A SEARCH FOR THE
UNDERCLASS

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CELLAR DWELLERS
IN
MANCHESTER, SALFORD, STOCKPORT
and ROCHDALE
1861 - 1871

by

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DECLARATION

This work is a much wider consideration of the research undertaken and presented as a dissertation presented to the University of Salford for the degree of BA in 1988. Use has also been made of my work on The Irish Cellar Dwellers of Salford, Stockport and Rochdale, 1861 - 1871, that was printed as an Occasional Paper in Politics and Contemporary History, no. 28, for the University of Salford.
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A SEARCH FOR THE UNDERCLASS

The concepts that lie behind my thesis are one of perception and reality - the perception of nineteenth century observers and the reality of the census returns.

The perceptions drawn will relate to many aspects of the underclass. The aspects will include the ethnic background, the morality, the habitation and the danger posed by the underclass to the society in which they lived. I will also consider the perceived forces that lay behind the creation of such a class.

In the first section, I will consider perceptions that have been drawn from a wide authorship. The authorship will include social novelists such as Disraeli and Elizabeth Gaskell, visitors to the north west of England - Kohl, de Tocqueville, Cook Taylor etc. I will also consider the perceptions of both newspaper reporters and professional enquirers. These works will cover a wide time scale - 1830s to 1890s. In this way we will be able to test whether the perceptions of the underclass changed, not only through authorship, but over time.

The second section - the reality section - will be based primarily on the information contained within the census enumerators' handbooks for Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale for 1861 and 1871. Use will also be made of the 1851 return. Every designated cellar dwelling and its inhabitants on the 1861 and 1871 returns has been listed and analysed. The analysis has then been compared with the perceptions, in every aspect, that have been drawn out in the first section.

In this way, I hope to test, firstly, whether an underclass did exist and,
secondly, whether it lived in the worst housing conditions to be found in some of the industrial towns of the mid-Victorian north west of England.
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INTRODUCTION

“We must avoid the creation of an underclass dependent on benefit.”
Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer,

“The poor and vicious classes have always been, and will always be, the most productive breeding ground of evil doers of all sorts; it is they whom we shall designate as the dangerous classes”
Honore Fregier,
Des classes dangereuses dans les grandes villes, 1838.

Two of the principal social consequences of industrialisation on British society were, arguably, the severing of the bonds of paternalism and deference and the growth of towns. In 1851, 54 per cent of the population of England and Wales lived in towns of over 5,000 residents compared to only 20 per cent in 1800. Over the same period of time, the population of England and Wales had increased from almost 9 million to 18 million. The population of Manchester had increased from 75,000 in 1801 to 303,000 in 1851. Less than half of the inhabitants of the great towns in 1851 had been born there.

The dramatic change in society - in the basic way of life - brought feelings of
shock, horror, amazement and curiosity. Great masses of humanity, many retaining their rural habits, were herded together, often out of sight, owing deference to no-one. The elite’s attitude of paternalism was replaced by one of ambivalence. The ambivalence of the elite was probably most strongly observed in the north west of England. The masses were needed to man the factories and to keep the frames spinning in the mills, yet they brought with them the threat of civil unrest, the threat of disease and the threat of a drain on the very profits they created. The immorality, licentiousness and drunkenness of the lower orders threatened to result in a

“huge Serborian bog........which must sooner or later swallow up the crust of our civilisation.”(2)

Paternalism had been further eroded by the New Poor Law, 1834. Himmelfarb argues that

“Where private charity created a moral bond between giver and recipient, public relief dissolved that bond.”(3)

The poor of society were perceived as falling into two groups - the deserving and the undeserving poor. The undeserving attracted various epithets that changed over time, partly according to underlying assumptions, - the dangerous classes - the submerged tenth - the ragged classes - the underclass - the residuum et al. Whatever the epithet, it was believed by ‘decent’ society that this mass of humanity was a large and growing sector of society whose moral and physical degeneration would spread rapidly and envelope, not only the deserving poor, but the honest working man and, in time, respectable society itself would be threatened.
Who were these people? We know the underclass of today. We hear about them, we read about them, we sometimes see them. They live in the worst housing conditions, frequently on run-down council estates or in neglected inner-city properties. They do not work and depend on the State for support. They take drugs or drink to excess. Many only emerge from their dwellings at night. Single women give birth to under-weight children for whom they feel little affection. These children mature almost as wild animals with little knowledge of right or wrong. They frequently absent themselves from school. At sixteen they are incapable of obtaining honest employment and follow the natural path of criminality taken by their elders. The underclass of the 1990s differ in appearance from the rest of society. They are generally smaller in stature. They are sallow-skinned with lank hair and sullen faces which show their lack of intelligence. The underclass have no stake in society and have, therefore, become alienated from that society. Society looks on helpless, feeling shock, anger and fear. The underclass are perceived almost as a race apart within our community.

The underclass of today has come under ever-increasing scrutiny because our society is facing profound changes, the most profound of which is unemployment. Unlike previous trade depressions, the unemployment of the late 1980s and 1990s is not localised geographically and is not specific to one industry. It is nationwide and across the whole economy. Unemployment, and the social consequence that flow from it, have an air of permanence. Therefore, society feels great insecurity.

Our knowledge of today's underclass is frequently 'second hand'. Few of us meet or talk to such people. Our perceptions come from newspapers, books, reports and investigations. We are aware of areas within our towns where we must
not venture, especially after dark - not because we have personally suffered injury whilst visiting such areas - but because our local newspaper is full of dramatic stories of the deviant behaviour that is ever-present in these localities. Our perception is one of a homogeneous mass that poses an ever-present threat to respectable society.

Respectable society of the mid-Victorian age gained its perception of the underclass from many of the same sources - books, newspapers, investigations and reports. The first section of this thesis is an exploration into a variety of such material in an endeavour to examine the ambivalent feelings of society and to assess where the line was drawn between that society and those it considered to be members of the underclass. We will consider, not only the thoughts of the authors, be they novelists, newspaper reporters, observers or investigators, but also the messages that would have been received from their works by the reader. We may discover differences between these sources, particularly between the novelists and the other contemporary authors. Novelists concern themselves with individuals whilst the other writers may restrict their observations to the mass.

The second section will concern itself with a review of the perceptions examined in the first section and compare these to the individual people who lived in some of the worst housing conditions to be found in Victorian towns - the cellar dwellers. Our questions will be, do any or all of the epithets and perceptions of the underclass apply to such individuals?

I have chosen to consider the cellar dwellers of four north west towns. The first town is Manchester - Shock City personified - from the turn of the century.
Manchester was second only to Liverpool in the number of cellar dwellings it contained. Manchester was an economically complex town. In the Ancoats area, for example, there were huge mills employing over 1,000 hands (A J Kidd in *Manchester* (4)). There were many smaller workshops employing less than 100 people. However, Kidd argues that the average firm had an establishment of 100-250 hands. In the other areas of the town there were gas works, iron works, canal wharves and foundries. There was a commercial sector filled with warehousing, exchanges, banks and other financial institutions at the time of my study. Manchester possessed three terminal railway stations and many fine hotels. There had been a price to pay for this extraordinary growth and enterprise. As Kidd notes

"During the first half of the nineteenth century, Manchester was one of the most overcrowded and unhealthy places in the whole of England."(5)

Across the river Irwell from Manchester lies our second town, Salford, often, mistakenly, considered to be part of Manchester but fiercely proud of its independent status. The closeness of Manchester impacted upon the economy of Salford which resulted in Salford having an industrial service sector that served, not only the cotton industry, but also the railways. Industries such as iron foundries, dye-stuff manufacturers, glue factories, soapworks, breweries, chemical works etc., were all located in Salford. It did not possess a commercial sector. Engels believed that Salford was one vast working class town that was even filthier than Manchester. It was in Salford that he discovered an old man living in a cow shed. Robert Roberts labelled Salford *The Classic Slum* (6).

The other two towns lie almost equidistant from Manchester - one to the
north and one to the south - and in many ways they were away from its sphere of influence, yet they were interdependent because of Manchester’s entrepot status. Stockport and Rochdale could be described as textile towns in the widest sense. Stockport is situated on the edge of the Cheshire plain. It was described by Engels as

"one of the darkest and smokiest holes in the whole industrial area. . . . . . . . . [it] presents a truly revolting picture. But the cottages and cellar dwellings of the workers are even more unpleasant to look at." (7)

Rochdale - in the foothills of the Pennines - does not appear to have received Engels’s close scrutiny. It was included among a list of towns that were all described as being

"huge working class communities in which cellar dwellings [were] to be found everywhere" (8)

To discover the cellar dwellers of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale, the census enumerators’ handbooks have been examined for 1861 and 1871. An analysis was then made of all the occupants living in designated cellar dwellings contained within the handbooks. The years 1861 and 1871 have been deliberately selected for two principal reasons. Firstly, this was a relatively stable economic period falling either side of the ‘cotton famine’ and after the troubled ‘hungry forties’ thus reducing the general socio-economic influences from the equation. Secondly, on a more practical level, the 1841 census returns are extremely limited in the information that they supply. For example, no family relationships were given and few female occupations were supplied. The place of birth of the
individual was restricted to 'yes' or 'no' for the local county or 'Ireland' or 'Scotland'. Furthermore, much of the 1851 census return has been damaged or destroyed, especially that which related to areas of Manchester and Salford. However, use will be made of this return where possible.

The historiography of the working classes is vast and multi-faceted. It is, however, possible to argue that there has been a commonality in the methodology adopted. Many social historians, whether considering the working classes as a whole, or as individual groups within the working class, have drawn conclusions from their own interpretations of the behaviour of the articulate, active and literate members of the working class. Methodology of this nature has two results. Firstly, it has produced a great variety of conclusions as to the desires and aspirations of the working classes and a commonality of conclusion as to the day-to-day existence of the individual members. Secondly, groups within the working class that did not produce articulate, active or literate members escaped the close scrutiny of such social historians.

It was, perhaps, H J Dyos who was the first social historian to examine the urban setting and to collate the messages that existed within it. This change can be demonstrated in the massive collection of essays that Dyos edited with Wolff - *The Victorian City*(9). Dyos attempted to separate the historian from the contemporary observer of Victorian Britain; such a separation was vital for, as Green and Parton conclude(10), the poor were perceived as an "undifferentiated mass". Despite this shift in methodology, it can be argued that few historians have looked into the face of the inarticulate or the inactive people who resided at the bottom of society.
The census returns have been used for a variety of purposes by social historians but, principally, the information has been statistical. For example, Michael Anderson, in *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (11), uses information contained within the Parliamentary Papers that are based on the census information. Anderson uses this information to compare rural Lancashire and pre-famine Ireland and considers household structure and residence patterns. W A Armstrong in *The Interpretation of the Census Enumerators' Books for Victorian Towns* (12), produces fascinating tables relating to the varying social structure within York. He considers the household structure within various social groupings, the numbers of children born to various classes etc.

Neville Kirk (13) used the census returns to trace the growth of the Irish immigrant population into the cotton industry and the establishment of Irish quarters within the towns of Stockport, Ashton and Stalybridge. David Large (14) has used the census returns to demonstrate Irish immigration, in growth and decline, into Bristol and the patterns of settlement. Frank Neale (15) and I C Taylor (16) have also used the census for "Irish" studies. Stedman Jones (17) used the census return to demonstrate occupational classification of specific districts of London. Yet others, more geographically based historians such as Richard Dennis (18), have used the census returns to demonstrate demographic movements and spacial separation of the class, which, some argue, led to the formation of respectable working class areas and the slums. As David Green, in his occasional paper *A Pauper Community in Victorian London*, writes "Geographical polarisation of the classes and the abrogation of social responsibility became pressing issues as the century progressed" (19). Although many historians have used the census returns, few, if any, have introduced their readers to any of the individuals they found listed.
there, nor have they followed the progress of such individuals over time to consider their changing life circumstances.

Housing in general, and that of the working class in particular, has exercised the talents of many historians - Burnett, Chapman, Daunton, Gauldie (20) et al. Studies have been undertaken into gridiron terraced housing patterns, lodging houses and back-to-back housing. Each author has acknowledged the presence of cellar dwellings, and each has concluded that the majority of cellar dwellings were foul, damp and disgusting holes. Many historians have concluded that cellar dwellings were a consequence of the pressure of a growing population upon the existing housing stock. Burnett considered the cellar-dwelling population of Liverpool and concluded that one eighth of the population of the town resided in cellar dwellings in 1799. Burnett also considered the size of cellar dwellings including some in Stockport. He does not, however, expand upon the variety of size, construction or distribution patterns of cellar dwellings. Furthermore, no 'housing' historian opened the door of a cellar dwelling to consider its inhabitants.

'Health' historians, such as A S Wohl, in his book *Endangered Lives* (21), reinforces the 'housing' historians view of cellar dwellings, and he notes that the respectable Victorian viewed the cellar dweller as a form of low life. Many social historians maintain that cellar dwellings were the home of the poor immigrant, principally Irish in origin, thus perpetuating the views of the contemporary observer such as Kay and Gaskell. Wohl, maintains that it was not only the poor immigrant who was forced to make his home in such a place. He argues that thousands of families lived in cellar dwellings. However, Wohl does not expand on this to
consider who these families were - where had they been born, if not Ireland - how
did they earn a living - how old were they?

Finally, there are the ‘group’ historians. Of these, the most important from
our standpoint are the historians of gender. Ivy Pinchbeck(22) drew on the
information contained within the Blue Books as did some of the social novelists
whose work we will consider in the first section. Pinchbeck also used
contemporary literature and newspapers to explore the working class family.
Wanda Neff(23) drew on similar source material. Although both Pinchbeck and
Neff explore many aspects of women’s lives, we meet few ‘real’ people.
Liddington and Norris(24) in their study of the Women’s Suffrage Movement do
introduce their readers to women through their unpublished diaries and personal
interviews. They also refer to women weavers and their role in the franchise
agitation before 1914. However, these women were both articulate and active -
not members of the mass. Few historians looked specifically at the residuum.
Himmelfarb in The Idea of Poverty(25) does refer to members of the residuum
when she considers Mayhew’s characters. However, she appears to argue that
such characters were unique to their own time and place and consequently did not
exist outside their own sphere.

F M L Thompson, in The Rise of Respectable Society, considers all groups
within Victorian Britain. He clearly separates the residuum from the rest of the
working class. He comments on this small group at home and at work, arguing
constantly that they were a minority. He argues that many historians have followed
the middle class Victorians lead in seeing all unskilled workers as members of the
feckless underclass, whereas Thompson argues that only one tenth to one third of the unskilled could be so described. Thompson also argues that many historians "rightly or righteously ....have contrived to convey the impression that the entire working class dragged out its existence in cellar dwellings"(26). Although Thompson, perhaps, came closest to the underclass, he, too, did not step over the threshold into the cellar; he, too, perceived them as a 'mass', albeit small, unwashed and brutish, a mass that as Stedman Jones points out, contemporary observers in London believed, was becoming increasingly degenerate.

M A Cowther(27) in The Workhouse System 1834-1929 does perhaps consider the individual. It is, however, possible to argue that such people did not pose a moral or health threat to society even if they were an economic drain. They were non people, confined and restricted and therefore controlled, posing little danger to the society in which they lived. Bill Fishman, in East End 1888, does step across the threshold. He does encounter 'real' people, people who lived and breathed in the East End of London. Their lives were hard and perhaps brutish in the eyes of many contemporary observers. However, through Fishman's treatment of his material, we see that few of these people were members of the underclass.

More recently there has been a concentration on working class culture, probably starting with Standish Meacham(28) and more recently, Joanne Bourke(29). However, from my researches into secondary literature, it would appear that, with a few notable exceptions, only the active, articulate or literate members of the working class have been considered in depth. The existence of an underclass has been simply acknowledged. The picture painted of the cellar dweller is not a picture of the respectable working class. At best, cellar dwellings
were perceived as housing the old who were one step away from the workhouse or
the immigrant. At worst cellars were the dens of the underemployed, the feckless
or the totally degenerate - the underclass. The purpose of this study is to step
across the threshold of the cellar - to go further than Burnett and to consider the
cellar's size, construction and location. I wish to take similar steps to those taken
by Fishman and to look into the faces of the cellar dwellers in Manchester, Salford,
Stockport and Rochdale and to follow some of these individuals over time and to
adjudge whether they conformed to the perceptions of the underclass.

We will start our search for the people of the mid Victorian underclass with
the social novel.
INTRODUCTION - References


CHAPTER 1

THE SOCIAL NOVELIST’S PERCEPTION

Let us start with an overview. Cazamian(1) described the social novel as a novel with a purpose. It was, perhaps, the Chartists who gave it such purpose. Martha Vicinus(2), in her chapter entitled *Chartist Fiction and the Development of Class-Based Literature*, argues that the Chartist novelist insisted on a better future through self-help and education whilst reminding the ‘better off’ of their obligations to the ‘respectable poor’.

Unitarian novelists such as Harriet Martineau - a devotee of the Ricardo theory - sought to convince the worker “of the wisdom of a policy of laissez-faire”(3). Indeed, when the hero of her *A Manchester Strike* had fallen into the ranks of the underclass, he remained respectable by accepting the situation as “God’s will”. The novel ends on a common theme - that of master and man working cheerfully together.

Many social novelists relied on the Blue Books for their knowledge of the conditions endured by the industrial worker. Blue Books were data produced by Parliamentary Commissioners. One such novelist was Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna. From the information she gleaned from the Blue Books Ms Tonna argued that

> “hunger could induce, not only a spirit of revolt, but also total extinction of any sense of values so that a man can be reduced to a bestial state in his fight for survival.”(4)

In her novel *Helen Fleetwood*, Tonna’s portrayal of the Wright family demonstrates how life circumstances can destroy all human feelings. The factory system destroyed the Wright family in less than twelve months.
Geraldine Endsor Jewsbury lived in Manchester from 1812 to 1854. She saw and described the unhealthy conditions suffered by the mill workers. In her novel *Marion Withers*, she depicted the slums of Manchester as an underworld peopled by a potentially violent mass. The streets of this underworld were "loathsome" and stinking. Jewsbury described the cellar dwellings of Manchester as being the homes of

"thieves, wretched women, ruffians, the off-scourings of the worst class."(5)

In her novel, Jewsbury points clearly to the dichotomy between the hand and the master, the one possessing barbaric strength in need of education, the other an educated philanthropic manufacturer. They both needed each other to prosper.

Finally, there were the social novels of the 'visitor' such as Charles Dickens. *Hard Times(*) was first published in Household Words in 1858 and was his only novel set in an industrial area. It can be argued that the scenes he had witnessed in both Manchester and Preston were alien to his day-to-day experiences in London. Keating argues that

"Dickens's close relationship with his readers led him, too often, to compromise and refine the social truth of his fiction."(6)

For whatever reason, the hero of *Hard Times* was the epitome of the deserving poor. Stephen Blackpool does not belong to a Trades Union. He takes his


See also Kovacevic for a critical comparison of Dickens and Harriet Martineau
problems to his master even wiping the brass door knob with his sleeve. Blackpool is morally correct in that he does not consummate his love for Rachel. It is Mrs Blackpool who is the undeserving, the underclass model. She is steeped in vice, she is filthy, she is a drunkard and it is she that brings about Stephen’s tragedy.

From this very brief overview of the social novel it is clear that the choice is not only vast but various. Any selection is problematical. I have selected six novelists who reflect a similar variety of approach to the works discussed above. The novelists are Benjamin Disraeli, the Young England Tory whose information was based on the Blue Books, Elizabeth Gaskell, a Unitarian liberal who spent her adult life in Manchester, Mrs Linneus Banks, who spent her childhood in Manchester, Margaret Harkness, a socialist and feminist who visited Manchester, and, finally, Alfred Alsop and Silas K Hocking who shared a religious salvation ideal.

These novels span a wider time scale than the second part of this thesis and it may be possible to detect a change stimulated by the external factor of time itself. We will attempt to define each author’s perception of the underclass, what danger such a class posed and whether each author could offer a solution to the ills he perceived in society. We will also consider how far the varying backgrounds and experiences of each author created elements of variety within those perceptions. The social novelists concentrated on individuals. They created these individuals to depict their vision, either of the heroic poor, striving against their life circumstances, or to depict their vision of the underclass. These fictionalised individuals, the heroic and the underclass, varied in their nature. However, it can be argued that use of such characters in a study of this nature is valid, as the novel
is one element, one part of the jigsaw, that created the perception, held by respectable Victorian society, of the poor and the underclass.

I

*Coningsby* (1844), *Sybil* (1845) and *Tancred* (1847) formed the Young England trilogy of novels by Benjamin Disraeli. *Sybil* attracted the sub-title *Two Nations*, a phrase used by W B Ferrand, a friend of Disraeli, in a speech at the Manchester Corn Exchange in 1843. The novel was written as a didactic work on the 'Hungry Forties'.

The two-nation theme of *Sybil* was clearly marked at the outset in an encounter between Egremont, the noble hero of the novel, and Morley, a radical journalist. In a discourse relating to the state of the nation, Morley argued that there were, in reality, two nations that existed in parallel, each with no knowledge of, no intercourse with and no sympathy towards, the other. One was the nation of the Rich, the other was the nation of the Poor. It was between these two parallel planets that Egremont wandered.

The town of Marney is the paradigm of an 1840s town. It had grown rapidly, its inhabitants having been forced to leave their estate cottages which had been neglected and destroyed by the estate owners. From afar, Marney had a pleasant aspect but this external beauty hid a diseased heart. The dwellings of the poor had become a breeding ground for typhus and malaria.

Mowbray was another town that had grown haphazardly. Its population
swarmed into courts and cul-de-sacs that had narrow entrances which gave the appearance of hives. Into these streets, ascending...

"from their dark and dismal dwellings the subterraneous nation of cellar dwellers poured forth."(7)

In a few short pages, Disraeli points us to the many ills created by such places. One such ill was that children no longer respected their parents. They found work at an early age and were soon paid sufficiently to set up their own establishment, leaving the care of their parents to others. Young people such as these had little thought of tomorrow, they wasted their earning on drink at ‘The Temple’.

It is in Mowbray that we first encounter Devildust, the very essence of a slum child. His companions may have been bred in the swarming courts of Mowbray but Devildust’s roots belonged to another, almost unseen, world. Devildust’s mother was a factory worker who had put him out to a nurse in order that she could return to her work. The nurse fed him on laudanum which prepared him for “the silence of [his] impending grave”.

Devildust’s mother disappeared when he was two years old and his early life was spent on the streets. He grew stunted and pale yet he survived defying "even the fatal fever which was the only inhabitant of his cellar that never quitted."(8)

Devildust eventually found work in a factory. His name came from the dusty conditions found inside the factory. He was a good worker and soon he learnt to read and write at the factory school. He became a leading member of the Literary and Scientific Institute - not wasting his time drinking at The Temple.

We see in Disraeli’s commentary on Devildust’s life an understanding and a
sympathy, almost an admiration, for the individual. However, the individual is one who, through his own efforts and despite his appalling start, has become an acceptable member of society and an example to others.

If Devildust’s early life was a personification of the underclass, a third town, Wodgate, was the bricks and mortar. Wodgate had grown from a squatter camp into a town of brass founders and steel workers. The name Wodgate had been derived from Woden emphasizing the town’s heathen qualities. Wodgate was home to

“swarming thousands, lodged in the most miserable tenements in the most hideous burgh in the ugliest county in the world.”(9)

The people of Wodgate only laboured for four days each week - the other three being spent in a drunken stupor. It was only the fact that they were physically weak that prevented total vice. Disraeli argues that such people were not immoral - immorality suggested a degree of knowledge. The inhabitants of Wodgate were as animals and, as such, they were without conscience - they acted on impulse or instinct. The ignorant animals of Wodgate inhabited cellars that were to be found secreted away down filth-filled alleys

“whose exhalations are sufficient to taint the atmosphere of the whole kingdom and fill the country with fever and pestilence.”(10)

The country was not only threatened by disease from Wodgate. At one point the ‘Hell Cats’ of Wodgate rose up.

“They destroyed and ravaged, sacked and gutted houses; plundered cellars..........destroyed gas works that the town at night might be in darkness.”(11)

Disraeli did not allow his noble hero Egremont to descend into Wodgate. It
was the radical journalist Morley, who met two of the inhabitants. The girl was physically deformed due to her working conditions. She had been baptised but was totally confused when questioned on Christianity believing that Pontius Pilate was “our Saviour”. The man was haggard well beyond his age and he bore the scars of many beatings inflicted by his master. Disraeli found little in these two members of the underclass to attract him. He called for no sympathy and, indeed, the girl’s confusion and physical appearance were described in a way that would repel the reader.

Disraeli argues that Wodgate existed because it lacked a middle class example in that there were no schools, churches, Town Halls, magistrates, no municipality. When left to their own devices, the people who formed the lowest level of society reverted to their base animalistic instincts. Clearly Disraeli was regretting the break in the chain of paternalism and deference - a point that was emphasized when he took Egremont to Mr Trafford’s village.

Mr Trafford possessed Old English feelings. He believed that between master and man “there should be other ties than the payment and receipt of wages”. Trafford had provided his workers with a safe, light and well-ventilated factory. In the factory, children worked under the eyes of their parents, the parents under the eye of a supervisor ensuring proper behaviour. Trafford provided homes with gardens, public baths and a church for the workers. Disraeli stresses that the closeness of employer to employee brought order. The people were healthy and well-dressed and women were held in proper regard.

It is clear that the people of Mowbray had not attained the higher ideals of
the Trafford villages nor had they sunk to the animalisation depths of Wodgate inhabitants. Why was this? The people of Mowbray lived, after all, in cellars, in teeming alleys. They were drunkards, they had ungrateful children. They saw many of their children die in infancy. All were poor and many of them were on the brink of destitution. What separated them from their Wodgate neighbours was their willingness to help themselves, be it through Chartism, the Institute or even a Trades Union. Furthermore, within Mowbray there were strong feelings of class solidarity. They cared deeply about the problems of one another - feelings that were totally absent from the people of Wodgate. Despite its horrors, Disraeli saw Mowbray as a place fit for, not only Egremont to visit, but he also allowed his heroine, Sybil to venture forth onto its streets.

Disraeli’s portrayal of Sybil reflects the Victorian romanticism of gracious womanhood. Contrasts are sharply drawn between her almost etherial qualities and those of the women workers whose language would shame some men. Such women replaced their menfolk in the factory, deserting hearth, home and their children. Women such as these were unnatural creatures. Disraeli believed that they did not grieve for their dead children, on the contrary, many committed infanticide for the money from the burial club.

It can be argued that in the novel Sybil Disraeli was describing three nations, not two, the Rich - the world of Egremont and his family, the Poor - the world of Mowbray and the underclass world of Wodgate. From Wodgate came danger, not only of disease but of riot - a threat to society as a whole. There was no hope for Wodgate or its people. There is hope for Mowbray. That hope does not come from the rich landowning class but from the middle class - the factory owner -
working closely with the worker. Trafford, although possessing Old English feelings, is an example of the newly emerging middle class. This class must not separate itself from the workers as the rich had done by sacking the estate workers' cottages. By living close to his workers, his good example will be followed. When Disraeli raises the eyes of his readers from the seething, threatening mass to the individual, Devildust, he calls forth their sympathy and admiration. This individual had, through his own efforts, risen above the mass. Such individualisation is a common theme in many social novels. The author appreciated that a reader can empathise with an individual and can realise that they, the mass, are individuals. If society does not follow the Trafford example, Mowbray and all the Devildusts it contained would sink into the mire of the underclass.

R A Butler, in his introduction to Sybil, argues that one should not expect answers from novels such as Sybil; they simply draw our attention to faults within society. He does, however, argue that books like Sybil had more influence on public opinion than descriptions of working class life in Mrs Gaskell's Mary Barton and North and South to which we now turn.

II

Mary Barton or, A Tale of Manchester Life (1848), was Elizabeth Gaskell's first social novel. It was written shortly after the death of one of her children. Mrs Gaskell had been born in the country town of Knutsford, Cheshire, and had spent her school days in Stratford-upon-Avon. She had a deep love of the countryside. Following her marriage, she moved to Manchester where her husband was the
pastor at Cross Street Chapel in the centre of the town.

Once she had recovered from what must have been an appalling shock, she began to empathise with the people around her. *Mary Barton* was not written as a political polemic nor was Mrs Gaskell writing to further her religious beliefs. She “approaches the problem from the proletarian point of view”. (12) The novel can be seen on two levels. Firstly, it is a plea for sympathy and for understanding of the working classes and a strong criticism of the factory owners. Secondly, it clearly demonstrates the fear held by the middle classes - a fear of the threat posed by Chartism, Trades Unions and by Communism. The people Elizabeth wrote about were the people she knew - both masters and men. The homes she described were the homes she visited.

The novel opens with the Bartons and their friends the Wilsons enjoying the countryside of Greenheys. For a moment they are free from the filth, pollution and misery that surround them at home. The Barton home, though modest and situated in a back street in Manchester, was cheerfully furnished and Mrs Barton’s pride and joy - her crimson tea caddy - her collection of crockery and glass were all displayed. This cheerful home is soon destroyed. Mrs Barton and her new baby died for want of care and, one by one, the tea caddy, the crockery, the glasses disappear re-enforcing the image of John Barton’s misery and drawing the pity from the reader.

John Barton’s descent from decent working man to murderer started with the death of his wife and child. He was poor and could not provide what they needed. Those who could provide - the rich- would not
......it's the poor and the poor only as does such things for the poor. Don't think to come over me with the old tale that the rich know nothing of the trials of the poor. I say if they don't know they ought to. We're their slaves as long as we can work, we pile up their fortunes with the sweat of our brows and yet we are to live as separate as if we were in two worlds.(13)

This is an echo of Disraeli's two-nation theme.

John Barton became the living form of the fear held by the middle classes. He becomes a Chartist, a Trades Unionist and a Communist, "all that is commonly called wild and visionary".(14) Barton's faith in the rich, the mill owners, had been destroyed but his faith in the Monarchy remained. He was selected to present a Chartist petition to the Queen and he set off in high hopes only to return in raging desperation.

The textile industry was in a slump. Men were laid off or working short time. Carson, the mill owner, had cut the wages of his workforce in an attempt to save his business from the threat posed by foreign competition. However,

"the employers are too arrogant to explain their conduct, they simply impose their will. Misunderstanding divides the classes and hatred grows out of mutual ignorance."(15)

In retaliation, the union calls a strike. Carson's son, the epitome of the idle rich, rides past the striking workforce and mocks the starvation that is etched on their faces. The strike leaders hold a secret meeting at which an oath of vengence is sworn. Lots are drawn to select the assassin and John Barton is chosen as the one to avenge his class on the hated symbol of the rich, Carson's son.

We can see clearly in Mrs Gaskell's writings the ambivalent feelings held by
the middle classes of the time. On the one hand, she is pleading for understanding between the classes, or at least a dialogue between them. On the other hand, she demonstrates the horror of the fearful secrecy of organisations such as the Trades Unions. Trades Unions are depicted as tyrannical - they force workers to join - and barbaric when they face strike breakers. Unions can also be evil. They can force one of their number to commit the ultimate sin of murder. It is the secrecy of such organisations that posed the greatest threat to the prevailing social order.

Barton, and his friend Wilson, demonstrate class solidarity in a more acceptable form. Cazamin writes that

"no scene in any novel of the time........more powerfully evokes the conditions of social distress than that in which Barton and Wilson go to the aid of their comrade Davenport's family."(16)

Davenport had been laid off from Carson's mill. He had succumbed to fever. The Davenport family had sunk to the lowest level and home was now a cellar in Berry Street in the London Road area of Manchester. Berry Street was foul and littered with every kind of filth imaginable. Barton and Wilson called on the family to see what help they could offer. They descended the steps from the street to the door of the cellar. The street was one foot above their heads. Inside the cellar was very dark

"the smell was so footed as almost to knock the two men down. Quickly recovering themselves, as those inured to such things do, they began to penetrate the thick darkness of the place and to see three or four little children rolling on the damp, nay wet, brick floor through which the stagnant, filthy moisture of the street oozed up.

The back cellar had no window, only a grating down which dropped the moisture from pig sties and worse abominations. It was not paved, the floor was one mass of bad smelling mud. It had never been used for there was not an article of furniture in it. nor could a

26
human being, much less a pig, have lived there many days." (17)

By individualising the out-of-work and the destitute in the form of Davenport and his family, Mrs Gaskell - as Disraeli - raises her readers’ eyes from the undeserving mass. Davenport was deserving, he was not to blame for his circumstances, he therefore deserves our sympathy.

Mrs Gaskell mixed not only with the Davenports of her world. Many industrialists would have been within her circle of friends. Hence, Carson, the mill owner, was not a one-dimensional character. He had risen from humble origins through his own efforts. However, he had made his home away from the smoke and grime of Manchester. The move away from his workers is symbolic. He had separated himself from them. Again, Mrs Gaskell is echoing Disraeli. The separation of master and men is reinforced when Wilson asked Carson for a hospital ticket for Davenport. Carson had no knowledge of Davenport even though he had worked in his mill for three years - “I don’t pretend to know the names of the men I employ, that I leave to the overlooker.” (18)

Mrs Gaskell was also concerned to demonstrate to her readers that the slum dwellers were all individuals. She introduced them to Alice Wilson who lived in a clean, cheerful cellar. Alice was a washerwoman who supplemented her income with herbalism. There was Job Legh who read philosophy, biology and mathematics. Job was intended to demonstrate that intelligence existed in the slums.
If Alice Wilson and Job Legh are the bright side of slum life, there is another
darker side. Mrs Gaskell describes the descent of Esther, Barton's sister-in-law.
Esther had been a beautiful country girl who worked in a Manchester factory. She
had earned sufficient money to maintain herself but had spent it recklessly on
dresses and night life "when honest women are in their beds". Esther is eventually
seduced by a soldier who, after three years and the birth of a child, abandons her.
The child ill and, after selling all she owns, Esther sells herself on the streets to buy
medicine for the child but all in vain. The child dies and Esther has become an
alcoholic.

Once again, in Esther's story, Mrs Gaskell is reflecting Disraeli's reservations
concerning the rates of pay that bring about a too-early independence in the youth
of the 1840s. Furthermore, Mrs Gaskell, again as Disraeli, was gravely concerned
about a factory system that replaced male workers with female workers. This
concern was expressed again through an individual's experience. Mrs Wilson had
worked in a factory since she was five years old and had become maimed through
an accident at work. Because her early life had been spent in the factory, she had
no knowledge of housekeeping. She believed that married women should remain
at home. Mrs Wilson maintained that men, whose wives went out to work, were
driven to seek refuge in the public house. The public house was warm, clean and
bright. The home of a working woman was dirty, unwelcoming and without a fire.
The working mother acted unnaturally when she placed her children 'out at nurse'.

Throughout the novel *Mary Barton*, Mrs Gaskell was making a very strong
plea for an understanding between the classes. Her plea was encapsulated in a
classic death bed reconciliation between the dying John Barton and the grieving Carson. She was also making a plea for legislative intervention in factory conditions and female labour. If her two pleas went unheeded, more John Bartons would rise and take the matter into their own hands and they would have good cause as society and the system had failed them.

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It can be argued that Mary Barton painted a picture of friction between capital and labour. In North and South (1854-5), Mrs Gaskell contrasted two life style patterns - the old agrarian ways of the South with the coarser life of the industrial North. The reason for this change in style may lie in the events that took place during the six year period of their writing. The events in Paris in 1848 had reverberated on the social order in England and there was an unspoken fear that it could happen here. Cazamian maintains that

"The tone of philanthropic literature after 1850 was different from what it had been before."(19)

It could also be argued that, on a more personal level, the squalor and starvation that had so shocked Mrs Gaskell on her arrival in Manchester had lost their bitter edge.

The heroine of North and South is Margaret Hale. Her father had been a country vicar in Helston. However, he developed grave doubts about the Church of England and his role within it. The family move to the northern industrial town of Milton. In Milton, the sky is the colour of lead, the streets are packed with traffic, there are row upon row of small brick houses and factories whose chimneys
belched out "unparliamentary smoke".

The streets of Milton swarm with people, especially with mill workers two or three times a day. The girls were rough and the men rude. On one of her excursions, Margaret Hale becomes acquainted with a middle-aged, care-worn man. She had seen him around Milton with a sickly looking girl. Margaret picks some flowers and gives them to her 'humble friends', thus North and South meet. These humble friends are Nicholas Higgins and his daughter Bessy.

The mill owner in *North and South* is Thornton. He, like Carson in *Mary Barton*, had risen from humble origins. Thornton’s family had suffered the social stigma of bankruptcy a generation before and he has dedicated himself to regain social acceptance and to rid the family name of the shame. Unlike Carson, Thornton has remained, his home was in the mill yard. However, Gaskell implies that he was still separated from his workers. Thornton believed that any man, through hard work and decent behaviour could rise

"it may not be always as a master, but as an overlooker, a cashier, a book-keeper, a clerk, one on the side of authority and order."(20)

The strong implication of this statement is that those who do not rise bring chaos and, as such, are dangerous and undeserving. They have turned their backs on what society had to offer them.

Thornton, like Carson, cut the workers wages with no explanation. It was his capital and he could choose what to do with it. A strike is called and Thornton brings in Irish knobsticks, blacklegs and strike breakers to work the mill. The use of cheap and docile Irish labour was an important factor in the social history of
Lancashire at the time of the novel. It was believed that, because they were docile and probably starving, these knobsticks would turn their hand to anything. Thornton soon regretted his action as the knobsticks were totally unskilled mill workers.

Higgins, Margaret's humble friend, is a union committee man and it is the relationship between Higgins and Thornon that is the essence of the novel. Bessy Higgins is dying, poisoned by 'fluff on the lung' as a result of her employment in the carding room of the mill. Gaskell comments, through Bessy, that it was possible to install an extractor system in the carding room to alleviate the fluff but this was expensive and labour was cheap. Despite his hardships, Higgins, unlike John Barton in *Mary Barton*, does not grow bitter. He does, however, share Barton's commitment to his fellow man, a commitment that was sorely tested.

Boucher, a neighbour of Higgins, was an unskilled man with a large family. He exasperated Higgins by his "want of spirit". Boucher blames the union for his misery whilst Higgins argues that the union will care for him and his family. Boucher maintains that the union is tyrannical and he leaves to beg for work. Bessy admits to feeling angry with Boucher and his wife. They appeared feckless and unable to manage. However, she argues, he was still a man and -- "if sorrow comes to them they love, it hurts 'em as sore as e'er it did Soloman."(21)

The strike committee decided to uphold the law of the land. They wished to prove that union members were steady, thoughtful men, good hands and good citizens. They attempted to talk the Irish out of Thornton's mill. However, matters got out of hand and Boucher was blamed. Higgins threatened to inform
the authorities to keep the union’s good name intact. This testimony to a trades union appears to be a volte-face by Mrs Gaskell when we consider her attitude as expressed in *Mary Barton*.

The union does not, however, totally escape criticism. It is implied that men, even men like Boucher, were forced to join the union. Non-union men found themselves ostracized at the work place. The union was portrayed as tyrannical and although this tyranny does not result in murder, there is an implication that the union was responsible for Boucher’s suicide.

In *North and South* the reader is introduced to the more undeserving poor. Boucher’s problems stemmed from his own character weaknesses but, as an individual, he was still a man who could feel pain. However, Gaskell’s description of the streets during the strike gave a message of threat.

“There was no sound, no steam engine at work......no click of machinery......but far away, the ominous gathering roar, deep...... clamouring.”(22)

On the streets were

“unusual loiterers.......the more ill-looking of men - the discreditable minority - hang about on the steps of beerhouses and gin shops.”(23)

The principal protagonists in *North and South*, Thornton, the individualist and Higgins, the collectivist, do move closer together. Their relationship echoes that of Traffords in Disraeli’s *Sybil* in that it becomes beyond a mere “cash nexus”.

There are clear differences between the novels *May Barton* and *North and
Principal amongst these is the lack of an underclass in *Mary Barton*. All the characters, excepting Carson's son, demand sympathy and many demand admiration. Even the crime of John Barton and the shame of Esther were not without reason. In *North and South*, Boucher is a most unsympathetic character but his death at his own hands goes some way to redeem his character. The mob of loiterers are, however, clearly the underclass, ugly, lazy and feckless and present within a society of hard working, steady mill hands. The common theme of *Mary Barton* and *North and South* was clear and unequivocal as it was in *Sybil* - master and men should be close together for the benefit of all. Was this the message of our next social novel - *The Manchester Man*?

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Mrs Linnaeus Banks was born Isabella Varley in 1821 in Oldham Street, Manchester. She lived in Manchester until 1846 and left for good in 1848. Mrs Banks was an inhabitant of the same Manchester as Engels, Kay et al and yet, in her many annotations and notes, her Manchester was a world away from their disease and poverty-ridden streets. At one point during her childhood in Manchester she lived in Red Bank, a short distance from Allens Court. In this court, fourteen people died of cholera within forty eight hours. Mrs Banks was aged twelve at the time and, yet again, no mention was made of this incident in any of her works. Throughout her life Mrs Banks prided herself on her powers of observation and her inquisitive nature. It would therefore have been almost impossible for her to deny knowledge of the squalor that lay close by.
The reason for her 'ignorance' may lie in the fact that Manchester was the scene of her childhood and, hence, all she witnessed was 'normal'. Furthermore, she may have succumbed to the temptation to look back with affection, disregarding the underside. Other of our authors, Mrs Gaskell for example, were regarding the scene with adult eyes.

_The Manchester Man_ is the most renowned novel written by Mrs Banks in 1875. It is primarily an historical novel but the underlying message is a testament to the doctrine of self-help. Thomas argues that

"The Manchester Man as an historical novel is part of the process by which the past came to be understood in late Victorian England. The analysis is inevitably presented in the context of an exceptional individual experience and of the process of upward mobility." (24)

In the opening chapter of the novel Mrs Banks confirms that she was aware of some of the hovels that lined the steep banks of the Irk. It is the Irk in flood that is the starting point of the novel. With almost biblical significance, a child, in its cradle, is rescued from the flood waters by Simon Clegg, a tanner. The tannery master witnessed the rescue but Clegg refused the proffered reward - he was only doing his duty - to receive money for saving a child's life would have been against his conscience. The child, later to be christened Jabez Clegg, is fostered by Clegg's daughter, Bess.

The Clegg's home was situated in a court that was approached by a dark passage only a few feet wide. The court had been hewn into the natural rock. In the sunken basement of the house, a tripe boiler follows his trade. The Clegg's home consisted of three rooms, two that overlooked the river and the fields beyond and a kitchen that overlooked the yard of the court. Bess worked as a 'batter' at
home, that is, she would turn and beat raw cotton. Mrs Banks owns that this was not a healthy occupation and that the house was filled with cotton dust. However, when Bess took her cotton to the factory every Saturday morning, she returned to polish and mop the whole house until it shone. What is more, she sang whilst she cleaned! Bess had taken over the household on the death of her mother and provided a good home for her father. Simon Clegg, though shrivelled of skin,

"was a staunch 'Church and King' man and, as a natural consequence, a stout upholder of their ordinances."(25)

Bess had a sweetheart, Tom Hulme, who had joined the Lancashire Volunteers and had been stationed in Ireland for three years amongst those 'wild Irish men'. Tom returns home and seeks his sweetheart. The Cleggs had left Skinners Yard not willingly "contrary to the roving habits of ordinary weekly tenants". The gossips of the New Court inform Tom that Jabez is actually Bess's love child. Tom was so shocked he almost fainted. He was disgusted as he had heard her singing "unconscious or reckless of her degredation". Tom had only been a hand loom weaver and was but a private in his regiment

"but he had a soul as constant in love, as sensitive to disgrace, as the proudest officer in the corps".(26)

The novel traces Jabez's rise from the river bed to riches. The rise is possible because of his loving home, hard work, education - he was selected for the Blue Coat School - and his bravery. In this way his life becomes meaningful - he had been tested and had shown himself worthy. Mrs Banks confirmed the status achieved by Jabez Clegg in that she no longer wrote his speech in dialect.

It can be argued that the reader of The Manchester Man would not be able to truly appreciate the rise of Jabez Clegg if it were not for the comparison Mrs
Banks drew between the deserving and the undeserving poor. We encounter the undeserving poor in Shudehill Market.

There had been a distribution of food and drink in celebration of the Coronation. The distribution to the poor had taken place in Shudehill. The scene that faced Jabez resembled Hogarth's *Gin Lane*. The people fought like dogs, snatching food from anyone weaker than themselves. Food was trampled underfoot and the streets ran with ale. Jabez's eyes were shocked by the scene of unimaginable grossness, his ears were assailed with the foul language.

"Children, men and women, their clothes torn or disarranged, lay singly or in groups on the paths or in the gutters...drunk, sick, helpless, exposed......there were loaves in the gutters and meat trampled in the mire, food which, properly distributed, would have gladdened many a poor, hard-working family too self-respecting to join that clamorous mob."(27)

It could perhaps be argued that, by painting the picture of debauchery so graphically, Mrs Banks was critical of the principle of charity. The food and drink has been thrown to the mob rather than into the hands of the deserving poor - so deserving that they would not shame themselves by admitting their poverty and going to the distribution. Was Mrs Banks arguing that the prevailing climate of both charity and the Poor Law system encouraged the undeserving to wallow further in the mire of their own making?

The Shudehill rabble was certainly the symbol of the chaos that threatened society, but the only solution offered by Mrs Banks was one of temperance. The deserving poor, as symbolised by the Clegg family, actually refused reward for "for doing their duty". Jabez did receive charity - he was elected to the Blue Coat
School, a charitable endowment of Humphrey Cheetham. His election was not freely given, Jabez had to prove his worth, that he was of

"honest, industrious parents and neither illegitimate nor diseased and baptismal registers had to be produced". (28)

The message of The Manchester Man would appear to be - give charity selectively and with great care to the individual and not to the mass or the mob, they were undeserving animals.

IV

If The Manchester Man was a novel of ascent, A Manchester Shirt Maker is a novel of descent. The author was Margaret Harkness. She was born in Worcestershire in 1854, the daughter of an Anglican priest. As such, she had a sheltered upbringing. On her mother’s side of the family she was related to Beatrice Potter (later Webb) and it was through this family link that Margaret Harkness gained her personal liberation. In the early 1880s she became interested in the problems of the East End of London. She also became attracted to Socialism and developed friendships with Eleanor Marx and Annie Besant. Her first social novel, A City Girl was published in 1887. This novel grew out of her belief in the Salvation Army as the only organisation that was prepared to help the underprivileged. Although she lived most of her life in London, she did visit Manchester for a short period of time. A Manchester Shirt Maker, published in 1890, was her response to what she witnessed in Manchester. It was written under the pseudonym of John Law.
Although Margaret Harkness’s visit to Manchester was brief, her descriptions of Manchester slum life - the streets and the conditions found there - are both graphic and authentic. On the very first page of the novel she notes that Manchester lay under

“a thick yellow-grey mist. Through the mist, the street lamps looked like the eyes of a man suffering from jaundice." (29)

Even snow cannot bring a white, clean appearance to such streets as it falls onto the mud.

Harkness notes the sharp social divisions amongst those who people the streets. The charlady considers herself superior to the old match seller - the hawker, with a barrow, is above the blind organ grinder. There are factory girls who roam the streets eating black puddings trying to ‘pick up’ young men. The social divisions between one group of workers and another carried over into the playgrounds of the board school with the child of a tradesman looking down on the child of a labourer. Miss Harkness writes that unless one had lived in Manchester such a powerful class distinction would be very difficult to comprehend.

The focus of the novel is Mary Dillon. Like Jabez Clegg, she had been ‘found’. She had been abandoned in a Catholic Church. Unlike Jabez, no warm and loving family awaited her - the priest delivered her up to the workhouse. There, Mary Dillon was trained in domestic service and, whilst working as a servant, she met and married John Dillon. John was an impulsive, simple-natured man and clearly her social superior - he was a tradesman and she a pauper servant.

Despite strong family disapproval, the couple were happy and contented together until John had an accident at work. He was brought home from the
hospital a cripple and soon he dies. Mary now has a child to support. Her husband's family refused to accept the "workhouse brat". Mary cannot find work and she is forced to pawn her furniture.

Her descent begins and she is forced to leave her home and take up residence in Angel Meadow.

"Why the worst slum in Manchester is called by this name, it is not easy to imagine." (30)

Mary's neighbours in Angel Meadow spend most of their time discussing the events in Strangeways Prison. They have a morbid fascination for the place. The women of Angel Meadow are described as having matted hair and bloated features, the men as being besotted with drink and strangely silent. Angel Meadow itself was full of lodging houses that charged 3d - 4d per night for a bed and

"women can get a bed if they are supposed to be married." (31)

Mary Dillon's home in Angel Meadow was a back-to-back cottage, that is, one without a rear entrance. In this house that she shared with rats and mice, Mary had a table, a couple of chairs and her child's cradle. In the good times her husband has bought her a sewing machine and she had struggled to keep it hoping to make her living as dressmaker. However, her neighbours had little need of her talents as they always patronised the second-hand clothes market.

In desperation, Mary seeks work as a shirt-maker in Salford. Harkness describes Salford as being peopled with the victims of Mammon. She argues that the temples to Mammon had been constructed in Manchester - Mammon was the Manchester deity. The residents of Salford did not, however, suffer long in their
appalling town - they were

“hatched, matched and despatched at the shortest possible notice. Nowhere is the death rate so high as it is in Manchester, for the god of Mammon has a voracious appetite and, above all things, he loves to devour children.”(32)

Mary’s potential employer in Salford had committed suicide. In her description of the scene that faced Mary at the man’s home, Harkness demonstrated keenly her belief in the failure of the established church. The curate had no comfort to offer the dead man’s wife and her six children. He was more suited to polite chatter at garden parties. The curate pontificated that the lack of work was God’s will and that to “rush uncalled into his maker’s presence was most presumptuous.” Harkness argues that, if the roles had been reversed, if the curate had a wife, six children, no rich relations, no friends, no education and no work, he too would have succumbed to despair.

Mary next seeks work in a factory in Great Ancoats Street that employed over two hundred shirt-makers. Whilst she is in the factory, a man is verbally assaulted by a woman. Joseph Cohen was a despised “sweater” who paid starvation wages, thus threatening the factory shirt-makers’ livelihoods. In her description of Cohen and his wife, Harkness displayed a degree of racial prejudice that is surprising given her commitment to the East End of London and its people. Cohen is the despised sweater and, although born and bred in Manchester and able to speak the Lancashire dialect, he “preferred a sort of heathen gibberish”. Furthermore, when Mary seeks work with Cohen he cheats her out of the only money she possessed.

Having no money to pay her rent, Mary is forced to sever her last links with
respectability - she sells her sewing machine. In her destitution, Mary’s one thought is for her child. She is determined that her child will never be labelled “workhouse brat”. Mary tries to buy some “Dovers Powder” from the chemist. He recommends strong soup. Mary steals the powder and kills her child. “Better a painless death than a pauper’s.” As the child breathes its last, a letter arrives from her husband’s family. It contained no words of comfort, only a five pound note that Mary uses to buy a headstone for her husband and child in Ardwick cemetery.

Mary made no attempt to evade the authorities and is soon brought to court charged with murder and theft. From the dock she makes an impassioned plea, clearly reflecting Harkness’s strong feelings for the lot of poor women.

“O Gentlemen, if you were but women! You can’t understand what I’ve done, gentlemen. You are men, rich men perhaps, with food to give your children...........If you were women, you would know what it is to pawn your sewing machine and then see your child starving.”(33)

Mary was taken to the Lunatic Asylum. There she was given a silk handkerchief by a philanthropic gentleman. She strangled herself with the handkerchief and she, too, was rushed, unbidden, into her maker’s presence.

Throughout the novel, Harkness was determined to demonstrate that Mary Dillon was not of Angel Meadow. She lived there amidst its noise and its violence - she witnessed women fighting in the streets - she knew of children being killed ‘accidentally’ and, yet, she did not accept such behaviour as right. Mary never brought home liquor from the beer house. She remained both aloof from her gossiping neighbours and untouched and untainted by all that she witnessed.
Harkness argues that, in London, it was easy for poor people to live without having any contact with their neighbours. However, Angel Meadow resembled a village where everyone was known and watched. Harkness is, therefore, stressing that to remain above the mass of the underclass in places like Angel Meadow was extremely difficult and such effort demanded admiration.

Mary Dillon had in no way contributed to her own descent; she was a victim of the system and of those institutions that supported that system - the Church and the Law. Her descent was also symbolic of the “futility of middle-class philanthropy” (34) as exemplified by the £5 note and the silk handkerchief. Thomas argues that

“The brutality of low life in A Manchester Shirtmaker is enacted within a social morality which sees behaviour, not as the product of innate depravity or fecklessness, but as the inevitable consequence of an oppressive economic system which dehumanises and alienates. The City itself is represented as a symbol of despair desparation and not as productive, energetic or vital.” (35)

As Mrs Gaskell in Mary Barton, Harkness calls for her readers’ admiration, sympathy and understanding for one who commits the act of murder - this time more horrific as its her own child she kills. However, Harkness shows that in many ways this was an act of love. In such an act, Harkness draws a line between the underclass of Angel Meadow whose babies died almost daily, “by accident”. Women such as these felt no love for their children.
Our final social novelists, Alfred Alsop and Silas K Hocking, wrote their novels from the same ethos, that of religious salvation. For them, salvation came, not only from attaining a high spiritual plane, but also from the attainment of an acceptable standard of cleanliness, hard work and self-reliance. The standard was judged, not only by the authors, but by their readership. Both Alsop and Hocking, like many other social novelists, concentrated the reader’s attention on the individual. Both sought to stimulate the reader’s empathy to a high degree by making their heroes children. Not just any children were used but the children of the streets - children who would be visible to the readers if only they chose to look.

Alfred Alsop, who wrote under the pseudonym of A Delver, was the superintendent of Wood Street Mission in Manchester. The Mission’s purpose was the rescue of street children. Alsop wrote his novels, perhaps novelettes is a more correct title, to raise funds and willing hands for the Mission’s work. His pseudonym, A Delver, suggests an explorer in an unknown world. The titles chosen for this works reinforce the impression. *From Dark to Light* or *Voices from the Slums* written in 1882 or *Below the Surface* or *Doom in the Slums*, 1885. The journey the explorer took was always on the downward path into darkness and degradation - a world that he believed was unknown to his genteel readership.

Alsop believed that the dark, narrow streets of the slums cramped the energy of their inhabitants and shortened their life. No fresh air entered such places and
“God’s name is seldom heard, except in blasphemy. The sweet tones of a mother’s voice are changed for the loud bawling from an excited woman, the father’s guiding hand for the merciless blows of a drunken man. In such places, children are growing up to be - what? The answer in its unvarnished truth is - drunkards and gaol birds”. (36)

In this statement, Alsop was clearly warning his readership of the dangers of generational degeneration, reflecting the social Darwinism of his time.

Alsop guided his readers through the various layers of society as he perceived it. He went from the honest artisan with a decent wife and respectful children to the darkened homes of the ‘violent fathers and indifferent mothers’ until he reached the group he called the residuum.

“where unrestrained passions have full sway and all the sweeping torrent of blackened iniquity rolls along in its course drowning virtue and swamping goodness.” (37)

The children who people Alsop’s works were visible children such as Fred, a hot potato seller. Drink had brought his father to prison and his mother bravely struggled against increasing poverty. Fred steals a loaf of bread to feed his brothers and sister. However, he is deeply ashamed of his actions and, in attempting to return the loaf, is hit by a lorry and ‘ere long entered the land of rest.

Happy Liza was a child of the Deansgate slums. She earned a few pennies selling newspapers near the steps of the Exchange. Her face reflected her sufferings. Her good mother had died and her drunkard father had kicked Liza down the stairs. She now limped along with a crutch. Lack of food and the effort
of selling newspapers in the snow proved too much for Liza and she died with her gaze fixed on the treasured picture of her mother.

Much of Alsop's writing is cloyingly sentimental to the late twentieth century reader. However, when this is put to one side, there is a clear message of danger - danger to society from the underclass. The only way to fight back against the threat was to remove the children - the next generation - from the slums. In *Driven from Home*, Alsop describes one three-storied house that is a microcosm of the underclass.

The house was on Deansgate and was home to Charlie. The house, once elegant, is now virtually falling down. On the ground floor of this house lived a man and his wife. The man had abused 'Nature's Laws' which made him "both in temper and appearance hideous". His wife feared that he would murder her or commit suicide. On the floor above, the room at the front of the house was home to another couple. The man was Irish and both he and his wife were fond of drink. Their room stank of alcohol and there was much cursing and swearing. The room at the back was home to a young woman and her two children. The mother spent her days drinking and gossiping whilst her children beg or stole. This room contained little furniture, the bed being a bundle of filthy straw, "dirt was its carpet and vermin its companions".

At the top of the house was the garret in which Charlie had been born surrounded by drunken, shouting women whilst his mother lay in a stupor. His parents had once had a high social status, his mother had even attended Sunday School, but drink had brought them down to live amongst the dregs and scum of
society. They were now rag pickers. One day Charlie's mother flung him downstairs. In hospital he is visited by a 'saved' slum acquaintance and he is eventually sent out to Canada where he prospers.

It can argued that this one building on Deansgate - once elegant, now decayed - represented society itself and how neglect caused the decay. Perhaps Alsop was attempting to point to the separation of the classes as highlighted by Disraeli and Elizabeth Gaskell. The neglect by the middle classes brought the decay of a society.

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Silas K Hocking was a Methodist minister who worked in Manchester for a short period of time. He is, perhaps, better remembered today for his Liverpool-based novel Her Benny, 1879. His Manchester novels, Chips, our Joe and Mike were written around 1885. Like Alsop, Hocking's theme was the rescue of children and, also like Alsop, he was extremely sentimental.

"Alas! that they should be trampled on like the snow in the street until they become as foul. If before winter came again they should be sleeping in their graves, who could grieve? Better death than shame a thousand times, for, if they live, who shall save them - who?"(38)

'Chips' like many of Alsop's heroes cared for a weaker, younger sibling, Seth. They lived in a Manchester court close to Long Millgate that ran between the Market Street ward and that of St Georges. Their father had died of a broken heart as a result of being falsely accused of their mother's manslaughter. Seth died in the
snow that

“came down like feathers from angels' wings and gently covered up his white gentle face and hid his rags from human gaze.”(39)

After spending the night under a stall in Shudehill Market, ‘Chips’ went to a Sunday School in Salford where he was revived with buns and cocoa. He helped a crippled boy home and then rescued a crippled man. The man offers him a home in the country. Here, he thrives and becomes a “persevering young Englishman who does not parade his goodness.”

Mike makes the opposite journey. He had been born in the country, the son of a hard-working shoemaker and his pretty wife. Trade suffers and they move to Manchester - to a small house in a narrow street off Oldham Road. Mike admitted that

“It was for long enough 'fore I could get used to the dirty women and the ragged children.”(40)

Mike's father cannot adapt to City work and he starts drinking. The family pawn their belongings and soon the father is imprisoned because of the bad company he had kept in the pub. The family move to live in a cellar in Charter Street, hard by Angel Meadow. Mike and his young sister are soon orphaned. He takes her into his arms and they eventually reach Liverpool where she dies in his arms.

Alone in a strange city, Mike hangs around the docks. He meets scores of children in the same position as himself. On his death bed in hospital - now a man - he muses to the author

“I've wondered a lot lately whether the carriage-folk, when they
drive through the grand streets, ever think that, behind the tall houses, there's courts an' alleys full of hungry little children, an' all sorts of suffering an' misery an' awful want." (41)

As argued above, the sentimentality of Alsop and Hocking is unacceptable to today's reader. It must, however, be remembered that the market for which they were both writing demanded such an approach. Alsop novels were sold for one shilling each to raise funds for the Wood Street Mission. Once the sentimentality is put to one side, it is possible to identify strong messages contained within the novels.

Both Alsop and Hocking made deliberate use of the 'slum' areas of Deansgate, Ancoats, Angel Meadow and Shudehill. Such a use would indicate that the readership were aware of the existence of the 'horrors', thus throwing doubt on the argument that the better classes - the carriage class - were unaware of what lay behind the grand streets. Both authors stress the immorality, drunkenness and degradation of the adults of these areas. For them there is no hope - hope was reserved for the innocents, the children. However, even the children have to prove that they are deserving. All the heroes of Alsop's and Hocking's novels had initially shown a spirit of self-sacrifice and a willingness to help others. Some had faced temptation and had fallen, but they felt shame at their fall. The reward for these deserving children was a place in heaven, the countryside or Canada or, and of equal importance, the reward of being considered an honest, hard-working Christian Englishman.
It is clear that each of these six novelists perceived a group within their society that posed a threat to the existing order. The threat was disease, moral pollution or revolt. It can be argued that such a group also posed an economic threat. It is also clear that each novelist’s perception of the threat from the underclass varied in both degree and solution.

