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SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AND THE SCHOOLING OF  
WORKING-CLASS CHILDREN AGED SEVEN AND UNDER  
IN SEVEN AREAS OF NORTH LONDON, 1800-1851

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### ABSTRACT

In the 1850s publicly-aided schools for infants co-existed with private working-class schools, some of which also catered for very young children. During the first half of the nineteenth century parents of infant-aged children could decide whether or not to send their child to school; if they opted for schooling they might then have had to make decisions about the type of school to use.

This investigation set out to establish whether working-class parents' decisions regarding the schooling of their very young children were influenced by a range of socio-economic factors, and whether parents with certain life-styles were more favourably disposed towards the public infant schools than towards the much maligned private working-class schools.

This investigation examined the school attendance of infants in relation to a range of socio-economic factors, which included parental occupation, whether or not the mother was at work, the employment and schooling patterns of older children in the family, the parents' religion and country of birth, the size of the family and the ages of the children concerned. The autonomy and independence of members of the working-class was acknowledged throughout the study by emphasising the parents' role in determining the pattern of their children's education.

Seven small areas of North London were chosen for in-depth analysis. The areas differed in terms of their social make-up and the availability of schooling facilities. The 1851 census enumerators' returns were used in order to recreate a picture of school attendance in the survey area, and school attendance was analysed in relation to the socio-economic profiles of the families.

The study concludes with a summary of the findings and a comparison between the school attendance patterns in the seven areas.

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### INTRODUCTION.

The education of young members of society is not a mechanical process immune from social influences such as religious beliefs, politics, the value placed on different kinds of knowledge and the attitudes about an individual's role in society. Decisions that are made regarding the nature of educational provision reflect the values of society. Societal values are dynamic and whilst they may be one of the agents of change in society, they are themselves formed or modified as a result of changes in society. 'Educational history, therefore, is only true to life when it is treated as a chapter of social history.'

Fifty years after Tawney made this comment, educational historians have increasingly begun to recognise education as an integral part of society. Current research has tended to focus more on the effect on education of religion, politics and community values rather than offering accounts of the administration of education and quantitative studies on the numbers of schools and pupils.<sup>2</sup> This investigation into the education of children aged seven and under in London during the

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1. Tawney, R.H., 'Review of The Charity School Movement by M.G. Jones', Economic History Review, Vol. IX, 1938-39, p. 202.

2. For example the collections of McCann, P. (ed.), Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century, 1977; Reeder, D. (ed.), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century, 1977; Hurt, J. (ed.), Childhood, Youth and Education in the Late Nineteenth Century, 1981.

first half of the nineteenth century was based upon the view that the study of education is inseparable from the study of society.

The first section of this chapter examines the scope and significance of the study and the remaining two sections outline some of the research problems caused by the orientation of the investigation.

#### The Scope and Orientation of the Investigation.

This investigation focused on the education of working-class 'under eights' in North London between 1800 and 1851. There has been much debate about the validity of the criteria used when assigning individuals or groups to particular social classes.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this investigation the category 'working class' included all those adults who were skilled manual workers, semi-skilled manual workers and unskilled workers. Small scale employers, even those employing only one other adult, were categorised as lower middle class alongside workers such as

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1. See for example, Thompson, E.P., The Making of the English Working Class, 1968; Neale, R.S., 'Class and Class Consciousness in Early Nineteenth Century England - Three Classes or Five?' in Victorian Studies, Vol. 12, 1968, pp. 5-32; Baker, R.P., 'Labour History, Social Science and the Concept of the Working Class' in Labor History, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1973, pp. 98-104.

police officers, clerks and shopkeepers.<sup>1</sup> Children were categorised on the basis of their father's and/or mother's occupation. Within the working class there was a great deal of heterogeneity in terms of economic situation, political views and attitudes towards education. This is discussed in later chapters.

Earlier research into the education of working-class children during the first half of the nineteenth century has been invaluable in a number of ways. It has provided present-day historians with a wealth of information relating to the development of educational facilities through time, the beginnings of state intervention, the role of the Church in providing schools for the working class and the views of the middle and upper classes about the educational facilities for the working class.<sup>2</sup> Many questions remained unanswered, however. How did the educational provision fit in with the everyday lives of those for whom it was provided? What did the parents and

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1. A similar system of categorisation has been used by other historians: for example, Marsden, W.E., 'Social environment, school attendance and educational achievement in a Merseyside town 1870-1900' in McCann, P. (ed.), Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.

2. For example, Sturt, M., The Education of the People, 1967; Murphy, J., Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1971; Whitbread, N., Evolution of the Nursery and Infant School, 1972; Lawson, J. and Silver, H., A Social History of Education in England, 1973.

children think about the schools and their educational aims? Was children's attendance at school dependent upon their parents' occupation, religion, political views or economic condition, or was it a combination of these and other factors? Recently educational historians have begun to try to answer many of these questions but mainly in relation to children above the ages of seven or with respect to schooling in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The education of children below the age of eight is an aspect of educational history that needs further investigation.

A fair amount is already known about the development of public infant schools<sup>2</sup> in Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century and of the contributions made to early education during this period by figures such as Robert Owen and

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1. Gardner, P., The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England, 1984; Marsden, W.E., 'Social environment, school attendance and educational achievement in a Merseyside town 1870-1900' in McCann, P. (ed.), op cit. 1977, pp. 193-230; Marsden, W.E., Unequal Educational Provision in England and Wales: The Nineteenth Century Roots, 1987.

2. The term 'public infant school' is used here to denote schools for children below the age of eight which were subject to external control.



Samuel Wilderspin.<sup>1</sup> Little however is known about parents' responses to these infant schools. In addition little is also known about the alternative forms of early childhood educational facilities, an example of which was the the working-class private school.<sup>2</sup> Writers, politicians and educationists of the time were aware of the existence of private working-class schools but frequently chose to ignore their existence when formulating figures that dealt with educational provision.<sup>3</sup> Possibly, this was because of the widespread opinion held by the middle- and

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1. For example: Rusk, R.R., A History of Infant Education, 1933; Raymont, T., A History of the Education of Young Children, 1937; McCann, W.P., 'Samuel Wilderspin and the Early Infant Schools' in British Journal of Educational Studies (hereafter B.J.E.S.), Vol. XIV, No. 2, May 1966, pp. 188-204; Turner, D.A., 'The State and the Infant School System' in B.J.E.S. Vol. XVIII, No. 2, June 1970, pp. 155-165; Whitbread, N. The Evolution of the Nursery-Infant School, 1972; McCann, W.P. and Young, F.A. Samuel Wilderspin and the Infant School Movement, 1982; Dobie, C.C. 'A Study in the Development of Infant Education in London 1860-1870', 1988, Unpublished M.A., University of London; Deacon, W.A. 'The Promise and Reality of Infant Education 1800-1850', 1988, Unpublished M.A., University of London.

2. The term 'private working-class school' is used throughout this thesis to refer to all those schools which catered for working-class children and were supported solely by the school fees of the children.

3. For example: Reports of the Education Committee of the London Statistical Society ( hereafter L.S.S.) in the Journal of the Royal Statistical Society (hereafter J.S.S.), 1837-1849, also P.P. 1837-8, (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes.

upper-class observers who stated that:

Taking into consideration the extreme youth of the children attending them [ dame schools ] together with the meagre amount of instruction , the total absence of properly qualified teachers and the general impression which prevails among them that the children are only sent to be kept out of harms way, there will be some danger of over estimating their value, if they are set down as a whole, as representing much more than nurseries, where children of the working class are taken care of.<sup>1</sup>

Many twentieth-century historians appear to have adopted this particular view with the result that early childhood education in the first half of the nineteenth century has tended to be conceived as infant school education. Some historians, including A.F.B. Roberts, J. Higginson and D.P. Leinster-Mackay, have evidence to support an alternative view of dame schools, one that suggests that these schools were not necessarily as dreadful or as worthless as conventional educational history has portrayed them to be.<sup>2</sup>

The members of the working class were not a passive group waiting for things to be provided for them and their children. Instead they were active participants in society who were capable of making their own decisions about their lives and the needs of

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1. Birmingham Statistical Society, 'Report of the Birmingham Statistical Society on the State of Education in Birmingham', J.S.S., Vol. 3, April 1840, p. 32.
  2. Roberts, A.F.B., 'A New View of the Infant School Movement' in B.J.E.S., Vol. XX, No. 2, June 1972, pp. 154-164;  
Higginson, J., 'Dame Schools' in B.J.E.S., Vol. XXII, No. 2, June 1974, pp. 166-180; Leinster-Mackay, D.P., 'Dame Schools: A Need for Review' in B.J.E.S. Vol. XIV. Feb. 1976, pp. 33-47.

their children, and who set about fulfilling these needs despite the various hardships this section of society had to endure - hardships which included economic problems, ill health and lack of access to the country's decision makers. The development of the teetotal movement is one example of the way in which members of the working class took control of their own lives and reformed themselves rather than relying on leadership from their social superiors.<sup>1</sup>

Another aspect of life in which this working-class independence is evidenced is in the decisions they made about the educational needs of their children and the provision they made in order to fulfil these needs. This point was highlighted recently by Phil Gardner when he argued that the reason why private working-class schools were so popular with the working class was because 'the schools provided the education the working class demanded for themselves and not what the middle class provided for them'.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the characteristic diversity of North London it was necessary to focus on relatively small districts in order to answer questions regarding the relationship between educational facilities and the socio-economic factors. At this point it

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1. Olsen, G.R., 'From Parish to Palace: Working-Class Influences on Anglican Temperance Movements, 1835-1914', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 40, No. 2, April 1989, pp. 239-243.
  2. Gardner, P., The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England, 1984, p. 161.

should be noted that the small districts ought not to be viewed as typical of the larger areas of which they formed a part for two main reasons. Firstly, few of the larger areas were homogenous. Secondly, the small districts were not randomly selected and were chosen partly on the basis of the availability of sufficient source material. The districts surveyed, therefore, are ones which were of particular interest to contemporaries, and the districts' social and economic features were judged to be worth documenting. The fact that the districts might not have been 'typical' does not invalidate any conclusions that are drawn from the in-depth studies, but does mean that generalised conclusions relating to the area of which they were a part and to North London as whole must necessarily be tentative.

One aim of this investigation was to broaden the concept of nineteenth-century early childhood education so as to include more than that which occurred in public infant schools. Concepts of education were not necessarily shared by the different social classes and to concentrate only on the education received in infant schools would be to accept uncritically the contemporary view of the middle and upper classes as universally held, whilst ignoring the views of the working class.

A second aim of the study was to begin to explore in greater depth the response of the working class to the various forms of early childhood educational provision, and to give more recognition to the resourcefulness and autonomy of the working class than has hitherto been the norm.

A third aim was to examine the place of early childhood educational facilities in local communities as opposed to attempting to identify nationwide trends. In the early nineteenth century London was a large community composed of a number of smaller, diverse communities and therefore a study of London offered the opportunity to examine localised trends as well as broader patterns.

At this point it should be noted that the study does not include a statistical analysis of the findings. There are three main reasons for this. Firstly, the use of statistics can lead to a positivistic approach to explaining the behaviour of people. Such an approach tends to divert attention from the individual, and insufficient emphasis is placed on the fact that, because of the existence of free-will, human social behaviour can not be described in terms of simple laws. Secondly, an emphasis on statistics does not enable readers to examine and analyse the original data. Thirdly, the samples in this study were relatively small and it would have been inappropriate and misleading to subject these samples to statistical analysis.

## CHAPTER 1

### RESEARCH ISSUES RELATED TO THE INVESTIGATION

Questions which relate to the attitudes and opinions of the working class have remained unanswered for so long partly because of the difficulties involved in finding the answers. A major problem in attempting to investigate the education of the working class and what they themselves thought about early childhood education was that most of the easily available source material relating to the lives and education of the metropolitan working class was written from a middle- or upper-class viewpoint. There is a paucity of first hand working-class testimony about London life and the education of young children.

Evidence about the education of very young working-class children between 1800 and 1850 falls into two main categories. The first category contains a quantity of easily accessible primary source material that has been utilised by numerous educational historians. This material is in the form of Parliamentary Papers;<sup>1</sup> the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education;<sup>2</sup>

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1. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt. 1; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, P.P. 1834 (572) ix, Report on the State of Education, P.P. 1837-1838 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales and P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales). Also Parliamentary Papers not primarily concerned with education eg. P.P. 1815 (473) III, Report on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis; P.P. 1816 (396) v, Report from the Select Committee on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis and P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Hand-Loom Weavers. Returns and Reports from the Assistant Commissioners.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-58 and Reports of the Committee of Council on Education, 1859-64.

annual reports of societies specifically concerned with the education of working-class children;<sup>1</sup> school minute books; the reports of the London Statistical Society (L.S.S.); education journals;<sup>2</sup> articles in newspapers and in periodicals as politically diverse as the Edinburgh Review, Quarterly Review and Westminster Review; the published works of contemporary educationists such as Owen, Wilderspin, Pole and Carey<sup>3</sup> and those of nineteenth-century social researchers and commentators such as Tristan, Mayhew and Hollingshead.<sup>4</sup> Maps and street directories were also referred to.

The outstanding feature of all the material in this first category is that it was written or edited by members of the middle or upper classes and as such is a record of members of this particular group's perception of the situation.

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1. For example, the National and British School Societies, the Associated Catholic Charities and the Ragged School Union.

2. For example, The Quarterly Journal of Education; Report of the Central Society of Education; The Quarterly Educational Magazine and The Ragged School Union Magazine.

3. Owen, R.D., An Outline of the System of Education at New Lanark, 1824; Wilderspin, S., On the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor, 1824; Pole, T., Observations Relative to Infant Schools, 1823 and Carey, M., The Infant School, 1827.

4. Tristan, F., The London Journal of Flora Tristan, 1842; Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey of Labour and the Poor 1849-51, and London Labour and the London Poor, 1861; Hollingshead, J., Ragged London in 1861, 1861.

The second and much smaller category of sources includes reference materials that offer an insight into what members of the working class thought about the education and care of their children. The information contained within these materials was needed to create a balanced picture of the issues connected with early childhood education in London (eg. attendance patterns, which types of schools were preferred and for what reasons). These materials provide first hand working-class testimony in the form of autobiographies or direct quotes.<sup>1</sup> The radical, unstamped press is included in the second category as it provides an antithesis to the official newspapers of the day (e.g. The Times). The enumerators' returns for the population censuses also fall into the second category and offer relatively objective information about those aspects of working-class life that were closely linked with educational provision, (eg. residential and occupational patterns in London between 1841 and 1861 and the geographic position of private schools).

Source materials from both categories presented problems. For example the nineteenth-century education statistics included in the first category initially appear to provide an objective

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1. Direct quotes from members of the working class appear throughout Mayhew's work and also in the reports of Select Committees. Although the words were recorded by the middle and upper classes, the comments can provide another source of working-class testimony provided the material is treated with caution. Readers need to be aware that not all of what was said to investigators was necessarily recorded or printed.



account of how things were but once questions are asked about the survey and the resultant statistics it becomes clear that social statistics are far from unbiased.<sup>1</sup> Why for example, were a particular set of statistics compiled in the first place? What questions were asked? Who was asked the questions and by whom? How were the responses recorded? What underlying assumptions were applied when the results were sorted and organised into a coherent set of statistics? The answers to these and other similar questions tend to lead to the conclusion that most nineteenth-century statistics that relate to the lives and education of the working class were arrived at through processes that were neither value-free nor totally objective, and were open to the influence of personal prejudice at every stage. Indeed, the surveys and statistics probably provide more information about the motivations and values of those responsible for the surveys than about the subjects of the survey.

During the first half of the nineteenth century both national and local surveys of education failed to produce statistics that were

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1. The general problems of quantitative methods are discussed in Floud, R., An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians, 1979 and Wrigley, E.A. (ed.), Nineteenth Century Society : Essays in the Use of Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data, 1972.

accurate factual accounts of the current situation<sup>1</sup>, although the L.S.S. claimed to do so.<sup>2</sup> Quantitative inaccuracies were the result of the various agencies' inability to collect comprehensive and accurate data. Contemporaries were aware of the shortcomings of the Parliamentary Education Surveys of 1818 and 1833 and the related statistics were criticised on the grounds that an inadequate survey schedule had resulted in quantitative inaccuracies.<sup>3</sup>

Another important cause of inaccuracies in the parliamentary figures was that the majority of those responsible for the Education Returns were middle class<sup>4</sup> and many private working-

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1. National education surveys were instigated by Parliament and published as P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor and P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales. Local education surveys included those conducted by the L.S.S. between 1837 and 1848; the Central Society of Education in 1837 and 1838; the Ragged School Union and the Spitalfields School Society.

2. The Education Committee of the L.S.S. claimed that it was confined to a 'statement of facts' in J.S.S. Vol. 1, 1837, p. 5.

3. For example, 'Statistics of Education in England' Quarterly Journal of Education, Vol. IX, No. XVIII, Oct. 1834 - Jan. 1835, pp. 66-74; Central Society of Education, Second Publication, 1838 p. 266 and the account of the speech of Thomas Wyse MP. in Edinburgh Review, Vol. 65, 1837, pp. 245-65.

4. For example, it is clear that the majority of the education returns to Parliament in 1833 were made by the local clergy or the verger or men of a similar status: P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales.

class schools were not recorded in the educational returns simply because the returning officer did not know of their existence. Similarly there is evidence that the agents of the L.S.S. experienced some difficulties in providing comprehensive information about working-class private schools as the teachers in these schools were loathe to co-operate for fear that as a result their school might be closed down.<sup>1</sup>

Working-class private schools were also sometimes not included in the returns to Parliament because they did not conform to the returning officers' concept of a school.<sup>2</sup> Those that were returned were often disregarded in the final statistical analyses on the basis that such schools were 'worthless'.<sup>3</sup> The published statistics of the L.S.S. were similarly biased as they too were arrived at by a process which was heavily influenced by the predominantly middle-class values of the Committee which paid little heed to the views of the working-class parents who sent their children to the working-class private schools.<sup>4</sup> For example in 1837 the L.S.S. decided it was necessary to exclude from its final statistics those children educated in dame schools 'in order to arrive at the real number of those who are receiving

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1. See for example comments quoted in 'The First Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vol. 1, 1838, p. 4.

2. See section on terminology, p. 23 et seq. of this chapter.

3. P.P. 1838 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales, p. 132.

4. Reports of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S. Vols. 1-6, 1837-43.

what is worthy of the name of instruction'.<sup>1</sup>

Statistics of those societies specifically concerned with education<sup>2</sup> were also liable to be an interpretation rather than a factual account, although the possibility of bias was more obvious in the case of the figures produced by societies which had an explicit aim (eg. to gain financial support for schools for the poor or to establish Catholic schools) as opposed to those produced by supposedly impartial 'fact-finding' bodies such as a Parliamentary Select Committee.

Whilst it is not possible to identify any particular set of early nineteenth-century education statistics as being totally accurate it is possible to suggest that some of the statistics were probably more accurate than others. For example there was little scope for checking the veracity of the returns to the nationwide parliamentary education surveys, whereas the investigations of

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1. First Report of the L.S.S. on the State of Education in Westminster, J.S.S. Vol. 1, 1838, p. 9.

2. For example, the British and Foreign School Society and the National Society, the Ragged School Union, the Spitalfields School Society, the Associated Catholic Charities etc. The Catholic Charities Society, for example, would have tended to over-estimate rather than under-estimate the number of Catholic children in need of education and might have helped strengthen its case by disregarding schools that did not provide the type of education the Society deemed to be of value, so too would have the British and National Societies.

the L.S.S. were in direct contrast to this as they were local in nature and concerned with geographically small areas. The fact that the L.S.S. surveys were local and relatively small scale enabled the findings of the L.S.S agents to be verified more readily, and some checks were carried out.<sup>1</sup> In addition, there is evidence that some of the education returns to Parliament were not properly completed, and no reasons were given for the failure to reply.<sup>2</sup> In contrast the L.S.S. apparently had fewer instances of people not replying to questions and furthermore, when non co-operation was experienced by the agents, the L.S.S. offered possible explanations for it and therefore made it easier to take the omissions into account.<sup>3</sup> The L.S.S. had no avowed political or religious goal, and although it was true that most of the members of the L.S.S. were middle or upper class there was not the pressure to produce statistics that confirmed a claim or strengthened a cause, as was the case for the various religious and education societies.

Although each set of statistics is a valuable historical source, it is possible to suggest that in general terms the statistics of the L.S.S. were probably the most impartial and accurate, whilst those resulting from enquiries by Education Select Committees

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1. First Report of the L.S.S. in J.S.S. Vol. 1, 1838. p. 4.

2. For example, P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, St. Paul's, Shadwell, p. 579.

3. For example, J.S.S., Vol. 1, 1838, p. 4 and J.S.S. Vol. 6, 1843, p. 28.

were less accurate, and those produced by religious and education societies were the least reliable as they were the most partisan.

The sources included in the second category also presented research difficulties. There were three main problems with the working-class autobiographies. Firstly, they were written retrospectively and were therefore only as accurate as the authors' memories. Secondly, the autobiographies provide a very selective view of working-class life as the writing of autobiographies was not a widespread occupation amongst the working class. Thirdly, of the early nineteenth-century autobiographies that survive today, the majority tend to have been written by males with the result that the perceptions of working-class women are seriously under-represented by this form of record.<sup>1</sup> Finally, relatively few autobiographies have come to light which were written by people living in London during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Inherent in the various reports, articles and books concerned

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1. For example: Burnett, J., Useful Toil, 1974; Vincent, D., Bread Knowledge and Freedom, 1981; Burnett, J., Destiny Obscure, 1982.

2. Londoners who wrote autobiographies included John James Bezer, republished in Vincent, D., Testaments of Radicalism, 1977; Carter, T., Memoirs of a Working Man, 1845; Basset, J., The Life of a Vagrant or the Testimony of an Outcast to the Value and Truth of the Gospel, 1850; O'Neill, J., 'Fifty Years Experience of an Irish Shoemaker in London' in St. Crispin, Vols. 1-3, 1869-71.

with the lives and education of the working class was the problem that they reflected the attitudes, beliefs and prejudices of the authors. Whilst it is true, for example, that Mayhew's survey for the Morning Chronicle<sup>1</sup> resulted in a very valuable pool of information about the lives of the metropolitan poor, and he is widely regarded as a pioneer of oral history, his work needs to be treated with caution. Although his work provided a view of London life that increased people's awareness of the lives of the poorer members of the metropolitan working class, and 'the voices of the poor' can be heard in his accounts of the different aspects of labour in London<sup>2</sup>, he did not always write objectively. Furthermore, it is possible that less sensational evidence was omitted from his published articles. He did not select at random those he visited but was guided by the suggestions of his informants, with the result that the life-styles he described and the opinions voiced might not have been as representative as one would wish. Hollingshead's reports of the sufferings of the poor<sup>3</sup> in 1861 was also a fairly subjective account of what he saw in spite of his own claims and the views of contemporary critics.<sup>4</sup> Hollingshead was far more interested

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey of Labour and the Poor, Vols. 1-6, 1849-50 and London Labour and the London Poor, (esp. Vols. 1 and 2), 1861.

2. Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1, 1861, p. xv.

3. Hollingshead, J., Ragged London in 1861, 1861.

4. Ragged London was praised for its sobriety in the Westminster Review, Vol. CXLIX, July 1861, p. 132.

in providing a record of the experiences of the average poorer working-class Londoner in the 1860s<sup>1</sup> as opposed to Mayhew, who concentrated more on the criminal element of the working class or on the 'street folk'.

Hollinghead's Ragged London also captured the misery and relentless nature of the lives of the metropolitan poor without romanticising their lives and it therefore possibly offered a truer, though less palatable, picture of the lives of the poor than did Mayhew's works.

Tristan's London Journal reflected her French background but was useful in that it presented yet another view of London, that of a woman and of a relatively disinterested party.<sup>2</sup>

The newspapers which avowedly expressed the views of the working class were included in the second category,<sup>3</sup> but it was not always easy to decide how representative were the views expressed in these papers. Those involved in their production were undoubtedly not only politically aware, but were also willing to risk imprisonment as the working class newspapers were unstamped

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1. For example, Hollingshead described the misery of an unemployed dock labourer and his eight children and the plight of a poor silk weaver's wife in East London who was 'almost sinking from anxiety, if not from want', Ragged London, p. 31 and p. 39 respectively.

2. Tristan, F., The London Journal of Flora Tristan, 1842.

3. Papers such as Hetherington's The Poor Man's Guardian, and Cobbet's Political Register fell into the second category.



and therefore illegal. On the other hand it would be unwise to ignore the fact that some of these papers had very healthy circulations.<sup>1</sup> Between the autumn of 1816 and the early spring of 1817 the circulation of The Political Register was between 40,000 and 60,000 per week, in comparison with that of The Times, the leading daily, which was only 5,370 and that of The Observer, a weekly, which was 6,860. By 1836 more than 500 different unstamped journals and newspapers were being printed, and approximately 200,000 of these papers were sold per week.<sup>2</sup> Despite their relatively low cost each paper sold was almost certainly read by more than one person, and with this in mind it is clear that they provide an insight into the views of a fair proportion of the working class, although as with the autobiographies the views of radical working-class women were under-represented.

In order to discover more about the lives and education of the working class in London it was necessary to supplement the information gleaned from the more commonly used 'official' historical records and turn to less obvious sources. The enumerators' returns for the population census for the year 1851 proved to be valuable in the search for working-class private schools and the patterns of school attendance in terms of

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1. Thompson, E.P., The Making of the English Working Class, 1963, p. 789 and Vincent, D. Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, 1981, p. 114.

2. Hollis, P., The Pauper Press, 1970, p. 124.

age.' Whilst the returns were 'official' in the sense that the censuses were carried out on the instigation of Parliament, it was easier to gain a more accurate picture of the actual situation from the Returns than from the tables of figures and statistics that were the final result of the house to house surveys. One reason for this was that the inconsistencies, possible inaccuracies and sources of error were easier to identify in the original enumerators' returns than in the apparently unbiased, impersonal final statistics. One source of error was the non-declaration on the part of working-class private school teachers. In the early 1840s the L.S.S. claimed that the 1841 census would understate the number of private working-class schools because many of the teachers concerned, especially women or those with an alternative occupation, chose not to describe themselves as teachers. The L.S.S. stated that this non-declaration was because private school teaching amongst the working class was often taken up as a last resort, and as a result such teachers had little pride in their occupation. Whilst this may have been the case for some teachers, it is also possible that teachers were suspicious about the motives of the enumerators and therefore chose not to declare themselves as school teachers.<sup>1</sup> In 1851 low esteem and suspicion may have led to non-declaration but, in addition, the desire to avoid having

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1. The particular problems associated with census returns are discussed in more detail later in this chapter ( pp. 37-44).

2. 'Fifth Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S.' in J.S.S., Vol. 6, Aug. 1843, pp. 211-218.

to fill in the schedule for the 1851 Education Census may have caused many working-class private school teachers to refrain from describing themselves as teachers.<sup>1</sup> Married women who were not heads of households would have found it particularly easy to avoid stating that they were teachers.

Five main research difficulties were experienced as a result of the orientation of the study. Four have already been discussed, namely the middle- and upper-class bias that was present in the majority of 'official' records, the fact that nineteenth-century statistics and surveys were not free from subjectiveness, the paucity of working-class testimony that is required to counterbalance the relative preponderance of middle- and upper-class testimony and the lack of records which adequately reflect the views of contemporary women from all social classes. The fifth problem was related to the terminology associated with Early Years educational provision and this is examined in the following section.

#### Terminology Associated with Early Childhood Education

The identification of London schools attended by working-class children aged below eight was complicated by the way in which these schools were described between 1800 and 1850. This section briefly examines the terminology associated with early childhood

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1. For a detailed discussion of non-declaration in 1851 see Gardner, P., op cit. pp. 56-59.

education in the nineteenth century in order to highlight the nature of the research problems encountered. Since the evolution of vocabulary relating to early childhood education was closely linked with the development of schools specifically for very young children this section also places these schools in their historical context.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the educational scene in North London was characterised by a patchwork of various kinds of schools which differed from each other in a range of ways, including their mode of establishment, means of financial support, religious affiliation, curriculum, the social background of the children and the age range catered for within the schools. In official nineteenth-century records and surveys schools were categorised on the basis of the schools' means of financial support. The category of 'public schools' included all those schools that were endowed, supported by voluntary subscriptions or contributions and those that received financial support from the government, from the various school societies (eg. the National Society, the British Society and the Ragged School Union) or from other sources such as the City Mission and the Associated Catholic Charities.

Schools receiving public financial assistance were also subject to varying degrees of external control and involvement. 'Private' schools, on the other hand, were supported solely by the pupils' school fees, and the teachers or proprietors were free from

external control.<sup>1</sup> There were numerous instances of school categorisation on the basis of personal assessments of the teachers' efficiency or the educational value of the curriculum.<sup>2</sup> The lack of a clearly-defined, relatively objective and commonly understood system of classification resulted in inconsistencies which were further compounded because contemporaries did not always share the same understanding of the descriptive terms applied to schools.<sup>3</sup> The labels given to schools before the mid-nineteenth century therefore ought not to be interpreted as an indication of a commonly-shared contemporary view of the school.

Identification of London schools which catered for children below the age of eight before the mid-nineteenth century was particularly problematic due to three main inter-related factors: the lack of age related labels for public schools and

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1. 'External' has been used in this context to refer to people and agencies who were not intimately associated with the school on a day to day basis either as teachers, pupils or parents.

2. For example, Reports of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vols. 1-6, 1838-43.

3. For example, 'prep school' was used to describe a variety of schools until the Clarendon Report (1864), see Leinster-Mackay, D., 'The evolution of t'other schools: an examination of the nineteenth century development of the private preparatory school' in History of Education, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1976, pp. 241-249.

Also Hume, R., 'Some Terminological Dificulties in the History of Education' in History of Education Society Bulletin, No. 35, Spring 1985, pp. 19-25.

schoolchildren in these schools, the introduction and use of the term 'infants' in the educational field and the lack of consensus amongst contemporaries regarding the meaning of the term 'dame school'.

From a late twentieth-century standpoint the age of pupils appears to be an obvious feature to use as an objective criterion for classifying schools. At the turn of the nineteenth century however little emphasis was placed on a child's age as was demonstrated by the manner in which school children were described. All school children were simply referred to as 'pupils' or 'scholars'; no distinction was made between school children on the grounds of chronological age. The absence of age-related labels in the educational field before the 1840s may have been a reflection of the long standing patterns of school attendance in London and other parts of the country.

Prior to the mid-nineteenth century age was of relatively little importance in determining the type and length of schooling. There was no standard age for starting school; instead children started school when they were judged ready to do so rather than because they had reached a specific age.<sup>1</sup> Attendance at school was dependent upon the family's economic and social status and the age at which a child first went to school was frequently

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1. The introduction of a set school starting age has been discussed by Szreter, R., 'The Origins of Full Time Compulsory Education at Five' in B.J.E.S., XIII, 1964, pp. 16-28.

dependent upon the financial situation of the family.<sup>1</sup> In many poorer families the cost of sending a child to school was prohibitive and some children were therefore never able to attend school. The age at which children left school was also flexible and in many cases it was also influenced by economic considerations. Families were frequently dependent upon children's earnings to help ease financial hardship, and in these cases the children left day school when they were old enough to contribute to the family's income. The age at which a child could earn a living was dependent upon a range of factors including local employment opportunities, whether or not the child could assist the parents and the individual child's capabilities.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to the 1850s the various milestones in children's educational lives (e.g. starting day school, beginning paid employment etc.) were not rigidly age-specific, and this was reflected in the labels applied to schools which seldom referred directly to the age of the pupils. Educational institutions were sometimes named according to what was taught (e.g. song schools, grammar schools and ABC schools). Other schools such as dame

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1. Burnett, J., Destiny Obscure, 1982, pp. 135-149.

2. For example, 'Schools for the Industrious Classes' in Central Society of Education, Second Publication, 1838, pp. 388-297; autobiographical evidence in Vincent, D., op. cit. 1981; Pinchbeck, I., Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850, 1930.

schools, charity schools, parish schools and private venture schools were labelled on the basis of who did the teaching, the schools' means of support, or the areas the schools served. The petty schools of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries appear to be an exception to this pattern of labelling. The word 'petty' was derived from the French 'petit' and pupils at these schools were referred to as 'petties' or 'petits'.<sup>1</sup> In practice most children at the petty schools tended to be fairly young for three reasons. Firstly, the basic curriculum of the schools was most suitable for children who were experiencing formal education for the first time. Secondly, children from poorer families were unable to stay at school for too long as their earning capacity was required at home. Thirdly, the children of richer parents, although under no financial pressure to leave these schools, frequently left as soon as they could read and write and progressed to grammar schools (this was especially true of boys). Too close an association between the probable age of the pupils and the term used to describe them is perhaps ill-founded, as it has been suggested that 'petties' could refer to any pupil at a petty school including those who were no longer children.<sup>2</sup> There was no hard and fast rule governing the age of children at these schools and the term 'petit' was applied to these schools more because of the size of the school rather than because of the age of the pupils.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Aries, P., Centuries of Childhood, 1960, p. 25.

2. Aries, P., op cit. p. 25

3. Aries, P., op cit. p. 274 et seq.



The lack of words specifically to refer to very young pupils was not because small children did not attend school. Until the early nineteenth century most schools catered for a broad age range. This was as much the case for schools attended mainly by children of the poor as for the grammar schools, which were rapidly becoming the preserve of the wealthy.

It was true that by the nineteenth century few grammar schools were catering for boys below the age of eight but eighteenth-century records show that some of these schools had been attended by very young pupils. Pupils aged three and four attended Dulwich School, and at Eton some boys were as young as six.<sup>1</sup> The low numbers of very young grammar school pupils were probably more a result of grammar schools' rules which required entrants to have basic reading skills, rather than an explicit insistence on entrants being over a specified age. At the other end of the age scale there were reports of young men as old as 20 who were still grammar school pupils.<sup>2</sup>

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there appears to have been an increasing tendency to fix a nominal lower age limit of seven in public schools attended by poorer children. The National and British Societies and numerous London charity schools stated in their rules and regulations that children below the age of six or seven would not be admitted to the school. The Secretary of the National Society for example

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1. Gathorne-Hardy. J., The Public School Phenomenon, 1977, p. 42

2. Gathorne-Hardy, J., *op cit.*, p. 42

asserted that the only question asked of would-be National School pupils was 'Are you seven years old ?'.<sup>1</sup> As registration of births was not introduced until 1834 it must have been impossible for most schools to adhere rigidly to any rules relating to the age of new entrants. Many teachers and school officials probably shared the pragmatic approach of the rector of St. Clement Danes, London, who stated that children were admitted to West Street Boys' School 'as soon as ever the boys have breeches, we do not consult their age, but their size'.<sup>2</sup> Some public day schools for the poor also set an upper age limit despite the fact that in nineteenth-century London the age at which a child's day schooling ended was frequently self-limiting. Not all schools rigorously enforced their school leaving ages, and in cases where family circumstances allowed for the continued day time schooling of older children, instances occurred of young working-class people still at school at the age of fifteen, sixteen and seventeen.<sup>3</sup>

Nineteenth-century records reflect contemporary attitudes towards chronological age in that schools were rarely categorised and named on the basis of the pupils' ages. Similarly, age specific labels were not used to describe pupils in schools. Attempts to classify public schools on the basis of age were not very

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, p. 32.

2. Ibid., p. 17.

3. Report of the Ladies Visiting Committee, St. Martin's School, Draft Minutes of the Trustees, 18th May 1814, Westminster Local History and Archives Library.

successful as the schools were not attended by rigidly defined age groups. In 1850, Joseph Fletcher analysed the ages of children attending 160 British and Wesleyan schools. As a result of his research he stated that 'one third of the children in schools which are not reckoned as infant schools, are of the infantile ages not exceeding seven...'<sup>1</sup>. Any reference to age-specific educational provision before the nineteenth century is an anachronism and even during the first half of the nineteenth century many schools were flexible regarding the ages of their pupils. Identification of schools attended by children within a specified age group was necessarily tentative.

The 'infant schools' of the nineteenth century were a watershed in the history of English education, not only because some educationists had begun to develop a form of education specifically for a clearly defined age group of children, but also because the label given to the schools was directly related to the age of the pupils.

Educationists in the vanguard of this particular development explicitly stated that infant schools catered for the educational needs of children below the age of eight.<sup>2</sup> It was not until the early 1830s that these terms began to be used accurately by other

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1. Fletcher, J., 'Statistics of the Attendance in Schools for Children of the Poorer Classes' in J.S.S., Vol. 15, June 1852, p. 116.

2. For example, Wilderspin's evidence to the Select Committee on Education, P.P. 1835 (465) VII, Report on the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 13. Also Pole, T. op cit.

educationists. Widespread understanding of the term 'infant' in the educational context was slow in developing, partly because the concept of age-specific education was new, and partly because the word 'infant' had been in common usage for several centuries in a non-educational context, and referred to babies and children.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries very young babies of all ages were described as 'infants'. Blake's poem Infant Sorrow was written in the 1770s and undoubtedly referred to the tribulations of a very young baby as the infant was described as 'striving against swaddling bands'. During the same period however older children were also described as 'infants'. The title of Hugh Downman's work, Infancy, or the Management of Children, a Didactic Poem clearly revealed the interchangeability of the terms 'infant' and 'child'. The term 'infant' was not always precise enough for contemporaries who then qualified the term. Late eighteenth-century parish returns for example, on the 'State of the Infant Poor' included all children below the age of 14. The 'infant poor' were further divided into two categories: those below the age of four and those aged between four and 14.<sup>2</sup> The ages of four and 14 were not standardised cut-off points. A register of the 'parish infant poor' for the years 1768-1778 noted that the infants

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1. Referred to in Hardyment, C., Dream Babies, 1983, p. 17.

2. George, M.D., London Life in the Eighteenth Century, 1925, p. 405

concerned were children 'received [by the parish] under six'.<sup>1</sup>

In the early nineteenth century the term 'infant' was still used to refer to children across a broad age band, although there appeared to have been a decline in the frequency with which the term was used to refer to older children (i.e. children over the age of seven). Instances in which older children were described as 'infants' usually occurred when the speaker or writer wished to arouse public sympathy or a sense of outrage. Thus, in 1816 in Parliament, Mr. Rose spoke of the evil effects of mendicancy on 'infants from two years old to eight and ten' who were involved in the metropolis.<sup>2</sup> A decade later a ballad referring to the murder of a ten year old apprentice girl contained the lines :

Such treatment to Poor Infants

Was Never Heard Before.<sup>3</sup>

Prior to the nineteenth century the term 'infant' had been used in an educational context. In 1525 the term 'infaunts' was used in the foundation papers of Manchester Grammar School which stated that admission to the school would be refused to 'no scollar nor infaunt, of what cuntrey or schire so ever he be, beyng man child'.<sup>4</sup> Towards the end of the eighteenth century

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1. George, M.D., London Life in the Eighteenth Century, 1925, p. 405.

2. Hansard , May 28th 1816, Vol. XXXIV, p. 858.

3. George, M.D. op cit., p. 257.

4. Vincent, W.A.L., The Grammar Schools; Their Continuing Tradition 1660-1714, 1969, p. 42.

Vicessimus Knox described how when 'but an infant' he had been sent to one of the leading grammar schools of the time.'

The two main types of private schools for the poor were known as dame schools and common day schools. Contemporary views were mixed as to whether or not there was a link between age and the type of private working-class school. This lack of clarity is examined in detail in the following section. Suffice it to say that there is no evidence of nineteenth century working-class private schools having imposed lower or upper age limits.

#### The Location of Public and Private Schools: Methodology.

The general problems associated with the source materials available have already been examined earlier in this chapter. This section provides a brief outline of the different methods that had to be used in locating public and private schools.

It was possible to glean information regarding the location of public schools from a wide range of source material including the annual lists of schools published by the various religious societies, the results of government education surveys, Post Office directories and street directories, surveys of local statistical societies, school log books, Charity Commissioners Reports, Select Committee Reports, handbills announcing sermons to be preached or the public examination of pupils and, for

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1. Jarrett, D., England in the Age of Hogarth, 1976, p. 68.

schools in existence after 1833, the Minutes of the Committee of Council of Education and the Reports of H.M.I.s.

In contrast, source material relating to the location of private working-class schools was severely limited. Such schools were not linked to churches and therefore no benefit sermons were preached on their behalf; the children were not publicly examined; voluntary subscriptions were not raised to support these schools and the schools did not receive government or religious society grants. The reports of the L.S.S. and the various Parliamentary education surveys were the two major readily accessible sources of information regarding private working-class schools. Both these sources, however, tended to provide general information about the scale of private working-class schooling but contained virtually no information about the exact geographical location of private working-class schools; even vague clues such as: 'a large dame school exists ... in the immediate neighbourhood of George St. and Sth. Audley St. Infant School'<sup>1</sup> were tantalising rare.

Some private schools were listed in Post Office and street directories, but the schools that appeared in these directories were generally situated in pleasant residential areas or in a street where there were a number of thriving businesses, and

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1. 'On the Condition of the Working Class in the Inner Ward of St. George's Parish, Hanover Square', J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 25.

therefore were likely to have been attended by wealthy or middle-class children. These schools were described in the directories as 'Ladies School' or 'Gentlemen's School' or 'Preparatory School'.<sup>1</sup> Teachers who worked in middle-class private schools or who were available to tutor middle- and upper-class youngsters were also listed in street directories.<sup>2</sup> Private working-class schools in the poorer areas of London, the type of private school that working-class children would have attended, were not listed in the Post Office and street directories.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the location of working-class private schools, it was necessary to resort to other sources. The original enumerators' returns for the 1841 and 1851 censuses were judged to be a potentially valuable source of information as they would list the names, ages, addresses and occupations of all those staying in any given district in London on the nights of

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1. For example, see entries in Pigot's London Directory, 1838; Robson's London Directory, 1842; Kelly's Directory, 1844-1848.

2. List of teachers in Kelly's Directory, 1844-1848

3. This point has also been made by Atkins, P.J., 'The Compilation and Reliability of London Directories' in The London Journal : A Review of Metropolitan Past and Present,

Vol. 14, No. 1, 1989, p.20 and p.26.



the censuses.<sup>1</sup>

There were a number of difficulties, however, regarding the enumerators' returns. The first was that teachers were described in a range of ways in the enumerators' returns (e.g. schoolmistress, schoolmaster, governess, day school teacher, teacher in a school, infant school governess, Catholic teacher etc.), and it was not always immediately evident from the description of the teacher as to whether she or he was a teacher in a public school or a private school. The address sometimes provided the necessary clue. John Williams, for example, appeared in the 1841 census returns as 'schoolmaster' and since his address was given as Parochial School House, Brick Lane it seemed safe to conclude that he was a teacher in a public school.<sup>2</sup>

In other instances it was information gleaned from other sources that enabled the categorisation of public and private school teachers. One such source was the Post Office directories which, as stated earlier, listed public schools and named the

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1. For discussions relating to the use of census materials see: Wrigley, E.A. (ed.), Nineteenth Century Society: Essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data, 1972. and Lawton, R. (ed.), The Census and Social Structure: an interpretative guide to 19th century censuses for England and Wales, 1978.

2. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 710.

teachers in public schools. By referring to the Post Office directories for a few years before and after each census it was possible to identify some of the individuals returned as teachers in the census as teachers in public schools. William Beck, for example, was described in the 1841 census as living in Wood Street and working as a schoolmaster. According to the British and Foreign School Society Annual Reports<sup>1</sup> there was a British school in Wood Street and in the 1842 Post Office directory William Beck was clearly identified as master of the British and Foreign School in Wood Street.<sup>2</sup> In the 1842 directory William Beck was described as teaching in the Protestant Dissenting Charity School, Wood Street, Spitalfields which was the alternative name for the British and Foreign School, Wood Street.

The enumerators' returns did not give any direct indication of the social class of the teacher or of the pupils she or he taught. Once again the Post Office directories proved invaluable in helping to distinguish between those teachers who were probably providing a private school for middle-class children and those who were probably providing a private school for working-class children in the neighbourhood. Streets and courts inhabited mainly by the poorer sections of society did not feature in Post Office directories unless there happened to be a public house or commercial concern operating in the street,

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1. Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society, 1841-1860.

2. Kelly's Post Office Directory, 1842.

in which case the only entry for the street or court would be the public house, the manufactory or the business. If, according to the census returns, there appeared to be a school operating in a street or court which did not appear in the Post Office directory it was assumed that the school was probably situated in a working-class, poor area, and the school was therefore likely to be catering for the working-class inhabitants.

In addition to this quick check a more methodical system of defining the socio-economic profile of a street or area was used. Briefly, the socio-economic make-up of the immediate neighbourhood surrounding a school was noted and analysed in terms of the occupations of the adults, the number of families per dwelling, the number of inhabitants per house and the presence or absence of live-in servants.<sup>1</sup> Category 1 included all the very poor working-class neighbourhoods which were defined as those in which the majority of those employed were unskilled workers (e.g. hawkers, charwomen, labourers, errand boys, porters etc.).<sup>2</sup> In addition the houses in Category 1 neighbourhoods were frequently occupied by more than one family. Category 2 areas included those streets and courts in which

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1. Wealthy households might have consisted of a large number of people but many of the members of the household were likely to be servants. In contrast, poor households might have been small but often more than one family lived in a house and live-in servants were rare.

resided a number of individuals who could be categorised as skilled working-class (e.g. silk weavers, carpenters, coopers, bricklayers etc.). Category 3 consisted of streets in which there were some skilled working class but a higher proportion of lower middle-class workers (e.g. clerks, police constables and small shopkeepers). Areas in Category 4 were those with high proportions of dentists, accountants, solicitors, ministers, merchants and members of the gentry.

D. Mills and J. Mills have recently highlighted some of the difficulties inherent in using nineteenth century census returns in order to link occupations with social class, especially with regard to the self-employed (e.g. chimney sweeps, hawkers, dealers).<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study, self-employed workers who did not employ others and who were manual workers or unskilled workers were categorised as working class. If the worker was self employed but skilled then she or he was regarded as falling into Category 2. If the self-employed worker was unskilled she or he fell into Category 1.

Obviously it was rare for a particular street to fall neatly into any one particular category and most streets contained elements of the categories closest to them. Nonetheless this

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1. Mills, D. and Mills, J., 'Occupation and Social Stratification Revisited: the census enumerators' books of Victorian Britain' in Rodgers, R. (ed.), The Urban History Yearbook, 1989.

method of classification gave a useful picture of the socio-economic profile of specific areas. Categories 3 and 4 were judged to be unlikely locations for private working-class schools, and individuals living in such areas who were returned as teachers were likely to be tutors in middle-class homes or teachers in middle-class preparatory schools or academies. Schools and teachers situated in areas defined as Categories 1 and 2 were probably utilised by children of working-class Londoners, and private schools in Categories 1 and 2 could probably be described with confidence as working-class private schools.<sup>1</sup>.

The validity of the approach may be judged from the following examples. In the 1841 census Henry Pratt was listed as 'schoolmaster' and described as living in Keate Street, Spitalfields. No occupation was listed for his wife, and three of his children aged between 13 and 18 were returned as labourer, dressmaker and errand boy. The occupational profile of the family would suggest that it was working class and probably unskilled. Keate Street was inhabited by shoebinders, laundresses, carpenters, dealers in fruit, weavers, bricklayers and labourers. The occupational profile of the street would

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1. This system of categorising neighbourhoods has also been used by Phil Gardner: Gardner, P., The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England, 1984, Appx. A, pp. 246-249.

suggest it fell into categories 1 / 2. The street was not listed in the Post Office directory and neither was Henry Pratt nor his school. Taken together the evidence would suggest that Henry Pratt was operating a private working-class school in Keate Street in 1841.

James Box and his daughter Ann were also listed in the 1841 census returns for Christ Church Spitalfields and described as living in Princes Street. There was no occupation listed for James' wife or his other daughter Harriet, aged 15. Princes Street was judged to be on the border between categories 2 and 3 as there were skilled workers in the street (e.g. watchmakers) and there were also members of the lower middle class (clerks and a police superintendent). It seemed unlikely therefore that James Box's school was a private working-class school. Support for this supposition was gained from examining the street listings in the Post Office directories for the years 1838 - 1842. Not only was Princes Street listed in the Post Office directories but also listed were James Box and his school. As pointed out earlier in this section, working-class schools and streets inhabited by the poorer Londoners were not listed in Post Office directories. In the 1851 census returns James Box still appeared as schoolmaster but at a new address, 12, White Lion Street. On turning to the Post Office directory for 1852, James Box's school is listed at 12, White Lion Street and shared premises with J. N. Canton, 'writing master'. In close proximity to James Box's school there was a 'ladies school' and a piano teacher. The evidence taken as a whole from the various

sources would support the view expressed earlier that James Box's school was very definitely a school for middle-class children or possibly the children of well-paid skilled workers.

However, the census returns, as with all historical documentary evidence, needed to be treated with caution and some method of assessing the accuracy of the enumerators' returns was necessary in order to judge the value of the information retrieved, and in turn, the validity of those conclusions drawn from census material. Ideally what was required was an accurate and independently-produced list of private working-class schools which could then be compared with the census returns.

Unfortunately, the only list of schools available which fulfilled some of the requirements was the list drawn up by the vestry clerk of Christ Church, Spitalfields in response to the Parliamentary Enquiry of 1833.<sup>1</sup> The 1831 census returns for the parish of Christ Church, Spitalfields, were not available for comparison, so consequently the 1833 Parliamentary returns had to be compared with the 1841 enumerators' returns for the district. The eight year gap between the records resulted in speculations rather than firm, unassailable conclusions, but the comparison exercise was valuable in that a number of important points were highlighted.

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1. Christ Church Spitalfields Scrapbook containing miscellaneous information including a copy of the 1833 Education Return to Parliament (Tower Hamlets Local History Library).

The first point was that the census returns gave a fairly accurate record of the socio-economic make up of a neighbourhood and furthermore, the picture given in the census returns was likely to be recognised by contemporaries. This view was based on the fact that the assertion made by the vestry clerk in 1833 that most of the schools in the parish were 'of a very inferior kind' appeared to be supported to a large degree by the enumerator's returns of 1841. Most of the streets listed by the vestry clerk could be classed in categories 1 and 2, and only Church Street was on the borderline between categories 2 and 3 as it was inhabited by a mix of people, including some lower middle-class inhabitants such as clerks.

The second point was that none of the private-school teachers listed by the vestry clerk was living at the same address eight years later. Whether this meant that the teacher had moved to another area and had since opened a school, or whether the teacher had taken up alternative employment somewhere else would not have been possible to ascertain without scouring the whole of the 1841 census for London. However, it does highlight the fact that many private schools had short lives in any one place.

### Conclusion

There were basically five main research difficulties. The quantity of available records, the class and gender bias of the records, the lack of information regarding the ages of the children in specific schools and the subjectiveness of nineteenth-century statistics were all factors which made



identification of private working-class schools in particular very difficult. These difficulties meant that a meaningful analysis of the Early Years education in the whole of North London was not feasible. The following chapters focus on smaller areas within North London and use as wide a range of sources as possible to develop a picture of the educational situation in each of the areas and the links between educational provision and social and economic factors.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE PATTERN OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR WORKING-CLASS CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF EIGHT IN NORTH LONDON 1815-1859: The Geographic and Temporal Location of Schools in North London.

There are a number of vital questions that need answering in relation to the development of educational facilities for working-class children below the age of eight in North London. What was the scale of educational provision for this age group during the period 1800 to 1859? Was there a discernible pattern to the distribution and spread of these schools? Did local employment patterns influence the pattern of education available? Was there a relationship between the number of public schools and the number of working-class private schools in any given area? This chapter examines school provision between 1815 and 1859, rather than between 1800 and 1851, for two main reasons. Firstly, when identifying schools catering for 'under eights' during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, it was necessary to rely on the annual reports of the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society but the reports preceding 1815 contain little information pertaining to the age of pupils in London schools. Secondly, the scale of educational provision was explored up to 1859, rather than 1851, in order to clarify whether patterns of school establishment radically changed after 1851.

It has been argued that the educational needs of a given area are

partly determined by its socio-economic composition.<sup>1</sup> On this basis it would be reasonable to expect that between 1800 and 1860, the pattern of educational provision for very young working-class children, would have been closely linked with a wide range of factors. These factors included the economic position of families, the social and religious composition of North London, the proportion of Londoners who were able and willing to support schools for the very young, the number of children under eight and the form of educational facilities desired by parents of these young children.

This chapter begins with a brief examination of the location of public and private schools in North London between 1815 and 1859 before moving on to a more detailed consideration of some of the questions outlined above. For the purposes of this study North London was divided into nine sectors, the boundaries of which were based mainly on nineteenth century parish boundaries and districts.

#### Brief Outline of the Location and Growth of Public Schools for Children Below the Age of Eight.

It is well documented that the first public infants' school in London was opened in Westminster in 1818 by Brougham and his

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1. For example, Marsden, W.E., 'Education and Social Geography of Nineteenth-Century Towns and Cities' in Reeder, D. (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century, 1977, pp. 49-73. Also Marsden, W.E., 1987, op cit.

associates.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, in 1820, Samuel Wilderspin opened an infants' school in Quaker Street, Spitalfields. The opening of these two schools was significant in that they were the first public schools established in North London to cater solely for very young children, but records suggest that young children had been attending public schools in North London before infants' schools had made their appearance. Before 1820, of the four schools catering for children below the age of eight, the British and Foreign School in Eagle Street, Finsbury, the Bell Lane Jews' Free School in Spitalfields and the East London Irish Free Schools in Goodmans Yard, Minories and Brewers Street Infants' School, only one was specifically an infants' school.

Even after the late 1820s and early 1830s when infants' schools had started to become a recognised part of the educational scene, infants at publicly-aided schools were not always confined to infants' schools. Many of the infants at school in North London were to be found in National or British schools with an infants' department; others attended ragged schools which catered for a wide age range whilst some infants were in schools which took in children below the age of eight but made no special provision for their younger pupils.

Between 1816 and 1859 the number of public schools catering for infants increased from one to 333.<sup>2</sup> At this point it should be

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1. McCann, P. and Young, E.A., Samuel Wilderspin and the Infant School Movement, 1982.

2. Refer to Appendix I of this thesis.

noted that there are problems with placing too much emphasis on the exact numbers involved since despite careful research there are undoubtedly some schools that have been overlooked as they do not feature in the records referred to or because the presence of infants at some schools was not recorded.<sup>1</sup> Some measure, however, was necessary in order to develop an idea of the pattern of the development of educational provision across North London between 1815 and 1859 and to make comparisons between different areas of North London. The numbers have been used more as an approximate indication of the scale of provision rather than as an exact description of the situation at the time. The graphs provide indications about probable trends (e.g. the rate of new establishments etc.) and not precise descriptions. Thus Graph A (overleaf) gives an indication of the approximate quinquennial rate of change of the total number of schools catering for 'infants' rather than an exact rate of increase. Using Graph A it is possible to state that between 1815 and 1834 there appeared to be a fairly rapid rise in the rate at which new facilities for 'infants' were established. The rate fell slightly between 1834 and 1844, rose again between 1844 and 1849 but decreased thereafter. This simple analysis masks the fact that the distribution of these schools was not uniform across London. Both the approximate numbers of public schools and the rate of growth of publicly aided 'infant' provision varied from area to area.

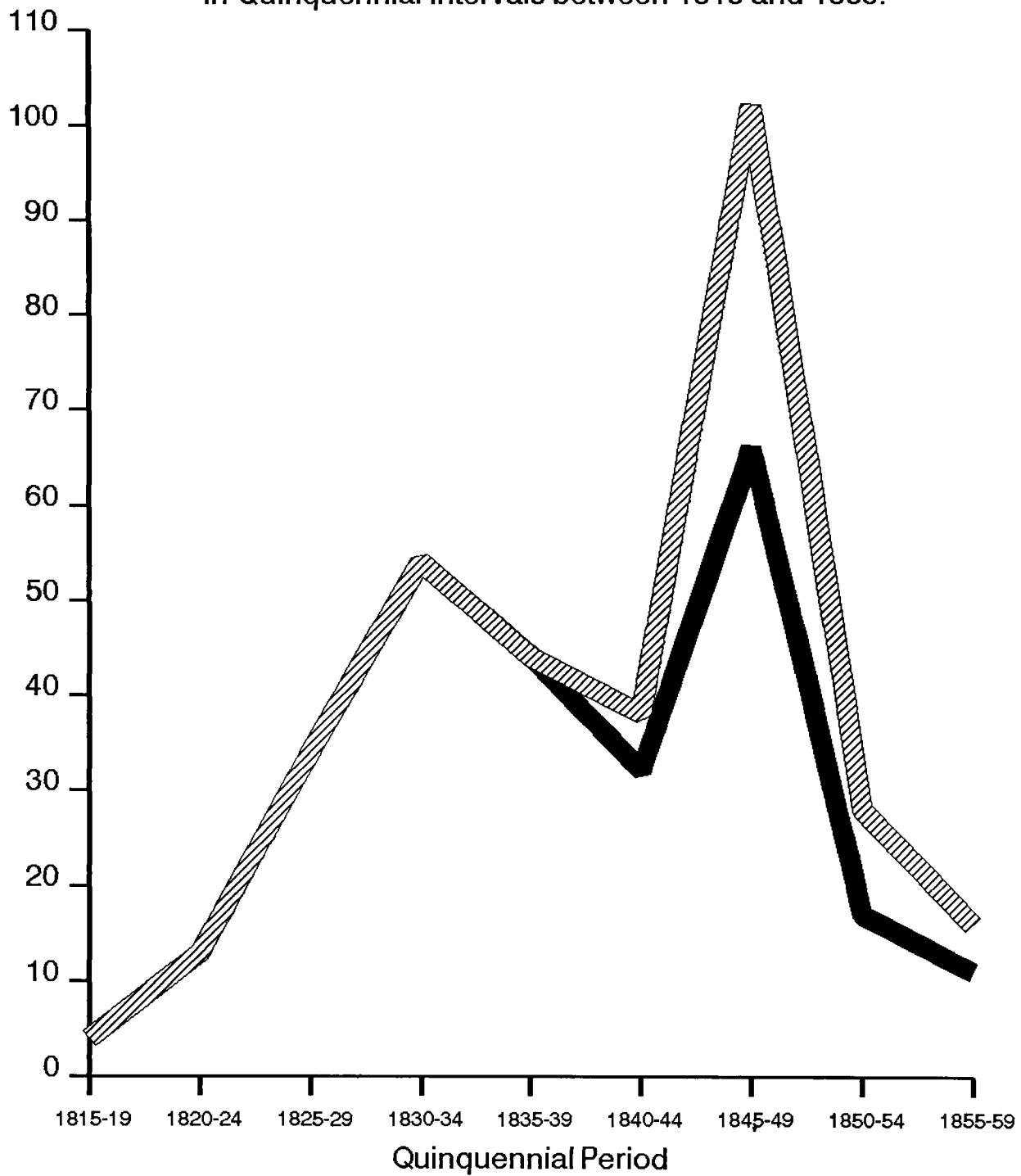
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1. See Gardner, P., op cit., Chap. 2.



Graph A

Number of infant schools established in North London  
in Quinquennial intervals between 1815 and 1859.



**■** Schools with known date of establishment  
**▨** Includes schools with uncertain date of establishment

Between 1815 and 1829 all nine areas of North London witnessed an increase in the number of public schools catering for children below the age of eight (Table 2.1 below and Graph B overleaf).

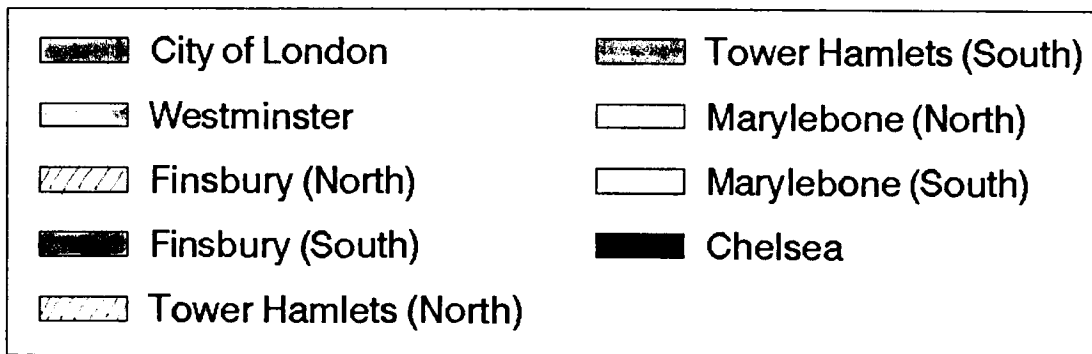
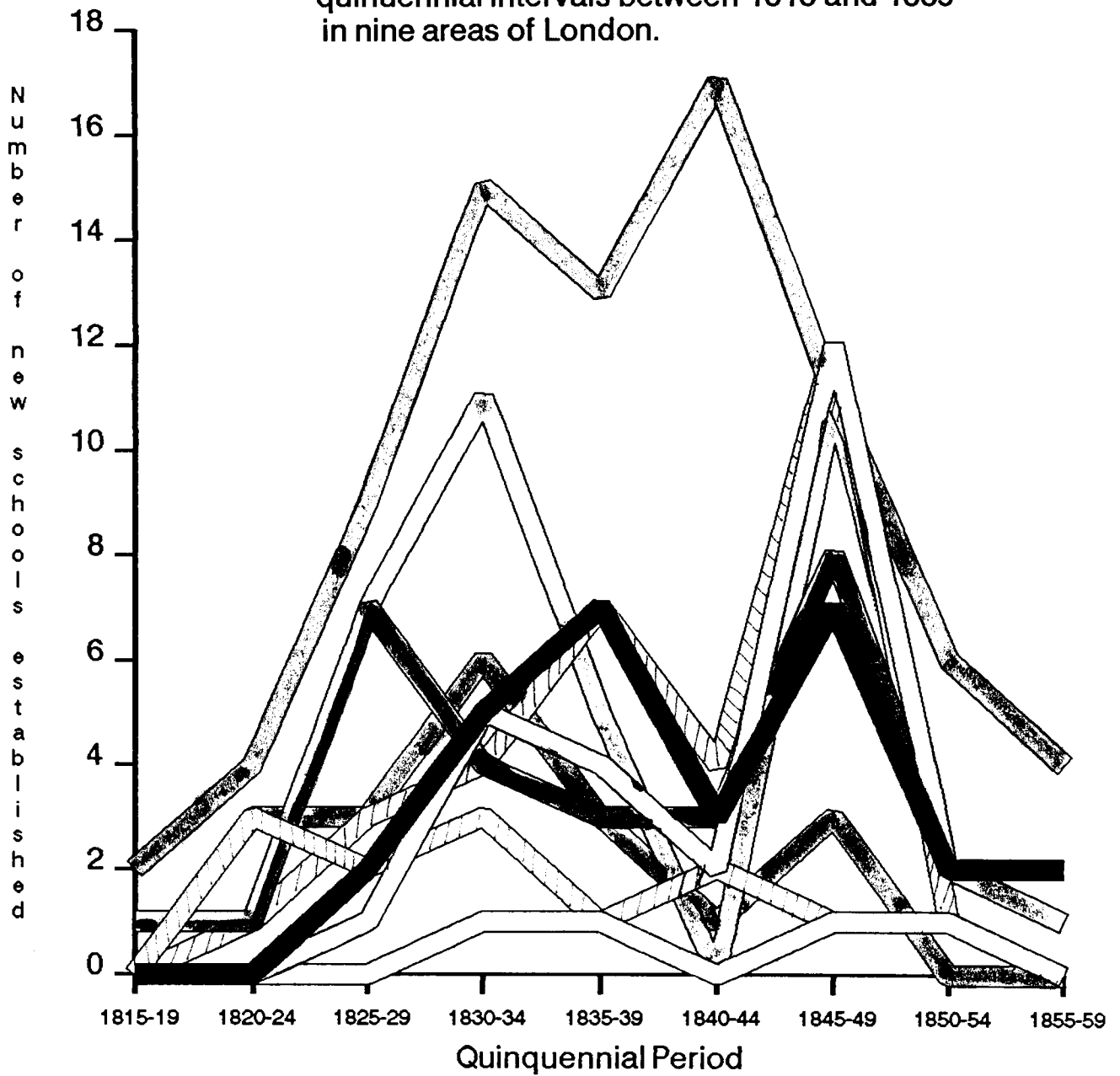
Table 2.1  
Total of 'new' schools per area in nine areas  
of North London in five year intervals (1815-59).

	1815-19	1820-24	1825-29	1830-34	1835-39	1840-44	1845-49	1850-54	1855-59	TOTAL
City	0	3	3	6	3	1	3	0	0	19
Westminster	1	1	7	11	5	0	11	2	1	39
Finsbury (North)	0	1	3	4	7	4	12	1	0	32
Finsbury (South)	1	1	7	4	3	3	8	2	2	31
Tower Hamlets (North)	0	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	0	13
Tower Hamlets (South)	2	4	9	15	13	17	11	6	4	81
Marylebone (North)	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	4
Marylebone (South)	0	0	1	5	4	2	12	2	2	28
Chelsea	0	0	2	5	7	3	7	2	2	28
Total	4	13	34	54	44	32	66	17	11	275

1. Figures from P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Part 1, pp. 533-564; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 554-594; P.P. 152-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales), pp. 8-9; Minutes of the Committee of Council of Education, 1839-58; Reports of the Committee of Council of Education, 1859-64; Annual Reports of the National School Society, 1826-60; Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society, 1816-1864; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 8-19; Ragged School Union Magazine, Vol. 1, 1849; Ragged School Union, Eighth Annual Report, 1852; Reports of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vols. 1-6, 1837-43; Lists of Schools and Lists of Teachers in Post Office Directories, 1838-48; Murphy, M.A., 'The Origin, Growth and Development of Schools for Roman Catholic Poor Children in the Archdiocese of Westminster 1760-1861', M.Phil, University of London, p. 381 et seq.

Graph B

Number of new infant schools established in  
quinuennial intervals between 1815 and 1859  
in nine areas of London.





Within the first fifteen years however, clear differences had begun to emerge in terms of the scale of provision for each of the different areas of North London (Table 2.2).<sup>1</sup>

Table 2.2  
Cumulative totals of schools per area in nine areas  
of North London in five year intervals (1815-59).

	1815-19	1820-24	1825-29	1830-34	1835-39	1840-44	1845-49	1850-54	1855-59	TOTAL
City	0	3	6	12	15	16	19	19	19	19
Westminster	1	2	9	20	25	25	36	38	39	39
Finsbury (North)	0	1	4	8	15	19	31	32	32	32
Finsbury (South)	1	2	9	13	16	19	27	29	31	31
Tower Hamlets (North)	0	3	5	8	9	11	12	13	13	13
Tower Hamlets (South)	2	6	15	30	43	60	71	77	81	81
Marylebone (North)	0	0	0	1	2	2	3	4	4	4
Marylebone (South)	0	0	1	6	10	12	24	26	28	28
Chelsea	0	0	2	7	14	17	24	26	28	28
Total	4	17	51	105	149	181	247	264	275	275

By 1829 the best served area of London was south Tower Hamlets, with 15 schools catering for infants; trailing a little behind were Westminster and South Finsbury with nine schools each. The

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1. Provision in relation to population and size of locality is discussed on p. 62 of this chapter.

2. Figures are based on Table 2.1, p. 51 of this thesis.

City of London had less than half the number of schools as did South Tower Hamlets. The total number of schools in North Finsbury, North Tower Hamlets, the whole of Marylebone and Chelsea together was less than in South Tower Hamlets alone.

Throughout the period being investigated South Tower Hamlets retained its position at the top of the table in terms of the total number of public schools catering for infants, with Westminster in second place (Table 2.3). In other areas of London the pattern that was evident by the late 1820s changed in subsequent years. South Marylebone, for example, was a 'slow starter' in that by 1829 there was only one school in this area and it was lying in eighth place. By 1859, however, south Marylebone had risen to third place, behind south Tower Hamlets and Westminster.

Table 2.3: Number of Public Schools Catering for Infants in Nine Areas of North London by 1859 (for which the date of first infant intake has been confirmed).

City of London.....	19
City of Westminster.....	39
Finsbury (North).....	32
Finsbury (South).....	31
Tower Hamlets (North).....	13
Tower Hamlets (South).....	81
Marylebone (North).....	4
Marylebone (South).....	28
Chelsea.....	28
Total.....	275

There were a number of schools for which the year in which infants began to attend is uncertain. Table 2.4 shows the geographic distribution of these schools.

Table 2.4  
Schools for which exact date of establishment is uncertain.

	1840-44	1845-49	1850-54	1855-59	Unknown	TOTAL
City	0	6	2	0	0	8
Westminster	0	3	3	0	1	7
Finsbury (North)	0	3	1	1	0	5
Finsbury (South)	0	5	1	0	0	6
Tower Hamlets (North)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tower Hamlets (South)	2	6	2	2	0	12
Marylebone (North)	0	1	0	1	0	2
Marylebone (South)	2	7	1	0	0	10
Chelsea	2	5	1	0	0	8
Total	6	36	11	4	1	58

With the inclusion of the schools referred to in Table 2.4 the picture of Early Years public provision hardly alters. Tower Hamlets and Westminster remain in first and second places, north Finsbury drops to joint fourth place with south Finsbury whilst South Marylebone rises from fifth to third place.

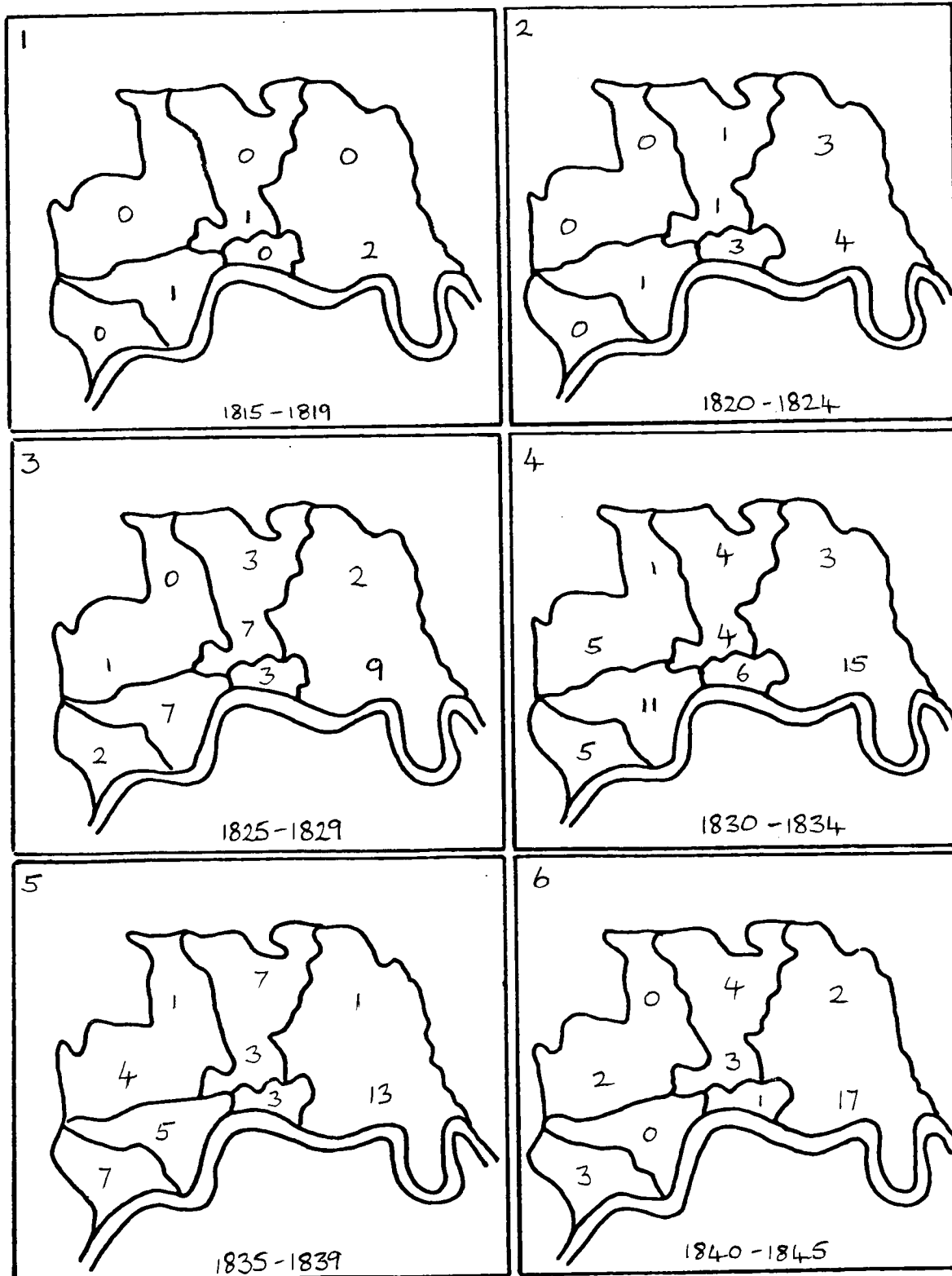
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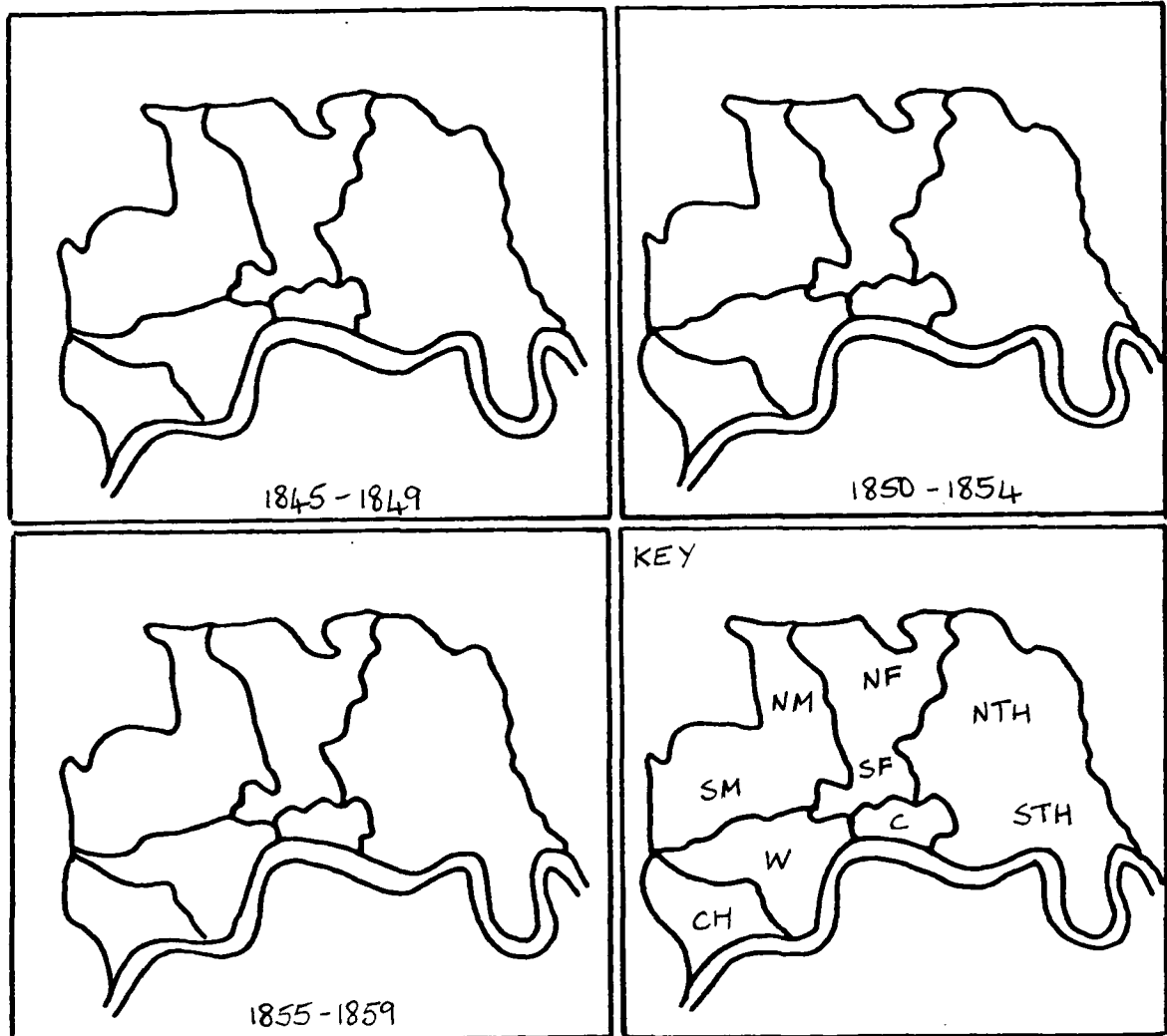
1. This list comprises those schools that were listed in nineteenth century reports or surveys (eg. those of the L.S.S., the Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society and the National Society) and for which the year in which infants first attended was not recorded.

The geographical pattern of the development of facilities for infants' schooling for each quinquennium between 1815 and 1859 is shown in Maps 1-18 and Graph C (overleaf). The number of new schools or new facilities for infants per quinquennium in each of the nine areas of North London is shown clearly by Maps 1-9, whilst Maps 10-18 and Graph C illustrate the progressive build up of educational facilities for infants in the same nine areas of North London.

What emerges from the maps is a complex picture of the development of publicly aided Early Years provision. The southern areas adjacent to the Thames and situated to the east and west of the City of London (i.e Chelsea, Westminster and South Tower Hamlets) had the most schools. In contrast, the two most northern areas (North Marylebone and North Tower Hamlets) were less well served with public educational facilities for 'infants'.

Maps 1 to 9 show the number of new schools established in each area of London.

