MANAGERS IN UK STEEL, 1870-1960:

a sociological study of their early backgrounds

and careers

JOHN GRAHAM OWEN

Master of Science

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

October 1993

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

MANAGERS IN UK STEEL, 1870-1960

a Sociological Study of their early Backgrounds and Careers.

JOHN GRAHAM OWEN
MASTER OF SCIENCE
1993.

A sample of eighty seven industrial steel managers in UK firms is taken from biographical sources that include trade journals like "Production Engineer", and "The Institute Of Mechanical Engineers". Data upon managers' social, educational and occupational characteristics in industrial to later industrial society, 1870-1960, are collected as a means to discuss issues arising from a contention that the British social system has probably been elitist in being more readily prepared to accept individuals from advantaged social and educational backgrounds into higher status management careers whilst denying access to those less than favourably advantaged, of management potential through later experience, that may have contributed to the UK's competitive decline in steel.

The research divides into three thirty year cohorts. This helps the researcher to discern generational differences in occupational status that point to elitist management recruitment practice: whether preferences have been to select managers from middle class backgrounds with a broad education or if they have been more prepared to recruit managers of less favourable backgrounds into lower grade occupations and promote on the basis of experience. In each cohort, a general expected tendency is for managers of favourable backgrounds to occupy a higher career entry grade that furthers their chances of attaining a top management position in fewer moves in less time than managers less favourably inclined.

Chapter 1 explores the research problem. Chapter 2 identifies previous research literature in the field of management careers and chapter 3 describes the theory of elitism in relation to managerial socialisation. Chapter 4 consolidates this theme with specific reference to instances in the research literature that suggest elitist tendencies within family, education and occupation experiences. Chapter 5 describes the methodology applied and chapters six and seven describe, analyse and evaluate the managerial characteristics, concluding as to improvements of the situation and suggesting the direction and focus of future empirical research.

C O N T E N T S

L I S T   O F   F I G U R E S

ABSTRACT

To establish the extent to which elitism has prevailed in
managerial career opportunities within three thirty year
cohorts up to 1960, social origins, educational
establishments attended and qualifications achieved were
compared to career entry grades and career destinations from
a sample of eighty seven British Steel Managers.

The research literature in the field of industrial managers
points to elitism in management recruitment practice in the
British steel industry. This appears to occur through
British society's tendency to separate the needs of industry
from the needs of education leading to the gentrification of
managerial occupations at the expense of a distaste for
manually regarded industries and occupations.

The empirical research upon British Steel Managers
undertaken for this thesis substantiates an observed close
association between managerial social, educational and
occupational reproduction. An interpretative evaluation is
that managers born into the two categories of middle class
social origins generally preserve inter-generational status.
A deviation from this is in cases where steel managers born
into social class II move upwards into top management and in
cases where social class I born steel managers move
downwards into middle management.

The type of educational establishment attended appears more
important to a management career in the earlier two cohorts
examined whereas an arts or science degree tends to shift
emphasis from a mainly ascriptive career type to one more
balanced in terms of educational achievement in the latest
cohort.

For the working and lower classes, practical experience and
opportunism can enable a successful managerial career

appropriately designated as the "opportunist" manager.
This being the case particularly in the 1870-1900 cohort,
became increasingly infrequent in the next two cohorts with
an emphasis more upon sound educational achievement: the
proportion rising from the bottom becomes less than before
as educational qualifications become increasingly
differentiated and raised in terms of standards and types up
to and beyond 1960.

The gradual requirement for greater educational achievement
in the 1931-60 cohort has to a large extent strengthened
middle class lines. Working and lower classes are seen to
be more disadvantaged due to lack of early anticipatory
socialisation for a managerial career. Where they have
attained middle or top management appointments the career
has generally typified several occupational moves with
initially greater inertia in non-managerial and lower
managerial occupations before progression upwards that
generally indicates haphazard occupational choice.

Therefore, the degree of elitism to which an increasingly
elitist ideology attached to senior management recruitment
of industrial steel managers, as evaluated in this research,
supports the view that there is a distinct and growing
tendency towards elitism in the sense that the social system
consistently reproduces the same cultural managerial
statuses inter-generationally. This results in an under-
representation of managers in middle and top management from
less than favourable social origins.

A recommendation for an improvement of the situation is to
introduce fairer measures of educational equality of
opportunity that could well involve changes in school
curricula that includes teaching subjects pertinent to
industrial management on a wider scale.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Overview Of The Problem

The UK steel industry's poor competitive strength in world
markets from 1870 to 1960, tends more often than not to be
highlighted as an economic rather than a social related
issue. The following research intends to redress this
emphasis by adopting a sociological perspective of the
underlying problems as being more intimately associated
with elitist ideology within traditional British family,
educational and occupational institutions.

Previous research literature tends to suggest there to
have been an elitist approach to management selection that
is traceable to advantages ascribed at birth. Within
early family life, values and expectations of a management
career are inculcated by parents. To be born into a
family where support and encouragement is given to
learning, backed by adequate resources that can ensure
later high educational achievement, helps towards a head
start on the management career ladder. Families of lower
social status are at a greater disadvantage economically,
in not being able to provide the resources necessary to
achieve the educational standards employers look for in
management recruitment. This disadvantage is added to
where, to a large extent, internal management training is
neglected or even absent, that otherwise could improve the
chances of selection into managemnent to those of proven
experience in lower status occupations.

UK manufacturing industries, including steel, appear to
have largely rejected internal training as part of planned
occupational experience throughout recent social history
that has made planning for a management career difficult
for those individuals ascribed lower social origins who
have under-achieved academically. Individuals can rarely
be considered as serious contenders for management in
this situation unless they are prepared to overcome their

initial disadvantages by undertaking part-time study,
usually at their own expense, whilst in employment. In
instances where an interpretation of "training" by firms
emphasises experience on the job combined with the
individual's responsibility for further education to
improve theoretical knowledge could contribute to denying
managers of lower social origins and educational
backgrounds the more general skills and knowledge to
fulfill managerial roles successfully. It could well be
that firms have tended to recognise an early lack of
social advantage and achievement as a justifiable cause to
reject individuals of proven experience as being
unsuitable to undertake managerial responsibilities.

The rejection of formal education and training in internal
management selection in UK industry generally, led to
weaker competition from the 1870's, (Keeble,S.,1992:65-
83). The rejection has contributed to the rift between
the needs of education on the one hand and the needs of
industry, including steel, on the other. The mismatch of
goal congruency is suggested as being partly responsible
in gradually undermining the steel industry's
effectiveness as a 20th century competitor in national and
international markets.

Intrinsic Interest In The Research
A personal interest in sociology has encouraged
undertaking research into managerial careers which
involves analysing inter-relationships between family,
educational and occupational characteristics. This is
made possible through the inherent nature of inequality in
the British social system that allows the researcher to
interpret the regulation in social selection of managers
through the various contributory institutions. Different
career types can be identified by characteristics such as
the mainly ascriptive managerial career of an individual
born into a a family-owned firm, or a career for example,

based mainly on achievement where a manager may have
undertaken part-time study as a means to secure promotion
from basic occupational grades.

Why Elitism Can Be A Problem To A Managerial Career
An elitist ideology to management selection in UK steel
related firms relevantly concerns two inter-related
issues. Firstly, there is the tendency for managers of
lower social origin and lower educational achievement to
be generally under-represented at middle and higher
management levels, as indicated in research literature.
It appears that little has been done to improve their
chances of promotion despite progressive educational
reforms throughout the 1870-1960 cohorts. Secondly, is
the issue of the way in which firms have tended to ignore
management training as a long term strategic objective.

Arising in the first issue is to question the adequacy of
the state education system in the preparation of a
management career to those ascribed less than favourable
social origins. Can it be true to say that the state
education system has generally been prepared to underplay
the role of providing a basic grounding in management
education by focussing to reproduce lower statuses to suit
the demands of local industries whilst private sector
education has tended to reproduce consistently managers of
higher academic attainment from the more prestigious
educational establishments such as a minor or major public
school and university? If this has always been the
general tendency, it could well be said that managers from
disadvantaged backgrounds are rarely considered as serious
contenders for higher management positions.

It is reasonable to suppose that the type of education
undergone and family influence are critical factors in
anticipating management careers. Yet a paradox is that
despite the various legislative educational reforms in the

later 19th and 20th centuries, any marked reduction in
class divisiveness in education has not significantly
provided a fairer system to open up management
opportunities. Thus despite the 1944 Education Act, in a
1950's study, there were still predicted to be fewer
managers rising from the bottom, (The Acton Society Trust,
1956:18) in a 1950's study.

The second issue relates to the way management has
developed from earlier haphazard practices in British
industrialisation that have continued to undermine firms'
attitudes to management training. Some firms have been
more successful than others at implementing management
training schemes, though generally, short-term low-cost
criteria have prevailed. For firms to continue to ignore
longer term internal management training invariably means
weakening relative competitive positions unless expertise
is bought in and usually, the larger-sized firms only are
able to afford this.

Focus Of The Problem
To discern instances where elitism can occur in managerial
careers, specific questions to address include: to what
extent can it be argued that career entry grade and final
career destination depend upon the social and educational
backgrounds of managers and are there differences in each
of the cohorts analysed? Do intervening variables account
for any observed differences in career entry and career
destination from the sample such as experience in other
firms? Is there evidence to suggest steel-related firms
recruit lower grade managers in terms of specialised
educational and occupational experiences and middle/higher
grade management from general experiences that emphasise a
marketable advantage for individuals in possession of
certain characteristics?

CHAPTER 2

THE CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS TO THIS RESEARCH ON MANAGERIAL
CAREERS

Erickson,C.,(1959), researched the similarities and
differences between the social, educational and occupational
characteristics of managers in steel and hosiery firms in
and around Sheffield and Nottingham. Using documentary
methodology, five differences were evaluated as being
significant in managerial characteristics between the two
industries.

Firstly, the hosiery industry did not introduce
"professionally-trained" men in terms of credentialised
educationalists to leading positions in the 20th century.
This suggests initially that the hosiery industry could well
have relied more upon specialised experience by promoting
from within firms and that individuals with the right
technical experience would have stood a good chance of
attaining middle or top management status, including those
from poorer social and educational backgrounds. Yet, the
second significant difference suggests this not to be the
case.

Hosiery has had no technically-trained leaders for
management as such, in terms of individuals having served an
apprenticeship and rising from the bottom. An implication
here, is that of a promotion bar having operated at the
supervisory levels in which it was more likely than not for
firms to have relied upon recruitment policies into
management that favoured those of middle class origins who
received a broader general education. The specialised
trainee type of career background was probably more
disadvantaged in that management practice required decision
making skills that could not be readily assimilated without
further internal training for which there was a reluctance
by firms to pursue.

Hosiery has been more exclusively inbred, seeking both capital and talent from within the industry itself, and it has made use of more men with experience in only one firm. The generations of family ties enabled the accumulation of a cultural advantage in skills and knowledge that was carried forward especially in family-owned firms.

Lastly, hosiers since the innovating generations, have been younger management groups. This suggests that to have been born into a family with managerial experience and knowledge of the industry, generally improves the chances of a first career entry grade into management to accelerate the chances of a middle or top management position. An inter-generational accumulation of knowledge could well be a reason why firms have not tended to implement costly internal training schemes, though in the long term this has most likely to have been a contributory if not prime cause of the industry's reduced competitive strength.

Two broad similarities between steel and hosiery were evident with regards to managerial characteristics. Firstly, both industries experienced a falling-off of technically-trained and experienced management after a period of increased technological innovation. Secondly, the managerial revolution was not complete in either industry, up to 1950. Lifetime salaried administrators were still in a minority, though there were gradual increases from 1870, in the numbers of salaried staff with the growth in popularity of the limited company with the inherent advantages of separate corporate identity and limited liability.

Both industries are indicative of a strong cultural link with earlier industrial eras in which management practice was significantly influenced by entrepreneurs. This is probably why both industries have undergone decline from the 1870's in that the managerial philosophy of newer industries

has not been readily assimilated into hosiery and steel.

The research evidence cited upon the probable relationships of the different managerial characteristics make for further research in this field of enquiry, in particular, to attempt to explain the notion that elitism has prevailed to varying extents within manufacturing industries throughout recent socio-historical experience; to suggest how improvements may be made in education and training of future managers that could directly improve competitive strength.

Lee,G.,(1981:37-46), researched researched the family, educational and occupational socialisation of Coventry executives. The influence of early family and educational life experiences of managers upon career entry and career mobility is described. Here, the family unit is stated as being an initial ascriptive element which locates an individual in the social structure from which later achievement is made. It is emphasised that a range of educational and occupational opportunities are open to individuals derived from the position of the family within the social structure. Children born into middle class homes develop a different set of life chances to children born into homes of working class parents in terms of resources that enhance childrens' opportunities to achieve within the educational system. Entry into high status and high income occupations is closely related to the type of secondary education children undertake. Children in families with the greatest range of opportunities within the educational system will tend to benefit from a greater career entry choice.

In the same chapter, the education system is highlighted as being a formative influence to career progression. The different educational institutions such as public schools and grammar schools closely relate with entry into various sectors of the hierarchised occupational structure. The

education system directly influences career entry by channelling academic abilities which are more pronounced as children progress in the system. The type of school directs children into different types of career. The link between school and occupation is further enhanced by higher/further education, as entry into the higher strata of the occupational structure is more likely if post-school qualifications are obtained. The type of education undergone and the extent and kind of educational qualifications obtained are linked to the timing of occupational entry and subsequent career progression.

Clements,R.V.,(1958), is research based on a sample of nearly seven hundred UK managers who were interviewed at all levels within mainly public limited companies. Of particular use is the typology of career patterns that were identified from the different social characteristics of managers.

A mainly ascriptive type of manager is described as the "crown prince", through occupational inheritence, having undergone exclusive education and having a father of high occupational status which enhanced upward career mobility. The ex-managerial trainee type originated from the higher social ranks. The fathers' occupations included a clergyman and prosperous manufacturer in the sample.

The career type described as the "expert", trained before entering industry, was identified in family origin as between lower middle and established middle class. A typical father's occupation included a bank manager and a police sergeant. A sound educational background was usual in the form of attendance at a grammar school and provincial university.

The special entrants were identified as those whose occupations were settled by private and individual

negotiation where none was marked out for management but
nevertheless had social advantages, though not considered
the most useful means of all social connections, whose
fathers included a proprietor of a ship building yard and a
newsagent.

Two other types were sub-divided by school leaving age and
educational experiences, identified as managers having
"risen from the bottom". The split was made on educational
differences such as the undertaking of an apprenticeship,
part-time study and being in possession of qualifications.
This group left school at fifteen but were differentiated
from those who left at an earlier age without
qualifications. These men were by no means mainly from the
working class. A substantial proportion originated from
the lower middle classes.

An advantage of the typology is that in future research,
including that for this thesis, comparisons can be made to
establish trends in the types of managers appointed in firms
inter-generationally and intra-generationally.