For Disraeli, the inhabitants of Wodgate could and would rise up and plunge society into darkness. There was no hope for such people. The only proffered solution to save the deserving - Mowbray - was one of return to almost feudal paternalism. The message of Sybil is a strong plea for interventionism.

Mrs Gaskell also made a plea for governmental intervention in *Mary Barton*. She saw the threat to society coming from the secrecy of socialism, Trades Unions and communism. The threat was all the more dangerous as it came from people who were intelligent and sharp-witted. In *Mary Barton*, she saw no undeserving poor. People such as the Davenports were destitute, not through weaknesses in their own characters, but through weaknesses in the system. In this, Mrs Gaskell demonstrated the ambiguity of the feelings, not just of herself, but of those of the society in which she lived. She coupled danger and threat with compassion and understanding. She ends *Mary Barton* with a plea for the classes to come together, not in a spirit of paternalism as suggested by Disraeli, but in a spirit of mutual respect.

In *North and South*, there was a similar ‘coming together’. However, there are significant differences between *Mary Barton* and *North and South*. Boucher’s problems do stem from his own weaknesses, unlike Davenport’s, although, his
suicide was the result of the dangerous, tyrannical union. In *North and South*, we are almost introduced to the undeserving dangerous class in the ‘distant roar’ and the loiterers. There is one further difference between *Mary Barton* and *North and South* that may be time-related. John Barton demanded Parliamentary action whilst, in *North and South*, the plea was for intervention to be locally based and placed in the hands of those who understood an industrial city. Could this reflect a prevailing political change in that centralised intervention was then considered to be a continental philosophy coupled with a demand for stronger local powers as suggested by Cazamian.

The characters that peopled Mrs Gaskell’s novels were many-dimensional, from the mill owners to the Davenports and the Bouchers. Disraeli’s characters, in particular those of Wodgate and Mowbray, were virtually one-dimensional, clearly demonstrating that Mrs Gaskell was writing about people she knew, whereas Disraeli’s people came from the Blue Books. This is especially true when we consider the women of these novels. Excluding the idealised icon to womanhood, Sybil, Disraeli demonstrates some sympathy for the women of Mowbray; they were victims of the system. However, the sympathy was tempered for they were not without vice, they drank and they fought. He also used animalistic terms when describing both the people and their dwellings - the alleyways like the entrance to hives from which the people swarmed. Furthermore, these women did not grieve when their children died, they welcomed the burial club money. Again, this was a Blue Book picture. Compare this with Mrs Davenport’s care and concern for her children in the cellar. Even Mr Boucher - the weak, complaining man - was still a
man who could grieve.

Bess, in *The Manchester Man*, was almost on the same pedestal as Sybil. However, in spite of her somewhat rosy perception of the Clegg’s home and its location, Mrs Banks drew a very firm line between the deserving and the undeserving. She warned that uncontrolled and indiscriminate giving of charity would only encourage the undeserving to continue down their chosen path of debauchery. As Disraeli, Mrs Banks saw no hope for this underclass. They were a threat to the deserving poor for they took what should have been directed to the deserving poor.

Harkness, writing thirty five years after *North and South*, does not make a plea for understanding or charity. Her novel, *A Manchester Shirtmaker*, is a demand for change. It is clear that she, as Mrs Gaskell, was writing of places and people that she had seen for herself. Although she stressed that there was clear line between Mary and her neighbours, it could be argued that her plea was to the middle classes asking them to look again at the slums and their inhabitants. She appears to argue that it was the prevailing social conditions that forced them to live as they did. For Harkness, charity would not help; it was a change in the ethos of society that was required. Writing as she did from a feminist standpoint, it is of little wonder that the factory women are strong and united together when they rose up as a body to confront the ‘sweater’.

For Alsop and Hocking, the dangerous underclass were the adults of the slums who were lost in a sea of immorality. This sea would swamp decent society if the children remained. However, not every child could be turned into an
acceptable citizen. They had to prove themselves. The women of Alsop's and Hocking's novels fell neatly into one of two categories. They were either earthly or heavenly saints or desolate drunkards who were devoid of any womanly feelings. Such categorisation would lead one to believe that neither Alsop nor Hocking had any close contact with working class women.

All our novelists believed that their society contained within it the potential seeds of its own destruction. Those who knew Manchester pinpointed specific areas of the city where these seeds germinated in profusion. What were the perceptions of those who came to Manchester as visitors? Did they look at the same areas and see the same dangers?
Chapter 1 - References


3. Cazamian op cit p 58.


8. Disraeli, ibid, p 132.

9. Disraeli, ibid, p 203.

10. Disraeli, ibid, p 205.

11. Disraeli, ibid, p 446.


16. Cazamian, ibid, p 211.
17. Gaskell, op cit, p 55.
18. Gaskell, ibid, p 64.
20. Gaskell, op cit, p 125.
22. Gaskell, ibid, p 227.
23. Gaskell, ibid, p 180.
26. Linnaeus Banks, ibid, p 35.
27. Linnaeus Banks, ibid, p 313.
28. Linnaeus Banks, ibid, p 70.
33. John Law, ibid, p 158.
34. Thomas, op cit, p 211.
35. Thomas, ibid, p 212.
37. Delver, ibid, p 9.

38. Silas K Hocking, *Chips, our Joe and Mike*. Frederick Warne (no date) p 25.


40. Hocking, ibid, p 221.

41. Hocking, ibid, p 227.
The growth of large towns from 1800 onwards magnified the problems of poverty by increasing their visibility. The rural poor of previous decades had suffered profoundly, but unseen. Now, packed into unventilated streets and courts in their thousands, the urban poor, and the conditions they endured, demanded attention. Manchester acted as a magnet - it was depicted as almost Hell on Earth. As such, it attracted visitors from a very wide sphere. Some came to be shocked, as visitors to a freak show, others came to wonder at the temples to the textile trade - the mills and warehouses. The textile industry was so advanced in Manchester that the town attracted industrial spies and researchers from the continent of Europe and beyond, together with many political writers. Other visitors, General Sir Charles Napier, for example, had Manchester thrust upon them.

Many of the visitors to Manchester recorded their thoughts and observations and it these that we will consider in this chapter. The works have not been selected for their literary merit nor for the fame of their authorship. They have been selected because they come from a variety of backgrounds and they came to Manchester for a wide variety of reasons. We will test the statement that

"the overwhelming majority of written accounts by contemporary observers of Manchester and other industrial towns express shock and disgust." (1)
We will consider the degree of shock and disgust and on whom the visitors lay the blame for the horrors they perceived. Did the visitors identify and underclass? Did they perceive such a group as a threatening mass or did they consider the individuals within that mass as individuals such as Devildust or Mary Dillon? Finally, did time temper the perception? Use will be made of the authors' own words in an attempt to extract the true essence of the message they wished to impart to their readers. Unlike the social novelists who used the fictional individual as a vehicle for the conveyance of their information, one would expect the visitor to be both more fact and mass focussed.

There is one notable absentee from this collection of visitors' accounts - Frederick Engels. *The Condition of the Working Class in England* was written between 1844 - 5 and use will be made of the book elsewhere in this study. It has, however, been excluded from this chapter for two principal reasons. Firstly, the English translation was not readily available in this country until 1892 and, therefore, would have had little impact on the perception of the underclass held by the mid-Victorian elites. Secondly, although a proportion of Engels's descriptive passages were empirically based, he made use of the written works of Dr J P Kay (Kay Shuttleworth) and Peter Gaskell whose perceptions were based on a society a decade or more before. Engels interwove these earlier accounts into his own work and paid little head to the intervening changes that had taken place in Manchester. We will consider the works of both Kay and Gaskell in the final chapter of this section.

Robert Southey was born in Bristol in 1774. He became “a vehement
republican, filled with enthusiasm for the French revolution.”(2) In 1808 he produced a collection of ‘letters’ Southey wrote under the adopted guise of Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella. In letter XXXVIII he recorded one of his first visits to Manchester.

Southey had a guide around the manufactory who was keen to stress the benefits of child labour. The children of Manchester were not a burden on the parish; they earned their keep by working in the mill from five in the morning until six in the evening. Southey doubted the benefit of such labour. He also perceived danger in such a system that took young girls into a mill before they had become skilled in the domestic duties that they would need when they married. There were also other inherent dangers in such a system. In a mill or factory, large numbers of both sexes were herded together. They lacked any religious or moral instruction and, as a result, were “debauched and profligate”. Southey also claimed to find that, despite the high wages earned from such work, the workers never saved for a time of need, they were too improvident.

“though the parish was not at the expense of maintaining them when children, it had to provide for them in disease induced by their mode of life and premature debility and old age”.(3)

Southey was clearly aware of the great danger posed by generational degeneration. He argued that children who were deprived of a childhood, through labour, who were deprived of fresh air and natural sleep, again, through being confined in a mill and working until they were too exhausted for natural sleep, had their moral and physical health destroyed. They either died from work-induced
"they live to grow up without decency, without comfort and without hope, without morals, without religion and without shame and bring forth slaves like themselves to tread in the same path of misery". (4)

He maintained that the poor were becoming more numerous, more depraved year on year. Such degeneration was an inevitable consequence of an industrial system. Southey also saw this growing mass as a political threat to society. He believed that, as they lacked local ties and looked on those above them with envy rather than respect, the mass were "more easily instigated to revolt". Southey clearly recognised the break in the chain of paternalism and deference.

What of the home of this potentially dangerous mass of people? Southey was of the opinion that Manchester was devoid of interest and beauty, it was a "damned, dirty den of much worms" despite being the second city in England in both size and population.

"The dwellings of the labouring manufacturers are in narrow streets and lanes blocked up from light and air.......crowded together because every inch of land is of such value that room for light and air cannot be afforded them. Here in Manchester a great proportion of the poor lodge in cellars, damp and dark, where every kind of filth is suffered to accumulate because no exertions of domestic care can ever make such homes decent. These places are so many hotbeds of infection and the poor in large towns are rarely without an infectious fever amongst them, a plague of their own, which leaves the habitations of the rich, like a Goshen of cleanliness and comfort, unvisited". (5)

Southey commented elsewhere that he would rather be hanged in London than die a natural death in Manchester. It is little wonder that he was very willing to leave Manchester and to depart to Chester along the canal by stage boat.
A second visitor who did not wish to linger long in Manchester was Johann Heinrich Meidenger (1792-1867). He had been born in Frankfurt, Germany, and was by career a merchant but, he spent much of his time in travel writing. He toured Britain in 1820 and again in 1826. On his first visit he passed through Stockport and Manchester where he found

"Poverty and uncleanliness are everywhere apparent. Brutality and immorality are rife. Among the workers one sees a large number of pale and poorly-dressed people who live on buttermilk, oatcakes and potatoes".(6)

On his second visit, Meidenger noted that Manchester had grown considerably. It had an unfinished appearance with many areas not yet built on. The built-up areas consisted of irregular, narrow, filthy streets that had been built haphazardly, without any plan

"it is easily applicable that staying here is not the most pleasant of things to do".(7)

II

A visitor who stayed longer and looked closer was Alexis de Tocqueville. He had been born in Paris in 1805 and had achieved fame as a political scientist, historian and politician. In 1835 he made his second visit to this country and journeyed through England and Ireland following the publication of his work Democracy in America. On the 2nd July he arrived in Manchester from Birmingham. He reported in notes that Manchester was "the great manufacturing city of cloth thread cotton". It was favourably placed, close to coal mines, "ten
leagues' from a large port and 'twenty five leagues' from the world's best machine-making town of Birmingham.

de Tocqueville compared Manchester with Birmingham and, on every count, Manchester was found wanting. Manchester was 'unfinished', it lacked an efficient police force and there was a total lack of government. He noted that Manchester contained 60,000 Irish-born inhabitants compared with only 5,000 in Birmingham. He argued that the houses of Manchester were overcrowded whilst those in Birmingham rarely contained more than one family.

"at Manchester a part of the population lives in damp cellars. hot, stinking and unhealthy. thirteen to fifteen individuals in one. At Birmingham that is rare" (8)

The streets of Manchester were unpaved and filled with stagnant puddles. de Tocqueville also noted that Manchester lacked sufficient public lavatories.

The socio-economic system of Manchester differed from that of Birmingham. de Tocqueville commented that, in Manchester, there were a few great capitalists, thousands of poor workers and a very small middle class. Birmingham consisted of small workshops where men and master worked alongside each other. Many women and children constituted the Manchester workforce whilst in Birmingham the workforce was principally male. As a result, the inhabitants of Birmingham were "more healthy, more moral, better off and more orderly" than those of Manchester. In these observations made by de Tocqueville, we find strong echoes of Disraeli - the small workshop that brings master and man together as at Trafford's village - results in a much more acceptable workforce, one that was less
It is apparent from his writings that de Tocqueville walked the streets of Manchester and even looked inside the homes of some of its poorest inhabitants. The streets through which he walked were rutted, "full of dung, rubble and putrid stagnant pools." The sight that greeted his eyes consisted of labyrinths of brickwork. He was surprised to note the occasional "fine stone building with Corinthian columns". However, he found himself surrounded by vice and poverty.

"On ground below the level of the river and overshadowed on every side by immense workshops, stretches marshy land which widely spaced muddy ditches can neither drain nor cleanse. Narrow, twisting roads lead down to it. They are lined with one-storey houses whose ill-fitting planks and broken windows show them up, even from a distance, as the last refuge a man might find between poverty and death. Nonetheless, the wretched people reduced to living in them can still inspire jealousy of their fellow beings. Below some of their miserable dwellings is a row of cellars to which a sunken corridor leads. Twelve to fifteen human beings are crowded pell-mell into each of these repulsive holes."(9)

In a margin note alongside this entry, de Tocqueville confirmed his actual presence when he found that lines of washing blocked the roads. Furthermore, he noted that the hovels had coal fires that filled them with damp and stuffy heat - they had no chairs. He described the area as being bordered by a foetid river that was "the Styx of this new Hades".

Amongst the people of the new Hades, de Tocqueville observed many who came
Although he does not name the country, one can assume he was referring to Ireland in view of his earlier comment on the large number of Irish inhabitants of Manchester compared with the Irish population of Birmingham. He saw these immigrants as being in competition with the English working man. de Tocqueville admits that “science, industry and the love of gain” had brought wealth to some of Manchester’s inhabitants. This, he argues, had created a city of contrasts. Manchester was a city of rich and poor, of enlightenment and ignorance, of civilisation and barbarism; as such it attracted immigrants from all over the country. Its population of 300,000 was growing rapidly.

de Tocqueville did not limit his visits to the slums. He visited one of Manchester’s major textile attractions, McConnell’s mill in Ancoats. The mill employed 1,500 hands who worked a 69 hour week for which they received on average eleven shillings. The owners maintained that such a sum was sufficient to keep an industrial worker in comfort should that worker be prudent with his expenditure. There was, however, a downward pressure on wages due to increased mechanisation and an overstocked labour market. Three quarters of the workers in McConnell’s mill were women and children, a fact that de Tocqueville believed to be

“fatal to education and dangerous for women’s morals but one which follows the fact that this work needs little physical strength, so that the work of women and children is enough and costs less than that of men.”(11)

Again, in margin notes alongside the report of his visit to McConnell’s, de
Tocqueville mused on the effect such a life has on the spirit of the worker who worked 12 hours every day excepting Sunday. He was not surprised to find that on this day the Manchester worker either stayed in bed or spent the day in the public house.

"Few but the Catholics go to church. In England, Protestantism, which keeps a very strong hold on the upper classes, seems to be losing its power over the lower classes. The opposite with Catholicism - easy to see the reason." (12)

Amongst the margin notes made alongside the main commentary on his observations, de Tocqueville gave his opinion of Manchester and its inhabitants, with both brevity and clarity. Amongst other matters he noted

i. Evident lack of government.
ii. Poverty. Good wages 'at the moment'. What must it be like at another time?
iii. The people's fear of soldiers.
iv. Inability of the poor to act in isolation.
v. Charitable Societies - 'Provident Society'. Effort of the middle classes to keep the direction of the lower classes and to establish links with them.
vii. Three weeks stoppage of work would bring society down in ruins. Dr Kay said that.
viii. Working population absorbed in material pleasures and brutalised.

de Tocqueville's final comments on Manchester clearly demonstrate his powers of description.
"A sort of black smoke covers the city. The sun seen through it is a disc without rays. Under this half daylight, 300,000 human beings are ceaselessly at work. A thousand noises disturb this damp, dank labyrinth but they are not at all ordinary sounds one hears in great cities.......From this foul drain the greatest stream of human industry flows out to fertilize the whole worlds. From this filthy sewer, pure gold flows. Here humanity attains its most complete development and its most brutish, here civilisation works its miracle and civilised man is turned back almost into a savage."(13)

Given de Tocqueville’s comment that the inhabitants of Manchester feared the soldiers, what was the soldiers’ perception of them? General Sir Charles James Napier was stationed in Manchester commanding the armed forces in readiness to repel the Chartist threat. He wrote in his diary of 1839

"Manchester is the chimney of the world. Rich rascals, poor rogues, drunken ragamuffins and prostitutes, the moral soot made into paste by the rain, the physique; and the only view is a long chimney, what a place! The entrance to Hell realised..(14)

Bradshaw maintains that Napier demonstrated a sense of regret in carrying out his orders when he wrote in his diary

"Good God, what work! To send grapeshot from four guns into a helpless mass of fellow citizens; sweeping the streets with fire and charging with cavalry, destroying poor people whose only crime is that they have been ill-governed and reduced to such straits that they seek redress in arms, ignorant that, in all ways, that is the most certain to increase the ills they complain of."(15)

Napier was in Manchester at a time of political unrest. Our next group of visitors were in Manchester at a time of economic unrest - the Hungry Forties. Had a stoppage of work brought society down in ruins as prophesied by de Tocqueville
Eugene Buret had studied economics in Paris. In 1840 he visited Manchester. Buret argued that the conditions suffered by the poor were ignored by society until cholera came to town. Despite the many investigations and enquiries that have been conducted into their conditions, Buret believed that the poor had been abandoned to their fate.

He noted that the Irish were prominent amongst the new arrivals to Manchester. He argued that they were content with the hurriedly built shelter that the speculative builder had provided. The Irish had also found shelter in the cellars of Manchester. However, they were not alone.

"Many of the native working families of Manchester have also descended to the living conditions of the Irish........often, more than one family lives in a humid 'cave' which consists of one room in a stifling atmosphere where twelve to sixteen people are crammed. To these calamitous sufferings add the pigs and other domestic animals with the other disgusting natural inconveniences that one can possibly imagine. Then you have an idea of the living conditions of the very destitute of Manchester. (16)

Buret observed that the areas inhabited by the poor were in general areas of recent origin. There were, however, areas of the town that had once been elegant and well constructed but that had deteriorated due to lack of maintenance. No such faded elegance was visible in 'Little Ireland'. For Buret, that area contained all the horrors imaginable.
Henry Colman was a Unitarian minister from Boston, U.S.A. In 1843 he visited Manchester and had for a guide Dr Lyon Playfair whose report we will be considering later. Colman, like Buret, commented on the pigs that shared the homes of their owners. He described the Manchester dialect as ‘gawky’ and, even when he could understand the words, they made little sense to him. Buret believed that the people were deliberately maintained in a state of ignorance “lest they should become discontented with their condition.” Colman’s guide did not spare the visitor’s sensitivities, they witnessed

“exhibitions of the most disgusting and loathsome forms of destitution and utter vice..........We went into thirty or more different houses, from the most squalid, to those which would not be inaptly termed elegant, and marched directly into parlours, chambers, garrets and cellars, crowded, in many cases, like the cells of a beehive but only in fullness and beyond this I must abjure the comparison and say rather like a putrid carcass filled with vermin.”(17)

Little wonder that Colman thanked heaven that he was not a poor man with a family in England.

William Cooke Taylor was a native of Ireland. In the early 1840s, sponsored by the Anti Corn Law League, he visited Manchester. His Manchester was a township whose narrow streets, courts and cellars were the domain of the lowest class. The homes of such people were hidden from the gaze of the higher orders by mills, factories and warehouses. Cooke Taylor commented that the wealthy had removed themselves to Cheetham, Broughton and Chorlton - the airy suburbs of Manchester.
Cooke Taylor believed that such class separation was evil and maintained that his society had changed the well known proverb to "one half of the world does not care how the other half lives".

"Ardwick knows less about Ancoats than it does about China and feels more interest in the conditions of New Zealand than of Little Ireland."(18)

Cooke Taylor, like Buret, believed that the result of this separation was that the rich lost sight of the poor and only considered them when forced to do so "by their appearance as vagrants, mendicants or delinquents".

The problem for Cooke Taylor had been created by an incoming non-factory population - a population that had increased due to the demand for unskilled labourers, not least for the new railways. Cooke Taylor believed that the rural immigrant was one who had been unable to stand the hard rigours of rural toil or he was a person of bad character who wished to become anonymous in the teeming mass of people to be found in a large town. Thus, he argued, the immigrant was physically and/or morally degenerate and, as a consequence,

"Manchester must long continue to present an appearance of great destitution and delinquency."(19)

It is of passing interest to note that Cooke Taylor's view of the rural immigrant - weak, almost broken, secretive and possibly criminal, was to be reversed by Llewellyn Smith in the late 1880s when he "connected the demoralization of the East End (of London) with the comparatively low proportion of provincial immigrants in the district". Trevelyan had maintained ten years earlier that the 'Londoner' was considered to be obstinate and truculent whereas the rural worker
was considered to be docile and pliable. It is difficult to apply these two adjectives to the rural immigrant perceived by Cooke Taylor. *

He prided himself for having kept aloof from politics. Even so, he warned his readership of the dangers posed by Chartism and Trades Unions. He saw the poor as being the dupes of such organisations and, in the hands of gifted orators, they could be brought to the edge of revolt. He, like Gaskell, warned of the 'visionaries'. He saw even greater danger in the very system of society - a system in which, he argued, a man's character was predetermined. The system dictated that a worker spent twelve to fifteen hours each day employed at a task without variety that demanded little from his intellect. A pressure would build within such a man, he would seek excitement and he would find it in the tavern or on the race ground. Cooke Taylor urged the middle classes to provide 'pleasurable, profitable and healthful' activities to release the pressure in socially acceptable ways.

"Men are but children of a larger growth, they will have their pleasures and unless care be taken, the sermon of Church or Chapel will be neutralised." (20)

This is a clear call for paternal involvement from his readers.

Cooke Taylor's travels had taken him to Stockport, a town he had visited five years earlier. Then he had found income levels to average three pounds a week. The operative's homes were comfortable and their children were cared for. The elderly had also been respected, frequently caring for the home and children so that a mother could safely add to the family income.

The trade depression had severely changed Stockport. Cooke Taylor lists many instances of great hardship that he had taken from the reports of the Commissioner of the poor. One example will suffice for our purposes.

"Samuel Parry (wife and two children of six and four) was a dresser at Lanes Mill and used to earn twenty five shillings a week on average, lived in a house at one and nine pence rent. sold chairs, tables, bed and bedding and left house for the present one which is a cellar, almost unfurnished; furniture, two tables and a stool, rent eightpence per week. had subscribed to a sick club and a penny club for funerals, had not be able latterly to keep up his subscriptions, has in fact no means but his allowance from the Board which is two and sixpence per week in food. has also had clogs from the Board."(21)

Although he did not look into the faces of Samuel Parry and his family, he was deeply moved by the plight of the individual. One who did look into several faces was Jacob Venedey, our next visitor.

Jacob Venedey was born in Cologne and was of a liberal persuasion. In 1842 he came to England and arrived in Manchester in 1844. Here he met Frederick Engels who acted as his guide around the poorer areas of Manchester. Venedey found that Manchester contained streets that

"are mostly broad and the character ranges from the proudest porticoed house to the naked poverty of a gloomy cellar dwelling.(22)"

Engels guided his friend into ‘Little Ireland’, a place of appalling squalor, hidden and ignored until cholera visited. Hundreds were then driven from their cellars which were then boarded up. When the epidemic was over the fashionable quarter again forgot about Little Ireland and the cellars were reopened. The
inhabitants could be seen almost daily emptying river water from their underground shelters. The chimneys of Manchester polluted the air, the factory and human waste polluted the very river that found its way into these cellars.

Venedey took a stroll along Deansgate where he noticed that many female operatives had immodestly low-cut bodices that displayed bare flesh to passers by. The foyer and lounge of the Theatre Royal were dominated by prostitutes who "offered themselves in a most shameless manner". Venedey also saw drunken women attempting to haul one another into public houses to continue drinking. When visiting an area around the river Irk, he found that

"In spite of the fact that it was in working hours, a mob of idle louts loitered around in these streets. Lazy and mostly dirty women in rags were sitting or standing at all the doors. I encountered a mother with her baby at her breast drunkenly staggering about......Many of the women who stood at the doors [of pubs] were obviously prostitutes and more than once I was greeted by them with shameless derision." (23)

It is difficult to believe that this was the same area described by Mrs Banks in *The Manchester Man*.

Venedey, like Colman, ventured into the homes of the operatives. He visited the home of a fustian cutter who remarked to his visitor that the work was easy, so easy that a child could do it. In a whole week the fustian cutter could earn eight shillings but there was a shortage of work. "The man complained a lot and claimed that he could not live on his wage." In the home of a carder's family Venedey commented that the house was dirty and miserable "of course, the people were Irish", however, Venedey does point out that the man of the house was only
earning fourteen shillings a week and his two children only three and sixpence together. The whole family had to live on this.

Venedey visited a cellar dwelling where a woman lived with her mother and her child - “a wonderful blond child with blue eyes”. The woman earned eight shillings a week and her mother acted as a servant in the house above. For this they received free accommodation. Venedey notes that the cellar shone and the inhabitants were so clean that they put many people to shame. Finally, Venedey visited a family of handloom weavers.

“They were English but dirty like the Irish. Their hardship had lasted long enough to destroy their old pride, to make them forget their former wealth. Nearly a dozen people sat crowded in a kind of ‘cellar kitchen’. The equipment consisted of smoothed-down benches and tables and a pot with food for everybody was on the stove. The people themselves looked ragged, tattered, dirty and wild - like the worst kind among the Irish.”(24)

IV

Our final two visitors, Leon Faucher and Johana George Kohl were both in Manchester in 1844 and have therefore been placed together in this final section.

Leon Faucher was born in Limoges, France, in 1803, and was a prolific writer on politics and economics. Faucher’s observations of his journey through England were published in 1845 in two volumes under the title *Etudes sur Angleterre*. The section relating to Manchester was “translated from the French
with copious notes appended by a member of the Manchester Athenaeum". (25) It was first published in Manchester by Abel Heywood. Faucher's study of Manchester ranged wide - from its earliest beginnings to the state of national politics of the day.

Faucher recorded that when the business of the day was ended

"The authority, the impulsive force, the moral order.......flies from the town [abandoning it to] operatives, publicans, mendicants, thieves and prostitutes, merely taking the precaution to leave behind him a police force." (26)

He also recorded that those left behind chose not to spent their time with their families, despite having been separated for long periods spent at work. Home for such people held little attraction. Men, women and children took to the streets or to the beer-houses.

"If you traverse the poor quarter of the town - Angel Meadow, Garden Street, Newtown Street, Georges Road.......Ancoats or Little Ireland, you perceive the doors of the cottages open and you are jostled by the crowd of loiterers." (27)

Faucher perceived a clear distinction between the English of such areas and the Irish. The English strolled about in small groups whereas the Irish were always in their hundreds on the corner of Oldham Road and Great Ancoats Street.

"The Irish labourers formed the most abject portion of the population, their dwellings were the most dirty and unhealthy, and their children the most neglected. It was in the cellars occupied by them that illicit distillation of ardent spirits was carried on. Misery of every description, fever, roguery, debauchery and theft were rife amongst
them; their neighbourhood was the chosen retreat of vagabonds and criminals, scarcely a day passed without some disturbance or without some serious crime. Happily, however, these features of the Irish portion of the population have undergone a remarkable change." (28)

The translator, a member of the Athenaeum did not share Faucher's optimistic outlook. The translator believed that Irish immigration had inflicted "a deadly blow" to the working classes of Manchester. The Irish had established distinct colonies from which emanated fever and "human miasma". The Irish, he argued, were "indolent of disposition" and possessed "instability of character" which

"prevent them from aspiring to a higher standard of living and their great numbers have produced a competition with the English labourers." (29)

Here, Faucher's translator is echoing the thoughts of de Tocqueville of ten years before.

Faucher incurred his translator's wrath when he maintained that thousands of Manchester children ran around the streets bare-footed and in rags whilst their parents frequented the beer-houses and gin shops. He argued that the police annually took in 5,000 children who had been lost or abandoned by their parents. The translator appears to have taken this comment as a libel upon the inhabitants of Manchester as a whole. He argued that in any big town children would play in the streets - there was nowhere else for them to play. Thus, many lose their way but all were speedily returned to their anxious parents. The translator added

"Angel Meadow and St George's Road are no more average specimens of working classes in Manchester than Billingsgate is a fair specimen of the social conditions of London." (30)
Faucher next turned his thoughts to the moral condition of the inhabitants of Manchester and considered the question of prostitution. He noted that prostitution was less public in manufacturing districts than in seaports and caused little problem to the police of Manchester who had reported that, in 1840, Manchester contained 285 houses of ill fame inhabited by 629 prostitutes.

On a nocturnal ramble with a Mr Beswick, Faucher counted 500 - 600 prostitutes. To these, he argued, must be added those of a higher rank "who do not descend to walk the streets publicly". Most of these women were to be found around the exchange. Faucher and his companion noted that when these women accosted passers-by they did so less rudely than in other towns. Faucher proffered two explanations for this:

"Firstly, the more decent prostitutes flock to Manchester because it is, in regard to promiscuous intercourse, the rendezvous of the wealthier classes and, secondly, prostitution for money has little scope among inferior classes where clandestine connections are so common, and where chastity, instead of being the rule amongst females, tends more and more to become the exception."(31)

Faucher quoted from Mr Logan’s *An Exposure of Female Prostitution* in which Logan asserted that Manchester contained 1500 prostitutes. Logan also asserted that Rochdale contained no high-class brothels. Rochdale gentlemen sought their pleasures in Manchester. Rochdale did possess 100 brothels, all of "the lowest description and in one single district".

Faucher believed that in any society in which the number of men to women were not equally balanced, there was bound to be degradation. This was even
more likely when men, women and children closely confined in high temperatures in the mills and factories. He believed that those conditions acted as a tropical sun and that bodies matured before education and moral sentiments had been instilled. Factory girls, therefore,

"strangers to modesty and, when they do not marry early, they form illicit connections which degrade them still more than premature marriage. It is a common occurrence to meet in the intervals of labour, in the back streets, couples of males and females, which the caprice of the moment has brought together." (32)

Although the illegitimacy rate was higher in rural districts, Faucher argues that this does not imply that the women of the town were of a higher moral standing. He quotes from a Dr Hodgkins who believed the more promiscuous the female, the less fertile she became.

Faucher then turned this attention to the immigrant nature of Manchester's inhabitants. He remarks that those of Paris kept one foot in their rural home and one in the city. His dream was always to return. This was not so in Manchester where many of the migrant workers were whole families. They sheltered in lodging houses and were permanently on the move. Faucher quotes figures provided by the Statistical Society which showed that, of a population of 169,000 in Manchester and Salford in 1836, 12,500 lived in lodging houses and a further 700 were lodged with the inhabitants of cellars. Faucher also quotes from Dr Howard's Sanitary Report which advised that

"Where cellars are occupied as lodging houses, the back room is generally used as the sleeping apartment, and, as this has often no window, and can, therefore, only receive light and air through the
door opening into the front room, the utter impossibility of ventilation renders the ravages of infectious fevers particularly destructive when once find entrance.”(33)

Faucher believed that the dark, packed alleys and courts, yards and cellars, had a profound impact on the mortality of their population. He reminds his readers that life expectancy for the professional person was around 38 years whilst that of the labouring classes was only 17 years. He questions

“Is not that an unnatural state of society?.......in which life is, for the mass, without virility and without old age, extending scarcely beyond the threshold of puberty and perpetuated by a generation of children.”(34)

Faucher painted a picture of the operatives of Manchester depicting them as pale and small and having no appearance of health, vigour or beauty. Their declining vigour was replaced by “febrile energy”. As confirmation of his perception he maintained that the army believed that Manchester men could not “bear much fatigue”. This, he argues, was strong evidence “that the race is degenerating”. Faucher’s translator, again, took deep exception to this condemnation. He pointed the reader to an article contained in the Manchester Guardian of August 1843, which claimed that recruiting officers claimed difficulties because the stature of the men in manufacturing districts was declining. The translator poses the question

“Does this difficulty arise from a deterioration or from an improvement in the race? Is it that men are not big enough, or that they are too big to stoop to the degradation of selling their liberty and becoming instruments of slaughter for eighteen pence per day? The men of the manufacturing districts are too well-off and have too much sense to join a profession which is daily growing
We have seen from de Tocqueville that the inhabitants of Manchester feared the soldier. It would appear that at least some of the members of the Athenaeum despised him. It would also appear that the same members had little knowledge of an operative’s wage. Eighteen pence per day would have been considered almost luxurious to many a member of the labouring classes of Manchester.

Our final visitor, Johann George Kohl, was a writer and geographer from Bremen, Germany. On his 1844 visit to Manchester, Kohl was both impressed and shocked by what he witnessed and he was convinced that Manchester was “alone of its kind”.

Kohl was impressed by the Infirmary, though he regretted its town centre location. He noted that it had treated 4,000 serious accidents each year due, he believed, to the quantity of complicated and dangerous machinery. He was equally impressed by the cleanliness and spacious accommodation provided for prisoners in the New Bailey. He noted that the greater number of prisoners were either juveniles or Irish. Kohl also found that almost all the residents of the Night Asylum were Irish.

Along with schools, police stations, the Exchange and museums, Kohl visited Orrell’s Mill, “one of the best built of any”. However, he found the atmosphere oppressive and was deeply concerned about the obvious dangers of closely packed and fast moving machinery on very smooth and slippery floors.
Kohl questioned the effects of factory work, both on the education and the morals of the young.

"In a factory there is no father to teach and to punish, no mother to love and to reward, no grown-up brother and sister to instruct by example. The dull, ceaseless mechanical occupation, continued all day long, affords no scope for invention or thought. For the woman also, how evil in its influence must be the factory system! What can these girls, who pass their youthful years in ceaseless mechanical labour, learn of household and maternal duties, on which the happiness of the present generation, and the character of the future one, so largely depend." (36)

Kohl argues that the government had done very little to educate the manufacturing population. Kohl, like Colman before him, believed that this was a deliberate act as

"to make these more generally intelligent and refined will be to counteract what they call the 'special training' by which they are fitted for their particular mechanical avocations. They are also averse to the encouragement of temperance... on the ground that drinking is necessary... to enable these to sustain the fatigue of their occupation and that the best workmen are generally the great drinkers." (37)

Kohl makes mention of the many institutions and associations established by the labourers themselves - sick societies, burial clubs, lyceums and mechanics institutes. However, he expresses grave concern about other associations

"whose object, sometimes avowed, sometimes secret, is to protect the interests of the members against the real or pretended encroachments of their masters." (38)
Kohl believed such associations as these - a Trades Union - could exercise formidable and tyrannical power. The strikes called by the unions were more disastrous for the labourer than for the master. The master was forced to improve his machinery which enabled him to produce more with less hands.

Kohl also implied that the activities of the Trades Unions were responsible for the English labourer's poor reputation abroad. In Austria, he maintained that they were dismissed for turbulence, brutality and drunkenness. In America they were considered to be dissipated and discontent and "given to sensual indulgences".

Not all the blame for this reputation lay with the Trades Unions. The masters were equally to blame. With one or two exceptions, the masters treated their labourers extremely harshly and made no attempt to improve the character of their men

"The severity of discipline in the English factories, the cold, harsh manner in which the work people are addressed by their supervisors, the rigid silence enforced among them and the unfeeling manner with which they are dismissed to steal or starve at every fluctuation in the fortunes of their masters, all these things cannot but have a hardening and deadening affect on their characters. No less evil in its effect must be the total absence of all intercourse between these despised classes and their employers and the mutual indifference of both ranks to the prosperity or adversity of the other. It is commonly said in England that there is less personal intercourse between the master cotton spinner and his workmen than between the Duke of Wellington and the meanest cottager on his estate." (39)

These despised classes lived in a town that never saw the sun, it only saw the moon and stars when the factory chimneys stopped belching smoke. They lived in low, dirty houses in quarters that were squalid, filthy and miserable. These areas
were full of beer-houses, dram shops and gin palaces. The streets were filled with ragged women and naked children. Many houses were empty whilst others were chronically overcrowded when people sought cheaper accommodation by sharing with another family.

For Kohl, the most wretched of Manchester inhabitants were the handloom weavers. He visited one in his home.

"[he] sat in unwilling idleness, the very image of silent despair, a poor half-starved weaver who had not a penny to buy cotton and who told me that he had been in vain seeking employment for eight days." (40)

To reinforce the comparison between the despised classes and the rest of society, Kohl commented that the rich drove, rode or walked through these quarters on broad, splendid streets to the suburbs

"where splendid villas and gardens congregate as closely as chimneys on the river and shops in Market Street." (41)

Despite de Tocqueville's warning, society still existed during the hungry forties but both Faucher and Kohl saw its state as precarious.

In this section we have considered the empirical image of Manchester that was witnessed by a variety of people from a variety of backgrounds. The visits spanned almost forty years, although the majority took place in the "hungry
forties”. All the visitors whose writings we have considered were to a lesser or
greater degree shocked by what they witnessed. There is a common theme in the
‘profligacy’, ‘foulness’, ‘nakedness’ and ‘drunkenness’. They were all struck by
the pallor and poor physique of many of the Manchester inhabitants. Our visitors
do not condemn Manchester as a whole. There were things to admire, Connell’s
Mill, the Infirmary etc, although they all agree that the sun never shone on
Manchester, but was permanently hidden by a pall of smoke. The visitors’
condemnation is reserved for “the poor areas” in general or for the specifically
defined areas of Angel Meadow, Ancoats, Deansgate, Little Ireland and St
Georges. As the translator of Faucher’s writings asserted, St Georges is not
Manchester. Meindinger, Buret and de Tocqueville saw these areas as “unbuilt”,
of recent origin and unfinished.

Many of the visitors were not only shocked by what they saw before them,
they were also fearful for the future. Southey, Cooke Taylor and, to a lesser
extent, Kohl, perceived the very real threat of human degeneration prior to the
ideas about social Darwinism. Such degeneration, they believed, would rapidly
spread through the whole of the working classes. They also perceived a second
threat - a threat to the social order of the area. For Cooke Taylor and Kohl, the
threat would manifest itself through the secret activities of “The Union”. For
Southey, this political threat came from the poor themselves, who he saw as
kindling for the fire of revolution.

The majority of the authors of the accounts that we have considered laid the
blame for the appalling and fearful situation that they witnessed on three principal
causes. Firstly, the separation of the classes. They would have agreed with Kohl when he wrote “that there is less personal intercourse between the master cotton spinner and his workmen than between the Duke of Wellington and the meanest cottager on his estate”. They would also have agreed with Faucher when he notes that after the hours of business, the moral order and the authority of the town departs, leaving the town in the hands of the thieves, mendicants and prostitutes; people who owe a duty to no-one. We find strong echoes of this scenario in Disraeli’s Sybil. St Georges is Disraeli’s Wodgate. The situation has been brought about by the severing of the bonds of paternalism and deference. Disraeli argues that if only we could return to the time when these bonds were strong, and mill owners would emulate Mr Trafford, many of the threats posed by the present situation would fade into insignificance. Disraeli’s argument would find strong support amongst many of our visitors.

The second area of blame lay squarely on the factory system itself. Southey, de Tocqueville, Faucher, Kohl et al, all believed that the system separated families. Working wives and mothers neglected hearth and home. Their children were surrendered into the hands of those unfit to care, leaving them to become lost on the streets. An unclean house without food prepared forced husbands to seek solace in the tavern. Young girls were put to work in the factory and thus they never had the opportunity to learn domestic skills. The nature of the work in the factory or mill, though not physically strenuous, was monotonous and unceasing, dulling the senses of all engaged in it. The children of the system, though no longer a burden on the parish, or on their parents, came to adulthood without the guidance or moral education that would naturally have occurred when the children worked alongside their parents. There were some of our visitors who strongly
believed that the close confinement of the sexes in the hot and humid conditions of the mill would automatically lead to degeneration.

The third area of blame was the large Irish population of Manchester. Buret, Venedey and Faucher were all very strong in their condemnation of the life style of the Irish in Manchester - a life style that threatened to contaminate the English worker both morally and physically. Buret maintained that the Irish accepted the lowest of standards. Faucher saw the Irish as the most dirty, the most unhealthy, their children the most neglected, their cellars as dens of fever, their disposition as one of indolence and instability. Venedey who was escorted around Manchester by Engels, appears to have expected little else from the Irish - the house was filthy - of course, it was Irish.

It is clear from the above that some of our visitors placed the Irish at the very bottom of the social scale. Others cast their net wider. Southey argued that all workers eventually became drunken and dissolute, debauched and profligate as a result of the system. Mundinger commented on the fact that brutality and immorality were rife in the populations of Stockport and Manchester. Colman was subjected to the disgusting and loathsome forms of destitution and utter vice and profligacy of the poor in general. Cooke Taylor believed that it was rural immigration, not specifically Irish immigration, that brought physical and moral degeneration. Even Venedey observed operatives in Deansgate with low-cut bodices and shameless prostitutes who were not Irish. He visited a cellar kitchen whose inhabitants were ragged, tattered, dirty and wild like the worst kind among the Irish. Faucher believed that factory girls were, in general, strangers to modesty.
When viewed en masse, the base line of society - the line that separated the underclass from acceptable society - was drawn quite a long way up the working class. However, as we have found with the novelists, when the visitor looked into the faces of the individuals who existed below the line, they occasionally found a jewel amongst the dregs. For Disraeli, the novelist, the jewel was Devildust. For Venedey, the visitor, it was the beautiful, blue-eyed, blond child living in a cellar. When Cooke Taylor considered the individuals listed on the Guardians’ books, he felt great sadness for them. Even Venedey felt a certain sympathy for the carder and his family, even though they were Irish and, of course, dirty. He noted that hardship destroyed pride. It would appear that personal contact with the individuals living below the line, brought a degree of empathy from even the most critical observer.

Despite the variety of works considered in this section, there is very little difference in their description of and their reactions to the appalling conditions endured by the lowest strata of the population in Manchester. The writers may lay different emphasis on the reasons for the situations that faced them - imposed or self-inflicted - but it can be argued that none of them would deny General Napier’s claim that the entrance to certain parts of Manchester was “The entrance to Hell realised”.

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9. de Tocqueville, ibid p 95.
10. de Tocqueville, ibid p 92.
11. de Tocqueville, ibid p 93.
12. de Tocqueville, ibid p 97.
13. de Tocqueville, ibid p 96.
17. Bradshaw, *op cit* p 43.
22. Bradshaw, op cit p 46.
27. Faucher, ibid p 27.
29. Faucher, ibid p 29.
31. Faucher, ibid p 41.
32. Faucher, ibid p 46.
33. Faucher, ibid p 64.
34. Faucher, ibid p 70.
35. Faucher, ibid p 72.
38. Kohl, ibid p 139.
40. Kohl, ibid p 134.
41. Kohl, ibid p 134.
CHAPTER 3

THE NEWSPAPER REPORTER’S PERCEPTION

One source of information on today’s underclass is the media - radio, television, newspapers and magazines. The perception we draw from this information varies depending on our own prejudices and the prejudices of the report. This is most evident when we consider newspapers. Many newspapers are loyal servants of a particular political persuasion, some deal in sleaze and expose while others write in what is now known as “sound byte” journalism - the couple of sentences report rather than an in-depth analysis. The majority of newspaper readers select the paper that most confirms their own beliefs or prejudices or that feeds their appetite for “gossip.”

The only media sources available to the Victorians were newspapers, broadsheets and magazines. Differences in both style and approach between the newspaper reporters and that of the novelists, or the visitors, can be expected for two principal reasons. Firstly, a newspaper is far more transient than a novel and there would be more pressure for completion placed on the reporter than the author. Secondly, the reporter knew his readership whilst Mrs Gaskell, for instance, was unsure who, if anyone, would read her first novel Mary Barton. It is also very likely that General Sir Charles James Napier never expected his diary to enter the public domain.

We should also expect to find variety between the newspapers one to another. As argued above, today’s newspapers vary in content and style and so did the
newspapers of the early Victorian era - some would follow the political dictats of their owners, some saw themselves as crusaders, others were 'scandal sheets'. In this chapter we will consider one London-based daily paper and its reports on Manchester. We will also consider local weekly papers from other towns under study - Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. Did these newspapers, like the novelists and visitors, perceive an underclass within their society? Where was this class perceived to live? Was such a class seen as posing any danger to society in general and what, if anything, did the reporters perceived as the reason for the existence of such a class? We can expect to find both an en masse and an individual approach from newspaper reporters.

I

The most famous piece of investigative journalism conducted by a newspaper into urban social conditions was that undertaken by the Morning Chronicle, 1849-1851. Its most famous reporter was Henry Mayhew who was the first to suggest that such a journalistic investigation into Labour and the Poor in England and Wales, should be undertaken. For the purpose of the investigation, the Morning Chronicle divided the country into six broad areas and appointed a high grade journalist to each district. Henry Mayhew was appointed to the Metropolitan District. The investigation into the Manufacturing Districts was undertaken by Angus Bethane Reach.

Reach had been born in Inverness and, after completing his education at the University of Edinburgh, he went to London where he became a Parliamentary reporter for the Morning Chronicle. He gained a reputation for powerful word
pictures. Although he was fully aware of the horrors brought by industrialisation, his spirit was one of optimism. Reach started his investigation into the Manufacturing Districts in Manchester.

Reach’s Manchester was brown, brown sky and brown streets. There were streets of all kinds, some narrow and almost empty of people, others broad and always full of people. Reach described Manchester as being divided into three districts.

“The central of these - lying around the heart of the exchange - is the grand district of warehouses and counting houses. The far outskirts of the city.......thither fly all those who can afford to live out of the smoke. Between these two regions........lies the great mass of smoky, dingy, sweltering and toiling Manchester.” (1)

We are given our first glimpses of Reach’s optimism when he reported that, although this section of the town was “inglorious”, the streets where the spinners and weavers lived were not “universally miserable”. There were, however, some that were worse than the others and yet the inhabitants and the rents of these streets were very similar to the better streets.

The older parts of Manchester contained what Reach perceived to be the worst dwellings. These were the areas that contained the largest number of cellar dwellings which were

“sunk some four or five feet below the pavement and occupied, perhaps, by a single poor old woman or by a family, the heads of which are given to pretty regular alternation between their subterranean abode and the neighbouring wine vaults.” (The older parts
also contain[ the largest proportion of close, filthy courts, of undrained lanes and of houses built back to back without any provision for ventilation and with very little of cleanliness."(2)

Despite the lack of ventilation and cleanliness, Reach asserts that these areas of Manchester were almost decent when compared with certain parts of Glasgow. He does, however, allow one caveat to this - that was the area around Oldham Road, Ancoats which was peopled with “swarms of the most squalid looking people”. Salford, too, was on a par with Glasgow. It was

“full of streets unpaved, undrained, strewn with offal and refuse and pierced with airless cul-de-sacs rendered still more noisome by the quantities of ill-coloured clothes hung to dry from window to window.”(3)

Reach was struck by the variety of accommodation available to the labouring classes of Manchester, between the houses of Hulme, the houses of Ancoats and the cellar dwellings. Hulme was a newly built area where cellars were used for their intended purpose - storage. Reach claimed that the Hulme house dweller and the Ancoats cellar dweller earned similar wages and yet “what was deal in Ancoats was mahogany in Hulme”. He decided to examine the deal and the mahogany in greater detail.

He was invited into a house in Hulme by the lady of the house. He was careful to note that she did not work in the mill but her sons and daughters did. The house was cheerful and comfortable and ‘tolerably’ clean. The walls had been papered and there was a sufficient supply of furniture. There were several ornaments and the window ledges boasted several plant pots that contained dusty
GERANIUMS.

Reach then took himself to a dingy Ancoats street that had a 'central sloppy gutter'. Here he took the opportunity to look through doors that were 'hospitably open'. The floors of these houses were either brick or flagstone. They usually contained one deal table, a few chairs and stools and most had a cradle by the fireside. The Ancoats house contained ornaments of a more humble nature. However, all contained that most useful of ornaments - a clock.

In the cellar dwellings Reach noted no ornaments and little furniture.

"The floors seem damp and unwholesome, you catch a glimpse of a rickety-looking bed in a dark airless corner and the fire upon the hearth is often cheerlessly small, smouldering amongst the unswept ashes." (4)

As noted above, Reach assumed that the Hulme house dweller, the Ancoats house dweller and the cellar dweller were all in receipt of similar incomes. This must have been an assumption as the only occupant he met and talked to was the lady in Hulme who invited him to enter. The occupiers of the other homes appear to have been absent when Reach availed himself of their open doors or peered into their cellars.

Reach painted a wonderful word picture of Saturday afternoon - a picture of the 'universality of the purification'. He saw young children staggering with buckets full of water, he even saw 'two or three Lords of Creation' black-leading the stoves. The children had to carry water because, as Captain Willis, the Head of Constabulary in 1847, had reported, there were 22,956 houses in Manchester.
without either an internal water supply or a common tap. Amongst these were many of the cellars. Captain Willis had reported that there were 5,070 cellar dwellings in the Borough of Manchester. Of these, 1,108 had piped water, over 1,968 had a common tap leaving 2,000 dependent on other sources - usually the river. It was reported to Reach that there was a 'growing disinclination' towards cellar dwellings as they were 'much disliked'. Reach noted that there were more people living in unventilated, undrained and unwholesome buildings in the St Georges Road, Oldham Road and Great Ancoats Street area than in the new districts of Chorlton and Hulme.

Reach was fully aware of the problems of his time. He, in common with many of the novelists and visitors, remarked on the separation of the classes. He believed that it was the duty of the master to care for the welfare of the hand.

"At all events, whether it be their duty or not, it is very clearly in their interest." (5)

To emphasize his point, Reach reported a conversation he had had with an intelligent card room hand who, although he had worked in the same mill for nineteen years, had never spoken to the master. This hand believed that he would work better if he thought that the master cared about him. Another operative argued that the masters were afraid to speak to the hands for fear that they would lose authority.

Reach also concerned himself with the effect of industrialisation on the family. He was confused by the contradictory nature of the results of his enquiries. He accepted that the life of the operative was shortened
“the child toils sooner. attains physical development sooner. marries sooner, has children in his turn sooner and, in the present sanitary state of matters. dies sooner.” (6)

Reach strongly believed that this turned the family into an economic unit rather than a source of warmth and instruction, for now the family was not solely dependent on the income from the head of the household. This economic arrangement broke the bonds of affection between the family members. Another evil stemmed from the early break up of the family, a physical evil whose seriousness was progressive.

“The children of parents not come to full vigour and development of their strength must be a weakly and a stunted race and they in their turn will produce weakly and stunted successors”. (7)

It was this situation that lead to the threat of generational degeneration and not the actual conditions within the mills and factories.

The contradiction to this, for Reach, lay in what he believed to be the advantages of early marriage which he saw as a natural check on ‘indiscriminate sexual intercourse’.

“The factory system accumulates great masses of population - it has a peculiar forcing effect upon the physical energies of youth........Amid a population generally ignorant, generally untrained to habits of self-denial and upon whom the bonds of abstract morality cannot be expected to lie too heavily. what must in the natural course of things be the effect of such a combination of circumstances? Were it not for early marriages........the practical result would be a state of society from the contemplation of which all right-minded persons would shrink.” (8)

Reach was fully aware of the use of narcotics on children. Perhaps he, like
Disraeli, had obtained his information from the Blue Books. He also suggested, again like Disraeli, that many children died 'unnaturally' without care or concern. It was his 'solemn conviction' that working mothers were the 'bane and the disgrace' of the cotton system. He left it to others to judge whether there should be legislation that differentiated between women and mothers as workers and suggested that it might be possible to extend the hours of the one, thereby increasing the 'time apportionable to the domestic duties of the other'.

Reach reported on the general mortality rate of Manchester. It was higher than in neighbouring towns as the city acted as a magnet 'to tramps and vagrants' from the agricultural districts. Such people, he argued, as Cooke Taylor had done, were usually incapable of field work and in poor health. They were housed in conditions that were worse than those of the pauper or criminal. Reach argued that the people of Angel Meadow were living "twenty or thirty a house where there was only accommodation for less than one third this number".

In common with Mayhew, his co-reporter in London, Reach took to the streets and talked to the people. After visiting a model lodging-house, a clean and respectable establishment, he visited "the lowest, most filthy, most unhealthy and most wicked locality in Manchester........Angel Meadow". The area was full of cellar dwellings - thieves, prostitutes and tramps filled its streets.

"And in the very worst sties of filth and darkness, by the unhappy wretches, the low Irish."(9)

Reach had a guide through this den of vice, a police sub inspector. Reach believed that his presence restricted his investigation as it caused panic amongst many of the
Angel Meadow inhabitants.

Reach entered an ordinary 'low lodging house' and discovered a group of about ten men and women sitting around the fire who fell silent in the presence of the policeman and cast furtive glances in his direction. The women of this group

"were coarse-looking and repulsive, more than one with contused, discoloured faces. The men were of that class you often remark in low localities - squalid, hulking fellows with no particular mark of any trade or calling upon them. The women were of the worst class of prostitute, and the men, their bullies and partners in robberies."(10)

The lodging house was packed with broken beds that were covered with filthy, brown rags. The whole place was overpoweringly hot and stinking. The charge for a bed was fourpence per night.

Reach and his companion visited the 'Dog and Duck' public house in Charter Street, Ancoats - well-known to the police throughout the kingdom. Disappointingly, the Dog and Duck only contained two customers. Reach and his companion were more fortunate when they entered a crowded beer-house. Here he met women whose "faded finery proclaimed that they had formerly held high position in their wretched class". There was a "villainous-looking black man with no shoes" and two pedlars. However, as they were leaving

"a boy about 13 or 14, smartly dressed with a tassel dangling from his cap came up. 'Well, young 'un,' said my companion, 'whose pockets have your hands been in this morning?' The boy stared coolly at the inspector. The light from a lamp fell upon his face and I never saw a worse one - little deep-sunk eyes and square, bony jaw with a vile
expression. 'What do ye mean, talking about pockets to me? I don't know nothing about pockets,' and turning on his heel, entered the house. The boy had been twice convicted and been several times in trouble. He walked Market Street at night, often in partnership with a woman."(11)

Reach had encountered few Irish on his walks around the Angel Meadow area of Manchester. They, he argued, lived in the cellars. Reach and his companion descended into one such establishment. He reported that the first room was about twelve feet by eight and neither Reach nor his companion could stand up without stooping. They discovered at least a dozen men, women and children sitting or squatting around the fire. He also reported that at least half the inmates of this cellar were absent at the time of his visit. The inmates slept together on the stone floor or on shavings or on rags. The back room of this cellar was strewn with 'splinters of wood used for matchmaking'. On these shavings Reach observed two little girls asleep. The people of the cellar were natives of Westpoint in Co. Mayo, Ireland. The lady of the house thanked her God that they were free of fever, "they were poor but they were daysint and did their best".(12)

Reach and his companion then visited the "worst cellar in all Manchester". I use the quote almost in full to demonstrate most graphically the horror that met their eyes.

"The outer room was like that of others I had seen.........we proceeded into the inner cellars. They were, literally, vaults, three of them opening from one to the other. The air was thick with damp and stench. The vaults were mere subterranean holes, utterly without light. The flicker of the candle showed their grimy walls, reeking with foetid damp, which trickled in greasy drops down to the floor. Beds were huddled in every corner.........in one of these a man was
lying dressed and besides him slept a well-grown calf. Sitting upon another bed was an old man, maudlin drunk, with the saliva running over his chin. In the next cellar two boys were snoring together in one bed and besides them was an old man sleeping in an old battered cap. "Is he undressed?" I said. The police officer, for answer, twitched down the clothes and revealed a stark naked man, black with filth. The smell in this room was dreadful and the air at once hot and wet. I saw that a sort of hole or shallow cave about six feet long, two feet deep and a little more than one foot high had been scooped out through the wall into the earth on the outside of the foundation, and in this hole or earthen cupboard there was stretched upon a scanty litter of foul-smelling straw, a human being - an old man. As he lay on his back, his face was not two inches beneath the roof, so to speak, of the hole. I turned away, and was glad when I found myself breathing such comparatively fresh air as can be found in Angel Meadow, Manchester."

From this horror we now turn for the first time for a perception of Stockport and its people.

II

Reach, in his investigation for the Morning Chronicle, took his readers through the rich variety of life that existed at the bottom of Manchester society. He introduced his readers to women who were the worst class of prostitute - to a villainous looking black man with no shoes - to a young boy with a vile expression and, finally, to the inhabitants of the worst cellar in Manchester. The Stockport Advertiser perceived very little variety - the underclass of Stockport society was clearly identified as the Irish. The Stockport Advertiser was a staunch supporter of
the Tory ethos and, furthermore, it played a leading role in the vehement anti-Irish campaign that had been conducted in the Borough from the early 1840s.

The *Advertiser* depicted the Irish as uncivilised, filthy, lazy, immoral and bestial. Their habitations were hotbeds of disease, corruption and crime. The areas of concentrated Irish occupancy were seen as the Augean stables and the *Advertiser* demanded action from the sanitary authorities. Unless action was taken, the whole Borough was threatened.

For example, in August, 1851, the *Advertiser* reported on a cellar dwelling in Rock Yard.

"........the sleeping place for which is excavated out of the rock, the bed is made of shavings strewn on the ground and upon this an Irishman, his wife and three children regularly take their rest environed by bestial filth and moisture..........unless the most determined efforts be made to insist upon something like a civilized mode of habitation amongst the lower orders of Irish, the health of our manufacturing population will not be worth a week's purchase."

In addition to the direct condemnation of the Irish, the *Advertiser* also dealt in strong innuendo. When the body of a newly-born baby was found stuffed into an over-flowing privy in Pickford's Brow (21.11.1851) the *Advertiser* reported that it is was the Irish who used the privy and, as it was on a public thoroughfare, it had been emptied at the authorities expense.

The following year the *Advertiser* continued to inform its readers of the almost heathen practices of the Irish. In an article in the paper for 16.4.1852 it
reported that the police had visited a lodging house in the Borough and that they had discovered the naked body of a woman lying before the fire. Apparently, the woman had just died and her friends had taken her from her bed and brought her into the kitchen to wash her prior to the ceremony of ‘waking’. Although the article does not contain the word ‘Irish’, the use of the term ‘waking’ was a very strong pointer to the ethnic origins of the company.

We have seen, both with Reach and the visitors and novelists, that specific areas of Manchester attracted their attentions. For The Stockport Advertiser, attention focused on specific streets and buildings. These streets would have been known to the paper’s readership and constituted, at least in their perception, the Irish areas of the Borough. Frequent reference was made to Rock Row, Garnet Street, Watson Street, et al. One place that constantly and, over time, was continually laid before the readers of the Advertiser was Sheppards Buildings. In 1846 it was described as consisting of two rows containing 44 houses and 22 cellar dwellings that were ‘damp, dark and very low, not more than six feet between floor and ceiling’. The street between these two rows was seven yards wide and a common gutter ran down the middle of the street that was always full of putrefying matter. The inhabitants of Sheppards Buildings were reported as sleeping four to a bed.

On 18.8.1854, the Advertiser reported that the symptoms of cholera had made their appearance in Sheppards Buildings. The buildings appeared to have grown over the intervening years. It now consisted of three rows of buildings that contained 66 houses most of which possessed a cellar dwelling beneath them. The buildings housed 462 people. All the inhabitants appeared to have had the use of
just one ‘petty’ and the area did not benefit from a sewer. There was a gas works and a dye works in very close proximity. The houses and the cellars were chiefly occupied by the Irish and they were ‘in a very filthy state’. The houses were 13 feet 8 inches long, 9 feet 5 inches broad and 7 feet high. They contained two rooms and the sleeping room contained two or three beds. The cellars were described as being 6 feet below the level of the street. On the 21.9.1855, the Advertiser reported that Sheppards Buildings had been purchased by the Gas Committee for £1,000.

