitalist class consciousness bent on destroying the social and political cohesiveness of an undifferentiated proletariat. Thus of more importance to the individual capitalist - and of more relevance to labour market structuring - are the much more pragmatic day to day considerations of organising production in response to market, technological, and trade union pressure.

It is decisions and actions taken in response to these particular pressures that are the main determinants of employment structures. It may well be, this argument goes, that sections of the workforce may be treated preferentially in regard to earnings in order to reduce the threat of collective strike action, or to defeat strikes already in progress; but this is not the same as the creation of a structured internal market. According to Barron and Norris<sup>21</sup>:

"Creating a structured internal market as opposed to an internally hierarchically arranged system of rewards with no corresponding internal promotion policy results from a concern to reduce labour turnover rates and not from a reaction to demands for improved pay and conditions ... The internal labour market with an internal promotion policy is designed to reduce turnover and not to buy off workers' demands."

Another criticism of D.L.M.T. made, normally, by those more sympathetic to the basic arguments of Dualism, is that insufficient weight is given to the active influence of trade unions. Although implied in Doeringer's writing is a recognition that organised labour can have a determinate effect,<sup>22</sup> the effect is not thought to be one of great importance.<sup>23</sup> Some writers see this as a major defect of the theory. Rubery<sup>24</sup> sees it as a defect of both D.L.M.T. and Radical Theory - the latter is criticised because stratification is said to take place as a consequence of the employer's response to the threat of worker collective action and not a consequence of any involvement on the part of trade unions.

It would seem trade unions can have a very significant influence on a firm's allocative structure. Union pressure, for example, can effectively restrict the number of ports of entry to a plant by negotiating an agreement that management advertise jobs internally 'on the board' prior to resorting to recruitment on the external market. Unions can also influence the rules for lay-offs and redundancies by negotiating an agreement, for example, that the 'last-in' should be 'first-out', or that 'voluntary' redundancies should take precedence. Unions also can impose limits on the length and characters of job ladders - thus a study by Mackay<sup>25</sup> of the British Engineering industry found that in one geographical area they studied recruitment to positions at the top of the manual skill hierarchy was almost entirely from apprentices trained in the firm or from already trained men who were in the external market; these restrictions on the sources of recruits for these positions created a boundary above which internal recruits taken in at the semi-skilled or unskilled level could not rise; the degree of openness of traditional craft positions to 'dilutee' men may vary according to overall demand and scarcity of time-served skills, with the consequence that dilutee skills acquired during a period of high demand, when competitive threat to established time-served tradesmen may be small, may lose their 'general' market

value on the onset of recession and the introduction of new craft restrictions; at the same time 'dilutees' might be further excluded by the actions of management in preferring to have time-served men at a time when they can 'pick and choose'. Unions, or sections of unions, dominated by unskilled or semi-skilled men may themselves pressurise managements to create structured rule-bound job ladders, and accompanying formal qualifications of job entitlement, in order to create a 'professional' differentiation from unskilled men proper and thereby reduce potential competition. Rubery goes further and suggests that the existence of a highly differentiated rule bound job structure is crucial to the ability of a union to exert its control and press forward its objectives:

"The existence of a structured labour force, where jobs are strictly defined, and workers are not interchangeable, provides a bargaining base for labour against management's attempts to increase productivity and introduce new technology. Changes in job ladders, skill demarcations, and the pace of work, become areas for bargaining, whereas a homogeneous labour force, interchangeable in function, would lay itself open not only to competition from the external market but also to further declines in workers' control of production and continuous undermining of bargaining power. Divisions by custom, rule, and status are essential parts of any union's bargaining strength."

The simple dichotomy of a single Primary and single Secondary sector has been disputed. Norris,<sup>26</sup> referring to his own work in Sunderland, wrote:

"The notion of two labour markets is clearly an over-simplification. The data quoted for Sunderland seems to reveal at least 3 sectors, the non-manual sector, the skilled and semi-skilled manual, and the unskilled manual, within the male labour market alone."

Moreover, at the same time as disputing the notion of there being only two clearly distinguishable market sectors - identified by skill level, pay, fringe benefits, working conditions, insecurity etc - Norris also claimed the significant finding that movement between sectors occurs. Thus, one consequence, for example, was that men whom Norris identified as having 'Primary' work histories - men who in the

last five years had had only one or two occupations and one or two employers - were not necessarily currently in Primary type employment; some had recently 'fallen' from a long term stable job, thanks to redundancy or ill health, into worse lesser paid employment.

Consequently, Norris<sup>27</sup> concludes:

"The notion of two completely segregated labour markets with no intersectoral mobility seems to be something of an oversimplification. The data suggests a picture of two relatively segregated markets but where worker flows between the two do occur, particularly from the Primary sector into the Secondary sector."

Other writers have also criticised the simple two-sector model. One in particular, Sengenberger,<sup>28</sup> suggests the dualist structure should be amended to a tri-partite segmentation. The three segments are divided and characterised thus:

1. Everyman's Market:

These are more-or-less equivalent to the Secondary markets in the terminology of the Dual Labour Market Theory. The jobs in question require virtually no special training. The costs for recruitment, training and wages, incurred by the employer are typically low. There are many potential competitors, for these jobs. Recruitment and discharge decisions are mainly guided by short term considerations. These jobs are very insecure.

2. Market for Men with General Occupational Qualifications:

This is occupied by men who are vocationally or professionally qualified workers who may have a skill which is relatively scarce and in demand and who may be able to choose or move between jobs. These skills are generally applicable to a variety of contexts and employments and so contrast with the next category where jobs tend to be plant specific.

### 3. Market for Corporation-Specific Qualifications:

This market is occupied by personnel trained for the specific purposes of a corporation or plant. This training can involve high human capital investment for the employer but it tends to bind the worker to his firm as any mobility might mean a total loss of qualification.

Segments (1) and (3) roughly correspond with the Secondary and Primary markets of Dual Labour Market Theory. The significant addition is segment (2) where men with generally applicable skills are singled out as having a peculiarly different market situation.

Gordon et al<sup>29</sup> make a broadly similar point when they talk about Subordinate Primary Workers and Independent Primary Workers. The former do routinised repetitive work and tend to be tied to a single employer; the latter have general skills applicable to a variety of contexts and therefore tend to have experience with more employers.

Kreckel<sup>30</sup> refers to other attempts to amend dualist theory including a suggestion by German scientists that the differentiation between 'general' skills and plant-specific skills is too stark and that there should be recognition of the fact that there are people who occupy intermediate status - with declining general skills which have not yet quite declined to the extent of being totally plant specific; they also suggest distinguishing between men with plant specific 'skills' - ie having acquired a specific knowledge or craft - and those who have no 'skills' as such but operate plant specific equipment.

### Conclusion

The 'Labour Market' is a relatively new focus of empirical research - this despite its long history as a significant conceptual component of economic theory. Most empirical research that has been carried out seems mainly to have simply thrown more doubt on the adequacy of existing concepts, with the consequence that established beliefs have been undermined; but no clear sound theory has yet emerged from out of the flux.

It is now generally agreed that labour markets are much more complicated phenomena than was assumed to be the case by the classical

economists. At the same time there is still considerable disagreement about the mechanisms involved in labour distribution, about the nature of structural organisation, about the main principles serving to order the market, and even about whether much sense can be made out of the whole process at all - especially on the part of the labour market participants themselves.

In this chapter we have presented the ideas which we think form the main foci of discussion and from which new perspectives and theories may be expected to develop. Certainly they form the background against which this research was carried out. Whether or not we were able to support, refute, or develop any of the ideas will be seen in the following chapters, and will be summed up in the final concluding section.

If there is one key concept that has imposed itself upon and structured the way this research was developed it is the interplay of lateral and hierarchical market organisation and movement. It is this theme which provides a unifying framework through which the rest of this thesis can be read.

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  30. Kreckel, R., op. cit.



## CHAPTER III

Two Engineering Plants

The men we interviewed came from two engineering plants about a mile apart along the river Tyne in West Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The two plants were known as Vickers Scotswood Engineering and Tress Engineering. We propose in this chapter to present a brief historical introduction to the two factories and then describe the respondents who formed our two samples.

Vickers Scotswood

In the 1840's William Armstrong set up as a manufacturer of hydraulic cranes and general engineering products; he started a small factory at Elswick, a village outside Newcastle. At the end of the 1850's the government decided to place large orders for guns built to Armstrong's designs; another factory was built at Elswick to meet the government orders. By the 1860's the Elswick Ordnance Works was established. After 1867 Armstrongs built warships as well.

"By the 1880's the village of Elswick had become a city of forges, factories and steelworks, 'an arsenal in itself'. The Elswick Works were regarded not so much as the manufacturers of lethal weapons as the leaders of British Engineering"<sup>1</sup>. The yards at Elswick became the world's largest supplier of warships. Elswick leadership in engineering was acknowledged. Men trained at Elswick were in demand all over the world.

In 1897 Armstrongs merged with Sir Joseph Whitworth and Company to form Sir W.G. Armstrong Whitworth and Company Limited. In 1899 Armstrong-Whitworth's opened another armaments plant about a mile up river from Elswick, at Scotswood.

Vickers, Sons and Company was a steel company that became manufacturers of armour in 1888. Vickers' interests in armaments grew and in the years leading up to the First World War it challenged Armstrong Whitworth for the leadership of the British Armaments

## Industry.

"By 1914 Vickers was numbered among the Industrial Great Powers of Europe. Actually a Great Power at sea and on the land, potentially a Great Power in the air. They were essentially an armaments firm, one of the two greatest in Britain"<sup>2</sup>.

After the First World War both Vickers and Armstrong Whitworths were faced with essentially the same problem - a problem that was to re-occur after the Second World War - both companies had to try and fill their Works with something other than armament manufacture. A whole variety of peace-time products were tried with varying degrees of success - products ranging from merchant ships, locomotives, light industrial machinery, machine-tools, and sewing machines, to domestic appliances, toys, furniture and sporting guns.

The Elswick Works were occupied post-war with the building of marine engines and merchant ships. Before the war the Scotswood Works was producing motor cars; for the duration of the war, however, the motor car department was put into cold storage and Scotswood was turned over to producing shells. After the war Armstrong's saw one of its main home prospects to be in the shape of locomotives and Scotswood was envisaged as a great centre of locomotive production.

In the 1920's both Vickers and Armstrong's ran into difficulties, with the latter being the weaker. The solution adopted was rationalisation and merger. In 1927 Vickers and Armstrong merged. The whole of the armaments and naval shipbuilding works were amalgamated and transferred to a new company called Vickers-Armstrong Limited. At the same time, however, Vickers and Armstrong's remained individual companies in their own right and retained exclusive control over certain branches of business. Armstrong-Whitworth kept about a quarter of its interests, including the Scotswood Works. Hence after 1927 the Elswick Works were owned by Vickers Armstrong and the Scotswood Works by Armstrong Whitworth - two separate companies.

In 1928 the whole production of tanks, truck vehicles and armoured cars, with the exception of experimental work, was transferred from Sheffield to Elswick. Between 1927 and 1937 the Scotswood Works of Armstrong-Whitworth were engaged on general engineering work,

especially on locomotives. In August 1937 the Scotswood Works were purchased from Armstrong's by the Admiralty and leased to Vickers-Armstrong on a 28 year lease. The object was to provide further skills and capacity for expanded armaments production. Once a large locomotives order was completed at the end of 1937 the Works was reorganised exclusively for armament work.

At the beginning of the Second World War the Elswick Works employed 12,250 and the Scotswood Works 6,250. Vickers Armstrong employed 64,000 people in 1938.

Elswick and Scotswood produced armaments during the war for both land and sea forces. Gun mountings were a speciality. Production extended beyond the confines of the Scotswood and Elswick plants to 'satellite' works, under Vickers' managerial control.

After the war Vickers was faced with the re-occurring problem of filling excess capacity created by the drop in armaments work, caused partly by the end of the war itself and partly by technological changes rendering some of Vickers' products outmoded. Whilst the need for diversification was recognised however, armaments production, or, rather, the retention of armaments capacity, remained the prime object within Vickers engineering interests. To a degree, consequently, new product ventures remained subservient to the needs of the armaments business. Thus new products such as Clearing Presses at Elswick and possibly Shervick Tractors at Scotswood were introduced, partly because they facilitated the retention of armament production capacity. Presses, for example, were a direct substitute for gun mountings and it was easy to switch back to manufacturing gun mountings if the demand arose; similarly, the skills and facilities for producing tractors could be used for producing tanks.

This policy of preserving armaments producing capacity was a double edged sword. Whilst the ability was retained to start up manufacture at short notice of armaments of value to the National Interest, not to say of at times highly profitable interest to Vickers, the upshot was that resources and capacity were diverted away from the establishment of a range of secure long term civilian 'house' products. When the call for armaments came, as in the Korean War for example, the manufacture of civilian products was abruptly stopped, negotiations

for peace time products abruptly halted, and production turned over to traditional war work. The tendency was, in consequence, for the Engineering Works, and in particular Elswick and Scotswood, to engage in short term jobbing activities, simply filling up capacity in between armament orders.

At both Elswick and Scotswood, then, since the war, the men worked on a long list of civilian products, many built under licence, from other companies, some produced for other parts of the Vickers Group, few established as long term 'house' staple manufactures. At the same time Elswick remained overtly dependent on armament work, especially tanks which it had been building since after the First World War. The 'Centurion' tank provided a lot of work throughout the Fifties and successors such as the 'Chieftain' maintained the involvement of the Elswick workforce thereafter. But no basis was established for sustained civilian production.

One major attempt was made at Scotswood to produce a product that could have long term viability and which could sustain a large workforce. This was the Shervick Tractor. Scotswood had a particularly high excess capacity after the cessation of war and for a time a large part of the floor space was actually let out. In 1947, however, it was decided to turn Scotswood over to the building of tractors - a product admirably suited to a company used to manufacturing heavy tracked war vehicles, and for which there was a highly skilled workforce readily available. The venture was beset with problems, however, and after about a decade of production difficulties - just paradoxically when some of the workforce thought the product 'was right' - the Shervick Tractor was abandoned, in 1959, apparently in response to cheaper American competition. 900 men were made redundant. Consequently, by the Sixties, Scotswood, like Elswick, was still without a major commercial 'own product'.

Whilst attempts were being made at Scotswood to fill up excess capacity with tractor production new products were also sought for Elswick. An early introduction was the building of big power presses and orders were received from the Clearing Machine Corporation of Chicago. The lucrative Elswick non-ferrous rolling mill and extruding shop was also promoted with heavy investment. In 1957 the Elswick die shop was established employing about 250 skilled tool fitters,

supplying dies mainly to car companies, in particular Fords. Another new venture was the production (under licence) of 'Paceco' container handling equipment. And the production of variable speed gears was another sizeable project.

At Scotswood, in addition to tractors and earth moving equipment, the post-war period saw amongst other things the manufacture of a variety of heavy steelwork plant and rubber processing equipment.

By the late Fifties, however, moves were afoot to move the Vickers organisation further away from a dependence upon its traditional armaments and heavy engineering interests and towards a variety of essentially lighter engineering, and more profitable, commercial work. Capital would no longer necessarily be invested in those branches of business in which the Company was born and which had dominated its thinking for over 100 years. Such a change in direction had catastrophic implications for the oldest parts of the Vickers Group: the heavy engineering works of West Newcastle.

The Sixties ushered in a period characterised by rationalisation, change, and, for Scotswood and Elswick, uncertainty and insecurity. A slow, gradual, but inexorable, decline began. In 1959 the Elswick Variable Speed Gear Plant was abandoned - its business transferred to Swindon. In 1962 the Elswick Printing Department closed. In 1964 the Elswick Deck Machinery Shop was first transferred to Scotswood and then closed. Other commercial engineering products, including the Clearing Presses were transferred to Scotswood. Naval work was transferred to Barrow.

At the 1965 Vickers Directors and Principal Officers Conference the Chairman asked that it be considered "Whether there was a need to give greater rewards for success and less security for failure. Vickers, it was thought, had been widely regarded as an employer providing absolute security of employment, irrespective of performance"<sup>3</sup>. A "job for life" could no longer be guaranteed.

With the emphasis on securing greatest returns for their money Vickers actively sought out new branches of business for long term growth. Printing machinery, office equipment (beginning with the acquisition of Roneo), medical equipment, and chemical engineering, were

identified as growth areas. And as new branches of business were opened up old ones were closed down. In the name of rationalisation the second half of the Sixties saw a concerted effort to eliminate activities which were either unprofitable per se (or at least not profitable enough), or which did not 'fit' into the long term Vickers product strategy.

Scotswood and Elswick were particularly ripe rationalisation candidates. Neither were in the 'growth' sectors and both were thought to make uneconomic use of space. Plans went ahead to reorganise production and concentrate activities into smaller areas at both works. Products, and sometimes men, were transferred from one plant to another. In 1966 the 'Paceco' container handling equipment was transferred from Elswick to Scotswood; in 1967 underwater equipment for Standard Telephones, plus most of the men who made them, went the same way. These supplemented a whole range of existing heavy engineering products - most introduced since the Tractor was abandoned - including the Clearing Power Presses (transferred from Elswick earlier), metal processing equipment, deck machinery - including deck cranes and steering gear - pulverising plant, electro-hydraulic equipment, pressure vessels, printing presses, newspaper presses, moulding machines, and many more.

The Seventies saw the Engineering Group within Vickers producing inadequate profits. A policy of vigorously rooting out ailing businesses and products was decided upon. Scotswood was seen as a particular problem. The cyclical nature of the Power Press business in particular and the lack of other 'standard' products, except the 'Paceco' cranes and the Standard Telephone Equipment, left the Works too vulnerable to fluctuations in jobbing engineering. In the early Seventies a decision was made to dispense with a number of large but unprofitable orders. Large scale redundancies took place.

Redundancies also took place elsewhere in the Engineering Group, particularly at Crabtree-Vickers in Leeds. During the years 1970 to 1976 the Engineering Group declared a total of 3,500 redundancies, of which 2,700 took place in the three years 1971, 1972 and 1973. At Elswick 'the Forge' was closed in 1969, soon to be followed by the Die Shop. In 1977 the Elswick Foundry, a constant loss maker, was sold, and later closed down.

Between 1939 and 1978 employment in Elswick and Scotswood dropped in stages from 18,500 to 2,662.

Employment Changes at Vickers Works, West Newcastle\*

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Vickers Elswick</u>	<u>Vickers Scotswood</u>	<u>Michell Bearings</u>	<u>Total</u>
1939	12,250	6,250	(Taken over 1968/9)	18,500
1963	5,700	1,300	-	7,000
1969	3,490	1,200	508	5,198
1970	3,612	1,156	485	5,253
1974	2,301	777	457	3,535
1976	2,134	800	520	3,454
1978	1,862	800	525	3,187

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\*Source: Benwell C.D.P. "Permanent Unemployment" 1978

In September 1979 Vickers Scotswood was closed down. In 1981 Vickers Elswick badly let down by the withdrawal of a large Iranian tank order, and still without any adequate civilian alternatives, followed suit and closed.

Vickers meanwhile, continues to prosper.

### Tress Engineering

Tress was a company started after the Second World War in the village of Newburn, about a mile up river from the Vickers Scotswood Works. In sharp contrast to Scotswood Tress only made two products, namely valves and guages for the petro-chemical industry.

In 1962 Tress Engineering was taken over by the American based Fairey Corporation, a multi-plant organisation with varied interests in aviation and engineering. In 1977 Fairey employed a total of 516,000 and controlled 20 subsidiaries in the U.K., plus 12 subsidiaries overseas. Two U.K. subsidiaries were on Tyneside, namely Tress Engineering in Newcastle and Fairey Stainless in Gateshead; Fairey Stainless employed in 1977 about 80 people and manufactured metal beer barrels.

By the early Seventies the Newcastle subsidiary was losing money and in 1972 a new managing director was brought in by the parent company, apparently with the express purpose of winding up the business. However, there was a change of mind, and although nearly one hundred men were made redundant the firm itself was given a temporary reprieve. From then on the business began to pick up and gradually more men were taken on. The Works employed 368 men and women in 1976, about 60 more than in 1974. By the first part of 1977 about 380 were employed. But the situation deteriorated again later in 1977 and in September of that year about 55 people lost their jobs. Around about the same time the parent company itself ran into serious financial difficulties mainly because of problems with its aircraft business in Belgium. Finally the Fairey Aviation and Engineering Group was forced to call in the Receiver. In January 1978 the British National Enterprise Board took over eight Fairey subsidiaries, including Tress Engineering, and formed them into Fairey Engineering Holdings. In June 1978 Fairey Engineering Holdings, itself wholly owned by the National Enterprise Board, decided to close down Tress Engineering on the grounds that it was an unviable proposition. 310 men and 20 women were made redundant.



### Engineering and The Tyneside Labour Market\*

In 1978 there were over 180,000 jobs in Newcastle, over 50% of which were filled by people travelling into the city from the local Tyneside catchment area. At the same time about a third of the economically active living in Newcastle travelled out of the city to their work.

Of those men living in the city in 1976, 2/3 of the economically active were manual workers, of which about 66% would be officially described as being in 'skilled' jobs - nearly a half of these 'skilled' had served an apprenticeship or had a similar training qualification. 21% of all economically active men in the city had an apprenticeship or similar training qualification compared to 13% of all men nationally. Newcastle, therefore, was characterised as having a large male manual workforce with an unusually high skill component.

38% of Newcastle's economically active men worked, in 1976, in manufacturing - slightly more than the 35% for Great Britain as a whole. The most important sectors within manufacturing for the city's men were mechanical engineering (employing 9% of all economically active male residents), shipbuilding (7%), and food, drink, tobacco (6%).

All the engineering industries and shipbuilding together employed 20% of Newcastle's economically active male residents in 1976.

Looking at male occupations (rather than sectors of industrial employment as above) an estimated 17% of employed men in Newcastle and 21% of employed men on Tyneside were in engineering occupations.

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\*Note:- Much of the information in this section derives from a Newcastle City Council Report<sup>4</sup> presented in 1978. The report says its statistics were derived from official government sources and a Tyne and Wear Household Survey carried out in 1976.

Occupations of Employed Males

(Source: Tyne and Wear Household Survey 1976)

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	<u>Newcastle</u>	<u>Tyneside*</u>
Metal Plate Workers and Riveters	1050	4800
Gas, Electric Welders	1100	4900
Metal Mechanics	1100	2500
Maintenance and Other Fitters	3000	12100
Plumbers, Gas Fitters	1050	3500
All Other Engineering Workers	<u>5150</u>	<u>18700</u>
<u>Engineering Workers</u>	12450	46500
 All Employed Males:	 71100	 221250
 Engineering Workers as % of		
All Employed Males:	17%	21%

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Engineering or engineering-related establishments would, of course, also employ a large number of ancillary trades such as electrical workers, joiners, carpenters, warehousemen, storekeepers, clerical workers and labourers.

In 1976, therefore, despite the fact that heavy engineering, as well as other traditional industries had by this time been in slow decline for many years, it remained the case that engineering and engineering-related industries on Tyneside were still very significant employers of men.

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\*Note: 'Tyneside' includes Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside.

The position, however, was not stable. Closure, run-down, and depression became increasingly prevalent as the Seventies progressed. The number of redundancies - particularly in the Northern Region - accelerated dramatically; and it was the traditional sector, especially engineering, which bore the brunt.

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Redundancies in the Northern Region

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Engineering</u>	<u>Engineering as % of All Northern Region Redundancies</u>
1977	22600	5300	23%
1978	19700	3700	19%
1979	14600	2700	18%
1980	36000	8300	23%
1981	29700*	7200	24%

Source: Manpower Services Commission:

"Regional Employment Market Intelligence  
Trends", Autumn 1981

\*First 9 months only

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Between mid-1979 and mid-1981 41000 jobs were lost in Tyne and Wear; almost all the jobs lost were male jobs in the manufacturing sector. According to a Tyne and Wear County Council report<sup>5</sup>, the decline was particularly severe in ship-building, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and the clothing industry.

If engineering was a dominant employer of men in the late Seventies all the signs were that it would cease to be so by the late Eighties. It was in such a context, then, of an engineering industry still prominent, but under extreme pressure, that the closures of Tress (1978) and Vickers Scotswood (1979) took place.

### Tyneside Employers

Throughout this thesis, but particularly in Chapter IV, reference will be made to specific Tyneside employers. In order to help the reader we propose to list and briefly describe the main activities of the companies mentioned most frequently. These were employers largely brought into the conversation by the respondents themselves.

Although such a list will not be exhaustive it will give some impression of the types and range of employments perceived by our respondents as possible work-places. Broadly speaking, the employers fell into three categories: Engineering Manufacturers; Non-Engineering Manufacturers; Non-Manufacturing Organisations. Although movement across all three categories was always a possibility, and in some work-histories did occur, it can be seen from the list that in 1978/9 there was still a sufficiently large number of engineering firms on Tyneside, together with a sufficiently large number of men skilled in engineering trades, to allow for a certain amount of market exclusivity to occur. Some men would tend to perceive themselves as engineers and move about largely within the confines of an engineering labour market.

### Firms Within the Engineering Manufacturing Labour Market 1978/9

1. Aveling Barford (West Newcastle): Earth-Moving Machinery
2. Baker-Perkins (Hebburn): Food Manufacturing Machinery, Foundry Machinery, etc.
3. Boyles Brothers (North Newcastle): Drilling Equipment
4. British Engines (West Newcastle): Precision Machining and Engine Re-Manufacturing
5. British Shipbuilders/Swan Hunters (East Newcastle, Wallsend, Hebburn, etc): Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering
6. Bushing Company (Hebburn): Electrical Equipment
7. C.A. Parsons (East Newcastle): Turbine Generator Manufacturers
8. Caterpillar Tractor Company (Birtley): Earth-Moving Equipment
9. Churchill Engineering (Blaydon): Machine Tool Precision Engineering
10. Clarke-Chapman (Blaydon and Gateshead): Marine and Off-Shore Machinery

11. Eimco (Gateshead): Mining and Drilling Equipment
12. George Blair (East Newcastle): Engineering and Steel Founding
13. Huwood (Gateshead): Mining Machinery
14. H.K. Porter (Ryton): Car and Commercial Vehicle Accessories
15. Ingersoll Rand (Gateshead): Pumps and Compressors
16. Liner Engineering (Gateshead): Earth Moving and Fork-Lift Truck Machinery
17. Pearsons Machine Tools (East Newcastle): Special Purpose Machining Engineers
18. Reyrolles and Reyrolle-Parsons (Gateshead and Hebburn): Heavy and Electrical Engineers
19. Rose-Forgrove (Gateshead): Packaging Machinery
20. Toolrite Ltd (Gateshead): Toolmakers, Precision Engineers
21. Thor Tools (North Shields): Power Tools Manufacturers
22. Tress Engineering (West Newcastle): Valves and Gauges
23. Vickers Crabtree (Gateshead): Printing Machinery
24. Vickers Elswick (West Newcastle): Heavy Engineering, Particularly Armaments
25. Vickers Michell Bearings (West Newcastle): Marine Equipment, Particularly Bearings
26. Vickers Scotswood (West Newcastle): Heavy Engineering

Manufacturing Firms Outside the Engineering Market Proper (although many firms would contain at least some Engineering jobs)

1. Anglo Great Lakes Corporation (West Newcastle): Artificial Graphite Manufacturers
2. Associated Lead Manufacturers (West Newcastle): Lead Products, Paint etc.
3. Bridon Fibres (Gateshead): Manufacturers of Industrial Fibres
4. Carricks (West Newcastle): Bakers
5. Delta Enfield Cables (Felling): Manufacturers of Electrical Cables
6. Ever Ready (West Newcastle): Batteries
7. Fairey Stainless (Gateshead): Metal Barrels
8. Galloway (Blaydon): Tool Distributors
9. George Angus (WallSEND): Fluid Sealing Products
10. Glass Tubes and Components (West Newcastle): Glass Manufacturers
11. Lamp Metals (Gateshead): Tungsten and Lead Wire Manufacturers
12. Levine (West Newcastle): Garments Manufacturers

13. Osram Lamps (Gateshead): Lamp Manufacturers
14. Proctor and Gamble (North Newcastle): Soaps, oils, toilet preparations etc.
15. Rowntree-Mackintosh (North-West Newcastle): Confectionery
16. Scottish and Newcastle Breweries (Central Newcastle): Brewers
17. Tarmac Ltd (Gateshead): Construction
18. Thomas De La Rue (Gateshead): Manufacturers of Banknotes etc
19. Winthrop Laboratories (West Newcastle): Pharmaceuticals

#### Non-Manufacturing Employers

1. British Gas
2. British Telecom
3. 'Power Stations'
4. Newcastle Council

All the above named employers, in all three categories, employed at least 50 people. Smaller companies were normally referred to as 'a small engineering company' or 'a small building firm' etc.

The biggest engineering manufacturers were companies in the Northern Engineering Industries group - which included in particular C.A. Parsons, Clarke Chapman, Bushing and Reyrolles - British Shipbuilders, Vickers and Caterpillar. All of these companies employed over 1000 men on Tyneside; N.E.I. employed over 10000.

In the non-engineering manufacturing sector major employers included Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, Proctor and Gamble, and Rowntree-Mackintosh.

In 1979 over half of Newcastle's manufacturing jobs were in four employments: Vickers, British Shipbuilders, N.E.I. Parsons and Scottish and Newcastle Breweries.

Outside of manufacturing Newcastle City Council was a particularly big employer.

### The Samples

83 men\* agreed to talk about their work lives, their post redundancy experiences, and their hopes and expectations for the future. These were mostly manual workers, but a small number of foremen, storemen, and one sub-contract manager were included. All conversations were tape recorded. No attempt was made to rigidly structure the interviews along pre-set paths, but care was taken to ensure conversations included themes of interest. Within these broad limits respondents were free to express themselves.

Some respondents from Tress were initially contacted by the researcher when he was employed by Newcastle City Council as an interviewer on a study of redundancy in West Newcastle. Further numbers of Tress respondents were contacted by an ad hoc 'snowball' process whereby interviewees suggested other people likely to agree to be interviewed. Scotswood respondents were contacted by the same process, an original nucleus of possible interviewees having been suggested by a prominent local trade union figure who previously worked at the plant.

### Scotswood

About 750 men and women lost their jobs from Scotswood throughout the year of 1979. Officially, the plant closed in September 1979, but in practice people were paid off in stages (largely according to specialisation) from April to November. Of the 750, about 100 were middle and senior management personnel; of the remaining 650, about 95% were males. Of these we interviewed 47.

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\*Note: In some cases wives were included in interviews. Also a few men were interviewed without the use of a tape-recorder; however, these 'interviews' were very limited in extent and they have not been counted in the general body of this report. Where the partial interviews are used they are specifically identified.

A Newcastle Council sponsored report, called 'Vickers Scotswood Economic Audit', was published immediately prior to closure. It described the skill composition of the non-managerial workforce. Leaving aside their categories of 'Clerical' and 'Technical' (which types are not included in our sample), and reworking the figures accordingly, the two samples can be compared:-

<u>Scotswood Audit</u>			<u>Our Sample</u>		
Skilled Manual	63%	(260)	Skilled Manual	58%	(27)
Semi-Skilled Manual	4%	(57)	Semi-Skilled Manual	12%	(6)
Ancillary Workers	15%	(63)	Ancillary Workers	20%	(10)
& Labourers			& Labourers		
Foremen	8%	(32)	Foremen	9%	(4)
	<hr/>	<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
	100%	(412)*		100%	(47)

In the above table our sample has been categorised according to the skill definitions used by Newcastle City Council, whereby the decision or not to identify a person as 'skilled' depended on whether such a job would normally be done by a time-served man. 3 men have been included within our 'skilled' category however who were not time-served; they were all tool-grinders who had been at Scotswood many years doing technically difficult work, and regarded themselves and were regarded by others as of a status equivalent to time-served tradesmen.

It can be seen that our sample is broadly representative of the shop-floor skill distribution at Scotswood.

The feature which stands out amongst the Scotswood manual workers is the high proportion of skilled tradesmen, men who had normally served a full apprenticeship. Note also that many of the semi-skilled men

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\*Note: A sample from a total non-managerial workforce of 650



were machine workers who may have been capable of working a variety of machines and who could be highly accomplished at their 'trade'. The general impression of the Scotswood workforce, therefore, is of one incorporating a high level of technical proficiency. Many of the jobs were of a 'one-off' nature for which it was necessary to employ workers with a broad level of engineering knowledge and expertise. The jobs themselves were often very big, allowing men to clamber around and over them.

### TRESS

330 men and women lost their jobs from Tress. In July 1979, one year after the closure, Newcastle City Council carried out a survey of the company's redundant manual workers. With a response rate of 95%, it was found that "The respondents divide into three groups which were roughly equal in size. These groups consist of 62 machine setter operators (32%), mainly trained by Tress, other companies or a government skill centre, 62 tradesmen (32%), 80% of whom were apprentice trained, and 69 non-skilled men (36%), covering a wide range of ancillary and non-skilled production jobs".<sup>7</sup>

In our sample of 36 were 14 machine setter operators (39%), mostly non-time served, 8 tradesmen (22%), all time-served, and 14 non-skilled men (39%). Tradesmen, therefore, are somewhat under-represented, whilst the other two skill groups are slightly over-represented.

The general impression of the Tress workforce is of one incorporating a much lower level of technical proficiency than that of Scotswood. Less than a third of the manual workers at Tress surveyed by the Council (and only 22% of our sample) were time-served tradesmen and the semi-skilled machine operators were neither proficient on a wide range of machines nor used to working on a wide range of products. Moreover, some of the tradesmen, especially the fitters, were only used to working on a very narrow range of activities.

There was a greater tendency for the work on the shop floor at Tress to involve repetitive activities. There was a very narrow product range of valves and gauges and work on the various cutting, shaping

and grinding machines and in the fitting bay often involved lengthy batch-work. Whereas the jobs at Scotswood were often very big and usually time consuming, at Tress the jobs were relatively small and produced in relatively short cycles.

If the sizes of jobs and machinery placed Scotswood firmly in the 'heavy engineering' sector then, relatively speaking, Tress was firmly in 'light engineering'.

### AGE

According to the 'Scotswood Audit', Scotswood employees "were found to be older than workers in the Newcastle area generally". The report said that "Whilst in Newcastle as a whole 38% of the economically active male residents are over 45 years, 46% of the workforce at Scotswood is over 50 years old". In our sample of 47 - which did not include Clerical and Technical Workers - older men were even more represented with 51%.

For Tress also Newcastle Council found<sup>8</sup> "The Tress workers are slightly older than employed manual workers in the City: just over 40% were over 50 (compared to almost 30% in the city)." In our sample older men were again a little over represented with 47% over 50.

<u>Scotswood Audit</u>	<u>Our Sample: Scotswood</u>	<u>Our Sample: Tress</u>
Under 30 years: 27%	5%	8%
30 - 39 : 18%	36%	28%
40 - 49 : 18%	8%	17%
50 - 59 : 36%	34%	33%
60 - 65 : 10%	17%	14%
<hr/> 100% (534)*	<hr/> 100% (47)	<hr/> 100% (36)

At Scotswood it was the high representation of men over 50 amongst the skilled that was particularly influential in giving a high representation of the old in our Scotswood sample. At Tress, in contrast, it appears to be the high representation of the old amongst the non-skilled which was the main influence.

## RESIDENCE

### Scotswood

The 'Scotswood Audit' found that 35% of the Vickers Scotswood workforce surveyed (including Clerical and Technical Workers) lived in the west end of Newcastle (specified as Scotswood, Newburn, Benwell, Elswick and Denton). In our sample (excluding Clerical and Technical Workers) 44% lived there. Another 32% lived equally close south of the river (outside Newcastle) in Blaydon and Winlaton. Another 9% lived in neighbouring areas.

### Tress

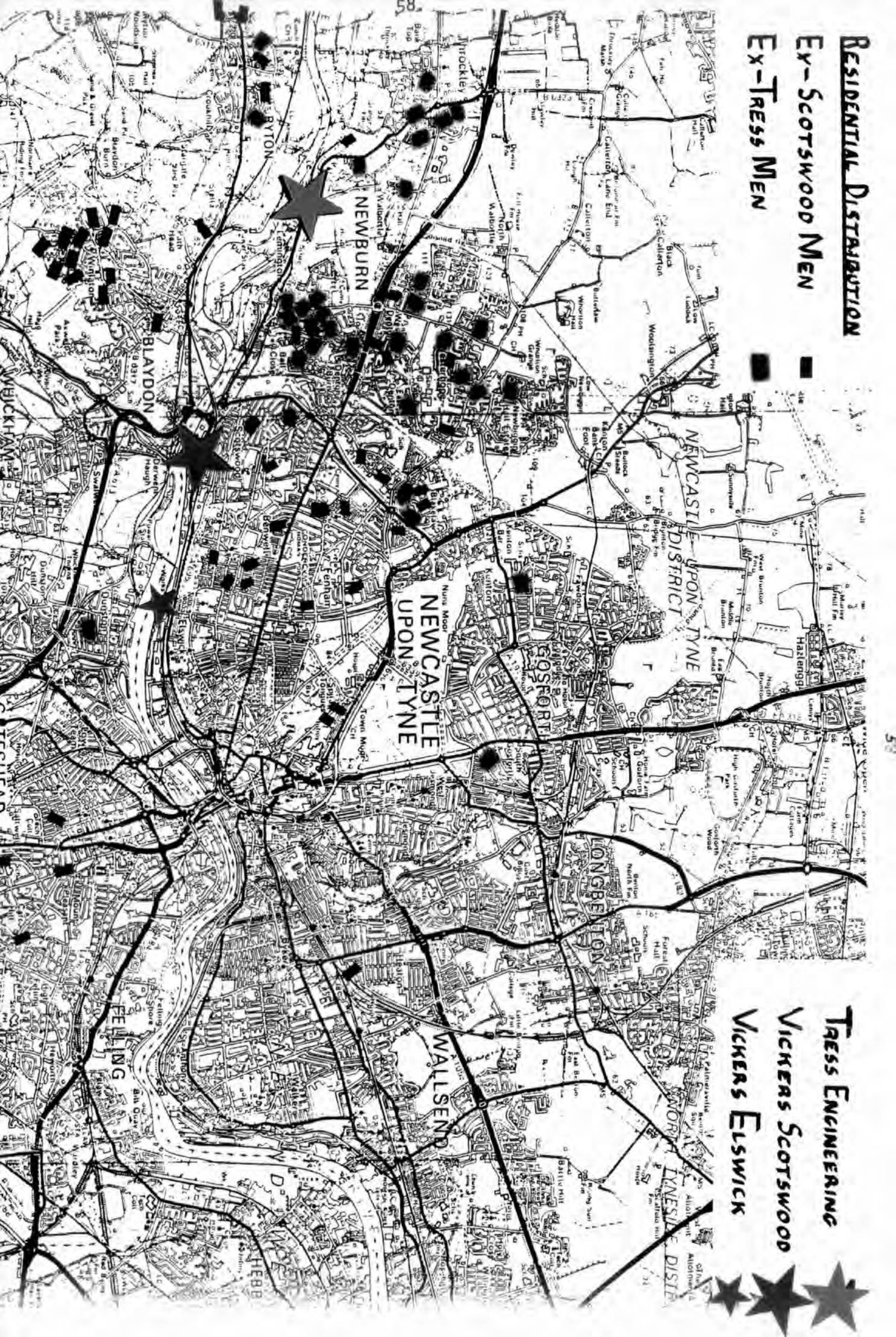
In the case of Tress 83% of our sample lived in the west end of Newcastle (specified as Scotswood, Newburn, Benwell, Elswick and Denton).

## THE INTERVIEWS

The main interviews were carried out over the period February of 1980 to April of 1981, with the Tress men being mainly questioned in the earlier stages and the Scotswood men in the latter. As can be seen from the graphs, it was in June 1980 - two years after the Tress closure and about a year after Scotswood shut - that the unemployment figures began to soar - from a base that by 'normal' post-war standards was extremely high. Between April 1979 and April 1981 unemployment in Great Britain rose by 88% - from 1,341,000 to 2,525,000. Redundancies in 1980, both throughout the country and locally, were double those of the previous year; and 1981 continued the trend. A contemporary Newcastle Council report estimated that in September 1981 there were 22,500 people without work in Newcastle, an increase, it said, of 83% since March 1979.

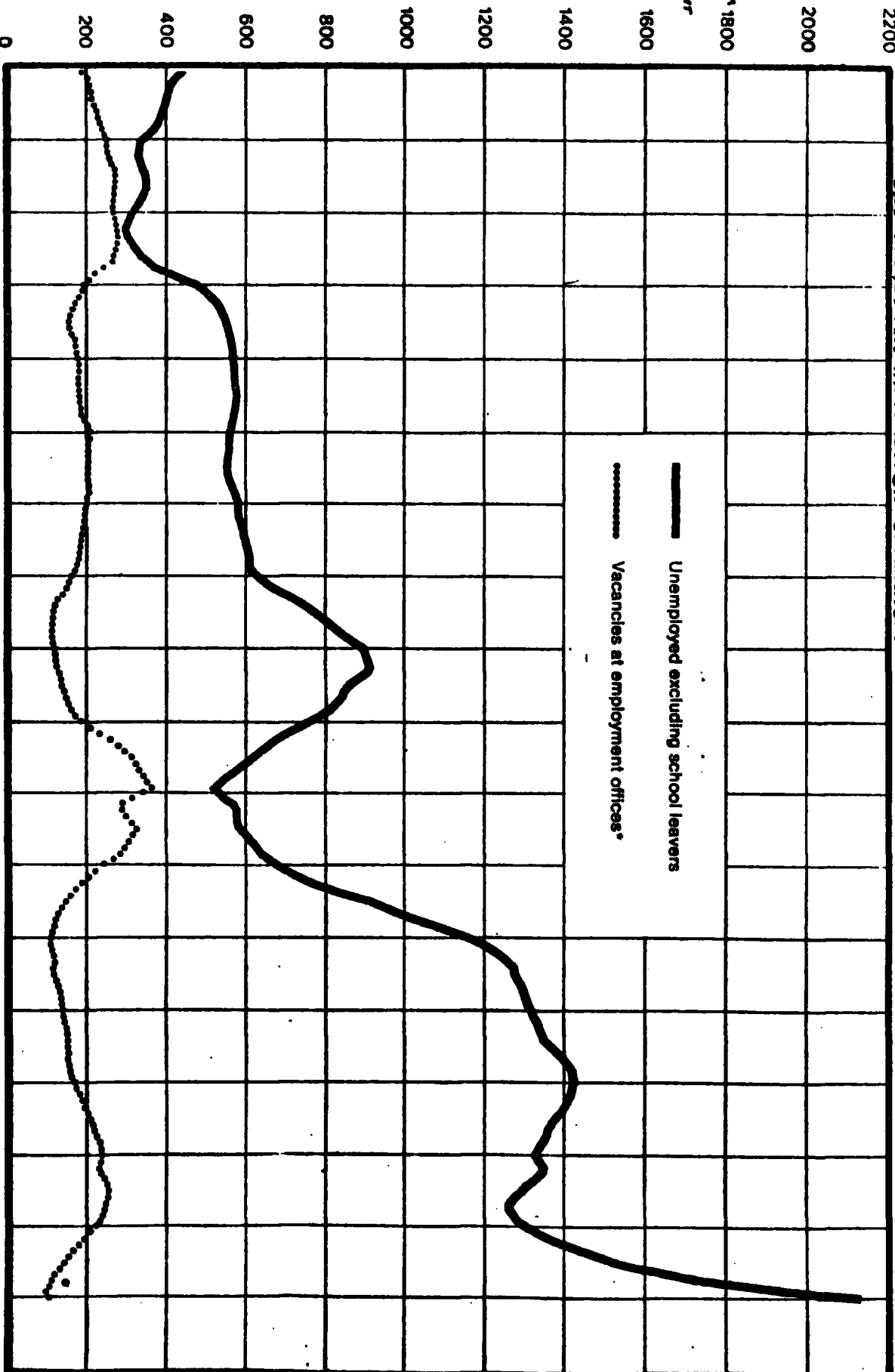
In June 1981 the samples were followed up and brief interviews were held to ascertain any changes in status.

**RESIDENTIAL DISTRACTION**  
**Ex-Scotswood Men**  
**Ex-Tress Men**



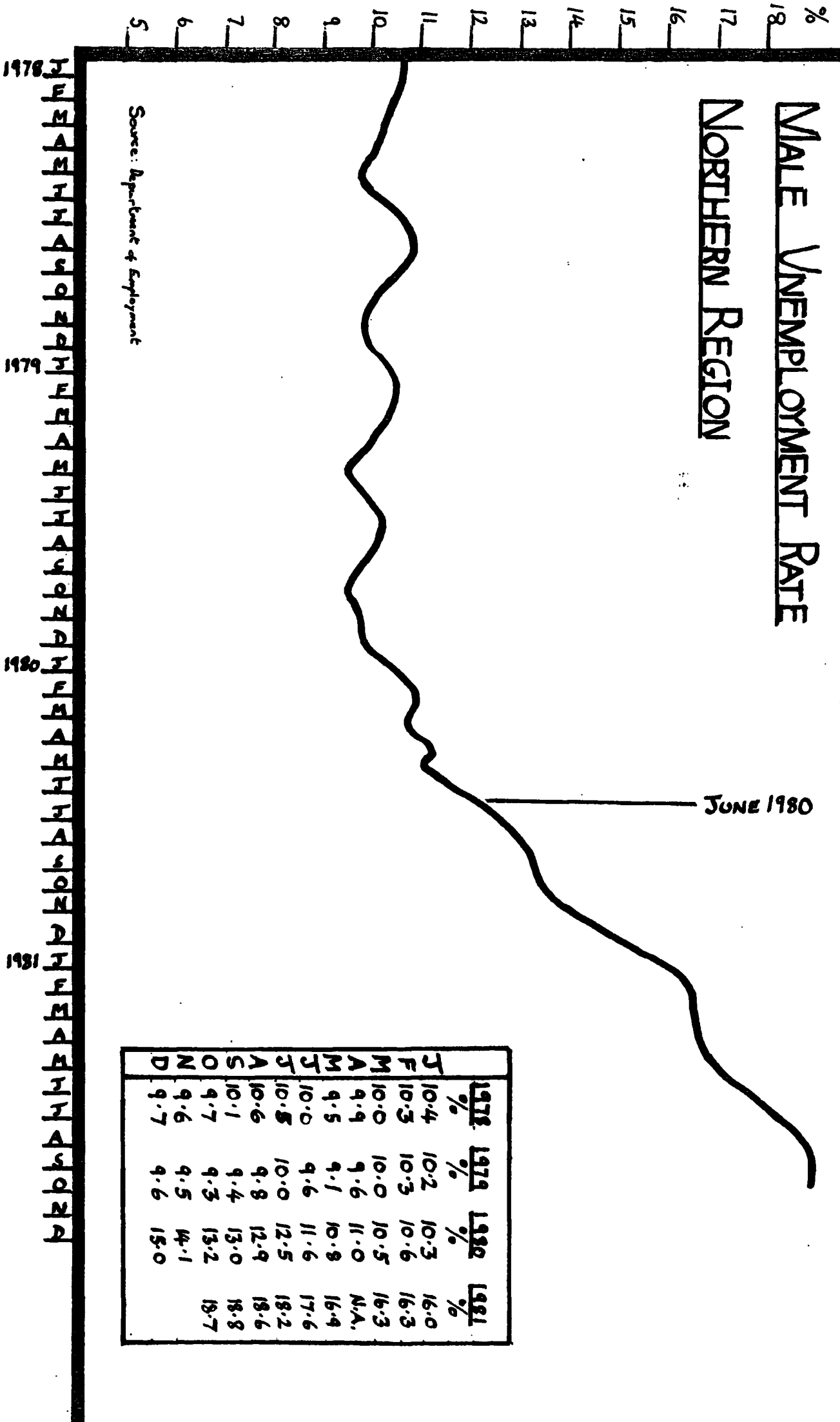
**TRESS ENGINEERING**  
**VICKERS SCOTSWOOD**  
**VICKERS ELSWICK**





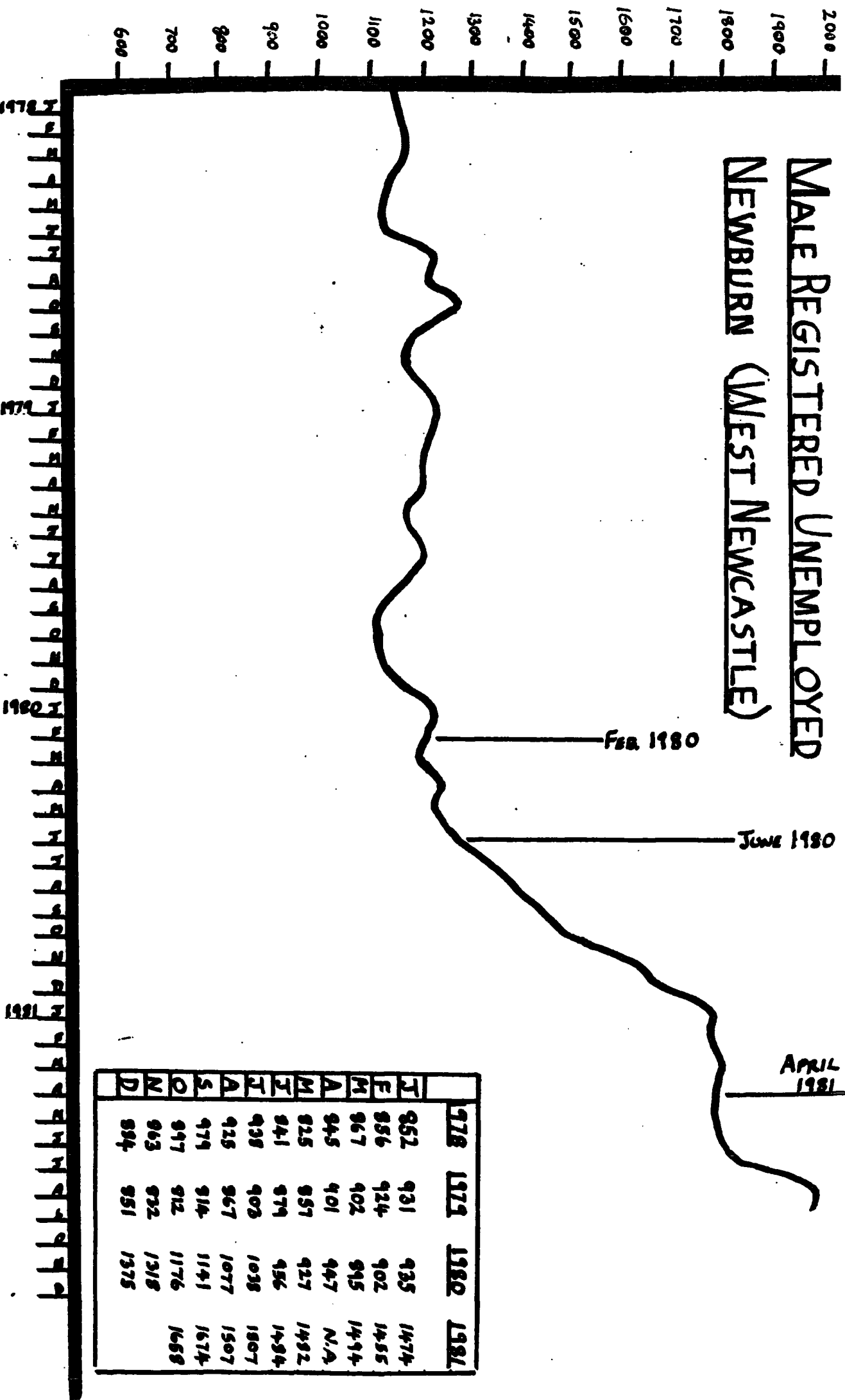
Vacancies at employment offices are only about a third of total vacancies

# MALE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE NORTHERN REGION



	1978	1979	1980	1981
J	10.4	10.2	10.3	16.0
F	10.3	10.3	10.6	16.3
M	10.0	10.0	10.5	16.3
A	9.9	9.6	11.0	N.A.
M	9.5	9.1	10.8	16.4
J	10.0	9.6	11.6	17.6
J	10.5	10.0	12.5	18.2
A	10.6	9.8	12.9	18.6
S	10.1	9.4	13.0	18.8
O	9.7	9.3	13.2	19.7
N	9.6	9.5	14.1	
D	9.7	9.6	15.0	

# MALE REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED NEWBURN (WEST NEWCASTLE)



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## CHAPTER 1V

Attractions and Repulsions

An object of the research was to identify factors influential in determining a person's decision to stay with, change, or choose a particular employment. In so far as these factors exist they can be thought of as structuring individuals along certain paths and subdividing the labour market into sub-sections. In the following pages we set out in tabular form those aspects of Scotswood and Tress that people liked and disliked, aspects which we may assume were instrumental in attracting or repelling people to or from particular places of work. As well as listing those features which people said they liked or not about the two factories from which they were made redundant, we also add for comparative purposes comments pertaining to any post-redundancy employment; such comparisons further highlight people's preferences.

The main purpose of the tables is to provide a general indication of the types of factors involved. It is not intended to make precise statistical calculations of differences in response between the two plants and within them; the nature of the method of eliciting information and the size of the samples does not allow for safe precise quantitative comparison. Where large inter and intra-plant differences are clear and obvious, however, we may take such indications as being if not definitive at least suggestive.

A simple count of those aspects mentioned reveals the following:

ASPECTS THAT WERE LIKED ABOUT TRESS/SCOTSWOOD

	<u>TRESS</u> N=36	<u>SCOTSWOOD</u> N=47
Respondents who either said they liked Tress/Scotswood because the work was <u>Job</u> interesting or/and because there was <u>Satisfaction</u> a variety of work.	5 (14%)	31 (66%)
Respondents who said they liked Tress/Scotswood because of the friendly, <u>Friendliness</u> family, or homely atmosphere.	13 (36%)	29 (62%)
Respondents who indicated they liked <u>Security</u> the security Tress/Scotswood offered.	4 (11%)	14 (30%)
Respondents who mentioned they liked Tress/Scotswood because it was 'easy' <u>Local</u> to get to', 'local', or 'close to home'.	17 (47%)	15 (32%)
Respondents who appreciated the quality of supervision (or lack of it) and/or the relations between management and the work-force. <u>Management</u>	16 (44%)	13 (28%)
Respondents who appreciated the fact that the work at Tress/Scotswood was easy or light. <u>Easy/Light</u>	8 (22%)	0
Respondents who mentioned that the pay at Tress/Scotswood was <u>Pay</u> 'good', 'very good', or 'better than average'.	(1) 16 (44%) (3) 4 (11%)	(1) 10 (21%) (2) 9 (19%) (3) 2 (4%)

(1) = Unqualified Evaluation

(2) = 'good pay' qualified by 'used to be good'

(3) = 'good pay' qualified by 'used to be poor'

ASPECTS THAT WERE DISLIKED ABOUT TRESS/SCOTSWOOD

		<u>TRESS</u> N=36	<u>SCOTSWOOD</u> N=47
Respondents who voiced criticisms of piecework or advantages of its absence at Tress/Scotswood.	<u>Piecework</u>	4 (11%)	*13 (28%)
Respondents who mentioned they did not like working night-shift.	<u>Night-Shift</u>	2 (5%)	11 (23%)
Respondents who mentioned a disliking for environmental working conditions, including buildings, dirt, smell, heat etc.	<u>Working Conditions</u>	5 (14%)	11 (23%)
Respondents who mentioned an awareness of insecurity - whether in Tress/Scotswood in particular or in engineering in general.	<u>Insecurity</u>	1 (3%)	9 (19%)
Respondents who disliked 'class' distinctions giving rise to separate canteen facilities, differing finishing times etc. for staff and shop-floor workers.	<u>Unfair Privileges</u>	0	7 (15%)
Respondents who said they felt they were 'just a number' in Tress/Scotswood.	<u>Just a Number</u>	1 (3%)	4 (8%)
Respondents who found the work boring, monotonous, uninteresting etc.	<u>Job Dis-satisfaction</u>	10 (28%)	3 (6%)
Respondents who felt there were 'too many managers', or 'there was too much supervision', or that management in general was poor.	<u>Management</u>	5 (14%)	2 (4%)

Respondents who thought the pay  
was 'not good', 'not fantastic',  
'poor', 'worse than average' etc.

Pay

(1)	1	(3%)	(1)	15	(32%)
			(2)	9	(19%)
			(3)	2	(4%)
			(4)	2	(4%)

(1) = Unqualified Evaluation

(2) = 'poor pay' qualified by 'used to be good'

(3) = 'poor pay' qualified by 'used to be average'

(4) = 'good pay' qualified by 'used to be poor'

\* At Scotswood men voiced reservations about the system of payment, with 13 (28%) mentioning criticisms of the piecework system operating prior to the mid '60s, and 10 (21%) pointing out drawbacks of the flat rate plus shop floor bonus that replaced piecework. Some of these two groups were the same people who criticised both systems.

In brief, then, those aspects most liked and disliked were, in order of times mentioned:

### TRESS

Liked: Pay\*, Local, Relations with Management, Friendliness, Easy or Light Work, Job Interest, Security.

Disliked: Monotonous or Uninteresting Work, Environmental Working Conditions, Unsatisfactory Management, Piecework.

### SCOTSWOOD

Liked: Job Interest, Friendliness, Local, Security, Relations with Management, Pay\*.

Disliked: Poor Pay\*, Piecework, Night-Shift, Environmental Working Conditions, Flat Rate Bonus System, Insecurity, Unfair Privileges.

\* Pay in Recent Years.

Features which stand out are:

1. The high appreciation at Tress of high pay and a dislike by some of monotonous or uninteresting work, in contradiction to a high appreciation of interesting work at Scotswood but a feeling by many that in later years at least pay was relatively low.
2. The importance of friendly atmosphere, local situation, and reasonable relations with management at both places.
3. The significance of 'security' or 'insecurity' at Scotswood where 30% mentioned the former and 19% the latter.

These features will be explored in greater depth in later chapters.

The tables overleaf are arranged in 5 columns. Going from left to right, Column '1' describes a person's name, age, and years of service at Scotswood or Tress; in the case of 'Scotswood' respondents' years of service at other Vickers plants are mentioned, as are occasions of management invoked transfer between company plants. Columns '2' and '3' describe aspects that were respectively 'liked' or 'dis-liked' about Tress or Scotswood; in column '2' phrases that negatively qualify what was liked are underlined; in column '3' phrases that positively qualify what was dis-liked are underlined. Column '4' describes attitudes towards experience of post-redundancy employment; where 'unemployed' alone appears the respondent has had no jobs between redundancy and interview. In column '4' negative attitudes alone are underlined. Column '5' gives space for additional comments the respondents made; they throw further light on work attitudes and expectations.

