

The legacy of Quintin Hogg and The Polytechnic, 1864–1992

# Educating Mind, Body and Spirit



The History of the University of Westminster  
Part Three

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*Foreword by Dame Mary Hogg, DBE*

‘The Poly’ were words I heard as a child. Not knowing what they meant I instinctively knew it was a name for something that was important and significant. Quintin Hogg, a fervent young Christian, started his work aged 19 in February 1864. Well educated himself and from a comfortable life, he wanted to help the ragged, homeless, illiterate boys of London. By day he worked for tea and sugar merchants in the City of London. By night dressed in ragged clothes he entered the murky, damp, cold darkness of the Adelphi Arches on the riverside, somewhere near Charing Cross. The Embankment had not been built. He carried only a lantern and a Bible. In the dim light he taught the boys to read. To earn their trust and understand them he learned their ways, sleeping on Thames barges, or in barrels, working as a bootblack and speaking their cant.

Before long he was able to hire a room and open his first ragged school and boys’ home. He must have been charming, determined and charismatic and much able to inspire his family and friends to help, practically as well as financially. By 1882 his ragged schools were so popular he needed to expand into larger and more permanent premises. He found them at 309 Regent Street. The Royal Polytechnic Institute, founded by Sir George Cayley to exhibit to earlier Victorians the then wonders of modern science and technology, had fallen onto hard times and closed its doors. From its ashes like a phoenix arose The Polytechnic – a name that became widely known and was adopted by many later similar institutions. Derived from Ancient Greek it translates as ‘skilled in many arts’.

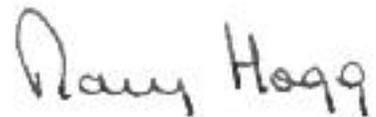
Quintin Hogg had come a long way but his desire to educate remained. He had a desire, a vision, to make ‘The Poly’ a centre of education for the people of London, and vocational training for those who found it easier to learn in the workshop than in the classroom: trades were taught, and close links forged between the Polytechnic and the local economy to assist the students into employment. He wanted ‘to educate the whole person spiritual, social, educational and athletic’. The building at 309 Regent Street was ‘all purpose’ in design with space for teaching, for regular Sunday meetings, for evening entertainment and social events, for gymnastics, and swimming. Sports and social clubs were encouraged and flourished; holiday tours and cruises organised to provide ‘a good time’ and broaden horizons.

Quintin Hogg died in 1903, but his inspiration and vision lived on. His family and friends continued his work. He had won massive support and respect. A Memorial Ground at Chiswick was purchased by public donation in 1906, and 30 years later a stadium was added. The ground is still used by our students, sports clubs and the local community. 309 Regent Street

was rebuilt in 1912 and later other buildings in the area were acquired as The Poly expanded in student numbers and popularity. It was open to all with day-time and evening classes in many subjects. In 1992 The Poly, by then the Polytechnic of Central London, metamorphosed into the University of Westminster.

Would Quintin Hogg be pleased? He was innovative and moved with the times, recognising the need for change when it arose. His foundation now bears a name that signifies its achievements and its presence and very being in the heart of London. It is known nationally and internationally. A new name and status but its history stands: and the vision of its founder remains strong. It is still here educating and training young people whoever and whatever their background in a multitude of subjects. It remains 'skilled in many arts'.

I think Quintin Hogg would be not only pleased but proud and much gratified that those small and humble beginnings under the Adelphi Arches grew into something that has done and is doing so much for so many.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Hogg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'M'.

Dame Mary Hogg, DBE

## *Acknowledgements and conventions*

Thanks are due to many individuals and teams at the University of Westminster, in particular the staff at the University of Westminster Archive and the Editorial Board, co-chaired by Dr Jeremy Colwill and Suzanne Enright. The work has been part-funded by The Quintin Hogg Trust, which supports the University of Westminster in the furtherance of its educational activities, and by the University itself.

The authors would additionally like to thank the following individuals and institutions: Harold Bamberg, Sophie Bridges at the Churchill Archives Centre, The British Library, Dr Eve Colpus, Hannah Elias, Dr Daniel Grey, Tony Lees at Manchester County Record Office, London Metropolitan Archives, Helen Matthews, Dr Helen McCarthy, Martin Percy, Andrew Riley at the Churchill Archives Centre, Dr Charles Sandeman-Allen, Dr Laura Schwartz, Paul Smith at the Thomas Cook Archive, Maurice and Sheila Steer, Patrick Stribley, Sinead Wheeler at Toynbee Hall.

### **A note on archive sources**

The research for this book was undertaken while the University of Westminster Archive was being re-catalogued. All material has been recorded under the new cataloguing system, but the old reference, where applicable, has also been included in parenthesis.

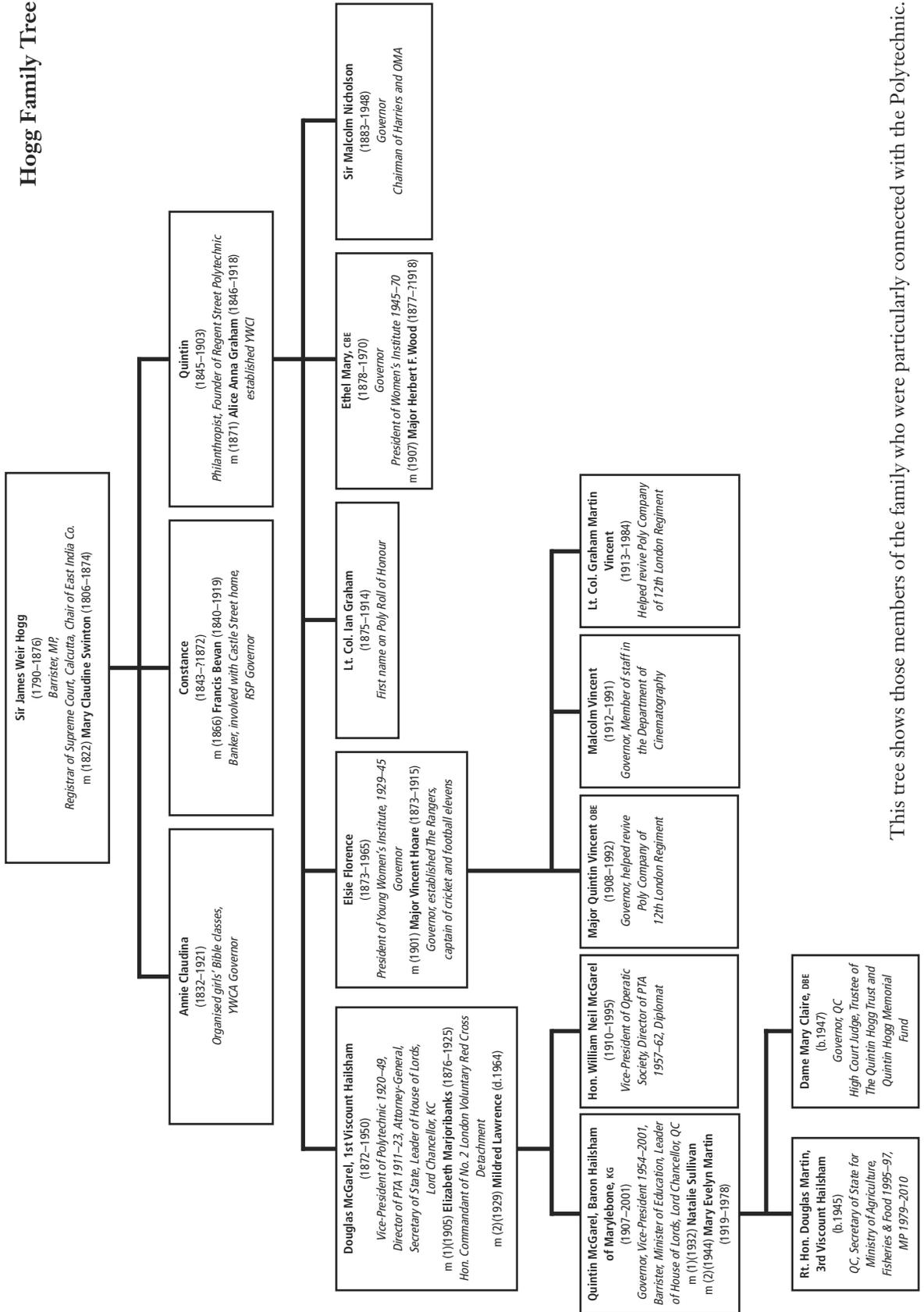
*Abbreviations*

BL	The British Library
CAC	Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge
CAT	College of Advanced Technology
CGLI	City and Guilds of London Institute
CHA	Countrywide Holidays (formerly, Co-operative Holidays Association), Greater Manchester Record Office
CNAAL	Council for National Academic Awards
CPF	City Parochial Foundation
DES	Department of Education and Science
ERO	Essex Record Office, Chelmsford
GLC	Greater London Council
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
LCC	London County Council
LEA	Local Education Authority
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
NUS	National Union of Students
ODNB	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , edited by H.G.C. Matthew and Brian Harrison, 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). The Dictionary is also available online at <a href="http://www.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/online/">http://www.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/online/</a>
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHP	Oral History Programme, University of Westminster Archive
OMA	Old Members' Association
PCC	Polytechnic Cycling Club
PCFC	Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council
PCL	Polytechnic of Central London
PCLSU	Polytechnic of Central London Students' Union
PIN	Polytechnic Institute
PTA	Polytechnic Touring Association
RAC	Regional Advisory Council
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
RFC	Royal Flying Corps
RPI	Royal Polytechnic Institution
RSP	Regent Street Polytechnic
SAL	Staatsarchiv Luzern, Switzerland
SRC	Student Representative Council
SU	Students' Union
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
UWA	University of Westminster Archive
WMRC	University of Warwick Modern Records Centre
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YMCI	Young Men's Christian Institute
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
YWCI	Young Women's Christian Institute
YPS	York Place Ragged School

## *Name changes*

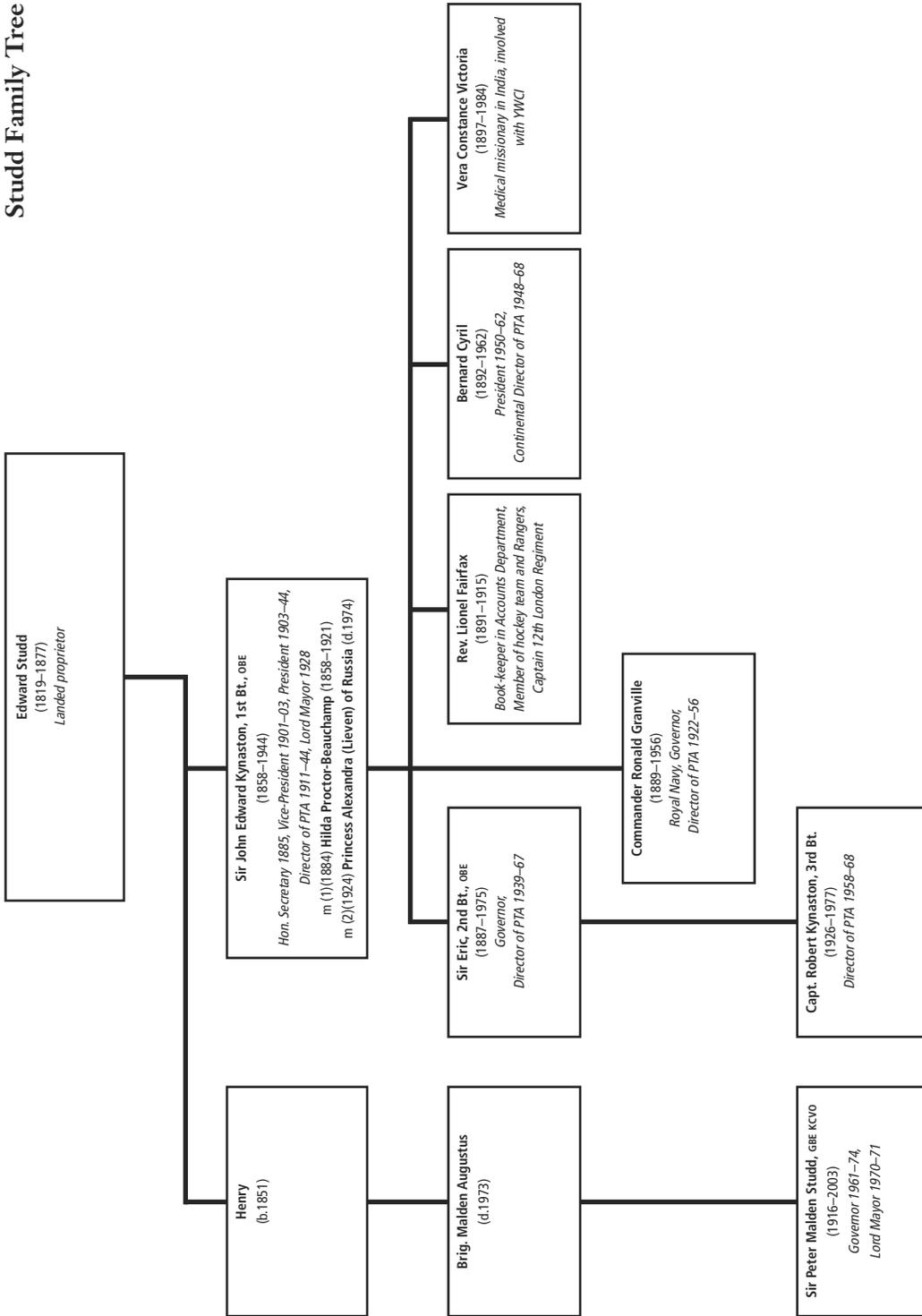
- 1838 **Polytechnic Institution** opens, later becoming the Royal Polytechnic Institution (RPI) following the patronage of Prince Albert.
- 1864 Quintin Hogg establishes the **York Place Ragged School and Mission**, to provide basic education for some of London's poorest children in the slums of Covent Garden.
- 1873 Hogg develops his vision to provide educational, sporting and social opportunities for young working men by establishing the **Youths' Christian Institute** at 15 Hanover Street.
- 1878 The Institute moves to 48–49 Long Acre and is renamed the **Young Men's Christian Institute**.
- 1882 Hogg's Institute moves into 309 Regent Street, following the closure of the RPI, and gradually becomes known as The Polytechnic.
- 1891 The Charity Commission Scheme of Administration establishes the governing body and begins the transition from private to public institution. **Regent Street Polytechnic** becomes the official name, but the institution continues to describe itself as 'The Polytechnic'.
- 1970 The **Polytechnic of Central London (PCL)** is designated on 1 May 1970 following the White Paper 'A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges' (Cmd. 3006) published in 1966. PCL is the result of a merger of Regent Street Polytechnic with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce.
- 1990 Merger with Harrow College of Higher Education.
- 1992 PCL gains university status following the Higher and Further Education Act (1992), which abolished the remaining distinctions between polytechnics and universities. It is renamed the **University of Westminster**, with the right to award its own degrees.

Hogg Family Tree



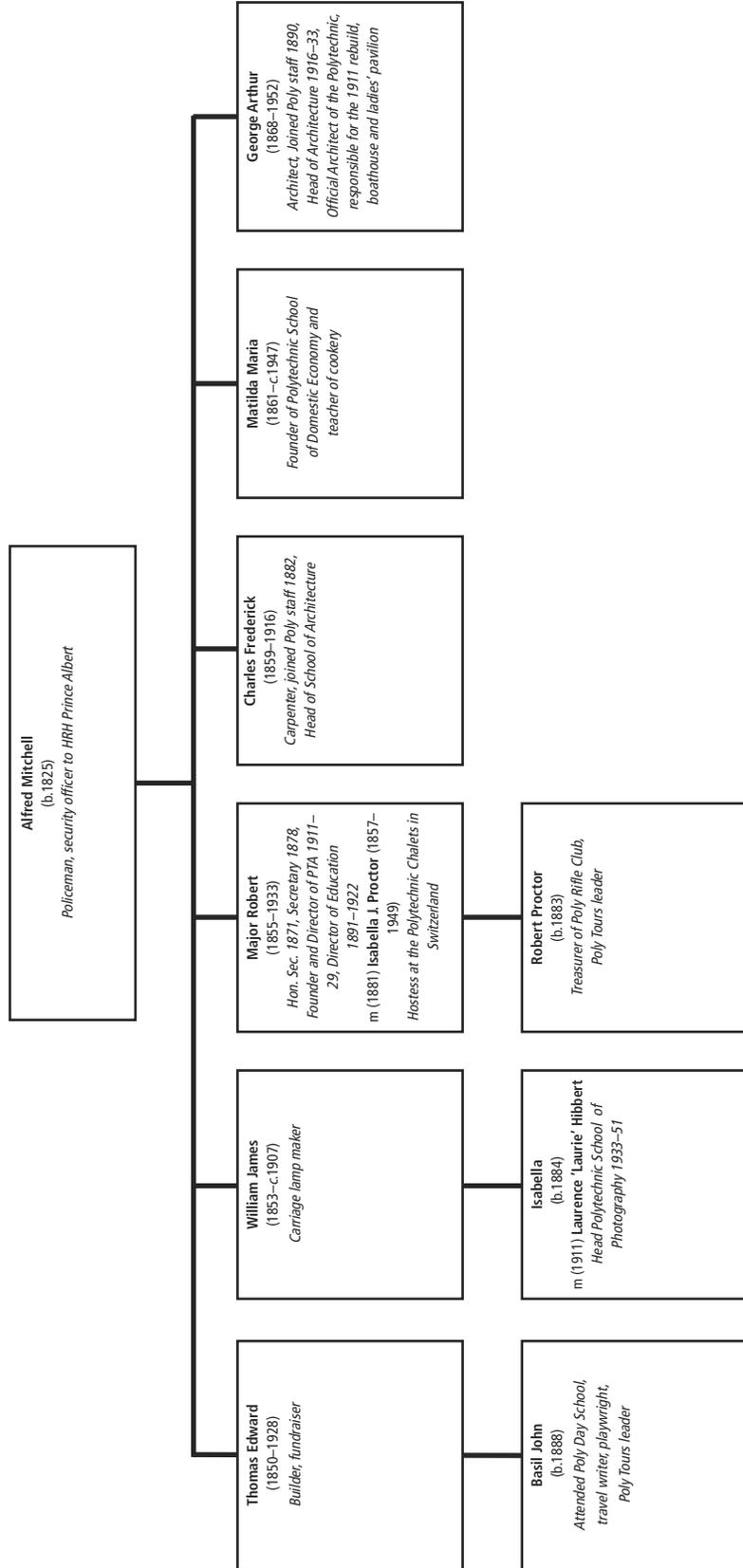
This tree shows those members of the family who were particularly connected with the Polytechnic.

# Studd Family Tree



This tree shows those members of the family who were particularly connected with the Polytechnic.

Mitchell Family Tree



This tree shows those members of the family who were particularly connected with the Polytechnic.



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 Of Alley, York Place, The Strand (1864) | 7 Quintin Hogg Memorial Sports Ground, Chiswick (1906)                  |
| 2 Castle Street, Covent Garden (1868)     | 8 Great Portland Street Extension, 4-12 Little Titchfield Street (1929) |
| 3 15 Hanover Street, Covent Garden (1873) | 9 35 Marylebone Road (1970)   |
| 4 48 & 49 Long Acre, Covent Garden (1878) | 10 115 New Cavendish Street (1970)                                      |
| 5 307, 309 & 311 Regent Street (1882)     | 11 Harrow (1990)  |
| 6 15 Langham Place (1888)                 |   |

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# *Introduction*

Elaine Penn

For over one hundred years the word ‘polytechnic’ was at the heart of the UK higher education system, providing technical and vocational training alongside traditional university instruction. The word’s original meaning from the Greek is ‘skilled in many arts’ and no institution encompassed this sense more than The Polytechnic, Regent Street. Its importance in providing the blueprint for the development of polytechnic education in the UK is recognised, yet its origins and its founder, Quintin Hogg, have remained largely unknown. This volume presents, for the first time, a series of essays detailing aspects of the Polytechnic’s history – exploring its role in the education of women, the political radicalism of its students, its pioneering of foreign travel as a means of educating and its significant contributions to military and public service during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Polytechnic story is one of both change and continuity. It is a story of adaptation and evolution amid the changing educational policies of local and central government; but principally it is an account of one man’s lasting legacy to provide an holistic educational experience based on opportunity and inclusivity.

