STUDIES IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY

This series, specially commissioned by the Economic History Society, provides a guide to the current interpretations of the key themes of economic and social history in which advances have recently been made or in which there has been significant debate.

Originally entitled 'Studies in Economic History', in 1974 the series had its scope extended to include topics in social history, and the new series title, 'Studies in Economic and Social History', signalises this development.

The series gives readers access to the best work done, helps them to draw their own conclusions in major fields of study, and by means of the critical bibliography in each book guides them in the selection of further reading. The aim is to provide a springboard to further work rather than a set of pre-packaged conclusions or short-cuts.

ECONOMIC HISTORY SOCIETY

The Economic History Society, which numbers around 3000 members, publishes the *Economic History Review* four times a year (free to members) and holds an annual conference. Enquiries about membership should be addressed to the Assistant Secretary, Economic History Society, PO Box 190, 1 Greville Road, Cambridge CB1 3QG. Full-time students may join at special rates.

STUDIES IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Edited for the Economic History Society by L.A. Clarkson

PUBLISHED

- B.W.E. Alford* British Economic Performance since 1945
B.W.E. Alford Depression and Recovery? British Economic Growth, 1918–1939
J.L. Anderson Explaining Long-Term Economic Change
Michael Anderson Approaches to the History of the Western Family, 1500–1914
Dudley Baines Emigration from Europe, 1815–1930
P.J. Cain Economic Foundations of British Overseas Expansion, 1815–1914
S.D. Chapman The Cotton Industry in the Industrial Revolution
Neil Charlesworth British Rule and the Indian Economy, 1800–1914
R.A. Church The Great Victorian Boom, 1850–1873
L.A. Clarkson Proto-Industrialization: The First Phase of Industrialization?
D.C. Coleman Industry in Tudor and Stuart England
P.L. Cottrell British Overseas Investment in the Nineteenth Century
M.A. Crowther Social Policy in Britain, 1914–1939
Ian M. Drummond The Gold Standard and the International Monetary System, 1900–1939
Alan Dyer Decline and Growth in English Towns, 1400–1640
M.E. Falkus The Industrialisation of Russia, 1700–1914
Peter Fearon The Origins and Nature of the Great Slump, 1929–1932
T.R. Gourvish Railways and the British Economy, 1830–1914
J.R. Harris The British Iron Industry, 1700–1850
John Hatcher Plague, Population and the English Economy, 1348–1530
J.R. Hay The Origins of the Liberal Welfare Reforms, 1906–1914
R.H. Hilton The Decline of Serfdom in Medieval England
R.A. Houston The Population History of Britain and Ireland
E.L. Jones The Development of English Agriculture, 1815–1973
John Lovell British Trade Unions, 1875–1933
W.J. Macpherson The Economic Development of Japan, c. 1868–1941
Donald N. McCloskey Econometric History
Hugh Mcleod Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain
Alan S. Milward The Economic Effects of the Two World Wars on Britain
G.E. Mingay Enclosure and the Small Farmer in the Age of the Industrial Revolution
R.J. Morris Class and Class Consciousness in the Industrial Revolution, 1780–1850
J. Forbes Munro Britain in Tropical Africa, 1870–1960
Cormac Ó Gráda The Great Irish Famine
R.B. Outhwaite Inflation in Tudor and Early Stuart England
R.J. Overy The Nazi Economic Recovery, 1932–1938
P.L. Payne British Entrepreneurship in the Nineteenth Century
Roy Porter Disease, Medicine and Society in England, 1550–1860
Richard Rodger Nineteenth-century Housing, 1780–1914
Michael E. Rose The Relief of Poverty, 1834–1914
Michael Sanderson Education, Economic Change and Society in England, 1780–1870, Second Edition
S.B. Saul The Myth of the Great Depression, 1873–1896
Peter Temin Causal Factors in American Economic Growth in the Nineteenth Century
Joan Thirsk England's Agricultural Regions and Agrarian History, 1500–1750
Michael Turner Enclosures in Britain, 1750–1830
J.R. Ward Poverty and Progress in the Caribbean, 1800–1960

OTHER TITLES ARE IN PREPARATION

Social Policy in Britain *1914–1939*

Prepared for
The Economic History Society by

M. A. CROWTHER

Senior Lecturer in Economic History
University of Glasgow

M
MACMILLAN

© The Economic History Society 1988

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 33–4 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

First published 1988
Reprinted 1991

Published by
MACMILLAN EDUCATION LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Crowther, M. A.

