# Contents

List of Figures, Tables, and Maps xii

Preface xiv

Acknowledgments xvi

1 “So Much Honest Poverty”: Introduction 1
   Unemployment and welfare 3
   Masculine citizenship 6
   Black Country contexts 10
   Structure and sources 17

Part I Unemployment and the Continuities of Honest Poverty

2 Not “Weary Willies” or “Tired Tims”: The Work Imperative in the Poor Law World 25
   The Poor Law and the Labour Test 27
   Task work versus work relief 32
   The growing honest poor/pauper dichotomy 35
   The nation in the poor law world 38
   The poor law world overwhelmed 42
   Conclusion 49

3 “They were not single men”: Responsibility for Family and Hierarchies of Deservedness 50
   Profiles of poor law applicants 52
   Constructing married men’s privilege 62
   Family liability in the politics of unemployed men 67
   Family liability in crisis 70
   Men’s unemployment and women’s work 77
   Conclusion 80

4 “A reward for good citizenship”: National Unemployment Benefits and the Genuine Search for Work 82
   The development of national unemployment benefits 84
   Genuine work and suitable employment 91
   Work history and skill 93
   Respectability and women’s work 96
| Contents |
|------------------|------------------|
| Family liability and the gendered search for suitable employment | 98 |
| Conclusion | 105 |

**Part II  Honest Poverty in National Crisis**

5  “Married men had greater responsibilities”: The First World War, the Service Imperative, and the Sacrifice of Single Men  
Sacrifice of Single Men | 109 |
| Constituting the service imperative | 111 |
| The single and the married | 116 |
| Family liability as national service | 124 |
| Conclusion | 136 |

6  “The whole world had gone against them”: Ex-Servicemen and the Politics of Relief  
Ex-Servicemen and the Politics of Relief | 138 |
| Ex-servicemen and the poor law | 140 |
| The politics of preference | 147 |
| Out-of-Work Donation | 148 |
| Preferential hiring | 152 |
| A local context | 156 |
| Conclusion | 158 |

7  “No right to relieve a striker”: Trade Disputes and the Politics of Work and Family in the 1920s  
Family welfare and the Merthyr Tydfil decision | 159 |
| Definitions of work and family welfare | 160 |
| Striking men and unemployment benefit | 169 |
| Back to work? | 172 |
| Conclusion | 177 |

**Part III  Honest Poverty and the Intimacies of Policy**

8  “Younger men are given the preference”: Older Men’s Welfare and Intergenerational Responsibilities  
Welfare and Intergenerational Responsibilities | 183 |
| Expectations of intergenerational liability | 184 |
| The liability of sons | 188 |
| The invisibility of daughters | 193 |
| Old age pensions | 197 |
| Conclusion | 204 |

9  “He did not realise his responsibilities”: Giving Up the Privileges of Honest Poverty  
Privileges of Honest Poverty | 206 |
| Neglectful husbands and women’s poor law relief | 209 |
| Liability and the law | 210 |
“A large muster of unemployed” assembled in the Vegetable Market in the West Midlands town of Dudley in mid-September 1921. Many of the men present had been out of work for long stretches and had used up their eligibility for national unemployment benefits. They met to discuss strategies for approaching local government bodies for assistance. The featured speaker of the gathering was James Wilson, the Labour Member of Parliament for Dudley. He rallied the crowd, insisting that

the unemployed of Dudley did not want doles, and they had not met there that afternoon to ask for doles. What they wanted was genuine employment. (Hear, hear.) They were not loafers, but were men who protested against unemployment and were entitled to approach their local authorities ... and ask them to do all they could to remove unemployment and provide useful and productive schemes which would find them work.

Wilson recognized the limitations of existing national unemployment policies, so he urged unemployed men to exercise their right to demand relief at the local level from the Board of Guardians, who administered the long-stigmatized Poor Law:

There were men who felt their manhood would be affected by going to the Guardians ... but he told them that to cherish those feelings they would be worse than cowards if they allowed women and children to starve as a result. They were entitled to go to the Guardians and claim, when the right to work was not met, such sustenance as would enable them to keep their women-folk and their kiddies healthy.
Unemployment, Welfare, and Masculine Citizenship

Wilson concluded by exhorting the crowd “to continue to protest against the conditions and enforce their ideals; to continue to make approaches to their local Councils and Boards of Guardians and compel them to do their duty; and also in every way to bring pressure upon the central Government to do its duty.”

Wilson’s powerful speech captures fundamental themes in the politics of unemployment and welfare in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain. While Wilson addressed his gathering in the early 1920s, his themes would have resonated in the late nineteenth century, when the “problem of unemployment” first became part of people's vocabularies and experiences. Wilson identified the unemployed as men who desperately wanted to work – “They were not loafers, but men” – equating being a man with the desire to work. By admonishing the men in the crowd for putting their own feelings above the survival of their wives and children, Wilson also associated “men” with those who were responsible for families, whose “manhood” was contingent upon providing for “their women-folk and their kiddies.” According to Wilson, a man’s dependence on public funds did not threaten his manhood if his aim was to support his wife and children. In fact, “men” were entitled to ask for welfare in the name of their families when there was no work available for them. That right extended from local to national resources.

The men that Wilson addressed were members of the “honest poor.” From the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Britons confronted the modern realities of chronic and mass unemployment and commonly referred to “honest poverty” and the “honest poor” to bemoan the extent of suffering among “deserving” people. In 1919, for example, the Dudley Herald editor lamented that the region was experiencing “so much honest poverty” that the increased expenditures of poor law boards of guardians were justified. I take up the phrase “honest poverty” as an analytical tool to examine relationships among unemployment, welfare, and citizenship. From this perspective, honest poverty was a category applying to men (“honest” when referring to women had predominantly sexual rather than class connotations). Honest poverty describes a model of working-class masculine status built on the pillars of the male breadwinner ideal: the work imperative, which required men to demonstrate that they were willing to work, and family liability, which required men to support their families responsibly. A man who performed these roles signified his respectability – he could be poor and still fulfill the expectations of what it meant to be a man – but many working-class men faced regular challenges to their abilities to work and
maintain families. Many found themselves needing help from the state. I introduce “honest poverty” as a way to think about a working-class masculine citizenship status tied explicitly to welfare.

This book asks two big questions: 1) what happened when working-class men, who were expected to fulfill the male breadwinner ideal by working and maintaining dependants, either were unable or unwilling to take on these responsibilities? and 2) how did attempts by the British government and local officials to address that inability or unwillingness – and poor men’s interactions with these attempts – shape new boundaries around what it meant to be a citizen? I argue that, from the late nineteenth century, the visibility of unemployment and demands from new voters pushed policymakers, welfare providers, and unemployed men to reconceptualize relationships among unemployment, welfare, and citizenship. This reconceptualization incorporated dependence on the state into constructions of respectable working-class masculinity and citizenship. This was “honest poverty.” The work-welfare system associated with the male breadwinner ideal insisted on self-sufficiency and independence. The honest poverty work-welfare system opened a space for working-class men to remain “men” even when they depended on public welfare.

Unemployment and welfare

Sociologist Mike Savage has argued that “structural insecurity” has been the “distinctive feature of working-class life,” forcing workers “to find strategies for dealing with the chronic insecurity of everyday life.” One of those strategies has been to turn to public welfare provisions. For the purposes of this study, I use the term “welfare” to mean social policies and practices intended to contribute to (but not necessarily meet) basic living needs. I focus on welfare in relationship to unemployment, so many of the programs I discuss relate specifically to providing poor law relief or government benefits to men out of work. Because unemployment insurance was never untangled from non-contributory benefits in the period I cover, I talk broadly about unemployment benefits as welfare. I also include other forms of assistance, such as court-ordered “maintenance payments” for elderly parents and neglected wives and children, as part of the welfare system of the time. Men and women moved among different forms of welfare, sometimes concurrently, sometimes serially, seeking survival from the district poor law authorities, national benefit providers, and local courts. They also drew on private charity and their friends and families to help them through hard
times. Scholars have stressed the significance of this “mixed economy of welfare.”5 While my focus in this book is on public forms of assistance, the contributions of friendly societies, voluntary relief committees, charities, trade unions, and other non-government forms of relief were significant. Indeed, central and local government actors for much of the period expected the poor to cobble together a subsistence income from a combination of public and private resources. And, until after the First World War, the central government expected local bodies to take on the bulk of the welfare burden. Most of that burden fell on the Poor Law.

The only system of state assistance available to the poor before the 1911 Unemployment Insurance Act came through the Poor Law, originally Elizabethan, but which took its nineteenth-century form from the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 (the “New” Poor Law). The Poor Law Amendment Act transformed a system of relief being criticized for its cost to local ratepayers, its supposed encouragement of dependence on public funds as opposed to independent initiative, and its outdated administrative machinery. Collecting small parishes into larger unions overseen by the newly-created Boards of Guardians, the New Poor Law was funded by local taxes (rates), but the central government took on more responsibility with a Poor Law Commission to establish national policy and monitor practice. The Commission was replaced by the Poor Law Board in 1847, which in its turn was replaced by the Local Government Board in 1871, which oversaw all local government bodies, including the Poor Law Guardians. Finally, the new Ministry of Health took over management of the Poor Law in 1919.6

The ideology of the New Poor Law helped enforce economic independence as the masculine norm.7 It insisted that able-bodied men without gainful employment were blameworthy agents of their jobless status; they were not innocent victims of economic forces. While they could be viewed as the unfortunate sufferers of temporary slumps, they were supposed to have anticipated and saved for this possibility to maintain their self-sufficiency. The New Poor Law mandated that, in order to obtain assistance, able-bodied men prove their desperate circumstances by accepting indoor workhouse relief. If a man was married and had children, his family had to follow him into the workhouse, reinforcing both assumptions about the husband/father’s responsibility for his family and his failure to fulfill those breadwinner obligations. Life in the workhouse meant families separated into different wards, regimented days of task work such as picking oakum and breaking stone, wearing uniforms, and eating barely nutritious food. The intention was to create a humiliating test of people’s claims of destitution, and the poor universally hated the workhouse.8
The poor law bureaucracy closely investigated poor law operations and produced volumes of reports that reflect an attempt to refine policies to better control local conditions. Practice was often far different from policy, however, and many poor law unions continued to award outrelief, relief in cash or in kind outside the workhouse, especially when the economic environment made it impossible to offer the workhouse to all who needed help. The early 1870s saw a reassertion of the principles of 1834, the “crusade against outrelief,” an effort to clamp down on poor law unions that inspectors identified as being too generous with outdoor assistance. All poor law relief, however, was designed to stigmatize, and when working men were politically enfranchised in the late nineteenth century, becoming a “pauper” by accepting relief meant relinquishing the vote. A man who depended on public assistance was not a full citizen. Or was he?

