Chapter 4

Trends in pauperism between 1834-1914 in Nantwich Union, Cheshire, England and Wales

With the introduction of the new Poor Law in 1834 changes had been forced upon the nation which, it was believed, would bring about a reduction in the cost of relief, relieve the burden on ratepayers, and target the relief at those truly in need. The prevalence of outdoor relief would, it was believed, be greatly reduced if not wiped out altogether, and by so doing it was hoped that able bodied pauperism would disappear as the deterrent workhouse became effective. What this new system of relief, described by A. Digby as providing '... conditional welfare for a minority, with public assistance as the price of social stigma and loss of voting rights'[1] failed to take account of was that the new economic climate contained innate problems such as cyclical depression, and changing the system of relief and the means by which people could claim it, would not solve the problem of growing pauperism. The old criteria of encouraging self help and reinforcing less eligibility were simply no longer enough to tackle a growing problem that was innately part of the newly developed economic infrastructure of the country.

During the late 1830s and early 1840s the transfer from the old to the new system of relief was still taking place and everything, including standardising a national system of recording figures to show total pauper numbers and cost, was in a state of flux. In order to better understand the trends that were developing between 1834 and 1914 in Nantwich, Cheshire and England and Wales as a whole, several broad themes will be

examined:

a) the number of people receiving in-maintenance, the cost of such relief and developing trends in the number of able and non-able bodied relieved. Also developments in the changing economy of both the town, county and country as a whole, which affected the scale of in-maintenance together with the attitudes of the guardians to these changes.

b) the granting of out-relief and the changing attitudes towards this form of relief. The cost of pauperism in terms of both in and out relief, and the changing attitudes of the guardians and ratepayers to the Poor Law in general.

Several questions suggest themselves concerning the above themes: the Poor Law Commissioners expected monumental changes in the patterns of poor relief once the 1834 Amendment Act had been introduced, i.e. the reduction of costs and falling numbers. Were their expectations fulfilled? How did the Nantwich Guardians interpret the new law, and is there any evidence to suggest they were adapting the rules to suit local circumstances, thereby testing and questioning central authority? How did an event like the cotton famine affect patterns of relief in South Cheshire? and in relation to out-relief did this form of relief decline as intended by the central body, and what class of paupers resorted to its support? Throughout it is important to relate the trends discernible in Nantwich Union to the county and country as a whole in order to identify differences

and similarities, and to remember that the paupers being analysed here represent the tip of the iceberg, and that the majority would be relying on family, friends, charities, and voluntary effort in general in order to survive without resort to the guardians.

Indoor relief - The initial transfer

What were the early effects of the 1834 Amendment Act on indoor relief? During the transition from the old system of relief to the new, there was a growing sense of urgency about the problems of overcrowding and disease in workhouses.[2] Between March 1841 and 1842 the Cheshire Union of Stockport reported '... unexampled difficulty and distress'[3] resulting from a great depression in trade during the summer of 1841, and their burden was further increased because agricultural districts, Nantwich being one, were also suffering badly, which led to an increased movement of paupers.[4]

The figures for Cheshire show that between Lady Day 1840 and 1841 there had been an actual decrease of 7% in the total numbers of people relieved, but that the number of indoor paupers had increased by 5.6% as the new system began to take effect and the cost of relief had increased by 1.7%.[5] Comparing these figures with those available for England and Wales, pauperism nationally was on the increase - by 8.4% between 1840-1841, and the number of indoor paupers had increased by 10.4%. The cost of maintaining the poor in England and Wales had increased by 3.9% over the previous year, and 9.4% of the population were classed as paupers.

Adult able bodied pauperism had in fact declined in

Cheshire by 8.7% between 1840-1841 and in terms of the number of able-bodied people relieved in the workhouse a decline of 10½% was recorded.[6] Initial figures appeared to indicate that the Amendment Act was achieving its goal. The census of 1841 revealed that Nantwich Workhouse contained 132 people, 53% of whom were females, and 47% males. Of this figure 59% were children under the age of 15, and 82½% of the total inmate population belonged to 26 families.[7] Between the years ending 25th March 1841 and 1842 the number of paupers relieved in Nantwich Workhouse increased by 65.96% from 1919 to 317, and the cost of in-maintenance had likewise increased by 9.1%. Expenditure per pauper head had thus fallen from £4 18s 0d to £3 5s 0d. In terms of economic efficiency the new system appeared to be working. However by December 1842 the Master of Nantwich Workhouse was declaring that he could no longer admit any further inmates as he had 198 paupers in the workhouse and he could not physically accept anyone else.[8] It was becoming obvious that a strict policy of indoor relief could only be applied as far as the existing buildings would allow.

The trend within Cheshire as a whole regarding the number of paupers receiving in-maintenance was also on the increase, and between the quarter ended Lady Day 1839 and 1840 the number of paupers relieved in workhouses increased by 57.8%.[9] The average cost per head, per week, for food and clothing in Nantwich Workhouse was 2s 6d during March 1841, which was 3d below the average amount spent in Cheshire as a whole.[10]

Between the years ending 25th March, 1841 and 1842 the number of indoor paupers in Cheshire increased by 23.3% and the cost of in-maintenance increased by 21.3% to reach a

figure of £10,997.[11] Granted, the population was also increasing at this time - the population of Nantwich had increased by 7.8% between 1831 and 1841, and Cheshire's population had likewise risen by 18.3% during the same period. However the rate at which indoor relief was increasing far outstripped any increase in population that was occurring.

By the quarter ending Lady Day 1847 the number of indoor paupers in Nantwich had increased by 27.7% to reach 940 compared with the same period in 1846, and the figures for the quarter ending Lady Day 1847 represented a 492% increase over the figures for the year ending 25th March 1841.[12] One reason for this great increase was that between 1846 and 1848 the cotton mill in Nantwich was idle and secondly the potato crop failed throughout the county in 1846. Even though the population of Nantwich Union had increased by 6.29% between 1841 and 1851, the above increase in the number of indoor poor in Nantwich shows clearly how serious the problem of poverty was becoming. However, while the number of people relieved in Nantwich Workhouse had increased so dramatically, the amount spent on indoor relief in the year ending Lady Day 1846 actually represented a decrease of 13.8% compared to the amount spent in 1842.[13] This fact vindicated the workhouse system as being more economical for the ratepayers, but for the inmates the reality of their experience has to be viewed in more than economic terms. Overcrowded and insanitary conditions together with poor food occasioned by increased numbers and less cash meant that this form of less eligibility often meant inmates becoming a further burden on the ratepayers when they actually contracted debilitating diseases once inside the workhouse itself. Short

term 'economic' achievements were not seen in the context of long-term consequences.

In Cheshire the number of people receiving indoor relief was also on the increase: the figures for the quarter ending Lady Day 1847 compared to 1846 reveal that the numbers relieved in the workhouse had increased by 92.9%[14] as more Unions began to administer the Act, and the cost of relief had increased by 20.4% to reach a figure of £7,061. In England as a whole at this time the cost of in-maintenance had increased by 11.49% between the quarter ending Lady Day 1846 and 1847,[15] an increase which was considerably lower than that taking place in Cheshire. The extent to which indoor pauperism had increased since the late 1830s despite the deterrent of less eligibility can be greater gauged by the fact that in the seven years between the quarter ending Lady Day 1839 and the same period in 1847 the number of indoor paupers in Chehsire had increased by 211% Numbers were increasing while costs fluctuated; the transfer to the new system had not been as straight forward in terms of positive results as at first anticipated.

The 1850s - initial confidence turns to doubt

By the half year ending Lady Day 1851 the number of indoor paupers in Nantwich Workhouse was still on the increase: by 5.8% compared to the same period in 1850 and by more than 242% when figures for the half year 1851 are compared to the yearly figures for 1841,[16] far outstripping the 6.2% population increase in Nantwich between 1841 and 1851. However the expenditure on indoor relief in Cheshire had fallen by 28.9% between the half years ending Lady Day 1849 and 1850, and in England

as a whole a decrease of 18.6% had occurred. The yearly figures for Cheshire also reveal that during 1850 the total amount spent on indoor relief continued to fall at a time when the actual number of inmates in the workhouse was increasing.[17] For example between the half years ending Lady Day 1850 and 1851 there had been a 9.0% increase in the number of indoor inmates.[18] In terms of efficiency the new system, once again, appeared to be operating effectively. However this was a trend that was very short lived, and the cost of indoor relief began to rise again. By the year ending Lady Day 1855 cost of indoor relief in Cheshire had risen by 78.3% in just five years. Expenditure on indoor relief was also increasing in England and Wales as can be seen from the figures relating to the half years ending Lady Day 1854 and 1855. During this period in Cheshire expenditure on indoor relief increased by 16.2%, and in England and Wales by 7.59%, once again showing that expenditure in Cheshire exceeded the trends being set nationally.[19]

In terms of the number relieved, able bodied paupers in Cheshire remained fairly stable in the returns for the 1st January 1850 and 1851. However an increase of 20.6% occurred between July 1850 and 1851[20] and within Cheshire an increasing number of able bodied inmates continued to receive relief inside the workhouse throughout 1854 and 1855:[21] an increase of 20% and 42.8% occurred respectively in January and July 1855 over corresponding figures for 1850. This was a worrying increase for guardians, who since the inception of the 1834 Act were so desperate to curtail able bodied pauperism, and for whom the workhouse was to have been their ultimate weapon. In England and Wales the cost of indoor relief had increased by

5.69% between the half years ending Lady Day 1855 and 1856. In Cheshire during the same period an increase of 7.24% had occurred and the cost of indoor relief reached an all time high in the year ending Lady Day 1856 when it totalled £13,337 9.1% more than in the previous year.[22] This amount also represented a 94.6% increase when compared with the figures for the year ending Michaelmas 1850, just five and a half years previously. Similarly in Nantwich the cost of indoor relief steadily decreased from the all time 'high' that had been reached in the year ending Lady Day 1857 when the amount spent on indoor relief stood at £1,018 12s 0d, which represented a 12.7% increase compared to ten years previously.[23] Between the years ending Lady Day 1857 and 1860 the amount spent on indoor relief fell by 27.8% and stood at £734.[24] This was the lowest it had ever been since figures were first recorded for Nantwich Union in the early 1840s, and it was at the lowest that it would ever be, as from 1860 onwards the unmistakeable trend in the cost of in-maintenance was continually upwards in Nantwich.

Similarly within Cheshire as a whole the amount spent on indoor relief continued to fall steadily from 1856 onwards. Expenditure decreased by 13.1% between 1857 and 1860, when the total amount spent on indoor relief stood at £11,580 6s 0d.[25] Never from this point in 1860 through to the end of this study in 1914, did the cost of indoor relief in Cheshire ever fall to this level again, and apart from the occasional slight decline, expenditure continued to climb steadily throughout the period to 1914.

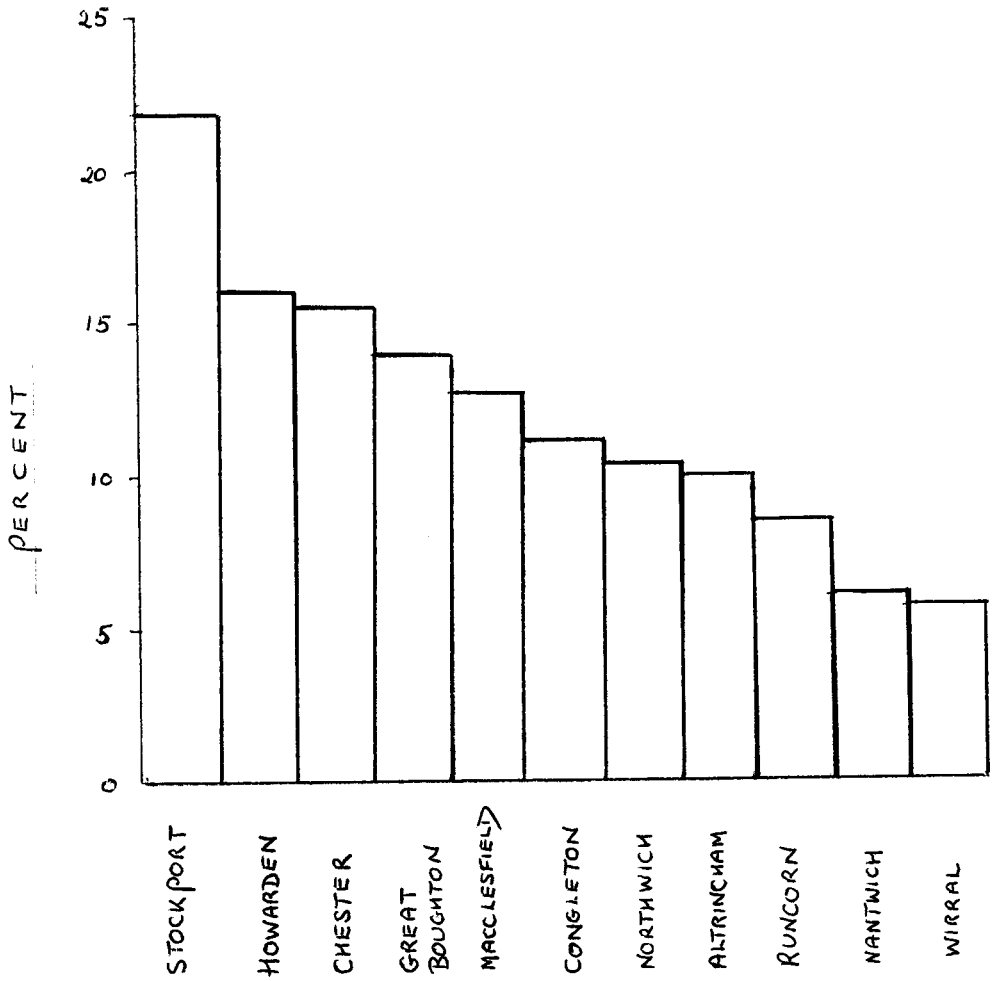
When assessing the number of indoor paupers relieved, the annual returns relating to the 1st of January and July, sub-

divided to show able and non-able bodied, assume great importance for comparison purposes. In Nantwich between the 1st July 1857 and the 1st July 1860, the number of able bodied in the workhouse had decreased by 33% from 36 to 24 individuals mirroring the fall that had taken place in the cost of indoor relief; and the total number of inmates declined by 18.5% to 88 individuals in July 1860.[26] This coincides with the introduction of the first shoe factory in Nantwich to use sewing machines, which would have provided more work in the town, but on the other hand would have adversely affected trade for small tradesmen who could not compete with such mechanisation. As M. E. Rose has stressed it was not just industrial unemployment with which the system of poor relief had to deal but underemployment together with seasonal and cyclical fluctuation.[27]

In Nantwich workhouse a large proportion of the inmates consisted of children under the age of 16 - for example between July 1857 and July 1860 they consistently formed between 40% - 48% of pauper numbers, and of these non-able bodied children formed between 58½% - 71½% of children admitted to the workhouse for relief.[28] Between 1857 - 1860 the number of male and female inmates admitted was fairly evenly divided, but one distinct pattern emerges - the majority of males in the workhouse were classed as non-able bodied, and the majority of females were able bodied.[29] On the death of the male wage earner many widows with children to support had no alternative but to enter the workhouse, as was the case for many unmarried mothers with illegitimate children if their family did not rally round. The January and July returns similarly reveal that the number of indoor inmates in Cheshire had increased between January 1857

and 1860 by 2.5% and between July 1859 and 1860 the number of indoor inmates had increased by 7%.[30] How effectively were the Nantwich Guardians dealing with pauperism within the workhouse as opposed to granting out relief, and how did their performance compare to other unions in Cheshire? On the 1st July 1860 only 6.6% of paupers claiming relief within Nantwich Union were relieved in the workhouse, Wirral Union being the only other union to relieve a lower proportion in the workhouse:

The proportion of paupers relieved in the workhouses of Cheshire 1st July, 1860 — figure 13



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This graph shows that the majority of unions within Cheshire relieved more of their paupers within the workhouse than

Nantwich, but that none of them relieved even a quarter of their poor within the workhouse. In terms of the sheer scale of numbers the workhouses could not cope with the numbers applying for relief, with obvious implications for the prevalence of outdoor relief.

The number of non-able bodied inmates always figured more prominently in the workhouses of Cheshire than the able bodied i.e. between January 1858 and July 1860 the non-able bodied consistently formed between 52% - 57.9% of inmates receiving indoor relief in Cheshire.[32] Child pauperism does not appear to have been so pronounced in the county as in Nantwich, and between January 1858 and July 1860 children under 16 consistently formed between 39.7% and 41% of pauper inmates.[33]

The Watershed of the 1860s - illusions shattered by the Cotton famine

How far was Nantwich Union affected by the great wave of poverty that engulfed the North-Western region in the early 1860s? Nantwich had a connection with the cotton trade, but the poverty that resulted from the cotton famine had a knock-on effect that permeated far more widely than just one industry. As Nantwich Union is in the southern tip of the North West region did it escape unscathed from this experience?

In Nantwich during the early 1860s the cost of in-maintenance increased sharply by 24.3% between the years ending Lady Day 1860 and 1861[34] to reach a figure of £913 3s 0d per annum. The trends evident in Nantwich were echoed in Cheshire as a whole, and from 1860 onwards the amount spent on in-maintenance rapidly increased by 17.8% between the years ending Lady Day 1860 and 1861. In England and Wales the cost of

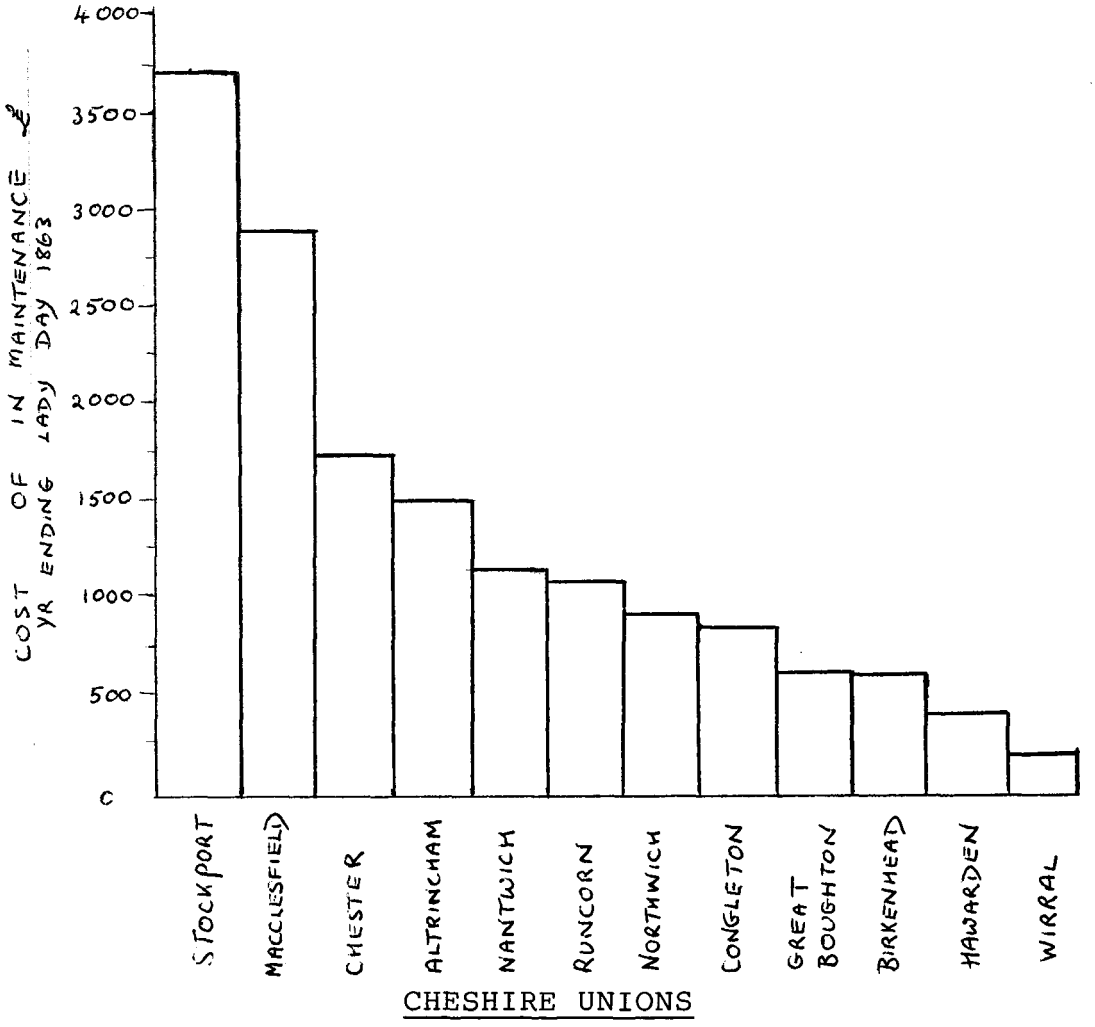
indoor relief increased by 13.29%, somewhat below the percentage increases taking place in Nantwich and Cheshire, and between 1861 and 1862 it increased again by a further 9.6%.[35]

When comparing Nantwich Union with other Cheshire unions it appears that for the half year ended Michaelmas 1860 Nantwich Union spent £361 5s 0d on in-maintenance or 2d per head of the population. The highest spending union within the shire at this time was the Wirral, who expended £675 18s 0d on in-maintenance, or 8d per head of population. Hawarden Union spent the least on indoor relief, just £159 15s 0d or ¼d per head of population.[36]

In the poor relief returns for the half year ending Lady Day 1861, the reasons given to explain the increase in the numbers applying for relief were two fold: firstly that a great increase in the price of bread, potatoes, meat and other staple food articles had taken place. Secondly, the severity of the weather at Christmas time had thrown large numbers out of employment, and as J. H. Treble has emphasised the main generator of widespread indigence in society remained a prolonged period of bad trade.[37] Similarly M. E. Rose has argued it was the cyclical depression heralding mass unemployment that proved that the workhouse test was largely irrelevant in the face of such problems.[38]

By the year ending Lady Day 1863 the North Western Region as a whole was in the grip of the cotton famine, and Nantwich Union reached a 'peak' for in-maintenance. Compared to other Cheshire Unions Nantwich was placed fifth out of twelve unions in terms of the amount spent on in-maintenance:

figure 14



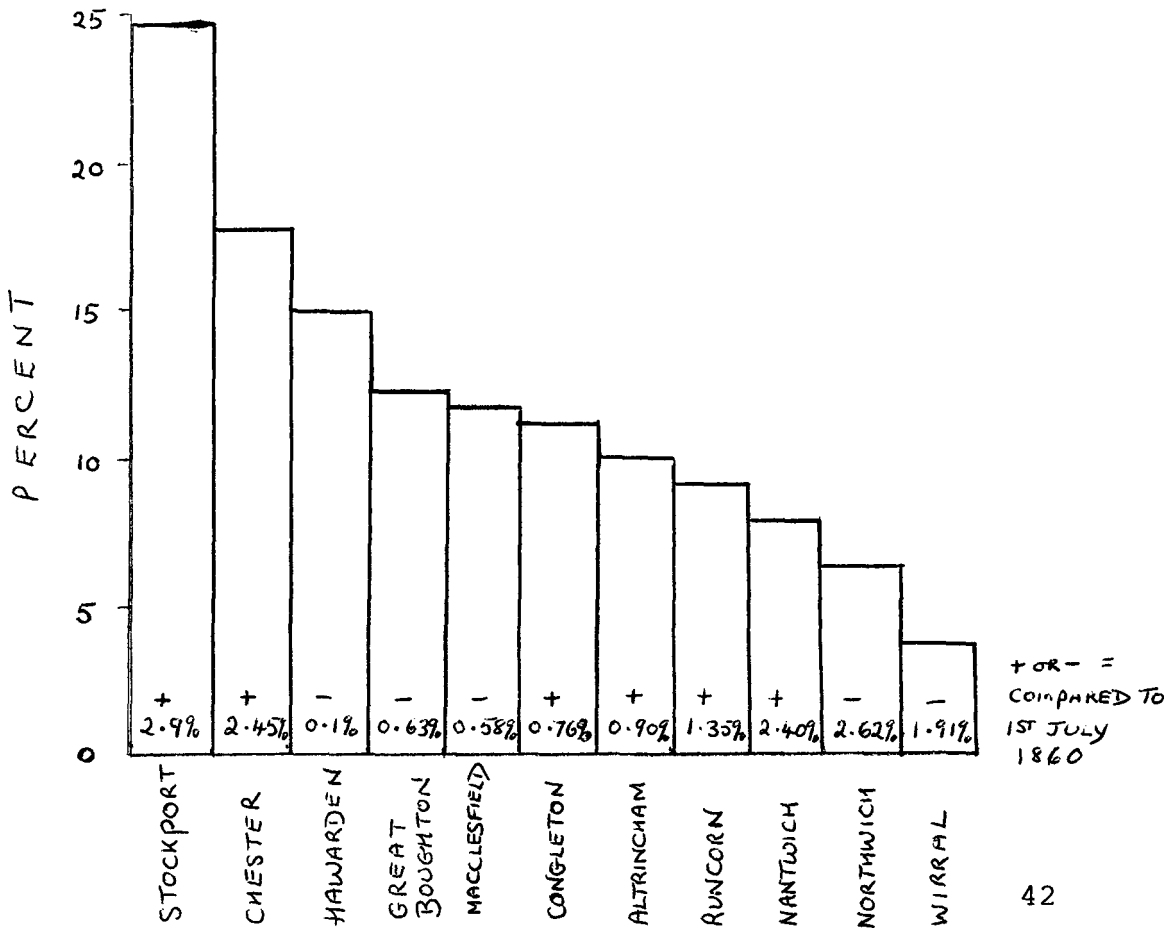
Stockport and Macclesfield Unions were greater hit because of their closer proximity to Lancashire and the 'overflow' of paupers on the move from the cotton centres together with their own reliance on the textile trades. When the amount expended on in-maintenance is considered on a County basis, the average per head of the population in Cheshire was 7¾d, six unions within Cheshire surpassed this amount and six, one of which was Nantwich, fell short of the county average.[39]

The figures for indoor relief in Nantwich Union show that the effects of the cotton famine did reach as far as South Cheshire. In the year ending Lady Day 1863 the cost of in-main-

tenance reached a record high of £1061 16s 0d in Nantwich Union which represented an increase of 44.5% over the cost of in-maintenance for the year ending Lady Day 1860.[40] Similarly in Cheshire as a whole expenditure on in-maintenance continued to increase, and between the years ending Lady Day 1861 and 1863 there was a further increase of 15.34% within the county.[41]

By 1st January 1861 the position in the eleven Cheshire Unions regarding the number of paupers relieved in the work-house was as follows:

figure 15



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From the graph it appears that Nantwich was ninth out of the eleven Cheshire unions in terms of the numbers of inmates

relieved in the workhouse in January 1861, and 9% of paupers receiving relief in Nantwich obtained it in the workhouse. Such statistics would have shocked the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834, but economic fluctuations, the limitations in the size of the workhouse, together with the sheer scale of applicants meant that in reality a framework of necessity was imposed upon the 1834 Amendment Act by local guardians, and those receiving relief in the workhouse represented only a fraction of all paupers in receipt of relief. When these figures are compared with those for just six months earlier, it is evident that the hardships of the winter months had increased indoor relief in 6 of the 11 unions. Indoor relief in Nantwich had increased by 2.40% compared to the 1st July 1860, which was the third largest increase within the county following Stockport, who had experienced an increase of 2.9% and Chester with a 2.45% increase. That these increases were not more is at first surprising considering that it was in the middle of the winter months. However many of the workhouses were already stretched to the limit and even an increase in pauper numbers amounting to 2.40% must have stretched facilities in the workhouse to the limit. Indeed it was in October 1860 that one of the Nantwich Guardians moved that Inspector Doyle's suggestion about alterations and extensions to Nantwich Workhouse be considered, as was the idea of selling the workhouse which had been adapted from an old building built in 1780, buying more land and building a new and bigger institution.[43] However in spite of the undoubted advantages of the above scheme it was decided not to proceed with the idea and the old workhouse remained, with alterations, until after the end of this study in 1914.[44]

The severity with which the cotton famine hit the North West of England, the North Midlands, and Yorkshire can be gauged from the special relief figures that were issued at this time. For example in terms of total expenditure on the relief of the poor in the North West of England (Lancashire and Cheshire) the third week in November 1862 saw an increase of 228.19% over the same week in November 1861, whereas England and Wales as a whole experienced an increase of 25.32%.[45]

In terms of relief in the workhouse, the figures for the North Western region reveal from April 1862, when the number of people relieved in the workhouse was 28.8% higher than in the same period in 1861,[46] the increase continued throughout the year:

Percentage increase in the numbers relieved in the workhouse in the North Western region

Increase compared to 1861	Increase %
4th week in May 1862	27.7
4th week in June 1862	26.2
5th week in July 1862	26.5
1st week in August 1862	28.3
1st week in September 1862	26.3
4th week in October 1862	24.8
4th week in November 1862	16.4
4th week in December 1862	8.7

[47]

However it is important not to underestimate the increase in the numbers relieved in the workhouse during this period. The above chart gives a % increase compared to the same weeks in

1862, when a noticeable increase in numbers applying for relief in the workhouse had already begun. During January 1863 the number of people relieved in workhouses in the North West continued to fall gradually and only in the fourth week in February was a decrease of 0.4% recorded over the same period in 1862.[48]

The number of people in the workhouse in Cheshire on 1st January 1861 compared to 1860 had increased by 3.5%,[49] however by January 1863 the increase had climbed to 32% compared to 1860.[50] In terms of the increase in the able and non-able bodied between January 1861 and 1863 the number of able bodied adults in workhouses in Cheshire had increased by 81%, and children by 32%. As the depression in industry mainly affected the able bodied, the increase in the non-able bodied was significantly smaller, namely 1.5% among non-able bodied adults and 14.4% in non-able bodied children.[51] The July returns reveal that between July 1860 and 1862 the number of adult able bodied paupers in Cheshire workhouses had increased by 105.7% and able bodied children by 36%.[52] This increase was reflected in the cost of in-maintenance and between the half year ended Michaelmas 1861 and 1862 expenditure increased by 15.6% in the county, whereas the increase for England and Wales as a whole for the same period was 2.9%.[53]

During this period of great distress Nantwich Union saw an increase in indoor relief among all classes:

July 1860-1862 = +55.6%	January 1861-1863 = +39.3%
July 1860-1863 = +60.2%	January 1861-1864 = +17.2%
July 1862-1863 = + 2.9%	January 1863-1864 = -15.8%

In terms of the able bodied male inmates, there was an increase of 75% between January 1861 and 1863, followed by a decrease in January 1864 of 21.4%,[55] as the severest part of the depression had passed. During this period able bodied females consistently numbered more than twice their male counterparts, and between July 1860 and 1862 their number in the workhouse increased by 133% and in January 1863 reached a peak of 32 able bodied females.[56]

During these depressed years the number of able bodied children in Nantwich Workhouse had increased dramatically: between July 1860 and 1862 by 181.8%, thereby falling by 6.4% in the following July.[57] In respect of the non-able bodied male adults an increase of 62.5% occurred between July 1860 and January 1861, and a further increase of 23% occurred between January 1861 and January 1864.[58]

This increase would have been symptomatic of the fact that families who would previously have cared for elderly relatives in their homes would have found it increasingly difficult to do so in times of economic restraint. However the number of female non-able bodied inmates remained fairly stable at between 5 and 7 females throughout the period. The number of non-able bodied children increased between January 1861 and January 1863 by 29% to reach a figure of 31 inmates, only to return in January 1864 to the level it had been in January 1861.[59]

The depression that had hit the region so hard started in October 1861, peaked in December 1862 and lingered on in unprecedentedly high levels of relief into the summer of 1863. In England and Wales expenditure on in-relief had peaked in 1862, thereafter falling so that by the year ending

Lady Day 1864 there had been a 3.3% reduction since the all time high of 1863. However this decrease was not to be sustained and 1864 marked a turning point: from this date onwards expenditure on indoor relief would continue to rise steadily in England and Wales until the end of this study in 1914.

As D. Fraser has argued the new Poor Law existed on a philosophy of being cruel to be kind: 'The logic was impeccable so long as the basic premise was sound - that men were completely masters of their own fate.' The advent of the cotton famine proved that the system of poor relief based on a system of less eligibility and degradation was no longer suitable when such wholesale poverty had obviously nothing to do with individual failing.[60]

By the year ending Lady Day 1865 the amount expended on indoor relief in Nantwich Union had fallen from its peak, two years earlier, by 22.9% and cost £817 15s 0d.[61] However as was the case nationally this downward trend was not to be sustained. In fact the amount expended on indoor relief in 1865 was the lowest it would ever be again, and in the year ending Lady Day 1866 an 11.8% increase in indoor expenditure took place. From this date onwards there was a continual increase in expenditure.[62] Similarly the number of pauper inmates in Nantwich workhouse decreased by 9.79% between 1st January 1864 and 1st July 1865, and the number of able bodied inmates decreased by 23.1% during the same period.[63] However this decline was not sustained and by July 1866 the number of paupers in Nantwich Workhouse had increased by 12.40%, and the number of able bodied inmates had increased once again by 11.3% as had the non-able bodied by 25%.[64]

In Cheshire by the year ended Lady Day 1865 the cost of

indoor expenditure continued to increase from the previous 'high it had reached in 1863. Between the years ending Lady Day 1863 and 1865 an increase of 1.7% had taken place and expenditure continued in an upward trend.[65] In just over five years the cost of in-maintenance within Cheshire had increased by 43.08%,[66] and the number of indoor inmates began to climb again after the initial fall off in numbers as the depression of 1861 and 1863 receded. By the 1st July 1865 the total number of indoor paupers had declined by 11.6% in comparison with 1st January 1863,[67] but between 1st July 1865 and 1866 the number of indoor paupers increased by 12.8% to reach 2382, just 8 paupers short of the previous peak reached in January 1863.[68] The reason for this increase lay in the larger numbers in the following classes:

Class of pauper	Increase in July 1866 compared to July 1865
Non able bodied adults	20.60%
Able bodied adults	13.57%
Able bodied children	19.06%

[69]

Even though the improved economic climate of July 1866 meant that the number of able bodied adults receiving indoor relief had fallen by 22.5% compared to January 1863,[70] the increase that occurred between July 1865 and 1866 among the able bodied gave cause for concern. However more dramatic was the rise in the non-able bodied, who despite the threat of less eligibility had no other alternative but to enter the workhouse for relief and, as a result, suffer the stringent measures that were

supposed to act as a deterrent to the able bodied. This increase in the dependency of the non-able bodied on the workhouse, often in old age and ill health, led to many of the problems in the workhouse identified in The Lancet. In terms of the sheer number of applicants, combined with the lack of facilities, the workhouse was not equipped to cope with an ill and aging population of inmates. In the 1830s such inmates had not been seen as the scourge of the system, and the whole workhouse had been established around the intention of deterring the able bodied from 'milking' the system. However from the 1860s onwards until the end of this study in 1914 the demands of the non-able bodied on the workhouse system did not diminish and their presence proved as big a problem, if not more so, than the able bodied.

The system of indoor relief faced unprecedented pressure as the century progressed in the face of a growing population and an economy which did not offer permanent employment to every able bodied adult, the experience of the 1860s had emphasised this. Industrialisation led to improved methods of transport and the migration of families or individual members of families to other parts of the country to look for work. This new economic climate all helped contribute to the fact that unlike in the early nineteenth century when the old and non-able bodied relied on relatives and friends to help them - and many in the later nineteenth century still relied on this form of relief - greater mobility and an unpredictable economy meant that the old and non-able bodied were more vulnerable than ever before. Ever increasing numbers found themselves with no alternative but to enter the workhouse for relief.

This was the painful fact that guardians grappled with during the 1860s, and had to continue to deal with during the 1870s.

The 1870s - The decade when the non-able bodied proved the fallacy of the workhouse deterrent

By July 1869 the number of indoor paupers in Cheshire stood at an all time high of 2622. However by July 1870 this figure had fallen by 8.8%,[71] the number of able bodied adults and children receiving relief in the workhouse had decreased by 24.3% and 35% respectively since July 1866. However the number of non-able bodied adults and children had both increased by 11.8% and 12.3% respectively,[72] again reaching an all time high within the county. £24,690 was expended on indoor relief in Cheshire during the year ending Lady Day 1870 which represented a 55.8% increase compared to just five years earlier, and 115.5% increase compared to ten years previously. In comparison expenditure on indoor relief in England and Wales had increased by 35% between 1865 and 1870 and by 64.7% in the ten years since 1860,[73] showing that the increases being borne in Cheshire were greater than those taking place in England and Wales as a whole. The number of people in all classes relieved in Cheshire workhouses had increased by 45.49% between July 1860 - 1870 while the population of the county during the same period had increased by 11%.

In Nantwich Union the trend was similarly one of increased expenditure with indoor relief costing the union £1190 in the year ending Lady Day 1870, which represented a 45.6% increase compared to five years previously[74] and a 62.1% increase compared to 1860. Compared to Birkenhead and Hawarden, respectively the highest and lowest spending unions within Cheshire

in terms of indoor relief, Nantwich spent 7d per head of population on indoor relief, whereas Birkenhead spent 1s 8¼d and Hawarden 1s 5¾d.[75] In respect of pauper numbers in the workhouse there had in fact been a decrease of 15.17% in July 1870 compared to July 1866,[76] at a time when population growth was at its highest in Nantwich. Between 1861 and 1871 the population of Nantwich Union increased by 31.2%. The fact that the number of inmates relieved in the workhouse actually decreased at this time reflects a period of commercial prosperity that existed in the area and the fact that the number of people receiving out-relief increased during this period. The number of able bodied in the workhouse had fallen by 52½% compared to 1866 while the non-able bodied had increased by 28½%. In terms of the total inmate population the non-able bodied made up 73% of paupers receiving relief in the workhouse in July 1870, an all time record for the union, and one that was not to be exceeded again until 1914. In Cheshire as a whole the non-able bodied formed 59.8% of indoor paupers.[77]

Against this background of increasing expenditure on indoor relief in the wake of The Lancet enquiry, and an overall downward trend in the numbers of 'all classes' relieved within the workhouse, (although the number of non-able bodied was on the increase), the Poor Law Inspectorate issued an optimistic report both about the present and future prospects of poor relief.[78] The report emphasised trends that were both 'reassuring' and 'satisfactory', as the most depressed conditions of trade had been passed and that a gradual, though slow, revival had set in, and that the welfare of the manufacturing classes

'... will be progressive, whilst the prosperity of all will be increased and maintained.'[79]

How generous were the Nantwich Guardians in providing necessities once paupers were admitted to the workhouse? In terms of the average weekly cost per head of maintaining paupers Nantwich spent an average of 3s 7d per week, compared to Birkenhead who spent 4s 10d, the most in the county, and Great Boughton who spent 2s 9d, the lowest in Cheshire.[80] In respect of food and necessities Nantwich allocated 3s 2¾d per pauper compared to the counties highest spender, Birkenhead, with 4s 6d, the lowest being Great Boughton with 2s 4¾d. For clothing Nantwich spent an average 4¼d per pauper, whereas the highest spending union in this respect was Macclesfield who spent 6d. and the lowest, Altrincham, spent 3d.

The upward trend in the cost of indoor relief continued in Nantwich: by the year ending Lady Day 1871 it had increased by 12.6% compared to 1870 and amounted to £1341 or 6d per head of the population.[81] By the year ended Michaelmas 1875 a further increase of 29.75% had taken place compared to 1873 and the amount expended on indoor relief stood at £1,631 or 7¼d per head of the population, another record for the union.[82] In fact the amount spent on indoor relief in the year ended Michaelmas 1875 represented a 37% increase over the amount spent in 1870; a 99.6% increase compared to 1865 and a 122% increase compared to sums expended in 1860! The Nantwich Guardians were experiencing the painful reality that expenditure was rising and so faced criticism not only from ratepayers about rising rates, the central body about rising out-relief, and the inspectorate about insufficient standards and the need

for more expenditure to improve standards of classification.

In Cheshire as a whole between Lady Day 1870 and 1875 there was a decrease of 0.78% in the amount spent on indoor relief,[83] but in the intervening period expenditure fluctuated. In England and Wales expenditure on indoor relief increased by 4.97% between 1870 and 1875, but as was the case in Cheshire expenditure did fluctuate - but the unmistakable overall trend was one of increasing costs.[84]

In regard to the number of inmates relieved in the workhouses of Cheshire by 1875 there was an increase of 1.37% between January 1874 and 1875, and a 1.83% increase between July 1874 and 1875.[85] Overall, however, although the trend was upward the number being relieved within the walls of the workhouse in July 1875 represented a decrease of 7.32% compared to July 1870. The number of able bodied adults had declined by 25.48% in July 1874 compared to July 1870,[86] only to increase by 32.9% in the following January,[87] emphasising yet again that the harshness of the weather and seasonal employment were determining factors in the level of relief, rather than the innate wish of the able bodied to live on relief. By July 1875 the number of able bodied adults in the workhouse had once again declined by 30.9% to number 277 adults.[88]

In Nantwich Union the total number of indoor inmates had increased by 34.95% between July 1870 and July 1875 and stood at 166 paupers,[89] or 0.3% of total population, or 11% of paupers relieved, the highest it had ever been since January 1863, during the desperate period of the cotton famine. However this percentage, high as it was for Nantwich, illustrates how inadequate the provision of relief in the workhouse was, the

majority of paupers being sustained on out-relief or by family and friends. However the summer months of 1872 and 1873 had been marked by a strike among the shoe trade in the town, and some of the trade previously held by the town's shoe makers never returned. June 1874 had also seen a cotton workers strike in Nantwich which led to the closure of the mill, all of which affected applications for relief. By July 1875 the number of able bodied men in the workhouse had increased by 333% compared to July 1870 and stood at 13; or 7.8% of inmates and the number of able bodied women had increased by 20% and represented 18.6% of inmates. Similarly the number of non-able bodied men, women, and children had increased and represented 68% of inmates,[90] since July 1870. The non-able bodied children were the biggest problem locally - compared to the non-able bodied males and females they outnumbered them 2 to 1 and more than 3 to 1 respectively, and since July 1865 their numbers had increased by 204.76% in the Nantwich Workhouse.[91] It was the implication of the reality of the non-able bodied in the workhouse during the 1860s and 1870s that revealed so many inadequacies, not only in the workhouse itself but in the system of which it was a part.

Rising costs and increasing indoor relief

The upward trend in both cost and the number of indoor inmates continued into the 1880s in both Nantwich, the county, and England and Wales as a whole. By the 1st January 1880 the number of indoor inmates in Cheshire had increased by 44.2% compared to 1st January 1875 and by the 1st July 1880 the increase was 37.57% compared to five years previously.[92] The

number of non-able bodied adults had increased by 64.36% between January 1875 and 1880 indicating that the burden of the non-able bodied was a progressive one.[93] The number of able bodied inmates within the county had increased by 62% between January 1875 and 1880 and by 61.37% between July 1875 and 1880, indicating that the increase in numbers was fairly consistent and that the scale of poverty was stable whether recorded in Winter or Summer.[94] Consistent with this trend, the cost of indoor relief within the county increased by 23.80% between the years ended Michaelmas 1875 and 1880, while population growth in Cheshire between 1871 and 1881 had increased by 14.8%. In England and Wales expenditure on indoor relief had increased by 11.4% between the year ending Lady Day 1875 and 1880, illustrating that the cost of indoor relief in Cheshire was increasing at double the percentage rate that it was nationally.[95]

In Nantwich Union the cost of indoor relief had increased by 12.38% between the years ending Michaelmas 1875 and 1880,[96] and when compared to figures for ten years earlier the increase amounts to 54%. Over the same period in England and Wales expenditure on indoor relief had increased by 16.96%. This comparison illustrates that when set against the national picture, the cost of maintaining paupers in the workhouse in Nantwich Union was increasing at a greater pace than was the case generally in England and Wales as a whole.[97] The number of inmates of all classes relieved in Nantwich Workhouse had increased by 21% between July 1875 and July 1880, and the number of inmates relieved in January 1880 numbered just 200, just one inmate less than recorded in the July return, indicating once again the seasons were having less impact in determining the scale

of pauper numbers. The number of able bodied men seeking relief in the workhouse had increased by 46% between July 1875 and July 1880, and they represented just 9.4% of total inmates.[98] The number of able bodied females receiving in-maintenance had increased by 158% compared to five years previously and represented 15.4% of inmates.[99] Overall the number of able bodied people receiving relief in the workhouse had increased by 107% between July 1875 and 1880,[100] and the number of paupers relieved in July 1880 represented the highest total of inmates since the previous 'peak' on the 1st January 1863, during the height of the cotton famine. In January 1863 indoor paupers had represented 0.41% of the population of the union and by January 1880 0.32% of the union were receiving indoor relief,[101] indicating that in terms of the total population the number relieved in the workhouse had remained fairly consistent.

The non-able bodied formed 49.75% of indoor paupers in Nantwich in July 1880, once again emphasising the continuing burden of the non-able bodied in the workhouse.[102]

Patterns and trends in indoor relief discernable from the census 1841 - 1881

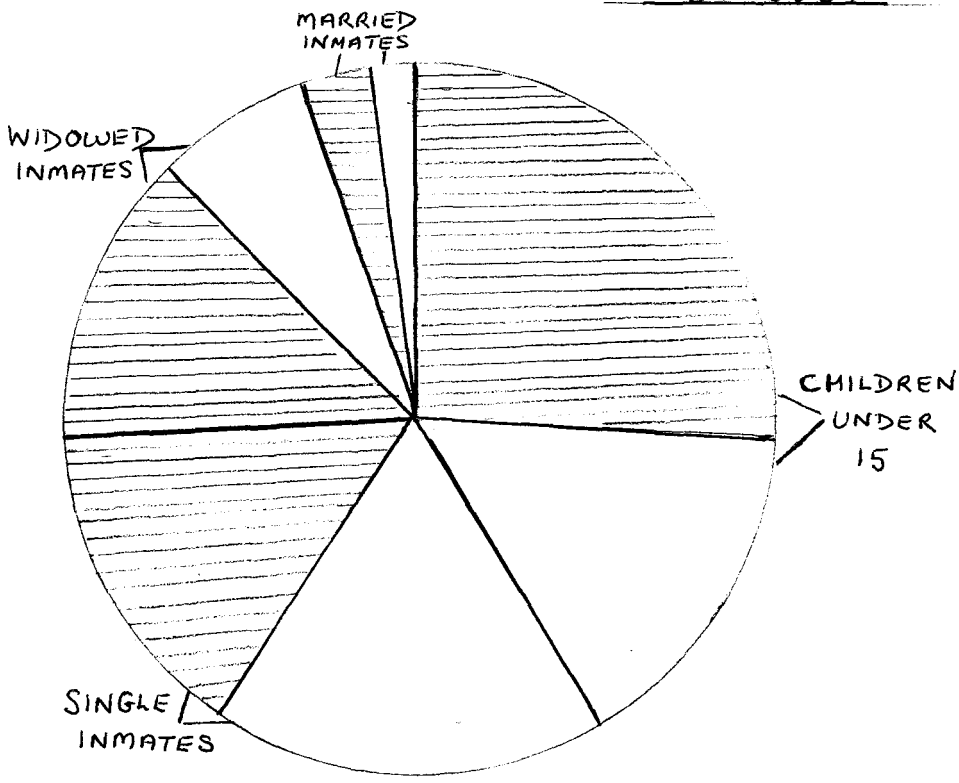
As all the admission books and personal details relating to the inmates of Nantwich Workhouse have been destroyed, it is only possible to identify patterns and trends existing amongst paupers receiving relief in the workhouse from the standpoint of the census returns from 1841-1881. What can be learned from the census returns about what the inmates had in common and what 'disasters' led them to resort to the workhouse?

As M. Anderson has emphasised 'critical life situations' are an important factor in family cohesion. The old, widows,

children, and orphans would be supported as far as possible by other members of the family during times of stress. However sickness, unemployment, death, or some other disaster could remove the basis of family support that was so vital, and the Poor Law was, as M. Anderson emphasises, seen 'as a refuge of the last resort.'[103] For all the following groups who consistently had to fall back on the workhouse, all lines of resistence were exhausted, and this emphasises how vulnerable the old, young, and widowed, were without 'frequent functional interaction with kin.'[104]

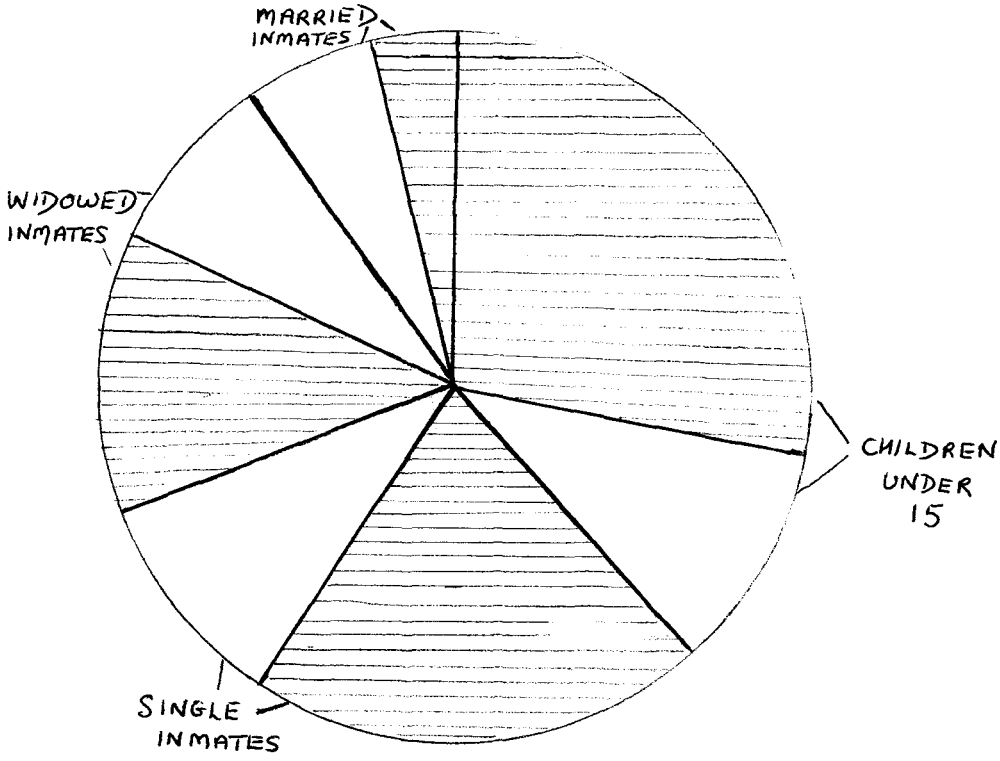
As has been identified throughout the period, children consistently formed a large proportion of inmates - 41.3% in the 1851 census and 38.3% by 1881[105] (see figures 16 and 17) and in both census' boys outnumbered girls by nearly 2 to 1 in 1851, and by nearly 3 to 1 in 1881. As the population of the county was increasing so the burden of supporting large families became excessive. In time of dire need for the family some were forced to resort to the workhouse, especially orphans who were either left with no relatives to support them or families who were unable to take on the financial responsibility of another child. Many women died in childbirth, often leaving large families for the husband to cope with. Again if the safety net of a close family rallying around could not function and the father had to go on the tramp looking for work, then the workhouse was often the only alternative. Similarly the problem of illegitimate children deposited with the workhouse as a convenient means of disposing of the child, or together with the mother who had no means of supporting herself and the baby all added to the large number of children receiving relief

PIE CHARTS TO SHOW THE COMPOSITION OF INMATES IN NANTWICH WORKHOUSE AT THE 1851 + 1881 CENSUS.



1851

FIGURE 16



1881

FIGURE 17

KEY

= MALE INMATES

= FEMALE INMATES

within the workhouse.

Single inmates consistently formed the next largest group of paupers in the workhouse: 32.6% in 1851 and 31% in 1881,[106] and although males were slightly outnumbered by females in 1851, by 1881 males outnumbered females by 2 to 1. Single people were perhaps the most mobile, with few family commitments and similarly not wanting to be a burden to their own mother and father, the desire to find work drove many to go on the tramp. As a result the workhouse would often be the only place in a strange town that a poor person would be able to find food and shelter.

In both 1851 and 1881 **widowers** formed the next largest group of inmates: 20.6% in 1851 and 21% in 1881.[107] P. Thane has argued that widowhood '... was everywhere a cause of severe poverty,' especially if there were young children to care for too.[108] The death of a partner, for some people meant that living alone became an impossibility, and for younger widows the death of the main wage earner meant that again, without the help of family and friends, the only means of surviving would be to seek relief in the workhouse.

Lastly **married inmates** formed the smallest group of paupers within the workhouse, both in 1851 and 1881, when they represented 5.3% and 9.58% of inmates respectively.[109] Perhaps less vulnerable than the aforementioned groups, because of their age, strength, and ability to work, if work could be found. Married inmates could at this 'stage' in their lives, fend off the last alternative of having to resort to the workhouse.

Between 1851 and 1881 the relative positions of these groups of inmates in terms of their numbers in the workhouse

did not alter, indicating that although the population continued to grow and the economy fluctuate, the most vulnerable members of society continued to depend on the workhouse for relief.

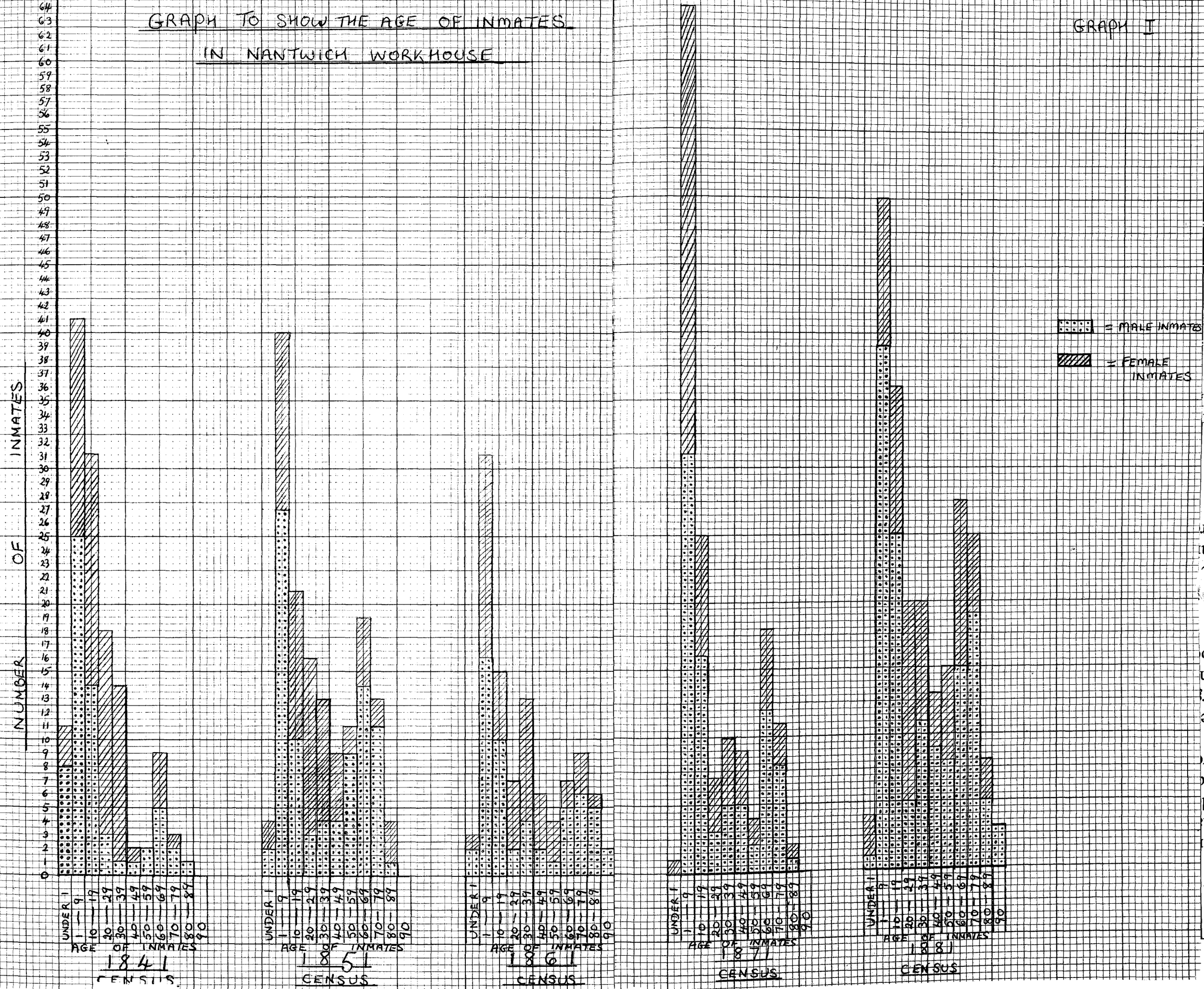
In relation to the age of the paupers in Nantwich Workhouse, in every census between 1841 and 1881 children between 1 and 9 formed the most populous group (see figure 18) and males always outnumbered females within this age group. The census of 1871 showed this group reaching a peak with 42.6% of total inmate numbers, and between 1861 and 1871 the number of children within this age band had increased by 106%.[110]

Consistently from 1841 to 1881 the next most prevalent group of inmates within the workhouse were young people aged between 10 and 19, the peak being reached in 1881 when they represented 16.4% of pauper inmates.[111] That these two groups should consistently rank first and second in terms of age groups within the workhouse indicates that from the age of one until employment could be found, these young people represented a financial burden to their parents, if they had any, which could not be sustained by some without seeking the help of relief within the workhouse. As the population of the country and the union was increasing, the number of young people within these age groups was increasing as never before as family sizes grew. With this increase came the inability to support all their children at certain times of 'stress' within the family group, and hence the need to rely on the workhouse to help sustain certain members of the family, so that others might remain outside it's walls.

The youngsters aged one and under were the only age group

GRAPH I

GRAPH TO SHOW THE AGE OF INMATES IN NANTWICH WORKHOUSE



which showed a definite and consistent decline in depending on relief in the workhouse between 1841-1881. Their numbers declined by 63.6% between 1841 and 1881 and whereas they formed 8.3% of inmates in 1841, by 1881 they only represented 1.8%.

Taking these groups of young people as a whole the percentage of inmates that fell within the age group from birth to 19 were as follows:

Year	Number of inmates between birth and 19 years	% of total inmates between birth and 19 years
1841	83	62.87
1851	65	43.33
1861	49	47.57
1871	90	60.00
1881	90	41.00

As a single group, young people aged 19 and under were the largest group receiving relief within the workhouse between 1841 and 1881.

Every other group within the walls of the workhouse showed an increase in numbers between 1841 and 1881, the 20 to 59 year olds all showing an encouraging decrease or stability in numbers between 1851 and 1861, only to subsequently double, treble, and quadruple by 1881. The fluctuations of the economy are reflected in the dependence of these age groups for support in the workhouse; as the economy floundered so their numbers increased. Locally from 1861 onwards Nantwich Union felt the effects of the cotton famine, together with the decline in the shoe trade in Nantwich after the shoe workers' strikes of 1872

and 1873. The clothing trade did move into the town, only to be hit by its own disputes and strikes during the 1870s, which all contributed to the increase in the number of inmates in the 20-59 age group. In 1851 this age group accounted for 32.6% of total inmates, falling to 20% in 1871, only to increase to 31% in 1881.

Between 1841 and 1881 the dependence of the old on the workhouse became increasingly obvious. The 60-69 year olds represented 6.8% of workhouse inmates in 1841 whereas by 1871 they represented 12% of inmates. By 1881 their numbers had increased nearly threefold.[112] Similarly in 1841 the 70 year old age group represented 2.27% of inmates, whereas by 1881 they numbered 11.4% of inmates. An eightfold increase in numbers had taken place within their age group between 1841 and 1881. The number of 80 year olds in the workhouse increased sevenfold between 1841 and 1881, by which time they formed 3.6% of inmates compared to just 0.75% in 1841.[113]

The 90 plus age group always ranked as the smallest category of inmates within the Nantwich Workhouse, representing 1.94% of indoor inmates in 1861, and 1.36% in 1881.[114] It is hardly surprising in an age of disease and poor nutrition that so few survived to such a great age, and a sad fact that when they did they had to resort either to the charities of the town or the workhouse to survive. As P. Thane has emphasised the first resort of the poor in time of need would always have been their family, but if the family was too poor, or its members had died or emigrated then many old people had no alternative but to turn to the workhouse.[115]

The following chart shows how the number of inmates over

60 years of age increased between 1841 and 1881:

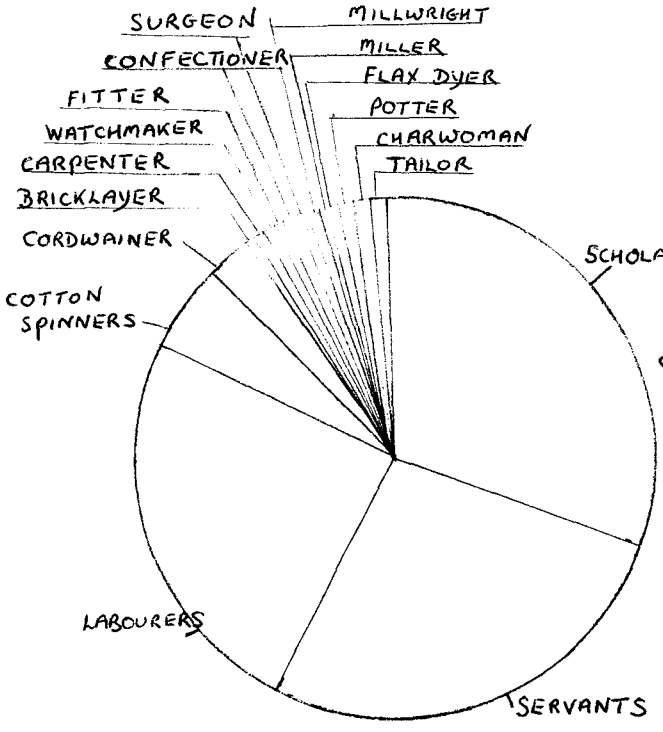
Year	Number of inmates over 60 years of age	% of total inmates over 60 years of age
1841	13	9.84
1851	36	24.0
1861	24	23.3
1871	30	20.0
1881	61	27.85

The greatest single increase in the aged poor took place between 1841 and 1851: in 1841 the workhouses were still in the throes of settling into their new role in the community and it was only as the 1840s progressed that many of the old in the union who had previously received relief in their homes would have had to move into the workhouse. From 1851 until 1871 the number of inmates over the age of 60 stayed at between 24%-20% of total inmates, but between 1871 and 1881 an increase of over 7% meant that by 1881 the number of inmates aged 60 or over had increased by 369% compared to 1841, whereas the total number of inmates had increased by 65.9% during the same period.

This fact explains why the workhouse faced so many problems with the aged poor - they had not originally been set up to deal with the problems of this age group and yet by 1881 27% of their inmates consisted of people aged over 60. Overcrowded conditions were always a problem, and were compounded by the medical demands made by this group of inmates, whose age meant that many of them needed treatment in the workhouse infirmary.

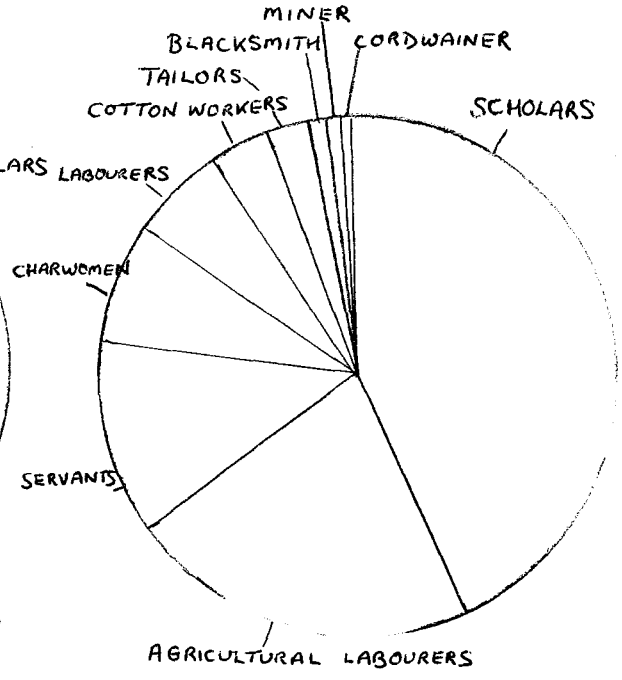
That the range of occupations listed by the recipients of indoor relief between 1851 and 1881 diversified is unquestionable, (see figures 19-22) and reflects the growth of Nantwich Union in terms of the range of industry in the area. The figures further reflect how, when these industries fell on hard times, the workhouse was still the last resort on to which some people were forced to fall back. Scholars consistently formed the largest group throughout the period, bearing testimony to the fact that children were an ever increasing burden. In the 1851 census they represented 30.7% of the inmates listed with an occupation, or 26% of the total inmate population.[116] Their prominence continued: in 1861 they represented 43.3% (or 34.9% of total inmates) and their numbers reached a peak in 1871 when they equalled 56% (50.6% of total inmates). In 1881 their numbers showed a decline when scholars represented 27.8% (or 23.7% of total inmates) but even then they were still the largest group in terms of 'occupations' within the workhouse.[117]

The category of 'servant' was the next most prominent group which is not surprising in a rural area where there were many large and small households employing servants. In the 1851 census, the most popular occupation in the county as a whole was that connected with the mechanical arts, trade or domestic service, which accounted for 27.6% of occupations followed by agriculture and manufacturing, which both accounted for 16%, and mining and mineral work represented just 4%. The only census return for the Nantwich Union in which domestic servants were ousted from second position was in 1861 when agricultural labourers were more numerous in a period



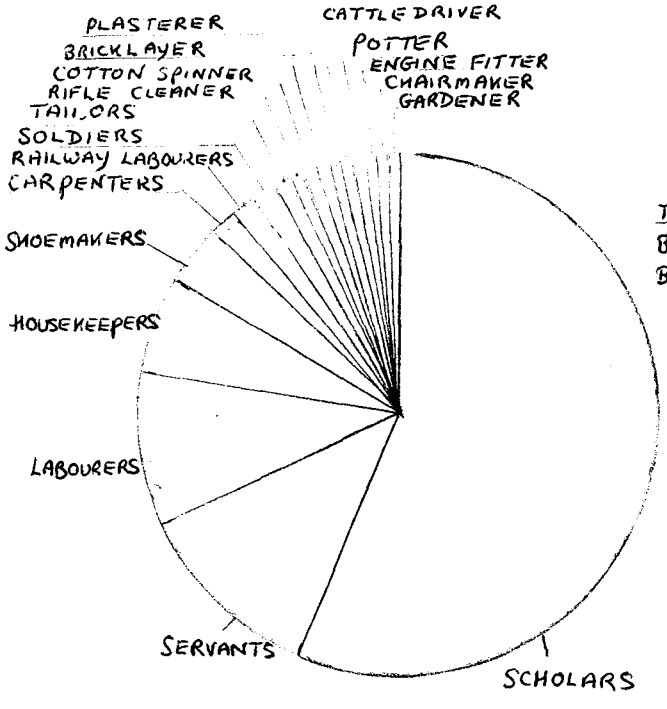
1851

FIGURE 19



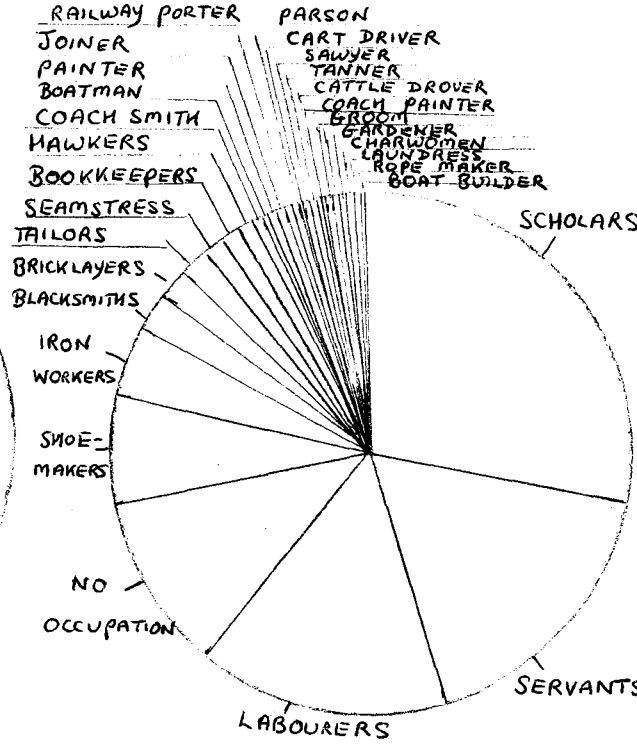
1861

FIGURE 20



1871

FIGURE 21



1881

FIGURE 22

THE OCCUPATIONS OF INMATES IN NANTWICH WORKHOUSE

characterised by depression when labourers from the countryside had been forced off the land. However between 1851 and 1871 the servant group as a whole within the workhouse was a shrinking one in relation to other occupations: between 1851 and 1871 they represented 26.7%; 12%; and 11.85% respectively of inmates listed as having an occupation.[118] This decline in their numbers could have reflected the fact that (a) servants were finding more employment during this period, perhaps in other new industries, and (b) that vis-a-vis the ever increasing number of more varied occupations, their predominance in the workhouse was dwindling. However by 1881 their proportion of inmate numbers had once again increased to 17.1% of inmates with an occupation, or 14.6% of total inmates.