VICKERS SCOTSMOOD

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
G. Browning Age: 51 Job: Crane driver/ Ancillary Worker Service: 23 years (+ 1 year at Elswick - transferred to Scotswood)	Happy at Scotswood/very friendly place/good money/variety of jobs.	When they abandoned piece work (in mid-60s) people didn't work hard enough and some were 'carrying' others/night-shift.	Unemployed	Never tempted to leave Scotswood/ used to "look forward going in on Sundays at Vickers".
B. Robson Age: 51 Job: Foreman-Plater Service: 28 years In 4 periods - last period 13 years (+2 years at Elswick - transferred from Scotswood, then trans- ferred back to Scotswood for final period) (+ 2 years at Vickers Naval Yard - transferred from second period at Scotswood)	Happy at Scotswood/knew everybody/could make good money when they were on piecework (before mid 60s) 'Top of the pay league in the North East' until they abandoned piecework, and then it <u>slowly went down hill</u> / interesting work - good variety of jobs/men were proud to work there/good shop-floor atmosphere/ Prospect of redundancy pay.	After piecework was dropped 'the pay was behind a lot of places - <u>'but it wasn't bad'</u> / a lot of other places paid foremen more/'Just a number'.	Unemployed	Would have stayed at Scotswood until retirement.
J. Lyle Age: 32 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: 13 years (+ 1 year at Elswick)	Relaxed pace of work/ established on the shop floor/felt secure - 'Job for life/left to get on with the job/opportunities for promotion/complicated interesting work.	Pay dropped behind other factories in later years/ distance to travel.	'Clarke-Chapmans' Engineering Job: Horizontal Borer  Slightly better pay than Scotswood - but constant <u>pressure to work harder</u>	Given the choice, would return to Scotswood/would have stayed at Scotswood because he was established and due for prom-



Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
J. Timpson Age: 57 Job: Inspector Service: 39 years (2 periods: 2nd period: 32 years)	Quite content at Scotswood/close to get to/high quality work/ followed the whole job through - didn't get bored.	Poorly paid until the 60s/don't like being indoors all the time/ 'just a number'/ antiquated piecework system up to 60s - caused a lot of argument.	Unemployed  than at Scotswood/Unfair piecework system/Friend- lier place than Scotswood because local friends work there/Scruffy, dirty & dark/'starting back at the bottom again'/future prospects/some interesting jobs - but also some mundane repetitive jobs/ easier to get to, closer to home/weak union.	otion/Clarkes usually thought of as 'another job for life' firm - but he doesn't feel secure about the future.  Never dreamt that Scotswood would close down - expected to work there until retirement.
J. Billingham Age: 45 Job: Turner Service: 11 years (+ 9 years at Elswick - transferred with S.T.C. job to Scotswood in 1968).	Job satisfaction from doing quality work/ preferred the guaranteed flat rate pay of Scotswood to the piecework system of Elswick - because on the flat rate it was like a regular upstanding wage and you could plan ahead, whereas on piecework your pay fluctuated/good men to work with/'satisfied with the pay'.	Same routine day-in day -out - same people, same types of jobs, same type of work, for 11 years.	'Day Centre' Job: Porter  Like the job/close to home home/less responsibility than at Scotswood/more interesting than Scotswood/ meet different people/ lower paid than Scotswood /a worthwhile job/cleaner environment.	'Wouldn't go back to engineering as long as I've got this job, for all that I would be getting more money'/Preferred a 'settled' job at Scotswood to jumping about chasing money.

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
A. Mason Age: 54 Job: Turner Service: 11 years (+ 26 years at Elswick - transferred with S.T.C. job to Scotswood in 1968).	Quite happy at Scotswood/ men got on well together/ content 'just knowing it was there'/constant day/ shift/satisfaction at turning out a well finished product.	Didn't like the Scotswood collective bonus system - rather have something based on the individual/ 'not well paid compared to other engineering works'.	'T. Pearsons Engineering' Job: Turner Insecure/a bit better paid than Scotswood - but still doesn't consider it to be 'good money' and moreover you have to work hard to earn it/not up to the same standard of work as at Scotswood - and he likes to turn out a good job/constant day-shift.	When at Scotswood would never have dreamt of going elsewhere/if he's made redundant again from his current job he's going to try and get out of insecure engineering industry, because he wants 'settled' steady employment.
P. Williams Age: 43 Job: Conveyor/ Marker-Off Service: 26 years	Family atmosphere/lax management discipline/ interesting work/enjoyed going to work/safe place to work.	'The money wasn't the best in the world'.	Unemployed	Considered leaving when Scotswood had a 'down' period - but the money else- where wasn't that much better and you would have to work harder/security at Scotswood increased with years of service.

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
S. Davies Age: 33 Job: Tool-Grinder Service: 2 years (+ 9 years at Elswick)	No piecework/had the status of a good engineer/job satisfaction /'very happy there'.	Men on shop floor wary of staff because they made them feel insecure/ bad canteen facilities.	'Commercial Plastics' Job: Machine Attendant 'It's different because it doesn't have 'us' and and 'them' situation'/ less pressure/less supervision/more workbreaks/ very good canteen facilities/very good pay at first - 'but now there's not the work and the pay is not all that good for the shifts and the travelling'/no job interest/hates working the shifts/long way to travel.	Glad to get out of Engineering because of insecurity - but doesn't like current cabbage job.
G. Brown Age: 59 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: 40 years	Felt secure at Vickers "I never thought that Vickers would close because it would do anything"/good quality work/ appreciated for your work/	Night shift/always less paid than other places - particularly in the South.	'Clarke-Chapmans Engineers' Job: Horizontal Borer Easier job/about the same pay as Scotswood - but you have to work harder/work not up to same standards as at Scotswood/bad organisation of work/shortage of tools/Doesn't like the piecework payment system/ less friendly than Scotswood - because of piecework.	Expected to be at Scotswood until retirement/after the closure would have preferred a job with less responsibility but ended up back on a responsible 'Boring' job.
P. Jackson Age: 34 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: 15 years (3 periods - last period 2 years).	Nobody on your back - easy-going/enjoyed working there.	Very insecure/nightshift.	'Post Office' Job: Postman Got security now/easy to get to/enjoy the job of Postman/Worse paid than Scotswood.	Liked the job at Scotswood; it was mainly the insecurity that wasn't liked.

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
N. White Age: 33 Job: Jig Borer Service: 11 years (+ 7 years at Elswick on 'tank work' - transferred to Scotswood).	Quite happy and content at Scotswood until the later years when wages were not very good/wages were good at first but fell back to near the bottom by the end/enjoyed the work/good men to work with/men and management prepared to work together/ good machines and tools.	Nightshift/poor wages in later years/insecurity especially in later years.	Small engineering co. Job: Horizontal Borer 'Just a job/not happy/ poor planning - always rushing to meet deadlines /shortages of tools/old machinery/rougher work than at Scotswood/pay a lot better than Scotswood but still a long way behind other places/worse relations between men and management/insecure future/ constant dayshift/good men to work with - good social activities.	After the closure was sick of factory insecurity, and tried for a 'security job'/ not surprised that some people have left engineering for jobs as postmen, buses 'because they're more secure'/pay is a lot better at current job but would still prefer to work at Scots- wood because he preferred the type of work/quite happy at Scotswood and never considered that the place might shut down.
T. Clarke Age: 47 Job: Floor Borer Service: 41 years	Everybody worked in harmony - but the atmosphere changed towards the finish/ used to be one of the highest paid places - 'But it was dragged down/Security - a steady job that should have las- ted until retirement/every body was friendly/plenty of tools/work was 'quite interesting at times'.	Didn't like having to climb up high for some jobs/in the latter years things were unsettled/ didn't like piecework because some people got easier paying jobs than others - but after piece- work was abolished and there was a guaranteed flat-rate some people were 'carrying' others.	Small engineering co. Job: Horizontal Borer It's a job/Very cold in winter/worse paid than Scotswood/old machines/dirty place/ shortage of tools/ 'the work itself is alright'.	When he's finished at his current job he would like to move out of engin- eering and get 'A steady decent labouring job' - because it hasn't got the responsib- ility, but it must have decent wage'.

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
R. Davidson Age: 52 Job: Foreman Filter Service: 47 years	Scotswood was a 'good company'/working for Scotswood was 'his life' /good relations between men, management and unions - everybody worked together/not too regimented/the company took care of you/Scotswood 'always well up the ladder' in the North East for paying good money - but less than places in <u>the Midlands and South</u> proud to work in Scotswood/ gave you a good engineering education/interested in the job.	The changeover from piecework to a guaranteed flat rate in the mid 60s reduced incentive and reduced production.	Unemployed	Never thought of leaving Scotswood.
D. Haign Age: 50 Job: Tool-maker Service: 28 years (5 periods; last period lasted 16 years).	Liked working at Scotswood - content/ happy atmosphere - easy going - could talk to both management and workmates/knew everybody there/glad when piecework was abandoned - prefers a guaranteed standard wage & no arguments/ feeling of freedom from close supervision and regulation/security - a 'job for life'/close to home.	Low pay - although almost continuous overtime until the last 6 years or so made the pay seem better than it 'really' was/too many managers in proportion to producers/stuck indoors all the time/likes to turn out a good job, but didn't get any recognition for the quality of the work at Scotswood.	Two jobs since Scotswood: Current job: 'Michell Bearings' Job: Tool-maker Close to home/no close supervision/pay a little bit better than Scotswood/ artificial light hurts the eyes/the management is OK at Michells, but Scotswood was a happier place to work/ no piecework - has the time to do the job properly/ stuck indoors all the time/ praise and recognition for turning out quality work.	Vickers used to be thought of as a firm offering 'a job for life'; the security of the job was one of the main reasons why people stayed there so long/ would definitely take a job out of engineering providing the money was decent, because engineering is no longer secure.

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
<p>R. Hughes Age: 31 Job: Tool-room fitter Service: 1 year</p>	<p>Good work-mates/a good lot of gear - <u>but some of the machines were old/ interesting work.</u></p>	<p>Insecure - as in engineering in general too many managers/ separate canteen facilities for staff and shop-floor workers - made to feel a second- class citizen/nightshift.</p>	<p>Previous job: 'Boyles Engineering': Tool-maker 'not bad paying'/too small a place - felt closed in - <u>somebody watching you all the time/a distance to travel/left for Michells.</u></p> <p>3 jobs since Scotswood: Current job: 'Post Office Telecom' Job: Fitter Upstanding wage/secure job with a future/high expect- ations of promotion/easy job intelligence wise/ <u>a lot less interesting than engineering/more relaxing than engineering/ promotion according to qualifications and length of service - no favouritism/ close to home/worse paid than Scotswood and engineer- ing generally/meeting different people is inter- esting/less comradeship in the Post Office/constant dayshift.</u></p> <p>Second Job: 'Parsons Engineering' Job: Tool-room fitter 'Terrible place to work'/ <u>bad first line management/ long way to travel/lot of strikes - not enough work/ better paid than Telecom -</u></p>	<p>The current job is very good but he would go back into the trade if he could get the same same level of security he's got now because the tool-fitting job is more interesting.</p>

Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
T. Diamond Age: 34 Job: Boilermaker/ marker-off Service: 18 years	Quite happy at Scotswood/ prospect of redundancy money with years of service/close to home/ good technical back-up staff: draughtsmen etc./ Vickers had a good name and they gave you a good apprenticeship/free work clothes.	Poor pay.	'T. Pearsons' Job: Boilermaker/ plater/marker-off Pay middling for the area but a lot better pay than Scotswood - but you have to work a bit harder/ expect to soon be promoted to Inspector/much further to travel than Scotswood/ its a piecework system and and you don't get paid for in between jobs 'waiting time'/bad technical staff/ too much individual responsibility for jobs/antiquated methods.	Seriously considered a job in the Post Office after the Scotswood closure because he gets 'sick of factory life' - being stuck indoors all day, seeing the same people doing the same things day after day. In a Post Office job you would get about and meet different people. Took current job in preference to Post Office offer because it is better paid & he has a family to bring up/wouldn't have left Scotswood for P.O. because his years of service tied him.

Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
C. Hughes Age: 33 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: 17 years	Having served your time at Vickers impresses employers/variety of jobs/ close to home/not a lot of conflict - no strikes until near the end/ "Proper engineering place".	Wage 'not fantastic' and 'lowest paid on the Tyne at the finish'/old buildings/stuck on the one 'boring' machine in the one shop/not much hope of promotion.	Unemployed: one job since Scotswood at 'Elmco Eng'. Preferred Scotswood because it was a 'proper engineering place'--rougner work at Elmco, little quality/ no inspection/got more repetitive stuff at Elmco, which was boring/ Elmco less friendly than Scotswood 'because everybody at Elmco was just interested in making money'/a distance to travel, which was costly/ a lot better pay than Scotswood - made redundant (last-in, first-out).	Fed up with the engineering trade and wanted to do something different - but got another job in engineering.
B. Williams Age: 43 Job: Tool Grinder Service: 12 years (2 periods), (plus 6 years at Elswick in the Die Shop - Redundant)	Friendly place.	Sickened by separate facilities and treatment of staff and men/ insecurity - in engineering in general.	Gateshead Swimming Baths Job: Attendant/Odd-job-man Better job/steadier secure job - <u>but less paid</u> : "I wouldn't dream of going back into engineering".	Made redundant 3 times from Vickers - twice Scotswood, once from Elswick.
S. White Age: 27 Job: Fitter Service: 10 years	Good pay at first - but then dropped right down/good apprentice training facilities/very little night-shift.	Terrible environmental working conditions/old equipment/'Us and 'Them' - separate canteens etc.	Unemployed	Was considering leaving Scotswood before the closure/ glad now to be out of a factory and wouldn't like to go back into one.



Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
T. Henderson Age: 36 Job: Driller Service: 9 years	'Great atmosphere and great set of lads to work with'/'interesting with a lot of variety in the work' /easy place to get to/moved around the factory into different shops.	'Dirty and a bit run down'.	Unemployed	'The longest I've stuck a job - Scotswood.'
K. Bryant Age: 54 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: 36 years	Family atmosphere - everybody knew each other/ interesting work/well off for equipment/free working clothes - boots, boiler suits etc/guaranteed wage/ regular amounts of work and plenty of overtime/ close to home.	Night-shift/not very high paying - used to be 'top of the league', but it dropped gradually back.	Two jobs since Scotswood: Current Job: Small engineering firm Job: Horizontal Borer <u>'It's a job'/difficult to settle down/lack of equipment/plecework - getting a bit old for it/constant day-shift/under pressure from foremen to get jobs out/feeling of being constantly watched and talked about by fellow workers/</u> <u>'Bad place for money' - towards the bottom for the district and, on plecework, you have to work harder than at Scotswood to earn it/distance to travel.</u> Previous Job: Small engineering co. Job: Horizontal Borer Good money/made redundant (last-in, first-out).	'Hates' his current job-keeping an eye open for any 'reasonable' jobs - he constant day shift, 100 pounds per week (compared to current 85 pounds), and something that's <u>secure.</u>

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
A. Bellingham Age: 33 Job: Grinder Service: 15 years	'Loved working at Scotswood'/had a lot of friends there/particularly friendly atmosphere.	"Wages weren't that good"/out of date machinery/bad working conditions - 'dark and miserable'/'separate canteen facilities for staff and shop floor men/aware of a social barrier between 'us' (the shop-floor) and 'them (staff)/very insecure.	'Churchill Engineering' Job: Grinder A lot better pay than Scotswood/'insecure/much better relations with management; no 'us' and 'them' as at Scotswood; everybody works together in a relaxed atmosphere/very good environmental working conditions/doing a more worthwhile job than at Scotswood and getting greater job satisfaction/men not quite so friendly towards one another as they were at Scotswood - might be because Churchills has piecework/no 'staff' and 'shopfloor' canteen distinctions/constant day-shift.	He was a 'Vickers' man and 'totally committed to Scotswood' - but he went through 8 redundancies during his time at Scotswood and often worried about whether he was going to keep his job/very happy in his current job - as long as it lasts.
J. Jones Age: 36 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: (8 years) (2 periods)	Friendly atmosphere/never thought it could close - 'felt safer in a bigger factory'/'interesting job - fully involved in it/no pressure/no piecework.	Relatively badly paid - several pounds behind the higher paid places.	'Ingersoll Rand' Job: N.C. Vertical Borer A bit better paid than Scotswood/'On an N.C. Vertical Borer you only do one item on a job whereas at Scotswood you did the whole job from start to finish which was much more interesting.	Felt settled; would definitely have stayed at Scotswood - until retirement/ Scotswood "was one of only 2 places I'd actually been back to twice".

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
<p>3. Halliday Age: 53 Job: Filter &amp; Turner Service: 17 years (plus 21 years at Elswick, including 12 years at the Die Divisions - transferred to Scotswood)</p>	<p>Used to lead the North East for money but ended up as one of the lowest <u>paid firms on the Tyne/</u> Easy to get to/made to feel wanted/homely atmosphere.</p>	<p>Night-shift/never felt totally secure.</p>	<p>'Liner Engineering' Job: Tool-maker A lot better pay than Scotswood/'Not too bad where I am provided it lasts" (but) "I still look in the paper every night". <u>Shortage of equipment/</u> <u>very weak union/men more</u> <u>friendly at Scotswood</u> <u>that at Liner.</u></p>	<p>Had a good job at Scotswood and wouldn't have thought of leaving/ always aware that engineering doesn't guarantee you a job for life/after the closure applied for a store-keepers job with the PTE because it seemed it would be 'A job for life'.</p>
<p>3. Strong Age: 36 Job: Machine Shop Foreman Service: 16 years (+ 4 years at Elswick)</p>	<p>'Enjoyed working there'/ the workforce was a 'team'/thought he had a 'job for life'/family atmosphere/working there was 'part of your life'/ liked working with big machines/interesting work - not repetitive/great deal of job satisfaction.</p>	<p>Pay was held down in later years and at the end the wage was 'abnormally low'/ lot of stress and hassle/ 'archaic' environmental working conditions/night- shift.</p>	<p>'Liner Engineering' Job: Machine Shop Foreman 'Don't enjoy working there'/just a job'/just work there for the money/ thought it was going to be another 'job for life' - but now feels very <u>insecure/takes work home</u> <u>on his mind/more batch-work</u> <u>and more rush, stress and</u> <u>pressure than at Scotswood/</u> <u>much better pay than</u> <u>Scotswood/constant</u> <u>dayshift.</u></p>	<p>'Never entered his head' to leave Scotswood/Whilst at Scotswood 'content' and settled and cocooned in this little make-believe world where you were protected for life'/took job at Liner in preference to alternative offer at a small factory because he thought he would be more secure/would now take a job out of engineering, even at lower pay, if it were secure.</p>

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
J. Taylor Age: 60 Job: Toilet Attendant Service: 5 years	"Quite happy there - good job"/"Don't think any other firm paid any higher than Scotswood" /more interesting work place, more room to move about, and more fresh air, than in previous job in coal mine.	None mentioned.	Unemployed.	-
K. Teacher Age: 39 Job: Horizontal Borer Service: 14 years (3 periods: final period lasted 7 years)	A good place to work - 'a way of life' never used to think about going to work/happy environment - good men to work with/ preferred the Scotswood guaranteed flat rate pay system to piecework pay system/close to home/good variety of interesting 'one off' work, never got bored.	A little less paid than other places/terrible environmental working conditions.	'T. Pearsons Engineering' Job: Horizontal Borer 'Not a pleasant place to work'/'insecure/going to work is an effort - often dread Mondays/the work is of the same standard as Scotswood but the tools are of poorer quality - which matters 'a tremendous amount'/'constant day shift pay is a little above average - but not confident it will remain high/further to travel than Scotswood - which costs time and money.	After Scotswood closed tried for a job in the Post Office because it offers security/'never ever wanted to leave Scotswood'.
D. Hopwood Age: 51 Job: Vending machine attendant/ Ancillary worker Service: 11 years (+ 4 years at Elswick - transferred to Scotswood)	Enjoyed working at Scots- wood - happy and content/ reasonable foremen and management/'good pay compared to some places - but never earned a big wage/everybody was friendly and helpful.	None mentioned.	Unemployed	Scotswood was the best place he'd ever worked at: 'everything was fabulous'.

Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
<p>G. Barton</p> <p>Age: 55</p> <p>Job: Turner</p> <p>Service: 11 years</p> <p>(+ 27 years at Elswick - worked on standard telephone cables job from 1952 - transferred with job to Scotswood 1968)</p>	<p>Vickers was 'home from home'/'fringe' benefits - free overalls, free shoes, pension scheme etc. /job interest/good quality work/good tools/settled and predictable work</p> <p>'gave job satisfaction'/'close to home/good apprenticeship system/proud of working at Scotswood/informal relations with management - no 'them' and 'us' as at Elswick - but <u>informality resulted in weaker management.</u></p>	<p>Inadequate pay/preferred piecework to the Scotswood flat rate which held back the earnings of those who produced more/preferred Elswick to Scotswood - could earn more on piecework and he knew more people there.</p>	<p>Small engineering factory</p> <p>Job: Turner</p> <p>'It's a job'/shortage of tools/'primitive' methods/worse paid than Scotswood/insecure - no predictability as at Scotswood.</p>	<p>In respect of current employment, 'it's a job. It's a case of suiting your purpose for the time being'/'in respect of Scotswood "I would have loved to retire on the job" - but he wasn't a 'Scotswood bloke' or an 'Elswick bloke': he was a 'Vickers bloke'.</p>
<p>A. Carr</p> <p>Age: 57</p> <p>Job: Fitter</p> <p>Service: 43 years</p> <p>(2 periods: last period 25 years)</p>	<p>Homely atmosphere had a lot of friends there/high-est paid on the river from the War to the mid-60s, but then fell right <u>behind/good relations</u> between shop stewards and management/wide variety of work - little repetitive stuff/having a variety of work was more enjoyable because it was a challenge/everybody helped one another/close to home.</p>	<p>Bad state of repair to buildings/unsatisfactory piecework system but the guaranteed flat rate that replaced it resulted in some men 'carrying' others because the incentive for some to work was gone.</p>	<p>Unemployed</p>	<p>Never entered his mind to leave Scotswood.</p>

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
D. Pearson Age: 54 Job: Crane Driver/ Slinger Service: 5 years	Liked working at Scotswood /easy to get to - not far to travel/seemed a secure place.	Sometimes monotonous - doing repetitive work/ very low wages for crane men - worst paid than other places.	Unemployed	Would have stayed at Scotswood if it had stayed open.
R. Scott Age: 57 Job: Inspector Service: 40 years (3 periods - final period lasted 33 years)	Friendly people/knew everybody/when it was on piecework (before mid 60s) it was one of the best paid places on the Tyne - but after piecework was abandoned the pay dropped down to one of the worst in the end/variety of work/local.	None mentioned.	Unemployed	-
A. Hall Age: 58 Job: Jig Borer Service: 11 years (+ 32 years at Elswick - transferred to Scotswood)	Good class of work/good equipment/good variety of work/good workmates/ comparable pay to other places in the district - but not the top - basic pay worse after the mid- 60s - but plenty of over- time and sometimes a shift allowance/liked being on guaranteed flat rate, rather than piecework.	None mentioned.	'Liner Engineering' Job: Horizontal Borer Similar pay to Scotswood/ different class of work - lower tolerances and lower quality/poor equipment organisation/faster speeds /'production work rather than 'tool-room' work/ would like to but can't do a quality job/'it's a job.	Never considered leaving Vickers/not happy where he is now/would now like a job out of engin- eering with no responsibility that will last until retirement or a jig-boring job in engineering where skill and quality can be applied.

Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
T. Mason Age: 63 Job: Foreman Service: 17 years (2 periods: 1st period at Scotswood 7 years - transferred to Elswick (20 years - made redundant) 2nd period 10 years)	Good life working for Vickers/enjoyed going on expenses-paid trips away for Vickers/foremen got sick-pay - which was security.	'The money wasn't big' - <u>but expenses sometimes made up for it</u> /In the progression of time the differential between staff and men was eroded, and foremen were relatively badly paid especially in later years/with the introduction of guaranteed flat rate in the mid 60s some men were 'carrying' others.	Unemployed	Had the chance to leave Scotswood for more money but 'money has never been a G-d for me' and he never left.
J. Field Age: 27 Job: Ancillary Worker Service: 5 years	Variety of work and 'not stuck in one place all the time'/'liked the job - quite happy with it.	Very poor pay and it was necessary to work overtime to make up the difference - <u>but being happy in the job is worth £10 per week</u> / didn't like alternate shift working - would have preferred either constant night-shift or constant day-shift.	Unemployed Recently lost job at Huwoods because he was 'last-in'. Hu woods (as a Grinder) was much better paid than Scotswood but he still preferred Scotswood because it was a better job; in particular the Scotswood job was cleaner / <u>Some jobs at Huwoods were repetitive and boring;</u> but there was some variation as well.	Thought Scotswood was probably a better place to work than Tress because the former probably had more variety in what you did and where you did it.
K. Laidlaw Age: 30 Job: Storeman Service: 2 years	Much better paid than previous non-engineering storeman's job/expected to be there until retirement - felt it was a secure place.	None mentioned.	Unemployed	Since the closure applied for a storeman's job with Telecom because he thought it would be secure/expected to be at Scotswood until retirement.

Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
N. Williams Age: 55 Job: Miller Service: 12 years (+ 12 years at Vickers Naval Yard, + 12 years at Elswick - transferred to Scotswood)	'Enjoyed working there'/you could see the finished product'/family atmosphere/friendly and helpful work-mates - 'because there was no piecework'/very little supervision - unlike at Elswick/'well paid' and a regular upstanding wage allowing forward planning.	None mentioned.	Unemployed	There weren't as many people 'chopping and changing' and 'chasing the money' at Scotswood as there were at Elswick/would have stayed at Scotswood until retirement/Scotswood was 'part of your life'.
A. Matthews Age: 62 Job: Floor Borer Service: 45 years	Liked the people he worked with/liked the independence his job gave him within Vickers/the work was interesting and not repetitive.	The pay was not as good as other places/the buildings were in bad repair.	Unemployed	Happy and content at Scotswood.
J. Owen Age: 28 Job: Storeman Service: 45 years	Easy to get to from home/secure 'job for life'/friendly, homely atmosphere/variety of work/no bus fare cost/good hours - constant day-shift/'pay was about average'.	'Class' distinction vis-a-vis different facilities 'staff' and 'men'.	Unemployed - 3 jobs since Scotswood 1) Last job: 'Bridon Fibres' Storeman: 'terrible atmosphere'/'everyone for themselves'/no proper union representation - made redundant 2) 'Rowntrees' (sweets) Warehouseman: hard work - no rest - left for Bridons 3) 'Applayards': Storeman 'diabolical place'/better pay than Scotswood/poor working conditions - inadequate organisation of the stores - left voluntarily.	Quite happy at Scotswood and would have stayed there.



Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
J. Davidson Age: 32 Job: Navy/Ancillary Worker Service: 2 years	Enjoyed working there/ 'nice job - wasn't just stuck in one place; went all over the factory/ 'made good money' (with overtime)/liked the variety of work/security/ regular yearly pay-rises.	None mentioned.	Unemployed.	Scotswood was the 'best job he's ever had'/would have stayed there until retirement/used to jump from job to job until he got the job at Scotswood.

J. Peters Age: 63 Job: Tool Grinder Service: 42 years (+ 1 year at Elswick - transferred from Scotswood when the Sherwick tractor production ceased - transferred back to Scotswood after 1 year)	Enjoyed the job - because it was a challenge - wasn't repetitive/decent pay in last few years - but very badly paid <u>earlier on, especially</u> <u>compared with the South/</u> <u>security, especially as</u> length of service increased/a lot of equip- ment compared to small places/left alone to get on with the job.	Working conditions/big rift between 'top' and 'bottom'- you're just a number'/nightshift/piece- work used to cause friction until it was stopped (in the 60s) - but then with guaranteed flat rate there was some friction because some men felt they were 'carrying' others.	Unemployed.	He was aware that places in the South paid much better wages and he was tempted to leave Scotswood, but he didn't want to lose the security that his years of service gave him.
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Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
A. Cross Age: 32 Job: Marker-off Service: 13 years (+ 2 years at Elswick - transferred to Scotswood)	Good work-mates - friendly atmosphere/no close supervision/enjoyed the work - always interesting/ weren't always stuck in the same place - did jobs in different shops/close to home.	Used to be one of the highest paid places on the Tyne when there was piece-work - but during Mr Cross's time it 'wasn't near the top' - but 'I didn't grumble'/separate canteen facilities etc for staff and blue collar workers - 'it always niggled'.	'WallSEND Slipway' (British Shipbuilders) Job: Marker-off Good work-mates/much better pay than Scotswood/no close supervision/'some jobs kept you interested'/move around - but not as much as at Scotswood/doesn't feel secure/don't like having to get up earlier because its further to travel.	Current employment is much better paid, but still preferred Scotswood; would be prepared to give up some, but not all, of the difference in pay for a job at Scotswood/feels lucky to have a job at all at the moment /quite satisfied when at Scotswood and 'never bothered looking at any other places'/expected to be at Scotswood until retirement.
B. Meredith Age: 35 Job: Navy Service: 8 years (in 2 periods)	Good place to work in/friendly work-mates/easy to get to/regular income.	'Wasn't fantastic money' - <u>but it was steady.</u>	Small building firm Job: Labourer 'It's not a great job/insecure - can't plan ahead/better money than Scotswood providing bonus is earned - 'but the money itself is terrible'.	Current employment is 'better than the dole'.
H. Washbone Age: 61 Job: Tool Grinder Service: 41 years	As good as or better pay than anywhere else/very friendly place - <u>but friendliness dropped off in the last 10 years/friendly supervision/everybody worked together, but left to get on with the job.</u>	Loss of friendliness during last 10 years - possibly because of increasing insecurity/'working conditions not as good as they could have been'/night-shift.	Insurance Company Job: Postal Clerk Much worse paid than Scotswood/'It's a job' - better than dole/constant day-shift/security.	Considered leaving Scotswood during slack periods but there was never anywhere else paying as good money /wasn't one to 'chase the money' because 'better the devil you know'.

Name/Age/Job Service at Scotswood	Aspects of Scotswood that were liked	Aspects of Scotswood that were disliked	Current employment compared to Scotswood	Additional comments
I. Wilkinson Age: 62 Job: Tool Grinder Service: 41 years	"Taking things in general Scotswood was as well off as anywhere in the area" / generally harmony between managment and unions / 'earned good money' when there was piecework / interesting variety of work.	Disagreed with the abandonment of piecework (in the mid 60s) because his earnings dropped / night-shift.	Unemployed.	Never considered leaving Scotswood because he was quite content and, at least when piece-work was on, he earned good money.
B. Race Age: 60 Job: Capstan-Setter-Operator Service: 32 years (+ 5 years in other Vickers plants)	Job security and contented frame of mind/job satisfaction increased after ending of piecework in 1964/65 because you had time to apply more skill to jobs/work-mates were your friends and you went to work to meet them.	Travelling from Wallsend to Scotswood every day by bus was 'a bit inconvenient' / 'never on a fantastic wage' - a lot more money could be got els here where there was piecework and overtime / bad working conditions.	Unemployment Advice Centre: Advice Worker	Expected Scotswood to be 'there for life' until retirement.
J. Straw Age: 47 Job: Ancillary Worker Labourer Service: 23 years	"Would go back to Scotswood tomorrow" / constant nightshift/handy to get to/family atmosphere - good men to work with.	Used to get upset about 'class' privileges - separate dining facilities, leaving work early etc/work was very unsteady and fluctuating / 'just a number'.	'Parsons Engineering' Job: Labourer in Boiler-Room Very insecure because he's one of the last starters / rougher men than at Scotswood/opportunities for other jobs at Parsons come up on the Board (as also in Scotswood) / further distance to travel than Scotswood and costs more bus-fare/pay is about the same as Scotswood/don't get free work clothes like you did at Scotswood.	After the closure he wanted to get out of engineering because of the unsteadiness of the work but he's never had the opportunity and he's ended up back in engineering/all he wants now is a guaranteed job.

**TRESS ENGINEERING**

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
D. Charles Age: 26 Job: Capstan-Setter- Operator Service: 4 years	Very good pay/local/ constant nightshift/ everybody knew each other and managers involved themselves with the employees/friendly atmosphere.	Union leadership inside Tress.	Unemployed - had 2 jobs since Tress - neither were as good as Tress:- 1) 'Thor - Tools Engineering': Capstan-Setter-Operator: <u>Didn't like it'/long way to travel/worse/basic pay than Tress/as newcomer, got the worse piecework jobs/no help from workmates -</u> left for Vickers Elswick. 2) 'Vickers Elswick' Engineering: Turret lathe setter-operator: <u>'Just a number'/no social involvement/most men were 'just for themselves'/</u> local/enjoyed the work itself/pressure from management to turn out products of a good standard and pressure to try and make jobs pay (on piecework) <u>/pay unfair considering the effort involved in compar- ison to labourers and other non-producers/- made redundant (last-in, first-out).</u>	Would have stayed at Tress.
J. Dalgleish Age: 58 Job: Sub-Contract Manager Service: 6 years	'A doddle of a job'.	None mentioned.	Unemployed: had 2 office jobs since Tress - didn't like either one: left first for better money/ left second one after a dispute with the manager.	Worked at Vickers just before the War but left because there was too much regimentation.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
E. Carlisle Age: 62 Job: Automatic machine- loader Service: 18 years	Easy light work - especially compared to previous job in Vickers Elswick Rolling Mill/ 'nearly the best paid workers in the North East'.	None mentioned.	Unemployed.	Mr Carlisle worked at Vickers Elswick 3 times but eventually went to Tress when Vickers went on short time working/never thought of leaving Tress/happier in a small place like Tress compared to a big place like Vickers because in a big place there's always a lot of friction amongst the men.
C. Watson Age: 30 Job: Valve Fitter (assembly work) Service: 15 years	Good pay/not confident in strange company but knew all the men there.	The job wasn't too bad/ arguments with some work- mates/tiring piece-work job/constant supervision/ 'rough' foremen/night- shift/boring repetitive work.	Unemployed.	Stayed at Tress mainly because it was good money - otherwise wasn't very happy with the job/ideally would now like to get out of factory work - particularly engin- eering which he thinks is insecure.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
H. Grant Age: 57 Job: Turner Service: 5 years	-	-	'Parsons Engineering': Fitter Constant day-shift/ <u>long way to travel.</u>	Mr Grant is a multi- iple job changer. He's worked in over a dozen engin- eering firms and been made redundant at least 5 times (including from Scotswood). He's about to be made redundant again from Parsons. One of the problems of moving about a lot, he says, is that you're always last in and normally first out.
T. Coulson Age: 64 Job: Labourer Service: 4 years	Good place to work/'not bothered by any bosses'/ easy work - especially compared to previous job in the pits.	Boring at times/smell and heat.	Unemployed.	Hoped to retire at Tress.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
R. Simon Age: 33 Job: Capstan-Setter - Operator Service: 8 years (2 periods: 2nd period 5 years)	'A smashing firm to work for'/opportunities to learn a skill/'highest paid firm in the North East at the end'/good men to work with/constant night-shift/job satisfaction - felt as though you were contributing something - much better than previous 'general labouring' jobs.	'Not all that good money at first'/old machinery.	Unemployed.	Would definitely had stayed at Tress had it not closed/Tress was 'the best thing that ever happened to him' because it got him away from labouring/expected to be at Tress until retirement - unless a better paid opportunity in his 'trade' came up; but because Tress was so well paying a better paid job elsewhere was unlikely to appear.
W. Samuelson Age: 56 Job: Capstan-Setter - Operator Service: 25 years	"A good firm to work for"/local/very good working conditions/"a lot better paid than other factories"/tolerances were looser than other places and so the work was easier to do/get settled in your ways after a long time.	Tiring work - both physically and mentally/piece work/the job itself (in engineering in general) is dirty, dangerous and thankless.	Unemployed - recently lost 'temporary job' at 'Ever Ready' - as a Packer - 'it was a good job': local/very good pay/easy work/clean work/everybody was friendly/- but it was monotonous keeping up with the machine/would like to have stayed until retirement.	After working in over a dozen different engineering firms he decided to stay at Tress because 'it was the best job I'd had in engineering' - particularly money-wise/'very disappointed to lose the job he got at Ever Ready after Tress closed/worked at



Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
T. Roberts Age: 59 Job: Labourer	Happy with the labouring and with the pay/working at Tress after working in a pit was like taking retirement/"never saw your boss all day"/ constant day-shift.	Old draughty building gave him bronchitis in winter/ smoky and oil-fumeey.	'Michell Bearings' Job: Labourer <u>Insecure/be content to stay at Michells until retirement/a bit better pay than Tress/free boots</u> - which you didn't get at Tress/canteen with good subsidised mid-day meals - no canteen at Tress/easy to get to/healthier air- conditioned factory at Michells/warm at Michells in winter/a lot of foremen - but they didn't bother the labourers/constant day shift/ <u>boring at times.</u>	Scotswood - but he didn't like working for Vickers: too regimented and 'you are just a number' - but Scotswood better than Elswick & Vickers is said to be better now than it used to be.  A lot happier at Michells than at Tress.
E. Wyatt Age: 64 Job: Labourer in Ragging Bay Service: 3 years	'Liked working for Tress'/ quite satisfied with the wages - as well paid as anywhere else/good companionship/interesting place to work.	Favouritism and unfair treatment.	Unemployed.	Even though he's now 'retired' he would 'go back tomorrow' to Tress if it was still open and he was asked.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
G. Wilkinson Age: 53 Job: Labourer Service: 3 years	Liked the job - 'easier work at my age'/'night-shift/good pay/close to home.	Some of the 'skilled' machine men looked down upon the labourers and didn't treat them with respect.	'British Cranes' Job: Grinder Better pay than Tress - Good money - but 'it's harder' and 'it's a job'/'prefer labouring at Tress/a long way to travel/friendly place - helpful workmates.	Although the current job is better paid than the Tress job you have to work harder and so Mr Wilkinson preferred labouring at Tress - even though it was less money/would have stayed at Tress.
R. Chelsea Age: 25 Job: Maintenance-Filter Service: 9 years (2 periods: 2nd period 3 years)	Left alone to do the job/one of the highest paid firms in the area/interesting job - no repetition/got on well with workmates and management/'job for life'.	Oily and dirty/erosion of differential with 'semi'-skilled machine workers.	Unemployed - has had a short lasting job since Tress in a small engineering company:- <u>low pay/costing too much to get there/didn't like the work/under constant supervision/made redundant.</u>	Mr Chelsea thinks that he had a different attitude towards doing 'a good job' than the capstan setter-operators who were pieceworkers doing a repetitive work, and mainly interested in money/he thought Tress was a secure 'job for life' and 'never even thought about getting finished'. Now he's looking for <u>any job - preferably a secure job - but any reasonably paying job is better than the dole.</u>

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
F. Simpson Age: 58 Job: Borer Service: 1 year	It was a good job/good conditions/wages 'weren't bad'/nice clean place/close to home/didn't have to work too hard and you didn't have anybody pushing you to work harder/seemed a safe job and expected to be there until retirement.	Never been happy in the engineering trade in general - the work tends to be monotonous and you're stood in one place all the time - but it 'was a job'/the trade used to be paid more than other non-engineering jobs, and it used to have a bit of status.	Unemployed.	Mr Simpson is a multiple job changer - largely involuntarily induced, he's been made redundant 4 times including Tress & Elswick and he left Scottswood twice in order to 'beat the axe' of redundancy/didn't like Vickers - you are 'just a number' and didn't get any respect - but Vickers 'used to dictate the pay-rates for the Tyne' / he's had a dozen or more jobs but 2 firms stood out as the best, one of them was Tress.
J. Gallow Age: 29 Job: Capstan-Setter Operator Service: 11 years	Very good place to work/work-mates close and friendly/Tress was one of the worst paying engineering places on Tyneside when he started - but was one of the best paying at the finish/strong union/close to home/relationships between management and workers not too bad - at foreman level/did	Mixed feelings about working in a factory - didn't like the smell and heat of the factory, and having to always wear overalls and safety gear - but glad to be inside on a cold winter's day/didn't get any satisfaction from the job itself - 'only went (to Tress) for the money.'	Council: Housing Maintenance Job: Brickey's mate Go to different places every day/learn skills that can be used at home/not working 'buzzer to buzzer' like in a factory/good pay (with bonus) - as good as in engineering, and you don't have to work as hard/work-mates not as	Likes current job and expects to get established in 'a job for life'.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
	very little night-shift.		<u>friendly as at Tress/very weak union/good conditions of work - with upstanding wage and pension scheme/drop in skill means a drop in status/reasonably close to work/constant day-shift/likes working outdoors generally speaking/'job for life'.</u>	
R.S. Williams Age: 59 Job: Setter Service: 20 years (2 periods: 2nd period 12 years)	Close to home/reasonably paid.	Incompetent management/rough work - loose tolerances/not much job satisfaction - got bored.	Hebburn Medium Sized Engineering Firm Job: Setter Better job than Tress / thought it was a good wage when he started but he has since found that some places pay better/a long way to travel/satisfaction from doing a quality job - much tighter tolerances than at Tress and more of a skilled job.	Used to work in Scotswood but didn't like it - too big - 'you're just a number' - and too regimented.
J. Gilkison Age: 59 Job: Labourer in the Rigging Bay Service: 5 years	Left alone to do the job.	None mentioned.	Unemployed.	-
A. Hindley Age: 30 Job: Capstan-Setter Operator Service: 5 years	High pay/close to home.	None mentioned.	Medium sized Engineering firm - Job: Capstan-Setter Operator At lower end of scale pay-wise, and less paid than Tress/union organised/poor planning and progressing/distance to travel.	Reasonably happy where he is now and no intention of leaving engineering.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
<p>S. Richards Age: 27 Job: Capstan-Setter - Operator Service: 4 years</p>	<p>Liked the Tress job/ always guaranteed work and money/security.</p>	<p>Lack of variation - stuck in the same place and doing the same thing day in day out.</p>	<p>Insulation firm Job: Lagger Good pay - <u>but not guaranteed to last/ variation and move about a lot/not guaranteed continuous work.</u></p>	<p>Moved to Tress from the lagging trade because he was 'setting up house' and so he wanted a guaranteed wage coming in each week with secure guaran- teed work/even had Tress not closed Mr Richards had seriously consid- ered returning to his 'chop &amp; change' lagging trade because he wanted a change from his job and he was attracted by better money.</p>
<p>G. Maud Age: 34 Job: Miller Service: 7 years</p>	<p>Close to home/better paid than previous job at Crabtree-Vickers/the work was a bit interesting/fair management/left alone to to do the job.</p>	<p>Piecework - would have preferred a guaranteed flat rate.</p>	<p>Unemployed - had 2 jobs since Tress (1) small engineering firm Job: Miller <u>Poor pay/shortage of tools/left the job</u> <u>(2) 'Ever Ready' Job:</u> <u>Machine Attendant</u> <u>Good firm/very boring</u> <u>repetitive job/left the</u> <u>job.</u></p>	<p>Would have stayed at Tress.</p>

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
S. Lumbley Age: 46 Job: Fitter Service: 15 years	Really good job all round/ good union shop/well paid - probably towards the top of the league on Tyneside for pay/good conditions/ good management until the last year or so - would listen to the union, and union and management worked quite well together.	Piecework - watching the clock/some conflict within workforce over differen- tials - especially between time served men and others/repetitive work got a bit boring at times - 'but it didn't bother me'.	Old People's Home Job: Handyman Bad pay/'It's a job'/move about a lot/safe job/can't get through all the work that needs doing.	The fitters at Tress did repetitive piece work and they could do the job very fast which enabled them to earn good money.
J. Mason Age: 46 Job: Storeman Service: 10 years (2 periods - 2nd period 4 years)	'Family' firm - very few strangers; a good social atmosphere/got on well with the staff - but <u>security &amp; relations</u> <u>deteriorated when Fairey</u> <u>took over in early 70s/no</u> <u>separate facilities for</u> <u>staff and shop-floor</u> workers as at previous employment at Anglo Great Lakes/local/opportunities to do a variety of jobs.	Old machinery.	Unemployed.	Settled at Tress - 'Expected to retire there'/Mr Mason worked his way up in Tress from a labourer to a setter of automatic machin- ery and towards the end went in the stores when he had trouble with his back.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
C. Hickson Age: 51 Job: Setter of Automatic Machinery Service: 16 years	Family atmosphere - <u>until later years with arrival of new people/job interest</u> - likes to get involved with the job and get 'a good quality job out' / close to home.	'Too much union' / erosion of differential between time-served skilled men and others / conflict between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled men, exacerbated by individual union personalities, breaking up previous unity amongst the men; semi-skilled men became 'top dogs' in place of skilled men, bringing about a change in the place.	Had 2 jobs since leaving Tress: Current job: 'Elmco Engineering' - Setter-Operator of manually worked machinery. 'Tress was a much better job' / <u>distance to travel - travelling expenses / weak union / shift-work / very good good pay / job satisfaction</u> - more control over individual wage level (on piece work) than at Tress and now uses hands as well as brain - <u>but requires more effort than with the the automatic machinery at Tress.</u> Previous Job: 'Forgrove Engineering' - Setter-Operator: 'Hated it' / <u>ridiculously low pay - rates' / very weak union / left for Elmco.</u>	Mr Hickson is a multiple job-changer - largely involuntarily induced, he had been at about a dozen firms in his time before he 'found' Tress, the job that 'he wanted' where he intended to stay.
T. Daniels Age: 47 Job: Driller Service: 14 years	At one time 'near the top' for pay-no limit to what you could earn on piecework / 'looked forward to going to work' - knew everybody; everybody friendly; family atmosphere / liked the job: not heavy - <u>but had to work hard / local / constant night-shift / 'job for life'.</u>	None mentioned.	'Aveling Barfords' Engineers: Driller 'Don't like it' / the pay is reasonable - but it's not as much as it should be for what we turn out' / <u>worse flat rate than Tress</u> - also opportunities to earn more on piecework at Tress than at Barfords / <u>much less unity amongst</u>	The Tress job was 'repetitive work' - doing the same job for 2 or 3 days at a time / Mr Daniels has had at least 8 jobs before Tress but Tress was 'the best paid job I'd ever had' / definitely would have stayed at



J. Morris	Preferred Tress job to current job at Thor.	Management out of touch with what's happening on the shop-floor.	'Thor Tools Engineering'	Took job at Tress in preference to Vickers because Tress was better paid/6 or 7 men from
Age: 31			Job: Capstan-Setter-Operator	
Service: 4 years	'about 20% better than 'not the best' - Tools/quite well paid - but 'not the best' -		Operator: <u>'Can't stand the place'/better paid than Tress at first - but wages</u>	

'Thor' Tools Engineering'  
 Job: Capstan-Setter-  
Operator: 'Can't stand the  
place'/better paid than  
Tress at first - but wages  
fluctuate badly from week  
to week and now on short-  
time/very weak union/poor  
atmosphere/no trust bet-  
ween management and shop-  
floor/management never  
seen on shop-floor/piece  
work calculations and  
times not open to shop-  
floor inspection/poor  
conditions of work in  
general: canteen facil-  
ities etc/very bad manage-  
ment/insecure/batches  
 don't last too long so not  
 so boring



Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
S. Morrison Age: 52 Job: Millwright Service: 14 years	'Wasn't a bad firm' - 'quite happy there'/ light engineering work; small machinery; no climbing up heights.	Night-shift.	Unemployed. - had one short job since Tress driving and labour- ing - but it was <u>heavy</u> <u>work</u> and he had to leave for health reasons.	Would have stayed at Tress until retire- ment/is keen to leave engineering now because most work is too heavy for him and because he doesn't think there's any future in engineering any more - but even an engineering job is better than the dole.
T. Isaacs Age: 30 Job: Capstan-Setter- Operator Service: 5 years (2 periods: 2nd period 3 years)	Constant night shift/ piecework pay disputes worked out fairly in a good system between management and union/ easy work/easy to get to/ good men to work with/pay could have been better - but no complaints/good management and a good union/men were well treated - no 'them' and 'us'/everybody helped each other.	Got boring sometimes doing long batches lasting up to 6 weeks.	'Thor Tools' Job: Capstan-Setter- Operator Worst place he's worked in /'money was good' - <u>but</u> <u>couldn't guarantee your</u> <u>money each week and now</u> <u>on short time and off</u> <u>night-shift and losing</u> <u>money/the newcomers always</u> <u>run out of work first -</u> <u>and with piecework that</u> <u>means they lose money/</u> <u>shortage of tools/'every-</u> <u>body for themselves'/'weak</u> <u>union/constant night-shift</u> <u>- but now taken off/</u> smaller batches than at Tress.	Mr Isaacs is a multiple job-changer who is used to 'chasing the money' - but he would have stayed at Tress/4 people from Tress at Thor Tools; Mr Isaacs doesn't like it and is looking out for a new job/ has applied for a job of telephone engineer.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
D. Grayson Age: 31 Job: Turner Service: 13 years	'Good job'/no piecework/ family concern - knew everybody - everybody helped each other - management would listen to you/close to home/ constant day shift/strong effective union/'probably the highest paid on the Tyne'.	None mentioned.	Had 2 jobs since Tress Current Job: 'Parsons Engineering'- Job: Turner <u>less pay than Tress/bigger and more dangerous work than Tress/Just a</u> <u>'number'/further to travel than Tress - but now used to it/longer basic working week at Parsons than Tress /constant day-shift/no piecework and therefore a better atmosphere than British Engines - work- mates help you out with tools/slow ineffective union.</u>	Current job at Parsons is much better than the one at British Engines but much worse than the one at Tress/ only 'stuck' British Engines 3 days before leaving for Parsons; he says British Engines had a lot of trouble holding onto people/ British Engines seemed particularly bad in comparison to Tress/if he gets made redundant from Parsons he's seriously consider- ing leaving engin- eering because there's more money to be made outside the trade.
A. Marton Age: 33 Job: Capstan-Setter- Operator Works Conveyor Service: 8 years	Quite happy at Tress/well paid - lowest paying on the Tyne at first; high- est paying on the Tyne by the end/very involved with the union and worked more than the required 39 hours per week.	None mentioned.	Unemployed - had 2 jobs since Tress: 1) Unemployment Advice Centre: Advice Worker <u>worse paid than Tress/ - redundant.</u> 2) 'Ferriers': Small Engin- eering Place: Capstan- Setter-Operator: <u>Very bad pay/firm closed down</u> making him redundant.	-

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
T. Tomlinson Age: 32 Job: Fitter Service: 15 years	Happy at Tress/easy to get to/'not bad paying' - improved in the last few years/knew the people there/relaxed - left alone to do the job/could talk to others whilst you were doing the job.	Bad management.	Unemployed - had 1 job since Tress: 'Parsons Engineering': Fitter <u>Only stuck it for one day/</u> <u>worse paid than Tress/</u> <u>extremely boring job -</u> <u>not a 'proper' Fitter's</u> <u>job - just filling.</u>	Redundancy was the only way he would have left Tress/ 4 other fitters from Tress were working in the Fitter's section at Parsons - he says all 4 left for other jobs, at least 3 of which were out of the trade/he has lost a lot of confidence in the ability of the trade to provide him with a secure job.

T. Wootton  
Age: 52  
Job: Setter of automatic machinery  
Service: 16 years

None mentioned.                      None mentioned.

Had 3 jobs since Tress:  
1) current employment:  
'Churchill Engineering':  
Machine Operator: As good  
a job as Tress/constant  
day-shift/better pay than  
the Print-Works/the pay's  
on par with most  
engineering places.  
2) Print Works: Labourer/  
Machine Minder: Job was  
'good enough'/shift-work/  
poor pay/close to home/  
left for Churchill's  
'for better pay'.  
3) 'Ingersoll Rand' Engineering: Setter/Operator: 'Not  
a good job'/long way to  
travel/left for the Print  
Works to get closer to home'

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
W. Waldgrave Age: 53 Job: Driller Service: 13 years	liked working at Tress/ sympathetic management/ shift work/left alone to do the job/quite happy with the job - <u>but didn't like it as much as previous job in Spencers Springworks which had more thinking involved, had 'more scope', and was less boring.</u>	Monotonous at times.	'Metal Spinners' Engineering: <u>Would have stayed at Doesn't like it/heavier work/unsympathetic management/poor union/much worse paid than Tress/ close to home.</u>	Would have stayed at Tress; wouldn't have gone anywhere else/ doesn't like his current job and will leave immediately if a better job comes up/used to work at Vickers Scotswood Tractor Works but didn't like it; didn't like the size of it, and found it depressing - left voluntarily.
J. Whiteside Age: 42 Job: Driller Service: 7 years	Easy to get to/decent pay/knew everybody - more personal than in a big place like Parsons - know all the managers and 'know who you're talking to'.	The same routine, stuck in the same spot day-in day-out (in engineering in general).	'Parsons Engineering': Job: Driller <u>Long way to travel/just a number - impersonal/don't like the work; just work for the money/no worse off financially than at Tress/insecure.</u>	Would have stayed at Tress/feels insecure in his current job/ particularly liked the short distance to Tress; particu- larly <u>dislikes</u> the long distance to his current job/he's sticking with his current job because there's nothing else about/would ideally like to get a job out of engineering, such as in the Post Office where you can get about a bit.

Name/Age/Job	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
G. Parkinson Age: 43 Job: Storeman Service: 4 years	Constant day-shift/good job/good money - a lot better pay than previous job.	Dead-end job.	'British Shipbuilders': Print Machine Operator <u>Long distance to travel/</u> <u>control over the pace of</u> <u>work - start and stop</u> <u>when you like without any</u> <u>close supervision/plenty</u> <u>of work - opportunities</u> <u>for overtime/fairly</u> <u>secure/more boring than</u> <u>Tress/a lot worse paid</u> <u>than Tress/dead-end job.</u>	Went to Tress in order to get a 'better paid, steady day-shift job'.
3. Kenilworth Age: 56 Job: Labourer-machine loader Service: 3 years	Liked going into work/happy place to work - family atmosphere; everybody helped one another/helpful management - most of them were fair/close to home.	None mentioned.	Had 3 jobs since Tress: 1) Current job: Pork Pie Van Salesman Good workmates and good atmosphere - but not as good as Tress; not the same comradeship/a decent wage - but worse paid than Tress/a better job than both the previous 2 jobs. 2) Building Worker Job Variety of work - but heavy and still felt unsettled - left for job and a much lower rate of pay. 3) Council: Chargehand on road maintenance Money was alright, but there was a lot of arguing which you didn't get at Tress; so he left for a job with a builder/long way to travel.	Happiest 3 years in his life working at Tress/would have stayed until retirement/had a very unsettling time after leaving Tress; had 3 jobs since but none have had the same comradeship which he misses/happy where he is and would be reluctant to go back into a factory because it's so insecure.

Name/Age/Job Service at Tress	Aspects of Tress that were liked	Aspects of Tress that were disliked	Current employment compared to Tress	Additional comments
C. Walton Age: 64 Job: First Aid Room - Labourer Service: 6 years	Good factory; good job/ cleaner, easier and more healthy than working in the coal mines/could go outside to get away from dust and smell of oil/ better job than previous jobs on building sites/ more secure work/reason- ably good money with working a lot of overtime/ easy to get to/reasonable management - left you alone to do the job.	Some of the men a bit inconsiderate to the labourers - leaving litter etc; not as helpful as in the mines.	Unemployed.	Mr Walton worked in the coal mines for 39 years before arriving at Tress - after working for short spells at a couple of building sites/would have stayed at Tress.
*A. Allbright Age: 61 Job: Labourer in the ragging bay Service: 11 years	-	-	'Vickers Elswick' Job: Handyman <u>Very insecure/good pay/light work.</u> Vickers Elswick.	Mr Allbright is expecting to be made redundant again - this time from Vickers Elswick.
*K. Cooper Age: 30 Job: Fitter Service:	Good place to work.	Foreman 'on you back'.	'Telecom': Telephone Installer: More secure/ <u>less paid than Tress/no close supervision by foremen/no factory noise and smells/get about and see different places/ bad union.</u>	Was unable after Tress to get another job in engineering but got job with GPO: There's about 5 men from Tress all work at the GPO now. All appear to be happy and none, he says, wish to work in a factory again.
*E. Stiles Age: 64 Job: Service: 5 years (* Partial Interviews)	Good pay/good job/ 'left you alone'.	None mentioned.	Unemployed.	Mr Stiles has always 'followed the money' the jobs themselves were of no importance .

### Employment Stability

In one respect at least the two work-groups of Scotswood and Tress were significantly similar: both the Scotswood and Tress men exhibited a particularly high level of employment stability prior to closure. All the 36 Tress men and over 90% of the 47 Scotswood men had only had 2 or less employers in the last five years of their employment.

It seems that in the case of Scotswood workers the high stability they exhibited was for many simply a continuation of a life-time history of minimal employer change; 52% of Scotswood workers had never worked for more than two employers since leaving school. In the case of Tress workers, however, the picture of life-time stability was much less likely to occur; only 20% of Tress workers had never worked for more than two employers.

Whilst a limitation in numbers prohibits any detailed statistical analysis the information we have suggests that it was the decrease in employment change amongst the unskilled and semi-skilled workers at Tress that was chiefly responsible for the apparent increased stability overall of the Tress work-force. A comparison with the skilled workers at Scotswood brings out this impression.

	<u>3 or more Employers</u> <u>in whole work-lives</u>	<u>3 or more Employers</u> <u>in last 5 years</u>
Tress Unskilled and Semi-Skilled Workers (n=27)	88%	0
Scotswood Skilled Workers (including Foremen, Inspectors etc) (n=32)	29%	9%

Whilst Scotswood 'skilled men' clearly had a high proportion (71%) who were very stable over their whole work-lives, and Tress non-skilled workers had a very low proportion (12%), over the last 5 years there is clearly a very different picture; both groups now exhibit very high stability, but of the two the Tress non-skilled have an even higher proportion who are stable.

In this chapter we have presented in tabular form people's comments on those aspects of Tress and Scotswood, and post-redundancy employment,

which they liked or dis-liked. It was clear from the tables that very few men did not have mixed feelings about their employment at Tress or Scotswood, but, judging from the fact that at both work-places the work-forces that were left at time of redundancy, and which we interviewed, exhibited a high degree of stability at a time of plentiful job opportunity, it seems probable that for these men the attraction of the 'liked' features outweighed the repulsiveness of the 'disliked' features, and that is why they stayed where they did. A

picture emerges, therefore, of groups of workers in which a majority had 'settled' on work-places they (relatively) liked.

