

MARRIED WOMEN ON FULL-TIME SHIFTWORK: SOME DOMESTIC
AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT

A study was made of the social and domestic consequences of married women working on full-time shifts, and took the form of a sample survey of full-time married women shiftworkers in two firms. A total of 252 women were interviewed, of whom 171 were married, and 81 separated or widowed.

They were not on the whole working from necessity, but in order to raise their family standard of living. In this, and in respect of the age groups in which they were most numerous, they were fairly typical of other post-war married women workers. They were, however, better paid than dayworkers.

Shiftworking presented them with few problems as individuals, though the majority suffered from some fatigue.

The women were studied in their roles not only as shiftworkers, but as housewives, wives and mothers.

As housewives they benefited from short working hours, and time at home during the day; as wives and mothers their advantages were less evident.

Their families, not surprisingly, were small, and under half the women had dependent children. Young children were adequately supervised in their mother's absence, but older school children were sometimes left.

The chief complaint of husbands, was of their wife's absence while they were at home. They were called upon to give some help in the house, but did not take over the housewife's duties to any great extent. The ways in which the women benefited from shiftworking, both financially, and as housewives, tended to justify in their eyes their absence from the house at times when husbands or children might need them.

Shiftwork was popular with the women, but this did not prevent a high rate of absence, or necessarily mean that shiftwork was more than one phase in the women's working lives.

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.... when a woman marries, it may in general be understood that she makes choice of the management of a household, and the bringing up of a family, as the first call upon her exertions, during as many years of her life as may be required for the purpose; and that she renounces, not all other objects and occupations, but all which are not consistent with this.

J.S.Mill The Subjection of Women

a) The Field of Study:

Married women who take jobs outside the home are not in the same position as male workers or single women. Married women have certain duties as housewives, wives and mothers, and they must combine these domestic responsibilities with the work their employers expect from them. Problems arise in this field because these responsibilities may be conflicting, and the ways in which the women try to resolve them are not always successful.

In spite of these problems there has been an enormous increase in the number of married women at work in recent years, and a change in the attitudes of the community to their responsibilities.

Before the war it was customary for women to give up their jobs when they married, and in many cases this was compulsory. This practice was based on two attitudes; firstly, because of the high level of unemployment during the inter-war period, women who worked were felt to be "taking the bread out of the mouths of men" if they went on working after it was not strictly necessary for their own support. In fact before the war, about one woman in nine did continue to work, but these were women with special reasons for doing so; those who had lost their husbands, or whose husbands were unable to support them through ill health or employment on casual labour, and those whose husbands would not support them, through shiftlessness or desertion. The second reason for compelling women to retire on marriage was based on the feeling that a "woman's place is in the Home", and a married woman should devote her full attention to her home and family.

This second consideration overlooked the changes that had taken place, and were still in progress regarding the situation of women in relation to size of their families and the changing patterns of marriage.

By the 1930s the working class family had diminished sharply in size, and of the women who married in the period 1920 - 4 the average size of the manual worker's family was 2.6. At the same time families were being completed in a shorter space of time, and 80% of the women who married in 1925 had completed their families within ten years.¹

These trends continued while the number of women who married increased, and the age at which they married fell; by 1951 two thirds of all women under 25 were married.² Meanwhile there was an increase in the expectation of life for women. A woman in the mid-twentieth century was more likely to marry than a woman of her mother's generation, and was likely to marry younger, to have fewer children and to complete her family within a shorter space of time than her mother; she could also expect to live longer. A woman's life could be divided into three main periods after she had left school. In the first period as a single woman she worked for her own support, then after a few years she married and in a few more years completed her family. The second period was that of rearing her children. By the time her children were adult, or even in their teens, her role as mother was virtually completed, and she still had many years of life left to her,

1. See D.V.Class and E.Grebenik. The Trend and Pattern of Fertility in Great Britain: A Report on the Family Census of 1946.

2. See C.M.Stewart. Future Trends in the Employment of Married Women. British Journal of Sociology Vol.XII No.1. March 1961.

from an age at which she was able and active.

With the outbreak of war came a great increase in the demand for labour, and married women who had previously been excluded from employment found that not only were they now needed, but that they had a duty to work if they could do so without detriment to their families. The war not only stimulated the demand for married women's labour, it also opened the way to a wider choice of occupations for women. Though the end of the war brought some return of restrictions, the continuation of full employment, and the lack of any other large source of labour, (short of lowering the school leaving age, or raising the age of retirement) enabled many women to stay on at work after marriage, and others to re-enter the field. A good example of the opportunities opened to women by the war is illustrated by the situation of the bus conductresses who were interviewed. Before the war all the conductors were men, but women were brought in during the war-time scarcity of men, and though there was an attempt to replace them with men afterwards, the continuing shortage of male labour resulted in women being kept on and married women being allowed to retain their jobs.

With the maintenance of full employment after the war, came the need for married women to enter the labour market and the climate of public opinion changed. The issues provoked by the problems of married women working are still discussed, but it is against the background of increasing numbers of them in the labour market, as opposed to the pre-war discussions of whether married women should be allowed to work at all.

The readiness of employers to employ married women is shown by the great increase in part-time working in the last few years, as this type of working is aimed at attracting women who are not prepared to be out of the house all day, but who will do some work if the hours are specially designed to meet their needs.

The post war economic situation affected the married woman in other ways. The continuation of the labour shortage resulted in the maintenance of high wages, and as incomes rose, working class patterns of consumption began to change and assume a character previously associated with a middle class way of life. The 1950s saw a great increase in the proportion of working class households with durable consumer goods; and a car, or perhaps a holiday abroad, came within the reach of a much wider section of the community. Expenditure on food rose and the types of foods bought increased in variety and in the extent to which they were pre-prepared. These changes introduced a whole range of wants that had previously been outside the extent of working class aspirations on any large scale.

Women who wanted to work outside the home were helped by the continuing trend which lightened the actual amount of which which they had to do as housewives. Houses with better equipment were more convenient, and easier to clean. The work of cooking was reduced by frozen or half prepared foods, and by the extension of canteen facilities, and school meals. The burden of washing could be lightened by a machine or laundry.

The mid-twentieth century as far as married women are concerned

was a time when, for large numbers of them, the opportunity to go out to work, and the incentive to do so, coincided. The willingness of employers to receive them, the compression of their duties as mothers into a relatively short period of their lives, and the changes in their work as housewives meant that many women were free to go out to work if they chose and, at the same time, the rise in material aspirations gave them a positive reason for taking up employment.

The result has been a steady increase in the number of married women at work, in both full time and part time jobs.

It is not likely that this is a temporary phenomenon. Unless unforeseen circumstances arise which lower the demand for labour, an increased number of married women will be needed in the future as industries expand, and the problems arising from the employment of married women will remain with us.

b) Aims of the Study:

In a situation where, in order to supply its needs, the country will continue to call on married women to stay at work, or to return after marriage, the need to be aware of the consequences of numbers of married women in the labour market is continuous. Although circumstances are such that married women are both willing and able to work, the essential problem remains that they have two jobs to cope with, and this results in a division of loyalties.

This study aimed at examining one aspect of the problem by taking the particular case of married shiftworkers. While female shiftworkers are not very numerous in this country their services are essential both

in firms that provide services over a longer period than the normal working day, and in firms that need to maximise the productivity of their machinery. There is not likely to be a decrease in the provision of such services, and in manufacturing industry the probability is that shiftwork will increase.

The study was planned as a sample survey of married women who were working on shifts to see why it was that they came to be doing this type of work, and what particular problems the hours they worked raised for them. While basically their problems are the same as those of any married women who works, it was thought that shift work did not necessarily lend itself easily to the combination of domestic responsibilities and ability to cope with the job. The study hoped to establish on the basis of the women studied, the extent to which shiftwork is a satisfactory arrangement for married women, and the effect it has within the home.

a) The definition of shiftwork:

The term "shiftwork" covers a number of different systems of working, and since the enquiry would have to be limited in scope, it was decided that the type of shiftwork to be included in the study should be restricted.

Basically shiftwork is some system whereby more than one set of workers are used to make up one working day, but the length of the day, and the way in which it is made up, can vary considerably.

Use has been made of part time workers in shifts in order to make up a working day, but it was decided that part time workers should be excluded from the study.

When it comes to combining the responsibilities of both home and work, the situation in which a woman is out of the house for a few hours at the same time each day is very different from that of a woman who works full-time alternating shifts.

The type of full time shift work most commonly worked by women is the two-shift or double day-shift system. The 1947 Report of the Committee on Double Day-Shift Working, describes this as a system using two sets of operatives to achieve one working day. The hours usually

worked are

6 a.m.	-	2 p.m.
2 p.m.	-	10 p.m.

from Monday to Friday, and 6 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Saturdays. These shifts may or may not alternate weekly, and there are a great number of individual variations on this basic pattern.¹ The hours closest to

1. See Report of the Committee on Double Day-Shift Working 1947. Cmd 7147

these, mentioned in the report, will be found in firms regulated by factory legislation, as their hours cannot legally be exceeded.

Having excluded part time workers, it was decided to look for firms whose systems approximated to this type of shiftworking, but with shifts that alternated, as this makes a major difference between shift, and day work. *There are three main reasons why a firm should adopt a shift system:*

- a) To meet temporary exceptional circumstances.
- b) To provide an essential service, which by its nature must be available for a period longer than a normal working day.
- c) When shorter working hours, and high overhead and capital costs make it uneconomic to run machines for so short a period as a normal working day.

The original plan, in order to find a concern where shiftwork was essential, was to find a firm that was providing an extended service. After such a firm had been chosen, however, it was thought that the study should be extended. At first it was hoped that a second firm might be found with shiftworkers of a different social class, but as it turned out, it was not possible to find a suitable firm where interviews could be arranged, and so one which worked shifts from economic considerations was selected.

b) The Firms:

The first firm to be chosen was a large passenger transport organisation employing a considerable number of women on shiftwork. The firm provided an essential public service which had to be maintained beyond the extent of a normal day.

The second firm was a sugar refining concern with women employed on shiftwork in certain departments, and with an adequate number for sampling purposes.

1). Passenger Transport

This Organisation provides road and rail passenger services over a wide area, and has to cope with two heavy peak periods daily. It is spread in small operating units united in administrative districts under centralised control.

In September 1960 the firm employed 10,585 women of whom 2,282 were clerical, and the rest shift workers (there was a small minority of day working supervisors, and part time workers). The shift workers were concentrated into three main groups.

Number of Shiftworkers Table 1

Occupation	Full Time	Part Time
Women Conductors	5225	-
Stationwomen	1050	-
Catering Staff	1000	313
Total	7275	313

The conductors formed the largest group, and all these were full-time shift-workers. Station staff were a substantial group, but on the advice of the managerial staff they were excluded from the study, as their turnover was so high that detailed records were not kept for them and sampling would have been difficult. The majority of the catering staff were canteen assistants, with a smaller group of miscellaneous employees.

It was therefore decided that bus conductresses should form the main body of the sample, but that a smaller group of catering assistants should be included. Arrangements were made to interview approximately 100 conductresses, and 50 catering assistants.

Conductresses:

The 5,225 women conductors were employed in 75 garages spread over the area, and divided into three roughly equal administrative regions. In order to simplify the administration of the sample and to reduce the time spent in travelling, the Chief Medical Officer chose one region, and the interviews were confined to this area. Within the chosen division 1,523 women were employed in 25 garages; from these, 6 garages were selected on the grounds of location and the prospect of local union co-operation, as it was not thought that anything would be gained by having the sample spread over the whole area. The number of women employed in these six garages varied from 34 to 96; the total number was 433, of whom 233 were married.

The hours of work were divided basically into early, middle or late shifts, but owing to the nature of the service provided, these had to be arranged so that the duties were both spread over the day and night, and were concentrated on peak periods. As a result of this, the shifts were relatively flexible, and the women started and finished at different times throughout the day.

The shifts changed weekly but were organised in an eleven day fortnight consisting of a five day week with two days off, and a six day week with one day off. The working day was 7 hours 40 minutes, but could be extended up to 8 hours 15 minutes. In order to cope with peak hour

traffic the spreadover shift was used. This was a split shift by which a break of up to four hours could be inserted into the working day, although most of the breaks were, in fact, shorter than this. A 40 minute meal break was allowed. Overtime was usually available, and a common method was to work on a rest day.

Women were employed on night work, but not all garages ran night services. Only one of the women interviewed was working at night, on a duty that came up for one week every ten months. Night work was not mentioned by any of the other women.

Although the organisation of the shifts seems complex, for the individuals concerned it can be quite simple as they have a rota of alternating shifts, early, middle or late, spread over a number of weeks, which they work through, and the pattern of their work is more regular than the general picture might suggest.

Catering Assistants:

The catering assistants worked in canteens in the bus garages. Shiftwork was necessary for the operation of the canteens, as they provide meals for the shiftworking bus crews. The canteens were divided into four administrative regions, and as with the bus conductors one region was selected, and the interviews confined to this area. The region contained 29 canteens which between them employed 216 catering workers.

The hours worked in each canteen varied according to the routes served, but they approximated much more closely to the double day-shift

model than those of the conductresses. With individual divergences the basic hours worked were 6.30 a.m. - 3.10 p.m.
1.20 p.m. - 10.0 p.m.

In some cases a middle shift from 8.00 - 4.40 p.m. was worked. The shifts changed every week.

The shifts were organised in an eleven day fortnight, in the same way as for the bus conductresses, and the working days are 8 hours and 40 minutes, including a 40 minute meal break.

2). Sugar Refining:

At first the firm offered one factory from which shiftworkers could be interviewed, but as their numbers proved to be rather small, a neighbouring branch of the same firm was used, and it was decided to divide the interviews equally between them.

Factory A:

This refinery is situated on a relatively isolated island in the docks, cut off from its main areas of recruitment on the one hand by the river, which must be crossed by ferry or pedestrian tunnel, and on the other by three roads, two of which are cut by swing bridges. This creates considerable problems of recruitment, and according to the personnel officer has meant that young workers are less employed here than in the other factory which is more accessible.

In June 1961 the refinery employed 535 women of whom 111 were shiftworkers. With the exception of 8 canteen workers and cloakroom attendants who were excluded from the study, all the shiftworkers were employed in two sugar packing departments. The total number of women

in these departments was 103 of whom 73 were married, and 50 of these were to be interviewed.

The hours worked were arranged in a five day week, consisting of five eight hour shifts. There was a half hour meal break in the first half of each shift, and a fifteen minute rest period in the second. The hours from Monday to Friday were those mentioned in the 1947 Committee's report,

6 a.m. - 2 p.m.

2 p.m. - 10 p.m.

with the shifts alternating weekly. Twelve or thirteen Saturdays a year were worked from 6 a.m. - 10 a.m. but otherwise there was no weekend working.

Factory B:

This refinery is situated on the edge of the dock region, and is much nearer its main areas of recruitment than Factory A.

In June 1961 577 women were employed at the refinery, of whom 200 were on shiftwork, a rather higher proportion than in the other factory, but as a large number of young workers were employed, only 97 of them were married. All married women were put to work in the same department, except for those in catering and cleaning jobs.

The hours were slightly different from those in Factory A. The shifts were in five day weeks 6.30 - 2.0 p.m.

or 2.00 - 9.15 p.m.

with a paid meal break of half an hour. Twelve or thirteen Saturdays a year were worked from 6.30 - 12.00 p.m.

The hours of the factory workers approximate closely to the definition

of double day-shift work given in the 1947 report. The canteen workers, while their hours are not so rigidly limited by legislation, have a shift system that is basically double day-shift work; their middle shift is merely a variation on this pattern. The staggered hours of the bus conductresses do not resemble this system so closely, but since they come nearer to double day-shift work than to any other shift system, it was felt that they could reasonably be included in the study.

c) Choice of Sample:

Because of the way that the women who were to be interviewed were distributed, four separate samples were planned, comprising 100 bus conductresses, 50 canteen workers, and 50 women each from factories A and B. This would give a total of approximately 250 interviews.

Bus Conductresses

With trade union agreement at the local level, lists were taken from the six selected garages, of the names and ages of all the married women in each garage.