In all but one of the four census taken between 1851 and 1881,[119] the group of inmates classified as labourers consistently came third in the rank order of inmates listed as having an occupation. In 1851 they represented 25% of inmates, this figure peaked at 27.7% in 1861, when they became the second most populous group in the workhouse, thereby falling to 9.6% and 15.5% in 1871 and 1881 respectively.[120] Once again it is evident that as the complexity of the economy of the county developed, and the diversity of jobs represented in the workhouse increased, so the overall number of labourers decreased in comparison to other areas of employment.

Between 1851 and 1881 the number of different occupations represented in the workhouse increased by 70.5% to stand at 29 in 1881.[121] After scholars, servants, and labourers, the remaining inmates classified as having an occupation (ranging from 17.3% in 1851 to 28.8% in 1881)[122] represented, not

surprisingly, the traditional industries of the area, new and developing areas of the economy and trades that were not indiginous, but were represented by inmates on the tramp.[123]

Between 1851 and 1871 cotton workers were consistently to be found in the workhouse, albeit in small numbers. A cotton factory had first been established in the town in 1785 and a further factory for cotton spinning was opened in 1789. This cotton mill was worked chiefly by child apprentices from workhouses and foundling hospitals in various parts of the country, as well as from Ireland. In the spring of 1874 female workers went on strike for a shilling a week rise in their wages, which was refused, and the mill finally closed in June 1874, hence the reason why no cotton workers appear in the census of 1881.[124] However occupations such as seamstress appear in the 1881 census as many workers from the cotton factory went to work in the new clothing factory that opened in the upper storey of the old cotton factory.

Tanning had been carried on in Nantwich since the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and shoemakers and cordwainers formed one of the staple trades of the town. Small family producers were numerous and the first shoe factory with sewing machines was introduced in 1859. Between the census of 1851 and 1881 the number of shoemakers in the workhouse quadrupled from 3 to 12 which represented 2.3% and 6.4% respectively of inmates with an occupation. That the number of shoemakers present in the workhouse increased, especially between 1871 and 1881 when there was an increase of 140%[125] can be explained by the fact that from the late 1850s the trade had seen automation in the form of sewing machines and rivetting increasingly

adopted. Also between May and August 1872 and May and July in 1873 there had been two long strikes involving the shoemakers, after which the shoe trade found it difficult to recover all its previous outlets. Many workers sought employment in the new clothing factories that were being set up at that time.

In the census' of 1871 and 1881 railway workers, labourers and porters, appear for the first time as in September 1858 the Crewe to Shrewsbury Railway, passing through Nantwich was opened, and in October 1863 the Nantwich to Market Drayton line was opened. Not many railway workers were inmates of the workhouse and if work was not available at Nantwich they could always go to Crewe, a few miles along the main road to seek employment at the growing railway town.

A range of other inmate occupations appear in the census, representing just one or two inmates in each instance, but spanning a wide selection of trades. As the century progressed not only the number of people applying for maintenance in the workhouse was increasing, but fluctuations in trade and personal circumstances meant that a far wider spectrum of industries and trades had members that at some time in their working lives had to depend for maintenance on the workhouse.

As no written details have survived relating to where the inmates of Nantwich Workhouse originated from, the census allows an examination of the general trends developing (see figures 23-26). Between 1851 and 1871 inmates originated from between 8 to 11 different locations around Great Britain, however by 1881 the workhouse contained people from 20 different places, including one from overseas. During the thirty year period from 1851 to 1881 the distance over which people had

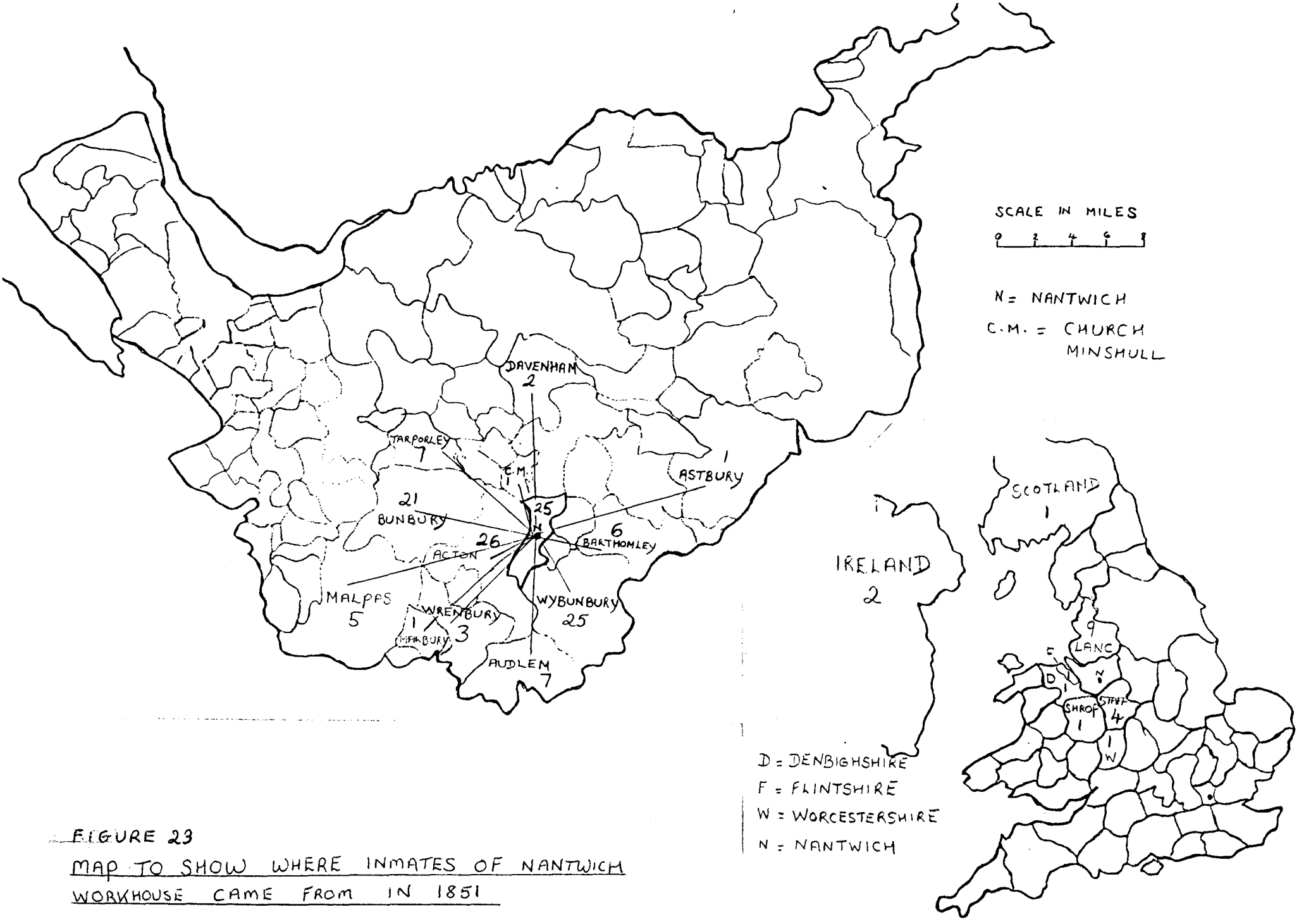


FIGURE 23

MAP TO SHOW WHERE INMATES OF NANTWICH WORKHOUSE CAME FROM IN 1851

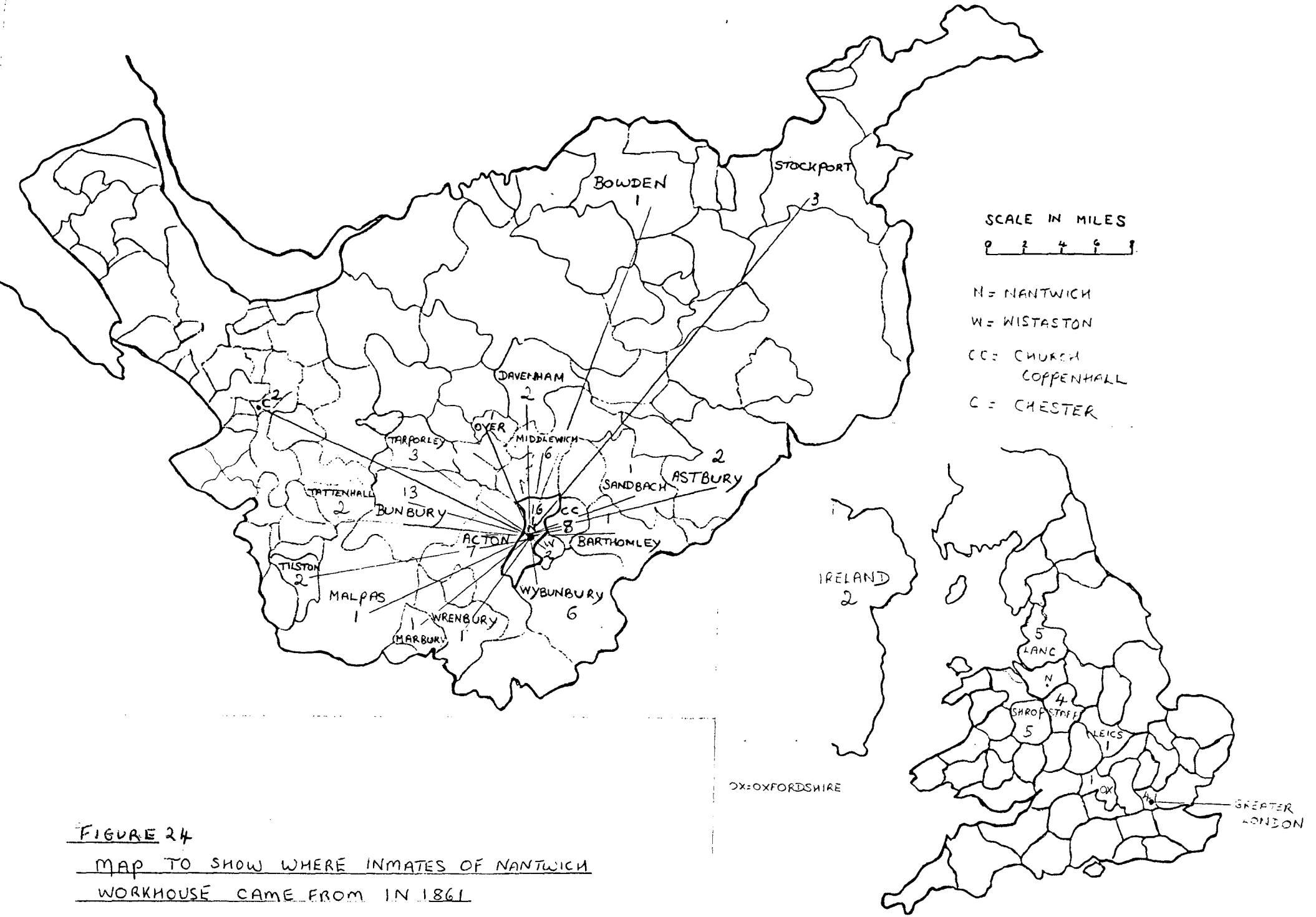


FIGURE 24

MAP TO SHOW WHERE INMATES OF NANTWICH WORKHOUSE CAME FROM IN 1861

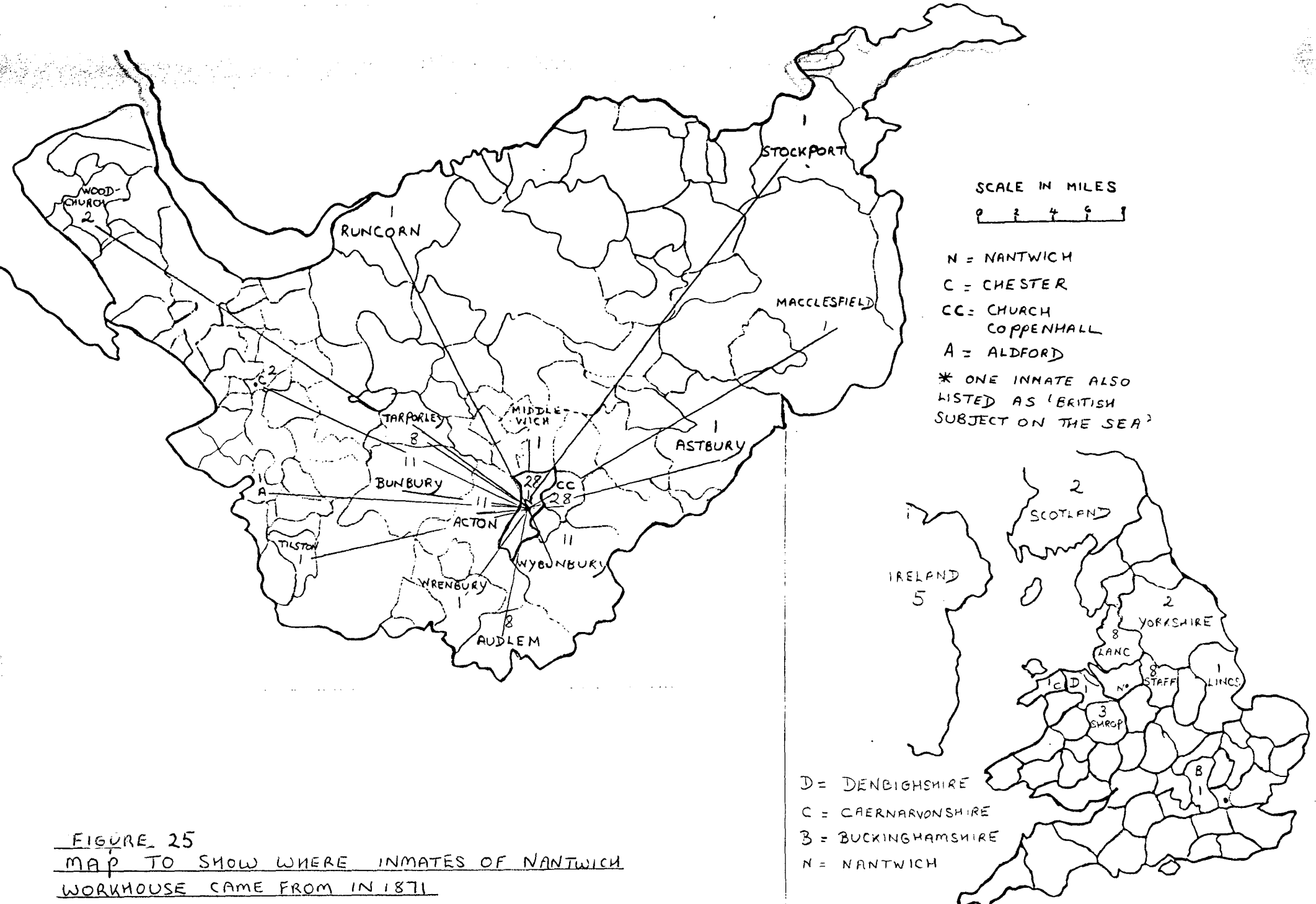
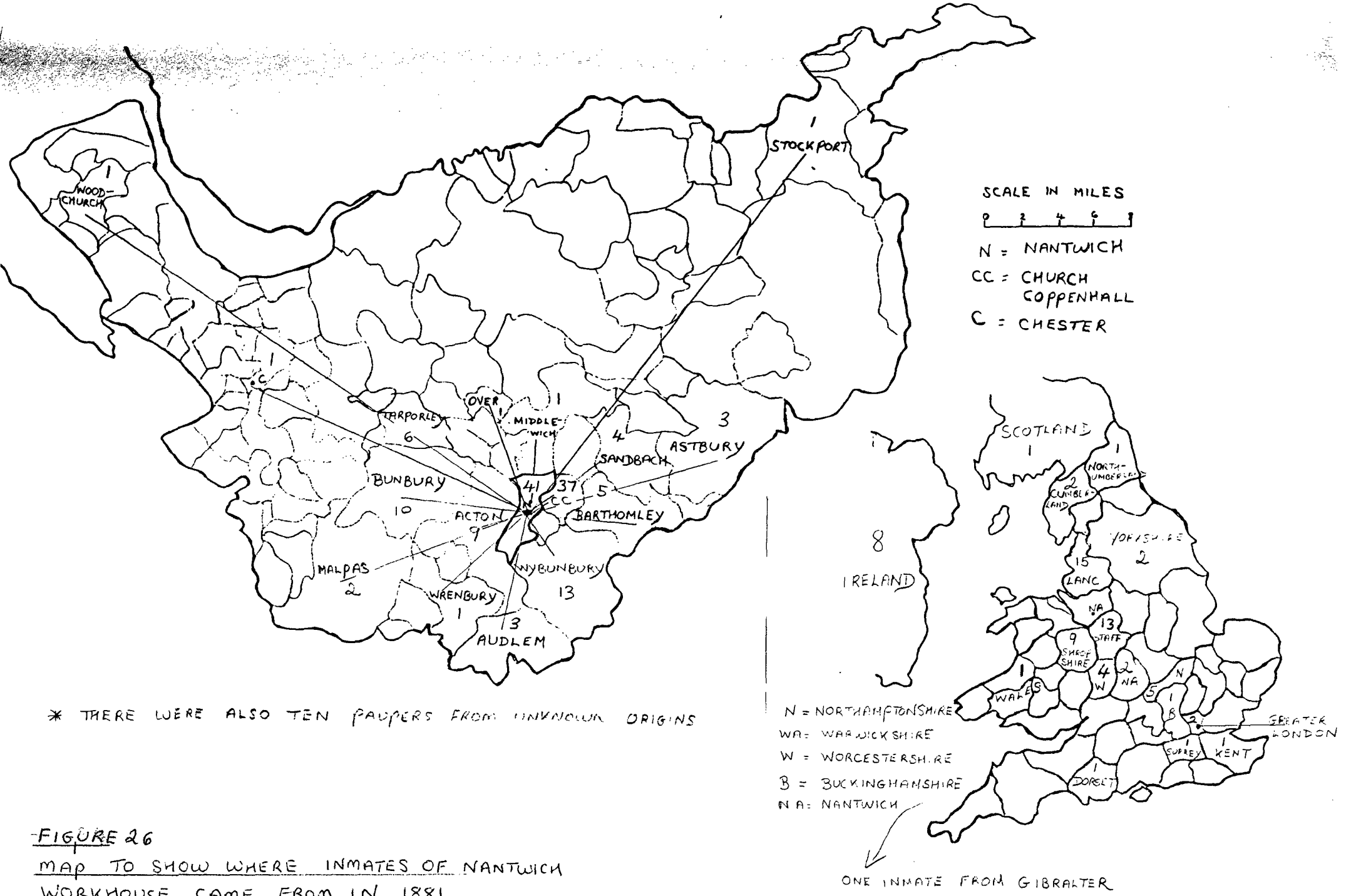


FIGURE 25
MAP TO SHOW WHERE INMATES OF NANTWICH WORKHOUSE CAME FROM IN 1871



* THERE WERE ALSO TEN PAUPERS FROM UNKNOWN ORIGINS

FIGURE 26

MAP TO SHOW WHERE INMATES OF NANTWICH WORKHOUSE CAME FROM IN 1881

travelled before residing in the workhouse had greatly increased reflecting the improvements taking place in transport, and the fact that more people found themselves faced with an economy that dictated that during downturns they had to tramp to look for work. In the census returns for Nantwich the following patterns emerge:

Year	No. of inmates from Cheshire in Nantwich Workhouse		Inmates from outside Cheshire		Total inmates
1851	130	(86.7%)	20	(13.3%)	150
1861	81	(78.7%)	22	(21.3%)	103
1871	119	(79.4%)	31	(20.6%)	150
1881	139	(63.4%)	80	(36.5%)	219

126

While the proportion of inmates from Cheshire declined by 23.3% between 1851 and 1881, total inmate numbers had increased by 46% during the same period. The most striking increase occurred in the number of inmates who originated from outside the county. In 1851 such inmates represented just 13.3% of paupers but by 1881 36.5% of inmates did not originate from Cheshire. The number of non-Cheshire inmates had increased by 300% between 1851 and 1881 while total numbers had risen by 46%. The neighbouring county of Lancashire provided the second largest group of inmates after those originating from Cheshire. Lancastrians represented 6% in 1851, 4.85% in 1861, 5.33% in 1871 and 6.8% in 1881. Even though Nantwich Union was in the south of the county, road links with Lancashire were good, and Lancashire workers who fell on hard times would be encouraged to look for work in the county not only because of its close proximity, but because of the existence of textile industries

throughout the region, and in Nantwich itself, together with other manufacturing and agricultural work.

Staffordshire, ranked third in the order of counties from which inmates originated, and in 1871 ranked joint second with Lancashire when they provided 5.33% of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse. Between 1851-1881 the proportion of inmates from Staffordshire had been on the increase: 2.6% in 1851, 3.8% in 1861 and 5.9% in 1881. As Nantwich Union lay close to the Staffordshire border, it was likely to be one of the first places in the county that Staffordshire paupers encountered when on the tramp for work in manufacturing, agriculture, or the mines which could be found in other parts of the county.

Shropshire, bordering the southern tip of the county, ranked joint second with Lancashire in 1861 in providing 4.85% of inmates, thereafter falling to fourth position in 1871 and 1881 when providing 2% and 4.1% of inmates. Agriculture figured prominently in the economy of Shropshire, together with some mining, and the inmates could well have come to Nantwich to seek work as agricultural labourers or have been stopping over at Nantwich on their way to Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Staffordshire in the search for work.

Nantwich is just forty miles from the port of Liverpool and while Irish inmates appear in all of the census returns, they do not predominate: for example in 1851 Irish inmates accounted for 1.3%; 1861 - 1.9%; 1871 - 3.3%; and 1881 - 3.6%. The attraction of work, or the fact that members of their families had already settled in other parts of the north west, meant that cities like Manchester and Liverpool and their surrounding areas had a greater proportion of Irish immigrants

than South Cheshire. Large scale building projects, such as the building of the railways would have accounted for an increase in their numbers in the region, but they did not form a large nucleus of poverty in Nantwich Union.

The census return for 1851 confirms a predominant pattern of local migration among the applicants for indoor relief, with the counties neighbouring Cheshire accounting for the majority of migrants - the furthest applicants originating from Ireland, Scotland, and Worcestershire. As A. Redford has argued people on the tramp looking for work usually followed a process of short-distance migration from surrounding counties, the inward movement usually taking place in stages, in an 'exceedingly complex wave-like motion.'[127] The evidence from the census' relating to inmates of the workhouse, confirms this theory. By 1861 the pattern remained largely unchanged but applicants had come a little further afield, from Leicestershire, Oxfordshire, and Greater London. Similarly in 1871 several inmates had come from Lincolnshire, Buckinghamshire, and Scotland. However the 1881 census revealed as never before, how the workhouse was increasingly being used by people from counties further away, who were now on the move around the country, seeking work at a time of depressed trade. In the thirty years between 1851 and 1881 the Board of Guardians had witnessed a shift in emphasis from when they were mainly concerned with the granting of indoor relief to inmates, of whom 86% originated from Cheshire, to a situation in 1881 where over one third of inmates receiving relief in Nantwich Workhouse were not from Cheshire.

Also between 1851 and 1881 a shift in emphasis was taking place in the composition of the local inmates receiving relief

in Nantwich Workhouse:

Census	Total Number in Workhouse	Where local inmates originated from: Nantwich		Acton		Bunbury		Wybunbury		Church Coppenhall	
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
1851	150	25	16.6	26	17.3	21	14	25	16.6	-	-
1861	103	16	15.3	7	6.8	13	12.6	6	5.8	8	7.7
1871	150	28	18.6	11	7.3	11	7.3	11	7.3	28	18.6
1881	219	41	18.7	9	4.1	10	4.5	13	5.9	37	16.9

In 1851 the majority of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse were from Nantwich, Acton, Wybunbury, and nearby Bunbury. In 1861 the noticeable addition to this list were paupers from the parish of Church Coppenhall, resulting from the growth of the new railway town of Crewe who subsequently began to send paupers to the workhouse. While paupers from the town of Nantwich continued to increase, as, on an unprecedented scale, did paupers from Church Coppenhall, so the number of inmates coming from the parishes of Acton, Bunbury, and Wybunbury declined. Also by 1861 it is noticeable that the Cheshire inmates to be found in Nantwich Workhouse had travelled from more distant parishes than had been the case in 1851 when the furthest Cheshire inmates had travelled before reaching Nantwich Workhouse had been 16 miles. By 1861 inmates from Chester, Bowden, and Stockport appear in the returns. As the cotton famine was just beginning to bite in the north west so people from further afield would appear looking for work.

This trend was reinforced in the census returns of 1871 when the number of inmates from Nantwich increased by 3% compared to 1861, but the most sizeable increase in inmate numbers arose from the parish of Church Coppenhall, who since 1861 had

increased its share of pauper inmates by 10.9%. Nantwich town and Church Coppenhall now ranked equally as the main centres from which inmates in Nantwich Workhouse originated, followed by neighbouring Wybunbury, Acton, and Bunbury, who compared to 1851, provided far fewer inmates than previously. Inmates from Chester, Woodchurch on the Wirral, Runcorn, Stockport, and Macclesfield still appeared in the workhouse, albeit in small numbers.

In the returns for 1881 the local patterns identifiable since the 1860s were once again repeated. The most marked feature was the fact that the workhouse was being used by inmates from neighbouring and more far flung counties, more than in any other previous census.

The information revealed in the census confirms the point made by J. H. Treble that working-class indigence was greatly affected by 'adverse family circumstance' such as sickness, widowhood, large families, and old age, and that all these factors were 'mutally reinforcing, rather than completely separate causes of poverty.'[128]

The increasing burden of the non-able bodied and children in the workhouse

By January 1885 the number of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse had increased by 23.5% compared to January 1880.[129] The most marked increases had taken place in the non-able bodied and children, as male able bodied inmates had only increased by 12.9% since January 1880 or by 4 inmates, and the number of female able bodied inmates in the workhouse had actually declined by 24% compared to 1880.[130] However the number of non-able bodied males and females had increased by 19.5% and 73.3%

respectively compared to January 1880 and the number of able and non-able bodied children had increased by 28.5% and 62.5% respectively.[131] These figures reinforce the argument that the non-able bodied and children under 16 formed a hard nucleus of inmates that constituted an ever growing body of inmates within the workhouse. By January 1885 non-able bodied inmates and children under 16 accounted for 72% of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse. The institution that had been established to deter the able bodied was filled with children and the non-able bodied. In July 1885 inmate numbers had decreased by 19.4% compared to January of that year,[132] but the trends identified above continued with the non-able bodied and children under 16 accounting for 72.8% of inmates.

In relation to the argument that the non-able bodied were forming an increasing burden for the Poor Law to maintain, K. Williams has drawn attention to the fact that after 1834 the Poor Law drew a line of exclusion against able bodied men, or more specifically the unemployed, so that relief became concentrated on the old and chronically sick. Williams emphasises that the spectacular rise in the relative importance of the old and infirm 'was not accounted for by a generous extension of relief' to this group. He points out that in relation to the population as a whole their 'percentage size' did not vary much. 'The explanation for the rise in relative importance of relief to aged and infirm adults is to be found in the absolute and relative decline of relief to able bodied men.'[133] However pressure on the workhouse in terms of total inmate numbers was still severe: just three months later, in October 1885, the clerk of Nantwich Union wrote to neighbouring Tarvin Union to

ask if they would take some of the inmates from Nantwich Union in order to '... reduce the pressure of inmates in the workhouse' and Tarvin accepted some of the Nantwich poor.[134]

Between the years ending Michaelmas 1880 and 1885 the cost of providing indoor relief in Nantwich had increased by 14.7% to stand at £2,103, which surpassed the 9.32% increase reached in England and Wales during the same period.[135] However in Cheshire the cost of indoor relief had increased by just 2,49% between 1880 and 1885,[136] a considerably lower percentage increase than that achieved in England and Wales, and Nantwich. The picture on a county basis was more optimistic than in Nantwich. Cheshire also reflected the tendency for the non-able bodied to dominate the workhouse and in January and July 1885 59% and 56% respectively of paupers, adults and children, receiving in-maintenance were classed as non-able bodied.[137] However at the county level there was also a marked increase in the number of able bodied adult inmates: between July 1880 and July 1885 an increase of 26% was recorded.[138] In Nantwich the opposite trend was in operation as between July 1880 and 1885 there had been a decrease of 16.0% in able bodied adults.[139] The fact that the number of able bodied inmates within Nantwich Workhouse was largely decreasing at this time bears witness to the growing clothing trade that had been establishing itself in the town from the 1870s, providing new employment for the area in an otherwise difficult period of trade recession. There were also opportunities for work provided by the railways at Crewe, other areas in the county not having access to such industry in a time of difficult trading conditions. Initially Nantwich was buffered against the onset of trade recession

that hit the county during the 1880s.

Unemployment, old age, and the non-able bodied - further proof that the workhouse was inappropriate

Between 1881 and 1891 the population of Nantwich Union increased by just 2.4%.[140] However by January 1895 the number of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse stood at 319, which represented a 29% increase since 1885, which was a far larger increase than was taking place generally in Cheshire.[141] The non-able bodied and children under 16 still constituted the majority of paupers, 63.9%, but this figure represented a decrease of 8% compared to ten years previously.[142] In fact the number of non-able bodied females and children in the workhouse remained the same in January 1895 as it had been in January 1885, only non-able bodied males had increased by 21.8%.[143] What had changed between 1885 and 1895 was the number of able bodied inmates receiving relief in the workhouse as the depression in trade and agriculture hit the area. The number of able bodied males had increased by 14.28%; able bodied females by 68.18%; and able bodied children by 33%.

Such large increases in the number of able bodied people seeking relief in the workhouse led Ada Nield Chew, a Crewe Guardian, to move that Nantwich Board take full and immediate advantage of such powers vested in them to provide work for the unemployed. One month after this plea was made the Board replied that:

> ... the general feeling of the members present appeared to be that now the severe weather had departed ordinary work suitable for persons at present out of employment would now be obtainable.[144]

Such optimism was not to prove reliable. As P. Thane has argued the provision of paid non-pauperizing work for the temporary unemployed was an ineffective policy as it was unsuitable for operating in winter, just when unemployment was at its highest. Such a system also tended to be expensive and inefficient as the labour force was not trained for the work.[145] Guardians as witnessed above, were reluctant to operate the scheme. The tendency for an increasing number of able bodied inmates to seek relief in the workhouse had been evident in Cheshire in the mid 1880s, when Nantwich Union had enjoyed decreases in the numbers of able bodied in the workhouse due to local economic growth. However by 1895 the reality of increasing numbers of able bodied paupers in Nantwich Workhouse was evident.

Evidence was given by Nantwich Union to the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression in February 1895 when it was stated that because of the state of poor trade many of the labouring classes were out of employment and many old labourers had taken refuge in the workhouse. Another reason given by one witness for the increased number of paupers was the discharge of men from Crewe Works at 65, but the Union denied this accusation, stating that men were only discharged when incapacitated and that there was no age limit.[146] While opinion differed on the details, the fact was that after leaving work due to old age many men found that they had no alternative but to resort to the workhouse. Wages were barely sufficient during their working lives to maintain their families, the surplus available to make savings for their old age was usually negligible.

In Cheshire there had been an increase of 13.26% in the

number of people receiving indoor relief between January 1885 and January 1895[147] and there was a marked increase in the number of able bodied adult inmates receiving in-maintenance; in January 1885 they accounted for 18.79% of inmates; by January 1895 they represented 26.71%, an increase in real terms of 60.93%.[148] In Nantwich during the same period the number of able bodied adults receiving indoor relief had increased by 35%. Able bodied adults were now receiving indoor relief in Cheshire on a scale that had never before been seen within the county:

Able bodied adults relieved in the workhouse

Date		Cheshire % of able bodied inmates	Nantwich Union % of able bodied inmates
January	1858	20.98	20.13
July	1860	14.85	14.77
January	1861	18.13	22.95
July	1862	23.90	21.16
January	1863	25.77	27.05
July	1865	19.89	22.48
July	1866	20.02	21.37
July	1870	15.11	10.56
January	1875	16.44	16.16
July	1875	12.51	15.06
January	1880	18.48	30.00
July	1880	14.67	24.87
January	1885	18.79	23.07
July	1885	17.02	21.10
January	1895	26.71	24.13
January	1910	23.47	26.19
January	1914	22.35	20.66

Even in the height of the cotton famine, Cheshire had never had as many adult able bodied poor in the workhouse as it did in January 1895. Nantwich Union relieved more adult able bodied paupers in the workhouse than was the case in the county as a whole, and January 1895 found nearly a quarter of all Nantwich inmates being classed as adult able bodied. The above figures

show that from the 1850s just sixteen years after the 1834 Act, adult able bodied paupers represented one fifth of all inmates. While this figure did fluctuate, it remained fairly consistent through the decades to show that a percentage of the able bodied were always desperate enough to be forced to disregard the deterrent effect of less eligibility. The figures for 1910 and 1914 show that this tendency for adult able bodied paupers to be relieved in the workhouse continued at well over 20%, which emphasises that with the economy that then existed the deterrent of the workhouse in itself was not enough to force a great decline in adult able bodied inmates.

The workhouse itself had originally been conceived to provide part of the 'cure' to rid society of the malaise of adult able bodied paupers - the deterrent being thought sufficient to motivate potential paupers back into earning their own living and so reduce pauperism. The fallacy of such an assumption was to be proved as the decades passed: many adult able bodied paupers had no alternative but to enter the workhouse as unemployment, caused by recession, became a reality. The institution itself and the tales that surrounded it, were not physically capable of curbing rising pauperism. Poverty had become part of the economy, not part of the psyche of man, the weak willed among whom had been seen as the chief culprits in perpetuating pauperism. The aged and non-able bodied often found themselves with nowhere else to go but the workhouse, a place not designed to deal with their needs, and yet they too were subject to the indignity of less eligibility.

At the end of the nineteenth century it was clear that the workhouse had not provided the cure for poverty that was

once envisaged. The Poor Law was seen increasingly to have many shortcomings that made it difficult to function in the economic climate that then existed with a prevelence of low wages, and unemployment resulting from trade recession not individual idleness.

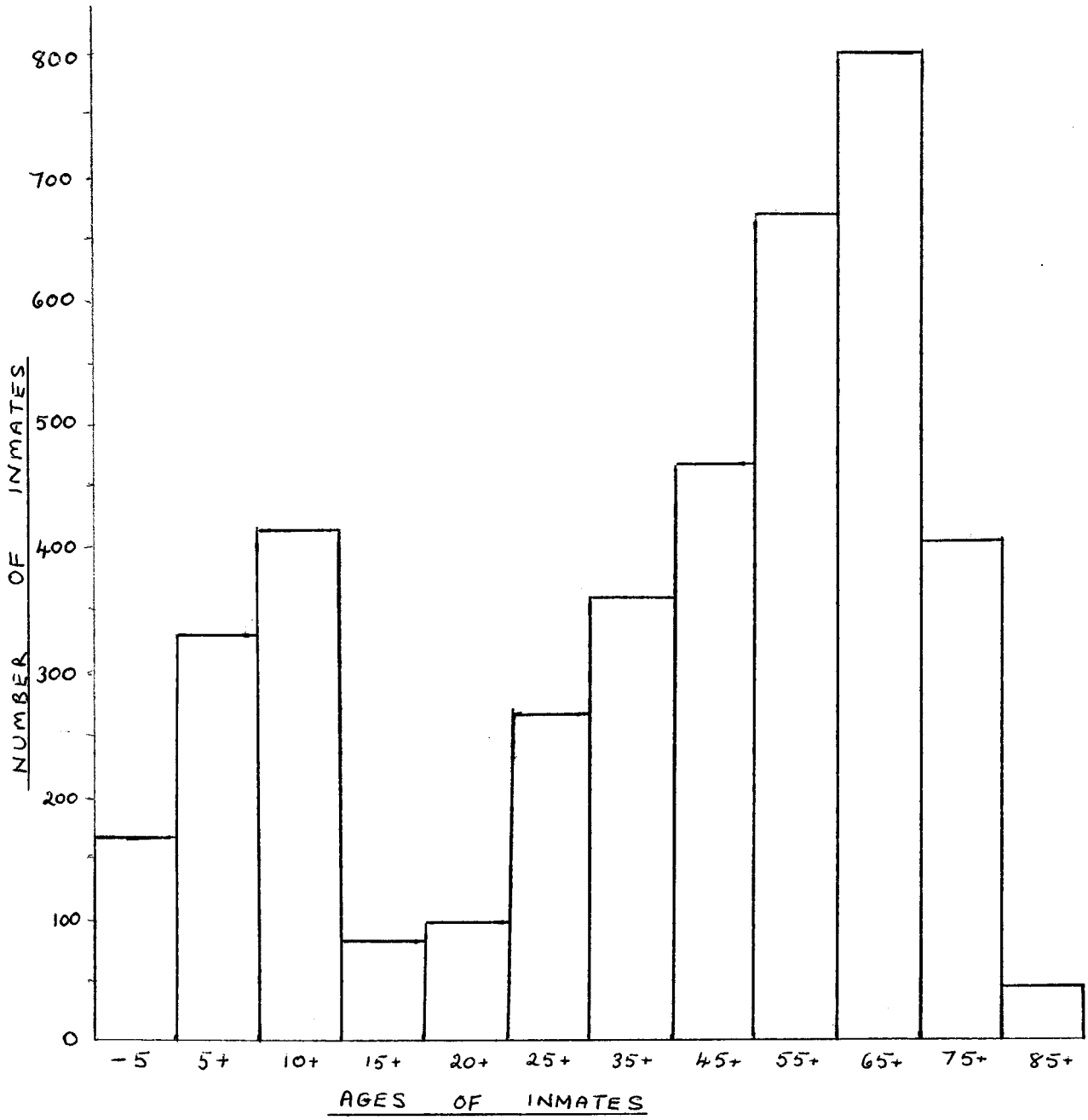
The cost of providing indoor relief in Nantwich Union, had increased by 20.87% between the year ending Michaelmas 1885 and the year ended Lady Day 1896; in Cheshire as a whole during the same period the cost of indoor relief had increased by 15.55%; and in England and Wales by 17.31%.[149] The start of the twentieth century saw a continual increase in the cost of indoor relief throughout the county: between 1896 and 1902 Nantwich Union witnessed an increase of 43.5%; and the cost for Cheshire increased by 53.5%. Indeed such was the increase in the cost of in-maintenance in Nantwich Union in 1900 that attention was drawn to the matter in the local press.[150] The average cost of in-maintenance was 4s 7¾d in 1900 compared with 3s 6½d in 1899. The Master of the workhouse blamed the increase on the cost of coal, but the assistant clerk pointed out that a different way of calculating the cost had been adopted which helped to explain the large increase in costs.[151] However the guardians were worried that if no satisfactory explanation of this change in accountancy were given to the public '... the guardians might be charged with bad management in having allowed the cost of in-maintenance to be increased by a shilling per head.' So the public were assured that using the new method of calculation, the average cost of in-maintenance in 1899 would have been 4s 8¼d, so there had been a slight decrease in cost for the ratepayer. The new method of calculation

was approved of.

By 1905 a further increase of 0.98% and 9.17% in the cost of in-maintenance had taken place in Nantwich and Cheshire respectively.[152] In England and Wales during the half year ending Lady Day 1905 the actual amount expended on in-relief was higher than in any of the other nine and a half years since 1896. In relation to the population it appeared that the rate per head of in-maintenance, although the same as in the corresponding half year in 1904, was in fact higher than in the eight other half years since 1896. This increased expenditure was related to the fact that the numbers of paupers relieved in workhouses had risen by 19%, and the number of infirm and aged poor relieved in England and Wales had risen by 23%.[153] As P. Thane has argued this growth in both numbers and cost has also been linked to the democratisation of the Poor Law franchise in 1894. However as she argues '... it was primarily the result of the gradual implementation of the Local Government Board policy of improving institutional relief'[154] which per pauper had always been more expensive than out relief.

The census of 1901 also focused attention on the problem of the aged poor in the workhouses of Cheshire. Only 0.5% of the general population in Cheshire were relieved in the workhouse, but at advanced ages the proportion was far higher: at the age of 55+ the proportion percent of the population of the same age in the workhouse equalled 2.4% and at 65+ 3.7% of the population of the county were in the workhouse.[155] In terms of the composition of inmates within the workhouse 47.09% of inmates within Cheshire were aged from 55 years upwards, and 30.73% came into the 65 years and upward category.

figure 27



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The report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor in 1895, and the Report of the Commission on Old Age Pensions in 1898, had highlighted the problem of the aged and infirm in society, together with inadequate out-relief provision and their condition in the workhouse. In England and Wales the

following facts were revealed in respect of the aged poor:

Age	Number of paupers on the day of count 1st August 1890	Numbers of paupers per 1000 of pop. in this age group
0 - 16	229,178	21
16 - 65	203,171	12
60 - 65	41,180	53
65 - 70	62,240	109
70 - 75	77.708	185
75 - 80	60,879	261
80+	44.860	300

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The conclusions to be drawn from this report were that relief was often sought by individuals at intervals, to tide over sickness and other special emergencies, and that all ages had occasional recourse to the Poor Law, but were not permanently maintained on the rates. However many aged people above the age of 65 who '... come only at long intervals for relief may often be a person who is generally averse to such assistance and only accepts it under pressure of illness or severe distress.[158] It was appreciated that while those in the workhouse were those who had no alternative and were forced to seek relief there, there were many more whose day to day conditions were:

> ... only just removed from pauperism and [it called for] sympathy and consideration [for those who were] ... destitute so far as their own resources are concerned but who are kept off the rates by the assistance of friends and by private charity. Such persons must sometimes endure great privation in their effort to avoid application for official relief.[159]

It was now appreciated to a greater extent than ever before that the aged and infirm were a growing problem, and the workhouse, and out-relief, were not the appropriate systems for them to be relieved under.

As the table below shows the number of non-able bodied adults in Nantwich Workhouse, many of whom were aged inmates, had always formed a large 'core' of inmates and indeed a growing burden as the decades passed:

Year	% of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse classed as non-able bodied adults
January 1858	23.6
January 1861	27.04
January 1864	26.57
January 1875	30.53
January 1880	30.50
January 1885	32.79
January 1895	28.84
January 1910	34.28
January 1914	48.93

During the 1890s the debate about whether elderly people should be marred with the stigma of poor relief, and whether provision for old age should be a private responsibility or a charge upon the State was a subject that was hotly debated. At the 22nd Annual Conference of the North West Poor Law District held at Chester in 1896, this subject was raised and the Reverend Thomas Bridge from Macclesfield was widely supported when he stated that the introduction of state pensions would lead to an enormous increase in cost and it would be better to train men

by firm discipline into habits of thrift and independence.[160] He believed that any pension that was introduced would simply be a form of deferred State relief which could easily be turned into '... an engine of political corruption.' However other delegates maintained that there was no reason why pensions should be seen as '... degrading to the honest working man who had helped to build up the wealth of the nation.'[161]

The President of the North Western Conference, Sir John T. Hibbert, summed up the situation by stating that: 'He had every confidence that the Friendly Societies who had done so much to reduce pauperism would be able to solve this question of old age pensions.'[162] Similarly Mrs Hodgson, who represented the Nantwich Guardians at the conference, said that she believed the subject of pensions to be outside the scope of the poor law system and would be better dealt with by the Friendly Societies and Provident Societies.[163] However the increasing number of aged and infirm inmates seeking relief led the Nantwich Board of Guardians to write to the government that the:

> Nantwich Union would urge upon Her Majesty's government the necessity of providing assistance by state aided old age pensions from the Imperial Exchequer so that the aged and deserving poor may be raised above the lot of the common paupers and their support be an equal burden on all classes of the people.[164]

As the burden of aged inmates continued to increase at unprecedented levels so the calls for government intervention to help deal with the problem grew louder as the provisions of the poor law and the pockets of the ratepayers were not deep enough to fulfill the growing need of the aged. This trend

for growing calls for government aid was one that developed in other areas of the poor law too, and at the start of the twentieth century it appeared as if the poor law was in dire need of government aid in terms of cash in order for it to survive at all. In November 1906 the Nantwich Guardians met to consider what representation they should make to the Royal Commission on the Poor Law and Relief of Distress, and one of the most important things they suggested was that: '... adequate provision should be made for the deserving aged and worn-out toilers of this country in order that their latter days may be spent in resonable comfort.'[165]

When the details of the proposed old age pension plan were issued by the government in 1908 Nantwich Guardians were quick to point out that deserving persons over 70 years of age who were in receipt of relief would be excluded from claiming a pension and they asked that this be amended so that such people could have the choice of transferring from poor relief to pension '... thus removing the stigma of pauperism and placing them on an equality with others receiving old age pension.'[166] Apart from having the interests of the over 70 year olds at heart it had always been a fact that a high proportion of those surviving into their seventieth and eightieth years claimed relief from the guardians, and if this clause was not amended they would still have been maintained by the ratepayers.

As Charles Booth had revealed in London between 1886 and 1903, and Seebohn Rowntree in York in 1899, the main causes of poverty were too low wages, unemployment, and old age, all of which the individual had little or no control over. The very fact that Booth and Rowntree had conducted their research on a

scientific basis helped to add weight to the argument that the very foundations on which the 1834 Poor Law Act were based were no longer relevent to an industrial economy. Less eligibility for the unemployed and old was not acceptable and yet many found themselves in the workhouse. While neither Booth or Rowntree directly criticised the work of the poor law, their findings heightened awareness of the inadequacies of the system.

That there was disquiet not only about indoor relief, but concerning the whole system of poor relief in England was expressed by the setting up of the 1905 Royal Commission on the Poor Law. The Majority and Minority Reports of 1909, (the latter being described by M. A. Crowther as an 'historical time-bomb which did not detonate until after 1945')[167] although not acted upon, both expressed the need for a new system of relief at a time when both at local and national level the cost of providing indoor relief was rising. In England and Wales from the half year ended Lady Day 1903 to 1910 the population was estimated to have increased by slightly more than 8%, but expenditure on the maintenance of indoor paupers had increased by more than 17%.[168] Expenditure on in-maintenance had increased in nine out of the ten half years between Lady Day 1901 and 1910 representing a 35% increase, and the number of aged and infirm had risen by 28% during this period.

Between 1905 and 1910 the cost of indoor relief in Nantwich had risen by 11.29%, despite the fact that the average cost of food and clothing for inmates in Nantwich was lower than the average of the other nine unions in the district. Between 1905 and 1910 in Cheshire there had been an increase of 16.4% in the cost of in-maintenance.[169] The number of inmates in Nantwich

Workhouse in January 1910 stood at 420, an increase of 31.66% compared to 1895.[170] As M. A. Crowther has emphasised the introduction of the Pensions Act in early 1909 had little effect on indoor relief as the pension (between 1s 0d and 5s 0d a week) was not enough to enable the infirm aged to support themselves outside the workhouse.[171] The number of able bodied adults relieved had increased by 42.85% since 1895; and in February 1907 67 unemployed people from Crewe marched in procession to Nantwich Workhouse where a deputation addressed the guardians and asked them to exercise the powers vested in them to provide work for the unemployed. The Chairman replied to the deputation who 'returned their thanks and withdrew'. A list of names and addresses of the people making up the procession was taken and a committee was set up to enquire into the respective cases and report back to the board at a future meeting. One month later the committee reported back 'exhaustively' but '... having regard to the nature of the cases investigated, the committee did not consider that any action need be taken by the guardians at present,' an almost identical response to that made 12 years earlier during a period of high unemployment.[172] As P. Thane has emphasised it was a combination of high unemployment and the '... unprecedented unwillingness of some at least of the unemployed to accept their fate passively' that demonstrated the absence of any systematic public provision for the unemployed under the poor law. As Thane has argued the shortlived Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 was indicative of the governments unwillingness to accept permanent responsibility for unemployment, and its half-hearted application, as witnessed in Nantwich meant that it provided no solution to the problems.

Unemployment was '... only one of a range of social problems for which the poor laws capacity to provide was, at best, controversial.'[173]

During this period the number of non-able bodied adults increased by 56.52% and between 1895 and 1910 the number of non-able bodied children increased by 98%.[174] In Cheshire the number of people receiving in-maintenance in January 1910 increased by 46% compared to 1895, while population growth within the county equalled 27.43%. However adult able bodied inmates in the workhouse had 'only' increased by 28.4% in Cheshire compared to 42.85% in Nantwich, but the number of non-able bodied inmates within the county had increased by a massive 74.4% between 1895 and 1910.[175]

These trends continued until the outbreak of the first World War when, in July 1914, there were 443 inmates in Nantwich Workhouse, the highest figure in the history of the Union, representing a 5.47% increase since 1910.[176] The number of able bodied people receiving indoor relief had increased by a further 20% since 1910, and the non-able bodied had in fact decreased by 31.94%.[177] In Cheshire the total number receiving indoor relief had fallen by 14.51% since January 1910.[178] By 1914 the trend in Cheshire in terms of in-maintenance was a downward one while in Nantwich, apart from the non-able bodied, the trend was still upward in terms of the able bodied seeking relief in the workhouse. The start of the first World War made many fear that the pressures on the poor relief system would increase still further, but the reality of the situation was to show that the effects of a war on the economy did in fact relieve many of the problems the poor law had been battling against

for years i.e. unemployment, and vagrancy.

Outdoor relief and trends in pauperism

The continuance of outdoor relief

As the Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales had bemoaned in 1836, outdoor relief to the able bodied was not being phased out as quickly as hoped. However Parliament hoped that outdoor relief to the able bodied would cease at the earliest possible period: '... that it could safely, and with propriety, be put an end to.'[179] Some three years later in their Fifth Annual Report it was stated that:

> Nevertheless, though the chief evil then prevalent has been extensively suppressed, it has not yet been extipated. Four-fifths of the money now expended as relief is still out-door relief, and until appropriate workhouses are completed, and the discretionary powers of relief are narrowed, there will be much difficulty in repressing a form of relief as mischievious as it is illegal.[180]

There had been some form of 'uniformity' in the rejection of the principle of the abolition of out-relief as being impracticable, and inappropriate,[181] and as A. Digby has stressed the fact that outdoor relief continued to be granted '... suggests the continued existence of discretionary power at local level in determining relief policies.'[182] Indeed as A. Brundage has argued the continuity of outdoor relief was one of the major factors in winning over many communities who were hostile towards the new law.[183]

In the light of the obvious difficulty experienced by the Commission, was the granting of outdoor relief extinguished immediately in Cheshire in general, and in Nantwich in

particular, and did the anticipated fall in total expenditure costs materialise?

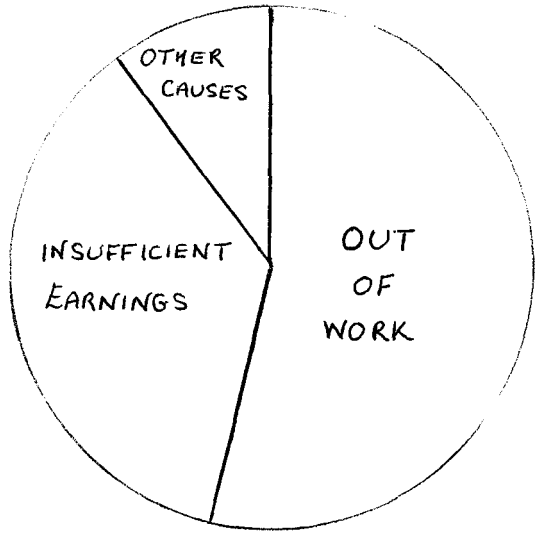
The amount spent on in and out relief in Cheshire as a whole between 1834 and 1840 showed a decrease of 18%. Between 1839 and 1840 the trend was one of increased costs, with an 8.4% increase in maintenance costs occurring, however.[184] Expenditure per head in the county had fallen from 5s 6d in 1834 to 4s 6d in 1840 which was pleasing to ratepayers, and from 1834 to 1837 the decline had been steady and continuous. However in 1838 expenditure per head increased by 2d and in 1840 by a further 4d, proving to ratepayers that all was not golden under the new Poor Law and that the cost of providing in and out relief was still capable of rising as well as falling.[185]

Similarly in England the total amount expended on in and out relief showed a decrease of 36.9% between 1834 to 1837, thereafter increasing by 2.58% in 1838; 6.57% in 1839, and 3.78% in 1840. The total decrease in maintenance costs in England between 1834 and 1840 had been 28% and expenditure per head had fallen from 9s 3d in 1834 to 6s 7d in 1840.[186] While the overall trend was pleasing to guardians and ratepayers alike, the increases occurring in 1838 and 1840 served as a warning of what could and did happen in the coming years.

As F. M. L. Thompson has pointed out even though the new Poor Law was in place by 1840 it was '... not a pure version of the 'principles of 1834' but a fudged compromise which varied from place to place ... and in the compromise many traces of pre 1834 customs survived.'[187] How far is this statement true of Cheshire in relation to its out relief policies and

for what reasons was out-relief granted in the county? During the quarter ending Lady Day 1840, the reasons why able bodied people, representing 17% of all recipients of out-relief, applied for such maintenance were as follows:

figure 28



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23.7% of all people receiving outdoor relief in Cheshire were the old and infirm, who were either partially or wholly disabled and it was obviously cheaper and more humane for them to receive out-relief than to be admitted into the workhouse.[189] Paupers who were out of work made up the largest group of able bodied recipients of out-relief, even though under the 1834 Act they should have received relief in the workhouse. While allowed to receive out-relief they could still continue to look for work and families were not split up. Overall the cost for guardians was cheaper than maintaining all the unemployed in the workhouse, and as D. Fraser has emphasised outdoor relief survived '... because it was a logical way of dealing with a labour demand which was necessarily seasonal.'[190]

As D. Fraser has also argued the main aim of the 1834 Amendment Act was to deter pauperism, one of the main causes of which had been allowances in aid of wages.[191] However despite the strictures from the central body, 36% of the able bodied on out relief in Cheshire in 1840 were receiving relief in order to top up their existing wages, a custom that had continued from the old Poor Law system. However as the evidence has revealed in other areas of poor law operation, the local guardians imposed a framework over the new Poor Law dictated by local circumstances, in a determined effort to withstand directives from the central body. Some eight years after the 1834 Amendment Act had become law, Cheshire guardians were distributing out relief in a way that obviously seemed appropriate to their particular economic and social climate. However the fact that this was at variance with the requirements of the 1834 Act indicated that what the commissioners required, and what was actually going on in the various unions, were two very different things. While the aspirations of the 1834 Act seemed in theory to hold the answer to the ratepayers' pleas for lower costs, in reality the system was shown to lack the capabilities to deal with the unemployed during times of depression without the use of out relief, as the workhouses were physically incapable of holding everyone who applied for relief. It was with this problem that the guardians had to continually wrestle as the realities of the situation conflicted once again with the desires of the Poor Law Commissioners. As A. Digby has argued the poor themselves preferred outdoor relief, even if these small doles involved near starvation and were thus 'inhumane' in their material 'inadequacy.'[192] Also as K. Williams has

pointed out the 1834 Report had not made any recommendations for the radical reform of relief given to groups such as the young, widows, the sick, and the old - consequently many young people found themselves in receipt of out-relief.[193]

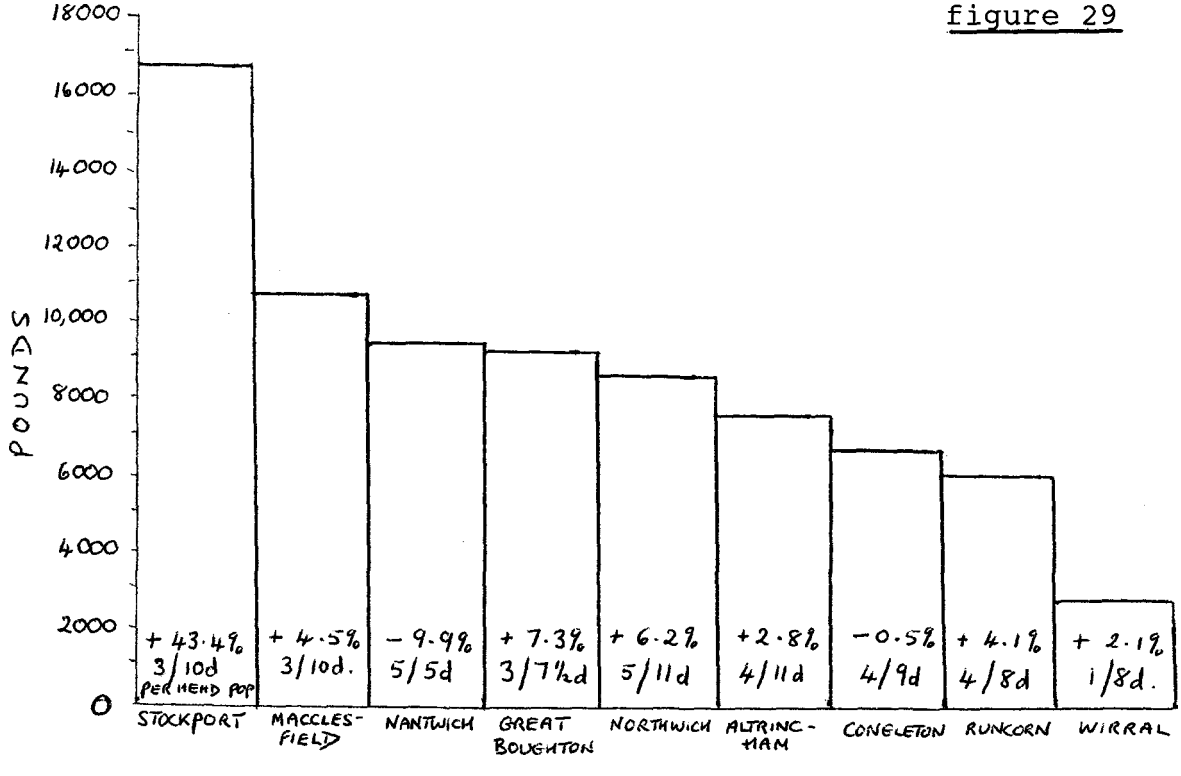
In Cheshire between the quarter ending Lady Day 1839 and 1840 the number of people receiving out-relief had increased by 15%.[194] During the same period the total number of paupers receiving in and out relief had increased by 17.77%, the trend within the county being one of increased pauperism on every count. The figures for the years ending Lady Day 1841 and 1842 showed that there had been an increase of 11.35% in the number of outdoor paupers relieved,[195] but the yearly figure for 1842, although showing an increase over 1841, did represent a decrease of 1.62% compared to the number of outdoor paupers relieved in the quarter ended Lady Day 1840. The cost of outdoor relief had increased by 7.38% between the year ending Lady Day 1841 and 1842 and the number of people receiving in and out relief during the year had increased by 12.44%.[196] In relation to other counties in England, Cheshire was ranked 39th out of 54 counties, with 7% of her population, or 1 in 14 being classed as paupers; Wiltshire being 'top' with 14% and Staffordshire 'bottom' with 5%.[197] Within the county people receiving out-relief outnumbered those in the workhouses by nearly 9 to 1, and the amount spent on out-relief in Cheshire in the year ending Lady Day 1842 amounted to 4.89 times the amount spent on indoor relief.[198]

In Nantwich Union, who had received an order prohibiting out-door relief to the able bodied in February 1841 and a general order in August 1841, the total number of people receiving

out-relief had fallen by 1.76% between the years ending Lady Day 1841 and 1842 contrary to the trend in Cheshire,[199] and the cost of such relief had fallen by 7.68% to £6,703. In terms of the total money expended on in and out relief during this period a decrease of 5.75% had occurred and expenditure stood at 4s 6d per head of the population within the union. While this overall decrease in total cost was taking place the total number of people receiving in and out relief had increased by 3.74%.[200] So while relieving more paupers in Nantwich Workhouse and fewer on out-relief the union were in fact maintaining more paupers at less expense to the union. However the reality was that out-relief was still needed in order to support all the paupers needing relief within the union.

For the year ending Lady Day 1842, when the total cost of in and out relief plus establishment charges are taken into consideration, the following emerges on a county basis:

figure 29



(+ and - indicate the difference in cost for the union between 1841 and 1842) 201

Nantwich ranked third in overall costs out of nine unions, but was one of only two unions that had actually seen a drop in total expenditure between 1841 and 1842. In terms of expenditure costs per head of the population, Nantwich was second only after Northwich in being the most expensive union in the county.

In the 8th Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners stress was once again placed on the urgency of phasing out outdoor relief as during the winter of 1841-1842 numerous cases had been allowed in the North of England but: '... we trust that similar cases will in future be brought without inconvenience under the operation of the established rules.'[202] In England and Wales increases in the total cost of maintaining the poor had been occurring since 1837.[203] The reasons why such increases were taking place were attributed to the population growth in England and Wales which had increased by 14.4% between 1831 and 1841, a considerable part of the increase having taken place between 1837 and 1841; and the fact that the cost of provisions had risen considerably, wheat prices having increased from 52s 6d per quarter in 1837 to 65s 3d per quarter in 1841. The price of wheat had fallen again in 1841 so this explanation could be discounted for the latter year. Amounts spent on the building of workhouses and loans being repaid between 1838 and 1841 were also contributory factors as was '... an increasing laxity with respect to the relief of the able bodied in some Unions.'[204] Distress in the manufacturing areas had also increased expenditure in 1841, and the Commissioners urged that while expenditure might have been increasing in England as a whole since 1837 '... imagine what expenditure would have been if the Poor Law Amendment Act had not been passed.[205]

The Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order, which was issued in 1844, directed that relief to able bodied men and women and their families, was to be given only in the workhouse, subject to certain exceptions. Large scale unemployment and a resistance to accepting the new law meant that this order was not rigidly enforced. In theory the outdoor labour test of 1842 was to ensure that the able bodied could not receive out-relief without performing some task of monotonous work, so upholding the principle of less eligibility. However the list of exceptions that always accompanied the instructions for issuing outdoor relief meant that the rules were very much open to interpretation.

In Cheshire the total cost of in and out relief fell by 16% between the years ending Lady Day 1843 and 1846,[206] but between 1846 and 1847 an increase of 2.45% occurred emphasising the fluctuating nature of expenditure.[207] Between the quarter ending Lady Day 1846 and 1847 the number of people receiving outdoor relief had increased by 73% while the cost of such relief had increased by 4.27%,[208] and during the quarter ending Lady Day 1847 for every person in the workhouse there were seven receiving out-relief.[209] 5.5% of Cheshire's population, or 1 in 18 were classed as paupers in 1847 compared to 8.8% of the population, or 1 in 11 in England. The 'top' county in this respect was Wiltshire where 17% of the population were classed as paupers, and the lowest was Derbyshire with 4.4%.[210] Similarly in 1847 the rate in the £ of relief to the poor on the annual value of rateable property assessed to the poor rate was 1s 0¼d in Cheshire; 1s 6¾d in Nantwich and 1s 6¾d in England, and the rate per head of expenditure for relief to the poor

was 3s 8d in Cheshire compared to 6s 1½d in England.[211] When comparisons are made from the standpoint of 1847 with 1834 respecting the amount of money expended on relieving the poor there had been a 13% decrease in Cheshire and a 17% decrease in England during this period.[212]

In Nantwich Union between the quarter ended Lady Day 1846 and 1847 the number of paupers receiving out-relief had increased by 6.3%, a much smaller increase than was taking place in Cheshire, but the cost of out-relief increased by 6.37% between the year ending Lady Day 1846 and 1847, just over 2% more than the increase occurring in the county. For every pauper in the workhouse at Nantwich there were nearly 3 people outside its walls receiving out-relief, a much smaller ratio than in Cheshire. During this period the total number of paupers in receipt of relief within Nantwich Union increased by 11.34% to stand at 3483, approximately 9½% of the population of the Union, which was much greater than in Cheshire.[213] Between the years ending Lady Day 1846 and 1847 the cost of in and out relief in the Union increased by 28.65%, or eleven times more than in Cheshire.[214] A downward trend in the total cost of in and out relief continued in the county: since the year ending Lady Day 1843, when a peak had been reached in the cost of in and out relief, there had been a decrease of 41.97% by the year ending Michaelmas 1851, which represented 2s 4d per head of the population. In 1841 expenditure per head of the population had amounted to 3s 11d.[215] For the Nantwich Guardians the 1840s had been a decade of increasing out-relief rather than cutting back its provision, the reality of need in the Union once again thwarting the instructions of the central body.

The 1850s - short term reductions, long term increases

There was a decrease of 3% in the total number of paupers relieved in and out of the workhouse in Cheshire between January 1850 and 1851 and those receiving relief on 1st January 1851 represented 3% of the population.[216] The number of able bodied paupers receiving out-relief in Cheshire also showed a downward trend with reductions of 9.46% between January 1850 and 1851, and by 3% between July 1850 and 1851; the able bodied on out-relief outnumbering the able bodied in the workhouse by 7 to 1 in July 1851, indicating the lack of capacity to deal with the sheer weight of numbers in the workhouse. The total number of able and non-able bodied receiving out-relief had declined by 6.12% between the half year ending Lady Day 1850 and 1851, when 5.44% of the county's population were receiving out-relief. However even though the trend appeared to be downward when the number of paupers receiving out-relief in Cheshire in the year of 1841 are compared with the half yearly figures for 1851 there was an overall increase of 34.18% while the population of the county had increased by 15.2% during the same period.[217] For every pauper in Cheshire receiving relief in the workhouse in 1851 there were seven on out-relief.[218] The cost of providing out-relief in the county had fallen by 6% between the year ending Michaelmas 1849 and 1850, followed by a further decline of 3.2% in the following year when expenditure on out-relief stood at 2 shillings per head.[219]

England and Wales were also experiencing a decline in the amount spent on in and out relief, for example a decrease of 10.7% had occurred in the half year ending Michaelmas 1850 together with a 7.4% decline in the numbers of paupers relieved

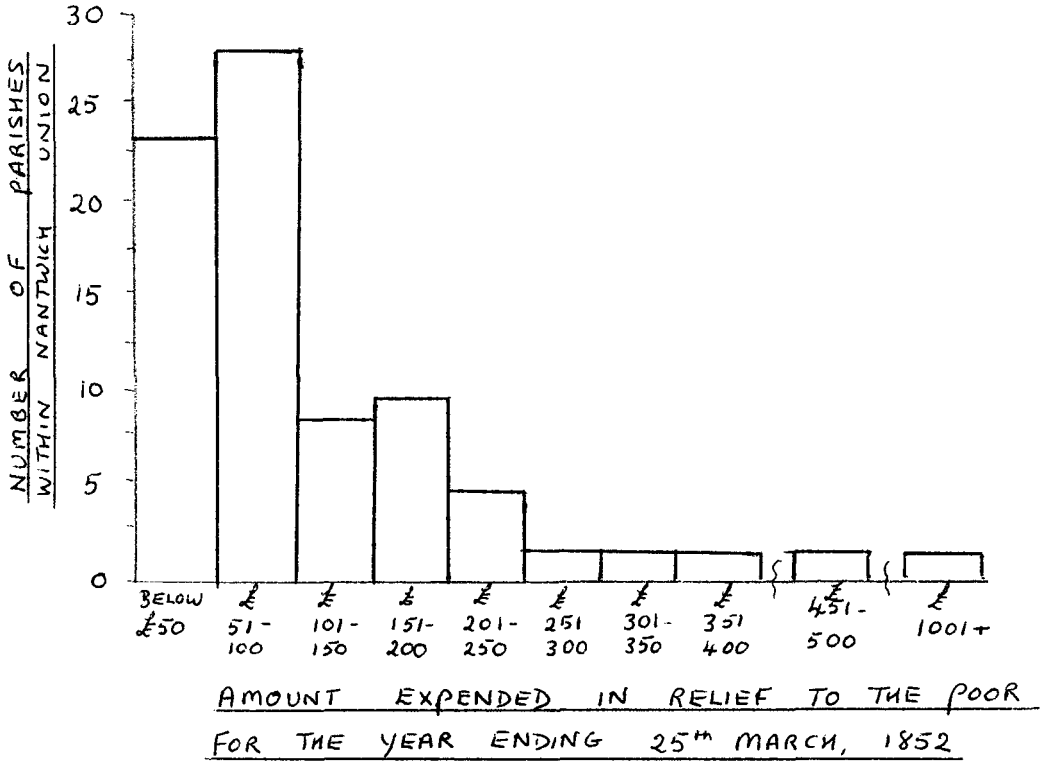
between January 1850 and 1851.[220] In terms of the able bodied relieved in and out of the workhouse there had been a decrease of 14.7% between January 1850 and 1851 compared to a decrease of 8.3% in Cheshire.[221] While the figures show a general decline in both cost and numbers, the long term trends in pauper numbers indicated an upward movement, while costs were being squeezed, which would have been beneficial to the ratepayers but not to the welfare of the paupers.