In respect of post-closure employment 68% of all jobs Scotswood men had between redundancy and the main interviews were in Tyneside engineering companies. Very few of these men gave the impression that they had found better jobs. It is true that the great majority felt that they were better paid (even allowing for estimates of 'imaginary' intermediate Scotswood 'pay-rises') but the 'trade-off' costs were many. The greatest complaints concerned features of the work itself, the organisation, the tooling etc; but also disliked were travel distances, the amount of effort required to earn the 'better' pay, and less friendly relations with work-mates.

32% of post-Scotswood jobs were outside engineering. In this small group of 11 jobs, men were more likely to say that they received worse pay than at Scotswood, but there were compensations for some such as increased security, cleaner environment, and less working pressures. On the whole - bearing in mind we are only talking about 11 jobs - there was a little more likelihood amongst this group than amongst those engaged in engineering firms for men to make generally favourable comparisons with Scotswood; even so, this was the case with less than half (5), and at least 3 of these 5 would still have preferred Scotswood had the latter been more secure.

In the case of Tress 66% of all jobs these men had between redundancy and the main interviews were in engineering companies. As with the Scotswood workers, hardly any of the re-employed Tress men appeared to feel they had got better jobs than before the redundancy. Most thought that they were worse paid - many also complained about increased travel distances.



33% of re-employed Tress workers got a job outside engineering. Of this group of 12, 3 appeared to feel they had found jobs as good as, or nearly as good as, Tress, with the pay in particular being comparable. Most of the rest, however, thought the pay was worse than Tress, whilst there were also complaints about boredom, travelling distances, degree of effort, and less friendly atmospheres.

The reactions of the men to their post-redundancy experiences tend to confirm that our samples stayed immobile at Tress and Scotswood because these firms were seen to be more likely than other employments, especially within engineering, to satisfy their prime objectives. The dis-satisfactions voiced tended to reflect a loss of the satisfactions experienced at Tress and Scotswood. Thus, for example, Scotswood men tended to complain about the quality of the work and its organisation in their post-redundancy employment, whilst Tress men tended to complain about the level of pay.

#### Unemployment and Instability

Very few of the men from either plant had suffered any recent unemployment prior to closure; indeed the clear majority of men had never suffered any unemployment ever. Subsequent to redundancy, however, there were strong suggestions that the men from both workplaces found it very difficult to re-secure themselves positions in stable sectors of the job structure.

The later introduction of the Scotswood labour force onto an ever worsening labour market appears to have generally resulted in these men taking longer to get jobs. 36% of the Scotswood sample got work within 3 months. This is much less than the Tress sample - who, of course, were paid off 10 to 18 months earlier - where 50% got work within 3 months. 50% of the Scotswood sample (including 55% of the skilled men) were still continuously unemployed after 6 months from being made redundant; this compares to 'only' 36% for all the Tress men.

The impression that the Scotswood men overall found it more difficult to find work continues if we look at the percentages still out of employment after 12 months. 46% of the Scotswood sample were still continuously unemployed after 12 months; the percentage for the Tress

men was 28%. This latter figure corresponds reasonably closely to the Newcastle Council Survey (referred to earlier) finding that 33% of Tress manual workers were still unemployed after 12 months.

A significant difference still occurred at the 20 month mark, because 36% of the Scotswood sample, but 'only' 22% of the Tress sample suffered at least 20 months continuous unemployment after closure. In both cases over three quarters of these very long term unemployed were aged over 50 years old.

Apart from the very long term unemployed who were obviously finding it very difficult to regain a secure footing, a strong impression was given that even amongst those who had managed to get a job most were only tenuously employed.

At the time of the follow-up interviews in June 1981 - between 2 and 16 months after the main interviews, 3 years after the Tress closure and nearly 2 years after the Scotswood closure - 47% of the Scotswood sample were unemployed and 54% of the Tress men were unemployed.

In the case of the Tress men, who were interviewed before the Scotswood sample, the time lapse between the main and follow-up interviews was much longer. Approximately 9 to 16 months passed between the Tress main and follow-up interviews; in the case of the Scotswood men the equivalent period was approximately 2 to 9 months.

The Tress numbers unemployed changed from 50% to 54% but those without work were not necessarily the same men at the two points in time. 38% (7) of all the men who had work at the time of the main interviews were again unemployed by the time of the follow-ups, all were working in engineering companies immediately prior to unemployment, and nearly all lost their jobs through further redundancy; the last-in first-out rule played a significant part. Of those 5 men who had meanwhile moved from a state of unemployment to employment, for the 4 men for whom we had information all had got a low skilled job outside engineering with little apparent long term prospects; all 4 men expressed dissatisfaction with their new jobs. The fifth man went to Germany in search of work and, we assume, found it.

In the case of the Scotswood men the period between the main

interviews and follow-up interviews was not very long and little movement had taken place. However, many of those who got jobs clearly felt very insecure, and subsequent newspaper and television reports of redundancies and closures in engineering firms such as Churchills, Liner, Caterpillar etc would strongly suggest that many men would have been made redundant again, not so much through total closure as much as through being 'last-in'.

78% of Tress workers in employment at the time of the main interviews, and 68% of employed Scotswood workers, were working in engineering factories. The fact that engineering manufacturing companies have felt the brunt of the impact of the Recession, plus the fact that the redundancy rule of last-in first-out is particularly likely to be adhered to in this sector (especially amongst larger unionised plants), is likely to have made our respondents particularly susceptible to instability.

The conclusion must be, therefore, that whatever other impact the redundancies at Tress and Scotswood had they heralded the end of a long period of stable continuous employment and the beginning, for many, of a time of uncertainty and instability.

## CHAPTER V

Security

The existence of security (or lack of it) at Scotswood was identified in the last chapter as a feature worthy of further elaboration. 30% of our Scotswood sample indicated they valued their work-place for reasons, amongst others, of security; 19% mentioned the lack of security. In this section we intend to consider how these findings might reflect a more general role for security as a structuring agent in the formation and working of labour markets.

Extensive use of quotation will be used in the course of explanation. It is not the case that quotations will be used selectively to illustrate points from a pre-conceived theoretical argument. Rather, a theoretical explanation has been developed to fit the statements made by our respondents.

Not all respondents referred adequately to the subject of security or security-related matters; 79% of our Scotswood respondents and 50% of our Tress respondents did so. This section, therefore, is based on the statements of those 67% of all our respondents (56 people) who talked about security, or security-related, subjects.

Conversations with individual Tress men in fact contained much less reference to 'security' as a significant goal, expectation, or influence on their own work career strategies. We think this probably reflects the fact that the Tress sample was dominated by men with an unskilled or semi-skilled background, with - prior to Tress - an unstable pattern of employment, in contrast to the sample from Scotswood which was dominated by men of a time-served skilled background with a history of very stable employment; consequently, we suggest, the Tress men were possibly less likely to expect long term stable employment and so 'security' as an orientation was less likely to figure as a realistic objective.

However, the above inference can only be taken as suggestive. We can only gauge with less certainty the significance of 'security' to the

Tress workforce. 'Security' as a theme was only consistently introduced into conversations with Scotswood respondents - in response to spontaneous remarks made by some of the first members of the sample to be interviewed. Interviews with Tress respondents were generally held earlier and since they made no such spontaneous remarks suggestive of the importance of security in their work-lives, and since the interviewer had himself not anticipated beforehand that such an orientation or work objective might be significant, then 'security' as a theme was not covered quite so strongly or consistently.

Despite this important fact, however, it remains true that the Tress workforce were less likely to talk about security unprompted, and the general impression of the interviewer was one that accorded with the general thesis that the Scotswood men - skilled men in particular - with more stable work histories, were more likely to be security-minded.

An appreciation of security or dislike of insecurity in their workplace was mentioned by 49% of Scotswood men but only 14% of Tress men; in view of this fact, together with what has been said above, this chapter concentrates on the Scotswood Works and the Scotswood men. Comments by and references to the Tress men will however be included where appropriate.

It may help the reader to follow the gist of the argument of this chapter if we set out now the basic conceptual framework that was developed to interpret our respondents' security-related comments.

Our explanatory framework posits the existence of a dual structure providing certain crucial conditions for action, and limitations to action; this dual structure of stable and unstable areas of work is in a sense the 'objective' side of the picture. Our framework also suggests that the significance of these objective conditions will vary for different individuals according to the weight they give 'security' as a desired goal; individual goals will vary according to individual and household circumstances and general economic environment; these variations in goals and the different types of action they tend to promote form in a sense the 'subjective' side of the picture. The

explanatory framework, therefore, attempts to incorporate both 'sides' - the subjective and the objective.

The job structure at Scotswood tended to be objectively bisected between stable and unstable sectors such that some workers were more secure than others. This duality tended to be mirrored by other Tyneside firms.

Within the insecure sector two basic types of men are identified; these are referred to as 'Involuntary Multiple Job Changers' and 'Voluntary Multiple Job Changers'. The most salient characteristic of the 'Involuntary' group is the state of being particularly vulnerable to suffering recurrent unemployment; these people tended to experience repeated job loss for reasons beyond their control; the group included both those who gave high priority to gaining a stable job but who were thwarted in their efforts, and those for whom the instability of repeated involuntary unemployment was not in itself a particular cause of concern. The 'Voluntary Multiple Job Changers' also were men who did not seem particularly concerned to gain security and who gave high priority to other goals from work; these were men who 'chopped and changed' jobs 'chasing the money' or looking for interesting work, or seeking other valued objectives.

At certain times in their lives or in response to certain circumstances men may actively desire to get themselves established in the secure sector; at this point 'security' has risen to the forefront of men's minds as an objective to which they give high priority; under the right conditions men seeking security may be able to achieve their primary objective and move out of the unstable sector; other men, however, may be thwarted in their ambitions.

People situated in the unstable sector but having a strong orientation to the acquisition of a secure job will feel particularly keenly the disjuncture between aspirations and reality. These people, members of the group of 'Involuntary Multiple Job Changers', are likely to have their numbers swelled at a time of factory closure when men who hitherto thought themselves securely established may be thrown out of work.

Thus this framework suggests an economic environment where instability is endemic but where the sharpest effects are restricted to the margins of a workforce. Leaving the margins and becoming a relatively secure established worker can be an objective valued by some. Having a position of security and re-joining the men at the margins can be a personal disaster.

This chapter describes the men who had become established and the men who inhabited the margins; it also tells how individuals can have a change of goal in response to personal or broader social circumstances and purposely seek to become established; it also tells of how total factory closure removed the security of men who but for complete shut-down should have had 'a job for life'.

### Security, Scotswood and 'A Job For Life'

Insofar as the effects of working in a particular sector come about by people being subject to forces outside of their individual immediate control, it is the job and its environment rather than the person occupying it which is insecure. It is in this sense that we might be able to identify objectively distinct sectors (or markets) offering better or worse chances for stable employment, encouraging or restricting certain types of movement between jobs and between and within employing organisations.

However, the significance of insecurity as a determining factor in labour allocation need not be viewed simply in this 'objective' structural manner. It should also be appreciated from the point of view of a subjective state of mind influencing choice such that a person insecure-in-mind may be seen typically to 'chase' a certain type of job to the exclusion of others. Thus it will be a major object of this chapter to demonstrate that where the objective of 'security' has priority status in people's minds people may consciously attempt - and sometimes succeed - to gain employment in those job sectors which they believe to offer the best chances of a stable future.

People said that Scotswood was known as a place that if you could get in you had a 'job for life'. A friend of Scotswood worker Chris Hughes was present for part of his interview; she said: "Around here Vickers is just that big and I think, you know, if you could get in it seemed sort of indestructible and you thought 'Oh well it was there for ever' - there was a job there for ever for you; and I think that's really why people did stay. My brother worked up there (at Scotswood) for 26 years". Robert Chelsea, a young maintenance fitter at Tress, said that when he started at that place he thought he would have a job there until he retired, just "the same as at Vickers". "Once you thought that when you joined Vickers", he said, "you were there for life".

Jobs that promised to last were likely to be valued. This fact stood out particularly in the interviews with those from Scotswood. And it



was its aura of permanence and indestructibility, and the safety it was believed by some to offer to those fortunate enough to get in, that made Scotswood particularly attractive to those seeking a stable life-time job. And like the female friend of Chris Hughes, many did think a job at Scotswood was 'a job for life'. John Owen, now in his early 30's and when interviewed unemployed, got a job at Vickers from the Gas Board:

"My grandfather was there (at Scotswood) for 27 years; but he died, like, round about 15 years ago now. But he was there a long time. That's why I thought when I got in I said to my wife I said "Why, I'm in for life", like, because it's one of those places you always associated with 'You were there and you were in!' You know, that was it, like, because nobody ever got sacked. You know there was no question of it."

Many people clearly looked forward to and expected prolonged stable employment at Scotswood; and although, as we shall see, this expectation would have been for some an illusion (regardless of the final closure) a substantial number of people had, indeed, many years of unbroken service. In our Scotswood sample of 47, 21% had worked without break at Scotswood for over 30 years; if direct transfers from Elswick are included, and time at Elswick is included in the calculations, the percentage working without break of service for over 30 years rises to 29%. What distinguished this group of workers from others at Scotswood was their privileged degree of relative security and their history of stable employment.

We would suggest that many men at Scotswood were fully aware of their privileged position of security and that this knowledge played an important part in their evaluation of possible career strategies. Some men tended to stay 'immobile' at Scotswood because going outside meant sacrificing the protection that years of service had given them. This fear of being unable to hold down a good and steady job once outside the gates of Scotswood was probably particularly strong in the minds of older men. This would mean that the longer you stayed at Scotswood the less you were likely to move voluntarily; at the same time, the longer you stayed at Scotswood the less you were likely to

be forced to move. Old age and immobility, therefore, tended to correlate.

### The Stable Sector

The following examples of long-time servers say there were times when they could have left Scotswood but they preferred not to because they believed nowhere else could offer them the same degree of security they believe they had acquired. For these men, we suggest, a long term stable job was of particular importance to them and that is why they chose the career strategy they did:

Tommy Clarke, a 'borer' in his fifties, worked over 40 years at Scotswood and nowhere else:

F.P. "Were you never tempted to leave Scotswood?"

T.C. "No".

F.P. "Never once?"

T.C. "Oh, the only time was when your work was running right down, you know. When the work was running right down it was a toss-up if you were staying or getting paid off, you know. Then you had to ask around to see if there were any other jobs going that use - because what we were after was a permanent job".

F.P. "That's what everybody or that's what you were after?"

T.C. "That's what I would have been after - a permanent job you know".

F.P. "Security ... long term prospects".

T.C. "Aye. I mean to say when you've got two kiddies in the house and the wife, why, you don't want to be on the dole. You want a job; and you want a steady job. I thought I would have been there until I was 65."

For Mr Clark, a steady reliable job was what was of prime importance in his estimation of suitable employment and that seems to be why he did not move about. Job-change appears to have only been contemplated when his position of security was threatened. Other men also said that the only times they thought of leaving Scotswood was when the work situation became unstable. For Tommy Clark it was, in fact, only

the final closure that pushed him out.

A similar case is Mr Race. He worked at Scotswood as a Capstan-Setter -Operator for about 40 years - for 20 years of which he travelled from Wallsend catching bus and train in both directions. Why did he stay at Scotswood so long?

Mr Race "Well you toy with the idea of leaving but it is job security. It is job-security that you think that the place is going to be there for life until you finish work at 65. You're on low wages in some respects; we, at Scotswood, we were never on a fantastic wage; we had to fight for every penny we got, you know, whereas there was a lot more money being made ... there are a lot of people who travel around the area, where there's overtime and where there's piecework, to get money. But we were sort of content, you know, to stop in our environment even though we had to travel a distance of 8 miles - 8 miles there and 8 miles back. You know, there's something about being in a sort of contented frame of mind, that you were going into work, you knew the nature of the work, you knew the machines, and you knew your mates. So, I mean, when you start for a wage - and if you're willing to stand for that wage, it's up to you - unless you're looking for money - but job contentment to me is worth a lot more than a lot of money; put it that way".

A third long time server was Mr Mason. Mr Mason worked on the 'Standard Telephone Cables job'. The production of specialised equipment for S.T.C. was transferred from Elswick to Scotswood, along with the team who worked on it, in 1968. Most of the men who worked on this job did so for over 20 years. Each man in the team of 30 or so did a particular part of the finished product, and continued to do that same part for years on end.

Mr Mason was a Turner in his fifties who worked continually at Elswick and then Scotswood for 37 years. He worked on the S.T.C. job for 25 years. He reckoned that it took him one shift to do his part of the

final product. For 25 years, then, he made the same part at the rate of one a shift. The work was highly skilled and you could not allow your concentration to wander, but of course after 25 years Mr Mason knew the job, as he put it, "backwards".

In a sense the work was repetitive, although not on a par with assembly line work, and it was predictable; and it was this latter characteristic that made the job particularly attractive:

F.P. "Was it a kind of way of life?"

A.M. "Yes, well I would put it that way, yes. In other words you were getting into a rut without realising it. And you were happy enough just knowing it was there. I'd be quite content just to plodge up and down the bank again - for all I'm getting a bit more money where I am now than what I was down there. I could never have dreamt of shifting elsewhere. I was quite happy down there."

It might seem strange to the reader that Mr Mason should profess a liking for carrying out a job that had repeated itself without apparent unrelenting monotony every working day (or night) for 25 years; the answer, we suggest, is that it was the very fact that Mr Mason was engaged in a very predictable routine, doing a job at which he had become highly proficient, making his replacement highly unlikely, making a product that had been demanded since the early Fifties, that made the job so attractive. In other words, the job offered security.

Finally, another man who worked as a Turner on the same S.T.C. job - this time for 27 out of 38 continuous years at Elswick and Scotswood - Mr Barton - further illustrates the point. Mr Barton got another Turner's job after Scotswood in a small engineering factory but he felt insecure; unlike with the S.T.C. job he did not know what the morrow would bring:

F.P. "Does job satisfaction come into it now? I mean you had it at Scotswood."

G.B. "Well I had it there because I had the same job; I mean to

say I was doing a repetitive job - more or less what you would call a repetitive job. As I say I knew what I was doing from day in to year in; I mean I couldn't tell you now what I'd be doing this time next year. You know, it's as simple as that."

These men probably would have had plenty of opportunities since the war to secure other employment. Many people remarked about the times when you could 'just walk out of one job and into another', and, as Mr Race above said - as did others - he felt he could have gone after more money, or, perhaps, got work closer to home, if he had wanted to do so. And Mr Mason said:

"Nobody (on the S.T.C. job) left. If they wanted to leave there was nothing to stop them over the years - because at times there was work going in different places for better money; but they didn't go; and I didn't go".

These men recognised their relatively privileged position and realised that pursuing other objectives might have resulted in a decline of security; and for men who could remember the Thirties this might have been a particularly potent fear. And if some men believed that the pay at Scotswood was less than could be got elsewhere, at least the pay was regular; and having regular certain pay was, perhaps, what was particularly valued.

C. Hughes: "The wage (at Scotswood) wasn't that fantastic - in fact at the finish it was the lowest paid place on the Tyne."

Friend (ex-engineer): "But the point was it had regular wages and regular overtime. People are pretty well reluctant to leave the type of job where you're getting a sort of regular wage on a regular basis."

Scotswood clearly had a substantial number of men in a sector of the workforce that were to a considerable degree protected from fluctuations in demand, and thereby the threat of redundancy; and this protection was highly valued.

The foundation of this protection appears to have been in part that some jobs had constantly longer runs of work than others. The men in the S.T.C. section, for example, had a run lasting over 25 years. The men working on the big floor boring machines also apparently had more regular flows of work:

F.P. "You never came close to being caught (by redundancy)?"

B. Strong "Well as it happened, those peaks and troughs (in work) didn't affect the Floor Borers so much; ... the Floor Borers were never affected so badly as other parts of the firm you know."

In part the protection may have derived from the value of some men for management. Some of the men - such as those on the S.T.C. job and the giant Floor Borers - could not easily be replaced, and there is some suggestion that in down periods some men may have been transferred onto other work as a temporary measure until demand improved again. There is the further fact that with the introduction of redundancy payments management would probably be loathe to incur the cost of paying off long time servers where short time servers were available. It is also possible that management may have felt a moral responsibility to protect those men who had shown the most loyalty to the firm - i.e. the long time servers.

Finally, in part the protection may have been a consequence of trade union influence.

This trade union influence, in turn, seems to have been conditioned by a widely held opinion that those who have stayed with a firm some time have demonstrated loyalty and therefore deserve preferential treatment over newcomers; it was widely believed by both short and long time servers that such a principle was only just. Consequently length of service counted:

T. Clarke "It was last-in first-out generally speaking; for a lot of years that's been going on you know - which is fair enough".

F.P. "So the longer you had been there ..."

T.C. "The longer you had been there ..."

F.P. "The safer you should have felt?"

T.C. "You should have been. I mean to say if that place had been kept open I should have been alright until I was 65."

It was probably more than anything else the general operation of the rule 'last into a section, first out of a section' that was most clearly responsible for sharply dichotomising the work-force into secure and insecure workers. Were it the case that candidates for redundancy were chosen purely on managerial whim or, perhaps more rationally, according to evaluation of worth to the Company, then a person's relative position of stability would be much more uncertain - not least to the said individual himself. At least when a person knows he is always likely to be made redundant he can take action to counteract its worst possible effects. If nothing else the general use of the last-in first-out rule makes the labour market appear more rational and predictable to its occupants.

There is no doubt that at Scotswood at least the last-in first-out rule was generally adhered to. Several foremen testified to the fact that when redundancies occurred they were often unable to get rid of the men they wanted removing; and it would apparently often happen that less technically skilled men would be kept on in preference to their more talented colleagues if the former had a greater length of service.

Peter Williams, the Works Convenor, with 26 years continuous service at Scotswood, confirmed that getting established and getting into the secure sector involved surviving those dangerous years when as a relatively new starter you were always likely to be paid off. He also pointed out that serving your time at Vickers gave you a head start of 5 years over men who had served their time elsewhere.

F.P. "Would they keep everybody on when they (Scotswood) had a 'down'?"

P.W. "Well, you see, Vickers had its ups and downs where they had these minor redundancies or a large redundancy, but then they used to re-employ them and everything; but if you had

served your apprenticeship there you could be one of the latter people in all the time - so as you got older into your middle 20's you'd been there 10 years; well Vickers had a helluva turnover of people all the time and depending on the amount and type of work they got and where people had been brought in, you would find that you could not be put on the list to be paid off and/or you would just miss it. Twice I just missed redundancies from Vickers myself in all those years; once I just missed it because I was just in my tenth year and all of those up to 9 years were going; and the second time I was on the list but a bloke who was 63 wanted to take an early retirement on the marking-off and he volunteered for going out; and I got kept on because he went; but I would have been paid off then you see."

Once you got past the difficult early years you were relatively safe, and so a sector of the workforce was in a relatively privileged position on the dimension of security. But that is not to say, of course, that the threat of redundancy never worried these men at all. The security they had was only of a relative kind. Allen Halliday had 38 years continuous service in at Scotswood and Elswick including 12 years in the prestigious Die Division. The men who worked in the Die Division were generally considered to be some of the most skilled in Vickers, but as he pointed out even for people like him, with all his years of service, the nagging worry was always there:

A.H. "It's so up and down. There's nothing ... you know, there's nothing - I mean I got work for 38 years - but there's nothing saying you're going to be in a job for life, you know. It's that uncertain."

F.P. "Now, you mean?"

A.H. "Well any time! Any time! It's always been uncertain. I didn't know I was going to be there 38 years did I? I mean I've always been ..."

F.P. "You've always been sort of 'wondering' have you?"

A.H. "Aye, this is it. You're never certain. There's nobody can say 'I'm going to be at Vickers next year', or the year after, because it was so up and down. One day you had a



flood of work, the next day you had nothing. It's a terrible existence, like ... It's only foresight that kept me one jump ahead. But I've been lucky. Like I said I've been fortunate."

Part of the reason why Allen Halliday never felt totally secure was because he never managed to establish himself on a job that gave a constant long run of work on a par with the S.T.C. job of Mr Mason and Mr Barton mentioned earlier. In fact Mr Halliday worked on a whole string of jobs that folded up:

A.H. "They made everything at Vickers; you name it, they made it; so if that job folded up well I was just transferred to something else. I was on the move all the time. But some people maybe got a job where they weren't; and they were there for maybe 15 years on this part of the same thing - you know if the job's a repetition job."

In his time Mr Halliday worked on Centurion tank gearings, gun mountings, dies, presses, Paceco Cranes, shearing machines, air-craft machinery, and more.

Nevertheless, despite Mr Halliday's constant feeling of uncertainty, it is still probably true to say that after he had been at Vickers a long while without a break of service he felt safer than many. Apart from the protection of the union he appears to have had the skills, and possibly managerial recognition, to get himself transferred from one job to another within Vickers - thereby, as he put it, 'keeping one jump ahead'. Possibly significant was Mr Halliday's flexibility; that is to say unlike many of the men in our sample Mr Halliday was not circumscribed by being specialised in only one facet of the trade - such as 'boring' or 'fitting' - but, appears to have had a broad knowledge and capability.

### The Unstable Sector

Many people were in a much more tenuous position than the long time

servers we have talked about so far. These were people who had never been at Scotswood long enough to get established and/or were in a trade or section which was subject to more fluctuation than the average. So those at risk tended to be the young and/or last in and those occupying more marginal short-term jobs.

John Peters, a Tool-Grinder for 42 years at the Scotswood plant said:

"Oh, Scotswood had their ups and downs. Oh yes. At times. But I was one of the lucky ones because I was in a job - in a Tool Room job - which are few and far between. If I had been, say, like a 'driller', where there's quite a numerous number of them, or like a Capstan-Hand, or something like that, I might have been out of work more often."

And indeed some people were continuously in and out of work - or if they managed to hold on to work they were continuously looking over their shoulders; and many of these people desired a strong measure of stable employment but were unable to achieve it at Scotswood. Such people might include, perhaps, married men with dependent children and with, possibly, a mortgage and other long-term financial commitments. The following two men are good examples.

Both men were round about the same age - in their early 30's; both were married with young children; one owned his house and the other had high aspirations to do so. Both regarded themselves as skilled but one was time-served and the other was college trained. Both had experienced the debilitating effects of being stuck in the insecure sector:

Mr Jackson worked on and off at Scotswood for about 15 years as a time-served tradesman. After this last redundancy he decided he'd had enough and sought to get out of Engineering - not just Scotswood. In fact he became a postman:

Mr Jackson:

"You cannot guarantee anything nowadays; but engineering, I mean, I worked at Vickers and it's 'up' and it's 'down'; you know, you

cannot say "Right, in two years' time I'm going to go to America or Australia for a holiday"; you can't say that. You know, you can't save up and plan that far ahead, because when I used to work at Vickers we used to work six months flat out, working every weekend and then there was nothing ... you know."

Mrs Jackson

"He's got more security where he is now. At least we know he's going to be there - for ever! I mean twice he came in and told us he was made redundant - which I couldn't take again, really. Whereas at least where he is now he's got a job; you know, we don't worry now about "Are the bills going to get paid?" because we know he's going to be in a job - you know, like we've booked our holidays for next year which we never ever did when he was at Vickers; we always waited until a few months before; whereas now since he's been in the Post Office we've booked our holidays before the turn of the year."

The second man, Mr Bellingham, had had 13 continuous years of extreme insecurity by the time of the closure. Ironically, he was probably beginning to feel comparatively safe when the shutdown came:

Mrs. B. "Allen was paid off, weren't you?\* ... but I mean it's a terrible thing to think that your husband's going to be out of work and if you want children you're going to have to give up work. You know it's an awful thing to have to have over you. But it puts all this pressure on you. It's the North East all over."

Mr. B. "Fear! They put fear into you. Isn't it? It's really 'fear'!"

Mrs. B. "That's why I'd really like to see him get out of it all."

F.P. "Was this kind of unsettled feeling ... was it the same when you were at Scotswood in good times? Or was it just a recent thing?"

Mr. B. "Oh no! We've been through it before. I think I went through about 8 redundancies."

F.P. "There's been eight in your time?"

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\*Note: But a mistake had been made and Mr Bellingham was reinstated without loss of service.

Mr. B. "Oh why, aye! And every time is it me? Is it me? And I think it was the second last time somebody said my name was on it; but it wasn't. It was a load of rubbish! But every time you think it's you. It's your turn ... and you're out the door! I mean what do people expect workers to do? You can be in anything! If you haven't got a future like that you just lose all faith in that way of life. You've got ambition but it's knocking your drive down all the time because you're always thinking that way, that the next time it's going to be you. You're out the door and you've got nothing!"

Mrs. B. "But that was why when you were made redundant you thought you would try something different - to get out of engineering - to get out of this situation where you're always wondering if it's going to be your turn next."

Like Mr Jackson, Mr Bellingham was in a sector of the job structure that was particularly susceptible to redundancy. Somehow he had managed to survive 13 continuous years, though, and so it seems he was on his way to becoming a long-service worker. When interviewed he had got another engineering job but he was fully aware that as a last starter he should be one of the first out if fresh redundancies occurred. He was extremely unsettled and like Mr Jackson he tried to get a job in the Post Office (Telecommunications side) because it seemed secure and had a future.

In fact, as has been noted already, Mr Bellingham got another engineering job. However, should he be made redundant again through being last-in and/or the shortfall in general demand - (at the time of interview he was working a one-day week) - he may be finally pushed into an unstable multiple employer pattern - a pattern that he particularly did not want.

Should this happen he may join a group of 'Involuntary Multiple Job Changers' - a sub-category of the Unstable Sector who have had a history of multiple job change, largely induced by their being repeatedly pushed out of employment.

Mr Hickson, a time-served Capstan-Setter-Operator from Tress, was one of these:

F.P. "Did you ever leave any jobs voluntarily, for more money ... or ...?"

C.H. "Sometimes more money, or as you were coming on to where they looked like closing up. Remember Baker Perkins closed down and they decided it would be more beneficial for them to go back down to Peterborough - the Machine Shop - and they came back up again about two years after. You know, you were put on the scrapheap. That's how I was getting moved around; you were more-or-less thrown on to your scrapheap. A few jobs I went for the money. The majority of time, though, it was because they were folding up in this area."

Mr Hickson worked for 13 companies in his time - all in an Engineering capacity - and had a long history of predominantly involuntary multiple employment. Apparently through a combination of being continually last in, being a victim of several total closures, and (possibly) having a skill that appears to be particularly susceptible to fluctuation, Mr Hickson had never experienced single employer long term employment and security prior to working at Tress. At Tress, however, he had comparative stability and was there 16 years, before being made redundant again. After leaving Tress he was made redundant yet again - still in his trade. At the time of interview Mr Hickson was in his mid-forties and so it seems likely that he would be particularly conscious of the need to achieve the measure of security that so far had eluded him.

Some people within the Unstable Sector - including possibly Mr Hickson and Mr Bellingham - are probably more likely than others to be dissatisfied with their situation. These people may experience

feelings of deprivation because they have strong desires for security which cannot be satisfied, either because of the sorts of characteristics mentioned earlier which make some jobs (or sectors) more unstable, or because the desire for security is found to be incompatible with the achievement of some other equally strong objective. People likely to be in most distress, it seems, are those who particularly desire guaranteed continual employment and/or income, and those most fearing their chances of regaining work easily once made redundant and unemployed.

Thus, we might expect such people in distress to tend towards certain characteristic types: - they may be family men with financial commitments seeking stability of employment and income; they may be older men - (or men who can see old age approaching); or they may be unskilled men - (or men whose skills have gradually lost their former market power). It seems less likely that these men, who need to build up their years of service, who possibly lack confidence and/or power in the market, will voluntarily change jobs to any great degree - at least within engineering - the less so the lighter the general state of demand for labour.

However, it would be incorrect to suggest that everybody in the unstable sector - or who has experienced unstable employment in the past - was particularly distressed at their lack of security. People valued security but not everybody was consciously concerned with following strategies deliberately calculated to building up future protection. Some people had other goals in mind, like maximising income, doing interesting work, working outdoors, or escaping from monotony etc.

Such goals could and indeed frequently did involve 'chopping and changing' companies. These people possibly did not feel they particularly needed the protection of a secure job. Possibly they had a skill which was very much in demand; or they were at any age when jobs were plentiful; or they were in a position in the life-cycle that was free from family induced responsibilities and commitments. These people you would not expect to find in a secure protected sector simply because they have never stayed anywhere long enough to build up

the years, or had any strong motivation to do so. These people tend to have had a multiple work history that was largely voluntarily induced. These men we have called 'Voluntary Multiple Job Changers'.

One such man was Mr Haigh, a Tool-Maker in his early fifties, who worked at 9 places before settling for Scotswood. At least until he got married he "liked to move around". Only once - apart from the final closure - was movement induced by redundancies:

F.P. "Is it a kind of feature of your trade to be sort of 'in-and-out'?"

L.H. "Oh no ... no. It was when I was young and single you know. I liked to move around you know; you got fed up with one job and you went to another job. I went to Churchills, Barfords, Caterpillar ... Michell Bearings."

Mr Haigh's pattern of job change apparently altered when he got married - i.e. it appears he voluntarily stopped 'chopping and changing' and sought stability and safety - the significance of which is strengthened by similar statements made elsewhere. A further important fact was that demand for his skills was heavy. A strategy of voluntary 'chop and change' would seem to suppose not only a desire but also the opportunity; and of course the more a person is aware of opportunity the less it is likely that he will be security-minded.

F.P. "Is there any single reason why you changed jobs so much?"

L.H. "To get experience."

F.P. "To get experience. Is it common amongst men of your trade?"

L.H. "Well, it was at the time. It was ... because jobs were pretty easy to get. You know; I mean, like, you heard a bloke say "there's a good job in Churchills", you know, and you'd say "oh well" - they're good maybe for their conditions. I didn't think when I was younger the way I think today; I would say "oh, I'll try there" ... "I'll go there", you know. I went to Barfords and found it wasn't all it was cracked up to be. So I went back to Scotswood; It's just a phase that you go through I think. You know,

you get browned off and you say "Oh I'll go to Churchills", and if anything came up I went for the job at Churchills; and I went there and I found that was even worse! Oh it was terrible! I said "Oh let's get another job", and then I went back to Vickers."

Mr Haigh said that his jumping about stopped after he got married and as he got older. In fact immediately prior to the closure he had notched up about 16 continuous years of service and he was on the way to becoming a long-term server. Moreover, he was in a section - the Tool Room - that was not subject to much fluctuation and he was known as a particularly skilful tradesman. He was in a very safe job - bar total closure. He would have been very reluctant to have voluntarily given it up.

One of the significant features of Mr Haigh's job history is that he was apparently able to stop 'jumping about' at will. This could be simply a matter of luck - for example he might have ended up in a firm just at the right time when there was a high general demand for that firm's products; but it also seems likely that it had something to do with the nature of his skill i.e. on the one hand it was possibly less prone to redundancy, and on the other it was in high demand; and therefore Mr Haigh may have been less at risk to involuntary job change. This perhaps contrasts with Mr Hickson earlier who seemed to have particular difficulty in escaping at will from the unstable sector.

A major drawback of jumping about - whether voluntarily or involuntarily induced - is that you do not get established anywhere. This means you are always liable for redundancy. What is more, some believed, your position worsens with each subsequent redundancy. Mr Strong certainly believed this:

B.S. "It snowballs you see. It's a vicious circle. The shorter the period you stay with a firm the worse off you are. This is why I still maintain that if you can get a job - a steady job - in a firm where you know you're going to be in for life - you're in that firm for life - you're much better



off, rather than chopping and changing."

F.P. "You have to get established there do you?"

B.S. "You've got to get established, yes."

F.P. "So you're not the last in?"

B.S. "That's the idea, yes."

Such instability, being always liable for redundancy - might not be so bad if times are good, jobs are plentiful, and you are in demand. But when times are bad, like now, 'chopping and changing' can be a risky business. You only have a tenuous hold on your job and if you lose it before you have managed to fix yourself up somewhere else you could be in a serious situation, and the weaker your power in the market the riskier it can be. The physically infirm, the unskilled, and the old, may particularly have a lot to fear; and awareness of market weakness influences career strategy:

Mr Williams explained:

"(moving about and chasing the money) only goes to a certain extent. I mean you come to a peak like when you know, you can chase the money for so long and then you say to yourself 'well, hold it, I've got to get settled in somewhere'."

F.P. "When you start getting a bit older?"

B.W. "That's right, aye. Aye. Oh aye ... oh aye, I mean, you can't afford to chop and change around now. You hang on to the job you've got ... because if you don't well obviously you're 'last in first out' again aren't you?"

F.P. "People's minds work like this?"

B.W. "Oh aye. Of course. Oh aye. They say 'We'll hang on' and they hang on and they hang on. 'There's always somebody arriving after me; well he's out before me if he comes in after me'."

So people might hang on, try and get established, and put years between themselves and the last starters. Alternatively they might get out altogether and go for something - perhaps a completely different industry - that they believe to be safer. One such sector of employment apparently widely believed to be 'safer' was the Post Office.

Mr Morris, a Capstan/Setter/Operator from Tress:

"People get to a certain age, I think security starts to look more important than money, you know. Say if you're getting past 40, like, you start thinking, "Well, I'll go somewhere else and I might be there (only) five years and I'll be 45 and it'll be harder and harder to get a job", you know, whereas if you go to the Post Office you've got more-or-less a job for life."

So it follows that if you have expectations of being in a weak market situation in the future then you might follow strategies calculated to reduce later risk; and with a bit of luck, you might, by the time the years of risk arrive, have established for yourself a secure position. You might have built up your years of service and/or got away from those jobs or industries more prone to fluctuation and redundancy.

And indeed it is a major observation of this chapter that some men did consciously stay 'immobile' at Scotswood precisely because they thought that they would thereby secure a measure of protection - and that subsequent to closure some deliberately left the 'unstable' Engineering industry for 'safe' employment, like the Post Office.

But as has been pointed out not everybody sought security or were engaged in establishing themselves. Clearly the decision to take a particular course of action, to follow a particular strategy, to seek a prime objective, varies according to a number of variables and contextual circumstances. Age, position in the life-cycle, level and scarcity of skill, and perceptions and expectations of employment chances etc. have all been mentioned as important differentiating conditions.

#### Post-Closure

Also important - particularly, perhaps, in present times - is the state of demand for Engineering labour in general. In a situation, such as now, where it is not simply individual factories but a whole

region or even industry which has a shortfall in demand, lack of confidence in the capacity of the trade to secure you a future becomes widespread.

Richard Kenilworth, a machine operator/labourer from Tress, in his mid-forties, spoke the minds of many when he said:

"To me, factory work to me is not ... it's very unsettling. To me that's one industry - like Engineering - such as that where you're here today and gone tomorrow like as far as I'm concerned - in this day and age. I think you're on a tight rope. Every factory in this country is on a tight-rope. I think they're all looking over their shoulders."

Charles Wetson, a 30 year old time-served fitter from Tress, also said:

C.W. "I want to keep out of factories (now) if possible."  
 F.P. "Any factories? Or just engineering?"  
 C.W. "Well engineering mainly."  
 F.P. "Because you don't trust them any more?"  
 C.W. "Ha! ... Basically I don't trust any factory any more."  
 F.P. "They're all likely to close, do you mean?"  
 C.W. "Mostly the engineering now I think. I mean you would never believe Vickers shutting theirs' down."

Finally Mr Williamson, a non time-served Miller from Scotswood echoed the general view:

"Let's face it, you could never say 'well I've got two years work on'. You could never say now 'I've got two years work' because you just don't know what's going to happen."

In view of such a widespread opinion of the lack of security to be found in Engineering it was not surprising, then, to find that some people appeared to have made a conscious effort to gain employment outside the industry.

Tommy Tomlinson worked at Tress as a Fitter for about 15 years after leaving school but by the time of the interview he had been unable to

find suitable employment since the redundancy 25 months earlier and he had been applying for jobs outside his trade. Although this was undoubtedly partly a consequence of the fact that he was simply unable to get a job in an Engineering factory to his liking, (he tried firms such as Vickers, Parsons, Churchills, British Engines etc.) it could also possibly reflect a lack of confidence in his trade as a work ticket:

F.P. "When you say you'd tried for jobs outside your trade, does that mean that you would never want to go back into your trade?"

T.T. "Well I wouldn't say that I wouldn't want to go back into the trade, it's just that the trade's not ... it's not there at the minute, like, you know, it's not worth it ... not with being a tradesman."

F.P. "Do you mean money-wise or job-wise?"

T.T. "Job wise; you're not guaranteed jobs now, like, in a trade - especially Engineering."

For Tommy Tomlinson, serving an apprenticeship and learning a trade had not paid the dividends he expected, particularly in regard to a secure future.

Another man who had never worked outside Engineering but who had his confidence in the trade destroyed was Chris Teacher. Mr Teacher was around 40 years old, a time-served tradesman from Scotswood, and married with young children, and who until recently would never have dreamed of taking a job outside Engineering. Looking for security, however, he tried for a postman's job:

"I couldn't see any future at all ... you've got to be looking for security, and just at the moment - well, for the past 5 or 6 years there just hasn't been any security in Engineering, you know. I mean, you could change your job and you could say to your new employer "Well, how long can you guarantee me working?" and they can't give you a guarantee you know.

My choice was the Post Office because I thought I would have more security in the Post Office. I never really thought about other

things."

Many people thought that if Scotswood could close down 'nowhere's safe', and if whole factories are shutting up then 'there's no such thing as security in engineering any more'. No skills are guaranteed employment and when a whole industry is contracting nobody is unaffected.

However, this tendency for some people to be moving out of engineering was not necessarily simply a consequence of widespread pessimism about the general demand that could be expected to come from the industry in the future. It could also partly be an attempt by people to get out of the particularly risky unstable sector i.e. the people who - voluntarily or involuntarily - were engaged in a pattern of multiple job change, as well as people who had only recently 'fallen' from a previous state of single employer stability.

Amongst the Scotswood sample men had to face the fact that total factory closure had the consequence of their losing their positions in the protected sector; and that, moreover, without the years of service to buttress them, starting afresh at a new engineering place increased their chances of being 'first out' in the event of further redundancies. Consequently, by compounding their insecure status as last starters with their pessimism about the general lack of demand in Engineering, many people faced the prospect of getting trapped into a cycle of involuntary recurrent unemployment.

Allen Halliday, a tradesman in his fifties, was a man who felt the pressure:

"It's the same people all the time. This is it! That's like me. Now if I'm finished at Bird's Engineering ... you know, I mean if it happens that I'm - we're going on short time next week - but if it happens that there's another redundancy then - I mean, I'm in the tool-room: fair enough, it might pass us by but ... but if I was in the workforce again I would have been out! So I went to another firm; I was offered a job at 'Carsons Engineering' actually. You know, when I looked like getting finished at Bird's I rang up Carsons. He said "Can you start tomorrow?" so I

was straight into another job again. Do you understand what I mean? But if it had come to redundancy at Bird's I was going to be first out again there. So I would go on all the time until I retire because I was 'last-in first-out'. And this is what's hapening."

The fear of being pushed into instability - of joining the 'Involuntary Multiple Job Changers' - and not knowing when it will end, could be enough to motivate men to try and get out of the volatile engineering industry into an area believed to be more stable - even, sometimes, at the cost of lower pay or less status. Such a motivation, of course, would likely be strongest in those particularly highly orientated towards security. Age again seems to be a particularly significant conditioning factor - a factor that seems to operate regardless of skill.

Mr Halliday was in his fifties and despite apparently being an exceptionally gifted engineer even he seriously considered getting out of the trade - for work which he clearly thought was of much lower status but which had, for him, the very powerful attraction of promising long and stable employment.

"I'll tell you what, I wrote away for - that's when this Bird's business was on - for a storekeeper at the P.T.E.I - because it seemed to me as though it was a job for life there."

Another man who had suffered a dramatic fall from protection to insecurity and who was particularly conscious of his age was Mr Straw.

Mr Straw was a labourer in his late 40's who worked over 20 continuous years at Scotswood. He was very fortunate and got another labouring job in another large engineering company; however, although he was thankful to have a job he was quite aware that as one of the last in he could soon be made redundant again; and if this happened he feared it could be some time before he regained work. The closure had for him particularly severe consequences; his life-style changed from one based on comparative stability and predictability, to one conditioned by constant feelings of unsettlement and apprehension - a consequence of losing his Scotswood protection:

"I have a nervous stomach as it is, and it was just getting on top of us, you know. I mean it still is now with this threat of redundancy. I mean, I've been fortunate ... as I said, our shop, now you've got a lot of old-timers and they volunteered to get their money, but if they hadn't volunteered I would have been out; I mean, they're even talking about it now ... even taking people off night-shift and all that you know. Well, there's three lads came in after me and I'm the fourth. They were talking about taking three lads off. So you know.

At one time, if you had been 20 odd years at Vickers, you'd think "Oh, I'm here for life" .. but now I'm up at this place, every time there's talk of redundancies it seems to, you know ... it hits here (in the stomach)."

Mr Straw had good reason for feeling concerned because he knew that, as a labourer, and as an older man, he was likely to have a particularly hard time finding work. It was not at all surprising to find that he felt very nervous and insecure. He was in a very weak market situation, and he had lost his 'long service' protection. So weak, in fact, was his market position, that for him simply having a job - any job - would be his main objective.

Consequently, with very pessimistic evaluations of his employment chances in mind, any further redundancy would very likely induce him to go after or accept jobs which might be ignored or refused by others - particularly, (he suggested) the young:

"I think if it was just average money I would take the job just to have a job. I would! I mean Brian Smith was telling me that their place for a tradesman - he's on piecework at 'Jones Brothers' and Peter Henderson is the same - he works just over Blaydon - the wages are terrible! You know. But it's a job. You've got to take it. I mean, because they're lads, I mean, they're 56 ... 58, they might never get a chance; they've got to hang on to that; but a younger lad won't stand for it. You know, he'll drift away where the money is."

As an older man, Mr Straw believed that there was less options open to

him with job opportunities being few and far between. If he refused one offer who knew how long it would be until the next one came up? And meanwhile he had to exist on the Dole and suffer the status of unemployment.

Finally, another man who had dropped heavily in security status and who was only very weakly committed to staying in engineering was Mr Mason. Again, age appeared to be a significant feature. But also pertinent was that Mr Mason believed he simply had not got the 'outlook' of a 'chop and changer'.

Like the other men - Mr Halliday and Mr Straw - Allen Mason had a fear of getting trapped in a re-current redundancy cycle. Again, he was around the fifty year old mark and again he had never been unemployed prior to the closure. Consequently he was not accustomed to short term employment, nor, of course, short-term security. Since Scotswood he got another job in his trade of 'Turner', but at the time of interview he was expecting to be paid off again. He did not like the experience of six months unemployment after Scotswood and he did not relish the idea of it happening again:

"As I say, I'm expecting to be on the Dole again in 5 or 6 weeks, and if this happens like, I want to be out of Engineering. This is ... from my point of view it's common sense to be out now because any Engineering Works ... as I say I haven't got a lot of faith in Engineering now, the way things are heading. Any Engineering Works at my age I'm going in and if there's any recession in the works at all and anybody's paid off it'll be 'last-in first-out', and I'll be one of them. And I worked for Vickers 37 years and I'm not the kind of bloke that wants a job for 6 months, 3 months or whatever, and then look for somewhere else. I want a job where I'm settled. That's the way I like to work.

What I'd like is a steady secure job, and I can't see one in Engineering nowadays."

Moving from protection at Scotswood into an insecure work pattern was a big shock for Mr Mason. He could see himself embarking on a path of



erratic multiple job change and he did not like the prospect. A combination of the Depression, being last-in, and his age, all seemed to him to be pushing him towards this end. He had a strong motivation to get out into a safe environment - a motivation strengthened, he claimed, by a work history that had instilled into him attitudes antipathetic to a strategy of 'Chop and Change'.

A.M. "Most of the blokes on my section at Scotswood - long-time service you know - they'll probably feel the same as me; we want a steady job."

F.P. "Is it ingrained into people?"

A.M. "I think so, yes. Yes, I think it's ingrained into people. In fact, if I'd floated about when I was younger - like some did, you know - chasing money and what not - I might not have been settled now; but, as I say, you get into a steady job and you're in a long time and you get into a rut. And it becomes a way of life for you."

So people would develop an orientation towards securing steady employment, and, it follows, they could seek to consciously select employment which they expect - rightly or wrongly - to be secure and avoid employment - like engineering - which is likely to be short term. The degree to which 'security' would be a priority will, of course, differ from person to person and according to circumstance. Moreover, not being able to get a preferred secure job does not mean that less than ideal employment would necessarily be rejected. Allen Mason, for example, would have taken a job in Engineering:

"Don't get me wrong. I might have to start in Engineering again when this job pays off. I might have to. But it won't be through choice. It'll be because there's nothing else."

It seems even an insecure Engineering job could be better than life on the dole.

## Conclusions

Controlling your life, being able to choose an individual life-style, and being able to move towards some goal, possibly projected far into the future, is one aspect of what having security means. Vickers Scotswood was seen by some as the sort of place that you could (a) depend upon and (b) in which you could build yourself a career. You could depend upon it to provide you with if not a large income at least a regular one; and when you have got financial commitments or you simply want to plan ahead for holidays, or such like, a regular predictable income is what you want. Moreover, unlike a lot of small new companies Scotswood had been there for nearly 100 years; it seemed established; it seemed sound; and it was not likely to simply disappear overnight; so Scotswood seemed a safe company to which to commit yourself. For young people in particular Scotswood also offered the prospect of upward mobility. It was a large company inside which you might expect opportunities to arise; and especially in later years when there was an expansion in non productive occupations in planning, progressing, and the such like, and when it became established that jobs should be advertised internally first before going to the outside market, opportunities for promotion did exist.

With its dependability and long term possibilities, therefore, Scotswood provided the possibility of 'a future'. People who are never sure what the next day will bring tend to live for the immediate i.e. their time horizons are short; and they adapt their life-styles accordingly; long term risks are minimised. If you were fortunate enough to get established at Scotswood, however, your horizons could lengthen and your credit worthiness increase; you could buy a car or a house. You could think long term and plan accordingly.

Security, however, is not necessarily sought for the conditions it provides for positive forward planning. It has a second aspect; an essentially negative defensive one; this aspect lays emphasis on protection and it has most appeal to those with most to fear unemployment. As market-power is reduced it is perhaps this second aspect which comes to the fore; the worker becomes more concerned with

holding his position and maintaining what he has got, rather than progressing on to other things. The immediate short term becomes of more concern than any future plans, other than the most defensive ones.

E. Wight Bakke, in his book "The Unemployed Man" noticed that it was this second aspect which characterised the men he studied in the Depression years of the 30's:

"Another characteristic of the way in which the worker protects his future is this. It is 'security' rather than 'ambition' foresight. The emphasis is not upon making aggressive plans which will ultimately lead me to a better position or a larger income, or a more secure job. The emphasis is not upon avoiding insecurity by climbing away from it; it is upon consolidating the position already occupied, making sure that such advantages as one has do not slip through one's fingers."<sup>1</sup>

One of the ways men 'defend their position' is to stay where they are; risk is minimised. At a time of extreme unemployment, like now, even the most detested jobs may be 'stuck out' - a job becomes nothing more than 'a job'. In a 1978 survey in North Shields<sup>2</sup> one third of the employed men interviewed were said to be staying immobile rather than increase their risk of unemployment by moving to another job. Stagnation in a disliked job, according to the survey, was perceived as the rational course of action to take in a context of high unemployment.

Defensively orientated security strategies, are not simply confined to periods of high unemployment. This we have seen. People's market-power can be seriously weakened whatever the overall level of activity in the economy. The onset of middle-age is especially seen as a time for 'getting settled in' somewhere. Skill, redundancy or the loss of a 'generalised' skill is a further inducement. Consequently, workers may stay immobile even when the general level of economic demand is quite high. This was the case for some of the men at Scotswood.

In fact, Scotswood tended to provide the conditions for people to follow both 'positive' and 'negative' security strategies; that is to say, people saw it as a place for getting in and getting on and as a

place for settling in and staying put.

In this latter respect it was necessary for a person first of all to get established. As we have seen, the job structure tended to be objectively bisected between a stable and unstable sector - a division mirrored in other Tyneside engineering firms - such that some workers were more secure than others. Once established in the stable sector, however, Scotswood workers did feel relatively secure; and many thought they would be working there until retirement.

The bases of the relative security within the stable sector appears to have been a combination of a number of factors, such that the more a person was favourably disposed in regard to them the better off he was. Of these, perhaps the most significant ones were: The operation of the union principle: "last-in, first-out" - which, of course, gave preferential treatment to 'first-starters' - The "lengths of runs of work" - which tended to favour some skills more than others, and some people engaged on some 'jobs' rather than others; in this latter respect it was not unusual for some of the long term servers to be engaged on the same 'job' for most of their work-lives - and, possibly, managerial protection, in the form of temporary transfers etc. for people of particular value to the Company - particularly, perhaps, people with unusual or plant specific skills, the replacement of which might be difficult or/and costly.

These differences in 'objective' stability do not appear to be solely perceptions of the detached analyst, nor simply some abstract categories of an academic theory; people appeared themselves to be aware of differential opportunities for security, and in response to this awareness were likely to pursue strategies calculated to be appropriate for their circumstances. Consequently, it seems that both in the past, and even, albeit to a lesser degree, in present times, people may have been exercising some measure of self-selection of jobs. This exercise of choice, however limited, could be an important factor in labour market operations.

This measure of self-selection, however, does not mean that everybody in fact necessarily managed to establish themselves in the type of

employment they particularly wanted; it was pointed out, for example, that some people strongly desiring 'security' were unsuccessful in their endeavours because of the existence of one or more of a number of factors, including:

- a) The existence of forces making certain groups - apparently those with certain skills and those 'last-in' - more prone to redundancy.
- b) The existence of selective recruitment practices, such as, for example, where young men may in some circumstances be preferred to old, or women to men.
- c) The existence of apparently incompatible objectives; thus people with strong desires for both security and (relatively) high income (e.g. men with families and a mortgage) may have been unable to find employment offering both rewards; in these cases the achievement of one objective may not have lessened strong feelings of being deprived of the other.

In this latter respect, there was evidence that subsequent to the Scotswood closure many people were highly conscious of being faced with a choice between leaving unstable engineering and going after something believed more secure - like the Post Office - but at an expected cost of lower income and/or status; and, staying in engineering, getting higher pay, but experiencing strong feelings of insecurity. Many of the men feeling this way would have dropped from the stable protected sector at Scotwood into unstable employment, and with being 'last-in' might very well have expected to be 'first-out'; but even before the closure, however, there were men in the unstable sector at Scotswood - men who had not established themselves - who felt this way.

These men, who were either restricted to the insecure unprotected sector at Scotswood or had since the closure 'dropped' into other insecure employments, tended to be - (or were likely to become) - members of the group referred to as 'Involuntary Multiple Job Changers' - a group the most salient characteristic of which is the state of being particularly vulnerable to suffering recurrent unemployment.

Other men did not seem particularly concerned to gain security and give high priority to other goals from work. They included amongst their number a group described as 'Voluntary Multiple Job Changers' - although there could have been 'unconcerned' men amongst the 'Involuntary Multiple Job Changer' group as well. The men who seemed less concerned about security as a goal tended to be young and/or single. A major influence on the roving attitudes of many of these people could have been the relative strength of their market-power. The suggestion was, however, that these men were unlikely to remain unconcerned all of their working lives; evidence suggests that the voluntary roaming is likely to stop as market-power is reduced - as men get older and/or skills are devalued - and/or when men get married and the inherent risk of unemployment involved in 'chopping and changing' is thought to be incompatible with family objectives. Thus it is that there may be attempts to get established before it is too late. Attempts may be made to get employment popularly thought of as guaranteed for life - in a large engineering firm like Scotswood, or maybe even outside engineering like the Post Office; or they may simply try to 'hang on' where they are and build up the years.

The degree of importance given to the objective of 'security' varies, but variables of particular significance appear to be life-cycle position, the state of demand, skills and age.

'Age' has been highlighted in this chapter as being of special importance; it would appear to be a factor of considerable significance for all skill groups. It would seem that age could be significant both within a skill group - e.g. older tradesmen may be disadvantaged in respect to younger tradesmen - and in getting access to a skill group e.g. changing from a skilled or unskilled position to a semi-skilled one, or vice-versa - whether this be done on the internal labour market or the external market.

Reluctance to recruit older man for some types of jobs occurs both inside and outside engineering. This seems to be particularly the case where recruitment tends to be at the bottom of semi-skilled hierarchies, and, possibly, where the work is of a physically arduous

or rapid kind.

Only older men with particularly valued skills would seem to have good employment prospects; other older men may become increasingly security conscious as opportunities for employment are reduced. It may in fact be that secure employment for these men may only be achieved at the cost of a very high trade-off in terms of pay and/or other conditions. Older men may feel constrained to take, or stick with, jobs other younger men would not stand. At the same time, it seems likely that some types of 'dead end' and/or low-paid jobs - but nevertheless possibly stable jobs - may be reserved as 'suitable' for older men - for men, that is, who are not likely to leave for something better.

**References**

1. Bakke, E.W., "The Unemployed Man", (Nisbet, 1933, Pg.43)
2. North Tyneside Community Development Project, "In and Out of Work" (1978)



## CHAPTER VI

Job Interest/Repetitive Work/Women's Work

In the tables in Chapter III the most frequently mentioned aspect of Scotswood that was appreciated was that the work was interesting or satisfying. At Tress, in contrast, an appreciation of such intrinsic aspects came low down the scale.

In the same tables it was shown that at Tress the most frequently mentioned aspect that was appreciated was the pay that could be earned. At Scotswood, in contrast, the 'pay' came low down.

The aim of this chapter is to expand upon these contrasting findings and to discuss in general the significance of 'Job Interest' as a structuring agent in labour market operations.

As in the case of Chapter V on 'security', in this chapter extensive use will be made of quotation in the course of explanation. 92% of Scotswood respondents and 77% of our Tress respondents referred adequately to the subject of 'job interest' or interest-related matters; this section, therefore, is based on the statements of those 86% of all our respondents (71 people) who talked about job-interest, or job-interest-related, subjects.