As roughly 100 women were wanted, and the chosen garages contained 233 married women, it was decided to select half of them, by the following method. For each garage in turn, the women were divided into 5 year age groups and listed alphabetically within the group; this stratification was used to reduce sampling error. The women in each age group were given a number, and corresponding numbered pieces of paper were shaken in a hat; half of them were drawn out and the women whose numbers were selected in this way were listed for interview. Where an age group contained an uneven number of names, the half figure was corrected. By this means, 120 conductresses were chosen for interview.

The women who resigned, refused, or were transferred, between the time when the sample was selected, and the time when interviewing started were replaced by substitutes drawn from the same age groups. In this way it was hoped to start with a balanced sample. Those who resigned or withdrew after the interviewing had started were not replaced. In all 12 substitutes were used, and 11 women were not replaced.

Catering Assistants.

This was intended to be a sample of approximately 50 canteen workers, but in the event a sample was not taken. By restricting the interviews to one region, the population had been reduced to 216 women. Although no official figures are published of the numbers of West Indians employed, it was known that the majority of these 216 women would be West Indians. This raised a problem since the numbers of West Indians in the other samples were known to be very low, and ^{if} significant differences were found in the organisation of West Indian family life, it was felt that the groups would not be comparable. Since it was felt that these differences were likely to arise it was considered preferable to exclude them from the group altogether.

After the exclusion of West Indians, part time workers, and five canteens whose members belonged to a separate trade union, only 49 women were left, and as 50 women were needed, these women were all interviewed.

The Factories.

In both factories a list of the married women with their ages was obtained, and a proportion of them selected to give two samples of approximately 50 women each, by the methods described above. In factory A,

instead of selecting substitutes as they were needed, a list of ten extra names was picked at the request of the personnel officer, and was used to replace those who withdrew from the original sample. In each factory 7 substitutes were used.

d) The Interview:

Although interviews in the women's homes might have been more fruitful than interviews at work, it was thought that interviews at work should produce sufficient data for the study, and the saving in time and travelling would mean that more women could be interviewed, within the period available. The chief disadvantages of interviewing at work were the necessity of working to a time table for the benefit of the managerial staff and supervisors, and the formality which surrounds an interview in an office as opposed to one in the home. The majority of women were prepared to talk freely, but a number were noticeably frightened or suspicious by being asked questions about their homes while they were at work. All the women concerned were notified in advance that they would be interviewed, but not all of them realised what the study was about, or that the interviews were voluntary. Because of this, each interview was prefaced with an explanation of the purposes of the study, and an assurance that it was confidential; any questions that the women had were answered, and these steps were usually sufficient to ensure co-operation. It was decided that a formal interview with a set questionnaire would have to be used in order to standardise the results of the study, but as there would be only one interviewer, the questions, and particularly the order, could be fairly flexible to give the interview as informal an atmosphere as possible.

The questionnaire was planned in three sections, to try to discover which types of women were working on shifts, what effects shiftwork had within their homes, in relation to their domestic responsibilities, and what their attitudes to shiftwork were. A pilot study was carried out among 12 canteen assistants from an area not included in the study, and the questions were arranged in the order that seemed to follow most naturally.

e) The Completed Questionnaires:

With the use of 26 substitutes the questionnaires were completed, and the samples are set out in Table 2.

Size of the samples Table 2

Sample	Number completed	Number not interviewed			Substitutes
		sick	resigned	refused	
Canteen	46	1	1	1	-
Buses	109	12	7	4	12
Factory A	47	6	-	1	7
Factory B	50	5	2	-	7
Total	252	20	10	6	26

There was one woman in the Factory A sample who turned out to be an unmarried mother, but who was not replaced as it was felt that since the interviews were confidential a reason for wanting a substitute could not be given.

Except in the bus group, all the women who had been selected were seen privately, whether they wished to be interviewed or not, and as a rule, those who were unwilling at first did allow themselves to be

interviewed. The two refusals in these 3 groups came from women who said that they never answered "personal questions" but in both cases there had been recent incidents at work that had made them unwilling to co-operate. The four refusals in the bus group came from women who were asked to co-operate by their union representatives. These women were not seen at all but were understood to have refused on the grounds that their husbands objected, or because they did not want to discuss anything relating to their marriages. It was felt that if they could have been seen probably not all of them would have refused, as the women on the whole were prepared to discuss their lives even when these were not happy. Even with these 4 refusals the total number did not seem to be large enough to be significant.

The proportion of the women who were living in the same households as their husbands varied between the samples. The canteen group had a high proportion of widows, 43% of the total, and a quarter of the women in the bus group were separated or divorced, so that the number of "married" women in these groups was correspondingly reduced. In order to differentiate between these groups the term "married" will be applied to those women in the sample who were living with their husbands, and "separated" to the separated, divorced and widowed women.

Marital Composition of Samples Table 3.

Sample	Married		Separated		Total	Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Canteen	17	38	29	62	46	100
Buses	73	67	36	33	109	100
Factory A	37	79	10	21	47	100
Factory B	44	88	6	12	50	100
Total	171	68	81	32	252	100

The numbers of separated women apart, a total of 171 married women, 68% of the total, remains.

f) Defects:

1. There were several weaknesses in the samples, but the most serious is the fact that the canteen women who were interviewed were not selected by sampling methods. The exclusion of the West Indians from the population was an arbitrary one, and the restriction of the interviews to one area, although necessary, was also arbitrary. The group has not been excluded from the study, however, since it was felt that the material that had been collected could be of some value, and as far as could be judged, the group was representative of the white canteen workers in this firm. The high proportion of separated and widowed women, and the fact that their average age is much higher than in the other groups can, I think, be explained by the fact that most of these women have taken up work, or have had to become self supporting in middle life, and have had to find unskilled work that they could do adequately. Shift jobs carry higher wages than day work, and catering work involves a type of work with which women are familiar. Besides this the firm was prepared to accept women at older ages than many other firms. It is not easy to find staff for canteens, but even in a time of full employment there may be categories of workers who find difficulty in getting jobs, and West Indians, and middle aged unskilled women both come into this category.
2. A small problem in sampling was that while West Indians were excluded from the canteen sample, they could not be excluded from the other groups, as any appearance of racial discrimination had to be avoided. In fact

only 12 West Indians were included in the other samples, so the number was not large enough to form a distinctive group.

3. The method of substitution was not consistent, since although the substitutes were selected by the same means in all the groups, in the bus sample, eleven women were not replaced. No method of substitution is completely satisfactory, but it was thought that some method should be used in order to prevent the samples becoming too small. New substitutes were not used in the bus sample once interviewing had started because of the difficulties of organising the interviews to fit in with duty rotas.

4. The selection of a single area for the interviews of bus workers was arbitrary, but it was felt that for such a small study, with only one interviewer, it was important to keep the time spent on travelling to a minimum. From the firm's point of view more than one area would have entailed a great deal of work.

5. Splitting the survey into groups was unfortunate in that it has meant that in breaking down the figures for analysis sub-groups are reduced to very small numbers. In order to compare the groups these numbers have frequently been expressed as percentages, but where the totals are small these percentages should be treated with caution, as they are apt to be deceptive.

6. No control group of non-shiftworkers was taken in order to compare the two groups, as it was felt that since the study would be small, it would be more helpful to find common factors relating to shiftwork, which could be compared with what is already known about married women's work in general, than to duplicate work which has already been done in this field.

It was not known whether shiftworkers would have features as a group that would distinguish them from other married women workers. A study was therefore made of certain of the shiftworkers' characteristics, to see what their households had in common, how their ages were distributed, and how their incomes compared with those of other married women workers.

1. Household Composition

If a married woman is working, she presents a specific problem to her employer, because she is assumed to have certain domestic responsibilities. In fact of course, these responsibilities vary with individual circumstances. One of the main variants is not so much in the number of people for whom the married worker is making a home, but in the relation of these people to her. A household can be made up of people outside the biological unit of parents and children, and as a result there is considerable variety in the complexity and type of households. Women who share their households with relatives are in a very different position from women with young children. In the same way, those who have relatives living nearby on whom they can depend for help, are differently situated from those whose relatives are far away. Even where households consist of parents and children alone, variation in the number and ages of the children can create families of different types.

The shiftworkers in the samples were distributed between households that varied both in their size and composition, and the nature of this variation has been studied to show the extent of the women's domestic responsibilities.

a) The Number of People

It was expected that shiftworking women would tend to have small families since it was thought that the hours they worked would make the day to day running of large households very difficult. The problems of having a daily routine different from that of the rest of the household, would be likely to discourage all but those with small households from taking up shiftwork.

The samples did, in fact, consist mainly of small families, but there was some variation in the size and type of these households.

Size of Households % Table 4

Sample	No. of People besides Self				Other H.Holds %	Total %	Total Nos.
	One %	Two %	Three %	More %			
Canteens	59	29	6	6	-	100	17
Buses	37	30	16	16	3	100	73
Factory A	41	16	30	13	-	100	37
Factory B	25	16	34	18	7	100	44
Total	37	23	23	14	3	100	171

The category 'Other households' is made up of women who live with their relations, so that they cannot be said to have a household of their own.

The tendency is clearly towards small families, but while those of the Transport workers were mostly very small those of the factory workers were more divided. The distribution becomes clearer if the table is compressed into two categories.

Size of Households %Table 5

Sample	No. of People Besides Self		Other H.Holds %	Total %	Total Nos.
	One or Two %	Three or More %			
Canteens	88	12	-	100	17
Buses	67	30	3	100	73
Factory A	57	43	-	100	37
Factory B	41	52	7	100	44
Total	60	37	3	100	171

Except in the Factory B sample, the majority of families consisted of the shiftworker and one or two others, but the factory samples had ^a larger proportion of families with three or more others, and this can probably be linked to the differences in the hours of the two samples. The shifts of the transport workers are more varied and extensive than those of the factory workers, whose hours are confined by law, and who do not work at weekends. The factory shifts are therefore less inconvenient from the point of view of the married woman.

The women could be divided into households of different types, those who lived alone with their husbands, those who had husbands and dependent children, and those who had husbands and other adults.

Type of Household %Table 6

Sample	Husband Only %	Children %	Adults %	Total %	Total Nos.
Canteens	59	12	29	100	17
Buses	37	48	15	100	73
Factory A	41	44	15	100	37
Factory B	25	50	25	100	44
Total	37	43*	20	100	171

* 9 of these households included adults, 26 included older children.

A comparatively large proportion of women live alone with their husbands, a total of more than a third. Added to the proportion who live with other adults, this includes the majority of all groups except Factory B. The remaining proportion of women, those with dependant children, might have been expected to be relatively small, since the inconveniences of shiftwork ~~were~~ ^{were} likely to be greatest when the need to look after younger children was involved.

b) Children:

The table above shows that 43% of the women had dependent children, but this figure is lower than it might be because owing to the age structure of the canteen group; there were only two women with children of school age in this group. If the canteen assistants are therefore excluded, the proportion of women with dependent children rises to 47%. If this figure is compared with the proportion of women with children in the study of working wives made by Viola Klein,¹ there is the basis for a rough assessment against national figures. Of the 250 working women in Viola Klein's sample 53% had dependent children, and as not all these women were working full time, the 47% of the shiftworking women with children is a higher proportion than might have been expected in the circumstances. However the number of children is not very high, and they are distributed in fairly small families.

1. See Viola Klein Working Wives. Institute of Personnel Management Occasional Papers No. 15. 1960.

Households with Children % Table 7

Sample	One %	Two %	Three %	More %	Total %	Total No.
Buses	71	20	6	2	100	34
Factory A	62	13	25	-	100	16
Factory B	45	50	5	-	100	22
Total	62	27	10	1	100	72

The canteen group has been excluded as there are only two children in it. Women in the factory samples tended to have larger families than women in the bus group, but in all the groups the number of women with large families was small. Though 25% of the Factory A group had three children, the percentage is deceptive owing to the small numbers, and there are only four women in this group.

As the women in the factory samples, had rather larger families, with slightly more dependent children than the women in the bus group, it might be assumed that they would also have had a fair proportion of the younger children in the sample. This, however, was not so. Owing to the fact that a number of the factory women had waited to come out to work until after they considered their children old enough to be left, more women in the bus sample had young children, but the number of young children in all groups was low.

Age of Children % Table 8

Sample	Under 5 %	5-10 %	11-15 %	Total %	Total No.
Buses	16	27	57	100	51
Factory A	12	23	65	100	26
Factory B	11	25	64	100	36
Total	13	25	62	100	113

Both the children in the canteen sample were in the 11-15 group. The table shows the proportion of children from each sample, in three main age groups. The majority are eleven or over, and the number under five is small, but more than a third of the 115 children are under eleven, so that some at least of the women had to cope with the problems of combining their work with the care of young children.

c) Number of Persons - Separated Women

The separated and widowed women did not have a home in the same sense as the married women in the sample, but they were not altogether without domestic responsibilities, although these were considerably less in proportion to their numbers than those of the married women. 24% of them had dependent children at home, 41% other children or adults, and the remaining 35% lived alone. Therefore only a relatively small number had households for which they were directly responsible. The households were very small; 41% of them consisted of the shiftworker and one other, 15% lived in other households, and only 9% had households consisting of the shiftworker and more than one other.

d) Children - Separated Women

While the dependent children were few in number, those women who did have them tended to have rather younger children, in proportion to their numbers, than the married women. Although the problem was a small one a minority of women were faced with having to provide for the care of young children without the help of their husbands.

Numbers of ChildrenTable 9

Sample	-5	5-10	11-15	Total
Canteen	-	-	1	1
Buses	2	4	7	13
Factories	2	2	1	5
Total	4	6	9	19

The 19 children were distributed between 13 households so that the number of women who are involved is not large.

e) School Children away from Home.

There were 18 children not at home either of school age or under who did not live at home. Only six of these were the children of married women. One of these was at a special school for handicapped children; one West Indian woman had left two children with relatives in Jamaica; one woman with a child of her own had just married a widower with two children and had left the children with relatives until they could be rehoused.

The other children were the offspring of separated or widowed women. One was in a special school, four in Ireland with relatives, three in Jamaica with relatives, three in a boarding convent, and one was left with a childminder from Monday to Friday. With the exception of the two women whose children were at special schools, and the one whose children were temporarily with relatives, all these women were either Irish or West Indians. Because of the hours they worked they could not manage to keep young children with them, and had no relatives living nearby to whom they could turn. These women were working on shifts because they

needed the money, but with little hope of being able to have their children home in the near future.

This was a very small number from the total interviewed, but it shows that the difficulty for a woman with young children who wants to take up shiftwork, will be in arranging for the care of her children outside the period catered for by schools and day nurseries.

f) Childless Women

The childless women can be divided into women whose children are away from home, and those who are without children. There were 24 women who had adult children away from home, and 52 women were childless.

Thirty eight of the childless women were over thirty and had been married for more than five years, so it was unlikely that they were working for a short while before starting their families. Of the 14 who were under thirty, 10 had been working shifts when they got married, and had continued after marriage. It was therefore probable that some of these women would give up shiftwork in order to start their families within a few years.

The numbers of childless separated women were much greater, and resulted in the large proportion of separated women who lived alone.

Summary

The married women were on the whole catering for fairly small families, with 37% catering solely for themselves and their husbands. Those women who did have children tended to have one or two children over the age of eleven. The samples differed to some extent, however, with the factory

samples containing more children in rather larger families, and the bus workers characterised by fewer and younger children. The canteen group consisted of small households with a few older children. The separated women had less domestic responsibility than the married women, but a minority had dependent children.

A number of women had older children or relatives living in their households, and a minority had other relatives living nearby.

2. Age:

Analysis of the ages at which married women are found to be working is of great value in examining the situation of married women in the labour market. While the numbers of married women at work have expanded greatly in recent years, the increases have been most noticeable in certain age groups. According to the Ministry of Labour Gazette for June, 1961, 52% of the women at work were married, but married women formed 75% of the 35-44 age group.

The ages at which women work are related to both the general pattern of their lives after marriage, and the reasons they have for working. The age distribution of the shiftworkers was therefore studied in order to see how it compared with the national pattern.

a) Age Distribution:

The age distribution of the married women varied between the samples, but the largest number came between the ages of 36 and 45. On a national level, this is roughly the group in which the percentage of married women against single women is highest.

