VOLUME ONE

THE NEW LIBERALISM AND THE CHALLENGE OF LABOUR IN THE WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE 1885-1914 WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HUDDERSFIELD

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Abstract

"The New Liberalism and the Challenge of Labour in the West Riding of Yorkshire 1885-1914, with special reference to Huddersfield"

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This thesis contributes substantially to a debate that has long been a preoccupation of historians surrounding the timing, underlying reasons for, and inevitability (or otherwise) of the Labour Party's replacement of Liberalism as the main opponent to the Conservative Party. In terms of the context for examining the extent and potential of Labour's challenge to Liberalism before 1914 and the presence of any form of 'progressive' or 'new' Liberalism, there has been a shift away from the ambit of national politics to that of local parliamentary and municipal politics. Amongst those areas of Britain that have been the subject of analysis, West Yorkshire, as the very birthplace of the Independent Labour Party, remains predominant and this study, by highlighting Huddersfield, complements and extends work already carried out on Leeds, Bradford and the Colne Valley.

Through a close analysis of the local and regional press, election results, personal papers, party records, pamphlets and trade union records, in conjunction with secondary sources, the emergence and nature of the Labour movement's challenge to a Liberalism dominated by a Nonconformist textile manufacturer elite, is examined. Trade unionism's central role in the establishment of the Huddersfield Labour Union in 1891 is evident. So too is the belated conversion of the Huddersfield Trades Council to independent parliamentary labour representation which, when combined with a religious, ethical form of Socialism around 1906, posed so serious a threat to established Liberalism that only opportune party re-organisation, an undemocratic franchise, and bitter divisions within the Labour movement, could save it. Yet even amidst its parliamentary victories of 1906 and 1910 Huddersfield Liberalism was, through its continued intransigence towards working-class concerns and its espousal of outdated issues, which had diminishing relevance to a nascent class-based electorate, increasingly less viable both electorally and intellectually.

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List of Tables

List of Abbreviations used in the Text

ASRS	Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants
BAIU	British Advocates of Industrial Unionism
BSP	British Socialist Party
GUTW	General Union of Textile Workers
HCA	Huddersfield Conservative Association
HJLA	Huddersfield Junior Liberal Association
HJUA	Huddersfield Junior Unionist Association
HLA	Huddersfield Liberal Association
HLU	Huddersfield Labour Union
HLUA	Huddersfield Liberal Unionist Association
HSP	Huddersfield Socialist Party
HWLA	Huddersfield Women's Liberal Association
HWMCA	Huddersfield Working Men's Conservative Association
HWUA	Huddersfield Women's Unionist Association
ILP	Independent Labour Party
LRC	Labour Representation Committee
NLF	National Liberal Federation
NUWSS	National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies
PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
SACC	South African Conciliation Committee
SDF	Social Democratic Federation
SLP	Socialist Labour Party
SSS	Socialist Sunday School
TUC	Trade Union Congress
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union

INTRODUCTION

> It is not hard to see why the 'strange death' of Liberalism should exercise such fascination. There is the personal drama associated with the schism between Asquith and Lloyd George. There is the sociological interest of the rise to political maturity and power of the working class. More generally, the decline of the Liberal Party has been popularly equated with the decline of a whole civilization, with the erosion of the liberal ethic, of the optimism and the certainty of moral values which the tensions and disillusionments of British society since 1914 have so largely undermined. In a sense, the decline of Liberalism has been taken as a parable of the decline of modern Britain.[1]

Given the atmosphere of political flux in the 1980s, when the emergence of a new centrist third party seems to question long-held assumptions both of class voting within a two-party system and the continued solidity of Labour's hitherto 'natural constituency', it is apt that an ostensibly similar period of flux between 1885 and 1924, when the Labour Party first rose to dislodge the Liberal Party as the main opposition party to Conservatism, should continue to arouse debate. Most remarkable in the saga of Liberal decline was perhaps the suddenness with which the party was overtaken by Labour. From an electoral landslide peak in 1906 of 399 seats, the Liberal Party had plummetted in less than two decades to forty seats in 1924, the year of the formation of Britain's first Labour Government.[2] Thereafter, despite the efforts of an elderly Lloyd George brandishing his 'Keynesian stick'[3], the Liberal Party was destined to occupy the diminishing centre ground of the political wilderness, sustained increasingly by only the protest vote and the expedient political pact.[4]

Such an abrupt and self-evident fall from power has naturally given rise to the argument that the Liberal Party's decline was really no surprise at all, was inevitable and could easily be discerned before 1914. Although attempts have been made to shift the analysis of Liberal fortunes beyond 1918[5], few historians would argue that Liberalism survived the Great War intact, either at a national or a local level, though some would deny that the war alone accounted for the collapse.[6] Consequently, interest has been directed to the crucial period between the 1885-86 Home Rule crisis and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Indeed many historians have placed an emphasis on the 'accidental' advent of the war itself as the key determinant of the Liberal Party's fate[7]: for example Michael Hart has concluded that "the First World War was a vital factor in the decline of the Liberals ... after 1918 Labour gained from Liberal organizational mistakes and intellectual lethargy"[8]. Yet it is only one watershed of several which have been highlighted as points at which the party's decline became easily discernible, inevitable or irreversible. Other studies have selected the welfare reforms of 1908-11 and especially the 'People's Budget' of 1909[9]; the 1903 MacDonald-Gladstone electoral pact[10]; the formation of the Labour Representation Committee in the wake of Taff Vale[11]; the Boer War and the Imperial split of the late 1890s[12]; the post-Gladstonian struggle for the party leadership and the failure to take up an advanced social policy at that time[13]; and the 1885-86 Home Rule crisis itself when the party lost elements of its middle-class support.[14] In essence, however, all that has emerged from this research is that no clear line of demarcation existed because of the

variable impact of national events on local politics, and the enormous diversity and complexity of local political organisation.[15] Moreover it has become clear that the debate on the decline of Liberalism is in reality several debates conducted at several levels, notably the national, the local and the ideological.

Although interest has gravitated towards the local level in an attempt to build up a more comprehensive, composite picture of how the political processes operated on the ground, until recently the debate's primary focus has been upon national politics. Indeed, since its publication in 1936, George Dangerfield's controversial The Strange Death of Liberal England, with its telling personification of Liberalism as a sick patient growing steadily weaker as a result of the rigours of industrial unrest, female suffrage agitation, Irish troubles, constitutional crisis and the advent of a Parliamentary Labour Party, has had an immense influence among historians. Even at the turn of the century, Dangerfield argued, Liberalism was emitting "a dismal rattling sound" and by 1906 "the death of Liberalism was pronounced; it was no longer the Left"[16]. Recent historians have been critical of both his impressionistic approach and his vague 'sense of impending clash', rooted in the link he detected between three elements of rebellion in Edwardian England: the women, the workers and the Tories.[17] Indeed McKibbin described Dangerfield's book as "a rather literary confection which does not attempt serious analysis"[18]; while Henry Pelling questioned the tendency of historians to see links where none exist.[19] Ironically, however, both were in the vanguard of scholars ascribing to Dangerfield's basic

belief in the inevitability of Liberalism's decline as here expressed by Pelling:

> The decline of Liberalism was not due to a sordid intrigue between Lloyd George and a few Conservative leaders and press lords ... Nor was it due, solely or predominantly ... to the impact of the war upon Liberal values and upon the unity of the parliamentary Liberal Party. Rather it was the result of long-term social and economic changes which were simultaneously uniting Britain geographically and dividing her inhabitants in terms of class.[20]

On the other hand, in emphasising Liberalism's vibrancy prior to the "accident" of the Great War, no single piece of historical writing has been more influential than Peter Clarke's Lancashire and the New Liberalism[21], in that historians since have generally fallen into pro- or anti-Clarke schools. Whilst his work exemplified to some extent the gradual shift of the debate to the local level, Clarke was nevertheless concerned to make more general comments on the state of Liberalism before 1914 and in particular to overturn Dangerfield's thesis that the supplanting of the Liberals by Labour was clearly portended well before the outbreak of war, and that this was rendered inevitable by the class polarisation of the electorate. He argued that in Lancashire, "the cockpit of Edwardian elections"[22], Liberalism remained strong and viable until the First World War. This it was able to do by containing the rise of Labour whilst building and maintaining a solid working-class basis of support. Clarke identified four major socio-political shifts which enabled Liberalism to overcome Tory ascendancy without fear of Labour encroachment. Firstly, the nature of political leadership had changed with the

collapse in influence of the local patriarchs. Secondly, the central importance of religion seemed to be declining. Thirdly, there was the rise to prominence of a "coherent ideology" in the form of 'Progressivism' or 'New Liberalism', which offered the working-class voter a 'viable' alternative to both Socialism and Tariff Reform. Fourthly, the pivot of politics moved away from the local and the communal to the national, with greater centralisation and party discipline, where local issues counted for less. Furthermore Clarke argued that "by 1910 the change to class politics was substantially complete"[23], and that the Liberal Party, armed with Progressivism, had won over the working class, thereby containing the Labour challenge. On the eve of war the Liberal Party, both in Lancashire and the country, was basically healthy: the blame for the decline of the party, therefore, must be sought in the war itself and the resultant internecine quarrel between Asquith and Lloyd George.[24]

Criticism of this claim came thick and fast, notably from 'broad left' historians who minimised the impact of the war, contested Clarke's definition of class, and argued for the inevitability of the Labour Party's replacement of what was basically a bourgeois Liberalism lacking in Labour's inherent working-class basis and appeal. Thus Ross McKibbin argued that "As political allegiance became more and more determined by class self-awareness, the Liberal Party found it could make no claim on the loyalties of any class."[25] Similarly Alun Howkins emphasised that Liberalism's persistent opposition to working-class militancy and strike action meant that "by its very

nature [it] could not deal with class demands or class struggle."[26] Implicit in this was the denial that the pre-1914 electorate was either class representative or class aligned, and that the experience of war, in itself, was an unsatisfactory explanation of the changes in the Labour Party's position in the country.[27] Other historians found it questionable how far Clarke's model could be considered typical, arguing that Lancashire, owing to its peculiar working-class Conservatism, was the exception rather than the rule.[28] In conditions of weakness it was advantageous for Liberalism to reach an accommodation with Labour, whereas in the Liberal stronghold of West Yorkshire, not least in Huddersfield, the opposite was true.[29] Even in such Liberal bastions as Leeds, Norwich and Leicester, where there were enforced 'Lib-Lab' agreements under the 1903 MacDonald-Gladstone pact[30], a comparative study of its impact on local politics has doubted "the effectiveness of a progressive alliance and the new liberalism in enabling the Liberal party to resist the encroachments of Labour prior to World War I", and that "a large and increasing number of working-class voters in these cities were [sic] not satisfied that the Liberal party adequately represented their interests"[31]. Thus the extent to which Progressivism was either 'viable' or widespread has aroused doubts[32], and Clarke has been particularly criticised for neglecting municipal politics and ward organisation, whilst over-concentrating on parliamentary politics in his quest to prove Lancashire's national application.[33] Indeed, more recent and localised studies of Lancashire confirm the peculiar nature of its politics, cast grave doubts on the electoral reality of Lib-Lab Progressivism, and highlight Labour's early municipal successes.[34]

Nor are the growing number of studies of other parts of the country generally supportive of Clarke's line of argument. Kenneth Morgan, in his study of Wales conceded that "Liberalism was uniquely well-equipped to withstand the challenge of labour in the years before 1914" but that "it was uniquely ill-equipped to meet the labour challenge after the war when the old society passed away", because "Welsh Liberalism, until 1929 when it was too late, never made any effort to develop a coherent social policy."[35] He concluded that there was no evidence for the presence of New Liberalism in Wales before 1914 and that "The Welsh experience might have been nearer the norm for Britain as a whole" than Clarke's Lancashire.[36] Cyril Parry endorsed Morgan's belief that the war was the main political watershed, conceding that the Welsh Labour movement grew only slowly and inconclusively before 1914, but similarly argued for the ultimate demise of Liberalism, war or no war.[37] In the case of another traditional area of strong Liberal support, Scotland, research is sadly lacking, however it remains clear that labour organisation came early with the formation of the Scottish Labour Party in 1888, partially in response to Liberalism's persistent intransigence in dealing with demands for working-class representation.[38] Subsequently, however, Liberal predominance was assured by a damaging series of internal conflicts amongst Scottish Labour leaders which seriously retarded growth before 1914.[39] Outside the Celtic fringe examination of Labour's challenge to Liberalism in rural areas has been limited. Janet Howarth's valuable study of Northamptonshire terminates before the turn of the century, but it does reveal how the Liberal revival of the 1880s had collapsed by 1895 and that the period was one of

transition from landed control to a politically class conscious electorate.[40] Similarly Alun Howkins' study of the St Faith's farm labourers' strike of 1910 found "how industrial conflict produced a switch to an independent working-class position" and "that the Liberal Party, in a local context, simply could not contain this kind of consciousness and the organisations produced by it, whereas the Labour Party could."[41]

More relevant perhaps to the Huddersfield situation, and where this study can contribute most, has been the work undertaken in the urban and industrial constituencies. Here, if anywhere, Labour should have been able to draw on Liberalism's hesitant social programme, emergent class awareness through the work process, the growing strength of urban "new unionism" and existing Trades Council organisation. Moreover, it is clear that the detailed, localised study of political trends and organisation is even more essential in the industrial areas because of the marked differentiation of experience between such ostensibly similar towns as Huddersfield and Bradford. As one historian has remarked: "This means examining local material with a real understanding of the meaning and effects of struggles on the individuals and groups involved."[42] A regional approach[43], though valid, is not microcosmic enough to reveal the multifarious influences on voting behaviour and partisan affiliation, ranging in Huddersfield from the temperance movement to the volunteer force.[44]

Amongst urban studies, Paul Thompson's detailed examination of London shows clearly how the Liberal party's hold on the metropolis was being

eroded: by 1900 it had lost all but eight of the seventy-two seats held in 1865.[45] Any partial Liberal recovery in 1892, 1906 and 1910 was, he argues, mainly illusory and "not based on a solution of its problems, but on the temporary revival of Nonconformist and trade union support and of radical political issues."[46] Once again, the absence of a 'viable' New Liberalism is notable, as in Battersea where Liberalism, it seems, was able to contain the demand for working-class representation until the war, but only through an unusual brand of Lib-Lab populism in the person of John Burns.[47] Birmingham and the West Midlands has received attention from R.A. Wright who found Labour before 1914 lacking "concerted homogeneity", while Liberalism was making little effort to respond to working-class demands, remaining low-key and dominated by a middle-class elite which tended to favour Labour.[48] When the Liberal Party did readjust on the eve of war, attempting to develop a brand of New Liberalism, it was a slow process, too late to stem the growing tide of Labour which was given full expression after 1918.

In the North-East, however, a rather different picture emerges which tends to support some of Clarke's conclusions. But there are clear differences, namely that New Liberalism was not a significant force and that "the politics of nonconformity still applied to a considerable degree and gave a continuing vitality to the "old Liberalism"", which meant that North-East Liberalism was successful in retaining "many wealthy and middle-class supporters" and "most of its working-class support."[49] In short, "there is little evidence from the fortunes of Labour candidates in 1910 or at by-elections to suggest that the

Labour Party was poised for a massive breakthrough."[50] Indeed, even in Labour's famous Jarrow by-election victory in 1907 there was "little evidence ... that younger working-class voters were moving ineluctably towards Labour [and] that Labour, after 1906, was unable to make further progress"[51], a conclusion Roy Douglas' study of the mining districts of the Potteries and Derbyshire supports.[52]

Of the industrial areas, it is perhaps Yorkshire, especially the West Riding, that deserves most attention from historians in the debate. It was, after all, in Bradford that the Independent Labour Party was founded in 1893, while Yorkshire generally was to remain a major centre of Labour strength.[53] Yet the West Riding was also a traditional Liberal stronghold: consequently the relations between an entrenched Liberalism and an ascendant Labour Party are of major national as well as local significance. Until recently there has been relatively little extended research on the rise of the Labour Party. This study of Huddersfield aims to fill at least one gap in our knowledge. Amongst the major centres in the West Riding only Bradford and Leeds have been examined in any depth. A study of Leeds Liberalism suggested that the heady heights of Liberal dominance in the 1880s were never thereafter reattained, that from the early 1890s Liberal complacency was setting in, and that the party was losing the allegiance of the working classes. Gradually the eloquence and superior organisation of local socialists, the evolution of a working-class cultural alternative to middle-class Liberalism, and the growth of the 'New Unionism' filtered through to produce the municipal Labour breakthrough of 1904-6.[54] More recently these observations have been

substantiated from a close analysis of municipal politics in Leeds to the effect that "The catchwords of Liberalism were irrelevant to the needs of the working class" and that "The demise of the Liberal Party was not ... the outcome of Liberal politicians' mistakes, or external 'accidents' (like the war) but a result of the policy developed by working-class socialists in the 1880s and 1890s."[55] A similar examination of the origins and nature of Socialism, and the varying relationship with trade unionism (often through the Trades Councils), as the key to an explanation of Liberalism's decline before 1914, characterises the work carried out by Reynolds and Laybourn on Bradford. They have stressed Liberalism's failure to respond to the demand for working-class representation and the drift from the Liberal Party of such wealthy and influential figures as Alfred Illingworth.[56] New Liberalism in Bradford had a handful of exponents, but they exercised little sway over the electorate and the rise of a trade-union orientated Labour Party was never seriously stemmed, galvanised as it was by a growing class awareness through strike action.[57] In other textile towns in the region, Dewsbury and Keighley, Labour advance was, like in Huddersfield, less marked and on the surface Liberalism seemed to have remained in the driving seat until 1914.[58] Two points emerge, however, that will recur throughout our examination of Huddersfield: firstly, that Liberalism's apparent survival before 1914 was rooted not in 'New Liberalism' or 'progressive' accommodations with Labour but in the reiteration of the old cries of traditional Liberalism and an efficient party machine; secondly that the parliamentary election results disguise an undercurrent of municipal Labour advance to the detriment of the Liberals.

Indeed one of the major flaws in Clarke's position is his neglect of municipal politics, which by and large reflected a gradual rise in support for Labour, especially in the number of votes cast.[59] Thus Chris Cook concluded that it was the Liberal Party's "failure to produce a constructive municipal policy that went beyond such negative demands as economy" that was "a major factor contributing to [its] eventual fall."[60] It is true that there are drawbacks both with comparing municipal and parliamentary election results and with using municipal results as a barometer of partisan allegiance, because of a slightly differing franchise, lower municipal turnouts, and the influence of local issues and personalities.[61] Nevertheless it is abundantly clear that the local parties keenly fought municipal elections: in Huddersfield for example between November 1901 and November 1913 there were 120 contested municipal elections (excluding by-elections[62]) as against sixty-one unopposed returns.[63] Moreover, local elections were seen by contemporaries as a fairly reliable indicator of a party's standing, regardless of turnout,[64] testing the ability of a party to organise its supporters into a successful electoral machine. It was not without significance, as we shall see, that the Huddersfield Labour Party's organisation, even with Trades Council backing, and even as late as 1910, was seriously under-financed and regarded as "contemptible" whereas that of the Liberals was "one of the strongest in the country."[65]

Another significant argument pursued by critics of Clarke's basic belief in the long-term health and viability of Liberalism, has been that the pre-1918 electorate was basically undemocratic,

unrepresentative, and failed to enfranchise large numbers of working people to whom the Labour Party could appeal. Labour's retarded growth before 1918 was a result of its natural supporters not having the vote, and this sheltered Liberalism and disguised its failings. It was Neal Blewett who first emphasised the principal anomalies of the post-1885 electoral system[66] and criticised the generally-held belief that "By 1885 the British electoral system had assumed much the same form as it has today."[67] He concluded that as late as 1911 only sixty per cent of the adult male population had the vote and that "at least half of the five million adult males not qualified to vote were eliminated by the working of the registration mechanism."[68] Indeed, it was the complexity of the franchise that effectively excluded many of the working classes: seven separate franchises operated so the importance of having a party agent both to comprehend the system and to attend the registration courts was paramount. Moreover it was, as we shall see, a luxury the early Labour Party in Huddersfield did not possess. Furthermore, the twelve-months residential qualification, plus the lengthy preparation of the voting registers, effectively disenfranchised the most geographically mobile, frequently the working class.[69] Plural voting remained extensive at about seven per cent of the total electorate but this did not apply to boroughs like Huddersfield, where there was no plural voting, and does not seem to have benefited the Conservative Party substantially more than the Liberal Party anyway.[70] Levels of party organisation and a working knowledge of registration procedures were therefore crucial determinants of levels of enfranchisement, as other research has underlined.[71] Moreover, there were even more barriers in the way

of the adoption of working men as candidates. Despite the 1883 Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act, elections were still flamboyant and costly affairs for candidates, demanding wealth and leisure-time working-class candidates did not possess; even assuming local middle-class Liberal party organisations would adopt a penniless working-class candidate in the first place and that was extremely rare.[72]

In essence Clarke and McKibbin agree that the pre-1918 electorate was less than democratic in numerical terms, but disagree as to the extent it was class representative and how much of the existing working-class vote was solidly Liberal before 1914. For McKibbin and colleagues the case is simple: the 1918 Representation of the People Act eradicated the worst anomalies of the franchise and fully represented the industrial working class for the first time with the result that after 1918 the Liberal Party "was overwhelmed by voters who could not be enrolled by official Liberalism. Much of this new electorate voted Labour in 1918; but had it been enfranchised it probably would have done so in 1914 as well."[73] For Clarke, however, three consecutive general election victories for the Liberal Party under extremely difficult circumstances and in conditions of unparalleled popular political participation, together with the loss of only sixteen of eighty-six contested by-elections between 1911 and 1914 (none of them to Labour, who finished bottom in all fourteen three-cornered by-elections it fought), is evidence of popular and undiminishing support for Liberalism, regardless of the franchise.[74] Moreover by correlating areas of higher than average enfranchisement to a good Liberal vote Clarke argued that working-class voters were expressing

a continued preference for Liberalism over Labour[75], that the Liberal Party had nothing to fear from electoral reform[76], and that there was nothing definite to suggest that there would be an automatic working-class flight to Labour under a wider franchise.[77] In short "after 1910 the Labour Party seems to have run out of steam. There is nothing to suggest that it was moving into a position to win further seats in its own right"[78], or as Roy Douglas has put it more forcibly: "No shred of evidence existed anywhere which might suggest that within ten years the Labour Party would be forming the government of the country."[79] Furthermore one historian has remarked that the greater the stress the McKibbin school place on the rise of class voting as the key explanation of Liberalism's decline, the harder it becomes to explain the inter-war Conservative predominance and working-class Toryism.[80] Nevertheless it is likely that the revival of Conservatism in Huddersfield between 1910 and 1914 was a result of the growing class polarisation of voters, as we shall see.

A central tenet of Clarke's argument was that Liberalism was not based, as McKibbin characterised it, on a tired, obsolete intellectual rationality destined to be irrelevant in the world of the mass electorate[81], and further that the New Liberalism he perceived in Lancashire was a widespread and credible factor behind policy motivation amongst Liberal leaders. As early as 1905 one writer remarked that:

> There may have been a time when Liberalism meant something ... Today it is merely an ante-room to toryism, a kind of lavatory where the parvenus tidy themselves up and change their garments as they press in amongst the old nobility.[82]

Though perhaps over-alarmist, there was a tendency to view the post-Gladstonian Liberal Party as one devoid of policy and direction: the hotch-patch Newcastle Programme of 1891 had disappeared in the morass of Home Rule and many Liberals did their best to forget it had ever existed, not least in Huddersfield. This, and Liberalism's unbending adhesion to voluntaryism and 'laissez-faire', had hastened the departure from the party of the Fabians with a cry of To Your Tents, O Israel![83], and a growing number of contemporaries began to feel that the Liberal Party was out of step with the growing collectivist clamour, exemplified by increasing trade union membership, an upward shift in the scale of industry, demands for state and municipal responses to the effects of depression, and concern with social conditions revealed by the surveys of Booth, Rowntree and others. Moreover there was Nonconformist disaffection with Rosebery's leadership and his successor, Campbell Bannerman, faced a deep ideological divide in the party over the Boer War.

It was out of this mêlée, Clarke argues, that 'New Liberal' theorists like J.A. Hobson, L.T. Hobhouse, Graham Wallas, C.F.G. Masterman, the Hammonds and Herbert Samuel, deriving inspiration from T.H. Green's work in the 1880s, sought to remould Liberalism along more collectivist lines by reconciling Liberal individualism ("a fundamental faith in the goodness and rationality of man") with greater state intervention.[84] Predictably there is disagreement over the extent and long-term significance of this re-orientation, as there is over the impact of the 'new thought' on the Liberal welfare reforms of 1908-11. Was the shift a natural and sincere development of Liberalism to adapt

to the times, or was it a cynical and desperate attempt to dish Labour and save Liberalism from falling "between two energetically moving grindstones - the upper grindstone of plutocratic imperialism, and the nether grindstone of social democracy"?[85] Support for Clarke's belief in the national trend towards New Liberalism in the party has come from Emy who concluded that "progressive politics had acquired an underlying unity by the late 1890s"[86], and Freeden who remarked that "Liberalism was by 1906 intellectually better equipped than any other ideological force to handle the pressing social problems that had at last secured the political limelight."[87] Critics, however, have questioned how far the Lancastrian Progressivism of C.P. Scott and the Manchester Guardian[88], and the sentiment manifested in the Rainbow Circle, the Progressive Review and the Nation lunches[89], extended geographically and socially beyond a small intellectual élite. The Liberal leadership "engrossed in the world of Westminster ... was curiously insensitive to the movement of opinion in the party at large"[90] and equally "Local Liberal feeling ... was frequently out of keeping with the carefully measured tones of the leadership ... The New Liberalism, for all its achievements, had not brought into being a new Liberal Party."[91] As we have seen there is, to date, little evidence that the New Liberal theories extended beyond London dinner parties and the columns of limited circulation journals, even in areas of apparent Liberal strength before 1914.

This study will demonstrate that in Huddersfield Liberalism was dominated by a handful of wealthy middle-class Nonconformist employers who, in both parliamentary and municipal politics, steered the well-

trodden path of individualism and laissez-faire Liberalism that they knew so well, displaying little interest in, or concern for, emergent working-class demands, because they believed their electoral position to be reasonably secure. In the short term their complacency seemed to be confirmed by the hesitancy of the electoral rise of Labour in the town, the effectiveness of the Liberal Party's organisation in dealing with the challenge, and the divisions which rent the Socialist and trade union movement. In the long term, however, the Liberals were ill-equipped to offer credible and advanced solutions to the social and political concerns of class-aware working people.

Notes for Introduction

1 Morgan, K.O., "The Forging of the Left", The Times Literary Supplement, 14 March 1975.

2 Craig, F.W.S., British Electoral Facts, 1885-1975, (London, 1976), pp.6-14.

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4 See for example: Evans, B.J. and Taylor, A.J., "The Rise and Fall of Two-Party Electoral Co-operation: Liberalism, Conservatism and the Huddersfield Formula", unpublished manuscript, 1982; Cook, C., A Short History of the Liberal Party, 1900-1976, (London, 1976).

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6 See below.

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63 See appendix 2.2. These figures reveal an average 33.7% of seats which went uncontested in Huddersfield's municipal elections 1901-13; compared to a national parliamentary average of 36.3% uncontested in the 1900 general election, 17% in 1906, 11.2% in January 1910 and 24.3% in December 1910. (See Lloyd, T., "Uncontested Seats in British General Elections, 1852-1910", Historical Journal, vol. 8, 1965).

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77 This point is supported by Duncan Tanner who concludes that "There was no inherent sociological reason why the newly enfranchised men should have voted solidly for Labour. If they did so after 1918, itself a dubious proposition, then the explanation is to be found not in the simple fact of electoral reform, but in the altered political or social context." (op. cit.)

78 Clarke, P.F., "The electoral position ...", op. cit., p.832.

79 Douglas, R., op. cit., p.125.

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82 Labour Leader, 23 June 1905. Not the most objective of commentators!

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CHAPTER ONE

HUDDERSFIELD: SETTING AND CONTEXT

1. The Growth of Huddersfield

Huddersfield grew most extensively between the 1850s and the 1890s, but it was a growth that had begun in 1671, when the Huddersfield market received its Royal Charter enabling it to take trade from the nearby Almondbury market on the hill. Before that time, and indeed down to 1760, Huddersfield was no more significant a settlement than Honley, Slaithwaite or Elland.[1] Trade was based on the cottage handloom cloth weaving industry, which had originated in the early fourteenth century, and to a lesser extent on agriculture and small-scale mining. As the town gained in size and reputation, so the cloth trade increased and spread into the outlying areas. This led to the construction of a cloth hall in 1766 (enlarged in 1780 and 1848), the first of its kind in the West Riding.[2] It was, for a time, the centre of local trade and symbolised the town's growing pre-eminence in, and reliance upon, the textile industry.

With the rise in the level of trade came new roads and improvement of existing pack-horse tracks, connecting Huddersfield more closely with surrounding areas and opening up easier links to Lancashire.[3] It was, however, the advent of the railway to replace the canals which really awakened Huddersfield from its quasi-rural seclusion and ended centuries of being "off the beaten track, ... neither commercially nor strategically important."[4] In October 1846 the foundation stone of Huddersfield's celebrated railway station, described as possessing "the most splendid station facade in England"[5], was laid, and by 1850 three railway lines ran through the town: to Leeds, Sheffield and Stalybridge.

1850 marked a turning point for the town: thereafter it expanded rapidly. St George's Square became a new centrepiece to complement the traditional meeting place of the Market Square (the centre of the woollen trade) and a new road, John William Street, was formed to link the two. The abiding influence of the Ramsden family which owned virtually all the land in the town, ensured that the development of the town would not be a haphazard affair.[6] There were wide, paved streets and a new business area, Estate Buildings, was created adjacent to St George's Square. The square itself was soon bordered by other new buildings: the George Hotel to the north, the imposing facade of the Lion Buildings (1853) to the east, and the Britannia Buildings to the south. In many ways St George's Square's replacement of the Market Square as the town's main focal point, was representative of Huddersfield's new textile wealth, grounded less in the yeoman-clothier and handloom tradition than in the new textile mills. It was these new manufacturers, made wealthy by the advent of mechanisation and the boom in the textile trade, who increasingly challenged the pre-eminence of the older landed family élites like the Kayes of Woodsome Hall and the Brookes of Armitage Bridge (many of whom also had textile interests). It was this new breed of manufacturer, moreover, which forged Huddersfield anew in its own image: an image of enlightened civic Liberalism and Nonconformity. Indeed it was they who saw the advantages to be accrued from Huddersfield's incorporation, achieved not without a struggle in July 1868, and significantly the first town council to be elected was overwhelmingly Liberal and textile manufacturer dominated.

The first thirty years of the Borough's existence saw some major civic advances, paralleled by a marked population increase, made all the more notable by the achievement of County Borough status in 1888 and the absorption of the township of Longwood in 1890. From then on Huddersfield's boundaries remained unchanged until 1937 and it was to be the 1890s that saw the end of a century of massive population growth. Thereafter trade depression and increased foreign competition accounted for the reversal evident in the 1901 census, as table 1.1 below indicates.

Table 1.1 Population in Huddersfield 1801-1931

Township	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	
of	7268	9671	13284	19035	25068	30880	34874	
Huddersfield		33.1	37.4	43.3	31.7	23.2	12.9	% increase

Borough	1871	1881	
of	70253	81841	
Huddersfield		16.5	% increase
(1868)			

County	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	
Borough of	95417	95043	107821	119725	123048	
Huddersfield		-0.4	13.4	11.0	2.8	% increase
(1888)						

Source: Brook, R., The Story of Huddersfield, (London 1968), p.301; and census returns.

Water was vital to the town's textile industry, both for steam to drive mill machinery and for use in the dyeing and finishing of the cloth. The mushrooming in demand from the new mills overburdened the rivers Colne and Holme that ran through the centre of the town, and between 1870 and 1906 the Corporation constructed five major reservoirs under the auspices of the Waterworks Committee, formed in 1869.[7] By 1905 one merchant was able to comment of the town's fine worsted trade that "Huddersfield makers are quite at the top of the tree. They have good workpeople, and a magnificent supply of water, and water that is well adapted for scouring and finishing cloth."[8] Other subsequent municipal endeavours included the purchase of the Huddersfield Gas Company in 1871, a concern which was extended in 1894 to enable the provision of cheap gas to householders throughout the borough. In 1883 Huddersfield was the first corporation in the United Kingdom to operate its own tramway system, one which was constantly modernised and extended, with electrification in 1901-2 being made possible by an extension of the municipally owned electricity supply in 1899.[9] The town was also fairly advanced in introducing an eight-hour working day for many of its employees in the early 1890s, though not the fair contracts which the Labour movement had called for[10]; it was amongst the first corporations to set up a stock system, and was one of only a handful of municipalities to take advantage of the 1875 Artisans Dwellings Act to erect 160 houses between 1880 and 1882.[11] In addition, the Corporation built a new covered Market Hall in 1880, an impressive Town Hall in 1881 and some public baths in 1888. Beaumont Park, Greenhead Park and Norman Park were acquired by the town from the Ramsden and Beaumont families between 1883 and 1896 to provide open spaces for approved and improving entertainments and processions.

By the 1890s Huddersfield had reached the apex of its municipal achievement, as an article, entitled "Communistic Huddersfield" in the Yorkshire Factory Times, remarked:

> In municipal work Huddersfield is as advanced a town as any in the kingdom, in fact, 99 per cent of the towns and cities are behind Huddersfield in municipal enterprise .... Huddersfield is one of those places which has done things of a communistic character and not known it ..... socialistic work has grown and grown, and the Corporation is the biggest employer of labour and property owner in the borough.[12]

It is clear, however, that Huddersfield's municipal endeavour owed nothing to any form of collectivism or socialism.[13] Rather it was founded on the civic gospel of Joseph Chamberlain and on the self-interested profit motives of those textile manufacturers who dominated the Borough Council and who benefited most from the municipalisation of water, gas and electricity. As Linda Jones has recently concluded, the civic gospel "was an entrepreneurial gospel projected as radical populism"[14]. Indeed it will become clear from chapter four below that there were strict limits to Huddersfield Liberalism's municipal philosophy and policy, which precluded any form of serious collectivisation such as provision of work for the unemployed or an extended housing programme. It was increasingly true in Huddersfield that "what was portrayed as a progressive policy designed to better conditions for all came more and more to resemble a holding action by businessmen against the forward march of municipal trading and municipal socialism"[15]. Moreover, their advances had to be paid for and it is perhaps ironic that in 1902 Huddersfield had the highest

indebtedness per head of the population than anywhere in the United Kingdom, and that this was reflected in the level of the rates.[16]

2. Family and Influence

H.J. Hanham has observed that, by the 1870s, borough patronage had declined in varying degrees: in general terms it was not as direct as it had been formerly, partly because of the 1872 Ballot Act.[17] This was demonstrably the case in Huddersfield, where by the 1880s the influence of the dominant Ramsden family had declined substantially in terms of direct personal and political involvement in the town's affairs; a process speeded up by the rapid growth of textiles and the resultant shift in the preponderance of wealth away from the land. Nevertheless the Ramsden's indirect influence in the town remained significant by virtue of the family's ownership of the whole of the land of the Huddersfield township with the exception of a tiny plot on Firth Street.

The family's connection with Huddersfield dated from 1599, when William Ramsden purchased the manor of Huddersfield from the Crown for £975. Thereafter the market rights were acquired and most of the land in and around Huddersfield was amassed, totalling over 4,000 acres.[18] The family seat was theoretically at Longley Hall, but it was rarely occupied and the town hardly ever saw a Ramsden. Nevertheless their influence extended to the important appointment of the vicar of Huddersfield and from 1832, when the Huddersfield parliamentary constituency was created, they ensured that their nominee (invariably a

Whig) represented the town at Westminster. In the first contest in 1832 Captain Lewis Fenton trounced the radical candidate and not even Richard Oastler's popular Tory Radicalism in 1837 could wrest the seat from Ramsden patronage. Subsequently W.R.C. Stansfield became the family's choice and sat as M.P. from 1838, but, in a scandal poorly handled by the Ramsdens, he nearly gave way in 1852 to the political ambitions of John William Ramsden[19], who saw the Huddersfield borough as his natural inheritance despite the fact he did not actually visit the source of his livelihood until his twentieth year. It transpired, however, that Stansfield's occupancy was assured when it was pointed out that, being under twenty-one, John William's prospective candidature was illegal.[20] Such neglect and heavy-handedness characterised the Ramsden family's relations with the town, fluctuating between the tolerable and the abysmal. Having burnt their fingers in 1852 the family withdrew from direct political involvement. By the time E.A. Leatham was elected in 1868 the Ramsdens were very little in evidence and in 1886 joined other landed Whig families in the West Riding in seceding from the Liberal Party over Home Rule.

More important than the Ramsden's political manoeverings was the persistent hold in terms of landowning which they exercised on the town. There is little evidence that this was in decline before 1914 even though the fifth baronet, John William Ramsden, had had to yield to popular opinion and allow the building of Nonconformist chapels within the town's limits. Previously the family had prevented such construction: Salendine Nook Baptist Chapel, erected in 1739, and

Highfield Congregational Chapel (1772) were just two which were forced to be built out of the town.[21] Such obstinacy went hand in hand with a profound ignorance of the spiritual geography of the town. For example on one occasion John William Ramsden declared he was unready to endow a church organ at Paddock because the district, being wealthy, was "undeserving". It was not until Earl Fitzwilliam, with a finer knowledge of the town, informed him that "Paddock is not a place where the rich of Huddersfield reside - only poor to be found there", that the district got its organ.[22] Another incident that seriously soured relations between the family and the town was the tenant-right controversy of 1859-60, which concerned the security of tenure of certain leaseholders on Ramsden-owned land and involved a bitter debate, settled eventually by the House of Lords in the Ramsdens' favour in 1866.[23] The town's occasional expressions of welcome to members of the family, as at John William's coming-of-age in 1852, were generally no more than isolated gestures.

The Ramsden family also clashed with the newly-created Corporation. In 1868 the borough council sought, through Parliament, compulsory purchase powers to acquire certain manorial rights and to buy land for any improvements to the town. A lengthy legal battle ensued, during which Sir John Ramsden complained "how he consented to the Corporation being instituted, and how it was very unfair to take advantage of him and take his property away from him."[24] But the Corporation persisted and in 1876 succeeded in purchasing the market rights for £14,453, enabling the erection of the new market hall in 1880. Such successes, however, only reduced the Ramsdens' land holding negligibly

and Sir John continued to draw a very considerable income from the town. In 1895, Russell Smart, Labour's candidate for Huddersfield, estimated that Ramsden made around £120,000 per annum, a figure which inevitably aroused considerable working-class outcry[25], and in 1906 The Worker claimed that annual ground rent payable on public buildings alone totalled nearly £3,000.[26] By 1909 the Labour Party was claiming that Sir John was still making £100,000 per annum, but even this estimate paled beside the actual £180,000 revealed by an ex parte application to the courts in 1912; a figure, indeed, which exceeded the total rates raised by the borough council in 1911 by £5,575.[27] As one Liberal contemporary commented:

> here in this town can be seen working at highest pressure all the evils which result from monopoly power, the unproductive, or underproductive, retention of land for the purpose of speculative gain, together with penalties and checks on industry of the most oppressive nature.[28]

Nor was such criticism surprising, given that the Ramsdens put back into the town only a small fraction of what they gained from it, usually in the form of small public monuments, but occasionally by waiving rent, for instance on the town's first free library in 1898 and on the Castle Hill Tower in 1899 (to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee).[29] In essence, the Ramsden's landowning influence remained significantly undiminished until 1920 when the Corporation bought off the whole estate for £1.3m, finally severing the links between the town and the family.[30]

Yet if, by the 1880s, the direct political influence of the Ramsden family in Huddersfield had been replaced by a more insidious influence, then the political mantle was quickly assumed by a handful of nouveau riche families who gained their wealth mainly from the textile boom. Collectively these families represented an élite which exercised nearly as much political control before 1914 as the Ramsdens had formerly done. Indeed, amongst the older-established families only one continued to exercise political influence after the 1880s: the Beaumont family of Whitley Beaumont, which had had links with Huddersfield stretching back to 1323 and maintained extensive interests in farming land, railways and coal and lead mining.[31] However agricultural receipts had fallen sharply by the early 1880s, and continued to decline thereafter, while mineral rents were reduced by a geographical shift south-westerly, away from the old colliery districts.[32] Nevertheless Henry Frederick Beaumont, a Churchman educated at Eton and M.P. for the Colne Valley between 1885 and 1892, exercised political influence in Huddersfield through land ownership of outlying parts of the town. In 1880 he gave one such tract to the borough council for the creation of Beaumont Park and was rewarded in 1894 by being made a freeman.[33] He was, however, atypical amongst his contemporary political colleagues, betraying his allegiance to the old-style Whiggish landed tradition when he split with the Liberals over Home Rule and became (rather belatedly) a Liberal Unionist, retiring from politics in 1892.[34]

Increasingly it was the 'newer' families which became prominent. The Conservative ranks included the Brookes of Armitage Bridge, the Croslands and the Kayes. Amongst the Liberals, the Willans, Hirst, Crowther, Eastwood and Woodhead families exercised influence. Most on both sides had textile interests and between them employed a large proportion of the area's textile workforce. Reuben and William Hirst were self-made men and ran the largest cotton-spinning concern in the area. Baptists, they dominated Lockwood Liberal Club: Reuben was mayor of Huddersfield 1891-3, having been an original council member in 1868, while his brother William sat as councillor for North Ward until 1901. Joseph Crowther, a leading Liberal Congregationalist educated at Huddersfield College, had interests in seven major textile firms and probably employed more people than any other single manufacturer in the area[35]; while amongst the Conservatives, James Henry Kaye, a churchman who stood as Conservative candidate in Huddersfield in 1910, employed over 1,000 at his Broadfield Worsted Mills. Almost as large was George Crosland and Sons of Crosland Moor, headed by Joseph Crosland who stood as Conservative candidate on a number of occasions. The Croslands, like the Brookes, with whom they shared control of the Huddersfield Conservative Association, were slightly older-established families than their Liberal counterparts, but had only come to prominence and influence through textile wealth. A notable exception to the general rule was Joseph Woodhead, pillar of Gladstonian Liberalism in Huddersfield who, with his son Ernest, owned and ran the influential Huddersfield Examiner, the town's most potent political mouthpiece. Established in September 1851, the Examiner grew from a circulation of 1255 a week in 1853 to over 13,000

by 1885. Its rival, the Conservative Huddersfield Chronicle actually pre-dated the Examiner by one year but never equalled it either in circulation or reputation, and folded in 1916.[36] The extent to which the families as employers exerted direct political influence over their work people is difficult to ascertain and was always denied, but Patrick Joyce has suggested that deference was fairly extensive when it came to politics and church/chapel attendances, though this issue will be discussed in chapters three and four below.[37]

Yet if textile involvement was a common feature amongst the new family elite, similarity of worship was not. Religion was in Huddersfield, as elsewhere (see section four below), a crucial determinant of political affiliation and could transcend politics, as Edward Brooke recently remarked of his grandfather, Sir Thomas Brooke: "He would have been a Liberal but for the question of the Church"[38]. Religion and politics went hand in hand: Anglicanism with Conservatism, Nonconformity with Liberalism; and after 1886 it was rare that this was not the case. Indeed these links were forged and solidified, alongside entrepreneurial pre-eminence, through inter-marriage between the leading families. The Congregational Liberal Woodheads were linked by marriage to the Congregational Liberal Willans (albeit attending a different chapel) through the daughter of James Edward Willans, who was related to Henry Asquith.[39] The Brookes of Armitage Bridge cemented their political links with the Priestley family via Sir Thomas Brooke's marriage to the first daughter of James Priestley, president of the Chamber of Commerce and a leading Conservative Churchman. In turn, Edward Carlile of Meltham, whose yarn and thread interests

extended as far as Russia and Poland (where the firm had factories employing over 10,000 people each)[40]; ensured his political future by marrying his daughter into the Brooke family. He stood as Conservative candidate in the 1900 election in Huddersfield. Such family connections were surprisingly common and rarely crossed the barriers of religion and politics: witness also the marriage links between the engineering, Baptist, Liberal Hopkinsons and the Methodist Liberal dyers and finishers, the Walkers of Deighton.

Apart from dynastic aspirations, many of the leading families, both Liberal and Conservative, sought to exert direct political influence, very much as the Ramsdens had done, via political organisation. The extent to which the Brooke family controlled the Huddersfield Conservative Association (HCA) was remarkable. The eldest brother, Sir Thomas Brooke, who had stood unsuccessfully as Conservative candidate in Huddersfield in 1874, founded the Huddersfield Working Men's Conservative Association in 1867, reorganising and refinancing it after the 1880 general election.[41] Henceforth he and his brothers, William and John Arthur controlled and financed Conservative politics in Huddersfield until after 1914, with J.A. Brooke at the helm as President of the HCA from 1888 onwards and President of the Colne Valley Conservative Association until 1904. Outside party politics, the brothers between them dominated the Huddersfield Charity Organisation Society, the Huddersfield N.S.P.C.C., the local Volunteer battalion, the town's Church of England Temperance Society, and endowed two parish churches at Honley and Armitage Bridge, marrying

a daughter to the vicar of a third at Almondbury. They also maintained an influential involvement in the Chamber of Commerce, Huddersfield College, Huddersfield Infirmary, Almondbury Grammar School and the St. John Ambulance Brigade.[42]

The non-caucus character of the HCA, dependant as it was upon what, in the words of John Foster Fraser who stood as Conservative candidate in Huddersfield in 1906, "certain big-wigs in the locality are in favour of"[43]; differed theoretically from the 'democratic' Huddersfield Liberal Association (HLA). However, the wealthy Liberal family élites were just as influential in their own way in a Liberal "machinery of a make-believe democracy"[44]. The HLA tended to be broader based financially and was run by a caucus of 'Two Hundred' drawn from the district Liberal clubs. In practice, however, the executive of the HLA frequently ignored ward feeling and was slow to reflect attitudes: for example during the Home Rule crisis. Individuals like Joseph Woodhead, as President between 1880-93, exercised dominant influence. Apart from his press voice he was also long-standing president of the Huddersfield Temperance Society, a major supporter of Disestablishment and founder of the Huddersfield Mechanics Institute. His wife was the leading light in the Women's Liberal Association (established in 1888) and the Women's Temperance Society, while his son Ernest was President of Marsh Liberal Club, a key figure in the Junior Liberal Association, and president of the Commercial Temperance League, the Huddersfield Temperance League and the Band of Hope Union.

By the 1880's, therefore, new family élites had largely replaced the direct political influence of the Ramsdens. Textile manufacturing wealth had by and large replaced landed wealth as the main determinant of influence and was reflected in the occupational composition of the Huddersfield Borough Council.[45] The power structure was by no means completely monolithic and a handful of working-class men like Owen Balmforth did rise to the higher political echelons, but generally certain key men dictated political policy, as Blewett has succinctly noted: "Too often in the urban constituencies of the North the local organisations were closed and complacent coteries of traditional notables"[46]. In the case of the Liberal Party this was to have serious implications for the rise of the demand for independent Labour representation.

3. The Industrial Framework

Although it is true that by 1851 Bradford was "undisputably the worsted textile capital of the world"[47], specialising in woolcombing, yarn spinning and worsted dress goods for women; in the production of high-quality fine worsted cloth Huddersfield had emerged as the clear international leader. In 1887 the Examiner observed that "the qualities of the worsted fabrics made in this district have now arrived at such a degree of excellence that for gentleman's wear it is on all hands admitted that they hold the field unchallenged"[48]; and twenty-five years later on the eve of the Great War it could still remark that "the Huddersfield area still holds a position of pre-eminence for cloth manufacture"[49]. In the interim the industry had not been bereft

of problems, but Huddersfield's pre-eminence enabled it to pay consistently higher wages than elsewhere in the West Riding, thereby significantly minimising labour unrest, and enabled the town to weather the threats of foreign competition and American protection from the 1890s surprisingly well.

A combination of factors lay behind the development of textiles in Huddersfield. One historian has commented that it was:

> the national disadvantages of the region, the vigorous and rainy climate, the barren, shallow soil, the great moors and wastes, that first compelled a scanty population to turn to the raising of cattle and sheep and to the wearing of home-grown wool.[50]

Furthermore, the plentiful supply of good water and an abundance of coal nearby all enabled the industry to grow very rapidly from 1760 onwards with the advent of machinery, steam and the canals. Yet even after the introduction of machinery and the rapid mechanisation of the cotton industry just over the Pennines, textiles in Huddersfield remained for a time basically domestic, changing little from its domestic origins in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and centering on the yeoman clothier who supplied outworkers with the raw materials to weave in their own cottages: "the coming of machinery and power had neither convulsed nor disorganised the domestic industry"[51]. It was only really from the 1820s that the yeoman clothiers turned merchant-manufacturers and began to amalgamate the existing three branches of the industry (miller, clothier and merchant) under one roof. Even then hand-loom weaving and cottage work remained

an important element of the industry for some decades, as Clapham noted: "In 1866 the hand-weavers managed about a quarter of the looms in the trade; they still had some importance twenty years later"[52].

In Huddersfield by the 1880s, however, factories and mills predominated: in 1892, for example, there were in the area 1,947 factories and 1,870 workshops registered with the factory inspector.[53] In the rebuilding of the town the Market Square had superseded the neglected Cloth Hall as the focus of textiles in the town: of the 500 woollen merchants and manufacturers registered in White's Directory of Trade in 1881 eighty-four were to be found in or near the Market Square.[54] Mill building mushroomed along the banks of the Colne and Holme rivers which met in Huddersfield, and, after the construction of the reservoirs, along the main thoroughfares also. In terms of their size the complex nature of fine worsted production rendered the mills generally smaller than those in Bradford and the Heavy Woollen District. In 1907 Clapham found a maximum of 2,000 spindles per spinning mill in Huddersfield compared with 4,000 in Bradford. Similarly in weaving the maximum number of looms in Huddersfield firms was below twenty-five: in Bradford it was between 175 and 200.[55] Very large mills like the Martin family's Wellington Mills at Lindley, which employed as many as 1,700 were exceptional[56] and none in Huddersfield was as large as Lister's Manningham Mills in Bradford which had at its height over 5,000 employees.

Individual family ownership was a persistent factor and with relatively small mills all the indications are that worker deference was fairly

extensive. During the 1910 elections, for example, the Conservative candidate, Harold Smith, held a mill-yard meeting at which the firm's master, Ernest Learoyd, addressed his workers commenting that he viewed "with the greatest anxiety" the future employment prospects of the firm under Free Trade. "If", however, "they should be fortunate enough to get an alteration of that system he should look forward to a prospering trade for a long time to come"[57]. Such political pressure, as with the victimisation of trade unionists following the 1883 strike (see below), was rarely so overt and there is, of course, no way of directly assessing its effect. Nevertheless employers frequently went out of their way to build and cultivate common ties of interest with their workers, usually through the rituals of mill outings, presentations and occasional bonus schemes, of which there is evidence in the local press.[58]

Yet if family ownership could restrict self-expression, it also provided the continuity of skill and tradition essential to the success of the Huddersfield textile industry. As one manufacturer remarked whilst giving evidence to the Tariff Commission in 1905: "The trade is almost hereditary in Huddersfield. It goes from father to son; they seem to have special knowledge which almost descends ... [Huddersfield] manufacturers and workpeople are the cleverest in woollen and worsted manufacture in the world"[59]. Indeed the evolution of Huddersfield fine worsteds for men's suitings owed much to the ingenuity of a handful of families of designers like the Etchells and the Martins.[60] Equally, however, the workforce showed a stability that was less evident in Bradford, where there was a massive influx of immigrant labour, mainly Irish.[61] As shall be seen Huddersfield's Irish

population was relatively small, though not insignificant, and this had much to do with the skilled nature of the town's textile industry and the paucity of the unskilled end, especially woolcombing.

Successful and prosperous as Huddersfield had become, there was evidence in the 1880s of a feeling of complacency settling into the industry. Not only were the sons of the wealthy manufacturers being sent south for their education, rather than working their way through the firm, but there was an unreadiness by manufacturers in the town to exhibit and advertise their products abroad.[62] Only when the American McKinley protective tariff began to bite in the 1890s and German competition became serious did Huddersfield manufacturers realise that an unrivalled fine worsted trade alone was not sufficient to cushion the town's industry from the unemployment and economic distress resultant from the depression of the town's woollen industry.

Yet despite the problems of the 1890s employment in the textile industry in Huddersfield increased substantially between 1881 and 1911, almost doubling during that period as table 1.2 shows.

Table 1.2 Textile Employment in Huddersfield 1881-1911

Year	Woollen and Worsteds			Other[1]			Total	% of Population
1881	Male 2436) Female 5671)	8107		Male 2208) Female 1518)	3726		11833	14.5
1891	Male 8473) Female 7088)	15561		Male 1457) Female 1505)	2962		18523	19.4
1901	Male 6697) Female 6330)	13027		Male 2547) Female 2632)	5179		18206	19.2
1911	Male 8641) Female 8085)	16726		Male 2442) Female 2184)	4626		21352	19.8

[1] Includes cotton, silk, flax, hemp, felt and carpet workers.

Source: Census returns, 1881-1911.

Part of this increase was due to the growth in worsted production in the 1880s but diversification into tweeds was another factor. After 1891 textile employment as a proportion of Huddersfield's population remained roughly constant, picking up slightly around 1905-6 and 1909-12 when trade with the United States improved.[63] One notable aspect of the table is that the number of male workers exceeded the number of female workers. Huddersfield, indeed, was the only large textile town in the West Riding where this was the case.[64] Traditionally the industry across the country was female dominated: in 1904 there were 152,803 female to 108,998 males employed in the British woollen textile industry.[65] The contrary trend in Huddersfield was almost certainly due to the fact that worsted spinning, usually dominated by women and girls, was only a small part of the town's total industry, and that an unusually high proportion of men were employed as weavers, especially relevant as weaving was by far the largest branch of the Huddersfield trade.[66] In local cotton spinning, very much a subsidiary textile sector in Huddersfield, the more familiar male-female ratios applied with 695 men and 1,339 women employed in 1911.[67]

Textiles clearly constituted the major employer in Huddersfield: in 1901 37.8% of the working population.[68] Yet this was a lower proportion than in Bradford which was less industrially-diversified than Huddersfield. In 1901 building and construction workers numbered 2,953 in Huddersfield with engineering and machine making just behind with 2,685.[69] By 1911 the chemical industry was making a mark as a significant employer with 1,087 workers, by which time engineering

had increased its workforce to 3,508.[70] In both these sectors it was large family firms that predominated: in engineering was Broadbents of Lower Queen Street, Hopkinsons of Birkby, and David Browns of Crosland Moor which successfully cornered the market for cast-iron gears and went on to build a highly profitable vehicle business.[71] In chemicals Read Holliday was innovative in developing an array of new coloured dyestuffs which proved essential for the popularity of Huddersfield fancy waistcoatings. When he died in 1889 Hollidays of Deighton was "at the heart of a thriving chemical industry"[72]. The firm later became British Dyes and in 1926 amalgamated with Brunner Mond, Nobell Industries and United Alkali to become part of Imperial Chemical Industries.

Despite the problems American protection and foreign competition posed to the West Riding woollen and worsted industry, lowering levels of employment and forcing down wages, in turn leading to a rise of strike action in the 1880s and 1890s; Huddersfield remained remarkably aloof, maintaining relative industrial passivity compared with the ructions evident in Leeds, Bradford and Halifax. This passivity was to be an important factor in the backwardness and lack of electoral success of the Labour Party in Huddersfield later on, and there are several explanations for it. One already noted was the preponderance in the Huddersfield trade of small scale, family-run industrial units which tended to maximise worker deference and hampered trade union growth. But perhaps more important as a determinant of industrial relations in the town's textile industry in the period up to 1914 was the Huddersfield weavers' strike of 1883, described by one historian as:

> a conflict so prolonged, so intense, and affecting interests so great, having indirect consequences so momentous - I refer more particularly to the formation of the local Labour Party - that it is not without justification that the conflict is still referred to emphatically as THE Weavers' Strike.[73]

The issues surrounding the strike were complex[74] but briefly concerned a uniform pay scale the employers were attempting to introduce. The skilled weavers, led by the small and newly-formed West Yorkshire Weavers' Association, suspected the 'Chinese Puzzle' (as they termed the new scale) to be a manufacturers' scheme to increase production through speeding up, but one which held no benefit for the weavers themselves. The scale was therefore opposed and by 14 March 1883 over two thousand weavers in the Huddersfield area had struck work, bringing out many of their fellow workers in other departments and consequently causing "the stoppage of most mills in the town and district"[75]. Lasting eight weeks, it was undoubtedly the worst dispute Huddersfield's textile industry was ever to face. So it was all the more significant that it ended in defeat for the weavers and widespread employer victimisation of the strike leaders. On the positive side the strike had consolidated the existence of the Weavers' Union, which had been formed in August 1881 out of the strike fund of the January 1881 Newsome strike. Led by Albert Shaw, the union earned considerable kudos from the struggle and, despite internal wrangling and recrimination, re-organised along Lancashire lines after the strike, renaming itself the Huddersfield and District Power-Loom Weavers' and Woollen Operatives' Association.[76] Moreover, the 1883

strike had seen the rise to prominence of Allen Gee, who was to play a major role in labour politics both in Huddersfield and nationally. It was his emotive oratory during the 1883 strike and the resultant shift of his allegiance from Liberalism, that paved the way for his involvement in the 1890-91 Manningham Mills Strike and subsequently the creation of the Bradford, Huddersfield and Colne Valley Labour Unions.[77]

Yet despite the firm establishment of a reasonably broad-based textile union and the heightened consciousness that the strike had brought, levels of unionisation in Huddersfield remained lamentably low. Even after the fillip of the 'New Unionism' of the late 1880s, Allen Gee remarked to the Royal Commission on Labour in 1891 that only some 2,000 weavers of about 9,000 eligible in the Huddersfield district were in a union, though he noted that "It is very badly organised, but it has been considerably better during the last two years"[78]. However, the Huddersfield weavers were amongst the best organised of workers in the industry, and Gee's figure of 22 per cent unionisation was exceptionally high. In the West Riding textile industry generally, Keith Laybourn has estimated that union membership was extremely low, fluctuating from 1.7 per cent in 1885 to 5 per cent in 1900, with a peak of 10 per cent in the 1890s.[79] Having said that it does seem likely from contemporary opinion, notably that of Gee and Turner, that trade union organisation in Huddersfield was far better than in Halifax which was "hopeless", Keighley which was "blackleg", Bradford which was "the most heartbreaking", and Leeds which was "the worst organised of the lot"[80]. Even so, although general levels of textile

unionisation in Huddersfield may have been among the highest in the West Riding, overall unionisation in the town remained low. Trades Council union affiliation in 1895, bearing in mind that there were invariably non-affiliated unions, revealed that 3.1 per cent of Huddersfield's population were union members compared to 6.3 per cent in Yorkshire generally.[81] By 1900 more accurate figures from the Board of Trade suggest that this figure had risen to 4.4 per cent of the town's population (or 8.3 per cent of the working population)[82]. Although this was higher than 2.6 per cent of the Colne Valley's population who were union members, it was less than the 5.75 per cent national average and far lower than the reported sixty-two per cent unionisation in Lancashire.[83]

This relatively low level of union membership in Huddersfield had two consequences. Firstly, it limited militant trade union action and frequently delayed recognition by textile employers of trade unions per se. As Turner observed of the 1883 strike, the masters had "never liked the independent tone of the Weavers' Union officials" and ten years later the predominant attitude of Liberal leaders like Joseph Woodhead was still anti-union.[84] Recruitment campaigns during the 1890s did, as we shall see, augment membership, but calls for strike action were frequently ignored, even by the minority of textile workers who were union members.[85] This made for a thirty-year period of relatively peaceful industrial relations in the Huddersfield trade between 1883 and 1913. However, a secondary consequence of weak trade unionism was that the search by a frustrated union leadership and by socialists for a way of improving working-class wages, conditions and

representation invariably took on a political rather than an industrial form, at least in the period up to 1906-10. Indeed this may assist in explaining the strength of Labour politics in the West Riding, compared with Lancashire where unionisation was high but where Labour was electorally less successful.[86] However, there is the paradox that trade unionism in Huddersfield, albeit relatively weak, was clearly in the forefront of fashioning and financing the Huddersfield ILP, and in promoting its electoral significance after 1903.