Introduction

According to the tables in Chapter III, 66% of Scotswood respondents referred to liking Vickers Scotswood as a place of work in respect of the types of jobs that were done; this compares to only 14% of Tress respondents.

In contrast, only 6% of Scotswood respondents mentioned that the work at their former work-place was 'dissatisfying', 'boring', 'monotonous' etc.; this compares to 28% of Tress respondents.

In brief, therefore, the men from Scotswood were much more likely to be aware of and mention an appreciation of intrinsically interesting work. Tress men, at the same time, were much more likely to be aware

of and mention a regret about monotonous work. Even so, the percentage of only 28% mentioning job dissatisfaction at Tress was not in fact particularly high; this reflects, we believe, not the existence of interesting satisfying jobs - (only 14% above mentioned a liking for interesting work at Tress) - but, rather, the fact that the Tress men tended to give less weight and significance to the intrinsic nature of the work; repetitive or boring work may not have been seen as a particular disadvantage, as it would have been for many from Scotswood. This may have been partly a consequence of differences in work values, orientations and priorities - Tress men, for example, seemed to contain a large number who were particularly money conscious - but it may also reflect a significant difference in expectation - more of the Tress men, with their largely unskilled and semi-skilled backgrounds, would have been less likely to expect interesting satisfying work.

In the previous chapter we suggested the existence of 'security' or 'lack of security' as a structuring influence on those with appropriate orientations. For analytical purposes we distinguished between an 'objective' job structure which was sectorally divided along 'stable'/'unstable' lines and 'subjective' orientations whereby individuals would differ according to the weight they gave 'security' as a work objective. Thus whether or not people who were particularly security conscious achieved satisfaction would depend on whether they managed to establish themselves in a stable sector of the job structure. To some extent achieving security could be a consequence of workers forsaking job opportunities more attractive on other dimensions but more inherently unstable. This element of 'choice' suggested that a labour market model presuming simply hierarchy would be invalid.

A complicated picture of both hierarchical and lateral structuring and movement in the labour market emerges further in this chapter. Here we describe a job structure that was significantly differentiated according to the availability of interesting or satisfying work. Jobs occupied positions on a range, the two extreme ends of which we characterise thus: at one end was particularly interesting work - work that has a long completion time span, tends to vary, is mentally stimulating, with a tendency for active worker domination and control over the object of his work; at the other extreme was particularly

monotonous work - work that is of short duration, repetitive, mentally boring, and a tendency for worker subordination to machine dictat. Jobs could be more or less interesting according to which pole of the above range they approached. Which positions on this range people occupied was largely determined - as in the case of 'security' - by both 'structural' and 'action' determinants.

Structural determinants governed in particular the terms of choice ie the range of opportunities open to the individual. The most obvious significant structural determinant amongst our male samples was 'skill'; men with the greater skills had better access to the more interesting jobs, and this fact gave the labour market on the dimension of 'job interest' a strong hierarchical character; the best jobs would tend to go to those who were time-served and the worst jobs to those with no skills at all. Thus a major way of achieving an objective of interesting work would be to move upwards by improving your skills. For some men, especially labourers in Tress, such a strategy was certainly a possibility.

However to present and explain labour movement in pursuit of job interest simply in terms of hierarchical opportunity and straight-forward hierarchical progression would have been inadequate. Account had to be taken of the fact that jobs offering high returns on the dimension of 'job interest' might not necessarily do so on other valued rewards, that people may have had a variety of possibly conflicting work objectives, and that the pursuit of 'job interest' might incur unacceptable 'trade-off' costs. Thus both the objective distribution of work characteristics and the variations in people's orientations, promoted the need to make choices, inducing thereby lateral, as well as hierarchical, movement.

Whilst it was the case for a strong tendency for 'better' or 'worse' jobs on certain dimensions - such as 'job interest', 'pay', 'status' etc - to generally follow a hierarchical line from 'lower' to 'higher' skill, it was not the case that the best jobs on one dimension necessarily ranked the best on another. In particular in this chapter we show that the most interesting jobs were not necessarily the best paying, and that significant divergence can occur above the level of the unskilled between interesting satisfying jobs and higher paid (but monotonous) - normally piece-work - jobs. At the same time these higher paid jobs can also rank low on 'security' and be of low attraction on 'effort'.

It was quite possible that a semi-skilled worker, such as many of the 'machine men' at Tress, could earn more, on piece-work, than a time-served tradesman - such as many of the men at Scotswood - doing 'quality' time-consuming jobs. Here lay, therefore, a major 'lateral' cut across any simple hierarchical model. The skilled men were faced with a choice, and their decision of whether or not to sacrifice job interest (as well as possibly 'security' and an easier 'effort' rate) and chase the money would depend on their orientations. Men at Scotswood seemed to be particularly orientated towards 'job interest' and so it is likely that they chose to stay where they were. Tress machine men, on the other hand, barred as they were from the most interesting work, did not have such a stark choice - although even had they the choice many may still have selected Tress because of the (relatively) high monetary returns it offered.

The fact, then, that skilled men's jobs did not necessarily rank highest on all major valued work returns - including, in particular, 'pay' - encouraged some skilled workers to consider 'trade-offs' across skill boundaries. Yet, despite very important cross currents on dimensions such as 'security', 'pay', 'job interest', and 'effort', the Newcastle engineering labour market still maintained an essentially hierarchical character. Even though the more interesting and skilled jobs could be worse than semi-skilled jobs in terms of pay, it was still the case that both these higher skill categories tended to contain jobs offering greater interest and higher pay than could be found in the skill categories lower down. Moreover, this hierarchical character was made even more pronounced by the differential distribution of individual opportunity for choice. Tradesmen could have the option to go for interesting work or high paid repetitive work, whilst, of course, most semi-skilled men would by definition be banned from the most skilled interesting jobs. Thus tradesmen surveyed the market from a superior position or higher plane.

A cut-back in job opportunities for those skilled men who chose interesting work could induce them to re-orientate themselves and go after 'second choices' - of a type likely to be equally or better paid, but more monotonous, semi-skilled jobs. A further cut back in jobs amongst the semi-skilled could induce the semi-skilled men, and some skilled men, to take lower paid jobs amongst the unskilled. Those men who actually initially 'chose' unskilled jobs - perhaps for reasons of less effort, preference for outdoor work, or whatever - could find themselves in competition with those who had 'traded down'.

The essential theme of this chapter, then, is that the labour market is characterised by a complicated meshing of both hierarchical and lateral principles of organisation. The conclusion is a tentative one that hierarchy tends to dominate, but the variation in job attributes is such and the variation in work objectives is such that conditions for calculative trade-offs and choices may exist and promote much stronger lateral movement than perhaps is currently thought by social scientists to be the case.

## Vickers Scotswood

The Works Convenor of Scotswood, a time-served man, when asked why he thought men stayed at Scotswood gave an answer which we have broadly confirmed in our study:

P.W. "I feel people liked going to Vickers because (1) It was a safe firm to work for."

F.P. "Once you had been there a certain length of time?"

P.W. "That's right. And (2) You did a canny class of work when you were there, and you did get a bit of variation. (3) You had this good family-type atmosphere."

Reason (1) 'A safe firm to work for', has been dealt with in the previous chapter. Reason (2) 'A canny class of work' and a 'bit of variation' will be dealt with in this chapter.

The work at Scotswood was known to be of 'a good class'; jobs required a high quality finish; tolerances tended to be fine; work tended to be complicated. And with being a 'jobbing shop' there was over the years a big variety of work. Allen Hall, a jig-borer:

A.H. "I think Vickers was a damn good place to serve your time and it was a good factory to work in - because they had such a variety of work ... Vickers was a good place to work; they had a good class of work."

And of course the nature and 'class' of the work required a suitably qualified workforce - particularly skilful men who tended to take a pride in their work and indeed a pride in being associated with Vickers. Three skilled men:

Tommy Clarke "When I do a job I like to do it right. You get the way that you like to do a job right. You get a lot of blokes who couldn't care less. But I would rather take a little bit longer and do a good job. You've got to have a bit of pride in doing the job, you know."

John Lyle "I don't think I would fancy working in any place that sort of mass produces jobs. I like to have the sort of feeling

when I've finished a job: "I've done it" - and not the machine-pride in your work, like."

Ron            "They had all the skills down there to build anything.  
Davidson    Anything you'd care to mention they could do it, down there  
             ... I think everybody that worked in Scotswood was proud.  
             It was known as a first class engineering place."

The work of the skilled men at Vickers Scotswood tended strongly towards the 'Interesting' end of the range 'Interesting'-'Monotonous' work mentioned earlier; that is to say you were apt to find at Scotswood 'work that had a long completion time span, tended to vary, was mentally stimulating, with a tendency for active worker domination and control over the object of his work' (see page 117). This type of work - work of a 'one-off' kind - was clearly appreciated by those averse to more 'repetitive' working practices.

Brian        "You were doing different operations everyday. This was the  
Strong        attraction I think at Scotswod. It wasn't repetitive.  
(Machine    Scotswood Works did a lot of 'one-offs'.  
Shop  
Foreman)

Colin        "I couldn't stand repetitive work. No. That was another  
Teacher      thing about Vickers; it was what you call a one-off factory.  
(Horiz-      Practically every job you did, every job you machined, was  
ontal        different. And you had the variation. So you never used to  
Borer)      get bored."

Allen        "I've never done repetitive work. I couldn't do that, no.  
Hall        No! No. No. No, I would get sick. Even when I was at  
(Jig        Scotswood there and you got, say, a batch of 20 or 30 off,  
Borer)      after you'd done half of them you were just up to here,  
             sick."

At Scotswood after the mid-60's the payment system changed from one based on piecework to one giving a guaranteed flat-rate plus works production bonus; thus a man's earnings were no longer directly tied in to his individual rate of effort. Men were no longer 'chasing the clock'. Time could be taken to get the job right. You could apply

more skill; and for some this gave more satisfaction. George Brown compared the dominant ethos of Scotswood with his current post-redundancy employment where the primary objective was a quick turn round:

G.B. "I don't think (at the present job) it's the same quality as what Vickers turned out because (at Vickers) you took your time; you did a job properly."

F.P. "Does that bother you? Would you prefer to go for quality?"

G.B. "Well, I'm used to quality; I was more used to quality. I mean I like it right, and I double check it. You haven't got time to double check it here."

At Scotswood the payment system positively encouraged people to take their time; in these circumstances, where individual effort is divorced from individual earnings, and where men have the incentive and the opportunity to apply thought and skill to the job, the attraction of 'one-off' work is enhanced and 'repetitive' work diminished.

### Tress Engineering

At Tress Engineering, in contrast to Scotswood, a lot of the work tended to be repetitive, with short completion time spans; this particularly applied to the work of the large number of machine-operators and attendants and most of the assembly fitters, all of whom were on piecework. It did not apply, however, to some of the labourers and a number of skilled tradesmen: electricians, maintenance workers, tool-room workers - who were on a day-rate plus factory production bonus. Robert Chelsea was a maintenance fitter, and as one of the men doing skilled work, carrying out a variety of operations, he did not find his work as boring as others doing more restricted activities:

R.C. "It's (Maintenance Fitting) not a boring job you know; there's not the same thing to do twice; it's always different; it's not like you're pressing a button all the time all the day you know."



Working on maintenance Robert Chelsea was not on piece-work; he took as long as he needed to get the job right; for him time was not money. Robert Chelsea, a time-served man, received what he considered to be a reasonable wage and job satisfaction. Other men at Tress appeared to find their work less interesting.

Bob Williams, a time-served 'setter', a man who said he liked to do a quality job, regretted the 'roughness' of the work done on the machines he set at Tress. Since Tress he got another job which he preferred because there was more skill involved:

R.W. "If this job where I'm at now was at Newburn I'd be over the moon ... it's a better job altogether than at Tress ... There's more personal satisfaction for one thing because you know you're doing a good job ... you didn't have the same satisfaction in your job as what you've got here. You know when you've done a job here you've done a good job and you feel satisfied with the job. At Tress you were getting a bit bored with it."

Other men at Tress got even less satisfaction out of their work than Mr Williams; these included the men actually operating the machines set by Mr Williams, men operating or tending a variety of other machines, and men assembling together the components that the machine operators had produced. Except for the 'assembly fitters', there was a strong tendency for these men to be non-time-served. These men were engaged on largely repetitive 'production' work. These jobs did not offer much in the way of intellectual stimulation but there were other compensations. Some people liked the work because it was comparatively easy; the jobs and machinery were small so there was not too much heavy lifting; also the tolerances tended to be loose - as regretfully pointed out by Mr Williams above - and so there was less responsibility, less mental strain, and you could turn out the components quickly. But most of all the main compensation was money. The machine operators could earn good pay compared to other unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, and, as some of the time-served men at Tress complained, some of the 'machine men' could even earn, on piece-work, more than the skilled tradesmen - albeit at greater effort.

The most distinctive aspects of much of the work at Tress, in contrast

to Scotswood, were that it tended to be repetitive and it was dominated by piecework.

Like the rest of the 'machine men' the capstan operators and capstan-setter-operators were on piece-work. They were largely 'semi-skilled' men who had not served an apprenticeship but who had received a short period of training either at Tress or a government skill centre. According to Robert Chelsea (see above) such people had a different attitude to work than did people like himself - a time-served skilled maintenance fitter:

R.C. "A setter-operator; that's all repetitive work isn't it?"

F.P. "Were they just after the money?"

R.C. "Well, that's all it is; it's all piece-work - a setter-operator; you get the machines set and it's just how to get the jobs done fastest; that's all. Probably they would have different ideas, I would think, than me ... I think their main concern would be money; going where the money is."

F.P. "Just follow the money?"

R.C. "Well that's what they're working for like really; I mean the faster they're going the more money they're getting; that's what the name of the game is for them: piece-workers."

Mr Galbraith was a Capstan-Setter-Operator, trained at Tress; he had no doubt why he did the job:

J.G. "I didn't get any satisfaction out of it; as I say, I only went for the money."

Mr Simpson, a time-served 'Borer' at Tress, considered his job to be 'a job' and nothing more; he was solely in it for the money:

R.S. "That was what kept us on; I would always make a few quid more than other people. But I cannot say I was very happy at it; it was 'a job', and that was it."

For those with a particularly high economistic orientation, or those without the skills to be offered anything but repetitive work, extremely repetitive work could be interpreted as a good thing, simply

because of the possibilities it gives for earning high wages: Stan Lumbly, a time-served valve-fitter at Tress:

S.L. "At Tress we were on piece-work; so probably the fitting section were as well paid as anybody at the Tress. Of course a lot of the fitters had been at them for years and they could do the job blindfolded, especially on piecework - repetition work for 10 years; and you've found ways of doing things that nobody else would ever find. So they were pretty well paid."

But of course doing the same thing over and over again, perfecting your technique, and working fast, has the cost of removing variation and job interest. Mr C Walton, another time-served valve-fitter at Tress:

C.W. "We were called fitters but basically it was assembly work you know."

F.P. "Was it repetitive work?"

C.W. "Oh aye. Doing the same thing over and over again, day in day out; it was boring ... It was sickening, but it had to be done so you did it ... Basically I was there at Tress because the money was good."

Tony Isaacs, another non-time-served capstan-setter-operator, confirmed that the work at Tress could be repetitive and boring at times:

T.I. "I used to get bored at Tress sometimes. We had batches that could last 6 weeks; naturally you got bored doing the same thing. The more you did it the quicker you did them and the quicker you finished."

Boring as repetitive work could be, at least on piecework you had a target to aim for so you had a sort of satisfaction when you produced a certain number and you knew you had made your bonus. Allan Marton, the Tress Works Convenor, and himself drawn from the 'semi-skilled' ranks of the Capstan-Setter-Operators, supported the piecework system precisely because it gave some purpose to essentially intellectually stultifying jobs:

A.M. "I had this constant argument at Tress with a lot of people about piecework. You see if you're a teacher, or you're using your brain all the time, time passes by very very quickly; it's an interesting job. But when you're on production if there's no incentive it becomes very boring; and I was always very much in favour of piecework - to have a target to work to. I knew a lot of people who worked on jobs where they didn't want piecework, doing exactly the same as us, and they were always complaining about being bored."

Piecework was supported by the Tress union and a number of men at Scotswood, but there were still some at Tress and many at Scotswood who opposed it; this we think was mainly because piece-work and 'chasing the clock' went against the principle of taking time to do a quality job; but piece-work was also heavily criticised for the discord it causes between worker and rate-fixer, and worker and worker; and also piecework was opposed by those whose disabilities or advancing age militated against working fast and hard.

There were others who had a more ambiguous attitude. People who wished for job interest and the possibility of earning high pay recognised that the two objectives could often be incompatible. George Brown of Scotswood expressed the view that he would not like repetitive work because of the boredom but would like repetitive work because, on piecework, you could earn more money.

F.P. "You never fancied working for these car places?"

G.B. "No, because it would be boring, doing the same job over and over again all the same; I mean I like a run of work when it's piecework because you're making the money, but I think it begins to get monotonous."

It was precisely because the two desired objectives of 'high pay' and 'interesting work' were often incompatible that frequently men would be faced with a choice. Repetitive work can mean high pay; but it can also mean boredom. As we have seen, many men from Scotswood were particularly averse to repetitive work, basically on the grounds that such work offered little intrinsic satisfaction. Such aversion led

some men to discriminate against employments according to repetitive/non-repetitive criteria. Owing to the tendency towards an association between repetitive work, piecework and high earnings, however the choice often came down to one between interesting work or higher-paid, but boring work.

### The Unskilled and Women

So far we have tended to contrast the skilled jobs of the mainly time-served men at Scotswood, and some at Tress, with the 'semi-skilled' jobs of the mainly non-time-served machine-men and assembly fitters at Tress, and some at Scotswood. In this comparison we pointed out that the skilled men in our samples tended to do interesting work and the semi-skilled men do uninteresting but relatively highly paid 'production' work. In the main, most of the skilled men would have access to repetitive production jobs - including those carried out by some of the semi-skilled men - and therefore they may have been faced at times with a choice between interesting moderately paid 'one-off' work and boring higher paid 'repetitive' work. Car manufacturers were thought by our men to contain a lot of repetitive work and it was thought by some of our Scotswood sample that had a higher waged car plant opened in the North East many skilled men would have been faced with a difficult choice. The semi-skilled men of Tress, on the other hand, excluded from the most interesting jobs of the skilled men, would have had less interest to 'lose' and so would probably have found the decision of whether or not to work in a higher paid car plant less onerous.

To the extent that the semi-skilled men were excluded from the most interesting work their choice was curtailed. But this is not to say that even these men had no choice at all. It would be wrong to suggest that there was not an awareness amongst semi-skilled men, and non-skilled men in general, of jobs available to them offering varying degrees of monotony. Some jobs open to these people were considered a little more interesting than the average, and some were thought to be a lot more monotonous.

Mr Parkinson, a store-keeper, a shop-floor job, had the chance of working on the machines at Tress but he preferred the variety of his

own work:

G.P. "Working on a machine, to me it always seemed to be a boring job, with standing in the one spot doing the same thing time and time again - which was what most of the machinery at Tress was."

Mr Walgrave worked a drilling machine at Tress but he found the extreme repetitiveness monotonous; he would ideally have liked to have moved onto a capstan because there seemed to be a little more variety and 'scope'.

Mr Simon did work a capstan. Like many others he had worked his way up in Tress from a position of 'labourer'. He had no doubt that compared to his labouring jobs in the past his work at Tress was more satisfying:

F.P. "Why do you prefer engineering - because the job was better do you mean?"

R.S. "Because I've had a taste of it and I like it. I mean before then I was only a general labourer and on building sites - and the way you get mucked about on general labouring you've got no idea what it's like ... you feel like you're contributing something when you're doing what I was doing at Tress; that's the way I felt anyway ... I liked working on the machines; it's the best job I've ever had - the most satisfying job I've ever had as well."

At Vickers Scotswood, labourers and ancillary men, whilst perhaps not generally getting a great deal of interest out of any particular job, were nevertheless very appreciative of the variety of non-skilled jobs to do, and that movement from job to job, or around the factory whilst engaged on a job, meant that they were not stuck in the same place all the time. In fact, on the dimension of freedom of movement Scotswood labourers tended to be even better off than some skilled and semi-skilled machine men who were stuck in one place all the time. The reason the Scotswood labourers had a good deal of variation probably lay in the fact that a big plant like Vickers Scotswood would in itself offer more scope; and probably, also, there was at some time a 'flexibility' agreement between unions and management.

John Field was an ancillary worker at Scotswood:

J.F. "I would think that Scotswood was probably a little bit better than the Tress; I mean at Scotswood your job varied - if, say, you were like a spare man you could go on the fork-lift all day, or maybe on slinging; if, say, somebody was off for the day and they needed somebody, and you're spare, they'd say, "Will you go on there?" That way you weren't stuck in the one shop all the time; but I don't know whether they would do that at Tress or not. You could get round the factory at Scotswood - work in different shops."

John Davidson, another ancillary worker at Scotswood:

J.D. "I could have cried when they sacked me. The jobs were nice. The job I had was a navvy and I was going all over the factory ... I wasn't just stuck in one place all the time ... I wasn't doing just one specific job at Scotswood; I was doing a variety of jobs - scaffolding and concreting, and that kind of thing ... working on the roofs."

At Tress, the small size of the place militated against any great variety of jobs for the labourers but there were a number of different positions - e.g. in the stores, in the 'Ragging Bay', sweeping the floor, etc. - in which a person could work over a long period. And of course at Tress it was quite common for younger men to work on a number of unskilled jobs and then progress up a semi-skilled hierarchy to a position of capstan-setter-operator or 'setter'. Thus if at Tress there was little variety over a short period there were opportunities for change over the long term and this was appreciated.

If the non-skilled men were aware that within the range of jobs open to them within Tress and Scotswood some jobs were more interesting or more boring than others, outside of these work-places, in other factories, there was a recognised group of jobs widely considered to be the most monotonous of all. These were jobs involving extremely repetitive work, commonly where the worker is effectively a machine-minder, or at least subservient to the dictates of a more-or-less independent behaviour of a machine. These jobs - the most repetitive, boring of all - were most commonly associated in the minds of our men

100.

with 'women's work'.

The nature of this work, whether it be fiddly - like putting filaments into light-bulbs - extremely repetitive - like packing boxes with Ever Ready batteries from an assembly line, or packing toffees at Rowntrees sweet factory - or extremely tiresome - like attending a machine churning out tablets at Winthrop Laboratories, or changing bobbins at Bridons rope factory, was thought by many men to be more suited to women. Women were better at it mainly because men have not got the patience. Certainly in some cases it was thought that women's factory jobs were more suited to women because the work might lend itself to more delicate or nimble fingers; but, on the whole, it was thought certain jobs were done by women because they simply did not get bored as easily as men. Some men thought this different capacity towards boredom was an inherent sexual difference; some thought that it could be an adaptation to experience at work; some thought that the female's job was only of secondary importance to her and so she did not need any intrinsic satisfactions from work. Whichever explanation was held, it was very commonly believed that women 'were better' at boring jobs. Here are a few of the comments made by men from Scotswood and Tress:

Jack Straw (Scotswood Labourer):

"I wouldn't fancy Rowntrees - this conveyor belt system; I suppose they're women's jobs; I don't think you'd get many men sitting at tedious jobs, doing things like that."

Norman Williamson (Scotswood Capstan-Setter-Operator):

"Women do boring jobs that men won't do; men have'n't got the patience women have."

Allen Carr (Scotswood Fitter):

"Women are more adaptable to repetitive work than men."

Brian Williams (Scotswood Borer):

"Women are more suited to repetition work; I think that's a fact."

Robert Chelsea (Tress Maintenance Fitter):

"Women apparently do 'packing' jobs or work on a conveyor



belt better than men because they've got more patience."

John Dalgleish (Tress Sub-Contract Manager):

"I think women are better at repetitious jobs."

John Gallow (Tress Capstan-Setter-Operator):

"A women doesn't seem to get as bored as a man doing small, repetitious, boring jobs."

John Owen (Scotswood Storekeeper):

"At the rope factory most of them were women - because I think they were the only ones that would do the work on the machines; as I say it was dirty and monotonous - you know, it was just like twines of string coming along and going onto bobbins and all they had to do was take the bobbin and change it over; you just watched the strings. It would drive a bloke mad."

George Brown and Wife:

Wife "A man doesn't want to sit on a machine just drilling a hole like that all day and make rings and things like that does he?"

G.B. "No."

Wife "I think if I was a man I'd be hoping to achieve something at the end of a job ... but with a woman ... her mind's not on her job; I mean she just goes for the money."

John Billingham (Scotswood Turner):

"At Elswick women were just sitting on stools pottering around with the links of chains or something all day long ... It would drive you up the wall. You see a man who has gone there to keep his family he's got to be interested in what he's doing - whereas the women were mainly working to get extra pocket money for themselves - a bit of self-support; so it didn't matter to them what they did. But anybody who's served his time a lot of job satisfaction comes into it."

It is clear that definitions of repetitiveness and monotony are relative. Capstan-operators at Tress, for example, may have had long runs of work lasting for several weeks, but this is not as bad as sitting on an assembly line for months or even years on end. And whereas no capstan-operators interviewed actually said job interest was a major attraction of the workplace - as did many from Scotswood - some did at least indicate that the work did give some interest. Generally speaking, it could be said perhaps that compared with the highly skilled one-off jobs, carried out by time-served men or equivalent, at places like Scotswood, much of the work done at Tress was repetitive and boring; but compared to assembly type work, 'women's work', and many unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in general, the Tress machine work was probably more interesting and satisfying.

Tom Daniels, a driller from Tress, distinguishes between the 'repetitive' engineering work done at Tress and the machine dominated assembly line monotony of Ever Ready - a factory situated next to Tress, and work most widely identified as 'women's work'.

F.P. "You said 'that' job would bore you?"

T.D. "Well, what I've been told of what they do; I mean it's just the standing in lines all the time while the batteries come down; I don't think I could do it."

F.P. "You're not the kind of person who could stand that?"

T.D. "No."

F.P. "Repetitive work."

T.D. "That's it. Well, actually, is it repetitive work? I mean repetitive work as far as I'm concerned is when you're working - like we are at the Tress; mind, they weren't heavy jobs, but you were on the same job for maybe 2 or 3 days a week. But this job (at Ever Ready) I think you're just standing watching them come by you - whereas at Tress I was working with my hands. You know, I was doing a job and I was active. But there (at Ever Ready) you're not active.

So in Mr Daniels' eyes the kind of work which he and others were doing at Tress, which in the engineering trade would normally be considered repetitive and by many, especially at Scotswood, boring, was much more satisfying than the sort of machine attendant assembly line job at Ever Ready - the sort of job described as a 'woman's job'. The

crucial qualitative distinction that makes such jobs that much worse than the already repetitive work he was doing, appears to be, in Mr Daniel's eyes, that at Tress he at least had immediate control over the tools and object of his work; and he was active. There would of course also be the fact that repetitive though Tress machine work was over the short term, there were variations - new batches - over a long period; at Ever Ready the batteries kept on rolling past the same, day in day out. If Ever Ready typified one extreme and Scotswood the other, Tress lay in between.

It seems likely that many of the most monotonous jobs were available to most if not all men in our sample, but because other better jobs were available men were choosing not to do them. These boring 'women's jobs' were jobs that some people thought men would refuse to do. They were as one man put it, jobs 'at the end of the queue'. Three men:

Robert Chelsea (a time served maintenance fitter):

R.C. "What I would class as a 'woman's job' is a job that a man will not do - like 'packing', or when you've got stuff going along a conveyor belt and all you're doing is picking at it and putting it in a box - which women apparently do better than men."

John Gallow (a non-time-served 'semi-skilled' capstan-setter-operator):

J.G. "(At Ever Ready batteries come along) a conveyor-belt and they pack them into boxes - all day; women do that; I can't! I couldn't. I can't tell you why but a woman can do that type of job whereas a bloke can't ... It does seem to be a fact of life that women do these tedious, monotonous, boring jobs; and a bloke wouldn't do it."

T. Wootton (a non-time-served 'semi-skilled' driller):

T.W. "A woman would do a job that a man wouldn't do, such as like putting little spools onto nuts - you know, like a monotonous, repetitive job all day; a man would get bored with that job, but a woman would do it; I would say women get the most boring jobs of the lot; I would generalise like that; yes."

Although many men would choose not to do the most monotonous 'women's jobs' if they could, the level of unacceptability was not uniform. The differences in level reflected, we suggest, people's expectations about the sorts of jobs available to them, and people's particular objectives and priorities from work. The lower down the skill hierarchy you were placed the narrower the range of opportunities open to you and the more you were likely to consider jobs others more favourably placed could afford to ignore. Also, people in a weak market situation, such as the old and infirm and the unemployed at times of low demand, are likely to narrow their horizons. Moreover, even the most monotonous jobs of all could have some features of appeal to those with appropriate orientations; in particular, monotonous repetitive assembly line jobs or machine attending jobs could involve relatively little effort which could prove attractive to the disabled or those advancing in age.

Those with the lowest expectations amongst our sample would probably be the labourers and other non-skilled men - those with least access to the jobs in the skill hierarchy above them. And men from this category seemed most conducive to at least trying 'women's' factory work. Mr Field, a labourer from Scotswood, said he would do extreme repetitive work but he probably would not be able to stick it for long, especially if it meant staying in one place. Mr Davidson, a navvy, said he did not think he would like a monotonous assembly-line job, but if it was well paid he would try it. Mr Henderson, a driller, said he did not suppose he would like conveyor-belt type work but he would try it first. Mr Hopwood, a crane-driver, would "give anything a try; you've got to earn your livelihood somewhere".

Even men higher up the skill hierarchy may, given the appropriate orientations, and conducive circumstances, take a 'woman's job'. Being unemployed is likely to provide such conducive circumstances. Two men who were unemployed took similar 'women's jobs' at Ever Ready, packing. One had hopes that the job would last until retirement; the other had hopes that his stay in the job would be as short as possible.

Mr Samuelson, a Tress capstan-setter-operator, recognised the Ever Ready job was boring, but it had the compensation of being easy:

W.S. "It wasn't everybody's cup of tea; a lot of people used to say 'Oh this is monotonous' - you know 'boring' - which it was; you had to keep up with the machine; but it was easy; there was nothing hard about it at all. And as I say I was happy enough."

Mr Samuelson was 56 years old and maybe at an age when the amount of effort involved in a job becomes important. Also, he was married with young children and had low expectations - at his age and at a time of high unemployment - of getting any work at all. A safe, reasonably paid job, involving little effort, was sufficient compensation for awkward shift-times and extreme monotony - Mr Samuelson said he would have liked to have kept the job until retirement.

Mr Maud actually worked, after Tress, on the same job as Mr Samuelson. Unlike the latter, however, Mr Maud could not wait to leave. Mr Maud was single, in his early 30s, and was time-served. He had higher expectations of getting the type of work he wanted and he was particularly orientated towards doing interesting work. Mr Maud's view of the Ever Ready job was:

G.M. "That was a woman's job, simply doing 'that' all night; it sent us crackers".

As soon as a better job came up Mr Maud left Ever Ready. The job he left for was in fact relatively low paid but it was much more interesting:

G.M. "The foreman said 'Well you've got a variation and everything; you know, you're not going to be stuck doing this repetition work'; I said 'Well the money isn't so good but with that sort of job I don't think you could be bored with it; every day was going to be different.'"

Both Mr Maud and Mr Samuelson took jobs, under the pressure of unemployment, 'at the back of the queue'. Both men expressed a dislike for the monotony of the job, but given their different orientations their prospects of moving on were very different. As soon as the opportunity arose Mr Maud chose to leave the job. Mr Samuelson, on the other hand, seemed much less likely to leave; partly this would probably be in consequence of a recognition on his part

that 'good' jobs were becoming scarcer as he got older and the Recession deepened; but also the job offered a compensation he particularly valued - little effort.

Although 'effort' as a structuring agent does not feature as a major theme in this thesis there is no doubt that it is of some importance, especially for older men. Piece-work may be avoided as maybe 'heavy' engineering by those seeking light work. Mr Samuelson gave the 'easiness' and 'lightness' of the work at Tress (in contrast to the 'heavy' engineering of Scotswood) as a main reason for liking it there. His liking for Ever Ready is consistent with his earlier orientation.

If Mr Maud's attitudes supported the contention that 'women's jobs' would only be taken as a last resort, Mr Samuelson's case suggests that for some at least such jobs can be preferred by men even when alternatives are available.

#### Labour Market Segmentation, Re-Structuring and Re-Orientation

The choices people made on the one hand, and the constraints on opportunity on the other, served to segment workers into separate sub-labour-markets. At one end of the 'Interesting'/'Monotony' range were the most interesting jobs where the worker had to think about what he was doing, where task completion time-spans tended to be long, and where the worker had a large measure of control over the tools and object of his work. These sorts of jobs tended to be found at Vickers Scotswood. At the other end of the range were the most monotonous jobs of all, where the work required little thought, task completion time-spans tended to be short, and where the worker tended to be subservient to the dictates of a machine. These sorts of jobs were thought to be typically occupied by women. 'Ever Ready', a factory situated next to Tress, was most frequently cited as a place containing such jobs. The jobs at Tress Engineering tended to lie between these extremes.

If jobs below the most interesting were characterised by offering varying degrees of monotony, some also offered compensatory features which may have been valued by some men and women. So, where choice

was available, and depending on their own particular orientations and priorities, individuals could calculate the terms of a trade-off they would accept. Those with least access to interesting work, of course, would in effect be 'trading-off' or sacrificing less 'job interest' for other compensations such as 'money'. Generally speaking, we believe men lower down the skill hierarchy had least access to the most interesting and satisfying jobs.

Where jobs offered high satisfaction and relatively high pay (or other valued feature) of course no choice or trade-off was necessary.

The distribution, or confinement, of workers to jobs along the 'Interesting'/'Monotony' continuum, resulted partly from structural determinants outside the individual's immediate control and partly from choice.

#### (A) Structural Determinants

(1) The most significant determinant under this heading was a person's position in the hierarchy of skill.

If Vickers Scotswood was dominated by 'one-off' work and a tendency towards variation in work, and Tress Engineering was dominated by 'Production' work and a tendency towards repetition, there were still men at Scotswood who apparently had less variation in their work than did others and likewise men at Tress who had more interest than the majority. The difference was most clearly obvious at Tress where the division between interesting work and monotonous repetitive work tended to mirror the division between skilled and non-skilled men. At Scotswood the differences were not so obvious; this was partly because of the numerical dominance of skilled men, but also, we think, even non-time-served college trained machine workers at Scotswood had more variety and did more complicated work than most 'semi-skilled' men elsewhere; also, even men described at Scotswood as belonging to labouring and 'ancillary' sections, whilst having, perhaps limited interest and variation on a particular work-task increased their variation by moving flexibly daily amongst a number of work-tasks. Nevertheless, even if labourers at Scotswood did obtain a degree of work satisfaction above that usually available to such people, they clearly did not have access to jobs offering the degree of

satisfaction attainable by the skilled men. At Scotswood, also, then, a person's skill position was a significant determinant.

(II) A second structural determinant of whether a man was engaged on interesting 'one-off' jobs or boring repetitive jobs was the type of work undertaken by the factory as a whole. The actual nature of the work can impose limitations on the amount and range of knowledge and skill a person can apply, even when that person is formally a time-served skilled man. Scotswood was a 'jobbing' shop; after the end of the Shervick Tractor there was no large scale 'production' work involving long runs of repeat jobs. Other engineering factories had much longer runs of work, and even Elswick had its tank production. At Scotswood such was the variety of the products made that even semi-skilled men had a good degree of job-interest and satisfaction. At Tress, such was the narrowness of the product range that even some time-served skilled men were constrained to carry out boring repetitive work.

Jack Jones, a Scotswood skilled 'Borer', moved after the closure to a job involving the use of a numerically controlled machine which imposed upon him a restricted range of operations; he finds it very different, and much less interesting, than the much broader range of operations he normally carried out at Scotswood.

J.J. "I would have been happy at Scotswood now, still doing the type of work I was doing; it was interesting."

F.P. "More interesting than what you are doing now?"

J.J. "Yes. Definitely! It was more interesting at Scotswood; you were more involved in it. You were like doing everything on the job, on the machine - different types of work on that particular component; you were more-or-less doing most of it. Whereas now you are just doing a particular item on the job, maybe boring a hole or something like that; and then it goes away. When I was at Scotswood you were 'drilling', 'milling', 'tapping', you know. You were doing nearly all that the job wanted; that's what made it more interesting."

Where a position in a production process only requires a limited amount of skill or knowledge, used repeatedly, the occupation of that



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position only requires either (i) a person with a narrow knowledge or (ii) a person with a broad breadth of knowledge who is prepared or constrained to apply only a fraction of it. In the first case men may be actually trained by the Company or outside agency for a short period to carry out a restricted range of activities; in engineering such men are traditionally referred to as dilutees. In the second case men are effectively laying aside skills and capabilities - either by choice or constraint - in order to concentrate on the one activity. In practice, it would seem, the more the fragmentation of work tasks and the less opportunity a person has for applying the whole range of his knowledge, the more the application of a person's skills are diluted through constraint rather than choice.

The nature of the work may not only force a skilled man to use a fraction of his knowledge and capabilities; it can also impose limitations on the amount and range of knowledge and skill a person can acquire for later use. In consequence, restricted experience in one sector could effectively exclude you from consideration by employers wanting people with greater knowledge and a broader experience. Even time-served men who have been restricted to only a limited range of work might find themselves constrained to look for, and choose from, work within a limited range of capabilities.

At Vickers Scotswood the division of labour was such that for some men there was a tendency towards specialisation - whether it be on 'fitting', the Boilermaker trades - e.g. welding, plating, marking-off, or as a 'machine man'. Consequently, for all that a time-served engineer was supposed to be capable across all facets of the trade, it did happen that some Scotswood men left after many years incompetent in some aspects.

But if some of the Scotswood men tended to be restricted to a particular trade facet, at least within the confines of that facet they had had a broad range of experience. Were a job for a 'fitter' to come up then a Scotswood 'fitter' would likely be as skilful and knowledgeable as any fitters on the Tyneside market.

At Tress, however, not only was there a tendency for the division of labour to result in some time-served men specialising in a particular trade aspect, such as fitting, but there was also the constraint that

even within that trade specialisation the range of operations was very limited. Consequently, jobs requiring a greater degree of experience and knowledge - jobs such as those at Scotswood - would probably have been beyond their capabilities. Despite being formally 'skilled', then, some of the time-served men at Tress - especially the fitters - might in reality have only been in the market for repetitive semi-skilled jobs.

Allen Cross, a Scotswood 'marker-off':

A.C. "The likes of Tress were more like specialists in their field - valves and things like that ... well, somebody who has worked at Scotswood would have got the same job maybe once every say 4 or 5 months; you know, it wasn't sort of like mass production; there was very little of that; it was more-or-less one job or two jobs. But at Tress I think they were getting batches of hundreds - repetitive work - whereas at Scotswood the jobs were always more-or-less different every time you got one. You see, if you're doing repetitive work, day in day out that's all you more-or-less can do ... their scope is very limited - or might be very limited; whereas at Vickers there was quite a large scope on the job."

These processes of limiting a persons 'scope' go on largely outside of the individual's immediate control and play a determinate part in the nature of the work he is likely to be engaged upon. On the one hand a person may not have the opportunity to apply all skills; on the other hand his range of knowledge - and future marketability - may be limited by lack of experience.

Those processes serving to promote the opportunities for use of a person's skill, or in fact for the acquisition and/or maintenance of that skill, form part of the structural context in which a person may attempt to achieve his work aims.

In the preceding few pages we focussed upon essentially technological constraints; however, if a 'structural' barrier or constraint is the consequence of, or the working out of, a general social principle then other such structural factors of significance could be 'age' and

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'gender'. Age can be particularly important in regard to jobs requiring much effort, especially those involving piece-work. The importance of gender is self-evident from the fact that virtually all the shop floor workers at Tress and Scotswood were male, whilst the suggestion was that outside of these two plants there was a stratum of particularly monotonous jobs possibly 'reserved' for females.

In the chapter on 'internal labour markets' we refer to two other structural influences: i.e. the significance for individual action of trade union constraints and regulations, and the meaning of barriers between the internal and external labour market.

## B. CHOICE

The selective preferences of recruiters is an obvious and vital influence on the distribution of people to jobs. However apart from one sub-contract manager at Tress no other managerial personnel above foreman level were interviewed and so we cannot make any detailed comment on their practices. There was some evidence, however, that at Tress Engineering older men were preferred for labouring jobs because they were less likely to move on; this aspect is referred to in the next chapter on Internal Labour Markets.

### Self-Selection

The self-selection and direction of a man towards one labour-market sector offering a particular type of reward in preference to another takes place in a particular structural context - a context that allows for the possibility of certain choices to occur. We have identified a person's position in the hierarchy of skill as a main determining factor.

Skilled men were more likely to be faced with a choice between 'interesting' and 'high paid (but monotonous)' work. Within the skilled range of jobs a tradesman might be faced with a choice between varied one-off work of the type such as at Scotswood, and more 'repetitive', higher paid work, usually piece-work, as in factories geared more to a mass market. At the same time a skilled man had

access not only to jobs within his own skill group but also to those in the non-skilled ranges - jobs which again were more likely to be repetitive and boring, but possibly higher paid. Some tradesmen would be able to get jobs which were both interesting and well paid, whilst others would be in a trade - such as, it was said, 'welding' - which gave much less opportunity for job interest; but large numbers would have to consider whether to trade off interesting satisfying work for higher paid, monotonous, repetitive work.

The extent to which men would be prepared to go after higher pay would depend on the strength of the economic component in their scale of objectives from work and the nature and range of opportunities available to them. Much of the work at Scotswood seems to have been particularly interesting and satisfying so it may have been that a person would have had to be strongly economically orientated to leave Scotswood and chase better money elsewhere - especially if that meant doing repetitive piece-work jobs. Men with young families and financial commitments might be particularly liable to have an economic orientation and so be prone to 'chase the money'.

The more repetitive trades at Scotswood, and the men on the machines at Tress, of course would be sacrificing less job interest were they to leave and so it might take a smaller monetary differential elsewhere to attract them. At Tress, there was in fact a high level of agreement amongst the workforce there that the pay was particularly high and so it was believed unlikely that they would have reason to leave.

Exclusion from the skilled group effectively meant a narrowing of choice for the non-skilled men. Although, as we saw, the denial of access to the most interesting work did not in fact mean that the non-skilled were unaware of differences in interest or monotony characteristic of the range of jobs open to them, it did mean that the balance of attractions of a job was likely to swing to other features on offer - such as pay, ease of effort, lack of supervision, etc. Denied access to the most interesting work, therefore, men were likely to give priority to other objectives from work.

Great though the constraints may have been there was still considerable scope for people to influence their final job destination

by the exercise of individual discretion and choice. This was the case both on the external and internal markets.

### Restructuring and Re-orientation

Where choice is available actual selection is determined by an individual's work orientation. A person's work orientation is likely to vary according to changes in contextual circumstances. That is to say that at certain times particular objectives are likely to rise to the fore. When change occurs the individual re-evaluates his current employment or situation in terms of his new orientation and, if unsatisfied, surveys the market for jobs likely to meet his new requirements. Thus in this way a restructuring process takes place.

The restructuring of an orientation may lead to a re-evaluation of the worth of a trade-off - say a trade-off between interesting work and higher paid (but monotonous) work - where, for example, an alteration in circumstances increases the importance of a third or intervening factor - such as 'security'. An increase in desire for security may alter the overall value of one job and lessen the other.

Mr Jones, a skilled man from Scotswood, says that, other things being equal, a person like himself might 'normally' be faced with a straightforward choice between interesting work or higher paid work; but Mr Jones points out that higher paid, but monotonous, repetitive jobs are often short term and therefore insecure; in such a case, therefore, an increase in desire for 'security' could have a bearing on any choice:

J.J. "It seems that the bloke with the skills, and who could do a good job, doesn't get as much as what the bloke with the boring job gets. So you either go for the boring job or you go to use your skills."

F.P. "Do you think a man with a family would need the money more, so he would be more likely to go for the boring job?"

J.J. "It depends you see. It goes back to security. The bloke will go into the job in which he thinks he will be secure. For all that there might be a nice apple there to take a bite at it might only last for about 6 months and then he

could be out on the Dole again. You usually find with some of these jobs that they only last 12 months or so - you know, 6 or 12 months."

The extent to which 'security' as an objective will intervene in an existing choice between 'job interest' and 'money' will of course depend on the influence of variables already referred to in Chapter IV i.e. variables such as the age of the individual, his position in the life-cycle, the general level of demand for his skills, etc. In Chapter IV we discussed voluntary 'chop and changers' included within which were those who 'chase the money'. 'Chasing the money' in engineering apparently normally involved working on piece-work jobs. Vickers Elswick, for example, was a piece-work factory and it was said that they had an above average number of 'chop and changers'. It was pointed out that when 'security' became a priority amongst people's work objectives then the tendency to 'chop and change' could stop and attempts could be made to get established and acquire security. That is to say the objective of security intervenes to affect the conditions of choice.

The restructuring of an orientation is particularly likely to occur as market power is weakened. Increasing age is likely to be accompanied by a weakening market situation. Jobs rejected when younger may be accepted when older. If a younger man, for example, might not be prepared to accept monotonous work an older man might realistically feel he has little alternative. According to Mr Halliday an older man tends to accept the situation and adapts his thinking in line with his new market situation:

F.P. "Can you stand repetitive work?"

A.H. "Repetitive? Well, I don't know; up to a certain point I suppose I could. I think you can stand it more when you get older. Do you know what I mean?"

F.P. "Can you?"

A.H. "I think so. I mean, I could imagine so like. I think you start to think that way because there's nothing else; you just say 'well I've got to do it; and that's that like.'"

If market power can be reduced in good times - whether it be due to the advancement of age, loss of a general skill, or whatever - it is

all the more likely to occur in bad times. Market weakness and restructuring of orientations is particularly likely to occur in conditions of high unemployment and low demand. A weakening market situation implies a loss of opportunity and therefore a restriction of choice. With choice restricted individuals may be forced to consider whether or not their current orientations i.e. their sets of objectives and priorities - are realistic and sustainable. Jobs previously not considered, or even rejected, may now be re-considered and possibly accepted.

Chris Hughes, a Scotswood skilled man, would 'normally' not have considered the repetitive work of Tress, even for better money; at the time of the interview, with work short, he would:

C.H. "I wouldn't do repetition work. Whether you're making money or not I wouldn't do it - although I did it at Eimco (a small engineering firm) but it wasn't really repetition work - 10 or 20 jobs. But when you got onto transistorised things and plastic things I'm talking about batches of 100. I mean like Tress Engineering, little valves and things like that. There was a lad at Eimco from Tress - Charlie Dickson - they used to make thousands of valves - small valves; it would drive me crackers."

F.P. "But if the money was there it wouldn't tempt you?"

C.H. "No; maybe now it would! But if things were healthy I wouldn't."

Mr Timpson was another man who under the pressure of unemployment was beginning to re-organise his orientation and start to consider work that in better times he would choose not to do - repetitive work. When this interview was carried out he had been unemployed over 12 months and was clearly feeling the strain.

F.P. "Some people have said that they wouldn't do 'repetitive work'."

J.T. "I quite agree. That was one thing that used to get me ... (at Scotswood) ... you got the odd job that was repetitive - maybe about 10 or 20 off ... if you had hundreds or thousands that would drive me barmy!"

F.P. "Do you think you could take a job like that?"

J.T. "Well there's a question! Let's say I'd rather not - but I may have to."

As unemployment lengthens pressures are increased, expectations are lowered, and eventually even jobs at the 'back of the queue' come into consideration. More and more men, and maybe women, compete for jobs that in good times would not have been considered by many - need not have been considered by many. Men higher up the skill hierarchy 'trade down', not so much through preference but through lack of choice. Those with the weakest market power are likely to 'trade down' first. Good jobs are likely to be 'secure' jobs, but any jobs may be better than no jobs.

Even the most monotonous of jobs - even jobs described as women's jobs - may now be accepted. Ken Laidlaw, a store-keeper at Scotswood, has been out of work over 12 months:

K.L. "The majority of these jobs that are for women only, I don't think men would do them. The likes of where I used to work at Osrams, in the factory where they made them you wouldn't get a man doing the sort of fiddly jobs of putting filaments in light bulbs, you know; I don't think a man would do it - but I would do it, because I would do any sort of work. There's quite a lot of men couldn't do that sort of thing; you know, they couldn't stand it all day - sitting there putting these things into bulbs ... but ... you know, it's a job. If there were lots of jobs available I wouldn't take a job like that - you know, they're right at the back of the queue those sorts of jobs."

Brian Strong (Scotswood Foreman):

"They seem to have women working at these benches putting all the little micro-chips together, or whatever it is, in little electrical connections; they seem to have women do that job. I wouldn't like to do it. But it's better than being on the dole I suppose. I suppose if it came to the crunch I would do anything rather than be on the dole."

Tommy Thompson (Tress time-served fitter):

"I've heard it's pretty boring at Ever Ready; but it cannot



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be any more boring than what I'm doing here (unemployed at home) and you're going to get paid. They reckon it is boring; that's all you do, just watch batteries!"

### Conclusion

If Scotswood was dominated by skilled, normally time-served, tradesmen, Tress was dominated by 'semi-skilled', normally non-time-served, piece-workers. This difference in the preponderant nature of the workforce, plus the difference in the nature of the work tasks, is reflected in the tables in Chapter III. Whereas in the case of the Scotswood workers the most frequently mentioned appreciated aspect of the work-place was 'job interest', in the case of the Tress workers 'good pay' was foremost. This difference in appreciation clearly reflected an objective difference in the sorts of work available at the two work-places. At the same time it seems that there was a certain degree of congruence between the orientations of the two work-forces and what the two work-places in fact had to offer. Many men at Scotswood clearly had a strong preference for doing interesting, complicated, quality work, and Scotswood satisfied that preference. Many men at Tress, on the other hand, - possibly not used to doing, or expecting to be given, highly interesting work - seemed to be particularly money conscious, and Tress's believed relatively high pay was well appreciated.

This differentiation of the two work-forces was a part of a more general systematic dividing of the labour market along both lateral and hierarchical lines. The market was laterally divided, or segmented, where persons with access to a range of jobs may have been faced with a choice, to the effect of channelling people into separate groups according to their preferences; it was hierarchically divided to the extent that access to some jobs may have been barred to those without appropriate qualifications. In our sample of manual workers the basis of the hierarchy that existed was 'skill' - i.e. the technical ability to carry out a particular range of possible operations or functions and the social and political recognition of the right to carry out that job - although there were suggestions that other possible significant divisions could be based on age and gender.

The skill divisions identified followed the definitions used in the

thesis in general, whereupon three broad groups were distinguished:

Skilled Men: identified in the main by their having served an apprenticeship, acting both as a recognised indicator of their socially accepted right to carry out certain jobs and of their technical competence to handle a broad range of operations.

Semi-Skilled Men: identified in the main by their having trained for a short period - say 6 months - to carry out a limited range of engineering functions - such as one or more of 'milling', 'grinding', 'drilling', 'planing', 'welding', 'assembling', etc.

Unskilled Men, Labourers, Ancillary Workers: generally men engaged on work that needed a minimum of training.

These were the three main groupings of shop-floor workers within Tress Engineering and Vickers Scotswood. Outside of these two engineering plants, inside some other factories, we referred to a fourth grouping which could possibly be seen as a sub-division of the 'Unskilled' group; this sub-grouping was composed of people working on a range of jobs where the most salient characteristic is a strong tendency towards human subordination towards the working of machinery or large capital equipment; assembly line or conveyor-belt jobs, machine minding, and packing jobs were most typical.

A person's position in this hierarchy followed from a combination of structural determinants outside the individual's control, and self-selection and choice. The technical organisation of production - and changes therein - work experience, trade union constraints and demarcations, and the state of demand for a person's skills or other attributes, confine a person within certain boundaries of the job structure. To the extent, then, that a person was confined to a limited range in or across the four 'skill' groupings mentioned above his choice was restricted to the attributes of the range of jobs thereby available to him. Labourers could not, without proper training, select from jobs normally available to semi-skilled men, and semi-skilled men could not select from jobs normally available to skilled men. The reverse, however, could occur; men further up the hierarchy could have a range of jobs below them from which to choose. We will see later that at least at Tress Engineering there were good

opportunities for men to move, over time, from the unskilled group to the semi-skilled via a structured internal labour market, and thus open up the range of possibilities available to them. The divisions between the semi-skilled and skilled groups, however, were for those seeking upward mobility much more tightly drawn; the degree of training for a skilled job was much longer and normally entrance to this exclusive group depended on the aspirant having served an apprenticeship.

Skilled men were more likely than the semi-skilled or labourers to have the opportunity to take jobs which were mentally stimulating and generally satisfying. Such jobs, however, need not possess a monopoly of other valued attributes and, in particular, they need not necessarily be better paid. Higher paid, but less interesting work, may be found in the range of jobs open to skilled, semi-skilled, and even unskilled workers. Consequently, a skilled man was particularly likely to be faced with a choice between 'interesting work' and less satisfying higher paid work.

Men lower down the hierarchy would not generally have access to the more interesting work open to the skilled workers. The denial of access to the most interesting work, however, did not mean there was not still an awareness that the jobs that were available might offer varying degrees of monotony or satisfaction. Despite the curtailment of the range of jobs offering particularly interesting work, the range of variation left was such that a degree of choice still existed. Although the removal of the most interesting work, and the effect this was likely to have on expectations and orientations, may have promoted a tendency towards evaluating work in economic terms - such that economic maximisation became a prime objective - it did not mean that an unskilled or semi-skilled worker would necessarily do a higher paid job 'at any cost'. There might not have been many jobs around that offered a great deal of interest or satisfaction, but there were jobs around which were even more boring and monotonous than others.

The fourth, or 'bottom', grouping in our hierarchy we described above we suggested contained the most mentally stultifying, monotonous jobs of all. These jobs were jobs which as one man put it were 'at the end of the queue' for many people; they were jobs that some men would not

touch unless there was nothing else; they were jobs which many men seemed to think were more suitable for women, and which we think were often left for women.

Jobs carried out by the skilled men of Scotswood tended to occupy a position close to the 'Interesting' end of the 'Interesting'/'Monotonous' continuum - i.e. the work tended to 'have a long completion time span, tended to vary, was mentally stimulating, with a tendency for active worker domination and control over the object of his work'. At the other end of the range - or continuum - were the most monotonous jobs where there was a tendency for the work 'to be of short duration, repetitive, mentally boring, and a tendency for worker subordination to machine dictat'. Jobs at Tress tended to lie between these two extremes.

The distribution of people to positions along the continuum involved a mechanism that relied in part upon individuals themselves finding and selecting suitable jobs. The process of selection and the definition of 'suitable jobs' emerge from evaluations of the attributes of those jobs on offer in the light of, and in relation to, an individual's particular set of objectives and priorities from work. Such objectives and priorities may include 'interesting work', but may also include others, such as 'high pay', 'ease of work', 'closeness to home', 'shift-work', etc. Jobs offering low rewards on one dimension may compensate on others.

These objectives or priorities - or orientations - are subject to change in accordance with alterations in circumstances pertaining to the individual, his family, or the state of demand for his labour. Where a person's ideal or original objectives cannot be attained, or where some circumstances induce a change in a person's set of priorities, a person's orientation is re-structured and he thereafter seeks or accepts jobs previously rejected or ignored. Restructuring may occur, for example, where the onset of marriage induces a need for predictability and security and people may cease 'chopping and changing' jobs, chasing the money, and seek to get settled in somewhere - even at cost of higher paid, but riskier, rewards elsewhere; where restructuring may occur older men may increasingly become orientated to easier and/or more secure jobs; or a third example could be where some men may develop a liking for night-work if

it fits in with their wives' jobs or family responsibilities. Finally some orientations might have to be excluded from consideration or changed if there is insufficient demand for a person's labour, or if gaining access to suitable jobs, by perhaps moving house, could incur unacceptable costs.

An orientation held in times of plentiful employment is particularly likely to become unrealistic and no longer sustainable, at times of recession. Since orientations are held in relation to and in comparison to the available alternatives, at times of heavy redundancy and low demand the point of comparison is frequently between the rewards of whatever jobs are on offer and the state of unemployment. This is all the more the case when a person is actually out of work. In this situation, at a minimum, an individual will accept a job that is better than his particular experience of unemployment. Of course there will be variations in the effects of unemployment and in the sorts of comparisons the unemployed will make, but generally speaking as unemployment lengthens, and effects worsen, the balance is likely to swing further towards the worst jobs and increasingly previously rejected work may come into consideration. The speed at which a person is likely to 'trade down' to inferior jobs may relate to his evaluation of his market situation; those feeling strongest and securest may hold out longer.

As the range of available jobs narrows a 'spill-over' effect is likely to develop; 'unskilled' men may now consider work typically done by women, the 'semi-skilled' may consider labourer's jobs, and the skilled may move down to any of those below them. As the situation deteriorates even jobs 'at the back of the queue' - those only marginally better than being unemployed - come under increasing demand. Those people least in demand are likely to get squeezed out and become long term unemployed, or disappear from the visible active labour market altogether - perhaps becoming 'house wives' or taking premature retirement.

CHAPTER VIICHOICE, AGEING, UNEMPLOYMENT, CHANGING ORIENTATIONS TO WORK

Previous chapters have described how there tended to be congruence between the sorts of work-rewards Tress and Scotswood offered, and their respective workforce's ideas of what they most wanted from work; however, it was not our intention, and nor does our methodology permit us, to make a precise statistical analysis of the comparative extent to which workers' preferences, likes or dislikes, and orientations, were formed inside of and in response to the work-context, on the one hand, or outside of the work-place in response to changes occurring in the home, the life-cycle, or other broader social phenomena on the other. Consequently we cannot evaluate the extent to which choice operated prior to arriving at a work-place - such that jobs were selected out, or offers accepted, that fitted prior conceptions of suitability -, or after arriving at a work-place - such that the experience of a work-place persuaded people to choose not to move on.

Nevertheless, we can say that, quantitative weight apart, our interviews did indicate that both sets of influences could occur, in respect of different individuals and for the same individual at different stages of his life. That is to say people could change their ideas of suitable work as a result of events occurring outside the work context, and in particular for our sample the experience of lengthy unemployment, and consequently select, or accept, employment believed to be congruent with their restructured preferences; and people could go to a work-place for one reason, acquire a liking for that work-place through experience or the acquisition of new knowledge, and subsequently decide to stay immobile in that work-place because it was then believed to offer the best chances of satisfying new post-experience preferences.