Clarke,(1955), researched the social and educational
backgrounds and career patterns of managers of large-sized
firms that included a range of industries such as textiles
and chemicals in and around Manchester. Educational
differences were identified as being prime indicators of
career mobility. Amongst the summary of findings was the
tendency for part-time study as being a main educational
route for managers, a trend contrasted with other studies of
managers in smaller firms who were observed to have less
grounding in part-time education as well as a tendency
towards less academic ability.

The findings can be compared with the empirical research for
this thesis to see if there have been changes in the
education of managers, for instance, whether or not a

typical managing director is more likely to have studied for
graduate and postgraduate qualifications on a part-time
basis whilst undergoing a career or whether qualifications
have generally been gained prior to career entry.

The Acton Society Trust, (1956), a study in the 1950's,
assessed the social and educational backgrounds and career
patterns of 3,327 managers of twenty seven British private
manufacturing organisations employing over ten thousand
employees nationwide. The aim was to discover whether
differences in social backgrounds and careers between
managers in different grades pointed to conclusions about
the extent to which company practices had the effect of
favouring some types of background rather than others, and
if so, which factors appeared generally advantageous from
the point of view of promotion, and in what order of
importance, (ibid:19). The results are analysed
quantitatively and qualitatively, providing a valuable
source of information for comparative purposes. Descriptive
analysis considers each company in terms of thirteen
functional areas of management participation including
methods of management selection, formal assessments upon
performance, training for management and the degree of
internal promotion. Other relevant analysis concerns the
changes in the proportion of managers with different types
of first employment which is indicative of upward and
downward career mobility in this and similar comparable
studies.

The summary, (ibid:18), states that the analysis of the
background of the younger managers is likely in future
generations to emphasise management succession in terms of
better educated and qualified professionals. It also seems,
as might be expected, that with more educational
opportunities available since the 1950's that the proportion
of managers rising from the bottom will be less than before.
The extent that this is now the case is highly probable

though subject to ongoing confirmation through research
such as that conducted for this thesis.

The study by Pollard,(1965), is a general socio-historical
text that describes the origins and developments of
management practice over industrial timescales. Later
chapters reinforce an earlier descriptive coverage of the
development of large-scale enterprise in British industry by
considering the social characteristics of management
including their education and training. The extent to which
regard was given to each of these characteristics is a
measure of prevailing social attitudes to management
practice at fixed points in the time-scale he examined from
1780 to about 1870.

It is stated (ibid:147) that for managing an early 19th
century iron works, technical competence was the least
important requirement since the right sort of man would soon
be expected to achieve it. Three main traits of successful
managers are identified by Pollard: "natural" ability which
stresses personal characteristics showing through which in
order of priority are cited as character, capacity and then
technical competence. The lower regard for technical
competence seems to have had a significant bearing upon the
attitudes towards management education and training in this
industry.

Education and training of managers is described in the
earlier industrial phases of the 19th century. The village
school is stated as the main source of elementary education
followed by an apprenticeship to a local craftsman. It was
the skilled men in the building and metal trades in
particular who enhanced the potential wealth of
entrepreneurial ability that formed an important reservoir
of managerial personnel acting as a driving force of
technical progress by those who undertook formal education
and training. Society grew in divisiveness with the

consequences of industrial and economic expansion. This
required adaption to new standards and methods of formal
management training.

Through the development of early education it is implied
that this became increasingly differentiated downwards.
There became a functional need for industry and society to
stratify the educational system, which meant packaging,
labelling, sifting and grading of individuals. This enabled
sources of managerial talent to be selected through higher
status education that usually meant at that time undertaking
education in a major or minor public school.

The literature covers the social origins and destinations of
managers at fixed timescales and is a guide to the
prevailing recruitment practices with which occupational
sociology partly concerns itself: as do the more recent
sociological studies of 20th century British industrial
management cited here.

CHAPTER 3 ELITISM AND MANAGERIAL SOCIALISATION:
THE THEORY

Concept Of Elitism

In British society, family and education institutions
provide central life chances and experiences through values
and expectations from which later occupational segregation
and integration evolve. Occupational elites are those
groups most effective in maintaining barriers to entry.
When barriers to entry are strong the degree to which
elitism prevails is most likely to be predominant.

The following interpretation of an elite most relevant to
the research for this thesis is taken from (Giddens,1974:
1-20). Here, elitism is described as primarily associated
with three inter-related dimensions with particular
significance to managerial careers. Firstly, elitism in
managerial occupational recruitment relates to the degree in
which British social institutions are open or closed in
favour or otherwise of individuals with certain
characteristics. The more open the recruitment practice,
the less likely elitism prevails to favour a privileged
minority. The degree to which recruitment channels may be
open or closed become persuasive in establishing whether or
not elitism prevails as a dysfunction to fair competition.
Secondly, in analysing the structure of elite groups, their
level of social integration and moral integrity is important
as this establishes the necessary cohesion to bind group
interests. Social integration concerns the frequency and
nature of the social contacts and relationships between
elite groups that for instance includes marriage ties
between families in business who would wish to pass on their
interests inter-generationally.

How far managers are conscious of an overall group
solidarity in terms of moral integration influences the
degree of managerial elitism. When moral and social
integration are high, elites are best able to maintain

exclusiveness and solidarity. When moral and social
integration are lower, two types of conflict can undermine
elite solidarity, that of latent and manifest conflict.
Latent conflict is less serious in that consensus decision
making is a means of resolving group interests without
significant threat to an exixting power structure. Manifest
conflict is inherently more unstable where there is greater
threat to the power structure. Manifest conflict is a more
destructive force that can be directed from below to those
in higher echelon management, for instance, as could occur
by strong trade union claims for excessive labour
settlements that could undermine the economic power of
existing elites.

Thirdly, relative power determines managerial elites and
where power is largely dispersed, there are limitations upon
elites derived from constraints imposed from below. When
power is less dispersed, the closure of channels into elite
positions usually enables those in power to secure hegemony.
This is likely to include an economic advantage facilitated
by the political system that maintains the status quo.

The dimensions of recruitment, structure and power influence
ascription and achievement. Adherence to career entry
requirements based upon credentialised qualifications and
early experiences are a means of integrating social
solidarity to constrain membership. From this emerges
discernable relationships between occupational socialisation
and that of family and educational socialisation. Early
social ties in family and educational life can either
enhance or deter acceptance into a management career through
significant others. So elitism in this research context, is
interpreted within a family, educational and occupational
paradigm of open recruitment that is subject to changes of
mobility, upwards and downwards, within and between
generations, (see figure 5, page 44).

Elitism And The Family

The theory based upon family socialisation is well
summarised by Farmer,M.,(1970:104-109). Here it is stated
that the findings of all the major studies reach a measure
of agreement that parental attitudes, particularly those of
the father, are critical to a child's educational
development and later achievement. Attitudes towards career
preparation differ according to social class in as much that
middle class attitudes stress achievement motivation towards
anticipating a management career whereas working class
families are generally unable to prepare for this to the
same extent because of pressing maintenance needs.

In a society in which status is rigidly ascribed, (e.g. 19th
century Britain), little or no opportunity for upwards
mobility would be possible to those of humbler origins. In
a meritocracy such as now operates in British society,
however, the educational system is a means for individuals
from divergent social backgrounds to anticipate a management
career. Parental guidance and encouragement within the
family unit is an important element of status passage,
though families differ in being able to provide adequately
for this.

Upwards social mobility has become a viable goal for some
who would previously have been excluded from higher status
occupations such as in industrial management. An instance
where this applies began with grammar schools where the
working class through ability could achieve qualifications
that could further their career prospects. Family
background can often be a deciding factor in educational
opportunities, particularly when ability is borderline. The
father's attitude is critical to education in laying the
foundation for a successful management career.

Research suggests that the children who do worst of all at
school are those whose fathers are apathetic, unambitious

and in jobs without prospects. This category is more likely
to include a large number of manual workers who tend to be
more hostile towards education. Likewise, fathers who have
undergone successful careers which give them personal
satisfaction and who have moved up the social scale do not
have the most successful children at school possibly because
they have been too pre-occupied with realising their own
ambitions to give enough attention and encouragement to
their children.

The above mentioned research on family socialisation carried
out by Lee,G.,(1981) and others raises questions about
family life on the themes of conformity and obedience and
achievement motivation. Conformity and obedience were
measured on an authoritarianism to liberalism scale. To
enquire into parents' concern with achievement, questions
probed the extent to which parents expected, demanded and
encouraged ocupational achievement from their children, the
responses of which provided the basis of the ascription
versus achievement family socialisation scale.

The findings indicated that directors and managers generally
conform to the picture of working class families being more
authoritarian than middle class families and that this
supports the literature on family socialisation generally.
On the question of parental concern for achievement, there
were no obvious class differences that emerged; the families
of directors born into social class IV were the least
concerned with their son's achievement, though a small group
of directors born into the lowest social class belonged to
families who were eager that there sons should do well in a
career. This latter finding contradicted the literature
that stresses the middle class child is universally taught
the values of achievement more strongly than in a working
class home.

Apart from this study there appears little research that

inter-relates in an explicit way elitism per se to family, educational and occupational institutions. The general tendency emphasises that middle class family advantages do allow a head start to a managerial career, and that in the context of there being a limited number of managerial training and career opportunities available at any particular point in time, those individuals ascribed disadvantages or restricted life chances in early family and educational life seem to indicate a crowding-out effect that constrains the chances of a successful managerial career unless ground is made up by later educational achievement. In the event of upwards mobility of the family due to promotion of the father, this advantage gained by achievement becomes an ascriptive element which is passed on in the family to the next generation. Downwards mobility causes the opposite effect though this can be compensated for in later generations by hard work and application of intelligence that can be seen by significant others as deserving of promotion.

Having given a picture of direct family influence on social mobility, particularly the father's occupation and attitudes to learning, there is at the same time extra-familial constraints involving economics and politics that tend to produce small changes rather than radical ones in the social structure over time. Changes in social mobility that do occur can take a long time generationally and that these are a direct result of pressure within and between different social classes. This will clearly have considerable significance for the interpretation of findings of the research on UK steel managers undertaken for this thesis.

Elitism And British Education

A particular feature of the early educational life of individuals that probably goes as far as any other in indicating incidences of elitism in the UK was the practice and effect of streaming in the widest and narrowest terms.

Not only was streaming a common practice of distinguishing ability within classes of primary and secondary schools within similar age bands but also rank order was applied rigorously in the secondary stage of education, from the age of eleven years to school leaving age.

From the 1870's up until about 1940, various educational reforms more or less concerned increasing the school leaving age, which in the later 19th century/earlier 20th century was regarded as a protection for children from being subject to commercial exploitation by unscrupulous employers. Recent socio-historical reforms in education in the state system really began with the Education Act of 1944. The Act emerged from debates on education of the 1920's and 1930's and reflected an attempt to build a fine new world in which the disillusionment of the 1930's and the deprivations of war would be foregotten partly by providing a new educational system, (Kelly,1987:42-3).

This laid the basis for distinguishing between individuals of different levels of ability. In the report stage, three broad identifiable types of individuals were the academic type, being at home with abstract ideas attributing cause and effect, the technical type being inclined to mechanics and the workings of the physical environment and the practical type who lacked these attributes, being more at home with concrete ideas. For each type of individual it was proposed to create a tripartite system of education that would cater for them in grammar schools, technical schools and secondary modern schools. In effect, the system turned out to be bipartite as technical schools never really established a significant foothold in the system after the Act.

The 1944 Education Act had a profound effect upon the British state education system that was driven by a philosophy of traditional learning that emphasised the

transmission of knowledge as an objective value rather than
as a process that matched the needs of individual
development. In this respect, the state education system
was geared to stratification and competition that more
likely went beyond serving egalitarian needs to the extent
of being competitively dysfunctional in as much that
recruitment, structure and power combined to disadvantage
individuals with less than favourable ascribed social
backgrounds.

An added dimension that undermined social disadvantage was
the prevailing ideology regards "intelligence", as this was
profoundly integrated into formal education and teaching
strategies. Cyril Burt's view that intelligence was innate,
general cognitive development that could be objectively
measured, virtually condemned those of average or less than
average intelligence the necessary parity of esteem to
successfully anticipate a managerial career.

A competitive ethos in state education was probably
dysfunctional to fair and effective competition by
emphasising the role of traditional learning in schools.
Reference to case studies from anthropology can illustrate
this point in the text, (Stones,E.,1969:339-49). Whenever
children are placed in rank order the success of one child
depends on the failure of another. The positive
reinforcement and corresponding emotional state of the child
at the top has its opposite in the negative reinforcement
and adverse emotional state of the child at the bottom. Only
one child in the whole class can possibly experience a total
feeling of success; every other child in the class will have
failed in some degree.

In this way the effect of intense competition is
dysfunctional to the learning process in terms of task
accomplishment. It can be plausibly suggested that this
experience socialises the child differentially to future

occupational success and negative or positive aspirations to a future managerial career.

The working class were predominately subject to this style of education, at least up to 1960 before comprehensive education was introduced, whereas middle class education in the form of private schools was not affected by the 1944 Education Act. The state and private education sectors have always been separate systems with different philosophies as to what counts as valid knowledge, including technical and managerial skills, and how this is transmitted.

Pre-comprehensive secondary education in the state system was peopled mainly by the working class who were members subject to authoritarian teaching styles that stressed physical punishment for disobedience which most probably had a detrimental effect upon real learning in terms of career preparation for the majority in this situation. A more liberal approach to teaching style with fair discipline to reward and punishment would have stood in good stead for a managerial career, those individuals undergoing a private education. The skimming of academic ability in the state education system, particularly at the secondary stage, would have disadvantaged the vast majority of individuals going through this selective process. The subsequent effects of such educational experiences upon achievement motivation of the eighty seven sampled UK steel managers examined for this thesis is clearly important.

Elitism In The Occupational Structure
Occupational status is a main means of locating the individual within the social system and structure. The following theoretical appraisal is drawn from the work of Hall,R.,(1963:258-261). Here, he cites Caplow as suggesting three central factors in the occupational structure that indicate social status: aggregation, differentiation and rationalisation. Additionally, the

characteristics of occupations that contribute to their
various social rankings include the nature of work and where
it is performed. Whether the work is group or individual
task based and the different entry requirements for
occupations have a bearing upon elitist tendencies.

For aggregation, the tendency towards differential statuses
in professional and quasi-professional occupations as the
twentieth century passes has led to a greater anonyminity
and impersonality to an occupation. In this sense, the job
description indicates the importance of the work not what
the individual actually does. The duties are ascribed to an
office or position rather than to the individual so that the
expectations of peers are seen as responses to the
occupation title. In large sized-firms with steep
hierarchies, top and middle management would tend towards a
greater degree of impersonality and prestige than say
equivalent management in smaller family type firms.

Similarly, with occupational differentiation, higher status
is ascribed to individuals in positions higher up in the
management hierarchy with response to job title rather than
the personal characteristics of performance being stressed.
High status occupational titles give an aura of greater
respectfulness. For example, more prestige would be given
to an occupational title of Executive Managing Director than
say Senior Manager.