In the last third of the nineteenth century, poor law authorities faced new types of applicants: men they regarded as honest even though they were unemployed. These seemingly honest jobless men challenged poor law assumptions, for they were not the unskilled and casual laborers that officials expected to become paupers. They were not the “residuum,” whose “vices, drunkenness, improvidence, mendicancy, bad language, filthy habits, gambling, low amusements, and ignorance,” according to Gareth Stedman Jones, authorities essentially equated with pauperism. In this context, policymakers introduced the idea of “unemployment” to try to capture the structural rather than the individual causes of joblessness. The problem of unemployment in the late nineteenth century came to be framed above all by the social survey literature of Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree. Yet even before the publication of *Life and Labour of the People of London* (1889–1903) and *Poverty: A Study of Town Life* (1901), “unemployment” was conceptually taking shape. Economic analyses of industrial capitalism combined with demonstrations by unemployed men, argues Matt Perry, to force a recognition that unemployment could exist even when a man was aggressively searching for work. Indeed, unemployment was a “problem” precisely because men who clearly were looking for work could not find any. The development and increasing use of the term “unemployment” in the 1880s acknowledged a problem beyond individual fault.

If people could understand joblessness as more of an economic than a moral problem (or at least consider a combination of structural and individual factors), then able-bodied, unemployed men could be “honest,” which meant the state could legitimately assist them in non-stigmatizing ways outside the poor law framework, and unemployed
men could continue to vote. “New liberal” thinkers emphasized a positive role for the state that focused on facilitating civic and economic agency for honest poor men.16 While these ideas began circulating in the 1880s, it was with the Liberal “landslide” of 1906 that the national government actively began to legislate new welfare provisions informed by this thinking.17 William Beveridge’s 1909 publication of *Unemployment: A Problem of Industry* explicitly framed the problem of unemployment as economic in nature and beyond the control of individual unemployed people, which contributed to government approaches.18 The Unemployment Insurance Act of 1911 introduced the first national system of unemployment insurance, designed for honest poor men, which Parliament expanded and revised throughout the 1920s. Yet the limitations of national insurance meant the unemployed continued to rely on the Poor Law and also on the non-contributory benefits system the government developed in the 1920s. National policy and local practice intersected and diverged, constructing the boundaries of the honest poverty work-welfare regime.

My work draws on the complex analyses that scholars of gender and welfare have provided of, in Ann Orloff’s words, “the mutually constitutive relationship between systems of social provision and regulation and gender.”19 Most studies of gender and welfare have focused on the ways developing welfare arrangements in the United States and Western Europe, premised on male breadwinner norms, disadvantaged women. Jane Lewis writes that welfare systems “have deployed models of individual ‘survival’ based on relatively firm assumptions about family organization and gender relations” that propped up the male breadwinner.20 These welfare systems circumscribed (married) women’s citizenship, mediating women’s access to the state through their husbands.21 Yet men’s dependence on state welfare presented a fundamental challenge to independent breadwinner masculinity and working-class men’s citizenship claims as well. These issues are the central concern of this book.22

**Masculine citizenship**

Historically, poverty and unemployment have restricted men’s abilities to act out dominant models of masculinity, even while men were acutely aware of the cultural expectations. As historian John Tosh has put it with reference to manhood in the nineteenth century, “The injunction ‘Be a man!’ implied that there were only certain ways in which one could be a man.”23 The male breadwinner ideal was certainly
the norm when Britons confronted the problem of unemployment in the late nineteenth century. Men who earned a regular income that allowed them to support wives and children who remained outside the labor market sat atop the hierarchy of patriarchal privilege. Scholars of British labor, gender, and welfare history, however, have illustrated the wide gap between the male breadwinner ideal and material realities; most working men could not earn a family wage, many women were forced to earn out of economic necessity, and many women had to survive on their own.24 The discourse of honest poverty recognized this structural insecurity of working-class life and created an acceptable category of dependent able-bodied masculine status that tried to solve the problem of the failed working-class male breadwinner. The process through which this discourse took shape and the social practices it engendered opened new possibilities for citizenship for working-class men that promised political, economic, and social rights.25

Citizenship, as Kathleen Canning and Sonya Rose argue in Gender, Citizenship, and Subjectivities, “can be understood as a political status assigned to individuals by states, as a relation of belonging to specific communities, or as a set of social practices that define the relationships between peoples and states and among peoples within communities.”26 My analysis weaves these various understandings together, considering formal political status but more importantly the cultural meanings associated with that status and the ways that “peoples and states” struggled to define relationships of belonging through social practices. These relationships were in flux in the period I examine with a changing franchise, a transformation of the state’s role with regard to social provision, and the growing politicization of the poor. Canning and Rose also stress the ways that “citizenship provides the languages, rhetorics, and even the formal categories for claims-making, sometimes in the name of national belonging or on behalf of specific rights, duties, or protections, or visions of political participation.”27 Unemployed men unquestionably drew on the categories of honest poverty to claim their rights to work and welfare, to make claims based on an understanding of citizenship that valued their experiences as workers and family men.

Citizenship, in this view, expresses a community’s values and norms, as well as conferring rights and requiring obligations.28 In the words of the much-cited sociologist T.H. Marshall, “citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All those who possess the status are equal with regard to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed.”29 For Marshall, citizenship status was tied to rights, and he envisioned a progression from civil rights in
the eighteenth century, to political rights in the nineteenth century, to social rights in the twentieth century. While his theory of progressive citizenship has been rightly criticized, I adopt his “social citizenship” to express the idea that, in order for citizens to fully enjoy civil and political (and economic) rights, they have to have a basic minimum standard of living, and the state has an obligation to provide that minimum. As Marshall declares, social citizenship signifies “the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society.” While not dictated through law or formal policy, only married men in the honest poverty work-welfare system could experience the full benefits of social citizenship that signified their place as “full members of a community.” As this book will show, citizenship status was circumscribed by both gender and marital status, which positioned women and unmarried men outside the welfare (and other) advantages conferred on married men.

While the discourse of honest poverty held out the promise of more inclusive citizenship relationships, women did not experience citizenship (formal or otherwise) in the same ways that men did, and men’s experiences of citizenship depended on their social locations relative to work and family. All men (and women, too, in theory) could meet the first qualification of honest poverty: adhering to the work imperative. Even if jobs were unavailable, a person could prove his or her deservingness by showing a good faith effort to find employment. Yet the second qualification – assuming family liability – required a person to be a head of household with a wife (and children) to maintain. Because women and unmarried men could not meet the qualification of family liability in the honest poverty work-welfare regime, they were marked as less worthy of assistance and, indeed, as less than full citizens.

Citizenship, then, can be understood as a status that, while creating the potential for equality, has been “bestowed” unevenly depending on the cultural meanings invested in it and the historical circumstances. Tosh has argued that masculinity also needs to be recognized as a “social status, demonstrated in specific social contexts.” Scholars following R.W. Connell have used the concept of “hegemonic masculinity” to argue that masculinity not only takes shape in opposition to femininity as an expression of patriarchal power, but that dominant (or hegemonic) masculinity also produces subordinate masculinities. A fundamental tension between the hegemonic breadwinner and the honest poor man existed around the dichotomy of independence/dependence. The breadwinner was always independent, while the honest poor man was dependent. In terms of sociological theories of welfare, honest
poverty helped frame welfare as a right of citizenship (rather than a need), the only way dependence could be reconciled with masculinity.\textsuperscript{35} With unemployment increasingly understood to be structural, unemployed men and welfare providers established honest poverty masculinity as a social status to bolster deserving honest men's abilities to act like independent breadwinners, downplaying their failures to find work and provide for families. In a specific social context, welfare assistance became a sign of masculinity, a sign of membership in the community. Many voices at the local and national levels demanded an understanding of masculinity where welfare and citizenship could coexist, but other voices retorted that men who could not succeed independently were indeed failures as men. Honest poverty, therefore, was not an easy or a comfortable masculine citizenship status, even for the men it benefited.

Additionally, honest poverty could only work as a masculine citizenship status if it was temporary. At both the national and local levels, officials saw both poor law unemployment relief and national unemployment insurance as solving acute rather than chronic problems. In this way, unemployed honest men were different from “regular paupers” or “unemployables,” who were socially constructed as permanently and irresponsibly in need.\textsuperscript{36} If a man became dependent for the long haul, his dependence eventually overrode his presentation as a potential breadwinner. The honest poor were basically independent men who needed some assistance to resume their lives of self-sufficiency. When men remained chronically out of work, policymakers and welfare providers reverted to blaming the unemployed, revealing the fragility of rights claims within the honest poverty work-welfare system. State assistance could be a sign of incorporation into the nation, a sign of citizenship, but only if it was short term. Honest poverty had to be transitional – a means to get deserving men back on their feet so they could wear the full mantle of masculine citizenship as independent breadwinners.

If economic independence through work was one fundamental component of hegemonic masculinity, marriage was the other, meaning that unmarried men occupied a subordinate position across the board.\textsuperscript{37} Historians of the family have emphasized the centrality of marriage to “being a man” in the nineteenth century. Marriage and fatherhood, according to Joanne Bailey, were “part of achieving ‘full’ or ‘patriarchal’ manhood,”\textsuperscript{38} and John Gillis has referred to the period after 1850 as “the era of mandatory marriage” for both men and women.\textsuperscript{39} Scholars of Victorian working-class politics have illustrated that many organizations increasingly adopted an ethos of “respectability” focused on a
masculinity grounded in the home, with the independent ability to support a wife and children signifying that men had earned the right to be incorporated into the nation. Men who remained unmarried failed to live up to patriarchal expectations and simultaneously signaled gender nonconformity regardless of their sexual identities or practices.