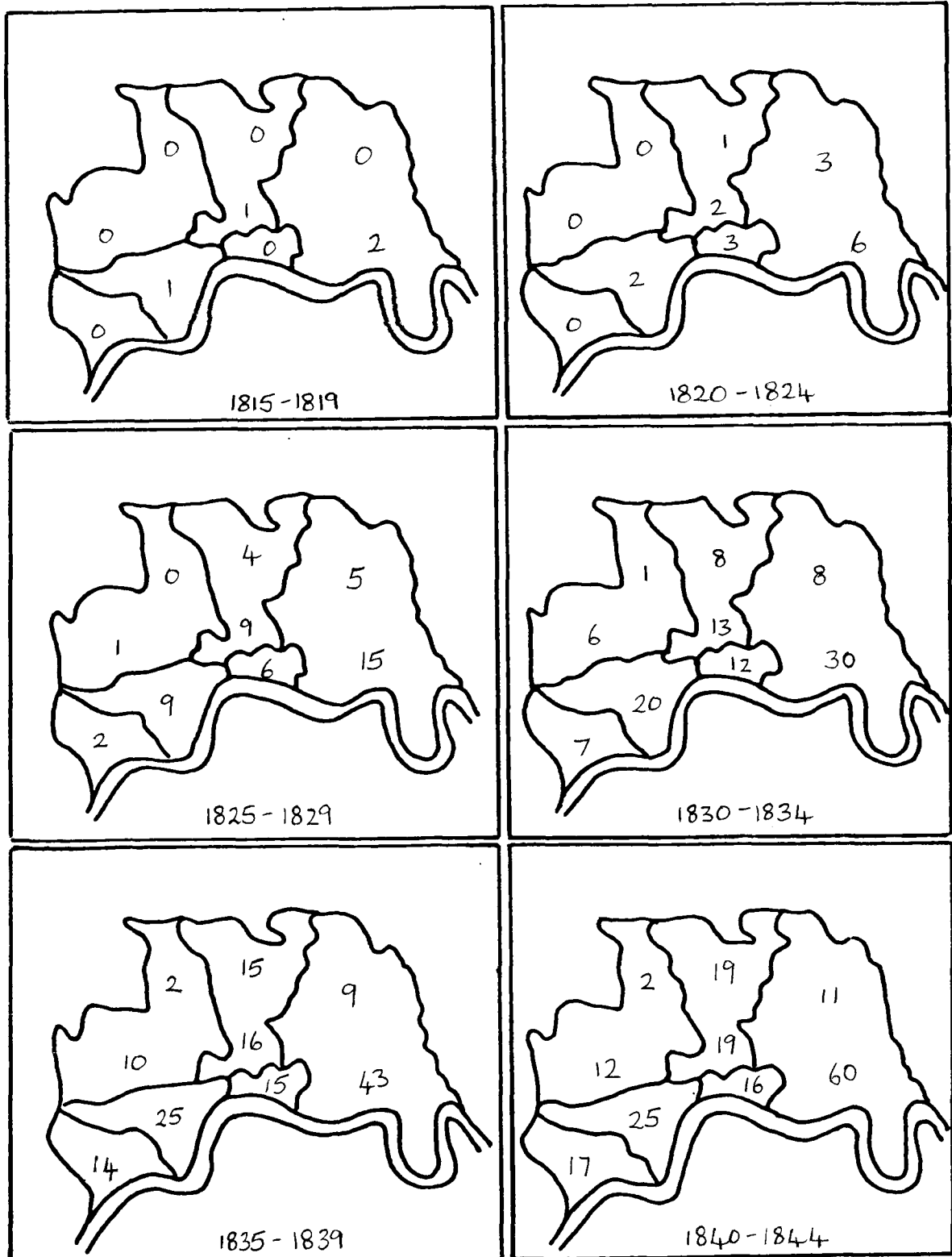


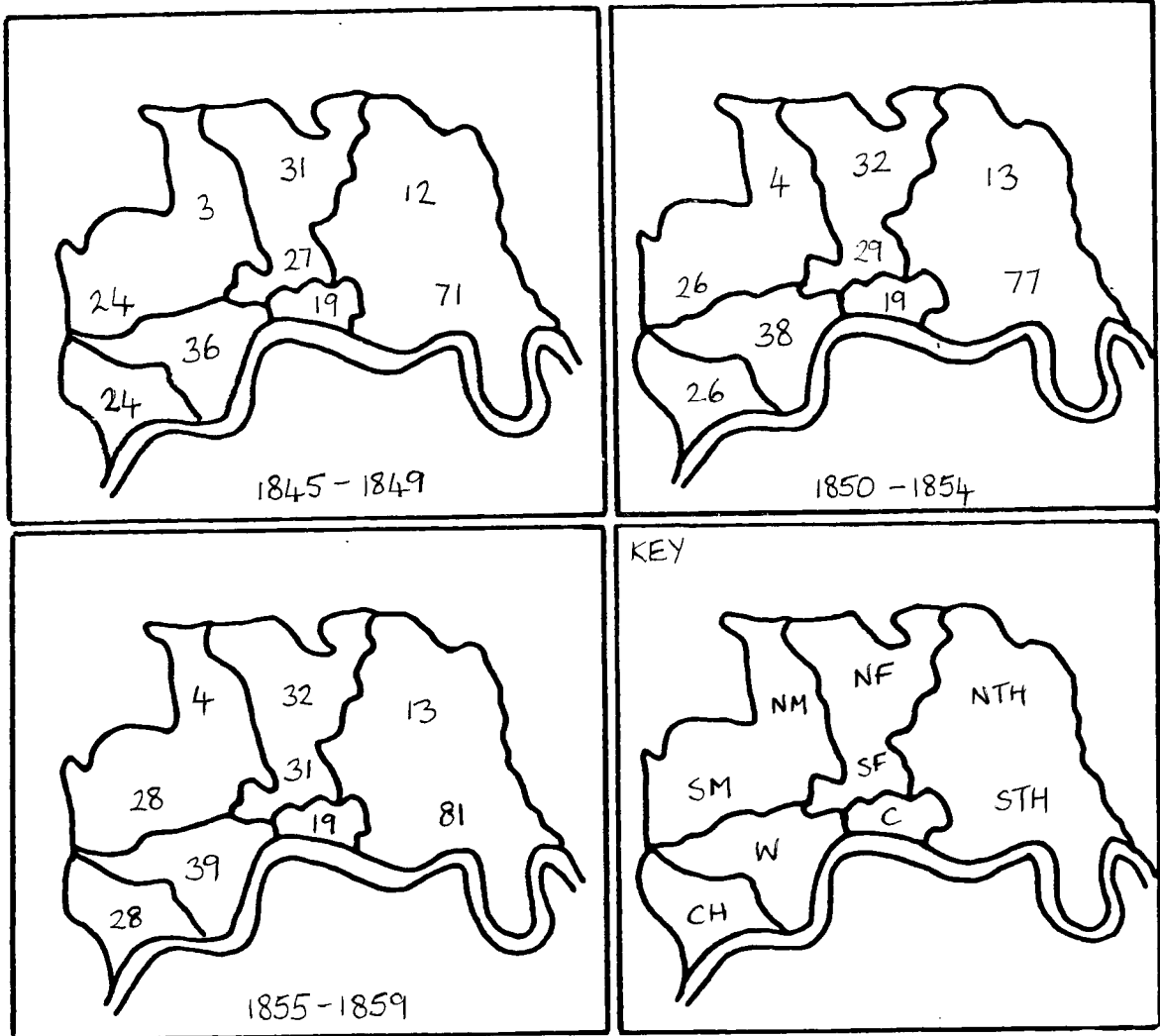


Key :

- C = City
- W = Westminster
- NF = North Finsbury
- SF = South Finsbury
- NTH = North Tower Hamlets
- STH = South Tower Hamlets
- NM = North Marylebone
- SM = South Marylebone
- CH = Chelsea

Maps 10 to 18 show the cumulative totals of schools in each area of London





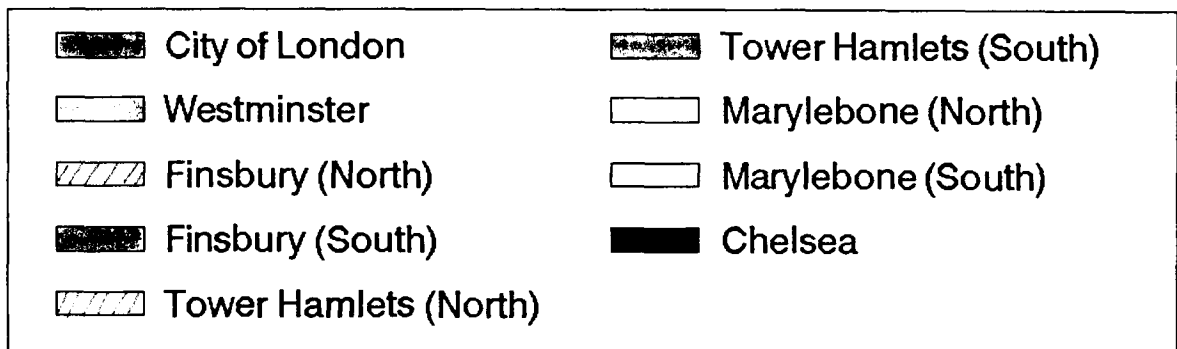
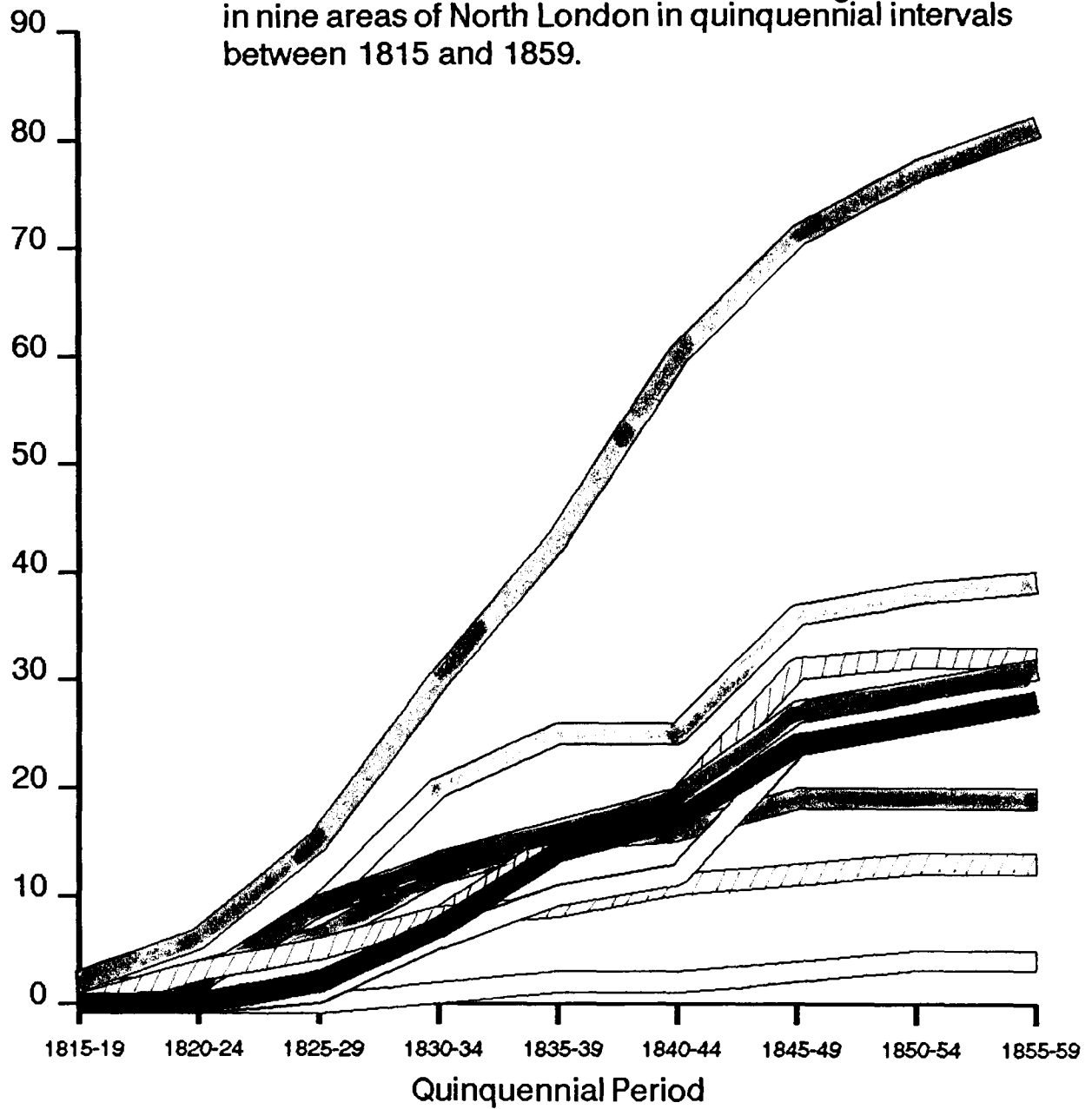
Key :

- C = City
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- NF = North Finsbury
- SF = South Finsbury
- NTH = North Tower Hamlets
- STH = South Tower Hamlets
- NM = North Marylebone
- SM = South Marylebone
- CH = Chelsea



Graph C

Cumulative totals of Public schools catering for infants in nine areas of North London in quinquennial intervals between 1815 and 1859.



The maps on the previous pages highlight that the nine areas of North London differed in terms of geographical size and population densities and, therefore, it would be misleading to make simple comparisons between these nine areas.<sup>1</sup> For example, the area defined in this study as South Finsbury which consisted of Clerkenwell, St James; the Artillery Ground; St. Luke's; St. Andrew's; St. George the Martyr and Saffron Hill; St. Giles in the Fields and St. George's, Bloomsbury covered 976 acres and, in 1841, was inhabited by 186,408 people. North Tower Hamlets, however, which consisted of the parish of St. John, Hackney covered 3,330 acres and in 1841 was only inhabited by 38,771. The City of Westminster covered 2,500 acres and, in 1841, was home to 222,053 souls.

Population densities also varied within the nine areas. South Tower Hamlets for example covered approximately 4,000 acres and, according to the 1841 census, was inhabited by more than 317,000 people. The average population density for South Tower Hamlets, therefore, was approximately 79 persons per acre. In Stepney, which included Mile End Old Town, Mile End New Town, Poplar and

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1. P.P. 1831 (348) XVIII, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, pp. 161-166 and P.P. 1841 Great Britain 1841 Census, Enumeration Abstract, pp. 178-183.

2. P.P. 1841 Great Britain 1841 Census, Enumeration Abstract, pp. 178-183.

Ratcliffe the population density was only 30 people per acre. The population density in Christ Church, Spitalfields, however, was a staggering 291 people per acre, eight times as great as that of Stepney.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, although it has only been possible to trace 27 schools catering for infants that were situated in the City of London up to 1859, whereas in South Marylebone there were 38 such schools, it must be remembered that the area of the City was about one third of that of South Marylebone. The socio-economic profiles of each of the nine areas were also very diverse and the influence of this in determining the pattern of educational provision is examined in a later section.

There were variations in the rate of increase of educational facilities within any given area between 1815 and 1859. For some areas such as North Tower Hamlets and North Marylebone, because of the relatively low numbers involved it is hard to determine whether there was a pattern to the establishment of new facilities for infants (Graph B). In contrast, it is clear from Graph B that the southern district of Marylebone experienced two peak periods as regards the establishment of schools for infants, as did Westminster, Chelsea and, to a lesser extent, the City of London. The southern districts of Tower Hamlets, however, simply witnessed a fairly increase between 1815 and 1859 until a peak

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1. P.P. 1841 Great Britain 1841 Census, Enumeration Abstract, pp. 178-183.

was reached between 1840 and 1844 and thereafter there was a consistent decline in the rate of establishment of new facilities for infants.

Between 1815 and 1859 the rates of increase of public educational facilities for infants also varied between areas of North London, and it is interesting to note that the peaks and troughs for the different areas of London did not always coincide with each other. In South Tower Hamlets, for example, the peak period for development of educational facilities for infants was during the first half of the 1840s when at least 18 more schools opened their doors to 'under eights'. In Westminster during this same period there was no increase in publicly-aided facilities for infants.

Whether or not the pattern of working-class private school provision showed a similar diversity is discussed in the following section.

#### Brief Outline of the Growth and Location of Working-Class Private Schools for Children Aged Seven and Under.

In 1843 the Education Committee of the L.S.S. noted that 'whilst the Charity and Sunday schools are sufficiently known to the public through the reports of the societies to which they respectively belong, the census of private schools has never yet

been undertaken.<sup>1</sup> One aim of the education surveys of the L.S.S. was to provide information about the existing pattern of both private and public schooling for working class children in different areas of London, but the L.S.S. did not survey all the parishes in North London. Official records (e.g. Parliamentary Education Enquiries, the 1851 Education Census and the Church Schools Enquiry of 1846) are therefore the only readily accessible records available that look at the various forms of educational provision London-wide. These records can only be used to provide an idea about the possible scale of private working-class schooling for 'under eights', but they can not provide material for accurate quantitative analysis of the educational situation because the records are notoriously inaccurate.<sup>2</sup>

According to the 1819 Digest of Parochial Returns there were 385 unendowed day schools in Middlesex.<sup>3</sup> Of these schools 74 (19 per cent) were classified as dame schools, 269 (70 per cent) were classified as ordinary schools and the remaining 42 schools (11 per cent) fell into the category of 'schools on the New Plan' and

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1. Report of the Education Committee, J.S.S., Vol. 6, 1843, p. 212.

2. See Chapter 1 this thesis, pp. 13-18.

3. P.P. 1819 (224), ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, p. 564.

were National or British schools.<sup>1</sup> This particular classification system does not shed much light on the pattern of private schooling for 'under eights' since no rigid age-based criteria were used in determining whether a particular school was a dame school or an ordinary school. It has been argued that in reality the difference between dame schools and ordinary schools was not so much in the age of pupils but in the curriculum.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, whilst it is probable that the majority of the dame schools were private it is far from clear what proportion of the ordinary schools were private and what proportion were in receipt of public finance of some description. A clearer picture of the pattern of private schooling in North London can be gained by examining the returns for individual parishes in North London rather than by attempting to interpret London-wide figures.

The 1818 returns for each parish of North London suggest very strongly that private schools were a well established part of the educational scene in most areas of North London. According to these returns the only three areas in which there were no private schools were North Marylebone and North and South Finsbury. The scale of private schooling appeared to vary between and within other areas of London.

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1. P.P. 1819 (224), ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, p. 564.

2. Gardner, P., *op cit.*, pp. 17-18.

In the west of London, in Westminster, the returns for the parishes of St. Margaret's and St. John's noted that approximately 800 children attended 'forty small day schools kept by women'. In St. Martin's in the Fields there were 'numerous small schools'. In St. Anne's there were 'several small schools...where admission is paid for by respective parents', whilst St. Clement Danes apparently had only one private school. The return for the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, however, would suggest that this was a district of Westminster without any private working-class schools as no schools that could fall into this category were listed, but the clergyman making the return specifically mentioned that there were 'a considerable number of boarding and day schools for the respectable and middling classes of society'.<sup>1</sup>

Within the eastern area of South Tower Hamlets, the parish best served with private schools would seem to have been St. Mary Matfelon, Whitechapel in which there were 'about forty [other] schools, mostly kept by dames, educating 1,000 children'. Also in the east of London, in the parish of St. Paul's, Shadwell, were '16 schools where 259 boys and girls are taught by mistresses at 3d and 4d a week' and in Mile End New Town 'three or four schools' taught thirty to forty children. In contrast,

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1. P.P. 1819 (224), ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, pp. 542-549.

the entry for St. Mary's, Stoke Newington (North Tower Hamlets) was very vague with 'several' day and boarding schools being listed.<sup>1</sup>

It is probable that there were private working-class schools in the City of London. 'Several pay schools' were situated in St. Botolph's (Bishopsgate), two private schools in St. Mary's, Aldermanbury whilst the return for St. Michael le Quern stated unequivocally that the parish was served by 'a dame's school'. The return for Marylebone vaguely noted the presence of 'some private schools', whilst further afield in the west of London there were 'numberless small day and evening schools kept by women' in St. Luke's, Chelsea, and 'fifteen small schools' in St. Mary Abbots, Kensington.<sup>2</sup>

It is not possible to ascertain what proportion of the schools that were listed were working-class private schools which also took in 'under eights', but there are grounds for arguing that many of these schools probably did fall into this category. Firstly, the use of terms such as 'women' and 'dames' in a period when respectable females were referred to as 'ladies' hints that the school teachers in the listed schools were not of a particularly high social standing. Secondly, the fact that the

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1. P.P. 1819 (224), ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, pp. 551-553.

2. Ibid., pp.548-50.



fees charged in some of the schools listed were about 3d a week would suggest that the children attending these schools were not from well-off families. Thirdly, according to contemporary records and recent research, most working-class private schools catered for a wide age range.<sup>1</sup> It is likely that many of the schools listed were attended partly, though not exclusively, by 'under eights'.

According to the 1818 Returns, private working-class schools were a significant part of the educational scene in different areas of North London, but there were large variations in the spread of facilities available across North London. Westminster and South Tower Hamlets stand out as having a high number of private schools whereas none were recorded in North Marylebone and the whole of Finsbury. Other areas which appear to have been fairly well served include Chelsea and South Marylebone (Table 2.5 overleaf).

It is striking that within each of these areas the schools were not evenly distributed. In South Tower Hamlets, whilst Whitechapel may have had 40 private schools, the large and highly populated parishes of St. George in the East; St. Leonard's, Shoreditch; Christchurch, Spitalfields and St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green apparently had none. Similarly, in Westminster, most of the schools appear to have been located in St. Margaret's, St. John's and St. Martin's in the Fields, whilst none was recorded in the parishes of St. George's, Hanover Square and St. James'.

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1. Gardner, P., op cit., p. 23-25.

Table 2.5

Number of Private Day Schools<sup>1</sup>

<u>Area</u>	<u>1818 Returns</u>	<u>1833 Returns</u>	<u>1851 Census</u>
Chelsea	15+	9	219
City of London	3+	20	119
Finsbury (North)	Unknown	Unknown	209
Finsbury (South)	Unknown	5	223
Marylebone (North)	Unknown	Unknown	239
Marylebone (South)	Unknown	Unknown	195
Tower Hamlets (Sth)	60	31	430
Tower Hamlets (Nth)	'several'	Unknown	117
Westminster	40+	27+	219

Since each of the returns was made by the local clergy it is possible that these differences are merely a reflection of each man's diligence or local knowledge, but it is also possible that

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1. Figures obtained from P.P. 1819 (224), ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, pp. 533-564; 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 554-594; P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education, (England and Wales), pp. 8-9.

these differences were real and in some way related to the socio-economic profiles of each of the parishes. Did later surveys show a similar pattern of distribution?

Did private working-class schools continue to provide education for a significant number of young working class children in North London even after the spread of the National and British Schools and, perhaps more importantly, the development of public schools catering specifically for 'under eights'?

It is necessary to examine the 1833 Education Returns<sup>1</sup> in an attempt to answer these questions. As with the 1818 Returns the collated and tabulated results of the 1833 Education Survey do not offer much help in answering this question, despite the fact that in this survey schools were classified as infant schools or daily schools. The possible gains to the researcher resulting from an attempt to classify schools according to age are counterbalanced by the losses due to the lack of clarity about the schools' status (i.e. private or public).

It is impossible to determine the number of private working-class schools from the tables summarising the results of the 1833 survey, because both public and private schools nominally catering for children aged between two and seven were placed in the category of infant schools. Similarly, public and private

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1. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 554-594.

day schools were all placed in the second category of daily schools. Difficulties also arise from the fact that there was an overlap in terms of the ages of the pupils in the two categories of schools, as 'under eights' were attending daily schools.<sup>1</sup> In addition there is no summary for London alone as it is included in the summary for the County of Middlesex.

As with the 1818 Survey, however, the individual parish returns are the most useful source of information, but again the survey results must be treated with caution and only used to provide an indication of the situation at the time.

In order to provide an idea of the scale of private working-class education for 'under eights' a note was made of those schools in the category of infant schools which met the following criteria. Firstly, the school had to be recorded as being totally dependent upon the children's fees for its existence and upkeep. Secondly, the school had to be small with no more than 20-30 children, as this effectively excluded any school which may have charged the parents fees but was held in a building that was owned or rented by a person or a group of people who were concerned with providing education for working-class children. If a school in the category of daily schools fulfilled both these criteria the return had also to make a specific reference to the age of the pupils before the school was included in the list.

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1. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns  
Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales,  
p. 593.

An interesting pattern to emerge was that, as in 1818, some areas of North London apparently did not have any private working-class schools catering for infants. This perhaps should not be surprising in the light of the fact that only eight per cent of all the schools enumerated in the 1833 survey fell into this category.<sup>1</sup> In North London, however, what is particularly interesting is that, as seemed to be the case 15 years earlier, the schools that did fall into this category were again not distributed evenly across North London. There were apparently none of these schools in North Marylebone, North Finsbury, North Tower Hamlets, a considerable reduction in Chelsea but an increase of these schools in South Finsbury. As in 1818 the highest number of these schools appeared to be situated in Westminster and South Tower Hamlets.

A closer look at the individual parish returns of 1833 shows that, again, even within the two areas, schools were not evenly distributed. In Westminster, the distribution of schools was very similar to that in 1818. The parish of St. Margaret's was credited with three infant schools in which 34 children received instruction at their parents' expense. In addition 36 daily schools were also enumerated and 22 of these schools were specifically described as 'small Preparatory schools kept by females'. As these schools were described as preparatory it would seem likely that they catered more for younger children

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1. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns  
Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales,  
pp. 592-593.

than for older children, but it was unusual for schools catering solely for 'under eights' to be single sex.<sup>1</sup> However, in the entry for St. John's, Westminster two private schools were returned as infant schools, one of which was a mixed school and the other was a small girls-only school. It is possible therefore that the 22 of the preparatory schools in St. Margaret's were indeed mainly attended by younger children. In 1833, as in 1818, no private working-class schools were listed for the Westminster parishes of St. George, Hanover Square and St. James. One notable difference was that there was no evidence of the 'numerous small schools' that had been in existence in St. Martin's in the Fields 15 years earlier.

The 1833 Returns for parishes in South Tower Hamlets would indicate that the distribution of private schools had altered quite considerably since 1818. In each of the three parishes of Christchurch (Spitalfields), St. Leonard's (Shoreditch) and St. Mary, Stratford le Bow, three private schools for very young children appeared to have been established since the 1818 survey. Most dramatically however, the return for St. Mary's, Whitechapel made no mention of the 40 schools that had been listed in 1818. Conversely, in 1818 the return for St. George in the East indicated that there were no private schools, yet in 1833, 300 children were receiving an education in 22 daily schools 'kept by females...for very young children'.

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1. The Education Committee of the L.S.S. asserted that 'among the younger scholars the sexes are little separated', and this could imply that younger children tended to attend mixed schools. J.S.S., Vol. 6, 1843, pp. 211-217.

Those responsible for the schedules of the 1851 Education Census displayed a higher degree of awareness regarding the importance of careful classification. However, private schools were frequently not categorised according to the age of the pupils (probably because most private schools still catered for a wide age range). Using 'efficiency' as the basis for classification of private schools, the collators came to the conclusion that approximately 47 per cent of private schools were 'inferior' schools. 'Inferior' schools were principally dame schools in which reading and writing were taught. Approximately 24 per cent of private schools were judged to be 'middling' with a slightly wider curriculum than the 'inferior' schools <sup>1</sup>. Since some of the 'middling schools' and the dame schools may have catered for a middle-class clientele, and as the 1851 Census figures were being used only to gain an overall picture of the scale of private school provision, it did not seem necessary to attempt to work out the exact number of private working-class schools for the very young. The figures used, therefore, are those presented in the 1851 Census.<sup>2</sup>

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1. P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales), pp. xxxiii.

2. The London districts in the summary tables do not map neatly with the districts being used in this thesis. Thus Kensington as defined by the 1851 census falls into the area of Chelsea but includes the south Marylebone parishes of St. John's and St. Mary's, Paddington. 'Shoreditch' in South Tower Hamlets includes the North Tower Hamlets areas of Hoxton and Haggerstone.

The number of private schools in different areas of North London is summarised in Table 2.5. As in the earlier surveys South Tower Hamlets had the highest number of these schools. By 1851 however, Westminster seemed to be lagging behind Chelsea and North Marylebone, South Finsbury.

What is very apparent from the foregoing analysis is that during the first half of the nineteenth century South Tower Hamlets consistently appeared to have the highest number of private schools. This was also the case in the distribution of public schools across North London. Also similar to the spread of public schools was the way in which there was a progressive decrease in the number of private schools in the outer northern arc as one moved from west to east (i.e. from North Marylebone to North Finsbury to North Tower Hamlets).

If these variations were real, what factors caused these variations between and within different areas of London, and were private and public educational provision influenced in similar ways by the same factors as is suggested by this brief overview? The following section begins to examine the relationships between socio-economic factors and educational provision.



The Relationship Between the Scale of Educational Facilities for  
Infants and the Socio-Economic Profiles of Different Areas of  
North London.

It is probable that three key aspects of London together played a significant part in influencing the development of early childhood education during the first six decades of the nineteenth century. These key aspects were: the pattern of London's growth and the diverse character of London's districts, the employment patterns in the capital, and the social and geographic effects of migration to London. This section of the chapter examines in turn the ways in which each of these factors may have influenced the provision of schools for infants.

The growth of London and the diversity of its districts.

For centuries London had served a number of different functions and by the beginning of the nineteenth century it was recognised as the political, administrative and social centre of the country while its flourishing port helped ensure that it was also a centre of commerce. In the late eighteenth century London's population was outstanding compared with that of other large British towns. By 1861 even the rapidly expanding centres such as Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham only had populations of approximately a quarter of a million in comparison with that of London which exceeded two million.<sup>1</sup> London also expanded geographically during the same period. At the beginning of the nineteenth century London extended from Hoxton in the north to

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 46.

Southwark in the south and from Hyde Park in the west to Limehouse in the east. By mid-century much of the land between the ribbon developments that had grown up along the main roads into the centre of London had been built upon, and London was described by a contemporary as 'stretching from Hammersmith to Blackwell [and] from Holloway to Camberwell'.<sup>1</sup> Areas that had previously been rural or semi-rural such as Poplar, Mile End, Islington, Camden and Kensington had all been ingested by London, the 'monstrous city'.<sup>2</sup>

It would appear that London's growth was matched by a growth in its educational facilities. From 1815 onwards there was a steady increase in North London in the number of publicly-aided schools which catered for infants (Graph C). As mentioned earlier, taking North London as a whole, two peaks occurred in the establishment of public schools; the first in the early 30s and the second much larger peak in the late 40s (Graph A). This pattern, however, was not mirrored exactly in the nine areas under examination.

Unfortunately due to insufficient data it is not possible to state whether there was a similar pattern of growth regarding private working class educational facilities across North London, although comparison of the 1818 and 1851 Returns would suggest

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1. Perkin, H., The Origins of Modern English Society, 1969, p. 117.

2. Corfield, P.J., The Impact of English Towns, 1770 - 1800., 1982, pp. 66-77.

that during this period there was an overall increase in the number of private working-class schools.

During the first half of the nineteenth century London was not an homogeneous area either socially or economically. It has been argued that the diversity of London's neighbourhoods was partly the result of the absorption of previously distinct areas on the outskirts of London, areas which did not suddenly lose their economic and social character simply because they had been engulfed by London.<sup>1</sup> How, if at all, was this diversity between areas reflected in the educational provision for 'under eights' ? Between 1820 and 1849 the geographic expansion of London was accompanied by an increase in public educational facilities for young children in the outer arc of North London i.e. Chelsea, Kensington, Fulham, St. Pancras, Islington , Highbury, Mile End, Poplar (Maps 1-9).

There were, however, discernible differences in the patterns of educational provision between each of the districts of the outer ring of North London. The peaks of activity in terms of establishment of public education facilities for infants varied. The period 1830-34 was a spell of peak activity in North London overall and this level of activity was mirrored in North Tower Hamlets. This was the last such peak in North Tower Hamlets before 1859. North Finsbury experienced two peaks, one between 1835 and 1839 and the second between 1845 and 1849, a period

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1. Alexander, S., Women's Work in the Nineteenth Century, A Study of the Years 1820-50, 1984, p. 15.

during which other outer districts such as North Tower Hamlets and Chelsea were also witnessing a rise in the establishment of infant schools (Graph B).

In terms of the establishment of new public education facilities for infants, not only did each of the districts in the outer arc differ from the others but there was also a noticeable degree of diversity between the outer and inner districts of each of the six areas of North London. For example, there was very little similarity between the northern and southern areas in both Marylebone and Tower Hamlets, or between Chelsea and its more central neighbour, Westminster. In only one district, Finsbury, was there a degree of fairly consistent and noticeable congruence between the outer and inner rings of a district.

A comparison of the 1818, 1833 and 1851 Returns to Parliament would suggest that there was an overall increase in the number of private working-class schools in the outer arc of North London during the first half of the nineteenth century. The returns would also point to the existence of differences between areas of North London in terms of the distribution of private educational facilities for 'under eights'.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately it is not possible to provide a longitudinal analysis of the development of private working-class schooling for such relatively large tracts of North London since detailed, ongoing

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1. See Table 2.5, p. 70 of this thesis.

records of the number of private schools across North London do not exist.

The foregoing analysis suggests that the pattern of growth of public educational facilities for infants varied from area to area. The situation regarding private working-class schooling is less clear. At this juncture it would be helpful to examine in more depth what made different areas of North London so distinct from each other and try to isolate some of the factors which had a major influence on determining the pattern of Early Years educational provision in North London.

The size of London and its multiplicity of function both contributed towards the development of numerous diverse metropolitan districts, each with its own particular occupational, economic and social profiles. The following section explores the extent to which patterns of public education provision can be linked to the occupational, economic and social profiles of the different areas in of North London.

#### The influence of residential patterns on educational provision.

In London at the turn of the nineteenth century one of the clearest social trends was the influence of both occupation and wealth in determining where in the capital people lived and worked. This was not a new trend but one that had begun to emerge as early as the sixteenth century. As London began to grow beyond the confines of the City during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, clear differences in the nature

of the new neighbourhoods became apparent.<sup>1</sup> The majority of the large and pleasant homes were concentrated in the western and central parishes of North London whilst the eastern and riverside parishes contained a higher proportion of much smaller homes.

Two important factors led to the emergence of this residential pattern. The first was that wealthy Londoners moved westwards because the land in the east was marshy and unsuitable for grand building.<sup>2</sup> The second and more important influence was that of occupation. A carriage ride across London was time consuming and those Londoners involved in finance, the Royal Court or Parliament preferred to live in the western parishes which were conveniently close to the City and Westminster. It has been claimed that the westwards movement of the wealthy in the late seventeenth century was due to the fact that the prevailing wind was a west wind one so those that were able to do so, moved westwards to escape the 'fumes, steams and stinks of the whole

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1. For example, in 1598 John Stow contrasted the 'fair homes' of Aldgate with the 'filthy cottages' of Aldermanbury. Cited by Power, M.J., 'The Social Topography of Restoration London' in Beier, A.J. and Finlay, R. (eds.), London 1500-1700, The Making of the Metropolis, 1986, p. 199.

See also Power, M.J., *ibid*, pp. 199-223 for an analysis of the distribution of wealth in London during the 1660s.

2. Schwarz, L.D., 'Occupations and Incomes in Late Eighteenth Century East London,' in East London Papers, Vol. 14, No. 2. Dec. 1972, p.88.

easterly pyle'.<sup>1</sup> The reason for the west of London being more environmentally pleasant than the east was closely related to the fact that the eastern and southern areas of London had gradually become centres for the more unpleasant industries. During the seventeenth and eighteenth century many manufacturers decided not to live and work within the walls of the City and moved to the eastern and southern suburbs of London. By living and working outside the confines of the City these manufacturers were able to avoid the various rules of the London guilds and the high rents of the City.<sup>2</sup> In moving south and east rather than west the manufacturers remained conveniently close to the docks. As a result many of these parishes became centres for noxious and unpleasant smelling industries such as tanning, alum making, and soap making, which either required a lot of space or had been banned from the City on account of the environmental pollution they caused. Many of the residents in the eastern parishes north of the Thames were employed in these industries.

It is clear from the population censuses of 1841 and 1851 that during the first half of the nineteenth century different areas of London could be identified with different industries or

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1. William Petty, 1662, quoted by George, M.D., op cit. p. 74.

2. Beier, A.L., 'Engine of Manufacture : The Trades of London' in Beier, A.L. and Finlay R. (eds), op cit. and Power, M.J., 'The Social Topography of Restoration London', op cit., pp. 156-159.

occupations.<sup>1</sup> All the riggers in Middlesex and most of the ship builders, rope makers, sailmakers, caulkers, silk workers and sugar bakers and refiners were based in the Tower District.<sup>2</sup> Finsbury was the focal point for watchmaking, and also for many jewellers and silversmiths, and more than 40 per cent of all the Middlesex-based cabinet makers and carvers and guilders were situated in Holborn.

Like the wealthier Londoner, the majority of working-class Londoners were constrained by their work when it came to deciding where to live. Those working in the unpleasant industries in the south and east of London had also to live in the same district because of the lack of an efficient and affordable public transport system. This meant that until the late nineteenth century it was impracticable for most working-class workers to live at any great distance from their place of employment.<sup>3</sup> This was especially true for the numerous workers engaged in casual work, as it was imperative for such workers to be 'on hand' should work become available. The fact that large ships could only sail up the Thames as far as London Bridge meant that shipbuilders, mariners and casual dockside labourers gravitated

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1. Mayhew also linked specific areas of London with specific trades and occupations, see Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 51.

2. The Tower District roughly approximates to North and South Tower Hamlets.

3. See contemporary testimony quoted by Hobsbawm, E. in Worlds of Labour, 1984, pp. 137-138.



towards the eastern parishes as their work was centred there.<sup>1</sup> This particular limitation on where it was practical for workers to live during the first half of the nineteenth century partly contributed towards the fact that the social and economic character of districts across London were largely dependent upon local employment opportunities.

In 1780 Archenholtz noted the very different characters of parishes in the east and west of London :

...the east end, especially the shores of the Thames, consists of old houses, the streets there are narrow, dark and ill paved. The contrast between this and the West End is astonishing: the houses here are mostly new and elegant; the squares superb, the streets straight and open...<sup>2</sup>

In the mid-nineteenth century, this pattern was still discernible:

This part [i.e. the West End] of London is superb; the houses are well built and the streets though extremely monotonous, are nicely laid out...Lodgings are cheaper in certain parts of the south and north east of the city...<sup>3</sup>

How rigid was this economic and social east-west divide and what were the implications of it for the provision of public education for infants?

The first thing to be said is that the distribution of schools for infants did not show a clear east-west divide across North London. By 1859 39 per cent of the public schools catering for infants in North London were situated in Chelsea, Westminster and

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1. See 1841 and 1851 Census Enumerators' Returns for Christ Church, Spitalfields, HO 107 710 and HO 107 1543.

2. Quoted in George, M.D., *op cit.*, p. 76.

3. Tristan, F., The London Journal of Flora Tristan, 1842, p. 19.

Marylebone in the west. Approximately 32 per cent of these schools were situated in Tower Hamlets in the east and 30 per cent were situated in the central zone composed of the City and Finsbury. This particular pattern does not seem to be compatible with the widely-accepted view that most public schools (for both infants and older children) were established in an effort to ensure social stability and the production of an amenable hardworking workforce.<sup>1</sup> If this was indeed the case then why were most of the public schools for infants situated in the supposedly more affluent western parishes of North London, whilst the poorer districts in the east of London appeared to have received less attention? One explanation lies in the fact that whilst there was a discernible distribution of wealth along an east-west axis in North London, residential segregation on the grounds of occupation, wealth and social class was not absolute in the early nineteenth century.

The lack of rigid segregation along the lines of wealth was noted by Flora Tristan when on a visit to an infants' school:

...we boldly plunged into a labyrinth of unpaved lanes where at every instant our cab was in danger of being shaken to pieces; and this was in London, very near the fashionable districts and elegant squares! We passed through streets so mean and squalid it would be hard to find their equal...<sup>2</sup>

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1. This point has been highlighted by Machin, G. J. 'The Westminster Free Day Asylum: The Origins of the First English Infant School' in Journal of Educational Administration and History (hereafter J.E.A.H.), Vol. XX, July 1988, pp.43-56 and Pratt, C.A. 'Educational Provision in the Parish of St. Mathew, Bethnal Green, 1834-1890, With Special Reference to the Education of the Poor', M.A. University of London, 1985, p. 90.
  2. Tristan, F. The London Journal of Flora Tristan, 1842, p. 233.

Other contemporaries were also aware that wealth and poverty were frequently very close neighbours in many areas of London during the first half of the nineteenth century, as was made clear in a report from the Education Committee of the L.S.S in 1843. This report made a special point of describing how atypical

Clerkenwell was in comparison with the rest of the metropolis:

It has, however, none of the usual characteristics of a manufacturing town. There are many miles of open well ventilated streets containing exclusively private houses which look neat and comfortable and the stranger is not struck by the appearance of extreme misery and wealth alternating with each other in close juxtaposition. The cause of this peculiarity of Clerkenwell, which so distinguishes it from other parts of the metropolis is to be found in the nature of its manufacture...<sup>1</sup>

An explanation for the lack of rigid residential segregation along the lines of wealth lies in the employment patterns in North London at the time. Firstly, in the same way as the ports and docks attracted sailors and dock workers to the east of London, the presence of the wealthy in the west attracted those who worked in the service industries and the luxury trades

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1. Report of the Education Committee of the Statistical Society of London on the Borough of Finsbury, J.S.S. Vol. 6, 1843, p. 28. Watchmaking and jewellery making were the main forms of manufacture in the area.

(e.g. coach building, jewellery and other skilled specialist trades).<sup>1</sup>

The symbiotic relationship that existed between rich and poor was recognised by the eighteenth-century architect and planner, John Gwynne, who remarked that when building houses for the rich 'it will be found necessary to allot smaller places contiguous, for the Habitations of the useful and labourious people whose dependence upon their Superiors requires such a Distribution.'<sup>2</sup> A hundred years later, in the mid-nineteenth century, Hollingshead noted this phenomenon too when he wrote that 'there is hardly a settlement of leading residences that has not its particular colony of ill-housed poor hanging on to its skirts', and went on to assert that large private houses attracted 'a crowded dependent popluation' in the same way as did factories and industry;<sup>3</sup> until cheap and efficient public transport became a reality, workers in the service industries and luxury trades,

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1. According to the 1841 population census the largest occupational group for men over the age of 20 living in Holborn and Westminster was that of domestic servants, in Finsbury and Tower Divisions it was labouring. 75 per cent of the musical instrument makers in Middlesex were based in Holborn and Westminster and more than 505 of the coachbuilders were based in Holborn. P.P. 1844 (587) XXVII, Great Britain (England, Wales, Islands). Occupation Abstract, pp. 108-125

2. Cited in Corfield, P.J., op. cit., p. 78.

3. Hollingshead, J., Ragged London in 1861, 1861, p. 73.

in common with most of London's working class, were compelled to live within walking distance of their place of work.

The economic and social status of the residents in the central and western districts of London was therefore quite diverse, with the comfortably off often living very close to the poor. Despite the fact that within any given area there was diversity both in the occupational and economic status of the residents, there was a discernible trend in the metropolis, of an imbalance in wealth along an east-west axis. A likely consequence of this imbalance of wealth in terms of early childhood educational provision was a dearth of funds for the establishment and continued support of local schools for poor working-class children. The finding that a high proportion of public facilities for infants were located in the western districts may not be as inexplicable as it may at first have seemed, and there may be at least three explanations for it. Firstly, clearly the 'need' for public educational facilities as defined by interested members of the middle and upper classes was not confined to the eastern districts alone.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the higher proportion of wealthy inhabitants in the west probably resulted in more money being available for the establishment of public schools. Thirdly, in certain areas of

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1. The definition of an area's educational 'needs' varied depending upon who was making the judgement. Thus the 'needs' as defined by a poor working-class parent might have differed considerably from the 'needs' defined by a middle-class Evangelical. This issue is discussed in more depth in later chapters of the thesis.

London wealthy residents perceived that crime rates were particularly high in the locality in which they lived.

One such area was south Marylebone, where between 1773 and 1829 the increase in the local population was accompanied by a corresponding increase in the number of crimes against property in the area. On a per capita basis the number of indictments did not rise but residents in Marylebone believed that the crime rate was on the increase. One response to this may have been to establish and support schools for the poor in an effort to ensure the moral education of potential criminals.<sup>1</sup>

What of private educational facilities? Did these show an east-west divide? According to the 1818 Returns the two areas with the highest number of private schools were on opposite sides of London - Westminster in the west and South Tower Hamlets in the east. By mid-nineteenth century the distribution of private schools matched that of public schools. Most of the private schools recorded were situated in the west of London, in Chelsea, Westminster and Marylebone, whilst the central zone apparently had the lowest number of these schools. If there was a higher proportion of poor working-class families in east London than in west London, why were there more working-class private schools in the west?

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1. Reynolds, E.A. 'St. Marylebone: Local Police Reform in London, 1755-1829' in The Historian: A Journal of History, Vol. LI, No. 3, May 1989, p. 457.

Did the poorer families in west and east London differ from each other in terms of their attitudes towards early education or the amount of money they had to spend on education? Why were some areas so well served with both public and private schools whilst other areas had few of either sort of school? Were public schools established to draw children away from the private working-class schools which were perceived to be inadequate by middle- and upper-class observers? Alternatively, were private schools established as the community's response to an increase in the number of public schools and if so why? Answers to these questions require more detailed information than that contained within the 1818, 1833 and 1851 Returns.

The general character of an area, for example, was also determined by the manner in which the land had been developed. In some areas there were strict building regulations which resulted in the building of fine houses, plenty of space between houses and well laid out streets and squares.<sup>1</sup> Building in other areas of London was not so regulated, and speculative builders sometimes quite brazenly ignored building regulations and continued to do so through much of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The condition of many of those areas of London that had been poor for

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1. Stevens, D.F., 'The Central Area' in Coppock J.T. and Prince, H.C. op cit. Also George, M.D., op cit., pp. 73-92.

2. Prince, H.C., 'North West London 1814-63' in Coppock J.T. and Prince, H.C. (eds.), op cit., p. 11; George, M.D. op cit., pp. 79-87 and Hollingshead, J., op cit., pp. 67-68.

centuries often worsened during the early nineteenth century as they were not the focus of prestigious developments.

The socio-economic profile of areas was not static in that the character of a district was liable to change over a period of time. Such changes were often accompanied by changes in the educational requirements of the inhabitants. Beames highlighted the instability of districts in his descriptions of London's rookeries, in which he pointed out that some of the dwellings had formerly been 'ancient houses for rich families'.<sup>1</sup>

Changes in districts may have been the result of localised changes in economic and occupational profiles and considerations of residential fashions, but dramatic changes were also brought about by various 'improvements' in the locality, such as the building of fashionable shops and houses and the development of London's communications systems (e.g. new roads, railways, canals and docks).

These improvements had a profound affect on Londoners' lives, especially the poorer Londoners. On the one hand the developments provided new employment opportunities. On the other hand the problem of displacement was a significant consequence of all this building. The development of the docks and improvements in the City necessitated the demolition of numerous houses of the poor. Railways, too, adversely affected the poorer Londoner as the line of railways tended to be drawn through those districts

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1. Beames, T., The Rookeries of London, 1852, pp. 16-17.



where it was felt that there would be least opposition.<sup>1</sup>

Displacement and overcrowding were just two of the consequences of 'improvements', but for some Londoners a third consequence was that they lost their livelihoods due to the loss of local services and the related jobs. Whilst the large London markets (e.g. Smithfield and Covent Garden ) were expanding, the smaller markets around the City which served local residents were being displaced by street improvements, and by 1829 St. James' market, Carnaby market and Westminster market had all been swept away.<sup>2</sup>

Slum clearance increased the pressure on existing educational facilities in the surrounding districts as displaced families were edged into new neighbourhoods. Merely expanding the existing forms of educational provision was not necessarily the solution to the problems created by the new situation. The educational needs of the incoming families may have been very different from those families already settled in the area. Differences in the parents' occupations, expendable income, religion and attitude towards education would have influenced the type of educational facilities the parents required. Chapters 3-8 consist of detailed localised studies of the way in which educational facilities were affected by the changes just described.

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1. Coppock, J.T. and Prince, H.C. (eds.), *op cit.*, p. 62.

2. Green, D.R., 'Street Trading in London: A Case study of Casual Labour 1830-60' in Johnson J.H. and Pooley, C.G. (eds), The Structure of Nineteenth Century Cities, 1982, Chap. 5.

Employment patterns in London.

The nature of certain types of work in the capital meant that the economic state of workers could fluctuate considerably through the year, and many workers, both skilled and unskilled, experienced periods of total or virtual unemployment alternating with periods of steady employment.

Some workers were at the mercy of the weather. On a day to day basis, rainy weather prevented street sellers, carpenters and housebuilders from earning a living. The periods of low employment were more predictable for other workers as peaks and troughs in employment were identifiable with seasons of the year. Those involved in housebuilding had little work during winter but more chances of work in spring and summer. Conversely winter was a better time than summer for workers in the coal trade (e.g. unloaders of coal ships or porters). Workers who provided for the needs of the wealthy (e.g. milliners, pastry cooks, coachbuilders, tailors and boot-makers and shoe-makers) were likely to be in full employment during the 'fashionable season' which extended from February to July, but for the rest of the year many experienced some degree of unemployment. Other London workers experienced economic fluctuations as a result of national and international politics (e.g. wars and trade restrictions).

Since few areas of London were exclusively associated with any specific trade or occupation it is not possible at this point to provide a brief and definitive account of the effects of unemployment on Early Years schooling in North London since whole parishes or districts were not uniformly affected. Chapters

three to eight of this thesis examine a selection of metropolitan areas in detail, as such in-depth studies of small areas of North London are necessary to develop a deeper understanding of possible links between specific employment patterns and patterns of school establishment and attendance.

Migration to London: its effect on social attitudes and the involvement of the Church in education.

The diversity of London's population in 1800 stemmed partly from the fact that for over two hundred years there had been high levels of migration to the capital. From the late sixteenth century onwards London's population began to increase rapidly<sup>1</sup> and by the mid-seventeenth century it was asserted that London was 'supplied with people from out of the country, whereby not only to increase the overplus of burials... but likewise to increase its inhabitants'.<sup>2</sup> During the first half of the nineteenth century migration to London continued. The middle and upper classes were disturbed by the high levels of migration, and this anxiety had far reaching effects on the form of education that was provided for the working class as a whole during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Prior to the nineteenth century many migrants settled in the suburbs as rents there were lower than in the City and it was

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1. Finlay, R. and Shearer, B., 'Population Growth and Expansion' in Beier, A.L. and Finlay, R. (eds.), op cit., pp. 37-48.

2. Kitch, M.J., 'Capital and Kingdom: Migration to Later Stuart London' in Beier, A.L. and Finlay, R. (eds.), op cit., p. 244

possible to work beyond the production and economic controls of the various guilds of London.<sup>1</sup> One result of working outside the guilds' jurisdiction was that the proportion of apprentices outside the City of London declined. The suburban workers appeared to be free from any overt means of control as they were not subject to the political and social influence of the guilds and they were also not 'bound' to a master.<sup>2</sup> In the late seventeenth century Graunt expressed the fear induced by this particular situation when he observed that in the suburbs 'many vicious persons get liberty to live as they please, for want of some heedful eye'.<sup>3</sup>

High levels of migration to London were partly responsible for the decline in the effectiveness of traditional means of social control such as the system of patronage. By the nineteenth century London was a sprawling city with a large population

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1. Immigrants were unable to practice a trade in the City and this resulted in skilled immigrants settling in the suburbs of London ( eg. Huguenot silk weavers settled in Spitalfields). Statt, D., ' The City of London and the Controversy Over Immigration, 1660-1722' in The Historical Journal, Vol. 33, No. 2, March 1990.

2. The ideal situation in which the master took a responsible interest in the morals of his apprentices was not always achieved as is clear from the evidence of ex-apprentices (eg. Francis Place) and that relating to parish apprentices: George, M.D., op cit., Chaps. 5 and 6.

3. Beier, A.L. and Finlay, R.F., 'The Significance of the Metropolis' in Beier, A.L. and Finlay, R.F. (eds.), op cit., p. 21.

consisting of a high number of migrants and a high proportion of workers who moved around depending upon where there were job opportunities. In such a city it was difficult to maintain close personal links between the social classes and as a result patronage declined and with it a previously effective means of social control.<sup>1</sup>

Although most metropolitan districts were socially diverse they were frequently subdivided into socially segregated areas that decreased interaction between social classes. In 1835, John Blackburn, a Dissenting minister, commented that although he had been born and brought up in London he had 'no adequate conception of the real state of the population' until he became the Secretary of the Christian Instruction Society.<sup>2</sup> Chadwick also highlighted this particular feature of London life:

We have found that the inhabitants of the front houses in many of the main streets of ...the metropolis, have never entered the adjoining courts or seen the interior of any of the tenements, situate at the backs of their own houses, in which their own work people or dependents reside...<sup>3</sup>

Charles Dickens's special affinity with and understanding of London was much respected by his readers<sup>4</sup> and it is therefore interesting to note that in Oliver Twist he presented London as

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1. Hay, D., 'Property, Authority and Criminal Law' in Hay, D. et al, Albion's Fatal Tree, Crime and Society in Eighteenth Century England, 1975, pp. 54-55.

2. P.P. 1835 (465) vii, Report on the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 54.

3. Chadwick, E., Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain, 1842, p. 397.

4. Schwarzbach, F.S., Dickens and the City, 1979, p. 44.

an ideal hiding place :

The name awakened a new train of ideas in the boy's mind. London! - that great large place! - nobody - not even Mr. Bumble - could ever find him there! he had often heard the old man in the workhouse, too, say that no lad of spirit need want in London..<sup>1</sup>

The development of attitudes and beliefs of those with little or no experience of the less genteel side of London must have been influenced by passages such as this. It is interesting to compare the preceding passage with one written by Robert Vaughn a few years later in 1843:

In a neighbourhood where every man is known, where all his movements are liable to observation and the slightest irregularity becomes a matter of local notoriety, a strong check is constantly laid upon the tendencies on the ill disposed. In such connections it is felt that should the law fail to punish, society will not. The crowded capital is to such men an intricate forest, into which they plunge and find, for a season at least, the places of concealment convenient to them.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly there was a fear that the anonymity afforded by London was likely to lead to a decline in social control.

The revolution in France had also fuelled fears amongst the middle and upper classes that the working classes might begin to challenge the existing social status quo. The situation might have seemed less threatening had there not been a decline in Church attendance by members of the metropolitan working class.<sup>3</sup> In Church they would have been told that it was the meek who

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1. Dickens, C., Oliver Twist, 1837.

2. Cited in Briggs, A., Victorian Cities, 1963, p. 64.

3. P.P. 1852-53 [1690] lxxxix, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Religious Worship (England and Wales), , pp. ccllii et seq.

would inherit the Kingdom of God, and that whilst on earth they were to be diligent and humble.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of migrants, however, were unlikely to receive these words of wisdom as they tended to settle in areas of London which were already overcrowded due to low rents and relatively good employment opportunities, and where there were insufficient Churches for the growing population.<sup>2</sup>

Many in the middle and upper classes believed that educational provision with strong moral and religious elements was vital in ensuring that the working class knew and accepted their place in society. These beliefs were reflected in the aims of school societies such as the National and British and Foreign Societies.<sup>3</sup> By 1859 in North London there were more than 200 schools belonging to the National and British Societies which were catering for infants. Maps 10-18 show an increase in schools, but were areas with high proportions of migrants 'targeted' as areas for the establishment of public schools, or did the fears arising from high levels of migration result in a more generalised increase in schools across North London as a whole?<sup>4</sup> Moreover, were there more private working-class schools

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1. Wilberforce, W., Practical View, 1798 quoted in Perkin, H., Origins of Modern English Society, 1969, p. 282.

2. See for example Reports of Bethnal Green Churches and Schools Fund Committee, 1839-1854, pp. 5-6 et seq.

3. National Society, First Annual Report, 1812, p. 18.

4. See Tables 2.1-2.4 and Maps 1-18 in this chapter.

in areas of high migration? An attempt was made to begin to explore these questions through the in-depth studies of small areas of London.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to recognise the fact that many migrants to London were not necessarily content with the educational facilities in London. For example, many migrants were Catholics from Ireland, who were not keen to send their children to non-Catholic schools. Estimates as to the size of the Irish Catholic population in London varied greatly but it is probable that by the early 1850s there were more than 300,000 Irish Catholics in London.<sup>2</sup> Their presence in North London had specific effects on Early Years education. The settlement patterns of the Irish resulted in some districts (e.g. St. Giles, Rosemary Lane and parts of Marylebone) having very high proportions of Irish Catholics.<sup>3</sup>

It was in these smaller districts that the effect of Irish Catholics on educational provision was likely to be most

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1. Chapters 3-8 of this thesis.

2. Murphy, M.A., 'The Origin, Growth and Development of Schools for Roman Catholic Poor Children in the Archdiocese of Westminster 1760-1861', unpublished M.Phil thesis, University of London, 1979, p. 21.

3. Murphy, M.A. op cit., p. 21 and Feheney, J.M.P., 'Changing Attitudes in the Catholic Church to the Provision of Schooling for Orphan and Destitute Children from the London Area During the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of London, 1981, pp. 10-11.



discernible, and therefore two of the areas chosen for close examination in the following chapters were areas with high proportions of Irish Catholics.

Jews formed another sizeable minority group in North London. Jews had begun to settle in England in significant numbers from the 1650s onwards, and by the late eighteenth century it was estimated that there were 20,000 Jews in England.<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of the 1850s the Chief Rabbi asserted that the number of Jews in England had risen to 35,000, of whom 18,000 lived in London.<sup>2</sup> Although European Jews continued to settle in London throughout the nineteenth century, the Jewish community in London was not predominantly immigrant. Many of the Jews in London, however, retained much of their culture and adhered to their religion and as such, like the Irish, had specific needs that the public Church schools were not able to meet. The in-depth study of part of Spitalfields (Chapter 5) examines what these needs were, and investigates the ways in which the Jewish community educated their very young children.

There is evidence that during the first half of the nineteenth century there was a degree of residential zoning in London; occupation was one of the most influential factors in determining the pattern of zoning. In the early nineteenth century the lack of cheap and efficient transport and the high levels of casual labour meant that members of the working class had little choice

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1. Brook, S., The Club: The Jews of Modern Britain, 1989, p. 17.

2. Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, 1861, p. 117.

but to live near their workplace. Residential zoning was not absolute, although in wealthier areas one usually had to enter courts and alleys to seek out the poor. Poor areas tended to become progressively poorer as they were unattractive to wealthy Londoners. The possibility that educational provision for 'under eights' was affected by unequal distribution of wealth in North London is one of the issues examined in the following chapters, as is the effect of employment patterns and fluctuations in the economic situations of families.

The manner in which the suburbs of London developed, and the high levels of migration, had implications for the evolution of inter-class antagonism. The middle and upper classes felt that traditional means of social control were no longer effective and this, combined with their lack of knowledge about the realities of working-class life, contributed to the development of the view that education was the only viable means of ensuring that the members of the working class did not get ideas above their station. The in-depth studies in the following chapters examine the influence of such a view in different districts of London. It is clear that the pattern of development of Early Years educational provision for working-class children was complex.

This chapter has been able to offer only a limited insight into the way in which some factors influenced the distribution of public schools for infants; limited because problems arise with comparing the eastern districts of North and South Tower Hamlets with the combined districts of Marylebone, Westminster and Chelsea. One of these difficulties is that the significant

differences within each of these large areas are masked. In the west, for example approximately 15 per cent of public schools catering for infants in 1859 were in Westminster, 13 per cent in Marylebone and only 11 per cent were in Chelsea. In the east 3.4 per cent of these schools were in North Tower Hamlets whilst almost 27 per cent of the total number of North London's public schools for infants were located in South Tower Hamlets alone. Similarly, in 1818 the majority of private schools in South Tower Hamlets were apparently situated in the parish of St. Mary's but 15 years later most of the private schools in South Tower Hamlets were in St. George in the East.

A second problem lies in comparing the provision at the end of the period under examination with the provision at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Such a comparison would not take into account of the fact that between 1815 and 1859 all areas of North London were in a state of flux and were experiencing changes in employment opportunities, in population densities, in the social and religious make-up of the area, in the number of under eights at any given time, and in the proportion and character of migrants in the area. The educational needs of the different districts are likely to have varied through time as a result of these changes, as is suggested by the peaks and troughs in public school establishment referred to in the previous section. Studies of relatively large and very diverse areas of North London seem unlikely to provide the key to understanding the influence of social and economic factors on the development of either private or public Early Years provision.

Using only three sources for a discussion relating to private schools means that any analysis of private schooling is particularly affected by this problem. One way of ensuring that the characteristic diversity of North London does not become unmanageable in research terms is to focus on smaller districts as the variables in each district are likely to be fewer and more easily 'tracked'. The following chapters provide an in-depth analysis of the effect of the social and economic changes in selected districts of North London on Early Years educational provision between 1815 and 1859 with a special emphasis on the year 1851.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE INNER WARD OF  
ST. GEORGE'S HANOVER SQUARE, WESTMINSTER.

This chapter focuses on St. George's, Hanover Square, one of the eight relatively small districts which were selected for in-depth examination.

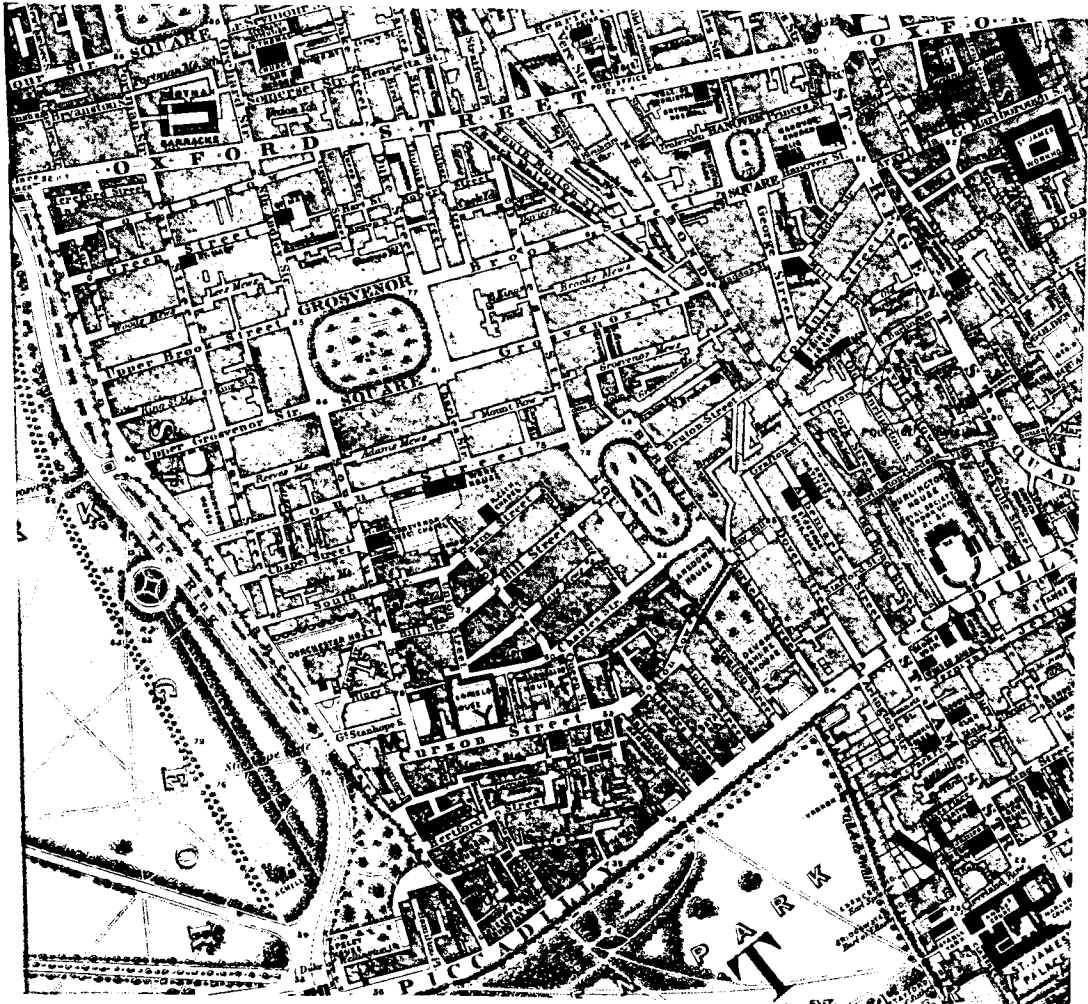
The first section of this chapter provides a brief background to the inner ward of St. George's and is followed by an account of the number and location of public and private schools which catered for infant-aged children within the inner ward. The use of census returns is then discussed in a brief methodological section. The remainder of the chapter provides a detailed analysis of the school attendance patterns of 'under eights' in relation to the age of children, family size, employment of older siblings, fathers' occupations, mothers' marital and employment states and the economic situation of families.

St. George's parish, Hanover Square, was situated in the north west region of the City of Westminster. The inner ward of St. George's was in the north west of the parish and was delineated by Oxford Street in the north, Regent Street, Old Burlington Street and Sackville Street in the west, Piccadilly in the south and Park Lane in the west.<sup>1</sup> There are no readily accessible population

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1. This definition was that given by the L.S.S in J.S.S. Vol. 6, 1843, p. 17.

Area of St. George's, Hanover Square in  
which surveyed streets were located.



From Stanford's New Library Map of London, 1862

figures for the inner ward of St. George's alone, but at the start of the nineteenth century Hanover Square, Grosvenor Square and the surrounding streets had already been built and there were few major geographical changes in the parish between 1827 and 1862.<sup>1</sup> Much of the inner ward had been built in the eighteenth century, and during the period under study the district was not one in which a great deal of building or 'improvements' occurred which could have resulted in significant and relatively sudden localised changes in the population. In addition, the inner ward and the parish as a whole did not experience large scale sudden changes as St. George's was not an area in which a large number of migrants settled. A relatively high proportion of residents, however, were born outside London.<sup>2</sup> It is probable therefore that the general trend in the inner ward as regards population growth was similar to that of the parish in general.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population of the whole of the district of St George's, Hanover Square was 38,440; by 1821 the population had increased to 46,384; it stood at 58,209 in 1831; ten years later the population was 66,453 and by 1851 it had reached 73,230.<sup>3</sup> Thus the population of the whole parish almost

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1. George, M.D., op cit., p. 74.

2. This high proportion of residents born outside London was attributable to the high number of domestic servants in the area, most of whom were recruited from country areas. Stedman-Jones, G., Outcast London, 1971, p. 138.

3. P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, pp. 161-166; P.P. 1843 (496) xxii, Great Britain 1841 Census, Enumeration Abstract, p. 182; P.P. 1852-53 (1631) lxxxv, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables, Part 1, Vol.1, p. 2.

doubled during the first 50 years of the nineteenth century. This rate of increase of the population for the district was virtually identical to that of London as a whole. The population of the inner ward increased steadily during the first half of the nineteenth century but without any dramatic surges in the population levels. Whether or not educational facilities kept pace with the steadily increasing population is examined a little later in the section.

The inner ward of St. George's was composed of a mixture of pleasant residential streets and squares and crowded alleys and courts. The large squares such as Hanover Square and Berkeley Square and streets such as New Bond Street, Albermarle Street, Dover Street, Grosvenor Street, were inhabited by wealthy families and professionals.<sup>1</sup> In 1838 the L.S.S. noted that:

A very large proportion of even the resident population consists of superior tradesmen and people of rank, and a still larger proportion of middling tradesmen and shopkeepers.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the working-class women and men within the inner ward were employed as domestic servants of various descriptions who serviced the needs of the high proportion of wealthy or comfortably off residents within the inner ward. In the 1830s more than one third of all the men over the age of 20 in St George's parish were employed as servants.<sup>3</sup> This was still the case in the early 1840s, as was highlighted by a report by the L.S.S. which noted that 34 per

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1. Third Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vol. 1, 1838, p. 449.

2. Third Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vol. 1, 1838, p. 499.

3. P.P. 1833 (149) xxxvi, Census of Great Britain, 1831, Enumeration Abstract, pp. 375-377.



cent of the males in the parish were in the service of the gentry.<sup>1</sup>

The parish did not consist entirely of fine houses. In the early 1840s a description of a street in St. George's Hanover Square noted:

Pneumonia and bronchitis are frequently fatal in poorer districts...[in] the damp, dark, underground kitchen in which all the occupants live and sleep, in which the room is made more close by fire required for cooking, the atmosphere loaded with moisture from wet clothes hung across the narrow space to dry...<sup>2</sup>

In 1838 the number of 'poor' families<sup>3</sup> in the whole parish was estimated to amount to 3,891 (or seven per cent of the local residents).<sup>4</sup> These poorer inhabitants lived in small streets and courts in areas that were tucked away behind the large streets and airy squares (see Map 19). Certain streets and courts such as Lancashire Court, Oxford Buildings, Little Grosvenor Street, Robert Street, Robert Street Mews, Gilbert Street, Thomas Court, Sneads Gardens and Shepherds' Market were identified by contemporaries as

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1. 'On the Condition of the Working Class in the Inner Ward of St. George's Parish, Hanover Square' in J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, pp. 17-24.

2. P.P. 1843 (XII), Supplementary Report on the Practice of Internment in Towns by E. Chadwick, p. 257.

3. Those defined as 'poor' families by the L.S.S. were all those without their own front door and which one could visit without first seeking permission.

4. 'Report on the Condition of the Working Class in the Inner Ward of St. George's Parish, Hanover Square' in J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 17.

ones with a large proportion of working-class families.<sup>1</sup> The 1841 and 1851 Census returns show that many of the families in these streets had very young children.

Despite the relatively small number of working-class poor who were resident in the district, the inner ward was worth investigating in depth for a number of reasons. Firstly, it offered the opportunity to compare patterns of Early Years education in an economically mixed area with those in the more uniformly poor areas of the capital.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, unlike some other areas of London, the working-class adult men were engaged in a very wide range of occupations and over a quarter of the women were said to be in paid employment.<sup>3</sup> Census returns reveal that in addition to the high number of domestic servants and grooms and coachmen there was also a sizeable number of day labourers, charwomen, laundresses and hawkers, plus a number of more skilled workers such as dressmakers, plasterers, tailors, bricklayers, cabinet makers and upholsterers. Patterns in Early Years education viewed in the context of this diversity of occupation may help to shed some light on questions such as whether a young child's education was discernibly influenced by the parents' occupation or whether more 'under eights' with working mothers went to school. Also, did the type of school that a child attended depend upon the parents' occupation ?

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1. J.S.S. Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 449. Also the census enumerators' returns for 1841 and 1851: HO 107 733, HO 107 734, HO 107 680, HO 107 1475, HO 107 1076.

2. See chapters on Christ Church, Spitalfields; St. Giles, Finsbury and St. Luke's, Somers Town.

3. J.S.S. Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 18.

Educational Facilities for Infants in the Inner Ward of St.

George's, Hanover Square.

In 1819 it was noted that there were many schools for the upper and middle classes but insufficient educational facilities for the poor in the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square. The poorer working-class residents were conscious of the lack of schools for their children and it was recorded that they were 'anxious to possess the means of education'.<sup>1</sup> These parents, however, had to wait more than ten years before the first publicly-aided infants' school was opened in the district (Table 3A below). This school was situated in Farm Street between Grosvenor Square and Berkeley Square.<sup>2</sup> The Farm

Table 3A: Names of public schools catering for infants within the inner ward of St. George's, Hanover Square with date of establishment.<sup>3</sup>

- 1829 - Farm Street Infants' School, Grosvenor Square and Berkley Square.
- 1831 - St Mark's Infants' School, George Street, (North Audley Street). Also known as Parochial Infants' School.
- 1843 - South Moulton Lane, Roman Catholic Infants' School.
  - Oxford Buildings British School
- 1846 - St. George's Infants' School, Albemarle Street.
  - St. George's, Grosvenor Chapel Infants' School, South Audley Street.
  - St. George's, Hanover Chapel Infants' School.

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1. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt. 1, pp. 542-549.

2. The exact date of establishment is unclear; according to the 1833 Parliamentary Returns it was listed as having been established in 1829 but the L.S.S. set the date of establishment at 1831.

3. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, pp. 449-455; J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 24; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 16-19.

Street school was conveniently situated for working-class children living in Farm Street but was also not too far from the very crowded courts, streets and alleys in the south-west corner of the inner ward (see Map 19). In 1833 the school was catering for 110 'infants';<sup>1</sup> by 1838 it was still flourishing and the number of pupils had increased to 153.<sup>2</sup>

Another infants' school was opened in 1831 behind St. Mark's Church on the north side of Grosvenor Square. This second school was situated in the heart of the poorer area in the north west of the district (see Map 19). St Mark's was almost twice the size of the Farm Street School. The number of pupils in 1833 was 237<sup>3</sup> and the number had changed little by 1838 when 234 'infants' were recorded as attending.<sup>4</sup> By 1846, however, the number at St. Mark's Infants' School had fallen to 173<sup>5</sup> and this decline in the number of infant pupils continued so that by 1852 only 128 infants were in attendance.<sup>6</sup> One reason for the decline in the number of children attending St. Mark's during the early 1840s could be that during

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1. P.P. 1835 (62) xli-xlii, Abstract of Answers and Returns to Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 583.

2. Third Report of the L.S.S., J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 475.

3. P.P. 1835 (62) xli-xlii, Abstract of Answers and Returns to Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 583.

4. Third Report of the L.S.S., J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 474.

5. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846 -47, pp. 16-17.

6. 'Reports tabulated in detail, for 1851-52, on schools inspected by Rev. F.C. Cook', Minutes of the Committee of Council, Vol. 2, 1852-53, p. 416.

this period other public infants' schools were opened in the neighbourhood (Table 3A). A Roman Catholic infants' school in South Moulton Lane was established in the early 1840s and the existence of a British and Foreign School 'with the infant system' was recorded in Oxford Buildings, which was close to Woodstock Street and parallel to South Moulton Street. In 1843 the Catholic school, which catered for both 'infants' and older children was attended by a total of 142 children.<sup>2</sup> The 1843 report of the London Statistical Society highlighted the competition that existed between schools:

The Roman Catholic school was instituted but lately, and in opposition to the last mentioned one [Oxford Buildings school], in order to prevent its drawing away the children of the Irish who frequent Oxford Market.<sup>3</sup>

The attendance figures for the British and Foreign School in Oxford buildings are not known as this school was not mentioned in the records of the British and Foreign School Society or school inspectors' reports.

The 1846 Church School Inquiry listed three more groups of schools that catered for 'infants'.<sup>4</sup> Grosvenor Chapel Infants' School in South Audley Street was the largest of the schools with 180 'infants' attending on weekdays only. Hanover Chapel was the next

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1. 'Report on the Condition of the Working Class in the Inner Ward of St. George's Parish, Hanover Square', J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p24.

2. Ibid., p. 24

3. Ibid., p. 24.

4. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 16-17.

largest with 135 'infants' attending on both weekdays and Sundays at the Hanover Chapel School, whilst the Charlotte Chapel Infants' school was not only the smallest but also appeared to be more of a Sunday school than a daily school, as 75 'infants' attended on Sundays only, compared with only 29 'infants' who attended both during the week and on Sunday.<sup>1</sup>

All of these seven schools were supported by a combination of subscription and school pence and were therefore public schools. Although the number of public infants' schools within the inner ward increased during the first half of the nineteenth century, this growth did not mirror the steady rise in the population of the locality. It is not immediately clear as to why this was the case; perhaps the fact that this particular area of London had a relatively low proportion of poor inhabitants meant that middle-class contemporaries tended to give priority to establishing schools in other areas where they felt the need was greater because of the high proportion of poor residents.

If, as was asserted in 1819, the poor were anxious for the provision of educational facilities, were the parents wanting public schools and were they happy with the public schools established, or was there a need for community provided education in the form of private working-class schools? According to the various parliamentary reports and local L.S.S. surveys of St. George's, Hanover Square the district was well served with private schools (Table 3B overleaf).

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1. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 16-17.

The problem is that we have no way of knowing exactly how many of these private schools were private working-class schools catering for children below the age of eight. All of the 43 private schools listed in the 1833 returns to Parliament could have been small enough to be private working-class schools but if so how many of them catered for 'infants' and where were these schools located ?

Table 3B: Number of private working-class schools catering for infants within the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square.<sup>1</sup>

- 1818 - No schools listed.
- 1833 - 43 daily schools  
(11 girls' schools, 7 boys' schools and 25 mixed schools).
- 1838 - 32 dame schools  
36 common day schools.
- 1841 - 13 private school teachers.
- 1843 - 12 dame schools.  
- approx 30 common day schools.
- 1851 - 10 private school teachers.
- 1851 - 62 private schools.

In 1838 the L.S.S noted that there were 109 private schools in the parish of St. George's and classified 32 (or almost 30 per cent) as dames' schools and 36 (or 33 per cent) as common day schools.<sup>2</sup>

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1. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Part 1, pp. 542-549; J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, pp. 449-77; 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns for Inner Ward of St. George's, Hanover Square, HO 733 and HO 107 734; J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, pp. 17-26; 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns for the Inner Ward of St. George's, Hanover Square, HO 107 1475 and HO 107 1076; P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales), p. 8. It has been assumed that in private working-class schools there was only one teacher per school, therefore the 13 teachers recorded in the 1841 census taught in 13 schools.

2. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 450.

Thus, according to the L.S.S calculations over 60 per cent of private schools in the parish were private working-class schools.

Using Horace Mann's system of clasification<sup>1</sup> and that of the L.S.S. it is only possible at this point to estimate that between 60 and 74 per cent of private schools were private working-class schools. So in 1833, of the schools identified in St. George's, Hanover Square, probably 25-30 of them were private-working class schools.

Similarly, of the 62 schools identified in the 1851 Education Census, between 37 and 45 were private working-class schools. These figures are for the whole parish of St. George's but how many were in the inner ward alone and where were they?

In 1843, within the inner ward, the L.S.S. listed 12 dames schools and approximately 30 common day schools.<sup>2</sup> None of the existing education records provides accurate locations for these schools.

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1. Horace Mann classified private schools according to their 'efficiency'. He identified four categories of private schools in the 1851 education census: superior, middling, inferior and undescribed. Inferior schools were 'principally dame schools' and middling schools were those in which arithmetic, English Grammar and geography etc. were taught. Middling schools were equivalent to common day schools. On the assumption that inferior and middling schools were mainly working-class private schools, aproximately 70 per cent of private schools listed in the 1851 Census were working-class. Horace Mann's Report, P.P. 1852 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, Education, (England and Wales), p. xxxiii.