From industrialising to later mature industrial society,
occupational differentiation has increased to the extent
that the opportunities for elitist recruitment practices are
likely to be prevalent due to the professionalisation or
attempted professionalisation of management specialisms.
During the twentieth century, as management has progressed
more on scientific lines, functional activities become more
sensitively associated with business success and failure.
Accounting and legal functions are two such professions that

are professionally differentiated in themselves according to levels of attainment and experience, such that the more successful businesses of the twentieth century now invariably employ qualified solicitors and accountants as executive elites. It will be of interest to test this tendency in the sample of UK steel managers examined for this thesis, (see chapter 7 below).

The rationalisation of occupational status substitutes formal controls of behaviour for informal, personal and spontaneous controls. An example of this in practice is where an individual reaches a top management post through being a member of a family firm, where it is now (in the 1990's) more readily assumed that this achievement has been on merit not the fact that the son's father is managing director. Today, if a person is not promoted it is also generally assumed that his performance on the job is below that required to merit consideration, not the fact that he has ascribed disadvantages. This leads to the assumption that occupational entry has been decided by scientific objectivity based on an individual's intelligence, ability, character and personal acceptability. The assumption is that the formal controls of selection are themselves rational and this is a factor that can encourage elitist recruitment practices.

Furthermore, there are characteristics of occupations that contribute to a spectrum of occupational rankings. A number of these can be considered as elements contributing to the formation of managerial elites.

The specific nature of the work performed is differentiated according to status. Where the activity is involved with a manipulation of symbols this is indicative of high status, particularly in scientific employment. Where the work involves social manipulation, such as in industrial management, this can be a significant attribute to

conferring status, particularly where the status sensitively
influences the careers of others within management. Lower
status is attributed to occupations that involve physical
objects, particularly the physical contact and movement of
them. The longer an individual is exposed to this type of
work, for instance a warehouse supervisor in a machine shop,
this may act as a bar to promotion into management.

Prerequisites for entry into an occupation are fundamental
to occupational status. Careers can be distinguished as
early-and late-ceiling occupations where usually the higher
the ceiling the higher the qualifications and the longer the
time of study for entry. The training is more rigorous for
late-ceiling careers and tends to require specialist
knowledge that may need on-going study to enable a high
level of proficiency. Usually, high status occupations
demand relevant generalist and specialist knowledge normally
beyond individuals at a supervisory level. A high level of
knowledge and experience gained in say marketing, would
credentialise an individual in being more cut out for a
marketing director's postion than say a salesman with years
of experience on the road.

There is a distinction in status between individual and
group-based tasks. Individual based tasks are generally
ascribed higher status as this implies the individual is
capable of accomplishing the task alone.

There are differences in status between supervised and non-
supervised work. Those being supervised are ascribed lower
status but the degree of supervision also influences status
in as much that where the supervision is continuous this
equates with lower status. Where the type of responsibility
and supervision is at an executive level there is the chance
that hidden agendas can affect career outcomes especially
where an executive supervisor sees as a threat the ambition
of a quick-learning subordinate to the extent of forwarding

unfavourable reports that are largely undeserved that reduce
the subordinates chances of promotion.

The location of an occupation affects status. Generally,
higher status is ascribed to an office setting rather than a
factory and a research laboratory more than a machine shop.
The type of industry varies in the amount of status accorded
to it as well; the aviation industry has higher status than
say the railways and the electronics industry more than
heavy engineering. This is suggestive that individuals can
come up against strong opposition in terms of regarded
rational experience towards promotion in management
occupations if their career paths have at any time involved
inter-industry changes, where in the opinion of significant
others the experience may be played down even though in a
practical sense the experience would be worthy of
consideration for promotion. Here again, evidence to test
this will be adduced from the careers of our sample of
eighty seven UK steel managers.

Whether an occupation is in public or private industry or a
contract of employment or self-employment influences status.
Private industry generally has more status except in the top
management positions of large public corporations. Self-
employment is more highly regarded than a contract of
employment. Whether or not previous experience has been in
private or public firms and if this has been on either a
contracted out basis or contract of employment is likely to
influence career destiny in management.

There are usually overlaps in occupational characteristics.
For example, a foundry manager who is basically responsible
for overseeing the movement of raw materials may also have
ancillary administrative duties that require an office
location and may be engaged on a contracted out basis to a
private firm though formally engaged with a public
corporation by a contract of employment. How significant

others respond to occupational titles and work experiences
of an aspiring manager can mean the difference between
remaining in lower management or perhaps gaining
promotion into higher echelon management as one of the
managerial elites.

CHAPTER 4

MANAGERIAL CAREERS AND ELITISM

Clark found that British managers in the 1960's were
becoming increasingly homogeneous in education and social
backgrounds. The average manager came increasingly from a
middle class background, having received a grammar school
and university education. But perhaps the most ominous
signs for individuals of working class origin. Previously,
even without the advantage of a formal education, which they
often had no opportunity to receive, they could still be
successful in management, (Lee,G.,1981:149).

Clements, (1958) found a link between social origins and the
size of organisations in which top management posts are
held. 60 per cent of his top managers were born into the
two highest social grades and he found that those from the
very top social grade are most likely to be found in small
firms. He attributed this to the influence of family and
family connections in the size of organisation. In contrast
he found that lower middle class men more usually reached
the top in large firms where there was likely to be a
greater emphasis upon specialist knowledge. A few of his
sample had risen to top management from manual or clerical
jobs but it had taken them much longer. Taking his sample
of managers as a whole, he found that the majority who had
started their working lives at the bottom of an organisation
remained blocked after twenty or thirty years at the lower
levels of management, (Lee,G.,op.cit:148).

Lee,G.,(op.cit:141-2) stresses two themes from her study of
Coventry executives. First of all there are consistent
differences in the characteristics of the top executives in
the different sizes of company. Those who attain board
level appointments in the large companies are generally a
'birth elite', by inheriting middle class advantages
that has enabled them to undertake a selective education in
either a grammar or public school. They are better

qualified on leaving school and are also more likely to have
work-related qualifications than directors in the smaller
companies. The directors of the larger companies usually
came from outside the locality and worked in a number of
different places in the course of their careers. The
contrast is greatest with the functional directors in the
smaller companies who tended to originate from poor
families, to have left an elementary or secondary modern
school at an early age without qualifications to remain
uncredentialised by not taking up part-time study.

The second theme emphasises the importance of career entry
in relation to later occupational mobility. The executives
attained higher status management appointments via a career
entry grade that involved training. This was in the form of
a higher level apprenticeship, some other form of
traineeship in a technical field, articles for accountancy
or a traineeship in this field, or less frequently, a
management traineeship. The experiences of Coventry
executives show that those who begin in this way are better
placed for promotion in the short term to the top posts in
large organisations. Some executives lacking this start to
their working lives still succeeded in management but the
climb to the top usually took longer and they were more
likely to be able to be employed by the smaller-sized firm.

The Acton Society Trust,(1956:18) concluded that managers in
the 1950's came from varied backgrounds: over half started
life as manual or clerical workers; one in two went only to
elementary or to ordinary secondary school; one in five to a
public school; and more than one in four to a grammar
school; only one in five had a degree. The proportion with
professional qualifications was very low, less than one in
five. The analysis of the backgrounds of the younger
managers suggested that the successors to present managers
would be better educated and more qualified. It was
predicted, even with more educational opportunities

available in later to post industrial society, that the
proportion rising from the bottom will be less than before.

The evidence from the study by Charlotte Erickson, (1959:49)
does not support the view that increased educational
opportunities in British society since 1902 have had an
important effect in breaking down barriers to positions of
influence in the steel industry. Part of the explanation is
given as the prolonged depression of the industry which
followed the First World War. It is possible that the
apparent decline in the industry's fortune-making powers
combined with a persistent British elitist social attitude
against trade, caused dynastic heirs to shun the industry,
leaving gaps to be filled from other sources. As there had
been no training and recruitment schemes in general
operating in the industry, at the time of her research to
enable personnel to screen future managers, a large number
of men of relatively humble birth and education obtained and
seized their opportunities. This can be explained in the
wider terms of British society in that two wars and a
continuing foreign trade crisis produced a likely levelling
effect where able men of management material were required
to leave the industry as conscripts and management
recruitment into more critical sectors of the economy
weakened traditional selection policies in the steel
industry generally.

A criticism by Levine, (1967) is that there has been a
tendency for a too highly developed British class
consciousness up and down the social scale which has not
been mitigated by widespread acceptance of the need for
sound management training. The implication is that the
British social system failed to bridge the gap between the
needs of education and industry as early as 1880.

Keeble,S.,(1992:65-93,125-50) emphasises the British
rejection of formal management education and planned

experience that could well have encouraged elitist practices towards management selection over a range of British industries.

Until 1870, systematic management education and training remained undeveloped, and not until the 1890's were attempts made to establish a more satisfactory standard which took the form of a university education for the then aspiring managers. This change coincided with the emergence of the British economy from recession of the 1880's so this was an appropriate time for the education system to consolidate management education that could well have developed towards professionalisation. Two other periods in industrialisation, after the First World War and from the early 1930's, provided further opportunities to consolidate the development of management education when the economy was buoyant. Yet, in all three periods, the opportunities for progress were stifled due to reluctant attitudes by firms to innovation which probably restricted the chances of managers of disadvantaged social origins with non-academic backgrounds to reach no further than supervisory status.

Britain was some years behind a number of other industrial countries in offering a business education at university level, though this could have been used to advantage in that Britain could have learnt from the mistakes of other leading nations including Japan and Germany. British industrialists and economists went abroad to investigate management educational practices and emphasised in their reports that foreign competitors were already benefitting from their investment in the management training of young people.

In recommending similar educational services to British firms, British writers had in mind the prevailing types of business education carried on in the technical colleges or new universities that reflected the specialisation of industry in local areas: London stressed the needs of the

financial services sector, Birmingham the metal trades and
Manchester the cotton industry. This meant bearing in mind
the type of recruit likely to be attracted to the training
required: Birmingham was seen to be a training market
directed to businessmen's heirs and London to attract
ambitious clerks.

The writers proposed a three tiered approach to management
in the 1920's that was seen to be the answer to haphazard
management training practices. An introduction to the world
of industry was to be followed by skills training in
accounting, languages and statistics leading to the final
stage that included marketing, logistics and finance
interspersed with management experience in industry. The
advocates of this approach considered firstly that it was
necessary to promote business interest in management
education to a practical, yet empirically trained clientele,
whilst secondly, finding acceptance for the subject area as
one suitably liberal to offer individuals for university
training.

This approach failed to recognise early on that instead of
providing the transmission of knowledge relevant to trade
and industry, the liberal nature of the education instead
stressed the transmission of culture, the development of
intellect and the moulding of personality. At the time of
the late 1920's, it was known that some very large firms
were turning to the universities for able men as potential
managers. Yet, it seems likely that management education in
universities at this time accentuated cultural gaps between
different statuses in society rather than facilitating
workable structures in which management overlapped rather
than being divided by hierarchical barriers. One of the
problems the educationalists and industrialists faced was
regional differences in social and cultural development with
consequent differences in values and expectations of
management.

The shortfall in education to provide adequate training for managers meant there was an attitude of rejection of planned managerial experience by employers as a long term strategic objective. This stemmed from employers being traditionally intent upon recruitment criteria that stressed relevant previous on-the-job experience. Firms filled vacancies with men who knew or could get to know after a short time how specialist jobs were being done and were potentially capable of taking on this type of training successfully. The over-riding requirement boiled down to employers seeking men who filled the job not with the men with ability whose capacities could be developed to serve businesses in the long term.

This emphasis did provide some men with relevant experience and technical knowledge an advantage that enhanced their careers, for instance, by being recognised as credentialised specialists in having been employed in different firms and being reputed to know their trade that stood them in good stead for promotion, though there were risks attached. Many individuals interested in developing their own abilities through experience in different firms, industries or departments could find it increasingly difficult to do so as the 20th century progressed. They were more likely to be made aware that not many firms of any size or type would be impressed. Thoughts of disloyalty and inability to settle down were commonly expressed by significant others to deter aspiring managers from employing their skills and expertise in other firms. Some firms took this a stage further by placing strong obstacles in the way of individuals intent upon career progression. They could be pressed to sign a long term contract to prevent them from moving to another area of work. This attitude contributed to stifling the careers of managers from disadvantaged social backgrounds that meant them more likely than not serving in lower status grades throughout their occupational lives.

CHAPTER 5 METHODOLOGY

A sample size of eighty seven steel managers represents the
proportion of the whole population which the historical
sources have enabled the researcher to study. The number of
managers in each cohort is shown in Figure 6, on page 52.

Data Collection Method

"The Institute Of Mechanical Engineers" is the main
biographical data source used reporting upon the social,
educational and occupational lives of deceased British
managerial employees. Each annual publication from the
middle of the 19th century has a "memoirs" chapter that
publishes biography's of managers associated with
engineering, a fair proportion of whom have had career
experience in steel related industries and firms. A few
steel managers have also been sampled from minor sources
that have included biographies from "The Sheffield Weekly
News", "Pioneers Of The Cleveland Iron Trade", "Creators Of
The Age Of Steel", "Engineering", and "The Production
Engineer".

Taking the annual journal of "The Institute Of Mechanical
Engineers" from 1975 and working back to 1945, data upon the
characteristics of managers are allocated to the 1931-60
cohort. Between 1914 and 1944, data are allocated to the
1901-30 cohort. Between 1883 and 1913, data are allocated
to the 1870-1900 cohort. The fifteen years or so overlaps
between data allocation and each cohort gives a fair chance
of matching the career spans to cohorts. There will
inevitably be cases where managers are born in one cohort to
have then undertaken education and careers in another, and
this points to the fact that there are validity and
reliability factors to consider. For data collected through
the other literature, career span dictates allocation to one
of the three cohorts.

A larger sample size of managers with more detailed data

upon their backgrounds would have improved validity and
reliability. As it was the sample method relied upon
biographies that included fragmentory data, that given time
could have been augumented more fully.

The sample of eighty seven UK steel managers is biased to
those having reached a final career destination of at least
supervisory management. A larger variety of careers would
have been liklier from a larger sample size that would have
included a greater proportion of steel managers exhibiting
downwards occupational mobility into non-managerial grades.

To have used triangulation that included a combination of
case study, questionnaire, survey and documentary sources
would have given the opportunity to explore behavioural and
interpretative paradigms that would have allowed a
comparison between industrial and post-industrial cohorts.
A more rigorous methodology would have provided additional
data upon the size and type of firm together with
respondents' perceptions about their careers to enable an
analysis in greater depth. Reliance upon secondary sources
has meant emphasising an interpretative paradigm and a
limited analysis in attempts to attribute potential
relationships between social, educational and occupational
characteristics of British Steel Managers.

The Variables
Career entry grade and final career destination grade are
taken as dependent upon the social origins, types of
education undergone and the level of qualifications
attained. This is a simplified functional relationship to
be stated in two ways. Firstly, final career destination
has been found to relate to on-the-job performance, and in
particular the reputation of an individual in being able to
handle managerial responsibility adequately in the first
twelve months in a managerial occupation, (Berlew,E.,and
Hall,T.,1960:219-221). Secondly, intervening variables such

as promotion policies of firms, management skill shortages
due to war and also marriage are key factors that can
determine the outcomes of a management career over and above
the influences of father's social class and types of
educational attendance/qualifications.