Probably one of the strongest 'work-place experience' influences on preferences amongst our sample was the friendly social atmosphere that for both groups was clearly well appreciated. But men could also become aware of, and appreciate or otherwise, features such as the level of pay, the degree of effort, the monotony or otherwise of the work, and

the opportunities for changing jobs. Thus, in the case of the last example, if orientations tended to be formed in the light of awareness of opportunity, then changing job structures and changing chances on the internal market might be expected to have led to a re-orientation. At Tress Engineering, for example, men could go there to do work within the labouring strata of jobs, and expect the sorts of rewards that go with such jobs, only later to take the opportunity to rise up the semi-skilled internal labour market and thereafter become aware of the sorts of rewards subsequently available to them. The experience of a place like Tress changed some men's expectations of the sorts of work considered suitable. Experience of post-redundancy unemployment, however, led many men to eventually to lower - in the cases of some re-lower - their sights, and select, or accept, jobs previously rejected or ignored.

Amongst the strongest external influences appear to have been travelling distance from home to work-place, position in the family life cycle, household organisation - including roles and responsibilities in the home and the relation of other family members to paid work -, in the post-redundancy situation the experience of lengthy unemployment and unstable re-employment - which we concentrate on in this chapter -, and position in the individual life cycle - ie the ageing process, which also receives some emphasis here.

Whether external or internal influences predominate, decisions to consider, go after, or accept, particular types of employment, imply discretion is being used - which in the sense we have used it in this thesis means the exercise of choice. This exercise does not necessarily mean that men were selecting rationally from a range of employments; indeed we have already mentioned that people's ideas of the sorts of rewards specific firms offered were very flimsy and so an informed calculated selection would seem unlikely. Neither does it mean that the choices were ideal abstractions independent of individual circumstances, social relationships or the constraints imposed by limited opportunities - and in times of high unemployment these constraints could be extreme. But it does mean that people getting to know about particular firms - such as Tress Engineering or Vickers Scotswood - could evaluate their suitability or

acceptability for people like them, in their particular situations, and where opportunity allowed select accordingly.

In order to understand why, therefore, men or women end up at certain jobs we have to be aware that certain types of work are seen as suitable or appropriate for some people but not for others. This in itself would not give us an adequate explanation for overall labour allocation, especially when opportunities are restricted and competition fierce, but nevertheless this subjective dimension on the part of the workers has to be taken into account. Even at times of acute recession, as now, people in different circumstances may tend to move towards broad ranges of jobs suitable for people like them. Married mothers may still want jobs close to home; single men may take generally lower paid jobs than, say, family men who have a higher 'reserve wage' because of greater financial commitments and higher welfare payments; older men may be looking for jobs involving less effort; the least powerful in the market particularly may be seeking security; people with working spouses, or other family members, may feel less pressure to go for jobs, or higher paying jobs, 'at any cost'; different groups may continue to give different weights to working shifts, travelling distances, moving out of the area, working abroad, etc.

Not only may different groups have different ideas of suitability, but these ideas may change over time and context. Consequently, we need to understand not only the incidence of varying orientations amongst a given population, but also the significance and effectiveness of factors influencing change. As mentioned earlier these influences can be either found in or out of the work context. The object of this chapter is to concentrate on one particularly significant 'external' influence, especially in times of recession, namely: the experience of lengthy unemployment.



### THE EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

The impact of unemployment on those out of work, and their reactions, varies considerably. Sinfield<sup>1</sup> mentions a whole range of factors of potential influence, including; Length of Time Unemployed; Individual Personality; Experience of Previous Unemployment; Age; Health; Level of Resources; Level of Demand; Extent of Informal Contacts; Gender; Marital Status; Situation of Other Household Members. But he emphasises two factors as being particularly important, namely:- (a) The Level of Demand, (b) The Level and Range of Resources on Hand; these resources are both economic and social. People expecting that demand for their skills will eventually give them work, and who have the economic and social resources to ride out unemployment, are under less pressure and will react - or not react - accordingly.

In our study we got the impression that it was men's perceptions of weakness in the market and increasing financial pressures as unemployment progressed that was particularly likely to lead to a restructuring of orientations, - or as some men put it 'lowering their sights'.

When this study was carried out Earnings Related Unemployment Benefit Supplement was paid out for the first six months, after which men went on to 'Flat Rate' Unemployment Benefit for a further six months, after which they were no longer entitled to Unemployment Benefit and became dependent on means tested Supplementary Benefit. So at the six month point, and then in particularly the 12 month point, men were liable to notice sharp drops in income and a general worsening of their financial situation.

The financial problems faced by those having to live on Supplementary Benefit are well documented. Clark<sup>2</sup>, for example, found that families with two or more children living on Supplementary Benefit were particularly likely to get into financial difficulties.

The Department of Employment<sup>3</sup> carried out a survey of 4,000 people unemployed for one year at time of interview in 1980 and found that:-

"85% of the sample were receiving Supplementary Benefit, and most were financially considerably worse off when unemployed than when they were in work. More than half of them commented on the lack of money and their inability to maintain a satisfactory standard of living while unemployed. Approximately a third of both men and women had borrowed money during the previous year".

It was found that families with dependent children were suffering the greatest financial hardship from long term unemployment. The survey found that 55% of married people with dependent children had some problems meeting regular payments, a significantly greater proportion than the 32% of married men without dependent children and the 20% of single men with similar problems.

A survey of households in East Newcastle, carried out by Newcastle City Council<sup>4</sup> in 1981, aimed among other things to gauge the extent to which their financial situation had changed over the previous 12 months. It was found that families where the head of household was unemployed were the most likely to have experienced difficulties, and that these difficulties were likely to be particularly severe once the 12 month point of continuous unemployment had been reached - the point at which people went off Unemployment Benefit and on to Supplementary Benefit:-

Pg 11. "The Survey showed that a number of families who had not experienced job loss were reducing expenditure, and in some cases finding difficulty in meeting large bills. However, the experience of unemployment was the major factor creating these problems..... The long term unemployed are shown by the survey to be in the severest financial difficulties, reducing discretionary expenditure, yet still in many cases finding it difficult to meet essential items of expenditure, such as heating".

In 1982 Pyke<sup>5</sup>, carrying out a survey in the South Shields area of South Tyneside, found that on a range of indicators households with unemployed heads had been more prone over the previous 12 months to experience financial problems - such as difficulty in paying rent, meeting heating bills, using up savings etc - than those households with employed heads, and that there were strong suggestions that the situation deteriorated as unemployment progressed.

Other research has also shown the tendency for the unemployed, and especially the longer term unemployed, to experience severe financial hardship. See, for example, Colledge and Bartholomew<sup>6</sup>, and Smith<sup>7</sup>.

The effects of unemployment are not only financial; they are also social, psychological, and physical. Financial problems, together with increased contact, have been shown to be associated with an increase in arguments within the family, even leading to family break-ups. See, for example, Colledge and Bartholomew<sup>8</sup>, J.M.Hill<sup>9</sup>, and Newcastle City Council Tress Redundancy Study<sup>10</sup>.

The association between unemployment and deteriorating mental and physical health has been shown in a number of studies. Pyke<sup>11</sup> found that the unemployed were much more likely than the employed to suffer from a number of ailments, and the long term unemployed more than the short term unemployed:-

Pg8: "The ailments complained of by the unemployed were of a type that may be associated with worry, depression, and nervous disorders. Thus stomach troubles, chest pains, headaches, and general feelings of deterioration predominated. The general nature of the ailments complained of by the unemployed, and particularly the long term unemployed, then, would seem to be consistent with an hypothesis that suggests that there is a tendency for the effects of unemployment to increase in intensity as duration lengthens".

Other studies also have found a strong association. The Department of Employment<sup>12</sup> survey into long term unemployment found that psychological and psychosomatic problems could be generated or exacerbated by family stress during unemployment. See also Ramsden and Sme<sup>13</sup>, Daniel<sup>14</sup>, Colledge and Bartholomew<sup>15</sup>, Harrison<sup>16</sup>, Dooley and Calalano<sup>17</sup>, and Jahoda<sup>18</sup>.

There is also some suggestion of a relationship between unemployment and increased incidence of death. See, for example, Fox<sup>19</sup>, and Brenner<sup>20</sup>.

A number of the studies and reports on the experience of unemployment touch upon, and distinguish between, a whole range of effects. Colledge and Bartholomew<sup>21</sup>, for example, described the effects of prolonged unemployment amongst their sample as including: loss of confidence and

self-esteem, boredom and inactivity, family tensions, loss of social contact, and 'a very noticeable relationship between poor health and the duration of people's unemployment'. They also pointed out that a high proportion of the long term unemployed at this time were aged over 55 and that they tended to believe that employers thought them less employable because of the health risks and cost of pension and insurance schemes as well as the fact that they could only offer a limited remaining working life.

J. M. Hill<sup>22</sup> said that he found that the mal-effects of unemployment included: loss of a sense of personal and occupational identity, a loss of a sense of personal worth, feelings of degradation, boredom, loss of drive, depression, sloth, laziness, and inertia. He also suggested that people who are continuously unemployed typically go through a series of phases, becoming increasingly prone to demoralisation, worsening financial problems, family tensions, loss of social contact, and deteriorating psychological well-being; eventually, he suggested, people could resign themselves to a life of no paid work.

The Manpower Services Commission<sup>23</sup> agreed with the general description of a linear progression, reaching a stage where:- "Money will have run short and activities become curtailed. Boredom and inertia set in and the days become indistinguishable. Arguments and tensions within the house may increase. Often at this stage the individual is faced with the problem of whether to lower his or her sights - accepting lower pay, giving up a trade, or moving away from the area".\*

It is the elaboration and illustration of the meaning of the last sentence above that forms the main focus of this chapter. There is often a cumulative intensification of pressure as unemployment lengthens which is always likely to influence people's ideas of suitable employment. Increasingly a 'good job' is likely to be seen as a job better than life on the Dole; some differences between jobs may become less significant, and the division between having a job and having no job becomes more salient. People are likely to take jobs previously not considered.

The broad effect, then, of lengthening unemployment is, we would argue, to induce people to lower their standards; but (a) There may be a number of

\* Note: Our emphasis .

levels through which a person may drop before reaching a minimum possible; as time progresses certain requirements of suitable work - such as 'no shift-work', 'short travelling distance', 'clean work', 'outside work', etc - may be dropped. (b) An individual's reaction to the pressures of unemployment may vary according to circumstances mentioned earlier, such as level of resources, individual perceptions of market strength, household commitments, the relationship of other family members to paid work, and possibly the availability of informal 'Black Economy' work. (c) There may be certain levels which form strong barriers for people, and below which they may be particularly reluctant to, or unable to, drop, but the nature or existence of these 'hard' levels may vary for different groups; for example, levels of state benefits will vary, affecting people's ideas of a reserve wage; households would have different commitments to child care which may impose constraints on possible jobs; there may be variations in the extent to which spouses can go out to work to compensate for loss of income or allow the unemployed person to pursue non-financial work objectives such as job security; there may be variations in people's health or strength; housing difficulties or family ties might prevent some people moving location.

Through the rest of most of this chapter we will demonstrate the tendencies for people to 'trade down' and change their ideas of suitable work as unemployment progresses; we will also highlight the significance of age as a variable in the sorts of jobs people can get and as an influence on their readiness to 'lower their sights'.

Examples of men from Tress Engineering and Vickers Scotswood will be treated separately. Fifteen different cases, altogether between 1 in 5 and 1 in 6 of the combined sample, are presented. These showed the most clear signs of 'trading down'. They tended to be older, long-term unemployed, more skilled men. As for the rest of the samples, the picture was mixed. Some men showed signs that they were beginning to consider other types of work, or if they had a job when interviewed remembered that they had been under pressure to do so, but were less clear-cut examples than the ones we have chosen; some were simply poor at expressing themselves; other men, including skilled men, got jobs reasonably quickly and had not changed their minds; others, mainly labourers and unskilled, were long-term unemployed but showed little sign of re-orientating themselves - although greater sensitivity and subtlety in our approach may have found changes even amongst some of these.

## TRESS ENGINEERING

Tress Engineering closed down in June 1978. Newcastle City Council undertook a household survey of all Tress manual workers in July 1979, just over one year after the closure. The results of the survey were written up in a report entitled "The Tress Redundancy: A Year After The Closure"<sup>24</sup>. The writer of this thesis was engaged upon that survey as an interviewer with specific responsibility to interview long term unemployed men and find out how they and their families had been affected by a continuous period out of work of over 12 months. Some of these men were re-interviewed as part of this research project.

The survey found that "about 30% of all the redundant workers had not had a job at all over a year after the closure", whilst nearly 50% were unemployed for at least 6 months. Of all respondents interviewed - including both those back at work and those still unemployed - about 40%, a minority, said they had had financial difficulties since leaving Tress. The report concluded, however, that for some, the long term unemployed, financial difficulties had been greater, and were likely to worsen if the period out of work continued:-

"It is clear from the survey that at this stage, one year after the closure, the presence of the lump sum redundancy payment had been sufficient to ensure that only a minority of Tress workers had faced significant financial hardship as a result of redundancy. It is also evident, however, that for those who were still not working, about one third of the sample, financial difficulties will become an increasingly important feature of their lives .... Men who had been continuously unemployed since the closure would lose their entitlement to unemployment benefit and would be totally dependent on short term Supplementary Benefit, usually lower than their income from Unemployment Benefit, from the beginning of September. Several respondents in this situation in fact mentioned their worries about their financial situation over the coming winter in spite of the absence of financial difficulties earlier. There is a clear relationship between the experience of financial difficulties - being forced to cut down on expenditure - and the length of time respondents were unemployed; 80% of those who had over 6 months unemployment said they had to cut down compared to 35% of those with under 6 months unemployment".

Nearly a half of the respondents said that unemployment had affected them personally. Five features of long term unemployment were identified as particularly likely to affect respondents. These five features were: reluctant resignation to long term unemployment amongst older men; degradation, the feeling that others looked down on the unemployed; the loss of independence; feelings of apathy; and a growing loss of confidence in the ability to find work or carry out a job. One in five respondents also said that the redundancy had caused serious arguments within their immediate family, whilst many complained of the way a shortage of income forced them to cut down on social activities.

The report came to the conclusion that the experience of prolonged unemployment, both in respect of its impact on people's lives and in regard to a growing awareness of lack of opportunity in the market, tended to induce men to 'lower their sights' and change their minds about 'suitable' work:-

"The men came to the market with few illusions. Non-skilled men were dubious about their ability to find any kind of work whilst skilled men appeared to feel that although some work would be available to them they would have considerable difficulty finding jobs in their own field. The men's experience of the labour market clearly led many of them to revise even these expectations downwards. Such downward revision of expectations was particularly important amongst Machine-Tool-Setter-Operators. 70% of this group said that looking for work had turned out to be worse or a lot worse than they expected, two-thirds actually changed their minds about the kind of work they were looking for, and about half of those who saw themselves as having a particular trade or industry revised their opinions about this as well. Many of the other skilled men and the non-skilled men were also led to revise their views about the labour-market, but the former were least affected by these labour market pressures, under half of them saying that looking for work was actually worse or a lot worse than expected and around a third changing their minds about the type of jobs they were looking for".

"The survey data indicated quite clearly that the downward revision of expectations by the men and tendencies to look for alternative kinds of employment were responses to the actual experience of longer term unemployment".

For the tradesmen it was found that by the time of the survey - some 13 months after the closure - only a half had found a job in their trade; the remainder had either taken a less skilled job, or were still unemployed - apparently holding out until a suitable job came up. One in five of those working when interviewed were clearly in lower skill level jobs such as labourer, caretaker, semi-skilled operative, etc.

For the 'semi-skilled' Machine-Tool-Setter-Operators the tendency to 'trade down' was even clearer. Only a third had managed to get a job in their trade, and many even had experienced difficulty getting a job out of the trade.

The unskilled men had low expectations right from the start and "many of the non-skilled men started out prepared to work for and accept virtually any job that came up". Of course the unskilled men were in a labour market that was increasingly tightening as the Recession deepened and men above them dropped down and went after 'their' jobs.

60% of all the men interviewed who were working said that their new jobs made less use of their training, and 44% said it was less skilled.

Amongst older respondents, ie those aged 50 and over, the chances of being employed when interviewed were less and the amount of unemployment experienced was greater than for younger men. 49% of respondents over 50 were unemployed when interviewed and 58% had experienced over 6 months unemployment.

New jobs were likely to involve more travelling and more expense than did the Tress job, and 69% expressed a positive preference for the jobs they had had at Tress.

The Council Survey, then, provided some evidence that at a time of low demand men, under the pressure of unemployment, were accepting worse jobs. Our interviews provide more evidence of this process and in the following pages we will quote at length to show what was involved. All of the men were interviewed earlier by the Council and some were quoted in its report. Nearly all the Council quotations were actually recorded during interviews carried out by the writer of this thesis, and where appropriate they may be repeated here. Where quotations are in fact taken from the Council report they will be identified as to their source.



CASE 1

Mr Chelsea was in his mid-twenties and had served his time at Tress as a Maintenance Fitter. Before the closure he had never worked anywhere else. He was single and lived with his parents in West Newcastle.

Mr Chelsea was interviewed by the writer of this thesis on behalf of the Council in July 1979, just over a year after the closure. He had had no paid work since being made redundant. Below, a quotation from the Council report is repeated; it shows the detrimental way in which he was being affected, the distress he was feeling at not being able to get back into his trade, and that he was beginning to consider jobs out of the area:-

"I have a lot of arguments with my parents; it's always my fault. I don't mean they always say it's my fault; it really is. Things build up during the day and when they come in I just let go, for hardly any reason at all sometimes. I just can't explain how I feel; it's just terrible. I can't do anything. I get bored and I'm worried.

Sometimes my mum and dad shout at me for not doing something I've had all day to do. And they're right. Some days I get up and it's all go; I get things done; but some days I'm just pissed off; I don't feel like doing anything. I just sit there, all day, thinking and worrying about what I'm going to do.

If someone I knew a year ago was to meet me in a pub they'd notice the difference in me. The Tress closure has had a big effect.

Now I'm thinking of moving South; I don't want to but there's no work up here. I won't be able to come back if I do move. Engineering's finished up here so there aren't going to be any jobs in a few years' time. I like the North East so it'll be a big thing for me if I do move. The trouble is making the break. But what are the alternatives? I might try setting up with a few friends on our own - a market stall or something. Or I might try a course, mechanics or something. I don't want to forget my skill though.

It's hard to explain how I feel. I feel a bit angry but that isn't it.

I've got pounds worth of tools rusting and I'm not going to use them..... I get depressed of course; you can't get over a thing like this. I used to sleep in late, very late. Now I get up and look for work. But I'm deteriorating and it's getting worse."

As can be seen from the quotation above Mr Chelsea was affected by worry, feelings of apathy and boredom, and short-temperedness - leading to friction with his parents.

8 months later he was again unemployed when interviewed as part of this thesis research. In between he had in fact had a job in his trade as a Maintenance Fitter, but it had lasted less than 2 weeks; he was made redundant again. He said that he would have left anyway because it was "badly paid" - at £60 a week -, the travelling distance was too far, and being a small place the supervision was too tight.

By the time of the interview for this thesis, then, Mr Chelsea had been unemployed 21 months bar two weeks. At the time there was a steel strike in progress but he said that although in the past he would have supported them now he had no sympathy for them. He said that he had completely changed his views; "People who strike just do themselves out of a job".

To the question of whether he would consider joining in with other unemployed people to demonstrate or take collective action, Mr Chelsea said that unemployment had made him more individualistic. He had no time for others and he was now just concerned to look after himself:-

R.C. "I've got no time for going on marches for the unemployed; all I want is a job; they aren't going to find it for me. I just want to look for a job in the paper or go to the Dole. I don't want to get involved in that sort of thing - going on these marches; I could do; I could go on a march but it wouldn't do me any good. I'm just out for myself, me, now; I'm out for myself - nobody else; because nobody gives a hoot for you, outside the family. I'm going to get myself a job and balls to the rest of them! That's the way I feel about it now. It's dog eat dog in this world. You think I'm going hard do you? I just think now that you've got to get yourself a job; nobody's going to get you one; and if you don't nobody cares".

In some ways Mr Chelsea actually seemed less badly affected than at the time of the Council survey 8 months earlier:-

R.C. "Boredom-wise I'm getting out a lot more than I was - looking for work, you know; I'm getting to do a lot more so I'm not so bored. I mean I was telling you months ago that I would just get up at maybe 1 o'clock just to get the day over; that's no longer; I get up now at half past seven, go down to the Dole, have a look around, and maybe have a look at a few factories to see if there's owt going - just to get out of the house to get some fresh air and see what's going on in the world. I don't get as bored as much as I used to".

F.P. "So it's a little bit better that way?"

R.C. "Aye. You see I'm doing something about it rather than just sitting in the house blaming the wall. The family has always been good to us - money-wise. My money-position has changed, like; I'm on less now being on Social Security; it's about £3 a week less than what I was getting on the Dole. The only thing that has changed is that I'm looking for work more - more interested you know, getting over my depressed bouts - just getting up and getting out looking for work. You think about new things".

For the purpose of the argument of this chapter the last sentence above is particularly relevant. When Mr Chelsea was made redundant from Tress he had not long completed serving his apprenticeship and the idea of moving out of his trade was particularly abhorrent to him, and even when interviewed for the Council he was still intent largely on getting a job in his trade - albeit possibly away from the North East; but by the time of the thesis interview he seemed much less resistant to 'doing new things'. As he said:-

R.C. "I bet if you were to look at all the interviews I have done you would notice a big change in my attitudes. At the beginning I was all Maintenance Fitter.

I would never have thought of going to college six months ago.

All I thought was that you go on to a retraining scheme for learning a different trade and I'd just come to my time. I didn't see why I should have to change it. That was my opinion; I'm probably different now - but at the time".

F.P. "You think now you might even think of changing your trade?"

R.C. "It depends. If the opportunities were there; if I knew for a fact that there were a lot of vacancies going for bricklayers or whatever and I thought that 6 months at a Training College would get me into a job where the money was canny, I would think about it now, but at one time I wouldn't have done at all."

Mr Chelsea had already started applying for labouring jobs, although he was still exercising some discretion - in particular in regard to pay. Labouring jobs which he considered to be offering unreasonable pay he did not bother with. He said that for jobs out of his trade he mostly applied to large firms where the money was better and there was a chance to get on. Three labouring jobs he cited as ones he had applied for all involved conditions warranting higher pay. These were a job on the Kielder dam building project, a job working on the North Sea Oil Rigs, and a job in a local factory working irregular shifts.

Not only did Mr Chelsea seem more prepared to lower his sights to a non-skilled job, he said that he was more actively trying to get a job away, even though with all his friends and relatives living locally he would be losing a lot.

R.C. "When you first came months and months ago I was very bitter wasn't I. I thought I would get in the trade no bother; but now you've got no choice; you've got to look at other things. I said to you that I was looking for work away, and I was, but I didn't have the same motivation to look for it as I have now; I want to be away now; I want to move away now".

F.P. "What has happened? What has changed?"

R.C. "It's just getting worse; it's getting no better - the job situation. The area's just getting worse; and I just resent the fact that I'm going to have to work away. I resent the fact that I'm having to move away to get a job; but I'm not so

bothered now. I'm more-or-less looking forward to it now.  
I've been on the Dole that long that just to get a job again".

Part of the pressure to move away came from a feeling of guilt that he was a burden to his parents, even though he knew they did not want him to leave:-

R.C. "I've got no choice (but to go away) have I. I cannot just stop on the Dole all the time with my mother and father earning my bread".

He was also getting fed up not having any money for himself:-

R.C. "My parents don't want to see us short; but I used to go out 3 or 4 times a week all the time; but I can't now. Once a week I go out on a Friday with the lads".

Moving away offered the prospect of getting a reasonably paid job in his trade. He would have very much preferred to get a local reasonably paying job but he had been unable to get one. He had only had a very brief bad job and the only jobs that seemed to be going for those who did not have the right contacts were low paid. These jobs Mr Chelsea had apparently up to now resisted:

R.C. "Every job I've written away for these last couple of months has been working away. There's never been one in the Dole that's been worth applying for. On Thursday in the Dole there were about half a dozen jobs on the maintenance side - 4 wanted men over 25, and in the case of the other two the money was just rubbish".

Mr Chelsea still apparently evaluated the money worth of a job according to some notion of 'reasonableness' - rather than, say, a straight comparison with Dole money. Whether or not the pay was deemed reasonable seemed to be determined partly by some notion of a living wage and partly according to a notion of what certain types of work ought to pay. He mentioned two factories in which he would not want to work because of the unhealthy nature of the products, but where he would work if the pay was better than average:-

R.C. "There's two factories in this area working with dangerous chemicals

or dangerous products:- 'The Graphite' (Anglo Great Lakes Corporation), working with graphite, and 'Porters', over the water at Newburn, making asbestos break-parts".

He would take a job at Porters - "I would take it because the money's there, and the risks are minimum - with ventilation systems; if the money was there I would do it; but I wouldn't work with graphite because the ~~money's~~ not there. There are jobs that come up at 'the Graphite' every now and then; it's just ordinary money but ~~you're~~ working with graphite black all the time".

Another firm with a bad reputation was 'The Delta' rolling mill. Again a job came in the Job Centre but it was not paying enough to interest Mr Chelsea:-

R.C. "There was a job came in - hot, heavy work - but it was only £48-£50 a week, you know".

F.P. "What if the money was there though?"

R.C. "Well if you got the money for the job I'd do it; but I'm not going to knacker myself for that kind of money".

If Mr Chelsea had already moved towards actively trying to get jobs away, and jobs out of his trade at home, there was an indication that he was thinking of lowering his standards further by dropping the minimum wage he would consider. It seemed he was beginning to evaluate a job's money worth not in terms of 'reasonableness' as mentioned earlier but in terms of 'sufficient to get by on' until a better job came up.

F.P. "Would you even think of giving up your trade if the money was good enough?"

R.C. "I've tried. I've tried to give up my trade, yes. Why, even if it was just enough to live on until I tried to find something else. The jobs now on the Dole for labouring jobs are ridiculous. The money now is £50 ....£55. Maybe I could live on that for a while until I could find something else".

At the time of the follow-up 16 months later in June 1981 Mr Chelsea was

coming to the end of a training course. Two months later he had taken a job as a labourer. This was the first labourer's job he had taken since he was made redundant from Tress three years earlier. His mother, who passed on the information, said, with obvious regret, that he had moved out of his trade but at least "it was a job".

## CASE 2

Mr Lumbley was a time-served fitter in his mid to late 40's. He was married with children. His wife worked part-time and one of his children was old enough to work but at the time of the interview for this thesis he had been unemployed two years. Mr Lumbley was at Tress 15 years after having worked in several other engineering establishments including Vickers Elswick. He described Tress as one of the best places he had worked at, and he was particularly appreciative of the relatively high pay and the strong union. He went to Tress from working on maintenance at Blyth Power Station because although the pay at the power station was very good the work was intermittent. He had never heard of Tress Engineering until a friend told him about it in a pub. He thought it was very unlikely that many men who had left Tress would be able to get a job as well paid.

When Mr Lumbley first left Tress he "had a bit of a holiday". When he started looking for work he went after jobs in his trade at places such as, he said, Parsons, Vickers, and Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, but without luck. He turned down a fitter's job in London that he was offered immediately Tress closed as neither he nor his family wanted to move. He found getting a job much more difficult than he expected. The experience of long term unemployment affected him badly.

When he was interviewed by the writer of this thesis for the Council survey he had been unemployed 13 months. The following extract, reproduced from the Council report, shows the sort of pressure he was under and that he was by then prepared to take a job out of his trade:-

S.L. "I'm much more bad tempered than I used to be; I jump on things much quicker now. I've changed a lot in myself. I think not

having any money is the big thing. How can I tell you how I feel? If I was to go into town with money in my pocket I can look into shop windows and I know that I can buy something if I want to; I might not want anything, and I might end up buying nothing, but that isn't the point. The point is the feeling you've got when you've got the money to buy something. You see, there's some point in looking in shop windows if you've got money to spend, but if you haven't got any money it's pointless. It's the same with betting. I like to have a bet on the horses sometimes. I don't always have a bet but I like to have a bet if I want to. Now I can bet the odd shilling, but there's no point to it. You lose your independence. That's what I'm trying to say. If I had a few bob in my pocket I could go out and about and do things. You might not want to, but the thing would be that you would know that you could do if you wanted to. You become frustrated. There's things you want to do but you can't. It gets hold of you. Everything becomes pointless from when you get up in the morning to when you go to bed. There's things around the house that you know you should be doing but you can't get up the effort to do them - even when you're not tired".

"Apart from the frustration and the boredom there's the worry. There's the heating and other bills, the future, the uncertainty, the wondering - things always on your mind. You can't stop thinking about them. The worry is always there - day and night; I can't sleep at night for worry".

"You ask me whether it's being without money or the boredom that makes me want to work again? It's both".

"It doesn't matter whether it's dayshift, night-shift, dirty-work, inside work, outside work or anything. I was looking at a bloke cleaning out the lavatories in the pub. I used to think "Who'd do a job like that?" But I was looking at him and I thought at least he's got a job. I'd try sweeping the roads now if I could get some money. Even if it was only forty odd pound a week - £1 an hour - I'd do it - as long as it's more than what we're getting now. If I had more money unemployment wouldn't be so bad; you could always find something to do".



13 months later Mr Lumbley was re-interviewed for this thesis. By then he had a job but still remembered the pressure he had been under to take a job out of the trade:-

S.L. "Through my own experience, once you're out of work for a few months even you begin to get desperate; with being used to working all the time; and if you get knocked back for a few jobs, or you cannot get in for some reason, you end up taking any job ..... There's a thousand ways it affected me being out of work. You know, I used to be arguing with the wife - probably through worry, more than owt else about money, whether you're ever going to get a job; messing around in the house with nowt to do. You know I was getting very nervous as well; I mean I could tell by the way I was jumping at people when I was talking to them - couldn't be bothered listening to anybody, always complaining about something. I put it down to just having nowt to do; and the majority of times that you talk to people that have been out of work for a while they're in the same situation. It just gets on top of you being around the house all the time and nowhere to go, and no money to do it with anyway".

F.P. "Did you find whether it got any worse as you were out of work longer?"

S.L. "Oh yes".

F.P. "It got worse?"

S.L. "I think it gets worse obviously; I mean you end up with a situation where you cannot go out on a weekend even; I mean I had a situation where my sister and her man used to come over here on a weekend and take us out for a pint; well I used to go because I was that fed up with sitting in ..... but at the back of your mind you say to yourself 'coming over here and taking me out!' and all this type of thing, because I hadn't got the cash myself; you know, you lose confidence that way; I mean you've sort of lost your independence; and I had the wife working and I wasn't working; she would bring the wage in and I'm going down the Dole for £16 a week".

In response to the question of whether there were any jobs he would not have taken Mr Lumbley replied:-

S.L. "Well I would never have gone down the pits or worked at the Delta (rolling mill) or the likes of that; but most jobs I would have done".

F.P. "What about the Graphite (Anglo Great Lakes) place?"

S.L. "I don't think it will suit me at all .... You know, they talk about the Delta but I think they're probably worse down there".

Mr Lumbley's response, given when he was back at work, suggests strong preferences against certain types of work, but would the same objections have been sufficient to stop him taking such jobs when he was unemployed? In this next extract Mr Lumbley speaks with feeling about how he would not want to do shift-work, but then follows it up by saying that if he was unemployed he could take such jobs:-

S.L. "I don't like shift-work .... I don't think anybody should work night-shift to be honest; it's not a natural shift at all. You're better being on 'constant' - but not 'week and week about'.

F.P. "Do you think that's the worst system?"

S.L. " 'Week and week about?' Oh aye. It plays havoc with your sleep, eating, and you name it; and you just cannot do anything about it ... With night-shift the majority of people cannot sleep, and you're sitting there for hours looking at the clock, waiting to start work. No, in my opinion there should be no night-shift at all. I've never done it for a long time .... (but) .... we used to have rows with the wife, and I'd get bad tempered with not getting my sleep. And in the summer it was twice as bad trying to get to sleep when it's warm and light outside".

F.P. "Would it have stopped you taking a job?"

SL. "If I thought that there was let's say a decent enough job that came up, and I was on the Dole, and it was shift-work, I would

probably have taken it; because I mean it gets desperate; it's as simple as that. You see I'd never been on the Dole before and just sitting around in here was driving me barmy. I mean, there's nowt to go to bed for; there's nowt to get up for; there's no work to be got. I mean I was getting up in the mornings and sitting in here and my wife went to work - as I said she worked part-time; you're just sitting around the house; I mean that's it! It really gets you down. You've got to have something to do. I used to think they were daft before but I can understand why some people go out to work when they can probably make more money sitting in the house - if they've got a few kids you know; but they'd rather be working; at least it's something to do; it keeps them active and I think that's the thing. I think you've got to do something; you cannot just sit around all the bloody time because you know my nerves ~~were~~ getting the better of me sitting about".

Not long after the Council interview Mr Lumbley took a job as a gardener-cum-handyman, a job he still had when interviewed for this thesis.

Mrs Lumbley's view of her husband's job was that "it wasn't a real job; it's cheap labour. This is Thatcher's policy". Mr Lumbley agreed with his wife's sentiment and said that he thought that the government was trying to force the Working Class into taking low paid jobs. Mr Lumbley is not at all happy with the job; it's badly paid and he does not like the work, but "It's a job".

S.L. "As I say it's a job. I mean I was getting £16 odd on the Dole. I just couldn't live on that at all."

Prior to getting the job Mr Lumbley was under financial pressure. Once he had gone onto Supplementary Benefit his wife's part-time wages were taken into account when working out his entitlement. Before getting his job he had been discussing with his wife the sale of his car:-

S.L. "It was over a year before I got this job and just beforehand I was talking to the wife (about getting rid of the car) ... because you know when it comes to your tax and that it just couldn't be done; it was as simple as that. It was ridiculous anyway; I was on the Dole .... I had been on the Dole that long and I had a bloody

car standing outside ..... Christ! I thought it was just a matter of walking into a job you know, especially for a tradesman; but it didn't work out that way at all. As I say it was just a matter of weeks and that (car) would have been away".

Mr Lumbley said he would be interested in another better paid job, but to move the new job would also have to be secure;-

S.L. "You see the way I am now you know it's a safe job; it's only rarely anybody gets the sack on this type of job, but if I did take another job on with more money I would want to know how long it was going to last; but with one of these jobs where it could go up and down I probably wouldn't take it; you know I think you've got to look for security - nowadays you have anyway. I mean even a factory job now I would probably take if the money was there, but behind it I would be saying 'Well there's that many factories closing down'; you know you could be there two or three months and the place could be shut".

Mr Lumbley still had the same job at the time of the follow-up 10 months later. His views about the job had not changed: "It's a job. The money's no good".

### CASE 3

Mr Simon was 33, married with two young children. At Tress he was a 'semi-skilled' Capstan-Setter-Operator who had trained up from a labourer. When interviewed for this thesis he had been continuously unemployed 24 months.

When the opportunity to go to Tress arose Mr Simon took it because he saw it as a chance to move up away from labouring work. He did not go there initially for the money.

R.S. "I had been at Tress 8 years all in; before that I worked just **general** labouring. The last place where I worked before then was in the Scottish and Newcastle Breweries".

F.P. "What made you go to the Tress then? Did you hear about the money?"

R.S. "Well it wasn't all that good money when I first started there; it was more of an opportunity; and there's the machine work behind us; you know it's classed as a skill; I know it's only semi-skilled but the Union classes it as skilled; and it was the best thing since sliced bread that happened to me, that at Tress".

Once he had risen up the Tress semi-skilled hierarchy, and experienced what he believed to be a better way of life, he apparently developed a preference for engineering machine work, a preference that still remained after Tress closed:-

R.S. "Really deep down I do want to still stay in engineering".

F.P. "Why do you prefer engineering?"

R.S. "Because I've had a taste of it - once I had a start at the Tress - and I like it; I mean, before then I was only a general labourer and on building sites, and the way you get mucked about on general labouring you've got no idea what it's like; one day you're carrying the hod, the next day you're on making concrete; then you're digging ditches. You feel like you're contributing something when you're doing what I was doing like."

F.P. "So you would have been happy to stay there had it not closed?"

R.S. "Oh yes it would have taken a bomb to blast us out of that place if it hadn't closed".

Mr Simon's liking for Tress appears to have been based partly on the fact that he had risen out of and away from labouring work, and partly on the fact that he believed that even at the same engineering level other firms in the area did not pay as well:-

R.S. "Loyalty to the Company to me doesn't come into the reckoning; I've got to go where the money is ..... I liked the lads I worked with at Tress; I got on with them smashing; but I mean I just wouldn't stay there because I get on alright with them you know."

F.P. "But you didn't reckon anything better would come up anyway?"

R.S. "Not round here; not in engineering; because it was the highest paid engineering firm in the North East; but if something like that did happen - let us say 'Porters' were paying £130 or £140 whereas Tress was paying £100, and they wanted men, I would go and see about the job at 'Porters'; I think 9 out of 10 would at Tress".

When Mr Simon left Tress there is no doubt that he wanted a job at the 'trade' he had learnt there, and two years later when interviewed he still ideally wanted such a job but by then he was prepared to take much less.

As in the cases of other men a major effect of prolonged unemployment on Mr Simon was a shortage of money and subsequent curtailment of normal activities, with an inability to look further ahead than the next day:-

R.S. "You cannot (plan ahead) - not when you're how the way we are; it's just a day to day existence...I wish I could turn around in the bed and say 'We're going away for a nice holiday this year', but I cannot. That's what gets me down the worst, the bairns asking us whether we're going on a holiday. Most of the people along here are working; they take their kids away on holiday; that's what gets me down the worst".

Boredom and apathy were also, as usual, experienced:-

F.P. "Do you get as bored as you used to?"

R.S. "Oh aye! I mean, this is some sort of life isn't it, sitting in the house all day long. I cannot be bothered to get up in the mornings; I sit and watch the last thing on television at night.

Also there was the feeling of degradation:-

R.S. "Oh it bothers us (being thought of as a Scrounger). I want to work. Aye. I mean I've been out of work two years now; I've been wanting work for two years. I don't like anybody saying I'm a scrounger. I don't like the idea of being on the Dole; I hate it.

I think there's nowt more degrading than being on the Dole".

Mr Simon said he started looking for a job immediately he left Tress. His idea was to get work quickly and save his redundancy money. But it did not work out that way. He was unable to get a job either at his trade or anything else, even though it seems he considerably lowered his standards:-

F.P. "How would you decide whether a job was worth taking?"

R.S. "Well a reasonable wage would have to be £60..... As for deciding about the job, if the money was there I wouldn't 'decide'; I would take it - as long as the money was there. I would never say "Well that's a degrading job"; if the money was there I would take it."

F.P. "Are there jobs that you'd go for now that you wouldn't go for a year ago?"

R.S. "Yes. That's what I'm saying. Before I went to the Tress I would never dream of emptying bins, I mean I didn't think men were beneath me because they were emptying bins; it's just a thing I would never consider doing. But if I had the chance of going on with them I'd take it".

R.S. "I would do owt as long as the money was there; I don't care what the job is; I never think about that; I don't think 'Well I may go and clean drains or sweep the roads'; I would do it."

R.S. "If I got a job I would still prefer to be in engineering, but if I had a job that paid decent money I would take it... I mean if I detested that job I would probably stick it until I found something more suitable".

R.S. "Shiftwork; I wouldn't do six until two, two until ten, and that; I don't like that shift. I'm saying I don't like it but if I had to do it I would do it. I don't like doing that sort of shift-work - day-shift, night-shift".

F.P. "But if the money was there?"

R.S. "If the money was there I would do it. That's what I went to the Ever Ready for; I was prepared to do 6 until 2 because I mean it's

only just up the road; it's a matter of being handy; I was prepared to do that sort of work (as a machine-operator or line packer) .... I don't care what the work was; as long as they were paying decent wages I would do it - emptying bins, sweeping roads; it doesn't matter to me now".

Mr Simon wanted a job in engineering but it is clear that he was under financial pressure to do other kinds of work, .... including shift-work which he did not like, as long as the pay "was decent" - which apparently meant a little more than the current household income. He was at the time of interview even considering working away and sending money home, and also doing his 'last resort' job of working down a pit:-

R.S. "I'm looking outside engineering now because it's a waste of time looking in engineering in this area".

R.S. "The father-in-law is having a word for us at the pit. That's one job I vowed I'd never take; I always said when I was working full time and anybody offered me a job down a pit, if it was the last job on Earth I wouldn't take it".

F.P. "But you're even considering that now?"

R.S. "Yes".

F.P. "Is there nothing you can think of that you wouldn't consider? Some people have mentioned the Graphite (Anglo Great Lakes Corporation)".

R.S. "Well I've applied there four times".

F.P. "Were you applying for 'anything'?"

R.S. "At first I applied for Capstans, and then the other three times I just put down 'Anything' ".

Not only can the pressure of unemployment induce people to take jobs previously not considered in the formal economy, but also in the informal economy.

R.S. "I would take a job labouring if the money was there ... I can sweep the roads if the money was there, because of the way I'm on now".



F.P. "I suppose all your redundancy money must have gone by now has it?"

R.S. "Oh yes, a long time ago; I've got to go on the fiddle - every bit of work I can get - when I can get it; I don't like doing it; I've got to".

F.P. "Is that a bit worrying for you?"

R.S. "Aye it is, in case I get caught - because it's a gaol sentence, first offence now; but I've got to make ends meet; I mean it's £15.40 rent for these and then there's £5 a week on top of that for heating, man".

R.S. "I'm looking after myself and my family the best way I think I can and as I say I've got to go out and do a bit on the sly".

F.P. "Are you able to make enough money on the odd fiddle job?"

R.S. "No; why, no. I don't make much from it. I'm grateful for the few pounds like. At this time of the year you put it away to cover the electric bill when it comes in .... I do a bit of drainwork now and again, but the last couple of weeks we've been putting the chimney pots on you know ... It's always at the back of your mind that you're going to get caught, but it's an understanding we're prepared to take; I've got to take it anyway".

If long term unemployment can induce people to change their ideas about work in the formal and informal (Black) economies, it can also increase pressures for change in the organisation of the household economy. In particular, the question can arise as to whether it makes economic sense for the household for man and wife to change roles, with the wife going out to work full time and the man looking after the house and possibly children. Whether or not such a switch takes place, or simply any increase in participation in the paid economy by the wife, may be determined in large part by the wife's ability to earn sufficient to offset any loss in State benefits. But women may want to go out to work for other reasons, to gain independence or for interest sake, so whether it makes 'economic sense' may not be the only consideration. In the case of Mr Simon there was a resistance on his part to an actual reversal in work-roles regardless of the benefits or costs in money terms. The possibility of a change was being considered.

F.P. "Have you noticed it getting worse over the last two years?"

R.S. "Well I'd say worse and worse; I mean I get nowt; I don't get a halfpenny; I give it all to my wife; I get £45.17p off Social Security, and it's £15.40 for here; that leaves us with £30, and I've got two kids - a man, a wife and two kids living on under £30 a week! It's an insult. When I think back to when I worked at the Tress I spent nearly as much as that on beer at the weekend; we were always going out".

F.P. "Has your wife thought of going out to do any work?"

R.S. "She does work. She works part-time at night."

F.P. "Is it worth it?"

R.S. "No. She's allowed to make £11.45 before it affects the Social Security. But in fact what she was thinking of doing was to take a full time job, because women around here can now get a full time job easier than what a man can. I mean she used to work in an office when she was at work before we had the bairns; she could go and get a job probably no bother tomorrow. But what I want to find out is how it will affect my Social Security allowance if she gets a full time job .... (But anyway) I don't like the idea of her having to work full time".

F.P. "Why?"

R.S. "Because I'm supposed to be the breadwinner of the house; I want to go to work full time; I mean I don't want to stay and me have to reverse roles with my wife, and doing the housework and doing the cooking; I'm not cut out for that".

12 months later, at the time of the follow-up interview, Mr Simon was still unemployed and, he said, the Social Security people and the Unemployment Review Officer were harrassing him. But the problem of finding work that paid a worthwhile wage remained. He received £61 a week on State benefits so he thought he needed a job paying about £85 gross. He thought he could get a job paying £60 straight away but it would not be worth it; such jobs, he thought, were for single men.

CASE 4

Mr Williams was 59 years old, married with an invalid grown up daughter and a wife who did no paid work. At Tress he was a time-served Setter. He was there over 20 years in two spells.

Mr Williams broke his service at Tress because he was jealous of the fact that newcomers to the firm were getting promoted over his head. However the firm he went to, Churchills, in Blaydon, proved to be unacceptable because of the travelling distance involved, so Mr Williams chose to go back to Tress.

Because of difficulties involved with looking after his ill daughter Mr Williams was unable to look for work for 6 months after Tress closed down. The prolonged unemployment of some 18 months, before he got his current job in his trade, had a bad effect on him:-

F.P. "Can you remember how it was affecting you towards the end of about 18 months?"

R.W. "I was getting very, very depressed; really very depressed".

Wife "Up all night".

R.W. "Aye".

Wife "Sitting up .... Edgy".

R.W. "Bored, bored, you know".

Wife "I could see it creeping in; but he never ... you never lost your pride".

R.W. "Oh no".

Wife "Or anything; he still dressed himself in the mornings and that, but I was starting to worry for his health; I was starting to worry a bit because he used to read a lot and he stopped reading".

The psychological pressures may have been greater than the straight-forward economic one, although the Williams were finding it impossible to live on Supplementary Benefit alone and their savings were certainly going down:-

F.P. "Were you getting into any money troubles before you got this job?"

Wife "We weren't in any money troubles".

R.W. "Oh no, no ... (but) ... my savings were getting down a bit".

Wife "They were well down then".

The experience of unemployment clearly seemed to lead Mr Williams to seriously consider leaving his trade:-

R.W. "I've been in the trade nearly all my working life; I've never gone into anything else. There's two lads that I know who worked at Tress - one at the top here and one down here -; one's called Mercer; the other one's called Black; and one was an Inspector at Tress and the other a foreman; and they've taken jobs in the brick industry at Throckley, just labouring; they couldn't get jobs at their trade you see - it must have been disillusionment as well I suppose; they've both taken jobs at the Throckley Brick Company at Throckley there; they're both labouring - just taking bricks off the machines".

F.P. "What kind of experience did you have before you got this job?"

R.W. "The age was against us you know".

F.P. "Did you ever think of leaving engineering?"

R.W. "Aye, definitely; I was in the process of any job would have suited me like, you know; but I thought I was a bit too good to be a labourer; that was my opinion; why should a man that's worked in a trade for 38 years have to come down to labouring, you know?"

F.P. "Did you ever actually consider giving up your trade?"

R.W. "Aye; oh yes, aye; in fact I was in the process of any job being better than on the Dole, because I think the Dole is soul-destroying".

Wife "You feel degraded don't you?"

F.P. "Did you actually try for jobs outside engineering?"

Wife "Every Ready he tried umpteen times".

R.W. "Aye; I tried there; aye. I was sick of going down there - you know just to do labouring down there".

F.P. "If I was to say something like 'the buses' or 'the post', is that something that you would have considered?"

R.W. "Aye; aye definitely; anything. Any job; I would have done any job".

Wife "You were even going to phone a warehouse or anything weren't you".

R.W. "Aye".

Wife "Rather than be on the Dole".

R.W. "Aye, aye; definitely".

Immediately prior to getting his current job he was seriously considering taking a course in a semi-skilled 'trade' of milling, in order, he said, simply to get back into a factory, and into an internal labour market. But he clearly thought that to move onto semi-skilled work was a step down and a bit degrading:-

R.W. "I thought 'Well after 38 years experience why should I take less money when a bloke with my capabilities...'; as I said I tried this job and I got it; but if I hadn't got the job I would have gone on the Training Course - just to get into the factory you know, and once I was in the factory I would have been alright".

Mr Williams believed that his age had something to do with why it took him so long to get a job, and not get into places like Ever Ready:-

R.W. "I have a brother-in-law who works there (at Ever Ready), and he used to work at Tress as a fork-lift-driver, and he said 'You're wasting your time Bob'; he said 'I'll try to get you in but you're too old'. They've got an age limit down there you see".

F.P. "What kind of job did you want?"

R.W. "Any job - just labouring; but it was handy because that was on the doorstep you see".

At his current job, however, his age had <sup>not</sup> been a handicap because, he thought, the firm particularly wanted men with experience:-

R.W. "I tried a few jobs but with my being 59 I was too old you see; they didn't want to know us; they just couldn't care less; well this place I went to I was lucky because they've got a policy where they'd rather start a man with experience".

The job was one that required a particularly high degree of skill, more so than those at Tress. He said that very few of the men on the machining equipment were under 40.

After he got his current job both husband and wife noticed an immediate improvement in his wellbeing:-

F.P. "Did you find there was a big change as soon as he got the job?"

Wife "Yes"

R.W. "Oh aye, I found a new interest in life".

Wife "I cried; I'm very soft, he went out of there and I said to my daughter 'Ee, your dad's got a spring in his step', and then I watched him and you know I could see it all coming back; he played war for us standing there; he was laughing at us; I said 'I see a spring in his step'; well he went out and he looked well".

Mrs Williams said she noticed her husband's renewed interest in his trade that had been reduced during his long period of unemployment:-

Wife "Do you know what he bought with his first pocket-money after he had a pay - guage".

R.W. "I'd seen this guage that I wanted".

Wife "So he was interested back in his trade. Those little things meant a lot; I knew you were getting interested".

R.W. "I wasn't getting interested any more than I was before **Karen**".

Wife "No, but I was watching you to see how you were coming on".

F.P. "But when you said that you were considering moving out of your trade do you think that would have been a temporary thing or do you think you would have ever gone back into it?"

R.W. "No, I don't think so - not once I had moved out I wouldn't have gone back into it - not for the last 5 to 6 years that I've got to stick; I'm getting out in five and a half years; I'll be 60 in July; I wouldn't have bothered coming back".

But he did get a job in his trade and although it was only 'average' pay it required the use of Mr Williams's skills, which he appreciated, and so for this latter reason he thought it was a better job than Tress; but it had one serious drawback in Mr Williams's eyes which was the amount of daily travelling to and from the work-place:-

R.W. "If this job where I'm at now was at Newburn I'd be over the moon; if that job had been where Tress was - because it's a better job altogether than Tress - I'd be over the moon. The only thing that I've got against this job is the travelling, the excessive travelling".

F.P. "Are you saying that this job is better than Tress?"

R.W. "Oh aye I think so, aye; there's more personal satisfaction for one thing because you know you're doing a good job".

F.P. "Are you using your skills more?"

R.W. "You're using your skills more; aye. You know when you've done a job here you've done a good job; and you feel satisfied with the job; at Tress you were getting a bit bored with it".

A few months later Mr Williams was once more made redundant and at the time of the follow-up interview, 13 months after the main interviews, he said he did not expect to ever work again.

#### CASE 5

In 1979 one year after the Tress closure, Mr Cooper had been continuously unemployed 12 months. He was an apprenticed trained fitter at Tress. He was single, in his late twenties, and lived with his parents. When interviewed for the Council he had been badly affected and was already looking outside his trade and outside the area:-

K.C. "I've lost a lot of confidence in myself; I've particularly lost confidence that I can do new jobs, but I'm also nervous about getting back to doing work within my own trade. Before I would have tried anything. If somebody had said 'there's a job going at so and so's but it's a bit different than you're used to', I would have been prepared to give it a go, had I wanted to, like. I wasn't scared of anything. But now it's a lot different. People have come up to me since I was made redundant and said there's a job going if you want it - 'It's not your trade but you could easily do it', mainly welding or something I'd say 'No thanks'. 'What are you scared of?', they'd say. I'd just say 'No, it's not for me'. But you see a year ago I would have had a go. But it's difficult to say how I feel; it's a funny feeling. I'm worried about not having a job but at the same time I'm worried that I won't be able to do the job when I get it. If somebody was to offer me a job to start in a week's time, for that week I wouldn't be able to stop worrying.



I'd worry sick. It's not only jobs out of my trade. If somebody was to say 'Strip that capstan' I'd be scared silly. The last few weeks I've been getting really depressed. Luckily I go out and play golf quite a bit; that keeps me sane. It's the boredom and the long long days. It's not as bad when the weather's fine but last winter was terrible. I was stuck in doors all the time, but more often than not I'd just sit there staring at the wall. The frustration's really bad. You want to do something but you can't".

"Not having any money's the main trouble. You lose your independence. I don't like having to depend on other people. Friends will ask you to go out with them but you can't afford it. They'll offer to pay for you but you know that they've got wives and families and that it would be hard for them to support you. Sometimes people offer to buy you drinks because they know you're unemployed, but it's embarrassing. I don't like having drinks bought for me and not being able to buy my round. I want to have a few bob in my own pocket, to be independent. It all makes you feel very small. You meet people and they ask you what you're doing and you say you're unemployed, and you know what they're thinking. You can tell yourself that you don't care what they think but deep down it gets you. It always gets you. Sometimes people will say 'You're still not working? You're not trying man. I've got a job. There's plenty of jobs for those who want to work'. But I am trying. Sometimes, after I've been turned down for another job, I begin to think there's something wrong with me. Talking now, I know there aren't any jobs and that it's not me at fault but after you've been to a few interviews you get depressed and start to lose your confidence".

"I often try to avoid talking about work with others. When others talk about their work it gets on my nerves. I lose my temper a bit. I'm sure that when I was working I used to talk about work just as much. But I suppose it's just that I'm unemployed".

10 months later Mr Cooper was interviewed again, although our conversation in this case was not recorded on tape. He said that he had given up trying to get a job in his trade and had taken a job working for the Post Office (Telecommunications side), installing telephone equipment. Five other men, including tradesmen, from Tress were working with him.

Mr Cooper said that since he had experienced his new job he never wanted to work in engineering, or even a factory, again. He claimed the other men felt the same. His new job had a major drawback in that it was relatively low paid - he said it was about the same as he was earning at Tress two years earlier -; but the compensations, he found, outweighed the costs. These compensations were the security, not being directly supervised, being away from the noisy, smelly, environment of the factory, and being able to move about and meet a variety of circumstances and people.

At Tress, Mr Cooper said, he was a strong trade unionist but after the redundancy his attitudes changed a lot; he became "just for himself". As far as he was concerned it became a case of 'dog eat dog'. He believed others had come to feel the same as him. He had been asked by his union to go on television to talk about the effects of unemployment but he had refused because he did not want to be associated with militant trade unionists. He believed that the G.P.O. did not like unions and that they would make it hard for him if they thought he was a militant. The union at the G.P.O. was 'no good'. But anyway he no longer cared about anybody else; he was just looking after himself.

#### VICKERS SCOTSWOOD

The following case studies illustrate that the experience of lengthening unemployment was likely to affect men from Scotswood as well, changing their ideas of suitable work and choosing different types of jobs as their period out of work progressed.

#### CASE 6

Geof Barton was 55. He was a time-served Centre Lathe Turner at Scotswood, working continuously in Vickers plants for 38 years. He lived with his wife and a daughter still at school south of the river in Winlaton. He was unemployed for about 3 months before getting another Centre Lathe Turning

job in a small engineering firm. He called it a 'twopence-halfpenny' firm, possibly in comparison with, although not stated, the 'real' engineering firms of the likes of Vickers, Parsons, Churchills, etc.

Mr Barton said that he got progressively worried as unemployment lasted and he failed to get work; and as he realised that work of the sort he ideally wanted - work in his trade, doing 'proper' engineering work, well-paid, and constant day-shift - was going to be hard to come by, he lowered his sights and re-orientated himself to other types of jobs. His re-evaluation of 'suitable' work seemed to occur in response to personal experience and what he had heard of the experiences of others made redundant; no doubt stories in the press and on television of a worsening unemployment situation also had their influence. He apparently came to believe that older men were at an extra disadvantage. Consequently, pessimistic of his own chances, and disliking the experience of unemployment itself, he took a 'second-rate' job which 'would have to do' until something better came up. The process leading up to this event can best be conveyed by allowing Mr Barton to 'speak for himself'. The following quotations serve to illustrate the points made above.

The common pattern amongst the skilled men was to at first look for jobs 'in the trade' and then, as unemployment lengthened, start to broaden the scope of their search, gradually coming round to consider 'anything' better than the Dole. Mr Barton was not in fact unemployed very long, relatively speaking, but he showed signs of following the pattern.

F.P. "Have you ever thought of leaving your trade since Scotswood?"

G.B. "Well, actually, when I finished "No", but prior to getting a start I thought 'Dear me! I'll have to take owt!' I mean to say I wasn't bothered what I was going to do".

F.P. "You were worried by then were you?"

G.B. "Oh yes! What?! There's blokes that I know - good turners - and they're doing jobs that are away from their trade; and some of them are not getting all that good money, but at least they've got a job; and I think that's the way they look at it, you know, in that situation. Having employment I think is a morale booster. I think blokes will basically take anything".

Mr Barton certainly believed his age was against him for work in most engineering plants. He had tried to get into, along with other engineering plants, Vickers Elswick:-

F.P. "Did you try anywhere else, then, apart from Elswick?"

G.B. "Oh yes, but of course as soon as you mentioned your age".

F.P. "How old are you?"

G.B. "55. And, as I say, they didn't want to know you".

F.P. "Are you sure of that?"

F.P. "That's definite is it?"

G.B. "Definite, yes. British Engines advertised for turners and I got an application form and I sent the application away and we all got more-or-less the same - I think they must have a standard reply for knocking you back because British Engines and Vickers were more-or-less word perfect the same -; and as I say there were other blokes that I knew of - younger blokes - and some of them got a start. So obviously that's all they're concerned with, age - once you passed certain years; and certainly my years were too great for them; that was for sure. I mean that was one thing about this job where I am now; there was nothing like that. They asked me my age, but as far as I know I could be the oldest one who applied. Obviously they weren't worried about ages. But, apparently, going by the different replies from blokes that I know have written in for jobs, your age is against you. My mate - he was 60 - went to the Job Centre and (the man) said 'Oh you don't need to come back here; you'll never get a job at your age'. That was the Job Centre. As it happened he got a job on his own. At least he's <sup>got</sup> a job; that's the way he looks at it. He's a good hand - a good hand".

F.P. "Within engineering?"

G.B. "Oh yes, definitely. He's out of the trade now, but he was a good hand on the engineering side".