2. J.S.S. Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 25.



The most specific reference to the location of the private working-class schools in this district was that the largest dame school in the area was in the immediate neighbourhood of two infants' schools (St. Mark's and Grosvenor Chapel Infants' School).<sup>1</sup> Working from the the 1841 and 1851 enumerators' returns for the inner ward of

TABLE 3C

1841

Lit.Grosvenor Street: Anne Merriman (Schoolmistress).

George St : William and Elizabeth Hall (Hart School,  
schoolmaster and schoolmistress).

Providence Court : Sarah Foster (Schoolmistress).

Providence Court : Georgina Lozeman (Schoolmistress).

Sneads Gardens : Elizabeth Cook (Schoolmistress).

Chapel Street : Elizabeth Lisock (Schoolmistress).

Chapel Street East : Sarah Wylds (Schoolmistress).

Gilbert Street : Anne Toper (Schoolmistress).

Gilbert Street : Isaac White (Schoolmaster).

Total = 10

1851

Cock Yard : Mary Vandell (Schoolmistress).

Gilbert Street : Ophelia Dafoulyar (Daily governess).

Gilbert Street : Annette Faure (Governess).

George Street : Mary Bruder (Governess).

Shepherds Court : Ann Bignall (Schoolmistress).

Pollen Street : Jane Eliz. Bradley (Governess).

Lancashire Court : Sarah Adams (Schoolmistress).

Mount Row : Mary Ann Morley (Governess of Preparatory  
School).

Clarges Street : Mary Charles (Governess).

Down Street : Emily Coates (Schoolmistress).

Total = 10

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 25.

2. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 733-74.

St. George's it was only possible to identify ten teachers as probable working-class private school teachers in 1841 and the same number in 1851 (Table 3C). It is important to remember, however, that these numbers are almost certainly under-estimations of the total number of private working class schools as many, for a variety of reasons, escaped detection by the enumerators and local investigators.

What proportion of pupils at the 42 private schools identified by the L.S.S. were between the ages of two and seven ? According to the L.S.S., most teachers in dame's schools in the inner ward did not know the ages of their pupils and therefore it was necessary to hazard guesses about the children's ages on the basis of their appearance.<sup>1</sup> The L.S.S. estimated that in St. George's, Hanover Square and two other 'very similar' Westminster parishes, approximately 50 per cent of children in dame's schools were 'under fives'.<sup>2</sup> In common day schools the proportion was lower, with only 28 per cent of the pupils being 'under fives'.<sup>3</sup> It follows then that the proportion of 'under eights' in both these types of schools must have been greater than 50 per cent and 28 per cent respectively, but it is not possible to ascertain the exact proportions. On the basis of the number of dame and common day schools it would appear that just over 60 per cent of all private schools in the inner ward of St. George's were not only highly

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 451.

2. Ibid., p. 451.

3. Ibid., p. 452.

likely to be private working-class schools but also that the overwhelming majority of these schools catered for 'under eights' to varying degrees.

A survey of the inner ward carried out in 1842 found that 773 children were attending private working-class schools and 915 children were attending public infants' schools.<sup>1</sup> If the proportion of 'under eights' in private working-class schools is conservatively estimated to have been 40 per cent (or approximately 300 pupils) then at least a quarter of all working-class children under the age of eight who were attending school at this point were to be found in the private working-class schools. Within the inner ward of St. George's , Hanover Square, these private working-class schools undoubtedly formed a significant part of the early years educational scene.

#### Schools for Infants in Their Socio-Economic Context.

It is apparent that the location of private working-class schools within the inner ward altered between 1841 and 1851 (Table 3C). Furthermore, schools catering for infants were not evenly distributed throughout the inner ward. This finding raises a few questions. Were these differences significant and what caused them? Were there links between the number and location of private working-class schools and the economic state of families?

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1. J.S.S. Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 24.

Before attempting to answer these questions it is necessary to look critically at the information gathered from the census returns for the inner ward of St. George's, Hanover Square. To begin with, it is not at all certain that Table 3C provides a comprehensive list of all the private working-class schools in the inner ward. Problems arising from failure on the part of private school teachers to describe themselves as such to the enumerators at the time of the 1841 and 1851 censuses, have already been discussed in detail.<sup>1</sup> With regard to the inner ward of St. George's, almost a quarter of the teachers in the dame and common day schools told an L.S.S. investigator that they had another occupation in addition to teaching.<sup>2</sup> All or some of these teachers could have chosen to declare this alternative occupation in preference to teaching. If this proportion remained the same over the next ten to 15 years it is possible that approximately a quarter of working-class private schools would not appear in either of the census returns. Census enumerators' returns for the inner ward of St. George's provide a concrete example of the possible 'masking' of schools within this particular locality. In 1841 there was no school listed in the highly populated Lancashire Court but in 1851 Sarah Adams aged 70, declared herself as a 'schoolmistress'.<sup>3</sup>

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1. See especially Chapter 1 of this thesis, pp. 37 et seq.

2. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, Table X, p. 463.

3. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1475.

Another look at the 1841 census returns revealed that a Sally Adams aged 60 was living in Lancashire Court but she was described as a dressmaker.<sup>1</sup> Of course, there is no way of knowing for certain whether Sally Adams was teaching in both 1841 and 1851 and the intervening years or whether in fact the census returns were an accurate record of the situation. However, the finding suggests that the existence of a private working-class school in Lancashire Court prior to 1851 was a distinct possibility.

The tracing of private working-class schools in which the teacher was a woman with an alternative occupation was likely to be complicated still further by the fact that some of the women teachers may have married during the inter-census period, resulting in a name change. One instance within the inner ward was complicated by the possibility of the declaration of an alternative occupation, a name change due to marriage and the presence of a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law with the same name. In Little Grosvenor Street there seemed to be a very similar example of possible 'masking' of a school to that of the case of Sally Adams. Ann Merriman of Little Grosvenor Street appeared in the 1841 census as a teacher. In 1851 there no longer appeared to be a school in this particular street, (Table 3C), but examination of the 1851 census returns for the

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1. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 733.

street revealed that Ann Merriman was still living in the street but she had described herself as a dressmaker. Was Anne Merriman still teaching or had she given up the school? A closer examination of the returns revealed that at the time of the 1841 census Anne Merriman was 50 years old and no husband was listed, although she had a 15 year old son living with her. At the time of the 1851 census not only was Anne only 35 years old but a husband, John, was listed.<sup>1</sup> Did the returns refer to the same person? Unless there had been a mistake with regards to ages it seems unlikely that the Anne of 1841 was the same as the Anne of 1851. A search of the marriage registration records revealed that a John Richard Merriman of west London married in 1846,<sup>2</sup> suggesting very strongly that the Anne of 1851 was the daughter-in-law of Anne Merriman. Anne Merriman the elder did not appear in the 1851 census. It is possible that she had moved, remarried or died. Whether or not her daughter-in-law continued the school is unknown.

In the case of individuals who were returned as teachers in one census but can not be traced under any guise in an earlier or later census it is only possible to hypothesise that schools might have existed for nine years or less or even for only a few months which just happened to coincide with the night of the census.

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1. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns HO 107 733 and 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1475.

2. Marriage Registration (West London), 1846, Vol. 2, No. 290, [St. Catherine's House].

As a result of the difficulties just outlined it seemed most appropriate to use the 1841 and 1851 censuses to recreate two separate 'snapshots' of the educational pattern, rather than use them for a longitudinal study over a continuous ten year period.

Despite the fact that it is not possible to arrive at a definitive figure for the number of private schools within the study area, existing evidence would seem to suggest a relationship between the socio-economic profile of a locality and the levels of working-class private provision and public provision.

Distribution of schools and ages of children within the inner ward of St. George's.

Unlike other areas of London, the inner ward of St. George's was not singled out by contemporaries as being one with high numbers of young children, and census returns show that children aged between two and seven accounted for only eight per cent of the inhabitants in some streets, although in others the proportion of infants was as high as 25 per cent. How did these differences influence the provision of public and private schooling for infants?

In the 1840s and 50s the streets around the public infants' schools were well supplied with 'under eights'<sup>1</sup> and in 1841 and 1851 there were a number of streets in which there were more

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1. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 733-734 and 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1475 and HO 107 1076.

infant-aged children than children in the eight to twelve age group. The relationship between the location of a public infants school and the number of 'under eights' in the immediate locality was more fortuitous than the result of deliberate planning since public infant schools operated in purpose-built buildings or suitably large rented accommodation, which meant that public infant schools could not easily move location if there was a sudden change in the age profile of an area.

The location of private working-class schools in relation to potential pupils is more significant. In both 1841 and 1851 'under eights' were recorded in all of the streets in which there were private working-class schools (i.e. those listed in Table 3C). This would suggest that the opening of a private school was closely linked with the presence of potential pupils in the immediate neighbourhood. That private working-class schools responded to local demand is also suggested by the fact that many of these schools were not permanent fixtures on the educational landscape of a particular area. According to an 1838 L.S.S. survey of St. George's, Hanover Square and two neighbouring parishes, only 30 per cent of private working-class schools had been in existence before 1830. Almost a third of common and middling day schools in the three parishes had been established more than eight years previously, but less than 15 per cent of dame schools had been in existence for more than eight years.<sup>1</sup> Using the 1841 and 1851 census returns to

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, 1838, p. 459.



trace school teachers and schools within the inner ward, resulted in schools in two streets (Gilbert Street and George Street) appearing in both sets of returns although the teachers had changed (Table 3C).

These findings can be used in two ways. Firstly, to argue simply that working-class private school teachers only taught for short periods of time whilst waiting for 'better' work or to tide themselves over a lean period, and since private working-class schools were tied to the teacher rather than an institution this interpretation of the situation would lead to an assertion that private working-class schools also had short lives. This interpretation does not place schools in their social context. An alternative view has been put forward by Phil Gardner, who argues that although it is true few private working-class schools remained at the same addresss for ten years or more the teacher may not necessarily have given up teaching; he or she may have moved and opened a new school at a new address. Basically, Gardner argued that private working-class schools were mobile rather than ephemeral. The notion of mobility is important as it suggests that teaching was not necessarily merely a stop-gap occupation and furthermore that when teachers moved they might have continued teaching in response to local demands.

To support his case regarding mobility, Gardner provided an example of a teacher holding a school at the time of one census, getting married and moving in the intercensus period and appearing in the subsequent census under a different name at a

different address.<sup>1</sup> In this study no such teacher could be traced within the inner ward to support the argument that schools and teachers were mobile and responsive to local needs, but the finding that at least two schools continued in the same streets albeit with a change of teachers would suggest that there was a local demand for private working-class schools that the new teachers met when the previous ones, for whatever reason, stopped teaching. This, in conjunction with the finding that private working-class schools were concentrated in areas with high numbers of working-class 'under eights', would suggest very strongly that for their continued existence private working-class schools depended upon a very localised clientele. This in turn supports the view that private working-class schools were a local community resource situated in the heart of, and responsive to, the community they served.

In the 1840s and early 1850s children in the north-west sector of the inner ward were within easy walking distance of five private schools and three public infants' schools, but not all 'under eights' attended schools and of those who did some went to public infants' schools whilst others attended private working-class schools. How many of the 'under eights' in the locality attended school? Were school attendance patterns linked to parental occupation? Did more children of working mothers attend school? Were single parents more likely to send

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1. Gardner, P., *op cit.* p. 127 et seq.

their young children to school? Were there any links between the number and ages of children within a family and the schooling patterns of 'infants'? Did the schooling and employment patterns of older children influence attendance of 'under eights' at school? Was there a link between the existence of a private working-class schools and the occupations of the parents of potential scholars ? The remaining sections of this chapter offer answers to these questions.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Age.

To develop an idea of the proportion of 'under eights' who might have been at school it is necessary to turn to the 1851 census returns. The earlier 1841 census is of no use as the enumerators for this and still earlier censuses were not required to state whether the children were 'scholars'. The 1851 census schedule, however, required that householders state whether children over the age of five were 'scholars' (i.e. daily attending school) or 'scholar at home' (i.e. were receiving tuition). The 1851 census returns have been used for a hundred per cent sample of 22 streets,<sup>1</sup> courts and alleys in

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1. This entailed the examination of every family in the streets and a note was then made of every family with one or more children aged between two and seven. The main reason for adopting this approach was that it enabled a very detailed picture to be built up of chosen areas of London. This method has also been used by Christine Heward (see Heward, C., 'Growing Up in a Birmingham Community 1851 -71, Some Preliminary Findings' in Hurt, J. (ed.), Childhood, Youth and Education in the Late Nineteenth Century, 1981, pp. 36-47.)

the north-west sector of the inner ward.<sup>1</sup> Of the 3,973 people living in these streets there were 633 children in the two to seven age range. The proportion of children within each year band was fairly even. The largest group was composed of four year olds, 18.3 per cent of the total, whilst seven year olds formed the smallest group, 14.2 per cent (Table 3.1 below). Within this sector of the inner ward 30 per cent of working class 'infants' were returned as attending school, five per cent were described as scholars at home and no description was provided for 65 per cent of infants in this locality.

If each year group is looked at separately three interesting patterns emerge (Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Table 3.1

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	8	13	31	41	48	50	191
Scholars at home	2	8	3	6	8	4	31
No description	98	92	82	65	38	36	411
Total	108	113	116	112	94	90	633

Table 3.2

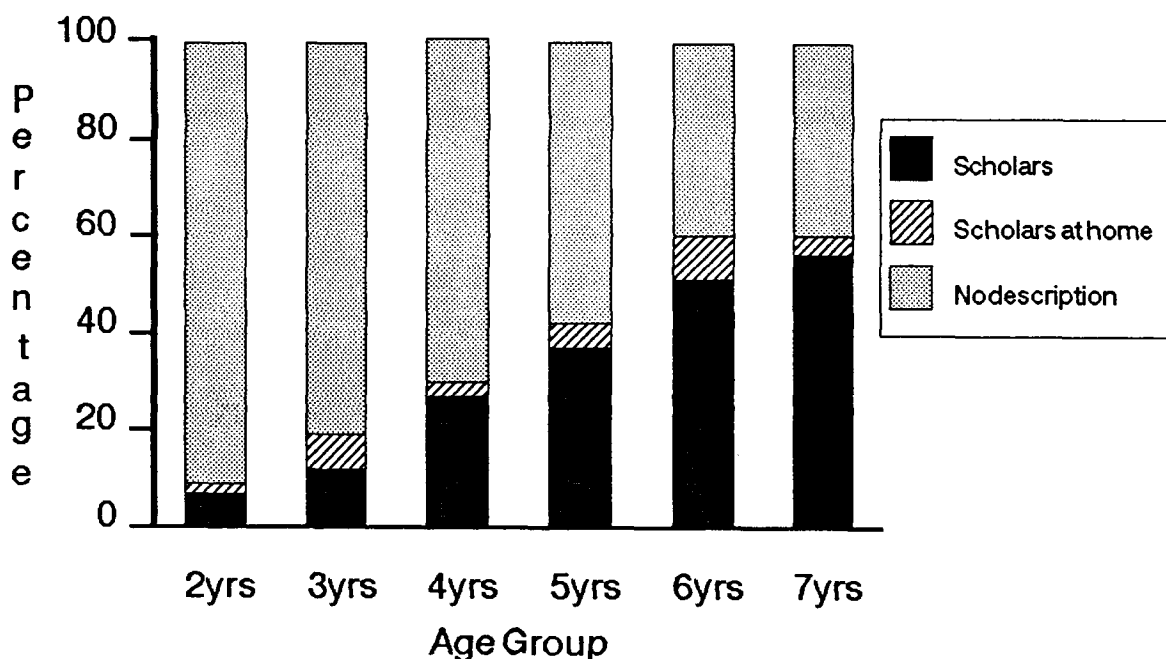
St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	7	12	27	37	51	56
Scholars at home	2	7	3	5	9	4
No description	91	81	70	58	40	40
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 show that there was a progressive increase in the proportion of children at schools in each successive year band. Only seven per cent of two year olds were returned as scholars whereas 56 per cent of seven year olds were so described. Secondly, there was not a steady increase in the proportion of children attending school in each year band but instead there was a very sharp increase in the proportion of children returned as scholars between the ages of three and four and only a very small increase between the ages of six and seven. Thirdly, there was a progressive decline in the proportion of children for whom no description was provided from 90 per cent of the two year olds to only 40 per cent of the seven year olds (Graph 3.1 below).

Graph 3.1

St. George's: Description of total percentage of children in each age group.



There were differences between individual streets; in Thomas Street and Thomas Court for example there were more children who were scholars at home than scholars at school, whilst in other streets no scholars at home were recorded. These differences between streets and age bands might have been due solely to real differences in attendance patterns but it is more likely that differences recorded resulted from a combination of real differences and the different degrees of thoroughness on the part of the enumerators. It is interesting to note for example that 26 of the 31 children recorded as scholars at home were all recorded by one enumerator.<sup>1</sup>

School Attendance in Relation to Family Size and Employment of Older Siblings.

Of the 613 families in the sample, 382 were composed of between one and three children and 231 were composed of four or more children. Table 3.3 overleaf shows that at least one 'under eight' was attending school in a quarter to a third of smaller families (i.e. those with one to three children). In comparison, proportionally twice as many larger families (i.e. those composed of four or more children) sent at least one 'under eight' to school. One reason for this particular pattern could have been that in larger families there was a greater chance that at least one of the infant children was aged between

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1. For example in Robert Street the less-than-thorough enumerator's use of ditto marks resulted in a two month old labourer and a seven month old scholar. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1475.

four and seven and therefore more likely to be at school than a child aged two or three.

Table 3.3

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: School attendance related to family size and employment of mother.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	101	25	29	10
Two Children	123	28	40	19
Three Children	158	53	34	13
Four Children	116	60	21	8
Five Children	66	32	9	3
Six or more Children	49	30	9	8
Total	613	228	142	61

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with a working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one infant at school.

A further point to consider is the effect the schooling and employment of older siblings had on the schooling of 'under eights'. Approximately half of the 410 eight to fourteen year olds in the sample attended school.<sup>1</sup> Tables 3.4 and 3.4a (overleaf) show that there was a sharp decline in school attendance between the ages of 13 and 14 and a correspondingly sharp rise in the proportion of 14 year olds in employment.

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1. Each of the eight to 14 year olds referred to here had at least one younger sibling aged between two and seven.

Table 3.4a

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	45	33	40	28	33	18	5	202
At work	0	0	0	1	8	9	18	36
Scholars at home	5	4	5	5	1	5	0	25
No description	23	29	21	26	17	12	10	138
Total	73	66	66	60	59	44	33	401

Table 3.4b

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of total percentage of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	62	50	61	47	56	41	15
At work	0	0	0	2	13	20	55
Scholars at home	7	6	7	8	2	11	0
No description	31	44	32	43	29	27	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The 'take-off' age for employment was 12. Approximately one in seven 12 year olds was described as being in some form of paid employment as were one in five 13 year olds and more than half of the fourteen year olds (Table 3.4a). The effect that this appeared to have had on the schooling of two to seven year olds



was that as most children did not start work until around the age of 13, there was not the same urgency to send very young children to school as even if a child first went to school at the age of nine she or he could receive three years schooling before starting work.<sup>1</sup> Possibly, if children in this area of London had started work at a slightly younger age, the proportion of two to seven year olds at school might have been higher than it was.

The school attendance of young children was also influenced by whether or not their older sisters or brothers were in paid employment. Infants were sent to school in a higher proportion of families in which at least one older sibling was at work than in families in which none of the older siblings was employed. Of the 98 families in which at least one older sibling was employed, 60 per cent sent at least one 'under eight' to school, compared with only 41 per cent of the 225 families in which older siblings were not at work (Tables 3.5a and 3.5b overleaf.)

This pattern might have occurred because families in which older siblings were employed had a higher income than those in which one of the children worked, and therefore more money was available for the education of the school-aged children. An older sibling at work did not automatically mean that an 'under eight' in the family attended school as children aged eight or

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1. Compared with other areas of London in which children started work at a younger age (e.g. Spitalfields and St. Giles).

Table 3.5a

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings

	A	B	C	D	Total
English	96	58	217	89	460
Irish	2	1	8	3	14
Total	98	59	225	92	474

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 3.5b

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Percentage of families in each category relating school attendance to employment of older siblings.

	G	F
English	60	41
Irish	50	38
Total %	60	41

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work which also had at least one infant at school ( $B/A \times 100$ ).

F = Percentage of families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school ( $D/C \times 100$ ).

Table 3.5b is based on figures in Table 3.5a.

over took precedence over younger children when it came to attending school. Thus, in the majority of families in which an older sibling was at work, an 'under eight' attended school only if the older sisters and brothers who were not at work were at school. In those families in which no older children were at work an 'under eight' was also unlikely to attend school if the older siblings were not at school. Whilst an older sibling at work seemed to have a positive influence on the school attendance of 'under eights', this influence was modified by whether or not other older siblings were at school.

The finding that a higher proportion of larger families sent at least one 'under eight' to school might be because there was more likelihood of an older child being employed in a large family. It could also be argued, however, that in larger families, despite the added income of older children, parents might have had less money to spare for schooling after the family had been housed, fed and clothed and parents may have chosen to spend what little money there was on the schooling of older children.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Parents' Occupations.

Despite the imperfections in the census returns it was still possible to explore whether there was a discernible relationship between parental occupation and attendance at school. Children below the age of eight who were listed as scholars in 1851 had parents who were from a wide range of occupations. Fathers of 'infant' scholars included skilled workers (e.g. master tailors, boot and shoemakers, cabinet makers, master carpenters, saddlers, wheelwrights, watchmakers), unskilled workers (e.g. labourers, porters, stablemen, coachmen, hawkers, messengers), and a few non-manual workers ( eg. grocers and other retailers, domestic servants and miscellaneous occupations such as lodging-house keepers). Mothers with young children at school were generally employed in a much smaller range of occupations including dressmakers and milliners, laundresses, manglers or charwomen.<sup>1</sup>

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1475 and HO 107 1076.

Contemporary observers asserted that skilled workers tended to be more intellectual than unskilled workers and also valued education. In commenting on the life style of one group of skilled workers Mayhew noted that:

The children of carpenters are mostly well brought up, the fathers educating them to the best of their ability. They are generally sent to day schools. The cause of carpenters being so anxious about the education of their children lies in the fact that they themselves find the necessity of a knowledge of arithmetic, geometry and drawing in the different branches of their business...<sup>1</sup>

Boot and shoemakers were described by Mayhew as 'far from being an unintellectual body of men'<sup>2</sup> and he believed that there was an enormous gulf between skilled operatives and unskilled workmen with respect to their morals and intellect.<sup>3</sup> The obvious question is whether these alleged differences in attitudes towards education were reflected in the school attendance patterns of the young children of skilled and unskilled workers.

An examination of the school attendance patterns of the children of fathers employed in the eight main occupational groups revealed that there appeared to be little difference between the school attendance of the children of skilled workers and those of unskilled workers (Table 3.6 and Graph 3.2. overleaf).

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 5, 1850, p. 86.

2. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 3, 1850, p. 120.

3. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 2, 1849, p. 150.

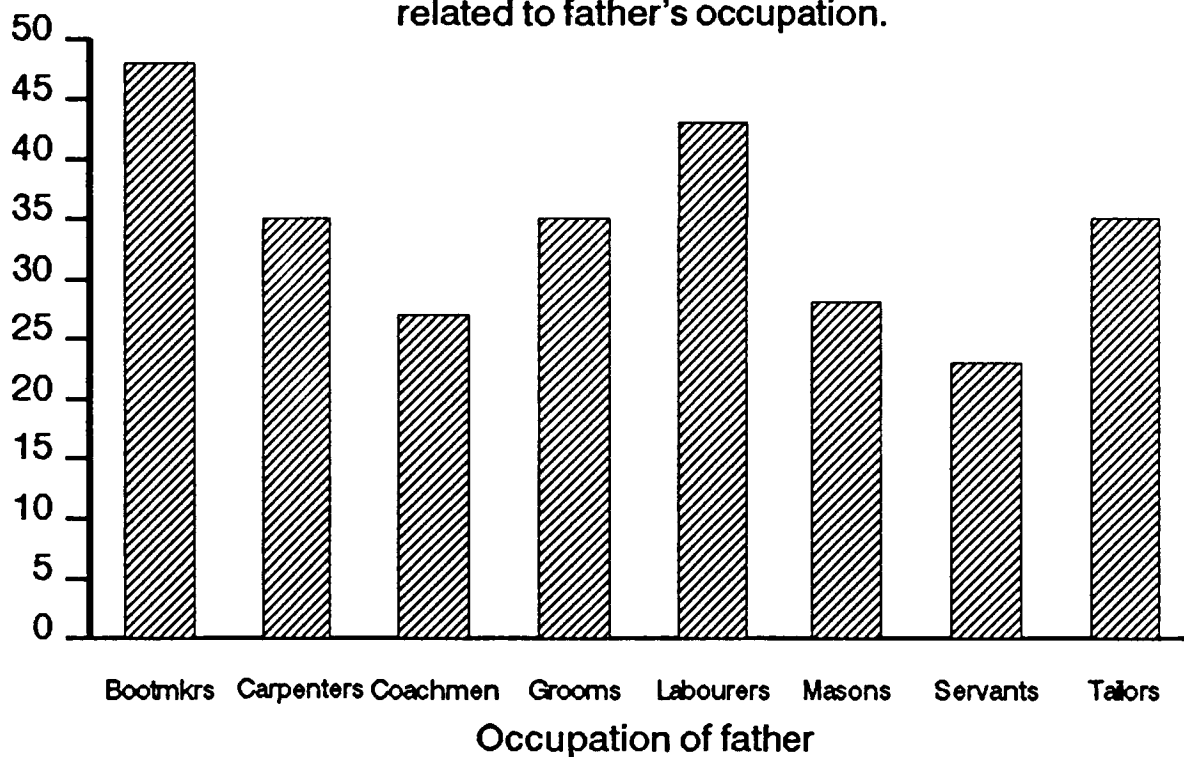
**Table 3.6**

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Attendance patterns of children, related to fathers' occupations, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Boot and Shoemakers	12 (48%)	0 (0%)	13 (52%)	25 (100%)
Carpenters, Joiners etc.	11 (35%)	0 (0%)	21 (65%)	32 (100%)
Coachmen	13 (27%)	2 (4%)	34 (69%)	49 (100%)
Grooms, Stablemen etc.	16 (35%)	0 (0%)	30 (65%)	46 (100%)
Labourers	15 (43%)	0 (0%)	20 (57%)	35 (100%)
Masons, Bricklayers etc.	5 (28%)	0 (0%)	13 (72%)	18 (100%)
Servants	5 (23%)	2 (9%)	15 (68%)	22 (100%)
Tailors	15 (35%)	1 (2%)	27 (63%)	43 (100%)

**Graph 3.2**

St. George's: Percentage of children at school related to father's occupation.



Approximately 37 per cent of the children of skilled fathers were at school compared with 32 per cent of those whose fathers were unskilled. Looking at specific occupational groups it was interesting to note that the boot and shoemakers, who were skilled workers, had the highest proportion of 'infants' at school but labourers, an unskilled body of workers, were the group with the second highest proportion of 'infants' at school. Skilled workers such as carpenters, other skilled wood workers and tailors had approximately the same proportion of young children at school as some unskilled workers including stablemen, ostlers and grooms.

It was possible, of course, that differences in attendance patterns between skilled workers and unskilled workers in this small survey area were disguised by significant differences in the age distribution of children in the two groups. As discussed earlier, four was a critical age in that the census returns show a sharp increase in school attendance between the ages of three and four. If either skilled or unskilled workers had very high or very low proportions of 'under fours' then this might have resulted in a false picture of school attendance, but analysis of the families of the two groups of workers revealed only minor differences in the proportion of 'under fours'. Bearing in mind the possible inaccuracies of the 1851 census it would seem that there was very little difference in the patterns of school attendance between skilled and unskilled workers' children.

This initially surprising finding begins to make more sense when one examines more closely the life experiences of those described as skilled or unskilled workers. Firstly, neither of these categories was homogeneous; not only did both categories encompass a very wide range of trades and occupations but there were also subtle gradations between the occupations and within a particular trade resulting in a hierarchy of labour.<sup>1</sup> An oft-quoted example is that of coachbuilding, in which body makers were the elite, followed by carriage makers and trimmers, smiths and spring makers. In the building trade bricklayers, carpenters and joiners came below the masons and plumbers.<sup>2</sup> The hierarchy of skilled workers resulted in what has been termed a labour aristocracy. In his study of the artisan elite in Kentish London in the middle of the nineteenth century, Geoffrey Crossick has argued that this stratification within the working class was not merely linked with the possession of a skill but rather with a range of additional features including the work

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1. For discussion of the concept of labour aristocracy see Thompson, E.P., The Making of the English Working Class, 1963; Perkin, H., Origins of Modern English Society, 1969; Stedman-Jones, G., Outcast London, 1971; Crossick, G., An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society, Kentish London 1840-1880, 1978; Hobsbawm, E.J., Worlds of Labour, 1978; Rule, J., The Labouring Classes in Early Industrial England 1750-1850, 1986.

2. Crossick, G., An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society, Kentish London 1840-1880, 1978, pp. 107-108.

situation, wages, economic opportunities, craft control, job security , education, politics and life styles etc.<sup>1</sup> One difficulty with categorising workers as skilled, unskilled, or as members of the labour elite, is that it ignores the fact that none of these categories had clearly defined cultural profiles or life styles. The actual life experiences of individual workers and their children owed as much to culture as to the economic situation of the family.

The economic situation of families is an important factor when considering the patterns of schooling. The amount of money that could be spared for schooling varied greatly between the working-class families living within the inner ward.

Shoemakers, weavers, tailors and carpenters were well paid at the beginning of the nineteenth century. By the 1850s many of these workers were poorly paid due to a combination of loss of wage determining powers, introduction of piece rates, mechanisation and introduction of female and child labour. The result of this was that during the 1840s the weekly wage of skilled workers such as shoemen, bootclosers and bootmen in regular employ was between 17s and 26s (although most experienced a slight drop in wages towards the end of the decade). Early in the nineteenth century, in 1813, London bricklayers earned 5s 6d a day in summer and by the late 1840s

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1. Crossick, G., An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society, Kentish London 1840-1880, 1978.



this had only dropped a little to 5s 3d or 5s.<sup>1</sup> Unskilled workers did not necessarily earn that much less than skilled workers. For example, grooms and stablehands were paid approximately one pound a week and bricklayers' labourers earned 2s 9d to 3s a day.<sup>2</sup>

Workers in the same trade or employed in the same occupation could be paid very different wages depending upon whether they were employed in the 'honourable' section of the trade or 'sweating'. In the late 1840s for example, a good tailor in regular employment, working in one of the highest paid shops in the West End could earn between 23s and 36s a week whilst a tailor engaged in slop-work (i.e. working for a sweat shop) would only earn 11s.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, cabinet makers working in the 'honourable' sections of their trade could earn on average 35s a week in the late 1840's whilst West End cabinet makers in the 'slop trade' earned as little as 18s a week.<sup>4</sup> Carpenters too could command a wage of up to 35s a week but those in 'strapping' shops earned considerably less. It has been argued that in the 1840s, where the father was in full-time employment, a skilled London workman was fairly comfortably off with weekly wages of 30s or more.<sup>5</sup> However, this very brief account of

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1. Burnett, J., Useful Toil, 1974, p. 267.

2. P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Hand Loom Weavers, Returns and Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Part 2, pp. 279-284.

3. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 2, 1849, pp. 82-86.

4. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 1, 1849, p. 113.

5. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 1, 1849, p. 113.

earnings related to occupations shows that within the inner ward the earnings of skilled workers were varied and the stark descriptions of occupation as they appear in census returns, for example tailor, carpenter, dressmaker, provide few definite clues as to the earnings of the people concerned.

Take the case of a carpenter, John Ball. In 1841 he was living in Lancashire Court and was married with four young children aged between six months and eight years. Was he a skilled worker in the 'honourable' part of the trade? If so, he may have earned as much as 30s a week. Or was he employed in the 'dishonourable' section, in one of the 'strapping shops'? In which case he would have earned considerably less. Similarly, did a tailor named John Smith, also a family man who lived in Lancashire Court, earn as much as 35s a week or as little as 11s?<sup>2</sup>

This diversity of earnings amongst workers means that it is not possible to discern patterns in life styles that can be easily related to occupational groups. The effects of a reduction in earnings was, however, clearly explained to Mayhew by a number

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1. Burnett, J., Plenty and Want, 1979, p. 67. It is interesting to note that school fees did not feature in the family budget Burnett quoted, although there were no fewer than five children in the family.

2. The Ball and Smith families were listed in 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1475.

of workers he interviewed. A cabinet maker told him:

I must work from six to eight and later to get 18s now for my labour where I used to get 54s a week - that's just a third. I could in the old times give my children good schooling and good meals. Now children have to be put to work very young...'

A boot closer working for one of the best West End shops highlighted the evils of poor pay both in terms of his children's education and his own intellectual development:

...if we are forced to put our children to work directly they are able, they can not receive any education whatever, and then their minds and bodies will both be stunted...In the years '45, '46 and '47 I was in a much better condition than I am now. Then I was able to take periodicals in. I used to have near a shillings worth of them every week, sir...I used to have my weekly newspaper too. But since '48 ...I can't afford it.'

The perennial problem encountered by historians investigating the standard of living of working-class families in the early nineteenth century is that wide variations in wages in conjunction with the fluctuations in food prices meant that standards of living varied considerably from family to family and from year to year. This needs to be borne in mind when attempting to investigate the relationship between occupation, family income and school attendance.

What comes across in Mayhew's interviews was that the reduction in wages did not mean that the values and aspirations of the workers changed but it did mean that for many parents there was

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1. Mayhew, H. op cit., Vol.5, 1850, p. 189.

2. Mayhew, H. op cit., Vol.3, 1850, p. 128.

the frustration of not being able to provide their children with the things they felt were necessary, which included education.

School Attendance Patterns in Relation to Mothers' Occupations and Marital State.

The preceding discussion focused on fathers' occupations and children's school attendance. This section examines the school attendance patterns of children of working mothers and those whose mothers were not in paid employment.

There were slight differences in the school attendance patterns of the children of working mothers and those whose mothers were not in paid employment. Just over a third of children under the age of eight with working mothers were attending school at the time of the 1851 census, compared with just under a third of 'under eights' whose mothers were not in paid employment (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Attendance patterns of children of working mothers, related to mothers marital state giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
All working mothers	45 (35%)	72 (56%)	11 (9%)	128 (100%)
Married working mothers	16 (31%)	28 (54%)	8 (15%)	52 (100%)
Single working mothers	24 (33%)	46 (63%)	3 (4%)	73 (100%)

The major occupations listed for women in the poorer courts and streets (e.g. Lancashire Court, Little Grosvenor Street, Oxford Buildings, Robert Street, Gilbert Street, Thomas Court, Sneads Gardens and Providence Court) were laundress, charwoman, needlewoman, dressmaker and milliner. There were differences in the school attendance patterns of the children of laundresses, charwomen, ironers and manglers and those of needlewomen, milliners and dressmakers (Table 3.8a-3.8c).

Table 3.8a

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of children whose mothers were Charwomen/Laundresses, relating description to marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single (15)	10	5	5	20
Married (19)	13	2	12	27
All (34)	23	7	17	47

Table 3.8b

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of children whose mothers were Dress makers and Milliners, relating description to marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single (24)	11	1	18	30
Married (12)	3	3	13	19
All (36)	14	4	31	49

Table 3.8c

St. George's, Hanover Sq.: Description of children whose mothers were employed in miscellaneous occupations, relating description to marital state of mother

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single (14)	3	0	20	23
Married (7)	4	0	5	9
All (21)	7	0	25	32

A higher proportion of laundresses' children attended school than did those of needlewomen and dressmakers. One explanation could be that laundresses and washerwomen were compelled to make arrangements for the day time care of their children as they themselves tended to work away from home, whereas many of the dressmakers, milliners and needlewomen worked from home.

Another explanation takes account of the economic state of the two groups of workers. The overwhelming majority of women earned very low wages, partly because it was erroneously assumed that their wages were always supplementary to those of the male wage earner in the family.<sup>1</sup> A glance at the census returns shows that this was not always the case within the inner ward of St. George's. Many women in this area were struggling to provide, not only for themselves, but also often for their young children. Laundering, charring, washing and the various forms of needlework were all badly paid occupations and involved long hours of work. Laundering and charring were also physically exhausting jobs. Laundresses, charwomen and washerwomen earned only 1s 6d to 3s a day (or 10s 6d to 21s a week) but work was of a casual nature and involved being away from home from early morning to late night.<sup>2</sup> Dressmakers and milliners earned even less than laundresses and their weekly pay

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1. Alexander, S., Women's Work in Nineteenth-Century London. A study of the years 1820-1850, 1983, p. 32.

2. Alexander, S., *op cit.*, pp. 50-52.

varied between 4s 6d and 12s a week.<sup>1</sup> This last group of metropolitan worker was singled out in the early 1860s as being the worst fed in London and yet the cost of food for an adult needlewomen could swallow up more than half of the weekly wage of the poorest paid.<sup>2</sup>

The higher rates of school attendance amongst the children of laundresses might have been linked to the fact that the higher wages of these women probably meant that they were more likely than dressmakers to have money available for schooling.

In comparing married and single mothers it became clear that there was a noticeable difference in the attendance patterns of married laundresses' children and married dressmakers' children (Tables 3.8a-3.8c).<sup>3</sup> Only a small proportion of the children

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1. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 6, 1850, p. 132 and p. 136.

2. Burnett, J., Plenty and Want : A Social History of Diet in England from 1815 to the Present Day, 1979, p. 193.

3. Unless otherwise stated, the term 'single mother' has been used throughout this thesis to refer to those mothers who were returned as heads of household in the 1851 census enumerators' returns and to those for whom no husband or father of their children was recorded. Thus, women who were divorced, separated, deserted, widowed or who had never married were regarded as single. It is possible that a small number of women classified as single might have been married and had husbands who worked away from home but contributed to the family income.

in the latter category were returned as scholars whilst almost half of the children of married laundresses and charwomen were so described. Did this mean that married laundresses tended to be in a better financial position than married dressmakers? Did the differences reflect differences in attitude towards education of the very young?

Unfortunately the second question cannot be answered as there is no record of the opinion of laundresses or needlewomen within the inner ward. If there had been a pattern in terms of the husbands' occupations it might have been possible to speculate tentatively about mothers' attitudes to education if it was assumed that they were likely to be the same or similar to their husbands'. The only pattern that was apparent in the inner ward was that more laundresses were married to unskilled workers than to skilled workers, whereas needlewomen were married to skilled and unskilled workers in approximately equal proportions. However, as discussed earlier, the attendance patterns of skilled and unskilled workers were not clear cut, and since laundresses and dressmakers were married to men employed in a wide range of occupations it is not possible to make any definite links between parents' occupations and school attendance patterns. It is also not possible to speculate about the economic situation of married laundresses in comparison to that of married needlewomen, as women in both groups were married to well paid and poorly paid workers. In addition, both groups were similar in terms of the number of children and the number of working children. This is an area that requires more research.



On the basis of the census returns it would appear that, in general, the mother's marital state appeared to have made little difference to a child's attendance at school. The occupation of mothers however, did have some influence on the attendance patterns of 'under eights'.

#### Economic Situation of Families and Attendance at School.

Although there were undoubtedly a few better-paid workers living in the streets under consideration within the inner ward (i.e. where the male bread winner was bringing home around 30s a week), on the basis of the parents' occupations it is probable that in the 1840s and early 1850s the majority of working-class parents in the district were attempting to house, feed, clothe and educate their children on an average of only a pound a week.<sup>1</sup> In addition, some families experienced periods of extreme hardship during the course of the year if the parents were employed in the 'seasonal' occupations referred to earlier. Some families benefited from the income of older children who were at work.

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1. Thompson, E.P., The Making of the English Working Class, 1968, Chap. 8; Burnett, J., Plenty and Want, 1979, Chaps. 3 and 6; Rule, J., The Labouring Classes in Early Industrial England, 1750-1850, 1986, pp. 27-46 and pp. 107-130.

Where more than one person in the family was working the joint income was regarded as the total amount available to the family.

It is not possible to reconstruct the weekly budget of these poorer families and then determine how much was left for schooling but it is possible to develop an insight into the 'price' of education for poorer families by comparing the cost of private school fees with cost of a basic foodstuff. On the basis of first-hand contemporary accounts there is no doubt that bread formed the major part of the poorer person's diet, and in some cases the expenditure on bread accounted for up to half of the family income. A working-class family consisting of two adults and three children ate approximately six 4lb loaves a week and, between 1830 and 1855, the weekly bread bill for such a family fluctuated between 3s 5d and 5s 5d.<sup>1</sup> Placing the cost of private schooling against this weekly bill helps one to gain an idea of how expensive private education was. The cost of sending three children to a private working-class school for an average weekly fee of 6d per child would have amounted to 1s 6d (although some private schools within the inner ward charged as much as 10d a week). In times of hardship, for example when one or other of the parents was out of work or going through a slack period, this amount of money represented between a third and a half of what was needed each week for the family bread bill alone. It is not unreasonable to suggest then that for many families the 1d per week per child payable to the public infant school represented a much more acceptable economic proposition than the 4d-10d charged by private working-class schools.

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1. Burnett, J., Plenty and Want, 1979, p. 52.

Public infant schools were probably utilised mainly by those poorer families who believed that some form of education was important but for whom private school fees were too high.

Although there was a higher number of working-class schools in the poorer sections of the inner ward few of the private working-class schools were situated in the very poorest of streets. Only three of the schools listed in Table 3C were in very poor streets (George Street and Sneads Gardens). The remaining schools were in working-class streets where fewer of the residents were unskilled or likely to be poorly paid workers. Does this mean that the majority of private working-class schools were not catering for the children of the poorest families but for children from slightly better off working-class families? This hypothesis would certainly tie in with the following observation made in 1838 by the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in respect of attendance of children at dame schools in St. George's parish and two other Westminster parishes: 'Dame schools [are attended] by those of mechanics and labourers who are above receiving a charitable education for their children'.<sup>1</sup> This comment hints at positive and conscious decisions made by some parents to send their children to private working-class schools which were based on a sense of personal pride. These parents did not see themselves as being in need of charity and

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, 1838, p. 455.

were therefore not interested in the 'cut price' public educational facilities.

The poorest children were not excluded from attending private schools merely because few of the private schools were located in the poorest streets. What probably prevented many of the poorest children making the short journey to a school in a nearby street was the fact that many parents were effectively excluded from being able to make the choice between a private working-class school or a public infant school as a result of the fees charged in private schools. In the late 1830s and early 1840s the fees charged at dame schools in the inner ward ranged from 4d to 10d per week with an average of 6d being charged.<sup>1</sup> In contrast the fees at the public infant schools were only 1d or 2d a week per child. Many of the poorest parents who wanted their children educated might not have chosen a public education for their children but were forced to send their children to public schools for a 'charitable education' because of family economics.

Parents did not, however, choose schools purely on the basis of whether they could afford to pay the fees, as was revealed by the investigations of the L.S.S. in the late 1830s and early 1840s.

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1. J.S.S., 1838, Vol. 1, p. 451.

In 1843, C.R. Weld Esq. reported that within the inner ward 'a considerable number of parents [were] extremely solicitous to give their children as good an education as they could command'.<sup>1</sup> Where did these parents think their children would receive a good education? If the answer was in public schools then even those who could have afforded private school fees might have sent their children to public infant schools, but if parents were not happy with the education offered in public schools then the likelihood was that they would continue to support the local private working-class schools.

As suggested earlier, some working-class parents deliberately chose not to send their children to public infant schools as they did not want their children to receive a charity education. Charity schools that required the wearing of some sort of distinctive costume were allegedly very unpopular with working-class parents, despite the free schooling they offered, and such was the strength of feeling that parents who were 'any degree raised above want will sooner forego the pecuniary advantage, than condescend to allow their children to bear the marks of charity'.<sup>2</sup> More importantly, perhaps, the same L.S.S. report stated that parents sometimes chose to send their children to private schools because of the belief that 'nothing is

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 19.

2. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 455.

effectually taught where no payment is demanded'.<sup>1</sup> This view could have arisen from a simple, ill-informed prejudice and mistrust, and lack of regard for anything that could be described as charitable. This was the rather negative interpretation of many middle-class observers at the time who believed simply that working-class parents took pride in being able to pay for their children's education. That this was a widely held view amongst working-class parents was questioned by the Education Committee of the L.S.S. which pointed out that both public-school and private-school teachers sometimes had difficulty in extracting the fees.

This analysis fails to take into account that working-class parents were probably well aware of the power of money and therefore reasoned that if payment of the teacher was not dependent upon quality of service then there was little motivation to provide the best service possible; put another way, parents who paid for their children's education had a degree of power and control over the quality and form of their children's education, a power which they lacked in charity schools or public schools which charged a nominal fee. Comments made by a school inspector in 1845 would suggest that the poorest working-class parents were justified in fearing that public schools for their children did not provide as good an

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 455.

education as that received by better-off children. In his 1845 Report, H.M.I. Revd. Cook pointed out that the strict rules of public schools were often not consistent with the life styles of poor working-class families and, as a result, some children who were constantly late or unwashed were asked to leave the public school and the vacant places were then filled by children of 'respectable mechanics and small shopkeepers'. Cook suggested that such an approach was not very sensible if the aim of those providing public schools was to reach the poorest children. His solution was to have what can only be described as a two-tier system of public schooling. In one set of schools there should be 'considerable latitude', whilst in the other set of schools strict rules and 'a higher course of instruction and superior arrangements' were to be the order of the day.<sup>1</sup>

This dual system was probably not in operation within the inner ward of St. George's since, as mentioned earlier, the children of respectable mechanics and small tradespeople tended to attend private day schools,<sup>2</sup> but in Islington, where the system was in operation, such children attended the public infant schools.<sup>3</sup> It seems likely that some parents would have known that some

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1. 'Report on Schools in the Eastern District by Rev. F.C. Cook' in Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 101.

2. J.S.S. Dec. 1838 Vol. 1, p. 455.

3. In his report Cook listed Islington, Whitechapel and St. Giles as areas where this dual system operated. Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 101.

public schools which catered for the poorest children also provided a second-class education, and it is therefore not surprising that parents might have resented paying for a public school education and where possible, preferred to send their child to a private school.

That this was in fact the case was suggested by the irritated observation made by the Master of the parochial school in the neighbouring parish of St. Anne's:

Ask a parent to pay the whole value, or what he considers to be the whole value, of his child's education and he will make every effort to do so, as is proved by the preference which parents give to private schools. But offer him a charitable education, and he expects to receive it gratis. He is ready to pay for the whole instruction of his child, but will not "condescend" to receive charity and pay likewise.<sup>1</sup>

The assertion that many working-class parents wanted some control over the education of their children is based partly on the fact that many were said to resent the rules and regulations of the public schools. This opposition could be viewed in a positive light. It could be seen as an active rejection of the essentially middle-class values that pervaded public infant schools. That this rejection was likely is supported by the fact that groups of working-class workers such as hand-loom weavers resented the rules and regulations of the factory system, many of which were similar to those of public schools. These rules concerned punctuality, cleanliness, and highlighted

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1. J.S.S. Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 455.



the separation of the home from work and school.<sup>1</sup>

Not all working-class parents had the same attitude towards education generally and many might well have chosen to send their children to public infant schools but it is important not to lose sight of the fact that many working-class parents wanted to be free to choose what sort of education their child received. As a skilled, but poor, West-End tailor made clear to Mayhew when talking about his employers:

...it is almost impossible for men with families to live decently by their labour; and now, for the first time, they pretend to feel for them. They even talk of erecting a school for children of their workpeople...They had much better erect workshops, and employ men on the premises at fair living wages, and then the men could educate their own children without being indebted to their 'charity'.<sup>2</sup>

Working-class parents' insistence on sending their children to private schools despite the provision of public schools surprised and frustrated middle-class observers. In 1843, C.R. Weld commented, '..it is somewhat singular that the largest dames' schools should be situated in the immediate neighbourhood of George-st. and South Audley-st. Infants' Schools...' <sup>3</sup>

Clearly, distance from home was not a major factor in influencing whether or not a child attended a public or a

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1. Lawton, D., Class, Culture and the Curriculum, 1975, p. 36 and Thompson, E.P. op cit., pp. 338-339.

2. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 2, 1849, p. 143.

3. J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 25.

private school. It is possible that St. Mark's National Infant School was not very popular because of its close association with the Church of England. This seems especially likely when one considers that in St. George's and two adjacent parishes almost half of dame school teachers were Dissenters in 1838, and in 1843 the proportion within the inner ward was 70 per cent.<sup>1</sup> In addition the early years of the 1840s saw the establishment of a Dissenting school in Oxford Buildings and a Catholic school in South Moulton Lane. The opening of these schools coincided with a fall in attendance at St. Mark's. It is probable, therefore, that religious considerations influenced parents' choices with regard to schools for their young children. The Catholic school was certainly opened in order to attract the children of the poor Irish who lived in the neighbourhood and who had been, until this time, attending the British and Foreign school.<sup>1</sup>

The diversity of attitudes towards schooling in all its forms was highlighted by the hierarchy of schools that was said to exist within the inner ward.<sup>2</sup> In terms of the 'condition' of the parents the lowest ranking schools were National and infant schools as they were attended by children of the poorest parents. Children of a 'superior class' were more likely to go to British and Foreign schools.<sup>3</sup> Private

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 463 and J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 24.

2. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 455.

3. The term 'superior class' is that used by the Education Committee of the L.S.S.: Ibid., p. 455.

working-class schools were at the top of the ranking.<sup>1</sup>

It could be argued that this ranking was merely a reflection of the cost of each type of schooling, and therefore the free or cheapest schools were likely to be filled with the poorest children, whilst the better-off children were able to attend the more expensive public schools or private schools. An analysis of the parents' occupations in infant, National and British schools suggests that parental choice of school was related to parental occupation rather than parental earnings.

The L.S.S. compared the occupations of parents of the children in five National schools in St. George's parish and the two public infants' schools in the inner ward of St. George's (St. Mark's and Farm Street) with those of parents in the British and Foreign School in Wardour Street in the neighbouring parish of St. Anne's, Soho (Table 3.9). By combining the figures for the National schools with those for the infants' schools, and comparing these with a British and Foreign school that did not cater for infants, it would seem that the compiler of the table believed that the clientele of National schools was very similar to that of infants' schools, whilst both differed from the clientele of British and Foreign Schools catering for

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1. Compare this ranking with that in Islington where public infant and National schools were attended by the 'better' children.

older children only. Further study is required in order to determine how justified this view is.

Table 3.9 (overleaf) shows that there were interesting differences between the two groups of schools. Firstly, National and infant schools appeared to be attended predominantly by children of unskilled workers, whilst children of skilled workers formed a far higher proportion of the pupil body in British and Foreign schools. British and Foreign schools often charged more than National schools but this cannot be the only reason for the school attendance patterns noted as skilled workers did not necessarily earn more than unskilled workers. Analysis of this particular pattern of attendance at public schools would suggest that choice of school owed less to economics than parents' perceptions of the schools.

The differences in school attendance highlighted in Table 3.9 cannot be accounted for by explanations based on religious differences. National and British schools differed in terms of their religious orientation but Table 3.9 cannot be used to analyse the relationship between religion, occupation and choice of school because one of the infant schools, which was put in the same category as the National school, was not an Anglican school. The teacher in Farm Street Infants' School was a Dissenter and the school was attended by the children of Dissenters.<sup>1</sup>

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 475.

Table 3.9

The occupations of parents of children in a British and Foreign School, five National Schools and two Infants Schools

Trade or calling of parent	Nat. & Infant Schools		British Schools	
	number	percentage	number	percentage
Bricklayers/Stonemasons	77	3.6	23	2.8
Carpenters	105	4.9	109	13.3
Charwomen	140	6.5	14	1.7
Jewellers and Goldsmiths	0	0	32	3.9
Labourers	138	6.4	16	2.0
Laundresses	79	3.7	0	0
Mechanics	60	2.8	74	9.0
Policemen	18	.8	24	2.9
Porters	154	7.2	50	6.1
Shoemakers	152	7.1	82	10
Smiths	69	3.2	58	7.1
Servants	292	13.6	24	2.9
Sempstresses	38	1.8	16	2.0
Stablemen, Ostlers	535	25	36	4.4
Tailors	97	4.5	120	14.6
Misellaneous	263	12.3	165	20.1
Total	2140	100	820	100

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Table 3.9 is a slightly condensed version of Table XXIII included in the Third Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 469.

Apart from school fees and religious orientation how did National and British schools differ from each other? It is interesting to note that the L.S.S. praised St. Mark's Infant School and stated that it was 'perhaps the best of its kind. It has a clothing fund, a lending library and a children's saving bank attached to it...'.<sup>1</sup> In contrast C.R. Weld described the Oxford Buildings Dissenting School as 'wretchedly dirty and the children are the most unhealthy looking that I have seen in any part of London, but it is conducted with ability.'<sup>2</sup> Five years earlier the L.S.S. had commented that British and Foreign schools might not be as clean as National schools but the teacher-pupil relationship in British schools was more relaxed than in National schools and, furthermore, 'the children themselves have more energy, are more attentive to their business and seem more impressed with the idea that they are sent to school to learn and not to waste their time.'<sup>3</sup> It seems feasible that many working-class parents preferred the more informal atmosphere of British schools which not only stimulated their children but also did not, unlike St. Mark's Infant School, place a heavy emphasis on cleanliness and thrift, values that the middle

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 159.

2. J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 24.

3. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, pp. 456-457.

classes could easily afford to hold, but which were less important and relevant to families struggling to survive in the poorer areas of the inner ward.

The attractions of the private working-class schools were many and diverse. For some parents, public schools were seen as charitable insitutions whereas private schools did not have this stigma. Others chose to send their children to private working-class schools in order to prevent their youngsters from associating with 'low company'. Others apparently resented the various rules and regulations (eg. insistence on cleanliness and the length of children's hair).<sup>1</sup> The L.S.S. asserted that children were sent to dame schools not so much for educational reasons but simply in order to keep the children 'out of the streets'.<sup>2</sup> The L.S.S. investigators noted that teachers in private working-class schools had told them that the children had been sent 'to do nothing', and parents had specifically stated that the children were not to be 'worried with learning'.<sup>3</sup> If, however, private working-class schools were

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, pp. 456-457 and J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, pp. 17-24.

2. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 451.

3. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 452.

perceived by parents as a child-minding facility it is surprising that parents paid an average of 6d a week when the child could be cared for in a public school for as little as a 1d a week.

It seems likely that private schools were popular as they were situated in the midst of the community, the teacher was a member of the community with an understanding of the day to day realities of working-class life in London, and the school was held in familiar surroundings in the teacher's own home. The fact that many children in working-class private schools learnt to read using books they brought from home might also have been important to parents. In most of the public schools children learnt to read using the Bible or moral tracts and stories which espoused middle-class values. The reading material that children had at home was likely to have reflected the parents' interests, and might have been very different from the moral tales and meaningless rhymes read by infants in public schools. It would seem that many parents felt very strongly about this particular issue, as the Education Committee of the L.S.S. reported that one private working-class teacher stated that if she had started to use the reading aids produced by the various societies it would have resulted in the immediate removal of all the children in her school.<sup>1</sup>

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 215.



The existing evidence supports the view that parents thought carefully about the education of their children. For some parents education in any form of school was judged to be unsuitable. According to the 1851 census returns less than 5 per cent of 'under eights' were scholars at home but of course the proportion may have been higher. Within the inner ward some parents chose to educate their children at home in order to ensure that their child did not associate with other children whose behaviour they did not approve of and also to protect their child from infectious diseases. Given the high rate of mortality amongst under fives this last consideration must have been important to many parents with children of an age to attend the crowded infant schools.

#### School Attendance and the Influence of Seasonal Employment Patterns

The district was interesting as it witnessed a seasonal ebb and flow of the wealthier elements of the population. The 'fashionable season' coincided with the Parliamentary season in London and extended from February to July. In the spring there was an annual increase in the population as a result of families returning from the country to their own town houses or rented houses for the season. In autumn, the population fell again as the gentry returned to the country. The autumn was also the time when resident tradesmen and their families went on holiday to the seaside or to the countryside.<sup>1</sup> This seasonal migration

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1. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 449.

of the wealthy population was not confined to St. George's parish but was noticeable in many of the districts in London with a sizable wealthy population, and continued to be a feature of London life.<sup>1</sup> Any discernible effect of this particular regular occurrence on the education of working-class 'under eights' may therefore be of relevance to other areas of London. In the late 1830s the L.S.S. stated that the movement of the gentry had no perceptible effect on the dame and common day schools but that 'middling schools' were badly affected in the autumn due to the absence of tradesmen's children.<sup>2</sup> This might seem logical given the fact that the majority of schools defined by the L.S.S. as dame or common day schools were attended by working-class children and therefore the exodus of wealthy children into the country would have had little affect on these schools. However, the seasonal ebb and flow of the wealthy also affected those workers who provided for their needs (eg. milliners, pastrycooks, coachmen, tailors, dressmakers and bootmakers etc.). Such workers were likely to be in full employment during the period from February to July, but for the rest of the year most experienced some degree of unemployment and possibly resultant hardship. Mayhew calculated that out of

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1. See for example Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, 1861, Vol. 2, p. 299

2. J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 453.

the 'London season' approximately 25 per cent fewer workers were required in occupations subject to seasonal variation and therefore the affected workers and their families had 'to starve on as best they can for at least three months in the year'.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the 'snapshot' nature of the information contained within the census returns did not allow for an longitudinal study of school attendance over a twelve month period. As the economic state of families altered during the course of a year, such a study would be invaluable as it would cast more light on the connection between school attendance and the economic situation of families.

#### Summary.

In the surveyed areas of St. George's approximately 30 per cent of two to seven year olds attended school. School attendance appears to have been linked to age. Less than 10 per cent of two and three year olds were at school compared with just over 30 per cent of three and four year olds and more than 50 per cent of six and seven year olds. Infants from larger families (i.e. those composed of four or more children) were more likely to be at school than those from smaller families. In addition, the presence of older siblings in paid employment exerted a positive effect on school attendance amongst the 'under eights'. The father's occupation also influenced school attendance,

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1. Mayhew, H. London Labour and the London Poor, 1861, Vol. 2, p. 301.

although the existing data would suggest that there was no clear-cut distinction between the school attendance of the children of skilled and unskilled workers. Furthermore, since diverse wages were paid to men in the same occupational groups, uniform life-styles linked to occupational groups were not discernible. Boot and shoemakers sent almost half of their infant-aged children to school, whilst labourers in the area sent over 40 per cent of their 'under eights' to school. At the other end of the scale approximately a quarter of servants' and coachmen's children attended school. School attendance did not appear to be influenced by whether or not the mother was single or married, but the mother's occupation did effect school attendance. Laundresses were more likely to send their children to school than dressmakers.

The following chapters examine the school attendance patterns in six other areas of North London.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN PART OF SOUTH MARYLEBONE.

South Marylebone was bounded by Marylebone Road in the north, Oxford Street and Uxbridge Road in the south, Tottenham Court Road in the east and extended westwards to include Paddington and Notting Hill. The study area was the square formed by Marylebone Road (New Road), Edgware Road, Oxford street and Great Portland Place (see map overleaf). An analysis of 21 streets within the study area was undertaken. Nine of the streets were situated in the north-west sector of the study area and the remaining 12 streets were situated in the north-east sector of the study area.

The Portman, Portland and Bedford estates formed a large part of the study area. In the development of these estates, building regulations regarding the number and density of houses had been adhered to, with the result that part of the study area was composed of large houses with plenty of space in between the residences and well laid out streets and squares.<sup>1</sup> The estates had been developed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the large squares and pleasant streets were soon inhabited by wealthy families. A large part of the study area therefore was home to a well-established wealthy population.

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1. Stevens, D.F., 'The Central Area' in Coppock, J.T. and Prince, H.C., Greater London, 1964, p. 171; also George, M.D., London Life in the Eighteenth Century, 1925, p. 75.

Area of South Marylebone in which  
surveyed streets were located.



From Stanford's New Library Map of London, 1862

South Marylebone was not only inhabited by the wealthy but also by people from the whole economic and social spectrum. It was home to those engaged in the government of the country, wealthy businessmen, Army Officers, professionals as well as those involved in smaller business ventures, retailers and skilled craftsmen and also by a number of semi- and unskilled workers such as labourers, coachmen, servants and also some vagrants and paupers. A sizeable proportion of men were engaged in the building trade due to the high levels of building activity in Paddington and on the north side of the Marylebone Road.

South Marylebone was very similar to other western parishes in that the rich and poor lived in close proximity to each other. A high proportion of men with young children were employed in occupations that serviced the needs of the wealthy (e.g. servants, coachmen, grooms, shoemakers, tailors). Employed women with young children worked mainly as laundresses, dressmakers and needlewomen.

In the report of the survey carried out by the Central Society of Education it was stated explicitly that the relative proximity of the middle and working classes did not necessarily mean that the wealthy knew about the lives of their poor neighbours:

Few who live in the cleanly and well-paved parish of St. Marylebone, are aware that, within a stone's throw of some of its leading streets, such districts as have been examined by the agent of the society exist; much less have they any idea of the painful details which have been elicited.<sup>1</sup>

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1. 'Statistical Inquiries of the Central Society of Education into the Social Condition of the Working Classes' in Central Society of Education, First Publication, 1837, p. 339.

Whilst the wealthy were living in light and airy streets, their poorer neighbours were crammed into the unhealthy courts and alleys nearby. In 1816 Montague Burgoyne, the Secretary of the Callmell Society, noted that in Callmell Buildings, within yards of the fashionable Portman Square, the poor were so closely packed that 700 people were living in 23 houses.<sup>1</sup> The housing conditions of the poor did not improve much during the course of the next few decades. A survey of Callmell Buildings carried out by the Central Society of Education in 1837 revealed that the 26 houses in the survey area were inhabited by 288 families who were living in appalling conditions and the buildings were described as a 'warren'.<sup>2</sup>

It is clear from the 1841 and 1851 census returns that overcrowding in the study area continued to be a fact of life for many of the poorer residents. The overcrowding can not be attributed to a single cause. The population of the area increased during the first half of the nineteenth century from 63,982 in 1801 to 157,696 in 1851.<sup>3</sup> This rate of increase was approximately the same as that

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis, p. 261.

2. Porter, G.R., 'Statistical Enquiries into the Social Condition of the Working Classes and into the Means Provided for the Education of Their Children' in Central Society of Education, Second Publication, 1838, p. 253.

3. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, p. 562; P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, pp. 161-166; P.P. 1852-53 (1631) lxxxv, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables, Part 1, Vol. 1, p. 2.



of London as a whole. New accommodation for the poor was not built and so obviously the pressure on existing housing increased. The study area was also inhabited by a number of Irish migrants. A sizeable number of Irish migrants had been attracted to Marylebone in the late eighteenth century due to the employment opportunities afforded by the building of the Paddington Canal.<sup>1</sup> In the early nineteenth century Irish families continued to settle in the locality, partly because there continued to be plenty of construction work in the area. According to a report on the Irish poor in Great Britain in 1836, economic considerations played a large part in determining where the Irish migrants lived:

In all the towns of England and Scotland where the Irish have settled, they inhabit the *cheapest* dwellings which can be procured; and thus they are collected in the lowest, dampest, dirtiest, most unhealthy and ruinous parts of town.<sup>2</sup>

In South Marylebone the infamous Callmell Buildings were an unhealthy collection of houses and had a high proportion of Irish residents.<sup>3</sup>

Although the study area was not a major centre of Irish migrant settlement there were a number of streets and courts that were inhabited almost exclusively by Irish families. Apart from Callmell

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1. George, M.D., op cit., pp. 121-122.

2. P.P. 1836 (40) xxxiv, Report of Commissioners for Inquiry into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland, Appx G, Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, p. xi.

3. Porter, G.R., 'Statistical Enquiries into the Social Condition of the Working Classes and into the Means Provided for the Education of Their Children' in Central Society of Education, Second Publication, 1838, p. 251; and P.P. 1843 XII, Supplementary Report on the Practice of Internment in Towns by E. Chadwick, p. 259.

Buildings there were other streets with a very high proportion of Irish families with young children and these included Horace Street and York Court. In the remaining streets the proportion of young families in which one or both parents had been born in Ireland ranged from under ten per cent in Molyneux Street and Shouldham Street to over 25 per cent in Moore Street and more than 40 per cent in Barretts Court.<sup>1</sup>

There appears to have been relatively little contemporary interest in the conditions and lives of the non-Irish poor in this part of Marylebone. For example, surveys of living conditions focused on areas with high Irish populations, and philanthropic societies such as the Callmell Society focused their efforts on the Irish poor. There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, the social 'problem' of the Irish poor in the locality might have been perceived to have been of more pressing importance than any of the 'problems' created by the English poor. The second reason is related to contemporary perceptions of the English poor residing within the study area. It is possible that in comparison with the appalling condition of the poor in neighbouring areas such as Agar Town, St. Giles and parts of Westminster, the English poor in this particular locality were not deemed to have been in urgent need of philanthropic attention. On the basis of the 1841 and 1851 census returns it would seem that the very poor English families were not crowded together in any particular street or court. Instead, in

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1489.

most streets and courts, very poor working-class English families were interspersed with families in which the head of the household was in steady employment or in a fairly well-paid job. Some very poor English families even lived adjacent to a small number of 'respectable' working-class families who were on the borderline between the working class and middle class (e.g. families headed by clerks, small retailers and shopkeepers and small scale employers). Thus the poverty of the really poor was masked. In contrast, the Irish poor were concentrated in a few streets. A detailed study of the educational facilities within the area highlighted how such differences in contemporary interest and concern affected the pattern of early years schooling within a small area.

Major areas of investigation in this detailed study included a continued exploration of the links between parental occupation and school attendance and an investigation of the schooling provision and attendance patterns of young children of Irish parents who were living in small enclaves rather than larger settlements. The residential patterns of working-class and wealthy families in this area of London enabled an exploration of the effect of poor families being fairly dispersed throughout an area on the development of public educational facilities for working-class infants; it also facilitated an investigation of the educational facilities available to the working-class poor in an area with a high proportion of wealthy residents.

Educational Facilities for Infants in Marylebone.

Prior to 1836 there is no evidence of a public school within the study area catering for infants. Between 1836 and 1857, however, there was a rapid increase in the number of public infant schools and other public schools which catered for infants and older children (see Table 4A overleaf).

Marylebone Diocesan school was situated in Nutford Place in the north west sector of the study area. Although the first reference to the infant school was in 1845,<sup>1</sup> a comment made by H.M.I. Cook in 1852 would suggest that infants were catered for from at least 1835. In Cook's 1852 Inspector's Report it was recorded that an infant teacher had been 'seventeen years in this position'.<sup>2</sup> The school was not united to the National Society nor connected with any Church but was managed by a committee. It is not clear how the school was financed but by the mid-forties the funds of the school were said to be in a very 'depressed state'. The 70 infants were in a badly lit and 'inconvenient' room. Cook's opinion was that the school required a considerable injection of financial aid if it was to improve.<sup>3</sup>

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1. 'Special Reports upon Schools in Middlesex' by the Rev. F.C. Cook in Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 110.

2. 'Tabulated Reports in detail, for 1851-52, of Schools inspected by H.M.I. Rev. F.C. Cook' in Minutes of the Committee of Council, Vol. 2, 1852-53, p. 405.

3. Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 110.

Table 4A: List of public schools.<sup>1</sup>

- 1835 - Marylebone Diocesan School, Nutford Place.
  - 1836 - Portland Place, All Souls and Trinity School.
  - 1838 - Infant School at 63, Marylebone High Street.
    - 45, Upper York St. St. Mary's Western Infant School.
  - 1845 - Marylebone Central School.
  - 1846 - Brunswick Chapel (near Portman Square).
  - 1847 - Grotto Passage Ragged School (near Paddington Street).
  - 1848 - Ragged School, Grays Yard, James Street.
    - Ragged School, Edwards Mews, Portman Square.
    - Portman Square Infants' School.
  - 1849 - Ragged School, Hindes Street Mews.
    - Ragged School, Bulstrode Mews.
    - Ragged School, Moore Street.
  - 1850 - Harcourt Street Infants' School.
    - Moore Street Infant School.
  - 1852 - St. James Roman Catholic School, High Street, Marylebone.
  - 1857 - Cleveland Street, Marylebone Holy Trinity School.
- Total = 16

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1. Annual Reports of the National School Society, 1826-38; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 8-9; 'Special Reports upon Schools in Middlesex' by the Rev. F.C. Cook in Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, pp. 109-110; Minutes of the Committee of Council, Vol. 2, 1852-53. p. 405 and pp. 1072-1073. R.S.U Magazine, Vol. 1, April 1849, p. 75; May 1849, p. 97; July 1849, p. 134 and Aug. 1849, p. 155. Lists of schools in Pigot's London Directory, 1838 and Kelly's Post Office Directory, 1844. Also, Prospectus of Western Infant School, St. Marylebone, 1843; Handbill announcing Anniversary of the meeting of the Charity and National Schools of the Parish of St. Marylebone, 30th May 1850; Holy Trinity School Minute Book, 1857, (Marylebone Local History Library).

In 1836 another public infant school opened in Great Portland Street in the north-east sector of the study area. Between 1836 and 1850 the infant school was variously known as Marylebone Infants' School, All Souls' Infants School, All Souls' and Trinity Infants Schools and finally as the Eastern National Infants' School.<sup>1</sup> This infants' school was united to the National Society and was also associated with a school for older children. When the school first opened it catered for 286 children, 49 of whom were Sunday scholars.<sup>2</sup> In the 1840s and early 1850s the school was attended by 420-430 children.<sup>3</sup>

According to the 1838 Pigot's London Directory there was an infant school at 63, Marylebone High Street.<sup>4</sup> Six years later a Boys' Catholic Charity School was listed at the same address but the infants' school was not mentioned.<sup>5</sup> The only details that have been found that relate to an infant school in Marylebone High street are those of the St. James Girls' and Infants' Roman Catholic School which was first recorded in 1852.

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1. Annual Reports of the National Society, 1836-38; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 8-9; Minutes of Committee of Council, Vol. 2, 1852-53. p. 405.

2. Annual Report of the National Society, 1838, p. 156.

3. Handbill announcing Anniversary of the meeting of the Charity and National Schools of the Parish of St. Marylebone, 30th May 1850, Marylebone Local History Library.

4. Pigot's London Directory, 1838.

5. Kelly's Post Office Directory, 1844.

As no link has been established between the schools mentioned in the Post Office Directory and the St. James School, it has been assumed that the schools are not one and the same.

The Western Infant School in Upper York Street, was established in 1838<sup>1</sup> and continued to operate in the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>2</sup> The cost of establishing the school was paid by a group of benefactors and the running of the school was paid for through annual subscriptions and school pence. On average the school catered for approximately 140 children at any one time, but between 1838 and 1842 the school educated 1056 children, an average of 211 a year.<sup>3</sup>

No new public infant schools were established for the next six years. In 1844 or 1845 the Marylebone Central School, which had been in operation since 1827, began to cater for between 145 and 166 infants.<sup>4</sup> The school, at the northern end of Marylebone High Street was, as the name suggests, situated in the central zone of the study area. It was associated with the Central National School which catered for 330 older children, 80 of whom were clothed by the school.

There are very few records which mention the Brunswick Chapel Schools, which were united to the National Society. In 1846 the Church School Inquiry listed three Brunswick Chapel schools, one of which was an infants' school. The infants' school catered for 114 children and was supported by school pence.<sup>5</sup> The school was not

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1. Prospectus of Western Infant School, St. Marylebone, 1843.

2. Handbill announcing Anniversary of the meeting of the Charity and National Schools of the Parish of St. Marylebone, 30th May 1850.

3. Prospectus of Western Infant School, St. Marylebone, 1843.

4. Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 109; National Society Church School Enquiry, 1846-47, pp. 8-9; Handbill announcing Anniversary..., op cit., 30th May 1850.

5. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 8-9.

inspected and, interestingly, was not included in the list of Charity and National schools in Marylebone which was published to advertise a sermon which was to be given on 30th May 1850 in aid of such schools. It is therefore possible that the Brunswick Chapel school was fairly shortlived, or that the school moved to a new site and changed its name.

The late 1840s witnessed a rapid increase in the number of ragged schools within the area and in 1847 and 1848, no fewer than six ragged schools were opened.<sup>1</sup> One was in Moore Street in the north west sector and the remaining five were situated to the east of Portman Square, in the small streets and courts near Manchester Square. Moore Street Ragged School was within easy reach of young children of some of the poorest families in the north-west sector (e.g. those living in Horace Street and Moore Street itself). The ragged school in Grotto Passage was easily reached by children living in most of the streets in the north-east sample area.<sup>2</sup> Grays Yard, Edwards Mews, Hinde Street Mews and Bulstrode Mews were fairly accessible to those children living in Callmell Buildings, Grays Buildings, Gees Court and other nearby small courts and alleys which

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1. Ragged School Union Magazine (R.S.U. Magazine), Vol. 1, April 1849, p. 75; R.S.U. Magazine, Vol. 1, May 1849, p. 97; R.S.U. Magazine, Vol. 1, July 1849, p. 134; R.S.U. Magazine, Vol. 1, Aug. 1849, p. 155.

2. In St. Marylebone Local History Library, the Grotto Passage Ragged and Industrial School is included in the card index and it is noted that these schools opened in 1854 and an inscription to this effect still exists. The records of the Ragged School Society, however, state clearly that these schools were in existence in 1846 (R.S.U. Magazine, Vol.1, Aug. 1849, p. 155). It would seem that these schools moved to new premises in Grotto Passage in 1854.



were populated by a number of very poor families.<sup>1</sup>

In the 1850s four more schools were recorded as catering for infants. Two of these schools, Harcourt Street Infant School and Moore Street School, were very close to the Western Infant School. Very few details have emerged about these two schools except that in 1850 the Moore Street school was catering for 200 infants while Harcourt Street Infants' school was catering for 180 infants and was attached to a school for 50 older children. In February 1857 the infant department of the Holy Trinity National school opened in Buckingham Street. The number of infants at this school averaged 200.<sup>2</sup>

Only one public Roman Catholic School was opened within the study area. St. James' Roman Catholic Girls' and Infants' School was inspected in 1852 by Mr. Marshall.<sup>3</sup> The school catered for 110 infants and was situated in Marylebone High street at the junction with Bentinck Mews. Although the school was relatively close to the Irish Catholic families residing in the south and north east sectors of the study area, the school must have been difficult to get to for those in the north-west. In the early 1850s a Roman Catholic school for girls and infants was opened on the north side of the New Road

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1. 1851 Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1488-1489.

2. Holy Trinity School Minute Book, 1857, Marylebone Local History Library.

3. 'Tabulated Reports in detail, for 1851-52 of Roman Catholic Schools inspected by H.M.I. T.W.M. Marshall Esq.' in Minutes of the Committee of Council, Vol. 2, 1852-52, p. 1073.

in Blandford Square and it is possible that the children in the north-west of the study area attended this school.<sup>1</sup> In the 1830s there was accommodation in public infants' schools for approximately 500 children between the ages of two and seven. By the late 1840s the number of school places for this age group had increased to approximately 860 in the National and Charity schools, with another 330 infants' places in Grays Yard and Edward Mews Ragged Schools<sup>2</sup> and an unspecified number of places in the remaining three ragged schools. By the late 1850s there was accommodation for approximately 1,900 infants. There were also a number of schools just outside the study area (e.g. Blandford Square School, Christ Chapel School and St. John's National School) to which children could have easily been sent.

As in other areas of North London, apart from the ragged schools, the public schools were not situated in the poorest streets. Moore Street Infant School was the only exception to this as it was located in a street with a sizeable proportion of unskilled workers (e.g. labourers, crossing sweepers, stablemen).

It is possible that the high number of public infant school places was due to the fact that the wealthy resident population was able to support schools for older children in addition to schools for the 'under eights'. In other parts of London where the local wealthy population was much smaller, there were fewer public education

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1. 'Reports of H.M.I. T.W.M. Marshall Esq' in Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1852-52, Vol.2, p. 1072.

2. R.S.U. Magazine, Vol. 1, July 1849, pp. 134-35.

facilities for infants; one reason for this was that available finance might have forced interested parties to make a choice between supporting a school for older children and supporting a school for infants. Although an increasing number of contemporaries felt that infant schools were a valuable part of the educational scene it is doubtful whether many would have chosen to support one in preference to a school for older children. In addition, applications to the National Society for a grant to support an infant school were likely to be turned down unless schooling facilities were available for older children. In the mid-1830s the National Society itself was very clear about its priorities. The application form for support of an infant school asked the signatories to certify that they were 'acting in concert with and co-operation with the managers of the National Sunday or Sunday and Daily School' in the area and furthermore that the infant school was intended to serve as a preparation for the local National School. Where a Sunday or daily school did not exist the National Society stated emphatically that 'the Sunday Instruction of older Children shall be secured before that of Infants during the week is undertaken at all, or otherwise the assistance of the Society cannot be obtained'.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that apart from St. James, all the public infants' schools in this area of London were Anglican in persuasion and there were no British and Foreign schools or Dissenters' schools.

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1. Facsimile of the Form of Certificate for Use in the Case of Infant Schools, 23rd Annual Report of the National Society, 1834, p. 33.

The study area was outstanding in terms of the number of private schools in existence during the first half of the nineteenth century (Table 4B). As was the case with St. George's, Hanover Square there can be little doubt that some of the private schools were for middle and upper class children.

Table 4B: Number of private schools within the survey area of Marylebone.<sup>1</sup>

1819 - 'Some private schools'

1833 - 146 Daily Schools

1837 - Private school recorded in Callmell Buildings

1841 - 28 Private school teachers

1851 - 42 Private school teachers

1851 - 195 Private schools

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1. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, p. 550; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 574-576; Porter, G.R., op cit., 1838, p. 254; 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 679-680; 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1488-1489; P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, Education (of England and Wales), p. 8. This last figure includes those private schools that were for middle class and wealthier children.

Both St. George's, Hanover Square and this particular area of Marylebone were very similar in terms of the proportion of wealthy to poor residents. It is not possible to state with any degree of certainty how many of these private schools catered for working-class children. If it is cautiously assumed, however, that the proportion of private schools that were working-class private schools was likely to be similar in the two areas of London then it is possible to state that there were between 87 and 108 working-class private schools in 1833 and 117 and 144 working-class private schools in 1851.