Another reason for both the industrial passivity of the period and the general apathy towards trade unionism, was wage levels in the district. Although average pay in Huddersfield woollens and worsteds had dropped following the defeat of 1883, thereafter it continued in an upward direction and was consistently much higher than the rest of the West Riding trade, even exceeding average Lancashire cotton wages which were notoriously greater than their Yorkshire counterparts (as table 1.3 indicates).[87]

To a certain degree these high wage levels were a result of the lower proportion of female workers in Huddersfield than was usual in West Riding textiles: Allen Gee pointed out in 1891 that women could expect to earn between 15 per cent and 55 per cent less than men, the averages being 24s per week for men and 16s for women.[88] But it is evident that women workers in Huddersfield earned more than women elsewhere in the industry.[89]

Table 1.3 Average Weekly Earnings of Woollen and Cotton Operatives, 1871-1906

	Wool and Worsted					Cotton
	Halifax	Bradford	Leeds	Batley & Dewsbury	Huddersfield	Lancashire & Cheshire
Year	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1871	11 11	13 8	14 4	16 5	16 5	14 5
1874	-	16 8	17 11	18 1	18 2	15 4
1877	13 0	14 2	-	18 1	20 2	16 0
1880	11 1	12 8	15 9	18 1	18 10	14 10
1886	10 10	12 9	16 1	16 10	16 9	15 6
1891	-	12 9	-	14 9	17 2	15 2
1896	-	12 10	-	-	17 8	17 0
1900	-	13 0	14 4	16 5	18 2	17 4
1906	13 00	13 11	15 11	17 11	20 1	19 7

Source: Willmott, H., "The 'Labour Unrest' and the Woollen Trades", Socialist Review, November 1910, p.212.

Although wage levels in Huddersfield were consistently high by West Riding standards, by 1910, price increases were beginning to reduce the level of real wages and it was this that the union was able to exploit in order to increase membership from 3,990 in 1910 to 7,140 by 1913.[90] Moreover, after an aborted attempt in 1911-12 the union was successful in 1913 in establishing a new wage scale, the first since 1883.

4. Religion

It is a truism that the ebbing of religious Nonconformity between the 1870s and the First World War was inextricably linked in one way or another with the changing fortunes of Liberalism. In 1958 Glaser observed that:

> the decline of Nonconformity had as an inevitable consequence the decline of Liberalism ... the gradual loss of the Liberal Party's practical political strength and, more important, the loss of the religious ethos and moral passion which had distinguished English Liberalism in its creative golden age.[91]

Nor have subsequent studies attempted to undermine either this or the basic identification of Anglicanism with Conservatism and Nonconformity as the 'conscience' and 'back-bone' of the Liberal Party.[92] More debate, however, has surrounded the extent to which religion was being replaced by class before 1914 as the main determinant of political affiliation, and how far it was relatively declining levels of Nonconformist chapel attendance, rather than a wholesale political defection of Nonconformists to Toryism, that accounted for Liberalism's decline.[93]

The first traces of Nonconformity in Huddersfield date back to the year of the Act of Toleration when in October 1689 a Baptist meeting house was established at Salendine Nook, just outside the town to the west. Fifty years later the congregation of eleven built a proper chapel and by 1795 137 were regularly attending, during which time a second chapel had been founded at Lockwood (1790) followed by others at Milnsbridge

(1842), Oakes (1864) and New North Road (1878).[94] Yet although the Baptists can claim to be the originators of religious dissent in Huddersfield it was Methodism, and Wesleyan Methodism in particular, that gained and maintained the most support.

John Wesley had visited Huddersfield on several occasions between 1757 and 1761 during which time he had befriended Henry Venn, Evangelical vicar of Huddersfield, who allowed him to use his pulpit.[95] Such cordial relations did not, however, continue and in 1775 the first Wesleyan chapel had been erected at Old Bank, near the town centre, on land owned by the Hirsts, the prominent Liberal cotton spinning family.[96] Other chapels ensued and in 1845 two circuits were constituted: Buxton Road and Queen Street, followed later by a third, Gledholt. By 1893 there were twenty Wesleyan chapels in the borough, plus an additional twenty-two chapels belonging to the other Methodist sections.[97]

Numerically Methodism remained the predominant form of Nonconformity in Huddersfield into the 1920s[98], but it was Congregationalism, and to a lesser extent Unitarianism, which exercised the most influence in politics and society. Highfield Congregational Chapel, opened in January 1772 in New North Road had been a reaction to the anti-evangelical approach of Venn's successor as Vicar of Huddersfield, Holcar Crook, and was for many years a powerhouse of political influence.[99] The Reverend Robert Bruce (1829-1908), minister at Highfield from 1854 until 1904, was a towering figure of national Congregationalism as chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1888, and a representative of the denomination at international councils. He was president of the Yorkshire

Congregational Union in 1881 and of the West Riding Congregational Union; and in Huddersfield he inaugurated and presided over the town's first Free Church Council. As a fervent Liberal of the "old school" he was a leading member of the Huddersfield Liberal Association's 'Two Hundred' and a frequent hustings orator. For twenty-one years he represented Liberalism on the School Board (for nine years as chairman) and set the whole tone for education in the town. With a Nonconformist majority behind him he enabled eleven new schools to be built between 1873 and 1880, catering for 8,778 children.[100] Whilst minister at Highfield he increased membership from around 200 in 1854 to 350 in 1904, attracting to the chapel men of influence like Joseph Woodhead, William Willans, Wright Mellor, Thomas Denham, Alfred Sykes and Fred Crosland.[101] Few chapels in the town included so many of the local élite under one roof, and much of the credit for this was due to Robert Bruce.[102]

By 1885, although Highfield's influence remained very considerable, other, less élitist Congregational chapels had opened. In 1824 William Willans had been a moving force behind the establishment of Ramsden Street, described by Clyde Binfield as "a young man's church in a young man's town"[103], and prominent members, many of them Liberal textile manufacturers, included John Moody, William Wrigley, Charles Henry Jones, Charles Vickerman, William Shaw and William Dawson.[104] Hillhouse chapel, again Willans-financed, followed in 1865 in response to the town's growth since the 1850s.[105] Finally in 1885, after a religious controversy at Ramsden Street which had resulted in the barring by the Court of Chancery of a number of the congregation,

Milton Church was established. Led by the Reverend Stannard, the chapel had an extremely influential following, many of whom had defected from Highfield and Ramsden Street, notably the Willans, Hirst, Woodhead and Eastwood families.[106] Milton's approach was far more 'populist' than the two other main Congregationalist chapels: it organised sports clubs, musical events and conversaziones, and was significantly the first chapel to inaugurate the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon movement (PSA) in the area as a means of regaining flagging working-class attendance.[107]

By 1893 although Huddersfield Congregationalism had grown to nine chapels it was not to be the town's "folk religion" and never rivalled Methodism in terms of levels of adherence. Nor for that matter did Unitarianism. The first Unitarian chapel in Huddersfield was Fitzwilliam Street, opened in 1854, but before then Unitarians had met in halls in Westgate and Bath Buildings.[108] The most notable minister at Fitzwilliam Street during our period was Ramsden Balmforth who figured very prominently in the early Labour movement in Huddersfield, winning notoriety by heading the School Board poll as a Labour candidate in January 1892.[109] Unitarianism in Huddersfield belied its national élite following and appealed to a broad political spectrum, from Balmforth and other socialists[110] through radical Liberals like Owen Balmforth[111] to men like Walter Haigh who was a Conservative free trader.[112] Other men of influence in the congregation included the manufacturer Herbert Shaw and S.C. Potts who was Borough Accountant during the 1880s. Apart from the chapel's links with Socialism it maintained close contact with the Huddersfield Secular Society.[113]

Initially the Anglican and Catholic churches were slow to respond both to the emergence of a strong and increasingly influential Nonconformity drawing its support from the 'nouveau riche' textile manufacturing class, and Huddersfield's urbanisation and population increase. In 1813 the curate of Huddersfield, Rev. William Harding, had written to the Church Missionary Society that "The state of the Church here is truly painful. We have a population of 8,000 and only one church and every seat in it is private property. The consequence is that the body of Dissenters and Methodists is very great"[114]. Trinity Church was the response, opened in 1818 and enlarged in 1825, followed by a new church at Woodhouse in 1824 and St. Paul's in the town centre in 1829. From the 1830s recovery was well under way, assisted by grants from Parliament and endowments from local families like the Starkey family, millowners at Longroyd Bridge, who built St. Thomas's in 1859. Most importantly a new parish church, designed by the Pritchett family, was opened in 1836. By 1873 the Nonconformist could report that there was an Establishment proportion of church accommodation of 34.8 per cent[115], which reflected the advance made since the beginning of the century when there were scarcely 1,000 seats to go round a population of 7,200. Nevertheless, as a result of continued chapel building into the 1880s, Anglican accommodation had declined slightly by 1893 to 30.2 per cent of total accommodation.[116]

In contrast to Nonconformity and Anglicanism, Catholicism in Huddersfield was never numerically very important and until 1914 had only two churches in the town: St. Patrick (1832) and St. Joseph (1895), plus a mission at Queen Street South; though these were large

churches and would celebrate a large number of masses every Sunday. St. Patrick's was the leading church of the two, built and extended not only by the Catholic community itself, but also by a number of local Protestant businessmen "because they valued the Irish labour and realised that a fine new church would help keep their new workpeople in Huddersfield."[117]

This indicates not only, as Steele has remarked, that "Irish was virtually synonymous with Catholic"[118] but also that employers had benefited from the cheap Irish labour that had arrived in Huddersfield to work in the burgeoning textile trade, often as woolcombers, and later as railway construction workers.[119] Yet the level of Irish immigration to Huddersfield was never as great as in other textile towns in the West Riding (see table 1.4), partially because there was

Table 1.4 Huddersfield's Irish-Born Population Compared to other West Riding Towns, 1851-1901

	1851	% Pop.	1881	% Pop.	1901	% Pop.
Huddersfield	1,957	5	1,462	1.8	799	0.8
Halifax	2,686	7	2,587	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Leeds	8,533	23	9,560	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Bradford	9,581	26	7,870	4.3	4,294	1.5

Sources: Decennial Censuses, 1851-1901; Richardson, C., "Irish Settlement in Mid-Nineteenth Century Bradford", Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research, May 1968.

less unskilled work in the Huddersfield trade than in towns like Bradford. Nevertheless, small and relatively integrated though the Irish Catholic community was in Huddersfield, it exercised an important voting power because of the narrow margin between the Liberals and Conservatives. Jackson has remarked how well-organised the Irish vote was in Britain before 1914[120] and this was true in Huddersfield, where in 1886 the Irish League boasted that, other than removals and deaths, all its 625 voters (4.2 per cent of the electorate) had been to the polls.[121] Thereafter the restricted franchise and deaths amongst the Irish-born had reduced the number of 'Irish' voters in the town to 399 (2.6 per cent) by 1893.[122] But regardless of this, political contenders in Huddersfield persisted in taking the Irish Catholic vote very seriously, as witnessed by Labour's attempts to woo it in 1906.[123] Moreover, the community's political and spiritual leader, Canon Stephen Dolan of St. Patrick's, continued to exercise extensive influence until his death in 1913, during which time he sat as a member of the School Board (1883-95), of the Education Committee (1903-12) and of the Board of Guardians.[124]

*

By the early 1890s the church and chapel building drive of the previous century was over: the extent of religious accommodation in Huddersfield, as summarised in table 1.5, remained little changed before 1914. Religion, politics and economic interests had, with few exceptions, lined up solidly: Anglicanism with Conservatism, Nonconformity with Liberalism. Yet increasingly the concern was not the competing levels of religious provision in the town, or even

Table 1.5 Churches and Chapels in the County Borough of Huddersfield, December 1893

Denomination	Total No. Churches/Chapels	Total Accommodation
Church of England	29	14,272
Wesleyan Methodist	20	9,365
Congregational	9	6,110
Free Wesleyan and Methodist Free	10	4,250
Methodist New Connexion	8	4,550
Primitive Methodist	4	940
Baptist	7	4,350
Unitarian	1	200
Roman Catholic	2	1,050
Spiritualists	1	400
Plymouth Brethren	2	290
Friends	1	250
Swedenborgians	1	250
Salvation Army	1	200
Christian Army	1	200
Christian Brethren	1	180
Rock Mission	1	150
Christadelphians	1	100
Catholic Apostolic	1	100
Labour Church	1	100

Source: Huddersfield Wesleyan Methodist Church, Tabulated Statement as to Provision for Religious Worship in Huddersfield, (Huddersfield, 1893).

religious rivalries, so much as the problems of declining attendance and changing attitudes towards worship, especially amongst the working classes.

It now seems clear that Nonconformist attendance continued to increase numerically until just before the Great War but that it was declining relative to the population increase of the period. Gilbert, for example, has shown how total Methodist membership (the largest body of Nonconformists) declined as a percentage of the adult English population from four per cent in 1886 to 3.2 per cent in 1914.[125] Congregational and Baptist adherence experienced a similar trend, though all saw a slight rise in real terms around 1906 and this can be associated with the Liberal electoral landslide of that year.[126] Yet if Nonconformist attendance was declining with the fortunes of national Liberalism on the one hand; on the other the Established Church seemed to grow both numerically and relatively in the period 1881-1914, with growth relative to population only falling off around 1911. Roman Catholic adherence similarly increased in real terms.[127]

Precisely how these national trends affected Huddersfield is extremely difficult to ascertain due to the acute dearth of religious statistics. The only comprehensive religious survey ever made was in 1851 and its usefulness and accuracy has been the subject of much debate.[128] Nevertheless it does reveal that on Sunday, 30 March 1851 around 17,000 out of a population in Huddersfield of 30,880 (59.6 per cent) attended church or chapel, of whom 52.8 per cent were Nonconformist (around

8,900 in all).[129] Indeed Huddersfield's "index of religious attendance", at 59.6 per cent, was the sixteenth highest of all towns in the country and the fourth best attended industrial town (beating Leeds' 47.4 per cent, Bradford's 42.7 per cent and Halifax's 41.4 per cent). However, it was only the thirteenth most Nonconformist town, well behind Bradford (third) and Leeds (seventh); and Anglican attendance in Huddersfield was only slightly below the national average.[130] This suggests that in 1851 at least, Huddersfield clearly had a significant Nonconformist presence but was not as strongly Nonconformist as Bradford or Leeds. Moreover, by the early 1890s there is evidence that Huddersfield Nonconformity was following the national trends of relative decline.

In 1893 a confidential report on church provision in Huddersfield commented that:

> the complacent remark 'I do my best in the pulpit whether there be 50 or 500' is not sufficient to free us as a class of Ministers .... from all blame in the matter of enfeebled congregations while we have such commodious and well arranged premises only one third filled.[131]

In the absence of any religious statistics of a general nature after 1851 such impressionistic evidence is extremely valuable, especially if we wish to link declining Liberalism with declining Nonconformity. Applying the one third attendance estimate to total Nonconformist accommodation in 1893 gives us 9,800 or 10.3 per cent of Huddersfield's

1891 population and this marks a substantial relative decline from 1851's figure of 8,900 or 28.8 per cent of the population. Nor is the 1893 figure unrealistic: it can be partially checked using Wesleyan attendance figures published in the local press. The 1896 Wesleyan return of members revealed a total membership of 3,099.[132] If we take the impressionistic one third again and apply it to total Wesleyan accommodation in the same year the figure is 3,121: a discrepancy of only twenty-two. Admittedly this is only one isolated example but it does suggest that if we have to rely on impressionistic evidence then it may not be as inaccurate as we might suspect. Indeed, the above figures, taken with Kinnear's findings that there were 6,602 Nonconformists in Huddersfield in 1922 (or 5.5 per cent of the 1921 population)[133]; render a three-point scale which on balance reflects Gilbert's national trends of relative Nonconformist decline.

Many of the specific reasons for this decline, in that they relate to the state of Liberalism, will be examined in chapter four, but in general terms it is fairly clear that by and large the urban working-class adult, had relatively little formal contact with church or chapel, and what there was declined as the century progressed.[134] This is borne out by Inglis' comments on the 1851 census and by subsequent contemporary testimony, especially in the 1890s, when the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon movement (PSA) was conceived as a self-confessed and temporarily successful attempt to regain working-class attendance, at a time when alternative weekend leisure pursuits, like cycling and rambling, were becoming both more available and affordable, and more socially acceptable.[135] Nevertheless if working-class

adults did not formally attend worship their lives were frequently touched by religion in indirect ways, for example through education, temperance or improvement societies. As Alan Ainsworth has commented of Lancashire: "Religion among the working class of late nineteenth century Lancashire may well have been more pervasive, and more widely accepted than is usually assumed."[136] Moreover, attendance by working-class children, for whatever reasons, at some form of religious auxiliary, be it Sunday School or Band of Hope, was relatively common.[137] Indeed for adults escaping from the "black clothes, kid gloves, talk silk hats and long faces"[138] of church or chapel, temperance may well have been a more frequent everyday manifestation of Nonconformity.

Temperance in Huddersfield was a major political and social force. The Huddersfield Temperance Society, established in March 1832 and based on a pledge of moderation, becoming one of total abstinence in July 1834[139], had begun as a joint Nonconformist - Church of England venture, but by the 1860s a schism had occurred and the Church of England broke away to form its own society. Concern that the young should be educated early to the evils of drink resulted in the Huddersfield Temperance Society's Band of Hope (1850) which recruited children from the working class and later comprised the nucleus of the Huddersfield and District Band of Hope Union. At its peak in 1904 the Union had over 12,000 members, representing eighty individual bands.[140] Similar membership figures for the Temperance Society are not available but it is clear that it was a substantial and influential body, including amongst its members notables like the Woodheads,

Alderman G.W. Hellawell, William Jepson and Thomas Mellor.[141] From the late 1870s the society owned Victoria Temperance Hall in Buxton Road, moving to Princess Street in 1901, and in October 1890 a Temperance Club opened its doors to 300 members. Perhaps the most important aspect of the society's activities, however, was its summer programme of meetings in the Market Square which began in 1836 and became a regular feature of the town. This direct approach, supplemented by the society's coffee-carts and the advent of several temperance hotels, ensured that the issue remained foremost in the minds of the Huddersfield people.[142]

5. The Political Background

The parliamentary constituency of Huddersfield was created in 1832 and in December of that year 415 of the 608 registered electors, out of a population of some 19,000, turned out to return Captain Lewis Fenton, a Whig, as the town's first M.P.[143] The 1867 Reform Act, which nationally added one million town labourers to the franchise, increased Huddersfield's electorate to 1,900 and after incorporation in 1868 the parliamentary borough was extended slightly. The 1884 Reform Act brought the parliamentary electorate in the town to nearly 15,000 but the constituency failed to win its case for a second seat under the 1885 Redistribution of Seats Act, which created the neighbouring Colne Valley constituency, and was to remain throughout our period one of the largest single seat constituencies in the country.[144] The boundaries of the parliamentary constituency remained unchanged between 1885 and 1914, and although the municipal constituency was slightly

larger than the parliamentary one, following the attainment of County Borough status in 1888, it was only by a handful of votes and is negligible for the purposes of comparison.[145]

In general the levels of enfranchisement in Huddersfield before 1914 seem to reflect the findings of recent research. Blewett found that 59 per cent of all adult males were enfranchised in 1911[146], while Matthew, McKibbin and Kay reached a national average of 59.8 per cent in boroughs and 69.9 per cent in counties.[147] In Huddersfield, from census returns and the electoral register we find that in 1892 61.1 per cent of all adult males possessed the vote in parliamentary elections.[148] This had increased slightly to 63.7 per cent in 1900 but dropped again in 1910 to 59.8 per cent, which corresponds broadly to the national average figures, especially given that there were no plural voters in Huddersfield.[149] Not only were around 40 per cent of all men excluded from voting in parliamentary elections in Huddersfield before 1918 but also all women. Expressed as a percentage of the town's total adult population, parliamentary voters represented only 27.8 per cent in 1892 and 27.1 per cent in 1910.[150] A projection of the 1918 Representation of the People Act on Huddersfield's 1900 and 1910 parliamentary electorate is illuminating in showing just how undemocratic the franchise was between 1884 and 1918. The 1918 act enfranchised all men over 21 and women over 30: in 1900 in Huddersfield this would have meant an electorate of 48,894 (51.4 per cent of the population), whereas the actual figure was 16,770 (17.6 per cent of the population). In 1910 the projection yields 59,520 (55.2 per cent of the population) compared with the actual

19,021 (17.6 per cent).[151] More importantly, however, in terms of the class profile of the electorate, was the fact that the majority of those excluded from voting before 1918 seem to have been working class by virtue of the residential qualification and the complexities of the registration requirements.[152] It can, therefore, be argued that Labour's pre-war progress was stemmed because its natural support simply did not possess the vote.[153]

The merits of this argument and the extent to which Liberalism was retaining working-class support prior to 1914 will be considered later, but recent research has alighted upon municipal election results as an indicator of shifts in partisan allegiance.[154] Interestingly the municipal franchise was marginally more democratic than its parliamentary counterpart. In November 1910, for example, 22,269 were entitled to vote in Huddersfield's municipal elections, compared with 19,021 in the parliamentary elections of that year.[155] It can therefore be seen in some ways as a more accurate indication of party trends at a local level than the infrequent parliamentary elections, though there are the difficulties of lower municipal turnouts and the influence of local issues and personalities over party allegiance.[156] Nevertheless municipal election results are interesting in that they included women voters: an estimated 4,000 or so in 1910.[157] Indeed women were entitled to stand for election to the Council, though there was only one such candidate in Huddersfield before 1914: Mrs Julia Glaisyer, a member of the Education Committee and president of the Women's Liberal Association, who was twice defeated in South Central ward in 1910 and 1912 in straight fights against sitting Conservatives.[158]

The suitability of women to stand for public office and vote was much debated between 1900 and 1914, but despite the efforts of the Women's Liberal Association (formed in 1888), the Huddersfield branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Socities (May 1904) and the Huddersfield Women's Social and Political Union (December 1906)[159], very little progress had been made by 1910. In July of that year Mrs J. Stuttard, secretary of the HWLA, speaking in support of Shackleton's Women's Suffrage Bill at the Women's Liberal Federation, reported that there were in Huddersfield no women councillors, only two women doctors, only two women on an Education Committee of twenty-one, twelve women Guardians out of over forty, three women on the pensions committee and three on the distress committee.[160] Outside the HWLA, the NUWSS and the WSPU, women exercised virtually no direct political influence in any of the three parties in Huddersfield before 1914, nor indeed in any of the major trade unions.

As the Huddersfield constituency stood in 1885 it was roughly a diamond in shape, bordered by the constituencies of the Colne Valley to the south-west, Elland and Spen Valley to the north, Dewsbury to the East, and Holmfirth to the east and south. Huddersfield has been classified by Blewett as "urban mainly working-class"[161] but from the number of domestic servants and the average number of people per house, it was in fact marginally more 'middle-class' than was typical of other West Riding mill towns.[162] More importantly, however, Huddersfield was generally more class-mixed than some industrial towns. The middle-class residential areas like Marsh, Edgerton, Beaumont Park and Almondbury were less well-defined than say Headingley in Leeds, and

all were bordered by, or in some cases amidst, poorer working-class areas. For example some of the worst working-class housing was to be found in Paddock which bordered the fashionable Marsh area and was actually one half of Marsh ward for municipal purposes. Table 1.6 reflects that there were clear variations between wards but that it was a complex

Table 1.6 Huddersfield Borough's Ward Profile

Ward	Av. No. People/House		Av. Rent/Week	Rateable Value (in £)
	1881	1901	1907	1887
Almondbury	4.5	3.9	2s. 3d.	4s. 7d.
Central	5.4	4.6	2s. 9d.	4s. 3d.
Dalton	4.6	4.3	n.a.	4s. 3d.
East	5.3	4.8	2s. 2d.	n.a.
Fartown	4.8	4.2	2s. 8d.	4s. 1d.
Lindley	5.0	4.3	n.a.	4s. 5d.
Lockwood	5.0	4.3	2s. 4d.	4s. 10d.
Longwood	n.a.	4.2	2s.	n.a.
Marsh	4.7	4.2	2s.	4s. 8d.
Moldgreen	4.7	4.1	2s. 6d.	3s. 4d.
North	4.9	4.6	2s. 9d.	4s. 3d.
South	5.2	5.1	2s. 7d.	4s. 3d.
West	5.0	4.4	2s. 9d.	4s. 3d.

Source: Census Returns 1881 and 1901; HE, 28 September 1907 and 12 March 1887.

picture with relatively few clearly wealthy wards. In political terms one would expect the 'poorer' wards like North, South, Central and Moldgreen to be the most likely areas of potential Labour support and this was to be the case with North and Moldgreen. But South and Central were never such strong Labour areas as Lindley and Dalton.[163] Thus social conditions and politics did not always closely correlate and ward representation was frequently mixed. Indeed between 1885 and 1900 only three of the thirteen municipal wards were solidly one party (Liberal in each case) and between 1900 and 1914 no ward was consistently represented by one party only. Although this was partially a reflection of the advent of a third party, it also indicated the town's social mixture and diversity. It was, however, only a mixture in relative terms: the élite remained the élite.

In part Huddersfield's political complexity arose out of the continuing impact of Richard Oastler's Tory Radicalism of the 1830s. Oastler, "the Factory King" of Fixby Hall, whose celebrated "Yorkshire Slavery" letter to the Leeds Mercury in 1830, sparked off the Ten Hour movement and created the Huddersfield Short-Time Committee, was beaten in two elections in Huddersfield in 1837. But he left in the town a powerful legacy of a working-class Toryism which could demand abolition of stamp duty and indirect taxation, whilst advocating a levy on land and a return to domestic industry. Thirty years later this legacy was still evident in T.P. Crosland's defeat of E.A. Leatham in 1865, and sixty years later in Joseph Crosland's defeat of Joseph Woodhead in 1893.[164]

Significantly it was Oastler who inspired the town's earliest political organisation, the Huddersfield Conservative Operatives' Association, which was formed in March 1836 and which by 1838 boasted 200 members.[165] By the late 1840s, however, Oastler's retirement and the passing of the 1847 Factory Act had extinguished all vestiges of Conservative political organisation and it was not revived until October 1866 when "a few gentlemen holding Conservative principles ... met to consider what steps should be taken in establishing a Working Men's Conservative Association."[166] In January 1867 an inaugural dinner of the Huddersfield Working Men's Conservative Association (HWMCA) was attended by the Earl of Dartmouth, a number of "prominent men" and 550 members, of which three-quarters were described as "bona fide working men."[167] By November 1868 membership had increased to 876 with the fillip of the 1867 Reform Act and the creation of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations of Sir John Gorst.[168] At the 1878 AGM of the National Union F.F. Abbey and Robert Welsh reported from Huddersfield that there were twenty-three branches of the association, many of them meeting in public houses due to "opposition from wives."[169] Thereafter, however, the HWMCA went into a decline exacerbated by the election defeat of 1880 and the fact that by then "the Liberal Party organisation was much superior to that of the Conservatives."[170] But during the early 1880s, dismayed by the 1880 defeat, Thomas Brooke of Armitage Bridge stepped in, providing sufficient finance and inspiration to overhaul completely the Association, and initiating a period of Brooke family dominance of Huddersfield Conservatism which continued up to and beyond the Great War. By 1886 a new set of rules had been adopted to enable annual

'guinea subscribers' to be members, and 'Working Men's' in the Association's title was dropped in line with its new predominantly professional image.[171] A permanent registration secretary was appointed in April 1886 and thereafter the Huddersfield Conservative Association remained a relatively efficient, if frequently defeated, political fighting force.

Yet if Huddersfield Conservatism had a radical legacy to call upon, so too did radical Liberalism. Luddism, Owenism and Chartism had had their impact on radicalism in the town[172] and Richard Cobden's candidature in 1857, albeit unsuccessful, left behind a strong allegiance to Free Trade and a trace of his opposition to the Crimean War which was to be revived at the time of the Boer War.[173] Moreover, Cobden's opposition to the Ten-Hours Bill, which probably lost him the seat, had a lineal descendant in Joseph Woodhead's 'individualist' opposition to the Eight-Hour Bill in the 1893 by-election which also cost Liberalism the seat. Disestablishmentarianism was a further theme that ran through Huddersfield Liberalism from William Willans, the father of Congregationalism in the town who stood as Liberal candidate in 1852 and who was a moving spirit behind the early Huddersfield Liberal Association, through E.A. Leatham to the Woodhead family.[174]

The precise origins of the Huddersfield Liberal Association (HLA) are unclear, as John Vincent has observed "in view of the silence of the printed records on the subject, the history of these clubs must be written from the imagination."[175] It does appear, however, that the 1867 Reform Act and Liberal defeat in the 1874 general election acted

as catalysts for the emergence of local Liberal clubs in the town. Possibly the movement was also encouraged by the Paris Commune, which had inspired the Huddersfield Republican Club in 1873, but in any event many of Huddersfield's Liberal clubs dated their foundation to 1874.[176] By 1879 a Liberal Registration Association had been formed, both to co-ordinate the individual clubs and carry out the vital court work of voter registration.[177] Then, following the election victory of 1880 the Registration Association was renamed the Huddersfield Liberal Association with a representative caucus of 'Two Hundred', to be affiliated to the National Liberal Federation in 1887.[178]

By the 1880s club life was a well-established facet of Huddersfield's social and political life: in 1881 there were twelve Liberal clubs and nine Conservative clubs in the town, rising to seventeen and fourteen respectively by 1891.[179] Although in many cases there is evidence they were dominated by local 'big-wigs' paying lip-service to democracy, they did offer not only an organisational unit at election times and for the crucial registration work, but also important social centres for activities ranging from brass bands, crown-green bowling, billiards and whist to knife-and-fork suppers, conversaziones and magic lantern shows.[180] Such activities built up partisan feeling and were, moreover, common in type to all clubs, regardless of politics. Amicable whist and billiard matches between Liberal and Conservative clubs were common. Indeed the basic characteristics of political clubs varied very little: the main exception being that most Liberal clubs did not sell alcohol, though even this was, for economic reasons, being eroded during our period. Apart from the political clubs

there were also nine working men's clubs in the town in 1881,[181] most of which were apolitical but which were generally free of the middle-class moral restraints that had characterised the movement's earlier days,[182] and helped strengthen a distinctive working-class culture increasingly responsive to the independent class approach of the Labour Party.

Notes for Chapter One

1 Crump, W.B. and Ghorbal, G., History of the Huddersfield Woollen Industry, (Huddersfield, 1935; Tolson Museum reprint 1967), p.57.

2 Ibid., chapter eleven. Halifax Piece Hall was erected in 1779.

3 Crump, W.B., Huddersfield Highways, (Huddersfield, 1949; Tolson Museum reprint 1968).

4 Dyson, T., The History of Huddersfield and District, (Huddersfield, 1932), p.1.

5 Betjeman, Sir John, "Huddersfield Discovered", Weekend Telegraph, 2 October 1964, p.32. It was designed by the Pritchett family who also designed Huddersfield College and the new Parish Church.

6 Crump and Ghorbal, op. cit., p.115.

7 Woodhead, T.W., A History of the Huddersfield Water Supplies, (Huddersfield, 1939).

8 Report of the Tariff Commission, vol. 2, (Textile Trades), part 2, (Evidence on the Woollen Industry), (London, 1905), para. 1423. It is also notable that during the 1890s Huddersfield was able to derive income from its reservoirs by selling water to neighbouring areas.

9 Brook, R., The Tramways of Huddersfield, (Huddersfield, 1959); "The Corporation Electricity Supply: Huddersfield", Lighting, 1 February 1894; Warrilow, W.E., "In Old Huddersfield", The Electrical Times, 25 October 1928. See also chapter four below on the vexed question of Sunday trams. Huddersfield was also the first town to introduce post-boxes on trams.

10 'Fair contracts' were to be awarded only locally and be payable at local trade union rates. The whole question of the Labour movement's challenge to Liberalism's municipal approach from the early 1890's is examined in chapter four below.

11 Huddersfield Examiner, (hereafter HE), 30 September 1893; and chapter four below.

12 Yorkshire Factory Times (hereafter YFT), 3 July 1896.

13 Pearce, C., "Communistic Huddersfield", Old West Riding, vol. 1, no. 1, (Spring 1981), pp.17-23.

14 Jones, L.A., "Public Pursuit of Private Profit? Liberal Businessmen and Municipal Politics in Birmingham, 1865-1900", Business History, XXV, no. 3, (November 1983), p.254. More

generally see: Hennock, E.P., Fit and Proper Persons, (London, 1973); idem., "Finance and Politics in Urban Local Government in England, 1835-1900", Historical Journal, VI, 2, (1963), pp.212-25; Fraser, D., Urban politics in Victorian England, (Leicester, 1976); Kellett, J.R., "Municipal Socialism, Enterprise and Trading in the Victorian City", Urban History Yearbook, 1978; Briggs, A., Victorian Cities, (London, 1963).

15 Jones, L.A., ibid., p.255.

16 The figure was £33 per head of the population (a total of around £3,136,419). Manchester came second with £31. See: Huddersfield Chronicle (hereafter HC), 1 March 1902.

17 Hanham, H.J., Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone, (London, 1959), chapter 3.

18 Brook, R., The Story of Huddersfield, (London, 1968), p.20.

19 Sir John William Ramsden (1831-1914) was educated at Eton and Trinity College Cambridge, and in July 1839 he succeeded his grandfather to become 5th Baronet. He married Helen Gwendolen, third daughter of the 13th Duke of Somerset, and was Whig M.P. for Taunton 1853-7, Hythe 1857-9, West Riding 1859-65, Monmouthshire Boroughs 1868-74, East West Riding 1880-5 and Osgoldcross 1885-6. For a short time he was Under-Secretary for War (1857-8). In 1886 he split with the Liberal Party over Home Rule to become a Liberal Unionist and subsequently withdrew from politics. He was a "moderate Churchman" and left £474,576 in his will. See his obituary in HE, 18 April 1914, also HE, 30 May 1914.

20 See article (anon.), "Sir John William Ramsden Part One, 1831-57" in Huddersfield Local Studies Library (B920 RAM).

21 Sykes, D.F.E., The History of Huddersfield and its vicinity, (Huddersfield, 1898), chapter XV; also Dyson, T., op. cit., chapter XXII.

22 Ibid.

23 For full details of the complexities of the controversy see: Sykes, D.F.E., op. cit., chapter X; and Brook, R., op. cit., pp.156-8.

24 Cited in Williams, J.G., "Paternalism in Local Government in the Nineteenth Century", Public Administration, XXXIII, (1955), p.442.

25 HE, 27 April 1895.

26 The Worker (hereafter HW), 21 September 1906.

27 See Ben Riley's 1909 municipal election address for North Central Ward (copy in Huddersfield Polytechnic Library); and "Man Who Owns a Town", Daily Chronicle, 1 July 1912, p.1.

28 'R.M.-S.' in Daily Chronicle, ibid.

29 The free library was the culmination of many years of public pressure and agitation beginning in 1887. A public poll in that year opposed the idea but in 1897 the council yielded to pressure and the library was opened in 1898 by Lord Ripon. See HE, 19, 26 March, 2 April 1887; 30 January, 13 February, 5 June, 24 July 1897; and 23 April 1898. Also: Brook, R., History of the Library Movement in Huddersfield, (Huddersfield, n.d.).

30 Stephenson, C., The Ramsdens and their estate in Huddersfield: the town that bought itself, (Huddersfield, 1972). More generally see Patrick Joyce's comments on the exceptional nature of the Ramsden estate in Work, Society and Politics, (1980: paperback edition, London 1982), pp.9 and 298.

31 Ward, J.T., "The Beaumont Family's Estates in the Nineteenth Century", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, XXXV, (1962), pp.196-77.

32 Wray, D.A., The Mining Industry in the Huddersfield District, (Huddersfield, 1929).

33 See his obituary in HE, 11 October 1913.

34 Ward, J.T., op. cit., p.176; also Clark, D., Colne Valley: Radicalism to Socialism, (London, 1981), pp.5-6.

35 See his obituary in HE, 17 June 1905. He perished in a car accident!

36 See: The Huddersfield Examiner: The Making of a Newspaper - 80 Years of Progress, 1851-1931, (Huddersfield, 1931); Brook, R., (1968), op. cit., p.173; also HE, September 1911 commemorative issue. The Examiner's 1853 circulation compared to the Chronicle's 943 and the Bradford Observer's 1235 per week. In 1855 a supplement was added and the abolition of stamp duty reduced the price (see letters between Woodhead and Richard Cobden on this in the Tolson Museum Collection, Huddersfield: D215). The Daily Examiner appeared in January 1871. Woodhead also owned and ran the Dewsbury Reporter. See also more generally Wadsworth, A.P., "Newspaper Circulations 1800-1954", Manchester Statistical Society, 1955, and Stephen Koss' excellent The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain, Volume one: The Nineteenth Century, (London, 1981).

37 Joyce, P., op. cit.

38 Interview conducted with Edward Brooke, 18 November 1981.

39 The complexities of inter-marriage are dealt with in Binfield, C., "Asquith: The Formation of a Prime Minister", The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, vol. 2, no. 7, (April 1981), which includes detail on the Willans, Jones, Wrigley and Hirst families.

40 From the interview with Edward Brooke, op. cit.

41 Clarke, M.G., "Development and Purpose in a Local Conservative Association: A Study in the Huddersfield Constituencies, 1836-1966", unpublished, February 1966. (Copy in Huddersfield Central Library), p.22; and below.

42 References from HE and HC, passim.

43 Cited from the Acland-Hood Papers in Blewett, N., The Peers, the Parties and the People: the General Elections of 1910, (London, 1972), p.271.

44 Joyce, P., op. cit., p.269.

45 See appendix 2.12.

46 Blewett, N., op. cit.

47 Jowitt, J.A., in Wright, D.G. and Jowitt, J.A., (eds.), Victorian Bradford, (Bradford, 1981), p.245. See also Gary Firth "The Bradford Trade in the Nineteenth Century", in the same volume.

48 HE, 1 January 1887.

49 HE, 27 December 1913.

50 Crump and Ghorbal, op. cit., p.11. See also Crump, W.B., "The Wool Textile Industry of the Pennines in its Physical Setting", Textile Institute Journal, XXVI (1935), pp.367-74 and 383-94; and Humberstone, G., "The Woollen Industry of the Huddersfield District and its relation to local geography, 1750-1925", unpublished Leeds University M.A. thesis (n.d.).

51 Crump and Ghorbal, ibid., p.89.

52 Clapham, J.H., Economic History of Modern Britain, volume 2, (London, 1932), p.83; also idem, The Woollen and Worsted Industries, (London, 1907). Patrick Joyce has argued that the persistence of this hand-working in the West Riding, long after textiles had been mechanised in Lancashire, explains the strong Chartist and Labour presence in the area: "Independence rather than deference was the key-note of class relations in much of the West Riding", (op. cit., p.xxi). He also claims that working-class protest was not "contained and modified by trade union action", (ibid, pp.60, 229-30, 321). Further research on the 1830-85 period would be necessary to fully discuss these arguments as they affected Huddersfield.

53 Report of the Huddersfield district factory inspector in HE, 23 July 1892.

54 White's Directory of 1881 of the Clothing District, (London, 1881).

55 Clapham, J.H., (1907), op. cit., pp.131-133.

56 HE, 29 June 1912.

57 HE, 15 January 1910. There were 300 electors amongst his workers.

58 See also Clark, D., op. cit., pp.11-12; and Joyce, P., op. cit., passim.

59 Report of the Tariff Commission, volume two, (Textile Trades), part two, (Evidence on the Woollen Industry), para. 1423, (London, 1905).

60 Crump and Ghorbal, op. cit., p.123; Brook, R., op. cit., chapter IX; HE, 29 June 1912. The Martins were prominent Liberals, Horace Martin being president of the Liberal Club for many years.

61 Richardson, C., "Irish Settlement in Mid-Nineteenth Century Bradford", Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research, May 1968, pp.40-57.

62 For discussion of these themes see Perks, R.B., "Real Profit-Sharing: William Thomson & Sons of Huddersfield, 1886-1925", Business History, XXIV, no. 2, (July 1982).

63 See chapter four below.

64 Board of Trade Report: Textile Trades, Huddersfield 1914, (London, 1914).

65 Quoted in Clark, D., op. cit., p.11.

66 Board of Trade, op. cit.

67 Ibid., p.12.

68 Census Returns, 1901: Table 35.

69 Ibid.

70 Census Returns, 1911: Table 23.

71 Donnelly, D., David Brown's: The Story of a Family Business 1860-1960, (London, 1960); also Brook, R., op. cit., pp.216-7. HC, 25 July 1903 contains an interesting profile of the town's "booming" engineering industry.

72 Brook, J., op. cit., p.145.

73 Sykes, D.F.E., The History of Huddersfield, (Huddersfield, 1911), p.326.

74 Ben Turner's account of the strike in his A Short History of the General Union of Textile Workers, (Heckmondwike, 1920), pp.28-65, elucidates the issues splendidly.

75 Ibid., p.28.

76 This name was officially registered on 17 August 1883.

77 See chapter two below. He became chairman of the Weavers' Union in 1888, Labour's first councillor in Huddersfield in 1892, and later chairman of the Labour Representation Committee.

78 Royal Commission on Labour 1892-4, Group, C., Vol. One (Textiles), c. 6708-VI (1892), ques. 4784-90.

79 Laybourn, K., "The Attitudes of Yorkshire Trade Unions to the Economic and Social Problems of the Great Depression, 1873-1896", unpublished PhD, Lancaster University, 1972, pp.142 and 175. His figures are based on the membership of the West Riding Power Loom Weavers' Association (later known as the General Union of Weavers and Textile Workers) and as such exclude only a relatively small body of unionists. Membership of the West Riding Weavers' peaked in 1892 after which it was hit by poor trade, protection and unemployment until after 1910:

Year:	1886	1889	1892	1895	1898	1901	1904	1907	1910
Members:	600	1800	4700	3000	2300	1568	1531	4200	4535

Source: Board of Trade Reports on Trade Unions, 1886-1910.

80 Turner, B., op. cit., pp.124, 153-6; Gee, A., in Royal Commission on Labour, op. cit., ques. 4796.

81 Laybourn thesis, op. cit., p.132.

82 Board of Trade Report on Trade Unions, 1900; and Census Returns 1901, table 35.

83 Clark, D., op. cit., p.88; Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, The History of Trade Unions, (London, 1894), p.427; Lady Dilke speaking at the 1900 T.U.C. in Huddersfield, see HC, 8 September 1900.

84 Turner, B., op. cit., p.29. On the Liberal attitude to trade unionism, see chapters two, three and four below.

85 Even as late as 1911-12 there was insufficient support for strike action: see HE, 13 and 20 May, 17 June and 27 July, 1911.

86 Clarke, P.F., Lancashire and the New Liberalism, (Cambridge, 1971); Burgess, K., The Origins of British Industrial Relations, (London, 1975); Joyce, P., op. cit; and Watson, M.I., "The Cotton Trade Unions and Labour Representation in the Late Nineteenth Century", Northern History, vol. XX, (1984).

87 The figures that appear in this table are drawn from an article in Socialist Review, November 1910, by George Henry Wood, the authority on textile wages, writing under one of his pseudonyms: Henry Willmott. On G.H. Wood see: Laybourn, K., "The George Henry Wood Collection", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, 1980; also HE, 25 June 1910, and The Worker, (HW), 25 June 1910.

88 Royal Commission on Labour, op. cit., ques. 4819-22, 4827-32. Gee confessed that the discrepancy between male and female wages was based more on tradition than on skill or work done, though he observed that men were expected to look after their own looms to a greater extent than women. The whole question of skill, wages and sexual division of labour in the textile industry, is currently being researched by Dierdre Busfield from York University.

89 Willmott, H., "The 'Labour Unrest' and the Woollen Trades", Socialist Review, November 1910, p.216. Also, Bornat, J., "An Examination of the General Union of Textile Workers: 1883-1922", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Essex, 1981, which has comparative male-female wage levels drawn from G.H. Wood's "Wage Notes" in Huddersfield Polytechnic Library. (see especially table 3, p.457).

90 Membership of the General Union of Textile Workers from T.U.C. Annual Reports.

91 Glaser, J.F., "English Nonconformity and the Decline of Liberalism", American Historical Review, LXIII, (1958), p.363.

92 See especially: Koss, S., Nonconformity in Modern British Politics, (London, 1975); Bebbington, D.W., The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870-1914, (London, 1982); Joyce, P., op. cit.; Pelling, H., Social Geography of British Elections, 1885-1910, (London, 1967); Yeo, S., Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis, (London, 1976); Helmstadter, R.J., "The Nonconformist Conscience", in Marsh, P., (ed.), The Conscience of the Victorian State, (London, 1979).

93 Clarke, P.F., "Electoral Sociology of Modern Britain", History, LVII (1972); idem; Lancashire and the New Liberalism, (Cambridge, 1971); Dunbabin, J.P.D., "British Elections in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: a regional approach", English Historical Review, XCV, (1980); Bebbington, D.W., "Nonconformity and Electoral Sociology, 1867-1918", Historical Journal, 27, 3, (1984), pp.633-56.

94 Brook, R., op. cit., p.57; Sykes, D.F.E., op. cit., (1898), chapter XV; Huddersfield Directory 1909, (Huddersfield, 1909). The first Nonconformist chapel building in the area is reputed to have been opened at Holmfirth in 1694.

95 Wesley observed in his diary for 1759: "Preached near Huddersfield to the wildest congregation I have seen in Yorkshire ... I believed some felt the sharpness of His word" (cited in Brook, R., op. cit., p.61). Venn had, in fact, attended a Methodist conference in 1756, three years prior to his arrival in Huddersfield. See Sykes, D.F.E., op. cit., p.143; Pelling, H., op. cit., p.301; Briggs, A., The Age of Improvement, (London, 1959), p.70.

96 Reuben Hirst was mayor of Huddersfield (1891-3) and President of Lockwood Liberal Club. His brother, William, was for a long time president of the Board of Guardians and Liberal councillor for North Ward between 1875 and 1901.

97 A 'circuit' comprised a group of Methodist 'societies' each with its own chapel. A minister was appointed not to a chapel but to a circuit around which he would tour. Each circuit had a superintendent who was responsible in turn to a district chairman overseeing the whole area. Apart from Wesleyan Methodist chapels there were in Huddersfield, Free Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists and the Methodist New Connexion which had broken away and opened a chapel in High Street in 1815.

98 Kinnear, M., The British Voter, (New York, 1968), p.125, gives the following figures of Nonconformist adherents in Huddersfield in 1922: Wesleyan: 3273; Primitive Methodist: 402; Congregationalist: 1406; Baptist: 1346; Presbytarian: 175.

99 Dicks, J.W., The Inheritance of Faith: Highfield Congregational 1772-1972, (Leeds, 1972).

100 In 1898 Huddersfield had seventeen Board schools, accommodating 11,368 children. See Sykes, D.F.E., op. cit., chapter XVII, and town directories.

101 Woodhead (1824-1913) was proprietor of the Huddersfield Examiner, Liberal M.P. for Spen Valley 1885-92, mayor of Huddersfield, president of the HLA and the Temperance Society, and a founder of the town's Mechanics Institute. William Willans (1800-63), a leading wool merchant, stood as parliamentary Liberal candidate in Huddersfield in 1852. He was president of the Chamber of Commerce, a founder of Huddersfield College and was related to the Asquiths. Hillhouse Congregational, which he had been instrumental in financing, opened two years after his death. Wright Mellor (1817-93) was three times mayor of Huddersfield, a member of the School Board, chairman of the HLA and a woollen manufacturer. Denham (1818-92) was a draper, mayor from 1880-1, vice-president of the Temperance Society, a founder of Huddersfield Girls' College, and a Liberal alderman between 1868 and 1883. Sykes represented Highfield at the Yorkshire Congregational Union in 1873 as its General Treasurer for over twenty years, and chairman in 1891. A wool merchant, he was President of Marsh Liberal Club. Fred Crosland was a textile manufacturer, first president of the YMCA and a

prominent advocate of the Building Society movement. His son, also Fred, was another leading Liberal Congregationalist. - Attendance figures at Highfield come from a list of members amongst miscellaneous papers relating to the chapel in Huddersfield local studies library.

102 On Bruce see: HE, 20 February 1904 (retirement); 21 July 1906 (receipt of freedom of the Borough); and 7 November 1908 (obituary). Dicks, op. cit., describes Bruce as "the most famous minister to be associated with Highfield" (p.8). See also: Wrigley, F., The History of the Yorkshire Congregational Union: A Story of Fifty Years, 1873-1923, (London n.d.? 1924). Bruce married Alice Briggs of the Blackburn manufacturing Liberal family (see Joyce, P., op. cit.) whose nephew was W.E. Briggs, M.P. for Blackburn 1874-85.

103 Binfield, C., So Down to Prayers, (London, 1977), p.149; idem., "Asquith: The Formation of a Prime Minister", Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, vol. 2, no. 7, (April, 1981); also Sykes, A.W., Ramsden Street Chapel: Notes and Records 1825-1925, (Huddersfield, 1925): it was well-known for the success of its Sunday schools.

104 Moody (1801-70) was a close friend of Willans, deacon and superintendant at Ramsden Street for many years and founder of the Huddersfield Sunday School Union. Wrigley was deacon for thirty-two years, a prominent member of the London Missionary Society and a munificent philanthropist. Jones (1800-84) was William Willans' brother-in-law, Huddersfield's first mayor, chairman of the School Board and president of Huddersfield College. Vickerman (1822-95) was a Liberal councillor for Moldgreen, an expert wool spinner, director of Huddersfield Permanent Building Society and a governor of the College. Shaw (1821-97) married into the Willans family and had textile interests: his main interest was the Sunday school. Dawson (1819-1901) was deacon and secretary at Ramsden Street: he was active in the Huddersfield Temperance Society, British Temperance League, the Religious Tract Society and the London Missionary Society. - Note the frequency of inter-marriage links. See also Binfield, C., op. cit., (1981), pp.219-23.

105 Binfield, C., ibid., p.219-20.

106 Charles Hirst broke a long tradition of attendance by his family at Ramsden Street when he seceded in 1881. Indeed he had himself been a member since 1862, serving as deacon for twenty-two years and Sunday school superintendant for three years. The Eastwoods had married one of their daughters to a former minister at Highfield and had a long tradition at Ramsden Street before Frederick Eastwood, president of the Chamber of Commerce, chairman of Huddersfield Banking Company, and vice-president of the HLA, left in 1881 for Milton. The Woodheads had defected to Milton from Highfield. J.E. Willans (1842-1926) had inherited the religious mantle of his father William and became vice-president of the HLA, and of the C.O.S., and a School Board member.

107 See chapter four below for an extended examination of the PSA movement.

108 Dyson, T., op. cit., chapter XXII. A moving spirit behind the establishment of the chapel was Frederick Schwann, president of the Huddersfield Temperance Society 1852-81 and an initiator of Huddersfield College, who subscribed £300 towards the building costs.

109 Balmforth studied divinity at Oxford in 1894 and returned to become minister at Fitzwilliam Street before emigrating to South Africa in June 1897. See chapters two, four and five below for his Labour involvement.

110 On the links between Unitarianism and Socialism see Sellers, I., "Unitarians and the Labour Church Movement; Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, vol. XII, no. 1, (1959), pp1-6.

111 Owen was Ramsden Balmforth's brother and a secularist, republican, radical Liberal, co-operator, Liberal councillor, educationalist and mayor. See chapter two below.

112 Haigh (1818-93) had split with the Liberals over Home Rule but adhered to Free Trade. He was a director of the Yorkshire Banking Company, a partner in a large shipping firm, a governor of Huddersfield Savings Bank and a J.P. He numbered amongst his literary friends Samuel Smiles, (HE, 18 February 1893).

113 On the "easy relationship" between Unitarianism and Secularism (and Socialism) see Royle, E., Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866-1915, (Manchester, 1980), pp.129 and 340. D.F.E. Sykes and Abel Hellawell are further examples of Unitarian Secularists. See also chapter two below.

114 Cited in Brook, R., op. cit., p.129.

115 The Nonconformist, January 1873.

116 Huddersfield Wesleyan Methodist Council, Tabulated Statement as to the Building Accommodation and Ministerial Provision for Religious Worship in the Borough of Huddersfield in December 1893, (Huddersfield, 1893).

117 Brook, R., op. cit., p.128.

118 Steele, E.D., "The Irish Presence in the North of England, 1850-1914", Northern History, vol. 12, (1976), p.220.

119 See, amongst other work, Sullivan, D., Navvymen, (London, 1983).

120 Jackson, J.A., The Irish in Britain, (London, 1963), p.123.

121 HE, 3 July 1886.

122 HE, 11 February 1893.

123 See chapter six below, and more generally: Doyle, P.J., "Religion, Politics and the Catholic Working Class", New Blackfriars, May 1973.

124 See his obituary in HE, 11 January 1913.

125 Gilbert, A.D., Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914, (London, 1976), pp.31-32. See also: Currie, R., Gilbert, A., and Horsley, L., Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700, (London, 1977); Gay, J.D., The Geography of Religion in England, (London, 1971), pp.112-113.

126 Views vary on this resurgence around 1906 (see chapters five and six below) but many historians feel it was the "last stand of Nonconformity ... an artificial resurgence. The seeming strength of Dissent was illusory", (Glasier, J.F., op. cit., p.360); "The Liberal recovery was not based on a solution of its problems, but on the temporary revival of Nonconformist and trade union support and of old radical political issues". (Thompson, P., Socialists, Liberals and Labour: The Struggle for London, 1885-1914, (London, 1967), p.295); "it .... appeared that Nonconformity was now a more powerful electoral force than ever. But this superficial appearance proved to be an illusion". (Hamer, D.A., The Politics of Electoral Pressure, (London, 1976), p.324). There was also the Welsh Baptist revival of around 1903-5 when Welsh Baptist membership shot up from 82,000 to 550,280 (see Morgan, K.O., Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922, (Cardiff, 1963)).

127 Gilbert, A., op. cit., chapter two.

128 Religious Worship (England and Wales) Report, P.P. 1852-3, LXXXIX, 1. In 1881 the local press in many towns carried out a more informal religious census, the results of which appeared in The Nonconformist, 2 February 1882. Huddersfield was not, however, covered in this census. On the pros and cons of the 1851 census see: Pickering, W.S.F., "The 1851 Religious Census - A Useless Experiment?", British Journal of Sociology, 18, (1967), pp.382-407; who concludes that "the experiment was by no means a waste of time" (p.406); also Inglis, K.S., "Patterns of Religious Worship in 1851", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XI, (1960), pp.74-87.

129 Religious Worship Report, ibid.; and Inglis, K., ibid.

130 Inglis, K., op. cit.

131 Huddersfield Wesleyan Council report, op. cit., appended notes to a general survey of all religious provision in the town.

132 HE, 1 May 1897. These Wesleyan returns are not consistently available as they were not always published and do not seem to exist in any form elsewhere.

133 Kinnear, M., op. cit., p.125.

134 See in particular: Inglis, K.S., Churches and the Working Class in Victorian England, (London, 1963); Pelling, H., "Popular Attitudes to Religion" in Popular Politics and Society in Later Victorian Britain, (London, 1967); Mayor, S., The Churches and the Labour Movement, (London, 1967).

135 Inglis, K.S., ibid.; Wigley, J., The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday, (Manchester, 1980); Harrison, B., "Religion and Recreation in Nineteenth Century England", Past and Present, 1967, part 3.

136 Ainsworth, A.J., "Religion in the Working Class Community, and the Evolution of Socialism in Late Nineteenth Century Lancashire: A Case of Working Class Consciousness", Social History (Canada), vol. X, part 20, (1977), pp.354-80. J.H.S. Kent in "The Role of Religion in the Cultural Structure of the Late Victorian City", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 1973, pp.153-73, has also observed how "it may be regarded as axiomatic that the strength of religious institutions depends, not on a number of people who are existentially committed to a particular theological outlook ... but on the social roles which are available to the institutions as such" (p.154).

137 See Shiman, L.L., "The Band of Hope Movement: Respectable Recreation for Working-Class Children", Victorian Studies, vol. 17, (1973-4), pp.49-74.

138 Labour Prophet, November 1893, p.105.

139 Anon., 1832-1932: One Hundred Years of Temperance Work: Souvenir of the Centenary Celebrations of the Huddersfield Temperance Society, (Huddersfield, 1932).

140 Dearden, F.W., Huddersfield and District Band of Hope Union: Jubilee Memorial 1870-1920, (Huddersfield, 1920), p.96. See also Tayler, R., The Hope of the Race, (London, 1946) and Shiman, op. cit.

141 See above footnote 101. Hellawell, a merchant and Liberal alderman from January 1894, was president and vice-president of the Temperance Society, president of the Commercial Temperance League, and a leading member of the HLA. Jepson, a boot manufacturer and Liberal councillor for Lockwood, was president of the Society from 1903-5. Mellor, a draper and Liberal councillor for Fartown from 1894, was president 1898-99 and 1908-10.

142 The first temperance hotel to open in Huddersfield was in Cross Church Street in 1835. Thornton's was perhaps the most famous (see chapter two below). See Winskill, P.T., The Temperance Movement and its Workers: Volumes 1-4, (London, 1892) - copies in the Joseph Livesey Library, Sheffield.

143 Park, G.R., Parliamentary Representation of Yorkshire, (Hull, 1886); see also appendix 1.1.

144 Public General Statutes 1884-5, (London, 1885), pp.128-214; HE, 7 March 1891; and chapter two below.

145 The 1911 Census returns reveal that the parliamentary borough at that time comprised 11,000 acres while the County borough comprised 11,859 acres; the addition being parts of Linthwaite.

146 Blewett, N., "The Franchise in the United Kingdom, 1885-1918", Past and Present, no. 32, (1965), p.31.

147 Mothan, H.C.G., McKibbin, R., and Kay, J.A., "The Franchise Factor in the Rise of the Labour Party", English Historical Review, XCI, no. CCCLXI, (October 1976), p.727.

148 The nature of the census returns render the definition of 'adult male' as over 20, rather than over 21. This means there is a slight discrepancy but the resultant 61.1% is probably, if anything, higher than lower in consequence.

149 "A man could vote only once in a borough, no matter how many divisions that borough contained and no matter what voting qualification he possessed in each of the borough divisions", Blewett, N., op. cit., p.44.

150 From census returns 1891, 1901 and 1911.

151 Ibid.

152 See Blewett, N., op. cit., and Matthew et al, op. cit.

153 Matthew et al, op. cit.; McKibbin, R., The Evolution of the Labour Party, 1910-24, (Oxford, 1974).

154 Cook, C., "Labour and the Downfall of the Liberal Party 1906-14", in Sked, A., and Cook, C., Crisis and Controversy, (London, 1976); Sheppard, M.G., and Halstead, J.L., "Labour's Municipal Election Performance in Provincial England and Wales 1901-13", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, Autumn 1979; Sheppard, M.G., "The Effects of the Franchise Provisions on the Social and Sex Composition of the Municipal Electorate 1882-1914", Bulletin ..., no. 45, (Autumn, 1982); Wald, K.D., "Class and the Vote before the First World War", British Journal of Political Science, vol. 8, (1978).

155 HE, 22 October 1910.

156 See Wald, K.D., op. cit.

157 HE, 22 October 1910.

158 She was the daughter of J.W. Robson who was a Liberal councillor for Moldgreen from 1901, a Quaker and chairman of the Huddersfield School Board. Her mother, Mrs J.W. Robson, was vice-president of the HWLA and the brother of Joshua Rowntree of the York Rowntrees, also was M.P. for Scarborough and also a Quaker. The Robson family were prominent in Huddersfield in opposing the Boer War. See also HE, 8 October and 5 November 1910; and HE, 2 November 1912. She lost 469-415 in 1910, and 585-386 in 1912.

159 See chapter six below. Other than these organisations the only other evidence there is of female political activity of any organised variety is in 1897 when there appears to have been a Huddersfield sub-committee of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage (see HE, 20 March 1897).

160 Typically women were confined to areas of welfare care. HE, 9 July 1910; and chapter four below.

161 Blewett, N., The Peers ...., (1972), op. cit., pp.488-94.

162 Pelling, H., Social Geography of British Elections, 1885-1914, (London, 1967), p.301, found from the 1901 census that exactly one family in ten had a female domestic servant, compared to Bradford's 8%, Halifax's 7.6% and Dewsbury's 9.7%. The 1911 census figures support this: Huddersfield - 8.6%; Bradford 6.5%; Dewsbury 5.9%. In 1911 Harrogate's figure was, by comparison 34.8%. Comparative figures on the average number of people per house in 1901 were: Huddersfield 4.25%; Bradford 4.36%; Dewsbury 4.27%, (Census returns).

163 See appendix 2.3.

164 See appendix 1.1 and chapter three below.

165 Clarke, M.G., "Development and Purpose in a Local Conservative Association: A Study in the Huddersfield Constituencies, 1836-1966", unpublished manuscript, 1966; copy in Huddersfield Local Studies Library (B329). Clarke was fortunate in having access to the HCA archive which was sadly destroyed by fire in 1966. (Letter to author from K. Bates, 11 August 1981).

166 HC, 26 February 1867.

167 Clarke, M.G., op. cit., p.16.

168 See ibid., pp.17-21; also more generally: Blake, R., The Conservative Party from Peel to Churchill, (London, 1970), chapter five; Feuchtwanger, E.J., "J.E. Gorst and the Central Organisation of the Conservative Party, 1870-1882", Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research, XXXII, (1959).

169 Clarke, M.G., ibid., also letter from Abbey in HE, 14 July 1906, in which he related the history of the HWMCA and the generosity of the Brooke family.

170 Thomas Brooke to the secretary of the HWMCA, 1880; cited in Clarke, M.G., op. cit., p.22.

171 Ibid.

172 Peel, F., The Risings of the Luddites, (Heckmondwike, 1880); Berry, J., The Luddites in Yorkshire, (Leeds, 1970); Brook, R., op. cit., pp.85-94; Sykes, D.F.E., (1906), op. cit., pp.305-29; Chadwick, S., 'A Bold and Faithful Journalist': Joshua Hobson, 1810-1876, (Huddersfield, 1976).