Age Distribution of Married Women %Table 10

Sample	-25 %	25-30 %	31-35 %	36-40 %	41-45 %	46-50 %	51-55 %	56-60 %	Over 60 %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	-	-	6	-	-	12	29	29	24	100	17
Buses	11	15	14	15	26	11	7	1	-	100	73
Factory A	-	3	11	32	14	19	5	16	-	100	37
Factory B	9	9	21	16	18	9	11	7	-	100	44
Total	7	9	14	18	19	12	10	9	2	100	171

In the canteen sample, apart from the one woman in her thirties, the women were very much older as a group than in the other samples. The lack of younger women in the group was due, at least in part, to the way in which the group was selected, and also to the type of work they were doing. The firm found it difficult to get recruits for canteen work, and owing to the nature of the work was prepared to take on middle aged women with no previous experience, who might be considered too old to start a factory job.

The bus workers had a rather higher proportion of younger married women than the factory samples, with a peak in the early forties.

The Factory A sample had its highest proportion of women between the ages of thirty six and forty. There were also a relatively large number in the forty six to fifty range, and a much higher percentage over fifty five than in either of the other two main samples.

The Factory B group tended rather in the opposite direction, with its highest proportion of women in their early thirties but a fair number in their later thirties and early forties. The three larger samples taken together follow the general pattern of age distribution for married women workers at the present time. The bus workers and the Factory B group each

had 55% of their members between the ages of 31 and 45, and the Factory A sample 57%.

The separated and widowed women presented a rather different picture. The factory workers had an age distribution not unlike that of the married women, but their numbers were small in comparison with the much larger groups from the bus and canteen samples.

Age Distribution of Separated Women % Table 11

Sample	-25 %	26-30 %	31-35 %	36-40 %	41-45 %	46-50 %	51-55 %	56-60 %	Over 60 %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	-	-	-	3	-	14	17	45	21	100	29
Buses	3	14	16	11	11	39	6	-	-	100	36
Factories	19	6	-	19	19	12	6	19	-	100	16
Total	5	7	7	10	9	25	10	20	7	100	81

In general the separated women were older than the married women, and this, as might be expected, was especially marked among the widows. The age groups in which the largest numbers were found were higher than those for married women in general in the population.

b) Number of Years since Marriage:

The length of time that the married women had been married was taken into consideration in order to see whether most of the women had been married for some time, or whether they had married more recently. It was thought that this analysis would distinguish between the women who had remained at work after marriage, and those who were more likely to have returned to the field of employment after a period at home.

Years since Marriage %Table 12

Sample	Under 5 %	5 - 10 %	11 - 19 %	20 & Over %	Not Known %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	6	-	-	94	-	100	17
Buses	16	15	30	35	4	100	73
Factory A	3	5	30	57	5	100	37
Factory B	16	5	25	52	-	100	44
Total	12	9	26	50	3	100	171

In the factory samples 87% and 77% of the women had been married for more than 10 years, and more than half of them for more than 20 years. In the bus group the proportions of women in these categories were lower. 65% of the bus workers had been married for more than 10 years, and only just over a third of them for more than 20 years. This seems to indicate that the bus group comprised both women who had gone on working after marriage, and women who had been married for some time, and might have had a period as housewives. The women in the factory samples, however, were predominately in the latter group. Taking the samples together, the proportion of those who had been married for less than five years, and who therefore might be likely to leave employment in order to start a family, was low.

Summary

While there were variations between the samples, the age distribution of the married women did bear some resemblance to the national pattern. 37% of the shiftworkers, however, were in the 36-45 age group, as compared with 28% of the married women given in the Ministry of Labour Gazette who were in the corresponding group. As a result, the shiftworkers

had a smaller proportion of women in the upper age groups.

On the whole the women were working after some years of marriage, and few of them had been married for a relatively short period.

3. Income

Whatever the reasons married women may have for working, the wages that they earn must be important to them with regard both to the incentive to work, and to their choice of a job. One of the ways in which shiftworkers differ from dayworkers is in their wages. According to F.P. Cook, "the appeal of shiftwork to employees depends largely on how attractive it is made financially",¹ and it is customary for firms to pay shift allowances, in order to compensate for the supposed disadvantages of shiftworking. Whether or not married women are attracted to shiftwork by these allowances, they do benefit by them.

A comparison was made between the wages of the women who were interviewed, and what is known of national wages rates, in order to see how the shiftworkers were situated in relation to other working women.

The problem of comparing actual net income from an examination of average wage rates is not always a straight forward task. Time lost, overtime rates, and different rates for different processes mean that not only may individual earnings fluctuate from week to week, but that an average assessment may conceal the extent and causes of these fluctuations.

1. See F.P. Cook Shift Work Institute of Personnel Management Broadsheet 1954.

The Ministry of Labour Gazette for April 1961 published figures for average earnings of manual workers in October 1960. If these figures are compared with the range of earnings of the women interviewed, a rough idea can be obtained of how these wages compare with the national situation.

According to the Gazette figures for women over 18 in manufacturing industries, 94.87% earned under £11 per week, and of all women over 18, 82.6% earned between £5 and £10 per week.

Figures given for hours and earnings in the Gazette for August 1961, covered April of that year, roughly the period when the interviewing started. Average earnings in sugar manufacture were £8 15 10, and the average hours worked per week 51.2. Road passenger transport (excluding the London Transport Executive) paid women an average of £11 9 0 for a 59 hour week. (The catering industry was not covered).

a) Bus Conductresses:

The women conductors worked the same hours as the men and received equal pay. This fact together with the extra allowances they received for working shift hours made their basic earnings rather higher than the national average for women.

The conductor's basic rate at the time of the interviews was £10 16 0 rising after a six month probationary period to £11 1 0 and after a year to £11 6 0. In fact actual earnings varied considerably, and it is probable that women on the whole took home rather less than men as they were usually less interested in doing overtime. Besides overtime rates, there was extra pay for early starting, and for late finishing,

for working on Sundays and public holidays, for night work and for standing-by time. (Standing-by time is a break in a shift exceeding the time allowed for the meal break). As a result, average earnings were about £1 above the standard rates, but with considerable variations between individuals. In one garage the earnings of the sampled women were taken in the week in which they were interviewed. The gross wage varied between £10 10 4 and £20 8 11, with a net average of £12 4 4, and this probably gives a fair picture of the overall situation.

The hours that they worked were arranged in fortnights of eleven days, not exceeding 81 hours 30 minutes, so that the working week was less than 41 hours. These figures compare very favourably with the national averages, since they put the bus workers in the top section of women workers with regard to earnings; this should be remembered in considering the impact of shiftwork on the women's homes.

b) Factory Workers:

The women working in the factories earned differing amounts according to the processes with which they were concerned, but as their hours were strictly limited by law, and there was very little overtime working, their earnings did not fluctuate like those of the bus conductresses.

There were three different rates in operation at each factory but these were not identical as they covered various processes of production and packing. Each rate included a shift allowance of 17/6 a week.

	<u>Factory A</u>		<u>Factory B</u>
Basic	£8 10 5	Basic	£8 10 4
Middle	£9 5 1	Middle	£8 15 1
Top	£9 9 3	Top	£9 5 1

There was no piece work, but after six months the workers were rated on their job, and given the appropriate rate of pay, after which their pay could rise, but could not be downgraded. The women in both factories worked less than 40 hours a week.

The women in the factories were not as well paid as the bus workers, but they were in the upper bracket of the national range of women's earnings, and while their basic rates were not higher than the average for the sugar industry as a whole, the hours they worked were very much shorter. In respect of the length of time that they are out of the house, and the return that they get for it, these women are relatively well off by working shifts.

c) Canteen Assistants:

The hours of canteen workers were not limited as in the factories, but they were not as varied as those of the conductresses, and there was not the same need for overtime working. Overtime rates were, however, paid for working on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and public holidays.

There were two grades of catering assistant, but all the women who were interviewed were in the senior grade, which with a shift allowance of 9/2 a week carried a wage of £6 6 8. The average working week was 44 hours, so that these women were much worse off than the women in the other samples. Their situation does not compare so favourably with the

national figures, but they were better off simply in terms of wages and hours than they would have been if they had been working on fulltime daywork in the same industry.

Summary

Apart from the women in the canteen samples, the shiftworkers were well paid in comparison with other women workers. In all the samples, the combination of higher wages, and shorter hours than the women could have obtained by comparable day work must have given shiftwork an attraction daywork could not possess.

These conditions constitute a powerful incentive to do this work, a factor which might pull in the opposite direction from any disadvantages that the shift hours could bring.

The increases in the numbers of married women in the field of employment have already been discussed. Since we live in a society where married women are working, not so much from necessity, as from a desire to raise family standards of living, it was important to discover why the shiftworkers came out to work. The separated and widowed women in the samples were obviously working from necessity, but in order to understand the effects of shiftwork on the home, it was necessary to know the reasons that led the married women to take a job, and further, the reasons for their choice of shiftwork.

a) Social forces:

It is not a simple matter to disentangle the motives that are operative when a woman takes up shiftwork. Almost all the women were prepared to discuss why they were at work, and how they came to take a shift job, but a fair number of them gave as reasons what were obviously rationalisations from their experience of shiftwork. For example, several women said that they took a shift job because they could manage more easily as housewives if they worked shift hours, but it would emerge during the interview that they had taken the job for some other reason, or through indifference, and discovered the advantages afterwards. At the same time it is still possible to deduce from the information collected in the interviews, something of the forces that lead married women to work, and more specifically, to work on shifts. It is important however to bear in mind the type of

social attitudes by which these women were influenced, as they were well aware of the publicity that the whole question of married women's work has attracted in the last few years. At the same time, the changes in the field of married women's employment, have increased their opportunities of working.

One of the most striking comments that occurred in all samples, was that women had to work because their husbands did not earn "enough". This is plainly not a matter that can be decided by objective criteria, and judging by the variation in the husbands' incomes that were quoted as being insufficient for decent living, the crucial factor is not available income, but the influences affecting material expectations. The women who complained that they had to work, were working in order to provide their families with a higher standard of living. One woman said that she usually worked for a few months at a time, when she wanted something specific for the house, but for the majority, working was a more serious business than this.

There was a marked difference between the factory samples and the bus workers on this question. The factory workers tended to feel that they had to work, "for the cost of living", while the bus workers, though they too felt the need to maintain "decent" standards, had a larger proportion who liked working.

b) Reasons for Working:

Bearing in mind that the women were aware of the fact that standards were rising, and that opportunities for married women in the field of employment were expanding, the reasons that they gave for coming out

to work can give some indication of why they had entered the labour market after marriage.

Reasons for working % Table 13.

Sample	Main Income %	Extras %	Specific Object %	Interest %	Husband's Wage inad. %	Total No. of Women.
Canteen	18	70	24	29	18	17
Buses	9	78	32	19	12	73
Factory A	5	91	22	14	28	37
Factory B	6	73	13	9	27	44
Total	7	75	24	14	20	171

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some women are included in more than one category.

Although in general the women who said that they had to work were not compelled by necessity, there was a small number of women who were providing the main, or sole source of income for their household. The majority of them worked because their husband was either an invalid or disabled, but a few in the bus sample were working because their husband would not support them, or they wanted to be independent of him. 19 women in the factories complained, not of the inadequacy of their husband's income, but of its irregularity. These were the wives either of dockers, or of men employed in the motor industry, and they worked because of their fear of strikes. By this they ensured that

when their husband was not working some money was coming in, and when he was working, they had money that could go towards "extras".

The largest number of women were those who said that they worked not because they had to, but in order to provide "extras" for themselves and their families. These women were usually making an effort to keep pace with a changing order of things, "to keep up with the cost of living", "to give the kiddies things we never had", "to get nice things for the house, and give the children a better chance". While most of the women gave the provision of "extras" as a reason for working, many of them appear in other categories as well.

A smaller number of women came out to work with a specific aim in view. In most cases this aim was to buy their own house, and the women would devote most of their earnings towards this, but some women were supporting relatives, or had other specific objects in mind. In a few cases women had originally come out to work in order to save for a house, and had stayed at work after this aim was achieved in order to provide new furniture, and other equipment for their home.

The women who worked for interest were those who disliked being full time housewives and enjoyed having something to do outside their homes. With one or two exceptions they had all worked for most of their lives.

The women who thought that their husband's wage was inadequate have been recorded as a separate group.

c) Reasons for Choosing a Shift Job:

Once the women had decided to take a full time job, other factors

were operative in their decisions to take up shifts, rather than day work. They were therefore asked why they had taken their present job, in order to see how many of them had chosen shiftwork, and how many had taken the job for other reasons.

On the strength of the answers they gave, the women could be divided into four categories; those who chose shiftwork, those who were attracted by the higher pay that went with shiftwork, those who were interested in the job, and the rest who were indifferent.

Reasons for Choosing Shiftwork % Table 14.

Sample	Shifts %	Wages %	Interest %	Indiff %	Total No. of Women
Canteen	36	11	23	36	17
Buses	38	32	49	9	73
Factory A	70	8	14	24	37
Factory B	63	2	4	34	44
Total	51	19	25	22	171

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some women are included in more than one category.

The duplication in this table comes chiefly where women with some other reason for taking the job, were also attracted by the wages.

The relatively large numbers of factory workers who said that they chose to do shift work may be deceptive, but the other reasons for actively choosing the job, seem to be largely confined to the bus workers. In Factory B it was the policy of the firm to keep all the

married women in one department, As this was a shiftworking department, married women had the choice of doing shiftwork, or looking elsewhere, and in these circumstances, many decided to try shiftwork.

The 88 women who said that they had chosen shiftwork were asked to give the reason for their choice. 31 had had a personal preference for shiftwork, 26 made their choice because they could manage their homes and children more easily, and 23 had husbands who were shiftworkers. The remaining 8 women had been part time workers in the factories, and had chosen to do shift work when part time working had ceased, rather than find another job.

Although some women had a special reason for choosing shifts, the large number in this category probably indicates satisfaction with shiftwork, rather than an active choice.

d) Pattern of Work since Marriage:

The post war employment of married women tends to fall into a stereotyped pattern. A woman is likely to work for a short time after marriage, retire to become a full time housewife and mother for some years, and return to the labour market again, when her family responsibilities are diminished. It was felt that it would be valuable to see whether the shiftworkers conformed to this pattern, or whether they had worked for most of their married lives.

Since it would be very difficult to obtain an accurate picture of all their previous jobs, a rough idea was gathered of the proportion of the women's married lives that had been spent in working. The breaks in their working lives do not relate to an absolute number of years,

but to their relative length in each woman's life, and are divided into long and short breaks. The women who had worked all their married lives, and those for whom this was their first job since their marriage, were recorded separately.

Breaks in Working Life since Marriage % Table 15.

Sample	None %	Short %	Long %	First Job %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	6	17	53	24	100	17
Buses	56	26	12	6	100	73
Factory A	16	35	43	6	100	37
Factory B	13	18	57	12	100	44
Total	32	25	34	9	100	171

A broad difference between the bus workers and the factory samples emerges in table 15. 82% of the bus workers have worked for most, or all of their married lives, while only 51% of the women in factory A, and 31% in Factory B were in this category. The canteen workers with 23% are even lower, but this may be due to the way in which the group was selected.

These differences in the working lives of the two main groups confirms the impression gained from the interviews that while the factory B group is made up of women who mostly conform to the stereotyped pattern of work, the bus workers have spent most of their lives working, because they would rather do this than stay at home. The women in

factory A come somewhere between these two.

e) Length of Service:

The length of time for which the women had held their shift jobs was considered to be relevant to the question of why they were working. It was thought that if they had taken up shiftwork without having some good reason for doing so, this might show in relatively short service. Labour wastage among married woman was a problem keenly felt by the firms involved, but in fact relatively few very short service women were included in the samples. Those who were interviewed were therefore likely to be women who were sufficiently satisfied with shiftwork to hold their jobs for a number of years.

In spite of the numbers of bus workers who had been working for most of their married lives, the bus sample had a high proportion of the women with relatively short service. Factory A had a similar proportion, but in Factory B it was very much lower.