Quintin Hogg purchased the lease on the former Royal Polytechnic Institution (RPI) building at 309 Regent Street in 1882 in order to provide new accommodation for his expanding Young Men’s Christian Institute. Hogg undoubtedly realised the potential of the building’s central location and position on one of London’s main thoroughfares. He also knew about the RPI’s state-of-the-art facilities – including laboratories, workshops and a purpose-built theatre – having attended a series of lectures at the Institution as a schoolboy in the 1850s. But, although Hogg would also have been aware of the RPI’s reputation as a place of innovation and experiment, it seems that the influence that the former institution was to have on the name of Hogg’s own institute was serendipitous. Contemporary newspaper advertisements suggest the enormous impact of the RPI as many businesses give their locations solely in relation to the Institution. Its well-known, informal, title of ‘The Polytechnic’ or more simply ‘The Poly’ was immediately adopted by Hogg and his institute members; and little more than six months after the move into 309 Regent Street, the name Polytechnic Young Men’s Christian Institute appears officially on institute

stationery. Despite the apparent absence of a formal decision, the adoption of the title ‘polytechnic’ was to prove fortuitous as it exemplified Hogg’s vision for a multi-faceted scheme of education comprising stimuli for the mind, the body and the spirit. Hogg’s Institute was truly to be a place that provided skills in many arts – from technical and trade subjects to religious instruction and guidance, from sports training to social activities including dances, debates and travel. As this volume will detail, the title of Regent Street Polytechnic was officially given to the Institute in 1891 in order to differentiate it from the seven other Polytechnics founded across London, and for which it provided the model. To its members and students it remained simply ‘The Poly’ – a name that was retained for over one hundred years, throughout re-structuring and re-organisation in the late 1960s and the creation of The Polytechnic of Central London in 1970. It was therefore not without a touch of sadness for many that the name disappeared officially in 1992, with the creation of The University of Westminster, one of 38 former polytechnics that changed their title and status under new government legislation. Although the name polytechnic is no longer in use, its heritage is a celebrated part of the University’s ethos and mission. Hogg’s original vision to provide opportunities for self-improvement and career development continues to be an integral element of the University’s modern education provision.

It is the legacy of Quintin Hogg, founder of The Polytechnic, which provides the common theme of the essays in this volume as each explores the different impacts and implications it has had on various aspects of the institution’s history.

Chapter 2: Quintin Hogg and his legacy sets the scene as author Helen Glew describes Hogg’s early life and influences. Glew gives reasons why Hogg has been largely forgotten in the history of nineteenth-century philanthropy, including the suggestion that many accounts focus on work based in London’s East End, before providing a detailed narrative of Hogg’s important role in the development of technical education. Glew draws comparisons with contemporaries of Hogg and demonstrates the unique features of his work, including his hands-on approach and his holistic interpretation of education. Despite the scarcity of original source material, Glew is able to glean insight into the character of this enigmatic individual. One key source, the *Castle Street Working Boys’ Home Manager’s Private Journal*, is particularly interesting as its ambiguous authorship and the lack of verifiable independent evidence, as Glew points out, raises as many questions as it answers. In this chapter Glew also explores the hagiography of Hogg following his sudden death in 1903, and details the various mechanisms by which the cult of his personality remained at the heart of the institution and its activities well into the late twentieth century.

Chapter 3: The Institute and the Polytechnic by Michael Heller explores the changing educational policy of the institution as it shifts from its origins as an evening school for workers with a dominant religious, sporting and social side towards a growing emphasis on full-time and advanced education provision. Heller skilfully dissects the complex history of UK higher education, and the

particular London context of local government involvement in the sector. His narrative provides explanations for the increased separation of the educational from the sporting and social aspects of the Poly, leading ultimately to the demise of the latter towards the end of the twentieth century. Yet despite the significant changes that take place in the institution, Heller also details the constancies, including the aim to prepare people for working life, which was at the heart of Hogg's vision and which continues to be a central mission of the institution.

Chapter 4: A history of student life at the Polytechnic examines the unique set of circumstances which created a high level of student activism during the 1960s–80s. Author Michael Heller describes the rich diversity of the Polytechnic's student body – of class, age, educational status and ethnicity – which, he argues, led to the development of an especially creative, ambitious and outspoken student collective. Heller explores the motivations of students joining the Poly, suggesting that for many its prime location and first-class facilities in central London were as much of an attraction as its reputation for excellence in certain subject areas. Heller details the student politics that were prevalent at the Polytechnic from the 1930s – with many local issues taking the fore, including the standard of the Poly's cafeteria which was to be a recurring source of discontentment among the student body. National campaigns also feature, although again, there is a particular emphasis on local significance – for example the campaign against increased overseas student fees, which affected the Polytechnic especially as its student body comprised nearly three times the national average of international students. The author also explores the social side of student life at the Poly, including Rag Week, which can trace its origins back to earlier charitable work, and music which was an important part of Polytechnic life from orchestra recitals in the 1880s through to pop concerts from the 1960s onwards.

Chapter 5: Women at the Polytechnic details the role of the institution in the education of women, together with the role of women in the institution. Author Helen Glew explores the important roles played by the women in Hogg's life – his wife Alice, and his daughters, Elsie and Ethel, who successively maintained and reinforced his original vision for the Polytechnic. Glew details the sometimes contradictory nature of the Poly, which was pioneering in the range of classes it made available to women, yet was also restrictive with the foundation in 1888 of a sister organisation, the Young Women's Christian Institute, which offered a distinctly female curriculum, and the strict segregation of many sporting and social activities. Glew examines the contribution of the Poly's women members during the First and Second World Wars and demonstrates how the female membership changed after 1945. This chapter also details the instrumental role played by the Polytechnic in the development of Women's Studies as an academic discipline in the 1970s.

Chapter 6: 'Those who did fall in': war, military service and the Polytechnic by Anthony Gorst explores changing attitudes towards patriotism from enthusiastic volunteering during the Boer and First World Wars to protests against nuclear disarmament and the Vietnam War. Gorst traces the connections

between muscular Christianity and military service that were embedded in the core of the Polytechnic's ethos. He details how the formation of a Poly Regiment – the 12th London Rangers – resulted in devastating losses in both World Wars. Gorst also explores the Home Front and the contributions of the Polytechnic to the training of wireless operators and disabled ex-servicemen, among others. The Poly largely escaped damage during the Blitz, although the Queen's Hall situated opposite the Regent Street building was hit, and the boathouse and ladies pavilion at Chiswick were destroyed by enemy bombs in 1944. Gorst also examines the Polytechnic's commemoration and memorialisation of its war dead.

Chapter 7: From philanthropy to commerce: the Polytechnic Touring Association details the history of perhaps one of the Polytechnic's most surprising features, namely a travel agent business. Author Neil Matthews considers the Polytechnic Touring Association (PTA) within the wider context of increased paid holidays, an expanding transport system and the development of 'rational recreation' initiatives in the mid to late nineteenth century. Matthews details the relationship and increasing tension between notions of travel as an educative tool that could provide spiritual and physical refreshment, and the competitive demands of business. He explores how the PTA trips helped to shape Polytechnic members' ideas of abroad and how such ideas were further reinforced through the re-creation and commemoration of trips via reunion concerts attended by thousands. The author details some of the PTA's successes, including its popular chalets on the shores of Lake Lucerne, and its provision of the first escorted air tours to Switzerland in 1932. Matthews also provides the first detailed account of the later period of the PTA's history, a period marked by various changes of owners and directors, name changes including Lunn Poly and Portland Camping, financial losses and, finally, its cessation of trading from the 1980s.

This volume concludes with an Afterword written by Professor Geoff Petts, Vice-Chancellor and Rector of the University of Westminster. In this piece, the author offers a personal reflection on the state of Higher Education in the UK today and the key drivers which have shaped the sector. Petts reinforces many of the themes found in earlier chapters (i.e. widening participation and access to education and a national demand for a skilled workforce). He traces common elements that span from the University's earliest beginnings as the Royal Polytechnic Institution in the 1830s, through Regent Street Polytechnic and PCL to the present day. These elements form part of the University's distinctive identity and its values – founded on the aspirations of Sir George Cayley and Quintin Hogg – and which continue to provide excellent education for diverse communities, innovation in research and public engagement.

In addition to the essays, this volume also includes several double-page features that highlight further aspects of the Polytechnic's history. The features draw attention to some of the popular social clubs and societies that were a vital part of the Poly's communal life, including the Reading Circle, Music and Drama Societies, the Polytechnic Parliament, the Rambling Club and several

student societies such as the Architectural Society and the Engineering Society. The final feature details the Old Members' Association which was largely responsible for the sustained continuation of Hogg's Institute well into the late twentieth century.

The story of the Polytechnic is simultaneously the story of one remarkable man – Quintin Hogg – and the story of a past community of over 10,000 students and members. Despite the inherent tensions and often competing demands within this diverse community, it flourished and prospered, adapting at times, but ultimately remaining astonishingly constant throughout its long history. Although the language of Hogg, tacitly couched in a Victorian sense of Christian duty, may sometimes seem alien to a modern reader, there is much in his ideas that is valuable and relevant today. Hogg's vision of an institution that catered for the whole person – intellectual, spiritual and physical – regardless of individual means or background prefigures the twenty-first century university student experience. Hogg's original aim to provide opportunities for self-improvement and professional development remains at the very heart of his Institute's successor, the University of Westminster.

This volume is the third in a series of publications detailing the history of the University of Westminster for the first time.<sup>1</sup> All the essays in this volume draw on an extensive range of primary and secondary sources held in the University of Westminster Archive and elsewhere, including a fantastic variety of drawings and photographs that richly illustrate the text.

<sup>1</sup> See Brenda Weeden, *The Education of the Eye: History of the Royal Polytechnic Institution 1838–1881* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2008) and Mark Clapson, *An Education in Sport: Competition, communities and identities at the University of Westminster since 1864* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2012).



# Quintin Hogg and his legacy

Helen Glew

## INTRODUCTION

Quintin Hogg (born 1845), the founder of Regent Street Polytechnic and several previous philanthropic ventures, died suddenly in January 1903. There was profound shock and grief at the institution, which Hogg's home adjoined, and the *Polytechnic Magazine* carried, among its pages of tributes, black-bordered pages with Bible verse and the heading 'HE IS DEAD! Our beloved President, the earthly father of us all has passed away!'<sup>1</sup>

This was the first of many published Polytechnic tributes to Hogg and his work. The reference to Hogg as 'earthly father', with its devotional and biblical overtones, was not accidental. Although the Polytechnic had paid, professional staff by this time, 'QH', as he was often called, remained the figurehead and guiding hand of the institution. The Polytechnic was founded on his beliefs and principles and, initially, with his personal finances. Hogg maintained a strong, personal presence at Regent Street, learning the names and personal histories of his 'Poly boys', and regularly addressing students and members on the teachings of the Bible. After his funeral and cremation, the Poly began a thorough commitment to the commemoration of his life and work, hosting a memorial service and formally celebrating his life annually on the anniversary of his death. In death as in life, the figure of Quintin Hogg loomed large in the Poly's work, aims and self-perceptions. This chapter explores what it was that fostered this sense of idolatory and exceptionalism, and the ways in which Hogg's work transformed into a lasting legacy.

Quintin Hogg has been largely forgotten by historians of nineteenth-century philanthropy and education. Although W. Eagar's 1953 history of boys' clubs makes clear Hogg's profound influence on a number of his contemporaries, Hogg's work has not commanded a great deal of attention since.<sup>2</sup> Part of this, no doubt, is the problem of records: Hogg left no personal papers, partly because he reportedly preferred face-to-face contact, and partly because many early papers were lost when his Holly Hill property burnt down in 1886. Any correspondence to others survives only by chance.<sup>3</sup> Most nineteenth-century philanthropists concentrated their attentions on east London, where poverty and deprivation were most rife, and historians' accounts have tended

<sup>1</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1903. See also Fig. 29 on page 37.

<sup>2</sup> W. McG. Eagar, *Making Men: the history of the Boys' Clubs and related movements in Great Britain* (London: University of London Press, 1953).

<sup>3</sup> Ethel M. Hogg, *Quintin Hogg: A Biography*, 2nd edition (London: Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd, 1904), p. 14.

to mirror this. Thus, discussion of Hogg's work has been doubly hindered.<sup>4</sup> The rapid expansion of philanthropic educational initiatives from the mid-nineteenth century has furthermore meant that Hogg's work has not received the attention it deserves. For example, Thomas Kelly positions Hogg as the creator of 'the first of what was to become a widespread system of polytechnics' but offers no further assessment of his influence, despite Hogg recognising and acting upon the need for greater technical education in the country at this time, as is discussed further by Michael Heller in this volume.<sup>5</sup> As Mark Freeman has argued, Kelly and other historians of adult education have tended to stress the secular developments and overlook those with religious connections.<sup>6</sup> The study of Hogg's work, therefore, opens up possibilities both for wider study of central London philanthropy and a fuller discussion of his achievements in adult and technical education. This chapter also builds considerably on the writing of Ethel Wood, née Hogg (1878–1970), Quintin's second daughter, who wrote several editions of a biography of her father and the Polytechnic in 1904, 1932 and 1965. These tend to be seen as a definitive account of his life, written by a daughter who herself did not have any great involvement with the Poly until 1945. Although this chapter draws on Wood's account of her father as a means to gain a chronological overview, the availability of archival sources and other primary accounts that have come to light since Wood's own work allow a richer picture of Hogg, his work and his legacy.

#### EARLY LIFE

Quintin Hogg was the fourteenth child of James Weir Hogg (1790–1876) and Lady Mary Hogg, and grew up in upper middle class comfort. James Weir Hogg was a successful lawyer, MP and businessman. He was born and educated in Ireland, then travelled to India where he set up legal practice and married. On his return to Britain he began a Parliamentary career and also served as a director of the East India Company.<sup>7</sup> Quintin Hogg was raised in and around London and as the youngest child in a large family, Quintin was often cared for by his older sister Annie, who regularly read him portions of the Bible.<sup>8</sup> In 1855, his mother gave him a Bible, which remained in his possession for the rest of his life. In it, he wrote marginalia as he read. This is an indication of the seriousness with which he studied the Bible as a means to interpret the principles of a Christian life. While at Eton, he formed what he called a 'synagogue' – a Bible study group for his peers, indicative of his leadership, his willingness to teach and share, as well as his vociferous evangelicalism.

On leaving Eton, Hogg declined an opportunity to study at Oxford, preferring instead to go into business in the City. Throughout his career, Hogg became involved in various ventures at home and particularly abroad. Initially, he joined a tea merchants, but a contact via his brother-in-law allowed him to join the sugar merchants Bosanquet, Curtis & Co. This remained his chief business interest: the firm was renamed Hogg, Curtis & Campbell when he became a partner.<sup>9</sup> He retired from the firm and ceased his frequent travels to the

4 The literature here is vast. For a discussion of the demonisation of the East End in the late nineteenth century, see, for example, John Marriott, *Beyond the Tower: A History of East London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 149–73.

5 Thomas Kelly, *A History of Adult Education in Great Britain*, third edition (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), p. 197. See also Chapter 3.

6 Mark Freeman, 'The decline of the adult school movement between the wars', *History of Education*, Vol. 39, No. 4, July 2010, pp. 481–2.

7 G.R.F. Barker, 'Hogg, Sir James Weir (1790–1876)', rev. Katherine Prior, *ODNB*.

8 Ethel M. Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg* (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd, 1932), p. 24.

9 G.S. Woods, 'Hogg, Quintin (1845–1903)', Rev. Roger T Stearn, *ODNB*.



**Fig. 1**  
*Quintin Hogg annotated the passages he was interpreting and compiled statistics on language and symbolism in the Bible.*

West Indies and Demerara in 1898.<sup>10</sup> Throughout his working life he also had a number of other business interests, including the West India and Panama Telegraph Co., the National Discount Company, the North British Mercantile Insurance Company and the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Company.<sup>11</sup> Business allowed him two principal things that had an impact on his wider life and work. The first of these was travel, which he reported on at length to Poly members and which surely added weight to his advocacy of colonial emigration as a means to a new beginning. His business interests also generated capital which financed the establishment of his ventures in and around Covent Garden from the mid-1860s and made possible the purchase of the building at 309 Regent Street in 1882. His travels also undermined his long-term health: in the late 1860s, he caught yellow fever in Trinidad after leaving warnings about contracting the disease unheeded. He was treated with mercury, which worsened his condition, leaving, according to his daughter Ethel, only one further treatment. This was risky: although Ethel does not specify what the treatment was, she does note that there was a strong chance that it might prove fatal. Nevertheless, Hogg opted for the unknown treatment, but the effects of the mercury poisoning and the treatment to counteract it would leave a lasting effect on his health.<sup>12</sup> He suffered from bouts of ill health for the rest of his life as a result, many of which were also exacerbated by hard work, and his

10 Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 261.

11 *The Pall Mall Gazette*, Saturday 7 August 1869, p. 14; 'Mr Quintin Hogg', *The Times*, 19 January 1903.

12 Hogg, *Quintin Hogg*, first edition (1904), pp. 77–8; The Duke of Argyll, 'A Modern Crusader: The Story of a Born Philanthropist', *The Pall Mall Magazine*, Vol. 38, No. 164, December 1906, p. 821.



Fig. 2

*Young Quintin Hogg during his schooling at Eton where he initiated a Bible study group.*

physical and possibly his mental health broke down seriously once again in 1874 in reaction to the death of his mother.<sup>13</sup> According to Ethel, his ‘sensitive, nervous nature’ also predisposed him to periods of depression.<sup>14</sup>

In the late 1860s, Hogg met and began a courtship with Alice Graham (1846–1918), whom he had met through one of his sisters.<sup>15</sup> Alice was the daughter of the Liberal MP and art collector William Graham.<sup>16</sup> Their relationship appears to have been a secret initially, as their engagement came as a surprise to Alice’s family and Hogg’s colleagues alike. Frances Horner, one of Alice’s sisters, noted that ‘[w]e younger ones were very much startled and outraged’ when the engagement was announced. They ‘regarded her as an institution, the practical head of the family, and resented the intrusion of new claims’. She wrote further of Hogg’s audacity in bringing an engagement ring on the day of the proposal and the teasing to which the younger siblings subjected the new couple afterwards. Although the precise circumstances of their meeting are not known, Alice appears to have been a perfect partner choice in terms of Hogg’s charitable work and she became a wholehearted ‘comrade and sharer’ in the work of the Polytechnic and its predecessors, although the conventions of Victorian upper-middle class marriage also meant it would have been difficult for her to do otherwise.<sup>17</sup> Quintin Hogg and Alice Graham were married in

13 Hogg, *Quintin Hogg*, first edition (1904), pp. 85–6.

14 Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 259.

15 Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 43.

16 Oliver Garnett, ‘Graham, William (1817–1885)’, *ODNB*.

17 Frances Horner, *Time Remembered* (London: Heinemann, 1933), p. 40. See also Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 46; Eagar, *Making Men*, p. 249. See also Chapter 5.



Fig. 3  
*In Alice Hogg's obituary, the Polytechnic Magazine stated that it was 'largely owing to her insistence' that the Young Women's Christian Institute was opened.*



Fig. 4  
*Hogg frequently travelled to the West Indies for work and wrote letters back to the Polytechnic Magazine, describing life in Demerara.*

1871 and had five children: Douglas McGarel (1872–1950), Elsie Florence (1873–1965), Ian Graham (1875–1914), Ethel Mary (1878–1970) and Malcolm Nicholson (1883–1948) all of whom had some involvement with the Poly during their lives.