The Independent Variables:
Social Origins
Family social class is ascribed at birth and is indicative
of the father's occupation. Reference to the birth
certificate on which the father's occupation is stated is a
guide to family social class. Figure 1 on page 42, shows
the social class of managers by father's occupation in rank
order as a criteria for comparing social origins to the
dependent variables of career entry grade and career
destination grade.

However, validity and reliability are affected in that the
father may change occupations more than once in a lifetime.
This means that the social status of the family can vary
before and after career entry of a steel manager. Data upon
extraneous familial circumstances are not always available
from the biographical sources to discern any measurable
degree of influence upon careers.

Type Of Education
The types of educational establishments attended relate to
anticipatory socialisation that influences career entry
grade and final career destination, shown in Figure 2 on
page 42. Education type, including that undergone pre-and
post-career entry is ranked. Prestigious education at a
major or minor public school and university are the highest
ranked establishments. The lowest types of education are
given as attendance at an elementary and secondary modern
school.

Figure 1.

Manager's Social Class By Father's Occupation

Social Class	Occupations
I	Higher administrative, professional and managerial
II	Other administrative, professional and managerial
III	Inspectorial, supervisory and skilled manual
IV	Clerical, retail and semi-skilled manual
V	Domestic and routine non-manual
VI	Unskilled manual

Figure 2.

Highest Educational Establishment Attended

1. University

2. College (full or part-time)

3. Public School (major or minor)

4. Grammar School

5. Elementary or Secondary Modern School

Figure 3.
Highest Educational Qualifications Attained

1. Degree

2. Diploma or Professional Certificate

3. Craft or Clerical Certificate

4. None

Figure 4.
Highest Occupational Grade

1. Top management: directors, owner-managers

2. Middle management: Professionals without executive
    control

3. Junior professional/executive work

4. Technical training

5. Apprenticeship

6. Clerical work (without training)

7. Shop assistant

8. Craft apprentice

9. Semi-skilled

10. Unskilled

Figure 5.

A MODEL OF MANAGERIAL SOCIALISATION

Higher
Status

Lower
Status

ASCRIBED
ELITES

ASCRIBED
NON-ELITES

HIGHER STATUS
TYPE EDUCATION

LOWER STATUS
TYPE EDUCATION

HIGHER STATUS
QUALIFICATIONS

LOWER STATUS
QUALIFICATIONS

TOP MANAGEMENT

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

LOWER MANAGEMENT

NON-MANAGERIAL
GRADES

social mobility

educational mobility

occupational mobility
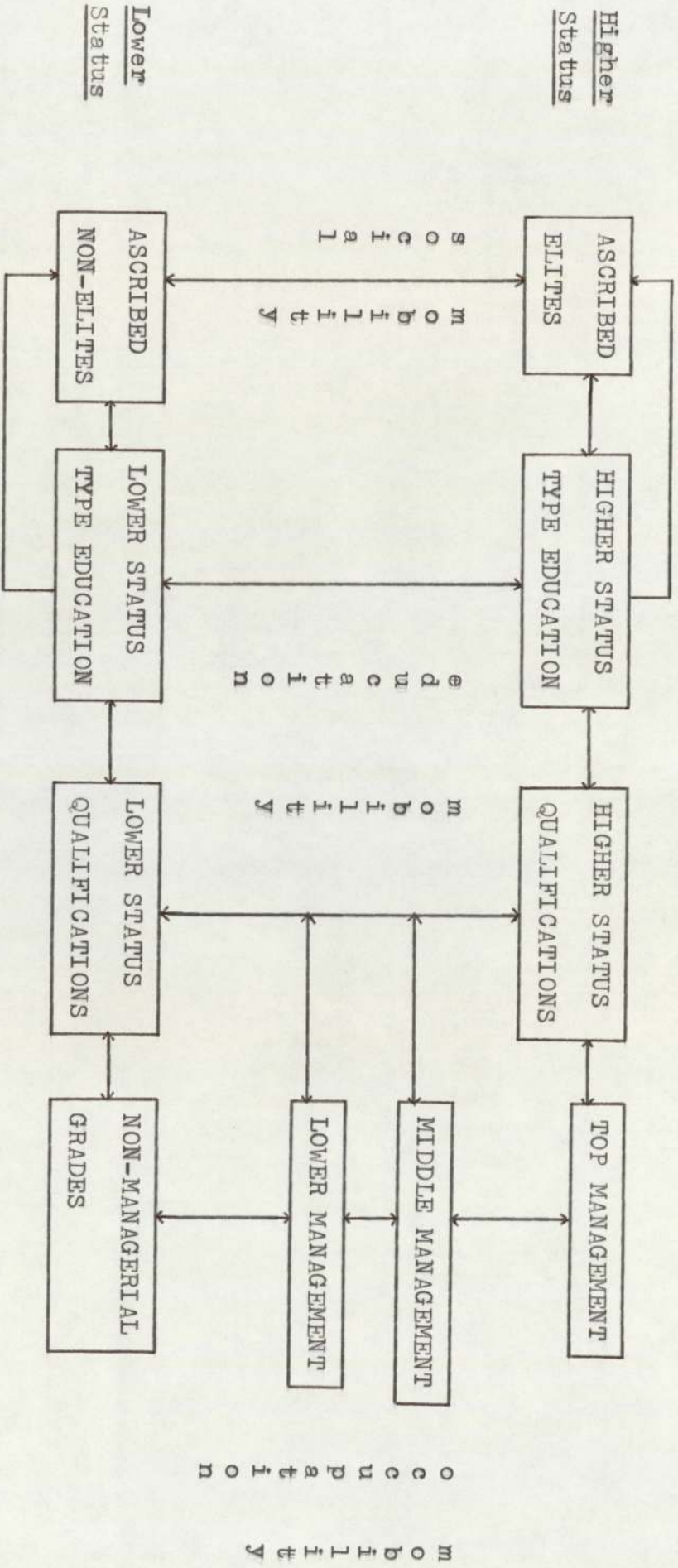
The Importance Of Educational Qualifications

Qualifications at pre-and post-career entry influence career destinations. Figure 3 on page 43, shows the highest qualifications include degree level attainment down to the lowest, a school leaving certificate. The hierarchy indicates a broad level of achievement possible in the education system, though it should be appreciated that there are many qualifications at undergraduate and post graduate levels that could be sub-categorised and ranked. Qualifications can be obtained after career entry as well as before and can be taken at higher or lower status educational establishments regardless of social origins.

A validity problem is that the kinds and standards of qualifications will tend to differ from one cohort to the next and also within cohorts. The different kinds and standards of qualifications in historical experience will have influenced management selection criteria to variable extents. To be able to take into account the extent of the differences in standards and types of qualifications that influenced selection at fixed points in time cannot be satisfactorily determined, though it is fair to point out that in later industrialisation there was an increasing need for better qualified steel managers at all levels to which a relevant university degree and professional qualification would have improved the likelihood of reaching a top management grade though would not necessarily guarantee it.

The Dependent Variables:
Career Entry And Career Destination

In Figure 4 on page 43, there are ten categories of occupational rank. The top two categories include top management of strategic decision making authority such as a managing director, factory owner and chief executive; and middle management which include managers of tactical decision making authority such as a works manager, branch manager, general manager of a foundry and an accountant

without executive authority in a firm. The next grade down,
junior professional/executive work, is a first rung
managerial grade that would include managers of supervisory
authority, for instance an administrative officer and
superintendent of a workshop. Grades below the top three are
non-managerial occupations, though they include grades that
through experience, can help towards promotion to one of the
managerial grades.

Reliability and validity regards occupational title can be a
problem. Interpretation as to the grade of a manager is not
altogether evident on occupational title alone. In later
19th century industrialisation, the influence of the
merchant and sub-contract system still remained a feature
within the steel industry where the occupational title of
"manager" could include journeymen purveying the goods on
the principal's behalf, or to higher status owner managers.
The role of "managers" in later cohorts became more
differentiated in that managerial status is more
distinguishable by occupational title, for instance, a
production controller is associated with a lower managerial
grade, branch manager associated with middle management and
director associated with top management.

Research Aim

To discuss the social origins and educational backgrounds of
managers in qualitative terms dependent upon the likelihood
of their being potential relationships to career entry and
career destination grades that give rise to a justifiable
interpretation that a tendency has been towards elitism in
management selection policies within steel related firms,
1870-1960, that could well have had dysfunctional
consequences upon the UK steel industry's competitiveness.

The Hypotheses

An expectancy of this research is that the higher the social
origins of managers by father's occupation, the greater the

tendency will be for managers to occupy higher status career entry grades and to achieve a top management position within relatively few career moves in comparatively short timescales. The type of career pattern thus followed is expected to consist of predominately ascribed social characteristics indicative of managers whose fathers belong to one of the two middle class ranked occupational grades and having been educated at a high status educational establishment such as a major/minor public school and/or university. Hence, the managers from privileged social and educational backgrounds occupying middle and higher managerial occupational grades are expected to be "professionally" credentialised in terms of successfully anticipating and realising educational and occupational aspirations.

The more humble the social origins of managers by father's occupation then the expectancy is that they will occupy a lower career entry grade and tend to remain within lower grade management to characterise either an excessively mobile or an excessively immobile career pattern. A less prestigious early education is expected in terms of a secondary, elementary or grammar school education. Pre-and post-career qualifications and training of lower grade managers are expected to be more in terms of below degree level attainment with specialised experience such as an apprenticeship. For managers making it to the top from disadvantaged backgrounds, the career pattern is expected to entail several moves upwards over a lengthy timescale.

A Conceptual Model (Figure 5, page 44)
The model is a means to link the variables and hypotheses to the issues for discussion. The model limits the study to elements of sociology that may indicate instances of elitism in the research literature as well as in the sample of managers in steel related firms. There are economic and political intervening variables related to the social

institutions and associated values that are transmitted
through them. The economic environment is left out of the
model as this cannot satisfactorily be included without an
appreciation of the economic environment as a whole
regarding competition over the course of a management career
for each cohort. To have included this in the model would
complicate behaviour to an extent that would render the
research unmanageable and probably invalidate analysis.

It would be wrong to state that the British social,
educational and occupational systems have been entirely
elitist in the selection processes as stratification
inevitably occurs even within a meritocracy. Yet, not only
does research literature point to there having been elitist
elements present to a greater and lesser extent in recent
social history, particularly in educational selection, but
that the British social system has been blamed for
contributing towards the decline of UK manufacturing
industry, including steel, (McCloskey,1973:1-4).

The British social, educational and occupational systems
inter-relate within and between hierarchies. Family
background depicts the ascribed elites as those of middle
class origins and non-elites as the working class. The
process of social stratification operates dynamically:
mobility in a meritocracy occurs upwards and downwards,
though generally there is a strong association between
working class social origins, working class
education/achievement and working class occupations, on the
one hand, and middle class social origins, middle class
education/achievement and middle class occupations, on the
other.

The inter-relatedness indicated by the arrow directions
between ascribed statuses at birth and the types of
education undertaken imply that social reproduction is a
fact of life that cannot be wished away in British society

and also that education can be a means to social mobility within a meritocracy. The earlier family and educational life stages are carried forward into the occupational structure, though in this later stage career mobility becomes increasingly complex, not only being influenced by social origins and pre-and-post career qualifications but also factors beyond the scope of the model that includes economic, political and psychological behaviour.

To be ascribed high status education does not necessarily guarantee high educational achievement and a successful career in management and similarly to be selected for low status education does not necessarily guarantee educational failure and a confinement to non-managerial grades. In this respect, the model is not entirely satisfactory in conveying the significance of intervening variables with family, educational and occupational life that includes the degree of authoritarianism/liberalism in teaching styles that can strongly influence expectations and career outcomes.

Usually, however, high qualifications are a significant determinant to the attainment of top management. This need not necessarily have been the case in socio-historical experience, for it is quite possible for low educational achievers from middle class backgrounds to enter a managerial grade in a family firm and take what necessary qualifications, on a part-time basis, to become better managers. It is also possible for those with high academic qualifications not to be able to secure a rung on the management career ladder and may have found the best way forward by starting in a non-managerial grade.

Educational socialisation as depicted takes no account of the timing of events that can be critical to future managerial careers such as school leaving age and qualifications at career entry. Instead, the connectedness of the system gives a general guide to potential mobility

irrespective of whether or not education was undertaken before or after career entry.

It is possible for highly qualified managers to seek lower qualifications in subjects outside their immediate specialisms just as much as could be the case of a non-managerial grade employee undertaking higher status qualifications to improve chances of promotion. There are also likely to be intrinsic values that stress other than initial career expectations. In an instance of this kind, education may not be initially recognised as a means to a career in management but rather towards self-improvement or self-actualisation. However, personal success in this way could improve the marketable quality of skills firms tend to seek in managers to prompt individuals in this position to reconsider their career strategies.

To be able to estimate to any degree of accuracy the proportion of individuals reaching management statuses from selected social origins and educational experiences is probably impossible empirically as there are most likely to be individuals reaching the ranks of management from divergent career paths and who have been ready to accept opportunities without prior career strategies. The linkages in the model to some extent take into account this factor as well as suggesting potential relationships between high and low status as determinants of career outcomes. The strength of the model is a flexibility that allows different interpretations rather than one being predisposed to a fixed paradigm of behaviour.

CHAPTER 6

The Managers: Their Family, Educational And Occupational
Characteristics

1870-1900 Cohort: Description Of Data

Figures 6 and 7 on pages 52 and 53, categorise the data by
social origins and the types of education of industrial
steel managers in each cohort. There are fourteen steel
managers of social class I fathers. The first was a company
president's son who was privately educated, he went on to
university and afterwards took up a railway engineering
apprenticeship for two years to be an assistant engineer at
career entry for fifteen months, he later had successive
moves as a draughtsman for thirteen years, a superintendent
for one year, a resident engineer for three different firms
for a total of nine years, a director for two years and
finally became a work's manager in his father's works for
three years. The next steel manager's father was a
shipbuilding work's owner. This steel manager was educated
at private schools and on leaving became an apprentice in
his father's works for five years to become an assistant
manager at career entry for three years after which he
emigrated to Africa for three years in the same occupational
grade and later had consecutive occupational moves as a
shipyard manager, managing director before starting a
consultancy engineering business which lasted for twenty
four years. Another steel manager was the son of an owner
of a tool-making firm who went to an elementary school and
left without qualifications to be an apprentice before
becoming a partner of a steel firm for ten years at career
entry, he later became a foundry manager for eight years at
the final career destination. Another steel manager was the
son of an owner of a steel works who left elementary school
at fourteen without qualifications to become a business
partner in his father's works before becoming a managing
director for twenty five years. Similarly, a solicitor's
son left an elementary school at fourteen without
qualifications to take up an engineering apprenticeship,

Figure 6.