In Nantwich Union by the half year ending Lady Day 1850 the number of paupers receiving out-relief reached an all time high of 3172, but by the half year ending Lady Day 1851 there had been a decrease of 7.12% and paupers on out-relief represented 1 in every 12 people. 8.1% of the population of the Union were in receipt of out-door relief, more than 2½% more than in Cheshire; and for every person in Nantwich Workhouse there were four receiving out-relief.[222] When the number of paupers receiving out-relief in <u>six months</u> in 1851 is compared with the <u>yearly</u> figures ten years previously, there had been an increase of 36.51% in out-relief numbers, while the population of the Union had increased by 6.2% during this period. In terms of total pauper numbers, both in and out of the workhouse, for the half year ending Lady Day 1851 10% of the population of the Union were affected compared to ten years previously when 6.94% had been classed as paupers.[223] In the ten year period from Lady Day 1841 to the year ending Lady Day 1852 the cost of providing in and out relief within Nantwich Union had increased by 12.4%.[224] The promised boons of the new Poor Law had certainly not materialised in Nantwich Union.

For the year ending 25th March 1852 there exists for

Nantwich Union a complete breakdown of the amounts expended on relief to the poor by every parish within the union:

figure 30



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66.2% of parishes distributed below £100 to its poor in the twelve month period, and a further 27.2% distributed between £101 and £250. Just 3.89% of the Union gave between £251 and £400 and the two largest distributors in terms of cash were Audlem who expended £463 (or 5s 10d per head of the population) and Nantwich with £1014 (or 3s 7d per head of the population). Monks Coppenhall and Church Coppenhall, which together covered the new railway town of Crewe, had not by this stage developed the problems with poverty that they were later to encounter, and only distributed £92 and £89 respectively in poor relief or 4¾d and 3s 6d respectively per head of population.

While there had been declines in the overall cost of providing in and out relief in Cheshire, England and Wales, between 1842 and 1852, the expenditure in Nantwich had increased, but the declines at county and national level tended to disguise the underlying rates of increase, so the overall trend was not as optimistic as was at first thought.

Nantwich Union, in common with the practice in many unions throughout the land, granted outdoor relief to able bodied applicants. While this was against the principle of the 1834 Act, in reality the sheer weight of numbers seeking relief meant that this practice had to be accepted, especially during times of high unemployment. The Poor Law Board queried such relief in January 1854, but after examination of the cases agreed that as it appeared to have been impossible for the applicants to have availed themselves of an offer of the workhouse, such out-relief was not illegal '... but that this opinion applies only to cases in which the applicants could not avail themselves of an offer of relief in the workhouse.'[226]

The Poor Law Board also expressed their strong disapproval of the practice adopted by Nantwich Union of granting relief in aid of wages. Such relief had been proposed for an able bodied man for the purpose of providing clothing for his son when he entered into service. The Poor Law Board wrote to the union expressing strong disapproval as:

> ... it tends to place the children of persons receiving assistance of this kind from the poor rates in a position more favourable to their obtaining situations than the children of independent labourers.[227]

As M. E. Rose has noted it was common for out relief in aid of wages to be continued under the new Poor Law in Lancashire and

the West Riding as a continuation of the old system of relief that was so jealously guarded.[228] This practice also existed in Cheshire during the early 1840s as identified earlier, but for the Nantwich Guardians to be attempting to give such allowances in 1854 was certainly a defiant gesture to the central board.

Apart from the problems concerning the cost of relief and pauper numbers, the union also had to deal with the problems of fraud and malpractice among its relieving officers; described by K. D. M. Snell as the 'crucial and distancing intermediary.'[229] In August 1852 Peter Smith, the relieving officer for Bunbury district was suspended from duty as it appeared that he had taken money that, according to his accounts, had been paid to tradesmen for relief in kind for various paupers. He had refused relief altogether to one pauper because she had not attended punctually at the time he had arranged.[230] Smith stated that relief charged to his account '... did not profess to be paid to tradesmen but to the paupers,' but the Poor Law Board stressed that:

> ... they cannot allow that any relieving officer should appropriate money to his own use which has been passed in his accounts for relief in kind, and then shelter himself under the plea that any unpaid tickets is a private debt between him and the tradesmen and although some might have given him credit to a larger amount it is known to the Guardians that in some instances application for payment has not been complied with.[231]

Other charges were brought against Smith concerning the fact that he refused medical relief without telling the applicant that he required a medical certificate, and that medical relief was given to one man for months without Smith actually visiting

him '... tho' not more than thirty yards out of his way.'[232] As a result of this case each of the relieving officers in Nantwich Union were requested to visit each pauper receiving relief every three weeks and to report such visits to the Board in their weekly diary.

In spite of the evidence the suspension against Smith was dropped by the Nantwich Guardians, but an amendment moved that the Poor Law Board investigate the charges against him. Two weeks later the local board 'regretted' having received a letter from the Poor Law Board requesting them to call upon Smith to resign, as the charges on which he was suspended from office had not been proved against him.[233] Mr Doyle investigated the case and declared that although there appeared to be some irrelevancies in his duties '... there is no semblance of fraud' and that they were not '... of sufficient importance to warrant his discharge and trust that the Board will reinstate him.'[234] On the 23rd October 1852 Smith resigned and his resignation was accepted. Within ten months however Smith had become Assistant Overseer of Alpraham and reports of misconduct once again surfaced, but when he was summoned to attend the board meeting an amendment was moved that the board felt that the charges against Smith were unfounded.[235]

This case serves to emphasise that the system of poor relief was open to abuse in terms of malpractices by officers both in and out of the workhouse. Whenever food or money were concerned people would be tempted, and the Poor Law Board had to grapple with such problems as well as growing pauper numbers. However, as already shown to be the case, the local guardians were loath to dismiss an officer, because of the trouble

encountered in appointing a successor. Whether a Master or relieving officer, they could usually depend on being given a second chance.

After the steady decline that had taken place in Cheshire in the cost of in and out relief up to 1851, the trend changed to one of ever increasing expenditure. An increase of 5% took place between the year ending Michaelmas 1851 and the year ending Lady Day 1854, followed by a further increase of 12.36% between the years ending Lady Day 1854 and 1855. By the year ending Lady Day 1857 expenditure on in and out relief stood at £71,793 which represented a 12.29% increase in two years, and this was the highest expenditure on in and out relief in Cheshire since 1847, representing 3s 2d per head of the county.[236] By January and July 1856 the total number of paupers receiving relief both in and out of the workhouse had increased by 7.8% and 7% respectively compared to the same months in 1850. The increases had occurred in the numbers relieved in the workhouse and the non-able bodied receiving out relief; paupers represented one in every 30 people in Cheshire.[237]

The cost of out relief in Cheshire had been increasing since the year ending Lady Day 1855 when expenditure had risen by 9.9% compared to the previous year[238] and by the year ending Michaelmas 1857 a further increase of 12% had taken place. Expenditure on out relief was at the highest it had been at any time during the 1840s and 1850s, and was four times larger than that spent on in-maintenance,[239] as the reality of achieving the aims of the 1834 Amendment Act slipped further away.

By the year ending Lady Day 1857 in Nantwich Union the cost of in and out relief had risen by 11.17% since Lady Day 1852

to reach the all time high of £9,663 4s 0d, the highest it had been since 1847, mirroring the situation in Cheshire as a whole.[240] In July 1857 the total number of people receiving out-relief in the union was nearly twelve times the number of people relieved in the workhouse. 70.7% of those receiving out-relief were adults and 26.8% children (the remaining 2.5% being lunatics). Of those receiving out-relief 8.53% were classed as able bodied adults and 62.2% non-able bodied. So as was the case in the workhouse, by far the greatest number of people receiving relief were the non-able bodied who outnumbered the able bodied by nearly 3 to 1.[241] Between 1st July 1857 and the 1st January 1858 the total number of paupers both in and out of Nantwich Workhouse increased by 5.2% and the number of paupers claiming out-relief increased by 2.87% in the six month period. The number of able bodied both in and out of the workhouse increased by 10.9% during this period as Cheshire and the North West generally was going through a very severe few months of depression, the worst before the onset of the cotton famine. However Nantwich Union, although experiencing a 5% increase in pauperism, was not as badly hit as the county as a whole. By the 1st week in January 1858 Cheshire was registering a 47.46% increase in paupers over the last week in December 1857.[242] In Nantwich the severe conditions were reflected by the numbers in the workhouse increasing by 33% between July 1857 and January 1858, with able bodied adult inmates increasing by 61%.[243]

In Cheshire the number of paupers receiving out-relief fluctuated: there was an increase in all classes of 23.8% between January 1857 and 1858, but by July 1858 the worst of the poverty that had struck the region during the winter of 1857-

1858 had declined, and the number of people on out-relief had fallen by 23½% between January and July 1858. In England and Wales between January 1857 and 1858 an increase of 19.1% had been recorded in adult able bodied pauperism, whereas the increase in Cheshire had reached 61.7%, and those claiming out-relief had increased by 70.5%, emphasising how the fortunes of different regions could vary during economic fluctuations.[244] The North Western Region, and to a lesser extent, the North Midland and York Division were the worst affected by the severity of the winter months between December 1857, and January 1858. The following percentage rate of increase in pauper numbers were recorded each week:

Weeks in 1857-1858		NORTH WESTERN (Lancashire and Cheshire)	
Dec	1st week	27.75%	increase
"	2nd "	33.91%	"
"	3rd "	38.53%	"
"	4th "	43.26%	"
"	5th "	46.38%	"
Jan	1st "	47.46%	"
Feb	4th "	34.78%	"
Mar	4th "	28.29%	"
Apr	4th "	21.24%	"
May	5th "	13.09%	"
June	4th "	9.56%	"
July	5th "	6.51%	"
Aug	4th "	6.27%	"
Sept	4th "	4.31%	"
Oct	5th "	0.03%	decrease
Nov	4th "	16.27%	"
Dec	4th "	29.61%	"

[245]

Top of the list of Union Counties which suffered increased pauperism in all classes both in and out of the workhouse in January 1858 was Nottingham with a 61% increase (compared to January 1857), Lancashire with 52.7%; West Yorkshire with 24.9%; Leicester with 22.5% and Cheshire with 22.4%,[246] and

collectively they formed the top five counties in England and Wales in terms of increased pauperism. Also when the expenditure of 44 counties showing a decrease for the half year ending Michaelmas 1856-1857 were compared with 3 counties showing an increase, Cheshire registered the largest increase in England and Wales of 1.2%,[247] whereas in England and Wales as a whole there had been a decrease of 3.9% in expenditure.

Between January 1858 and July 1860 there was a decrease of 6.6% in the number of people receiving out-relief in the Nantwich Union. The reductions occurred in the number of able bodied children and adults, who had declined by 23.5% and 18.58% respectively compared to January 1858, while the number of non-able bodied adults had fallen by 4.3%. The non-able bodied represented 73.66% of those receiving out-relief and the tendency for the non-able bodied to form the stable core of those on out-relief, as well as in the workhouse, was becoming firmly entrenched. By July 1860 there were fourteen times as many people receiving out-relief in Nantwich as in the workhouse,[248] another trend that was becoming firmly established at this time.

K. Williams has argued that rather than there being a desire to eliminate outdoor relief for all classes in the 1850s and 1860s it was the able bodied males that were the main target of cutbacks, especially those 'in health' and the 'unemployed'.[249] The figures for Nantwich Union between 1857 and 1861, reveal that able bodied males on out-relief represented between 1.2% - 1.7% of recipients, the non-able bodied (both male and female), able bodied females and children far outnumbering their male counterparts, seeming to confirm Williams'

theory. However the fact that the central body kept a careful eye on all cases of out-relief is evident from the correspondence noted in the Minute Books. That such relief was granted with a good deal of local discretion, testifies to the reluctance of the local guardians to be dictated to by the central authority, for example the case when the Nantwich Guardians attempted to grant an allowance in aid of wages in 1854.

The cost of out-relief had been falling steadily during this period in Nantwich, for example between the years ending Lady Day 1857 and 1861 there had been a decrease of 10.6%, but in 1861 the cost of providing out-relief represented a masssive 86% of the total expenditure on in and out relief within the Union.[250] The total cost of in and out relief had fallen by 31.96% between the years ending Lady Day 1857 and 1861, while the numbers of paupers in the January and July returns had only fallen by 2.2% during the same period. So while costs were being stringently curbed, the number of paupers had only fallen slightly. By 1861 the expenditure per head of Nantwich Union on in and out relief stood at 3s 3d in comparison to 4s 10d in 1851 and 1841.[251]

By January 1861 there were ten times the number of paupers on out-relief compared to those receiving relief in the workhouse.[252] also noticeable was that between July 1860 and January 1861 the number of able bodied adults and children on out relief in Nantwich had increased by 7.29% as the start of the cotton famine began to affect the area, being a foretaste of the increases that were to occur in the next few years.

In terms of the cost of out-relief in Cheshire by the year ending Michaelmas 1860 there had been a decrease of 6.45% since

the peak of 1857.[253] However by the year ending Lady Day 1861 an increase of 2.37% had taken place so that expenditure on out-relief represented 80.4% of the total expenditure on in and out relief. In terms of total expenditure there had been a 7.4% decrease, far less than had taken place in Nantwich between 1857 and 1860. However after this date, with the onset of the cotton famine increases were continual, and between Michaelmas 1860 and Lady Day 1861, an increase of 7% took place and the total cost of in and out relief in Cheshire stood at 2s 9d per head, an increase of 4½d compared to 1851. By 1861 3.2% of the county's population were classed as paupers.[254]

The Poor Law stretched to the limits

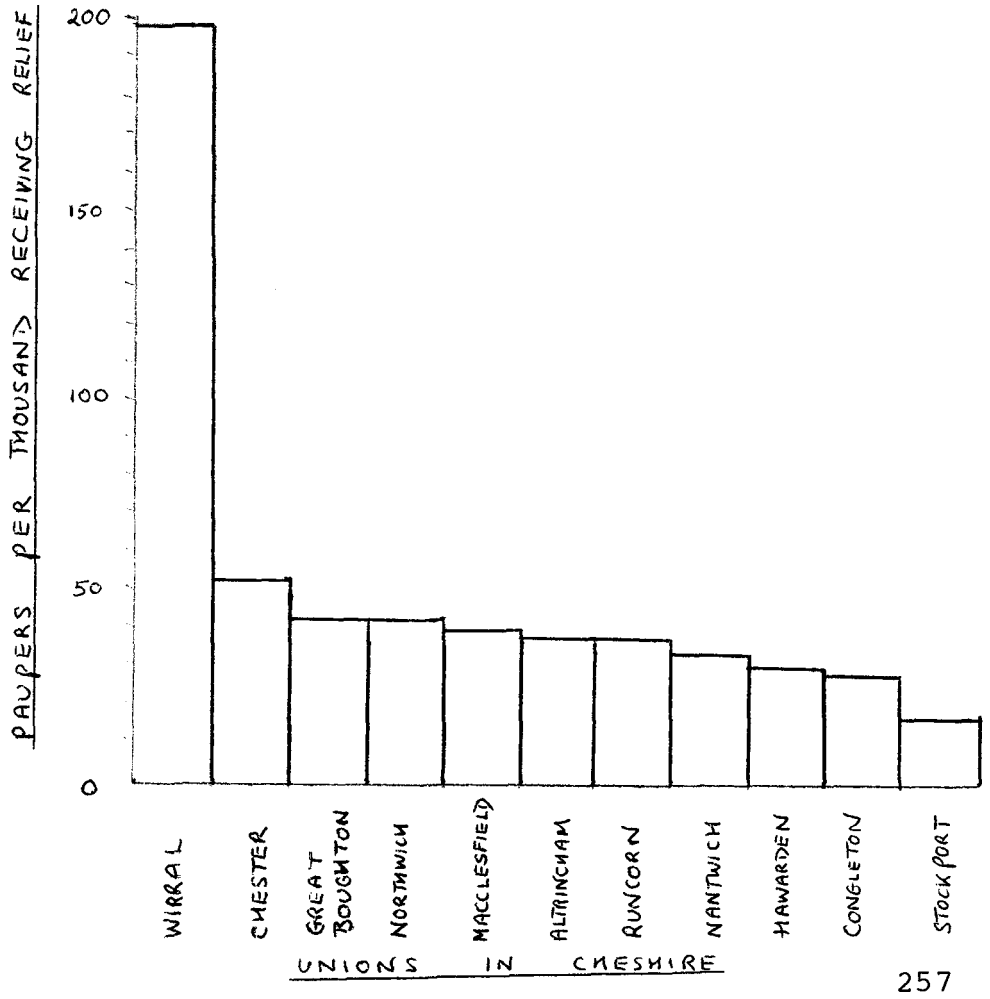
In England and Wales the cost of out-relief had fallen by 9.18% between 1857 and 1860 after which it continued to rise annually until 1864. Between 1860 and 1863 the cost of out-relief increased by 24.8%[255] and with the onset of the cotton famine in the North West of England the system of relief was to be stretched to the limit as it tried to cope with the mass unemployment of the able bodied.

Between January 1860 and 1861 all classes of paupers had increased in Cheshire by 15.5% and in England and Wales by 4.8%, while adult able bodied pauperism had increased by 42.7% in Cheshire and 10% in England and Wales,[256] indicating the disparity of experience between one of the counties in the North West of England, and even then not one of the worst affected, and the rest of England and Wales.

In the context of what was being experienced in the rest of Cheshire on 1st January 1861, the total numbers of paupers

relieved both in and out of the workhouse per thousand of the population were as follows:

figure 31



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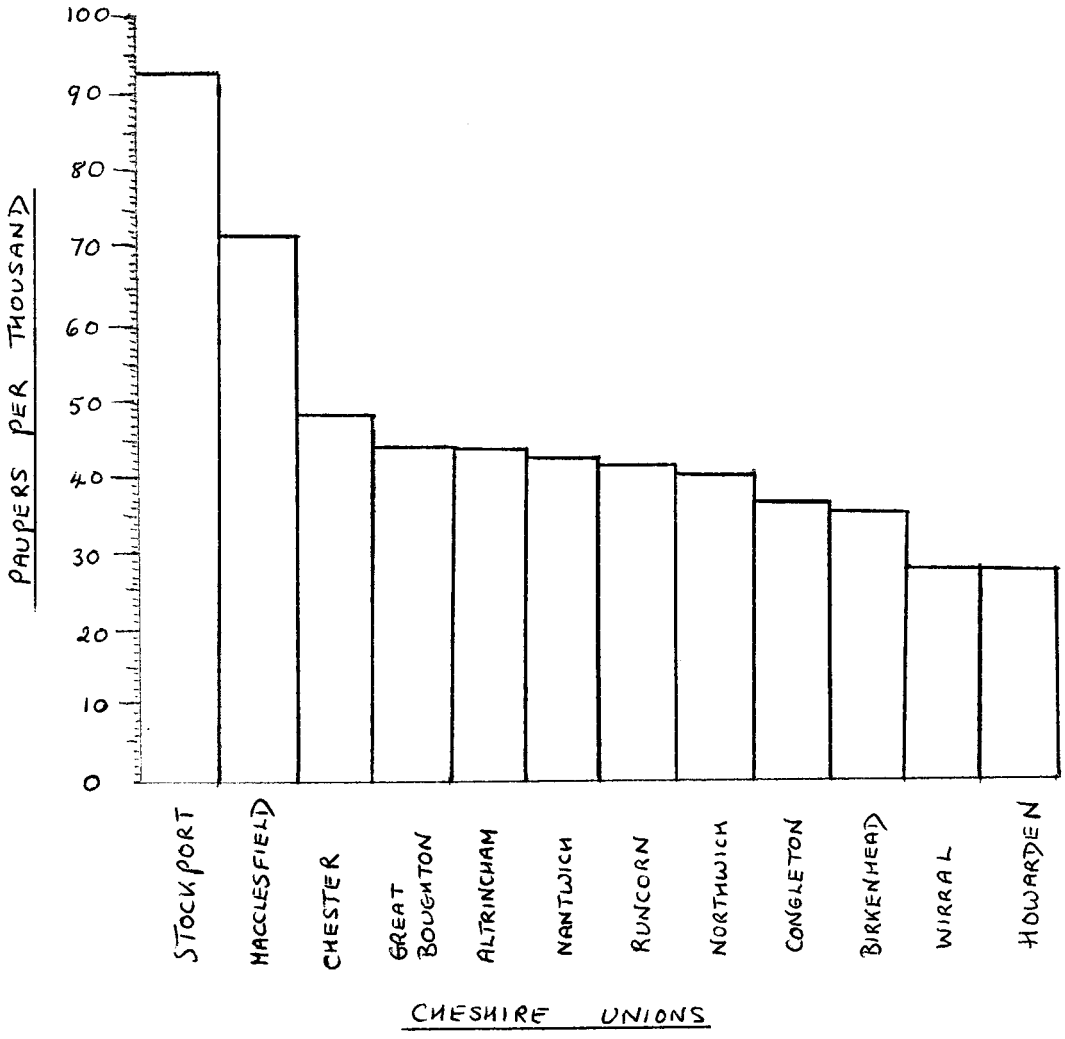
Wirral Union was by far the worst hit by pauperism in the period prior to the cotton famine, with Nantwich ranking eight out of the eleven Cheshire unions. Stockport which was so severely affected by the cotton famine, was in fact last in relation to the other Cheshire unions at this time in terms of total pauper numbers in relation to population; the bulk of the unions having between 30 and 39 paupers per 1,000. Expenditure on in and out relief in Cheshire had increased by 9½% between the half year ending Lady Day 1860 and 1861 because of the rise in food

prices and severe weather which had disrupted employment.[258] However increases in Nottingham during this period had amounted to 29.7%, the highest increase to take place in England, the lowest being 0.3% in Northumberland. How did the Nantwich Guardians tackle the growing pauperism associated with the cotton famine? By the 1st July 1862 the number of people receiving out-relief in Nantwich Union was one person in every 27, or 3.6% of the union, an increase of 20.27% compared with two years previously.[259] In relation to every pauper in the workhouse there were nearly eleven receiving out-relief as unemployment and depression effectively made the principles of the 1834 Act unworkable. Since July 1860 the number of able bodied adults receiving out-relief had increased by 90.2%. Despite the large increases that were taking place in the number of able bodied paupers the non-able bodied, both adults and children, still constituted 61% of people claiming out-relief.[260] By July 1862 there were 39 paupers per 1,000 of the population in Nantwich Union, an increase of 19% compared to January 1861. In England and Wales during this period an increase of 8.97% had taken place in pauperism and in the North Midland, North Western and York Divisions an increase of 33.47% had occurred.[261]

In Cheshire between the half year ending Michaelmas 1861 and 1862 the cost of outdoor relief had increased by 36.99% and the cost of in and out relief had increased by 33%, with expenditure on out-relief standing at just over five times the amount expended on in-maintenance.[262] By the 1st July 1862 the number of paupers receiving out-relief in the county had increased by 51.34% compared to July 1860, more than double the increase that had taken place in Nantwich; the number of able

bodied adults had increased by a massive 157% and the non-able bodied by 13%.[263] One difference between the conditions existing in Nantwich Union and in the county as a whole was that in Cheshire the proportion of able bodied people receiving out-relief in July 1862 stood at 55.8% and the non-able bodied constituted 41%; whereas in Nantwich even though the able bodied paupers receiving out-relief had increased substantially, the non-able bodied still represented 61% of recipients. In Cheshire, areas like Stockport were badly affected by the cotton famine, so the able bodied assumed a larger proportion of recipients and led to the massive increases recorded between 1860 and 1862. The total number of people receiving both in and out relief within the county had increased by 48.6% between July 1860 and 1862. Paupers represented 41 people in every 1,000 of the population in Cheshire, compared to 39 per 1,000 in Nantwich Union, and for every pauper relieved in a workhouse within Cheshire there were 9 receiving out-relief.[264] Between July 1862 and January 1863 in Nantwich Union the number of people receiving out-relief increased by 8.46% and the number of able bodied adults claiming this relief increased by 34.28%. Once again despite the large increase in the number of able bodied adults receiving out-relief, they only formed 39.5% of outdoor paupers, the rest being the non-able bodied. In terms of both in and out relief by January 1863 there were 43 paupers per 1,000 in Nantwich Union, an increase of 9.77% in the six months since July 1862.[265] The winter of 1863 marked the worst sufferings of the poor, and to compare Nantwich's experience in January 1863 with the rest of the Cheshire Unions this graph shows the total number of paupers per thousand of the population:

figure 32



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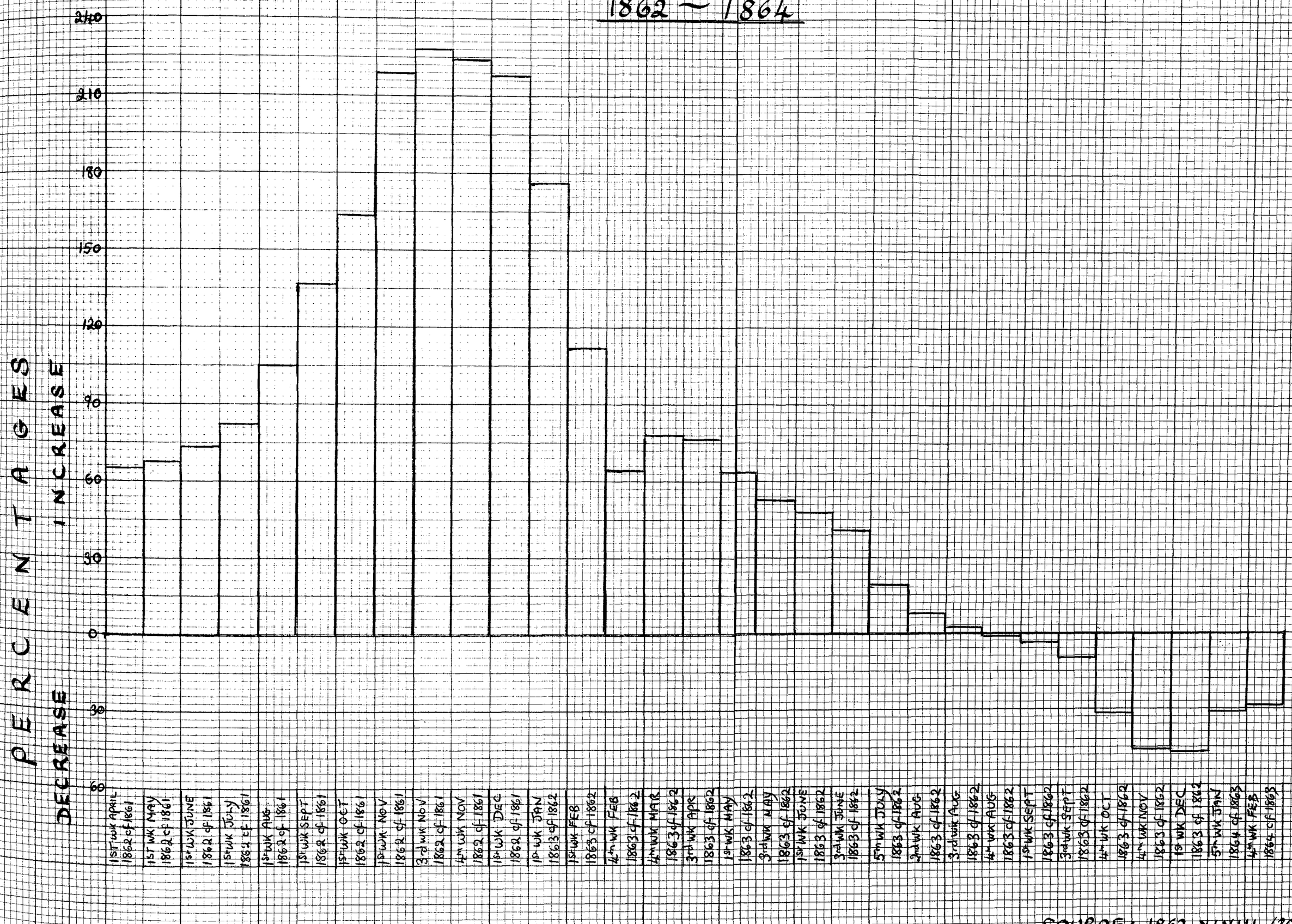
Stockport and Macclesfield, with their heavy reliance on the textile industry, suffered the worst of all the Cheshire Unions and contained 50% of the county's paupers, and 6 of the 12 Cheshire Unions had between 41 and 48 paupers per 1,000 of the population. 5.1% of the county were in receipt of poor relief or 1 in every 19 people, which represented an increase of 23.16% between July 1862 and January 1863.[267]

Figure 33 shows the % increase in the number of paupers relieved both in and out of the workhouse in 1862 compared to

Figure 33

GRAPH TO SHOW THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE/DECREASE OF PAUPERS RELIEVED IN LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE DURING THE COTTON FAMINE 1862 ~ 1864



SOURCE: 1862 XLVIII (307A)

1861, and 1863 in relation to 1862, for the North West Region of England, which consisted of Lancashire and Cheshire. The peak of distress was reached in the third week of November 1862 when compared to twelve months earlier the number of paupers had increased by 228.19%, whereas in England and Wales as a whole an increase of 25.32% had occurred, emphasising once again the vast differences that occurred in the regions compared to the average for England and Wales. The peak of distress in England and Wales occurred in the 1st week of December 1862 when pauper numbers increased by 25.50%, thereafter falling off steadily. In Lancashire and Cheshire the increase in pauper numbers was well under way in April 1862, when increases of 65.45% were recorded; such percentage increases were not to be improved upon until May 1863 when an increase of 64.32% was recorded, the fall continuing steadily until the 4th week in August 1863 when a decrease was recorded for the first time since the crisis had started in early 1862.

In Nantwich Union between January and July 1863 the total number of people receiving out-relief had fallen by 7%. The number of able bodied adults on out-relief had declined by 48% since the peak of the distress had been reached in January 1863, and there was a decline of 37.6% in able bodied children. The non-able bodied represented 63.8% of applicants for out-relief and the number of able bodied adult applicants both in and out of the workhouse had fallen by 45½% as the worst effects of the cotton famine were then on the wane.[268]

In terms of expenditure the effects of the cotton famine increased the cost of in and out relief by 33.9% in Cheshire between the years ending Lady Day 1862 and 1863, and the cost

of out-relief was 5½ times larger than that expended on in-maintenance.[269] Per head of the county the cost of maintaining the poor both in and out of the workhouse equalled 5s 5d during the year ending Lady Day 1863, an increase of 107% since the year ending Michaelmas 1860.[270]

In Nantwich Union the cost of out-relief increased by 8.9% between the years ending Lady Day 1861 and 1862 and by a further 10.8% by the year ending Lady Day 1863; out-relief by this time represented six times the amount spent on in-maintenance. Total expenditure on the poor represented 4s 3d per head of the union in 1863, an increase of 28% compared to the year ending Lady Day 1861.[271]

The winter of 1864 again saw a 6.5% increase in the number of able bodied adults receiving out-relief in Nantwich compared to July 1863, with every other class of applicant declining so that the total number of people receiving out-relief in January 1864 had declined by 11.3%[272] However the decline was a short one, and by July 1865 able bodied adults claiming out-relief had once again increased by 12.3%. By July 1865 paupers in Nantwich Union represented 3.79% of the population compared to 4.35% in January 1863 and 3.3% in January 1861.[273]

By 1865 the worst seemed to be over and the cost of out-relief had fallen by 7.66% between the year ending Lady Day 1863 and 1865, and total expenditure on in and out relief fell by 10.5% during the same period to represent 3s 9d per head in Nantwich Union in 1865, a decrease of 9.7% compared to 1863 when it had reached 4s 2d per head.[274]

In Cheshire too the trend in paupers and cost was a downward one; the numbers relieved in July 1866 were 37.6% below

the peak reached in January 1863,[275] and the cost of providing out-relief fell by 24% between 1863 and 1865. The number of people claiming out-relief fell by 39.7% during this period, and the number of able bodied adults on out-relief had fallen by 69.8%. Consequently the non-able bodied once again assumed a larger proportion of those on out-relief and in July 1865 they represented 53.3% of all recipients, compared to 35.48% in January 1863.[276]

The mid 1860s in Cheshire were marked by higher expenditure on maintenance in the workhouse, lower spending on out-relief and a decreasing amount of total expenditure. Total expenditure on in and out relief fell by 40.5% between 1863 and 1866, and although declining annually, it still represented, apart from the worst years of the cotton famine, the highest that expenditure had ever been in the county since 1843.[277]

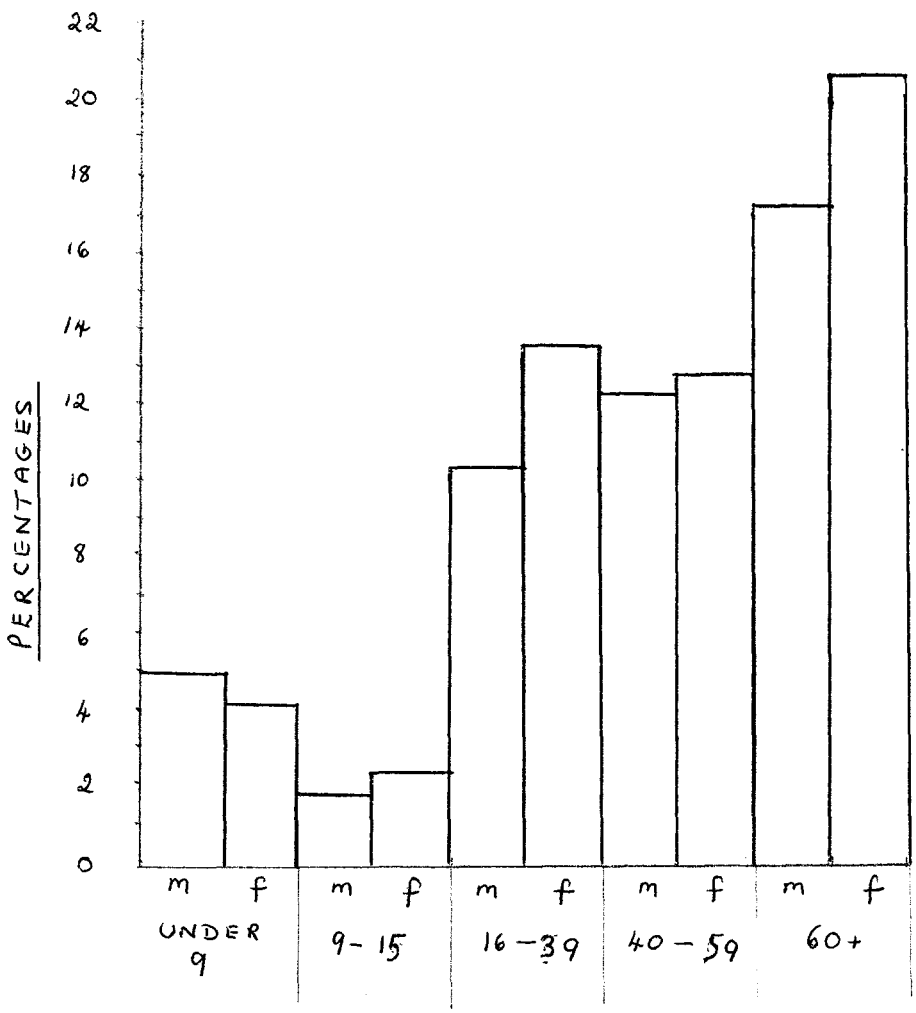
Out relief for the sick

The number of sick people being supported on out-relief was the subject of a special report by Dr Edward Smith in December 1869.[278] As M. E. Rose has emphasised inmates in the workhouses tended to get a larger share of the attention of the poor law critics and reformers than did the far greater number on outdoor relief.[279] However in the wake of The Lancet investigations this report did draw attention to the scale of sickness amongst out-relief recipients, and the severity of some of the illnesses being treated in the home.

As R. G. Hodgkinson has emphasised many people 'above' the ordinary class of pauper went to the guardians for medicine. 'They were those who could just maintain their independence

but could not meet the emergency of sickness wholly or partly, and who came between the permanent pauper and the thrifty club member.'[280] Medical relief granted in the early stages of a disease would, in the long term, prove more economical than having the whole family pauperised through a long illness. Dr Smith found that the proportion of sick people claiming out-relief on the 18th December 1869 in England and Wales was 12.7% and in Cheshire 11%.[281] The ages of these sick people in Cheshire were as follows:

figure 34



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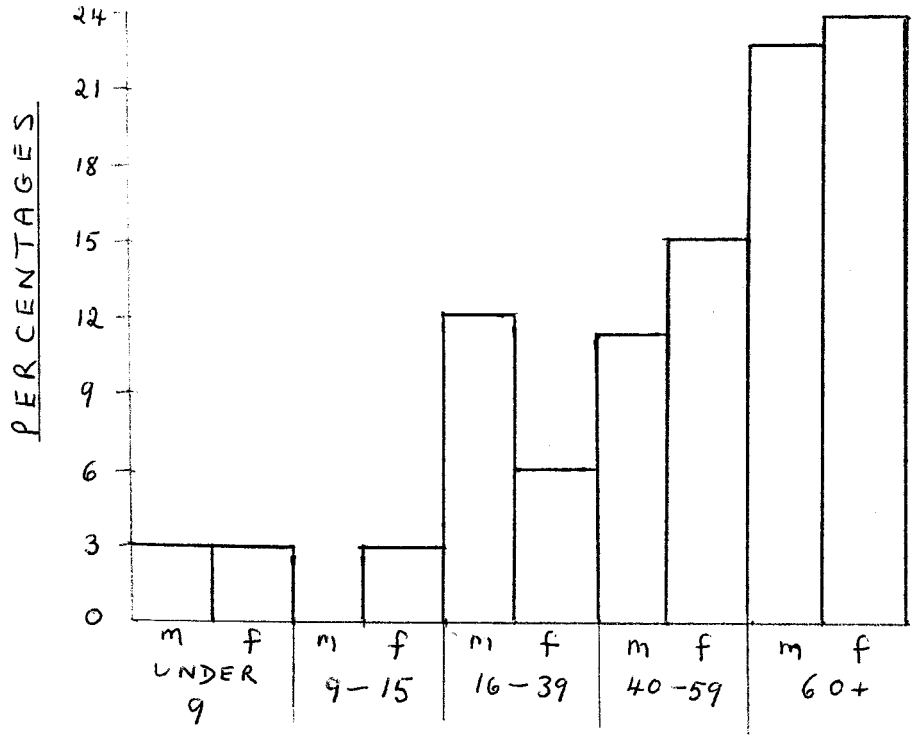
AGE AND SEX OF RECIPIENTS OF OUTDOOR RELIEF BECAUSE OF SICKNESS (CHESHIRE)

In all but the 9 and under age group, females figured more prominently than men, and 63.1% of the sick recipients were in the 40-60+ age groups, no doubt adding fuel to the concern expressed just fourteen months later that the aged sick and females claiming out-relief should be stringently checked to see if relief in the workhouse would not be more suitable. 36.1% of recipients in Cheshire were said to be 'acutely ill' and 63.9% were classed as 'chronic'. However considering the conditions of many workhouse infirmaries at this time, in the light of The Lancet revelations just five years previously, there was just not the room or facilities to admit these acute and chronic patients into the infirmaries, even though they were in obvious need of specialised care and attention.

In Nantwich 6.92% of paupers, 4% less than in Cheshire as a whole were claiming out-relief because of sickness, 44% being classed as acute, and 56% chronically sick:

figure 35



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AGE AND SEX OF RECIPIENTS OF OUTDOOR RELIEF BECAUSE OF SICKNESS (NANTWICH)

70% of the sick paupers on out-relief in Nantwich Union were in the 40-60+ age group, just over 6% more than in Cheshire, and 51% of the total number of sick paupers were females, just slightly less than in Cheshire. The types of diseases that were relieved on out-relief in Nantwich Union in 1869 were as follows

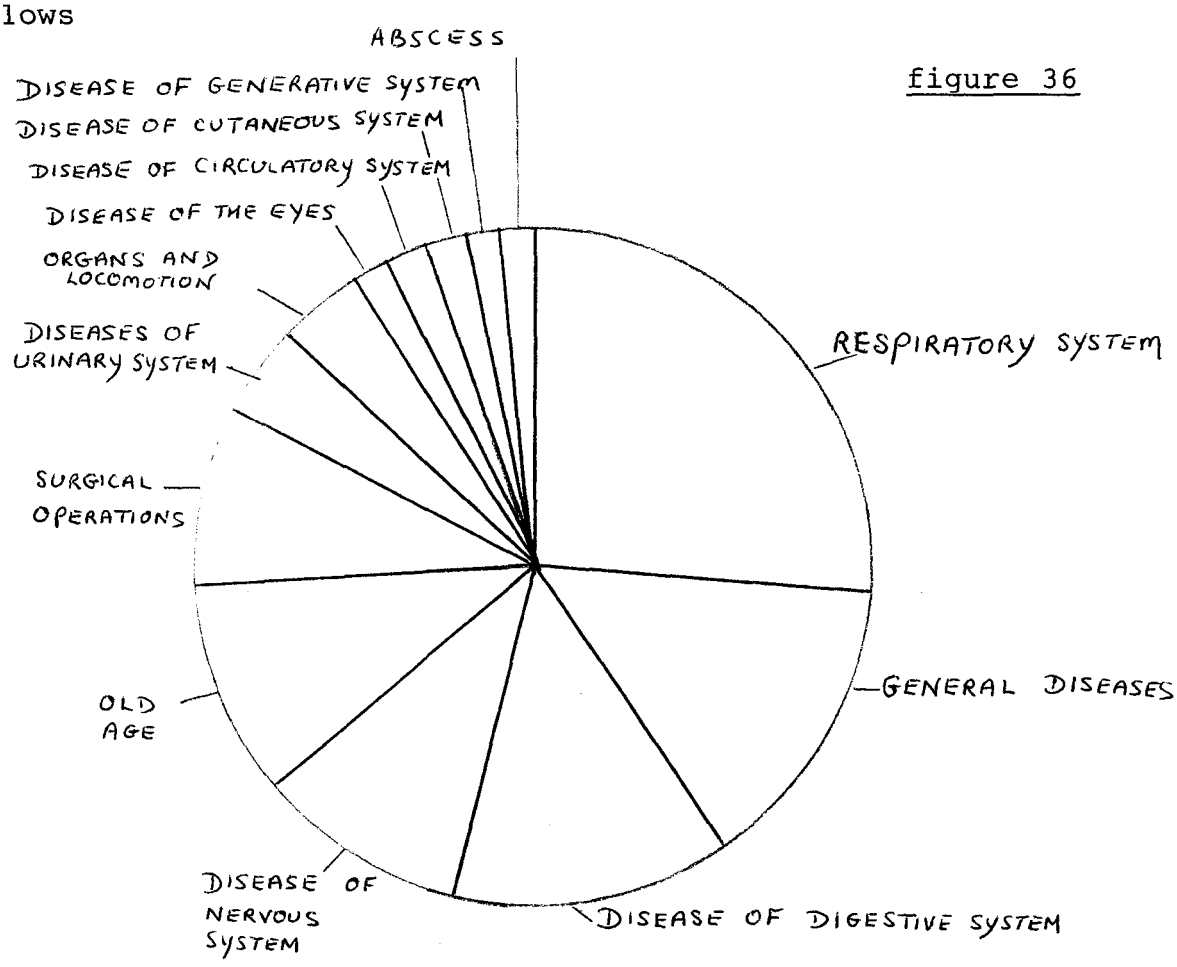

figure 36

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It is hard to imagine that a disease like cancer could be classed as a general disease, but it was, and the range and severity of illness relieved in the home environment rather than the infirmary was great. Also most of these incapacities were ones that would need intensive nursing and care, and the patients would be dependent on others in the long term, again perhaps a motive for their being relieved at home. The cost factor too, must also be considered. Over a long period of

time it would have been a great deal cheaper to maintain these people in their homes than admit them to the workhouse infirmary even if it had had the beds and facilities - which Nantwich Infirmary had not. Apart from the types of sickness warranting out-relief it is also important to emphasise that sickness, whether treated in or out of the workhouse, caused great hardship for families. As P. Thane has emphasised Rowntree found that 'sickness caused an appalling burden of debt,' which in the long term could mean the prolonged reliance of the family on poor relief.[285]

The renewed attack on out-relief

By 1870 in Nantwich Union the cost of in-maintenance was increasing, out-relief was falling, and the total expenditure reached a peak from which it started to decline. The number of people receiving out-relief in July 1870 represented an increase of only 0.4% over the figures for July 1865, and the total number of people relieved both in and out of the workhouse was in fact only one more person than five years previously. The number of able bodied adults claiming out-relief had also fallen by 3.4% since 1865. However the number of able bodied children receiving out-relief had increased by 7.6% which represented the largest increase in any out-relief category. As M. E. Rose has emphasised despite continual anxiety over the state of the children in the workhouse, the condition of by far the greater number of children whose parents, usually their widowed mothers, were on outdoor relief, 'was almost completely ignored by the central authorities.'[286]

The non-able bodied still dominated out-relief: they

received 60.7% of all out-relief granted.[287] The cost of maintaining the poor had increased by 11.5% between the year ending Lady Day 1865 and 1870 where it reached its peak, thereafter falling by 1.89% in the year ending Lady Day 1871 when relieving the poor cost 3s 2d per head of the population of the union, 1d less than ten years previously. This fact must have pleased the ratepayers as the population had increased by 31.2% during the same period.[288]

The cost of out-relief in Nantwich Union increased by just 0.4% between the years ending Lady Day 1865 and 1871 to reach £6,340; £207 of which was relief in kind, this being the first year that relief in kind was noted separately, and it represented 3.2% of the total expenditure on out-relief. In comparison in England and Wales relief in kind represented 16% of the cost of out-relief.[289] The cost of out-relief in Nantwich Union in 1871 was still nearly 5 times that spent on in maintenance and represented 82.5% of total expenditure on the poor. In comparison in England and Wales the cost of out-relief was 2½ times that spent on relief in the workhouse,[290] which was a cause of concern for the Local Government Board, and led to what F. M. L. Thompson has described as one of the 'periodic flurries of renewed severity' embarked upon when outdoor relief got out of hand.[291]

The reasons as to why out-relief was still a favoured means of granting relief when the aim had been to banish it in the 1840s are various: lack of central authority, an economic climate that was not favourable to its elimination, and the role of determined local guardians. However as K. Williams has argued, although in his opinion only able bodied males had been

the target of out-relief cutbacks in the 1850s and 1860s, the 1870s saw an attempt to restrict out-relief to all classes; and a repressive purge began.[292] In their Circular on Outdoor Relief in 1871 the board condemned the out-relief system and guardians were discouraged from granting out-relief to able bodied women and widows with dependent children. Instead the alternative solution of taking one or more of their children into the workhouse was suggested, and the board also advised that the aged and sick should be carefully scrutinised before relief was granted. As P. Thane has argued such a policy did create confusion: on the one hand the strict principles of 1834 were to be applied in an attempt to restrict numbers. However relief was still to be 'adequate to meet need', which was bound to conflict with the principles of 1834.[293] For example, in Nantwich Union the number of able bodied women granted outdoor relief in July 1870 was 9 times larger than the number of able bodied men and such a proportionate differences had always been the case since the 1850s. In reality the guardians in the unions had been concerned with cutting costs, and in the short term the cost of out-relief was cheaper than maintaining some one in the workhouse, not to mention the problems of over-crowding. The Local Government Board were however concerned with the long term implications of granting out-relief. While the cost of out-relief was falling in Nantwich Union and the number of indoor paupers was increasing in the early to mid 1870s, it was a situation that was finely balanced on an economic knife edge. As soon as there was a downturn in the local economy, the balance was overturned in favour of granting more out-relief, as the workhouses were physically incapable of

coping. As F. B. Smith has emphasised the crusade against out-relief in the early 1870s was no real solution to the problem '... it merely shifted the problem and temporarily made it less obvious. In the 1880s the problem surfaced again as unemployment, and in the 1890s as destitution and old age.[294]

In Cheshire the number of people receiving out-relief had fallen by 2.75% between July 1865 and 1870, the number of able bodied adults having fallen by 3.5%.[295] The total amount expended to maintain the poor both in and out of the workhouse was however on the increase. Between the years ending Lady Day 1866 and 1870 there had been an increase of 9.8%, mainly due to the increasing costs of in-maintenance which had increased by 46% during this period, reflecting the improvements being made to workhouses, while out-relief costs had increased by just 1.8%.[296] Out-relief costs, however, still represented 73% of total expenditure on the poor. In Cheshire in the early 1870s there were 24 people per thousand receiving out-relief and 4 per thousand in the workhouse, the same ratio as in Nantwich Union during the same period.

Once again irregularities concerning the way relieving officers distributed out-relief in Nantwich Union came to the fore in December 1873,[297] during the purge on excessive out-relief. After interviewing the relieving officers, it came to light that they were not attending pay stations at the appointed time, and receipts were 'very exceptionally' taken from tradesmen when no money had been paid. Some relieving officers made payments in shops and sometimes left payments for paupers with shopkeepers if the pauper did not attend on time. Consequently the relieving officer had no idea when, and if, the pauper

actually received the money. Some relieving officers also gave money to their relatives or aquaintances to give out, if, for example, they were ill, or if a pauper lived a long way away they would give the money to someone who was passing where they lived. Many officers were found to be behind in making up their accounts and entering up the date when they last visited the paupers, and none of the relieving officers visited all of their paupers regularly. Some said they did so once every three months, and others once every two months or six weeks, and if a pauper attended the pay station the relieving officer did not bother to visit them in their home. In defence several officers stated that they felt their districts were too large and that they were underpaid as it cost £70 a year for a horse and trap.

As a result of these 'grave irregularities', stringent measures were taken to enforce new regulations relating to out-relief, and a notice was printed on the face of orders for relief in kind that receipts should not be issued when money had not been paid to the tradesmen. Vouchers for all relief in kind were to be presented to the Board for examination together with accounts, and relief was no longer to be paid at shops or pubs, or left with a shopkeeper to disburse, as attendance at pay stations was to be strictly adhered to. Paupers were also to be visited in their homes at least every six weeks.

Between July 1870-1875 the number of paupers relieved in Nantwich Union fell by 5.4% and they now represented 2.7% of the population of the union, or 1 pauper in every 37 people, a fall of 27% compared to ten years previously. The number of people claiming out-relief had also fallen by 8.9% in the five

year period, and for every person in the workhouse there were nearly eight in receipt of out-relief. The non-able bodied constituted 52.8% of out-relief recipients, a decline of 8% compared to 1870, reflecting the re-assessment of pauper lists. The proportion of able bodied adults had however increased by 20% since 1870, the number of able bodied males having increased by 135% in the five year period, reflecting the effects of the shoe strike and cotton workers strike of 1872, 1873, and 1874.[298]

The cost of in and out relief within the union had decreased by 12.3% since the year ending Lady Day 1871; expenditure on out-relief having fallen by 10% during the same period. Relief in kind still represented 3.2% of the cost of out-relief, out-relief was now only 3½ times greater, in monetory terms, than in-maintenance: a great change compared to ten years previously when out-relief had been over 7½ times greater than in-relief, again reflecting the new stringency of relieving officers.[299]

In Cheshire the trend in both the cost and the number of paupers was downward between 1870 and 1875. The total cost of in and out relief fell by 23.4% which represented 2s 5d per head of the county in 1875, compared to 3s 3d in 1870. The cost of out-relief had also fallen by 31%, three times the decrease recorded in Nantwich, so that in 1875 the cost of out-relief was only 1.9 times greater than the cost of in-maintenance, a marked change from 1865 when out-relief had been 4.3 times larger.[300] Again the comparison with Cheshire reveals that Nantwich Union was still giving proportionally a far greater amount of out-relief compared to in-maintenance than was generally the case in Cheshire. The purge against out-relief still had a lot to achieve in Nantwich.

The number of people granted out-relief in Cheshire had also been falling steadily in response to the 'purge' so that by July 1875 there had been a 29% decrease in the number of people relieved compared to 1870, again over three times the decrease that had taken place in Nantwich Union. The number of able bodied adults receiving out-relief had fallen by 40%.[301] So between 1870 and 1875 the fall in both cost and numbers relating to pauperism had been far more marked in Cheshire than in Nantwich Union, but this period had marked a difficult phase for the Nantwich area with strikes in local industry that had repercussions on poor relief.

The 1880s - increasing costs and increasing unemployment result in the failure to reduce out-relief

By 1880 the trend in the number of paupers in Nantwich Union was on the increase, together with the cost of providing such relief. Between January 1875 and 1880 the total number of paupers both in and out of the workhouse had increased by 14.2% while out-relief figures had increased by 13.46%, confirming, as P. Thane has argued, that attempts to impose a consistent out-door policy were effectively a failure. Any reductions in out-relief could not be sustained in practice and did not lead to a fall in total expenditure.[302] As M. E. Rose has emphasised the crusade of the 1870s might have reduced numbers in the short term, but never completely abolished the system: '... the chief reason for the survival of the out-door system lay in the desire of the Board of Guardians to continue it,' motivated by reasons of humanity, and, most importantly economy.[303]

For every pauper in Nantwich Workhouse in July 1880 there were seven receiving out-relief, illustrating the dogged

determination of the guardians to dispense such relief. The number of able bodied adults receiving out-relief had increased by 10.5% between July 1875 and 1880, the January figures for 1880 revealing an increase in able bodied adults of 67.6% compared with five years earlier. Once again in July 1880, even though the guardians had been warned to scrutinise the claims of able bodied women for out-relief, there were 3.7 times the number of able bodied women claiming out-relief than men.[304]

In terms of cost between the year ending Michaelmas 1875-1880 the cost of relieving pauperism in Nantwich Union had increased by 18.9%, the cost of relief per head of the population being 2s 10d, an increase of 1d since 1875. The cost of out-relief had increased by 20.79% between 1875 and 1880 which represented 3.7 times the amount spent on indoor relief. The amount of relief given in kind had increased by 73% compared to 1875, and represented 4.7% of the cost of out-relief in the year ending Michaelmas 1880.[305] The amount of relief granted in kind varied between different unions within Cheshire, and if the half year ending Michaelmas 1880 is taken as an example, Macclesfield, Altrincham, Congleton, Wirral, and Birkenhead did not grant any relief in kind, the remainder giving relief in kind as follows:

Name	Relief in kind as proportion of out-relief
Stockport	18.7%
Tarvin	8.6%
Northwich	5.2%
Nantwich	4.1%
Runcorn	2.7%
Chester	2.7%
Hawarden	1.6%

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That this kind of relief was open to abuse was evident from the experience of Nantwich Union when receipts had been issued by relieving officers for goods when no money had changed hands. The proportion of out-relief given in kind in Cheshire was 4.2% money still being the preferred way of issuing relief.

In Cheshire between 1875 and 1880, as in Nantwich, the trend in both numbers of paupers and cost was upward in contrast to England and Wales as a whole, where the actual amount of money distributed in in and out relief had decreased by 1.4% and the cost of out-relief had fallen by 8.3%.[307] Between January 1875 and 1880 the total number of paupers in the county had increased by 34.29%, more than double the increase that took place in Nantwich, and the number of people receiving out-relief had increased by 31.8%, the able bodied representing 54% of recipients.[308]

In terms of cost, between the years ending Michaelmas 1875 and 1880 the cost of relieving the poor had increased by 19.8% in Cheshire, the cost of out-relief having increased by 17.7%, 3% less than in Nantwich, and the amount expended on out-relief was now less than double that spent on in-maintenance.[309]

In Nantwich Union between 1880-1885 the number of paupers had increased by 9.4% and 8.6% in January and July respectively representing 2.8% of the unions population, or 1 pauper in 36 people, the figures for England and Wales at this time being 1 in 37. The number of people receiving out-relief had once again increased by 7.4% in January and 10% in July and the number of able bodied adults had increased by 23.9% since July 1880.[310] As P. Thane has argued the unemployment that was prevalent in the mid 1880s contributed to the difficulty of

sustaining any policy restricting out-relief as the workhouses were not large enough to hold all the unemployed. Out-relief continued in combination with the labour test of stone breaking,[311] which as M. A. Crowther has pointed out was a '... tacit acknowledgement that the workhouse test could not solve large-scale unemployment.[312]

The proportion of people receiving relief out of Nantwich Workhouse compared to those inside was 6 to 1 in January, and nearly 8 to 1 in July 1885. The total amount given to the poor in relief had increased by 14.5% between 1880 and 1885 and the cost of providing out-relief had also increased by 14.5%. Relief in kind now only formed 2% of the total cost of out-relief, a 50% cut in real terms compared to the amount of relief in kind in 1880.[313]

In Cheshire by January and July 1885 the total number of paupers claiming relief had declined by 12% and 1.2% respectively compared to 1880, contrary to the increases that were taking place in pauperism in Nantwich. The numbers receiving out-relief had also fallen since 1880 by 16.6% and 4% respectively in January and July 1885, again in contrast to the increases occurring in Nantwich.[314] The cost of out-relief was just over 1½ times larger than the amount expended on in maintenance, again less than half the ratio achieved in Nantwich, and for England and Wales out-relief was just 1.2 times larger than in-maintenance. The cost of out-relief in England and Wales had fallen by 8.8% between 1880 and 1885, once again a marked contrast to the increase of 14.5% in out-relief in Nantwich Union during the same period.[315]

Outdoor relief - new measures to tackle an old problem

That the amount expended on out-relief was a great problem for Nantwich Union, was evident from the increases recorded in the returns for 1885, especially when compared to the figures for Cheshire and England and Wales, which showed decreases in out-relief over the same period of time. An all time high was reached in Nantwich Union when, for the year ending Lady Day 1891, expenditure on out-relief totalled £9,535 an increase of 20.8% compared to 1885. Out-relief was 4.9 times larger than the cost of in-maintenance, and represented 72% of the total amount expended on in and out relief.[316] However the minutes of the finance committee tried to reassure everyone that a gradual decline in out-relief was emerging within the union, which amounted to £21 per week compared to the corresponding week in 1890; or at a rate of £1,092 per year if sustained, which would amount to ⅝d of a penny in the £. The local guardians stated that they were also heartened by the fact that for the last half year Nantwich district had paid out £943 17s 8d in out-relief - less than in any half year since 1884.[317]

In July 1891 new recommendations were adopted by Nantwich Union related to who was eligible to receive out-relief, again in an attempt to reduce expenditure. Out-relief was not now to be granted to the following groups, except during periods of sickness:

a) single able bodied men and women.
b) able bodied widows who had no children or just 1 child.
c) widows with children.
d) women married to criminals.
e) deserted married women.
f) married women left destitute by husbands who had gone into the militia or army.
g) people living with relatives whose combined income could support everyone.
h) non-residents.

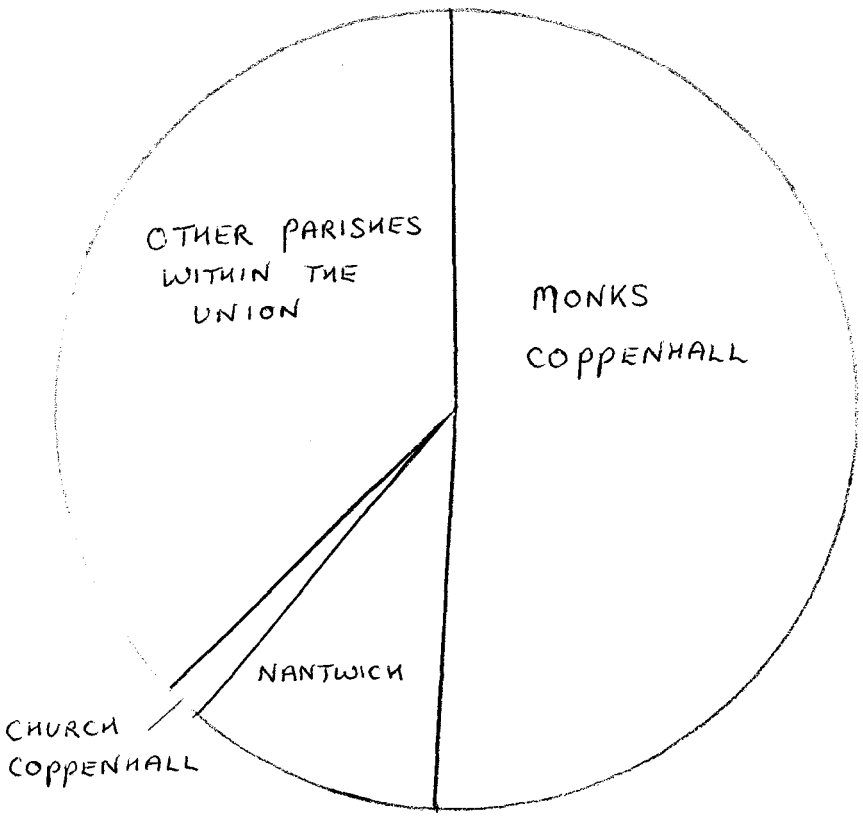
The relieving officers were also warned to watch out for widows who had received money from insurance societies etc., '... which, in the opinion of the relief committee ... had been lavishly spent in mourning or funeral expenses, or has been otherwise improperly expended.' and that they should not need any relief until at least one month after the death of their husband. The maximum out-relief for adults was to be set at 2s 6d each, and widows with children were to receive 1s 6d for each child after the first. Out-relief was also not to be given for sickness for more than two weeks and, if verified by a doctor, then not for a period longer than 13 weeks. The use of wine, spirits, and beer, as medical 'extras' for out-paupers was also to be discontinued.[319]

For the half year ending Michaelmas 1892 in Nantwich Union, 1801 people received out-relief: 19.5% were male. 45% were female, (consistent with the trend that women far outnumbered men as recipients of relief) and 35% were children under the age of 16. This represented a decrease of 13.4% compared to the corresponding half year in 1891, so the new cost cutting measures had had some effect in reducing numbers.[320] An annual decline in the amount of out-relief dispensed continued, so that between the years ending Lady Day 1892-1897 the overall decline in the number of people claiming out-relief reached 16.4%.[321] However the cost of providing out-relief fell more slowly, and between 1893 and 1897 a decline of only 0.6% had taken place, despite the economies that had been made.[322]

During the period 1892-1897 between 61½%-64% of the paupers receiving out-relief in Nantwich Union came from just three places: Monks Coppenhall, Nantwich, and Church Coppenhall.

A typical year from this period indicates the proportional representation of paupers from various parishes:

figure 37

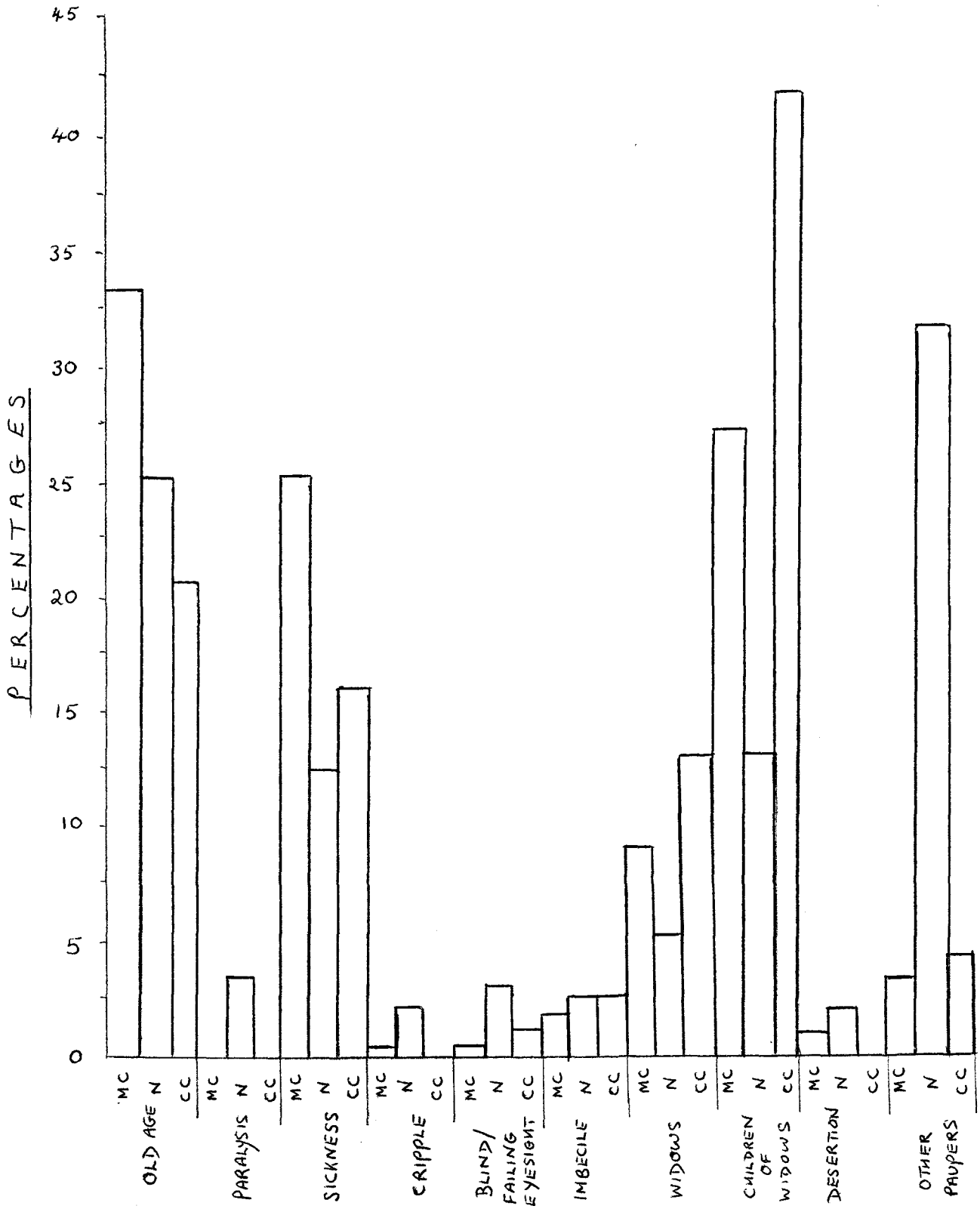


323

The growing railway town of Crewe, centred on the parish of Monks Coppenhall, provided the greatest source of applicants for outdoor relief; its importance in this respect was growing all the time, as the population grew rapidly and people faced varying economic fortune. In the year ending Lady Day 1893 Monks Coppenhall provided 43% of outdoor relief recipients, and this figure rose annually to reach 51% in 1897. Nantwich itself was the next largest source of out-relief paupers, but even here the percentage was falling from 12% in 1893 to 10.7%

in 1895. Church Coppenhalls's relative position was also waning as the percentage of outdoor paupers it provided slipped from 6½% in 1893 to 1.2% in 1895.