Personal testimonies from many who knew Hogg singly and collectively attest to his religious and moral convictions and the profound influence he had on those around him. A number of these accounts are drawn upon throughout this chapter. Samuel Barnett's recording of mutual dislike between himself and Hogg, and feeling that Hogg was 'anxious to shut me up' stand out as atypical of views on his character.<sup>18</sup> At times, he also appears to have inspired particular devotion. In a diary, of sorts, which Hogg presented to Henry Offer (b.1845/6), the manager of Hogg's Castle Street Boys' Home, Offer wrote in increasingly impassioned tones concerning his feelings about Hogg, including intermittent criticisms of his character that are generally not found elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> The two men clearly had a close and good-humoured relationship, according to Offer's records of their conversations. Pencilled marginalia, some of which are initialled and one of which is dated, suggest that Hogg also read the journal.<sup>20</sup>

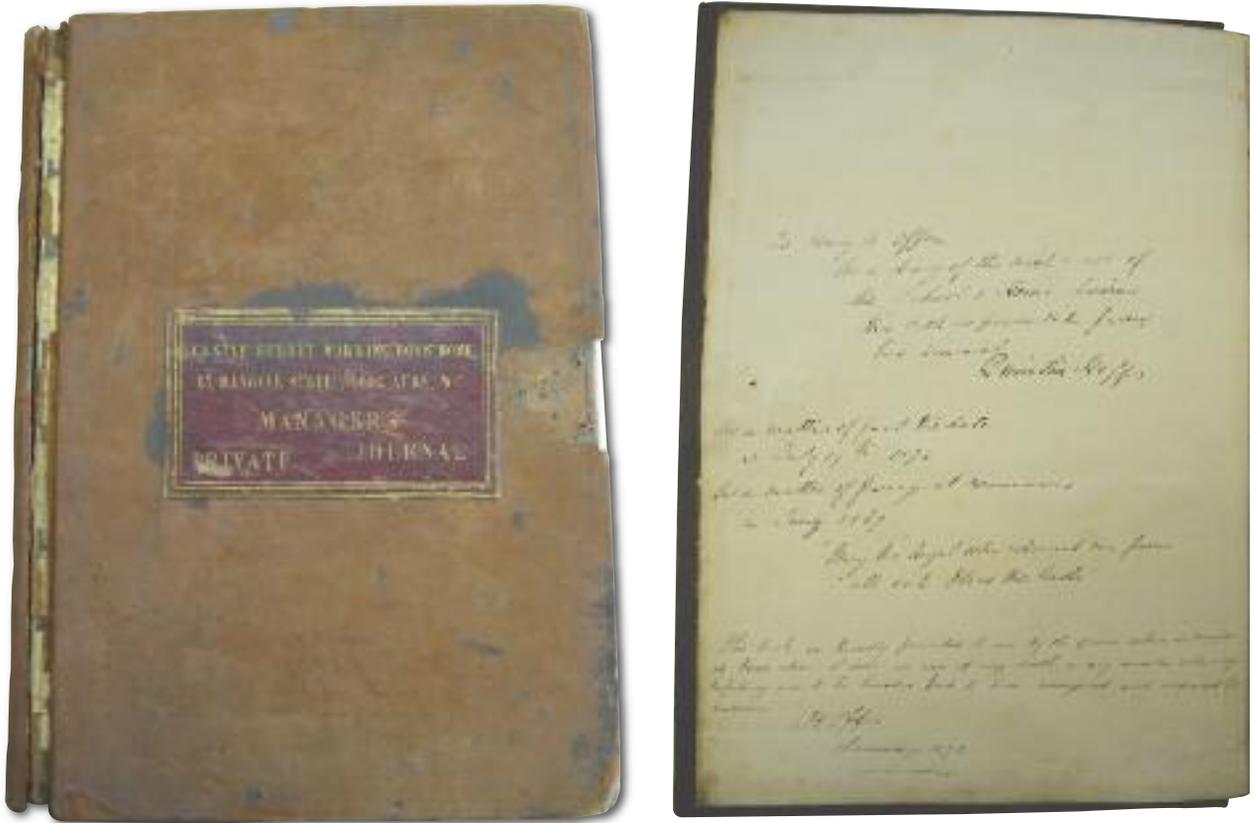
Offer recorded at great length his dismay when Hogg, whom he referred to as his 'usual tormentor', announced his marriage to Alice Graham:

I cannot but however here say that the merry bells that shall enliven the morn of his approaching wedding day will at the same time toll the death knell to much of my pleasure & comfort. After that day a, to him, imperceptable[sic]

18 Canon Samuel Barnett to Frank Barnett, 9 July [1886?], LMA F/BAR/42.

19 *Castle Street Working Boys' Home – Manager's Private Journal*, hereafter the *Castle Street Journal*, Wednesday 15 March 1871, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2010/53].

20 *Castle Street Journal frontispiece*, Wednesday 19 November 1867; Wednesday 21 July 1870, YCI/1.



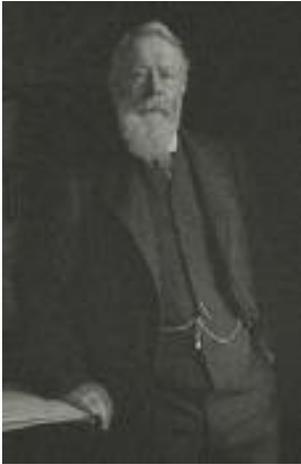
change will creep over him. He may talk as much & as sincerely as he likes about his partner's love for the work &c &c but he will be, e'er very long, looking upon me as a poor week [sic] muff & I know not what besides.<sup>21</sup>

Offer appeared to be perturbed about the change he believed would be wrought by Quintin and Alice's marriage, but it also becomes clear that Offer's feelings ran deeper than this. Though we do not know Hogg's own reactions and response, other than that he may have read the relevant journal entries, Offer's writings are revealing of his own emotions. On the day he was told of the engagement he wrote: '[w]ho would have thought that Q.H.Esq would have been the first to take such a step. In the bewilderment of the first knowledge of such marvellous intelligence I can only but rudely mutter a few words of congratulation, half beleiving[sic] it a joke.'<sup>22</sup> Hogg later presented Offer with a gift to mark the occasion of his engagement, and also a change of role in the institution (although the latter does not appear to have been connected to the former). Offer commented that:

'Did Mr H never open the covers of this book I really cant [sic] say how many things I should write about him[.] That a special book would have to be kept as an Index for his name is quite certain. As it is I feel writing about him is difficult, not that I could tell him any news. He knows me and I know him. ...

**Figs. 5, 6**  
*The Castle Street Working Boys' Home Journal compiled by Manager Henry Offer, [1867]-1872.*

21 *Castle Street Journal*, Wednesday 15 March 1871, UWA YCI/1.  
22 *Castle Street Journal*, Monday 6 March 1871, UWA YCI/1.



**Fig. 7**  
*Hogg met Arthur Kinnaird at Eton and the two became lifelong friends. Kinnaird joined Hogg's work initially at York Place and Castle Street, and then became involved in the Polytechnic, especially in its range of sporting activities.*

**Fig. 8**  
*The shoe blacks working around Charing Cross were among the boys that Hogg brought in from the streets and educated.*



[We have] so well understood each other that an angry word has not passed between us these many, long, years. This is all the more remarkable because of the multiplicity of changes through which we have passed.<sup>23</sup>

We have, of course, only Offer's perspective, and twenty-first century analysis needs to be mindful of the Victorian practices and conventions of men writing to, and about, one another, but Offer's account reveals the depth of his feelings towards Hogg. The two men appear to have remained friends after Hogg's marriage, and Offer does not record any actualisation of his fears that marriage would change Hogg's commitment to his work. According to Thomas Pelham (1847–1916) who wrote about Hogg's life in 1914, Offer left abruptly in late 1872 after financial problems, although the journal also records a strong disagreement with Hogg over a 'number of petty things' in early August that year.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Castle Street Journal*, Saturday 18 March 1871, UWA YCI/1.

<sup>24</sup> T.W.H. Pelham, *Recollections of the Pre-historic Days of the Polytechnic* (London: Pollock & Co., 1914); *Castle Street Journal*, Saturday 3 August 1872, UWA YCI/1.



15 Hanover Street/Castle Street

48-49 Long Acre

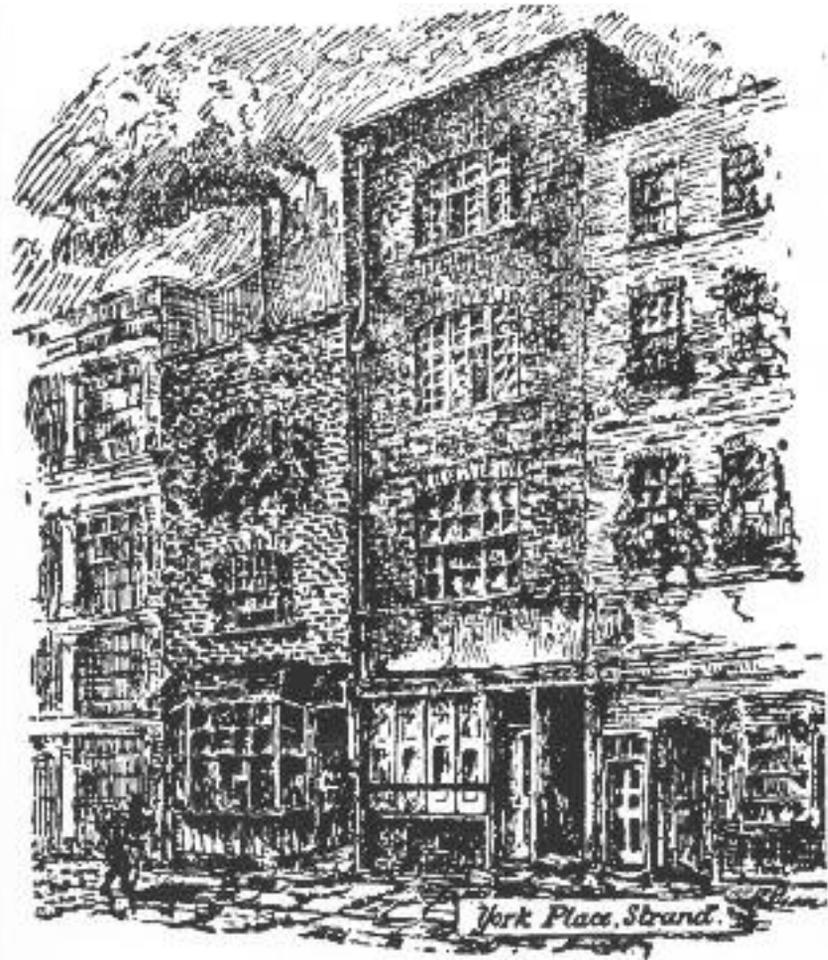
5 Salisbury Street

Of Alley, York Place



Fig. 9  
 Map showing the locations of  
 Hogg's early educational ventures  
 in the Covent Garden area of  
 London.

Fig. 10  
 Quintin Hogg founded a Ragged  
 School and Boys Home in small  
 premises at York Place, just off the  
 Strand, London.



### IN AND AROUND CHARING CROSS: HOGG'S EARLIEST INITIATIVES

London in the second half of the nineteenth century was a city of growing contrasts in wealth and poverty. When Hogg began his philanthropic work in central London in the 1860s, the devastating poverty was somewhat less known – or often wilfully ignored – by the middle classes and the rich. His earliest recorded philanthropic project, besides his Bible ‘synagogue’ at Eton, was teaching two boys to read in the Adelphi Arches near Charing Cross. The area was a mix of commercial space but also included slum housing and extreme poverty. Hogg purchased the outfit typically worn by a shoe-black and, in an attempt to better understand the lives of ‘ragged’ young people, he lived rough, in disguise, on the streets in the evenings and overnight, before going home to his father’s house to wash and dress for his daytime employment.<sup>25</sup> By 1864, he had acquired, with the help of his school friend Arthur Kinnaird (1847–1923), premises in Of Alley, near Charing Cross, and he first established a school for the female flower sellers of Covent Garden.<sup>26</sup> According to Eagar, he supervised the work of a female Bible scholar who taught the women and girls, while

25 Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 43.

26 Eagar, *Making Men*, pp. 246–7; Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 44.

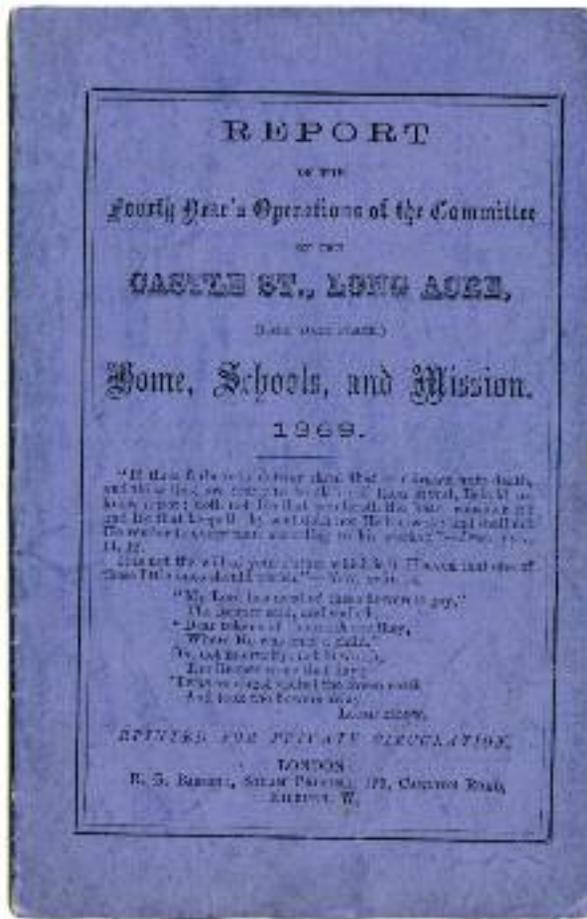


Fig. 11

*The first Annual Report of the Castle Street School and Home stated that '[t]here are, perhaps, but few parts of the metropolis which stood more in need of Christian effort than that in which York Place is situated.'*

also visiting the slums of Bedfordbury, just off Covent Garden, and hosting open-air meetings for nearby residents of all ages at which he preached.<sup>27</sup> Hogg's elder sister Annie, ten years his senior, was also involved in providing girls' education at this site.<sup>28</sup> Despite Hogg's later personal focus on the education of boys and young men, and the resultant popular memories of his work, it is significant that some of his earliest work was actually for young women. His contributions to philanthropy are thus less gendered than has been supposed, even though, in replicating Victorian voluntary work traditions, he left much of the personal contact with women to the female members of his family.<sup>29</sup> In this vein, it was recorded in the Annual Report for 1867–68 that Lady Mary Hogg and a Mrs Melville ran mothers' meetings on Tuesday afternoons.<sup>30</sup>

When Annie Hogg's girls asked for assistance for their brothers, Hogg started, nearby, the York Place Ragged School for boys, which later extended its opening hours into the evenings and soon acquired dormitories too. Hogg had a room at the premises, where he slept each night. It seems that the boys who lodged at York Place had to pay fees, though it is not clear what these amounted to.<sup>31</sup> The boys had often previously lived in the so-called common lodging houses in the area, which were notorious among Victorian urban culture as dens of violence, crime and immorality until they were eventually

27 Eagar, *Making Men*, p. 247.

28 Hogg, *Quintin Hogg*, 2nd edition, pp. 59–60.

29 On the gendered nature of philanthropy in the late 19th century, see among others, Frank Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

30 *York Place Ragged School First Annual Report*, 1867, UWA YPS/1 [P52a].

31 *Castle Street Journal*, 31 August 1872, UWA YCI/1.

Fig. 12  
The large premises at Castle Street enabled Hogg to provide dormitories for boys and accommodation for himself.

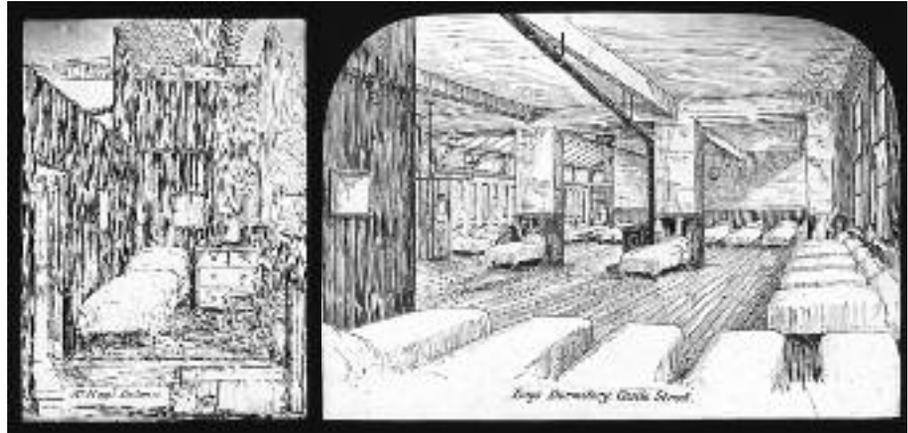
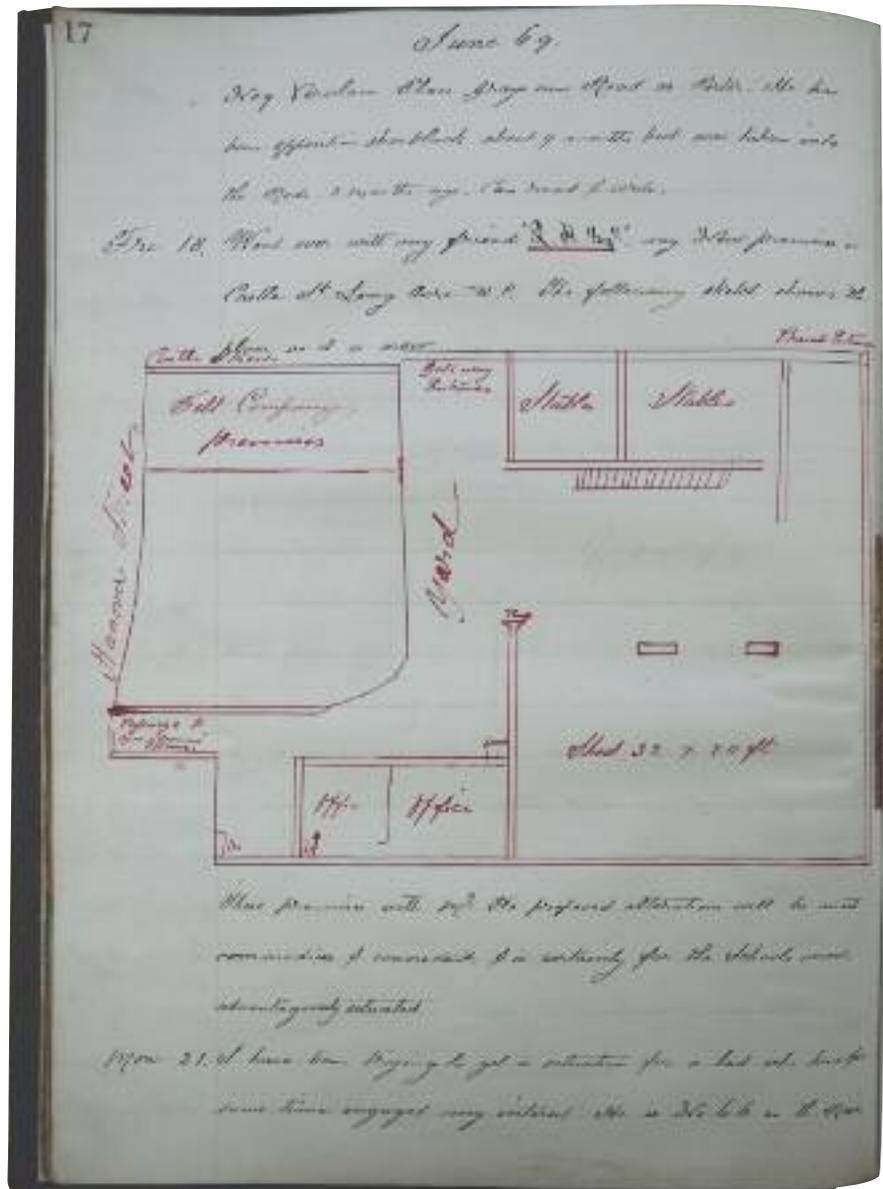


Fig. 13  
Offer writes that the new premises in Castle Street were 'most commodious and convenient'.



removed by legislation.<sup>32</sup> At the official opening of the later Castle Street premises, Hogg gave an account of the York Place years. He stated that the average attendance after one year of operation was 70. Two missionaries were appointed to visit and preach in the local community, which, along with word of mouth, swelled the numbers attending the day school, evening classes, Sunday school and the open-air gatherings that Hogg termed ‘people’s meetings’. The Annual Report clearly stated that ‘the object the Committee had in view was not simply instructing the destitute children, but the evangelisation of the masses in the district who never attended any place of worship.’<sup>33</sup> This again shows the religious commitment of Hogg and his supporters and their primary commitment to bring Christian teachings to as wide a constituency as possible. Hogg estimated that 175 boys found work in 1867 as a result of what they had learned at York Place.<sup>34</sup>

In late 1868, the school moved to new premises in Castle Street (see map on page 14) having been such a success as to need more space. York Place was kept open as a home for young women. In Castle Street, Annie Hogg operated the girls’ home in the front section of the house, and the rest of the space was devoted to boys.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the gender segregation, Hogg separated the boys whom he had worked to reform from those newer to his work, seemingly in order to prevent relapses or negative influences.<sup>36</sup>

Hogg continued to fund the initiative at Castle Street just as he had his other ventures. He was also, alongside Offer, deeply involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation and lived there for several years before his marriage. He brought boys in from the streets and found them accommodation either in Castle Street or in another charitable institution with which he had links. He continued his work with the ‘shoe blacks’ and was involved with the ‘red’ brigade of the shoe blacks’ association, though there is some dispute as to whether he founded it or merely assisted with the running of it.<sup>37</sup> The shoe blacks’ organisation was set up with the boys’ future very much in mind while at the same time perhaps attempting to ensure that these boys demonstrated hard work, initiative and commitment and thus fitted the Victorian ‘deserving poor’ categorisation. Out of their earnings, the boys received 6d per day, and the rest was divided into three, with a further third given to the boy, another third banked for his future, and the remainder returned to the society to help with running costs.<sup>38</sup> In an apparent mirroring of the importance Hogg attached to biblical instruction, the boys were able to attend classes at Castle Street, and were obliged to attend Sunday school there.