A further point of interest is that the public infants' schools were situated on the edges of the study area. This was not because there were no working-class families living in the central region and therefore no need for schools. Looking at the geographical distribution of private and public schools it could be argued that the need for schools in the central area was clearly demonstrated by the fact that there were a number of private schools in this area, which was devoid of public schools.

Table 4C: List of possible private working-class school teachers from 1841 Census.<sup>1</sup>

Callmell Buildings	: Michael Tracey (Schoolmaster) <sup>1</sup>
Crawford Street	: Martha Clarke (Governess)
David Street	: Mary Ann West and Charlotte West (Governesses)
East Street	: ? Gilmore, (Schoolmaster) <sup>2</sup>
East Street	: William Kennedy (Schoolmaster)
George Street	: Lite Payhardin (Teacher)
Harcourt Street	: William Banks (Schoolmaster).
Harcourt Street	: Charlotte Wood (Schoolmistress)
Homer Row	: Mary Aud (Schoolmistress).
Homer Street	: Emma Faulkener (Schoolmistress).
Homer Street	: Sarah King (Schoolmistress).
Horace Street	: Thomas Chalke (Schoolmaster aged 14 )
John Street North	: Elizabeth Smith (Schoolmistress)
John Street West	: Elizabeth Keep and Louisa Keep (Teachers)
King Street	: Jane Knapps and daughter Jane (Governesses)
King Street	: Mary Morgan (Schoolmistress).
Little York Place	: Sarah Richard (Schoolmistress)
Molyneux Street	: Louisa Booth (Schoolmistress)
Molyneux street	: Priscilla Hale (Governess)
Shouldham Street	: Eleanor Simmons (Governess)
Winchester Row	: Maria Wheeler (Teacher)
Winchester Row	: Caroline Cook (Teacher)
Winchester Row	: George Evans (Schoolmaster)
York Buildings	: Elizabeth Chaplin (Teacher)
York Buildings	: Jemima Pratt (Governess)
Total = 28	

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1. The location of schools and the descriptions in brackets are those recorded by the 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 679-680.

2. The first name of this teacher was illegibly written.

Table 4D: List of possible private working-class private school teachers from 1851 Census.<sup>1</sup>

Adam Street East	:	John and Ann Clark (Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress)
Adam Street East	:	Henry Freeman (Schoolmaster)
Brown Street *	:	Thomas Hammond (Schoolmaster)
Crawford Street	:	Martha Paine (Schoolmistress).
Crawford Street	:	Eliza Smith (Governess)
	:	William Asquith (Assistant)
Dorset Street	:	Elizabeth Fisher (Schoolmistress)
East Street *	:	Caroline Walter (Schoolmistress)
East Street *	:	Edward Woodward (Schoolmaster)
East Street *	:	Mary Ann Hudson (Assistant schoolmistress).
Gray Street	:	Bridget Whyte (Schoolmistress)
Great Barlow Street *	:	Mary Hockin (Schoolmistress)
Henrietta Street	:	Johanna White (Schoolmistress)
Homer Street	:	Mathilda Faulkener (Governess)
James Street	:	Jane Neale (Schoolmistress)
James Street	:	Margaret Chittendon (Schoolmistress)
John Street North	:	Emily Grossmith (Infant School Teacher)
John Street West *	:	Martha Iron (Schoolmistress).
Little George Street	:	Ann Hill (Schoolmistress)
Little Harcourt Street	:	Maria Craig (Schoolteacher)
Little York Place	:	Anne Musto (Schoolmistress)
Molyneux Street *	:	Merina Church (Teacher of Infant School)
Moore Street	:	Kate Walch (Schoolmistress) <sup>2</sup>
North Street *	:	Sarah Lundy (Governess)
North Street	:	Susannah King (Schoolmistress)
Northumberland Street	:	Helen Hodyer, (Daily governess)
Northumberland Street	:	Hannah Stagg, (Governess)
Nottingham Street	:	Isabella Cosgreave (Daily governess)
Orchard Place	:	John Heffsen (Schoolmaster)
Paddington Street *	:	Mathilda Brooks (Governess of Private Day School)
	:	Elizabeth Edwards (Assistant to M.Brooks)
Paddington Street *	:	Elizabeth Thomas (Governess)
Queen Street *	:	Augustus Walworth (Teacher)
South Street	:	Joseph Farrington (Schoolmaster)
South Street	:	Mary Atchison (Governess)
South Street	:	Charlotte Sugden (Governess)
Spring Street	:	Elizabeth Alduse, (Teacher)
Spring Street	:	Sarah Dewey (Schoolmistress).
Walmer Place	:	Elizabeth Bowen (Schoolmistress).
Woodstock Street	:	Margaret Foot (Governess).

Total = 41.

\* Denotes schools situated in streets chosen for detailed analysis of census enumerators' returns.

1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1488-1489.

2. There was a ragged school in Moore Street and it is possible that Kate Walch taught in this school. Kate Walch was Irish-born, however, and she was probably Catholic; it therefore seems unlikely that she taught in the Moore Street Ragged school.

The existence and location of a working-class private school appears to have been closely linked with the number of potential pupils in the neighbourhood (Tables 4C, 4D and 4E). Some of the surveyed streets were inhabited by high numbers of 'under eights'. Fourteen streets were each inhabited by more than 38 'under eights'. None of the eleven private schools in the surveyed area was situated in streets with fewer than 38 infants. Interestingly East Street not only had the highest number of infant-aged children but also three working-class teachers in two separate private schools. In the eight streets with private schools the proportion of infant scholars

Table 4E: List of teachers recorded in 1851 Census with uncertain status (i.e public or private schoolteacher).<sup>1</sup>

Harcourt Street	: Mary Ann and John Cheslie (Schoolmistress and Schoolmaster)
High Street	: Rosalie Stephens (Schoolmistress)
High Street	: Caroline Woolley (Schoolmistress)
Moore Street <sup>1</sup>	: Mary Ann Collis (Schoolmistress)
Total = 5	

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1488-1489. There were public schools in all of these streets and it is not certain whether the teachers named were teachers in the public school or in their own private working class school. As Mary Ann Collis, in Moore Street, did not share her house and employed three servants it is very probable that she taught in the public Moore Street Infant School. No further details are known about the other four teachers as they were not in streets chosen for detailed analysis.



ranged from 21 per cent to 64 per cent. In the remaining six streets the proportion of infants scholars ranged from 0 per cent to 41 per cent.

As in other areas of London, the presence of working-class private schools in this area was clearly not the only factor influencing school attendance. The following sections examine school attendance in relation to other factors.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Age.

Of the 1449 children between the ages of two and seven living in the sampled streets, 444 or 31 per cent were returned as scholars (Tables 4.1a and 4.1b overleaf).

Table 4.1a

Marylebone N.E. & N.W.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

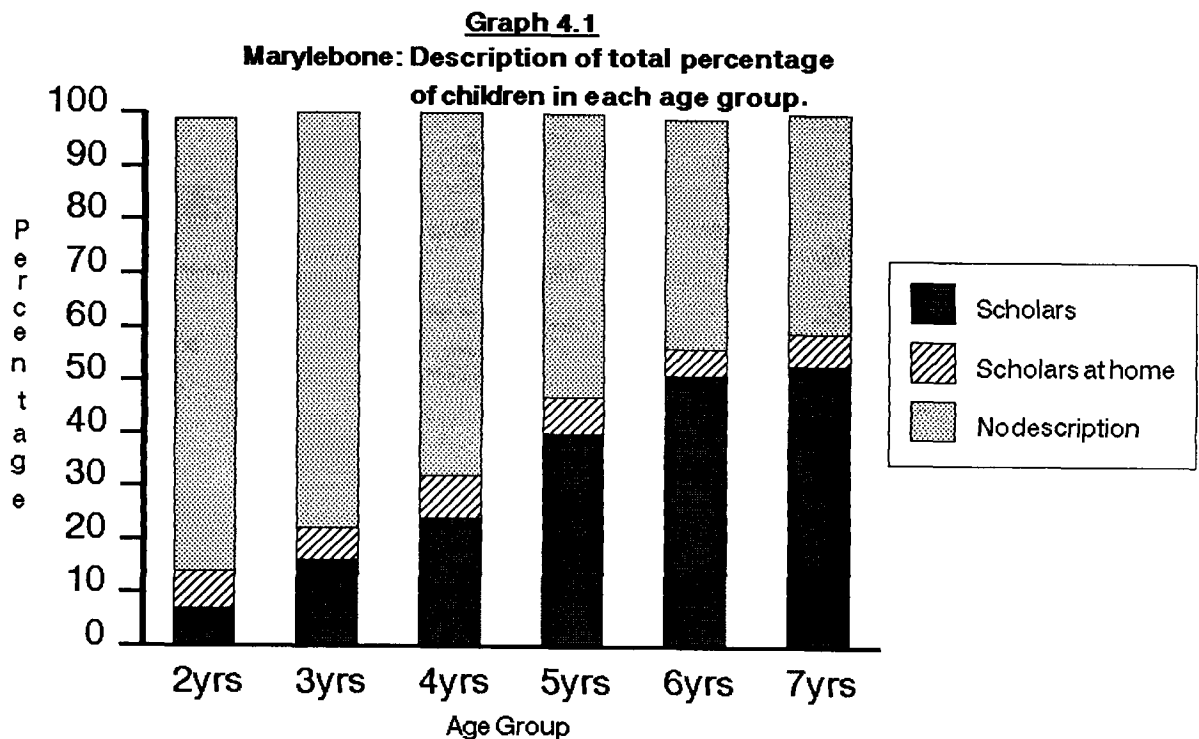
	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	20	41	56	90	115	122	444
Scholars at home	20	15	18	16	12	13	94
No description	235	204	160	120	97	95	911
Total	275	260	234	226	224	230	1449

Table 4.1b

Marylebone N.E. & N.W.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	7	16	24	40	51	53
Scholars at home	7	6	8	7	5	6
No description	86	78	68	53	44	41
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

There was an increase in the proportion of children at school in each successive age band, with eight per cent of two year olds at school and 53 per cent of seven year olds (Graph 4.1 below). The proportion of children at school did not increase steadily with age. The largest increase occurred between the ages of four and five and there was only a very small increase between the ages of six and seven.



There were also differences between children living in the north-west and the north-east of the study area. In the north-west the number and proportion of scholars increased in each successive age-band, with ten per cent of two year olds at school and 58 per cent of seven year olds (Tables 4.2a and 4.2b). The increase in the proportion of scholars was not uniform and there was a large increase between the ages of four and five; just over a quarter of four year olds attended school as compared with almost half of the five year olds.

Table 4.2a

Marylebone N.W.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	13	19	27	51	62	59	231
Scholars at home	20	15	17	14	11	13	90
No description	98	83	59	40	39	29	348
Total	131	117	103	105	112	101	669

Table 4.2b

Marylebone N.W.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	10	16	26	49	55	58
Scholars at home	15	13	17	13	10	13
No description	75	71	57	38	35	29
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

In the north east only five per cent of two year olds attended school but almost 50 per cent of the seven year olds attended school (Tables 4.3a and 4.3b). As in the north-west there was a proportional increase in scholars in each successive age band but the largest increase occurred between the ages of five and six (Table 4.3b ).

Table 4.3a

Marylebone N.E.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	7	22	29	39	53	63	213
Scholars at home	0	0	1	2	1	0	4
No description	137	121	101	80	58	66	563
Total	144	143	131	121	112	129	780

Table 4.3b

Marylebone N.E.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	5	15	22	32	47	49
Scholars at home	0	0	1	2	1	0
No description	95	85	77	66	52	51
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

In each of the age bands the proportion of scholars was higher in the north-west than the north-east and therefore the school attendance of two to seven year olds overall was lower in the north-east than in the north-west. This difference might have been linked to the proportions of two to four year olds and five to seven year

olds in the north-east and the north-west. In the light of school attendance patterns in other areas of London it would be expected that a higher proportion of two to four year olds in an area would result in a lower proportion of infants returned as scholars. In the two sample areas this was not the case. Two to four year olds accounted for 50 per cent of infants in the north-east and 52 per cent of infants in the north-west (Tables 4.2a and 4.3a). This finding would suggest that, once a school was established, factors other than age alone influenced school attendance.

School Attendance in Relation to Family Size and Employment of Older Siblings.

Family size appeared to influence school attendance in that as the number of children in the family increased from one to four a higher proportion of families sent at least one infant to school (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Marylebone: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	163	28	63	16
Two Children	248	66	75	27
Three Children	210	81	66	27
Four Children	159	72	39	25
Five Children	82	38	17	6
Six or more Children	61	28	15	8
Total	923	313	275	109

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one infant at school.

Thus, under a third of families with one or two children sent an infant-aged child to school, as compared with almost half of families with four or more children. In terms of affecting school attendance, four children appeared to be the critical number, as the proportion of families sending an infant to school varied little depending upon whether the family was composed of four, five, six or more children.

Another influencing factor might have been the availability of schooling facilities.<sup>1</sup> Of the 669 infant-aged children living in the sample streets in the north-west, 231 or 34 per cent were returned as scholars at the time of the 1851 Census (Tables 4.2a). These infants were specifically catered for in the form of four public infants' schools, in addition to the non-age specific ragged school in Moore Street, and seven working-class private schools. Attendance at these 12 schools would not have involved long walks or the crossing of large, busy roads. In contrast children living in the streets in the north east of the study area were less well served with public infants schools. Only one of the public infants' schools, Marylebone Central, and one of the ragged schools, in Grotto Passage, could have been reached without a fairly long walk and the negotiation of busy roads. This sector was well served with private schools and ragged schools of which there were 19 and five respectively. There were a further four public schools and one

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1. See earlier discussion on the links between private schools and proportion of children at school (pp. 188-189 of this chapter).

ragged school which involved longer walks. Of the 780 infants living in the sampled streets in the north east only 231, or 27 per cent, were described as scholars in 1851 (Tables 4.3a). It is feasible to suggest that the higher school attendance rates in the north-west were partly due to the convenient location of the schools. In addition the fact that children in the north-west had a shorter, safer journey to school than their peers in the north-east might explain why half of five year olds in the north west attended school, in comparison with only a third of five year olds in the north-east.

Although the foregoing analysis has taken into account some of the practicalities involved in sending a young child to school, it has not considered the economic realities. Private working-class schools usually charged more than public schools and therefore parents who sent their children to these schools had to be earning sufficient to cover the cost of private school fees, which could be as high as one shilling a week per child.<sup>1</sup> Parents who sent their children to the public infant school had only to ensure that their child was relatively neatly dressed and had 1d or 2d a week for the school fees. Even these apparently minimal requirements were beyond the reach of those parents who sent their children to ragged schools, where no fees were charged and no rules were laid down regarding dress and cleanliness. Despite the fact that the north-east was well served with private schools it is possible that many of the parents in the sample streets could not afford to send their

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1. Porter, G.R., op cit., 1838, p. 256.

children to these schools and, therefore, they effectively had less choice of schools than parents in the north-west. If very poor parents living in the north-east wished to avoid a long journey to school for their children, the only choice they could make was between the public infant school at the north end of Marylebone High Street or the local ragged schools.

The patterns of schooling and employment amongst older siblings may also have influenced the school attendance of 'under eights'.

Almost half of all eight to fourteen year olds who had younger siblings were described as scholars (Table 4.5a). Between the ages of eight and twelve the proportion of older siblings at school did not alter greatly but there was a sharp decline in the proportion of older siblings at school once they were aged thirteen or over (Table 4.5a below and 4.5b overleaf).

Table 4.5a

Marylebone: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	68	77	61	57	45	28	16	352
At work	1	0	1	4	6	18	30	60
Scholars at home	7	8	3	6	6	5	3	38
No description	58	58	58	32	23	35	19	283
Total	134	143	123	99	80	86	68	733



Table 4.5b

Marylebone: Description of total percentage of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	51	54	50	58	56	33	24
At work	1	0	1	4	8	21	44
Scholars at home	5	6	2	6	8	6	4
No description	43	40	47	32	28	40	28
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The decline in school attendance was matched by an increase in employment at the age of thirteen. Less than 10 per cent of twelve year olds were employed but approximately 20 per cent of thirteen year olds and 45 per cent of fourteen year olds were in paid work. Overall a higher proportion of eight to fourteen year olds were at school than two to seven year olds, which would suggest that schooling of older children took priority over the schooling of younger children.

There was an infant at school in approximately half of the families in which there was at least one older sibling at work (Table 4.6a). Less than half of the families in which no older sibling was at work sent an infant to school (Table 4.6a). This finding could be used to argue that older siblings at work improved the economic situation

of the family and therefore parents were better able to afford to send their young children to school.

Table 4.6a

Marylebone: Percentage of families in each category relating school attendance to employment of older siblings.

	G	F
English	50	59
Irish	42	46
Total	51	43

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work which also had at least one infant at school ( $B/A \times 100$ ).

F = Percentage of families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school ( $D/C \times 100$ ).

Table 4.6a is based on figures in Tables 4.6b and 4.6c.

Alternatively, it is possible that once older children began to work they were no longer available to look after younger siblings and parents had therefore to make arrangements for the day care of their younger children. The situation was more complex than this, however, as is suggested by the finding that in the north-west sector of the sample area, and in Irish families living throughout the sample area, more families with no older siblings at work sent an infant to school than those families in which one or more older siblings was employed (Tables 4.6b and 4.6c).

Table 4.6b

Marylebone N.W.: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
English	48	23	128	67	266
Irish	9	5	29	23	66
Total	57	28	157	90	332

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 4.6c

Marylebone N.E.: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
English	58	30	149	50	287
Irish	8	5	36	7	56
Total	66	35	185	57	343

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

A closer examination of the patterns of school attendance revealed that in those families in which older children were not at work, infants were more likely to attend school if some or all of their unemployed older siblings were at school than if their older siblings were neither at school nor at work. In families in which there was at least one older sibling at work, infants tended only to attend school if some or all of their unemployed older siblings were at school. It was relatively rare to find families in which infants were at school whilst older children were at home. In both English

and Irish families in Marylebone it would appear that older children took precedence over infants when it came to attending school.

The proportion of each age group at school varied with the occupation of the father and this is discussed in depth in the following section.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Fathers' Occupations.

With regard to fathers of young children, in both the north-east and the north-west, the single largest occupational group was that of labourers. In the north-west other major occupational groups included food retailers, plumbers, painters, glaziers, servants and tailors. In the north-east the major occupational groups were fairly similar, with a high proportion of food retailers, plumbers, painters, glaziers, servants and tailors as well as shoemakers and carpenters. Table 4.7 provides an indication of the school

Table 4.7

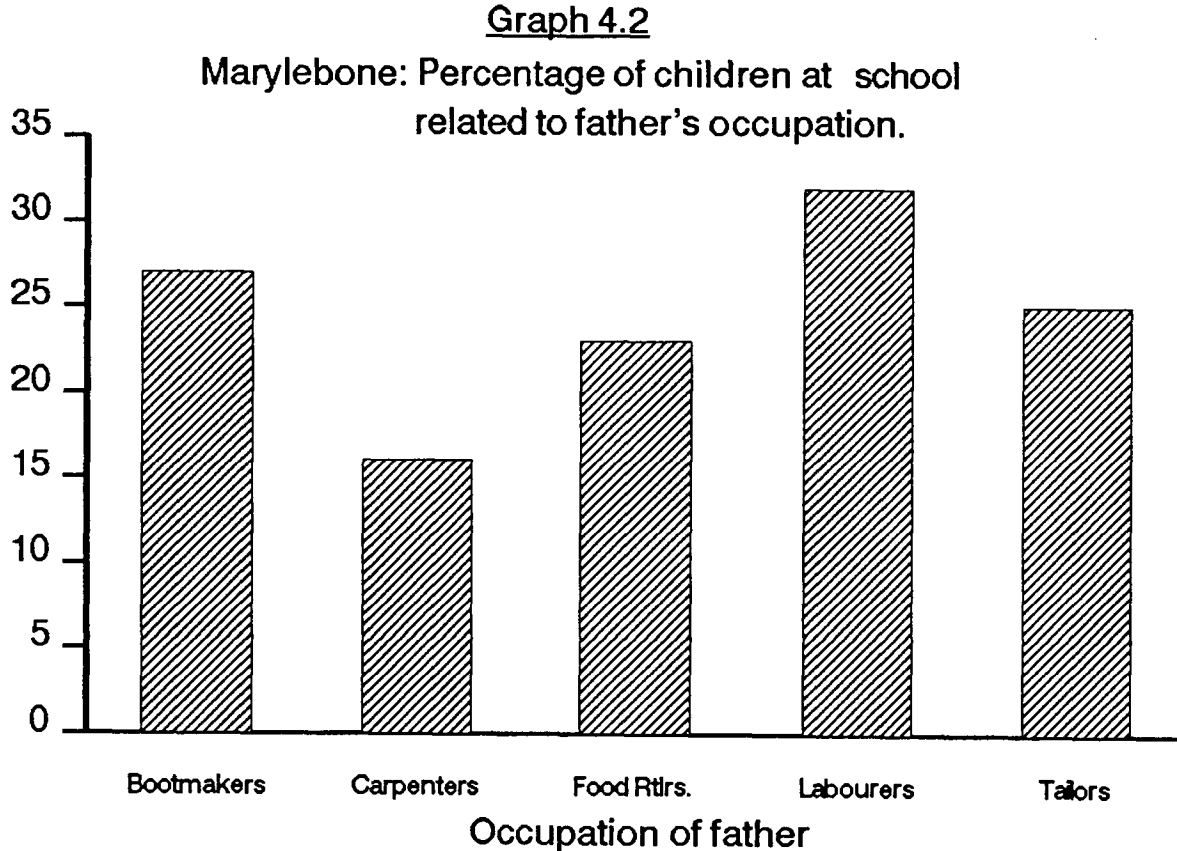
Marylebone: Attendance patterns of children, related to fathers' occupations, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Boot and Shoemaker	21 (27%)	0 (0%)	57 (73%)	78 (100%)
Carpenters	7 (16%)	1 (2%)	35 (82%)	43 (100%)
Food Retailers	20 (23%)	9 (10%)	60 (67%)	89 (100%)
Labourers	56 (32%)	2 (1%)	116 (67%)	174 (100%)
Tailors	16 (25%)	3 (5%)	45 (70%)	64 (100%)

attendance patterns of young children whose fathers worked as labourers, boot and shoemakers, carpenters, tailors or food retailers.

Looking at the sample streets overall it would seem that carpenters' children had the lowest incidence of school attendance, with only 16 per cent of two to seven year olds described as scholars.

Labourers' children had the best record with almost a third of infant-aged children at school. There was little difference between the attendance patterns of the children of food retailers, boot and shoemakers and tailors (Graph 4.2). As shown in the previous



chapter, it is not possible to make simple connections between a father's occupation, his wage level and the school attendance of his children. This is partly because within any occupational group, wages could vary dramatically depending upon whether the worker was engaged in slop work or the honourable part of the trade, and furthermore whether there was work to be had or not. The probable earnings of the different occupational groups have already been discussed elsewhere. Suffice it to say that fathers living in Marylebone who were employed in any of the above listed occupations would have experienced periods of slack employment due to the weather or the demands of the London 'season'.

The school attendance patterns of infants within the study area are interesting as they do not appear to confirm contemporary theories regarding the value placed on education by different occupational groups. In the early 1840s one contemporary view of carpenters was that they were 'the most sober and steady body of working men in the metropolis'.<sup>1</sup> Mayhew agreed with this view and asserted that carpenters also placed a high value on education.<sup>2</sup>

West-End tailors were another group of workers that impressed Mayhew who described them as 'enlightened, provident and sober', despite the demoralising effects of partial unemployment due to the London 'season' and lowered wages due to the employment of women and children.

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1. P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Hand-Loom Weavers. Returns and Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Part 2, p. 279.

2. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 5, 1850, p. 86.

Contemporary perceptions of shoemakers appear to have been more diverse. A former police officer stated unequivocally that he had never, in his whole life, known a dozen 'stable, steady men' amongst the body of shoemakers and furthermore, the families of shoemakers were 'in a filthy, abominable state : all in dirt and wretched'. <sup>1</sup> This negative view was not confirmed by Mayhew, who described boot and shoemakers as a 'stern, uncompromising, and reflecting race'. <sup>2</sup>

In the light of these comments it is surprising to note that within the study area carpenters' children had the lowest rate of school attendance. Differences between the occupational groups may have been related to differences in the age distribution of the children concerned (Tables 4.8a - 4.8e overleaf). If carpenters had a high proportion of children under four and shoemakers had a higher proportion of children over four it is possible that contemporary perceptions may remain unchallenged by the present findings. Taking the north-east and the north-west samples together, of the carpenters' children 56 per cent were two to four year olds, as were 52 per cent of the shoemakers' children, 50 per cent of tailors' children and 51 per cent of labourers' and food retailers' children. The slight differences in the proportions of two to four year olds are not sufficient to account for the large differences between the groups in the proportion of children at school.

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1. P.P. 1840 (63) xxiv, Hand-Loom Weavers. Returns and Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Part 2, p. 281.

2. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 3, 1850, p. 120.

Table 4.8a

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were tailors.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	10	9	13	13	7	12	64
Percent	16	14	20	20	11	19	100

Table 4.8b

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were carpenters.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	12	6	6	5	8	6	43
Percent	28	14	14	11	19	14	100

Table 4.8c

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were boot and shoemakers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	14	13	13	11	11	16	78
Percent	18	17	17	14	14	20	100

Table 4.8d

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were food retailers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	23	12	11	17	8	19	90
Percent	26	13	12	19	9	21	100

Table 4.8e

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	27	30	33	34	30	21	175
Percent	15	17	19	20	17	12	100



It could be argued that the carpenters within the sample area happened to work in the 'dishonourable' section of the trade and therefore had no money to spare for the education of their children. This purely economic explanation is weak, however, as even the poorest paid carpenter was likely to earn around 11s a week which was no less than many tailors, shoemakers and labourers, all of whom had a higher proportion of their children at school.

An alternative explanation could be that carpenters valued education but felt that schooling of older children was more important than that of younger children (i.e. infants), whereas in labourers', tailors', shoemakers' and food retailers' families it is possible that schooling of younger children took a higher priority. An analysis of the school attendance patterns of older siblings shed more light on this issue.

Older children described as scholars ranged from 25 per cent in shoemakers' families to 50 per cent in labourers families. In the case of carpenters' children, 41 per cent of 'over eights' were at school as compared with 38 per cent of tailors' and food retailers' children and 25 per cent of shoemakers children. In shoemakers' families a higher proportion of 'under eights' than 'over eights' attended school but in all the other occupational groups a higher proportion of 'over eights' attended school. Interestingly, the largest difference in the proportion of older children at school occurred in carpenters' families (Table 4.9 overleaf). These figures would suggest that apart from shoemakers' children, older siblings were more likely to be sent to school than children under

eight. The tendency amongst carpenters to send older children to school might have led to the contemporary view that carpenters valued education.

Table 4.9

Marylebone: Percentage of infants and older siblings at school related to fathers' occupations.

	Infants	Older siblings
Carpenters	16	41
Food Retailers	23	38
Labourers	32	50
Shoemakers	27	25
Tailors	25	38

It is possible that shoemakers' children tended to receive daily schooling at a younger age than the children of other occupational groups because these children entered the employment market at an early age. Many shoemakers gave evidence to Mayhew about the need to employ their wives and children in the trade and this was especially true for those engaged in the slop trade. Young children could run errands and care for even younger siblings not at school. This can only provide a partial explanation of the different patterns of school attendance in relation to occupational groups as carpenters and tailors were increasingly compelled to employ their young children.

School Attendance in Relation to Mother's Employment and Marital State.

Whether or not the mother was married and worked may have influenced school attendance. Approximately 28 per cent of two to seven year olds whose mothers were married and not working attended school, but 43 per cent of infants with a married working mother attended school (Tables 4.10a and 4.10b).

Table 4.10a

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Children of married working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	9	14	13	24	19	80
Scholars at home	2	1	1	0	2	0	6
No description	26	24	16	13	11	11	101
Total	29	34	31	26	37	30	187

Table 4.10b

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Children of married working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	3	26	45	50	65	63
Scholars at home	7	3	3	0	5	0
No description	90	71	52	50	30	37
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Approximately one third of two to seven year olds with single mothers were at school (Tables 4.11a and 4.11b).

Table 4.11a

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Children of single working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	3	8	9	13	18	20	71
Scholars at home	4	3	5	3	4	3	22
No description	31	29	19	20	11	16	126
Total	38	40	33	36	33	39	219

Table 4.11b

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Children of single working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	8	20	27	36	55	51
Scholars at home	10	8	15	8	12	8
No description	82	72	58	56	33	41
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Clearly children with working mothers were more likely to attend school than those whose mothers were engaged in what the enumerators described as 'domestic duties' at home. Furthermore, in this part of Marylebone, children whose mothers were married and at work were much more likely to attend school than those whose mother was working but single. This part of Marylebone differed from other areas of north London such as Spitalfields in the east and St. George's Hanover Square, in the west, where the marital state of a working mother appeared to have little or no influence on whether a child attended school.

Tables 4.10b and 4.11b show that for both single and married working mothers there was an increase in the proportion of children at school in each year band between the ages of two and six, but between the ages of six and seven there was a slight decline. This pattern was also apparent in Christ Church, Spitalfields and it is possible it was for the same reasons (i.e. the need for children to supplement the family income as soon as they were able, the use of older children in caring for younger siblings whilst the mother was at work, the need to attend to the home etc.). In the case of the children of single mothers the increase in the proportion of scholars in each year band was fairly steady with the two biggest increases occurring between the ages of two and three and five and six. The pattern was slightly different for the children of married working mothers as in this instance the two major increases occurred between the ages of two and three and three and four. It is possible that in both cases the increase in school attendance at the age of three took place when mothers felt that they could return to or start work as their child was old enough to go to a school of some sort.

It is likely that the economic situation of single mothers was worse than that of married working mothers as there was only one adult income. It is therefore possible that single mothers had less money to spend on schooling, especially private schooling, and therefore took advantage of the free or cheap schooling offered by public schools. Some single mothers would have sent their children to the public infant schools, but even though the weekly fees were low in comparison with private schools, the mother still had to ensure that

the child was clean and was not sent in torn clothes. This might have placed an intolerable strain on a single mother both economically and in terms of time; it is therefore possible that some mothers chose to delay sending their children to school until they were a little older, when perhaps the task of keeping the child clean and neat was a little easier. The second rise in school attendance between the ages of five and six, might have occurred because an increasing number of children of this age were judged capable of travelling to and from school alone.

There are no clear cut reasons as to why such a high proportion of children under four with married working mothers were at school. It is possible that there was sufficient money available in these families to pay for schooling and clothes.

In families with working mothers, school attendance of very young children was influenced to a certain degree by the size of the family. In families composed of one to four children, there was an increased likelihood of an infant attending school as the family size increased (i.e. more families with four children sent at least one infant to school than families with only one child). In larger families, with five or more children, the relationship between family size, employment of mothers and school attendance was less clear (Table 4.4).

Differences in attendance patterns seem to have been related to the mothers' occupations. The three main occupations of both single and married mothers were laundress, charwoman and needlewoman or dressmaker. The largest single occupational group was that of

laundress, with 29 single mothers and 32 married mothers so employed. Of a total of 46 charwomen, 24 were single mothers and 22 married mothers, while of the 41 dressmakers and needlewomen, 19 were single and 22 were married mothers. Married laundresses had the highest proportion of infants at school (58 per cent), whilst single laundresses had the lowest proportion of infants at school (27 per cent). This marked difference was not due to differences in the age distribution of the children.

In the case of charwomen, the marital state of the mother made very little difference to the proportion of infants at school. In the case of married charwomen 46 per cent of two to seven year olds were at school. In the case of single charwomen the proportion was 47 per cent.

Virtually half of the infant children of single dressmakers were at school compared with just over a third of married dressmakers' children. As both laundresses and charwomen worked outside the home one would have expected more children to be at school, as there was a need to provide some form of day care for these children. Conversely, as many dressmakers and needlewomen worked from home, the need for day care of young children was not as urgent as when the mother had to leave home early and return home late. One would expect that dressmakers' children would have had the lowest rate of school attendance, especially since dressmakers earned less than both charwomen and laundresses. These expectations were met in the case of charwomen and married laundresses and dressmakers but not in the case of single laundresses and dressmakers. This finding supports the point made earlier, that school attendance was

influenced by a complex network of factors rather than by any one factor alone.

School Attendance in Relation to Parents' Religion and Country of Birth.

By the middle of the nineteenth century parts of Marylebone had been areas of Irish settlement for some decades. In the sampled streets Irish families were a small but significant presence as they accounted for approximately 16 per cent of all the sampled families. Approximately 15 per cent of the two to seven year olds in the sampled streets had at least one parent who was born in Ireland. The number of families influenced by Irish culture and Catholicism was certainly greater than shown by the 1851 census, since second generation Irish (i.e. parents born in England but whose own parents were Irish-born) are recorded as 'English'. As in other sections, it has been assumed that the overwhelming majority of Irish families were Roman Catholic.

The attendance patterns of the children of English-born and Irish-born parents were very similar (see Tables 4.12a-4.13d overleaf). Approximately 31 per cent of two to seven year olds in both groups attended school (Tables 4.13a and 4.13c overleaf). This is perhaps surprising in the light of the fact that there were very few public educational facilities for Catholics in the area (St. James' Catholic School, in Marylebone High Street only began to cater for infants in 1852). Kate Walsh was the only private working-class schoolteacher who was Irish-born.



Table 4.12a

Marylebone N.W.: Description of total numbers of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

Irish Families	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	3	4	10	13	6	37
Scholars at home	3	0	2	0	0	1	6
No description	7	13	12	8	9	1	50
Total	11	16	18	18	22	8	93

Table 4.12b

Marylebone N.W.: Description of total percentage of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

Irish Families	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	9	19	22	56	59	74
Scholars at home	27	0	11	0	0	13
No description	64	81	67	44	41	13
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.12c

Marylebone N.E.: Description of total numbers of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

Irish Families	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	2	3	7	5	11	28
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	19	18	20	13	11	10	91
Total	19	20	23	20	16	21	119

Table 4.12d

Marylebone N.E.: Description of total percentage of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

Irish Families	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	0	10	13	35	31	52
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	100	90	87	65	69	48
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.13a

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Description of total numbers of Irish children, within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	5	7	17	18	17	65
Scholars at home	3	0	2	0	0	1	6
No description	26	31	32	21	20	11	141
Total	30	36	41	38	38	29	212

Table 4.13b

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Description of total percentage of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	3	14	17	45	47	59
Scholars at home	10	0	5	0	0	3
No description	87	86	78	55	53	38
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.13c

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Description of total numbers of 'English' children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	19	36	49	73	97	105	379
Scholars at home	17	15	16	16	12	12	88
No description	209	173	128	99	77	84	770
Total	245	224	193	188	186	201	1237

Table 4.13d

Marylebone N.W. & N.E.: Description of total percentage of 'English' children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	8	16	25	39	52	52
Scholars at home	7	7	8	8	7	6
No description	85	77	67	53	41	42
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

The unexpectedly high level of school attendance amongst Irish families was not due to the age distribution of the children, as half of the infants were aged from two to four. In Irish families there was an increase in the proportion of scholars in each successive year band. 'Under fours' with Irish parents were less likely to be in school than their English peers but two very large increases in school attendance occurred, the first between the ages of four and five and the second between the ages of six and seven. As a result of these increases in school attendance a higher proportion of Irish seven year olds were in school than English seven year olds.

The vast majority of Irish-born fathers with young children worked as labourers. They provide a useful group to study as their children formed a large enough group to analyse and they can be compared with the children of English labourers.

In the sample area a higher proportion of Irish labourers' children aged between two and seven were at school than the children of their English counterparts (Tables 4.14a-4.14c). It could be argued that this difference between Irish and English labourers' children was due to the fact that 57 per cent of the Irish children were aged from five to seven as compared with only 32 per cent of English labourers' children (Tables 4.14a and 4.14b). However, it is not possible to deny that Irish labourers' children were more likely to attend school when one notes that 15 per cent of English labourers' children aged seven were in school compared with 30 per cent of Irish labourers' children of the same age.

Table 4.14a

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were Irish labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	13	18	19	27	24	15	116
Percent	11	16	16	23	21	13	100

Table 4.14b

Marylebone: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were English labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	14	12	14	7	6	6	59
Percent	24	20	24	12	10	10	100

Table 4.14c

Marylebone: Attendance patterns of labourers' children related to fathers country of origin, giving number and percentage.

	Scholar	Sch at Home	No Desc	Total
Labourers - Irish	42 (36%)	0 (0%)	74 (64%)	116 (100%)
Labourers- English	14 (24%)	2 (3%)	43 (73%)	59 (100%)

This difference in attendance pattern might have been influenced by whether the mother was at work or not. If more Irish mothers were in employment then it could be argued that the higher school attendance owes less to the fact that the family was Irish and more to the fact that the mother was at work. The proportion of Irish and English labourers whose wives were working were very similar and therefore the explanation for the diverse attendance patterns must lie elsewhere.

Economically Irish and English labourers must have been on a par; if anything the Irish were likely to be paid less than the English. If

the Irish did not have more expendable income, then why did more Irish children attend school? A survey of two very poor courts in Marylebone was carried out in 1837.<sup>1</sup> One of the courts was inhabited almost entirely by Irish families and the other by English families. The results of the survey showed that English families were more likely to have reading material at home and that Irish parents were less likely to be able to read or write. The author of the report also stated that a higher proportion of English children attended school. The interesting point, however, was that more English children received a free education than did Irish children. Whilst 53 per cent of English children were educated free only 24 per cent of Irish children received a free education. In addition the average weekly rate paid by Irish parents for their children's schooling was just under 6d a week whereas English parents paid an average of 3d a week. According to Porter, this clearly showed that the Irish were 'really more solicitous for the intellectual advancement of their children' and were more disposed to make 'greater sacrifices for its attainment'.<sup>2</sup>

It could be argued that the lack of public educational facilities forced Irish parents into paying for their children's education but on the other hand, if the parents were unconvinced about the value of schooling they would have been unlikely to pay scarce money for it.

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1. Porter, G.R., *op cit.*, 1838, pp. 255-256.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 255-256.

Summary.

In the small area of Marylebone which was studied, just under a third of two to seven year olds were described in the 1851 Census as scholars. Factors which appeared to exert a positive influence on school attendance amongst infants included the employment of older siblings, the size of the family (infants in larger families were more likely to attend school than those in small families), working mothers and the presence of at least one parent of Irish extraction. The influence of the fathers' occupations was not clear in this part of London.

Whether or not the attendance of infants in East London was influenced in the same way by the same factors is explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN PART OF CHRIST CHURCH,  
SPITALFIELDS (SOUTH TOWER HAMLETS).

The district known as Spitalfields consisted of Mile End New Town, Norton Falgate and the Old Artillery Ground, and the parishes of Christ Church Spitalfields and St. Matthew, Bethnal Green. The area focused on in this section formed part of the parish of Christ Church, Spitalfields and was bounded by Quaker Street and Spicer Street in the north, Brick Lane in the east and Wentworth Street in the south, and Bell Lane, Crispin Street and Elder Street in the west. This area was chosen partly because it was adjacent to the Quaker Street Infants' School, which was the second infants' school to be opened in London, partly to further the work done by other educational historians<sup>1</sup> who have focused on the area and partly because there was a fair amount of available source material. Whilst working on the in-depth study it became clear that the small area chosen also offered the opportunity to explore the pattern of Early Years education amongst poor Jewish families in this part of London.

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1. Especially that of Philip McCann. See for example, McCann, P., 'Samuel Wilderspin and the Early Infant Schools, in B.J.E.S., No. 2, May 1966; McCann, P., 'Popular education, socialization and social control: Spitalfields 1812-1824' in McCann, P. (ed.), Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century, 1977, pp. 1-40; McCann, P. and Young, F.A., Samuel Wilderspin and the Infant School Movement, 1982, esp. Chap 2, (pp. 15-21).

Area of Christ Church, Spitalfields  
in which surveyed streets were located.



From Stanford's New Library Map of London, 1862



Christ Church, Spitalfields was notable for three main reasons: the very high proportion of poor inhabitants, the ethnic and religious diversity of the residents and the changes in employment opportunities between 1800 and the 1850s.

Between 1811 and 1831 the population of the district of Spitalfields increased from 50,000 to 90,000 but most of this rapid increase occurred in Bethnal Green. The population of the parish of Christ Church increased slowly; in 1801 it stood at 15,091; 30 years later it had only risen slightly to 17,949.<sup>1</sup> In contrast the population of Bethnal Green almost trebled during the same 30 year period.<sup>2</sup> The rapid population increase in Bethnal Green was partly due to displacement of the poor as a result of dock building and improvements in the City and partly to the enhanced employment opportunities resulting from the new dockyards. Despite the relatively small population increase in Christ Church, the parish was similar to other areas of Spitalfields in that it was densely populated.

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1. P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, 1831, pp. 161-166.

2. The population in Bethnal Green increased from 22,310 to 62,018 between 1801 and 1831. P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, 1831, pp. 161-166; P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Hand Loom Weavers. Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Part II, p. 214; P.P. 1843 (496) xxi, Great Britain 1841 Census Enumeration Abstract, p. 368.

Whilst the various parishes and areas of the district of Spitalfields differed in terms of the population growth there were similarities as regards their socio-economic profiles. In 1684 Tower Hamlets was inhabited by 'weavers and other manufactures and of seamen and such who relate to shipping and are generally very factious and poore'.<sup>1</sup> This description was also applicable to south Tower Hamlets in the early nineteenth century. The whole district was predominantly poor with only a very small proportion of the wealthy or middle-class local inhabitants (four to five per cent of the resident population).<sup>2</sup> In 1807, the Spitalfields Vestry highlighted the 'very peculiar circumstances' of the area which was due to the fact that it was 'inhabited almost entirely by poor Persons'.<sup>3</sup> William Hale, a local silk manufacturer, provided one explanation for the high concentration of poor in the district:

The leading cause of that accumulation of extreme poverty which is to be found in this neighbourhood is the gradual removal of the more affluent people into other parishes, while their former dwellings here soon become divided or subdivided into small lodgings...<sup>4</sup>

Another reason for the predominance of poor families was that many of the jobs in the area were poorly paid and job availability was subject to cyclical, seasonal or even day to day fluctuations.<sup>5</sup> In

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1. Cited in George, M.D., *op cit.*, p. 76.

2. Schwarz, L.D., 'Occupations and Incomes in Late Eighteenth Century East London' in East London Papers, Vol. 14, No. 2, Dec. 1972, p. 93.

3. Leech, K., 'The Decay of Spitalfields' in East End Papers, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1965.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Stedman Jones, G., Outcast London, 1971, pp. 33-45; Hollingshead, J., Ragged London in 1861, 1861, p. 26; Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey of Labour and the Poor, Vols. 1-6, 1849-50.

the first half of the nineteenth century the East End was the focus for much of London's 'slop work' in tailoring, shoe-making and cabinet making etc., with the result that in this area of London were a high number of poorly paid and over-worked tailors, dressmakers, cabinet makers, shoe and bootmakers. Silk working was another major occupation in Christ Church and Bethnal Green. In the nineteenth century silk weavers were not highly paid and they experienced a number of periods of hardship due to fluctuations in the English silk trade.

Contemporary reports make frequent reference to the poverty of those living in the area of Christ Church. In The Poor Man's Guardian Spitalfields was described in the following way :

The low houses are all huddled together in close and dark lanes and alleys, presenting at first sight an appearance of non-habitation, so dilapidated are the doors and windows - in every room of the houses, whole families, parents, children and aged grandfathers swarm together...<sup>1</sup>

In the 1840s Thrawl Street was described as being 'one of the worst parts of Spitalfields, chiefly inhabited by a class of persons of the very lowest and most degraded character'.<sup>2</sup> Flower and Dean Street also had a bad reputation. The south-east sector of the study area formed half of one of London's major thieves' rookeries. According to Mayhew the 400 square yard area bounded by Church Street, Whitechapel Road, Brick Lane and Commercial Street contained 800 criminals of various descriptions. Mayhew named eight streets in the study area which contained low lodging houses frequented by

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1. The Poor Man's Guardian, 18th Feb. 1832.

2. The Ragged School Union Magazine, Vol. 1, July 1849, p. 136.

beggars, prostitutes and thieves.<sup>1</sup> Working-class private schools were situated in or very near to each of these eight streets.

Christ Church was an ethnically and religiously diverse area. During the first half of the nineteenth century there was a growing Jewish presence composed of European immigrants and their descendants in Spitalfields. The Jewish population could be divided into two communities: the Sephardim who had roots in Spain and Portugal and the Ashkenazim from France, Germany and Poland. By the mid-nineteenth century the East End of London was becoming a focus for new Jewish immigrants, probably because of the existence of the small Jewish community, synagogues and charitable support. Wealthier middle-class Jewish families lived in Goodmans Fields, Houndsditch, Bevis Marks, Dukes Place and Whitechapel. The poorer Jewish families lived in and around Houndsditch and Wentworth Street.<sup>2</sup> The poorer Jews living in the study area earned their living as tailors, old clothes dealers and hawkers, shopkeepers, watchmakers, pencil makers, and hatters.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Quennell, P. (ed.), Mayhew's London Underworld, 1987, p. 207. The eight streets named were Union Street, Wentworth Street, Thrawl Street, Fashion Street, Flower and Dean Street, Lower Keate Street, Church Street, and George Street.

2. Lipman, V.D., Social History of the Jews in England, 1850-1950, 1954, p. 28; Lipman, V.D., 'Jewish Settlement in the East End 1840-1940' in Newman, A. (ed.), The Jewish East End, 1840-1939, 1981, pp. 26-27.

3. Bevis Mark Records Vol. 3, Abstract of the Marriage Records 1837-1901; Roth, C., A History of the Jews in England, 1941; Lipman, V.D. (ed.), Three Centuries of Anglo-Jewish History, 1961.

The area had also been the focus for French Huguenot settlement in the seventeenth century and many of their descendants had remained in the locality. Mayhew noted that in the eighteenth century these Spitalfields weavers had established a Floricultural Society, an Historical Society, a Mathematical Society and an Entomological Society.<sup>1</sup> In the mid 1830s, Henry Dunn commented that silk weavers in East London were 'intelligent men' and noted that many had been educated in National or Lancasterian Schools when young. Dunn went on to state that as most were skilful workers 'their faculties had been sharpened and...they are by no means deficient in intellectual power'.<sup>2</sup> By the 1850s the silk weavers no longer engaged in such high-minded pursuits, although Mayhew asserted that the weavers remained far above the ordinary artisan in terms of 'refinement and intellect'.<sup>3</sup>

In the early seventeenth century an Irish community developed in St. Giles, but by the nineteenth century there were also Irish communities in parts of Bloomsbury and Saffron Hill and significant communities had also developed in parts of East London, including Spitalfields.<sup>4</sup> Many of the Irish had been driven out of Ireland by the potato famines in the 1840s, and unskilled workers were attracted to the eastern parishes on account of the work

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 54.

2. P.P. 1835 (465) vii, Report on the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 10.

3. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 543.

4. Harrington, B., 'The London Irish: A Study in Political Activism 1870-1910', Ph.D, Princeton University, 1979, p. 7.

available in the docks and construction trades.<sup>1</sup>

The availability and type of employment in the area changed during the first half of the century. From the eighteenth century Christ Church, Spitalfields was identifiable as the centre of London's silk industry, partly because many of the Huguenots who settled in Christ Church were silk workers. During the first half of the nineteenth century, however, there was a decline in the proportion of silk weavers in Christ Church as many moved away to live and work in nearby Bethnal Green where rents were lower and rooms were larger. The building of the docks attracted river and dockyard workers, many of whom were unskilled and casual.

By the mid-nineteenth century, London's silk industry had declined, and as a result many skilled workers found themselves under-employed or totally unemployed. This obviously affected the economic situation of families and the effects on education are examined later in the section. The decline of the silk and other industries (e.g. shipbuilding) resulted in the release of a large number of workers looking for employment, which encouraged the growth of 'slop work' or 'sweated labour' in tailoring, shoe making and cabinet making etc. in the East End. The seasonality of many East End occupations also ensured a ready supply of people desperate to work.

In the East End, wind direction alone could result in unemployment.

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1. Jackson, J.A., 'The Irish in East London' in East End Papers, Vol. 6, No. 2, Dec. 1963, pp. 105-106.

On the basis of information from the St. Katherine's Dock Company Mayhew asserted that 'in London alone there are 12,000 people deprived of food by the prevalence of an easterly wind' as ships were prevented from arriving in London's docks. The result was that the multitude of dockyard workers and others dependent upon shipping were temporarily unemployed.<sup>1</sup> East End shoemakers and tailors, like those in the West End, suffered from periodic seasons of partial or total unemployment. The loss of even one or two days income badly affected most families as few had any savings or anything of value which was worth pawning or selling. It has also been argued that the employment of women in these trades resulted in a lowering of the wages.<sup>2</sup> The two major consequences of the development of 'sweated' labour in the East End were a reduction in wages and an increase in the number of unskilled workers in the trades. During the second decade of the nineteenth century a high proportion of the local population were manual workers (60 per cent), of which only 10 per cent were skilled.<sup>3</sup>

Educational Facilities for Infants in the Parish of Christ Church, Spitalfields.

In 1812, a survey of Quaker Street and the surrounding area revealed an adult literacy rate of only 50 per cent and a child literacy rate

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 81.

2. See for example Stedman Jones, G. op cit., pp. 83 and 108 and comments of workers to Mayhew, H., Morning Chronicle Survey, 1849-50, (Vol. 2, p. 81 and Vol. 3, p. 163).

3. McCann, P., 'Popular education, socialization and social control: Spitalfields 1812-24' in McCann, P. (ed.), op cit., p. 2.

of between three and five per cent.<sup>1</sup> Four years later, in 1816, William Hale, commented that the education of the poor in Spitalfields was 'much better attended to now than it was some years back'. He estimated that there were not enough schools for nearly half of all the poor children in the area and about 1,500 poor children were uneducated. Of those children who were being educated 80 per cent attended Sunday Schools only.<sup>2</sup>

Until 1820 there were no schools specifically for 'under eights', but from 1818 one school in the area, the Jewish Free School, was attended by children below the age of eight (Table 5A). This school opened in Bell Lane in 1817 and catered for 250 boys.<sup>3</sup> Two years later the 1819 Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society commented that 'there are several children in the school scarce seven years of age, that can spell from 600 to 700 words'.<sup>4</sup> As the school appeared to take the credit for the small boys' skills it would suggest that the Bell Lane School accepted children below the age of eight.

The first school in the area to cater specifically for 'under eights' was Quaker Street Infant School (Table 5A). The school opened at the end of July 1820 and charged no fees. It was also

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1. The Philanthropist, Vol. II, 1812, p. 189, cited in McCann, P. and Young, F., Samuel Wilderspin and the Infant School Movement, p. 16.

2. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of Lower Orders of the Metropolis, p. 13.

3. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1819.

4. Ibid.



Table 5A: Names of public schools catering for infants in or near the study area within Christ Church, Spitalfields with dates of establishment.<sup>1</sup>

- 1818 - Jewish Free School (Boys), Bell Lane.
- 1820 - Quaker Street Infants' School, Quaker Street.
  - Jewish Free School (Girls), Bell Lane
- 1833 - Dorset Street Infants' School.
  - White Row Infants' School, Tenter Street.<sup>2</sup>
- 1838 - British and Foreign school, Hope Street (also known as Phoenix Street) 8, Grey Eagle Street.
- 1842 - Butler Street Roman Catholic Ragged School.
- 1846 - Vine Street Court Ragged School.
- 1847 - Protestant Dissenting Charity School, Wood Street.<sup>3</sup>
- 1849 - Spicer Street Ragged School.
  - Dolphin Court Ragged School.
- 1852 - Wilkes Street Ragged School.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society, 1818-1849; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 558; P.P. 1837-38 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales, p. 130; P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Reports from Assistant Hand Loom Weavers Commissioners, Part II, p. 268; Endowed Charities, County of London, Vol. I, 1904; Kelly's London Post Office Directory, 1842 and The Catholic School, Vol. 4, Jan. 1849, p. 62; 'Report on Infant Schools on the principles of the British and Foreign School Society by Joseph Fletcher Esq.', Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 363; 'Report for the year 1847, by H.M.I. Joseph Fletcher', Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1847-48, Appx IV, pp. 307-38; Ragged School Union Magazine, Vol. 1, May 1849, p. 97; Ragged School Union Magazine, Vol. 1, June 1849, p. 134; Eighth Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, p. 24-25 and p. 54.

2. Both these schools were supported solely by school fees but were too large to have been private working-class schools.

3. This school was established in 1717; a new building was erected in 1841 but the presence of infants was not recorded until 1847.

4. Infants were recorded as attending the ragged schools listed, except the Wilkes Street School. This school has been included, however, because it was very common for 'under eights' to attend ragged schools.

only the second infant school to have opened in London. The school in Quaker Street was situated within walking distance of many very poor streets and courts. On the first day 26 children were admitted, 21 on the second day, on the 31st July 65 children were admitted and a week later 38. It was at this point that Samuel Wilderspin and his wife were appointed as the managers and teachers in the school.<sup>1</sup> The school had a rather uncertain start. Within the first fortnight of opening nearly all the original pupils had left but the fact that children continued to enrol would suggest that there was a local need for a public school which catered for 'under eights'. Soon after the Wilderspains took over, the number of pupils fell to 50 when parents discovered what was happening in the school. There was evidently a mismatch of perceptions about what a school for infants should be providing. Many mothers were unimpressed with the fact that games were played and the apparent lack of formal instruction.<sup>2</sup> Within three years the school had gained popularity, it was full to capacity with 214 children in attendance and Wilderspin was in the position of having to turn would-be pupils away.<sup>3</sup>

Ten years later the Quaker Street Infant school was attended by 90 boys and 40 girls, and by this time parents paid a penny a week per

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1. Wilderspin, S., On the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor, 1824.

2. McCann, P. and Young, F., op cit., esp. Chap. 1.

3. McCann, P. and Young, F., op cit..

child.<sup>1</sup> In 1838 the number in attendance was 154<sup>2</sup> while in 1840 the attendance was recorded as 150 in summer and 112 in winter.<sup>3</sup>

No new public infants' school was opened in the area for the next 12 years but this was not necessarily because there was no demand for public infant education. A Jewish infant school, for example, would have probably been well attended, as throughout the 1820s very young children attended both the boys' and the newly established girls' Jewish Free Schools, despite the fact that these schools had not been established to cater for 'under eights'. In 1827 a report on the boys' school stated that the major part was 'composed of very young boys recently admitted, a considerable number being not more than six years old'. As regards the girls' school the same report noted 'this school likewise contains a number of young children, half of whom are not more than seven years old'.<sup>4</sup> The boys' school was very large and in 1827 was attended by 390 boys. The girls' school was much smaller and contained 150 children. If half the pupils in the girls' and boys' schools were below the age of eight then these schools were catering for approximately 270 infants. 'Under eights' continued to attend these two schools throughout the

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1. P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 558.

2. P.P. 1837-38 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales, p. 130.

3. P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Handloom Weavers. Returns and Reports from Assistant Commissioners, Part II, p. 268.

4. Annual Report of British and Foreign School Society, 1827.

1820s and in 1831 approximately 50 per cent of the pupils in the girls' school were below the age of eight. The 1831 Report on the girls' school recommended that an infants' school should be instituted, and stated that it was 'highly to be desired that some munificent ladies should patronise such an establishment'.<sup>1</sup> No such school was established in the study area during the period under investigation although nearby, in Houndsditch, the Jewish Infant School was founded in 1841.<sup>2</sup>

The good attendance at the Quaker Street school and the continued presence of infants in the Jewish Free schools would suggest that there was certainly a need for public infants' schools but it was not until 1832 that two new public infant schools were established. White Row Infant School catered for 90 children (30 boys and 60 girls) and the other school in Dorset Street catered for 50 children.<sup>3</sup> Both of these schools charged school pence. The schools were situated on streets that were parallel to each other and were both very close to streets with a bad reputation (e.g. Fashion Street and Flower and Dean Street).

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1. Endowed Charities, County of London, Vol. I, 1904.

2. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1831.

3. Christ Church Spitalfields Scrapbook, Tower Hamlets Local History Library and P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 558.

By 1833 approximately 540 infants were attending public schools in the area, 270 of which were in public infant schools and the remainder in the Jewish Free Schools.<sup>1</sup>

The three public infant schools and the Jewish Free Schools did not satisfy the demand for public education facilities for infants. Over the next 25 years no more public schools for infants only were founded in the study area, but seven more schools were opened that catered for both infants and older children, and one school which had been established for older children began to accept 'under eights'. These schools were the Hope Street British and Foreign School, the Protestant Dissenting Charity School in Wood Street and five ragged schools: the Roman Catholic ragged school in Butler Street, and the ragged schools in Vine Court, Spicer Street, Dolphin Court and Wilkes Street.

In March 1838, Hope Street School for girls opened and parents were charged 2d per week. The school seems to have operated for only 9 years as there is no record of the school after 1847. The school began in hired rooms and initially 120 girls aged between five and 14 attended.<sup>2</sup> Within three years the number of pupils had dropped to 74.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1831; Christ Church Spitalfields Scrapbook, Tower Hamlets Local History Library and P.P. 1835 [62] xli-xliii, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 558.

2. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1839.

3. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1842.

A Roman Catholic ragged school commenced operation in 1842 in Butler Street.<sup>1</sup> Four years later, in June 1846, a ragged school started in Vine Street Court, a small street fairly close to Hope Street. At the time of Fletcher's inspection, the Vine Street Court school was attended by 317 children between the ages of two and nine or ten. As with other ragged schools no fees were charged.<sup>2</sup>

The Protestant Dissenting Charity School had been established in 1717<sup>3</sup> and in 1847 it was noted that in the girls' section of the school half the children were infants.<sup>4</sup>

In the late 1840s and early 1850s three more ragged schools began to operate in the area. The Spicer Street Ragged Schools were first opened by the City Missionary in the district and in 1849 an infant day school existed, which catered for 130 children. It was noted in the Ragged School Union Magazine that the Spicer Street Ragged Schools had become 'a most important field of labour for the moral and social advancement of the children'.<sup>5</sup> The Dolphin Court Ragged School catered for 170 children, many of whom were destitute.<sup>6</sup> In the day school seven children were orphans, three were the children

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1. Kelly's London Post Office Directory, 1842 and The Catholic School, Vol. 4, Jan. 1849, p. 62.

2. 'Report for the year 1847, by H.M.I. Joseph Fletcher', Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1847-48, Appx IV, pp. 307-38.

3. 'Report on Infant Schools on the principles of the British and Foreign School Society by Joseph Fletcher Esq.', Minutes of the Committee of Council Minutes, 1845, p. 363.

4. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1848.

5. Ragged School Union Magazine, Vol. 1, May 1849, p. 97.

6. Eighth Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, pp. 24,25 and 54.

of convicts, 50 had no beds, 20 had no shoes, and seven were known to have been in prison.<sup>1</sup> The destitution of the children in this area led to the Ragged School Union opening the Dolphin Court Refuge, which was one of a few dormitories designed to house and feed a limited number of children.<sup>2</sup> The Wilkes Street Ragged School, whose existence was first recorded in 1852, catered for a total of 450 children but it is not known how many of these children were infants who attended during the week.<sup>3</sup>

According to the 1851 education census in the Whitechapel district 7,612 children were attending public schools. On the basis of School Society reports the number of infants at public schools in the study area of Christ Church was over 800.<sup>4</sup>

The comments made to Wilderspin in 1820, regarding sending children to 'Mrs So-and-So' implied that private working class schools were in existence and supported by local parents (Tables 5B and 5C overleaf).

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1. Eighth Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, p.24.

2. Ibid., p.7.

3. Ibid., p. 54.

4. Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society, 1849-1855 and Ragged School Union Magazine Vol. 1 June 1849, p. 134.

Table 5B: Number of private working-class schools catering for infants.<sup>1</sup>

1818 - None listed.  
1833 - 4 schools.  
1834 - At least 10 schools.  
1838 - No figures given.  
1841 - 10 teachers listed.  
1851 - 9 teachers listed.  
      - 59 private schools in Whitechapel.

From the list of schools prepared in response to the 1833 Parliamentary Enquiry there would appear to have been at least 9 private working-class schools within the area to which parents could send their infants (Table 5C overleaf). Approximately 114 infants attended these nine schools.<sup>2</sup>

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1. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1; P.P. 1835 (62) xli-xliii, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 558; Christ Church Spitalfields Scrapbook; P.P. 1837-38 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales; Population Census Enumerators' Returns, 1841, HO 107 710; Population Census Enumerators' Returns, 1851, HO 107 1543; P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales), pp. 8-9. The 59 private schools listed in 1851 were in the area of Whitechapel which included the districts of Spitalfields, Mile End New town, Whitechapel North, Whitechapel Church, Goodmans Fields, Aldgate and Artillery.
2. Schools listed in Christ Church Spitalfields Scrapbook, Tower Hamlets Local History Library.



Table 5C: Names and addresses of probable private working-class school teachers who catered for infants in 1833-1834.<sup>1</sup>

40, Fashion Street : Mary Chamberlain.

16, Lamb Street : Allurna Fitch Gardner.

27, Lamb Street : Robert Shorter.

2, New Court : No name.<sup>2</sup>

1, Tenter Street : ? Isaacs.<sup>3</sup>

13, Upper Keate Street : Martha Carter.

84, Wheler Street : Mary Atkinson.

It is likely that there were more private schools which catered, at least in part, for infants. This supposition is based on the finding that children as young as three were attending four schools defined as 'daily schools'. In 1833, the Returning Officer for Spitalfields included the details of four daily schools in an effort to provide an idea of the sort of schools that were typical of the parish. Two of these schools fell into the study area and both were situated in Lamb Street. If the remaining nine daily schools within the study area were similar to the two described then the total number of private working-class schools in the area catering for

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1. List compiled from a copy of the 1833 Education Return to Parliament.

2. There were two courts named New Court within a small area of the parish, one near Fashion Street was situated within the study area but the second was not, as it was south of Wentworth Street. It is not clear which New Court was referred to in this list.

3. The first name was written illegibly.

for infants was 20.<sup>1</sup>

There is no way of knowing how many of the children in daily schools were below the age of eight. In Robert Shorter's school, in Lamb Street, the upper leaving age of his pupils was given as 15 but this high leaving age was probably attributable to the fact that in addition to his day school he also ran an evening school. In the other school in Lamb Street the leaving age was recorded as being 'about twelve'. If it is assumed that the number of children in each year band was equal and that the average leaving age was 12, then approximately half the children would have been under the age of eight.<sup>2</sup> Erring on the side of caution the proportion of infants could be set at a third, in which case approximately 113 of the 341 children in private daily schools were infants.

In 1833 there were 20 schools which, on the basis of their size and location, would appear to have been private working-class schools. If a total of approximately 227 infants attended these private working-class schools then almost 30 per cent of all the infant

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1. This figure was calculated on the basis that all the children in the private infant schools were under the age of seven and a third of pupils in the private daily schools were infants.

2. Setting the leaving age at 12 is erring on the side of caution as in Spitalfields children could begin to work from the age of six or seven and 16 per cent of 11 year olds were employed.

scholars within the study area attended private working-class schools whilst the remaining 70 per cent (540 children) attended public schools.<sup>1</sup> According to available records the number of private working-class schools in the area fell during the next 20 years.

In 1840, James Miller gave evidence to the Hand-Loom Weavers Commissioners and stated that in Christ Church, Spitalfields 'I have not even a dame school for boys or for girls'.<sup>2</sup> According to Miller, schools in the area were all of a public nature. On the basis of the 1841 census it would appear that Miller's assessment of the situation was not very accurate. Whilst it seems to be true that the number of private schools in the area fell, 9 individuals were identified in the study area who could have been teaching in a private working-class school in 1841. Ten years later the figure was ten (Tables 5D and 5E overleaf). If, on average, these schools catered for ten infants each then, in the 1840s and the early 1850s, only 90-100 working-class infants attended private schools, compared with the 800 or so who attended public schools of some form or another. The proportion of infant scholars who went to private schools appears to have dropped from 30 per cent in the early 1830s to only 10 per cent in the 1840s and 1850s. There was a corresponding increase in the proportion of infants attending public schools which rose from 70 per cent to 90 per cent.

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1. Figures obtained from Christ Church, Spitalfields Scrapbook, Annual Reports of British and Foreign School, 1827-33.

2. P.P. 1840 [639] xxiv, Handloom. Returns and Reports from the Assistant Commissioners, Part 2, p. 262.

Table 5D: List of possible private working-class school teachers from 1841 Census<sup>1</sup>

Bell Court : Samuel Nato (Teacher of Hebrew).  
Browns Lane: Isabella Clarke (Schoolmistress).  
Freeman St.: Moses Levy (Teacher).  
Freeman St.: Henry Zilva (Teacher).  
Keate St.: Henry Pritt (Schoolmaster).  
Palmer St. : Catherine Losaus (Schoolmistress).  
Red Lion Court.: Caroline Judge (Schoolmistress).  
Tilley St.: Harriet Creaton (Schoolmistress).  
Vine Court : Mary Critchfield (Schoolmistress).          Total = 9

Table 5E: List of possible private working-class school teachers from 1851 Census<sup>2</sup>

Elder St : Susannah King (Day School Teacher).  
Elder St : Mary Boullen (Schoolmistress).  
Elder St : Name illegible (Catholic Teacher, male).  
Lamb St : Elizabeth Symonds (Teacher at a school).  
20, Shepherd St : Name illegible (Schoolmaster).  
Tenter St : Mary Wordsworth (Schoolmistress).<sup>3</sup>  
Tilley St : Ester Davis (Teacher in school).  
White Lion St: Nathaniel Canlon (Schoolmaster) and 17 yr old daughter (Ladies' schoolmistress).  
Wilkes St : Elizabeth Williamson (Schoolmistress).          Total = 10

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1. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 710.
  2. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1543.
  3. It is possible that Mary Wordsworth taught at the public White Row Infants' School.

Distribution of 'under eights' and location of schools.

The 1851 census returns for 43 streets, courts and places were analysed in order to develop an idea of the relationship between infant schooling and the socio-economic profile of the area. A total of 6,553 people lived in the 43 streets and courts examined. The number of children aged from two and seven was 1,213, which represented 18.5 per cent of the local population. This proportion was surprisingly low as children figured strongly in contemporary descriptions of Spitalfields. Some streets in the study area, however, did have a high proportion of 'under eights'. They formed only five per cent of the residents in Lower Keate Street but in Shepherd Street 29 per cent of the residents were children aged between two and seven.

As in other areas of London, public infants' schools were situated within walking distance of a high number of infants. The number of two to seven year olds in each of the 43 streets ranged from one to 101. Thirty or more infants lived in each of 18 streets. All the private schools in the Christ Church study area were situated in streets with more than 30 infants.<sup>1</sup> Overall the proportion of under sevens returned as scholars was 40.5 per cent. In the eight streets

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1. Streets with 30 or more children have been focused on in the following paragraphs in order to provide a degree of comparability with the streets with private schools, and because a meaningful analysis is not possible if the number of children concerned is too small.

with a private school, between 37 per cent and 69 per cent of the two to seven year olds were classed as scholars. In the other 10 streets with 30 or more infants the proportion of two to seven year olds at school was slightly lower and varied from 26 per cent to 62 per cent. Although there may have been a straightforward relationship between a higher than average proportion of infant scholars and the presence of a private school in a street, alternative explanations cannot be dismissed. It is possible that in Spitalfields, as in other areas of London, there were differences in the attendance patterns of children in different year bands and that the age make-up of streets varied.

#### School Attendance Patterns in Relation to Age.

Within the study area there was an increase in the proportion of children at school in each successive year band between the ages of two and seven, but this increase was not steady (Table 5.3b and Graph 5.1 overleaf). Less than 10 per cent of two year olds went to school whilst a quarter of three year olds did so. Almost a third of four year olds and just over half of five and six year olds attended school. Just over two thirds of seven year olds went to school. The proportion of children described as 'at home' declined steadily from 12 per cent of two year olds to only three per cent of seven year olds. Similarly, there was a steady decline in the proportion of children within each successive age band for whom no description was provided, from 79 per cent of two year olds to 32 per cent of seven year olds.

Table 5.1a

Spitalfields N.W.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	4	16	23	45	50	53	191
Scholars at home	16	14	5	6	6	3	50
No description	35	44	31	24	24	12	170
Total	55	74	59	75	80	68	411

Table 5.1b

Spitalfields N.W.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	7	22	39	60	62	78
Scholars at home	29	19	8	8	8	4
No description	64	59	53	32	30	18
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.2a

Spitalfields S.E.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	13	35	39	72	62	80	301
Scholars at home	7	6	10	8	3	3	37
No description	115	85	81	69	60	54	464
Total	135	126	130	149	125	137	802

Table 5.2b

Spitalfields S.E.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	10	28	30	48	50	58
Scholars at home	5	5	8	5	2	2
No description	85	67	62	47	48	40
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.3a

Spitalfields N.W. & S.E.: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	17	51	62	117	112	133	492
Scholars at home	23	20	15	14	9	6	87
No description	150	129	112	93	84	66	634
Total	190	200	189	224	205	205	1213

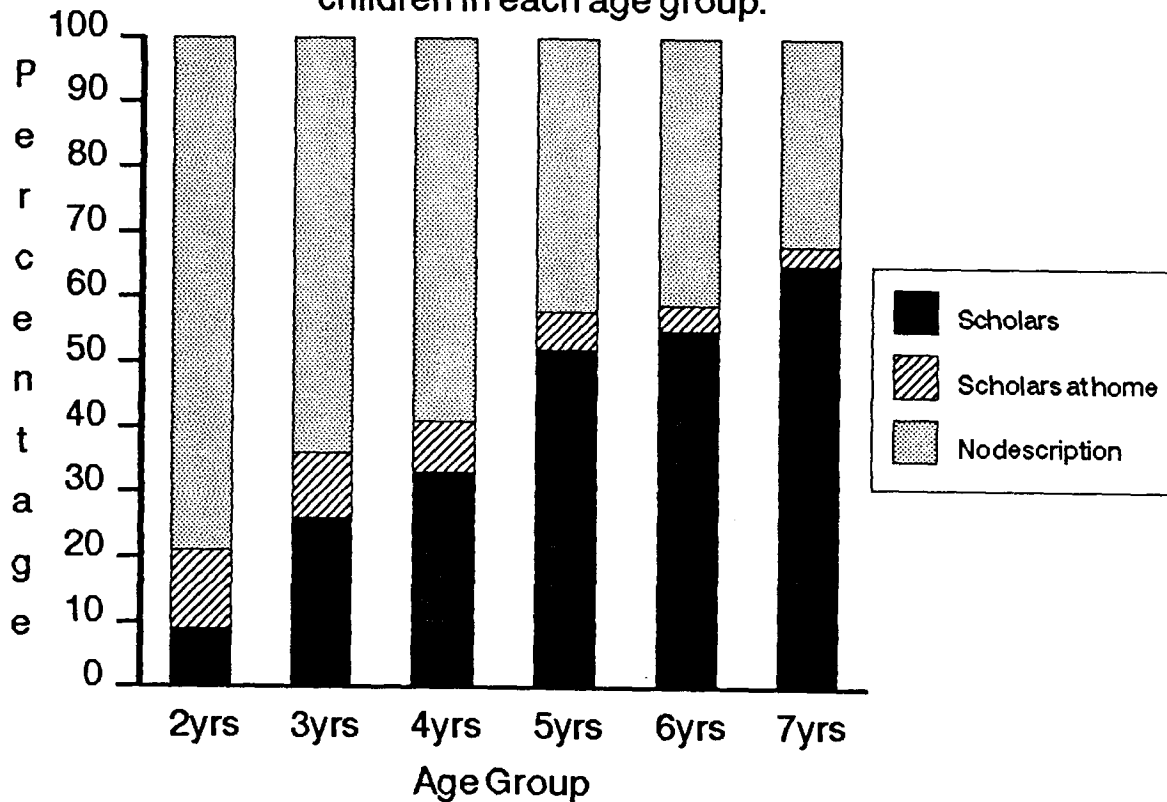
Table 5.3b

Spitalfields N.W. & S.E.: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	9	26	33	52	55	65
Scholars at home	12	10	8	6	4	3
No description	79	64	59	42	41	32
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Graph 5.1

Spitalfields: Description of total percentage of children in each age group.





It follows from the preceding analysis that relatively high proportions of children returned as scholars in certain streets might have been due to a disproportionate number of children in the upper age bands (five to seven). In the 43 streets surveyed, the number of children in each year band varied by a maximum of 2.9 per cent of the total. In the 18 streets with 30 or more children, five were more heavily weighted with five to seven year olds and the average proportion of infants at school was 53 per cent. In the seven streets with approximately equal numbers of older and younger infants the average proportion at school was only 39 per cent. In the six streets which had more two to four year olds the average proportion of scholars was 46 per cent.

There would appear to have been a link between the overall proportion of scholars and the proportion of children in each year band. The figures suggest, however, that other factors also influenced school attendance and it was the interaction of the various factors that resulted in the area's school attendance profile. The father's occupation was a factor which would appear to have influenced school attendance amongst 'under eights'.

#### School Attendance Patterns in Relation to Parents' Occupations.

Fathers of young children were employed in skilled work as carpenters, plumbers, wheelwrights, watch-makers, tailors, shoe and bootmakers and silk weaving. Fathers employed in unskilled work included labourers, porters and hawkers and dockside workers. There were also high numbers of non-manual workers such as general

dealers, those engaged in more specialised food retailing (e.g. fishmongers, fruit sellers, bakers, butchers etc.), silk dealers and clothes dealers. Numerically, the six main occupations in the area were general dealer, silk weaver, labourer, shoe- or boot-maker, tailor, and food retailer. Mothers of young children worked in a wider range of occupations than in other parts of London. Married and single mothers were returned as working in 21 and 22 different occupations respectively. The major occupations were dressmaker or tailor, weaver, laundress and charwoman.

School attendance patterns of infant aged children of tailors, shoemakers, weavers, food retailers, general dealers and labourers were different (Table 5.4 below and Graph 5.2 overleaf).

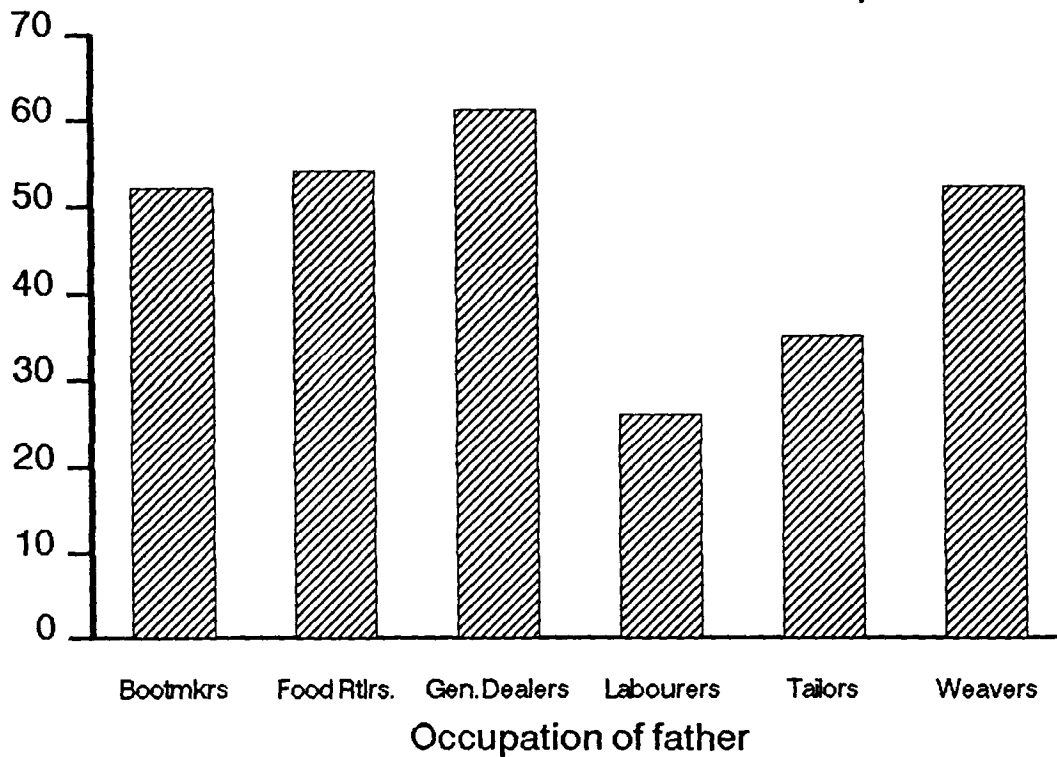
Table 5.4

Spitalfields: Attendance patterns of children, related to fathers' occupations, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Boot and Shoemaker	38 (52%)	6 (8%)	29 (40%)	73 (100%)
Food Retailers	33 (54%)	2 (3%)	26 (43%)	61 (100%)
General Dealers	45 (61%)	1 (1%)	28 (38%)	74 (100%)
Labourers	20 (26%)	1 (1%)	57 (73%)	78 (100%)
Tailors	19 (35%)	3 (6%)	32 (59%)	54 (100%)
Weavers	45 (52%)	15 (17%)	27 (31%)	87 (100%)

Graph 5.2

Spitalfields : Graph to show percentage of children at school related to fathers' occupation.



Of the 74 children whose fathers were general dealers, 45 or 61 per cent were scholars whilst no description was provided for 28 children (38 per cent). The attendance pattern of tailors children stood in contrast to this, of the 54 children whose father were tailors only 19 (35 per cent) were described as scholars and no description was provided for the remaining 32 (59 per cent). The schooling patterns of shoemakers', food retailers' and weavers' children were very similar to each other. In all three of these occupational groups just over half of the infants were at school.

Labourers' children had the worst record of school attendance with only 20 (26 per cent) at school and 57 (73 per cent) not described in any way. Tables 5.5a-5.5f overleaf show that there was no simple relationship between school attendance and the age distribution of children in each of the different groups. For example, 45 per cent of labourers' children were in the two to four age bracket, as were 46 per cent of food retailers' children, and yet there was a marked difference in the school attendance of the two groups of children. The six major occupations differed in terms of the wages earned, the pattern of employment through the year, the employment structure of the trade (i.e. whether women and children were employed), where the work was done and also the level of skill required. These factors appear partly to have influenced the pattern of school attendance of young children.