The reasons why out-relief was granted varied between the parishes: figure 38



The children of widows proved to be the most numerous group amongst outdoor paupers, closely followed by the old and the sick. Surprisingly in the fast growing parish of Monks Coppenhall the old were more numerous recipients of out-relief than in Nantwich. Paralysis and disabilities such as being a cripple and blindness were more common in Nantwich, and even then these reasons for the granting of out-relief were dwarfed by the aforementioned, old age, sickness, and widows and their dependents.

By January 1895 the number of paupers relieved both in and out of the workhouse in Nantwich Union had increased by 4.8% compared to ten years previously, while the population of the union had only increased by 2.4%. Agriculture was suffering from depression and trade generally was poor. While the cost of in and out relief had fallen by 4.39% between 1891 and 1896 it was still at one of the highest levels it had ever been at £12,657, and out-relief was still three times higher than the total cost of in-maintenance.[325] During February 1895 the subject of this increase in costs was raised at the Local Board of Guardians meeting, and the fact that rates had increased from 1s 6d in the £ to 2s 6d in 1894 was discussed. Local rates had risen for a variety of reasons: the cost of district roads, increased county expenditure, together with the aggregate cost of the administration of the poor law, and the contributions of individual ratepayers had increased through a large addition to the rateable value. While all this was true the actual amount expended to the poor in relief, especially out of the workhouse, was at an exceptionally high level in Nantwich compared to Cheshire, and England and Wales. Also when Nantwich

poor relief figures were compared with previous years, the story seemed to be one of ever increasing paupers both in and out of the workhouse, together with climbing costs. The position of Nantwich compared to Cheshire, England and Wales, as a whole in 1895 appeared thus:

	Estimated Population 1894	Indoor Ratio per 1000 Jan 1895	Outdoor Ratio per 1000 Jan 1895	In/Out Ratio per 1000 Jan 1895
England and Wales	30,060,763	7.5	20.0	27.5
Cheshire	737,296	5.6	16.2	21.8
Nantwich	63.728	5.0	24.0	29.0

326

The Local Board of Guardians stated that the increase in the aggregate cost of pauperism in their union was the result of the proportionate increase of pauperism in Crewe, while the proportionate cost of Nantwich and the county districts had diminished. The urban districts of the union were felt to be mostly to blame for the increases, with the discharge of men from Crewe Works at 65, and the abolition of the Pension Fund, however others at the meeting denied that this was true. It was agreed that the cost of outdoor relief had been heavier when the Pension Fund had been abolished, but they had no evidence that this was due to its abolition.[327] The tendency to lay men off in their 60s did become more prevalent at this time, hence, as P. Thane has argued not only were there more old people, '... but more of them became unable to support themselves at earlier ages.'[328]

At the 22nd Annual Conference of the North Western Poor

Law District in October 1896 the liberality with which outdoor relief was dispensed preoccupied the conference, but the final consensus was that no one:

> ... could adopt a hard and fast rule on outdoor relief (Hear Hear) as some unions were totally differently circumstanced and had to administer their relief according to their surroundings and the cases brought before them. [329]

However people's attitude towards out-relief was changing. Its receipt was no longer considered to be an act of degradation, as there was a positive acknowledgement that at times of emergency there was no alternative, and it was necessity, not moral weakness that drew people to claim relief. This attitude can be seen in the following statement from the Nantwich Board of Guardians:

> ... the Board is of the opinion that it is wrong in principle and opposed to the spirits of the times, to deprive members of Registered Friendly Societies of the franchise who owing to illness have been compelled to obtain outdoor relief. [330]

With this more enlightened, liberal attitude the purge on out-relief had characterised the 1870s and 1880s was effectively redundant. Indeed economic realities had meant that the Nantwich Guardians had never implemented the purge to the satisfaction of the local government board.

1900 - Cost of pauperism per head second highest in Cheshire

By the half year ending March 1900 expenditure on in and out relief was falling gradually, although the Local Government Inspector still felt that the expenditure on pauperism within the union was rather high. 2.6% of Nantwich Union's population, or 1 person in 38 were classed as paupers, whereas

in Birkenhead the rate was 1.7% or 1 in 58, Bucklow's paupers numbered 1.3% of the population or 1 in 76, and Stockport had a rate of 1.6% pauperism or 1 in 62. Within Nantwich Union 84 out of every 100 paupers were relieved out of the workhouse, and it was this fact that the Local Government Inspector drew attention to. He drew comparisons with Atcham and other non-pauperised unions showing that there the difference between the number of outdoor and indoor poor was in fact the reverse of the position in Nantwich: in Atcham the indoor poor represented 73% of paupers. The cost of pauperism per head of the population in Nantwich Union was 1s 8¼d which was above the average of 1s 4¼d for this region, and Nantwich was the second highest union in this respect in Cheshire. The Inspector suggested that it '... might be possible for the guardians to cut down to some small extent the cost of out-relief.[331] When asked by the Nantwich Guardians if the Inspector favoured indoor relief he replied:

> What I say is that instead of having 83% of outdoor paupers and 16% indoor you would be more likely to diminish your paupers if you made them more equal - say, for instance if 50% were indoor and 50% were outdoor (a laugh).[332]

In reply to this the Board of Guardians stated their belief that it would not be right to offer the workhouse to a deserving old married couple who were in their seventies or eighties, and the Local Government Board reiterated that they did not urge them to adopt that course except in cases where there was a lack of accommodation and no one to take care of the applicants. The Local Government Board urged that the workhouse should be offered to people who were 'not respectable'

and who were more or less able bodied. However a circular letter was then received from the Local Government Board stating that guardians should remove children from the workhouse surroundings and treat the aged and deserving poor by a 'more liberal extension of out-relief.'[333] As attitudes towards out-relief were changing, there was obvious confusion surrounding the subject. As the Nantwich Guardians, forced by an over-crowded workhouse, an awareness of costs plus a more understanding attitude towards the aged, granted more out-relief, they were subsequently criticised for their actions. However in defence of their actions the local guardians stated that: '... there would [not] be found in the Nantwich Workhouse many people who had been industrious and had lived a moral life. The difficulty was to fix a standard from which to judge people.' The general consensus of opinion was that the only way to provide for the deserving poor outside the workhouse was to grant more liberal relief. At Christmas time in 1900 out-relief was increased by 1s 0d for adults and 6d for children, to which Mr Leah, a local guardian, replied that the inmates of the workhouse fared better at Christmas than those on out-relief as inmates were treated to a special dinner.[334]

Figures for the 1st January 1901 revealed that in Nantwich Union 2.8% of the population were classed as paupers, or 1 in 35, which was the top % rate for Cheshire, followed by Chester with 2.6% or 1 in 38.[335] In terms of expenditure for the maintenance of paupers both in and out of the workhouse for the half year ending Lady Day 1901, Nantwich ranked fourth out of the eleven Cheshire Unions with a total expenditure of £5,656 which represented a 13.3% decrease over the same period in 1897.[336]

This represented a cost per head of the population of 1s 9½d, the second most expensive in Cheshire after Chester at 2s 4½d. However as E. C. Midwinter has argued by 1900 'there was no longer any pretence of restricting outdoor relief. Indeed, it was accepted as an integral element of the system'[337] hence the changes that allowed guardians to ignore friendly society premiums when calculating relief.

When the Out-door relief (Friendly Society) Bill came before Parliament in 1901, Nantwich Board of Guardians were unanimously against the proposal that when members of Friendly Societies applied for out-relief they should not take into consideration any sum up to five shillings a week received from a society. This, they felt, was wrong in principle as it would interfere with the discretionary powers presently possessed by the guardians.[338] They believed that they had always interpreted the Friendly Society Act of 1894 in a reasonable way when granting out-relief, but they felt that the 1901 Bill went too far in asking them to grant out-relief without regard to any income from Friendly Societies.[339] On the issue of Friendly Society members and out-relief the guardians argued they had always taken the 'medium course' and their object in subsidising any small allowance received by a member of a Friendly Society had been to make him feel that his effort had not been thrown away. The guardians expressed that their sympathies were with the Friendly Societies, and they believed that the 'Friendly Society spirit' was sufficiently strong among the Nantwich Guardians to see that justice was done to members. However they were of the opinion that the 1901 Bill should not be supported. Local discretion was still to be preferred to central direction

even over an issue that they agreed with.

In Cheshire by the year ending Michaelmas 1901 the cost of in and out relief stood at 2s 7½d per head of the population. Out-relief accounting for 53% of the total cost of poor relief as in and out maintenance began to draw closer together in terms of cost.[340] By 1905 the cost of out relief had increased by 7.8%, emphasising the constant fluctuations that characterised the system. In England and Wales too the trend was upwards. Between 1902 and 1905 the increase in the total cost of in and out relief was 9% with a 10.58% increase in out-relief, which accounted for 48% of the cost of in and out relief.[341] The cost per head nationally of in and out relief being 3s 10d. The reasons given for the increase in expenditure was the increased amount of outdoor relief that had been granted and the increased number of paupers relieved, together with a marked increase in the cost of boarding out pauper children. During the half year ending Michaelmas 1905 the actual amount expended in England and Wales, and the rate per head on population expenditure for in and out relief, was higher than in any half year ending Michaelmas since 1896.[342]

In Nantwich Union the trend was also upward in terms of cost: between 1902 and 1905 the cost of maintaining the poor both in and out of the workhouse increased by 2.8% and stood at 3s 4½d per head of the union. The cost of out-relief increased by 3.6% and was 2.3 times larger than the cost of in-maintenance and accounted for 69.7% of the cost of in and out relief.[343] So while the percentage increases in cost were not so high in Nantwich Union compared to those taking place in Cheshire and England and Wales as a whole, the proportion that out-relief

represented to the total cost of in and out relief was higher than that existing in the county and country.

Relief in kind represented between 1.4%-1.7% of the cost of out-relief in Nantwich Union between 1902 and 1905,[344] and this was a matter of great concern to the guardians from 1901 onwards. In November 1901 it was reported that relief in kind had been granted to 60 cases in less than one hour, when milk and beef had been distributed, and the practice was increasing. The guardians notified Dr. Atkinson who had issued the orders and informed him to desist from issuing them except in cases of temporary illness.[345] However Dr. Atkinson of Crewe told the guardians that many of the people that he had to attend were in extreme destitution and it was imperative on him to order extras to help their recovery, or even at times to prolong life, if they could not be prevailed upon to enter the house. His answer to their suggestion that he should cut back on relief in kind was that the guardians should be more liberal with out-relief, so that then he could curtail the extras, and he assured the guardians that they might '... rest assured that he did not order extras except in necessitous and very urgent cases.'[346]

While the guardians were keen to be stringent in the granting of relief in kind, on other occasions they showed a more understanding attitude. For example a man and his wife at Stapeley who had been in receipt of 6s 0d a week out-door relief, received a legacy to the value of £34 16s 4d. Payment of outdoor relief was stopped and the regulations required the recovery of twelve months relief, but as both the old people were over 80 years old 'no further action was taken.'[347]

Pressure for change

There was a sense of change coming over the poor relief system in the first decade of the twentieth century with pressure for the introduction of old age pensions and pleas for more government intervention in terms of money and organisation to help look after people in times of need. Less eligibility had been shown to be inappropriate in a modern economic climate and as P. Thane has argued there was a shift from blaming the fecklessness and idleness of the poor for their poverty, to a recognition that the fault lay in the structure of the economy; from a 'moral' to an 'economic' diagnosis. The need for government intervention was also recognised and so there was a move towards a compromise between 'individualism and 'collectivism' epitomised in the Liberal reforms, involving a complex process of change, which in turn reflected the complexity of the causes of poverty.[348]

It was in an attempt to better understand the nature of pauperism that during the year ending 30th September 1907 a survey was undertaken to evaluate the numbers of paupers relieved during a complete year and the length of time they were relieved.[349] The total number of people relieved in that year represented 1 in 20 or 4.9% of the population of England and Wales, with children under 16 accounting for less than one third. 29.4% were relieved in the workhouse, 66.4% received out-relief (19% of whom received medical relief only) and 4.2% received both in and out relief at different times of the year. Approximately one third of paupers were in receipt of relief for the full twelve months, while 12% were relieved for a period exceeding six months. These figures emphasised that for

approximately 45% of paupers relief tended to be long term for the old, non-able bodied, and sick. The poor relief system as envisaged in 1834 did not fulfill their requirements and was a great burden for the ratepayers to sustain, a fact that had been evident for many decades, but this return emphasised as never before.

In Cheshire the survey revealed that 3.5% or 1 in 28 of the population were relieved; 30% were men (31% England and Wales); 39% females (36% England and Wales) and 31% were children under 16 (33% England and Wales). 32% received none but in-relief; 64.5% none but out-relief (of which 15.6% received only medical relief) and 3.4% received both in and out relief. The fact that double the number of people required out-relief compared to in-maintenance indicated the degree to which people were forced to fall back on out-relief in order to survive. Out-relief was shown to be a much needed part of poor relief, if poor relief was taken to mean a system that people could resort to in time of need. The workhouse, apart from being physically incapable of accommodating everyone in need, was, for the majority, no longer suitable for the purpose for which it was first built.

In Nantwich Union 3.9% of the population had received relief during 1907 or 1 in 25 people: 0.4% more than in Cheshire as a whole and 1% less than in England and Wales. 27% were men, 41% were women, and 31.7% were children - 22% received none but in-relief, 76% received none but out-relief and 1.1% received both in and out relief at different times during the year. These figures mirror the anxieties being expressed by the Local Guardians and reflect the trends emerging from the yearly and

half yearly, and daily January and July returns - that outdoor relief in Nantwich Union always represented the bulk of expenditure, and even though the guardians had brought down the ratio of out to in-relief in the following stages:

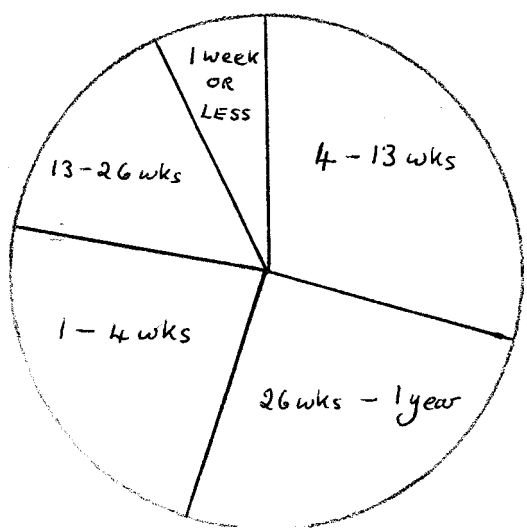
	Ratio of the cost of out-relief compared to in-maintenance.
1850s	x 6
1860s	x 7
1870s	x 4
1880s	x 3
1890s	x 5
1900s	x 2
1905	x 2

out relief still carried the greatest burden in terms of numbers and cost. On the other hand to have maintained all these people in the workhouse, even if they could have been accommodated, would have cost even more, divided families, and so created even more poverty.

In relation to the eleven other Cheshire Unions, Chester had the highest rate of pauperism with 5.9% of the population seeking relief during the year. Three other unions had over 4% of the population classed as paupers: Stockport with 4.3%, Congleton with 4.2%, and Nantwich with 4%. Macclesfield, Birkenhead, and Northwich had between 3-4% and the remaining four unions had between 2-3% of their population classed as paupers.

The length of time that people received relief in Nantwich Union was as follows:

figure 39



Only 6% of outdoor relief in Nantwich was granted for a week or less, a further 45% claimed for between one to six months, and 26% of recipients remained on out-relief for between six to twelve months. In all, 71% of all outdoor relief granted in Nantwich Union was of a long term nature, reinforcing the point made in the Report that there was a relatively greater permanency of relief in rural areas as compared to urban areas. However while Nantwich Union did contain large areas of countryside it also encompassed the urban area of Crewe, which had contributed greatly to the growth of outdoor relief. The report confirmed the reality that had been evident in relief figures for decades: out-relief was not being given lightly, but was maintaining those in need on a long term basis, such as the old and sick. Such confirmation was the foundation on which further changes to the system of relief could be based.

The pressure for old age pensions had been considerable, however as P. Thane has argued when introduced it was a '... pension for the very poor, the very respectable, and the very old.' The age threshold was fixed at 70, because to have introduced it any earlier would have been too expensive. The measure was described as being an 'experimental beginning in a new field of state action and beginnings needs must be cautious.[350] The significance of the act was that it was the first publicly financed cash benefit, free from the stigma of the Poor Law. By implication it was being acknowledged that people could be poor through no fault of their own. However as J. H. Treble has emphasised the fact that 27% of the 70+ age group were beneficiaries of this means tested pension was 'conclusive demonstration of the needs for state relief and of the depths of secure,

hidden, respectable poverty among the aged.'[351]

The implementation of the Old Age Pension Act of 1908 meant that after 1st January 1909 any person over 70 receiving out-door relief from Nantwich Union received relief representing the amount they would have received from an old age pension, if not disqualified solely on account of being in receipt of poor relief and they were of good character.[352] Some of the Nantwich Guardians also put forward the motion that a committee should be appointed to deal with new applicants for poor relief who, after 1909, would otherwise be eligible to receive old age pensions. The idea was that relief should be provided for them outside the Poor Law so that they would not be compelled to forfeit their right to a pension. It was suggested that a fund be raised by voluntary contributions out of which assistance could be given in the interim on the same scale as that given by the guardians. The motion was defeated by 23 votes to 5.[353]

In England and Wales 1909 marked the high point in expenditure on outdoor relief when it reached 11½d per head of the population. While population growth reached 8% between 1903 and 1910, outdoor relief increased by nearly 15%.[354] In January 1910 there were 26.4 paupers per 1,000 in England and Wales, and while there had been a continuous increase in the number of indoor paupers since 1900 amounting to 39%, the number of people receiving out-relief in 1910 was lower than in any year since 1903, reflecting the impact of the introduction of old age pensions.[355]

The number of people in receipt of poor relief in Cheshire on the 1st January 1910 represented 2% of the population, and recipients of out-relief represented 57.6% of the total number

relieved. Costs however were still on the increase and between the years ending Michaelmas 1905 and 1910 the total cost of in and out relief had increased by 10.4% and out-relief by 4.8%, out-relief accounting for 51.6% of total costs.[356]

In Nantwich Union the total number of paupers relieved in January 1910, represented 2.5% of the population, or 1 pauper in every 40 people, once again a higher ratio than in Cheshire as a whole. Of the total number relieved 69% were in receipt of out-relief, again higher than in the county as a whole. Non-able bodied adults represented 56% of those on out-relief, however with the introduction of the 1908 Old Age Pension Act where everyone in receipt of poor relief was disqualified from receiving a pension, many of the old non-able bodied would have switched to receiving an old age pension, so being eliminated from the statistics. Contrary to the increased costs in Cheshire, the cost of providing in and out relief in Nantwich had fallen by 3.2% between 1905 and 1910, and out-relief had decreased by 9.5%, but still represented 65% of the cost of in and out relief.[357]

In 1911 an order was passed in relation to out-relief that meant case papers would have to be made up for each applicant and so for the first time, as K. Williams has emphasised, the poor law would acquire a systematic knowledge of those on outdoor relief. 'Those on relief would cease to be 'paupers' or objects of repression and become ... objects for treatment.'[358] Little was achieved before the outbreak of the first World War, but as Williams has emphasised whereas the policy of the 1870s towards out-relief had been 'negative', the 1900s saw a move towards the regular review of applicants which was a 'positive

part of a strategy of treatment.'[359] However the 'treatment strategy' did not have a significant effect before 1914.

By January 1914 the number of paupers in the county, as well as in Nantwich Union, had fallen by 16% and 32% respectively since January 1910 with further decreases of 4.6% and 12.6% between January and July 1914. As P. Thane has pointed out the liberal reform measures concerning children, the aged and the sick contributed to the impressive fall in the total number of paupers, the fall being most dramatic amongst outdoor paupers.[360] In Cheshire the number of people claiming out-relief fell by 23.6% between January 1910-1914 and a further decrease of 3.2% took place between Jnuary and July 1914.[361] In Nantwich Union the number of people claiming out-relief had fallen by a massive 43.5% between January 1910-1914, with a further decrease of 6.2% by July 1914. Outdoor paupers still represented 62% of all paupers, but now the total percentage of paupers in the union had fallen to 1.5% or 1 pauper to every 66 people.[362] Nantwich was now seventh out of the eleven Cheshire Unions in respect of the percentage of paupers to population Chester, Congleton, Northwich, Macclesfield, Stockport, and Birkenhead all recording a higher percentage of paupers to the population, and Nantwich Union had never previously enjoyed 1.5% pauperism at all during the entire history of the new Poor Law. So although Nantwich had on many occasions experienced comparatively worse levels of pauperism than in the county as a whole, especially in the respect of outdoor relief, by 1914 the positions were reversed and pauperism fell more quickly than in Cheshire. K. Williams has argued 'selective repression was still alive' in relation to the relief of able bodied males

and in Nantwich Union they represented 4.2% of the total number of people relieved both in and out of the workhouse.[363]

In England and Wales by January 1914 paupers numbered 1 in 48 people; the total number of paupers having fallen by 18.6% between January 1910-1914.[364]

In conclusion the period from 1834-1914 had seen the establishment of the new Poor Law and workhouse system in a country where the able bodied were seen as the main culprits in causing rising poverty. Initially it was the intention to eliminate out-relief, whether to all classes or just able bodied males is still debated, as it was considered to be another symptom of the malaise that had caused such poverty to spread. Yet the reality of a fluctuating economy and the needs of the people in the union meant that the wishes of the Poor Law Commission could not be carried out.

As K. Williams has emphasised Poor Law policy represented an intertwined, complex relationship of repression, classification, special treatment and surveillance, each aspect being met by the guarded reception of the local guardians which affected the speed with which each was adopted.[365] Indeed the 'great expectation of change' anticipated after the introduction of the 1834 Act did not materialise for economic reasons and the fact that the local guardians jealously guarded traditions of local discretion which they were loth to lose.

The problem of the destitution faced by the old, the non-able bodied and sick, could not be catered for solely in the workhouse, indeed the reason why the workhouse was put under so many strains was because many people were within its walls that it was not suited for. The able bodied unemployed could

not be satisfactorily dealt with in times of depression, especially when large regions of the country were affected. Once again the reality of the situation faced by the Board of Guardians conflicted with the theory of poor relief. Less eligibility came to represent meaningless suffering to many for whom it had no significance in a volatile economic climate. As P. Thane has argued 'Despite rising expenditure, the ratio of paupers to total population continued to fall from the 1870s and rose only slightly during the depression of 1903-1905.[366] However in Nantwich Union the evidence reveals that the fall was not so pronounced between 1870 and 1910:

Year	% of paupers to population
1841	6.9
1861	3.3
1870	2.8
1880	2.6
1895	2.9
1907	4.0
1910	2.5
1914	1.7

While the decline had been marked between 1841 and 1861 thereafter there was only slight movement which was frequently up as well as down. Hence the continued concern of the Local Government Board with the level of pauperism in Nantwich compared to other areas of Cheshire. While Nantwich Union was criticised for excessive levels of out-relief and high costs compared to the rest of the county F. M. L. Thompson has argued that:

> In a somewhat self-fulfilling way the system worked ... As a proportion of the total population the number of paupers receiving either outdoor or indoor relief ... fell steadily to less than 3% from the 1890s onwards. Plainly by far the greater part of the 30% of the town population of the U.K. which Rowntree reckoned ... might be living

> in poverty were doing so without resort to poor relief. The majority of the deserving poor were indeed, it could be argued, shamed, bullied, and intimidated by the gaunt spectre of the Poor Law and its workhouse test into shifting for themselves, just as the authors of the 1834 Act had intended.[367]

Despite the academic argument of whether or not the system was a success, rising costs together with increasing pauper numbers, especially outdoor paupers in Nantwich Union, was the reality of the situation. This led to increasing calls for intervention as the County Councils began to administer Acts of Parliament without financial help from the government, which, in turn, led to greater burdens on the ratepayers. The inadequacies of the system of poor relief and the inability of the local guardians to deal with the sheer scale of the problems associated with the old, sick, children, and unemployed led to the Old Age Pension Act of 1908, the Childrens Act of 1908, and the Insurance Act of 1911, which embodied the recognition that only the state had the necessary resources to solve such social problems. P. Thane has described this period of Liberal reform as the '... dismantling of the Poor Law from without' by withdrawing deserving groups from its influence, but with provisos and rules '... little different from those of the Poor Law.'[368] Those least able to work or save were still vulnerable. By the outbreak of the first World War, the system of poor relief had been deeply undermined as other authorities, such as town councils, were taking over and duplicating the functions of the Board of Guardians. As M. E. Rose has concluded: '... in the face of ... industrial distress the board of guardians had failed just as the parish overseers were deemed to have failed in their approach to agrarian distress in the early 1830s.'[369]

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER FOUR

1. A. Digby, British Welfare Policy, op. cit., p. 29

2. Eight Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales (1842) pp. 188-190

3. ibid. p. 191

4. ibid. p. 194

5. ibid. Appendix E No. 1 pp. 610-613

6. ibib. Appendix E No. 2 pp. 614-615

7. C.P.L. Census Return for England and Wales 1841 Spool 116 7th June, 1841

8. Parl. Papers 1843, XLV (144) p. 3 and C.R.O. LGN 1/1 p. 88 3rd December 1842

9. Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (126) p. 2

10. Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (115) p. 25
Wirral Union average cost per head per week for food and clothing in the workhouse = 2s 4d
Altrincham Union = 3s 3d
Great Boughton = 2s 6d
Congleton = 3s 0d
Macclesfield = 2s11d
Northwich = 2s 2¼d
Stockport = 3s 4¼d
Nantwich = 2s 6d

11. Parl. Papers 1843 (144) pp. 2-3

12. Parl. Papers 1847-1848 (466-B) p. 4
compared to figures for Nantwich in Parl Papers 1843 XLV (144)

13. Parl. Papers 1847-1848 LIII (466-B) Indoor relief for year ending Lady Day 1846 £886.

14. ibid. P. 2 number of indoor inmates in Cheshire
Quarter ended Lady Day 1846 = 1965
Quarter ended Lady Day 1847 = 3791

15. ibid. also England - Expenditure on in-maintenance
Quarter ended Lady Day 1846 = £675222
Quarter ended Lady Day 1847 = £752857
1847-1848 LIII (27)

16. Parl. Papers 1852 XLV (583) and (533)

17. Parl. Papers 1850 L (435)
Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (3)
Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (301)
Cheshire-Indoor relief
Half Year ending Lady Day 1849 = £4908
Half Year ending Ladt Day 1850 = £3488
Between year ending October 1849 and October 1850 cost of indoor relief had fallen by 23.7%

England and Wales-Indoor relief
Half Year ending Lady Day 1849 = £464,459
Half Year ending Lady Day 1850 = £377,709

18. M.C.L. 1852 XLV (583)

19. Parl. Papers 1854-1855 XLVI (483) and (66)
Total spent on indoor relief in Cheshire
Year ending Lady Day 1854 = £9,868
Year ending Lady Day 1855 =£12,221

20. Parl. Papers 1850 L (624)
Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (3) and (645)

21. Parl. Papers 1854-1855 XLVI (483) and (66)
January 1854-1855 = increase 6.6% able bodied in relief
July 1854-1855 = increase 3.0% able bodied in relief

22. Parl. Papers 1856 XLIX (84) and (420)
also Cheshire indoor expenditure =
Half Year ending Lady Day 1855 = £6,432
Half Year ending Lady Day 1856 = £6,898

England and Wales indoor expenditure =
Half Year ending Lady Day 1855 = £499,655
Half Year ending Lady Day 1856 = £528,101

23. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77D)

24. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383D)

25. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77OI) and (77C)
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383D)

26. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B)
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B)

27. M. E. Rose, The Poor and the City, op. cit., p. 3

28. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B) and (77BI)
1st July 1857 Children under 16 = 48% of inmates
65½% non-able bodied
1st January 1858 Children under 16 = 40% of inmates
58½% non-able bodied
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B)
1st July 1860 Children under 16 = 44% of inmates
71½% non-able bodied

29. ibid. 1st July 1857 male non-able bodied = 85%
female " " " = 75%
1st January 1858 male " " " = 86%
female " " " = 75½%
1st July 1860 male " " " = 80%
female " " " = 60%

30. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B.I.)
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B.I.) and (383B)

31. ibid. p. 47

32. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B.I.)
52% of indoor inmates in Cheshire classed as non-able bodied (January 1858)
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B)
57.9% of indoor inmates in Cheshire classed as non-able bodied (July 1860)

33. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B.I.)
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B.I.)

34. ibid. (383C9 and (383 C.I.)

35. ibid. also for figures for England and Wales see Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

36. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383C) p. 15 Table 4

37. ibid. (383C.I.) p. 4 and J. H. Treble, op. cit.,p. 86
M. E. Rose, **The New Poor Law in an Industrial Area** op. cit., p. 121

39. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431D) pp. 48-49
see figure 14

40. ibid. Year ending Lady Day 1863

41. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431D) Year ended Lady Day 1863
In-relief for Cheshire = £15,572 18s 0d

42. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B,I,) pp. 46-47

43. C.R.O. LGN 1/6 p. 373 6th October 1860
and 20th October 1860 p. 378

44. ibid. 17th November 1860 p. 396

45. Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307 A.V.I.I.)

46. 4th week in April, 1862 the number relieved in the workhouse = 17,536 compared to 13,614 in April 1861
Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307A)

47. ibid (307A-AVII)

48. ibid. 4th week February 1862, 18,351 inmates relieved in workhouse.
4th week February 1863, 18,276 inmates relieved - a decrease of 0.4%

49. 1st January 1860 inmates = 1805
1st January 1861 inmates = 1869
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B.I.)

50. Number of inmates in Cheshire workhouses:
1st January 1860 = 1805 Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B.I)
1st January 1861 = 1869 ibid.
1st January 1863 = 2390 Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307 B.I.)

51. 1st January 1861 Able bodied inmates in Cheshire=
339 adults
251 children under 16
non-able bodied
573 adults
500 children under 16
Parl. Papers 1860 (383 B.I.)

1st January 1863 Able bodied inmates in Cheshire =
616 adults
333 children under 16
non-able bodied
582 adults
572 children under 16
Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307B.I.)

52. 1st July 1860 Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B)
Able bodied inmates in Cheshire =
244 adults
291 children under 16
Non-able bodied =
494 adults
457 children under 16

Total inmates = 1869

1st July 1862 Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307B)
Able bodied inmates in Cheshire =
502 adults
298 children under 16
Non-able bodied =
529 adults
483 children under 16

Total inmates = 2100

53. Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307C) pp. 14-15

54.

1st July 1860	88	indoor	inmates	in	Nantwich
1st January 1861	122	"	"	"	"
1st July 1862	137	"	"	"	"
1st January 1863	170	"	"	"	"
1st July 1863	141	"	"	"	"
1st January 1864	143	"	"	"	"

Parl Papers 1860 LVIII (383B, 383BI) 1862 XLVIII (307B)
1863 XLVIII (307B.I.) 1863 LI (431B, B.I.)

55. ibid.
1st January 1861 8 male able bodied in Nantwich Workhouse
1st January 1863 14 " " " " "
1st January 1864 11 " " " " "

56. ibid.
1st July 1862 21 female able bodied in Nantwich Workhouse
1st January 1863 32 " " " " "
1st January 1864 24 " " " " "

57. ibid. Able bodied children in Nantwich Workhouse

1st July 1860	11
1st July 1862	31
1st July 1863	29
1st January 1861	28
1st January 1863	34
1st January 1864	34

58. ibid. Non-able bodied males in Nantwich Workhouse

1st July 1860	16
1st January 1861	26
1st January 1863	29
1st January 1864	32

59. ibid. 24 non-able bodied children

60. D. Fraser, 'The Evolution of the British Welfare State' op. cit., p. 44

61. Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442D)

62. ibid. (442C) ibid. (442C.I.)

63. Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442B)

64. ibid.

65. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431D)
Year ending Lady Day 1863 Indoor relief in Cheshire = £15,572
Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442C and 442CI)
Year ending Lady Day 1865 Indoor relief in Cheshire = £15,842
ibid.
Year ending Lady Day 1866 Indoor relief in Cheshire = £16,667

66. From the year ending Lady Day 1860 in Cheshire when in-maintenance cost £11,452 until the year ending Michaelmas 1865 when the amount spent on in-maintenance amounted to £16,386.
Parl. Papers 1860 (383X and (383C.I.)
Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442C.I.) and (442C)

67. ibid. (442B)

68. ibid.

69. ibid.

70. Parl. Papers 1862 XLV (307B.I.)
1st January 1863 - 616 able bodied adult paupers in Cheshire
Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442B)
1st July 1865 - 420 able bodied adult paupers in Cheshire

71. ibid.
1st July 1870 - 2,389 indoor paupers

72. Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442B)
1st July 1866

477 - able bodied adult paupers in Cheshire
331 - " " child " " "

700 - non-able bodied adult paupers in Cheshire
575 - " " " child " " "

Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280B)
1st July 1870

361 - able bodied adult paupers in Cheshire
215 - " " child " " "

783 - non-able bodied adult paupers in Cheshire
646 - " " " child " " "

73. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280D)
1st July 1860 - all classes relieved in Cheshire workhouses = 1642

1st July 1870 - all classes relieved in Cheshire workhouses = 2389

Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)
England and Wales - expenditure on indoor relief in the year ending Lady Day 1870 = £1,502,807
" " " " Lady Day 1865 = £1,111,478
" " " " Lady Day 1860 = £912,360

74. Parl. Papers 1870 (280D)

75. ibid. (280B)

76. ibid.

77. Parl. Papers 1870 XLVIII (442B)
1st July 1866 - 59 able bodied in Nantwich Workhouse
70 non -able bodied " " "

Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280B)
1st July 1870 - 28 able bodied in Nantwich Workhouse
90 non-able bodied " " "

Cheshire non-able bodied = 1429 (total inmates= 2389)

78. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (69) Report by R. B. Cane Esq. Poor Law Inspector, dated 20th January 1870 on the pauperism of the whole of the county of Lancaster and parts of the counties of Chester, Derby, and York.

79. ibid.

80. ibid. (280C) for the half years ending Michaelmas 1870

81. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280C)
Parl. Papers 1871 LIX (140C)

82. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122C4) and (122C.I.)

83. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280D)
Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122D)

84. Parl. Papers 1871 LIX (140D)
Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122C.I.)
England and Wales: expenditure on in-maintenance
£1,502,807 in the year ending Lady Day 1870
£1,524,695 " " " " " " 1871
£1.577,596 " " " " " " 1875
Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

85. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B) and (122B.I.)
1st January 1874 inmates = 2405
" " 1875 " = 2438
1st July 1874 " = 2174
" " 1875 " = 2214

86. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B.I.)
1st July 1874 = 269 able bodied adult inmates

87. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B)
1st January 1875 = 401 able bodied inmates

88. ibid. (122B.I.)

89. ibid.

90. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B.I.)

91. 64 non-able bodied children in the workhouse July 1875
21 " " " " " " " July 1865

92. Parl Papers 1880 (66B)

93. ibid.
1st January 1880 total number of non-able bodied adults = 1356

1st July 1880 total number of non-able bodied adults = 1101

94. ibid.
1st January 1880 - 650 able bodied inmates
1st July 1880 - 447 " " "

95. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122C) and (122C,I,)
Year ending Michaelmas 1875 - expenditure in Cheshire on indoor relief = £23,827

Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B.I.) and (66C,I,)
Year ending Michaelmas 1880 - expenditure in Cheshire on indoor relief = "29,498

Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)
Year ending Lady Day 1875 - expenditure in England and Wales on indoor relief= £1,577,596
Year ending Lady Day 1880 = £1,757,749

96. Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66C) and (66C,I,)

97. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280D)
For the year ending Lady Day 1870 the cost of indoor relief for Nantwich Union amounted to £1190
England and Wales - expenditure on indoor relief:
1870 = £1,502,807
1880 = £1,757,749
Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

98. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B.I.)
Able bodied men in Nantwich Workhouse
1st July 1875 = 13

99. Able bodied females in Nantwich Workhouse:
Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B.I.) 1st July 1880 = 31
Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B.I.) 1st July 1875 = 12
Able bodied children in Nantwich workhouse:
1st July 1880 = 37
1st July 1875 = 17

100. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122 B.I.)
1st July 1875 - 42 able bodied inmates

Parl. Papers 1880 (66 B.I.)
1st July 1880 - 87 able bodied inmates

101. Parl. Papers 1863 XLVIII (307B,I,)
1st January 1863 - 170 indoor inmates
population of the Union 1861 = 40955

Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B)
1st January 1880 - 200 indoor inmates
population of the Union 1881 = 61566

102. ibid. 1st July 1880
100 non-able bodied inmates out of 200 indoor paupers

103. G. Anderson, Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire, (1971) p. 137

104. ibid. p. 151 and p. 171

105. 1851 Census Return
62 children under 15. Total in Nantwich Workhouse = 150
1881 Census Return
84 children under 15. Total in Nantwich Workhouse = 219

106. 1851 census = 49 single inmates
1881 " = 68 " "

107. 1851 census = 31 widowed inmates
1881 " = 46 " "

108. P. Thane op. cit., p. 8

109. 1851 census = 8 married inmates
1881 " = 21 " "

110. 64 children aged between 1 and 9 were relieved in the workhouse in 1871
31 children aged between 1 and 9 were relieved in the workhouse in 1861

111. 36 young people aged between 10-19 were relieved in the workhouse

112. 1841 = 9 inmates aged between 60-69
1871 = 18 " " " 60-69
1881 = 25 " " " 60-69

113. 1841 = 3 inmates aged between 70-79 1 = 80 years
1881 = 25 " " " 70-79 8 = 80 years

114. 1861 = 2 inmates aged over 90
1881 = 3 " " " 90

115. P. Thane op. cit., p. 19

116. In the 1851 and 1881 census inmates are listed with an occupation where applicable. The aged, idiots etc., are not classified with an occupation, so for the purposes of figures 19-22 I have calculated the proportions for each group vis. a vis. those classified as having an occupation. For the purposes of discussion I have also calculated their proportion in relation to the total inmate proportion.

117. 1851 number of scholars =39
1861 in Nantwich work- =36
1871 house =76
1881 =52

118. 1851 number of servants =34
1861 in Nantwich work- =10
1871 house =16
1881 =32

119. In the 1861 Census agricultural labourers were the second most popular group of inmates in the workhouse when they formed 27.7% of inmates classified as having an occupation.

120. 1851 = 32
1861 = 18 agricultural labourers and 5 labourers
1871 = 13
1881 = 29

121. In 1851 there were 17 different occupational groups represented in the workhouse. By 1881 this figure had increased to 29.

122. 1851 - remaining inmates after scholars = 17.3%
1861 - servants and labourers extracted = 22.8%
1871 = 22.2%
1881 = 28.8%

123. Only in the census of 1881 were inmates on the tramp distinguished from other inmates and they represented 4.8% or 9 inmates classified as having an occupation. Their occupations ranged from labourers to iron puddlers, a seamstress, rope makers and a boat builder.

124. J. Hall op. cit., pp. 267-269

125. 1871 = 5 shoemakers = 3.7% of inmates with occupation
1881 = 12 " = 6.4% " " " "

126. Census Returns 1851 - 1881

127. A. Redford, Labour Migration in England 1800-1850 (1964) pp. 183-186

128. J. H. Treble op.cit., p. 91 and p. 103

129. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVII (94B)
1st January 1885 inmates in Nantwich Workhouse = 247

Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B)
1st January 1880 inmates in Nantwich Workhouse = 200

130. 1st January 1880 female able bodied = 29
1st January 1885 female able bodied = 22

131.

	1st January 1880	1st January 1885
Non-able bodied males	46	55
" " " females	15	26
Able bodied children	35	45
Non-able bodied children	32	52

132. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVIII (94B.I.)
1st July 1885 number of inmates in Nantwich Workhouse = 199

133. K. Williams. op. cit., p. 41

134. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVII (94B) and (94B.I.)
and C.R.O. LGN 1/16 3rd October 1885
1st January 1885 able bodied males in Nantwich workhouse = 35
1st July 1885 able bodied males in Nantwich Workhouse = 22

135. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVII (94C) and (94C.I.)
England and Wales indoor expenditure:
1880 = £1,757.749
1885 = £1,921,587
Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

136. Parl. Papers 1884-1885 LXVII (94C)

137. Parl. Papers 1884-1885 LXVII (94B) and (94B.I.)
Non-able bodied in Cheshire:
1st January 1885 = 2160
1st July 1885 = 1857

138. Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B)
Parl. Papers 1884-1885 LXVIII (94B9)(66B.I.) (94B.I.)
Adult able bodied inmates in Cheshire
1st January 1880 = 650
1st January 1885 = 686
1st July 1880 = 447
1st July 1885 = 564

Children under 16 - able bodied in Cheshire
1st January 1880 = 358
1st January 1885 = 410
1st July 1880 = 280
1st July 1885 = 447

139. Adult able bodied inmates in Nantwich Workhouse:
1st January 1880 = 60
1st January 1885 = 57
1st July 1880 = 50
1st July 1885 = 42

Able bodied children under 16 in Nantwich Workhouse
1st January 1880 = 35
1st January 1885 = 45
1st July 1880 = 37
1st July 1885 = 30

140. Parl. Papers 1896 LXXI (313)
Population of Nantwich Union = 63,098 in 1891

141. Parl. Papers 1895 LXXXIV (75B)

142. ibid. 204 inmates

143. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVII (94B)
Parl. Papers 1895 LXXXIV (75B)
Non-able bodied males - 1st January 1885 = 55
" " " " - 1st January 1895 = 67

144. Able bodied males 1st January 1895 = 40
" " females 1st January 1895 = 37
" " children 1st January 1895 = 60
and C.R.O. LGN 1/21 9th February 1895 p. 72
and 9th March 1895 p. 104

145. P. Thane op. cit., p. 39

146. C.R.O. LGN 1/21 23rd February 1895 pp. 85-86

147. Parl. Papers 1895 LXXXIV (75B)

148. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVII (94B)
Parl. Papers 1895 LXXXIV (75B)
Cheshire able bodied adults receiving in-relief

	1st January 1885	1st January 1895
	686	1104
Nantwich	57	77

149. Parl. Papers 1885 LXVII (94C) and (94C,I,)
Cost of indoor relief in Nantwich Union:
Year ending Michaelmas 1885 = £2103

Parl. Papers 1896 LXXI (313)
Year ending Lady Day 1896 = £2542

Cost of indoor relief in Cheshire:
Year ending Michaelmas 1885 = £30.234
" " Lady Day 1896 = £34,936

Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)
Cost of indoor relief in England and Wales:
Year ending Lady Day 1885 = £1,921,587
" " Lady Day 1896 = £2,254,350

150. Parl. Papers 1902 LXXXVIII (326) and (326I)
Cost of indoor relief:
Nantwich 1902 = £3648
Cheshire 1902 =£53638
also see C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 8th September 1900
and 22nd September 1900

151. Previously some establishment changes had not been taken into account when calculating the average costs.

152. Parl. Papers 1905 LXVII (325) (325I)

153. Parl. Papers 1905 LXVII (325) pp. 7-8 and (325I) p. 8 and p. 10

154. P. Thane op. cit., p. 72

155. M.C.L. 1901 census table 30 p. 66

156. ibid. p.vii

157. Report on the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor (1895) p. xiii volume 28 (Irish University Press)

158. ibid. comments on Sir Hugh Owen

159. ibid.

160. C.R.O. MF204/20 Chester Chronicle 10th October 1896

161. ibid. Mr. Robinson of Barrow

162. ibid. Sir John T. Hibbert, K.C.B. President of the 22nd Annual Conference of the North Western Poor Law Division.

163. ibid.

164. C.R.O. LGN 1/22 22nd August 1896 p. 130

165. C.R.O. LGN1/26 26th November 1906 p. 402

166. C.R.O. LGN 1/27 13th June 1908 p. 360

167. M. A. Crowther, op. cit., p. 83

168. Parl. Papers 1910 LXXVII (204C) p. 8

169. ibid. also C.R.O. LGN 1/27 4th April 1908 p. 299

170. Parl. Papers 1910 XCII (242)

171. M. A. Crowther op. cit., p. 84

172. C.R.O. LGN 1/26 p. 450 and
C.R.O. LGN 1/27 9th March 1907 p. 16

173. P. Thane op. cit., pp. 70-72

174. ibid.

175. ibid.

176. Parl. Papers 1914 LIV (282)

177. Able bodied in Nantwich Workhouse July 1914 = 132
Non-able " " " " = 98

178. Parl. Papers 1914 LXIX (278) 1st January 1914

179. Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales (1836) p. 7

180. Fifth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales (1839) p. 13

181. D. Fraser, The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century op. cit., p. 18

182. A. Digby, British Welfare Policy, op. cit., p. 33

183. A. Brundage, op. cit., p. 183

184. Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (33) 1834 = £92,640
1839 = £69,987
1840 = £75,895

185. ibid.

186. Seventh Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners (1841) appendix 17

187. F. M. L. Thompson, op. cit., p. 346

188 Seventh Annual Report, op. cit., pp. 422-424

189. ibid. p. 434, 4974 aged and infirm paupers partially or wholly disabled.

190. D. Fraser, (Editor's comments) The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit., p. 14

191. D. Fraser, The Evolution of the British Welfare State, op. cit., p. 42

192. A. Digby, The Poor Law in Nineteenth Century England, op. cit., p. 32

193. K. Williams, op. cit., p. 56

194. Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (126)

195. Parl. Papers 1843 XLV (144)

196. Parl. Papers 1843 XLV (144)

197. Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (126) p. 3

198. ibid.
Expenditure on in-maintenance = £10,997
" " out-maintenance = £53,783

199. ibid.
The number of people on out relief, year ending Lady Day 1841 = 2158 1842 = 2120
Also see 8th Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners (1842) Appendix A No. 1 p. 69 and Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (89)

200. Parl. Papers 1843 (144)

201. ibid. p. 3

202. 8th Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners (1842) op. cit., p. 4

203. Parl. Papers 1841 XXI (33) p. 37
Total expenditure on relief of poor in England and Wales year ending Lady Day:

1837	4,044,741	5s 10d per head
1838	4,123,604	6s 0d per head
1839	4,406,907	6s 4d per head
1840	4,576,965	6s 7d per head

204. 8th Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, op. cit., p. 8

205. ibid. p. 10

206. Parl. Papers 1847-1848 LIII (735)

207. ibid.

208. ibid. (4669

209. ibid. Quarter ending Lady Day 1847
in paupers 3791
out paupers 27221

210. Parl. Papers 1847-1848 LIII (735)

211. ibid.

212. ibid. p. 168

213. ibid. (466-B)
Nantwich - number of out-paupers quarter ending Lady Day 1847 = 2543
Cost of out-relief = £7661 year ending Lady Day 1847

214. Parl. Papers 1847-1848 LIII (466B)
Parl. Papers 1850 L (413)

215. Parl. Papers 1852 XLV (583) and (I)
Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (3) (301)

216. Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (3)

217. Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (3) (645)
Cheshire able bodied receiving out-relief:
1st January 1850 = 2060 1st July 1850 = 1802
1st January 1851 = 1865 1st July 1851 = 1747
able bodied in the workhouse = 228
Parl. Papers 1852 XLV (583)
Parl. Papers 1843 XLV (144)

218. Parl. Papers 1852 XLV (583)

219. Parl. Papers 1852 XLIX (3) and (301)
Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (301) and 1852 XLV (I)

220. Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (3)

221. ibid.

222. Parl. Papers 1852 XLV (533)

223. ibid. and Parl. Papers 1843 XLV (144)

224. Parl. Papers 1854 LV pt.1 (81)
Nantwich cost of in/out relief = £8692

225. ibid.

226. C.R.O. LGN 1/4 1st January 1854 p. 440

227. ibid.

228. M. E. Rose, The New Poor Law in an Industrial Area op. cit p. 132

228. K. D. M. Snell, op. cit., p.120

230. C.R.O. LGN 1/4 7th August 1852 p. 156

231. ibid. 28th August 1852 p. 169

232. ibid.

233. ibid. 11th September 1852 p. 178

234. ibid. 2nd October 1852 p. 199

235. ibid. 20th August 1853 p. 356
3rd September 1853 p. 363

236. Parl. Papers 1851 XLIX (301) and 1852 XLV (I)
Expenditure Cheshire in/out relief years ending
Michaelmas 1851 = £54,177

Parl. Papers 1854-1855 XLV (66) and (483)
Lady Day 1854 = £56,897

ibid.
Lady Day 1855 = £63,931

Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77D)
Lady Day 1857 £71,793

237. Parl. Papers 1856 XLIX (84) and (420)

Cheshire	In/out paupers	Out able-bodied
1st January 1856	15372	2045
1st July 1856	14359	1852

238. Parl. Papers 1854-1855 XLVI)66) and (483)

239. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77C1) and (77C)

240. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77D)

241 Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B)
Nantwich 1st July 1857

Children -	able bodied	231
"	non-able bodied	115
Adults	able bodied	110
"	non-able bodied	802
Total out relief		1289

242. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B.I)

243. see earlier comments p. 274

244. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77 B.I)

245. ibid. and Parl. Papers 1857-1858 XLIX pt. 2 (98 A.I.)

246. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77 B.I.)

247. ibid. (77C) p. 3
Half Year ending Michaelmas

	Cheshire		England and Wales	
	1856	1857	1856	1857
IN	6184	6073	458401	443898
OUT	28328	28866	1502626	1440110
TOTAL	34512	34936	1961027	1884008
	1.2% Increase		3.9% Decrease	

248. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B)
Total out-relief in Nantwich 1st July 1860 = 1238

Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77B)
Total out-relief in Nantwich 1st July 1857 = 1289

249. K. Williams op. cit., pp. 64-65

250. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77D)
Nantwich Cost of out-relief year ending Lady Day 1857 = £6333

Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383C) and (383C.I.)
Nantwich Cost of out-relief year ending Lady Day 1861 = £5661

Total in/out relief Lady Day 1861 = £6574
ibid.

251. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383B.I.) and (383 C.I.)
Nantwich Cost of in/out relief year ending Lady Day 1861 = £6574

252. Parl. Papers 1857 XXXII (77 B.I.)
Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383 B.I.)

253. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383C) and (383C.I.)

254. Year ending Lady Day 1861: Out Relief = £55,470

Year ending Michaelmas 1860 in/out relief = £66,471

Half year ending Michaelmas 1860 in/out relief = £33,302

Half year ending Lady Day 1861 in/out relief = £35,668

255. Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

256 Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383 B.I.)

257. ibid.

258. ibid. (383 C,I,)

259. Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307B)

260. ibid.
Nantwich. July 1862 able bodied adults = 175
non-able " " = 800
able bodied children = 337
non-able " " = 119

261. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431 AII)

262. Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307C)
North Midland, North Western, and York Divisions:
Paupers in receipt of relief 30th June 1861 = 189186
" " " " " 30th June 1862 = 252508

263. ibid. (207B)
Cheshire: 1st July 1862

Numbers on out relief	18830
able bodied adults	4031
non-able bodied adults	6660

264. ibid.
Cheshire in/out relief 1st July 1862 = 20930 people

265. Parl. Papers 1863 XLVIII (307 B.I.)

266. Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307 B.I.)

267. ibid.

268. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431B)

269. ibid. (431D)

270. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383 C) and (383 C.I)
Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431D.)

271. Parl. Papers 1860 LVIII (383C) and (383C.I)
Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307D)
Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431D)

272. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431B.I.)

273. Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442D)

274. ibid.

275. Cheshire:
Total numbers relieved in/out 1st July 1865 = 16212
" " " " " 1st July 1866 = 16069

276. Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442B) and (442D)
Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431D)

277. ibid. (442C) (442 C.I.)

278. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (468)
Survey made on 18th December 1869

279. M. E. Rose, The English Poor Law 1780-1930
op. cit., p. 160

280. R. G. Hodgkinson, op. cit., p. 690

281. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (468) p. xxviii/xxix

282. ibid.

283. ibid. pp. 28-29

284. ibid. pp. 258-259

285. P. Thane op. cit., p. 54

286. M. E. Rose, The English Poor Law 1780-1930
op. cit., p. 179

287. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280B)

288. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280D)
Parl. Papers 1871 LIX (140D)

289. ibid. (140C)

290. Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)
England and Wales:
Out relief year ending Lady Day 1871 = £3,663,970
In " " " " " " = £1,524,695

291. F. M. L. Thompson, op. cit., p. 347

292. K. Williams, op. cit., p. 66, p. 71, p. 128

293. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 73

294. F. B. Smith, op. cit., p. 384

295. Parl. Papers 1870 LVIII (280B)

296. Parl. Papers 1865 XLVIII (442C and (442C.I)
Parl. Papers 1871 LIX (140C)

297. C.R.O. LGN 1/11 27th December 1873 p. 336

298. Parl. Papers 1875 LXIII (122B.I)

299. ibid. (122 C.I)

300. ibid. (122C) and (122C.I)

301. ibid. (122B)

302. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 35

303. M. E. Rose, 'The Allowance System under the New Poor Law', Economic History Review vol. 19 (December 1966) pp. 612-613

304. Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B) and (66B.I)

305. Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66C) and (66C.I)

306. ibid. p. 23

307. Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

308. Parl. Papers 1880 LXI (66B) and (66B.I)

309. ibid. (66C) and (66C.I)

310. Parl. Papers 1884-1885 LXVII (94A)

311. P. Thane op. cit., p. 35

312. M. A. Crowther, op. cit., P. 72

313. Parl. Papers 1884-1885 LXVII (94C) and (94C.I)

314. ibid. (94B) and (94B.I)

315. ibid. (94C) and (94C.I) and
Parl. Papers 1895-1896 LXXI (313)

316. Parl. Papers 1890 (269)

317. C.R.O. LGN 2022/1/1 9th May 1891

318. C.R.O. LGN 2022/21 p. 8

319. ibid. pp. 9-10

320. ibid. pp. 26-27

321. ibid.
Nantwich:
Year ending Lady Day 1892 out relief paupers = 4134
" " " " 1897 " " " = 3456

322. ibid.
Nantwich:
Year ending Lady Day 1893 cost out-relief = £7377 4s 0d
" " " " 1897 " " " = £7332 19s 0d

323. ibid.

324. ibid.

325. Parl. Papers 1895 LXXXIV (75B)
Parl. Papers 1896 LXXI (313)

326. Parl. Papers 1895 LXXXIV (75B)

327. C.R.O. LGN 1/21 pp. 85-86

328. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 10

329. C.R.O. Chester Chronicle 3rd October 1896 MF 204/20

330. C.R.O. LGN 1/11 25th July 1896 p. 109

331. C.R.O. Crewe Chronicle 25th August 1900 MF 207/6

332. ibid.

333. ibid.

334. C.R.O.Crewe Chronicle 15th December 1900 MF 207/6

335. C.R.O. Crewe Chronicle 31st August 1901 MF 207/6

336. ibid.
Nantwich Union:
Half year ending Lady Day 1901 expenditure =£5656
" " " " " 1897 " =£6530
C.R.O. LGN 2022/21

337. E. C. Midwinter, Victorian Social Reform (1968) p. 51

338. C.R.O. LGN 1/24 28th September 1901 and
12th October 1901

339. C.R.O. Crewe Chronicle 19th October 1901 MF 207/6

340. Parl. Papers 1902 LXXXVIII (326) and (326I)

341. Parl. Papers 1905 LXVII (325)

342. ibid.

343. Parl. Papers 1902 LXXXVIII (326)
Parl. Papers 1905 LXVII (325) and (325I)

344. ibid.
Nantwich: Year ending Michaelmas 1905
Expenditure on out relief = £8500
In kind = £148

345. C.R.O. Crewe Chronicle 2nd November 1901 MF 207/6

346. C.R.O. Crewe Chronicle 30th November 1901 MF 207/6

347. C.R.O. LGN 1/26 20th June 1906 p. 319

348. P. Thane op. cit., pp. 10-11 and p. 57

349. Parl. Papers 1908 XCII (250)

350. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 83

351. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 107

352. C.R.O. LGN 1/27 19th September 1908 p. 430

353. ibid. 3rd October 1908 p. 441

354. Parl. Papers 1910 LXXVIII (204C)

355. ibid. (242I) p. ix

356. ibid. (242)(204C)(203C)

357. ibid.

358. K. Williams, op. cit., p. 132

359 ibid. p. 133

360. P. Thane, op. cit p. 91

361. Parl. Papers 1914 LXIX (278)
Parl. Papers 1914 (282)

	Jan. 1914	July 1914
Number of paupers in Cheshire	15891	15148
" " " " Nantwich Un.	1344	1174
Paupers receiving out-relief in Cheshire	8323	8052

362. ibid.

Out relief	January	1914	=	780
Nantwich	July	1914	=	731

363. K. Williams, op. cit., p. 135

364. Parl. Papers 1914 LXIX (278)

365. K. Williams, op. cit., p. 144

366. P. Thane, op. cit., pp. 72-73

367. F. M. L. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 350-351

368. P. Thane, op. cit., pp. 72-73

369. M. E. Rose, (Editors comments) The Poor and the City, op. cit., p. 12

Chapter 5

Voluntary endeavour in Crewe and Nantwich 1830 - 1914

After 1834 and the introduction of the new Poor Law, the market town of Nantwich came to dominate everything concerning the poor law in this area of South Cheshire. Just as charities had assumed an important role in Nantwich before 1834, so they continued to have an effect on the life of the town throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, and an examination will be made of to what extent their role adapted to a changing economic and social climate. Increasingly the problems they faced concerned a lack of finance, by implication increasing the work of the poor law which was then faced with the challenge of relieving even more people as charities dried up. Several broad questions suggest themselves about charitable activity: did they exert a form of social discipline over the people receiving benefit from them; is it possible to detect if they actually affected material well being or in fact worsened the problem? How was the problem of raising finance tackled and is there any evidence of the poor law and charities co-operating one with the other?

However unlike the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when Nantwich tended to have the monopoly on charitable activity, the period after 1834 saw the emergence of the railway town of Crewe. As the town developed a new set of social problems arose and consequently a new set of charities grew up to help placate the problem. What areas were they concerned with and how effective were they in dealing with the problems?

In many respects Crewe became the more dominant of the two towns in a short space of time, not merely in terms of the size

of its population and pace of industrial development. The scale of the social problems encountered reflected that this new community was developed by the wholesale migration of families by the railway company from the North of England, and especially from the Edge Hill area of Liverpool. Therefore the London and North Western Railway Co., had little choice but to become involved in the welfare of its workers by providing many of the social necessities for a growing community. However while fulfilling many great needs the railway company did not, and perhaps had no intention of, satisfying every deficiency. How far did railway paternalism develop in Crewe? As well as the paternalism exhibited by the L.N.W.R., other forces played a vital role in providing for the well being of the growing community. The Co-operative movement assumed an important role in the town from 1845 onwards as did the Friendly Societies for men, women, and children, and to a less extent the churches, with their mutual improvement societies and Bands of Hope. Who did they appeal to and what did they offer to members? what impact did they make in tackling poverty?

Disasters locally, as well as nationally, motivated both Crewe and Nantwich into raising funds for the victims and the families of those involved. What impact did the Boer War and the First World War have on the community, and what form did the fund raising for these two major events take?

The old charities existing in Monks Coppenhall and Church Coppenhall from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries continued; how did they cope with problems associated with a growing industrial town? A combination of their inadequacies and pressing need led to a host of new charitable endeavours in

Crewe that in many respects overshadowed those existing in neighbouring Nantwich, and an examination will be made of what impact they had on the local community.

By 1914 Crewe and Nantwich enjoyed an uneasy partnership regarding the poor law, with Crewe constantly seeking increased representation on the Board of Guardians, and the L.N.W.R arguing about the amount their lands had been assessed at for the rates. By 1914 the number of new charities that had emerged in Crewe since the 1850s far outnumbered those in Nantwich and indeed those concerned in organising charitable endeavour in Nantwich frequently complained that they could not rouse the people of their town to participate in fund raising events such as those entered into by the people of Crewe, just a few miles up the road. Indeed fund raising and charitable endeavour moved during the nineteenth century, into fulfilling a vital part of peoples leisure activity. An examination will be made of how far this extended in Crewe together with the importance of charity by the poor for the poor.

Nantwich charities 1834-1914

What problems were faced by charities in the period immediately prior to the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act? In Nantwich the main concern centred around the lack of new bequests. Any new legacies that were made tended to augment existing charities because inflation combined with a rapidly growing population had devalued many of the old charities, making life almost unbearable for recipients. The consolidation of many old, small, charitable bequests had taken place in order to make them collectively viable, and two of the largest bequests that Nantwich ever enjoyed in the 1830s and 1840s from

the Sprout brothers augmented existing charities.[1]

This relative 'drying up of private charity' that S. G. and E. O. A. Checkland have described as 'leaving only recourse to the parish' available to the poor[2] came at a time when men like William Sprout, who was an overseer of the poor and a Wright's Trustee, realised that only large injections of cash could help to tackle the ever growing problem of poverty that the old charities were ill equipped to cope with.

No matter how harsh less eligibility in the workhouse was in practice, the reality of the situation was that most members of the working classes were likely to experience poverty at some time in their lives. It was then that local charities were vital to help individuals over a difficult period, and with the appearance of the workhouse, they were more vital than ever before. As M. E. Rose has pointed out[3] the Royal Commission on the Poor Law concentrated too much attention on the problem caused by the able bodied unemployed being demoralised by outdoor relief and did not consider the poverty caused by physical and mental ill health, old age, and orphans. As a result it was these people that so much charitable effort had to be directed towards, as the old, orphaned and sick constituted the largest proportion of those receiving relief from the poor law.

However vital the need for extra charitable help from the recipients point of view, many people thought that many charities would undermine the work of the Poor Law Amendment Act by creating even more poverty if the charity was not administered with care. The role played by charities in relation to the relief of the poor came under the scrutiny of the 1834 Poor Law Report which declared that the effect of charities distributed

among classes who received poor relief was '... often wasted and mischievous... they are only less pernicious than the abuse in the application of the poor-rates, because they are visibly limited in amount.'[4] The Commission described some charities as 'evil' because the 'majority' of them attracted an undue proportion of the poorer classes who '... in the hope of trifling benefits to be obtained without labour, often linger on in spots most unfavourable to the exercise of their industry.'[5] Poverty, the commissioner emphasised, was, as a result, 'collected and created' '...whence the benevolent founders have manifestly expected to make it disappear.' However as D. Owen has argued the 1834 Amendment Act offered the barest minimum assuming more constructive assistance would be provided by voluntary charity:

> It was one of the unhappy consequences of this view that philanthropy was left with the obligation of labouring not merely to relieve unfortunate individuals ... but also to alleviate the distress that was endemic among considerable sections of the working population.[6]

As Owen has emphasised the early Victorians thought of the public system as supplementing 'the active exercise of private charity and the philanthropic efforts of individuals,' and by so doing the state left a tremendous social expanse to be occupied by private benevolence.[7] The need for private charitable endeavour was emphasised during times of severe economic depression when the local board of guardians simply could not cope with the increased burden of the poor. The Eighth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners acknowledged that the effects of the depression that hit Lancashire and Cheshire in 1841-1842 would have been much worse had it not been for the private

charity that helped to relieve the distress.[8] The need for increased monetary contributions to keep existing charities functioning in the face of the devalued legacies and increasing claimants was imperative in the period just prior to the introduction of the new Poor Law and in the decades afterwards. Indeed the augmentation of existing charities had taken place since 1793 when Miss Elizabeth Walker had augmented Chorlton's Charity and Wright's Almshouses, and in turn Miss Walker's Charity was 'topped up' by William Sprout in 1829.

The fortunes of the old established Nantwich charities in the period from 1834 to 1914 were mixed, and the amounts disbursed were comparatively small, when considered either singly or collectively, compared to amounts distributed by the Board of Guardians in 'in' and 'out' relief for the Nantwich Union. Individually, how did the important charities of Nantwich cope with maintaining the poor between 1834-1914, what were the problems they faced and did they manage to overcome the obstacles?

Wilbraham Charities

The Wilbraham family bequests in the form of £14 a year, the interest from £400 donated in 1661 by Ralph Wilbraham, continued to be paid every Christmas to the poor to provide clothing and was still being distributed in 1914. Also the almshouses built in 1613 by Sir Roger Wilbraham continued to accommodate six almspeople; in 1838 the annual income and expenditure standing at £24.[9] This yearly annuity remained the same, following the wishes of the original founder, but the cost of the upkeep of the almshouses outstripped the funds available, causing Mary and Elizabeth Bennion to augment Sir Roger Wilbraham's

foundation with a sum of £738 in 1856.

By 1868 the expenditure on the almshouses stood at £12 per year, and an allowance of £6 4s 6d was made for clothing for the almspeople. Bennion's augmentation producing £23 5s 3d annually.[10] However by 1870 the almshouses had become so dilapidated and insanitary that they were knocked down and rebuilt by Lord Tollemache, who then represented the Wilbraham family. They were rebuilt in Welsh Row in two groups of three with small gardens in front, each group bearing his arms and motto. The houses were reserved for four people from Nantwich and two from Acton, and when the old men died their widows were allowed to remain as long as they conducted themselves properly. By 1892 the inmates received 17s 6d a quarter from Roger William Wilbraham J.P. of Northwich, an annual sum of 6s 8d for coals and once every two years a gown and petticoat were provided for each widow. Peter Sprout's bequest further augmented the almshouses by £2 a year, and the total expenditure reached £35 10s 0d in 1892.[11] No further increases took place in allowances, and this financial arrangement was still in operation at the outbreak of the first World War. It is clear that without Bennion's Charity the original bequest would not have been able to have kept up with the repairs and necessary allowances for the almspeople. This charity is however a good example of how an old established family continued to support, albeit in an ever diminishing way, a commitment established by an ancestor two hundred and fifty-seven years previously.

Sir Edmund Wright's Charity

Between 1831-1833 Sir Edmund Wright's Charity expended

£125 6s 4½d[12] which left the charity with a deficit of £49 6s 4½d. The fact that the benefactors of ten charities during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries had indicated that they wished their bequests to be administered by the Wright's Trustees, applying the same rules as those governing Sir Edmund Wright's almshouses,[13] meant that this was the most financially influential charity in the town. Despite this fact, the early 1830s marked a difficult phase in its finances, such difficulties only easing with the £60 a year allowance from the William Sprout bequest in 1829. With help from Sprout's charity and Miss Chorlton's charity in 1835 £104 8s 7d was expended,[14] but thereafter expenditure averaged between £60 and £70 per annum until 1849 when once again the almshouse showed a deficit of £4 10s 3½d which was off-set by borrowing from Chorlton's Charity, and in 1851 interest from the bank was used to balance a deficit of £6 5s 4½d. Indeed in the period prior to 1840 some of the houses were kept vacant for long periods because of the cost of repairs, and the rules which governed the almsmen were just as strictly adhered to as in the eighteenth century. For example in 1835 an almsman was admitted but received no pension from Wright's Charity for three years as he had not lived in Nantwich for the prescribed length of time laid down by the founder. However as the charity was in dire financial need by this time, it was perhaps a blessing for them to have an almsman in residence who they did not have to pay an allowance to, despite the hardship this would have caused to the almsman.[15]

By 1868 the annual income from rent to the almshouses was £32[16] and the charity relied for its existence on augmentation

from other charities. Such were the economies that had to be made that in November 1877 the annual dinner that it had become a custom for Trustees and local tradesmen to attend, thereby encouraging them to contribute to the upkeep of the charity, was abandoned, but the almsmen continued to have their annual feast every 24th November, again funded by William Sprout and Miss Elizabeth Walker.