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF UK STEEL MANAGERS IN EACH SOCIAL
CLASS BY COHORT

	1870-1900		1901-1930		1931-1960		
Social Origin	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Total
I	14	40	6	33	2	6	22
II	9	26	4	22	3	9	16
III	4	11	1	6	1	3	6
IV	3	9	0	0	1	3	4
V	1	3	0	0	0	0	1
VI	4	11	0	0	0	0	4
Not Identified	0	0	7	39	27	79	34
Total	35	100	18	100	34	100	87

Figure 7.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS ATTENDED BY UK STEEL MANAGERS IN EACH COHORT

Highest Type Of Educational Establishment Attended	Cohort		
	1870-1900	1901-1930	1931-1960
University	5	1	14
Private	20	3	6
Grammar	1	3	4
Elementary	8	4	2
Part-Time College	1	7	5
Technical School	0	0	3

at career entry he became a superintendent for eight years
after which he emigrated to Canada in the same occupational
grade for ten years, he was later promoted to a general
manager for a few months and subsequently became a company
representative in an engineering consultant's role before
finally becoming a director. The next steel manager was a
factory owner's son who went to university and obtained a
bachelor of arts degree to become an administrative trainee
at career entry and rose to the position of director. After
the son of a prosperous businessman had a private education,
he received an administrative apprenticeship and later rose
to the position of finance director. The next steel manager
was a steel manufacturer's son who left a private school to
become an apprentice technician in his father's works, at
career entry he became an owner-manager and remained in this
occupation up until retirement age. The son of a country
gentleman left a private school to become a trainee
merchant, he began his career as a merchant and later became
an iron works owner. The son of a factory owner underwent
private and university education, he obtained a degree in
mineralology, became a researcher at career entry later to
become a steelworks owner. A judge's son left a private
school for an administrative apprenticeship before becoming
a managing director for the rest of his career. A shipyard
owner's son is described as having had an "academy"
education, later he entered into an administrative
traineeship and rose to the rank of chairman of a steel
firm. The son of an iron work's owner, after attending
private schools became a designer of farming implements at
career entry and later he became a director of an
agricultural machinery firm. An owner of an automobile
works sent his son to an elementary school and on leaving at
fourteen he became an apprentice in his father's works for
four years, at career entry he was employed in a basic grade
occupation for one year and later changed firms to become a
department manager for four years, he returned to his
father's business as joint partner before becoming an

owner-manager. The son of an owner-manager was sent to two private schools and left at seventeen without qualifications to undertake articles in surveying before becoming a superintendent in his father's business for six years after which he was promoted to a manager's occupation in a research and development department until retirement.

There were nine managers born of social clas II fathers. The first was a vicar's son who was sent to a private school and was an apprentice traveller before becoming a director. A JP's son also went to a private school, to become an articled engineer and later a director. The son of a consultant engineer was sent to Rugby public school after which he took up a two year's articled apprenticeship in a steelworks before entering into a business partnership. Another JP's son first went to an elementary school before transfering to a private school for three years after which he attended college part-time whilst undergoing a three year pupilage, to become a draughtsman at career entry for six months and then undertook a series of occupational changes that included an inspector for one year, an estimator for one year, a resident engineer for one year with another firm, a sales assistant for four years before becoming a sales manager at final career destination. The son of a clerk of the peace was sent to a private school and went on to university to gain a chemistry degree to become an iron work's manager at career entry before a managing director's appointment in an iron works for twenty four years. The son of a joint partner of a flax spinning business went to two private schools and on to college and university to obtain a chemistry degree after which he emigrated to America and rose to a manager's grade in a steel works before becoming a managing director of the firm. A vicar's son went to a private school and on to university and gained a bachelor of science degree, afterwards he was an apprentice for one year before moving to another steel firm in manual grade employment before changing firms to become a manager for

seven years until retirement. A son of a JP went to three private schools, was an articled surveyor at seventeen for five years, at career entry he became a superintendent for six years and afterwards became an engineer in research and development until retirement. The last steel manager was a vicar's son who received no more than an elementary education to become an apprentice locomotive engineer on leaving school, his first job was described as an "improver", he later moved to another firm as a general manager to later become a chief engineer and finally rose to a postion of joint owner-manager.

There were four steel managers born of social class III fathers. A farmer's son was sent to a private school to later become an articled solicitor before becoming a director. The son of an overseer went to a grammar school who left at fourteen for an apprenticeship in a locomotive works for four years, he became a superintendent for two years at career entry, later to become a department manager before entering into a joint partnership in a machine tool manufacturers. A supervisor's son left a private school to become an apprentice millwright for five years after which he had seven different manual jobs with different firms before becoming a foreman and finally a chief assistant. The last in this class was a farmer's son who left a private school for a five year apprenticeship whilst also undertaking part-time study at night school in mechanics and mathematics, at career entry he took up manual employment and later moved to another firm in a similar occupation for one year, he moved to another firm as a foreman for five years, he became a foreman in another works for four years, then left this firm to become a manager for two years, and at final career destination he became an owner-manager of a firm making ticket machines.

Three sons were born of social class IV fathers. The son of an assistant merchant undertook a private education after

which he took up administrative training to become a factory
owner. After the son of a mechanic had an elementary
education he became an apprentice for four years, at career
entry he became a foreman for six years, then had successive
occupational changes as a superintendent for five years, a
resident engineer at two firms to become a director
on the fifth move. An assistant mining engineer's son left
a private school at sixteen to undertake an apprenticeship
before becoming an iron works owner for two years at career
entry, he later became a principal draughtsman for three
years in a different firm before becoming an assistant
engineer for twenty three years.

The son of a nailmaker came from social class V, he received
no more than an elementary education without qualifications
to take up a technical apprenticeship and later became an
owner-manager of a steel works.

There were four men of the lowest social origin, three were
described as being born of humble circumstances, the other
was the son of a journeyman tailor. All four men rose to
top management positions after leaving school at fourteen
without qualifications. A son of a journeyman tailor left
an elementary school at fourteen to become an insurance
clerk at career entry, after at least four occupational
changes with three different firms he became a factory
owner. The steel managers described as of humble social
origins, the first left a free school to become a post-
runner before becoming a factory owner. The second left an
elementary school to become a clerk and eventually became a
factory owner. The third born of humble circumstances was
educated privately by a jeweller after which he was
apprenticed to a blacksmith for ten years after which he
became a partner in a steel firm.

Similarities And Differences

The sons of fathers in social class I all had the benefit of
a sound education in the form of attendance at a university
or private school and this advantage enabled all to secure a
technical apprenticeship followed by supervisory career
entry grades.

The three managers who only had an elementary education had
not been later disadvantaged in their careers, more than
likely due to their father's high occupational status that
allowed a degree of upwards mobility through favourable
social connections.

The fact that three of the managers had degrees seems to
have had little impact upon attaining top grade management.
In fact, the two managers who only went to an elementary
school with no school leaving qualifications, one became an
owner-manager on the fifth occupational move and the other a
director on the sixth move whereas a work's manager with a
degree achieved this grade on the eighth move having had the
privilege of a private and university education. This is
unexpected as the graduate would impliedly have had a
broader education and earlier specialised experience of
short duration, more suited to an accelerated career path in
management.

An intervening variable in the solicitor's son's career
involved working abroad for ten years and this experience
could well have made up for a lack of early educational
achievement.

It appears that all the careers of steel managers born of
social class I fathers have been predominately ascriptive:
their middle class social origins have allowed them to
undertake a more prestigious type of education that has
helped career progression without a particular need to have
achieved academically.

Of those managers born of social class II fathers, all but one had a private education, and all but one had some form of traineeship. The manager with only an elementary education received an engineering apprenticeship and became a joint owner on the fourth career move which compares favourably with any manager born into social class I.

There were three managers who had degrees and in two cases, this seemed to have had an impact on careers. One had a degree in chemistry and was an iron works manager at career entry and a managing director on the fourth occupational move. The other also had a chemistry degree but undertook an apprenticeship and became a managing director in three moves.

Seven out of the nine in social class II made top management. Of two who only made middle management, one manager attended elementary and private schools before receiving a pupilage which involved part-time study and had seven occupational moves before becoming a sales manager. The other attended three different private schools and was apprenticed for eight years before becoming a department manager.

Social class II fathers again indicated their sons as having had mainly ascriptive career paths: a father's lower middle class background has generally enabled his son to attend a private school to provide the academic grounding for a top management career.

A striking comparison in the skilled working class, graded III by father's occupation is the time and number of occupational moves required to make it into top management. The superintendent's son was also a superintendent for fourteen years before becoming an owner manager. The farmer's son also became an owner manager after six moves in two different firms, rising from manual grades. The chief

supervisor's son took seven moves to become an assistant
supervisor and was the only one of the four who did not
supercede his father's social class.

These men were generally well educated, though being born of
a working class father may have inhibited their careers in
early occupational life as it is noticeable that
these managers had spent longer in lower grade occupations.
A higher management position has not been forthcoming
without more moves on average than managers born into the
higher social classes.

In social class IV, the assistant mining engineer's son had
a middle management occupation at career entry that is
unexpected, though this could well have been influenced by a
private education, then apprenticeship, which could have
given a blend of knowledge and experience required to enter
this grade. It is noticeable that this lasted for two years
and that the next two occupational moves were no more than
at a supervisory level, indicating downwards occupational
mobility. The career of an assistant engineer's son was in
the opposite direction, having received an elementary
education, then an apprenticeship, he later underwent five
progressive occupational moves over fifteen years to become
a director.

It is noticeable that steel managers from semi-skilled
working class origins to have had scope for management
progression, though at the same time, there is more
variation in the career patterns that suggests career
anticipation is more remote in comparison to the steel
managers from higher social class origins.

The nailmaker's son in social class V, is an example of an
achieved career type through experience on-the-job rather
than by academic achievement. He has risen from the lower
occupational ranks that suggest this manager has been

prepared to take a chance in the career stakes that has paid off in terms of reaching top management.

The careers of those managers of fathers in social class VI are exceptional. As expected, their low social origins were followed up by a low status type education with little or no qualifications and low status career entries. Their high career destinations from earlier social disadvantages was not expected to occur to the extent achieved. Of two that went to an elementary school, both had a clerical job at career entry and this could well have inspired ambition against the odds towards a successful management career. One of these men became an owner-manager of a large munitions factory in the Midlands after lower grade occupational experience with two previous firms. The manager who went to a "free" school and became a post-runner was equally ambitious and rose from the bottom after several moves with different firms.

It could well have been an instinct of making the right move at the right time that paid off for these steel managers. To have made it to the top from the lowest social class, each manager passed through five social barriers. A predominantly achieved career typology is emphasised in terms of acquired experience that differentiates this type of manager from those born of higher social origins.

1901-1930 Cohort: Description Of Data
There were six steel managers born of social class I fathers. All had top management final career destinations to which a contributory factor was a sound educational background in the form of attendance at a private school and a university. At least two steel managers followed up a sound educational base with experience in industry.

The son of a factory owner went to Winchester College then on to Cambridge University where he obtained a bachelor's

degree in engineering after which he served a four year articled apprenticeship in his father's firm, he was a junior partner at career entry and on the fourth occupational move became chairman after being seconded to two firms. The second factory owner's son underwent a private and then technical education, he left without significant qualifications to take up a three year pupilage, he was a district manager at career entry for seven years, afterwards he became a department manager for three years before becoming a company president on the fourth move. The son of the third factory owner went to university and obtained a bachelor's degree in engineering, he was a railway works apprentice for four years before becoming a owner of a steel works for seventeen years before becoming a chairman for thirty five years. The fourth factory owner's son attended a grammar school and left without significant qualifications to become an apprentice in his father's works for five years, he was a research assistant at career entry and later became a manager and on the third and final occupational move became a chairman of a steel firm. The fifth factory owner's son went to a technical college and left without significant qualifications to be apprenticed in his father's works, at career entry he was an assistant in research and development and became a business partner with his father for nine years after which he became a managing director for nineteen years and on the fourth move became the chairman of the firm. The last steel manager went to private schools to be later apprenticed for five years, at career entry he was an assistant works manager, before becoming a chief works manager for five years and finally a director on the fourth occupational move.

Four steel managers came from social class II origins: the son of a naval captain, the son of a shop manager in the Royal Ordnance sector of the civil service, the son of an inventor and a canon's son. The captain's son went to a private school then on to a university where he obtained a

bachelor's degree in engineering before becoming a manager
of a metallurgical firm at career entry for twelve years and
later became an owner- manager. The shop manager's son went
to a university where he obtained a bachelor of science
degree after which he became an apprentice for five years,
later to become an assistant manager at career entry, he
later bacame a chief ratefixer, and finally a shop manager.
The inventor's son went to an elementary school to later
undertake an apprenticeship at an iron company for six
years, after this training he became a draughtsman at career
entry, later to become an assistant manager for fourteen
years, he later moved to another firm as an assistant
manager for two years before becoming an owner-manager, and
finally a chief engineer on the fifth move. The canon's son
went to a private school where he left without significant
qualifications to become an articled engineer for three
years after which he entered manual grade employment and
later had successive occupational changes as a chief
assistant, a wagon superintendent, a superintendent in a new
firm and on the fifth and final occupational move became a
department manager at another firm.

One steel manager was identified as of social class III
origin, that of a farmer's son. This manager had a private
education which enabled him to obtain a scholarship at a
Royal College Of Science after which he was apprenticed for
four years, at career entry he was a university lecturer in
engineering for eight years, then he became a department
manager in a steel firm, and finally became a senior
inspector with another firm.

There were seven managers whose social origins by father's
occupation could not be traced but are important to the
study of careers for this thesis regards an impact upon
educational criteria. One steel manager went to a grammar
school where he left without qualifications to become an
apprentice at an iron works for three years, afterwards

became a draughtsman for one year at career entry and later
had a succession of occupational moves that included a
work's engineer for four years at another firm before being
promoted to a works manager for three years, he undertook
the same position at another firm for the same length of
time and later became a manager at an iron works, a general
manager at a different firm, a secretary to the executive
and on the eighth and final occupational move became a
consultant engineer. Another steel manager also had a
grammar school education backed up by a seven year
apprenticeship and interspersed this training with periods
of part-time study at a local technical college, he was a
journeyman engineer at career entry after which he became a
work's manager at a different firm and later became an
engineer before moving to another firm as a managing
director for thirteen years on the fourth and final
occupational move. The third steel manager went to an
elementary school and left without qualifications to be an
apprentice for six years whilst undergoing part-time study
at a local technical college, he became a chief engineer at
career entry after which he became a works manager for
nineteen years before moving to another firm as a department
manager and later became a works manager before the fifth
and final occupational move as a general manager in a steel
firm. A similar career type was followed by a man having
attended an elementary school who left at fourteen years of
age without qualifications to enter an apprenticeship for
seven years, he became a charge-hand at career entry, he
later moved to another firm in the same occupational grade
before being promoted to a foreman, he became a foreman for
four years at another firm before becoming a chief engineer
for twenty five years and later a consultant engineer on the
sixth and final career move. The next steel manager is
described as having had a general education to enter a four
year apprenticeship whilst attending evening classes in
engineering, he became a mechanic at career entry for six
years, he later became a foreman for four years and was

promoted to assistant works manager for two years, he became
a consultant engineer for eighteen years and a technical
manager for eight years, on a penultimate promotion he
became a works manager for eight years before the seventh
and final occupational move as a research director for ten
years. This career lasted for sixty years, the longest in
the sample. Another steel manager had an elementary
education and followed this up by attendance at a local
technical college for five years, he was apprenticed with
two firms for a total of six years, he became a research
assistant at career entry and had successive occupational
changes as a chief ratefixer, a work's manager for six
years, a research and development manager for twelve years
and finally a consultant engineer on the fifth move for
fifteen years on a self-employed basis. The last managerial
career was that of a steel manager described as having had a
college education who obtained certificates in science and
art, he was an apprentice at an iron works for five years to
later bacome a draughtsman at career entry for nine years,
afterwards he had successive occupational changes that
included a promotion to a chief draughtsman, assistant
engineer, a manager for six years, a manager in another firm
for six years, an assistant engineer for three years with
two different firms before becoming a district engineer on
the final occupational move.