While my focus is not sexuality, I intend this study to contribute to understandings of what I call “welfare heteronormativity,” exploring not just the ways patriarchal welfare policies and practices privileged men over women but also privileged certain men over other men by insisting men demonstrate their masculine status through (heterosexual) marriage. Margot Canaday’s work on the United States in the twentieth century has influenced how scholars conceptualize “the straight state,” arguing, among other things, that welfare schemes served to shape and reinforce heterosexual arrangements and institutions. In her introduction to the collection Thinking Straight, Chrys Ingraham also emphasizes the ways that individuals “embrace[e] a sense of entitlement, social and economic, just by virtue of participating in married heterosexual life regardless of the ways that entitlement denies those who do not have access to equal opportunity and citizenship.”

While policymakers and relief providers sought ways to help honest unemployed married men claim their rights to assistance, they continued to blame most single men for their poverty or simply ignored single men’s circumstances. They also punished married men who gave up their entitlements: men who, for example, refused to work or abandoned their families, men who refused to live “a normal way of life.”

Black Country contexts

As historians have been asserting for several decades now, the poor law story is a local one, and, while the national trend by the late nineteenth century might have been a turn away from the Poor Law, this was not the case for inhabitants across all poor law unions. Historians generally have not had a lot to say about the role of the Poor Law in reference to unemployed men of the honest poor. José Harris, for example, in her now-classic study of unemployment, contends that the Poor Law was essentially irrelevant to the problem of unemployment, “that, at least since 1870, the Poor Law had never been a major source of relief to the unemployed.” Similarly, poor law historian Lynn Hollen Lees argues that in the late nineteenth century fewer people used the Poor Law, and “being a pauper became a much less familiar status,” which led to increasing antagonism towards poor law relief.
men created “alternatives” to the Poor Law in “friendly societies, benefit clubs, and trade unions ... diminishing the likelihood that they would need poor relief if their incomes declined.”46 Scholars have been more interested in these new forms of working-class self-help than in the ways the draconian Poor Law continued to matter. An exception is Elizabeth Hurren who, in a study of the rural Brixworth Poor Law Union, argues that poor people in the period after 1870 reasserted their entitlement to relief in the face of the crusade against outrelief. Rather than leading to reluctance to rely on the Poor Law, enfranchisement encouraged poor men to demand what they saw as their right to relief.47

Part of my project in this book is to demonstrate the Poor Law’s continuing relevance to dealing with the problem of unemployment. To do so, I use the Black Country region of the West Midlands to put flesh on the policy skeleton (Map 1.1). The region provides an excellent case study of honest poverty, as chronic un- and underemployment eroded men’s ability to support their families and led them to seek help from local and national government resources. The Black Country got its name from its coal and iron production, whose close-to-the-surface coal seams and blast furnaces blackened land and sky (Figure 1.1). As a Birmingham journalist wrote in 1884, “Blue skies change to a reeking canopy of black and grey smoke. The earth is one vast unsightly heap of dead ashes and dingy refuse. Canals of diluted coal dust teach how filthy water may be and yet retain fluidity. Tumbledown houses, tumbledown works, tottering black chimneys, fire belching furnaces, squalid and blackened people.”48 This evocative passage speaks to the industrial decline, environmental degradation, and endemic poverty that the region suffered by the last quarter of the nineteenth century.49

I examine the experiences of the Black Country poor by focusing on records from the Dudley and Stourbridge Poor Law Unions, which contained parishes in southwestern Staffordshire and northern Worcestershire (Map 1.2). In addition to Dudley and Stourbridge, towns like Rowley Regis, Tipton, Cradley Heath, Brierley Hill, Halesowen, Quarry Bank, and Lye struggled with the economic changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The region had come to prominence in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries through specialization in coal and iron production centered around the district’s ten-yard coal seam and rich deposits of ironstone and limestone.50 The Black Country was also known for chain- and nailmaking, and for glass, bricks, tools, and other industries tied to iron, such as “hollow ware” (metal table items like sugar bowls, creamers, and teapots). The extractive coal and iron industries went into serious decline in the 1870s
from flooding and overworking, while the staple domestic wrought nailmaking collapsed from factory competition to the point where the Nailmakers’ Union folded in 1895. Domestic nailmaking employed about 20,000 people in the region in the mid-1870s, but this was down to a few hundred at the start of the First World War.51

Perhaps because of the nature of the economy, at least until the turn of the century, the region saw men outnumber women at a time when the general census of England and Wales revealed a large imbalance towards women.52 Interestingly, Black Country scholar George Barnsby
argues that “the Black Country was not an area of early marriage,” and many people stayed unmarried. His study of the 1861 census indicates that “no less than one third of the population of marriageable age remain[ed] single,” and “that the proportion of people remaining single was considerably higher than for the rest of the country.” Barnsby also emphasizes that many more men than women remained unmarried. While he is cautious about comparing the numbers from the 1901 census to 1861 because of differences in the registration districts counted, Barnsby concludes that the numbers of unmarried adults actually rose about five per cent to 38 per cent of the Black Country population. Likewise, late marriage continued to be the pattern.

Men predominated in the physical work of the iron and coal industries (Figure 1.2) and in the making of the heavy chains and anchors that were a pride of the region (Figure 1.3). Many a miner had a wife who worked making nails or small chains, as these were occupations considered simple to learn, whose skills were passed down within families, and that were most often conducted on the basis of domestic production in sheds annexed to workers’ houses (Figure 1.4). When mines flooded and blast furnaces shut down, displaced men often turned to the domestic sector of chain- and nailmaking, accelerating wage declines by further
overcrowding.\textsuperscript{56} According to Barnsby, the area saw little rise in the standard of living over the course of the nineteenth century and had about 20 per cent of its population “almost perpetually below the minimum level necessary to maintain life,” with over half “above subsistence but below the minimum standard of comfort all their lives.”\textsuperscript{57}

What contemporaries came to understand as the “Great Depression” of the late nineteenth century hit the Dudley and Stourbridge districts of the Black Country particularly hard, and many of the old trades surrounding coal and iron production never rebounded from the effects of the economic downturn. While the Black Country region as a whole was eventually able to recover through the development of new industries associated with transport and engineering, the people whose
livings depended on coal and iron production and nailmaking did not. Chainmakers, who maintained more economic stability for a while, struggled with overcrowding and wage reductions from the entrance of nailmakers, miners, and iron workers into their industry. Other skilled trades associated with wrought iron – like hollow ware work and edge tool making – also eventually declined with mechanization. The brick and glass industries realized the same fate. Un- and underemployment in the Dudley and Stourbridge Unions became endemic.\textsuperscript{58} Between 1870 and 1930, the region generally battled a combination of the exhaustion of local resources, mechanized challenges to local industries, and poor demand for local products.

The area experienced a temporary boom during the First World War, as its infrastructure transitioned smoothly to munitions production, but the old industries continued their decline in the postwar period. Writing in 1929, G.C. Allen concluded his study on \textit{The Industrial Development of Birmingham and the Black Country} by noting that, while the Black Country did not fare as badly in the 1920s economic crisis as did other
Figure 1.3  Titanic Anchor, forged by Hingley and Sons, Netherton, being pulled through the streets, 1911
Source: © Dudley Archives and Local History Service, ref. p/92.

Figure 1.4  Dudley cottage, with nail shed attached to the back, c.1900
Source: © Dudley Archives and Local History Service, ref. p/59.
older industrial districts, towns with specialization in the traditional staple industries had high unemployment, suffering “severely” from declines in iron and coal. In his study of Staffordshire, D.M. Palliser notes that, by the mid-twentieth century, the Black Country landscape had changed: “gone are the pitheads, most of the glasshouses, nailers’ and chain-makers’ workshops, the tiler’s chimneys, the taller factory chimneys, and the proud facades of the major Victorian manufactories.” These economic developments and their impact on the inhabitants of the Dudley and Stourbridge Poor Law Unions illuminate the tensions between ideology and practice, the challenges of a work-welfare system premised on male breadwinning in the face of economic realities.

Structure and sources

My chronology is a poor law historian’s chronology: beginning with the “crusade against outrelief” in the early 1870s and ending with the abolition of a nineteenth-century institution, the Boards of Guardians, in 1929. Some of my chapters cover themes that cross the entire period; the continuities are informed by the stretch of the Poor Law across the decades. The remaining chapters deal more explicitly with the changes brought about by new policies and economic conditions. My themes and chronologies overlap and pull apart, creating stories that cannot neatly fit into a single narrative.

I have arranged the book in three parts, interweaving local and national stories. Part I, “Unemployment and the Continuities of Honest Poverty,” traces the pressures that the “problem of unemployment” put on the Poor Law, which brought into sharp relief the inability of many poor men to achieve masculine breadwinner status. Chapter 2 introduces the work imperative, an ideology that required men who were unemployed to prove their desire for work. When local Boards of Guardians were faced with increasing numbers of honest unemployed men demanding relief, they searched for ways to separate these men from “regular paupers.” Task work became the predominant means through which honest poor men could demonstrate their welfare deservedness, although they experienced it as demeaning. I examine the ways the work imperative evolved under the Poor Law and through local work relief schemes, showing the limitations of relief efforts that depended solely on local resources.

Chapter 3 argues that, while adhering to the work imperative was a universal sign of masculine status, only by being married – and
preferably having children as well – could a man achieve full masculine status and welfare deservedness. Married men had family liability, responsibility for maintaining wives and children, which placed them at the top of the hierarchy of welfare deservedness. Unemployed married men used their marital status to argue for their right to assistance, helping to construct unemployment as a problem of married men.

Chapter 4 explores the ways the assumptions of honest poverty became foundational to the system of national unemployment benefits. National politicians and government bureaucrats used the same languages of the work imperative and family liability as local authorities and institutionalized the heteronormative framework of honest poverty as the basis of national unemployment schemes. While policies in the postwar period increasingly expected women as well as men to adhere to the work imperative, men’s family liability remained constant so that women and single men could not make the same rights claims as married men with reference to unemployment benefits.