Hogg and Offer worked hard to acquire suitable, secure employment for Castle Street residents, particularly when they had proved themselves in the shoe blacks’ brigade or had reached an age when they could be apprenticed. Many boys clearly flourished (and in some cases left the home for new opportunities), but others floundered, and Offer regularly reported his disappointment with particular individuals who turned back to a life of petty crime or who were unable to shake the influences from previous stages in their lives. In some cases, boys were transferred to other charitable organisations, and in a few cases,

32 See, for example, Jerry White, *London in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Vintage, 2007), p. 31 and R. Vladimir Steffel, ‘The Slum Question: The London County Council and Decent Dwellings for the Working Classes, 1880–1914’, *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 5. No. 4, 1973, pp. 314–25.

33 *Castle Street Journal*, 2 November 1869, UWA YCI/1. *York Place Ragged School First Annual Report*, 1867, UWA YPS/1 [P52a].

34 *Castle Street Journal*, 2 November 1869, UWA YCI/1.

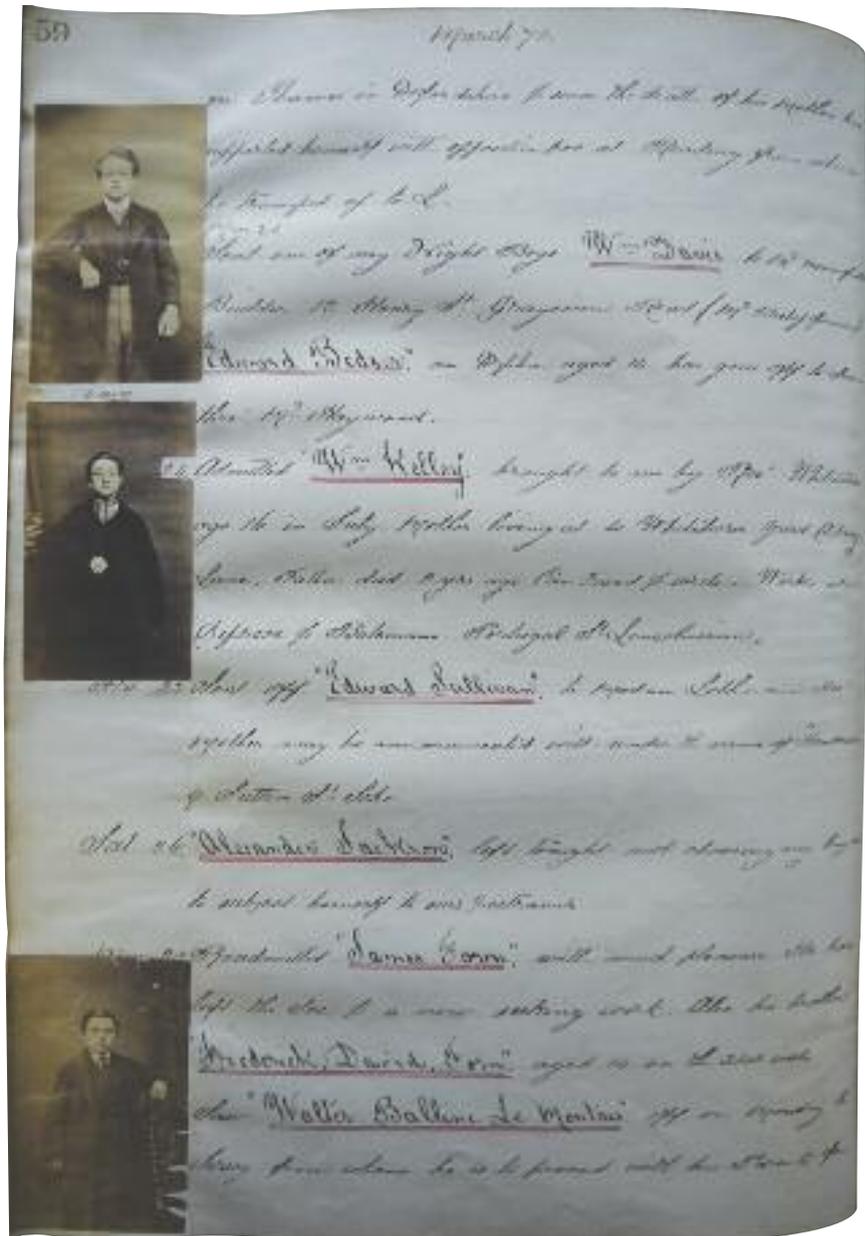
35 Ethel Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic* (London: Macdonald & Co., 1965), p. 42.

36 Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic*, p. 44.

37 The *Castle Street Journal* suggests that Hogg set up this section of the shoe black brigade. See entry for 2 November 1867, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2010/53]. Pelham, in his account, says he took a prominent role in the existing section. See Pelham, *Recollections*, pp. 8–9.

38 Brenda Weeden, ‘Quintin Hogg and the Original Polytechnic’ in Colin Rochester, George Campbell Gosling, Alison Penn and Meta Zimmeck, *Understanding the Roots of Voluntary Action: Historical Perspectives on Current Social Policy* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2011), pp. 99–100.

Fig. 14  
 Offer's journal provides a rare insight into the lives of the boys attending the Boys' Home recording individual boys' backgrounds and futures.



were sent, via the Bow Street Magistrates' Court, to the Middlesex Industrial School at Feltham. Boys and young men who had left the latter were also sometimes admitted to Castle Street.<sup>39</sup> Boys were made to leave the home if bills went unpaid, if they partook in petty theft and if they were impertinent.<sup>40</sup> By contrast, there were a number of notable success stories: Ted Pittaway joined the Metropolitan Police, William Costello did well in Eastern Canada and Thomas Harrod was able to return to live with his family.<sup>41</sup>

The London with which Hogg and so many other philanthropists were contending loomed large. In pre-welfare state Britain, there were limits to philanthropy: when Ted Pittaway's brother William, discharged from the Home for petty theft in 1869, turned up at the Home unwell, he was sent to

39 *Castle Street Journal*, Saturday 18 June 1870, 4 January 1871, UWA YCI/1. Pelham also corroborates Offer's hard work in placing boys in employment. Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 15.  
 40 *Castle Street Journal*, 2 June 1869, 16 July 1869, 14 February 1872, UWA YCI/1.  
 41 Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 13; *Castle Street Journal*, 21 July 1869; 3 September 1870, UWA YCI/1.

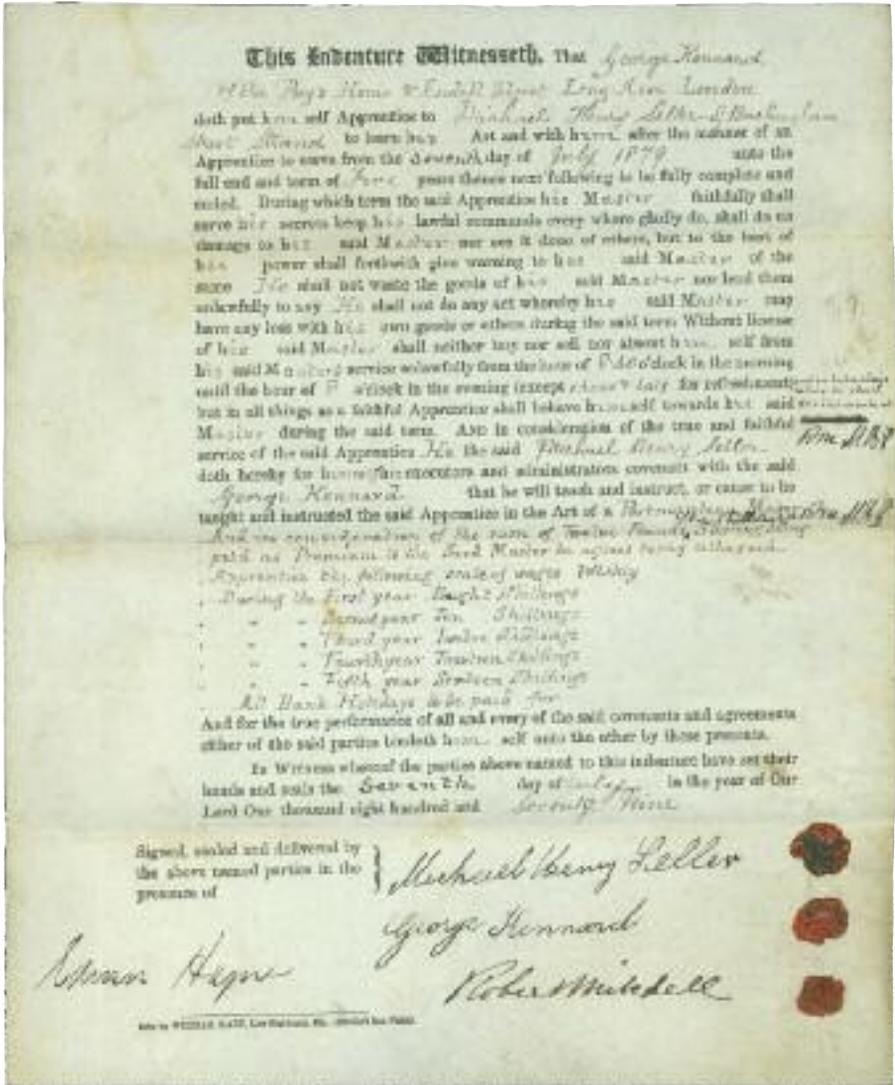


Fig. 15  
 Hogg arranged for the  
 apprenticeship of many of the boys  
 in his charge.

the workhouse for his care, where he later died.<sup>42</sup> Although the 1867 Metropolitan Poor Law Act had been passed in part to address the fact that the workhouse was often the only resort for the sick poor, 1869 was too early for it to have had any effect. The mid-to-late Victorian climate of voluntarism substituting for lack of state provision in many areas meant that Hogg and his Castle Street staff moved in several overlapping philanthropic circles. Offer's journal frequently records connections with, or attendances at, other missions or refuges, including the nearby Field Lane and City missions, and conveys a sense of community and mutual endeavour rather than rivalry.<sup>43</sup> The opening ceremony of the Castle Street premises was attended by members of the Grafton Street Mission and the Salvation Army and was chaired by Frank Bevan, Anglican philanthropist banker and the husband of Hogg's sister Constance.<sup>44</sup> On several occasions, Dr Thomas Barnardo spoke at Castle Street to the boys and on at least one occasion, Offer placed a Castle Street boy in Barnardo's east end homes.<sup>45</sup> Hogg also worked closely with, and clearly influenced, Thomas Pelham

42 *Castle Street Journal*, 16 July and 20 July 1869, UWA YCI/1. Hogg did manage to get the boys vaccinated against smallpox during an outbreak, however. See Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 12.  
 43 *Castle Street Journal*, 16 October 1865, 14 February 1871, 28 February 1872, 7 March 1872, UWA YCI/1.  
 44 *Castle Street Journal*, Tuesday 2 November 1869, UWA YCI/1. See also Leslie Hannah, 'Bevan, Francis Augustus (1840-1919)', *ODNB*.  
 45 *Castle Street Journal*, 28 February 1872; 7 March 1872; 8 May 1872; 16 May 1872; 30 October 1872, UWA YCI/1.

Fig. 16

Considerable numbers of the Castle Street and YMCI boys and young men emigrated, often initially to Newfoundland and Canada. Some moved on elsewhere in North America, maintaining contact with their former friends in London. Here, Hogg visits a group of former YMCI boys in Denver, Colorado.



and Arthur Kinnaird, who together established the London Homes for Working Boys in 1870. Both men taught at the York Place and Castle Street institutions at various points and would later become governors of the Polytechnic.<sup>46</sup> The London Homes for Working Boys organisation worked, informally at least, alongside the Castle Street institution.<sup>47</sup> Offer records Kinnaird sending boys to Castle Street, and vice versa.<sup>48</sup>

There is some debate about the effectiveness of Hogg's work at Castle Street. Thomas Pelham – clearly influenced by Hogg's ethos and approach – felt that Castle Street failed to provide the necessary 'brotherhood of fellowship to bind the boys together, and ... when the school was not open, they were thrown into their old companionship, and exposed to all the manifold temptations of London street life.'<sup>49</sup> On a quantitative basis, the *Castle Street Journal* records the successes and the failures, but given that the school predated many state initiatives and was financed principally by Hogg's own capital, it is a marked achievement of late Victorian philanthropy alongside the growing number of similar ventures in central London at this time.<sup>50</sup> The journal suggests that 134 boys emigrated between 1869 and 1872, under Hogg's direct advocacy of the practice as a means to secure a fresh start in new surroundings. It also records that 34 boys were apprenticed: although these lists may not be complete (particularly for the numbers of apprentices), they remain a useful indication of the school's achievement.<sup>51</sup> Offer frequently recorded that the Home was at capacity, and the 1871 Census reveals that 31 boys lived there with Sara Wren, a well-thought of servant, Henry Offer and his sister Amelia, who was listed as matron, though it is not clear that she ever officially held this role. For as many boys who were less well-regarded or found to be devious, there were an equal number of whom Offer and/or Hogg became particularly fond. Famously, Hogg took one of the Castle Street boys with him on his

46 Eagar, *Making Men*, p. 251; *Castle Street Journal*, 22 September 1871, UWA YCI/1; Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 19.

47 Eagar, *Making Men*, p. 244.

48 Arthur Kinnaird was also involved in providing opportunities for sport to the Castle Street boys. This is discussed in more detail in Mark Clapson, *An Education in Sport: Competition, communities and identities at the University of Westminster since 1864* (Cambridge: Granta, 2012).

49 Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 11. W. Eagar, *Making Men*, pp. 241–5.

50 Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830–1885* (London: Routledge, 1978).

51 'A connected list of our Emigrants'; 'A connected list of our Apprentices', *Castle Street Journal*, UWA YCI/1.

honeymoon, fearing that he was otherwise too weak to survive, and Offer also took boys to accompany him on holidays with his sister.<sup>52</sup> Bible study, school hymns and evening cocoa formed important parts of the nightly ritual and the Home also offered educational evening classes, taught by, among others, Kin-naird, Pelham and Hogg.<sup>53</sup> The Day School was run by Miss Light and received a grant from the Department of Education.<sup>54</sup> Drinking at the Home was absolutely forbidden and punished, and this insistence on abstaining from alcohol would be carried through to the establishment of the Polytechnic.<sup>55</sup> In early 1872 there were some fractious meetings after staff took boys to the theatre, a pastime to which Hogg was decidedly opposed.<sup>56</sup>

#### THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE: FROM CASTLE STREET TO LONG ACRE

Hogg's establishment of the Young Men's Christian Institute and Reading Rooms (YMCI) in 1873 marks, in many ways, a new phase in his philanthropy. As Brenda Weeden has argued, his former Castle Street boys had become young men and he wanted to keep providing them with material and Christian assistance.<sup>57</sup> The focus of his work changed in terms of age and also in terms of social class position: he was now less likely to be 'rescuing' those living on the streets but instead helping working men – many of whom had once been homeless or destitute, of course – through the twin middle class-driven pursuits of 'self-improvement' and 'rational recreation'.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the Institute's aims were the 'social, mental and religious improvement of youths in the neighbourhood'.<sup>59</sup> While in many ways these echoed the aims of Hogg's previous work in terms of religious and moral development, the YMCI also offered more opportunities for clubs, societies and self-directed, self-improving leisure.

Hogg continued his personal attendance and contributions to the YMCI when business did not take him elsewhere. However, he also realised that the institution would only achieve its potential if members themselves were keen to be involved in the day-to-day running and development of the institution. When he was going away on a business trip in 1879, for example, he remarked in a sermon that:

In going away... my greatest comfort is in the knowledge that the Institute and the works connected with it are no less dear to many of you here than they are to myself. No one man can ever make an Institute such as this a failure or a success. This place will be just what you, who are members of it, choose to make it.<sup>60</sup>

Accordingly, committee members were elected from among the young men.<sup>61</sup> Young men were also asked to undertake a share of responsibility in becoming spiritual leaders as befitted their increasing years. In late 1879, for example, Hogg reported a shortage of Sunday School teachers in the local

52 Eagar, p. 249; *Castle Street Journal*, December 1870, UWA YCI/1.

53 Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 7.

54 Pelham, *Recollections*, p. 6.

55 See *Castle Street Journal*, 26 December 1869, which mentions several boys having been caned for getting drunk on Christmas Day.

56 *Castle Street Journal*, Tuesday 9 January 1872; Friday 19 January 1872, UWA YCI/1.

57 Weeden, 'Quintin Hogg and the Original Polytechnic', pp. 100–1.

58 Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*.

59 *Youths' Christian Institute (Strand Branch) Rules and Third Annual Report*, 1880, UWA YCI/8 [P52g].

60 *Home Tidings*, December 1879.

61 *Youths' Christian Institute (Strand Branch) Rules and Third Annual Report*, 1880, UWA YCI/8 [P52g].

Fig. 17

*Robert Mitchell came from a humble working class background and had attended the Boys' Home. He became Honorary Secretary of the YMCI in 1871, and was to play a key role in the development of the Polytechnic as Director of Education, 1891–1922, and founder of the Polytechnic Touring Association.*



area and encouraged Institute members, and eventually suitable women among their acquaintance, to offer their services.<sup>62</sup>

When setting up the YMCI, Hogg had considered forming a new branch of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), but eventually decided against this.<sup>63</sup> In particular, he objected to the ways in which the YMCA judged a man's religious belief and classified him accordingly:

One of the most serious faults of the YMCA system in my opinion is the classification of members into "saved" and "unsaved". The Committee set themselves up as judges of each man's spiritual standing, and until a young man has satisfied them he is in their judgement a good Christian he cannot be a member of the institution – only an associate. That, I think is radically wrong. Many a man who is reticent as to his religion is at heart a Christian of the Christians.<sup>64</sup>

However, the name for Hogg's new institute consciously echoed that of the YMCA, possibly in an attempt to compete with the association's offering. Interestingly, too, in 1880 one of the annex branches of the YMCI chose to amalgamate with the YMCA, suggesting that the latter's practices were perhaps less problematic for members than they were for Hogg.<sup>65</sup>

62 *Home Tidings*, December 1879; *Home Tidings*, August 1880.

63 Pelham, *Recollections*, pp. 16–17.

64 *Evening News*, 3 July 1894, as quoted in Frederick Johnson, 'The London Polytechnic Movement, with special reference to Quintin Hogg', unpublished PhD thesis, Institute of Education, London, [1929].

65 *Home Tidings*, 30 October 1880, p. 306.

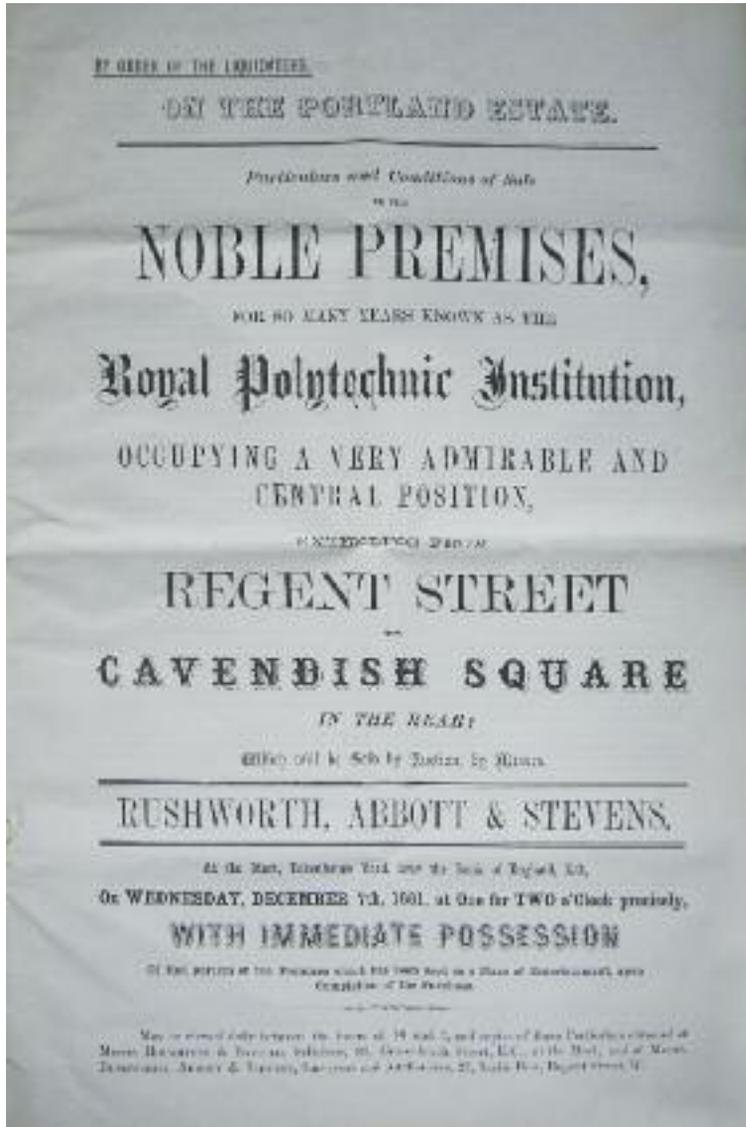


Fig. 18

*In 1881 the Royal Polytechnic Institution closed due to financial failure. Its premises at 309 Regent Street were bought at auction by Hogg.*

Hogg appointed Robert Mitchell (1855–1933), a former metalworker and beneficiary of Hogg's earlier ventures, as Secretary of the YMCI, initially in an honorary capacity and then in a full-time post.<sup>66</sup> Mitchell was thus heavily involved in the day-to-day oversight of the Institute, and among other duties kept a register of unemployed members so that they might be matched with new situations arising locally.<sup>67</sup> This was the beginning of Mitchell's long association as a key member of staff in Hogg's work and his influence is shown in a number of chapters throughout this volume.