173 Brook, R., op. cit., p.169; Dyson, T., op. cit., pp.437-8; Chadwick, S., op. cit., p.54; and chapter five below.

174 On Willans see above section on religion also Binfield, C., op. cit.

175 Vincent, J., The Formation of the British Liberal Party, (London, 1966; Pelican edition 1972), p.123.

176 On republicanism in Huddersfield see chapter two below.

177 See Owen Balmforth's obituary in HE, 4 February 1922.

178 On Liberal organisation generally see: Herrick, F.H., "The Origins of the National Liberal Federation", Journal of Modern History, XVII (1945); McGill, B., "Francis Schnadhorst and Liberal Party organisation", Journal of Modern History, XXXIV, no. 1, (1962); Vincent, J., op. cit., and Wright, D.G., Democracy and Reform, 1815-1885, (London, 1970).

179 They were as follows: 1881: Liberal - Almondbury, Berry Brow, Crosland Moor, Central, Huddersfield, Lockwood, Moldgreen, Paddock, Primrose Hill, Salford, Sheepridge and West; Conservative - Almondbury, Berry Brow, East and South (in Ramsden Street), Fartown, Lockwood/Salford, Moldgreen, North, Sheepridge and West. 1891: Liberal - above plus Park Gate, Longwood, Lindley, Cowcliffe, Fartown and Lockwood but minus Central; Conservative - above plus Primrose Hill, Rashcliffe, Paddock, Marsh and Longwood. See Kelly's Town Directory: Huddersfield, (London, 1881); and Slater's Directory of Huddersfield, (Manchester, 1891).

180 See the local press generally on local activities. On the centrality of registration work see Blewett, N., op. cit., (Past and Present), passim; and Jones, G.A., "Further Thoughts on the Franchise, 1885-1910", Past and Present, no. 34, July 1966.

181 Kelly's Town Directory, op. cit., p.169. They were: Bradley Mills, Cliffe End, Cowcliffe, Crosland Moor, Fartown, Lockwood, Marsh, Newsome and Paddock.

182 See Price, R.N., "The Working Men's Club Movement and Victorian Social Reform Ideology", Victorian Studies, XV, (1971).

CHAPTER TWO

LIBERALISM, SOCIALISM AND THE ADVENT OF LABOUR, 1885-1892

> It is the local wirepullers whose influence it is necessary to destroy if working men are .... ever to get a fair share of representation. But a more effectual way to secure such representation would be by separate and independent action.[1]

1. The Impact of the Home Rule Crisis

Between 1885 and 1886 the relative political calm and stability which Huddersfield had experienced since Edward Aldam Leatham had become the town's M.P. in 1868[2] was shattered by the vexed issue of Irish Home Rule. Leatham himself, a banker from Wakefield, whose political affiliations had always been closer to those of his brother-in-law John Bright and Joseph Chamberlain, than to Gladstone[3], seceded from the Liberal Party to join the Liberal Unionists, and, after a lengthy row, was disowned by the Huddersfield Liberal Association (HLA).

Yet in many ways his departure, like that of the two leading landowning families, the Ramsdens and the Beaumonts, was not unexpected.[4] Despite being described as "a Radical member for a Radical constituency"[5] with a record as "a Reformer", substantiated to some extent by his prominent support of the 1883 Corrupt Practices Act, he had by 1885 made himself unpopular amongst some members of the HLA. In part this derived from his increasingly unfashionable belief in a governing elite which had little room for working-class parliamentary representation: "We elect, not the random elements, which in their infinite variety are to be found scattered everywhere upon the surface, but what is best and soundest."[6] Such sentiment

sat uneasily alongside the fillip which the 1884 Reform Act had given nascent, but ill-expressed, desires for greater working-class representation, and was increasingly out of step with the growing portion of the party that favoured universal male suffrage, the most vocal of which were the local Liberal clubs. However, Leatham's attitude was that "We have had a very large instalment of reform and I think we may surely be content with it for some little time to come". Equally, his reluctance to press for a second seat for Huddersfield during debate on the Redistribution of Seats Bill, despite there being a good case, jarred relations with the HLA and revealed the truth that he jealously guarded the town as his personal domain: "I am both proud and glad that my great constituency remains undivided and indivisible"[7].

Leatham's departure from Huddersfield and from Liberalism was not, however, painless. An historic meeting of the HLA on 29 April 1886 betrayed a myriad of opinions on Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule. The majority of delegates favoured a mild resolution endorsing Gladstone's leadership whilst "not pledging itself to all the details contained in the Irish Bills"[8], which reflected Roberts' comment that "a devoted, almost blind, loyalty to Gladstone was the keynote of virtually all Liberal comment in the area"[9]. A minority of about twenty-five (out of a caucus of 200), however, wanted to go even further. Led by Owen Balmforth[10] and Carmi Smith[11], they tabled an amendment of unqualified support for the Irish Bills[12]. In the event it was lost and a compromise motion passed thanking Gladstone for introducing the bills, but only after a prolonged debate during

which several prominent local Liberals, notable amongst them Charles Glendinning and Dr. Robert Bruce, Congregationalist minister at Highfield Chapel, had expressed serious doubts about the efficacy of Home Rule. Moreover, although such doubts were not generally mirrored in the local Liberal clubs, which were forthright in their unequivocal support of both Gladstone and the Home Rule Bills[13], there was a significant movement towards secession amongst some in the Liberal ranks.

This feeling was rallied by Leatham's speech in the Commons on 13 May 1886, in which he accused Gladstone of "jockeying" his colleagues into supporting Home Rule by playing on his personal popularity, and observed of Home Rule that

> If the worst enemy of the Liberal Party had set himself to devise a scheme for the disintegration and disruption of it he could hardly have hit on anything so formidable or fatal.[14]

As Leatham's opposition became clear so the brave faces of the HLA and the Examiner crumbled. A letter from Owen Balmforth in the Examiner on 22 May reflected the swelling undercurrent of feeling in favour of ousting Leatham as M.P.:

> Observation and experience during the past few weeks convince me that the vast majority of the Liberals in Huddersfield differ from the views held by Mr. Leatham on the Home Rule Bill ..... a grave responsibility rests upon every Liberal elector, and particularly upon our local leaders, in deciding - and that before it is too late - upon Mr. Leatham's future relationship with the party.[15]

Moreover, this was reiterated by an unofficial meeting on 31 May of some 5,000 Liberal supporters, led by Balmforth and chaired by Thomas Bland,[16] which thronged the Market Square to support Home Rule and condemn Leatham's stance.[17] Added to this came the loss of a safe Liberal seat at Lockwood in a municipal by-election, and an offer by the Conservative Parliamentary candidate Joseph Crosland[18] to withdraw in favour of Leatham.[19] Both seemed to indicate that a firm decision by the wavering Liberal Association one way or another was required. This eventually came on Tuesday, 8 June, when a motion to re-select was passed, accompanied by a resolution of loyalty to Gladstone.[20] The dissentients numbered seven and it is likely that it was they who comprised the main core of the breakaway Huddersfield Liberal Unionist Association (HLUA) established shortly afterwards.[21]

The main Liberal Unionist protagonists seem to have been Charles Mills, formerly Leatham's election agent, J. Vickerman, E. Huth, Thomas Holliday, M. Sykes, J. C. Broadbent and John Sugden.[22] The latter had formerly been secretary of the HLA and later reflected on the bitterness and finality surrounding his defection:

> You had either to follow; do as you were told; or be politically damned .... I had increased my subscription, was a member of two other Liberal clubs, but because I (with others) could not swallow Home Rule ... the Liberals became very angry, took their names off my nomination paper as councillor .... and out of pure spite and ill-will brought a man at the last moment to oppose, and not having time to get assistance they turned me out with great rejoicing.[23]

Significantly no particular pattern or common characteristic is evident amongst those who seceded in 1886 in Huddersfield. There does not seem to have been a religious divide: two of the seven were Anglican and two members of Fitzwilliam Street Unitarian Chapel. Indeed those Liberals who remained within the fold included Robert Bruce, minister at Highfield, who refused to vote in the 1886 general election and seriously considered deserting Liberalism,[24] and William Marriott, a leading Churchman, whose allegiance to Gladstone was unshaken.[25] Nor was it an age divide: the average age of the Liberal Unionist defectors did not differ from the mainstay of the HLA. Nor was it a divide based on educational background, class or employment. In short there was little to differentiate them from the remainder of the HLA and they seem to have coalesced in little other than a common antipathy to Home Rule. Nevertheless by March 1887 the Huddersfield Liberal Unionist Association could boast sixty members, rising to 170 by the turn of the century.[26] Moreover, although as the years elapsed the HLUA gravitated increasingly towards the HCA (being eventually absorbed by it in 1910) it was a measure of the bitterness and acrimony surrounding the split of 1886 that ensured that the HLUA retained a proudly independent existence not without influence. It very quickly acquired its own club and had three municipal representatives in 1886, rising to a peak of five between 1896 and 1900.[27]

Yet if one Liberal M.P. had been relinquished another quickly took his place in the form of William Summers, the son of John Summers of Stalybridge iron master fame. Born in 1853 and educated at Owens

College, Manchester, London University and University College, Oxford, he was called to the bar in 1881. Elected M.P. for Stalybridge in 1880, he had gained notice in the Commons by speaking well on the Irish Land Bill, before his defeat in 1885 due to redistribution. He was an excellent speaker, a prolific writer, a Nonconformist and a temperance advocate, being on the 'progressive' wing of the Liberal Party.[28] Having visited Ireland in 1881 he was thoroughly convinced of the need for Home Rule and fought the 1886 campaign on that issue alone.[29] He comfortably defeated the Conservatives' Joseph Crosland after a bitter campaign marked by a caustic letter from Leatham calling on Liberal electors "to give your vote against any one who is ready, like Mr. Summers, at the bidding of an imperious autocrat in London, to trample every principle of Liberalism under foot."[30]

At 81.6% the turnout had been the highest in West Yorkshire and 7.4% higher than the national average.[31] Nevertheless the Huddersfield result did reflect something of the national pattern of Liberal abstention in that the Liberal vote had been reduced by 750 since 1885. However the Conservatives had not picked up the whole of this number as their own vote was also down by 170. Taking into account the movement of the estimated 600 Irish electors from Conservative to Liberal, the result meant that around 1350 Liberals (9% of the electorate) had either abstained or voted Conservative in 1886, the indications being that 400 or so had voted Conservative.[32]

The situation in Huddersfield was, in short, the same as the rest of Yorkshire: "there was no large scale movement of votes from the

Liberals to the Unionists [but] .... there was a fair, though not crucial, number of abstentions among traditional Liberal votes."[33] Huddersfield, with the rest of the West Riding, though not the rest of the country, remained Liberal. In West Yorkshire the position after 1886 was almost unchanged from that of 1885, the Liberals holding eighteen of the twenty-two seats (a loss of one). In fact only the West Riding, the North East, rural Wales and Eastern Scotland voted solidly Liberal in 1886, elsewhere there was a Unionist landslide.[34] However, as Blewett has observed, "the Unionist hegemony was ushered in by default rather than by conversion"[35] in view of the high number of both Liberal abstentions and unopposed Unionist seats.[36] In subsequent elections it was Liberal apathy rather than Conservative enthusiasm that perpetuated the Unionist hegemony. Only when the Liberals had shelved Home Rule, mobilised their potential support, and stepped up the number of contested elections did they begin to do well again. In short, the 1886 general election had frozen a section of Liberal support into apathy and abstention that was not thawed out until after the turn of the century, and considerably worsened by the events of the 1890s.[37] Thus, beneath the surface, as Cooke and Vincent have observed the results of 1886 "confirmed rather than reversed the voting patterns of previous elections".[38] Huddersfield reflected this.

Several points emerge from the impact of the Home Rule crisis in Huddersfield. Firstly, despite the ousting of Leatham and despite evidence of defection and abstention, the Liberal Party remained firmly in the driving seat: it had held the parliamentary seat in

unfavourable circumstances and although its municipal representation dropped by five seats between November 1885 and November 1886 it still retained a clear majority which remained stable until 1900.[39]

Secondly, if the defection of landed Whigs like the Ramsdens was on the cards before 1886 the same cannot easily be said about those men who formed the HLUA. As has been observed elsewhere "they represented no wholesale middle-class flight from Liberalism,"[40] while "the profiles of Liberal membership and those who ... [became] Liberal Unionists remained quite similar."[41] Having said that it is clear that Liberal Unionism in Huddersfield was more significant and influential than in much of the West Riding. Roberts' observation that "Liberal Unionism was not a significant independent force in West Yorkshire politics"[42] is not strictly applicable to Huddersfield.

Thirdly, the crisis illustrated that rank-and-file opinion in the local Liberal clubs moved faster than the HLA and was probably more advanced in its Liberalism than the local Liberal leadership. Significantly it was the tiny minority of working men on the HLA, men like Owen Balmforth and Thomas Bland, that were most vocal in backing Home Rule and the ousting of Leatham. Indeed it was Balmforth who in 1893 was to perceive most clearly the threat posed by the Labour Party which was to have amongst its leaders his father and brother, as well as Allen Gee, who had acted as one of Leatham's nominators in 1885. While Gladstone remained leader the Liberal Party's working-class following seemed firm but the monopoly which Home Rule

came to exercise over Liberalism as a result of 1886 compounded the problems the party was soon to face: that of finding a leader to replace Gladstone; that of formulating a social programme; that of continuing to straddle both middle and working-class support; that of evolving an Imperial policy. Huddersfield Liberalism in 1886 remained reasonably intact but Home Rule came to be seen by many working people as an irrelevancy at a time of falling wages, unemployment and ever-deteriorating living conditions, when the 1884 Reform Act had seemed to promise so much.

2. Radicalism and Socialism in Huddersfield

By the time of the 1892 General Election a new potential threat to Liberalism had reared its head: that of the Huddersfield Labour Union, established in September 1891 and embodying a desire for independent working-class representatives. The advent of local Labour parties and their early grassroots achievements has been analysed with increasing thoroughness in recent years such that there now exist studies of a growing cross-section of the early Labour movement throughout the country. With some qualifications and variations, two main themes emerge: firstly that Labour activity around 1890 was strongest and most significant in West Yorkshire. It was the main stamping ground of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and at the party's first national conference in Bradford in 1893 a third of the 120 delegates were from Yorkshire[43]; there were none from Wales or Ireland and only three from the South,[44] as Shaw commented: "London was practically out of the Conference."[45] This is not to say that Yorkshire had a monopoly on Socialism or militant trade

unionism at this time. Indeed the Social Democratic Federation (established in 1881), the Fabian Society (1884) and the Socialist League (1884) were all stronger in London than in Yorkshire, while the 'new' unskilled trade unionism made itself felt in the capital during the 1889 London Dock Strike. Moreover, Scotland had had a Labour Party since 1888, formed by Keir Hardie in the wake of the Mid-Lanark by-election at which he had been snubbed by the Liberal Party. Nevertheless Yorkshire, and in particular Bradford, remained the hub of early Labour activity in terms of pioneering political initiative and achievement. In fact Bradford, Leeds, Halifax, and the Colne Valley all had Labour M.P.s and often extensive Labour municipal representation by 1907. Huddersfield, on the other hand, was something of an anomaly in the West Riding's claim to be the cradle of the Labour movement: the Labour Party did not win the parliamentary seat until as late as 1923, despite the fact that in theory it was as favourable a constituency for Labour as were most of the other urban constituencies in the West Riding. Furthermore, as late as 1927 the Huddersfield Liberal Party remained the largest party as the Borough Council. It is with an explanation of the atypical backwardness of Labour politics in relation to Liberalism in Huddersfield that much of this thesis is concerned.[46]

The second theme to emerge from recent research concerns the factors underlying the creation of the local Labour parties. Most historians are agreed on the centrality of differing combinations of two strands: small Socialist groups and militant, sometimes 'new', unionism. However, local conditions varied widely: "Each district where the

ILP emerged during the 1890s has its own history to tell. In some areas the strength of trade union affiliation was more important than the cultural or anti-Liberal nature of the movement. In other areas it was the cultural and anti-Liberal attitudes that prevailed."[47] Clearly the formation of local Labour parties was a gradual process as E. P. Thompson has stressed: "The fertilisation of the masses with socialist ideas was not spontaneous but was the result of the work, over many years, of a group of exceptionally gifted propagandists and trade unionists."[48] Often, however, it was the trade unions which were in the forefront in the establishment of the ILP, frequently by virtue of the existence of a ready-made organisation in the form of the Trades Councils. Indeed, as Saville has observed: "to write the history of labour politics in most towns means to document the history of the Trades Council as the focal point of the local movement,"[49] although there is widespread variation as to the point at which local Trades Councils threw in their lot with independent labour politics or Socialism. It was in fact the 'conversion' of the Trades Council that proved to be the turning point for local Labour parties in many towns, not least in Huddersfield. Extensive work by Dr. Keith Laybourn has focussed on the central role of the trade unions in the formation of the Bradford Labour Union in May 1891: "Trade unions played a vital, if not decisive, role in the creation of an authentic working-class political party."[50] Other research on Manchester and Salford,[51] Bristol,[52] Leicester,[53] Blackburn[54], London[55] and elsewhere tends to confirm this emphasis. To what extent it was the newer, unskilled trade unions, rather than the craft unions, that were taking the active role again varied geographically. It does, however, seem

reasonable to assume that it was not a hard and fast dichotomy[56] in that it was not simply the new unions which were rebelling against Liberalism and speaking out for working-class rights. In Bradford all unionists worked together: "it was not - as has often been supposed - a straightforward clash between new and old unionism, between the unskilled, on the one hand, and craftsmen somewhat desperately trying to avoid proletarianisation on the other."[57]

Recently, however, David Clark has challenged this orthodoxy of the central role of the unions in the emergence of the Labour Party by arguing that "Colne Valley ... does prove conclusively that trade unionism is not an essential prerequisite for Socialism."[58] He contended that the Colne Valley Labour Union, formed in July 1891, had its origins in ethical Socialism based on a network of social activity rather than in trade unionism which was exceptionally weak in the constituency. Moreover, there was no evidence of pre-existing socialist bodies in the area which may have contributed to the rise of Labour politics: "the Colne Valley men had no previous links with any Socialist groups and indeed had not even a trades council."[59] In short, labour politics in the Colne Valley was ethical and spontaneous. In Wales Socialism also figured more prominently than trade unionism in the emergence of the Labour Party,[60] although it is clear that before 1914 little headway had been made in undermining the principality's Liberal hegemony.[61] In the majority of cases, however, it is clear that it was the coming together of trade unionism and often well-established, albeit small, Socialist

bodies like the SDF and the Fabian Society, which constituted the birth of an ILP. Frequently, although the two strands may have been drifting together for some time, it was strike action which fused the two into a working combination. In Bradford, the Manningham Mills Strike (1890-1) was crucial to the formation of the Labour Union in that it hardened class feeling and stamped the Liberal Party as the party of the employer and of worker repression.[62] The centrality of strike action as the catalyst for independent Labour politics has been observed elsewhere.[63]

If it was the geographically varying combination of Socialist groups and the trade unions that led to the emergence of local Labour parties then what was it that inspired growing numbers of working men to move away from the established parties, in particular the Liberal Party, to support Labour? Again research has yielded a number of common, if varying, local factors, notably Liberal intransigence to working-class representation. Some working men became disillusioned with the failure of the Liberal Party, especially after the advent of Home Rule, to bring forward the sort of issues and policies which concerned the everyday concerns of unemployment, housing, wages and conditions. The issues which predominated in the Liberal Party in the late 1880s and 1890s were basically alien to working men: Home Rule, disestablishment and to a lesser extent, temperance. It was these issues also that occupied so much of the time of the local Liberal Associations and clubs, not least in Huddersfield as shall be seen. Discussion on issues of greater working-class interest like the Eight-Hour Day, factory and housing reform and payment of M.P.s was limited

even though, as the Fabian Society discovered, such issues were clearly crowd-pullers. Another frequent working-class grievance levelled against local Liberal Associations was their persistent refusal to adopt working-class candidates at either Parliamentary or municipal level. This was a common, if misunderstood, factor underlying independent Labour politics and has been noted by many historians.[64] From the point of view of the typical local Liberal Association a working-class candidate was far from ideal: he may well win over more working-class votes but invariably he had no money either to fund his candidature or as contributions to 'worthy' local causes which paid dividends at election time. Moreover, a working man would not directly represent the middle and employer classes on whom the Liberal associations relied for finance and leadership.

A further area of nascent working-class discontent with Liberalism was the subjugation of individual expression. The caucus system and the club network of the Liberal Party was in theory democratic, but, as already seen, in practice the local Liberal leadership frequently lagged behind the clubs, making its own decision with merely a gesture to representative bodies. Nor is there evidence that the Liberal clubs' ruling bodies were peopled by the working classes to any great degree. The Saltaire-type paternalistic deferential radicalism was being undermined by the 1880s as some working men sought independent political expression in the quest for higher wages and better conditions. It is against this background of varying factors that the emergence of the Huddersfield Labour Union and its relationship with Liberalism can be compared.

Organised Socialism came late to Huddersfield when compared with Bradford, where there was branch of William Morris's Socialist League in 1886, and Leeds, which saw the formation of a branch of the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) in 1884.[65] In 1886 Ben Turner, the weavers' union leader, had advertised in the Huddersfield Examiner for men of like political thinking to join him in establishing a local branch of the SDF, but he received only two replies and the idea had been abandoned.[66] Nor did a visit from William Morris in November 1887 elicit much interest.[67]

Yet the town could boast a fairly strong radical tradition grounded in both Luddism and in the movement for parliamentary and factory reform in the 1830s. The Huddersfield Radical (or Political) Union formed in November 1830, out of which the Huddersfield Short-Time Committee was to grow in the spring of 1831, was an important early political working-class organisation.[68] Moreover this tradition can be linked to both Liberalism and early Socialism through Secularism, a movement based on the belief that "the evils of contemporary society were attributable to the baneful effects of religion."[69] Support for Richard Carlile's Painite republicanism in the 1820s had been successfully organised in Huddersfield by Abel Hallawell, a tinplate worker[70] and by the 1830s this allegiance had largely been transfered to Owenite 'co-operative socialism'. The Huddersfield Secular Society, formed in 1837 and lasting until 1912, with a break between 1843 and 1847 when a moderate form of Chartism gained a modest following in the town, was influential if not numerically very strong.[71] Moreover its model Secular Sunday

School established in 1862 had amongst its members during a twenty-four year life span, several subsequent local Socialist pioneers including Ben Turner and the Balmforth family.[72] Watts Balmforth had been an Owenite and a Chartist, and like many such radicals had drifted towards the Liberal Party from the 1850s, though he later became an ILPer. He had two sons: Ramsden, a bookkeeper for the Co-operative Society, was a founder member of the Fabian Society and the ILP in Huddersfield, and was subsequently ordained a Unitarian minister,[73] while his brother Owen, who had been secretary of the shortlived Huddersfield Republican Club inspired by the Paris Commune in the early 1870s,[74] and a leading spokesman of Holyoake Secularism, remained a radical Liberal and was later mayor of Huddersfield. This division of political affiliation within one family[75] reiterates how fine the line was between radical Liberalism and Socialism or trade union 'economism' in the early years. Allen Gee, weavers' trade union leader and Huddersfield's first Labour councillor, also claimed Bradlaughite sympathies whilst a Liberal in his youth[76] though, like Turner, he owed more to Secularism's concern with social issues like pensions, unemployment and land reform, than to anti-religion.[77] It is evident therefore that Huddersfield had a continuous radical tradition transmitted via Secularism to both Liberalism and, to a lesser extent, ethical Socialism. This helps to explain why between the 1880s and 1906 Socialism remained generally amorphous and unorganised, emerging when it did as a new radicalism. Here lay the core of many of Socialism's early problems in Huddersfield: that Liberalism had assimilated the main strands of the town's radical tradition, while the Conservatives

also inherited an aura of radical Toryism derived from Richard Oastler's alliance with the Radicals in the 1830s.

The centre of radical and political discussion in Huddersfield in the 1890s was Thornton's Temperance Hotel, nicknamed "The Centre of Light and Knowledge", which was opened in 1850 and had a venerable tradition as the town's main debating and meeting house for Radicals, Chartists, Secularists and Co-operators alike.[78] It was run by Joseph Thornton, a cloth finisher and "a man of exceptional intelligence and a philosophical turn of mind [with] broad and advanced political views."[79] Until his death in 1887, after which the Hotel suffered serious financial trouble, gradually declining to bankruptcy and closure in 1909, "Thornton's" was frequented by leading secularists like Holyoake, Bradlaugh and Besant; by Radicals like Watts Balmforth, William Armitage and W.B. Croft;[80] and by leading businessmen like Godfrey Sykes, Andrew Chatterton, Reuben Hirst, John Sugden and Joseph Crowther.[81] From the 1880s nascent Socialist thinkers like Ramsden Balmforth, Ben Turner and Joe Dyson[82] were also sprouting from this fertile intellectual atmosphere.

It was thus appropriately at Thornton's, late in 1890, that the Huddersfield Fabian Society, "undoubtedly the first organised effort in the direction of Socialism,"[83] was born, following a visit from W. S. de Mattos of the National Fabian Society.[84] A mere fifteen people attended the inaugural meeting and it is likely that neither membership nor resources ever exceeded this meagre level during the

society's short life. Although several of this small band were later to become prominent Socialists and Labour leaders in Huddersfield, especially Ramsden Balmforth, Joe Dyson, Tom Topping, W. H. Hudson, Jimmy Green, Vincent Dearnley, Moorhouse Dyson, C. Merryfield and John Holland,[85] there was very little in their early meetings and lectures which would have been unacceptable to radical Liberals of the time, like Owen Balmforth, Thomas Bland and George Thomson.[86] Despite the apparent slant of lecture titles such as "Sharing of Wealth", "Drifting to Socialism", "What Socialism Is" and "The Condition of Working Men", virtually nothing was espoused which was not subsequently contained within the Liberal Party's Newcastle Programme of 1891.[87] For example Dyson in his lecture, "Practical Socialism" called for nothing more than profit-sharing, payment of M.P.s, universal male suffrage, free education, and the Eight-Hour Day.[88] It was, in fact, only nebulous and ill-expressed demands for redistribution of wealth and greater working-class parliamentary representation that really differentiated the Huddersfield Fabians from local Liberals.

3. Trade Unionism and Labour's First Contest

It is not altogether clear why in 1886-7 there should have been a total lack of interest in Socialism locally, or why by 1890-1 there was sufficient support to establish a Fabian Society, albeit small, and, as shall be seen, a Labour Union. Clearly disillusionment with the Liberal Party was to some extent a cause and this will be examined shortly. But perhaps most important was the changing nature of local trade unionism between 1883 and 1892. As has been seen, textile

employment in Huddersfield increased significantly between 1881 and 1891,[89] as did the level of unionisation. The largest union locally, the West Riding Power Loom Weavers' Association, increased its membership from 600 in 1886 to 4,700 in 1892.[90] It was also concluded earlier that, even after this revival, trade unionism in Huddersfield remained weak compared to many areas of the country, notably Lancashire, but was relatively strong by West Riding standards. Trade union growth in the late 1880s, therefore, was plainly a major factor behind the establishment of the Labour Union.

This union revival had not been evident in the early 1880s: although the 1883 Huddersfield weavers' strike[91] had firmly established the existence of the Weavers' Association, based in Huddersfield, and something of a place in the hearts of the workers, the enthusiasm of 1883 dwindled markedly in the years 1884-7.[92] There had been something of an influx of membership during the strike, but thereafter the apathy characteristic of West Riding textile workers towards trade unions returned, producing a waning of activity. Furthermore there was a widespread fear that joining the union would endanger one's job at a time when trade was not at its peak and employment insecure. Nor was this an unrealistic fear in view of the victimisation that had followed the 1883 strike.[93] The years 1883-7, therefore, were years of consolidation for Huddersfield trade unionism: organisation and reorganisation, rather than successful recruitment, was the major aim.[94] In January 1885 Ben Turner wrote to Allen Gee strongly urging a rejuvenation of the Weavers' Association:

> I am extremely sorry that our union is so low down in numbers .... I wonder sometimes if the rules of our society could be altered and amended so as to be more effective. The organisation as it is is almost valueless .... I have tried often .... to get weavers to join, but they say it isn't good enough.[95]

There were several consequences of the initiative contained within this letter: firstly, it marked the beginning of a close working and personal relationship between Gee and Turner which was later extended at the Yorkshire Factory Times and which was to last for many years. Secondly, the unions rules were revised[96] and thirdly, a series of lectures on the objects and advantages of trade unions was begun, being gradually stepped up as the 1880s progressed. Finally, growing out of these immediate changes came the establishment in November 1885 of the Huddersfield Trades Council.

There had been two previous failed attempt to form a Trades Council in the town in 1869 and 1874, but the third attempt had an air of greater conviction and came at a time of something approaching a mushrooming of trades councils all over the country.[97] In inspiration the Council owed everything to the Weavers' Union and in particular Allen Gee who, as its first President, saw it very much as "another of his efforts to fortify local trade unionism for a renewed fight."[98] Starting life in the Chess Tavern, High Street (owned by E. E. Fleming, the first Secretary), the Council combined with the friendly and co-operative societies in 1886 to buy the disused Mechanics Institute in Northumberland Street, which was opened in August the same year by the Marquis of Ripon as the Friendly and

Trades Societies Club.[99] In the initial years of its existence the Trades Council was dominated by the Weavers' Association as is evidenced by the composition of the executive. It was, moreover, ostensibly non-political:

> The idea of setting up a separate political body in opposition to capitalist parties ... was evidently not the intention of the promoters of the Council. Improvements in wages, hours and conditions of labour, to be achieved through industrial organisation, were the chief ends in view.[100]

Nevertheless, at the outset, there was little doubt that the Council was closely aligned to Liberalism, albeit very much within the radical Lib-Lab tradition epitomised at that time by Gee himself.[101] In the early years frequent attenders at Trades Council meetings included advanced Liberals like Owen Balmforth and George Thomson,[102] while firm support was expressed for M.P. Summers, whose 'progressive' views on industry were greatly favoured. In particular Summers supported the Eight-Hour Day, which was far from typical amongst Yorkshire Liberals.[103] In the first years of its existence, therefore, the Trades Council was Lib-Lab in approach and broadly non-political.

The main significance of the Trades Council was that it served as a co-ordinating body for the area's diverse and often tiny unions: in theory it represented a very wide area, including the Colne Valley, "but in practical terms this was nothing more than token coverage."[104] Its exact membership and composition is extremely difficult to ascertain: the first comprehensive figures published

in 1896 indicate that two years earlier twenty-seven unions (or branches) were affiliated representing 2,262 members.[105] Prior to this there are no reliable membership details available but at the Council's AGM in September 1889 nine trades were represented, while in October 1890 eleven trades were affiliated representing around 1,500 members.[106] Even allowing for a duplication of branches in one trade, this suggests that between 1889 and 1894 there was a substantial expansion in affiliation, supplemented by a rise in the level of membership in those trades already represented on the Council. On balance, there would seem to be little reason to doubt "that the Council quickly established itself in the favour of local Trade Unions and took but little time to become truly representative of the trade union movement of the town."[107]

Nevertheless, it was not until the late 1880s that the consolidation of the local trade union movement, epitomised by the creation of the Trades Council, began to pay dividends in terms of membership and political organisation, and this was for a number of reasons as much to do with national events and shifting opinion as with local initiative. Firstly, there was a trade revival towards the end of the decade. This naturally benefited Huddersfield even though the town's textile industry had not suffered the worst ravages of the depression and was reported to be in a "sound and satisfactory condition" in the mid-1880s compared with the ailing condition of the cotton industry and agriculture at that time.[108] As trade picked up, so demand for mill labour increased and overtime became more common, which gave workers the money, the security and, to some

extent, the inclination to join a union, although it would be erroneous to assume that there was a rush to sign up.

Secondly, emanating mainly from London, was the New Unionism which was recruiting workers hitherto unorganised and displaying a greater militancy, often backed by Socialism, than had the craft unions.[109] Although the Weavers' Association was clearly not an unskilled union in its early history[110] it greatly benefited from this atmosphere of union growth and activity that accompanied the 1889 London Dock Strike, the 1890 Leeds Gasworkers' Strike and the 1890-1 Manningham Mills Strike. Balmforth declared in 1900 that "Huddersfield was not formerly considered a strong-hold of trade unionism, but, happily, like the rest of the country, it has, since the great London dock strike of 1889, made rapid and striking progress in this direction."[111] Moreover, as Ben Turner observed, it was not just the coming of the New Unions themselves that was so important as much as the advent of new methods within the existing unions, not least his own:

> The old unions dealt with friendly society benefits in addition to trade benefits; the new unions ignored the former. The old unions had very complicated book-keeping arrangements, while the new unions were busier making members than book-keeping. The old trade union official was clerk, book-keeper, banker, financier; the new one more of a propagandist, a platform man, and a negotiator.[112]

Thirdly, working-class political consciousness had been aroused by the 1884 Reform Act and the evolution of a local party organisation

manifested in the caucus and the club movement.[113] To some working men, trade unionism and Labour politics offered an outlet for this consciousness in the form of a political organisation unreliant upon the employer and more closely geared to everyday life. Yet while all these more general trends were an essential backdrop to trade union revival in Huddersfield, in the final analysis it was the local effort that actually attracted members into the unions and sparked off an interest in independent labour politics.

Not only did the membership of the Huddersfield Trades Council grow significantly from 1887-9 onwards, paralleled by union growth generally, but its representation was also widened to encompass a whole gamut of unions not directly connected with the textile industry. The influx of these newer unions, notably the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (A.S.R.S.) and the General Labourers' Union, was increasingly reflected in the council's executive committee: J. A. Fletcher (Amalgamated Society of Engineers), W. H. Scott (Ironfounders' Union), W. Wray (Tailors' Union) and Tom Topping (A.S.R.S.) all held key posts between 1887 and 1893.[114] Others like William Pickles (Painters' and Decorators' Union) and R. Thomas (Printers' Union) were also making their presence felt.[115] Although it would be wrong to identify in the changing composition of the Trades Council a political volte face, it is clear that there had been, by 1891, a measurable shift in position away from the earlier radical, ostensibly non-political, ' Lib-Labism' to a more independent stance and a readiness to become more directly involved in politics. A similar sort of move can be discerned in Bradford where James

Bartley,[116] writing in 1887, said that "I believe it to be extremely undesirable to mix trade unionism with politics," yet, only two years later, led an attack on the 'Lib-Lab' elements in the Bradford Trades Council and helped forge the alliance between socialism and trade unionism.[117]

During the summer and autumn of 1890 the Huddersfield Trades Council discussed the question of labour representation on the Town Council and other locally elected bodies. In August 1890 Allen Gee attended the T.U.C. for the eighth year running, this time as the Trades Council's representative, and his subsequent report reflected something of the change that had come over both himself and the Council as a result of the climate of 1887-9. He spoke warmly on the one hand of the "talents" of Ben Tillett but, on the other, was seriously critical of John Burns, observing that "Mr. Burns has been placed upon a higher pedestal than his abilities warrant."[118] Here Gee seemed to be relinquishing, at least in part, his adherence to the form of 'Lib-Labism' characterised by Burns[119] and coming down in favour of Tillett's move aggressively independent, class approach to politics. In this light it is not altogether surprising that when, in October 1890, the Trades Council asked Gee to stand for the Lindley Ward in the forthcoming municipal election, he quickly consented.[120]

The ward's sitting member on the Council was manufacturer Benjamin Broadbent, a Liberal Unionist.[121] Gee, as a member of Lindley Liberal Club and a Liberal worker of over ten years' vintage, standing

as a working man's candidate, clearly presented the Liberal Association and the Lindley Liberal Ward Committee with a problem. It was very much a test case as it was the first time a distinctively Labour candidate had stood in the Borough, and the first time the Liberal Party was required to respond to a potential threat. On Monday, 20 October, the Liberal ward committee, chaired by Joseph Smith,[122] met to discuss the situation. It was eventually agreed that they would in no way support or aid Gee's candidature, but neither would they field another, Liberal, candidate. Gee's claim to Liberal support on the grounds that he had not as yet relinquished his official adherence to the Liberal Party, was disregarded and the Liberal Party remained inactive.[123] This inactivity clearly coincided with the 'official' HLA line and indeed the Huddersfield Examiner refrained from all comment. In fact, it was a line of action least likely to cause dissension within the HLA itself. Nevertheless the ward committee's decision was soon subject to keen criticism from Councillor J.A. Sykes,[124] W.A. Beevers[125] and Owen Balmforth: all three were Liberals and all three came out in firm support of Gee's candidature. However, they were evidently only a small minority in the HLA: none of the larger families ventured to support Gee. Even so, support was not lacking. Gee was a native of Lindley and a popular local man, quite apart from his fine trade union record, as one correspondent pointed out in the Examiner: "Mr. Gee has persistently and bravely stood forth to champion the cause of his fellow working men, to obtain for them their just rights and their demands for justice recognised."[126] He could, moreover, rely on the support of some friendly societies, much of the Trades Council

membership, though not all, a few Socialists notably John Holland (later a Fabian) and the Yorkshire Factory Times.

Throughout his two week campaign Gee's main emphasis was on the need to get working men into the Council chamber so rendering it truly representative of the town's population: they alone could represent working-class interests. Here Gee was undermining the typical Liberal attitude, expressed by E.A. Leatham,[127] that the educated middle class was best equipped to represent working men. He persistently denied that working men were unfit to serve on the Council and queried whether it was "to be a disqualification that a man has worked on a loom?"[128] He was critical, moreover, of Broadbent's insinuations[129] that his stance as a working-class candidate was merely a vote-catching slogan calculated to further his own ambitions, replying: "I would rather win a shilling a week for the weavers of the district than all the honours they [the Borough Council] could confer upon me."[130] Above all Gee denied that he was an advocate of class tension: he was merely seeking to further the rights of working people, long neglected by Liberalism.[131]

Although in theory standing as a 'Lib-Lab', Gee's candidature in 1890 was viewed by many as being distinctively independent of the Liberal Party, as the Yorkshire Factory Times commented:

> Mr. Gee's fight is a fight between capital and labour. His opponent is a representative of the wealthy classes, a manufacturer, born and bred under easy circumstances, supported by men of means, nominated by men of broadcloth, and with assentors upon his nomination forms with long purses.[132]

In the event Gee was defeated, receiving only 323 votes to his opponent's 783 on a turnout of 62.4% (the second lowest of the eight contests in 1890). Broadbent had accumulated a solid Conservative vote while the Liberal vote had evidently split: some had supported Gee and some Broadbent, but many Liberals had abstained.[133] Although Gee had not done abysmally it was clear that he would have to attract more Liberal voters and residual working-class Tory voters if he were to win the seat. The result came as something of a relief and a vindication of official Liberalism: the Huddersfield Examiner, noting Broadbent's larger than anticipated majority, remarked:

> The electors evidently do not think that the time has come for giving labour, any more than any other interests, a direct and special share of the representation of the municipal borough.[134]

Regardless of the result, the importance of the Lindley contest in general terms was that it indicated the beginnings of a rebellion against Liberalism. In specific terms it had sowed the seeds for the creation of the Labour Union by hardening the stance of Gee and his followers in the light of the HLA's refusal to condone the candidature. Such actions by the Liberals indicated to some working men that only by means of an independent approach would they have any chance of realistic representation on local bodies. In retrospect it could be argued that the HLA had bungled their first response to Labour's demands, as seems to have been so often the case elsewhere in the country. To most contemporaries, however, it looked rather different: they believed working men were adequately represented

by Liberals on the Borough Council and that independent working-class candidates were unnecessary. By eroding the traditional 'progressive alliance' of Liberalism, aimed at combating privilege and landed wealth, such independent candidates risked assisting the common enemy of Toryism. Only a handful of men, like Balmforth, perceived the mistake the HLA was making in not enabling working men to stand as Liberal candidates. Such advice went unheeded and Gee thereafter threw in his lot with Labour. More generally his candidature had revived working-class interest in local politics and produced a climate locally that was favourable to the creation of a Fabian Society late in 1890, and subsequently a Labour Union.

4. Trade Union Activity 1890-92

Throughout Gee's candidature a major factor in his favour had been the Yorkshire Factory Times, which early in October 1890 had pressed the Huddersfield Trades Council to select a working-class candidate to fight the municipal elections. One councillor alone, it was claimed, would be sufficient to draw attention to the issues of sweated labour, low wages, fair contracts and the need for greater civic economy: "we only hope that men may be found who are prepared to fight the battle of Labour on these or similar lines in Huddersfield."[135] Nor was such pressure out of character. Since its formation in July 1889 the Yorkshire Factory Times had persistently encouraged trade union recruitment as the means to ameliorate wages and conditions. The paper was based in Huddersfield and owned by John Andrew of Cotton Factory Times and Ashton Reporter fame. J. Burgess was the editor and from the outset he attracted

notable contributors to the new paper: Allen Gee was persuaded to leave his loom to become bookkeeper-cum-correspondent while Ben Turner, already a Cotton Factory Times writer, readily joined the venture as the "Sweeper-Up". Other notable Labour pioneers who contributed to the paper included Tom Maguire, James Bartley and James Mawdsley, true to the editorial dictum that it was to be "a paper written by workmen for workmen."[136]

In a series of editorials in 1889 the Yorkshire Factory Times pointed out that weavers' wages had declined markedly in recent years and that a further drift downwards could only be prevented if people joined the union, details of which were frequently supplied.[137] Significantly this pressure coincided with a renewed recruitment drive between 1889 and 1891 by the Weavers' Union, led by Gee, Turner and W.H. Drew.[138] Indeed the Yorkshire Factory Times detailed a whole series of weavers' meetings in the area at this time as well as interventions by the triumvirate in numerous disputes and strikes. In some cases they were welcomed by employers, in others they were cold-shouldered and in one instance a mill-owner in Longwood threatened to kick Gee off his premises if he ventured to enter.[139]

The combination of national events, publicity from the Yorkshire Factory Times, and the recruitment drive had a clear impact locally and trade unionism really became widespread for the first time. In January 1890 it was reported that the Huddersfield gasworkers had "at last organised themselves" with a union membership of 104,[140] while a new power-loom tuners' association numbered seventy-five

men.[141] The A.G.M. of the Weavers' Association revealed in April 1890 that membership had increased four-fold in the preceding year: 140 meetings had been held covering virtually every part of the West Riding and Ben Turner alone had travelled 816 miles in one month.[142] By January 1891 a strong Huddersfield branch of the A.S.R.S. had been formed, soon after affiliating to the Trades Council,[143] and in May the Weavers' Association was widened to encompass nearly all mill jobs.[144] At the close of 1891 Huddersfield also had a new Dyers' Association, whose membership tripled to 200 between Christmas 1890 and June 1891, a new Brassworkers' Union, a branch of the Amalgamated Society of Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators, and a Cigar-Makers' Union.[145] Unions representing the carters and lurrymen, and the enginemen and firemen followed shortly afterwards. The rise in union activity was indeed remarkable, as the Yorkshire Factory Times observed: "Even a place like Huddersfield, for instance, where until the last year or two the spirit of organisation seemed to be dead or dying, is at last awakening to the necessities of the times."[146] Moreover, as Ben Turner commented, the Yorkshire Factory Times itself had played no small part in this revival: "The establishment of that paper, with its liberty to Gee, Drew and myself to go on Union agitation, made our Union prosper."[147]

In parallel to this union activity between 1888 and 1891, Huddersfield also experienced a significant rise in the number of strikes and lockouts in the textile industry (see table 2.1 below) which can be explained in two ways. Firstly, the upturn in trade meant labour was

temporarily at a premium and jobs were easier to acquire rendering strike action easier. By 1892, however, American protective tariffs were beginning to bite and trade worsened, though as shall be seen later Huddersfield was to some extent insulated from this. Secondly, the revival of trade unionism locally had focussed on the need to raise weavers' wages. Wages had declined relatively since the 1870s[148], as the Yorkshire Factory Times observed, while at the same time faster looms were being introduced which seemed to yield greater profits to the masters without returning to the weavers a proportionate share in the form of increased wages. Wage grievances, indeed, accounted for the vast majority of the strikes detailed in table 2.1. Despite the probable lack of comprehensiveness of these figures the general upward trend is clear and this is consistent with Laybourn's more general conclusions on Yorkshire strikes and lock-outs in this period.[149] It is also notable that the proportion of strikes and lock-outs which were successful or partially successful was higher towards the end of the 1890s than at the beginning. Possibly this said something of the attitudes of the textile employers who were very much on the defensive at this time in view of the threat of foreign competition and the crescendo of union activity. They did not wish to set a precedent by yielding too much to the unions.

Table 2.1 Strikes and Lockouts in the Huddersfield Textile Industry, 1888-95

Year	Woollens	Worsted	Result*
1888	2		PS, F
1889	1	2	F, PS, ND
1890	5	1	2F, 2PS, S, ND
1891	7	0	3PS, 2F, S, ND
1892	1		F
1893	2		2S
1894	4		2S, 2PS
1895	5		3PS, S, F
	30		8F, 12PS, 7S, 3ND

* F: Failure; S: Successful; PS: Partially successful; ND: No details available

Source: Board of Trade Reports on Strikes and Lockouts, 1888-1895

Only in the ensuing years when trade union growth seemed to have declined were they more ready to concede to the workers' demands and had by that time come to accept the actual existence of a trade union, which they had been less prepared to do earlier in the decade. Nevertheless, the prevailing Liberal view of unions, as expressed by the Examiner, held good for some years to come: that unions could best serve the working classes

> by acting as provident and co-operative societies to strengthen the position of the workers [rather] than by suicidal conflicts with capital. Indeed the wholesome competition of organised labour would bring the capitalist to his knees sooner than any amount of direct fighting, and in the meanwhile the wives and children of the workers would escape agonies untold, and the trade of the country would be protected from one of the chief sources of weakness and instability.[150]

Outright employer hostility to the unions is evidenced by the victimisation which followed the 1883 strike, as already observed, and by other strike action resulting from the sacking of a union member.[151] Overall, the rise in local strike activity observed here was both a consequence of local union revival and changing attitudes, as well as a contribution to an atmosphere of political change conducive to a move away from Liberalism, here personified by employers.

Although the Liberal Party in Huddersfield still remained the working man's party, it was increasingly viewed with frustration by those who saw in labour politics the only chance to improve wages and conditions. To them it seemed both natural and necessitous, moreover, that working men should be represented by their own class; some had, after all, the vote. By 1891 in Huddersfield there was thus the coming together of several factors: a revived trades unionism; a strengthened Trades Council committed to attaining working-class representation at local, if not parliamentary, level; an undercurrent of Socialism in the form of a Fabian Society; a legitimate grievance amongst working men regarding wages and conditions; and a conviction amongst a handful of 'well-read' men like Gee, that the Liberal Party could no longer offer working men what they desired nor even best represent their interests.

5. The Parties and the People, 1886-1892

Perhaps what was most notable about the period between the elections of 1886 and 1892 was the almost total monopoly that Home Rule and

Irish affairs enjoyed, not only in politics generally, but within the Liberal Party. A glance at the activities of Huddersfield Liberals from 1886-91 reveals that only extremely rarely did the local Liberal clubs, much less the HLA or William Summers himself, depart from the issue of Ireland whether it be espousal of Home Rule, criticism of Tory coercion or an attack on the Irish Land Purchase Bill.

Locally, 1887 was dominated by a sustained Liberal critique of Balfour's policy of Irish coercion with mass protest meetings in April and December, the latter addressed by Lord Rosebery. At every turn, the local clubs passed resolutions condemning coercion and the brutal use of the police to quell rioting. No other single issue became prominent. In November 1887 Joseph Woodhead, as M.P. for Spen Valley and President of the HLA, followed a growing fashion amongst M.P.s and visited Ireland. He returned with the sentiment that "he believed that if he were an Irishman, and subjected to the extortions with which he had been made acquainted, he would be a terrible 'Plan of Campaign' man."[152] On the surface, therefore, the commitment by the HLA to Home Rule appeared to be a firm one.

Between 1888 and 1892 this commitment remained publicly unruffled. Indeed the argument was evolved that Home Rule was an obstruction to domestic reform, a barrier to be surmounted before advance could continue[153], or as William Summers put it: "The Irish question blocks the way"[154], "With the present condition of things in Ireland it would be idle for us to attempt to discuss any other political

question."[155] Joseph Woodhead argued along similar lines that "they would be glad to get quit of the Irish question and turn their attention to reforms which were required at home" but Ireland meanwhile must remain paramount.[156] This was to remain the prevailing tenor of Liberal speeches in Huddersfield well into 1891. In April of that year Summers reminded a mass meeting of Liberals in Huddersfield Town Hall that nothing had changed, Ireland alone was "preventing the discussion of the wants and necessities of the English people": Home Rule still blocked the way.[157] In October, referring to the Parnell Divorce Scandal and the Irish leader's death on the 6th, Summers voiced both the fears of some Liberals concerning Home Rule's paramountcy and a renewed determination to pursue its realisation, when he said: "Mr Parnell is gone, but the Irish cause remains. Mr. Gladstone may go, and the Irish cause will still remain."[158] Indeed, during these years the HLA's obsession with Ireland bordered on that of Gladstone's himself: in March 1888 a banquet was held for T.D. Sullivan M.P., ex-mayor of Dublin, followed by a mass meeting on Home Rule addressed by Asquith.[159] Throughout the period the Liberal clubs passed resolution after resolution condemning the imprisonment of this or that Irish leader. Moreover, Chamberlain's visit to Huddersfield in 1889 only reinforced Home Rule as the focus of local political interest.[160]

When local political discussion did turn to other questions, as it did in June 1890, it was to the issue of temperance, in particular an attack on the Government's Public House Endowment Bill which proposed compensation to landlords losing licences through public

action. Welsh Disestablishment was another old chestnut which received limited airing in these years. Only land law reform emerged as anything resembling a new issue. In short it is evident that between the Home Rule crisis and the creation of the Huddersfield Labour Union in September 1891 virtually nothing of direct relevance to the wages, conditions and employment of working people was discussed in the town at a political level. When something other than Ireland cropped up it was invariably the old Liberal, Nonconformist shibboleths of disestablishment and temperance, not workers' compensation, the Eight-Hour Day, payment of M.P.s, abolition of plural voting, factory inspection reform and so on. This was the case even after the 1891 Newcastle Programme. If Liberalism really meant much more than Home Rule, then it was hardly evident in these years in Hudderfield. Not that working men were hostile to Home Rule per se, it was merely that some expressed

> a daily increasing suspicion that the Home Rule question is being used by Liberal landlords and capitalists, not to say by Mr. Gladstone himself, as a means of staving off the far more deeply reaching social reforms which would otherwise have been taken up.[161]

However, if on the one hand Huddersfield Liberals seemed obsessed with Home Rule, ignorant of the desires of working men and unprepared to countenance working-class candidates like Gee, on the other hand they were not idle in these years. They made positive efforts to respond albeit in a limited way to the changing nature of politics and the need to bring about an influx of young blood into the party,

by widening the existing Liberal organisation. In May 1887 the Huddersfield Junior Liberal Association was inaugurated "to promote the spread of Liberal principles amongst the young men of Huddersfield [and] to unite junior Liberals together for active political work."[162] This was followed, in December 1888, by the Huddersfield Women's Liberal Association committed to forming "sound opinions amongst women on public questions ... [and] securing the best possible representation in local elections."[163]

It is probable, however, that neither of these new bodies recruited from the working classes. Nor, indeed, was it likely that the HLA conceived that this should be so. As Hanham has observed, it is clear that the Liberal Party believed working men should work through existing clubs or other independent bodies like the co-ops or friendly societies or trade unions.[164] It was only when trade unions began to exert a more interventionist role, notably over the issue of the Eight-Hour Day, that some Liberals questioned their suitability as ideal organisations for working men.[165] On balance Liberals saw no need to establish distinctively working men's organisations when so many already existed. Consequently it seems probable that the new organisations were directed mainly towards the middle class. Had this not been the case few working men would have been attracted to an employer-dominated organisation anyway. In many ways, therefore, the rise of the new unions and later the Labour clubs tapped a previously dormant source of potential club attenders by offering a distinctively working-class social and political atmosphere.

Generally, although the HLA made advances in organisation during the 1880s it amounted to preaching to the converted in electoral terms: nothing was done in terms of organisation or policy to appeal to or educate working men, nor indeed was such action deemed to be necessary by the Liberal leaders in Huddersfield. Even the most progressive members of the HLA placed their faith in existing bodies, like the co-operative movement, viewed as the optimum vehicle for working-class organisation by virtue of the emphasis on self-help and class unity.[166]

Yet if the Liberal Party seemed to be doing little in the 1880s to respond to working-class demands for participation in the political machinery, the same was not quite true of the Conservative Party. The HCA spent the period 1886-92 re-organising: in 1886 a permanent secretary was appointed to organise registration and this was followed in the later 1880s by attempts to make local Conservative clubs more politically minded rather than being merely social centres.[167] Furthermore, in October 1891, after widespread debate, the Huddersfield and County Conservative Club was formed with a membership said to be as high as 1300. Shortly after its foundation the club became a limited company and broke formal ties to the HCA though it clearly remained the main meeting place for local Conservatives.[168]

Much of this renewed activity had been inspired by Conservative Central Office which had been pressing hard for local reorganisation since 1886 and for its part responded to a persistent grievance of

the HCA that prominent speakers had been unwilling to visit the town. In October 1888 Hartington addressed a meeting in the Town Hall[169] and in September 1889 Chamberlain delivered a bitter attack on Home Rule,[170] followed late in 1891 by Balfour who made a successful trip to Huddersfield in defence of his own Irish policy and the Government's policies since 1886.[171] Supplementary to these visits was a Conservative recruitment campaign locally, held shortly before the 1892 election, in which twenty-two meetings were held in the month up to 10 June. The drive resulted in a 666 increase in the H.C.A.'s subscription list bringing it to a total of some 3,000.[172]

The HCA was also more adept than the Liberals at directly organising working people. The Huddersfield Primrose League, for example, was phenomenally successful, boasting 2,375 members (2.5 per cent of the town's population) in the Huddersfield 'habitation' (as the clubs were termed) alone in 1890, excluding several other habitations around the Borough.[173] Moreover, as Janet Robb has remarked, a high percentage of the membership of this organisation, especially in the 1880s, was working class, possibly as high as ninety per cent in 1886, though this level quickly declined.[174] Indeed a primary object of the League was an educational one: "To instruct working men and women how to answer the arguments of the Radicals, and the Socialists, and the Atheists in the workshops and in the public houses, and at the street corners."[175]

In other spheres too Conservatism was successful in attracting working men: its identification with drink and gambling, evils eschewed by

Liberal Nonconformity, inevitably enamoured the party to 'worldly' working men. As Joyce has observed, pubs were the focus of working-class life even in strong temperance areas like Huddersfield: invariably the publican was a leader of street opinion.[176] Publicans were Tory almost to a man and "the party's self-appointed agents". Pubs meant warmth, music, companionship, gossip and wit: "To the great mass of manual workers the local public house spelled paradise. Many small employers of labour still paid out their weekly wages there."[177] Conservatism was also closely identified with the Crown and expressions of patriotism were frequent.[178] More continuously such sentiment was expressed by the local Volunteer movement which was Conservative-run, and recruited from the working classes.[179]

On balance it would be true to say that in the 1880s the Conservatives in Huddersfield were probably as much in tune with working men as was the Liberal Party when it came to everyday life and leisure-time. Both parties inevitably lost ground to Labour in the 1890s but this Conservative working-class tradition remained as important an influence in the subsequently retarded growth of Labour in the town as did Nonconformity for Liberalism.[180]

6. The Formation of the Huddersfield Labour Union and Local Politics, 1891-2

The formation of the Huddersfield Labour Union in September 1891 was undoubtedly brought about in the long term by the events and the atmosphere already discussed, but in the short term the Manningham

Mills Strike of 1890-1, in which Gee and Turner had been much involved,[181] and the subsequent establishment of the Bradford Labour Union[182] were crucial catalysts. Moreover, it was Bartley, Gee and Turner who had addressed the meeting in Slaithwaite Socialist Club in July 1891 which resulted in the Colne Valley Labour Union.[183] Underlying this meeting and subsequent ones during August[184] was a current of disillusionment with Liberalism: Sir James Kitson, Liberal candidate for Colne Valley, was criticised as a "man who practices keeping them [working men] in the same place in the gutter by lowering their wages"[184] while Allen Gee's maltreatment in Lindley was frequently invoked. So too was the Liberal Party's refusal in 1889 to countenance working men as Liberal candidates for the Huddersfield School Board elections. In this instance the Liberals had given the Trades Council assurances that one of the seven unsectarian candidates would be a Trades Council nominee. However the Liberals reneged on this and voted the Labour man out, giving further assurances he would instead fill the Board's next vacancy. However, fifteen months later, the working man was once more passed over and a Liberal employer put in to fill the vacancy.[186] Naturally these events led to anger and disillusionment amongst Trades Council members.

During August 1891 it is clear that informal talks were underway between the Huddersfield Fabian Society and the Trades Council for on 26 August delegates Topping (ASRS) and Tetley (Joiners') reported to the Council that after preliminary discussion on the possibility of an independent labour party in Huddersfield a joint

meeting had been arranged for 16 September.[187] In the meantime a dispute broke out between the Liberal-controlled Borough Council and the Huddersfield branch of the Amalgamated Society of Enginemen and Firemen who manned the town's trams. An employee, D. Dutton, a strong trade union member, had been dismissed by the tramways committee, ostensibly through drunkenness, but in reality it was claimed, because he was a trade unionist and had been inspiring his fellow workmen to strike against low wages and the poor condition of the tram boilers rendering them unsafe. A meeting was convened on 31 August and it was well attended, including Gee and Turner.[188] The enginemen's grievances were aired and it emerged that the tramways committee had refused to meet a deputation of men to discuss wages and conditions, let alone Dutton's reinstatement. Feelings ran high that the Borough Council needed "reforming", as one delegate put it: "The mediocrity of intellect in the Council is not creditable to the ratepayers, and it's high time some working men are sent there."[189] Tapping this ill-feeling, Gee proposed a resolution, seconded by Turner, to the effect "that ... the time has arrived when labour candidates should be brought forward for the County Council, School Board, and other elective bodies in the town."[190] It was passed unanimously. The events surrounding this meeting confirmed several underlying political features: firstly, Gee's determination to break with the Liberal Party; secondly, the attitude of local Liberals, this time on the Borough Council, to working men; and thirdly the mood of militancy amongst some trade unionists in Huddersfield at this time. The enginemen's grievances were an overt expression of those of other workers in the area and once again Liberal intransigence was plain to see.

Two weeks later on 16 September J.A. Fletcher chaired a joint meeting at the Friendly and Trades' Club between the Trades Council and the Fabian Society represented by Ramsden Balmforth, Joe Dyson, James Green, Charles Merryfield and Moorhouse Dyson.[191] An animated discussion ensued, in which the Fabians emphasised that independent representation alone could achieve labour's aims. There was little dissension amongst trade unionists represented by Gee, Tetley, White, Topping, Smith, W.H. Greasley[192] and J.W. Downing[193]: all strongly advocated an independent line, though most of them talked of getting working men onto local bodies rather than into Parliament. Eventually a motion to form "a distinct and separate Labour party in the borough of Huddersfield" was passed unanimously, and a committee was elected pro tem. The Huddersfield Labour Party, or Labour Union, had come into being.

Another meeting on 24 September confirmed the executive comprising John White (Card and Blowing Room Operatives' Society) as President, Joe Dyson (Fabian Society) as Secretary and Tom Topping (ASRS) as Treasurer.[194] Furthermore an annual subscription of 1s. was fixed and a constitution was formulated, the two main parts of which are worthy of quotation:

> (1) Its objects shall be to promote the interests of working-men in whatsoever way it may from time to time be thought advisable and to further the cause of direct Labour representation on local bodies and in Parliament.

> (2) Its operations shall be carried on irrespective of the convenience of any political party. Persons holding official positions in connection with political organisations shall not be eligible for membership and members of the Labour Union accepting official positions in any political organisation shall thereby forfeit their membership.[195]

There are two points of note here: firstly, Socialism was not declared to be an object of the Huddersfield Labour Union (HLU). This remained so until after the Bradford Conference of January 1893 when Huddersfield's six delegates[196] affirmed the ILP's Socialist aims and the HLU became affiliated to the national ILP. Secondly, although it was a break with the existing parties the new Labour Union precluded only officials of those parties not membership *per se*.

Reactions to the new Labour Union were predictable: the *Yorkshire Factory Times* was laudatory but warned: "Those who take the lead in the matter will have to take a good deal of hard blows, and it goes without saying almost that their motives will be questioned and distorted by the representatives of the two great parties."[197] The *Chronicle* refrained from comment altogether, while the *Examiner*, having remarked sceptically on the Colne Valley Labour Union in July,[198] failed completely to report the establishment of the similar body in Huddersfield.