Length of Service in Years % Table 16

Sample	- 1 %	1 - 3 %	4 - 6 %	7 - 9 %	10 - 15 %	16 & Over %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	-	29	6	12	29	24	100	17
Buses	10	35	25	14	4	12	100	73
Factory A	19	28	4	28	19	2	100	37
Factory B	2	16	36	11	24	11	100	44
Total	9	28	22	16	15	11	100	171

The groups of years have been unequally divided in order to make

a clearer distribution of service lengths. The short service of under a year is recorded separately as this is the period when wastage is highest, the next period of three years is one in which wastage is still likely to be high, but after working for three years women are likely to stay longer.

The largest number of women is in the one to three year group, and the numbers decline as the length of service increases. The majority of women had been working for more than three years, but a minority had worked for a shorter term than this, and a number of them might well discontinue shiftworking.

The variations between the samples show that most of the bus workers are in the lower groupings with a peak in the one to three year group, while the factory workers are rather more widely spread. It is difficult to distinguish, on the basis of information collected in the interviews, between satisfaction with the job, and with the hours worked. All that can be said is that the hours of the bus workers are more varied and less convenient than those of the factory workers, and though their financial inducements to work shifts are greater, this may not be sufficient to keep them in shiftwork. Even if the women concerned like their work, a change in the claims made on them, outside their work, may result in their finding hours that are less demanding.

f) Previous Experience of Shiftwork:

With the exception of a small minority, all the women had had some experience of full time work since marriage. It was felt that one

explanation of their willingness to take up shift work might be that they had done it before, and were used to this system of working. They were therefore asked whether they had ever had a shift job before, either before or after marriage. But out of a total of 252 women, only 71 had had any previous experience of shiftwork.

Number with Previous Experience Table 17

Sample	Married	Separated	Total
Canteen	3	3	6
Buses	23	14	37
Factory A	13	5	18
Factory B	7	3	10
Total	46	25	71

Not only were the numbers of the women small, but 28 of them had had their only other shift job during the war. At that time the hours were longer, night work frequent, and conditions so different that the women concerned did not really consider that there was much in common, beyond the name, between this experience and the hours they were now working.

Most of the women had stayed in their previous shift jobs for a relatively short time, but a few had experienced longer service.

Length of Previous Service % Table 18

Sample	- 1 %	1 - 3 %	4 - 6 %	7 - 9 %	10 & Over %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	30	50	20	-	-	100	6
Buses	19	28	17	11	4	100	37
Factory A	11	56	22	11	-	100	18
Factory B	-	60	30	-	10	100	10
Total	18	45	23	10	4	100	71

The proportion who had held their job for more than ten years was very small, and only 26 women had had service of more than three years.

While a minority of the women in the samples were able to choose shift-work on the basis of past experience, their experience had not been very extensive. With two exceptions none of them had held more than one previous shift job. Not all the women had been married at the time of their previous shift jobs. 23 of them had been single, and 9 had taken shift jobs after becoming separated, divorced, or widowed.

The type of jobs which they had held before did not vary very much. Most of the women had been employed in factories, with others in passenger transport, catering and cleaning jobs. A few had been nurses or telephone operators.

While almost all the women who were interviewed had worked since their marriage in other jobs, few had been shiftworkers before, and for most of them the choice of their present job had had to be made without first hand knowledge of this type of working.

Summary

The married women in the samples were not, on the whole, working because they had to, but in order to raise their family standard of living. The women in the factory B sample followed fairly closely the pattern of work characteristic of the post-war married woman worker, and this was true, to a lesser extent, of the women in the other samples.

Few women had had any other experience of shiftwork, and, apart from those whose husbands were shiftworkers, they had little on which to base their choice of shiftwork. Less than half the women had been shiftworkers for more than six years.

In Britain today we have an industrial society in which most able bodied adults are expected to work for their living. While it is accepted that some jobs must continue round the clock, most jobs are organised on the basis of a recognised working day. The actual times of starting and finishing work may vary but the working of the country in general is geared to this day. Entertainment is concentrated in the evenings and weekends, meals have their accepted times, and passenger transport has to cope with daily rush hours when the public travels to and from work.

In a society organised in this way shiftworkers have two problems. In the first place, they have to work against the accepted national pattern, and, in addition, their lives may fall into a different routine from that of their families.

The married woman on double day-shift work will not necessarily be affected in the same ways as shiftworkers employed on other systems, but she is likely to have to eat, travel and take her leisure at different times from the majority of the community. While sleep may not seem to present any particular difficulties to the double day-shift worker, the subject was raised during the interviews, and has therefore been included in the discussion.

These aspects of shiftwork were therefore taken into consideration, in order to see what problems they presented to the married woman.

1. Leisure

a) The Nature of the Problem:

With regard to leisure the shiftworker's difficulty lies in the

fact that she may be working while others are free, and have her free time while others are working. This may affect her contacts both with the community in general, since organised entertainments are not arranged to fit in with the hours that she works, and with her own circle, if she is free, while her family and friends are occupied. Although double day-shift hours do not mean that the workers never have free time except when others are working, there is the danger that their leisure activities may be restricted and they may feel socially isolated by the hours they work.

In the interviews the women were asked how frequently they spent an evening out of the house as this was felt to be a fairly good indication of the amount of time that was spent in leisure activities at a time when they were not set apart from the majority. This however cannot be taken to be a comprehensive index of how the women spent their spare time. A more detailed analysis was not attempted as it was felt that in order to complete a full picture, the questionnaire would have to be expanded out of all proportion to the importance of this section. The women were asked in addition however, what they usually did if they had a free evening, in order to gain some impression of whether they were able to spend leisure time as they would like, or whether they felt that shift work restricted them in this respect.

b) How Leisure was Spent:

The problems of leisure were rather different for women in the bus and canteen samples than for the factory workers. The women in the transport firm work during weekends and public holidays, unless these

happen to coincide with their rest days, while the factory women do not work at weekends apart from 12 or 13 Saturday mornings a year. This means that the factory women have a certain period each week when their free time coincides with that of the majority, while for the transport workers this is a much rarer occurrence.

On the whole, the women were not aware that their leisure activities were restricted and those who felt cut off by the hours they worked were very few in number. Four of the bus workers and one woman in the Factory A sample complained that their social life was curtailed. Four of these women were childless, and the fifth had one child of 18. Two of them had married in their 40s and had found that they had lost most of their friends through working on shifts.

The rest of the women were fairly contented with the opportunities that they had for leisure activities or else attributed their lack of leisure time outside the home to other factors, such as their husband's ill health or the claims of their children. The women who said they usually stayed at home could be divided into two categories, those who stayed because they liked it, "for a bit of home life", "I love to stay in," "I stay in since we've had a home of our own," and those who found they couldn't get out very often, "I never have time to go out", or from a woman with young children, "I can't get out much". The women did not seem to be unduly worried by the fact, and did not blame it on shiftworking.

How Free Evenings were Spent % Table 19.

Sample	Stay in %	Friends %	Entertainmt %	Other %	Total No. of Women.
Canteens	82	24	24	18	17
Buses	72	45	32	7	73
Factory A	89	28	35	2	37
Factory B	88	12	40	4	44
Total	81	30	34	6	171

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some women are included in more than one category.

Several women come into more than one category, as they were not able to decide what they did most often. Table 19 seems to show that most of the women usually stayed in, but many of them went out from time to time. 52 women visited or entertained friends and 59 usually went out if they had a free evening. The types of entertainment did not vary very much. The cinema was the most popular form, but others included visits to the public house, excursions by car or motor cycle, and for a few, bingo, or watching football. The opportunities for these kinds of entertainment are greater for the factory women than for women in the bus group. Several factory workers mentioned that shiftwork enabled them to get their housework done during the week, leaving the weekend free to spend with their families, whereas when they had been dayworkers, they had tended to spend the weekends catching up with their housework. The categories included under 'other' cover the women who spent their free evenings either watching television, or in the garden

or allotment.

The frequency of evenings out were grouped in three main sections, to show those who had been out in the fortnight preceding the interview, those who had not been out in the last fortnight but who did go out from time to time, and those who said they never went out.

Frequency of Evenings Out % Table 20.

Sample	Last Frtnight %	Sometimes %	Never %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	42	29	29	100	17
Buses	72	25	3	100	73
Factory A	62	19	19	100	37
Factory B	73	7	20	100	44
Total	67	19	13	100	171

7 of the women in the Factory A sample, and 15 in the Factory B sample, said that if they did go out it was only at the weekend.

With the very few exceptions mentioned above the women seemed satisfied with the opportunities for leisure activities made possible by shiftwork. They tended to concentrate these activities into the weekends or their rest days and make use of free time during the week to get their chores done. A few women went out frequently during the week when they were on the early shift, "I go out every evening," "I'm never in", but few had serious interests outside the home, and only very few belonged to clubs. In general they were satisfied to spend their time at home, with an occasional evening out.

c) Leisure - Separated Women:

The separated women were much more concerned with the fear of social isolation than the married women. With the exception of the mothers of young children and some of the older women who never went out, they tried to go out or to visit friends when they had a free evening. Most of them had been out within the fortnight preceding the interviews and they spent their time in much the same ways as the married women.

Summary:

The real difference between the two groups was in their attitudes to leisure. While the married women tended to be satisfied at home, provided they had the occasional opportunity for an evening out, the separated women were much more anxious to engage in social activities. This seems to indicate that the married women did not regard the curtailment of leisure as a major problem, because they were married, rather than because they were shiftworkers.

2. Meals

a) The Nature of the Problem:

The customary meal times which are generally accepted in the community, give rise to specific problems for the shiftworker. Apart from the married woman's task of providing meals for her family, the shiftworker has to get her own meals at times other than recognised meal times, and to eat her meals at times which change each week.

There is a potential danger here, either that the irregularity will

become a strain on health, or that the women will not bother to prepare proper meals, and in both cases digestive disorders may result.

b) The Extent of the Problem:

In fact meals did not seem to present any problems to the women that they did not feel well able to cope with. Only six women complained that the irregular meals were a strain on their health and had led to digestive troubles. Of these three were separated and two did not "get on" with their husbands. There were no other complaints from any of the samples, and it would appear that the irregularity tended only to affect those who might have some other reason for being prone to digestive upset.

The majority of women had one hot meal at home with their families, another meal at work, and a snack either before or after work, according to the shift. For an early shift the snack would be breakfast, the next meal would be taken at work, and, with some sort of snack in between, the evening meal would be taken with the family. On a late shift, breakfast was usually taken with the family, and lunch with any members who were at home, or who came home at midday. The evening meal was then eaten at work.

Rather more than half the total number of women used the canteen at work, but the proportion varied between the samples, with many more of the factory workers making use of the canteen than the bus and canteen workers. Those who did not use the canteen usually brought a snack with them, and in a few cases bus conductresses lived near enough to be able to go home during their breaks.

Summary:

The simple fact of having to eat at both different times from their families and at different times each week was not seen as a problem by the women and there was a general lack of interest in the question. They generally managed to have one meal a day with their families, and with a few exceptions had their main meal at home either before or after work.

3. The Journey to Work

a) The Nature of the Problem:

Shiftworkers have to get to and from work early in the morning, and late at night, when the demand for public transport is at its lowest. This means that they must either rely on such services as exist at these times, or make their own travelling arrangements.

The samples were rather differently situated with regard to travelling. Among the bus workers, with their greater variety of hours, some women had, on occasion, to travel before the earliest, or after the latest buses on their routes. Workers in factory A, owing to the geographical situation of their factory, had an awkward journey to accomplish, simply in order to reach work. A few women were driven to work by their husbands, or got lifts from friends, but for the most part they walked, or depended on public transport.

b) Distance from Work:

In fact most of the women lived only a short distance of their work and had little difficulty in travelling. The time they spent on their journey was taken as an indication of the distance they lived from

their work.

Travelling Time - Married Women % Table 21

Sample	-15 min. %	-30 min. %	-45 min. %	- 1 Hr. %	Total No.	Total %
Canteen	18	40	18	24	17	100
Buses	66	23	8	3	73	100
Factory A	43	34	13	10	37	100
Factory B	52	40	4	4	44	100
Total	53	30	10	7	171	100

A larger proportion of bus workers lived near enough to their work to take only fifteen minutes in travelling, than in the rest of the samples, but only a few women in each sample took longer than half an hour.

The separated women had, in general, rather further to travel, but the difference was in the number who took half an hour instead of fifteen minutes rather than in the number who had to make much longer journeys.

Travelling Time - Separated Women % Table 22.

Sample	-15 min. %	-30 min. %	-45 min. %	- 1 Hr. %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	34	44	5	17	100	29
Buses	62	33	5	-	100	36
Factories	6	56	32	6	100	16
Total	41	43	9	7	100	81

Twenty of the bus women, ten married, and ten separated, took longer over their journeys than their usual time when they were on a very early, or very late shift. In these cases they had to walk to work, and for fourteen of them this meant a walk of between forty five minutes and an hour. However this was not necessary very often, and the women on the whole were not worried by it.

Thirty women complained that their journey was difficult, and was made awkward by the hours they worked. Here the chief problem was not the distance from work, but not being able to rely on regular transport when it was needed. The sufferers were mostly bus workers on very late or early shifts and women in Factory A who found the position of their factory inconvenient.

Summary:

On the whole travelling was not a serious problem. Although it could be inconvenient, particularly in the bus group and the Factory A sample, most of the women lived close enough to their work to be able to manage the journey without difficulty.

4. Sleep

a) The Nature of the Problem:

While the difficulty of sleeping during the day is an obvious problem for nightworkers, it is not obvious why double day-shift workers should complain of lack of sleep. Although they work in the evenings, there is no reason why they should not be home in time to get a reasonable night's rest. During the week on late turn they do not

have to go back to work until the late morning or early afternoon, and when early rising is necessary they get home from work in the afternoon. Nevertheless this question was raised in a number of interviews and is discussed here since the claims made on the women as housewives, wives and mothers tended to conflict with their need for rest. While sleep may be a much greater problem for other groups of workers, these women felt that it was a problem that concerned them.

b) Fatigue:

The Problem of adequate sleep is a difficult one to treat objectively as personal needs vary greatly and the number of hours spent nominally asleep is little indication of the rest obtained. It was felt that all that could be hoped for in investigating this problem was a fairly general indication of whether or not the women felt tired, and if they did, whether they could attribute their fatigue to any particular cause. It was thought that to ask simply whether they felt tired would not be very helpful as most people feel tired at some time or other, whatever their occupation, so they were asked whether they ever felt over-tired. Most women seemed fairly ready to distinguish this from merely feeling tired at the end of the day. Problems of adequate sleep were discussed if the women brought them up as a cause of fatigue.

Frequency of Fatigue. % Table 23.

Sample	Often %	Sometimes %	Never %	Total %	Total No.
Canteens	18	53	29	100	17
Buses	28	47	26	100	73
Factory A	19	43	38	100	37
Factory B	-	50	50	100	44
Total	51	47	60	100	171

The table shows that most of the women felt overtired at some time, but the large number of women who said that they were sometimes tired, probably includes those who did not in fact feel really overtired, and those who only got overtired occasionally. On the other hand, with the exception of women in the bus sample, few women seemed to feel overtired frequently, and a substantial proportion did not suffer from fatigue at all. This is especially marked in the Factory B sample, where half the women were never over-tired. This difference is probably due to the fact that in the bus group, the work the women were doing was in itself possibly more tiring than factory work, and their shifts more extensive. The Factory A workers whose work and hours are similar to those in Factory B are on average slightly older than the Factory B sample, and have rather further to travel.

The women who did complain of fatigue fell into three main categories; a certain number found the job they were doing tiring, and a change in their work, or an especially heavy day might make them over-

tired. The second group found it difficult to get enough sleep when they were on a certain shift; and the third group became over-tired either through special circumstances, such as ill-health, or through an inability to cope with both their jobs and running their households.

Causes of Fatigue % Table 24.

Sample	Early Shift	Late or Mid. Shift	Job Tiring	Other	None	Total %	Total No.
	%	%	%	%	%		
Canteen	11	6	36	18	29	100	17
Buses	16	15	27	15	26	100	73
Factory A	43	5	10	2	38	100	37
Factory B	26	7	13	4	50	100	44
Total	24	9	21	9	35	100	171

The early shift was found tiring because of the temptation not to go to bed early enough. Women with families who were in during the evenings tended not to go to bed until the rest of the family did, in spite of having to get up much earlier. Those who liked to go out during the week, only had the opportunity of going, while they were on the early shift, and this tended to mean that they did not get to bed very early. The most common attitude to this problem was "I know it's silly, but I can't help it". In a few cases the fear of over-sleeping made bus workers who had to get up for very early shifts unable to sleep

properly, but this was not common. A more frequent complaint was of the difficulty of readjusting to a new routine at the beginning of the week, when changing from a late to an early shift.