In 1878, larger premises in Long Acre, Covent Garden were acquired. The boys' ragged day school was given over to the London School Board with its new remit under the Education Acts of 1870 and 1880. The boys' home was turned over to Thomas Pelham. The Young Men's Christian Institute was therefore now a separate entity and became Hogg's chief focus.<sup>68</sup> By 1880, the

<sup>66</sup> *Annual Report for Youths' Christian Institute and Reading Rooms, 1875*, UWA YCI/5/2/1 [P524]; Weeden, 'Quintin Hogg and the Original Polytechnic', p. 101.

<sup>67</sup> *Home Tidings*, December 1879, p. 120.

<sup>68</sup> Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic*, pp. 46–7.

Fig. 19

Hogg's YMCI soon became known as the Polytechnic, taking its predecessor's name 'Polytechnic Institution', which remained inscribed on the façade of 309 Regent Street.



YMCI had several annexes, including one on Salisbury Street near the Strand, and in the same year there was mention of one at Hogg's family home, Holly Hill, near Southampton, which is also indicative of the apparent lack of distinction Hogg often saw between work and private life.<sup>69</sup>

### THE POLYTECHNIC

When Hogg moved his YMCI to the Polytechnic building in order to better accommodate members, he brought to Regent Street a well-established institution where the young men knew each other and knew him. The popularity of the YMCI was such that it was continually outgrowing its premises, necessitating a search for new accommodation after the idea of a purpose-built building was rejected. In 1882, Hogg purchased the lease of George Cayley's former Royal Polytechnic Institution building at 309 Regent Street for £50,000, and although this was deemed to be of sufficient size to eliminate further concerns over space, more space simply seemed to mean that more boys and young men applied to be Poly members: on the first day of opening, reportedly around 1,000 men applied for membership.<sup>70</sup>

Hogg was aware that the new accommodation was some distance from the previous premises in and around Covent Garden and was anxious to ensure that as many of the young men as possible made the transition. He asked members to treat Regent Street exactly as they had Long Acre, attending straight after work (and in their work attire if necessary) 'so that everyone would feel just as much at ease.'<sup>71</sup> To facilitate this, he had shower and washing facilities

69 *Youths' Christian Institute (Strand Branch) Rules and Third Annual Report*, 1880, UWA YCI/8 [P52g]; *Home Tidings*, August 1880.

70 Fred A. McKenzie, 'The Regent Street Polytechnic: England's Largest Educational Institute', *Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated monthly for men and women*, October 1898, p. 542.

71 *Home Tidings*, October 1882.



Fig. 20

*In January 1888, Hogg held Conversazioni over two nights, with one half of the Institute's membership invited on each evening, to make up for not having seen as much of them as he would have liked owing to ill-health.*

constructed. In the new premises, young men could join for social and sporting activities as members, and then also take educational classes for a reduced fee, or they could pay as students for the individual classes that they wanted to take. Hogg paid particular attention to the sporting and social clubs, arguing that part of his success was due to the investment of time and resources in these as a means for young men to come and relax after work.<sup>72</sup> He himself had participated heavily in sport at Eton, as Mark Clapson has documented.<sup>73</sup>

Hogg's work before the YMCI was in many ways typical of mid-Victorian philanthropy, in that it was concerned with lifting young people out of grinding poverty and the life of petty crime, vice and poor health with which it was often connected. Such work was largely carried out by men like Hogg – those with sufficiently high personal incomes to secure the financial aspects of the ventures and sufficient connections to raise the profile of the institution and the expertise available to it. This meant that philanthropy had an inescapable class dimension to it, and the class aspects of Hogg's ventures are clear throughout this period. However, the class dynamic of Hogg's work changed gradually with the relocation to Regent Street. Part of this was the social make-up of the West End – with domestic servants, clerks and retail assistants – compared with Covent Garden, which was still yet to be fully redeveloped and cleared of slum accommodation.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, in becoming more focused on the boys

<sup>72</sup> Quintin Hogg, as quoted in *The Polytechnic (The Pioneer Institute for Technical Education): Its Genesis and Present Status* (London: The Polytechnic, 1892).

<sup>73</sup> Clapson, p. 8.

<sup>74</sup> White, p. 301, p. 331.

who had once been part of Castle Street and who were now attending the YMCI, Hogg, by definition, surrounded himself with his success stories and with men who, by and large, were joining, or aspiring to join, the ranks of the ‘respectable working class’ or even the lower middle class. As Michael Heller’s work in this volume demonstrates, the class profile of the YMCI at the Polytechnic shifted significantly in the first few decades of its operation.

#### HOGG’S INDIVIDUAL APPROACH

As Hogg’s day-to-day involvement at York Place, then Castle Street and Long Acre suggests, he developed a very individual brand of philanthropy that emphasised the importance of individual leaders to provide quasi-parental wisdom and guidance. This continued – and if anything, probably expanded – with the relocation to Regent Street, where on the first day of opening Hogg stayed until past midnight to personally greet the 1,000 or so young men who came to join the Institute. In 1886, Quintin and Alice Hogg and their daughters moved into a house at No. 5 Cavendish Square that adjoined the Poly, and Hogg regularly spent his evenings with the male members and students of the Poly, Alice spending many of hers with the female members after 1888. Memories and anecdotes abound about Hogg’s advice-giving and force of personality.<sup>75</sup> Although he had preached at a number of other organisations during his years around Covent Garden, he appears to have consciously decided to scale back these commitments once he was running the Poly, remarking:

I refuse almost every invitation to speak at outside meetings. My work is here in Regent Street, and I believe it is only by concentrating oneself on one’s own work that a man can hope to make it really successful or obtain the best results.<sup>76</sup>

Hogg’s personal style of leadership occasionally clashed with the views of his contemporaries. Thomas Pelham, for example, favoured the same individualist approach to charitable work that Hogg personified, but Arthur Kinnaird reportedly preferred a committee-led approach on the grounds that this led to more progress. As a result, Kinnaird was a prominent member of around 28 different organisations whereas Regent Street remained Hogg’s sole project after 1881.<sup>77</sup> The strength of Hogg’s personality in the organisation – both in terms of preaching sermons and leading Bible classes and in terms of providing informal advice to individual members – is evidenced by countless recollections of young men after Hogg’s death or after their time at the institution. One man lamented the ‘loss of one who set us many good examples in the good old days, and whose cheery and kindly words can never be effaced from our memory’. Another member affirmed that ‘Nobody but a Poly boy can realise what a loss it means.’<sup>78</sup>

Although Hogg increasingly handed over the day-to-day running of the Poly to Robert Mitchell and the governing body – or was forced to do so in some cases in order to secure funding – he clearly sought to continue to be a

<sup>75</sup> Argyll, p. 819.

<sup>76</sup> As quoted in McKenzie, ‘The Regent Street Polytechnic’, p. 65.

<sup>77</sup> Eagar, p. 238; p. 244. Emily Kinnaird, *Reminiscences* (London: John Murray, 1925), p. 116.

<sup>78</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 28 January 1903.

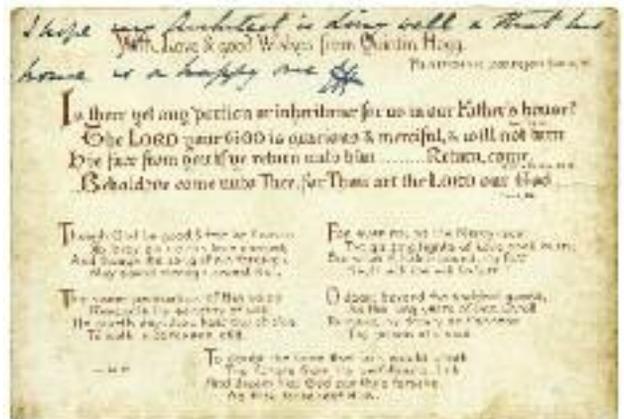
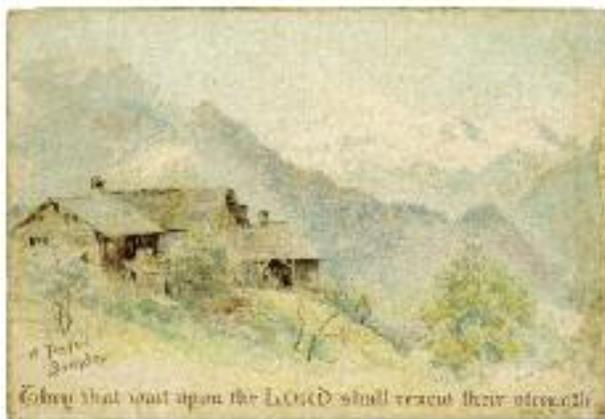
father figure to the young men. His letters to his Poly boys give a sense of his relationships with them. He employed, and had clearly carefully thought about, various technological and marketing innovations in order to reach the maximum number of members without the communications becoming too excessive a burden on his time. For example, he sent pre-printed postcards with a scene on one side and a Bible verse on the other, adding his own additional greeting as appropriate for birthdays or New Year. One such card was sent to Percy Brewer, a former Poly boy, asking ‘What is my boy Percy doing now – is he still at Hollands in Warwick St & does he still attend Hinde St Chapel & why has he quite forgotten the Poly & QH?’<sup>79</sup> In the late 1880s and throughout the 1890s, Hogg also handwrote several letters a year that were addressed ‘My dear boy’. These were mass-produced in his handwriting and sent to each member. The idea was clearly to make it appear that ‘QH’ had written to each member personally, and it appears to have worked: several of these letters were sent back to Quintin McGarel Hogg, Quintin Hogg’s grandson, in the mid-twentieth century often with accompanying letters suggesting that the original recipients had treasured the letter and re-read it throughout their lives.<sup>80</sup>

RELIGION

In January 1880, Robert Mitchell and W.T. Paton wrote the following to members of the YMCI in a New Year letter sent on behalf of an absent Quintin Hogg:

What we should like you to remember is this, that everything secular becomes sacred when consecrated to the Saviour, and done heartily as unto the Lord. We feel confident you will do all in your power to keep the tone and character of the Institute in accord with everything that is Christian, and let the power and influence of our religion be shown, not so much, or merely, in occasional religious acts or services incumbent as these are and should be, but in doing *every-day* duties from a religious motive – ‘Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God’.<sup>81</sup>

Figs. 21, 22  
Examples of greetings cards sent by Hogg to individual members of the Polytechnic.

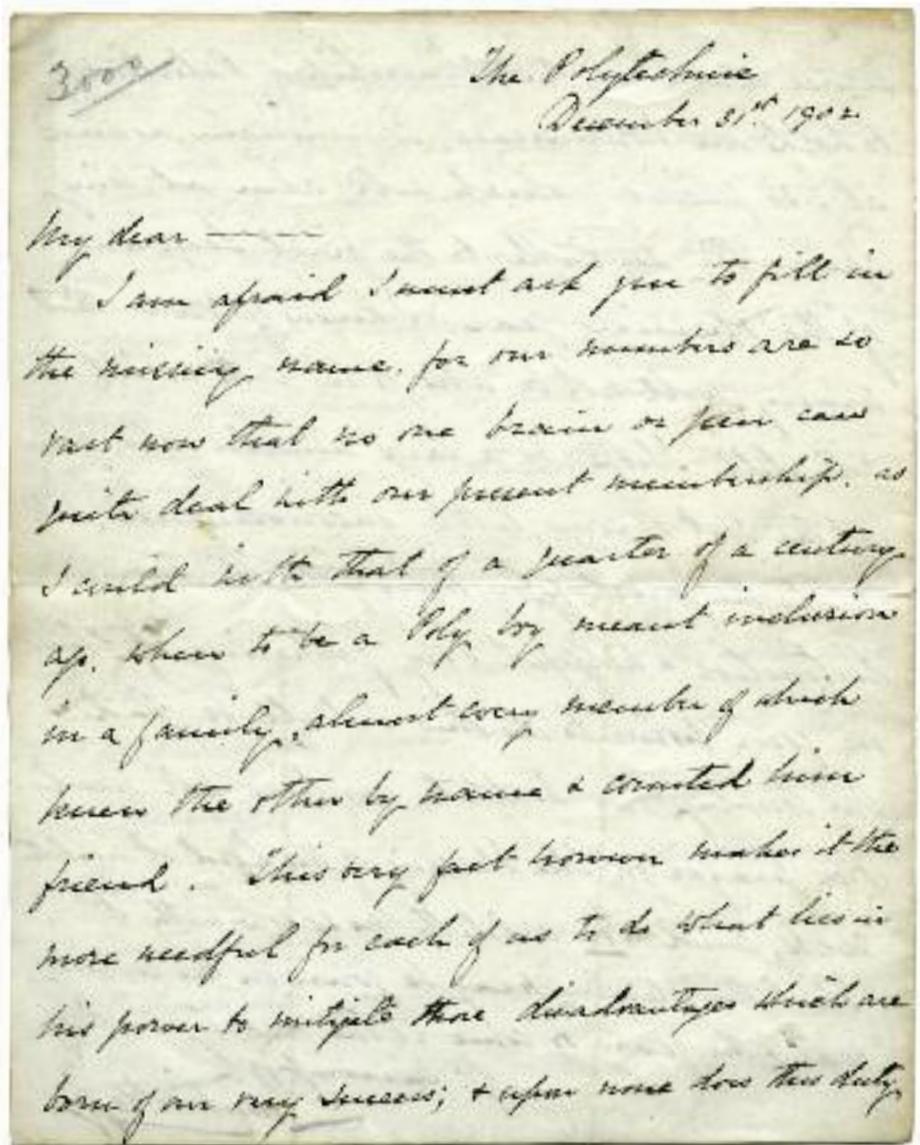


If Hogg's socio-economic position made his charitable work possible, it was his attitudes to religion, along with his strength of personality, that determined the distinctiveness of the Poly's offering. Whereas many late Victorian philanthropic – and indeed educational – efforts were based around specific churches or denominations, Hogg eschewed organised religion and church-going. Instead, he remained committed to the principle that it was an individual's reading of the Bible that would acquaint them with God's teachings and lead them to a moral and Christian way of life. In a sermon to the YMCI, for example, he spoke of the:

wrong view of Christianity that some men have, regarding a deliverance from hell and not a present deliverance from sin as the object of their lives [which had] distorted the very words that we use in Christian churches. In all

Fig. 23

Hogg handwrote letters that were mass-produced and sent to each member. This is the last letter he wrote to members before his death in January 1903. The 3,000 in the corner is presumed to be an instruction to the printer regarding the number of copies.



79 Postcard from Quintin Hogg to Percy, undated, CAC HLSM/2/12/24.  
 80 Papers of Quintin McGarel Hogg (1907–2001), Baron Hailsbam of Marylebone, 1916–2001, CAC HLSM/2/12/10 and HLSM/8/16/1.  
 81 Home Tidings, January 1880.

Churches it is “salvation” that is sought: “to be saved” is the cry of every soul. The question is, Salvation from what? If we turn to our Bible we are told it is to be salvation from our sins.<sup>82</sup>

Hogg’s propensity to return to Bible teachings had been epitomised by his ‘synagogues’ at Eton and his later Bible classes in the venues around Covent Garden. His Bible classes and addresses at the YMCI and later at the Poly tended to be based on a particular text and followed by his own interpretations of the spiritual messages. After reading a text from the Old Testament, for example, Hogg lectured those assembled in July 1879 about the moral dangers of temptation. ‘Don’t speculate on being an exception’, he told them, to the fact that giving into temptation would lead to ruin. Mindful of the London streets in which his institute was situated, he remarked on a ‘London [filled] with sin and ruin’ and warned his pupils against turning away from God and into this life. In a sermon shortly after, he advised his listeners against using Christian service as a substitute for cultivating individual moral and Christian habits and a personal relationship with God.<sup>83</sup>

Hogg’s views of religion and of an individual relationship with God were also delineated in warm-hearted letters he wrote to his son Douglas on the occasion of his confirmation and his departure for Eton. He spoke of his own ‘Christian career’ and how it was his confirmation that marked a transition therein, ‘from the mere externals of religion to taste of its real substance and joy’. He expressed hope that Douglas would begin to see God as his friend and that he would not delay in striving to know God.<sup>84</sup> When Douglas went to Eton, he told him that ‘the best safeguard against evil ... is “do good”’.<sup>85</sup> Thus, in these letters, he encapsulated two of the central tenets of his religious conviction: that there was a distinct difference between outward religion and a real relationship with God, and that it was desirable to lead an active, Christian life as ‘a worker ... try[ing] to benefit some one’.<sup>86</sup>

Ascertaining the religious culture of the Poly, even if the nature of Hogg’s teaching is clear, is more difficult. One proviso of the state-funded grant awarded in 1891 stated that it was not to be used for religious teaching.<sup>87</sup> The level of Bible study and evening services does not seem to have diminished afterwards, suggesting that such activities remained privately financed. Reviews and articles on the Polytechnic after this point stress the distinctive religious culture at the Poly, but the *Windsor Magazine*, in a feature article in 1898, noted that ‘[r]eligion is forced down no one’s throat, there is no button-holing of members and inquiring as to their spiritual condition, and any man is at perfect liberty to be a member or attend classes for years, if he wishes, without once going near a religious meeting’.<sup>88</sup> This said, Christianity clearly remained central to Hogg’s vision and he seems to have been concerned at various points that the Poly was better at its social and educational mission than it was at its religious and spiritual functions. Although there was a member-led Bible society, Hogg’s own writings suggest that members needed some encouragement, if not outright coercion, to attend. In February 1888, for example,

82 *Home Tidings*, December 1879.

83 *Home Tidings*, 2 July 1879.

84 Copy letter from Q.H. to Douglas Hogg, 2 April 1889, UWA HOG/1/13 [P50c].

85 Copy letter from Q.H. to Douglas Hogg, undated [post 1886], UWA HOG/1/12 [P50c].

86 Copy letter from Q.H. to Douglas Hogg, undated [post 1886], UWA HOG/1/12 [P50c].

87 Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic*, p. 65.

88 McKenzie, ‘The Regent Street Polytechnic’, p. 544. For an account of a Poly service, see ‘Music at the Polytechnic: Sunday Evening Service for the People’, *The Nonconformist Musical Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 181, January 1903, pp. 6–7.