By 1892 the almsmen received approximately £14 a year from William Sprout's and Sir Edmund Wright's charities, which was paid in quarterly instalments and at Christmas a new shirt, a pair of shoes, and a cravat were supplied, annual expenditure amounting to £84 per year.

In 1906 considerable changes were made in connection with Sir Edmund Wright's Charity. The almshouses had fallen into such a state of dilapidation that the Trust carried out a scheme of restoration and improvements, and with the consent of the Charity Commissioners accepted £1400 in final settlement of the rent charge of £32 a year from a farm in Middlesex. £1,100 was invested, which produced an annual income of £37 14s 8d and the remaining £300 was applied to the restoration and improvement scheme.

The rules of Sir Edmund Wright's Almshouses regarding the religion of the almsmen continued to be strictly applied, and the founders service was preached annually on November 27th, the anniversary of the baptism of Sir Edmund. In 1909 the Trustees, as was the custom, met at the almshouses and viewed the almsmen and then went to the parish church 'together with as many almsmen as should be able to go,' which on this occasion was three. During the sermon the Rector pointed out some of

problems the Trustees had to deal with, such as selecting wise investments that would assure the continuance of the charity. However the Rector pointed out that:

> ... The celebration of this anniversary is not for the perpetual recitation of the deeds of a bygone worthy: the idea is not extol the self not to perpetuate the name of the founder of these charities but for a higher and nobler purpose, the education of followers in the principles which animated them.[17]

The rector emphasised that people became trustees 'as an act of grace' or as if they were 'conferring a favour,' whereas such a trusteeship should confer as much moral good and advantage to the trustee as the almsman:

> The danger of the work of ministering the alms and the good deeds of others is to lead men to be satisfied therewith and to neglect the bounden duty of administering their own.[18]

The Rector was referring to a problem that was the scourge of many charities at this period - that it was all well and good to administer someone else's charity but there was a need for new charities and new injections of cash to cope with present problems; this need could only be met by people such as the present trustees starting up their own charities or offering financial support.

Hodgkin's Charity and educational charities in Nantwich

Hodgkin's Charity had been administered by the trustees of Sir Edmund Wright since 1796 and paid for children of the poor to be apprenticed without the aid of the poor rates. This was a difficult charity to administer with the problem of absconding apprentices or Masters not treating their apprentices

fairly. However in the period 1830-1914 this charity's original aim of 'education and training' in a broad sense was re-directed to help fund the local grammar school as that, rather than apprenticeship, proved easier to administer.

In 1838 £5 was paid from Hodgkin's Charity to the Blue Cap School to educate ten boys, but in July 1836 there was a balance to the Treasurer of £148 0s 4½d this accumulation having been caused by disputes between the trustees and masters because of the 'unfair practices of the latter.'[19] Consistently from 1831-1851 the income of the charity ranged from £131 to £547 a year, while expenditure ranged from £81 to £422, meaning there was always a surplus of between £41-£239 in the hands of the trustees.[20] In 1855 the Charity Commissioners commented on this fact.[21] In response the trustees stated that they continually found it difficult to secure suitable masters for the boys and that they had been prepared to place out six boys the previous month but only three masters had applied and two of those had been rejected. There was a possibility that ten or more boys would be apprenticed next year, and this they argued accounted for the large balance in hand.

In 1872 it was decided to apply £300 from the balance in hand of Hodgkin's Charity to the endowment of the Free Grammar School of Nantwich, and also £45 each year, which represented about half the income of the charity, was put towards the education of six additional free scholars '... from the class of children intended by the founder to be benefited by bequest.'[22] When the scheme was officially drawn up in 1873 the yearly sum of £60 was allocated from the endowment for free education as a reward of merit for boys from public elementary schools.[23]

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many charities held assets in the form of land. However the popularity of investing in stocks and shares increased rapidly after the Charitable Trusts Act of 1855 which allowed charities to purchase stock, in 1880 trustees of Sir Edmund Wright's Charity received confirmation from the Charity Commissioners that experience had proved to them that investing charitable funds in stock 'is ultimately most beneficial to the interest of the charities.'[24] Accordingly, in order to improve the yield, the assets of Sir Edmund Wright's Charity were invested in various consolidated stock.

The issue of whether the trustees of Sir Edmund Wright's Charity should hand over the trust to the Charity Commission arose in 1878[25] when F. Hobson, a bank manager and one of the trustees representing Hodgkin's Charity, moved to Stafford and resigned his position. However he stated that he felt it would be a pity if the present trustees did not attend to their duties and so compelled the treasurer to hand over the trust. If this was done he feared the administration would never come back to the town and so part of the wishes of the founder would be frustrated. A new election of trustees was suggested to replace 'those now unable or unwilling to attend.' It was also questioned whether it was absolutely necessary to have the full thirteen trustees as stipulated by the founder as 'would not a smaller number of well chosen trustees who could act in harmony with each other be better than a large mixture of probably inharmonious or incongruous elements.'[26] The 'objectionable alternative of giving up to strangers what has formally been a source of pleasure to the trustees and some profit to our poor towns-

people' was avoided, but the fact that trustees did not always take their duties seriously by attending regularly and that internal disagreements did hinder the administration of the charities, is evident.

In 1884 Nantwich Grammar School, which had been established in 1860 from the old Grammar and Blue Cap School, together with Hodgkin's Charity formed one foundation which became known as Nantwich and Acton Grammar School, and the six Hodgkin's scholarships were continued in the new foundation.[27] In 1892 Hodgkin's scholarships were further combined with a bequest of 1731 by John Broomhall, creating a total income of £85 13s 8d yearly, such sums continuing to be expended up to the First World War.

It was in January 1906 that the Hodgkin's scholarships were amended to offer places to both boys and girls under 12 who had been scholars for at least three years in a public elementary school. As long as conduct and progress was satisfactory the scholarships were renewable for three years. Reading, writing. arithmetic, geography, English grammar and composition, together with drawing, were all examined.[28]

Other people within the town continued to support educational charities for the benefit of the poor in the post 1834 period: in 1837 £4 a year was granted to the Free Grammar School by Mr Wilbraham as interest from £100 given by his ancestors, which paid for four boys to be educated. The Churchwardens also contributed £6 12s 0d for the education of another four boys. Classics were taught free but if they required to learn reading, writing, and accounts then 5s 0d a quarter had to be paid.[29]

Until its consolidation in 1860 with the old Grammar School, the Blue Cap School received an income of £47 6s 11d a year for forty boys who were taught reading, writing and accounts 'free and clothed'.[30] Sixpence had to be paid by the boys in winter for a fire.[31] The £60 endowment of the Blue Cap School by Broomhall and Turnpenny was in fact taken by the Overseers to help build a new workhouse, and £3 3s 0d was given annually in repayment to the Blue Cap School, a good example of how trustees and overseers diverted funds to meet current needs.

When the new Grammar School was built in 1860 by George Wilbraham of Delamere, he endowed the school with £500, Lord Crewe transferred £200 from the Blue Cap School and six boys could be nominated by the two men for a free education.[32] In 1892 a further £100 was contributed from the Consolidated Charities of the town, administered by the churchwardens, which had previously been used to provide bread for the poor,[33] and by 1896 the school had an annual income of £194.[34]

Bridget Wood's Charity

Bridget Wood's Charity was one of the charities administered by the trustees of Sir Edmund Wright, where tickets were issued to those who could not support themselves, in Wall Lane and Beam Street, which could be exchanged for clothes. Between 1831 and 1837 the charity consistently held a small balance in hand of £1, but between 1837 and 1839, no expenditure was made which resulted in £34 10s 0d remaining with the trustees. In the Charity Commissioners report of 1837-1838 it stated that the charity distributed the sum of £16 15s 0d in clothing

once every two years.[35]

In 1840 the capital sum loaned to Nantwich Workhouse in 1782 was returned, resulting in cash in hand of £397 13s 0d but in 1843 a mortgage of £400 was granted from Bridget Wood's income capital[36] which in fact resulted in the charity recording a deficit of £5 11s 2d, and between 1847 and 1851 the charity consistently recorded a deficit.

In 1839 the number of people receiving relief from the Bridget Wood Charity in Wall Lane included 71 adults and 107 children, 60% of the relief being granted to children. In Beam Street 228 adults and 318 children were relieved, and again 58% of the relief went to children. Eight residents from the almshouses were also granted relief and together there were 170 'legal' and 4 'doubtful' claimants. In all just 3.2% of the population of Nantwich lived in Wall Lane and Beam Street, and of the 174 possible claimants 724 people received relief, indicating that on average people claimed up to four times each during the year.[37]

By 1841 £33 6s 0d was disbursed which represented, on average, 3s 10d per ticket,[38] but by 1847 the money disbursed had decreased by 6.8%.[39] By 1851 the average value of each ticket stood at 3s 0d which represented a decrease of 34% compared to 1841, and between 1851 and 1853 the number of tickets issued had fallen by 17.36%, each ticket only being worth 2s 10d in 1853.[40] For the remainder of the 1850s and early 1860s the value of tickets stabilised at between 2s 11d and 3s 0d each. However by 1882 only 109 tickets were issued, representing a decrease of 37.3% since 1841, but the value of a single ticket in 1882 was, on average, 4s 0d. Between 1882 and 1887 the

number of tickets issued increased by 54% while the average monetary value fell consistently from 3s 7½d in 1883; 3s 3d in 1885; and 2s 4½d in 1887.[41] While nearly the same number of tickets were issued in 1885 and 1887 the value of those tickets fell by 26.9% in just two years, and if a comparison is made between 1882 and 1887 the value of a single ticket in terms of purchasing power had fallen by 40.6%.

Between 1911-1913 166 tickets were issued, so a good comparison can be made with 1885 when 165 tickets were granted. During the interim the value of the tickets had fallen by 7.6% so while ticket numbers remained stable, or as in some years, increased dramatically, their monetary value had fallen, and so in real terms the recipients must have found it harder to make ends meet. As was the case with so many charities the need might increase but the money disbursed did not increase proportionately.

Meakin and Delves Almshouses

Meakin and Delves Almshouses were also administered by Sir Edmund Wright's Trustees, and in 1837 the Charity Commissioners reported that Mary Masterson's Charity, whereby 16s 0d a year was given in bread to 26 people, was now paid out of Meakin and Delves Charity.[42] This charity retained a healthy 'balance in hand' throughout the 1830s, 40s, and 50s, of between £87 and £228.[43] Indeed the large 'balance' credited to the charity did not escape the notice of the Charity Commissioners who asked for an explanation. The trustees stated this resulted from the fact that certain of the almshouses were untenented and the balance was required for converting the individual houses into a row of cottages '... unless they can be let as

warehouses in which case the greater portion of the balance will be invested.'[44]

The almshouses continued and by 1868 £45 16s 6d was expended yearly on their upkeep. £4 16s 6d being spent on bread for the poor.[45] However by 1877 the almshouses had fallen into such a dilapidated state that £100 was needed to bring them up to standard but with the extreme age of the building they were 'not calculated to stand many years.'[46] Considering the healthy position the charity had always been in financially it is surprising that the buildings had been allowed to deteriorate to such an extent. The trustees, however, chose not to use the money to improve standards.

Eventually the almshouses were repaired and were still in use at the outbreak of the first World War, when the income of the charity stood at £58 a year, and it also received help from William Sprout's Charity. Two men, two widows, and one married couple occupied the almshouses and received an allowance of £2 10s 0d per quarter.

Crewe's Almshouses

Crewe's Almshouses continued to be inhabited throughout the nineteenth century and in 1837-1838 the income of the charity totalled £48 6s 3d from rents.[47] As each of the seven inmates received allowances of £1 12s 6d a quarter there was very little income left for the actual upkeep and maintenance of the buildings, even though they were described as being in good condition in 1838.

The census reveals that in 1861 one of the Crewe Almshouses was unoccupied.[48] This was a common occurrence as when the

almsmen died a suitable replacement occupant had to be found. Also as the charities were trying hard to balance the books an empty almshouse meant a saving in terms of both its upkeep and the allowance for its occupant.

In the remaining six cottages there were thirteen people and up to five people shared one cottage, as whole families were allowed to move in. The ages of all the 'heads of the families' ranged from 60 to 82 years,three almsmen being in their seventies and eighties. Five sons and daughters lived with their parents, their ages ranging from 10 to 40 years of age.

The former occupations of the almsmen not surprisingly reflect the main industries of the town: shoemaker, cabinet maker, joiner, labourer, and hawker; and the children of the almsmen were employed as cotton spinners, boot and shoe makers, and one twelve year old was classed as a nurse. The youngest almsman John Poole, aged 60, was fortunate in that his wife had a job as a bookbinder, and two of his children were employed, the family having one dependent child classed as a scholar. The fact that three members of the family were working must have helped his situation financially.

By 1871 all seven houses were occupied, five of the cottages having the same residents as ten years earlier.[49] During this ten year period John Horton's grandson, a cordwainer aged 25 from Manchester, and a granddaughter of nine from Nantwich, had moved in to live with their grandfather. Since 1861 one of the eighty year old almsmen had died and this cottage was then occupied by a 71 year old widower together with her 16 year old granddaughter, an apprentice dressmaker. A 65 year

old widower from Middlewich had moved into the vacant almshouse and the Poole family had a grandson of 19, classed as a house-painter, and a granddaughter of seven living with them.

The ages of the occupants of Crewe's Almshouses in 1871 ranged from 7-96, and some of the almspeople who had been residents in 1861 recorded very different ages on the 1871 return. For example Thomas Hassall was recorded as being 82 in 1861 and in 1871 was 96. John Poole who had been the youngest almsman in 1861 at 60 years of age, was recorded as being 67 in 1871. Perhaps it was thought more acceptable for an almsman to have reached his sixtieth birthday before entering one of the almshouses and John Poole, who did have a young family to support perhaps added on a few years to his age in 1861 in order to gain admission.

In 1861 38% of the residents of Crewe's Almshouses were sons/grandsons or daughters/granddaughters living with elder members of the family. By 1871 this percentage had increased to 43.75%. Maybe the possibility of sending younger members of the family to live with elder relatives in the almshouses made life financially easier for other members of the family, and the almsman's allowance could be stretched to feed a young child. Also, as was the case with the grandson from Manchester, the almshouse provided a place to live in a town where otherwise lodgings would have to be found. In fact four of the seven younger members of the families living in the almshouses had got jobs, and so by living with their elder relations they enjoyed rent free accommodation.

The income from the charity remained at £58 from 1868 to 1892 when it increased to £66 17s 5d,[50] but by 1892 the almsmen's

allowance had actually fallen to £1 10s 0d a quarter, a decrease of 7.4% compared to 1838. In the real terms of what the allowance would buy, the decrease would have been even more pronounced. As the financial income of the charity failed to increase to any great extent during the nineteenth century the fabric of the buildings failed to be updated and indeed it was only in the pre-second World War years that an internal water supply and decent lavatory accommodation was provided as the trustees of the Crewe estate had no funds to provide these improvements, indeed it was a small committee of townspeople who raised the cash to install water and electricity. The Crewe Almshouses are an example of a charity whose income failed to increase to keep pace with rising costs, and as a result their structure and the almsmen's allowances deteriorated. After the initial interest and benevolence of the founder the impetus to maintain the charity was not sustained beyond the bare necessities.

Elizabeth Walker and Martha Chorlton's charities

Both charities were administered by the Sir Edmund Wright Trustees, and despite Miss Walker's direction that the money should be dispensed in £5 allowances to 'as many aged women as [the] amount would allow' the charity always retained a healthy balance in hand, ranging from £4 15s 11½d in 1835-1837 to £86 5s 1½d between 1849-1851, a point that was observed by the Charity Commissioners when they commented that the balance '... appears increasingly large' and so the trustees invested it in another annuitant.[51]

In 1868 five allowances were made[52] and throughout the later part of the nineteenth century received £30 a year from

the William Sprout bequest.[53] Between 1892 and 1896 six elderly ladies received £5 each from the charity and the five recipients of Martha Chorlton's Charity received £2 13 0d a year from Elizabeth Walker's bequest in order to maintain the value of the Chorlton Charity at approximately £4 a year for each widow. A consistent pattern of five or six allowances were made, never more, from the Walker bequest, and the allowance always remained for the specified sum laid down by the founder, even though in 1914 its purchasing power would have been greatly diminished compared to the initial value of the allowance in 1793. William Sprout's bequest also came to the rescue of Chorlton's Charity, which meant that there were six recipients in 1914 who received an extra £5 each, or £9 in total.

Charities administered by the Churchwardens

The Churchwardens of Nantwich had the responsibility of administering 10 charities within the town,[54] one of which was the Consolidated Charities which consisted of a number of smaller bequests which had been added together in order that their value could be maximised.[55] By 1837-1838 the Churchwarden's Charities produced approximately £53 17s 0d to be disbursed to the poor, usually in the form of large loaves in winter and smaller ones in summer, the recipients being expected to attend Church every Sunday morning. Small monetary handouts were also given to the needy in Barker Street and Hospital Street, as specified by two of the benefactors, as well as to the residents generally.[56]

William Sprout boosted the Churchwarden's Charities in 1829 when he instructed the Rector of Nantwich to send any poor sick people from Nantwich to Chester Infirmary, for which he gave

the institution £1,000 and in 1837 Mary Swan left £1,000 to the Rector and Churchwardens, the interest to be distributed in bread, clothing, and money, the people of Hospital Street having preference. Between 1837-1914 this charity produced between £26-£28 annually which was added to the funds of the Churchwardens.[57] However arguments often arose as to whether the Churchwardens administered this money in the best interests of the poor. In October 1843 there was great opposition in the town, to the church rate which had been set at 3¾d in the £ in order to pay for repairs to the parish church. An amendment was moved for a rate of 1d in the £ and the amendment gained the majority of votes. The Churchwardens then declared that people could not vote on which rate was to be adopted if they had not paid their poor rates and '... as the poor rates have been unusually heavy during the past years many of the working classes were in arrears.[58] In spite of this proviso the majority of people still voted for the lower amended rate. A general poll of the whole parish was then demanded by the Churchwardens: and at the close of poll on the first day there were 100 votes for the 1d rate, giving them a majority of 13 over the 3¾d rate. That evening after a meeting of the supporters of the 3¾d rate a public notice was issued that stated:

> ... that all persons receiving benefits from the public charities of this town are expected to pay their poor rate and vote for the Churchwarden's rate of 3¾d in the pound <u>or they may expect to lose the benefit of the charities</u>. [59]

Such an ultimatum was described as 'tyrannical' and as an 'intimidating edict' which was received with 'disgust and indignation which it merited.' However as a result many went to vote '... to please their oppressors, and at the same moment

belie their own consciences.'[60]

Supporters of the 3¾d rate tried to prevent people from opposing it by saying that if the 1d rate was passed the public charities of the town would be thrown into chancery and their benefit would be lost forever. Such rumours were encountered by 'several gentlemen' stating that they would become churchwardens if necessary and prevent anything of that nature taking place. The majority 'for' the 1d rate was 94. This incident bears witness to the power the churchwardens tried to exercise, using the charities that they disbursed as a powerful lever with which to influence people. The local press described it as a victory for 'principle over interest' and 'conscience over compulsion'. The above incident, together with the occurrence of large balances in hand existing alongside obvious need and often dilapidated almshouses, together with allowances that failed to increase with the passage of time, indicates that the Trustees/Churchwardens did not always organise their finances and administer the charities in a way that was totally beneficial to the recipients.

By 1843 the amount distributed by the Consolidated Charities stood at £54 6s 2d together with £14 9s 2d from other Churchwarden's charities.[61] The Rector and Churchwardens were also responsible for the distribution of a special charity raised during 1849 when cholera appeared in Nantwich, and in 14 weeks 1,000 people caught the disease out of a population of 6,000, and 180 died.[62] Hospital Street, Wood Street, and Mill Street were badly hit and the poor who lived in these areas were particularly affected by the disease. The noblemen and gentry raised a fund which the Rector administered in the form

of food, and help was also given to the various benefit clubs of the town, many of which were at that time insolvent.[63]

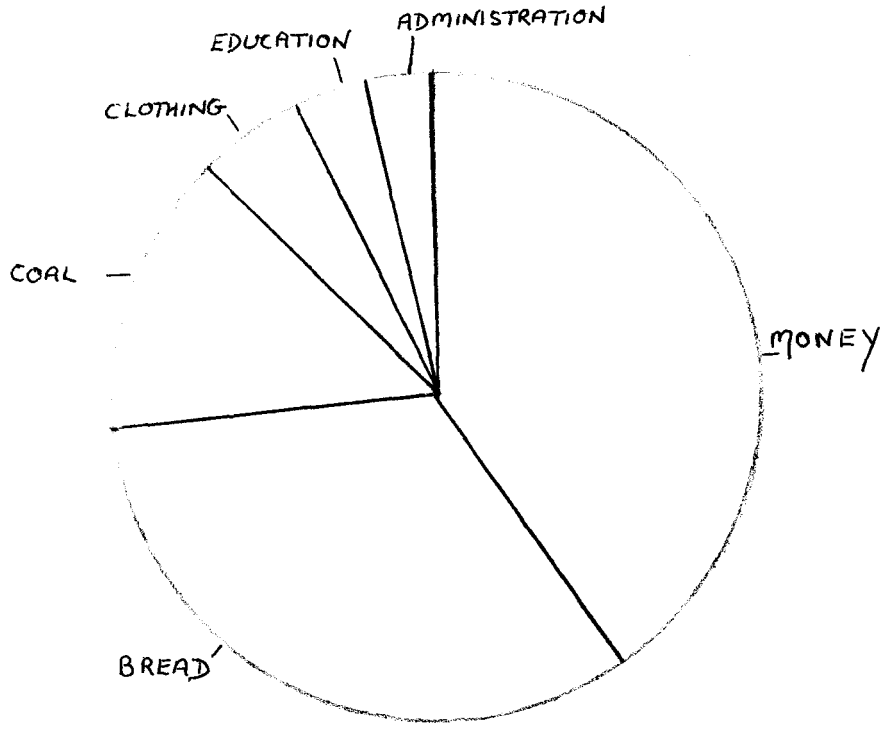
By 1868 the value of the interest to be distributed by the Consolidated Charity had increased to £60 19s 10d, which represented an increase of 12% since 1843, and the other nine charities under the control of the Churchwardens amounted to £84 6s 2d.[64] Included in this amount was a new bequest made by Folliott in 1851 who bequeathed £5 7s 4d a year to be supplied to the poor in fuel. Also £6 13s 3d was allowed from the consolidated fund to the Grammar and Blue Cap School, again indicating a growing awareness that apart from feeding the poor the value of education could be of long term significance in relation to the poverty of the future.

The funding of education by the Churchwardens assumed even more importance in 1891 when £100 from the capital of the consolidated charities was transferred to Nantwich and Acton Grammar School.[65] This act of transferring money originally intended for another purpose in order to further the aims of education, followed the lead set by Hodgkin's Charity. However, short term needs still needed to be satisfied and the Churchwardens continued to provide bread every Sunday, and small monetary handouts.

By 1892 the yearly amount disbursed by the Consolidated Charity stood at £72 8s 2d an increase of 18.6% between 1868 and 1892[66] from which 90 x 3d. loaves were distributed every Sunday throughout the year. From the other nine Churchwardens Charities, Slade's Charity was disbursed to 60 people in two equal payments at Easter and on St. Thomas Day, to the value of £36 0s 0d. Altogether these charities disbursed £89 in 1892,

an increase of 5% between 1868 and 1892, and collectively the total amount disbursed by the Churchwardens stood at £161 8s 0d, an increase of 11% since 1868. By 1908 the amount disbursed reached £180 1s 3d, an increase of 11½% since 1892. However by 1911 expenditure had fallen by 24.8% to stand at £135 7s 9d, but hereafter the trend was upward once again, so that by 1914 expenditure had increased by 89% since 1911.[67] Proportionately a typical years expenditure was disbursed as follows:

figure 40



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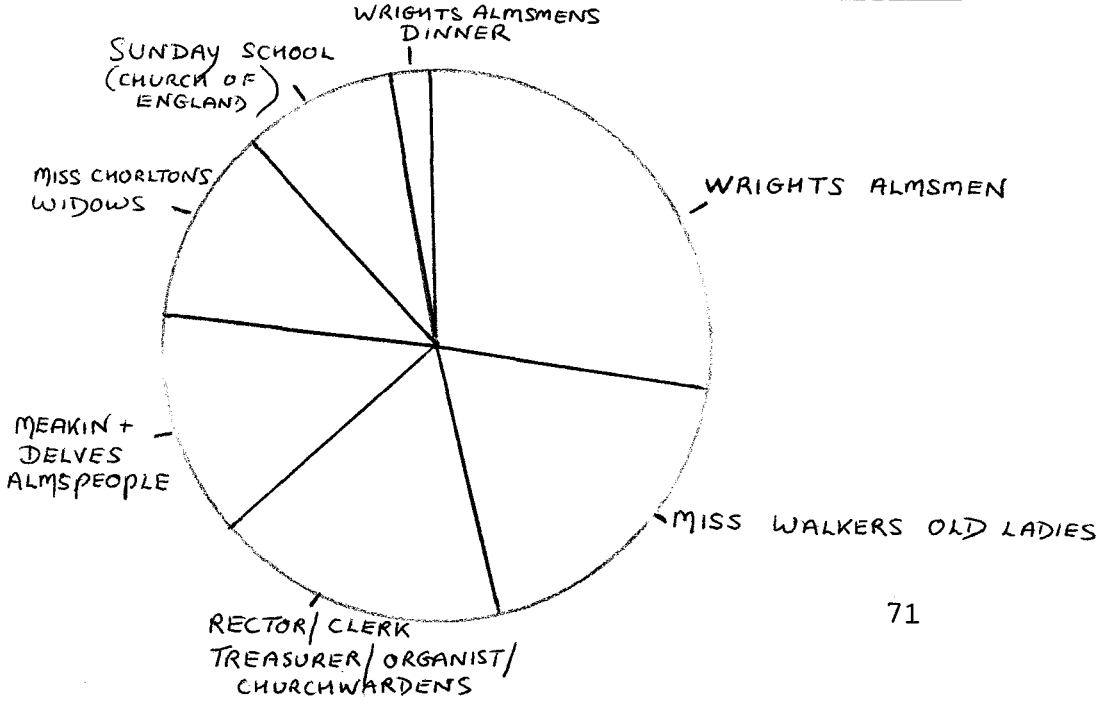
In 1909 the Churchwardens did make an extraneous payment of £1 1s 0d towards an artificial leg, the only recorded time that a payment for such an item was granted. Also a pension of £1 0s 0d was granted in 1909, but the most prominent feature of the period 1908-1914 was that every year a large balance in hand was carried forward: £116-£121 between 1908-1910; £156 in 1911; £136 in 1913 and finally £51 in 1914.[69]

Throughout the period from 1837 onwards there seems to have been two extremes in the charities of the town - those who were constantly facing deficits and being augmented by others in order to survive, and those who were prosperous enough to have a large a balance in hand, and did not seem to be expending the full value of the assets to the poor.

William Sprout's bequest

Between 1829 and 1914 several new bequests were added to the charities of the town - Mary Swan, Folliotts and Bennions, all of which came under the auspices of the Churchwardens. However one of the biggest and most influential bequests was William Sprout's legacy which stipulated that after the death of his brother Peter, £2,000 in government funds were to be invested for the benefit of local charities, especially those under the control of Sir Edmund Wright's Trustees. In total his bequest amounted to approximately £6,000 in capital. By 1837-1838 the total annual disbursements of this charity amounted to £215 7s 0d [70] and were allocated proportionately to the following local charities:

figure 41



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The continued existence of these charities between 1837-1914 owed a great deal to Sprout's augmentation at a time when old legacies were finding it hard to accommodate new calls on their charity.

By 1868 expenditure from William Sprout's bequest had fallen to £161 10s 8d, a reduction of 23½% compared to 1837[72] because of the insufficiency of the estate.[73] Maintenance of the almshouses took up 77.8% of the disbursements, as by this time many of them were in a dilapidated condition and were in dire need of further improvement. However by 1892 total annual disbursements had risen to £185, an increase of 14.5% since 1868, and remained at this level until 1914.

Peter Sprout's bequest

Peter Sprout's will of 1834 gave £2,200 to the Trustees of Sir Edmund Wright's Charity, to be placed in Government Securities. After the Rector, Parish Clerk, and Treasurer had received a total of £6 0s 0d annually the remainder was divided amongst ten annuitants who were paid quarterly.[74] Also after the death of Peter Sprout's wife a further £536 0s 0d was added to the original bequest, and Wilbraham's Charity was augmented by £16 0s 0d a year.[75] Recipients under Peter Sprout's charity were left in no doubt where they stood regarding payment of their poor rates, for in 1836 it was the 'unanimous opinion of the gathering' that if the annuitants did not pay their poor rates they would be considered as receiving parochial relief and liable to be 'expelled' from receiving further help from the charity.[76] In 1855 there was only £5 17s 9d to be disbursed to ten recipients, but it was decided to continue granting the old rate of £6 8s 0d so that the recipients would not suffer

and '... the surplus which has gradually accumulated will in like manner be reduced.'[77] This latter point was picked up by the Charity Commissioners as Peter Sprout had particularly requested that all the interest should be distributed annually to the poor, and they stressed there was no reason why any balance should be kept in hand. Despite this fact between 1835 and 1851 the charity consistently had a favourable balance between £16-£27 per annum.[78]

By 1868 the annual income disbursed by the charity stood at £81 0s 0d, at which figure it remained for the rest of the nineteenth century.[79] It was partly the static nature of the disbursements from the charity that created a local uproar in 1900 regarding whether the charity was being administered properly. It was alleged that '... for many years past it had become an unalterable law' to select eight deserving people instead of ten, which was strongly denied, the following statistics being quoted: that in the period between 1852-1899 there were for:

6 years	=	8 recipients.
27 years	=	9 recipients.
15 years	=	10 recipients. [80]

The number of recipients either increasing or decreasing according to the money in hand, as Trustees stated that they did not want to reduce the actual amount received i.e. £6 8s 0d. In 1900 it was emphasised that if 10 people were to receive an annuity, the amount would have to be reduced by thirteen shillings per annum, which the Trustees considered was a lot for people to lose. So it was decided to keep to the old system '... as the one who had never had it would never miss it.'[81] The Trustees also pointed out that if the Charity Commissioners

were contacted they would probably advise that as the recipients died, their number should be reduced, and that 5s 0d a week be paid to each of them.

Letters continued to appear in the local press concerning charities '... those mysterious and much coveted treasures'[82] and the trustees of Peter Sprout's charity were continually criticised for reducing the number of recipients. It was stressed that up to 1896 there had been nine or ten recipients but that the expenditure of the charity had exceeded income, and a debt of several pounds had accumulated. As a result when two vacancies had occurred they were not filled with the result that the debt had disappeared and the trustees had a balance in hand, when another appointment had been made to the charity. The trustees were unanimously against reducing the amount payable to each recipient and were equally adamant that '... any alteration cannot possibly be brought about by corresponding in the press.'[83]

Despite this, letters continued to appear and it was argued that if each recipient's allowance was cut by 2d a week, then a tenth applicant could be paid 2s 4d a week:

> ... as he has as much right to the charity as those who have received it ... The tenth has never had a penny, but has, I maintain, been cruelly wronged out of that to which, on the ground of both equity and justice, he was fully entitled.[84]

This idea was however once again rejected by the trustees.

While the trustees maintained there was no mystery about the way that the charity was administered, Mr Hinde declared that there was a 'great lack of perspicuity' so it was extremely difficult to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, as expenditure

varied so much.[85] In conclusion it was pointed out that Peter Sprout's will had stated that he 'earnestly desired' ten poor householders to benefit from his charity, but that this was not absolutely binding, and the trustees emphasised that no real fault could be found in the way they had run the charity. However this response did not quell criticism as it was questioned why interest from the bank had not been added to the account for the last three years, and why this interest together with interest for other charities was all placed to the credit of Sir Edmund Wright's Charities. 'why should it be given every year to a charity which is considered to be of such great importance. ... let us have fairness all round.'[86]

The last two 'New' charities of the nineteenth century

The last two charitable bequests of the nineteenth century were both to augment an existing charity, which is indicative of the financial crises many of the charities of Nantwich were in by the second half of the nineteenth century. Increasing need coupled with rising prices meant the only way that many charities could effectively continue was through augmentation. Unless huge amounts were invested any new charity would not succeed in doing more than scratching the surface of the problem. However a fresh injection of cash, no matter how small, would at least guarantee continued benefit for local people for the foreseeable future.

In 1864 Miss Hall bequeathed £200 to augment Miss Walker's charity; and in 1866 Mrs Pemberton left a further £50 to help the same charity. By 1892 these two charities were adding £7 17s 8d to Miss Walkr's fund,[87] which continued to be added to the funds of the charity until 1914.

A charity generated by economic and social change

An example of a small charity that arose in Nantwich in response to the development of the Shropshire Union Canal was the Boatman's Mission, which catered for the needs of the men employed by the Shropshire Union Canal Company. Nearly one hundred men attended a tea organised by the mission in January 1885, and Sunday services were held every week, the emphasis being on moral improvement. Clothing donated by people living in the district, was given to the men who attended the mission on a regular basis.[88] Mrs Tollemache, wife of Lord Tollemache, patronised the charity, and attended Christmas celebrations, giving tobacco, sweets, and oranges to those present. Another role fulfilled by the charity was that when the boats were frozen, in bad weather, soup was supplied to the stranded boatmen.

This charity which arose in response to the changing local economy in order to satisfy the needs of a new group of workmen had a dual role to play. This group of workmen had obvious identifiable needs, especially in the winter months when all transport would have ground to a halt and the boatmen were then stranded miles from home, with a limited supply of money to support them. The organisation was also conscious of the moral role it could play among this itinerant group who were constantly passing through the town, and could, potentially, have brought with them undesirable elements. The charity could therefore, exercise a form of social control over those who attended its gatherings.

A charity for all

The Beam Heath Trust, although not a charity in the sense

that it was only distributed to the needy, was evenly allocated to all residents of the town who had lived there for seven years or longer, and continued to function throughout this period. In 1892 the Trust had an annual income of £1600 and the inhabitants received between 15s 0d to 25s 0d annually.[89] By 1908 there were 1322 claimants who each received 14s 0d per person,[90] and in 1909, 14s 0d was again paid to residents, but the tendency to keep a large 'balance in hand' was again repeated in this Trust. For example in 1908 a balance of £793 was carried forward, and in 1909 the balance in hand stood at £766 18s 5d.[91] By 1914 there was still a balance in hand of £762 13s 1d and £928 18s 0d was distributed to 1327 claimants.[92] with a further balance to carry forward of £871 5s 0d which was almost as much as was disbursed to claimants.

The total value of Nantwich Charities 1834-1914

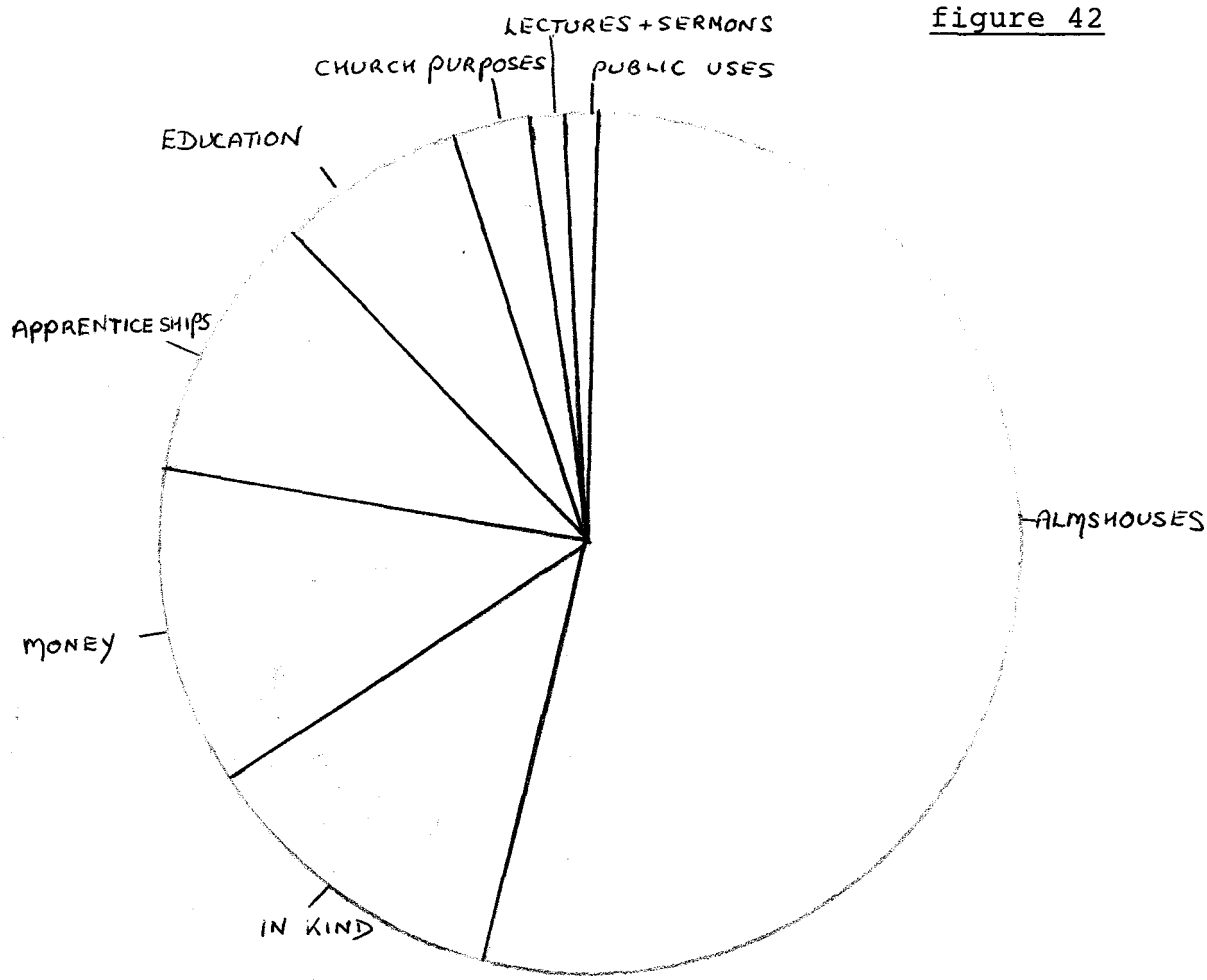
How financially important were the Nantwich Charities in comparison to the relief distributed by the Guardians? The fact that Nantwich had many charities for the benefit of its residents was a tradition that dated back to Roger Praers' Obit, the first charitable bequest made to the town before 1515, and which was still being dispensed by the Churchwardens in 1914. In 1843 the approximate value of all the charitable bequests amounted to £1,013 8s 2d[93] which represented 3s 8d per head of the population. When this is compared to the £7732 0s 0d which was dispensed in 1842 by the Poor Law Guardians for Nantwich Union,[94] which represented 4s 6d per head of the Union, the financial scale of charitable endeavour did not compare with the amount of money distributed by the Poor Law authorities. In fact charitable expenditure in Nantwich during 1843 was at an all

time 'high' in that Hodgkin's Charity, together with the Peter and William Sprout's bequest, expended unusually large amounts that year in comparison with other years, which inflates charitable expenditure for that year.

By 1863 charitable expenditure in Nantwich had fallen to £730 9s 5d,[95] representing 2s 4d per head of the population. Again if compared with the £8549 18s 0d dispensed by the Local Board of Guardians in 'in and out' relief in 1863 which amounted to 4s 2d per head, the proportionate difference between the two forms of relief was becoming more pronounced.[96] The amount of charitable relief granted per head was just 56% of the value of relief given by the Poor Law Authorities.

In terms of the purposes to which these local charities were applied the founders had usually been quite specific in identifying areas of local need:

figure 42



Benefactors wishes were usually followed and when several new charities were established they simply augmented existing institutions in order to bring the endowment up to present monetary requirements. As a result the proportions outlined in figure 42 remained relevant until the end of the period being studied. The only change to a founder's original wishes was the slight alteration that occurred in Hodgkin's Apprenticeship Charity, as education in general was thought to provide a more easily administered form of charitable relief, yet still broadly following the wishes of the founder.

In Cheshire the amount of money given to charities in 1863 totalled £15,016 8s 2d or 7d per head of the population.[98] So on a county basis the population only had 25% of the monetary value of charitable relief compared to that enjoyed by Nantwich residents. If a further comparison is made between the total value of charitable relief in Cheshire with the amount disbursed by the Poor Law Guardians in 'in' and 'out' relief in the county it will be seen that the value of charitable endeavour represented just 13.6% of that disbursed by the Poor Law Guardians. When viewed in this context, although the level of charitable relief in Nantwich only represented 56% of that distributed by the Poor Law, they were in a four fold better position than the rest of the pauper population in Cheshire.

The fall off in the amount dispensed by charities at county level and to a lesser extent, locally in Nantwich, could have had several causes. Firstly economies were being made by the charities in order to balance the books. Secondly with many old established charities with fixed levels of income the disbursements could not increase at the same pace as population growth, so smaller amounts were granted for relief. Also

argument continued as to the value of charitable endeavour and whether the charities themselves actually encouraged the growth of poverty. An article in the local Guardian reflected this mood when it reported that pauperism had increased alarmingly in England and Wales and was becoming chronic. Instead of being lessened by charity:

> ... it seems to grow on that which feeds it, and notwithstanding all the active benevolence of bygone years, the appalling misery, want, and general wretchedness, not to speak of crime, instead of decreasing grows, and the problem ... is as far from solution as ever.[99]

It was stated that all the money given by charity did not seem to relieve the misery, and that voluntary and parochial charity should be made to work in unison. Charity, it warned, 'breeds the misery'. However despite these warnings the charitable endeavours in Nantwich appear to have enabled some people either to avoid the workhouse, by maintaining the old in almshouses which were often in far from good repair, or by providing small monetary handouts, or relief in kind that could have made all the difference between going in and staying out of the workhouse. Also despite the fairly generous level of charitable relief available in Nantwich, the ever increasing numbers applying for relief both in and out of the workhouse indicate that not all the poverty that existed at this time could have resulted from excessive charitable endeavour, or on the other hand could hope to be cured by it. Between 1862 and 1892 the amount expended be charities in Nantwich had increased by 32.8%[100] in comparison with an increase of 36.7% in the amount distributed by the Local Board of Guardians in both 'in' and 'out' relief,[101] at a time when the population of the town had increased by 19% during

the same period. Per head of the population charitable expenditure in Nantwich accounted for 2s 7d, an increase of 3d per head since 1862, while relief granted by the Poor Law represented 4s 2d per head, an increase of 4d per head since 1862.

By 1914 expenditure by the local charities had slowed down somewhat, and equalled £969 7s 3d, an increase of 1% since 1892, while the population of the town had increased by 5.4% during the same period. Charitable expenditure per head of the local population equalled 2s 5d, a decrease of 2d per head since 1892. In comparison expenditure by the Local Guardians on 'in' and 'out' relief had actually fallen by 10.9% between 1891 and 1910,[102] and represented 3s 0d per head of the population, a decrease of 1s 2d per head since 1891.

So by 1914 the dramatic growth in poor relief seemed to be abating as certain sections of those in need such as the old, were partly withdrawn from the sphere of the poor law by virtue of the introduction of old age pensions. The proportional difference between the official and unofficial forms of relief began to narrow in Nantwich. Increasingly since the 1880s and 1890s it had been realised that, as M. E. Rose has argued, private philanthropy was not enough; the state had to play an increasing and more effective role in improving the conditions of life for the mass of its members.[103]

The extent and intensity of poverty in England and Wales came under the scrutiny of a Special Report by the Royal Commission on the Poor Law Relief of Distress in 1909. It concluded that the greatest distress existed where trade was bad, for example in the salt districts of Cheshire and Nantwich.[104] Among the moral causes of poverty - drink, thriftlessness,

gambling, and early and indiscreet marriages were identified together with shortness of work, poor wages, and '... the climate in certain parts of Cheshire appears to be a good deal responsible for laziness and want of independence among the poor.'[105]

In reference to the charities of Nantwich the report emphasised that the existence of endowed charities had a direct effect in creating paupers:

> In Nantwich the decline of the boot and tailoring trades is not alone responsible for the increase of pauperism. The report from the Rural Deanery says that Nantwich 'is an old market town with one church to which are attached a number of rich charities, and this fact has naturally conduced to a certain amount of pauperism. Not infrequently cases of out-of-work destitution are traceable to the cruel kindness of individuals, especially visitors, who administer casual street charity.' [106]

Certainly it appears that in comparison to Cheshire, Nantwich enjoyed a higher level of charitable relief than was general throughout the county, but as to whether this was in response to a greater need or whether the charity itself created the poverty is arguable. However judging by the strictness with which the charities were administered and the fact that frequently large balances were left to accrue in the bank, there seems little evidence of paupers being spoilt by the charities.

Nantwich Cottage Hospital Charity Fund

Apart from the old established charities of Nantwich what other 'causes' inspired new charitable endeavour in the town in the nineteenth century? The last big enterprise before the first World War that most people in Nantwich felt was important for everyone's benefit was the establishment of a cottage

hospital. Up until this point the only medical facilities available, apart from the practitioners, were the hospital facilities existing in the workhouse infirmary. In order to be treated in the infirmary entry into the institution of the workhouse was necessary, and the move to establish a hospital was an acknowledgement of the fact that to be sick and poor, or just sick, did not constitute the need to be classed as 'less eligible'.

The first person to suggest the setting up of the Cottage Hospital was Mr Dutton, Chairman of the Nantwich Board of Guardians. He was, no doubt, influenced by the fact that the cost of running the infirmary was so high because it was always full of the elderly and the sick who had not been inmates of the workhouse before their illness - a problem that had faced the workhouse authorities since its beginning. A high incidence of outdoor medical relief had resulted, and the fact remained that those who were normally 'independent' were often forced, during sickness, to resort to the poor law. The fact that the idea of providing a cottage hospital received so much public support was because people in general had no great desire to enter the workhouse in order to obtain medical aid when they had an accident, but it was an historical fact that necessity had created the only available infirmary facilities in Nantwich Workhouse.

Crewe had taken the lead by opening a cottage hospital in 1895 and efforts to raise money for a hospital in Nantwich began in earnest in 1908 when Miss Nixon made the first large single donation of £50 0s 0d to the fund.[107] A cottage hospital fete was organised on an annual basis, the Fete of 1908 realising a profit of £137 and in 1909 £150.[108] At the annual fete such

entertainment as a military tournament was provided together with theatrical performances, football matches, street collections, and jumble sales, which all brought in extra funds.[109]

However Dr. Munro, the workhouse doctor, and a member of the Cottage Hospital Committee, was always reminding the members of the necessity of cutting costs where ever possible as whatever money was raised should be allocated to the endowment fund of the hospital because '... when the hospital was built [it] would be a great drain upon the resources of the district,'[110] and in 1909 the endowment fund only stood at £150, so £125 from the profits of the 1909 fete was added to this fund.

When a three day bazaar was held in aid of the building and endowment fund in November 1909 it was reported in the press that: 'No public movement in Nantwich and district has caught the popular fancy more than the Cottage Hospital Scheme and all classes of society have enthusiastically supported the undertaking',[111] and the Duchess of Westminster lent her support by opening the bazaar.

By November 1909 £2400 had been promised and £1900 had been deposited in the bank. A coupon club which enabled people to spend their coupons in the bazaar, raised £200, and events like the three day bazaar raised £1606 9s 7d.[112] By the end of 1909 £2100 had been raised in donations and a target of £3000 was set as the amount needed to build, furnish, and equip the hospital.

The Nantwich and District Cottage Hospital was finally opened on 15th February 1911 by Mrs H. J. Tollemache, who was also involved with the Boatmans Mission and Nantwich Workhouse, and had been on the organisational committee since its inception.

The hospital was built on land donated by her husband, who was also a member of the Nantwich Board of Guardians.

However once enough money had been raised to actually build, furnish and open the hospital, the financing of the day to day costs of the institution had to continue. Four legacies totalling £1405 were left to the hospital between 1911 and 1913, and patients who could afford were asked to pay small sums to cover the cost of their treatment. For everyone else the hospital was free.

The annual fete continued as a key money earner, but by 1914 there was a feeling that a change was needed in order to keep the interest of the people. House to house collections continued to be made, and in 1913 raised £48,[113] but a deficit from the 1913 fete meant that only £50 was handed over to the hospital. People had become tired of fetes '... and unlike the Crewe people they could not keep up the popular side of it.' Garden parties were suggested as an alternative but '... Nantwich people were not sufficiently enthusiastic,' as they were '... extremely slow to catch fire and they become more so as years went by.'[114] The house to house collections were satisfactory '... although the largest percentage of small sums and blank envelopes came from Nantwich.' The general feeling was that by 1914 the villagers and country districts surrounding Nantwich were more enthusiastic and contributed on a more generous scale than the town itself. 49½% of all the income for the hospital was raised from Nantwich town and patients contributions, so the various fund raising activities and organisations that contributed to the finances of the hospital had a very important role to play in its continued existence.[115]

The need for the hospital was emphasised by the fact that it treated 144 cases in 1913, 17 more than in 1912. On average the number of beds occupied equalled 9.5 compared to 6.5 in 1912, an increase of nearly 50%. Strict economies were observed in the running of the institution in order that it should survive, and the cost per bed in 1913 was £73 17s 4d compared to £94 3s 6d in 1912.[116] In 1914 the subscription list for the hospital was much the same as in previous years, but donations from working people had increased considerably,[117] and a firework display was included in the attractions of the annual fete in an attempt to increase public interest.[118] Another new idea to help maintain the hospital was the introduction of 'pound day' when people contributed articles of one pound in weight to the household department of the hospital such as soap, sugar, butter, tea, or fruit. As a result 230lbs of articles that could be used in the day to day running of the hospital were received, mostly from people who had themselves been treated in the hospital.[119]

The work of Friendly Societies in Nantwich

As P. H. J. H. Gosden has emphasised friendly societies, trade unions, and the co-operative movement represented '... the ways in which those without political power sought to protect themselves in an increasingly industrialised society' pioneering self-help among working men.[120] What part did the friendly societies play in Nantwich in protecting working people from the hardships that often led to poverty and ultimately reliance on the local guardians? The friendly society movement fostered in its members a sense of independence, and one of its most important functions was to provide a measure of

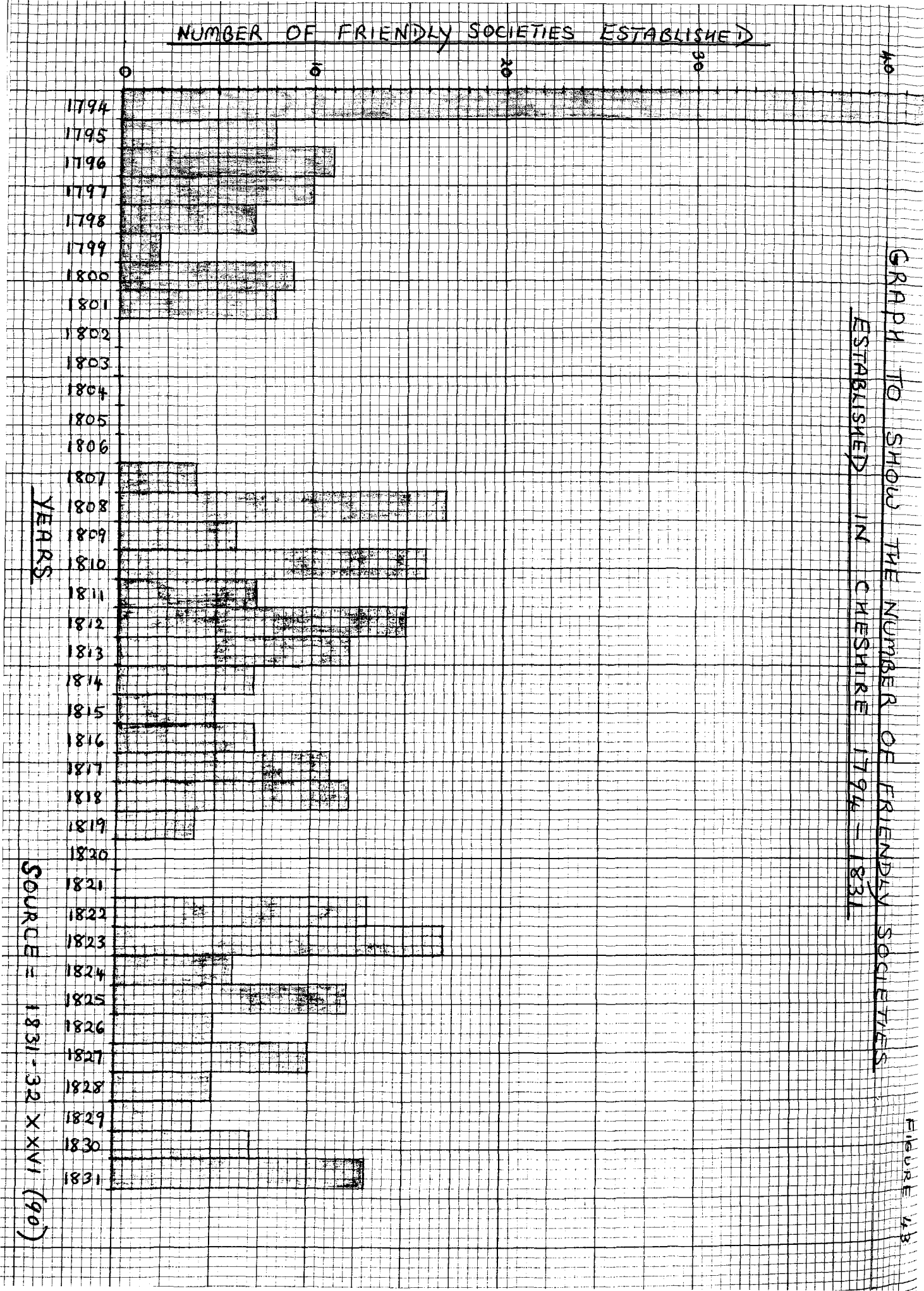
protection at times when members and their families would be financially vulnerable e.g. in sickness, and death. It was at such times that members would have been forced to fall back on the poor rates or charitable help if their society had not been able to provide financial support. However as P. H. J. H. Gosden has pointed out[121] the affiliated orders uncompromisingly opposed any form of direct link between the official provision for paupers and the facilities which they offered to their members, a trend that was to remain throughout the period up to 1914.

As Gosden has argued the friendly societies offered a sense of security at a time of wholesale change, for example when the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act was introduced which independent self reliant workers thought of as disgraceful to have to resort to.[122] As Gosden has pointed out between 1835-1845 the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows saw more lodges being set up in Cheshire than in any other decade in the nineteenth century.[123] Indeed the Poor Law Commissioners claimed it was one of their aims to encourage men to join friendly societies and as poor relief became more strictly administered working men would, they believed, be more eager to provide for themselves.[124] Local unease about the protracted way changes in poor relief were being introduced, together with speculation and fear that parish relief was to be severely curtailed, all contributed to the feeling of vulnerability that many working men felt. This concern also extended to their families, who, if the main breadwinner was struck down, and other members of the family could not help out, had no other alternative but to turn to the parish for relief. That was why so many friendly societies made provision for widows to continue in their husband's

society after his death, and funds developed that were half benevolent in nature and half insurance, that covered both widows and orphans, the relief of distressed members, and aided members when they were on the tramp in search of work. All the above incidents in life caused enough hardship to force many people to fall back on the last alternative of the workhouse, and many inmates in the workhouse who fell into the above category bore witness to this.

The role of the friendly society was for the majority to try to financially fend off those threats, for the minority who would be in crisis at any one time. Where the societies found this hard in practice was when membership declined, contributions could not keep pace with expenditure, and new young healthy members were not recruited to help maintain the elderly who were more likely to be a drain on funds.

In Cheshire, friendly societies were active in 1794 and they continued to grow steadily thereafter, so that by 1831 there were 342 official friendly societies in the county (see figure 43). The first friendly society in Nantwich to be filed with the Clerk of the Peace in Chester was the Nantwich Union Society that is simply recorded as originating prior to 1794.[125] The Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity), Ancient Order of Foresters, Independent Order of Rechabites, and National Independent Order of Oddfellows were all represented in the town, together with a few smaller societies.[126] Several of the friendly societies of Nantwich were said to be 'worth noting' in the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners in 1874.[127] The Female Sick Club founded in 1821, had 241 members in 1872, which represented 7% of the female population of the town or


GRAPH TO SHOW THE NUMBER OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ESTABLISHED IN CHESHIRE 1794 - 1831
FIGURE 48
NUMBER OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ESTABLISHED
0
10
20
30
40
YEARS
1794
1795
1796
1797
1798
1799
1800
1801
1802
1803
1804
1805
1806
1807
1808
1809
1810
1811
1812
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1816
1817
1818
1819
1820
1821
1822
1823
1824
1825
1826
1827
1828
1829
1830
1831
SOURCE = 1831-32 XXVI (90)

1 in every 14 women, and funds of £285. In 1870 the Female Sick Club amalgamated with another female club of 40 members which used to divide its funds yearly, but by 1872 there were no adult dividend clubs in Nantwich as they had 'all died out.'

There were also four 'peculiar' clubs in Nantwich, all very similar in organisation and specifically for children. As P. H. J. H. Gosden has pointed out local societies were often based on a religious group such as a Sunday School, and the largest of these societies in Nantwich had been originally established in connection with the Church of England Sunday School in 1827, and was still principally for that purpose in 1872, being an unregistered organisation.[128] The three other 'peculiar' clubs were the Ebenezer, the Wesleyan, and the Independent.

The ages of the members of the Church of England Club ranged from 1 to 17 years, contributions being 1d per week. Benefits included 1s 6d per week during sickness and £4 0s 0d at death if the child was over five years of age, and £2 0s 0d if under five years of age. A levy of 3d was made on each member at each death, and small fines were made if anyone fell into arrears. There were 1375 members of this club which represented approximately 20% of the population of Nantwich. If there was any surplus left in the funds at the end of each year it was divided amongst the members. Many of the members paid 2d or 3d per week to the club, but only 1d for sickness benefit, the rest of the contributions being paid into the savings bank for the individual member. The club also had honorary members who only paid into the savings side of the club, and in return received money at the end of the year. In 1871 the dividend

payable was 4s 9d per member or £1026, the dividend being larger than the weekly contribution, because of the excess of 3d levies over the number of funeral payments made, plus interest from the savings bank.

The members of the Church of England Club were also entitled to medical attendance, for which 10d per head was charged, and two doctors were engaged who, in 1871, received £54 8s 6d for their services. The fact that the organisation was a long standing one in the local community was witnessed by the fact that the Secretary had served for 25 years, and the Treasurer for 30 years. There were no printed rules for the club, the only written rules dating from 1847, and according to the Secretary the rules were 'common knowledge and tradition', and any disputes were settled by the Treasurer. Accounts were never audited, no balance sheets were shown to the Royal Commission and there was no committee '... but the result of the yearly dividend after allowing for the benefits shows that members get their money's worth.'

The Juvenile Friendly Society run by the Congregational Sunday School had been founded in 1823 and was managed by the Sunday School committee who issued printed rules. Any person who was a teacher or scholar at the school from the ages of 5 to 20 could be a member. Also children between the ages of 1 to 5 could join, but could not receive any benefit in times of sickness. Parents and members of the congregation could also become honorary members and could then use the club as a savings bank. An entrance fee of 2d was charged together with a contribution of 1d per week. Sick relief was 1s 6d per week for three months. then 1s 0d for three months, followed by

6d a week for the rest of the sickness up to the age of 20, when membership ceased. Death benefit was £1 10s 0d, a levy of 2d being made on all members, any surplus going into the fund for division. The services of a doctor could be received for 2½d per quarter, and the fund was divided at Christmas, one guinea always being left in the fund.

The Wesleyan Methodist Sunday and Day School Sick Club had been founded in 1831, and benefits once again ceased at the age of twenty. No sick benefit was given to children under the age of ten, and the services of a doctor cost 2½d per quarter extra. Death benefit consisted of a 3d levy on the other members and 'the parents have to collect the levy themselves.'

The Ebenezer, Wesleyan and Independent clubs collectively had as many members as the Church of England Club, so between all four clubs there were approximately 2600 members, or 39% of the population of Nantwich in 1872. Clubs said to have 'imitated' them, existed in Middleton, Lancashire.

What did these four 'peculiar' clubs aim to achieve for their members? Firstly to provide some measure of sickness and death benefit; the number of sick children in the workhouse and high mortality rates reflecting the hardships many parents had to undergo when their children were ill or payments had to be made for funerals. Also as many children after the age of nine were potential wage earners, sickness for that child could mean the loss of a vital wage for the family. Secondly, the element of thrift introduced by encouraging regular savings would also be seen as establishing good habits early in life that could be continued in adulthood, which would hopefully help to fend off poverty. Thirdly, if children had witnessed how their family

had benefited from such clubs, then they would be more likely to continue with the self-help ethos of supporting a Friendly Society when they became adults.

The role of the parent has to be emphasised in all these clubs. The children would not have been able to afford the contributions, their parents would have paid them for them, and would have been the recipients of the benefits in case of sickness or death, as they would have been the ones who would have borne the financial loss of the children's earnings during sickness, or had to pay for the cost of the funeral. Both occasions could have warranted recourse to the workhouse if some form of insurance/benefit had not been provided, and so the parents who could afford the contributions were being provident and also passing on this prudent attitude to their children, the proviso always being that the level of contributions could be afforded. The number of members recorded in 1872 proves that approximately 39% of the town could afford such rates. When the members of these four clubs are added to those who were members of the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) and Female Sick Club that existed in Nantwich at this time, then it appears that collectively they had 3554 members. 53.2% of the population of Nantwich or 1 in every 2 people in 1872 were members of a Friendly Society. However despite this relatively high number of people trying to insure against the occurrence of financially crippling events, 47% still had to rely on their families and the workhouse in times of need.[129] When these figures are compared with figures for Cheshire as a whole, a county which had a 'very large development of Friendly Societies'[130]

the proportion of people in the county who were members of a friendly society numbered one in every eleven people, or 9%. This figure would have been much higher if unregistered societies, and societies that did not make returns were taken into account. Nantwich's figure of 53.2% did include people in unregistered societies, but even so still serves to emphasise how popular the societies and their ethos were within the town.

By 1872 there were no longer any dividend clubs in Nantwich, the last, the Friendly Rest, having broken up in 1860. Another dividend society, the Friendly Knot, had operated until 1850 and had had 140 members. It used to issue 3d cheques for liquor, but they gave up both liquor cheques and dividends as the club's popularity declined.

In 1875 the Loyal Poor Man's Friend branch of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, who numbered among its members Dr Munro, the workhouse doctor, had 179 members or 2.6% of the population of Nantwich. In 1874 they had paid out £95 0s 0d in sickness benefit or the equivalent of 10s 7½d per member.[131] Sickness benefit was paid at the rate of 10s 0d a week for 12 months and then 5s 0d a week for the next 12 months, whereas many other societies only provided sick pay for six month periods. However committee members spoke with disappointment that the gentry of the area did not take much interest in the work of the society.

On a district basis the Loyal Poor Man's Friend branch at Nantwich was one of eight lodges who together accounted for 1282 members. Receipts between 1869 and 1874 amounted to £7690 0s 0d, and sickness benefit equalled £3546 0s 0d or an average of £2 15s 4d per member. 105 funerals had taken place

costing an average of £9 2s 0d each, and the district had a balance over the five year period of £3180 0s 0d.

In relation to the widow and orphan fund, which had to be subscribed to separately, the contributions were said to be very low, so no great payments could be expected. 31 widows and 296 orphans had received gifts of £162 0s 0d and the total value of the widow and orphan fund stood at £625 0s 0d.

The fact that the unregistered Church and Chapel Children's clubs did so well in Nantwich is in marked contrast to the experience of the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) and the Druid Society, who while not having a branch in Nantwich, did report to the Commission on Friendly Societies in 1872 of the troubles they had encountered when they had tried to establish a widows and orphans fund.[132] When adult members were encouraged to enrol their children as members, the Druids found that '... the people neglected to enrol their children and it was a complete failure.' The point was made that it was usually the women who would insure their children out of their weekly income, and when times were hard and money was in short supply it would be most likely that these subscriptions would be the first to be economised on by the family. The fact that the four 'peculiar' societies flourished in Nantwich and maintained high membership figures, shows a determination on the part of the subscriber to maintain their subscriptions in an area of family life that was the first to be cut back in times of hardship.

The Abstract of the Quinquennial Returns relating to sickness and mortality reveal a variety of experience between the different friendly societies of Nantwich.[133] The Poor Man's

Friend Lodge of the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity), the Court Wych Malbank of the Ancient Order of Foresters, and the Sanctuary Wych Malbank of the Ancient Order of Shepherds all made returns. All of the societies' members were predominantly involved in light, as opposed to heavy labour, and the increase in the number of members for the Poor Man's Friend Lodge stood at 9.2% between 1870 and 1875; the Court of Wych Malbank increased its membership by 12.5% during the same period, and the Sanctuary of Wych Malbank decreased its numbers by 3.4%. In terms of recruiting new members the period between 1865 and 1870 saw the greatest growth. In the wake of the cotton famine and the unemployment and poverty wrought during those years, the idea of being able to safeguard against sickness and death must have encouraged people to join. Even though unemployment could not be insured against the members contributions were continued for him while he was out of work, so at least if sickness befell him during this period he was entitled to benefit. For example the Court Wych Malbank recruited 29% of its members between 1865-1870 and the Sanctury of Wych Malbank recruited 56% during the same period. The Court of Wych Malbank was the largest of all the three societies with 389 members in 1870, followed by the Poor Man's Friend Lodge with 163 members and lastly the Sanctuary of Wych Malbank with 88 members. Collectively these three societies represented 9.6% of the Nantwich population, and when dependents were taken into consideration this figure could easily be trebled.

In relation to sick pay the Poor Man's Friend Lodge had seen an increase of 72% in the numbers of weeks claimed by members in sickness benefit between 1855 and 1865. Between

1860 and 1870 the number of weeks increased by 96.5% and finally between 1865 and 1875 a decrease of 4.8% was recorded, which averaged at eight weeks per man between 1870-1875.

The cost of paying death benefit to members was always a drain on funds, but the Poor Man's Friend Lodge was fortunate that in any five year period between 1855 to 1875 the maximum number of members that died was ten, representing 5.7% of its members at that time. The Court of Wych Malbank experienced a death rate of 6.4% amongst its members between 1870-1875, and the Sanctuary of Wych Malbank also experienced a death rate of 5.8% between 1870-1875.

The problem of being able to maintain subscriptions to a friendly society in times of depression and hardship was emphasised by the number of members who had to discontinue their membership. Between 1860-1865, covering the worst years of the cotton famine and its aftermath, the Poor Man's Friend Lodge lost 17% of its members and between 1865-1870 Court Wych Malbank had 84% of their members discontinue. The recruitment of members all depended on whether people could afford, and then maintain, the subscription rates, which led to the vicious cycle of falling and then rising membership within the various friendly societies.

The greatest drain of all on the funds of friendly societies was the payment of sickness benefit to its members, hence the need for frequent visits to the sick members home to confirm his illness, and to safeguard the funds of the members against misappropriation. The Poor Man's Friend Lodge, Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) in Nantwich paid out the following amounts in sickness and funeral benefit:

	1890	1894
	£	£
Sickness benefit	178	228
Funeral benefit	37	50
District funeral fund	72	76
	287	354
Contributions received	£198	£239
Deficit of	£ 89	£115

134

Despite an increase in membership of 15.2% between 1890 and 1894 and a 20.7% increase in contributions, there was a growing deficit between the contributions received and the money needed to meet the demands being made for sickness benefit and death benefits. Such shortfalls were met by drawing on the assets of the society, which in the long term undermined its very existence. The solution however, as Gosden has emphasised, was difficult to find - if contributions were increased there was a danger that members would join societies offering cheaper rates, and yet members wanted more in benefits than could actually be afforded.[135] Just as sickness had left many families with no alternative but to go to the workhouse for relief, so the call on societies to pay sickness benefit was one of the main reasons why so many of them found themselves in financial difficulties. The fact that sick pay was often used to cover the disability of old age, which needed to be insured for separately, but hardly ever was, was a prime cause of deficiencies. The greater longevity of members began to have a noticeable impact on the finances of societies in the 1880s and 1890s.[136] Indeed as P.Thane has argued the societies saw their role '... as providing for mutual help among the working classes in a situation in which individual self-help was impossible for so many of them.[137]

The Poor Mans Friend Lodge was not the only friendly society in Nantwich facing difficulties during the 1890s; in 1893 the Ancient Order of Shepherds, Sanctuary Wych Malbank who had 120 members, was recorded as having a deficiency of £196 0s 0d.[138] Hence, as Gosden has argued, the growing trend for adequate rates of contributions to cover benefits became a feature of the late nineteenth century.[139] However, as witnessed in Nantwich this was a hard financial lesson to apply at the same time as keeping membership figures up too.