In Part II, “Honest Poverty in National Crisis,” I work through the ways that the First World War and major industrial actions of the 1920s revealed the privilege of family liability in determining welfare deservedness. Chapter 5 explores how the First World War opened up the possibility of a new path to masculine citizenship for men: military service. Yet military service was experienced differently for married and single men. Married men did not need war to prove their masculine citizenship, because they had already achieved that status through work and marriage. Single men, by contrast, could use military service as a path to citizenship, and the British public, simultaneously, demanded single men’s sacrifice to protect married men and their families.

Chapter 6 argues that, in the postwar period, the welfare of veterans was measured against already-existing assumptions about the state’s role in supporting married men and their families. As unemployment reached unprecedented numbers in the early 1920s, the government found it more and more difficult to hold to the promises it had made to ex-servicemen regarding welfare preferences connected to service. Indeed the principles of welfare preferences for veterans and welfare preferences for married men often conflicted, creating policy and practical problems at both the national and local levels. In the end, family liability continued to garner the most masculine credit.

Chapter 7 focuses on the massive coal strikes of 1921 and 1926. I argue that these strikes were contests over the willingness to work, with striking men claiming that their status as citizens allowed them to refuse to work under unacceptable conditions and terms. Authorities,
however, saw striking men as giving up the privileges of honest poverty by refusing to work. These strikes were also contests over the relationships between striking men and their families vis-à-vis the state, since authorities wanted to punish men on strike as no longer blamelessly unemployed, but they did not want married men’s dependent wives and children to suffer. This created major policy headaches, as the government tried to assist wives and children without benefiting striking husbands.

Part III, “Honest Poverty and the Intimacies of Policy,” investigates family relationships under the framework of honest poverty, showing that family members used the language of honest poverty against each other to pursue welfare benefits. Chapter 8 examines the ways age played a large role in officials’ determinations concerning men’s welfare. As men grew older, they were increasingly unable to meet the terms of honest poverty: age and poor health contributed to an inability to work to provide for a family. They were therefore blameless in their need and deserving of welfare. The Old Age Pensions Act of 1908 codified this assumption by providing automatic state assistance to elderly men (and women) who could prove histories of honest poverty. Yet the state still expected that adult children would assist their older parents. Officials held unmarried sons primarily accountable to maintain their parents, since married sons already had family liability for wives and children, and the state did not consider daughters full economic agents.

The final chapter examines marital separation and maintenance cases as welfare struggles, fought over husbands’ adherence to the work imperative and family liability. Men who neglected their wives gave up the privileges of honest poverty masculinity, and estranged wives and poor law officers highlighted husbands’ failures as men, summoning them to magistrates’ courts for maintenance orders. Authorities tracked down men who deserted their families, especially when those families became dependent on poor law relief. The politics of honest poverty played out on an imperial stage when heads of state argued for legal changes to facilitate finding and punishing men throughout the British Empire who failed to uphold their family responsibilities.

This book has ended up quite a distance from the project I started. I began my research asking questions about gender, health, and the late nineteenth-century Poor Law. The collections I found in the Staffordshire Record Office pushed me in a new direction, and a story about masculinity and unemployment pulled this one-time Victorian historian into the unfamiliar territory of the twentieth century. Most challenging to my conceptualization and writing of this book was that
very different types of materials and diverse levels of coverage exist for
the different periods that I include in the study. In particular, I came
up against the scholar’s dilemma of access. Some of the documents
I worked with on my first research trip, before I knew what this book
was going to become, were on subsequent trips “closed” by new data
privacy provisions. This means that I incorporate some materials that
I was unable to study as deeply as I would have liked or through the lens
I came to use on the rest of my sources.

The documents that changed the path of this project are applications
for poor law relief from the Stourbridge Poor Law Union. The applica-
tions come in two forms. The first is a set of serial ledgers of Relieving
Officers’ Application and Report Books that exist in ten-year intervals
from 1871 to 1911. These are enormous registers in which relieving
officers recorded applications by date, including demographic data, the
reasons for the application, the applicant’s request, and the outcome
of the application. I assume that at some point a decision was made to
archive these books only for the census years and a few others. While
the coverage is not exhaustive (and is uneven across the years), I created
a database (Dataset 1, DS1) that contains more than 7,700 applications
from about 4,500 separate applicants in the parishes of the Stourbridge
Union.61

The second set of applications reflects changes in recordkeeping:
relieving officers moved from serial ledgers to case files. Each applicant
had a separate file, which could include only a single request for aid on
one day or many applications that stretched over the decades. I have
a much smaller dataset for these records (Dataset 2, DS2) that encom-
passes the 221 extant case files from 1912 to 1929.62 I only viewed this
collection once, and, painfully, I did not examine the part of the collec-
tion containing unemployment insurance materials for the same period.
I simply did not know I would be writing about unemployment before
my access was restricted. Because of the privacy issues that emerged dur-
ing my research, I use first names and last initials in reference to these
poor law applications. Where names were used in public documents,
such as in newspapers or open archives, I use the full names.

In addition to the relieving officers’ records, for the local context
I draw heavily on three newspapers – the Dudley Herald, the County
Express, and the County Advertiser – all of which were published once a
week throughout the period. These newspapers reported regularly on
Boards of Guardians’ and local government meetings, committees of
unemployed men, police matters, the impact of national events like the
First World War on local people, and many other items of tremendous
use in understanding what life might have been like in the Stourbridge and Dudley Unions. The Stourbridge and Dudley Guardians’ Minutes and Committee Books vary in terms of their detail but provide a good sense of the struggles facing these local welfare providers as they confronted increasing demands on their scant resources.

To understand national policies and their development, I rely on parliamentary debates and the reports of various parliamentary commissions and committees as well as archives of government correspondence, memoranda, meetings, and other relevant papers. The files of appeals brought to the Crown-appointed Umpire by men and women who were denied unemployment benefits in the 1920s illuminate the implementation of national welfare policies, which in turn influenced subsequent practices. Most of these materials are housed at the National Archives in London, in the documents of the Ministries of Labour, Health, and Pensions and in the Treasury and War Office papers.

*Unemployment, Welfare, and Masculine Citizenship* does not tell an easy tale of the replacement of the poor law system with a “better,” more modern system of welfare, a smooth transition from needs- to rights-based welfare. Rather, in some ways, the Poor Law in the 1920s became more practically expansive, while national unemployment benefits became more ideologically restrictive. Although those deemed worthy to receive national benefits experienced fairly generous state assistance, the terms on which they were eligible for assistance drew upon the same expectations of honest poverty that were central to the administration of the Poor Law. And, as poor law authorities at the local level became increasingly unwilling to leave applicants to starve, national policymakers were more and more willing to force those they perceived as undeserving of national assistance back on local resources. The tensions between central government policy and local discretion in practice created an unpredictable context for the ways men and women negotiated their welfare.
### Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ablebodiedness, 4, 28, 85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of aged poor, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of veterans, 144–6, 147, 153, 154–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams, R.J.Q., 110–11, 119–20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adultery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and maintenance of wives, 214–15, 228–9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and women's deservedness, 214–15, 228–9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation orders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the British Empire, 229–31, 275n113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and maintenance of single mothers, 229–31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of applicants for poor law relief, 55, 62, 185–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and honest poverty, 183–4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and unemployment benefit, 183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ablebodiedness of, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as applicants for poor law relief, 187, 195–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children's support of, 184, 187–8, 189–97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deservedness of, 183–4, 197–8, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and family liability, 183, 197–8, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and gender, 185, 197, 198–9, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health of, 198</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marital status of, 185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and old age pensions, 195–204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Poor Law, 184–5, 199, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor law relief to, 185, 187–8, 191, 197–9, 269n66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>survival strategies of, 184, 187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployment of, 183, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work histories of, 198–9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and work imperative, 197–8, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen, G.C., 15, 112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, Olive, 218</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants for poor law relief, 52–62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abandoned wives as, 209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ages of, 55, 62, 185–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children of, 193–4, 195–6, 209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children contributing to, 186–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependants of, 196–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elderly people as, 187, 195–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender of, 52, 55, 58–9, 62, 185, 204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marital status of, 52, 55, 58–9, 62, 185, 209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married women as, 55, 208, 209–10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupations of by gender, 59–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasons for applications by, 56–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single mothers as, 209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sons versus daughters of, 193–4, 195–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>women as, 52–62, 208, 209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asquith, Herbert Henry, 120, 121, 123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey, Joanne, 9, 65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnsby, George, 12–13, 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barr, Niall, 139, 146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behlmer, George, 211, 272n37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beveridge, William, 6, 39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Country, 10–11, 15–17, 244n49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during First World War, 111–12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marriage in, 12–13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during miners' strike (1921), 161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sex ratio in, 12–13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standard of living in, 13–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>towns, 11–12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployment in, 11, 42–3, 156, 161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Country industries, 60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decline of, 11–12, 14–15, 28–9, 35–6, 161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during First World War, 15–17, 112, 113–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men's work in, 13–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployment in, 42–3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>women's work in, 13–14, 55, 77, 79, 250n12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