In the case of women who cited late or middle shifts as the cause of their fatigue the situation was similar. The shiftworker got home late at night, and then either got up early to see her family off or had young children to cope with. Some simply found that they could not sleep during the day, so that all morning was spent in working in the home, before doing a full shift at work. The middle shift for the bus workers frequently meant a fairly early start with a break in the middle of the day, but instead of resting in this break a few women felt that they could not bear to leave the housework, and so they too tended to spend a long day working.

The women who complained that they found their jobs tiring, (most of whom were bus conductors,) were able to cope as a rule, but were likely to become over-tired if they had to do anything extra at home.

The women who had other reasons for fatigue were again mostly in the bus sample, and apart from those who felt that they were too old for the job that they were doing, and those who felt over-tired following illness, they were mostly women who disliked shiftwork and found the two jobs of shiftworker and housewife too much for them.

Summary:

While the problem of sleep was not sufficiently serious for the women to consider giving up their work, it was felt to be a problem in a great number of cases. Not all the fatigue experienced could be

directly attributed to shiftwork, but the difficulties of resting during the day, and of going to bed at different times from the rest of the family as a result of shiftworking presented many of the women with a handicap.

1. Housework:

a) The Domestic Revolution:

Housewives are not noted for their interest in women's emancipation, and they rarely band together for their common good, but within the last twenty or thirty years they have been at the centre of what can only be described as a domestic revolution. Every woman who has a husband or family has duties as a housewife and is expected to see that the house is clean, clothes are washed, and meals prepared for the family. If the position of the pre-war housewife is compared with that of her counterpart today, the main changes affecting these duties become apparent.

Before the last war the majority of married women were full-time housewives, and only about 1 in 9 of them were at work. Today it seems that the proportion at work is nearer 1 in 3,¹ and even allowing for possible exaggeration there is a great and continuing increase. How is it that these women can manage two jobs, one at home, and one at work, where formerly the majority spent their days in what the Chief Inspector of Factories has called, "the lonely monotony of household duties"? There are in fact two ways in which this has become possible. The physical burden of housework has been reduced and at the same time duties formerly performed by the housewife have been taken over by agencies outside the home.

Anyone who has had to clean a house without any labour saving aids, or to do a family's washing entirely by hand will know just how much hard

1 See Viola Klein *Working Wives*. op. cit.

work these duties involve. To have the use of a vacuum cleaner or a washing machine brings a complete transformation. Not only is the physical burden of the work diminished but the time spent in washing and cleaning is very greatly reduced. Before the war these more expensive consumer goods that are of direct help to the housewife were not in common use, but the post-war period has seen an enormous expansion in their consumption; a trend at first apparent chiefly in the middle classes, but later extending to the working classes. These changes are part of a much wider movement which has sprung up in the context of material prosperity. Not only are people in the position to buy things previously beyond their grasp, but with prosperity the level of material aspiration has risen, so that they want a much wider range of goods. There are many housewives who still do not have the more expensive aids to housework, but they all benefit in a number of ways by other changes. These changes are sometimes small in themselves, but they add up to a substantial saving in time and labour. Synthetic fabrics have brought us clothes that wash easily and drip dry. Silicone polishes and new floor coverings have taken much of the drudgery out of cleaning work. Houses are now built with the housewife in mind, and planned to reduce the amount of work entailed in running them. Kitchens are designed to ensure that cooking involves the least possible work, by planning the layout to save time and energy. Over and over again within the home the housewife's labour is being lightened both by the acquisition of labour saving aids and equipment for doing the work, and by the development of consumer goods that need the minimum care.

Not only is the housewife's labour in the home being reduced, but she is being helped increasingly by agencies outside the home. Women who do

not have washing machines at home are not compelled to do their washing by hand. Higher incomes enable more women to send their washing to laundries. More marked however is the spread of launderettes, which take the work of washing out of the housewife's hands and enable her to have it done quickly without effort on her part.

The revolution has not by-passed shopping and cooking. The trend towards outside agencies taking over the housewife's functions is noticeable here. One of the most striking developments in the post-war period has been in the changing attitudes towards food. Habits relating to eating are slow to change, but after the war, once people realised that their new prosperity gave them power to buy things that had previously been beyond them, their horizons were widened and the way opened for habits to change. As a result foods are now widely purchased which formerly would have been regarded as too luxurious for the majority, and people are prepared to pay in order to have foods partially prepared before they are purchased.

Although the subject was not treated statistically, the interviews gave striking evidence of these new attitudes to food. The concept of a higher family standard of living meant the "best" for the family, and the importance of earning sufficient money for "decent food" was a point that occurred in several interviews. These higher standards involved buying food of a good quality that could be quickly prepared and served. The women who were interviewed frequently spent a substantial portion of their own earnings on food. Several of those who complained that their husbands wage was inadequate found that their husband's wage alone did not allow them to buy many frozen or prepared foods. Food production

is catering increasingly for women who are prepared to pay for food that needs the minimum of preparation. Meat, fish, fruit and vegetables can all be obtained frozen or in various stages of preparation, and baking is simplified by frozen pastry or cake mixes. By paying for it the housewife can greatly reduce the time she needs to spend in the kitchen.

Not only has the preparation of meals become a much less troublesome task than it used to be, but the housewife may not need to prepare meals so often, since facilities for obtaining meals outside the home have been greatly extended. The school meals service provides children with a cooked meal at school, and saves their mothers from having to prepare a midday meal for them at home. The extension of canteen facilities at work and the introduction of luncheon vouchers gives the same opportunity to older members of the family. While some will still prefer to take a snack to work, the chance for them to have a hot meal at midday can be a great saving for the housewife who cooks for them. A woman whose family is out of the house all day, and does not come home at lunch time is much freer than a woman tied to preparing meals during the day. Housework is a field where Parkinson's Law is operative and work expands to fill the available time, but since the pre-war period there has been such an extension of the opportunities to reduce work in the house that it is no longer necessary for housework to be a full-time job. It was possible for housewives to go out to work before the war, but it is very much easier for them to do so today.

It is not possible to state that these changes in the home caused more housewives to go out to work, or that the fact that more housewives are going out to work is a result of these changes, but women who want to work

are very greatly assisted by the trend in housework towards less work, and the greater number of women in the labour market stimulates the demand for further reductions in their domestic work.

Extensive though these changes have been, the housewife is by no means redundant. The work of cleaning, washing and cooking is much lighter and easier than before but it must still be done, and the housewife must either do it herself, or find others to take over her duties. In the following sections specific ways in which the housewife was helped, both within and from outside the home are recorded. It was thought that to treat in statistical detail every way in which help was received would involve too great a concentration on this section, so the study was confined to selected ways in which the women benefitted by these developments.

b) The Shiftworker's Advantages:

A married woman who takes a full time job retains her duties as housewife. She has to meet the obligations of two jobs for she must see that the housework gets done, as well as coping with a full job of work. The day worker is out of the house for most of the day, and has to confine her duties as housewife to the evenings and weekends, but the shiftworker has some time at home during the day every week. This opportunity to be at home at times when the family was in most cases not there was considered by most of the women to be a very great advantage. They were able to spend part of the day getting on with the housework as if they were ordinary housewives, and owing to their relatively short hours, this part of a day seemed long enough.

Attitudes towards their role as housewife varied from the woman whose husband and children did most of the work because she did not believe in doing too much, to the woman who said that she would be grossly insulted if her husband did anything at all. In the majority of cases, however, although the shiftworker regarded the housework as her job, she was not able to cope with it alone. She expected to do most of the work, but was grateful for any help that was forthcoming from the rest of the family.

c) Dependence on Others:

The degree to which women managed their own housework varied considerably, and the extent to which they relied on others for help depended on both the availability of helpers, and the womens' attitudes to their role.

Help with the Housework % Table 25

Sample	Shiftwkr All %	Shiftwkr Most %	Shared %	Husband Most %	Relatives %	Total %	Total No.
Canteen	24	35	11	24	6	100	17
Buses	30	40	22	4	4	100	73
Factory A	21	65	11	-	3	100	37
Factory B	20	52	14	2	12	100	44
Total	25	16	48	5	6	100	171

The percentage of bus workers who did all their own housework was rather higher than in the other samples, but if the women who did all, and those who did most of the work are taken together the proportion in the bus sample is 70% and in the factory samples 72% and 86% respectively. The workers in Factory A have a higher proportion in this category since bus workers tend to receive more help from their husbands than the other samples (excluding the canteens), and in the Factory B sample the number helped by relatives is higher as more of the women live in shared households.

The number of husbands in the bus sample who share^{ed} the housework equally with their wives ^{is} ^{in the} greater than other samples because of the opportunity of fitting their hours to those of their wives.

The high proportion of the husbands of canteen workers who ^{did} ~~do~~ most of the housework is deceptive owing to the small numbers of married canteen workers. There are in fact only four men in this category, three of them in households without children at home, and the fourth with a spastic son who needed constant attention. The women were

helped to some extent by their children, but they did not expect very much from them. The children who were working did not contribute very much more than the school children in proportion to their numbers, and the fact of earning did not mean that they were expected to take on much more in the house.

The proportion of women who did less work than other members of the family was low except in the canteen sample; 3 of the bus workers and 1 of the B Factory sample did less work than their husbands. Where women were helped by relations only a few of the relatives who lived in the same household did more housework than the shiftworker. Eight of the thirteen women in this category were helped by relatives, and in the five cases where they did not help, either the shiftworker did all the work herself or shared it with her husband.

d) Help from Outside the Home:

Six women were helped with housework by relatives who did not live in the household. Four of these paid a married daughter to come in and help them. This was an arrangement that suited both parties very well as the daughters found the extra money useful but could not find any other work with elastic hours to which they could bring a baby, while their mothers were grateful for some help with the cleaning. The other two women were helped by their mother and mother-in-law respectively. One woman paid a neighbour to do 3 morning's work a week.

Only 28 of the married women, out of the total of 171, did all their washing at home without the use of a machine, and 88 of them made some use at least of facilities for doing their washing outside the home, using laundries, laundrettes or machines provided on council estates.

Laundries have the advantage that the firms are usually prepared to collect and deliver, and though this makes washing expensive many of the women thought it worth while as they were earning, and since it saved so much work. Women who used publicly provided washing machines of one sort or another had the advantage over women on full time day work in that they could use them during the day at times when the demand for them was not too heavy. In all but a few cases it was considered well worth the extra expense to have some help with the washing because of the time and labour that would otherwise be necessary.

e) Separated Women:

In spite of their small households only four of the separated and widowed women did all the housework themselves. One of these lived with her parents and did all the housework while her mother did all the cooking and looked after the child, the others lived alone with small children. Five of those who lived with their parents or had a parent living with them did less than half the housework, two others did rather more than their mothers, and the remaining five were all helped to some extent by their children, one of whom was aged nine, and the rest thirteen or fourteen. There was little idea of the housewife's role as was the case with the married women, as it seemed difficult for a woman in this situation to manage without help. This may be due to the fact that in most cases there were relatives at hand.

Summary

The majority of women expected to do most of their housework themselves, but depend upon some help from their families. This help came chiefly from their husbands, to a lesser extent from their children, and

in a minority of cases from relatives living either in, or near the household. The women found the chief advantage of shiftwork was that it enabled them to cope more easily with housework and gave them sufficient time at home to do most of their housework during the day.

2. Family Meals

a) The Shiftworker's Disadvantages:

In spite of the variation in their own hours of work, the majority of the shiftworkers regarded it as their duty as housewives to provide meals for their families. With regard to the general chores round the house, and shopping the shiftworker is in a more advantageous position than the woman who works an ordinary day, but cooking has been treated separately, because it can become something of a problem when the housewife is out of the house for the family's main meal for a week at a time.

Although women with other adults, or older children in their households usually included them in the number for whom they had to cook, or provide meals, the discussion is restricted to her husband, and dependent children, for whom she feels it is her primary duty to make provision.

b) Dependence on Others:

In general, cooking difficulties only arose when the shiftworker was on a late turn, and therefore was out when her family wanted their evening meal. This problem was met in a number of ways. Several of the women left a meal prepared before they went out, so the family only had to heat the food when they came in. Women in this situation found frozen foods, and other pre-prepared food extremely useful. In other households the women left the family to cook their own meal, or arranged for a relative to cook it for them. A small number of families had their main meal at midday, and only had to get themselves a snack in the evening.

Arrangements for Evening Meal - Married Women % Table 26.

Sample	Meal Left Prepared %	Husband Cooks %	Sch. Chn Cook %	Other Chn Cook %	Relatives Cook %	Snack %	Total No. of Women
Canteen	36	41	-	-	29	-	17
Buses	37	37	7	6	22	3	73
Factory A	45	13	10	10	13	14	37
Factory B	36	25	12	13	25	7	44
Total	39	30	8	8	22	5	171

The percentages add up to more than 100 as some households are included in more than one category.

The table shows that where the shiftworker does not leave the meal ready for her family she depends chiefly on her husband to do the cooking. A few school children help, but even fewer of these cook very regularly, as in most cases there is some sort of alternative arrangement, for cooking in addition to what the children do.

Thirteen of the thirty-eight relatives who help with the cooking live in the same household, and the remaining twenty-five live nearby and come in to cook when necessary.

As the interviews took place in summer the women who left meals prepared for their families were often able to leave cold meals or salads so that there was very little further work to be done, but in winter the family is more likely to have to cook vegetables, or heat the food.

The families who did not have a main meal in the evenings were few, and in households where this happened the men got a hot meal at work or came home at lunch time, while the children had school dinners.

The women did not on the whole find cooking a great problem, but several of them found it inconvenient. The general feeling was that provided the shiftworker planned ahead she could get used to organising meals without too much difficulty, but the co-operation of the family was usually necessary. Several women mentioned that they had deliberately increased their expenditure on food since taking up full time work, so that their families could have the "best", and they were satisfied that their husbands and children were being well looked after in this respect.

c) Help from outside the home:

Apart from the women whose relatives come in to help them with the cooking, the only way in which women were assisted was by their families being able to obtain hot meals during the day. The fact that several women had husbands on shifts does not really affect the issue of providing meals for them. It may happen that in some weeks husbands and wife can have their meals together, whereas they could not if the husband did day work, but there will still be times when the shiftworking wife has to provide meals for her husband in her absence. The only women who had no problems were those without children who worked the same shifts as their husbands.

A number of husbands simply took a snack to work with them for their midday meal, but others used a canteen at work or came home during the day. The opportunities for men to come home were probably greatest for the husbands of women in the Factory B sample, as they were more likely to find work near their homes.

Husband's Midday Meal % Table 27

Sample	Canteen %	Home %	Other %	Total %	Total No.
Canteens	29	6	65	100	17
Buses	25	12	63	100	73
Factory A	40	19	40	100	37
Factory B	32	32	13	100	44
Total	30	18	51	100	171

The husbands who came home, ate with their wives during the weeks when they were on late turn, and in the other weeks either cooked their own meal or were cooked for by relatives.

School meals were widely used, so that most of the children got two cooked meals a day.

Number of Children Taking School Dinner Table 28

Sample	Yes		No		Total	
	Number of Children	Number of Househlds	Number of Children	Number of Households	Nos.	Households
Buses	40	29	3	3	43	32
Factory B	21	13	11	7	32	20
Factory A	21	14	2	2	23	16
Total	82	56	16	12	98	68

The canteen sample is not included in this table, as there are only two children of school age. Both of them have school dinners.

In the twelve households where children did not have school dinners, the children came home for their midday meal. In nine cases they were fed by relatives, in two the shiftworker left a meal prepared, and one child got her own meal. All these children had a meal cooked for them by their mother in the weeks when she was on late shift.

d) Separated Women:

The problem of providing meals for their families only concerns those separated women who have dependent children. There were sixteen women with children, and as they had no husbands who could do the cooking while they were out, they were much more dependent on relatives than the married women.