The role that friendly societies played in reducing pauperism was discussed at the 22nd Annual Conference of the North West Poor Law District in October 1896.[140] It was generally felt that friendly societies encouraged a more independent attitude and as a result had helped reduce pauperism since 1834 '... and few things equalled those societies in promoting that independence of spirit,' but it was stressed that the public did not always fully support the friendly society movement because '... promises made to early members had not always been carried out. However the Poor Law Conference was at pains to emphasise that friendly societies '... dealt with those who were voluntarily thrifty, Board of Guardians have to deal with those who were not thrifty, but inherently improvident (Hear, Hear,).'[141]

This dilemma concerning what part friendly societies had in fact played in reducing pauperism was examined by the Royal Commission of 1909-1911. Sir Edward Brabrook, late Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies stated that he was reluctant to look upon friendly societies as having 'prevented' pauperism:

> It involves the assumption that if the Friendly Societies had not existed

> the member would have become a pauper. I don't think members of Friendly Societies are of the stuff out of which paupers are made. Pauperism is a moral disease, not a mere accident of poverty. If there had been no Friendly Societies the man would still have the savings which he had put into the Friendly Society. A Friendly Society does not create capital: it only equalises risks. [142]

To argue that pauperism was a 'moral disease' belies the evidence to be found in Nantwich Workhouse where the majority of inmates were old, and sickness accounted for a large amount of out-relief. The fact that the poor rates were hard pushed in times of economic depression also reflects the unpredictable nature of the economy, rather than any moral fault in the recipients. What is certain is that in times of sickness and death the friendly societies helped to provide some financial security, albeit in a small way, especially if lodge funds were drained, to help the family over a period when the workhouse might otherwise have been their only recourse. Indeed benefit from the friendly societies did not provide total protection against the need to claim from the poor rates, hence the number of members who were forced on the poor rates because the society benefit was not enough to sustain their families.

There was a discernible attitude of sympathy towards members of friendly societies by officials on the local board of guardians who declared that 'The board is of the opinion that it is wrong in principle and opposed to the spirits of the times to deprive members of Registered Friendly Societies of the franchise who owing to illness have been compelled to obtain outdoor relief.'[143] The fact that members of friendly societies had attempted to provide a measure of protection in the event of sickness and death raised them, in the minds of local poor law

officials, above the mass of ordinary paupers, into a position which deserved special consideration. Indeed, as Gosden has argued, thrift organisations such as the friendly societies were in conflict with the Poor Law because people who had made no provision for the future were relieved while society members had their public relief reduced because of the benefit they received from the society. This, they argued, encouraged improvidence and harmed the cause of thrift and self-help,[144] that they were attempting to inculcate.

By 1910 the biggest friendly society in Nantwich was the Ancient Order of Foresters, Wych Malbank with 749 members, followed by the Poor Man's Friend Lodge of the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) with 399 members. Together their membership represented 14.6% of the population of Nantwich. When the membership of the smaller friendly societies in Nantwich are added to this figure 18.1% of the population were members of a registered society.[145] In Cheshire as a whole the total members of friendly societies accounted for 14.7% of the population. Friendly society membership in Nantwich was on a greater scale than in Cheshire, a county which was considered to have a solid foundation of friendly societies.

The old charities of Church Coppenhall, Monks Coppenhall, and the township of Crewe

What role did the old established charities play in the relief of poverty in Crewe? The consolidated charities of Cartwright, John and Sara Turner, Thomas Pickering, and the Blumires charity continued to be distributed, although the development of Crewe and the dramatic growth in population that followed, meant that the amounts distributed were so small as

to be of hardly any use. The fact that the charities had been conceived when totally different economic and social conditions prevailed meant that with the coming of the railways the need was apparent for the creation of new charities to fill in the gap. The initiative came both from the London and North Western Railway Company, and private individuals.

In 1837-1838 Blumires Charity was distributed in 2d brown loaves on a weekly basis.[146] The consolidated charity was distributed by the churchwardens in 12 x 1d wheaten loaves, together with a sum which was given yearly to the poor, and 16 x 2d loaves were dispensed every two weeks at Church. Any excess was added to the Sacrament money and distributed twice a year at Christmas and Easter in small sums ranging from 2s 0d to 2s 3d to each family.[147] The interest from Pickering's £5 0s 0d was distributed amongst the poor on St. Thomas' Day by the churchwardens.

By 1843 the collective value of the consolidated charities amounted to £9 0s 0d and Pickering's Charity to 5s 0d.[148] These sums continued to be distributed annually and by 1862 the value of the consolidated charity had risen by 66% to £15 0s 0d, consisting of bread to the value of £4 4s 6d and £10 15s 6d in money, with Pickering's Charity remaining at the fixed rate of 5s 0d.[149] By 1892 the value of the consolidated charities and Pickering's bequest amounted to £16 5s 0d a year, an increase of 6.5% in twentyfour years. The population of Crewe in 1891 stood at 28,761, so the value of the Consolidated Charities amounted to less than ¼d per head.[150]

Unlike the situation in Nantwich, no one thought it worth while to augment the consolidated charities of Coppenhall, so

their value had no hope of keeping pace with the growth of population. By 1914 the value of the Consolidated Charities stood at £23 10s 4d, which was distributed in bread to 12 people and money to 30 people.[151]

The only new bequest that was added to the consolidated charity was made in 1904 by Maria Beech. This bequest involved £14 17s 4d being paid annually for coal to be distributed to the deserving poor. The coal was given to 40 or 50 people in quantities of 1 to 3 cwt, according to the price.[152]

As M. E. Rose has emphasised[153] despite the revelations of mass poverty, numbers in receipt of poor relief nationally indicated that only 2 or 3% of the population were in receipt of poor relief at a time when Booth and Rowntree were arguing that nearly a third of the people they had investigated were in poverty. Apart from the financially small old established charities of Monks Coppenhall and the Poor Law, the poor of Crewe had to find other means of alleviating their poverty. A combination of self-help, and acts such as 'Pawning, loans, the taking in of laundry or lodgers, help from friends or kin enabled the balancing of that small economic miracle, the working-class family budget.'[154] Gifts of such items as a pair of boots, food, or small amounts of cash 'helped to keep the poor afloat'. It is with this 'second line of defence' as it was available in Crewe that the following sections will deal.

Different groups of people who attracted charitable effort

The development of charitable endeavour in the new town of Crewe, can best be analysed from 1830-1914 by examining the areas of concern that motivated local people to raise money. As J. H. Treble has pointed out the workhouse was an institution

which the poor would go 'to considerable lengths to avoid, including living at well below the poverty line'[155] and it was in an attempt to help such people that many funds and charitable endeavours sprung up. Also D. Fraser has emphasised the fact that there were so many charitable enterprises embarked upon was '... implicit condemnation of the notion of self-help for all.'[156]

Many of these Crewe charities and funds also illustrate the fact that much of their support, both financial and organisational relied on working class support, a trend emphasised by F. Prochaska and involved charity of the poor, to the poor, as opposed to the old established charities of Nantwich that relied on essentially middle class trustees.[157] Crewe did have rich members of the public such as F. W. Webb and the Mayor, Aldermen, M.P.s and the railway company that supported charities but the support of the ordinary working man and woman was responsible for a continual flow of charitable endeavour. Whereas F. Prochaska has argued that in many working-class communities funds and voluntary effort in the established philanthropic tradition were difficult to come by, this stimulating growth of spontaneous help on a one to one basis, in Crewe such spontaneity was channelled by the workers into the traditional type of charitable 'infrastructure' centering on concerts, funds and benefits,[158] as well as existing in unrecorded acts by individual kindness.

Which particular groups in society attracted the benevolence of the people of Crewe, and in what ways were funds raised to sustain them? The plight of poor children, orphans, widows and the aged all solicited a strong response from the local

population. For example the Crewe 'Cinderella' club, an institution connected with St. John's Sunday School, gave an annual tea and concert for poor children from Crewe at Christmas, a tradition that began in 1899 with 30 children attending. By 1903 100 children attended and the Mayor and Mayoress gave support to the event, which by 1911 was entertaining 240 children. The Christmas tree for the party was presented by the Marquis of Crewe, and all sectors of the town were encouraged to support the event.[159] The Railway Temperance Union also joined in the tradition of providing a Christmas tea for poor children by entertaining 130 of them in 1904,[160] and the Oxford Street Wesleyan Mission in 1906 began to provide a free breakfast on Christmas Day for poor children of the surrounding neighbourhood. The custom quickly caught on among Wesleyan Churches and in 1909 Earle Street Church provided a free breakfast for 360 children.[161]

The Mayor of Crewe, as first citizen of the town, lent his name to a number of charities, the Mayor of Crewe's Childrens Fund being one such contribution. It was during a severe period of unemployment in the winter of 1904 that the Mayor and Mayoress issued a circular asking people to consider what could be done to provide the children of poor and out-of-work parents with free meals, clothing, or both during the winter months. Members of the Council and Education Committee, local clergy, and Ministers of all denominations together with the head teachers of the day schools were involved. Ward committees were elected to co-operate with teachers in the distribution of relief and the Mayor and Mayoress started a subscription list with twenty guineas, and sums amounting to over £100 were

promised at the first meeting to consider the problem on 1st December 1904. Soon after a 'grand entertainment' was given in the Lyceum Theatre to raise money for the fund, the use of the theatre being given free, and a host of local artistes 'very kindly gave their services.' Whist drives were frequently held to help raise money, and in 1905 £89 0s 6d was raised of which 5.8% was spent on providing breakfasts; 56% on boots and clogs; 3.1% on underwear; 0.8% on administration, and 32% constituted the balance in hand.[162]

The Education (Provision of Meals) Act of 1906 permitted, but did not require local authorities to provide meals for needy children. The scheme could be financed by voluntary contributions, charges on parents, or from public funds, and as this scheme was administered by the Board of Education there was no association with the Poor Law and the stigma that went with it. Such a scheme was really an extension of what had already been in operation since 1904. As P. Thane has argued 'This was the unplanned beginning of a process whereby the Liberal government gradually withdrew provision for deserving groups from the Poor Law, at no cost to the Exchequer and as little as possible to local rates.'[163]

Groups like the School Canteen Committee continued to organise whist drives and dances for 400 people, the proceeds going to the Mayor's Fund to buy shoes for poor children.[164] Also during the winter months the School Canteen Committee continued to feed underfed school children. This relief took the form of free breakfasts which were usually served from mid-October to the end of March. The numbers of free breakfasts given during four weeks ending March 20th 1908 numbered 6549

at a cost of £65 10s 0d. The severity of the conditions in regard to poor children continued so that in December 1910 the education Committee set up a 'Care Committee' whose specific aim was to induce parents to obtain medical advice and the treatment necessary for their children, and to co-operate with the Canteen Committee regarding the feeding of underfed school children.[165] Indeed as M. E. Rose has argued 'new' agencies such as the education authority were more important than the Board of Guardians in exposing and dealing with child poverty.[166]

Orphans, as distinct from poor children, had many of their own special charities within the town, which were always well supported by the main industries and unions. For example the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, had their own special orphan fund to help maintain the children of their members as accidents and early death was a common occurrence on the railways. In 1897 the Society held their first Church Parade in Crewe, the object of which was to make a collection in aid of the Railway Orphan Fund, and they also held an annual tea party and concert, the proceeds from which went to the General Orphan Fund of the Society, and as many as 700 people attended these occasions emphasising how the social life and leisure pursuits of Crewe became closely enmeshed with fund raising events.[167] Mr F. W. Webb, Chief Mechanical Engineer at Crewe for the London and North Western Railway Company always took a great interest in the treatment of orphans, and advocated from 1885 onwards that the town needed its own orphanage rather than sending the children to institutions in Derby. He presided at meetings of the Church of England Society for providing homes for waifs and strays[168] regular treats were provided,

for example, 400 orphan and destitute children were entertained in the Queens Park by the managers of the Yokohama Minstrels who did a lot of charity fund raising at Nantwich Workhouse.[169]

Concerts were constantly held to raise money for funds: in 1896 Councillor Hoptroff organised a concert to raise money to provide a treat for orphan children from Crewe, 500 children being provided with a tea. Councillor Hoptroff raised money for this treat on an annual basis, the event growing to include sports and races.[170]

Small cantatas and fancy bazaars, described as a 'most popular and fashionable way of making money and a pre-eminently female affair [that] was both cause and effect of the expanding influence of women in philanthropy'[171] by F. K. Prochaska, were also held to aid orphan funds. For example the Amalgamated Society of the Women's Guild raised £6 for its orphan fund in this way and annual street collections were made in Crewe for the 'Waif Saturday Fund', a typical collection in 1899 raising £16 1s 4d.[172] Councillor Hoptroff and his 'energetic committee' also provided a Christmas treat for around 500 orphans, consisting of tea, a concert under the presidency of an Alderman of the Mayor, and each child was given a present. The money for such events was raised, for example, by cricket matches between teams representing local butchers and the post office eleven. The Crewe Musical Comedy Society also put on productions which were always received by large audiences, again all the proceeds going to the Orphan Children's Treat Fund.[173]

By the end of 1905 the Orphan Fund of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants had 1865 children to care for at a cost of £180 16s 6d weekly or £9403 0s 0d per annum. 27 of

these children came from Crewe or 1.4%, and the cost of maintenance for them was £2 11s 6d per week. The society encouraged its members to raise funds not only for the maintenance of their own towns orphans, but to look at the problem of helping railway orphans throughout the country.[174]

Apart from determination to help the orphans of Crewe, the Dr Barnardo's movement stressed the problems faced throughout the country and was always strongly supported in the town. In 1898 a concert to raise money for Dr Barnado's was held in the Town Hall, artistes including Miss Hoptroff, following the lead of her Father in raising money for orphans. Street collections were made, typical sums raised by this method between 1900-1903 being £14-£16. In 1906 ladies who were anxious to help support the work of Dr Barnardo's Homes inaugurated a conversazione which raised enough money to support a cot in one of the Barnardo Hospitals - to be called 'The Crewe Cot.'[175] Branches of the Young Helpers' League held miscellaneous concerts and dramatic entertainments to raise funds for the Dr Barnardo's Homes, and the High School in Westminster Street had sales of work to help the local branch.[176] The fund raising for Dr Barnardo's continued up to the first World War and beyond, the house to house collection of 1914 raising £19 for the fund, one of the highest sums ever collected using this method.[177]

Closely connected with fund raising activities for orphans were those specifically for widows and orphans. Occasionally events would take place for an individual family, for example in 1869 a concert was given to aid the widow and children of the late R. Young. Holland's Christy Minstrells performed and £14 0s 0d was raised.[178] As J. H. Treble has emphasised in

working-class society the economic impact of widowhood was immediately felt, hence their high number in the workhouse, but help from charities, kin, cleaning work etc., '... could not remove the shadow of poverty which hung so heavily over the families of widows ... whose children were too young to enter the labour market.'[179]

All the main industries of the town had their widows and orphans funds, for example from 1886 onwards the Boilermakers Society of the Railway Works held annual concerts in order to raise money for their fund, as from 1893 did the Railway Guards Universal Friendly Society and usually the hall was 'packed to its utmost capacity' the motto of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants being: 'We succour the widows and orphans.'[180]

Old people formed another identifiable group that attracted a great deal of charitable endeavour, and as the majority of the inmates of Nantwich Workhouse were classed as 'aged' those who managed to remain outside the walls of the workhouse were often found to be in dire need. However as J. H. Treble has argued this supplementary aid '... had at best a marginal impact upon the overall problem of poverty amongst the aged'[181] their own families providing the safest source of help and protection. D. Owen echoes this sentiment as 'voluntary philanthropy could offer no comprehensive protection against the hazards of old age.'[182]

Annual treats for the aged began in Crewe in 1871 and took the form of the Vicar and the Mayor delivering several addresses after which followed tea and a concert, subscriptions being raised from the local community to pay for the event. By 1885 173 old people attended the event, their collective average

age being 73, the youngest guest was 70 years old and the eldest 88 years of age, and each was given 1s 8d before they left.[183] The gifts that they were given varied from year to year and included a currant loaf each from the Mayor, and a copy of the New Testament each from the Mayoress. By 1895 there were over 400 old people attending the function, attendance figures having doubled in five years.[184]

To celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee the Council decided that the town should provide treats for the aged poor and young children. Several sites were purchased to provide playgrounds for the children, and on 21st June 1897 the Jubilee Celebrations began with a treat for the aged poor. Between 500 and 600 old people met on the Market Square and were driven in vehicles to the Queen's Park where they were provided with tea, and sports events took place.[185]

The aged and young were once again singled out by the council for a special tea to mark the Coronation of Edward VII. However when the Coronation was postponed due to the King's serious illness, the Committee continued to serve tea to the children in their schools, and the following day the aged and deserving poor were given a tea.[186]

The involvement of the Mayor in so many local charities, meant that the organisation received continued support year after year, and became an annual part of the local calender. Such support encouraged other Councillors and Aldermen to follow suit, together with their wives, families, and other leading townspeople. So when Councillor Taylor became Mayor in 1903 he had since 1891 been the 'principal moving spirit' in the provision of the annual treat for the aged and poor of Crewe.

Under the auspices of Mayor Taylor: '... everything was done to bring a few pleasant rays of sunshine into lives darkened by poverty, or made weary and burdensome by the weight of years.'[187] 440 old folk attended the tea in 1904, entertainment afterwards being directed by Councillor Hoptroff. The Mayoress also had a valuable role to play in encouraging the wives and daughters of Aldermen, and the local community in general, to participate in fund raising events. As F. K. Prochaska has emphasised 'Propping up family institutions and the local community were intimately associated with a woman's role, whatever her class.'[188]

Since 1884 the Primitive Methodists of Crewe had entertained the aged and deserving poor but instead of the members having their annual tea and social in 1904 the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour entertained 100 old and deserving people together with the disabled, to a tea and concert under the Presidency of Alderman McNeill.[189] That the event was a success was witnessed by the fact that in the following year 120 old and poor people were entertained to tea in the schoolroom, followed the next night by 100 poor and destitute children who were guests of the junior members of the Society. The event became an annual one and in 1908 the number of children entertained had increased to 200. By 1914 140 adults were 'sumptuously' entertained and after the supper the Band of Hope gave a talk on 'Paddy's Mistake' and hymns were sung.[190]

Once again the old were entertained by the Council to mark the Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary in 1911. 500 aged people attended the tea, and were afterwards entertained by the 'Aeolion Entertainers'.[191] The one feature that characterises all the 'treats' for the elderly was that they were 'one off' occasions, usually on an annual basis. While these

events were no doubt appreciated, the poverty and need existing among the aged during the intervening twelve months was left largely for the poor law officials to deal with via the workhouse or out-relief. While poor children, orphans, and widows all received treats from various organisations on an annual basis, they also had on-going funds to help them throughout the year, organised by the Mayor and various trades societies. However for the old there was nothing of a similar nature to help sustain them throughout the year. Although the amounts distributed to almsmen and women in Nantwich were small, many of them were on a weekly basis throughout the year, nothing similar appears to have operated in Crewe.

One-off charitable benefits to provide a substantial sum of money for the families of workers who, through an accident or sudden illness were too ill to work often took place in Crewe. For example a concert was given by the North and South Steam Sheds for the benefit of five workmen who, through old age and infirmities were no longer able to work,[192] and the Mayor presided over concerts for men who had met with serious accidents in Crewe Works.[193]

The Town Hall 'was the scene of an enthusiastic gathering' when local branches of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers presented permanent disablement benefits of £100 each to two of its members in 1908.[194] Such payments helping the recipients to make 'ends meet' without having to recourse to the poor law authorities for some time.

The tradition of benefit concerts continued, and in 1911 a largely attended gathering was held for Alfred Sprittles, a well known local entertainer whose eyesight had become seriously

affected so that he could no longer perform, and other benefit concerts were held by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and National Union of Railwaymen.[195]

By 1914 a 'sacred concert' was organised by various enginemen's societies of Crewe to provide funds to assist several loco enginemen who had been ill for periods ranging from 6 months to 15 years. The concert was 'packed to the doors' and as Mr Bowen Cooke, Chief Mechanical Engineer commented, this showed a 'spirit of regard for those who were unfortunately placed.' The railway company did, he assured the audience, '... fully realise the fact that they had their troubles and they sympathised with them', but in a cautionary note he added that to retain that sympathy they should work together in a spirit of loyalty and good comradeship.[196]

Small, **individual charitable efforts**, organised in some cases by only one person, also took place in Crewe, and while only on a very small scale did, nevertheless, affect the lives of a few people. For example in 1910 a concert promoted by 'the Misses Morgan' in aid of the poor was 'completely crowded ... and met with a hearty and generous response.'[197] Charitable effort on behalf of the **disabled** was largely neglected, but the Mayoress did have a 'one-off' reception in aid of the Crippled Girls' Industrial Branch of the Watercress and Flower Girls' Christian Mission, London. Artificial flowers made by the girls were displayed, the proceeds from their sale going to the institution in London. Again support for these societies usually took the form of an exhibition, and in 1908 the Mayoress opened a floral exhibition in aid of the Blind and Crippled Girls' Industrial Homes, the proceeds going to the institution.[198]

Again it was largely through the efforts of a Miss Cooke, together with the help of other ladies and gentlemen of the town, that a party of disabled people went on a 35 mile motor car ride in 1911 to Cholmondeley and Beeston.[199] Apart from these individual, occasional responses, charitable efforts for the disabled were few and far between, and those undertaken by trade societies for disabled members mainly concerned those disabled as a result of their employment. Little provision, apart from that provided under the poor law, was available for those crippled from birth or who were not members of a trade society.

Money raising activities were undertaken to help fund the Royal Albert Asylum, Lancaster, an institution that took inmates from Nantwich Workhouse among others, and served the whole of the North of England by taking care of lunatics. The annual concerts always produced 'crowded audiences.' One Crewe lady made a collection of dolls to be given to the asylum at Christmas, these dolls being put on display for the public together with lantern slides showing the institution to raise more cash.[200] One trait that runs through all these charities is the fact that the 'poor ... made sacrifices to help the poor.'[201] reinforcing M. Anderson's argument that a great deal of aid was offered to those in need by those who had little themselves. Neighbours, whether literally next door or within the same town, rallied in times of need, motivated no doubt by the reality that it could just as easily be them that was in need next time. Certainly the experience in Crewe supports F. Prochaska's argument that though unostentatious and in many cases uncelebrated, the charity of the poor to the poor was startling in its extent,

especially when realities such as caring for aging relatives, cooking meals, washing, lending possessions to neighbours and other acts of unrecorded kindness are considered.[202]

As J. H. Treble has pointed out a family's relationship to the poverty line was also influenced by how successfully they could 'exploit an assorted range of expedients to mitigate some of the worst effects of poverty'[203] such as those outlined above, especially during periods of cyclical unemployment.

How people responded to poverty created by fluctuations in the economy

As N. McCord has emphasised ad hoc funds to cope with emergencies such as economic depression were very important in a society which did not possess state agencies to help meet pressing temporary needs.[204] However as D. Owen has argued private philanthropy could make relatively little contribution to a realistic handling of unemployment as the problem was 'well beyond the scope of voluntary agencies.'[205] However to those who received relief, any help must have been better than nothing. How did people of Crewe respond to such crises and in what ways were the poor helped?

Short time lay-offs, and groups of men being discharged from Crewe Works were phrases the local people dreaded hearing. The fact that the employment of the majority of the town was under the control of the L. N. W. R. meant that when lay-offs were made whole families were hit, so the hardship was magnified. The reality that the town needed a wider base of employment was not acted upon until just before the first World War when the Council began to actively advertise for more industry. However whatever the cause of the distress the 'Immediacy and familiarity

of the parish bound the community together ... in a web of kindness, obligation, and expectation.'[206]

The L. N. W. R. were not the only cause of unemployment- on 1st January 1891 a special meeting of Crewe Town Council was held to consider the distress caused by so many workmen being thrown out of work owing to the frost. As a result special funds were set up in three wards of the town to help alleviate distress, but a proposal to merge the funds into one was rejected.[207]

On 1st March 1892 the coal crisis threatened to affect Crewe Works and rumours were rife throughout the town. By 12th March, 650 men were thrown idle through lack of work, but on this occasion the furnace men were able to restart work on 28th March.[208]

In January 1894 there was great distress in Crewe due, once again, to the bad weather, and various ward committees distributed food tickets. The uncertainty of the weather and the havoc it caused for employment during the winter months made the above situation an annual occurrence with the relief fund once again being distributed in January 1895 as a large number of men were once again 'thrown idle'. It was in response to the severe poverty of the winter months that a meeting of the Secretaries of Football clubs in Crewe took place in November 1895, and Hon. R. A. Ward M.P. offered a charity cup for competition, the proceeds from the matches to be applied towards the relief of distress in Crewe.[209]

Indeed by 1905 most hoped that the short-time would be over but:

> The chilly cry of short-time which was a year ago, hoped ere now would have

> been a cry of the past, is still with us with its attendant suffering and deprivation, ... which affects so seriously the great Railway and all other interests.[210]

Throughout 1906 whist drives were organised, and the proceeds were devoted to a fund for the benefit of the unemployed in Crewe. During December 1906 a group of prominent townsmen consulted the Mayor, Alderman Hoptroff, to discuss the opening of a special relief fund for the benefit of the men who because of their old age had been discharged from Crewe Works.[211] The fund was established and by 1908 there was still a need for its assistance. A grand concert was held in November 1908 to augment the fund in order to 'provide something in the shape of Christmas Cheer' for the discharged workmen and necessitous poor of Crewe, and the Crewe Opera House was given free so that another 'sacred concert' could be held in December for the same purpose.[212] Things were to get worse before they got better: on Christmas Eve 1908 it was announced that various departments would be placed on short-time, the report causing '... quite a consternation in the town.[213] Indeed as P. Thane has argued, the ad hoc funds raised by public subscription were a major source of charity for the unemployed, and the Mayor played an important role in gathering local support during times of need.[214]

Against this background of short-time, unemployment and poverty, it is surprising to find the Royal Commission on the Poor Law and Relief of Distress in 1909 referring to Crewe as having '... little real poverty' as it had a flourishing industry,[215] although the Report did acknowledge that one of the causes of poverty was shortness of work and poor wages. The

poverty existing amongst the undernourished children and their families in Crewe, together with the existence of boot funds etc., does not seem to have been acknowledged by the Royal Commission.

Despite the picture painted by the Royal Commission the problem of short time and unemployment still loomed in 1911:

> The cloud of 'short time' with all its distressing results, has hung over the town for some considerable time, but surely the silver lining will appear at no distant date, and thus cheer the hearts of those who are now suffering so much privation and distress.[216]

Mr W. S. B. McLaren, the Liberal M.P. for Crewe, contributed £50 to the fund opened by the Mayor for providing the poor children of the town with boots and clothing during the winter months, and an animated picture entertainment raised £28 10s 0d for the fund which had been in operation since December 1904. Whist drives, dances, and sacred concerts during January 1911 raised £67 0s 3d for the boot and shoe fund.[217] It was only in 1911 after many years of short time, lay-offs, and unemployment that the Town Council announced that '... efforts should be made, with the help of the Railway Company to attract new industries to the town' and to broaden the economic base on which the town functioned.[218] By April 1911 several of the departments of Crewe Works were placed on full time. However in October 1911, 100 men in the old Works and Deviation were dismissed. Further discharges were made during the first week of October, bringing the total number of dismissals up to approximately 200, with promises of another 200 men to go before the end of the year. At the end of October another batch of men were discharged from the fitting shops of the old works, the first

week in November saw men discharged from the fitting shop and boiler shop, followed by 13 more dismissals in the second week in November.[219]

In February 1912 Mr Ernest Craig, Conservative M.P. for Crewe, gave the Mayor a cheque for £50 to help provide further boots and shoes for poor school children, and further whist drives and dances were held to boost the fund.[220] The poverty in the town became progressively worse as a result of the coal strike, with the employees of the Forge and Rail Mill being particularly hit. On 1st March Mr Bowen Cooke, Chief Mechanical Engineer, together with the Chief Constable of the County swore in 185 special constables to protect the railway company's coal supplies, many of the men being sworn in included men laid off in the dispute. On 2nd March the forge and rail mill were closed down altogether and nearly 1,000 men and boys were laid off, the engine drivers, firemen, and cleaners, at the North and South Steam Sheds being put on reduced hours. By 7th March an additional 44 employees of the L. N. W. R. company were sworn in as special constables. It was on the 9th March that the Cumberland Wharf, which belonged to the North Staffordshire Railway Company, was filled with hundreds of men, women, and children, taking pieces of coal from the tips, having been '... driven to this owing to the shortage of coal due to the strike. The 'mining' operators were watched by a number of townsmen, including the Mayor.'[221]

On the 21st March 1912 a sub committee was appointed to deal with the fund to help relieve distress caused by the coal strike. As M. E. Rose has argued such funds '... kept people from starvation if not from suffering.'[222] Mr McLaren, the

Liberal M.P. for Crewe, gave the Mayor a cheque for £135 to purchase one hundred tons of coal for distribution to the poor, and Mr Ernest Craig sent a cheque for £100 and six tons of coal for the poor. By 4th April the local relief committee had dealt with 2300 cases, and if it is assumed that every case dealt with, there were three or four members in a family, then approximately 20% of the population of the town had received help from the committee, and concerts were given to try to raise further money. One such event at the Crewe New Theatre saw the Relief Committee distributing 3000 hot cross buns amongst poor children.[223]

The Crewe Co-operative Society gave £150 to help relieve the poorest members of the society who had suffered through the coal strike, and by 1st April 1912 the local relief committee had dealt with 5600 cases since commencing operations on the 23rd March, the degree of poverty biting deeply into the local community.[224] It was not until November 1912 that the paint shop of the Works once again resumed full time work after an interval of four years.[225]

As J. H. Treble has emphasised the local charitable funds raised in response to economic fluctuations were but as '... partial salves for some of the needs of their families.'[226] However by 1914 the state legislation to deal with unemployment insurance and the provision of public work schemes had no more than '... a marginal impact' on poverty caused by unemployment. N. McCord has argued that in relation to the money expended on voluntary relief measures '... it is very clear that unofficial far outweighed official exertion.'[227] However while this may have been true on a national level, locally the Nantwich Poor

Law Guardians distribution per year of between £7103 in 1858 and £12,184 in 1905 was in excess of the sums raised by local charities, which were numerous and involved a lot of effort, but were frequently small in value. Both official and unofficial were required, together with organisations like the Friendly Societies in order for the poor to call on a variety of 'defences' in time of need.

Is there any evidence to indicate that the official and unofficial worked together to ease the plight of the poor? In Nantwich and Crewe there is no evidence to suggest that members of charities actively worked with the Poor Law authorities to check on the people they were distributing relief to, and there is no evidence of the Charity Organisation Society becoming involved in the work of the multiplicity of local funds in order to rationalise relief. The guardians did subscribe to institutions that were voluntarily maintained for special treatment for sick paupers, but these were in Manchester, Buxton, and Birmingham. During the 1890s the guardians showed themselves ready to accept gifts for the inmates from charitable individuals and for example, F. Webb's brother was a guardian so obviously knowledge of what was going on in terms of fund raising would have existed, but this appears to have been as far as the co-operation extended.

The development of paternalism in Crewe from the L. N. W. R.

Apart from the efforts of the people of Crewe and fellow workers to sustain the poor in times of need, the L. N. W. R. company did acknowledge its obligation to help provide for some of the needs of this new community which it had created. As W. H. Chaloner has emphasised 'The Grand Junction Board was

compelled by a mixture of principle, self-interest, and necessity to adopt what may be termed a social policy towards its employees in the new colony at Crewe,'especially regarding facilities for community life.[228] Changes, however, in the attitude of the railway company could be detected just prior to the first World War when new national legislation, together with a hardening of attitude by the workers in the wake of industrial action, meant that the company was not so willing to continue being such a generous benefactor. What form did this paternalism take and how did the population benefit?

The paternalistic attitude of the L. N. W. R. was exemplified by its creation and financing of the Mechanics Institute and the financial interest that the company always took in educational matters in the town. As there were no facilities when the first families were moved to Crewe from Edgehill, houses were built for the workers by the L. N. W. R. together with a church, gas works, public baths and schools for their children. On the one hand the workers and their children benefited from the facilities provided and by gaining an education they could thereby insure, to some extent, against poverty in the future. The fact that the railway company were gaining better qualified and more efficient workers was the dual edge of this munificance. As D. Fraser has argued the sponsoring of the Mechanics Institute was a device for using philanthropy as a means of social control by transmitting 'superior' social values to the poor.[229] Some of the people of Crewe resented what they saw as the interference of the company in the running of the Mechanics Institute. A letter in the local press stated that while members of the institution were grateful to the directors of the company

they resented the fact that these gifts should destroy '...all practical interest in the working of the institution by the members.' In fact the member went on to say that the company acted:

> ... rather as tho' the aim was to depress the interest of the member in the working, and to show them how dependent they are for all these good things, and how obsequious they should be to those through whose hands they came to them, and in fact to kill their interest by means of the patronage.[230]

and he believed this to be an injurious use of the directors gifts that had existed for some time. The paternalism exercised via the Mechanics Institute did, it was argued, inhibit the members and for the sake of their jobs they would not dare to contradict any decision concerning the institute. However the institute continued to encourage both a development of basic education together with mechanical and engineering skills and a knowledge of current affairs via the news and reading room which was stocked with newspapers and periodicals, and a library of 10.000 volumes, as well as a gymnasium which could be joined for life for £5, or 2s 6d per quarter, or 10d per month, with reduced rates for the use of just the library or reading room.[231]

The Kean Prize was a charity established by the L. N. W. R. in 1887 to offer prizes of £5 each to youths of the Mechanics Institute under 17 years of age, employed in the locomotive works, who had excelled in some aspect of their work. Once again it was the emphasis on improving proficiency in regard to their work that stimulated paternal interest.[232] It was also in 1887 that the L. N. W. R. gave the land for the Queen's Park to

the people of Crewe together with £10,000 to lay it out for recreational purposes.

That the L. N. W. R. did exercise power locally by virtue of the fact that they were the only large employer of labour in the town did have a psychological effect on the population. So in 1890 when Mr Webb and Mr Whale, executives of the L. N. W. R., withdrew from the Town Council the occasion was likened to:

> ... almost equivalent to the loss of Counsel in a legal suit, and it is to be feared that it will result in restricted privileges to the town through the want of direct advocacy to the Chairman and Directors, but may we not entertain a hope that when the Council is no longer beclouded by bitter political fog, these members may return and assist in restoring it to its former dignity.[233]

This was the view of Wilmot Eardley, Chairman of the Crewe Conservative Association, and refers to the occasion when Mr Webb and Mr Whale left their positions on the town council after the scandal of the railway company in Crewe dismissing workers and intimidating others because they were active supporters of the Liberal party. The accusation was denied by the Board of Directors who stated every workman should exercise his political franchise as he liked but this scandal split the workforce in two.

In the summer of 1890 after the intimidation affair, various departments of Crewe Railway Works asked the company for reduced railway fares for workmen and their families at weekend and holiday times, and quarter fares were 'generously conceded by the company,' as a paternalistic act towards its employees.[234] However the intimidation affair caused a great deal of

bitterness and anger, and emphasised the problem of where exactly paternalism ended and interference in the lives of the workers began. Despite the problems of 1890 Sir Richard Moon continued the patronage of the L. N. W. R. in education by transferring debenture stock valued at £2000 to University College, Liverpool, in order to set up scholarships, exhibitions and prizes to be awarded to young men employed in the L. N. W. R. company works at Crewe. Wolverton, and Earlstown, to help them further their studies of engineering.[235]

The L. N. W. R. company also became involved in the towns plans to build and finance a cottage hospital, largely through the influence of Mr Webb who pioneered the scheme. In 1894 they gave a plot of land on which to build the hospital, and again through Mr Webb's encouragement contributed £500 towards the Endowment Fund.[236]

When the extension to the Cottage Hospital was opened by Lord Stalbridge, Chairman of the L. N. W. R., in October 1909, the operating table had unfortunately not arrived and Lord Stalbridge commented that '... whatever department [of the L. N. W. R.] was at fault it was the only time the London and North Western Railway Company had failed in its duty towards the hospital.'[237]

However despite the comments of Lord Stalbridge the L. N. W. R. did contribute a great deal financially to the setting up of the Memorial Hospital apart from the gift of land and £500. A great deal of the money raising for the new hospital was carried out in the Works, but this solely concerned the men themselves, raising money in Bazaars and Fairs for their new hospital. The chief paternalistic concern of the L. N. W. R.

remained the provision of education for their employees and their families, and by 1901 seven of the twelve schools in Crewe had been built by the railway company and contained 59½% of the school population within the town.[238] In 1904 the Mechanics Institute was still supported by the company who apart from providing the building, paid for electric light, gas, coal and coke for heating, and general maintenance.[239] They also contributed half of the fees which were paid by apprentices from the works to help fund the work of the institute. In 1903 the total contribution of the L. N. W. R. to the Mechanics Institute equalled £1,360 11s 4d and five extra classrooms were built at a cost of £3,000, for which they also paid.[240]

By 1903 circumstances were changing and the community was no longer solely dependent on the railway company to provide schools. As they were in business first and foremost to run a railway company, the L. N. W. R. offered to sell to the Corporation the day schools in Bedford Street, and Edleston Road, and to lease the other company schools at a total of £700 per annum.[241]

The vast majority of the paternalism exhibited by the L. N. W. R. in Crewe was channelled into education via the Mechanics Institute, school buildings and the payment of apprentice fees and prizes offered to stimulate excellence in the field of engineering. The Parliamentary Return showing the charitable contributions made by the railway companies in 1907 shows the following distribution of money by the L. N. W. R.

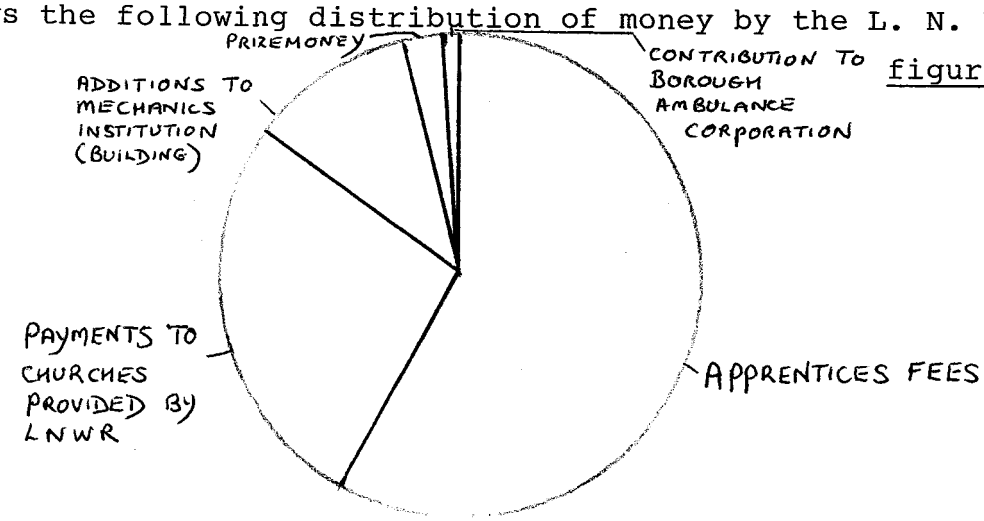

figure 44

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By 1910 the proportionate distribution of money was the same, the only change being that the L. N. W. R. made a contribution of £6 14s 0d to Acton School, Nantwich, and total contributions had increased by 30.5% since 1907. The company keenly supported first aid work hence the competitions staged between departments regarding knowledge of the subject, and the contribution to the borough ambulance corporation.

The commitment of the L. N. W. R. to education was emphasised in 1908 when the Board of Education told the company that grants for certain subjects taught by the Mechanics Institute were to be discontinued. The company considered this to be an 'arbitrary course' but they continued the classes and the directors of the L. N. W. R. made good the deficiency in funds.[243] Membership of the Mechanics Institute was declining at this time so revenue from subscriptions were down, the growth of social clubs in the town being blamed for the decline, together with the fact that the newsroom was not sufficient to attract new members, and a lounge and billiard room was required for smoking, games, and music.[244]

1911 was marred by short-time, lay-offs, and dismissals. In February short-time was described by the L. N. W. R. as an alternative to dismissals. In June the Boilermakers Trade Society approached the company for an increase in wages and while not all demands were met, the position of platers, riveters, and charge hands was improved. In August the general railway strike brought 2,000 Crewe men out on strike from the 17th until the 20th August. Trade Unionists were then balloted on whether or not to strike for 'recognition' in order to obtain better wages and conditions of employment, and an overwhelming vote

in favour of strike action was declared. Before a strike was resorted to deputations talked with Mr Bowen Cooke and numerous concessions, including a minimum wage of £1 for labourers was granted. Mr Bowen Cooke assured the men that the policy of the railway company was to forget the past and to get on with running the company. However during October 200 men were dismissed from Crewe Works, followed on 4th November by the publication of new rates of pay and reductions in hours of labour for a large number of men, especially those in lower grades. The cost of the concessions amounted to over £80,000 per annum for the L. N. W. R. On the 8th November further men were discharged from the works, followed by 13 more dismissals on the 15th of November. On the 19th November the workers voted against another strike but in favour of a round table conference.[245]

This year of industrial strife with the unions marked the end of an era, and the paternalistic attitude of the L. N. W. R. that had been so strong in regard to education began to be diluted. In November 1911 the L. N. W. R. announced that it was handing over the classes run by the Mechanics Institute to the local education authority. Mr Bowen Cooke, President of the Institution, assured everyone that:

> ... it must not for one moment be thought that the decision was arrived at in a moment of pique. The Directors of the Company honestly thought that in the best interests of everybody, in view of the attitude of the Board of Education the Company should throw in their lot with the town and county authorities, and hand over to them the arrangements of the classes.[246]

While the paternalism of the L. N. W. R. had its value in regard to education the adverse side of this was an imposition

of social control over members of the workforce that some found distasteful. By 1914 the main concern of the L. N. W. R. appeared to the the winding down of such benevolence.

F. W. Webb - Chief Mechanical Engineer of the L. N. W. R. and his support for charitable benevolence in Crewe

Mr Webb was Chief Mechanical Engineer from 1871-1903 and was elected Mayor of Crewe in 1886 and 1887 when he was actively involved in the patronage of many local charities. That he enjoyed great power and position locally is unquestioned, but he has been criticised for his role in the intimidation affair. What was Mr Webb's role in local charities - was he genuinely concerned for the workers or was he merely extending the social control of the company for which he worked? Whatever man had occupied his position within the company was bound to have attracted criticism, but what facts do remain about Mr Webb indicate that through his interest in local charities he did not only financially support, but actively suggested the creation of institutions that would help improve the lives of local individuals, and such organisations were badly needed. The fact that he positively identified deficiences in the local community was instrumental in the establishment of the Euston Coffee Tavern, the Cottage Hospital, and, after his death, Webbs Orphanage, and a nursing institution. No doubt the deference of the workers to the requirements of the company was uppermost in his mind, but to those who benefited from his bequests the fact that such institutions existed at all relied a great deal on the persistence and financial support of Mr Webb.

Mr Webb opened the Euston Coffee Tavern adjoining the

Mechanics Institute in 1880: a place where non alcoholic drinks and food could be bought, and meetings and functions held, all the profits went to local charities. For example in October 1892 the committee of the Euston Coffe Tavern, presided over by Mr Webb donated £200 to the Mechanics Institute, of which Mr Webb was also President.[247] The contribution of £200 annually to the Mechanics Institute was a common occurrence and in 1895, the year that the new Cottage Hospital opened in Crewe, and of which Mr Webb was a trustee and Chairman of the Governors, the Coffee Tavern made a gift of £300 to the hospital, followed in 1900 by another contribution of £200.[248] By 1910, after the death of Mr Webb, the Euston Coffee Tavern contributed all of its profits to the Crewe Cottage Hospital, being administered by a sub committee of the Cottage Hospital Management Committee.[249]

It was in 1885 when Mr Webb was opening the new reading room and coffee tavern attached to the Mechanics Institute in Goddard Street, that he mentioned his ambition of seeing an orphanage built in the town, and he assured everyone '... when the people of the town put their heads together to see if they could start an orphanage instead of being indebted to Derby or anywhere else, the money would be ready for them.'[250] Any orphans left unprovided for would he hoped be able to find employment in the railway company. However the people of Crewe did not initiate such a scheme and fund raising for orphans centred around providing treats for them. It was only in Mr Webb's Will that a large enough sum of money was left to finance the building of such an institution.

Mr Webb's concern to improve the provision of facilities for sick people was however shared by the community in general,

and marks a point where charitable fund raising entered a field where all the community, not just the poorest, would benefit. During the 1890s a determined effort to raise enough money to establish a hospital in Crewe was embarked upon so that the sick would not have to be admitted to the workhouse infirmary at Nantwich. The workhouse had provided the only hospital provision in the area, apart from the railway hospital which was only designed to cater for accidents that occurred to employees of the L. N. W. R. Through the influence of Mr Webb, the land for the hospital was obtained free of charge from the L. N. W. R. and he initiated the fund raising by giving a cheque for £1000 towards the cost of the building. Also in December 1895, four months after the opening of the hospital, Mr Webb donated another cheque for £400 which finally cleared off the debt on the building.[251] Similarly the contribution of £500 which the L. N. W. R. made towards the endowment fund of the hospital in 1896 was made through the influence of Mr Webb. His interest in the fate of the hospital did not end there, and in May 1903 he gave a cheque for £5,000 to go towards the Endowment Fund to help ensure the hospitals continued financial security.[252]

The gift to the hospital was the last charitable act before his own health deteriorated and he had to retire in 1903. As D. Owen has argued the bulk of capital resources for charitable work came from legacies and after Mr Webb's death in 1906 his will revealed that he had bequeathed £120,000 in various legacies, including £10,000 to provide a nursing institution for Crewe, £1,000 each to several hospitals and convalescent home to which Crewe patients were sent, one of which was the

Royal Albert Asylum in Lancaster.[253] £2,000 was given to Owen's College, Manchester, and a similar sum to Liverpool University for the founding of 'Webb's Scholarship' to further educational training in engineering. Out of the residue of the estate Webb's Orphanage was to be provided for Crewe.[254]

Webb's Orphanage was designed on the lines of the Chelsea Hospital in 4½ acres of ground, and was built to accomodate twenty boys and twenty girls between the ages of 6 and 12, specifically from families of L. N. W. R. employees. Boys could remain in the orphanage until they were 14, and girls until they were 15. The foundation stone of the building was laid on the 23rd October 1909 by Lord Stalbridge, Chairman of the L. N. W. R. and the building was formally opened on the 18th December, 1911 by G. Claughton, Chairman of the L. N. W. R., the estimated cost being approximately £40,000.[255] The building contained a dining hall, recreation and work rooms, laundry, bath rooms, Trustee room, and rooms for the staff. It was described as being full of every modern convenience and at the rear of the building was a fully equipped hospital with plenty of land available if any extensions were needed. Children were eligible for entrance to the orphanage if they lost one of their parents who was an L. N. W. R. employee, and it was not necessarily confined to those who had lost both their parents.[256]

The legacy of £10,000 which Mr Webb left for the establishment of a Nursing Institution was a project he had seen a need for some years previously, and the people of Crewe had started to raise money for such an institution. In 1897 the Mayoress of Crewe invited a number of ladies and Ministers to discuss the desirability of establishing a nursing institution for the

sick poor of the borough.[257] As a result the Crewe District Nursing Association was formed, district nursing having become one of the most practical and successful forms of philanthropy in England.[258] Concerts in the Town Hall were frequent and for which there was usually a good attendance, and ping-pong tournaments were also held with the object of assisting the funds of the Association.[259]

The final meeting of the Crewe Nursing Association took place in October 1908 as the establishment of the Webb Nursing Institution meant that there was no necessity for the local association to continue '... its beneficient work in the interests of the sick poor of the town.'[260]

A house was purchased in Heathfield Avenue for the Nursing Institute and two nurses were selected. £1,000 was donated by the L. N. W. R. to help finance its running costs.[261] That the institute nurses were kept busy can be seen from the report for July 1909. There had been 12 new cases, 9 convalescents, 1 hospital case, and 2 deaths. Altogether 351 visits had been paid , and a gift of copies of the Daily Graphic had been received for patients to read.[262] Indeed during May 1914 the Institute was still dealing with 350 visits a month.[263]

During his life Mr Webb had exercised powerful influence within the L. N. W. R. Company and had negotiated with them for gifts like the Queen's Park, opened during his year as Mayor, as well as gathering support for the new Memorial Hospital. Also throughout his working life in Crewe he identified deficiencies within the local community in relation to orphans and the sick. In the case of the orphanage he drew the attention of the people to the facts and the remedy that needed to be

adopted in order to rectify the situation. However it was left to Mr Webb's last will and testament to bring to fruition his twin concerns of caring for the orphans and sick of the town. Whatever his motives he was the town's most financially important patron.

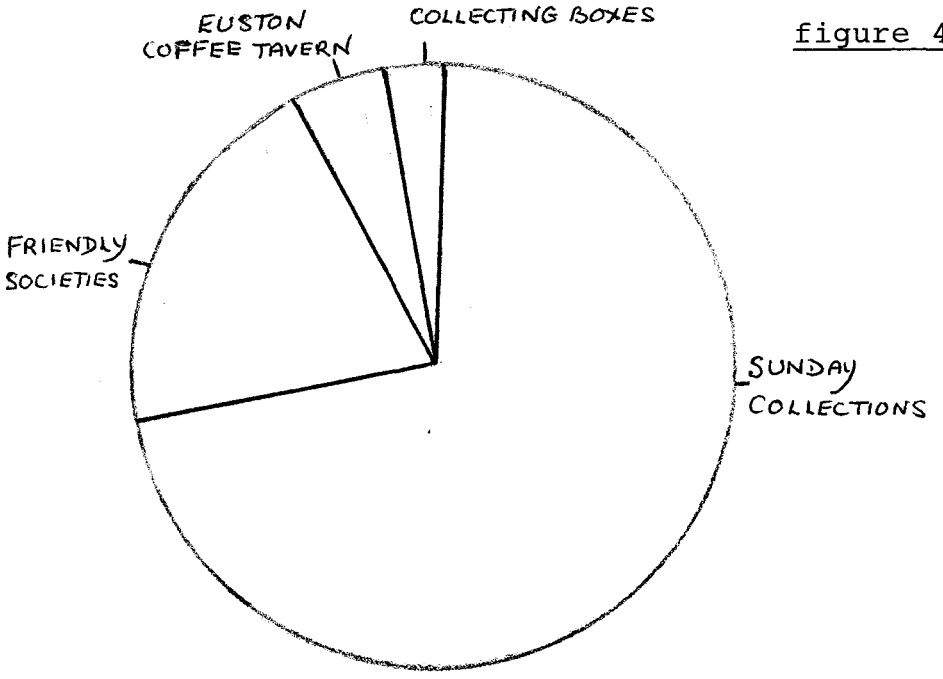
Charitable endeavour to help provide Hospital facilities for Crewe inhabitants

The provision of hospital facilities for the sick had always assumed great importance for the poor. The reason for this was that the only medical facilities available for them when they became ill was in the workhouse infirmary, with all the stigma and degradation that was attached to that institution. Charitable activities to help provide medical care were fervently supported by Friendly Societies and independent workers who, while taking a pride in self sufficiency and independence while in health and employment, did not wish to become dependent on the workhouse for medical aid when, and if, they fell ill.

In the period prior to the 1890s, before the idea of a cottage hospital in Crewe had been suggested, all charitable endeavour centred around raising money to subscribe to medical institutions where local people could receive treatment. The Crewe and District Hospital Sunday Fund was established for this purpose in 1878 and collections were made in churches and chapels workshops, and all public places. As D. Owen has pointed out until the end of the century the only significant venture in common financing was that connected with the Hospital Sunday and Saturday Funds, and for many decades the money from such funds was depended upon by hospital managers in order to keep their institutions running.[264] The Mayor was President and

Treasurer of the Crewe Fund, the ex-Mayor being the Vice-President together with all former Mayors, so influential local patronage was assured. The fund received small donations from the Euston Coffee Tavern, and from many of the Friendly Societies operating in the town together with contributions from the Mayor, from Sunday collections, and general collecting boxes distributed throughout the town. In 1885 a typical years contributions amounted to £108 15s 0d and emanated from:

figure 45



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By far the greatest contribution to the fund came from the Sunday collections, but in the 62 collecting boxes distributed throughout the town in 1885 the most that any one of them contained was 4s 0d. Indeed as P. Thane has emphasised a considerable amount was given to such Hospital Sunday Funds by those with little to spare, so when times were hard collections suffered.[266]

The hospitals that received the largest subscriptions from the fund were the Devonshire Hospital, Buxton, together with the Manchester Royal Infirmary, and the Manchester Eye Hospital

reflecting the demand in terms of the number of patients receiving treatment from these institutions. These institutions were followed by the Liverpool Royal Infirmary and Birmingham and Midland Eye Hospitals. Small contributions were also made to the Shropshire Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital, Rhyl Convalescent Institute for Men and Women, the Brompton Hospital for Consumption, and Chester General Hospital.

All sectors of the community contributed to the finances of the fund, and once again a variety of methods were used to raise money. A drawing-room entertainment in the Town Hall was organised by the United Methodist Free Church to boost funds,[267] and Hospital Sunday occupied a designated day in the local calender on which efforts to raise money were concentrated; in 1891 £121 2s 6d was given to medical institutions resulting from local collections.[268]

The contributions to such a fund obviously depended on the amount of surplus income that families could spare and in 1906 for example, the income of the fund was affected by depression and the Mayor had to make a special appeal as the fund for 1905 had proved insufficient to meet expenditure.[269] Perhaps the fact that Crewe had opened its own Cottage Hospital in 1895 and the charitable effort for this had to be sustained year after year in order to keep the hospital operational, meant that local people expected this institution to fulfil its needs and did not see the point of subscribing to institutions further afield. Despite this monetary deficiency a total of 98 patients were referred to various institutions by the fund in 1905, but this only represented 0.2% of the population which is perhaps an indicator as to the failing popularity of the fund.

The great charitable effort that united Crewe in the 1890s was the attempt to raise enough cash to build, equip, and run a cottage hospital. With Crewe's rapidly increasing population which had increased by 36.9% between 1871-1881 and by a further 34.4% between 1881-1891, a hospital was badly needed. As D. Owen has emphasised 'The latter half of the [nineteenth] century in fact, spawned hospitals in a lavish fashion.'[270]

A fund to raise money for the hospital was initiated by the contribution of £1,000 from Mr Webb, which was seconded by Henry Thomas Yates Thompson, director of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, who gave a similar sum. The land for the hospital was given free by the L. N. W. R. together with a strip of land donated by the Crewe Corporation, and with a gift of £500 from Alderman Martin Heath J.P. the fund was well under way.[271] The foundation stone of the hospital was laid on 28th June, 1894 by Mrs Henry Yates Thompson. Just thirteen months later, on the 7th August 1895 the hospital was opened by the Earl of Crewe, watched by several thousand people.

The Memorial Cottage Hospital consisted of three wards, named after Samuel Thompson, Francis Webb, and Martin Heath, 'the three' main benefactors of the hospital, together with a small ward for special cases. Henry Thompson and Francis Webb both furnished a ward in the most 'replete and modern manner' and it was Mr Webb's further donation of £400 together with £300 from the Euston Coffee Tavern, that enabled the building to be handed over to the Trustees free from debt.[272] Initially the staff of the hospital consisted of the Matron, one nurse, and one probationer, and during the first year of its existence 24 patients were treated at a cost of £706, an average of

£1 9s 0d per week.

The continued existence of the hospital was a matter that necessitated non-stop fund raising, and as D. Owen has emphasised many hospitals found themselves in 'perennial financial difficulties.'[273] The subscriptions of life and annual governors helped, together with collections in Churches and Chapels, but as early as 1895 it was stated that '... in order that the benificial working of the institute could continue, other sources of income were to be sought.'[274]

The General Manager of the L. N. W. R. presented a Challenge Cup for competition among local football clubs, which resulted in substantial sums being added to the Maintenance Account. The Earl of Crewe donated £100 and gave permission for a bazaar and fete to be held in his park, and with '... generous support from large numbers of influential persons both within the town and elsewhere, success is anticipated.'[275] In 1895 the annual expenses of running the hospital amounted to £600 and with anticipated sums from subscribers and collections amounting to £250 approximately £350 still had to be provided.

As D. Owen has emphasised 'Fortunate the organiser who could stock his head table with ... a member of the Royal Family. Snob appeal after all, was one of the more efficient handmaidens of good works.'[276] The first annual bazaar to help raise money for the endowment fund was opened by H. R. H. Princess Louise, and included leaping competitions, a military tournament with the Sixth Dragoon Guards, and band of the Coldstream Guards, fancy dress, a bicycle carnival, a haunted swing, and palmistry. The bazaar raised £2,657 which was not as much as expected.[277]

Apart from the annual bazaar other resourceful means of

raising funds were resorted to, for example Mr Gallienne, a 'well known poet' gave a lecture in the Town Hall[278] and the Crewe Orchestral Society gave concerts in aid of the Endowment Fund.[279] In 1897 the endowment fund amounted to £2553 15s 5d and attempts were made to increase the public's interest in the hospital.[280] The Friendly Societies were encouraged by the Mayor to hold a fete on behalf of the Hospital Fund and it was also decided to hold an annual fete, which would be concluded with a grand firework display, and in 1899 15,000 people attended producing a 'very satisfactory financial result.'[281] Benefit performances were given by the Lyceum Theatre together with 'cinematograph entertainments', all in an attempt to raise extra funds.[282]

In 1901 a fund was opened by the Mayor, Dr Wilson, in order to provide the cash to build a children's ward for the hospital as a permanent memorial to Queen Victoria. The fund raising events for this, as well as the day to day running of the hospital, never ceased with 'sacred concerts' being held in the Lyceum and the annual fete of 1901 raised £230 for the funds.[283] Also the children of Crewe were encouraged to add their subscriptions to the list in order to help pay for the new ward and '... no doubt every child will ever look upon this with pride and pleasure.' As F. K. Prochaska has emphasised the role children played in charitable activity was 'enormous'[284] and their financial contribution to fund raising must not be discounted. It was in November 1901 that the childrens ward was formally opened by Lady Annabel Crewe-Milnes watched by many adults and 3,000 school children.[285]

Financially the hospital was constantly at the mercy of

fund raising events, and its very existence relied upon their success. During 1901, 150 patients had been admitted to the hospital and the balance in hand at the end of the year was £148 7s 10d[286] and while this was a favourable balance, it was not such a large amount as to allow complacency. As a result concerts in aid of funds continued, linking entertainment with the knowledge that the proceeds were all going to a useful cause. The Aeolian Pierrot Troupe gave concerts to raise funds in the Town Hall, and the Cottage Hospital Football competition continued to be held, and as a result of the 1902-1903 season £205 was contributed to the funds of the hospital.[287]

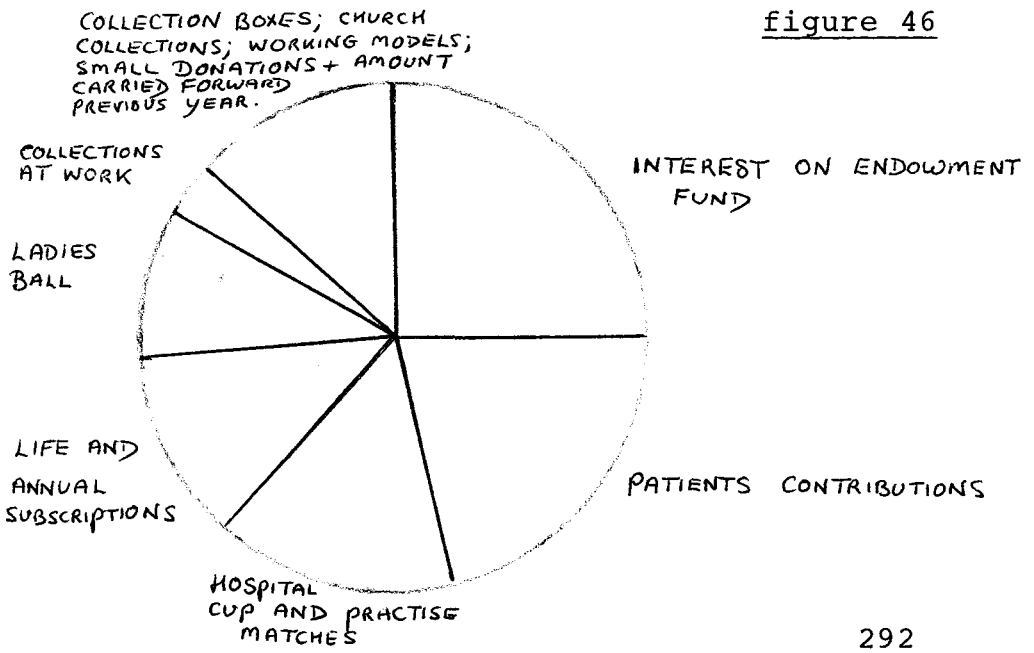
The gift by Mr Webb of £5,000 to the Endowment Fund in 1903 did mean that a little of the desperate year to year pressure for funds was eased as this sum was invested to produce an annual return. However fund raising events did continue such as a 'select' garden party and alfresco entertainment in August 1903, but as the endowment fund was now in a healthier position, the proceeds were divided between the Crewe Nursing Association and the cottage hospital.[288] The Butchers Association of the town also took an active interest in raising funds for the hospital and held a fancy dress ball in 1904 together with other social functions,[289] emphasising that all sections of the public were involved in fund raising.

The fact that annual fund raising events could not be relied upon to provide a stable source of income was exemplified by the football cup competition. From the 1903-1904 season the donation to the hospital amounted to £145, 29% less than in the previous year. However it was stressed that since the start of the competition, the hospital had benefited to the extent

of £800 from this source.[290]

Despite Mr Webb's large injection of cash into the endowment fund and constant fund raising, the cash reserves of the hospital were depleted because of depression, and for part of 1905 the hospital had to close one of the female wards.[291] With £150 from the football competition, and a ball organised by a group of ladies which raised £107, there was still a small debt of £1 2s 8d at the start of 1906. The receipts of the hospital for 1905 illustrate the varied sources of their income;

figure 46



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The desperate plight regarding money in 1905 reflected the fact that there had not been an annual fete and the Euston Coffee Tavern had not made its usual annual contribution, perhaps because Mr Webb no longer presided over the institution. However one encouraging sign in 1905 had been that workingmen's contributions had increased by 175% since 1904 to stand at £33 0s 0d which, in the middle of a depression in the town, was encouraging. Against a background of limited finance and funds so finely balanced that the loss of two regular subscribers meant a cut back in services, 1906 saw the continued closure of a

ward and further economies being made. As a result it was unanimously decided to resume the cottage hospital fete.[293]

Consequent upon the urgent need for cash for the hospital there was also a spate of fund raising events including Mr P. Collins, the famous showman, who brought his carnival to the town and gave a benefit night on behalf of the hospital which raised £31, and the Lyceum Theatre held a fund raising concert which contributed a further £15 18s 6d.[294] The revival of the fete in 1906 proved a success with a procession of over 60 sections, and entertainments in the Queens Park which 22,000 people attended, establishing a record for any similar event in Crewe, £600 was handed over to the maintenance account of the hospital as a result.[295]

In October 1906 a new football ground was opened for the purpose of holiday matches for the cottage hospital cup competition. It was presented by the directors of the L. N. W. R. company and provided much larger accommodation which it was hoped would help to raise further money for the hospital, as with patients own contributions, and the fete, the football competition was one of the larger money earners.[296]

The popularity of the annual fete continued to grow and in 1908 over 30,000 people attended the celebrations in the Queens Park, establishing another record. Total profits reached £671 6s 6½d and £550 was transferred to the hospital's current account.[297]

Increased demand on the facilities offered by the cottage hospital were such that a foundation stone was laid for a new wing in February 1909 which was opened on the 6th October 1909, a facility which had been '... sorely needed for some time...

[as the hospital] had been taxed to the utmost.'[298] However the fact remained that the finances of the hospital were precariously placed from one year to the next, and after the initial enthusiasm of several large bequests to the endowment fund, no new ones had been made between 1903-1909. The reality of the situation was that the survival of the institution depended largely on the success of the annual carnival, and if the weather was bad on the day, the whole affair produced very little cash, and hospital services had to be severely curtailed.

Between 1899-1907, the expenditure of the hospital had increased by 53% to reach £1209, the cost per patient having been £1 9s 0d per week in 1896; but this amount had been reduced to 14s 1d per head per week in 1908, which, Lord Stalbridge said, 'spoke volumes for [the] management.'[299] Between 1901-1911 population growth in Crewe had equalled 6.9%, while patient numbers had increased by 141% between 1899-1907 to stand at 317 per year. When the hospital had first opened in 1895, its estimated financial requirements had been £600, 41% of which had been covered by subscribers and collections, the remaining money to be raised by the committee. However by 1909 the financial demands of the hospital had increased way beyond initial targets. Increased costs and demand were rapidly outstretching the capacity of traditional charitable endeavour. This was especially worrying as the street collection made in 1909 was 20% lower than in 1908, but the money raised from gate receipts at the annual fete had increased by 70%, but once again this source of income very much depended on the weather on the day.[300] The amount being handed over to the hospital by the fund raising committee in 1909 showed an increase of approximately 9% compared

to 1908, and stood at £600, but the management committee still required around £800 to complete the cost of the new wing.[301] However between 1906 and 1909 £2200 had been raised for the hospital, which everyone felt was encouraging for the future.[302] The workmen were praised for their part in the procession with original and artistic costumes that cost a considerable sum to produce. The money for this had been collected among the men in the workshops, who had devoted a lot of time to produce such a 'brilliant result.' Without the interest of the working men they would hardly '... be in a position to hand over to the Cottage Hospital the large sum of £600.'[303] This fact also illustrates that the men of the town were actively involved in both the organisation, and participation in, charitable events. Women did not keep this as a 'sole preserve' as has frequently been found to be the case in many areas.

However out of all this enthusiasm came the cautionary note that while the Crewe Pageant was unique and visitors came from all parts of England to see it, while the number of visitors to the town amounted to 20,000 only 2711 had paid for admission to the park. The great majority of the people watched the procession which was free, and then went home 'without in any way assisting towards the financial success of the undertaking.[304]

In 1909 many of the workshop troupes, who had taken part in the Crewe Hospital Pageant, went to Wigan to participate in their first carnival to raise funds for the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary. This is a good example of one group of workers not just trying to raise money for themselves, but fellow workers who were fund raising for a similar cause in Lancashire,[305] once again illustrating the value of mutual aid, even among workers

from different towns.