The Stockport Advertiser’s perception of the under class was clearly unfocussed. A more multi-focussed investigation was undertaken by Mr W I Wild under the title of Light and Shades of Stockport Life. The articles were first printed in the Cheshire County News - date unknown. They were reprinted in a booklet by the Cheshire County News Co Ltd around 1888. All the following quotations are taken from this booklet.

In the second of the articles headed Hillgate Past and Present, Wild notes that Hillgate had fallen from its once genteel standing. The once grand houses had become lodging houses. The area was full of disreputable individuals.

"The pale faced girl with the shawl over her head, is a learner, as yet, in the same school as the fierce looking virago who has no head covering whatever and none she needs for all vestige of womanhood has long since departed.”(14)

There were street loafers whose faces clearly showed that they regularly attended the police court. The majority of people had a battered and weary look, their lives were sad and vicious.

Fights were a regular occurrence on Hillgate and the police had to patrol in twos or threes. Wild was particularly revolted by the sight of two women who, having been ejected from a public house, had set about each other, tearing each
other's hair and blaspheming loudly. The cause of the fight was a man who Wild described as being

"a degraded specimen of manhood. a veritable gaol-bird who is chuckling over the contest."

Wild was confident of his ability to read character in the faces of the people he encountered, even when these people were mere children. Townend House for Boys was a home for boys who had been rescued from "want and sorrow or crime". In this home he encountered

"a misshapen creature, small enough in stature but scarcely seeming human in his grotesque appearance and antics. The shuffle of the tramp is in his gait, the whine of the professional beggar in his voice, until he was rescued and brought here. he seldom or never slept in a bed. was beaten and cuffed out of all human semblance until his father, in a drunken fury. smashed a quart jug on his head and left marks upon him which he will carry for life."(15)

Wild carried his character-reading abilities on into his other articles. In the fifth, entitled Wellington Road on a Sunday Night, he described a visit to a public house. 'Delilah' was present in full force. Some of the young girls were as the one on Hillgate, novices, whilst others were well practised in the art. Back on Wellington Road, Wild encountered gangs of teen-age girls who possessed innocent faces but foul tongues. When these young girls met with the opposite sex, they exchanged indecent gestures. Wild argued that such behaviour made Wellington Road an unsuitable place for a respectable woman to walk unaccompanied, especially at night. During the day, Wellington Road presented a very different aspect. It was a 'spacious roadway' and provided a good promenade. Few other provincial towns could boast of such a road. What could be done to restore the
character of such a place at night? Wild believed that the police did what they could but the problem was too vast for their efforts to quell. Furthermore

"despite the presence of the Sunday School and wealthy congregations in church and chapel, there was not an organisation that could reach these young people to offer them counter attractions. Surely, the religion of today is too respectable."(16)

In his next article, Wild took his reader one step down the social ladder from the teenagers of Wellington Road, to an area he called Trampdom, which was situated around Adlington Square. Here he was shown into a lodging house by a woman from the ‘Sister Isle’. In this house he set eyes upon a man who had two children with him. By merely looking into the man’s face, Wild was certain that he was ‘wanted’ somewhere. Across the street from the lodging house Wild encountered young men and women. One of the men had been disturbed immodestly changing his nether garments in full view but the action had occasioned no remark. With this man was a young woman with a ‘powerful’ fringe. “Everything about her proclaimed that she had often frequented the police courts.”

As with the reports in The Stockport Advertiser, Wild marked the territory of Trampdom clearly - Chestergate, Rock Row and High Street. The vast majority of the denizens of Trampdom were young people of both sexes.

“There is on most faces a look of sullen defiance or reckless bravado and the girls are seldom prepossessing, only in one instance having any trace of beauty or intelligence.”(17)

Over the whole area hung an odour that Wild labelled the ‘poverty smell’.

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Wild's description of Trampdom resembled that of a rabbit warren. It was full of dark streets, alleys and courts. One could pass through one house into another and exit into courts where numerous alleyways diverged. Wild was certain that few of the respectable inhabitants of Stockport were aware of the horrors and immorality that existed down these dark, impenetrable streets. Few knew that their Borough contained so many people who chose not to participate in respectable occupations and scraped a living by hawking or chair mending. However, Wild believed that it was his duty to warn his readers who were of a charitable disposition to be on their guard.

“If you are at all charitably disposed, be sure your weakness is known, nay, the very place where you dwell and the veteran cadger, as he disposes of the bread and meat he has received from your kindly sympathy, feels a pleasure in securing the best price for your contribution whilst he makes himself comfortable on the coppers he has obtained.”(18)

It is of little surprise that Wild drew a clear line between the deserving and the undeserving poor given his antipathy to charity. The distinction was most clearly demonstrated in his report on a visit to the workhouse under the title *Only a Pauper whom Nobody Owns*. He found the ‘house’ clean and saw many happy, smiling children. The boys of the house were taught tailoring and shoemaking, whilst the girls were put out to service. Able-bodied paupers made firewood and coffins whilst those who were infirm pulled fur from old clothes for the hatting industry. Wild was delighted to report that the Tramp ward had been improved. No longer did it provide a free night’s shelter, the tramp was now allotted tasks that had to be completed before he could leave. No longer did the tramp share a common dormitory with others of his ilk, he now slept in a single cell with a plank
for a bed attached to which was a pair of leg irons. Whilst so confined, the tramp was expected to spend time in ‘silent meditation’. In spite of all these improvements, Wild still believed that

“For the idle and the improvident, the present ‘House’ is far too comfortable, for the unfortunate it affords a happy asylum from the cares and anxieties of a struggling existence.”(19)

And so to Rochdale.

III

During December, 1870, The Rochdale Pilot, a Tory paper, printed a series of papers by ‘Urban’ on the condition of the ‘Very Poor’. In the first, printed on the 17th December, ‘Urban’ argued that his readers were aware of the existence of beggars. They had all at one time succumbed to unwisely giving alms. They were all aware of the existence of thieves from the court records and, following the passing of the Contagious Diseases Act, they were all aware of what was politely phrased ‘social evil’. Society was also aware of ‘pauperism, vice and starvation’ because they paid rates to the Poor Law Guardians. Urban went on to argue that society did not know how or where such people lived. Urban’s articles were therefore written as an act of enlightenment.

Urban likened Rochdale society and, perhaps, society in general, to a many-layered box of figs or a display of fruit that hid the decay away from the eyes of the
market inspector. He saw it as his duty to open up the rotten layer at the bottom to society's gaze. Urban claimed that he had nothing to do with labels such as upper circles, middle class or even working classes. He intended to concentrate his articles on the 'Very Poor', a label he suggested which proved to be inapt. He intended to introduce to his readers

"people who live like pigs in squalid courts and most of them gain their living by dishonest means."

Urban maintained that various parts of Rochdale could be described as filthy and squalid but there were two distinct areas that called for specific condemnation. These were firstly, Church Lane and the area of the Gank and, secondly, Mount Pleasant. What made these two areas, rivals in the growth of criminality as they were, distinct for Urban, was that Mount Pleasant was the home of the Rochdale Irish. It followed for Urban that, although there were frequent fights in Mount Pleasant, they were 'of a family character'. In the Church Lane and Gank area 'assaults and robberies take place on strangers'. He had, therefore, decided to concentrate his energies on Church Lane.

To ensure that he did his duty towards his readership, Urban carefully defined this area of evil - Church Stile to Packer Street, along the South Parade, up Drake Street, Great George Street and School Lane and back to Church Stile - an area of 450 by 150 yards. It was described as being an area of

"sinuous alleys, which no stranger could pass after nightfall without danger of robbery and ill-treatment. Here are streets swarming with the most wretched of miserable beings. Here fallen humanity plies its horrid trade without shame for with shame there is hope and these poor creatures have fallen almost below hope. Here too are lounging and idle scamps, living on the villainy of the women."
Many of the houses in the Gank were 300 year old cottages, others were described as merely lean-to sheds. Urban stated a preference for the lean-to sheds for at least the draughtiness allowed ‘the foul air to disperse’, in spite of each court containing a ‘smoking middenstead’. The rent for one room in a house was three and sixpence a week, for one room in a shed it was four shillings a week. One upper room in a house had been abandoned as unfit, ‘even for a prostitute’. Urban maintained that the owners of the properties could charge such high rents because all the premises were brothels - their inmates ‘Nymphs of the Pave’ - “(What mockery)”. Little wonder that Mr Logan found few first class houses in Rochdale.

Urban appears to have been aware of Logan’s report on prostitution. He argued that, in larger towns, there were grades of prostitutes, from those in fashionable quarters to the ‘Molly or Sal’ of the slums. In Church Lane he found no quality, all were equally bad. In addition, many of the Church Lane ‘nympha’ had men who lived either solely on the trade of prostitution or took part in robberies. Urban was not impressed by the skills of the Rochdale thieves. “There is nothing about Rochdale thieves to put a copper on his mettle.”

In his second paper, printed on the 24th and 31st of December, 1870, Urban again concentrated on Church Lane. This time he was accompanied by a police officer. His declared aim was to test the truth or falsehood of all that he had heard relating to the habits of the criminals. Surprisingly, in view of his first paper, Urban owns that there were some honest inhabitants living in Church Lane and the Gank and he wished to assure them that they were not to be included in his investigation. His intention was to be “devoted almost entirely to a visit to the brothels - and there were many - and to the lodging houses”.

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At the very outset of his journey Urban encountered a ‘triper’, a prostitute who steals from a client whilst his thoughts were elsewhere - he also met a victim of such a practice. Apart from these two, Church Lane was quiet. Urban and his companion then entered a public house where they saw some of the decent Gank inhabitants engaged in ‘clog dancing’. Despite being surrounded by brothels, the customers of the public house showed an intelligent, joyous appreciation of music and were almost perfectly sober. Urban reminded his readership that he was not “drawing on fancy for my description, but on solid fact”.

In their continued search for the true low life of Rochdale, Urban and his guide turned their attention to lodging houses. In one such establishment they were informed that the residents were not tramps but journeymen and hawkers. At another, all he could report on was the smell. Rather disappointedly, they left the lodging houses as “no incidents enlivened our very business-like inspection”. They ventured once more on to Church Lane.

In Church Lane Urban and his companion were greeted by loud cries of ‘Murder!’ and ‘Police!’. The cries emanated from a young woman who was “endishabille to an alarming degree”. Between her shouts and curses she claimed that some bullies had thrown a stone through her “windy and bruk a pane and hit her on the head”. Urban described her as without beauty, disfigured by her life of degradation. He wondered how a man could be attracted to such a creature. He also considered the possibility that he had placed himself on a “pedestal of self-righteousness”. It can be argued that, by printing the speech in dialect, he clearly lifted himself above the people of Church Lane. He ended this paper by maintaining that
There are things within our ken which may not be proclaimed on
the housetops and the mysteries of Church Lane are of them.

It being one o’clock on a Sunday morning, Urban and his companion called an end
to their exploration.

We can agree with Urban that, in his visits to the brothels of Church Lane, he
had adopted a self-righteous stance. Conversely, his writing took on the hue of the
voyeur. In his second visit to the lodging houses, his stance was on the common
theme of the deserving and the undeserving poor and the dangers of indiscriminate
charitable giving. His declared aim was to explore the world of the beggar and he
chose 10.30 am on a Sunday morning for his visit. The results of his investigation
were printed in The Rochdale Pilot on the 31st December, 1870.

Urban admitted that, in his youth, he had often given a crust of bread to a
beggar ‘be he dog or man’. However, he now realised that crust such as these were
gathered together and sold - a trade previously noted by Wild in Stockport. The
action of selling alms made begging a profession. Urban maintained that society
was not being charitable when charity was given indiscriminately to all

“It is not charity to one’s neighbours to foster a tribe of people in
habits of idleness.”

Urban argued that during hard times man had a choice between ‘enquiry and
authority’ or begging. If a man chose begging he was on a downward slope, his
self-respect vanished and he became a ‘lazy scamp’. Down this path lay
degeneration, for
"No child who can crawl is too young to beg and, as a rule, the younger the applicant, the more sympathy and alms will be accorded."

The home of the beggar and his family was revolting

"Wretchedness and riot were hand in hand, squalor and waste were here allied........and it was as clean as might be expected from the presence of five children and dissolute parents."

It is not clear who invited Urban into this den. However, he does not spare his readers from the sight. He described the room and its occupants in graphic detail, from the half-naked children to the table that was without a cloth, from the befuddled head of the family to the fact that he sliced his bread with a tobacco-stained knife. What attracted most of Urban’s attention was the quantity of food these ‘poor’ people had at their disposal. There were platters of eggs and bacon, bread, six or seven pounds of ribs, “not the most healthy in colour, but meat all the same” and potatoes. There was a bottle on the table a quarter full of tea or whisky. Urban concluded that

"In all the houses we entered, there was evidence of reckless extravagance, coupled with want. Not want of food but a want of all those comforts which go to make up a home. The personal habits of the people themselves were wretched in their filth and I saw enough in that morning’s walk to convince me of the truth of all I had heard on the subject of beggars."

Clearly, Urban’s message was that such people were the undeserving poor. The deserving poor would face ‘enquiry and authority’ and make their case before the Guardians. People who chose to beg were not poor, they had sufficient to maintain themselves. It was their own characters that were at fault, they were feckless and profligate. It is also clear, and not denied by Urban, that he had
entered the home of the beggar with well defined preconceived notions as to their way of life. His standards were clearly those of his own class in that he noted the lack of a table cloth, the dirty knife and the ribs, though not suitable for himself, were perfectly acceptable as food for the underclass of Rochdale.

Juxtaposed to Urban’s article in *The Rochdale Pilot* of the 31st December, 1870, was the following report from the Rochdale Petty Sessions

“Mary Ann Benson and Sarah Platt were charged with stealing a purse, watchguard and seven pawn tickets from the person of Christopher Jackson. Mr Whitehead defended. The case was one of ordinary brothel robbery. The prosecutor stated that on Monday night he was in a brothel in Church Lane and was there robbed. He stated that he was not in the house more than ten minutes. He was quite sober at the time. The bench did not trouble Mr Whitehead for any defence, believing that any man - especially a married man as Christopher Jackson was - who could be capable of such disreputable conduct as that of going into a brothel whilst sober was a person whose evidence could not be depended upon without corroboration. There was no corroborating evidence, consequently the prisoners were discharged.”

It would appear that, despite Urban’s courage in undertaking the onerous duty of visiting Church Lane, the general populace of Rochdale was fully aware of the situation that existed there. It would also appear that, in the eyes of the elite, anyone who visited the area, especially when sober, reaped their just deserts!

IV

Our final reporter’s perception is provided by the *Salford Weekly News* - a
newspaper that was on the Liberal wing of politics. In January, 1877, the paper dispatched 'Our Special Commissioner' into the darker recesses of the town to investigate the 'Sanitary and Social State of Salford'. In the first article, on the 6th January, the Commissioner used the truer version of the old adage, than that used by Cooke Taylor, “one half of the world knows not how the other half lives”. In this he was suggesting that he was about to embark on a journey of exploration.

The Commissioner argued that whilst only a London garret provided perfect solitude, there were too many people in large towns for people to concern themselves with their neighbours. Unlike Harkness, he found no village communities amid the slums of Salford. Through the efforts of the jerry-builder, whole neighbourhoods had suddenly come into being and, should they disappear as quickly, it would be a matter of slight concern.

The Commissioner claimed the mantle of the ordinary man. He claimed no special skills but he knew when a house was fit for habitation by civilised beings. He knew that pure air, cleanliness, sunlight and pure water were essential to a decent existence. As an ordinary man, he would not judge others but he took with him on his journey the

"well defined canons of morality subscription to which, even if tacit, is absolutely necessary to the existence of society."

Again, as the common man, he had little sympathy for the jerry-builder, the building inspector, the nuisance inspector or the medical officer all of whom, he believed, neglected their duties through "incompetence or idleness". The Commissioner was also critical of religious agencies that failed to keep the commandments.
"I know it will fall to my lot to relate to my readers occasionally stories of distress and of heroic struggle against poverty and the misery and degradation that so often follow in its train. . . . . I am no man's enemy but I shall do my best to speak the truth always, to exaggerate nothing, to set down nought in malice, but in all things to be the relentless enemy of wrong and the determined champion of right."

The Commissioner's first expedition was into an area of the town that was bounded on one side by the River Irwell and Broughton Road - Greengate and Springfield Lane on the others - an area known as Greengate. Houses here were let at two to six shillings a week. The area was full of small shops selling rather aged looking fruit, vegetables and confectionery - often in the charge of a dirty, young girl. There was also a marine store dealer "from whose odorous dwelling may I be permitted to live a considerable distance away all my life".

The area of Greengate presented a picture of contrast. Some of the houses were so respectable that the woman of the house not only cleaned her doorstep but also the pavement in front of her house. Others had an air of "misery, dirt, degradation and improvidence". The Commissioner questioned whether the inhabitants of these homes were really human. The worst areas were reached down dark alleys. The courts here measured four to five yards by two to three yards, therefore, no clean air or sunshine could reach the inhabitants. The closets were stinking and foul, lacking both privacy and decency. In Vale Street, he discovered a necessary that opened

"directly onto a public thoroughfare . . . . . the whole thing in its revolting foulness is exposed to the public gaze. Young men and women, boys and girls and people of all ages live in the neighbourhood. They are inured to filth and accustomed to foulness."
In his second paper, printed on the 13th January, 1877, the Special Commissioner considered the variety of people that lived in Greengate. The majority of people he had met had an air of resignation - had little desire to live any better. Urban had briefly acknowledged that Church Lane, Rochdale contained some decent residents, whilst the Salford Commissioner noted that many people of Greengate wanted their children to attend both day and Sunday school. Indeed, he had met children who were healthy and strong, sickly and weak, dirty and clean, intelligent and dull. He had met those who promised beauty and strength. However, he believed that their adulthood was "doomed to be marred by dreadful surroundings before they can unfold". The Commissioner clearly noted the signs of generational degeneration when he argued that

"In the faces of all may be read the history of ancestors. Some tell tales of parental debauchery and evil too terrible to be detailed, while others speak of a parentage that has degenerated - fallen from a higher state."

The Commissioner took his readers into the home of a Greengate resident - the home of the 'Brown' family. It was a two-up, two-down house and the inhabitants numbered seven. The house had a cellar pantry in which was kept the coals and a few fowls. The house was dirty but 'Mrs Brown' was described as motherly. Her eldest child had died, aged ten, shortly after they had arrived in Salford from the Lancashire countryside, attracted by the prospect of higher wages. The eldest living child earned five to six shillings in the mill and the others attended school, excepting one:

"You see, somebody must run errands and nurse the baby, especially on washing and ironing days and who so likely as that poor unfortunate but preternaturally sharp little maiden aged twelve."
In *The Salford Weekly News* of the 20th January, 1877, the Commissioner described his exploration of the Crescent area. He remarked that this area had once contained ‘beauty and wealth’. Now it contained a gasworks, cattle market, brick kilns and a smallpox hospital. He made no mention of the railway as a agency of decay. He noted that, when the area was very respectable, there was no Christ Church which led him to wonder

> “to what extent the respectability of the Crescent had suffered by the erection of a church.”

The jerry-builder was feeding on the Crescent and covering every open space in a very short period of time. He notes that in West John Street, one of their houses recently collapsed, killing a man. These houses only had two rooms, one on top of the other. On the opposite side of the street there were dwellings with no upstairs rooms at all. The whole street shared two closets with middens and doors that did not lock. Again, the Commissioner was revolted by the stench and ‘beat a hasty retreat’.

Further into his walk, the Commissioner arrived in the Barrack area of Regent Road - an area that ‘beggared adequate description’. The houses were again described as filthy and few possessed any pains of glass. Like Reach, he entered one uninvited, but this house was empty, it was not someone’s home. The interior was repulsive. It was of a two-up, two-down construction and the rooms measured about ten feet by nine and nine feet high and eight feet by eight.

The condition of the people of Crescent was low. The few young girls that caught his eye lacked the ‘charm of English girlhood’ and moved in a ‘slovenly,
slipshod, hopeless way'. There were many children on the streets even though it was school hours. These children resembled bundles of dirty rags; some had sore eyes, all had filthy hair 'that seemed never to have known a brush or a comb', and all were bare-footed. One was even stark naked.

"As to the men and women who live in the localities, those I happened to see looked poisoned. People with skin diseases are common and those with drinking disease commoner."

Although shocked and sickened by what he had seen, our special Commissioner reserved his strongest condemnation for Bury's Building off Millwall Street.

"There are a number of cellar dwellings here, and it is enough to make a man ashamed of his humanity to go into them. To call those places 'dwellings' fit for human habitation, is to utter a monstrous lie. I say they are fit for toads and toads only.........if there is anyone who should find it in his heart to say that such a hole is a fit place for a human being, however degraded, to dwell in, then I make that individual a present of my pity."

The cellars were two-roomed and, if they were on the end of the block, the rent was one and sixpence, for the others the rent was one and threepence. The Commissioner's description of the cellars conformed totally with that of the Davenport's cellar in *Mary Barton* - a back room with a grated window, that was unusable, the lack of furniture, the damp, even the accumulation of rubbish by the cellar door. The people who inhabited these awful places were pale and sickly. The Commissioner concludes that

"while we permit such folk to inure themselves to conditions of life
It was not all stench and filth in Ordsall. The Commissioner drew a clear demarcation line between the wards of Greengate and Crescent and those of Regent and Ordsall. The people of the latter were described as

"the backbone and muscle of England - the working men who form that large element of political stability so characteristic of the English people."

The houses of Ordsall had two rooms downstairs plus kitchen. The men earned good wages and their wives were excellent managers. Their children attended school; few attended church. The people of Ordsall were well-read in history, mechanical science etc. They frequently attended lectures in the free library and listened with intelligent attention.

Who was to blame for the darker side of Salford? The Commissioner clearly believed that the authorities - the Medical Officer of Health, the Sanitary Committee - grossly neglected their duties. "Who's duty is it to empty the overflowing middens?" he asked. The landlords and their agents, the speculative builder were also blamed for chronic overcrowding and for building houses without sufficient necessaries. They built houses that were damp and likely to collapse and demanded rents ranging from two shillings to six shillings for their properties. Even Ordsall was not without its problems - these were inflicted by the Corporation. The night-soil men had been instructed to carry out their duties during the day. "The stench was something terrible."
The clearest difference between the various pieces of material considered in this chapter is one of style - the in-depth report as against the expose - the London-based as against the local. Reach was clearly a gifted reporter, investigator and observer. He had a rare talent for explanation and he avoided the somewhat overblown rhetoric of some of the other reporters. Reach’s description of the worst cellar in Manchester is, even to today’s reader, profoundly vivid because of his coolness and control of the language used; unlike, for example, the Salford reporter’s description of the cellar dwelling as fit only for toads. It can, however, be argued that both types of language were equally valid within their own context, given the reporter’s knowledge of his readership.

It is clear that Reach was writing for a London and Metropolitan readership rather than the other newspapers we have considered. Reach made only one reference to a side street by name with the implication that Charter Street was a national byword for squalor and vice. All the other reporters made great use of street names, demonstrating the local knowledge of their readership. In many instances they clearly defined relatively small geographical areas.

The more national message of Reach was reinforced by his need to introduce his readership to Manchester. It was a town of immigrants - newcomers from other towns and villages in addition to Irish immigrants. For him, Manchester was brown, brown sky, brown streets. For many of the visitors, previously considered, Manchester was grey. Local papers had no need of such a painting. Their readership knew precisely the colour and the make-up of their town.

Throughout Reach’s report there was an acceptance that life for those placed
towards the very bottom of the social scale was very hard, squalid and short. However, there was also a belief that these conditions would improve. Reach believed that the capitalist class would, through enlightened self-interest, build decent, affordable homes, would provide more education and would shorten the hours of nursing mothers. This feeling of hope does not hold for the people in the worst cellar. For them there was no hope, they would simply fester. The local papers express little or no hope for those they reported on. The Salford commissioner, for example, saw signs of resignation.

Reach consciously drew a line of demarcation between the 'reputable' poor areas of Hulme and the 'disreputable' areas of Deansgate, Ancoats and especially Angel Meadow. It is interesting to note the difference in approach taken towards the areas that lay on either side of the line. In the 'mahogany' Hulme, Reach was escorted around the house by the resident. In the 'deal' area of Ancoats, Reach peered through doorways that were 'hospitably' open. However, as he described the whole room, one must assume that he at least stepped over the threshold - a step that appears to have been taken without invitation. This behaviour we have also seen amongst some of the novelists we have considered, Delver, for example. Reach, too, saw no reason to extend the courtesy of a knock at the door of a home of the Ancoats dweller. It is almost as though he were an explorer discovering an African village or a twentieth century naturalist examining a species of animal, rather than a visitor among his own countrymen. Urban and his police guide appeared to have entered the brothels, lodging houses and the homes of beggars in Rochdale also without invitation.

We can see throughout Reach's reports a steady progression down the social
scale - Hulme to Ancoats to Angel Meadow. From house to model lodging to low lodging to cellar. Whilst he was descending the social scale, Reach considered the social and moral problems faced by those on each level. The children of the Hulme lady still lived at home bringing in a wage to increase the family budget. Lower down, the maternal and paternal bonds were soon severed, reducing the moral influence of the family - a point that was heavily stressed by Disraeli in *Sybil*. This early break was also strongly condemned by Southey, de Tocqueville, Faucher, Kohl et al. The local newspapers do not enter the philosophical discourse on family values.

The passage of descent in the local press was not as clearly defined as that of the *Morning Chronicle*. However, Wild’s articles do show gradations within the lower levels of society. The boys and girls on Wellington Road may have been obnoxious, but their behaviour paled when he considered the residents of Trampdom. Here, we found a clearly defined geographical area - Chestergate, Rock Row, Adlington Square, High Street. We also found the female of the ‘Sister Isle’, the man changing his nether garments in public view and the young woman with the ‘powerful fringe’. We found the sexes intermingling promiscuously, men and women without beauty or intelligence. It was in Trampdom that we saw the criminal, the workshy and over the whole area was the colour of poverty. Yet, the Salford reporter noted clean doorsteps and pavements even in stinking Greengate.

Reach met with the criminal and the work-shy in the low lodging house. Here he introduced his readers to prostitutes and their bullies, hulking men with no marks of a trade. These were people who fell silent in the presence of a policeman.
and a middle class visitor who had made no attempt to disguise his status. Such people would not meet the eyes of their visitors. The same class of person was met with in the beerhouse - the villainous-looking black man and the cheeky lad with a tassel on his cap. The lad, like the lady with the powerful fringe and her companions, was clearly marked by his description, “little deep-sunk eyes and square, bony jaw with a vile expression”. Not only did he have a vile expression - he had a police record and walked Market Street at night with a woman!

Urban of Rochdale, whilst acknowledging that society was many-layered, confined himself to people who lived like ‘pigs’ in squalid courts and who gained their living by dishonest means. They, too, were people without beauty or intelligence - disfigured and loathsome creatures. The strong message from Urban was that such people had deliberately rejected the acceptable standard of life that was commonly held to by the rest of the people of Rochdale or, at least, held to by the reporter and his companion.

For the Salford reporter, excluding the clean doorsteps of Greengate, the town’s population was clearly divided into two. They were either, the honest backbone of England, the working men of Ordsall, or the fearful-looking specimens of humanity around the Crescent. Such people were sodden, bleary-eyed, marked with sores, spots and scurvy. They were low-browed and destitute of any ray of intelligence and, like the people of Trampdom, they stank, again reflecting the theory of social Darwinism.

We see here our first commonality of conclusion between the London-based and the local reporters’ perception - people at the bottom of the social scale could be clearly identified by their appearance; they appeared to be a race apart from the
rest of humanity. Unlike Reach, however, the local reporters' approach to them is much less empathetic. There was little, if any, consideration paid to the social and moral problems faced by this race of people. The emphasis of the local reporters was more squarely based on the problems created by such people,

The second commonality of conclusion within the reporters' perception was also shared with Southey and Cooke Taylor - the awareness of the threat of degeneration of the population. For Reach, such degeneration was the natural result of early parentage and the widespread use of narcotics on children. For Urban of Rochdale, it was the result of beggars training their children in the skills of the trade. For Wild, it was the prostitutes instructing their sisters in the ancient art. For the Commissioner in Salford, degeneration came through the population becoming inured to the debauchery and filth that surrounded the people every waking moment. There is little evidence that any of our reporters were prepared to follow the Darwinian theory which contended that such a race of people would die out. Indeed, the Salford reporter believed that, whilst society possessed a pit - a stinking sink - there would always be people to fall into it. The reporters even perceived those who, despite living in the pit, fought against its degenerating effects. In Ancoats, Reach observed the 'universality of purification' with even the 'Lords of Creation' playing their part. For Urban, these were the happy clog dancers untainted by the brothels that surrounded them.

There is a third, though less firm, commonality amongst the various reported perceptions, in a negative sense. Unlike many of the other works we have considered, little was made of the political argument of blame. We do not find the reporters strongly stressing the separation of the classes argument that was
emphasised by both Disraeli and Faucher. Reach noted that such a separation did exist and the Special Commissioner in Salford does remark that one half of the world does not know the other half. He blamed this lack of knowledge for the conditions he described. Nor do we find the factory system itself held up as the root cause of the horrors that each reporter discovered although, again, as we have seen, Reach did call for shorter working hours for mothers. The factory system lay at the very heart of the problem for Southey, Kohl et al. We do find in the Salford articles, and to a lesser extent, in *The Stockport Advertiser* articles, a demand for the local authorities to act and a strong implication, in the Salford paper at least, that the local authorities and the landlords had been neglectful in their duties.

It is possible to argue that Trampdom in Stockport, Church Lane in Rochdale and the stinking, hidden back streets of Salford were their reporters' vision of Disraeli's Hellgate. At this distance in time it is not possible to be certain of the reporters' reasons for drawing the line of the underclass here. Did Wild and Urban choose such a level merely to excite the salacious appetites of their respective readerships with an expose of immorality and degradation? What is certain is that Reach took us further down the human staircase whilst accepting that such an investigation was the specific purpose behind the *Morning Chronicle* series. Reach took us lower than Hillgate - lower than the Davenport's cellar - lower than Southey and Cooke Taylor took their readers. Reach took his readers into a cellar in which a human being slept in a hole.

The question now to be answered is which would the readers of the various newspapers take as their perception of those at the very bottom of human society - the underclass. Who posed the greatest threat to the readers' way of life? Would it
be the thieves, bullies and prostitutes who inhabited Reach's low lodging house, Trampdom and Church Lane? These were people who could obviously work for a living, but who had chosen a life of debauchery, without shame, training others into their way of life. Would it be the Irish, condemned by Buret, Venedey, de Tocqueville and Faucher, the Irish of the Manchester cellars, the Irish of the Stockport cellars who lived environed by bestial filth?

It is human nature to seek for the worst excesses of behaviour - either to feed salacious appetites, or to confirm prejudices. It is, however, possible to argue that, for the readership of the various publications, the greatest perceived threat would come from the thieves, prostitutes and their bullies. People such as these had consciously rejected the accepted standard and sought to attract others into the same way of life.

Support for this argument may lie in L P Curtis, *Apes and Angels*. In chapter IV, Curtis writes

"The dominant Victorian stereotype of Paddy looked far more like an ape than a man. By the 1860s, no respectable reader of comic weeklies and most of their readers were respectable - could possibly mistake the simous nose, long upper lip, huge projecting mouth and jutting low jaw as well as sloping forehead for any other category of undesirable or dangerous human being than that known as Irish."(20)

Curtis illustrated what he labelled ‘Simianizing’ the Irish celt with the use of Punch cartoons. He argued that the process of simianizing took place between 1840 and 1890 with the 1860s being the pivotal point of change. In the early stages
the Irishman developed a porcine physiognomy though he retained a humanoid appearance. Later he developed an acute “mid-facial prognathism and changed from man to beast”. Curtis maintained that the

“antecedents of this stereotype were just as widespread as the conviction in England and Scotland that the Irish were inherently inferior and quite unfit to manage their own affairs.”

If we accept the thesis proposed by Curtis, it is possible to argue that the reader of the *Morning Chronicle* and *The Stockport Advertiser* would not have been surprised by the conditions found in the ‘homes’ of the Irish. The Irish were beasts and they lived like beasts in filth and without morals. We find echoes of this in the almost dismissive attitude of Venedey when he remarked, “of course, they were Irish”, when describing a filthy house and his shock when he found an English family “dirty like the Irish”. The Rochdale Irish were dismissed from Urban’s reporting - “they simply fight amongst themselves” - perhaps again suggestive of animal behaviour. The beggars and prostitutes, those who bore the physical signs of their debauchery, those who lived surrounded by squalor and accepted it were, according to the reporters, with the odd exception, not Irish. They had sunk to the lowest level of human existence. They were both alien in appearance alien in culture, they were a race apart but still a human race. From them came the severest threat of total human degeneration.
Chapter 3 - References

2. ibid p 18.
3. ibid p 18.
4. ibid p 22.
5. ibid p 27.
6. ibid p 29.
7. ibid p 31-32.
8. ibid p 32.
9. ibid p 75.
10. ibid p 76.
11. ibid p 77.
12. ibid p 78.
13. ibid p 78.
15. ibid, p 20.
16. ibid, p 25.
17. ibid, p 27.
18. ibid, p 29.
19. ibid, p 39.
CHAPTER 4

THE PROFESSIONAL PERCEPTION

In this, the final chapter of our investigation into the Victorian perception of the underclass, we will consider the thoughts of those to whom the title 'professional' could be awarded. Professional men, Perkin argues

"had a separate, if sometimes subconscious, social ideal which underlay their versions of the other class ideals. Their ideal society was a functional one based on expertise and selection by merit."(1)

Included within Perkin's ranks of professional men were doctors, lawyers and clergymen. The first three works in this chapter were written by doctors, James Phillips Kay (Shuttleworth), Peter Gaskell and Lyon Playfair. The final works are papers given to the Manchester Statistical Society by H C Oates, LIB and the Revd J E Mercer. The Society itself was an establishment for professional men. Several of these works were specially commissioned and, as such, would not have immediately impinged on the minds of a wide audience. However, they do provide an insight into the perceptions of those who could be considered to be men of power and authority within their respective spheres. These works extend over a period from 1830 to 1890.

As a consequence of the professional standing of the writers one would perhaps expect to find their perceptions to be more sharply focussed, perhaps more logically focussed, than the other works we have considered. They were not dependent on sales of their work for income as was possibly the position with the
novelist or the newspaper reporter. Furthermore, these works cover a wider time scale than any of the previous works. We would, therefore, expect to find a degree of focus shift, one to another. These works concentrate principally on Manchester and the city had undergone quite dramatic changes in the intervening years, not only in its physical size but in its municipal authority and sanitary reform that was now based on a more knowledgeable approach to the transmission of disease.

Did these professional men perceive an underclass within their society? Where and how did this underclass live? Did their presence endanger society in general and what, if anything, was perceived as the cause of the existence of this underclass?

I

Dr James Phillips Kay, later Sir James Phillips Kay-Shuttleworth, was a physician as the Ardwick and Ancoats Dispensary, in Manchester. As such, he came into daily contact with the working people of the area. He realised that radical solutions were needed to combat the appalling working and living conditions endured by his patients. Manchester of 1830-31 was the scene of strikes, lock-outs, attacks on black legs and rising crime. Added to the feelings of concern and discontent was the threat of cholera which appeared in Manchester on the 17th May, 1832. In the summer of that year, Dr Kay produced his first pamphlet on the Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes employed in the Cotton Manufactury in Manchester. [Dr Kay published a second, enlarged edition of this pamphlet a short time later and it is this that we will consider.]
Kay prefaced his work with a letter to the Rev Thomas Chalmers, DD in which he, Kay, explained that whilst undertaking a minute study of the spread of cholera, he had frequented the “precincts of vice and disease”. He had been distressed to discover

"how many of the evils suffered by the poor flow from their own ignorance or moral errors.”(2)

Kay maintained that it was easy for a worker’s home to become a place of vice as it contained “a fatal element of contagion to poison his offspring”. The ease of contamination could only be halted by public and private counsel bringing the message of temperance, economy and persevering industry.

Kay accepted that cholera rarely visited the other orders of society. However, they should not remain aloof to the problem. Cholera came “like a thief in the night” and, consequently, threatened commerce and society. Kay, like Reach, argued that the other orders must act, if only out of a spirit of self-interest. Kay maintained that cholera had brought knowledge. It had opened up horror to the public gaze. Those who, like himself, were duty bound to descend into the abodes of poverty, must realise that

“where pauperism and disease congregate around the source of social discontent and political disorder........”(3)

pestilence would fester in secret at the very heart of society.

Kay acknowledged that those who lived out of town and only visited for business and pleasure had been unaware. Parliament had denied the existence of
the horrors and had attributed the social unrest to a few unprincipled leaders. He acknowledged that the other orders were not without problems, poor trade and high taxes had affected them. However, he argued that cholera had made even the out-of-town people aware. They had accepted that the

"united exertions of the individual members of society were required to procure moral and physical change in the community." (4)

Kay clearly perceived the classes of Manchester as being separated one from another, not only by a move to the suburbs, or the countryside, but within its own borders. The centre of Manchester contained shops, warehouses and a few superior dwellings. Other parts were occupied by shopkeepers and the labouring classes. By implication, Kay suggested that the poorest were separated from the labouring classes when he noted that the areas occupied by the poor were of recent origin. Kay’s Manchester was one of immigrants attracted by the cotton industry. The worst of these were the barbaric Irish who brought their “debased habits with them” and had infected the host community. Kay, as de Tocqueville, saw the Irish in terms of competition with the English worker. He contrasted Irish immigration with the colonization of savage tribes who imposed a downward thrust on the existing civilisation. As a consequence, the native worker of Manchester had ceased to take a pride in his home, had spent every spare penny in the tavern and, when old age or infirmity arrived, he needed either charity, the support of his children, or the Poor Law.

As Kohl was to report ten years later, Kay argued that this demoralised population laboured long hours at work that demanded neither intellect nor muscle. As a consequence, it cultivated man’s baser instincts. These people worked in
hot and dusty conditions and lived in pestilential streets that, although recently erected, were narrow, unpaved, ill-soughed and filled with refuse. The areas were all ill-ventilated and under-provided with privies. Typhus was a regular visitor to the area and, as the health of the people became depressed, so too their habits

"at once spendthrifts and destitute - denying themselves the comforts of life. in order that they may wallow in the unrestrained licence of animal appetite."(5)

Kay found the homes of the Irish to be the most destitute. They lacked furniture and, frequently, one whole Irish family shared one bed of filth straw. Kay reported that inspectors had found that

"often more than one family lived in a damp cellar containing only one room in whose pestilential atmosphere from 12 to 16 persons were crowded. To these fertile sources of disease were sometimes added the keeping of pigs and other animals in the house, with other nuisances of the most revolting character."(6)

This report was quoted almost word for word by Buret in 1840, perhaps he too, like Engels, relied on the past for his perception of the present!

Kay did not restrict his investigation to one part of Manchester. He, like Venedey, visited the area off Oxford Road. He, too, discovered that this tightly packed area was occupied chiefly by the "lowest Irish" and that many of the occupied cellars were below the level of the River Medlock which frequently inundated the cellars. The area was considered to be so dreadful that a special sub-committee of the Board of Health had visited the area, known as Little Ireland. They had reported to the district magistrate that

"The cellars much worse, all damp and occasionally overflowed. The
cellars consist of two rooms on a floor, each nine feet by ten feet square, some inhabited by ten persons, others by more. In many the people have no bed and keep each other warm by close stowage on shavings, straw etc. A change of linen or clothes is an exception to the common practice. Many of the back rooms where they sleep have no other means of ventilation than from the front room. Some of the cellars on the lower ground were once filled up as uninhabitable, but one is now occupied by a weaver, and he has stopped up the drain with clay to prevent the water flowing from it into his cellar and mops up the water every morning.”(7)

In the London Road area, Kay found people who occupied “dilapidated abodes or obscure and damp cellars in which it is impossible for health to be preserved”. In both Pot Street and Clay Street and the courts off Portland Street, Kay found dwellings that were tightly packed and full of filth.

The final area discussed in detail by Kay was the area around Ducie Bridge - Irish Town, the home of The Manchester Man. The River Irk passed through this part of town, black and full of “excrementious matter”. It was an area of bone works, tanneries and size manufacturies. On the banks of the river, Kay discovered “a crazy labyrinth of pauper dwellings” known as Gibraltar. On the opposite side of the river was the pauper burial ground and a series of courts. The most notorious of which was Allen’s Court. This court was surrounded by pig sties, a tripe manufactury, a tannery and a manufacturer of cat gut. Most of the houses within Allen’s Court were occupied by three or four families.

Kay’s overview of the housing conditions of the poor concluded that, as the majority had been constructed back-to-back, without yards, privies or receptacles for rubbish, the only depository was the street. The occupied cellars were damp,
stinking places and they housed

"a turbulent population which, rendered reckless by dissipation and want, misled by the secret intrigues and excited by the inflammatory harangues of demagogues has frequently committed daring assaults on the liberty of the more peaceful portions of the working classes and the most frightful devastations on the property of their masters. Machines have been broken and factories gutted and burned at midday and the riotous crown has dispersed ere the insufficient body of police arrived at the scene of disturbance."(8)

Such a scene was replicated by Disraeli in the riot of the Hellcats. Kay argued further, and Disraeli concurred, that it was not only such wild behaviour that threatened society. The administration of the Poor Law perpetuated "indigence, improvidence, idleness and vice". He believed that the Poor Rate was a tax on the capital of those who had worked hard. The wages of the worthy were given to encourage the sluggard and the "man whose imprudence entails upon the community the precious burden of his meagre and neglected offspring".(9)

Kay argued that the Poor Law increased pauperism and he explained the theory thus

"The land is let to speculators who build cottages, the rents of which are collected weekly, a commutation of rents being often paid by the landlords when they are demanded which seldom occurs in the lowest description of houses. A married man having thus, by law, and unquestioned right to a maintenance proportioned to the number of his family, direct encouragement is afforded to improvident marriages. The most destitute and immoral marry to increase their claim on the stipend appointed for them by law, which thus acts as a bounty on the increase of a squalid and debilitated race, who inherit from their parents disease, sometimes deformity, often vice and always beggary."(10)
In this one statement Kay was not only participating in the arguments of Royal Commission of the Poor Law, and other contemporary debates, he could also be participating in the debates of the late twentieth century where it is argued by some that people deliberately increase the size of their families simply to increase the amount of state benefit they receive. No one had to look to the future. Kay believed that the Poor Law had replaced the charity of the past which had “extended an invisible chain of sympathy between the higher and lower ranks of society”. In the past, the poor had been grateful for the counsel and assistance they had received from their betters. Now these natural ties had been broken and

“a wide gulf has been created between the higher and lower orders of the community across which the scowl of hatred banishes the smile of charity and love.”(11)

Kay does, however, accept that, within a large town, it was impossible for the parish to discern the deserving from the undeserving poor.

Kay argued that pauperism and moral depression were closely aligned and existed most obviously in areas that contained the most gin shops and taverns. Here could be found scenes of depravity and the “leprosy of vice”. Kay recorded an absence of religious belief amongst such people and he believed that this absence led to man’s baser instincts rising to the fore. Filial and paternal bonds no longer existed.

“Too frequently the father, enjoying perfect health and with ample opportunities of employment, is supported in idleness on the earnings of his oppressed children and, on the other hand, when age and decrepitude cripple the energies of the parents, their adult children abandon them to the scanty maintenance derived from parochial relief.”(12)
Kay observed a definable cycle that caused debility through successive generations. Young girls were put to work in factories depriving them of the opportunity to acquire any domestic skills. In the past such skills had been acquired at their mother’s side in their own home. When such a girl grew into womanhood and married she continued to work outside the home. Her children were left in the charge of another who had little interest in them. As a consequence, the children were

“ill-fed, dirty, ill-clad, exposed to cold and neglected
and.........more than one half of the offspring of the poor.......died
before they have competed their fifth year.”(13)

Those that did survive were sickly. Should such a cycle remain unchecked, Kay argued, the health of successive generations would be depressed and “physical ills would accumulate in an unhappy progression”.

Kay did not see these people as individuals - he saw them as a “fearful” mass.

“a mass that lay like a slumbering giant ..........[they had] lit the torch
of incendiarism, or well nigh uplifted the arm of rebellion in the
land.”(14)

One of the principal creative impulses that led to the creation of the “sleeping giant”, at least for Kay, was industrialisation. When trade had been high immigration had been encouraged as a source of cheap labour. Now trade had fallen and the demand for such labour had also diminished, Irish immigration had initially been encouraged and had proved to be ‘one chief source of the demoralization and consequent depression of the people’. When working people
became demoralized and physically depressed they became less efficient producers of wealth. We can clearly see that Kay perceived a group of people, within Manchester society of the 1830s, who were dangerous not only in the threat of riot, not only in the spread of disease, but were also an economic threat. They demanded support from the wages of the honest worker who was taxed through the Poor Law and, furthermore, they had become an inefficient workforce. Once again, Kay’s arguments can be carried over into the twentieth century. In the 1950s, commonwealth immigration was encouraged - the economy was flourishing. However, when the economy took a down swing, these commonwealth citizens became despised.

Kay concluded his pamphlet by indicating the radical path he had referred to in his opening letter to the Rev. Thomas Chalmers - a path that could prevent society falling into complete ruin. Kay believed that ‘the higher and lower orders’ needed to associate. This was a view echoed by Mrs. Gaskell in both Mary Barton and North and South. He described a charitable society in Liverpool whose membership consisted of influential inhabitants of the town. Each member had a specific sector of the town placed under his care. The members visited the inhabitants assigned to them in their homes. They

"sympathise with their distress and minister to the wants of the necessitous; but above all, they acquire by their charity, the right of inquiring into their arrangements - of instructing them in domestic economy - of recommending sobriety, cleanliness, forethought and method." (15)
Clearly, in this way Kay, perceived the bonds of paternalism and deference becoming re-established within the industrial setting. Kay accepted that such systems were not without difficulties especially in large towns such as Manchester. He did, however, provide an example of how such association was being conducted by Mr Thomas Ashton of Hyde. Ashton employed 1,200 people. He had built decent homes for his workers, provided them with a school, a library and evening classes. Mr Ashton also lived amongst his workers and had frequent "opportunities of maintaining a cordial association" with them. As a consequence, Mr Ashton’s factory flourished, the workforce was happy and "so little pauperism exists, the taint of vice has not deeply infected the population". Kay refrained from informing his readers of the fact that Hyde was almost a village when compared with Manchester. Mr Ashton’s alter ego, Mr Trafford, in Sybil ran a similar establishment that was also of village proportions.

Kay’s final sentences were a direct call to the higher classes. It was their duty to educate the lower orders away from their dissolute path. If the higher classes failed in their duty, there were others in society who would feed on the ignorance and vice and create a violent explosion that would destroy society.

II

Little is known of the professional life of Peter Gaskell beyond the fact that he was admitted to the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1828 whilst he
was living in London. Gaskell died in London in 1841, aged 35. Sometime between 1828 and his death, he lived in Bredbury, near Stockport. His first book, *The Manufacturing Population of England*, was published in 1833. In 1836, he produced a larger version of this book entitled *Artisans and Machinery* and it is this book that we will consider in this chapter.

In the preface, Gaskell argued that the matters to be discussed were of great importance to anyone who had the commercial and welfare interests of the kingdom at heart. He maintained that the artisan class of society had declined

"from comfort, morality, independence and loyalty to misery, demoralisation, dependence and discontent."(16)

Mechanisation had wrought this change. It had also brought the "secret cabal" and the co-operative union and

"the ample means of inflaming [the workers] passions and depraving their appetites by sensual indulgences of the lowest kind."(17)

Gaskell opened by painting a rosy picture of pre-factory life. He believed that it was a time when the domestic worker had simple wants. He cultivated his garden, he saved his money, he was studious and took an interest in botany and mathematics. Children remained in the family home and "passions and social instincts were properly cultivated".

The squire was loved and revered by his tenants and neighbours. He mingled freely in their sports........and was a kind and indulgent master."(18)
Such people no longer existed. Gaskell maintained that society had become artificial. Those who still clung to the old domestic manufacture had become some of the poorest members of the new artificial state. One can assume that here Gaskell was referring to the hand loom weavers who, he noted “with pain”, were in great distress.

Gaskell marked the progress of man from his primaeval state. Man then had a basic instinct to provide food and shelter for his family. As he became more civilised, he accepted the law of the land and with it the encroachment on his personal liberty for the greater good of society. Gaskell took as his bench mark of “refinement and social communion” the middle classes of 1833 and argued that the inferior classes of the manufacturing districts had “retrograded or remained behind in the march of improvement”. They were as the ‘uncultivated child of nature’.

These children of nature lived in weekly tenanted houses that were poorly built. The drainage was defective, where it existed. The streets had become the depository of all household filth and the conveniences were shared by fifty or more people. Inside, the homes were filthy, unfurnished and deprived of all the accessories to decency and comfort. This mode of life had a brutalizing effect on the people, their language had become obscene. This led Gaskell to believe that there was a high degree of promiscuity. They lived crowded together in homes that contained only one sleeping room, thus lacking privacy which brought

“into open day things which delicacy commands should be shrouded from observation. destroys all notions of sexual decency and domestic chastity.”(19)

There was, however, for Gaskell a class even lower than those he had described above. There were the 20,000 Manchester cellar dwellers.
“These cells are the very picture of loathsomeness, placed upon the soil, though partly flagged, without drains, subjected to being occasionally overflowed, seldom cleansed, each return of their inmates bringing with it a further accession of filth, they speedily become disgusting receptacles of every species of vermin which can infest the human body.”(20)

This description of the cellar dwellings of Manchester was quoted by Engels.

Who were the people who inhabited such places? For Gaskell, they were generally the Irish, who were employed as hand look weavers or bricklayers labourers. Their wives and children were engaged in begging or match selling or hawking pins and oranges. They were all ragged, filthy and squalid. They left their cellars all day to wander the town and suburbs bringing home a little meat or bread. They were vile in the extreme. Furthermore

“The Irish cottier has brought with him his disgusting domestic companion, the pig, for whenever he can scrape together a sufficient sum for the purchase of one of these animals, it becomes an inmate of his cellar.”(21)

Not only did the Irish live in filth with their pig, they lived on potatoes and brewed illicit spirits in their cellars. Half of them had been brought before the courts, however, detection was not easy as many of the cellars had only a trapdoor in a court as a means of entrance and exit. Gaskell perceived that in areas where the Irish congregated, the “natives” had been brought down to the same level, their recklessness and improvidence had been contagious - law and order was under threat.
Gaskell, as other observers, perceived the passing of maternal affection amongst the lower orders engaged in the factory system. The "brightest and purest" of all instincts had been annihilated. A mother who abandoned her child while she worked in the factory became "inaccessible to its appeals to her tenderness". It was not only the natural bonds between mother and child that had been torn apart, those between siblings and those of child to parent had also been savaged.

"Recklessness, improvidence and necessary poverty, starvation, drunkenness, parental cruelty and carelessness, filial disobedience, neglect of conjugal rights, absence of maternal love, destruction of brotherly and sisterly affection....."(22)

had resulted in moral degeneration and social misery.

Gaskell believed that the break in the natural bonds of affection, coupled with the living and working conditions endured by such people, brought about early sexual development. The mother, who had no sexual morality herself, saw no reason to restrain her children's impulses. He noted by way of a footnote that, whilst it was a felony to have sexual intercourse with a child under ten years of age, it was only a misdemeanour if the child was aged between ten and twelve. Gaskell perceived this licentiousness as being capable of corrupting all society. He concluded that sexual depravity was common amongst mill hands. Pregnancy often preceded marriage as men wanted fertile wives who would produce children to keep them when they could no longer work. People such as these had turned their backs on the improvements that had been made - education was progressing - their illnesses were attended to and religion was brought to their door, and yet people were
"filled with immorality, irreligion, improvidence, political
discontent.......ingratitude, ignorance and vice."(23)

The factory worker, Gaskell noted, left his home early and returned between 8.00 and 9.00 pm. His home offered little comfort and he sought solace elsewhere. Every Saturday night the streets were "a scene of turmoil, strife and roguery". It was not only the men who sought solace elsewhere. Gaskell noted mothers with children, sweethearts, grandfathers, prostitutes and pickpockets amongst the clientele of the gin vaults.

Gaskell wished to reinforce his perception of the dangers that lay within the gin vaults. He described a group of young girls and women outside one such establishment. The were all pallid and coarse save one, who possessed both beauty and innocence - a country girl. Her friends entered - she held back but was persuaded to follow. In the vault the girls soon found company with young men who were dirty in both dress and language. After much merriment, they left. The innocent had been metamorphosed into

"a Bacchanal, with distended and glowing cheeks, staggering step, disordered apparel - utterly lost, to herself and when the morning bell rings her to her appointed labour, she will be one of the herd and will speedily lose all trace of her purity and feminine beauty."(24)

This example is the first and only time that Gaskell considered an individual and she, too, was soon lost into the mass of people inhabiting the world of the underclass.

Gaskell's medical training almost forced him to consider the physical disposition of the mass. He painted an unprepossessing picture of people who
were, even as children,

“pale, stunted, flaccid of feature, tender-eyed and very often tumid-belled. Their bones are soft and deformities easily develop. They are flat-footed and many are pigeon-chested with curvature of the spine.”(25)

The women possessed none of the “ideas of excellence in moral and physical attributes of their sex”. Gaskell commented that an M Thackery of Leeds had thought that a group of operatives he had seen in Oxford Road were a degenerate race, they were so “feeble, stunted and depraved”. Gaskell, like Kay, perceived great danger flowing from this deformed race. They married early and those of their children that did survive, followed in their parents’ steps, thus threatening to produce a large and growing race of deformed, debilitated and immoral people.

There was one further threat that society faced in the 1830s and that was the threat posed by the Trades Unions - at least, in Gaskell’s perception. He accepted that the membership of such organisations were generally people who were better paid than those he had been describing previously. However, he stressed, the unions possessed strong powers and could intimidate others to join. Unions possessed a “dark tribunal” which could paralyse trade - trade was thus held in bondage by the unruly. Atrocious acts had been committed by such people who had used weapons fit only for demons

“such as the corrosive oil of vitriol, dashed in the faces of the most meritorious individuals with the effect of disfiguring their persons and burning their eyes out of the sockets with the most dreadful agony.”(26)
Gaskell maintained that not even the most “ignorant, savage nations” had displayed such “cruelty or depravity”. Gaskell argued that the union leaders were feeding on the prevailing distress amongst the workers. They had been worked up into madness. To emphasise his point, Gaskell reminded his readers that, during the 1831-32 strike, Thomas Ashton, the son of Mr S Ashton of Manchester, had been shot through the chest on his way home. He was “distinguished by his general kindness to men and endeared by his amiable qualities to his friends”. By noting that the union was feeding on distress, Gaskell, by implication, suggests that the underclass could be tempted into the savagery even if they were not considered suitable for membership of the union.

Did Mrs Gaskell base John Barton’s hideous crime on the death of Mr Ashton’s son? One can only speculate!

III

We have seen from the writings of Kay and Gaskell that the decade of the 1830s was perceived as a decade of turmoil, riot and disease. In the early 1840s a national enquiry was conducted into the *The State of Large Towns and Populous Districts of England and Wales*. Her Majesty’s Commissioner to conduct the enquiry into the towns of Lancashire was Dr Lyon Playfair.

Playfair’s report consisted of two sections. The first dealt with drainage, water supplies, building regulations and the dwellings of the poor. The second
section concerned itself with the moral and physical effects on the population of the conditions to be found in the towns under consideration.

Playfair started his report by considering all the waterways that flowed through Manchester and Salford. He quoted a Mr Binney who maintained that these waterways contained dead dogs and cats and gas that bubbled up to the surface, giving off sulphurous odour. The banks were seen as a "constant seat of disease, so much so that the infamous Allens Court had been demolished.

Playfair, unlike Engels, reported that, since 1830, many miles of sewers had been constructed in Manchester and that many streets had been paved. Such improvements had not been solely restricted to the better class areas of the town. As a consequence, the physical condition of the people had greatly improved. Playfair reported that almost the whole of Angel Meadow had been paved and sewer and that cellars had been protected from flooding. There were, however, still matters requiring attention including

"a chandlery [which] sends forth its disgusting effluvia, pig sties are dotted up and down and heaps of filth are poured down a precipitous clay bank to lie and rot."(27)

In Salford, Playfair reported, the Borough had obtained an Improvement Act. Even so, it faced grave difficulties in implementation. The properties that lined the unsewered and unpaved streets were owned by people of limited means. Dilapidated properties such as these attracted low rents, hence, the owners could not meet the required expenditure and "matters were let lie".
In Rochdale, Playfair found that the Police Commissioner was empowered to maintain old sewers but not empowered to construct new ones. Therefore

"In many parts of the new town, the streets, courts and alleys are uneven and unpaved and favourable to the retention of stagnant moisture and accumulation of refuse thrown from the houses. These are stagnant pools and ditches contiguous to the dwellings."(28)

Playfair noted that Rochdale was fortunate in that the river Roche passed through the town with a rapid current.

Playfair considered the role of what could, perhaps, be described as a necessary evil - the night-soil men. He described them as

"very filthy in their appearance and habits and, being often assisted in their labours by their families, their houses are usually most offensive and wretched abodes. Night-soil men were paid three shillings for a load of two tons."(29)

As other writers noted, Playfair complained that the night-soil men were reckless in their search, breaking down privy doors and leaving the streets filthy and stinking. He does not acknowledge that the man could not comply with such niceties if he had to accumulate two tons of night-soil to earn three shillings.

The improvements noted by Playfair at the start of his report do not seem to have increased the provision of necessaries - perhaps another explanation for the night-soil man’s need for speed. Playfair quoted from a report into such provision in the Oldham Road/St Georges area of Manchester in which a population of 7,095 shared 33 petties or necessaries. In Salford, he found even fewer and of those that
were visited, many were “utterly unfit for the purpose intended”. Cellar dwellings were totally devoid of necessaries. Consequently, they had to empty their night-soil into the necessaries in the courts.

“emptying out their filth and dirt in the passage up to the court and causing a most disgusting and foul nuisance to the neighbourhood generally.” (30)

Coupled with the stench from the rivers and the privies was the stench from the unregulated slaughter houses and pig sties. In Manchester, Playfair discovered seventy seven slaughter houses that were frequently situated in unventilated courts. Although the law allowed for persons so affected to indict the owners, the people most affected were the poor without the means to pursue such a course. Playfair argued that these people were ignorant of the dangerous effects of decomposing refuse on their health. Medical science was, at this time, still holding to the miasma theory of contagion. Playfair quoted a Mr Neel who discovered an extremely offensive smell in Little Ireland that emanated from an open gutter that ran through two courts in which pigs were kept.

When Playfair considered the dwellings of the poor, he noted that

“cellar habitations in Lancashire are generally dismal abodes, badly lighted and worse ventilated. Many of them were originally designed for weaving shops, and were selected for this purpose on account of their dampness........The dampness........was very detrimental as places of residence; but the habit of living in cellars being thus acquired by part of the factory population, the evil has gradually increased.”

The relieving officer for the Chorlton Union was quoted in Playfair’s report. He
believed that, although some cellar dwellers lived in comfort, others lived in a state “that was revolting to humanity”. The majority of cellar dwellers had been brought down to such places unwillingly. The majority of cellar dwellers had increased expenditure as if it was deemed essential

“to have a fire throughout the entire night as well as during the day.......... when this cannot be obtained, the damp air was overpowering to the constitution added to the scantiness of bed covering, brings on a variety of disease.........I find they do not enjoy regular good health when residing in damp cellars.”(31)

Playfair was anxious to provide balance in his report for he contended that when cellar dwellings were placed above the drainage and were well ventilated, they could provide convenient and cheap residences. He noted that, only in Liverpool, had any attempt been made to prevent cellars being used for human habitation.

Despite this contention, Playfair reported on some cellar dwellings that had become lodging houses. The floors of these cellars were frequently bare earth and at night this was strewn with straw and for a penny per night as many lodgers as possible took their rest.

“in this way as many as thirty human beings or more are sometimes packed together, each inhaling the poison which his neighbour generates and presenting in miniature a picture of the Black Hole of Calcutta.”(32)

Playfair produced the following tabulated information relating to cellar dwellings in both Manchester and Rochdale.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Cellars</th>
<th>Computed Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>4,443</td>
<td>18,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>1,747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the case of Manchester, the number of inhabitants resident in cellars was ascertained by actual enumeration and found to be on average 4.1 persons in each cellar. In Rochdale, a similar enumeration gave the average of 4.007. The number of beds in a cellar is disproportionate to the number of inmates. In the examination of cellars in Manchester, kindly undertaken by Captain Willis, there were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1,500 cases in which</th>
<th>3 persons slept in the same bed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>738</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were 31 without beds.