289
Boards of Guardians, 4, 238
discretion of, 164, 165, 167–8, 180
and negligent husbands, 208
and strikes, 162–9, 172
Booth, Charles, 5, 241n13
Boscawen, Arthur, 114–15
Bourke, Joanna, 67, 152, 216
Brady, Sean, 51
British Empire
affiliation orders in, 229–31, 275n113
citizenship in, 223–4, 227, 274n81
enforcement of maintenance orders in, 225–31, 275n110
family liability in, 225–7
seeking work in, 223–5
British Legion, 138, 139, 146, 155, 156
Browne, Tom (illustrator), 25
Brundage, Anthony, 238
Burnett, John, 32, 87
Burns, John, 84, 87
Cameron, David, 276n5
Canaday, Margot, 10
Canning, Kathleen, 7
Chamberlain, Austen, 149, 201
Chamberlain circular, 34, 41
Chamberlain, Joseph, 34, 35
Charity Organization Society, 28, 66
Children (adult), 59, 187
family liability of, 188–9
and maintenance of parents, see maintenance of parents
Children (dependent), 55, 59, 63–4, 65, 68, 77, 209
Churchill, Winston, 170
Citizenship, 3, 7–8, 238
and deservedness, 37–8
and family liability, 8, 67, 72–3, 125, 208, 224, 227, 229, 230, 237
and gender, 8, 93, 243n32
and honest poverty, 7–8, 9, 70, 72–3, 233, 238–9
imperial, 223–4, 227, 274n81
and maintenance of wives, 213–14, 227
and marital status, 7–8, 9–10, 51–2, 118, 120–2, 124, 137, 235–6
and masculinity, 2, 3, 6, 7, 39–40, 51–2, 96, 223–4, 227, 233, 237
and military service, 18, 72–3, 111, 118, 122, 136, 137, 236
and old age pensions, 199–201, 202
and Poor Law, 5, 43–4, 83
and poor law relief, 33, 37–8, 233–4, 238–9
and service imperative, 111, 136
single men’s, 8, 10, 111, 118, 137
and strikes, 159–60, 169, 179–80
and unemployment, 33, 37–8, 233
and unemployment benefit, 82, 86, 87, 105–6, 232–3, 234–5
veterans’, 138–40, 146, 150
and voting, 33, 37–8, 42, 234
and welfare, 6, 7–8, 9, 39–40, 42, 233
women’s, 8, 74, 93
and work imperative, 8, 47–8, 136, 237
and work relief, 47–8, 234
Clark, Anna, 79
Cohen, Deborah, 139–40, 141, 143, 147, 152
Common Law
and maintenance of wives, 212, 214
Connell, R.W., 8
Conscription
exemption from, 123, 124–36
and marital status, 123, 126, 128–36
and military service, 110–11
versus voluntarism, 124
Cott, Nancy, 243n31
Croll, Andy, 251n30
Crowther, M.A., 184–5, 267n6
Crusade against outrelief, 5, 11, 28, 29, 51, 246n14
and married women, 209
Dataset 1 (DS1), 20, 52, 60, 62, 185–8, 193, 194, 195–6, 209
Dataset 2 (DS2), 20, 44, 55, 60, 62, 185–8, 196, 197, 250n11
Davis, Jennifer, 211, 271n21
Deacon, Alan, 86, 89, 93, 255n71
Dependency
and honest poverty, 7, 9, 75, 77
of married women, 60, 102
and masculinity, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8–9, 87, 96, 233, 238
and old age pensions, 197
and poor law relief, 36–7
and suicide, 75, 76–7
and unemployment, 34, 75, 232–3
and welfare, 232–3
Derby, Lord (Edward George Villiers Stanley), 119, 120
Derby Scheme, 118–20, 121
and marital status, 118–20
Desertion, see wives (abandoned)
Deservedness, 8, 30, 36–8, 40, 41, 46, 49, 51, 52, 66, 83, 84, 89, 93–4, 96
of abandoned wives, 209, 210
of aged poor, 183–4, 197–8, 204
and citizenship, 37–8
of elderly men, 183–4
and family liability, 66, 67, 69–70
and fatherhood, 64–5
and honest poverty, 17, 50–1, 70, 235, 237
and marital status, 50–2, 62–3, 64, 66, 233
and military service, 136
and old age pensions, 199, 200–1
and Poor Law, 36–7, 45–6, 62, 63–4
of single mothers, 229–30
of strikers, 159, 162
and strikes, 159–60, 175–8, 179–80
and task work, 44–5
and unemployment benefit, 83, 86, 93, 105
of veterans, 139–41, 142–6, 147–52, 154–5, 158
and welfare, 233, 237
and work imperative, 34–5, 66, 106, 233, 234
and work relief, 35, 66
Dewey, P.E., 125
Disabled veterans, 140–1, 142–4, 147, 153
employment of, 262n62
and Poor Law, 140–3
preferences for, 147, 152, 153,
see also preferential hiring of veterans
unemployment of, 139, 153
Divorce, 213–14
and Poor Person’s Procedure (1914), 271n29
Dole, see unemployment benefit
Domestic duties
and women’s deservedness, 215–16
Domestic service
and genuinely seeking work test, 100, 103
for married women, 100, 103
and unemployment benefit, 97–8, 100, 103
and women’s work, 97–8, 103
Domestic violence, 212, 273n51
and maintenance orders, 212–13, 215, 217
Draft (military), see conscription
Dudley Board of Guardians, 29–32, 43, 44, 45, 46, 63–4, 72, 161, 165, 167
Dudley Poor Law Union, 11–15, 29, 35–6, 84, 161
see also Black Country; Black Country industries
Duncan Smith, Iain, 232–3
Elderly, see aged poor
Emigration, 223–4
and maintenance of wives and children, 224
Employment, see seeking work; unemployment; women’s work; work
Enfranchisement, see voting
Ex-servicemen, see veterans

Family economies
and marital separation, 216–17
and women’s work, 7, 73–4, 79, 193–7, 201, 204–5, 220, 236–7, 268n35, 269n51
Family liability, 2, 66, 67, 70, 80–1, 83, 91, 93, 98, 216, 237, 267n6
for abandoned wives, 211
and aged poor, 183, 197–8, 204
across the British Empire, 225–7
as cause of suicide, 75–7
as cause of theft, 70–2
as cause of welfare fraud, 72–3
Family liability — continued
and citizenship, 8, 67, 72-3, 74, 124, 208, 224, 227, 229, 230, 237
of daughters versus sons, 193
and deservedness, 66, 67, 69-70
of elderly men, 183-4
and First World War, 117
and gender, 93, 98-9, 188-9, 193-6, 204-5
and honest poverty, 99-100, 208, 230, 235-6, 237
husbands’ neglect of, 208, 209-10, 211-14
and imperial citizenship, 227, 231
and marital status, 51-2, 122, 124, 204-5, 235-6
and masculinity, 2, 51-2, 75, 98-9, 208, 218-20, 223-4, 229, 230, 235-6
and military service, 109-10, 116-17, 122-3, 136-7
and military service exemptions, 128-30, 135-6
and Poor Law, 62, 63-4
and seeking work, 99-100, 221, 223-4
and single men, 123-4, 236
and strikes, 160, 162, 165-6, 169, 180
and Umpire’s decisions, 99-100
and unemployed men, 68
and unemployment benefit, 83, 86, 98-100, 105
and veterans, 147, 153
women’s, 93, 204-5
and women’s work, 77-80, 98-9
and work imperative, 99, 106, 204-5, 218-19
see also maintenance of parents; maintenance of wives
Family responsibility, see family liability
Fatherhood
and deservedness, 64-5
and masculinity, 9-10
First World War, 42, 87, 138, 235, 236
Black Country during, 111-12
Black Country industries during, 15-17, 112, 113-14
and family liability, 117
and military service, 109-10, 256n6
recruiting for, 256n6
separation allowances, 117
and single mothers, 229-30
and unemployment, 42, 111, 112-13, 138
and unemployment benefit, 87
veterans of, 260n6, see also veterans
and widows and widowers, 117, 124, 126
and women, 111, 115, 117
Fraud, see welfare fraud
Gender
of aged poor, 185, 197, 198-9, 204
of applicants for poor law relief, 52, 55, 58-9, 62, 185, 204-5
and citizenship, 7-8, 93, 238-9, 243n32
and family liability, 93, 98-9, 188-9, 193-6, 204-5
and genuinely seeking work test, 93, 98-9, 105-6
and honest poverty, 8, 235, 236-7
and Labour Test, 28
and military service, 111
and old age pensions, 197, 199, 201, 204
and Umpire’s decisions, 99-100
and unemployment, 85, 100, 233, 236-7
and unemployment benefit, 93, 96-7, 98-9, 100-1, 103, 105-6, 204-5, 236-7
and welfare, 6, 7, 117, 233, 236-7, 242n21, 243n35
and work imperative, 2-3, 8, 93, 96, 196, 204-5, 236-7
see also masculinity
General Strike (1926), 162, 166, 167-8
and poor law relief, 159
see also miners’ strikes; strikes
Genuinely seeking work test, 89, 91-3, 96, 106, 238
and domestic service, 100, 103
and gender, 93, 98-9, 105-6
and Labour Test, 96
and marital status, 99-103, 104-6
Index 293