There were economic similarities between shoemakers, weavers and tailors in the East End. The wages of workmen in all three of these trades had declined quite drastically during the first half of the nineteenth century. All three trades experienced fluctuations, either seasonal as in the case of shoemakers and tailors or, as in the case of the silk trade, as a result of other factors (e.g. war, insufficient work available). Tailoring and shoemaking both had an 'honourable' section in which rates of pay were reasonable and work tended to be bespoke, and the 'slop trade' section in which cheap ready made articles were produced and rates of pay were very low.

Table 5.5a

Spitalfields: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were boot and shoemakers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	12	14	11	14	9	13	73
Percent	16	19	15	19	12	18	100.00

Table 5.5b

Spitalfields: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were food retailers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	10	9	10	12	12	8	61
Percent	16	15	16	20	20	13	100

Table 5.5c

Spitalfields: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were general dealers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	6	11	16	14	15	12	74
Percent	8	15	22	19	20	16	100

Table 5.5d

Spitalfields: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	14	11	11	12	13	17	78
Percent	18	14	14	15	17	22	100

Table 5.5e

Spitalfields: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were tailors.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	5	14	6	10	8	11	54
Percent	9	26	11	19	15	20	100

Table 5.5f

Spitalfields: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were weavers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	18	10	7	21	12	19	87
Percent	21	11	8	24	14	22	100

There had been an increase in female and child labour in all three trades, which workers at the time cited as a major cause of low wages.<sup>1</sup>

General dealers and food retailers were similar to each other in that their trade depended upon what was available through the year and furthermore, when other workers were experiencing hardship they had less to spend and therefore all those engaged in retailing were affected. In the East End of London many general dealers and other food retailers (eg. lemon sellers, fish sellers, bakers etc.) did not make a great profit and therefore had little to tide them over slack periods.

The three main areas of boot and shoe manufacture in the East End of London were Bethnal Green, Whitechapel and Spitalfields. If fully employed, the average weekly wages of those making men's footwear for the slop trade were approximately 12 or 13 shillings. If not in full employment the wages could be as little as three shillings a week up to around nine shillings. Those making women's and children's shoes earned even less. Mayhew commented that some of the shoemakers' wives and children were 'wretchedly clad and lodged and ...wretchedly fed'.<sup>2</sup> The employers were unscrupulous and reduced the workmen's wages by various means, for example false measures and down-grading the work. The hardship was exacerbated by the fact that shoemaking was one of the trades that was subject to

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vols. 3, 5 and 6, 1849-50.

2. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 3, 1850, p. 197.

seasonal fluctuations. Appalling though the pay was some shoemakers, by working long hours, did manage to ensure that they earned enough to send their children to school. The statement made to Mayhew by one such shoemaker was interesting in that he unconsciously revealed his scale of values - education came before meat:

I was obliged to work from five or six in the morning to twelve at night. At this work, bad as the pay was, we could, by long hours, get bread and coffee, and school money for two children - meat we could not get. I could not get Sunday's dinner.<sup>1</sup>

Less than half of the tailors in the West End were engaged in the slop trade, but in the East End between a half and two thirds of the tailors were so employed. Mayhew commented that the slop workers were almost 'brutified with their incessant toil, wretched pay, miserable food and filthy homes.'<sup>2</sup>

In December 1849, Mayhew met a group of working East End tailors who told him that the average weekly earnings of those engaged in the slop trade were approximately eight shillings after the cost of trimmings, light and fuel had been deducted. Slop trade employers levied fines for work that was late, not deemed to be up to standard or other such 'crimes'. Tailors in the honourable part of the trade earned on average 15s 5d clear. All who spoke to Mayhew commented on the decline in wages over the previous 20 years and many stated that in the 1820s and early 1830s a tailor could support his family and educate his children, but in the late 1840s this was no longer

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 3, 1850, p. 197.

2. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 2, 1850, p. 96.

the case:

Since I have been at the slop work I have neither been able to save anything, nor to keep my children as I wanted to. I couldn't even send them to church of a Sunday for the want of their clothes...<sup>1</sup>

Weavers, most of whom in the study area were silk weavers, experienced hardship during the first half of the nineteenth century. Between 1800 and 1817 there were three major troughs in the silk industry. The number entering Spitalfields workhouse doubled and the number receiving outdoor relief quadrupled during this period. By 1817 it was estimated that 20,000 weavers were unemployed. From the late 1820s onwards further distress was caused by the repeal of the Spitalfields Act which had regulated wages, the undercutting by employers, the fall in piece rates and the employment of women and children.<sup>2</sup> There was an increase in unemployment amongst silk weavers. Between 1824 and 1832 one London employer reduced his workforce by approximately 80 per cent, from 300 to 60 or 70, and in the early 1830s approximately two thirds of the looms were idle.<sup>3</sup> In 1839, a skilful weaver could earn around 11s a week after he had paid for the necessary quilling, winding and picking. In 1849 the average weekly wage of a Spitalfields weaver was 4s 9d to 5s 6d. When in work weavers could earn over 20s a week

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 2, 1849, p. 121.

2. George, M.D. op cit. pp. 181-197; Pinchbeck, I., Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850; Mayhew, H. The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vols. 1-6, 1849-50.

3. Mc.Higgins, R., 'The 1832 Cholera Epidemic in East London', in East London Record, No. 2, 1979, p. 9.



a week but there were many weeks when weavers earned nothing.<sup>1</sup> This did not mean that weavers did not think about the education of their children nor regret the fact that they could not educate them. Some ensured that their children received at least a Sunday School education. One of the most skilled weavers told Mayhew that 'labour is so low he [a weaver] can't afford to send his children to school. He only sends them of a Sunday - he can't afford it of a work-a-day'.<sup>2</sup>

School Attendance in Relation to Patterns of Child Labour and the Employment of Older Siblings.

The increasing involvement of women and children in shoemaking, cabinet making, tailoring and weaving from the mid-1820s had not only led to an influx of unskilled labour, with a consequent loss of power when it came to wage bargaining, but also meant that by the early 1850s many families found that one wage was insufficient to support the family and therefore women and children were forced to work.<sup>3</sup> Some shoemakers set themselves up as 'chamber-masters'. It was not too expensive for an unemployed shoemaker to buy the tools and materials he required and to set up work at home, helped by members of his family or by hiring children. Shoemakers who did so were known as 'chamber-masters'. These men did not make a good living. The chamber-masters' acceptance of low prices for a piece of work was seen as being partly responsible for bringing down wages

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1. Mayhew, H. The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, pp. 55-57.

2. Ibid., p. 58.

3. Mayhew, H. The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 2, 1849, p. 127.

in the trade generally. Mayhew was told that 'the eastern portion of London is the great hotbed of this evil'.<sup>1</sup> The family unit often had to work all day and the father then had to sell the completed shoes to warehouses or shops. The buyers took advantage of the fact that the father needed to sell the shoes quickly to avoid wasting too much time and energy in wandering from buyer to buyer to obtain the best price. As a result the father often had to sell the shoes for next to nothing just in order to feed his family. Shoemakers in this part of the trade were also affected by seasonal fluctuations, the briskest season being summer.

By the mid 1830s tailors appeared to be subject to the same fate. The wages of the majority of East-End tailors were so low that tailors' wives and children were forced to work. In the 1840s and 1850s many tailors were extremely poor and one tailor told Mayhew that the decrease in the price of food between 1845 and 1850 had made little difference as wages had gone down more than the price of food.<sup>2</sup>

As in shoemaking and tailoring, women entered the weaving trade and consequently many husbands and wives worked together. Children too were useful and could begin to contribute to the family income from a young age. Many children of silk weavers worked as 'quillers' or silk winders from about the age of six or seven and slightly older children were 'pickers' who picked out the knots in the silk. On a

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 3, 1850, pp. 162-163.

2. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 2, 1849, p. 113.

visit to a street inhabited by a fair number of weavers, Mayhew commented on the absence of children in the street and asserted that 'in such a street had the labour of the young been less valuable, the gutters and doorsteps would have swarmed with juveniles.'

Comparing these three occupations, on the basis of the fathers' wages alone, weavers were the worst off and yet they had a higher proportion of infant-aged children at school than did tailors (see Graph 5.2). It could be argued that since weavers' children were able to help by quilling from around the age of six or seven they were sent to school at a younger age than shoemakers' or tailors' children, but this particular argument does not help account for the finding that the proportion of children at school was approximately the same for weavers and shoemakers (Graph 5.2).

An alternative explanation could lie in the fact that in many cases the family income was composed of not just the father's wage, but also the earnings of the older children and the mother. As previously stated, one reason for this was that the father's wage was not sufficient to support the family because of low wages or irregularity of employment. In weavers' families with infants at school, 32 per cent had older children at work and 23 per cent had older children and mothers at work. In shoemakers' families the proportions were 18 per cent and four per cent respectively. Tailors' families in the sample area were outstanding in that in only 11 per cent of these families were older children working, and only in six per cent of the families did older children and mothers

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 56.

contribute to the family income. It is possible that despite the low wages of fathers who were weavers, the high proportion of weavers' wives and children at work ensured that there was sufficient money for schooling of younger children. Conversely, the relatively low levels of employment amongst the wives and children of tailors may explain the correspondingly low level of school attendance of tailors' infant children (schooling after all did not only depend upon the ability to pay fees but also, except in the case of attendance at a ragged school, the ability to ensure the child was decently clad). This explanation gains credence from the finding that 64 per cent of families with at least one older sibling at work also sent at least one infant-aged child to school, compared with only 50 per cent of families in which none of the older children was employed (Tables 5.6 and 5.7).

Table 5.6

Spitalfields: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
English	154	99	192	93	538
Irish	14	3	34	12	63
Jewish	23	20	30	22	95
Total	191	122	256	127	696

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 5.7

Spitalfields: Percentage of families in each category relating  
school attendance to employment of older siblings.

	G	F
English	64	48
Irish	21	35
Jewish	87	73
Total %	64	50

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work  
which also had at least one infant at school ( $B/A \times 100$ ).

F = Percentage of families with no older siblings at work  
but at least one infant at school ( $D/C \times 100$ ).

Table 5.7 is based on figures in Table 5.6.

Parents did not necessarily choose to spend their money on schooling, as was illustrated by the case of the Laws family referred to by the Children's Employment Commission in 1840.<sup>1</sup> John Laws was a Spitalfields silk worker who earned on average 10s a week. His wife also worked the loom and earned eight shillings. They had three children; the eldest, a boy aged 13 assisted his father and the two younger children aged five and 18 months were at home. The family employed a young girl as a 'servant of all work' who was discharged when trade was slack. Her job was to 'nurse and attend to the family'. For her services the Laws paid 2s 8d a week. After paying for food, heating and rent there was nothing left for school as the weekly outgoings totalled 18s 8d. It was noted that the eldest child went to an evening school twice a week but did not have to pay for this.

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1. P.P. 1842-43 (432) xv, Second Report to the Commission on Children's Employment, p. F26.

If they had chosen to send their two younger children to school the Laws would probably have been forced to discharge the servant girl, but in so doing the mother would have had less time at her loom due to an increase in domestic duties.

The relatively high proportion of two to seven year olds returned as scholars in the study area as a whole might have been due to the tendency for children, especially girls, to begin work at around the age of six or seven, which resulted in parents sending their children to school before they could be useful at home or economically active. The 1851 census returns for the area, however, would suggest that few children below the age of eleven worked (Tables 5.8 and 5.8b). The scale of employment amongst the young in the area could have been understated in the census returns because young children might not have worked regularly or parents might not have described a child who helped at home as being employed. Contemporary reports give a strong impression that children in Spitalfields began work at a younger age than in other parts of London.

Table 5.8a

Spitalfields: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	77	80	81	55	56	23	14	386
At work	3	2	10	18	13	30	49	125
Scholars at home	4	4	6	3	3	4	2	26
No description	31	29	42	36	30	10	18	196
Total	115	115	139	112	102	67	83	733

Table 5.8b

Spitalfields: Description of total percentage of older siblings  
within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	67	70	58	49	55	34	17
At work	3	2	7	16	13	45	59
Scholars at home	3	3	4	3	3	6	2
No description	27	25	30	32	29	15	22
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

In Spitalfields children did not always work for their parents only as assistants. Young girls from the age of seven or so often took on the care of younger siblings and some of the domestic duties, especially if the mother was employed. Such children were obviously unable to attend day school for economic and practical reasons. Children also worked outside the family circle and earned a small, but nonetheless, useful wage. One way in which these children found employment was by attending the Bethnal Green Market where children were available for hire and engaged in a range of different types of work:

The market days are Monday and Tuesday mornings, from seven to nine...A great many of both sexes congregate together, on most days there are three females to one male. They consist of sewing boys, shoe binders, winders for weavers, and girls for all kinds of slop needlework, girls for domestic work, nursing children etc...<sup>1</sup>

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 3, 1850, p. 179.

Those who made statements to Mayhew variously stated that the children at the market were depraved, vicious and dishonest and alleged that few people took a second child from the market. There were exceptions however, 'occasionally a decent little boy or girl may be met with, but they stand at a distance from the others (the mob), and have a father, mother or some friend with them, to see to whom they are going'.<sup>1</sup> Most of the children were ten or over but some were as young as seven.<sup>2</sup>

One result of the early age at which children started work or helped at home was that fewer older children, especially girls, were able to attend school, and the high levels of school attendance amongst 'under eights' would suggest that, as a result, parents tended to send their children to school at an earlier age than in other parts of London.

The 1831 Annual Report of the Girls' Jewish Free School would support this hypothesis. Following a statement regarding the high proportion of children in the school who were 'scarcely seven years of age', the report went on to state that 'the great use made of female children among the poor in necessary domestic employment keeps this portion of the school much under the mark'.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, following his inspection of the Vine Street Court Ragged

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 3, 1850, p. 179.

2. P.P. 1842-43 (432) xv, Second Report to the Commission on Children's Employment, Part 1, p. f263.

3. Annual Report of British and Foreign School Society, 1831.



School, Fletcher commented that the children in the school were of 'all ages between two and nine or ten, beyond which the children in very poor neighbourhoods like this are seldom found'.<sup>1</sup>

In Spitalfields, there were job opportunities for children from the age of six as quillers etc. Slightly older girls were employed as nurses and general servants, and boys were employed as winders and pickers. In the sample, only five children aged between two and seven were returned as being employed, one six year old girl was a fringe weaver and a seven year boy was a travelling general dealer; a six year old worked with rest of his family as a box maker and a five year old worked as an 'interpreter' of old shoes.<sup>2</sup>

#### School Attendance in Relation to Mother's Employment and Marital State.

The preceding section briefly mentioned the possible effects of working mothers on school attendance. There were twice as many married working mothers as single working mothers. The marital state of a working mother did not appear to exert much influence on whether a child attended school, as 43 per cent of all infant children with working mothers, both single and married, attended school (Tables 5.9a and 5.9b). There was a gradual increase

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1. 'Report for the year 1847, by H.M.I. Joseph Fletcher', Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1847-48, Appx IV, p. 308.

2. Some enumerators used ditto marks freely, with the result that babies and young children were returned as being employed. In these cases the under sevens were not regarded as being employed.

Table 5.9a

Spitalfields: Children of married working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	6	13	11	20	27	23	100
Scholars at home	21	5	7	3	1	1	38
No description	8	19	22	21	11	16	97
Total	35	37	40	44	39	40	235

Table 5.9b

Spitalfields: Children of married working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	17	35	27	45	69	57
Scholars at home	60	14	18	7	3	3
No description	23	51	55	48	28	40
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.10a

Spitalfields: Children of single working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	4	8	10	14	15	52
Scholars at home	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
No description	15	8	11	11	9	13	67
Total	16	13	19	22	23	28	121

Table 5.10b

Spitalfields: Children of single working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	6	31	42	45	61	54
Scholars at home	0	8	0	5	0	0
No description	94	61	58	50	39	46
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

in the proportion of scholars in each successive age band up to the age of six, but between six and seven there was a noticeable decline in the proportion of children at school (Tables 5.9b and 5.10b). This decline was not apparent in families in which the mother did not work. In families in which the mother did not work approximately 40 per cent of the two to seven year olds were at school, and there was an increase in the proportion of scholars in each age band from only 9 per cent of two year olds to 67 per cent of seven year olds. Far from being a decline in the proportion of scholars between the ages of six and seven, there was a noticeable increase, from 54 per cent of six year olds to 67 per cent of seven year olds.

These patterns may have occurred because married and single women who were working were doing so from necessity, in which case it is feasible to suggest that their children probably had to start work as soon as possible, and therefore there was a decline in the proportion of scholars once the children reached the age at which they could become economically active. In families in which the mother was not in paid employment, parents might have felt that there was less of a need to provide child care for the very young and it could be that parents chose to send their children to school at a later age. Another explanation for the increase in school attendance at the age of six or seven in families with a non-working mother could have been that the family could live on the father's income alone, and therefore could afford to keep their children at school a little longer as the child's wage was not needed to feed the family.

Whether a mother was married, single, working or at home made very little difference to whether or not two to four year olds attended school. This finding does not fit neatly with the view of middle-class contemporaries who frequently stated that mothers sent their young children to school purely to be taken care of. Wilderspin himself claimed that the Quaker Street Infants' School was valuable in that it fulfilled the need of working mothers for child care.<sup>1</sup>

In the early part of the century the only schools that would accept very young children (i.e. between two and five or six) were private working-class schools, and middle-class commentators criticised these schools partly on the basis that they were primarily concerned with containment rather than education. Whilst giving evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee in 1838, Buxton was asked by Gladstone whether he thought that the 'the prominent idea [of dame schools] was that they are sent to be taken care of and not to be taught'. Buxton replied simply that he thought 'that is a great part of it'.<sup>2</sup> This view was encapsulated by the school inspector, Fletcher, who wrote in 1845:

It is not surprising that the mother of a working man's family, who is perhaps employed in some branch of industry, and almost invariably has all the labours of her little household to perform, in a very narrow space and in want of many common conveniences, should begin to consider children of even two or three years of age very much 'in the way' during the great part of the day and be ready to make a sacrifice of some pence per week to have them safely bestowed in some 'out of the way

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1. Wilderspin, S. On the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor, 1824.

2. P.P. 1837-38 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales, p. 97.

school'; an expressive designation she is very apt to give to the little congregation of infants in the kitchen of some neighbouring dame...<sup>3</sup>

If mothers did send their young children to school to be taken care of, then one would expect to find that mothers at home who were not in paid employment were less likely to send their two to four year olds to school than a working mother. As stated earlier, this was not found to be the case in the study area despite the fact that more single mothers than married ones worked in jobs that involved leaving home early and returning late (e.g. laundresses and charwomen) and many married working mothers were engaged in piece work which was not helped by the interruptions caused by the presence of small children. The need for day care therefore was obviously not the only reason young children were sent to school. That mothers withdrew their children from Wilderspin's school, despite the fact that the school charged no fees, tends to suggest that working-class parents at this time were interested in the form of their young children's schooling and did not only view schools for young children as merely places to keep them 'out of the way.'

School Attendance in Relation to Religion and Parent's Country of Birth.

Another important variable in this study area was religion and country of birth.

There were 71 Irish families and 107 children between the ages of two and seven. The vast majority of these families were Catholic, although on the basis of their names one Irish family was Jewish.

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1. Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1845, p. 351.

The second largest minority group was composed of Jewish families, of which there were 59 and 108 children in the two to seven age range.<sup>1</sup> The third largest minority group was composed of Germans and Dutch, at least half of whom were also Jewish. This was the smallest group, with 46 families and a total of 77 two to seven year olds.

There were clear differences in the attendance patterns of these three groups. In the case of Jewish families, 68 per cent of children between two and seven attended school and no child was listed as receiving education at home (Tables 5.11a and 5.11b overleaf). The Irish families were a complete contrast; only 24 per cent of the two to seven year olds were in school whilst for the majority, 72 per cent, no description was provided (Tables 5.112a and 5.112b) The difference is shown very clearly by Graphs 5.3 and 5.4.

Table 5.11a

Spitalfields: Description of total number of Jewish children, within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	2	8	12	18	17	15	72
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	11	6	10	3	2	1	33
Total	13	14	22	21	19	16	105

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1. The only way of determining whether a family was Jewish or not was by examining the names. In some case the first and family names were typically Jewish (e.g. Isaac, Cohen, Solomon, Levy, Emmanuel), in other cases only the first names were common Jewish names (e.g. Esther, Jacob, Samuel, Aaron etc.).

Table 5.11b

Spitalfields: Description of total percentage of Jewish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	15	57	55	86	89	94
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	85	43	45	14	11	6
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.12a

Spitalfields: Description of total numbers of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

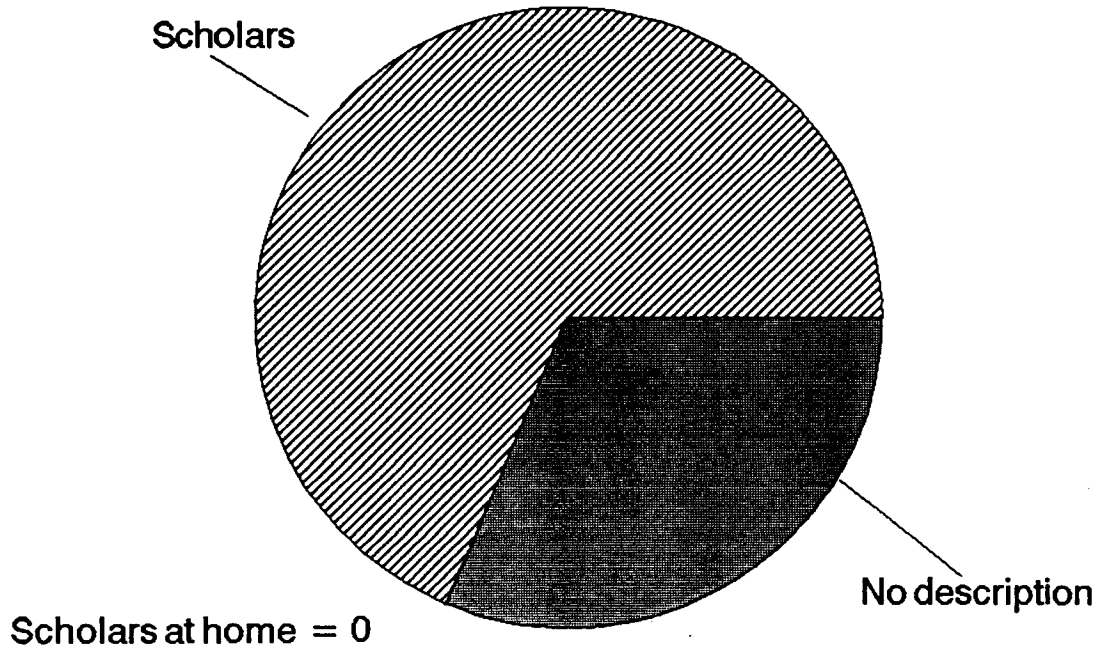
	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	3	3	6	9	3	24
Scholars at home	1	1	2	0	1	1	6
No description	13	13	13	8	10	18	75
Total	14	17	18	14	20	22	105

Table 5.12b

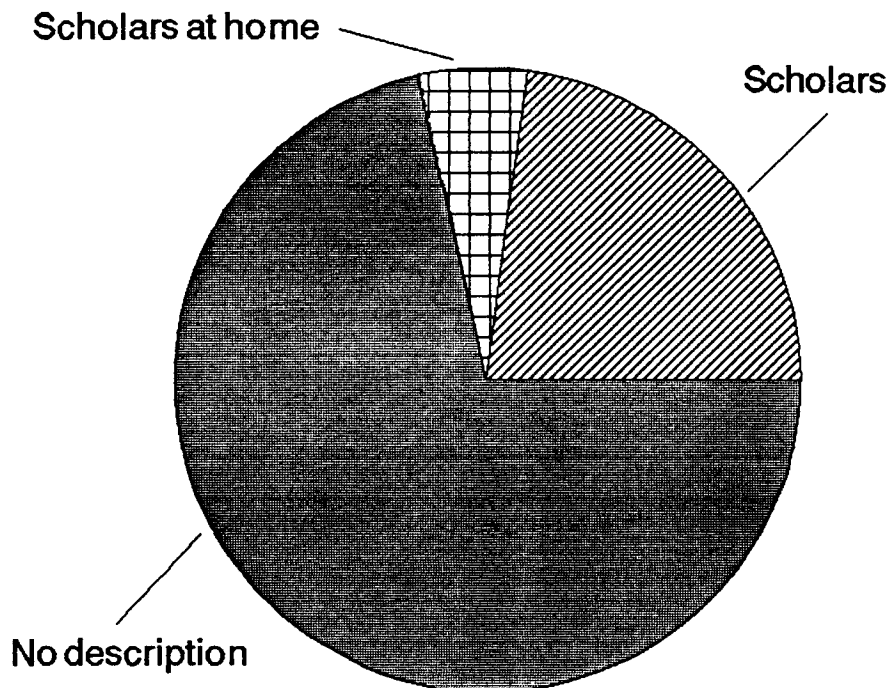
Spitalfields: Description of total percentage of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	0	18	17	43	45	14
Scholars at home	7	6	11	0	5	5
No description	93	76	72	57	50	81
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Graph 5.3  
Spitalfields: Graph to show proportion of Jewish children in each category.



Graph 5.4  
Spitalfields: Graph to show proportion of Irish children in each category





The German and Dutch families formed an interesting group. Taken as a whole, school attendance levels amongst the 'under eights' was 51 per cent. Almost half of the German and Dutch families had very definite Jewish names and were obviously European Jews who had migrated to England. Amongst these German and Dutch Jews 56 per cent of two to seven year olds attended school (Tables 5.13a and 5.13b below) but in the other German and Dutch families school attendance was lower, with only 45 per cent returned as scholars (Tables 5.14a and 5.14b overleaf)

Table 5.13a

Spitalfields: Description of total number of German/Dutch Jewish children, within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	6	2	9	4	23
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	4	4	6	2	0	0	16
Total	5	5	12	4	9	4	39

Table 5.13b

Spitalfields: Description of total percentage of German/Dutch Jewish children, within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	20	20	50	50	100	100
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	80	80	50	50	0	0
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.14a

Spitalfields: Description of total number of German/Dutch children (excluding Jewish children), within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	2	3	3	5	4	17
Scholars at home	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
No description	6	3	6	1	3	0	19
Total	6	5	10	4	8	4	37

Table 5.14b

Spitalfields: Description of total percentage of German/Dutch children (excluding Jewish children), within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	0	40	30	75	63	100
Scholars at home	0	0	10	0	0	0
No description	100	60	60	25	37	0
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

These differences might have reflected the age make up of the under sevens in each of the groups, the diverse economic situation of the groups, the availability of suitable educational facilities or the diverse attitudes towards the education of young children.

The proportions of children in each year band were not similar in each of the three groups of Irish, Jewish and German and Dutch children (Tables 5.11a, 5.12. 5.14a). This unevenness was reflected in the ages of scholars in the German and Dutch families. There was, however, a tendency in German and Dutch families towards increased school attendance as the children grew older. In the

case of Irish and Jewish families, despite differences in the proportion within each age band, there was a discernible pattern in the school attendance of under sevens. In both Irish and Jewish families the proportion of scholars increased between the ages of two and six. In Jewish families the vast majority of seven year olds were at school but in Irish families there was a decline in the number and proportion of seven year olds at school. This decline was discernible in other areas of London (e.g. St. Giles and Marylebone).

Parental occupation and the family's economic situation might also have influenced school attendance. More than two-thirds of the Jewish families were headed by someone who was a general dealer, hawker or seller of fruit, cakes and sweets or clothes. In Irish families a third of the heads of households were labourers and tailors. There was no dominant occupation in the non-Jewish Dutch and German families.<sup>1</sup>

A good return was not always guaranteed from street-selling. The market was slack or brisk depending upon the spending power of the customers, the desirability of the stock, or the weather. Few definitive figures are therefore available for the income of general dealers but income could vary from only 10s a week to more than

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1. The term 'non-Jewish German and Dutch families' is used to refer to those families without obvious Jewish names. It is possible that some of these families were indeed Jewish.

one pound.<sup>1</sup> Labourers and tailors were not in steady regular employment and although a labourer could sometimes earn a decent wage there were times when he was unemployed due to bad weather, lack of work, ships not docking etc. The economic situation of general dealers' families was very similar to that of labourers and tailors and yet there was a marked difference in school attendance patterns.<sup>2</sup>

Economic explanations are clearly not sufficient. The differences may have been linked in some way to the pattern of mothers' employment. The contemporary view was that a high level of female employment led to a greater need for schools for young children. Only 20 per cent of married Jewish women were described as employed; a slightly higher proportion of married Irish women went to work (28 per cent) and only 15 per cent of non-Jewish German and Dutch married mothers went to work. It would seem that in these three cultural groups, the attendance of children at school was not solely influenced by the employment patterns of mothers.

On the basis of the data it is possible to argue that the influences of financial constraints and parents' working patterns were mediated by other factors in determining whether or not a young child went to school. The early establishment of the Jews' Free School would

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1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol 1, 1849, p. 264.

2. Labourers' wages were estimated to average 2s 6d and 3s 9d a day when employed, P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Hand Loom Weavers. Returns and Reports from Assistant Commissioners, p. 279.

suggest that from early in the century, middle-class Jews were keen to ensure that the children of the less wealthy Jew would receive some instruction. The justifications put forward for establishing such schools were very similar to those being put forward by Evangelicals, Anglicans and later by Catholics. The 1831 Annual Report on the Jewish Free School noted for example:

Many poor children has it rescued from the dire effects of ignorance, many a boy has been saved by salutary instruction, who from want of employment of his time, would have wandered the streets and whose active mind, would have been drawn into actions leading to vice and ending in crime and infamy.<sup>1</sup>

Jewish infants in the area were relatively well served and by the beginning of 1841 there was the nearby Houndsditch Jews' Infants school as well as the Girls' and Boys' Jews' Free Schools. The existence of wealthy middle-class Jews undoubtedly helped ensure that public education facilities were not only established but also received on-going financial support.<sup>2</sup> Not all Jewish parents wanted to send their children to these public schools. In 1833 one private infants' school for boys was in operation in Tenter Street and run by a teacher whose second name was Isaacs. There were two daily schools in Bell Lane catering for 53 children; the first was run by Henry Levy and the second by Solomon Abraham. The 1841 census returns listed three Jewish teachers who probably operated working-class private schools, Ester Davis in Tilley Street, Nathaniel Canlon and his 17 year old daughter in White Lion Street and Samuel Nato , 'a teacher of Hebrew' in Bell Court. The L.S.S. recorded

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1. Annual Report of the Jewish Free School, 1831.

2. Brook, S., The Club: The Jews of Modern Britain, 1989, pp. 18-21.

the existence of nine private schools run by Jews in Whitechapel and Shadwell. In 1851 there were two such teachers, Moses Levy and Henry Zilva, both of whom operated schools in Freeman Street.

Very little has come to light regarding the value placed by Jewish families on education of young children. Mayhew asserted that:

Notwithstanding these means of education [the seven metropolitan Jews' Schools], the body of poorer, or what in other callings might be termed the working classes, are not even tolerably well educated; they are indifferent to the matter. With many, the multiplication table seems to constitute what they think the acme of all knowledge needful to man...So neglectful or so neccessitous (but I heard frequently the ignorance attributed to neglect far more frequently than neccessity) are the poorer Jews, and so soon do they take their children away from school "to learn and do something useful for themselves" and so irregular is their attendance, on the plea that the time can not be spared, and the boy must do something for himself, that many children leave the free schools ...as ignorant as they entered...<sup>1</sup>

The picture painted by Mayhew does not seem to tally with the attendance figures of young Jewish children, which were well above average for the district unless Jewish parents did indeed send their younger children to be 'minded' at the free schools. Mayhew's suggestion that the Jewish community was not interested in educating its children is also not borne out by the literacy levels amongst couples marrying in the Bevis Marks Synagogue.<sup>2</sup> The Bevis Marks Synagogue served the Spanish and Portuguese congregation and, although the synagogue itself was situated outside the study area, it was attended by some Jews who lived within the sampled area of

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1. Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 2, 1861, p. 128

2. Bevis Marks Records 3: Abstract of the Marriage Records, 1837-1901.

Spitalfields. An analysis of the Bevis Marks marriage registers for the 20 year period from 1841 to 1860 showed that illiteracy rates amongst Jews were consistently lower than amongst brides and grooms throughout England (see below).

<u>Period</u>	<u>Males not signing</u> <u>register (percentage)</u>		<u>Females not signing</u> <u>register (percentage)</u>	
	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>All</u>
1841-50	9.3	32	35.8	47.5
1851-60	6.5	28.6	28.8	40.8

Although the ability to sign one's name does not mean that one is functionally literate (i.e. can read and write with a fair degree of fluency or ease), the figures above would suggest that a high proportion of Jewish children were at least introduced to the written word.

As stated earlier, some Jewish parents were also willing to pay for day schooling. There are three possible reasons as to why private Jewish working-class schools might have been supported in the area. The first is that, as with working-class parents elsewhere, it is possible that some parents were not happy with the curriculum and hidden curriculum in the public Jews' schools or the non-Jewish public infants' schools. It is also possible that parents were keen that their children learned to read Hebrew, something non-Jewish private schools would be unable to offer. The third reason might have been to do with language and sect. Many of the Jews in London

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1. Bevis Marks Records 3: Abstract of the Marriage Records, 1837-1901.

originated in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe and might have felt more secure in sending their children to a school where the teacher shared the children's home language and their home traditions. The L.S.S. noted the linguistic differences between private Jewish schools:

Every child is taught Hebrew, and there is no distinction of girls and boys in this respect...They read it for the most part with the German pronunciation, but in some schools they use the Portuguese or Spanish, there being two races of Jews in London.<sup>1</sup>

The school attendance patterns of Jewish children was further complicated by the fact that the two main sects, Ashkenazim and Sephardim, might have had different views regarding the value of education of very young children. In the mid-1860s Colquhoun stated that whilst the Sephardim 'give their children the best education which can be obtained' the Ashkenazim children 'got no education at all'.<sup>2</sup>

The available data does not enable definite conclusions to be drawn regarding the patterns of Jewish education and this is an area that would benefit from more detailed research.

The school attendance of young Irish or Catholic children stood in contrast to that of young Jewish children (Graphs 5.3 and 5.4). Whilst 69 per cent of Jewish children aged between two and seven attended school, only 23 per cent of Irish 'under eights' did so.

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1. Fifth Report and Summary of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vol. 6, 1843, pp. 211-217.

2. Colquhoun, P. 'Treatise on the Police in the Metropolis', 1866, p. 120 quoted in Rayment-Pickard, A.E., 'Education Provision in Stepney and Whitechapel from 1780-1870', 1986, M.A. University of London, p. 19.



The majority of Irish families were Catholic and there was only one Catholic school in the area. This meant that those parents who did not want their children exposed to Protestant interpretations of the scriptures had little choice but to send their children to a private school, if they could afford one, or to not send them to schools at all.

In 1849, Scott Naysmyth Stokes, the Secretary of the Catholic Poor School Committee stated that:

As the regulations of the schools to which the designation Ragged is properly confined are such as to prevent Roman Catholic children from attending them without doing violence to their conscience, it has become necessary to open for such children of the lowest class, a separate school of the same general character. Such schools have accordingly been established in various parts of the metropolis and are numerously attended...<sup>1</sup>

One such school was the Roman Catholic Ragged School in Butler Street which catered for 150 infants. It is likely that the Irish couple returned as ragged school teachers in the 1851 census were the teachers in this school.

It was not enough to provide schools, however; another problem was to get the children to school and to keep them there. K.T. McDonnell has used the views of contemporaries to argue that the poverty of the Irish in the East End of London was a great inhibiting factor as

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1. Letter from Scott Nasmyth Stokes dated 26th July 1849, printed in The Catholic School, Vol. 1 No. XI, Sept. 1849.

regards school attendance:

...hundreds of children in this district are like the birds of the air, depending on each day's labour for their sustenance, from the age of seven years and upwards labouring after one fashion or another from morning to late at night. No system can educate this class of children unless schools that could feed and clothe them.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the poverty of many Irish families, it was also not uncommon for Irish parents not to speak English and this must have had a negative influence on school attendance as it made it more difficult for such parents to gain access to the public educational facilities available. Unlike the Jewish families in the area, the Irish Catholic community had not, at this point, begun to establish a network of schools in which the Catholic faith was taught and in which the teachers could speak Irish. This was partly because there were few wealthy or middle-class Irish Catholics in London at the time, who would have been in a financial position to establish and support schools for Irish Catholic children and partly because the English Catholics, some of whom were wealthy, were only slowly beginning to overcome their antagonism towards the Irish Catholics and accepting that they would have to be the ones to provide Catholic schools.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Westminster Diocesan Archives W2/3/5/14, Wiseman Papers, cited by McDonnell, K.G.T., 'Roman Catholics in London, 1850-65' in Hollaender A.E.J. and Kellaway, W. (eds), Studies in London History, 1969, p. 440.

2. Jackson, J.A., 'The Irish in East London' in East London Papers, Vol. 6, No. 2, Dec. 1963, pp. 107-114 and Jackson, J.A., The Irish in Britain, 1963, p. 139.

School Attendance in Relation to Family Size.

The difficulty in discerning clear cut links between the economic and employment situation of families, the cultural background of the families and the attendance of 'under eights' at school would suggest that these factors interacted with others including the age of the children concerned and the size of the family.

Families composed of two or three children accounted for more than 40 per cent of families in the Spitalfields sample. Irish families were not particularly large and the majority, in common with the sample as a whole, tended to be composed of two or three children. Jewish families however, tended to be larger; more than 40 per cent were composed of five or more children (Tables 5.15-5.17 overleaf).

In the sample as a whole, a higher proportion of families with three or more children sent at least one infant to school than families with only one or two children. This pattern was repeated in the case of Jewish families, but in Irish families school attendance appeared to bear very little relationship to the size of the family (Table 5.16 and 5.17 overleaf). The finding that, apart from Irish families, larger families were more likely to send at least one infant-aged child to school does not have a simple economic explanation. One explanation could be that in larger families there was more likelihood that older children would be contributing to the family income and, as discussed previously, more families in which older siblings were employed sent infants to school than families in which one of the children was employed. Another explanation could

Table 5.15

Spitalfields: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother in English families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	76	26	27	11
Two Children	129	37	36	14
Three Children	124	56	39	23
Four Children	102	48	28	14
Five Children	79	48	28	18
Six or more Children	72	46	15	10
Total	582	261	173	90

Table 5.16

Spitalfields: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother in Irish families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	9	1	3	0
Two Children	14	5	5	1
Three Children	17	4	6	0
Four Children	11	3	4	2
Five Children	13	4	3	0
Six or more Children	8	3	1	0
Total	72	20	22	3

Table 5.17

Spitalfields: School attendance related to family size and employment  
of mother in Jewish, German and Dutch families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	4	1	3	1
Two Children	14	4	3	1
Three Children	18	11	8	3
Four Children	14	12	4	4
Five Children	9	6	3	1
Six or more Children	26	23	8	6
Total	85	57	29	16

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with a working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one  
infant at school.

relate to the size of the family and to whether or not the mother worked. Whether or not a mother was employed did not appear to have been influenced by the size of the family. In those families in which the mothers worked, however, approximately a third of families with one or two children sent at least one 'under eight' to school, whilst between half and two thirds of families with three or more children sent an infant to school. It is not possible to provide a useful analysis of the relationship between family size, employment of mother and school attendance in the case of Irish and Jewish families as the number of families of each size is too small.

Whilst the family size does not appear to have had a major influence on school attendance it is clear, nonetheless, that it was one of a series of factors whose interaction shaped school attendance by infants in this area of Spitalfields.

#### Summary.

This eastern area of London had a higher proportion of infants at school than the two areas in the west of London (St. George's, Hanover Square and Marylebone). Jewish infants in this particular area of London had a far better record of school attendance than their English peers, whilst Irish Catholics in the area had the worst record of school attendance. In common with infants in Marylebone and St. Georges, 'under eights' in Spitalfields who had at least one older sibling at work and who came from a large family were more likely to attend school than those who were from small families and had no older siblings at work. Unlike the two western areas, the marital and employment state of the mother appeared to

exert little influence on school attendance. The effect of the father's occupation on school attendance was modified by factors such as religion and the father's country of birth and therefore no clear cut pattern emerged as to school attendance in relation to fathers' occupations.

The next chapter focuses on St. Giles, an area in the central zone which was very distinctive because of the high proportion of Irish families living in the locality.

CHAPTER 6

SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE CHURCH LANE AREA  
OF THE PARISH OF ST. GILES, FINSBURY.

The parish of St. Giles was situated in south Finsbury. The study area, composed of Church Lane and the nearby streets, was chosen mainly because it had been an area of intense interest to contemporaries. It had been the focus of surveys, visits and philanthropic activity. The locality was infamous internationally, and prior to her visit to London a Spanish friend told the Frenchwoman Flora Tristan that she ought to visit the area. The study area formed part of the district which was familiarly known as the 'Holy Land' or 'Little Dublin'<sup>1</sup> because of the high numbers of Irish inhabitants.

Hogarth's eighteenth-century engraving entitled Gin Lane was based on Church Lane and almost a century later, in 1828, the 'extreme wretchedness, ignorance and filthiness' of the great majority of the inhabitants of the 'Holy Land' was said to be beyond description.<sup>1</sup> In the 1830s Charles Dickens wrote:

We need go no further than St. Giles, or Drury Lane, for sights and scenes of a most repulsive nature...whole streets of squalid and miserable appearance, whose inhabitants are lounging in the public road, fighting, screaming and swearing - these are the common objects which present themselves.<sup>2</sup>

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1. St. Giles Local District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor in the Populous District, in the parish of St. Giles in the Fields, 1828, p. 41. The 'Holy Land' was bounded by Great Russell Street, High Street and George Street.

2. Dickens, C., 'Sunday Under Three Heads: As It Is' in Reprinted Pieces, 1858, republished as The Uncommercial Traveller and Reprinted Pieces, 1861, p. 564.

Area of St.Giles in which  
surveyed streets were located.



Five years later Flora Tristan ventured into the dark, narrow alley known as Bainbridge Street, turned right into an unnamed street and described what she saw in the following way:

...the atmosphere is stifling, there is no fresh air to breathe nor daylight to guide your steps. The wretched inhabitants wash their garments themselves and hang them on poles across the street, shutting out all pure air and sunshine. The slimy mud beneath your feet gives off all manner of noxious vapours while the wretched rags above your head drip their dirty rain upon your head...picture if you can, barefoot men, women and children picking their way through the foul morass; some huddled against the wall for want of anywhere to sit...I saw children *without a stitch of clothing*...All this is horrifying enough, but it is nothing compared with the expressions on the people's faces...I recognised in them the self same faces and expressions that I had observed when I visited the prisons...<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1840s a visitor to the George Street Model Lodging House described the street itself as wretched and felt that the 'the swarms of vicious looking young women seen sitting on the edges of the pavement...[showed] the general depravity of the neighbourhood'.<sup>2</sup> During the course of the next few years it would appear that the character of the area improved somewhat.

Following his visit to Church Lane, Mayhew wrote :

From the windows of the three storied houses in Church Lane were suspended wooden rods with clothes to dry across the narrow streets...Altogether the appearance of the inhabitants was much more clean and orderly than might be expected in such a low locality. Many women of the lower orders, chiefly of the Irish cockneys, were seated...beside the open widows. Some men were smoking their pipes...whom from their appearance we evidently took to be out-door

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1. Tristan, F., The London Journal of Flora Tristan, 1842, pp. 156-57.

2. The Labourers Friend, New Series, No. XLI, Oct. 1847, pp. 178-79. The George Street Model Lodging House was just one of such houses built by the Philanthropic Society for the Improvement of the Condition of the Labouring Classes.

labourers. Numbers of young women, the wives of costermongers, sat in front of their houses...clad in cotton gowns with a general aspect of personal cleanliness and contentment...<sup>1</sup>

Until the late 1840s the Church Lane area of St. Giles was the archetypal London 'rookery': overcrowded, dirty and inhabited by a high number of criminals.<sup>2</sup> An outstanding feature of the study area was the high number of Irish. According to the 1841 census enumerators' returns for Church Lane, 43 per cent of the inhabitants were born in Ireland and 71 per cent of families with children below the age of eight were Irish (i.e. one or both parents had been born in Ireland).<sup>3</sup> By 1851, 92 per cent of families with young children in Church Lane were Irish. The population of Church Lane had almost doubled during this ten year period and had increased from 654 in 1841 to 1,209 in 1851. This massive increase was attributed partly to the migration of Irish during the 1846 and 1847 Irish famines, who sought out their countryfolk:

Of the great number of immigrants who, during the late disastrous years in Ireland, flocked as well into the metropolis as into other large towns of England, there can be no doubt that the vast majority sought naturally the spots frequented by their countrymen; Church Lane must have felt considerably the effect of this accession.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Quennel, P. (ed.), Mayhew's London Underworld, 1987, pp. 173-75.

2. Beames, T., The Rookeries of London; Past, Present and Prospective, 1853, pp. 29-32; Chesney, K., The Victorian Underworld, 1970, pp. 122-26.

3. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 673 and HO 107 674.

4. Horace Mann, 'Statement of Mortality in Church Lane During the Last Ten Years' in J.S.S., Vol. XI, Feb. 1848, p. 20.

The second explanation for the population increase lay in the urban and moral reformers' response to the slums. Slums such as Church Lane and the surrounding streets were viewed with distaste and anxiety by the middle- and upper-class reformers, who perceived such places as refuges for criminals and 'nurseries of felons'.<sup>1</sup> In addition slums tended to harbour a high number of mendicants. Between 1820 and 1824 there were more street beggars in St. Giles than in any other parish.<sup>2</sup> Many contemporaries felt that one way of solving the problem would be totally to sweep the slums away or open up the area by a partial demolition of the slums. Partial demolition would at least ensure that the inhabitants were more easily accessible to reformers and the forces of law and order.

In the late 1820s the plan put forward to build an extension to Oxford Street involved the demolition of some of the rookery, as the new road was to pass between Church Lane and Bainbridge Street. The plan was applauded by St. Giles Local District Committee who argued that it would result in nothing but good:

...by dispersing in some degree the hordes that congregate here, and breaking them into smaller collections, would render them more accessible to observation and control, as well as to instruction and relief and afford a hope (perhaps the only), of a fundamental cure for the manifold evils of this wretched neighbourhood.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Beames, T., op cit, 1853, p. 149.

2. Society for the Suppression of Mendicity, Second, Third and Fourth Reports, 1820-24.

3. St. Giles Local District Committee, op cit., 1828, p. 25.

In 1841, a year before work on the new street began, Henry Austin stated that the new road should be used to destroy all 'that nest of filth and abomination termed the Rookery, in St. Giles'.<sup>1</sup> The completion of New Oxford Street in 1847 did not solve the problem, as it had simply resulted in some of the displaced poor moving to adjacent streets and living in even worse conditions than before, whilst others moved to the streets around Seven Dials.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the population changes due to building work and immigration, the area experienced seasonal changes in the population. There was a seasonal influx of Irish families before the hay harvest. In 1815 this particular influx was estimated to be more than 5,000.<sup>3</sup> Had these seasonal workers lived throughout London their presence would not have caused so much attention, but they tended to gravitate to areas such as St. Giles, where they found others like themselves: poor casual workers or criminals. Many families arrived too early for the harvest and whilst some of the women and men found casual employment, others turned to begging in the streets. Come harvest time it was estimated that 1,000 Irish adults and

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1. Austin, H. 'Metropolitan Improvements' in Westminster Review, No. XXXVI, 1841, pp. 419 and 424-25.

2. The Labourers' Friend, New Series, No. XXIV, May 1846, p. 73 and No. XLI, Oct. 1847, pp 178-179; Green, D.R. People of the Rookery: A Pauper Community in Victorian London, Occasional Paper No. 26, 1989, Geography Dept. King's College, London, pp 37-38.

3. P.P. 1816 (396) v, Report from the Select Committee on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis, p. 7.

children left the area for the country.<sup>1</sup>

An examination of the education in this particular study area affords the opportunity to explore the effects on Early Years education of factors including a rapid localised increase in population, high proportions of Irish and Catholic families and the schooling patterns of a large number of children with parents engaged mainly in casual work.

St. Patrick's School in the parish of St. Giles, was established in 1803. It was supported by voluntary contributions and was for Catholic children only. The St. Giles Irish Free Schools in George Street were instituted in 1813 and during the course of the next three years educated 774 children. It is not clear how many children attended these schools annually. In 1816 John Kelly, the Treasurer of St. Patrick's School, asserted that his school was educating 400 children and attributed this very high attendance to the work of 'a very excellent mistress in the boys' school'. Thomas Finnegan, however, who was the master of the St. Giles Free Schools, said that he believed the Catholic school educated only 200 children. He also stated that his schools had the capacity to educate 300 but in fact attendance averaged only 200.<sup>2</sup>

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1. P.P. 1815 (473) III, Report on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis, pp. 26-27.

2. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, pp. 4-5.

Table 6A: Educational facilities for infants in St. Giles, Finsbury.<sup>1</sup>

- 1803 - St. Patrick's School.
- 1813 - St. Giles Irish Free Schools, George Street. (British and Foreign School).
- 1826 - St. Giles Irish Free School for Infants, George Street (British and Foreign School).
- 1828 - St. Francis Free Catholic School, George Street.
- 1846 - West Street Chapel Infants' School (listed by the National Society )
- 1847 - St. Anne's Charity Infants School, Rose Street.
- 1849 - 11, West Street, Seven Dials, Girls' School (British and Foreign School)  
- Crown Street Infants' School.  
- St. Francis Xavier Infants' School, Seven Dials.
- 1851 - Rose Lane Ragged School (Moved to Dunns Passage in 1852).

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1. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns Made to the Select Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Education of the Poor, p. 545; St. Giles Local District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor, 1828, p. 4; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 561-562; Annual Report of British and Foreign School Society, 1838; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7; Kelly's London P.O. Directory, 1849, List of schools; Murphy, M.A., 'The Origin, Growth and Development of Schools for Roman Catholic Poor Children in the Archdiocese of Westminster, 1760 - 1861', 1979, Unpublished M.Phil., University of London, pp. 108-109, 130-135, 209-211, 394.

Despite the fact that the St. Giles schools were not full to capacity, the existing schools did not meet the educational needs of the area. In 1816 the curate of St. Giles believed that there must be an 'immense' number of children uneducated as the population was so thick.<sup>1</sup> In 1819 it was stated that 'the poor are without the means of education of their children and from the numerous applications for admission, appear very desirous of obtaining them'.<sup>2</sup> In the light of this comment it is interesting to note that in 1828 the Local District Committee of St. Giles noted that the Irish Free Schools, which had been established in 1813, did not begin to flourish until 1825.<sup>3</sup>

It is not clear whether the aforementioned schools catered for infants. What is known for certain, however, is that in August 1826 the Committee of the St. Giles Irish Free Schools opened a school for infants which was attended by 70 to 100 pupils. Two years later St. Francis Catholic Free school opened at 19, George Street. This school was originally intended to serve as

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis, p. 18.

2. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns Made to the Select Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Education of the Poor, p. 545.

3. St. Giles Local District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor, 1828, p. 4.

the infant school for St. Patrick's but in fact catered for children between the ages of four and 14.<sup>1</sup>

In 1838 the British and Foreign Society noted the existence of West Street Girls' School and 8 years later, in 1846, West Street Chapel Infants' School was listed in the reports of the National Society.<sup>2</sup> The infants' school, which was not united with the National Society, was supported purely by subscription and educated 80 children during the week and 70 children on Sunday. The following year an infant school opened in Rose Street in the neighbouring parish of St. Anne's. This school catered for 130 infants. In the late 1840s another two Catholic infant schools opened, one in Crown Street and the other, St. Francis Xavier Girls' and Infants' School, in Seven Dials.<sup>3</sup> A Catholic ragged school opened in Rose Lane, Covent Garden in 1851. A year later it moved to Dunns Passage and catered for 150 infants, 150 girls and 400 boys. Children living within the study area could easily walk to the last four schools.

The area does not appear to have been well served with private working-class schools. According to the 1833 education returns the combined parishes of St. Giles and St. George's contained five small private infant schools in which the instruction

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1. Murphy, M.A., op cit., p. 130.

2. Annual Report of British and Foreign School Society, 1838; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7; Kelly's London P.O. Directory, 1849, List of schools.

3. Murphy, M.A., 1979, op cit., pp. 209-211 and p. 394.



was 'wholly at the expense of the parents'.<sup>1</sup> Ten years later the L.S.S. survey of Finsbury revealed the 'total want of any private schools for the reception of children of the poorest classes'.<sup>2</sup> Scouring the 1841 and 1851 census enumerators' returns yielded only one possible private-school teacher within the study area, Jeremiah Tooting, aged 39, of Church Lane who was described in the 1841 Census as a 'teacher'. This area therefore stood in direct contrast to other areas of London such as the St. Mary's district of Marylebone and St. George's , Hanover Square.<sup>3</sup>

#### Schools catering for Catholic children.

The various public schools in this part of St. Giles did not cater for the same sections of the community. This area of London was one in which religious differences appeared to have played a major part in the development of public educational facilities for infants.

Four public schools, St. Patrick's, St. Francis, St. Francis Xavier and Crown Street Infants', all catered specifically for the high number of Catholic children in the area. The St. Giles Irish Free Schools were designated 'free' because they were supposedly open to both Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants.

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1. P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 561.

2. 'Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S on the Borough of Finsbury', J.S.S., Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 29.

3. See chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis.

Finnegan asserted that his school aimed to give children of the poor Irish 'proper instruction and useful information regarding reading, writing and arithmetic only, without interfering with the principles of their religion'.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, however, that the St. Giles Free Schools were not free from religious affiliation and this was the cause of some dissatisfaction. Finnegan explained that the St. Giles schools were not full to capacity because of the 'unprecedented opposition' of the Roman Catholic clergy.<sup>2</sup> The reason for the clergy's outrage was that the Approved Version of the Bible was used to teach the children to read. The St. Giles schools were known as the 'Protestant Bible Schools' and Finnegan asserted that not only had the Catholic clergy forbidden parents to allow their children to attend the school and read the scriptures, but had also threatened parents with excommunication if they defied this order. Finnegan was very willing to provide details of the Roman Catholic priests' violent opposition and claimed that the school house windows had been broken; he alleged that he and his wife had been pelted with mud and his child so badly beaten that he was crippled. This particularly violent series of events were said to have occurred after Finnegan had prevented a priest from teaching the Roman Catholic catechism in the school.<sup>3</sup>

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis, p. 2.

2. This may have been why the schools did not begin to flourish until 1825, see page 291 of this chapter.

3. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis, p. 3.

Many Catholics believed that the St. Giles Free Schools were not only non-Catholic but also anti-Catholic. This was not an unreasonable suspicion in view of the fact that the Approved Version of the scriptures was used in St. Giles Free Schools.<sup>1</sup> In addition, Roman Catholics in London had experienced prejudice, insensitivity and hostility in other schools (e.g. the Protestant Poor Law schools and workhouse schools). Catholic parents, for example, with children in workhouse schools, were frequently not informed that they had a right to religious instruction for their children and themselves in a faith other than that of the Established Church.<sup>2</sup>

In St. Giles, the Catholic response to this prejudice was to establish their own schools. St. Francis Catholic Free School in George Street was established by 'a few humble individuals' specifically in order to provide an alternative to the St. Giles group of schools.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Murphy, M.A., op cit., pp. 130, 147-148; The Catholic School, Vol. 1, No. 1, Aug. 1848, pp. 11-12.

2. Feheney, J.M.P., 'Changing Attitudes in the Catholic Church to the Provision of Schooling for Orphan and Destitute Children from the London Area During the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', 1981, Ph.D, University of London, p. 39.

3. Murphy, M.A., op cit., 1979, p. 130 and p. 148.

There is no direct testimony from parents at the time regarding their views about the schools available. Finnegan stated that, after the priest had been prevented from catechising the children, the following Sunday's sermon had included dire warnings to the parents about the proselytising intentions of the school. In the week after the sermon, the attendance at the schools plummeted from 230 to 38 but during the following week, as memories of the sermon faded, many of the scholars returned. Finnegan asserted that the return of scholars demonstrated that parents were satisfied with the mode of instruction.<sup>1</sup> It is possible to put forward another explanation for the return of the scholars. At this particular time the only other school in the area was St. Patrick's, which was already educating no fewer than 400 children. It is possible, therefore, that parents with children at the St. Giles Free School simply had nowhere else to send their children, and some of the parents might have been willing to compromise their religious beliefs in order to secure free schooling for their children. The fact that the school was not full to capacity, despite parents wanting schooling for their children, would suggest that there were some parents who felt very strongly that they wanted a Catholic education for their children.

As the decades passed Catholics did not feel any less threatened. The ragged schools established by the Evangelical

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis, p. 3.

Ragged School Union (R.S.U.) were seen by some Catholics as yet another means of proselytising poor Catholic children, although the R.S.U. insisted it was unsectarian. The R.S.U. did not distinguish between children on religious grounds and blandly stated that although many of the children were of Roman Catholic parents, 'the authorised version of the scriptures [was] read and explained to all'.<sup>1</sup> It seems unlikely that the R.S.U. was unaware of the consequences of such an approach. The R.S.U. went on to state however that it was encouraged that 'all sections of the Christian Church seem now to have resolved to come forward and agree to merge all minor differences in this effort to rescue poor perishing children'.<sup>2</sup> The Catholic Poor School Committee was totally opposed to such an approach and made it clear that the committee hoped the R.S.U. would cease this practice. The lack of a sympathetic response from the R.S.U. was a motivating factor in the establishment of the Catholic Ragged School in Rose Street. Father Hutchinson was responsible for the establishment of this school, and he believed that such a school was necessary as Protestants were using schools to proselytise.<sup>3</sup>

The comments made by the R.S.U. in 1852 about the education of poor Irish Catholics show that Irish Catholics had grounds for

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1. The Catholic School, Aug. 1848 Vol.1, No. 1, pp. 11-12.

2. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

3. Feheney, J.M.P., 'The London Catholic Ragged School, 1851-1863: The Story and the Sources', History of Education Society Bulletin, 1985, p. 19.

supposing that even the apparently non-sectarian ragged schools could not be trusted to respect the faith of the Catholic pupils:

We pretend, in our ragged work, to go to the root of the evils we seek to remove, but the root of Irish degradation and misery is popery and no weapon but 'the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God' will ever be capable of wounding it.<sup>1</sup>

The Catholic ragged school operated along the same lines of other ragged schools in terms of clientele and teaching methods. The school was welcomed by local residents as it was attended by 150 infants and 550 older children during the day, and a further 350 pupils in the evening. This ragged school was probably well utilised not only because of its Catholic ethos but also because it was free.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Age.

School attendance by the under eights was low in this part of London. In the sampled streets the average attendance rate was only 23 per cent, which compared unfavourably with the rates in other areas of London (Tables 6.1a and 6.1b overleaf). There was a fairly steady increase in the proportion of children at school in each successive year band although from the age of five the rate of increase levelled off (Graph 6.1 overleaf). This pattern was also observable if the Church Lane area and the Seven Dials area were looked at separately (Tables 6.2a-6.3b)

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1. Ragged School Union Magazine 1852, p. 24.

Table 6.1a

St.Giles, Church Lane and Seven Dials: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	12	14	15	31	29	32	133
Scholars at home	1	3	4	1	2	1	12
No description	113	83	54	69	57	58	434
Total	126	100	73	101	88	91	579

Table 6.1b

St.Giles, Church Lane and Seven Dials: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	10	14	21	31	33	35
Scholars at home	1	3	5	1	2	1
No description	89	83	74	68	65	64
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Graph 6.1

St. Giles: Description of total percentage of children in each age group.

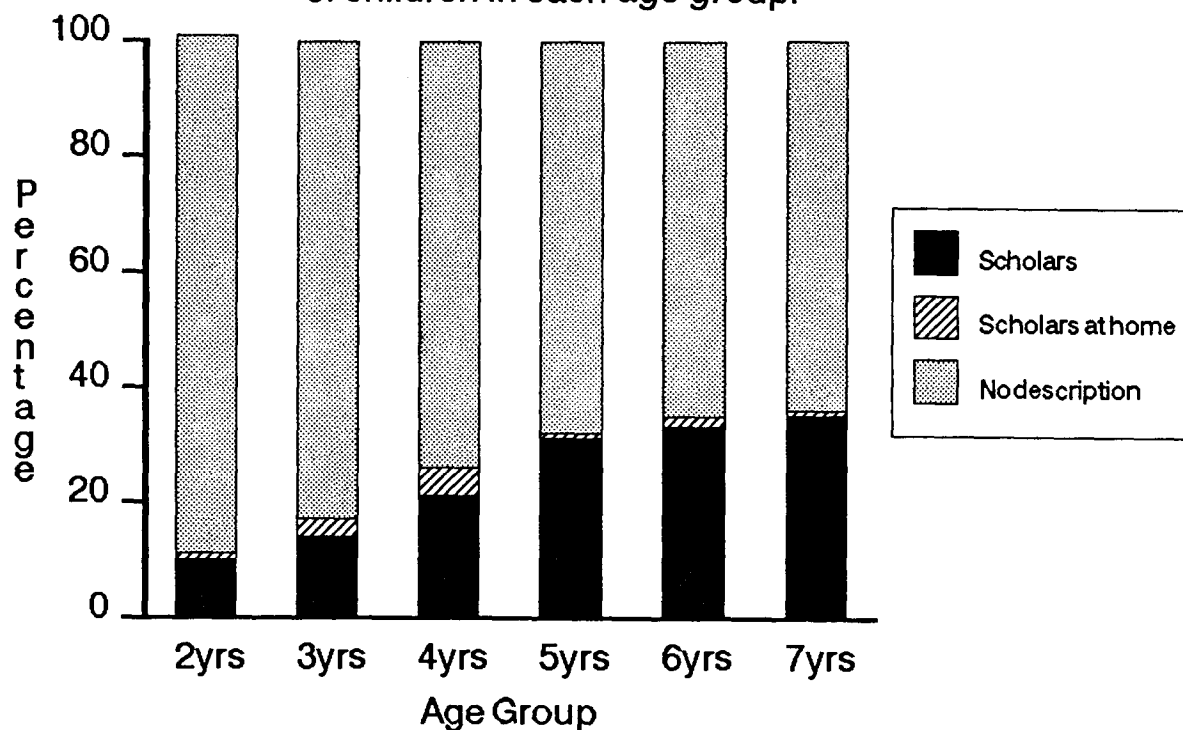


Table 6.2a

St.Giles, Church Lane area: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	3	3	3	8	6	8	31
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	36	25	22	24	22	24	153
Total	39	28	25	32	28	32	184

Table 6.2b

St.Giles, Church Lane area: Description of percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	8	11	12	25	21	25
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	92	89	88	75	79	75
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6.3a

St.Giles, Seven Dials area: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	9	11	12	23	23	24	102
Scholars at home	1	3	4	1	2	1	12
No description	77	58	32	45	35	34	281
Total	87	72	48	69	60	59	395

Table 6.3b

St.Giles, Seven Dials area: Description of percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

Seven Dials area	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	10	15	25	33	38	41
Scholars at home	1	4	8	1	3	2
No description	89	81	67	66	59	57
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100



One explanation for the low levels of school attendance could lie in the age distribution of children aged from two to seven. If there had been a very high proportion of two to four year olds in the sample then it would not have been surprising if the overall level of school attendance was low. In the case of the sampled streets in St. Giles, however, 52 per cent of the 579 infant-aged children were in the two to four age bracket and 48 per cent were aged five to seven (Table 6.1a). This slight age imbalance was not of sufficient magnitude to account for the very low school attendance rates.

The pattern of school attendance in the area could also have been influenced in some way by the fact that a high proportion of children in the sample had parents who had been born in Ireland. In the Church Lane area, Irish children accounted for 77 per cent of children aged between two and seven. In the Seven Dials area the proportion was lower but at 21 per cent was still significant. School attendance was very low amongst Irish children aged between two and seven. Taking the Irish in Church Lane and Seven Dials together, only 13 per cent of under eights were at school (Tables 6.4a-6.6b overleaf). The number of children at school within each age band was very small and it is therefore not possible to state with any degree of certainty whether there was an increase in the proportion of Irish children at school with an increase in age. It is clear, however, that the low levels of school attendance amongst the Irish children in the area contributed to the low level of school attendance observed in the study area as a whole.

Table 6.4a

St.Giles, Church Lane and Seven Dials: Description of total number of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	3	2	4	3	5	11	28
Scholars at home	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
No description	53	22	33	30	26	29	193
Total	56	25	38	33	31	40	223

Table 6.4b

St.Giles, Church Lane and Seven Dials: Description of percentage number of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	5	8	11	9	16	28
Scholars at home	0	4	3	0	0	0
No description	95	88	86	91	84	72
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6.5a

St.Giles, Church Lane area: Description of total number of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	2	1	2	2	2	8	17
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	30	14	20	19	20	21	124
Total	32	15	22	21	22	29	141

Table 6.5b

St.Giles, Church Lane area: Description of percentage Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	6	7	9	10	9	28
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	94	93	91	90	91	72
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6.6a

St.Giles, Seven Dials: Description of total number of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	2	1	3	3	11
Scholars at home	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
No description	23	8	13	11	6	8	69
Total	24	10	16	12	9	11	82

Table 6.6b

St.Giles, Seven Dials: Description of percentage of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	4	10	13	8	33	27
Scholars at home	0	10	6	0	0	0
No description	96	80	81	92	67	73
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

The low levels of school attendance were not because vast numbers of children started work at a very young age but rather because, in this area, there was a tendency for children to go to school when slightly older rather than when very young. Of those 8 to 14 year olds with younger siblings, only 30 per cent were at school and the peak ages for school attendance were eight and ten (Tables 6.7a and 6.7b overleaf). From the age of ten there was an increase in the proportion of children at work.

Table 6.7a

St. Giles: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	24	19	24	8	16	7	8	106
At work	1	0	6	4	8	10	9	38
Scholars at home	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	5
No description	32	39	27	33	35	22	14	202
Total	57	61	58	45	59	39	32	351

Table 6.7b

St. Giles: Description of total percentage of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	42	31	41	18	27	18	25
At work	2	0	10	9	14	26	28
Scholars at home	0	5	2	0	0	0	3
No description	56	64	47	73	59	56	44
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

### School Attendance in Relation to Family Size and the Employment of Older Siblings.

In families with at least one older sibling at work, infants had a greater chance of attending school than those in which there were no older siblings at work. Table 6.8b shows that 38 per cent of families with at least one older sibling at work also

had at least one infant at school whilst only 23 per cent of families with no older siblings at work sent an infant to school. This pattern was observable in both English and Irish families. The possible economic explanations for this particular pattern of school attendance have already been discussed in the previous three chapters.

Table 6.8a

St.Giles: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
English	34	16	93	29	172
Irish	22	5	73	9	109
Total	56	21	166	38	281

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 6.8b

St.Giles: Percentage of families in each category relating school attendance to employment of siblings.

	G	F
English	32	24
Irish	19	11
Total %	38	23

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work which also had at least one infant at school ( $B/A \times 100$ ).

F = Percentage of families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school ( $D/C \times 100$ ).

Table 6.8b is based on figures in Table 6.8a.

There was no clear connection between the school attendance of infants and family size since the proportion of families sending

a young child to school did not increase or decrease steadily as the family size increased (Table 6.9a). Less than 10 per cent of families with only one child sent the child to school; approximately 40 per cent of families composed of four children sent at least one infant-aged child to school, but in larger families the proportion of families with an infant at school decreased. The general trend was that more than a quarter of families composed of four or more children had at least one infant at school, whilst less than a fifth of families with one to three children sent an infant to school. Families most likely to have at least one infant at school were those composed of four children.

Table 6.9a  
St. Giles: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother in all families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	65	5	22	3
Two Children	109	22	32	9
Three Children	94	19	23	5
Four Children	73	31	19	8
Five Children	35	11	9	3
Six or more Children	27	7	7	3
Total	403	95	112	31

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one infant at school.

When Irish and English families are examined separately, school attendance does not increase or decrease smoothly in relation to family size. Very few Irish families with one or two children sent an infant to school, and school attendance of infants amongst Irish families with three or more than five children does not appear to have been influenced by family size (Table 6.9b).

Table 6.9b  
St. Giles: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother in Irish families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	24	1	7	1
Two Children	43	2	10	0
Three Children	42	8	12	2
Four Children	27	7	8	3
Five Children	13	2	4	2
Six or more Children	11	2	3	1
Total	160	22	44	9

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one infant at school.

In English families, family size appeared to have no clear cut effect on school attendance (Table 6.9c overleaf).

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Table 6.9c  
St. Giles: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother in English families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	41	4	15	3
Two Children	66	20	22	9
Three Children	52	11	11	3
Four Children	46	24	11	5
Five Children	22	9	5	1
Six or more Children	16	5	4	2
Total	243	73	68	23

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least  
one infant at school.

In both Irish and English families, an infant in a four-child family had the best chance of attending school. The low school attendance by infants in the sample area of St. Giles could be attributed to the fact that families composed of four or more children accounted for only a third of all the families in the sample.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Fathers' Occupations.

The study area was outstanding in comparison with other areas studied in London as many of the parents were very poor. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century most working parents within the area earned very little. In 1841 the majority of men living in and around Church Lane earned their



living as labourers and costermongers.<sup>1</sup> The employment patterns had changed little by 1851. The jobs available to fathers with children below the age of eight in and around St. Giles were, in the main, poorly paid and of a casual nature. In the Church Lane area 48 per cent were labourers and 26 per cent were costermongers, hawkers or dealers. The occupational profile was a little different in the streets around Seven Dials. Labourers accounted for only 11 per cent of fathers with young children, whilst bootmakers and shoemakers accounted for 14 per cent and carpenters, metal workers and tailors approximately 8 per cent each.

At the time of the 1841 Census, mothers worked as dress-makers, shoebinders, market women and laundresses.<sup>2</sup> In 1851, in the Church Lane area, married mothers were mainly employed as fruit and vegetable sellers, market women hawkers, charwomen and laundresses. Single women with young children worked as costermongers, marketwomen, and fruit sellers.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, in the Seven Dials area, married working mothers were employed as dressmakers, shoemakers, dealers and charwomen and single working mothers worked as laundresses, dressmakers, charwomen and dealers.

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1. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 673 and HO 107 674.

2. Ibid.

3. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1508 and HO 107 1509.

The majority of occupations, male and female, provided only a precarious living as they were subject to the vagaries of the weather and the seasons. Labourers could only work when the weather was clement and street-sellers were similarly adversely affected by rainy weather. The figures for applications for Poor Relief in St. Giles between 1832 and 1862 have been used by David Green to show that, as in other parts of London, poverty in St. Giles had a seasonal rhythm. The highest number of applications for relief occurred in the winter months, between February and June. During the London 'season' there was a decline, and in the late summer and autumn applications began to increase until a peak was reached in January.<sup>1</sup> Cyclic patterns in availability of employment also depended upon other factors (e.g. the health of the country's economy and international wars). In the late 1840s some costermongers suffered during the cholera epidemic, as few people bought fruit and vegetables during this period.<sup>2</sup> Many workers in the study area experienced long and short spells of unemployment. In 1827 the occupational profile of the district was very similar to that in 1851, and an 1827 survey of the area revealed that 324 adults were unemployed. Since the total population at the time, including children, was 3,600 it would seem that approximately 18 per cent of the adults were unemployed. Most of those out of work were labourers, some of whom had been out of work for many months.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Green, D., People of the Rookery, 1986, p. 27.

2. Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1, 1861, p. 53.

3. St Giles Local District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor, 1828, pp. 7-9.

Between 1832 and 1862 almost 40 per cent of men earned less than 15s a week.

Women fared even worse, with 75 per cent earning less than 10s a week.<sup>1</sup> Labourers, when employed, could earn around three shillings a day but probably earned on average around 12s a week. Costermongers earned only 10s a week through the year.

An analysis of the school attendance patterns of infants whose fathers were labourers, shoemakers, tailors and street sellers and general dealers appeared to show that school attendance could be loosely linked with the father's occupation (Graph 6.2 overleaf).

The school attendance rates for children varied with approximately a quarter of street sellers' and tailors' children at school (Table 6.10c and 6.11c overleaf). Less than a fifth of shoemakers' children and just under a tenth of labourers' 'under eights' were described as scholars (Table 6.12c and 6.13c overleaf). The low school attendance rate amongst labourers' children may have been due to the poor pay and the casual nature of the fathers' employment. A purely wage-related explanation is insufficient since a far higher proportion of street sellers' children attended school, although their fathers, like the labourers, earned very little and were at the mercy of the weather. Families responded in different ways to the economic ups and downs of life. Some of these responses are explored in the following section.

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1. Green, D., People of the Rookery, 1986, p. 20.

Graph 6.2

St. Giles: Percentage of scholars related to father's occupation and nationality.

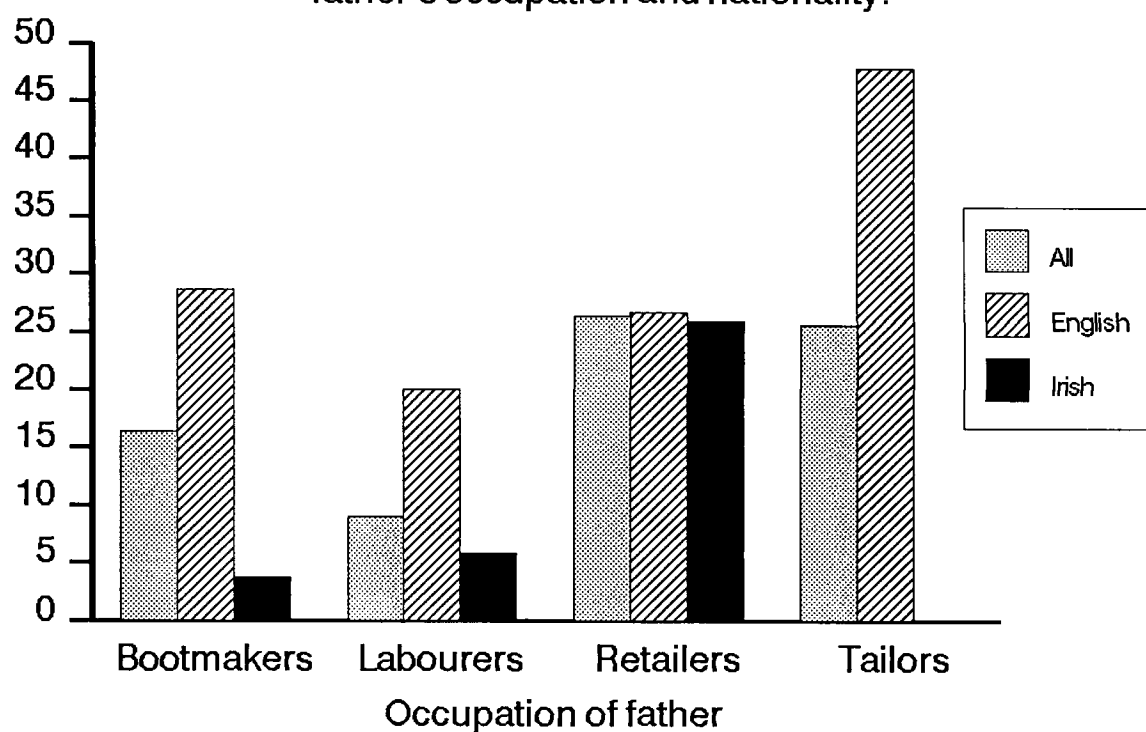


Table 6.10a

St. Giles: Description of children of all English street sellers and retailers relating number withing each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	2	0	4	1	0	8
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	7	3	3	5	0	4	22
Total	8	5	3	9	1	4	30

Table 6.10b

St. Giles: Description of children of all Irish street sellers and retailers relating number withing each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	2	0	1	1	1	2	7
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	7	2	2	5	3	1	20
Total	9	2	3	6	4	3	27

Table 6.10c

St. Giles: Description of children of all street sellers and retailers relating number withing each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	3	2	1	5	2	2	15
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	14	5	5	10	3	5	42
Total	17	7	6	15	5	7	57

Table 6.11a

St. Giles: Description of children of English born tailors,  
relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	0	3	4	2	11
Scholars at home	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
No description	2	7	1	1	0	0	11
Total	3	9	1	4	4	2	23

Table 6.11b

St. Giles: Description of children of Irish born tailors,  
relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	3	3	1	7	4	2	20
Total	3	3	1	7	4	2	20

Table 6.11c

St. Giles: Description of children of all tailors,  
relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	0	3	4	2	11
Scholars at home	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
No description	5	10	2	8	4	2	31
Total	6	12	2	11	8	4	43

Table 6.12a

St. Giles: Description of children of English born shoemakers, relating number withing each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	0	3	1	2	8
Scholars at home	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
No description	7	5	1	2	2	0	17
Total	9	6	2	5	3	3	28

Table 6.12b

St. Giles: Description of children of Irish born shoemakers relating number withing each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	9	0	7	3	3	4	26
Total	9	0	7	3	3	5	27

Table 6.12c

St. Giles: Description of children of all shoemakers, relating number withing each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	0	3	1	3	9
Scholars at home	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
No description	16	5	8	5	5	4	43
Total	18	6	9	8	6	8	55

Table 6.13a

St. Giles: Description of children of English born labourers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	1	0	3	0	1	5
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	4	4	3	3	4	2	20
Total	4	5	3	6	4	3	25

Table 6.13b

St. Giles: Description of children of Irish born labourers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	0	0	2	3	5
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	19	13	13	8	13	15	81
Total	19	13	13	8	15	18	86

Table 6.13c

St. Giles: Description of children of all labourers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	1	0	3	2	4	10
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	23	17	16	11	17	17	101
Total	23	18	16	14	19	21	111



Family Economics and School Attendance.