Similarities And Differences

Characteristic of the steel managers born of social class I
fathers is the potential direct relationship of social
origin, higher status type education and higher status
qualifications to career entry grade and final career
destination. Career entry grades are high in each case, for
example, a researcher, a junior partner in two instances and
a district manager which suggests a lead start had been
gained through early social advantages. It is also
interesting to notice the number of occupational moves it
took the steel managers of middle class origins to reach top

management after an above average career entry grade in comparison to other steel managers: two in three moves, one in four moves and one in two moves. The fewer the moves to reach top management after a good career entry grade is compatible with the hypothesis.

For those born into social class II, there was more variability in the career patterns than in the higher social class. The inventor's son had a career that involved upwards and downwards occupational mobility, there were four succesive moves upwards then a downward move at final career destination. The one man who made top management represented twenty five per cent of the category compared to one hundred per cent in the higher social class, which gives an unexpected differential considering the ascriptive advantage of a lower middle class background.

The career of the farmer's son identified in social class III is an expected occurence in that despite having the ability to achieve academically, he rose no further than a middle management position. The move to another firm at final career destination in an inspectorial role indicates downward occupational mobility. It is suggested that by being ascribed a lower social origin at birth may not have facilitated upwards occupational mobility in management to the same extent as say those of similar academic achievement in the higher two social classes.

For those whose social origins could not be determined, a striking observation is the number of occupational moves managers had made, and also in some cases, the length of time spent in occupations. For the three managers who had between seven and eight occupational moves, all had a sound educational background at either a grammar school or through part-time college education. Two steel managers had several occupational changes with different steel firms and each move was more or less at a similar middle management

grade to indicate a strong degree of horizontal mobility.

The third steel manager had varied occupational experience
with one firm in which there was a distinctive career
progression from shop floor supervision, to middle
management then into top management after fifty years
experience. This manager was also more academically
successful than the other two as he had gained a masters
degree which probably assisted him towards becoming a
research director.

The second category of steel managers whose social origins
could not be determined were similar regards to education
and career experiences. Three of these men had the
disadvantage of having received no more than an elementary
education without significant qualifications, had between
five and six career moves and finished up in middle
management, two as consultant engineers and one as a general
manager. A noticeable occurence is the length of time spent
in the occupations. One steel manager spent nineteen years
in general management before moving to another firm in the
same occupational grade. Another steel manager was a chief
engineer for twenty five years before becoming a consultant.
The lack of qualifications may well have inhibited the
careers of these steel managers.

There was one managerial career that differed from the
others in terms of a probable educational advantage. This
manager had a grammar school education, followed by
engineering experience. He made the grade into top
management after four progressive career moves with three
different firms that suggests a good chance of anticipatory
occupational socialisation into steel management.

1931-1960 Cohort: Description Of Data
Only seven steel managers of the thirty four in the cohort
could be traced by father's social origin. Of the seven,

two were identified as of social class 1 origin. A son of a
managing director of an iron works, left school at fourteen
after an elementary education and no qualifications to take
up an apprenticeship, he became a work's manager at career
entry for twenty years to become a managing director and
chairman on the third and final move. The other steel
manager was the son of a medical director who was educated
at Rugby public school and went on to university to obtain a
first class honours degree in engineering and later, a
doctorate, he was a designer at career entry and later
became a manager in an experimental department and finally
became a chief engineer.

Three steel managers were of social class II. One was the
son of a reverand who undertook a private education and went
on to Cambridge University to obtain a first class honours
degree in mechanical engineering, he underwent a three
year's engineering apprenticeship, at career entry he was a
mechanic's demonstrator and finally became a research
professor. The second steel manager was the son of an
author who went to Cambridge University and obtained a first
class honours degree in mechanical science, he was an
apprentice at a shipbuilder's for five years and was later
promoted to a draughtsman for one year, he moved to a new
firm as a laboratory supervisor, he became an assistant
engineer after which he was promoted to a superintendent for
three years and then moved to a new firm as a production
director, he moved again to a different firm as a
superintendent for two years before becoming a chief
superintendent for thirteen years. The other steel manager
was the son of an iron works manager who left school without
significant qualifications for an apprenticeship at
an iron works, he became an assistant works manager at
career entry with a different firm, he later became a
consultant engineer and undertook four other occupational
changes as a chief draughtsman at a new firm, an assistant
works manager, a consultant, before the final career

destination as a chief engineer at a new firm.

There was one manager born of a self-employed master baker, in social class III. This steel manager went to college and obtained a bachelor of arts degree, afterwards he took up an apprentice scholarship, he was a draughtsman at career entry for two years, and then moved on to two other firms in the same type of occupation for two years, he moved to another firm as a technical director for eight years then changed firms again to take up a directorship, later he changed firms to become a work's manager, and on the final occupational move changed firms to become a managing director.

One steel manager was the son of a master blacksmith in social class IV. This steel manager left an elementary school at fourteen to take up a nine year apprenticeship with his father, he became a journeyman engineer for seven years at career entry, then became an assistant engineer for twenty years after which he emigrated to Australia as a research engineer and later became a lecturer in mechanical engineering for thirteen years before returning to Britain as a chief engineer in a steel firm at final career destination.

For those steel managers whose social origins could not be determined, eleven were identified as having significant qualifications. The first steel manager underwent a private education then went to a university and obtained a bachelor of arts degree before being apprenticed as a draughtsman for five years, he became a work's manager at career entry, he then became a general manager for three years and a managing director on the third and final occupational move. The next steel manager also went to a university and obtained a higher degree in engineering to undertake training as an apprentice draughtsman, his next occupation was that of chief draughtsman with two different firms for the rest of

his career. A steel manager is described as having attended
a Royal School and later went to a university to obtain a
bachelor's degree then a master's degree, he became a
foreman at career entry for two years, later to become an
assistant locomotive superintendent abroad for two years,
then he had successive occupational moves as a work's
manager for fifteen years, a chief engineer for two years, a
superintendent for ten years before finally moving to
another firm as a chief mechanical engineer. Another steel
manager received a pupilage at a steelworks, he later became
a shop manager and whilst in this occupation he undertook
part-time courses in engineering at Cambridge University to
obtain two higher degrees before leaving the industry to
take up an academic career. The fifth steel manager went to
a high school then to a university to obtain a bachelor's
degree, after a period of training in the steel industry he
underwent an army career and after national service he
became an assistant director of a steel firm and eventually
became a director. The next steel manager went to a
university and obtained a bachelor's degree to undertake an
apprenticeship, at career entry he was employed in a non-
managerial grade in research and development, afterwards he
became a designer before becoming a manager in research and
development. The next steel manager went to a university
to gain a bachelor of science degree and spent the whole of
his career in the research and development department
reaching the grade of Department Head. Another steel
manager had a private education at Shrewsbury School and on
to Cambridge University to obtain a bachelor of science
degree before taking up an engineering apprenticeship, at
career entry he was a technical representative, he later
became a technical officer before a final occupational move
as a Training Services Manager. The next steel manager also
went to Cambridge University to obtain an honours degree in
engineering, he later undertook an engineering
apprenticeship to become the Chief Cost Accountant at career
entry, he became the Section Head of an engineering

department and eventually became a chief engineer for seven years. Another steel manager went to a grammar school, then went to Oxford University where he obtained a higher degree, he later undertook a pupilage at a locomotive works for three years, he became an assistant resident engineer at career entry, afterwards he became a department manager, he moved to another firm as a general manager and later established a business as an owner-manager before a final career move as a chief engineer. The final career was that of a steel manager who attended a university to obtain a higher degree, he later took up an engineering apprenticeship for three years before moving on to another firm as an assistant manager, he later became an assistant engineer and afterwards emigrated to become an engineering lecturer before returning to England in a similar occupation.

The final sixteen managers in the cohort are identified as having qualifications less than degree level, though some are observed to have had sound early educational backgrounds at grammar and private schools. The first went to a technical college and later undertook an engineering apprenticeship for four years to become a journeyman engineer with a different firm at career entry, later he became the Manager Of Research And Development and finally became an assistant superintendent. One steel manager left a private school at seventeen to be an apprentice engineer, he became a draughtsman at career entry, he later undertook the same occupation at another firm before changing firms again as an engineer for sixteen years, he changed firms in the same occupation for seven years before becoming an owner-manager of a steel firm. Another steel manager went to a grammar school and on to a local technical college to obtain an engineering diploma, he later was an apprentice for six years, and afterwards a draughtsman for two years at career entry before changing firms in the same occupation, he later had successive promotions to chief draughtsman,

assistant manager and shop manager, afterwards he moved to
another firm as a work's manager for two years, he later
became a superintendent at two different firms before
becoming a general manager and finally a director of a steel
firm. The next steel manager went to an elementary school
yet rose to an executive position as a chairman without
academic qualifications, having first been apprenticed to a
bicycle maker he then had a series of managerial positions
that included at career entry, a works manager for six
years, a manager for a different firm for six years, an
owner-manager before becoming a managing director on the
penultimate move for twenty six years. A steel manager
described as having had a technical education was an
apprentice millwright for seven years to become a millwright
at career entry, he changed firms to become a mechanic
before finally becoming a lecturer in mechanical
engineering. The next steel manager left a technical school
to undertake an engineering apprenticeship for six years,
afterwards he took up manual work as an improver and an
erector before emigrating to South Africa to take up
employment as a work's manager before changing firms twice,
once to become a manager for six years, and again as a
manager in another firm before finally becoming a joint
partner of a steel firm. A steel manager left a private
school at sixteen to undergo an engineering apprenticeship
for five years after which he was a draughtsman with various
firms before becoming a chief draughtsman, he later became
an assistant lecturer in engineering. The next steel
manager left a technical school with an engineering diploma,
he was an engineering apprentice for six years, at career
entry he was an erection engineer for three years before
becoming an assistant works manager to later become an
installation engineer at another firm, afterwards he became
a chief engineer for two years at another firm before
promotion to a technical representative for twenty eight
years. The next steel manager attended a technical college
to obtain a surveyor's qualification that enabled him to

take up an engineering apprenticeship before becoming a
marine engineer at career entry and finally a surveyor. A
steel manager was an apprentice engineer in research and
development for three years and eventually became a group
leader. Another steel manager attended a grammar school and
later studied part-time at a technical college to obtain a
surveyor's diploma, he was an apprentice engineer before
joining the Royal Air Force after which he was a
draughtsman, later successive occupational moves included an
assistant manager, a manager for five years and finally a
factory owner. A steel manager attended a technical college
part-time whilst undergoing an apprenticeship, he later
became a foundry metallurgist at career entry before a final
occupational move as a superintendent. A steel manager took
up an engineering apprenticeship for seven years, he was a
chief draughtsman at career entry for three years, he later
undertook the same occupation in a different firm for two
years and afterwards became a mechanical engineer before
reaching the grade of chief draughtsman. One steel manager
left a technical school to take up an engineering
apprenticeship, afterwards he emigrated to become a
toolmaker at career entry, further occupational moves
included a toolroom foreman at another firm, on returning to
England he became a work's manager, a production manager, a
technical representative and finally an owner-manager.
After an engineering apprenticeship with an iron firm for
eleven years, at career entry a steel manager became a
senior draughtsman at another firm for five years, further
occupational moves with different steel firms included a
head draughtsman, an assistant engineer, a chief engineer
for eight years and was promoted to the Work's Manager at
this firm before moving firms again to become a director and
finally a director at another steel firm for twenty years.
Finally, in this category, after spending five years as an
apprentice engineer, a steel manager became a fitter for
three years, he later became a gauge maker with another firm
for three years, a machine setter with the same firm at

different locations, he later had successive promotions from a rate fixer, to an assistant foreman, to a foreman for fourteen years, and later to a shop manager.

Similarities And Differences

The first career in social class 1 was mainly ascriptive whereas the second showed a combination of ascriptive and achieved characteristics. The high career entry grade of the first career was expected on the basis of the father's high social class, though not by the type of education undertaken. The low number of moves to reach a top management grade in this career was predictable, though the twenty years spent in middle management was rather long and less expected for a high status ascribed career and a reason for this may well have been the lack of earlier educational achievement.

The second career is a measure of both ascription and achievement, though the high degree of academic achievement did not ensure a top management position as in the former career. To have stopped short of a top management position may have been influenced by the father's non-association with the steel industry that otherwise could have given a favourable chance to make top management.

For those born into social class II no steel manager reached a top executive position despite two of the managers having attended a prestigious university and obtaining degree qualifications which was unexpected. A Cambridge graduate had eight occupational moves with four different firms and spent thirteen years in middle management. Another Cambridge graduate never exceeded a supervisory management grade.

The iron work's owner's son followed his father's footsteps by entering a lower managerial occupation to eventually reach the same managerial grade after six occupational moves

with three different firms.

The greater the number of inter-firm changes tends to
emphasise varied work experience that has not
ensured a top management position. It is noticeable that
lower middle class social origins, in each case, resulted in
final middle or lower management career destinations.

The career of the manager born into social class III was a
career developed on the lines of achievement. This manager
was prepared to make nine occupational moves in order to
reach top management. Having entered middle management on
the fourth occupational move this initial attainment could
well have inspired the motivation necessary for further
successful career development. A college education backed
up by a degree and the preparedness to risk occupational
changes seems to have overcome an initial ascriptive birth
disadvantage that may otherwise have inhibited his
managerial career.

The steel manager born into social class IV had the
disadvantage of leaving school early and took up a longer
than average apprenticeship followed by a fairly long spell
in a non-managerial occupation at career entry. He was
prepared to emigrate to improve his career prospects. This
career parallels the hypothesis of lower social origins
corresponding to a lower career entry grade, with the best
part of a career lifetime spent in non-managerial grades
before making it into supervisory management in the twilight
of a career.

Other Careers
There were two significant careers of the eleven with
higher qualifications in which a top managerial grade was
achieved. Though both are mentioned as having had the
advantage of higher education, neither of these managers
went to Oxford or Cambridge like four others in this

category of high academic achievers. Both careers into top
management were achieved in few moves, though one career was
more progressive than the other by virtue of successive
steps up the management hierarchy that strongly suggests
career anticipation. The other career differed in that a
top management position was likely to have been, to some
extent, influenced by national service.

The four managers who underwent a prestigious education at
either Oxford or Cambridge, did not make it to the top which
was unexpected.

There were three men with higher degrees, one of them
obtaining a foreman's occupation at career entry that
probably facilitated early career progress. The other two
with higher degrees never made middle management. It is
noticeable that one of the steel managers after reaching a
supervisory grade emigrated to imply that he may have come
up against a promotion barrier and be prepared to risk an
occupational move abroad. There were two managers who
attended other universities who both remained in the same
low supervisory occupations on retirement to give an inert
career pattern.