In Rochdale, out of 457 cellar dwellers examined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>42 contained</th>
<th>6 persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9 or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Playfair, in common with many of his contemporaries, expressed grave concern on the matter of overcrowding, especially when such overcrowding
necessitated the sharing of beds. To demonstrate this concern, he listed the family
details of several families. It is unclear whether these families were cellar dwellers
or occupied a house that contained only one bedroom or whether they occupied
one room in a house that was in multiple occupation. The point Playfair wished to
stress was that it was not simply poverty that had forced such overcrowding and
with it indecency

Case I
The family whose total earnings amount to £2 - 2s per week, consisting
of the father and mother who sleep in one bed, a married son and his
wife, who sleep in a second bed, a grown-up daughter who, with two
boys of 12 and 14, sleep together in a bed on the floor, the whole
family being in the same room.

Case II
JS has a father and mother who live with him; he and his wife sleep in
one bed, his father and mother in another, his two grown-up sisters in a
third, his brother of 19 and a young man lodger, who is courting one of
his sisters, in a fourth, all in the same room. JS does not know or will
not tell how much they all make but thinks it “a good lot as his wife
and sisters and brother are at factory, himself on a print ground and his
father a labourer”.

As a footnote to these reports, Playfair notes that

“Mr Holland gives me the following instance: DF is a widower
with one sleeping apartment in which sleeps his adult son and
daughter. The latter has a bastard child, which she affiliates on the
father, he upon his son and the neighbours upon both.”(34)

Playfair next turned his report to the question of mortality. He argued that
there must be something radically wrong in a community when the artisan reaches only fifteen years of age and has twenty eight years less chance of life than the gentleman from the day of his birth or eleven years less of adult life and much more than that period of actual loss of working ability. "(35)

He acknowledged that the shocking rates of infant mortality, especially in the central districts of Manchester, were responsible for the inequality rates that were even higher amongst illegitimate children who represented 1 in every 20 births. Playfair also argued that the early marriage played its part in the infant mortality figures. He found that the average age of marriage amongst males in Lancashire was “not over 23 years”.

Playfair argued that early marriage between people of low morals and low intelligence, whose living conditions encouraged the appetite and instinct of the animal rather than the higher human feelings, led to generational decline. To reinforce his argument, he, like Faucher, commented on the difficulties faced by recruitment officers in finding tall, able-bodied men in Lancashire. He also considered the sickness rates at the work place and he calculated that each family member was absent from work at least seventeen or twenty days annually.

“The pecuniary burdens entailed upon the community by the excessive amount of mortality and sickness are much greater than has hitherto been conceived.”(36)

Playfair estimated the cost of sustaining the sick, of caring for the widows and orphans and the cost in lost production, amounted to about £5 million nationally. Furthermore, he argued, little if anything was spent on prevention.

Playfair perceived at least one cause of degeneration and early death that was
preventable - the use of opiates on children. We have touched on this subject elsewhere in this section. However, it was such an evil practice that we must remind ourselves once more of the children who were slept to death

"You may know at once a child who is accustomed to the use of these drugs. It becomes so thin that you feel nothing but bone. Its eyes get sunken and fixed, its nose pinched, in fact, such children look exactly like little old wizened men and women. They sink off in a decline and die. I have often reprobated the practice to mothers, but their answer is, 'what are we to do, it is so very cross'.”(37)

It was not simply the stinking rivers, the lack of sanitation, the overcrowding or the use of opiates that caused disease. Playfair believed it had a moral dimension - that was the want of domestic economy. He argued that it was not uncommon for a girl to marry at 15 and be a mother at 17. Soon after confinement, the mother returned to work leaving her child to an uncaring nurse. A mother of such tender years was unaware of the needs of a child nor did she know how to run a home. Her house became filthy and offered no comfort to her husband. He was driven to the tavern which brought in its wake crime and immorality. Playfair argued that, in the ‘great distress’ of 1842, women could not find work; they remained at home caring for their children and their hearthsides. The had no money to buy narcotics. As a direct result, Playfair argues, the death rate in the whole of Manchester, Salford and Stockport fell in 1838 from 11,323 to 10,201.

Playfair concluded his report by maintaining that

"Humanity calls loudly for the interference of a paternalistic legislature to remedy the evils widely spread and deeply rooted - but not removeable.”(38)
He argued that society wasted time, money and effort on amelioration rather than the removal of the evils. Clean water, sanitation and education were needed to end Lancashire’s reputation as the most unhealthy county in England. He argued that action must be taken because

"the great mass is yet chaotic and, unless God’s blessing, breathed upon by the spirit of intelligence and of religion, it may be hurled upon all that is fair and good amongst us, with a momentum as sudden as it is irresistible." (39)

We see clearly from this one statement that, although considerable improvements have been undertaken in Manchester, there remained, in Playfair’s perception, a mass of people who were not only an economic threat to society, they were also a mass of people who posed a threat to the very existence of that society.

IV

In the autumn of 1833, the Manchester Statistical Society was inaugurated - the first of its kind in the country. It was formed by a small group of young men who were friends. The group were

"all men of philanthropic and literary taste and all connected in some degree with local industry or banking." (40)

The prime mover behind the group was William Langton. James Phillips Kay was the first secretary of the Society and Benjamin Heywood of Heywood’s Bank was the first president. We will now consider three papers that were read at meetings of the Society.
In February, 1864, the Society appointed a committee of members to make enquiry into the educational and other conditions to be found in an area of Deansgate. The committee reported its findings in a paper read to the Society on the 9th December, 1864. The area to be investigated lay between Peter Street and Gt Bridgewater Street in one direction and between Deansgate and Lower Mosley Street in the other. When the land occupied by warehousing and public buildings was deleted, the remaining area was about 12.2 acres. The area contained 852 houses, 78 of which had cellars that were let separately. Of these, 713 houses and 68 cellars were occupied at the time of the enquiry. The paper which was given by Mr Henry Caine Oats, LI B concentrated on these habitations.

The information was gathered by house-to-house enquiry and the committee were pleased to report that most of their questions had been readily answered. In only eleven cases was information refused and, of these, eight were in the liquor trade and three were brothels. The first table concerned itself with overcrowding. The committee found that 28.15% of the families in this area of Deansgate lived in one room. Family numbers ranged from four persons to seven. One family of five who occupied one room had a total income of four shillings and paid rent of one shilling per week.

"In another case, there are four persons living in a one room cellar, consisting of a widow and her lodger and a spinster and her child....... In another, the family consists of seven persons, the children being two boys and three girls, two of them over twelve years and their total earnings are twenty three shillings a week."(41)

Oats cited many instances of gross overcrowding where men, women, boys and girls over twelve years of age plus lodgers shared a single room. He drew the
members' attention to a specific house in Lombard Street that had five rooms that were inhabited by eighteen people

“amongst whom are three girls - two over twelve - and fourteen men and women lodgers from nearly all nations.”(42)

Oats contended that some of the people who lived in such wretchedness had surprisingly high incomes. He cited one family who occupied two rooms in Fleet Street. The rooms were about eight feet square. The family had eight members including four boys and two girls, four of whom were over twelve. The family's income was twenty six shillings. This situation, however, was the exception. The majority of families visited by the committee were very poor. One family of six were totally dependent on the wages of their children which amounted to twelve shillings and sixpence.

“...In another case, the family consists of the parents and four girls...... they live in a cellar, have no regular income and nothing but a little straw to lie on.”(43)

Of the houses examined in this area of Deansgate, 180 were back-to-back for which the weekly rent ranged from two shillings to seven and six. Where the houses did possess a rear yard, this was inevitably filthy and unhealthy. Mr Oats and his committee categorised the people and their dwellings under two rather subjective headings - ‘clean’ and ‘dirty’. The area was perceived as containing two distinct sectors - one to the south around Gt Bridgewater Street which was dirty and its people given to drink. This sector was the haunt of thieves and prostitutes. The second sector, towards Peter Street, was clean and respectable.

Mr Oats and his committee questioned the inhabitants on their incomes.
Again, their questions had been readily answered; only 28 families refused. 49 families declared that they received no income whatsoever. Oats maintained that, in a few cases, ‘no income’ would be the actual position. The people would be existing on whatever they could raise on their possessions. Oats did, however, believe that in the majority of cases, they did receive income “from sources they would not mention such as stealing and prostitution”.

The committee produced tables that indicated that the income of 732 of the 1,054 families did not exceed twenty shillings per week. Some income was derived from the keeping of lodgers. The area under investigation contained 511 lodgers of whom 226 paid, on average, one shilling and sevenpence per week. Occasionally, lodgers received free shelter in exchange for house or child care duties. However, the committee concluded that many of the lodgers were “no doubt prostitutes”. After rent, the highest proportion of income was spent on bread and potatoes. The committee reported in one family of four whose income was only four shillings per week, rent one and ninepence, who, for the last five months, had only had one meal per day.

The committee finally turned their attention to the morals of the district. The area contained thirty public houses of one description or another with a further fourteen on the boundary streets. Three of these establishments were known to be the haunt of thieves whilst a further ten were of a similar character. Twenty two houses were brothels and in a further nine, there were women “who have the appearance of being prostitutes”. In nineteen of the houses that were ‘ascertained’ to be brothels, the committee found no less than 105 women

“In ten other houses...........there were fifty five persons consisting
apparently of prostitutes and men connected with them. In two cases, a daughter supports her mother by prostitution, and, in one case, a widow keeps two prostitutes along with her own daughter. Very nearly the whole of the houses above mentioned are found in the southern portion of the district and most of them in Lombard Street." (44)

During the 1865-66 session, the Manchester Statistical Society appointed another committee to undertake a similar enquiry into the conditions to be found in the Ancoats area of Manchester. Their report was presented in a paper read to the Society on the 15th November, 1865. Again, the paper was presented by Mr Oats.

The area to be investigated was bounded by Gt Ancoats Street, Union Street, New Islington and Canal Street, an area of 20.43 acres when the non-house properties and the canal had been discounted. The area contained 868 houses.

"of these 39, being tenanted as shops whose occupants are of a superior class to that of the inhabitants generally, have not been included and, respecting four of the houses within the district - one very large house in Canal Street, two spirit vaults and one the residence of a Roman Catholic priest - no enquiries were made." (45)

Of the remaining 643 houses, 32 were unoccupied leaving 607 inhabited houses and 68 cellars dwellings for the purpose of the inquiry.

The same methodology as that employed in the investigation in Deansgate, was adopted for the Ancoats enquiry and the inhabitants proved to be as helpful. The committee discovered the average occupancy rate of the 789 families was 2.29 per room. However, 19.14% of the families occupied a single room. Again, Oates highlighted several examples of gross overcrowding.
"The people arc far too closely packed together to be in health and in these cases the evil is often aggravated by the very dirty habits of the occupier." (46)

To emphasize the gross overcrowding and the unacceptable habits of the populace, Oats cited one family

"father, mother and six children amongst whom arc two boys of 12 and 17 and a girl of 20. They earn thirty three shillings per week but, owing, apparently, to the fact that both parents are given to drink, the house is very dirty indeed and they are all very badly in want of clothing." (47)

Over half the houses in this area were back-to-back. The area contained exposed, stinking privies and, in one case, the committee reported that twelve families shared a single privy. These houses attracted rents ranging from one and six to three and six, the average being two shillings to two and six.

Not only was Ancoats packed with people, it was packed with animals. The committee reported seeing a great number and variety of dogs. There were also donkeys and ponies. Many of these were kept by hawkers and, frequently, their stabling was within the homes of their owners.

"One man keeps two small horses in his kitchen, another keeps a pony and a pig in the scullery and also rabbits and dogs about the house.......... When animals are thus kept in the very abodes of the people, it is not surprising that many of them should be found filthy in the extreme." (48)

Not only did the houses in Ancoats stink, many were, in the eyes of the committee, totally unfit for human habitation. Some of the houses were almost in a
state of collapse. The committee heard many complaints relating to the lack of action. The committee claimed that they had, ill-advisedly, visited some areas in which the stench was so foul that it had been impossible for the member to remain inside and questions had to asked outside. Oats concluded that the whole area called out for sanitary improvement.

Using the same ‘clean’ - ‘dirty’ classification, the committee perceived 176 families out of a total of 780 to be very clean and respectable and a further 101 as ‘clean’. They did, however, add the rider that “this, of course, must be understood in a relative sense”. 118 of the families were “dirty and untidy” and 168 were “very filthy indeed”. Mr Oats reported that, amongst the very filthy, many were almost naked, many children had been seen on the streets entirely naked and “lost in dirt”.

Some of the most shocking instances were reported when the committee considered individual circumstances. In one instance, the committee visited a home where three children, utterly naked, were eating their food from a pan that was placed in the middle of the floor. In another instance, a family were in a miserable state, the children “scarcely visible for filth” and yet, the income of this family was thirty shillings per week. The committee reported that the man of the house had about 30 birds, “hung round the house for his own amusement”.

“Another family, all of whose members go out hawking fish, live in a place that, from the smell of bad fish and from the filth about, is described as not fit for a dog to live in; this man’s face was perfectly black and he was, at the time of the visit, making his meal of fish, the odour of which was more than the visitor could endure.”(49)
Within the district covered by the committee, they found no less than seventeen families who were described as very badly in want of clothes.

The survey of Ancoats, as that of Deansgate, ended with consideration being given to the morals of the inhabitants. The committee found seven beer houses and seven spirit vaults or public houses in the area with a further three beer houses and two vaults on the boundary streets. No mention was made of prostitution other than the somewhat curious comment that

"some other information as to the morals and criminality of the district was incidentally obtained by the visitor, but it does not admit being tabulated as no special inquiries were directed to that end." (50)

The committee found 282 lodgers in the district 223 of whom paid on average one and twopence farthing for their lodging - no comment was made on those who paid nothing. The income levels of the Ancoats families equated with those found in Deansgate in that 69% of the latter and 67% of the former were under twenty shillings per week.

An area of Ancoats not investigated by Mr Oats and his committee was the area known as Angel Meadow - the area of The Manchester Shirtnmaker - and one that, as we have seen, attracted considerable attention from many people. During the 1896-97 session of the Manchester Statistical Society, the Rev J E Mercer MA read a paper on The Condition of Life in Angel Meadow.

Mercer started is paper by remarking that society in general had much to be proud of but, equally, it had much to cause it shame. Legislation, he believed, had
rarely proved equal to the evils it was intended to overcome. Mercer agreed with Huxley who had written

"The savage squalor and sullen despair, and the modes of life prevalent in the slum, constitute a huge, Scrobian bog, which, unless wise and benevolent men take it in hand, must sooner or later swallow up the surface crust of our civilisation........... I think it is not to be doubted that, unless this remediable misery is effectually dealt with, the hordes of vice and pauperism will destroy modern civilisation as effectually as uncivilised tribes of another kind destroyed the great social organism which preceded ours."(51)

Mercer believed that Angel Meadow was one such slum. We see here that, despite the use of the modern term 'organism', use is also made of the old language of the 'uncivilised tribe'.

Mercer defined Angel Meadow as lying between Rochdale Road, Miller Street, Cheetham Hill Road and Gould Street - thirty three acres that were home to seven thousand men, women and children. When the land covered by industrial establishments and the railway were removed from the calculation, the density of the population of Angel Meadow was around 300 people per acre. Mercer notes that Whitechapel had a density rate of 193 per acre and that of Bethnal Green was around 365 persons per acre.

Mercer gave thought to the term 'slum'. He argued that within every large centre of population, there would be certain quarters into which "the vicious, the wretched and the helpless" drifted. These he defined as 'natural' or 'normal' slums. He argued that quarters such as these in the modern town were not natural,
they were manufactured. The magnetic impulse of the industrial revolution had
drawn in thousands of people and little had been done to cater for their wants. The
hordes of Angel Meadow were housed in old, vermin-infested houses. Mercer
quoted a report from the Medical Officer of Health of 1897, showing that some
action had been taken in that 120 back-to back had been made ‘through’ houses
but much remained to be done to serve the physical, intellectual and moral needs of
the people.

Mercer looked into the faces of the wretched people of Angel Meadow -
people whom he had visited personally. In one house he found

“a woman ill in bed - too weak to attend to herself - left alone while
others at work. House, fine crusted specimen of dilapidation - alive
with vermin - rats came up out of the sewers and carried off food left
at the woman’s side. House soon after condemned but typical of
many yet remaining.”(52)

In a second example, the house was so foul that the doctor had refused to enter.
The floor of this house was indescribable and the baby appeared to have been fed
by the occasional crust being thrown into its cradle where it lay utterly neglected.

The area of Angel Meadow was damp and subjected to frequent fogs. It also
stank - the people had their own peculiar odour - these were the ‘self assertive and
penetrating’ smell of fried fish shops - there were ‘nauseous exhalations’ from
premises that blatently flouted the sanitary regulations. The houses stank and the
streets were little better ‘yet in these houses and streets thousands are born, live
and die’. Mercer believed that only the strong survived but such conditions sapped
the vitality of even the strongest. He maintained that this loss of vitality almost necessitated the use of 'strong stimulates' to goad the flagging energies.

Mercer contended that the physical state of the survivors of Angel Meadow was dangerous for society in general. Despite the almost horrific mortality rates, diseased men and women still poured forth from the slums.

“For in the slums there are no restraints either social or moral on reckless propagation, and it was this sinister fact which gave much of its weight to Huxley's warning.” (53)

Although Mercer displayed a charitable heart to the people of Angel Meadow, he argued that charity was not what was required. He argued that if money were poured into the area, if rents were reduced, if free education was provided, if children were fed and clothed - all that was saved would be spent on drink, all that could be pawned would go on drink. What was really needed, Mercer argued, were clubs and recreation. He believed that the people of the slums sought excitement and society should divert this into healthy pursuits. He advocated clubs that provided billiard tables, games, newspapers and dancing for both sexes and all ages. Mercer was pleased to note that there was a prospect of a University Settlement being established in the area.

Mercer did not shrink from dealing with

“immorality and a most painful subject it is ....... I fear of speaking generally, the women of the slums are more degraded than the men, more drunken, idle and depraved ....... the class of fallen girls and women is very large and aggressive ......... of the 42 streets of the parish only 18 can be said to be free from this class and many of these 18 even are doubtful ......... Angel Street with 54 houses, has only 8 quite free. Charter Street with 79 houses has only 21 quite free.” (54)
Prostitution was considered to be simply another trade. Rooms were available at 8d. per night. Mercer was disturbed to find that many of the 'girls' were controlled by young men who passed dissolute lives supported by the girls earnings. He contrasted this situation with that existing in Whitechapel in London where the majority of brothel keepers were women. He suggests that this was a slightly more 'acceptable' arrangement.

Mercer found that Angel Meadow was home to the somewhat 'Mayhewesque' characters. There were itinerant musicians, conjurors, tipsters, lurkers, mouchers, begging letter writers

"There is the company of hawkers, both those who sell in the streets and those, who by Act of Parliament, are allowed to pull out our door bells and dirty our steps...there is the man who 'stands pad', who never asks, but stands with an averted look of suffering angelically borne......These and many others swell the exceeding great army of paupers and beggars." (55)

Mercer's final thoughts were for the children of Angel Meadow - neglected from birth - initiated into the worst secrets of vice and crime

"Not long ago I found the mother of a family lying dead, the younger children playing round the bed and turning up the sheet in curiosity to examine the body and the eldest girl was washing upon a table near the bed and leaning the pots against the mother's legs to drain." (56)

If life was bad for legitimate children, it was even worse for those who were illegitimate. They were seen as an unwanted burden. Although it was possible to pursue the absent father through the courts, a paternity warrant cost eight shillings,
far out of the reach of the majority of such 'fallen' women. Mercer argued that if the law were stronger in its pursuit of these fathers, there would be fewer illegitimate children born and the burden on private and public institutions would be greatly reduced.

Mercer quoted from a Mr Frances Peck who had written that children were seen as the absolute property of their parents. As such, children could be starved and herded like pigs, living

"indeed with pigs, in damp and filthy cellars. they may send them to the streets to bring them back the gains of a premature prostitution. to buy them more drink. they may do all this while they are earning plenty themselves and yet the law refrains from interfering. Is parental authority...the only despotism by divine agent? Is it alone among the powers of earth too sacred to be curbed in the interests of right and justice?"(57)

Mercer concluded his paper by arguing that there was no one cure for the evils that existed in Angel Meadow - neither socialism nor laissez faire. The evil was complex, the cure must also be complex. A hard head and a kind heart, fired by a belief that a cure was needed, was vital to banish the slums. Mercer reminded his audience that Charles Booth had recently published his ninth volume of *Life and Labours of the People of London*. Mercer recommended to his audience the path of progress defined by Booth, a path that called for restrictions on the employment of young children, the discouragement of the employment of mothers with young children, stronger policing to control loafers, guerilla warfare against all insanitary conditions and the education of public opinion. Mercer argued that small steps such as these, if taken by a large enough number of people, would bring about great change.
We have considered a variety of works in this chapter that displayed notable differences in approach to the subject. They varied from the almost mathematical approach of Oats and his committee to the treatise approach of Gaskell. Despite these differences, the writers frequently provide answers to our questions that are not only in accord one to another, but are also in accord with many of the other works that we have considered.

All the professional men perceived a group within their society that could be defined as an underclass be they writing in the 1830s or the 1890s. This group was perceived as dangerous to society in general, be it seen as cholera, as depicted by Kay, or as a Serborian bog as depicted by Mercer, spreading disease and immorality. The underclass also posed an economic threat - they demanded and received Poor Law assistance that encouraged their profligacy. It was perceived that they were becoming an increasingly inefficient workforce. It is worthy of note that the nationally commissioned inquiry - that of Playfair - was the only one that actually costed the economic danger posed.

Each author in this chapter spotlighted specific areas of Manchester as being the most depraved - areas that have been mentioned time and again in this section - Deansgate, Little Ireland, Ancoats and Angel Meadow. Again, the professional men, as many other writers, shared a commonality of language when describing these areas - wretched, filthy, stinking. Men such as these lived in a society that was more brutal, more filthy, more stinking than today’s society. Rivers no longer belch sulphurous fumes, they are no longer full of dead cats and dogs, the streets are no longer filled with manure, chimneys no longer pour forth black smoke. People now wash their bodies and their clothes on a regular basis using soap and clean
water for their clothes, not stale urine. We have competent sewers and flushing lavatories. In many ways it can be argued that the writers in all these chapters would have been inured to sights and smells that would appal late twentieth century man, and yet they used words such as stinking, wretched and filthy, making it almost impossible for us to comprehend the scene that assaulted their eyes and their nostrils.

Differences can be detected in the professionals' perception of who constituted the underclass. For the earlier writers, Kay and Gaskell, it was clearly the Irish. They were a barbaric tribe that possessed vile habits and shared their homes with pigs. In this perception, both Kay and Gaskell find company with Buret, Venedey, de Tocqueville and Faucher. Later works do not make specific mention of the Irish, supporting the argument previously made that the Irish had become absorbed into their host society. Gaskell also perceived others who shared the low status of the Irish - those whom he described as "retrograded or remained behind". In tone this reflects Cooke Taylor's perception of the rural immigrant. Playfair does not appear to define one specific group - for him the whole mass of the labouring classes gave serious cause for concern.

It would appear that Oats and his committee discovered two specific groups. Firstly, those of the southern sector of Deansgate - the thieves and the prostitutes, a mirror image of Church Lane, Rochdale. Secondly, for Oats, there were the animalistic people of Ancoats. There is an unspoken suggestion in Oat's report that these people of Ancoats were lower than those of Deansgate. It is worthy of note that Oats does not equate such animalistic behaviour simply with those of an Irish descent.
Mercer perceived the people of the manufactured slums to be the underclass. They saw prostitution as simply another trade, they spent their days in a state of intoxication and earned money by begging or by acting as tipsters, lurchers and mouchers. They sent their children onto the streets to keep them in idleness. The women of Angel Meadow were more degraded than the men. Again, Mercer makes no mention of the Irish. It could possibly be argued that Mercer was too familiar with the area to notice the Irish - Margaret Harkness certainly noticed them. Alternatively, it could be argued that the words Angel Meadow were synonymous with Irish quarter and no further explanation was required for an audience of local men.

The type of accommodation available to the underclass varied from house to lodging house to cellar. It can be argued that Kay, Gaskell and Playfair saw this as a sliding scale. Many of the houses were poorly constructed, without sanitation, often in a state of collapse and tightly packed together. They contained little furniture and were frequently overcrowded, not only with people but also with animals.

Kay, Gaskell and Playfair reserved their strongest adjectives and criticism for the cellar dwellings. For Kay, cellar dwellings were damp and frequently flooded by the river and its contents. Cellar dwellers slept on stinking straw and never changed their clothes. Ten or more people shared one cellared room whose atmosphere soon became pestilential. For Gaskell, cellars were the very picture of loathsomeness - receptacles of every species of vermin. For Playfair, cellar dwellings were unwillingly sought, they were damp and the air was overpowering to the constitution. A lodging cellar appeared to Playfair as the Black Hole of
Calcutta. Fifty years on, Mercer found damp, filthy cellars that were home to both children and pigs. In finding cellars to be the worst form of human habitation, these professional men are in accord with the perceptions of virtually all the authors of the works considered in this section.

What had caused such a situation to come into existence? Where did these professional men perceive the blame to lie? For Kay, Gaskell and Mercer, the blame lay within industrialisation itself. Kay and Gaskell believed that the factory system brought both want of domestic economy and a dulling of natural human feelings. This resulted in immorality and profligacy. Furthermore, they perceived the Poor Law system as an encouragement to such vices - the smile of charity and with it the hand of guidance had gone. Gaskell and Mercer perceived the society of the slums as unnatural and manufactured.

By both word and implication, Kay, Gaskell and Mercer argued that industrialisation and the Poor Law system had separated the classes - a common theme throughout the whole of this section. The people of the underclass needed guidance and wise counsel and, as Mercer stated, society had not provided for their wants and needs. Although Oats and his committee do not overtly refer to the separation of the classes, there is a strong covert message that the peoples of Deansgate and Ancoats were devoid of the guidance that the presence of the middle class would provide.

Many of the writers perceived a degree of individual culpability. This was, however, softened by their attitude to the people - an attitude of a parent to a child who had taken the wrong path through parental neglect. None of these
professional men were as condemnatory as Urban of Rochdale who argued that such people had deliberately taken their vice-ridden path. Few of the writers in this chapter looked into the face of the underclass. When they did, they showed a sympathy and an understanding. Oats accepted the family as honest when they told him they had no income and had existed on one meal a day for several months. Those who did not respond to his committee’s questions were dismissed as thieves and prostitutes. Mercer demonstrated great sadness for the old lady who had to share her food with the sewer rats. His humanity was severely tested when he saw a dead mother used as a draining board.

Mercer’s final thoughts on the children of Angel Meadow almost one hundred years ago, were shocking. He equated parental rights with despotism. Perhaps he, like Delver and Hocking, his contemporaries, believed that generational degeneration - the spreading of the Serborian bog - could only be halted by removing the children from such misery and vice.
Chapter 4 - References


3. ibid p 8.

4. ibid p 11.

5. ibid p 27.

6. ibid p 32.

7. ibid p 35.

8. ibid p 42.

9. ibid p 46.

10. ibid p 47.

11. ibid p 49.

12. ibid p 64.

13. ibid p 70.

14. ibid p 77.

15. ibid p 99.


17. ibid preface vi.

18. ibid p 16.

19. ibid p 81.

20. ibid p 83.

21. ibid p 83.
22. ibid p 89.
23. ibid p 116.
24. ibid p 127.
25. ibid p 186.
26. ibid p 291.


28. ibid p 16.
29. ibid p 24.
30. ibid p 28.
31. ibid p 39.
32. ibid p 45.
33. ibid p 37.
34. ibid p 41.
35. ibid p 94.
36. ibid p 104-5.
37. ibid p 125.
38. ibid p 130.
39. ibid p 131.


42. ibid.
43. ibid.
44. ibid.


46. ibid.

47. ibid.

48. ibid.

49. ibid.

50. ibid.


52. ibid.

53. ibid.

54. ibid.

55. ibid.

56. ibid.

57. ibid.
THE SYMPHYSIS
THE UNION OF TWO PARTS

In the preceding section, we have considered the perceptions of four differing groups of observers. The novelist approach was based on fictional individuals, whilst the other observers based their writings on the mass. The individuals of the novels called for sympathy, understanding and, occasionally, action. However, in the background to the novels, we have found the threatening mass - Disraeli's 'Hellcats', Mrs Gaskell's 'distant rumblings', Harkness's people of Angel Meadow. The mass perceived by the visitors, reporters and professionals was equally threatening. However, when these observers, almost accidentally, encountered individual members of the mass, they, too, exhibited a degree of understanding and, indeed, sympathy for their life-style.

From Southey in 1808, through to Mercer in 1897, Manchester was perceived as a society that contained within its midst the seeds of its own destruction - a horde of human beings. Manchester had attracted observers from far and wide - it was Sin City - and, as a result, it perhaps received more close scrutiny and criticism than it deserved. However, as we have seen from Playfair and the reporters to the local newspapers, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale also contained elements within them that both shocked and horrified respectable society. This horde of people were depicted as either, a disease that would spread rapidly and contaminate the respectable working man or, as a pit into which the unwary could easily fall. Although the mass was deformed and degenerate [half of...
whom died before reaching their fifth birthday] they continued to exist - defiant of sewerage, charitable inquiry or domestic necessaries. They were perceived as over-grown children with animalistic instincts - devoid of guidance, a race apart, the underclass.

The constituent parts of this mass are complex. For some, eg Cooke Taylor, the underclass were rural immigrants, enfeebled and criminal, who were retrograded or had remained behind the social, moral and economic advances that society had made. Stedman Jones(1) defined such people as those who had turned their back on society or had been rejected by it. Many early observers were more defined in their perception, for them, the underclass were simply the Irish immigrants. Other observers perceived the whole of the labouring class as threatening, arguing that mill and factory work which necessitated both sexes working together in humid conditions brought in its wake gross immorality and feckless waste of adequate incomes. There were, however, other observers who perceived the underclass as beggars, prostitutes and hawkers. Finally, there were those who, like Mercer, perceived the women of the underclass to be the most dissolute, the most depraved of all.

One common theme throughout the whole of the first section of this thesis is that cellar dwellings were perceived to be the lowest form of human shelter. What was meant by a cellar? There are desirable residences that possess what we now refer to as 'basement' flats. They have an open area in front and are approached by a flight of steps down from the road. Such places were initially designed as the servants' quarters, the kitchen etc, of the rather grand home above. They were well lit, ventilated and intended for people to use for long periods of the day.
Many of the writers on Manchester in the 1840s maintained that the areas inhabited by the poor were of recent origin. We can, therefore, presume that the majority of cellar dwellings were not of the superior ‘basement flat’ model.

Playfair maintained that many cellars in Lancashire were originally used as weaving shops. Indeed, Morgan(2) has confirmed that 1790s cottages in Preston were specifically built for the then prosperous handloom weavers with cellars for the loom. Coutie(3) argues that many Stockport cellars were used as workshops. However, she does not maintain that they were specifically designed as such. It is difficult to accept that the majority of the 4,443 cellar dwellings discovered by Playfair were specifically designed for the handloom weaver; by the time they were built the handloom weavers were almost destitute. Reach provides us with a pointer when he writes that the cellars in Hulme were put to their proper purpose - storage. It was noted elsewhere that cellars were used for coal and a few fowl. Cellars such as these would have been almost devoid of natural light and ventilation. They were intended for human beings to visit, not to live in.

Did the underclass of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale live in such cellars? In 1861 there were 1,433 designated cellars with a population of 5,451 people in the towns in total. In 1871, 1,176 designated cellars contained 4,151 people. As stated in the introduction, the inhabitants of designated cellar dwellings in these four towns in 1861 and 1871, form the basis of the second section of this thesis. The information has been taken from the census returns. There are many caveats that can be held against census information. However, the majority of Parliamentary and other statistics relating to the condition of the people have been based primarily on census information. Furthermore, it can be argued
that the information contained within the census was, in many ways, a self-
perception - how the cellar dwellers perceived themselves or, at least, how they
wished to be perceived. Throughout this section we will review the various
perceptions of the underclass and their cellars. We will also attempt to look into
the faces of the people, for as we have found when the observers put aside the
mass and looked at the individual, they, the observers, reacted in a different way,
be it admiration for Devildust - love for the child with lustrous blue eyes, or
concern for the family with no income.

Table I (over page) provides us with a jumping off point. It indicates the
number of cellar dwellings in all the towns and Manchester sub-districts under
consideration. The table also provides the number of people who lived in these
cellars. I have decided to divide Manchester into five sub-districts - Ancoats, St
Georges, Deansgate, Market Street and London Road. In this way we may be able
to discern differences as not only between the four towns, but also within
Manchester.

3. H Coutie, *Transactions of Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*,

173/4
### TABLE I
Numbers of designated cellar dwellings and cellar dwellers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or sub-district</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of cellars</th>
<th>Number of cellar dwellers</th>
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<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>452</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>STOCKPORT</td>
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<td>153</td>
<td>438</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>429</td>
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<td>1871</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>599</td>
</tr>
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</table>
CHAPTER V

CELLAR DWELLINGS REVIEWED

In this chapter we will take a brief overview of the housing conditions of the poor in Victorian Manchester. We will consider the development of such housing and who was responsible for such development. We will then move on to consider the housing of the underclass - the designated cellar dwellings of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. We will examine the observers’ perceptions of the conditions to be found in such habitations. We will consider their dimensions, and locations and visibility of the cellar dwellings. Finally, we will debate some probable causes for their existence. All this will prepare the ground for the central task of this second section - to look at the cellar dwellers themselves.

I

The provision of housing for the masses lay in the hands of the speculative builder. He worked unfettered by building regulations. Many of the visitors to Manchester commented on the work of the speculative builder and noted that the results fell far short of the then accepted standards of decency. The house building of such men was designed to be overcrowded. House building land was costly even to lease. High density house building reduced the initial expenditure on land and by making courts and alleys, the speculative builder avoided, as far as possible, the expense of road making. Such building practices resulted in airless, dark and often damp homes.

Edwin Chadwick reported in 1842
"An immense number of small houses occupied by the poorer classes in the suburbs of Manchester are of the most superficial character. New cottages are erected with a rapidity that astonishes persons who are unacquainted with their flimsy structure. They have certainly avoided the objectionable mode of forming underground dwellings, but have run into the opposite extreme, having neither cellar nor foundation." (1)

Furthermore, as Rate Books indicate, many such properties were in the hands of small landlords with little income, making property maintenance virtually impossible.

Gouldie (2) writes that today, a house without a bathroom is not a decent home, whilst at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a ‘decent’ home could be one that claimed no more than to be weatherproof, ceilinged and floored with access to some outside source of water. By the mid nineteenth century, ‘decent’ would mean large enough for unmarried adult members of the family to have separate sleeping accommodation as well as possessing adequate drainage and a regular supply of clean water. Gouldie argues that it is impossible to know through different periods what was meant by clean and dirty. Clean, she argued, may simply have meant free from vermin. Thus, for a cellar dwelling to be considered acceptable, it must at least provide separate beds for unmarried adults, some access to water and sanitation and be free of some of the larger species of vermin.

Nassau Senior, a contemporary and convert of Edwin Chadwick, observed in Manchester:

"A carpenter and a builder unite to buy a series of building sites (that is they lease them for a number of years) and cover them with houses. In one place we found a whole street following the course of a ditch because in this way deeper cellars could be secured without the cost of
digging, cellars not for storing wares or rubbish, but for dwellings for human beings.”(3)

Southey and Cooke Taylor, on their visits to Manchester, noted that the factory operative inhabited the streets, lanes and houses where the cost of land dictated that light and air could not be afforded. For those of the class below the operative, the only available shelter was a cellar.

A report in British Parliamentary Papers* computed the cellar dwelling population of Manchester to be 18,000. It concluded that

“In those towns .........where these abodes prevail, they present........ scenes of misery and wretchedness and afford frequent instances of the occupation of dwellings totally unfit for the residency of human beings.”

Cellar dwelling was not simply a phenomenon of the early nineteenth century, especially in the towns of the north west of England. I C Taylor(4) quoting from W Moss, A Familiar Survey of Liverpool, 1784, noted that

“habitations of the poorest class in this, as in all large towns who depend upon casual support, are of course confined, being chiefly in cellars.”

Moss believed that, even though the appearance of a cellar dwelling might be unattractive, it was a more ‘healthful’ residence than a room in a multiple-occupied house. “Being detached, a cellar can neither receive or communicate anything

*British Parliamentary Papers, 1845, Vol XVII.
infectious.” Taylor noted that a little time later, Dr Currie reported that typhus was endemic amongst Liverpool’s cellar and court inmates.

What forced cellar dwellings into the nineteenth century spotlight was the rapid growth of towns. People poured into the towns at an unprecedented rate and they sought shelter. Did the cellar dwellings of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale adequately fulfill this need? Clearly not, at least in the eyes of the observers. They were perceived to be at best damp, at worst oozing, vermin filled, stinking, hotbeds of fever, loathsome places fit only for toads.

As Gouldie has argued above, it is difficult to assess, through different periods, what was meant by ‘clean’. As Oats stressed to the Manchester Statistical Society, the word ‘clean’ must be considered in a relative sense. In this, Oats points us to difficulties that the contemporary observers had to face. They were middle class and brought with them their own standards of clean, acceptable and decent. Some, like Disraeli for example, probably never ventured inside a cellar dwelling and took their perceptions from elsewhere. Other observers, for example, many of the visitors, came to Manchester to be shocked. It can, perhaps, be argued that even Reach was deliberately in search of the worst.

It is certain that not all cellar dwellings were as loathsome as those described by Peter Gaskell. Playfair argued that when such a dwelling was placed above the drainage, it provided adequate accommodation. Mrs Gaskell, in *Mary Barton*, drew a clear distinction between the horror of the Davenport’s cellar and that of the Barton’s neighbour whose cellar home was clean and cheerful and offered a degree of comfort. It would appear, however, that such cellared comfort was the
exception.

The Builder, 20th April, 1844, reported that the great proportion of inhabited cellars were dark, damp, confined, ill-ventilated and dirty. It proceeded to report that such habitations constituted an evil.

"how can a hole underground of from 12 to 15 feet square admit of ventilation so as to fit it for a human habitation."

Dr John Leigh, the first Medical Officer of Health for Manchester, writing in 1868, described Manchester cellar dwellings thus:

"So numerous were the inhabited cellars of Manchester, a few years ago, that it might well be considered a city of cave dwellers with this advantage.......the modern caves were all underground.......when we consider that even the air which finds access to these sunken habitations is obtained from the level of sewer openings and that, in many instances, the invigorating rays of the sun can never reach their interior, it can excite no surprise that the blanched and flabby children of which they are the homes, grow up into the stunted men and women that crowd the streets of manufacturing towns."(5)

Kidd points out that Dr Leigh took severe action against cellar dwellings and that, by 1868, virtually all of Manchester’s cellar dwellings had been closed.(6)

Wohl described cellar dwelling as the perfect nexus for disease

"For those suffering from pulmonary illnesses and for those who contracted typhus and other fevers, they were often death traps. To those suffering from arthritis or rheumatism, the cellars were cells which aggravated and perpetuated their discomfort."(7)
Wohl confirms Kidd's finding. The Building and Sanitary Committee had, by 1872, closed 2,400 cellar dwellings and "by 1874, only 108 remained, occupied mainly by old people". Table I shows a dramatic fall in the number of cellar dwellings but this fall was restricted to the London Road and Market Street sub-districts.

### TABLE I

Numbers of designated cellar dwellings and cellar dwellers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or sub-district</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of cellars</th>
<th>Number of cellar dwellers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Street</td>
<td>1861</td>
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<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>142</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>1232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>298</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Research, by way of contemporary maps, indicates that many of the cellar dwellings under investigation were to be found in closed courts. Others were to be found under back-to-back housing, that is, blocks of houses that have no rear exit, as depicted in the engraving and photographs 1, 2 and 3 in the appendix to this chapter. Back-to-back housing and closed courts construction were roundly condemned by sanitary reformers as both types of construction severely limited ventilation and light to the houses. This can only make the condition of the cellars underneath even less enviable.

Contemporary maps of the various towns under study indicate the presence of cellars by a flight of six or seven steps leading either up to the front door of the house or down to the cellar beneath. Frequently, the number of flights did not correspond to the number of designated cellar dwellings in that particular street. The absence of such steps led me to the somewhat doubtful conclusion that entry to the cellar was gained internally via the house. However, further research led to the discovery of the engraving number 4 in the appendix. The engraving would suggest that some cellar dwellings had no steps leading to a separate door - they had no door at all. The only means of entrance and exit was through a window-type arrangement at street level.

The discovery of cellar dwellings in closed courts, under back-to-back and some without their own front door leads us to accept the perception that cellar dwellings were foul. Given that they lacked a supply of clean water and were devoid of necessaries and were, furthermore, situated in such ill-ventilated areas, the word 'clean' at its most basic meaning (free of vermin) would have been
virtually impossible to achieve. It is also doubtful whether these cellars were watertight given the lack of paving and sewer ing. Surface water and the overflowing privies would, naturally, seep into the cellars.

Many observers and investigators were not only concerned with the physical filth of the cellar dwelling, they were also concerned with the moral filth that they perceived - the fact that unmarried, adult family members shared the same sleeping accommodation. It follows, therefore, that the size of the cellar dwelling would have been a strong determining factor when they perceived the decency standard of the dwelling.

Burnett maintains that cellar dwellings in Leeds ranged from fifteen feet square to fourteen by thirteen feet; whilst Liverpool cellars could measure as little as ten by twelve feet. Burnett writes of Liverpool

"where cellar conditions were probably at their worst, the floors were typically four to six feet below street level, many of them were unflagged and provided with brick stepping stones to keep feet clear of the water."(8)

Burnett adds that ceiling levels were, naturally, low. Frequently, in cellar dwellings in Stockport, the ceilings were around six feet in height.

Dr Leigh maintained above that Manchester cellars were underground and, as Nassau Senior observed, some cellars were contained within a ditch. The subterraneous depth of cellars, which is not indicated on maps, was greatly dependent on the lie of the land. If, for example, the block of houses had been
constructed along a piece of rising ground, then, in order to maintain a level ground floor throughout the block, some cellars would have been totally underground, whilst others, lower down the hill, could have benefitted from a window that was three or more feet above street level. This form of construction is demonstrated in the photographs of Crowther Street, Stockport and Brindle Health, Salford - 5 and 6 in the appendix.

It has proved impossible to physically measure any of the cellar dwellings under investigation. Most of the buildings have long since been demolished. Of those that do remain, street levels have been raised, area steps have been blocked off and internal investigation is not always welcomed. We are, therefore, indebted to the painstaking recording of Jerome Caminada(9), a detective with the Manchester police force, for perhaps the most definitive diagram of the interior of a cellar dwelling. It is clear from the diagram and photograph (item 7 in the appendix) that the cellar dwelling in Watson Street, Manchester was situated under two back-to-back houses. The back cellar was smaller and lower than the front cellar. It was not flagged and had no window although the photograph appears to indicate the presence of a grating. The number of steps leading down from Watson Street would suggest that the cellar was about six feet below the level of the street. The front cellar had its own front door which was, presumably, situated under the front steps. The front cellar also had a window that was not totally below the level of the street. There is no indication on the census return for either 1861 or 1871 that the back cellar, under the house in Back Cooper Lane, was let as a separate dwelling.

The Watson Street example does not hold for many other cellar dwellings
under back-to-back houses in other parts of Manchester. Indeed, it would appear that this cellar was superior in ventilation and light, in the number of rooms and in room size. Maps of Manchester indicate that room size within the houses over designated cellar dwellings ranged from about nine to thirteen feet square. We must assume that cellar room size equated with house room size in the absence of information to the contrary.

In the following paragraphs we will consider in some detail the size of various cellar dwellings based on map scales. The dimensions are externally based, therefore the interior dimensions of the cellar dwelling would have been smaller. Furthermore, many cellar dwellings contained a fireplace, reducing the living space even further. Every street referred to in the following paragraphs contained designated cellar dwellings on the relevant 1861 or 1871 census. It is not possible to ascertain with any degree of accuracy which building contained which cellar - house numbering was somewhat random, sometimes totally lacking.

Map I (1849) in the appendix is of the St Georges area of Manchester, containing the infamous Angel Meadow, 1849. The unnamed street running along the Parochial Burial Ground of St Michael’s Church, was Back Style Street. The houses in Back Style Street, Style Street and Old Mount were back-to-back in construction. They probably consisted of two rooms, one above the other. The 1861 census indicates that cellar dwellings were inhabited in all these streets. Each cellar would, therefore, have contained only one room. This single room measured between eight and nine foot square.

Map II shows an area of Deansgate. In Grove Street, there were twenty
seven cellar dwellings, one under each house. Each cellar dwelling appears to have possessed a flight of steps. The external measurements are about twenty two feet seven inches by fourteen feet three inches, which was probably divided into two rooms. Although these cellars are clearly superior to those under Style Street, these Grove Street cellars were significantly smaller than the Watson Street cellar visited by Detective Caminada.

In Salford we find similar variations. Map III shows three blocks of back-to-back houses between West Wellington Street and Muslinet Street. These streets were Mason Street, Pike Street and Weaver Street. The 1861 census indicates the presence of inhabited cellars under all three streets. We can, therefore, assume that each cellar had only one room. These rooms measured roughly ten feet three inches to fourteen feet five square - again, externally. Map IV shows that Cooke Street, Salford offered cellared accommodation of about twenty two feet eight inches by sixteen feet six, whilst Paradise, Map V, offered cellars that ranged from twenty four feet nine inches square to twenty two feet eight inches by eight feet three. It is likely that the cellars in Cooke Street and those in Paradise had the luxury of two rooms.

In Rochdale, Great George Street (Map VI) the cellared accommodation offered two rooms, one’s own front door, entry steps and a massive floor space of approximately twenty seven feet three inches by sixteen feet nine. The unlucky cellar dwellers under what appear to be back-to-back houses in Mill Street and Duke Street (Map VII) had a floor space of only sixteen feet nine inches square and thirteen feet six square respectively. The back cellars in these two streets do
not appear to have been let separately and, if this was truly the case, the floor space would similar to that in the Watson Street cellar.

Finally, in Stockport cellar dwellings that were not under back-to-back houses in Great Egerton Street (Map VIII) possessed entry steps and had an overall floor space of twenty three feet seven inches by sixteen feet two, which was probably divided into two rooms. However, the cellars in Lamb Street, off Duke Street (Map IX) only had a floor space of sixteen feet nine inches by ten feet.

At first sight, the size of the room or rooms occupied by cellar dwellers do not appear to have been unacceptably small - room size in an average 1930s semi-detached house was around twelve feet square. However, unlike the 1930s house, the 1860s cellar had a ceiling height of about six feet, often a dirt floor, no separate room for cooking or sleeping and no sanitary arrangements. Should the family contain mixed-sex adult members, it would have been impossible to have separate sleeping arrangements. There would be no privacy offered to inmates of cellars. We can, therefore, accept the perception that cellar dwellings were certainly below the standards of decency that were acceptable to society in general. Cellar dwellers lived, slept, cooked, washed and died in their filthy and dangerous sunken habitations. As the Salford Reporter, in February, 1861, reported

"On Monday, an inquest was held at the Factory Tavern, George Street, on the body of Emma Rawlinson, the daughter of John, living in a cellar at 14, James Street, who died the previous day from the effect of burns she had received on the Saturday. She was hanging a pair of sugar tongs over the mantelpiece when her dress caught fire. Her parents were in a state of extreme destitution and had nothing more than a little straw for the child to lie upon. A small sum was collected amongst the police force to purchase a few necessaries for
her. They were informed at the dispensary that they had no accommodation for cases of burning. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.”

III

Henry Coleman, the Unitarian minister from America, whose thoughts we have considered in the first section, described the area inhabited by the underclass as “rather like a putrid carcass filled with maggots”. Certainly, they were places not to be visited by respectable society. Other writers took on the mantle of the explorer arguing that one half of the world did not know how the other half lived. They saw it as their duty to visit this unknown world and to describe it to their readers. The hidden quality of the underclass areas was also stressed by Frederick Engels when he wrote

“He who visits Manchester simply on business or for pleasure, need never see the slums.”(10)

Can the ‘hidden’ epithet be attached to the cellar dwellings areas of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale?

As argued above, many of Manchester’s cellar dwellings were situated in closed courts, in areas that would not have been ‘seen’ by the gentlemen visiting Manchester for business or pleasure. However, if the gentleman arrived in Manchester at London Road Station, he would pass cellar dwellings on London Road. He could remain aloof from their existence if he walked down Piccadilly on to Market Street and into the Exchange. If, however, business took him to any of
the large mills and factories in the New Cross area of Ancoats, he could not fail to 'see'.

The gentleman could visit the Free Trade Hall or the Theatre Royal without seeing provided that he did not inadvertently leave by the back door. He would also have to take care to turn left and not right off Deansgate for, if such care were not taken, he could not fail to see cellar dwellings. If the gentleman was so unfortunate as to arrive in Manchester at Victoria Station, he would need to apply great caution when planning his route if the avoidance of cellar dwellings was his intention. A profusion of cellar dwellings would litter his sight should he take the most direct route to Piccadilly. He could not stroll along Long Millgate towards the famous Chetham Hospital, Blue Coat School and the Cathedral. If this gentleman walked along Miller Street, he would have had to keep his eyes directly to the front, looking neither to the left nor to the right. Furthermore, he must avoid travelling along Oldham Road, Rochdale Road or Great Ancoats Street, unless he travelled in a cab with the blinds drawn.

The gentleman of Salford, Stockport or Rochdale faced even greater difficulties than those which faced the gentleman visitor to Manchester. Frequently, the gentlemen of these towns were not visitors, they were inhabitants. The Salford gentleman in his splendid Georgian home on Crescent was only approximately three hundred feet away from the cellar dwellings in both Park Street and George Street (See Map III). The Crescent gentleman could safely worship at Christ Church, St Philip’s or St John’s Roman Catholic Cathedral. If, however, he worshipped at Irwell Street Wesleyan Chapel or at St Simon’s Church, it would have been virtually impossible not to pass a street that contained cellar
dwellings. If this gentleman chose to cross the river Irwell into Manchester, great care would have been necessary in the choice of bridge. Should the Salford gentleman be fortunate enough to live in one of the spacious villas in Broughton or along Eccles Old Road, his sight would have been unassailed by squalor only if he remained at home or drove to the Town Hall or to Manchester sticking rigidly to the main roads or with his coach blinds tightly closed. Salford’s cellar dwellings were spread throughout the full length of the town - north to south, east to west - with the exception of the ‘new’ terraced houses in the area of Ordsall. Few, if any, of the wards in the Borough of Salford were free of cellar dwellings in 1861 and 1871.

In Stockport, the pattern of cellar dwellings distribution was somewhat different from that of Salford. They were principally to be found in the streets that branched off the old main highway, Hillgate. Thus the gentleman of Shaw Heath was protected unless he wished to visit an area on the opposite side of Wellington Road. He could worship at St Thomas’s Church with care. If, however, he had connections with the Stockport Sunday School, he would need to be blindfolded not to see cellar dwellings. If the Stockport gentleman had business at the Court House, route selection would be difficult if he wished to avoid ‘seeing’ and he must on no account enter the Portwood area. Business at the mills and printworks in Daw Bank was possible. However, business at the mills in Hope Carr would not be recommended to the gentlemen who did not want to ‘see’.

For the Rochdale gentleman, life was a little more complicated, especially if he was a member of St Chad’s Parish Church. The most appalling housing conditions to be found in Rochdale were built on land belonging to this church.
Urban of the *Rochdale Pilot* has vividly reported on the activities of those who lived in Church Lane and the Gank. The houses in the Gank possessed no foundations - thus, no cellar dwellings. However, cellar dwellings did exist in Church Style and in most of the streets that surrounded St Chad's. Apart from this area, cellar dwelling distribution in Rochdale was virtually confined within the area formed by Failinge Road, Toad Lane, Yorkshire Street, St James Street and the brickfields to the north of the town. If the gentleman of Grove Place, for example, was not a member of St Chad’s and chose only to visit half of his home town, he could possibly have claimed not to have seen a cellar dwelling.

The pattern of cellar dwelling distribution varied from town to town. The pattern appears to have been dictated by the patterns of development that had evolved in each town. The development of Manchester appears to have been almost circular, outwards from the Cathedral and Chetham’s Hospital. In Salford and Stockport the town development was more linear in pattern, following the lines of the principal thoroughfare and spreading from them. In Rochdale, after the early development around St Chad’s, the town developed in a somewhat rectangular pattern out from the Butts.

All the cellar dwellings that have been located were sited close to places of manufacture be it mills, iron works, rope works, tanneries, cattle markets etc, all of which would add to the contaminating atmosphere in which the cellar dwellers lived. This further confirms the perception of the world of the underclass as resembling a putrid carcass. It stank, even to those whose noses found streets full of horse manure and rivers belching sulphur, almost acceptable. Thus, smell alone would ensure some ‘visibility’ even for the dedicated myopic.
The 'hidden' perception conveyed by the observers is, however, open to question. We have discovered that many cellar dwellings were visible. It has been argued that it was only with difficulty that the gentlemen could avoid 'seeing'. It can also be argued that such avoidance demonstrated a degree of knowledge. Such knowledge could have been gained from reading the newspaper articles of their intrepid reporters. Such knowledge could also been gained from personal experience. Did the gentleman see and then choose to ignore?

IV

As argued above, it was the rapid, unplanned and unexampled growth of towns that forced the underclass into the spotlight. The population of Manchester rose from 126,066 in 1821 to 182,016 by 1831. Manchester was not alone in its problem. Salford, Manchester's neighbour across the Irwell, experienced a population increase from 32,600 to 50,810 over the same period. In Stockport, the population rose from 21,726 to 25,469 and in Rochdale from 21,127 to 27,889, again, in the ten years between 1821 and 1831. Alarming as these cold figures are, they masked an even greater problem. The largest percentage increase in population lay within the working class. These people needed affordable shelter. Did such a population increase force people to find such shelter in a cellar?

Building within the towns was taking place at a rapid rate, as Chadwick observed. Frequently, visitors and reporters commented on the unfinished appearance, especially of Manchester and Salford. However, building was not restricted to house building. Mills and factories demanded and received land
priority. Homes for the working classes, decent affordable homes, were not perceived as an economically attractive enterprise, especially within the town centre or on a large scale.

In the central districts of Manchester, in 1841 there were 27,055 inhabited houses, 2,285 uninhabited and 134 in the process of construction, for a population of 163,856. In 1851, there were 28,887 inhabited houses, 806 uninhabited and 92 under construction for a population of 186,986. Within the Greengate and Regent Road districts of Salford, there were 10,004 inhabited houses, 1,243 uninhabited and 86 under construction for a population of 53,200 in 1841. In 1851, in the same districts, there were 11,368 inhabited houses, 437 uninhabited and 193 under construction for a population of 63,423.

Stockport and Rochdale faced a similar situation. In the two central districts of Stockport, in 1841, there were 7,502 inhabited houses, 1,552 uninhabited and 22 under construction for a population of 38,283. In 1851, there were 7,840 inhabited houses, 691 uninhabited and only 7 under construction for a population of 40,376. Finally, in the central district of Rochdale in 1841, there were 3,374 inhabited houses, 487 uninhabited and 29 under construction for a population of 18,275. In 1851, there were 4,256 inhabited houses, 281 uninhabited and 12 under construction for a population of 21,958.

The following figures* are a little less refined as they apply to the whole of the towns under study rather than simply to the central districts as above.

*British Parliamentary Papers, Vol LXVI, Part II.
TABLE II Houses and populations, 1861 and 1871

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>INHAB</th>
<th>UNINHAB</th>
<th>UNDER CONSTR</th>
<th>POP</th>
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<td>MANCHESTER</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>42,916</td>
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<td>243,988</td>
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<td>1871</td>
<td>47,581</td>
<td>4,330</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>251,956</td>
</tr>
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<td>1861</td>
<td>19,670</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>105,335</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>24,649</td>
<td>1,882</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>128,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>19,122</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>94,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>20,353</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>97,709</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1861</td>
<td>18,444</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>91,754</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>23,239</td>
<td>1,252</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>109,858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note from the above table that each town displayed an increase in the number of uninhabited houses over the ten year period. This would lead one to suggest that the towns were experiencing a period of economic depression, perhaps relating to the cotton famine of the early 1860s. However, each town also displays an increase in the number of houses under construction which would suggest a buoyant economy. Despite these fluctuations, the general occupancy level, calculated by a simple division of population into inhabited houses, gives five persons per dwelling. This does not suggest chronic pressure on available housing stock. However, Table II includes all types of housing within the whole town, from the grandest to the most humble. As has been argued above, the largest increase in population had taken place amongst the lowest classes in the towns. Many of the habited and uninhabited homes listed in Table II would have
been out of the reach of a large proportion of the population.

In addition to the population growth amongst the lowest classes, other factors were at work from the 1830s that potentially placed a strain on the housing problems faced by these people. Existing homes were being demolished without a concurrent programme of new building. From the 1830s the most dramatic and visible cause of the demolition of existing housing stock, throughout almost every town in Britain, was the massive and rapid development of the railway network. Did such a development force the people of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale into cellar dwellings?

The first passenger railway line in Britain was that from Liverpool to Manchester which was opened to traffic on the 30th September, 1830. The line terminated at Liverpool Road Station in the Castlefield area of Deansgate. Other Manchester stations followed quickly - Oldham Road, sanctioned in 1836 - Store Street, later London Road, now Picadilly, sanctioned in 1837 - Hunts Bank (Victoria), sanctioned in 1893.

The initial progress of the railway development was rapid, the towns through which it passed were not then incorporated, and could therefore exercise little control. However, the principal accelerator was the unique privileges conferred on the railway companies from their conception- firstly corporate form and, secondly, the power of compulsory purchase. The wheels of compulsory purchase were oiled by the fact that the land immediately outside the centre of town lay in the hands of a few large estates. Derby, Egerton/Bridgewater, Moseley and de Traffords were the principal landowners around Manchester and Salford. In this
way, the railway companies had only a few interested parties to deal with when they were seeking land for development.

A close harmony developed between the landowner and the railway company. An illustration of this can be gleaned from the following letter from the London and North Western Railway Company to the Earl of Derby’s agent for Manchester and Salford. The letter refers to land in Ordsall Lane, Salford.

“We have no right and do not wish to criticise the price which you name for the land in question Ordsall Lane (sic) but we do look at the large sum we should have to pay for a plot of ground on which to put aside some empty wagons. Our board do not meet on Tuesdays but I will venture to give 16 shillings per yard for the whole plot and if you take into consideration the large proportion of backland for an ordinary purpose of sale......a kind of terra incognita. When you have built a row of cottages in front I trust you will consider the arrangement I now propose as fair to both sides.” (11)

Little mention was made of the “cottages with out-buildings and cellar dwellings of the meanest quality” that already occupied the site in question - nor of their inhabitants.

The visibility of rapidity of railway development led to growing concern. Railway Companies were required under the Shaftesbury Standing Order (50191), 1853, to file Demolition Statements as to how many working men were likely to be evicted by each urban railway scheme (12). Although the Standing Order had initially resulted from the perceived pressure on housing stock in London, many in Manchester believed that they, too, faced similar pressures. Kellett argues that Demolition Statements “ludicrously” understated the numbers of both people and houses likely to be affected.
Demolition Statements were required before the first reading of the railway development bills that involved the displacement of thirty or more houses, in the same parish, occupied by the labouring classes. The drawing up of such statements was open to flexible interpretation. Numbers were extracted from the Book of Reference which gave details of owners, lessees and occupiers, but not family members, lodgers or casual occupiers. Furthermore, the concept of ‘labouring classes’ was not clearly defined. Thus, for some railway promoters, the test of a working class dwelling was whether it was in multiple occupation, for others the test was financial - whether the head of the household earned a pound a week or less.

The census of the population that was to be dispossessed was taken by the Railway companies themselves and it was not subjected to any official check. Kellett maintains that there was a deliberate attempt to mislead - in that the railway schemes were broken down into parts so as to minimise the apparent effect of the scheme as a whole.

For all these reasons, it is, therefore, difficult to obtain hard figures for population displacement. Kellett maintains that the best estimate of the numbers involved can be arrived at by considering that, within the major Victorian cities, the proportion of built up area that was subjected to demolition for railway development was up to 9%. Kellett points out that the common density of working class housing in Manchester and Salford was 300 to 400 per acre.

