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A woman delayed her claim because of ignorance of the procedure and because she thought that a claim would be unsuccessful

*Held* that she had not shown good cause for the delay

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1. My decision is that from and including the 10th to the 17th July, 1951 and from and including the 19th July to the 21st August, 1951 the claimant is disqualified for receiving unemployment benefit—on the ground that she failed to claim within the time prescribed and has not shown good cause for her failure to claim before the 25th October, 1951.

2. The claimant, a married woman (aged 47), who had been employed as a factory worker with the same employers since 1940 left on the 29th June, 1951, as she states,

“through lies being told about me refusing to do a job during the day shift, whereas the job was offered to me for overtime”.

In her further statement the claimant explains that her "pride" was hurt because the foreman's word was taken "before mine" and that accordingly she gave notice. That, however, does not account for the long delay—until the 25th October, 1951—before she made a claim for unemployment benefit. On that matter her statement of grounds of appeal against the local Insurance Officer's disallowance of benefit was to the effect that she "did not think she had to go to the Labour Exchange after such reports", and at the hearing before the Tribunal—according to the record of her evidence—she attributed her delay in claiming benefit to "ignorance of the procedure". That, however, was not her only reason for failing to attend at the Employment Exchange, for both in her statement of grounds of appeal to the Local Tribunal and her statement of grounds of appeal against their decision—affirming that of the local Insurance Officer—she states that:—

"I thought that if I went to the Labour Exchange they again would take the Manager's word about my dismissal and not mine".

The question for my decision is not whether the claimant was treated unfairly or inconsiderately by the manager or by the foreman, and as the case does not raise that question there is naturally no evidence before me on that matter except her own statements. But, *even if I assumed* that she had been treated unfairly, as she alleges, there is no evidence that would entitle me to disturb the decision of the Local Tribunal on the question decided by them and now for my decision, namely whether good cause has been shown for the claimant's failure to attend at the Employment Exchange and her delay in claiming unemployment benefit for the periods of unemployment in question—the 10th to the 17th July and the 19th July to the 21st August, 1951—until the 25th October, 1951. The only causes of the delay that she suggests are ignorance on her part of the regulations relating to claims and her belief that "the manager's word would be taken" about the reason for her leaving her employment and that on that account her claim for benefit would be rejected or prejudiced in some way.

3. In reply to the claimant's statement in this appeal the Insurance Officer concerned with it refers to some decisions of the Umpire in cases of delayed claims under the Unemployment Insurance Acts. I have considered those decisions but they deal with circumstances quite different from the circumstances of the present case. In any event principles consistently applied in Commissioner's decisions under the National Insurance Acts are directly applicable to the case. It has been held in numerous decisions that ignorance of the requirements of regulations is not in itself "good cause" for delay. It has also been held repeatedly and consistently that, except in special circumstances not applicable in this case—such as reliance by a claimant on the advice of an official that the claimant was entitled to act on to the effect that benefit was not claimable, but which was found subsequently to be erroneous—belief by a claimant that no advantage would result from claiming benefit does not constitute good cause for delay in claiming.

4. Accordingly I must disallow the claimant's appeal.

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