and motherhood, 103
for single people, 104–5
and skill, 94–6
Umpire’s decisions about, 93–4
and unemployment benefit, 91–2
for widows and widowers, 105
for women, 96–8, 99, 100–3
Gillis, John, 9
Gordon, Linda, 243n35
Gorman, Daniel, 274n81
Government (national)
responses to strikes, 162–3, 178–9
responses to unemployment, 35–6, 38–40, 44–5, 47, 49, 84–5, 87–9
Gullace, Nicoletta, 111, 124, 256n3
Hamerton, A. James, 216, 217
Hanagan, Michael, 83
Hannington, Wal, 47
criticism of task work, 47
Harris, José, 10, 27–8, 34
Hegemonic masculinity, 8–9
Heteronormativity, 10, 51, 80, 217–18, 235–6, 244n42, 244n43
Higgs, Edward, 193–4
Honest poverty, 2–3
and ablebodiedness, 28
and age, 183–4
of aged poor, 197, 204
and citizenship, 7–8, 9, 26–7, 70, 72–3, 233, 238–9
and dependency, 7, 9, 75, 77
and deservedness, 17, 50–1, 70, 235, 237
of elderly men, 183–4
and family liability, 50–1, 99–100, 208, 230, 235–6, 237
and gender, 8, 235, 236–7
as justification for theft, 70–2
as justification for welfare fraud, 72–3
and Labour Test, 28
and maintenance of wives, 211–12, 217–18, 230–1
and maintenance orders, 210–11
and marital status, 50–1, 64, 69, 235–6
and masculinity, 2, 7, 8–9, 27, 73, 75, 235–6, 237–9
and military service, 111
and old age pensions, 197, 199–200, 202–4
and Poor Law, 36–7, 64, 233–4
and poor law relief, 30–1, 33, 233–4, 235, 238–9
and single men, 8, 10, 50–1, 64, 81, 236
and strikes, 159–60, 169, 179–80
and unemployment, 9, 25, 26–7, 29–30, 31–3, 34, 36, 41, 85, 218, 233, 238–9
and unemployment benefit, 83, 89, 91, 234–5
and Unemployment Insurance Act of 1911, 85–6
and veterans, 140, 147, 158
and welfare, 8–9, 19, 26–7, 40, 233, 236, 237–9
for women, 98, 214
women’s use of, 217–18, 237
and work imperative, 28, 218, 221, 233, 234, 237
and work relief, 41, 234
Hore, C.F.A., 142–3, 144, 145, 146
Horne, John, 52
Horne, Robert, 149
Humphreys, Robert, 144–5
Humphries, Jane, 209
Hurren, Elizabeth, 11
Husbands
neglect of wives by, 206–8, 209
see also maintenance of wives
Idlers, see loafers
Igra, Anna R., 270n10
Imperial Conference of 1911, 226–8
and Provision for Deserted Wives and Children, 227–8
Ingraham, Chrys, 10
Intergenerational liability, 184, 267n14
Jackson, Stevi, 244n43
Jones, Gareth Stedman, 5
Kent, Susan Kingsley, 275n108
King’s Roll, 152, 154
Labor disputes, see strikes
Labour Exchanges Act of 1909, 39
Labour Party
responses to unemployment, 89, 91
Labour Test (Poor Law), 27, 28–32, 33, 34, 38, 41, 45, 47, 49 and gender, 28 compared to genuinely seeking work test, 96 and honest poverty, 28 protests against, 44, 47 and strikes, 162 and unemployment benefit, 234–5 and work imperative, 47, 234 Laybourn, Keith, 255n74 Lees, Lynn Hollen, 10, 28, 33, 196 Lewis, Jane, 6 Liable relatives, 184–5 women as, 193, 196–7, 198–9, 204–5 Liable relatives clause (Poor Law), 184 Light, Alison, 67 Lloyd George, David, 85, 138–9, 152, 153, 201 Loafer, 27, 28, 31, 38, 66, 86, 94, 153, 232, 233, 234, 235, 239 and Poor Law, 28, 33, 36–7, 45–6 and poor law relief, 30–1 versus unemployed men, 38, 41, 86, 94, 221 Local authorities
criticism of national policy, 65–6, 84–5 privileging of married men, 65–6, 67, 155 responses to unemployment, 35–6, 84–5, 222 and work relief, 35–6, 47–8 Local Government Board (English), 4, 28, 34, 35, 84, 85, 221, 225, 234 Local Government Board (Scottish), 226, 227, 229 Lomas, Janis, 117, 257n30 Macnamara, Thomas, 149–50 Magee, Gary, 224 Magistrates’ courts
and seeking work, 223–4, 231
by unemployed men, 218–19, 220–4, 230
and women’s responsibilities, 214–16, 228–9
and women’s work, 220
and work imperative, 218–19, 220–1, 230

see also family liability

Maintenance orders, 214, 272n33, 273n58
and abandonment of wives, 210–11, 218
and domestic violence, 212–13
frequency of application for, 272n37
and honest poverty, 210–11
imprisonment for neglect of, 213–14, 218, 222–3
for parents, 184–5, 189
and poor law relief, 210–11
reciprocal imperial legislation for, 225–7
as welfare, 3, 210–11
for wives, 210–12, 213–16, 218, 219–20, 225–31

Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act of 1920, 228, 229–30

Male breadwinner ideal, 2–3, 6–7, 8–9, 27, 51–2, 73, 80, 86, 233, 235–6, 238, 240n3
challenges to, 39–40
and masculinity, 8–9, 27, 51–2
and veterans, 139–40
and welfare, 249n6

Manhood, see masculinity

Marital separation, 19, 213–14
and family economies, 216–17
and maintenance of wives, 213–14, 216–17, 219–20

Marital status
of aged poor, 185
of applicants for poor law relief, 52, 55, 58–9, 62, 185, 209
and citizenship, 7–8, 9–10, 51–2, 118, 120–2, 124, 137, 235–6
and conscription, 123, 124, 126, 128–36

and deservedness, 50–2, 62–3, 64, 66, 233
and family liability, 51–2, 122, 124, 204–5, 235–6
and genuinely seeking work test, 99–103, 104–5, 105–6
and honest poverty, 50–1, 64, 69, 235–6
and masculinity, 6–7, 9–10, 51–2, 67, 79, 100, 111, 120–4, 136–7
and military service, 18, 109–11, 116–17, 118–21, 122–4, 136–7, 236
and military service exemptions, 126, 128–36
and Out-of-Work Donation, 148–9
and patriotism, 118–20, 121–2
and poor law relief, 62–4
and preferential hiring of veterans, 154–5, 157
of strikers, 172
and unemployment, 51, 100
and unemployment benefit, 98–101, 103, 105–6
and veterans, 147–9, 150–1, 158
and welfare, 52, 233, 236
and work imperative, 50–2, 93, 196, 204–5, 235–6

Marriage
in Black Country, 12–13
as cover for shirking, 121–2, 133–4
and domestic violence, 212–13, 215, 217
and masculinity, 9–10
norms of, 215–16, 217, 237

Marriage bar, 100–2

Marriage law, 213–14
and maintenance of wives, 212–13
Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion) Act of 1886, 213
Married Women’s Property Acts, 212
Matrimonial Causes Act of 1878, 212–13
Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act of 1895, 213

Married men
emigration of, 224
maintaining parents, 188–9, 191–2
Married men – continued
and military service, 109–10, 116–18, 120–1, 122, 130–1, 134
privileging of, 50–2, 62, 63–4, 65, 67–8, 69–70, 80–1, 105–6, 148, 154–5, 157, 158, 188–9, 190–1, 235, 236, 237
protection of, 116–21, 122, 130–1, 134, 135–7, 236
and work relief, 65–6
and veterans, 154–5, 157–8
Married women
and crusade against outrelief, 209
dependency of, 60, 102
and domestic service, 100–2, 103
and genuinely seeking work test, 100–3
maintenance of, see maintenance of wives
and marriage bar, 100–2
as poor law applicants, 55, 208, 209–10
and unemployment benefit, 98–9, 102–3
as workers, 77, 220
in workhouses, 209
Marshall, T.H., 7–8
Masculinity, 86, 93, 227–8, 243n37, 249n2
and citizenship, 2, 3, 6, 7, 39–40, 51–2, 96, 223–4, 227, 233, 237
and dependency, 3, 5, 6, 8–9, 87
domestic, 52, 67, 68, 80–1
and family liability, 2, 51–2, 75, 98–9, 208, 218–20, 223–4, 229, 230, 235–6
and fatherhood, 9–10
hegemonic, 8–9
and honest poverty, 2, 7, 8–9, 27, 73, 75, 235–6, 237–9
and independence, 3, 4, 6, 8–9, 28–9, 40, 51–2, 65, 70, 75, 77, 238–9
and maintenance of wives, 213–14, 218–21, 227–8, 230
and male breadwinner ideal, 8–9, 27, 51–2
and marital status, 6–7, 9–10, 51–2, 67, 79, 100, 111, 120–4, 136–7
and military service, 109–10, 111, 114, 115, 118, 120–4, 130, 136
and national identity, 87
and Poor Law, 4–5, 26–7, 27–8, 41, 83, 233–4
and service imperative, 114, 115
and skill, 94–6
of strikers, 159–60, 169, 170, 180
and unemployment, 2, 6–7, 27, 39–40, 41, 75, 86–7, 139–40, 146, 150, 236–7
and unemployment benefit, 82, 86, 87, 89, 91, 99–100
of veterans, 139–40, 142, 150, 153
and welfare, 3, 6, 8–9, 39–40, 233–4, 238–9
and work, 9–10, 27, 47–9, 89, 93, 94–6
and work imperative, 2, 3, 75, 180, 232
and work relief, 34–5, 37, 40, 41, 48–9
McClelland, Keith, 28–9, 51–2, 75
McDermott, James, 124–5
McLaren, Angus, 52
Means testing, 89, 91, 238
Men, see aged poor; applicants for poor law relief; married men; masculinity; single men; veterans
Merthyr Tydfil Decision, 160, 162, 163, 164–6, 168, 172, 180
see also strikes and poor law relief
Meyer, Jessica, 262n62
Military recruiting, 110–11, 112–14
Military service
Acts, 124, 133
and citizenship, 18, 72–3, 111, 118, 122, 136, 137, 236
and conscription, 110–11
and deservedness, 136
and First World War, 109–10, 256n6
and gender, 111
and honest poverty, 111
and marital status, 18, 109–11, 116–17, 118–21, 122–4, 136–7, 236
and married men, 109–10, 116–18, 120–1, 122, 130–1, 134
and masculinity, 109–10, 111, 114, 115, 118, 120–4, 130, 136
and single men, 109–10, 117–21, 123–4, 136–7
as solution to unemployment, 112–13
and unskilled workers, 122–3
and voluntarism, 110–11, 118
versus war work, 115–16, 123, 136
and work imperative, 111, 114, 122–3, 136
see also service imperative; veterans
Military service exemptions, 124–36
dataset, 125–6
and family liability, 128–30, 135–6
and marital status, 126, 128–36
public opinion about, 126
and separation allowances, 135–6
and skill, 132
tribunals, 124–6, 130–1
and war work, 132–4
Military service organizations,
see British Legion; National Federation for Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers
Miners’ Federation, 160–1, 178–9
Miners’ strikes (1921 and 1926), 160–1, 166–70, 171, 172, 180, 222, 264n8
in the Black Country, 161
see also General Strike (1926);
Merthyr Tydfil Decision; strikers; strikes
Ministry of Health, 4
and relief to strikers, 162, 164–8, 172
Minor, Iris, 218
Mond, Alfred, 164, 165, 166
Motherhood
and genuinely seeking work test, 103
see also single mothers
National Federation for Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers (NFDSS), 140, 142, 150, 152, 153, 157
National identity
and masculinity, 87
and military service, 115–16, 121
and work imperative, 46
see also citizenship, imperial
National Insurance Act of 1911, 41–2, 85, 87, 234–5
National Unemployed Workers Movement, 47
New Liberalism, 6, 38–9
New Poor Law, see Poor Law
Not genuinely seeking work, see genuinely seeking work test
Obama, Barack, 239
Old age pensions (OAPs), 184, 187, 197–204
Act of 1908, 197, 200, 202, 269n65
and citizenship, 199–201, 202
and dependency, 197
and deservedness, 199, 200–1
and gender, 197, 199, 201, 204
and honest poverty, 197, 199–200, 202–4
and maintenance of parents, 201–2
and Poor Law, 199–200
and poor law relief, 199, 200–1, 202, 204
and women, 201, 202, 204
and work imperative, 199, 202, 204
Orloff, Ann, 6
Out-of-Work Donation (OWD), 88, 139, 148–9, 150, 152
and marital status, 148–9
and single men, 149, 150–2
and veterans, 138–9, 148–52
and women, 148–9
Outrelief, 5, 28, 29, 33, 43, 44, 63, 233, 235
changing attitudes toward, 200–1
see also poor law relief
Palliser, D.M., 17
Parliamentary debates, 85–7, 120–4, 143–4, 200–2
Patriotism
and marital status, 118–20, 121–2
and war work, 116
Paupers and pauperism, 5, 9, 26, 33, 42, 46, 233–4, 243n36
versus unemployed men, 33, 34, 35, 36–7, 46
Pedersen, Susan, 117, 148
Perry, Matt, 5, 43, 75
Poor Law, 4–5, 10–11, 21, 27–8, 41, 82–3, 166, 238, 241n6
and ablebodiedness, 4, 28, 33
and aged poor, 184–5, 199
and citizenship, 5, 43–4, 83
and deservedness, 36–7, 45–6, 62, 63–4
and family liability, 62, 63–4
and honest poverty, 36–7, 64, 233–4
and loafers, 28, 33, 36–7, 45–6
and masculinity, 4–5, 26–7, 27–8, 41, 83, 233–4
and old age pensions, 199–200
and single mothers, 55, 209, 270n11
stigma of, 5, 26–7, 34, 36–7, 45, 143, 245n5
and task work, see Labour Test
and unemployment, 4–6, 10, 17, 25–7, 36–7
and veterans, 139, 140–6
and voting, 5, 11, 28–9, 31–2, 42, 234
and work imperative, 36–7, 45–6, 144
see also applicants for poor law relief; Labour Test; outrelief;
poor law relief
Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, see Poor Law
Poor law relief
for abandoned wives, 208, 209–11
to aged poor, 185, 187–8, 191, 197–9, 204, 269n66
applications for, see applicants for poor law relief
and citizenship, 33, 37–8, 233–4, 238–9
and General Strike (1926), 159
and honest poverty, 30–1, 33, 233–4, 235, 238–9
and maintenance of parents, 184–8, 189–92, 193–4, 195–6, 204
and maintenance of wives, 208, 210–12, 213, 216–18, 220–1, 222–3, 224–7, 230
and maintenance orders, 210–11
and marital status, 62–4
for neglected women, 196, 209, 217–18
and old age pensions, 199, 200–1, 202, 204
to strikers, 167–8, 172
and strikes, 159–60, 161–9, 179–80
to unemployed men, 3–6, 9, 26–9, 34, 36–8, 39–40, 41, 43–4, 45–8
and unemployment, 29–30, 31–2, 36, 245n5
and vagrancy, 221
and veterans, 140–1, 142–6, 150–1
and voting, 5, 33
work relief as alternative to, 34–5, 36, 48–9, 234
see also applicants for poor law relief; Labour Test; outrelief
Poplarism, 264n23
Poverty, see applicants for poor law relief; honest poverty; paupers
and pauperism; Poor Law; poor law relief; unemployment; welfare
Preferential hiring of veterans, 152–7, 158
and disabled veterans, 147, 152, 153
and marital status, 154–5, 157
and masculinity, 153
trade union resistance to, 153, 154–5, 156–7
by Unemployment Grants Committee, 154–5
and work imperative, 153
and work relief, 154–5
see also veterans, preferences for
Public works, see work relief
Relieving Officers
Application and Report Books, 20, 52
National Association of, 168
Representation of the People Act of 1918, 38, 42, 139, 234
Residuum, see loafers; paupers and pauperism
Respectability, 2, 9, 96
and applicants for poor law relief, 209
Index 299