One consequence of the low and irregular wages was that some parents were compelled to send their children to work at a young age. In the early part of the nineteenth century the St. Giles Free Schools were seen as agents of reform amongst the poor Irish living in the area. Supporters of the schools were therefore unhappy when they observed that the schools had not 'succeeded to any considerable extent, notwithstanding the meritorious exertions of a very intelligent and humane master'. The failure of the schools was attributed to the poor attendance of children and the fact that parents removed their children from the school 'for the more profitable occupation of begging'.<sup>1</sup> Children as young as five would beg alone or were sometimes hired for 2s 6d a day by adults who found that the presence of small children tended to make people a little more generous. Children were able to earn from one to four shillings a day on the streets at a time when Irish labourers in the area earned approximately two shillings a day and 'very few indeed have more than 3s'.<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that some parents decided to send their children out begging rather than send them to school since the money the children brought home would have formed a significant part of the family income. It should be noted here that the census returns cannot confirm or refute these claims regarding the begging activities of very young children as no child aged between two and eight was

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, p 4.

2. Ibid., p. 4.

described by the enumerators as a mendicant or beggar, probably because parents chose not to disclose this particular piece of information.

In 1816 Francis Baisler examined an area around Long Acre and Drury Lane and stated that although many of the adults were themselves uneducated most were 'extremely anxious' for education. He added that the 'general inquiry was, what time they might expect to get their children to school'.<sup>1</sup> Three years earlier Edward Wakefield had presented a report to the West London Lancasterian Society in which he stated that, although the vast majority of children living near Shorts Gardens were ignorant, 'it would be doing the parents great injustice...to omit stating that they seemed anxiously desirous that their children should receive this blessing [of education]'.<sup>2</sup>

Parents were most concerned about education for the four to ten age group as once children were around the age of ten parents tended to 'send them out to do something, and do not keep them at home'.<sup>3</sup> Some children did not attend school at all before beginning to work at the age of seven or so. The Central Society of Education gave examples of two such children in St. Giles who did not attend a school before the age of seven and

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1. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 40.

3. Ibid., p. 8.

began working when only seven or eight years old. One child, Dennis Crawley, lived in Church Lane and sold onions. He had first started to attend a day school at the age of eight but within three months his father had died and he had to leave school in order to help support himself. Another child aged ten lived near Seven Dials and sold poultry in Covent Garden. He earned between 3s and 20s a week. His natural father could read and write but his stepfather could not and had sent him to work when he was only seven years old. In 1838 this child had just started to attend the Sunday School in George Street.<sup>1</sup>

Records would suggest that by the middle of the nineteenth century a few children were still being sent to work at an early age. In 1841, one seven year old matchseller was recorded in Church Lane.<sup>2</sup> In 1851, in the sample area, a six year old boy was returned as a fruit seller, a five year old girl was engaged in needlework and a seven year old sold matches.<sup>3</sup> The early age at which children could begin to contribute to the family income may account for the levelling off that occurred after the age of five with regard to school attendance.

Within the study area, very few children below the age of eight were described as working and yet only 23 per cent of children

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1. 'Schools for the Industrious Classes' in Central Society of Education, 2nd Publication, 1838, p. 390 and p. 396.

2. 1841 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 673.

3. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1509.

in this age group were described as scholars. The need to pay school fees could not have been a factor discouraging attendance at public schools since the majority of schools in the area were free. If few young children were earning then the loss of potential wages could not account for the low attendance. One explanation for the poor attendance might have been that parents were too poor to clothe their children. In 1816 the Treasurer of St. Patrick's stated that parents wanted to educate their children but were often prevented from so doing because they ↵

could not afford to clothe their children. Both St. Patrick's and St. Giles Free schools tried to provide clothing for the scholars and Kelly believed that this had contributed to an increase in attendance.<sup>1</sup> Twenty years later, clothing children was still a problem and George Cornewall Lewis pointed out that the Irish 'frequently made excuses for themselves or their children, for not attending chapel or school, on the ground of want of proper clothing'.<sup>2</sup> According to Joseph Wigram, the curate of the parish of St. James, Soho, quite a few children of the poor Irish attended the National School but many left to attend the 'St. Patrick's clothed school'.<sup>3</sup> It is not certain

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1. St. Giles District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor, 1828, p. 5.

2. P.P. 1837 (68) xxxi Second Report of the Commissioners for Inquiry into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland, Appx G, Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, p. xii.

3. P.P. 1835 [465] vii, Report on the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 7-8.

whether the lure of St. Patrick's lay in its religious affiliation, the standard of teaching or the fact that it provided clothes for its pupils. The St. Giles Local District Committee believed that the provision of clothes or food resulted in parents ceasing to value the intrinsic worth of education. The Committee asserted that 'children were sent merely because provisions and clothes were given , and even the teachers, in their anxiety to afford bodily relief relaxed in their endeavours for the mental improvement of the scholars entrusted to them'.<sup>1</sup>

School Attendance in Relation to Religion and Parents' Country of Birth.

No analysis of school attendance in this particular area of London, however, can ignore the fact that a high proportion of the children were Irish. Different patterns of school attendance emerge when Irish and English fathers are looked at separately. In the case of English labourers, five out of 25 'under eights' were at school as compared with five out of 86 children of Irish labourers (Table 6.13a and 6.13b). Clearly a higher proportion of English labourers' children attended school than Irish labourers' children. Eight out of 28 English boot- and shoemakers' children were at school as compared with only one out of 26 Irish shoemakers' children (6.12a and 6.12b). There was also a marked difference in the attendance patterns of tailors' children; almost half of English tailors' children were

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1. St. Giles District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor, 1828, p. 5.

at school but not a single Irish tailors' child was described as a scholar (Table 6.11a and 6.11b). In the case of street sellers' children, the parents' country of origin did not seem to influence attendance as approximately a quarter of Irish children and a quarter of the English children attended school (Table 6.10a and 6.10b).

It is possible that the differences between the Irish and the English were due to different views on education, religious factors, economic factors, the availability of facilities or a combination of all of these.

Approximately 12 to 13 per cent of infants with an Irish parent were described as scholars in 1851, as compared to almost a third of children with English born parents. Attendance of Irish children at school was often irregular, which was partly attributable to the seasonal influx and efflux of families around harvest time.

Many of the Irish parents were unable to read or write but reports seem to show that this did not mean that the Irish did not value education. In fact most records suggest that Irish parents were generally keen to send their children to school.<sup>1</sup> The determination of some Irish Catholics to do well ought not to be underestimated. Mayhew quoted the case of a 15 year old girl who, since being orphaned at the age of eight, had

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1. For example, Porter, G.R., op cit., 1838, p. 256; Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1, 1861, p. 108.

supported herself and her younger brother and sister.

Furthermore, she had sent both the younger children to a Roman Catholic school and a ragged school, and as a result all three children were able to read well.<sup>1</sup> If the parents were keen to educate their children then why were school attendance rates amongst the very young so low? One reason might have been that many parents had suspicions about the proselytising intent of English schools and this may have discouraged parents from sending their young children to school.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the Irish working class faced a great deal of deep rooted prejudice in England. In the late 1820s it was stated that colonies of Irish labourers caused trouble because of their 'wild and lawless disposition'.<sup>3</sup> Over the next 40 years the prejudice did not decrease and in 1862 a typical Irish labourer and bricklayer in London and Liverpool was described as 'a creature manifestly between the gorilla and the negro ...[which] belongs in fact to a tribe of Irish savages'.<sup>4</sup> Such negative perceptions of the Irish poor must have influenced how Irish children were perceived in public schools.

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1. Mayhew, H. London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1, 1861, pp. 135-136.

2. St. Giles Local District Committee, A Short Account of the Wretched State of the Poor, 1828, p. 42.

2. See pp. 294-295 of this chapter

3. This description appeared in Punch in 1862 and was cited by Swift, R., 'The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City: Problems and Perspective' in Irish Historical Studies, Vol. XXV No.99, May 1987, pp. 271-272.

Working-class Irish Catholics had to contend not only with the prejudices against the Irish working class in general but also religious prejudice.<sup>1</sup> In 1839, The Times warned of the dangers that would result from allowing Protestant children 'to herd with the Leprous brood of Papists' in schools.<sup>2</sup>

Prejudice against poor Irish Catholics was not confined to English Protestants. Some English Catholics felt that their security and status was threatened by the presence of the Irish Catholics and sought to distance themselves from their Irish co-religionists. One such English Catholic woman asserted that 'English Catholics are responsible beings who are taught right from wrong, whereas Irish Catholics, belonging to a yet savage nation, know no better and are perhaps excusable on that account'.<sup>3</sup>

In view of these prejudices, based on religion, class and culture, it seems feasible to suggest that many Irish parents

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1. Gilley, S. and Swift, R. have argued that anti-Irish sentiments were not evident in the case of the middle class Irish and therefore the prejudices and negative judgements made about the vast majority of Irish migrants were more to do with the social class of the migrants than their ethnicity. See Gilley, S. and Swift, R. (eds.), The Irish in the Victorian City, 1985.

2. The Times, 18th May 1839, cited by Marmion, J.P., 'The Beginnings of the Catholic Poor Schools in England' in Recusant History, Vol. 17, No. 1, May 1984, pp. 67-83.

3. Jackson, J.A., 'The Irish in East London' in East London Papers Vol. 6, No. 2, Dec. 1963, p. 114.



would have felt alienated by the ethos of most of the public schools. If this had been the case then the obvious question to ask is, why did the parents not send their children to private schools set up by members of their own community? The answer lies in the fact that the majority of the Irish in St. Giles were very poor. In 1816 it was estimated that the Irish earned an average of 2s a day and that few earned more than 3s a day.

The Irish in England were concentrated at the bottom of the social and economic ladder and the situation had not improved much by the early 1850s. In St. Giles half of the Irish were in unskilled work, as compared with only a quarter of the English. Wages did not increase much for casual workers during the first half of the nineteenth century, and by the late 1860s, casual workers were only paid 3s a day. In 1850, labourers in regular employment earned about 15s a week over the year, whilst those not in regular employment earned an average of 8s to 10s a week. As stated earlier some of the Irish worked as shoemakers and tailors but most were engaged in sweated labour and therefore wages were low. It is clear how inadequate these wages were when one considers that rent alone could have cost the average Irish family 3s a week. On the basis of the available data on wages and expenditure, Lynne Hollen Lees has argued that families with young children supported by those engaged in sweated or casual work or by a female, were often not above the poverty line. The income was not enough to pay for even the

most minimal day to day living expenses (e.g. food, shelter, clothes).<sup>1</sup> Obviously not all Irish families were living in abject poverty but many of the families in the survey area contained young children and were headed by women or casual workers. Such families would have had no money to spare for private schooling and even attending free public schools would have posed a problem when the children had no shoes to wear.<sup>2</sup> The finding, that the proportion of children at school did not increase much from the age of five, may have an economic explanation. Families with an income barely sufficient to cover the essentials of life must have welcomed the wages of their children, however meagre and however irregular. Young children in St. Giles could earn a little by street selling, helping parents or older siblings who were street sellers, running errands for parents who worked from home (e.g. shoemakers, tailors and dressmakers) and, as in other parts of London, could make it easier for the mother to work by taking on responsibility for day care of younger siblings.

The positive relationship that existed between the availability of suitable schools and levels of schooling was highlighted by an Irishman who attributed the increased desire of Irish parents to send their children to school to an increase in the number of Roman Catholic schools: 'the more schools there are, the more people think about schooling their children'<sup>3</sup>. Lynne Hollen

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1. Lees, L.H., Exiles of Erin, 1979, pp. 99-100.

2. Ibid., p. 85.

3. Mayhew, H. London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1, 1861, p. 108.

Lees has argued that 'Irish' neighbourhoods offered security and a sense of community.<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Church recognised the importance of providing Roman Catholic schools and chapels that were situated in the heart of areas in which the residents were Irish Catholics, as these facilities were far more likely to be utilised than similar facilities which required the child or adult to leave the security of the neighbourhood. If Irish migrants preferred to live their day to day lives within one neighbourhood it is probable that they would have preferred to send their very young children to schools within the neighbourhood. The unavailability of sufficient Roman Catholic schools for the very young in the study area might have contributed to the low levels of school attendance.

The school attendance of Irish children within the study area was influenced by the parents' religion, the family income, the employment patterns of Irish children and the existence of a suitable public school within the locality.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Mothers' Employment and Marital State.

Whether the mother worked, and whether she was bringing the child up alone, were two further factors that might have influenced the school attendance of all young children.

Within the study area the presence of a working mother affected levels of school attendance. In 1851, just over a quarter of

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1. Lees, L.H., op cit., p. 87.

all infant-aged children, whose mothers were at work, attended school (Table 6.14a).<sup>1</sup> A higher proportion of married working mothers' children attended school than single working mothers' children, 30 per cent for married mothers as opposed to 16 per cent for single mothers (Table 6.14c) .

Table 6.14a

St. Giles: Description of children of English working mothers.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	5 (28%)	0 (0%)	13 (72%)	18 (100%)
Married	25 (34%)	0 (0%)	48 (66%)	73 (100%)
All	28 (31%)	0 (0%)	61 (69%)	89 (100%)

Table 6.14b

St. Giles: Description of children of Irish working mothers.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	18 (90%)	20 (100%)
Married	9 (28%)	0 (0%)	32 (72%)	41 (100%)
All	10 (16%)	1 (2%)	50 (82%)	61 (100%)

Table 6.14c

St. Giles: Description of children of all working mothers.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	6 (16%)	1 (3%)	31 (81%)	38 (100%)
Married	34 (30%)	0 (0%)	80 (70%)	114 (100%)
All	38 (25%)	1 (1%)	111 (74%)	150 (100%)

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1. This is slightly higher than the average for the study area as a whole (see Table 6.1a of this chapter, p. 299).

Table 6.15a

St. Giles, Seven Dials: Description of children of English born single working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	2	1	0	1	4
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	2	1	2	5	1	0	11
Total	2	1	4	6	1	1	15

Table 6.15b

St. Giles, Seven Dials: Description of children of Irish born single working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scholars at home	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
No description	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	2	0	0	0	0	2

Table 6.15c

St. Giles, Seven Dials: Description of children of all single working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	2	1	0	1	4
Scholars at home	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
No description	2	2	2	5	1	0	12
Total	2	3	4	6	1	1	17

Table 6.16a

St. Giles, Church Lane: Description of children of English born single working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	1	1	1	0	0	0	3

Table 6.16b

St. Giles, Church Lane: Description of children of Irish born single working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	3	1	2	2	7	2	17
Total	3	1	2	2	7	3	18

Table 6.16c

St. Giles, Church Lane: Description of children of all single working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	4	2	2	2	7	2	19
Total	4	2	3	2	7	3	21

Table 6.17a

St. Giles, Seven Dials: Description of children of English born married working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	4	3	4	4	7	22
Scholars at home	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
No description	9	12	3	4	4	6	38
Total	9	16	7	8	8	13	61

Table 6.17b

St. Giles, Seven Dials: Description of children of Irish born married working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	8	0	2	3	1	4	18
Total	8	1	2	4	1	4	20

Table 6.17c

St. Giles, Seven Dials: Description of children of all married working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	5	3	5	4	7	24
Scholars at home	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
No description	17	12	5	7	5	10	56
Total	17	17	9	12	9	17	81

Table 6.18a

St. Giles, Church Lane: Description of children of English born married working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	2	1	1	4	1	1	10
Total	3	1	1	5	1	2	13

Table 6.18b

St. Giles, Church Lane: Description of children of Irish born married working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	0	1	1	2	2	7
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	4	1	3	3	2	1	14
Total	5	1	4	4	4	3	21

Table 6.18c

St. Giles, Church Lane: Description of children of all married working mothers, relating numbers within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	2	0	1	2	2	3	10
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	6	2	4	7	3	2	24
Total	8	2	5	9	5	5	34



There were also differences between the attendance patterns of children with Irish-born mothers and those whose mothers were born in England. Just over a fifth of infant-aged children of married working mothers who were Irish attended school, as contrasted with 34 per cent of the children of English married working mothers (Tables 6.14b and 6.14c). Attendance amongst the children of single mothers was lower. In the case of single working mothers, only one out of the 20 children with Irish mothers attended school but nine out of 42 children of English single mothers' were at school (Table 6.14b and 6.14c). It is interesting to note that eight of the 10 infant scholars, whose mothers worked and were Irish, lived in George Street. It is possible therefore that the attendance of the Irish children was influenced by the fact that there was an infant school that was conveniently close to home. The St. Giles Free Infant School had been established after members of the school committee had discovered that young children whose mothers went out to work were often locked up alone or 'suffered to go about unattended during her absence'<sup>1</sup> and it was felt that an infant school was needed in the area.

The school attendance of children of Irish working mothers was probably influenced by the same factors as those influencing Irish children in general. English and Irish women in the study area tended to be employed in different occupations. Irish women earned their living mainly as street sellers or workers in the

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1. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1827.

nearby Covent Garden. English women worked as charwomen, weavers, shoemakers, but most worked as dressmakers, tailors or needlewomen. Neither the Irish nor the English women were in well-paid work and the earnings of both were subject to seasonal fluctuations. It seems unlikely, therefore, that the differences between the attendance patterns of children of working Irish mothers and working English mothers can be attributed to their occupations.

It is possible, however, that the husband's occupation influenced the pattern of school attendance amongst the young children of working married mothers. Irish mothers who were employed were mainly married to labourers, fruit sellers, dealers and costermongers and a few were married to boot and shoemakers. None of the men's occupations was highly paid and most were subject to fluctuations in employment levels. Even when both parents were employed, it is likely that in the Irish families there was seldom much money to spare for schooling or the expenses linked with schooling (e.g. clothes and shoes). In contrast English working mothers were married to men employed in a wide range of occupations, some badly paid and irregular (eg. labouring, street-selling, cleaning and portering, shoemaking and tailoring) and others which were either less subject to the seasonal fluctuations or were more skilled (e.g. portmanteau making, jewel-casemaking, brewing, metal work of various descriptions, printing, japanning). In the English families it is possible that the father's income was more regular or slightly higher than in Irish families, with the result that there was a little more to spend on schooling.

The effect of a working mother on school attendance was further modified by the size of the family, although family size in itself did not influence whether or not a mother worked (Table 6.9a-6.9c). In those families in which the mother worked, however, families composed of four or more children and a working mother were more likely to have at least one infant-aged child at school than families with one to three children and a working mother.

#### Summary.

St. Giles was outstanding in that a very high proportion of Irish families lived in the area and furthermore, many of the families were extremely poor. The number of Catholic public schools was a reflection of the high Irish presence in the area. The level of school attendance amongst infants in St. Giles was very low, at less than 25 per cent compared with approximately 30 per cent in St. George's and Marylebone, and 40 per cent in Spitalfields. This overall low level of school attendance was probably due mainly to the fact that only 13 per cent of Irish children attended school, compared with 29 per cent of English children in the area. The poverty stricken state of many families in St. Giles may also have prevented children from attending school.

The following chapters examine the school attendance patterns in three areas in the outer arc of London.

CHAPTER 7

SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN PART OF CHELSEA, BOUNDED  
BY BOND STREET, WESTBOURNE STREET, CHELSEA REACH AND OAKLEY STREET.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Chelsea was a rural area on the western outskirts of London and consisted mainly of farms, common land and parks.<sup>1</sup> The King's Road at this time was a private road used by the King and open only to those bearing the required copper token.<sup>2</sup> In the mid-eighteenth century, Chelsea was referred to as the 'Village of Palaces' because of the large houses in the area. By the early nineteenth century, however, the character of the area had begun to change.<sup>3</sup> Between 1801 and 1851 the population of Chelsea increased almost sixfold whilst that of London as a whole only doubled. In 1801 the population of Chelsea was approximately 12,000 and by 1851 it had risen to 56,538.<sup>4</sup> In common with other areas of rapid population increase (e.g. Spitalfields), as the population of Chelsea increased the numbers of poor families in the area rose. The reasons, however, were different. In Spitalfields the number of poor families increased because of an efflux of the wealthy and middle classes and the availability of cheap housing and employment opportunities, especially unskilled work. By way of contrast, wealthy families not only continued to live in Chelsea

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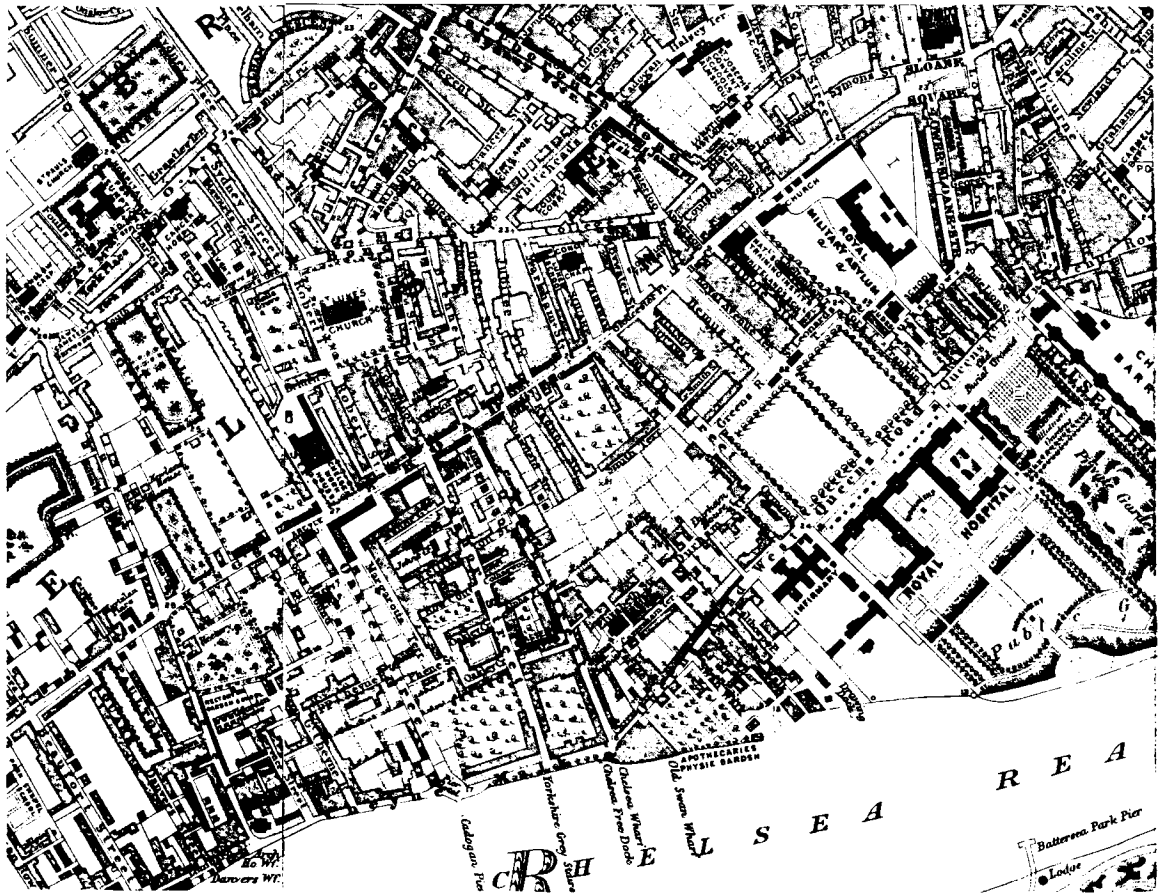
1. Gaunt, W., Chelsea, 1954, p. 39 et seq..

2. Weinreb, B. and Hibbert, C., The London Encyclopaedia, 1983, p. 436.

3. Faulkner, T., An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, 1829, Vol. 2, p. 95.

4. P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1810, 1811, 1821 and 1831, pp. 161-166.;

Area of Chelsea in which surveyed  
streets were located.



From Stanford's New Library Map of London, 1862

but Chelsea was also an area to which the wealthy moved. This increase in the number of wealthy families was partly responsible for the rise in the number of poorer, working-class inhabitants in the area as the presence of wealthy families increased the need for workers able to service their requirements. Workers in the building trades were attracted to the area due to the increase in housebuilding. The number of poorer families also rose because a large number of houses were built on the open land in Chelsea. Many of these houses were small and cramped, and as a result slums began to develop in parts of Chelsea. The fact that by the mid 1830s the King's Road had become a public thoroughfare, and was no longer a road for the privileged few, was one indication that the character of Chelsea changed during the first half of the nineteenth century.

By 1851 Chelsea could no longer be described as a village on the outskirts of London, although some market gardens remained which hinted at the essentially rural nature of Chelsea's past. The occupational profile of the surveyed streets in Chelsea revealed that between 1810 and 1851 there had been a decline in the proportion of agricultural workers and an increase in other groups. In the surveyed streets only eight fathers of young children worked as gardeners or market florists. The high proportions of skilled and unskilled construction workers in the area in the 1840s and 1850s were a reflection of the high rate of house building in the area. Chelsea was similar to other parts of London with sizeable numbers of wealthy families, in that a number of workers were employed as shoemakers, dressmakers, hatters, laundresses, coachmen and domestic servants.

During the first half of the nineteenth century Chelsea contained a number of fashionable, pleasant streets such as Cheyne Walk and Sloane Street which were inhabited by various well known contemporary writers and artists. Chelsea was also an area of London in which wealthier families had summer residences. As stated earlier however, there were slums in the area. In 1834 Thomas Carlyle described Chelsea as 'a singularly heterogenous spot, very dirty and confused in some places, [and] quite beautiful in other'.<sup>1</sup> One such slum, referred to as Jews' Row, was described as a 'labyrinth of courts and passages of small one and two roomed houses...inhabited by the very lowest and most depraved criminal classes'.<sup>2</sup> This description was very similar to the numerous descriptions of the slums contained within the inner arc of London<sup>3</sup> and an in-depth study of the area enabled a comparison of the educational and social experiences of young children living in slums in the outer arc of London with those of children living within the inner arc.

The survey area was composed of 44 streets situated at the junction of the three parishes St. Luke's, Christ Church and St. Jude's. The socio-economic profiles of some of the survey streets were similar to those in the surveyed area of Marylebone in that apart from the

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1. Cited in Holme, T., Chelsea, 1972, p. 136.

2. Bell Ellenor, T., Rambling Recollections of Chelsea and the Surrounding District, as a Village in the Early Part of the Past Century, by an Old Inhabitant, 1901, p. 81.

3. See Chapters 3-6 of this thesis.

the very rich and the very poor, residential segregation was not always very clear cut, and few streets were inhabited solely by poorly-paid, unskilled casual workers. The 1851 census returns showed that some of Chelsea's streets were fairly mixed in terms of the occupations and social class of the residents. In Jubilee Place for example, families of barristers, clerks, public school teachers, cab proprietors and a 'lady' lived adjacent to the families of carpenters, shoemakers, carmen, brass founders and upholsterers, whilst Markham Street was inhabited by clerks, cabinet makers, bootmakers, laundresses and schoolmistresses.<sup>1</sup> This residential pattern contrasted with that found in parts of St. Giles, Christ Church, Spitalfields and, to a lesser extent, St. George's, Westminster, where some of the streets were inhabited solely by unskilled workers' families. Whether the residential patterns in Chelsea had a discernible effect on educational provision for working-class children below the age of eight is explored later in the section.

Chelsea was similar to the other areas of London which experienced rapid increases in the local population in that existing facilities for the moral and spiritual welfare of the local residents, especially the poor residents, were found to be inadequate as the

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1472 and 1473.



population increased.<sup>1</sup> As early as 1829 Thomas Faulkner highlighted the fact that the increase in the population of Chelsea was accompanied by an increase in the number of families who were 'incapable of paying for the education of their offspring'.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in the case of Chelsea, the population increase appeared to result in an increased pressure on existing publicly funded educational facilities for the poor.

Educational Facilities for Infants Within the Survey Area of Chelsea.

In the 1819 Education Returns, it was recorded that the area referred to as St. Luke's, Chelsea (which also included Kensington), had a population of 18,262 and was served by a parish charity school, two National schools, two Sunday schools (one of which was allied to a school of industry), and 'numerous' Dissenters schools. The schools listed catered for over 750 children. In addition to these schools there were 'numberless small day and evening schools, kept by women' and the returning officer noted that 'the poorer classes are not without the means of education'.<sup>3</sup> None of the

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1. For example, the inadequate number of churches and schools in relation to the growing population of Bethnal Green was specifically mentioned in the 1839 Report of the Bethnal Green Churches and Schools Fund reprinted in Reports of the Bethnal Green Churches and Schools Fund Committee, 1839-54, 1854, pp. 5-6.

2. Faulkner, T., An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, 1829, Vol. 2, p. 92.

3. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt. 1, p. 548.

schools, however, catered for infants, nor is it known how many infants attended the 'small schools'.

By 1833 the population of St. Luke's, Chelsea (excluding Kensington) had risen to 32,371 and three public infant schools were in operation.<sup>1</sup> One of the three infant schools, St. Luke's, Markham Street, was within the survey area, whilst the other two schools were situated outside the survey area (Table 7A).<sup>2</sup>

Table 7A: Public schools within the survey area.<sup>3</sup>

1825 - Markham Street Infant School, (between 1825 and 1827 school held in Pond Place).

1843 - Christ Church Infant School, Queen Street ( Moved in 1850 to Queen's Road West).

1846 - St. Jude's Infant School, Turks Row.

Public schools within walking distance of children in the survey area.

1836 - Rectory Garden Infants' School.

1835 - Trinity Infants' School, Sloane Street.

1845 - St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Schools, Cadogan Street.

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1. P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 556.

2. The two infant schools referred to here are the Clockhouse School and Trinity Infants' School.

3. P.P. 1819 (224) ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt. 1, p. 548; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 556; 'Report by Rev, F.C. Cook on Schools' Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1846, p. 152; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7; Faulkener, T., op cit., Vol. 1, p. 148 and Vol. 2, pp. 166-170 and p. 316.

The Markham Street Infant School started life in 'small and inconvenient premises' in Pond Place. In 1827, however, the school was able to move to its new building in Markham Street. Once at its new premises this school could cater for as many as 160 children, but the average attendance in 1827 and 1828 was 110 and 140 respectively.<sup>1</sup>

The Royal Military Asylum was situated on the north-eastern edge of the study area and educated 450 boys whose fathers were soldiers in the regular army. Boys were admitted to this school between the ages of five and nine and left at the age of 14.<sup>2</sup> None of the fathers of young children in the survey area was described as a regular soldier and it therefore seems unlikely that the Military Asylum was regarded as a major educational facility for families in the area.

Three years later, in 1836, the Rectory Garden Infants' School opened.<sup>3</sup> Although this school was outside the study area it would have been within walking distance of some of the children's homes. The next public school to open its doors to infant aged children in the area was Christ Church School. The exact date of establishment of the infants' section of this school is uncertain. Christ Church

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1. Faulkener, T., op cit., Vol. 2, pp. 166-170.

2. P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to State of Education in England and Wales, p. 556.

3. The Rectory Garden School appears on Thompson's Map of London, Part 1, 1836. The school is listed in the National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7, but no date of establishment was recorded.

Boys' school opened in 1840 in Queen Street, and admitted boys between the ages of six and fourteen on payment of 2d a week which was paid in advance.<sup>1</sup> By 1843 sufficient funds had been raised to enable the building of a new boys' and girls' school opposite Christ Church in Paradise Street, Queen's Road West, and when the boys moved to their new school in 1843 the building they had vacated was used as an infants' department.<sup>1</sup> In 1846 the number of infants at the Christ Church school stood at 85.<sup>2</sup> Within two years the existing accommodation was insufficient for the increasing number of pupils. Funds were raised to build a new infant school which was completed in 1850 and attended by 120 children.<sup>3</sup>

St. Jude's Church opened in 1844 and two years later, in 1846, St. Jude's Infants' School was inspected by H.M.I. Cook. He noted that there were 98 infants on the book but there was only accommodation for 80 infants.<sup>4</sup> In the records of the National Society the number of infants was stated to be 102.<sup>5</sup> The fact that St. Jude's Infants' School was filled to overflowing would suggest that working-class parents saw this school as a welcome addition to the local educational facilities.

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1. Welch, F.J., Christ Church Schools Scrapbook, (unpublished), c1890, Chelsea Local History Library.

2. Ibid.

2. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7.

3. Welch, F.J., op cit..

4. 'Report by the Rev, F.C. Cook on Schools' Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1846, p. 152.

5. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7.

By 1851 there was accommodation for approximately 350 infant-aged children in three public schools situated within the survey area.<sup>1</sup> In addition there was accommodation for approximately the same number in a further three public schools situated within walking distance of homes within the study area.<sup>2</sup>

During the course of 30 years, from 1825 to 1855, public educational facilities for infants within the study area increased fivefold and therefore almost kept pace with the rate of the population growth in Chelsea as a whole. Chelsea was not an area which caught the attention of contemporaries who were anxious about the moral and religious state of London's poor. Few investigations were made into the state of the poor in the area, and it did not feature in consciousness-raising and anxiety-inducing commentaries such as those of Mayhew, Dickens, Hollingshead and Beames. This low level of interest in the poor of Chelsea was not because poor families did not live in the area, since a large proportion of the residents in the immediate neighbourhood of Christ Church were indeed poor, as were those living in 'Jews Row' near St. Jude's Church.<sup>3</sup> In view of the apparent lack of interest shown towards the poor of Chelsea it is surprising that this area of London fared so well in terms of the establishment of new schools and, more

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1. Figures obtained from National Society Church School Inquiry 1846-47, pp. 6-7 and Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1846-52.

2. The three schools were Trinity Infants' School, Rectory Garden and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School in Cadogan Street.

3. Welch, F.J., op cit.. The slum known as Jews' Row was bounded by Turks Row, White Lion Street and Franklin Row.

especially, the provision of public infants' schools. It is possible that the lack of clear residential zoning on economical and social grounds, the low proportion of migrants and the fact that Chelsea developed from a village may have resulted in a lower degree of alienation between economic and social groups than was evident in other parts of London. This in turn might have meant that the wealthier inhabitants were more aware of the needs of their poorer neighbours, and felt a sense of responsibility about providing schools and churches for the poor in the area which was reflected in the fact that many public schools could rely upon local support.

Amongst the wealthier inhabitants, the interest in supporting schools for the poor was probably also further stimulated by two opposing emotions: shame and pride. Early in the nineteenth century, Luke Thomas Flood played a part in stimulating the wealthy inhabitants' sense of shame. In 1816, Flood was appointed treasurer of the Chelsea Parochial Schools and he felt that the low level of annual subscriptions to the schools did not reflect well on the wealthy in the area as it suggested a lack of interest on their part. A number of 'uncharitable remarks' about the wealthy residents had in fact been occasioned by this apparent lack of interest. Flood capitalised on the wealthy residents' fear of public shame, and in so doing ensured that the annual subscriptions increased to such a level that 120 children could be clothed and educated.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Faulkner, T., An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, 1829, pp. 92-93.

It is not clear whether subscribers to schools in subsequent years were motivated by a real interest in the education of poor children or a desire to avoid criticism. What is clear, however, from the histories of other schools in the locality, is that when necessary, sufficient funds for establishing or supporting a school could be raised from the local wealthy inhabitants. The school which was later to develop into Chelsea National School, for example, started life as a small Sunday school supported by a few young men and their immediate friends. When, in 1816, this group decided to establish a day school they were able to do so by relying upon the 'continued liberality of their friends'.<sup>1</sup> Wealthy locals did not only support schools: Sloane Terrace Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1811 as a result of the 'liberality of several beneficent gentlemen', including Joseph Butterworth, who at the time had summer apartments in Chelsea.<sup>2</sup> A very high proportion of contributors to the Chelsea Benevolent Society, established in 1838, lived in Chelsea itself.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Chelsea differed from some of the areas of London within the inner arc in which either there were insufficient wealthy residents to support the various schools and philanthropic societies,<sup>4</sup> or the

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1. Faulkner, T., An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, 1829, p. 338.

2. Bryan, G., Chelsea in Olden and Present Times, 1869, p. 210.

3. Second, Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Annual Reports of Chelsea Benevolent Society, 1840 and 1853-57.

4. For example, Spitalfields, see Chapter 5 of this thesis.

wealthy were unaware of the situation of the poor in their locality and were only stirred into action as a result of published surveys or articles in the press.

It is probable that the establishment of other public infants' schools was also stimulated by feelings of pride as the success of the Markham Street Infants' School ensured that local residents were proud of this particular form of schooling. The concerted effort made by the school's trustees to raise funds in 1828 and the school's policy of being open every day for inspection led to the institution becoming well known in the locality. In 1829, Faulkner stated that the school awakened 'a very warm interest' throughout the parish and the institution had 'taken a deep hold upon the feelings and affections of the inhabitants'.<sup>1</sup> That the success of the Markham Street school stimulated support for other infants' schools in the locality is suggested by the fact that, unlike in other parts of London, most of the public schools established in Chelsea during the first half of the nineteenth century catered for infants as well as older children.

Chelsea was well served with private schools but a large number of the private schools were academies or superior day schools and were therefore not open to very young working-class children. Within the survey area, eight teachers were listed in the 1851 Census who might have been private working-class school teachers (Table 7B overleaf). If all these teachers ran private working-class schools, it is

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1. Faulkner, T., An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, 1829, Vol. 2, pp. 168-169.



possible to estimate that there was private school accommodation for approximately 80 children aged between two and seven. On this basis, just over ten per cent of working-class infant scholars attended private working-class schools.

Table 7B: List of possible private working-class private school teachers (recorded in the 1851 Census).<sup>1</sup>

Manor Gardens	: Elizabeth Boothby (Small School).
Queen Street	: Emma Davis (Teacher).
Markham Street	: Nancy Sarles (Schoolmistress). <sup>2</sup>
Upper Manor Street	: Emily Knight (Teacher in a Day school).
Upper Manor Street	: Caroline Francis (Schoolmistress).
George Street	: Ann Margus (Schoolmistress).
George Street	: Charlotte North (Schoolmistress).
Collingwood Street	: Mary Middleship (School Teacher).

School Attendance in Relation to Age.

In the streets that were surveyed there were 1,243 children aged between two and seven, of which 543, or 44 per cent, were described as scholars, five per cent were described as being 'at home' and no information was provided about the remaining 51 per cent (Table 7.4a overleaf). In comparison with the other metropolitan areas sampled, Chelsea had the second highest level of school attendance by infants.

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1472 and 1473.

2. Nancy Sarles was not the teacher at the Markham Street infant school, as Mary Park was returned as the 'Infant School Mistress' and lived at the infant school. Nancy Sarles was not listed in the 1850 and 1851 Post Office Directories either as a private school teacher or as a teacher in a public school. It seems likely, therefore, that she was a working-class private school teacher.

Table 7.1a

Chelsea, St.Luke's: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	10	18	23	33	36	33	153
Scholars at home	1	1	2	1	1	1	7
No description	45	43	31	19	17	20	175
Total	56	62	56	53	54	54	335

Table 7.1b

Chelsea, St.Luke's: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	18	29	41	62	67	61
Scholars at home	2	2	4	2	2	2
No description	80	69	55	36	31	37
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 7.2a

Chelsea, Christ Church: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	10	10	27	36	45	43	171
Scholars at home	20	13	8	4	5	3	53
No description	43	29	41	34	22	20	189
Total	73	52	76	74	72	66	413

Table 7.2b

Chelsea, Christ Church: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	14	19	36	49	63	65
Scholars at home	27	25	10	5	7	5
No description	59	56	54	46	30	30
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 7.3a

Chelsea, St. Jude's: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	16	18	40	41	56	50	221
Scholars at home	1	1	4	0	1	1	8
No description	78	46	46	30	30	38	268
Total	95	65	90	71	87	89	497

Table 7.3b

Chelsea, St. Jude's: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	17	28	44	58	64	56
Scholars at home	1	2	4	0	1	1
No description	82	70	52	42	35	43
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 7.4a

Chelsea, Total: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	36	45	90	109	137	126	543
Scholars at home	22	15	14	5	7	5	68
No description	166	118	118	83	69	78	632
Total	224	178	222	197	213	209	1243

Table 7.4b

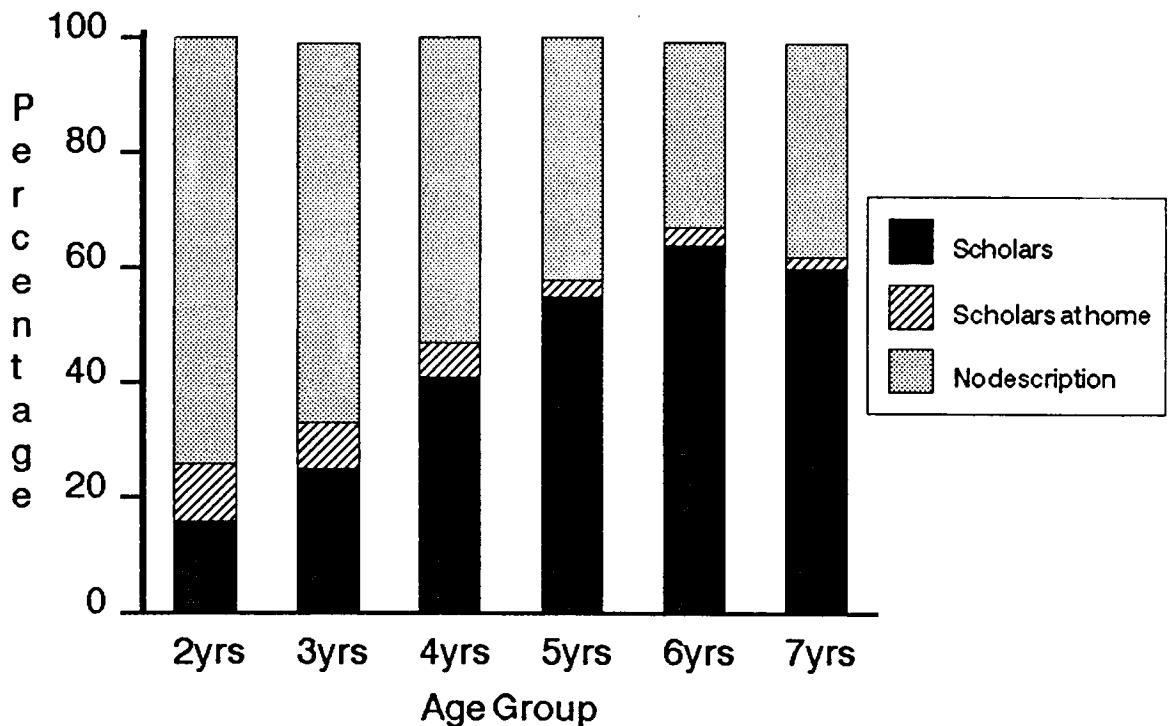
Chelsea, Total: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	16	25	41	55	65	60
Scholars at home	10	8	6	3	3	2
No description	74	67	53	42	32	38
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Approximately 41 per cent of infants living in the group of streets in the Christ Church area attended school, as compared with 44 per cent in the St. Jude's area, and 46 per cent in the area of St. Luke's (Tables 7.1a, 7.1b, 7.2a, 7.2b, 7.3a and 7.3b on previous page). These slight differences could have been due to the existence of a direct link between the age distribution of infants and the proportion of scholars in each year band in each of the three groups of streets. In the sample as a whole the proportion of children at school within each year band increased between the ages of two and six (Table 7.4b and Graph 7.1 below).

Graph 7.1

Chelsea: Description of total percentage of children in each age group.



Only 16 per cent of two year olds were recorded as attending school whilst 65 per cent of six year olds were so described. Between the ages of six and seven there was a slight decline in the proportion of children at school. The same pattern was discernible in the groups of streets in both the St. Jude's and the St. Luke's areas, but not in the area of Christ Church. In the St. Luke's group of streets, 18 per cent of two year olds were at school, as were 67 per cent of six year olds, but only 61 per cent of seven year olds were scholars. In the St. Jude's area the proportions of two, six and seven year olds at school were 17 per cent, 64 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. Attendance of children in the Christ Church area, however, showed an increase between the ages of two and seven, with no decline occurring between the ages of six and seven. In this last area 14 per cent of two year olds, 62 per cent of six year olds and 65 per cent of seven year olds were at school.

In the Christ Church area 58 per cent of children aged from five to seven were at school; in St. Jude's the proportion was 60 per cent whilst in St. Luke's, 63 per cent of five to seven year olds were at school. The proportions of two to four year olds at school in each of the three areas was 23 per cent in Christ Church and 29 per cent in both St. Luke's and St. Jude's. A high proportion of two to four year olds in an area would have the effect of lowering the overall proportion of infants at school. In Christ Church, the younger age group accounted for 49 per cent of all infants surveyed; in St. Jude's and St. Luke's the proportions were 50 per cent and 52 per cent respectively but these variations between the three areas were not large enough to enable any definite links to be drawn between

the proportion of infants at school, the age distribution of infants in each of the three areas, and patterns of school attendance in relation to age.

On the basis of these figures it is possible to state that in this part of London, there was an increase in the proportion of children attending school between the ages of two and six. The slightly different levels of school attendance in each of the three areas of Chelsea would suggest that, in common with other parts of London, a child's attendance at school was influenced by an amalgam of factors, including age.

One factor influencing school attendance might have been the proximity of suitable schools. Children living in each of the three areas were within easy reach of at least one public infants' school. Children in the streets near Christ Church had access to Christ Church Infants' School, which catered for 120 children, and three private working-class schools. A fourth working-class private school was within walking distance of children in the Christ Church area but to reach it children would have had to cross the King's Road, which might have prevented some parents from using this school. Between 160 and 220 children in the St. Luke's area could attend Chelsea's showpiece infants' school in Markham Street. St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School in Cadogan Street was within easy

reach of the few Roman Catholics in the sample.<sup>1</sup> There were two private working-class schools situated in the St. Luke's area whilst a third was on the south side of the King's Road, which might have meant that the school was effectively inaccessible to 'under eights' in St. Luke's.

Of the three areas in Chelsea, St. Jude's had the fewest schools catering for infants, since only one public and two private schools were situated in the immediate locality, with a fourth school, a public infants school, a short distance away. The two public schools catered for more than 300 children. St. Jude's Infants' School was over subscribed as it catered for approximately 100 children and was only supposed to accommodate 80 children. It is feasible that children from this area attended Trinity Infants' School, which was within walking distance and catered for approximately 210 infants during the week.<sup>2</sup> Infants in the St. Jude's area had access to the highest number of public infant school places but the lowest number of public schools and local private schools. Infants living in the sampled streets in the Christ Church area had access to the lowest number of public infant school places,

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1. In the sampled streets in St. Luke's only nine Irish families were recorded, whilst in the Christ Church area 13 and in St. Jude's 69 Irish families were recorded. Not all of the Irish families were necessarily Catholic and some English families might have been Catholic. In the absence of evidence to the contrary it has been assumed that the majority of the Irish families and very few of the English families were Catholic.

2. National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846-47, pp. 6-7.

but the highest number of private schools. Since Christ Church had the lowest proportion of infants at school, the highest number of private working class schools and the lowest accommodation in public infants' schools, it would seem that the availability of places in public infants' schools had a greater influence on the levels of school attendance than the availability of working-class private schools. A comparison of the streets in St. Luke's with those in St. Jude's shows that, proportionally, St. Luke's had more two to four year olds than five to seven year olds and fewer public infant school places, but school attendance amongst infants in St. Luke's was slightly higher than that in St. Jude's. This would suggest that age distribution and availability of public educational facilities were not the only factors influencing school attendance in Chelsea.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Family Size and Employment of Older Siblings.

The size of the family was another factor which influenced school attendance amongst infants. In the sample area as a whole the proportion of families sending at least one infant to school rose as the number of children in the family increased. In families with one or two children approximately 30 per cent of families sent an infant to school, but almost 80 per cent of families with six or more children sent at least one infant to school (Table 7.5 overleaf). This pattern was apparent in the St. Jude's area of Chelsea, but in the Christ Church and St. Luke's areas the links between school attendance and family size were not so clear cut. In these last two areas far fewer families composed of one or two



Table 7.5  
Chelsea: School attendance related to family size and  
employment of mother in English families.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	106	31	81	20
Two Children	193	65	142	28
Three Children	178	93	137	40
Four Children	147	90	102	28
Five Children	95	58	75	15
Six or more Children	75	59	51	14
Total	794	396	588	145

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least  
one infant at school.

children sent at least one 'under eight' to school than families  
composed of three or more children.

It is possible that the employment patterns of older children may  
have influenced the school attendance patterns of infants. If, as  
in other parts of London, children began to contribute to the family  
income at a fairly early age then it is possible that the relatively  
high levels of school attendance amongst infants in Chelsea might  
have been related in some way to the employment pattern of older  
children. A high proportion of older siblings at work could have  
influenced school attendance of infants in two ways. Either  
parents might have sent their children to school at a younger age so  
that they received some formal education before starting work or the  
extra income generated by older siblings at work might have meant

that parents could afford to send younger children to school.

Table 7.6a

Chelsea: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	89	84	86	71	42	35	13	420
At work	0	2	1	6	17	19	24	69
Scholars at home	0	2	6	5	5	3	4	25
No description	43	45	35	34	36	27	16	236
Total	132	133	128	116	100	84	57	750

Table 7.6b

Chelsea: Description of total percentage of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	67	63	67	61	42	42	23
At work	0	2	1	5	17	23	42
Scholars at home	0	2	5	4	5	4	7
No description	33	33	27	30	36	32	28
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

In the sampled families there was a total of 750 children between the ages of eight and 14, all of whom had younger siblings aged between two and seven (Table 7.6a).

It is clear from Table 7.6b that over half (56 per cent) of the older children were at school. Attendance amongst eight to 10 year olds hovered around 67 per cent.<sup>1</sup> At the age of 11 there was a slight drop in the proportion of children at school, which was followed by a much sharper drop between the ages of 11 and 12. Only 42 per cent of 12 year olds and 41 per cent of 13 year olds were at school and by the age of 14 the proportion of scholars had dropped even further to 23 per cent.

Less than 5 per cent of eight to 11 year olds were recorded as being in paid employment. The drop in school attendance between the ages of 11 and 12 was mirrored by a rise in employment as 17 per cent of 12 year olds were in work. By the age of 14 approximately 42 per cent of children were at work. These figures would suggest that high school attendance amongst infants in Chelsea was not due to children having to start work at an early age since few children worked before the age of 11.

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1. It is worth noting that a higher proportion of eight year olds were at school than seven year olds and therefore the decrease in school attendance between the ages of six and seven which was noticeable in St. Luke's and St. Jude's does not appear to have been due to the onset of a pattern of decline in school attendance amongst children over the age of six.

Almost three quarters of those families in which older siblings were at work sent at least one infant aged child to school, compared with just over half of the families in which there were no older children at work (Tables 7.8 and 7.9). This difference was evident in both the Christ Church and St. Jude's areas.

Table 7.7

Chelsea: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
St. Luke's	37	21	83	49	190
Christ Church	47	33	108	49	237
St. Jude's	63	49	141	73	326
Total	147	103	332	171	753

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 7.8

Chelsea: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
English	123	92	291	153	659
Irish	14	11	41	18	84
Total	137	103	332	171	743

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Amongst Irish families in the sample school, attendance of 'under eights' was higher amongst those whose older siblings were employed than amongst those whose older siblings were not described as employed (Tables 7.8 and 7.9).

Table 7.9

Chelsea: Percentage of families in each category relating school attendance to employment of older siblings.

	G	F
English	75	53
Irish	79	44
Total %	75	52

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work which also had at least one infant at school (  $B/A \times 100$  ).

F = Percentage pf families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school (  $D/C \times 100$  ).

Table 7.9 is based on figures in Table 7.8.

In the St. Luke's area, however, whether or not older siblings were at work did not appear to influence the school attendance of infants. In both the St. Luke's and Christ Church areas, a high proportion of older siblings who were not at work and whose younger siblings were at school attended school themselves, whereas in St. Jude's a high proportion of older siblings were neither at school nor at work.

Overall in the sample area, older siblings at work had a positive effect on the school attendance of two to sevens year olds, although the employment pattern of older children was such that it is probable that the earnings of older siblings only helped pay for

young children's schooling in those families where there was at least one child over the age of 12 or 13.

School Attendance in Relation to Fathers' Occupation.

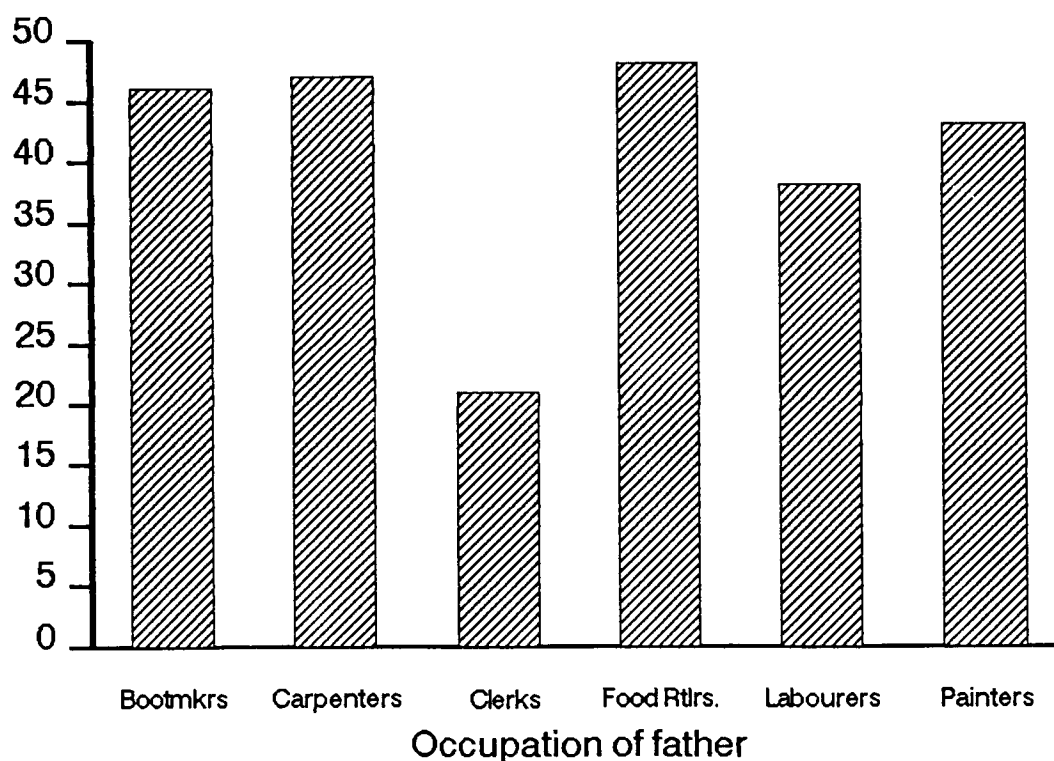
As in other parts of London it is possible that school attendance amongst infants was influenced by parental occupation. Amongst the fathers of young children in the area, labourers formed the largest single occupational group. Painters, plasterers and others connected with house building formed the second largest group, closely followed by food retailers and carpenters. Of these four occupational groups food retailers, carpenters and shoemakers had the highest proportion of infants at school (Table 7.10 and Graph 7.2 overleaf). Not far behind were the children of painters, plasterers, plumbers and glaziers etc., of whom 43 per cent were at school. Labourers sent only 38 per cent of their infant-aged children to school.

Table 7.10

Chelsea: Attendance patterns of children, related to fathers' occupations, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Boot and Shoemakers	26 (46%)	1 (2%)	30 (52%)	57 (100%)
Carpenters	33 (47%)	3 (4%)	34 (49%)	70 (100%)
Clerks	8 (21%)	1 (3%)	28 (76%)	37 (100%)
Food Retailers	38 (48%)	1 (1%)	40 (51%)	79 (100%)
Labourers	74 (38%)	13 (7%)	107 (55%)	194 (100%)
Painters	29 (43%)	3 (4%)	36 (53%)	68 (100%)

Graph 7.2  
Chelsea : Percentage of children at school  
related to fathers' occupation.



It is possible that the differences in school attendance amongst children whose fathers were labourers, carpenters, shoemakers, painters and food retailers were partly attributable to the age distribution of the children in the sample. Two to four year olds accounted for 54 per cent of painters' children, 51 per cent of carpenters' children, 49 per cent of food retailers' children, 48 per cent of labourers' children and 44 per cent of shoemakers' children (Tables 7.11a - 7.11f overleaf).

Table 7.11a

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were shoemakers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	10	8	7	11	10	11	57
Percent	18	14	12	19	18	19	100

Table 7.11b

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were carpenters.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	11	11	13	10	15	9	69
Percent	16	16	19	14	22	13	100

Table 7.11c

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were clerks.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	6	6	8	1	6	10	37
Percent	16	16	22	3	16	27	100

Table 7.11d

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were food retailers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	13	15	11	14	10	16	79
Percent	16	19	14	18	13	20	100

Table 7.11e

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	43	21	30	26	42	32	194
Percent	22	11	15	13	22	17	100



Table 7.11f

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were Painters.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	20	4	13	11	14	6	68
Percent	29	6	19	16	21	9	100

On the basis of the figures in the tables above it would appear that the variations in school attendance can not be wholly explained by the differences in the age distribution of the children of fathers in the six occupational groups. Painters, for example, had the highest proportion of two to four year olds and yet had a higher proportion of children at school than did labourers. The school attendance of labourers' children must take into account the fact that attendance patterns might have been influenced by the fact that it was the only occupational group with a significant Irish presence.

Thirty seven of the 121 labourers in the sample were Irish. Of the 194 children of labourers, 66 had Irish-born fathers and 128 had fathers born in England (Tables 7.12a and 7.12b). Almost 41 per cent of Irish labourers' infant-aged children were at school compared with 37 per cent of English labourers' children of the same age (Table 7.13c).

Table 7.12a

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were Irish labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	15	7	9	8	16	11	66
Percent	23	11	13	12	24	17	100

Table 7.12b

Chelsea: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were English labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	28	14	21	18	26	21	128
Percent	22	11	16	14	20	17	100

Table 7.13

Chelsea: Attendance patterns of Labourers children related to fathers country of origin, giving number and percentage.

	Scholar	Sch at Home	No Desc	Total
Labourers - Irish	27 (41%)	2 (3%)	37 (56%)	66 (100%)
Labourers- English	47 (37%)	11 (8%)	70 (55%)	128 (100%)

The major occupational groups of fathers varied in each of the three areas. In St. Jude's no fewer than 78 fathers of young children were labourers and the next largest occupational groups were painters and shoemakers. In Christ Church labourers were again the the largest occupational groups but did not predominate to the same extent as in St. Jude's as in the Christ Church area there were 36 labourers and 22 painters, 20 bricklayers, 17 food retailers and 14 carpenters. In St. Luke's there were similar numbers in seven

occupational groups: carpenters, clerks, coachmen, food retailers, labourers, metal workers and painters.

It is worth noting that, despite the disproportionate number of labourers in St. Jude's, this area did not have the lowest level of school attendance amongst infants. This could have been partly due to the fact that almost half of the labourers in St. Jude's were Irish-born who, as illustrated earlier, appeared to have a slightly better record of sending their children to school than did English-born labourers. In Christ Church, the area with the lowest level of school attendance, only one out of the 36 labourers was Irish-born, the remainder being English.

The school attendance pattern amongst clerks' children was explored as they formed a significant group in St. Luke's. In the 16 clerks' families there was a total of 37 children aged from two to seven. School attendance was very low with only eight children (or 21 per cent) described as scholars. A clerk was one of those metropolitan workers who could be on the borderline between the upper working class and middle class. In the mid- nineteenth century relatively few middle-class infants were sent to school. Instead, middle class 'under eights' tended to be taught at home by their mothers or possibly a governess.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whitbread, N., The Evolution of the Nursery-Infant School: A History of Infant and Nursery Education in Britain 1800-1970, 1972, pp. 28-29.

This pattern of early education amongst the middle classes might have accounted for the low levels of school attendance amongst clerks' children in Chelsea. Only one clerk's child was described as a 'scholar at home' but no description was provided for more than three quarters of clerks' children. This suggests that most clerks' children might have been taught by their mothers rather than a governess and were therefore possibly not regarded as 'scholars' as such.

As in other parts of London the wages of labourers and those involved in house building were likely to vary through the year. Many of the coachmen were employed by wealthy families and therefore might have experienced a decrease in earnings outside the London 'season'. The economic situation of food retailers also varied, but not so drastically as some other workers as people would always need food. Furthermore, food retailers had an advantage over labourers and painters in that they were used to adapting to suit the season and needs of the clientele (e.g. selling different foods in different seasons of the year). In common with all those in the retail trade, however, the earnings of food sellers depended upon the spending power of their customers. It is clear that those involved in making and selling fancy food would have experienced a decrease in earnings outside the London 'season', but even those selling basic foods such as bread, meat and vegetables would experience a drop in earnings if their regular customers were out of work. Without specific details about the annual wages of workers employed in different occupations it is only possible to postulate that school attendance amongst infants was affected by the varying

economic state of the family although, as discussed earlier, the contemporary view was that some workers (e.g. carpenters), were more inclined to send their children to school than other groups of workers.

School Attendance in Relation to Mothers' Employment and Marital State.

In 28 per cent of the families in the St. Luke's area the mother was in paid employment. In Christ Church the proportion was slightly higher, at 30 per cent, whilst in St. Jude's 36 per cent of mothers with young children were at work. The proportion of married working mothers ranged from 11 per cent in St. Luke's to 18 per cent in Christ Church and 20 per cent in St. Jude's. The proportion of single mothers in the same three areas was 11 per cent, 12 per cent and 16 per cent respectively. Thus, St. Jude's had the highest proportion of working mothers, both married and single.

In the whole sample, 51 per cent of two to seven year olds whose mothers were at work were described as scholars, as compared with only 40 per cent of those whose mothers were not in paid employment (Table 7.14).

Table 7.14

Chelsea: Attendance patterns of children of working mothers, related to mother's marital state, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
All working mothers	190 (51%)	24 (7%)	157 (42%)	371 (100%)
Married working mothers	108 (51%)	12 (6%)	90 (43%)	210 (100%)
Single working mothers	82 (51%)	12 (7%)	67 (42%)	161 (100%)

Table 7.15a

Chelsea: Children of married, non-working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	25	33	55	72	87	81	353
Scholars at home	17	10	8	3	2	4	44
No description	127	83	91	63	51	60	475
Total	169	126	154	138	140	145	872

Table 7.15b

Chelsea: Children of married, non-working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	15	26	36	52	62	56
Scholars at home	10	8	5	2	1	3
No description	75	66	59	46	37	41
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

In the case of non-working mothers, there was a steady increase in the proportion of children at school in each successive age band between the ages of two and six, increasing from 15 per cent of two year olds to 62 per cent of six year olds, with the largest increase occurring between the ages of four and five (Table 7.15a). Between the ages of six and seven there was a decrease in the proportion of

children at school as only 56 per cent of seven year olds were described as scholars.

School attendance patterns amongst the children of working mothers were markedly different. There was an increase in the proportion of children at school between the ages of two and seven, with no decrease occurring at the age of seven. Twenty per cent of two year olds were described as scholars as were 70 per cent of seven year olds. The largest increase in school attendance occurred between the ages of three and four, a full year earlier than was the case for children of non-working mothers (Tables 7.16a and 7.16b).

Table 7.16a

Chelsea: Children of all working mothers, relating  
number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	11	12	35	37	50	45	190
Scholars at home	5	5	6	2	5	1	24
No description	39	35	27	20	18	18	157
Total	55	52	68	59	73	64	371

Table 7.16b

Chelsea: Children of all working mothers, relating  
percentage within each age group to  
description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	20	23	51	63	68	70
Scholars at home	9	10	9	3	7	2
No description	71	67	40	34	25	28
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

These figures would suggest that children of mothers in paid employment were more likely to be at school than those whose mothers were not. Working mothers also tended to send their infants to school at a younger age than did non-working mothers. In addition, in every year band between two and seven, working mothers had a higher proportion of children at school than did non-working mothers. Why there was a decrease in the proportion of children at school between the ages of six and seven in the case of non-working mothers needs further investigation.

The marital state of working mothers did not effect school attendance greatly as 51 per cent of both single and married working mothers' children were at school, and the school attendance of children with both married and single working mothers increased with age.

A closer analysis of school attendance revealed, however, that the marital state of the mother did influence the pattern of school attendance in relation to the age of the children. In the case of single mothers 16 per cent of two year olds were at school as were 68 per cent of seven year olds but the peak for school attendance occurred at the age of six, when 69 per cent of the age band were at school. Between the ages of three and four and four and five there were large increases in the proportion of children at school (Tables 7.17a and 7.17b overleaf).



Table 7.17a

Chelsea: Children of single working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	3	5	11	18	24	21	82
Scholars at home	3	2	3	1	2	1	12
No description	13	17	11	8	9	9	67
Total	19	24	25	27	35	31	161

Table 7.17b

Chelsea: Children of single working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	16	21	44	67	69	68
Scholars at home	16	8	12	4	6	3
No description	68	71	44	29	25	29
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

The pattern was similar for the children of married working mothers but there was no decrease in school attendance between the ages of six and seven and the peak attendance occurred at the age of seven. Of the two year olds, 22 per cent were at school as were 73 per cent of seven year olds. The largest increase in the proportion of children at school occurred between the ages of three and four (Tables 7.18a and 7.18b overleaf).

Table 7.18a

Chelsea: Children of married working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	8	7	24	19	26	24	108
Scholars at home	2	3	3	1	3	0	12
No description	26	18	16	12	9	9	90
Total	36	28	43	32	38	33	210

Table 7.18b

Chelsea: Children of married working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	22	25	56	59	68	73
Scholars at home	6	11	7	3	8	0
No description	72	64	37	38	24	27
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

On the basis of these figures it would appear that at the age of two children of married working mothers were more likely to be at school than two year olds of single working mothers, and it was only at the age of six that school attendance patterns of single and married working mothers were similar. In addition, fewer seven year olds of single mothers were at school than those whose mothers were married. It is possible that these differences in school attendance were related to the economic state of the families concerned. Families headed by a single mother were probably in a worse financial state than those in which there were two bread-winners. Married working

mothers might, therefore, have been better able to afford to send their children to school from a younger age and keep them at school at an older age. Single working mothers might not have been able to afford the school fees or the clothes in order to send a two year old to school and might also have been less able to afford to keep older children at school. It is also possible that the decrease in school attendance amongst seven year olds was a result of their being needed at home to look after younger siblings.

Differences in the attendance patterns of single and married working mothers might also have been due to the nature of the mother's work (e.g. whether or not the mother had to work away from home, the hours she had to work etc.). The highest number of both single and married women worked as laundresses and washerwomen. Married women also worked as dressmakers, charwomen, ironers and shoemakers. Single women worked as charwomen, needlewomen and ironers. The mother's occupation did not seem to play a highly significant part in determining whether or not a young child attended school. Fifty five per cent of all charwomen's infant aged children were at school, compared with 56 per cent of all needlewomen's children and 57 per cent of all laundresses' children (Tables 7.19a-7.19c overleaf).

Table 7.19a

Chelsea: Description of children whose mothers were  
laundresses, relating description to  
marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	34	6	22	62
Married	37	7	19	63
All	71	13	41	125

Table 7.19b

Chelsea: Description of children whose mothers were  
dress makers and needlewomen, relating  
description to marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	9	3	4	16
Married	19	1	19	39
All	28	4	23	55

Table 7.19c

Chelsea: Description of children whose mothers were  
charwomen, relating description to  
marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	11	1	9	21
Married	5	0	3	8
All	16	1	12	29

An analysis of the attendance patterns of the children of  
laundresses, washerwomen and needlewomen suggested that the marital

state of the mother made little or no difference to school attendance. In the case of married laundresses, 59 per cent of two to seven year olds were at school whilst 55 per cent of single laundresses' infant children were scholars (Table 7.19a). The marital state of needlewomen made no difference to the school attendance of infants, as in both cases 56 per cent of two to seven year olds attended school (Table 7.19b). The situation was a little different for the children of charwomen. Only 52 per cent of single charwomen's children were at school, compared with 63 per cent of the children of married charwomen (Table 7.19c). An analysis of the ages of the children of single and married mothers in the three occupational groups revealed that in all three cases married women had a higher proportion of two to four year olds than did single women. Bearing in mind the finding, previously discussed, that school attendance increased with age, this would suggest that if the samples of single and married working mothers' children had been similar in terms of age distribution, overall school attendance amongst the children of married working mothers in all three occupational groups would probably have been found to be higher than amongst single working mothers.

There was a relationship between the size of the family and whether or not the mother was likely to be in paid employment. In the survey area as a whole, the mother was less likely to be at work if there were more than four children in the family. Of those families in which the mother worked, however, school attendance of 'under eights' was not related to family size (Table 7.5).

School Attendance in Relation to Religion and Parents' Country of Birth.

Chelsea was not a focus for Irish migrants to the extent that other areas of London were. Irish-born parents were present in only 11 per cent of families in the sample. The 91 Irish families in the sample were not evenly distributed throughout the sample area. St. Jude's had the highest concentration of Irish families with young children, as 69 lived in this particular group of streets, 13 Irish families lived in the Christ Church groups of streets and only 9 lived in the St. Luke's area. The school attendance patterns of children of Irish-born parents are shown in Tables 7.20a and 7.20b.

Table 7.20a

Chelsea: Description of total numbers of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	2	6	10	12	16	10	56
Scholars at home	2	0	3	0	1	0	6
No description	21	12	10	4	15	14	76
Total	25	18	23	16	32	24	138

Table 7.20b

Chelsea: Description of total percentage of Irish children,  
within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	8	33	43	75	50	42
Scholars at home	8	0	13	0	3	0
No description	84	67	44	25	47	58
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

School attendance amongst the Irish families was interesting as only 8 per cent of two year olds were at school and 42 per cent of seven

year olds (Table 7.20a and 7.20b). These two figures suggest that the proportion of children at school increased with age but this was not the case. The peak age for school attendance occurred at the age of five with 75 per cent of this age band in school. There was a fairly sharp rise in school attendance between the ages of two and three and an even sharper rise between the ages of four and five. Between the ages of five and six however, school attendance decreased by a quarter.<sup>1</sup> Overall 40 per cent of infants with Irish parents attended school as compared with 44 per cent of the whole sample. The school attendance patterns of Irish labourers' children suggests that, in Chelsea, school attendance amongst Irish families was not consistently lower than that of English or Scottish families.

The school attendance of Irish children in Chelsea differed from that in other areas of London as it was not significantly lower than that of English children. This might have been because Irish children could attend the Roman Catholic school in Cadogan Street. Alternatively, the Irish in Chelsea might not have been so poor as the Irish in St. Giles or Spitalfields and might, therefore, have been able to afford to send their children to private working-

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1. This drop in school attendance was not permanent as between the ages of eight and 11 school attendance amongst the older siblings in these families varied from 83 per cent to 43 per cent. It was only between the ages of 12 and 14, when children started to work, that the proportion of children at school dropped below 40 per cent.

class schools rather than the non-Catholic public schools. More research is required which focuses on the Irish in Chelsea as relatively little is known about the day to day lives of the Irish in this area of London.

Summary.

School attendance amongst infants in Chelsea was relatively high and stood at an average of 44 per cent. Such attendance was found to be influenced by the children's ages, parental occupation, family size and the presence of older siblings in paid work. Furthermore, whether or not the child's mothers was employed and married or single seemed to influence attendance at school, particularly amongst the very young infants (i.e. those under four). There was not a very high Irish presence in the area but it was interesting to note that school attendance amongst the children of Irish-born parents did not differ greatly from that of English-born parents.

The following chapter examines school attendance in a further two areas in the outer arc of London in order to enable some comparison to be made between school attendance patterns of infants living in the inner and outer arcs of London.



## CHAPTER 8

### SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE ST. LUKE'S DISTRICT OF ST. PANCRAS, PART OF SOMERS TOWN, NORTH FINSBURY.

Somers Town formed a part of the parish of St. Pancras, North Finsbury, and was situated on the north side of Euston Road, sandwiched between Camden Town and Agar Town. The sample area was composed of streets bounded by Euston Road in the south, Chalton Street in the west, Phoenix Street in the north and St. Pancras Road in the east. Most of the sample area was contained within the St. Luke's district of St. Pancras.<sup>1</sup>

The New Road, part of which later became known as the Euston Road, was built in 1756 and in the late eighteenth century the area now known as King's Cross, was merely a village on the New Road.<sup>2</sup> During the closing decades of the eighteenth century the fields on the north side of the Euston Road could be reached via a small white turnstile situated at the north end of Judd Place.<sup>3</sup>

Somers Town began to develop in the 1780s. Initially the developers had planned to build a desirable middle-class suburb in the form of

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1. Rivington, W., Church Extension in St. Pancras : A Comparative Statement of the Increase of Houses, Population and Church Accommodation in the Parish of St. Pancras from 1801-1851, 1852,

p. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 2.

3. Graham, J.J., Chronicles of a Century of Methodism at King's Cross Wesleyan Church, 1923, p. 16.

Area of St. Luke's, St. Pancras in  
which surveyed streets were located.



From Stanford's New Library Map of London, 1862

a pentagon but the plan was never completed and many of the houses were sold for less than their cost price. From this point onwards Somers Town was mainly inhabited by the working class and by the early 1830s the area was far from desirable.<sup>1</sup> Inflation during the early years of the nineteenth century meant that those who had bought cheap houses in the area during the 1780s were able to rent them out at high rents and in so doing made a very handsome profit. This stimulated a second building boom in the area as speculators saw the potential to make money by erecting poor quality housing and then charging high rents. Whilst houses were being built as cheaply and as quickly as possible in Somers Town, development of the land on the south side of the New Road recommenced, with the result that by 1815, Somers Town was no longer a rural area on the outskirts of London but instead was very much a part of London.<sup>2</sup>

The quality of housing changed little during the first half of the nineteenth century. In the early 1850s Thomas Beames asserted that in the parish of St. Pancras, there were streets 'of the class of Rookery, which cannot be fifty years old' and added that the rows of small houses built on undrained land were simply 'depots for the investment of money by rapacious speculators'.<sup>3</sup>

In the middle of the nineteenth century Somers Town was reputed to be very similar to neighbouring Agar Town, which had been a

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1. Weinreb, B. and Hibbert, C., The London Encyclopaedia, 1983, p. 795.

2. George, M.D., *op cit.*, pp. 88-89.

3. Beames, T., The Rookeries of London, 1852, p. 15.

notorious slum from the time that the poor quality houses in the district had first been erected in the 1830s.<sup>1</sup> There were no water supplies or drainage in Agar Town and John Hollingshead described the resulting development as 'the lowest effort of building skill and arrangement in or near London'.<sup>2</sup> Although there were gasworks in the area the gas was sent to more 'favoured' areas and none was available to the local residents. Furthermore, no dustbins existed in the area and private privies were a rarity; the water pumps had apparently long since been destroyed and 'the water was kept in a hole'.<sup>3</sup> That Somers Town was certainly similar to Agar Town is suggested by the following description:

It is filled with courts and alleys; it puts forward a gin-palace built in the true Seven Dials style...and is crowded with cheap gin-shops, cheap clothiers, and cheap haberdashers. Its side streets have a smoky, worn out appearance...every street door is open, no house is without its patched windows; and every passage is full of children.<sup>4</sup>

This description also suggests that Somers Town was similar to some of the poorest areas within the inner arc of London (e.g. St. Giles, Spitalfields, parts of Marylebone) and a comparison of the school attendance of infants in poor areas within the inner arc with that of their peers in Somers Town could offer further insights into the the factors affecting school attendance of 'under eights'.

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1. Prince, H.C., 'North West London 1814-63' in Coppock J.T. and Prince, H.C., op cit., p. 111.

2. Hollingshead, J., Ragged London in 1861, 1861, p. 68.

3. Ibid., p. 69.

4. Ibid., p. 72.

Between 1801 and 1851 the population of the parish of St. Pancras increased by approximately 500 per cent to stand at 167,000 in 1851.<sup>1</sup> Parts of the parish were more highly populated than others. A survey of the St. Luke's district in 1847 enumerated 1191 houses and 12,000 residents.<sup>2</sup> Most of the houses in St. Luke's were small and ramshackle, so an average ratio of ten people to a house suggests that there was overcrowding of the poor. Somers Town was not alone in experiencing massive increases in population; the population of Chelsea, which was also in the outer arc, increased sixfold between 1801 and 1851 but the sample area in Somers Town and Chelsea differed in that the sample streets in Somers Town appear to have been more uniformly working-class and the inhabitants poorer than was the case in Chelsea.<sup>3</sup> The investigation of a part of Chelsea revealed that not only were few streets inhabited solely by the poor and unskilled but also that the wealthier inhabitants were quite willing to contribute towards schools and Churches.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the St. Luke's district of St. Pancras was specifically described in 1847 as 'a thoroughly destitute and helpless District'.<sup>5</sup>

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1. P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, pp. 161-166; P.P. 1852-53 (1632) lxxxvi, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables, Part 1, Vol. 1, p. 2.

2. Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1847, p. 5.

3. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1497.

4. See Chapter 7 of this thesis.

5. Handbill advertising a benefit sermon for the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 10th November 1847, inserted in Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1847.

Furthermore, it was judged that external financial aid would be required if a Church was to be built in St. Luke's, St. Pancras as 'nothing can be expected from local efforts or resources'.<sup>1</sup>

An analysis of the 1851 census enumerators' returns suggests that most of the families living within the sample area were indeed fairly poor but the destitution evident in areas such as St. Giles was not so widespread in this particular part of London.

The largest occupational group amongst fathers of young children was that of boot and shoemakers, closely followed by labourers of various descriptions. Many fathers earned their living as plumbers, painters, carpenters, cab or coachmen, tailors and bricklayers. As in other parts of London, most working mothers were employed as laundresses or dressmakers. A sizeable number of working mothers were employed as shoemakers or shoebinders.<sup>2</sup>

The census returns show that both skilled and unskilled workers lived in the locality, and the large Saturday night/Sunday morning market held in the 'Brill' was said to be patronised by the wives of labourers and mechanics.<sup>3</sup> In some streets small manufacturers, skilled workers and small businessmen lived alongside unskilled and casual workers.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Handbill advertising a benefit sermon for the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 10th November 1847, inserted in Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1847.

2. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1497.

3. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol. 1, 1849, p. 248.

4. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1497.

From its earliest days, Somers Town had been a culturally mixed area since French and Spanish refugees had settled in the locality in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As with most refugees, these newcomers were generally very poor, although many of the Spanish male immigrants had been professional men in their home country.<sup>1</sup> In 1851, however, most of the heads of households in the sample area were English-born. In comparison with other areas of London, the sample streets had a low Irish presence and relatively few of the families in the sample streets were recent Irish immigrants.<sup>2</sup>

Educational Facilities for Infants in St. Luke's, Somers Town.