As unemployment lengthened:

G.B. "I decided that I'd just have to try and accept anything that's going. Obviously I enjoyed myself the time I was off and all that, but at the back of my mind I thought 'Dear me, at my age I'm going to be left high and dry here' .... I even went for an interview with Caterpillar - they had started their twi-light shift - and I thought 'Oh well, I might as well go along there and have a go there'."

F.P. "Why did you say that you 'even' went to Caterpillar?"

G.B. "Well, the twi-light shift was the only start you could get and the way I was looking at it it was better than nothing".

F.P. "A last resort kind of thing?"

G.B. "Oh yes, more-or-less. As I said, I wanted an ordinary working day job more than anything else".

Like others, Mr Barton was concerned when unemployed about the prospect of a deteriorating financial situation, and again like others he perceived a possible strategy to be to go on a retraining course, not so much in order to acquire a new marketable skill as much as to lengthen the time, Mr Barton believed, he would maintain his right to receive Earnings Related benefits. There was also the possible bonus of getting free tools:-

G.B. "These blokes that go to these Skill Centres will never get into factory work".

F.P. "They won't?"

G.B. "No. Never! The only places that you would get into are twopence-halfpenny firms - you know, the likes of the place where I'm working now..... They'll never be accepted in engineering. I mean to say, in the factories that I know of it's only on the semi-skilled side where they would get in ... I had even thought of (a Skill Centre) during the time I was off; I thought if it came to the crunch I might as well, just go for 6 months .... You see what I was told about the Skill Centre was that all you had to do was go in for 6 months and they would get you a new set of tools .... plus the fact that if you

go to the Skill Centre, and you do your 6 months, and then you come back out of there and then you go back onto the Dole".

F.P. "You don't go on the Social Security?"

G.B. "No. You go back onto your Earnings Related again. Apparently it's one of the dodges ... So I had all these things in mind. But as I say, I got a job and it didn't materialise".

Another strategy considered by many, but apparently engaged upon by very few, amongst our sample, was to supplement their state benefits by getting work in the Informal ('Black') Economy. Mr Barton said it was the possibility of acquiring a skill useable for 'fiddle work' that was a significant influence on his being prepared to learn something outside his trade, should he have gone to a Skill Centre:-

G.B. "I would have gone in as anything. I wouldn't have worried about that. Being in engineering you do your work at the place where you're working and when you come back you cannot do it; but there's other trades where you can bring your trade back where you can make plenty of money outside - like bricklayers, electricians, joiners, painters. I suppose they make more money you could say on the fiddle than what they do working. So I would have taken anything".

Our interviews suggested a great deal of sympathy for men who did 'fiddle jobs'. Mr Barton was no exception:-

F.P. "Do you think people on Social Security are justified in doing the odd fiddle job?"

G.B. "Oh yes, definitely. Yes".

F.P. "To make up the money?"

G.B. "You've got to. I don't care how honest you are; I mean to say I thought of that; I can tell you that if there was any way I could have made cash the time I was on the Dole I would have done it. I would have gone out painting, window-cleaning or anything. I've got my ladders. I've still got my chimney sweep brushes. I would do all

that. You've got to. If you cannot get a job. Let's face it, the standard of living that you're used to and you come to be thrown out of work you get pretty downhearted when you look at the cash that you've got coming in; and all your bills have got to be met. When I was made redundant from Vickers if I hadn't looked after my cash I would have been at the end of my tether, because I thought 'Well, dear me, I've got maybe another 12 years before I go on a pension!' I thought 'Well, how am I going to see myself through just on Dole or Social Security?'

Unfortunately for Mr Barton, and the other redundant men, engineering is not the sort of trade that is very useful in the Informal Market and that is one reason why he wondered whether he made the right decision in turning down an opportunity years earlier to be a coach-painter - a trade quite suitable for fiddle-work.

Fortunately for Mr Barton he got a legitimate job - of a sorts - a 'twopence halfpenny' job where they did not mind his age:-

G.B. "I got a job - mind I'm not too happy with the job that I have got, but the way the work situation is going you look at the papers, and you hear the television about how many people are going out of work; so as I say I'll have to more-or-less stick with the job I've got now .... Things are not all that rosy. It's a case of conditions, and, as I say, different methods as well. It's back to the primitive days the way these fellows work. But as I say it's a job. It's a case of suiting your purpose for the time being".

Apart from the technical and environmental conditions of production, the other main drawbacks were the insecurity - especially compared to the security experienced at Scotswood -, and the 'less than top money'. If Barton chose to stay at Scotswood because it was thought better than other work-places, he chose to stay at this post-redundancy firm mainly because it was seen as being better than life on the Dole; better work-places were clearly believed to exist and should the opportunity arise he was going to move to one of them;

F.P. "Do you keep your eye open?"

G.B. "Oh yes".

F.P. "And keep your ear open".

G.B. "Oh yes. If the circumstances arise where I could get a job for better money and all that I would certainly take it".

The pressures of unemployment seemed to influence Mr Barton quicker than some; he was 'only' out of work 3 months; but we suggest that a significant factor was his age which Mr Barton believed increased his disadvantage in the market. There was some suggestion that under pressure Mr Barton took a job in a believed inferior type of engineering firm relative to other engineering firms of the like of such places as Parsons, Vickers and Churchills.

Mr Barton was still employed at the same firm at the time of the follow-up interview 7 months later.

## CASE 7

Robert Scott was aged 57 and was an Inspector at Scotswood. He worked there a total of 40 years. When interviewed for this thesis he had been continuously unemployed 14 months - including a 10 week period at a Government Skill Centre.

Mr Scott's description of the effects on him of unemployment were similar to that described in the literature elsewhere: "It isn't just the lack of money. You get into a rut and you don't want to do anything sometimes.... (When you have a job) you seem as though you're more settled in your mind. If you're going somewhere you know you're going somewhere every day .... When you're not working you've lost something. You don't know where to put yourself sometimes; you get up in the morning and you know you've got nothing to do; you've got nowhere to go".

He said that he knew other unemployed men whose health had been affected but he said that his had not - although he did get worried; sometimes his nerves were bad. He had cut back on drinks, cigarettes, and going out; he no longer sat with others drinking so as not to be faced with the embarrassment of not being able to buy a round.

Mr Scott's first preference was for a job in his trade at 'a reasonable wage' but he recognised that increasing length of unemployment,



accompanied by increasing financial pressures, were forcing him to consider 'trading down' and take second preferences. At the time of the interview he still had some of his redundancy money left and he felt this allowed him to retain at least some degree of discretion. However he realised that his money would run out before long and then, he believed, he would have to "accept anything". But he hoped to stave off that point in time by following the strategy of going on training courses for which he received only low payment, but which was sufficient to "get by" and which would slow down the drain on his redundancy money. The main object of these courses for him was not to learn a new skill to get a job, but, rather, to give him some income and give him the time to find a job employing his old skills:-

R.S. "I'm just hoping that if I go on this course I'll get more than my dole money and I can live off what I'm going to get ... I'm just hoping engineering picks up again by the time I've finished this course and if it does I can get another job; if it doesn't I've got to start looking further afield".

Despite Mr Scott's desire to stay in the trade, and his hopes that a Training Course strategy would give him time, in fact it was clear that he had already reached the point where he would be prepared to take a less skilled job - albeit hopefully as a temporary measure.

R.S. "The way I look at it now, I say 'Well there's not a job in the trade and there's a job down the road and it'll last 5 or 6 - well even if it was to last a couple of years, the trade might pick up".

F.P. "Some people said that after a while they would do jobs that they wouldn't think of doing a few months earlier - simply to get off the Dole".

R.S. "Yes, simply to get off the Dole. That's what I said. Now, really, if the job that I want is not there I'm quite willing to take any job. But there's very few jobs kicking around.

At the time of the follow up interview 8 months later Mr Scott was still unemployed and was on a training course.

CASE 8

Mr Carr was 57 years old. He worked a total of 43 years at Scotswood as a fitter. When interviewed he had been continuously unemployed 12 months. He lived with his wife but no children in Benwell, within walking distance of the Scotswood Works. His wife did not do paid work.

Mr Carr was badly affected by unemployment, although not as much as he thought he would have been had he not received redundancy money. He had "not got to the stage yet" that an old work-mate of his had who killed himself. Nevertheless things were gradually getting worse. He went off Earnings Related after 6 months, and then he started to dip into his redundancy savings. He had it in his mind what it would be like when his savings were gone:-

A.C. "Your life would just completely change. Well I like a drink; you wouldn't be able to go out and have a drink. I like my cigarettes; you would have to cut down on them because you couldn't afford them. So, you know, your life is going to change dramatically. There's no doubt about it".

Some people would say that cutting down on drinking and smoking would not be such a great hardship; but Mr Carr said that far from persuading him to economise by reducing his intake of beverage and cigarettes the experience of unemployment induced him to increase the intake considerably. The increased smoking - "double" what it was when he was in work - and drinking appeared to be by-products of boredom and frustration:-

A.C. "Yes you get bored; there's no doubt about it. The only way I hide my boredom is to go and have a drink. If I had to sit in here and watch four square walls day in and day out I would go steadily around the bend".

As in the case of others Mr Carr believed his age told against him getting work. In the past, he suggested, an older man could compete for work against younger colleagues partly because employers 'knew' that older men were more stable and partly because they were more experienced. But by the time of one year after the Scotswood closure unemployment had got so bad that employers could find sufficient young men who were steady - or

could easily replace any that left -, and the young men had the added attraction that they were fitter and could work harder. Consequently, Mr Carr argued, it was not his age 'per se' that was against him, so much as his 'age at a time of mass unemployment'. Below Mr Carr expresses his perceptive argument in his own words:-

A.C. "I think you could have found it harder to take if work had still been the same and just Scotswood had to close and you found yourself on the Dole, and you couldn't get a job for the simple reason that they're classing you as too old. But it's not really that as far as I'm concerned; it's really because they can pick and choose now, with there being so many on the Dole, they can actually pick and choose. You see, at one time, if unemployment hadn't been so great as it is now, I would have been able to get a job just like that. They would have said: 'There's a lad who's had all these years of experience behind him; he's 57; he's level-headed now, at that age; he's going to go to work and be at work for a week - week in and week out - whereas a youngster is not going to do that'. And it would have gone the opposite way as far as I'm concerned. They would have gone for the likes of us. But now things are where they can pick and choose, and if they get, say, the younger element in, and they're not up to standard, they know they can finish them, and pick and choose again until they get what they like .... (and) I think they're looking for the younger side because they think they can get more out of them, because they're apt to think that when a man reaches fifty to fifty-odd he's slowing down, whereas another lad's in his prime".

Above Mr Carr appeared to be referring to a situation of men competing for jobs within the skilled, and possibly semi-skilled, sectors of engineering; but even 'outside the trade', in the realm of unskilled work, Mr Carr had come to the conclusion that older men were at a disadvantage:

A.C. "A mate of mine thought it would be quite easy to get another job, but he's sort of disillusioned now; and I said to the lad before we finished "Remember we're going to have a difficult time getting a job in our trade", I said "I see no reason why we can't get a job

outside our trade; there'll be plenty of that". But I was wrong - because we're a bit too old, even though I've got another 8 years to do before I can retire. I'm 57".

This realisation (or belief) that age was going to be against him even for labouring jobs apparently occurred when, after failing to get a job in his trade after several months he 'lowered his sights' and started to look for other types of jobs - a common pattern amongst our men.

F.P. "Do you know whether a lot of people have had difficulty getting jobs within their trade?"

A.C. "Oh yes. Well I've tried all over".

F.P. "Were you trying for jobs within your trade when you left Scotswood?"

A.C. "Within the trade. And then after I had been out 6 or 7 months I was talking to different people and I said to one lad - and I was only talking about a labouring job, mind - I said 'Do you want any labourers on the Corporation?' 'Aye', he said 'As a matter of fact I think they want them'. But there again age came in; I was too old at 57. It's something I've accepted; but even at my age I've still got a good 7 to 8 years.... I didn't think it would be as hard as what it's actually turned out to be. You know, when I asked about different jobs outside the trade I said 'Why, you can't even get them now!' ".

Whether or not Mr Carr's age was against him (and from what other men said it certainly in fact seemed to be) he believed it to be so, and consequently it would have reinforced his view that he would have to take less than ideal employment. A great determinant of a man 'trading down' is the actual experience of unemployment itself, but a person's belief about his market power could also influence his market-strategy; those with greatest confidence may have greatest resistance to taking inferior jobs. A belief in your weaker position is likely to make you less 'choosy' and for this reason older men may have been liable to adjust their ideas of suitable work sooner. In the following passages Mr Carr explains convincingly that lengthening unemployment did indeed persuade him to go after or accept a lower level of job.

F.P. "Are there any places where you don't think you would work, unless you were really forced to?"

A.C. "One place I've never ever had a fancy for working is the shipyards".

Although Mr Carr found it hard to express why he had a particular aversion to working in the shipyards it was evident that one factor was the amount of travelling to and from work it would have involved, implying both more cost in bus fares or car petrol and the lengthening of the working day. Commenting on this latter aspect he said:-

A.C. "If you're starting at half past seven in the shipyards I would have to be getting up at about 6 o'clock in the morning for to travel down there. If you work an 8 hour day you're actually working an 11 hour day when you take your travelling into account. So you're working in a sense a 12 hour shift".

F.P. "So you kind of weigh things up really?"

A.C. "Oh yes, you've got to. But, having said all that, the way things are now I wouldn't be weighing that side up. I'd be too happy to get a job. So if I had a chance of a job over at the shipyards I'd be there".

At least by the stage Mr Carr had reached, the crucial comparison that is made when evaluating the 'worth' of a job is current experience of unemployment, not past preferences or expectations when working. The standard against which the unemployed measure the rewards of a job is a complex amalgam of all that it means to be without paid work, but undoubtedly one of the most important components, if not the most important, is the financial one. It was commonly the case that unemployed men's ideas of the level of wage they would accept was one that was marginally better than the total household income. Mr Carr's comments suggest that for him at least a job paying more than the household income would be acceptable, even at very low rates per hour. That is to say the job would not in these circumstances be rated in terms of pay per hour, but in terms of maximum earnings per week - whatever the hours. When Mr Carr had a job at Scotswood his comments suggest he would have compared a job in the shipyards in terms of rate per hour. Thus a job in the shipyards, adding as it would three to four hours onto the working day, was worth less on a measurement of rate per hour than a job at Scotswood which was only a five minute walk from Mr Carr's house. But this means of measurement apparently changed in the circumstances of prolonged unemployment when the total household income was very low.

The practice of comparing a job's earnings in the way outlined above is illustrated below:-

F.P. ("What would a job in the shipyards have to pay?")

A.C. "I would look at it in this sense. Let's for arguments sake say that after all that time (a 12 hour shift, including travelling) I was coming out with £60 a week - it's not a big wage nowadays - I would look at that £60 against the giro that I'm picking up now. That's the difference in wage now. You see at one time I would say 'That job's not worth a light!' But now my giro works out at twenty-odd pounds a week - as against £60. Well, then, it doesn't come into it now I go for that job. But with being used to coming out with, say, £60 or £70 a week from Scotswood - where I can walk from here to Scotswood and back in 10 minutes - and having to go down to the shipyards for the same or less, well I would say 'No way am I going down there'. You see there would be a vast difference in wage\*. But having sampled a 12 month on the Dole I don't think the money side comes into it as much, as long as you come out with a decent living wage".

\* Measured in rate per hour; absolute wage per week would be similar.

Mr Carr's last comment is not absolutely clear in its meaning, but we think he was saying that normally a job would be evaluated in terms of whether it was well-paying in terms of hours, conditions, travelling distance, etc, but after 12 months unemployed the costs or drawbacks of the job had become much less significant such that the only really important question was whether sufficient money could be earned; and if this was the case then criteria for distinguishing between jobs when Mr Carr was employed may no longer have applied after a long period on the Dole.

For Mr Carr the minimum wage he said he would accept - taking home around £50 a week - was much less than the pay he believed men in his trade were earning on Tyneside - around, he said, £90 a week. He had no doubt that it was the experience of unemployment that induced him to consider such low paid jobs:-

F.P. "If it was a local job would you accept one at £50?"

A.C. "Yes, local, come out with £50; I would accept that".

F.P. "Do you think that what you would accept has changed because you've been out of work for 12 months? Has that had an effect?"

A.C. "Yes definitely".

F.P. "Would you not have accepted that say 8 or 9 months ago?"

A.C. "No... No. You see, as I said, we've been used to working all our lives, coming out with our wages, living a social life that we live, that's all changed now, so therefore you'd only be too happy to take that kind of job. But, if say, somebody had said 'Oh, there's a good job going there; you'd be coming out with £50 a week', I'd have said 'No way!' But as I say things have changed now".

F.P. "So redundancy does have a big effect?"

A.C. "Oh I would say so, definitely. Without a doubt!"

F.P. "And it will probably be the same for everybody?"

A.C. "Yes. You see, because a man reaches a standard where he's glad to take anything - even if he's a tradesman; he'll do any kind of job to get a job, when he's sampled at least say 12 months on the Dole."

F.P. "Is that mainly the boredom, do you mean, or not having the money?"

A.C. "Well I would say 'both' - not having the money and also the boredom of it - just something to do. There are the type of people who will not have it; but when you've been working all your life from leaving school at 14, and then coming on the Dole for the first time, it is a bit hard, like, the boredom side."

Mr Carr was still unemployed at the time of the follow-up interview 8 months later.

CASE 9

Mr Timpson was 57. He lived with his sister in Winlaton, on the south bank of the Tyne. At Scotswood he was a Centre Lathe Turner, and then for 14 years he was an Inspector. He worked there 39 years. He had been continuously unemployed 11 months when interviewed for this thesis.

Like many others Mr Timpson got an apprenticeship at Vickers after being 'spoken for' by a relative who worked there. After a break in the army during the war years he was not very keen on returning to his old job but chose to do so because the employment he would otherwise have preferred would have meant moving away from Tyneside:-

J.T. "I came out (of the Army) in 1948 and things weren't much better than what they are now. I would have preferred to have gone somewhere else but it was rather difficult. So I went back to Vickers."

F.P. "You would have preferred to go somewhere else?"

J.T. "I would have preferred - just for a change. But I looked into things and made enquiries and it would have meant I would have had to leave home again; and I had been away from home for about 2 years so I didn't fancy that. So I went back to Vickers. And I've been there ever since".

Mr Timpson subsequently stayed at Scotswood, he said, because it was interesting and close to home. Although he was aware of better paid jobs elsewhere he was single and did not need extra money. He could not move away from the area because he had to look after his mother.

After the redundancy finding a suitable job was much more difficult than he expected. He wrote to a lot of engineering firms within easy travelling distance trying to get an Inspector's job - firms including, he said, Michell Bearings, Eimco, Ingersoll Rand, Churchills, Rose Forgrove, Huywoods, Vickers Crabtree, and Kimberley Clarks. He was offered an Inspector's job in an engineering firm in West Newcastle which "would have been ideal" but he failed a medical exam because of high blood pressure ; he turned down another Inspector's job in the town of Stanley because it was difficult to reach.



Mr Timpson believed that part of the reason for his difficulty in getting work was his age. At the time of interview he was beginning to 'trade down':

F.P. "What kind of jobs have you been going after since you left? Have they all been within your trade?"

J.T. "Yes. I've been applying for Inspection jobs; but lately I've been applying for a job on a Centre Lathe - you know, falling back to my trade - seeing if I could possibly get back into that; because I find that, just from what I hear, that as far as applying for Inspection jobs is concerned there's so many applying for them; and I'm 57 next month. Well you can imagine where I come. I don't know if they count experience or what. But I think you're at the back of the queue as far as your age is concerned."

By the time that Mr Timpson had been unemployed nearly 11 months he was beginning to get concerned about the financial situation. At the time of the interview he was simply in receipt of basic unemployment benefit. His sister had a retirement pension. He had been on the basic unemployment rate for 5 months: "So it means that since then I've been living on my savings. I've had to dig into them". The interview was held near the end of October and come November Mr Timpson was expecting a new law to come into effect limiting the total savings you could have whilst being eligible for Supplementary Benefit. His redundancy savings exceeded this limit but they were locked into long-term investments. The implication was that at a minimum Mr Timpson would not be eligible for Supplementary Benefit after 12 months unemployment; at worst he might not have even been able to withdraw his savings from his investment scheme.

These financial pressures, plus a dreading of the boredom of the coming winter, plus a growing conviction that 'at his age' he was not going to be able to get the job he wanted, were combining to persuade him to look for jobs hitherto largely ignored:-

J.T. "Lately I've been thinking of well 'security' - anything they've got - you know, gradually dropping down. I'm getting in a position now where I'll take anything".

F.P. "Rather than be on the Dole?"

J.T. "Rather than be on the Dole. This is 11 months now.... I think there's

practically no jobs in my trade kicking about. That's why I think I'll have to concentrate more on the Centre-Lathe-Turning".

F.P. "What about jobs outside your trade?"

J.T. "Well as I said I've thought about 'security' jobs - anything like that. But on the other hand you find quite a few security jobs saving 'Such and Such an Age Up to 55'; you'll find that".

F.P. "What about the pay?"

J.T. "The pay is very poor ... very poor in those jobs. They generally talk about sixty-odd pounds, and they're talking about five 12 hour shifts. At Samuel Palmers, the last one I read at Blaydon (Job Centre), it was five 12 hour shifts, and that was including odd weekends."

F.P. "And would that include travelling?"

J.T. "No, you'd be travelling outside that time. But I've never really applied for any of these. It's only crossed my mind, like. I've checked upon them in the Job Centre. It's something I might have to fall back onto".

Mr Timpson had not got a car and he did not live in a good place for travelling long distances by bus, so preferably he would like to get a job reasonably easy to get to; up to the interview he had had sufficient resources to be able to hold out until the job he wanted came up, but he thought the time was fast approaching when he was going to have to stop operating a restricted set of criteria limiting his range of choice:-

J.T. "(The job should) preferably be in the Newcastle area - say the Teams Valley and towards Newburn way - just round this area; I would like to get fixed up there - if possible; what you'd like and what you can find nowadays are two different things. As I said, come the end of November the financial aspect will be the big deciding factor".

F.P. "Do you think that up to now you're exercising choice to a certain degree?"

J.T. "Well as I said, up to now I've told you about Inspection jobs I've applied to; now I'm beginning to drop away from those down to Centre Lathe Turning; and failing that, 'Security' or something similar to that".

F.P. "One or two have said that they feel as if they've worked all their lives kind of moving up the ladder, & getting to the top of the trade, and it bothers them a bit to....".

J.T. "Yes, to drop down".

F.P. "Yes".

J.T. "I don't think that would really bother me - not a great deal".

F.P. "Would that maybe be because you're a bit older than some?"

J.T. "Yes"

F.P. "Do you think that maybe if you were say 40?"

J.T. "Oh if I was 40 I would have different ideas I should imagine. I'd want to get straight back into the trade; I'd still be more-or-less in the race. But I think I've turned a little bit complacent now; you do do that, you know, when you see invitations to apply for a job and it says 'Nobody over 55', and you're 57. It's not a thing that really worries me now".

F.P. "Do you mean that you get round to accepting a situation - resigned to the situation?"

J.T. "Resigned to the situation; you could say that. So much resigned to the situation that if I got the chance of a job on a lower scale I would have to go for it. I would prefer it to be within engineering, of course, what I've been used to".

Mr Timpson was still unemployed 8 months later and "things are getting worse".

CASE TEN

John Billingham was aged 45, married, with a single child at school. Mrs Billingham was disabled and in poor health and was unable to go out to work. Mr Billingham was at Scotswood 11 years, and before that at Vickers Elswick for 9 years. Mr Billingham's job at Vickers was as a Turner on the Standard Telephone Cables work. He was time served. After being continuously unemployed following the redundancy for 14 months he got a job as a porter at a nearby hospital. When interviewed he had been in his new job for 3 weeks.

Mr Billingham had gone to Vickers after being made redundant from his previous employment. He felt that getting a job when already unemployed did not, in the past at least, allow for much freedom of choice. The 'Dole' sent you to a place and if you did not accept an offer your money was stopped.

J.B. "There was no picking and choosing if there was anything I didn't fancy; you went. If you didn't your Dole was stopped".

Despite the apparent constraint on choice prior to working at Vickers, once there Mr Billingham may very well have made conscious decisions not to move on because it was quite clear he found the place had a lot of attractions:-

J.B. "The only job then was at Vickers; so I took it. And I was at Vickers ever since. I wouldn't have a word said against Vickers Elswick or Scotswood".

Mr Billingham was not affected by prolonged unemployment as badly as some. He thought that a major part of the reason for this was that he was always very active mentally and physically looking after his disabled wife and the home. Some men made redundant would find themselves without a role to play since house-keeping or making was generally the wife's province. Mr Billingham, however, had always done most of the housework and looking after his wife was a job in itself. Consequently the loss of paid formal work did not imply as much a loss of self-identity and purpose in life as it did for others.

Moreover his household duties helped him to avoid boredom and dwelling too much on his problems.

There is the further possibility that his wife's disability pension helped, for

12 months at any rate, to top up his unemployment pay to a higher level than was the case for most others, and so for a period at any rate the financial pressures may not have been so great.

J.B. "I think I was able to cope with (the unemployment) simply because I've got the wife to look after; I couldn't afford to show my emotions - you know, with her being in ill health to start with. If I had gone to pieces it would have shattered her - because she's in bad health to start with. I've always done most of the work in the house so I just plod along and never let it show .... I always had something to get up for. I don't think I was ever really bored. I didn't have time".

Nevertheless, Mr Billingham was affected, particularly by worry, and as unemployment progressed concern over the financial situation increased. Also he believed that even at 45 his age may have disadvantaged him for getting jobs.

J.B. "Some of the men from Scotswood their ages might stop them from getting jobs. Anybody around the 60 mark their age isn't going to be a great advantage for them. I mean 45 for me - they were looking at me as if I was senile! '45?! No Chance!'. The majority of men you're interviewing from Scotswood it's going to be their age stopping them getting work probably, not lack of experience. It's not their lack of ability or experience".

Increasing pressures and a belief of weakness in the market led Mr Billingham to follow a familiar pattern of gradually re-orientating himself to a lower paid type of job 'out of the trade'. As it happened, the job he got, a hospital porter, had real compensations which left him feeling not wholly dis-satisfied with the occupational change, but it is clear that this was more a product of fortune rather than a comparative choice between two types of employment. A choice did take place but the main comparison seems to have been 'a job at a certain level of pay' and 'unemployment with a certain level of income', rather than between one job and another. Consequently, it is probable from what he says that Mr Billingham would have accepted a much worse job than the one he got, as long as it was better than life on the Dole.

F.P. "Did it happen that after you'd been unemployed nearly a year, say, did you go after different jobs than you would have done when you first left?

One or two people have said that they changed their minds about the types of jobs they were looking for".

J.B. "Oh aye; at the beginning you start looking for a job in your trade and then towards the 12 month mark, you know, your Dole's finished - your Related Earnings only last 6 months - so then you know you're going on Social Security, which is lower again; so then you start thinking 'Well I'm not going to get a job; anything has got to be better than Social Security'. So that's the attitude that you generally take".

The significance of the 12 month mark is that then is when people's entitlement to unemployment pay is stopped and thereafter any further state support is subject to a means test. Up to this stage Mr Billingham had managed to 'get by' without dipping into his redundancy savings; after 12 months he started to live off his savings. That is when he appeared to give up trying to get a job in his trade and start considering other work.

Mr Billingham's experience of unemployment led him to regret his decision to learn an engineering trade, because not only did it not give him employment in the formal economy it was of no use for the informal 'fiddle' economy either.

F.P. "Given your time again would you go back into engineering?"

J.B. "I don't think I would go into engineering again".

F.P. "Any idea what you would go for?"

J.B. "I'll tell you one thing I certainly would do if I went into a trade, it would be one that you'd use outside".

F.P. "Out of the factory do you mean?"

J.B. "Yes, it would be a job that I could use outside. I mean I'm a turner; I can only turn on the machine and the machines are all inside the factory. You get electricians, plumbers, coppersmiths, or anything like that, they know that if they go on the Dole they can fiddle; even when they're working, instead of working overtime at work they can possibly do weekend work on the side and make it up that way, and utilise their skills outside the factory. Mine had always to be used there in the factory. That's what I'm always trying to impress on my laddie; he doesn't know what he wants

to be but I always say 'Get a job where, if you're going into a trade, get one that you can use when you leave the factory, something you can use outside' - make money outside".

8 months later at the time of the follow-up interview John Billingham was still in the same job.

#### CASE ELEVEN

Allan Mason was 54 and married. At Scotswood he was a Turner for 17 years. Before that he was at Elswick for 20 years. When interviewed he had had a new job as a Turner for 10 months. Prior to that he was unemployed 6 months. His wife worked part-time.

Mr Mason went into engineering initially in preference to pit-work:-

A.M. "Most of my mates were in engineering and I thought it was the thing to do".

F.P. "You managed to avoid the pits?"

A.M. "My father wouldn't allow me in the pits, neither myself nor my brother. No, he wouldn't wear that. If it hadn't been for him there is the possibility that one or both of us could have wound up in the pits. But he just wouldn't entertain it."

Mr Mason was badly affected by the experience of unemployment. Mrs Mason said that it caused plenty of rows in the household. Her husband got worried and depressed and would not wash or dress properly. Mr Mason said that he tried to put on a brave face so as not to distress the family; he thought he stopped a lot of family arguments developing into anything more serious by holding back. He said he particularly did not like staying at home whilst his wife went out to work.

Mr Mason said he hated being unemployed, by far the worst aspect of which was lack of money. There was also the boredom but this, he believed, was a consequence of lack of money, and was not in itself a problem; money would solve it.

A.M. "If I had the money in no way would I be bored; that's a different kettle of fish altogether. Oh no. With a restriction on money certainly I would be bored; but with money to suffice for my needs no way would I be bored; I've too many interests".

F.P. "Are you saying that it was only the money?"

A.M. "Yes. Oh yes".

For the first two months after he was made redundant Mr Mason did not look for any jobs; he had a 'holiday'. Then I thought "Well my period is up, I better start looking for another job. But I wasn't really concerned. So for another couple of months I went for various interviews half-heartedly - you know, not really set on it. I wanted a job but no way was I pushing it really hard. Then for the last couple of months I was really after a job, and I wasn't getting one".

Mr Mason's comment could be interpreted as meaning that he both progressively looked harder to find work and became less discriminatory; this would fit in with Mrs Mason's comment that her husband tried mainly for engineering jobs during the earlier part of his unemployment but "he tried for all sorts outside his trade towards the end".

When Mr Mason got his job he was coming to the limit of his entitlement to Related <sup>E</sup>arnings and this was pressurising him to get work:-

F.P. "Was that a big worry going off Related Earnings?"

A.M. "Oh yes. Yes. I know for a fact that I couldn't manage on the Dole. No way could I exist on bare Dole money - over a period of time. It's not enough".

For Mr Mason that work had to be in the formal economy:-

F.P. "(What about fiddle work)?"

A.M. "I wouldn't feel happy in that situation. To me, you're either 'working' or you're 'not working'."

F.P. "But if you're not getting enough money?"



A.M. "Well this is it; this is why I don't criticise anybody that's really doing it. But on the other hand it wouldn't be me. I would have to work or not work".

Mr Mason in fact did get a job in a small to medium sized engineering company, at his trade, but he felt very insecure. He was expecting to be made redundant again in the next few weeks, and he said that if it did happen again he would try to move out of engineering into something more stable. He said that this was "common sense for someone of his age". So he was 'keeping an eye open' for a secure job.

F.P. "When you say you've had enough of engineering do you mean that you've had enough of factories altogether?"

A.M. "Yes, I think so. I think so, because what I'd like is a steady and secure job; and I cannot see one in engineering nowadays".

F.P. "Do you mean that even if it meant a drop in pay?"

A.M. "Oh yes. Yes. I'm not greatly worried about money as long as I've got enough to get by on".

F.P. "Would it bother you at all to take a job which some might say was a bit of a drop in status?"

A.M. "Status? No. Not at all. No it wouldn't bother me that type of work now. Not at all".

The reason it 'wouldn't bother' him was because his main concern was to find a secure job. He did not see jobs in his trade as offering a stable future.

F.P. "One or two people have said jobs like warehousemen or stores"

A.M. "Yes".

F.P. "That sort of place?"

A.M. "Yes I could stand something like that if it was secure, I think".

But despite Mr Mason's preference for secure jobs, out of the trade if necessary, he said that should he be made redundant again he might in fact take another unstable engineering job again; he "might have no choice".

A.M. "Oh I couldn't get a job as a postman at my age. Oh I'd consider it; I'd consider anything. Don't get me wrong, I might have to start in engineering again when this job pays off; I may have to; but it'll not be through choice; it'll be because there's nothing else".

When Mr Mason said that he might have 'no choice' he meant that the opportunity might not arise to go into the kind of job he preferred; consequently he might have to make do with second best. In comparison to being unemployed even a 'second best' job may be better than no job, and so bad were Mr Mason's experiences on the Dole that he would probably choose to take the job. Other men might not have accepted it, especially if they had not been out of work long or if they were confident of their market power.

The acceptance of a job in engineering would not necessarily mean that his orientation toward a secure job would cease; a job could simply be accepted until the opportunity for a preferred type of employment arose.

7 months later, at the time of the follow-up interview, Allan Mason was still in in the same job.

## CASE TWELVE

Mr White was 33, married, with young children. He was at Scotswood 11 years and at Elswick another 7. His last job at Scotswood was as a Jig Borer. He was unemployed 6 months before getting his current job as a Horizontal Borer.

As was commonly the case Mr White had a rest for a few weeks after leaving Scotswood; then it seems he no longer wanted to stay out of work, but he could not get a job, and unemployment started to have its effect.

F.P. "Did you have a bit of a holiday at first when you left Scotswood?"

N.W. "Well I gave myself about a fortnight or a month, then I started looking in the Job Centre; once the month was up, I don't know about anybody else

but I was bored stiff. You know, I like to go to work. As I say, the first few weeks were OK, but after that you got bored stiff, with hanging around the house - getting in the way of the wife, you know".

By the time six months unemployment had been reached it seems that Mr White was getting to the stage of 'trading down', of considering from his point of view 'worse' jobs.

F.P. "It was getting a bit worrying was it?"

N.W. "Yes. Six months! I was sick of it. I wanted any type of work as long as the money was better than the Dole. It was very worrying, especially when you've got a family and two kids and a house you know. The Dole was no good".

F.P. "Did you think of looking for any jobs outside your trade?"

N.W. "I did, yes. I even thought about .... I tried to get an interview for a Security job; but it was my father that persuaded us to stay in the trade; he said 'You're still young; you've got a trade; you should have a stick at it'. So I did".

F.P. "Why did you look outside the trade?"

N.W. "I think it was just with being on the Dole. You get depressed: sitting around doing nothing. If anything came along that money-wise was OK I'd take it".

The job Mr White got was in a small engineering firm that was sadly lacking in equipment. He was not happy where he was but it was better than nothing; if something better came up he would take it.

F.P. "Are you in any way disillusioned with engineering?"

N.W. "Oh I wasn't at Scotswood; but up here, you know, when you've seen the two sides - Scotswood had good machines, good tools and that -; but I went up there (to current employment) and there was no tool-room; you know, I was a bit disillusioned after I had been there a few weeks. You know, I was 'Oh great! I've got a job. I can start'. But after a couple of weeks there, there were no tools, poor machines ... and you were supposed to get stuck in and make the most of it".

F.P. "So is it more of 'just a job'?"

N.W. " 'Just a job'. I dare say if I could get a better job I would be away... I'm not happy. My wife could tell you. Some nights I come home sick; but as I say 'It's a job'. I've just got to hope that something else comes along".

Mr White still had the same job at the time of the follow-up interview 6 months later.

The emphasis in these case studies has been on the way that lengthening unemployment can induce people to change their ideas of the sort of work they would choose/accept. But we have pointed out that the influence of not having a job will vary according to a number of factors, including in particular, we think, those relating to a person's actual or perceived strength in the market. Age has been highlighted for this reason, although we recognise that a person's position in the life-cycle has other significant implications other than simply the fact of changing market-power.

Because length of period unemployed is not a totally independent variable then the actual particular time a person has to be out of work before he/she is affected - if at all - will vary. It may be, for example, that where a person enters the state of unemployment already very pessimistic about chances of regaining a preferred type of job, he may be very quick to change his ideas of acceptable work. Another person, on the other hand, believing himself to possess a particularly strong skill, or/and having substantial financial and social resources to call upon, may not restructure his orientation towards work for some considerable time. There are in other words a number of variables involved, of which 'period of time out of work' is likely to be just one - albeit a particularly significant one.

What could also be important is whether or not a person has experienced unemployment before and whether any new job is thought likely to last. That is to say those locked into a cycle of recurrent unemployment, or who have dropped into an unstable sector, may also change their ideas of suitable work - inducing, for example, people to re-orientate themselves towards getting a secure job.

Three case studies will be used to illustrate these points in brief; it is recognised that they are somewhat tangential to the main object of this chapter - to discuss the progressive effects of single period unemployment - and so they will not be dealt with at great length.

### CASE THIRTEEN

Arthur Bellingham was 33, married with young children. He was at Scotswood 15 very insecure years, frequently narrowly avoiding redundancy, as a non-time-served 'Universal Grinder'. He was only unemployed one month before getting a job 'in his trade' at Churchills Engineering.

Before Mr Bellingham was finally paid off from Scotswood he was sent by the Job Centre to a little engineering firm near by to Churchills Engineering, which sub-contracted out the work. But Mr Bellingham did not take up the offer of a job because he did not think there would be much security with them. These little firms that rely on sub-contract work, said Mr Bellingham, are the first to get 'chopped' when a firm like Churchills starts to contract. He said he thought that there were 'dozens' of such little firms doing work for big firms like Churchills.

Although Mr Bellingham rejected this job offer, he said that after being made redundant the experience of unemployment hit him so hard that he was very quickly prepared to accept 'almost anything', although given the opportunity he would still prefer work that was secure - even work outside the trade in the Post Office.

F.P. "Some people say that when they've been unemployed for a while then they kind of lower their sights".

A.B. "I don't think you can think straight".

Wife "Well you would have taken anything wouldn't you?"

A.B. "Oh I would have taken anything".

F.P. "Outside your trade?"

A.B. "Yes. It hit me so hard".

Wife "I think it's very demoralising for a man to be made redundant".

A.B. "When you go down to that place it's like going into hell. It really is terrible, degrading, to have to go down there. And you know what I was like when I got the giro, it was terrible having to go to that Post Office and hand it over. I mean that was terrible. It was terrible having to go down to sign on... I mean there's people there who don't want a job; and you're amongst them; and you're having to queue up with them".

Wife "You're not just getting out of bed to go and sign on with no intention of looking for a job anyway, or trying to get a job. The stigma is attached to you because you're classed with those people anyway".

A.B. "You've got no respect whatsoever in that place; you're really on the bottom. It's terrible. I think it's terrible!."

F.P. "When you said that you might have considered anything, did you mean actually 'anything'?"

A.B. "Well what do you do? I mean if you can get a job that pays £10 better than Dole money you'll take it ... This is what I said at Churchills; if I could get the same money at Churchills as I could get on the Dole I would still keep my job - because I would have self-respect. It's as bad as that - even less money. There's no way that I would give up my job to go back to that - if I could do anything about it".

F.P. "So that would explain why a lot of people have taken jobs which seem to me to be low paid?"

A.B. "Oh yes. Oh, they'll take anything. Anything! They'd sooner cut the grass on the Town Moor for £10 a week rather than go down there. It's making people worse. You know, it tears you apart. And every time that phone used to ring I used to jump through the roof. I always used to be a bag of nerves."

At the time of the follow-up interview, 3 months later, Mr Bellingham was still at Churchills but he was on a two day week.

CASE FOURTEEN

Bernard Strong was 36, married with young children. At Scotswood he was a Machine-Shop foreman. He was there for 20 years. He was unemployed for 6 weeks before getting his current job at Liner Engineering as a foreman. His wife worked part-time as a typist.

During the short period he was unemployed Mr Strong discriminated in favour of 'foreman' jobs, but towards the end of the period he was beginning to lower his sights.

B.S. "I hung on and hung on for 5 or 6 weeks and then I got an offer of a job - which I thought was a secure firm; it was a multi-million pound organisation that was backing it; but we are going the same way; we've been hit by more redundancies, and now we're on short time again".

F.P. "When you say you 'held back' does that mean that you think you could have got another job if you wanted?"

B.S. "Possibly, if I'd gone back onto the tools; I have tried to keep my staff job, whereas otherwise I would possibly have had a job within 5 weeks".

B.S. "When I was getting towards the five week mark I was getting to the point where I would have taken anything; I would have gone back on the tools; but obviously I wanted to try and keep my staff status".

At about the same time that Mr Strong was offered a job as foreman by Liner Engineering, he was also offered another foreman's job by a small engineering firm; but he chose Liner because he thought it would be more secure:-

B.S. "I had a chance of a foreman's job down at a place in Blaydon - a small factory down there. At this time I knew I had a job at Liner (but the manager of the small place said) 'Let me know over the phone and I'll see to it for you'. But anyway I had a good think about it and at the time Liner had a lot of work, and it was a much bigger concern, and, as I said, I had been told that it was a multi-million pound organisation;

so I thought 'Oh well, you're safe'. When I think about it later I was wrong; but the idea was that you got yourself in another niche in another organisation where you were safe and you were cradled by money; you were safe. That's what I thought. So I phoned him up and told him I wasn't taking that little job down there. To me it was one of these little one-horse-town little firms that I wasn't sure how long it would last. But they're still going strong down there. They're doing better than the firm I work for".

B.S. "The way I look at it if it is a smaller place it's much easier to go bust; or that was my line of thought anyway; I'm not so sure now. You know, Vickers and a lot of these places that are shutting down, they're all multi-million pound organisations".

Although Mr Strong suffered comparatively little unemployment after Scotswood closed the general level of uncertainty in engineering appeared to be making him more susceptible to new ideas of suitable work:-

B.S. "At the back of my mind now - I've talked it over with my wife a few times; we talk about it now quite a bit - and I've said I'd gladly just get a complete change and come out of engineering, even if the money wasn't there, if I could get a secure job. I mean, really, that's all you've got to think about now, a secure job. You talk to fellows now who are 45 and they can't get a job because they're too old; well, it's ridiculous! "

Bernard Strong was still at Liner Engineering 6 months later at the time of the follow-up interviews, but he "was not very happy".

#### CASE FIFTEEN

Mr Straw was 47, married with young children. He was a labourer at Scotswood for 23 years. After the redundancy he was unemployed for 5 weeks before getting a job in the foundry of Parsons Engineering as a labourer.

Even just 5 weeks unemployment affected him. He thought it affected him particularly badly because he had never been out of work before. He said he could not sleep at night; things were always on his mind. It was "a very unsettling time".



As it happened he got the chance of two jobs at the same time - one in the Post Office, and believed to be secure, and the one he chose at Parsons Engineering, which offered what he particularly wanted; constant night-shift.

J.S. "I tried to get away (from engineering), but this lad (in the Club) said 'I'll speak for you'; I said 'Oh no, I want to get out of engineering (because of the insecurity). Then I said 'Go on, you can speak for us' because I was getting - it was only 5 weeks unemployment but it was still day after day. When this job came through he said 'The Foundry'; I said 'Oh!' - but it was constant night-shift. And that was the only thing I took the job for - because it was constant night-shift".

But at Parsons he was still unsettled and he thought he was too hasty taking this job in preference to the believed more secure, but lower paid, Post Office job:-

J.S. I regret knocking the Post Office job back - going round cleaning the sub-stations; but if I had sat down for a day and thought about it! I mean now a person just wants a guaranteed job. Here at Parsons if they took £5 off (your wage) you'd still be happy to keep your job. Well I'm just speaking for myself; I'm 47".

Before taking the job at Parsons he considered going after a job as a porter but it involved working difficult shifts and the pay was low so he did not follow through his initial interest. However, after experiencing the insecurity of Parsons he said he would accept the porter job.

J.S. "A firm wanted a porter-cum-handyman and I wrote in just to check it, and the wage. I think it was £70 on the top but it was two split-shifts - morning and evening with a 4 or 5 hour break in between. But with bus-fares (twice a day) and off-takes it was down to £50. It wasn't worth it. But I suppose if I got finished here now I would snap up a job like that - just any job".

F.P. "Rather than be on the Dole?"

J.S. "Rather than be on the Dole. Yes".

Undoubtedly it was Mr Straw's evaluation of his chances of getting work, as a labourer and as an older man, which was particularly significant in colouring

his ideas about the sorts of jobs he would accept. If he was to be made redundant again he believed he would take a low paying job and one involving shifts he did not like. Above all he wanted security:

J.S. "I just want somebody who could say to me 'You sign that contract; you're in here for 5 years'; I mean I wouldn't care less where they put us, or what job I had to do, as long as I had that guarantee... I only care about a job".

Jack Straw still had the same job at the time of the follow-up interview three months later, but he was still worried.

## CONCLUSION

The chapter pursued the general theme of the thesis, that of relating people's requirements, perceptions, preferences, and choices to the workings of labour markets. A sub-theme has been to show how people's ideas of suitable or acceptable work can change according to specific circumstances. It has been suggested that the restructuring of orientations, and the way that people may find their own way to positions where they are needed in the job-structure, may play a vital role in the efficient functioning of the economy.

Emphasis on this restructuring process has been placed in this chapter on the effects of redundancy, and particularly the experience of unemployment. Newcastle City Council, in their Tress Redundancy Study, found that the men's experiences in a depressed labour market led them to "revise their expectations downwards" and look for alternative kinds of employment; this strong tendency to go after jobs not previously considered was associated with increasing length of unemployment. We agree with the Council's conclusions, and have offered a number of case studies to illustrate how men, particularly amongst the skilled and semi-skilled, tended, with increasing length of unemployment, to restructure their orientations.

Our evidence suggested that the main determinants of the restructuring were the experience of unemployment itself - with its financial, social, and psychological pressures -, and a person's evaluation of his strength in the market. Those perceiving themselves as weakest in the market have been judged to be most likely to 'trade down', and go for second preference jobs, quickest. Older people were seen as a broad category of men particularly likely to perceive themselves as relatively disadvantaged, and judging from the evidence of the Tress Redundancy study, plus the recounting of experiences of our samples, the older men's pessimism seemed to be realistic.

The decision to go for worse jobs would often follow a change of comparison, from comparing possible future jobs with a man's last job to comparing with no job. There was a suggestion that this alteration in points of comparison could be accompanied by a change in the way a job's wage offer was evaluated - from some notion of 'wage per hour' to 'maximum wage per week' regardless of hours. Depending on which yardstick is used, possible employments are likely

to be standardised and compared differently. Thus when the movement is from 'wage per hour' to 'maximum wage per week', then the time involved in travel to work and the length of the working day become less significant. Jobs previously considered poorly paid in terms of, say, a standard 40 hour week may then be thought of as reasonably 'well paid' in terms of maximum earnings per week regardless of hours. This theme, of the standard by which the economic rewards of a job are measured, is continued in the next chapter.

We saw in this chapter that men were liable to rationally consider different strategies to achieve their objectives. Men could decide to go after, or accept, inferior jobs with the intention of using them as stepping stones onto something better. Such inferior jobs may be much less than ideally preferred but they were still likely to be better than prolonged unemployment. The notion of staying in a job until something better came up was quite common. For these men, then, the acceptance of inferior employment was seen as a temporary situation.

Other men would also take apparently inferior jobs but not be considering them as a stop-gap. These would be typically older men who gave very high priority to getting secure work that would last until retirement.

A commonly considered strategy for alleviating the financial costs of unemployment was to get work in the informal 'fiddle' economy, but the strong impression was that very few men from Tress, and even less from Scotswood, managed to get such work. Particular impediments to getting such work appeared to include lack of a useable skill, lack of equipment, age, and fear of the legal consequences, - although there could have been other factors as well. Hardly anybody amongst our samples actually disapproved of unemployed men engaging in such activities.

Another strategy was to go on a training course. But not many men actually followed such a course of action. Commonly men would say such courses were pointless for people of their age or that the 'skills' learnt would be of little use. Of those that had seriously considered the training courses, as many mentioned the attraction of a financial allowance as did those who mentioned the opportunity to learn a new skill. It was notable that where there was an attraction of acquiring a new skill it's attraction was just as likely to be in its value in the Informal Economy as much as in the Formal one.

Lengthening unemployment tended to result in a lowering of standards with the gradual dropping off of previous or restrictions to the sorts of jobs people

would take; people weakest in the market and those lowest in the skill hierarchy would likely start off with least restrictions, and would effectively be exercising least choice. People at the bottom had less opportunity to trade down. Statements claiming 'no choice' could not, however, be automatically taken at face value; selection could still be taking place. Often what was meant by 'not having any choice' was being under pressure to take jobs much worse than would ideally be liked; but there would still be jobs which for one reason or another were being selected out or excluded from consideration.

Some ideas of suitable or appropriate work may be based on certain assumptions or taken for granted environmental social circumstances. It could be that some types of jobs are not even thought about as possibilities. For example, cleaning other people's homes might be considered a viable option by some women, but seems less likely to be considered so by men. This could be because of the low pay, or even lack of opportunity; but it seems particularly likely to be because such work would be classified as 'women's work'.

The tensions and distinctions between men and women's work form the parameters of possible work strategies in other areas. An individual's ideas of suitable work may only be formed in relation to some notion of a household work strategy; this would include not only the division of work and responsibilities in the home but also the relationship of household members to the formal economy. The activities of one or more household members are likely to constrain or encourage the activities of others. An individual's labour market decisions may be made in the light of, and in relation to, his household work strategies; and the taking of certain jobs may only be feasible if alterations are made to household work organisation. But the re-organisation of household duties, and possible alterations in definitions of primary or secondary earners, may involve the challenging of hard held assumptions which may meet with varying degrees of resistance. The consideration of certain jobs, therefore, may depend on a fundamental change in a long-established pattern of behaviour or organisation.

This 'hard level' which is particularly resistant to changing ideas of work suitability, and which thereby forms one of the structural parameters to an individual's viewpoint on the jobs market, need not only be a product of gender and household relationships, but also such factors as restrictions on housing mobility, links to particular communities or even countries, and the availability and level of alternative sources of financial resources - including friends and relatives, the State, and the Informal Economy.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### Shift-Work/Earnings/Work-Place Size Office Work

In this study so far we have tried to evaluate the part possible work objectives and job attributes played in attracting or repelling people to and from jobs. Unfortunately time and space only allow for us to treat adequately a small part of the data we collected, with the consequence that a full analysis of other factors cannot be included. However, we think most of the more significant structuring agents - as measured in Chapter III - have been dealt with at length, whilst we are able to make at least some brief reference to other factors in this chapter now below.

#### Shift-work

66% of men from Scotswood and also 66% of men from Tress commented on aspects of shift-work.

From what the men said there seem to be a number of shift-systems operating in engineering, the most common of which appear to be the following: 'Week and Week About' (one week on day-shift followed by one week on night-shift); 'Fortnight About'; a 'Three Shift System' where the 24 hour clock is broken up into three periods (such as 6 till 2, 2 till 10, 10 till 6); and a 'Rotating (Continental) Three Shift System', where the starting times are continually changing as the shift periods rotate through the week. Also, of course, plants, or individuals in plants, may work either 'Constant Day-shift' or 'Constant Night-shift'.

People's attitudes towards working different shift systems and/or particular shift periods - such as 'night'-shift - vary according to their age, expectations, family circumstances and orientations. Responses reflecting the varying positions of different workers have been tabulated on the pages overleaf.



CasesShift-work Comments - Scotswood Workers

1. Working night-shift never bothered him - but his wife hates it.
2. He used to enjoy night-shift because of long weekend; but preferred day-shift 'in itself'; will work shifts if he 'has' to.
3. Shift-work is 'normal' in engineering but he doesn't like it; he will stay at current job because there's no night-shift.
4. Shift-work didn't bother him when single; but now married and 'it's no good for families because you don't see each other'; he will work shifts if he 'has' to.
5. Doesn't like shift-work, especially night-shift.
6. Particularly dislikes shift-work, but he's unemployed and he's considering doing it.
7. Turned down jobs after Scotswood that were constant night-shift or 'fortnight about'. He's 'too old for it'.
8. He worked 'fortnight about' all his life and has always hated night-shift; especially as he gets older.
9. Doesn't like shift-work, particularly night-shift. But there are compensations of long week-ends and extra money.
10. He got used to working 'fortnight about', but he particularly does not like 3 shift systems.
11. He doesn't like shift-work, but he will do it.
12. Shift-work wouldn't put him off a job. He prefers 'fortnight about' because you have longer to get acclimatised.
13. Shift-work has never bothered him because he was interested in his job.
14. Hates shift-work and left Michells to avoid night-shift and go on a day-shift job.
15. Does not like alternate shift-working; but prefers constant night-shift because it pays more; wife doesn't like it.
16. He did not mind night-shift and you could earn more money.
17. He liked working night shift; but his wife did not like it.
18. Shift-work does not bother him much, but given a choice he would not do it.
19. He's unemployed and he's now 'prepared to do shift-work'.
20. He does not like shift-work but he will do it if he has to.
21. Never got used to 'fortnight about' and is thankful that his present job is constant day-shift.
22. Does not want to work night-shift, or Continental shifts; but he will do shifts if he 'has' to.

Shift-work Comments - Scotswood Workers (Continued)

23. Shift-work or night-shift 'never worried me at all'.
24. Likes constant night-shift - fits in with family arrangements; it's more money; long weekends.
25. 'The night-shift got me down. I've done it since I was 18 but I still didn't get used to it.'
26. Does not like shifts; prefers to work either constant days or constant nights.
27. He did not like working shift-work at Scotswood; he is glad he is now on constant day-shift.
28. Particularly does not want to work night-shift; it ruins his social life and the wife does not like it.
29. Particularly does not like night-shift but would do it if he 'has' to; he does not mind other shift times.
30. He cannot stand working shifts, particularly a 3 shift system.
31. He got used to working shifts, and the money made up for it.

CasesShift-work Comments - Tress Workers

1. Doesn't like shift-work at current job which takes him away from home and night-life.
2. He did constant night-shift at Tress by choice because it fitted in with family arrangements and the wife's job, and because he did not like working alternate shifts. He will work alternate shifts if he 'has' to.
3. He did constant night-shift at Tress by choice; he was 'more suited to it' and it paid better money.
4. Been on constant nightshift for 5 years and still not used to it - affects his stomach; but would do it by choice because it's better paid; there's less supervision; and it fits in with family arrangements.
5. Likes and prefers constant night-shift 'It doesn't bother me at all'.
6. Does not like night-shift and Continental shifts - but would do them if he 'had' to if the money was good enough.
7. It was 'not a drudge' to go on night-shift, but he would prefer not to do it.
8. Hated rotating (Continental) shift system; but he would do it again if unemployment forces him to do so.
9. Has never liked 3 shift system; but used to alternate shifts and it 'doesn't bother' him now.
10. Has heard that the Power Station is a good job but he does not like the rotating (Continental) shifts.
11. He did not like shift-work, but 'I didn't hate it like some people do'.
12. After Tress he would not accept jobs involving shift-work; he wanted a constant day-shift job.
13. He does not like shifts - especially night-shift. Ignored a job on the buses because of the shifts.
14. He does not like shift-work, especially 3 shifts; but he will do it if he has to.
15. He would do shift-work willingly if he otherwise liked the job.
16. Shift-work 'doesn't bother' him.
17. He did not want a night-shift job and got a job working constant days.
18. He's used to doing shift-work and he liked working night-shift at Tress.

Shift-work Comments - Tress Workers (Continued)

19. Did not want a night-shift job because the wife did not like it; but then accepted a night-shift job because the job was otherwise worth it.
20. Will avoid shift-work if he can because he doesn't like the break in routine; particularly dislikes night-shift.
21. He does not like night-shift and has managed to avoid it since Tress.
22. Shift-work doesn't bother him.
23. Worked at Ever Ready but didn't like the 3 shift system, particularly 2 till 10.
24. Does not like shift-work, particularly 'week and week about', but will do it if he 'has' to.

The perhaps not surprising general impression from our interviews is that for the large majority of our respondents, given a choice, and other things being equal, they would not work shifts - in particular the 'Continental' rotating shifts - and, to a lesser extent, would not work constant night-shift.

Not having a settled routine, affecting people's eating habits, and stomachs, and sleeping habits, was the most common reason for not liking shifts; but also mentioned was the disruption of family life - in particular lack of contact between father and young children - and the disruption of social life.

But, other things are not equal; given a choice, some people would work shifts because of the compensations on offer. Some people said that working shifts was simply a 'cost' of remaining in engineering. But within engineering there are still shift-work variations. It is, we suggest, a reflection of people's general aversion to shift-work that working 'unpopular' hours or systems normally carries an extra payment, in the form of a 'shift-work allowance'. And it is this extra allowance which probably creates the greatest attraction.

As we will see in the next section shift-allowance may form a component of the earnings potential of a job or firm. Men who are particularly economically orientated, we suggest, tend to chase jobs with the greatest earnings potential - rather than, say, jobs offering the best rate for a 'normal' 40 hour week - and where the shift allowance forms a part of that potential then working shifts may be seen as a necessary cost.

Apart from the financial inducement of shift-work such 'unusual' hours for working may fit in with family arrangements such as where the wife goes out to work on the 'opposite' shift, thereby ensuring there is always one adult at home to look after young children.

There is the further compensatory attraction of shift-work - or at least night-shift - that the way the system works often results in men having long weekends. Quite a lot of men voiced their appreciation of this fact.

Finally, some men saw shift-work as a technically necessary part of

the production process. That is to say, if the product or delivery schedules demanded you worked 'round the clock' you did, because that was what the job entailed. For these men - mainly from Scotswood - the compensation of working unpleasant hours was the intrinsic satisfaction of 'doing a good job', of 'pulling your weight' in a group effort.

Generally speaking, then, shift-work was something that most men would rather avoid if they could, but everybody had a 'price' of such avoidance which they would not exceed; the 'price' of 'long term unemployment' was apparently more than everybody could afford and it was quite common for men to say that they did not want to work shift-systems but they would 'if they had to'.

### Earnings

Economists argue that variations in monetary reward crucially govern the distribution of people to jobs. At the same time, people's freedom to change jobs in response to variations in monetary reward governs, either in the short term or long term, the distribution of wage levels. In brief, high wages attract and low wages repel.