Eight of the women lived with their parents, and their children were cooked for by these relatives, whenever their mothers were at work. The evening meal for the other children was provided in a number of ways. Four of the children had relatives who came in to give them a meal, one had a meal heated by a neighbour, one had a meal left by her mother, and three got their own meals. The midday meal was usually provided at school, but six children who lived with their grandparents, came home for lunch.

In two cases where the women did not live with relatives, and had young children, they were not satisfied with the arrangements made for meals during their absence, but in general the older children looked after themselves, and the younger ones had relatives to cook for them, so their mothers were quite satisfied.

Summary

The Shiftworkers could not manage to provide meals in the evenings

without some help from their families, but in most cases they tried to keep this need for help to a minimum. About half the women's husbands, and most of their children had a hot meal at midday, either at home, work, or school.

Although the women were not always able to cook the meals themselves they felt that they were responsible for the provision of meals, and were satisfied with the arrangements that they had made.

3. The Shiftworker's Dwelling

The type and equipment of the house or flat that she lives in can make a great difference to the life of the housewife. Cramped old housing may encourage women to come out to work because there is little to occupy them as housewives, or in order to save for a house of their own. New housing, however, will probably bring higher rent to be paid, and the need for new furniture to match up to it.

It would have been extremely difficult to elicit information on the quality and convenience of housing from interviews at work, but some information was collected on the size and equipment of dwellings, to see how large were the establishments that the shiftworkers were running, and what labour saving aids the women possessed.

a) Size of Accomodation:

There were differences in the type of dwellings which the women were living in, according to the areas where they lived. The bus and canteen workers were spread out over a very wide area, but many lived in districts where large old houses are subdivided into flats, or in areas of newly built blocks of flats, while the factory workers were more likely to live in districts of small terrace houses, where they had some chance of being rehoused in small houses or flats.

Type of Dwelling - Married Women % Table 29

Sample	House %	Flat %	Rooms %	W.Relations %	Total %	Total No.
Canteens	82	18	-	-	100	17
Buses	30	64	3	3	100	73
Factory A	70	28	2	-	100	37
Factory B	54	32	4	9	100	44
Total	50	43	3	4	100	171

In all the samples except the bus group, the majority of women lived in houses rather than flats or rooms. 17 women who lived in houses either owned, or were buying them. A much higher proportion of the canteen and factory workers lived in houses than the bus workers. This can be partly explained by the different areas in which the women live, but besides this the canteen workers, being on the whole older women, had had longer in which to work for a house, while the factory workers having larger families than women in the other samples needed rather larger dwellings.

The size of the dwellings reflected this difference in the type of housing. The majority of women lived in small homes but the bus conductresses, with a higher proportion both of small families, and of flat dwellers, had a relatively large number in small dwellings.

Size of Accommodation - Married Women % Table 30

Sample	Number of Rooms (Excluding bathroom)				Total No.
	1 - 2 %	3 - 5 %	6 & Over %	Total %	
Canteen	-	100	-	100	17
Buses	41	56	3	100	73
Factory A	2	86	10	100	37
Factory B	18	79	2	100	44
Total	23	73	4	100	171

The women living in one or two rooms include 22 childless women, and 17 women with children, the number of children varying between one and four. Most of these women were either saving for, or thinking of saving for a home of their own, but were usually handicapped by the

high rents that were charged for their small flats. The majority of women were living in dwellings of from three to five rooms, and so had small homes to run, but ones which were adequate for the needs of their families.

The small size of the homes meant that as housewives they did not have large houses to look after. Most of them however were proud of their homes, and welcomed the opportunity that their earnings gave them to buy things for their houses. New furniture, carpets, and curtains were frequently mentioned by women who had already acquired them, and by those who aimed at buying them in the future.

b) Household Equipment:

Labour-saving consumer goods can be of great value to the busy housewife by reducing the time and energy that she needs to spend on household tasks.

At their interview the women were asked whether they had certain of these goods. It was felt that the heaviest jobs in the home are washing and cleaning, so they were asked whether they had a washing machine or spin drier, or whether they had a vacuum cleaner, and since meals could also present a particular problem to shiftworkers, they were also asked if they had a refrigerator.

Household Goods - Married Women % Table 31

Sample	Vacuum Cleaner %	Refrigerator %	Washing Machine %	Spin Drier %	None %	Total No. of Women
Canteen	88	65	29	6	11	17
Buses	61	24	27	17	26	73
Factory A	41	38	25	22	14	37
Factory B	73	52	27	9	16	44
Total	71	47	32	16	19	171

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some women are included in more than one category.

The large number of women with vacuum cleaners is not surprising, as these are the least expensive items, and do a great deal to reduce, and speed up the housework. While the number of women without any of these goods is very low, the numbers in any one category, apart from those with vacuum cleaners, are not large. This can I think be attributed to a number of factors. For one thing all these goods are expensive, and even with the high pay of shiftworkers it takes time to acquire them, but apart from this they may not be considered necessary by individuals, For example women who were accustomed to having their washing done outside the home at a laundry or launderette might think other goods more important than a washing machine. Some of those who lived on council estates had washing machines and drying facilities provided for their common use, while those who lived in small flats simply did not have the space for goods of this size. In a few cases women distrusted "these machines" and would not have one, preferring to do their washing themselves, but this was not a common attitude. The proportion of women with refrigerators varied between the samples, but the overall proportion was surprisingly high. Refrigerators are particularly useful for women who have to provide meals for the family during their own absence. Although those who owned refrigerators were very much in favour of them, there was much less discussion in the interviews of the advantages of refrigerators than there was of other goods.

These household aids form only part of the range of goods that the women aimed at acquiring, but for the majority of women, the improvement

of their homes, and the equipment of their houses, to make them easier to run, and pleasanter to live in, was an important factor in their being at work. Having taken up shiftwork, they were able to acquire gradually goods that would benefit them as housewives.

c) Separated Women

The 16 separated women with dependent children were not noticeably worse off in their accommodation than the married women. Only one of them lived in a house, 8 were in flats, 2 in rooms, and 5 with relatives, but 12 out of the 16 had three to five rooms, and only 4, one or two. Apart from those living with their parents, only two had more than one child with them, so that their households were very small.

Not surprisingly they were worse off in respect of household equipment than the married women. Five of them had none of the household goods mentioned, and of the others, 8 had a vacuum cleaner, 4 a refrigerator, and 2 a washing machine.

Being largely responsible for the support of themselves and their children, they were situated rather differently from the married women with regard to what they could acquire for their homes, and were less likely to be able to afford expensive goods.

Summary

41% of the busworkers were living in one or two rooms; factory B had a smaller proportion, 18%, but factory A had only one person in this category, and the canteen group none. 73% of the married women lived in three to five rooms. A fairly high proportion either owned or were buying their own homes, and a further number were saving towards this end.

The majority of women had some labour saving equipment, but though there were large numbers without any given item, these goods were considered desirable and in some cases necessary for the working housewife.

The shiftworker's family must in some measure, be affected by the hours that she works. As housewives, wives and mothers, the shiftworkers have certain duties to perform in the home, and the hours they work are so organised that they are out of the house at times when these duties need to be performed.

Some information was collected in order to consider how the shiftworker's husband and dependent children were affected by the fact that she worked on shifts.

1. The Shiftworker's Husband

The shiftworker's husband has inevitably remained a somewhat shadowy figure, but it was felt that he had great importance in that his wife could not work on shifts unless she had, not only his approval, but also his willing co-operation.

a) Occupation:

It was hoped that, even allowing for the usual vagueness of knowledge about husband's occupation sufficient information could be collected to give some general picture. In fact the information is so uneven that this is not really possible. The wife of a window cleaner or a postman will know what her husband does, but a woman whose husband is employed in some large undertaking is more likely to know only that "he works at the gasworks", or "on the railways", or to give the name of his firm.

Nine husbands were either invalids, or unemployed through ill health or disability, and one women gave no information. Five women were married to white collar workers, twenty five to skilled workers, thirteen

thirteen to drives of lorries, taxies or vans,
to dockers, and eight to labourers, five to caretakers or warehousemen,
four to house painters. Of the remaining 88 men, 47 worked in the same
firm as their wives, 25 worked in factories, 7 on the railways, and 9 in
miscellaneous occupations. Thirty two of the forty seven men who worked
in the same firm as their wives were canteen or bus workers' husbands.
Twenty three of them were bus drivers, five were conductors, one an
inspector, one a driving instructor, and two railway workers. The
remaining fifteen men were employed in various capacities in the sugar
refineries.

The number of men for whom the nature of their work and skills is
unknown prevents any generalisations, but there was a fairly wide range
of occupations, with the bus workers tending to have, as far as could be
seen, a slightly higher proportion of skilled husbands. One of the taxi
drivers was self-employed, but all the other husbands worked for an
employer.

b) Hours of work:

The majority of the women's husbands were on day work, but a large
proportion of them worked on shifts. Most of these shifts were organised
differently from those of the wife, in that either the hours worked were
not the same, or, the man was engaged upon some other shift system. A
number of them however had shifts that fitted in with those of their
wives, and they worked either on the same shifts, or on opposite ones.

(Table 32 over...)

Husbands' Hours % Table 32

Sample	Day Work %	Shiftwork %			Unemployed %	Total %	Total No.
		Different	Opposite	Same			
Canteen	53	29	-	-	18	100	17
Buses	49	17	10	24	-	100	73
Factory A	70	18	-	6	6	100	37
Factory B	64	18	7	2	9	100	44
Total	58	19	6	12	5	100	171

The proportion of shiftworkers varies from 24% in factory A, to 51% in the bus sample. This high proportion in the bus group is probably the result of greater opportunity than in the other samples, therefore, since on the buses men and women work the same hours at the same work. The husbands and wives who want to, can arrange their hours to suit their domestic situation. With the exception of the taxi driver who had his own taxi, all the bus workers' husbands who worked on the same shifts as their wives were employed in the same firm. Fifteen of the seventeen couples who worked the same hours were driver and conductor on the same buses, and the other two couples were all conductors. Thirteen of these women were childless, and three had children over 12, one had a child of seven, but had her mother living with her so that there was someone there when both parents were out at work.

The couples who worked on opposite shifts did so in order to share the care of young children, only one of the households in this group of ten had a child over 12, but as the number of young children in the samples was small, not many couples made this arrangement.

Husbands who worked on shifts less directly related to their wife's hours were divided between households with young children, older children and those without children. In this group wives and husbands sometimes had a few weeks when they were working similar hours, and then a stretch when they were quite different, but in most cases they were based on different systems. The presence or absence of children is obviously relevant if both parents are to work on shifts. Of the shiftworking husbands 47% were in households with one or more children of school age or under, while 45% of the day workers were in this category, so that there does not seem to be any great difference between them in this respect. The age of the children and the type of shift work which the parents do leaves room for considerable variation in the pattern of work and family structure.

All the women were working in firms where it was also possible for men to be employed on shift work, but the factories presented less opportunity for the linking of hours than the transport firm as the work that men and women did was different. It was therefore in the bus sample that most use was made of this opportunity. Where the men were not working on shifts the fact of their wives being on shift work must depend on other circumstances, but where the husband was a shiftworker, wives frequently gave this as their only reason for working on shifts, and said that they would not keep on with shiftwork if their husbands should stop. The fact that 38% of the women had shiftworking husbands would certainly suggest that this is an important factor in choosing shiftwork.

c) Attitudes to Wife's Shiftwork:

It was hoped that information on the husbands' attitudes to their wives' shifts would indicate not only the extent to which they supported their wife's action, but also how they felt her shift hours affected them. On both these counts it was a disadvantage to have the men's opinions second hand from their wives as the importance women attached to their husbands views on the question varied considerably. At the same time husbands in different situations with regard to the hours they worked, and the type of households they lived in, were affected by their wife's shiftwork in rather different ways. Obviously those who had no children and were working as driver on their wife's bus would be more likely to be in favour of these hours than a day worker whose wife's work meant that he had more work to do in the house and did not see his wife as often as before.

In spite of these limitations the husbands' opinions were noted and were grouped in three main sections, those who were in favour of their wife working on shifts, those who were against it, and those who were indifferent. There was a slightly larger proportion of men in this last group, 38% as against 33% who were in favour, and 29% against. The men who were in favour had much less common ground in their opinions than those who were not, but in all groups it was difficult to distinguish between those who were concerned for themselves in giving their views, and those who were concerned for their wife's welfare.

(Table 33 - over

Attitudes to Wife's Shiftwork % Table 33

Sample	For %	Against %	Indifferent %	Total No.	Total %
Canteen	24	47	29	17	100
Buses	43	31	26	73	100
Factory A	28	24	48	37	100
Factory B	25	23	13	44	100
Total	33	29	38	171	100

By far the largest number of those who did not like their wife working shifts complained of loneliness and of being left alone in the evenings, and at weekends. Thirty one of the 50 men in this group made these complaints, and "he misses me", "he gets lonely", "he doesn't like coming home to an empty house", "he doesn't like me not being there in the evenings" were the type of comments most frequently given. Thirteen of the husbands objected to their wife working on more general grounds; either they thought that married women ought not to work or they thought that this type of work was too hard for their wife, or they did not like her being out alone at night. One of the women whose husband objected, was about to leave because of his attitude, but the others were not prepared to give up their jobs, and not all their husbands would have been glad for them to do so. The chief justification that these women had for working was that they brought in a good wage, and their husbands usually appreciated this whatever disadvantages he felt he suffered. There were four women in the Factory B sample who did not think that their husbands were entitled to an opinion on this question. Since they

were now wage earners too, it was not up to their husbands to lay down the law, "It's not his business", "there's nothing he can do about it", "he has to accept it", they said, but this was not a common attitude. 42% of the bus conductors' husbands were in the group who were in favour of their wife's shiftwork as compared to 27% and 25% in the factory samples, and 24% in the canteen group. This higher proportion is probably due chiefly to the relatively large number of women working with their husbands on the same bus. Apart from these the reasons for being in favour of their wives working on shifts were rather vague, "He's quite happy", "He says he's happy if I am". There were, however, more specific reasons when a particular factor such as that of loneliness in the evenings presented no problem, "We manage to see enough of each other", "He has the children and the television to keep him company". Several of the men had been very dubious when their wives first took up shiftwork but now that they were used to it they found it suited them quite well and they were satisfied with the way their jobs worked together.

Most of the men who were indifferent had to make some initial effort to get over their distrust of the idea of their wife on shiftwork, but once their lives had been adjusted, they really did not mind whether their wives worked shifts or not. One woman when asked what her husband thought about the hours she worked said, "I don't know, I've never asked him", but indifference was not usually as complete as this, and was expressed by men who derived no great advantages from the hours that their wives worked, but who were not conscious of any real disadvantage.

The husbands who were at a disadvantage seemed to be those who

minded being left alone in the evenings. The advantages were more dependent on the relation between the hours of husbands and wives and the structure of their families, but husbands were not reported as being concerned at the amount of work they were expected to do in the home, and in only one case was the effect on children mentioned. Here a husband had objected to his wife working shifts on the grounds that their daughter (then aged thirteen) was too young to be left alone, but this had not stopped his wife from working on shifts.

In general, once a husband had had time to see that the adjustments in his life were not too great and had been further convinced by the income of his wife, her shiftwork became quite acceptable.

d) His Role in the Home:

It has been noted that the shiftworkers were not usually coping unaided with their housework and cooking, and when they needed someone to help them, it was most often their husband who was called upon. It was, however, extremely difficult to judge how valuable the husbands' contribution were. Apart from any other considerations, the amount of work that a housewife has to do, is not constant. In discussing the amount of work there is in a house, Margot Jefferys has said, "The maintainance of a home, however small, inevitably requires some routine work although the amount of such work can vary with such factors as the convenience of the house or flat, the efficiency of the domestic aids and of the person or persons using them and lastly, but by no means least, differing individual standards."¹ The satisfactory measurement of

1. See Margot Jefferys Research Note Married Women in the Higher Grades of the Civil Service and Government Sponsered Research Organizations. British Journal of Sociology Vol. 111 No. 4 December 1952.

housework is made extremely complex by the human element in running a home. In order to find out exactly what husbands did in the house, it would have been necessary to have had a series of questions designed to examine both the quality and the quantity of their work. Therefore the aspects of the question that were studied were considerably simplified. A very rough quantitative measurement was taken of the extent to which husbands gave some help, and the quality of their contribution was left to more impressionistic analysis.