In 1851 the only public school situated within the sample area was the Bloomsbury and Pancras School in Perry Street. The girls' school was established between 1819 and 1821 and the boys' school opened in 1825. On the basis of the few available details about the Perry Street Schools it would appear that both the girls' and the boys' schools were well attended.<sup>3</sup> In 1832 the number on the books in the girls' school was 150 and the average attendance was 100, whilst in the boys' school 310 children were on the register but

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1. Weinreb, B. and Hibbert, C., The London Encyclopaedia, 1983, p. 795.

2. In the sample, a total of 650 families had at least one child aged between two and seven. In only 31 of these families was the mother and/or father Irish-born.

3. Annual Reports of the British and Foreign Society, 1822-1834.

attendance averaged 200.<sup>1</sup> More than half the girls and boys were recorded as being on the 'Alphabet and Easy Scriptures'.<sup>2</sup> This suggests that the schools may have been catering at this point for a number of very young children.<sup>3</sup> It was not until 1834 that more explicit references were made to the ages of the children in these schools. In 1834 the annual report of the British Society recorded the presence of pupils below the age of eight in both the girls' and the boys' schools. In the girls' school the mistress noted that:

Many, now in the school, have within less than a year and a half risen from the alphabet class to the 6th and 7th reading classes...and one little girl, only five years of age, has within that short space of time, been enabled to read well in the New Testament.<sup>4</sup>

This would imply that the little girl had started at the school at around the age of three and a half or four. The master of the boys' school reported that at that time there were boys aged from five to seven in the highest class, several of whom had commenced in the alphabet class<sup>5</sup>.

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1. 27th Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society quoted in Quarterly Journal of Education, Vol. V, No. IX, 1833, pp. 52-72.

2. Ibid., pp. 52-72.

3. It could also be argued that the children were not necessarily very young but were older children who had previously not been to school or learnt to read.

4. 29th Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1834.

5. Ibid.



Table 8A: Public schools in or near the St. Luke's District of St. Pancras, Somers Town.<sup>1</sup>

- 1821 - Bloomsbury and Pancras Girls' School, Perry Street, Somers Town.<sup>2</sup>
- 1825 - Bloomsbury and Pancras Boys' School, Perry Street, Somers Town.
- 1845 - Agar Town Ragged School, St. Pancras Road.
- 1846 - St. Pancras East, Brittania Street Girls' Boys' and Infants' Schools.
- 1849 - King's Cross Ragged School, Brittania Street.
- 1850 - Sandwich Street Ragged Infants' School.
- 1851 - Polygon Infants' School, Clarendon Square.  
- Agar Town Ragged School (infants' classroom opened).

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1. Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society, 1822-1829; 'Report of H.M.I. Cook' in Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1846, p. 152; National Society Church School Inquiry, 1846, pp. 6-7; Ragged School Union Magazine, April 1849, p. 75; Ragged School Union Magazine, June, 1849, p. 134; Conquest, R., 'Ragged Schools and Others: The Education of the Poor of St. Pancras before the Education Act of 1870' in London and Middlesex Archive Society Transactions, Vol. 34, 1983, pp. 249-250; Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1847-1850; Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, Appx. 1, pp. 17, 23 and 34.

2. Annual Reports of the British and Foreign School Society, 1822-1829, record that the girls' school was established in 1821 but in the 1831 Annual Report the date of establishment was noted as 1829.

Throughout the 1830s, both the girls' and the boys' schools catered for some children below the age of eight, although neither school was described as an infants' school. In 1837 it was noted that the average age of the boys on entering the school was seven but some boys were admitted aged as young as four and half. In the girls' school the ages of girls entering the school varied between four and eleven but the majority of girls' starting at the school were below the age of nine.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1800 and 1859 there was no public infants' school within the sample area of the St. Luke's district but there were two infants' schools situated fairly close to the area and it is possible that some children from the St. Luke's district attended these two schools. In the mid-1840s the St. Pancras East National School in Britannia Street, near King's Cross had an infants' department <sup>2</sup>. in the late 1840s, to the west of the sample area in the Somers Chapel district of St. Pancras, there was a large infants' school which catered for 500 children.<sup>3</sup>

Young children may also have attended the three ragged schools close to St. Luke's district (Table 8A). King's Cross Ragged School in Britannia Street opened in 1844 and catered for an average of 60

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1. 32nd Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1837.

2. Report of H.M.I. Cook, Minutes of the Committee of Council Minutes, 1846 p. 152.

3. Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1849, pp. 7-8.

children.<sup>1</sup> Agar Town Ragged School, which opened a year later in 1845, was situated on the St. Pancras Road close to the northern end of Brewers Street. Initially the school could only cope with 150 children and another 100 had to be turned away.<sup>2</sup> By 1852 no fewer than 1,500 children had been admitted to the school and in 1851 an infant classroom for 100 children was erected and used daily.<sup>3</sup> In 1852 another ragged school for infants' opened on the south side of the Euston Road when an infants' daily school was established in Sandwich Street, Burton Crescent, at the same time as the girls' department of the Compton Street Ragged School moved to the same location.<sup>4</sup> It is not known how many children attended this particular infants' school but those who did had to pay a 'small fee', unlike at other ragged schools where schooling was free.<sup>5</sup>

In the various public schools close to the St. Luke's district there were approximately 1,660 day school places available of which 600-700 were specifically for infants. The children in the St. Luke's district were not as educationally well provided for as these figures would suggest, since the location of the schools would have

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1. Conquest, R., 'Ragged Schools and Others: The Education of the Poor of St. Pancras before the Education Act of 1870' in London and Middlesex Archive Society Transactions, Vol. 34, 1983, pp. 245-258.

2. Ibid., pp. 249-250

3. Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, p. 17 and Appx. 1, p. 55.

4. Ibid., p.24 and Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1850, p. 4

5. Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, Appx. 1, p. 55.

meant that only a proportion of these school places could have been filled by young children from the St. Luke's district.

Contemporaries concerned with the education of the poor did not feel that the public educational facilities in the area were sufficient, bearing in mind the poverty of some of the residents. In 1848, it was noted with concern that in the St. Luke's district where there were at least 5,000 'extremely poor' residents, there was no school of any kind 'in connexion with the Church of England'.<sup>1</sup> In 1849 plans were afoot to establish a ragged school in the district but these had to be abandoned due to lack of suitable accommodation.<sup>2</sup> In 1851 it was recorded that in St Luke's there was not 'a single Institution of any kind for the social or spiritual good of the neighbourhood'.<sup>3</sup> This did not mean, however, that the sample area was totally devoid of any sort of school. There were private working-class schools in the area but either the St. Pancras church Extension Committee did not know of their existence or, more likely, they did not hold them in very high regard.

According to the 1833 Education Returns there were 118 daily Schools in the parish of St. Pancras. Since many of these schools were very small and relied totally on the payment of a weekly fee it is

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1. Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1848, p. 5.

2. Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1849, p. 7 and Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, p. 6.

3. Report of the Committee of the St. Pancras Church Extension Fund, 1851, p. 8.

Table 8B: Private working-class schools in St. Luke's district,  
Somers Town (as listed by 1851 census enumerators).<sup>1</sup>

Brewer Street	: Mary Mills (Schoolmistress).
Denton Street	: Caroline Lark (Schoolmistress).
Denton Street	: Eliza Carter (Teacher).
Denton Street	: Anne Shaid (Schoolmistress).
Hertford Street	: Mary Ann James (Schoolmistress).
Perry Street	: Louisa Clairident (Teacher).
Perry Street	: Thomas Wall (Scholastic Profession).
Chapel Grove	: Elizabeth Gill (Schoolmistress).
Middlesex Street	: Mary Ann Beau (Schoolmistress).
Middlesex Street	: Eliza Allen <sup>2</sup> .

possible that these small schools were working-class private schools. It is not known how many private working-class schools were situated in or near the St. Luke's district of St. Pancras, but in 1840 the mistress of the girls' school in Perry Street reported that in the neighbourhood there were more than 'forty small day schools'.<sup>3</sup> On the basis of the 1851 education census figures, a third of scholars in St. Pancras were educated in private schools and in St. Pancras there was a total of 239 private schools.<sup>4</sup> It was estimated that approximately 112 of these private schools were

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1497.

2. It is unlikely that Eliza Allen was a teacher in a private working-class school as she was only 13 years old.

3. Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1840.

4. P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales), pp. 8-9.

probably 'inferior' schools (i.e. private working-class schools ).<sup>1</sup>

In 1851, the census enumerators listed nine private working-class schools within the sample area. There was a cluster of seven private working-class schools in the streets in the west of the sample area, near Perry Street School. One private school was situated in Middlesex Street and one in Chapel Grove. If it is assumed that there were ten 'under eights' in each of these schools it would appear that relatively few infants in the area attended private working-class schools.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Age.

An average of 29 per cent of infant-aged children living within the sample area attended school (Table 8.1a overleaf). Between the ages of two and seven the proportion of children at school increased with

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1. P.P. 1852-53 (1692) xc, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Education (England and Wales), p.xxxiii. In 1851 it was estimated that 47 per cent of private schools were 'inferior' (see page 75 of this thesis). Obviously the proportion of working class private schools to private schools for middle- and upper-class children would have varied depending upon the area, but Porter's estimate provides an idea of the contemporary perception of the nature and quality of private schooling in London.

age. Only 7 per cent of two year olds were described as scholars compared with 47 per cent of seven year olds. There was not a steady increase in the proportion of children at school in each successive age band. Less than 18 per cent of four year olds attended school but at the age of five the proportion of children at school rose dramatically to 43 per cent. This sharp increase was not repeated in subsequent age groups, as between the ages of five and seven the proportion of children at school rose only slightly to reach a maximum of 47 per cent (Table 8.1b and Graph 8.1 overleaf).

Table 8.1a

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	9	22	22	55	53	53	214
Scholars at home	4	4	4	6	4	3	25
No description	123	108	103	67	58	56	515
Total	136	134	129	128	115	112	754

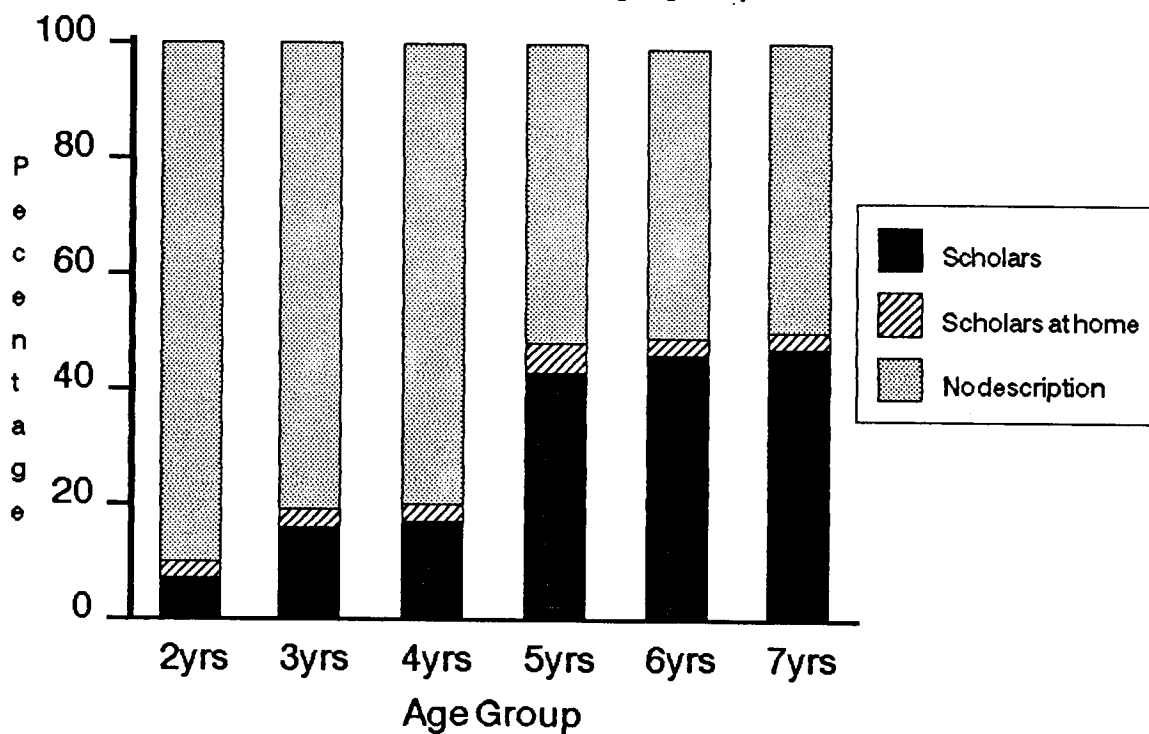
Table 8.1b

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	7	16	17	43	46	47
Scholars at home	3	3	3	5	3	3
No description	90	81	80	52	50	50
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Graph 8.1

St. Luke's: Description of total percentage of children in each age group.





The dramatic increase in the proportion of children who attended school once they were five might have been because the enumerators were not required to state whether or not children below the age of five were at school. It might also have been because the nearest public schools such as Perry Street School were not specifically infants' schools and the schools might therefore have preferred to limit the number of very young children (i.e. 'under fives') on their books. Equally, parents who wanted or needed to send their child to a public school may have been unwilling to send their very young children to schools which were not infants' schools.

The average school attendance amongst 'under eights' was low in comparison with other areas of London. This may be partially explained by the fact that two to four year olds accounted for 53 per cent of the sample, whilst five to seven year olds accounted for 47 per cent. The effect of the slightly higher proportion of younger infants on overall school attendance was compounded by the fact that school attendance amongst four year olds was low in this part of London in comparison with other surveyed areas.<sup>1</sup>

The low school attendance could also have been due to the lack of public infants' schools within the immediate neighbourhood. Parents of young children might have been loathe to send their child to a

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1. In Chelsea 41 per cent of 4 year olds were at school as were 27 per cent in St. George's, 24 per cent in Marylebone and 33 per cent in Spitalfields. Of the seven surveyed areas only St. Giles had a poorer record of school attendance amongst four year olds (21 per cent).

public school that required a long walk or was situated such that it was necessary for an older child or adult to accompany the child to school. The relative paucity of private working-class schools might have also contributed towards the low levels of school attendance since the nine private working-class schools in the survey area could only have catered for approximately 12 per cent of the 754 'under eights' in the area.<sup>1</sup>

School Attendance in Relation to Family Size and Employment of Older Siblings.

The low proportion of 'under eights' attending school in Somers Town cannot be explained on the grounds of the economic activity of these children, as the number of 'under eights' recorded as being employed was negligible. Of the 745 two to seven year olds in the sample only one child, a seven year old boy, was described as employed. It is possible that the low level of school attendance amongst infants living in the sample area was related in some way to the school attendance and employment patterns amongst older children in the area. If, for example, children did not start working until they were aged 14 or so, it is possible that parents might have chosen to delay sending children to school and as a result sent older children to school rather than the very young ones. There were certainly more schools catering for older children than schools catering for infants.

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1. This figure was arrived at by estimating that each private working-class school catered for an average of 10 'under eights'. The nine private working-class schools catered for a total of approximately 90 infant-aged children.

An analysis of school attendance patterns of children aged from 8 to 14 revealed that an average of 41 per cent children in this older age bracket were at school, which was a lower proportion than in all the other areas surveyed except St. Giles (Tables 8.2a and 8.2b).

Table 8.2a

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	41	45	46	33	24	13	8	210
At Work	0	0	2	7	9	26	16	60
Scholars at Home	2	1	4	3	0	2	2	14
No Description	35	47	40	30	26	25	21	224
Total	78	93	92	73	59	66	47	508

Table 8.2b

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of total percentage of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	53	48	50	45	41	20	17
At Work	0	0	2	10	15	39	34
Scholars at Home	3	1	4	4	0	3	4
No Description	45	51	44	41	44	38	45
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The peak age for school attendance occurred at the age of eight when almost 53 per cent of children were at school. The main 'take off' point as regards employment was around the age of 11 or 12 and more than a third of 13 year olds were recorded as being in paid employment whilst only a fifth of this age group attended school. Only Spitalfields had a higher proportion of eight to 14 year olds at work. These figures would suggest that once children reached the age of 11 or 12 they became economically active, and even the small wages they earned were too valuable to forego for the sake of day schooling. This interpretation is supported by a report on the Agar Town Ragged School which noted that:

The attendance of this school, more than any other, depends upon the season of the year and the amount of employment for young people - the number present during last winter often amounted to 100 - the summer average has been about 40... <sup>1</sup>

Since similar proportions of five to eight year olds and 10 to 12 year olds went to school, it would seem that school attendance was influenced by factors other than age and the potential to earn a little money. The area was inhabited by a high number of poor families and it is possible that parents were unable to afford to send their children to school because the family budget did not stretch to schooling. That this was even more likely to be the case in larger families was suggested in a report on the ragged school in Britannia Street which explicitly noted the negative affect of poverty and family size on school attendance:

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1. Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, p. 17.

There are schools for the poor which receive children for a few pence a week, but so great is the poverty of many of the parents, especially where the family is large, that the privilege does not extend to them.<sup>1</sup>

In the light of the previous two observations made by contemporaries it would seem that family economics played a major part in determining whether or not a child attended school. It would, therefore, be expected that 'under eights' in large families would be less likely to be at school than those in smaller families, unless the family income in the large families was greater than that of smaller families. An analysis of the families in the sample suggests that the opposite was in fact the case. The proportion of families with at least one child between the ages of two and seven at school increased rather than decreased with the size of the family. A higher proportion of families with four or more children sent an infant-aged child to school than did families with only one to three children. Thus, almost a quarter of families with two children sent at least one infant to school whilst almost two thirds of families with six or more children did so (Table 8.3 overleaf).

The low level of school attendance amongst infants in smaller families was reflected in the overall low school attendance amongst infants within the study area, since almost 60 per cent of the families in the sample were composed of three children or less.

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1. Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, p. 34.

Table 8.3  
St. Luke's, St. Pancras: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	63	15	29	12
Two Children	130	29	25	7
Three Children	120	34	30	9
Four Children	93	41	20	10
Five Children	63	25	13	6
Six or more Children	55	33	10	2
Total	524	177	127	46

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with a working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one  
infant at school.

The unexpected relationship between school attendance and family size may have been related to the employment of older siblings. Over half of families with at least one older child at work also sent at least one infant-aged child to school compared, with approximately a third of families in which none of the older children were at work (Table 8.4b).

It is not clear why young children from larger families were more likely to attend school than those from smaller families. One reason could have been that there was more likelihood that in the larger families more of the 'infants' would fall into the four to seven age range and therefore be more likely to attend school. In addition, there was more likelihood that at least one of the older children was of an age to be employed and, as suggested by the

figures in Table 8.4b, infants were more likely to be sent to school in those families in which older siblings were contributing to the family income.

Table 8.4a

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: School attendance related to employment of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
Total	94	53	205	71	423

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 8.4b

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Percentage of families in each category relating school attendance to employment of older siblings.

	G	F
Total %	56	35

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work which also had at least one infant at school (  $B/A \times 100$  ).

F = Percentage of families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school (  $D/C \times 100$  ).

Table 8.4b is based on figures in Table 8.4a.

### School Attendance in Relation to Fathers' Occupations.

Fathers of young children were employed in a wide range of skilled and unskilled occupations. A large number of fathers were employed as boot and shoemakers, labourers, plumbers, painters and plasterers, carpenters, cab and coachmen, bricklayers and tailors.<sup>1</sup> The school attendance of the infant-aged children of fathers employed as shoemakers, labourers, plumbers/painters and plasterers, carpenters and coachmen was below the average for the area as a whole. The infant-aged children of shoemakers and plumbers and

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1497.

painters had the highest proportion of their young children at school with 26 per cent of those between two and seven described as scholars. For carpenters the proportion was 21 per cent, for cabmen and coachmen 18 per cent, whilst only 11 per cent of labourers' infant-aged children were scholars (Table 8.5 and Graph 8.2).

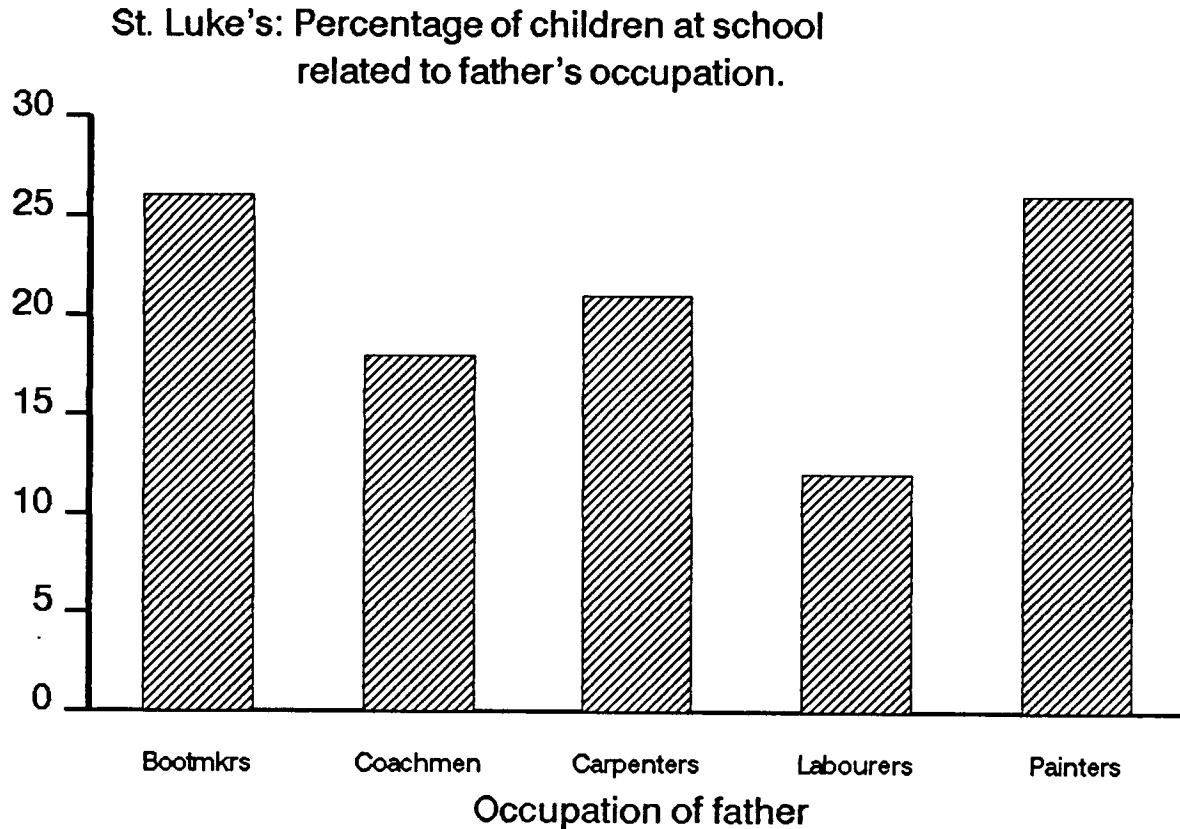
Table 8.5

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Attendance patterns of children, related to fathers' occupations, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Boot and Shoemakers	20 (26%)	3 (4%)	53 (70%)	76 (100%)
Carpenters, Joiners etc.	7 (21%)	1 (3%)	26 (76%)	34 (100%)
Coachmen	5 (18%)	2 (7%)	21 (75%)	28 (100%)
Labourers	8 (12%)	1 (1%)	61 (87%)	70 (100%)
Painters, Plumbers, etc.	10 (26%)	0 (0%)	28 (74%)	38 (100%)



Graph 8.2



The different patterns of school attendance amongst children whose fathers were employed in the various occupations can not be attributed solely to the ages of the children concerned. Two to four year olds predominated in all six of the major occupational groups in the area. Plumbers, painters and plasterers had the lowest proportion of two to four year olds (53 per cent) whilst carpenters had the highest proportion of two to four year olds (74 per cent). Whilst it is true, however, that in the sample more plumbers' and painters' children attended school than did plasterers' children, there was not a simple relationship between the ages of the children and proportion attending school in each occupational group. Carpenters, for example not only had a higher proportion of two to four year olds than did labourers but also had

a higher proportion of 'under eights' at school than labourers  
(Tables 8.6a - 8.6e overleaf).

Table 8.6a

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were shoemakers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	13	15	15	9	13	11	76
Percent	17	20	20	12	17	14	100

Table 8.6b

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were carpenters.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	9	8	8	4	2	3	34
Percent	26	24	24	12	5	9	100

Table 8.6c

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were coachmen.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	6	4	5	5	4	4	28
Percent	22	14	18	18	14	14	100

Table 8.6d

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were labourers.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	18	15	11	8	8	10	70
Percent	26	22	16	11	11	14	100

Table 8.6e

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Number and percentage of children within each age group whose fathers were plumbers/painters, etc.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Number	5	7	8	8	2	8	38
Percent	13	19	21	21	5	21	100

The differences also cannot be easily attributable to the annual employment patterns and remuneration within each occupational group as workers in all of these occupations were subject to seasonal fluctuations as regards employment and the amount of available work. In addition, when in employment, it was unlikely that there was much disparity between the wages of those engaged in each of the six occupations. Possible explanations for different patterns of school attendance in relation to fathers' occupations and the relative values placed on education amongst different occupational groups have already been discussed in previous chapters. The fact that in Somers Town, as in other parts of London, the attendance patterns of children cannot be clearly linked to fathers' occupation supports the argument that the education of very young children must have been modified by a range of factors. These factors probably included the economic situation of the family, the educational facilities available in the locality, the ages of the children, the views of the other parent, the parents' country of origin and religion and very personal choices made by individual parents.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Religion and Parents' Country of Birth.

Although Somers Town had been a focus of settlement for French and Spanish immigrants, the enumerators' returns for the area show that the vast majority of both the children and their parents were English born. In 31 families, however, one or both parents were born in Ireland. In these 31 families there were 52 children aged between two and seven, of which only three attended school (Tables 8.7a and 8.7b overleaf). School attendance amongst infants in the surveyed area was not very high at 29 per cent but amongst the

infant-aged children of Irish born parents it was even lower at only six per cent. In no other part of London was school attendance of Irish children so low; even in the notorious area of St. Giles 12 per cent of Irish children were at school.

Table 8.7a

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of total number of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
No description	8	12	8	5	6	9	48
Total	8	12	8	5	9	10	52

Table 8.7b

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of total percentage of Irish children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	0	0	0	0	22	10
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	11	0
No description	100	100	100	100	67	90
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

There are at least three possible explanations for the low levels of school attendance amongst Irish children in St. Lukes, Somers Town. Firstly, there were more Irish children in the two to four age bracket than in the five to seven bracket and this may have lowered overall school attendance. Secondly, there were no Catholic schools in the immediate vicinity and, as research into school attendance in other parts of London has shown, many Irish parents were very

unwilling to expose their children to the real or imagined proselytising influences of the ragged schools and other public schools such as those affiliated to the National Society. Thirdly, many of the Irish fathers were unskilled workers and no fewer than 13 Irish fathers were labourers. The children of Irish labourers accounted for more than half of the total number of Irish 'under eights' in the area. An analysis of school attendance amongst the children of Irish labourers shows that out of 28 children only three were described as scholars, as compared with five of the 42 children of English-born labourers. These figures would suggest that school attendance amongst the children of Irish labourers was similar to that of English labourers' children. Thus the proportion of labourers' children at school was not greatly affected by the fathers' country of origin.

Since Irish labourers' children accounted for more than half of the Irish 'under eights' in the sample it would appear that the low levels of school attendance amongst Irish 'under eights' was probably attributable to the high number of Irish fathers who were labourers rather than to religious or cultural influences.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Mothers' Employment and Marital State.

Mothers were in paid employment in almost a quarter of the families with children aged between two and seven. Of these 130 working mothers, 78 were married and the remaining 52 were either single or were bringing up their families alone. A higher proportion of two to seven year olds of married working mothers attended school than

the two to seven year olds of single working mothers (Tables 8.8a, 8.8b and 8.9a and 8.9b below).

Table 8.8a

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Children of married working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	4	3	2	8	10	11	38
Scholars at home	0	0	2	1	2	1	6
No description	20	15	19	11	11	7	83
Total	24	18	23	20	23	19	127

Table 8.8b

St.Luke's, St.Pancras: Children of married working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	17	17	9	40	43	58
Scholars at home	0	0	9	5	9	5
No description	83	83	82	55	48	37
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 8.9a

St.Luke's, St. Pancras: Children of single working mothers, relating number within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	1	1	6	4	4	17
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	9	13	6	9	7	10	54
Total	10	14	7	15	11	14	71

Table 8.9b

St.Luke's, St. Pancras: Children of single working mothers, relating percentage within each age group to description.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	10	7	14	40	36	29
Scholars at home	0	0	0	0	0	0
No description	90	93	86	60	64	71
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

The marital state of the mother appeared to have little influence on the schooling patterns of two to four year olds. As regards five to seven year olds, in the case of married working mothers, the proportion of children at school increased from 42 per cent of five year olds to 61 per cent of seven year olds. In the case of single working mothers, the proportion of five to seven year olds who were scholars decreased in each successive age band from 40 per cent of five year olds to 29 per cent of seven year olds (Tables 8.9a-8.9b).<sup>1</sup> This decline in school attendance was probably not an aberration, as an analysis of the school attendance of the older children of single and married working mothers revealed that approximately 20 per cent of single working mothers' children over the age of eight were at school as compared with 30 per cent of married working mothers' children. It would seem that single mothers were slightly less likely to send their children to school than married working mothers. The most feasible explanation for this would be that single working mothers had less money to spend on schooling than mothers in which both parents were employed.

School attendance amongst two to four year olds with working mothers was not significantly different from the attendance of the two to four year olds whose mothers were not in paid employment, which

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1. Too much emphasis on the exact proportions should be avoided as the number of children in some of the age groups was small. For example, there were only 18 seven year old children of married working mothers and therefore an extra one or two recorded as being at school would have altered the proportion of scholars by as much as 10 per cent.

would suggest that, in this part of London, two to four year olds who were sent to school were not sent solely because their mothers were at work and wanted the children 'out of the way'. There was a sharp rise in the proportion of scholars amongst children aged between four and five with working mothers, but this can not be attributed to the need of working mothers to organise day care for their young children as a similar rise also occurred between the ages of four and five in the case of children of non-working mothers. That school attendance amongst infants in this part of London owed little to whether or not the mother was employed is also suggested by the finding that within each age band there was no significant difference in the proportion of working mothers' children at school and non-working mothers' children at school. Only amongst the seven year old children of married working mothers was school attendance significantly higher than amongst seven year olds of non-working mothers.

Mothers were employed in a total of 25 different occupations but the three major occupations amongst married women were dressmaking, shoemaking and laundry work. Amongst single mothers the major occupations were also dressmakers and laundry work and, to a lesser extent, charring and shoemaking. There were distinct differences in the attendance patterns of laundresses' children and dressmakers' children with 40 per cent of dressmakers' 'under eights' described as scholars as compared with only 23 per cent of laundresses' children (Tables 8.10a - 8.10c overleaf). This difference is surprising in view of the remuneration and work patterns of laundresses and needlewomen. Dressmakers and needlewomen were very poorly paid and were frequently employed as 'outworkers'; thus it



would be expected that very little money would be available for schooling and furthermore, as the mother was at home there might not have been the same urgency for arrangements to be made for the care and education of young children during the day. Laundresses, on the other hand, could sometimes earn much more than dressmakers, and tended to work away from home for long hours, which had obvious implications for the care of young children.

Table 8.10a

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of children whose mothers were charwomen/laundresses, relating description to marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	2	0	8	10
Married	8	0	25	33
All	10	0	33	43

Table 8.10b

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of children whose mothers were needlewomen, relating description to marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	5	0	13	18
Married	12	0	13	25
All	17	0	26	43

Table 8.10c

St. Luke's, St. Pancras: Description of children whose mothers were employed as shoebinders, relating description to marital state of mother.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Single	1	0	6	7
Married	13	0	26	39
All	14	0	32	46

Clearly, family economics and working patterns were not the only factors influencing school attendance amongst infants. It is possible that different attitudes towards education of young children prevailed in dressmakers' and laundresses' families. That this may indeed have been the case is suggested by the finding that in this small area of London dressmakers were more likely to be married to a skilled or semi-skilled worker than an unskilled worker, whilst the opposite was true of the laundresses in the area. The dressmakers were married to a mason, piano-maker, organ finisher, coachmaker, printer, smith and marble polisher. Although some of the laundresses were married to skilled workers (eg. a jeweller, harnessmaker, printer, mason and engineer), nine of the 21 laundresses in the sample were married to a labourer, porter or similarly unskilled worker, whilst none of the needlewomen was. As previous sections have shown, it is not possible to predict the school attendance patterns of a group of children on the basis of whether their parents were skilled or unskilled workers but it would seem that skilled workers, who were themselves probably better educated than the majority of unskilled workers and more conscious of the value of education, were more likely to send their children to school than many unskilled workers.

The marital state of the dressmaker or laundress also affected school attendance. A higher proportion of married dressmakers' children attended school than did those of single dressmakers (48 per cent and 28 per cent respectively). In the case of laundresses, the difference between married and single women was not so marked with 24 per cent of married laundresses' children attending school

compared with 20 per cent of single laundresses' children. As mentioned earlier, a possible explanation for this difference is that the single working mothers had less money to spend on the schooling of their children.

Summary.

The analysis of this area of Somers Town has shown that school attendance amongst 'under eights' was low in comparison to other parts of London. This might have been due to the low number of public and private schools in the area. The low school attendance could also have been due to the fact that amongst the children of fathers employed in the five major occupations of the area only 20 per cent were described as scholars. The overall low school attendance of the area can not be attributed to the low levels of school attendance amongst Irish children, as Irish 'under eights' accounted for less than 10 per cent of 'under eights' in the sample area.

SCHOOL PROVISION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN PART OF HOMERTON AND  
HACKNEY, NORTH TOWER HAMLETS.

Hackney and Homerton, situated in the north-east sector of London in the outer arc, were on the northern fringes of the area referred to in this study as North Tower Hamlets. The North London Railway ran through the sample area, and streets to the south of the railway line (i.e. Water Lane, Salem Place, Durham Grove, Thomas Street and Hockley Street) were part of Hackney while the remaining ten streets formed part of Homerton.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Hackney was a rural area on the outskirts of London which was popular with the wealthier classes because it was conveniently close to the centre of London and yet was far enough away from the teeming streets of the city for it to be pleasantly rural, healthy and uncrowded.<sup>1</sup> In 1774 The Ambulator described Hackney as a 'very large and populous village on the North of London, inhabited by such numbers of merchants and wealthy persons that it is said that there are near a hundred gentlemen's coaches kept'.<sup>2</sup> During the early part of the nineteenth century Hackney remained relatively uncrowded and rural and in 1832 the British and Foreign Society described schools in Hackney and Homerton as being in the 'country division' of London.<sup>3</sup>

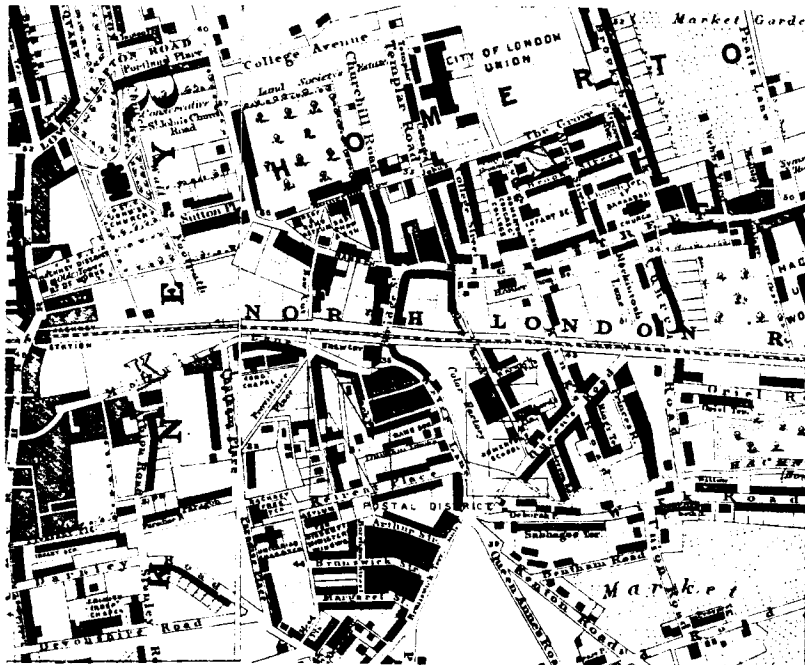
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1. Weinreb, B. and Hibbert, C., The London Encyclopaedia, 1983, p. 350.

2. Bateman, R.P., A Short History of the London Borough of Hackney, 1967, p. 10.

3. 27th Annual Report of the British and Foreign School Society, 1832.

Area of Homerton in which  
surveyed streets were located.



From Stanford's New Library Map of London, 1862

In 1842 Samuel Roper wrote a paper entitled On the Comparative Healthiness of the Parish of Hackney, in which he utilised the annual reports of the Registrar General to support his claim that Hackney was the healthiest parish in London as it had the lowest mortality rate. He ascribed 'the superior salubrity of the parish' to its low population density coupled with its healthy geographic position which ensured it was well ventilated and the land well drained.<sup>1</sup> According to Roper, in the eastern and western districts of London the population density was one person per 16 square yards, in Holborn one person per 19 square yards but in Hackney there was on average one person per 434 square yards. Analysis of the 1851 enumerators' returns certainly gave the impression that the overcrowded streets and tenements that were so characteristic of areas within the inner arc of London were not a feature of the sampled part of Hackney and Homerton. In the fifteen streets which formed the sample area there was a total of 1,447 residents. By way of contrast, in Spitalfields 1,335 people were housed in only six streets of similar length to those in Homerton, and in Marylebone 1292 people were crammed into seven small courts and mews which were situated behind the main streets.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Roper, S., On the Comparative Healthiness of the Parish of Hackney, 1842, p. 10.

2. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1510. The streets referred to were Tenter Street, Butler Street, Freeman Street, Tilley Street, Palmer Street and Shepherd Street in Spitalfields, and in Marylebone the courts and mews were Bakers Court, York Court, Blandford Mews, Bird Mews, Dorset Mews, Kendall Mews, and Manchester Mews North.

In the eighteenth century Homerton, like Hackney, was essentially rural. Watercress was grown in the area and it was surrounded by market gardens and fields. It was a poorer area than Hackney and by the middle of the nineteenth century was becoming increasingly industrialised.<sup>1</sup>

During the first half of the nineteenth century, London steadily expanded on all fronts, and in the process annexed previously isolated areas such as Somers Town and Chelsea. In the 1850s and early 1860s, however, market gardens and common land still separated Hackney and Homerton from the more built up areas of London.<sup>2</sup>

As in other parts of London, the population of Hackney increased during the first half of the nineteenth century. In the parish as a whole the population rose by more than 400 per cent between 1801 and 1851 and by mid-century stood at 58,429.<sup>3</sup> There is little evidence to suggest that this increase was due in any significant degree to an influx of immigrants. At the time of the 1851 Census, the overwhelming majority of parents in the sample were English-born and in only eight of the 134 families was the mother or father Irish-born.

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1. Weinreb, B. and Hibbert, C., The London Encyclopaedia, 1983, pp. 391-392.

2. Stanford's New Map of London, 1861.

3. P.P. 1831 (348) xviii, Comparative Account of the Population of Great Britain in the Years 1810, 1811, 1821 and 1831, pp. 161-166; P.P. 1851 (1631) lxxxv, Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables, Vol. 1, p. 2.

At the time of the 1851 census most of the fathers with young children who were living in the area were employed as labourers, porters, gardeners, boot and shoemakers, carpenters, painters and food retailers. Most working mothers were employed as laundresses, charwomen and needlewomen, with a few employed as shoebinders, strawbonnet makers, twine spinners and cooks. The streets surveyed were virtually uniformly working-class except for the presence of three clerks' families. Only one of the fathers, a glover who employed two men, could be described as a small scale employer.<sup>1</sup>

Educational Facilities for Infants in Part of Homerton and Hackney.

In 1818 eleven public day schools for the poor and four Sunday schools were located in various parts of Hackney, and the returning officer for Hackney noted that the poor had 'ample means of educating their children'.<sup>2</sup> None of these schools, however, was specifically an infants' school. During the mid-1820s and the early 1830s four infants' were established in the parish (Table 8.C overleaf). On October 2nd 1826 the Parochial Infant School in Bridge Street opened and admitted 94 children.<sup>3</sup> The appeal to the residents of Hackney for funds to establish and support the school

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1. This paragraph has been based on the 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns for the sampled area, HO 107 1505.

2. P.P. 1819 (224)ix, Digest of Parochial Returns to the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor, Pt.1, p. 546.

3. Baldry, J., The Hackney Free and Parochial Schools: A History, 1970, p. 41. The date of opening confirmed by P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 562.



Table 9A: Public infants' schools.<sup>1</sup>

1826 - Hackney Parochial Infants' School, Bridge Street, Homerton.  
1828 - Upper Clapton Infants' school, Wood street, Upper Clapton.  
1832 - West Hackney and Stamford Hill Infants' School.  
1833 - Well Street Infants' School (recommenced).  
1851 - College Lane School.<sup>2</sup>

Table 9B: Private working-class schools.<sup>3</sup>

Salem Place : Maria Thomas [Schoolmistress].  
College Street : Elizabeth Precious [Schoolmistress].  
Heslop Place : Henrietta Haslett [Teacher and governess]. <sup>4</sup>

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1. List of infant schools in Pigot's Post Office Directory, 1838; P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 562; 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1505; Baldry, J., The Hackney Free and Parochial Schools: A History, 1970, p. 41.

2. The earliest reference to this school that has been found occurs in the 1851 census enumerators' returns for the area, HO 107 1505. The 1862 Stanford Map of London shows an infants' school in College Lane. As private working-class schools do not appear on maps of London and the school was run by a husband and wife team it would seem that this school was probably a public infants' school.

3. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns, HO 107 1505.

4. Henrietta Haslett was only 14 years old and it is therefore questionable whether she would have been operating a private working-class school. Her father was a clerk and the family was probably on the borderline between upper working-class and lower middle-class. It is therefore feasible that Henrietta worked as an assistant in a private school or as a governess of young children in a middle-class home.

made it clear that a primary aim was to establish a school where children aged between two and six could attend when their parents were at work. Although the school was in the centre of the sample area, some of its regulations effectively prevented the institution from being used by all those who may have wanted to send their young children to school and therefore the extent to which this particular school was a useful resource for all in the community may have been limited. Children were admitted only if their parents were absent from home during the day, and if parents had been unable to make arrangements for the day care of their children. Children had to pay 1d a week and be sent 'quite clean, with their hair cut short and combed'. School started at nine o' clock in the morning and ended at five o'clock in summer and four o'clock in winter. The lunch break lasted from midday to 1.45 pm, but children were allowed to bring their lunch from home and eat it on the school premises. Any child arriving late, however, was sent home.<sup>1</sup> Some parents might have found it difficult to adhere to the various rules or may have resented having to cut their children's hair. Other parents might have wanted to send their child to the school, but were not deemed eligible as one of the parents was at home or alternative arrangements could be made for the child.

Three other public infants' schools were established in Hackney. One in Upper Clapton opened in 1828 and catered for approximately 120 children; the Stoke Newington, West Hackney and Stamford Hill

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1. Baldry, J., The Hackney Free and Parochial Schools: A History, 1970, p. 42.

School, which was established in 1832, catered for 159 children, and the Well Street Infants' school, which recommenced in the early 1830s, catered for 80-100 children.<sup>1</sup> All three of these schools were situated outside the study area and only the Well Street school was fairly accessible to 'under eights' within the sample.

The 1851 enumerators' returns would suggest that those parents of young children within the study area who wanted or needed to send their child to a private working-class school had only a very limited choice of schools. Three possible private working-class schoolteachers were recorded within the study area (Table 8.D).

Despite the apparent shortage of educational facilities for infants, this area had a high proportion of infant scholars.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Age.

Of the 209 children aged between two and seven in the sample, 116 or 55 per cent were described as scholars (Tables 9.1a and 9.1b overleaf). One explanation for this high level of school attendance could lie in the fact that although the proportion of 'under eights' in the area was similar to that in other parts of London, the low population density meant that the actual number of 'under eights' was low and therefore the existing schools were sufficient to meet demand. Other areas of London were well served with educational

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1. P.P. 1835 (62) xli, Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, p. 562.

Table 9.1a

Homerton: Description of total number of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Scholars	1	12	13	33	29	28	116
Scholars at home	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
No description	26	29	21	6	6	3	91
Total	27	42	34	39	35	32	209

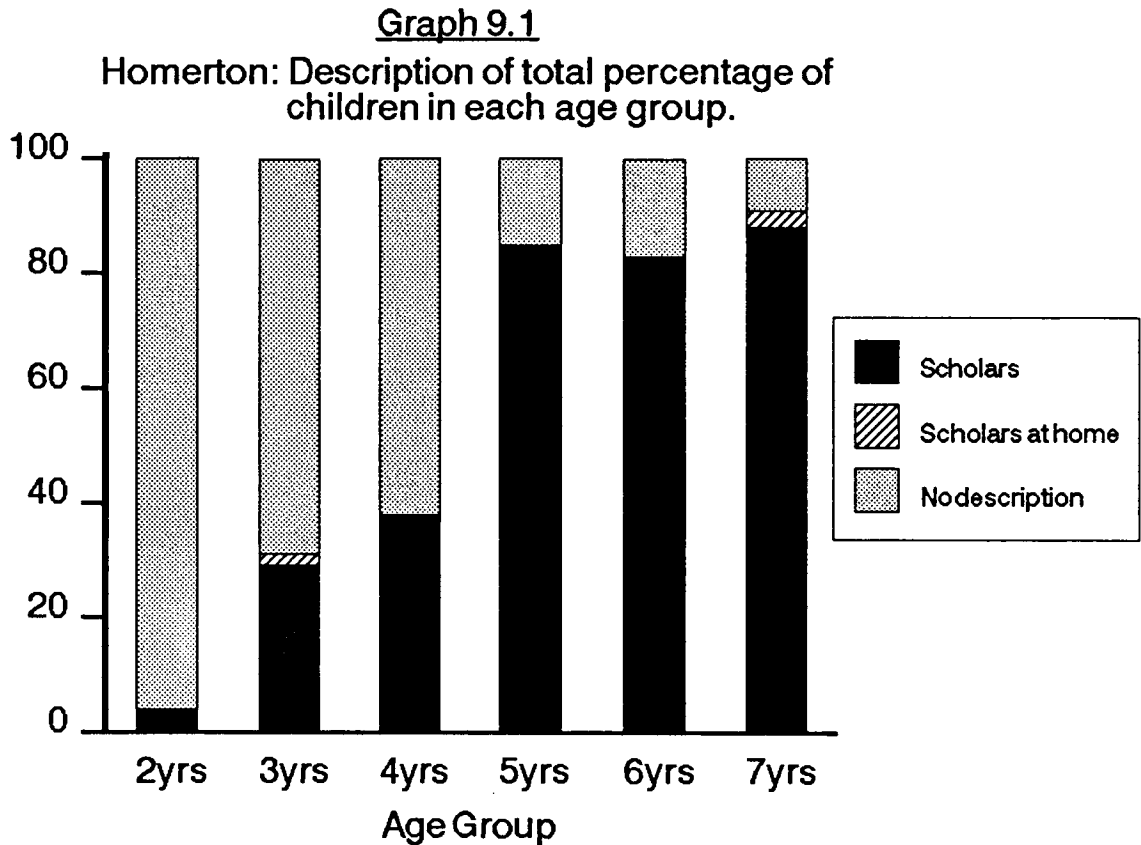
Table 9.1b

Homerton: Description of total percentage of children within each age group, relating age to attendance.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs
Scholars	4	29	38	85	83	88
Scholars at home	0	2	0	0	0	3
No description	96	69	62	15	17	9
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

facilities for infants (e.g. parts of Marylebone, Westminster and Spitalfields), and yet attendance levels were not as high as in this small area of Hackney and Homerton. This would suggest that availability and proximity of schools were not the only factors determining school attendance.

Only one out of 26 or approximately four per cent of two year olds was at school whilst 28 out of 32 (87 per cent) of seven year olds went to school. A major increase in the proportion of children at school occurred between the ages of four and five (Graph 9.1 overleaf).



Thus, in the sample, approximately 25 per cent of two to four year olds were at school compared, with 85 per cent of five to seven year olds. This finding suggests that the overall high levels of school attendance amongst infants in the sample were attributable to an age imbalance amongst the sample. This was not the, case however, as there were 103 two to four year olds in the sample and 106 five to seven year olds (Table 9.1a).

As in other areas of London it is possible that the schooling and employment patterns of older siblings, family size, the fathers' occupation and the working patterns of mothers may have all influenced school attendance.

School Attendance in Relation to Family Size and Employment of Older Siblings.

As shown in Tables 9.2a and 9.2b, in comparison with the six other sample areas Homerton had the lowest rate of employment amongst older children (approximately six to seven per cent) and yet had the highest proportion of infants returned as scholars (55 per cent). This would suggest that, in this area, there was little relationship between the school attendance of young children and whether or not their older siblings were at work, at school or at home.

An analysis of school attendance patterns of those infants who had older siblings revealed that more than three quarters, or 22 of the 28 families in which at least one older sibling was in paid employment, also sent at least one infant to school. This

Table 9.2a

Homerton: Description of total number of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs	Total
Scholars	23	18	27	13	17	13	5	116
At work	1	0	0	0	0	4	5	10
Scholars at home	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	5
No description	4	2	4	4	3	1	3	21
Total	29	21	32	17	21	19	13	152

Table 9.2b

Homerton: Description of total percentage of older siblings within each age group.

	8yrs	9yrs	10yrs	11yrs	12yrs	13yrs	14yrs
Scholars	80	86	84	76	81	69	38
At work	3	0	0	0	0	21	38
Scholars at home	3	5	3	0	5	5	0
No description	14	9	13	24	14	5	24
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

proportion was fractionally higher than that for the 47 families in which no older child was at work, as of these families three quarters or 35 sent one or more infant aged child to school (Tables 9.3a and 9.3b overleaf). The high levels of school attendance amongst infants in Homerton cannot be linked to the patterns of employment amongst older children in Homerton.

School attendance of infants was loosely related to the overall size of the family. A comparison of school attendance amongst infants in small families with that of infants in larger families revealed that a higher proportion of the larger families sent at least one infant-

Table 9.3a

Homerton: School attendance related to employment state of older siblings.

	A	B	C	D	Total
Total	28	22	47	35	132

A = Families with at least one older sibling at work.

B = Families with at least one older sibling at work and at least one infant at school.

C = Families with no older siblings at work.

D = Families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school.

Table 9.3b

Homerton: Percentage of families in each category relating school attendance to employment of older siblings.

	G	F
Total %	79	74

G = Percentage of families with at least one older sibling at work which also had at least one infant at school ( $B/A \times 100$ ).

F = Percentage of families with no older siblings at work but at least one infant at school ( $D/C \times 100$ ).

Table 9.3b is based on figures in Table 9.3a.

aged child to school. In the sample an average of 45 per cent of families composed of one or two children sent an 'under eight' to school as compared with 77 per cent of families with three or more children (Table 9.4 overleaf). It should be noted here that the high levels of school attendance in Homerton overall cannot be linked to family size as families with three or more children accounted for slightly less than half of the total sample. The influence of family size was further modified by whether or not the mother was in work (Table 9.4 above). Similar proportions of families with working mothers and composed of one child or with more



Table 9.4

Homerton: School attendance related to family size  
and employment of mother.

	A	B	C	D
One Child	22	10	8	3
Two Children	29	13	6	3
Three Children	21	13	9	6
Four Children	20	18	7	7
Five Children	15	12	5	5
Six or more Children	25	19	8	3
Total	132	85	43	27

A = Number of families.

B = Number of families with at least one infant at school.

C = Number of families with a working mother.

D = Number of families with a working mother and at least one  
infant at school.

than four children sent at least one infant-aged child to school. A lower proportion of families composed of two children sent an infant to school, whereas families with three children had the highest proportion of infants at school. The sample on which the foregoing analysis is based is small, as in only 43 families was the mother in paid employment.

It would be necessary to investigate a larger sample in Homerton to draw any firm conclusions about the links between school attendance, family size and mothers' employment state.

### School Attendance in Relation to Fathers' Occupations.

Fathers were employed in a wide range of occupations, some of which reflected the relatively rural nature of the area. Labourers formed the largest single occupational group as 24 out of the 124 fathers in the sample were thus employed. Boot and shoemakers, gardeners, food retailers, porters, carpenters and painters accounted for another 50 fathers. None of these occupations was particularly well paid and all were subject to differing degrees of seasonal fluctuations. Owing to the small numbers of children involved, it is feasible to attempt to relate school attendance to occupation only in respect of labourers' and shoemakers' children (Table 9.5 below). In the case of labourers' children 21 out of 38 children aged between two and seven were at school and with regard to shoemakers' children the figure was 10 out of a total of 19 children. The proportion of labourers' and shoemakers' children was approximately the same as that of the sample area as whole.

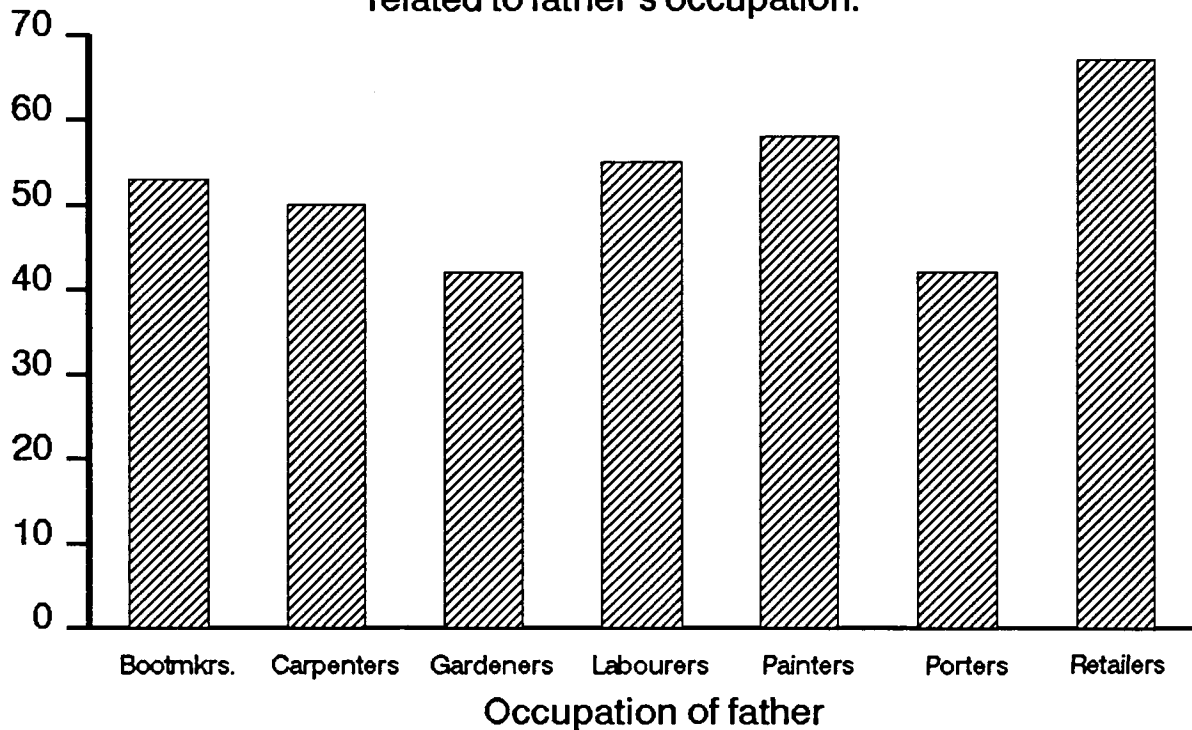
Table 9.5

Homerton: Attendance patterns of children, related to fathers' occupations, giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
Boot and Shoemakers	10 (53%)	0 (0%)	9 (47%)	19 (100%)
Carpenters, Joiners etc.	5 (50%)	0 (0%)	5 (50%)	10 (100%)
Food Retailers	6 (67%)	0 (0%)	3 (33%)	9 (100%)
Gardeners	5 (42%)	0 (0%)	7 (58%)	12 (100%)
Labourers	21 (55%)	0 (0%)	17 (45%)	38 (100%)
Painters	7 (58%)	2 (17%)	3 (25%)	12 (100%)
Porters	5 (42%)	0 (0%)	7 (58%)	12 (100%)

Graph 9.2

Homerton: Percentage of children at school  
related to father's occupation.



School Attendance in Relation to Mothers' Employment and Marital State.

Mothers were in paid employment in almost a third of the families in the sample, and 69 children aged from two to seven had a working mother. Mothers were employed mainly as laundresses, ironers, charwomen and needlewomen, but an analysis of school attendance in relation to the nature of the mothers' occupations was not possible in this sample as the figures were too small. Single working mothers accounted for approximately a quarter of all working mothers. Almost 54 per cent of two to seven year olds with a working mother were at school, compared with 56 per cent of infants

whose mothers were not in paid employment (Table 9.6 below). Given the small size of the sample, these differences are not statistically significant and it would therefore appear that school attendance of infants in the sample area was not noticeably affected by whether or not a mother worked. Furthermore, the marital state of working mothers did not seem to affect school attendance as approximately half of both single and married working mothers' of two to seven year olds were at school.

Table 9.6

Homerton: Attendance patterns of children of working mothers, related to mothers marital state giving number and percentage for each category.

	Scholars	Sch at Home	No Desc.	Total
All working mothers	37 (54%)	0 (0%)	32 (46%)	69 (100%)
Married working mothers	31 (53%)	0 (0%)	27 (47%)	58 (100%)
Single working mothers	6 (55%)	0 (0%)	5 (45%)	11 (100%)

The census enumerators' returns would suggest that there was possibly an increased tendency for younger infants to attend school if the mother was at work. To investigate this further an analysis of a larger sample would be necessary.

The Bridge Street Infants' School specifically catered for those children whose parents were at work. If parents perceived schools for young children mainly as a form of day-care facility then one would expect that the existence of such a facility would have meant

that parents would have utilised the facility to the full, and that the school attendance amongst children with working mothers would have been much higher than that of children with non-working mothers. The fact that there was very little difference between the school attendance of children with working and non-working mothers would suggest that factors other than the need for day care motivated parents into sending their children to school.

Furthermore, it is interesting to speculate about the reasons for parents not sending their child to the Bridge Street School. As in other areas of London, it is possible that working-class parents were not happy with the general ethos of the school and preferred to keep their children at home or make arrangements for their schooling and day care which drew on the resources of the local working-class community.

#### Summary.

The results of the analysis of school attendance in Homerton and Hackney suggest two things; either that school attendance of infants in this part of London was influenced by factors other than those in the other six areas examined, or that the same factors influenced school attendance but interacted differently and had a different effect on infants' patterns of schooling. This is an area of London that would benefit from further detailed exploration and analysis.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION.

Educational historians have drawn on a range of source materials to examine the education of young children in England during the early nineteenth century. The majority of their research has focused on the form this education took (e.g. curriculum, teaching styles) and the role key people such as Owen and Wilderspin played in the development of public schooling for working-class 'under eights'. This particular investigation has aimed to place the education of very young working-class children within the context of their everyday lives and to examine the factors which influenced attendance at school.

North London was chosen as the area to study as it was geographically small but highly populated and socially and economically diverse. Seven areas within North London were chosen for detailed analysis. The 1851 census returns for each of the seven areas and other source material, both primary and secondary were used to ascertain the proportion of 'under eights' at school and to build up a picture of the occupational and economic profile of each area. The way in which the education of 'under eights' in each area was affected by a range of socio-economic factors was explored. The effect of the following factors was investigated: availability of schools, age of the children, family size, fathers' occupation, mothers' occupations, working mothers, employment of children, older siblings at work and the parents' religion and country of birth.

This chapter draws together the findings for each of the seven areas and, where possible, suggests the extent to which the schooling patterns observed were likely to have been common to similar areas of London. The seven samples differed in terms of their geographic location and were socially diverse, and were similar only in that all seven samples were more heavily weighted towards the poorer members of the working class rather than the more comfortably off working class or families at the working class-middle class interface. The choice of sample areas was dictated to a certain extent by the availability of source material related to specific areas. The conclusions drawn about school attendance in relation to specific factors can only have a limited application in the better off working-class areas of London.

#### Educational Facilities for Infants and the Socio-Economic Profile of an Area.

In addition to exploring the school attendance of 'under eights' this study also aimed to examine the extent to which educational facilities were related to the socio-economic profiles of the different areas. With regard to public infant schools, many middle-class supporters of infant schools believed such schools were important as they would ensure that the children of the working class received a good religious and moral education and that the children would be kept off the streets where they would otherwise have been led into temptation. Furthermore, since many of the middle classes had a poor opinion of the private working-class schools, it was felt that public infant schools offered parents a sensible, affordable alternative.

The detailed studies revealed that the number of public infant schools established often bore little relationship to the actual needs of the locality. Whilst educationists and philanthropists were aware that certain areas were in dire need of an infant school, whether or not such a school was established often depended upon whether sufficient capital could be raised. Some areas (e.g. Spitalfields and Chelsea) had relatively little difficulty in attracting funds, but others (eg. St. Luke's, Somers Town) were less fortunate. This difference was not merely a reflection of the character of the area but rather how the area was perceived by potential contributors. As Phillip McCann has shown, Spitalfields attracted money for schools as members of the middle class believed that the establishment of schools would minimise the risk of social unrest in the area.<sup>1</sup> This study showed that wealthy inhabitants in Chelsea were happy to contribute to schools, partly to ensure they were not accused of failing in their duty towards the poor and partly, in the case of infant schools, because one such school in the area had become a source of interest and pride. Those areas which were not sufficiently notorious, and areas hidden away from all but the most dedicated social investigator, obviously suffered when it came to attracting money to establish schools.

The view that education of young working-class children was a panacea for the crime in London was widely held, with the result

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1. McCann, P., 'Popular education, socialization and social control: Spitalfields 1812 -1824' in McCann, P. (ed.), op.cit., 1977, pp. 5-31.



that areas perceived to contain large criminal or semi-criminal populations (e.g. St. Giles, Saffron Hill) were areas where a number of infant schools were opened.

As regards establishing infant schools to draw children away from the 'worthless' dame schools, it was interesting to note that in five of the seven areas investigated, the establishment of infant schools did not appear to inhibit the operation of private working-class schools. In Marylebone, Spitalfields, St. Luke's, St. George's and Chelsea, 'under eights' were well served with both types of school. Only in St. Giles and Homerton were there a number of public schools but very few private working-class schools.

It was not possible to determine which of the scholars listed in the 1851 census attended private schools and which attended public schools, but the existence of a number of private working-class schools within an area would suggest that a sizeable number of parents preferred such schools to the rule-ridden infant schools. On this basis it would appear that parents in Homerton, St. Luke's and St. George's were most likely to utilise private working-class schools. The three areas were very different from each other. Homerton was relatively uncrowded, was not particularly poor and had few Irish residents. St. Luke's had a high proportion of poor residents, some of whom were Irish, and St. George's had few Irish but a mix of very poor and fairly poor working-class residents.

The findings of this investigation of the location of schools for 'under eights' in relation to the social, economic and religious

character of an area would strongly suggest that the character of an area in North London was not the only factor to influence where schools were established. Furthermore, since the educational provision in any one area consisted of both public schools and private working-class schools, it is possible to state that the nature of the educational provision in North London was determined by both the working-class inhabitants and the middle-class philanthropists.

#### Availability of Schools and School Attendance.

In the seven areas there were a total of 6,080 children aged between two and seven, of whom 36 per cent were described as scholars in the 1851 census. The diversity of North London's districts was reflected in the attendance patterns of infants, since school attendance varied in each of the seven areas chosen for in-depth investigation. In St. Giles only 23 per cent of children in this age group were returned as scholars, compared with 55 per cent of the same age group in Homerton. The following sections summarise the way in which specific factors might have affected school attendance.

It is possible that the different proportions of infants at school were closely linked to differences in the availability of schools. In the early 1850s South Tower Hamlets had the most public schools catering for infants whilst North Marylebone, with four public infant schools, had the fewest such schools. In Westminster there were 38 public schools, and North Finsbury had 32 such schools, south Finsbury had 29, and Chelsea and south Marylebone had 26

schools apiece. Each of the remaining three areas was served by between four and 19 schools (Table 2.2). When considering the smaller areas chosen for detailed study it would appear that school attendance bore little relationship to the availability of schools. Despite having the fewest public schools for infants, Homerton in North Tower Hamlets, had the highest proportion of infants at school, whilst St. Giles, South Finsbury, had the lowest proportion of two to seven year olds at school (Table 10.1 below).

Table 10.1: Percentage of infants recorded as scholars in the seven North London areas surveyed.<sup>1</sup>

Chelsea.....	44 per cent.
Homerton.....	55 per cent
Marylebone.....	31 per cent.
St. George's.....	30 per cent.
St. Giles.....	23 per cent.
St. Luke's.....	28 per cent.
Spitalfields.....	41 per cent.

It could be argued that since the population and geographic size of each of the seven areas was different it would be more informative to relate school attendance to the number of school places, rather than to the number of schools. On this basis children in the surveyed area of Chelsea were the worst served as there were almost two children of infant school age to every one available school place. In Homerton, Somers Town and Spitalfields

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1. 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns for: St. George's HO 107 1076 and HO 107 1475; Marylebone HO 107 1488 and 1489; Christ Church, Spitalfields HO 107 1543; St. Giles HO 107 1508 and 1509; Chelsea, HO 107 1472 and 1473; Somers Town, St. Luke's HO 107 1496 and 1497; Homerton HO 107 1505.

the ratio of children to schools was just over one child to every school place, whilst in Marylebone the ratio was a little better. Children in St. Giles and St. George's had access to the highest number of school places, as there were only two children to every three school places (Table 10.2 below). School attendance amongst two to seven year olds clearly bore little relationship to the availability of public school places, as school attendance in the two areas with the best ratio of school places was 23 per cent and 30 per cent, whilst in the area with the lowest ratio of school places to children 44 per cent of children attended school.

Table 10.2: The ratio of infant-aged children to school places in public infant schools and private working-class schools.<sup>1</sup>

	Public schools	Private schools <sup>2</sup>
Chelsea.....	1.8 : 1	15.5 : 1
Homerton.....	1.1 : 1	6.7 : 1
Marylebone.....	0.9 : 1	13.1 : 1
St. George's.....	0.7 : 1	6.3 : 1
St. Giles.....	0.7 : 1	None listed
St. Luke's.....	1.1 : 1	8.4 : 1
Spitalfields.....	1.1 : 1	13.5 : 1

One explanation for this pattern could be that working-class parents did not wish to send their children to the available

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1. These ratios have been calculated using Tables 3A, 3C, 4A, 4D, 5A, 5E, 6A, 7A, 7B, 8A, 8B, 9A and 9B of this thesis and 1851 Population Census Enumerators' Returns for: St. George's HO 107 1076 and HO 107 1475; Marylebone HO 107 1488 and 1489; Christ Church, Spitalfields HO 107 1543; St. Giles HO 107 1508 and 1509; Chelsea, HO 107 1472 and 1473; Somers Town, St. Luke's HO 107 1496 and 1497; Homerton HO 107 1505.

2. This ratio has been calculated on the assumption that each working-class private school catered for 10 'under eights'.

public schools, preferring instead to send their children to private working-class schools.

This tendency had been noted, much to the chagrin of middle-class philanthropists and educationists. Apart from the rules and regulations, parents might have been unwilling to send their children to public infants' schools on the grounds of the very low adult to child ratio and the impersonal nature of such schools. Furthermore, although some infant schools in the capital were able to offer a playground and other amenities and operated in airy, spacious rooms, some of the infant schools were held in damp buildings and were badly lit and poorly ventilated. Parents may have felt that what they gained in terms of lower school fees did not compensate for the losses (e.g. seemingly irrelevant school rules, lack of control over what was taught).

The two areas with the best ratios of private school places to potential pupils were Homerton and St. George's. In Homerton 55 per cent of infants were at school but in St. George's only 30 per cent of 'under eights' were at school. In Chelsea, the area with the worst ratio of private working-class school places to children, the proportion of children at school was 44 per cent.

It would appear that the proportion of children at school bore no relationship to either the number of public school places or the number of private school places per child. One explanation for this finding could be that either the number of children returned

as scholars was innaccurate, or more likely, the 1851 census underestimated the number of schools actually in operation.

#### School Attendance in Relation to Age.

In all seven areas the proportion of children at school within each age band increased between the ages of two and seven. The proportions of two year olds at school varied from 4 per cent in Homerton to 16 per cent in Chelsea. The proportion of seven year olds at school showed a similar variation between areas. In Homerton 88 per cent of seven year olds were at school whilst in St. Giles only 35 per cent of seven year olds were scholars. It is interesting to note that the levels of school attendance amongst two year olds in an area did not bear any relation to the levels of school attendance amongst older infants in the same area. Homerton, for example, had the lowest proportion of two year olds at school and yet had the highest proportion of five to seven year olds at school. In contrast, St. Giles had the second highest proportion of two year olds at school but the lowest proportion of five to seven year old scholars.

The increase in the proportion of children at school in each successive year band was not steady. In all seven areas there was an apparent leap in the proportion of children at school between the ages of four and five (Table 10.3). The magnitude of this increase varied from only ten per cent in St. George's and St. Giles to 47 per cent in Homerton. In Chelsea, Homerton, Islington and St. George's there was another earlier jump in the proportion of children at school. In Chelsea and Homerton this large increase occurred between the ages of two and three, and was of

the order of 15 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. In Islington and St. George's the first large increases, of 16 per cent and 15 per cent, occurred between the ages of three and four. In six areas, beyond the age of five the proportional increase in the number of scholars in each successive age band was less than 10 per cent. In St. George's, however, a third increase in the proportion of scholars occurred between the ages of five and six, which meant that in this area, proportionally, four times as many six year olds were at school than three year olds.

Table 10.3

All seven areas: Percentage of infants at school in each age group and percentage of all children aged 2-7 attending school.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	All
Chelsea	16	25	41	55	64	60	40
Homerton	4	29	38	85	83	88	55
Marylebone	8	16	24	40	51	53	31
St. Georges	7	12	27	37	51	56	30
St. Giles	10	14	21	31	33	35	23
St. Lukes	7	16	17	43	46	47	28
Spitalfields	7	26	33	52	55	65	41

It is interesting to note that despite the fact that the seven areas differed from each other in a variety of ways, in all seven areas the proportion of children at school increased with age between the ages of two and seven (Table 10.3). Since the areas

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1. Table 10.3 is compiled from Tables 3.1a, 3.1b, 4.1a, 4.1b, 5.1a, 5.1b, 6.1a, 6.1b, 7.1a, 7.1b, 8.1a, 8.1b, 9.1a, and 9.1b.

were similar only in that the families investigated were working class and few of the families were economically well off, it is possible to suggest that this pattern of school attendance was probably replicated in other similar areas of London.

In all seven areas there was a noticeable increase in the proportion of children at school between the ages of four and five. This is interesting as, unlike the present day, when the vast majority of children are compelled to start school around the time of their fifth birthday, in early nineteenth-century London there were no such regulations about school attendance and children could first attend school at any age. One explanation for the increase in school attendance between the ages of four and five could lie in the householder's schedule for the 1851 census which only required that children over the age of five be described as 'scholar' or 'at home'<sup>1</sup>. This can offer only a partial explanation, however, since in all seven areas information about a sizeable proportion of 'under fives' was recorded when it need not have been. Furthermore, the pattern of increase in school attendance amongst 'under fives' was consistent in all seven areas, which would suggest that this pattern was real. Thus, although the increase in school attendance amongst five year olds may not have been as dramatic as the census would at first suggest, it is probable that five was a turning point as regards school attendance.

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1. Coleman, B.I., 'The incidence of education in the mid-nineteenth century' in Wrigley, E. A. (ed.), Nineteenth Century Society, 1972, p. 402.



Apart from the financial state of the family, factors influencing the age at which a child first went to school may have included the parents' views on the worth of schooling for very young children, the availability of schools for the 'under eights', and the practicalities of sending young children to school.

Many middle-class contemporaries believed that working-class parents perceived schools for very young children mainly as places of safe containment during the day, in other words a form of day-care. This view was probably based largely on the kinds of 'facts' published by societies such as the L.S.S. On the basis of interviews with teachers in dame schools in Westminster the L.S.S. concluded that at least half of the children in these schools were under five years old and that parents sent children to these schools, in order to keep them 'off the streets'. The society also asserted that 'a very large proportion [were] sent *avowedly* to do nothing' as parents had instructed the teachers that their children were not to be worried with learning'.<sup>1</sup> If this was the view of the majority of working-class parents then why was there a discernible link between age and school attendance? Common sense suggests that if parents sent infants to school solely to be looked after, then there should have been a decrease in the levels of school attendance with age, since older children were less in need of supervised day-care than younger children.

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1. 'Third Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. appointed to Enquire into the State of Education in Westminster' in J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 451.

Furthermore, if parents' only concern was the day-care of their young children why, in areas where infant schools were available, would parents choose to pay extra to send their child to a private working-class school or pay exorbitant fees for a childminder? It seems more likely that, whilst some parents' main concern was day care, there were many others who were genuinely concerned with the quality of the education on offer in the various forms of schools, and the extent to which their children would benefit from attendance at school.

Working-class parents' views on what constituted a 'good' education might not have included that which was provided in the local infants' school. This might have resulted in working-class parents choosing not to send their young children to available infants' schools and instead, they might have delayed sending their children to school until they were old enough to attend a school which, in the parents' views, offered a more worthwhile schooling. Wilderspin, in his evidence to the Select Committee on Education in 1835, gave an example of this mismatch of perceptions about what constituted a 'good' school:

Formerly they [parents] considered that if a child was cooped up in a small room for hours, that was the best plan that could be adopted; and they have come to us and said, "I can send my child to Mrs. So-and-So for 3d a week, where she will learn knitting and sewing and so on, and I will keep her until she is old enough to go there"...<sup>1</sup>

The parents who were talking to Wilderspin were clearly intending

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1. P.P. 1835 (465) vii, Report on the State of Education in England and Wales, pp. 22-23.

to send their children to a private working-class school but it is possible that many parents were willing to send their children to a public school, but preferred the formal schooling offered in the National and British schools for older children to that available in the local infant school, where the children seemed to play most of the day. Despite the admittance rules of schools for older children, many took in children from around the age of four or five, small boys frequently being sent to the girls' department until judged old enough to attend the boys' department.<sup>1</sup> The rise in school attendance amongst children between the ages of four and five might therefore have been because there were more schools that would accept children of this age, whilst there was a more limited number of public and private schools which catered for two to four year olds.

The practicalities of sending a child to school may explain the large rise at the age of five. Children of this age are more capable than two or three year olds of looking after themselves, not losing their lunch and possibly even finding their own way to a nearby school. It was therefore easier for parents to send a five year old to school than it was to send a younger child. Problems related to taking children to school and fetching them home were lessened if the child attended a school catering for older children, as it was then possible that an older sibling could be charged with the responsibility of the infant-aged child. Parents might have delayed sending their younger children to

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1. Annual Reports of the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society, 1815-1855.

school until they were old enough to accompany their older siblings.

The findings show that school attendance amongst 'under eights' increased in each successive age band and it is likely that this would have been evident in all areas of London. The precise proportion of each age group at school varied from area to area, partly because there was no specific age at which children started school and partly because of the effect of the interaction of a range of other factors including the economic state of the family, whether or not the mothers worked, the parents' religion and country of birth and the availability of schools. The proportion of two to four year olds at school did not necessarily provide an indication of the pattern of school attendance amongst five to seven year olds. Although it is probable that there was a significant increase in the proportion of children at school once they had reached the age of five, it is not possible to quantify this increase, since the attendance of two to four year olds as recorded by the census may understate the levels of school attendance amongst the 'under fives'. There are a number of factors which may have caused the leap in school attendance between the ages of four and five, including the parents' views on the schooling of very young children, the logistics of sending young children to school and the availability of school places.

School Attendance in Relation to Family Size.

In all seven samples it was found that school attendance amongst infants could be linked to the size of the family. Amongst small families (i.e. those composed of one or two children), fewer infant-aged children were sent to school than amongst larger families. This might have been because in larger families there was an increased possibility that at least one of the children was aged between five and seven, and therefore more likely to attend school than a two to four year old.

Another difference between large and small families, which was noted in four of the seven areas, was that more mothers were at work in smaller families than in larger families. In the remaining three areas there was little difference between large and small families with regard to working mothers. On economic grounds it is surprising that larger families were more likely to send a child to school, as larger families would possibly have had less money to spend as fewer mothers were in paid employment and there were more mouths to feed and children to clothe. One possible explanation for this particular finding could be that the parents of smaller families had deliberately decided to limit the size of their family on the grounds that they were too poor to afford more children. Another explanation is possible if it is assumed that mothers of young children did not go to work when the father earned sufficient to support the family. If this assumption is valid then it could be argued that the better paid men were more likely to have larger families and their relatively high wages meant that their children could be sent to school and their wives did not need to supplement the family income. In

other words, if there was a positive correlation between family size and the earnings of the father, it is possible that despite having more mouths to feed, parents of larger families still had more money to spend on schooling than did parents of small families.

The second explanation is supported by the finding that when school attendance in relation to working mothers was looked at in isolation, a positive correlation was found between school attendance and the presence of a working mother, whereas when the effect of working mothers is examined in conjunction with family size it would appear that school attendance was enhanced by the presence of non-working mothers. This finding also lends support to the view that day-care was not the main reason why working-class 'under eights' were sent to school.

#### School Attendance in Relation to the Employment of Children.

The testimony of working-class adults and children shows that the pattern of child employment undoubtedly influenced school attendance amongst children old enough to earn a living.