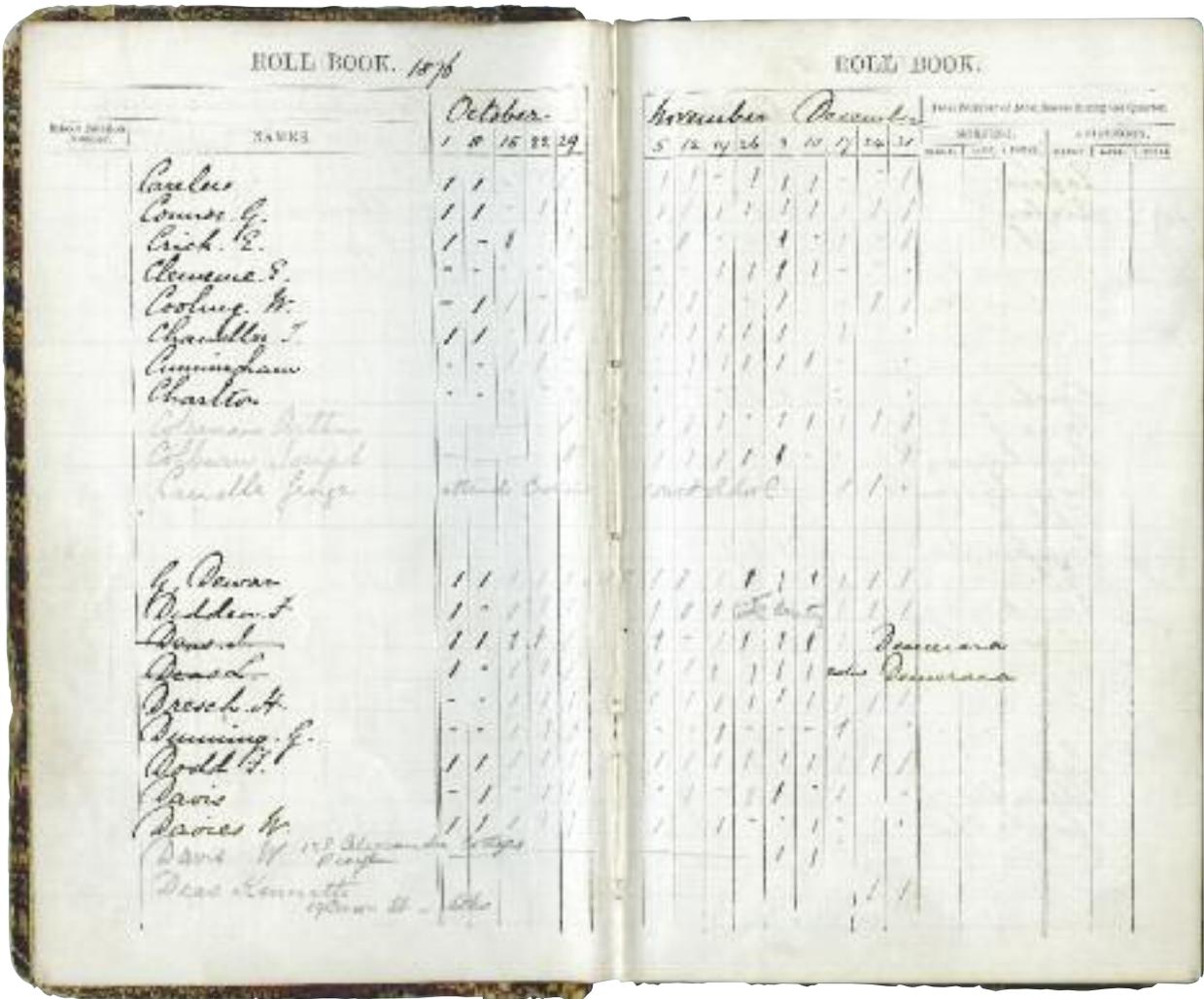


Fig. 24  
Attendance registers for Hogg's Bible classes were strictly kept. In addition to the classes, religious notes and exercises were included in early issues of the Polytechnic Magazine.

Hogg wrote to members asking them to strive to have attendance back at its old levels, detailing at length the benefits of prayer and worship.<sup>89</sup> Eight years later he wrote, similarly:

It is very far from my wish to draw any away from churches or chapels where they may attend, but if you live sufficiently near to the Institute, & are not otherwise engaged, I hope you will bear our services in mind & throw your lot in with those who desire to see the spiritual growth of the Poly keep pace with its physical & intellectual development.

It must needs be that some of our thousands of members have grown cold & indifferent to such matters & I want you, if you will, to help me in this endeavour to bring such again into touch with HIM who laid down his life that He might be a revelation to us of the Fatherhood of God & the brotherhood of Man.<sup>90</sup>

89 Letter from Quintin Hogg, 16 February 1888, CAC HLSM/2/19/7.

90 Letter from Quintin Hogg, 1 October 1896, CAC HLSM/2/12/10.

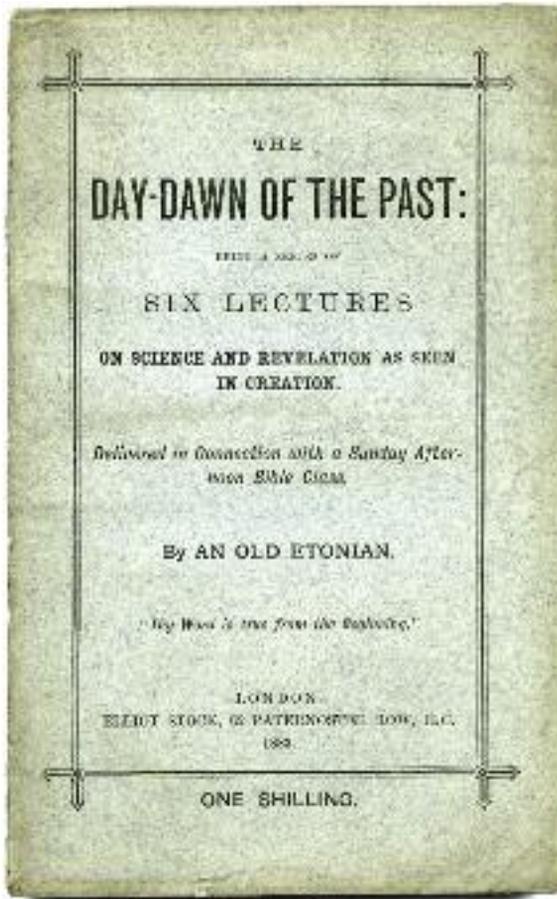


Fig. 25

*Hogg published several religious tracts during his lifetime, including The Day-Dawn of the Past (1883) and The Story of Peter (1900).*

Although it is difficult for historians to now recapture levels of Christian conviction among groups of people, the implications from Hogg's writings are that Hogg himself, and perhaps others, were concerned for the future spiritual direction of the Poly.

Interviewed in 1892, Hogg revealed that he did not believe that any man was really an atheist, and gave an example of a once-professed atheist to whom he was now offering spiritual guidance. 'We never conceal from our members', he stated, 'that, though we are anxious to do all we can for their temporal interests, our ultimate object is their eternal and spiritual welfare.'<sup>91</sup> The reference to 'eternal and spiritual welfare' underlines the fact that Hogg's own beliefs and aims would be clearly at odds with someone without religious conviction. Although the words are Offer's, not Hogg's, this 'ultimate object' might be detected back in 1872 in Castle Street. Writing about resident Frederick Munro, Offer expressed his frustration that:

[h]is strong dislike for religious truth and teaching and deep-rooted conviction that God's interesting himself in human affairs or listening to our prayers is a fallacy makes it questionable whether he is a desirable acquisition to the Home or not.<sup>92</sup>

91 *The Polytechnic (The Pioneer Institute for Technical Education): Its Genesis and Present Status* (London: The Polytechnic, 1892), UWA RSP/5/1 [P53].

92 *Castle Street Journal*, 22 January 1872, UWA YCI/1.

Immediately before his death, Hogg had been writing a letter to a former Poly boy who had clearly wanted to discuss something of importance with him. The unfinished letter suggested that the young man attend the Polytechnic later that day and Hogg promised him ‘all the afternoon if you like’ for discussion. Had the letter been sent, it is probable that it would not now be available to historians, and while it would be unwise to ascribe undue significance to it simply because it was the last thing Quintin Hogg wrote, it does contain a succinct transcription of some of his beliefs:

Forever virtue is better than vice, truth than falsehood, kindness than brutality. These, like love, ‘never fail’. So you must not let your [doubts?] lead you to a wrong life. Don’t confuse theology with religion. The one is a science to be proved or disproved, the other is a life to be lived.<sup>93</sup>

The word ‘doubts’ here was suggested in a transcription by his grandson as Hogg himself omitted a word when he was committing his advice to paper. Nonetheless, this appears to be a clear reiteration of Hogg’s views on Christianity and what he believed was entailed in a Christian life.

Fig. 26  
*Photographs of Hogg were often given to members to mark seasonal occasions.*



93 Quintin Hogg’s last, unfinished letter, 17 January 1903, UWA HOG/1/1/11 [P50c].

## EDUCATION

Hogg's religious position also contributed to his broad views on education. For him it was not simply about the acquisition of knowledge, but much more about the education and cultivation of the whole person: mind, body, and, first and foremost, spirit. In his opening address at Regent Street, he reportedly argued:

[T]he value of knowledge consisted not only in the utility of the thing acquired, but even more in the training of the mind, and power of thought, which the learner gained in the process.... Viewed in this light, it was impossible to separate religious and secular education; and all who believed in a future state at all would recognise the fact, that just as a man improved his opportunities on earth, developing his higher qualities and noble capabilities, so would he be more or less fitted when he passed into a higher state of existence to appreciate and make use of those good things which God had prepared for all who sought them.<sup>94</sup>

Hogg wanted 'to develop our institute into... a place which should recognise that God had given man more than one side to his character, and where we could gratify any reasonable taste, whether athletic, intellectual, spiritual or social.'<sup>95</sup> Accordingly, the existing YMCI clubs and societies were expanded in the new space. These included a large range of sporting clubs, utilising facilities in Regent Street and, eventually, Chiswick, as well as the Polytechnic Parliament, several lecture series and foreign language clubs.<sup>96</sup> Within a few years, the institution began offering a wide range of classes. While some of these could be taken recreationally, many more were designed as introductions or enhancements to a particular trade or skill set and others were



Fig. 27  
*Student work was often displayed in the Polytechnic. The elegant, but small reception foyer was to be greatly enlarged during the 1910–12 rebuilding of 309 Regent Street.*

94 *Home Tidings*, October 1882.

95 G.S. Woods, 'Hogg, Quintin (1845–1903)', *ODNB*, 1912 edition, p. 279.

96 On sport, see Clapson, *An Education in Sport*.



Fig. 28  
*Each of the sports and social clubs was allocated a room in the Polytechnic for the exclusive use of club members. This is the Harriers' Athletic Club room.*

designed for university entrance, though Hogg was reportedly less than keen on the latter.<sup>97</sup>

Asked in 1892 what he thought the difference was between his institution and others that were less successful, Hogg replied, in a different vein:

I think the mistake of many who have failed in this domain is that they have neglected the social element. Young fellows who have been at work all day don't always want in the evening to either attend a prayer-meeting or a lecture, or even to read books and magazines. You must provide opportunities for amusement, and recreation and friendly chat. In short, boys must play as well as work. I attribute the remarkable success of the Polytechnic largely to the fact that we have provided the members with rational amusement, and facilities for getting to know one another and making friendships.<sup>98</sup>

'Rational amusement' was a tenet of mid-late Victorian social and leisure life, and in Hogg's successive ventures and most particularly at the Polytechnic, this type of productive leisure time was infused with Hogg's personal brand of philanthropy and individual charitable commitment. Polytechnic societies

97 The classes and societies are discussed further throughout this volume. See also John Izbecki, 'The London Polytechnics' in Roderick Floud and Sean Glynn, eds., *London Higher* (London: Athlone Press, 1998).

98 *The Polytechnic (The Pioneer Institute for Technical Education): Its Genesis and Present Status* (London: The Polytechnic, 1892), UWA RSP/5/1 [P53j].

in particular continued this charitable impulse, through such ventures as mutual improvement societies, Christian Missions in the local area and helping to fund holidays for workers too poor to otherwise afford them.<sup>99</sup>

### COMMEMORATION

When Quintin Hogg was found dead in his bathroom on the morning of 17 January 1903, it was initially unclear what had caused his death. *The Times* at first reported heart failure hastened by the cold weather.<sup>100</sup> His daughter, Ethel, later gave the cause of death as fumes from a faulty gas heater that had been malfunctioning for some time.<sup>101</sup> The inquest recorded the cause of death as asphyxiation from the fumes, exacerbated by poor ventilation in the bathroom, and the coroner recorded a verdict of ‘death by misadventure’.<sup>102</sup> George Ives, a twentieth-century activist for gay rights, has suggested in his diary that Hogg may have committed suicide resulting from his involvement in a homosexual scandal about to be made public, but there is no other evidence to corroborate this.<sup>103</sup>

The *Polytechnic Magazine* devoted a considerable number of pages to tributes to Hogg from his contemporaries and friends as well as to recollections and memories of some ‘poly boys’. The issue included poetry, biblical verse and a pen and ink line drawing that was meant to encapsulate the chief aspects of Hogg’s life, work and legacy. In the weeks after his death, Hogg’s Bible was put on display, open at the page he had intended to use as the basis for a sermon the following Sunday.

Hogg’s funeral was held at All Souls Church, Langham Place, a few hundred yards from the Poly. Such a large number of mourners was expected that tickets had to be issued for the service. After the funeral, Hogg was cremated and his ashes were returned to the coffin and buried in St Marylebone Cemetery, a parish with which the Hoggs had a longstanding association. His grave, which also became Alice’s when she died in 1918, was inscribed with the word ‘Satisfied’, which he had also chosen for his mother’s gravestone and was a reference, as Ethel Wood explains, to two Bible verses.<sup>104</sup> It is not clear why Hogg chose cremation over burial, although an 1893 article in the *Polytechnic Magazine*, which Hogg may well have written, advocated cremation as the responsible option for the individual who cared about the natural surroundings.<sup>105</sup> However, cremation had only been ruled as definitely legal from 1902 so it was by no means a usual choice.<sup>106</sup> Hogg’s evident desire to be cremated is therefore almost certainly indicative of his strong feelings on the issue. The fact that his ashes were interred in a coffin meant that there did remain a physical marker of Hogg’s body after his death, though his grave does not appear to have ever been visited by groups or individuals from the Poly. Instead, Hogg was remembered through ceremonies and rituals at the Poly, as well as in the physical buildings themselves. In some ways, this befitted Hogg’s own wishes: according to his friend the Duke of Argyll, Hogg wanted to be remembered by the continuance of his work.<sup>107</sup> However, whether a man who, according to

<sup>99</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 23 June 1897, 16 July 1902, July 1903.

<sup>100</sup> ‘Obituary: Mr Quintin Hogg’, *The Times*, Monday, 19 January 1903, p. 6.

<sup>101</sup> Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 283–4.

<sup>102</sup> ‘Inquests’, *The Times*, 21 January 1903.

<sup>103</sup> *George Cecil Ives Diaries*, No. 43, 7 June 1903, pp. 15–16, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas.

<sup>104</sup> Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 286.

<sup>105</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 26 April 1893.

<sup>106</sup> Stephen White, ‘A burial ahead of its time? The Crookenden burial case and the sanctioning of cremation in England and Wales’, *Mortality*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 171–90, 2002.

<sup>107</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1906.

Fig. 29

This image was included in the Polytechnic Magazine special issue commemorating Hogg's life and work. It symbolised his contributions via the two figures clutching books and sporting equipment, while also naming the two Polytechnic Institutes and emphasising his Christian convictions.



his daughter, ordinarily shied away from public recognition would have been comfortable with the levels of idolatory bestowed on him by Polytechnic members and friends is a more difficult question.<sup>108</sup>

From 1904, the Polytechnic began what would become a decades-long tradition of 'Founder's Day', which commemorated the life, work and Christian teachings of Quintin Hogg on the anniversary of his death. This event had an incredible longevity – beyond the lifespans of contemporaries who had worked alongside Hogg, and those of many of the members and students who

108 Wood, *The Polytechnic and Quintin Hogg*, p. 260.

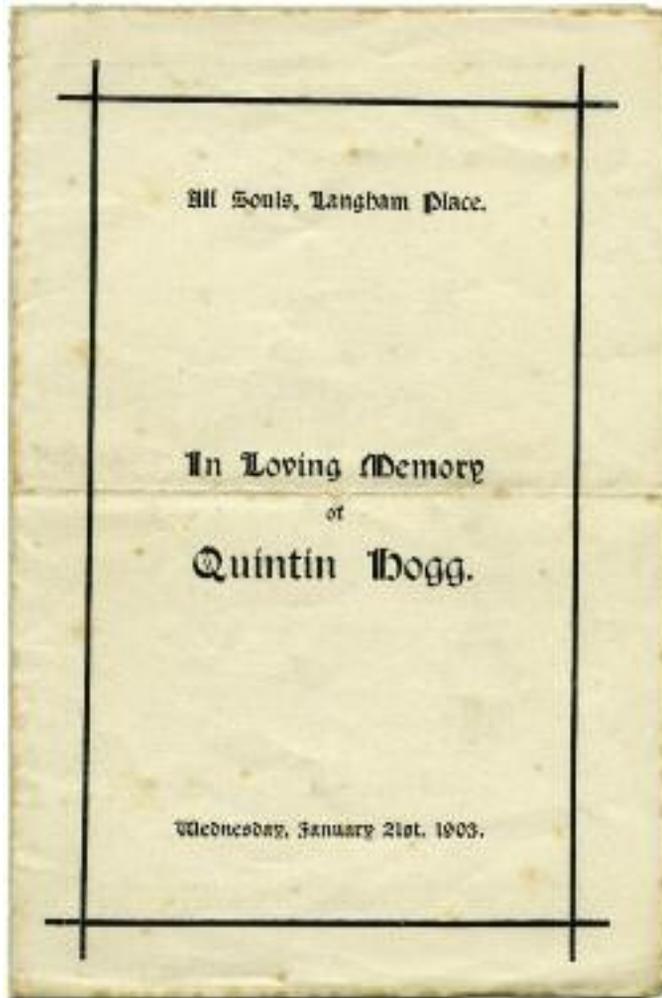


Fig. 30

*The demand for tickets of admission to the funeral service was so great that hundreds of applications were refused. The middle aisle of the church was filled with those standing and The Times newspaper noted that the coffin, placed at the foot of the Chancel steps, was hidden by the number of wreaths, crosses and floral tributes.*

had joined the Poly during his presidency. The annual event took the form of prayer and speeches from well-known Poly figures but also from ‘ordinary’ members, each sharing their memories of Hogg and his impact. While the often formulaic or ritualistic nature of these gatherings might have seemed almost hagiographical, they were clearly also a community’s means of remembering, a testimony to the esteem in which Hogg continued to be held and a recognition of his efforts in bringing the Polytechnic into being. In addition to Founder’s Day, the Poly also held annual ‘Family Gatherings’ in the autumn, seemingly building on the tradition of harvest festivals. These brought together the close-knit elements of the Polytechnic, including the families most associated with the institution. Hogg’s teachings and memory were a central part of the proceedings. It was only in 1970, when the institution became the Polytechnic of Central London, that Founder’s Day became a specific Members’ Christian Fellowship event and was renamed the ‘Poly Dedication Service and Quintin Hogg Anniversary’. This was one of multiple indicators of a real break with the Poly’s past.

Fig. 31

*The statue of Quintin Hogg, unveiled in 1906, was originally sited outside the Regent Street building but was relocated to nearby Portland Place in the 1930s.*



As well as commemorative services, the Poly also created several physical memorials to Hogg in the years after his death. The first of these was the sports ground after a three-year fundraising campaign was mounted. The previous sports ground, at Wimbledon, had been Hogg's own property and he had been forced to sell this not long before his death when the area was redeveloped for housing. As a result, he had lamented the lack of permanent sporting facilities for the Poly outside Regent Street, particularly given his philosophies about education and the importance of physical activity.<sup>109</sup> The Quintin Hogg Memorial Ground was accordingly opened in May 1906, a 40-acre sports ground in Chiswick, West London, that had been purchased through the generous support of friends, family and members of the public.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>109</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1903.

<sup>110</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1906; see also Clapson.



Fig. 32

*This postcard postmarked 12 December 1911 is an example of the memorabilia emphasising Hogg's life and work which was available to Polytechnic members.*

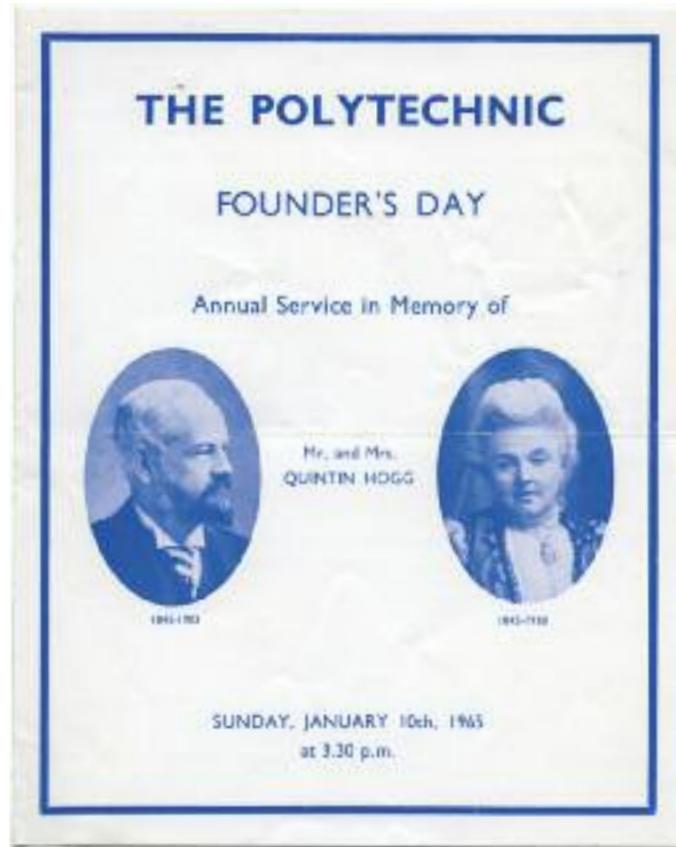
Later in 1906, a bronze statue of Hogg was unveiled in Langham Place, just north of the Polytechnic. The statue was designed by leading British sculptor Sir George Frampton RA, PRBS (1860–1928) and depicted Hogg reading from a book and instructing two boys, one of whom carried a football in the crook of his arm. This statue, paid for by members of the Polytechnic, continued the gendering of Hogg's philanthropic work while mirroring two of the main themes through which Hogg was commemorated in the *Polytechnic Magazine's* illustration immediately after his death: sport and formal instruction. When the foyer and entrance areas of Regent Street were refurbished just before the First World War, further textual memorials to Hogg were created.