Contributions from fund raising events continued to be unpredictable; the money raising from the hospital football cup competition fell by 32% between 1909 and 1910.[306] Emphasising the precarious financial footing on which the hospital continued to depend. Other fund raising events continued: flower shows, and sports events sponsored by the conservative association,[307] and with the aim of giving the public a chance to help towards the cost incurred by the various troupes in preparing for the hospital pageant, the procession was reenacted on the football ground.[308] Despite all this effort the profits handed over to the hospital from the annual carnival amounted to £500 in 1910, a decrease of 16½% on the previous years takings.[309]

The annual whist drive and dance for 600 people was held at the Town Hall in February 1911 as the continual round of fund raising went on undaunted. A carnival was held at the skating rink and the collection of money from local churches to mark King George V's coronation was divided between the fund for the Cottage Hospital and the Hospital Sunday Fund.[310]

In 1911, 35 troupes comprising over a thousand people, backed by the 'whole-hearted interest of the men of the works' went to Bradford just two weeks after the Crewe Fete, to assist in raising funds for the hospital fund there,[311] once again emphasising the element of mutual aid to fellow workers, and how leisure pursuits were continually bound up with fund raising. By the end of 1911 there was an overall decline of 15% in profits compared to the previous year, mainly because £75 had been granted to the troupes to assist with the cost of their costumes. However the pageant was regarded as a great success and it was

emphasised that since 1906 £3150 had been given to the funds of the hospital. Despite this fact the reality of the situation was that the capacity of the carnival, as the chief money earner for the hospital, was not great enough to sustain the institution, and small entertainments and concerts at various theatres in the town, although presenting an 'excellent programme', usually only raised about £25.[312]

In July 1912 two cots were presented to the hospital, subscribed for by the workmen employed in the Fitting Shop and the Boiler Shop, a new tradition whereby the men's money paid for an identifiable object in the hospital rather than just contributing to the general funds. It was also announced that since the hospital fete was inaugurated £1200 had been subscribed amongst the men in the works for costumes for the troupes, which helped to attract such large audiences to the events.[313]

It became a matter of keen competition within the works as to which workshop could raise the most money to aid the hospital, and fancy dress balls, carnivals, and concerts were held, by each department to obtain funds for their stalls at the Cottage Hospital bazaar, each shop having its own committee of men to organise events.[314] Once again the workmen were purloining the role usually dominated by women in the organisation and presentation of bazaars in order to raise money, but in Crewe the workmen made these events their own.

Between February 1913-1914 the expenditure of the Cottage Hospital amounted to £1650 whereas income only came to £1550, and the endowment fund badly needed increasing, just in case the annual fete was unsuccessful because of the weather. By 1914 there had been a 42½% increase in subscriptions received

from patients; a 4.7% increase in annual subscriptions; and an increase of five guineas in the subscription from the L. N. W. R.[315] The maintenance account of the Cottage Hospital exhausted all of its income in 1913-1914 and left an overdraft of £100 at the bank. The problem arose because the fete committee stipulated that a portion of the profits should be added to the endowment fund, in the hope of securing a permanent income and not just placed with the maintenance account for the day to day running of the institution. However the total income from the endowment fund in 1913 amounted to £323, which left £1227 to be found from other sources whose income tended to be unreliable and fluctuate from year to year.

The financing of the hospital was totally at the mercy of the weather; if the fete was a financial failure the hospital would be crippled, so an effort was made to augment the endowment fund, which led to a reduced income from the fete! The profits of the Euston Coffee Tavern, also fell by 41.6% between 1911-1912 and by a further 31.4% between 1912-1913, further emphasising the precariously unpredictable financial foundation on which the hospital depended.[316] Similarly the money received from the Hospital Cup competition fell by 63.6% between 1909-1913, due largely to the growth of other attractions in the town. In spite of this decline in income, patient costs had increased by 90.7% between 1909-1913, and by 1913 there had been an increase of 59% inpatients who then numbered 505, at an average cost of 14s 5d per week.[317] The point was made in the press in March 1914 that while the Cottage Hospital never refused a case, there were a good many people in the hospital who could afford to pay more than the minimum contribution of 2s 6d.

Private patients paid £1 10s 0d per week and it was stated that people should contribute according to their means and not be like one patient who received 7s 6d insurance benefit and only gave the hospital 2s 6d.

The other worrying note was that there had been a 46% decline in collections from the workshops between 1912-1913 and only two workshops contributed to the maintenance account and four to the endowment fund. Similarly in the first fete to boost the funds of the hospital 22 workshops had been represented. By 1913 only 14 shops maintained their interest in the pageant.[318]

The fund raising events for the hospital and many other local charities emphasises the strong link that existed between leisure activity and fund raising. As F. Prochaska has emphasised 'the social role of charity in the daily lives of ordinary people' was of great importance and a close relationship developed between performing a duty and participating in leisure pursuits such as concerts and bazaars, all of which motivated more philanthropy.[319] However the funding of the Cottage Hospital emphasised that just as the Poor Law had discovered the proper financing and administration of a hospital was very expensive, and in many ways, proved too much for local charitable endeavour to cope with year after year.

Finally the first World War affected the fate of the carnival in 1914, as 'the calling up of territorials, the dislocation of the train service, the cancelling of excursion tickets all told against the success of the carnival.[320] Only £160 was handed over to the hospital from the fete in 1914, and the numbers attending the function fell by 42% compared to 1913,

resulting in the hospital being £300 overdrawn at the bank.[321] The outbreak of war in 1914 merely realised the fears of many people and proved that it only took a freak occurrence to upset the precarious financial foundation on which the hospital was based.

The contribution of the Co-Operative Friendly Society to Charitable Endeavour and the welfare of its members in Crewe

The co-operative movement began in Crewe in 1845, the third society to be established in the country after the Stockport Great Moor Society set up in 1831, and the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers in 1844.[322] P. Thane has described the movement as a form of mutual aid with a 'wider working-class appeal', although it also largely excluded the poorest who could not afford the membership fee, and could not have credit or buy in small quantities from the stores.[323] What effect did this institution have on the way of life of the people of Crewe, especially in regard to helping to fend off poverty? After many of the first workers had moved to Crewe from Liverpool they discovered that while the L. N. W. R. had provided houses, schools, gas and water they had not provided shops, choosing to leave the problem of food supply to private enterprise, with the consequence that the workers were forced to pay very high prices. In the tradition of self help this reality led to the foundation of the Crewe Co-operative Industrial and Friendly Society, its object to provide groceries of a decent quality and at a fair price for its members. Indeed as Gosden has argued it is '... no exaggeration to see the increasing success of the co-operative stores as arising partly out of the growing appeal of self-help generally.'[324] Apart from fulfilling this aim the society also

established a tradition of helping not only its members but society generally in time of need. For example in 1862 at the start of the cotton famine, Mr Whittle, later Alderman and twice Mayor of Crewe, and the first Secretary of the Crewe Society said: '... that it was a time of great privation and patient endurance and of noble generosity. Our society distinguished itself in being the first to give a donation to alleviate the wants of the distressed.'[325] By 1864 the society was described as one of the most extensive and flourishing co-operative societies in the country,[326] and in 1869 a scheme was put forward by the society for members to have a club doctor, whose fees should be paid directly out of the dividend of each member. However the members held divided opinions on this matter, some believing that the scheme should be compulsory and others voluntary. As a result a special general meeting was held and two polls were held. The 'no's' had the majority, so the project was abandoned.

In 1872 the Crewe Society decided that an annual donation of £15 should be made to various hospitals, at the discretion of the committee. This grant was made out of the profits of the annual trip, as previously this money had gone to the newsroom and reading room fund, but as this had ceased to function by 1872, the support of hospitals seemed a worthy cause to patronise.

By 1871 co-operative members in Crewe represented 6.7% of the population, or 1 in every 15 people,[327] and the growth of the co-operative movement throughout the country had been dramatic. Between 1864 and 1874 the number of societies had increased by 105%, the number of members increasing by 175%

during the same period, while the amount of share capital increased five-fold.[328] Members of the working classes were attracted by the benefits of membership in terms of their every-day needs, and the fact that they were contributing to profits that they as members, would benefit from themselves, in the form of their dividend, which as Gosden has argued was an '... additional and tangible reward for prudence.'[329] In Cheshire co-operative members accounted for 12.9% of the population, or 1 in every 8 people in 1874.[330]

By 1877 the war between Russia and Turkey had begun, but ironically this was the cause of extra profits for the Crewe Society, because the sale of flour had increased the society's profits to such an extent that the dividend was increased. In their prosperous condition the Crewe Society made a special grant of £20 to the Crewe Indian Famine Relief Fund.

In consideration of the physical well being of their members, arrangements were made in 1883 for members to receive the attention of a dentist and a sick benefit club was formed in 1888 for its employees. Among other things the club organised the employee's annual picnic and each employee attending was granted 2s 6d by the Society.

Industrial unrest in Crewe in 1893, as well as other industrial areas, meant that the profits of the Society suffered as well as their members, large numbers of whom were out of work. Owing to the trade depression relief of £71 14s 8d was granted by the Society to deserving cases.

As W. H. Chaloner has pointed out, the society's efforts in regard to education in the early period of its history left a lot to be desired.[331] Only small donations were made to the

Mechanics' Institute, and these ceased after 1862, the prevailing mood being that the efforts of L. N. W. R. in this direction relieved the Crewe Society from duplicating this effort. The annual donation to the Mechanics Institute resumed again after 1887 together with support for the Heath Street Hall science classes. In 1892 the voluntary schools of the borough were declared free from what was termed 'school pence' and £15 was voted by the members of the Crewe Society to help them.[332] In 1896 20 free places on courses at the Borough Technical Institute were offered to the sons and daughters of members, and when the Crewe Secondary School opened in 1902, the society endowed two free places for the first three years.

During the 1890s the annual trips held by the co-op, the profits from which helped to finance charitable bequests, were no longer as popular due to the fact that cheap fares were enjoyed by employees and a large number left the town to go on their holidays. As a result a certain sum was taken from trading profits in order to make up the loss and keep the fund fluid.

In 1897, Diamond Jubilee year, a grant of £500 was made to relieve local distress caused by the lockout in the engineering trade, the collecting boxes were placed in the society's shops. On the death of Queen Victoria £10 was contributed towards the new children's ward that was added to the cottage hospital as a memorial to the Queen.[333]

The Co-Operative Friendly Society celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in Crewe in 1905 when it summed up its activities as follows:

> For Sixty years co-operators have been teaching one another the lessons of

> thrift, sobriety and self-denial: co-operators have been learning that the public house and the pawnshop are the foes of thrift ... and, wherever a working man has been wise enough to take full advantage of the store, he is not troubled with the nightmare of poverty and the workhouse.[334]

The society encouraged its members to save for a 'rainy-day' in case of sickness, accident, or misfortune, and considered its work to be more of encouraging a certain way of life, rather than just supplying its customers with good quality, reasonable priced food and household goods. As Gosden has pointed out the appeal of the co-ops lay partly in the way they acted as automatic saving banks - interest was added to shares together with dividends on purchases which meant members capital was increasing without any savings being made from his income.[335] Mr Miles Parkes, a former chairman of the society emphasised that the movement was teaching the working classes how by '... uniting their pence and their brains it was possible for them to work out for themselves their own social and industrial salvation.' He also estimated that between 1899 and 1909 the system of associated effort had saved for the working classes no less than £100,000,000.[336]

In 1911 the Crewe Co-operative Society made 279 recommendations for hospital treatment and convalescent care for members and £314 4s 6d was donated to charitable, educational and other worthy objects. By 1913 the number of hospital and convalescent home recommendations had increased by 11% to stand at 310 '... whom we hope have benefited at your hands' and charitable bequests amounted to £346 17s 8d an increase of 10.4% in two years.[337]

In 1870 approximately 4.9% of the population of Crewe were members of the Co-operative Friendly Society, or one in every 20 people. In just ten years the percentage had nearly doubled to 8.4% and similarly by 1891 the percentage had once again nearly doubled to reach 15.2% of the local population, or 1 in every 6 people. The co-operative ethos of supplying good quality food at a reasonable price together with an ever widening area of other household goods, attracted more members. The reality of obtaining a dividend on the total amount spent was an added attraction, especially to the poor, as they knew that by becoming a member they would be able to share in profits that they themselves had helped to accumulate. However as Thane and Gosden have argued, the very poor still purchased at lowest prices in ordinary shops '... since they were in no position to wait for a prospective dividend.' Just as the very poor could not afford the contributions to a Friendly Society, so the very poorest members of society were not members of the co-operative society 'since they lacked the means to do so.'[338]

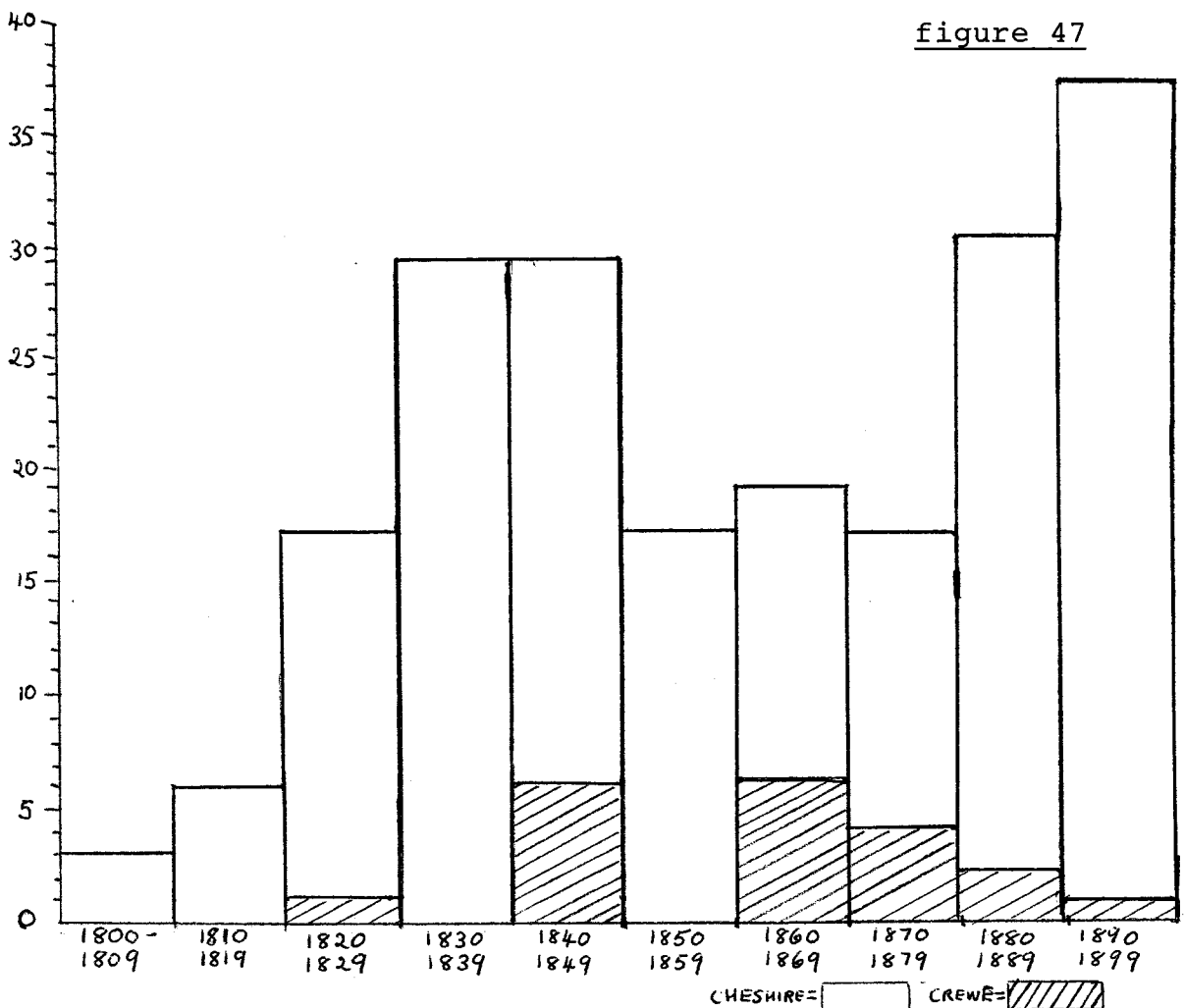
In Cheshire in 1899 approximately 5.3% of the county were co-operative members, in contrast to Crewe, who could boast a membership of 20.2% in 1901. Membership reached a peak of 11,000 in 1906-1907, thereafter falling, and then rallying at 10,855 in 1912, which represented 24% of the town or 1 in every 4 people.[339] So while the very poorest people could not afford to take advantage of the co-operative 'ethos' nearly one quarter of the town together with their families which would in fact double and treble the percentage, benefited from the services it had to offer.

The development of Friendly Societies and their role in helping workers in Crewe

The prime role of a Friendly Society was to protect its members and their families in time of need and greatest vulnerability, which might otherwise have caused redress to the workhouse: for example during sickness and death. However as M. Anderson has argued their role must not be over emphasised as benefit was limited and mainly covered sickness and death, keeping some members off the poor rates for only a short time.[340] How popular were such societies in Crewe and what part did they play in protecting their members from the Poor Law?

By 1900 in Cheshire there were 207 Friendly Societies, 3 of them having been established for one hundred years.[341] The rate of growth of societies within the county and in Crewe can be charted as follows:

figure 47



342

In Cheshire the growth of the Friendly Societies was steady although falling off somewhat during periods of depression from 1850-1870 when, as Gosden has pointed out, it would be hard enough for existing Friendly Societies to survive, let alone establish new ones.[343] The decade when most new Friendly Societies were established in England was the period between 1860-1869 when 966 new societies were formed, the rest of England not being so badly affected by the cotton famine as Lancashire and Cheshire, and so was able to sustain the growth of new societies, the experience of the North West of England no doubt encouraging their growth.

The development of Friendly Societies in Crewe coincided with periods of growth in the town, i.e. from 1840-1849 when the works and locomotive departments of the railway were being established. During the 1850s no new societies were established at a time of local depression in the railways, and many people left the town to find work elsewhere. During the 1860s, when six new societies were founded, the rail-mill at Crewe was one of the most up to date units in the country, and it was also during the 1860s that engine construction formerly carried out at Longsight was concentrated at Crewe where in future all locomotives were made. Also during the 1860s a Bessemer steel-making plant was opened at Crewe that greatly increased the number of workers employed by the L. N. W. R. and so stimulated the growth of societies.

By 1910 membership of Friendly Societies in Crewe had actually fallen by 14% since 1870 and just 11.9%, or 1 in every 8 people in Crewe were members, or 23.5% of the male population representing 1 in every 4 males. However the average funds

per member had increased to £6 12s 0d, a 50% increase since 1870 reflecting the increasingly sound financial basis on which they were operated.[344] In contrast in Cheshire 14.7% of the population or 1 in every 7 people were members of Friendly Societies, an increase of 63.3% since 1870.[345]

As Gosden has argued there were few large female Friendly Societies[346] as during the economic difficulties for a family a woman's subscription would be the first object of economy. However one of the first Friendly Society's to be recorded in Crewe was the Female Society of Crewe and Barthomley in 1822.[347] Indeed Crewe saw the consistent, albeit numerically small, interest of females in Friendly Societies with the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) Loyal Pride of the Valley Lodge establishing its own female lodge in 1900 which by 1910 had 38 members or 0.1% of the female population of Crewe.[348] Similarly female juvenile branches were set up in 1903 by the Independent Order of Oddfellows (National Independent) and in 1914 the Grand United Order of Oddfellows established a female branch for Crewe and District. Why female Friendly Societies were not more popular in Crewe reflects a trend that was echoed nationally too. Sir Edward Brabrook, former Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, maintained that in 1902 the societies for women were about the same in number as in 1850, and generally tended to be small and did not prosper. One reason for this was that actuaries discovered that women's sickness was very much more costly than men's and therefore '... it is more difficult to establish a women's society on a sound foundation. Accordingly the practical difficulties of the heavy contributions has prevented them to a large extent.[349] Women, who earned less

income than men, therefore found it very difficult to afford the larger contributions required and this fact stifled their growth.

In Crewe, during the 1840s lodges and tents of the main Friendly Societies were set up while the railway works were being established.[350] How well supported were the main Friendly Societies in Crewe? This was the all important question as it was on their financial strength that the members depended in time of crises. Oddfellowship always had a strong following within the town after the first lodge was established in 1842. One of the claims of the Oddfellows at this time was the establishment of a permanent fund for decayed and aged 'brethren' who, without the benefit of such a fund, would have been likely candidates for relief in the workhouse, and it was 'exciting considerable interest throughout the order.' As Gosden has argued the Manchester Unity grew rapidly between 1835-1845 during difficult years for the working class that inspired organisations for self-help and self-defence.[351]

The application of the new Poor Law was beginning to be felt for the first time and consequently feared by many, so increasing the attraction of Friendly Societies for those who could afford the subscriptions. This fund made Oddfellowship 'greatly superior' to the old system of benefit societies '... in its universality of sentiment, in relief, and sympathy.'[352]

The object of Friendly Societies to enable members to achieve collective or mutual protection in times of sickness and death was obviously an appealing one. Indeed as Gosden has argued after 1875 there was a growing feeling that Friendly Societies were becoming national mutual insurance organisations.[353]

Between 1870-1910 the membership of the three lodges of the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) increased by between 82.88%-606%[354] and their funds increased dramatically too, the Loyal Pride of the Valley Lodge experiencing an increase of 2200% in members funds between 1870-1910, which represented £8 per member in 1910.[355] Similarly the National Independent Order of Oddfellows represented by the Florence Nightingale Lodge, saw an increase in membership of 362% between 1870-1910, together with an increase of 1723% in funds which stood at £1659 in 1910 or £5 6s 0d per member. By 1910 the National Independent Order of Oddfellows had 992 members in the town, or 2.2% of the population, with funds of £3 14s 0d per member.[356]

The Grand Order of Modern Druids established the Loyal Britannia Lodge in 1844 and by 1875 had 297 members with funds of £1834 or £6 2s 0d per member. Together with other Druid Lodges, 3.5% of the Crewe population were members by 1870.[357] A district association for Crewe was established in 1864, which by 1910 had 2855 members, but funds of only 19s 6d per member, emphasising that the district association, while being numerically strong was not so financially sound as the Loyal Britannia Lodge.[358]

The Grand United Order of Oddfellows first established a lodge in Coppenhall in 1844 and by 1910 there were six lodges collectively representing 1059 members or 2.3% of Crewe's population with funds of £1 15s 6d per member.[359] The growth of the order between 1874-1910 ranged between 142%-172% in two of the biggest lodges, indicating the growing appeal of the society, but financially in terms of funds per member, was weaker than the other societies in the town.

The Ancient Order of Foresters first appeared in Crewe in 1846 when the Linton Dale Lodge was established by a gasfitter, who recorded the first minutes of the society in an 'ordinary penny copy book'. There were just 45 members in 1846 but by 1870 their membership had increased by 926% to stand at 462 members with funds of £5 per member, their average age in 1870 being 35. By 1910 their membership had actually decreased by 14½%, but their funds had increased by 29% to stand at £7 12s 0d per member.[360] By 1910 there were 1370 Foresters in Crewe, representing 3% of the population.[361]

The Independent Order of Rechabites, Star Tent, was established in Crewe in 1848. Between 1874-1910 membership increased by 293% to stand at 307 members or 0.68% of the population of Crewe. During this time their funds increased by 430% from £4 per member in 1874 to £5 8s 0d per member in 1910.[362]

The Locomotive Steam Engineers and Firemen's Friendly Society was established in Crewe in 1861, and by 1870 had 162 members and funds of £4 12s 0d per member. By 1874 its membership had increased by 19%, and its funds by 44% to stand at £5 12s 0d per member. However by 1898 membership had fallen by 10.8% and by 1910 membership stood at 83, a decline of 51% since 1898, but the society had funds of £17 6s 0d per member, so was financially very sound despite the drop in membership.[363]

A Friendly Society with a slightly different emphasis was the Sons of Temperance, Rose of Crewe Division, which was established in 1870. Its membership increased by 150% between 1870-1910 to reach 110 members, but its funds, decreased from £20 to just £2 in 1910. The role of this Friendly Society was one of education and the encouragement of its members to lead

a temperate life, and by so doing avoiding the trappings of poverty. This rather than the financial support of members during times of crisis, was the aim of the Sons of Temperance.[364]

Sick pay, together with death benefits, formed the two greatest items of financial expenditure to be met by the Friendly Societies. During the period 1855-1860 the Stranger's Home Lodge of the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) in Crewe paid out an average of 2 weeks 6 days sick pay per member. Between 1860-1865 membership of this lodge increased by 53.7% while the number of days sick pay increased by 135%, amounting to an average of 5 weeks 1 day per member, or an increase of 153%. Other lodges within the town were similarly hit by high levels of sickness. Between 1860-1865 the Britannia Lodge of Druids paid an average of 4 weeks 3 days sickness per member; the Court Prince of Peace, Ancient Order of Foresters paid an average of 1 week 3 days per member, and the Court Linton Dale, Ancient Order of Foresters paid an average of 4 weeks 2 days per member, the heaviest hit lodge being the Stranger's Home Lodge, the majority of whose members were involved in heavy indoor work. In contrast Court Prince of Peace paid the least in terms of sick pay but had a greater proportion of its members in light labour. The Stranger's Home Lodge continued to be a heavily burdened lodge in terms of sick pay: between 1865-1870 membership increased by 50% while the number of sick days claimed increased by 35.7% averaging 4 weeks 4 days per member, a decrease of 9.6% over the 1860-1865 period. However the Britannia Lodge of Druids saw an increase in the amount of sick pay claimed with an average of 5 weeks 4 days per member between 1865-1870, an increase of 22% per member since 1860-1865, again

another lodge with a high proportion of members involved in heavy indoor labour.

Between 1870-1875 both the Court Prince of Peace, Ancient Order of Foresters, and Stranger's Home Lodge, Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity), were paying members an average of 7 weeks 3 days and 6 weeks 4 days sickness benefit respectively, representing increases of 400% and 29% respectively since 1860-1865. Such increases explain why for example, when membership of the Stranger's Home Lodge increased by 10% between 1870 and 1874 the funds of the lodge increased by 45%, subscriptions having to be increased in order to cover the increasing amount of sickness amongst its members. As Gosden has argued the problem of setting a reasonable contribution that would enable the liabilities of the society to be met was a constant problem.[365]

The Perseverence Lodge of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows, paid an average of only 2 weeks 3 days sickness benefit per member between 1870-1875, far less than many other lodges in Crewe at this time. 59% of its members were employed in heavy outdoor labour, the only difference to many other Friendly Societies being the fact that their workers were employed outside.[366]

In 1870 13.9% of Crewe's population, 1 in every 7 people or 26.27% of the male population, 1 in every 4 men, were members of Friendly Societies and the average funds per member amounted to £4 8s 0d. In Cheshire as a whole 9% of the county were members of Friendly Societies or 1 in 11 of the population.[367] In the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners relating to Friendly Societies in 1874, Crewe was described as a creation of

'yesterday' and so '... had the advantage of starting fair with its Friendly Societies. The consequence is that they are well managed ... and decidedly above the average of the County.[368]

In Cheshire there was said to be '... a very large development of Friendly Societies'[369] even though in 1870 they were less extensively developed than in Crewe. If the returns showing the number of members in the various societies are compared for Cheshire and Crewe, the popularity of Friendly Society membership in Crewe becomes obvious:

figure 48

1870

Name of Society	Cheshire	Crewe
Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity)	2.6% 1 in every 38	3.3% 1 in every 30
Ancient Order of Foresters Cheshire one of the richest counties as far as Forestry concerned	3.5% 1 in every 28	4.1% 1 in every 24
Grand United Order of Oddfellows	0.9% 1 in every 111	0.9% 1 in every 111
Druids	0.7% 1 in every 142	3.4% 1 in every 28
National Independent Order of Oddfellows	0.02% 1 in every 5000	0.37% 1 in every 270
* only 143 members in Cheshire, 67 or 46% of these in Florence Nightingale Lodge, Crewe		
Rechabites	0.11% 1 in every 909	0.43% 1 in every 232
Sons of Temperence	0.02% 1 in every 5000	0.24% 1 in every 416

668 Returns sent out in Cheshire, only 50.4% returned.

In every instance the numbers of members in Crewe proportionately exceeded those existing in Cheshire, a county described as having a large development of Friendly Societies. So when the amount of 'in' and 'out' relief and private charity, together with relief during sickness and death provided by the Friendly Societies is taken into consideration, the scale of poverty in this area of South Cheshire is emphasised. Especially when the fact that relief in Nantwich Union often exceeded the average disbursed in Cheshire as a whole is considered.

One fact that was bemoaned nationally was the fact that juvenile Friendly Societies were not more successful, as here lay the key to introducing young people to the habit of regularly subscribing to a society which would be able to help them during sickness or the loss of the wage earner, and ultimately help them to avoid the workhouse. The Charity Organisation Society organised a movement to promote them during 1902 and when questioned for the Royal Commission of 1909, Sir Edward Brabrook stated that he believed 'more missionary zeal' was required by the adult societies in order to increase membership.[371]

> I suppose one reason why the juvenile societies do not increase as quickly as we should like them to do, is the general habit which is growing among the more careless of the working people of rather hoping that something will turn up from the government or the municipality or something else.[372]

What impact did Juvenile Societies have in Crewe? By 1891 the town had 19 Juvenile Friendly Societies and this increased to 23 in 1904.[373] When the Mayor and Mayoress of Crewe invited the juvenile members of Crewe Friendly Societies to tea in 1891 between 1400 and 1500 children attended, or 4.5% of the towns

population, indicating the prominence of the juvenile societies.[374] The profusion of juvenile societies in Crewe helped to disseminate the work of the Friendly Societies to a young and receptive audience whose families were members of societies and they themselves were more likely to remain members when they reached adulthood, having been brought up with the principles of thrift and independence.

The work of the Friendly Societies for the welfare of their members in Crewe was various, but they all had one aim in common: to remove the need for their members to rely on the poor law for help in time of need. The Crewe United Friendly Society represented the various lodges and courts of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows, Druids, Shepherds, and Foresters in Crewe, and comprised some 2000 members. It held an annual gala which first began in 1865, the proceeds from which, in 1874, helped to subscribe £70 to the Devonshire Hospital and Baths, Buxton, Manchester Eye Hospital, Birmingham Eye Hospital, Chester Infirmary, Crewe Mechanics Institute, and the widow and orphan funds of various courts. During 1874, 23 Friendly Society members attended the medical institutions subscribed to, who otherwise would have had to have been referred by the workhouse infirmary.[375] In 1875 10,000 people paid entrance fees to the Annual Gala and £105 was raised.[376]

The motto's adopted by the societies echoed their aim: 'We are combined to assist each other' was the motto of the Goss Green Lodge of Druids, and the Grand United Order of Oddfellows stated that 'hands united can root up necessitys nettle and plant in its place comforts and odourous flowers.'[377] However in November 1875 the Oddfellows severed their connection

with other Friendly Societies in Crewe who organised the annual gala on the grounds that the event had 'degenerated', but they kept up their own subscriptions to various hospitals and charities by holding a social tea and concert in the Town Hall.[378]

Friendly Societies in Crewe did have problems in their organisations as was seen to be the case in Nantwich, and the heavy calls of sickness and death payments were not easily met by all lodges. This emphasises the point made by J. H. Treble that although mutual assistance was an integral part of working class social life, especially during sickness, the benefit was on too small a scale to raise its recipients above the primary poverty line.[379] The graduated system of payments adopted by the Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) meant that younger members paid less and were consequently not sick so often. However Brother Skeldon, Grand Master of the Order of Druids who addressed an Oddfellows meeting in November 1875 spoke of the large amount of poverty that existed in the Manchester Unity and that sick claims were dishonoured 'again and again'. He emphasised the need for a central funeral fund from which all claims were paid, as the isolation of individual lodges resulted in a precarious position where sick claims were dishonoured. He also stressed that there was 'Nothing to boast about when the poor were left to take care of themselves while the rich [lodges] kept all they could get for their own exclusive use.'[380] The Order of Druids were in the same position as the Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) but were strong advocates of a central fund. There was monetary strength in the 'multitude' which the Hearts of Oak had illustrated, but this organisation, which paid sickness benefit on a district basis, lacked the 'social organisation'

attached to the other Friendly Societies.

The Grand Master of the Oddfellows replied to Brother Skeldon's criticisms by stating the impracticabilities of a central fund because districts differed as all trades were not equally healthy and contributions were not the same all over the county. He fervently denied that sick claims had been dishonoured, but Brother Skeldon again repeated his claim that sick claims had been denied at Crewe.[381]

Despite the problems that faced the Friendly Societies, so important was their work seen to be that at an Oddfellows Conference at Crewe in 1890, attended by delegates from Cheshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire, it was suggested that the objects and work of Friendly Societies and the 'statistics of life and death' should be brought before the scholars in Elementary Schools '... so that they might appreciate the advantage of becoming connected with some such society.'[382]

What was the attitude of the local Friendly Societies towards the introduction of state benefits for the old and sick? The provision of old age pensions affected Friendly Societies in that as their members got older, many of them had found it impossible to sustain themselves, being forced to fall back on the workhouse, after having led an otherwise independent life. Such government legislation would, however relieve many Friendly Societies of the heavy burden of virtually continuous sick pay for older members, which had resulted in many societies recording deficiencies in funds. However the societies were also warned that, as Gosden has argued, they would be in competition with the government for the savings of working men who would not be able to afford to contribute to a pension scheme and

pay Friendly Society membership.[383] These facts together with the fear of government interference in the affairs of Friendly Societies led to doubts about the virtue of state pensions but at a conference of the main Friendly Societies in Crewe in 1896 a resolution was unanimously passed that it was '... necessary and desirable for the State to provide pensions for the aged members of Friendly Societies' and that Societies themeslves would distribute the money, without any need for interference with their internal government, a right jealously guarded by the Societies.[384] Feeling was so strong over this matter that in April 1896 there was a demonstration by the various Friendly Societies of Crewe in favour of the provision of state old age pensions for aged members.[385] Financial problems were, Gosden argues, influential in shifting the balance in favour of the Friendly Societies supporting the introduction of state pensions.[386]

However not all Societies shared this eagerness for the state to become involved in the granting of pensions, and in 1906 the Grand Master of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows opposed appealing to the state for assistance regarding old age pensions and expressed the hope that '... the time was within measurable distance when they would be able to develop such a scheme within their own organisation.' There was he said, 'no hope for them' if they were going to wait for Parliament to help them '... for they were as far off getting state aid now as they were twenty-five years ago.'[387] This attitude reflects the independent spirit that had always been fostered by the Friendly Societies in that they encouraged their members to plan for the future and mutually help one another in time of need, shunning reliance on the poor law. State pensions were

seen by some to be a form of maintenance that with prudent planning would not be needed. As Gosden has emphasised political and social changes in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century tended to make the Friendly Societies movement appear as a vested interest defending itself against change that had involved the state promoting social welfare.[388]

Opinion among Society members was, however, divided on this issue as many felt that old age was not a sign of 'weakness of character' and that the state ought to help maintain the old who could no longer fend for themselves. This was preferable to an independent man, who had been a Friendly Society member all his life, being forced to receive relief in old age in the workhouse. The high percentage of aged people in the workhouse and in receipt of out-relief bore witness to the reality of this situation. However the real stumbling block to the provision of old age pensions by the Friendly Societies lay in the fact that this would mean increased subscriptions, and for some members the cost of contributing towards sickness and death benefit was as much as they could afford. The discharge of old men from Crewe Works in December 1906 led to renewed calls from the Druids for an old age pension scheme to be implemented to avoid hardship amongst people who had worked hard all their working lives.[389]

On the 1st January 1909, there were 'feelings of delight and excitement ... and feverish anticipation' by 400 'industrial veterans and ancient dames' in Crewe, when the first weeks pension was distributed, promp attendance meaning that by noon everyone had received their allowance.[390] Poverty caused by old age for those below the age of seventy still remained for

the Friendly Societies, charities and individual families to deal with.

Apart from old age pensions being introduced by the State and the mixed reception this received from the Friendly Societies, the government proposals regarding compulsory unemployment, sickness, and invalidity insurance was greeted with enthusiasm by the Rechabites, as unemployment assurance would enable unemployed members to keep up their Friendly Society membership. 'Cordial support' was promised to any scheme '... which while not hindering Friendly Societies will help those ineligible for their membership.'[391] However the Rechabites, as well as the other Friendly Societies, did express the hope that the penalising of thrift in the Old Age Pension Act, by counting Friendly Society benefit as income, would be removed.

The Ancient Order of Foresters were, however, opposed to any scheme of compulsory state insurance against sickness for people who were eligible for membership in 'voluntary thrift agencies'.[392] One delegate from Leeds at the Society's Annual Conference in Glasgow stated that he did not think the government should have state insurance for the weak: '... until all these men who were capable of entering into a Friendly Society did so, Parliament had no right to tax the men connected with Friendly Societies.'[393]

Locally not everyone was in favour of the new Insurance Act that would ensure support for people during sickness, and so avoid such a heavy reliance on the Poor Law during ill health. A league was formed in Crewe which pledged not to put the Insurance Act into operation, comprising farmers, local employers and employees, being headed by Sir Delves Broughton.[394]

In September 1912 local medical men connected with the Friendly Societies handed in their resignations on account of the Insurance Act.[395]

While the role of, and need for, Friendly Societies was changing in the period prior to 1914, fund raising continued to form, as it had done in the past, just as important a part in the existence of Friendly Societies as it did in the world of private charity. Subscriptions alone were rarely sufficient to fulfill the heavy burden of sickness benefit, death grants and the support of widows and orphans. Concerts were given by the Druids of the town when '... the opportunity was taken to present ... an injured brother, a sum of £40 and on another occasion £25 was given to a disabled member.[396] Close links were always maintained between the Friendly Societies, the Mayor of the town and the charities he supported for example the funding of the Crewe Memorial Cottage Hospital, through the support of which members of the societies would ultimately benefit. The Mayor frequently entertained the officers of the various Friendly Societies to an official entertainment in the Town Hall.[397] The Order of Druids made the Mayor (Rev. Bidlake,) and several Councillors honorary members of the Society in 1909, followed in 1910 by the Strangers Home Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows who similarly enrolled the Mayor as an honorary member. When Councillor Wooldridge was elected Mayor in 1909, he was already a long standing member of the Court 'Hand of Friendship' of the Ancient Order of Foresters and so the link between the Mayor, charitable endeavour, and Friendly Society was reinforced.[398] The fact that many Friendly Society members also held positions of responsibility in the community

that involved them directly with the problem of charitable endeavour and the poor was exemplified by such people as Councillor Froggatt J.P. who had worked in Crewe Works as a foreman, was Mayor of Crewe in 1908-1909, and was a member of Nantwich Board of Guardians for 14 years.[399]

The changes introduced in government legislation in 1908 meant that the role of Friendly Societies was affected in that insurance provision that had previously been provided by them for the thrifty, became available for everyone, which many members saw as threatening their position. As P. H. J. H. Gosden has emphasised it was not only the new government legislation that changed the character of Friendly Societies in the twentieth century, but the shortening of the working week, annual holidays, and better recreation and social activities gradually reduced the importance of Societies.[400] The fact that membership was not increasing as steadily as might have been expected was witnessed by the fact that the Crewe and Nantwich District of the Independent Order of Oddfellows spoke of increased members in rural lodges, but there was '... plenty of room for improvement so far as Crewe Lodges were concerned.'[401] Similarly musical evenings were suggested in order to attract younger people to the otherwise 'dull meetings'.[402] The maintenance of a steady flow of subscriptions was essential if Societies were to survive, which is why a membership drive was embarked upon in 1909 when their very existence was put in jeopardy by the new government legislation. As Gosden has argued Friendly Societies, and other self-help organisations '... ceased to be the various means by which that portion of the population which was 'within the risk of pauperism' endeavoured to escape from it.'[403]

Some regarded the government insurance and pension legislation as a 'levelling' between the thriftless and the prudent, but it did mean that relief other than from the Poor Law was now possible for a greater proportion of the population.

Other Societies established by workers and the L. N. W. R. in order to mutually insure against misfortune

Benefit societies provided in part by the employer promoted stability in the workforce as well as security for the insured because as P. Thane has argued 'workers were reluctant to leave jobs which provided benefits unobtainable elsewhere.'[404] How widespread were such societies in Crewe?

The L. N. W. R. Mutual Insurance Society covered all railway workers who subscribed to the fund, and operated over the whole L. N. W. R. region, Crewe having two branches, one in the Running Department established in 1868, and one in the Works which was set up in 1880. The Society financially assisted workers and their families if they received injuries at work that meant loss of earnings, permanent disability, or death, which would otherwise have meant recourse to the Poor Law Authorities for financial assistance. By 1884 the Works Mutual Insurance Society had a balance in hand for ordinary purposes that was more than double the amount they started with, without any increase in the number of 'calls' made upon members. From the people injured in 1883, fifty continued to receive relief from the fund in 1884. One man who had lost his sight as a result of an accident received a second class permanent disability allowance of £80. During 1883 460 men received injuries and 11,138 days of temporary disablement pay were granted. Typical payments granted in 1884 included £40

for a broken thigh, and an allowance of £100 to a widow for the accidental death of her husband. The widow of a shunter received a death allowance of £80.[405]

As P. H. J. H. Gosden has pointed out railwaymen were a minority group because ordinary insurance societies regarded them as engaged in 'dangerous employment' due to the variety and frequency with which serious, and often fatal accidents occurred resulting from heavy machinery.[406] Many firms had special tables of premiums, whereby contributions could be as much as 40% or 50% higher than in other professions, hence the development by the L. N. W. R. of their own societies. By 1885 membership of the L. N. W. R. Society had increased to 8000 and during 1884 87 claims had been made, of which 72% had died from natural causes, 14% had had fatal accidents, 10% had been permanently disabled; and 4% had been off sick for one year. 52% of the cost of the claims were 'met' by the society and 48% by the L. N. W. R., as Gosden has argued, which the company saw as a relief from the burden of maintaining employees and their families totally themselves.[407] It was in 1889 that Crewe Works Pension Fund was dissolved and £1,492 2s 10d, the balance left over after all the claims had been paid, was passed over to the Works Mutual Insurance Society at Crewe, and £1,824 0s 11d was handed over to the Running Departments Mutual Insurance Society. In total £28,064 had been returned to members of the Pension Fund and £8,944 to the L. N. W. R. which represented the amount that they had contributed to the scheme. £6,000 was distributed amongst the aged men's division. Between 1885-1889 the expenditure of the Works Mutual Insurance Society had increased by 30.9%[408] and by 1890 50% of payments made by the Society were

in respect of temporary disablement benefits, and permanent disablement amounting to 6% of claims. Accidental death accounted for 12% and natural death 29%. By far the heaviest financial burden that the Society had to bear was in respect of temporary disablement. Just as the Friendly Societies were burdened by the high number of men with temporary sickness. The precarious nature of working in the railway works made the insurance fund an important source of livelihood for many, without which whole families might have had to resort to the Guardians.[409]

By 1891 membership of the Mutual Insurance Society (Running Department) stood at 9187 an increase of 3.95% since 1890, and by 1895 a further increase of 10.8% had occurred when membership reached 10,182.[410] The society was gaining in strength every year, so that in 1895 Mr Webb expressed the earnest hope '... that nothing would be done by the Legislative to interfere with their Mutual Insurance Societies' reinforcing a spirit of independence amongst workers, that was so prevalent in the Friendly Societies.[411]

Membership of the L. N. W. R. Mutual Insurance Society (Running Department) continued to grow: by 1896 it had 10,262 members with disbursements for sickness, accidents and death of 14s 0d per member.[412] By 1902 membership had increased by 10% to stand at 11,300. The upward trend in membership continued until 1906 when there were 11,800 members, an increase of 2.6% since 1902. By 1909 however, membership had fallen by 1.6% and the decline continued so that by 1911 there were 11,396 members. The decline in membership coincided with government legislation to help the old and the fact that during 1911 17 calls were

made on its members, raising in total £6,854 6s 4d which may have discouraged people from renewing their subscriptions if finances were stretched. However during 1910 180 people including the old with defective eyesight and hearing, the sick, and permanently disabled, together with death claims, had been dealt with, amounting to £5,991 5s 0d or approximately £33 4s 0d per person. Temporary disablement allowances only represented 2% of that spent on the old, sick, permanently disabled, and death grants.[413]

By 1913 calls were made during the year on members raising a total of £8,234. The number of people receiving benefits increased by 36.6% between 1910-1913, while expenditure had increased by 28.9%. Temporary disablement payments still only formed 2.6% of that paid to the old, sick, disabled, and bereaved, but membership of the society had increased, due largely to improved trade, to stand at 12,365, an increase of 8.5% since 1911.[414]

There were also other funds run by L. N. W. R. workers in an attempt to collectively protect themselves in case illness prevented them from earning a living for themselves and their families. The Infectious Diseases Relief Fund had two branches one in Crewe Works, which opened in February each year to enroll new members, and one in the Steel Works, which enrolled new members in March.[415] There was also a L. N. W. R. Servants Hospital Fund established in 1877, that helped members meet the costs of specialised hospital treatment. By 1908 there were 150 branches throughout the network and 13,000 members, 126 hospitals and Convalescent Homes were subscribed to by the fund in England. Ireland, and Wales.[416] By 1914 the Hospital Fund had

seen a substantial increase in subscriptions and membership, and between 1908-1914 29 more branches were established, making a total of 179 throughout the network.[417] 713 indoor recommendations were made during 1914, together with 1,685 outdoor cases. In terms of expenditure in 1914, 34% of their income was spent on annual subscriptions to various hospitals and 59% went on to purchase additional recommendations and maintaining the wives and families of members while they were at convalescent homes. Once again fund raising was needed in order to maintain healthy finances, and a model of the 'Diamond Jubilee' at Crewe Station raised £22 5s 3d for the fund in 1914.[418]

Sick Benefit Societies were also operated in the Railway Works as another means of financially providing for periods which would otherwise have meant severe hardship. For example the crewe South Sheds Sick and Benefit Society 'met when occasion requires' at the Albion Hotel.[419] Also when presentations were made to officers of the society in recognition of valuable service, practicality was not forgotten. For example a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles in a silver case was given to the assistant foreman of No 2 Erecting Shop by members of the Sick Benefit Society in 1903.[420]

The Crewe Works Labourers Benevolent Fund was also set up to help families who were suffering financial hardship and the money was distributed through the various workshops in the works. During 1905 a total of 80 families were helped, which included 111 children, each family receiving an average of 17s 6d each.[421]

Another organisation aimed at caring for the well being of its members was the L. N. W. R. Provident Society, who, for example, in 1908, paid for the maintenance of a lunatic in

Nantwich Workhouse.[422] As Gosden has argued provident societies were the instrument of widespread material benefit to the industrial classes[423] but fund raising also formed an important part in the L. N. W. R. Societies when the mens contributions could not hope to provide, for example, a convalescent home for railwaymen at Rhyl, and consequently concerts were held to try to raise enough cash for the home.[424]

By 1914 the emphasis was on the provision of a decent pension as it had been recognised that old age marked the onset of a period in people's lives when, through no defect of character, it was all too easy to fall into the poverty trap and be forced to call on the Local Guardians for help. The government had been forced to recognise this need by the fact that the workhouses were increasingly burdened with the old and out-relief was inflated by the fact that it was supporting so many aged people. The workers themselves had sought a partial solution to the problem in trying to mutually combine to financially fend off recourse to the Guardians during sickness, accidents and bereavement, and the L. N. W. R. company had encouraged this by financially contributing to their pension funds and insurance societies. However not everyone could afford the contributions every year and while 11.9% of Crewe workers were members of Friendly Societies in 1910, many more were still reliant on charity or the Guardians in order to survive during periods of crisis such as sickness, bereavement, and depression. As P. Thane has emphasised while the Poor Law had been most effective in forcing all those who could to be self-helping 'It had not succeeded in eliminating their poverty.'[425]

The role played by Churches in charitable endeavour and the 'prevention' of poverty in Crewe

The Church or Chapel was a focal point within the community and as F. M. L. Thompson has argued unsystematised charitable works connected with the Church provided an 'apparatus of social services.'[426] How extensive was this form of relief in Crewe and what form did it take? The clergy and congregations of the Churches knew of the poor in their area and dispensed small amounts to help them during difficult periods. As P. Thane has argued Evangelical Anglians and Nonconformists realised that to save souls it was necessary first to remove the poverty which so consumed lives that the poor had no time for God.[427] The involvement of the Church with the poor of the Parish took various form. St. Paul's Church was responsible for dispensing the Beech bequest mentioned earlier which from 1904 onwards provided £4 8s 4d worth of coal each year to the deserving poor, usually forty or fifty families receiving the coal.[428] Christ Church, built by the L. N. W. R. company in 1845 for its workers gave £3 17s 9½d to the sick and needy in 1894, and St. John's Mission Room, established prior to a Church being built on the site, contributed 10s 2½d during the same year. Six bed rests were needed at a cost of 10s 6d each for the sick of the Parish and Christ Church funds and donations were sought to help purchase them.[429]

The Churches and Chapels of all denominations helped raise money to entertain the poor both old and young, at various times of the year. A 'new departure in the work of sympathy and interest in the well being of different classes of the community' was marked by the introduction of the Family Helpers' Union, and

meetings were held at various factories in the town[430]

Christmas offertories at Christ Church were entirely given to the sick and poor of the parish, and the Churches tried to instill into the congregation habits of thrift that would help them to avoid the ravages of poverty. For example St. Barnabas' Church organised a clothing club on Mondays when sums from 1d upwards could be deposited, and a bonus was given on cards over 5s 0d. The Church also organised a Provident Savings Bank on Fridays when sums from 1d upwards could be deposited and interest was given on all sums over 10s 0d at a rate of 2½%. Both of these clubs encouraged the poor to save for things that they would otherwise not be able to afford, and the added incentive of bonuses and interest encouraged the habit of saving.[431] As Gosden has emphasised thrift was the symbol and instrument of independence and liberty, and such societies were seen as providing a hedge against poverty.[432]

Another charitable idea began during Easter 1910 when St. John's Church in Crewe decided to have an 'egg service' and between three and four hundred eggs were brought to Church, which after the service were distributed among the sick poor.[433]

Band of Hope, Temperence Societies and Mutual Improvement Societies were also founded by many Churches in the town, again in an effort to guide their congregations away from a lifestyle that too easily lent itself to the onset of poverty. The Church saw itself fulfilling a preventive role in this context, and was not merely content to just give money to help placate the problem once the damage had been done. However it must be stressed that while drink was one cause of poverty many families became poor through a variety of other factors, such as

sickness, bereavement, and unemployment, but the groups organised by the Church were primarily aimed at establishing new lifestyles based around temperance, prudence, and thriftiness. By 1890 there were 12 Bands of Hope and Temperance Missions in Crewe, and between 1890-1901 this figure doubled and a District Band of Hope was established in 1897.[434]

The L. N. W. R. Company also established a Temperance Society and encouraged temperance among its workforce, not only in order to prevent poverty but also because work on the railway was both hot, which encouraged drinking, and very dangerous. Too much drink could lead to personal accidents as well as injury to a large number of people. In 1909 the Branch was said to be increasing its numbers so rapidly that a second billiard room had to be provided and they were '... guiding the rising generation into paths to make them better men.[435]

The link between the Bands of Hope and Friendly Society movement was evident from the fact that both groups were working men and women who wanted to help themselves. For example the Junior Rechabites urged their members to '... put their theoretical knowledge of temperance and hygiene into practice, once and for all pledging themselves against alcoholic drink.'[436] The Rechabite system of transferring juvenile members to adult branches was, they considered, a most important factor in regard to permanent temperance reform. Bands of Hope on the other hand worked very differently and the Rechabites 'deplored' the fact that '... too often its restraints [of the Band of Hope] were in adolescence thrown off by both boys and girls.[437] As a solution to this problem, and also to increase membership of the juvenile Rechabites, the High Deputy Ruler of the Rechabites declared

at their 43rd Conference at Birmingham, that if any Band of Hope was willing to start a juvenile Rechabite tent inside their Band of Hope '... they might receive from the Rechabite order the same terms as to both benefit and management allowances as were given to the juvenile branches.[438] Such branches were to be in active and close association with an adult branch 'or their object would not be attained' and an agreement was reached at the conference.

Crewe Men's Own Brotherhood

The inaugural meeting of the Brotherhood movement in Crewe took place in November 1910 with an address being given by the Rev. C. J. Barry on the subject of 'true manliness', and the group was started with the financial assistance of an anonymous gentleman.[439] Initially 670 were enrolled and the object of the group was to 'bridge a gulf which had become wider and wider between the men of the industrial world and their Churches.'[440] Meetings were held in Hightown Congregational Church every Sunday afternoon and were 'non-political, non-partisan, no class distinction. Christian-Democratic-Progressive.'[441]

What role did such a group play in helping the poor of the town? By February 1911 the Brotherhood numbered 1000, and by March membership had reached 1300 or 5.7% of the male population of the town.[442] One positive way in which the Brotherhood movement helped the poor of the town occurred in 1914 when for the first time for many years the Nantwich Guardians decided not to grant 1s 0d extra per adult outdoor pauper, and 6d per child, at Christmas because of the distressed state of agriculture, the poor price of cheese '... and the enormous demands made upon their purses from all quarters.'[443] While sympathy was

expressed for the widows and children the guardians emphasised resources must be conserved as much as possible and that they had to look '... after the distress caused by their poor friends who were laying down their lives on the fields of battle.'[444]

The cost of providing the extra outdoor relief for 685 adult outdoor paupers and 268 children was £27 15s 0d or $\frac{5}{8}$ths of a penny in the £. The following week a letter appeared in the local press declaring that the Crewe Men's Own Brotherhood Council had decided to give the Nantwich Guardians the sum of £27 15s 0d in order that the extra Christmas relief could be provided, and they expressed deep regret that:

> ...the Guardians should have acted in such an ungenerous manner toward the recipients of outdoor relief and especially to their children and we are confident that such an action is against the wishes of the electors.[445]

The Brotherhood added the proviso that if the guardians were not willing to accept their cheque then if they were given the names of those entitled to participate they would distribute the money themselves. Great arguements erupted at the next meeting of the Board of Guardians in respect of the gift from the Brotherhood, which was not accepted and the names of the people in receipt of out-relief were given to the Brotherhood so that they could distribute the money themselves. Several of the guardians argued that it was their job to administer relief and not to make gifts, and that their only obligation to provide Christmas fare was to those in the workhouse. Other guardians argued that all other Boards in England gave extra relief to those in receipt of out-door relief, while others maintained it was a matter of principle and had nothing to do with whether

they '... desired good cheer be afforded to recipients of out-relief at Christmas but whether charitable gifts should be paid out of public funds.'[446] Accordingly the Brotherhood unanimously decided that they should undertake the distribution of the money themselves.[447]

The response of Crewe people to requests for monetary aid for National and International appeals

Apart from supporting local charities to help residents fend off poverty, how motivated were Crewe people to support fund raising for more 'distant' causes? Founded by Lord Crewe in March 1896 the Lifeboat Saturday Movement always excited 'much public interest', and in September 1896 a procession of cyclists, harriers, and firemen accompanied a mounted lifeboat and small engine lent by the railway company through the streets of Crewe, and the Earl of Crewe opened his park to help raise money for the institution.[448] The first Lifeboat Saturday was marred by wet weather, the bain of so much charitable fund raising, but £75 was raised, The Earl of Crewe was the patron of the Lifeboat Saturday Fund, the Mayor was the President, the Mayoress was the President of the Ladies Committee, and executive committee being composed of Councillors, Vicars, and prominent business people of the town. The only year before the outbreak of the first World War in which Lifeboat Saturday was not held was in 1900, due to the fact that there was a large number of appeals being made at that time on account of the South African War.[449] Nantwich similarly held a cycle parade and floral carnival to aid the funds of the National Lifeboat Institution and usually several sections from Crewe took part in their demonstration.[450]

Apart from street collections, a parade and demonstrations in Crewe Hall Park, grand concerts by local artistes were held in order to help raise money for the fund, together with garden parties and cafe chantant, whist drives, and dances.[451] Sacred concerts were held at the Lyceum Theatre, which in 1905 was loaned for the occasion by the Mayor, Councillor Taylor, who owned the building, and Crewe Orchestral Society and the Aeolian Quartette Party performed.[452]

During the trade depression in Crewe in 1906 the Ladies Committee decided not to make any special effort for Lifeboat Saturday but just sold flowers in the street, a tradition that became an annual event, as it was so successful, raising around £10 with little effort. Collections took place in hotels and shops which raised £1 3s 5d and a concert held by the gentlemen's committee made a profit of £8 6s 4d. While 1906 marked the lowest ever amount raised for the Lifeboats, in the light of the long spell on short-time in Crewe Works it was considered a satisfactory effort. One thing was however learned from the fund raising in 1906, and that was that only a few coppers had been collected from the hotels of the town, and that in future the envelope style of collecting was to be adopted, which was far more successful, yielding £30 in 1910.[453] Between 1896, when the fund was started, and in 1913, the Lifeboat Saturday collections resulted in a total of £835 15s 0d being collected.

Apart from supporting national organisations like the Lifeboat Institution events such as the Crimean War elicited a mass wave of sympathy for the widows and orphans of soldiers and sailors involved in the war, and after the battle of Alma in October 1854 a Patriotic Fund was set up following a Royal

Proclamation which announced details of the fund. Al classes were expected to subscribe as it would help '... a war of civilisation against barbarism.'[454] Locally the Nantwich Guardians ordered that the guardians of each township should set up committees to make house to house collections and compile a list of those who had contributed.[455]

Another example of how the local population responded to the needs of others was witnessed in 1890 when a cantata entitled 'Playmates' was produced by the children of the Presbyterian Schools in the town. The money that was raised was to go to the sufferers of two colliery explosions in South Wales.[456] Once again it was the Presbyterian schoolchildren in 1892 who gave a performance of Rip Van Winkle, a May Pole dance and musical drills on behalf of the families suffering distress in the Cleveland district.[457]

In 1897 it was the Mayor of Crewe who held a public meeting at which it was resolved to open a fund for the relief of famine stricken people in India. There was a good attendance and about £50 was subscribed or promised.[458] The fund raising for the Indian Famine continued and in 1900 a grand concert was held in the Town Hall which proved '... a great success both from a musical and a financial point of view.[459]

1908 was the year of the Wigan Colliery disaster and two performances were given in the Crewe Opera House for the benefit of the sufferers of the disaster. Also a local committee was set up to organise the fund raising, and £122 was donated from Crewe to the Mayor of Wigan's relief fund.[460]

Local disasters also elicited a charitable response from Crewe people. In March 1910, the Crewe Opera House burned down

and the members of a travelling pantomime company suffered considerable loss. Great sympathy was felt for the company who were stranded having lost all their belongings in the fire, and funds were raised for their benefit.[461]

Another colliery disaster, this time at Hulton, led to a sacred concert being held on 1st January 1911 which raised £15 3s 5d, and in February 1911 the Mayor of Bolton acknowledged receipt of £151 15s 10d which had been subscribed from Crewe towards the Pretoria Colliery Disaster Fund.[462]

The sinking of the Titanic in 1912 also led to the staging of a benefit entertainment in the Crewe New Theatre in aid of the Disaster Relief Fund, the son of a Crewe plumber having been the third engineer on board the ship.[463]

Both the Boer War and the first World War had a profound effect on Crewe, and the people of the town responded in many different ways in order to support the soldiers and charitably provide for their families. On a wider sphere, as Gosden has argued, the expense of the Boer War delayed the development of legislation concerning old age pensions, after the acknowledgement in the 1890s that the prevalence of poverty among the aged was through no fault of their own, and the introduction of legislation looked likely until the advent of war.[464]

Crewe played a unique part in the Boer War in that the town supplied more volunteers for active service in proportion to its population than any other town in the country.[465] 488 men from Crewe went to serve in the war '... to assist in upholding the right and dignity of the nation.' 221 were members of the 2nd Cheshire Royal Engineers (Railway) Volunteers, 50 were of the Volunteer Service sections, 3 were surgeons, 4 were members

of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and the remainder were reservists.[466]

After the departure of the men a special fund was set up for the wives and families of the Crewe Reserves who had gone to the front. The L. N. W. R. Company subscribed £100 and £25 was received from the Earl of Crewe. Mr F. Webb also gave £1 a week from October until Christmas 1899 and the Crewe Co-op -erative Friendly Society donated £23 12s 2d to the fund.[467]

A variety of fund raising events were undertaken in order to raise money; a sacred concert by the Crewe Orchestral Society raised £6 8s 2d; and entertainment by school children raised £12; a Grand Concert in the Town Hall was organised, and a poem was recited, dedicated to the Crewe Engineer Reservists, coins being thrown on to the stage amounting to £1 15s 0d, and a further 16s 3d was raised by selling copies of the poem during the interval. A further concert by the Manchester Albyn Company was organised by Councillor Hoptroff during which the 'Absent-minded Beggar' was recited and a further £2 4s 6d was collected for the fund. Amateur dramatic performances took place, where once again the specially composed poem about the Reservists was recited, which was rewarded by a 'shower of coins' amounting to £2 6s 0d. All the above events took place within five weeks of the fund being opened.[468]

The new year saw the continuation of fund raising events by local organisations such as the Crewe Harriers' Club who donated the proceeds from their social and dance, collections were made in pubs, and further concerts were organised on a large scale, and smaller events such as entertainment in the Primitive Methodist school-room all contributed to the fund.[469]

When the news of the Relief of Mafeking became known a thanksgiving service was held in Christ Church and the offertories were donated to Lady Georgiana Curzon's 'Mafeking Relief Fund.'[470] The fall of Pretoria resulted in a grand demonstration at Crewe organised by the Friendly Societies of the town, and all the departments of Crewe Works. There were two processions, along the route of which money was collected for the Indian Famine Fund, £200 being raised from this event.[471] Court 'Linton Dale' of the Ancient Order of Foresters also organised a series of social evenings, the proceeds from which were put into a fund to defray the contributions of those members of the Court on active service in South Africa.[472]

In August 1901 a patriotic demonstration and carnival was held in order to raise money to provide a memorial to the Crewe men on active service in South Africa. The procession stretched for two miles, and a fete was held afterwards in Crewe Hall Park which raised a total of £300 for the Reservists' Memorial Fund. Fancy dress and patriotic balls were also held to further augment the fund.[473]

At Christmas 1901 Dr. Atkinson, who was the President of the Crewe Reservist Memorial Committee and the local Patriotic Committee entertained the wives and children of all the men who were, or had been, on active service in South Africa. The guests numbered about 1100 and they were provided with tea and a concert afterwards, together with 1000 toys which were distributed to the children.[474]

The first patriotic demonstration and fete held to raise money for the Crewe Reservists Memorial Fund was such a success that it became an annual event. The third such parade was held

in 1902, the procession being chiefly composed of employees from Crewe Works. Nearly 30,000 attended and £305 5s 11d was raised for the completion of a permanent memorial to the Crewe men who had served in South Africa.[475]

The Crewe Reservists' Fund had been continually augmented by many charitable fund raising events. The total sum received from all sources amounted to £2,738 7s 7½d. A total of 3 men, 180 women, and 281 children received assistance from the fund, the total individual payments numbering 2,413.[476]

In 1904, after all expenses had been defrayed in connection with the building of the memorial, it was decided that the balance of £40 was to be equally divided between the funds of the Cottage Hospital, the Sick Nursing Association, the old people's treat, and the orphan children's treat.[477]

The Boer War had united the people of Crewe in many charitable enterprises to raise money for the families of the Reservists who suffered hardships while the wage earner was away at the front, and the widows and orphans of those killed in action were also cared for. On their return several of those disabled by action also benefited from the fund, and everyone believed that '...its heritage of widowhood and orphanhood, of misery, ruin and desolation, will act and re-act upon the generation now living and even upon generations yet unborn.'[478]

Just twelve years after the end of the Boer War the first World War had been declared, and once again Crewe and Nantwich mobilised a variety of charitable endeavours in order to help the soldiers, their families, and foreign refugees brought to live in both towns. As F. Prochaska has emphasised philanthropy found new life with the onset of the first World War as new

avenues for voluntary social action emerged.[479] What new avenues of voluntary social action emerged in Crewe and Nantwich during the early months of the first World War?

As in past 'moments of crisis' a National Relief Fund was established on the 14th August 1914, and the Mayor of Crewe opened the subscription list, a sum of £29 17s 0d being subscribed on the first day.[480] Nationally by the 25th August, the Fund had reached the £1½ million mark, and after just one month the Nantwich War Relief Fund stood at £670 16s 11d. The subscription list for the National Relief Fund shows that the largest single amount donated during the week ending 25th September 1914 had come from the employees of Crewe Works who had collected £69 6s 6d. The staff of the railway station, parcel department, signal men, churches, the co-operative employees, hotels, Sunday schools, various trades associations, and fishing clubs, all made contributions. There were also special activities devised to raise money for the fund such as sale of patriotic poems which raised 9s 0d, the sale of postcards raised £2 4s 7d, a collection by 'Paddy' Mr Smallwood's dog raised £3 13s 2d, and 'Prince' the station dog raised 19s 4d, and a draw for a cake raised £1 1s 0d. Between the opening of the fund by the Mayor on the 14th August and the 25th September, £1477 9s 11d had been raised, or 8d per head of the population, and by the 9th October the sum had risen to £1,797 13s 9d.[481]

The Crewe Co-Operative Friendly Society donated £500 to the National Relief Fund, which by the 13th October had reached a national total of £3,125,000. Entertainments in aid of the Fund were held in the Town Hall, for example a lecture by the Church of England Men's Society on the 'Great War' was given

accompanied by 50 slides.[482] By the 30th October 1914 Crewe's total contribution to the National Fund amounted to £2,705 17s 4d, or 1s 2d per head of the population.[483]

Some dispute did arise among the local population as to the disproportionate amount of financial aid being contributed to the Relief Fund by the workers as compared to that donated by the tradespeople of the town. The men in Crewe Works were sending £60-£70 per week to the fund, but tradesmen, it was argued, were not sending anything. Several shopkeepers protested that they did not see why they should contribute money, when for example, drapers had already donated blankets, shirts and socks and Mr J. Seed said '... that not a day passed when they were not asked for something,[484] and others expressed the view that they should hold a little in reserve:

> if distress came to Crewe he knew [Mr Holland] that tradesmen would be called upon to support their own customers. They had given to the Prince of Wales Fund what they could afford and they would give again ... [but] they had no guarantee that Crewe would get its fair share out of the fund.[485]

All the tradesmen were united in the view that if Crewe came upon a period of acute distress their customers would want advanced credit, and so they agreed to wait and see how events developed as they '... had not tasted the war crisis yet'. In the event of a fall off in trade several shopkeepers told their employees that they would not be discharged, but they would have to take a weeks holiday and lose their wages.

Economically, the onset of war initially hit Nantwich hard, with large numbers of clothing orders being cancelled and many men were laid off resulting in hardship, and the council asked for the sewer scheme to be brought forward to help to provide

work for labourers. The Urban Council also applied to the War Office for uniform orders in the hope of securing more employment for the area.

The County Council asked all Boards of Guardians, Trade Unions, employers of labour, Churches, Friendly Societies, and Doctors, to consider the needs of their locality and to assist in the distribution of relief should distress arise.[486]

Nantwich Red Cross Society staffed three convalescent homes that had been placed at the service of the War Office, the furniture and bedding for which, it was hoped '... will be provided by the generosity of the public' and Sir Edward and Lady Cotton-Jodrell offered to take ten convalescent soldiers or sailors at Rease Heath Hall and to 'defray all expenses.'[487]

Nantwich Workhouse did not escape the effect of the frantic preparations for war, and the guardians experienced increased costs of goods due to scarcity, and their usual drugs contractor had to inform them that the Government had commandeered all their stocks of surgical dressings and drugs.[488]

Economic depression and local unemployment during the early weeks of the war soon turned to prosperity as the Nantwich factory of Harding and Sons received an order for 30,000 blue serge suits for the troops which were to be delivered at 1,500 per week, and the factory began immediate full time work.[489] However this was not the case for everyone as one factory in Nantwich had to close because their workers '... were accustomed to a different class of work to that turned out at other factories' which resulted in a certain amount of distress. However heavy contracts for military clothing secured the future for most factories.[490]

Crewe was also enjoying a period of prosperity due to the war, and the Chairman of the Crewe Tradesmen Association spoke of the fact that Crewe '... was practically unique in the whole of the country' as the artizan class were enjoying the 'greatest possible benefits by being continuously employed.'[491] Employment in the works had greatly increased due to a huge government order for gun-waggons together with 20,000 wheels and 200,000 spokes for wheels. Such orders were not of a temporary nature and continued for the duration of the war. However a note of caution was sounded that while the workers were receiving more money, it was not being circulated '... as freely as one would like it to be' as people were wary of short time being introduced again.[492]

In October 1914 there were only 42 names or 0.09% of the population on the 'dole list' and the majority of these were not 'Creweites' but were men who had come to Crewe in search of work having heard of the prosperity Crewe was enjoying.