When a man helps his wife in the house he may do no more than help with odd jobs, such as carrying in the coal, or he may play a large part in cooking, cleaning and looking after the children. He can, however, help his wife, not only with the actual work in the house, but by sharing with her the responsibilities of running the home.

The general impression gained from the interviews was that while the majority of husbands gave some help in the house, the responsibilities of the housewife were retained by the shiftworkers. Even where husbands did more work than their wives, the women regarded housework as their province. The men were prepared to help their wives in many ways with cooking, cleaning or with the children, but they usually helped only with work that needed to be done while their wife was not there. For example very few husbands did any washing, as this could be easily left until their wives could manage it.

Husbands helped to lighten the actual burden of the work that their wives had to do, but they did not really share in the responsibilities of the housewife.

98 husbands gave some help with the housework, but in most cases

they did less work than their wives; the number who did a considerable portion of the housework was very small.

Help with the Housework % Table 34

Sample	Work in Comparison with Wife's				Total %	Total No.
	More %	Same %	Less %	None %		
Canteens	24	11	24	41	100	17
Buses	4	22	28	45	100	73
Factory A	-	11	56	32	100	37
Factory B	2	13	36	49	100	44
Total	5	17	36	42	100	171

This table shows that the great majority of those who helped did less work than their wives, and only a tiny minority did more. The husbands who shared the work with their wives were mostly in the bus group, and were divided between childless couples, and those with younger children. So there were two quite different motives for giving their wives more help.

The husbands who did not help at all have little in common as a group, and perhaps their position depended as much on the characters and energy of their wives as on any factors relating to the amount of work to be done. There was a difference however between shiftworking, and day working husbands. Over half of the day workers did not help at all, while for the shiftworkers the figure is nearer a quarter, and the shiftworkers too have a higher proportion who do as much or more than their wives. Presumably this is because men on shifts, like their wives, have at least some portion of the day spent at home and therefore have a

greater opportunity to help than men who have only the evenings and weekends to help in.

The number of husbands who helped with cooking was rather smaller than the number who helped with other chores. 59 husbands gave some help, including those who got themselves a snack when their wives were out, and the remaining 112 had other arrangements made for them. 73 had meals left for them by their wives, 26 had meals cooked for them by relatives, and 10 by children, and three of them had meals out when their wife was not there. Again the proportion of shiftworking husbands who helped was higher than that of the dayworkers.

The number of husbands who gave no help of any kind in the house was low, 23 of the bus conductresses' husbands, 16 from Factory B, 8 from Factory A, and 6 from the canteen group, a total of 53, but the number who helped with both housework and cooking was also low, only 39 men from the total of 171 coming into this category. It emerged that most men did something in the house, but the burden of work fell heavily of them in only a relatively small number of cases.

31 of the men played a part in looking after children of school age or under but only 9 of them provided, with their wives, a continuous care so that the children were not left alone; 8 of these were shiftworkers, and one worked hours that enabled him to be at home when the children were there. The duties of the other 22 fathers consisted mainly in being there in the evenings during the weeks when their wives were on late turn, and in getting the children off in the morning on the weeks when she had to leave early. They could not, however, be there at all times when their wives were not, and if more comprehensive arrangements

were needed other help had to be called upon.

Summary

A considerable proportion of the husbands were also working shifts, and a number were working in the same firm as their wives. This gave rise to a great variety in the combinations of hours of work which were related to different domestic situations. The men in general accepted or approved their wife's hours but there were some complaints of loneliness while she was out. Husbands were mostly prepared to help in the house, but few of them were called upon to do very much work, and they played a useful but not very extensive role in supervising their children.

2. Dependent Children

The chief way in which children are affected by their mothers working, is in being left by themselves while their mother is out. Most mothers would not wish to go out and leave young children, but the hours they work make this a rather more extensive problem for shiftworking mothers, than for women who work a full-time day.

The woman who works on shifts while her children are still young will have to make some arrangement for their care over a much longer period than a woman on day work. The shiftworker's chief problem will be that she is not always there when her children leave for school in the mornings, or when they return in the afternoon, and she can be out until late evening. Unless she thinks that they are old enough to manage for themselves, the shiftworker must make some provision for her children over these periods.

a) Care of Children

Dependent children for the purposes of this study are taken as those who are under school age or are still at school at the age of fifteen, but excludes older school children. The numbers of dependent children are shown in Table 35.

Numbers of Children Table 35

Sample	Children	Households
Canteen	2	2
Buses	51	34
Factory A	26	16
Factory B	36	22
Total	115	74

Children were least likely to have arrangements made for them if they were aged 12 or over, or had one or more brothers or sisters, but only a small number of the 115 children had no arrangements made for them at all while their mothers were out at work.

Arrangements for Care of Children % Table 36

Sample	Father %	Relative %	Older child %	Neighbour %	Other %	None %	Total No. of Children
Buses	56	27	-	12	2	19	56
Factory A	46	27	4	26	4	26	26
Factory B	36	38	8	6	-	25	36
Total	47	30	3	12	2	22	113

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some of the children are included more than once. The canteen sample was excluded as there were only two children in this group. One had her father there in the evenings, and there were no arrangements for the other.

From these figures it would appear that their father is the most important figure in caring for the children during their mother's absence, but although fathers play a large part in looking after their children, they rarely play the sole part. 37 of the 54 children who were looked after by their fathers were also looked after by someone in one of the other categories.

Relatives played an important part as they were frequently available all day if necessary as well as in the evenings and so could take charge of younger children. The neighbours, who were all paid to look after the children, were only called upon where young children

were concerned. All the children except one who were looked after by neighbours were under eight years old.

The children who were thought old enough to be left by themselves were not necessarily left for long periods and fifteen of them had fathers who were on day work and were therefore probably there in the evenings. Those whose fathers were also on shiftwork all had at least one older brother or sister living at home.

It was very difficult to discover, where there were some arrangements made, how comprehensive these arrangements were, as they frequently varied from week to week according to the mother's shifts, and were also affected by the father's shifts. It appeared however that there were 15 children aged 11 or under who did not have comprehensive arrangements made for them. Nine of these had older brothers or sisters of school age, and one, an older brother who had left school; two were brother and sister aged 11 and 9 whose father was there in the evenings but were sometimes left to look after themselves during the day. The three remaining children were aged 10, 8 and 7, and in all cases there was a relative or neighbour to whom they could go, but they were considered old enough to be left in the house for short periods.

Where both parents were working on shifts there was the possibility that the children could be left alone all evening, and there were 21 children in 12 households affected in this way. In six households their father tried to work opposite shifts so that he was there when their mother was not, and in the other cases all the children had one or more older brother or sister; they were all over eleven and were thought old enough to be able to look after themselves.

Women with younger children found shiftwork more convenient than day work, since if they were going to work at all, some provision would have to be made for their children, and by working on shifts they saw considerably more of their children than if they had only been at home in the early morning or evenings. Older children presented a different problem since, while they might be old enough to be left for some time, it would be a different thing to leave them alone in the house until late at night. The majority of even the oldest children, however, had some sort of provision made for them, or had other children for company.

The school holidays brought new problems because children had to be supervised for a longer period, but as most children already have some provision made for them, in most cases this care was just extended where it was necessary. 81 of the 100 school children had no extra arrangements made for them in the school holidays preceeding the interviews. (This was either the Easter or the Christmas holiday and therefore was a fairly short period, but it was hoped that more accurate answers would be obtained by making the question as specific as possible) Only 17 children had had extra holiday provision made for them. 5 were looked after by relatives or neighbours, ten children had been sent away to stay with relatives, and in the other two cases mothers had been given leave to stay at home with their children. Therefore those children who are left alone from time to time are likely to be left for longer periods during the day in the school holidays.

In the year preceding the survey 66 of the children had been on holiday with their parents, and a small number were regularly sent to

stay with relatives for a few weeks in the summer.

When children were ill it was usual for their mothers to look after them, but in a few cases relatives or friends came in so that the shiftworker did not have to take time off work.

Care of Sick Children % Table 37

Sample	Mother %	Other %	No-one %	Never ill %	Total %	Total No.
Buses	42	21	5	32	100	34
Factory A	50	19	12	19	100	16
Factory B	63	6	6	15	100	22
Total	50	15	8	27	100	72

The canteen sample was excluded as there were only two children.

One was looked after by a relative, and the other by no-one.

The table only shows what happened the last time a child in the house was ill, so that not all the children are included. Four of the children who were looked after by their mothers had fathers on opposite shifts who shared the care of them. The small proportion of children who were not looked after, were all over 11, and were probably left for only part of the day without either of their parents in the house.

Children in the "never ill" category are those who either had not been ill since their mothers started shiftwork, or whose mothers could not remember whether they had been ill or not.

b) Help in the House:

Children did not play a very large part in the house, most of the help that women received from their children came from those over

school age. To some women it was a source of pride that the children did nothing in the house, but more often older children, and especially the girls were expected to do a little. One or two of the girls of 14 or 15 did a substantial portion of the housework, but this was unusual and was not demanded by their mothers. The younger children helped very little; 12 of those aged 11 or under helped with the housework, and none of them helped with any cooking.

Of the children over 11 thirty four gave some help with the housework, and 15 helped with the cooking, including those who got their own snacks, but only four children helped with both housework and cooking.

Although older children did some work in the house and a few helped with meals, the shiftworkers, in general, made arrangements for housework and cooking that did not depend on help from the children, and the children were not adversely affected in this respect by the hours that their mothers worked.

c) Separated Women:

The separated woman who does not either live with her parents or have a relative living with her, has greater difficulty in looking after her children than the married woman with a husband who can be there when she is out in the evenings. Nine of the separated women's children were looked after by relatives who live in the same household, so that their mothers had no real problem, and four women had made arrangements with relatives who lived near, or in one case with a neighbour. The remaining six children had no arrangements made for

them and as there were no other people in their households, they were left alone in the evenings when their mothers are working late. 2 of the other children were also sometimes left at night, making a total of eight children. Four of these were aged 11 or under, three of them nine year olds, and the others were older. One of the nine year olds had an elder brother of school age, but the other two were a source of great anxiety to their mothers, and one of them was about to be boarded with a foster mother. Both of these children had been staying out until nine or ten at night rather than come home to an empty house while their mothers were on late turn.

The only children who helped in the house were the older ones in households consisting of a mother and one or more children, and none of them helped with the cooking except in the case of one of the nine year olds who got himself a snack.

Summary

The special problem for shiftworking mothers is that of children being left alone for long periods, or in the evenings, and in most cases the difficulties were overcome and only older children, usually with other children in the house, were left. The problem was more acute for separated women and in at least two cases had not been successfully dealt with.

The children had little work to do in the house, and apart from the absence of their mother were not greatly affected by the hours that she worked.

3. Absence from Work

One of the chief problems in employing married women is that their rates of absence and wastage tend to be higher than those of other workers. Much has been written on this subject since the war, but given the post war conditions in the field of employment it is not difficult to understand that women with domestic responsibilities may not be very steady workers. Viola Klein has said "There can be little doubt that married women workers attempt to adjust their employment to their domestic requirements, and that those employers who are able to help them to do so reap the benefit in terms of more dependable service".¹

The incidence of absence cannot be satisfactorily discussed in terms of simple causes, as many variable factors are operative, but where married women are concerned, the generalisation that family and domestic considerations tend to be given priority over loyalty to an employer, seems to be supported by what is known of their behaviour. Rates of absence do however seem to vary between firms, and Viola Klein's study² included a number of firms where the attendance of married women was as good, or in a few firms, better than that of other women.

It was thought that a full analysis of the extent and causes of the rates of absence of the women who were interviewed would be beyond the scope of the study, but that it would be worth making some enquiry into the absence of married shiftworkers to see what factors seemed to

1 See Viola Klein - Employing Married Women. Institute of Personnel Management Occasional Papers No. 17 1961.

2 Ibid.

be in operation, and also how their rates of absence compared with the general picture of married women's performance. In order to keep the issue simple, absence was investigated by means of the interview and not for the firm as a whole.

a) Causes of Recent Absence:

Each woman was asked whether she had been absent from work within the month preceding the interview, and if she had, she was asked to give a reason for her absence. The answers were divided in two ways in order to clarify the main issues. In the first place, a distinction was drawn between women who were absent through sickness, and those who had been away for other reasons, as this is an important feature in the absence of married women. Secondly the length of absence was divided between those who were absent for one or two days, and those who were away for longer. This divided uncertificated sickness, which may not in fact be sickness at all, from illness which requires a doctor's certificate, and casual absence from longer leave.

The bus workers tended to be suspicious of any enquiry about why they were absent, and were very much more on the defensive than women in the other samples over this question. Presumably this was because the absence of an individual conductress can be much more disruptive than the absence of women in most other jobs owing to the nature of her work.

(Table 38 over)

Cause and Length of Absence - Married Women Table 38

Sample	Away ill		Away other reasons		Total
	1 - 2 Days	Longer	1 - 2 Days	Longer	
Canteen	-	3	-	-	3
Buses	9	12	5	-	26
Factory A	1	10	6	2	19
Factory B	4	3	8	1	16
Total	14	28	19	3	64

The period of a month was taken for this question as it was thought to be the longest period for which women might reasonably be expected to remember their absences, but there is no guarantee of accuracy.

The women who had been absent for longer than two days with certified sickness, had in fact been absent for a week or more in all cases except one, but whether the length of absence is due to the type of sickness, or to unwillingness to return to work it is not possible to say. The bus conductresses would need to be fully recovered in order to get through a full day's work, but a woman whose earnings are not essential may well be glad of the opportunity to stay at home until she feels quite well, whereas if her financial needs were greater, she might return earlier.

Most of the women with sickness absences of one or two days were bus conductresses, and unlike the women in the factory samples they had more short absences for sickness than for other reasons. These short absences had been taken for a variety of reasons; a bad headache, aching legs, the first day of a menstrual period, or just "feeling off colour", small ailments that make a day's work, and particularly a day on a bus, seem

unattractive.

The women who said that they had been absent but not sick, also had a variety of reasons. Four of the bus women said that they just took a day off, and would not say more than this, and the fifth had had leave over a weekend as she had had visitors coming. In the factories, eight women, including the three who were away for longer than three days, were absent because of illness in the family. Two felt tired so took a day off, two overslept, and thought it was not worth going to work, and the others went to look at a new flat, took a couple of days off for their daughter's wedding, helped a daughter to move house, tidied up the house after it had been decorated, or stayed at home to catch up with the housework. In some cases they were given leave by the firm, and in others they were not, but they saw themselves clearly as wives, mothers or housewives, with their duties as industrial workers taking second place.

None of the separated women were absent for more than two days, but of those with dependent children three were ill for one day, and two had a day off with a sick child. Of those with older children, one had a day off for her son's wedding, and one stayed at home as she was having workmen in.

b) Sick Children:

There were 52 out of the 72 households with children of school age or under, where the shiftworker could remember a child being ill, and in 32 cases she had had time off to look after the child. Apart from four cases where a husband on opposite shifts meant that neither of them

needed to take time off, there were only eleven households where someone else looked after the child.

Summary

Although these figures may not be a very sound basis for comparing the performance of married shiftworkers, with that of other married workers, the fact that 37% of the women had been absent in the month preceding the interviews seems to indicate that shiftwork does not prevent a high absence rate. The reasons given, apart from sickness, for taking time off were largely domestic. It seemed that absences in the bus group were more often due to personal causes than in the factory samples where the claims of home and family were plainer, but one cannot be sure of this. From the employer's point of view, the number of absentees was unnecessarily high.

The continuing need for married women in the labour market makes the consideration of the attitudes towards shiftwork, of both the women who work on shifts, and the firms that employ them, of great interest.

In view of their position on the labour market, the attitudes of married women are particularly significant. Since the majority of married women now at work are not the main source of their family's income, it is likely that they will look for work which will enable them to cope with their domestic responsibilities while holding a job. Examination of what they felt were the chief advantages and disadvantages of shiftwork should explain both the attraction that shift hours had for them, and the extent to which shiftwork is a suitable form of employment for married women. The attitudes of firms which employ married shift workers should reflect the problems that the employment of these women pose for them.