Did such a pattern of dramatic demolition hold for Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale? Simmons noted that “early passenger stations were placed at the very edge of the built up area”(13). The first passenger railway
station, Liverpool Road, Manchester, was built on what was almost a green field site. Mr Henry Ashton had been unfortunate in having developed a residential estate close to this area of Deansgate. When the railway was first mooted, his successors objected strongly to the proposal on the grounds that it would “alarm the inhabitants, impair their comforts and drive them away” (14). Victoria Station lay principally between the work house and the Paupers Cemetary - as noted by Engels (15) - on undeveloped land owned by Lord Ducie. Oldham Road - a goods station - was on a green field site and Store Street (London Road) was hard by canal land. Station sites did not remain static in size. When Victoria Station expanded, Little Gibraltar disappeared, when the Midland Railway Company extended the London Road site between 1861 and 1871, it demolished about 600 houses with a computed population of about 3,000 people (13). Central Station, as its name implies, was not as remotely sited as the earlier stations. When it was developed, 255 homes were lost including the Watson Street cellar described by Detective Caminada. The computed population of these homes was 1,200 persons. Central Station was built in 1880 and would, therefore, have had no impact on the housing conditions under discussion.

It cannot be denied that some of Manchester’s much needed low cost housing was demolished by railway development. However, it would appear that such demolition was pocket and piecemeal rather than the wholesale pattern that may have been experienced by other Victorian cities. Here, the main impact was environmental dereliction.

A similar pattern demolition and development occurred in Salford. The Manchester to Liverpool line passed through the town but it passed principally through the gardens and orchards of the elite. By 1844, there were four stations
with extensive sidings between Eccles and Liverpool Road Station, Manchester - but, again, development was mainly confined to green field sites. There was, of course, pocket demolition as witnessed in the above letter referring to Ordsall Lane. Salford was trisected by railway lines and huge viaducts strode across the town. This was particularly the case in the older most densely populated areas of Salford, but a careful study of the maps would indicate that the demolition was of around three houses per street. Indeed houses were found hard up to the massive pillars of the viaducts but whether they pre-date or post-date the development is open to question. Furthermore, the extension of Salford’s railway station did not impact at all on the housing stock - it took over the site of the then disused New Bayley Prison.

The railway line from Manchester to Rochdale was opened on the 3rd July, 1839. It followed the line of the canal. The station was a wooden construction in Moss Lane - almost shed like - and it was opened around 1843. Both line and station ran clear of any housing development whatsoever. The Stockport to Manchester line was completed in June, 1840 and initially terminated on the Lancashire side of the Mersey in Heaton Norris. The following year, the spectacular viaduct across what is now the centre of Stockport was completed and the line then terminated in Edgeley. This line and its stations were, like the picture in Rochdale, constructed on open land and, again, would have had little if any demolition effect on the housing of the working classes.

If railway development, per se, had little effect on the housing of the poor, other developments that followed in its wake may have had more damaging and longer lasting effects. Firstly, the commercialisation of the four towns under study
where the greatest impact was felt in Manchester. Commercialisation was ‘silent in its graduated operation’ and yet its impact was quite profound. The railway had brought in its wake a demand for land - land for the building of exchanges to deal with the increased commercial activity; land for warehousing and hotels; land for street widening to cope with the increased traffic flow. The land that was demanded was no longer green field sites or open areas, it was land which, in many instances, was covered with housing.

Baker, in 1872, demonstrated the effects of commercialisation on Manchester in his paper to the Manchester Statistical Society. He reported that, within the Market Street ward, in 1861, there had been 914 uninhabited houses, this figure had risen to 1,832 by 1871 - 40% of the ward’s total number of buildings. In the Deansgate and London Road districts, 75% of the buildings were uninhabited. Baker stressed that in uncommercial towns, such figures would indicate decay - this was not the message from the commercial Manchester. He argued that these uninhabited houses had become business premises, ‘locked up’ at night. In addition to the 600 houses lost for the extension of London Road Station, Baker notes, that the same area had lost 370 houses for warehousing. The Deansgate area had lost 755 houses for the new Town Hall. In all, by 1871, the London Road, Market Street and Deansgate sub-districts had lost 1,725 buildings and had gained 99 which were principally business premises. In the other sub-districts of Ancoats and St Georges, Baker reported an increase in buildings of 208 and 3,678 respectively. The Ancoats increase was not withstanding the Midland Railway extension “having absorbed many dwellings”. The St Georges increase had taken place on open ground around the Queen’s Road.
Baker also reported that the population contained within these commercialised sub-districts had also fallen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-district</th>
<th>% loss 1851-61</th>
<th>% loss 1861-71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE III Population loss in Market St, London Rd and Deansgate sub-districts, 1851 - 1871

Baker reported that these figures represented the first decline in population since 1841 - 1851 when the population had increased by 14%.

Commercialisation also brought an increase in land values. Again, using the figures provided by Baker, the following table indicates the increasing value per square yard of land in certain Manchester streets, all of which were within the central core of Manchester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>1862</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>min (£)</td>
<td>max (£)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldham St</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shudehill</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgewater St</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay St</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Land prices had been rising steadily since the coming of the railway. Some land had been snatched up by the speculator once it was realised that the railway had come to stay. They hoped to make a high profit from railway development across their pockets of land. Indeed, after its first, almost unfettered, progress, the railway companies faced increasing difficulties as a result of the changing pattern of land holding. Table III clearly shows that between 1862 and 1871 land prices had more than doubled - as a consequence, the building of homes for the poor of Manchester had become increasingly less attractive economically. Where did the dispossessed find shelter? Re-housing was not on the agenda. They were pressed into ever more crowded and deteriorating areas. As G T Robinson reported to the Manchester Statistical Society

“Whilst healthy zones of new growth match annual expansion of the City, the rottenness at the core increases. Moreover, it is not practicable that all the labouring classes should live in the suburbs.”(15)

Robinson’s comment leads us to a second incidental effect of railway development. The land alongside the track and even under bridges and viaducts became derelict and, consequently, its value was comparatively low. This was an attractive proposition to the small scale workshop, the slop and sweated traders. There was a ready pool of unskilled labour close at hand, a pool that was growing rapidly attracted by these very workshops. Furthermore, the warehousing developments were also heavily dependent on a ready source of unskilled labour which, again, in its turn acted like a magnet to people living in the areas outside Manchester. The population of Market Street, London Road and Deansgate sub-districts may have declined but the overall population had not. The poor and
unskilled had remained; they needed the work offered by such establishments and such establishments needed them. They also needed shelter.

The third effect of railway development had a more profound effect upon the society of Manchester. It brought smoke, noise, increased land prices, disruption and the labouring poor, but it also brought escape. The countryside called the elites. They could now move from their villas in Ardwick Green and Moss Side. The fresh air of the Cheshire Plain was only a short train ride away - well within commuting distance.

All the perceivers of the underclass have stressed that the separation of the classes was a prime cause of the disease that lay at the very heart of their society. The elites had left, they had gone to live in the countryside. Their villas on the edges of town were now occupied by the middle classes who had previously lived 'over the shop' in town. Large areas of Manchester's centre were now abandoned at night to the drunk, the prostitute and the policeman. It can perhaps be argued that when the gentleman was in Manchester during the day, he did see but he was not fearful, Manchester was his town and he was in control. At night, however, he left his town in the hands of the forces of darkness, both physical and metaphysical, and it was this that caused him to fear.

Salford, unlike Manchester, did not develop a commercial centre. The business man of Salford conducted his business in Manchester. Salford's development was industrially based. The old heart of Salford, from ancient times, centred around the Church of the Sacred Trinity and, despite railway development, this area of Greengate remained. It was a densely packed area of housing, mills.
iron works and print works. Salford had developed westwards. The elites of Salford, encouraged by an efficient tramway system, had removed themselves a couple of miles to the healthier districts of Broughton and Pendleton. Areas in the centre of the town had become almost exclusively working class. There were, however, pockets round this centre that clung on to what may have been somewhat faded gentility - areas such as Adephi, Islington and Crescent. Francis Hodgson Burnett, a one-time resident of Islington Square, Salford, described her areas thus:

Their early picturesqueness has usually been destroyed by the railway that has forced its way into the neighbourhood of factories and their accompanying cottages for operatives have sprung up around them. Both these things had happened to Islington Square and only the fact that it was an enclosed space shut in by a large and quite imposing iron gateway aided it to retain its atmosphere of faded gentility."(16)

Stockport and Rochdale, like Salford, did not develop commercially. They developed industrially - commerce was conducted in Manchester. The land alongside the railways became industrialised as had, in past decades, canal and riverside land. Unskilled labour was, consequently, drawn in from the surrounding countryside. The elites remained within walking distance or, at least, a short tram ride away. Indeed, pockets of at least middle class domination began to appear, for example, along the new main highway, Wellington Road, in Stockport, on the opposite side of the old town. Although the elites of Salford, Stockport and Rochdale were not geographically spatially separated from the lower orders, it has been argued that they were socially separated.* They used different places of

*for a further extension of this argument see R Dennis, English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century, Cambridge University Press, 1984.
entertainment, different shops; they had different work times and even worshipped in different churches. It is extremely unlikely that any gentleman visited the Dog and Duck public house in Charter Street, Ancoats that was visited by Reach and his companion.

In summary - people, especially those of the labouring classes, had been drawn into an urban environment from a more rural existence elsewhere. They were drawn in for a variety of reasons, famine and destitution in Ireland, growing hardship and poverty in the countryside. The attraction of more steady employment, in the mills and factories that were mushrooming over night, proved irresistible. Some, as Cooke Taylor suggested, were seeking the anonymity of the crowd; others would be seeking their fortune in what must have seemed to be an exciting environment, full of noise and bustle. Whatever the reason for their coming to the towns, all needed shelter, decent shelter, just at the moment when the demand for land for commercial and industrial enterprises had forced land prices to unprecedented heights and at a time when potential shelter was being destroyed. However, as we have noted, homes were being built. Any plot of land that was too small for a factory - uncommercial and therefore relatively cheap - was grasped by the speculative builder.

The demolition of housing for railway development in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale was minimal. Even in Manchester, the effect was not as profound as in other Victorian cities such as London. Perhaps this was due to the early railway development and the pattern of land holding. The commercialisation of Manchester did have a more insidious effect on available housing stock, a factor that was certainly not so profound in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale due to the
lack of commercialisation. As a counter balance to this, little if any account was
taken by, for example, Mr Baker (MSS 1872) of the potential increase in floor
space resulting from the multiple occupation of what had once been more middle
class homes in the centre of towns.

The cellar dwellings considered in this chapter would certainly conform to
the perception of filthy. Many were situated down blind courts, without
necessaries or without any water supply. Indeed, when they did have shared access
to a tap, the supply would have been infrequent and the precious commodity would
need to be stored in whatever receptacle came to hand. Its use, therefore, would
be severely limited. To keep such places free of vermin would have been
impossible.

Cellar dwelling would also fall below the accepted moral cleanliness required
by the perceivers. In such cramped places separate sleeping arrangements and any
privacy were impossible. The hidden perception of such places is more
questionable as has been argued. It is possible to accept that within Manchester
there was a clear separation of the classes that was at its most fearful during the
hours of darkness.

Although it cannot be denied that a certain degree of pressure was placed on
the available housing stock, especially in Manchester, it was not as chronic as at
first appeared. We are, therefore, still searching for a fuller answer to our question,
why over five thousand people live in cellars in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and
Rochdale in 1861? Does the answer lie amongst the people themselves?
Appendix to Chapter 5

1. Engraving and diagrammatical sketch of back-to-back housing with cellar dwelling.
2. Two photographs of enclosed courts with cellar dwellings in Stockport.
3. Engraving of various cellar dwelling entrances.
4. Photograph of Crowther Street, Stockport.
5. Photograph of Brindle Heath, Salford.
6. Diagrammatical drawing of cellar dwelling in Watson Street, Manchester.
7. Map of St Georges area, Manchester.
8. Map of Deansgate area of Manchester - Grove Street.
9. Map of Salford showing West Wellington Street and Muslinet Street.
10. Map of Salford, Cooke Street area.
11. Map of Salford, Paradise area.
12. Map of Rochdale, Gt Georges Street area.
14. Map of Stockport, Gt Egerton Street area.
16. Four engravings of the interior of cellar dwellings.
SECTION OF BACK TO BACK HOUSES

In positions A or B on the walls, taken out to show interior, the fireplaces are which are carried up and brought above the roof, as shown in dotted lines.

THREE STORY HOUSES, WITH CELLARS BENEATH.

Taken from
Salford in Pictures
V.I. Tomlinson
Morten 1974
Enclosed court
Angel street
Stockport
no date
Enclosed court with cellar
Angel Street
Stockport
MANCHESTER CELLAR DWELLINGS.

Entrance to an Underground Shop: Cellars for Buyers.

A A. Entrance to Cellar Dwellings. No other Opening.

Interior of a Cellar Shop: Business and the Family.

Access to other Cellar Dwellings: Death in the Dirt.
CELLAR UNDER No. 44 WATSON STREET.

13ft. wide by 15ft. 8in. long.
Height of Cellar, 7ft. 6in.
Flagged Floor.

Door one step down.

Back Cellar.
12ft. 4in. wide by 15ft. 4in. long.
Height of Cellar, 6ft. 9in.
Floor not flagged.

Window, but bricked up.

Taken from 25 Years of detective life
H. Watson Street. J Caninada
TEXT BOUND INTO

THE SPINE
Interior of Manchester Cellar Dwelling
Chapter 5 - References


3. ibid, p 84, also Engels, *Condition of the Working Class*, pp 74-75.


12. ibid, p 54.


Anthony S Wohl in his book *Endangered Lives* writes that

"in the eyes of respectable Victorians [the inhabitants of cellars] were regarded as a sub-species of cave dweller, scarcely human, a form of 'low life', a tribe of 'trogloidytes' and human moles."(1)

Green and Parton conclude that “those who commented on the slums at mid-century, saw the poor as an undifferentiated mass”(2). Those whose perceptions of the underclass we have considered in the first section certainly made generalisations about the mass - they were immigrants, usually Irish, they were unskilled, unable and unwilling to commit themselves to regular labour, they survived by hawking or begging. Those who did earn adequate wages spent their money recklessly. The perceivers of the underclass implied a restlessness within them - they were permanently on the move from one hole to another. The underclass assumed an independent life style, breaking family bonds, before they had matured into adulthood. If the underclass married, it was before the man was able to support a family - Playfair noted that he would not be over 23. He would father many children, supported by Poor Law benefit, who would become as degenerate as their parents. The underclass lived in grossly overcrowded conditions where all sense of modesty had been extinguished. This was the underclass en masse. Occasionally, the observers looked more closely and, amongst the scum, they noticed a jewel or, at least, an individual who was deserving of their pity and their charity.
In this and subsequent chapters, we will consider how valid these perceptions of the underclass are when tested against the information contained in the census enumerators handbooks relating to cellar dwellers in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale for 1861 and 1871. In order to consider whether the cellar dwellers were the underclass - "a sub-species" - it will be necessary, on occasions, to compare our findings with the town population as a whole. Where possible we will examine individual families to demonstrate our findings - we, too, may find jewels or the truly deserving.

Let us start with a single example, one family to which it would appear that most of the definitions of the underclass could be attached. The family is the Makin family of Salford. In 1851 they were living in a house in Bury Court. The head of the household was John Makin, aged 19. He was employed as a fustian cutter and had been born in Salford, as had all the other members of the household. John Makin had a wife Ellen who was aged 18, she worked as a piecer in a cotton mill. They had a young son, Thomas, who was three days old. Sharing this house was John’s father, William, aged 57, who was also a fustian cutter and John’s brother and sister, respectively, Thomas aged 7 and Ellen aged 10, who was a scavenger for a spinner in the mill. By census night, 1861, John and Ellen had moved to a cellar dwelling in Quay Street, Salford. Their baby son, Thomas, was not shown on the census. However, John and Ellen had two other children, Mary
aged 7 and James aged 2. It can be assumed that baby Thomas had died and it is very probable that another child had been born between Mary and James who had also failed to survive. The other family members had left.

By census night 1871, the Makin family had a new address. Now they were living in another cellar dwelling in Cook Street, Salford. John’s occupation had changed from a fustian cutter to that of a corn dresser. Ellen, his wife, was still employed in the cotton mill. Their daughter, Mary, had found employment in a flax mill. The son, James, was not shown on the census, it is likely that he, too, was dead. However, the Makins had been ‘blessed’ with other children, Elizabeth aged 11 who worked in the cotton mill, William aged 8, Ellen aged 6, Edward aged 4, Alice aged 2 and John aged 7 months.

The Makin family could perhaps have been considered to be feckless. Ellen and John had married whilst they were under the age of majority and were parents at the ages of 18 and 19 respectively. In 1851, their home, which consisted of only four rooms at the most, was overcrowded to twentieth century eyes, but at least it would have been possible for unmarried, adult family members to have separate sleeping arrangements. John and Ellen had had at least nine children and had seen possibly three of them die in infancy. Ellen, the mother of all these children, appears to have worked outside the home from 1851. During the twenty year period, they had at least three addresses. However, each address that has been confirmed, was within a small area of Salford. Furthermore, although John and Ellen had their own establishment, they had not broken their family ties - one parent and two siblings had moved in with them at least in 1851.
The most obvious underclass adjective that could not be attached to the Makins was that of immigrant - even Mr Makin senior had been born in Salford. This finding poses several questions. Is the Makin example unique in terms of cellar dwellers as a whole or were most of them living in the cellars of the town in which had been born? Manchester had been perceived as a town of immigrants - was it only Manchester that possessed such magnetic qualities? Did the cellar dwellings of all the towns, or simply those of Manchester, act as shelter for the newly arrived? If so, where did they come from, was it principally Ireland?

The following pie charts indicate the place of birth of the population of each town as a whole in 1861*, and the place of birth given for every inhabitant of cellar dwellings on the census nights of 1861 and 1871 in each area under investigation.

*The information relating to the town population as a whole was taken from the British Parliamentary Papers, LIII, Vol II, part 2. This information refers to 1861 only. The BPP published following the 1871 census does not provide separate place of birth details for Salford or Rochdale. A comparison would, therefore, be only partial and would not add to the overall picture.
PIE CHARTS showing place of birth of residents (1861) and cellar dwellers (1861 & 1871) of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale

1. Place of birth of population of Manchester as a whole, 1861

2. Place of birth of cellar population of St Georges Sub-district, 1861

3. Place of birth of cellar population of Market St Sub-district, 1861
4. Place of birth of cellar population of London Rd Sub-district, 1861

5. Place of birth of cellar population of Deansgate Sub-district 1861

6. Place of birth of cellar population of Ancoats Sub-district, 1861
7. Place of birth of cellar population of St Georges Sub-district, 1871

- 63.0% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 32.0% Ireland
- 2.9% England
- 2.1% Others

8. Place of birth of cellar population of Market St Sub-district 1871

- 72.3% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 14.2% Ireland
- 6.6% England
- 6.9% Others

9. Place of birth of cellar population of London Rd Sub-district, 1871

- 79.4% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 15.4% Ireland
- 3.6% England
- 1.6% Others
10. Place of birth of cellar population of Deansgate Sub-district, 1871

- 83.4% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 8.5% Ireland
- 5.9% England
- 2.2% Others

11. Place of birth of cellar population of Ancoats Sub-district, 1871

- 71.7% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 23.2% Ireland
- 2.8% England
- 2.3% Others

12. Place of birth of population of Salford, 1861

- 78.6% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 8.7% Ireland
- 8.7% England
- 4% Others
13. Place of birth of cellar population of SALFORD, 1861

- Lancs, Yorks & Ches: 75.3%
- Ireland: 18.2%
- England: 4.0%
- Others: 2.5%

14. Place of birth of cellar population of SALFORD, 1871

- Lancs, Yorks & Ches: 80%
- Ireland: 15%
- England: 2.8%
- Others: 2.2%

15. Place of birth of population of STOCKPORT, 1861

- Lancs, Yorks & Ches: 81%
- Ireland: 7.4%
- England: 9.4%
- Others: 2.2%
16. Place of birth of cellar population of STOCKPORT, 1861

- Lancs, Yorks & Ches: 72.0%
- Ireland: 22.5%
- England: 4.6%
- Others: 0.9%

17. Place of birth of cellar population of STOCKPORT 1871

- Lancs, Yorks & Ches: 80%
- Ireland: 15%
- England: 2.8%
- Others: 2.2%

18. Place of birth of population of ROCHDALE 1861

- Lancs, Yorks & Ches: 91%
- Ireland: 4.7%
- England: 3%
- Others: 1.3%
19. Place of birth of cellar population of ROCHDALE, 1861

- 59.0% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 34.0% Ireland
- 5.3% England
- 1.7% Others

20. Place of birth of cellar population of ROCHDALE 1871

- 29.0% Lancs, Yorks & Ches
- 15.0% Ireland
- 4.0% England
- 0.1% Others
Let us first consider the Irish side of the question. Many observers of the 1830s and 1840s perceived that the Irish were a major constituent part of the underclass. Peter Gaskell argued that the vast majority of Manchester cellars were inhabited by the Irish. The above pie chart confirms that 13.9% of the population of Manchester in 1861 had been born in Ireland. The sub-district pie charts clearly show that, with the exception of Deansgate sub-district, the Irish cellar dwellers were over-represented in terms of the Irish population as a whole. The over-representation had fallen to a degree by 1871. The Manchester sub-district pie charts also demonstrate significant differences one to another. There is a strong indication that the St Georges area was an Irish area. This area contained Angel Meadow - a much referred to area. The Irish over-representation is also visible in Salford and Stockport and especially in Rochdale where the percentage of Irish in the town as a whole in 1861 was only 4.7%, whilst in the cellar dwelling population it was 34%. Despite this over-representation we can argue that, unlike the perceptions of Peter Gaskell, the majority of cellar dwellings in 1861 and 1871 were not the homes of the Irish born immigrant.

The family of Patrick Carney were, perhaps, typical of the type of cellar dwelling resident Gaskell, et al, had led us to expect. In 1861 Patrick was the head of a household living in a cellar in Ludgate Hill in the St Georges area of Manchester. He had been born in Ireland and was a barrel dealer by trade. His wife, Margaret aged 28 had also been born in Ireland; she was a hawker. They had two Manchester-born children - Edward aged 5 and Charles aged 2. Patrick’s Irish-born mother-in-law, Mary Martin aged 50 - and his brother-in-law aged 17 shared the cellar as did two Irish-born lodgers - John Knowsley aged 60, a hawker, and Mary Barnett aged 46, a charwoman. The Irish of Manchester received a great
deal of attention from our observers and, therefore, the Irish question demands, and will receive, closer examination elsewhere in this thesis.

The pie charts also demonstrate that the majority of the people of the towns - at least 75% - had been born in Lancashire, Yorkshire or Cheshire. The majority of cellar dwellers had also been born in these three counties. However, when compared with the town population as a whole, these counties were under-represented. This is most marked in St Georges and Rochdale - the two areas of the greatest Irish over-representation.

Being born in Lancashire, Yorkshire or Cheshire did not make one local. They could still be the immigrant referred to by Cook Taylor - the rural immigrant. Further place of birth analysis is, therefore, required. The following table indicates the percentage of cellar dwellers who gave as their place of birth the town in they were resident on the census nights of 1861 and 1871.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or Sub-district</th>
<th>% of locally born cellar dwellers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Street</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
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<td>London Road</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the above pie charts bring into question the Irish perception - Table V may confirm another. Faucher commented that the inhabitants of Manchester possessed a physiognomy that lacked both health and vigour and that “the declining vigour of the men is replaced by a febrile energy”. Stedman Jones, in *Outcast London*, discusses the theory of hereditary urban degeneration. He reports on the arguments that led many to believe that “long life in the towns is accompanied by more or less degeneration of race”(3). It was believed that, in London at least, the city would die without a regular infusion of country-born strength. The belief in the theory of urban degeneration took hold in London in the 1880s; as argued elsewhere, the first horrors of urban living were first perceived in Manchester from the 1830s onwards. It can be argued, therefore, that such degeneration had taken place earlier in Manchester and was continuing to do so for, as Table V shows, the majority of cellar dwellers had been born in an urban setting. There is, however, one caveat to this argument - about one quarter of the locally-born cellar dwellers were under ten years of age and their parents had been born in a less urban situation. If it was not urban living, per se, that brought about the degeneration, morally and physically, of the underclass, was it the conditions to be found within the cellar itself?

II

We have noted in the previous chapter that it would have been impossible for cellar dwellers to attain the ‘clean’ standard of the period - ‘free of vermin’. It was
also argued that the moral decency standard of separate sleeping arrangements for unmarried adult family members would have been extremely difficult if the cellar inhabitants numbered more than two married couples at the most. The Makin’s Cook Street cellar was certainly overcrowded but it would have been possible to maintain a degree of morality as none of the children had achieved adulthood. Could the same be said for all the other cellar dwellings under consideration?

Cellar dwellings had been likened to the ‘Black Hole of Calcutta’ by Playfair when they were used as an underground lodging house. de Tocqueville and others claimed to have discovered cellar dwellings in Manchester that contained thirteen to fifteen inhabitants. However, Playfair went on to maintain that the average number of cellar dwellers in each non-lodging house cellar in both Manchester and Rochdale was around four. Coutie* suggests that Stockport cellars contained a single inhabitant in normal economic circumstances. However, when trade was depressed families were forced to take refuge in cellar dwellings. Wohl argues that, by 1874, the remaining 108 Manchester cellars were “occupied mainly by old people”(4).

The two most populated cellar dwellings I found were not in Manchester - one was in Rolla Street, Salford and the other in Cross Street, Stockport. Each of these cellar dwellings contained twelve persons on census night in 1861. The make up of these two cellar dwelling families differed considerably one to another.

The head of the household in the cellar in Rolla Street was Charles Eastwood, aged 44. He gave his occupation as ‘late’ publican. Charles had been

born in Huddersfield, Yorkshire. His wife, Elizabeth aged 37, was a dressmaker. She had been born in Macclesfield, Cheshire. The eldest child, William aged 20, had been born in Scotland and he was employed as a silk dresser; Esther, the next child was sixteen. She had been born in Preston and had no occupation. Then there was Charles, aged 12 who had been born in Macclesfield and was an errand boy. There were three other children all of whom had been born in Macclesfield, Elizabeth aged 10, Mary Ann aged 7 and John aged 3. It would appear that both Charles and Elizabeth had been married previously as the census shows that three step children were also living with the family in the cellar - William Harrop aged 15, an errand boy who had been born in Hanbury, Cheshire, Mary Harrop aged 13, a nurse and Emily Harrop aged 10, a schoolgirl, both of whom had been born in Macclesfield. It was clearly a much travelled family but one that did contain country blood! In addition to all the family members, the Eastwood cellar also contained a lodger - Mary Kelly aged 18, who had been born in Liverpool and was employed as a cotton winder.

The houses in Rolla Street, Salford, were back-to-back in construction. However, the census does not indicate the presence of a dwelling in the back cellar. We can, therefore, assume that the Eastwoods had the benefit of two cellared rooms. Even so, it would have been impossible for the decency standard, of non-married adults having separate sleeping arrangements, to be achieved. The papers given to the Manchester Statistical Society, that we have considered, suggest that ‘adulthood’ was achieved at the age of twelve. By this standard, the Eastwood family contained three non-married adult males and two females plus one adult female lodger in addition to the married couple and four non-adult children. Nothing that should have been hidden could have been hidden. The Eastwood’s cellar contained no privacy.
The second overcrowded cellar in Cross Street, Stockport was headed by Bridget Kavanagh, a widowed factory hand, aged 40, who had been born in Ireland. She had three of her own children living with her, Mary aged 20, Thomas aged 18 and a second son aged 16 whose name is illegible on the census return. All Bridget’s children had been born in Ireland and they all worked as factory hands. Bridget’s father, Thomas Cain, a 60 year old widower from Ireland shared his daughter’s cellar. The remaining inhabitants were all lodgers, John Duffy aged 28, and outdoor labourer who was unmarried, Bridget Duffy aged 24, an unmarried hawker, Thomas Joyce aged 40, a factory operative and his wife, Catherine aged 36, who was also a factory operative. The Joyces had three daughters, Mary aged 6, Ann aged 4 and Sarah aged 1. All the boarders had been born in Ireland, with the exception of the three Joyce children, who had been born in Stockport.

The Kavanagh cellar was superior to that of the Eastwoods in Salford in that it was not under a back-to-back house. It also appears to have had floor space that was superior to Rolla Street. Despite these advantages, this cellar contained four adult males and three adult females, all of whom were unmarried. Again, separate sleeping arrangements would have been virtually impossible. Little wonder that, as FML Thompson notes

“Constant murmurings of incest reached the ears of polite society...... where an entire family, husband, wife and children of all ages and both sexes lived in one room. any notions of modesty and decency were grotesque and chastity was thought to be an early casualty.”(5)

As argued above, these two cellars contained the most inhabitants, though perhaps not the most overcrowded as it would appear that both the Rolla Street
and the Cross Street cellars had the luxury of two rooms. The tables below give
the occupancy levels for all the cellar dwellings under investigation within the five
sub-districts of Manchester plus those in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale on the
census nights of 1861 and 1871. There may be occasional variations between the
overall number of cellar dwellings and those contained in the following tables due
to illegibility of the census return.
TABLE VI  Number of occupants per cellar

St Georges Sub-district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Occupants</th>
<th>Number of Cellar Dwellings 1861</th>
<th>Number of Cellar Dwellings 1871</th>
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Market St Sub-district

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### TABLE VI (cont)

Ancoats Sub-district

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Salford

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228
TABLE VI (cont)

STOCKPORT

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ROCHDALE

<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
Table VI indicates that the vast majority of cellar dwellings contained between one and four persons. For example, Ancoats in 1861 had 203 cellar dwellings, 127 of which had between one and four inhabitants, ie 55%. In 1871 132 of the 190 cellars contained one to four persons - 69%. In Salford, in 1861, 236 of the 331 cellars contained between one and four inhabitants which is a total of 71%.

These findings bring into question the perceptions of Kay, Gaskell and de Tocqueville. They also question Coutie's finding in that in Stockport, in 1861, only 15% of the cellar dwellings contained a single person whilst, in 1871, this had only risen to 21%. Both 1861 and 1871 were years of, relatively, stable economic circumstances. Our findings are closer to Playfair's perception. Although few cellar dwellings would appear to have resembled the Black Hole of Calcutta, we can, however, argue that even if a cellar had only four people, it could have been perceived as indecently overcrowded if the four inhabitants had to share a single room and they were adult, unmarried family members. We have noted from the papers given to the Manchester Statistical Society that human beings were not the only inhabitants of the cellar. The presence of animals added to the grossness to be found within; a situation that appears to be confirmed by the following letter to the Salford Weekly News on the 16th August, 1861. The correspondent claimed to know of a cellar dwelling that contained nine persons and was six feet under the ground:

"they keep at least one dog and it sleeps in the house (or cellar) with them, besides a cat, I don’t know how many rats, mice, black beetles, etc."

Cellar dwellings were not only to be found under houses. On census night,
1861, sixteen men, women and children were living in a cellar that was under a school building in Stockport. Another school cellar, this time in Broughton Road, Salford, provided a home for twenty one people - four family groups on the same census night. Three of these families were Irish headed and the fourth was headed by a Yorkshire born widow. On census night, 1871, three families, thirteen in number, were living in a cellar under a chapel in Cook Street, Salford.

These three cellars have been excluded from the overall occupancy analysis. We cannot define with any degree of accuracy the amount of floor space available to these families. We cannot, therefore, assess the decency standards consequent upon the number of inhabitants and their sleeping arrangements.

III

The vast majority of cellar dwellings contained family groupings. For example, excluding the singly occupied cellars in Ancoats, 1861, only 9 of the remaining 189 cellar dwellings were inhabited by people, none of whom were, in any way, related. In Stockport, 1861, there were only four cellar dwellings out of 180 where the same pattern applied. Family groupings were frequently man, wife and children, as we have seen in the Makin family. Sometimes the grouping was widowed parent and children. Occasionally siblings had taken a cellar together. We also find family groupings that include members of the extended family - in-laws or grandchildren.
One sibling group lived in a cellar under a house in Cross Street in the London Road sub-district. The head of the household was John Parton, aged 41, a Manchester born cotton doubler. John was single, as was his sister, Louisa aged 36, who did not work outside the home. Living with them was their married sister, Margaret Brown, aged 30, who also did not work outside the home. Margaret had her two children living with her, John aged 3 and William, aged 1. All members of this family had been born in Manchester. In Rope Street, Rochdale, in 1871, Thomas Manoch was the head of the cellared household. He was 39, Rochdale born and was employed as a blacksmith labourer. His wife Maria, aged 37, had been born in Ireland. They had a one year old son, Andrew. Also living in this cellar were John Needham, aged 14, a doffer who is described as stepson and Mary Hoban, aged 70, a former domestic servant who is described as 'mother-in-law'. The most pathetic family group was living in a cellar in Leeches Court, off Back Water Street, Stockport, in 1871. The cellar was occupied by Mary A Joyce, aged 11, and her little brother, Peter aged 2. No further information was provided about these two youngsters other than the comment on the census return, "Father in prison".

It can be argued that family groupings would pose less of a threat to society than single people, having at least in theory a degree of responsibility and stability. Did the cellar dwellers take on this responsibility when they themselves were immature? Were they as feckless as they were perceived - marrying without a thought to the future? Did the cellar dwellers follow the Makin example and marry and become parents whilst still in their teens?

Thompson(6) maintains that during the mid-Victorian period middle class
gentlemen delayed marriage until they had attained their late twenties or early thirties. They were expected, on marriage, to be able to provide a suitable home and sufficient income to maintain a wife and children. The legal age of marriage at this time was twelve years of age. However, as Thompson points out, there were very few teenage marriages in the country as a whole.

In an attempt to analyse the age of marriage of the cellar dwelling population, the age of the eldest child within the household has been subtracted from the age of the father. The fathers who were over the age of forty have not been included in the analysis as a whole as they may have had children who had become independent and were not, therefore, shown as part of the family unit. The analysis of the age of marriage is not a precise analysis - it is accepted that the methodology is flawed, not least by the fact that many children died in infancy. However, it is possible to argue that the results are a useful tool to be used against perceptions which, themselves, were not based on an in-depth analysis.

The following table gives the average age at marriage for the cellar dwellers in the five sub-districts of Manchester and in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale for both 1861 and 1871. Families lodging in cellars have been included, however, step-children have been excluded.

| TABLE VII  Average age at marriage |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| **Town or Sub-district** | **1861** | **1871** |
|                 | years | days | years | days |
| Market Street   | 26    | 73   | 24    | 51    |
| London Road     | 19    | 25   | 24    | 153   |
| St Georges      | 24    | 32   | 24    | 124   |
| Deansgate       | 24    | 76   | 23    | 350   |
| Ancoats         | 23    | 105  | 23    | 160   |
| STOCKPORT       | 24    | 237  | 23    | 266   |
| Salford         | 24    | 135  | 23    | 105   |
| Rochdale        | 24    | 260  | 23    | 211   |
This table indicates that, in general, male cellar dwellers married when they were aged between 23 and 24 years, again demonstrating that the Makins of Salford were not typical. Although the cellar dwellers married when they were several years younger than their middle class contemporaries, it is difficult to argue that they married before maturity. The table would, however, appear to indicate that the cellar dwellers in the London Road area married at a significantly earlier age than cellar dwellers elsewhere in 1861. The overall average for the London Road sub-district is affected by the fact that one male cellar dweller appears to have married when he was only fifteen years of age and two other male cellar dwellers appear to have married when they were seventeen.

One of these immaturely married couples was the Bingham family. They lived in a cellar in Fairbarns Buildings. The head of the household was William Bingham, aged 21. He was an iron dresser and, like wife and child, he had been born in Manchester. His wife Esther was aged 26 and she was a charwoman. They had a six year old daughter, Margaret. Another example of early marriage can be found in the family of John Lacy. John lived in a cellar in London Road. He had been born in Ireland. He was aged 36 and worked as a shoemaker. His wife Margaret, aged 41, did not work outside the home. She, too, had been born in Ireland, as had their daughter Bridget, aged 19, who worked as a boot closer, probably alongside her father. Despite having married whilst still in their teenage years, these two families did not appear to have produced many children, unlike the Makins. It is possible that both families did have other children who had failed to survive the rigours of cellar life. It must be re-emphasized, however, that these families appear to have been the exception in that the vast majority of cellar dwellers married in their early to late twenties.
Age was not simply a determinant of maturity, it could also be a significant determinant of poverty. When a couple first married, they were relatively financially sound. This position was threatened when the children were born. Over time the children grew up and contributed to the family income. When the children left home, the parents, then elderly, were again in financial difficulties. They were perceived as abandoned by their children and forced upon the Guardians for support. Old age came quickly to the inhabitants of the mid-Victorian industrial towns. As Playfair noted, the shocking rates of infant mortality resulted in the average life expectancy of the labourer being fifteen years. Should he survive into adulthood, his living conditions dictated that he would be an old man at fifty - incapable of meaningful labour. If he life had been spent in a damp, dark cellar, old age and incapacity would come even sooner.

Many cellar dwellers did not experience the expected easing of financial pressure in their middle years. Even when some of their children started to contribute to the family income, there was always another dependent, hungry mouth to feed. We have observed this with the Makin family. Two other examples can be taken from the Market Street sub-district, 1861. Firstly, the head of a Spear Street cellar was Thomas Maguire, aged 52. He had been born in Ireland and was employed as a cooking glass maker. His wife, Mary aged 42, had also been born in Ireland. She did not work outside the home. They had five Manchester born children - James aged 16, an ivory turner, Ellen aged 14, a servant, Rose aged 11, also a servant, John aged 8 and Catherine aged 6. Francis Leonard was the head of a family who lived in a cellar in Redfern Street. He had been born in Manchester as had all this family. Francis was 36 and employed as a painter. His wife, Mary Ellen was also 36 and she did not work outside the home. They had five children,
Eliza aged 13, a doller, Thomas aged 11, an errand boy, Francis aged 7, Ellen aged 4, and Jane aged 1. In view of the ages of Mr and Mrs Leonard, it is very likely that Jane would not have been their last child.

Coutie suggests that cellar dwellings in Stockport were occupied by the either the old or the young "because the rents were lower". As we have seen, Wohl maintained that towards 1874 the inhabitants of cellars were the elderly thereby suggesting that cellar dwellings were the last independent home for many - death or the workhouse were the final step. Furthermore, as we have seen in Playfair's report that the relieving officer for the Chorlton Union belived that the majority of cellar dwellers had been unwillingly brought down to such habitations again, suggesting financial pressures. Were such pressures age-related? Did the age range of the cellars dwellers differ significantly from the age range of the town dwellers as a whole?

The following table gives the total population of the towns under study and the number of people aged under ten and over fifty both numerically and as a percentage of the total population for 1861. The table also gives the total cellar dwelling population of the four towns and the numbers of people under ten and over fifty expressed both numerically and as a percentage of the total. These two age groups have been selected because, as has been argued above, the earning capacity of the fifty year old would be in decline and the vast majority of children under ten years of age were totally dependent. There were, of course, exceptions, for example, Ellen Flynn, aged 8, who lived in a cellar in Middle Lane, Rochdale in 1861 and who worked part time in the mill and 9 year old Elizabeth Paton, who lived in a cellar in Mersey Street, Stockport in the same year and who was a band maker.
**TABLE VIII**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total pop. 1861</th>
<th>Cellar pop. 1861</th>
<th>Cellar pop. 1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manchester %</td>
<td>Stockport %</td>
<td>Rochdale %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total pop. 1861</td>
<td>355,123</td>
<td>105,305</td>
<td>91,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged under 10</td>
<td>131,866</td>
<td>25,989</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport %</td>
<td>19,255</td>
<td>5,4</td>
<td>11,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total pop. 1861</td>
<td>1,232</td>
<td>2,997</td>
<td>1,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellar pop. 1861</td>
<td>1,366</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport %</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total pop. 1861</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellar pop. 1861</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>1,159</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport %</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total pop. 1861</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellar pop. 1861</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport %</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figures obtained from the British Parliamentary Papers, vol LIII, parts 1 & 2.

Variations in cellar figures are due to illegibility of census returns.

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Taking the town population as a whole, Table VIII appears to indicate that Manchester was, in 1861, still a town of incomers. Incomers tended to be young adults probably with young children. The table shows that 37% of the population of Manchester was under ten years of age whilst that of Salford, its neighbour, was only 24%. Furthermore, only 5.4% of Manchester’s total population was over fifty years of age compared to 11% in Salford. This difference cannot be explained by mortality rates. The death rates in Salford and Manchester were compatible. The table also indicates that each town, with the exception of Manchester, had a slightly higher percentage of under ten year olds living in cellars than within the town population as a whole, indicating that dependent children put a further strain on what was a tight family budget.

Moving now to the over fifty year old cellar dwellers, Table VIII indicates that many of Manchester’s house dwelling population had to move to a cellar in old age. A similar situation seems to have existed in the other towns although the difference in town and cellar population in this category are not as clearly defined as the under-10s. The workhouse in Lancashire had developed into a maternity hospital, an orphanage, an old folk’s home and a lunatic asylum, rather than a place of punishment for the undeserving. Even so, it would appear that many of the aged in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale preferred to live in cells fit only for toads than to present themselves at the door of the ‘house’.

One of the oldest cellar residents was Mary Ludow. In 1851 she was living in a cellar in Lomax Street, Salford. Mary was 80 years of age, she had been born in Salford as were all her family and she was on parish relief. Her married daughter, Ann Hudson aged 45, lived with her. Ann was a washer woman. Mary’s
unmarried daughter, Hannah aged 32, a worsted spinner and a grandson, John Simeon Ludlow aged 11, a turner for a silk engine also shared the cellar. In 1861, Mary, now 91, was still in the same cellar, her daughters and grandson were still living with her. Mary was no longer in receipt of parish relief. Mary’s daughters’ occupations had remained the same, however, John, the grandson had become a core maker. Presumably his now adult wage had lifted the family above relief level for Mary. The Ludlow family, like the Makins, did not sever family bonds. Furthermore, it serves as a pointer to the extremely low level of incomes available to female workers, a situation that will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

IV

We have noted that our example family - the Makins of Salford - had at least three addresses with a twenty year period. It is not possible to discover how many other addresses they had. Rate books for this period in Salford no longer exist and families like the Makins do not appear in trade directories. As argued above, the underclass were perceived to restless, almost permanently on the move. As such they were beyond control. We have seen, however, in the case of Mary Ludlow, that both she and her family remained in the same cellar for at least ten years. Between 8% (in Market Street sub-district) and 18% (in Rochdale) cellar dwelling families remained in the same cellar for the same period of time. Two families in Rochdale were in the same cellar for twenty years and three such families in both Stockport and Salford. There was one Ancoats family that was equally static.
Let us consider some of these 'stationary' cellar residents. In 1851, in Back Turner Street, Market Street sub-district of Manchester, there was a cellar dwelling family headed by John Brierly who was 37 years old. He worked as a saddler. John had been born in Manchester as had all his family members. His wife, Charlotte was aged 43 and did not work outside the home. They had six children - Richard, aged 18 who was a bat maker - Mary Ann, aged 14 who was an umbrella coverer - Peter, aged 10, a scholar - Charlotte Jane, aged 7 - John, aged 4 and Susannah, aged 2 weeks. In 1861 they are still in the same cellar, Richard and Mary Ann are not living with their parents. They would have been 28 and 24 respectively. It is therefore unlikely that they had married. Peter was still at home and worked as a stirrup stitcher, probably with his father. Charlotte Jane is a servant and John is now an umbrella frame maker. Susannah has survived and is at home with her mother.

A cellar in Every Street, Ancoats, was home to a much travelled family. The head of the household, Thomas Adshead, had been born in Stockport. He was 34 and an umbrella maker. His wife, Hannah, aged 35, had been born in Staffordshire. She did not work outside the home. The Adsheads had two children - Joseph, aged 7, who had been born in Stockport and Sarah, aged 5, who had been born in Staffordshire. They shared their cellar with Emily Mitchell, aged 17, who had also been born in Staffordshire. In 1871, Thomas, Hannah and Sarah were still in the same cellar. Sarah had found work as a cotton polisher. John was not shown on the 1871 census return. He would have been aged 17 but it is more probable that he had died.

In Stockport in 1871, Joseph Daybrooks was head of the household living in
a cellar in Bamford Street. Joseph had been born in Stockport, he was 34 years of age and a labourer. His wife, Sarah 33, had also been born in Stockport. She was employed as a cotton weaver. The 1891 census shows that they remained in the same cellar for twenty years. By 1891, Joseph had become a self-employed slater. The 1891 census also indicates that the Daybrooks had two rooms. As they appear to have had no children or lodgers, this cellar could be, perhaps, considered decent.

Another twenty years cellar resident was William Anderton and his family from Cleggs Yard, Rochdale. In 1851, William, who had been born in Padiham, Lancs, was employed as a dyer. He was 48 years old. His wife, Martha, aged 35, had been born in Rochdale. She did not work outside the home. They had three Rochdale-born children, John 15, a dyer, George 10 and Martha 1. In 1861, the family were still in the same cellar, William was still a dyer, John was a corn miller and George worked in the cotton mill. Baby Martha had not survived. The family also shared their cellar with an unmarried mother - Jane Niall, aged 17, and her one month old baby, Martha Jane. In 1871, they are still in the same cellar. The eldest son, John, has left home and son George has married Jane Niall. They now have a two year old daughter, Sarah. Martha and her daughter-in-law, Jane, do not work outside the home. William, now 63, was still employed as a cotton dyer and George was still in the cotton mill. Cleggs Yard was a closed court and by 1871, the Anderton were the only non-Irish family living in the court both in terms of cellars and houses.

It would appear that for at least three of these four family examples, escape from a cellar dwelling proved impossible even when the children started to contribute to the family income. The contribution made by children under 21 was
very little and, perhaps, did not equate to the cost of their food and clothing. The Andertons present a slightly different picture. However, by 1871, William was 63. It is difficult to believe that he had been a dyer for at least twenty years and was still in full strength. Furthermore, the family had two adults and two children who were totally dependent. Income levels will be considered in more detail in the next chapter.

An measure of stability can perhaps be gleaned from electoral rolls. Indeed, William Anderton was not only entitled to vote in the local elections, he had the ultimate badge of respectability - his name was listed amongst those entitled to vote in the Parliamentary elections.

The 1867 Franchise Reform Act went far further than had originally been intended, especially in its Borough provisions. As J P D Dunbabin argues,

"Nobody, then in Parliament, wished to extend the franchise beyond the respectable working class, however defined, to the residuum."(7)

Furthermore, it could, perhaps, be argued that the restlessness of these people - moving from one address to another - would negate their participation in the political life of their towns.

It can be argued that in the 1860s and 1870s the greatest power to affect the day-to-day life of the citizen lay in the hands of the local council. The overseer provided the list of names for inclusion on the electoral register and the political parties had the authority to object. Despite this procedure, many cellar dwellers found themselves with the right to participate in the polical life of their town. In
an attempt to put faces to the cellar dwelling electorate, every person whose abode was listed as either ‘cellar’ or ‘under’ on the local register of electors, was listed. The registers covered a period from 1869 to 1871, dependent on availability and legibility.

On a simple numerical basis, it would appear that the majority of cellar dwellings were included on the electoral roll. For example, in Ancoats, 158 cellar dwellings were listed whilst 190 cellar dwellings were designated as such on the 1871 census. In Deansgate, 142 cellar dwellings appear on the electoral roll whilst the census shows 122 designated cellar dwellings. The widest discrepancy is to be found in Salford where the 1870-71 roll lists 442 cellar dwellings whilst the 1871 census only designated 298 dwellings as cellars. It would appear that address was not a determinant of electoral rights.

One can, perhaps, expect that people who worked in the mills and factories - who might have come into contact with political activism in the form of a Trades Union - would have had their name on the electoral roll. Similarly, people who worked with non-unionised but politically aware fellow workers, who were perhaps active in the local clubs(8), would also be on the electoral roll. They would have been known to the local representatives of the party - their soundness could have been assessed and, consequently, they would not have been objected to. What of the others? What of those who were despised by the skilled working man - the general labourers, the hawkers, the casual workers etc, were their names included on the electoral roll?

In the St Georges sub-district of Manchester - the most Irish area - 131
people, whose abodes were described as 'cellar' or 'under', were listed on the electoral roll. Of these, only 30 were living in that cellar on census night, 1861 and 1871. This may indicate either movement or lack of designation of the cellar by the census enumerator. 17 of the 30 cellar dwellers had been born in Ireland. There were only 6 people whose occupations would indicate employment in a mill or a factory - expected voters. One would certainly not have expected that 65 years old Patrick McGrail, an Irish-born fish hawker, to have found a place on the electoral register nor James Wood, a 45 year old Scottish pig dealer. Also included on the register were Michael Hooks, 41, a Manchester-born general dealer and Alice Dwyer, 84, and Irish lady with no occupation.

In the Ancoats sub-district, 158 cellar dwellers were listed on the electoral register, twenty one of whom were resident at that address on the census nights of 1861 and 1871. Eight of these voters had been born in Ireland and six worked in a mill or factory. The unexpected included Richard Parry, aged 71, a Welsh shoemaker, and William Yates, 52, a tobacco maker. These two gentlemen possible carried out their trades within their own cellars and not within a small workshop. James Farrell, aged 69, an Irish-born dairyman had the local vote as did Ann Sutton, aged 43, a laundress.

In the Deansgate sub-district, 142 cellar dwellers were named on the roll and 24 of them have been discovered on the census. Of these 24, 3 worked with the textile industry, 1 in a foundry and 1 for the Canal Company. 6 of the 24 had been born in Ireland. 2 of the discovered voters were Manchester-born cloggers. Mrs Brocklebank, 54, from Carlisle, had the vote. Her occupation was described as a 'broker', usually a term applied to a dealer in second hand gloves. Edward
Richardson, aged 50, a hawker and 82 years old Elizabeth Ormrod, who was unemployed, were also amongst the 142 cellar dwellers of Deansgate eligible to vote in the local elections.

The final two Manchester sub-districts, Market Street and London Road had 75 and 154 cellar dwellers, respectively, who were entitled to vote. In the Market Street area only 9 were discovered on the census and in London Road, only 8 were discovered. These two areas had been subjected to the most commercialisation which probably accounts for the wide variation. The Market Street register included Eliza Wells, 29, of Manchester with no occupation, George Butterfield, 65, an Irish-born 'pensioner', which often indicates an old soldier, and Henry Swan, 27, a Manchester-born hawker. None of the 9 discovered voters in the Market Street sub-district were employed in a mill or factory. In the London Road sub-district, 3 of the 8 were employed in a mill or factory although, perhaps, William Chappell, aged 88, who gave his occupation as spinner, was not actively employed as such. Amongst the 8 in this district, there was one hawker and a charwoman who had the vote.

In Salford, 442 people whose abodes were listed as cellars were on the Burgers Poll, 1870-71. 119 have been found on the census return. Twenty six had been born in Ireland, thirty one worked in mills or factories and three were employed in the mining industry. The unexpected included Maria Wittingham, 67, who had been born in Stockport. The 1871 census indicates that Maria was a pauper - an automatic disqualification - the 1861 census shows Maria at the same address employed as a laundress. There were other unexpected voters in Salford. They included Jonathon Butterworth, 60, a clarinet player, Jonathon Jackson, 35,
and artist, Adam Hartley, 34, and Thomas Gratteridge, 59, both night soil men, and Thomas Robinson, 47, and John Booth, both of whom were employed as chimney sweeps. Many of the 1871 residents of Cook Street cellars had the right to vote in the local elections. However, our example family, the Makins, do not appear to have shared this right.

Of the 125 cellar voters on the local electoral roll for Stockport, 47 have been discovered on the census, 17 of whom worked in the textile industry or in a factory. One of these, however, was Edwin Tongue, a 34 year old hand loom weaver who, in all probability, worked in his own cellar. As in the other areas considered, Stockport’s electoral roll provided some unexpected voters. For example, Thomas Scott, 37, and Irish outdoor labourer, John Docker, 80, a Yorkshire-born coal dealer, Mary Carter, 70, a laundress and Elizabeth Hewitt, 72, a housekeeper. The oldest voter was William Sumners. He was 93 and had been born in Ireland. He was, of course, without employment. Of all the discovered electors in Stockport, 10 had been born in Ireland.

Finally, in Rochdale there were 153 cellar dwellings listed on the local electoral register, of these 61 have been found on the census returns, including William Anderton, 25 of whom worked in a mill or factory and 1 who was a coal miner. The Rochdale electorate also contained the unexpected such as Julia or Judith Stanton, 51, an Irish hawker of mops, Alice Kershaw, 34, a Rochdale-born charwoman, John Hill, 65, a Rochdale-born hand loom weaver. Even more surprising was the fact that Francis Moran, 60, an Irish hawker and Patrick Crehan, 48, an Irish-born chair bottomer shared the privilege of a Parliamentary vote with William Anderton. Of the total 61 found cellar dwelling voters in Rochdale, 31 had
been born in Ireland.

There does not seem to be a clear set of variables determining presence or absence on the electoral roll. An initial examination of the rolls shows that the addresses of the cellar dwellers ranged from main streets to back streets, courts to yards, again suggesting that the areas inhabited by the underclass were both known and visited. There does not appear to have been any discrimination along ethnic grounds for, as we have seen, many potential voters had been born in Ireland. The Irish were believed to be, historically, politically well-motivated. However, as Kidd notes

“Possibly the greatest factor in the working class Toryism of northern towns like Manchester was antagonism towards the Irish immigrant and his Roman Catholic religion.”(9)

The Parliamentary election of 1868 saw the start of this working class Toryism and was contested at a time of the anti-Catholicism ‘Murphy riots’. Furthermore, 1867 had witnessed the public hanging of three Fenians, Larkin, Allen and O’Brien, at Salford’s New Bayley Prison, for the murder of a policeman. The cry of “No Popery” had been very strong in Stockport. In 1852 an anti-Irish riot had taken place and two catholic church had been destroyed. This situation may explain why, on closer examination of the electoral rolls for Stockport, few cellar dwellers living in the Garnett Street, Crowther Street, High Bank Side had the vote - this was a recognised area of Irish habitation. It is therefore puzzling that there are no apparent ethnic discriminations on the electoral rolls for Manchester or Salford - all areas seem to have been enfranchised.

Rochdale, however, appears to contrast with Stockport and Manchester and
Salford. Rochdale's electoral rolls show that cellar dwellers in the Mount Pleasant area - White Hall Street, Rope Street etc, an area described by Urban as Irish - had the local vote. However, cellar dwellers in the Church Lane area were absent.

We do not know whether the potential cellar dwelling voter exercised his right. Many poll books are unavailable. Green and Parton quote from Mayhew who maintained that

\[
\text{The artisans are almost to a man red hot politicians...........The unskilled labourers are as unpolygonal as footmen.}^{(10)}
\]

Local matters would have impinged upon the life of the slum dweller quite profoundly whether for good or ill. Local matters were personified in the beings of the sanitary inspector, the poor law guardians, who were controlled by the separately elected Board of Guardians, the urban missionary, the landlord, the man from the Statistical Society and even the local newspaper reporter - all of whom, in the eyes of the underclass, would have been regarded as oppressors and spies and, as such, viewed with hostility. Why, then, would the cellar dweller make an effort to support them, if he did actually vote? What is equally puzzling is the apparent willingness of the street level representative of the local parties - the decent working man - to step over what has been perceived as a huge class divide and accept hawkers and their like having electoral status.

*******************************

In the introduction to this chapter, we highlighted several perceptions of the underclass and we have compared these to the cellar dwellings of Manchester,
Salford, Stockport and Rochdale in 1861 and 1871. We have discovered that, contrary to the finding of Venedey, Faucher, Gaskell et al, the majority of cellar dwellers were not Irish, not were they immigrants, around 50% of all cellar dwellers had been born in the town in which they were resident on both census nights. We have discovered that the majority of the cellar dwellers lived in family groups that frequently included adult children and extended family members. This situation did bring an unacceptable degree of overcrowding and indecency. As Gouldie argued in the previous chapter, for a home to be decent, unmarried, adult family members had to have separate sleeping arrangements. Such a standard would have been impossible to achieve simply due to the lack of space within the majority of cellar dwellings. However, the multiple generational household does demonstrate that not all paternal bonds were prematurely severed. We have also discovered, as Playfair did, that the cellar dwelling male married at an earlier age than his middle class contemporary - between 23 and 24 years of age. We can, however, argue that, at this age, the cellar dweller would probably have been in receipt of an adult wage. A minority of cellar dwellers were close to the workhouse gates by reason of age and an unknown number of them would have availed themselves of its maternity provision for the birth of their children, many of whom died in infancy. Finally, we have discovered that a surprisingly high number of cellar dwellers had the right to vote in local elections. Furthermore, a significant minority of cellar dwellers, not only remained in the same area for over ten years, many of them remained in the same cellar. We have, therefore, discovered that cellar dwellers, contrary to perception, did display a degree of both stability and responsibility.

It would appear that, in many ways, our example family - the Makins of
Salford - were atypical of cellar dwellers. We may have found no jewels amongst the cellar dwellers but we did find the Joice children in Stockport who would have touched the heart of the most detached observer. However, we have failed to discover why so many people lived in these damp stinking holes. Occasionally, as we have seen, the birth of six or more children could put a severe strain on a family budget, for instance, the Makin family, but what of the others? Were income levels, even multiple income levels, too low to meet the families' necessary expenditure or were the cellar dwellers unable or unwilling to commit themselves to regular day-after-day employment or were cellar dwellings perceived by their occupants to have unexpected advantages?
Chapter 6 - References


6. F M L Thompson, ibid, p 59.


CHAPTER 7

EMPLOYMENT REVIEWED

We have three broad perceptions of the underclass as workers derived from the observations considered in the first section. Firstly, the mill worker worked in hot and humid conditions at a dull, repetitive job that demanded little from him in the way of muscle or brain power. Such work was engaged in by both males and females. The conditions of work supposedly encouraged immorality - illicit connections were witnessed during work breaks - or a depression in spirit which sought an outlet in the public house or worse. Secondly, there were the hawkers who roamed the towns from dawn to dusk, frequently with their children, selling all manner of things. Some of these people were even allowed by law to ring doorbells and dirty doorsteps. Finally, there were those who had chosen the path of degradation - the thieves, the prostitutes and the beggars. There was one further group of people among the underclass - those who were dependent upon assistance. We have seen in the first section of this thesis that charitable giving was to be discouraged and the new Poor Law was roundly condemned by Kay, Disraeli et al. Assistance was available from the Guardians. However, no matter how deserving, the receipt of assistance had a counter-side, the recipient became a non-person - Maria Wittingham would have lost her right to vote one she became a pauper. To remain a person one had to work.

In this chapter we will consider the occupation, or lack of it, of the cellar dwellers of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale in 1861 and 1871.
When analysing occupations, we must hold to one caveat. The given occupations on the census return are self-assignment. We do not know how the enumerator posed the question relating to work, nor do we know how it was answered. Did the cellar dweller answer, “today I worked at this”, or did he say, “when working I do this”, or, again, did he answer, “today I have been labouring but by trade I am a shoemaker”; and which of the many possible answers did the enumerator use?

Furthermore, we do not know the amount of underemployment or short time working nor, in the case of the 1861 census in particular, do we know the degree of unemployment. More use of the term unemployed was made on the 1871 return, perhaps reflecting a change in attitude and a realisation that unemployment was trade-related rather than a seasonal, cyclical phenomenon. Terms such as ‘ex’ or ‘former’ or ‘late’ do appear on the 1861 return suggesting retirement rather than unemployment.

Following the analysis of the given occupations of the cellar dwellers, we will consider where possible income levels to be expected from such work. Income levels were frequently dependent on both the age and sex of the worker, for example, in the mill. We will, therefore, consider the possible income levels of those under 21, males and females, separately. We will also consider those in receipt of assistance. We will end the chapter by considering factors that restricted the cellar dwellers earning capacity, such as disability and sickness. Throughout this chapter we will again use individuals to demonstrate our findings.
Categorisation of the age of occupations followed by the cellar dwellers is problematical. Established occupational analysis systems are of little use - there are no landowners, no factory owners or members of the professional classes living in the cellars with the exception of a couple of schoolmasters and an unemployed apothecary. However, a choice of six categories has been made in an attempt to provide a degree of control over the somewhat chaotic picture of employment found amongst the cellar dwellers. The categories are: penny capitalists, textile workers, slop/seasonal/sweated workers, factory workers, unspecified labourers and miscellaneous.