On 27 September a large HLU meeting was held in the Market Square, its main aim being to publicise the new party and its aims. However, it also enabled John Gee to commence his campaign as the Labour Union's

first municipal candidate for Fartown Ward. The Yorkshire Factory Times had hinted that another three candidates could be in the offing in the West, Marsh and Dalton Wards but in the event none were forthcoming.[199] John Gee conducted an enthusiastic and enigmatic campaign against both Liberal and Conservative candidates. His programme of reform was a mixed bag and if not overtly Socialist, it was down-to-earth and likely to appeal to working people: he advocated an Eight-Hour Day, trade union 'liberty', more holidays, a six-day week, super tax, land value tax, abolition of the aldermanic bench, payment of council members, female municipal candidates, a free library and finally "free urinals and water closets for both sexes."[200] As the Examiner noted "the base and summit of his candidature was in and for the interest of labour, and the greatest good for the greatest number."[201] It became increasingly evident, however, that he would not win the seat after he had lost several votes of confidence at his own meetings, despite the vocal support of Gee, Tom Topping and Ramsden Balmforth, all of them fine speakers. Moreover, shortly before the poll the Trades Council confused matters by issuing a puzzling recommendation, based supposedly on a questionnaire issued to each candiduate, that in all but two of the eight contests[202] the Conservatives should receive trade union votes.[203] The only conclusion to be deduced from this was that the Trades Council had become utterly disillusioned with the Liberals on the Borough Council and considered it to be in their best interests to reduce the Liberal majority; possibly also to enable a more favourable opportunity for the advent of Labour candidates. Furthermore, such a dictum is curious if it is borne in mind that the

membership of the Trades Council was still predominantly Liberal at this time, even if this were not true of the leadership.

The results showed a poor poll for John Gee who was able to win only 130 votes (11.4%) to the Conservative's 416 (36.4%) and the Liberal's 596 (52.2%) on a 63.2% turnout. His performance, albeit in a three-cornered fight, compared unfavourably with Allen Gee's 30.5% the year before. Nevertheless Labour was at least fielding candidates. More generally, the Trades Council's recommendation had no effect in breaching the solidity of the Liberal Party's municipal representation which rose by one seat in 1891 to thirty-eight in all (out of sixty).[204] This Liberal municipal advance reflected to some extent the national swing away from the Government as a dissolution began to look a firm possibility.[205]

The Labour Union next turned its attention to the Huddersfield School Board elections set for 30 January 1892. In November 1891 the HLU agreed to ask Allen Gee and Ramsden Balmforth to stand as candidates,[206] and shortly before Christmas a stormy joint meeting of the HLU and the Trades Council was held to discuss the elections.[207] The general feeling of the meeting was of non-co-operation with the Liberals, and J. Dransfield[208] bitterly attacked the Liberal Association's executive, the fifty members of which he declared were "elected" for their money qualification alone rather than their representativeness. However, several of those trade unionists present expressed a desire to avoid a contest by not furthering independent candidates. Eventually the meeting endorsed Gee's prospective

candidature but came to no conclusions as to his possible status, whether independent or not.

A few days later, a meeting of the Labour Union considered a letter from the Liberal Party which agreed to recommend a Labour man as one of their unsectarian seven on the School Board.[209] Very quickly it was obvious that the meeting was split as to what to do next. The Trades Council representatives, notably G.A. Hirst,[210] argued that they were not ready to field an independent candidate; that they would be accused of forcing a contest if they did; and that the Liberal offer should be accepted. Meanwhile however, Downing and Balmforth pressed the need for a totally independent line of action. After much discussion the meeting ended with a resolution being passed endorsing Ramsden Balmforth's independent labour candidature for the School Board. A trade union amendment that he be run with the Liberal Party was lost.[211] A subsequent meeting of the HLU on 7 January endorsed this strongly independent stance especially, it was argued, in view of the experience of 1889,[212] although one delegate observed that, come the General Election, they would have to approve one or other of the parliamentary candidates as they had no money for their own.[213] On the same evening the division in approach to the question of independent candidates amongst Labour men was underlined by a heated Trades Council meeting which culminated in a resolution indicating that the Council would support Balmforth's candidature but not along independent lines. It was carried by a large majority despite pleas from W.H. Greasley to the contrary and effectively meant that Balmforth stood as an independent

labour candidate but without official Trades Council backing for his independence from Liberalism.[214]

The reluctance of the Trades Council to endorse Balmforth as an independent reveals something of an overdue backlash amongst Liberal trade unionists in response to the Council's recent move towards overtly Labour politics. Many rank-and-file trade unionists, whilst fully prepared to support efforts to get working men onto local bodies, were deeply suspicious of the Trades Council's attachment, via the HLU, to Socialism, and continued to favour a policy of obliging Liberals to make concessions rather than taking a politically independent stance. Only when Liberals were not ready to countenance working-class candidates, as in the case of the municipal contests, were many members of the Trades Council prepared to support independent candidates. In the case of the School Board the Liberals had offered Labour what amounted to one of their seven seats. Considering that their aim was to get working men onto public bodies, trade unionists believed this had been achieved: the Liberals had responded to Labour pressure and it was churlish to refuse their offer. In short, 'Lib-Labism' remained the dominant belief amongst the majority of the Trades Council membership, if not the leadership. While favourable to pressing the claims of working men they continued to vote Liberal and it was not to be until after 1900 that the Trades Council was finally able to throw off this 'Lib-Labism' and support an independent Socialist line, antagonistic at all levels to Liberalism.

The Yorkshire Factory Times took a poor view of the Trades Council's conduct and pressed for a policy of no compromise:

> The Independent Labour Party is not what it was a few short months ago. It has got out of Dreamland, and sits like a spectre by the side of the politicians. They dread it, and would like to bury it out of sight. But it is not to be buried, and it is not to be frightened away ... Compromise - no matter how it may be gilded - means ruin and disaster to the Independent Labour Party.[215]

The Trades Council, however, remained unmoved and even sent a letter to the Liberals denying that they were supporting the Labour Union's candidate.[216] Ramsden Balmforth, meanwhile, set about his campaign, fought mainly on the issues of fair contracts and a legal minimum wage.[217] Last minute efforts by the mayor to avert a contest were boycotted by the HLU and when the results came in they showed that Balmforth had been returned at the head of the poll with an amazing 12,490 votes. His nearest rival received only 7801.[218] As Ben Riley commented: "This was the first signal victory which the new Party in Huddersfield had secured, and it undoubtedly had a considerable influence in strengthening and consolidating the new movement."[219] The Liberal response to the result was predictably muted, although they suddenly claimed Balmforth for their own, unsectarian party, when only a week before he had been described as "vague" and his candidature unnecessary.[220] The Yorkshire Factory Times greeted the result as adequate revenge for 1889 but regretted the division between the Labour Union and the Trades Council pointing out that the latter's ambiguous approach augured badly for Labour in the next general election.

Following the School Board elections, the Labour Union spent the spring of election year consolidating the disseminating their ideas. The Miners' Eight-Hour Bill was the primary concern in February and March, and it was a bonus for local Liberalism that Summers accrued considerable kudos from supporting the bill in Parliament.[221] On 2 April the HLU's largest meeting to date was held in the Armoury, chaired by R. Balmforth and addressed by Ben Tillett, Gee, Turner and John White. The theme was the need for independent parliamentary representation and Tillet assailed the existing, capitalist parties for neglecting working men's demands and squandering wealth better redistributed.[222] The success of the meeting augmented the membership of the Labour Union, which increased throughout 1892 to around 400,[223] and it was followed up by the town's first May Day procession culminating in a spirited meeting in the Market Place.[224] Addressed by Tom Maguire and local Labour activists, the main tenor was once again on attaining independent representation for working men, both locally and nationally.

In fact Labour activity up to the election succeeded in attracting considerable interest in the town, as is reflected by the number of letters relating to Labour in the Huddersfield Examiner during April and May. The most notable aspect of this activity was Ramsden Balmforth's failure to force fair contracts through the School Board in May 1892.[225] Significantly this issue was often seen by Labour men as a test issue for Liberal attitudes to working men[226] and Balmforth saw it as the first step towards a redistribution of wealth. His socialism was essentially ethical, drawing much from Robert Owen

and John Ruskin,[227] and the School Board gave him a platform to express his Socialist ideas which he succinctly summarised thus:

> The only sure foundation for the social well-being of the State is to be found in an equitable diffusion of wealth among the classes of the community ... It is not merely a question of wages but of life, not of economics but of religion ... to give every man the means and the opportunity of enjoying life, and to raise the standard of our civic life, and to give every man the due reward for his labour.[228]

In the event Balmforth's motion was defeated on an amendment by six votes to five but Socialism had received a public airing of benefit to the HLU. Those who supported Balmforth's motion on fair contracts were his brother Owen, C. Smith,[229] W.P. Hellawell[230] and R.E. Hinchcliff,[231] those opposed were Reverend Bruce, J.E. Willans, E. Woodhead,[232] Canon Dolan,[233] J.W. Shaw[234] and T. Shaw.[235] In this split the conflicting approaches of Liberals in Huddersfield to the problems of Labour and working-class demands can be well observed. On the one hand were advanced Liberals like Smith and Owen Balmforth stressing the need to respond to the changing climate of society with a more interventionist role. On the other hand were traditional Liberals like Willans and Woodhead, maintaining a strictly individualist approach to politics and industry, standing very much "where they did in 1880"[236] and eschewing any suggestion of collectivism implicit in some of the policies of the younger Liberals and to some extent apparent in the 1891 Newcastle Programme. In short the vote on fair contracts epitomised the conflict with which Liberalism was increasingly faced in the 1890s.

7. The 1892 General Election

As has been seen, it is clear that in Huddersfield between 1886 and 1892 very little except Home Rule broke to the surface of politics, especially in the first five years of this period. Admittedly Summers had affirmed a commitment to the Newcastle Programme in November 1891 which encompassed some of the side issues in which Huddersfield Liberals were interested, notably the local veto, disestablishment and land reform[237], but this commitment detracted little from his determination to view Home Rule as "the question of questions". Local Liberals, in public at least, subscribed to Gladstone's 'total' moral approach to the issue: that it "blocked the way" to further reform. In private, however, it is likely that some more radical members of the HLA like Owen Balmforth, Carmi Smith and George Thomson were less then convinced that Home Rule's paramountcy would in the long term be fully beneficial to the Liberal Party, when they perceived all too clearly what working men were interested in. They were well aware, from attending local Fabian and trade union and co-operative meetings that Home Rule was rarely mentioned and that more everyday issues concerning employment figured more frequently. Exactly how extensive this discontent was within Liberal ranks in Huddersfield in the early 1890s is difficult to ascertain but Roberts concluded that the Parnell divorce scandal had confirmed many Liberals' worst fears and shaken their private, if not public, belief in Home Rule: "they were less than enthusiastic about their electoral prospects and some were looking forward to some shift in the direction of party policy."[238] The Newcastle Programme went one step towards satisfying this concern amongst some party supporters but many feared

it was "a Babel of inconsistent tongues"[239]: too unwieldly a programme of measures[240], difficult to present to the electorate, lacking in any list of priority, and, in short, reflecting party faddism and disunity rather than unity.[241] Moreover there were few doubts that Home Rule, not this programme, would lead the Liberals into the next election, seemingly undiminished by either the ravages of time or the Parnell Scandal. It was furthermore clear that the Liberal Unionists had made their break with Liberalism final.[242] Locally Joseph Woodhead continued to term them "traitors to their party"[243] and in the Colne Valley there was even greater bitterness following H.F. Beaumont's belated defection.

Yet despite the internal traumas with which Liberalism was faced, there was optimism in 1892 that much of the ground lost in 1886 would be recovered: some even predicted a Liberal majority of 100.[244] In fact by-election trends had been good for the Liberals: they had won ten seats from the Unionists since March 1890 alone, with a net gain of nineteen since 1886. The Government, on the other hand, had made only two gains in six years.[245] In Huddersfield, as the election approached, Summers once again faced Joseph Crosland as the joint Conservative - Liberal Unionist candidate. Crosland entered the campaign with the added fillip of a knighthood conferred in May 1889, although the Liberals had made it clear that they were doubtful he deserved it and discerned ulterior motives:

> The apologists dare not deny that knighthood has been conferred on the recipient chiefly, it not entirely, on account of his efforts to win Huddersfield from its long and honourable political allegiance .... Sir Joseph Crosland is a standing reminder of the seriousness of Tory tacticians and Primrose League wirepullers.[246]

To some extent this bitterness was justified: many men in Huddersfield more deserving of the honour had been passed over, but then there was nothing new about honours conferred for political motives.

By 1892 both party organisations had been reformed to some extent while the HLU was reasonably well established and able to exert at least some influence as the School Board elections had indicated. It was no foregone conclusion that Summers would win an easy victory and it was perceived that the action of the Labour Union and the Trades Council may prove decisive in determining the margin of such a Liberal victory.

In February 1892 the HLU discussed the question of the parliamentary representation of the borough and many members urged giving serious consideration to a Labour candidature.[247] Subseq- uently a special meeting on 14 April resolved, after protracted debate and by a very small majority with many abstentions, to bring out a Labour candidate, although no selection committee was agreed upon.[248] A further meeting on 28 April was similarly inconclusive,[249] but eventually on 5 May a joint HLU - Trades Council meeting resolved <u>not</u> to field a candidate, offering instead support for Tom Mann's projected Labour candidature

in the Colne Valley.[250] Significantly, this final decision was not, in the main, due to the Trades Council overturning the feeling of the HLU for the latter body was far from keen itself. Indeed President John White had argued that "it was not oppportune at the present time" for a Labour candidate to come forward and most of the Labour Union's members agreed. This did not, however, resolve the problem as to what course of action Labour voters should be advised to take. During June the HLU and the Trades Council discussed at length the submission of a list of questions to Summers and Crosland "to screw them up to advanced declarations"[251] and requested electors not to pledge themselves to either candidate before the answers had been published.[252] On the basis of these answers it was then decided on 30 June that the electors should be advised to vote as they wished, no action to be taken by the Labour Party at all.[253] This decision was disapproved of by many Labour Union members who had favoured a manifesto calling on Labour men to abstain.[254] That this did not come about in Huddersfield was probably due to the trade unions' reluctance to break openly with Liberalism, a continuation of their policy during the School Board elections made even more concrete by Summers' favourable attitudes towards labour, especially over the Eight-Hour Day.

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By comparison with the machinations and events of 1889-92 the election itself was a quiet affair. The Liberal campaign in Huddersfield greatly benefit ed from the appearance of John Morley and Herbert Asquith on 21 May. Morley's message was clear:

> You have to choose between Lord Salisbury with protection and coercion, with not a single positive plank in their programme ... and the great leader and the great party and the great policy which has for fifty years been forwarding the prosperity of the country.[255]

Before the dissolution of Parliament on 21 June both Summers and Crosland had issued addresses. Summers, as expected, placed "the question of questions" above all else but advocated a wide range of issues drawn from the Newcastle Programme, including registration reform, abolition of plural voting, universal male suffrage, land value taxation, local option, industrial boards of conciliation, shorter hours for railway workers and equalised death duties.[256] Crosland's address similarly put Home Rule to the forefront and defended the Government's coercive policy since 1886: "The country in 1886 decided by an overwhelming majority against this suicidal policy [of Home Rule] and all that has happened since has demonstrated the wisdom of that decisions."[257] He further pointed out the Government's "fine domestic record", in particular free education and local government reform. For the future, he advocated "provision for old age" (though not pensions), boards of arbitration and an "examination" of the hours of labour.

The campaign itself was short, lasting only two weeks, and proved even shorter for Summers who was prevented by illness from addressing any meetings at length between 28 June and polling day on 4 July, though he was present at many meetings. His place was filled by his sister Mrs Buckley[258] and although she was a poor substitute for Summers' supporters there was no discernible change in his popularity at public

meetings. Both parties fought along the lines of their manifestoes. For the Liberals "the overshadowing question of Home Rule" was frequently mentioned in the same breath as Lords reform, but only rarely were popular local issues like local option given leeway. Joseph Woodhead, having resigned his seat in the Spen Valley chaired the Liberal election committee extremely efficiently. Labour received little mention but Summers did make a point of greeting the new Labour Union whilst pledging himself to pressing for payment of M.P.s as the next step to enabling working men to enter Parliament.[259] Such talk dispelled any doubts some trade unionists may have had about his beliefs on industry and assured him of their support.

Crosland directed most of his speeches to a defence of the Government's record per se but especially in Ireland, pointing out how Home Rule would tax the English not to mention its other drawbacks.[260] In opposing any restrictions on the drink trade, he was supported by the newly-created Huddersfield and District Licensed Trade Electoral Association, opposed in particular to local option and direct veto, whilst calling for compensation for loss of licences.[261] In fact, the very creation of this body indicated how far local option had become popular locally amongst Liberal Nonconformists, second only to Home Rule in importance. Yet, despite this support, Crosland had a disappointing campaign, losing several votes of confidence;[262] nor had his oratorical ability improved since 1886; while his frequent use on the hustings of the captain of the town's football team[263] hardly caused a ripple despite the rise in popularity of football in the 1890s.[264]

The results, announced to a crowd of 15,000 assembled outside the Town Hall, gave Summers victory by a majority of 261 on a turnout which had increased by 8.5 per cent since 1886 to 90.1 per cent.[265] Although his majority had been increased by seventy-seven, in terms of the proportion of votes polled the 1892 result corresponded almost exactly to that of 1886: Summers received 50.9 per cent in 1892 to 50.8 per cent in 1886, while Crosland received 49.1 per cent in 1892 to 49.2 per cent in 1886, a negligible swing to the Liberals and contrary to the more general West Yorkshire swing to the Conservatives averaging 4.5 per cent.[266] The results of 1892, therefore, merely reiterated the message of 1886: that the constituency favoured Gladstonian Liberalism with Home Rule at its head. The Labour Union had apparently made no impact electorally since its formation in drawing men away from voting Liberal - nor could this be expected until more direct action was undertaken. Nationally, despite a widespread recovery, the Liberals did not regain many of the seats in Scotland and the West Midlands lost in 1886 and the limited extent of their recovery left them able to form only a very unstable minority government reliant on shaky Irish support.[267] In Yorkshire as a whole the Liberals regained two seats (Bradford East and Colne Valley) leaving the Conservatives with only two. Yet despite this the Liberals' share of the votes polled dropped, while that of the Conservatives rose, contrary to national trends which saw a Liberal decline in the share of the poll from 44.9 per cent to 44.2 per cent, but also significantly a Conservative decline from 51.5 per cent to 47.3 per cent.[268]

Roberts argues that the poor Liberal result in Yorkshire marked the beginnings of the decline of Liberalism, a result of the mishandling of its response to the rise of Labour since 1886.[269] In Huddersfield, however, although the Liberals had several times clearly exhibited an intransigence to Labour's demands this had no apparent electoral impact in 1892. Labour had been beaten off successfully at a municipal level, while the membership of the Trades Council, if not the leadership, continued to adhere, with qualifications, to Liberalism rendering the youthful Labour Union relatively powerless. While some working men were evidently sufficiently disillusioned with Liberalism in the 1880s to establish the HLU, the vast majority of those working people who had the vote remained in support of the main parties, mostly the Liberal Party. Admittedly William Summers was not a typical Yorkshire Liberal M.P., by virtue of his advanced industrial views compared with men like Woodhead and Illingworth; but to Summers' credit he succeeded in retaining both working-class votes and middle-class votes unlike Byles in Shipley,[270] Hutton in Morley, Levity in East Leeds and Whittaker in Spen Valley who alienated large sections of middle-class support by sympathising two closely with the interests of Labour.[271] Here, indeed, lay Liberalism's perennial problem which became more difficult as time went on: how to respond effectively to the demands of Labour without losing middle-class employer support (and finance). More often than not, the local Liberal Association made no response at all, as in Huddersfield. When a response was made, it was all too often at the risk of alienating crucial elements of traditional support. By 1892 independent labour politics had arrived in Huddersfield and it was

evident that some Liberals still within the fold were discontented with the Liberal Party's direction and seeming inability to offer socially advanced policies. Some agreed with Sidney Webb's sentiments that:

> the Liberal party will never again stir widespread popular enthusiasm until it finds its own soul, and puts on the armour of a genuine political faith. We must once more become .... systematic in our thought and constructive in our proposals. Above all, we must arrive at a common agreement as to what are our aims and whither we are going.[272]

Notes for Chapter Two

1 Yorkshire Factory Times, (hereafter YFT), 27 March 1891.

2 He had in fact originally been M.P. between 1859 and 1865, regaining the seat in 1868. See appendix 1.1.

3 Leatham was born in 1828 at Heath, near Wakefield, the son of William Leatham, a prominent banker. Educated at University College London, where he achieved a B.A. and M.A. in Classics, he followed his brother William into the family business. He published a novel, Charmione, in 1858 before turning to politics in 1859 as an eleventh hour radical Liberal candidate at Huddersfield. (For his election address see Huddersfield Examiner (HE), 27 April 1859). He won the seat by 19 votes, but was defeated in July 1865 only to regain it with a convincing majority in February 1868. Unlike his brother William, who was M.P. for Wakefield in 1859 and unseated by a petition for bribery, Leatham was strongly anti-Church of England and labelled by Dod's as "a Reformer". Amongst his abiding interests were moderate electoral reform: he had spoken prominently in support of the secret ballot and against corrupt practices. The foregoing biographical information is from HE, 10 February 1900 and Stenton, M. and Lees, S., (eds), Who's Who of British MPs, Volume One, 1832-1885, (Brighton, 1976). On Leatham's connections with Bright see Robbins, K., John Bright, (London, 1979).

4 Their defection paralleled that of other West Riding Whiggish landowners, notably the Fitzwilliam, Fawkes and Dent families. There were few that split over Home Rule like the Crossley family of Halifax.

5 HE, 28 November 1885.

6 Cited in Jones, A., The Politics of Reform 1884, (Cambridge, 1972), p.106.

7 HE, 7 November 1885. HE, 7 March 1891, in an article that observed that Durham, Pontefract, Salisbury, Taunton and Bury St. Edmunds each had one M.P. yet their combined populations totalled 79,864 to Huddersfield's 87,157 with one M.P. Huddersfield was to remain one of the largest single-seat constituencies in the country.

8 HE, 1 May 1886.

9 Roberts, A., "The Liberal Party in West Yorkshire, 1885-1895, with an epilogue, 1895-1914", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1979, p.127. See also his: "Leeds Liberalism and Late-Victorian Politics," Northern History, vol. V, (1970), pp.131-56, in which he emphasises the role of Leeds and the Leeds Mercury in swinging Yorkshire Liberalism around to support Home Rule. For rank-and-file support of Gladstone in Huddersfield see letters in HE, 17 April 1886.

10 Born on 28 February 1855, Owen Balmforth was a recurrent figure on the 'left' of the Huddersfield Liberal Association of which he was vice-president and secretary. Influenced by Bradlaugh in his youth and a member of the Huddersfield Secular Sunday School for twenty years, Balmforth helped set up a Republican Club in Huddersfield in 1873. A Unitarian, he was a Liberal councillor from 1897, becoming an alderman in 1904 and mayor in 1906. By trade he was a book-keeper for the Co-op. and became actively involved in the movement as editor of the local co-op. paper Wheatsheaf. He served on the School Board from 1883, on the Education Committee from 1903 (salaried secretary from 1908) and as secretary of the Friendly and Trades Societies' Club. His father, Watts Balmforth (1826-1904) was a life-long radical and Owenite and joined the Labour Party around 1893, as did Owen's brother Ramsden. Owen never made the transition but remained closer to a "New Liberal" than anyone else in the HLA, frequently speaking out for working men and criticising what he saw as retrogressive Whiggish tendencies in the Liberal Party.

11 Smith was a Wesleyan, a temperance advocate and a provisions merchant. He was a Liberal councillor for Lockwood from 1904, an alderman from June 1909 and mayor 1918-19. He was a vice-president of the HLA and a member of the School Board.

12 HE, 1 May 1886.

13 Ibid; and HE, 8 May 1886.

14 Cited in Southgate, D., The Passing of the Whigs, 1832-1886, (London, 1962), p.409, from Hansard. On 20 May Leatham attended a meeting of some thirty-five dissident Liberals summoned by Chamberlain, and on 22 May a meeting of the Liberal Union, chaired by Lord Hartington. See Cooke, A.B., and Vincent, J, The Governing Passion: Cabinet Government and Party Politics in Britain, 1885-86, (Brighton, 1974), pp.424-425.

15 HE, 22 May 1886.

16 A rope and twine manufacturer, Bland was a Liberal councillor from 1887 until 1896. Like Balmforth he was a working man (one of very few in the HLA) and very closely connected with the co-operative movement. Indeed he was President of Huddersfield Industrial Society (1872-8, 1883-4), a director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society (1874-1907), and a member of the central board of the Co-operative Congress (1873-81, 1882-7). A temperance advocate, Bland was a member of Ramsden Street Congregational. Born in 1825, he died in 1908, and was in 1892 the first working man in Huddersfield to be a J.P.

17 HE, 29 May 1886.

18 Joseph Crosland (1826-1904) represented the Conservative and Unionist interest in Huddersfield at five elections narrowly winning the seat at the 1893 by-election. The Crosland family had deep roots in Huddersfield, dating back to 1587, since when several branches had dispersed. Joseph was the third son of

George Crosland, a woollen manufacturer who built several mills in the area notably in Lockwood and Crosland Moor, and he rose to lead the family firm. He was a Conservative councillor for Lockwood (1869-72), a member of the School Board, and President of the Chamber of Commerce (1872-4). Though the Crosland family were traditionally Methodist, Joseph was for most of his life an Anglican, generously endowing All Saints Paddock and St. Barnabas Crosland Moor. Following his marriage locally he built Royds Wood which became a centre of social activity. Apart from textiles he was chairman of the Huddersfield Banking Company until its amalgamation in 1897 with the London and Midland, and was a wealthy man, contributing large sums to Conservative Party funds, the Technical College and the Infirmary. Nevertheless his knighthood in May 1889 came as a surprise and was seen as blatantly political by his opponents. Never a great speaker or a popular politician, he achieved the Conservative candidature more as a result of the leverage which his money and his family name (his brother, T.P. Crosland, represented Huddersfield as M.P. between 1865 and 1868) brought than anything else. Foregoing details from HE, 3 September 1904 and elsewhere.

19 This emerged at a meeting of the Huddersfield Conservative Association (HCA) on 5 June. See HE, 12 June 1886.

20 HE, 12 June 1886.

21 An advert in the Examiner of 12 June had appealed for support in forming a branch of the Liberal Union in the town.

22 Mills was the HLUA's first secretary. Son of a Huddersfield ironfounder, he was a solicitor, clerk to the Borough Magistrates, secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, a playwright (Attic Nights, 1879), and was 49 years old in 1886. Vickerman was the HLUA's first president (1886-7, 1888-93). He was previously a Liberal councillor. A Churchman and a woollen manufacturer he was aged 49 in 1886 and died in 1893. Huth was president of the HLUA, 1887-8, a founder member of the Chamber of Commerce, a School Board member, and a Unitarian. Keenly involved in the Mechanics Institute, he had been a very active Liberal until 1886. He died in 1892. Holliday (President HLUA, 1894-8) was a partner in Read Holliday (chemical and electrical firm), a Unitarian and freemason. In 1897 he became a J.P. and was a director of the West Riding Bank until his death in 1898. Sykes was secretary of the HLUA from 1887. Broadbent was president of the HLUA from 1898 until his death in 1904, and was also a vice-president of the Yorkshire Liberal Unionist Association. A shipping merchant, he was a Churchman, a J.P. and a governor of both the Technical College and the Infirmary. John Sugden was initially a drysalter but later a cotton spinner. In 1892 he fought Colne Valley unsuccessfully as a Liberal Unionist, but sat as a Liberal Unionist on Huddersfield Council until 1908. President of the HLUA, 1893-4, a sympathiser of female suffrage, a Non-conformist and an early pioneer of Huddersfield's civic growth and of the HLA's advancement, Sugden was also a writer and journalist.

23 Sugden, J., Slaithwaite Notes, (Manchester, 1905), p.45.

24 See an interview with him in HE, 21 July 1906.

25 HE, 9 October 1897.

26 See appendix 6.1.

27 See appendix 2.1.

28 Foregoing information from: HE, 26 June 1886; Stalybridge and District Yearbook, 1905, p.11; Hill, S., Bygone Stalybridge, (Stalybridge, 1907); Stalybridge Reporter, 7 January 1893. He was also a Fellow of the Statistical Society; Governor of Victoria University Manchester; Treasurer of the Parliamentary Committee on Irish Affairs; and spoke six languages (four of them fluently). His publications included: The Condition and Prospects of the Poorer Classes; Free Trade and Protection; and The Economical Aspects of the Land Question. The Summers' iron foundry business was founded in 1857. In 1895 10,000 acres near Chester was purchased for the construction of the Summers Shotton Steel Works comprising 45 steel mills.

29 Summers was formally adopted as candidate on 19 June, 1886. See HE, 26 June 1886 for this and his election address.

30 HE, 3 July 1886.

31 See appendix 1.2.

32 This assumes, of course, that the 1885 Conservative vote, other than their Irish support, remained solid in 1886, and discounts any unfavourable or unestimable effects of the stale register in 1886. Crosland himself (HE, 10 July 1886) estimated about 1,000 abstentions which he believed cost him the election. My figure of 400 also assumes that about 600 'Irish' voters actually turned out to vote and there are indications that the Irish League did indeed get all their men to the polls and traced several removals.

33 Roberts, A., op. cit., p.147.

34 See Kinnear, M., The British Voter, (New York, 1968), pp.17-22; and Cooke and Vincent, op. cit., pp.435-58. The final result was 316 Conservatives, 79 Liberal Unionists, 190 Liberals and 85 Irish Nationalists. The Liberals suffered a net loss of 144 seats.

35 Blewett, N., The Peers, the Parties and the People, (London, 1972), p.21.

36 116 Unionists were returned unopposed in 1886 (one-third of the total) compared to six in 1885.

37 See Blewett, N., op. cit., p.22; Dunbabin, J.P.D., "Parliamentary Elections in Great Britain, 1868-1900: A Psephological Note", English Historical Review, January 1966; Cornford, J., "The Transformation of Conservatism in the late Nineteenth Century", Victorian Studies, 1963, pp.35-66.

38 Cooke and Vincent, op. cit., p.437.

39 See appendix 2.1.

40 Roberts, A., Northern History, op. cit., p.147.

41 Stephens, H.W., "The Changing Context of British Politics in the 1880s: The Reform Acts and the Formation of the Liberal Unionist Party", Social Science History, Vol. 1, No. 4, (Summer, 1977), p.499.

42 Roberts, A., thesis, op. cit., p.132.

43 Moore, R., The Emergence of the Labour Party, 1880-1924, (London, 1978), p.51. See Howell, D., British Workers and the Independent Labour Party 1888-1906, (Manchester, 1983) for the best account, (pp.282-300).

44 Representing London, Chatham and Plymouth.

45 Quoted in Pelling, H., The Origins of the Labour Party, 1880-1900, (Oxford, 2nd ed. 1965), p.117.

46 Another major anomaly in West Riding labour politics was Keighley which seems to have been very similar to Huddersfield in its politics. See James, D., "The Rise of the I.L.P. in Keighley", unpublished lecture given 20 February 1982, and idem., "The Keighley I.L.P. 1892-1900" in: Jowitt, J.A. and Taylor, R.K.S. (eds), Bradford 1890-1914: The Cradle of the Independent Labour Party, (Bradford, 1980), pp.56-72.

47 Laybourn, K., "The Trade Unions and the I.L.P.: The Manningham Experience", in Jowitt and Taylor, ibid., p.42. This point is endorsed by Howell, D., op. cit.

48 Thompson, E.P., "Homage to Tom Maguire" in Briggs, A. and Saville, J., (eds.), Essays in Labour History: Volume One, (London, 1960), p.279.

49 Saville, J., "Trades Councils and the Labour Movement to 1900", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, no. 14, (Spring, 1967), p.29.

50 Reynolds, J. and Laybourn, K., "The Emergence of the Independent Labour Party in Bradford", International Review of Social History, XX, 1975), p.345; also Laybourn, op. cit., and idem., "The Manningham Mills Strike: Its Importance in Bradford History", The Bradford Antiquary, part XLVI, (1976).

51 Hill, J., "Manchester and Salford Politics and the Early Development of the Independent Labour Party", International Review of Social History, XXVI, Part 2, (1981), pp.171-201.

52 Bryher, S., An Account of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol, Part One, (Bristol, 1929).

53 Cox, D., "The Labour Party in Leicester: A Study in Branch Development", International Review of Social History, vol. 6, Part 2, (1961), pp.197-211.

54 Walton, R.L., "The Labour Movement in Blackburn 1880-1914", Unpublished M.A. thesis, (CNAA, Huddersfield Polytechnic, 1981). P.F. Clarke's Lancashire and the New Liberalism, (Cambridge, 1971), tends to put less emphasis on the trade union role in the Blackburn ILP and more on the SDF - see pp.40-41.

55 Thompson, P., "Liberals, Radicals and Labour in London 1880-1900", Past and Present, 1964, pp.73-101; idem., Socialists, Liberals and Labour: The Struggle for London 1885-1914, (London, 1967); Wrigley, C., "Liberals and the Desire for Working-Class Representation in Battersea, 1886-1922" in Brown, K.D.(ed.)., Essays in Anti-Labour History, (London, 1974), pp.126-57.

56 See Duffy, A.E.P., "New Unionism in Britain, 1889-90: A Reappraisal", Economic History Review, XIV, (1961-2), pp.306-319; also Howell, D., op. cit., Part 1.

57 Reynolds and Laybourn, op. cit., p.326.

58 Clark, D., Colne Valley: Radicalism to Socialism, (London, 1981), p.195.

59 Ibid., p.22.

60 Parry, C., "Gwynedd Politics 1900-1920: The Rise of a Labour Party", Welsh History Review, VI, (1972), pp.313-28.

61 Morgan, K.O., "The New Liberalism and the Challenge of Labour: The Welsh Experience, 1885-1929" in Brown, K.D., (ed.), op. cit., pp.159-182.

62 Laybourn, K., op. cit; also Pearce, C., The Manningham Mills Strike, December 1890 - April 1891, University of Hull Occasional Papers in Economic and Social History, (Hull, 1975).

63 James, D., op. cit; Thompson, E.P., op cit.

64 Purdue, A.W., "The Liberal and Labour Parties in North-East Politics 1900-14: The Struggle for Supremacy", International Review of Social History, XXVI (1981), part 1; Brown, J., "Attercliffe, 1894: How One Local Liberal Party Failed to Meet the Challenge of Labour", Journal of British Studies, XIV, no. 2, (May, 1975), pp.48-77; Pelling, H., op. cit., chapter IV; Laybourn, K., op. cit., Moore, R., op. cit.

65 In March 1885 the branch was dissolved and its members reformed as a branch of the Socialist League. See Woodhouse, T., "The Working Class" in Fraser, D., (ed.), A History of Modern Leeds, (Manchester, 1980). More generally see Tsuzuki, C., H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism, (Oxford, 1961); Wilkins, M.S., "The Non-Socialist Origins of England's First Important Socialist Organisation", International Review of Social History, vol. 4, no. 2, (1959), pp.199-207; Hobsbawm, E.J., "Hyndman and the S.D.F." in Labouring Men, (London, 1964).

66 Riley, B., "A Brief Account of the Rise and Growth of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Huddersfield and the Colne Valley", in Riley, B., and Whiteley, E., The 16th I.L.P. Conference Handbook, (Huddersfield, 1908), p.18; idem., "The Rise of the Labour Movement in the West Riding", Socialist Review, June, 1909; and Thompson, E.P., in Briggs and Saville, op. cit.

67 HE, 12 November 1887. Morris's visit to Bradford in 1884 had led directly to a branch of the Socialist League.

68 See Chadwick, S., 'A Bold and Faithful Journalist': Joshua Hobson, 1810-1876, (Huddersfield, 1976). I am indebted to John Halstead for much of the ensuing section on Huddersfield's early radicalism.

69 Royle, E., Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866-1915, (Manchester, 1980), p.x; idem., Victorian Infidels: The Origins of the British Secularist Movement, 1791-1866, (Manchester, 1974).

70 Ibid., (1974), p.35.

71 Membership was 54 in 1879, (Royle (1980), op. cit., p.135) rising to 80 in 1886, (HE, 10 April 1886).

72 See Turner, B., About Myself, (London, 1930), p.47. He was secretary of the school in 1881, President of the Weavers' Association (1902-22), a Fabian, an ILPer, and M.P. for Batley for Labour in 1922. On the broader links between secularism and ethical Socialism, later manifested in Harry Snell's brand of Socialism in Huddersfield around 1908-14, see Mayhew, G.J., "The Ethical and Religious Foundations of Socialist Politics in Britain", unpublished PhD thesis, York University, 1980.

73 This "easy relationship" between Secularism and Unitarianism has been noted by Royle (1980), op. cit., p.129. D.F.E. Sykes and Abel Hallawell were further examples of Unitarian Secularists.

74 The Club lasted from 1873 until 1875; see Owen Balmforth's obituary in HE, 4 February 1922, and footnote 10 above. More generally see: Gossman, N.J., "Republicanism in 19th Century England", International Review of Social History, vol. VII, part 1, (1962), pp.47-60.

75 Owen's daughter, Gertrude, was a member of the Labour Party; see Huddersfield Citizen, 16 September 1927.

76 See Bellamy, J., and Saville, J., (eds.), Dictionary of Labour Biography, vol. 3, (London, 1976), pp.81-4 for a full biography of Gee.

77 Turner, B., op. cit.

78 See HE, 30 October 1909; Turner, B., op. cit., pp.82-3; Joseph Thornton's obituary in HE, 4 October 1887; and Royle, (1974), op. cit., p.227. It was similar to Cave's Café in Leeds and Laycock's in Bradford.

79 HE, ibid.

80 Watts was the father of Owen and Ramsden. He was a radical member of Rashcliffe Liberal Club and a fervent disciple of Robert Owen (after whom he named his son). He was a prominent local co-operator. Later he split with the Liberals and became a leading member of Lockwood Labour Club formed late in 1892. In 1893 he represented Huddersfield at the first conference of the ILP in Bradford. William Armitage (1815-93) was known as 'Young Feargus O'Connor' because of his Chartist enthusiasms which had lost him his job in the 1840s. He was a friend of Richard Oastler, a plug plotter and eventually a Gladstonian Liberal with extreme contempt for the Church. He despaired of Home Rule but never left Liberalism. He was perhaps Huddersfield's most prominent Radical in the 1840s. Croft wrote a life of Oastler and was an advocate of factory reform.

81 Sykes was Mayor of Huddersfield 1889-91 and a Liberal Councillor and Alderman for Moldgreen Ward from 1878 until 1895. He was a member of High Street Methodist New Connexion Chapel and President of Huddersfield Tradesmen's Benevolent Institute. By trade a cloth manufacturer he died in 1896 leaving £37,000. Chatterton formed the Thornton's Temperance Hotel Company Limited in the 1890s in an unsuccessful effort to save it from bankruptcy. He was chairman of South Ward Liberal Club and later a Councillor. Hirst, born in 1829, was the largest cotton spinner in the district and Mayor from 1891-3. He had entered the first Council in 1868 as a Liberal, becoming an alderman in 1874, and was several times President of Lockwood Liberal Club.

82 Dyson was the first Secretary of both the Huddersfield Fabian Society and the Huddersfield Labour Union. In 1891 he had also helped to establish the Colne Valley Labour Union. He was a woollen operative turned fish salesman before emigrating to South Africa in October 1896, upon which he terminated 18 months on the Huddersfield School Board and many years as a Labour propagandist and speaker. During the Boer War he survived the seige of Mafeking as an 'auctioneer' and became a supporter of the British Government's Imperial policy (see chapter five below)

83 Riley, B., op. cit., p.19.

84 YFT, 16 January 1891.

85 For Balmforth and Dyson see above. Tom Topping was first treasurer of the Huddersfield Fabian Society and a leading member of the ASRS (and later the NUR). He was a Labour councillor in Huddersfield from 1911 until 1921 during which time he was President of the Huddersfield ILP. As an NEC member of the ASRS/NUR he actively encouraged affiliation to the LRC and close co-operation with the Labour Party. In 1926 he was instrumental in organising the General Strike in Huddersfield. (Huddersfield Citizen, 18 February 1927). William Hudson was a leading figure in the Huddersfield Fabian Society, the Huddersfield Labour Union, the ILP and the Huddersfield Labour Party. He was a close friend of Russell Smart, Labour candidate in the town in 1895, and a prominent member of the Trades Council. (Huddersfield Citizen, 22 June 1928). Jimmy Green, raised in Ireland, was again a well-known figure in all Huddersfield's Labour organisations, being in 1891 a member of the Fabian Socity deputation that urged the Trades Council to form a local ILP. He subsequently became treasurer of Huddersfield ILP for several years, and a keen supporter of Allen Gee, (Huddersfield Citizen, 20 April 1928). Dearnley worked significantly at William Thomson and Sons Limited, Huddersfield's famous and successful profit-sharing woollen manufacturing concern. (See Perks, R.B., "Real Profit-Sharing: William Thomson and Sons of Huddersfield, 1886-1925", Business History, XXIV, no. 2, July 1982).

86 On Thomson see Perks, R.B., ibid., and note 102 below.

87 YFT, 19 June 1891; HE, 7 March, 18 April and 25 July 1891. Many of the Fabian Society's meetings were held in the Friendly and Trade Societies' Club on Northumberland Street.

88 HE, 7 March 1891.

89 See above chapter one, table two. Increased from 11,833 employees to 18,523.

90 See above chapter one.

91 See above chapter one for details of this strike.

92 Turner, B., Short History of the General Union of Textile Workers, (Heckmondwike, 1920).

93 Ibid., p.53, also Clark, D., op. cit., p.10.

94 Turner, ibid., also idem., Heavy Woollen District Branch of the General Union of Textile Workers, (Huddersfield, 1917).

95 Turner, B., About Myself, p.91.

96 Principally reducing the subscription "because there was so much anti-unionism about or so little trades unionism possible", (Ibid., p.92).

97 There is very little published information on Trades Councils but see: Clinton, A., "The History of Trades Councils", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, no. 29, (1974), pp.37-50, (an excellent bibliographical study); also Grant, B., "Trades Councils, 1860-1914", Local Historian, vol. 3, part 4, (Summer, 1957), pp.160-5; and Saville, J., op. cit.

98 Huddersfield and District Associated Trades and Industrial Council: Jubilee Souvenir, 1885-1935, (Huddersfield, 1935), p.15.

99 HE, 16 August 1886.

100 Jubilee Souvenir, (1935), op. cit., p.17.

101 Gee had, of course, nominated E.A. Leatham as Liberal candidate in 1885, (HE, 28 November 1885) and was at that time a leading member of Lindley Liberal Club: the membership of which, incidentally, he never relinquished.

102 Thomson (1842-1921) established and managed a remarkable profit sharing concern from 1886 until his death, with the active support of the Trades Council. Gee was in fact at one time Chairman of the firm's Committee. Thomson was a vice-president of the HLA, Mayor 1910-12, President of the Chamber of Commerce (1892-5) and a keen educationalist. As a Ruskinite and Master of the Guild of St. George, Thomson always described himself as a "Practical Socialist" believing profit sharing to be a form of socialism least liable to divide classes. His views were close to those of Owen Balmforth and both men represented the more advanced wing of the HLA. See also my article: "Real Profit-Sharing: William Thomson & Sons of Huddersfield, 1886-1925", op. cit.

103 In March 1892 Summers was one of only three Yorkshire Liberal M.P.s who voted for the Miners' Eight-Hour Bill. The others were Lawrence Gane (M.P. East Leeds, 1886-95) and Ben Pickard (the miners' leader). Joseph Woodhead of Huddersfield (M.P. Spen Valley) voted against the bill, allying himself with the older individualist Liberal school opposed to all intervention in trade, epitomised by Alfred Illingworth (see also below).

104 Clark, D., op. cit., p.22.

105 Board of Trade Report on Trade Unions 1896, c.8644. The Council continued to grow, peaking in 1901 with a membership of 4,300.

106 Weavers, engineers, cotton operatives, printers, ironfounders, tailors, dyers, joiners and insurance agents (HE, 21 September 1889). By October 1890 the painters and gasworkers had also affiliated (YFT, 24 October 1890).

107 Jubilee Souvenir, op. cit., p.17.

108 HE, 1 January 1887: Annual Review of Huddersfield Trade.

109 Space does not permit a full discussion of the nature of 'New' Unionism and its relationship with the craft unions and politics in the 1890s. Recently David Howell, in British Workers and the Independent Labour Party, 1888-1906, (Manchester, 1983), has observed that the impact of New Unionism varied tremendously geographically and industrially, but that it provided "abundant opportunities for socialists to offer leadership to workers lacking any tradition of Lib-Lab dominance" and "left a permanent mark on the balance of trade union opinion", (p.123). More generally see: Clegg, H.A., Fox, A. and Thompson, A.F., A History of British Trade Unions Since 1889: Volume One, 1889-1910, (Oxford, 1964), chapter two; Duffy, A.E.P., op. cit., Moore, R., op. cit., pp.43-47; Pelling, H., op. cit., chapter five.

110 It was, of course, later renamed the General Union of Weavers and Textile Workers and readily accepted unskilled workers throughout the industry in addition to the skilled workers.

111 Balmforth, O., Official Programme: 33rd T.U.C. in Huddersfield 3 - 8 September, 1900, (Huddersfield, 1900), p.89.

112 Turner, B., op. cit., p.102.

113 See above chapter one also: Hanham, H.J., Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone, (London, 1959); Herrick, F.H., "The Origins of the National Liberal Federation", Journal of Modern History, XVII, (1945), [Critical of Ostrogorski's Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties (1902)]; Watson, R. Spence, The National Liberal Federation: A History, 1877-1906, (London, 1907).

114 Fletcher was President 1888-95, Scott was Secretary 1889-94, Wray was Vice-President 1887 and 1889, Topping was Vice-President 1892-4. See: Jubilee Souvenir, (1935), op. cit.

115 Pickles became President in 1897 in which post he continued until 1908. Thomas was Treasurer in 1888 and Vice-President 1896-98.

116 Bartley was a key member of the Bradford Typographical Society, sub-editor of the Factory Times and a formidable journalist.

117 See Reynolds and Laybourn, op. cit., p.323: from Bradford Observer, 16 July 1887.

118 YFT, 10 October 1890.

119 Wrigley, C., op cit., passim.

120 YFT, 17 October 1890 and 24 October 1890. Gee consented on the understanding that he would be the nominee of the Trades Council and would receive full expenses. The final cost of the election was £16-19s. - a bill paid by the Trades Council, (YFT, 28 November 1890).

121 See section one above.

122 Manufacturer Joseph Smith was President of Lindley Liberal Club 1889-90 and had been a Liberal councillor for the ward until 1889. Later he was Secretary of the HLA and Secretary in 1895 of Sir J.T. Woodhouse's election committee.

123 YFT, 24 October 1890.

124 Sykes was a Liberal councillor for Lindley. Subsequent to Gee's candidature he resigned as a councillor although for what reason is not clear; there is no evidence the two events were linked. (HE, 22 November 1890).

125 Beevers was a leading member of the Junior Liberal Association in Huddersfield.

126 HE, 27 October 1890.

127 See above section one.

128 HE, 25 October 1890, at a meeting on the 24th.

129 HE, 1 November 1890, at a meeting on the 29th.

130 Ibid, at a meeting on the 30th.

131 Amongst other things he committed himself to press, if elected, for a raise in the wages of Council employees, especially sweepers. HE, ibid.

132 YFT, 31 October 1890.

133 The Lindley turnout of 62.4% compared to North Ward 68.9%, Central 81.5%, East 86.5%, South 84.5%, Fartown 68.5%, Longwood (voting for the first time) 84%, Dalton, Deighton and Bradley ward 49.5%, (HE, 8 November 1890). More generally see appendices 2.2, 2.3, 2.5 and 2.10.

134 HE, 8 November 1890.

135 YFT, 3 October 1890.

136 YFT, 5 July 1889.

137 YFT, 12, 19 and 26 July 1889.

138 William Henry Drew was a Yorkshire Factory Times correspondant, an executive member of the Bradford Trades Council and prominent in the Bradford Labour Union from its formation. As a Weavers' Union official he, Gee and Turner comprised a team spreading the ideals of Labour and trade unionism throughout the county.

139 This occurred during a strike at Hirst, Hanson and Sons, Cliffe Mills, Longwood concerning a new scale for faster looms. This was a common cause for grievance amongst weavers at this time. See YFT, 13 December 1889.

140 YFT, 10 January 1890: The Gasworkers' and General Labourers' Union expanded rapidly to become one of Huddersfield's most militant. It affiliated to the Trades Council in April 1890.

141 YFT, 17 January 1890.

142 YFT, 25 April and 2 May 1890.

143 YFT, 16 January and 10 April 1891.

144 YFT, 29 May 1891.

145 See YFT, 12 June, 16 January, 19 June, 17 July 1891, respectively.

146 YFT, 16 January 1891.

147 Turner, B., Short History of the General Union of Textile Workers, (Heckmondwike, 1920), p.178.

148 See above, chapter one.

149 Laybourn, K., "The Attitude of Yorkshire Trade Unions to the Economic and Social Problems of the Great Depression, 1873-96", Unpublished PhD thesis, Lancaster University 1972, chapter four.

150 HE, 14 June 1892.

151 See, for example, Board of Trade Report on Strikes and Lock-outs 1888, case no. 8. There was another similar incident of note in September 1891 which helped spark off the formation of the Labour Union (see below).

152 Quoted in Roberts, A., op. cit., p.155. J.H. Wilson (M.P. Holmfirth) visited Ireland nine times between 1887 and 1889.

153 This theme has been examined in depth by D.A. Hamer in Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery, (Oxford, 1972); idem., "The Irish Question and Liberal Politics 1886-1894", Historical Journal, XII, 3, (1969), pp.511-32. He observes that by the end of that period Lords Reform was emerging as the primary 'obstruction issue', being the means to attain Home Rule.

154 HE, 21 January 1888: annual address to constituents.

155 HE, 11 February 1888.

156 Quoted in Roberts, op. cit., p.154.

157 HE, 11 April 1891.

158 HE, 17 October 1891.

159 HE, 31 March 1888.

160 HE, 21 September 1889.

161 Webb, S., "The Moral of the Elections", Contemporary Review, August 1892, p.282.

162 HE, 19 February 1887.

163 HE, 8 December 1888. In November 1890 a Federation of Huddersfield and District Liberal Clubs was also formed.

164 Hanham, H.J., "Liberal Organisations for Working Men, 1860-1914", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, VII, (1963), pp.5-9.

165 The Eight-Hour question was to figure prominently in the 1893 Huddersfield by-election. For a more general consideration of the Eight-Hour movement see: Duffy, A.E.P., "The Eight Hours Day Movement in Britain, 1886-1893", Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies, XXXVI, (1968), pp.203-222 and 345-363 (two parts).

166 In particular men like Owen Balmforth and George Thomson, both prominent co-operators.

167 See Clarke, M.G., "Development and Purpose in a Local Conservative Association: A Study in the Huddersfield Constituencies 1836-1966", unpublished script, February 1966, in Huddersfield local history library (B329). In 1888 a motion to deprive those Conservative clubs not holding at least one political meeting a year of their capitation grant, was only narrowly defeated.

168 Ibid., pp.27-29.

169 HE, 3 November 1888. His main tenor had been a critique of Home Rule. Sir John Ramsden and H.F. Beaumont also gave speeches.

170 HE, 21 September 1889. The meeting was also addressed by Lord Selborne.

171 HE, 5 December 1891. The Examiner commented: "a man of such shallow pretensions to statesmanship would never have reached his present position but for the happy accident of his relation to the Prime Minister".

172 The membership of the HCA in 1888 had been 2,232. See Clarke, op. cit., p.27.

173 HE, 26 April 1890.

174 Robb, J.H., The Primrose League 1883-1906, (New York 1942 - Reprint 1968), chapter five. Overall membership continued to expand until 1914 but the League's antagonism to the trade unions and especially the Eight-Hour Day alienated growing

numbers of working men in the 1890s: "The time had come when neither the traditional appeal of the party, nor the propaganda technique of the Primrose League could win the majority of working class votes". (p.174).

175 Ibid., p.49.

176 Joyce, P., Work, Society and Politics, (1980), chapter eight. Slater's Directory of Huddersfield and District 1891, (Manchester, 1891) listed 150 pubs, inns and hotels in the town and this was probably an underestimate.

177 Roberts, R., The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century, (London 1971 - Pelican edition 1980), p.120; see also pp.18, 121-23.

178 Queen Victoria's jubilees in 1887 and 1897 were events of enormous rejoicing.

179 See later for further discussion of the Volunteers.

180 See Joyce, P., op. cit., McKenzie and Silver, Angels in Marble, (London, 1968); and Nordlinger, E., Working Class Tories, (London, 1967) for working-class Toryism more generally.

181 See Laybourn, K., op. cit., Pearce, C., op. cit.; YFT, 15 July 1892.

182 Reynolds and Laybourn, op. cit.

183 Clark, D., op. cit., pp.17-19. He also suggests that a Labour organisation was probably formed earlier than this in November 1890. See also HE, 25 July 1891.

184 HE, 15 August 1891.

185 Quoted in Clark, D., op. cit., p.18 - at a meeting on 21 July 1891.

186 YFT, 5 February 1892.

187 YFT, 4 September 1891.

188 HE, 5 September 1891.

189 Ibid.

190 Ibid.

191 YFT, 25 September 1891.

192 W.H. Greasley was a textile worker prominent in the Weavers' Association from the time of the 1883 strike. He was Vice-President of the Trades Council 1890-2 and played a part in the Manningham Mills Strike.

193 John William Downing was President of the Weavers' Association and gave evidence to the Royal Commission on Labour in that capacity. (See Group C, vol. one, ques. 4782-5238). He was briefly President of the Trades Council in 1896 and went on to be President of the Huddersfield Labour Union and of Milnsbridge Labour Club. Like Gee he lived in Longwood, and they were the only two members of the original Colne Valley Labour Union who were not from Slaithwaite or Marsden.

194 Riley, B., (1908), op. cit., p.21.

195 Ibid., p.22.

196 J. Turner (Milnsbridge), Luke Jackson (Longwood), C.B. Andrews (Huddersfield Central), Watts Balmforth (Lockwood), Councillor Allen Gee (Oakes) and Joe Dyson (Fabian Society). See Riley, ibid., pp.24-25, also Pelling, op. cit., pp.118-119. Colne Valley was represented by only one delegate, Edward Hoskin of Slaithwaite.

197 YFT, 25 September 1891.

198 HE, 22 July 1891.

199 YFT, 16 October 1891: the paper considered these three wards, plus Fartown and Lindley to be the most favourable for Labour. When Labour did eventually win municipal seats in 1904 it was, however, in the Moldgreen and North Wards (see apendix 2.3).

200 HE, 17 October 1891.

201 HE, 28 October 1891.

202 In the Fartown and Lockwood contests the Trades Council recommended trade unionists to support John Gee and W. Jepson (Liberal) respectively.

203 HE, 7 November 1891. The questionnaire covered the Eight-Hour Day, fair wages, Council provision of work for the unemployed, free public services, Sunday opening of the Town Hall and evening meetings of the Council to enable working men to attend. In view of these issues it is surprising that the Conservatives earned Trades Council approval rather than the Liberals.

204 See appendix 2.1 for the municipal position. The Liberals' representation, having dropped from 44 to 39 between 1885 and 1886, remained stable and unshakeable at between 37 and 39 seats, until the turn of the century, when the Conservatives made major gains. Having benefit ed from the Home Rule secession and the addition of Longwood in 1890 the Conservatives also remained fairly constant between 1891 and 1900 with between 20 and 22 seats (including the Liberal Unionists).

205 Nationwide, the Liberals made 79 municipal gains to the Conservatives' 58 and the Liberal Unionists' 6. 'Labour' gained 3 (Bradford, Nottingham and Gateshead). It is interesting to note that the Conservatives gained six seats in Bradford, possibly due to the advent of Labour which had split the radical vote. HE, 7 November 1891.

206 YFT, 27 November 1891.

207 YFT, 25 December 1891.

208 Dransfield was President of Paddock Labour Club from 1893.

209 YFT, 1 January 1892.

210 G.A. Hirst was Secretary of the Trades Council from its formation until 1893. He was a prominent member of the cotton spinners' union.

211 YFT, 1 January 1892, Gee had by this time expressed his desire not to be nominated. Subsequently only Balmforth's name was mentioned.

212 See above.

213 YFT, 8 January 1892.

214 Ibid.

215 YFT, 15 January 1892.

216 HE, 16 January 1892.

217 YFT, 22 January 1892. Fair contracts will be discussed later: briefly they meant that a local public body would only employ labour for contract work which was paid at the local trade union minimum rates. It was often seen as a test-issue for Liberal attitudes to working men.

218 The system of voting in School Board elections was by the cumulative, list system whereby each elector (8,870 out of 18,063 actually voted in January 1892) effectively had thirteen votes which he could distribute amongst the candidate as he wished. So a Labour voters would tend to give all thirteen of his votes to Balmforth as the only Labour candidate, a Liberal vote would spread his over the eight unsectarian candidates, a Conservative voter had six candidates to cover. Given this it is possible to conclude that a minimum 960 votes plumped for Balmforth and he may have received more support than this if some Labour voters had spread their votes and some Liberal and Conservatives votes had supported him. It is not unrealistic to assume, therefore, that in 1892 some thousand electors were Labour, especially given the 49% turnout.

219 Riley, B., op. cit., p.23.

220 HE, 30 January 1892 and 6 February 1892.

221 YFT, 26 February 1892, 4 March 1892.

222 YFT, 8 April 1892; HE, 9 April 1892. The meeting was well attended and resolved that "the time has now arrived when working men should protect their interests and obtain their due share of representation in Parliament, on all local governing bodies, independent of the trammels of either of the two great political parties" (YFT, ibid).

223 Riley, B., op. cit., p.23.

224 HE, 7 May 1892; YFT, 6 May 1892.

225 HE, 4 June 1892. His resolution was eventually defeated at the School Board meeting of July (see HE, 16 July 1892).

226 See Roberts, A., op. cit., p.195; Thompson, P., "Liberals, Radicals and Labour in London, 1880-1900", Past and Present, 27, (1964), p.84.

227 Balmforth's, The New Reformation and its relation to Moral and Social Problems, (London, 1893) and Some Social and Political Pioneers of the Nineteenth Century, (London, 1900) both acknowledged his debt to Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris and Owen. He concluded in the latter work:

> Not only our work and worth as a nation and an empire, but, what is of far more consequence, our worth and well being as responsible individuals, will depend on our ideals and conceptions of such great words as Justice, Progress, Wealth, Happiness, Good.

In his Co-operation as a Democratic Force, (London, 1895) he again echoed Ruskin's ideas within a Socialist context with religious overtones. In many ways his views coincided very closely with those of George Thomson (see my article in Business History, op. cit.).

228 HE, 4 June 1892. This summarises Balmforth's Socialism. It is unlikely that many of the members of the HLU had developed a similarly complex view of Socialism, though it is evident many of them perceived the same sense of a utopia to be achieved through Socialism in the early years. This will be discussed later.

229 Carmi Smith was an advanced Liberal, a Wesleyan and temperance advocate. He was by trade a provisions merchant and was Liberal councillor for Lockwood from 1904. An alderman from 1909, he was mayor in 1918-19.

230 William Priestly Hellawell was described as a Conservative and a 'gentleman'. He was a Churchman, a member of both Marsh and Almondbury Conservative Associations and President of Huddersfield Angling Club (1890-1902). It would be wrong to read too much into the Conservatives' support for fair contracts: most likely it was a strategic vote to embarrass the Liberals rather than a vote of conviction.

231 Richard Hinchcliff was also a Conservative, a member of Marsh Conservative Association and subsequently Secretary of Huddersfield Conservative Club. He was a 'gentleman' and a Churchman.

232 Ernest Woodhead (1857-1944) was the son of Joseph and effectively editor of the Examiner from the 1880s in place of his father. He was a Liberal councillor and alderman and mayor betwen 1901-2. A Congregationalist he was keenly involved in temperance work and the PSA movement, and a prominent member of the HLA and the HJLA. He was a rugby international, a keen golfer, a supporter of female suffrage and held an M.A. in languages.

233 Stephen Dolan, born in Tipperary in 1841, was the Catholic and Irish community's main voice and leader as priest at St. Joseph's from 1884-1913. He was a School Board member from 1883 until 1895 and also a member of the Board of Guardians for 13 years. From 1903 until 1912 he served on the Education Committee.

234 Joseph Whiteley Shaw was President of Longwood Liberal Club, a member of the HLA and a prominent Baptist at Salendine Nook. He was a textile manufacturer and total abstainer. Later he was a member of the Education Committee.

235 Thomas Shaw was also a Baptist (Rehobath Chapel, Lockwood) and a member of Longwood Liberal Club. By trade he was a corn-miller at Berry Brow, where he did many good works, and was from 1897 Liberal councillor for Almondbury. He died in 1903 leaving a handsome £10,304.

236 Webb, S., op. cit.

237 HE, 28 November 1891.

238 Roberts, A., op. cit., p.173.

239 Webb, S., op. cit., p.279.

240 It was described by Chamberlain as "a political conglomerate" and by Balfour as "a programme of varieties". K.O. Morgan in, The Age of Lloyd George: The Liberal Party and British Politics, 1890-1929, (London, 1971) puts the Newcastle Programme into perspective and outlines its main content.