1. The Shiftworkers' Attitudes

a) The Advantages:

The overwhelming advantage of shiftwork, as far as the married women were concerned, was the opportunity it gave them to manage their shopping and housework during the day. The married woman who is employed on full time day work is compelled to do her shopping in her lunch hour, after work, or at the weekend, so that in general time is short, and the shops are at their most crowded. Nearly all the women had had experience as day workers since their marriage, and were very conscious of their

advantages in this respect. The arrangement of their shifts enabled them to choose the time when they did their shopping as if they were full time housewives. Many women said that they would never return to day work on the strength of this consideration alone, and even allowing for exaggeration, this illustrates the importance they attached to this advantage.

The opportunity to cope with other household chores was regarded as equally advantageous. Although some of the women did not like evening work, they did appreciate the time that they had at home during the day, in which they could get their housework done. They were then able to spend any free evenings as they wished. In addition, the women in the factories were able to do most of their housework during the week and leave the weekend free to spend at home, or to go out with their families.

The importance that the women attached to this aspect of shiftwork cannot be over-emphasised. Of the 165 women who expressed opinions 137 discussed this advantage, and for many of them this was the only point, either for or against shiftwork which they mentioned. From their point of view, shiftwork enabled them to combine their work with the execution of the most time consuming of their duties, and at the same time, to earn a higher wage than would have been possible on comparable day work. Throughout the discussions of the advantages of shiftwork, the emphasis was laid on the ways in which the women benefitted as housewives. With the exception of a minority who liked shifts because they could see more of their families, the other points were brought up by women who found that shiftwork gave them more free

time or those who thought that their domestic circumstances were particularly well suited to shiftwork. This last point seemed to depend more on the woman concerned than any other factor, since the types of household that were thought to be suitable covered all those included in the samples.

The Advantages of Shiftwork % Table 39

Sample	Housework %	More Time %	Type of Household %	Family %	D.K. %	Total No. of Women
Canteen	76	6	18	-	24	17
Buses	75	40	41	13	6	73
Factory A	91	38	22	2	19	37
Factory B	79	29	18	13	2	44
Total	80	25	29	7	9	171

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some of the women appear in more than one category.

The women who gave no reason for liking shiftwork were not necessarily dissatisfied with their work; in half the cases they had either never thought about it, or had been working shifts for so long that they could not think of anything to say on either side.

The attitudes of women with children under 16 were considered separately to see whether the presence of children affected the advantages of shiftwork. These women included a higher proportion of those who appreciated the advantages as housewives, and also of those who had more time at home, or who thought their family circumstances particularly

suitable for shiftwork. Since they had to make arrangements for their children in order to come out to work, shiftwork did not seem to bring them any special disadvantages.

b) The Disadvantages:

The disadvantages could be divided into two groups; those which affected the women personally, and those which they felt affected their families. A much larger proportion of the women could think of no disadvantages in shiftwork, than the proportion who felt that there were no advantages.

A number of women found shiftwork tiring to the extent of being a serious drawback. This was a smaller number than the women who had said that they were sometimes overtired, as not all women felt their fatigue constituted a definite disadvantage. A small group complained of personal disadvantages from working on shifts, and this included women with digestive troubles, and those who found their social life restricted.

The Disadvantages of Shiftwork % Table 40

Sample	Tiring %	Personal Effects %	Evenings weekends %	Family Left %	D.K. %	Total No. of Women
Canteen	29	-	18	11	53	17
Buses	10	12	28	22	47	73
Factory A	34	5	22	11	51	37
Factory B	21	7	9	4	70	44
Total	19	8	19	14	54	171

The percentages do not add up to 100 as some of the women are included in more than one category.

The women who disliked shiftwork because it meant working in the evenings or at the weekends, were those who felt that because of this they had less time to spend with their families. Those who complained of their families being left while they were at work, felt more directly responsible for their families. Though they did not think their families were really neglected, they felt rather guilty about leaving them. This, however, was a small group in comparison with the total numbers.

The married women with children had a slightly higher proportion of women who minded leaving their families, but otherwise there were no great differences in the range of opinions.

The proportion of women who thought that shiftwork might have some disadvantages for their families, together made up a third of the samples.

c) Evaluation:

It is significant that the advantages and disadvantages of shiftwork were discussed primarily in terms of housework, and the ways in which the women were personally affected. If these women were to work at all the problems of how to maintain their responsibilities as housewives, wives and mothers would have to be faced. In day work they had found that housework and shopping was the problem that taxed them most; shiftwork had greatly eased this situation, giving at the same time, more time to themselves, and a good wage. They usually managed to find some way of meeting their other responsibilities, and having become accustomed to it, found in general that they liked shiftwork

very much better than day work. With some women there was a conflict between the fact that they personally preferred shiftwork, and the adverse effects that they considered it had on their families, but such admissions were rare. In most cases the women thought that the money they earned fully justified their situation. The general impression was that the women liked shiftwork, but on one or two counts found that it has drawbacks.

Geoffrey Thomas, in his study ~~of~~ Women and Work, found that there were specific disadvantages experienced by married women at work. The most important of these was the difficulty of coping with shopping and housework, but women also complained of industrial conditions, low pay, long hours, and transport difficulties, and that they had so much to do they had no time for leisure activities or to spend with their families; a small number complained of feeling tired. Changes in industrial conditions since 1943 will have alleviated some of their complaints in this sphere, but in relation to the other points, the shiftworkers can be seen to be at an advantage. Their pay was good for women, their hours were not long, and they did not on the whole find transport a problem. They had sufficient time for such leisure time activities as they wished to engage in, and on the whole found that they were not rushed. The feeling that they did not see enough of their families was present, but in this they seemed little worse off than other working women. The only way in which they suffered more, was from fatigue.

It is difficult to arrive at a precise evaluation of these pros and cons, but the women were asked during the interview whether there

any other hours that they would prefer to work, in order to give a rough guide to satisfaction with shiftwork. 23% of the married women would have preferred other hours of work; roughly two thirds of them wanted day work, and the rest, non-alternating shifts.

The women who wanted daywork were equally divided between those who would have liked to give up shifts because they did not like them, and those who had more specific reasons. Some of these women were only doing shiftwork because their husbands were on shifts, and they disliked working in the evenings and at weekends, other with husbands on day work, wanted to work the same hours, and a small number of women thought that they ought to give up shifts for the sake of their families. In all cases the advantages of day work seemed to be its regularity, and the fact that it fitted in with the routine to which the women were accustomed. Most of these women had had relatively short service in shiftwork, but there were a number with service of three years or more.

The attraction of non-alternating shifts was in the idea of a regular day from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. every week. This would mean early rising, but would leave half of every working day free, and would give the women the evenings and weekends to spend with their families.

The separated women did not think very differently on this subject. With a few exceptions they liked shiftwork, and they found it convenient. As might be expected a rather lower proportion found shiftwork particularly advantageous because of the housework and shopping, since a number of them lived in shared households. Only two women were worried about their families.

2. The Firms' Attitudes

No official statement was obtained from the firms concerned on their attitudes to their shiftworkers, but during the course of the interviewing some idea of the firm's point of view was gathered, and it was felt that it was worth briefly discussing this as it makes an interesting comparison with the womens' approach. It was generally felt that shiftwork was not really a suitable form of work for married women since their other duties would be likely to conflict with their duty to their job, and it was felt that shiftwork would impose extra strain on them. While all shiftworkers^{ers} were, perhaps, in some danger of suffering from working to a routine that is not shared by the community at large, married women were a rather special case simply because of their roles as housewives, wives and mothers.

This opinion might seem at variance with the women's general satisfaction with their hours. It is worth noticing, however, that the women saw the advantages of shiftwork primarily in terms of their duties as housewives; when the effects on the family were mentioned, they were discussed primarily in terms of the disadvantages. The relatively high rates of wastage might point to the fact that while married women may like shiftwork, they may not stay in shift jobs for long. Most of the women thought that there were advantages in shiftwork, but the fact that its disadvantages affected their families could lead to resignation.

CONCLUSIONS

In an industrial society such as Britain today, the need for shiftworking is likely to expand rather than diminish; the provision of essential services must continue, and the demand for increasing productivity in industry will probably tend to a wider adoption of shift systems. Shiftworking will never be a suitable system for every industry, but shiftworkers are likely to remain a small but important body.

In discussions of the problems of shiftworking, the impact on the family has been generally neglected either because most shiftworkers seem satisfied with the hours that they work, or because it is thought that the only problem lies in an initial period of adjustment to the lives of those concerned. In fact very little is known about the impact of shiftwork on the home or family life.

Where married women are employed on shiftwork they face problems, not only as shiftworkers, but as housewives, wives and mothers, and the effect that shiftwork has, will depend on the nature and extent of their responsibilities in these roles.

When the relevant characteristics of the shiftworkers are compared with what is known about working women in general, there are some differences, but the married shiftworkers did not seem to be markedly different from other married women workers.

In respect of income, shiftworkers were rather better off than other working women. The combination of shorter hours with the payment of shift allowances, resulted in a higher return for their labour than they could have obtained by day work. With the exception of the canteen

group where pay was much lower than in the other samples, their earnings placed these women in the upper ranks of women wage earners.

The age groups in which the majority of these women were found, and the reasons they gave for coming out to work showed similarities with what is known of married women workers in general. Although the bus conductresses differed somewhat from the other groups both in their reasons for working, and in the proportion of their married lives that had been spent at work, most of the women were working, not from necessity, but in order to satisfy a range of wants that their husbands alone could not achieve, and in a smaller number of cases to give themselves some interest outside the home. The types of households from which the shiftworkers were drawn varied, but there were certain common characteristics. All the households tended to be small whatever their composition; over a third of the women lived alone with their husbands and though rather under half the women had dependent children, (a larger proportion than was anticipated) few had more than one or two children. Although this means that their domestic responsibilities were not very heavy, the women had duties as housewives, wives, and, in some cases, as mothers. The possible variations in the hours of husband and wife, however, and the relation of these to family structure, give a number of different ways in which households can be affected by shiftwork.

The aim of this study was not to prove that shiftwork was either a good or bad thing, but to investigate the relationship between the women's roles at work and at home. It was thought that the claims of these roles would sometimes conflict; apart from the major division

between the woman's responsibility to her employer and her domestic duties, shiftwork created a further conflict between a woman's role as housewife, and her role as wife and mother.

As housewives, shiftwork suited these women very well; most of them commented on its advantage over daywork in this respect. The arrangement of the relatively short working hours gave them sufficient opportunity to manage their shopping and housework during the day, and to have some time left for other pursuits. The fact that shiftworkers had more free time than they would have had on daywork did not necessarily mean that they had more time to spend with their families. Women in the factory samples had the opportunity to get their housework done during the week, which left them with relatively free weekends, but the number of women who found that shiftwork enabled them to see more of their families was small and was made up largely from women with young children.

The most direct way in which children were affected by shiftwork was by the absence of their mothers. The younger children had adequate arrangements made for their supervision, and very few of the children under 12 were left alone while their mothers were working. Those for whom comprehensive arrangements were not made, were only left for short periods. During the school holidays these periods could become more extensive, but the children had their mothers at home for half the day, and someone to be with them in the evenings.

Children over eleven were more likely to be considered old enough to look after themselves. Where there were younger children in the household they would probably be included in any arrangements

made, but otherwise they were left alone when necessary. In most cases these older children had company in the evenings, but their mothers did not feel that they had a duty to ensure this. On the basis of the material obtained from the interviews little can be said about the effects of their mothers' work on these older children, but it could be argued that even children of 14 or 15 need some sort of supervision outside school hours. A small number of women felt that they should try to be with their families in the evenings, but most of them thought that older children could be safely left to their own devices.

The women who had responsibilities as mothers found some way of meeting these, but with the exception of women who worked opposite shifts with their husbands, shiftwork made this task more difficult than it would be for day workers, because of the extensive period for which provision had to be made. Only women who could organise supervision during the day and in the evenings, or were prepared to leave children unsupervised could undertake this work.

In order to get a satisfactory picture of the effect of shift work on married life, it would have been necessary to interview both husbands and wives, but from the material obtained something of these effects can be deduced. The women's acceptance of their conventional role as wives was somewhat modified by full time work, but they regarded themselves primarily as homemakers. Their husbands helped them in the home, when it was necessary, or out of the goodness of their hearts, but rarely because either partner felt it was the husband's duty to do so. While a number of women expected their husbands to do

a little work in the house, very few demanded much help, even if they received it, and there was little evidence of this issue becoming a source of contention.

In discussing their marriages, several women introduced the idea of companionship. This was a rather vague concept, but implied a conscious idea of partnership in marriage, seen in terms of both shared leisure, and shared duties in their home, within the limits of a traditional division of labour. It was this aspect of their marriages that women felt was affected by shiftwork. Where husbands' hours were adjusted to those of their wives, there was increased scope for women to share their husbands' lives, but in other cases they were likely to see rather less of their husbands than they would if they were dayworkers. The proportion who mentioned this point as a positive disadvantage of shiftwork was not large, but the women were generally aware that this situation existed as a result of the hours they worked.

On the whole the women considered that the ways in which they benefited from shiftwork, both as wage earners, and as housewives outweighed the disadvantages in other spheres. This, however, does not mean that all the women were entirely successful in reconciling the conflicting claims made on them as workers, housewives, wives and mothers.

The employer of these workers was likely to find that their absence rates were high owing to their attitudes towards their domestic roles, and that general satisfaction with their work did not necessarily lead to long service. Although there were differences between the samples here, most of the women had taken up shiftwork without

having a strong reason for doing so, and had stayed on because they found it agreeable. In all probability these women would resign if other claims made on them became pressing. Shiftworking can be well suited to the employment of married women, particularly where women without children can work the same hours as their husbands; but where women have rather more extensive domestic responsibilities, or their husband's hours are not so convenient, the advantages that they derive from shiftwork may not keep them in the field for more than one phase of their working lives. The importance they attach to the conflicting forces affecting them, will depend largely on their own conception of their roles.

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Married Women Who Work on Shifts

The following questions were asked:-

- 1) Can you tell me who lives in your household?
- 2) Have you any children living away from home? If Yes, How many?
What are their ages?
- 3) Can you tell me the main reasons why you come out to work?
- 4) Why did you take this particular job?
- 5) Did you specially want a job with shifts? If Yes, what was your reason?
- 6) Were you married when you came here? If No, were you single, separated or widowed?
- 7) Have you worked ever since you got married? If No, how long have you had as a housewife?
- 8) Have you had any other job where you worked on shifts? If Yes, What was it, How long were you there, what hours did you work, were you married at the time?
- 9) If you could choose, what hours would you most like to work?
- 10) What is your husband's job?
- 11) What hours does he work?
- 12) How does he feel about the hours you work?
- 13) How do you travel to and from work?
- 14) How long does the journey take you?

(For women with dependent children)

- 15) Do you make any special arrangements to have your children looked after while you are at work? If yes, what arrangements?
- 16) Did you make any special arrangements during the last school holidays? If yes, what arrangements?
- 17) Last time a child was ill who looked after it?
- 18) Have you been off work within the last month? If Yes, what was the reason? How long were you away?
- 19) Do you mind telling me how old you are?
- 20) How old were you when you married?
- 21) Do you live in a House, Flat, Room, with Relations?
If in a house, Owned or Rented?
How many rooms do you have the use of?
- 22) Do you do all the housework yourself? If no, who helps you?
What do they do? Is this more or less than you do?
- 23) Do you ever use a laundry or Launderette?
- 24) Have you a washing Machine, spin drier, refrigerator or vacuum cleaner?
- 25) When does your family have the main meal of the day?
- 26) Who prepares it?
- 27) Do you or your husband use a canteen at work?
- 28) Do the children have school dinners?
- 29) When you have a free evening what do you usually do?
- 30) Have you been able to take an evening out within the last fortnight?
- 31) Did you take a holiday away from home last year? If Yes, was it a family one?

32) What do you think are the advantages of working on shifts?

33) What do you think are the disadvantages?

34) Do you ever feel over-tired?

APPENDIX 3.

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