Clearly, within each category, there will be wide variations in possible income levels, dependent upon the trade followed. For example, within textile workers, we will find trades ranging from an overlooker to a scavenger, within the factory we will find the blacksmith labourer and the iron puddler. These two categories - textiles and factories - have been treated separately, firstly, because the census enumerator appears to have differentiated between them and, secondly, as far as the cellar dwellers are concerned, the textile industry was female-dominated, whilst the factory was more male-orientated. The choice of occupations included under the penny capitalist category were obvious - hawkers, dealers and the like. However, the choice of those placed under the slop/seasonal/sweated trades may be considered presumptive. It is clear that some trades would be seasonally affected - brick layers and their labourers, for example. However, others such as shirt makers, tailors and shoe makers have been presumed to have been working in
the sweated trades, providing clothing etc, for the cheap/slop end of the market with seasonal fluctuations. There are some occupations that do not respond to the selected categorisation, menservants, sailors, miners - these have been placed in the miscellaneous category.

The given occupations of the cellar dwellers of Manchester will be analysed under the five sub-districts that have been used previously. The sub-districts appear to have offered specific spheres of employment. For example, Ancoats was almost a mill town in its own right - see maps 1, 2 and 3 in the appendix to this chapter - whilst the occupational opportunities for the St Georges cellar dweller were greatly influence by the presence of Smithfield Market - see map 4 in the appendix to this chapter. The employment analysis for Salford, Stockport and Rochdale will be town wide as the employment patterns were not area specific.

Table IX, on the following pages, gives the number of cellar dwellers expressed in percentage terms following occupations within the six category areas. Note is also made of the percentage of cellar dwellers over the age of ten years without an occupation.
TABLE IX
Occupational analysis of cellar dwellers

St Georges sub-district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational category</th>
<th>1861 (%)</th>
<th>1871 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penny capitalism</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile industry</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slop/seasonal/sweated</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified labourers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

% of total potential workforce (aged over 10) without income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1861 (%)</th>
<th>1871 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of total potential workforce (aged over 10) without income</td>
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Market Street sub-district

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified labourers</td>
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% of total potential workforce (aged over 10) without income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1861 (%)</th>
<th>1871 (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of total potential workforce (aged over 10) without income</td>
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TABLE IX (cont)

London Road sub-district

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% of total potential workforce (aged over 10) without income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1861 (%)</th>
<th>1871 (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of total potential workforce</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>(aged over 10) without income</td>
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Deansgate sub-district

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% of total potential workforce (aged over 10) without income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1861 (%)</th>
<th>1871 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of total potential workforce</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(aged over 10) without income</td>
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### TABLE IX (cont)

**Ancoats sub-district**

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<th>1871 (%)</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified labourers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>% of total potential workforce</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(aged over 10) without income</td>
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**Salford**

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
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<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% of total potential workforce</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(aged over 10) without income</td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
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### STOCKPORT

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>Penny capitalism</td>
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<td>Textile industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified labourers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total potential workforce</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>(aged over 10) without income</td>
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### ROCHDALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational category</th>
<th>1861 (%)</th>
<th>1871 (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penny capitalism</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Textile industry</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>Slop/seasonal/sweated</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(aged over 10) without income</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Let us now analyse these results. Penny capitalism is an expected category of work for those at the edge of the abyss. John Benson in *The Penny Capitalist* argues that the picture of the role of the Penny capitalist within Victorian society is so often distorted by the historian's concentration on enterprises such as Marks and Spencer or Kendal Milne(1). People such as these were the rare exceptions. There were thousands of others, many of our cellar dwellers included, who depended on penny capitalism to keep a roof over their head.

For Benson, there are four characteristics or elements that define a penny capitalist - independence, speculation, working class origins and a small scale enterprise. Though the margins of activity are frequently blurred, for Benson the Penny Capitalist is

"A working man or woman who went into business on a small scale in the hope of profit (but with the possibility of loss) and made himself (or herself) responsible for every facet of the enterprise."(2)

Certain occupations that have been placed under the Penny Capitalist category to not conform precisely to Benson's definition. Principle amongst these are the makers; makers of baskets, makers of red quilts, makers of fancy boxes, makers of artificial flowers such as Pricella Hampton, aged 12, who lived in a cellar in Greengate, Salford in 1861. People such as these were probably more correctly labelled as outworkers. These occupation have been included under the Penny Capitalist because, although clearly, they were not responsible for every facet of the operation (they were not responsible for the sale of the finished article), they were responsible for the whole production of the article. Furthermore, makers frequently had to expend their own money on, for example, glue, thread, needles etc.
Therefore, if they failed to reach a specific quota of production, they could run the risk of loss. We have seen that Mary Dillon, *A Manchester Shirtnaker*, intended to use her own sewing machine.

Mr James Battersby, aged 87, who lived in a cellar in Pitt Street, London Road, with his wife Elizabeth, aged 79, has also been included as a Penny Capitalist. James and Elizabeth were dependent on the income that James earned as a knocker-up. James would have possibly had to provide himself with a clock and maybe a long pole. He was entirely responsible for every facet of the operation and certainly would have received no income whatsoever if he did not fulfil his task. A neighbour of the Battersbys in Barrow Place, Sarah Ackroyde has been categorised as a Penny Capitalist. Sarah, aged 64, was a bleeder with leeches. She would have to expend money to buy the leeches and possibly to maintain them. If she failed to attract customers she would have secured a loss. Continuing with 'medical' occupations, nurses and female doctors have been included. They too were dependent on custom and may have expended some money on their trade if only a few pennies worth of Godfrey's. I have also included Joseph Needham and his wife, Ann, both aged 60 who were animal preservers in a cellar in Canal Street, Ancoats in 1871.

Many of those employed within the Penny Capitalist category were street traders - hawkers and dealers. This group, perhaps, is the most romanticised group of workers. There is scarcely a film about Victorian life without the sound of the jolly, rosy-cheeked street trader crying his wares. However, in reality, life for the hawker was unromantic, desperate and marginal. Some street traders dealt in hot food or drinks such as coffee stall holders. Hot food would have been most

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welcome in the poorest districts where both time and the facility for cooking were limited. In urban areas, the hawker would buy his stock from both shops and markets - frequently on a day-to-day basis. The lower down the retail chain, the lower the quality of goods for sale. It was not unknown for the street trader to trade in foodstuffs that had been discarded as unfit by the more legitimate retail establishments. Mayhew writes that fish was at least two or three days old before it was bought and was “frequently putrid when sold to the poor”(3). This fact was attested to by Mr Oats and his committee’s investigation for the Manchester Statistical Society, in Ancoats. This situation did not only apply to fish but to the whole range of fresh food.

“By the side of the wealthy salesman and the wholesale purveyor of fruit, green stuff and flowers there are innumerable hangers-on, parasites of the flower world that seek to pick up the few crumbs that must incidentally fall from the loaded boards and counters where so much is bought and sold.”(4)

Our cellared street traders did not limit themselves to the sale of ‘fresh’ produce. They hawked herbs, birds, sand, salt, mats, brushes, pots, hardware, balm etc, etc. These were also the ‘dealers’ in old clothes and shoes, barrels, timber and newspapers and there were ‘brokers’ in provisions and furniture.

Himmelfarb, in *The Idea of Poverty*, argues that Mayhew believed that the ‘race’ of street traders had generic characteristics

“a greater development of the animal than of the intellectual or moral nature. high cheekbones and protruding jaws. a slang language. lax ideas of property. general improvidence. repugnance to continuous labour. disregard of female honour. love of cruelty. pugnacity and an utter want of religion.”(5)
She adds that, amongst costermongers, marriage was almost unknown - Mayhew estimated that less than one tenth of the couples living together had married. It is notable that in his description of the street traders' characteristics, Mayhew's views correspond almost exactly to the perceptions of the characteristics of the underclass as a whole.

We cannot examine the physiognomy of the street traders who lived in cellars. We can, however, step a little closer to them than merely noting their existence. We will concentrate on 1861.

In the St Georges area of Manchester, there were, in 1861, 57 people who gave their occupation as hawker plus one barrel dealer. Of these 58 people, 35 described themselves as married and 6 were widowed. Twenty were described as head of the household which indicated that they were the principal bread winner. Eleven family groups worked together as hawkers - husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters. Seven of the hawkers were shown as lodgers in cellars, three of whom lodged with a husband and wife team of hawkers. The youngest hawker was eleven years old Thomas Anderson. The head of his cellared home was Jane Anderson, 48, a widow who was 'depending on the family'. Her eldest son, John, aged 17, was a brush maker. Thomas had two elder sisters, Ann aged 19 and Jane, aged 16, who were hawkers along with Thomas; perhaps they hawked the brushes their brother made. The whole family had been born in Ireland. The eldest hawker amongst the cellared inhabitants of St Georges was aged 92. He was described as a visitor in a cellar that contained four other family hawkers. All but five of the cellar dwelling hawkers in St Georges sub-district in 1861 had been born in Ireland. Fifteen of the total were male.
In the Market Street area, which abuts the St Georges area, there were thirteen cellar dwellers in 1861 who described themselves as hawkers and there were ten dealers. Of the total twenty three, eleven were married and six were widowed. Eleven were described as head of household and only three were cellar lodgers. There were two family groups. The youngest hawker in this area was aged twelve and she worked with her mother and two sisters. The eldest was a sixty eight year old female stay dealer. Seventeen of the twenty three hawkers and dealers had been born in Ireland and of the twenty three, nine were males.

The Ancoats sub-district also abuts St Georges. In this area in 1861 there were eleven hawkers, three dealers and one vendor of salt. Of the total number, four were described as married and six were widowed. There was one family group, a mother and daughter. Eight of the total were described as head of household and four were lodging in cellars, one of whom lodged in a cellar whose head of household was also a hawker. The youngest hawker in Ancoats in 1861 was eighteen years of age whilst the oldest was seventy. Nine of the hawkers had been born in Ireland. Only three of the Ancoats street traders were male - the salt vendor, one who described himself as both a hawker and a labourer and the eighteen year old.

In the London Road and Deansgate sub-districts the picture was significantly different in that there were fewer hawkers per capita of the cellar dwellers and, of these, few were Irish. In the London Road area, there were only nine hawkers or dealers - seven of whom had been born in Manchester and none of whom had been born in Ireland. Six were the head of cellar households. All nine were either married or widowed and there was one husband and wife team. In the London
Road area the age of the hawkers was generally higher, the youngest being twenty nine and the oldest seventy three. One of these people had been dealing in earthenware or hawking hardware for at least ten years from the same cellar. He was Manchester born David Swinson, aged 40 in 1861, who lived in a cellar in Cross Street with his wife Elizabeth. In the Deansgate sub-district, in 1861, there were only three cellar dwelling hawkers, two men who had been born in Manchester and one Irish born woman. The female and one male were head of households, the other male was aged seventeen.

In Salford, in 1861, there were ten dealers or hawkers living in cellars; seven were male and eight were head of household. There was one who was a lodger. Five of the ten were Irish born. There were no family groups. The age range of the Salford street traders was from nineteen to seventy.

In Stockport - a smaller town with a smaller cellar dwelling population than that of Salford - in 1861 there were twelve people who described themselves as street traders. Eight of the twelve had been born in Ireland. Five of the total were male and there was one husband and wife team. Nine of the street traders were the head of household and two were cellar lodgers. The age range amongst the Stockport street traders was higher than that in Salford, the youngest being twenty four and the oldest sixty five with eight of the total being forty or over.

Finally, in Rochdale there were only four street traders living in cellars in 1861. One of these was an Irish male aged thirty who was the head of household, one was an Irish female head of household, aged 60, and the other two were a husband and wife team aged thirty eight and thirty five respectively, both of whom
had been born in Leeds.

Benson argues that

"More often, the decision to sell was born of poverty and misfortune; it was the last desperate ploy of immigrants, the unskilled, the unemployed, the old, the sick, the victimised and the injured."(6)

He goes on to argue that street trading "provided a haven for the seasonally unemployed" especially amongst the Irish labourers. Treble argues that in 1830 - 1840, in Lancashire, many Irish women and their children took to hawking to increase the family budget. However, he goes on to argue that such a trade was not exclusive to women and children

"In many cases the dominant elements among small shopkeepers, hawkers, peddlers, costermongers and stall holders were either adult males or families who worked as a single unit."(7)

Some of Benson's arguments do not hold for our street traders - the age range was wide; they were not all immigrants and none of them were disabled according to the census return. It is also doubtful whether they were the seasonally unemployed labourers as the census was taken towards the end of the starvation season of January to April. The 1861 census was taken on 7.4.1861 and the 1871 on the 2.4.1871. Our findings appear to be more in accord with Trebles arguments although, again, there was a strong Irish flavour to his findings. It was only in the St Georges district and in Stockport where the Irish formed more than 50% of the street traders. Furthermore, it would appear that Mayhew's observation of the
costermongers' domestic arrangements (cohabitation) does not hold for the hawkers of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale, many of whom were either married or widowed.

Benson suggests that street trading was growing during the second half of the nineteenth century. It was, however, a precarious and unpleasant trade. Income levels are very difficult to assess as they depended on the type of goods being sold, the season and the area in which the hawker plied his trade. It also depended on the hours and effort the hawker was willing to expend. In Oldham, for example, Irish besom makers and hawkers could earn four shillings per week in 1840s whilst rag and bone hawkers in Yorkshire could earn around six to nine shillings in the same period. The London costermonger of the 1840s and 1850s earned thirty to thirty five shillings in the high summer, an income that fell to four to six shillings between January and April.(8)

Trade also depended upon the availability of goods. Street traders were the poor trading with the poor; therefore, items had to be wholesaled that had a readily available retail market. Our street traders would need to be close to available sources so that they could be on time to gather the crumbs that fell from the more respectable traders. Frequently this was late at night. This may go some way to explain the preponderance of street traders in St Georges and in some parts of Market Street and Ancoats sub-districts. The Shudehill area described by Mrs Banks was almost at the junction of St Georges, Ancoats and Market Street as was Market Place and the Shambles. Furthermore, there was the giant Smithfield Market in the same locality. This market dealt in provisions, fruit, delph etc. In Stockport we found a high proportion of cellar dwellers engaged in street
trading when compared to Salford. Stockport had an ancient and massive market around the parish church of St. Mary. Being close to the Cheshire plain, the Stockport market in farm produce amongst a wide variety of other commodities. We have, therefore, in both Manchester and Stockport significant sources of readily available and hawkable goods.

Shopkeepers, too, were dependent on a readily available stock. Cellared shops did not lend themselves to stock storage when the family had to occupy the same cellar. The shopkeeper probably considered himself to be one rung above the street trader, but he, too, depended on whatever the poor could spend. All the shopkeepers living in cellars in 1861 and 1871 in the areas covered by this thesis appear to have traded from their own cellared home - not places that would attract the discerning shopper.

The goods sold in these cellared shops included fish, greengrocery and provisions. There were also the marine shops. In a cellar under 36, Gravel Lane, Salford in 1861 the head of the household was Thomas Donough, aged 35, from Preston. He had an Irish born wife and three children aged 4, 2 and 11 months. The whole family were dependent on Mr Donough's income from 'marine'. The term marine appears to have related to 'junk' or rag and bone collections. It appears to have been an obnoxious trade as the following letter to the Salford Weekly News, 21st July, 1866 indicates.

"Sir,

In writing to you, I wish to call the attention of the Salford Sanitary Committee to the granting of licences for the business of marine store dealers carrying on their business in cellars. There is a
marine store kept under the house in which I live and I can assure you that the smell arising from the dirty rags and the storage of bones, this hot weather, is at times unbearable. A short time ago the fever was very bad in our neighbourhood and a great many died. But should we again be visited with the fever or the cholera, I think those living in houses where marine stores are allowed in cellars underneath them will run a very serious risk.

I am, Sir, yours truly

Prevention is Better than Cure."

The cellared shopkeeper and the street trader were, as argued above, the poor trading with the poor. Incomes were low and competition was fierce. Not only did he have to live close to the wholesale market, he had to be known by his retail market. Furthermore, as Stedman Jones points out in *Outcast London*,

"Costermongers.............had to find dwellings with facilities for keeping their donkeys.............and also places where no objection would be made to the disposal of garbage produced in the preparation of their wares for sale. The choice nearly always confined itself to decaying slum courts."(9)

It can be argued that for this group of cellar dwellers, poverty of income dictated that they occupied the cheapest housing and that fear of losing their markets dictated their lack of mobility. A move to another area would be to gamble with what little they did earn.

II

A second expected category of employment for the cellar dweller was within the Slop/Seasonal/Sweated trades. Stedman Jones(10) maintains that casual labour
as a phenomenon took its more dramatic form in London. London was a unique city that acted like a magnet to thousands. The attraction of so much wealth and the profusion of charitable organisations proved irresistible to the Victorian poor.

Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale did not experience the London Season - that brought pressure on dress makers, milliners etc. London had substantial docks which Manchester and Salford did not have until the Manchester Ship Canal was opened to traffic in 1894. London's distance from coalfields meant that there was, proportionally, a higher concentration of small workshops and finishing trades and a lack of heavy industry. Despite these differences, as A J Kidd(11) argues, an analysis of the 1851 census enumerators returns for an area of Deansgate alone has suggested that over 70% of the residents were engaged in low paid, low status and insecure trades.*(12) The preponderance of casual and seasonal employment was notable. Many of the occupations discussed by Stedman Jones were practised by the cellar dwellers. It can, therefore, be argued that Stedman Jones's analysis can be used, in part explanation, as to why at a time of national prosperity, we find another group trapped in misery.

Occupations in the Slop/Seasonal/Sweated category, like those in the Penny Capitalist category, did not provide a steady income but did provide one that was too precious to abandon in search for another. The casually employed person was in a dilemma. His income was insufficient to provide a decent standard of living, but he could not survive without it. His mobility was limited by his lack of

knowledge of the work market elsewhere. His only information came from his neighbours. He had no trades union branch which, for the skilled man, could act as an information gathering centre equivalent to a labour exchange. It was also essential for the casually employed to be known to those who employed the casual labour - many of whom demanded that the workers lived within a specified distance from the place of employment. The well known 'good worker' would be more readily taken on than the stranger whose abilities were an unknown quantity. Although the casual worker's place of work may have changed almost daily, his knowledge of its availability would have been limited to his immediate neighbourhood. If he did, by chance, hear of employment outside his area, his extremely limited income would prevent him from presenting himself for selection even by using the cheapest available transport.

A further tie on the casual worker was the very early start times in many casual trades. Unlike the street trader, the casual worker had to be at work from 6.00 am, and in some cases as early as 5.00 am. It was, therefore, vital that the worker lived close to his place of employment. Lateness was grounds for dismissal and/or loss of pay.

In such a hand-to-mouth existence, these ties not only bound the head of the household to his cellar, but also other members of the family. As soon as possible, work of some description had to be found for the children and, again, local knowledge was vital. Stedman Jones argues that, in this way, the married casual worker was trapped in a vicious circle. It was necessary for the family to work in order to attain a bearable level of subsistence, yet, due to the nature of the work, it increased his immobility. Further, the need to find work for the family, in turn.
helped to maintain the overstocked labour market which, in turn, had a depressing effect on wages thus helping to maintain casual trades. The casual worker could not escape.

".....for the uncertain gamble of obtaining more regular work elsewhere entailed not only risking his own livelihood but also that of his wife."(13)

Income levels for many Slop/Seasonal/Sweated trades have proved elusive; by the very nature of the work they are almost impossible to assess. However, David Chadwick FSS, one time Treasurer to the Borough of Salford, produced figures for some of the seasonal trades relating to 1859. Chadwick pointed out that statistical returns for rates of wages had been comparatively neglected.

"owing to the general disinclination that exists amongst employers of labour to furnish the requisite information and the equally strong objections which the operatives themselves appear to entertain in regard to all enquiries submitted to them on the subject."(14)

Chadwick does not clarify the nature of the employer, the size of establishment etc, nor does he give a seasonal adjustment to the wage figure, only to the hours worked. Furthermore, he does not indicate who supplied the information - the employer or employee. We must therefore take these figures as a rough rather than a precise guide.

Chadwick(15) supplies income levels for carpenters and joiners at twenty eight shillings per week, the hours worked varied between 55 hours in winter to 58 hours in the summer time. Slaters received twenty six shillings per week with hours varying between 50 and 58 dependent on the season. Bricklayers received an
hourly rate of 7.13 pence whilst their labourers received 4.54 pence per hour. These wage rates applied to adult males. Treble gives a rate of “twenty one shillings per 55.5 hour week for unskilled building workers in 1859”.(16) These wage rates do not appear to indicate grinding poverty. However, it must be emphasized that the rates applied to a full week’s work, a luxury that was not available to many of the cellar dwellers. They worked on a day-to-day basis with many idle days due to the overstocked labour market.

One area of slop/sweated/seasonal work that attracted many cellar dwellers was that of boot and shoe making. Chadwick informs us that the average weekly wage for boot closers ranged from twenty six to thirty two shillings, whilst that of boot makers ranged from twenty two to twenty five shillings for a 60 hour week. Treble(17) maintains that in 1840 a female shoe binder for the slop trade as little as three shillings and three halfpence per week. By 1863 he notes that ‘third class’ shoe makers in Northamptonshire earned twelve shillings per week. Frequently, a husband and wife worked as a team in the enterprise as outworkers in their own cellar. For example, in a cellar in Bull Street, Salford in 1861, Salford born William Jackson, aged 30, was the head of the household. He was a shoemaker and his wife, Mary, aged 27, was a boot binder. They supported their three children aged 4, 2 and 1 month. Sometimes the whole extended family worked together. For example, John O'Brian, aged 25, was a boot and shoe maker, his wife, Ellen was a boot binder, his mother-in-law, Margaret Whitney, aged 50, was a boot binder and his brother-in-law, Luke, was a boot and shoe maker. They all lived together in a cellar in Water Street, Deansgate in 1861. The O'Brian family would appear to have had quite a substantial income, possibly around £3 per week, however, it must be stressed that they, too, belonged to a seasonal and overstocked
labour market that was being pressed by mechanisation.

Cellar dwellers whose declared occupations have been included in the 'miscellaneous' category, would also have been employed on a casual day-to-day basis. Within this category many were employed in the transportation sector. They were employed as carters of manure and bones, railway employees, boat drivers, canal horse drivers and watermen and errand boys. Chadwick placed various carters at wage levels between sixteen and seventeen shillings for a 56 to 60 hour week.

The miscellaneous category also includes those who were probably employed by the local council, nightsoil men, lamplighters and scavengers. The term 'scavenger' was also used within the textile industry. However, it is very unlikely that the adult males who used this term to describe their employment, were employed within the textile trade. Chadwick's tables indicate a weekly wage for street scavengers at thirteen shillings for 58.5 hours. The 1864 minutes for Salford Council show that 'emptiers' of nightsoil received eight pence per ton, carters of nightsoil received four pence per ton. Scavengers who filled carts received fifteen shillings per week and street sweepers fourteen shillings per week. Also in this category we find a wide variety of labourers - railway navvies, day labourers, spade labourers, even agricultural labourers. There are also cellar dwellers who found employment in the food industry - bakers, confectioners, gentleman's cook, soda and ginger beer makers, fish cleaners and curers, brewers and tripe dressers. Little wonder that there were so many problems relating to the quality of food in the industrialised towns.
Throughout the whole of the areas under study and across both census years, there is little difference within the miscellaneous areas of work followed by the cellar dwellers. All the areas of work are distinguished by low status, low skill and, hence, low pay, especially when a full week’s work would have been difficult to find. Many would have been offered employment on a day-to-day basis, but, unlike the slop/seasonal/sweated occupations, most of these occupations were not dependent on the season. Goods always needed transporting, food was needed every day irrespective of quality, lamps needed lighting, privies needed emptying and streets needed cleaning. As we have found with the penny capitalists and the slop/seasonal/sweated workers, many in the miscellaneous category would need to be known and available to his potential employer and this tied him both to his area and possibly to his cellar.

Many of the occupations within the miscellaneous category are recognisable. However, there is, of course, the odd exception. For example, in Great Bridgewater Street, Deansgate, in 1871, we find a cellar headed by William Watson, aged 48, a bricklayer from Leicester. His wife, Matilda aged 50, described her occupation as a ‘chair minder’. Matilda was born in Dublin and the couple had one child, Mary aged 14, who worked as a piecer. Matilda finds herself in the miscellaneous category through lack of knowledge or imagination of the author - a century earlier and more, Matilda could have ‘minded’ sedan chairs - but what type of chair could she have been minding in 1871? Perhaps the enumerator misheard the Irish accent or misspelt the word which should have read ‘mender’, but this would appear to have been a male occupation.
The previous categories of employment discussed above were expected areas of employment for those who lived at the bottom of society. It is unexpected to discover that a high percentage of cellar dwellers found employment within the mills and factories of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. Occupations such as these demanded regular attendance, commitment day after day to long hours of labour at specific start and finish times. Conditions such as these would not have attracted the feckless or the restless underclass. Furthermore, work in the mills and factories attracted in some cases 'reasonable' wage levels and regularity of earning.

It has been argued above and by Cooke Taylor and others that work in the mill demanded little from the operative, he did not need his muscle or his brain. However, it can also be argued that such work did demand concentration. Much of the machinery demanded "skill, experience and judgement"(18) to operate it successfully. Within the factory setting, especially factories that were engaged in heavy industrial production such as iron making, the operative would have had to give the same commitment to the clock and possess skill, experience, muscle power and concentration - all qualities that would not have been found within a physically and morally degenerate population.

Table IX above shows clearly that, within the two 'mill' towns of Stockport and Rochdale, around 50% of the working cellar dwellers were employed within the textile industry. As we found with the hawker of St Georges and the Smithfield
Market, address is a frequent determinant of occupation. This is re-emphasized when we consider that in 1861, for example, 44% of the cellar dwellers in Ancoats and 36% of those in London Road also worked within the textile industry. Mention has been made earlier of the McConnell/Murray mills which lay virtually on the border between the Ancoats and London Road sub-districts. This mill complex was massive and employed thousands of hands but it was by no means the only mill in the area as the 1849 map at the end of this chapter will clearly demonstrate. Virtually every street around these mills contained cellar dwellings whose inhabitants were dependent on the textile industry. Early start times and the need for food at dinner breaks would dictate an address close to the mill.

The range of occupations within the textile industry followed by the cellar dwellers was vast, ranging from the almost poverty stricken hand loom weavers working in their own homes to the virtually aristocratic overlookers in the mill. We will start in the mill.

The textiles worked were principally cotton but we do find silk workers, flax workers and woollen workers. As we shall see, wage rates were variable dependent upon the textile worked. The position achievable within the work force hierarchy depended upon both age and sex. Cellar dwellers found employment at almost every level of the industry.

As age and sex were strong determinants of wage rates, the following table demonstrates the numbers of men, women, boys and girls who lived in cellars and were employed within the textile industry. The labels 'boy' and 'girl' indicate persons aged under twenty one. Choosing this age may be arbitrary, however, I
have failed to discover precisely when a young person became entitled to adult wages. My guide for selecting twenty one is Engels(19) who, by way of footnote, divided workers into over 21 and under 21. Furthermore, the age of majority in 1861 was twenty one. For these reasons I have taken this age as my base line for adulthood.

TABLE X

Sex and maturity of cellar dwelling textile workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District or Town</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Road</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Street</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key

M = adult male
F = adult female
B = male under 21
G = female under 21

It is clear from the table above that mill work was, principally, a female domain. In some areas of work within the mill, females outnumbered males by 2 to 1. Mill work frequently depended on fine manual dexterity - a quality that lay within female hands. The role of the female cellar dweller in the mill and the areas
open to her will be examined in greater depth in the next chapter.

One of the highest paid areas of work within the mill achieved by the cellar dwellers was that of cotton spinner. Chadwick’s tables give an average wage rate, for 60 hours, of forty one shillings for a male spinner but out of this income the spinner had to pay his piecer, usually a woman or a boy, sixteen shillings per week. However, the piecer was often a family member, therefore, this figure would be open to ‘negotiation’. Another area of high take home pay was received by the overlooker. In the carding department an overlooker received twenty eight shillings per week, according to Chadwick, whilst in the spinning department he received twenty six shillings and in the throstling department the overlooker received twenty four shillings.

Very few of the cellar dwellers found themselves amongst these elites of the cotton mill. On both the 1861 and 1871 censuses and across all the towns we find only 42 male spinners. The spinner’s wage after deduction for the piecer was similar to the carpenter, however, unlike the carpenter, the spinner received a full week’s wage all year round. Across both years and all towns we find only few male overlookers. In addition to those few there was one young man, aged 19, lodging in a cellar in Back Street, Salford in 1861, who gave his occupation as ‘overlooker’. This assertion is difficult to accept and perhaps demonstrates one of the difficulties in using self-assignment as a basis for occupational analysis.

The area of work within the cotton mill that attracted most cellar dwellers was weaving. The following table analyses, as before, the sex and adulthood of those cellar dwellers who were so engaged. All areas of weaving have been
 included, excepting hand loom weaving, and they cover ribbon weavers and power loom weavers amongst others.

TABLE XI
Cellar dwellers employed in weaving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Road</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Street</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key

M = adult male
F = adult female
B = male under 21
G = female under 21

The above table again demonstrates that weaving was a significant area of female employment within the cotton mill. The above table, as Table X, also indicates a significant fall in the numbers of cellar dwellers employed in the textile industry between 1861 and 1871 - from 1115 to 714. There are three possible explanations for this fall. Firstly, the obvious one in that the actual number of cellar dwellers fell between 1861 and 1871. Secondly, there had been the 'Cotton Famine' - a time of severe distress in the cotton districts of Lancashire. Many mills would not have survived and thus the availability of work would have been

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reduced. Those previously employed in the mills then could have found other work that was, perhaps, more suited to their temperament and, therefore, they did not return to the industry. Thirdly, those mills that did survive could have taken advantage of the increased technology that had become available, thus reducing the number of hands required. Perhaps the cellar dweller was incapable of working with the new technology.

In the appendix to his book, A L Bowley, MA, FSS(20), one time lecturer in statistics at the London School of Economics and Political Science, produced a table showing what appears to have been a decline in the overall numbers of those employed in the cotton trade in Manchester between the years 1833 and 1886. Chadwick, however, shows an increase in the number of looms worked which would again indicate increased technology.

Bowley’s table indicates that both men and women were employed within the weaving sector of the industry although it was chiefly an area of female employment. Bowley does not differentiate between the sexes when he gives an average weekly wage for weavers of 12s. in 1860, 8s. 6d. in 1865 and 12s. 2d. in 1870. Bowley’s table also shows that in 1859 weaving wage rates varied between 10s. 9d. and 18s. per week dependent on the number of looms worked. Bowley’s table gives the average income for spinners as being 23s. 2d. in 1860, 30s. in 1865 and 27s. 3d. in 1870. These figures are, presumably, after the piecers deduction as Chadwick gave a figure of 41s. for male spinners in 1859.

The remainder of the cellar dwellers who worked in the cotton mill found employment throughout the various processes - doubling, scrutching, winding.
blowing, tenting, carding etc. According to Chadwick’s table, few if any of these processes attracted weekly incomes over 10s. for a 60 hour week.

Cellar dwellers also found employment within the silk and flax sectors of the textile industry. Again, these were chiefly women and girls which may have been due to the very low rates of pay available within certain sectors. Chadwick, again, provides the following information for 1859, based on 60 hours per week.

**TABLE XII**
Income levels in the silk and flax industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Wage per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silk cleaner</td>
<td>6s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk spinner</td>
<td>10s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk doubler</td>
<td>8s 9d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk weaver (men)</td>
<td>20s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk weaver (women)</td>
<td>7s 6d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flax spinner</td>
<td>7s 0d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before leaving the ‘mill work’ two other income levels are worth noting. Chadwick maintained that firstly, calico printers, who were using machinery, earned 38s. per week, whilst block calico printers earned 28s. per week. Secondly, dyers and bleachers, in general, earned between 16s. and 18s. per week. Several cellar dwellers gave these areas of occupation on their census return.
The area of the textile industry that was excluded from our weaving analysis was that of the hand loom weaver. Bowley writes

"There is no doubt that the earnings of the hand loom weaver diminished at an extraordinarily rapid rate between 1790 and 1840 so that whereas at the former date they were a fairly well-to-do and contented set of men, at the later date those who remained were earning a miserable 5s. a week at the expenditure of 14 hours daily work."(21)

In Stockport, in 1861, four men and one boy were hand loom weavers. By 1871 there was only one man. In Rochdale, in 1861, there were three male hand loom weavers of wool and one of flannel. In Salford, there were no hand loom weavers. In the Market Street sub-district there was only one husband and wife team. In the St Georges sub-district there were three family groups.

The St Georges hand loom weavers formed a small colony in Old Mount. This area was one of the few cellar dwelling areas that existed before 1794, as the map in the appendix to this chapter will show. It is, therefore, possible that the Old Mount houses had been constructed with loom cellars as argued by both Morgan and Coutie, as previously noted. Two of these families were living in Old Mount in 1851. They were John Bradley, aged 41, his wife Bridget, aged 43, both of whom had been born in Ireland and both of whom were cotton hand loom weavers. The Bradleys had four Manchester born children in 1851, Joseph, aged 15, who helped a power loom weaver, Elizabeth, aged 13, a cotton winder and Michael, aged 13, and Thomas, aged 10, who both went to school. In 1861 Mr Bradley was still a hand loom weaver, his wife was described as a cotton winder, Elizabeth was a power loom weaver and Michael and Thomas were hookers in a warehouse. David
Nangle, aged 44, and his wife Sarah, aged 45, had both been born in Ireland. The 1851 census shows them as cotton weavers. They had four Manchester-born children, Catherine, aged 17, and Thomas, aged 15, who were also cotton weavers and Mary, aged 8, and David, aged 5, who both attended school. In 1861, David and Sarah were both described as cotton handloom weavers. Mary had become a power cotton winder and young David was apprenticed to a cabinet maker. The third Old Mount cotton handloom weaver was only there in 1861. He was Patrick Hickey, aged 50. All the Hickey family had been born in Ireland. Patrick’s wife, Catherine, aged 50, was a cotton winder. Their daughter, Ellen, aged 22, was a silk handloom weaver, their second daughter, Julia, aged 17, was a silk winder and their son, John, aged 14, was a silk piecer. It is possible that Catherine, Julia and John worked in the cellar with the handlooms although it is equally possible that they worked in a mill.

The three handloom weavers of wool in Rochdale all lived in cellars in Portland Street. They were Richard Hoyle, aged 70, from Rossendale and his wife, Margaret, aged 69, Joshua Fielden, aged 68, born in Rochdale and his lodger, Robert Diggle, aged 65, who had also been born in Rochdale. The flannel handloom weaver was John Hill who lived in a cellar in Cheetham Street. John was 65, he had the local vote and had been born in Rochdale. John shared his cellar with his wife, Elizabeth, aged 58, who was a greengrocer, and their two sons, John, aged 30, a journeyman plasterer and Charles, aged 24, a fruitier. If both the handloom and the grocery were in the cellar with the family, how could they move?

As noted in Table IX, a small percentage of cellar dwellers found work within the non-textile factories of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale.
Within this category we find many industries - glass making, wire works, iron works and brass foundries. Neither Chadwick nor Bowley provided tables that covered the full range of both industries and sectors of work within those industries. The following table is based on Bowley’s findings and is intended to serve as an indicator of possible wage rates that were achieved by a few of our cellar dwellers. Bowley does not supply hours worked. However, we can assume 58 to 60 hours per week. The relevant year is included in brackets.

TABLE XIII
Heavy engineering wage levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Wage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Wage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitter</td>
<td></td>
<td>27/- (1862)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaker</td>
<td></td>
<td>30/- (1862)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td></td>
<td>30/- (1860)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith's Stricker</td>
<td></td>
<td>19/- (1864)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Moulder</td>
<td></td>
<td>30/- (1860)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td></td>
<td>15/- (1860)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were twelve cellar dwellers whose income levels were, in all probability, lower than the most inadequate or indolent hawker. In Salford, in 1871, we find Maria Wittingham, a widow aged 67. She lived in a cellar in Halls Place with her grand-daughter, Harriet Mercer, aged 11, who was a ‘nurse’. Maria was a pauper. In Stockport, in 1871, in adjacent cellars, we find Rebecca Garden, aged 55, a widow and Sarah Burgess, aged 79, both of whom were in receipt of parish assistance. Sarah Badge, who lodge in a cellar in Higher Hillgate,
Stockport, was 67, she had been born in Liverpool and, like Maria Wittingham, Sarah was a pauper. Sarah Peers lodged in a cellar in Bamford Street, Stockport in 1871. She was 84 years old and was a beggar, hardly the picture of a rascally beggar painted by the Rochdale newspaper reporter.

In Davisons Court in Manchester, in 1871, Mary Meadow, aged 53, a widow, was in receipt of parish relief - she was blind. Rebecca Cain, aged 66, of Silk Street, Ancoats, was also on the parish as was Julia Murphy, who was 82, and blind. Bridget Kearn from Ireland, a widow, aged 80, was dependent on outdoor relief. Ann Welsh, 78, Alice Butler, 71 and Ann Percival, all of Manchester cellars, described themselves as paupers. Of all the cellar dwellers, these twelve women were, perhaps, the closest to the workhouse door. There was no one else to care for them but society.

IV

To complete the picture of incomes, it is necessary to consider expenditure - the cost of living. Chadwick, again, provided a useful indicator. He based the following figures on a family consisting of a husband and wife and three children whose total income was 30s. per week. Presumably, he believed this income to be an average income for the working classes of 1859.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 X 4lb loaves</td>
<td>3 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 peck meal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6lb flour</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5lb butcher's meat</td>
<td>2 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2lb bacon</td>
<td>1 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 score potatoes</td>
<td>2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 quarts milk</td>
<td>1 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetables</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2lb coffee</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4lb tea</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3lb sugar</td>
<td>1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2lb rice</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1lb butter</td>
<td>1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2lb treacle</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 1/2lb soap</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coals</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candles</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rent, taxes, water</td>
<td>4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothing</td>
<td>3 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sundries</td>
<td>2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>30 0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Chadwick’s figures, we can see that, on an income of 30s. per week, it was possible, by the standards of the time, to have a ‘healthy life’. However, the majority of our cellar dwellers’ incomes were considerably less than 30s. per week. Treble supplies figures that related to an income of 21s. 4 1/2d. for a man, wife and three children in 1904. They could only afford, amongst other items, 5 pints of
milk, 8d. - 4lb of meat, 2s. 8d. - 1 lb of bacon, 6 3/4d. - 1 stone potatoes, 8s. 3/4d. (21) It is interesting to note that, in 1863, the Poor Law Board for Manchester prescribed a dietary requirement for the children who lived in the Industrial School in Swinton. For boys aged between 9 and 16, the requirements included 2lb of potatoes and vegetables, 8lb 6oz of bread, 12 pints of milk and 8 oz of meat per week. If the boy worked on the farm, he was entitled to receive an extra 4oz of bread per day.

The above expenditure figures would indicate that the diet of many cellar dwellers would have been, at best, unhealthy, at worst, almost at starvation level. They simply did not have sufficient income to give their families even the Industrial School requirements.

Let us take, again, our example family, the Makins of Salford. In 1861, the only income for the family - man, wife and two children - was from James's work as a fustian cutter, probably around 10s. to 12s. per week. In 1871, James was a corn dresser, his wife's income from the mill would have been about 9s. The income from the two working children would have been even less. The total family income would not have exceeded 20s. There were five dependent children and, in all probability, there would have been a nurse to pay.

The family of Thomas Armstrong lived in a cellar in Longworth Street, Deansgate, in 1861. Thomas was a cotton weaver - income around 12s. - his wife was a charwoman - income 5s. per week. They had to keep themselves and their four dependent children on 17s. per week. Terrance Murray, 63, a hawker of fruit, lived in a cellar in Edge Street, Market Street. His wife, Bridget, 40, did not work.
outside the home and they, too, had four dependent children to feed. It may be argued that these families were not typical of cellar dwellings families, however, the more we consider cellar dwellers, the more we realise that there was no typical cellar dweller. We can, nevertheless, argue that, for the Makins, the Armstrongs, the Murrays and for many other cellar dwellers, butcher’s meat, bacon and milk would have been either unknown or extremely limited. Filling foods such as bread, potatoes and, maybe, rice and a little treacle, would have been the staple diet. Expenditure on coals and candles would have been, in proportion to their income, higher than that for the house dweller. One could not survive in a damp, dark cellar without coals and candles.

No matter how squalid the conditions or how wretched the family income, the rent for the cellar had to be paid. Figures for the rent charged for many cellar dwellings have proved impossible to verify. Gauldie (23) gives a figure of 1s. to 1s. 6d. for one room. This figure equates with the figure given by Chadwick, if one accepts that the rent for a room would be proportionally higher than the rent per house. Rate books for the relevant periods in Manchester have been preserved and confirm that the rent for Mr Armstrong’s cellar was 2s. 3d. per week, whilst the Murray’s rent was 2s. The Manchester rate books indicate that cellar dwelling rents ranged from 1s. per week to 3s. 6d.

It is clear from both income levels and expenditure levels necessary to maintain life, that it was poverty that forced many cellar dwellers to find the cheapest possible housing. However, it is also clear that a significant minority of cellar dwelling families had income levels that would suggest that they could live anywhere. Mill and factory workers were not so tied to an area as, for example,
the penny capitalist or the casually employed, although, as has been suggested, proximity to work was a considerable advantage due to early start times. The mill worker was not tied to a specific mill. Mill work was unionised and through this network information would be received of 'hands needed'. We have seen that houses were available for a rent of around 5s. to 6s. per week in Manchester where housing rents were probably higher than in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. Why, then, did the 'high' and regular earner live in a cellar?

It can be argued that many of the trades that attracted the higher, regular wages posed the highest threat to the health of the operative. Work in the mill was notoriously damaging to the lungs, as Mrs Gaskell showed in *North and South*. The blowing and carding sections were perhaps the worst and, as Chadwick noted, the cardroom overlooker received more income than other overlookers. The air in these sections of the textile industry was filled with cotton dust and fibres, so too the lungs of the operatives. Mills were also renowned for accidents caused by unguarded machinery. The average age of cellar dwelling cotton operatives in Ancoats in 1861 was 37 for males and 27 for females. In 1871 it was 31 for males and 24 for females. In Stockport in 1861 the average age for male cellar dwelling cotton operatives was 29, for females it was 28 whilst in 1871 it was 31 for both sexes. These average ages are surprisingly low. There was no compulsory retiring age, therefore, the figures, perhaps, suggest an early non-compulsory retirement due to ill health.

Many other industries such as dyeing, bleaching etc, used injurious chemicals with little knowledge and with little regard to the well-being of the workers. The Mad Hatter was not simply a character in a fairy story - arsenic was commonly
used in the hatting industry. Add to this the searing heat and flying molten metal in the iron works and we can see that high pay brought high risk. Many of the contemporary observers of the time commented on the deformity, shortness and wanness of the operatives they saw. Disraeli's Hell Cats - iron workers - were grossly deformed in appearance.

The census returns do not supply information as to general health. There is a column for completion by the enumerator that should be completed if the person is blind, deaf, dumb or an imbecile. Surprisingly few of the cellar dwellers in any of the areas were shown as having any of these conditions. More use was made of this column on the 1871 return. For example, John Chapman in a cellar in Salford, had lost an arm. James Boardman, also of Salford, had lost a leg. James Hampson of Stockport was described as a cripple and Peter Small, also of Stockport, was dumb. John Hayes, who lodged in a cellar in Brown Street, Manchester was described as a lunatic. It would appear, however, that despite the perceptions of the visitors and reporters, the cellar dwellers presented, at least to the enumerator, as physically 'normal'.

Ill health was unrecorded on the census. We are, therefore, dependent on the information that was provided by the local Medical Officer of Health. The Medical Officer of Health for Salford, for example, reported in 1861 that of 1058 deaths, 350 were due to diseases of the lungs, of these 115 were due to bronchitis. In Rochdale, in 1877, the Medical Officer of Health reported that of the 1527 deaths, 315 were due to diseases of the lungs - 236 due to bronchitis alone. Lung diseases were not immediately fatal. They brought months, even years of increasing incapacity. The onset of such an illness, especially if contracted by the chief bread
winner, heralded the onset of a period of considerable financial strain. Indeed, as Rowntree noted, in his 1902 study of poverty in York, one of the primary causes of poverty was the illness or death of the male bread winner. The loss of income, even for a short period of time, from

"sickness, unemployment and bereavement - even minor domestic setbacks - were all sufficient to make a beginning with the pawnbroker." (26)

or even worse with the loan shark whose rates could be as high as 433 1/2% per year. The debt thus incurred placed a financial burden on the family that was difficult to clear, even if the breadwinner recovered his health and could return to his previous employment. The burden was impossible to lift if the chief bread winner died.

It would appear that death was a class conscious visitor. Of the 1058 deaths in Salford in 1861, 236 occurred in fifteen streets that contained cellar dwellings. In Cook Street alone there had been 26 deaths in 1861. This was the street that, in 1871, was home to the Makins. In Rochdale, in 1877, of the 1527 deaths, 193 had occurred in streets that contained cellar dwellings, 21 in Whitehall that passed through the Mount Pleasant district and 12 in Rope Street. So profound was the effect of the loss of a male bread winner that between 26% and 41% of all cellar dwellings under study were female headed - a situation that will be considered in detail in the next chapter.

**********************
In this chapter we have considered the cellar dweller at work and his living expenses. We have found that area of habitation had a significant effect on the occupational direction taken by the cellar dweller - mill work in Ancoats - hawking in St Georges. We have also found that the income levels and the price of the basic necessities of life for many dictated that shelter was sought in a cellar. We have discovered that, for a significant minority, potential income levels from their given occupations would have been sufficient to provide more 'decent' shelter. However, it has also been argued that the very nature of such work frequently condemned the worker to a life of sickness and premature death, inflicting severe financial problems on the whole family.

It can be argued that, within this chapter, two perceptions have been brought into question. Firstly, there is that of Kay et al, who perceived the underclass as a rapidly growing population that had embarked upon a course of generational degeneration. Thirty years after Kay's observations, we find that the vast majority of all cellar dwellers were keeping body and soul together by the sweat of their own brows. Only eleven cellar dwellers over the ten year period and within the four towns had become dependent on the parish or the Poor Law Guardians. One other was dependent on the charity of the passer-by. Many cellar dwellers had proved capable of work in the mill or factory in spite of being town bred - without their constitution being revitalised by country-bred blood.

The second perception that has been questioned is, again, the hidden question. It has been argued in previous chapters that cellar dwellings were not hidden, although their occupants could be socially segregated from respectable society. However, we have seen in this chapter that the very nature of the
occupation followed by many cellar dwellers dictated that they would be constantly visible - hawking their wares - cleaning the streets - driving their carts. It may have been that, to the population a large, they were not seen - they were simply part of the daily scene. It can be argued that perhaps only the slop/sweated workers or the mill and factory hands were hidden. Their hours of employment put them on the streets when the elites were within their own homes.

At the end of this chapter it was noted that the loss of a male bread winner brought severe financial hardship on the remaining family members. In the next chapter we will consider the position of those who had to bear this hardship - the female cellar dweller.
Appendix to Chapter 7

1. 1849 map of Ancoats showing McConnell/Murray Mills and Glassworks (bottom right).

2. 1849 map of Ancoats showing other mills and canal area.

3. 1849 map of Ancoats showing iron works etc.

4. 1849 map of St Georges showing Smithfield Market.

5. 1794 map of Angel Meadow - Old Mount area (top left).
1849 O/S Map showing McConnels/ Murrays Mill

X indicates presence of cellar dwellings
TEXT BOUND INTO

THE SPINE
1848 Map Ancoats

x indicates presence of cellar dwellings
Map showing the presence of cellar dwellings in the area.
Chapter 7 - References

4. Benson, op cit, p 100.
8. Treble, ibid, p 48.
10. Stedman Jones, ibid, p 65.
15. Chadwick, ibid, p 6.
17. Treble, op cit, p 38.


24. Treble, op cit, p 91.


27. M Tebbut, ibid, p 14.
The romantic middle class picture of Victorian womanhood was one of delicacy, decorum, gentility and innocence. The woman was a protected creature - protected first by her father and then by her husband. If she was so unfortunate as not to marry then she was protected by a close male relative. The Victorian woman was always the property of the man. Once she assumed the "honourable distinction of a wife"(1) it was her duty to provide a warm, clean, welcoming home for her husband and children.

We are, however, concerned with women to whom the epithet Lady could never be applied. The perceptions of the women of the underclass were complex and somewhat confused. For many of our male observers such women were devoid of modesty, maternal feelings and domestic skills. They were Viragos, Delilahs and fighting drunks. They lacked the charm of English girlhood, they were stinking and festering. If not actually prostitutes themselves, they saw no shame in the trade. Mercer actually stated that the women of Angel Meadow were more degraded than the men.

The female observers, Mrs. Gaskell and Margaret Harkness, looked at the women of the underclass more as individuals, consequently with more sympathy. Mrs. Gaskell depicted Mary Barton as a young woman who, though tempted, possessed the moral courage to take the right path. Mrs. Gaskell showed deep
understanding and empathy for Mrs. Davenport and even Mary Barton’s ‘fallen’ aunt had sold herself to save her child. Harkness demanded both understanding and action for the Mary Dillons of her world and although she depicted Mary’s neighbours as drunken gossips who frequently ‘overlay’ their children, they were accepted as people not animals.

In this chapter we will take a closer look at these women and their children. We will consider them not as a mass but as a specific group within society. Where possible we will examine actual individuals and speculate how they came to be living in cellars. We will be principally though not exclusively be concentrating on women who were the head of household. In the final section we will consider those women who could not afford a cellar of their own - the female cellar dwelling lodger.

I

Let us start by considering numbers. It would appear that the female town dweller was more capable of surviving the conditions that existed in Victorian towns than the male. For example in Ancoats in 1851 there were 3576 males under 5 years of age whilst in the 20 - 25 age range a fall of only 11%. In the Greengate area of Salford in 1851 there were 2407 males under 5 and 1677 aged between 20 - 25 a fall of 31% whilst these were 2308 females under 5 and 1897 aged 20 - 25 a fall of 21%. In the Wardleworth area of Rochdale in the same year 897 males were under 5 and 682 aged 20 -25 a fall of 24%. There were 822 females under five and
767 aged 20 - 25 a fall of 7%. In the Borough of Stockport 1851 there were 3212 males under five and 2504 aged 20 - 25 a fall of 23% whilst there were 3325 females under five and 3208 aged 20 - 25 a fall of only 4%.

In Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale in 1861 and 1871 the overall female population aged between 20 to 60 years, outnumbered their male equivalent by about 18%. One would, therefore, expect to find a similar percentage of females to be living without a male. One would not expect to find between 26% and 41% of cellars to be headed by females. The following table gives the number of cellar dwellings that were female headed and the percentage of total cellar dwellings that this number represented.

TABLE XIV
Number of female-headed cellars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or Sub-district</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

300
The marital status of the female head of household is demonstrated on the table below in percentage terms:

**TABLE XV**
Marital status of female heads of cellars*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or Sub-district</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th></th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All figures are percentages

KEY: W = widow, M = married, S = single

*The slight discrepancies in these percentages are due to either absence or illegibility of marital status on the census return.

The above tables show some interesting variations. Table XIV (1861) shows
us that St. Georges had the lowest percentage of female headed households whilst Deansgate was second lowest. In 1871 the positions are reversed and it must be remembered that the number of cellar dwellings discovered in St. Georges sub-district fell between 1861 and 1871 by 49 whilst those in Deansgate rose by two. Table XV however gives us the most significant variations. Rochdale had the most unmarried female heads of cellared households. Salford had the most 'abandoned' wives in 1861 whilst in 1871 this accolade again went to Rochdale. It must be remembered that the number of designated cellar swellings in Rochdale rose from 114 in 1861 to 169 in 1871; it was the only town or district to demonstrate such a rise. When we consider the percentages in table XV we note that again St. Georges sub-district noticeable different to the other sub-districts and towns. Not only did it have the lowest percentage of female-headed cellars, it had the highest percentage of widows and the lowest percentage of both single and married female heads of households across both years.

It is not the first time that the St. Georges sub district of Manchester has presented us with a different analysis not only to the other towns but also to the other sub districts. St. Georges had fewer locally born cellar dwellers, it had more Irish born, it had more hawkers and again speaking in percentage terms there were few cellar dwellers in St. Georges who had the right to vote in the local elections. One can only speculate as to the reason for the marital status variations of the female heads of the cellar dwellings in St. Georges. Perhaps incomers were more likely to be young married couples rather than single females. The influence of the Catholic Church would discourage wife abandonment. Perhaps the widow would be fearful of moving in what could still be regarded as a foreign land.
The above table XV very clearly demonstrates that, for all cellar dwellers the lack of a male bread-winner be it through death, desertion or remaining single was a significant factor in determining poverty levels: a quarter to over one third of all cellar dwellings were dependent on a female head confirming Rowntree’s findings in York in 1902.

Let us now move from statistics to people, and consider how their life circumstances perhaps dictated their residence in a cellar. In 1841 Mary Oakden and her husband Thomas, a baker, lived in a house in Nathens Court in Salford. Mary did not work outside the home. They had four children; Sarah 9, Elizabeth 7, Frances 5 and Thomas 2. By 1861 Mrs. Oakden was living in a cellar under 28 Albion Street, Salford. She was now widowed and was working as a washerwoman. Her eldest child, Sarah, was still at home and she was employed in the mill. Sarah was deaf as was her sister, Elizabeth, who was employed as a dressmaker. Frances had left home on her marriage to a hairdresser. Thomas was still at home and he worked as a picture framer. Between 1841 and 1861, Mrs. Oakden had given birth to two more children; Mary who in 1861 was 18 and Martha who was 16. Both these children then worked in the mill. In 1871, Mrs. Oakden was still living in the same cellar with her daughter Sarah, who had by this time left the mill and was now working as a domestic servant. Thomas, who was described as lame, was also living in the cellar. He was now a newsagent. Elizabeth, Mary and Hannah had all left home and Elizabeth and Mary had found themselves husbands.

Mrs. Oakden was widowed when she was about thirty eight years old and she had six children, all of whom were dependent. The destruction of some of the
1851 census returns for Salford has meant that we do not know when she had to move to a cellar. However, we can be almost certain that widowhood dictated the move. Through the years, as the children grew and found work, the Oakden’s financial circumstances would have become less dire. However, four of these children left home and ceased to contribute, leaving the Oakden cellar dependent on the income from one elderly washer woman, one deaf domestic servant and one lame newsagent. The income would possibly have been less then £1 per week, on which, to house, feed and clothe, three adults; a move to a house would have been impossible.

William Fish lived in a house in Crowther Street, Stockport in 1851. He was 36 and a shoemaker. He had a wife, Mary, aged 39, a daughter, Elizabeth, aged 13, who worked as a cotton weaver, and three sons, William, aged 10, Luke, aged 3, and Alfred aged 1. By 1861 William, senior, had died. His widow, Mary, had moved a short distance to a cellar in Cross Street. She had found work as a laundress. Her daughter, Elizabeth, was still at home and still employed as a cotton weaver. William, junior, was also working in the cotton mill and he had married a 19 year old girl called Maria. The other two sons, Alfred and Luke, are not shown on the census. They would have been aged 13 and 11 respectively - too young to leave home. We can assume that they both had died. Between 1851 and 1861, Mrs Fish had given birth to three other children, James aged 9, Ellen aged 6 and Mary aged 4.

It would appear likely that Mr Fish had died sometime between 1856 and 1857, in his early forties. This had precipitated the move from a house to a cellar for the remaining family members. Within a short ten year span, Mrs Fish, at
almost 40 years of age had given birth to three children and suffered the death not only of her husband but two of her children. We could, perhaps, speculate that these losses coupled with poverty, three dependent children and appalling living conditions meant that life for Mrs Fish was simply a matter of getting through each day. If she sought help in a bottle, who could criticize her? A move from the cellar was impossible.

The final family in this section was that of James Wild. In 1851, James aged 35 and a cotton weaver, lived in a house in Oldham Road, Ancoats. His family consisted of a wife, Elizabeth aged 34 and four children, Benjamin (age unknown), Lucy aged 9, Elizabeth aged 4 and Adelaide aged 2. By 1861, Elizabeth was widowed and earning a living as a herb dealer. Benjamin appears to have left the family home which was now a cellar a few doors away from their previous home. Daughters Lucy and Elizabeth shared the cellar with their mother and worked in a cotton mill. They also had a brother, Samuel, who attended school. The Wild cellar contained two female lodgers. Since Adelaide was not shown on the census return, she was probably dead. Ten years later Mrs Wild was still in the same cellar. Her youngest children, Elizabeth and Samuel, were still living with her, Samuel having obtained employment in a warehouse. The two lodgers have been replaced by two granddaughters, Adelaide aged 6 and Mary Jane, 1. The surname of both these children was Wild. Did Lucy leave home, have two children, naming one after her dead sister or was Elizabeth the fallen woman or were the children Benjamin’s?

The life pattern of Mrs Wild was similar to the other examples in that the death of her husband precipitated the move to a cellar. It can, perhaps, be argued
that Mrs Wild was the closest of the three to lifting herself out of her cellar. The family income - if we include the wages of Mrs Wild, Elizabeth and Samuel - could have been just over 20s. per week. The daughter was 22 and a weaver in 1871, the son, although not on adult wages, would have been making a contribution and Mrs Wild was still a herbalist, an occupation which she had followed for at least ten years and was, therefore, established. The rent for the cellar was only 2s. 3d. per week. However, fate had dictated that, at the age of 56, she had two dependent children to care for - again, it would appear that escape was denied her.

II

The working woman was not a nineteenth century phenomenon. Women had worked alongside their husbands or fathers in the fields or in their cottage industries since time began. What attracted the Victorian social reformer, and the Royal Commission, to the Victorian working woman was her visibility. The rapid growth of towns, the movement of mills and factories away from the rural setting and the strongly developing ideal of separated spheres put the female worker in the spotlight and what was witnessed was condemned. As Hewitt noted,

"...........no clean and tidy wife appears to welcome her husband - no smiling and affectionate mother to welcome her children.......[home] is miserably furnished, dirty and squalid........The husband, after a day’s work is done, and finding his wife helping to keep, goes off to the alehouse.”(2)

The mother who was absent from the home from 5.30 am until after 6.30 pm could
not educate her daughters in the art of domesticity. Thus the pattern of slovenly housekeeping and intemperate husbands would continue. This pattern was witnessed and condemned by many of our observers.

Engels believed that, if a married woman worked in a factory,

"family life is inevitably destroyed. . . . a married woman cannot really be regarded as a mother if she is unable to spare the time to look after her infant."(3)

Engels also believed that a married woman working away from the home led to an unwelcomed role-reversal with men being

"condemned to perform household duties. One might well imagine the righteous indignation of the workers being virtually turned into eunuchs."(4)

Perhaps Mrs Bayley, in a paper to the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science in 1864, encapsulated the contemporary view of the Victorian working woman

"The wife and mother going abroad for work is, with few exceptions, a waste of time, a waste of property, a waste of morals and a waste of health and life and ought in every way to be prevented."(5)

Many cellar dwelling women, not simply those who found themselves to be head of a household, had little choice but to work. Their family circumstances, whether or not they were wives and mothers, dictated that they had to find paid employment. Occasionally, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the wife was able to work alongside her husband and other family members, in hawking or
shoemaking, for example, but frequently she had to separate herself from her family ties and work independently.

Many cellar dwelling women found employment in penny capitalism, specifically in areas of ‘women’s work’ - cleaning, washing and sewing. Within Salford, Stockport, Rochdale and the Market Street, Deansgate and London Road sub-districts of Manchester, more female cellar dwellers were employed as charwomen than in any other branch of penny capitalism. Almost as many female cellar dwellers were acting as washerwomen and laundresses and, with the exception of Stockport and Rochdale, each area contained at least one female keeper of a mangle. Jerome Carminada, who had carefully measured the Watson Street cellar, introduced his readers to two mangle keepers.

"‘Mangle Martin’ and his sister ‘Mangle Mary’, so called from being the possessors of one of those old ‘parish mangles’ which are now seldom seen, were two well known characters. Martin, who was also a day waiter, had a peculiar feminine voice, whilst his sister was blessed with a very masculine one.”(6)

Caminada’s use of the term ‘parish mangle’ could lead one to suppose that the mangle had been provided by the parish to the assist the parishioners with their laundry and to assist the keepers with some income.