241 See Hamer, op. cit., and idem., The Politics of Electoral Pressure, (Brighton, 1976). Wilfred Lawson, prominent temperance reformer and local optionist, visited Huddersfield in April 1891. (See HE, 11 April).

242 Hurst, M., Joseph Chamberlain and Liberal Reunion, (London, 1967).

243 Leeds Mercury, 14 April 1887 and elsewhere.

244 Kinnear, M., The British Voter, (New York, 1968), p.22.

245 Craig, F.W.S., British Electoral Facts 1885-1975, (London, 1976), Table 2.01. Of 102 contested by-elections between 1886 and 1892 twenty-five changed hands: twenty-two Liberal gains, one Conservative gain (March 1890, Ayr Burghs) and one Liberal Unionist gain (February 1888, Doncaster) plus one independent Liberal gain.

246 HE, 1 June 1889 also 25 May 1889. Crosland was one of eleven knighthoods conferred in the birthday honours.

247 YFT, 26 February 1892, 4 March 1892.

248 YFT, 22 April 1892.

249 YFT, 30 April 1892.

250 YFT, 13 May 1892, HE, 7 May 1892. Mann subsequently withdrew due to lack of finance and organisation, see Clark, D., op. cit, pp.30-31.

251 Riley, B., op. cit., p.24.

252 YFT, 10 June, 1 July 1892. See HE, 2 July for a full list of the questions and answers submitted to candidates.

253 YFT, 8 July. A motion that the HLU field a candidate at the next election (after 1892) independently and distinct from the Trades Council was adjourned and later defeated.

254 Riley, op. cit. The Colne Valley Labour Union resolved "that having fully considered the answers from both candidates [Kitson and Sugden, to the questionnaire] we consider them very unsatisfactory and cannot recommend Labour electors to vote for either candidate". (Clark, P., op. cit., p.31.).

255 HE, 28 May 1892. Also present were: Mark Oldroyd, (M.P. Dewsbury), H.J. Wilson (M.P. Holmfirth) and C.E. Schwann.

256 HE, 25 June 1892.

257 Ibid.

258 Mrs Buckley was wife of Abel Buckley, M.P. for Hyde. She was President of the Huddersfield Women's Liberal Association 1892-1895, and died in December 1897, leaving two sons.

259 HE, 2 July. Meeting in Birkby on 27 June.

260 HE, 25 June 1892.

261 HE, 30 April. The organisation's objectives were: "(i) defend the interests of licensed trade, (ii) to organise the district, (iii) to influence the selection and return of candidates favourable to the trade, (a) to Parliament in all cases, (b) to local public bodies in suitable cases approved by the committee, and (iv) generally to act without regard to party politics". Sixty were present at the inaugural meeting and Ben Ainley, a brewer from Lindley, became the first president.

262 At Lindley (24 June), Berry Brow and Primrose Hill (30 June).

263 HE, 9 July 1892.

264 See Read, D., The English Provinces c.1760-1960: A Study in Influence, (London, 1964), pp.229-31. By the 1890s 80,000 people were watching the F.A. Cup Final, while the contemporary press spoke of the "New Football Mania" and the "Football Madness".

265 Summers 7,098; Crosland 6,837.

266 Pelling, H., Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910, (London, 1967), p.297.

267 Kinnear, M., op. cit., pp.22-3.

268 Pelling, op. cit.; Kinnear, ibid. In 1892 the Liberals won 270 seats to 268 Conservatives and 47 Liberal Unionists. There were also 81 Irish Nationalists.

269 Roberts, A., op. cit., pp.237-8.

270 See Laybourn in Jowitt and Taylor, op. cit., p.30 for Byles' performance in 1892. In that year he had Labour Party support.

271 In Shipley the swing to the Conservatives 1885-92 was 8%, in Morley it was 6.4%, in Leeds East 2.5% (1886-92) and in Spen Valley 8.6% (1886-92).

272 Webb, S., op. cit., p.279.

CHAPTER THREE

CONSERVATIVE INTERREGNUM AND THE POLITICS OF LABOUR

1892-1899

1. Labour Activity 1892

> The programme of the Socialist Party ... is so impracticable that Liberals and Radicals easily recognise how foolish it would be to take up the bulk of it .... Every working man in the Liberal ranks knows that a vote given to the Socialists is in effect a vote given to the Tories, and that every abstention is a means of weakening the cause of progress.[1]

Although the results of the 1892 general election appeared to confirm the pre-eminence of Liberalism in Huddersfield the latter part of the year belonged essentially to the Labour Union which continued to advance with firm steps. Celebrating its first birthday at the annual general meeting in July 1892 the Labour Union looked back on a successful inaugural year which augured well for the probability of major advances for Labour in the borough in the coming years.[2] However, J.W. Downing,[3] the new president, was quick to dispel any hints of complacency by observing that a paucity of finance remained the key obstacle to future activity.[4] Although in some cases the Trades Council had been prepared to finance Labour candidates in local elections,[5] it seemed likely that in the majority of cases the meagre resources of the Labour Union would be called upon. At a minimum expenditure of around £6 per municipal candidate[6] the Labour Union required a large number of one shilling members of it were to finance candidates on a long-term basis, particularly if such candidates were elected and required maintenance. Although the HLU's enthusiastic fund-raising activities, supplemented by those

of the district clubs after 1892, supplied additional money, finance remained a perennial problem.

Another problem which the Labour Union faced in the early years was the lack of an effective party organisation. It was a frequent criticism of the Labour Union that it claimed a democratic representativeness that it so obviously lacked, inspiring at least one "working man" to enquire: "by what right or authority have the so-called Labour Union to select a [municipal] candidate?"[7] He continued:

> What we want is a representative body in each ward, with a central council for things pertaining to the whole borough and not a few who can afford to pay a subscription to a certain union, bamboozle and bandy us any way they choose.[8]

Such complaints clearly indicated that working men were not prepared to support Labour unless they were offered a more direct involvement than had been supplied by Liberalism. The Labour leaders, for their part, counselled patience pointing out that, desirable as it may be, "The localisation of the Huddersfield Labour Union by means of clubs in each ward is only a matter of time and money."[9]

Allied to these problems was that of finding suitable candidates to fight municipal seats. In response to a motion that no less than two seats be fought by Labour in November 1892[10] only five names were nominated as prospective Labour candidates[11] and all but one

of these, Allen Gee, declined to stand, although in fact a further two eventually stood under pressure. The reasons for such reticence can be explained as much by an inability if elected to attend council meetings held during the day, and fear of employer reprisals, as by finance and inclination. Allen Gee was unusually fortunate in being allowed time off by the Yorkshire Factory Times. Lack of candidates was, therefore, a recurrent problem for both the Labour Union and the Trades Council well into the next century: in 1900 for example the Trades Council remarked that they were "unable to find any man to contest any ward."[12]

By the end of 1892, however, some of these early teething problems had been offset. Membership of the Labour Union had grown constantly throughout the year, attaining between three and four hundred in total.[13] Moreover, these figures were augmented by the establishment of several district Labour clubs. In August 1892 Milnsbridge Labour Club was opened by Tom Mann, at which time it had around 130 members drawn from both the Colne Valley and Huddersfield constituencies which it straddled. An inaugural resolution moved by Ramsden Balmforth pledged the club "to supplement the work of trades unions and co-operative societies by organising on independent lines for taking political action, and urges upon all workers the necessity for enrolling themselves as members of the independent Labour Party."[14] This was followed in November 1892 by three other Labour Clubs at Lindley and Oakes (thirty members), Lockwood (sixty) and Longwood (fifty), although all were formally opened in the following year.[15] This club activity continued to be supplemented,

moreover, by the Huddersfield Fabian Society which continued to hold meetings on a wide range of topics delivered by an array of visiting speakers including Katherine St. John Conway, Leonard Hall and H. Russell Smart.[16]

Two events late in 1892, however, did more to instil the Labour Union with new confidence and inspiration than anything else. Firstly, on 11 October, the HLU held its most prestigious meeting to date when Keir Hardie addressed a packed meeting in the Victoria Hall.[17] His main theme was the need for a totally independent political line of action, differentiating Labour from the other two parties and at the same time he pressed for a strengthening of the local trade union movement. The success of the meeting greatly invigorated the membership of the HLU thus providing the backdrop for the return of Allen Gee at Lindley as Labour's first councillor on Huddersfield Borough Council in November 1892.

Initially the Lindley Liberal Association had approached Oliver Oxley, an advanced Liberal of strong temperance views, with a view to him becoming Liberal candidate in the ward, hoping he would also be acceptable to the Labour Union. Labour had little intention of withdrawing Allen Gee as candidate but interviewed Oxley anyway, finding him to be unacceptable.[18] By that time, however, Oxley had declined the Liberal offer in view of the Liberal clubs' "sympathy with the movement of direct labour representative and personal regard for Mr Allan [sic] Gee."[19] Following Oxley's departure the Lindley Liberals agreed to recommend that the electors support Allen Gee,[20]

an unprecedented action and evidence that for the first time Liberalism was prepared to make at least some concession to Labour. It was, moreover, a step forward since 1890 when the Lindley Liberals had merely agreed to take no action. Too much, however, should not be read into this: Gee had a popular following in the ward and had been a leading member of the Lindley Liberal Club prior to his defection to Labour. It was probably his personal reputation that ensured him a straight contest with J. Haigh, the Independent (Conservative) candidate,[21] rather than a more general Liberal acceptance of Labour's claims.

In the event another independent candidate W.H. Dean also entered the field, but he received only sixteen votes and detracted little from Gee's victory over Haigh by 134 votes. Gee's poll had increased by 145 (or 26.7%) since 1890 although the reduced turnout indicated a degree of Liberal abstention.[22] In the two other seats contested by Labour in 1892, in the North and Lockwood wards, eleventh-hour Labour candidates received Trades Council backing but fared poorly, winning only 8.2 per cent and 18.9 per cent of the vote respectively and coming third in each case.[23] Nevertheless it was almost a high spot for Labour activity in local elections, as it was not until 1902 that as many as three candidates were again fielded.[24] Gee's victory was in fact one of five victories out of ten Labour candidates fielded in Huddersfield, Bradford and Halifax in 1892 and the Yorkshire Factory Times draw clear parallels: "in future apathetic Huddersfield will be the scene of many such Labour battles as have been fought in the neighbouring town of Bradford."[25]

2. The 1893 By-Election

In retrospect the events of late 1892 prepared the way ideally for the role the Labour Union was to play in the 1893 Huddersfield by-election. None, however, could have predicted that when William Summers sailed for Bombay on 28 October 1892 he would never return.[26] His death on New Years' Day 1893 in Allahabad from smallpox came as a shock and a blow to Huddersfield Liberalism, as the Manchester Guardian commented: "The career is over which promised so much .... The chief reason why many believed in him and in his future was his clear and unhesitating grasp of Radical principles."[27] The Examiner added: "Undoubtedly the most progressive wing of the Liberal party has lost one of its staunchest members."[28] Most importantly Summers' "attitude on the Eight-Hours Bill and other measures for the benefit of the workers stamped him as the genuine article"[29] in the eyes of many local trade unionsts. If this unusually enlightened, Liberal attitude was not to be apparent in his successor, then it seemed likely that some working men at least would re-examine their political priorities.

From the outset the acrimony that was to characterise the by-election became painfully evident. The main parties having agreed on a political truce until after a memorial service for Summers in the Town Hall on Monday, 9 January,[30] the Conservatives accused the Liberal Chief Whip, Marjoribanks, of breaking it by openly hawking the seat around London: "Their chief official seems to have treated the borough as though it were part and parcel of his own property."[31] Whatever the truth in this, it was clear that the

Huddersfield Liberals were seriously worried that they had insufficient time to bring out a candidate who could win the seat, in view of Sir Joseph Crosland's renewed bid, as leading Liberal Carmi Smith was later to observe Summers' death had seriously set back the Party.[32]

Events moved rapidly: on the evening after the memorial service the Liberal 'Two Hundred' met and appointed a candidate selection committee of twenty-four, while simultaneously at the Conservative Club Sir Joseph Crosland was re-adopted, declaring his intentions unequivocably: "The issue before us in this contest is that of the unity of the United Kingdom. That issue has not been altered since we last fought."[33] In the campaign that followed he wavered but rarely from this line. On the Wednesday evening (11 January) the Liberal Selection Committee, chaired by Joseph Woodhead, received a Labour deputation including Allen Gee, Ramsden Balmforth, J.A. Fletcher and Joe Dyson, which expressed opposition to any Liberal candidate whose views were not at least as advanced as Summers had been. It later emerged that they had expressed serious reservations as to the possible candidature of Joseph Woodhead due to his views on labour issues generally, but the Eight-Hour Day in particular; against which he had voted in the Commons in March 1892. However the selection committee was either ignorant of these doubts or preferred to ignore them, for it agreed to recommend Woodhead as Liberal candidate by a majority vote of twenty or twenty-one out of the twenty-four.[34] Several men had apparently been invited to stand, including George Thomson, but all save Woodhead had declined.

In many ways he seemed an obvious choice: he and his Examiner had virtually built Huddersfield Liberalism, he was well-known and had had Parliamentary experience whilst MP for the Spen Valley (1885-92). However, as Owen Balmforth commented in a biting attack on Woodhead's prospective candidature at the Wednesday meeting of the 'Two Hundred', he lacked Summers' "wholehearted radicalism", he had been found unsuitable by the Labour Union and he had only just retired from his seat in Spen Valley through ill-health.[35] Balmforth's dissent, albeit very much in the minority, was supported by the comments of "several working men present" who said that "there was a good deal of feeling amongst the working classes in the constituency against Mr. Woodhead as a candidate."[36] Yet despite such warnings the caucus voted overwhelmingly to field Woodhead as Liberal candidate; there were in fact only two dissensions indicating Balmforth's isolation.[37]

In retrospect, the adoption of a man as candidate whose attitudes to Labour were far from sound may have been short-sighted, but it was, as Roberts puts it, "understandable".[38] The Liberal Association was still dominated by the wealthy, Nonconformist manufacturing class who had invested large amounts of time and money in the Liberal cause and whom were more likely to favour a home-grown candidate of their own kind with a proven record rather than an outsider. It was only the experience of 1893 which eroded this sentiment.

In his acceptance speech Woodhead denied that he differed in any major way from the Labour Union but admitted that he opposed the Eight-Hour Bill, commenting that "he should remain firm on that question even if the seat depended upon it."[39] He further revealed that a Labour deputation had visited him that afternoon on the question of wages and conditions at the Examiner offices and that he had satisfied them in these matters. The deputation's version was, however, somewhat different. G.W. Haigh reported that although Woodhead had shown he paid 'fair' wages he had refused to accept that the rules of the Typographical Union should operate in the Examiner offices and had refused to take on only union members in future, as this would interfere with "the sanctity of freedom of contract." Woodhead's antipathy to the principles of trade unionism had been clear and the meeting had ended in stalemate.[40] This set the stage for what was to be a test by-election of Liberal attitudes to Labour in Huddersfield.

Meeting on the Thursday evening the Huddersfield Labour Union urgently considered the situation, mindful of comments from the Yorkshire Factory Times that the by-election presented an ideal opportunity to field a candidate:

> There is in Huddersfield, as elsewhere, a throwing-aside of political partisanship and a-going in for the bread and butter politics, long since advocated by such men as Ramsden Balmforth, J.W. Downing, J.A. Fletcher and others.[41]

There was in addition the taunt from the Huddersfield Chronicle which, although clearly aimed at splitting the radical vote, rang strangely true to many Labour supporters:

> Now, if ever, is the time for the Labour party to assert itself and to show that the members are not mere hangers on, and the humble servants of the Radical party ... they must either support a candidate of their own, or refrain from assisting Mr. Woodhead who objects to the very fundamental principles on which trades unionism is founded.[42]

Initially, in view of Woodhead's uncompromising attitude on the Eight-Hour Day and his antipathy to trade unionism, feeling in the HLU was in favour of bringing out a Labour candidate. However, after much debate, it was agreed that a deputation be sent to seek advice from the ILP leadership, at that time attending the party's first national conference in Bradford. They reported back the following evening and two points came to light: firstly, that no candidate could be found, and secondly that a canvas of finance had yielded promises of only £62 which it was felt was insufficient to fight an election. In view of this a motion that no independent Labour candidate be sponsored was passed and a decision as to how Labour electors should be advised to vote was deferred.[43]

Although neither Crosland nor Woodhead commenced their campaigns until the following week, with polling day set for 4 February, both issued their addresses. Woodhead observed that his opinions were well-known locally but reiterated that Home Rule, "the largest measure of self-government consistent with the supremacy of the Crown and the Imperial

Parliament and the entire unity of the Empire" remained paramount.[44] He also subscribed to abolition of plural voting, payment of M.P.s and election expenses from public funds, universal male suffrage, disestablishment, land law reform and the local veto. In short, "my sole object will be to support all legislation adopted to improve the condition of the people - to render the public burdens less oppressive, and the life of the masses of our population easier, brighter and happier."[45] Crosland similarly viewed Home Rule as "the most important issue before you" but seemed to promise almost as much in terms of reform as had Woodhead. He pledged himself to reduce the hours of labour, employer accident liability, pensions, and reform of the registration laws: issues of perhaps more direct interest to working people than disestablishment and, arguably, the local veto. It further emerged from the candidates' answers to a Trades Council questionnaire that, on the crucial question of the Miners' Eight-Hour Bill, Crosland was prepared to support it if elected.[46] Woodhead was not. Moreover, Crosland agreed to female enfranchisement on the same terms as men. On many other issues the two candidates were in agreement, but Woodhead equivocated on several points more advanced Liberals would not have hesitated to support, notably land value taxation and abolition of the Lords.[47] On balance the gap between the candidates was not great when it came to 'bread and butter' issues.

Neither candidate, however, satisfied the majority feeling of the Trades Council. At three noisy meetings on 18, 25 and 31 January the Council lamented the loss of Summers, "a true Labour man",

but was once again bitterly split as to what action to take. The more vocal Labour Union men, notably Balmforth, Dyson, White, Downing, Gee and W. Varley, pressed for a recommendation that voters abstain; while the Liberals especially Joe Crosland, Ellis Gee and G.H. Milnes, more numerous but less vocal, counselled support for Woodhead. The result, much to the Labour Union's disapproval, was a compromise motion leaving trade unionists to exercise their individual discretion.[48] Once again the Trades Council had not been prepared to act openly against the Liberals. On this occasion, however, the Labour Union, having failed both to convert the Trades Council and persuade Clement Edwards to stand at the last minute, issued a separate manifesto urging its members to abstain from voting,[49] an action which it claimed would affect around 500 votes.[50] Nevertheless the real voting influence lay not with the Labour Union but with the Trades Council which had augmented its affiliated societies by eleven since November 1891 to twenty-nine in all, representing something over 2,000 members.[51] Moreover, the seriousness with which the Liberal Association regarded the Council's hostility to Woodhead was not surprising in view of the letters appearing in the local press from trade unionists expressing dismay at Woodhead's attitude to Labour. Some, it became apparent, were even prepared to vote for Crosland would at least support the Miners' Eight-Hour Bill. The by-election was turning into one concerning, above all, the principle of trade unionism, as "Trades Unionist" commented:

> What we have a right to object to him [Woodhead] for is that from a want of combination his work people are comparatively powerless to redress wrongs .... he has no claim whatever upon our votes and I think we are quite strong enough to show these half-hearted radical employers of labour that we can do without their aid.[52]

"One for the Union" added:

> Caucuses must be taught the lesson that the day is gone when mere figureheads will be sent to represent working-men constituencies .... if he [Woodhead] wins in this unequal contest against the vital principles of trade unionism it is a disastrous defeat for trade unionism as a principle for improving the condition of the workers.[53]

More generally other correspondents professed that they were not surprised at the hostility of the Trades Council and the Labour Union when one considered a record of local liberal intransigence towards Labour, especially on the issue of fair contracts:

> If Liberalism had been carried out as advocated from the platform and the press, the present Labour party would not have been in existence. There is a labour party in the town, though some try to deny the fact, and their numbers are growing daily: and it is predicted ... that before many years have elapsed, unless the Town Council adopt the policy of fair contracts and fair wages, they will return working men to the Municipal Parliament, and probably to the British House of Commons.[54]

Another letter from a "Radical" went so far as to claim that the Trades Council's action was in revenge for the Liberal failure to

support Ramsden Balmforth's fair contracts resolution at the School Board.[55] Moreover, the theme of Liberal 'professions' as compared to Liberal 'performance' was hammered home by the Conservatives:

> There has been too much of Mr. Woodhead's style about the whole Gladstonian party. Always ready with professions they have as often failed in practice.[56]

Despite numerous letters from 'working men' critical of Labour's "dog-in-the-manger policy which makes them the shuttlecock of political parties"[57] and appealing to "the thought of your old friend, and brave brother in the common struggle, who sleeps in his lone Indian grave"[58], Woodhead's obstinate refusal to shift his ground on the Eight-Hour Question and trade-union rights continued to paint him as a man in some ways less enlightened than Crosland. Crosland, on the other hand, was able to forestall accusations from the Yorkshire Factory Times[59] and Edwin Martin[60] that he approved of one weaver working two looms in his mill, an issue as potentially explosive as the Eight-Hour Day and trade union acceptance.[61] Furthermore a deputation from the Trades Council which visited his factory found no fault with the pertaining conditions and wages.[62] Crosland commented after the election, with some justification, that "The Huddersfield Trades Council had nothing to say against me."[63]

Crosland's election campaign was well-organised by the revamped Conservative organisation[64] and he was able to concentrate on Home Rule throughout. Woodhead, however, was never really able to escape

from a defence of his own personality and attitudes. As the campaign wore on he had to contend with an accumulation of specific accusations, not only that he refused to make his offices a union shop but that he declined to print letters in the Examiner which were from ILPers or were contrary to his own views.[65] Moreover, crowding up from the depths of the past came charges that he had flaunted the rules of the Typographical Society as long ago as 1854 by employing too many apprentices at cheap rates,[66] and that during the infamous Ramsden Tenant-Right Question he had come down on the side of the landlord rather than the tenants.[67] F.R. Jones remarked that Woodhead had:

> thwarted, opposed, ridiculed, and even uttered libels against those who espoused the course of the tenantry of the Ramsden estate .... by his cruel opposition during the tenant right agitation be forfeited all just claim to the honour of ever representing Huddersfield.[68]

Local feeling was running so high on this matter that Sir John Ramsden decided not to visit Huddersfield to vote for fear of worsening the situation by his presence.[69] Bitter accusations and counter-accusations flew between the two party papers from which Crosland remained blissfully aloof. At the opening meeting of his campaign at Moldgreen, Woodhead claimed conditions at George Harper's Chronicle were bad enough to force some of the compositors to apply for work at the Examiner.[70] Countering this the Chronicle compositors strenuously denied the insinuation:

> Electioneering dodges are all very well but they should not be resorted to at the expense of working men. Such conduct as that of which Mr. Woodhead is guilty is not only sufficient to condemn his conduct in the eyes of every trades unionist, but also of every honourable and honest man.[71]

So it went on, each charge and counter-charge becoming increasingly more complex and acrimonious: the Yorkshire Post even expressed wonder that "Huddersfield should have thought to put up the refuse of a neighbouring constituency."[72] Even when Woodhead was able to discuss Liberal party policy he rarely discussed Home Rule directly: at one meeting a plaintiff voice was heard: "Let's have Home Rule if you please."[73] Instead he talked of "historic Liberal principles" and the Liberal Party as "the friend of progress",[74] frequently without reference to distinct policy intention. Indeed the Newcastle Programme was mentioned only in passing and not by Woodhead himself who eschewed many of its policies. This only seemed to compound the impression some voters were getting of a somewhat old-fashioned unenlightened Liberalism unsound on labour policy and reliant on the unoriginal policies of Home Rule, temperance and disestablishment. Speaking at Colne on 16 January Keir Hardie succinctly summarised the whole by-election:

> In Huddersfield not only have the Liberals ignored the Labour party but they have literally courted destruction by flying in the face of the Labour Party by selecting a candidate who is chiefly known throughout Yorkshire by his hostility to the labour movement; a man who has said ... that he would rather lose the election than vote for the Eight-Hours Bill for miners .... That is the man whom the Liberals of Huddersfield have selected to

> represent labour in the House of Commons, and those were the men who said they were the friends of labour .... if the election results in a loss both to the Liberal and Labour party the fault would be on the shoulders of those men who were false to the cause of democracy.[75]

The 1893 by-election, therefore, was not one of policies but one of personalities, or as the Leeds Mercury phrased it "a mere personal squabble."[76] The Examiner added: "there is every indication that there will be but little politics about the election; it will be rather a personal fight."[77] Nevertheless, Crosland managed to emerge relatively unscathed despite accusations that he was "trimming his sails in order to catch each passing breeze."[78] He assiduously refused to take the bait in Woodhead's references to his past electoral defeats[79] and succeeded in maintaining the initiative until polling day. Even the support lent to the Liberal cause by the 400 or so Irish voters[80] and the mass meeting on 25 January addressed by Francis Channing and Herbert Gladstone could do little to lift the growing Liberal gloom. Even the Examiner itself went so far as to admit the possibility that Woodhead's position on the Eight-Hours issue may "cost the Liberals the election."[81]

The election results, watched with keen interest all over the country, showed that the Conservatives had pulled off the seemingly impossible by winning Huddersfield for the first time since 1865, albeit by the narrow margin of thirty-five votes. In seven months Crosland had increased his poll by 231 to 7068 (50.1 per cent) while the Liberal

vote had declined by sixty-five to 7033 (49.9 per cent). At 90.7 per cent (from 90.1 per cent in 1892) the turnout was the highest ever recorded in the borough and was virtually a maximum allowing for only 1425 deaths, removals and abstentions. It was clear, therefore, that voters had not abstained in any number as the Liberals had feared and the Conservatives hoped, but rather had turned out to register their votes for Crosland. The swing to the Conservatives of precisely one per cent represented around 150 votes. Exactly who they were is impossible to be certain about but contemporary feeling was fairly unanimous that it was composed of Liberal working men antipathetic to Woodhead's attitude on Labour, though the possibility of a Crosland victory may have brought out some 'sleeping' Conservative voters. It was nevertheless a great Conservative victory.

Within the national context it was the eighth contested by-election since the 1892 election and only the second to have changed hands.[82] Subsequently the Liberals made up the loss very quickly by narrowly holding Halifax on 9 February despite a strong Labour challenge[83] and gaining Walsall the same day. Within the ensuing fortnight there were additional Liberal gains at Pontefract, Hexham (Northumberland) and Cirencester. The Huddersfield result, therefore, went very much against national trends but reflected the worsening state of Yorkshire Liberalism.[84]

Comment on the result was profuse. The Manchester Guardian, the Bradford Observer and the Christian World concurred in blaming the Liberal defeat on personal dislike of Woodhead: "The reason is

generally admitted to have been the personal unpopularity of Mr. Woodhead ... an avowed enemy of trades unionism."[85] H.J. Wilson, the advanced Liberal MP for Holmfirth, noted with frustration:

> Huddersfield has been lost by 35 votes! largely if not entirely because Woodhead was not only very strong against legislation for labour in any form, but even more because he was so sharp and unconciliatory in his way of dealing with it. I am vexed at him. A man has no right to be so indifferent and reckless in view of such tremendous issues as are now before us, and which by-elections have so much influence over.[86]

Predictably opinion in Huddersfield itself was mixed. The Liberals blamed the "nameless falsehoods and discreditable influences" perpetrated by the Conservatives and branded the Trades Council as "a Tory auxiliary."[87] For the Conservatives Crosland attributed victory to Woodhead's neglect of Home Rule ("as he made it out, it was only an affair of gas, and water, and sewerage") and to his organisation:

> There isn't a better organisation anywhere. We have a regular secretary and under-secretary always at work. The executive is a hard-working one and keen after the interests of the party, and we have done everything we could to interest the people, as by opening political and other clubs, to tempt them away from the public houses, and by giving lectures and providing a comfortable place for men to go.[88]

More realistically, however, both main parties recognised privately the underlying feature of the result, as Liberal Carmi Smith readily acknowledged: "There is no doubt the Labour vote has turned the

election, and to them is due whatever credit or blame arises from the change."[89] More particularly one "Radical" blamed the Fabians for letting Crosland in: "[their] liberty is the liberty of self, their politics opportunism. Socialists? No! Socialism runs in broader channels, and does not stoop to this kind of work."[90] Ramsden Balmforth for Labour recalled Keir Hardie's earlier comment: "If anyone wishes to know who has lost the election for the Liberals, I can easily tell them - it is the Liberal Executive itself."[91] The Yorkshire Factory Times however was more dismissive:

> And so Sir Joseph is in and Joseph is out. Well, what of it? .... The world is just the same to the bulk of workers - a slow, cruel, continual grind of much work, with too little food, too small houses, and too little clothing.[92]

The 1893 Huddersfield by-election revealed several points. Firstly, it was a lesson to the local Liberal Party that trade unionism and Labour could no longer be ignored as they had tended to be in the past. Working men were demanding a deeper Liberal committment to 'bread and butter' policies like the hours of labour, and they were numerous enough to swing the result of an election. Secondly, although the Labour Union had been in existence less than eighteen months it could boast a membership exceeding three hundred, excluding an indeterminant club membership, with representatives on both the Borough Council and the School Board. Its advance had been remarkable and its political potential amply illustrated by the by-election result. Thirdly, the election was to some extent the writing on the

wall for hard-line individualist Liberals of the old school like Woodhead. The future increasingly seemed to lie not with the traditional Liberals but with a more collectivist Liberalism as expressed by Owen Balmforth and George Thomson. After 1893 more members of the HLA came to realise the threat Labour posed and although most never reached the collectivist position of Balmforth and Thomson there was a perceptible shift. In short, the 1893 candidature was a step backwards for Huddersfield Liberalism, as if Summers' advanced beliefs and the intervening emergence of both the Labour Union and a politically active Trades Council had never happened. Huddersfield Liberals had refused to take these developments and Labour's demands seriously and it required the loss of the parliamentary seat to awaken them. As at the Attercliffe by-election of 1894 local Liberal leaders had been slow to respond to Labour: they had continued to encourage democracy yet "failed to understand the implications of their own ideology .... [and] believed on the whole that the working class would remain content to be represented by good Liberal employers and professional men."[93] Fatally, the lessons learnt in part by Huddersfield Liberals as early as 1893 were not to be learnt by the vast majority of local Liberal Associations until it was too late.

3. The Aftermath of the 1893 By-Election

Following hard on the heels of the by-election came something of a backlash from Liberals and trade unionists alike. There is clear evidence that purges of supposed Labour sympathisers were being carried out in several Liberal clubs: Watts Balmforth claimed he had been ousted as a committee member of the Rashcliffe Liberal Club

for his connections with the Labour Union, despite the fact that he had canvassed for Woodhead during the by-election.[94] He pointed out that similar reprisals had taken place at Primrose Hill Liberal Club where Allen Heywood had been voted off the committee because he had abstained in the by-election.[95] Further indications of a Liberal backlash came from Strederick Hutton who published a letter he had received from Fred Brigg, secretary of Moldgreen Liberal Club, to the effect that:

> The committee .... decided that the political opinions held by you are not in accord with those of the Liberal party, and as they cannot countenance Tory principles being advocated in this institution, I am instructed to request that you resign your membership of the club.[96]

Huttons' crime had apparently been that he had expressed doubts as to the paramountcy of Home Rule and was 'rumoured' to have abstained in the by-election. Just how extensive and effective this purge was is difficult to ascertain, but sufficient evidence is available to suggest it was occurring in several Liberal clubs and was a direct response to the by-election defeat.

Similar Liberal resentment was also evident at the Friendly and Trades Societies' Club, when, at the half-yearly meeting in February 1893 Allen Gee and W.H. Scott (Ironfounders') proposed an amendment to the composition of the club's directorate whereby the friendly societies would have sixteen executive members to the trade unions' nine.[97] The existing proportion was twenty-two friendly society men to six

union men. This action was clearly interpreted by the Liberal friendly societies as an attempt by the Labour Union to extend its influence in the club, and, still smarting from the by-election loss, the Liberals firmly opposed the amendment. As the debate became more heated opprobrium was heaped upon the Labour and Trades Council members present for their by-election 'treachery'. J.A. Fletcher and Joe Dyson in particular suffered acute personal abuse.[98] In the event the amendment was lost by a large majority, but the meeting had revealed that many working men continued to resent the intrusion of the Labour Union into trade union and friendly society affairs, as one working man observed: "any political action taken solely in the interests of Labour should be taken in the name of the Labour Union which has been formed for that purpose."[99] Notwithstanding Hardie's stress on independence, which had characterised his speeches in Huddersfield, many of those people who approved of a Labour party still saw it as a pressure group working alongside the Liberal Party rather than as an alternative to Liberalism.

Yet, if on the one hand there was something of a Liberal backlash in Spring 1893 on the other hand the Labour Union seemed unperturbed and made further advances. Six delegates were sent to the ILP's first conference on 13 and 14 January 1893 in Bradford[100] and they had supported a substantive motion "to secure the collective ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange." As Pelling observed: "The conference was evidently strongly Socialist"[101] and thereafter the HLU can be considered to be a body with Socialist aims. Indeed a new constitution was adopted by

the HLU in March 1893 which embodied socialism and changed the HLU's name to the Huddersfield and District Independent Labour Party (ILP).[102] Furthermore an amended executive committee was established comprising four delegates from the Central Labour Club and two from each district Labour club, with an extra delegate for every fifty members over and above an initial hundred. Ramsden Balmforth was elected President of the Executive Committee.

These constitutional changes were accompanied by the formal openings of several Labour clubs formed late in 1892. Table 3.1 below indicates these clubs' location and approximate membership. The decline evident in the later 1890s will be discussed later. From the table it would not be unrealistic to assume a minimum Labour club membership of 700 and a maximum of 800 around 1893. Ben Riley, examining the Labour Union's records, now sadly lost, found that membership had declined after the 1893 by-election,[103] but he undoubtedly failed to take into account the fact that many Labour supporters, not wishing to duplicate their membership, would most likely leave the central club and join one of the new district clubs. So overall Labour membership increased, though the central ILP may have diminished. The total numbers involved, although relatively small when compared to the Liberal membership, were by no means insignificant. Table 3.2 below indicates from available information on Huddersfield Liberal clubs around 1893 that a club's average membership tended to be just over 180. If this is multiplied by the total number of clubs traced (fifteen) the overall membership of local Liberal clubs totalled 2700. This is clearly a tentative and possibly

inflated figure, but indicates that the Labour club movement could perhaps have had as much as a quarter as many members as the Liberal clubs: no mean achievement for a youthful party and indicative of the enthusiasm which characterised many early Labour adherents.

Table 3.1 Huddersfield Labour Clubs 1891-1899

			Membership*		
Labour Club	First Formed	Formally Opened	1892/3	1898	1899
Central	Sept 1891	-	300-400	120	84
Lockwood	Nov 1892	25 Feb 1893	60-90	17	N.A.
Salford	Nov 1892	March 1893	80	N.A.	N.A.
Longwood	Nov 1892	December 1892	50	45	27
Milnsbridge	-	August 1892	130	33	59
Lindley	Nov 1892	June 1893	30-60	N.A.	N.A.
Paddock	Aug 1893	25 Nov 1893	50-70	N.A.	N.A.
			700-800	215	170

* From Huddersfield Examiner and I.L.P. News. Latter listed membership only April 1898 to June 1899. N.A. indicates 'not available' and often demise.

Table 3.2 Membership of Selected Huddersfield Liberal Clubs Circa. 1893

Location	Membership**	Date
Marsh	102	1893
Lockwood	130	1893
Moldgreen	206	1893
Lindley	275	1893
Almondbury	187	1891
Fartown	200	1890
Longwood	150	1897
Primrose Hill	193	1887
Paddock	208	1885
	1651 Av.: 183	

** Based on A.G.M. reports in Huddersfield Examiner. Figures are nearest to 1893 available. A further six Liberal clubs existing in 1893 gave no membership figures at any time (1885-1900).

However, the Liberal Party also had the Junior and Women's Associations whose combined membership in 1894 was 557 (see tables four and five below). Bearing in mind some duplication, this additional membership probably took the total number of 'active' Liberals well over 3,000, though enrolment did not of course necessarily mean strictly active participation. Whatever the relative party positions it may be concluded that Labour club membership benefit ed from the 1893 by-election.

Indeed it was probably this phenomenon, together with the shock of the 1893 defeat, which lay behind the seriousness with which the Liberal Association now viewed the Huddersfield ILP and explains their unprecedented gestures of conciliation during 1893.[104] Something of a revised approach became apparent as early as May 1893, when a canvas of Liberal ward representatives revealed that the majority thought "it would not be wise to again invite Mr. Woodhead to be the Liberal candidate, but that a gentleman should be sought who would be at least as advanced as the late Mr. Summers on Labour and Social questions."[105] This amounted to an affirmation that a mistake had been made in 1893 and a realisation that solid working class support must be attracted. Subsequently, at a special meeting of the 'Two Hundred' on 9 May a resolution to renew Woodhead's candidate was defeated ninety-two to sixty-six votes and a motion passed to seek a new candidate. Once again it is notable that the margin of opposition at the central level was not as great as that in the ward committees which had voted ten or eleven out of fourteen against a repetition of Woodhead's candidature.[106] As in 1886 the local clubs seemed to be a step or two ahead of the 'Two Hundred'. Nevertheless a new air of realism was beginning to pervade the HLA executive, as J.E. Willans reflected:

> The fact is the choice of a candidate for the Borough, that is of one who will unite all sections of the Party and thus fight with a good prospect of success is now a task of unusual difficulty. This is mainly due to the attitude of the Labour Party and of the Trades Council. It can hardly be denied that Huddersfield can no longer be considered a safe seat for the Liberal Party.[107]

In the meantime while the HLA conferred with Party Headquarters in its quest for a candidate, the Huddersfield ILP was engaged in the same task. Enthusiasm was high and several prominent meetings had been held during the Spring and Summer, notably an extended visit by Isabella Ford in April,[108] a highly successful May Day demonstration, attended by a reported 5,000[109] and two addresses by Hardie in July.[110] Tom Mann had been active locally, opening several of the new Labour clubs[111] and it was a result of his pressure that a conference of local trade unions was held in March to consider how to extend unionisation in the Colne Valley.[112]

Unemployment, poor trade and unrest, however, were the keynotes of the year in Yorkshire with the largest industrial dispute Britain had hitherto experienced when 300,000 miners stopped work.[113] Huddersfield itself remained blissfully free from such unrest but in May a body of Huddersfield police were despatched to help crush the Hull Dock Strike and this provoked horrified condemnation from the Trades Council and the Labour Clubs in Huddersfield. Violence was especially prevalent around Barnsley and Wakefield where troops arrived to quell strike riots. But it was the shooting by troops of two strikers at Featherstone colliery on 7 September 1893 that really aroused anger and a passionate repudiation of government policy towards industrial unrest. Furthermore, a Special Commission on the incident worsened matters by concluding that the use of troops had been warranted and their action justified.[114] A cover-up was rumoured and Asquith, as Home Secretary and a Yorkshireman himself, never fully recovered from his supposed complicity.[115]

Featherstone had wide-ranging repercussions throughout the West Riding not least for the popularity of Liberalism. As Neville has observed:

> The affair was detrimental to the Liberal Party's cause at a critical time when the nascent I.L.P. and other socialist groups were gradually expanding. Widespread indignation at the shootings was voiced by people of all shades of political opinion.[116]

In Huddersfield the incident hardened the stance of those Labour supporters who had always maintained that the two main parties were synonymous in representing capital and were both fundamentally antagonistic to the interests of Labour. Featherstone illustrated, they maintained, that the Liberals were not the friends of the working class which they claimed to be. Moreover, as Herbert Samuel later observed, "this antagonism between businessmen and workers increased with the years."[117]

It was, therefore, against this background that the Huddersfield ILP exemplified its determination to field a parliamentary Labour candidate at the ensuing election by drawing up a short-list of contenders early in September 1893 which comprised: Ramsden Balmforth, George Bernard Shaw, Cunninghame Graham, H. Russell Smart, Clement Edwards and Leonard Hall.[118] A month later Russell Smart had emerged as favourite and on 2 November 1893 he accepted adoption as candidate by the Huddersfield ILP conditional upon them raising £100 and submitting to him a petition of support signed by 1,000 people.[119]

Hymen Russell Smart had left home at seventeen and drifted into the theatrical profession until his marriage when he abandoned the footlights to pursue a more secure trade as a sanitary engineer.[120] A Londoner, he was involved in the Clapham Labour League and was a member of the Gasworkers' and General Labourers' Union, having been converted to Socialism by an article in the Daily Telegraph on French Socialism entitled "Property is Robbery". He gave his first lecture at St Helens' Trades Council and from then on quickly established himself as a leading Fabian lecturer holding the record for the highest number of lectures in one year (163 in 1893). Simultaneously he published a number of Socialist pamphlets[121] and this later helped him to become editor of the I.L.P. News for a brief period. In 1894 his approach to Socialism was defined as "Parliamentary agitation on Trade Union lines"[122] but it was evident from his involvement with the Labour Church movement that his perspective on Socialism was of a moral, ethical nature and he was increasingly critical of the trade union movement's domination of the ILP. Indeed by 1907 he had emerged as a key critic of the ILP leadership, an advocate of Socialist Unity and was in 1911 a founder and executive member of the British Socialist Party.[123] However, whilst in Huddersfield he appealed strongly to trade unionists and Socialists alike by advocating a range of measures which included an Eight-Hour day, a national minimum wage, municipalisation of land, nationalisation of all industry and on all-out attack on competition.[124] In a series of letters to the Examiner he denied Socialism undermined the concepts of individualism and the family,

while pointing out that reform of the Lords and disestablishment would neither feed the hungry nor find employment. His keynote was that "The main point of Socialism is that we claim for labour the entire product of labour"[125].

On the evening following Smart's conditional adoption, the Liberal Association's Selection Committee met to report that they had found a possible candidate but that he wished to be assured of joint Liberal and Labour backing. It was therefore resolved "that the Sub-Committee be empowered to enter into negotiations with the Labour Party"[126]. An interesting series of events ensured. On Monday 6 November the Executive Committee of the HLA announced that Charles Roberts of Balliol College, Oxford,[127] would address the Liberal '200' to include the Junior and Women's Associations, and that the ILP and the Trades Council as well as the Irish League would also be invited.[128] At the meeting two days later 252 were present (including ten representatives from the ILP and the Trades Council) and Roberts spoke for over an hour in support of payment of M.P.s, election expenses from the rates, female suffrage, Home Rule, abolition of the Lords, social reform and, more vaguely, "an increased State intervention with the view of the greater equality of wealth."[129] Although he was clearly more advanced in his views than Woodhead and as advanced as Summers had been, he came far short of Smart's policies on nationalisation. When Roberts stepped away from the traditional Liberal stance he did so hesitantly and without any carefully formulated policies or plans: his references to equality of wealth were nebulous and insubstantial enough to smack

of a calculated sop to Labour, while he remained conspiciously silent on the Eight-Hour Day. There were, therefore, few doubts when the ILP met on the Thursday (9 November) that they would find him an unsuitable alternative to Smart. But in the event they agreed to confer with the Liberals on the representation of the Borough, on the understanding that Smart would be enabled to address the Liberal '200' at the same time Roberts was arranged to speak to the ILP membership.[130] In retrospect it is clear that the ILP had no intention of withdrawing Smart or supporting Roberts at this time, and that they cleverly used the situation for the purposes of publicity and propaganda, although this was not immediately evident.

The two addresses duly took place on 15 and 16 November. At the latter meeting Smart outlined the ILP's programme while making it clear to the Liberals that he would not become a Liberal candidate: if he was to stand "he would contest the constituency whatever other candidates there might be - and whatever the decision of the Trades Council."[131] He reiterated this antagonistic stance in a subsequent speech at the Leeds Labour Church,[132] by which time it was becoming clear to the Examiner, if not to the Liberal Association, that there would be no Lib-Lab agreement and no compromise candidate in Huddersfield.[133] As if to confirm the gap that existed between the two sides the ILP issued a manifesto, following Roberts' address, declaring they would field a candidate in any circumstances. At the same time it is important to note how the manifesto also attacked the lack of compunction with which the Liberal government was gunning

down strikers: the link was significant.[134] Even at this juncture the HLA still pursued further negotiations, although with diminishing conviction. It was not, in fact, until a joint conference between the Liberals and the ILP on 1 December that the final breakdown of talks came and the ILP finally indicated that they "had no idea of supporting the candidate of the Liberal Party, but were determined to do their utmost to go to the Poll with Mr. Russell Smart."[135] It read almost like a declaration of war, as Roberts subsequent withdrawal reflected:

> I decline to court a split contest between the two forces which I equally desire to represent .... I stand for the ultimate identification of Liberalism and the Labour Movement .... common understanding between the two forces in indispensible.[136]

So it was that the first and last negotiations between the Liberal and Labour parties in Huddersfield foundered. However, the talks had indicated the seriousness with which the HLA viewed the Labour threat after February 1893 and had witnessed a perceptible softening of the previously intransigent Liberal position towards Labour. Despite the breakdown of the negotiations it remained a major priority of the HLA that a candidate should be found who would be acceptable to working men, if not to the ILP. The ILP for its part had used the situation admirably for its own ends, succeeding in publicising their programme and to some extent legitimising Smart's candidature. Co-operation with the Liberals had never at any time been in their minds and this emphasised a sharpening of their position since the ambiguous Lib-Labism of the inaugural year.

4. The 1895 General Election

I The Run-Up

Local events in Huddersfield in 1893 had to some extent detracted from Parliamentary affairs, which had been monopolised by Gladstone's Second Home Rule Bill until its defeat in September 1893. To advanced Liberals, like Balmforth and Thomson, it had been a wasted session: "Radical elements eager for a programme of social betterment, felt that he [Gladstone] had sacrificed it to his obession"[137]. Yet even with Home Rule temporarily shelved and Gladstone's departure in March 1894 the Liberals' problems were far from solved. The Fabians, who had in Huddersfield formed the nucleus of the ILP, had finally withdrawn links with the Liberal Party with the cry To Your Tents, O Israel!,[138] frustrated that the Newcastle Programme had been persistently ignored. Meanwhile the leadership scramble in 1894-5 only deepened the divisions in the Party as to policy priority, especially in foreign affairs: "Each section claimed that it was the backbone of the Liberal Party"[139]. Rosebery's premiership proved ineffectual and although in his Bradford speech of October 1894 he propagated reform of the Lords as a new 'umbrella issue' to unite the Party, it singularly failed to do so. By 1895 the Liberals were bitterly divided with nothing to show for three years in office except for Harcourt's 1894 'Death Duty' Budget. Policies had either not received united Liberal support, for example the 1893 Miners' Eight-Hour Bill and the 1895 Factory and Workshops Bill, or had been mutilated by the Lords, like the 1893 Employers' Liability Bill.

Inevitably Huddersfield Liberalism reflected something of the apathy and confusion evident at national level: Home Rule was less apparent locally than at any time since 1886, yet it still formed the main topic of Austen Chamberlain's speech in Huddersfield Town Hall in March 1894.[140] Asquith, in his visit the following month, discussed elements of the Newcastle Programme, especially electoral and Lords reform,[141] but local Liberals took up few of his pointers and were, in fact, conspicuously quiet until late 1894 when the laboured matter of Welsh Disestablishment became a live issue both locally and nationally.[142] Even then, however, there was an uncharacteristic half-heartedness about Liberal activity; a restraint not evident before.

Nevertheless it would be erroneous to assume that Huddersfield Liberalism lacked vitality at this time or, indeed, was failing to maintain its local predominance. The Huddersfield Junior Liberal Association (HJLA), formed in 1887, played an increasingly central role in keeping local Liberalism to the forefront, especially from January 1894 when the Liberal Association's rules were amended to admit six HJLA representatives to the 'Two Hundred', and three to the Executive.[143] There were well over two hundred Junior Liberals at this time, although numbers had declined since 1892[144], and prominent members included John Pyrah[145], Fred Crosland[146]. A.L. Woodhead[147] and Tom Hall[148]. During 1894 their main determination was: "to deal with the Labour question" in view of its potency evident in the by-election, and several meetings were held on the topic. Their main emphasis was on the suitability of the

Liberal Party to represent Labour: it was futile, they argued, to create an independent Labour Party when a progressive party already existed: "Why should they be divided when their interests are identically the same?[149]" The only possible role for an ILP would be as a pressure group to persuade the Liberal Party to more far-reaching reform. One part of the HJLA's campaign during 1894 was a public debate between Smart and Byrne, the motion being "That the interests of the community will be better served by the ILP than by the Liberal Party[150]". This illustrated that at least one section of Huddersfield Liberalism was prepared to face the Labour issue, even if the majority were not.

It was, moreover, the Junior Liberals who pointed to the urgent need for a central Liberal Club in the town noting "that the Conservative Club was absorbing a considerable number of their members and the sons of leading Liberals and that the future Liberalism of the Borough was being imperilled[151]". In fact, despite persistent pressure from the HJLA and due procrastination by the HLA executive, it was not until April 1898 that a central club was opened in Westgate, when it could claim an initial membership of 600.[152]

Yet if there was evidence of Liberal vitality in Huddersfield during 1894-5 and a readiness to face Labour, which indicated a move away from the more conciliatory approach of 1893, so too were there signs of weakness. Despite a determination in April 1893 to improve the Party's election management[153] there remained on the eve of the 1895 election serious lapses in local organisation reminiscent of

those which had contributed to the 1893 defeat.[154] In West Ward it was reported that there was no Secretary and very few workers: "the Ward as a whole was practically without organisation[155]". Moreover, Central, Lindley, South and Lockwood ward representatives complained of a certain apathy amongst party workers and a shortage of canvassers, especially these willing to work in the poorer districts. Supplementary to these problems was the more critical one of an adverse financial balance for the HLA amounting to £112.[156] This highlighted the large number of subscribers who had lapsed their contributions since 1892 and emphasised the necessity to secure a candidate who could pay his own way. Indeed this was a perennial problem for local Liberal Associations and severely militated against the likelihood of the adoption of working men, as Pelling has observed:

> No doubt the middle-class men who controlled these associations rejected Labour candidates because they feared that such men would represent their own middle-class interests poorly or not at all; but in other cases they simply refused to contemplate shouldering the burden of expense which fell upon a constituency association whose member could not pay his own way.[157]

The overall picture which emerges of the Huddersfield Liberal Party on the eve of the 1895 election is that of a party facing a number of short-term organisational problems and a certain confusion as to how to deal with the Labour Party. Neither negotiation nor attack had stemmed its advance and the tendency was to 'hope for the best' rather than seriously formulate new policy initiative. Nor,

realistically, did it seem to many Liberals that the latter was necessary: true, the parliamentary seat had been lost but Liberal predominance on the Borough Council, on the School Board and on the Board of Guardians was unrivalled. The Labour Party was a temporary, if irritating, aberration.

For the Labour Party the eighteen months preceding the 1895 election were ones of continued activity and enthusiasm. Trade was poor and unemployment became their main concern as chapter four will examine in greater detail. In February 1894 a mass meeting of the unemployed was held at which Russell Smart strongly criticised the Borough Council's Labour Bureau[158] as ineffective and called for the immediate commencement of public works to provide work: "the unemployed do not want charity but employment[159]". This was to constitute the ILP's approach to unemployment in Huddersfield for several years, linked to a renewed drive for fair contracts, fair municipal wages and a reduction in council "extravagence": often via Allen Gee's lone voice in the council chamber.[160] By way of meetings and press correspondence a subtle pressure was maintained by what were a relatively small number of ILPers. G. Madelaine's letter was representative of Labour's persistence at this time:

> I am convinced if the working classes would only return to our Council a majority of men of their own class, such a miserable wage as 16s. per week for an adult worker would soon be a thing of the past.[161]

This was typical in that it illustrates the ILP's strategy of constantly identifying the amelioration of wages and conditions with Labour representatives on local governing bodies. It was essentially, therefore, an appeal to class self-interest with little reference to Socialism directly. Socialism was kept very much beneath the surface even though the vast majority of the ILP membership were committed to its realisation. For example, the Huddersfield and Colne Valley Labour News which was set up by the ILPs of the Colne Valley and Huddersfield, was proclaimed as: "A Literary Paper, a Local Paper, a Labour Paper, and a Newspaper combined ... an organ to voice Democratic sentiments and the people's cause."[162] It started up as a weekly in December 1893 and included articles by Smart, Joe Burgess, Caroline Martyn and Joe Dyson, but folded in February 1894 after only ten issues, mainly because it sought to cover the same ground as the Yorkshire Factory Times.

The ILP's cause in Huddersfield was also kept to the forefront through less subtle methods. Smart, whose candidature became official on 27 October 1894,[163] had clearly benefited from his involvement in the public debates organised by the HJLA and the Huddersfield Temperance Society,[164] while there was another successful May Day demonstration in 1894 addressed by Tom Mann.[165] Moreover, two Labour candidates were fielded in the November 1894 municipal elections, although both were unsuccessful,[166] as was a Labour contender for a seat on the Board of Guardians in December.[167] However, on 1 February the following year Joe Dyson was returned as a member of the School Board,[168] albeit without Trades Council

support.[169] Finally, there were two notable changes made to the ILP's constitution in Huddersfield: firstly it was formally affiliated to the national ILP and secondly every member would henceforth be required to sign a declaration that he was "a socialist pledged to sever all connections with any other political party, to vote in local elections as the local ILP determines and in parliamentary elections as a conference of the national ILP determines."[170] This effectively broke with the HLU's original constitution[171] and indicated a further shift leftwards, away from the Lib-Labism of the Trades Council, which was once again to prove an obstacle to electoral co-operation.

II The Campaign

When the Government resigned on 21 June 1895 the task facing Huddersfield Liberals if they wished to regain the seat appeared more daunting than usual; there was a Labour candidate in the field, threatening to split the radical vote, and as yet no Liberal candidate had been produced. By contrast, the Huddersfield ILP revealed a remarkable state of preparedness at an organising meeting on 25 June, chaired by Tom Topping, at which an election council of seventy-six was appointed together with a Propagandist committee, a Womens' committee, and a Finance Committee. The latter reported that there was £170 already in the bank for the election, with an additional £200 promised.[172] Harry Henshall, manager of the Labour Press Society based in Manchester, was to be Smart's agent and it was at his instigation that a bi-weekly Labour election paper entitled the Huddersfield I.L.P. Election Herald, was to be published.[173]

Once again, however, the Huddersfield Trades Council held aloof, refusing to endorse Smart's candidature and there was a heated meeting on 26 June, sparked off by a proposal that a list be drawn up of those Trades Council members who were also ILPers. Gee and Topping were able to resist this by passing a motion "that the Council did not inquire into the politics of its members"[174] but this only opened a wider debate as the Trades Council's attitude to the ILP. The majority of those representatives present argued that ILP influence in the Council was alienating trade unions and threatening to reduce the membership; while a small number of ILPers asserted that their principles and aims had the full support of the workers and that the furtherance of trade unionism was one of them. However, even amongst trade unionists with pronounced ILP sympathies like Tom Topping, Allen Gee and John White there was no desire to force the issue and they admitted that in view of declining trade union membership[175] the Council should remain taciturn on political commitment: "that the Council takes independent action in reference to any legislation that affects the interests of the workers, directly from that Council, and without being in coalition with any political party whatever."[176] Consequently no motion whatsoever was passed with reference to Smart's candidature, an attitude which reflected the Yorkshire Factory Times' tendency after 1894 to neglect ILP activities (the 1895 election was totally ignored). Precisely what were the motives which lay behind this reticence is difficult to ascertain, but it may well have been a fear that with a poor climate for trade unionism an association with Socialism would be likely to alienate much-needed recruits and damage the cause of trade unionism

generally. Ben Turner certainly seemed to hint at this when he wrote in the Factory Times:

> Many readers have pressed us to make the Factory Times an ILP paper for Yorkshire. It wouldn't pay wages to do so; and besides that, the paper was started as a trade union organ pure and simple, and must remain so ... the little bit our paper has dabbled in ILP'ism has not improved our circulation.[177]

Whatever the reasons, Russell Smart entered the 1895 election as Huddersfield's first Labour candidate without official Trades Council support.

Apart from Charles Roberts, who had declined the Liberal candidature late in 1893, several other potential Liberal candidates had at one time or another been rumoured including Asquith and Sir James Kitson, Liberal MP for Colne Valley.[178] However, Asquith had declined[179] and there is no evidence that Kitson had ever been considered suitable by the HLA in view of his strong opposition to any form of state intervention in industry. In April 1894 the Examiner had mentioned the name of Sir James Thomas Woodhouse of Hull in connection with the Liberal candidature and he eventually emerged as candidate on 27 June, having belatedly accepted the HLA's invitation to stand.[180]

Sir James Woodhouse (1852-1921), who was to play a major role in Huddersfield politics for over a decade, had made his name in Hull as a solicitor from 1878, and a borough councillor from 1882. In

1890 at only thirty-eight years old he had become Hull's youngest Mayor ever as a tribute to his services to the town, notably in education. His year in office was described as "one of the most brilliant on record."[181] Two years later he contested the solidly Tory seat of Howdenshire[182] reducing the Conservative majority by 841. He was knighted in the 1895 New Year's honours list and resided at Brough Hall, Brough.[183] It is probable that his support of the Miners' Eight-Hour Day, payment of MPs and taxation of land values, in conjunction with a soundness on Home Rule, local option and religious equality greatly enamoured him to Huddersfield Liberals. He was, moreover, an accomplished orator and he had supported the Hull Dock Strikers of 1893 indicating that his views on trade unionism contrasted starkly with those of Woodhead. Surprisingly he was a Churchman, but this seems to have made little difference.

The election campaign itself lasted only two weeks and it was the Liberals' main concern to lay low the ghost of 1893, yet evoke it as a warning to would-be Labour supporters that on that occasion they had ensured a Tory victory. This was not, nevertheless, Woodhouse's main theme. His address restated the tradition of Liberal reform and applauded the Government's record since 1892, while outlining a future programme of reforms along the lines of the Newcastle Programme, but his main emphasis was on Lords reform: "This I regard as the supreme and vital issue of this election. I am opposed to hereditary legislators, and I am in favour of the abolition of the veto of the House of Lords."[184] This issue, indeed, became an 'umbrella' of Gladstonian proportions in the Huddersfield campaign,

for Lords obstructionism could explain, at a stroke, the paucity of Liberal achievement between 1892 and 1895, while enabling major reforms to be put off, including Home Rule, until the Lords was reformed.[185] In this respect, therefore, Woodhouse followed Rosebery's line in the election as opposed to the issues of Home Rule and Local Option, pressed by Morley and Harcourt respectively, although both of these were included in his address.

Sir Joseph Crosland's address was, by contrast with that of Woodhouse, short and concise: he claimed that "despite the efforts of the Gladstonian party to conceal the fact"[186] the issue of the election was Home Rule pure and simple. Although he expressed support for pensions, 'restricted hours of labour', employer accident liability and liquor 'restrictions', he had nothing new to put forward to mitigate the apathy with which many people, not least the Liberals, increasingly viewed the Home Rule issue, now a decade old.

Unfortunately Russell Smart's address no longer survives but his programme can be deduced from the Huddersfield I.L.P. Election Herald and the somewhat scanty coverage his campaign received in the rest of the local press. Ignoring traditional political sabbatarianism, Smart began his intensive campaign on Sunday 30 June. At his first public meeting in Queen Street South, which around 1,100 people attended, he made an impassioned appeal to Socialists, trade unionists and co-operators alike to support the ILP programme of an Eight-Hour Day, municipal provision of work, equal taxation, nationalisation of the land, a national minimum wage of 24s. per week, pensions, free

school meals, factory reform and abolition of the Lords.[187] Above all, he said, the election was to be "a clear, straight up and down fight upon the principle of Socialism versus the present system of capitalism,"[188] a point reiterated by those speakers who journeyed to support him, notably Glasier, Sexton and Clynes. In fact his campaign strayed rarely from this emphasis summarised by the Examiner as "the organisation of an industrial commonwealth, founded upon the socialisation of land and of capital."[189] It was, in short, a Socialist campaign, but Smart was quick to link what was still basically a utopian concept to the everyday issues of wages and conditions.