Social policy in Britain 1914–1939.—

(Studies in economic and social history).

1. Great Britain—Social policy 2. Great Britain—Politics and government—1910–1936 3. Great Britain—Politics and government—1936–1945

I. Title II. Economic History Society

III. Series

361.6'1'0941 HN385

ISBN 978-0-333-32285-7 ISBN 978-1-349-06151-8 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-06151-8

Series Standing Order

If you would like to receive future titles in this series as they are published, you can make use of our standing order facility. To place a standing order please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address and the name of the series. Please state with which title you wish to begin your standing order. (If you live outside the United Kingdom we may not have the rights for your area, in which case we will forward your order to the publisher concerned.)

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd,
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 2XS, England.

Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	6
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	6
<i>Note on References</i>	6
<i>Editor's Preface</i>	7
1 Introduction	9
2 Agents of Policy	
(i) Motivation and the 'welfare consensus'	11
(ii) The extent of intervention	14
(iii) The makers of policy	18
3 The First World War and After	
(i) Wartime measures	26
(ii) The failure of reconstruction	30
4 Social Policy in the 1920s	
(i) Unemployment policy	40
(ii) The crisis of local government	46
(iii) Poverty, health and housing	50
5 The 'Low, Dishonest Decade'?	
(i) Unemployment policy: theory and practice	59
(ii) Unemployment and social welfare	66
6 Conclusion	73
<i>References</i>	75
<i>Select Bibliography</i>	76
<i>Index</i>	85

List of Tables

1	Local and central government expenditure on social services in the UK 1913–1951	15
2	House-building 1919–1934	57
3	Infantile mortality in England and Wales and in Scotland 1926–1939	67

Acknowledgements

Particular thanks are due to Pat Thane, for reading the manuscript and giving good advice. Rodney Lowe also helped me with much useful information. Thanks also to many of the authors mentioned in the following pages, for sending me copies of offprints and assisting with the bibliography.

Note on References

References in the text within square brackets relate to the numbered items in the Bibliography, followed, where necessary, by the page numbers in italics, for example [1, 7–9].

The cover illustration is a cartoon by David Low entitled 'Lloyd George and the double-headed Ass', circa 1921. It is reproduced here courtesy of Mail Newspapers plc. The photograph was supplied by the Centre for the Study of Cartoons and Caricature, Canterbury.

Editor's Preface

When this series was established in 1968 the first editor, the late Professor M. W. Flinn, laid down three guiding principles. The books should be concerned with important fields of economic history; they should be surveys of the current state of scholarship rather than a vehicle for the specialist views of the authors, and above all, they were to be introductions to their subject and not 'a set of pre-packaged conclusions'. These aims were admirably fulfilled by Professor Flinn and by his successor, Professor T. C. Smout, who took over the series in 1977. As it passes to its third editor and approaches its third decade, the principles remain the same.

Nevertheless, times change, even though principles do not. The series was launched when the study of economic history was burgeoning and new findings and fresh interpretations were threatening to overwhelm students – and sometimes their teachers. The series has expanded its scope, particularly in the area of social history – although the distinction between 'economic' and 'social' is sometimes hard to recognise and even more difficult to sustain. It has also extended geographically; its roots remain firmly British, but an increasing number of titles is concerned with the economic and social history of the wider world. However, some of the early titles can no longer claim to be introductions to the current state of scholarship; and the discipline as a whole lacks the heady growth of the 1960s and early 1970s. To overcome the first problem a number of new editions, or entirely new works, have been commissioned – some have already appeared. To deal with the second, the aim remains to publish up-to-date introductions to important areas of debate. If the series can demonstrate to students and their teachers the importance of the discipline of economic and social history and excite its further study, it will continue the task so ably begun by its first two editors.

The Queen's University of Belfast

L. A. CLARKSON
General Editor