In order for this market to work, and competitive pressures to exert their influence, it is necessary that men have a reasonable awareness of the different monetary rewards on offer, that they are able to compare them, and that there are no structural barriers to movement.

In this brief section we offer some, admittedly limited, evidence on the part economic reward actually plays in a labour market.

If 'wage levels' in fact refers to earnings then it is quite clear that the actual content of earnings can be quite complicated; and because earnings can be made up of several components, each of which can vary over time, knowledge of what places are paying, and how they compare with one another, would seem on the face of it extremely difficult.

Mr Hickson got a job after Tress at Eimco Engineering. He considered himself to be well paid and therefore, we would assume, unlikely to

move because of being discontented with his wage. If we look at his 'good pay' we can see that there were a number of components gathered together - a gathering, we think, that is not unusual. His earnings were made up of the following:

- Basic Pay
- Shift Allowance
- Overtime Allowance
- Guaranteed Monthly Personal Production Bonus
- Extra Bonuses on Piece-work
- Free Overalls        )
- Boot Allowance        ) Fringe Benefits
- Subsidised Meals     )

By taking all these components together Mr Hickson ended up 'well paid'. Moreover, he was on piece-work and he was getting to know the jobs; so he was getting faster and would therefore expect to start earning higher bonuses.

Of the above earnings components the 'Basic Pay', 'Guaranteed Monthly Personal Production Bonus', and 'Fringe Benefits', are reasonably stable; the other components, however - i.e. 'Overtime Allowance', 'Shift-Allowance' and 'Piece-Work Bonuses' - are much more likely to vary.

The variable component parts of earnings tend to vary in relation to the amount of work available. Where there is little work and these variable components - overtime, piece-work bonuses, shift allowances etc - drop off men have to depend on the wage available on the basic or stand-by rate. Where, therefore, 'variable' money cannot be made then the salient point of comparison becomes the basic rate - and one firm might be inferior to another on variable earnings potential whilst superior on guaranteed base rate alone. Vickers Scotswood possibly had a higher guaranteed basic pay than other engineering firms but lower earnings potential than piece-work firms such as Vickers Elswick.

Mr Charles got a job after Tress at 'Thor Tools'. Both Tress and Thor were on piecework. Tress had a much higher guaranteed basic i.e. if you could not make any bonus on a job because it was a 'bad job', or if because there was insufficient work, you were given a

guaranteed basic payment. However, it was possible to earn good pay on bonuses at Thor - but that was only if you got good jobs and according to Mr Charles good (paying) jobs tended to go to old-timers. Newcomers like himself tended to get the worst jobs.

Mr Isaacs also went to 'Thor Tools' and he confirmed that when there was a lot of work you could earn, with shift allowance, good money; but as the work dropped off so did the money. He further confirmed that newcomers lost out and that when work dropped off it was the new men like himself who ran out first. He said that even when, at the time of interview, he got work he could not make anything pay and so was losing bonus. So he had dropped almost to the comparatively low basic pay.

We suggest that it would be changes in the variable components, mostly governed by the availability of work, that are responsible for much labour movement. Harold Williamson described Elswick thus:

H.W. "Elswick had a rapid changeover all the time; you've got a certain lot of people who'll "chase the money"; and they chase where there's a lot of overtime and high piece rates; and as soon as the overtime starts getting chopped - which is only natural once you got on top of your workload - the overtime will go down - they just used to pack up and move on."

That is to say people who are particularly economically orientated are out to maximise their earnings even where 'trade-of' costs of shift-work, overtime, etc are involved. Such people are unlikely to compare according to some common standard of a 'normal' 40 hour day shift but rather opportunities for 'making' the greatest earnings. Such people are locked into a 'chop and change' strategy and will jump from firm to firm as 'paying' work drops off at one place and increases at another. Firms with work that fluctuates regularly are likely to be commonly visited by these men. Scotswood was said to be 'on the circuit', and that is why its closure affected not only the residual incumbent workforce but also the chop and change 'floaters'.

There is no doubt that relative changes in earnings can and will tend to push some men from the lower paying to the higher paying firms.



Economic theory, however, suggests that this is the force that underlies all job change. It is said that job change, and appropriate alterations in wage inducements, reflect one another, relying on the population at large to make meaningful wage comparisons and move towards firms offering the best 'deals'. Wage levels and labour availability are thought of as the aggregate outcome of the propensity of all market members to trade competitively and freely with good to 'perfect' knowledge of options.

One assumption is that all men are comparing the same thing. In fact, it seems that people's ideas of what constitutes 'good pay' can differ. We have already seen that some men gauge a good paying firm by what it is optimally possible to earn, regardless of effort, hours, shifts etc. John Davidson, for example, a navvy, thought Scotswood was a 'good money place'; but for his 'good money' Mr Davidson had to work 5 normal days, plus 3 half-shifts, plus time on Saturdays and Sundays; so although pay per hour was relatively low, pay per week was relatively high. Some labourers at Tress also praised their employer for being a 'good payer' because there was frequently plenty of overtime - not because hourly rates were good.

However, not all men will necessarily compare and evaluate pay in these terms. They might have some idea of a 'normal' week - such as a 40 hour day-shift - and try to measure wage offers accordingly. Alternatively, their 'pay' evaluations may be indivisible from other considerations such as the effort involved - a firm might be 'well paying if you work for it'.

Mr Hall, a jig borer at Scotswood, was someone who tended to compare according to a 'standard' 40 hour week. He argued that this was the standard all men at Scotswood should have been using when evaluating the value of their pay but many in fact were not. He claimed that at one time the men at Scotswood were 'fooled' into thinking they had comparable pay to other factories. Apparently, the introduction of a 3 shift system led to a significant increase of pay thanks to shift allowances for working the 'unpopular' shifts of 2 till 10 and night-shift; but when the 3 shift system was stopped these shift allowances were also stopped and consequently the pay dropped back. For a 'normal' shift, then, it could be argued, the pay was 'really' poor. There was the further complication that at Scotswood earnings could be

boosted by working overtime - which apparently was 'normal'. Again, it could be argued, this could mask how good the pay was for 40 hours.

David Haigh also made the latter point, that overtime at Scotswood hid the 'real' value of earnings. He was a multiple job changer and as such he claimed to have had a better idea of how Scotswood compared with other places:

D.H. "I've been around and the Scotswood pay was low. At Scotswood you could always work a lot of overtime; their wages were false because they were getting wages with overtime all the time; but when that stopped as it did once about 6 weeks before it closed - they went very slack - and there was no overtime, then you found that the wage wasn't very good - because they were that used to having this continuous overtime and then all of a sudden it stopped; that's when you found out that the wage wasn't very good."

All this goes to suggest that it is doubtful whether all men were making the same kinds of comparisons and measurements of pay, which throws into doubt the effectiveness of the 'wage rate' as the 'price indicator' for men in the labour market and as part of a general equilibrating mechanism.

There is also the question of the extent of some people's knowledge of the sorts of monetary rewards on offer in the various employments and how their present wages compared. On the one hand people seemed to have fairly strong convictions that their pay at Tress and Scotswood was 'good' and relatively 'poor' respectively, and post closure employment experiences seemed to broadly confirm their opinions; moreover, for 'chop and changers' to 'chase the money' we must assume that these people at least must be able to pick up some relevant information; also some of the men who worked at Tress said they went there subsequent to hearing about the good pay.

On the other hand the impression given of the men's general knowledge of what various firms were paying was that at best it was vague. Some men may have had some rough ideas of one or two firms they believed to be 'good payers' or of firms likely to be amongst the best and firms likely to be amongst the worst; but such ideas were rarely held with

great conviction. There was some suggestion that there may have been some local knowledge. Scotswood, for example, was widely believed to have been better payers than Elswick up to about 12 years before closure; Ever Ready, the firm next to Tress, was known as good payers 'for labourers and women'.

Most information was apparently acquired in clubs and pubs, when 'new starters' came to a firm, and by personal experience; the unemployed were likely to pick up extra information from Job Centres and newspapers. With workers depending so much for their knowledge of the market on information passed on by others, there may have been problems of interpretation and comparison. For example, did reported payments include overtime or shiftwork? If the firm worked piecework, how easy was it to make the money? Was the money regular? Were there fringe benefits? Could the informant be believed at all? Men complained that even in Job Centres and newspapers advertisements could be misleading; if the 'wage' referred to basic pay what was the bonus - if any - like? If the pay includes bonus, how many hours did you work and what happened when/if bonus dropped off? These were the sorts of questions men wanted answering, but on which they may not have been able to get reliable information.

The general impression, then, was that there were real difficulties in men acquiring an extensive knowledge of comparative wage or earnings possibilities. It may in fact have been the case that most of the time many men did not particularly concern themselves with such matters - especially when the acquirement of adequate reliable information may have involved considerable effort. It may have been that it was only when circumstances pushed a certain orientation to the fore that a worker then surveyed the market and 'tuned into' and sought out the sort of information he needed.

Economically oriented multiple job changers may through experience have greater knowledge of, and cultivated more contacts in, the market, and through being linked into a 'chop and change' strategy may be more aware of and receptive to information on earnings; As one man put it he had 'learnt how to find the good jobs'. The labour market behaviour of these men, however, which most nearly approximates to that hypothesised by economic theory, should not be taken as typical of the population at large.

It was clear that workers in general did not have knowledge of the wage or earnings levels of a wide range of firms. Given this fact the question is begged as to why so many men at Tress were confident that they were relatively 'well paid', and so many men at Scotswood sure that they were relatively 'poorly paid' in later years, in respect to other places. There are several possible explanations. One could be that often comparisons were made with past employment experiences. Alternatively, comparisons might have been made with just one or two significant local companies - such as Vickers Elswick and Ever Ready. It might also have been that men had some notion of average earnings for the industry and/or area to which they could relate. Certainly most would have had a notion of a basic union rate which they could use as a measure of 'bottom pay'. In this way men could place themselves roughly in the earnings league. Further rough information was likely to be acquired in the normal way through new starters and in pubs and clubs. So through a series of indicators men at a plant may have been able to build up at least a general idea of how they were faring earnings-wise - without actually knowing much about the earnings of specific companies elsewhere. By such means men were likely to acquire feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their current pay; and we would suggest that it was only when dissatisfaction built up that men were particularly likely to concern themselves with or become receptive to information on earnings at other places.

A further limitation on a straightforward wage induced economic theory of labour distribution are structural barriers to movement. Such a barrier was seen to operate between the two largest engineering plants in West Newcastle - Vickers Scotswood and Vickers Elswick.

It was a very well believed fact amongst men from both samples that for many years Vickers Scotswood on piecework payed better rates than its sister factory at Vickers Elswick - only a mile down the road. To the question, then, why did men not continually leave Elswick and go to Scotswood the reply invariably was that to do so could be very difficult. Vickers, it was said, would not accept direct applications from Elswick to Scotswood (or vice-versa). It was necessary to first resign your post. Apart from the fact that this meant that you broke your service and lost your pension rights, it meant you became

unemployed. Clearly, unless you were particularly confident of getting a job at Scotswood the costs and risks of leaving Elswick would be a considerable disincentive. In this case, then, where the same large company owns and controls more than one plant in the same area movement between them may not be as free and easy as implied in economic theory.

Generally speaking, we would suggest, a large company like Vickers aims to control and limit movement of its workers - particularly its most valuable workers - and the restrictions on voluntary movement between plants was probably deliberate. At the same time the Company would wish to retain the right to transfer workers where such movement was in Vickers' interests; and indeed whilst no voluntary movements between Vickers plants were recorded in our interviews many management induced movements were.

Clearly such structural barriers to inter plant movement militate against the equilibrating force that free movement of labour is supposed to have on wages. In the case of Vickers there was very good popular knowledge of the difference in wages between the two plants but men had little effective ability to make use of that knowledge.

But in Vickers not only was there apparently a restriction on voluntary inter-plant movement, but there were also barriers to intra-plant movement; and when in a place like Vickers Elswick there were at its height over a dozen 'shops', each shop as big as a small factory, then such restrictions are no less significant for labour 'market' theory than barriers to movement between a dozen independently owned and controlled plants.

It was reported that it was possible in Vickers for tradesmen to earn more doing the same work in some shops than in others and since management decided which shop you worked in you could not influence earnings rates by threatening to withdraw your labour and change shops. Jack Billingham, a turner at both Scotswood and Elswick:

J.B. "Elswick was a low paying place at the time I went. But then again once you got in a lot depended on what shop you were in. Well fortunately I went to a shop where the percentage was high - you know, the piece-work rate was high; and yet

you had other shops where it was very low. And you would be pounds ahead of a feller doing a similar kind of work in another shop, simply because the times weren't good enough, or the machinery wasn't."

F.P. "Did you not get people chopping and changing, trying to get into the best shop?"

J.B. "You didn't get transfers from one shop to another ... you stopped where you were - at Elswick and Scotswood. If they wanted you to move you have no choice. You couldn't say "Oh, I want to work in 12 shop", or "14 shop", or something like that."

Even inside the one shop or factory there could be marked differences in earnings for men doing similar work. Some men could consistently get the better paying jobs - maybe because it was believed they had certain rights as established workers; alternatively it could be that the more skilful workers got the jobs that required care and time - which were usually worse paying. It was said that it was the disparity in the distribution of good paying jobs that won the support of much of the Scotswood work-force for a change-over from piece-work to a standard day-rate in the mid '60s.

The variation in earnings that can occur because of the distribution of 'jobs' on a piece-work system is just one example of how workers on the external market may not be able to determine with certainty the monetary worth of a particular employment. While earnings are tied to the performance of certain functions, or the working of certain hours or shifts, or position in a structured promotion hierarchy, and the principles involved in the distribution of people to the various parts of this system are peculiar to the work-place, then a person outside of the system - or work-place - could be uncertain of the various opportunities and procedures involved, and may be unsure of being able to control his own allocation, and would therefore be equally unsure of his final earnings. It could be argued that economic theory tends to concentrate on market movements between firms and ignores allocatory mechanisms inside firms; but the bigger that organisations become the more that internal processes rise to importance.

The general conclusion, then, is that most workers' knowledge of earnings in Tyneside engineering factories was at best very fragmented

- and outside of engineering even worse. This is not to say that a person particularly motivated could not find out 'what could be made' at a factory advertising for workers - by asking questions of people who worked there, or simply by personal experience on the job; but at any one time a person was very unlikely to know of a range of possible earnings levels for a given number of employers. This suggests that the economic notion of a 'labour market' being an arena of numerous buyers and sellers, all being aware of the various prices on offer, would be very misleading.

There was the further suggestion that even when knowledge of a 'price' is accurate and well known, workers might not have the power to take that price; both lateral and hierarchical segmentation, the division between the internal and external market, the differential effect of selective recruitment practices, and the lack of worker control over all the determinants of his earnings at his place of work, might prevent it.

#### Office Work

It was quite clear from the interviews that the vast majority of the men perceived themselves as manual workers in a manual workers' labour market. Very few of the men had ever had any clerical or office experience and only two men reported applying for any office jobs subsequent to redundancy; and one of these men was something of an anomaly in our samples anyway in that he was the only one who was not a shop-floor worker.

Although it was quite obvious from the interviews generally that men were going after manual 'shop-floor' jobs, only 51% from Scotswood and 44% from Tress actually made specific comments on 'office work'. Of these 40 men, 51% clearly did not want an office job, mainly because they thought it would be boring; another 29% were also not considering office jobs because they were 'not office types', 'always classed themselves as manual workers', or 'not got the qualifications or experience'. Only 20% (8 men) seemed to be at all considering office work as at least a possibility; but at the time of the interviews only one man out of the whole combined samples of 87 had a sort of office job, minding a printing machine.

The overall impression was that the vast majority of our men had a manual worker's consciousness which tended to structure the sorts of jobs they were looking for. To a large extent this consciousness was undoubtedly predicated upon a recognition that the men simply did not have the qualifications or experience to do clerical work; but it was also the case that most men actually had a preference for manual work - at least in comparison to the lower grades of desk-bound clerical jobs which seemed to be the image that most men had of 'office work'.

#### Work-Place Size\*

According to Ingham<sup>1</sup>, and a C.D.P. report on 'Adamsez'<sup>2</sup> in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, workers can develop a positive preference for small work-places and actually choose to work there rather than in bigger, possibly higher paying, firms in the same geographical labour market.

We can confirm here that a minority of workers from both Scotswood and Tress did in some ways prefer smaller firms, particularly in respect of the fact that you were less likely to be treated 'as a number'. That is to say you were more likely to be noticed by management; relations with managers and other work-mates were more likely to be face to face, personal, and friendly; and you were more likely to be recognised for your talents and encouraged to better yourself. How powerful this preference was and to what extent it would actually induce men to choose small firms rather than big firms is difficult to say, especially if the bigger firms offered counter attractions such as higher pay or security. Nevertheless, the preference, for some, was there, and was likely to play some part in any calculation of a trade-off, and where other things were equal could tip the balance.

A few examples of people's comments may be illustrative; firstly, some Scotswood men:

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\* Note     48% of the combined samples made comments on this subject - 38% of the Scotswood sample and 61% of those from Tress.



John Timpson, a Scotswood Inspector, a single man in his fifties:

"I'd rather prefer a small firm (because) I think you can get more involved with the work and with the people you work with. In a bigger firm you're just a number and there's not that personal side about it ... Given the choice, now if I was to find a job, I'd rather work in a small firm ... my ideal would be a small firm with one-off jobs, all different."

Alec Halliday, a fitter and turner at Scotswood, a man in his fifties:

"I wish I had served my time in a smaller place because I might have been recognised - you know, I mean, somebody coming along and saying "Well, I think you should get a better job". You sort of get in a rut."

George Brown, a horizontal borer at Scotswood, a man in his fifties:

"I'd rather be in a small place, me if I had my time over again, because you would be thanked for what you were doing there; they would appreciate it more ... you'd be noticed more and they'd appreciate you more; but in a big place you're just one of the number."

John Peters, a tool-grinder at Scotswood, a man in his fifties:

"When you get a big concern like Vickers there's always a rift between your top and your bottom - too much of it, I think; now in a small firm they keep an interest in you; and if you're a good man they'll take notice of you."

Despite the preferences expressed for small firms the above men did not in fact leave Vickers. This suggests that either these men's opinions had been formed subsequent to redundancy - which was quite possible in view of the way some expressed resentment at the way the Company treated them - or the attractions of their jobs at Scotswood outweighed the disadvantages.

There is some suggestion from the Tress interviews, however, that at least in the early post-war years, some men have have left Vickers in

search of somewhere less impersonal and, in those days at least, less regimented.

Jack Dalglish, sub-contract manager at Tress, a man in his fifties, left Vickers because "there was too much regimentation" and went to a small engineering firm where everybody knew everybody and "you weren't just a number"; he said he would choose smaller firms even at a lower wage.

Mr Waldgrave, a driller at Tress, left Vickers because he did not like the loss of individuality he experienced in the Scotswood tractor works:

"I was only there about 3 months (in the fifties) but when you go in you feel like a stranger every morning you go in; hardly anybody talks to you; they get in one certain clique and all that; but if you've got a small firm to work for you practically see them all working there; you get to know each one".

But Mr Walgrave said he would not choose a smaller place if it was less pay.

Mr Williams, a time-served capstan-setter-operator at Tress, said he left Vickers because it was too big and "like a prison camp"; he said he definitely preferred a smaller place because "it's a smaller band of people".

Bob Samuelson, a capstan-setter-operator from Tress, a man in his fifties, worked at both Elswick and Scotswood, but he did not like the regimentation in the Fifties years and the fact that "you were just a number": "I find the small firms are the best where you know everybody; but Vickers is a massive place".

These comments suggest some men may have left, or avoided, Vickers because they were put off by its size and organisation. They also serve to remind us that the men we interviewed from Tress and Scotswood were the ones who stayed and that their attitudes towards and opinions of their work-places could not necessarily be generalised to a wider population. Having said that we do not know that the particular aspects that the men above disliked about Vickers were in

themselves sufficient motivating forces; rather it is probable, as we suggested earlier, that they tend to reinforce other reasons for moving.

It should be emphasised that in fact only a minority had any strong preferences for small firms in the ways suggested above. Many men did not register the size of a place as of any particular significance; a few men said the important thing was whether a firm was unionised and because it was more likely that a large firm would have a strong union they would tend to avoid smaller firms - but Tress was relatively small and it was unionised; some men simply said that they could not offer an opinion on the attractions or not of a firm that was small because they had never experienced a small firm and so they did not know what to expect; some men expressed a definite preference for large firms because they were likely to be more secure, offering more opportunities, and less likely to tend towards favouritism. Surprisingly, perhaps, the question of 'pay' did not figure strongly in people's comments.

### Conclusion

This short chapter indicated four more factors which may influence labour market behaviour. It was demonstrated that as with other structuring agents considered earlier - 'security', 'job interest', etc - the significance for individuals will vary according to a number of circumstances. Attitudes towards at least two of these factors were clearly not simple; invariably statements on 'work-place size', and 'shift-work', would carry a qualification such that it was clear that the context or co-existing conditions under which the factor in question was to be experienced could be crucial. The table on attitudes to shift-work in particular demonstrated that a liking for or dislike of shift-work in itself was unlikely to be a sufficient motivating force; whether or not a person would take a shift-work job would depend on the overall attached costs and benefits involved. In other words some calculation of a 'trade-off' would be made.

Statements on, or attitudes towards, 'earnings' and 'office-work' tended to be a little less complex, in the sense that it was less normal to introduce qualifications. Possibly this would indicate the

existence for some of strong orientations on these dimensions. Some people may be so orientated to the achievement of high earnings that any trade-off costs involved do not register as particularly significant. But there were men of course for whom the circumstances under which high pay could be earned were important; not everybody, for example, would work shifts - given a choice - even for the benefit of extra money; and also there were those men who might particularly value 'job interest' or 'security' in a relatively lower paid job; moreover the 'effort' involved or even the 'size of the firm' might militate against choosing a better paid job.

Attitudes towards 'office work' also seemed less prone to be accompanied by qualification; indeed, many seemed to hardly even consider it as an option at all. The orientation towards manual work was clearly very strong amongst the majority of our samples.

Overall, this discussion further highlights the complexity of the labour market. Despite the general hierarchical character described in earlier chapters it is quite clear that there was at the same time a significant amount of dimensional cross-cutting. Jobs perceived as better on one dimension were not necessarily perceived as better on others, and this promoted trade-offs and a certain amount of complex multi-dimensional movement. People could apparently move up one dimension - such as higher pay - whilst moving down another - such as decreased security.

The multi-dimensional cross-cutting was encouraged by both the fact that there could be various combinations of attributes attached to jobs in the job structure and also the fact that there does not appear to have been overall agreement amongst labour market participants as to what constitutes a 'good' job. Thus a low paying job could be considered 'poor' and unattractive by a young man with wife and children who is orientated to high earnings, but 'not so poor' and more attractive to an elderly man orientated to, say, stability and low effort.

If to the factors already dealt with we add others such as 'environmental conditions' - including whether it is 'inside' or 'outside' work - relations with management and fellow work-mates, hours of work, travelling distance, etc., then the potential for

complex orientations and job movement patterns is made all the more obvious.

To a significant extent, then, the tendency for lateral movement of the sort outlined above undermines any simple notion of hierarchical progression. Nevertheless hierarchical influences remained strong. The basis of the hierarchical ordering of the labour market, we have suggested, was a progressive broadening of scope and choice the higher up the skills ladder you rose. This could be exemplified by again referring to the case of the elderly man who might prefer a lower paid job if it involved less effort and possibly more stability; were such a man situated higher up in the job structure he might not need to trade off 'low pay' for 'less effort' and 'more stability'. At Vickers Scotswood, for example, a 'good' job for an older men was an 'Inspector', giving as it did 'job interest', and relatively good pay, and little physical effort, and security; but to obtain such a job you would need to progress upwards from a position within the skilled sector; such a job would not be open to a man lower down in, say, the position of a labourer. It is this latter type of man who would likely have to forsake one objective in order to receive the benefit of another.

Thus lateral movements, trade-offs, and choice, take place in the context of, and are conditioned by, a hierarchically structured market.

References

1. Ingham, G.K. "Size of Industrial Organisation and Worker Behaviour",  
(Cambridge University Press 1973)
2. Benwell Community Project, "Adamsez", (1980)

## CHAPTER IX

Internal Labour Markets

The object of this thesis is to throw light on the mechanisms involved in the distribution of people to jobs by approaching the subject through a framework that emphasises both the significance and efficacy of individual discretion and choice, and the existence of broader social constraints serving to limit the individual's freedom of action; the latter sets the context for the former.

In previous chapters we suggested that the skill hierarchy, and other demarcations, tended to divide workers into separate sub-labour-markets, imposing constraints on the range of possible work objectives that a worker could expect reasonably to pursue. Thus some men may have more opportunity to achieve, and therefore have more reason to expect to achieve, security or job interest or high pay or whatever. In this chapter we propose to discuss another significant demarcation: that between the 'Internal' and 'External' Labour Markets i.e. those activities and job opportunities that occur within work-places, and those activities and job opportunities available to those on the outside - whether situated in other work-places or not in 'work' at all. The most salient characteristic of the Internal/External division, then, is a differential access to different jobs for those in and out of a work-place.

Both Scotswood and Tress had active labour markets where men could, and did, change jobs within their places of work. The internal labour markets were hierarchically structured, in the first place broadly in line with the skill divisions already referred to in earlier chapters, but also in more detail at Tress, within the non-time-served non-skilled sector; that is to say, at Tress at least, there was a definite structured hierarchy of jobs up which unskilled men could progress until they reached the top of the semi-skilled group. At Scotswood, there was no such obvious progression.

Vickers Scotswood

At Scotswood it appears to have been mainly the time-served men who had the most opportunities for progressing upwards - especially in more recent years as new jobs were created and, apparently, as the union used its influence in monopolising chances for its members within the plant at the expense of 'strangers' on the external market. Allen Carr, a man who had been at Scotswood 43 years, and who was a Shop Convenor, explains some of the ways the internal market developed:

F.P. "Was there a lot of chopping and changing about within the plant ... people changing jobs and being promoted, or moving from one job to another, or not?"

A.C. "Well in the latter years that went on because, as you know, as years have progressed there's so many positions being created. You know, in my time you had a charge-man, a foreman, and the manager. Full stop! Then you had your Inspection Department and that. Now they've got quality controls ... and different systems that operate in the factory. So the Quality Control Officer is responsible to the Quality Control Manager, who is responsible to the top manager. And you had all these different jobs created. So people then were getting in the different jobs. If they put a position up on the notice-board a man would say 'Oh, I'll have a try at that'. So he would go for that job. So there was a lot of changing at that time. But in my time it was just strictly as I said the way it was; you had your charge-man, your foreman, your manager, and you just got on with your job."

Having a large internal workforce already familiar with many aspects of working at Scotswood would have been advantageous for management seeking to find someone to fill a vacancy; but it appears to have been the union which as much as anybody actually pushed for the closing off of jobs to outsiders:

A.C. "There were strangers coming from the outside and they were getting good positions."

F.P. "Were they?"



A.C. "Oh yes; they were getting management jobs, foreman's jobs, and all that. Now we had a meeting of the Shops Works Committee and we had a good discussion on it, like, and we said 'We think, this is all wrong. Why should a complete stranger from outside come in and get if you want to term it a 'snip' job, when a man who had put a life-time into the place wasn't getting the opportunity to go for that job?' We said 'That's wrong; in future, as far as we are concerned, if there's a job coming up for a foreman it's put up on the Board and then a man can apply from the shop floor.' Well that's what they did in the end."

Unfortunately for Mr Carr, in his case this fixing of the odds in favour of the internal work-force was to no avail. He was, as he put it, 'due for a foreman's job', but, he claims - as did several others - that he was overlooked because he was too good at his fitting job. That is to say, it would have been difficult, and possibly costly, for the management to find a suitably experienced replacement. The union could narrow the field of contenders but final choice remained the prerogative of management. Peter Williams, the Works Convenor, confirms that the exercise of this prerogative apparently denied some of the best tradesmen a chance to 'get off the tools' onto a staff job.

P.W. "You had people who would retire at their jobs because they were that good at it and they could never be recognised for different factors, and that was one of the factors - because they were too good at their jobs and they couldn't replace them. They could replace them but they didn't want to because they wanted that man doing that good job for them all the time."

It may be that a less able person, or a person with less specific skills, had a better chance of becoming a foreman. Nevertheless, despite the fact that some men tended to get stuck in a job because the management was loathe to lose their specific expertise, there clearly was, especially in later years, a lot of movement from the shop floor upwards to related staff jobs - jobs like Foreman, Inspector, Quality Control Men, Planners, Progress Chasers, Time-Fixers, and the such like. And if the men had the necessary paper

qualifications they could also apply for a range of clerical positions.

It seems likely that the amount of hierarchical movement was related in part to an increase in opportunity consequent upon the expansion of managerial and 'service' posts; some men made redundant from Scotswood blamed some of the Plant's financial problems on this alleged 'top-heaviness' in relation to the number of 'producers'.

The level of upward mobility no doubt increased when it became practice to advertise jobs on an internal notice board prior to resorting to the external market; this occurred at Tress also, and apparently at other engineering firms in the area; for example, some major local plants specifically reported by our respondents as following the practice included Clarke-Chapmans Engineering, Parsons Engineering, Michell Bearings, Caterpillar Tractor Company, and Huwood Engineering.

The practice of following a policy of promoting men from within would have the effect of closing off positions to men on the external market; as positions up job hierarchies are filled internally by men situated lower down, vacancies on the external market tend towards those 'at the bottom'; i.e. if a man in an unskilled post takes a semi-skilled job advertised on an internal notice board it is the unskilled post that may be advertised externally. Thus the practice of giving preference to insiders is likely to restrict the opportunities for outsiders. Some of the better jobs may simply not be available. Men doing a job normally carried out by people promoted from within would, if made unemployed, probably have particular difficulty gaining a job of a similar kind or level; the Scotswood Inspectors and Foremen in our sample were such men.

It seems that knowledge that a firm advertised jobs internally first could induce men to take inferior posts as a means of gaining access to an Internal Labour Market. Jack Field, a Scotswood ancillary man, was 'sick of being on the dole' when interviewed; he said he would take 'any job that was better than the dole' if that would get him in to a place where he could apply for jobs on the internal notice board:

J.F.        "Anything is better than the dole. I mean, if I got in

there (at Rowntrees) I might be able to get another job after I'd been there maybe a few months; you know, some other vacancy might come up; and I imagine they probably do the same there as what they do in other places; like when I was at Huwoods ... they gave the men in the factory a chance of that job first."

At Huwoods jobs such as spray-painter or grinder could come up on the notice board, and labourers could apply to be trained for them, said Mr Field; if they were successful in their applications then these labourers' places would be filled by more labourers taken from the external market. He expected Rowntrees followed similar practices:

J.F. "You might be able to get in and then, as I say, later on, after you'd been there a few months, if another job came vacant, I imagine they would do the same in their factories as what they do in other factories - giving a man who's on the floor a chance to do the job."

Other men also reported thinking in a similar vein. John Billingham, a Turner, considered taking a semi-skilled job at Caterpillar just so as to be on the inside if and when any jobs in his trade came up. Jack Straw, a labourer, was advised by the man who 'spoke' for him to take any job to get into Parsons Engineering and "then there's notices come up on the Notice Board and you can apply".

Most of the promotion into staff jobs at Scotswood apparently came from the ranks of the time-served skilled men; and within this group there were suggestions that length of service counted; consequently, to leave Scotswood and start somewhere else could, perhaps, put you further back in the queue for promotion. There was also lateral movement. Skilled men at Scotswood might move on to another facet of their trade - from Turning to Fitting etc - but this appears to have been the exception rather than the rule; most of the men at Scotswood - at least amongst those interviewed - clearly stayed within a delineated trade specialisation; indeed some men stayed on the same machine for years on end. Semi-skilled men might do different jobs within their stratum of activity - grinding, milling, planing, etc - normally on different machines; unskilled men could move laterally onto a whole variety of what were called 'ancillary' jobs, many of

which were paid different rates. According to David Hopwood, an 'ancillary' worker, there were 20 to 25 different jobs on which you could work if you proved yourself capable. Mr Hopwood concentrated mainly on crane-work, but even here there was a number of different job gradings paying different rates - including "light slinging (securing loads onto a crane's lifting gear), heavy slinging, precision crane man, precision slinger"; other jobs for ancillary men included 'fork-truck driver', 'plant-operator', 'rigger', 'burner', 'storeman' etc.

There tended to be more-or-less inflexible barriers between the skill groups - although there was some suggestion that barriers may be weakened at certain times. Jack Straw was a labourer at Scotswood. At one time vacancies arose to operate 'semi-skilled' machines and Mr Straw decided to move up; but he was rejected; at that time labourers at Scotswood were barred from moving up to semi-skilled jobs:

F.P. "Did you ever think of trying to get onto a semi-skilled job - on a machine or something?"

J.S. "I did when I first started. I started in 14 shop and I asked - but the foreman said 'No chance. Once you come in here labouring you stay labouring.' The only way you could get it is by packing in and starting again."

Later on circumstances changed and Mr Straw was asked to go on a semi-skilled machine - a 'plano-miller' - but he refused. Later on again circumstances changed again and barriers were re-imposed, apparently by the engineering union:

J.S. "The union got a rule in that they wouldn't allow a labourer to go from the floor onto a semi-skilled job."

David Hopwood was another ancillary man who applied for a job on a semi-skilled 'drilling' machine but he also was stopped by the engineering A.U.E.W. union. Mr Hopwood himself was in the G.M.W.U. and he says he was not allowed to change unions or jobs.

At certain times, with union agreement, however, men could be taken on who had been specifically trained to do 'semi-skilled' jobs - basically specific machine skills 'normally' within the orbit of the

skilled man. It seems that such men were more likely to be taken on in times of labour shortage. Brian Race, a capstan-setter-operator:

B.R. "These people - from Training Centres - we have taken one or two on in Scotswood. But it was a time when work was plentiful; put it that way. There was always plenty of work when we took these people on. Sometimes they were supervised by what we call 'setters' or charge-hands."

A specific agreement between unions and engineering employers to allow young men to train to work certain types of machine was made in 1964. But once trained and established as a semi-skilled machinist there remained impenetrable barriers between themselves and the work of the skilled men. Mr Bellingham, a semi-skilled man, worked on a range of machines carrying out planing, milling, grinding, gear-cutting, turning, drilling, boring, and capstan work; but he was still barred from encroaching upon territory reserved for 'skilled' men - although the reverse was permissible:

A.B. "You see, a skilled man can work on a grinding machine or anything like that, and a milling machine. They had skilled men on capstans. But that's as far as it goes. You can't do the opposite. You can't go on a lathe or a boring machine, or fitting, or anything like that. I mean, I had a City and Guilds in 'fitting' but I couldn't go on fitting - no way!"

Apart from being barred from 'skilled' work, there seems to have been little opportunity for the non-skilled men to as it were 'jump over' onto a staff job; this was presumably partly a consequence of not having sufficient technical knowledge to organise, supervise or service what was essentially a craft-type work organisation; also it may have been partly a refusal on the part of skilled men to work under the authority of men of a lower status, skill-wise; skilled men would not, for example, recognise the legitimate authority of an unskilled foreman.

At Scotswood, then, people tended to stay within their own range of skill activity, although there were opportunities in later years for the time-served or equivalent men to move up off the shop floor,

especially after it became the practice to advertise jobs internally before resorting to the outside market. Unskilled men, whilst largely barred from staff jobs, and skilled work, still had a range of differently paid jobs they would do, and the barriers between the 'unskilled' and 'semi-skilled' positions seem to have been a little more flexible than those barriers operating to preserve 'skilled' jobs for skilled men. Generally speaking, the strength of these barriers between the shop-floor skill groups seems to have depended on the negotiated positions of management and unions, influenced no doubt by the current demand for specific types of labour and the amount of work available.

### Tress Engineering

As at Scotswood, at Tress the skill divisions of time-served tradesmen, semi-skilled machine-operators and machine-setter operators, and non-skilled labourers and ancillary workers, were clearly distinguishable; in terms of exclusiveness the tradesmen as a group stood out alone, whilst considerable movement occurred between the other two sectors - largely in the direction upwards away from labouring jobs. Amongst the non-skilled jobs there was an obvious strong hierarchical character.

The strong influence of the non-skilled sector - numbering over 2/3 of all shop floor jobs - gave Tress a character clearly different from the tradesmen dominated Scotswood Works. The basic hierarchical organisation of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs at Tress can perhaps be best conveyed by relating a conversation with a time-served maintenance fitter, Robert Chelsea:

- R.C. "I'll tell you the way it was, the way Allan the Red (the Works Convenor) had it. You had - in his context right - you had the 'setters', the 'setter-operators', then the 'operators'; then you had the van drivers and the fork lift drivers; then the labourers."
- F.P. "That was how Allan had it?"
- R.C. "That's the way it was."
- F.P. "You mean in terms of pay, status, everything?"
- R.C. "Pay, status, the lot. Allan would have the setter-

operators first, like - but setters first. Then we (the time served men) had nowt to do with them. We were completely on our own - split."

At the top of the unskilled/semi-skilled hierarchy were the 'Setters'. These men mostly spent their time setting the automatic machines for others to operate. Each Setter was responsible for a number of machines. Originally these men were Capstan-Setter-Operators who had moved onto the new 'Setter' job when the automatic machines were introduced. There were 16 Setters for all the automatic machines. Of these 16 only two were time-served.

The Setter-Operators ostensibly both set and operated a particular machine - although it was said that few were capable of working completely without assistance or supervision. The largest group of these men were the Capstan-Setter-Operators. Nearly all these men were non-time-served, often trained at government Skill Centres.

Below the 'Setter-Operators' were the 'Machine Operators' who might operate a variety of different machines. The main machines at Tress included capstans, lathes, drilling machines, milling machines, collets, and slotting machines. A large number of machines were 'automated'. A man might have experience working several different types of machine. A machine operator would have a 'Setter' to do all his setting. On some of the automatic machinery an operator might in fact be responsible for operating several machines at once. A stage below this might be a 'Loader', the chief responsibility of whom was simply to feed automatic machines with metal ingots to be worked upon. There were said to be about 40 Loaders and each Loader was responsible for up to 3 machines. This job might be considered intermediate between the semi-skilled machine jobs and the labouring jobs proper. Roughly parallel with the Loader's job, and effectively providing an alternative route up the semi-skilled hierarchy, was a job in the 'Ragging Bay'. In the Ragging Bay men generally described as labourers operated grinding machines to remove the 'rags' or rough edges off 'finished' metal parts. Again 'Raggers' might be considered intermediate between labourers and semi-skilled jobs.

In terms of pay, in the non-skilled sector, Setter-Operators earned the most, but Setters had a higher basic rate. Setters, unlike

Setter-Operators, did not work piece-work. Machine Operators came next above Van-Drivers and Fork Lift Drivers.

Below these groups came the labourers.

According to Mr Chelsea the tradesmen were set apart. They themselves had their own hierarchy of skills with some being paid marginally more than others. To quote Mr Chelsea:

R.C. "Even with the tradesmen we had the higher categories, you know. You had the Tool-Room."

F.P. "They were the top?"

R.C. "They were one of the top. They had 14 pence per week more than us. The Maintenance Fitters and the Electricians had the same money."

F.P. "Basic?"

R.C. "Basic. And then you had the Welders on 60 pence per week less than us."

The tradesman's hierarchy, however, was crucially different to that of the semi-skilled men, the difference being that the skilled men did not normally intend to, or expect to, change positions or trades. Whereas the character of the skilled men's hierarchy was one simply based on differentials in pay and status, that of the semi-skilled men was additionally shaped by the existence of a promotional ladder up which you climbed, learning new skills or capacities as you went along.

#### The Semi-Skilled Men

The particularly distinctive feature of the Tress work-force was the comparatively high number of men who had never served an apprenticeship. Perhaps indicative of this unusual state of affairs for an engineering company was the equally unusual fact that the Works Convenor of Tress Engineering had himself never served his time.

Allan Marton, the 33 year old Works Convenor, worked at Tress for 8



years in his capacity as a union spokesman and negotiator, and as a Capstan-Setter-Operator. He says that in the late 60's and early 70's there was a shortage of workers to operate capstans, lathes, milling machines and the like. Consequently, a man like Allan Marton, trained at a Government Skill Centre, could pick and choose:

A.M. "Oh yes. I had a choice because there were so many different jobs; you see, people were knocking on the doors, even paying your travelling expenses to go for interviews, which was quite incredible; I'd never come across anything like this before; there was a tremendous shortage of skilled labour in the Engineering industry."

It seems that this skill shortage played a very important part in the development of the Tress internal labour market. Jobs that in 'normal' times would have been monopolised by tradesmen now became open to men whose previous horizons would have been restricted to a band of labouring and least-skilled occupations. Compared to a skilled man's job a Tress machine job may have seemed limited in scope and even monotonous; but compared to labouring jobs and the such like a semi-skilled job could be a definite improvement.

Men who had moved up from labouring to the top of the semi-skilled hierarchy now tended to perceive themselves as having risen to better things. Labouring or non-skilled jobs were not now normally considered as alternatives. A Capstan-Setter-Operator was likely to perceive the labour market from a viewpoint on a higher level than non-skilled men. Mr Simon was someone who was particularly aware of the change in status that his experience at Tress had given him.

R.S. "I've had a taste of it - once I had a start at the Tress - and I like it; I mean, before then I was only a general labourer, and on building sites and that; the way you get mucked about on general labouring you've got no idea what it's like; one day you're carrying the hod; the next day you're making concrete; then you're digging ditches. You feel like you're contributing something when you're doing what I was doing like, you know. That's the way I felt anyway."

As far as Mr Simon was concerned he had moved onto a completely different plane of work. He got more money; he had more status; he received more respect; and he got more job satisfaction.

Gaining access to the Tress internal labour market opened up opportunities not generally available on the external market. Consequently, 'getting in to Tress', getting a first job, could in itself be an immediate work objective, as part of a strategy aimed at achieving other longer term goals. Mr Simon was particularly highly economically orientated; he had a young family and his attitudes towards life were very much family centred; earning sufficient income to pursue non-work home centred objectives was his main aim. Progression up the Tress internal labour market resulted in Mr Simon experiencing a general improvement in his conditions of life and work, but it was the opportunity to earn with piece-work a lot of money that was particularly valued. But when Mr Simon first joined Tress the pay was not particularly high; there were, however, opportunities to move on to better things:

F.P. "What made you go to Tress? Did you hear about the money?"

R.S. "Well it wasn't all that good money when I first started there; it was more of an opportunity."

It seems that men may be prepared to defer gratification and choose jobs which do not themselves satisfy an orientation, such as an economic one, if such choices are instrumental in a long term strategy of goal fulfillment.

Mr Simon arrived at the Tress with a history of unskilled labouring jobs on building sites and in warehouses and eventually became a Capstan-Setter-Operator. He confirms Mr Marton's suggestion that a shortage of labour and the need to 'dilute' the trades provided him with his opportunity:

R.S. "That was just in case ... you know, say it was an operator on a machine - there was a vacancy - that was just in case one of the labourers that swept the floor wanted that job; he'd put in for it before it was sent to the dole you know. And if he did and he got it, well they'd send a vacancy up the dole for a labourer."

It became very common for men to enter Tress Engineering as unskilled labourers and progress through a structured hierarchy of semi-skilled machine jobs. One such man was Mr Simon. Another was Mr Gallow.

Mr Gallow joined Tress when he was 18; he started, in fact, one step above a labourer as a 'loader'. He did not, however, stop in that position. As he says "I built myself up as a Capstan-Setter-Operator from there." This was the job he had when he was made redundant.

As at Scotswood, the Tress unions - dominated by the A.U.E.W. - had a keen interest and influence on the working of the internal labour market. At Tress the union gradually set about regulating and standardising the different jobs and the qualifications needed to do them. In the cases of both Mr Simon and Mr Gallow there was when they joined the company no established training procedure or structured set of stages for learning the 'trade' of Capstan Operator and Setter at the Tress. Both men went straight onto operating a capstan without any preliminary training or recognised qualification. This situation, however, gradually changed. According to Mr Gallow.

J.G.        "(In the early 70's) when the union got a bit stronger and established that would never have happened; you know, you would have had to go under a Setter for a period and qualify as an Operator; and then possibly if the chance of being a Setter-Operator came about then you could try your hand at it; and see whether you were suited or not."

Later on, with trade union agreement and encouragement, the firm sponsored men to go on Government Training courses at a local Skill Centre.

Mr Gallow worked on a large number of semi-skilled machine jobs in Tress, some of which appear to have been part of a hierarchical progression, whilst others were less obviously on different levels but were nonetheless perceived as varying in attractiveness.

J.G.        "I was employed on just about everything down there, you know - drilling, milling machines, loading the automatics, even 'setting'; if somebody was off, you know, they would

say "Well, you go on; you've been on there before; you've seen how they do it."

F.P. "But some jobs were paid more than others were they?"

J.G. "Well, they were - but there wasn't a big differential between them; not really. There were some jobs better than others because they were easier; you could make more bonuses ... certain machines you would say 'Oh that one always does the 'such and suches' and they're a good job; if you can get on that machine you're doing well."

Some jobs and/or machines at Tress were considered to be better than others. This was the case on the same hierarchical level. Variations in attractiveness could be caused by the nature of the work - whether it was heavy or light, clean or dirty, etc - the amount of money that could be earned - whether or not it was easy to make a bonus - whether it involved shift-work, etc. The actual significance of these variations would also vary according to the particular person involved. Older men, for example, would likely prefer lighter work. Younger men with family and household responsibilities may be particularly orientated to earning high income. Some people may try to avoid shiftwork, perhaps because it interfered with household arrangements.

There was a lot of lateral movement amongst the non-skilled workforce at Tress. According to Mr Gallow which job or machine you got often depended on 'the luck of the draw' - the implication being that individuals might have little direct say over which job they got. But insofar as the matter rested with the decisions of management it might be possible to have an indirect say by influencing those decisions. Mr Gallow for example, thought that there was a tendency for the more intricate jobs to pay less well; consequently, if it was money you were after it paid not to let the management know your full capabilities:

J.G. "The jobs where you made money were always the simplest of jobs - you know, like one hole to be drilled through a component; and anybody with half an ounce of brains could stand all day punching that hole through; and they were making more money than the bloke who was doing an intricate job; and I thought to myself: "Aye, you let them see that

you know too much and they'll just exploit you; you'll end up doing the tricky work and some thick-head that stands punching holes he'll make more money than you. So I always sort of kept myself half way. Then if something came along I would tackle it but I didn't let them know that I could go on to greater things."

By presenting a particular image of himself Mr Gibson was able to exercise some influence, perhaps, on the mechanism by which men were distributed to jobs. That individuals would have liked to have had some influence we can assume would be so because not all jobs were the same and not everybody had the same preferences. Exactly how much self-selection went on in the non-skilled sector is uncertain; but undoubtedly it did occur. Men did of course talk of being thwarted in their ambitions; but they also talked of changing jobs, staying with jobs, or rejecting opportunities, at least as if they believed they were at times exercising discretion.

#### The Tradesmen

Despite the large numbers of the 'unskilled' and 'semi-skilled' there still remained a substantial minority of 'skilled' men on the shop floor. Some of the skilled men witnessed the influx of semi-skilled 'dilutees' with a mixture of mirth and scorn, and perhaps also a little apprehension. A man who recalls the reaction of amusement of his time-served colleagues is Mr Tomlinson - a fitter:

"They'd come in say with a paint brush - because there were some contractors in, you know, painting the place out - the next thing they were on a machine. You know, they all said "I'd rather do your work, like" - came in with a paint-brush and they're on the machines. We used to start laughing."

The time-served men were aware that they were the 'real' tradesmen and so there was a tendency amongst some of them to scorn the 'machine-men's' pretensions to be 'skilled'. Some of the labourers also mocked the claims of some of the 'dilutees' to have risen to a superior status; men who had not served their time had no right to look down upon anybody.

Some of the semi-skilled machine-men, on piece-work, could earn more than the tradesmen - albeit with greater effort - and this was resented by some skilled men. Possibly a source of greater resentment could have been a perceived threat posed by the dilutees to the skilled men's job security. Amongst our very small sample of only 8 Tress tradesmen at least one man expressed some apprehension: Mr Lumbley, a fitter:

"All these skills are going. I mean I was surprised when they brought these schemes in where they said they would take somebody after 2 or 3 months and he ended up as a skilled machinist or whatever. I'm surprised the unions allowed it to happen. Obviously at the time they were short of skills; that was the reason the schools happened you know. But I think it was a bit hard lines on the blokes that had served 5 years and what have you and they find to some extent that they're getting shoved into by younger people."

Perhaps those with most to fear from the competition of 'dilutees' were those time served men who like Mr Lumbley were carrying out the least technically difficult functions, functions which could be learnt in a short period of time. The assembly fitters at Tress were all time-served men but the job was very repetitive and, some would say, really only fit to be called 'semi-skilled'; and, maybe it could be argued, if the job itself was only of a semi-skilled nature it did not require a time-served man.

We argued earlier in Chapter VI that limited experience on a narrow range of work, such as was available at Tress, was likely to put an unemployed time-served engineer at a disadvantage when competing against men of a broader experience, such as those from Scotswood. It may not have been a coincidence that three years after closure, in June 1981, of the four time-served Tress fitters we interviewed all were either unemployed or working as a labourer. One man had been offered a job at his trade but he believed it to be beyond his capabilities and he turned it down.

### Labourers and Unskilled

To some extent there was a blurring of the borderline between the unskilled and semi-skilled groups. A 'Loader' on the automatic machines was, for example, something of an intermediate job. Generally speaking, however, the labouring jobs were perceived by the men to include sweeping and cleaning jobs, jobs in the Ragging Bay, jobs in the stores, jobs working on the 'Chemical Bath' - where metal was treated against corrosion - and jobs in the First Aid Room, etc. The range of unskilled jobs was much narrower than at Scotswood, but within these limits there was still a lot of lateral movement over a lengthy period of time, and also hierarchical movement onto machine jobs.

The labouring jobs tended to be occupied by older men aged over 50 years. Mr Carlisle, a man in his late 50's, was shop steward for the labourers for 10 years up to two years before the Tress closed and as such he claimed to have special knowledge of managerial practices. He said that vacancies for machine jobs were advertised on the internal notice board and there was nothing to stop older men moving upwards if they so wanted. But older men were less likely to want to move and this, said Mr Carlisle persuaded some foremen to prefer them when it came to hiring labourers:

"In our place (Tress) you had to be 40 before they would start you as a labourer because they said that once men got to an age 40 to 50 they would want to stay on labouring. When they got the likes of young lads and put them on labouring, sweeping the floor and that, they would automatically - if a job came on the board - they would automatically put in for the jobs you see - Well they would keep losing them."

The labouring sector acted as a reserve pool of labour, for the semi-skilled machine jobs; but older men appear to have been very reluctant to take the opportunities given them to move up. Consequently, there was a strong tendency for any young labourers to eventually move upwards leaving a residue of older men. At the same time it seems

that recruiters may at times positively have preferred to take on older men for labouring jobs in order to stem this upward flow.

One man who refused to move up was an ex-miner who worked at Tress as a labourer, Mr Coulson. He was in his 60's and was unable to do heavy work. He worked at Tress for 4 years. He worked mainly sweeping up and cleaning, although at times he worked in the stores. Mr Coulson liked the job "It was canny work, man; you weren't bothered by any bosses or nowt". Mr Coulson could have worked in the Ragging Bay but he did not fancy it. This was the case even though he saw a job in the Ragging Bay as a good way of progressing onto other machine work. You would do this, he suggested Mr Coulson, if you were after extra money, if, perhaps, you were a young man with a wife and children. But Mr Coulson was not interested: "I says 'I don't want it'; I never applied for nowt. I was happy with what I was doing - just the labouring; I was on a good section, the Capstans". He recognised that the machine men were relatively well paid but he was quite happy with his "canny number".

The explanation for the reluctance of older men to move upwards is complex. One factor, we suggest, is that increasing age tends to be accompanied by an increasing orientation towards work involving less effort. Mr Carlisle's recent job history, for example, suggested he gave some value to 'easy' work - as well as good pay and a preference for day-shift. He worked at Vickers Elswick before Tress but left the former because the latter was higher paid and easier work. He started at Tress as a fork-lift driver, and then moved on to the 'Chemical Bath' - a job he took mainly because it was constant day-shift which was easier for his wife; another factor was that it was higher paid. From the Bath he progressed to loading 3, and then 4, automatic machines; this job involved night-shift but it had attractive compensations. It was relatively high paid because it was a good piece-work rate and everything was done automatically; and the work was very light, involving as it did largely watching over the machines. Some machine loading jobs were much heavier than others and so Mr Carlisle thought he had done well to get the machine he got.

As men get older the amount of effort involved in a job becomes increasingly important. The semi-skilled machine jobs at Tress, paying by the piece, normally involved more intensive tiring work than



the labouring jobs. The labouring jobs paid less per hour than what an average semi-skilled piece-worker would earn but the labourers, as older men, were less likely to be under the same family pressures to earn high income and so the economic component of their orientation was probably not as significant; consequently they were probably more likely to trade in high pay for some other return such as ease of work. At the same time, those labourers who were highly economically motivated could make their pay up by working overtime - at a trade-off cost, though, of course, of less leisure. Mr Carlisle, above, appears to have been lucky enough not to need to make much of a trade-off at all; he had a light job and it was relatively highly paid - which is why he considered it to be the best job in the factory.

Another factor put forward to explain the differences in the attitudes of age groups towards the semi-skilled jobs was that as Mr Carlisle put it the older men "were satisfied" whilst the younger men, in contrast, were ambitious. The young men had their future before them and they wanted to achieve something. As Mrs Carlisle put it "No young lad wants to be a labourer." Older men, on the other hand, have reached the end of the road as far as work is concerned. Their future is retirement. Consequently, improving your skills and marketability for the future is pointless.

Finally there is the factor that it becomes increasingly difficult to change your outlook and learn something new as you get older. Mr Gallow makes the point:

"At that age I think it's hard for a bloke to grasp something, you know. I mean, fair enough, anybody can sweep the floor, you know, and empty the bins, and things like that. A lot of them are a bit reluctant to try anything else: 'No, I'm too old to try that now'."

Such a typical person was Mr Walton, an ex-miner in his 60s who was at Tress 6 years. He says he was not interested in trying for a machine job because: "(It would have been) too much worry; I couldn't concentrate properly. And then you start to get slow to learn like - something like 56 or something like that; when you're going on 56 it's a bit late in life to take it up".

Older men may be less receptive to new ideas and ways of doing things. Allan Marton, the Convenor, suggested that older men at Tress were particularly less receptive because of their background. A large number of them were ex-miners and "the vast majority of the older ones" would not put in for machine jobs. He suggested that coal-miners have particular difficulty coming to terms with engineering machinery and an engineering environment:

A.M. "A lot of the lads the attitude went 'Well, we dig coal... we've done it all our lives and we aren't going to do anything that's that different'; and they were quite happy to do labouring, pull things around, or whatever. It was a big change to come into a factory and then to try to work to a thousandth of an inch on a machine; they didn't want to be tied to a machine. I think some of them were sort of - not Luddites in the sense that they wanted to smash machines - but anti-machine, you know. The older ones I would say were virtually anti-machine. They used to look in amazement at the things you could do with machines."

It seems clear that many labourers made a deliberate choice not to 'try for' the machines. The absence of older workers on the machines was as much due to resistance from the older men themselves as much as say a consequence of selection preferences of management.

### Conclusions

The internal labour markets at Scotswood and Tress were arenas for the distribution of people to jobs. From management's point of view there was a ready pool of labour already familiar with the ways the Works were organised; they were likely to be familiar with the production process involved with particular products and may have specific advantages in technical knowledge over outsiders on the external market; the capabilities and experience of the men would be on record and so would be known and would therefore preclude the necessity of exercising time and expense in searching for suitable candidates on the external market.

In the case of Scotswood, the plant was in fact to some extent part of

a larger pool of labour available to the Vickers Group as a whole. Men could be transferred to those places where they were needed. It seems likely, however, that men would only be transferred if people with similar skills could not be found locally and if there was no effective resistance by the men themselves or their unions. If the Scotswood sample is anything to go by there was in fact little direct transfer in the short term; over the long term, however, considerable movement did occur. 27% of our sample of 47 men had at some time since the war been transferred directly to Scotswood from Elswick. Most of these movements occurred in the 1960s when during a period of product and plant re-organisation men were offered the 'choice' of transfer to Scotswood or redundancy. Some men, especially some of those transferred with the S.T.C. job, claimed that even after a decade at Scotswood they were still thought of by the indigenous population as 'outsiders', as, in fact, 'Elswick men'.

From the individual's point of view, getting into an internal labour market can have two main attractions: (a) it can give you access to a broader range of jobs, and (b) it can give you access to promotion hierarchies.

Both Vickers Scotswood and Tress Engineering had active internal labour markets. In earlier chapters we pointed out that people's orientations to work were formed in part in response to an evaluation of their range of options. Not everybody had the same options; people higher up the skill hierarchy tended to have a broader range than those lower down. We also suggested that further segmentation might occur according to gender and age differences - the young tend to have more scope than the old, and men more than women - and that within the 'skilled' group in particular there might occur significant divisions on the dimension of 'security'. A further division of importance proves to be that which divides 'insiders' from 'outsiders'; people in an internal labour market could have a greater range of opportunity and choice than those outside.

At both Vickers Scotswood and Tress Engineering it was the definite practice to advertise many, if not most, job vacancies internally, on a notice-board, prior to resorting to the external market. As a consequence the most popular jobs tended to be filled by internal applicants. It would normally only be in the event of there being

nobody inside the Works capable of doing a job and/or nobody capable inside the Works wanting the job, that a job vacancy would be sent onto the external market. Thus both work-places tended to have certain 'ports of entry', or positions for which external market applicants were more likely to have the opportunity to apply.

'Port of entry' jobs tended to be those with no obvious job ladder leading up to them from below - namely labouring and tradesmen's jobs. Structured hierarchies rising up from these jobs - such as the semi-skilled hierarchy at Tress and certain staff jobs at Scotswood were particularly likely to be filled with internal recruits. Popular jobs, or positions, not part of an obvious hierarchical progression would also likely be monopolised by 'insiders'.