Although Woodhouse could be assured of the temperance and Catholic vote it was clear he would have to win back those Liberal working men who had voted for Crosland in 1893 while simultaneously preventing a seepage to Labour. He held a large number of meetings, although not as many as Smart who was addressing as many as six every evening for two weeks, and the Lords issue never really left the limelight. His response to Smart was generally one of sympathy with his aims, but he accused him persistently of utopianism: for "desiring to attain chimerical reforms which were not within the range of practical politics,"[190] or, as another Liberal put it: "Liberals are practical men. We do; Socialists talk and don't; Tories howl and won't."[191] The difference between the ILP and the Liberal Party, Woodhouse claimed, was merely that of remedy, there was "room in Liberalism for all"[192] and working men need search no further than

the Liberal Party for a proponent of their best interests.[193] Devoting a third of his opening campaign speech to the ILP, he concluded by quoting Asquith:

> Far better try to influence a party like the Liberal Party which is in sympathy with your minds, which breathes your spirit, which has no selfish or class interests to subserve, far better try and persuade that party of the wisdom and necessity of the end which you wish to accomplish. It is better for practical men to attack the position and use if they can an old and well-tried instrument, rather than try and waste their energy in forging new tools which may be liable to break in their hands.[194]

Yet it was only in the earlier stage of the campaign that Woodhouse concerned himself with the Labour threat: as the election proceeded so he turned to identifying Crosland with Lords opposition to Liberal reforms. The Examiner also tended to concentrate on Crosland rather than Smart and by pronouncing the election, "The Knights' Tournament" managed to avoid any detailed discussion of Socialism.[195]

The Chronicle, however, not unexpectedly aimed its efforts at splitting the radical vote by encouraging the ILP: "One can admire the energy and enthusiasm of the Independent Labour Party, and compare it to the lethargy which seems to have come over the Liberal Party."[196] Woodhouse was branded as a carpet-bagger: "he is not interested in Huddersfield, except in the way of Huddersfield proving for him a stepping stone to higher things"[197] and this meant the contest was really between Smart and Crosland, especially as "the

Liberals are in miserable straits and that they are whistling to keep their courage up."[198]

Ironically it was Crosland who was facing the worst problems: he held far fewer meetings than in 1893 and only one mass meeting in the Town Hall.[199] At sixty-nine years old (compared to Woodhouse's forty-two), his poor health precluded any great vitality and his elevation of Home Rule above all other issues only tended to give the impression that he and his views were worn out. Moreover he missed vital opportunities during the campaign, in particular he should have stressed the local option issue which would have proved unpopular amongst a large number of working men and would have emphasised the Liberal splits on the issue. Furthermore, apart from his support for the Miners' Eight-Hour Bill his term as Huddersfield's MP had been undistinguished. Finally, his attempt to blame the Liberals for the trade depression, which had created high unemployment locally, singularly failed,[200] mainly because the textile trade had seen an improvement since 1891-3 despite abysmal trade with the United States described as "the worst since the American War."[201] He avoided the two-loom question, as did Woodhouse, and neither responded to Smart's taunt that its introduction would cause widespread unemployment: "The capitalists knew that if they did introduce it now such a vast number of the workers would be drawn to the Labour candidate, that he could, without doubt, be placed at the top of the poll."[202]

Yet despite Crosland's ineffectiveness the result of the poll remained uncertain to the end, mainly due to the unknown quantity of the Labour

Party. Smart had concluded his campaign jubilantly in St. George's Square, on the day before the poll, at a meeting attended by a reported 3,000 people, at which he had predicted that "The end of the Liberal Party was not far off" and that 3,000 people had pledged their votes to him.[203] In the event Woodhouse's margin of victory was wide. He secured 6755 votes (47.5 per cent) to Crosland's 5868 (41.3 per cent) and Smart's 1594 (11.2 per cent) on a lower turnout than 1893,[204] although 116 more people had actually voted. The Liberal majority was, at 887, the largest in Huddersfield since 1880 and once again the town had gone against trends elsewhere in the country, and indeed the county, where the Liberal vote had fallen substantially more than in Huddersfield. In fact after the 1895 election only fourteen of the twenty-two West Riding seats were still Liberal as opposed to twenty in 1892.[205] Nationally there was a swing of 2.7 per cent to the Unionists in 1895[206] sufficient to give them an overall majority of 152 seats in the Commons, although Liberal apathy had given a much larger number of the Unionists free-runs.[207]

Smart's 1594 votes had been drawn from both his opponents but the Liberal vote had fallen by only 278 or 2.4 per cent since 1893 compared to a drop of 1200 or 8.8 per cent for Crosland. Even allowing for the Liberals winning large numbers of votes from the Conservatives and losing some to Labour it seemed Smart had gained more of his votes from the Conservative camp than from Woodhouse, as both the Chronicle and Crosland readily admitted.[208] Moreover, this was of long-term significance, as table 3 illustrates. Since 1885, if

the 1895 Conservative result is momentarily ignored, it is clear that the Liberal vote had held up less well than the Conservative vote and that it was the Conservatives who were gradually gaining ground. After 1895, however, when Crosland's share of the poll plummetted by 8.8 per cent, Labour's intervention robbed the Conservatives of this favourable trend and they never again attained the level of support before 1914 which they had enjoyed in 1893. So although both parties lost support as a result of the advent of Labour's challenge, it was the Conservative party which fared worst, reaching a nadir of 26.6 per cent of the poll in 1906.

Table 3.3 Liberal and Conservative Vote in Huddersfield 1885-1910

	1885	1886	1892	1893*	1895	Average
Liberal	6960 (52.9%)	6210 (50.8%)	7098 (50.9%)	7033 (49.9%)	6755 (47.5%)	50.4%
Conservative	6194 (47.1%)	6026 (49.2%)	6837 (49.1%)	7068 (50.1%)	5868 41.3%)	47.4%

	1900	1906	1906*	1910	1910	Average
Liberal	7896 (53.6%)	6302 (38.2%)	5762 (36.0%)	7158 (39.8%)	6458 (37.5%)	41.0%
Conservative	6831 (46.4%)	4391 (26.6%)	4844 (30.2%)	5153 (28.6%)	5777 (33.5%)	33.1%

* By-elections February 1893 and November 1906.

Exactly why it was the Huddersfield Conservatives rather than the Liberals who were falling behind at this time, when exactly the opposite was the case elsewhere in West Yorkshire,[209] is not

altogether obvious. Clearly Woodhouse probably regained voters lost to Crosland in 1893 which may have disguised a seepage to Labour, but this is not enough. What is more likely is that the advent of a Labour candidate had broken a tradition of working-class Conservatism in Huddersfield, noted earlier, which had originated in Oastler and had thrived on Disraelian Tory Democracy, the Liberal Unionist split, the Liberals' neglect of social policy, the local option issue and Crosland's support for the Miners' Eight-Hour Day and pensions. Indeed it will be remembered that Crosland persistently cast himself in the same 'Liberal-Conservative' mould as his popular brother T.P. Crosland, who had won Huddersfield in 1865. It is probable that once a distinctively working-class candidate had emerged, as in 1895, some working-class Conservatives, disappointed with Crosland's parliamentary ineffectiveness and dismayed at his reversion to Home Rule, had switched to Labour. In fact the Liberal vote in Huddersfield showed a remarkable stability and remained relatively untouched by Smart's intervention, while elsewhere there was often a marked Liberal decline.[210] Undoubtedly the continued support of the Trades Council membership had much to do with this as the Chronicle observed: "The Liberal-Labour men who had talked loudly before and during the contest voted in the end for the orthodox Liberal candidate."[211], but another factor was the continued backing of Nonconformity. This will be examined in the next chapter. One thing does, however, seem clear: that the Liberals had regained the seat in 1895 neither by positively responding to Labour nor by proposing new social policies, but because of an unexpected collapse in the Conservative vote.

Russell Smart's performance in 1895 was disappointing when compared with other Labour votes in Yorkshire. His 11.2 per cent was lower than Ben Tillett's 23.4 per cent in Bradford West, John Lister's 20.5 per cent in Halifax and Tom Mann's 13.4 per cent in Colne Valley; while he also polled less than the average Labour vote across the country which was 1657.[212] Nevertheless a Labour candidate had stood in Huddersfield and there was at least some truth in the Chronicle's comment that:

> Never again will the Liberal Party possess the same power in Huddersfield that they held a few years ago .... [the Labour Party] will hang on their flank and rob their victories of its choicest sweets .... The present election is like the last expiring flare up of a cause which has seen its best days.[213]

After the poll Smart made a similar comment on the inevitability of Labour's rise when he said that the Socialist message had touched young men

> into whose hearts those principles had sunk like the rain that fell on the dry earth, fertilising them and making them blossom into the tree of future democracy.[214]

The Examiner's outlook was less poetic:

> It is to us a matter of wonder that nearly sixteen hundred Huddersfield men could cast their votes for a man who lightly talked about hanging capitalists and landlords to the street lamps.[215]

If the Liberal Party in West Yorkshire and in the country in 1895 was "in real difficulties",[216] the opposite seems to have been the case in Huddersfield which had returned Liberalism to power and had "become herself again."[217] Yet it was a chastened Liberalism, confident in its pre-eminence but painfully aware of Labour's potentiality and to some extent conscious of the needs of working men. As Owen Balmforth observed at the post-election celebration, the defeat of 1893 had "awakened apathetic workers to rejuvenate Liberalism."[218]

5. Huddersfield Politics, 1895-1899

Superficially the period between the 1895 election and the outbreak of the Boer War was a quiet one politically, particularly on the domestic front. The Government's 1896 Education Bill[219] aroused a predictable storm of Nonconformist abuse, not least in Huddersfield where several large protest meetings were held, chaired by Joseph Woodhead who had withdrawn from public life after the 1893 by-election but staged a Gladstonian-type comeback on this 'moral' issue.[220] It was, indeed, on the education issue that Huddersfield's new M.P. chose to give his maiden speech in the Commons in 11 May 1896 contributing to the debate which forced Balfour to withdraw the bill in June.[221] Yet if something of Liberalism's old fire was apparent on this issue, and on the Agricultural Ratings Bill, it was to be foreign and imperial concerns that predominated from late 1896 onwards with a consequent deepening of existing Liberal divisions on foreign policy, evident earlier over Uganda. In Huddersfield, from 29 September 1896, when a mass Liberal meeting of protest against the Armenian

outrages was held;[222] foreign and imperial concerns recurred in Woodhouse's speeches in the constituency,[223] while Sir Edward Grey's visit in October 1898 was devoted wholly to foreign policy. The Huddersfield Junior Liberal Association was unable or unwilling to revive its earlier interest in land reform, an issue which had proved so successful elsewhere in the country in reviving support for Liberalism,[224] and on 17 November 1898 the Association was folded, having been absorbed, it was said, by the new central Liberal club opened in April 1898.[225] Arguably this action robbed Huddersfield Liberalism of an admirably active organising body but it is evident that the new Liberal Club, with its weekly Saturday "Political Evenings" on a wide range of topics;[226] to some extent replaced the HJLA; although by 1904 it was found necessary to revive it.

The accentuation of Liberal divisions was exemplified at a national level by a virtual dichotomy between Rosebery and the Liberal Imperialists, and Harcourt and the 'Little Englanders' especially once South Africa had become a live issue.[227] Although in Huddersfield there was initially little evidence of this sort of division, even the Examiner was forced to comment acidly and with some despair on the state of the Liberal Party in January 1899:

> The Liberal leaders would do well to seek points of agreement on which they can unite the party of progress, instead of playing into the hands of the enemy, by proposing reactionary measures out of an imaginary compulsion to strive after an entirely illusory consistency.[228]

Nor were Huddersfield Unionists slow to exploit this moribund condition of the national Liberal Party: in February 1899 the Huddersfield Liberal Unionist Association heard an address by Lord James of Hereford, his main theme being "What has become of the Liberal Party?"[229] By July 1898 E. Hildred Carlile, a wealthy Meltham manufacturer and benefactor, related to the Brooke family, had emerged as the most likely candidate to replace Crosland as Conservative champion. Significantly Carlile was a strong Imperialist and commanded Huddersfield's Volunteer Battalion.[230] His selection reflected a rising pitch of Imperialist sentiment enhanced by the patriotism surrounding Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations in June 1897. In Huddersfield on Jubilee Day over 18,000 children marched through the streets singing the national anthem loud enough to be heard two miles away, the parks were a kaleidoscope of activity and a massive bonfire illuminated Castle Hill.[231]

Nevertheless Liberalism in Huddersfield exhibited significantly more life than was evident at the national level. In part, however, it was the visit to Huddersfield by the National Liberal Federation (NLF) in March 1896 which prevented a decline into apathy common amongst Liberal workers elsewhere in the country. Apparently Huddersfield was chosen because of Woodhouse's "great victory" in 1895 "when so many constituencies were going the other way"[232] and the annual report of the HLA in January 1897 noted that the NLF had indeed encouraged a renewed Liberal vitality locally: "The meetings of the Council have been well attended, the committee work has been carried out cheerfully, and with an earnest spirit,

and confidence in our strength permeates our members."[233]

Nevertheless tables four and five indicate that the presence of the NLF merely enhanced existing trends of steady membership growth for the HJLA and the HWLA evident before 1896. The figures showed that

Table 3.4 Membership of the Huddersfield Junior Liberal Association, 1887-98

1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898
163	226	247	265	271	280	N.A.	211	229	241	266	255

Note: N.A. indicates not available. The HJLA was formed in 1887.
Source: Huddersfield Examiner.

Table 3.5 Membership of the Huddersfield Women's Liberal Association, 1889-99

1889		1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899
FEB	NOV										
100	180	250	N.A.	300	N.A.	346	380	N.A.	N.A.	422	378

Note: N.A. indicates not available. The HWLA was formed in 1889.
Source: Huddersfield Examiner.

political participation in terms of Liberal membership of these two bodies was not declining in the later 1890s but increasing. The HJLA had experienced a drop in membership 1892-4, reflecting both national disillusionment with the Liberal Party and a local rebellion amongst the younger, more advanced Liberals against Woodhead's 1893 candidate. From 1894 it was picking up again until the establishment of the new Central Club which was clearly draining members away. However, what is evident from table four and from table six below[234] is that from 1897-8 Liberal membership in Huddersfield

was beginning to suffer from depletion, due ostensibly to national events and the sad state of the national Liberal Party. It may have been, however, that the establishment of the new Central Club had merely attracted members away from the district clubs and that real Liberal membership did not decline. Whichever is the more accurate explanation, the fact remains that the decline was relatively small compared to that experienced by the Labour clubs in the town (see below). Moreover, the financial problems the HLA had been facing for several years[235] had been solved by a financial canvass which had successfully raised £90.[236]

Table 3.6 Membership of the Lockwood, Lindley and Moldgreen Liberal Clubs, 1894-99

	Lockwood	Lindley	Moldgreen
1894	200	269	215
1895	170	284	205
1896	192	332	N.A.
1897	207	332	251
1898	200	320	217
1899	200	309	203

Note: N.A. indicates not available. Source: Huddersfield Examiner.

A further indication of Huddersfield Liberalism's continued vitality was its retention of a clear majority on the Borough Council, even though it is evident from the declining number of contests between 1894 and 1900 that public interest in local politics was diminishing.[237] Whether it was the re-organisation of Liberal local

election procedure[238] which prevented a Conservative, or indeed Labour, advance on the Council, or whether it was simply a continued impetus is difficult to be sure about. Certainly the Liberal Party's dominant position on the Huddersfield Council contrasts with that on the Bradford, Leeds and Halifax Councils where the Conservatives were making major inroads after 1895 at the expense of the Liberals. Dr. Ross and Dr. Laybourn have shown that between 1895 and 1899 the number of Conservatives on the Bradford Council rose sufficiently for them to win overall control and that this broad trend of growth was paralleled by an expansion in the Conservative club movement.[239] On Leeds Council, the Liberals had been ejected from power after an unbroken rule of sixty years, while they were barely in control in Halifax.[240] Yet if Huddersfield Liberalism's continued municipal predominance was contrary to the trends in the West Riding's cities it tended to be in line with the national municipal trends which saw the Liberal Party continuing to gain more local council seats than the Unionists until after 1895.[241]

Political partisanship in Huddersfield in the 1890s remained keen. The HLA continued to inveigh against "the notoriously corrupt practices of the Conservatives" in local elections[242] while making biting comments on E.H. Carlile's preliminary political meetings in February 1899 which were thinly disguised as smoking concerts in public houses.[243] Carlile could, of course, avoid any accusations of illegal practices because although he was identified as the HCA's prospective candidate he had not been officially adopted

as such. It was fairly clear that he was using his substantial wealth to gain himself political support.[244] Partisanship was also evident in the bitter conflicts on the School Board over the Education Bill, and on the Borough Council over the issues of how best to mark the Jubilee in 1897 and Sunday trams in 1896. Both were evidence of the undiminishing strength of political Nonconformity in the town.[245]

In many ways Huddersfield Liberalism's confidence and unassailability in the late 1890s can be explained by the virtual evaporation of the Labour threat. As Ben Riley succinctly observed in 1908 about the Huddersfield ILP:

> After the General Election of 1895, the local movement suffered a decided slump. The membership of the Party .... gradually dwindled down to very meagre proportions. The local I.L.P. clubs which had sprung up in every district during 1890-1894 carried on for some years a more or less sickly existence, and by the year 1900-1 had, with a few honourable exceptions, died out altogether.[246]

The only reliable source of ILP membership, the I.L.P. News, detailed this decline. As table one above indicated, out of the seven ILP clubs in the Huddersfield district around 1893 only three still survived in June 1899[247] returning a total membership of only 170 compared to something around 800 in 1893. This low level compares unfavourably with ILP membership in Bradford (1,000), Halifax (591) and Ashton-under-Lyne (210).[248] Moreover, the depletion in Labour

membership in Huddersfield led to a decline in activity: in the local elections between 1895 and 1901 only two Labour candidates stood, polling between them a mere 505 votes.[249] Allen Gee, therefore, remained Labour's sole representative on the Borough Council. Indeed so insignificant had the Huddersfield ILP seemed to have become by 1899 that the Examiner was able to comment with glee that:

> The letters I.L.P. strike the reader ... as the survivals almost of a forgotten age, so generally is it felt that the Independent Labour Party has ceased to be a power to affect either the Parliamentary or the industrial developments of the country .... There is not a single representative of the party in Parliament, the numbers in membership are not equal to the electorate of one of the bigger contituencies, and the funds have not that elasticity which is necessary if propagandist work is to be done.[250]

Exactly why there was this slump in ILP interest after 1895 can be explained by reference both to national and local factors. As Henry Pelling and A.E.P. Duffy have observed[251] there was manifold disappointment that none of the ILP's twenty-eight candidates had been returned in 1895 and that Hardie had lost his seat in South West Ham. High hopes had been dashed and disillusionment ensued, not least in Huddersfield. Nationally, this gave way to serious in-fighting focussing on a division in approach between Hardie (and his Labour Leader) who favoured closer co-operation with the unions as a prerequisite to a credible Labour movement, and Blatchford (plus the Clarion) who believed that Socialist Unity was the way forward, to which end he encouraged a fusion of the ILP and SDF.

In Huddersfield the Clarion movement was never very strong before 1900, although there is evidence of a Clarion Cycling Club and a Clarion Vocal Union.[252] Nevertheless the dissension at national level inevitably had an impact locally and when linked to the rising pitch of Imperialism, inherently unfavourable to radicalism, produced a waning of interest.

Moreover, there was a further move away from the ILP by the trade unions. Already in Huddersfield it has been seen how the Trades Council had helped to establish the ILP yet consistently refused to endorse an independent Socialist parliamentary candidate or any policy directly antagonistic to the Liberal Party. The Yorkshire Factory Times' ominous silence during and after the 1895 election also reflected an uncertainty amongst active trade unionists about the future of the ILP. The fact remained that many trade unionists were anti-Liberal but were not Socialist, as Hardie recognised. Even had there been universal male suffrage at this time it is possible that the relative party positions would not have been any different in Huddersfield until the Trades Council moved firmly into support of the ILP. At the national level evidence of this trade union aloofness in 1896-7 can be seen in the departure from the ILP's national executive of several key trade unionists, notably Mann and Brocklehurst, to be replaced by Socialists like MacDonald, Glasier and Snowden.

In part the attitude of the trade unions can also be explained by a fear of the growth of the SDF in the later 1890s, at a time when

the ILP was in flux and susceptible to a swing leftwards.[253] Moreover, the mid-1890s onwards were a lean time for trade unionism: recruitment did not remain at the heady heights of the early-1890s and while membership did not actually fall, in many cases neither did it rise. An examination of the Huddersfield Trades Council reveals that although the number of affiliated societies increased between 1896 and 1899 from twenty to thirty-one, the actual number of members represented increased by only 13.7 per cent from 2844 to 3297.[254] A squeeze on wages, exacerbated by American protection, left trade unions with less money to organise effectively or subsidise municipal candidates. At the Trades Council's 1895 A.G.M. it was reported that the vast majority of representatives had declined to contribute to an election fund because their own finances would simply not permit it.[255] A similar financial problem must undoubtedly have been dogging the Huddersfield ILP.

The Huddersfield ILP's problems were further compounded by the loss of two important figures. Firstly Joe Dyson, the Labour Union's founder secretary, emigrated to South Africa in October 1896, for health reasons.[256] Secondly came the departure of Ramsden Balmforth. He had resigned from the School Board in February 1894 to take up an Oxford scholarship and by early 1895 had returned as a clergyman and minister at Fitzwilliam Street Unitarian Chapel.[257] However, in June 1897, he too left for South Africa to become the minister of Cape Town Free Protestant Church. Although Ben Riley[258] very adequately replaced Dyson on the School Board and was re-elected unopposed in January 1898, the loss of two of the ILP's key pioneers

and propagandists was irreparable, especially when morale was already so low.

It would be erroneous, however, to assume, as some Liberals in Huddersfield did, that the Labour movement in the area showed no signs of life at all. Of the clubs which remained Longwood was the most active. Despite its meagre membership it was able to arrange successful garden parties in 1898 and 1899, plus a prolonged series of meetings attended by Snowden, Glasier and Stacey.[259] Furthermore, although the Labour Churches at Lockwood and Longwood, which had accompanied Smart's arrival, had petered out after 1895,[260] a Socialist Sunday School was begun early in 1896. The founders included Joe Dyson, G.A. Boothroyd, John Priestley, J.H. Hellawell and J.W. Tyas,[261] and it thrived during the late 1890s, the main aim being "to get at the little ones when their minds and susceptibilities are plastic and impressionable."[262] In the next chapter Socialism and religion, and the attitude of the political parties will be analysed in greater depth. Here it is sufficient to note that the Socialist Sunday School did at least indicate a new line of action during an otherwise lacklustre period for the Huddersfield Labour Party.

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By the outbreak of the Boer War Huddersfield Liberalism appeared to have weathered a decade and a half of change admirably well. Outright intransigence towards Labour had given way, after the shock of defeat in 1893, to a perceptible softening in approach and a realisation of the ILP's potential. However, no modus vivendi had been reached

between the HLA and the ILP. Nor, in fact, was one subsequently considered essential by the Liberals, given the continued aloofness of the Trades Council, which had weakened Smart's 1895 challenge, and the fading of ILP interest after 1895. Indeed, as ILP membership and activity plummetted, Liberal confidence returned, enhancing a trend of revivalism set in train by the lesson of 1893. Liberal predominance in all aspects of local politics was never really in any doubt despite the 1893 by-election defeat, and persisted contrary to trends elsewhere in the West Riding which indicated positive Conservative advances. When, from 1897-8, Liberal membership did possibly suffer a dent in Huddersfield, it was of a minor nature. On balance it seemed that the advent of a parliamentary Labour challenge in Huddersfield had done more to harm the forces of Conservatism than Liberalism. Nevertheless, in the longer term it remained to be seen whether the Liberal Party's awareness of Labour's political potential ran deep enough to yield any working-class Liberal candidates or, indeed, a more advanced municipal approach to solving the worsening social problems of unemployment, poor housing and infant mortality, at a time when the ILP itself was evolving just such an approach.[263]

Notes for Chapter Three

1 Huddersfield Examiner, (HE), 25 November 1893.

2 Yorkshire Factory Times (YFT), 29 July 1892.

3 John William Downing was also President of the West Riding Weavers' Association, President of the Trades Council 1896-7, and later first President of Milnsbridge Labour Club. In 1892 he gave evidence to the Royal Commission on Labour.

4 YFT, op. cit.

5 Allen Gee in 1890 for example.

6 Gee's expenses in winning Lindley in 1892 totalled £5-15-10d, (YFT, 2 December 1892). In 1890 his candidature had cost £6-19s, (YFT, 28 November 1890).

7 HE, 24 September 1892.

8 HE, 8 October 1892 in a second letter.

9 B.H. Shaw in a letter to HE, 29 October 1892.

10 YFT, 26 August 1892.

11 Allen Gee, John Gee, Watts Balmforth, C.B. Andrews and Mr Irving. See YFT, 12 and 26 August, 9 and 23 September 1892.

12 Huddersfield and District Trades and Labour Council Minutes, Executive meeting, 10 October 1900.

13 Riley, B, "A Brief Account of the Rise and Growth of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Huddersfield and the Colne Valley" in Riley, B., and Whiteley, E. (eds.), 16th I.L.P. Conference Handbook, (Huddersfield 1908), p.23.

14 HE, 13 August 1892.

15 See below. Paddock Labour Club, opened in August 1893, brought the total to five excluding the central Labour Union.

16 YFT, 23 September, 7 October, 2 December 1892, respectively.

17 HE, 15 October 1892, YFT, 14 October 1892.

18 HE, 29 October 1892. Oxley was interviewed by J.W. Downing, John White, and B.H. Shaw. They promised him Labour support in Longwood if he would adopt the Labour programme. He declined but stood as a Liberal candidate in Longwood where he was elected and remained until 1904.

19 Ibid.

20 At a meeting on 21 October 1892. See HE, 22 October 1892.

21 Haigh had actually been Liberal councillor for Lindley (1874-83) but was ousted by another Liberal. In 1886 he became a Liberal Unionist and his 1892 campaign was backed by Broadbent and other Liberal Unionists and Conservatives.

22 818 voted in 1892 as opposed to 1056 in 1890.

23 HE, 5 November 1892. They were John Gee (North) and C.B. Andrews (Lockwood).

24 See appendix of municipal results. Labour put one candidate up in 1893, 1895, 1897, 1899 and 1901. In 1894 two were forthcoming, but in 1896, 1898 and 1900 none were evident.

25 YFT, 4 November 1892.

26 His visit was partially to regain his health, which had kept him out of the later stages of the 1892 election, and to further his ambition to become Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

27 Quoted in HE, 7 January 1893.

28 Ibid.

29 Huddersfield Chronicle (HC), 21 January 1893, in a letter from "One For the Union".

30 J.A. Brooke, President of the Conservative Association had written to J. Woodhead, President of the H.L.A., offering a truce. Woodhead accepted and it was confirmed at a joint meeting on 4 January. (HE, 7 January 1893).

31 HC, 7 January 1893. There were also rumours that he had offered the seat to William Summers' brother, Walter, although this was strenuously denied.

32 HE, 18 February 1893. Carmi Smith was an executive member of the H.L.A., a member of the School Board, a Wesleyan and a temperance advocate. By trade he was a provisions merchant in Lockwood, and was later mayor.

33 HC, 14 January 1893.

34 This emerged from J.E. Willans' comment made at the Liberal '200' meeting on the following evening, (HE, 14 January 1893).

35 Ibid. Balmforth suggested that Joshua Rowntree be asked to contest the seat but J.W. Robson, as Rowntree's brother-in-law, said he would decline if asked.

36 HC, 14 January 1893.

37 Alfred Walker as Chairman called for a unanimous vote after the first had been taken but there was still one dissentient (and one absention). One must presume that this was Balmforth. The other dissenter may have been George Thomson. At Paddock on 18 January he said he opposed Woodhead's economic views but believed Liberalism to be better than Conservatism. At Fartown on 23 January he said his "opinions were the antithesis of some held by the Liberal candidate" and that he was "a representative of the advanced school of Radicalism." (HE, 28 January 1893).

38 Roberts, A.W., "The Liberal Party in West Yorkshire, 1885-1895", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, January 1979, p.283.

39 HC and HE, 14 January 1893.

40 YFT, 20 January 1893. The deputation had comprised Tom Booth and Allen Gee of the Trades Council, Joe Dyson and J. Dransfield of the Labour Union, and G.W. Haigh of the Colne Valley Labour Union.

41 YFT, 6 January 1893.

42 HC, 14 January 1893.

43 YFT, 20 January 1893.

44 HE, 14 January 1893.

45 Ibid.

46 See HE, 28 January 1893 for the full list of questions and answers. True to his word Crosland did actually support the Miners' Eight-Hour Bill in Parliament in May 1893.

47 The H.L.A. passed a resolution approving Abolition of the Lords on 3 November 1893. See Huddersfield Liberal Association Minutes (hereafter H.L.A.M.), Council meeting, 3 November.

48 YFT, 27 January, HE, 28 January and 4 February 1893.

49 HE, 4 February 1893.

50 HC, 4 February 1893. This, if anything was an underestimate: personal membership was probably over 700 at this time, including the district clubs.

51 A.G.M. Trades Council, YFT, 4 November 1892.

52 HC, 14 January 1893.

53 HC, 21 January 1893.

54 'S.H.' in HE, 28 January 1893.

55 HE, 11 February 1893.

56 HC, editorial 14 January 1893.

57 HE, 28 January 1893.

58 HE, 4 February 1893.

59 YFT, 6 January 1893 pronounced Crosland 'unsound' on the two-loom question. Crosland replied (YFT, 20 January) however that "I wish to state distinctly that I am not in favour of one man, or woman, working two looms .... no one is more strongly opposed to a reduction in the rate of wages than I am."

60 Edwin Martin was a member of the Liberal woollen family who owned the largest mill in Huddersfield, Wellington Mills in Lindley. He was prominent at the Lindley Liberal Club.

61 The Two-Loom Controversy was a recurring and potent issue from the early-1890s and something of a universal panacea for some employers in times of depression. The argument went that Huddersfield, having lost much of its plain woollen work to Bradford in the 1880s, should increase output and so reduce prices to win back work and increase employment. This could be done by weavers working two looms instead of one. The unions firmly opposed the proposal arguing it would mean working harder and more dangerously for proportionately less remuneration. The debate will be discussed in chapter four.

62 YFT, 27 January 1893.

63 HE, 11 February 1893 in an interview at the Commons.

64 See above chapter three.

65 For example Joe Dyson at Woodhead's meeting in the Friendly and Trades Club on 19 January (HE, 21 January). It was also suggested that during the 1883 strike the Examiner had carried more coverage of employer opinion than worker opinion.

66 See letters HE, 21 January 1893. The charge was denied on the grounds that on extra apprentice had been taken on unknowingly by Woodhead. In April and May 1894 the Examiner carried a series of detailed articles by Woodhead aimed at denying these charges and others. He was critical of the Typographical Association for unfairness and claimed to have always looked favourably on the unions, (HE, 21 April, 28 April, 5 May, 19 May 1894).

67 See chapter one on this agitation which took place 1858-9.

68 HE, 4 February 1893. Woodhead replied at his Newsome meeting on 28 January (HE, ibid.) that Sir John Ramsden had been in the right: "I acted in what I believed were the true interests of the tenants and the people of Huddersfield."

69 Ramsden Papers DD/RA/34/2; F.W. Beadon to Ramsden (29 January 1893) and Ramsden to Beadon (31 January 1893).

70 On 17 January, (HE, 21 January 1893).

71 HE, ibid. There were an acrimonious series of letters between Woodhead and Harper on this and allied issues (see HE and HC, passim.).

72 Quoted in HE, ibid.

73 HE, ibid.

74 For example see his meetings at Lockwood and the Friendly and Trades Club on 19 January 1893.

75 Quoted in HC, 21 January 1893.

76 Quoted in HE, 21 January 1893.

77 HE, ibid.

78 Woodhead at his second Town Hall meeting on 1 February (HE, 4 February) which was also addressed by Joshua Rowntree (late MP Scarborough) and H.W. Paul (MP Edinburgh).

79 See Woodhead's meetings at Longwood (20 January) and Moldgreen (17 January).

80 Owen Kiernan of the Huddersfield Irish League said there were 399 Irish electors on the register including 57 removals. All had been traced and a full poll had been achieved, (HE, 11 February 1893).

81 HE, 21 January 1893.

82 On 13 October 1892 the Conservatives won Cirencester (Glos.) from the Liberals.

83 The result was: Shaw (Lib) 4617, Arnold (Con) 4249, Lister (Lab) 3028.

84 See Roberts, A.W., op. cit., pp.239-50.

85 Quoted in HE, 11 February 1893.

86 To Alick Wilson, 9 February 1893, in H.J. Wilson Papers. Quoted in Roberts, A.W., op. cit., p.245.

87 HE, editorial, 11 February 1893.

88 HC, 11 February 1893. John Sugden also claimed (HE, 18 February) that superior Conservative organisation had had much to do with Crosland's victory. The Examiner admitted (11 February) that Home Rule had played "an inconspicuous part" and subsequent minutes of the H.L.A. indicate that the Liberal organisation was not in the best of shape, (H.L.A.M. Executive Committee, 28 April 1893).

89 HE, 18 February 1893.

90 A letter in HE, 11 February 1893.

91 A letter in HE, 18 February 1893. Even the Bradford Observer noted that although the Labour Union had been blamed for defeat "it is feared ... that the blame is not wholly on that side", (HE, 11 February 1893 quoted).

92 'Sweeper Up' (Ben Turner) in YFT, 10 February 1893.

93 Brown, J., "Attercliffe 1894: How One Local Liberal Party Failed to Meet the Challenge of Labour", Journal of British Studies, Vol. XIV, No. 2, (May 1975), pp.48-77. See also Pelling, H., The Origins of the Labour Party 1880-1900, (Oxford 1965), pp.163-5, Howell, D., British Workers and the Independent Labour Party, (Manchester 1983), pp.267-76.

94 Typical of many early Labour men Watts Balmforth's transition between Liberalism and Labour was protracted, often finalised by one event: in this case Liberal reprisals which made him leave the Rashcliffe Liberal Club in Spring 1893 to devote his time to the Lockwood Labour Club (which he had represented at the I.L.P. Conference in Bradford in January 1893).

95 See Balmforth's letter HE, 25 February 1893.

96 HC, 11 February 1893.

97 YFT, 3 March 1893; HE, 25 February 1893. Gee pointed out that the membership proportion was five friendly men to every three union men and that this was not reflected in the executive.

98 Joe Dyson was greeted with "That's him that called Woodhead a devil" and "We don't want any devils here tonight", (HE, ibid).

99 "One of the Unemployed", HE, 18 February 1893.

100 J. Turner (Milnsbridge), Luke Jackson (Longwood), C.B. Andrews (Huddersfield Central), Watts Balmforth (Lockwood), Allen Gee (Oakes/Lindley) and Joe Dyson (Fabian Society).

101 Pelling, H., op. ct., pp.118-9; also Howell, D., op. cit., chapter twelve.

102 See H.L.U. meeting 2 March 1893 (YFT, 10 March). The Huddersfield I.L.P. did not actually affiliate to the national I.L.P. until May 1895 (see below).

103 Riley, B., op. cit., p26.

104 It is interesting to note that following the 1894 Attercliffe by-election there were a similar series of Lib-Lab negotiations to those evident in Huddersfield. See Brown, J., op. cit., pp.71-4. There too they came to nothing.

105 H.L.A.M. Council meeting, 9 May 1893.

106 Ibid.

107 H.L.A.M. Selection Committee, 13 October 1893.

108 She was a frequent itinerant speaker in the area in the 1890s. She preached ethical Socialism, brotherhood and greater female unionisation, (YFT, 21 April 1893).

109 YFT, 12 May 1893 reported 5,000 present (as did Riley, B., op. cit., p.26). HE, 13 May 1893 estimated 3,000 present. Tom Mann was the main speaker.

110 HE, 5 August 1893. Hardie spoke on the Eight-Hour Bill and called on the local I.L.P. to field a candidate in the next election.

111 Lockwood on 25 February. Salford on 11 March and Lindley in June.

112 It was held on 25 March and chaired by J.A. Fletcher: 24 delegate representing 6,000 trade unionists were present, (YFT, 31 March 1893). Clark, D., Colne Valley: Radicalism to Socialism, (London 1981), points out how Tom Mann insisted on an improvement of Colne Valley trade unionism as a prerequisite for his candidature, (pp.39-40).

113 Clegg, H.A., Fox, A. and Thompson, A.E., A History of British Trade Unions Since 1889, Volume One, (Oxford 1964), p.107. Twenty-one million working days were lost.

114 Neville, R.G., "The Yorkshire Miners and the 1893 Lockout: The Featherstone 'Massacre'," International Review of Social History, XXI, (1976), pp.337-57.

115 See Koss, S., Asquith, (London 1976), pp.34-35; Jenkins, R., Asquith, (London 1964, Fontana edition 1967), pp.73-74.

116 Neville, op. cit., p.354.

117 In Rubinstein, B.D., 'The Decline of the Liberal Party 1880-1900', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1956, p.570.

118 YFT, 8 September 1893, HE, 9 September 1893.

119 HE, 4 November 1893.

120 This and other biographical information comes from several sources but notably Labour Prophet, March/April 1894.

121 The Right to Work, (Manchester, n.d.? 1895), Trade Unionism and Politics, (Manchester, n.d.? 1895), Municipal Socialism, (Manchester, n.d.? 1895), The I.L.P.: Its Programme and Policy, (Manchester 1893), The Economics of Temperance, (Manchester 1895).

122 Labour Prophet, op. cit.

123 His antagonism to the trade union style of I.L.P. leadership was apparent as early as the April 1895 I.L.P. Conference at Newcastle when he urged a more comprehensive adherence to Socialism, (HE, 20 April 1895). See also below chapters six and seven.

124 See his acceptance speech at 2 November I.L.P. meeting (HE, 4 November 1893) and his speech upon opening Paddock Labour Club on 25 November (HE, 2 December 1893).

125 HE, 25 November, 16 December 1893.

126 HLAM, 3 November 1893 and above footnote 104.

127 He was the son-in-law of the Earl of Carlile and a lecturer in modern history, but little else is known about him. It is possible that Asquith recommended him, having himself declined the candidature in October; (HLAM Executive Committee, 13 October 1893).

128 HLAM, 6 November 1893.

129 HLAM, 8 November, HE, 11 November 1893.

130 HLAM, 11 November.

131 HLAM, 16 November - 152 were present.

132 HE, 25 November 1893.

133 See the quotation which opened this chapter (footnote one).

134 HE, 25 November 1893.

135 HLAM Selection Committee, 12 December.

136 Letter in HE, 30 December 1893. He was also critical of what he termed the I.L.P.'s "selfish tactics".

137 Stansky, P., Ambitions and Strategies: The Struggle for the Leadership of the Liberal Party in the 1890s, (Oxford 1964), p.17; Roberts, A.W., op. cit., p.253.

138 Published in November 1893 by Sidney Webb and G Bernard Shaw.

139 Hamer, D.A., Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery, (Oxford 1972), p.189.

140 HE, 17 March 1894.

141 HE, 7 April 1894.

142 A meeting in support of Welsh Disestablishment and Disendowment was chaired by Joseph Woodhead in the Town Hall on 13 December 1894, (HE, 15 December 1894). Two months earlier an opposition meeting had been held by Huddersfield Conservatives, (HE, 6 October 1894).

143 HLAM AGM, 16 January 1894.

144 See table 3.4 below.

145 John Pyrah was a Fartown timber merchant and acting vice-president for many years. When the H.J.L.A. was revived in 1904 he became its first President.

146 Fred Crosland was especially prominent at Lindley Liberal Club (President 1895) and was a committee member of both the H.J.L.A. and the H.L.A. He was a Congregationalist and Councillor for North Ward (1891-7) also holding a seat on the School Board from 1895. By trade he was a manufacturer and his early death in 1897 at a very young age deeply showed his contemporaries.

147 A.L. Woodhead was the youngest of Joseph Woodhead's sons and eventually became a managing director of the Huddersfield Examiner. He was vice-president of the HJLA but never really felt at home in a political milieu.

148 Tom Hall was a member of Paddock and Moldgreen Liberal Clubs, and President of the former (1887-9). He was active on the HJLA for many years.

149 Lecture by James Byrne on "Liberalism and Labour", HE, 3 February 1894. See also a similar meeting in Moldgreen at which the Rev. Guttery spoke of the Newcastle Programme and blamed the Lords for obstructing Liberal working class legislation, (HE, 24 February 1894).

150 HE, 17 March 1894.

151 HLAM, 17 May 1895.

152 HE, 16 April 1898. It was to remain the key Liberal meeting-place in the town.

153 HLAM, 28 April 1893.

154 HLAM, Meeting of Officers, Ward Chairmen and Secretaries, 11 February 1895. There had been limited improvements in some wards.

155 Ibid. It should be noted, however, that West Ward remained solidly Conservative until after the turn of the century, annually returning two Conservatives.

156 HLAM, AGM, 15 February 1895.

157 Pelling, H., "Labour and the Downfall of Liberalism", in Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain, (London 1968), p.105.

158 This had been set up in January 1894 and was basically just a register of the unemployed which employers could consult if they required labour.

159 HE, 10 February 1894, YFT, 2 and 9 February 1894. Dr. Laybourn has examined the I.L.P.'s municipal approach to unemployment and other problems in, "'The Defence of the Bottom Dog': The Independent Labour Party in Local Politics" in Wright, D.G. and Jowitt, J.A., Victorian Bradford, (Bradford 1982), pp.223-244. See also Smart, R., The Right to Work, (Manchester, n.d.).

160 Gee frequently pushed the issue of fair contracts but to no avail. Only in 1906 was a corporation fair contract clause adopted. In June 1894 he attacked the redecoration of the Mayor's parlour as extravagent at a time when so many Council employees were under-paid.

161 HE, 30 June 1894.

162 Quoted in Clark, D., op. cit., p.54. At the time of writing this chapter the only surviving copies of this paper had been removed indefinitely to Leeds for renovation. See also Riley, B., op. cit., p.23 and Smart, R., in The Worker, 5 October 1907, for reference to the paper.

163 HE, 3 November 1894. Robert Blatchford was in the chair and Hardie and Enid Stacey were present.

164 The latter organisation had organised a debate on poverty and drink: Smart denied that poverty could be attributed primarily to drink but rather to capitalist competition. See also chapter four below for discussion on this.

165 HE, 2 June 1894. Motions were passed critical of naval expenditure and in support of the Eight-Hour Day and Lords' abolition.

166 Joe Dyson was defeated by a Liberal at Almondbury (547-358) while John Briggs came third at Longwood (379-150-140).

167 John Briggs at Longwood.

168 He came ninth in the voting gaining 11,699 votes, and replaced James Dransfield as Labour's only representative. Dransfield had earlier been co-opted on to the Board owing to Ramsden Balmforth's resignation in February 1894, (HE, 10 February and 10 March 1894).

169 HE, 5 January 1895.

170 HE, 11 May 1895.

171 Originally membership of another political party had been allowed providing it was not in an executive capacity (see chapter two above). Watts Balmforth, for instance, was a member of both Rashcliffe Liberal Club and Lockwood Labour Club.

172 HE, and HC, 29 June 1895. By the end of the campaign £230 had actually been raised in addition to the £170. Smart's expenses totalled £266-9-4d. Of this, £250-18-4d was paid by the Huddersfield I.L.P., £12-8-0d by the I.L.P.'s N.A.C. and three guineas by Smart himself. By comparison Crosland paid £833 of his total £842-7-0½d and Woodhouse paid £250 of his £794-16-2d (the H.L.A. paid the balance). See HE, 17 August 1895.

173 Two copies of the paper survive (10 and 13 July 1895) containing announcements of meetings, cartoons, and articles (often drawn from other publications) on such topics as the right to work, the two loom question, the aims of the I.L.P. and Christian Socialism. It did not include Smart's address. On Harry Henshall see Harkin, M.J., "The Manchester Labour Press Society Ltd.", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, No. 28, (1974), pp.22-8. It was this press, of course, that published many of Smart's pamphlets.

174 YFT, 5 July 1895. The proposed list was put by Blackburn of the A.S.R.S.

175 For example the West Riding Power Loom Weavers' Association membership slumped from 4,700 in 1892 to 3,000 in 1895. See Board of Trade Report on Trade Unions, 1896, c.8644 (1896).

176 YFT, 5 July 1895. The motion was put by John White but subsequently withdrawn as 'unnecessary'. However, the sentiment was clear from its wording.

177 YFT, 19 October 1894.

178 Yorkshire Post, 31 July 1893 in Clark, D., op. cit., p.56.

179 HLAM Executive Committee, 13 October 1893.

180 HLAM Selection Committee, 24 and 27 June 1895.

181 Eastern Morning News, 8 November 1900.

182 Pelling in Social Geography of British Elections, 1885-1910, (London 1967), refers to the constituency as "an agricultural constituency ... a safe Conservative seat", (pp.313-4).

183 Much of this biographical information is derived from his obituary in the Eastern Morning News, 9 February 1921 and from HE, 29 June 1895. He was also a J.P., Deputy Lieutenant of the East Riding, a trustee of the Hull Municipal Charities and a director of the Hull and Barnsley Railway Co., of the London City and Midland Bank, and of the National Telephone Co. Finally he was a major of the First Volunteer Battalion of the East Yorkshire Regiment. He married Jessie nee Reed, the daughter of a Hull solicitor, in 1876.

184 HE, 6 July 1895.

185 The Lords issue was a return to 'obstruction theory', noted earlier with Home Rule: that normal reforms could not proceed until the obstruction had been cleared away. See Hamer, D.A., op. cit., chap. VIII.

186 HE, 6 July 1895.

187 HE, ibid., and HC, 6 July 1895; also Huddersfield I.L.P. Election Herald, 10 July 1895.

188 HC, ibid.

189 HE, 20 July 1895.

190 HE, 13 July 1895. Meeting at Paddock on 12 July.

191 In a letter from Samuel Bull in HE, 13 July 1895.

192 HE, op. cit.

193 Ibid., meetings at Primrose Hill and Outcote Bank on 8 July.

194 Woodhouse in the Town Hall, 4 July 1895, (HE, 6 July 1895).

195 See HE, editorials 6 and 13 July 1895.

196 HC, 29 June 1895.

197 Ibid.

198 HC, 13 July 1895.

199 On 9 July (See HE, 13 July, 1895).

200 See for example his Paddock speech on 12 July 1895, (HE, ibid.).

201 Annual Review of Local Trade 1894 (HE, 29 December 1894). In fact the quarterly returns of Huddersfield exports to the United States, ending 30 June 1895, showed a 210% increase on the corresponding quarter of 1894 (HE, 13 July 1895).

202 Smart at Salendine Nook on 5 July (HE, 6 July 1895) and in the Huddersfield I.L.P. Election Herald, No. 3, (13 July 1895). In reality it was powerful union opposition and doubts amongst employers which prevented the introduction of the system. See also below chapter four and Howell, D., British Workers and the I.L.P., 1888-1906, (Manchester 1983), p.201.

203 HC, 13 July 1895, HE, 20 July 1895. This extravagent claim of pledges supposedly came from both the Liberals (2000) and the Conservatives (1000). It was almost certainly a fabrication to attract votes.

204 89.8 per cent compared to 90.7 per cent.

205 Roberts, A.W., op. cit., p.274. There were only two Liberal gains: Huddersfield and Scarborough.

206 Pelling, H., op. cit., p.415. See also Baines, J.A., "Parliamentary Representation in England, illustrated by the elections of 1892 and 1895", Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, LIX (March 1896), pp.38-124.

207 Kinnear, M., The British Voter, (New York, 1968), p.24. Eighty-nine more than in 1892. See also Lloyd, T., "Uncontested Seats in British General Elections, 1852-1910", Historical Journal, 1965.

208 HC, 20 July 1895.

209 Between 1885 and 1895 the Liberal share of the vote declined by 10.3 per cent while the Unionist vote increased by 5.3 per cent (Labour got 5 per cent in 1895). See Roberts, A.W., op. cit., p.332.

210 In Colne Valley Kitson's share of the vote dropped by 7.6 per cent in 1895 due to Mann's intervention. In Bradford West Alfred Illingworth's vote dropped by 23.9 per cent between 1886 and 1892 due to Ben Tillett's intervention. In Halifax John Lister's intervention as an I.L.P. candidate had robbed the Liberals of a seat. See Howell, D, op. cit., p.189.

211 HC, 20 July 1895.

212 Labour Leader, 27 July 1895. The I.L.P. contested twenty-eight seats in 1895 but won none. Tattersall in Preston polled the most votes for Labour (4781) while Parnell in Fulham polled the least (196) Smart's vote was also lower than Hardie's 45.6 per cent (West Ham South) Pankhurst's 42.1 per cent (Gorton) and Hobson's 31.2 per cent (Bristol East).

213 HC, 20 July 1895.

214 Speech at the Alfred Street I.L.P. rooms after the result was declared (HC and HE, 20 July).

215 HE editorial, 20 July 1895.

216 Roberts, A.W., op. cit., p.284.

217 Alfred Walker at Woodhouse's victory meeting (HE, 20 July 1895).

218 At a mass celebration of Woodhouse's return in the grounds of Alfred Walker's house on 7 September (HE, 14 September 1895).

219 The 1896 Bill aimed to satisfy Church of England demands for greater aid by making county and county borough councils education authorities. These would control secondary education and the school boards would continue to provide elementary education but under control of the new authority which had powers to increase the education rates as necessary. Clause 27, enabling the new authorities to provide supplementary religious instruction if a "reasonable number of parents" so desired, caused the most storm. Opponents also criticised the perpetuation of religious tests for teachers. The case against the bill was excellently stated by Owen Balmforth at a Special Meeting of the Huddersfield School Board on 30 April 1896 (HE, 2 May 1896).

220 Notably the Town Hall meeting on 19 May 1896 (HE, 23 May 1896, HLAM, 21 April 1896).

221 Although a Churchman, Woodhouse in an hour long speech condemned the Government's bill as "unnecessary, impractical, and unworkable, a measure that will produce discord and chaos", (HE, 16 May 1896).

222 HE, 3 October 1896. A large number of chapel clergy were present.

223 See his speeches in the Town Hall on 24 November 1896 (HE, 28 November 1896); at HJLA meeting on 11 March 1897 (HE, 13 March 1897) which the Earl of Crewe attended; on 2 December 1897 (HE, 4 December 1897) in which he gave a sustained critique of Chamberlain's Imperialism; and in December 1898 when he opened Crosland Moor Liberal Club and spoke on Egypt (HE, 10 December 1898).

224 Howarth, J., "The Liberal Revival in Northamptonshire, 1880-1895: A Case Study in Late Nineteenth Century Elections", Historical Journal, XII, 1, (1969), pp.78-118.

225 HE, 16 April 1898, HLAM 16 November 1897 and above. Initial membership was around 600. The HJLA had 255 members when it folded (HE, 19 November 1898).

226 Local political leaders and civic figures visited the club, and from Bradford W.P. Byles and A.E. Priestman.

227 See Stansky, op. cit., Hamer, op. cit., Morgan, K.O., The Age of Lloyd George: The Liberal Party and British Politics 1890-1929, (London 1971).

228 HE, 28 January 1899.

229 HE, 4 February 1899. J.C. Broadbent chaired and a large number of Conservatives were also present.

230 Carlile will be the subject of more detailed study in later chapters.

231 HE, 26 June 1897.

232 HE, 14 March 1896.

233 HLAM, AGM, 15 January 1897.

234 There is a scarcity of club statistics in Huddersfield: the Conservatives rarely released figures and the Liberals were little better. So, a comprehensive run of membership figures is rare and the three clubs here listed must be seen as a cross-section of the fifteen Liberal clubs in the borough.

235 HLAM, AGM, 15 February 1895 and above.

236 A sub-committee on subscriptions was appointed by the Finance Committee in June 1896 after income was found to be £100 below annual expenditure (HLAM, 12 June). It reported in October and December 1896 (HLAM, 23 October and 22 December). It must be remembered that the H.L.A. had paid all but £250 of the £795 election expensies incurred in 1895, so the influx of finance into H.L.A. coffers after 1895 was even more remarkable considering the £112 deficit in February 1895.

237 See appendix of municipal results.

238 A special sub-committee on the H.L.A.'s approach to municipal elections reported in May 1897 recommending an emergency fund, and a permanent Central Committee for local elections. These recommendations were implemented (HLAM, 14 May 1897).

239 Ross, W.D., 'Bradford Politics, 1880-1906', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Bradford 1977, p.272; Laybourn, K., The ILP in West Yorkshire, 1890-1918, (Croom Helm forthcoming 1984). The Bradford Conservatives also won control of the School Board in 1894 and all three Parliamentary seats in 1895.

240 Roberts, A., op. cit., p.278; Woodhouse, T., "The Working Class", in Fraser, D., (ed.), A History of Modern Leeds, (Manchester 1980).

241 In November 1896 nationally the Liberals gained 56 seats, the Unionists 33 and Labour 3 (HE, 7 November 1896). In November 1897 net Liberal gains were 36 seats (HE, 5 November 1897).

242 HLAM, 10 November 1896.

243 HE, editorial, 4 February 1899.

244 O'Leary, C., in The Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections 1868-1911, (Oxford 1962), chapter VII, points out the problems the 1883 Act faced in defining a 'bribable period': when was an election considered to be imminent, so precluding 'treating'? The problem of 'between election treating' was complicated by the fact that often a pressure group, like the Brewers' Association, not the candidate, provided the 'bribe'. See also, Howe, J.R., "Corruption in British Elections in the early 20th Century", Midland History, 5 (1979-80).

245 Both the education and Sunday trams issue aroused bitter opposition from the local chapels. See chapter four below.

246 Riley, B., op. cit., p.27. Also Glasier in Labour Leader, 30 November 1906.

247 Huddersfield Central, Longwood and Milnsbridge survived. Lockwood I.L.P. had seventeen members in June 1898 but thereafter there is no trace of its existence until Lockwood Socialist Institute was formed in March 1906. Similarly Paddock I.L.P. returned a report in June 1897 to the I.L.P. News but seems to have expired by the end of 1897.

248 ILP News, May 1899.

249 Tom Topping in Fartown in 1897 and John Briggs in Longwood in 1899.

250 HE, editorial, 8 April 1899.

251 Pelling, H., The Origins of the Labour Party, 1880-1900 (Oxford 1965), chapter IX; Duffy, A.E.P., "Differing Policies and Personal Rivalries in the Origins of the Independent Labour Party", Victorian Studies, VI, (1962-3).

252 By 1909 there was a Clarion Club in Albion Street, see below chapter five.

253 See Watmough, P.A., "The Membership of the Social Democratic Federation, 1885-1902", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, Spring 1977, no. 35, pp.35-40. There was never an S.D.F. in Huddersfield, although there was a branch in Dewsbury.

254 Board of Trade Report on Trade Unions, 1900, (cd. 773).

255 HE, 5 October 1895.

256 HE, 17 October 1895. He received a £70 testimonial from all three political parties.

257 HE, 5 January 1897.

258 Benjamin Riley (1866-1946) was born in Halifax, the son of a Chartist. He worked in a local mill before being apprenticed to a London bookbinder in 1888. By 1890 he had become a journeyman and moved to Brighton where he became involved in trade unionism and the unemployed agitation of 1890-1. From 1892-6 he was employed by the Land Restoration League as a lecturer and he toured the country in a trade union 'Red Van', becoming General Secretary of the Warwickshire Agricultural Labourers' Union in March 1895. In Huddersfield he set up as a library bookbinder and subsequently because Secretary of the Trades Council, 1879-99, a member of the School Board from 1896, and a Labour Councillor (North Ward) 1904-9. He was an N.A.C. member of the I.L.P. and contested Dewsbury in 1918, winning the seat in 1922 and representing the town as MP 1922-3, 1924-31 and 1935-45. He was P.P.S. to Lord Noel Buxton (1929-30) and retired from Parliament in 1945.

259 I.L.P. News, May and August 1898, January 1899 and July 1899. HE, 5 December 1896, 25 March 1899. It has already been noted that one of Labour's two local candidates between 1895 and 1901 was John Briggs of Longwood.

260 For the Huddersfield Labour Churches see below, chapter four.

261 See Riley, B., op. cit., pp.27-28. No records exist of this first Sunday School. Of the founders, George Alfred Boothroyd was a textile worker, a founder of the Labour Union, and later a Labour councillor for Lockwood (May - November 1906) and Newsome (from December 1911). J.H. Hellawell was Secretary of Huddersfield Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League around 1886.

262 Labour Leader, 25 March 1895.

263 See below chapter four also, Smart, R., Municipal Socialism, (Manchester n.d.,? 1895) and "Programme for a Socialist Parliament" in Carpenter, E., (ed), Forecasts of the Coming Century, by a decade of writers, (Manchester 1897), pp.42-61; plus Laybourn, K., "'The Defence of the Bottom Dog': The Independent Labour Party in Local Politics," in Wright, D.G., and Jowitt, J.A. (eds.), Victorian Bradford, (Bradford 1982), pp.223-44.

CHAPTER FOUR

LIBERALISM OR NEW LIBERALISM? THE LIBERAL RESPONSE TO LABOUR'S SOCIAL CHALLENGE IN HUDDERSFIELD, 1890-1910

> How completely out of touch modern local official Liberalism ... is with the real progressive spirit of the time ... the leading, dominant Liberals on the [Huddersfield] Council are either entirely opposed to enlarging the purpose of their politics or they are too timid, too nervous, achieving no great aim.[1]

Between 1890 and 1910 Liberalism in Huddersfield, as elsewhere in the country, was being challenged not only in terms of its political strength but also in terms of its alliance with Nonconformity and its approach to social problems. This chapter is concerned with these challenges and Huddersfield Liberalism's response to them.

The period in question was one in which long-held Liberal beliefs were being subjected to scrutiny, most particularly by the emerging Labour Party critical of the limitations of laissez-faire and individualism. Religious Nonconformity, so closely allied to Liberalism, had to be reconciled with a growing desire amongst working people for greater leisure time and a more informal approach to religion. Traditional Liberal stances on poverty, drink and charity were being undermined, while the role local government had to play in tackling unemployment and relieving social hardship became a major debating point. In Huddersfield, as will become evident, the Liberal Party's response to these social challenges never amounted to a 'New Liberalism' of the Lancashire type. Indeed it is becoming clear from elsewhere in the country that the local response rarely did.[2] Bold claims concerning the widespread presence of New Liberalism before 1914 must be substantiated not only by an examination of government policy and local parliamentary contests but also by detailed study of the municipal Liberal response to Labour's social and political

opposition. Most frequently local Liberal parties, dominated as they were by family élites, displayed few of the reformist tendencies of the 'New Liberal' Government ministers and even fewer of those of the intellectuals described by Dr. Clarke.[3] When a Liberal municipality, like Huddersfield, yielded to a demand for direct intervention it did so in a reluctant, hesitant and piecemeal fashion. There was a distinct lack of any concerted 'progressive' programme, together with a failure to respond to the demand for independent working-class representation. Liberal Party leaders, including Gladstone himself, often expressed a desire that Liberal working-class candidates be adopted, but local Liberal Associations were consistently unwilling to do so, as Pelling has observed,[4] primarily for financial reasons. In short, it will become evident that in social policy also the Huddersfield Liberal Party was living on borrowed time, remaining essentially Victorian, albeit with a 'sugar-coating' of social concern.

1. Liberal Nonconformity, Leisure and Ethical Socialism

It has already been pointed out that the severe paucity of accurate statistics for religious worship and adherence makes a reliable estimate of the proportion of Huddersfield's population which attended church and chapel extremely difficult.[5] It is an equally complex task trying to ascertain how many people, in particular working people, were involved in peripheral religious activity and how far their lives were touched indirectly by religion.[6] The general picture is that Nonconformity in Huddersfield as elsewhere was facing a number of problems, most not of its own making, which combined to

reduce numerically chapel adherence relative to population increase; even though in terms of influence it remained strong by virtue of the continued connection of local political leaders and captains of industry, and the prominence of such Nonconformist policies as local option. The closeness of the relationship between Nonconformity and Liberalism renders these problems on essential part of any analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Liberalism. There were two major problems: firstly "the problem of pleasure"[7], that is the trend of renewed urban working-class indifference to religious attendance which was exacerbated by the rise of popular entertainment, increased leisure time and the availability of cheap transport.[8] Secondly, the rise of the Labour Party and the advent of the Labour Church movement further weakened the Nonconformist - Liberal - working-class link, although this was somewhat retarded in Huddersfield. Pelling has observed that Socialism was a surrogate religion for some and that the Labour Churches marked "a significant transitional stage in the transfer of social energy from religion to politics"[9], while others have remarked upon the ethical, 'religious' nature of pioneering Socialism.[10]

The starched atmosphere of middle-class respectability at church and chapel was eschewed by working people in ever increasing numbers as the nineteenth century progressed and Sundays were becoming days for leisure not piety, as the 1890 Wesleyan Conference observed: "we are living in the midst of a great reaction from Puritanism."[11] In Huddersfield at the 1895 conference of the ruri-decanal chapter E.H. Carlile summarised, from the point of view of the Church of England, the altered conditions which had effected working-class

attitudes to religion thus: compulsory education, cheap newspapers and light literature available to all, gambling, betting, music hall, better transport, shorter hours of labour leaving people less tired, and "interest in a socialistic programme."[12] He added with reference to the bible classes, but which can be applied more generally, that:

> The vastly increased opportunities for pleasure-seeking are in danger of setting up a frivolous state of mind which can only be antagonistic to the welfare of the Bible Classes, and the pursuit of the Socialistic bubble of equality draws some away from our classes.[13]

Nor was concern amongst local religious bodies confined to adult attendance. On his first visit to a Wesleyan meeting in Huddersfield in 1899 Robert Perks[14] could applaud "the teaming life and spirit of young Methodism in the Huddersfield circuits"[15], but by his second visit in 1912 he found he had to appeal to young people to study and follow the faith in view of declining numbers.[16] Nevertheless available information on quasi-religious youth organisations in Huddersfield indicates that perhaps this concern was at least partially misplaced, certainly up to 1910-11. The Huddersfield Sunday School Union, formed in 1859, increased its affiliated schools from fifty-five in 1879-80 to sixty-six in 1900-1 (representing 16,009 scholars) and to seventy-two by 1908 (representing over 18,000).[17] Similarly, the Huddersfield Band of Hope Union, which aimed at educating children to the ways of temperance in an entertaining manner, expanded consistently until 1911, although its membership peaked in 1906-8 as indicated in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Membership of the Huddersfield Band of Hope Union, 1881-1917

Year	1881	1890	1895	1900
No. of Societies	42	55	69	70
Membership	8,303	9,277	11,000	10,100

Year	1906	1911	1914	1917
No. of Societies	90	102	90	69
Membership	12,000	11,318	10,476	6,830

Source: Dearden, F.W., Huddersfield and District Band of Hope Union: Jubilee Memorial 1870-1920, (Huddersfield 1920).