#### LEGACY

The fact that Quintin Hogg was synonymous with the Poly during and after his lifetime is indicative of the esteem in which he was held and the legacy that he created. The continuation of Founder's Day, in particular, also meant that his memory lasted throughout and beyond the lifespan of his children, the next generation reinterpreting his memory and teachings. Hogg's wife and daughters played pivotal roles in the Young Women's Christian Institute (YWCI), as will be discussed further in this volume, and his sons Douglas, Ian and Malcolm, and his two grandsons both named Quintin (Quintin McGarel

Fig. 33

*The Polytechnic held a memorial service to Hogg on 25 January 1903. This became the Founder's Day Service, which was held on the third Sunday each year. The Service continued to be held until 1988.*



Hogg, Baron Hailsham, and Quintin Hoare, Elsie and Vincent Hoare's son), were also involved in the governance of the Polytechnic. The association of the Hogg family continues with the University of Westminster today.

Hogg's legacy lasted as long as it possibly could in a society that was becoming gradually more secular, and in which, more significantly, the expectations of men and women were becoming increasingly distanced from late Victorian ideals. By the later 1940s and 1950s, the original impulses of the Polytechnic were most clearly seen in terms of the Old Members' Associations (OMA) which, as their names suggest, comprised those who had been Poly members for some time. By the post-Second World War period, it was the OMAs that most closely resembled what the Poly had once promoted: sports clubs, social activities and charity work, along at least partially gender-segregated lines. The rest of this volume explores, on the one hand, more of the details of Hogg's work and ideals and, on the other, the ways in which Hogg's work was in turn reinforced, challenged or reinterpreted as the Poly gradually changed throughout the twentieth century.

## READING CIRCLE

Writing in *The Quintinian* in 1893, Quintin Hogg explained that

There is one deficiency in our organisation which I have long wished to supply. Literary taste is not to be expected to exist in any very large number of our members, but many must have some capacity for it which, if developed, would enrich their lives and greatly add both to their pleasure and usefulness.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently that year a reading circle was established led by Mr William Scott Durrant who shared Hogg's views on the benefits of reading. The idea of the Circle was to 'make a real attempt to thoroughly understand one book and its author, and, to some extent, his period, before passing on to another'.<sup>2</sup> The members were to choose books to

discuss which were both interesting and of some relevance to their lives.

The Circle was a free society which both men and women were allowed to join on the proviso that each member had his/her own copy of the book being discussed. With the commencement of each new text, there was an introductory lecture to provide context and meetings were held every Friday to discuss prominent subjects arising in the course of that week's reading. Guest lecturers were often brought in to give talks, including some lantern slide presentations. Quintin Hogg attended meetings and gave readings. The society was extremely popular and articles in the *Polytechnic Magazine* suggest that most meetings were full to capacity.

Although the Circle did not specialise in current reading material, it covered a wide range of literature from Carlyle's *French Revolution* and Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, to Thackeray's *English Humourists of the 18th Century*, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and*



Fig. 34

Fig. 35



*Cleopatra*, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, whose complete works had only just been published as one volume in 1894.

The Circle was meant to be pleasurable as well as intellectual so it regularly took its activities outside the meeting room to visit historical towns around the country such as Windsor and Eton, Rochester, Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon, often tying in with the current book they were reading.

Despite its popularity, the Circle was dissolved in 1911.

**MR WILLIAM SCOTT DURRANT**

Mr Durrant was a well-known figure at the Polytechnic and was highly respected by its staff and members. He accompanied many Polytechnic Tours to Europe as a guide, including trips to Central Europe, Norway, Normandy, the Mediterranean and the Tyrolese Alps. He was also involved with the French Society, Rambling Club, German Society, Mutual Improvement Society and continued Quintin Hogg's Sunday afternoon lecture series on Egypt, which Hogg died before completing. His career included work as a clerk at the India Office from 1879-97, an income-tax assessor between 1903-13 and in 1919 he became Deputy Accountant-General. In 1921 he was awarded a Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire. He was also clearly esteemed by Hogg, who, in 1896, after only three years of the Circle, presented him with two bronze busts of Cromwell and Carlyle.

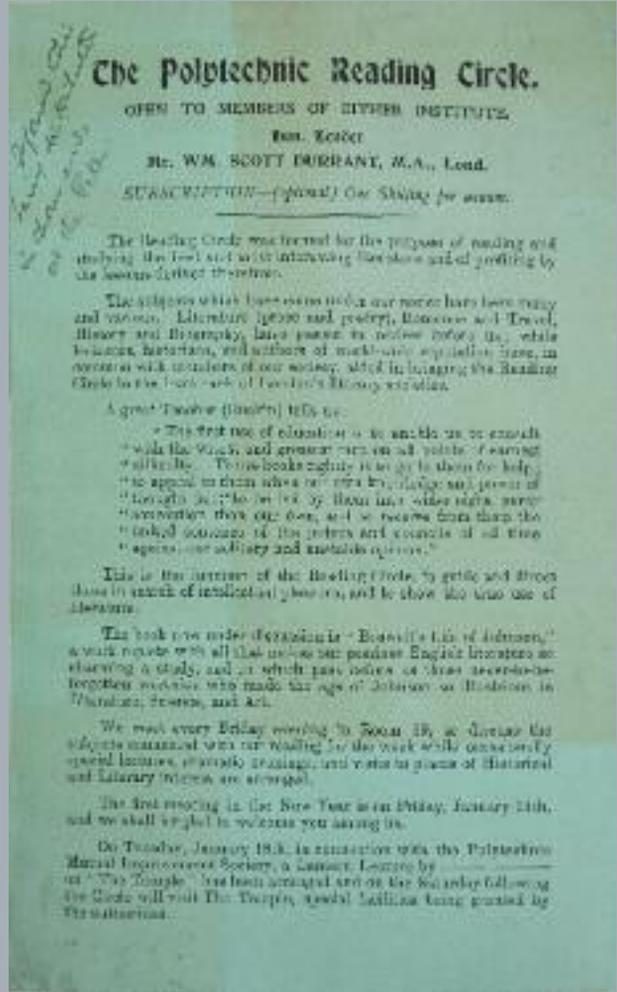


Fig. 36

- 1 *The Quintinian*, 4 October 1893.
- 2 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 18 October 1893.



Fig. 37

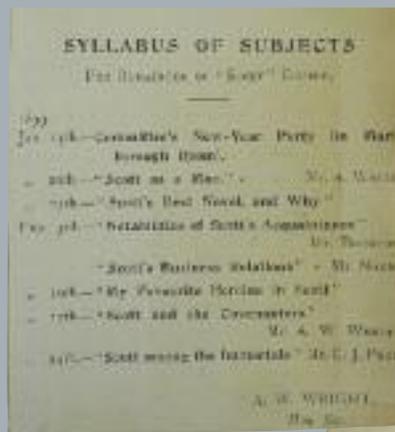


Fig. 38



Fig. 39



# *The Institute and the Polytechnic*

Michael Heller

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the origins, development and evolution of policy at the Polytechnic from 1882 to 1992. Since policy was created not only by the Polytechnic itself but also by local and national government bodies, discussion of its history will focus in part on the relation between the Polytechnic and these agencies. This invariably means a discussion of what these external groups thought the policy of the Polytechnic should be. Sometimes this clashed with that of the Polytechnic itself, whose vision of itself was strongly influenced by Quintin Hogg and his legacy. In terms of outline it will first consider the origins of Regent Street Polytechnic at the end of the nineteenth century. It will then go on to explore the relationship between the Polytechnic and its two main sources of external funding prior to the Second World War, namely the City Parochial Foundation and the London County Council. The chapter will then examine the relationship of the Polytechnic with central government after the Second World War. This period culminated in the creation of the Polytechnic of Central London following the reforms of the 1964–70 Harold Wilson government, which created polytechnics across the whole of Britain. The chapter will briefly discuss the evolution of policy at the Polytechnic of Central London from 1970 to 1992, and will finally outline the forces that led to the demise of the Polytechnic and the rise of the University of Westminster.

Policy in this chapter relates to the type of education the Polytechnic provided and the wider institution it believed itself to be. It further refers to the frameworks it established to guide its activities. It helps to explain how it saw itself, its institutional purpose and its goals. It thus helps determine what on the one hand was special and distinct about the Polytechnic, and on the other how it was similar to other higher educational institutions in London and the wider United Kingdom. This is important because over the course of the Poly's history its policy radically altered several times. In its early days it was principally an evening school for people in work. It was also a religious, sporting and social institution that saw education as just one of its functions. Over time, the educational activities of the Polytechnic took precedence over its other

functions, some of which gradually withered away entirely. In addition, the emphasis of this education changed from the part-time and intermediate to the full-time and advanced. The Poly thus shifted from an evening college to a higher educational day school on a par with most universities in Britain. This resulted in Regent Street Polytechnic (RSP) becoming The Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) in 1970 and The University of Westminster in 1992.

Within these developments a central theme of this chapter is the distinction between the Polytechnic Institute (hereafter called the Institute) and the Regent Street Polytechnic (RSP). What is unique about the history of the Polytechnic, when compared with similar higher education institutions, is that it comprised these two separate organisations within one body. As time progressed the boundaries between these institutions became more rigid. While Quintin Hogg envisaged the Polytechnic as a polymath institution that would develop the intellectual, physical, social and spiritual elements of its members, this vision was unable to maintain itself in the face of growth following the move to 309 Regent Street in 1882 and the sustained involvement of government agencies that played an increasingly important role within the Polytechnic. By 1909 a division appeared between RSP, a technical educational institution funded by the London County Council (LCC), and the Institute, a social and athletic association imbued with the spiritual and religious values of Hogg and his associates and financially supported by the City of London Parochial Foundation (CPF). The latter was an agency of the Charity Commissioners who administered charities on behalf of the Government. This organisational anomaly, a product of Hogg's legacy, would have huge ramifications for the history of policy at the Polytechnic, and indeed for the history of the institution as a whole.

#### THE FOUNDATION OF REGENT STREET POLYTECHNIC 1882–91

When Quintin Hogg purchased 309 Regent Street in 1882 he moved into the building his Young Men's Christian Institute (YMCI), the philanthropic enterprise that Hogg had previously established in Castle Street near Covent Garden. The YMCI's role was, in Hogg's words, to educate 'mind, body and spirit'. As its Director of Education stated to the LCC in 1908, 'The fundamental principles upon which the polytechnic is founded have for their ultimate realisation a four-fold development of its members: (a) education, (b) social, (c) physical and, (d) religious.'<sup>1</sup> The YMCI can be seen as part of the wider Victorian movement for 'rational recreation'.

This was an attempt to encourage Britain's poorer classes to pass their spare time in respectable pursuits, such as sport, religion, education and civil association, and away from the malign entertainments of alcohol, the public house, gambling and prostitution. With its focus on young people, the YMCI was akin to Victorian bodies such as the Boy Scouts, the YMCA and the Salvation Army. Its original role and policy was not purely educational but philanthropic.

<sup>1</sup> *London County Council Education Committee. The Polytechnics And Some Other Institutions. Preliminary Report by the Education Officer, 1909*, p. 25, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108f].

Fig. 40

Reflecting Hogg's holistic vision of education, the Polytechnic provided members with social rooms, including the Refreshment Room (which is shown here), library, gymnasium, swimming pool and admission to all entertainments.



The thousands of young men and women who came to Regent Street used it not just for its educational provision but also for its sporting, associational and religious facilities. As the LCC commented in 1909:

Historically it was and still continues to be a club for young men and women, and primarily its success is due in no small measure to its many sided manifestation of social life. It attracts by its organisation young men and women who otherwise would probably never enter any evening classes, and from its prestige in everything which concerns the development of manhood and womanhood exerts a tenacious influence on its members.<sup>2</sup>

How then did this Young Men's Christian Institute become Regent Street Polytechnic? Why was a private charity receiving the majority of its funding from government by 1900? Answers can be found in a much wider discussion that had begun 50 years earlier. This was the 'National Efficiency Debate'. By the mid-nineteenth century Britain felt that its industrial and global hegemony was being challenged by new powerful states such as the United States of America and Germany. As the decades progressed this sense of national vulnerability became ever keener.

One explanation for Britain's perceived demise lay in the failure of its education system to address the needs of an industrially advanced nation, something that had been admirably achieved in the US and Germany. While the latter had a comprehensive system of state-funded technical education, this was conspicuous by its absence in the United Kingdom. Where in Britain, critics asked, were Germany's *Technischen Hochschulen* or the technical colleges of

2 London County Council Education Committee. *The Polytechnics And Some Other Institutions. Preliminary Report by the Education Officer, 1909*, p. 25, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108f].



**Fig. 41**  
*Political debate about Britain's industrial and technological capabilities continued into the early twentieth century. The Polytechnic regularly displayed its contributions in this area at national exhibitions.*

the US, such as Boston's MIT. The need for technical education in Britain was further reinforced by two Royal Commissions on Technical Education, held 1872–75 and 1882–84, respectively. These reports demanded for the sake of national interest that there be more scientific and technical education in Britain.<sup>3</sup>

Reform gradually followed and funds became available. In 1878 the Livery Companies of London, under pressure from the government, established the City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI), one of the cornerstones of future technical education in Britain. The CGLI, using a portion of their ample endowments and wealth, created a system of technical education examinations and qualifications, and established the Engineering College in South Kensington (later to become part of Imperial College London) and the Finsbury Technical College. In 1883 the City of London Parochial Charities Act was passed. This provided that charities in the 107 parishes of the City of London, many of which had become socially moribund but contained large funds, should be administered by a corporate body called the London Parochial Charities (later called the City Parochial Foundation (CPF)), under the control of the Government's Charity Commission. The funds at the disposal of the CPF were spent on technical education, a large proportion dedicated to establishing a number of polytechnics in London based on Quintin Hogg's institution. Finally in 1889 and 1890 the Government passed two Technical Education Acts. The first empowered the newly created county councils (including the LCC) to provide technical education out of funding for the rates. The second, the 1890 Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, legislated that a large proportion of new duties on alcohol was made available to local county councils to be spent, if they wished, on technical education. In 1893 in London the LCC established the Technical Education Board (TEB). In 1904 the TEB was absorbed into the powerful Local Education Authority (LEA) of the LCC.<sup>4</sup>

It is in the context of this drive for the dissemination of technical education

- 3 M.D. Stephens and G.W. Roddick, 'Late Nineteenth Century Scientific and Technical Education. The Late Victorians and Scientific and Technical Education', *Annals of Science*, Vol. 28, No. 4, 1972, pp. 385–400.
- 4 *Report on Eight Years of Technical Education and Continuation Schools (mostly evening work) in Two Parts, 11 December, 1912*, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108g]; E.P. Henneck, 'Technological Education in England 1850–1926: the uses of a German model', *History of Education*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1990, pp. 299–331.

Fig. 42

*Members of the Polytechnic's early Governing Body included (top row) William Compton, 5th Marquis of Northampton (1851–1913); Frank A. Bevan (1840–1919), politician and President of the School Union; (middle row) Edward Maynard Denny (1813–1905), banker; (bottom row) John Gordon, 1st Marquis of Aberdeen (1847–1934), politician and founder of the London Playing Fields Society; and James Carnegie, a schoolfellow of Hogg at Eton.*



that one can understand the changes at the Polytechnic. Hogg's YMCI was precisely the type of organisation that appealed to the State and its affiliates in its quest to broaden technical education in Britain. It was voluntary, philanthropic, respectable and focused on, in part, the deserving poor. It specialised in the part-time, evening provision of technical education. In fact, Hogg's system was liked so much that it became the blueprint for a series of polytechnics that sprung up with assistance from the LCC, the CGLI and the CPF across London. Yet one must be careful in believing this to be purely fortuitous or because of the innate brilliance of Hogg's model. Hogg was part of a circle of individuals such as Sidney Webb (1859–1947), Lyon Playfair (1818–98) and Hubert Llewellyn Smith (1864–1945) who were instrumental in establishing technical education in London. Hogg was elected to the second London County Council in 1892, which contained both Webb and Llewellyn Smith. Webb chaired a special committee on technical education in 1892, which appointed Llewellyn Smith to investigate the topic in London, and led to a report that resulted in the establishment of the TEB in 1893. This body funded polytechnics and established the London Polytechnic Council in 1894.<sup>5</sup> Yet Hogg did not have it all his own way. Individuals like Webb and Llewellyn Smith, and bodies such as the LCC, were more interested in the educational side of Hogg's work than his spiritual endeavours or his belief in the four essential sides of man. It was here where divergences and friction began to appear in relation to the policy of the Polytechnic.

<sup>5</sup> Sean Glynn, 'The Establishment of Higher Education in London: A Survey', in Roderick Floud and Sean Glynn, *London Higher: The Establishment of Higher Education in London* (London: The Athlone Press, 1998). Other polytechnics created in the 1890s were Battersea Polytechnic, Borough Polytechnic, City Polytechnic, The Northern Polytechnic, The Northampton Institute, The South-Western Polytechnic and Woolwich Polytechnic.

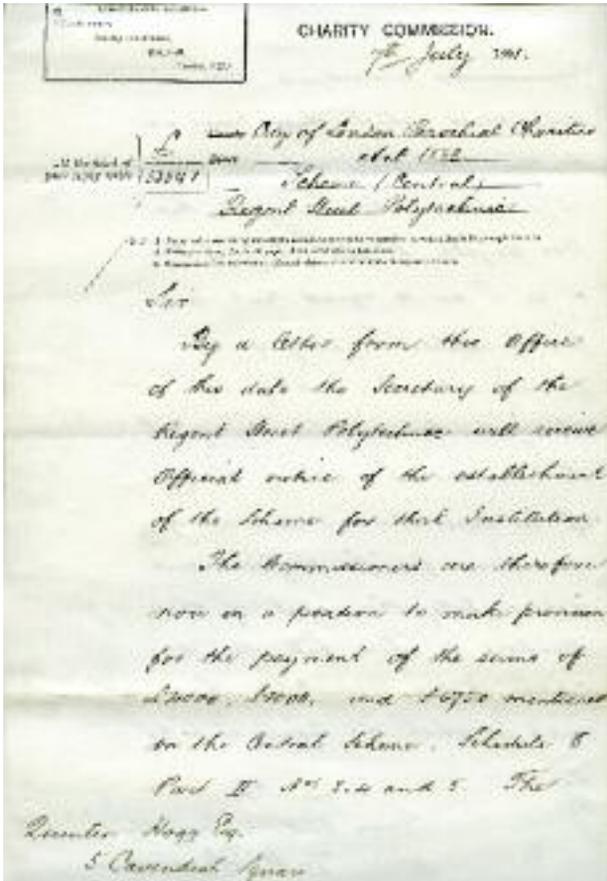


Figs. 43, 44  
*Early education at Hogg's new Polytechnic focused more on skills and trades that could be transferred into the workplace, such as carriage building and technical drawing, rather than academic learning.*



On 23 June 1891, Her Majesty Queen Victoria approved *The Scheme of Administration for The Regent Street Polytechnic Institute*. This legally binding document was the constitution of the Polytechnic until 1970. It registered and established the Institute as a charity under the domain of the Charity Commissioners.

It stated the functions and purposes of the Polytechnic, its governance and its rules and regulations. Effectively the *Scheme of Administration* was an agree-



Commissioners understand the  
expenditure which these sums are  
to cover has been met by your-  
self and that the money is there-  
fore payable to you. And of this  
as so I am to request that a  
formal application may in con-  
formity with the heading of  
Schedule 2 be addressed by you to  
the Commissioners, stating the fact  
of the expenditure and making  
application for the payment and  
stating fully the names of the  
Bankers to whom and the dis-  
cription of the account to the  
credit of which the money is to be  
paid.