In the case of Scotswood, although it could be treated by management as being with Elswick, and to some extent other Vickers plants as well, as part of a larger 'Company' labour pool, as far as the workers were concerned the reverse does not seem to have been true. That is to say Scotswood shop-floor workers did not have privileged access to jobs internal to other Vickers plants. Moreover there were strong suggestions that direct voluntary movement from one Vickers plant to another was at the least very difficult, if not, as some said, impossible. To move voluntarily from Scotswood to Elswick, or vice-versa, was likely to mean going via the external market - whether unemployment or another firm - and losing your years of service. Thus it seems both Scotswood and Elswick had their own separate internal labour markets with ports of access from the external market but not, at shop-floor level, open to each other.

Insofar as internal recruitment policies are adhered to elsewhere then it follows that below the skilled men's level it would generally be the case that people on the external market are likely to be faced with a much narrower range of choice. In effect, the more that recruitment to the most popular positions occurs internally then the more that the non-skilled unemployed are likely to be faced with the least attractive jobs; and to the extent that people occupying intermediate positions in a semi-skilled hierarchy are unable to transfer to a similar position or level in another work-place then the more that they become tied to their current employer.

The location in a firm's job structure of port of entry jobs will no doubt depend partly on the availability of internal labour and also the readiness of that labour to take up the opportunities on offer; it may also depend on the policies of trade unions. At both Tress and Scotswood the internal unions clearly took a keen interest and had a significant influence on the 'open-ness' of certain positions. In particular, the A.U.E.W. generally dominated by skilled men - but not at Tress - had, and still has, an interest in the location of the boundary between 'skilled' and 'semi-skilled' jobs. The opening up of trades to 'dilutees' seems to have occurred at times of labour shortage; at times of job shortage we might speculate whether the reverse process might occur; local unions might be able to exert influence to reserve jobs for time-served men. It may be, therefore, that the degree of dependency on a current employer by men at the top of semi-skilled hierarchies - such as the Capstan-Setter-Operators at Tress - may vary according to the policies and influence of skilled unionists elsewhere. Where, of course, the semi-skilled job is technologically specific to a particular work-place the question of political exclusion from elsewhere would not arise; in the case of the capstan-setter-operators at Tress, however, their 'skill' was to a degree useable elsewhere.

The *raison d'etre* for internal markets at Tress and Scotswood, and their particular characteristics, appears to be a product of at least four forces: the effect of a shortage on the external market of adequately socialised and trained workers; the creation of job vacancies requiring plant specific skills; the attempts by the managements to ensure a regular and competent supply of labour; and the attempts by trade unions to control work responsibilities and maximise opportunities for their members.

Within the internal markets jobs could vary in their attributes and men's work objectives and preferences could likewise vary. Given the opportunities available men at both Tress and Scotswood seemed to exercise at least some choice, even if such 'choice' often involved the acceptance or rejection of opportunities as they arose rather than the selection of suitable jobs at will.

Some objectives could not be attained unless access was gained to the pertinent skill group. At both Scotswood and Tress entry to the

skilled man's group was strictly controlled and generally not accessible to those who had not served an apprenticeship; however, which jobs or functions were to be monopolised by the skilled men would fluctuate at the margins at certain times, and at such times such jobs could be down-graded and become the province of semi-skilled men. At Tress, access to the top semi-skilled jobs was a definite possibility once entry to the internal market had been achieved; if certain objectives, such as high pay, could not be immediately achieved by labourers, they could be achieved in the long run by those prepared to undergo the training and exert the necessary effort. The Tress internal labour market and hierarchical structures provided the opportunity for men to rise to a higher plane of jobs where the rewards, we think, were likely to be perceived as better on a number of dimensions compared to the lesser skilled jobs below.

At Scotswood also there were at times opportunities for men to train to work semi-skilled machines, but the opportunities were not constant and there was no obvious progressive non-skilled job hierarchy as at Tress; the impression was given that at Scotswood the work of the top semi-skilled machine men had a much higher skill component than formally equivalent jobs at Tress, and if this was so it would be much more difficult to create a ladder of easily learnable jobs or 'steps' as at Tress. There were at Scotswood some simpler semi-skilled machine jobs which labourers could easily learn in a short period of time and at times, unions permitting, labourers might be allowed to do them, but such jobs were not part of a structured hierarchy.

If Tress was significantly characterised by the opportunities labourers had for upward mobility it was not the case that all men necessarily took advantage of those opportunities. There were strong suggestions that the manual labour force at Tress was differentiated according to their orientations and that where opportunities existed men would try to move towards those jobs offering returns most congruent with their preferences; the opportunities for upward mobility, therefore, had differing significance for men according to their work aims. It seems that older men were more apt than their younger colleagues to prefer to stick on labouring jobs, despite apparent opportunities for the former to move on and up if they so wanted.

Four components of the older men's orientation towards the labouring jobs were suggested: older men tend to prefer lighter jobs involving less intensive effort; some of the older Tress labourers came from a lifetime of mining and it may have been mentally difficult for them to adjust their minds to working with engineering machines; there would probably be less financial pressure on the older men, towards the end of the life-cycle, to earn the highest pay possible by working piece-work on the machines; and, the older man is less apt to think in terms of increasing his skills and future marketability. These components, either individually or collectively, could persuade men to choose not to move up the semi-skilled ladder. Younger men, on the other hand, with contrasting orientations, would be more liable to take advantage of the opportunities for upward mobility.

Even in respect of jobs broadly on the same non-skilled level it seemed they could still vary according to a number of attributes such as earnings possibilities, shift-work, heaviness, cleanliness, boredom, promotional opportunities, etc., and that men could vary in their preferences (or dislike) for them. The extent to which men could choose to do or not to do certain jobs was not clear, but men gave replies which suggested at least some influence, and even when it depended simply on the discretion of management it seems unlikely to be the case that the workers' preferences would always be ignored. It seems probable, then, that men were exercising at least some degree of choice, possibly involving at times a trade-off.

Skilled men at Tress and Scotswood did not engage in much lateral job movement - although they could apply their skill on different objects of work - but there were opportunities, especially at Scotswood, for upward movement onto technically related staff jobs. This upward movement was greatly facilitated by the policy of advertising jobs on the internal notice-board. To some extent older skilled men could see promotion onto a staff job such as Inspector as a means of achieving lighter work; but factors such as job interest, security, long term prospects, and status could also come into it. It seems that non-skilled men had little opportunity to progress onto a staff job.

## CHAPTER X

Summary and Conclusion

We will proceed in this last chapter by re-capitulating the main points and findings mentioned in the eight preceding chapters, following with a final comment and conclusion.

Summary

In Chapter I we introduced the thesis. Here it was explained that the study was set in a framework that tried to take account of both the significance and influence of workers' perceptions and interpretations, their values and preferences, and their efforts to achieve their objectives, and the constraining and determining effects of socially constructed barriers to movement and unfettered choice. There was to be no attempt to examine the consequences of selective recruitment practices, but their existence would be recognised as crucial and would in effect be taken as a given condition of the market. Managerial practices in general, and also trade union practices, were to be explicitly understood as important, especially in regard to the organisation of work on the internal labour market. But the emphasis of the project was to be on job opportunities - however actually determined - as seen through the eyes of the workers concerned, and the significance and effectiveness of worker preference and choice in the final labour distribution process. The overall aim was to investigate how the labour market was patterned "by relating people's orientations, and changes in orientations, to both the structure and restructuring of job opportunities, and to differences in, and alterations in, non-work variables".

Chapter 2 saw a presentation of theoretical perspectives on the labour market. The point was made that the traditional economist's explanation of how allocatory mechanisms work had come under increasing criticism in recent years and that attempts were being made to formulate new theories and models. Recognition that the market tends to be structurally divided into sub-divisions encouraged the



growth of a range of perspectives collectively known as Segmented or Dual Labour Market approaches. The ideas presented in this chapter formed the background against which the research was carried out.

Our samples, and the firms from which they were drawn, were introduced and described in Chapter 3. It was explained that the development and final closure of the two plants, Vickers Scotswood and Tress Engineering, should be understood in the context that they were both subsidiaries of large multinational companies. The interests and policies of the parent companies were just as important as the local conditions and markets of the subsidiaries themselves.

In the case of Scotswood - and the 'sister' plant at Elswick - development was closely bound up with the rise to pre-eminence of heavy engineering on Tyneside and the rise to power of the armaments giants of Vickers and Armstrongs. The post-war products of Scotswood and the skills of the men who worked on them reflected this historical inheritance. When Vickers eventually made a break with its long dependency on armaments and moved towards 'modern' products made with newer skills the strategic importance of the 'Newcastle Works' declined, and it finally became dispensable. Vickers Limited was 'restructured' and Scotswood disappeared.

Tress Engineering had a much shorter history; it only started after the Second World War. Its products and skills reflected its recent birth. The products were 'light' and geared towards the modern petrochemical industry. If Scotswood engineers were typical working class aristocrats, Tress workers were, by and large, a much more common lot; semi-skilled and unskilled men predominated.

Like Scotswood Tress's downfall came finally as a result of decisions made elsewhere in the multi-plant company. As an individual enterprise producing valves and gauges Tress may very well have been able to carry on and survive; but as part of a much bigger financial organisation its continuance depended on broader considerations of overall company policies and performance. Tress in Newcastle apparently did not fit into the overall plan and so, like Scotswood, was closed down.

When Tress and Scotswood ceased operations in 1978 and 1979 respectively the former employed about 750 people and the latter 330. At the time, engineering was still a significant employer of men on Tyneside, and there were still a sufficient number of engineering employers and a sufficient number of men trained in engineering trades to be able to talk about an 'engineering labour market'. During the period of research, however, the traditional industries, including heavy engineering and shipbuilding, came under severe pressure resulting in a dramatic increase in closures and redundancies.

Thus the period was characterised by rapidly decreasing job opportunities, a shrinking engineering market, and fast rising unemployment reaching levels not experienced since the 1930s. In a sense the Tress redundancies heralded what was to come. By the time Scotswood was shut the area was in serious depression. 18 months later, when our interviewing finished, the situation had deteriorated even further.

It was in a context, then, of considerable instability, and mounting social concern, that our two samples of 47 and 36, from Scotswood and Tress respectively, were interviewed over the period February 1980 to April 1981, and then followed up briefly in June of the same year.

In Chapter 4 we presented the first 'results' of our interviews. The respondents' attitudes to Scotswood and Tress and post-redundancy employment were tabulated and counted in order to produce a crude measure of the comparative quantitative weight of various aspects of attraction and repulsion. Differences between the Scotswood and Tress workforces were noted. Certain features stood out as worthy of further attention and it was decided to make them the subjects of later chapters.

The point was made that both the Tress and Scotswood work-forces had been particularly stable over the previous five years and that in both cases men had 'settled' on places they relatively liked. The tendency to stop moving about and settle down was thought to be particularly striking amongst semi-skilled and unskilled men at Tress Engineering.

This stability was related to the fact that at least some men were staying at Tress and Scotswood because "these firms were seen to be more likely than other employments, especially within engineering, to satisfy their prime objectives". It seemed men at Scotswood, for example, tended to value considerations of an intrinsic kind while men at Tress tended to be economically orientated. Scotswood and Tress tended to satisfy these work objectives. The implication was that choice was being exercised and that choice was being influenced by varying orientations.

Subsequent to the redundancies men from both samples seemed to be having difficulty regaining stable employment. Over a half of the Scotswood men and at least a third of the Tress men experienced over 6 months continuous employment. Even amongst those who got jobs many had clearly ended up in unstable employment with a constant risk of being made redundant again.

Whether through dissatisfaction with their current (post-redundancy) employment, inducing a wish to move voluntarily, or through occupying a position in the job structure subject to the threat of redundancy, one consequence of the closures of Scotswood and Tress, then, was a radical destabilisation of the work-force.

The subject of Chapter 5 was one of the issues identified in Chapter 4 - the significance of security as a structuring agent in the labour market experiences and strategies of men from Scotswood.

The general conclusion from Chapter 5 was that in engineering companies there was a tendency for the job-structure to be divided into a stable and an unstable sector, providing more or less security for job incumbents. The significance of this division depended on the orientations of the individuals concerned - those giving greatest priority to the achievement of a stable job having most interest in where they were situated in the job structure.

People's propensity to be security orientated we suggested would vary according to a number of variables and contextual circumstances. Age,

position in the life-cycle, level and scarcity of skill, and perceptions and expectations of employment chances, could all be significant.

Our interviews suggested that the men from Scotswood were more likely than those from Tress to be security orientated; whilst this might simply be a misleading consequence of the research procedure, we think that at least in part it reflects the fact that Scotswood contained a much higher proportion of skilled men, with more stable work histories, who had more reason to expect stable employment.

It was suggested that security orientated people would seek out, if they could, areas of least risk where they could 'settle in'. Large firms, with large amounts of fixed capital, might be expected to be less liable to close, and on this dimension firms such as these - firms such as Scotswood - were Primary employers. A security orientated person would therefore likely prefer such a firm. Actually getting in to a Primary firm would not, however, in itself guarantee security; men would only start to feel relatively safe once they had been there some years. Those most established would of course be older people and therefore there is probably some correlation between the securer positions and old age. But not everybody managed to get established and also whole firms could close down throwing even the most secure out of work. Consequently older men could be found in unstable areas as well.

Subsequent to closure many men were aware that they had fallen from a position of security in Scotswood's 'protected' sector to a situation of extreme insecurity and uncertainty; they were very aware that a shortage of demand was undermining the security of jobs in general and engineering jobs in particular, and also that as last starters into a factory they were likely to have the most tenuous rights to their jobs. Thus the Scotswood long time servers joined the ranks of the marginalised multiple job changers but unlike many of the latter their inclusion was not by choice. Being generally older, the men who had 'fallen' from the Scotswood stable sector were in a weaker market situation. If they began moving from job to job it was likely to be involuntarily induced. Such men felt particularly insecure.

The effect of increasing insecurity was to alter the overall balance of the trade-off people were prepared to make. Redundancy, and particularly the experience of unemployment, was always likely to induce men to adjust their work objectives. The worse things became the more that the 'work objective' became simply to have a job - any job; and this job would have to be in the Formal Economy; there was little evidence of Informal Market opportunities for the unemployed ex-Tress men, and even less for those from Scotswood.

The upshot was that those unemployed with the least market power and least resources to call upon were less able to discriminate and hold out until a 'good' job came up. A poor job was better than a long period of unemployment. Consequently jobs in and out of engineering which would possibly have been avoided in better times were now being taken. Within engineering there was an indication that older men in particular, in a weaker market situation than their younger colleagues, were more prepared to accept jobs offering lower pay and poorer working conditions. Some men left engineering altogether in search of security. Others decided that the trade-off costs, particularly the economic costs, were too high and hung on hoping for things to improve.

Chapter 6 was concerned with another of the issues identified in Chapter 4 - the significance of "job interest" as a structuring agent in the labour market experiences and strategies of our samples.

It was established that job interest tended to be related to position in the skill hierarchy. Scotswood time-served men had the opportunity to work on the most satisfying, interesting work. The range of jobs open to the semi-skilled and unskilled men from Tress tended to be more monotonous, but even amongst these some were worse than others. There were strong suggestions that there existed outside of Tress and Scotswood a range of jobs on Tyneside widely considered by men to be the most monotonous of all, and it was believed that these were typically done by women. These 'women's jobs' we saw as occupying a position at the bottom of the skill hierarchy.

This hierarchical ordering on the dimension of 'job interest' did not necessarily correspond with the ordering on other dimensions. Although we did not collect detailed data on pay the impression was gained that pay per hour was higher for the skilled and semi-skilled men than for the unskilled men and women. Up to the level of the semi-skilled, therefore, 'job interest' and 'high pay' tended to coincide. But the pattern changes higher up in so far as semi-skilled men could earn more than skilled men - nevertheless the latter would still normally earn more than unskilled labourers and women.

Jobs, therefore, tended to be better in terms of interest, pay, and status the higher up the skill hierarchy; also men higher up would have a greater power in the market. But there were significant cross-cutting compensatory considerations serving to considerably complicate matters.

Such considerations that could be taken into account when evaluating jobs otherwise favourably or unfavourably placed on aspects already mentioned could include: the rate of effort, opportunities for piece-work, opportunities for shift-work, overtime, 'outside' work, travelling distance, etc. These were significant lateral compensatory costs and benefits which played an important part in structuring and patterning labour market movement in West Newcastle.

The existence of these compensatory mechanisms could present men with significant choices. A particularly important one in the context of the engineering industry was faced by skilled men. Semi-skilled piece-workers could earn more than skilled time-served men. But the semi-skilled work tended to involve more effort and be repetitive - and therefore monotonous. Consequently, the skilled men, with access to both their 'own' interesting jobs and many of those of the semi-skilled men could be faced with a choice. Actual choice would depend on a person's work orientation. But to complicate matters further, choosing the higher paid semi-skilled jobs could involve jumping from employer to employer 'chasing the money', and this is not a strategy likely to increase a person's security. Consequently the costs of chasing the money could include more effort, less interest, and less security. People particularly orientated against bearing these 'costs' then, or a combination of these 'costs', would be less likely to choose the chop and change strategy. At Scotswood there were men who particularly valued the fact that the work they did involved less effort, was unusually interesting, and for the established more secure, and so they stayed where they were.

There were other significant compensatory mechanisms. At Tress, for example, there were indications that some unskilled labourers could actually earn more than some of the semi-skilled piece-workers and the time-served tradesmen. But this time the 'cost' was extreme amounts of overtime. However, if semi-skilled machine-workers were better off than labourers insofar as they had to work less hours for the same money, they were worse off in respect of the amount of effort involved. Here, then, was another significant compensation. Labourer's jobs, and women's jobs may, but not necessarily, involve less effort and could therefore prove an attraction to physically weaker, older, or infirm people. Yet another compensatory feature could be shift-work; in exchange for working unpopular shifts earnings could be boosted.

Thus amongst the manual workers of Newcastle some of those earning the most money would be those doing extremely repetitive, and boring, piece-work jobs, working at great speed and effort, working unpopular shifts, and excessive overtime; often 'chasing' such jobs, would mean moving from firm to firm and so such work was often also insecure. There were men who were prepared to accept such costs and who chased such jobs; and these men could be very well paid.

Despite the significant lateral compensatory component in the market we still decided that the dominant character was hierarchical. This was because we think that the crucial superiority of having a position higher up the skill range was the tendency to have a broader range of choice. Those people towards the top could select from those jobs open to them on their own skill level or from some of those 'below' them.

This hierarchical character is particularly likely to be demonstrated at times of depression. When job opportunities contract orientations are likely to be restructured, and as existing objectives become unrealistic and/or non-sustainable 'trading down' is likely to take place; competition for the 'worst' jobs increases and those with least market power are likely to be pushed out to face lengthy periods of unemployment.

We came to the clear conclusion, then, that whilst for most people positions higher up the skill hierarchy tended to offer best overall deals, and a greater range of choice, the actual workings of the market could only be understood in terms of unravelling the complex interplay of both hierarchical and compensatory features.

In Chapter 7 further evidence was offered of the role that orientation restructuring plays in allocating people to positions in the job structure. Whilst the pressures were extreme the mechanism of self-selection and choice still had a part to play. The focus of the chapter was on an issue touched upon in Chapter 5, namely the experience of prolonged unemployment and its relationship to people's changing ideas of the sorts of work they would accept. Our findings generally supported the conclusion of the Newcastle Council Tress Redundancy Study that men's experiences of prolonged unemployment led them "to revise their expectations downwards". We decided that financial pressures and perceptions of weakness in the market were particularly important influences in this restructuring process. There was some suggestion that older men were more likely to drop their standards quicker and be more prepared to take jobs which whilst possibly secure were generally inferior on other dimensions. The general impression was that over time men higher up the skill hierarchy were liable to increasingly try for jobs at a lower skill level, whilst men in the unskilled market would be faced with increased competition for 'their' jobs from men above. Unskilled men, of course, had a reduced range of options to begin with and were keenly aware of their weakness in the market; a tendency for them to change their ideas of suitable work was much less evident.

In Chapter 8 we discussed briefly a few other factors tending to attract or repel workers and in so doing structure their labour market behaviour.

One of these was 'pay'. It was concluded that the economic wage-related labour market theory was an inadequate framework through which to explain and understand the mechanisms involved in the distribution of people to jobs. Quite clearly there were, on the one hand, serious doubts as to whether workers had sufficient adequate knowledge to compare and contrast the monetary inducements of various employments, and, on the other hand, serious doubts as to whether workers armed with knowledge would always be able to select and keep the jobs they wanted. Structural divisions served to establish a certain degree of independence and lack of competitiveness between groups. Given these doubts it is very unlikely that the 'wage rate' or 'earnings level' acted as an equilibrating mechanism and distributor of labour throughout the market.



We suggested that men who were particularly economically orientated were interested in total earnings potential. Fluctuations in the variable component parts of earnings were likely to induce men to 'chop and change' jobs. Shift allowance, for example, may be a variable component and working shifts may be seen as a necessary cost of earning high pay. A changeover from shift-work to constant day-shift could encourage some men to move on.

Shift-work was something that most workers disliked but there were variations in intensity. For the most part working shifts was seen as a necessary cost of achieving some other objective. Possible compensations could include higher pay, longer weekends, fitting in with household arrangements, or simply avoiding unemployment. People's attitudes towards shift-work, then, varied according to individual orientations and the compensations on offer.

Office-work had few attractions for our men. It was quite clear that the vast majority had a manual worker's consciousness. Only 2% of the combined samples had an office job at the time of the interviews.

The size of a firm was significant for some men. Those who had a definite preference for smaller firms gave reasons such as: 'You were more likely to be noticed by management'; 'relations with managers and other work-mates are more likely to be face to face, personal, and friendly'; and, 'you are more likely to be recognised for your talents and encouraged to better yourself'. But only a minority had such feelings. Some preferred bigger companies because they were likely to be more secure, offer more opportunities, and less likely to tend towards favouritism. Many men did not register the size of a firm as being of any significance at all.

Chapter 9 concentrated on the job structure and distribution of labour internal to a work-place.

The determination of a person's job and the sorts of rewards he could expect occurred partly as a result of structural factors and partly by choice. Orientations and choice have been referred to already. The most significant structural determinant we decided was a person's

position in the hierarchy of skill - defined in the main according to the work people actually did.

Actually being engaged on skilled work, and receiving the benefits of skilled work, was dependent on a number of conditions and circumstances. We focussed on three of the more significant ones:

1. Acquiring the socially recognised, including trade-union recognised, qualification to do the job.
2. The provision of work that actually required the application of skill.
3. Acquiring the actual ability to do the job.

In respect of (1), having the right to do skilled work traditionally follows from having served an apprenticeship. However, the length of the required apprenticeship training can alter over time. Also, in periods of labour shortage simpler tasks normally included within the skilled man's province may be hived off and made available to men who have only served much shorter periods of training. Such men, referred to often as 'dilutees', are 'semi-skilled', and the work they do is likewise referred to as 'semi-skilled'.

In the case of (2) it was recognised that work traditionally described as 'skilled' might in fact have lost much of its original skill component. Such work might, however, have not been hived off and would therefore still be within the province and control of skill time-served men. The actual quality of the work done in the 'skilled' sector could therefore vary, with some of the more routine repetitive type being more on a par with 'semi-skilled' work. We suggested that an important structural determination of those variations were the types of 'jobs' undertaken by the employing organisation - whether in particular they were produced en masse or not. Consequently, whilst having an apprenticeship qualification would give you the right to do skilled men's work it was not a guarantee that the work would actually be there to do.

In respect of (3) actually having served an apprenticeship was not a guarantee of a person's ability to carry out a broad range of

engineering functions. A person's ability would relate to his experience which would in turn depend on features of factories he had been employed in. The technological composition and range of products, and a person's position in the technical division of labour, influence the variety and level of skill acquired. The more limited a person's experience, then the more specific his knowledge, then the narrower the range of jobs within an individual's sphere of capabilities. Some of the Tress 'skilled' men were said to have had less experience and therefore be in a narrower market than men from Scotswood.

Doing semi-skilled work also depended on qualifications, opportunity, and experience. These jobs seemed to be formed in response to shortages of 'skilled' tradesmen. The skill shortages, themselves, of course could be in part a consequence of earlier destruction of craft organisation of production. At the same time new technology could be produced in response to the demands of a 'de-skilled' form of work organisation. Semi-skilled jobs, therefore included not simply hived off 'skilled' jobs, but also new ones created to fit new types of social and technical organisation.

The three skill groupings - skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled - formed the basic structural context for the manual workers in the internal market. The way work was organised, the determination of boundaries between skill groups, and the range of jobs open to individuals within skill groups, appeared to be formed at Tress and Scotswood by managements and unions largely responding to technological and market forces. Managements probably perceived their work-forces as potential pools of labour that could be controlled and regulated in the best interests of production; internal unions responded to managerial pressures whilst seeking to organise and monopolise job opportunities in their own interests.

A particular feature of the Tress internal labour market was the structured hierarchy of semi-skilled jobs up which men with no initial qualifications could climb. A comparable situation did not exist in Scotswood, we think, because the nature of the jobs even semi-skilled men worked on demanded a broad range of experience and knowledge

than could be provided by short training courses. Scotswood was not producing en masse and so there was not a lot of repetitive routine work.

Within the non-skilled sector, in particular, the working of the internal markets appeared to depend at least in part on worker self-selection and choice. Job opportunities (occupation opportunities: 'driller', 'grinder', etc.) would be advertised on the internal notice board and men would decide if they wanted to apply. The actual decision would depend on a person's orientation. Younger unskilled men at Tress were particularly likely to 'put in for' semi-skilled machine jobs and thereby acquire a 'skill' that could be used elsewhere; older men were likely to prefer the less strenuous and responsible light labouring jobs. Final selection, of course, rested with management.

Within the skilled men's jobs lateral 'occupational' movement was unusual but management could direct men to work in certain shops or on certain 'jobs' (objects of work). Occupational movement upwards was possible for the skilled men who would apply for jobs as they were advertised 'on the Board'. But again the final decision would rest with management, and it was said men could be held down if their replacement was difficult or costly.

Generally speaking, staff jobs were closed off to men below the skilled man's level.

### Conclusion

In our research we found that workers undoubtedly had different work preferences - in relation to pay, size of firm, shift-work, office-work, security, effort, type of work (e.g. 'big' or 'small', 'repetitive' or 'one-off'), travelling distance, etc. - and we have no doubt that given the opportunity men would make different choices. These variations in orientation were thought to be related to a number of work and non-work factors and experiences, as well as the actual perception and expectation of opportunity.

There was a strong suggestion that workers at both Tress and Scotswood had found, or decided to stick with, places that promised to satisfy the respective work-force's preferences - with Scotswood offering, in particular, (relatively) interesting work and (for some) stability; and Tress offering relatively high pay and, for the unskilled, opportunities to better themselves; both places also offered a friendly working environment and easy access for men in West Newcastle.

The different orientations of the workers at Scotswood and Tress may, in part at least, have been formed in recognition of their different options. For example, because Scotswood men tended to be more skilled and because interesting work tended to occur higher up the skill hierarchy, then the less skilled Tress men had the lesser reason to expect anything but more monotonous work. To some extent, then, this may explain the greater tendency amongst Tress men to be economically orientated.

However, the propensity to have an economic orientation need not simply reflect lack of access to other work rewards. There were men at both Scotswood and Tress who would 'chase the money' and could do so even where other jobs offering alternative work rewards, including 'job interest', were available. There were certainly factors other than simply opportunity inducing men to pursue particular work objectives, and where possible a calculated choice would take place.

But the exercise of choice could only occur within the range of what was structurally possible. People could only choose to forsake, say, 'job-interest' for 'money' if in fact they had access to jobs offering both types of work reward. Consequently, the structuring of opportunities played an important part.

In Blackburn and Mann's influential labour market study of non-apprenticed male manual workers the authors came to the conclusion:

<sup>2</sup>"We first asked a simple question, 'Do high rewards on one aspect tend to be accompanied by high rewards on all aspects?' We

concluded that on balance they do, and therefore feel that the overall structure of the market is hierarchical rather than compensatory".

We have come to broadly the same conclusion for apprenticed and non-apprenticed workers in West Newcastle. Jobs higher up tended to be better paid, more interesting, and have a higher status value. They also gave greater opportunity to move up further to even better jobs. In general, the higher up the skill hierarchy the greater the range of options, encompassing jobs not only on the same level but also those below.

Whilst emphasising hierarchical characteristics of the market, however, we also found that for our male manual workers tendencies that Blackburn and Mann called 'compensatory', and we have called 'lateral' or trade-off', were possibly stronger, more pervasive, and more structurally significant than implied by the Peterborough authors.

Blackburn and Mann recognised that in Peterborough vertical progression was not the only kind of movement taking place. It was clear that on the one hand not everybody had the opportunity to progress up an internal labour market, whilst on the other hand it was not necessarily the case that all job objectives needed to be pursued in that way. In particular, they mentioned that there were objective opportunities for appropriately orientated individuals to achieve short and/or regular hours, highly autonomous outside work, or high wages, without moving upwards. In such cases compensatory trade-off costs were likely to be involved, but nevertheless the opportunities for the strongly orientated were there. On the subjective side it was reported that there was some evidence that the population was differentiated according to their orientations, and that three orientation types stood out as particularly strong: namely vis-a-vis 'outdoor work', 'job interest' and 'high wages'.\*

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\*Note: Other orientations were also said to be of significance. Included amongst these 'others' were 'security', 'trade union strength', 'worthwhileness', 'promotion', 'status' and 'personal suitability'.

Thus there was both the objective opportunity and the subjective desire for some to choose to follow a trade-off strategy rather than wait to be promoted up an internal labour market. If we add the reported fact that many men in Peterborough were forced to change employers through dismissals, redundancies, etc. It is clear that there must have been a considerable amount of lateral movement.

Despite Blackburn and Mann's emphasis on the hierarchical ordering of the labour market it is implicit in their account that there was in fact a complex intermeshing of both hierarchical and lateral organisation and movement. We need to understand the way in which these two organisational principles fit, and the means by which they become integrated into a greater whole.

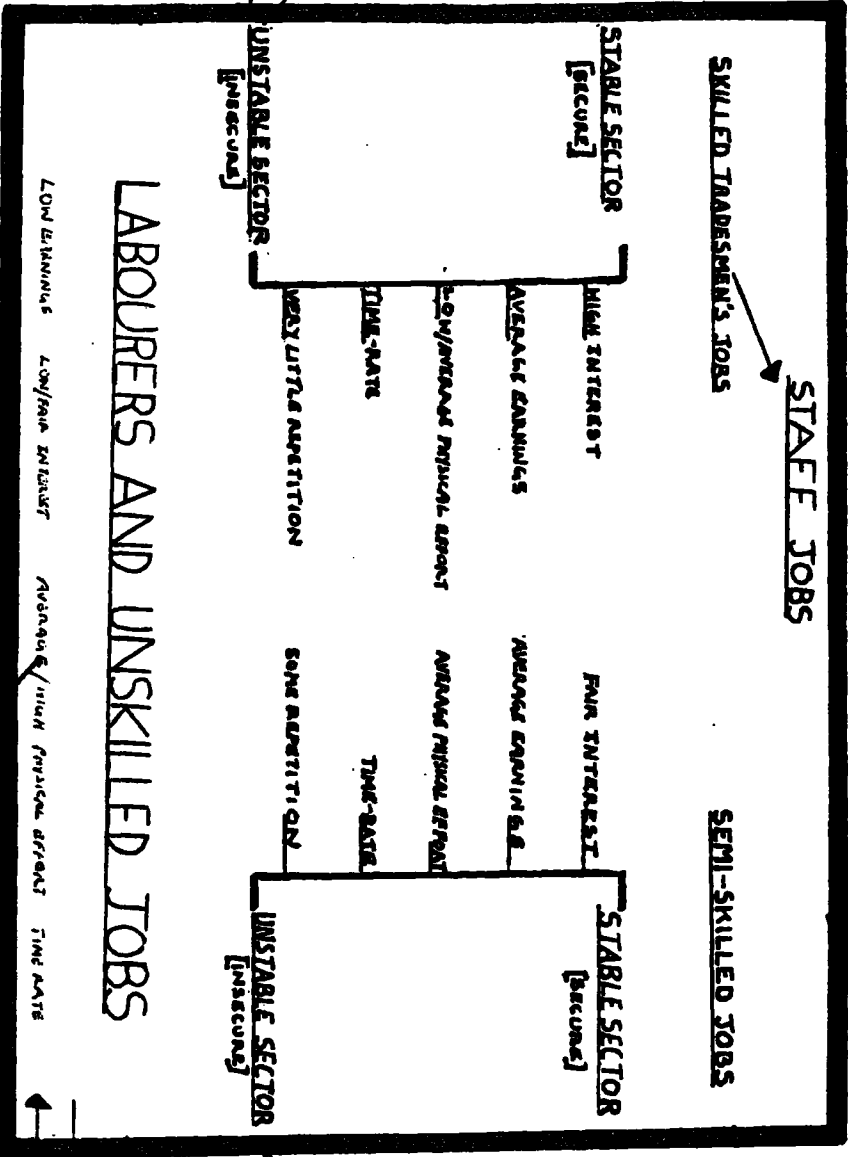
In an attempt to demonstrate some of the ways in which hierarchical and lateral principles of organisation may mesh together we have drawn two diagrams. These diagrams portray the work aspects typical of jobs attached to the skill hierarchy in Tress and Scotswood, and the directions of flow men could normally take. It will be seen that whereas there is a definite hierarchical ordering on aspects such as job interest, there are also compensatory costs and benefits. At Tress, for example, it can be seen that the high earning semi-skilled jobs may only be carried out at a cost of high effort, whereas the lower earning unskilled jobs are compensated for with low effort. Thus the markets are both hierarchically and laterally organised.

The existence of compensatory aspects in the market implies the necessity for people to make trade-offs. The sort of trade off they would wish to make will depend on their orientations. Where opportunity allows, therefore, people will tend to distribute themselves throughout the job/skill structure, on both the internal and external labour markets, according to their preferences. In respect of Tress, for example, it can be seen that older men could prefer to stick on unskilled labouring jobs rather than climb the semi-skilled hierarchy because such people tend to be orientated towards jobs involving less effort. In order to understand the labour market, therefore, it is necessary to be aware of the varying

**Repetitive Piece-Work Jobs:-**  
 HIGH PAY  
 LOW INTEREST  
 HIGH EFFORT  
 UNSTABLE

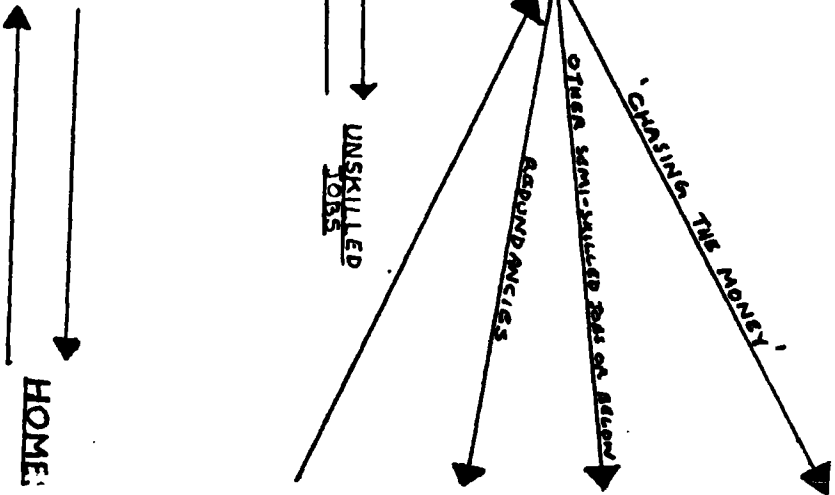
UNSTABLE SECTOR FOR LABORERS  
 'OTHER' INCLUDE THIS OR BELOW

UNSTABLE SECTOR FOR WOMEN  
 'OTHER' INCLUDE THIS OR BELOW



**WOMEN'S JOBS: MANUFACTURING MANUAL**  
 LOW EARNINGS  
 VERY LOW INTEREST  
 LOW PHYSICAL EFFORT  
 VERY ACQUISITIVE

**DIAGRAM 1. SCOTSMOOD ENGINEERING**





orientations, and the consequences these have for the choices people make.

But if the exercise of choice according to individual preference and orientation could determine a person's position in the job structure, such choice could only occur within tightly bound structural possibilities. In the diagrams the flow arrows suggest the range of opportunities available. Generally speaking it can be seen that the range increases the further up the skill hierarchy. Getting access to particular skill categories was therefore as important a determinant of labour distribution as was choice.

#### Diagram 1 Vickers Scotswood

At Scotswood men could be taken in at any level, but insiders would get first option. Movement was in and out of the unstable sector. It can be seen that 'voluntary multiple job-changers' who 'chased the money' moved about at cost of low interest, higher effort, and instability; in return, of course, they received higher earnings. Jobs open to these skilled 'chop and changers' tended to be more boring; this was because the salient characteristic of these sorts of jobs was their routine, simpler, repetitive nature. Note that semi-skilled 'chop and changers' at Scotswood had less interest to lose than their skilled colleagues, although the Scotswood semi-skilled would have had more interest to lose than those at Tress.

Men would of course leave voluntarily for reasons other than higher economic rewards - to be closer to home, to get more experience, etc. Also there were those who were locked into an involuntary multiple job-changing pattern; some of these men would have preferred to establish themselves in a secure job.

A feature of the men's options was the fact that they could all trade down, but in the short term none could take jobs in skill categories above them. In the longer term skilled men could gradually move up to staff jobs, whilst sometimes opportunities would arise for labourers to train for semi-skilled jobs.

SEMI-SKILLED  
JOBS OR BELOW

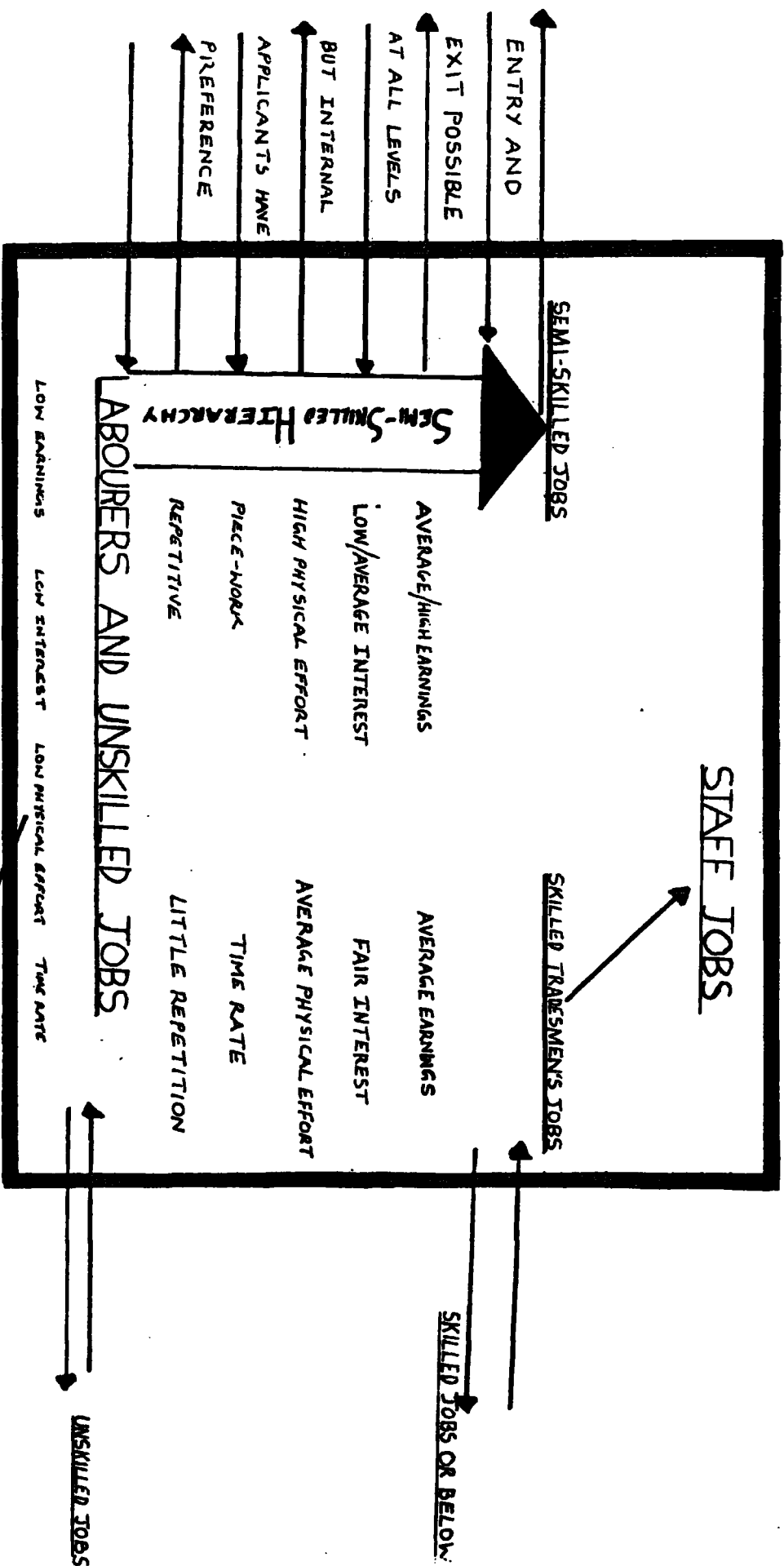


DIAGRAM 2. TRESS ENGINEERING

At the bottom of the skill hierarchy, outside of Scotswood, were women's jobs. The only aparent comparative benefit of those jobs was (1) they could involve less physical effort, and (2) travel to work distance could be shorter. No women worked on the Scotswood shop floor.

#### Diagram 2 Tress Engineering

At Tress entry and exit was possible at all levels but as in the case of Scotswood internal applicants had preference.

Unskilled labourers could move up the semi-skilled hierarchy but at cost of higher effort. Men preferring to stick at a low level low effort job at Tress could also possibly be attracted by some women's jobs. Such men are likely to be older ones, not physically inclined to engage in greater effort, possibly under less family pressure to earn high pay, and without an eye to future career prospects.

Men near the top of the semi-skilled hierarchy were not tied to Tress. As semi-skilled engineering piece-workers they had a marketable skill and were indeed in the same market as many of the men at Scotswood who had at some time 'chased the money'.

As at Scotswood skilled tradesmen had the best opportunities for promotion into staff jobs; and as at Scotswood all skills would have chances to 'trade down'.

Only two women worked on the shop floor at Tress, both doing unskilled jobs.

The socio-technical organisation of work, the differential opportunities for advancement, and the hierarchical character of much of the patterning of work rewards, gives some support to Dual Labour Market and Segementation theories of labour market organisation. The skilled and semi-skilled jobs at Scotswood and Tress appeared to occupy positions in the Primary sector as defined by segmentation theory. The skilled men belonged to what Sengenberger referred to as

'The Market For Men With General Occupational Qualifications'.

Within this skilled sector security and stability may have had special significance. On the one hand men may have been led to expect stable employment and may have therefore been more likely to include considerations of security within their overall calculations of the most appropriate employment strategy. On the other hand the technical conditions of production, together with the widespread adherence to the 'last-in first-out' rule may have tended to bisect the job structure into stable and unstable parts. To this degree, then, the conditions seemed to exist in this skilled man's market for a kind of dual structure of 'more stable' and 'less stable' jobs, with those particularly wanting stable employment seeking to get out of one sector into the other.

Being situated in the stable sector effectively meant a man had more security. But instability was not necessarily synonymous with insecurity. Some men in the unstable sector at Scotswood were quite secure in the fact that they had a general skill in demand on the external market. Such men with a marketable skill could jump from employer to employer. Many of these mobile men would be 'chasing the money' and could earn high pay; but it was likely to be at the cost of working on repetitive low interest jobs at high effort, and possibly involving awkward shifts and long hours, whilst implying exclusion from promotion structures leading to staff jobs. Thus economically orientated 'chop and changers' could apparently experience work aspects characteristic of both higher paid Primary and unstable Secondary employment. The repetitive nature of the work tended to take such men out of the skilled sector proper and into the province of the semi-skilled men. Thus in respect of the two segments of our Primary workers - the skilled and semi-skilled - men from both could at times operate in the same external market.

Men would only maintain their security on the external market as long as there remained a demand for their skills. If for reasons of increasing age, technological devaluation, or an overall depression in the market, men's market position weakened, it would then be incumbent upon them to establish themselves in an engineering company's stable

protected sector. It could be in a situation where men particularly desiring stability are unable to achieve it that being situated in the unstable sector would be synonymous with insecurity.

Such men with declining market skills and not established in the stable sector would appear to be weakly attached to Primary employment in engineering. Without the power on the external market, and yet prone to suffer recurrent unemployment because of their 'last in' marginal status, possibly those men could be seen as potential Secondary sector candidates.

The most likely Secondary candidates within our samples were the older men. Such people were likely to be discriminated against within and without engineering, in and outside skilled work. Certainly there was plenty of evidence amongst our samples that older men believed themselves to be in a weaker market situation and were accepting jobs they would not have considered when younger. Within engineering there was some suggestion that such men would be offered and would accept worse jobs in smaller firms; outside of engineering, jobs such as caretakers, porters, night-watchmen, light labouring jobs, and women's jobs, were 'popular'.

The 'Primary' sector of Dual Labour Market Theory referred originally to 'semi-skilled' technologically specific occupations which provide the opportunity for hierarchical progression within an internal labour market. In Sengenberger's model such people are said to be in 'The Market For Corporation Specific Qualifications'. Conversations with men in West Newcastle suggested certain employments typical of this sector - employments such as British Telecom, British Gas, and the local power stations. These Primary employers seemed to prefer people below a certain age level.

At Tress Engineering there was an internal hierarchical progression of semi-skilled jobs offering unqualified men chances for better pay, more interesting work (relative to unskilled and women's jobs), and career advancement. But the skills and knowledge acquired were not entirely specific to the one work-place. Tress tended to have jobs occupied by people with skills described by Kreckel as 'intermediate'

i.e. neither extremely generally applicable nor entirely plant specific. The existence of a semi-skilled engineering market on Tyneside allowed workers with these skills to move between firms, should they wish to do so and general demand permitting. The 'Primary' position of those men, then, rested on the two foundations of being established well up an internal structured hierarchy and being in general demand on the external market. With the closure of Tress both these foundations were undermined for so severe became the contraction in opportunities that by the time of the follow-up interviews in June 1981 (three years after the closure) well over three quarters of the semi-skilled Tress men in our sample were no longer working in their 'trade'.

Outside of Tress and Scotswood, and other engineering companies, were the 'women's jobs'. These jobs would seem to bear features similar to those described by segmentation theorists as belonging to the Secondary sector. Certainly compared to the jobs in the engineering 'Primary' sector they seemed to be much more monotonous, low paid, with no long term career prospects. Comments certainly suggested that such work was widely seen as the least popular amongst the men and it may very well have been the case that it was left to women. It may be best to view women's factory manual work as a sub-segment of the unskilled market. Unskilled men at Tress and Scotswood seemed most likely to try it. How exclusive women's jobs would be in times of depression when men throughout the skill structure 'trade down' is uncertain. It could be the case that traditional Secondary sector occupants are joined by newcomers during times of depression who then move up and away when demand increases and the range of opportunities expand.

A Segmentation model could at least in part be accommodated within the general hierarchical/lateral framework we have presented. If any further progress is to be made with Dual Labour Market Theory and the such like, however, writers will have to come to terms with a much greater complexity than is so far assumed.

A major deficiency with various segmentation theories that divide the job structure (and normally also the labour force) into 'Primary' and

'Secondary' sectors is the vagueness of the criteria determining the analytical allocation of jobs into the two categories. More often than not writers avoid making precise distinctions and definitions and simply refer to 'Primary' jobs as 'good' jobs and 'Secondary' ones as 'bad'. Often implicit in this vagueness is a recognition that the market does not divide so nicely. In reality, as we have seen in the cases of Tress and Scotswood, there is normally in fact a complex mixture of hierarchical ordering on some aspects and in some respects, and lateral compensatory features and organisations in other respects. 'Good' and 'bad' aspects may co-exist on the same job. To further complicate matters the significance of various aspects will differ according to people's orientations, which are influenced by work and non-work factors.

The fact that evaluations of the worth of a job may vary suggests that any future attempts to categorise the job structure into segments or sectors should not be on the basis of value placed on work rewards alone. Rather, a particular distribution of work attributes should be evaluated in terms of its significance for other processes and events in society. Thus, for example, the fact that some 'women's jobs' may be attractive for some women should be related to women's position in society in and out of the formal paid work context. In this way the focus is turned on how the labour market works, and away from the original intention of those segmentation theorists who wished to explain relative deprivation amongst certain sections of the population in terms of people's confinement to 'good' or 'bad' sectors.

The need to tie in the workings of the labour market to wider social processes suggests that further illumination could come from taking a perspective that is sensitive to both work and non-work influences. Focussing on changes that occur during people's life-cycles could be fruitful. People differentially situated in their life stages are likely to have correspondingly different orientations to (and expectations of) work due to both non-work and work influences, particularly in regard to changing access to types of employment as they get older. The upshot is that a kind of life-cycle segmentation develops, both determining and reflecting experience in the market.

Thus age segmentation can develop due to changing orientations:

Outside of the work/market context marriage may induce people to become more economically conscious and/or more security conscious and adjust their work objectives accordingly; later on, when family pressures and responsibilities may have abated, the economic component in a person's orientation may lose its weight.

Inside the work/market context changing opportunities may induce the adaptation of work objectives. As people get older they may rise up an internal labour market hierarchy and specialise such that the number of employments offering rewards on the same level may diminish. Thus by increasing their skills they become less generally employable. Alternatively some men may become progressively less generally employable through a decrease in their skills caused by technological redundancy.

People tend to get less able to exert as much effort as they get older. This could be more significant in some jobs than others. Men used to working piece-work in engineering may find it increasingly difficult to keep up with the pace; such people as these and those in other high effort jobs may become more orientated towards jobs involving less effort.

Further age segmentation occurs due to the efforts of varying demand i.e. a person's age could be significant for discriminating employers.

Young persons may be preferred for jobs at the bottom of a long promotion structure i.e. men/women may be hired with an eye to future prospects. It was said that on Tyneside, for example, British Telecom preferred younger men for this reason. Positions higher up the structure would not normally be open to the external market.

Older men may be discriminated against by employers demanding high effort. Heavy labouring work or piece-work may go to younger, fitter, and - in the case of piece-work - faster individuals.



Older men may be preferred by employers requiring a stable workforce. It was said that at Tress older men could be preferred for light labouring jobs because they were less likely to move on. Also, as we mentioned earlier, there was some suggestion that within engineering some small firms offering worse pay and conditions would prefer older men because younger men, knowing that they would get better rewards elsewhere, would not stand for it.

Finally, engineering companies requiring men with particularly good knowledge and skill could prefer older men. Where a small company has insufficient demand for its products to employ men full time on specific parts of a production process it may require to hire men capable of moving from one facet of the trade to another. It could be believed - possibly correctly - that older men are more likely to have a greater depth and breadth of knowledge than younger ones.

The overall impression is that in the manual sector men's market position generally weakens with age. However in some circumstances older men may actually be preferred to younger ones and so it is clear that age is not entirely an independent determinant of employment chances. Its significance can vary according to the requirements of particular employments.

Nevertheless, independent or not, changing ages appear to be associated with changing employment chances and changing orientations to work, suggesting a kind of life-cycle segmentation. Other evidence that fortunes are liable to change according to people's positions in their life or career cycles comes from Cousins, Curran and Brown<sup>3</sup> who found that in West Newcastle it was difficult to identify a permanently consolidated disadvantaged population suffering 'inner city deprivation' because people were liable to move in and out of disadvantage at different times in their lives. Blackburn and Mann found that in Peterborough the best jobs were at the top of internal labour markets and that the men who had these jobs tended to be older; but the authors considered the apparent division between older and younger workers to be a temporary career-cycle effect, and as such was no basis for stable stratification; as they got older the younger men were likely to improve their employment position.

At Tress we found that it was younger men who tended to be at the top of the internal labour market; older men preferred to be labourers. We suggested a number of reasons for this division but we think that possibly the most determinate could be the increased effort associated with the semi-skilled piece-work jobs in the hierarchy. Thus at Tress the low rewards of labouring work - low pay per hour, low status, etc. - were compensated for by low effort. Such a compensation may only be particularly salient for older men. This Tress example suggests that career cycle or life-cycle segmentation is not in fact synonymous with career cycle stratification because this latter term implies a progressive hierarchical movement as age increases; 'segmentation' describes a situation where people's relative market position differs with age, but the emphasis is on there being a difference rather than some notion of superior or inferior position. The actual nature of the difference may vary according to circumstance.

Changing opportunities and orientations with increasing age, brought about by circumstances and behaviour both within and without the work context, help to explain people's distribution to jobs offering particular combinations of work rewards. The accent in this approach is not on evaluating or determining people's relationships to areas of the job structure distinguished and defined according to positive and negative ratings on certain work aspects; rather the emphasis is on relating people's behaviour and objectives to those aspects of the job structure of salient interest to people like them. In this view people will be pursuing, and will be distributed to, jobs evaluated not according to their 'worth' but their appropriateness. People will be situated not in 'good' or 'bad' sectors but appropriate ones.

A further deficiency of segmentation theory is its relatively inflexible stance towards change and movement. Not only is it the case that sectors may not be so neatly delineated according to good and bad features, but also movements between sectors may occur - upsetting any simple notion that life-time privilege or deprivation can be automatically read off from a person's sectoral position. To make matters worse there may be changes in the job structure and the distribution of good and bad attributes, changes in those non-work

relationships and processes inducing particular work objectives, and changes in people's orientations and job evaluations through time. Consequently there is a need to take recognisance of the fluid and contingent nature of existing patterns of organisation.

In this thesis we have tried to draw special attention to this fluidity. We lay particular emphasis on the phenomenon of orientation restructuring. The significance of the mechanism lay in the way that it facilitated movement across the job structure. We made the point that if people could be differentially orientated on dimensions such as 'security', 'job interest', 'pay' etc., such that the perspectives they took on the market and the strategies they pursued differed accordingly, this source of segmentation was likely to make matters all the more complex by the fact that orientations could at certain times be restructured. We demonstrated some of this complexity by following men through their work careers. Thus changing circumstances induced changing work objectives which in turn induced new labour market strategies. A 'chop and change' strategy, for example, could be appropriate for satisfying a strong economic work objective, but a subsequent desire to achieve security could best be met by taking an alternative course of action, such as staying immobile.

It is clear that people's orientations to work were liable to change. But not only could there be alterations in people's estimations of the sort of work they wanted, but also alterations in the sorts of work available. That is to say, the job structure could change also.

The job structure as we have seen was based on a hierarchy of skill - a hierarchy that ranged from the most repetitive, boring, 'women's work', through the unskilled jobs at Tress and Scotswood, to the semi-skilled machine jobs largely at Tress, and the highly skilled craft jobs largely at Scotswood. Alterations in (1) people's access to these skill groups, or alterations in (2) the way the work was carried out, could change the sorts of work rewards available.

(1.) Whilst there were impediments to movement between the different skill categories, nevertheless some movement did occur. Where for example men higher up the skill hierarchy had the necessary technical knowledge - if any was necessary - they could, as we mentioned earlier, 'trade down' and compete for the jobs of those below them. Also, the unskilled men could acquire in relatively short time-periods the knowledge necessary to perform some of the semi-skilled jobs. Moreover, at times some of the skilled jobs could become open to men who had not served apprenticeships.

Despite these flows across the job structure the skill groups still retained varying degrees of exclusivity. The most exclusive was the skilled tradesman's category maintained so through the fact that an apprenticeship qualification was normally necessary. Even in the semi-skilled sector at Scotswood, however, unskilled men were not always allowed by trade unions to move onto the higher grade of work; and even where it was regularly permitted, as at Tress, jobs at tops of non-skilled hierarchies could only be acquired over time and with training; consequently at any one time there would always be a number of semi-skilled jobs which untrained men could not do.

Outside of the three male preserves was the women's work. The possibility for movement between the male and female sectors is uncertain, but no woman worked on the shop floor at Scotswood and only two at Tress. The comments of the men strongly suggested that many had chosen in the past not to do women's work; but equally it was clear that rather than be unemployed most probably would accept such work; whether in times of depression, when orientations are restructured and men 'trade-down' women's work is available to all is not clear.

Impediments to movement across these skill groups could include the influence of trade union interest groups, the necessity to acquire training - actually getting access to training could therefore also be important - and the policies and recruitment practices of managers. As in the case of orientations the existence of, or nature of, these

impediments is liable to change, underlining once again the dynamic nature of the labour market.

(2) As well as the question of who should have access to which existing categories of work, there is also the question of whether changes in the social and technical organisation of production alters the nature of the jobs available. For example an increase in semi-skilled jobs could occur as part of a general simplification of skilled work. The simplification of the production process, the increase in 'dilutees', and the creation of semi-skilled internal labour markets, would be one way in which dynamic changes in the job structure could result in both changes in job attributes - a movement from interesting to less interesting (routinised) work - and a movement from lateral principles of labour market organisation (men using general skills, going from firm to firm) to a hierarchical type of organisation (men using plant specific skills).

An increase in semi-skilled work could, of course, also increase the range of jobs open to the unskilled, especially where the introduction of new technology is accompanied by flexibility agreements between management and unions permitting men to move from job to job. There was some evidence that unskilled men at Scotswood appreciated the job interest that such flexibility gave them. At Tress tradesmen opposed to the end managerial attempts to introduce flexibility.

Thus the two principles of 'who should do which jobs' and 'changes in the nature of the jobs available' can be interdependent. But whether they occur separately or combined the net effect is an alteration in the range of job types available in the market. This may affect the sorts of skills people can acquire for future use, whilst changes in the range of opportunities is likely to induce changes in work objectives and labour market strategies. The net effect is an adjustment in the complex patterning of hierarchical and lateral movement.

Finally, there can be changes in pertinent processes and relationships outside the work/market context. In particular, relationships between men and women, the way work is organised in the home, and changing

patterns of marriage and family life, will affect people's orientations towards the formal paid economy. This could have particular relevance for the development of any Secondary sector which is normally thought of as being dominated by women.

The functioning of labour markets, then, must be understood in the context of a fluid set of inter-relationships. Thus an observation of a complex hierarchical/lateral patterning, or a particular segmentation occurring, may simply be one variation of a variety of possible forms. The patterning and the market sectors or segments may change. Any development of labour market theory must allow for the transient nature of structural divisions as well as alterations in the type of hierarchical and lateral movement occurring across the job structure. If change is the norm possibly greater attention should be paid to the causes of change rather than simply the consequences.

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