There were seven distictive managerial careers amongst the
sixteen steel managers whose fathers' social origins were
not identified in that their qualifications were no more
than at a technical level, yet, all made executive
positions. The first steel manager who had five
occupational moves with five different firms, had spent
twenty three years as an engineer which is more or less over
half an occupational lifetime, before going into business as
an owner-manager of a steel firm.

The next managerial career in steel firms was very
chanageable, yet this steel manager became a top executive
having first had a good technical education, he made ten

occupational moves with five different firms. Some
occupational moves indicated a degree of career progression,
for example, a draughtsman to chief draughtsman to assistant
manager to shop manager to general manager to director. The
career path suggests a degree of prior ocupational
socialisation that could well be related to an advantage of
a grammar school education.

The next steel manager who went to an elementary school had
a fairly changeable career that involved six occupational
moves with three different firms, he held two middle
management positions that each lasted six years and later
held a directorship appointment for over twenty five years.
This indicates a career path that has been achieved by
experience rather than a discernible advantage of social
origin or academic ability.

Emigration was a significant impact on the career of one
steel manager. Having had a limited education and prior
work experience he made six occupational moves with five
different firms. He was prepared to take a chance, by
taking overseas employment which paid off in terms of
becoming an owner manager later on.

Another steel manager who emigrated in mid-career was also
successful in making it into top management. His career was
achieved with a basic grounding of no more than a technical
apprenticeship followed by eight occupational moves with
five different firms indicating that several occupational
changes can pay dividends.

Of similar consequence was the intervention of a national
service career which appears to have accelerated career
progress into top management. This steel manager had no
more than technical qualifications and a grammar school
education, yet after five occupational moves became an
owner-manager. This career pattern shows a discernible

anticipatory sequence: a draughtsman to assistant manager to manager to owner-manager.

Another steel manager's career success was attained by undergoing several occupational changes. A long ten year apprenticeship probably contributed to a level of knowledge and specialised experience that enabled a high career entry grade as a senior draughtsman. The next five occupational changes were within similar status grades with three different steel firms before eventually entering a middle management grade occupation, the final occupational move to another firm that secured a top management appointment lasted for half a career lifetime or more.

The nine who did not make top management are differentiated into a group of managers who had low career entry grades. Three managers after their apprenticeships, began their careers, one as a journeyman, one as a millwright and the other as a fitter. From these three, two of them made progress, one as an assistant superintendent on the third move. The other had a more mobile career rising from the bottom into middle management on the seventh occupational move. The third steel manager made no significant advancement from career entry.

The other six had career entries as a draughtsman, an erection engineer, a marine engineer, a foundry metallurgist, a chief draughtsman and research assistant. The manager who was an erection engineer for three years at career entry had the advantage of obtaining a technical diploma that probably helped towards progress in management as this man was prepared to move four times with two different firms to become a technical representative for the best part of a career lifetime.

The steel manager who was a foundry metallurgist was also able to use his technical expertise gained through an

apprenticeship and attendance at a local technical college,
though he remained in the same firm and only had one
promotion to superintendent. This career was considerably
less marked by occupational changes in comparison to some
previously cited.

The four steel managers from this category more or less
remained in the same occupational grade from career entry so
that changes in occupational status were not discerned.

CHAPTER 7   CONCLUSION

Discussion Of Results: Social Origins And Education To
Career Entry And Career Destinations

The majority of managers born into social class I in the
1870-1900 cohort, attended a private school although only a
minority achieved significant qualifications at degree level
or equivalent. Educational qualifications made no
discernible difference upon a career in management during
this time. More significant to a successful career in
management was the ascriptive advantage of a middle class
origin that corresponded with the career entry grades and
final career destinations of the industrial steel managers
as stated in the hypotheses.

Being born of a social class I father showed an observed
tendency to preserve inter-generational occupational status
as most of the steel managers eventually became directors.
From the career paths detailed, the average number of
occupational changes to reach this executive appointment is
four suggesting a high degree of anticipatory career
socialisation.

All six managers born of social class I fathers in the 1901-
30 cohort had a good educational start by having attended at
least a minor public school. After this, two steel managers
attended university and both obtained a degree. A private
education combined with higher qualifications appeared more
prominent to a successful managerial career in this middle
cohort. Steel managers of this social origin, having
received a sound educational background were assured in each
case of at least a supervisory career entry grade.

There is a stronger measure of inter-generational
preservation of occupational status in the middle cohort.
This is indicated by the fact that all the steel managers
reached top management appointments from a middle class
origin compared with only the majority in the previous

cohort. The number of moves to reach top management averaged three which signifies a general tendency for top managers to be marginally less occupationally mobile in comparison to the previous cohort. This suggests occupational socialisation is developed in earlier family life that consolidates middle class status to a greater extent.

In the 1931-60 cohort, a manager without qualifications had a more successful managerial career in terms of reaching top management than a graduate manager who made no further than middle management, and this is inconsistent with the hypothesis. This implies that higher qualifications can be more peripheral to a successful managerial career for steel managers born into the middle class in the latest cohort. The tendency is for a middle class social origin to be consistent with a high career entry grade and at least a middle management appointment is reached in not more than three occupational moves. This indicates a continuing trend of top management appointments being attained in few moves. The fact that a middle class social origin did not guarantee a top management appointment indicates a weaker inter-generational preservation of occupational status in comparison with the middle cohort.

In each cohort, it is possible to give an impressionistic typology of a managerial career for a manager born of a social class I father. In the 1870-1900 cohort, a typical manager who makes an executive career in a family firm can be seen as having attended a private school without significant qualifications at school leaving age followed by a traineeship in a steelworks at sixteen as an engineering apprentice or administrative trainee for a period of at least four years. Occupational entry is made to at least a lower managerial grade and a typical manager makes top mangement within at least four occupational changes to be an owner-manager for the best part of half a career lifetime in a family type-firm.

In comparison with the 1901-30 cohort, the educational
pattern would be likely to be followed by further academic
study in higher education or at a local technical college
whilst undergoing an apprenticeship in a family firm.
Similarly, as with the former cohort, at least a supervisory
career entry grade would be more or less assured and a top
management position attainable as a director in about three
occupational moves.

In the first decade of the 1931-60 cohort, a typical manager
making it to the top is envisaged to be as having had a
broad education at a minor or major public school followed
by a short period of technical training in a family firm.
Towards the latter end of the latest cohort, the educational
factor would be envisaged to determine, more significantly,
the suitability to enter a top management career, given the
increasing need for managerial expertise. The difference in
the typology of a middle class born steel manager between
cohorts would tend to emphasise a movement from a highly
ascriptive career to one increasingly more balanced in terms
of educational achievement.

For two out of the four managers born of social class II
fathers in the 1870-1900 cohort, educational qualifications
appear to be more sensitive to a successful managerial
career. Two graduate steel managers undertook an average of
four occupational moves in middle management occupations
before entering top management. One graduate spent twenty
years in middle management before reaching director status
which was excessive and less consistent with the hypothesis
given the degree qualification and favourable social origin.
Without degree qualifications it is likelier that each
manager would have had more difficulty in attaining top
management and to have preserved a lower middle occupational
status instead. Consistent with the hypothesis is for a
social class II born steel manager to reach at least a
middle management grade and where a top management

appointment is reached, to depict an achievement oriented career pattern.

Of the three managers born of a social class II father in the 1901-30 cohort, degree qualifications again seemed sensitive to a successful managerial career. One graduate exceeded his father's social class after a middle management career that lasted twelve years. Another graduate manager reached middle management in three occupational moves with two different firms whereas the typical non-graduate manager, having undergone a lower status education, achieved middle management at final career destination in five occupational moves which meant the best part of half a career lifetime was spent in lower managerial grades. The average number of occupational moves into middle management in this cohort was four that at least preserved inter-generational occupational status.

In the 1931-60 cohort, each steel manager at least preserved inter-generational occupational status in which academic criteria was again a prominent feature in the careers. This can be illustrated in two of the three careers. The author's son after obtaining a first class honours degree made a top management grade in five occupational moves with four different firms then moved downwards into middle management that was unexpected given the normal progression into top management and the ascriptive advantage of a lower middle class origin combined with a high level of academic achievement.

The other graduate manager's career followed a progressive career path that was more consistent with the hypothesis in that a private education followed by attendance at a university enabled this steel manager to achieve middle management status in two occupational moves. Progress into top management, however, did not materialise and this was less consistent with the hypotheses given the high level of

educational achievement, prestigious educational
establishments attended and initial ascriptive advantage.

The non-graduate's career was fairly consistent with the
hypothesis that the low number of occupational moves into
middle management was realistic in terms of social origin,
though a top management appointment did not crystalise in
this case. A valid explanation could be that six
occupational moves with at least four different firms
combined with a lack of qualifications and lack of social
influence by not having undertaken a private education
probably inhibited career progress.

For managers born of lower middle class fathers there is a
general tendency to at least preserve occupational inter-
generational status, on average within three occupational
changes. Exceptionally, several occupational changes with
one or more firms in a career lifetime also appears to
preserve occupational status intergenerationally.
Educational achievement increasingly appears critical to
maintaining inter-generational status, particularly towards
the end of the last cohort.

A typology of a manager born of a social class II father is
depicted as an individual in the 1870-1900 cohort as having
the opportunity to undertake a private education at a minor
public school and having the opportunity to undertake a
university or college education. Afterwards, a short period
of training, say three years as an engineering apprentice or
articled trainee, would likely secure a supervisory career
entry grade in a steel firm. The number of occupational
changes into top management is likely to be at least four
and the number of changes between different firms is
moreover greater on average than managers born into the
upper middle class during this time.

In the 1901-30 cohort, it is less likely for this type of

manager to exceed his father's social class in terms of
occupational status, partly because of the higher ascriptive
advantage of managers born of social class I fathers in
occupying a greater proportion of top management
appointments in the steel industry. The typical manager is
envisaged to have undergone a general education at a minor
public school and later part-time study at a local college.
The opportunities to gain broad experience in different
firms is likely to typify a mobile career pattern that
includes up to several occupational changes.

In the 1931-60 cohort, the pressure to achieve academically
as a result of scientific and technological advancement in
the British Steel Industry is likely to be greater. A first
degree backed up by a traineeship in a steel firm would help
to lay the foundation to a later middle management career.
The fewer the number of occupational changes within shorter
durations of time, say three occupational changes in three
year intervals, is more likely to ensure a step up into
higher management.

For managers born of a social class III father in the 1870-
1900 cohort, a tendency is for managers to have undergone
secondary education at either a grammar or minor public
school, leaving at or about sixteen to take up an
engineering apprenticeship. Where a middle management
occupation is entered into, this on average would tend to be
after at least six occupational moves. Sometimes the length
of time spent in a middle management occupation is observed
as excessive before a top management career crystalises.
One manager reached a middle management occupation at
eighteen years of age where he remained for sixteen years
before making top management. A high career entry grade
after serving only an apprenticeship with no more than two
years training and no more than a reasonable standard of
secondary education was unexpected. More consistent with
the hypotheses was that the best part of a career lifetime

was spent in a middle management occupation that depicted an excessively immobile career with one firm before the top management appointment.

Another steel management career examined differed in terms of occupational changes. One manager from a middle class background had undergone an apprenticeship as a millwright after leaving a private school education, had an excessively mobile career pattern involving seven occupational moves with more than two different firms and never exceeded a lower supervisory position. This atypical career is more consistent with the hypothesis in that a working class social origin generally results in a career pattern of several occupational changes at less than middle management status. Less expected in this case was the earlier education at a private school only ending in lower management in comparison to the more typical career entry grade and final career destination of top management.

The farmer's son's private education is consistent with the middle management career entry grade though less so regards social origin. His career path is interspersed with occupational changes: five occupational moves with five different steel firms in middle management grades that finally resulted in raising inter-generational status by one social grade.

Qualifications do not feature significantly in these careers. This suggests managers of skilled working class fathers achieving career advancement, combined initial training, acquired experience and the willingness to risk occupational changes rather than any perceivable planned career strategy in educational advancement terms showing through.

The one manager's career in the 1901-30 cohort born of a social class III father was one based on achievement and

experience. This manager received an apprenticeship after a
private and college education, joined the steel industry in
mid-career after a lecturer's occupation in engineering for
eight years. The two occupational moves into middle
management given the less favourable ascriptive advantage
was less expected. Also inconsistent with the hypothesis
was that the level of academic achievement did not help this
steel manager to exceed a middle management occupational
grade. A possible reason as to why this career did not
crystalise into higher management may have been a reluctance
of employers to accept a working class background as
appropriate for consideration for higher management
potential.

For the one manager born of a social class III father in the
1931-60 cohort, anticipatory socialisation appears a
distinct contribution to advancement. This is so in that
three occupational moves ensured a middle management grade
and a fourth move into top management. This career
favourably compares with the illustrious careers of the
crown prince type in social class I and the achievers in
social class II. This manager's father could well have
encouraged his son's advancement into higher education that
enabled a degree, an apprentice scholarship and a skilled
career entry grade. The working class origin was consistent
with the manual career entry grade though less consistent
was the move up into middle management in three occupational
moves in less than five years. More consistent with the
career pattern was the sound educational background. After
reaching middle management, there were three successive
occupational changes that resulted in a final career
destination as a managing director. This career typifies one
as having been developed through a combination of academic
achievement, technical experience and a willingness to risk
occupational changes with different firms.

As to a typology of a manager born of a social class III

father in the 1870-1900 cohort, emphasis would be on an
engineering apprenticeship lasting not less than four years
after leaving secondary education without significant
qualifications, to enter skilled manual employment. To
consolidate a position in management this type of manager
would be more mobile in terms of occupational changes, say
at least five different occupations within ten years to
stand a realistic chance of reaching the top.

In the 1901-30 cohort, the type of manager who could most
readily make the top would not necessarily be one who was
academically qualified. Career progression would tend to
emphasise accumulated relevant experience in various firms
than one occupation with one firm. A large-sized managerial
type firm may have at that time been the environment best
suited to a manager from a skilled working class background
to impress an employer through relevant practical
experience, successful part-time study and a level of
motivation to befit managerial potential.

The successful step up into top management in the 1931-60
cohort is envisaged to entail a greater concern for career
preparation in early family life rather than leaving a
career to chance. A sound level of educational achievement
would be envisaged to be balanced by a longer period of
training, say seven years with fewer occupational changes
and firms than in the earlier two cohorts. Without the
advantages of a sound and appropriate educational background
in the most recent cohort, it becomes increasingly unlikely
that a manager of skilled working class social origin would
make top management following the longer time spent in a
manual or lower managerial occupation.

Of the three managers born of social class IV fathers in the
1870-1900 cohort, two made top management, one as a factory
owner, whose career was not detailed by the data available,
the other as a director. The manager who made a

directorship spent a four year apprenticeship after leaving school at fourteen without qualifications to become a foreman at career entry and spent over ten years at managerial level with at least three different firms before the director's appointment. This suggests a career that is largely based upon specialist experience and that being in the right place at the right time could have provided promotion opportunities rather than any deliberate attempt to improve career prospects by educational achievement.