Only one man was shown on either of the census’s as being employed within the ‘washing’ area of penny capitalism. He was William Iggingbottom, a 79 years old resident of a cellar in Paradise, Salford in 1861. William’s occupation was described as a washer man. His wife, Francis, 69 years old, was described as a washerwoman. It would, therefore, appear that this was a joint enterprise rather
than a role reversal.

Neville Kirk, in *Growth of Working Class Reformism in Mid-Victorian England*, writes that

"it should be noted that charwomen and washerwomen, groups much neglected by historians, made up a sizeable seven per cent of the paid female population of Lancashire."(7)

The hours of work and income levels for charwomen are impossible to assess. The availability of work would have been extremely limited. Servant keeping extended far down the social scale. Therefore charwomen, as many other Penny Capitalists, would have been the poor trading with the poor in an overstocked labour market.

The picture is slightly clearer when we consider the position of washerwomen and mangle keepers. It is not possible to confirm with any degree of certainty whether the washerwoman washed in her own home or in that of her customer. Washing of clothes, etc certainly required space, water and, possibly, some equipment. Such an activity within the confines of a cellar dwelling would have been extremely difficult. Access to a reasonable supply of water for the cellar dwellers of Manchester, Salford and Stockport was, at best, infrequent and, at worst, almost non-existent. Indeed, as late as 1904, the supply in Manchester averaged one tap for fourteen houses and in some districts, one tap for every forty houses. In Rochdale, there was better provision. However, as we have noted, cellar dwellings were found under houses that had been built from the 1820s. It is therefore unlikely that these old, narrow streets had been piped with a water supply by the 1860s. The supply would first be connected to newly built property.
Whether dictated by the lack of water or not, the poor resorted to other liquids for the laundry. Anthony Wohl in *Endangered Lives* quotes John Liddle, the Medical Officer of Health for Whitechapel, London who remarked that

"[the poor]....merely pass dirty linen through very dirty water. The smell of the linen itself, when so washed, is very offensive, and must have an injurious effect on the health of the occupants. the filth of their dwellings is excessive, so is their personal filth."

Wohl adds

"It possible that what Dr Liddle called 'dirty water' was actually 'wash', that is, urine kept in stone bottles until very strong and then used in washing clothes."(8)

Whether using 'wash' or water, however hard these women laboured, their reward was very low. Figures available for the end of the nineteenth century indicate an income of 2s. 6d. per bundle of washing and ironing. The income from the mangle was around 1d. per dozen items.(9) Treble provides information relating to Edinburgh in the 1840s which indicates that a washerwoman could be hired for 1s. per day. However, as with charwomen, the abundance of females seeking employment made it difficult to obtain more than 3 or 4 days work per week. In London, again in the 1840s, mangle keepers’ incomes averaged 8s. 2d. per week(10). It can, perhaps, be argued that the female cellar dweller, seeking employment in such an overstocked market, was not competing on equal grounds with the house dwelling washerwoman. Her physical appearance - filthy and stinking- would repel many customers.

Before leaving the area of female penny capitalism, it is worth noting the
variations in the actual numbers employed within the three principal occupations - cleaning (ie, charwomen and washerwomen), sewing and hawking - across the districts under study.

TABLE XVI
Female cellar dwellers employed in cleaning, sewing and hawking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or Sub-district</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY: C = cleaning, S = sewing, H = hawking

It is not surprising that many women earned their living by hawking within the St Georges area, as previously noted. The high proportion of women employed as dressmakers, plain sewers, etc in both St Georges and Ancoats is surprising. One possible, though tentative, answer may be that it was within these two districts of Manchester that the highest proportion of Irish born cellar dwellers was to be found. Perhaps for them, employment that did not take them out of their own home was more acceptable. However, as Harkness pointed out in 7he
Manchester Shirtmaker, the people of Angel Meadow had little use for a
dressmaker, they relied on the old clothes market.

A sector of employment that did remove the woman from her home and her
children for very long hours was mill work. As we have discovered in the previous
chapter, female cellar dwellers outnumbered male cellar dwellers within the textile
industry. We have also noted previously that many female cellar dwellers were
employed in the weaving section of the cotton mill. Income levels were dependent
not only on the number of looms worked, usually between two and four, but also
on the type of cloth produced. For example, if 71-inch reed printers cloth was
being produced, the weaver could receive between 10s. and 18s. for a 60 hour
week. If, however, the weaver was producing 40 inch shirtings, her income level
was somewhat higher and could vary between 10s. 9d and 20s. a week.

Throstle doffing was another area within the cotton industry that was female
dominated in terms of cellar dwellers. For them Chadwick, quoted above,
suggested an income level of about 9s. per 60 hours. The table below indicates
wage levels per 60 hours, based on Chadwick’s figures for other occupations within
the cotton mill that provided employment for the female cellar dweller.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE XVII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income levels in the cotton industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winders</td>
<td>5/6 - 9s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenters (other than steam)</td>
<td>8s - 9s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Doffers</td>
<td>5s - 6s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Reelers</td>
<td>9s - 9/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Piecers</td>
<td>10s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

312
Female cellar dwellers also found employment within other parts of the textile industry. The following figures relate to 60 hours per week.

**TABLE XVIII**
Income levels in the silk and flax industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silk cleaner</td>
<td>6s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk spinner</td>
<td>10s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk doubler</td>
<td>8s 9d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk weaver</td>
<td>7s 9d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flax spinner</td>
<td>7s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only figures available for the woollen industry relate to 1867 - 8. Again, based on a 60 hour week, women wool workers could earn 12s. 6d. whilst girls received 8s. 6d. It is worth noting that male woollen weavers received 15s. per week for the same work.

As argued in the previous chapter, work within the mill was less of a gamble than penny capitalism. It provided regular, weekly employment with a more or less guaranteed income at the end of the week. However, there was a heavy price to pay. J T Arlington, the first President of the Association of Certifying Medical Officers of Health of Great Britain and Ireland (1868) wrote in *The Hygiene of Diseases*
"of the incidental causes of ill health among cotton operatives .......... there are, dust from the cotton itself in the early processes of manufacture, heat with more or less watery vapour, combined in the weaving department with dust from the Cornish clay employed for sizing, long standing and a drooping posture in the spinning and doubling department, monotony of work, continuous strain upon the attention and excessive noise with vibrating of machinery. To these must be added vitiated air from excessive consumption of gas, from overcrowding and general defects of ventilation. And it is no wonder that accidents abound, considering the extent of machinery, the velocity of movement, the proximity of machines to watch over, the loosely hanging gearing and the liability of the loosening and flying off of some part of the machinery."(11)

Many of the women workers discussed above had a male bread-winner. Let us now consider some actual examples of female cellar dwellers who maintained themselves and their families on income derived from penny capitalism or from within the textile industry.

In a cellar in Foundry Street in the St Georges sub-district in 1861, the head of the household was Bridget Hackett, a widow aged 36, who had been born in Ireland. She earned her living as a seamstress. Bridget had seven children, all of whom had been born in Manchester - Mary, aged 15, a cotton weaver, Lawrence, aged 13, a dyer, Catherine, aged 12, no trade, Ellen 10, Ann 8, Bridget 7 and Winifred 4. Mrs Hackett paid 2s. per week in rent for her cellar. It is doubtful whether the Hackett family had more than 10s. per week to feed and clothe the family of eight after the rent had been paid and coals and candles had been bought to warm and light their damp, dark home.

Mary A Glossop was the head of the household in a cellar under 5 Grove
Street, Deansgate in 1861. She was 44 and had been born in London. Mary was a widow and earned her living as a washerwoman. She had five children. The eldest John, aged 23, was a carter and he had been born in Manchester. The other children had been born in Salford. They were Benjamin aged 16, a carter, Elizabeth aged 13, a flower maker, James aged 11, an errand boy and Anne, 8, who attended school. Mrs Glossop paid 2s. 3d. rent per week.

In 1871 Sarah Ann Boardman, aged 19, was the head of a household in a cellar under a house in Ashton Street, Salford. She was single and worked as a flax spinner. She had the total care of her brother John, aged 12, and her sister Mary, 8. We do not know how much rent Sarah had to pay but we do know that her income to support herself and her siblings would only have been about 7s. per week.

In 1851 in a house in Whitworth Street, Rochdale, there was the family of John Bentley. He was 32 and a coal miner. He had a wife Ann, a power loom weaver aged 28 and a daughter Betsy, aged 7. In 1861 Ann was living in a cellar in Whitehall. She was still described as ‘married’ but John was not shown on the census. Ann was described as a wool weaver and her daughter, Betsy, was a cotton spinner. There had been two more children, Ann aged 13, a wool spinner and Elizabeth, aged 8 who attended school. The Bentley family had the highest income of the three that we have considered, possibly over 20s. per week. Why were they living in a cellar? Perhaps John, her husband, had been injured at work and was in hospital and the family had to contribute to the medical expenses - something had precipitated the move from house to cellar.
Not all female heads of cellared households were in paid employment. Some, for example, Rebecca Stott, aged 87, were dependent on family members. Rebecca was a widow and she lived in a cellar in Angel Street, Stockport in 1861. She was dependent on her daughter and her two grandchildren. Rebecca’s daughter was a 40 year old cotton piece as was her grandson, Alfred aged 19, the granddaughter, Margaret, aged 18 was a cotton reeler. The cellar was also shared by two further dependent grandchildren. Although this family clearly demonstrates that family ties were not broken, the income of possibly about £1 5s. had to feed and clothe six people before the rent, coal and candles had been accounted for.

Phoeby Prescott kept herself out of the workhouse by keeping lodgers. She was a 64 year old widow who lived in a cellar in Acton Street, London Road in 1861. She had two lodgers, William Cross aged 75, a hawker, and Hannah Burchall, 40, a factory hand. A few female heads of cellar dwellings had no apparent income whatsoever. Elizabeth Thomas was one. She lived alone in a cellar under Weaver Street in Salford in 1861. Elizabeth was aged 73 and she was a widow. Was she, perhaps, considered to be amongst the ranks of the undeserving?

There was one area of work that was readily available to the female members of the underclass - that of prostitution - the oldest profession. It would appear from the observations made in the first part of this study that a great number of women throughout Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale were, if not actually professional prostitutes, were at least enthusiastic amateurs. Prostitution attracted many euphemisms, ‘ladies of the night’ being the most widely known. The Rochdale Observer frequently referred to them as ‘Nymphs of the Pave’.
thereby glamourising what was and is a dangerous and degrading profession. No female cellar dweller declared herself to be a member of this profession to the census enumerator. However, on the 1861 census return for 15 Major Street, Manchester, there was one entry that may be a unique piece of social history.

In the address column the enumerator wrote the word 'Brothel'. The head of the household was Betsy Gill, unmarried aged 40, and occupation - brothel keeper. Betsy had been born in Manchester. She had two children, James 5 and Elizabeth 2. In the brothel were six women whose occupations were described as 'prostitute'. They were

Maria Thornton aged 18 from Colne Bridge, Yorkshire
Isabella Nixon aged 22 from Blackpool
Theresa Scobell aged 23 from Scotland
Hannah Bradshaw aged 21 from Ireland
Henrietta Fraser aged 20 from Scotland
Elizabeth Burrows aged 20 from Leicester

They were not alone on census night. There were three 'friends'. James Black, aged 40, occupation unknown, place of birth unknown, A Stranger aged 40, occupation and place of birth unknown and A Stranger aged 35. The census enumerator was certainly fulfilling his duty to the utmost. One can only imagine the feelings of the 'friends'. At least Miss Gill remained home to care for her children. Ironically, the 1871 rate book indicates that the Hookers Club owned property in this area.
The average family size of couples who married in the mid-Victorian period was as Banks noted 5.5 to 6 live births (12). It is not possible to relate these figures to any specific social class as it was not until the *Fertility in Marriage Report* following the 1911 census take that social class and fertility were considered in tandem. We have noted in a previous chapter that cellar dwellers, on average, married slightly earlier than the middle classes. Furthermore, as Wohl points out

"The middle classes had been practising birth control from at least the 1860s onwards but the working classes did not begin to do so on a large enough scale to influence the general birth rate until the end of the century. More important, before the use of contraceptives, Victorian women had to face the dangers of pregnancy and child birth into late middle age." (13)

As F M L Thompson notes, middle class wives possessed "female adroitness in rebuffing or avoiding encounters". (14) Such avoidance would have been extremely difficult in a cellar dwelling.

Middle age pregnancy was not unknown to the cellar dwellers. For example, in Turner Street, Stockport, in 1861, Diniah Pepper, aged 74, lived with her son John, aged 27. In Salford, in 1871, we find the family of Thomas and Ellen Whittacker. Ellen’s age was given as 55 and the youngest of their five children was only seven months old.

The average of 2.4 children living with their parents in cellars across all the
areas under study in both 1861 and 1871. Early marriage, lack of contraception and late-life pregnancies would lead one to expect many more children. Where were they?

One reason may be that many pregnancies did not result in live births. Since performing or inducing an abortion was illegal, there is a lack of statistical information. However, it is likely that abortion, rather than contraception, was the principal method of family limitation amongst the cellar dwelling population and amongst the working classes as a whole. This was not surprising as many medical men believed that contraception was injurious to health. The resultant pregnancy would have been regarded as the woman’s problem. As such a rich tradition of folk-lore remedies had grown up amongst women. Self-help systems within the workplace or neighbourhood would be available to the woman with an unwanted pregnancy. Furthermore, advertisements for barely disguised abortifacients appeared in local newspapers such as the following from the *Rochdale Observer*, 6th July, 1861

“Latours Patent Female Friend - an infallible remedy for all Female Obstructions from whatever cause or however long-standing. In bottles -- No. 1, 10s. -- No. 2, 15s. -- No. 3, 20s. -- No. 4, 25s. -- No. 5, 30s. -- No. 6, 35s. -- No. 7, 40s. Each price depending on the number of months the obstruction has existed commencing with No. 1. 10s. -- one month -- and so on up to 7 months, 40s. Caution. The medicine must not be taken by ‘females’ for ‘obstructions’ brought on by any other ‘cause’ than ‘colds’ or ‘weakness’ as it is sure to bring on premature birth (miscarriage). Sole Agent, H Hargreaves, 33 Parsonage St, Burnley, Lancs. N B All letters containing remittance in postage stamps or otherwise will receive prompt attention.”
Although the initial cost of such a remedy was high, the cost of the loss of several weeks wages and the addition of another hungry mouth to feed would have been even higher for the family as a whole.

Many babies, though full term, would have been still-born. William Farr, of the Registrar General’s Office, estimated that perhaps as many as 40,000 still births went unrecorded every year in England and Wales in Victorian England. There was no legal requirement to register a still birth. Furthermore, children who died within a few days of birth could be held to have been still-born and legally buried without a death certificate. The women in our study worked long hours whilst in an advanced state of pregnancy. They were grossly under-nourished. They would have received little if any medical attention throughout their pregnancy. Some would have been fortunate enough to give birth in a workhouse. However, this was principally intended as a service for deserted females. For others, they would give birth alone or with the help of a neighbour. We can therefore assume that many cellar dwelling women endured many miscarriages and still births during their life time.

If the child was born alive, it was frequently weak and sickly. The Medical Officer of Health for Salford reported in 1875 that there had been 4,271 live births in the whole Borough during the preceding twelve months and of these 1,137 had failed to reach their first birthday. Of these 941 had occurred in cellar dwelling areas. Of all the deaths in the Borough of Salford in 1875, 47.72% were of children under five years of age. In Rochdale in the year ending March, 1877, of the total of 1,527 deaths for the Borough 765 had been of children under five years of age. The principal recorded causes of infant death were zymotic diseases such
as measles and diarrhoea, tubercular diseases, diseases of the lungs and convulsions. A significant number of infants died from developmental diseases such as premature birth and dentition (teething). It is worth noting that in Rochdale, of the 405 infants under one year who died in 1876-77, 30 died from debility, atrophy and marasmus whilst a further 34 died from "causes not certified".

The struggle for life of the cellar dwelling infant had not been won even if it survived its first few weeks. If it had been born to a working mother, the child needed care. The first day nursery in Lancashire was opened in Manchester in 1850. Between 1869 and 1871 three day nurseries had been established in Manchester and Salford. The Greengate Nursery in Salford could accept up to twenty children. It accepted only children of married women and charged 2s. per week. Hewitt reports that

"everything connected with the mother is taken into consideration, some infants were refused because the moral character of the mother was not equal to our standard." (15)

It is difficult to believe that cellar dwelling could have found refuge in such an establishment on cost alone which was the equivalent of the weekly rent for their home. For them it was the 'nurse'.

The nurse was frequently either an old woman or a young girl such as Mary Stevens, who was 13 and lived in a cellar in Crown Lane, St Georges in 1871. The nurse frequently had several charges in her care. The food for these babies consisted of pap - a mixture of bread and water that was made in the morning and kept on the fire all day. Liberal use was also made of Godfrey's cordial to sooth
the child and, as we have seen, many children were slept to death. Children were also subjected to ill usage as noted in the *Salford Weekly News* on 9.4.1864. It reported on an inquest into the death of Elizabeth Lightbourne, aged 22 months. The mother, a charwoman, had left the child in the care of Elizabeth Rutter, aged 13. The child had become ill and had been taken to the Dispensary where she had been treated for bruises. A few days later, the child died. The post mortem found blood clots on the child’s brain.

“A girl Jones, aged 11, said she had seen the girl Rutter hit and beat the child on the body with a heavy strap. Rutter acknowledged that she had sometimes beaten the child having received instructions to do so from the mother in consequence of its dirty habits.”

The verdict was that the child died from inflammation of the brain. There was no evidence as to how it had occurred.

We have seen in the first section of this thesis that thousands of children in Manchester became ‘lost’, and not all were ‘found’. The abandonment of children was sometimes immediate and permanent as the following two extracts from the baptismal register of St Chad’s Church, Rochdale demonstrate

1865 Dennis - a male child found by PC Dennis Ashworth (formerly in the 4th Regiment) on a doorstep of Mr Lawton, surgeon, on the night of 25th July, 1865. parents unknown. Workhouse - adopted name. Franklin.

1869 Saville Molesworth - Saville and Sarah Ratcliffe, Livesey Street. This child was found in Molesworth Street. His parents are unknown. Saville and Sarah Ratcliffe have adopted him as their son.
Occasionally, abandonment had tragic results. *Salford Weekly News* on 2.2.1867 contained a report of a child Emma Corlett, aged four, being found alone in a cellar dwelling in Clayton Street, Salford. The mother of the child had last been seen on Wednesday with her five month old infant in her arms. Emma had been found the following Sunday in a condition that made it

> "at once apparent that, had the discovery been made much later, death from starvation must have resulted."

The body of the child's mother had been taken from the river on the Friday and "there can be little doubt that the other child had been drowned".

Occasionally, abandonment may have been a temporary arrangement. We have noted that one of the functions of the workhouse was as an orphanage. The census return for the Salford Workhouse shows that it was home to a great number of children. Two such inmates in 1861 were A J Blinkhorn, a girl aged 6, and J Blinkhorn, a boy aged 5. Both had been born in Salford. In a cellar under Gorton's Buildings, Salford, in 1861, we find a family headed by Robert Blinkhorn and his wife, Ellen. They had four children living with them - William aged 14, Thomas aged 8, Robert aged 5 and Margaret 1. It is possible that both A J and J belonged to this family who were, at that time, unable to care for them.

There was a strong suspicion amongst the Victorian elites that infanticide was widely practised amongst the underclass. It was argued that this practice was encouraged by the growing popularity of infant burial clubs. Disraeli commented on this in *Sybil*. Wohl writes that

> "Assurance could be bought at a 1d. a week and the funeral of a child
rarely cost more than 30s. The club would pay out between 30s. and £5 so there was promise of a profit. It was widely believed that parents deliberately killed their children by overlaying them or suffocating them.”(16)

This belief may have lain behind the inquest into the death of Henry Oliver. In 1871, in a cellar under 22 Cook Street, the head of the household was William Oliver, aged 41, a silk weaver. With him lived his wife, Eliza aged 40, and their four children, John aged 13, Mary aged 10, Martha 7 and William 4. Thirteen years later the *Salford Weekly News* carried the following report:

> “An inquest was held at the Kings Arms Hotel, Salford........ touching the death of Henry Oliver, aged 7 weeks, son of Martha Oliver, a single woman living with her father in a cellar under 22 Cook Street. The deceased child was full grown and healthy up to the night preceding its death. On Saturday morning, about 5 o’clock, his mother, on wakening, found him dead. The theory of his mother being that he died in a fit. -- Mary Ann Lofthouse, wife of George Lofthouse, of 10 Boon Street, and Grace Leicester, widow, of 22 Cook Street, spoke of the care which Oliver had bestowed on her infant. An open verdict was returned.”

We have seen from the observers that the underclass, especially its female members, were perceived to be without morals, as the above newspaper report shows us. Martha Oliver was a single woman and it was believed that illegitimate children were at a greater risk than any other child. Indeed, one of the suggestions that emanated from *The Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life* on the 20th July, 1871, was that all illegitimate children should be under the supervision of the District Poor Law Medical Officer - not without cause as the following extract from the *Rochdale Observer*, 15.6.1861 demonstrates:

> “Death from alleged neglect --- On Sunday, John McCabe Russell.”
aged 15 months, son of Bridget Russell, a single woman residing at 14 South Lane, breathed his last. Mr Poole, assistant to Mr Collingwood, surgeon, states that the cause of death was inaction or want of proper nursing."

Dr Farr presented a table to the Select Committee that confirmed that between 1845 and 1869 illegitimacy rates had fallen from 70 per 1,000 births to 58 per 1,000. Therefore, in the period covered by this study, the national illegitimacy rate was 5.8%. Thompson notes that illegitimacy fell from around 7% of all births in the 1840s to 4% in the 1890s (17).

Table XIX (over page) gives the total live births and the numbers of those that were illegitimate for the year 1864. It would appear from this table that the inhabitants of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale were as 'moral' as the inhabitants of England as a whole, the Market Street area of Manchester being the very notable exception. However, it must be noted that the workhouse was situated within the Market Street sub-district and, as noted above, one of the functions of the workhouse was to act as a maternity hospital for abandoned females. The same facility was to be found in the Regent Road area of Salford and within the Stockport 1st district.

It has been observed throughout the research for this thesis that people were not always totally honest with officialdom. As a consequence, a selection of parish baptismal registers were examined with the thought that people may have been more truthful when faced by the Church. The registers covered the period from 1861 to 1871 inclusive.
### TABLE XIX Number of legitimate/illegitimate births

#### 1. MANCHESTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Birth</th>
<th>Illegitimate Births</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>2059</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2. SALFORD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Birth</th>
<th>Illegitimate Births</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pendleton</td>
<td>1005</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broughton</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greengate</td>
<td>1654</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regent Rd</td>
<td>1392</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3. STOCKPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Birth</th>
<th>Illegitimate Births</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stockport 1st</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport 2nd</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4. ROCHDALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Birth</th>
<th>Illegitimate Births</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wardleworth</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castleton within</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castleton without</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the total number of baptisms at Manchester Cathedral during this period, approximately 3.8% were illegitimate. In Salford, at St Stephen’s Church, the
percentage was 5.2%, whilst at Christ Church it was 2.11%. In Stockport at the Parish Church of St Mary, the illegitimate percentage was 1.5% and this register included many babies that had been born in the workhouse. At the opposite end of Stockport, at St Thomas’s Church, 2.3% of the baptisms were illegitimate children. The clergy at St Thomas’s, Stockport, left little doubt about the status of the child, with the word ‘Bastard’ or ‘Baseborn’ being writ large in the register. At St Chad’s Parish Church, Rochdale, they were a little less condemnatory although they did indicate when a married woman had ‘fallen’. For example,

Timothy, son of Hannah Williams of Smallbridge. Husband away 10 years.

The percentage of illegitimate baptisms at St Chad’s throughout 1861 to 1871 was 5.1%. All the churches discussed above were in cellar dwelling areas.

Table XX (over page) gives the percentage of children under ten years of age who were living in cellars and who appeared to have been born illegitimately in 1861 and 1871.

Again, we find that the St Georges district differs from all the other areas. Perhaps, as argued previously, the low illegitimacy rate as shown on both tables XIX and XX was due to the influence of the Catholic Church.

The word ‘appeared’ to be illegitimate has been used deliberately as it is not always possible to be totally certain of the marital status or, occasionally, of the identity of the mother. For example, in 1851, in Pott Street Court, Ancoats, the
### TABLE XX
Illegitimate cellar-dwelling children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>1861(%)</th>
<th>1871(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>12.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The high percentage in the London Rd sub-district for 1871 is due to the very low number of children under ten living in cellars, of whom there were only 25, 3 of whom were illegitimate.

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head of the household was Thomas Poole, aged 61. His wife Hannah was 63 and they had two unmarried daughters living with them, Ann aged 30 and Elizabeth aged 28. There were also two granddaughters, Jane aged 7 and Martha aged 3. In 1861 in a cellar in John Street, Ancoats, the head of the household was Ann Pool aged 37 whose marital status was given as widow. Jane and Martha are shown as being her daughters.
In a cellar dwelling under Union Street, Salford, in 1861, the head of the household was Ann Wardle. Mary, her 19 year old unmarried daughter, lived with her as did Samuel, aged 1 month who was shown as the child of the head of the household. The cellar also contained one male lodger, M J Haynes - no Christian names given - who was aged 19. The baptismal register for their local church, St Thomas's, contains the following entry:

10th Feb, 1861 -- Samuel, son of Mary Wardle, single woman.

Was M J the father?

Even when the relationship and the marital status are clearly given, one has occasionally to question the findings. For example, in 1871, in a cellar in the London Road area, the head of the household was Elizabeth O'Gillhooley, a single woman aged 28. Her daughter, Mary, was aged 18. Did Elizabeth give birth when she was only ten years of age?

Not all such 'fallen' women cause such confusion. In a cellar under Ashton Street, Salford, in 1861, the head of the household was Rose A Mee. She was 35, unmarried and employed as a cotton spinner. She had three children, Mary 11, Thomas 9 and John 2. By 1871, Rose had moved to another cellar close by. She was still unmarried, her daughter Mary had left home but Thomas and John were still there as was their new brother James, aged 4. Rose A Mee had the local vote.

Many single mothers were heads of their own cellar dwellings and almost as many had remained within their own family unit. For example, in Salford, 50% of the single mothers were the head of their own cellar dwelling whilst 42% had remained with their family. This would appear to indicate an acceptance of the
situation. Perhaps this acceptance was the very attitude that the investigators were referring to when they commented on the lack of shame amongst the underclass. Meanwhile, at least one single mother found herself a husband. In William Street, Salford, in 1861, Bridget Howard - a 28 years old plain sewer lived in a cellar with her son Joseph aged 8. Bridget was not married. In 1871 she had moved to another cellar and had married Keiron Daley, aged 43, a scavenger. She now had two more sons, one aged 8 and one aged 4.

There were, of course, exceptions to the general 'acceptance' picture. In what appears to have been a lodging house in Brinksway, Stockport, in 1851, one of the five lodgers was a single woman - Abigail Nicholson, aged 24, a power loom weaver. In 1861 Abigail was still a lodger in Brinksway but now she had moved into a cellar. She had given birth to two children, James 10 and Sarah 8. Abigail was still single. It is very likely that she was pregnant whilst she was living in the lodging house in 1851. Imagination could lead one to see Abigail as the tragic heroine of a 'do not darken my door again' melodrama. The majority of single mothers were not forced to become cellar dwelling lodgers. Society, at least the cellar dwelling section of it, appear to have been far less judgmental, far more understanding and compassionate, to the sexual indiscretions of others especially their own daughters. It would appear that in this they were at odds with perceived social mores of Victorian society in general. Thompson writes that

"Premarital sex.............was not a matter of disgrace among the working classes and was socially acceptable so long as it was followed by marriage; promiscuity and the desertion of unmarried pregnant girls were the sins."(18)

It would appear that the cellar dwellers were prepared to forgive even these sins.
We have seen that Abigail Nicholson’s circumstances dictated that she was unable to become the head of her own household - even in a cellar dwelling. Many other women found themselves in the same situation.

When tabulating people as ‘lodger’, I have excluded those who lived with family members such as nieces, grandchildren, parents and in-laws or those described as visitors. On the other hand, those whose relationship to the head of the household has been described as ‘servant’ have been included. It is doubtful whether servant keeping in the accepted use of the term extended this far down the social scale. Such a servant may have been assisting in the family business. For example, Mary A Jones was described as a servant in a cellar in Charter Street, St Georges. The head of the household, Luke Wriggly, was a marine store dealer. However, as Mary’s occupation is given as domestic servant, it is equally likely that she was employed elsewhere.

The terms ‘boarder’ and ‘lodger’ have been used in almost equal measure and would indicate that perhaps a ‘boarder’ received more that simply a bed and would, therefore, have contributed more to the family budget than a lodger - even if only a matter of a few pennies. As we have no way of calculating the income from either boarders or lodgers, both have been treated as one and the same and will be referred to as lodgers throughout.

Let us start by considering three of the five Manchester sub-districts to see if
a pattern emerges relating to the nature, sex and family groupings of the cellared lodgers. In the 186 cellar dwellings in the St Georges area in 1861, there was a total of 51 lodgers - 30 female and 21 male. Of these there were 14 sole males and one father and son pairing. There were 23 sole females and five mother and child groupings, two of whom appear to have been mother and illegitimate child. Of the total lodgers only seventeen were the sole lodger in the cellar. One interesting group of lodgers were four Irish born girls aged 20 - 24 who were all fibre dressers for brushes. The head of the household was a brush hawker. Another group of lodgers in the St Georges area appear to have been brothers and sister. They were Isaac Willetts, aged 18, a chair maker born in Staffordshire, Moses Willetts, aged 24, a chair maker also born in Staffordshire and Ellen Willetts, aged 27, no occupation. The head of this cellar was not a chair maker.

In the 137 cellars in St Georges in 1871, we find a total of 55 lodgers, 33 female and 22 male. The groupings were 14 sole males, 24 sole females, one husband and wife and one husband, wife and two children. There were four mothers with children of whom one would appear to have been illegitimate. Eight of the sole males lodged together in one cellar in Rochdale Road. Of the total of 55 lodgers, only 18 were the sole lodger in the cellar.

In the 124 cellar dwellings in the Market Street sub-district, in 1861, there were 10 sole males and 13 sole females. There were three family groups, one father and son, one husband, wife and child and one mother and child. Fourteen of the lodgers were the sole lodger in the cellar. In the 64 cellar dwellings in 1871 there were twenty five lodgers in total. Nine were sole males and eight were sole females. There was one husband and wife grouping - the husband was described as
a lunatic. There was one husband, wife and child group and two women who each had an illegitimate child. One of the youngest sole lodgers was lodging in a cellar in this area. She was Julia Higgins, aged 4, and she was described as a boarder in the Long Millgate cellar. The head of the household was James Lyons, aged 55, a labourer and he shared his cellar with his wife Ann, aged 51, who had no occupation. It is likely that young Julia was a 'nurse child' - not adopted but simply handed over by her parents to others.

In Ancoats, 203 cellar dwellings have been found on the 1861 census. These cellars contained 104 lodgers, 67 females and 37 males of whom 47 were sole females and 20 sole males. There was one male with three children, five married couples, three family groups, six mothers with children and three children who were possibly nurse children of whom one was aged two and the others were aged one. Only 24 of the 104 lodgers were the only lodger in the cellar, including the three nurse children. In the 190 cellar dwellings in 1871 in Ancoats, there were 63 lodgers in total, 40 of whom were female. There were 14 sole males and 24 sole females. There was one widowed male with two children, five married couples, two of whom had children and four women with children only one of whom appears to have been illegitimate. Only 22 lodgers were the only lodger in the cellar. One of the married couples lodged in a cellar that had nine other occupants in Henry Street.

The pattern that is emerging from these examples is that the majority of cellar dwelling lodgers in Manchester over both census years were females and the majority of these females were sole females, that is, they had no family with whom to share their life. Did this pattern hold for the cellar dwelling lodgers in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale?
In the 331 cellar dwellings in Salford in 1861, there were 22 sole males and 43 sole females lodging in the cellars. There was also one married couple with children and seven women with children. In the 298 cellars in 1871, there were eight sole males and twenty two sole females lodgers. There was also one married couple with children and four females with children none of whom appear to have been illegitimate. Of the total of 89 cellar lodgers in 1861, 37 were the sole lodger. Of the 48 lodgers in Salford cellars in 1871, twenty four were the sole lodger.

In Stockport’s 213 cellars, in 1861, there were 78 lodgers in total. Of these, there were 14 sole males, one male with a child, two married couples, four married couples with children, twenty six sole females and seven females with children, four of whom appear to be single mothers including Abigail Nicholson. Thirty one of the total number of lodgers were the only lodger in the cellar. In the 153 cellars in 1871, there were thirty four lodgers in total. Of these, four were sole males, sixteen sole females and four females with children two of whom were single mothers. There were no married couples. Of the total number of lodgers, seventeen were the only lodger in the cellar.

Finally, in Rochdale’s 114 cellars in 1861, there was a total of 34 lodgers, eleven of whom were sole males. There were two males with children, two married couples, eleven sole females and three females with children, two of whom appear to have been single mothers. Seventeen of the total number of lodgers were the only lodger in their cellar. In 1871, the census shows that there were thirty three people lodging in Rochdale’s 169 cellars. They were eight sole males, two married couples, twenty one sole females and four females with children only one of whom appears to have been a single mother. We can see clearly Salford, Stockport and Rochdale repeated the Manchester pattern of cellared lodgers.
There is a variety of possible reasons that forced people to become lodgers in cellars. One such reason can be demonstrated by the experience of the Flynn family of Rochdale. In 1851 Charles Flynn, aged 35, a tanner from Ireland, lived in Clarets Yard in Rochdale. The census does not show whether this was a cellar dwelling or a house. Charles had a wife, Mary aged 29, and two children, Catherine aged 8 and Charles 11 months. Mary and the children had been born in Rochdale. In 1861 the family were living in a cellar in Middle Lane. Charles was now a stone mason’s labourer. Mary was a housewife. Their eldest child Catherine was a throstle piecer and Charles was working half-time as a doffer in the mill. They had three more children, Ellen aged 8, who also worked short-time in the mill, Margaret 6 and Mary A aged one. By 1871, Mary had died and her now widowed husband had moved back to Clarets Yard and was lodging with his brother-in-law. Charles junior and Margaret were also lodging in Clarets Yard but not in the same cellar as their father. With them was an Anthony Flynn, aged eight, who was probably their younger brother. Within ten years Charles Flynn had lost his wife and, possibly, two of his children. It would appear that he could not cope without his wife and placed his surviving children in a female headed cellar.

In late twentieth century society, the majority of lodgers, other than students, are single males. They seek lodgings not necessarily through lack of finance but through a lack of ability to perform domestic tasks. However, as we have seen, with the exception of Rochdale in 1861, across all the four towns in both 1861 and 1871 the sole females, whether their marital status be single, widowed or married, outnumbered the sole males as lodgers in cellars. We have argued above that lack of a male bread winner was a primary cause of poverty. In spite of this, many women in such a position were able to maintain a household albeit in a cellar. Why
then did such a situation prove impossible for the female lodger? Were they young women who had been tempted into an early show of independence from the family home - a situation criticised by so many observers of the contemporary scene. Were they old women no longer able to care for themselves but reluctant to enter the workhouse?

Taking 1861 as an example, in St Georges sub-district only one female lodger was under fifteen years of age, three were over sixty. The average age of the remaining sole female lodgers was twenty nine. In Market Street, again, only one was under fifteen, three were over sixty and the average age of the remainder was thirty five. In Ancoats, there was only one sole female lodger under fifteen and three over sixty. The average age of the remaining sole females was thirty one. In Salford three sole females were under fifteen and six over sixty. The average age of the remainder was twenty seven. In Stockport, only one was under fifteen and one over sixty, giving an average age for the remainder of thirty one. In Rochdale one was under fifteen and one over sixty. The average age of the remainder was twenty eight.

It would, therefore, appear that the typical sole, female lodger was not a very young woman who, on earning a wage in her own right, no matter how small, had decided to leave her family home. It would also appear that very few could have been considered aged and ready for the workhouse. Were these women, therefore, women without work or on extremely low incomes perhaps from penny capitalism? Table XXI gives the percentage of sole female lodgers engaged in penny capitalism, the textile industry, miscellaneous or having no employment in 1861.
TABLE XXI
Occupational classification of female cellar lodgers

All figures are percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>Penny Capitalisation</th>
<th>Textiles</th>
<th>Misc</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XXI shows again that in Market Street and St Georges penny capitalism outstripped other areas of occupation. However, there was only one sole female cellar lodger in Market Street engaged in hawking or dealing and only four in St Georges. Many of the others were ‘makers’ including, as we have seen, the four Irish women who were fibre dressers for a brush maker.

Table XXI clearly demonstrates that many cellar lodgers were engaged within the textile industry, thus receiving a regular income. Although the income was regular, many sectors were low paid, as we have seen in tables XVII and
XVIII. For example, Ann Agnew lodged in a cellar in Butler Street, Ancoats. She was a cotton winder, her income could have been as low as 5s. 6d per week up to 9s. The rent for a cellar dwelling in Ancoats that would be close to the mills would have been around 2s. per week. If Ann's income was not at the top of the scale, then her own cellar would have been almost impossible. That said, a significant minority of sole female cellar lodgers appear to have been in receipt of sufficient income for them to have had their own cellar home.

One final reason for seeking lodgings, rather than having one's own home, could be that one was newly arrived in town. Did this apply to the sole female lodgers of 1861? Table XXII demonstrates the place of birth of the female lodgers. The 'local born' indicates birth in the town in which they were resident on census night - 'not local' indicates another town. The third column indicates the percentage of those who had been born in Ireland - the largest immigrant community amongst cellar dwellers. The final column gives the percentage of Irish born cellar dwellers as a whole in 1861 for comparative purposes.

TABLE XXII
Place of birth of female cellar lodgers

All figures are percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Non-local</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>Irish-born cellar dweller</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is, perhaps, with this final analysis that we approach an answer as to why sole females were over represented in terms of cellar dwelling lodgers. In late twentieth century society the majority of immigrants or emigrants are young families or sole males. However, when we consider the place of birth of the female lodger, it would appear that the 1860s presented a rather different picture. Thompson writes that

"Young, unmarried girls..........poured into the towns in their hundreds and thousands to enter domestic service."(19)

Domestic service was not what principally attracted these young women into Lancashire - it was cotton. A domestic servant may have found that her lodgings were provided by her employer. The mill girl had to find her own. We must, however, remember that the numbers involved, in the analysis of female cellar lodgers, was small and, therefore, general conclusions are difficult to draw. It can be argued that the women we have been considering faced greater difficulties in finding affordable shelter than their male counterparts, be it through lack of sufficient income or family roots. Many were, therefore, forced to become lodgers in cellars.

Life for the majority of Victorian women was both confined and restricted. They were possessions and, as such, had few rights. Life for the woman at the bottom of the social scale was bleak. If she had no husband, she would have to exist in a state of near destitution. As we have seen, slightly less than half of all the
cellar dwellings were female-headed and the majority of these women had been widowed.

The choice of work available to such women was restricted. Many female heads of cellar households found employment within the penny capitalist field - a prime area of underemployment. Should the female be able to secure employment within the mill, her income, although regular, was often below 10s. per week, unless she was able to reach the higher income levels of the skirting weaver. Often, as we have seen with the woollen weavers, her income would be less than that of her male counterpart.

We have seen that, should a married woman find work outside her home, she was condemned. Engels argued that she could not be regarded as a mother and Mrs Bayley, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, maintained that the working wife and mother was a waste of health and life and ought to be prevented. Many other observers believed that a working wife resulted in an unwelcoming home and want of domestic economy. The man returning to such a home would seek warmth and welcome outside, usually in the beer house. In this way, the working wife contributed to the perpetual circle of drunken husbands, uncaring children and incapable housewives. However, for many cellar dwelling women, there was no choice. They had to find work, even if their income amounted to only a few shillings, it would put a candle on the table, coals in the hearth, bread in the mouths of her children.

The married woman had to endure pregnancy well into her middle age. She probably also had to endure miscarriages, still births and maybe, even abortions.
she gave birth to live children, she would see many of them fade and die in infancy. When this happened, she would not only have to bear the burden of grief, but often the burden of blame. For the child that survived his first year, life was still a gamble. He had a 50/50 chance of reaching his fifth birthday; he could become lost or abandoned, or put out to a nurse who would dose him liberally with ‘Godfrey’s’. If he were born illegitimate, his chances of survival were even less. However, if illegitimacy rates are a pointer to immorality, it would appear that the female cellar dweller was at least as chaste as many of her Victorian sisters. Life for the single woman, be she widow or spinster, was grim.

For many immigrant women without family or local roots, it would appear that the only available shelter was lodgings, frequently in a cellar. We have discussed elsewhere the ‘moral’ issue of separate sleeping arrangements for unmarried adults. When a lodger is added to the equation it becomes even more complicated. However, it would appear that only a few cellar dwellings could be described as lodging houses such as the one so graphically described by Reach

Henry Coleman, one of the visitors to Manchester discussed in the first section of this thesis, thanked heaven that he was not a poor man with a family in Manchester. How much more heartfelt would his thanks have been if he had considered the plight of the widow with children?
Chapter 8 - References

2. Hewitt, ibid, p 68.
4. Engels, ibid, p 162.
15. Hewitt, op cit, p 162.
16. Wohl, op cit, p 34.

17. F M L Thompson, op cit, p 112.
18. Thompson, ibid, p 308.
19. Thompson, ibid, p 179.
The Irish immigrant in Victorian England attracted profound hostility from the observers of the contemporary scene. Faucher observed that “for several years the Irish labourers formed the most abject portion of the population”. (1) Buret, remarked that the areas inhabited by the Irish encompassed “all the horrors that human habitation can present”. (2) Furthermore, as we have seen, the Punch cartoonists depicted the Irishman, not as a human being, but as an animal - be it a pig or an ape.

It was, perhaps, Engels who encapsulated many of the perceptions held by contemporary observers of the Irish immigrant when he wrote

“They are to be found everywhere. The worst accommodation is good enough for them............They live solely on potatoes and any money left over from the purchase of potatoes goes on drink. Such folk do not need high wages. The slums of all the big towns swamp with Irish ..........The majority of cellar dwellers are nearly always Irish in origins. In short, as Dr Kay has pointed out, 'the Irish have discovered what is the minimum of the means of life upon which existence may be prolonged'. The Irish have also brought with them filth and intemperance.” (3)

Of their locations, Engels writes,

“I might mention that the most disgusting spot of all which lies on the Manchester side of the river. It is situated to the South West of
Oxford Road and is called 'Little Ireland'... Some four thousand people, mostly Irish, inhabit this slum."

The implications that can be drawn from the observations of the Irish in Manchester made by Buret, Venedey, Faucher, Engels et al are, firstly, that there was a considerable population of Irish prior to the famine influx of 1845 - 51, secondly, that they formed the majority of cellar dwellers, thirdly, that they were idle and work shy, incapable of a full day's work, fourthly, that they lived in very overcrowded conditions and, finally, that they tended to form enclaves. In this chapter we will test these perceptions as they relate to the Irish cellar dwellers under study. One point must be re-emphasized before we proceed. Many of the observers were writing of the 1830s and the 1840s - we are considering the Irish cellar dwellers of 1861 and 1871, and thus after the famine influx.

We are seeking the archetypal Irish cellar dweller - was he a race apart from his non-Irish counterpart? We will start by reminding ourselves of the main characteristics of the Irish population of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale as a whole and then consider the numbers of Irish-born cellar dwellers found within these towns for 1861 and 1871. In this chapter an attempt will be made to assess the length of time the Irish cellar dwellers had been resident in each town. We will consider their occupations, and, finally, we will examine their living conditions. Were Irish cellars more overcrowded than non-Irish cellars and did any or all of our four towns contain within them a 'Little Ireland' in 1861 or 1871? We will, again, consider the five sub-districts of Manchester separately for, as we have seen thus far, they differ one to another almost as towns within a town.
Irish immigration into Britain had grown steadily between 1815 and 1845 and had reached a climax between 1845 and 1851 during, and immediately following the Great Famine. By 1845, Irish immigration had established itself as an urban phenomenon. In 1861 there were 806,000 Irish-born residents in Britain. Table XXIII shows the number of Irish-born residents of our four towns in 1851 to 1871

TABLE XXIII   Total Irish-born populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Irish Population</th>
<th>% Irish-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>228,433</td>
<td>37,958</td>
<td>16.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>87,525</td>
<td>7,178</td>
<td>8.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>90,208</td>
<td>6,466</td>
<td>7.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>72,515</td>
<td>2,093</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>241,729</td>
<td>33,604</td>
<td>13.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>105,355</td>
<td>9,191</td>
<td>8.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>94,361</td>
<td>7,218</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>91,734</td>
<td>4,404</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>379,374</td>
<td>34,066</td>
<td>8.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>41,151</td>
<td>3,975</td>
<td>9.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures have been obtained from British Parliamentary Papers - 1861, vol L, part I and II; 1863, vol LIII, part I; 1873, vol LXXI, part II.
The 1851 and 1861 figures for Manchester relate to the township, those for Salford relate to the Borough whilst those for Stockport and Rochdale relate to the Parish or Union - a much larger area than the Borough. The 1871 figures give a combined total for Manchester and Salford and a Borough total for Stockport. Rochdale was not considered to be a principal town for the purpose of the 1873 analysis.

The 1871 figures confuse rather than clarify the picture. The combination of the Manchester and Salford figures does not allow us to be certain as to whether the Irish-born population of Salford had continued to expand slightly. Furthermore, the 1871 figures for Stockport would indicate a rise in the Irish-born population, however, these figures were based on a Borough figure rather than the larger Union area of the 1851 and 1861 figures. The 1871 figures should, therefore, be treated with great caution.

When we compare the above table, giving as it does the Irish-born population of the towns in toto, with the Irish-born cellar population of the towns, we find considerable variations.
It can be argued that table XXIV, showing as it does the number of Irish-born residents of cellars in our four towns, does not truly reflect the Irish impact on cellar dwellings as the non-Irish-born children of Irish-born parents have been excluded. If we include such children, the Irish impact on cellar dwelling will be more clearly defined.

**TABLE XXIV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Total cellar population</th>
<th>Irish-born cellar dwellers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>2,995</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>2,053</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>1,062</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These cellar dwelling population figures vary from the total number of cellar dwellers due to the illegibility of some census entries.*
In table XXV non-Irish-born children of the extended family (e.g., grandchildren) and the non-Irish-born children of Irish-born lodgers have been included. The non-Irish-born children of mixed marriages have not been included. By adding such children, the percentage of Irish cellar dwellers is as shown in table XXV.

**TABLE XXV**

Irish cellared populations including non-Irish-born children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has been noted from our place of birth analysis in chapter VI that there were notable variations within the five districts of Manchester. Therefore the Irishness of cellar dwellings has not yet been completely assessed. Table XXVI (over page) gives the percentage of Irish-born plus their non-Irish-born children living in cellars in the five sub-districts of Manchester for 1861 and 1871.

We can clearly see from table XXV that Engels's assertion that the majority of cellar dwellers were nearly all Irish in origin does not hold for our towns in 1861.
TABLE XXVI

Irish cellared population of
Manchester sub-districts

All figures are percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and 1871. In Manchester, Salford and Stockport the Irishness of cellar dwellings appears to have been in decline. It is only in Rochdale that the Irish percentage was increasing noticeably. When we consider Table XXVI, the districts of Manchester in isolation, it is notable that, again, the St Georges sub-district differs considerably from the other sub-districts of Manchester. Various reasons for this difference will be discussed later in this chapter. The rise of those with Irish origins in Deansgate was only in the region of one percent and, since this sub-district had the lowest Irish community in the whole of the five districts of Manchester in 1861, it can be dismissed. In the London Road sub-district, the Irish percentage remained the same, however, as noted elsewhere, there had been a noticeable decline in the number of cellar dwellings in this area between those designated as such on the 1861 census and those on the 1871 census. The results, therefore, may not be
Table XXV shows a marked difference in percentage terms, not only between the four towns, but over the ten year period. The percentage of Irish cellar dwellers in Salford remained almost constant over the period whilst that of Manchester and Stockport decreased quite dramatically. The Irish cellar dwellers in Rochdale over the same ten year period increased almost as dramatically.

The relative stability, in percentage terms, in Salford could suggest that the Irish immigrant into Salford had settled and that Salford was regarded as home. The immigrant was now more secure and could move out of his cellar into more acceptable accommodation, his place in the cellar being taken by another immigrant family.

The fall, in percentage terms, among the Irish cellar dwellers in Manchester and Stockport may also indicate that, as in Salford, the domestic circumstances of the immigrant had improved. The fall may also indicate that both Manchester and Stockport had witnessed a very early immigration and that, by 1871, several generations of those who had once been immigrants were now locally-born. For the fall to be as dramatic as it would appear to have been, there must also have been a significant decrease in the number of new immigrants. The fall in Stockport may also be a pointer to the prevailing attitudes of the host community which will be touched on later in this chapter.

There is a significant increase in the number of Irish residents in Rochdale cellars when compared with the fall in number elsewhere. This may indicate that
the Irish community in Rochdale was relatively new - as hinted at by Urban in *The Rochdale Pilot*. This fact appears to be confirmed by Table XXIII which shows that the Irish population of Rochdale as a whole more than doubled between 1851 and 1861. During the same period the Irish population of Manchester fell whilst those of Salford and Stockport only rose slightly.

In an attempt to establish the length of residence, the ages of the eldest child born locally to Irish-born parents, have been analysed. It is possible to argue that this is a valid method to assess the length of residence as most immigrants from Ireland were either young adults or members of young families and, therefore, in their fertile years. This analysis will confirm that the parents were resident in the towns at least from the birth of that child. Children of mixed marriages have, again, be excluded from the analysis.

In St Georges sub-district, 40% of the Irish families had either no children living with them or none that had been born locally. Of the remainder, the eldest locally-born child was aged under five in 17% of families, 6 - 10 years of age in 22%, 11 - 19 years of age in 14% and over 20 years of age in 4.3% of the families. In 1871, 26% of the Irish-born parents had no locally-born children living with them. Of the remainder, the oldest locally-born child was aged under 5 in 12% of the families, 6 - 10 years of age in 26% of the families, 11 - 19 in 22%, and 12% of the families had a locally-born child aged twenty or over. It would appear that in St Georges sub-district, the Irish-born cellar dwellers were established within Manchester in that 18.3% in 1861 had been in Manchester for over 10 years and, in 1871, 34% had been in Manchester for the same period of time.
In the Market Street sub-district in 1861, 31% of the Irish families had no locally-born children living with them. Of the remainder, the eldest locally-born child was aged under 5 in 29% of the families, 6 - 10 in 17% of the families, 11 - 19 in 14% and 7% of the families had a locally-born child aged 20 or over. In 1871, 35% of the Irish families had no locally-born children in their cellar. Of the remainder the eldest locally-born child was aged under five in 14% of the families and the same percentage had one aged 6 - 10 years. 35% of the families had a locally-born child aged between 11 and 19 years and none had a locally-born child over 20 years of age. This would suggest a similar pattern of immigration to that found in the St Georges sub-district.

In the London Road sub-district in 1861, 25% of Irish families had no locally-born children living in their cellar. In 9% of the families remaining, the eldest locally-born child was aged five or under. In 19% of the families the eldest locally-born child was aged 6 - 10, whilst in 38% of the families the child was aged between 11 and 19. 6% of the families had a locally-born child aged 20 or over living with them. Of the ten Irish families living in designated cellars in London Road sub-district in 1871, three had no locally-born children. In one family the eldest locally-born child was aged five or under. Three families had locally-born children aged between 6 and 10, one family had a locally-born child aged between 11 and 19 and on two families, the eldest locally-born child was aged twenty or over. It would appear, therefore, that the London Road sub-district attracted few new immigrant Irish families.

In the Deansgate sub-district in 1861 26% of the Irish families had no locally-born children. Of the remainder, the eldest locally-born child was aged five or
under in 20% of the families, 6 - 10 years of age in 13% of the families, 11-19 in 13% and over 20 in 26%. In 1871, 50% of the families had no locally-born children living with them. Of the remaining families, in 12% the eldest child was aged five or under, there were no families with locally-born children aged between 6 and 10. 25% of the families had a locally-born child aged 11 - 19 and 12% had one aged over twenty. It would appear that Deansgate had attracted a few new Irish immigrants. However, the majority were long term residents of Manchester.

The final Manchester sub-district is Ancoats. In 1861, 25% of the Irish families living in Ancoats cellars had no locally-born children living with them. In 18% of the remaining families the eldest locally-born child was under 5. In 24% of the families the eldest locally-born child was aged 6 - 10, in 20% of the families the eldest child was aged between 11 and 19 and 8% had a locally-born child aged twenty or over. In 1871, 35% of the Irish families had no locally-born children. In 8% of the remaining families, the eldest locally-born child was aged 5 or under, in 4% the child was aged 6 - 10, in 24% of the families, the child was aged 11 - 19 and 7% of the Irish families in Ancoats had a locally-born child that was aged twenty or over.

It would appear from this rather complex analysis that a significant number of the Irish cellar dwellers had been long-time residents of the town in which they were living on the census nights of 1861 and 1871. Many had been living locally for ten years in 1861 and a significant minority for over twenty years. Also, some at least of those without locally-born children would be the parents of mature children who had left home. We have already discussed two such long-term residents - our two hand loom weavers in Old Mount - the Nangels and the

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Bradleys. Another such long-term resident family was that of Patrick Wallace who, in 1851 lived in a cellar in Liverpool Street in the Deansgate sub-district. Patrick had been born in Ireland and was then aged fifty. He shared his cellar with his wife, Mary aged 46, born in Ireland, and their three daughters, Mary aged 14, born in Manchester and Elizabeth and Bridget, eleven year old twins. In 1861, Mary and Elizabeth were living in a cellar in Watson Street. Mary was a widow. It would appear that this family had been in Manchester since around 1837. There appears to have been a little evidence of a continuing immigration although, the high percentage of families without children born locally somewhat distorts the overall findings. Did a similar pattern hold within the other three towns?

In Salford in 1861, 47% of the Irish families had either no children living with them or none that had been born in Salford. Of the remainder, 32% had children over the age of five that had been born in Salford and a further 15% had children born locally who were over ten years of age. In 1871, 48% had no Salford born children, 11% had children aged five or under whilst 33% had children aged ten or over. Due to the high percentage of Irish-born couples without children born in Salford, the data is a little inconclusive. It does, however, strongly suggest a stable Irish population with a small number of new arrivals.

In Stockport in 1861, we find that 26% of the Irish families had no locally-born children living with them. Of the remainder, 14% had a child aged five or under, whilst 59% had a child over five that had been born in Stockport, indeed, 40% had a child that was aged ten or over. In 1871, we find that 44% had no Stockport-born children, 34% had no children aged 10 or over whilst only 22% had Stockport-born children born children who were under the age of ten and 13%
aged five or under. As in Salford, the Stockport figures do indicate that Irish immigration into Stockport was not a new phenomenon in 1861 and that there was only a small number of new arrivals. If, however, we combine the above findings with the fall in the numbers of Irish within cellars, it would appear that Stockport's Irish cellar dwelling population was more mobile than that of Salford.

The picture in Rochdale is somewhat different. In 1861, 50% of Irish families living in cellars had no locally-born children living with them. Of the remainder, 18% had locally-born children aged 0 - 5, 18% had children aged 6 - 10 and only 15% had children aged 10 or over. In 1871, 33% had no Rochdale-born children. Of the remainder, 22% had Rochdale-born children aged 0 - 5, 12% had children aged 5 - 9 and 33% had children aged 10 or over who had been born in Rochdale. These figures go some way to confirm our supposition that the Irish cellar dwelling population of Rochdale was more newly arrived than that of either Manchester, Salford or Stockport. The above figures, taken with the rise in the Irish cellar dwelling population of Rochdale, suggest that it was settling rather than settled, and that there was a steady influx of new arrivals. As I argued above, immigrants were mainly young adults or young families and, therefore, they would have been unmarried or just starting to produce children.

II

We now turn to the question of occupation. Engels saw the Irish as competitors with English workers and, where they did compete, wages were forced
"All occupations which demand little or no skill are open to the Irish...[the] Irish are unfitted for tasks that demand either regular apprenticeship...or unremitting application to one's job...The Irishman is just as capable as the Englishman at undertaking simple tasks involving brute strength...for example, hand loom weavers, builders' labourers, porters and odd job men."(5)

Kirk writes that

"By 1859, the view that Irish competition lowered wages was of some importance and could not be expected to vanish. Furthermore, such attitudes were not without a material base. Fears of down grading were reinforced by increased immigration and by the accusations made by operatives in a number of towns that employers sometimes discriminated in favour of the Irish. Finally (and without suggesting cause and effect relationship) those sectors of cotton in which the Irish usually congregated were generally poorly paid."(6)

O'Tuathaigh argues that

"In certain industries such as sugar refining, textiles (especially where the Irish acted as sweated labour in declining trades) in gas works, paper making, as sawyers, coal heavers and porters - in all of these categories, the Irish were disproportionately numerous...Both male and female Irish immigrants were heavily involved in hawking and street trading."(7)

Let us test these judgments in relation to our Irish cellar dwellers - people who were manifestly on the bottom end of, not merely the English, but also the Irish immigrant populations. In the previous chapter on the occupations of cellar dwellers it was noted that fifty eight cellar dwellers in the St Georges sub-district of Manchester in 1861 earned their incomes from hawking and dealing. Only five of
these people had not been born in Ireland. We also noted the presence of Smithfield Market. Alan Kidd in *Manchester* argues that

“The Ancoats Irish often found work as day labourers in the building trade (men) or as domestic servants (women) but the biggest single employer was Smithfield Market. One quarter of the stall holders were Catholic and so were a large number of porters and labourers employed in the market and the hordes of street sellers and hawkers trading on its margins.” (8)

In 1871 there were 26 cellar dwellers in St Georges sub-district who depended on hawking and dealing for their income, of these twenty one were of Irish origins. Clearly, the Irish of this district were over-represented in this trade, especially when we consider that in 1861 they formed only 66% of the total cellared population of the area and only 50% in 1871.

In Ancoats in 1861 there were fifteen hawkers and dealers of whom nine had been born in Ireland. In 1871 the number had increased to 26 hawkers, of these only eleven were Irish. The Irish were therefore over-represented in 1861, whilst in 1871, the percentage was much closer to that of the Irish cellared population of the area this being, respectively, 42% to 39%. In the Market Street sub-district in 1861, there were twenty three cellared hawkers and dealers of whom seventeen had been born in Ireland. In 1871 there were fifteen hawkers/dealers in total, seven of whom were Irish. As we have found in the St Georges sub-district, the Irish cellar dwellers of Market Street were over-represented in the field of hawking and dealing as the Irish-born percentage of Market Street was 45% in 1861 and 23% in 1871.
In the London Road area there were no Irish-born hawkers or dealers amongst the four in 1861 or the two in 1871. In Deansgate only three cellar dwellers earned their living by hawking or dealing in 1861 - one had been born in Ireland. In 1871 the number of hawkers and dealers had risen to ten. Only one of this number had been born in Ireland - he was a dealer in second-hand clothes. However, the 1871 finding in Deansgate does reflect the Irish cellar dwelling population of the area which was 13%.

The answer to the question - were the Irish over-represented in the area of hawking and dealing in Manchester - must be in the affirmative. In the areas that abutted Smithfield Market - St Georges and Market Street - in terms of the Irish cellared population of these districts as a whole, they were certainly over-represented. However, it cannot be maintained, as O'Tuathaigh implies, that they were “disproportionally numerous” in the other sub-districts of Manchester.

In Salford in 1861, there were ten cellar dwellers whose income was derived from hawking or dealing, five of whom had been born in Ireland. In 1871 there were twenty five hawkers or dealers, 24% of whom had been born in Ireland. Again, the Irish were over-represented in 1861 but in 1871 the percentage reflects more closely that of the Irish cellar dwelling population of the town as a whole. However, the Irish are still over represented as the Irish-born cellar population of Salford was 18% in 1861 and 15% in 1871.

In Stockport, in 1861, we found that of the twelve hawker/dealers, eight had been born in Ireland. In 1871 there were six hawkers and dealers, three of whom
were Irish. Finally, in Rochdale, in 1861, there were only four hawkers and dealers living in designated cellars, two of whom were Irish. In 1871, the number of hawkers and dealers living in designated cellar dwellings in Rochdale had increased to twenty - seventeen of whom were born in Ireland, which gives a percentage of 85% Irish hawkers/dealers against an Irish cellar dwelling population of only 53%.