The Nantwich Traders Association were happy that their town was not directly suffering from the effects of the war, and the relief committee which had been set up to relieve distress, now had only one case on its books receiving 5s 0d per week.[493] The farmers of Nantwich and the immediate surroundings were also 'rejoicing in unexampled prosperity ... and never in the history of the trade of Nantwich has overtime been worked for so long a period.[494]

The Co-Operative Friendly Society maintained its tradition of making charitable bequests during the early months of the war by making sure that the 16 co-operative employees who volunteered for the services from Crewe had their pay made up by

the Co-Op to 4/5ths of their normal weekly wage to ensure that their dependents did not suffer. The Crewe Co-Operative Society also made grants of £840 18s 6d to their employees and dependents and £392 5s 0d to the hospital to help with the burden of war.[495]

The Crewe Co-Operative Friendly Society contributed £200 to the Belgium Distress Fund,[496] and the whole of the Crewe and Nantwich area became involved in easing the plight of the Belgian refugees. The Mayor headed a committee to try to find homes in Crewe and Nantwich for Belgian refugee families consisting of a man, his wife, and children, 'without separation from one another' and local families were asked to volunteer accommodation.[497] Just six days later on the 25th September 1914, 25 Belgian refugees arrived in Crewe where they were housed by Catholic families in the town. After arriving at the railway station they were taken straight to the Ursuline Convent where they were given a substantial meal and 'received great kindness.'[498]

Nantwich also received its share of refugees. The Schoolhouse in Welsh Row was offered as accommodation for 15-20 people, and Henry Tollemache and Lady Cotton-Jodrell headed a committee to find further accommodation. Weekly subscriptions were made by workers in full time employment in Nantwich up to a maximum of 2 guineas each, in order to financially help the refugees. Dr. Munro the workhouse doctor, was the prime mover of the scheme, and by 20th October 1914 announced that they had already received 6 beds complete, 11 beds with mattresses, 54 pairs of sheets, 24 pillows, 25 pillowcases, 5 toilet sets, 16 chairs, 2 rocking chairs, 2 easy chairs, 4 small tables,

4 chest of drawers, 32 tea cups, and 2 tons of coal. The remaining articles that were needed were 'promised in a very few minutes.'[499] People from the countryside had promised to give produce to help feed the families, and in order to cross the language barrier Lady Cotton-Jodrell's maid, who was French, interpreted for the refugees. Three days after the planning meeting the schoolhouse was practically furnished as a home and an income guaranteed '... to maintain these poor unfortunate people.'[500]

As Crewe was the centre of the railway network, troops were constantly passing through the station at all times of the day and night. Members of the public began to appreciate their plight and by early September 1914 apples and various sorts of fruit were sent to Crewe Station for distribution to the troops passing through and '... proved most acceptable to them' and the officers passed on their thanks via the Station Master.[501] Every night at Crewe Station, when a troop train pulled in, a group of women offered tea, coffee, cakes and fruit to the soldiers. On one night alone 21 buckets full of coffee were distributed, and as the trains were only stationary at the platform for a little while, the women had to be very quick in distributing the food, and the porters helped them with this job. The cost of this charitable endeavour was borne by five local ladies.[502]

The fact that many soldiers had to change trains at Crewe all through the day and night meant that many had to spend a long time waiting around platforms, in waiting rooms or wandering around the streets. As a result the Crewe and District Federation of the Church of England Men's Society set up a Soldiers and Sailors Rest in an old Mission Room near to the

Photograph E Soldiers and Sailors Rest Rooms 1914

Railway Station. The officials of the Railway Company, especially Mr Bowen Cooke, co-operated with the scheme. The Mission Room was equipped with '... everything necessary for the entertainment and comfort of our fighting men.'[503] Crewe people contributed furniture: 15 beds were provided for those who wanted to sleep, and so many soldiers wanted to use the room that an extension had to be built by the Railway Company in 1915 which provided a refreshment room, a new games room with a billiard table, draughts, dominoes, and a piano presented by the Marquis of Crewe. Also two new dormitories and two new bathrooms with facilities for washing and shaving were also available in the new extensions, as well as food and non-intoxicating drink at cost price, together with free writing paper. Many of the servicemen were also given monetory assistance too.

There were a total of 60 voluntary stewards who helped serve food and supervised the rest room, who were all members of the Church of England Men's Society or other church workers who worked shifts at the Rest Room throughout the day and night. Every Sunday a free dinner was provided for men who happened to be at the 'Rest' at 1 p.m.[504]

The work of the 'Rest' was subsidised by private subscriptions and contributions from the sale of food, photographs, flag days, collection boxes, collections among L. N. W. R. employees, post office employees, Church of England Men's Society members, together with collections at shops, factories, schools, churches, chapels, and temperance societies, concerts, whist drives, golf, football, bowling and angling clubs.[505] School children made and sold small articles in order to provide cigerettes and flowers for the 'Rest' and Boy Scouts took it in

A13- Wartime (1914-1918)-Rest rooms for servicemen passing through Crewe

Photograph F Comforts provided for the Troops

Photograph G The rest room during a busy period

turns to do duty there. The L. N. W. R. Company also helped by providing the gas for heating and cooking and electricity for lighting.[506]

A wide variety of events took place in Crewe and Nantwich in order to raise funds for the troops at the front. A whist drive and dance was held by the Primrose League and £12 10s 0d was spent on materials to make shirts, balaclavas, mufflers, socks, pillows, sheets, and bandages.[507] An American tea was held at Nantwich to raise a fund to provide two companies of the 7th Battalion Cheshire Regiment with warm clothing for when they went abroad. Each visitor had to take with them an article for sale and also had to purchase an item. £62 was raised together with £10 worth of warm clothing for the use of the troops. The committee organising the event hoped to provide each man with a cardigan, jacket, a pair of mittens, and at least one pair of socks. 80 pairs of socks were donated and many other similar gifts were received.[508] Pedley Street school sent a parcel of clothing for the troops subscribed for and made by the teachers and pupils, consisting of socks, bed socks, (washed and powdered) and woolen mufflers.[509]

Postal orders and cheques were invited by the Dale Tobacco Fund of Crewe who by October 1914 had already been able to forward 2500 ounces of tobacco and cherrywood pipes packed in army cases to the front. £18 12s 9d had been subscribed and it was hoped to send similar consignments on a weekly basis. The local gentry were invited to assist in helping to provide this particular comfort.[510]

The relatives and dependants of soldiers were not forgotten amidst all the fund raising for the front. The British Medical

Association and Pharmaceutical Society offered to provide medical attendance and medicine without charge to dependents of serving soldiers. A supply of medical books were issued in Crewe through the local Soldiers and Sailors Families Association. All the doctors and chemists offered to give their services in carrying out this scheme.[511]

The Crewe League of Friendliness provided help and councilling to the wives of the men who were serving with the forces and at Christmas 1914 the League organised several entertainments for 160 wives and mothers of soldiers and sailors, providing a tea and Christmas stocking for each child, and a second social gathering for a further 150 wives and mothers.[512]

The reality of war mobilised both Crewe and Nantwich into a frantic round of fund raising based on the tried and tested 'formulas' of whist drives and concerts that had sustained schemes such as the establishment of the cottage hospital and provided finance to offer treats to the old, young, and poor of the town for decades. War did, ironically, bring prosperity on an unprecedented scale to both towns, so that the burden of maintaining paupers both in and out of the workhouse dwindled away, all charitable endeavour being channelled in to providing comforts for the troops.

The experience of Crewe and Nantwich, geographically separated by just four miles and both part of the same union, followed very different paths as far as charitable endeavour was concerned. Yet by the first World War, with indigenous pauperism greatly reduced, together with new economic prosperity, triggered by the onset of war, both towns came together to accomodate the Belgian refugees. Nantwich remained firmly

committed to its old established charities and almshouses and so had to contend with trying to make sure that the value of the disbursements remained realistic in the 'modern' as opposed to the 'ancient' times in which they had been conceived in order not to physically deprive the recipients. Indeed the charities of Nantwich tended to fall into two groups: those with no new income whose outgoings were overrun by inflation; and those charities which were augmented but tended to accumulate large balances in hand. In either case the recipients suffered as the charities attempted to deal with poverty on a scale undreampt of by founders, while the Charity Commissioners kept a keen eye on large balances in hand.

The charities of Nantwich did affect the material well-being of recipients; in some instances their conditions appeared to have actually deteriorated as allowances failed to increase and almshouses fell into disrepair. However the value of food and clothes tickets together with small monetary handouts did help people to sustain their families without resorting to the workhouse but inflation constantly eroded their value.

One aspect that is conveyed strongly is the fact that recipients of charities were expected to follow the wishes of the trustees who did exert a social discipline over almsmen and recipients in general, for example the conditions attached to living in the almshouses and the attempt by the Churchwardens to influence voting in respect of the local poll regarding the church rate. The threat always appears to have been that if recipients did not fulfil the demands of trustees, whether it be terms of religious belief, registering their vote in a certain way or even regarding where they were born - the relief

could be terminated.

No attempt was made in Nantwich or Crewe to integrate and co-ordinate the relief offered by private and public organisations along lines suggested by the Charity Organisation Society hence the variety of effort that developed to relieve the old and young in Crewe. However by the 1890s charitable endeavour to benefit all sectors of society emerged to unite the towns in money raising efforts that demanded perpetual support after the initial target, i.e. a hospital, had been reached in order to secure its future, which revealed problems of sustainability that raised new issues and challenges.

Crewe was not endowed with such an array of ancient charities, the consolidated charity being the only one the town possessed. As a result a great deal of individual charitable endeavour evolved and the working people who became involved in such schemes, both men and women, developed fund raising events that dominated leisure activities in the town. Entertainment in the form of concerts, dances, whist drives, garden parties and carnivals, were all raising money for some worthy cause that the residents could identify with. The only problem frequently encountered was the weather - if it rained the financial security of, for example, the Cottage Hospital, could be in jeopardy, for the next twelve months, emphasising the precarious financial knife edge on which charities operated.

The influence of the L. N. W. R. company in Crewe in terms of paternalistic concern was, on the one hand, prominent in the field of education and benefit societies for employees, yet on the other hand they were accused of imposing a form of social control over workers that many found overbearing. This conflict

was inevitable where a company who contributes facilities for its workers expects loyalty in return. As to whether the actual freedom of workers was curtailed it appears that in return for the L. N. W. R. contributing, for example, to benefit societies, workers literally were constrained to remain in the employment of the company in order not to lose benefit. The L. N. W. R. also had a vested interest in encouraging education in order to improve the quality of their workmen, but once again workers resented the fact that their part in decision making was ultimately constrained by the fact that they feared to contradict decisions made by members of the hierarchy of the company in case they lost their jobs.

Friendly Societies and trade associations were strong in both Crewe and Nantwich, yet the poorest people remained untouched by their benefits. Their existence was not without difficulty as disbursements tended to exceed contributions and sickness benefit tended to also encompass the permanent relief of aged members. Reality dictated that if societies were to survive, contributions had to be set at a realistic level and societies had to battle with this problem while retaining members in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Similarly the Co-Operative Friendly Society aimed to encourage thrift and self-help yet for those who could not afford the membership fee or to pay cash for goods the benefits of the society were irrelevant.

By the mid 1890s and even more so until the Liberal Government legislation of post 1906, there was the ever increasing awareness among all sections of the community that the financial need of the old was surpassing the scope of even the most

organised charitable endeavours, and appeals for government intervention became louder every year. As P. Thane has argued all the surveys concerned with poverty between 1900-1914 emphasised that poverty persisted even in households where the male worked long hours because the wages were low. The need for state action developed not only because of this reality but concern about the condition of the economy and the impact of the fact that one third of the Volunteers for the Boer War were physically unfit reinforced fears that Britain might face military as well as economic defeat from Germany. The need to improve the physical and productive efficiency of the population led to a new urgency in discussions about poverty, sickness, and physical disability, and led to demands for new and improved state and voluntary welfare measures designed to increase national efficiency, spurred on by the growth of the Labour movement.[513] However faith in itself and mutual help combined with charity still persisted.

By 1914 many of the poor still survived only with the help of family and neighbours, whose daily acts of charity have gone largely unrecorded. The whole community was involved in attempting to help the poor in times of need, whether triggered by personal misfortune or economic fluctuations: a position that any one of them could easily have found themselves in at any time. An awareness of individual vulnerability stimulating compassion in both towns for local as well as national appeals.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 5

1. See chapter 2 p. 102-105; Chapter 5 p. 417, 422-426
   William Sprout 1829 = £6,000 P. Sprout 1835 = £2,700

2. The Poor Law Report of 1834 Edited with an introduction by S. G. & E. O. A Checkland, (1974) p. 15

3. M. E. Rose, The Relief of Poverty 1834-1914 op. cit., p. 12

4. Poor Law Report 1834 op. cit., p. 496

5. ibid.

6. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 136

7. ibid. p. 137

8. Eighth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commission (1842) p. 194

9. Parl. Papers 1837/38 XXIV (103) p. 646

10. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433) p. 32/33

11. C.R.O. QDC 4
    Parl. Papers 1892 LIX (65)
    Kellys Directory 1892

12. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2

13. The charities under the management of the Wrights trustees:
    1) Sir Edmund Wright's Almshouse
    2) Hodgkin's Apprenticing charity
    3) Miss Chorlton's charity
    4) Meakins & Delves Almshouse
    5) Bridget Woods Charity
    6) Elizabeth Walker's Charity
    7) William Sprout's Charity
    8) Peter Sprout's Charity
    9) Miss Hall & Mrs Pemberton's Charity
    10) Mary and Elizabeth Bennion

14. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2

15. J. Hall, History of Nantwich p. 366 and p 368
    The allowance was £4 per year.

16. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433) p. 32/33

17. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 27th November, 1909

18. ibid.

19. Parl. papers 1838 XXIV (103)

20. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2

21. C.R.O. DSW 2116/100

22. C.R.O. DSW 2116/102

23. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/3

24. C.R.O. DSW 2116/101 14th January, 1880

25. ibid. 21st October, 1878

26. ibid.

27. ibid.

28. C.R.O. DSW 2116/108/2

29. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103) p. 644 and
Parl. Papers 1843 XVIII [435] p. 8

30. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103) p. 645 and
Parl. Papers 1843 XVIII [435] p. 12

		£	s	d
a)	George Wilbraham supplied money for 40 drab jackets blue cloth caps, bands, pair of shoes and stockings. Parents also contributed to the cost of shoes.	23	3	11
b)	Lord Crewe	5	0	0
c)	Mr Wilbraham	11	0	0
d)	Hodgkin's Charity	5	0	0
e)	Broomhall & Turnpenny's Charity	3	3	0
	1837 income	47	6	11

31. ibid.

32. Victoria History of the county of Chester Vol. III (1980) p. 244

33. Parl. Papers 1894 XI (221) p. 339

34. Parl. Papers 1896 XXV [8026] p48

35. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103)

36. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2

37. C.R.O. DSW 2116/12/3

38. C.R.O. DSW 2116/12/2

39. C.R.O. DSW 2116/12/3

40. C.R.O. DSW 2116/22

41. C.R.O. DSW 2116/12/3 and DSW 2116/22

42. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103)

43. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2

44. C.R.O. DSW 2116/100

45. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433)

46. C.R.O. DSW 2116/101

47. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103)

48. C.P.L. 1861 census returns

49. C.P.L. 1871 census returns

50. C.R.O. QDC 4

51. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2
DSW 2116/100

52. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433)

53. C.R.O. QDC4

54. The charities administered by the Churchwardens consisted of:
a) Praer's Obit
b) Slades charity
c) Harwar's
d) Peover's
e) Consolidated charities of 1704
f) Proudmans
g) Follitts
h) Meakin and Delves
i) Hickson's
j) Swan's

55. Dividends from £527 10. at £2 15s. % were added to the consolidated fund in 1829 when land was purchased from the Churchwardens by the Liverpool, Birmingham and Cheshire Canal Company.

56. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103)

57. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433)
Most of its assets were in the form of land from which rent was obtained but most of the land was gradually sold and the money put into stock.

58. C.R.O. MF 204/236 Chester Chronicle 3rd November 1843

59. ibid.

60. ibid.

61. Parl. Papers 1843 XVIII (435) p. 26

62. J. Hall, op. cit., p. 245

63. ibid.

64. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433)

65. Charity Commissioners Reports 1888-1892
p. 361 CII Appendix D p. 77 39th Report [6627]

66. C.R.O. QDC 4 1892
Kellys Directory 1892

67. C.R.O. NCH 3868

68. ibid.

1908	Bread	=	59	19	0	=	33.3%
	Admin.	=	5	8	11	=	3%
	Clothing	=	9	17	6	=	5.5%
	Education	=	5	19	11	=	3.3%
	Coal	=	26	4	0	=	14.55%
	Money	=	72	11	11	=	40.3%

69. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 3rd April 1914.
The capital deposited with the Churchwardens = £4280 7s. 4d. in gilt edge securities.

70. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103)

71. Wrights Almsmen = £60: Miss Walker's old ladies = £40
Rector/Clerk/Treasurer/Churchwarden/Organist = £35
Meakin & Delves Almspeople = £30
Miss Chorlton's Widows = £25: Sunday school = £20
Wrights Almsmen dinner = £5 Total = £215

72. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433)

73. C.R.O. DSW 2116/100 13th March 1855

74. Extracts from the Wills and information appertaining to the administration, by the trustees of Sir Edmund Wright's and other charities (Nantwich 1967)

75. C.R.O. DSW 2116/100 13th March 1855 This capital stock produced an annual interest of £29 8s 3d but it was unfortunately transferred into the new 2½% stock so a loss of £7 9s 1d was sustained annually by the poor.

76. ibid. Replies to queries from the Charity Commissioners
C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2 March 1836

77. ibid.

78. C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2

79. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433)

80. C.R.O. MF 207/6 Crewe Chronicle 7th July, 1900
Letter from J. Jackson, Treasurer of Wrights and other charities.

81. ibid.

82. C.R.O. MF 207/6 Crewe Chronicle 21st July, 1900
Letter from H. Hinde

83. C.R.O. MF 207/6 Crewe Chronicle 4th August, 1900
Letter from J. Jackson

84. C.R.O. MF 207/6 Crewe Chronicle 11th August, 1900

85. C.R.O. MF 207/6 Crewe Chronicle 18th August, 1900

86. C.R.O. MF 207/6 Crewe Chronicle 25th August, 1900

87. C.R.O. QDC 4

88. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 10th January, 1885

89. Kellys Directory 1892

90. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 16th October, 1909
Income from the Trust = £2042 17s 9d

91. ibid.

92. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 25th August, 1914

93. Figures calculated from C.R.O. DSW 2116/3/2 and Parl. Papers 1843 XVIII (435) p. 26

94. Parl. Papers 1843 XLV (144)

95. Parl. Papers 1867-68 LII (433)

96. Parl. Papers 1863 LI (431 D)

97. ibid.

98. ibid.

99. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 27th November, 1869

100. C.R.O. QDC/4 (1892)

101. Parl. Papers 1862 XLVIII (307 B)
Parl. Papers 1890 LXVII (269)

102. Parl. Papers 1910 LXXVII (203 C) and (204 C)

103. M. E. Rose, English Poor Law op. cit., p. 235

104. Parl. Papers 1909 Appendix Vol. XII (429) p. 63

105. ibid.

106. ibid. p. 64

107. Johnson's Nantwich Almanac and Directory 1954 p. 123

108. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 7th August, 1909 p. 6 and 9th October 1909 p. 4
Gross income of charity = £578 8s 5d net balance £162 13s 8d

109. ibid.
The breakdown of returns from the 1909 fete reveal how popular the event was locally:

	£	s	d
Before day of fete - 4,000 tickets sold	92	18	3
Gate money on the day	87	18	5
Admission to Grandstand	35	4	6
Admission to Gardens	4	12	2
Storing of bicycles	3	14	6

as at this time the population of the town was 7,800 the event was very well attended.

110. ibid.

111. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 13th November 1909 p. 7

112. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 17th November 1909 p. 4

113. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 27th January 1914

114. ibid.

115. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 13th February 1914
The third annual report of the Nantwich Cottage Hospital revealed that the funds for the hospital were raised from the following sources:

	%
Money from the town of Nantwich	26.70
Patients payments	22.80
Income from investments	19.40
Money from the surrounding villages (Aston; Audlem; Baddiley; Broomhall; Buerton; Willaston; Wistaston; Wrenbury)	8.30
Church and Chapel collections	6.90
Annual fete	6.56
Donations	2.41
Hospital Ball	2.20
Friendly Societies	1.80
Collections at workplaces	1.54
Football competition	0.55
School Sports Day	0.40
Collection boxes	0.37

116. ibid.

117. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 13th March 1914

118. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 28th April 1914

119. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 22nd May 1914 and 26th May 1914
1914 fete attracted 4-5000 people and raised £159 12s 6d.
House to house collection raised £74 9s 2d
C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 10th July 1914 p. 3 and
21st July 1914 p. 4

120. P. H. J. H. Gosden, The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875 (1961) pp. 6-7

121. ibid. p. 198

122. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help - Voluntary Associations in the Nineteenth century (1973) p. 69

123. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Friendly Societies op. cit., p. 208

124. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help op. cit., p. 70 and
P. H. J. H. Gosden, Friendly Societies op. cit., p. 201
pp. 205-207

125. C.R.O. QDS 2 and Parl. Papers 1837 LI (71)

126. ibid.
Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996) : Parl. Papers 1875 XLLII (408)

Nantwich Original Beneficial Society (est. 1794)

Crewe and Nantwich Female Friendly Society (est. 1821)

1872 = 241 members: funds £285
1885 = 150 members: funds £109 7s 8d £300 in savings bank
1899 = 82 members: funds £283

Nantwich Benevolence Society (est. 1824-1829)

Nantwich Beneficial Society (est. 1824-1829)

Philanthropic Union of Nantwich (est. 1825)
1875 = members n/k: funds £285

Nantwich Female Friendly Society (est. 1831)

Independent Order of Oddfellows; Manchester Unity
Loyal Poor Mans Friend Lodge (est. 1837)
1872 = 165 members: funds £1852: Assets £4678:
Liabilities £4801: deficit £123
1875 = 179 members: funds £2263
Widows and orphans fund £627: Burial society £51
1890 = 223 members
1894 = 257 members
1910 = 399 members: funds £6394:

Ancient Order of Forresters: Wych Malbank (est. 1838)
1872 = 398 members: funds £2492
1875 = 429 members: funds £3173
1910 = 749 members: funds £10,153

Ancient Order of Shepherds, Sanctury Wych Malbank (est. 1839)
1893 = 120 members

Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity)
Nantwich and Crewe District (est. 1838)
1910 = 2,939 members: funds £9,527

St. Crispin Sick and Friendly Society (est. 1840)
1910: 65 members: funds £154

Nantwich Social Britons Society (est. 1843)

Friendly Knot (operated until 1850)
1850: 140 members: funds £261
1875: members n/k: funds £311

United Patriots National Benefit Society, Nantwich branch (est. 1875)
1910: 11 members: funds nil

Independent Order of Rechobites, Rescue Tent (est. 1877)
1877: 17 members
1910: 9 members: funds £149

National Independent Order of Oddfellows: Loyal Faithful Friend Lodge (est. 1878)
1910: 83 members: funds £260

National Independent Order of Oddfellows: Loyal Philanthropic Lodge (est. 1896)
1910: 165 members: funds £179

127. Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996) pp. 71-72

128. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Friendly Societies, op. cit., p. 21

129. 1872:

Members of Childrens Friendly Societies (Church of England; Ebenezer; Weslyan; and Independent)	=	2750
Members of Ancient Order of Foresters	=	398
Members of Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity)	=	165
Members of Female Sick Club	=	241
Total members		3554

Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996)

130. ibid. p. 65

131. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 11th September 1875

132. Parl. Papers 1872 XXVI (745) p. 125 para. 2405

133. Parl. Papers 1880 LXVIII (365) p. 42

134. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 13th June 1896

135. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-help op. cit., p. 28 and p. 96

136. ibid. pp. 97-98; p. 260, p. 262

137. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 29

138. Parl. Papers 1901 (PF 334 7 F4) LXXII (35 I) p. 1

139. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-help op. cit., p.99 and
P. H. J. H. Gosden, Friendly Societies op. cit., p. 95

140. C.R.O. MF 204/20 Chester Chronicle 10th October 1896

141. ibid. 24th October 1896

142. Parl. Papers 1909 XL [4755] Appendix volume 2-3A
Evidence of Sir Edward Brabrook p. 455 line 35147
sub section 8

143. C.R.O. LGN 1/22 25th July 1896 p. 109

144. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-help op. cit., pp. 88-89

145. Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)

146. Parl. Papers 1837-38 XXIV (103) p. 639

147. ibid. p. 640

148. Parl. Papers 1843 XVIII (435) p. 25

149. Parl. Papers 1868 LII (433) pp. 20-21

150. C.R.O. QDC 4 1892

151. C.R.O. NCH 3868

152. ibid.

153. M. E. Rose, Editors Comments The Poor and the City op. cit., p. 3 and M. E. Rose, The Relief of Poverty op. cit., p. 16

154. ibid.

155. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 106
and F. M. L. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 352-353

156. D. Fraser, The Evolution of the Welfare State op. cit., p. 115

157. F. Prochaska, The Voluntary Impulse - Philanthropy in Modern Britain (1988) p. 27

158. ibid. p.48

159. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1900 3rd January 1899 p. 225
1905 26th December 1903 p. 205;
1910 26th December 1908 p. 212;
1911 27th December 1909 p. 172;
1912 21st December 1910 p. 190;
1913 23rd December 1911 p. 219;

160. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 2nd January 1904 p. 207

161. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 25th December 1907 p. 213;
1911 25th December 1909 p. 171;
1912 21st December 1910 p. 190;
1913 26th December 1911 p. 219.

162. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 1st December 1904 p. 267
13th December 1904 p. 268;
Crewe Chronicle 10th February 1906

163. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 75

164. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 4th February 1910 p. 176

165. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 15th April 1908 p. 229
and 14th October 1908 p. 250;
1911 7th December p. 220
1912 21st December 1910 p. 190

166. M. E. Rose, Relief of Poverty, op. cit., p. 42

167. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 27th June 1897 p. 221
and 1903 28th March 1902 p. 239;
1908-9 20th April 1908 p. 230;
1910 15th August 1909 p. 240;
Crewe Chronicle 21st April 1906

168. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1893 7th November p. 218

169. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1896 5th June 1895 p. 206

170. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 7th April 1896 p. 199
and 24th June 1896 p. 205;
1899 24th August 1898 p. 204;
1900 28th June 1899 p. 235

171. F. K. Prochaska, Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth century England (1980) p. 47 and p. 57

172. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1900 7th July 1899 p. 236
and 26th August 1899 p. 237

173. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 26th December 1900 p. 213
and 11th September 1901 p. 250;
4th December, 1901 p. 259;
1903 1st January, 1902 p. 219
1905 30th December 1903 p. 207

174. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 21st April 1906
C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 17th April 1911 p. 203

175. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1899 27th April 1898 p. 194
1901 29th September 1900 p. 208;
1904 19th September 1903 p. 259;
1907 10th January 1906 p. 215 and 24th January 1906 p. 216
1911 18th June 1910 p. 194

176. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 24th January 1908 p. 219
1910 1st April 1909 p. 225
1912 29th November 1911 p. 234

177. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 6th October 1914 p. 3

178. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 16th October 1869

179. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 96 and p. 99

180. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 8th December 1897 p. 239;
1899 2nd November 1898 p. 208 and 7th December 1898 p. 212
1901 13th December 1899 p. 181;
1910 10th November 1909 p. 254;
1902 11th December 1901 p. 260;
1911 12th October 1910 p. 209;
1903 8th October 1902 p. 256;
1911 16th November 1910 p. 216;
1910 13th October 1909 p. 247;
1913 4th December 1912 p. 253

181. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 108

182. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 510

183. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 10th October 1885

184. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 10th October 1891 p. 208
1896 30th October 1895 p. 218

185. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 20th May 1897 p. 217
1898 21st June 1897 p. 221

186. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1903 26th June 1902 p. 248

187. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 3rd November 1904 p. 263

188. F. K. Prochaska, Women and Philanthropy, op. cit., p. 42

189. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 1st January 1904 p. 207

190. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1907 27th December 1905 p. 214
1908-9 1st January 1908 p. 215
1911 31st December 1909 p. 173
C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 16th January 1914

191. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 22nd June 1911 p. 213

192. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 18th March 1901 p. 229

193. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1903 22nd February 1902 p. 231

194. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 18th May 1908 p. 234

195. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 22nd March 1911 p. 200
1913 29th November 1912 p. 253
and Crewe Guardian 24th April 1914

196. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 17th February 1914

197. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 7th December 1910 p. 221

198. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1900 5th December 1899 p. 242
1908-9 6th April 1908 p. 228

199. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 3rd July 1911 p. 215

200. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 12th October 1904 p. 259
1907 24th October 1906 p. 245;
1908-9 14th October 1908 p. 250;
1912 13th December 1911 p. 237

201. M. Anderson, op. cit., p. 147

202. F. Prochaska, Voluntary Impulse op. cit., p. 28

203. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 121

204. N. McCord, op. cit., p. 91

205. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 511

206. F. Prochaska, Voluntary Impulse op. cit., p. 26

207. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 1st January 1891

208. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1893 1st March 1892 p. 205
12th March 1892 p. 205; 28th March 1892 p. 207

209. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1894 13th January 1893 p. 183
1896 14th January 1895 p. 192;
1896 6th November 1895 p. 218.

210. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 Wilmot Eardley's 'Address'

211. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1907 21st February 1906 p. 220
5th December 1906 p. 252; 17th December 1906 p. 253

212. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 17th November 1908 p. 254
6th December 1908 p. 256

213. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 24th December 1908 p. 211
and Eardleys 'Address'.

214. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 24

215. Parl. Papers 1909 Appendix Vol. XIII (429) pp. 62-63

216. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 'Address'

217. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 28th October 1910 p. 212;
1912 27th December 1910 p. 190;
11th January 1911 p. 192;
22nd January 1911 p. 193;
8th February 1911 p. 195.

218. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 1st March 1911 p. 198

219. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912
5th April, 1911 p. 202 9th October 1911 p. 225
23rd October 1911 p. 226 8th November 1911 p. 230
15th November 1911 p. 231

220. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 7th February 1912 p. 223

221. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 1st March, 1912 p. 225
2nd March, 1912 p. 226; 7th March 1912 p. 226
9th March, 1912 p. 227

222. M. E. Rose, Editors Comments The Poor and the city op. cit., p. 3

223. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913: 21st March 1912 p. 229
4th April 1912 p. 230; 5th April 1912 p. 230

224. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 19th April 1912 p. 231

225. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 8th November 1912 p. 250
16th November 1912 p. 251

226. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 148

227. N. McCord, op. cit., p. 97

228. W. H. Chaloner, op. cit., p. 45; p. 61

229. D. Fraser (Editors comments) The New Poor Law op. cit., p.10

230. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 4th December 1869 p. 4

231. The subjects taught by the Mechanics Institute included: arithmetic and mensuration, grammer and geography, scripture and English history, music, shorthand, French, sewing, drawing, geometry, mechanical drawing, chemistry, acoustics, light and heat, magnetism amd electricity, mathematics, mechanics and steam, animal physiology, metallurgy, hygiene, botony, phsiography, geology, agriculture, manufacture of steel and iron, mechanical engineering and tools, carpentry and joinery.

232. Parl. Papers 1892 LIX (65)

233. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891 p. 4

234. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891 14th June 1890 p. 169

235. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 15th August 1892 p. 205

236. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 14th September 1896 p. 211

237. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 9th October 1909 p. 7

238. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1901 p. 75

239. C.R.O. NPR 1/24

240. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 23rd February 1903 p. 221

241. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 26th March 1903 p. 231
1905 30th December 1903 p. 207

242. Parl. Papers 1907 XCV (312)

243. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 24th February 1908 p. 223

244. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 31st July 1909 pp. 6-7

245. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 27th February 1911 p. 197
1st March 1911 p. 198; 19th June 1911 p. 212;
17th August 1911 p. 219; 22nd August 1911 p. 220
27th August 1911 p. 220; 6th September 1911 p. 221
4th October 1911 p. 224; 9th October 1911 p. 225
4th November 1911 p. 229; 8th November 1911 p. 230
15th November 1911 p. 231; 19th November 1911 p. 232

246. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 28th November 1911 p. 234

247. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1893 11th October 1892 p. 217

248. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1896 10th July 1895 p. 210
1901 22nd February 1900 p. 187

249. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 p. 193
Mr. Webb also shared his interest in the welfare of the community with his brother, the Rev. A. H. Webb, who represented Crewe on the Nantwich Board of Guardians.

250. ibid.

251. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 31st December 1895 p. 187

252. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 21st May 1903 p. 247

253. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 470

254. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 9th June 1906 p. 5
Crewe Guardian 9th June 1906 pp. 4-5

255. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 23rd October 1909 p. 248
and Crewe Guardian 16th October 1909 p. 6

256. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 p. 3

257. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 3rd June 1897 p. 219

258. F. Prochaska, Voluntary Impulse op. cit., p. 54

259. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1901 29th October 1900 p. 210
1903 16th April 1902 p. 242

260. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 8th October 1908 p. 249

261. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 27th October 1909 p. 4

262. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 4th August 1909 p. 6

263. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 16th June 1914 p. 4

264. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 485

265. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 4th July 1885 When balances in hand and interest included £161 11s 9d in the fund in 1885

266. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 2s

267. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891 27th January 1890 p. 151

268. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 4th August 1891 p. 205

269. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 17th February 1906 Subscriptions had amounted to £93 5s 7d and expenditure = £98 6s 7d.

270. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 483

271. C.P.L. Crewe Momorial Cottage Hospital Official Handbook for the Grand Bazaar and Fete in Crewe Hall Park 1896

272. The general government of the hospital was placed in the hands of the committee of trustees consisting of the Rt. Hon. Lord Stalbridge, Chairman of the L.N.W.R. Henry Yates Thompson, F. W. Webb and C. H. Pedley, a former Mayor of Crewe together with a committee consisiting of the Mayoress, various Aldermen, and J.P.'s and members of the town aristocracy in the form of Hon. Lady Fitzgerald, Lady Annabel Crewe-Milnes, Lady Celia Crewe-Milnes, Lady Cynthis Crewe-Milnes, Rt. Hon. Earl of Crewe, together with the wives and daughters of the Aldermen and J.P.'s

273. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 483

274. ibid.

275. ibid.

276. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 480

277. ibid. and C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 'Address' 7th August 1896 p. 200

278. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1896 26th March 1895 p. 200

279. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 25th January 1898 p. 203

280. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 25th February 1897 p. 207

281. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 16th March, 1897 p. 209; 22nd May, 1897 p. 217; 1900 17th June, 1899 p. 235

282. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 8th September 1897 p. 227
23rd November 1897 p. 237

283. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 5th April 1901 p. 233;
15th October 1901 p. 253

284. F. K. Prochaska, Women and Philanthropy, op. cit., pp. 74-75

285. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902: Address and
6th November 1901 p. 255

286. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1903 21st February 1902 p. 231

287. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 12th May 1903 p. 245

288. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 21st May 1903 p. 247

289. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 23rd February 1904 p. 221
6th December 1904 p. 268

290. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 23rd June 1904 p. 247

291. D. Owen, op. cit., p. 483

292. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 3rd March 1906

293. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1907 23rd April 1906 p. 227

294. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1907 23rd May 1906 p. 229
13th June 1906 p. 230

295. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1907 11th August 1906 p. 235
29th October 1906 p. 246

296. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1907 6th October 1906 p. 242

297. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-9 8th August 1908 p. 242
12th October 1908 p. 250

298. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 6th February 1909 p. 217
C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 4th August 1909 p. 6
Crewe Guardian 9th October 1909 p. 6

299. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 14th August 1909 p. 7
and 9th October 1909 pp. 6-7

300. ibid.

301. ibid.

302. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 16th October 1909

303. ibid.

304. ibid.

305. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 9th October 1909 p. 246

306. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 26th May 1909 p. 231
1911 28th May, 1910 p. 191

307. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 27th August 1910 p. 202

308. ibid.
24th September 1910 p. 205

309. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 14th November 1910 p. 216

310. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 23rd March 1911 p. 200;
22nd June 1911 p. 213

311. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 26th August 1911 p. 220

312. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 6th December 1911 p. 236

313. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 10th July 1912 p. 240
1st October 1912 p. 246

314. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 17th February 1914

315. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 20th February 1914

316. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 27th February 1914

317. ibid.

318. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 3rd March 1914 and 27th March 1914

319. F. Prochaska, The Voluntary Impulse, op. cit., p. xiv, 9, 30

320. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 11th August 1914 p. 2

321. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 17th November 1914 p. 2

322. Parl. Papers 1912 XIV (123) part B pp. 4-5

323. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 31

324. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 190

325. C.P.L. G. D. Lucas History of Crewe Co-operative
Friendly Society Ltd. 1845-1929 p. 16 (1929)

326. C.R.O. Cheshire Directory (Morris & Co.) 1864

327. G. D. Lucas, op. cit., p. 26

328. Parl. Papers 1876 XLII (449) p. 8

329. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 189

330. Parl Papers 1875 XLLII (408) pp. 77-81

331. W. H. Chaloner, The Social and Economic Development
of Crewe 1780-1923 (1973) p. 265

332. G. D. Lucas, op. cit.

333. ibid. p. 55

334. C.P.L. Illustrated Crewe Co-operative Almanac (1907) p. 8

335. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-help, op. cit., p. 198

336. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 9th October 1909 p. 4

337. C.P.L. Illustrated Crewe Co-operative Almanac 1911 and 1913.

338. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 199

339.

1870 = 889	co-operative	members	= 4.9%	of pop.	in Crewe
1880 = 2050	"	"	= 8.4	"	"
1891 = 5000	"	"	= 15.2	"	"
1901 = 8500	"	"	= 20.2	"	"
1912 =10855	"	"	= 24.0	"	"

from Eardleys Almanack and Parl. Papers 1899 LXXII (30I) Parl. Papers 1901 LXXIV [E698]

340. M. Anderson, op. cit., pp. 138-39

341. Parl. Papers 1899-1900 LXXII (35I)

342. ibid.

343. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., pp. 41-42

344. Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)

345. ibid. Part A Appendix N pp. 2-3

346. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., pp. 26-27

347. Parl. Papers 1824 XVIII (471)

348. 1910 = £90 in funds or £2 6s 0d. per member

349. Parl. Papers 1909 XL [475] Appendix vol. 2-3A line 35291

350. 1842: Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity)
1844: Order of Druids: Loyal Britannia Lodge
1844: Grand United Order of Oddfellows Coppenhall
1846: Ancient Order of Foresters Linton Dale
1848: Independent Order of Rechobites Star Tent

351. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 43

352. C.R.O. MF 204/236 Chester Chronicle 21st July 1843

353. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 84

354. Pride of the Valley Lodge (I.O.O.D. M.U.) est. 1867
1870 = 50 members 1910 = 353 members

Crewe Lodge (I.O.O.D. M.U.)
1870 = 333 members 1910 = 609 members

Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996) 1912 LXXXI (123)

355. Pride of the Valley Lodge funds 1870 = £124
" " " " 1910 = £2853 increase 2200%
1910 = £8 per member

Crewe Lodge, Pride of the Valley and Strangers Home Lodge:

1870 = 598 members
1910 = 1413 members
136% increase or 3% of Crewes population 1910 = funds of £13 per member.

356. ibid. National Independent Order of Oddfellows:
Florence Nightingale Lodge 1870 = 67 members
(est. 1859) 1910 = 310 members

Loyal Rose of Crewe Lodge (1874)) 682 members
Loyal Coppenhall Perseverence Lodge (1903)) in 1910

357. Parl. Papers 1875 XLLII (408)
By 1874 four Druid lodges established in Crewe:
Loyal Rockwood Loyal Brunel
Goss Green Squire Hill
Collectively = 337 members

358. ibid. Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)

359. Grand United Order of Oddfellows:

		Members in 1910
Loyal Perseverence Lodge	est. 1867	178
Friend Indeed Lodge	1867	72
Pride of Crewe Lodge	1871	278
Emblem of Hope Lodge	1873	178
Sir Roland Hill Lodge	1880	34
Loyal Excelsior Lodge	1884	319

Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)

360. Two other Ancient Order of Forester Lodges were established
Hand of Friendship (1866) increase in membership between 1870-1910 = 40% increase in funds 1622%
Prince of Peace Lodge (1854) increase in membership = 193% and funds increased by 363%
1910 = Hand of Friendship lodge funds per member = £7
Prince of Peace Lodge " " " = £4 16s

361. Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996)
Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)
C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 13th June 1896

362. Parl. Papers 1875 XLLII (408)
Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)
1903 - Richard Pedley Tent established. By 1910 = 12 members and £80 funds.

363. Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996)
Parl. Papers 1875 XLLII (408)
Parl. Papers 1899 LXXII (351)
Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)

364. Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996)
Parl. Papers 1912 LXXXI (123)

365. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 55 and
P. H. J. H. Gosden, Friendly Societies, op. cit., p. 62

366. Parl. Papers 1880 LXVIII (365)

367. Parl. Papers 1874 XXIII (996)

368. ibid. p. 71

369. ibid. p. 65

370. ibid. pp. 65-66

371. Parl. Papers 1909 [4755] XL line 35288

372. ibid. line 35311

373. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891 pp. 37-43

Druid Lodges with active juvenile branches in 1890s:
Loyal Brittania Lodge
Loyal Rockwood Lodge
Goss Green Lodge
Pride of Crewe Lodge
Loyal Brunel Lodge

Foresters:
Crewe United Juvenile society

Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity)
Loyal Crewe Lodge
Pride of the Valley Lodge
Strangers Home Lodge

National Independent Order of Oddfellows
Florence Nightingale Lodge
Rose of Crewe Lodge

Grand United Order of Oddfellows
Every adult lodge had a juvenile branch as did the Independent Order of Rechabites and the Sons of Temperance organised the Cadets of Temperance.

374. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 22nd August 1891 p. 206

375. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 8th May 1875

376. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 7th August 1875

377. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 8th May 1875 and 11th September 1875

378. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 20th November 1875

379. J. H. Treble, op. cit., p. 130

380. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 20th November 1875

381. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 4th December 1875
11th December 1875

382. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891 12th April 1890 p. 165

383. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help op. cit., p. 275

384. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 8th January 1896 p. 187

385. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 29th April 1896 p. 201

386. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., pp. 278-9

387. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 1st December 1906

388. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Friendly Societies, op. cit., p. 218

389. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 8th December 1906

390. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 1st January 1909 p. 212

391. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 7th August 1909 p. 10

392. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 11th August 1909 p. 8

393. ibid.

394. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 17th June 1912 p. 237

395. ibid. 27th September 1912 p. 246

396. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1899 12th February 1898 p. 186;
1900 28th July 1899 p. 236

397. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 30th December 1890 p. 194
1899: 29th October 1898 p. 206

398. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 12th November 1909 p. 254
and 20th November 1909 p. 256
1911: 14th July, 1910 p. 197

399. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 17th August 1911 p. 219

400. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. vii

401. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 28th July 1909 p. 4

402. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 9th October 1909 p. 6

403. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 283

404. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 32

405. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 14th February 1885

406. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 60

407. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 18th April 1885 and P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 61

408. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891: 24th February 1890 and 25th February 1890 p. 157

409. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 10th February 1890 p. 196

410. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1892 6th April 1891 p. 199 1896:22nd April 1895 p. 204

411. ibid.

412. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 30th March 1896 p. 197

413. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 24th April 1911 p. 205 £165 13s 8d.

414. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 31st March 1914

415. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 p. 179

416. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1903 p. 201; 1912 p. 177

417. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 2nd January 1914

418. ibid.

419. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 p. 185

420. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 31st January 1903 p. 215

421. C.P.L. Crewe Chronicle 24th February 1906

422. C.R.O. LGN 1/27 p. 361 13th June 1908

423. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 259

424. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1910 1st February 1909 p. 216

425. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 32

426. F. M. L. Thompson, op. cit., p. 252

427. P. Thane, op. cit., p. 13

428. C.R.O. NCH 10th August 1904

429. C.P.L. Christ Church Parish Magazine 1894 p.8

430. C.P.L. Christ Church Parish Magazing 1900 p. 31

431. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 p. 115

432. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self-Help, op. cit., p. 1

433. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 27th March 1910 p. 183

434. Church of England Temperence Society, Christ Church,
St. Pauls Church Band of Hope,
Union Street Baptist Band of Hope,
Band of Hope and Total Abstinence Society,
Free Christian Church Band of Hope,
Independent Methodist Band of Hope, Oak Street
Primitive Methodist Band of Hope, Heath Street
" " " " Ramsbottom Street
" " " " Mill Street
Blue Ribbon Gospel Temperence Mission
Hightown Weslyan Band of Hope
Trinity Weslyan Band of Hope
United Methodist Free Church Band of Hope (1892)
During 1893 Bands of Hope were all established by the following Congregationists; Primitive Methodists; Methodist New Connexion and Welsh Presbyterian.

435. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 9th October 1909 p. 6

436. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 7th August 1909 p. 10

437. ibid.

438. ibid.

439. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 20th November 1910 p. 217

440. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 4th January 1911 p. 191

441. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 p. 153
and 5th February 1911 p. 195

442. ibid. 26th February 1911 and 26th March 1911 p. 201

443. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 8th December 1914 p.2

444. ibid.

445. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 18th December 1914 p. 4

446. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 22nd December 1914 p. 2

447. C.P.L. Crewe Guardian 25th December 1914 p. 3

448. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1897 Address and
19th March 1896 p. 197 and 26th September 1896 p. 211

449. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1901 15th March 1900 p. 191

450. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 18th September 1901 p. 250

451. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1903 15th October 1902 p. 257
1904 19th August 1903 p. 255; 1910 3rd November 1909 p. 252
1912 18th October 1911 p. 226

452. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 30th October 1904 p. 262

453. C.P.L. The Crewe Chronicle 3rd March 1906 p. 109

454. C.R.O. The Chester Chronicle 28th October 1854 p. 5 MF 204/243

455. C.R.O. LGN 1/5 2nd December 1854 p. 134
16th December 1854 p. 143
23rd December 1854 p. 147

456. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1891 22nd April 1890 p. 165

457. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1893 2st June 1892 p. 209

458. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1898 26th January 1897 p.203

459. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1901

460. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1908-1909 1st September 1908

461. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1911 10th March 1910 p. 181
12th April 1910 p. 186

462. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1912 1st January 1911 p. 191
1st February 1911 p. 195

463. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1913 16th April 1912 p. 231
9th May 1912 p. 233

464. P. H. J. H. Gosden, Self Help op. cit., p. 272 p. 280

465. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1904 p. 32

466. ibid. p. 51

467. G. D. Lucas op. cit., p. 51
C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1900 16th October 1899 p. 238
26th October 1899 p. 239

468. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1900 12th November 1899 p. 240
15th November 1899 p. 240: 22nd November 1899 p. 241
27th November 1899 p. 241: 6th December 1899 p. 242

469. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1901 26th January 1900 p.183
26th February 1900 p. 187: 21st March 1900 p. 191

470. ibid. 20th May 1900 p. 199

471. ibid. 30th May 1900 p. 201: 9th June 1900 p. 202

472. ibid. 12th September 1900 p. 208

473. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1901 12th June 1901 p. 243
31st August 1901 p. 249: 9th September 1901 p. 250
12th November 1901 p. 256: 15th November 1901 p. 257

474. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 2nd December 1901 p. 259
1903 4th January 1902 p. 221

475. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1903 16th August 1902 p. 250
17th November 1902 p. 263

476. ibid. 27th October 1902 p. 259

477. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1905 16th June 1904 p. 245

478. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1902 Address p. 2

479. F. Prochaska op. cit., p. 76

480. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 14th August 1914 p. 7

481. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 25th August 1914 p. 3
18th September 1914 p. 5; 25th September 1914 p. 4
9th October 1914 p. 4; 13th October 1914 p. 3

482. C.P.L. Eardleys Almanack 1915 23rd November 1914 p.147

483. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 30th October 1914 p. 5

484. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 9th October 1914 p. 5

485. ibid.

486. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 14th August 1914 p. 5

487. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 18th August 1914 p. 3

488. ibid.

489. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 18th September 1914 p. 5

490. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 9th October 1914 p. 5

491. ibid.

492. ibid.

493. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 20th November 1914 p. 3

494. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 18th December 1914 p. 3

495. G. D. Lucas op. cit.,

496. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 13th October 1914 p. 3

497. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 18th September 1914 p. 5

498. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 25th September 1914 p. 5

499. C.P.L. The Crewe GUardian 20th October 1914 p. 3

500. ibid.

501. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 4th September 1914 p. 5

502. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 25th September 1914 p. 5

503. C.P.L. Descriptive leaflet found inside Register of Soldiers and Sailors Rest.
The rest room was opened on 10th April 1915.

504. C.P.L. Article reprinted from the Crewe Chronicle 16th April 1921, found inside Register of Soldiers and Sailors Rest.

505. C.P.L. Balance sheet attached to Register of Soldiers and Sailors Rest.

506. When the 'Rest' was finally closed in January 1920 and all the furniture was disposed of a balance of £1,579 10s 2d remained, and by the consent of the Charity Commissioners the funds were disposed of as follows:
Endowed a bed for ex-servicemen and dependents free of hospital charges £1,500 at Crewe Memorial Cottage Hospital.
To Crewe and District ex-servicemens and dependents Benevolent Fund £79 10s 2d.

507. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 9th October 1914 p. 5

508. ibid.

509. ibid.

510. ibid.

511. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 16th October 1914 p. 5

512. C.P.L. The Crewe Guardian 23rd October 1914 p. 4
18th December 1914 p. 5

513. P. Thane, op. cit., pp. 55-61

CONCLUSION

An examination of the treatment of poverty between 1730-1914 encompasses a period of great economic and social change, and yet certain threads of consistency do emerge. The old, sick, widowed, and children together with the unemployed during periods of trade depression formed the bulk of those seeking relief from the Poor Law throughout the period. Certainly in this area of South Cheshire the old Poor Law provided an all embracing form of relief that exhibited compassion and Overseers displayed an awareness of long term as well as short term solutions to poverty, as in the case of education and medicine.

The old Poor Law exhibited the great advantage of flexibility so that local overseers could adapt it to their own particular economic and social conditions. It was this factor that the Poor Law Commissioners identified as the prime reason why the system had been abused and had therefore to be changed. However it was the very flexibility inherent in the old Poor Law that Local Guardians fought to retain under the new system of relief. The fact that the Poor Law Commission failed to enforce a new centralised system again emphasises a sense of continuity between the old and the new system of relief.

Local 'crises' did occur under the old Poor Law where the rates increased to such a level that local ratepayers were incensed and the cost of relief per pauper rose. However national fears about increasing costs and finally the disruption caused by the Swing Riots heralded the end of the old Poor Law, even in areas where it had functioned relatively free from the problems associated with the able bodied unemployed or allowances in aid of wages.

The official system of poor relief was merely intended to fill the gap between the relief offered by charities and the vagrancy laws, and a wide variety of charities had emerged in Nantwich in the eighteenth century offering relief to certain clearly defined groups i.e. native of the town, members of the Church of England, the aged, tradesmen, widows: a respectable character being the over-riding proviso for receipt of any relief. These early charities did reinforce social discipline and drunkenness and bad language for example, did on occasions, result in the loss of relief. Rules regarding the religion of recipients were rigidly enforced to the point where relief would be withheld rather than grant it to a non-believer, even though he or she might have been in dire need.

In the eighteenth century the value of charitable relief was, even then, insufficient to cope with need; hence the desperate plight of the almsmen who transferred to the workhouse because they could no longer survive on their allowances. This problem of depreciating value of charitable endeavour was to be an ongoing battle throughout the nineteenth century.

Although Nantwich is considered to have had an extensive development of charities the amount they dispensed is overshadowed by the amounts granted by the Overseers, and so their importance must not be over-exaggerated. The capacity of private charity to fulfil the needs of the poor did look doubtful by the early nineteenth century; only a spate of augmentations gave the old charities new scope to continue, albeit inadequately, to support the system of poor relief in the nineteenth century.

While the gentry had initially shown concern for the poor

and initiated charities this was not sustained in terms of the establishment of new charities as old established families moved away from the town into the country. Tradesmen increasingly took their place as trustees and were vocal against raising rate bills, but they failed, to any great extent, to establish new charities that would update and replenish the old established charities of the town.

While the new Poor Law had been conceived to control the numbers of able bodied adults, especially males, abusing the system, the experience of Nantwich Union indicates that once again the aged, sick, widows, and children, formed the bulk of applicants, the non-able bodied dominating. Once again this shows continuity with the situation existing prior to the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act. Out-relief continued to be dispensed again continuing a tradition established under the old Poor Law and the general workhouse was faced with providing relief for the aged and sick who could not be relieved in their own homes. The unsuitability of a poorly equipped workhouse to deal with the sick, compounded by a reluctance on the part of the local guardians to spend cash on providing better facilities meant that the physical conditions of the sick and the aged, who formed the majority of inmates, declined to such a state that lives were threatened by insanitary conditions.

A reluctance on the part of the local guardians to be dictated to by the central board meant that any attempt to improve standards that were universally acceptable were rejected and inmates suffered in consequence. Disputes with Poor Law Inspectors were often protracted, the most economical form of modification and change being favoured by local guardians.

Economic fluctuations and trade depressions illustrated in the most painful way the inadequacy of both the Poor Law and private charity to cope with able bodied unemployment. Self-help organisations such as the Friendly Societies were stretched to breaking point, and events such as the cotton famine illustrated how a combination of out-relief, charity, and self-help and the sharing and kindness of the poor, to the poor, was the only way to survive such an experience. Even then charitable relief and out-relief did not prevent suffering.

The fact that the premise on which the 1834 Amendment Act had been based was false, at least for many areas of the country, meant that Nantwich Workhouse began to be occupied in the main by the aged, sick, and children, groups the Act had made so little mention of as they were not considered to be the main source of trouble. The able bodied who did occupy the workhouse were in the main women, widowhood being the main cause of destitution. Reality slowly dictated to the local guardians that specialised rather than general institutions were needed but the cost of change and improvement once again inhibited progress.

As sickness pervaded every ward of the workhouse medical provision assumed an importance not envisaged by the Poor Law Commissioners, or local guardians. Likewise education for the large numbers of children in the workhouse had to be developed, such progress jarring with the restraints constantly in the minds of the local guardians regarding less eligibility. The obvious need for improvement and development in the field of education and medicine was met with reluctance by the local guardians, but while improvements were slow they were gradually

introduced so that the guardians tackled these problems at a time when many working class children were receiving little or no education or their families little medical provision. Emphasis has here to be placed on the positive nature of change albeit slow and patchy.

The fact that out-relief continued unabated once again underlines the fact that economic conditions dictated that never again would there be a totally independent working class. The size of workhouses also dictated that everyone could not be accommodated within their walls. Despite the determined effort to clamp down on out-relief recipients post 1870 need determined its continuance.

Just as the charities of Nantwich had struggled in terms of cash to cope with need in the early nineteenth century so this trait continued as original bequests were diminished by inflation and increasing population. Augmentation meant that some charities at least could continue to function by granting a meaningful level of relief, but values did diminish while accusations of maladministration and the accumulation of large balances in hand meant that the poor were not receiving the full value of charities. Finance continued to be a problem and little co-operation or co-ordination between the Poor Law and charitable institutions took place.

In Monks Coppenhall and Church Coppenhall the small population prior to 1840 meant that the development of charitable endeavour had been limited once the L. N. W. R. developed the settlement, paternalism stemmed from the company in relation to providing education and benefit societies for its employees.

However the company was in business to make a profit and the dual edge of their munificence was that they would be acquiring a better qualified workforce. Just as in other charities elements of social control and social discipline emerge through the Mechanics Institute and some workers complained of their freedom being stifled by the fact that executives from the company inhibited the men making decisions other than those approved by the company. The importance of Frank Webb is highlighted not simply because he contributed large sums of money to local charities but because he not only considered the benefits to be derived by the L. N. W. R. from improvements in the town but the benefits for workers too. As there was no Cottage Hospital in the town he became interested in fund raising and contributed extensively himself. Where there was an identifiable need he drew attention to it, and in the case of the orphanage and nursing institution, left substantial legacies to make them a reality.

Friendly Societies were strong in both towns appealing to those with enough money to pay the subscriptions and assuring some security during sickness and bereavement not to mention old age, as many societies paid sickness benefit during old age to support members. However while the over-riding aim was to assist fellow members in time of need they too were faced with the dilemma of financial reality. While an attempt was made to keep subscriptions low to encourage membership and to be competitive, increasingly subscriptions did not cover benefit, so in order to survive and ultimately protect members, the later part of the nineteenth century was dominated by a search for a financially sound solution to their problem. While the self-

help ethic of the workers is personified in the Friendly Societies so the Co-Operative Society attempted to inculcate values of thrift together with providing quality food for members. However not all the poor were able to afford the membership of the Co-Operative Society, just as the Friendly Societies failed to reach every member of the working class.

The fact that the workhouse was always the last resort of the poor meant that a continual round of fund raising and charitable benefits developed in Crewe that came to dominate the leisure activities of the town. Local depressions or accidents in other areas of the country stimulated even more concerts and benefits to help fellow workers. The Value of such fund raising fell into two groups: those that raised money to entertain the old/young at certain times of the year such as Christmas; and those that attempted to provide continual assistance such as food and clothing for poor children. The 'one off' entertainments would have had little impact on material conditions throughout the year and it was the sustained fund raising that was most important, and by its very nature encountered difficulties. Attempts to provide a Cottage Hospital united the whole community and attempted to fill a gap that up to that time had been dealt with in the workhouse. The workmen themselves were the prime movers in this charity, but the problem of sustaining interest and funds was a difficulty mirroring the problems encountered in Nantwich in regard to charitable endeavour.

Poverty was not a static 'state' into which certain individuals fell, never to emerge again and an appreciation of the fact that it was at certain periods of their lives that people were most vulnerable led to concerted efforts to help widows,

children, the aged, and the unemployed during trade depressions. The realisation that it was not moral weakness that led to poverty increasingly led to calls for state help for the aged, sick, and unemployed, that would remove them from the stigma of the Poor Law, an attempt to redress the balance accentuated by the 1834 Act. Charitable endeavour was increasingly less able to effectively cope with the volume of need, but the fund raising continued as the working classes realised that it could be themselves who needed help next time.

While it is a fact that in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century less than 3% of the local population were in receipt of poor relief, Rowntree's and Booth's surveys drew attention to the fact that poverty was far more extensive than this, emphasising two important points. Firstly the workhouse and the Poor Law in general were so detested by the majority of the working class that it was in reality only called upon in the last resort when all else had failed. Secondly it emphasises the importance of all the other fund raising measures, charities, Friendly Societies, the Co-Operative Society, and Benefit Societies, in enabling people to survive, and then not without hardship, outside the walls of the workhouse. Poverty and deprivation became an accepted part of working class life and any aid that could be secured helped to ease the sufferings until times improved.

The causes of poverty: low pay, unemployment, and short-time, bad weather, death and sickness, once again show consistency throughout the period studied. While the strategy to deal with poverty was altered via the 1834 Amendment Act the underlying causes continued and rather than a moral reawakening

deterring the growth of poverty the reality of economic and social conditions emphasised the inappropriate assumptions on which the Act had been based.

The identification of need in the local community, activity to generate finance to satisfy that need, and the fulfilment of the deprivation was the responsibility of individuals, Churches, Friendly Societies. the Mayor, and they all filled a gap in the 'system' of relief. Private and public effort worked to fulfil different needs for different groups but neither worked together in co-ordinated action, no mention being made of the influence of the Charity Organisation Society. The only way they were interrelated was in the problems they shared of sustaining finances in order to fulfil need. The charity of the poor to the poor, and reliance on family and neighbours underpinned all relief, although largely unrecorded the vulnerability of individuals served to bring people together in time of need when those who had the least would offer help to others.

The operation of the Poor Law fulfilled only the need of a limited number - those who were most desperate and had no one else to turn to for help. Help for the rest relied on individual effort, either for themselves or their neighbours. Only in the 1890s did opinion start to change, and then it was not until 1908 that action was taken. Even then not all the aged poor received relief from pensions, conditions regarding age meant that many of the poor under 70 still fell through the net.

It was the first World War that finally united the neighbouring towns of Crewe and Nantwich in an attempt to accommodate the Belgian refugees. A whole new set of fund raising activities

evolved in order to meet the needs of new areas of want regarding soldiers and their families, emphasising the flexibility of such charitable effort and the capacity of the people to contribute to a seemingly endless stream of events.

APPENDIX A

Chart to show the amounts by which the rates had increased between 1776-1815

CHURCH COPPENHALL

1786 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	46%
1803 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	130%
1803 compared with 1784	Rate increase of	57%
1814 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	230%
1814 compared with 1803	Rate increase of	43½%
1815 compared with 1814	Rate decrease of	9%

MONKS COPPENHALL

1786 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	17%
1803 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	262%
1803 compared with 1784	Rate increase of	209%
1814 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	534%
1814 compared with 1803	Rate increase of	75%
1815 compared with 1814	Rate decrease of	13%

CREWE

1786 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	12%
1803 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	337%
1803 compared with 1784	Rate increase of	290%
1814 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	253%
1814 compared with 1803	Rate decrease of	19%
1815 compared with 1814	Rate increase of	5.2%

NANTWICH

1786 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	31%
1803 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	85%
1803 compared with 1784	Rate increase of	41½%
1814 compared with 1776	Rate increase of	292%
1814 compared with 1803	Rate increase of	112%
1815 compared with 1814	Rate decrease of	27%

SOURCE: The Abstract of Answers and Returns from the Overseers of the Poor, 1786, 1784, 1803, 1814, 1815. C.R.O.

APPENDIX B

NANTWICH POPULATION 1801 = 3463

APPROXIMATE POPULATION IN 1803 = 3560

		% of pauper population	% of total population
Permanent relief out of the workhouse	153	39.6	4.3
Permanent relief in the workhouse	39	10.1	1.1
Children receiving out-relief under 5	24	6.2	0.7
Children receiving out-relief between 5-14	39	10.1	1.1
Occasionally relieved	115	29.8	3.2
Non-parishioners receiving relief	16	4.2	0.4
	386	100.0	10.8

CHESHIRE POPULATION 1801 = 191751

APPROXIMATE POPULATION IN 1803 = 218583

		% of pauper population	% of total population
Permanent relief out of the workhouse	7504	28.6	3.4
Permanent relief in the workhouse	273	1.0	0.1
Children receiving out-relief under 5	2549	9.7	1.2
Children receiving out-relief between 5-14	4428	17.0	2.0
Occasionally relieved	7398	28.2	3.4
Non-parishioners receiving relief	4078	15.5	1.9
	26230	100.0	12.0

SOURCE: The Abstract of Answers and Returns from the Overseers of the Poor 1803

APPENDIX C

Chart to show the % increase in the expenditure on the poor in local communities

MONKS COPPENHALL

1784 compared with 1776	An increase of 25%
1803 compared with 1776	An increase of 161%
1803 compared with 1784	An increase of 108%
1814 compared with 1776	An increase of 213%

CHURCH COPPENHALL

1784 compared with 1776	An increase of 39%
1803 compared with 1776	An increase of 80%
1803 compared with 1784	An increase of 30%
1814 compared with 1776	An increase of 107%

CREWE

1784 compared with 1776	An increase of 19%
1803 compared with 1776	An increase of 186%
1803 compared with 1784	An increase of 140%
1814 compared with 1776	An increase of 276%

NANTWICH

1784 compared with 1776	An increase of 33%
1803 compared with 1776	An increase of 90%
1803 compared with 1784	An increase of 43%
1814 compared with 1776	An increase of 178%

SOURCE:
C.R.O. The Abstracts of the Answers and Returns from the Overseers of the Poor 1776, 1784, 1803 and 1814

APPENDIX D

Amount spent per pauper per year both in and out of the Workhouse and those occasionally relieved

	Date	Est. Pop.	No. of Paupers	% of local pop. in poverty	Amount spent on relief	Amount spent per pauper
NANTWICH	1803	3560	370	10.4	£1101	£2 19s. 10d.
	1813	4131	312	7.5	£1805	£5 15s. 6d.
	1814	4197	311	7.4	£1656	£5 6s. 6d.
	1815	4263	297	7.0	£1319	£4 8s. 10d.
MONKS COPPENHALL	1803	120	19	16.0	£71 9s.	£3 15s. 0d.
	1813	120	10	8.3	£55 0s.	£5 10s. 0d.
	1814	123	17	13.8	£86 0s.	£5 1s. 0d.
	1815	126	12	9.5	£68 0s.	£5 13s. 2d.
CHURCH COPPENHALL	1803	245	34	13.9	£176 6s.	£5 3s. 6d.
	1813	276	21	7.6	£165 0s.	£7 17s. 0d.
	1814	288	24	8.3	£202 0s.	£8 8s. 0d.
	1815	299	25	8.4	£190 0s.	£7 12s. 0d.
CREWE	1803		25		£187 17s.	£7 10s. 2d.
	1813		16		£258 0s.	£16 2s. 6d.
	1814		16		£247 0s.	£15 8s. 7d.
	1815		15		£260 0s.	£17 6s. 6d.

Between 1813-1815 the total money expended on the maintenance of the poor averaged £5 13s. 0d. for each pauper in Cheshire.

Source: C.R.O. The Abstract of Answers and Returns from the Overseers of the Poor 1803 and 1815

A P P E N D I X E

Chart to show the % of the rates expended on the poor 1803 - 1815

	1803	1813	1814	1815
CHURCH COPPENHAL	82½%	60%	66%	68%
MONKS COPPENHALL	68%	39&	47%	42½%
CREWE	61½%	100%	100%	100%
NANTWICH	100% (Deficit of £205)	78%	70%	76%

source: The Abstract of the Answers and Returns from the Overseers of the Poor, 1803 and 1815. C.R.O.

Source: C.R.O. LGN 1/4 p. 438/439

APPENDIX F

Nantwich Workhouse Diet 1854

		Breakfast		Dinner							Supper	
		Bread	Porridge	Cooked Rice and Treacle	Lobscouse	Pea Soup	Bread	Cooked Meat or Bacon	Potatoes or Vegetables	Butter-milk	Bread	Porridge
		oz.	pints	lbs.	quarts	pints	oz.	oz.	lbs.	pints	oz.	pints
SUNDAY	MEN	6	1½	1¾	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	1½	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1½
MONDAY	MEN	6	1½	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	1½
TUESDAY	MEN	6	1½	-	-	1½	4	-	-	-	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	5	1½
WEDNESDAY	MEN	6	1½	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	-	-	-	-	3	1½	½	5	1½
THURSDAY	MEN	6	1½	1¾	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	1½	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1½
FRIDAY	MEN	6	1½	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	-	-	-	-	3	1½	½	5	1½
SATURDAY	MEN	6	1½	-	-	1½	4	-	-	-	6	1½
	WOMEN	5	1½	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	5	1½

APPENDIX G

TABLE TO SHOW THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN THE WORKHOUSE AND WHERE THEY ORIGINATED FROM IN THE UNION

Year	Nantwich children	Monks Coppenhall children	Church Coppenhall children	%	Total for Union
April 1892 - 1893	59	114	13	74.5	250
April 1893 - 1894	90	151	11	77.0	327
April 1894 - 1895	61	153	9	72.8	306
April 1895 - 1896	54	129	8	70.0	272
April 1896 - 1897	64	131	8	78.0	259

Source: LGN 2022/21

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