While youth organisations seemed to be holding up relatively well in Huddersfield in numerical terms, despite competing distractions, it is to the immensely successful Pleasant Sunday Afternoon (P.S.A.), or Brotherhood, Movement in Huddersfield that one can turn for evidence that not only was local Nonconformity responding to such problems, but that it was able to stem, to some degree, the exodus of adult working people from the chapels.

I The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement in Huddersfield

The movement was originally begun in 1875 by John Blackburn, an Independent deacon in West Bromwich, but only really became widespread from 1885 after the establishment of a society in Derby.[18] The idea was to bring working men back to the chapels, and staunch further

seepage, by offering a more relaxed, entertaining and 'democratic' form of religion, untrammelled by formality, piety and middle-class respectability. Although initially male-directed women's P.S.A.s soon became equally prominent. Most P.S.A. meetings consisted of hymns, Bible readings, lectures, magic-lantern shows and music.[19] Prayer was kept to a minimum, meetings were short (about "sixty minutes of sunshine"[20]) and friendliness was the maxim. Prizes and merit certificates were awarded for good attendance. The movement's motto was "Brief, Bright and Brotherly" and this was adapted in Huddersfield to the 'Seven B's': "Based on the Bible, Brightness, Brevity, Books for prizes, Boldness, Best of Everything and Brotherliness."[21]

Although the movement was not, in principle, confined to any particular Nonconformist sect, in Yorkshire it was primarily Congregationalist in origin. It was Richard Westrope, a Leeds Congregationalist minister, who brought P.S.A.s to Yorkshire in "an attempt to grapple with the old problem which had burdened the hearts of all good men ... how to reach the masses of the people who were out of touch with organised religion."[22] Indeed the very name of the movement was an oblique comment on the existing form of Sunday worship for working people with the possible exception of the Adult Bible Classes from which, significantly, the Huddersfield P.S.A.s drew both inspiration and membership.[23]

The first P.S.A. in Huddersfield was set up in November 1891 at Milton Congregational Chapel by the Rev. A.C. Turberville who remarked:

> I do not wonder that in the past men did not feel inclined to go into the churches (which have been too full of padded pews and private preserves) on account of the priestism and standoffishness which has prevailed in the Christian Church.[24]

Milton P.S.A.'s popularity was remarkable and within two years attendances regularly exceeded 700 a week with occasionally over 1000 packing into the 700 seat chapel. On Christmas Eve 1899 a large number of people stood outside in the street having failed to gain entrance.[25] Membership rose from 420 in July 1892 to a peak of nearly 800 in February 1907 and the lead was swiftly followed in the town by a whole series, not only of P.S.A.s, but P.S.E.s (Sunday evenings), P.M.A.s (Monday afternoons) and P.T.E.s (Tuesday evenings). The Great Northern Street Men's P.T.E. was in fact the first in the country.[26] Nor were they confined to Congregationalism as table 4.2 illustrates.

What the duration was of some of these 'brotherhoods' and how many existed at any one time is difficult to ascertain, but it was clearly a substantial movement. Inglis remarks that often there was only one large P.S.A. in a town like those in Wolverhampton, with over 1000 members in 1891, and Hanley with 1680 members in the same year, but that "In some towns there were several P.S.A. Societies"[27], hinting that this was the exception rather than the rule. Huddersfield, therefore, may have been unusual in possessing such a multiplicity of P.S.A.s. Milton was by far the largest and most influential, closely allied to Liberalism. Prominent members included Joseph Woodhead and his son Ernest, J.E. Willans, Charles Hirst[28]

Table 4.2 The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Movement in Huddersfield, 1891-1914

Location	Type	Date Established	Approx. Membership
Milton Congregational	P.S.A.	Dec. 1891	420(July '92) 791 (Feb '07)
Lockwood Bentley St. Methodist Free	P.S.A.	1893	N.A.
Buxton Road Wesleyan	Women's P.M.A.	1897	253 (Oct. '98)
Great Northern St. Congregational	P.M.E.	N.A.	354 (Jan. '99)
Great Northern St. Congregational	Men's P.T.E.	Oct. 1898	236 (Jan. '99)
Moldgreen Methodist Free Church	P.S.A.	Jan. 1899	346 (Jan. '99)
Moldgreen Methodist Free Church	P.T.E.	N.A.	N.A.
Lockwood Mount Pleasant Wesleyan	Women's P.S.A.	Mar. 1899	N.A.
Hillhouse Congregational	P.S.A.	Nov. 1899	N.A.
Clara Street Congregational	P.S.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Queen Street Wesleyan	P.M.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Longwood (Parkwood) Wesleyan	P.S.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Temperance Society (Victoria Hall)	P.S.E.	N.A.	N.A.
Temperance Society (Victoria Hall)	Women's P.S.A.	Jan. 1902	196 (Feb. '03) 160 (Jan. '13)

Source: Huddersfield Examiner, passim.

and J.C. Moody.[29] Meanwhile, Clara Street P.S.A. had as its vice-president John Pyrah, President of the Junior Liberals and a founder of the Central Liberal Club. The local movement was also well represented at the Yorkshire Federation of P.S.A. and P.S.E. Societies formed in 1892 in Leeds. Rev. D.C. Tincker of Hillhouse Congregational Chapel was its President in 1910 while G.T. Rayner, the Milton P.S.A. secretary, was an executive member for many years.[30]

Precisely how many working people were recruited anew to the P.S.A.s in Huddersfield, as opposed to those merely transferring from another chapel or bible class is again difficult to ascertain. A.H. Byles remarked of Hanley P.S.A. in 1891 that "not more than 300 of the 1,680 members of the Society ... were found in any of our places of worship when they first came to us"[31], and added more generally:

> Thousands of working-men who, until these meetings were started, attended no religious service of any kind, are now regular worshippers in many of our churches; they have found their way back to them, and, if nothing more, have become familiar with the inside of the building.[32]

There is no reason to assume this was not the case in Huddersfield and indeed comments made at the 1895 conference of the Anglican ruri-decanal chapter suggested that P.S.A. meetings were attracting new adherents as well as some from the existing bible classes. One man who did not previously attend church or chapel remarked to a conference delegate that the P.S.A. "is free and easy. We like to say "hear hear" and to clap."[33] Indeed being able to express one's

feelings and not get dressed up to attend a P.S.A. meeting was a novel attraction to working people as John Blackham, the national founder, observed during a visit to Huddersfield in 1898:

> In their meetings they aimed at adaptation, no repression, no 'starch', perfect freedom - a man sat where he liked and dressed as he liked ..... The Bible did not require men to pull a long face.[34]

It is, moreover, interesting that one observer compared P.S.A. meetings to "the kind of meeting to which they [working men] are accustomed in their Trade Unions and political gatherings."[35]

Apart from the religious services themselves, the P.S.A.s sought to develop a social life around their meetings; as Byles urged "it would be a sheer waste of opportunity to gather such a body of men together for one hour in the week, and do nothing for them in other ways."[36] At Milton P.S.A., apart from frequent writing competitions and sales of work, there was a rambling club established in 1893 which regularly attracted up to eighty members ready to tramp the local beauty spots.[37] In 1901 Milton P.S.A. Cricket Club was founded,[38] and a whole series of 'educational' trips were arranged by train to places like Port Sunlight[39] and later further afield to Northern Ireland[40] and Jersey.[41] Furthermore, a library was commenced which boasted 1078 books in 1907[42] while the Savings bank had deposits totalling £497 in the same year.[43] As early as 1895, Milton P.S.A. had also rejected the standard P.S.A. Hymn Book and

printed 1500 of its own version, with larger print and popular songs to satisfy its working-class audience.[44]

Yet if Huddersfield Liberal Nonconformity was able to some extent to stem flagging working-class allegiance by means of the P.S.A., it did not seek to impart a new social gospel or 'New Liberal' ideas despite the presence of lecturers like George Thomson, H.J. Wilson, T. Russell Williams, Harry Snell and Isabella Ford.[45] Table 4.3 below gives a fair cross-section of P.S.A. meetings selected at random and it is evident that, although the approach may have been new, the most frequent themes were of the old Liberal individualist school: hard work, thrift, temperance, self-help charity, abstinence from gambling and drugs.

Despite its early success, by the Great War the P.S.A. movement was firmly in decline. Milton P.S.A. membership dropped from 791 in February 1907 to 525 in February 1912, and at the A.G.M. of that year A.L. Woodhead made an empassioned appeal for a restoration of the movement's earlier vigour, but without much success.[46] It was clear that the P.S.A. had also eventually succumbed to competition from alternative attractions, as Robert Roberts remarked:

> Those diversions aimed at the weaker vessels to temper the rigours of religion - Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, Bright Hours, Band of Hope concerts - were growing stale. Faced with the music hall in its hey-day, they seemed to represent all that was feeblest in entertainment.[47]

Table 4.3 Lectures at Milton Chapel P.S.A., 1892-1914

Title	Lecturer	Attendance	Date
Love One Another	John Sugden	500	17 April 1892
Labour and Capital	Isabella Ford	800	16 April 1893
Oliver Cromwell	T.A. Cockin	700	22 July 1894
Stakes and Sweepstakes	Rev. A.J. Davies	600	23 Sept. 1894
My Life as a Drunkard	J.H. Firth	N.A.	8 Sept. 1895
The Opium Question	H.J. Wilson	850	5 Jan. 1896
The History of Work	Sir J.T. Woodhouse	900	21 Feb. 1896
Christian Socialism	Rev. T.B. Castle	N.A.	9 Jan. 1898
Egypt (Illustrated)	J.L. Walker	N.A.	27 Nov. 1898
Dr. Barnado's Homes	J.B. Wookery	1000	5 Feb. 1899
Thrift	G. Thomson	N.A.	10 Feb. 1904
What is Truth?	T.R. Williams	N.A.	6 Aug. 1905
Popular Sport (Betting)	Harry Wood	N.A.	8 May 1910
Peace and Militarism	Harry Snell	N.A.	4 Jan. 1914

Source: HE, passim.

Indeed music hall at the Empire and from 1905 at the Hippodrome[48] proved to be as popular in Huddersfield as elsewhere, abetted by the expansion of the municipal tramways system which itself became a topic of debate.

II Liberal Nonconformity and the Issue of Sunday Trams

It was the tram, most particularly Sunday trams, in Carlile's words "an opportunity for pleasure seeking"[49], which constituted the focus of Nonconformity's fears regarding declining chapel attendance between

1895 and 1901, to which the P.S.A.s had been a response. The issue epitomised the question not only of reconciling religious attendance with changing views on leisure, but also of the whole attitude of working people to Sunday observance.[50] The churches and chapels had expressed fears for sometime that easier means of transport provided "a very great tendency to desert the church, and to spend the Sunday as a holiday"[51] and one clergyman in 1898 inveighed against the bicycle as "doing more to abolish church-going ... than any other social force."[52] The tramway system in Huddersfield had been in existence since 1882 and was one of the first to be run by a municipality. By 1896 it was an extremely comprehensive service and even had post-boxes fitted to the tramcars.[53] Richard Hoggart has described trams as "the gondolas of the people"[54] and the impact they had on society has been frequently noted, not least by Asa Briggs who pointed out that trams enabled working people to get to work more quickly and attend evening events at opposite sides of the town.[55]

Trams as a means of reaching work were one thing, but trams as a means of leaving the town on a Sunday was quite another and the first serious proposal for Sunday trams in 1895 sparked off a large number of outraged letters from Nonconformists in the Examiner.[56] The Tramways Committee of the Borough Council rejected the idea by eight votes to seven, but this merely postponed debate until 8 June 1896 when the same committee reversed its earlier opposition by voting "That the trams be run on Sundays" eight votes to seven.[57] This decision followed a visit to the Mayor from a distinguished deputation in support of the proposal, representing the Trades Council and all

three political parties, although Liberal supporters were a clear minority.[58]

The chapels, however, were furious that their opposition had been ignored and were adamant that a special meeting of the Borough Council be immediately summoned. This duly occurred on 29 June 1896 and received petitions in favour of Sunday trams totalling 3236 signatures and petitions against totalling 6500 plus a number of chapel resolutions.[59] An acrimonious debate ensued, in which the Liberal councillors, deferential to Nonconformist influence, almost to a man opposed the issue on various grounds: that Sunday was a day of rest, a family day when entertainment was to be eschewed, but also on the grounds of smoke and noise. The supporters, led by J.A. Woolven and Allen Gee, pointed out that Sunday trams would enable working men to go into the country and visit relatives more easily, chapel attendance would not suffer as the trams would transport the more distant and infrequent adherents to the chapel gates.[60] However, despite such persuasive advocacy, the Tramways Committee's resolution was overturned thirty-seven votes to sixteen, the minority comprising Allen Gee, three dissentient Liberals and an array of Conservatives.[61] It was agreed that this would be subject to a local referendum, the result of which (see table 4.4) confirmed both the Council's decision and the influence the chapels continued to exercise over Liberal Councillors. Nevertheless it was a poor turnout and according to Sunday tram supporters proved little.

For a time the debate merely simmered but in 1901 the publicity which the partial electrification and extension of the tram system attracted

revived the issue. On 20 February 1901 an inconclusive Council debate on Sunday trams was suspended for two months.[62] This very effectively gave time for local church and chapel opposition to organise itself and at the end of March a meeting of some thirty Anglican clergy and laymen agreed to co-operate fully with the Nonconformist chapels in campaigning against Sunday trams.[63] On 17 April the Borough Council met and a noisy debate ensued.[64] The Liberal 'anti-lobby' reiterated their points about noise, increased drunkness and crime, and the unfavourable effects on chapel attendance, but also produced new arguments that tramway employees should not and would not work on the Sabbath, nor would it pay to run Sunday trams. The 'pro-lobby', led by Woolven, pointed for their part to towns where Sunday trams had already been introduced but where chapel attendance had not declined. Eventually an amendment to a resolution proposing trams on Sundays was narrowly passed, twenty-nine to twenty-seven votes, making a decision again dependent on a public referendum. A further Council debate a month later ratified this decision, a Liberal motion to defer the whole question being defeated twenty-two to twenty votes[65]; and the poll went ahead.

Some measure of the importance of the issue locally can be gained from noting how keen canvassing was by both sides, with an abundance of hand bills and posters in evidence. The Chronicle commented that "the question seemed to be on everybody's lips, and political and other engrossing subjects paled into insignificance compared with this all-absorbing local question."[66] It was, in short, something of a test-case for the influence Nonconformity was able to exercise

in political decision-making, and the poll result, which reversed the 1896 decision, (see table 4.4) was all the more significant.

Table 4.4 Public Referenda on the Question of Sunday Trams in Huddersfield

1896			1901			Composition of Council		
Electorate	Turnout	%	Electorate	Turnout	%	July 1896		June 1901
18098	6899	38.0	19723	11197	56.8	Lib.	38	37
For	2725	39.6	For	7190	64.2	Con.	21	22
Against	4154	60.4	Against	4007	35.8	Other	1	1
Majority	1429		Majority	3183				

Sources: HE & HC; Borough Council Minutes.

The result of the second poll illustrated several points. The number actually opposing Sunday trams had hardly changed at all and represented a bedrock of traditional Churchmen and Nonconformists. It was a higher degree of interest which had reversed the 1896 decision, most probably amongst working men, stimulated not only by the publicity surrounding the electrification scheme, but also by an increasing tendency to disregard Nonconformist opinion, especially when it came to encroaching upon leisure time. The traditional concept of Sunday was an increasingly obsolete one, as C.F.G. Masterman commented in 1905: "the English Sunday of silence and spiritual exercises ... belongs to a vanishing England"[67] in which, it may be added, even a vibrant P.S.A. movement could hold little

sway. In only half a decade public opinion had been roused and the solidity of Liberalism's synonymity with the voice of Nonconformity eroded sufficiently to overturn the rarely united opposition of Huddersfield's Anglican and Nonconformist clergy. Such an event would hardly have been conceivable two decades earlier. Indeed the Examiner itself had been unusually reticent during the debate, merely commenting that the result, although a surprise, had been "entirely a question for the people themselves."[68]

In short, although Nonconformity remained clearly influential in Huddersfield by virtue of the support it received from local leaders, and was fighting a partially successful rearguard action in the form of the P.S.A. movement, its sway over adult working people by 1914 had been diminished, as the Sunday trams question demonstrated. However, the long-term importance of the town's P.S.A. movement in political terms lay less in the numbers it attracted, than in the fact of its emergence at the very moment of the birth of the I.L.P. and the Labour Church Movement. It will be argued that a vibrant P.S.A. movement in Huddersfield in the 1890s was a main factor in explaining the relative weakness in these years of the religious and ethical appeal of the Labour Party, and in particular the unimpressive record of the Labour Church Movement. The P.S.A. movement perhaps unwittingly constituted part of Liberal Nonconformity's response to the Labour challenge.

III Religion and Socialism in Huddersfield 1890-1910

Socialism, even in its early years, had an exaggerated reputation for Godlessness and for advocating free love. This was derived mainly

from the Fabians, in particular H.G. Wells and G.B. Shaw, who, proclaimed the Examiner, condemned marriage "as the very last word in human wickedness". Such beliefs, it was claimed, could lead only to "confusion in family relationships and the destruction of the sense of personal and parental responsibility."[69] Indeed many Labour supporters did demonstrate a healthy contempt for Sabbatarianism which they believed to be in step with contemporary working class feeling. Russell Smart's Sunday meetings during the 1895 Huddersfield election campaign were unprecedented and inspired widespread criticism, while the Examiner remarked sourly on a Huddersfield I.L.P. meeting addressed by Tom Mann that "Sunday appears to have been turned by the Independent Labour Party from the worship of God to the worship of Mann."[70] In 1906 the Colne Valley's Slaithwaite Guardian observed: "Socialism is inseparably associated in the public mind with disbelief in Christianity. The leaders foster it. The rank-and-file swallow it, and the organs of the party are largely used for secularist purposes."[71] Nor did a number of Socialist 'marriages' in Huddersfield dispel such accusations.[72]

By and large, however, research on the religious affiliation of many Labour pioneers acknowledges their early debt to the chapels and religious bodies. As Pelling has observed, most Labour candidates "claimed to be devoutly religious, nearly all of them being some sort of Methodist or Congregationalist."[73] Yet Stanley Pierson has pointed out that West Riding leaders tended to abandon their chapel connections once they had become involved in the Labour movement[74] and K.D. Brown has questioned the entire notion of such connections: "Was their allegiance a purely formal one or did it entail a real

commitment to a church and its teaching?"[75] Such speculation, moreover, is undeniably linked to the extent to which the early Labour movement appealed to working people on an ethical level, frequently termed the "religion of Socialism."[76]

In Huddersfield the predominant tone of Socialism in its first phase between 1891 and 1895 was neither secular nor ethical. Ramsden Balmforth was a quintessential ethical socialist in the 1890s in Huddersfield, as several of his religious tracts indicate. His New Reformation (1893) saw Socialism in terms of a religious revival and he strove to wed Christianity to the social problems of the day, as The Times observed, it was "The work of an advanced thinker who appears to write as a Unitarian so far as religion is concerned, and in regard to social problems as a Socialist".[77] Yet Balmforth was very much an exception in Huddersfield in the 1890s. Few of the town's Labour pioneers were either practising Nonconformists or expressed Socialism in ethical terms. Allen Gee was a supporter of Bradlaugh, Watts Balmforth never attended chapel, nor is there evidence that J.A. Fletcher, Joe Dyson or Fred Shaw were associated as adults with particular chapels. On the other hand Wilfrid Whiteley attended the Baptist Chapel, Marsh Band of Hope and later became a Unitarian, although it was through the Socialist Sunday Schools that he came to Socialism.[78]

Indeed, as has been seen earlier, what strength the early Huddersfield I.L.P. had lay in trade unionism, despite the aloofness of the Trades Council, and was epitomised by the influence of men like Gee, White,

Riley, Pickles and Topping. The Huddersfield Fabian Society was quickly absorbed by the I.L.P. and had collapsed by 1895 to be revived in 1908. Its key representatives on the I.L.P., moreover, Dyson and Balmforth, left and were not replaced. The influence of the ethical approach to Socialism, therefore, was greatly muted in the 1890s in Huddersfield and indeed only became apparent from about 1906 when the likes of Rev. W.B. Graham, Rev. F.R. Swan, Victor Grayson and Harry Snell became active locally, taking up many of Balmforth's earlier themes. The Reverend F.R. Swan[79] was particularly prominent after 1906 in espousing "a constructive message of social reformation. It is an ideal of human happiness ... The new spirit in the community is giving us a new politics, and a politics akin to a religion".[80] In 1895, however, Russell Smart, a keen Labour Church man, found he had to play down his Socialism in favour of a trade union approach with an emphasis on the right to work, wages and conditions rather than on promising "the kingdom of heaven". Moreover, a glance at the approach made by many of the I.L.P.'s local election candidates substantiates this point.[81] Some evidence for the relative weakness of the 'religious' appeal of Socialism in Huddersfield before 1900 can be attained by an examination of the local Labour Church Movement.

The Labour Church movement was begun by John Trevor, a Unitarian, in Manchester in October 1891 as a response to Ben Tillett's plea for churches "where the people could get what they needed".[82] The idea caught on initially only in Lancashire and Yorkshire and invariably Labour Churches were closely linked to the local I.L.P.s, especially

after an N.A.C. decision of the I.L.P. in 1894 that all branches should establish associated Labour Churches "wherever practicable".[83] The Labour Church movement's course and demise has been the subject of much debate which is not of major concern here.[84] What is important to note is how insignificant the movement was in Huddersfield, particularly when compared with other West Riding towns. Bradford Labour Church, formed in October 1891, had a paid-up membership of 2000 in November 1893[85] and retained a distinct independence from the I.L.P. despite an overlapping of membership. Even in 1896, during a period of Labour decline, the Bradford Labour Church boasted "a membership of 300, a local 'weekly' with a circulation of 5000 and no debt".[86] Keighley similarly had a strong Labour Church: "Almost the first thing the Labour Union did in 1892 was to buy 180 Labour Hymn Books" and by 1896 claimed 400-500 adherents.[87] Halifax, Spen Valley and Leeds also had strong Labour Churches.[88]

In Huddersfield there is evidence that three Labour Churches existed at one time or another, at Longwood, Lockwood and Milnsbridge (the latter also covered the Colne Valley). Each was established by local I.L.P. clubs: Milnsbridge Labour Church emerged first in February 1893 quickly followed by Longwood.[89] Lockwood Labour Church was in existence in January 1895[90] but in only November 1895 had to be re-established after it disappeared during the Summer.[91] Information on all three is sadly lacking: only Longwood was ever affiliated to the Labour Church Union and after a report in January 1894 that it had insufficient funds to send a delegate to the annual

conference[92] its affiliation lapsed.[93] Reports of local Labour Church meetings are few and far between: Fred Brocklehurst[94] visited Longwood Labour Church in December 1893[95] and the Examiner gave details of meetings at Longwood addressed by Hardie in 1893 and by Mrs Glasier and James Parker in 1894.[96] Yeo's assertion that "In late 1894 it was reported from Huddersfield that the Glasiers had spoken 14 times in a week"[97] refers presumably to the Labour Churches, but he cites no reference for this information and there is no local evidence to substantiate it. Membership of the Huddersfield Labour Churches is even less forthcoming and it seems probable that it was both low and synonymous with Labour club membership. After 1895 there is no trace that any of them still existed and it is likely they suffered the same fate as many of the local Labour clubs after Smart's 1895 defeat: decline and demise. Indeed it is possible that the advent of a prominent Labour Church advocate as candidate in 1895 had artificially stimulated a local effort temporarily, which quickly collapsed after his departure.

The general picture which emerges of the state of the Labour Church Movement in Huddersfield is one of weakness and insignificance,[98] once again evidence of Labour's relative backwardness compared with many of the other West Riding towns. This reinforces the impression that the vast majority of working men in Huddersfield were apathetic to Socialism in whatever form. As one supporter observed:

> Huddersfield never was noted for its enthusiasm, and our party keeps up the tradition wonderfully ... Our men here need thoroughly to learn the meaning of the word 'apathy'. The Liberals certainly have good grounds ... to think that we are but an insignificant thousand.[99]

The early influence of trade unionism in the Huddersfield I.L.P., emphasising bread-and-butter issues like wages and conditions, combined with the effect of the emergence of a temporarily strong and popular P.S.A. movement, clearly detracted from the potential ethical appeal of the nascent Labour Party in the town, an appeal which had proved so successful in Bradford.[100] A main route to Socialism via the Labour Churches was cut off, at least temporarily, by the success in Huddersfield of the P.S.A. movement. Nonconformity had thus claimed many of those working people who were disillusioned with existing forms of religion and most likely to adhere to a Labour Church. Indeed, by the time the local Labour Churches were underway, several P.S.A.s had been established catering for working people directly, and Milton P.S.A. alone was attracting as many people every Sunday as there were members of all Huddersfield's Labour clubs put together.[101] Faced with such formidable resources and competition as magic lanterns, sport, trips, 'famous' names and song the emerging Labour Churches were virtually strangled at birth as recruiting agents for the I.L.P., becoming little more than the existing membership of Labour clubs meeting under a different name.

The relative weakness of the Labour Church movement in Huddersfield, moreover, parallels Dr. Clark's conclusions concerning the quiescence of ethical Socialism in the Colne Valley,[102] and further undermines

Yeo's emphasis on the pre-existence of the "religion of Socialism" in the 1890s as a central factor, only terminated by the exigencies of having to organise effectively in electoral terms.[103] Yeo's analysis may fit the Clarion movement, characterised by Blatchford's stress on "making Socialists" and his antipathy to organisation as well as the movement's rural 'Merrie England' approach,[104] but in Huddersfield, as in the Colne Valley, it does not. Despite the early presence of a small number of ethical Socialists, most obviously Balmforth, the Huddersfield Labour movement was dominated by trade unionists who were cautious and unsuccessful in propagandising Socialism as a religious alternative to Liberal Nonconformity for working people. From the outset the H.L.U. was concerned almost exclusively with gaining local representation for the working class in order to improve wages and conditions: ethical socialism came later.

It was not, indeed, until about 1906 that the Huddersfield Labour Party made any sustained appeal to working people on anything other than the electoral level. The directly political aspects of the ethical socialism locally apparent in the early years of the twentieth century will be examined in chapters five and six. Here the main concern is to identify the social elements of this revival and two main ones emerge: the Clarion movement and the Socialist Sunday Schools. Both were very much part of an alternative Socialist culture which had largely foundered in the first phase of the Huddersfield Labour Party but which flourished in the second, with the clubs reviving more successfully.

There had been a short-lived Clarion Cycling Club in 1899 and a Clarion Field Club and a Clarion Scout troop in 1895 which had ninety-two members.[105] However these clubs lacked independence and were again synonymous with the Huddersfield I.L.P. as William Pickles, secretary of the Clarion Scouts observed: "We have no special plans for the future ... the Scouts will never make a great noise here" as organising the I.L.P. commanded the time of most of the Scouts.[106] Such pessimism and vagueness contrasted starkly with the situation after 1906 in Huddersfield when there was a Clarion Glee Club and Vocal Union, a Clarion Brass Band, a Clarion Handicraft Guild, the Clarion Harriers, a Clarion Swimming Club[107] and a revived Clarion Cycling Club.[108] By 1909 there was also a Clarion Club in Albion Street.[109] All were

> less preoccupied with political programmes than with enlarging the individual personality through creative activities, the development of 'fellowship' and a group life which foreshadowed the collectivity of the socialist society for which they were striving ... they expressed a revulsion against the ugliness and anonymity of urbanised, industrial society, and a deep reverence for nature.[110]

Significantly the Clarion movement in Huddersfield, as in the Colne Valley, was at its strongest much later than elsewhere in the West Riding: in 1895 Clarion Glee Clubs existed in Halifax, Hull and Keighley[111] while Bradford had strong and distinct Clarion Glee, Field and Cycling Clubs in 1897.[112] Although none seems to have been as popular as those in Lancashire, they were of more lasting importance than those in Huddersfield in the 1890s.

The second expression of the revived ethical emphasis was the Socialist Sunday School movement in Huddersfield.[113] It had actually been set in motion in 1896, possibly in response to the demise of the local Labour Churches, for G.A. Boothroyd, secretary of Lockwood Labour Church, trade unionist and later Labour Councillor, was a prominent exponent. Other key figures included Joe Dyson, John Priestley, J.H. Hellawell, J.W. Tyas and T.H. Thornton.[114] From the outset the main emphasis was on capturing youngsters for Socialism whilst "their minds and susceptibilities are plastic and impressionable".[115] Little is known of the Socialist Sunday School's activities in the 1890's: there is evidence that it still existed around the turn of the century from references in the Young Socialist[116] and the Labour Leader which reported on a Yorkshire conference of Socialist Sunday Schools in September 1900.[117] At that time it appeared that the Huddersfield S.S.S. had fifty scholars taught in classes financed by the local I.L.P. By way of comparison the Bradford Central S.S.S. formed in June 1899 by Sam Wood[118] boasted 112 scholars and was independently financed.[119] Halifax S.S.S. had 159 scholars and two meetings per Sunday.[120]

It was only, however, from 1906 that the Socialist Sunday School movement really progressed in Huddersfield. Lockwood S.S.S. was formed in July 1906[121] by the newly-established Lockwood Socialist Institute in which G.A. Boothroyd, Wilfrid Whiteley, Albert Clayton, John Beaumont, E.S. Bray and S. Tunnacliffe were prominent.[122] By 1908 a Paddock school had also been formed, by which time the Central S.S.S. had expanded to 300 scholars.[123] William Pickles,

R.A. Hopkinson, Mrs Siswick and Miss Shore figured most obviously in the latter school,[124] where, during the 1906 elections, attendances were reported to have risen from an average of 100 to 400.[125] In the first two years of the Socialist Sunday School's existence in Lockwood, scholars increased from sixteen to fifty, and teachers from one to twelve.[126] This growth, moreover, was paralleled elsewhere in Yorkshire: by 1914 Bradford had nine or ten S.S.S.'s[127] while between 1907 and 1910 in the Colne Valley "the Socialist Sunday schools began to emerge until eventually every club had one".[128]

To many Liberals and Nonconformists the S.S.S. movement was seen as a major challenge: it represented the most contemptible form of Socialist indoctrination and epitomised the Godlessness of the Labour Party. The Times assailed the movement in June 1902 as 'dangerous' and in Huddersfield H.J. Taylor, describing himself as 'a moderate trade unionist', was typical in his vehement attack on the S.S.S.'s:

> I hope all Sunday school workers will set their faces against such teaching as is prevalent in Socialistic circles. It lacks reverence and goodness, and the sooner it is properly tackled the better ... I have been at their meetings on various occasions, but there has been more of the spirit of anarchy than of social and friendly feeling.[129]

The accusations were quickly countered by a 'Young Socialist' who denied lack of goodness and irreverance and explained that:

> To the younger children a natural religion of love, truth and justice is taught, while the older scholars study economics, comparative religion and other subjects of interest.[130]

The maxim was, he claimed, to "make every day holy by good and useful deeds and kindly actions",[131] a line passionately espoused by the Rev. F.R. Swan who argued that Socialism was a religion and as such respected the ideals of Sabbatarianism throughout the week in a way which could not be said of the majority of

> Quite respectable Christians many of whom are supposed to belong to Churches [but] never or seldom go near a place of worship, yet they will denounce the Socialists for meeting to preach a social gospel. But more. They will play golf, tennis, will boat, fish, motor, cycle, lounge about, hold dinner parties etc.[132]

Yet such spirited defence made little impact and in March 1908 antipathy to the Socialist Sunday Schools, especially amongst Liberals, culminated in the refusal by the Borough Education Committee to allow Paddock S.S.S. to use Spring Grove School for its meetings.[133] Indeed only three members of the committee opposed the refusal: William Pickles, Ben Riley and, notably, George Thomson. Such political opposition continued until 1914 and was frequently disguised in terms of expense or convenience. It was underlined in June 1908 when the Borough Council prevented Paddock S.S.S. from using Paddock Recreation Ground for its anniversary meeting.[134]

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The period 1890-1910 was, therefore, one of continuing problems for Liberal Nonconformity in Huddersfield. Facing the twin challenges of leisure and Socialism it was able to respond decisively in the form of the P.S.A. movement which was probably a major contributory factor to the weakness of the local Labour Churches. In the long term,

however, it could do little to stem the tide of opinion away from Sunday observance and chapel attendance, epitomised by the Sunday trams issue, except in the area of youth organisations, whose growth was seemingly sustained until 1910-11. When ethical Socialism revived around 1906 to become the major force it clearly was not in the 1890s, Nonconformity's response was less effective, possibly because ethical Socialism itself had its roots in Nonconformity, as witnessed by the defection of chapel clergy to Socialism, like Graham and Swan. By 1906, moreover, the climate was more favourable for a Socialist revival and the Huddersfield Trades Council had come out in support of an independent working-class parliamentary candidate. In terms of the political repercussions for the Huddersfield Liberal Party, the combination of ethical Socialism, an I.L.P. in unity with the Trades Council and a weakened working-class Nonconformity was to pose a far more serious threat in 1906 than had been the case between 1891 and 1895 as succeeding chapters will show. Indeed the equation was to be further complicated by a local passive resistance campaign against the 1902 Education Bill and "considerable uneasiness" in local Nonconformist circles by 1907 concerning Government delays in enacting education, licensing, and church reforms. Such uneasiness caused Rev. W.G. Jenkins, Bruce's successor at Highfield, to comment:

> Should our hopes in these respects fade one after another, I feel quite sure that Nonconformity will be lost as a fighting force to Liberalism. Many of us will certainly look elsewhere. Why not to Labour?[135]

2. Liberal Individualism and Social Change

Apart from the challenge with which Huddersfield Liberalism was having to contend through the ballot box and in terms of its alliance to Nonconformity, it was also under pressure to revise its attitudes towards social problems, in particular unemployment, drink and health. Such revision became increasingly urgent from the 1890s when existing provision for social hardship, charitable and otherwise, was seen seriously to falter at times of severe local depression. Pressure came not just from the Huddersfield I.L.P. and Trades Council, which urged greater local and state intervention to provide work and alleviate poverty which crystallised in the 'Right to Work' agitation, but also from the findings of social investigators. The surveys of Booth and Rowntree had a subtle impact in Huddersfield, supplemented by the work of the town's M.P. from 1906, A.J. Sherwell, who questioned traditional concepts of poverty, albeit mildly. The prevalent atmosphere between 1890 and 1910 was one of social flux and it will be argued that in Huddersfield the Liberal response to change was essentially 'old Liberal', piecemeal and non-interventionist. Failing to constitute any form of New Liberalism, it was primarily an extension of a traditional, individualist, self-help philosophy.

I Attitudes to Charity

The prevailing nature of Victorian middle-class attitudes to poverty and charity have been well documented by historians[136] as has been the transition to a more 'scientific' social policy made flesh by the 'New Liberal' welfare measures of 1908-11.[137] Until the 1890s, it is reasonable to assume that the belief of the vast majority of charitable organisations, philanthropists and Poor Law Guardians was that poverty in the various forms was self-inflicted, most often as a result of 'immoral' practices, notably drink and gambling.[138] Individual incapacity rather than environmental or industrial factors were to blame for poor housing, unemployment and child poverty in the eyes of both Liberals and Conservatives. Such attitudes, indeed, were characteristic of all the charitable and reforming organisations which had sprouted in Huddersfield between 1830 and 1890.

Typical of the attitudes held by middle-class reformers in the 1890s was that of the Charity Organisation Society, established in 1869 and in Huddersfield in 1884. Leading figures were drawn from all political spheres and included notables like William Brooke, J.E. Willans, A. Whitworth,[139] G.D. Moxon,[140] W. Mallinson,[141] G.W. Hellawell,[142] Miss Siddon[143] and Mrs W.L.W. Marshall.[144] By the 1890s the C.O.S. had come to represent the most organised expression of voluntary charity in Huddersfield other than the Infirmary and the Poor Law. Initially the C.O.S. had emphasised the organisation of existing charity: "not to relieve existing

societies of their appropriate work, but rather to supply them with a machinery which will enable them to dispense relief more wisely and more effectively".[145] But in Huddersfield, as elsewhere, the C.O.S. had found itself forced to become merely another agency for relief reliant on public subscription, although on a larger scale than most existing organisations. Rejecting the sort of indiscriminate 'doling out' of material aid, which the Secretary of the Huddersfield C.O.S., John Hall, was so given to criticise during the local depression of 1891,[146] the C.O.S. aimed at a 'scientific' approach to relief by way of the case-study and in particular by identifying claimants as 'deserving' or 'undeserving' of aid.[147] Yet in essence, regardless of its methods, the C.O.S. was in the same self-help mould as earlier organisations or, as Meacham has put it, "a sophisticated rationalization of older attitudes"[148] and very much on the defensive in the 1890s from demands for greater social intervention voiced by Socialism.[149] Volunteers carrying out the Society's investigative work were usually leisured middle-class women like Miss Siddon. Assistance, where it was granted after meticulous examination, was not always material but was invariably "individual, personal, temporary and reformatory".[150] Relief was in no circumstances forthcoming if claimants were "drunk, immoral or idle ... unless they can prove they are reforming", nor if they were "unemployed by their own act".[151]

Nor did these attitudes fundamentally change in Huddersfield before 1914, despite being subject to strong attacks. Faced with severe unemployment and social distress, which will be examined shortly,

the persistent policy of the Liberal majority on the Huddersfield County Borough Council was to stimulate existing charity organisations like the C.O.S., and provide new outlets for voluntary aid via private subscription. The emergence of the Huddersfield Citizens' Guild of Help in February 1909 epitomised the Liberal Party's determination to deal with hardship by any means other than involving direct municipal intervention and public expenditure.

Supposedly the Guild of Help movement, which started in Bradford in 1904, "embodied a new approach to the organization of charity"[152] in the face of the inadequacy of existing charitable provision and a struggling Poor Law. In theory it was different from the C.O.S. in its emphasis on community organisation, citizenship and the need for co-operation between public and private relief agencies.[153] In Huddersfield, however, the Guild was virtually a synonym and a duplicate of the C.O.S. Its membership, albeit more Liberal than that of the C.O.S., included most of the leading C.O.S. figures notably J.E. Willans, Miss Siddon and Wilson Firth.[154] Moreover, unlike the Bradford Guild, which clashed with the C.O.S. on several occasions,[155] the Huddersfield Guild of Help was from the outset "in hearty co-operation" with the C.O.S., "a working agreement having been arranged, so as to prevent any overlapping".[156] Although by 1913 the Guild was lamenting just such duplication of relief "which could easily have been avoided by a combination of charities and a carefully kept register"[157] relations with the C.O.S. remained close enough that in 1917 the two organisations amalgamated.

Yet if the Huddersfield Guild of Help was in essence a revamped version of the C.O.S., a change of style rather than of interested parties, it was important in two ways. Firstly, it was quite evidently a Liberal "surrogate for municipal action"[158]: a last-ditch attempt to solve growing social problems without recourse to an erosion of Liberal ideals of voluntary self-help. Secondly, while its main emphasis continued to be along the lines of the C.O.S. it did reveal at least a hint of recognition that insanitary conditions and unemployment had something to do with poverty itself rather than simply drink and personal failing. It fell far short, however, of the stance of the Labour movement which proclaimed: "we cannot regard charity as a solution of the problem of the unemployed" nor, it may be added, poverty.[159] The Guild merely observed that "the question of insanitary conditions under which many of the poor live may be dealt with without additional legislation"[160] but rather by vigorous enforcement of existing legislation, hardly a progressive or New Liberal approach. Such was the nature of attitudes to charity in Huddersfield before 1914.

II The Primacy of Temperance

Moral considerations were crucially important in middle-class attitudes to poverty and relief. Perhaps the most dogmatic and influential representation of this in Huddersfield was the temperance movement which was not exclusively but overwhelmingly Liberal. The cause of total abstinence which had evolved since the 1830s via partial abstinence[161] went hand in hand with both later Victorian

Liberal Nonconformity and the capitalist work ethic worshipped by the textile manufacturers.[162] Temperance was particularly strong in Huddersfield[163]: before 1900 there were no fewer than seven separate temperance organisations in the town,[164] in addition to three which defended the liquor trade's 350 or so licences.[165] The temperance gospel was engrained in the town's Liberalism through chapel, Bands of Hope, P.S.A. and public meeting. Many of the town's radicals, Socialists and men of "light and leading" were weaned on the coffee of Thornton's Temperance Hotel and, after its demise, Robinson's Cafe.[166] Despite the existence of the Church of England Temperance Society boasting a not inconsiderable 1400 members in Huddersfield in 1906,[167] taking the pledge as a youngster, even if not adhered to later in life, was more often tantamount to a pledge to Liberalism. This was especially the case after the local veto had become Party policy in the late 1880s, bringing local temperance organisations firmly into the political arena. Indeed, as Fahey has observed, "For a generation, temperance reforms helped define the conflict between Liberals and Unionists ... [it] helped sustain the Liberals as a major party between the beginning of the Irish Home Rule Schism and the First World War".[168] The synonymity between Liberalism, Nonconformity and temperance was no better demonstrated than by the Congregational Woodhead family. Joseph was President of both the Temperance Society (1887-98) and the H.L.A., while his wife was President of both the Women's Temperance Society and the Women's Liberal Association. Their son Ernest was President of the Band of Hope Union and the Temperance League, Vice-President of the Commercial Temperance League and the Temperance Society, while

simultaneously a Liberal alderman, President of Marsh Liberal Club and a leading member of the Junior Liberals. The family was closely identified with both Milton and Highfield chapels, Ernest was a superintendent of Milton P.S.A. G. Sims Woodhead, Joseph's eldest son, was a distinguished medical scientist and President of the British Medical Temperance Association, the author of several temperance pamphlets.

The tendency amongst temperance advocates was to see drink as almost the sole cause of poverty, and abstinence as a universal panacea of social ills. Such attitudes were eroded only slowly. As late as 1897, when temperance had measured its earlier stridency somewhat, Huddersfield's radical solicitor D.F.E. Sykes'[169] pamphlet Drink entered its sixth edition to be followed by More About Drink. The following passage from Drink, is typical of much contemporary temperance material illustrative of the propensity to blame drink for virtually all society's shortcomings:

> strong drink has been and is the direst agent for evil known to these or any proceeding times ... Under its baneful influence the honest man becomes a thief, the virtuous woman an abandoned harlot, the patriot a mercenary hireling, the business man the laughing stock of the market place, the lawyer forgets his honour, the preacher his religion, the physician becomes a venal quack ... it exhausts the cash in the bank, the credit on the exchange, it consumes the furniture in the house, the childrens' boots, the wife's clothes ... the food you and yours should eat, it eats for you ... I say unhesitantly strong drink is answerable for more poverty than all the strikes, all the slack trade, all the natural infirmities to which the toiler is subject.[170]

Between 1885 and 1914 temperance in Huddersfield remained virtually undiminished as a social and political force not least amongst children. As table 4.1 above indicates membership of the Band of Hope Union continued to rise, only seriously declining with the advent of war. Most importantly, as L.L. Shiman has observed, the movement recruited widely amongst the "operative class"[171] and there is no reason to assume this was not the case in Huddersfield. To many working-class children the Band of Hope meeting was the "cultural highlight of the week"[172] and enabled parents to rid themselves of their offspring, if only temporarily.[173] The movement's popularity, moreover, lay as much in its outings and activities as in the formal meetings and the message it has intended to convey.[174]

Amongst adults, J.H. Firth, indefatigable agent of the Huddersfield Temperance League,[175] was still claiming personally in 1910 over 150 'conversions' to the pledge every year and he reported an increase in subscribers to the League from 509 to 609,[176] a doubling of the support enjoyed in 1897.[177] The Women's Temperance Society consistently increased its membership and in 1902 expanded its activity by forming a P.S.A. and a 'Y' branch for girls over sixteen which had nearly sixty members within a year.[178] The precise effect of all these organisations is difficult to quantify, but ostensibly they had some impact on convictions for drunkenness in the Borough from after 1903 and especially from 1905 when a marked decline set in as table 4.5 indicates. Moreover, between 1884 and 1895 there was a substantial decline in convictions from 411 to 222 and this high

figure was never again attained before 1914. How closely convictions for drunkenness can be linked to temperance is, of course, highly questionable in view of the importance of the other factors like licensing laws, unemployment, changing police policy and assiduousness, and local festivities. If nothing else, however, they act as a very rough guide.

Table 4.5 Convictions for Drunkenness in Huddersfield Borough, 1891-1910

	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900
Male	225	239	202	182	167	180	161	165	210	156
Female	83	42	49	52	55	72	58	57	63	82
Total	308	281	251	234	222	252	219	222	273	238
	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910
Male	151	187	200	167	199	172	177	163	132	128
Female	59	63	96	80	78	67	57	53	41	41
Total	210	250	296	247	277	239	234	216	173	169

Source: Huddersfield Chief Constable's Annual Report: Criminal and Miscellaneous Statistical Returns 1900-10 (Huddersfield Central Library)

Whatever the effect of temperance agitation on convictions, it is clear that the cause was contributory to the vitality of Liberalism in Huddersfield until 1914 if only by its persistent presence. Indeed its involvement in politics was often direct; in the 1890s the

Temperance Society's Vigilance Committee closely questioned municipal candidates on their attitudes to drink and issued a manifesto instructing temperance advocates how to vote.[179] For the trade itself the Licensed Trades Electoral Association, formed in April 1892, aimed "to influence the selection and return of candidates favourable to the trade", while proclaiming that "Behind the talk of temperance reform hides the veiled shadow of prohibition".[180] Temperance issues, in particular local option and later liquor duty, were rarely far from political discussion, at both local and parliamentary level. Nor was this surprising in view of the high percentage of Conservative councillors in the borough who were either licensed victuallers or were prominent in their defence. These acted as red rags to temperance enthusiasts, as did the frequency with which Conservative candidates used public houses for 'informal' meetings.[181]

Yet if temperance remained a potent political and social force throughout our period, the advent of the 'Great Depression', ushering in, as it did, a period of unemployment and hardship, saw the first strong challenges to the concept of self-inflicted proverty through drink. Sir James Woodhouse continued to inveigh against intemperance as "undoubtedly one of the greatest bugbears and curses of our modern civilisation" while hitting out at the £150 million spent every year on drink in Britain and the high number of licensed premises in Huddersfield itself.[182] Progressively, however, as the scale of social hardship came to light through the inadequacy of existing relief agencies and through the writings of Booth, Rowntree and others,[183]

had increased its workforce to 3,508.[70] In both these sectors it was large family firms that predominated: in engineering was Broadbents of Lower Queen Street, Hopkinsons of Birkby, and David Browns of Crosland Moor which successfully cornered the market for cast-iron gears and went on to build a highly profitable vehicle business.[71] In chemicals Read Holliday was innovative in developing an array of new coloured dyestuffs which proved essential for the popularity of Huddersfield fancy waistcoatings. When he died in 1889 Hollidays of Deighton was "at the heart of a thriving chemical industry"[72]. The firm later became British Dyes and in 1926 amalgamated with Brunner Mond, Nobell Industries and United Alkali to become part of Imperial Chemical Industries.

Despite the problems American protection and foreign competition posed to the West Riding woollen and worsted industry, lowering levels of employment and forcing down wages, in turn leading to a rise of strike action in the 1880s and 1890s; Huddersfield remained remarkably aloof, maintaining relative industrial passivity compared with the ructions evident in Leeds, Bradford and Halifax. This passivity was to be an important factor in the backwardness and lack of electoral success of the Labour Party in Huddersfield later on, and there are several explanations for it. One already noted was the preponderance in the Huddersfield trade of small scale, family-run industrial units which tended to maximise worker deference and hampered trade union growth. But perhaps more important as a determinant of industrial relations in the town's textile industry in the period up to 1914 was the Huddersfield weavers' strike of 1883, described by one historian as:

explanations for poverty, blaming high rents, lack of sanitation and overcrowding rather than drink or personal failing. He observed that, in Soho at least, voluntary groups "barely touch the fringe of the grave problems".[190] Significantly, however, the solution he offered was not a major step towards intervention or collectivism: "what is urgently needed is not so much further legislation as the vigorous and efficient administration" of existing laws.[191] It will be noted that this paralleled the Guild of Help's emphasis and both were typical of Liberalism's response to social hardship in Huddersfield before 1914. So although attitudes on drink and poverty were shifting, they remained essentially non-interventionist and in defence of the status quo.

The challenge to orthodox views on drink, poverty and charity, however, came not just from social investigators and the problems posed by local depression, but from the nascent Labour Party. From the outset it branded drink as "one of the greatest ramparts of capitalism"[192] and denied that drink necessarily caused poverty. Indeed, from his arrival in Huddersfield, Russell Smart stirred up something of an ant's nest by proclaiming that "the removal of alcohol would solve no economic problems. It would not remove the slum nor the sweater".[193] Furthermore his tract Socialism and Drink attacked the existing approach of the temperance movement:

> the Socialist affirms that the drinking habits of the poor are the result, rather than the cause of their surroundings, and that before drunkenness can be removed the social environment must be altered and poverty abolished.[194]

Drink was also bound up, he claimed, with capitalistic competition:

> the effect of alcohol is to lull the workers, crushed down to the dead level of wage slavery by the remorseless tyranny of rent and interest, into a state of sottish apathy with their conditions, which decays their economic freedom. Convert the wage-earners to temperance tomorrow and they would be Socialists the day after.[195]

In other words, Smart was not criticising the value of temperance per se but its link with poverty. Nor was his an atypical viewpoint amongst I.L.P.s: Philip Snowden was a leading advocate of temperance while Russell Williams, Huddersfield's Labour candidate in 1906, concurred with many of the views of Sherwell though often more forcefully.[196] Indeed the majority of Huddersfield's Labour and Socialist clubs excluded drink: most of the local movement's pioneers were strong temperance supporters, many having gained speaking experience whilst young at Band of Hope meetings.[197] Most often the Huddersfield Labour Party did not hesitate in supporting local option, reduction of licenses and increased liquor duties, although in 1908 doubts were expressed about the Licensing Bill, which, it was felt, would cause unemployment.[198] The party's challenge, however, to the orthodox Liberal view of drink and poverty was frequently evident, not least at two debates held on the question. Smart, speaking at the first in 1894, opposed a motion that "the practice of total abstinence from intoxicating liquors of the entire population of Great Britain [will] bring with it the abolition of sixty per cent of the poverty".[199] At the second in 1902 William Pickles represented Labour and the motion had been softened somewhat: "Are the drinking

habits of the people the chief cause of poverty?"[200] It is interesting to note how little the views of either side had changed in the eight years between these debates.

Evidently the softening of the approach of the temperance movement was a slow process, despite a changing emphasis amongst some Liberals themselves, and was made all the more difficult by the fact that the challenge to orthodoxy encompassed so much that went to form a whole set of Liberal middle-class beliefs, apart from drink itself. By attacking the existing temperance movement, Socialism was undermining the traditional values of self-help and 'hard' work; and substituting 'right'; that is the right of the individual to look to the State for relief from poverty and unemployment. It was in this respect that Socialists differed from advanced Liberals like Sherwell, who recognised that poverty could cause drunkenness but who framed the solution in terms of individualism and extension of existing legislation. The cause of temperance, therefore, which remained such a central part of Huddersfield Liberalism up to 1914, was so much more than abstinence from drink, as Samuel Bull, a Liberal manufacturer observed: not only did alcohol cost money and use up labour but it diminished the power to work efficiently: "if the unemployed drank less it would raise their efficiency and give them employment".[201] Unemployment, therefore, was a further aspect of Liberal attitudes to drink and poverty, and it was pressure from the effects of local depression from the 1890s which made it more and more difficult to explain away hardship solely in terms of personal failing.

III Unemployment and Poverty

During late 1890 and early 1891 a combination of factors came to a head in Huddersfield: protection of the U.S. textile industry by way of the McKinley tariff,[202] increased domestic competition for the lower end of the woollen trade due to foreign imports,[203] seasonal unemployment and an abysmal winter. All these produced hardship and unemployment on a scale unprecedented in Huddersfield, although the situation in Bradford was even worse, being more reliant on worsteds.[204] For the Huddersfield textile industry itself it was "the worst [year] which has been experienced for thirty years"[205] marked by a high number of bankruptcies and reduced investment. As the year opened John Hall, wearing two caps as secretary of the C.O.S. and clerk to the Board of Guardians, wrote to the Examiner, in the style of "In Darkest Huddersfield and the Way Out", that poverty was being seriously overlooked locally and that existing provision, including the Poor Law, was inadequate to deal with the worst effects.[206] Any doubts that this was the case were removed by a deputation of the unemployed to the Mayor "to call attention to the distress which prevailed in the borough amongst the out-door labourers".[207] In short, it was becoming evident in Huddersfield, as elsewhere, that "the uneasy synthesis of Poor Law, thrift and charity which had relieved distress from want of employment since the 1830s" was under great strain.[208] Indeed table 4.6, detailing charitable provision before 1890, indicates how limited in scope, provision and income the vast majority of local charities were, and how ill-suited to cope with extraordinary hardship. Only

the C.O.S. significantly supplemented the Poor Law before 1890 and it too was clearly struggling during the winter of 1890-1, as John Hall observed.

In response to the distress, there followed a whole gamut of uncoordinated relief measures. Several soup kitchens were set up, bread and coal was distributed free by ticket as were meals for 'needy' children, although some meals were only 'cheap'.[209] Several voluntary ward relief committees were established[210] and a number of old people's gatherings held. Significantly the Liberal Borough Council did virtually nothing other than set up a Mayor's distress fund which raised £185 by voluntary means within a fortnight,[211] although even this was one better than Bradford Liberal Council's refusal to set up a fund in 1893.[212] In general, the first serious local depression of the latter quarter of the nineteenth century in Huddersfield had elicited a mêlée of voluntary, piecemeal and temporary measures designed to relieve the immediate problem: they were merely palliatives, rather than long-term cures for the underlying problem of inadequate existing provision. Indeed the response of 1891 reiterated traditional beliefs that unemployment was the fault of temporary factors like the weather and the workers themselves, rather than of wider structural factors like foreign competition. The Examiner was typical of Liberal opinion, blaming high wages and local strike action for reducing Huddersfield's ability to meet "very excessive" competition; while the McKinley tariff was mentioned only by way of an aside.[213]

Table 4.6 Charitable Provision in Huddersfield Before 1890

1. Endowed Charities

Name	Date Begun	Gross Annual Income	Recipients Each Year
Ramsden Charity	1767	£74	270 poor people
John Mortimer's Charity	1823	£16	Old people in Marsh
Ann Hanson's Charity	1829	£5	" " " "
William Cliffe's Charity	1851	£28	Poor widows over 40
Holroyd's Charity	1830	£38	4 cottages in Birkby
Sir John Ramsden's Gift	1839	£17-15s	Industrious aged poor
Gibson's Charity	1637	£4	Coal for needy
George Brooke's Gift	1884	£23	Buxton Rd. Wesleyan poor
Bentley's Gift	1821	c.£30	Poor in Huddersfield
Wilson's Gift	1830	c.£5	" " "
Nettleton's Charity	1613	£311	Needy in Almondbury
Almondbury Poor Charity	1673	£65	Needy in Newsome and Almondbury
Fenay's Charity	1765	N.A.	" " " "
Firth's Dole	1624	£12-10s	Relief of Almondbury poor rates
Bentley Charity	1850	c.£30	6 poor Lockwood householders
Lee's Charity	1861	£21-16s	Poor in Dalton
Technical College	1878	£394	Education for all

2. Charities Reliant on Annual Subscription

Orphan Home	1861	£250	22 orphans
Poor Folk's Gathering	1871	£160	1200 old and poor
Deaf and Dumb Society	-	-	Deaf and Dumb
Blind Society	-	-	Blind
Charity Organisation Society	1884	£432 (average 1884-94)	Poor and needy
Training Home for Rough Girls	-	-	Orphaned girls
Inebriate Home for Women	-	-	Intemperate women

3. Charities Endowed and Subscribed To

General Infirmary	1829	£2000 endowed	+ £6000 subscribed	Over 1000 patients

Source: Rigby, E.A. (Clerk to Guardians) Paper on Local Charities (HE, 22 February 1908)

Criticism of such a response was seriously limited in 1891, as the Huddersfield Labour Union had still to find its feet. But by the time the depression had once again deepened in the winter of 1893-4, pressure from Labour and some Liberals resulted in a more positive response from the Liberal Borough Council than had been the case in 1891. From late 1893 Russell Smart had blamed poverty on competition while concurring with the Trades Council's demands for an eight-hour day, abolition of overtime and a minimum wage as the means to provide more jobs with a living wage.[214] Such pressure, added to a lack of confidence in the Liberal camp owing to the loss of the parliamentary seat and a seat in the local elections in November 1893, undoubtedly made the Liberal party on the Council more aware of the need to respond positively to renewed unemployment. There was, moreover the impetus provided by a Local Government Board circular of 30 September 1893 which had stressed the need for local authorities to find menial temporary work for unemployed artisans.[215] An Unemployed Sub-Committee was subsequently set up to consider the Board's recommendations,[216] but, as was so typical of such committees, nothing was done until January 1894 when letters from the Trades Council and the Labour Union requesting a Labour Bureau were reluctantly acceded to.[217]

A Labour Bureau was duly opened on 24 January in Peel Street and within a week 495 men and 77 women had registered as unemployed, 356 of the total being either labourers or woollen operatives.[218] This number, however, clearly represented only a small percentage of the total unemployed[219] and the Bureau was cold-shouldered by employers.[220] Moreover, at a meeting of the unemployed called by

the Labour Union on 4 February 1894 the Bureau was criticised by William Wheatley as grossly insufficient. What was needed, Labour claimed, was an immediate programme of municipal relief works allied to working-class representation on public bodies. As Russell Smart remarked, the unemployed "did not want charity but employment".[221]

This demand for municipal relief work represented the more realistic side of the Labour Union's immediate solution for unemployment, backed by the Eight-Hour Day, abolition of overtime, and fair contracts, and it received support from a small number of both Conservative and Liberal councillors who joined the Labour Union in establishing an unofficial unemployment committee to organise relief.[222] The result of such pressure on the Borough Council to enact public works was, however, extremely limited. The Council's unemployed sub-committee received a Labour deputation on 9 February[223] urging immediate public works and a relief committee, but "the sub-committee did not consider it desirable to form a Relief Committee", and successive committees behind closed doors over the ensuing two months refused to implement the majority of suggested public works.[224]

The final sum of the Council's efforts for the town's unemployed was to provide temporary jobs for forty-eight men, forty of them in demolishing a brick factory.[225] By 16 March the Labour Bureau was closed, the sub-committee dissolved and consideration of relief works "allowed to drop".[226] The Liberal Council's response to the unemployment crisis had been conditioned throughout by the belief that unemployment was a temporary aberration. Lip-service had been

paid to Labour's demands, but very little had in reality been done and most Liberals argued that it was "absurd that it is the duty of the government and local authorities to provide work".[227] Moreover, they believed in the existence of an unemployed (and by implication, unemployable) class which "could have averted their present condition"[228] had they wished to do so. It was, indeed, this idea of a constant stratum of unemployment that Russell Smart was so concerned to undermine in the early 1890s when he argued that "there is no such thing as an unemployed class, but that unemployment is spread over the whole industrial community".[229]

Yet as the depression continued into 1895, there were few signs of a major revision of traditional attitudes to poverty. Although trade improved slightly following the repeal of the McKinley tariff and its replacement by the milder Wilson tariff[230] unemployment remained high.[231] There was, moreover, further evidence that existing relief was patently insufficient. The C.O.S. issued an urgent appeal in January 1895 for funds to cope with the depression and a fall in subscriptions[232] while the emergence of the Huddersfield Cinderella Society early in 1895 reflected the obvious need for such an organisation.[233] This society was, in its first phase in 1895, linked to the Labour Union (when it was revived in 1898 it was an all-party body) and was a larger version of the Lockwood Cinderella Society which had been formed late in 1894 by the Lockwood Labour Church. The Cinderella Movement itself had been initiated by Robert Blatchford, editor of the Clarion and author of Merrie England, in 1889 to provide meals for slum children suffering from trade

depression.[234] The Cinderella clubs and societies subsequently spread throughout the North with a peak of activity from 1897 until 1906 when the school feeding act of that year reduced their role.[235] Although the majority of clubs were formed by local I.L.P.s, Fabians or Clarion clubs, some were non-socialist at the outset or, as in Huddersfield, became so later.[236] In the early part of 1895 Huddersfield's Cinderella Societies played a major role in relieving child poverty by providing free meals every other day during January and February at 150 per sitting.[237] Their achievement was all the more admirable given that the central relief fund eventually set up by the Mayor refused them a grant on the grounds that they were dominated by I.L.P.ers using the situation to win working-class support. John Hendrick, secretary of Lockwood Cinderella Society, denied this hotly but no money was forthcoming.[238]

Apart from actively supplying much needed relief, the Huddersfield I.L.P. and the Trades Council were again vocal in demanding public works and greater municipal relief, and this was soon galvanised into a 'right to work' campaign. On 3 February 1895 Allen Gee proposed a right to work motion at a mass meeting of the unemployed in the Armoury to the effect that:

> it is the duty of the State to guarantee to every citizen the opportunity of maintaining himself and his dependants by honest labour; that pending the reorganisation of society on the basis of an industrial commonwealth, this meeting demands that immediate action be taken by the Government and all local bodies to provide employment for every unemployed worker, such employment not to entail loss of citizenship or carry any other form of degradation, and to be remunerated by trade union rates of wages.[239]

This new emphasis on 'the right to work' owed much to the writings of H. Russell Smart as well as to local feeling. In February 1895 Smart wrote an article in the Labour Leader in which he asserted that all men possessed a natural right to work and that this could be achieved by reducing unemployment via the Eight-Hour Day and a minimum wage of 24s. per week. Municipal authorities should be legally bound to find work for all those applying.[240] He went on to set out these ideas in greater detail in The Right to Work (Manchester n.d. 1895?) in which he was sceptical of a purely local approach to solving unemployment:

> The unemployment problem cannot be effectively dealt with without treating the industrial system as a whole ... any attempt to induce the Municipalities to moralize the industrial conditions merely by local pressure is doomed to failure, for isolated action is useless.[241]

Furthermore, implicit in Smart's scheme was a return to the land to increase worker purchasing power and make Britain more self-sufficient.[242] The whole plan was embodied in a detailed 'right to work bill' (see appendix) which constituted a resolution moved by the Huddersfield I.L.P. at the national I.L.P. conference in Newcastle during April 1895.[243] Yet despite his macro-economic approach Smart, like the Huddersfield I.L.P.s, conceded that "pending ... an industrial commonwealth" the most fruitful line of attack was municipal, although this could be but a partial solution. To this end Smart and the local I.L.P. pressed for the establishment of a joint central unemployment committee to provide work and relief.[244] In many ways therefore, the 'right to work' campaign in Huddersfield circa 1895 had an air of unreality and impracticality which paralleled

a similar I.L.P. response in Bradford, described as "hastily contrived and ill-considered ... No constructive solution to unemployment was to emerge in a purely local context".[245] Similarly Labour's theoretical aims in Huddersfield, typified by a local version of Smart's 'Right to Work Bill', had frequently to be revised in the light of the harsh realities of local politics.