and maintenance of parents, 188
and women’s work, 96–8, 255n59
Rose, Sonya, 7, 52, 240n4
Ross, Ellen, 208
Rowntree, Seebohm, 5
Royal Commission on Divorce and Matrimonial Causes (1912), 223
Royal Commission on the Aged Poor (1895), 199
Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and the Relief of Distress (1909), 41–2, 66, 251n37
Ryan, Patricia, 162–3
Ryan, Paul, 232–3
Savage, Mike, 3
Scott, James C., 241n9
Scroungers, see loafers
Seeking work, 221, 223–4
in the British Empire, 223–5
and desertion of families, 223–5
and deservedness, 221
and family liability, 99–100, 221, 223–4
and maintenance of wives, 223–4, 231
and remittances home, 224
Select Committee on Distress from Want of Employment (1895/6), 35, 36–8
Select Committee on the Deserving Aged Poor (1899), 199
Self help
as alternative to Poor Law, 11
Separation (marital), 208, 212, 213–14, 218, 272n35, 272n37, 273n58
Separation allowances
during First World War, 117, 257n30
and military service exemptions, 135–6
Service imperative, 111
and citizenship, 111, 136
and masculinity, 114, 115
and single men, 117–20
and war work, 114, 132–3
versus work imperative, 114, 116–17, 136
Sexual norms, 10, 214
and welfare, 10, see also welfare heteronormativity
for women, 96, 214
Shenk, Gerald E., 125
Shirkers, 42, 46, 48
single men as, 118, 134
unemployed men as, 46, 48
and war work, 42, 116
see also loafers
Single men
and citizenship, 8, 10, 111, 118, 137
emigration of, 224
and family liability, 123–4, 236
and honest poverty, 8, 10, 50–1, 64, 81, 236
and maintenance of parents, 188, 189–90, 192–3, 236
and military service, 109–10, 117–21, 123–4, 136–7
and Out-of-Work Donation, 149, 150–2
and service imperative, 117–20
as shirkers, 118, 134
suspicions of, 52, 64, 80–1
and unemployment benefit, 104–5, 192–3
Single mothers
and affiliation orders, 229–30
deservedness of, 229–30
and Poor Law, 55, 209, 270n11
sympathy for, 229–30
Single people
and genuinely seeking work test, 104–5
Skill
and genuinely seeking work test, 94–6
and masculinity, 94–6
and military service exemptions, 132
and unemployment benefit, 94–6
Sources, 19–21
Stanley, Edward George Villiers, see Derby, Lord
Stonebreaking, see Labour Test
Stourbridge Board of Guardians, 29, 33, 43–5, 47, 50, 58, 65, 68, 74–5, 84, 167
Stourbridge Poor Law Union, 11–15, 29, 35–6, 43–4, 47, 52, 84
see also Black Country; Black Country industries
Strikers
deservedness of, 159, 162
marital status of, 171, 172
masculinity of, 159–60, 169, 170, 180
poor law relief to, 167–8, 172
sympathy for, 162–3, 165, 180, 222
Umpire’s decisions about, 173–7, 178
and unemployment benefit, 172–7, 178–9
welfare of, 164, 179–80
see also strikes
Strikes
and Boards of Guardians, 162–9, 172
and citizenship, 159–60, 169, 179–80
and deservedness, 159–60, 175–8, 179–80
and family liability, 162, 165–6, 169, 180
government responses to, 162–3, 164–8, 172, 178–9
and honest poverty, 159–60, 169, 179–80
and Labour Test, 162
versus lock-outs, 167, 169–70, 264n9
and poor law relief, 159–60, 161–9, 179–80
Umpire’s decisions about, 172–7, 178–9
and unemployment, 160, 162, 174, 175
and unemployment benefit, 172–80
and welfare of single men, 171–2
women’s role in, 162, 170, 180
and work imperative, 160, 162, 172–80
see also General Strike (1926); miners’ strikes (1921 and 1926)
Strikwerda, Eric, 251n43
Suffrage, see voting
Suicide
and family liability, 75–7
unemployment as cause of, 75–7
Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women Act) of 1895, 213
Task work, 4, 28, 30, 32, 34, 44, 45, 47, 63, 235
see also Labour Test
Thane, Pat, 184–5, 189, 196
Theft
and family liability, 70–2
honest poverty as justification for, 70–2
Thompson, Andrew, 224
Todd, Selina, 253n79, 255n59, 269n51
Tosh, John, 6, 8, 243n37
Trade disputes, see strikes
Trades Union Congress, 69, 159, 166, 170
Trainor, Richard, 29
Transients
sexual and gender nonconformity of, 249n7
see also vagrancy
Tribunals (military service), 124–36
see also military service exemptions
Umpire’s decisions (on unemployment benefit), 91–3
and family liability, 99–100
and gender, 99–100
and genuinely seeking work test, 93–4
about single people, 104–5
about strikers, 173–7, 178
and strikes, 172–3, 178–9
and women’s work, 96–8
and work imperative, 93–4, 172–80
Unemployables, see loafers; paupers and pauperism
Unemployed men
degeneration of, 38, 46
and dependency, 34, 49, 75
equated with married men, 68–9
family liability of, 68, 98–9, 100, 218–19, 236–7
versus loafers, 38, 41, 86, 94, 221
maintenance of wives, 218–19, 220–4, 230
versus paupers, 33, 34, 35, 36–7, 46
politics of, 1–2, 7, 32–3, 43–5, 47–8, 67–70, 155, 237–8
poor law relief to, 3–6, 9, 26–9, 34, 36–8, 39–40, 41, 43–4, 45–8
as shirkers, 46, 48
and wives’ employment, 73–4
and work imperative, 31, 34, 45–6, 48, 49, 220, 221, 285
work relief to, 34–5, 36, 48–9, 65–6, 234
see also unemployment
Unemployed Workmen’s Act of 1905, 38–9, 40, 41, 84, 234
Unemployment, 2, 3, 43, 67, 69, 88–9, 241n12
and aged poor, 183, 204
Black Country, 11, 42–3, 156, 161
and Boards of Guardians, 84
as cause of suicide, 75–7
and citizenship, 33, 37–8, 233
and dependency, 34, 75, 232–3
of disabled veterans, 139, 153
and First World War, 42, 111, 112–13, 138
and gender, 85, 100, 233, 236–7
government responses to, 35–6, 38–40, 44–5, 47, 49, 84–5, 87–9
and honest poverty, 9, 25, 26–7, 29–30, 31–3, 34, 36, 41, 85, 218, 233, 238–9
Labour Party responses to, 89, 91
local authority response to, 35–6, 84–5, 222
and marital status, 51, 100
and masculinity, 2, 6–7, 27, 39–40, 41, 75, 86–7, 139–40, 146, 150, 236–7
and military recruiting, 112–13
military service as solution to, 112–13
and Poor Law, 4–6, 10, 17, 25–7, 36–7
problem of, 17, 42, 51, 62, 89, 232, 239
protest against, 1–2, 32, 43–4
shame of, 42–3, 75
and stigma, 86, 239
and strikes, 160, 162, 174, 175
and theft, 70–2
of veterans, 138–40, 146, 147, 148, 150, 152, 153, 154–5, 156–7
and welfare fraud, 72–3
and work imperative, 8, 27, 29–30, 31–2, 41, 85, 221
see also unemployed men
Unemployment benefit, 3, 18, 21, 43, 45, 72, 82–3, 84, 85–6, 87, 89, 91, 192–3, 238, 253n4
and age, 183–4
applications for, 91–2, 93, 94
and citizenship, 82, 86, 87, 105–6, 232–3, 234–5
for dependants, 192–3
and deservedness, 83, 86, 93, 105
and family liability, 83, 86, 98–100, 105
and First World War, 87
and gender, 93, 96–7, 98–9, 100–1, 103, 105–6, 204–5, 236–7
and genuinely seeking work test, 91–2
and honest poverty, 83, 89, 91, 234–5
and Labour Test, 234–5
and marital status, 98–101, 103, 105–6
for married women, 98–9, 102–3
and masculinity, 82, 86, 87, 89, 91, 99–100
and means testing, 89, 91
qualifications for, 85
for single men, 104–5, 192–3
Unemployment benefit – continued
and skill, 94–6
for strikers, 172–7, 178–9
and strikes, 172–80
Umpire’s decisions about, 92–3
for war workers, 88
for widows and widowers, 105
for women, 96–9, 100–3, 255n71, 255n74
and work imperative, 83, 85–7, 89, 91, 93, 94, 96, 106, 234–5
Unemployment Grants Committee (UGC), 154, 262n71
and preferential hiring of veterans, 154–5
Unemployment insurance, see unemployment benefit;
Unemployment Insurance Acts
Unemployment Insurance Acts, 6, 41–2, 83, 85, 87, 88–9, 106, 148, 149, 151, 172, 192, 234–5, 238
and honest poverty, 85–6
Unmarried men, see single men