The three towns of Salford, Stockport and Rochdale present different pictures one to another in terms of both the number of hawkers/dealers and the percentage of Irish cellar dwellers engaged in the trade. In Salford we find a significant increase in overall numbers of hawkers/dealers from 1861 to 1871, however, during the same period there was a fall in percentage terms of those so employed who had been born in Ireland. On the other hand, a similar increase in the Rochdale numbers was coupled with a significant percentage increase in Irish cellar dwellers earning their living from hawking or dealing.

The rise of those from Ireland engaged in hawking and dealing adds to our belief that the Rochdale Irish were more recently arrived. A similar rise was not noted in any of the Manchester sub-districts - not even in St Georges - nor in Salford or Stockport. Hawking, street trading and dealing would have been easy occupations for the newly arrived to enter although, as we have argued elsewhere, it would have been difficult for them to earn an acceptable income. The fall in percentage terms in the other towns would suggest that the Irish populations were settled and that very few new immigrants arrived between 1861 and 1871.

Let us now consider another suggested area of Irish employment - labouring.
### TABLE XXVII

Numbers of cellared Irish/non-Irish labourers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>1861 Non-Irish</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1871 Non-Irish</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Included within table XXVII excavators (navvies), spade labourers, day labourers, agricultural labourers and labourers for bricklayers, masons etc. The table confirms that the Irish cellar dwellers were considerably over-represented in labouring especially when one compares the above findings to the Irishness of the various areas. However, it was a declining difference over the ten year period excepting in Rochdale. Again, we find Rochdale in 1871 presenting a different pattern to the other districts in that, the cellared Irishness percentage of Rochdale in 1871 was 53% whilst the Irish labouring percentage was 66%. In St Georges, for example, the Irishness percentage was 50% whilst the Irish labouring percentage was 58%. Again, we find confirmation that the Rochdale Irish were more newly arrived.
Hopkins who lived in a cellar in Union Street. John was thirty years old and had been born in Ireland. He was a brick cutter’s labourer. His wife, Bridget, was also aged thirty, she was a throstle spinner and she, too, had been born in Ireland. Their eldest child, John aged 8, had been born in Liverpool, the port of entry for almost all Irish immigrants to the north west of England. Their second child, Margaret, was only two months old and she had been born in Rochdale.

The second family was that of Peter Burns, aged thirty one, a bricklayer’s labourer, who, like his wife Mary, aged thirty one, had been born in Ireland. They lived in a cellar in Whitehall Street. They had three sons, Michael and Thomas, aged 8 and 4 respectively, who had been born in Birkenhead which is on the opposite side of the River Mersey from Liverpool. Their youngest son, John, was aged two and he had been born in Rochdale. The Burns had brought another family member with them. Mrs Burns’s sister, Catherine O’Rourke, aged twenty six, also born in Ireland, shared the cellar as did Mrs O’Rourke’s two Rochdale born children Thomas aged two and Mary aged four months. On their travels to Birkenhead, the Burns family appear to have collected a fifteen year old girl - Rose McDonald who had become a lodger in their cellar. Rose worked as a back tenter in a cotton mill.

Engels suggests that many Irish immigrants were employed as hand loom weavers. By the 1830s, hand loom weavers were amongst the poorest workers. Their trade had come under severe pressure from power loom weaving. The Manchester Guardian of 30th January, 1830, surveyed forty one

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hand loom weaving families and estimated their income to be around 5d. per head per day. (9) By 1861 there were very few hand loom weavers in the whole of the areas under study. In total only 20 cellar dwellings in all four towns and in both years, were employed as hand loom weavers. It would, therefore, appear that Engels's conclusions do not hold as far as the cellar dwelling population is concerned. The numbers involved in hand loom weaving, be it cotton, silk or flannel, are too small to draw any ethnic conclusions. Let us, therefore, examine mill work. For the purpose of this analysis we will consider the mill area of Manchester, Ancoats, and compare this with our findings for Salford and the mill town of Stockport.

We have seen in the occupational analysis in chapter VII that most cellar dwellers who were employed in the mill worked in the weaving sector. This area of work attracted income levels of about 12s. per week in 1861 and 1871 making it a relatively low waged sector when compared to the wage of the spinner which was around 20s. per week after he had paid his piecer. Kirk had argued, above, that it was in low waged areas that the Irish congregated.

Table XI shows us that, in 1861, forty nine Ancoats cellar dwellers were employed as weavers, an number that fell to thirty two in 1871. In 1861, thirty nine of the forty nine were Irish and, in 1871, eleven of the thirty two were Irish. In Salford, in 1861, thirty seven cellar dwellers were employed as weavers only three of whom were Irish. In 1871, there were twenty four weavers, seven of whom were Irish in origin. Finally, in Stockport, in 1861, there were ninety five cellar dwellers employed as weavers, thirty six of whom were Irish, whilst in 1871, there were only nine weavers in total none of whom were Irish. In other areas of
mill work such as doffing, doubling, tenting and piecing, we find a similar degree of ethnic mixing.

The above analysis of cellar dwellers employed in weaving does bring into question Kirk’s assertion. Only in Ancoats, and only in 1861, do the Irish appear to have dominated the weaving sector of the textile industry. Nor do the Irish appear to have been denied employment in the spinning sector. For example, in Stockport, there were eleven non-Irish spinners and ten Irish spinners whose homes were designated cellar dwellings.

Moving from the mill to the factory and the foundry, proportionally few cellar dwellers found employment within these establishments. Perhaps they were seen as lacking the physical strength and the mental capacity such work demanded. One would, therefore, expect to find few, if any, Irish cellar dwellers employed in such a field given the perception of their drunken and restless natures. For the purpose of this analysis, we will consider Ancoats, Deansgate, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale as there were too few cellar dwellers employed within the factory or foundry in the St Georges, London Road and Market Street sub-districts to make a worthwhile comparison.

In Ancoats in 1861, twenty eight cellar dwellers were employed within either factory or foundry discounting labourers. They worked in a wide variety of occupations. There were turners, boiler makers, forge workers, screw bolt makers, fitters, etc. However, only ten were of Irish origin and only one Irishman was employed within the heavy side of the industry, the ironworks. In 1871, there were thirty one cellar dwellers employed with factories or foundries and, again, only ten
of them were Irish. However, more Irish appear to have found employment in the ironworks than in 1861. For example, there was John Anderson, aged thirty four, who had been born in Ireland. He lived in his mother's cellar under 9 Elizabeth Street. The family had been in Manchester since 1851. John was an iron moulder and would possibly have been earning about 34s. per week.

In Deansgate, in 1861, there were seventeen cellar dwellers employed in factories or foundries principally within the heavy sectors of brass or iron. Only one of the seventeen was of Irish origins and he was an iron planer. In 1871, twenty nine cellar dwellers gave their occupations as being within a factory or foundry and, again, these were principally within the heavy sector. Only two of the cellar dwellers were Irish.

In Salford, twenty non-Irish cellar dwellers were employed in factories or foundries - chain making, tin plate working and iron making. Five Irish cellar dwellers were employed within these sectors, only one of whom was specifically within the iron industry. In 1871, thirty one non-Irish cellar dwellers and six Irish cellar dwellers worked in a factory or a foundry. Four of these were Irish females. Neither of the two Irish males worked in the heavy side of the industry.

In Stockport, in 1861, seven non-Irish cellar dwellers were employed within the hatting factory, nine gave their occupation as simply 'factory' and one was employed as an iron moulder. There was only one Irish-born hatter. Thirty eight Irish cellar dwellers gave their occupation as factory and there was one Irishman employed as a core grinder. In 1871, of the fifteen non-Irish factory workers, twelve were employed in the hatting industry. One Irish girl worked in the hatting industry and three Irish people worked in an unspecified factory.

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Finally, in Rochdale only six cellar dwellers in 1861 were employed within a factory principally on the heavy side of the industry, who had not been born in Ireland. There were eight Irish-born cellar dwellers who were described as factory operatives. In 1871, there were twelve non-Irish factory workers, again, principally in heavy engineering and there were fourteen Irish cellar dwellers who were, again, described as factory operatives.

Initially, it would appear from the above that the Irish cellar dweller was under-represented in terms of employment within the factory or foundry in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. However, when we compare the number of Irish people so employed to the Irish population percentage, it is not so clear. For example, in Salford, in 1861, the Irishness percentage (25%) is equal to the percentage of Irish to non-Irish workers in the factories. It can be argued that, within the heavy engineering sectors - those that attracted the highest incomes - such as boiler makers, fitters, smiths and iron moulders, the Irish cellar dwellers were under-represented. However, the overall number of cellar dwellers employed in such fields was low and, therefore, firm conclusions cannot be drawn. Perhaps cellar dwellers as a whole were considered to be too feeble for such work.

One final area to be considered before we leave the employment of the Irish cellar dweller is that of non-employment, those without any income whatsoever. Were they more likely to be unemployed or remain at home than their non-Irish cellar dwelling counterpart? Table XXVIII indicates those who were totally without income. Those on parish relief or pension and those described as gentleman or independent and the beggar have been excluded as they were in receipt of some income even if it were only a few coppers. Again, the figures vary
from the overall totals of cellar dwellers due to illegibility of parts of the census returns.

**TABLE XXVIII**

Irish/non-Irish cellar dwellers without paid employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>Non-Irish</th>
<th>Irish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M  F  B  G</td>
<td>M  F  B  G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>1  39  5  13</td>
<td>32  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>29  1</td>
<td>23  2  3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>1  52  8  7</td>
<td>1  14  2  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>1  57  3  2</td>
<td>6  56  1  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>50  5  3  43  4  5</td>
<td>1  33  6  32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>1  101  1</td>
<td>8  55  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>2  42</td>
<td>5  22  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>26  1  27</td>
<td>1  19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**

M = male over 21  
F = female over 21  
B = male aged 10 - 21  
G = female aged 10 - 21

There is an interesting anomaly within the non-employed in that the word 'unemployed' was rarely used in the 1861 census. However, in the 1871 census, the word 'unemployed' has only been used in relation to the non-Irish. This may reflect the increasing awareness that unemployment was not part of the natural way of life for any group in society - a notion that had not been accepted by the Irish worker.
Table XXVIII indicates that Irish cellar dwellers were more likely to remain at home than their non-Irish cellar dwelling counterparts. However, we do find that between 1861 and 1871 the number of Irish females without employment fell, or remained virtually the same, with the exception, again, of Rochdale, a further indication of their newness. Most of the Irish immigrants into the north west of England came, via Dublin, from the rural areas of Connacht and, especially, Leinster(10). Within the rural setting, it would have been usual for the married woman to find paid employment outside the home. She would work alongside her husband on the land. In the more urban setting, this was not possible. However, the second generation would not have such a rural tradition, it would be natural for them to seek work outside the home as their neighbours did.

To conclude this section on employment, although we have found some differences between the areas of employment followed by the Irish and the non-Irish cellar dwellers in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale, there appears to have been a much higher level of ethnic mixing among people at the bottom end than seems to be implied by both Kirk and O’Tuathaigh. It is only when we considered specific areas such as St Georges or Rochdale in 1871, that it can be argued that the Irish were over-represented in hawking. The same argument applies in the field of labouring. Within the mill, neither ethnic group appears to have been condemned to the lowest paid sector. It is only within the heavy industries that the absence of the Irish is noticeable. However, few cellar dwellers found employment within these relatively highly remunerated trades.

If it was not occupation that marked out the Irish cellar dweller, was it that his cellar was more overcrowded than that of his non-Irish counterpart?
First, numbers - table XXIX indicates the average number of residents within each cellar. The calculation of ethnicity is based on the place of birth of the head of the household. Again, the figure for this analysis will vary slightly from the overall figures due to the illegibility of the census returns.

**TABLE XXIX**

Average number of inhabitants of Irish/non-Irish cellars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Irish</td>
<td>Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salford</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochdale</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perception of Kay, Gaskell et al, that cellar dwellings, especially those of the Irish, were *grossly* overcrowded, is brought into question when we consider table XXIX. However, as stressed previously, Kay and Gaskell were reporting on
a situation that existed some thirty years before the time of this study. The table
does indicate that, of the Manchester sub-districts, Ancoats and St Georges show a
higher average of inhabitants per Irish cellar with a very slight fall over the ten year
period. However, it can be argued that, within Manchester as a whole, the Irish
cellar dwelling was almost indistinguishable from that of the non-Irish cellar in
relation to the number of inhabitants. The Irish cellars in Manchester contained
only 0.28 more inhabitants in 1861 and 0.32 in 1871. In Salford, the Irish cellars
contained 0.6 and 0.7 more inhabitants over the same period.

Stockport and Rochdale figures present a different picture from that of
Manchester and Salford. The difference between the 1861 Irish/non-Irish
occupancy levels for Stockport is significant and may go some way to explain the
extremely critical attention the Stockport Irish received from the reporters of The
Stockport Advertiser.

One such overcrowded Irish cellar was in Tatton Street, Stockport, in 1861.
The head of the household was Thomas Mallory, aged 50, a labourer who had been
born in Ireland. His wife, Bridget aged 40, did not work outside the home. They
had seven children, Mary 22, a cotton hand, Kate 20, Michael 18, Margaret 16,
Thomas 14, all factory hands, Catherine 9, a scholar and John 5 who was the first
locally-born child. Mary Stanton, Thomas's niece shared the cellar as did Bridget
Duffy, a 25 years old Irish-born factory hand who was described as a lodger.

The fall in the average number of inhabitants in Irish cellars in Stockport in
1871 is the most dramatic fall of all the areas under study. I find it difficult to offer
any firm explanation for this. It is true that the Irish-born population of Stockport
declined between 1861 and 1871 and that the total number of cellar dwellings also
fell over the same period for all the areas under study excepting Rochdale. I cannot believe that the racial prejudice of the strongly Tory Stockport Advertiser would have affected the domestic arrangements of the Irish. Perhaps the second generation of Irish immigrants had fewer children than their parents. If this is so, why did the occupancy levels in Irish cellars in Manchester and Salford change so little?

Rochdale provides another insoluble puzzle. Throughout this chapter, it has appeared that the Irish in Rochdale were a newer phenomenon than in Manchester, Salford and Stockport. One would assume that Irish incomers were young adults or young families. As a consequence, one would expect to find more children in the Irish-headed cellars which would increase the average number of inhabitants between 1861 and 1871. However, as table XXIX indicates, the opposite was, in fact, the case. Despite this fall, it can be argued that the difference between the number of inhabitants in Irish cellars and that in non-Irish cellars in Rochdale is more clearly defined than in either Manchester or Salford.

The average number of inhabitants within the Irish-headed cellar dwellings is not, I would argue, sufficiently high, or higher than that in the non-Irish-headed cellars, to account for the considerable contemporary interest shown in the Irish in that it did not achieve the fifteen plus occupants described by many of the contemporary observers. However, one extra inhabitant could create overcrowding in such a confined space. Perhaps and additional answer lay within the structure of the household. The family structure of man, wife and children would be considered a more stable unit than a household made up of a number of lodgers. It could be argued that a household with a number of lodgers would be
less stable, care less for its surroundings and be more fickle with its income than a
family unit, whatever the ethnic background.

O'Tuathaigh argues that

"the keeping of lodgers was an important source of income for the
enterprising immigrant family. both because of the rent and the
laundry services often rendered for cash by the woman of the
house."(11)

Table XXX indicates the percentage of cellar dwellings within Manchester,
Salford, Stockport and Rochdale that contained lodgers. The ethnic division is
determined by the place of birth of the head of the household. No differentiation is
made has been made between the terms ‘lodger’ and ‘boarder’.

TABLE XXX

Percentage of cellar dwellings containing lodgers

All figures are percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Irish</td>
<td>Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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TABLE XXXI

Average number of lodgers per cellar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town or District</th>
<th>1861 Non-Irish</th>
<th>1861 Irish</th>
<th>1871 Non-Irish</th>
<th>1871 Irish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancoats</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deansgate</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Rd</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market St</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Georges</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALFORD</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOCKPORT</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCHDALE</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XXX, showing the percentage of cellar dwellings containing lodgers, shows the first significant difference between the Irish cellar dweller and the non-Irish cellar dweller in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. In Salford, the Irish maintained the old pattern of supplementing the family income by taking in lodgers even though, as argued above, the Salford Irish seemed to have been long established. The very high percentage of Irish cellar dwellings containing lodgers in Stockport in both 1861 and 1871 may go some way to explain the reasons behind the contemporary focus of attention on the Irish.

In Manchester, the difference between Irish and non-Irish is less significant.
It is, again, only in Ancoats and St Georges sub-districts that more Irish cellars contained lodgers than non-Irish cellars. It must also be noted that, within these two districts, the percentage of non-Irish cellars containing lodgers was lower than any other area in 1861.

The answer to the question, were the Irish cellar dwellers more inclined to keep lodgers than their non-Irish counterparts, is both yes and no. The answer is certainly affirmative in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale, true in Ancoats and St Georges, but not in Deansgate, Market Street and London Road.

In general terms, the number of lodgers per cellar did not amount to the level of lodging house keeping as table XXXI indicates. However, there were a few cellars that could have been considered to be lodging houses although it is doubtful whether they were registered as such.

One such cellar was to be found in St Georges sub-district in 1871. The cellar was under 38 Rochdale Road. The head of the household was Charles Fowler aged 43, a hairdresser from Lincolnshire. His wife, Esther, did not work outside the home. This cellar contained eight male lodgers, half of whom had been born in Ireland. The eldest was a 74 year old hawker, the youngest an 18 year old tin plate worker. Being situated on a principal thoroughfare, this cellar was likely to have been larger than average, containing perhaps four rooms. Despite this, to twentieth century eyes the overcrowding was chronic. At least the lodgers were all of the same sex and would, therefore, pass the nineteenth century moral standards test had they shared the same sleeping arrangements.

Another potential lodging house cellar was situated in Ancoats, in 1861, in
Gun Street. The head of this cellared household was a 46 years old laundress from Ireland. She was a widow. She had seven lodgers who appear to have been two unrelated family groups. All the residents of this cellar were female with the exception of a Mr Allen who lodged there with his wife and 2 year old child. It is difficult to be certain as to the size of this Gun Street cellar as Gun Street contained buildings of varying sizes. It is, however, likely that this cellar was considerably smaller than that in Rochdale Road.

Salford, Stockport and Rochdale also contained a few cellars that could be considered as lodging houses. Two such cellars were in Salford in 1861. In the first, which was Irish-headed, there were nine inhabitants in total, seven of whom were lodgers. In the second, not Irish-headed, there were nine inhabitants, five of whom were lodgers. In a cellar in Cross Street, Stockport, in 1861, there were twelve inhabitants in total. The head of the household was an Irish-born widow aged 40. She had three Irish-born children, one daughter aged 20, and two sons aged 18 and 16. Her Irish-born father lived with her. There were two unmarried lodgers with the same surname, both born in Ireland, John and Bridget Duffy, aged 28 and 24 respectively plus a married Irish-born couple and their three Stockport-born daughters. In Rochdale, again in 1861, an Irish-headed cellar contained eleven inhabitants, six of whom were lodgers. In 1871, in a cellar under Mill Street, Rochdale, an Irish-headed cellar contained eight inhabitants, six of whom were lodgers. This cellar was headed by an Irish labourer, William Kilroy aged 40. His wife Barbara, 40, did not work outside the home and she, too, had been born in Ireland. These lodgers were all female, Margaret Moony, 26, from Manchester, Mary Moony, 8, Bridget Moony, 6, and Catherine Moony, 2, who had been born in Rochdale. There were also Ellen Gupper, 20, from Rochdale and Mary Connor, 20, from Manchester.
It has been argued above that very few cellars in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale could be considered as lodging cellars reminiscent of the one described by Read. Where we have found lodging cellars, they were headed by both Irish and non-Irish-born people. Did the perceived Irish 'problem' stem from where the Irish cellars were located? Did the Irish cellar dweller choose to live in a ghetto, a Little Ireland, and was it this that attracted the often hostile attention of his contemporaries? Again, in testing this, in the context of Irish cellar dwellers, it is arguable we are observing the Irish situation where it it liable to be the most acute - at the bottom end of society.

IV

Engels believed that Manchester contained two Irish areas, one known as Little Ireland, the other, New Town, which Engels claimed was known as Irish Town. He also suggested that the tenants of Ancoats “are generally Irish”. (12) The census return for the Little Ireland area in 1861 does not designate any of the homes in this area as cellar dwellings. We will, therefore, concentrate our analysis of the Manchester Irish ghettos on New Town (St Georges sub-district) and Ancoats. These two areas have demonstrated, on our place of birth analysis, the highest concentration of Irish-born cellar dwellers.

Fielding in *Class and Ethnicity* writes that

“In 1871, one third of [Angel] Meadow’s residents were Irish-born

Moreover, certain streets were overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, Irish.”(13)
The 1861 census, and that for 1871, for the St Georges sub-district, show a total of fifty four streets that contained cellar dwellings. Of these fifty four streets, twenty were only on the 1861 census and twelve on the 1871 return only. The remaining twenty two streets are shown as containing cellar dwellings on both the 1861 and the 1871 returns. The number of cellar dwellings within a street can vary over time. We will concentrate on these twenty two streets. If we consider these streets to be streets of cellar dwellings rather than streets of houses, the breakdown of the ethnicity of the streets is as shown in table XXXII.

### TABLE XXXII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Irish</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Irish only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the percentages in the table indicate, the ethnicity of the streets changed over the ten year period. Eleven streets retained the same ethnic make up, four changed from mixed to Irish-only, one changed from Irish-only to non-Irish and six changed from mixed to non-Irish.
These findings do not indicate the presence of an Irish quarter, rather, perhaps, a shifting pattern of clustering. In 1861, the vast majority of the streets were mixed with Irish and non-Irish-born cellar dwellers living alongside each other. The pattern was shifting to non-Irish-born by 1871, perhaps indicating the presence of a second or third generation of locally-born residents with Irish roots.

Let us look in closer detail at one street. Ashley Lane ran through the centre of Angel Meadow. The houses in Ashley Lane varied in size. However, many of them were of the back-to-back construction. The first 1861 cellar was headed by Manchester-born Joseph Tilly, a hawker. His wife and two children lived with him. The house above was occupied by Hancock Bond, an Irish shoemaker, his Irish wife and their two Manchester-born children. Thomas Thormond, a 30 year old Irish-born shoemaker lived in the next cellar with his Irish-born wife, Mary, and two children, Elizabeth aged 3 who had been born in Ireland and William aged 9 months who had been born in Manchester. The house above was headed by William Hands who had been born in Manchester. William had an Irish-born wife and two Manchester-born children. The third cellar was the home of Stockport-born Mary Frost and her two children. In the house above there was yet another Irish-born shoemaker, Robert Hulme who had an Irish wife and one Manchester-born child. Patrick Kildare, an Irish-born agricultural labourer, lived with his sister in the next cellar, whilst the house above contained two families. One was headed by London-born Mark Williamson. He had an Irish-born wife and four children. The second family was headed by Irish-born John McDonald and his wife and there were five lodgers. Michael McDonnel, another agricultural labourer, lived in the next cellar with his wife and one adult child. They had all been born in Ireland. The house above this cellar contained two families, both of which were Irish-
headed. Finally, Austin Gilroy, yet another Irish agricultural labourer, lived in the next cellar with his wife and two children. The house above was home to Manchester-born William Larry. William’s wife had been born in Norwich and their two children had been born in Manchester.

In 1871, Catherine Broom, an Irish hawker, lived in the first cellar with her son, under the house of James Newton, a Manchester-born rope maker and his niece. Nathen McDonagh, an Irish scavenger, his wife and four children lived in the next cellar under the home of John Crowther, an Irish-born shoe maker and marine store dealer. Mr Crowther had an Irish-born wife and five Manchester-born children, the eldest of whom was fifteen. John Hines occupied the next cellar. He was 50 and had been born in Ireland. He earned his living as a hawker and he shared his cellar with his wife and an unmarried mother and her son. James Baglia, an Irish-born paper hanger, his wife and four children lived in the house above. Catherine McDonald (McDonnell), the widow of Michael from 1861, was still in the same cellar. She appears to have taken six boarders into her home. The surname of the family in the house above her is illegible, however, the male head of the household had been born in Ireland whilst his wife and two children had been born in Manchester. Catherine Moran occupied the next cellar dwelling in Ashley Lane in 1871. She had been born in Ireland and had two children. Mrs Moran was a marine store dealer. She had five lodgers in her cellar all of whom were Irish. The house above this rather crowded cellar was headed by Thomas McGloughlin, an Irish scavenger, his wife and two children. The final cellar was headed by May Mulloy, a 25 year old widow from Ireland. She earned her living as a hawker and she had two children. Mrs Mulloy lived under a house that was headed by John Pollitt who had been born in Manchester and who shared his house with his wife.
and two children.

This examination of one cellared street through 1861 and 1871 indicates that even where Irishness was at its most marked, at the heart of notorious Angel Meadow, Irish and non-Irish lived together, occasionally in the same building. Was the same pattern discernible in Ancoats?

In Ancoats forty eight streets are shown as having cellar dwellings on either the 1861 census return or that of 1871. Thirteen of these streets were shown with designated cellar dwellings in 1861 only, fourteen in 1871 only. Of the remaining twenty one streets, the place of birth of some of the residents of cellars in one street is illegible. We are, therefore, dealing with only twenty streets for the purpose of the ethnic analysis in table XXXIII.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Irish</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Irish only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the cellared Ancoats streets we find an even stronger pattern of ethnic
mixing than in St Georges. We also find a higher percentage of Irish-only streets than in St Georges in 1861. Again, we find the pattern changing to a more non-Irish complexion. However, this change is less marked than that noted in the St Georges sub-district.

I have chosen to examine Elizabeth Street, Ancoats. This street was situated close to McConnel, Murray mills towards the London Road sub-district. An 1848 map of the area indicates that the majority of the houses in Elizabeth Street were back-to-back in construction. Furthermore, the map shows only six sets of cellar steps. In spite of this, the 1861 census designates seven cellars as dwellings and the 1871 designates fifteen. We will not consider all the cellar dwellings in detail.

The cellar under 61 Elizabeth Street, Ancoats in 1861 was headed by Liverpool-born Sarah Murphy. She had two Manchester-born children aged thirty and nineteen living with her. The house above was headed by Manchester-born Mary Meadowcroft who had her three children and one boarder living with her. Ann Chapman, who had been born at sea, headed the cellar under 57 Elizabeth Street. She had six children all of whom had been born relatively locally. The house above her was in multiple occupation. It contained eight occupants in all, seven Manchester-born and one who had been born in Denton, Lancashire. Hannah Murray and her three children, aged 22, 19 and 12, lived in the cellar under 49 Elizabeth Street. They had all been born in Ireland. Samuel Howard from Bradford, Yorkshire and his wife, Louise from Buckinghamshire lived in the house above. Manchester-born William McNalley, his wife and child and one Irish boarder lived in the cellar under 55 Elizabeth Street. The house above contained nine inhabitants, none of whom had been born in Ireland.
In 1851, Timothy Mulhall from Ireland lived in William Street, Ancoats with his wife and daughters. Timothy and his wife had been born in Ireland. In 1861, Bridget, now a widow, lived in a cellar under 47 Elizabeth Street. She had three more children. The house above her was home to Lancashire born Mary Appleby, a single woman, and her two unmarried sisters. John Doyle, who had been born in Manchester, lived alone in the cellar under 45 Elizabeth Street. The house above was home to Joseph and William Stephenson, an Irish-born father and son. Finally, under 43 Elizabeth Street, lived Patrick Brennan, his wife and three children. All the family, except a 2 month old baby had been born in Ireland. The house above was home to George and Priscilla Aldred. George had been born in Manchester, his wife in Stockport.

In 1871, the cellar under 25 Elizabeth Street was Cheshire headed whilst the house was Manchester headed. Under number 23, the head of the household had been born in Manchester, his wife was Irish. The house above the cellar was multiply occupied and contained ten inhabitants in total, none of whom had been born in Ireland. The cellar under 9 Elizabeth Street was Irish-headed and contained seven occupants, whilst the house above was home to six Manchester-born people. Julia Murphy, who was blind, Irish and on parish relief, shared her cellar under 5 Elizabeth Street with a Manchester-born lodger. The house above Julia Murphy had seven non-Irish inhabitants. Charles Carr, from Ireland, his wife and child lived under the home of Manchester-born James Townly. Richard Bullock and his family from Manchester lived under the house of Irish-born Elizabeth Higgins. The last house we will consider in Elizabeth Street, Ancoats in 1871, is number 59. In the cellar lived Ann Goggins, 59, a widow from Ireland who was a silk weaver. Her married daughter and two grandchildren lived with her. All the residents of the
house above them had been born in Manchester.

In both the St Georges and Ancoats sub-districts, some of the surnames of the Manchester-born residents would suggest second generation Irish - John Doyle, William Riley etc. However, both Elizabeth Street and Ashley Lane do demonstrate a significant degree of ethnic mixing both within the cellars and within the houses. Often Irish and non-Irish shared the same building, occasionally the same cellar. If, again, we consider the streets of both St Georges and Ancoats as streets of cellars rather than as streets of houses, there does not appear to have been even a cluster of Irish-only streets, with the exception of the area around Old Mount in St Georges. However, many of the streets both in St Georges and Ancoats were dominated by Irish-born people - a pattern that was changing by 1871, perhaps, as argued above, due to the presence of second generation Irish cellar dwellers. Was a similar pattern discernible in Salford, Stockport and Rochdale?

In Salford there was no discernible area of Irish settlement within the town as a whole. The discernible pattern was of a significant number of Irish-headed households within specific streets in the older parts of the town. Garrett, in his dissertation on the Irish community in Salford, shows that, even within these clusters, there was a high degree of ethnic mixing. He writes

"the thirty six Irish-born in both Garden Street and Brown Street, formed a community of about 25% of all residents, but in only three places can they be identified as living in more than two houses together amongst all the seventy five houses in both streets. In each case there is much to suggest integration or shared dependence..."
through poverty as seven of the Irish-born were either wives of non-Irish, members of an extended family or lodgers in English houses; five of the nine houses being shared by multiple occupancy between Irish and non-Irish families.”(14)

The census enumerators’ handbooks for Salford in 1861 and 1871 show a total of 110 streets having cellars that were used as dwellings. Of these 110, 49 are shown on the 1861 return only and 30 on the 1871 return only. The remaining 331 streets are shown as containing cellar dwellings in both 1861 and 1871. If we consider these streets as if they were streets of cellar dwellings, only the break-down of the ethnicity of these streets is as shown in table XXXIV. The analysis has been restricted to thirty streets due to illegibility of one of the 1871 returns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Irish</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Irish only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this table shows, the ethnicity of the streets changed slightly through the ten years. The table also demonstrates a significant difference from the findings in 384.
both St Georges and Ancoats, especially in the percentage of streets that were non-Irish, clearly confirming the stronger Irishness of the two Manchester sub-districts. Seventeen of the Salford streets retained the same ethnic make-up, two changed from Irish-only to mixed, one Irish-only street became non-Irish, two mixed streets became non-Irish, seven changed from non-Irish to mixed and one mixed street became Irish-only. We can see that over the ten year period, the clustering was reducing and an even stronger pattern of shared streets was developing. Not all the streets covered by Garrett’s survey contained designated cellar dwellings in 1861 and 1871. I will look in close detail at two streets that did contain such dwellings.

Park Street and Ashton Street which, according to Garrett’s survey, contained 86% and 11% Irish, respectively overall, are situated in quite separate parts of Salford. Park Street street was situated off Bank Street in the Islington area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Number of cellars</th>
<th>Irish headed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park St</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashton St</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE XXXV

Total number of cellars and number of Irish-headed cellars in Park St and Ashton St, Salford
whilst Ashton Street was in the Pendleton area. Both streets show designated cellar dwellings in 1861 and 1871 and both show ethnically mixed heads of households overall. They, therefore, provide a viable example for a close study and may demonstrate patterns of ethnic clustering within streets. They also demonstrate the fluctuation of the ethnic mix in Salford over time.

The first cellar on the 1861 census in Park Street was headed by Salford born Mary Olide. She had two children living with her. The house above her was empty. The second cellar was headed by Arthur Hulligan. He shared his cellar with his wife, four children, one nephew and two lodgers. Mr Hulligan had been born in Ireland. The house above was headed by Ireland-born Elizabeth Flinn who lived with her three children and one lodger. The third cellar was, again, Irish-headed by Salina Moran who had five children. Mrs Moran lived under the household of Irish-born James Walker, his wife and five children. Next came the cellar headed by Michael Devan, who was born at sea and is, therefore, classed as non-Irish. His wife lived with him and she had been born in Ireland. They had two sons living in the cellar. The Devan family lived under the home of Liverpool-born Thomas Munro, his wife and six children. The cellar of Irish-born Ann Harrick was next listed on the enumerator’s return. Ann lived with her brother, sister and son under the house of Mary Delany (Irish-born) and her five children. The cellar of English sounding George Braithwaite was next. Mr Braithwaite was, however, Irish by birth. His wife and five children lived with him. They lived under the house of Irish-born John Ogear who had a wife, two children and three lodgers. The final cellar on the 1861 return for Park Street was headed by Manchester-born Samuel Copley. His wife and three children lived with him. They lived under the Irish-headed household of Edward Seeny, his wife, three children and one lodger.
In Park Street in 1871, the enumerator's returns show that all the cellars were Irish-headed. Michael Connor, his wife and three children lived under the house of Irish-born James Walker and Liverpool-born William Rogerson. The house contained ten inhabitants in total. Peter Dolan headed the next cellar with his wife and four children. They, too, lived under a very crowded house that was headed by Irish-born Daniel Cahill who lived with his wife and seven children. The cellar headed by John McQuillan was next and with him lived his wife and two children. The house above the McQuillan cellar was headed by Irish-born Michael Grady and it had twelve inhabitants. The final cellar was headed by Edward Gibbon. His wife and four children lived with him. In the house above Irish-born Michael Gallagher was shown as head of household. There was a total of eleven residents in Mr Gallagher's house.

It would be simple to argue from this one example, Park Street, that Salford did have a 'Little Ireland'. However, if we examine another street in the same detail, we may find a different picture. The first cellar in Ashton Street in 1861 was headed by Irish-born Bernard Quinn. His wife, four children and one lodger lived with him. In the house above lived Bury-born Robert Ramsden, his wife and five children. The second cellar was headed by Bolton-born Isabella Heys. Her two children lived with her as did one Irish-born lodger. Over Mrs Heys's cellar lived Chorley, Lancashire-born Noah Springsfellow, his wife, two children and a 'servant'. In the cellar under 3 Ashton Street lived Irish-born Alicia Smith, her two children and two grandchildren. In the house above we find James Charleton who had been born in Chowbent, Lancashire. James lived with his wife, one child and two lodgers. Irish-born Mary Bissett and her sister lived in the next cellar under the house headed by Pendleton-born Henry Fitzpatrick. His wife and twin sons
lived with him as did five lodgers, one of whom was Irish-born. Irish-born Rose Mee lived in the next cellar with her three children. Rose lived under the house headed by Irish-born Thomas Campbell, his wife, one child, his mother-in-law and four lodgers. Atherton, Lancashire-born William Hatton lived in the cellar at 7 Ashton Street, whilst the house above was occupied by Irish-born William Campbell, his wife, three children, one son-in-law, three grandchildren and four lodgers. James Fitzpatrick, who was born in Pendleton, lived in the cellar under 8 Ashton Street, as did his wife, four children and one lodger. The house above was occupied by Irish-born Ann Johnson, her two children and one boarder. The final cellar in Ashton Street in 1861 was headed by Ireland-born Catherine Yates and she had one child living with her. Above Catherine lived Irish-born Eliza Hare, her five children, one grandchild and three lodgers.

In 1871 the ethnic make-up of Ashton Street had changed slightly. In the cellar under 1 Ashton Street, the head of the household was Robert Robinson who had been born in Bradshaw, Lancashire. He had an Irish-born wife living with him and two children. The house above was still headed by Robert Ramsden and his family. Robert now gives his place of birth as Bolton rather than Bury as he did on the 1861 return. Robert’s wife, three children and one lodger share the house. The cellar under 3 Ashton Street was headed by Salford-born Mary Ramsden who had one child. Above her lived Joseph Barnes who was born in Clifton, Lancashire and his wife and four children. The cellar under 5 Ashton Street was headed by Chorley-born Thomas Robinson, his wife and four children, whilst above them lived Blackburn-born Joseph Grimshaw, his wife and five children. William Fennel, who had been born in Worsley, lived in the cellar under no 7 with his wife and a 16 year old female described as a daughter- in-law and unmarried. Above the Fennels
lived Irish-born William Carmblt(?), his wife, four children, one grandchild and one lodger. Sarah Ann Boardman, who was born in Salford, lived with her brother and sister in the cellar under no 9. The house above was occupied by Irish-born William Powell, his wife, five children and two lodgers. The cellar at no 11 was headed by Irish-born Mark Andrews. His wife and three children lived with him. In the house above lived Irish-born Mary Burns, four children and three lodgers. Finally, in the cellar under 13 Ashton Street we find Rose Flood who had been born in Ireland. She had two children living with her. In the house above Rose there was Margaret Pilkington who had been born in Ireland, her five children, her sister and five lodgers.

The above study provided us with two differing pictures of the ethnicity of Salford streets. Park Street, in 1871, provides an example of a 'Little Ireland'. However, this is the only street of cellars that changed from being ethnically mixed to being Irish-only. I would argue that Ashton Street demonstrates the more typical picture of Irish cellar dwellings over the period, showing as it does shared buildings and Irish living next door to non-Irish; it certainly reflects the findings of Garrett for the population of Salford as a whole. Unlike the position in both St Georges and Ancoats, there is little evidence of second generation Irish in Salford cellars.

Let us now turn our attention to Stockport. Neville Kirk writes that by 1841,

“Irish quarters were beginning to emerge in the centre of the town around Rock Row, Adlington Square and Jackson's Alley. By 1851, few non-Irish families were to be found in these streets. The streets
of Middle Hillgate (Cromwell Street, Covent Garden and Cross Street) constituted by 1851, a further area of heavy Irish concentration. Again, few non-Irish families inhabited this densely packed neighbourhood."(15)

It is clear from the 1861 census return for Stockport that the centre of the town, the oldest part, contained the majority of designated cellar dwellings. It is also clear that the area defined by Kirk did contain a higher proportion of Irish-headed cellar dwellings than within the town as a whole. Not all the streets within the area defined by Kirk are shown as containing cellar dwellings. In table XXXVI (over page), I list all the streets within the defined area which did contain such dwellings showing the total number of cellar dwellings and the total number of them that were Irish-headed.

Table XXXVI shows that 63% of all designated cellar dwellings within the area defined by Kirk were Irish-headed. I would argue that Kirk’s statement that few non-Irish families lived in this area does not hold when we consider the cellar dwellings in 1861, 37% of which were not Irish-headed.

Over the ten year period of this study, 75 streets in Stockport as a whole are shown on the census as cellars that were used as separate dwellings. Of these, 35 only appear on the 1861 return, 23 on the 1871 return only. 17 appear on both returns.

For the purpose of ethnic analysis of the Stockport streets showing cellar dwellings that appear on both censuses, I have omitted Higher Hillgate and Union Street. In 1861, Higher Hillgate contained twenty five non-Irish cellar dwellings and one Irish, and in 1871, nineteen non-Irish and no Irish-headed cellar dwellings. In 1871, Union Street had twenty three non-Irish cellars and one Irish cellar.
Factually, each street had a period of mixed occupancy. However, the degree of mixing was so low that their inclusion would distort the findings. There are also special features concerning this area that I will touch on later.

TABLE XXXVI

Total number of cellars in specific Stockport streets and number of Irish headed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STREET</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>IRISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tatton St</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fletcher St</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowther St</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garnet St</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross St</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Pl</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Sq</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etchells St</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Petersgate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchells Ct</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Bankside</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John St</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George St</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke St</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown St</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb St</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridgeway Lane</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>64</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ethnic break-down of the remaining 15 streets is shown in table XXXVII.

**TABLE XXXVII**

Ethnicity percentage of cellared streets in Stockport

All figures are percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Irish</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Irish only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XXXVII, for fifteen streets, shows some change in ethnic make-up. Over the ten years, eight retained the same ethnic pattern, one changed from non-Irish to Irish-only, three changed from mixed to non-Irish, two changed from non-Irish to mixed and one mixed became non-Irish. Unlike the picture in both St Georges and Ancoats and Salford, there appears to have been a growth, in percentage terms, of Irish-only cellar streets.

To assess further the degree of clustering, I will again look at two streets in closer detail. Finding two streets for such study within the area defined by Kirk proved to be a difficult task. I have, therefore, selected John Street, within Kirk's area and King Street which was just outside. Many of the streets mentioned by Kirk, whilst showing cellar dwellings in 1861, are not shown on the 1871 return as
having designated cellar dwellings, although there is evidence of multiple occupancy. Furthermore, due to the idiosyncrasy of the enumerator, it is not always possible to confirm who occupied the house over each specific cellar.

The first cellar in John Street, in 1861, was headed by Patrick Reddington who had been born in Ireland. His Irish wife and three children lived with him. The second cellar was headed by William Walker who was Stockport-born. He shared his cellar with his wife and three children. Cellar three was headed by Warrington-born John Smith. His wife had been born in Ireland. They had three children. Cellar four was headed by Stockport born James Cropley who lived with his wife. The cellar next to Mr Cropley’s was headed by Irish-born Michael Drury who shared his cellar with a wife, four children and one lodger. The next cellar was the home of Stockport-born Ann Shuttleworth who had two overnight visitors. The seventh was headed by Irish-born Nancy Sumners who shared her cellar with her two children, one granddaughter and two lodgers. The final cellar was headed by Ireland-born Patrick Flannery whose wife and three children lived with him.

According to the 1861 census return, the Reddington, the Walker and the Smith cellars were all under the house of Cheadle born Peter Longstaff, his wife and their three children. It has not been possible to determine who was living over the other five cellars.

The picture for 1871 is somewhat clearer. The first cellar in John Street was headed by Irish-born Ellen Article and her son lived with her. They lived under the home of Stockport-born James Wooley, his wife and daughter. The second cellar was headed by Didsbury-born William Birch who shared his cellar with his wife.
The Birch cellar was under the home of James Lowndes, his wife and their three children who were all born in Stockport. John Pope, a Liverpool-born actor, lived with his actress wife in the third cellar. This cellar was under the home of George Ridgeway who, with this wife and seven children, had been born in Stockport. Ellen Waddy, an Irish-born washerwoman, lived in the cellar under the home of Berkshire-born Maria Hempshaw and her five children. In the final cellar, the head of the household was Wright Brown who had been born in Bolton. Mr Brown lived with his wife and two children under the home of Stockport-born David Albiston.

The first cellar in King Street, Stockport in 1861, was headed by Derbyshire-born Joseph Craven who lived with his wife. The Cravens lived under the home of Stockport-born Charles Richardson and his wife. The next cellar was headed by Stockport-born John Booth who lived with his wife and three children. The house above was home to John Breeding, his wife and four children who had all been born in Stockport. There were two other cellar dwellings under Mr Breeding’s house, one headed by Stockport-born Thomas Robinson who shared his cellar with his wife and three children, his mother-in-law and his sister-in-law. The other cellar was headed by Cheadle-born Olivia Robinson and her three children.

In 1871, King Street is shown as King Street East; it does appear to have been the same street. The first cellar was headed by Irish-born Catherine Talbot who lived with her two children under the home of Stockport-born Benjamin Wood Findon and his wife. The only other cellar in this street was inhabited by Stockport-born Samuel Whitehead. Samuel shared his home with his wife, four children and two lodgers, one of whom had been born in Ireland.
The above analysis indicates that there was a strong Irish presence in cellar dwellings in the area specified by Kirk though, perhaps, by 1861 and 1871, not as strong as his 1851 findings for the areas as a whole suggests. There were more streets that were ethnically pure than was evident in Ancoats, Salford and most of St Georges. A fuller explanation of this strong Irish presence in a specific area of Stockport is beyond the scope of this study. However, some pointers must be laid down. There is strong evidence of racial tension in Stockport; a tension that appears to have been stirred by *The Stockport Advertiser*, as we have seen and by Stockport Toryism in general, to judge from Kirk.

The anti-Irish tension came to a head with the Stockport riot during 28th to 30th June, 1852. It started simply with the ejection of a man from a public house and culminated in the sacking of two Catholic churches and the reading of the Riot Act. Tension such as this would have forced the Irish to seek security in numbers. I have found little evidence of similar tensions elsewhere. Indeed, the Catholic community of Salford felt confident enough to build the magnificent St John’s Cathedral in 1848. The leading anti-Papist in Salford was the Revd Hugh Stowell. Mr Stowell was a frequent guest preacher at St Thomas’s Church in Stockport. St Thomas’s is on Higher Hillgate and is bounded on one side by Union Street. If the congregation of St Thomas’s invited such a guest preacher as Mr Stowell, it could follow that they reflected the views and the attitudes of the locality. This, I would argue, is a strong pointer as to why, out of twenty six cellar dwellings in Higher Hillgate, only one was Irish-headed and why, in 1871, none of the nineteen cellar dwellings were Irish-headed. It would also explain why, in Union Street, in 1861, all the fourteen cellars were non-Irish and why of the twenty four cellar dwellings in 1871, only one was Irish-headed.
Finally, let us turn to Rochdale. My researches have discovered no works, either contemporary or historical, on the Irish inhabitants of Rochdale around 1861 and 1871. However, as we noted from Urban in *The Rochdale Pilot*, there was a discernible area of Irish settlement. Furthermore, as we have seen, the Irish in Rochdale were a significant and growing phenomenon amongst the cellar dwelling population of the town. In the ten year period of this study, thirty six streets in the borough as a whole are shown as having designated cellar dwellings. Of these, nine appear only on the 1861 return and twelve on the 1871 return only. The remaining fifteen streets appear on both returns. The ethnic breakdown of the streets that contained cellar dwellings in both 1861 and 1871 is shown in Table XXXVIII.

**TABLE XXXVIII**

Ethnicity percentage of cellared streets in Rochdale

All figures are percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Irish</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Irish only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We see here, again, a changing pattern of ethnicity over the ten year period. However, the change in each town and sub-district has been different. In
Rochdale's twelve cellared streets. six of the mixed streets remained the same, two mixed became Irish-only, two non-Irish remained non-Irish, one Irish-only became mixed, one mixed became non-Irish and one Irish-only remained Irish-only.

In choosing streets for a close comparative study, I have, again, faced difficulties. Many of those that appeared on both censuses contained too variable a number of cellars for comparative purposes. For example, Rope Street in 1861 is shown as having two non-Irish-headed cellars and one Irish-headed, whilst, in 1871, it contained sixteen Irish-headed and one non-Irish-headed cellar dwellings. Again, Whitehall, in 1861, had six non-Irish-headed cellars and three Irish-headed, whilst, in 1871, it contained thirteen Irish-headed and four non-Irish-headed. A further difficulty was that, in 1861, the enumerator frequently grouped all the cellar dwellings together at the end of his return for the street as a whole. In such cases, a comparison of the cellar dweller with his upstairs neighbour is impossible.

I have chosen to consider Middle Lane which ran between Union Street and Whitehall. This was in the centre of both the cellar dwelling area and the 'Irish' area of Mount Pleasant. In 1861, the return shows six cellar dwellings, four Irish-headed, two non-Irish. By 1871, there were only three cellar dwellings each of which was Irish-headed.

The first cellar in Middle Lane, in 1861, was headed by Rochdale-born John Royle who lived with his two children and a 'housekeeper'. The second cellar was home to Yorkshire-born Sarah Wolfenden and her four children. According to the enumerator's return, both of these cellars were under the house of Rochdale-born James Hitchen, his wife and two children. The remaining four cellar dwellings.
which were all Irish-headed are shown as being under the home of Irish-born James O’Boyle. James lived with his wife and five children.

In 1871, the first cellar in Middle Lane was headed by Irish-born John Coffee. His wife and five children shared his cellar. They lived under the home of Rochdale-born Joel Cropper who had a wife and two children. The second cellar, again, Irish-headed, was the home of William Williamson, his wife and two children. This cellar was under the house of Irish-born William Ragan who had a wife and six children living with him. The house above the third cellar was unoccupied whilst the cellar was home to Irish-born John Buttler who was a widower and had three children.

This brief look at Middle Lane shows a degree of clustering within buildings. Furthermore, the changes we have noted in Union Street and Whitehall suggest a degree of clustering within streets. The street that contained the highest continual percentage of Irish to non-Irish was Cleggs Yard. In 1861, it contained nine Irish-headed cellars to four non-Irish and, in 1871, there were eleven Irish-headed to one non-Irish cellar - the home of William Anderton. This pattern is reflected in the houses above in that all the houses in Cleggs Yard, for both years, were Irish-headed except one.

The growth of clustering over the ten years adds weight to our earlier assumption that the Irish in Rochdale were a more newly arrived group than the Irish residents of Manchester, Salford or Stockport. As our tables have shown, the cellar dwelling population of Rochdale grew over the ten year period - a further indication of their newness. I would argue that it would be natural for the incoming
immigrant to seek residence amongst his fellow countrymen. He would, therefore, seek out areas of Irish residence such as Mount Pleasant. The presence of such Irish clusters does not appear to have attracted the same hostile reception as was the case in Stockport. Urban of *The Rochdale Pilot* merely notes their aggressive behaviour which, he maintained, was contained amongst themselves.

The Irish immigrant received considerable, perhaps the greatest, attention from the contemporary observers of the underclass, especially in Manchester - so, too, in this thesis. We have tested how far their findings hold for the Irish-born cellar dwellers of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. To do this we have compared the occupations, occupancy levels and locations of the Irish-born cellar dweller with those of the non-Irish-born cellar dweller through ten years.

The findings of Buret, Engels et al through to Kirk and O'Tuathaigh appear to show the Irish immigrants as a group apart, be it either as a result of their own nature or the attitude of the host community. However, at one of the lowest levels in society - cellar dwelling - I have been struck by the many similarities between the Irish and the non-Irish.

It is true that, in terms of the Irish population of all our towns as a whole, the Irish immigrant was over-represented amongst cellar dwellers. However, in occupational terms, we have found few differences between the trades of the Irish and the non-Irish excepting the area of heavy metal working. There is no evidence that either ethnic group was condemned to areas of work that were less financially
rewarding, even non-employment was almost equally divided amongst Irish and non-Irish cellar dwellers.

It was only when we considered the number of inhabitants within the Irish cellars to those within the non-Irish cellars that we detected the first discernible difference between the two groups. The difference that was most notable was that of the keeping of lodgers. As I have argued above, this was a simple way for the immigrant to supplement the family budget as it did not necessitate being known by the host community. It is possible that lodgers were considered to be less stable members of the community, constantly on the move, irresponsible and a potential threat to civilised order. It would follow that the keeping of lodgers in an unregistered cellar dwelling would be a focus of disapproval and attract criticism.

There is some evidence of ethnic clustering which is most marked in the Old Mount area of St Georges, in Stockport and in Rochdale. In both Stockport and Rochdale I have shown special reasons for the situation, in Stockport, a history of ethnic conflict and, in Rochdale, the relative newness of the Irish population. Rochdale’s situation may serve as a pointer to the findings of Kay and Engels in that the newly arrived immigrant will seek out his own kind. As Thompson notes,

“To head for an established Irish bridgehead was an obvious strategy of a newly arrived immigrant from a poor peasant society for whom a large town was a strange, totally unfamiliar and hostile place.”(16)

Perhaps the Old Mount area of St Georges, containing as it did Irish hand loom weavers and a disproportionately high number of hawkers, was the rump of the Manchester so condemned by many of the observers.
Despite the evidence of ethnic clustering, we have discovered a surprisingly high degree of ethnic mixing, not only in streets, but within buildings and even within cellars. We can, therefore, argue that, in 1861, in terms of cellar dwellings, Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale did not contain within their midst a 'Little Ireland'. Furthermore, aside from over-representation and the keeping of lodgers, the Irish cellar dweller was virtually indistinguishable from his non-Irish cellar dwelling neighbour. Our search for the archetypal Irish cellar dweller has been inconclusive.
Chapter 9 - References


4. Engels, ibid, p 71.

5. Engels, ibid, p 107.


11. O'Tuathaigh, ibid, p 17.


CONCLUSION

From Benjamin Disraeli to the Revd Mercer, from James Phillips Kay to Alfred Alsop, from the 1830s down to the 1890s, respectable society perceived there to be a mass of people, an underclass existing within their towns. The underclass was different from all the other elements that constituted society and it was this difference that made the underclass dangerous. Its members were different both morally and physically and their degeneration could be readily observed simply in their appearance. Despite their foreshortened life span, the underclass was growing rapidly. It threatened to swamp the ranks of the respectable working man, bringing not only disease and immorality but severe pressure on the whole of the economic system of the country.

Some of the underclass were perceived as beggars or hawkers, some of the women were prostitutes, frequently keeping men in drunken idleness by their immoral trade. Others worked in mills and factories, in hot, humid conditions, at dull, repetitive, undemanding labour that robbed them of all human decency and brought them to the level of animals. The underclass were perceived as reckless, feckless, and restive, wasting whatever money they had in the pleasure of the moment with no regard to the future. The women of the underclass were seen as lacking both domestic skills and maternal feelings. Their children were abandoned to their fate soon after birth. They roamed the streets, receiving no parental and giving no filial affection in return. The underclass had become detached from the body of society. It owed deference to no one and paternalism had been taken from the hands of the respectable individual and placed within the hands of the Poor.
Law Guardians.

The areas inhabited by the underclass were clearly defined. They were perceived to be the areas that contained the most drinking dens, the most brothels, the most Irish and the most animals, be it pig, dog or donkey. These areas received the least air and sunshine. They were unsewered and undrained, devoid of privies and water, the streets were full of rotting matter. Within the homes of the underclass, the worst of which were the cellar dwellings, all was perceived as chaos - dark, damp and filthy. In these hovels all manner of unspeakable practices were commonplace. Perhaps the most profound difference between the mass of the underclass and society in general, noted by our observers, was the stench, not only of the areas and of the streets but of the people - a stench to which the underclass had become inured.

The perceptions of the mass of the underclass varied little between observers or over time. However, when the observer turned from the mass to the individual, the perception changed. Margaret Harkness’s Mary Dillon in *The Manchester Shirtmaker* lived within the underclass but was not part of it. Mrs Gaskell’s Davenports lived in a stinking, oozing cellar but they had retained their human qualities. Cooke Taylor was deeply moved by the grinding poverty that had forced people like Samuel Parry, in Stockport, to sell all he owned and move his family to a cellar. Even Venedey discovered a cellar that shone, whose clean inhabitants included “a wonderful blond child with blue eyes”. However, observers such as Cooke Taylor and Venedey rarely individualised their reports.

In our search for the underclass we have considered individuals - the individual cellar dweller in Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. The
time span, between 1861 and the 1990s, prevents an empirical examination of the physical appearance of the underclass. However, early photographers of the 1890s occasionally captured the dull-eyed, hollow-cheeked features of the slum dweller. Time has also separated us from the stench of the underclass. However, many of us have memories of sulphur-belching rivers and smoke-filled towns. Such images create our own perceptions; to reach closer to nineteenth century reality, we must put these perceptions aside and rely on firmer data.

Maps have shown us that cellar dwellings were not always hidden and that their physical size mitigated against privacy for the inhabitants of many of them. The censuses have shown that the majority of all cellar dwellers were locally-born individuals. They married when aged over twenty one, although this was slightly younger than their middle class contemporaries. A substantial minority of cellar dwellers were not restless, they remained in the same area, often in the same cellar for over ten years. A surprising number of cellar dwellers had the right to vote in the local elections, the ultimate mark of social stability and even respectability - a handful achieved Parliamentary status. Furthermore, the Irish cellar dweller, whilst over-represented in terms of the Irish population of the towns as a whole, was not in the majority, nor did they form Irish ghettos or even Irish quarters within any of the towns under study.

The majority of cellar dwellers were forced into such places due to poverty and, once down at that level, escape proved almost impossible. Although the vast majority of them were employed, their wage levels and the day-to-day nature of that employment dictated that they sought the cheapest available accommodation.
The rent could only be paid and food could only be put on the table if the family budget were enhanced by more than one income. Should the chief breadwinner of a working class family die, the remaining members could be forced from their house into a cellar.

There were, however, cellar dwelling families whose income levels were comparatively high when based on the given occupation. It has, however, been argued that high incomes frequently brought high risks to the health of the operative. It would therefore follow that some high income earners could have been in chronic ill health. Despite this, it is certain that a few were no doubt feckless and reckless, preferring to pay 2s. per week for a cellar than 4s. per week plus for a house, thereby having more to 'waste in pleasure'.

The purpose of this thesis was to search for the underclass. We have discovered that in a part of St Georges sub-district of Manchester, there existed what may have been the rump of the underclass perceived in the Manchester of the 1830s and 1840s. The area contained the most Irish-born, the most hawkers and hand loom weavers and the least stable cellar dwelling population of any other sub-district of Manchester. We have also discovered the potential seeds of an underclass in Rochdale, should the Mount Pleasant and Church Lane areas of the town unite.

Despite this, I would argue that our findings are the reverse of the perceptions of the observers in that we have discovered only a few individuals who were, potentially, members of the underclass. We have not discovered a threatening mass. We have discovered several thousand individuals who, for a
variety of reasons, were trapped in accommodation that, even in the 1830s, was deemed to be unfit for human beings. These people were poor, almost poverty stricken, rather than dangerous. Given clean water, adequate sanitation, healthy food and decent shelter, plus a living and sustainable wage, they would pose little threat to the community in which they existed. Perhaps, if today’s society regarded our underclass as individuals, rather than a mass, we would be less fearful of the future. The underclass - the dangerous class - has been discussed and feared for over one hundred and fifty years and society has not yet fallen into the abyss.
The vast majority of cellar dwellings that we have been investigating no longer exist. However, certain parts of the four towns have escaped demolition. The following photographs are a small sample of those I have taken on my exploration into the nooks and crannies of Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Rochdale. I must, at this point, thank my husband and my daughter who acted as bodyguards and tape recorder operators on these excursions. I do not claim that any of these cellars were actually used as cellar dwellings. However, they do serve as both an example and a record of the possible types of cellar which we have been investigating.

The first two photographs were taken inside cellars that were not in our area. They are both in Ashton-under-Lyne in Greater Manchester. I was accompanied on this occasion by a gentleman from the Surveyor’s Department. Photograph 1 is of an unused cellar showing stalactites hanging from the cellar ceiling. The second photograph was taken inside a cellar that is still in use and shows an example of a fire-place.

Photograph 3 is of Whitehall Street, Rochdale showing clear evidence of the existence of a cellar beneath the property. Photograph 4 is of Oldfield Road, Salford. Close examination of the change in the colour of the brickwork under the black shuttered window would indicate the presence of a cellar. Both Whitehall Street and Oldfield Road contained cellar dwellings. Photographs 5 and 6 are of Stockport showing the acceptable and less acceptable types of cellar dwelling.
Photographs 7 and 8 are also of Stockport (Astley Street). Here we can see the gable end of the row of housing indicating that the houses were of two-up and two-down construction. Astley Street, Stockport did contain cellar dwellings.

Photograph 9 of Paton Street, Manchester, shows houses and cellars. The cellar steps run down alongside the house. Photograph 10 - Dale Street, Manchester - show a cellar with the steps at right angles to the house. From my observations, this type of step arrangement would appear to be less common than that found in Paton Street.

The next four photographs were also taken in Manchester, in Hilton Street. These show cellar steps, again, side-on to the house above. They also show that the cellar would have admitted some light as the window would have been above street level. These photographs also demonstrate how narrow the steps and passage way were and how easy it would have been for the passageway to become filled with filth from unpaved and unsewered streets. They also demonstrate how difficult, if not impossible, it would have been to keep clean.

The final two photographs were given to me by a friend having heard of my fascination for cellars. They are of Peel Green, Eccles, which is now part of Salford and shows a less neglected cellar than those found in Hilton Street, Manchester. All the following photographs were taken between 1989 and 1995.
Interior of unused cellar in Ashton u Lyne

Fireplace in used cellar in Ashton u Lyne
Hopes Carr Stockport

Lawrence Street Stockport
Gable end Astley Street Stockport

Cellar Astley Street Stockport
Paton Street Manchester

Dale Street Manchester
Hilton Street Manchester
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**Census of Great Britain, Population Tables II, Vol II, 1851.**

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6. Newspapers

The Builder, 1844.
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