The career of an assistant mining engineer's son showed a reverse career pattern to this. This manager had a career entry grade as an iron work's manager that was not expected in as much that an adequate career preparation seemed absent given his earlier lower status education and his limited initial practical training and experience. The resultant downwards occupational mobility may well have been related to this poor and atypical career preparation. His final career destination as an assistant engineer was consistent with the lower social class origin that in this case confirmed inter-generational preservation of occupational status.

To be born of a semi-skilled working class father in the 1870-1900 cohort did not necessarily disadvantage a managerial career to the same extent as in the later cohorts. One steel manager greatly exceeded his father's social class by attaining an executive appointment as chairman of a steel firm. This manager's grammar school education followed by a short-term apprenticeship and part-time attendance at a technical college undoubtedly assisted his career. The seven years spent in the first occupation provided a platform for the second occupational change into top management as an owner of a steel firm for eleven years and successive executive appointments as a managing director and chairman. The relatively small number of occupational changes before reaching top management is not consistent

with the hypothesis for a manager of semi-skilled working
class origin. The career suggests a degree of anticipatory
occupational socialisation equivalent to those top managers
from one of the two middle class social origins. In this
manager's case, the father would have likely sacrificed
welfare resources to educate and train his son that provided
the early status passage necessary to make a significant
impact upon a future career.

In the case of one manager born of a social class IV father
in the 1931-60 cohort, the lower social origin is consistent
with the lower career entry, career pattern and final career
destination. There was a long nine year apprenticeship
followed by a series of occupational changes that never
exceeded, to any substantial extent, lower grade management.
The time spent in each such occupation was probably a
disadvantage to anything other than a supervisory grade:
seven years, twenty years, six years and finally thirteen
years indicate that the lower social origin to be closely
associated to the length of time spent in lower management
occupations.

A typical manager born of a social class IV father would
have stood a much better chance of a top management career
in the earliest cohort. The varied career experience in
different firms and occupations would have allowed the level
of developed expertise to start up a small family-type firm
or be likely to impress employers as worthy lower managerial
potential in the larger-sized steel firm.

In the 1901-30 cohort, the typical manager from a working
class background would probably find it increasingly
difficult to get on in the small family-type firm and that
to acquire initial practical experience in a medium-or
large-sized firm after obtaining technical qualifications is
more likely to reap rewards in the managerial career stakes;
though even with a balance of academic qualifications,

practical experience and the willingness to change
occupations with different firms, the lower social origins
would tend to inhibit upwards occupational mobility in
management.

In the 1931-60 cohort, the chances of a manager with a semi-
skilled social origin making a directorship or equivalent
status becomes more remote. Unless early occupational
preparation is undertaken, which would invariably involve
family sacrifices, then a more haphazard career pattern is
liklier. Being in the right place at the right time would
be less likely to feature strongly in determining a
managerial career. An explanation lies within changes in
the occupational structure in the steel industry. This
became increasingly differentiated after 1930 in terms of
skill and expertise with a tendency towards greater
professionalisation in management-related functions that
constrained occupational moves upwards to a greater extent,
especially for uncredentialised and over-specialised
managers possessing lower skills and limited experience
associated with social class IV origins.

Managers born into social classes V and VI could only be
identified in the 1870-1900 cohort. An elementary education
of a manager born of a social class V father was
incompatible with the final career destination of an owner-
manager itself. The three steel managers of the lowest
social origin partly complied with the hypotheses in that
top management was reached in more occupational moves with
several firms. Less expected was the fact that all three of
the lowest social class steel managers made top management
which suggests that being born of low ascriptive status need
not be a bar at that time to an opportunist management
career.

It is more unlikely for the type of manager depicted as the
opportunist from the lowest two social origins to achieve

such high statuses in steel management especially in the
latter part of the latest cohort, due in part to a greater
emphasis on the industry's requiremement for higher academic
qualifications. The fact that each of the four managers
reached top management conceals the many instances of
business failures by owner-managers after completing many
years practical and technical experience in the steel
industry. The age of laissez faire capital encouraged many
skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled entrepreneurs
with industrial experience to set up their own firms in
industry in which many ventures failed due to lack of
managerial expertise rather than technical incompetence or
the motivation to succeed.

In the later two cohorts, there were a number of managers
whose social origins could not be determined, yet whose
education had an impact upon their careers. In the 1901-30
cohort, a general tendency in one group was towards several
occupational changes, a sound educational background and at
least a middle management occupation that suggested career
anticipation regarding the final career destination of those
examined. Managers had a fairly free range of occupational
choice implied by the many occupational changes. In the
second category, occupational inertia was more evident and
compatible with a lower type of education and achievement.

In the 1931-60 cohort, in the first category of managers
higher education and a degree qualification guaranteed a
successful top managerial career for two individuals that
was consistent with the hypothesis. More inconsistent was
the non-attainment of a top management appointment in the
careers of four Oxbridge graduates. A possible explanation
as to why the graduates in this category failed to reach top
management is that the supply of graduates and technically
qualified managers could well have exceeded demand. This
situation may have periodically prompted employers to base
executive recruitment practice upon characteristics other

than academic criteria. This is likely to include social origins, in which a working class background would be a valid explanation for the non-executive appointments for these three academically-credentialised managers had data been available to confirm this.

An excessive number of occupational changes and lack of a degree qualification combined with an elementary education and a low career entry grade, appeared not to be insurmountable to a career in steel management. In fact employers may have regarded a less distinguished academic background as a characteristic that did not necessarily enter into the normal routine of managing a steel firm.

The lack of discernible upwards mobility made by the nine managers with low career entry grades was likely due to a combination of poorer education, lack of relevant experience and though not available in the data, a probable disadvantage of a working class background.

An Evaluation Of The Development Of British Elitist Culture
In Steel Management

Our empirical research into the characteristics of eighty seven British industrial managers in steel firms finds that there has been an increasing tendency for the industry in the transition from industrial to advanced industrial society to have adopted an elitist ideology with regard to managerial recruitment. Comparisons with other leading studies in the field discussed in Chapter One above tend to confirm this.

Clements,(1958:152) finds that those without social advantages (such as the tendency to be highly qualified) who nevertheless became top managers took longer to achieve this status than did men of more favourable backgrounds which parallels the findings in our research. A difference in his study is that he observed the less successful

managers of less than favourable social origins to have
spent most of their working lives in one firm whereas in our
research the managers of less favourable social origins have
undergone more occupational changes with more than one firm
and become successful managers through opportunism,
especially in the earliest cohort, though this trend tapered
off in the next two cohorts.

The research conducted by The Acton Society Trust,(1956:18)
predicts the backgrounds of the younger managers to
successors of industrial managers of the 1950's as being
better educated and more qualified as it was expected that
with improved educational opportunities the proportion
rising from the bottom would be less than before. This
implies there will be a widening gap in educational equality
between the middle and lower classes. Our research supports
this prediction and would go a stage further by emphasisng
that this position applied within the latest cohort. This
is detectable in so far as there is a tendency for managers
born of the two middle class social origins to reach top
management and generally preserve inter-generational
occupational status within fewer occupational moves thus
crowding out the opportunities for otherwise potential
managers from less favourable backgrounds. After 1944 and
into the 1960's, the process of sifting and grading of
ability in the state education system intensified the
competition for management places by emphasising greater
educational achievement in which those born of humbler
origins would find it more difficult without prior
socialisation advantages.

Besides the comparisons of our research with other studies
that support the increasing tendency towards elitist
managerial recruitment of UK steel managers, there is
supportive evidence in sociological literature as to how and
why this came about from 1870 onwards. Firstly, at this
time, the leaders of British society increasingly regarded

manual type industries and occupations within them with
disdain. The British social class system pervaded the
culture of steel related firms that had the consequence of
gentrifying management whilst deprecating non-management in
terms of lower class values. There was another form of
social pressure that operated within the occupational
structure that encouraged elitism and this was the
consequence of specialisation.

Weiner,J.,(1981:127-54) portrays the influence of British
culture as a determinant of elitist managerial recruitment
practice in industrial management that included steel. From
1870, there was a discernible deep rooted prejudice that a
career in industry was a dispicable life in which no sane
and enlightened person should be engaged. The leaders of
industry from this time accommodated themselves to an elite
culture blended of pre-industrial aristocratic and religious
values and more recent professional and bureaucratic values
that inhibited their quest for expansion, productivity and
profit. For management to seek these objectives conflicted
with the values of society to the point that the distrust of
materialism and economic change discouraged the commitment
to industry, and in particular steel. Social prestige was
sought by using the wealth acquired in industry to escape
it. Alternatively, industrial managers inheriting and
running steel firms struggled to adapt their lives to the
anti-materialistic values of society. They managed to adapt
by gentrifying managerial occupations that stressed the
good-life virtues that provided for social welfare of the
employees and managerial objectives rather than the pursuit
of profit and efficiency.

At the turn of the 1870's, the relations between the
financial institutions in the City and the industries in the
north began to widen. The City no longer became prepared to
risk long term investments into steel related industries.
This aloofness set up on-going behaviour that was suspicious

of change and a resistance to innovation. Industry was
pushed aside to the periphery of British social and cultural
concerns to be criticised and disdained. Steel industrial
managers distanced themselves from this image and is
probably a valid explanation as to why leading steel
industrialists were likelier to undergo an Oxbridge
education and possess an arts degree, as was found in
Erickson's research, rather than hold a degree in science or
engineering from a provincial educational institute.

The increasing tendency towards elitism in the recruitment
of British steel managers stems from the gentrification of
top management that traces back to the cultural absorption
of the middle classes into a quasi-aristocratic elite which
nurtured both a rustic and a nostalgic myth of an English
way of life and the transfer of interest and energies away
from wealth creation that more or less maintained the
status quo.

After 1870, specialisation had a greater impact upon
occupational status. Higher status occupations demanded a
competent level of skill and knowledge that invariably meant
longer periods of academic and practical training. Higher
and lower qualifications and skills became more
differentially rewarded. This became a basis to intensify
occupational stratification to the extent that social
integration became more prominent through the
professionalisation of knowledge.

Within the occupational structure of differential rewards
according to differential educational experiences is the
division between white and blue collar employment. Manual
occupations directly relate to the production function in
terms of a rate of pay on output and time. Office
employment is more remote from production and nearer to the
marketing function and allows remuneration to be based on a
fixed salary scale, plus in some cases a commission on

sales.

The skilled specialist in manual shop-floor employment is more likely to find difficulty entering management due to the social stigma and alienation of the production functon from general management values than say an articled clerk with office experience who is more befitted for promotion into management having a closer association with middle class values in terms of previous status passage and task proximity to management.

Occupational status can change without an individual moving from an occupation. Professional occupations are likelier to undergo a rise in status over time that is indicative of longer training and higher entry qualifications. Non-professional and manual occupations associated with skilled and semi-skilled employment are liklier to be subject to a lowering of occupational status as would-be entrants to this type of labour intermittently flood the employment market to be made cheaply available and managed by credentialised management. It follows that a tendency towards downward occupational mobility with regards to occupational titles, especially in previously stable skilled and semi-skilled manual employment is likely to contribute to deny potential steel managers from this background the opportunities of entry into higher management given the process of managerial gentrification in the steel industry from the 1870's.

Recommendations For Future Research

Elitism within the context of managerial careers has not been extensively researched in Britain, though more has been done in America. Each industry, in whatever advanced industrial country studied, will show different trends in occupational mobility over cohorts, and future research could well be developed by considering inter-industry comparisons that involved different sectors, sizes of firms and different types of specialist managers.

As far as developing a better understanding of elitism in
the context of managerial careers, this could be developed
by considering elements of achievement and ascription that
would indicate types of social integration and the barriers
to managerial advancement imposed inside industrial firms.
The methodology could incorporate triangulation to include a
contemporary study by questionaire and survey analysis that
compares with managerial characteristics in earlier
industrial cohorts from biogaphical and documentary sources.

Another variant to this field of research is in relation to
school education as this early life experience clearly
influences status passage. The school curriculum becomes a
focal point of analysis as does the type and status of the
school. It may well be discovered in later research that
elitism in managerial recruitment, whether in industrial or
non-industrial management, correlates to some degree with
the quality of the school curriculum and the types of
subjects that encourage or deter occupational choice in
management.

Having determined the instances and degrees to which elitism
prevails, the researcher should bear in mind the constraints
in redressing discernible social disadvantages. This may
mean taking a political stance in the education arena to
strongly petition to the relevant authorities a need for
fairer educational opportunity through the school curriculum
to provide an adequate degree of socialisation that would
allow those born into less than favourable social origins to
improve their chances of realistically considering a
management career.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acton Society Trust(1956)*Management Succession*,Acton
   Society Trust,London

Berlew,D.E.andHall,D.T.(1966)'The Socialisation of
   Managers:Effects of Expectations on Performance',
   Adminisrtative Science Quarterly, Vol.XI,Part2,pp.219-221

Church,R.A.(1969)*Kenricks In Hardware:A Family Business,*
   David Charles,London

Clark,D.G.(1966)*The Industrial Manager,*Business
Publications,London

Clements,R.V.(1958)*Managers:A Study Of Their Careers In
   Industry,*Allen & Unwin,London

*Engineering,*London,1883to1975

Erickson,C.(1959)*British Industrialists:Steel And Hosiery
   1850-1950,*Cambridge University Press,London

Farmer,M.(1970)*The Family,*Longman's,London

Giddens,A.(1974)*Elites And Power In British
   Society,*Cambridge University Press,London

Hall.R.(1969)*Occupations and the Social Structure,*
   Prentice Hall,New Jersey

Jeans,J.S.(1875)*Pioneers Of The Cleveland Trade,*Metheun,
   London

Jeans,W.T.(1884)*The Creators Of The Age Of Steel,*
   Chapman And Hall,London

Keeble,S.P.(1992)*The Ability To Manage:A Study Of British
   Management 1880-1990,*Manchester University Press,
   Manchester

Kelly,A.V.(1987)*Education,*Heinemann,London

Lee.G.L.(1981)*Who Gets To The Top?:A Sociological Study Of
   Business Executives,*Gower,Aldershot

Levine,A.(1967)*Industrial Retardation In Britain 1880-1914,*
   The Garden Press Limited,London

McCloskey,D.N.(1973)*Economic Maturity And Entrepreneurial Decline:British Iron And Steel,*Harvard University Press, Massachusetts

Mottram,R.H.andCoote,C.(1950)*Through Five Generations:The History Of The Butterley Company,*Faber & Faber,London

Osborn,M.(1952)*The Story Of The Mushets,*Nelson & Sons, London

Pollard,S.(1965)*The Genesis Of Modern Management:A Study Of The Industrial Revolution In Great Britain,* Edwin Arnold,London

*The Institute Of Mechanical Engineers,*London,1883to1975

*The Production Engineer,*London,1883to1975

*The Sheffield Weekly News,*Sheffield,1899to1900

Stones,E.(1966)*An Introduction To Educational Psychology,* Metheun,London

Wiener,M.J.(1981)*English Culture And The Decline Of The Industrial Spirit 1850-1980,*Cambridge University Press, Reading