Autobiographies of working-class Londoners who grew up in the early nineteenth century mention how their schooling often came to an abrupt end as a result of a change in family circumstances or because they were sent out to work.<sup>1</sup> The Central Society of Education published the testimony of a number of London

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1. For example, Vincent, D., Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, 1981, pp. 93-107 and Burnett, J., Destiny Obscure, 1982, pp. 135-136 and 188-189.

youngsters, many of whom told how they were removed from school in order to start work.<sup>1</sup> Over ten years later the situation was unchanged. A cabinet maker for example, who employed his own ten-year-old daughter told Mayhew that she 'never goes to school; we can't spare her'.<sup>2</sup> If local employment opportunities were such that children were able to start work at around the age of 11, did children in these areas go to school at an earlier age than in areas where children tended not to start work until aged about 13 or 14? The analyses of the seven samples would suggest that there was no clear-cut link between levels of school attendance amongst infants and the age at which children started work. Between nine per cent and 16 per cent of 11 year olds were employed in Spitalfields, St. Giles and Somers Town, and in addition small proportions of eight to ten year olds were at work in these areas. The proportion of infant-aged children at school in each of the three areas was 41 per cent, 26 per cent and 29 per cent respectively. By way of contrast in Homerton, where children generally did not start work until they were about 13 years old, school attendance amongst infants stood at 55 per cent. Even if the school attendance amongst each year group of infants is examined individually rather than all the infants en bloc, no clear pattern emerges. Children in Spitalfields, Somers Town and St. Giles did not start school at an earlier age than in other areas of London, and a glance at the school attendance amongst older infants in St. Giles and Somers Town shows that,

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1. 'Schools for the Industrial Classes' in Central Society of Education, Second Publication, 1838, pp. 388-397.

2. Mayhew, H., op cit., Vol. 5, 1850, p. 198.

despite starting work at an earlier age, school attendance amongst children in the five to seven age group was amongst the lowest out of the seven areas. Moreover, the peak age for school attendance varied from area to area and bore little relationship to the age at which children generally started work. In Spitalfields the peak age for school attendance was nine, and only in Marylebone was the peak age higher, at 11. In St. Giles the peak age was eight, as it was in Chelsea, Somers Town and St. George's. Oddly, in Homerton the peak age for school attendance was seven and yet the census did not record any child below the age of 13 as being employed. These findings would suggest that the age at which children were likely to start work did not unduly influence the school attendance of infants. The proportion of infants at school was consistently low in both St. Giles and Somers Town, whilst in Homerton it was consistently high.

The employment of older siblings was one aspect of child employment which consistently appeared to influence the school attendance of two to seven year olds. The pattern of infant schooling amongst families composed of at least one child in the two to seven age range and at least one child aged eight or over was analysed. In all seven survey areas the presence of at least one older sibling at work had a positive effect on school attendance amongst infants. There are at least three possible explanations for this. The first relates to the age profiles of the families. In those families in which an older sibling was at work it was more likely that the children as a whole were older than if the older sibling was not at work. This is because if the



older sibling was at work she or he was likely to be aged 12 or over; if not in work she or he was likely to be aged eight to 11 and as such the ages of younger siblings were correspondingly higher or lower.

The second explanation is based on the fact that older siblings frequently cared for their younger sisters and brothers, sometimes missing school themselves to do so. Once at work, however, it was unlikely that a child would be kept at home to look after a younger child as the family probably could not afford the resultant loss in earnings. It is possible, therefore, that in those families in which older siblings tended to look after younger children, the employment of the older child meant that parents had to organise an alternative form of day care. Sending the younger child to school might have been seen as the solution to the problem. In these cases, although the need for child care might have been the initial motivating factor in sending their child to school, there is no evidence to suggest that these parents were any less interested in the form and quality of their child's schooling than those parents for whom child-care was not such a pressing concern.

The third explanation is economic. If a family income was supplemented by the wages of one of the children, the family was obviously in a better position than if this money was not coming in. After housing, feeding and clothing the family it is possible that the earnings of a child meant that parents could afford to send some or all of the younger children to school. In

the seven survey areas, if an older sibling was at work there was a tendency for 'over eights' to take precedence over 'under eights' with respect to schooling. Thus, in larger families , the positive effect of an older sibling was not reflected in the schooling patterns of the 'under eights' unless all or some of the other children (i.e. eight to 14 year olds) were at school.

School Attendance in Relation to the Employment of Mothers.

The middle classes' perception of those private working-class schools in which a large proportion of children were very young was that they were not places of education. As seen through middle-class eyes these schools served little more than 'to keep the children out of danger during the time that their parents are engaged in daily labour'.<sup>1</sup>

Many middle-class supporters of infants' schools did not attempt to deny the existence of a pressing need for the day-care of young children of working mothers, but highlighted both the day-care and educative roles of infant schools. Other supporters of infant schools emphasised the economic value to working mothers of such schools. In 1823 Thomas Pole wrote:

Independent of all considerations of benefit to the children, it is well known that they [young children] are a great tie to their mothers, who are thereby in many instances, prevented from going out to day service, by which they might essentially contribute to the support of their family; unless, as is often the case, they pay a considerable portion of their earnings to a neighbour...to take charge of the children, or to send them at a certain expense to schools under improper persons...The parents of

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1. 'First Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S.' in J.S.S., Vol.1, 1838, p. 14.

such poor children, have in many instances, thankfully embraced the privilege offered them, of having their children from one and a half to six years of age, sent to Infant Schools...<sup>1</sup>

Writing in the Quarterly Review in 1825, John Bird Sumner and J.T Coleridge reiterated this view of the role and value of infant schools:

In towns a thousand occupations employ the mother away from home during the greater part of the day; and the children are left under the nominal care of some neighbour or elder child...in many cases they are left to run wild...can we doubt their being better under a gentle system of restraint, directed by a person fitted for the employment, and selected because so fitted?<sup>2</sup>

Those establishing the Bridge Street Infant School in Homerton in 1828 obviously felt that infant schools were primarily for children of working mothers as no child was admitted unless both parents worked away from home during the day and no suitable alternative arrangements could be made for the care of the child.<sup>3</sup>

The view that infant schools were of especial value to working mothers was prevalent amongst middle-class educationists during the whole of the period under study. In 1833 it was stated in

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1. Pole, T., Observations Relative to Infant Schools, 1823, pp. 21-22.

2. Bird Sumner, J. and Coleridge, J.T., Article No.VI in Quarterly Review, No, LXIV, October 1825.

3. Baldry, J., The Hackney Free and Parochial Schools: A History, 1970, p. 42.

the Quarterly Journal of Education that infant schools were first established 'with the view of affording asylum to the poor little neglected infants, during the hours when the avocations of their parents prevented them from watching over their children'.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, underlying most contemporary writings on education, was the view that school attendance amongst very young children was strongly influenced by whether or not the mother was in paid employment.

The analysis of school attendance in relation to the mothers' employment status in each of the seven survey areas showed that the proportion of working mothers' children who attended school varied between 26 per cent and 54 per cent, compared with 21 per cent to 56 per cent of non-working mothers' children.

In five of the seven areas a lower proportion of non-working mothers' children attended school than those of working mothers. The difference in the proportions of children at school in each of the two groups was less than 10 per cent, except in St. George's where the difference was more marked and stood at 16 per cent. In the two areas in which a higher proportion of non-working mothers' children were at school the difference was very small (only one to two per cent). Apart from St. George's, the proportion of working mothers' children at school in each area was very similar to that of all children in the area. In addition, Homerton and Chelsea had the highest proportion of

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1. 'Wilderspin's Early Discipline Illustrated' in Quarterly Journal of Education, Vol. V, 1833, p. 132.

working mothers' children at school, and Somers Town and St. Giles had the lowest proportion of working mothers' children at school.

If very young children were mainly sent to school in order that they might be looked after whilst the mothers were at work, then one would expect to have found that working mothers would have been more likely to send their two to four year olds to school than non-working mothers. This, however, was not found to be the case. These findings suggest that whilst it was usually the case that more children of working mothers attended school than children of non-working mothers, the differences in the proportion of children at school in each of the two groups was not sufficiently large to support the view that school attendance was heavily influenced by whether or not the mother was at work and her children in need of day-care.

In those families in which the need for day-care might have been a major factor in determining whether or not a child attended school, it is possible that the pattern of men's work in London might have meant that there was more of a relationship between school attendance and both parents' occupations rather than merely whether or not the mother was employed. Many male workers in London were engaged in casual work and some work was still done at home rather than in large workshops or factories (e.g. handloom weaving, shoemaking, cabinet making, tailoring). This pattern of working allowed for a greater flexibility in fathers' and mothers' roles in relation to child care. There are recorded

instances of fathers who worked at home, 'minding' young children whilst their wives went out to work. Mayhew spoke to an Irish woman whose husband earned his living by portering, selling hot potatoes in the street and sewing sacks at home. She told Mayhew that when her husband was engaged in sack sewing he minded the children whilst she sold oranges in the street. When he found work as a porter she had to remain at home to look after the children.<sup>1</sup>

Amongst working mothers, whether or not the mother was single had a slight effect on the school attendance of infant-aged children.<sup>2</sup> In five of the seven survey areas the same or a smaller proportion of the children of single working mothers attended school than those of married working mothers. The different attendance patterns amongst single working mothers' children and married working mothers' children were most marked in Marylebone and St. Giles (Table 10.4 below). Only in St. George's and Homerton were there more children of single working mothers attending school than those of married working mothers but it should be noted that the Homerton sample was very small and therefore the figures may provide a biased picture of the school attendance pattern in the area.

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1. Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. 1, 1861, p. 467.

2. The term 'single mother' has been used here, as throughout the thesis, to refer to those mothers who were listed in the census as unmarried or widowed, in addition to those women who were listed as married but who appeared to be living alone with their children.

The working mothers in the sample were fairly representative of the metropolitan female workforce as a whole in that most of them were employed as needlewomen, dressmakers, charwomen or laundresses.<sup>1</sup> Each of these occupations had a different earning potential. Unless employed by one of the best shops in London, most needlewomen and dressmakers earned very little and were also subject to fluctuations in wages, since outside the 'London Season' there was usually very little work available. In contrast some laundresses and ironers could earn much more than needlewomen, and some were able to establish their own small

Table 10.4

All seven areas: School attendance of infants of married working mothers and single working mothers.

	Married working mothers	Single working mothers
Chelsea	51	51
Homerton	53	55
Marylebone	43	32
St. Georges	31	33
St. Giles	30	16
St. Lukes	30	24
Spitalfields	43	43

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1. Earle, P., 'The female labour market in London in the late 17th and early 18th centuries' in The Economic History Review, Vol. XLII, Aug. 1989. In this article Earle states that the four major occupations for London women in 1851 were domestic service, making and mending clothes, charring/laundry and nursing.

businesses. Laundresses, however, frequently worked away from home, and left very early in the morning and did not return home until late, whilst most needlewomen and dressmakers, especially those employed in the lowest paid work, tended to work at home.

If it was true that working mothers sent young children to school to be looked after during the day, one would expect to have found that more laundresses' children than needlewomen's children attended school, as laundresses were not only in more need of child care for their children but also probably had more money to pay for schooling. This, however, was not found to be the case.

It was possible to compare the school attendance of infant-aged children in relation to mothers' occupations in four areas: St. George's; St. Lukes, Somers Town; Marylebone and Chelsea but no clear cut pattern emerged.<sup>1</sup> In St. George's laundresses sent a higher proportion of children to school than did needlewomen but in St. Lukes, Somers Town the opposite was the case. In Chelsea there was no real difference between the different occupational groups, whilst in Marylebone married laundresses had the highest proportion of children at school but single laundresses had the lowest.

On this basis it would appear that the nature of the mothers' occupation was one of the factors which helped to mould the pattern of infant schooling in North London but the exact effect varied from area to area.

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1. See Chapters 3,4,7 and 8 of this thesis.



School Attendance in Relation to Fathers' Occupations.

London's working class consisted of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Burnett has stated that the working class consisted of a 'infinite series of sub-classes, shading imperceptibly one into another, but with almost nothing in common between top and bottom'.<sup>1</sup> Working-class fathers of young children in North London were employed in a very wide range of different occupations. As regards the skilled workers in London, the historian John Clapham wrote:

...the typical London skilled workmen was neither brewery hand, shipwright nor silk weaver, but either a member of the building trades, or a shoemaker, tailor, cabinet maker, printer, clockmaker, jeweller, baker...<sup>2</sup>

This was confirmed by the analyses of the census returns for each of the seven in-depth study areas. In addition to skilled workers, however, a number of the fathers in the samples were employed as semi-skilled workers or casual, unskilled labour and worked as street sellers or porters, or as day labourers on building sites, in market gardens, on the dockside, or in retail markets.

Hierarchies existed within and between occupations. There were two main types of hierarchy. The first was concerned with the level of wages, the protection of these levels and rules governing employment or entry to the trade. The second type of hierarchy was sometimes, but not always, linked with the first form and was concerned with how the workers themselves perceived their position in the social scale. Skilled rural craftsmen for example were better educated than many urban workers and on

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1. Burnett, J., Useful Toil, 1974, p. 250.

2. Clapham, J., quoted by Thompson, E.P., *op cit.*, 1963, p. 260.

migrating to towns they felt themselves to be a 'cut above' many of the urban workers (e.g. weavers).<sup>1</sup> A hierarchy existed between workers in the various parts of the building trade.<sup>2</sup>

The status of a group of workers did not necessarily remain unchanged during the early part of the nineteenth century. Mayhew provided a great deal of information about how the status and wages of workers in previously skilled and well paid trades (e.g. shoemaking, cabinet-making and tailoring) were gradually eroded during the first half of the nineteenth century due to the introduction of different methods of work (i.e. outwork and piece work), the introduction of unskilled workers, especially women and children, and the imposition of new ways of determining earnings (e.g. piece rates replaced time rates).<sup>3</sup> With respect to the tailors, shoemakers and cabinet makers in London there were two grades of workers, those in the 'honourable' section, who were generally skilled and relatively well paid, and those in the 'dishonourable' section, who were usually less skilled or unskilled sweated workers who were very badly paid.

This study focused on the education of working-class children but the working class was not a homogenous group, economically, socially or educationally, and this was reflected in the diversity of parents' views about education and its value.

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1. Thompson, E.P., *op cit.*, pp. 260-266.

2. See Chapter 3 of this thesis for a discussion of this point.

3. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vols. 2, 3 and 5, 1849-50.

Bearing in mind the fact that London's working class consisted of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers, that hierarchies both economic and social existed both between the various groups of workers and within certain occupations, any link established between schooling patterns and parental occupation must be fairly tentative.

In the seven survey areas large proportions of fathers were employed as tailors, shoemakers, labourers, coachmen or in the building trade as carpenters or bricklayers, plumbers, glaziers and painters. The school attendance amongst the children of fathers employed in each of these occupations varied from area to area (Table 10.5).

Table 9.5

All seven areas: Attendance patterns of infants related to fathers' occupations, giving percentage for each category.

	Overall %	Carpenters	Tailors	Shoemakers	Labourers	Coachmen	Painters	Retailers
Chelsea	44	47	n/a	46	38	n/a	43	48
Homerton	55	50	n/a	53	55	n/a	70	67
Marylebone	31	n/a	25	27	32	n/a	n/a	23
St. Georges	30	35	n/a	48	43	27	n/a	n/a
St. Giles	23	16	26	16	9	n/a	n/a	27
St. Lukes	28	21	n/a	26	11	18	26	n/a
Spitalfields	41	n/a	n/a	52	26	n/a	n/a	* 54

\* Does not include general dealers children since there were relatively few general dealers in other areas of London, whilst in Spitalfields the many general dealers were in the main Jewish. The inclusion of general dealers children here would present a distorted picture of school attendance.

With respect to the children of carpenters, 16 per cent were at school in St. Giles compared with 50 per cent in Homerton. Similarly whilst 16 per cent of shoemakers' children attended school in St. Giles, 53 per cent were at school in Homerton. The group of fathers with the highest proportion of children at school was that composed of plumbers, painters and glaziers in Homerton. Labourers in St. Giles had the lowest proportion of children at school.

Attempting to relate school attendance patterns and occupations across the seven survey areas does not take into account the fact that the proportion of all two to seven year old scholars, regardless of parental occupation, varied from area to area. Moreover, each area differed in terms of the religious composition of families, the proportion of working mothers, large families, older siblings at work etc. In order to take these factors into account it would be better to compare the school attendance amongst two to seven year olds as a whole in each of the areas with the school attendance of the children of specific groups of workers. In this way it would be possible to decide whether the school attendance of the children of a specific group of workers was above or below the average for the area, and also how it related to the school attendance of the children of other groups of workers.

This form of analysis was used to examine the school attendance of the children of tailors, carpenters, shoemakers, labourers, retailers, plumbers and painters, and coachmen. Workers in all of these areas were subject to seasonal fluctuations and

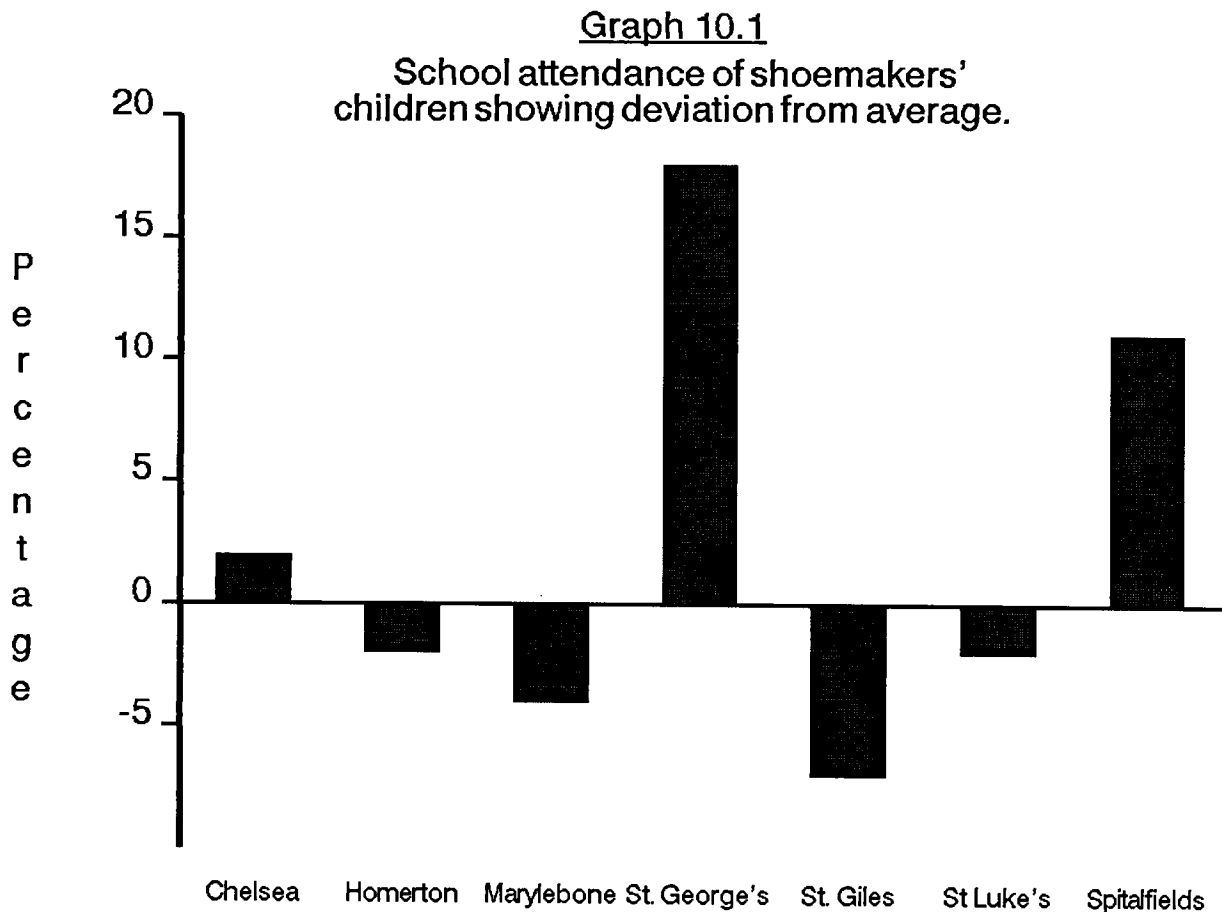
correspondingly, the economic state of their families varied from week to week and month to month. If parents wanted to send their children to a private working-class school there was no guarantee that they would have the required amount of money for the school fees throughout the year. Therefore, although this could not be investigated in this study, it is likely that the school attendance amongst children at private working-class schools might have shown a degree of variation over the course of six months or a year. Using census material only enabled an analysis to be made on the school attendance on one day of the year.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, adults engaged in work subject to seasonal variations frequently took on casual labour during periods of low employment; it is therefore feasible that some labourers, 'slop' tailors, shoemakers and cabinet makers, were employed in other occupations at other times of the year. As a result of this it is important to remember that none of the occupational groups can be seen as watertight or exclusive, in that members of the group might also have worked at other occupations during the course of any particular year.

In respect of shoemakers, in three out of the seven areas the proportion of shoemakers' children at school was above the average for the area (Graph 10.1a) In three of the seven areas

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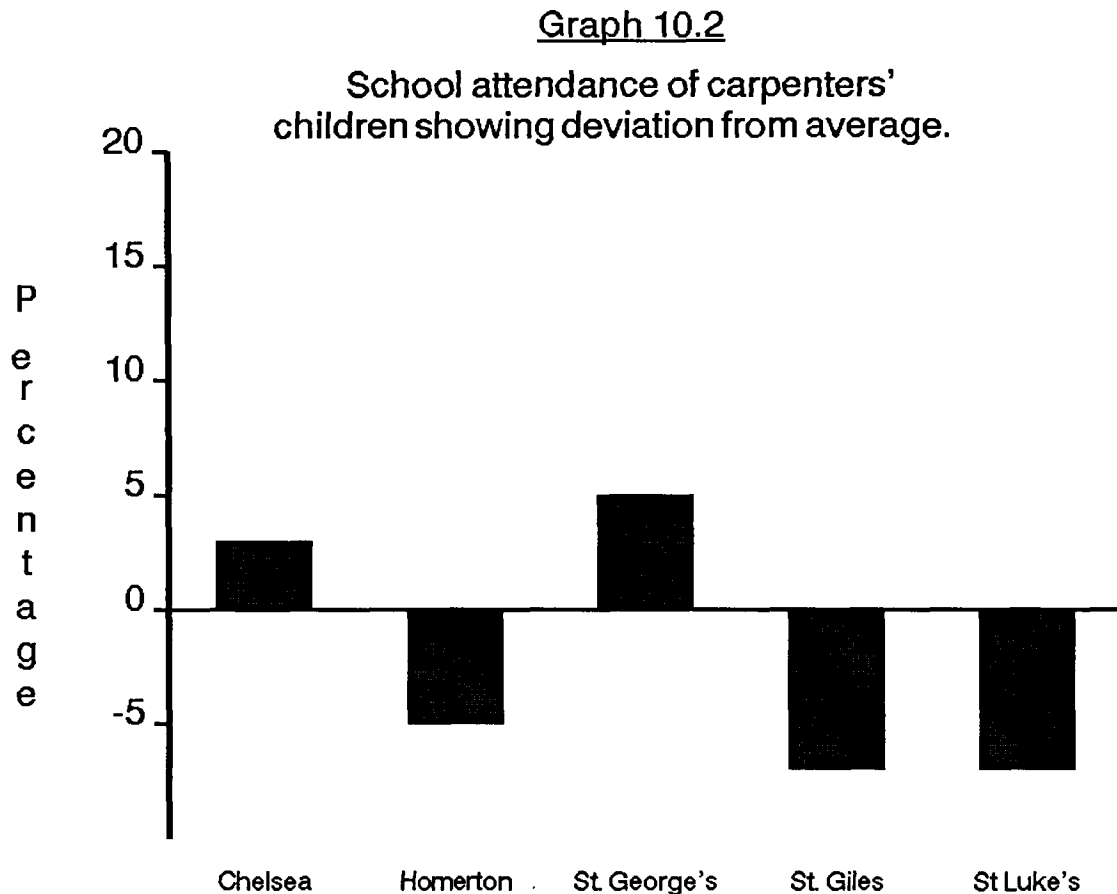
1. This aspect of education has been discussed in relation to attendance at south London National Schools in Silver, P. and Silver, H., The Education of the Poor: the History of a National School 1824-1974, 1974, pp. 38-48 and Madoc-Jones, B., 'Patterns of attendance and their social significance: Mitcham National School 1830-39' in McCann, P. (ed.), *op cit.*, pp. 41-65.

shoemakers had the best record of sending infant-aged children to school. In Mayhew's view shoemakers were 'far from unintelligent' and were generally keen to educate their children.<sup>1</sup> The day to day lives of the shoemakers' families in the samples were probably fairly diverse; in some families the father might have been employed in the 'honourable' part of the trade and might have made an adequate living, whilst in others the father probably had to rely on the help of the family in order to earn enough to feed his family. Parents of families in the first category might have been able to afford to send young children to school, whereas in the second instance the family might not have been able to afford the expenses involved in

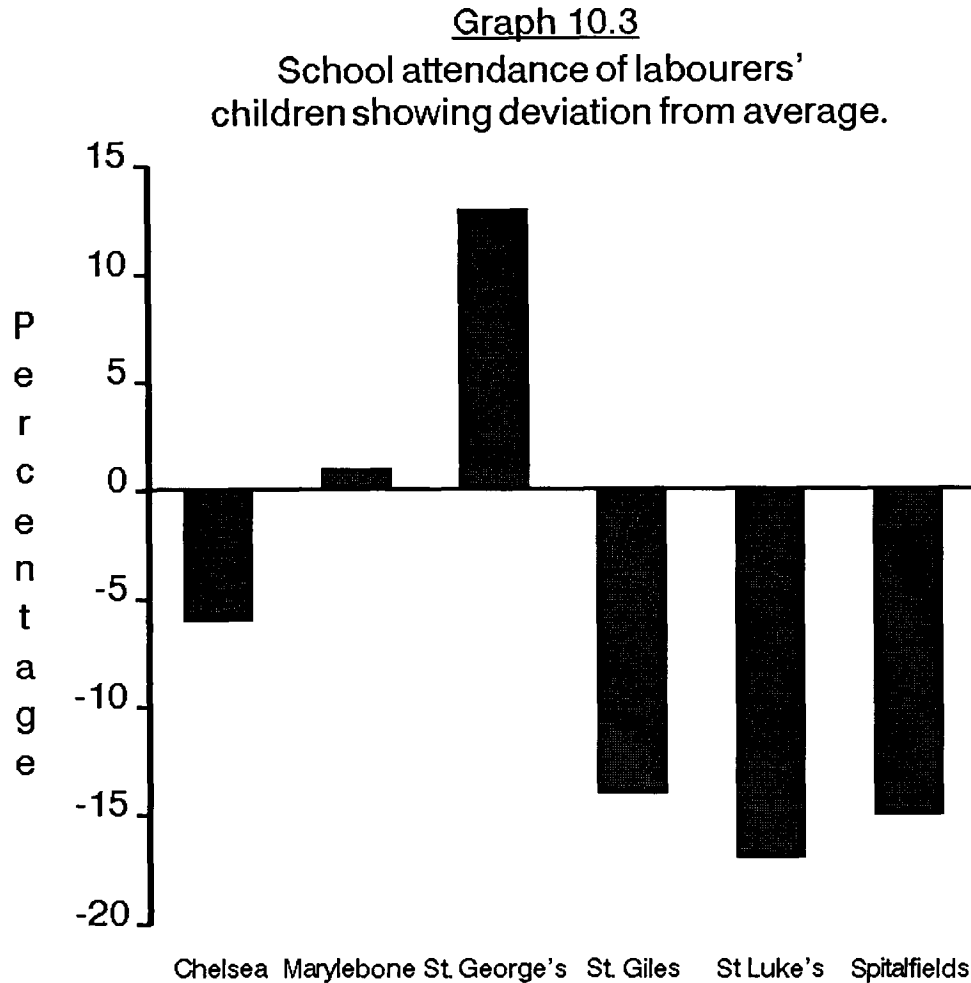


1. Mayhew, H., The Morning Chronicle Survey, Vol.5, 1850, p86.

sending a child to school or the child was required to help at home, either in helping to complete the boots and shoes or in looking after younger siblings.



Carpenters were another group that apparently valued education. The school attendance of carpenters' children was examined in five areas and in two of the five areas school attendance of carpenters' children was above the average for the area but in only one area did carpenters have the highest proportion of infants at school (Graph 10.2 above).



As regards labourers' children, in only two of the seven areas was school attendance above the average for the area, and only in one area, Marylebone, did labourers have the best record of sending infants to school (Graph 10.3). The school attendance of this group of children was influenced by the fact that many labourers were Irish Roman Catholics.

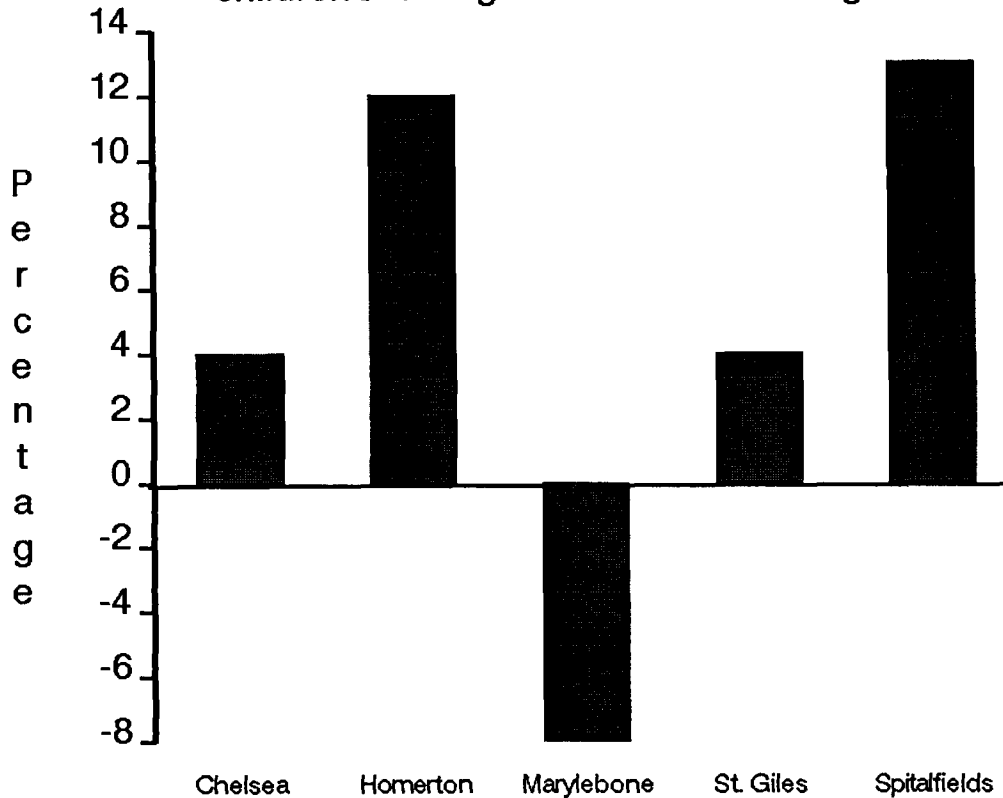
Retailers appeared to value education too. The group 'retailers' comprised a wide group of workers including costermongers, general dealers, and food and drink sellers. Owing to the heterogeneous nature of the group it is only possible to state that in four out of five areas the school attendance of



retailers' children was above the area average (Graph 10.4).

Graph 10.4

School attendance of retailers'  
children showing deviation from average.



It should be noted that in the case of Spitalfields the fact that a high proportion of retailers were Jewish may have caused the school attendance amongst retailers' children to be higher than the norm.

Coachmen were a major occupational group in St. Luke's, Somers Town and St. George's. In both areas school attendance amongst coachmen's children was below the average for each area. The L.S.S. noted that in St. George's there was a high proportion of coachmen and many of the parents in the area were keen to provide their children with a good education, but some mothers chose to teach their children at home. The mothers' reason for doing so

was that these parents objected to their children associating with other children whose behaviour they did not approve of, and were anxious that their child was not exposed to 'contagious disorders'.<sup>1</sup> Parents of very young children must have been especially anxious to protect their children from infectious diseases and it is possible that this was a contributory cause of the low school attendance amongst coachmen's children rather than a lack of interest in education on the parents' part.

Tailors predominated in Marylebone and St. Giles. In Marylebone school attendance amongst tailors' children was below the average for the area whilst in St. Giles it was above average.

Furthermore, in St. Giles tailors occupied the top position as regards the school attendance of their children. At first glance this appears surprising, as it is more likely that tailors in Marylebone were skilled, well-paid workers in the 'honourable' section of the trade than those in St. Giles. St. Giles, however, was notable for the very high proportion of Irish families in the area which had the effect of reducing the proportion of two to seven year olds at school overall.<sup>2</sup>

Approximately half the tailors' children were Irish and half were English. If there had been fewer English tailors it might have been that the proportion of tailors' children at school would

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1. Weld, C.R. 'On the Condition of the Working Class in the Inner Ward of St. George's Parish, Hanover Square' in J.S.S. Vol. 6, Feb. 1843, p. 19.

2. See Chapter 5 of this thesis.

have been equal to or below the average for the area as a whole. Thus, although tailors in St. Giles had a good record of sending children to school in comparison with other workers, the significance of this ought not to be overstated.

Plumbers, painters and glaziers formed a sizeable group in Homerton, Somers Town and Chelsea. In Chelsea and Somers Town school attendance was below average, but in Homerton it was well above the average and stood at 70 per cent. In both Somers Town and Homerton this occupational group had the highest proportion of children at school.

No clear cut picture has emerged relating school attendance to fathers' occupation, although it would appear that shoemakers tended to be most likely to send their infant-aged children to school, whilst the pattern was less clear for the remaining five occupational groups. The L.S.S., however, claimed that some patterns in school attendance could be linked to occupation. Dame schools for example were attended by the children of 'mechanics and labourers who are above receiving a charitable education for their children, or allowing them to mix with what they call "low company"'.<sup>1</sup> The present study was not able to investigate this particular aspect of schooling and parental occupation and this is an area that would benefit from further research.

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1. 'Third Report of the Education Committee of the L.S.S.' in J.S.S., Vol. 1, Dec. 1838, p. 455.

School Attendance in Relation to Religion and Parents' Country of Birth.

In five of the seven survey areas there were sufficiently high numbers of Irish families to enable a comparison to be made between the schooling patterns of the children of Irish-born and English-born parents. Those parents defined as English-born and whose families were categorised as English, might have included some second generation Irish (adults whose parents were Irish-born). The proportion was probably quite small as many second generation Irish were 'picked up', as couples consisting of an Irish-born partner and an English-born partner were categorised as Irish. In a number of other cases the presence in the household of grandparents frequently revealed that although the parents of the two to seven year olds in the survey had in fact been born in England, the grandparents were Irish-born. In these cases the families were categorised as Irish. The category of 'English' children consisted mainly of children whose parents were born in England but also included the small numbers of children whose parents had been born in Wales and Scotland, in addition to the very small number of immigrants from Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike most other immigrants, it was possible in the case of the poor Irish in London to link religion with country of birth.<sup>2</sup> 3

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1. Only in Spitalfields was there a sizeable community of European immigrants, which consisted of immigrants from Holland and Germany, and the school attendance pattern of this group was examined separately.

2. Some writers have questioned the validity of assuming that all Irish were Catholics (e.g. Dr. Gerard Conolly cited in Gilley and Swift, R. (eds.), op cit., p. 9).

The vast majority of the poor Irish immigrants were Roman Catholic since Catholics in Ireland had been forced into poverty and denied access to education as a result of the Penal Laws.<sup>1</sup> Thus, although a few immigrants may have been Protestant, the proportion of poor, Protestant Irish immigrants was probably extremely small and it has been assumed that most of the Irish families were Roman Catholic.<sup>2</sup>

In the small study areas within Chelsea, Spitalfields, St. Giles, St. Luke's and Marylebone, there were 730 Irish children and 4,327 English children. The proportion of Irish children in each of the five areas surveyed varied from only seven per cent in St. Luke's, Somers Town to 39 per cent in the Church Lane and Seven Dials areas of St. Giles. Of the 730 Irish children two to four year olds accounted for 51 per cent of the total and five to seven year olds 49 per cent, the same ratio as in the group of 4,327 English children. The proportion of Irish children at school was 24 per cent compared with 36 per cent of English children.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Jackson, J.A., 'The Irish in East London' in East London Papers, Vol. 6, No. 2, Dec. 1963.

2. The householders' census schedules did not require that the adults' religion be recorded and it was therefore not possible to identify the small number of Irish families which were not Catholic in order to exclude them.

3. The Jewish German and Dutch children in Spitalfields have not been included in this figure, if they were included the school attendance amongst 'English' children would be increased by one per cent to stand at 37 per cent.

There were differences between the Irish and English with regard to school attendance in relation to age. Amongst the English children, between the ages of two and seven the proportion of children at school increased in each successive age band from 11 per cent of two year olds to 57 per cent of seven year olds. The increase was not steady and a large leap in the proportion of children at school occurred between the ages of four and five.

Table 10.6a

Five areas: Description of total number of 'English' children within each age group attending school.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Chelsea	34 (199)	39 (160)	80 (199)	97 (181)	121 (181)	116 (185)	487 (1105)
Marylebone	19 (245)	36 (224)	49 (193)	73 (188)	97 (186)	105 (201)	379 (1237)
St. Giles	9 (70)	12 (75)	11 (35)	28 (68)	24 (57)	21 (51)	105 (356)
St. Lukes	9 (128)	22 (122)	22 (121)	55 (123)	51 (106)	52 (102)	211 (702)
Spitalfields	14 (152)	37 (159)	38 (127)	88 (181)	72 (149)	107 (159)	356 (927)
Total	85 (794)	146 (740)	200 (675)	341 (741)	365 (679)	401 (698)	1538 (4327)

Figures in brackets ( ) denote total number in each age group.

Between the ages of five and seven the proportional increase in school attendance was only 11 per cent, compared with 19 per cent between the ages of two and four. Approximately a 52 per cent of five to seven year olds were at school compared with only 20 per cent of two to four year olds. Seven was the peak age for school attendance amongst this group of infants (Tables 10.6a and 10.6b).

Table 10.6b

Five areas: Description of total percentage of 'English' children within each age group attending school.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Chelsea	17	24	40	54	67	63	44
Marylebone	8	16	25	39	52	52	31
St. Giles	13	16	31	41	42	41	29
St. Lukes	7	18	18	45	48	51	30
Spitalfields	9	23	30	49	48	67	38
Total %	11	20	30	46	54	57	36

The pattern of school attendance was slightly different amongst the Irish children. In this group, the peak age for school attendance was six. There was an increase in the proportion of children attending school between the ages of two and six but between the ages of six and seven there was a decrease in school attendance with the result that the proportion of seven year olds at school was slightly below that of five year olds. As with the English children, between the ages of four and five there was a large rise in the proportion of children attending school.

Between the ages of five and six the proportion of children at school increased by only two per cent whilst between the ages of two and four it increased by approximately 14 per cent.

Approximately 36 per cent of Irish five to seven year olds were at school which was a lower proportion than that of English five to seven year olds. Only 12 per cent of Irish two to four year olds were at school, which was also lower than that of their English counterparts (Tables 10.7a and 10.7b overleaf).

Table 10.7a

Five areas: Description of total number of Irish children within each age group attending school.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total
Chelsea	2 (25)	6 (18)	10 (23)	12 (16)	16 (32)	10 (24)	56 (138)
Marylebone	1 (30)	5 (36)	7 (41)	17 (38)	18 (38)	17 (29)	65 (212)
St. Giles	3 (56)	2 (25)	4 (38)	3 (33)	5 (31)	11 (40)	28 (223)
St. Lukes	0 (8)	0 (12)	0 (8)	0 (5)	2 (9)	1 (10)	3 (52)
Spitalfields	0 (14)	3 (17)	3 (18)	6 (14)	9 (20)	3 (22)	24 (105)
Total	6 (133)	16 (108)	24 (128)	38 (106)	50 (130)	42 (125)	176 (730)

Figures in brackets ( ) denote total number in each age group.

Table 10.7b

Five areas: Description of total percentage of Irish children within each age group attending school.

	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	Total %
Chelsea	8	33	43	75	50	42	41
Marylebone	3	14	17	45	47	59	31
St. Giles	5	8	11	9	16	28	13
St. Lukes	0	0	0	0	22	10	6
Spitalfields	0	18	17	43	45	14	23
Total	5	15	19	36	38	34	24



When the five areas are examined separately, slightly different patterns of school attendance emerge. In Marylebone there was no difference between Irish and English children as regards school attendance. In both groups 31 per cent of infant-aged children were described as scholars. In Chelsea, school attendance amongst the Irish children stood at the 41 per cent, whilst that of the English children was only a little higher at 44 per cent. In the remaining three areas the parents' country of birth had a dramatic influence on school attendance and the difference was most marked in Somers Town. In St. Luke's, six per cent of the Irish children were at school compared with 30 per cent of English children. In Spitalfields, 23 per cent of Irish two to seven year olds were at school compared with 38 per cent of English children. If the Jewish children and German and Dutch children are included in the category of English children, the proportion of non-Irish children at school in Spitalfields was a little higher at 42 per cent. In St. Giles, which had the most Irish children, 13 per cent of Irish children were at school compared with 29 per cent of their English peers.

In all of the areas, the proportion of five to seven year olds at school was higher than that of two to four year olds and this was true for both Irish and English children. The age distribution amongst Irish and English children was very similar and therefore the different school attendance patterns amongst Irish and English children cannot be attributed to one group consisting of a higher proportion of very young infants (i.e. two to four year

olds). Only in Marylebone could the age distribution have affected the overall figures for school attendance. In this area the overall figure for the proportion of English children at school might have been decreased since the sample consisted of more two to four year olds than five to sevens.<sup>1</sup> This would help to explain why Marylebone was the only area in which there was no discernible difference between the school attendance of Irish and English children.

The finding that in four of the five areas school attendance amongst Irish infants was noticeably lower than amongst non-Irish children would suggest that parents' country of birth and religion was a decisive factor in determining school attendance. This might have arisen because of differences between the English and Irish as regards their economic state, employment of children, availability of schools and attitudes towards education.

In the five areas the vast majority of Irish immigrants were very

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1. There was also a noticeable age imbalance amongst the English children in Spitalfields but this was mirrored in the age distribution of Irish children and therefore could be ignored.

poor and most, although not all, were unskilled workers.<sup>1</sup> The major skilled male occupations were shoemaking and tailoring, and skilled work for Irish women consisted mainly of needlework. None of these skilled occupations was well paid unless the worker was lucky enough and sufficiently skilled to have been taken on by an employer in the 'honourable' section of the trades. Irish men were mainly employed as general labourers, workers in the transport system or in the various branches of the construction and clothing trades. Irish women were mainly employed in domestic service and the food and clothing industries. Street selling was another means by which many of the Irish, young and old, were able to earn a little money. The same occupational pattern existed in London as a whole.<sup>2</sup> The economic situation of the Irish families in the study owed much to the fact that in the surveyed areas, as in the rest of London, the Irish were over-represented amongst the groups of unskilled workers.<sup>3</sup>

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1. John O'Neill, who emigrated from Ireland in 1808 was a skilled shoemaker. See O'Neill, J., 'Fifty Years Experience of a London Shoemaker in London' in St. Crispin - A Weekly Journal, Vols. 1-3, 1869-71; O'Tuathaigh, H.A.G., 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain: Problems of Integration' in Gilley, S. and Swift, R. (eds.), *op cit.*, pp. 16-17.

2. Hollen Lees, L., Exiles of Erin, Irish Migrants in Victorian London, 1979, pp. 91-100; Jackson, J.A., 'The Irish in East London' in East London Papers, Vol. 6. No.2, Dec. 1963, pp. 105-119 and P.P. 1836 (40) xxxiv, Report of the Commissioners for Inquiry into the Condition of the the Poorer Classes in Ireland, Appx G., Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain.

3. Hollen Lees, L., *op cit.*, p. 93 and p. 100.

One result of the poor economic state of some Irish families was that many Irish parents were compelled to allow their children to work from a very early age.<sup>1</sup> In the census returns for the areas under investigation, employment amongst Irish 'under eights' was not recorded but it is intriguing that school attendance amongst Irish children began to decline from the age of six whilst in the case of English children the proportion of children at school continued to increase beyond the age of seven.

Even if the child was too young to earn any money it is possible that many poor Irish families, like their English counterparts were unable to afford to send their children to school as they could not buy the necessary clothes, shoes and food.<sup>2</sup> William Blair, a surgeon in Bloomsbury, noted that poverty was a hindrance to education:

...we have this particular fact to illustrate it: when the distress of the poor has been extreme, as during the winter season, and an effort has been made by private subscription, to relieve the immediate wants of the parents and the children, great numbers of the children who had been kept away [from school], have again returned and regularly attended the school.<sup>3</sup>

Low school attendance amongst Irish children in North London cannot be attributed solely to poverty, since not all Irish

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1. Hollen Lees, L., op cit., p. 85 ; McDonnell, K.G.T., 'Roman Catholics in London, 1860-65' in Hollaender, A.E.J. and Kellaway, W. (eds.), op cit., p 440.

2. Hollen Lees, L., op cit., p. 85; Feheney, J.M.P., op cit 1981, p. ; McDonnell, K.G.T., 'Roman Catholics in London, 1860-65' in Hollaender, A.E.J. and Kellaway, W. (eds.), op cit., pp 440.

3. P.P. 1818 (136) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, p. 253.

families were in such dire straits. Another explanation could lie in the residential patterns of the Irish, linked with the shortage of Roman Catholic schools which catered for infants. In the 1830s it was stated that the Irish tended to live separately from their English peers and this was partly attributed to the fact that the 'natives' were unwilling to mix with the Irish who consequently 'herded together in particular quarters or streets of large towns.' The census returns in 1841 and 1851 confirmed that certain streets were inhabited mainly by Irish families, whilst other streets were inhabited mainly by English families, but the separation was not total as in many streets the Irish and the English lived next to each other. The Irish isolation ought not to be viewed in geographic terms but instead in cultural terms.<sup>2</sup> The cultural, linguistic and religious differences between the Irish and the English contributed to the development of Irish communities.

The pattern of school attendance was one expression of this cultural divide. In the late 1830s Henry Dunn told the Education Select Committee that Catholics preferred to educate their own children and few attended either National or British Schools. He added, however, that although the Catholics had provided several small schools for themselves there were not enough of these schools as 'the great mass of them [Irish children] do not go

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1. P.P. 1836 (40) xxxiv, Report of the Commissioners for Inquiry into the Condition of the the Poorer Classes in Ireland, Appx. G, p. xiv

2. This point has been made by Hollen Lees, L., op cit., p. 87.

anywhere'.<sup>1</sup> The education surveys of the L.S.S. between 1837 and 1843 only identified a total of 17 Roman Catholic working-class private schools out of a total of 1,086.<sup>2</sup> The actual number of Catholic private working-class schools might have been much higher but it is probable that the suspicion which greeted middle-class investigators in poor areas of London was probably intensified when Irish Catholics were quizzed about the schooling of their children; after all, Catholics had been prevented in the past from establishing schools.

In the five survey areas Irish parents were unwilling to use the available public education facilities, not because they did not value education but rather because there were not enough Roman Catholic public schools which catered for infants. In the five survey areas, 730 Irish infants were served by only eight Roman Catholic public schools. These schools were not evenly distributed: St. Luke's, Somers Town had no such school whilst St. Giles had five. Parents who would have wanted to send their child to a public school were prevented from so doing as their religious beliefs were such that they could not countenance exposing their children to the religious education received in the National, British and ragged schools. Many Irish parents were convinced that the aim of most of the existing public schools was to convert their children to Protestantism. This

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1. P.P. 1838 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales, p. 52.

2. Fifth Report and Summary of the Education Committee of the L.S.S. in J.S.S., Vol. 6, Aug. 1843, p. 214.

view was current for most of the nineteenth century and was widespread in London and not confined to the areas studied.<sup>1</sup> Some of the public schools denied this charge but many Irish were unconvinced.<sup>2</sup>

Not all Catholic parents refused to send their children to the National, British and ragged Schools but Dunn had to admit that, although a few Catholics attended British and Foreign schools, they were not 'generally contented with the schools'.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, those who used non-Catholic public schools were chastised by the local priests. In the late 1830s Wilderspin asserted that Catholic parents were 'very willing' to send their children to infants' schools but it was the priests who were not willing to let them go. St. Giles was not alone in witnessing the wrath of Roman Catholic priests.<sup>4</sup> In 1851, a priest entered the Portman Square Ragged School without permission with the aim of listing all the children present and when he was ejected a crowd gathered outside the school and accused the teacher of abusing the priest. The crowd then pelted the school with stones and oyster shells, school books and Bibles were torn up, and that night there was a procession to Callmell Buildings (an area with a high Irish population) where homes were illuminated and the remaining school books were destroyed. On the following Sunday

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1. For example, The Report of the West Lancastrian Society, 16th Sept. 1813, Goldsmiths' Collection, University of London.

2. P.P. 1816 (498) iv, Report on the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis, p. 252.

3. P.P 1838 (589) vii, Report from the Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales, p. 51.

4. See Chapter 6 of this thesis.

the priest preached an uncompromising sermon and he criticised parents who sent their children to the 'Protestant school'. In Islington, the priest did not have the same success, as parents refused to withdraw their children from the Elder Walk Ragged School since 'the instruction received was too valuable to be given up at his bidding'.<sup>1</sup> The value Irish parents placed on education is hinted at in the Annual Report of the Brewers Court Ragged Infant Day School, Drury Lane. This school was situated in St. Giles with its large Irish population. It was not a Catholic school but many of the children's parents were Catholics. Peak attendance at this school occurred when a nearby Catholic school closed for repairs. Rather than allow their children to miss out on schooling the parents sent their children to the local ragged infant school.<sup>2</sup>

Possibly more Catholics would have sent their children to non-Catholic schools but for the obvious antagonism Irish Catholics faced. This antagonism was reflected in the language used when discussing the Irish poor in London. The Ragged School Union used phrases such as 'Irish degradation', and alleged that the 'misery of Popery' was the root of this evil in the capital.<sup>3</sup> Catholic children had been referred to as 'the leprous brood of Popists'.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Both incidents are described in the Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, pp. 27-28.

2. Eighth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, 1852, p. 20.

3. Ragged School Union Magazine, 1852, p. 24.

4. The Times, 3 June 1839.



Feelings obviously ran high, and as there was a shortage of Catholic Schools, parents were often in the position of having to send their children to a private working-class school although they might have preferred a public Catholic school.<sup>1</sup> The shortage of public Catholic schools also meant that parents had only a limited choice of school. Although the Irish were, in the main, much poorer than their English counterparts, contrary to popular belief at the time not all Irish families were rough, dissolute and dirty.<sup>2</sup> The social grading referred to earlier with respect to the working class in general also operated amongst the Irish working class and therefore some parents may not have wanted their children to associate with the 'rougher' children who attended some of the Catholic schools (eg. the ragged infant schools). These parents may have been forced to send their children to private Catholic schools or, along with those who could not afford a private working-class school, may have resorted to the available public schools at the risk of compromising their religious beliefs and facing the wrath of their priest. Many simply chose to keep their children at home.

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1. Annual Report of the Associated Catholic Charities, 1830

2. Mayhew, H., London Labour and the London Poor, Vol.1, 1861, p. 110; Revd. Hutchinson, W.A., 'The Catholic Poor in London' in The Tablet, 1854, quoted by Feheney, J.M.P., 'Changing Attitudes in the Catholic Church to the Provision of Schooling for Orphan and Destitute Children from the London Area during the Second Half of the Ninetennth Century', 1982, Unpublished Ph.D, pp. 11-13.

The low levels of school attendance amongst Irish 'under eights' relative to the school attendance of their non-Irish peers appear to have been mainly a result of the economic state of the families, the lack of suitable public and private schools (i.e. Catholic schools) and in those families where Irish was spoken at home it is possible that parents were loathe to send their very young children to an English-speaking school.

The other community which was possible to investigate was the East End Jewish community. Since there was only one area in which there was a large enough sample to work with, it is not possible to provide a comparison of schooling patterns of Jewish children across the capital. The exact patterns of school attendance, the family circumstances, the availability of schools have already been discussed. Suffice it to say that the Jewish community appeared to stand in direct contrast to the Irish community, which is interesting in that both communities consisted of large numbers of immigrants. Many Jewish families were of European extraction. The Jewish families and Catholics were also similar in the area surveyed in that families belonging to each community were generally quite poor.

As to whether or not the Jewish community were as keen as the Irish to have separate schools is not clear. William Allen, the Treasurer of the British and Foreign School Society, told the 1834 Select Committee that Jews had confidence in schools belonging to the society and supported his claim by repeating a

comment made to him by a leading Jew, 'We send our master to be instructed by you, because we know that you will not attempt to proselyte him'.<sup>1</sup> A few years later, Miller told the Hand-Loom Weavers Commission that in the Bell Lane Jewish School, Spitalfields, 'there is no attempt to maintain a "middle wall of partition" between the Jews and the rest of the native born subjects of the Crown', so much so that the authorised version of the Bible was used in the school.<sup>2</sup> This would have been a source of contention for Irish Catholics. Henry Dunn's comments to the 1834 Select Committee suggest, however, that Jews, like the Catholics, would have preferred their own schools.<sup>3</sup> This might have been on religious grounds, cultural grounds or, in common with some Irish families, on linguistic grounds. Young Jewish children in the East End of London were well served with public schools compared with their Irish peers. Furthermore, the Jews differed from the Irish Catholics in that there were a number of Jewish private working-class schools. The Education Committee of the L.S.S. only listed 22 Jewish private working-class schools but these served a smaller community as there were far fewer Jews in London than Irish Catholics. The Jews and the Catholics were supposedly similar in that parents sent their children to work at a young age, but this was not reflected in the school attendance

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1. P.P. 1834 (572) ix, Report on the State of Education, p. 76.

2. P.P. 1840 (639) xxiv, Hand Loom Weavers, Returns and Reports from Assistant Commissioners, pp. 261-276.

3. P.P. 1834 (572) ix, Report on the State of Education, p. 29.

of the Jewish children amongst whom school attendance increased beyond the age of five to reach 95 per cent at the age of seven. The sample was small but compared with an identically sized sample in the same area, attendance amongst Irish seven year olds only amounted to 45 per cent. The proportion of Jewish children aged between two and seven at school was 69 per cent.

Parents' country of origin and religion were factors which had a powerful influence on the school attendance of 'under eights'. The nature of this influence depended upon the country of religion concerned. In the case of the children of Irish Catholics, fewer 'under eights' attended school than non-Catholics and the peak age for school attendance amongst infants was six, after which school attendance began to decline. In the case of the children of Jewish parents, school attendance increased between the ages of five and seven and 95 per cent of seven year olds were at school. This was much higher than the 57 per cent which was the average proportion of English seven year olds at school in all seven survey areas, and 34 per cent which was the average for seven year old Irish children. When the school attendance of two to seven year olds is examined en bloc, the proportion of Jewish children at school was 69 per cent, which was higher than that of English children (36 per cent) and that of Irish children which was only 24 per cent.

Summary.

This study investigated the influence on school attendance in relation to eight main factors. The main findings of the study are as follows.

Children's attendance at school increased with age between the ages of two and seven, except in the case of Irish children amongst whom school attendance increased only up to the age of six. The peak ages for school attendance amongst English and Jewish infants was seven, whilst amongst Irish children it was six. In all religious and ethnic groups, school attendance increased greatly between the ages of four and five.

'Under eights' from larger families were more likely to attend school than those from smaller families. School attendance was higher amongst infant aged child who had an older sibling who was in paid employment than amongst infants who had no older sibling at work. The age at which children generally started work in an area did not have a discernible effect on school attendance amongst infants.

Generally, more children of working mothers attended school than those whose mothers were at home. School attendance patterns could not be linked definitively to mothers' or fathers' occupations.

Attendance patterns were dependent upon the parents' country of birth and religion. Children of Jewish parents had the best record of school attendance, whilst those of Irish parents had the worst.

Whilst this investigation has shown that the school attendance of 'under eights' was affected by a range of socio-economic factors it has also raised a number of interesting questions. Areas which would benefit from further research include an examination of the influences which affected the school attendance of Irish and Jewish children below the age of eight, the relationship between the number of private working-class schools and the socio-economic profile of an area and an in-depth examination of how working-class parents perceived public infant schools and the effect this had on school attendance. In addition, detailed studies of the school attendance of infants in other parts of Britain may help clarify the way in which the various factors examined here interact and result in discernible patterns of school attendance.

APPENDIX 1

The Geographic and Temporal Location of Schools in North London  
Attended by Working-Class Children Below the Age of Eight (1800-  
1859).

The list below shows the location of schools recorded to have catered for infants with the earliest date at which infants attended each school

Abbreviations: Ch	- Chelsea	Cy	- City of London
N/Fy	- North Finsbury	S/Fy	- South Finsbury
N/M	- North Marylebone	S/M	- South Marylebone
N/TH	- North Tower Hamlets		
S/TH	- South Tower Hamlets		
W	- Westminster		

1815-1819 (4 schools).

1816 - Eagle Street School, S/Fy

1818 - Brewers Street Infants' School (later moved to Vincent's Square), W

- Bell Lane Jews' Free School (Boys'), Spitalfields, S/TH

1819 - East London Irish Free Schools, Goodmans Yard, Minories  
S/TH

1820-1824 (13 schools).

1820 - Quaker Street Infants' School, Spitalfields, S/TH

- Bell Lane Jews' Free School (Girls'), Spitalfields, S/TH

- North London Calthorpe Terrace School, Grays Inn Lane, S/Fy

1821 - Bloomsbury and St. Pancras School, Perry Street, Somers Town,  
N/Fy

1822 - Stoke Newington, N/TH

- St. Anne's, Blackfriars, Cy

1823 - Hackney Road, Ann's Place Infants' School, N/TH

- Whitechapel Infants' School, S/TH

1824 - St. Dionis School, Backchurch, Cy

- Palmers Village Infants' Sch, St. Margaret's, Westminster, W

- Stratford, N/TH

- Bethnal Green, S/TH.

- Pudding Lane, Cy

1825-1829 (34 schools).

1825 - Jews Episcopal Chapel Infants' School, Cambridge Heath,  
Gloucester Street, (St. Matthews, Bethnal Green), S/TH

- Chelsea, St. Luke's Infants' School, Markham Street (moved  
to King's Rd, 1828), Ch

- St. Giles in the Fields and St. George's, Bloomsbury Infants'  
School, Trinity Church, Stonecutters Alley, S/Fy

- Blue Anchor Alley Infants' School, Bunhill Row, (St.  
Luke's, Old Street, Finsbury), S/Fy

- Liverpool Street, Cy

1826 - St. Leonard's, Shoreditch Infants' School, S/TH

- Hackney Infants' School, Bridge Street, Homerton, N/TH



1826 (cont.)

- Adelphi British and Foreign Infants' School, Long Acre,  
St. Paul's, Covent Garden, W
- St. Giles Irish Free Schools (Infants'), George Street, Great  
Russel Street, S/Fy
- St. Mary's, Islington, Upper Street, (attached to the  
National Society), N/Fy
- St. Stephen's Infants' School, Coleman Street, Cy
- Tonbridge Street Infants' School, New Road, S/M

1827 - Baldwins Gardens, St Andrew's and St George the  
Martyr, Holborn, S/Fy

- Regent Square Infants' School, Regent Square/Francis  
Square, St. Pancras East, N/Fy
- Infants' Orphan Asylum, St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, S/TH
- St. George in the East Infants' School, S/TH
- St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, S/TH
- Walham Green, Ch
- Craven Chapel, Western Union School, Carnaby Market, W

1828 - Pestalozzian Infants' School, Holborn, S/Fy

- Radnor Street Wesleyan Chapel Infants' School, S/Fy
- St. Francis Free Roman Catholic School, S/Fy
- Liverpool Buildings, Bishopsgate, Cy
- Pestalozzian Infants' School, Shoreditch, S/TH
- St. George in the East, Walburgh Street, Christ Church Lower  
Infants' School, S/TH
- Stamford Hill Infants' School, Upper Clapton, N/TH

1828 (cont.)

- St. Mary le Strand and Savoy Infants' School, W
- St. Paul's, Covent Garden, W
- St. Francis Catholic Free School, 19, George Street, St. Giles, W

1829 - Mrs Glynne's Infants' School, Ranelagh Road, Millbank, (St. George's, Hanover Square), W

- Farm Street Infants' School, Grosvenor Square and Berkley Square (St. George's Hanover Sq ), W
- St. Mary's, Islington, N/Fy
- St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, S/TH
- Poplar Chapel and Blackwall Hamlet Infants' School, S/TH

1830-1834 (54 schools).

1830 - Ratcliffe Hamlet Infants' School, S/TH

- Christ Church, Spitalfields, S/TH
- Orchard Street Infants' School, Hackney (on site of Well Street Chapel), N/TH

1831 - St. Mark's Infants' School, North Audley Street, W

- St. George's, Hanover Square, St. Peter's Infants' School, W
- St. George's, Hanover Square, Parochial Infants' School, W
- Islington Parochial School, Infants' School, Greenman's Lane,  
N/Fy

- Camden Town Infants' School, St. Pancras, N/Fy

- City Road Chapel School, Golden Lane, (in 1837/38 moved to Radnor St), S/Fy

1831 (cont.)

- Chelsea Upper (St. Luke's), Trinity Infants' School, Ch
- Chelsea, St Luke's, Clockhouse School, Ch
- City of London Schools, Harp Alley, Cy

1832 - St. Martin's in the Fields, Lord Henley Infants' School, W

- St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, S/TH
- Stoke Newington, West Hackney and Stamford Hill School, N/TH
- Kentish Town Infants' School, St Pancras, N/Fy

1833 - St. James Infants' School, Marshall Street, W

- St. Peter's Infants' School, St. George's , Westminster,  
(loosely attached to Belgrave National School), W
- St. James Infants' School, St. George's, Hanover Square, W
- Orange Street Chapel, St Martin's in the Fields, W
- St. Clement Danes Infants', 45, Stanhope Street, Clare  
Market, Strand, W
- Dorset Street Infants' School, S/TH
- George Green's Infants' School, Preston's Road, Poplar, S/TH
- Hare Street, Brick Lane, Calvinist Infants' School,  
Spitalfields, S/TH
- St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, S/TH
- St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, S/TH
- Stepney Meeting School, Garden Street, Stepney, S/TH
- St. Mary's, Spital Square, Norton Folgate Infants', S/TH
- Teale Street Infants' and Daily School, St Matthew's, Bethnal  
Green, S/TH

1833 (cont.)

- Twigg Folly School, Bethnal Green, S/TH
- White Row Infants' School, Tenter Street, S/TH
- Hackney Well Street Chapel Infants', (recommenced), N/TH
- 3 Infants' schools attached to Kensington National School, Ch
- St. Alphage, near Sion College, Cripplegate, Infants', Cy
- Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Preparatory School, Creechurch  
(near Bevis Marks), Cy
- Poultry Chapel, Sugar Loaf Court, Garlick Hill, Cy
- Jacob's Well Court Girls' School, Barbican, Cy
- St. Luke's, Old Street, S/Fy.
- St. Giles and St. George, Bloomsbury Lancasterian School,  
S/Fy.
- Paddington Infants' School, S/M
- Rev. Wigram Infants' School, Vere Street, S/M (later moved  
to Islington)
- St. Marylebone Infants' School (Central Division - children  
progressed into Marylebone National School), S/M
- Mrs. Sutcliffe's Infants' School, Bayswater, S/M

1834 - Tufton Street National Infants' School, (St. John the  
Evangelist) Westminster, W

- Pimlico, Buckingham Chapel, Palace Street, W
- Wycliffe Chapel School, Philpott Street, Commercial Road,  
Stepney, S/TH
- Christ Church, Spitalfields, White Row Infants' School,  
Tenter Street, S/TH
- St. Bride's and Bridewell Precinct, Cy

1834 (cont.)

- Paddington Infants' School, Church Place, S/M
- York Terrace, Regents Park, N/M
- St. Andrew's, St. Peter's National Infants' School, Holborn,  
Saffron Hill Church, Bleeding Heart Yard, S/Fy
- Bloomsbury and St. Pancras, Perry Street, Somers Town, N/Fy

1835-1839 (44 schools).

1835 - Kensington, Horton Street, Ch

- Kensington Gore, Park Lane Infants' School, Ch
- Marylebone Diocesan School, Nutford Place, S/M
- Camden Town Infants' School, N/Fy

1836 - Hertford Place, Haggerstone Road, S/TH

- Nichol Street Ragged School, Old Nichol Street, S/TH
- St. Mary's Infants', Highbury Vale, N/Fy
- St. Paul's, Islington, Balls Pond Road, Cross Street, N/Fy
- St. Paul's, Islington, New Norfolk Street, N/Fy
- Marylebone All Souls and Trinity (Eastern) Portland Place S/M
- Dacre Street Infants', St. Margaret's, Westminster, W
- Craven Chapel Infants', Western Union, Marshall Street,  
Golden Square, W
- New Pye Street School, Tothill Street, Westminster, W
- London Passage Infants' and Sunday School, Cy
- Chelsea St. Luke's, Rectory Garden School, Ch

- 1837 - St. John's Infants' School, Vincent Square, Westminster, W  
- Home and Colonial Infant School Society School, St. Chad's  
Row, Grays Inn Rd (King's Cross end), N/Fy
- 1838 - Gasgoigne Place Schools, Castle Street, Bethnal Green, S/TH  
- Bromley Infants' School, S/TH  
- St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, Curtain Road, S/TH  
- Aldersgate, Lady Packington's, Charterhouse Square, Cy  
- St. Dunstan's in the West, 2, Hen and Chickens Court, Fleet  
Street, Cy  
- Liverpool Buildings, City of London Infants', S/Fy  
- St. Peter's Infants', Onslow Street, Great Saffron Hill,  
Holborn, S/Fy  
- Cloudsley Infants' School, Cloudsley Square, Trinity Church,  
Islington, N/Fy  
- St. Pancras, Christchurch, Albany Street, N/Fy  
- Fulham, St. John's, Ch  
- Kensington, Earl Street, Ch  
- Kensington, King Street, Ch  
- Chelsea, Park Chapel Infants' and Sunday School, Ch  
- Marylebone, Western Infants' School, Upper York Street,  
Bryanstone Square, S/M  
- Marylebone Infants' School, 63, Marylebone High Street, S/M  
- Marylebone, Christ Chapel, St. Johns Wood N/M  
- Hope Street British and Foreign School, S/TH  
- Union Gardens Infants' School, Shoreditch, S/TH  
- White Bear Gardens Infants' School, S/TH

1838 (cont.)

- Redmans Rd Infants' School, Mile End Road, Stepney, S/TH
- Whitechapel, St. Marks School, S/TH
- Stoke Newington Girls' and Infants', N/TH
- St. Peter's Infants' School, Queen Street, Pimlico, W

1839 - Abbey Street, Bethnal Green, S/TH

- Heneage Lane National and Infants' School, S/TH
- Latimer Chapel, Mile End, Bridge Street, S/TH
- Turk's Head Yard Ragged School, Clerkenwell, S/Fy

1840-1844 (32 schools).

1840 - George Street Infants' (now called Empson Street), Bromley by Bow, S/TH

- All Saints Infants' School, Newby Place, Poplar S/TH

1841 - All Saints, Mile End, Stepney, S/TH

- St. Peter's, Mile End, Stepney, S/TH
- Wapping Infants' School (Roman Catholic), S/TH
- St. Bartholomew's, Bethnal Green, S/TH
- Hackney Rd, Westmoreland Street, Weymouth Street, N/TH
- Islington South and Pentonville, Denmark Terrace, N/Fy
- Islington, St. Stephens, River Street/ Amwell Street, N/Fy
- Jews' Infants' School, Houndsditch, Cy
- Paddington, St. John's, Titchbourne Street, S/M

1842 - Butler Street Roman Catholic Ragged School, S/TH

- St. Andrew's, Bethnal Green, S/TH

- St. Simon's (previously St. James the Less), Bethnal Green,  
S/TH

- St. James, Ratcliffe, Whitehorse Street, Ratcliffe Street,  
S/TH

- St. Thomas, Stepney, S/TH

- St. Paul's Infants', 179, High Street, Shadwell, S/TH

1843 - St. Bartholomew's, Bethnal Green, S/TH.

- St. James the Great, Bethnal Green, S/TH

- Stepney Trinity School, S/TH

- St. Philip's, Stepney, S/TH

- Haggerstone, St. Mary's, S/TH

- New Broad Street School, Whitecross Place, Wilson Street,  
Finsbury, S/Fy.

- Turners Place School (Infants'), S/Fy

- Islington, Chapel of Ease, N/Fy

- Warwick St. Infants' School, (Roman Catholic) Chelsea, Ch

- Fulham Roman Catholic Girls' and Infants' School, Parsons  
Green, Ch

- Christ Church, Chelsea (initially at Queen Street, Flood  
Street and moved in 1850 near to Christ Church), Ch

- Brook Street Ragged School, (near Store Street), S/M

1844 - Islington, All Saints District School, N/Fy

- Bunhill Row, St. Pauls, (near St. Lukes), Finsbury, S/Fy

- St. John's, Hoxton, N/TH



1845-1849 (66 schools).

1845 - King Edward Street Ragged School, Ely Place, (moved to Albert Street, Mile End New Town in 1851), S/TH

- Agar Town Ragged School, N/Fy
- Paddington, Bayswater, N/M
- St. Joseph's Convent of Our Lady of Mercy and Poor Schools, Cadogan Street, Ch
- Edge Terrace, St. John's, Notting Hill, S/M
- St. Marylebone Central Infants' School, Marylebone High Street, S/M
- St. Mary Abbots, Kensington Infants' School, Reservoir Road, Ch
- Crown Street Roman Catholic Infants' School, (now Charing Cross Road), W
- Lamb and Flag Court Ragged School, Clerkenwell, S/Fy (N.B. the infants' school was built in 1849)

1846 - St. George in the East, Christchurch Lower, Watney Street, S/TH

- Vine Street Court, Spitalfields Ragged School, S/TH
- Lincoln Place, New North Road. National Infants', N/TH
- Bedford Chapel, Irish Free Schools, Bloomsbury, S/M
- Grotto Passage Ragged School, S/M
- St. Pancras, Woburn Chapel, N/Fy
- Golden Square, All Saints Infants, St. Pancras, N/Fy
- St. Pancras East, Britannia Street, N/Fy
- St. James, Holloway, Islington, N/Fy
- Westbrook Infants' School, St. Peter's Islington, N/Fy

1846 (cont.)

- Philip's Street Ragged School for Boys (near Cowper St, City Road), S/Fy
- Kensington Gravel Pits, St. John's, Ch
- St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, Ch
- Westminster Chapel, Westminster, W

1847 - St. Jude's, Bethnal Green, S/TH

- Mr. Stabb's Ragged School, Spitalfields, S/TH
- Protestant Dissenting Charity School, Wood Street Spitalfields, S/TH
- Charterhouse, St. Thomas Girls' and Infants', Cy
- George St, Lisson Grove, S/M
- George St, Lisson Grove Ragged School, S/M
- St. Pancras, Trinity School, N/Fy
- St. Anne's Charity Infants' School, Rose Lane, S/Fy
- St. Michael's, Pimlico. Ch
- Exeter Buildings Ragged School, Chelsea, Ch
- St. Anne's Infants' Rose Street, Soho, W

1848 - Neales Yard Ragged School, Seven Dials, W

- 6 Ragged Schools in the area of Old Pye Street and Duck Lane, W
- Brewers Court Ragged School, W
- St. Sepulchre's Infants' 17, Giltspur St, W. Smithfield, Cy

1848 (cont.)

- Pied Bull Yard, Bloomsbury National Sunday and  
Infants' School, S/M
- Edwards Mews Ragged School, Portman Square, S/M
- Grays Yard, James Street Ragged School, S/M
- Little Camden Street, Camden Town School N/Fy
- Polygon Infants' School, Polygon, Clarendon Square, N/Fy
- Elder Walk, Islington, N/Fy
- Bere Street Ragged School, Ratcliffe, St. James, S/TH
- Thrawl Street, Spitalfields, S/TH

1849 - Bulstrode Mews Ragged School, S/M

- Hinde Street Mews Ragged School, S/M
- Moore Street Ragged School, S/M
- St. George in the East, St. Mary's, Johnson Street, (Christ  
Church Upper), S/TH
- Dolphin Court Ragged School, S/TH
- Spicer Street Ragged School, Spitalfields S/TH
- British and Foreign School for Irish Children, 11, West  
Street, Seven Dials, S/Fy
- Golden Lane Ragged School, Honduras Street, S/Fy
- Scotch Church, Crown Court, Drury Lane, Little Russel Street,  
S/Fy
- St. Francis Xavier Infants' School, Seven Dials, S/Fy
- Crown Street Infants' School, S/Fy
- St. Philip's Ragged School, St. Pancras, N/Fy
- King's Cross Ragged School, N/Fy

1849 (cont.)

- Kensington Gore Lane, Ch
- Fox and Knot Court, King Street, West Smithfield, Cy

1850-1854 (17 schools)

1850 - St. Leonard's National Girls' and Infants' School, Bromley  
S/TH

- Sandwich Street Ragged Infants' School, N/Fy

1851 - St. Edward's Girls' and Infants' Roman Catholic School,  
Holland Street Kensington, Ch

- St. Peter's, Bethnal Green, S/TH
- St. Philip's, Bethnal Green, S/TH
- College Lane School, N/TH
- Rose Lane Roman Catholic Ragged School, Covent Garden,  
(moved to Dunns Passage in 1852), S/Fy
- Harcourt Street Infants' School, S/M
- Moore Street Infants' School, S/M

1852 - Blandford Square Roman Catholic Girls' and Infants' School,  
N/M

- Gate Street Lincolns Inns Fields Roman Catholic School, S/Fy
- St. Stephen's School, Westminster, W
- Wesleyan Normal Practicing Infants', Horseferry Rd,  
Westminster. W
- St. Matthias National School, Hare Street, Bethnal Green,  
S/TH
- Wilkes Street Ragged School, S/TH

1853 - St. Edward's Roman Catholic School, Holland Street,  
Kensington, Ch

1854 - St. John's, Limehouse, S/TH

1855-1859 (11 schools)

1855 - Holy Family Church School, Great Saffron Hill, S/Fy.

- St. Anne's Roman Catholic School, 17 Princes Street,  
S/TH

- Mile End New Town Chapel, Church Street, S/TH

- Kensington Roman Catholic Infants' School, Ch

1856 - George Yard Ragged School, Angel Court, Whitechapel, S/TH

1857 - Marylebone, Holy Trinity National Infants' School, Cleveland  
Street, S/M

- Jennings Buildings Ragged School, near St Mary Abbots,  
Kensington, Ch

1858 - Westminster Chapel, York Street, Buckingham Gate, W

- North Street Ragged School, Shoreditch S/TH

1859 - Great Queen Street Chapel, Wesleyan Methodist School, Lincoln  
Inns Fields, S/Fy

- St. James' Place Ragged School, Notting Hill, S/M

The following list is of schools known to have taken in infants by 1859.

The earliest date at which infants attended these schools is uncertain and the date beside each school indicates the earliest reference to infants.

1841 - Fulham, St. Mary's North End, Ch

- Mile End Infants' School, Underwood Street, S/TH

1843 - South Moulton Street Roman Catholic Infants' School, S/M

- Oxford Buildings British School, S/M

1844 - Fulham, All Saints, Ch

- St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green (applied for a government grant for a gallery for infants) S/TH

1846 - St. Barnabas, St. Luke's National School, Old Street, S/Fy

- St. George's National Infant School, Bloomsbury, S/Fy

- St. George the Martyr Infant School, Bloomsbury S/Fy

- St. Giles in the Fields, West Street Chapel, Bloomsbury S/Fy

- St. Luke's Infants' S/Fy

- St. John's, Holloway Infants' School, N/Fy

- Islington Trinity School, N/Fy

- St. Pancras, Woburn Chapel, N/Fy

- St. Bartholomew's the Great. Cy

- St. Botolph's Infant School, Aldgate, Cy

- St. Botolph's Infants' School, Aldersgate Street, Cy

- St. James, Mitre Street, Aldgate, Cy

- Bunhill Row Roman Catholic , Moorfields, Cy

1846 (cont)

- St. Nicholas Cole Abbey and St. Nicholas Olave, 3rd City of  
London School, Cy
- St. George in the East, Rectors Infants' School, S/TH
- St. Matthias, Prince's Court Infant School, Bethnal Green  
S/TH
- Bethnal Green Workhouse School S/TH
- Whitechapel Rector's Infant School, S/TH
- Stepney Infants' School, S/TH
- Limehouse, St. Anne's, S/TH
- Brompton, Trinity Infant School, Ch
- Chelsea, St. Jude's National Infants' School, Ch
- Chelsea, St. Mark's Infants' School, Ch
- Knightsbridge, All Saints, Ch
- Little Charles Street Infants' School, Kensington Square, Ch
- Hammersmith, Latymer, N/M
- St. Mary's, Marylebone, S/M
- St. John's, Marylebone, S/M
- Paddington, All Saints, S/M
- St. Paul's, Lisson Grove, Marylebone S/M
- St. Stephen the Martyr, Marylebone S/M
- St. George's, Albermarle Street, (Charlotte Chapel), W
- St. George's, Grosvenor Chapel, W
- St. George's, Hanover Chapel, W

1848 - Portman Square Infant School, Marylebone, S/M

- 1849 - Charles Street Chapel/Trinity Chapel, Lisson Grove,  
Paddington, S/M
- 1851 - Domestic Mission School, Chapel Street, Cripplegate, Cy  
- St. Pancras Infants School, N/Fy  
- St. Edward's, Roman Catholic School, Palace Street,  
Westminster, W
- 1852 - East London, Red Lion Street, Clerkenwell, S/Fy  
- St. James Roman Catholic High Street, Marylebone, S/M  
- Chelsea, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Girls' and Infants', Ch  
- Moorfields, Bunhill Row Roman Catholic Girls' and Infants',  
Cy  
- Westminster Normal Practicing School, W  
- Westminster, St. Stephen's, W  
- Whitechapel Society School for Girls and Infants', S/TH
- 1853 - Weighhouse School, Darby Street, Rosemary Lane S/TH
- 1856 - Paddington Union, Paddington Chapel, N/M
- 1858 - Kentish Town, Trafalgar Place, N/Fy  
- Domestic Mission School, Spicer Street, Spitalfields, S/TH  
- Stratford and West Ham, Bridge Road, S/TH

Date of establishment unknown:

St Peter's (later St. Mary's) Roman Catholic School, Great Peter  
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