Nevertheless the combined pressure from circumstances and the I.L.P. brought about a partial acquiescence by the Liberal Mayor, J.J. Brook, and on 8 February 1895 he summoned a meeting of local groups to discuss the problem of unemployment which resulted in the formation of a central relief fund and committee comprising: the Mayor, five C.O.S. members, five members of the Poor Folks Gathering, Alderman Reuben Hirst, J.L. Walker, F. Eastwood, Mrs. Hall and Mrs. C.E. Freeman.[246] It was, in effect, a glorified C.O.S. but the need for such a body was well illustrated by the fact that within less than a week 1,939 people had received relief by way of free coal, soup and bread paid for not by the municipality but by voluntary subscription.[247] However, public works were even less evident than in 1894 and no bureau was set up, the stress being on short-term relief by voluntary means and sitting the depression out. Despite pressure from Labour, therefore, the Liberal majority on the Borough Council had done nothing more than set up an agency for charitable aid, consistently refusing to take a more active role. The parallels with Bradford in this matter are striking and it seems likely that this typified the Liberal Party's municipal approach to unemployment more generally.

A key explanation of the Council's lack of intervention lay in the belief that, not only was it wrong to tamper with the free market but also that the main reason for the depression of trade was temporary and local, rather than international. In particular it was the result, they claimed, of the union's refusal to operate a system of two looms to one weaver especially in lower quality woollens and plain worsteds, thereby making Huddersfield domestically uncompetitive with Bradford and Halifax. This was to be a major topic of debate into the next century and invariably cropped up at times of trade depression when it supplemented existing individualist explanations for distress and poverty. The debate was most vociferous in 1895, 1898 and 1903. From a very large amount of correspondence on the subject[248] and from evidence to the Tariff Commission several lines of argument emerge. Firstly, employers claimed that the system as operated in Bradford had increased output and efficiency, but the unions countered by saying that the differing nature of the cloth made in Huddersfield made comparison invalid. Secondly it was argued that a weaver would be able to earn much more working two looms than one even on a reduced rate per piece, to which the union replied that the weaver would be required to change pieces of cloth more often thereby reducing the increase. So weavers would work harder for proportionately less money while exposing themselves to higher accident risk. Thirdly, the employers criticised the unions for preventing the weavers from accepting two looms, yet a ballot in 1903 of all those working resulted in an overwhelmingly majority of 5176 against the implementation of two looms.[249] Finally, it was claimed that the introduction of the system would eradicate local unemployment

and it was this which the unions and the Yorkshire Factory Times most bitterly opposed. They argued that either fewer weavers would be required or they would be put on short-time: both possibilities meant lower wages and unemployment.[250]

Union opposition alone, however, would probably not have been enough to prevent the implementation of the two-loom system, given that only about twenty per cent of weavers were union members. Crucially some employers, including George Thomson, doubted its validity as the perfect cure for the town's industrial ills. They were unconvinced as to its applicability to Huddersfield conditions and were unready to take on prolonged union opposition. Such doubt was reflected in the long-delayed report of a local joint commission on the depression in trade, set up in 1892, after many problems of its composition.[251] The report, issued on May 1895, could only conclude that the Huddersfield district had been as badly affected by the depression as elsewhere. Much to the chagrin of local manufacturers no recommendations were made, least of all in support of the two-loom system.[252] It was not, therefore, open employer hostility to the two-loom system which prevented its advent so much as doubts amongst a small number of employers that a prolonged battle with the unions over the issue would yield the results which the most prominent advocates promised.

In essence the importance of the two-loom debate was that it illustrated that between 1895 and 1903 large numbers of employers, many of them Liberal, wavered very little from seeing unemployment

and depression as locally orientated and 'self-inflicted' through union obstinacy. Working men had nobody to blame for their position but themselves if they were unprepared to move according to the free market. In this respect the consensus of Liberal employer attitudes to unemployment and poverty were as insular and individualistic as were their attitudes to drink and charity, contrasting markedly with the Labour Union's and Trades Council's stress on the centrality of national and international factors, while demanding that local government intervene to provide work and alleviate distress.[253] So Liberalism and Labour differed both as to the origins and nature of depression, and how best to handle it.

There was a further trade recession in 1898 but it was not until after 1903 that the Liberal Borough Council was once again required to respond positively to renewed distress and unemployment. The revival of these problems was largely a result of the ending of the Boer War boom, during which Huddersfield had supplied large quantities of khaki, and a further sharp reduction in trade with America. It was perhaps the latter factor which had persistently effected Huddersfield's trade so badly since 1891. Since then exports to the U.S.A. had been in general decline and between 1902 and 1904 alone exports dropped from £191,116 to £80,926 which was the lowest return of trade with the States since 1877.[254] The adverse impact of U.S. protection was becoming all too evident and was reiterated by the Tariff Commission of 1905 which concluded of Huddersfield that "since 1898 the Americans have only bought sufficient goods to employ 5000 workers for one year, instead of 14,000" before 1898.[255] Moreover, the annual consular returns of Huddersfield's trade with the States tended to support these conclusions as table 4.7 indicates.

Table 4.7 Huddersfield's Textile Exports to the United States, 1891-1913

Year	Woollens (£)	Worsteds (£)	Total (£)	% Increase/ Decrease	Tariff
1891	109,966	374,585	484,551	-	McKinley
1892	101,810	464,422	566,232	+ 16.9	
1893	95,233	330,661	425,894	- 24.8	
1894	75,817	223,369	299,186	- 29.8	
1895	256,682	469,289	725,971	+ 142.6	Wilson
1896	190,344	220,594	410,938	- 43.4	
1897	176,580	238,819	415,399	+ 1.1	
1898	52,020	109,412	161,432	- 61.1	Dingley
1899	76,994	114,043	191,037	+ 18.3	
1900	87,629	98,230	185,859	- 2.7	
1901	83,081	81,393	164,474	- 11.5	
1902	92,538	98,578	191,116	+ 16.2	
1903	58,545	57,419	115,964	- 39.3	
1904	34,382	46,544	80,926	- 30.2	
1905	41,869	62,034	103,903	+ 28.4	
1906	45,275	70,992	116,267	+ 11.9	
1907	34,978	56,212	91,190	- 21.6	
1908	19,139	42,068	61,207	- 32.9	
1909	33,225	53,116	86,341	+ 41.1	
1910	45,043	53,932	98,975	+ 14.6	
1911	48,048	64,247	112,295	+ 13.5	
1912	58,317	77,861	136,178	+ 17.5	
1913	55,194	64,609	119,803	- 13.7	

Source: U.S. Consular Returns in HE, 27 December 1913

The employment situation was serious and would have been worse but for the relative buoyancy of the cheap tweed and ready-made clothing trade in the area. At the same time it is important to note that the Liberals were facing a renewed municipal challenge from Labour: between 1902 and 1908 Labour increased the number of candidates fielded every November from three to ten and succeeded in substantially augmenting its representation on the borough council from one in 1903 to eight in 1906 (see appendix). Signs abounded, moreover, that once again existing organisations were failing to cope with a constantly widening problem. Exactly how well the Board of Guardians was coping at this time is difficult to tell in view of the absence of detailed minute books, but it is evident that growing needs were making unparalleled financial demands. Expenditure on pauper relief in the Huddersfield districts grew from £3998 in 1896 and 1897 to £6260 in 1904 and to £8745 in 1908.[256] In 1902, 1903 and 1904 the Cinderella Society, revived in February 1898, urgently appealed for funds. Yet despite vastly increasing its income and the number of children helped (see table 4.8) much more remained to be done.

Table 4.8 Huddersfield Cinderella Society 1899-1908

Year	1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908
Income	£2	£17	N.A.	£34	£64	£80	N.A.	£250	£442	£463
Children Helped	550		1040	650	1050	1510	2590	2099	4004	N.A.

Sources: Annual Reports of Huddersfield Cinderella Society (Huddersfield Central Library); HE, passim.

The C.O.S. revealed similar problems as the number of individuals passing through its books increased from 2715 in 1905 to 3404 in 1908,[257] while the Victoria Sick Poor Nurses Association set up in 1897 had doubled its income by 1908 but still had insufficient funds to meet a doubling of demand.[258] There was, moreover, increasing concern that Huddersfield was being depopulated as a result of unemployment and poor trade. This fear had arisen in 1895-6 when Joseph Brooke had linked an increase in the number of empty houses in the borough to poor trade.[259] The 1901 census deepened these fears when it revealed that the town's population had actually declined by 0.4% since 1891,[260] while the birth rate continued to decline between 1881 and 1905 from 27.7 to 23.7 per thousand,[261] rendering it consistently the lowest of the country's thirty-three largest towns. Furthermore there were worries about Huddersfield's health, especially the high infant mortality rate, and the seeming inadequacy of existing sanitary measures. All these fears and anxieties fitted easily into ideas, current in early Edwardian society, of national efficiency.

The problems with which the Liberal Borough Council had to contend were, therefore, manifold and, although its practical response became more apparent, it never really strayed from its earlier policy of reticence, tempered by occasional lip-service to Labour's demands and marked by an essential emphasis on the sanctity of individual self-help and charity. Early in October 1904 the Board of Guardians urged the Corporation "to consider the expediency of finding employment for skilled and unskilled able-bodied men during the

present depressed condition of trade"[262] and a special sub-committee concerning lack of employment was subsequently established following a resolution passed by full Council on 19 October, "That in the opinion of this Council it is desirable that steps be taken to find employment for workers during the forthcoming winter".[263] Yet once again virtually nothing was actually achieved. Eli Whitwam, as Chairman of the Board of Guardians, constantly denied that poverty and unemployment were any worse than normal, despite evidence to the contrary, and strongly opposed any extension of public involvement.[264] Despite a recognition of "exceptional unemployment" the special sub-committee had, by the end of January 1905, done nothing except attempt to list those applying to the Town Clerk and the C.O.S. for work.[265] No public works were commenced nor was a labour bureau set up, mainly because the worst distress had passed before the Town Clerk had concluded his report on what measures the Council should adopt to deal with the problem. Such red tape and delay typified the Liberal Council's response to social problems in a variety of spheres.

By the Autumnn of 1905, however, the Council was forced to take more wide-ranging action than it had done hitherto, mainly due to the implementation of the Government's Unemployed Workmen Bill. From the bill's introduction, I.L.P. and Trades Council support had been apparent, recognising that in the absence of a Right to Work Bill it was the best they could hope for. On 2 July 1905 a mass meeting was held in St. George's Square attended by over 2000 people [266] as part of a national Labour Party campaign against unemployment

and in support of the bill, which resulted in riots in Manchester in August.[267] The Huddersfield meeting was typical of the majority in calling once more for 'the right to work', pressing the Government to enable local authorities to institute public works by funding them nationally, overseen by a Ministry of Labour to ensure payment of trade union rates of pay.[268] As such the Huddersfield Labour Party's approach to unemployment was not significantly different from that of 1894-5.

The Unemployed Act was passed in the middle of August 1905, forcing local authorities to establish distress committees and bureaux, and immediately Huddersfield's five Labour councillors pressed the Liberal majority to do as the act required. On 20 September councillors Ben Riley and William Wheatley pointed out that "it was the Council's duty to place [the unemployed] in a better position" but Liberal doubts and procrastination once more became evident. J.E. Willans observed that the Council "had sympathy with the deserving poor and were anxious to improve their position" but that the formation of a distress committee was "premature" and "unnecessary", with which even Owen Balmforth agreed.[269] Nevertheless the Council reluctantly agreed to establish a distress committee under the act[270] which held its first meeting on 27 October 1905 chaired by Benjamin Broadbent.[271] By the end of November 1905 three sub-committees had been established to cover records, temporary work and finance, but once again there is no evidence that anything very much was actually done at any time except the compilation of a list of those unemployed who applied for work at the record office, likely to be a small percentage of total unemployed.

Such continued to be the case until 1914, despite several mass demonstrations organised by the Huddersfield Labour Party[272] while in Parliament the Labour Party was pressing during 1908 for a Right to Work Bill similar to Smart's 1895 version, but without success.[273] The Council's response to renewed pressure, was, as before, slight. Even though a labour bureau was opened in October 1908 which registered 300 people little was done to find them work as Labour's councillors frequently pointed out.[274] Nor did the opening of the state-run local Labour Exchange in February 1910[275] significantly alter the plight of the town's unemployed. The new exchange was no different from the bureaux and continued to carry the Poor Law stigma, while the unions were suspicious of it, fearing it could be a source of black-leg labour during strikes.[276] Moreover, it was evident that Huddersfield Liberals continued to see poor housing, strikes and laziness, as well as drink, as primary causes of unemployment.[277]

The record of the Huddersfield Liberal Party's response to the problems of unemployment and distress up to 1914 was consistently one of offering palliatives and was in most cases more apparent than real, falling far short of any concerted programme of New Liberalism. Liberal attitudes towards poverty changed hardly at all before 1914. In most cases it was reticence, inaction and delay which constituted the Borough Council's reply to Labour's demands for public works and the right to work for a decent wage.

IV Health, Housing and School Feeding

When it came to housing and health, the Huddersfield Borough Council was equally unwilling to yield the principles of self-help and individualism. Despite its favourable early record of municipal housing,[278] the Borough Council's policy of stimulating private builders to contruct working-class housing persistently failed to supply adequate provision in the town. Extensive pressure at the beginning of the century eventually achieved a Council resolution in 1907 to the effect that the municipal authority should erect "suitable dwellings for the working classes ... as soon as possible" in view of the large number of people in the town "who are compelled for want of other and suitable accommodation to live in unhealthy cellars and other dwellings".[279] However, the Council failed to act on this until 1912 when a small number of tenements were built jointly with the Ramsden Estate in Kirkgate, the plans having been submitted in 1909. Apart from this, nothing constructive was achieved by the Council before 1914 despite persistent Labour pressure from The Worker and the likes of Ben Riley, as quoted at the opening of this chapter. In May 1913, six years after the original Council resolution the Huddersfield Trades Council urgently called for the Council to immediately erect 1000 five-roomed houses at 5s. rent per week (including rates) as a stop-gap measure for a severe housing shortage. The fifty houses proposed by the Borough Council were, it was claimed, too few, too small and too expensive for working men.[280] The general picture, therefore, of the Liberal Council's record on housing was remarkably similar to its response to unemployment: it was hesitant, reluctant and piecemeal, characterised

in this instance by a persistent tendency to blame the slum dweller for creating his own slum[281] while temperance reformers blamed drink for the poverty therein.

On public health there was ostensibly more achievement to point to. Benjamin Broadbent's famous and unprecedented municipal scheme for birth registration and health visiting, which was inaugurated in Huddersfield in 1904 and aimed at reducing infantile mortality, was supported by the Council from the outset and established the guidelines for a national health visiting scheme. A recent study of the scheme has concluded, however, that it

> subscribed to the middle-class ideology of conventional philanthropy which believed in teaching the value of self-help, hard work and thrift to the poor and a firm commitment to individual responsibility.[282]

The scheme grew out of a fear of depopulation and was accepted precisely because its inspiration lay firmly within traditional Liberal individualist traditions of non-intervention. It was, moreover, a conscious "concession to growing demands for social reform being made by the rising Labour movement".[283] Yet in its emphasis on maternal ignorance as the primary cause of infant mortality, rather than an environmental factors like lack of nourishment and poor housing (which Labour were so quick to pick on) the scheme was consistent with Liberal views on self-improvement, "not collectivist but individualist".[284] In this sense it is difficult to see the scheme

as any form of New Liberalism, quite apart from the fact that its inaugurators were Conservative in politics.

Huddersfield Borough Council's attitude to school feeding was in a similar vein, although it may be argued that in this particular field Liberalism yielded significantly more than was usually the case. The question of feeding impoverished youngsters had previously been left to the Guardians and, latterly, the Cinderella Society. But demand had mushroomed and shown how inadequate was the existing provision and indeed how enormous was the problem remaining. As a result a school feeding conference was held in October 1905 initiated by the Council and representative of the Board of Guardians, the Education Committee, the C.O.S., the Cinderella Society, head teachers, magistrates, clergy and doctors,[285] at which it was agreed that a private subscription fund be established to provide free meals (breakfasts) to "necessitous school children of deserving parents".[286] Once again, therefore, the Liberal Borough Council had acceded to pressure to act by creating a committee, significantly on the eve of the municipal elections, but had subsequently refused to break with the principle of individual responsibility and voluntary private aid.

The scheme was successful in feeding a very small number of children: at the outset it was estimated that there were 240 underfed children "due to their parents being temporarily unemployed" [287] (almost certainly an underestimate) and by the end of the first year 27,272 meals had been supplied covering one and a half per cent of school

children. But this can be estimated to be only around 200[288] which was actually lower than the originally projected number and far short of the 2011 children with which the Cinderella Society dealt in the same year (see table 4.8). In the scheme's second year even fewer meals were provided (16,169) due to the lack of funds and it was evident that voluntary aid alone was not enough.

It was for these reasons, rather than Labour pressure, which was somewhat muted in this matter compared to Bradford,[289] that the Borough Council in Huddersfield readily established a Canteen committee, financed from the rates at one farthing per pound, under the 1906 Education (Provision of Meals) Act. The measure itself, passed by full Council on 24 April 1907 with unusual ease,[290] was the only major Liberal concession to demands for direct intervention in social policy before 1914 and eroded theoretical views amongst Liberals on parental responsibility and self-help. A clue perhaps to the apparent lack of struggle surrounding school-feeding in Huddersfield, compared with the strife witnessed in Bradford,[291] can be found in the actual resolution passed which was phrased in terms of educational efficiency and viewed as a natural extension of the voluntary scheme:

> ... some of the children attending certain Elementary Schools in the Borough are unable by reason of lack of food, to take full advantage of the education provided for them, and ... it has been ascertained that funds, other than public funds, are not available or are insufficient in amount to defray the cost of food furnished in meals.[292]

Even when the principle had been established, however, the scheme did not feed significantly more needy children than before: in 1907-8 12,865 meals were supplied and by 1910 this total had risen to 25,115 including 2842 meals supplied in the holidays. But this latter figure covered a total of only ninety-seven children from thirty-six families[293] and although this small number were evidently well-fed they were only a small percentage of those children who were found to be 'needy' by the Cinderella Society. In short the advent of municipal school feeding in Huddersfield was a very limited concession by the Liberal Party, reluctantly introduced, and was very much the exception rather than the rule in the Party's typical response to the social problems with which it was faced around the turn of the century.

V Some Conclusions

In examining Labour's social challenge to Liberalism between 1890 and 1910 it has been evident that the Liberal-Nonconformist Alliance remained comparatively strong, although based on shifting ground. The P.S.A. movement, representing Nonconformity's response to declining working-class religious attendance and interest, was able to limit in the short-term the potential growth of the Labour Church movement and contribute to delaying the emergence of ethical Socialism until circa 1906. When ethical Socialism did become apparent it was as an influential force in the revival of Labour's electoral performance. In the Liberal Council's response to social change and to Labour's, at times ill-expressed, demands, nothing approaching

a progressive or reformist programme can be discerned. If New Liberalism involved a desire for advance and welfare reform at both a national and a local level, than New Liberalism did not exist in Huddersfield, where Liberalism's social beliefs remained conditioned by temperance and individual self-help attitudes until 1914. Where a municipal response was evident, it was usually piecemeal, parsimonious, hesitant and reluctant, and, with the notable exception of school feeding, never amounted to a significant concession to the Labour Party and Trades Council's demands for greater intervention and collectivisation. Attitudes towards poverty, drink and unemployment were changing from the 1890s in the face of documented evidence of the sheer scale of the problem, but even 'advanced' Liberals like A.J. Sherwell and new organisations like the Guild of Help which embodied this change, continued to adhere to the centrality of individual responsibility and rigorous enforcement of existing legislation. As The Worker commented of the Guild of Help, in a critique that may serve as a wider summary of Labour's challenge:

> The Guild of Help seems to apply soothing plasters to the grievous wounds inflicted in the course of the competitive fight; the Socialists want to stop the fight. The Guild of Help wants to comfort the old; the Socialists to first save the young from the chances of such a fate in the future ... The Guild of Help means well. It proposes to wade into the social swamp and bale out the dirty water with a leaky bucket; but it does not propose to stop the dirty stream of competitive effluent, which daily broadens and deepens the filthy puzzle ... The Guild of Help is good, but it is not good enough.[294]

NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

1 Labour councillor Ben Riley in a letter to the Huddersfield Examiner (HE), 22 October 1910.

2 See introduction and in particular work by K. Laybourn on Bradford, A. Roberts on Leeds and P. Thompson on London, previously cited.

3 Liberals and Social Democrats (Cambridge 1978).

4 Pelling, H., "Labour and the Downfall of Liberalism" in Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain, (London 1967), p.105.

5 See Chapter One, and especially Gilbert, A.D., Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914 (London, 1976).

6 See Ainsworth, A.J., "Religion in the working class community and the evolution of Socialism in late nineteenth century Lancashire", Social History (Canada) vol. 10, part 20 (1977), pp.354-80; Kent, J., "Feelings and Festivals: An Interpretation of Some Working-Class Religious Attitudes" in Dyos, H.J. and Wolff, M., The Victorian City Vol. 2, (London 1973).

7 K. Inglis' phrase in Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (London 1863).

8 See Harrison, B., "Religion and Recreation in Nineteenth Century England", Past and Present, 1967, part 3, pp.98-125; Pelling, H., "Popular Attitudes to Religion" in Popular Politics ..., op. cit.; Wigley, J., The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday, (Manchester 1980); and Kent, J., op. cit.

9 Pelling, H., The Origins of the Labour Party 1880-1900 (Oxford 1965) chap. VII.

10 In particular, Yeo, S., "A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain, 1883-1896", History Workshop Journal no. 4 (Autumn 1977); and Pierson, S., British Socialists: The Journey from Fantasy to Politics (Harvard 1979).

11 Inglis, K., op. cit., p.74.

12 HE, 15 June 1895.

13 Ibid.

14 Sir Robert W. Perks was Liberal M.P. for Louth 1892-1910, a prominent Wesleyan and leading member of the National Council of Federated Free Churches. He was dubbed 'Imperial Perks' by Beatrice Webb for his support of Rosebery's Liberal Imperialism and led the agitation against the 1902 Education Bill.

15 HE, 11 November 1899.

16 HE, 16 November 1912.

17 See Bruce, R., Huddersfield Sunday School Centenary Memorial (Huddersfield 1880) also, Huddersfield Chronicle (HC), 30 March 1901 and HE, 4 April 1908.

18 Inglis, K., op. cit., pp.79-85; Jones, R.T., Congregationalism in England 1662-1962, (London 1962), pp.317-319; Tuffley, J.W., Grain From Galilee: The Romance of the Brotherhood Movement (London 1935), pp.1-4; Lees, S., "The P.S.A. Movement: Its Founder, Origin and Spread", The Christian World, 7 April 1892; Crooks, W., "What the P.S.A. Stands For", The Leader, June 1907. The Leader, originally the P.S.A. Leader, was the official organ of the movement.

19 See Byles, A.H., The P.S.A.: What It Is and How to Start It, (London 1891), for more comprehensive details of the order of service, especially pp.25-29.

20 Tuffley, J.W., op. cit., pp.31-2.

21 HE, 22 October 1898.

22 Wrigley, F., The History of the Yorkshire Congregational Union: A Story of Fifty Years, 1873-1923, (London n.d., 1924?), p.102. See also Dixon, J.W., Pledged to the People: A Sketch of the Rev. Richard Westrope, (London 1896).

23 HE, 15 June 1895.

24 HE, 2 January 1892.

25 HE, 30 December 1899.

26 HE, 7 January 1899.

27 Inglis, K., op. cit., p.79.

28 Charles Hirst was a member of the H.L.A. and a member of the School Board. He was also vice-president of the H.J.L.A., chairman of the Central Ward Liberal Committee and superintendent of Milton Church Sunday School.

29 John Moody (1833-1911) was President of Huddersfield Band of Hope Union 1892-5, a member of the Board of Guardians 1900-1907 and Liberal candidate for Dalton in March 1891. He was also a prominent member of the Sunday School Union and by occupation cashier.

30 HE, 19 March 1910.

31 Byles, A.H., op. cit., p.8.

32 Ibid., p.40.

33 HE, 15 June 1895.

34 HE, 22 October 1898.

35 Byles, A.H., op. cit., p.10.

36 Ibid., pp.29-30. Note his list of suggested activities which included: a benevolent fund, a temperance branch, a bible class, an ambulance class, a poor man's lawyer, a sick house, a savings' bank, lectures, concerts, debates, outdoor sports, a gymnasium, an angling club and a reading room.

37 HE, 11 May 1893.

38 HC, 30 March 1901.

39 HE, 27 May 1899 - 250 went on the trip.

40 HE, 17 June 1911 - 200 went on the trip.

41 HE, 2 September 1911. The 200 who went on the trip ended up being stranded by the rail strike.

42 HE, 23 February 1907.

43 Ibid.

44 HE, 26 October 1895.

45 These latter three were members of the Labour Party: Williams was Labour candidate for Huddersfield twice in 1906; Snell was the town's Labour candidate in 1910; and Isabella Ford of Leeds was a frequent propagandist in the area. Labour's connection with the P.S.A. movement was not unusual: Arthur Henderson and Philip Snowden were later vice-presidents of the National Brotherhood Movement (see Tuffley, J.W., op. cit., p.154). See also Labour Leader, 19 May 1894, and Mayhew, G.J., "The Ethical and Religious Foundations of Socialist Politics in Britain, 1884-1931", unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of York, 1980, pp.130-2.

46 HE, 3 February 1912.

47 Roberts, R., The Classic Slum, (London 1971; Pelican edition 1973), p.175.

48 Brook, R., The Story of Huddersfield, (London 1968), pp.278-9. The Hippodrome, converted from the Volunteers' old Armoury when they moved into the Drill Hall, was opened in July 1905 by music hall star Vesta Tilley. See also HC, 1 February 1902, and HE, 22 July 1905.

49 HE, 15 June 1895.

50 For wider discussion on this see Wrigley, J., op. cit., and Harrison, B., op. cit.

51 Inglis, K., op. cit., p.75.

52 Ibid.

53 Brook, R., op. cit., pp.180-3 and 222-4; also idem., The Tramways of Huddersfield (Huddersfield 1959). The post-boxes were the idea of Charles Glendinning (1840-1898) Liberal alderman for Fartown, and when first installed in 1893 they were the first in the country (HE, 10 September 1898).

54 Hoggart, R., The Uses of Literacy, (London 1957, Pelican edition 1966), p.145.

55 Briggs, A., Victorian Cities, (London 1963, Pelican edition 1977), p.16.

56 HE, 1 June 1895.

57 Printed Proceedings of Huddersfield County Borough Council (hereafter, Borough Council Minutes), Tramways Committee, 8 June 1896. Those present were: Aldermen Haigh (Lib.), J.L. Walker (Lib. Mayor) and J.J. Brook (Lib.) plus Councillors Aston (Con.), Bland (Lib.), Brearley (Lib.), Briggs (Con.), Broadbent (Indep./Con.), Clark (Con.), Crosland (Lib.), Firth (Lib.), Gee (Lab.), Jordan (Con.), Moorhouse (Lib.), Moxon (Con.), Oxley (Lib.), Whitehead (Lib.) and Woolven (Con.). The vote indicated three Liberal abstentions.

58 HE, 13 June 1896. The deputation included: R. Hattersley (President of the Trades Council), Allen Gee, J.A. Fletcher, Councillor J. Clark (Conservative landlord and vice-chairman of the Tramways Committee), Councillor Woolven (Conservative landlord and the main advocate of Sunday trams), Councillor E.A. Beaumont ('Radical' Conservative), Councillor T. Bland (Advanced Liberal, temperance advocate and President of Huddersfield Industrial Society), and J.D. Prior (Huddersfield area Factory Inspector).

59 Borough Council Minutes: Full Council, 29 June 1896.

60 HE, 27 June 1896 for the conflicting arguments. See also Sugden, J., Slaithwaite Notes, (Manchester 1905), pp.106-9, for the social and religious benefits of trams.

61 Borough Council Minutes, op. cit. They were in total: Gee, Aldermen Glendinning (Liberal) and Haigh (Liberal) plus Councillor Bland (Liberal). The Conservatives were: Dyson, Woolven, Marshall, Moon, Moxon, Clark, Marsland, Mellor, Jordan, Briggs and Hesketh plus John Sugden (Liberal Unionist).

62 Borough Council Minutes: Full Council, 20 February 1901. Also HC, 23 February 1901.

63 HC, 23 March 1901.

64 HC, 20 April 1901; and Borough Council Minutes: Full Council, 17 April 1901.

65 Borough Council Minutes: Full Council, 15 May 1901.

66 HC, 8 June 1901.

67 Masterman, C.F.G., In Peril of Change, (London 1905) p.323, cited in Wrigley, J., op. cit., p.159.

68 HE, 8 June 1901.

69 HE, 27 October 1906. Wells' Ann Veronica (1909), Shaw's Getting Married (1908) and Arnold Bennett's Whom God Hath Joined (1906) all exemplified the Examiner's worst fears as to the paramountcy of marriage.

70 HE, 2 June 1894.

71 27 April 1906, quoted in Clark, D., Colne Valley: Radicalism to Socialism, (London 1981), p.147. For the opposing view see The Worker (hereafter HW), 21 September 1906 and 22 June 1907.

72 See for example HE, 14 October 1911.

73 Pelling, H., A Short History of the Labour Party (Second edition London 1965), p.15.

74 Pierson, S., Marxism and the Origins of British Socialism (London 1975) and British Socialists ..., op. cit.

75 Brown, K.D., "Nonconformity and the British Labour Movement", Journal of Social History, 18, (1975), p.114; also Mayhew, G.J., op. cit., for a detailed religious analysis of 417 Labour M.P.s elected before 1931.

76 See Yeo, S., op. cit., for a discussion of this phrase.

77 Quoted in Balmforth, R., Some Social and Political Pioneers of the Nineteenth Century, (London 1900).

78 Whiteley (1882-197?) joined the I.L.P. in 1905 and was from 1906 secretary of Lockwood Socialist Institute. In 1907 he helped Victor Grayson win Colne Valley and was a leading conscientous objector in Huddersfield during the First World War. He stood as I.L.P. candidate in Colne Valley in 1918, and in 1929-31 represented Ladywood. See Pearce, C., "An Interview With Wilfrid Whiteley", Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, 1969, pp.14-21.

79 Rev. F.R. Swan left his Congregational chapel in Marsden to become editor of the Huddersfield Worker from November 1907 to September 1908. He was also organising secretary of the League of Progressive Thought (See Chapter 6 below).

80 Swan, F.R., Do Socialists Desecrate the Sabbath?, (Huddersfield - The Worker Press, n.d. 1907-8?) p.13.

81 See chapters two and three.

82 Pelling, H., The Origins of the Labour Party 1880-1900, (Oxford 1965), p.133. See also: Pierson, S., "John Trevor and the Labour Church Movement in England 1891-1900", Church History, 29, (Dec. 1960), part 4, pp.463-78; Inglis, K.S., "The Labour Church Movement", International Review of Social History, 3., (1958), pp.445-60; Pelling, H. and Inglis, K.S., "Discussion on the Labour Church Movement", International Review of Social History, 4., (1959), part one, pp.111-113; Sellers, I., "Unitarians and the Labour Church Movement", Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society, XII, no. 1, (1959), pp.1-6; Kynaston, D., King Labour: The British Working Class 1850-1914, (London 1976), pp.95-6.

83 Labour Prophet, September 1894.

84 See especially Pelling and Inglis, op. cit., passim.

85 Labourn, K., "Trade Unions and the I.L.P.: The Manningham Experience" in Jowitt, J.A., and Taylor, R.K.S., (eds), Bradford 1890-1914: The Cradle of the Independent Labour Party, (Bradford Occasional Papers 1980), p.37.

86 Yeo, S., op. cit., p.28.

87 James, D., "The Keighley I.L.P. 1892-1900", in Jowitt and Taylor (eds.), op. cit., p.68.

88 Inglis, K., Churches and the Working Classes, op. cit., chapter six.

89 Yorkshire Factory Times (YFT), 3 March 1893; Labour Prophet, May 1893.

90 YFT, 11 January, 1 and 15 February 1895.

91 Labour Leader, 23 November 1895, also idem., 14 September, 12 October 1895.

92 Labour Prophet, January 1894.

93 By early 1895 at least.

94 Brocklehurst was General Secretary of the Labour Church Union, he came from Manchester and was a Cambridge graduate, having joined the I.L.P. and the Labour Church after he had decided against taking holy orders. (Labour Prophet, January 1893).

95 Labour Prophet, December 1893.

96 HE, 5 August 1893 and 20 October 1894. Parker's lecture was entitled "An Ideal Municipality".

97 Yeo, S., op. cit., p.28.

98 Ben Riley in his 1908 account of the rise of Labour in Huddersfield made no mention of Labour Churches although he did refer to the Socialist Sunday Schools.

99 'Norman' in Clarion, 23 February 1895.

100 Laybourn, K., op. cit., and idem. with Reynolds, J., "The Emergence of the Independent Labour Party in Bradford", International Review of Social History, XX, (1975), pp.313-46.

101 Between seven and eight hundred - see chapter three.

102 Clark, D., op. cit., pp.50-52.

103 Yeo, S., op. cit.

104 See Pelling, H., op. cit., chapters VII and VIII; also Prynn, D., "The Clarion Club, Rambling and the Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890s", Journal of Contemporary History, 11, (1976), pp.65-77; and Fincher, J.A., "The Clarion Movement", unpublished M.A. thesis, Manchester University, 1971.

105 The Scout: A Journal for Socialist Workers, vol. one, no. one, 30 March 1895.

106 Ibid. B Whitehead was also a prominent Huddersfield Clarion Scouter.

107 HE, 16 February 1907; The Worker (HW), 12 and 26 January 1907, 9 February 1907.

108 HE, 14 April 1906. Fred Shaw was prominent in reviving the club, see his biography in Saville, J. and Bellamy. J., Dictionary of Labour Biography Volume 2, (London 1974). Also references in HW, 27 April 1906.

109 Huddersfield Directory 1909, (Huddersfield 1909), p.537. In July 1910 negotiations to amalgamate the Clarion Club and the Huddersfield Socialist Party broke down (HW, 9 July 1910).

110 Prynn, D., op. cit., p.65.

111 Yeo, S., op. cit., p.38.

112 Laybourn, K., op. cit., p.39.

113 See Reid, F., "Socialist Sunday Schools in Britain 1892-1939", International Review of Social History, XL, (1966), pp.18-47, for the seminal work on the movement.

114 Riley, B., "A Brief Account of the Rise and Growth of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Huddersfield and the Colne Valley" in Riley, B. and Whiteley, E., (eds.), 16th I.L.P. Conference Handbook, (Huddersfield 1908), p.27.

115 Lizzie Glasier's phrase in Labour Leader, 25 March 1895.

116 Young Socialist, March 1901.

117 Labour Leader, 15 September 1900. Brook and Priestley represented Huddersfield.

118 Laybourn, K., op. cit., p.38.

119 Labour Leader, op. cit.

120 Ibid.

121 Minute Book of Lockwood Socialist Institute, 15 July 1906. (In Huddersfield Polytechnic Library). The political role of the S.S.S. movement and particularly its relationship with the Labour Party is discussed in chapter Six below.

122 Boothroyd was general secretary, Clayton President, Whiteley corresponding secretary. Tunnacliffe was President from January 1907, (see ibid., 14 January 1907). The Institute was formed in March 1906. See Pearce, C., op. cit., for further comments on Whiteley's role in Lockwood S.S.S.

123 Riley, B., op. cit., p.28; HE, 29 June 1907; HW, 15 December 1906 and 7 March 1908.

124 Pickles was President of the Trades Council 1897-1908 representing the Society of House and Ship Painters. He was a School Board member (1901-3) and a Labour Councillor for Lindley from 1904-10. He fought Holmfirth for Labour in the 1910 elections but was defeated. R.A. Hopkinson was a member of the revived Huddersfield Fabian Society and independent progressive candidate for West Central Ward in 1912.

125 Reid, F., op. cit., p.27. See chapter Six below, also HW, 22 June 1906.

126 HE, 18 January 1908.

127 Laybourn, K., op. cit., pp.38 and 44.

128 Clark, D., op. cit., p.164. There were eventually six or seven.

129 HE, 29 June 1907.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid., drawn from the Socialist Ten Commandments, frequently quoted (see Reid, F., op. cit., and Clark, D., op. cit.) See also: Socialist Sunday Schools: Aims, Objects and Organisation (n.d., published by National Council of British S.S.S.s); and The Socialist Sunday School Tune Book, (London 1926).

132 Swan, F.R., op. cit., p.7.

133 HE, 14 March 1908.

134 HE, 20 June 1908. An amendment proposed by William Wheatley, who denied the S.S.S. was political, was defeated. Such Council action paralleled similar opposition in 1907 by the London Education Authority which forbade S.S.S.s use of Council premises.

135 HE, 8 June 1907 from an interview with the London Standard.

136 See especially: Owen, D., English Philanthropy, 1660-1960, (Cambridge, Mass. 1964); Woodroofe, K., From Charity to Social Work, (London 1962); Harrison, B., "Philanthropy and the Victorians", Victorian Studies, IX, (June 1966); Institute of Economic Affairs, The Long Debate on Poverty, (Old Woking, Surrey, 1972).

137 See especially: Gilbert, B.B., The Evolution of National Insurance in Great Britain: The Origins of the Welfare State, (London 1966); Bruce, M., The Coming of the Welfare State, (4th edition; London 1968); Marshall, T.H., Social Policy, (London 1965); Fraser, D., The Evolution of the British Welfare State (London 1973); Thane, P., (ed.), The Origins of British Social Policy, (London 1978); Moore, M.J., "Social Work and Social Welfare: An Organisation of Philanthropic Resources in Britain, 1900-1914", Journal of British Studies, XVI, no. 2, (Spring 1977), pp.85-104; Harris, J., Unemployment and Politics: A Study in English Social Policy 1886-1914., (Oxford, 1972).

138 For gambling see McKibbin, R., "Working-Class Gambling in Britain 1880-1939", Past and Present, no. 82, (February 1979).

139 Whitworth was a Liberal alderman and vice-president of the C.O.S. A journalist on the Leeds Mercury, he was later a member of the Board of Guardians, 1917-22.

140 Moxon, treasurer of the C.O.S., was a Conservative Councillor from 1886.

141 Mallinson, vice-president of the C.O.S., was a Liberal and vice-president of the Temperance Society.

142 Hellawell was a Liberal alderman, vice-president of the Temperance Society, and president of the Commercial Temperance League.

143 Miss Siddon was one of the first women in the country to become a Guardian (in 1882) and the second to become chairman of a Board of Guardians. She was the first president of Huddersfield Branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and president of the West Riding Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies. The epitomy of leisured, middle-class female philanthropy she helped set up a children's home, was a member of the Infirmary Board and the Distress Committee, and gave evidence to the Royal Commission on the Poor Law. She was a leading member of the C.O.S. and the Guild of Help, undoubtedly Conservative in politics and was made a J.P. in 1913, the second in the country.

144 Mrs. Marshall was the wife of Dr. W.L.W. Marshall, President of the H.L.U.A.

145 1875 Annual Report cited in Moore, M.J., op. cit., p.87.

146 See also his letter in HE, 6 January 1894 and below section III.

147 See C.O.S. annual reports, 1904-8, in Huddersfield Central Library for example of both classes. More generally see: Wakefield, E.W., "The Growth of Charity Organisation in the North of England", Charity Organisation Review, vol. XXIV (1908), pp.40-55.

148 Meacham, S., A Life Apart: The English Working Class, 1890-1914, (London, 1977), p.207.

149 This is a complex topic of its own, see Mason, J.W., "Thomas Mackay: The Anti-Socialist Philosophy of the Charity Organisation Society" in Brown, K.D., (ed.), Essays in Anti-Labour History, (London 1974); also Mason, J.W., "Political Economy and the Response to Socialism in Britain 1870-1914", Historial Journal 23, 3, (1980), pp.565-87.

150 Woodroofe, K., op. cit., p.39. See also: Summers, Ann, "A Home from Home - Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century" in Burman, S., (ed.), Fit Work for Women, (London, 1979).

151 Ibid., p.41.

152 Cahill, M. and Jowitt, A., "The New Philanthropy: The Emergence of the Bradford City Guild of Help", Journal of Social Policy, 9, 3, p.359.

153 Moore, M.J., op. cit., pp.91-93. See also Yeo, S., Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis, (London 1976) and Masterman, N., "The Guild of Help Movement", Charity Organisation Review, vol. XX, September 1906, pp.139-50.

154 Members also included J. Holroyd (first president, Mayor and a Liberal dyer), O. Balmforth, Rev. W.G. Jenkins (of Highfield 1904-11) J. Blamires (first chairman, Mayor, independent Conservative and member of the Education Committee), C.H. Crowther (treasurer, president of the Central Liberal Club) and Rev. Merlin (of Highfield from 1913). See HE, 27 November 1909 and HE, 22 November 1913.

155 Cahill and Jowitt, op. cit., p.376; Moore, M.J., op. cit., pp.97-98.

156 First A.G.M., HE, 27 November 1909.

157 HE, 22 November 1913.

158 Cahill and Jowitt, op. cit., p.372.

159 Trades Council Minutes: Full Council, 22 November 1905.

160 HE, 27 November 1909.

161 Anon., 1832-1932: One Hundred Years of Temperance Work: Souvenir of the Century Celebrations of the Huddersfield Temperance Society, (Huddersfield 1932), also Winskill, P.T., The Temperance Movement and Its Workers: Volume One, (London 1892), pp.119-134. Seminal, of course, is Brian Harrison's Drink and the Victorians, (London 1971).

162 On this second point see Reid, C., "Temperance, Teetotalism and Local Culture: The Early Temperance Movement in Sheffield", Northern History, vol. 13, (1977), pp.248-64.

163 See chapter one.

164 They were: Association for Stopping the Sale of Liquor on Sundays; Temperance Society (1832); Band of Hope Union (1870); Church of England Temperance Society; Women's Temperance Society (1885); Temperance League (1896); and Commercial Temperance League (1898). There were also, of course, the Rechabites.

165 These were: Anti-Sunday Closing Association; Licensed Victuallers' Protection and Benevolent Assocation; and Licensed Trades Electoral Association (1892).

166 See chapter two for information on Thornton's.

167 HE, 3 November 1906.

168 Fahey, D.M., "The Politics of Drink: Pressure Groups and the British Liberal Party 1883-1908", Social Science, 54, 2, (1979), p.83.

169 Sykes took part in the 1883 Weavers' Strike on the side of the workers and started up a radical paper locally entitled the Northern Pioneer which quickly failed. He went bankrupt in 1899 and turned his attention to writing histories of Huddersfield and the Colne Valley. Originally a Liberal he later joined the Colne Valley Labour League.

170 Sykes, D.F.E., Drink (Huddersfield 1897), pp.4-12. He covers, in this extract, crime, prostitution, bankruptcy, corruption, secularism, poverty, poor trade and ill-health.

171 Shiman, L.L., "The Band of Hope Movement: Respectable Recreation for Working-Class Children", Victorian Studies, 17, (1973-4), pp.49-74.

172 Roberts, R., op. cit., p.152.

173 Meacham, S., op. cit., p.164.

174 Shiman, (op. cit.), points out that drinking parents often sent their children, and that few children continued to adhere to temperance later in life. This latter point was stressed by The Worker of 6 June 1914: "it loses hold upon them immediately they reach adolescence and enter the practical every-day life of the average worker". One lady I spoke to in Bradford remembers the Band of Hope as her parents' rare opportunity to rid the house of children and go to bed together undisturbed.

175 James Henry Firth was himself the classic convert: having lost all his goods and money he saw 'the light' at a P.S.A. meeting in Milton Chapel in August 1893. He became Huddersfield's keenest temperance worker, and the Temperance League was begun in 1896 by his efforts. See Sykes, D.F.E., Life of James Henry Firth, Temperance Worker, (Huddersfield 1897).

176 HE, 19 March 1910.

177 HE, 3 April 1897.

178 HE, 9 November 1901; 15 February 1902; 10 January 1903; 30 January 1904.

179 See for example: HE, 10 October 1891 and 7 November 1891.

180 HE, 30 April 1892.

181 See chapter three for references to Carlile and public houses. More generally see: Fahey, D.M., "Brewers, Publicans, and Working Class Drinkers: Pressure Group Politics in Late Victorian and Edwardian England", Social History (Canada), XIII (no. 25), May 1980, pp.85-103; Dingle, A.E., The Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England, (London, 1980).

182 HE, 23 October 1897.

183 See especially: Booth, Charles, Life and Labour of the People in London, (Seventeen volumes 1889-1903, London); Rowntree, B.S., Poverty: A Study of Town Life, (London 1901); Booth, William, In Darkest England and the Way Out, (London 1890); Bell Lady Florence, At the Works, (London 1907).

184 Sherwell, A. and Rowntree, J., The Temperance Problem and Social Reform, (London 1899), p.458.

185 He observed that the typical working class family spent one fifth of its annual income on alcohol (Ibid., p.15).

186 Ibid., p.406. He was thinking in particular of temperance cafes offering music, papers, benefit clubs as well as "cleanliness, brightness and warmth". See also Meacham, S., op. cit., pp.125-7 on this, and HE, 21 January 1905.

187 Sherwell, A. and Rowntree, J., The Taxation of the Liquor Trade, (London 1906), pp.508-510; also idem., The Taxation of the Publican in the U.S.: A Comparison and A Contrast, (London 1909).

188 In addition to those works cited above he wrote (with Rowntree, J.) Public Control of the Liquor Traffic (London 1903), and on his own, Counter Attractions to the Public House, (London 1911) and Are the New Licence Duties 'Confiscatory' & 'Ruinous'?, (London 1909). What remains of his personal papers is based in the British Library of Social and Political Science, but is mainly notes and manuscripts of his publications. He was adviser

to Lloyd George during the 1909 'People's Budget'. See also his parliamentary speeches, especially his maiden speech on the Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill on 26 April 1907 (Parliamentary Debates, 4th Series, vol. 173). Also note his speeches on 10 May 1909 and 1 April 1910, (Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series, Vols 4 and 15).

189 London, 1897.

190 Ibid., p.151.

191 Ibid., p.53.

192 Smart, H.R., Socialism and Drink, (Manchester n.d. 1893?), p.2.

193 HE, 16 December 1893.

194 Smart, H.R., op. cit. Also see, Dingle, A.E., "Drink and Working-Class Living Standards in Britain, 1870-1914", Economic History Review, XXV, (1972), pp.608-22.

195 Ibid.

196 See Williams, T. Russell, Temperance Reform (London, 1908). In 1905 Russell Williams said at his adoption meeting: "The assumption that the people's poverty arises from their own drunken propensities is the most insulting and unworthy indictment that ever fell from the lips of public men" (HE, 25 March 1905).

197 See Pearce, C., op. cit., and Minutes of Lockwood Socialist Institute, 22 July 1906 and 28 May 1907.

198 Brown, J.B., "The Pig or the Stye: Drink and Poverty in Late Victorian England", International Review of Social History, XVIII, (1973), p.394. For detail on the Huddersfield Trades Council's attitude to the 1908 Licensing Bill see: Trades Council Minutes, 26 August 1908; The Worker, 30 May 1908; and HE, 27 June and 29 August 1908.

199 HE, 17 November 1894.

200 HE, 8 March 1902.

201 HE, 16 December 1893.

202 Introduced in December 1890. See Laybourn, K., "The Attitude of Yorkshire Trade Unions to the Economic and Social Problems of the Great Depression, 1873-1896". Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Lancaster, September 1972.

203 Sigsworth, E.M. and Blackman, J.M., "The Woollen and Worsted Industries" in Aldcroft, D.H. (ed.), The Development of British Industry and Foreign Competition, 1875-1914, (London 1968).

204 Firth, G., "The Bradford Trade in the Nineteenth Century" in Wright, D.G. and Jowitt, J.A., (eds.), Victorian Bradford (Bradford 1981). See also Report of the Tariff Commission, Volume 2, Part 2, (London 1905).

205 HE, 19 December 1891.

206 HE, 10 January 1891. Evoking, of course, William Booth's book of 1890.

207 HE, 24 January 1891.

208 Harris, J., Unemployment and Politics, op. cit., p.51.

209 The Poor Folk's Gathering set up the largest soup kitchen and the C.O.S. gave out tickets to the needy, often after careful and time-wasting investigations. In one day alone before 2 p.m. 550 loaves had been given out (HE, 24 January 1891).

210 In Lindley, Moldgreen and Central.

211 HE, 31 January 1891.

212 Laybourn, K., "'The Defence of the Bottom Dog': The I.L.P. in Local Politics" in Wright and Jowitt (eds.), op. cit., p.230. For some additional parallels see Hennock, E.P., Fit and Proper Persons, (London 1973); Mathers, H., "Sheffield Municipal Politics 1893-1926: Parties, Personalities and the Rise of Labour", unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1979. Also Fraser, D., (eds.) Municipal Reform and the Industrial City (New York 1982), especially Brian Barber's "Municipal Government in Leeds 1835-1914". Another perspective is: Jones, L.J., "Public Pursuit of Private Profit? Liberal Businessmen and Municipal Politics in Birmingham, 1865-1900", Business History XXV, no. 3 (November 1983), pp.240-59.

213 HE, 19 December 1891. The reference to strike action probably recalled the bitter five week cotton strike of February-March 1891 in which spinners demanded a five per cent increase and eventually received two-and-a-half per cent.

214 See chapter three.

215 Borough Council Minutes: General Purposes Committee, 10 October 1893. Strictly there was nothing new about the circular, being a repeat of the Chamberlain circular of 1886. See Fraser, D., The Evolution of the British Welfare State (London 1973), pp.130-1, 223-4, 253-5.

216 Ibid., General Purposes Committee, 10 November 1893.

217 Ibid., General Purposes Unemployed Sub-Committee, 9 January 1894.

218 Ibid., General Purposes, 2 February 1894: Returns of Huddersfield Labour Bureau; also HE, 3 February 1894.

219 YFT, 26 January 1894.

220 HE, 10 February 1894.

221 Ibid.

222 Ibid., Those councillors included E.A. Beaumont, J.H. Aston, E. Mellor, J. Clark and Allen Gee.

223 Borough Council Minutes: General Purposes Unemployed Sub-Committee, 9 February 1894.

224 Ibid., Health Committee, 31 January 1894; Health Committee, 14 February 1894.

225 Ibid., Unemployed Sub-Committee, 16 and 23 February 1894.

226 Ibid., Unemployed Sub-Committee, 9 March 1894; General Purposes 13 March, 1894.

227 HE, 10 February 1894 ('Common Sense').

228 HE, 17 February 1894 ('Common Sense').

229 Smart, H.R., The Right to Work, (Manchester, n.d. 1894/5?), p.2.

230 See Chamber of Commerce Annual Report in HE, 26 January 1895: also YFT, 9 November 1894; and table 4.7 below.

231 YFT, 18 January 1895.

232 HE, 12 January 1895, 9 February 1895.

233 HE, 26 January 1895.

234 Bellamy, J. and Saville, J. (eds.), Dictionary of Labour Biography, Volume IV, (London 1977), p.37.

235 See below on school feeding.

236 Fincher, J.A., op. cit., pp.151-3.

237 HE, 12 January 1895, 26 January 1895, 9 February 1895, 9 March 1895; YFT, 8 February 1895.

238 HE, 23 February 1895.

239 YFT, 8 February 1895.

240 Labour Leader, 9 February 1895.

241 Smart, H.R., The Right to Work (Manchester n.d., 1894/5?), pp.2-3, see also idem., Municipal Socialism, (Manchester n.d., 1895?) which reiterates the same point.

242 The Right to Work, pp.12-14.

243 Brown, K.D., Labour and Unemployment 1900-1914, (Newton Abbot 1971), pp.18-19.

244 YFT, 8 February 1895.

245 Laybourn, K., "'The Defence of the Bottom Dog'...", op. cit., pp.229-30.

246 HE, 9 February 1895; YFT, 15 February 1895.

247 HE, 16 February 1895. The fund itself raised £1000 by 22 February from subscriptions, street collections and mill collections (YFT, 22 February 1895).

248 See especially: HE, 2, 9, 16, 23 March and 6 April 1895; HE, 29 January, 26 March, 9 April, 14, 21 and 28 May, and 4 June 1898; HC, 7 February, 30 May, 22 August, and 5 September 1903. Also Laybourn, K., Ph.D. thesis, op. cit., and YFT, 21 March and 11 April 1902; 10 October 1902; 6 February 1903.

249 The vote was: 5217 against, 41 for, 48 abstentions and 15 spoilt. 126 firms were eligible, 112 actually voted and 14 refused to allow the ballot to take place on their premises. See HC, 5 September 1903; YFT, 11 November 1903.

250 YFT, 8 March 1895.

251 HE, 15 October 1892.

252 YFT, 31 May 1895; HE, 25 May 1895; Laybourn, K., op. cit., pp.32-40.

253 The Trades Council adopted bi-metallism in March 1893 (YFT, 31 March) and established a Bimetallic Committee in 1894.

254 HE, 26 December 1903, (Annual Review of Trade).

255 Report of the Tariff Commission, op. cit., paragraph 1469.

256 Huddersfield Poor Law Union, Lists of Paupers Relieved (Several volumes in Huddersfield Central Library). This level of increase did, however, seem to be happening everywhere and was not merely a result of unemployment per se.

257 Annual Reports of C.O.S. (Huddersfield Central Library).

258 Parton, C., "Liberal Individualism and Infant Mortality: The Infant Welfare Movement in Huddersfield, 1900-1918", unpublished M.A. thesis, Huddersfield Polytechnic, October 1981, p.7.

259 Empty houses increased from 973 in March 1891 to 2172 in March 1893. See HE, 7 November 1896.

260 From 95,420 to 95,047. See Census of England and Wales: County of York, Cd. 1107 (1902).

261 Parton, C., op. cit., p.44.

262 Borough Council Minutes: General Purposes Committee, 11 October 1904.

263 Ibid., Full Council, 19 October; General Purposes Special Unemployment Sub-Committee, 20 October 1904. The sub-committee comprised: Mayor, Deputy-Mayor, Aldermen Firth, Gee, Kendall and Woodhead; Councillors North, Nowell, Shaw, Taylor and Hewing; plus Eli Whitwam and E.A. Rigby from the Board of Guardians.

264 HE, 22 October 1904.

265 Borough Council Minutes: Special Sub-Committee, 21 January 1905.

266 HE, 8 July 1905.

267 See Brown, K.D., op. cit., chapter two. One correspondant, 'Veritas' in HE, 5 August 1905, blamed the Manchester riots not on unemployment but on delay in setting up the Boer War inquiry!

268 HE, op. cit.

269 HE and HC, 23 September 1905.

270 Borough Council Minutes: Full Council, 20 September 1905.

271 Ibid., Distress Committee 27 October 1905. Thomas Mallinson (Chairman of the Board of Guardians) was vice-chairman and other members were: Miss Siddon, Mrs. France, Mrs. Learoyd, F. Calverley, G. Hesketh, John Hewing, G. Kilner, B. North, T. Taylor, C. Fitton, T. Grundy and L. Hargreaves.

272 Note especially the one on 8 October 1908 - see HE, 10 October 1908.

273 Brown, K.D., op. cit., pp.85-112. Also idem., "The Labour Party and the Unemployment Question, 1906-1910", Historical Journal, XIV, 3, (1971), pp.599-616.

274 HE, 20 February 1909.

275 HE, 12 February 1910; and The Worker, 5 February 1910.

276 Brown, K.D., op. cit., p.127; the problem was pointed out at a meeting of the Huddersfield Trades Council on 21 July 1909, (The Worker, 31 July 1909).

277 See for example the attitudes expressed at meetings of the Central Liberal Club, especially Oscar Wihl's lecture on 12 February 1910 on "The Problem of Unemployment", (HE, 19 February 1910) and Samuel Gleave's on 25 March 1911 on "Unemployment", (HE, 1 April 1911).

278 Brook, R., op. cit., p.185. 160 financially self-supporting houses were built by the Corporation in Turnbridge in 1880-2 and were amongst the first such dwellings in the country.

279 HE, 19 October 1907; Borough Council Minutes, Full Council 16 October 1907. The town's medical health officer, Dr. S.G. Moore found in September 1907 308 cellar dwellings in the borough, all of which failed to comply with the 1875 Public Health Act. Nearly half of these (141) were in two wards (Lockwood: 75; North: 66) while a third ward (West) had 54 such dwellings. Dr. Moore pointed out that in 1900 79 of them had been closed by public order but that this was stopped as the displaced occupants had nowhere else to live (HE, 28 September 1907).

280 Minutes of Huddersfield Trades Council: Full Council 28 May 1913. See also, The Worker, 24 January and 25 April 1914, attacking the Council's continuing delay in its building project. For earlier criticism of the "masterly inactivity" of the Council's housing committee see: The Worker, 17 September 1910, 21 and 28 January and 22 July 1911, also 9 November 1912 and 31 August 1907.

281 Parton, C., op. cit., pp.10-11.

282 Ibid., p.18.

283 Ibid., p.92.

284 Ibid., p.98. Also Dyhouse, C., "Working Class Mothers and Infant Mortality in England, 1895-1914", Journal of Social History, vol. 12, pt. 2, (1978), pp.248-67.

285 HE, 28 October 1905.

286 Ibid. Note the C.O.S.-type stress on 'deserving'.

287 HE, 16 November 1905.

288 The 1905 Mayoral Statement (printed copy in Huddersfield Central Library) indicated that there were thirty-nine schools in the Borough (seventeen Council and twenty-two Denominational) with 15,379 registered and 12,757 attending on average.

289 Laybourn, K., "The Issue of School Feeding in Bradford, 1904-1907", Journal of Educational Administration and History, XIV, no. 2., July 1982, pp.30-38; Reese, W.J., "After Bread, Education: Nutrition and Urban School Children, 1890-1920", Teacher's College Record, vol. 81, pt. 4 (1980), pp.496-525; also Parton op. cit.

290 Borough Council Minutes: Full Council, 24 April 1907.

291 Laybourn, K., op. cit.

292 Borough Council Minutes, op. cit.

293 Mayoral Statements 1908-13, (op. cit.).

294 The Worker, 4 December 1909.