Vagrancy
and poor law relief, 221
and seeking work, 221
and veterans, 144–6, 148, 158
Vagrancy Act of 1824, 27, 162, 212, 218
Veterans
ablebodiedness of, 144–6, 147, 153, 154–5
and citizenship, 138–40, 146, 150
deservedness of, 139–41, 142–6, 147–52, 154–5, 158
disabled, see disabled veterans
and family liability, 147, 153
of First World War, 260n6
government support of, 138–9, 140–1, 142–6, 147
and honest poverty, 140, 147, 158
marital status of, 147–9, 150–1, 158
and married men, 154–5, 157–8
and masculinity, 139–40, 142, 146, 150, 153
and Out-of-Work Donation, 138–9, 148–52
politics of, see British Legion;
National Federation of
Discharged and Demobilised
Sailors and Soldiers
and Poor Law, 139, 140–6
and poor law relief, 140–1, 142–6, 150–1
preferences for, 147–9, 151, 152–5, 156–7, see also preferential hiring of veterans
suspicion of, 140, 149–52
as unemployables, 138, 146, 151–2
unemployment of, 138–40, 146, 147, 148, 150, 152, 153, 154–5, 156–7
and vagrancy, 144–6, 148, 158
and welfare preferences, 140, see also preferential hiring of veterans
in workhouses, 140–1, 142–6
and work imperative, 140
and work relief, 154–5
see also military service
Vincent, David, 139
Voting
and aged poor, 204
and citizenship, 33, 37–8, 42, 234
and honest poverty, 26–7
and old age pensions, 199, 200–1, 202
and Poor Law, 5, 11, 28–9, 31–2, 42
and poor law relief, 5, 33
by unemployed men, 68–9
and unemployment, 42
and working men, 5
and work relief, 35

Wall, Richard, 184
War work
in Black Country, 112, 113–14
as cover for shirking, 114, 132–3
versus military service, 114, 115–16, 123, 136
and military service exemptions, 132–4
and Out-of-Work Donation, 148–9
and patriotism, 116
and service imperative, 132–3
women’s, 117, 257n26
and work imperative, 115, 116
Weary Willy and Tired Tim
as symbols of loafers, 25–6
see also loafers

Welfare, 3
and abandoned wives, 270n10
of aged poor, 204–5
and citizenship, 6, 7–8, 9, 39–40, 42, 233
dependency, 232–3
deservedness, 2–3, 8, 9, 233, 237
and gender, 6, 7, 117, 233, 236–7, 242n21, 243n35
and honest poverty, 8–9, 26–7, 40, 233, 236, 237–9
maintenance payments as, 3, 210–11
and male breadwinner ideal, 249n6
and marital status, 52, 233, 236
and masculinity, 3, 6, 8–9, 39–40, 233–4, 238–9
mixed economy of, 4, 240n5
public opinion about, 232–3
and sexuality, 10
of strikers, 179–80, 164
of wives and children, 51, 52, 64–5, 68–9, 71, 77, 160, 162, 164, 170–1, 180, 208, 217, 222, 223, 230, 251n30
see also maintenance orders; outrelief; Poor Law; poor law relief; task work; unemployment benefit; work relief

Welfare fraud
honest poverty as justification for, 72–3
and wives’ economic contributions, 73–5
Welfare heteronormativity, 10, 51, 233
Whiteside, Noel, 241n12

Widows and widowers
and genuinely seeking work test, 105
and poor law relief, 62
and unemployment benefit, 105
Williams, Samantha, 243n36, 269n69

Willingness to work, see work imperative

Wives
maintenance of, see maintenance of wives
neglect of, 206–8, 209, 210–12, 213–31, 237
sympathy for, 65, 67–8, 77
Wives (abandoned)
as applicants for poor law relief, 209
deservedness of, 209, 210
maintenance of, 210–14, 218, 223–5, 226–9
and marital separation, 213–14
and poor law relief, 209–11
suspicions of, 210
and welfare, 270n10
and workhouse, 209

Women
as applicants for poor law relief, 52–62, 208, 209
and citizenship, 8, 74, 93
and domestic norms, 214, 215–16
and family liability, 93, 204–5
and First World War, 111, 115, 117
and genuinely seeking work test, 96–8, 99, 100–3
and honest poverty, 98, 214
as liable relatives, 193, 196–7, 198–9, 204–5
and old age pensions, 201, 202, 204
Out-of-Work Donation for, 148–9
and poor law relief, 196, 209, 217–18
and sexual norms, 214
and unemployment benefit, 96–9, 100–3, 255n71, 255n74
and war work, 117, 257n26
as workers, 55, 73–5, 77–80, 195–7, 198–9, 204–5, 220
and work imperative, 28, 83, 93, 96, 99
Women’s work, 77, 96, 252n75, 253n79
in Black Country industries, 13–14, 55, 77, 79, 250n12
Women’s work – continued
competing with men’s work, 77, 79–80
and domestic service, 97–8, 103
in family economies, 7, 73–4, 79, 193–7, 201, 204–5, 220, 236–7, 268n35, 269n51
and family liability, 77–80, 98–9
and maintenance of wives, 220
and protective legislation, 77, 79
and respectability, 96–8, 255n59
and sexuality, 96
Umpire’s decisions about, 96–8
and work imperative, 103

Work
and masculinity, 9–10, 27, 47–9, 89, 93, 94–6
suitable, 92–3, 96, 98
see also unemployment; women’s work; work imperative

Work history, see work imperative
Workhouse, 4, 28, 30, 31, 33, 41, 46, 65, 241n8
stigma of, 28, 31, 32
veterans in, 140–1, 142–6
women and, 28, 209

Work imperative, 2, 27, 29, 31–2, 33, 34, 38, 45–6, 47, 48, 49, 50–1, 66, 75, 83, 85, 86, 89, 91, 93–4, 96
and aged poor, 197–9, 204
and citizenship, 8, 47–8, 136, 237
and deservedness, 34–5, 66, 106, 233, 234
and elderly men, 183–4
and family liability, 99, 106, 204–5, 218–19
and gender, 2–3, 8, 93, 96, 196, 204–5, 236–7
and honest poverty, 28, 218, 221, 233, 234, 237
and Labour Test, 47, 234
and maintenance of wives, 218–19, 220–1, 230
and marital status, 50–2, 93, 196, 204–5, 235–6
and masculinity, 2, 3, 75, 180, 232
and military service, 111, 114, 122–3, 136
and national identity, 46
and old age pensions, 199, 202, 204
and Poor Law, 36–7, 45–6, 144
and preferential hiring of veterans, 153
versus service imperative, 114, 116–17, 136
and strikes, 160, 162, 172–80
and Umpire’s decisions, 93–4, 172–80
and unemployed men, 31, 34, 45–6, 48, 49, 220, 221, 285
and unemployment, 8, 27, 29–30, 31–2, 41, 85, 221
and unemployment benefit, 83, 85, 86, 89, 91, 93, 94, 96, 106, 234–5
and veterans, 140
and war work, 115, 116
and women, 28, 83, 93, 96, 99, 103
and working conditions, 169–70, 180
and work relief, 34–5, 41, 47–9
see also genuinely seeking work test; Labour Test

Work relief, 32, 34, 35, 36, 40, 41, 47–9, 68, 69, 235
as alternative to poor law relief, 34–5, 36, 48–9, 234
and bias against single men, 65–6, 68–9
and citizenship, 47–8, 234
and deservedness, 35, 66
and honest poverty, 41, 234
and local authorities, 35–6, 47–8
and masculinity, 34–5, 37, 40, 41, 48–9
and preferential hiring of veterans, 154–5
privileging married men for, 65–6, 67
and unemployed men, 34–5, 48–9, 65–6, 234
and work imperative, 34–5, 41, 47–9

Work test, see Labour Test; work imperative
World War I, see First World War