I am, Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
D. R. Fearon

Figs. 45, 46

*This letter from the Charity Commission confirms the establishment of a Scheme of Administration for the Polytechnic, as well as the repayment to Quintin Hogg of money for Polytechnic expenses that had been covered by him personally.*

ment between the Charity Commission and the Polytechnic, which legally laid out how the latter would be governed and what it could do in return for funding from the former. This was a clear statement of policy. The Institute was now controlled by a group of 15 governors who were trustees but were allowed no personal stake in it. One of these was Hogg, three were appointed by the CPF, one came from the London County Council and nine were appointed by the Polytechnic. In 1911 the LCC increased its representation to five reflecting its growing influence on the educational side of the Polytechnic. All members, except Hogg, held office for six years. The Scheme stated that: 'The object of this Institution is the promotion of the industrial skill, general knowledge, health and well-being of young men and women belonging to the poorer classes.'<sup>6</sup> Instruction was defined as the general principles and rules relating to any handicraft, trade or business. Classes were also to be held, as a rule, in the evening at a time most suitable to those in work. Guidelines for social clubs, the rights of members and general facilities such as a library and a refreshment room, were also given.

The most important element of the *Scheme* is that it marked the ending of Quintin Hogg's personal power over the Polytechnic. The latter was transformed from a private fiefdom into a charity that was controlled by rules and regulations, overseen by the Charity Commission and the State. To paraphrase

<sup>6</sup> *Scheme of Administration for Regent Street Polytechnic Institute*, 23 June 1891, p. 11, UWA RSP/2/1 [P49b].



Fig. 47

*In July 1887 the members of the Council were given badges to wear so that they could be identified more easily by other members of the Institute. Hogg described it as a 'useful and important body'.*

the German sociologist Max Weber, charismatic, personal power had been converted into bureaucratic, legal authority.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the religious fervour of the former YMCI, now rebranded as the Institute, had gone. There was no mention of religion in the document and indeed religious and political organisations (the Sectarian Ban) were outlawed at the Polytechnic. In terms of mission, education was very much at the forefront with social activities and sport trailing some way behind.

Yet the *Scheme of Administration* did not completely dictate policy for the Polytechnic. Quintin Hogg still played a major role. His vision for the Polytechnic did not disappear in 1891 or even following his death in 1903 when it was perpetuated for 40 years by his close associate J.E.K. Studd. The LCC, however, had a different view. It saw the Polytechnic as a technical educational institution with its clubs and sport being something of a hindrance. Following the creation of its Local Education Authority (LEA) in 1904, the Polytechnic was viewed as merely one of many suppliers of technical education in a chaotic and overlapping system in London that needed consolidation.<sup>8</sup> In a report in 1909 the LCC stated that it was no longer willing to fund the social and recreational sides of the polytechnics. As a consequence, the CPF agreed that it would fund this area, with the LCC focusing on the educational work. The Polytechnic now had to prepare annually two sets of accounts, one showing its educational work, the other its social and recreational functions. On the basis of this, two different grant applications had to be made to the LCC and the CPF.<sup>9</sup> By the interwar period two competing visions and bodies had emerged at Regent Street. The first was the Polytechnic Institute (the Institute) which was essentially a social and athletics club. This was supported by the CPF and the Charity Commission. The second was Regent Street Polytechnic (RSP) a technical college funded by the LCC. The title 'the Polytechnic' is

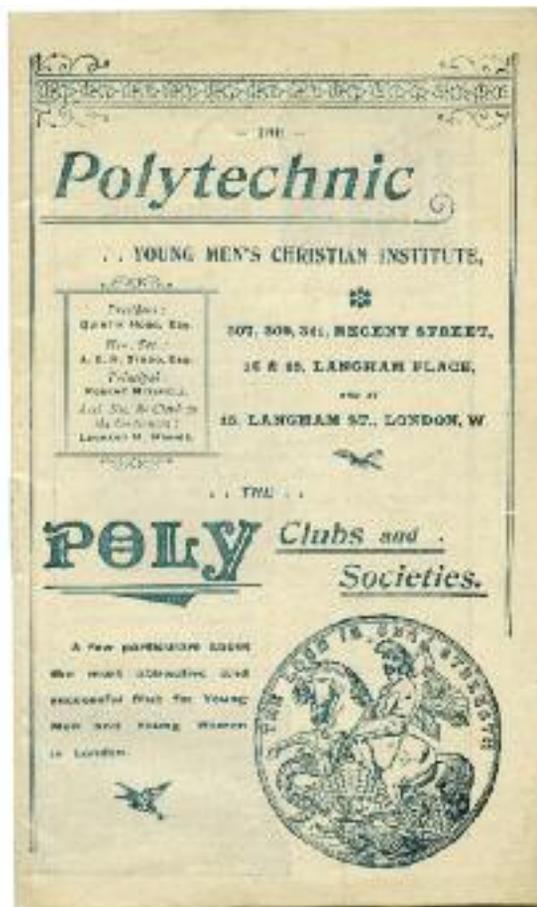
7 Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (eds.), *Max Weber, Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), Chapter 3.

8 *Report on Eight years of Technical Education*, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108f].

9 *City Parochial Foundation Report on Policy Relating to Grants, 1935*, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/7].

Fig. 48

This lavishly illustrated booklet was produced to promote the social and sporting side of the Polytechnic Institute. The advantages for members listed include cheap travel, insurance, a Labour Bureau, and a savings bank personally guaranteed by Mr Quintin Hogg.



used to describe the overarching organisation. The students and members of the Polytechnic had become two distinct groups funded by two different organisations. The consequence was a schism in policy and an organisation that suffered from multiple personality disorder. To understand how this partially resolved itself one must first examine the relationship between the Institute and the CPF.

#### THE INSTITUTE AND THE CITY PAROCHIAL FOUNDATION 1890–1939

The CPF gave the Institute a capital grant of £11,750 in 1891, provided it with a fixed grant of £3,500 a year, and furnished it with supplementary grants that provided extra funds. By the 1930s it was giving the Institute £7,500 a year. It also lent the Polytechnic large sums of money, which enabled it to expand and modernise. The CPF also paid the examination fees of Polytechnic students from 1895 and supported a staff pension scheme from 1904. Both of these were taken over by the LCC in 1931 and 1929, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Beyond this there is little indication that the CPF concerned itself with the running of the Polytechnic. Control and regulation of finance was a sufficient form of power. In

10 RSP Report City Parochial Foundation: Future Policy as to Grants, 1937 and City Parochial Foundation Report on Policy Relating to Grants, 1935, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/7].

this respect, the CPF acted as an auditor. It policed and inspected the Institute to ensure that it was meeting its duties according to the *Scheme of Administration* and ensured financial rigour and discipline.

A series of correspondence between Hogg and the Charity Commission in the 1890s indicate that the relationship was not always harmonious.<sup>11</sup> While the Commission was happy to provide Hogg with funds to expand the Institute, it was concerned about his financial proximity to it. To some extent Hogg still behaved as if he owned the Polytechnic, mixing his own private wealth with its funds. The Charity Commission, on the other hand, was keen to keep the two firmly distinct. In July 1890 it insisted that Hogg's own residence on 5 Cavendish Square, which was physically attached to 309 Regent Street, be severed legally from the Institute. This was done to prevent any 'embarrassing claims' for repairs and other obligations being made by the former on the latter.<sup>12</sup> More serious was a request by Hogg in 1894 for a loan for the sum of £20,000. The Polytechnic was technically bankrupt, having overspent by £23,500. It had already dipped into £5,000 of its £25,000 endowment fund, which it had no authority to do. Such an act, under the *Scheme of Administration*, required the permission of the Charity Commission.<sup>13</sup>

Further correspondence indicates that the Commission was not happy with the funds in which the endowment had been invested. Some of these bonds were in companies and funds connected with Hogg and other members of the Board of Governors and represented a clear conflict of interest. Perhaps even more serious was the fact that of the £23,500 debt, £5,000 was owed to Hogg himself. Hogg, it would seem, was lending money to himself on behalf of the Polytechnic and then asking the Charity Commission to pay this back. The

Fig. 49  
The last photograph of the Polytechnic Institute Council to include Quintin Hogg, taken only a few months before his death.



Fig. 50

In 1899 Book-keeping was taught at the Polytechnic from 6.30pm–9.30pm, three nights a week.



matter was resolved by Hogg eventually agreeing to forego this personal debt, the Institute selling some of its endowment stock and taking a loan of £15,000 from the CPF.<sup>14</sup> The Charity Commission had made it clear that it was not Hogg's personal banker for the Polytechnic and that the *Scheme of Administration* had to be respected.

By the interwar period signs of strain increased in the relationship between the Polytechnic and the CPF. The problem was the social class of the members of Institute. The *Scheme of Administration* had clearly stated that the Polytechnic was intended for the benefit of 'the poorer classes'. Most of its members, however, were clerical workers and shop assistants, many working in the West End of London. This lower-middle-class group could hardly be described as being in need of charity.

The situation was compounded by a clause in the CPF's guidelines of 1891 that stated:

That if it shall appear to the Central Governing Body at any time that any such Institution is not conducting in conformity with the Schemes regulating the same or that, in conducting the same due regard is not had to the interests of the Poorer Classes, it shall be their duty to notify the same to the Commissioners, who shall thereupon enquire into the matter and may, if they see fit, direct the said payment to be suspended or reduced.<sup>15</sup>

This led in 1932 to an investigation by the CPF into the social composition of all of London's polytechnics. This situation was precarious. If it were demonstrated that the membership of these bodies were no longer poor, their funding could end. In response to the investigation, the Institute argued that it had

11 Correspondence between the Charity Commission and Regent Street Polytechnic, 1888–1935, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST45].

12 Letter from G.H. Gauntlett, Charity Commission to Messrs Clarke, Rawlins & Co., 7 July 1890, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST45/15/9].

13 Letter from G.H. Gauntlett, Charity Commission to The Secretary, Regent Street Polytechnic Institute, 1 August 1894, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST45/15/14].

14 Letter from Quintin Hogg to the Secretary, Charity Commission, 13 November 1894, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST45/15/16].

15 *City Parochial Foundation Report on Policy Relating to Grants*, 1935, p. 18, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/15].



Fig. 51

*The new Library was opened in February 1930 by Mr Gater, Education Officer of the London County Council. At the ceremony J.E.K. Studd said that the Governors had in mind the policy that the Library should not only be useful but attractive too.*

never departed from the principles upon which it was founded. It still catered to the poorer classes. While it was true that a large part of its education was of a higher grade, this was because since 1891 junior technical and secondary schools had been established by the LCC. With scholarships this had enabled poorer students to attend the Polytechnic to obtain a professional qualification or degree. As a Memorandum to the Governors on the subject commented:

The idea that, because a student is working for a professional qualification or degree, he does not belong to the 'poorer classes' is quite unsound. The whole idea of modern educational policy is to enable poorer students to attain as high a standard as they can, and it is Institutes such as The Polytechnic which help them do so.<sup>16</sup>

The Polytechnic passed the investigation of 1932. The CPF had defined members of the 'poorer classes' as individuals whose main source of education was elementary school and whose parents earned £250 or lower a year. According to the results of the study published in 1933, 50.7 per cent of its students at the Regent Street Polytechnic had only attended elementary school and 66 per cent came from households earning under £250 a year. The results while perhaps satisfactory were hardly convincing. Compared with other polytechnics, Regent Street's students were wealthier and the study had not examined the members of the Institute.<sup>17</sup>

In 1935 the CPF once more began to question its relationship with London's

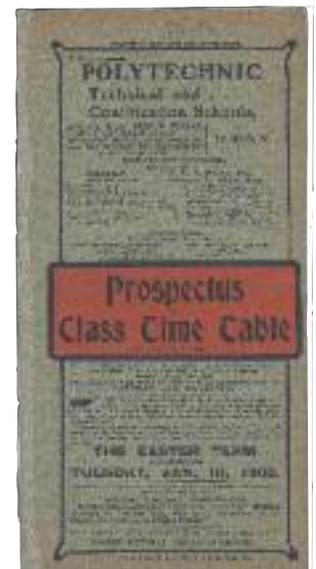


Fig. 52

*1905 Polytechnic Prospectus, noting that 'all classes are open to the public irrespective of age or sex'.*

16 Memorandum for the information of the Governors 'Polytechnics and the Poorer Classes', 16 June 1932, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST72].

17 City Parochial Foundation Report *Polytechnics and the Poorer Classes*, 1933, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST72].

Fig. 53

*The Motor Body classes were popular, due to the presence of many automobile retailers on Regent Street in the 1920s and 1930s.*



polytechnics. This time it focused on the 1921 Education Act, which stated that local education authorities could pay for sporting and recreational facilities for students in higher education colleges and institutes. Based on the principle that the Charity Commission should not pay for schemes that could be funded out of taxes and local rates, the CPF announced that it would be cutting supplementary grants to polytechnics. It wished to spend the money on more deserving areas such as the provision of recreational facilities on new council housing estates that were being built around London. The cuts were aimed to begin in 1938.<sup>18</sup>

The Polytechnic replied with protest and alarm. In 1937 a Memorandum was sent to the CPF in an attempt to defend its grants. The document provides a clear declaration of the policy of the Polytechnic and its firm belief that its work fulfilled the goals and principles laid out in 1891:

Throughout its career the Polytechnic has adhered to its original policy and aims – to provide educational, social and athletic facilities of the best kind possible for the poorer classes of London at the lowest possible fees. While the educational side is very large and important ... the institute has never been purely educational in the sense that all entrants have been obliged to attend classes. The Polytechnic has always kept an open door for all comers and while due insistence is made at all times on the necessity of taking advantage of the full activities, there are over 6,000 young men and women enrolled who have joined the Institute primarily for social and athletic

18 Letter from Clerk of the Trustees of the London Parochial Charities to the Governors of the Polytechnic containing the memorandum *London Parochial Charities New Policy as to Grants*, 15 July 1935, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST72].

facilities ... To many of these members the Polytechnic is much more than an attractive rendezvous – it is the place in which they receive their training from youth to manhood – it is their ‘alma mater’ and all their interest and friendships outside their work are centred in the Polytechnic.<sup>19</sup>

The Memorandum stated that the money the CPF provided for this support was vital. Without this it would be unable to supply the sporting and social facilities to the working young men and women of the West End and the City. The CPF grants were also fundamental in maintaining the independence of the Polytechnic, which safeguarded its unique character. As it wrote:

While the Polytechnic undertakes a large and important volume of education work of the Metropolis, it is not merely a unit in the educational system. It has a virile life of its own governed under a Charity Scheme and conducted solely by its own Governors and Members – unfettered by state or municipal regulations.<sup>20</sup>

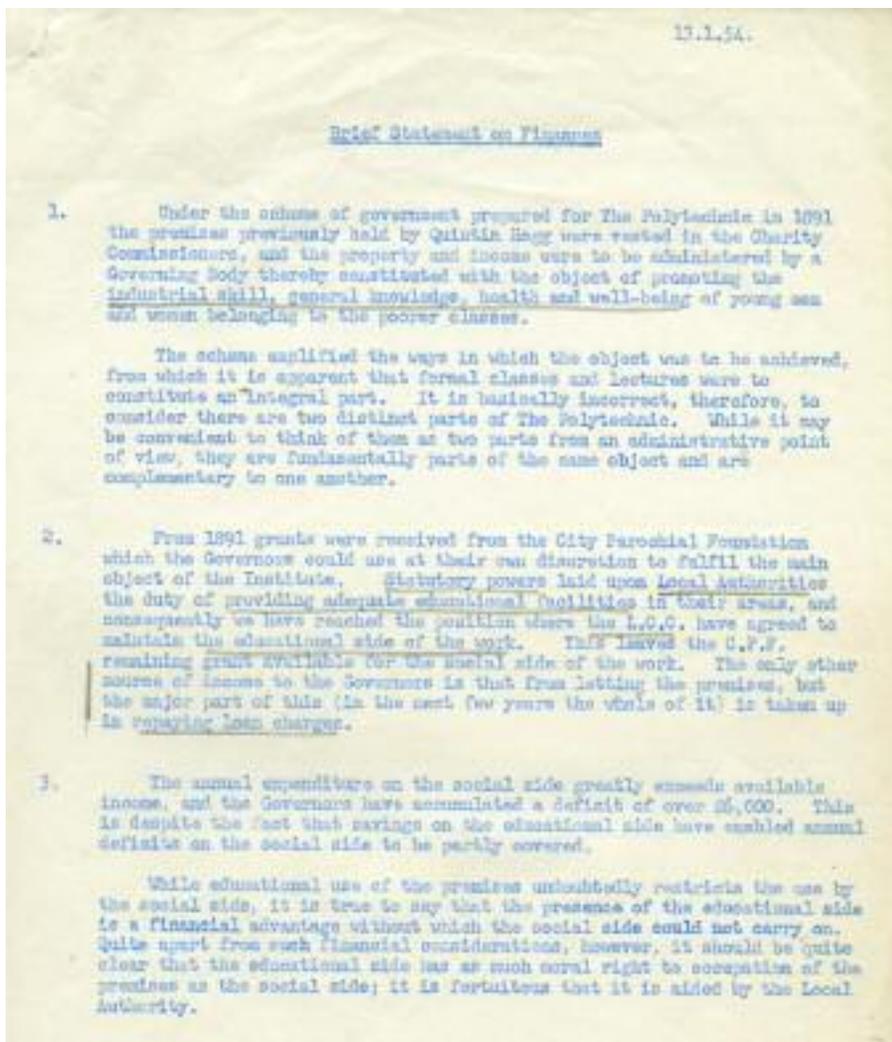
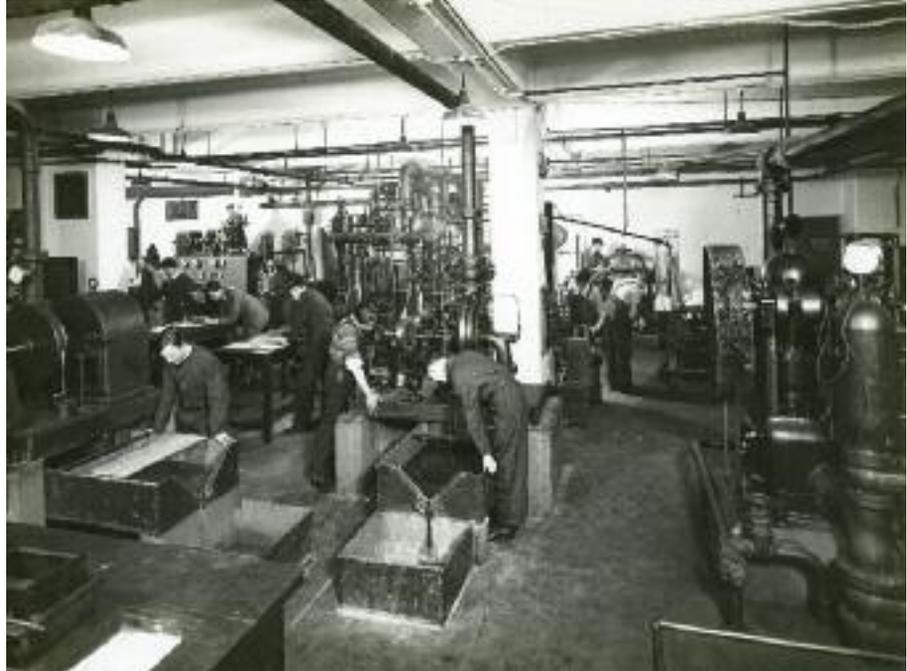


Fig. 54  
*The 1954 dispute with the City Parochial Foundation threatened Hogg's original vision of the Polytechnic as having both social and educational dimensions.*

19 *City Parochial Foundation: Report on Policy Relating to Grants, 1937*, p. 6, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/14].

20 *City Parochial Foundation: Report on Policy Relating to Grants, 1937*, p. 17, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/14].

Fig. 55  
*The Electrical Machine  
 Laboratory in the basement of  
 309 Regent Street served the needs  
 of 80 day students and 800  
 evening students in the School of  
 Engineering.*



Such exhortations were unfortunately insufficient. Despite a meeting of J.E.K. Studd and other senior members of the Polytechnic with the CPF in September 1937, it was announced the following year that the supplementary grants would be phased out over a period of five years, beginning in 1943.

This was, however, only round one in the increasingly fractious relationship between the CPF and London's polytechnics. In November 1954 the CPF went to court to seek sanction for ceasing its statutory grants to the polytechnics and other colleges in London. Regent Street Polytechnic and Morley College were co-defendants.<sup>21</sup>

The Foundation claimed that the Education Act of 1944 had rendered out of date the London colleges' entitlements to income from the charity funds it administered. The Act laid down that it was the duty of every local education authority to provide social, sporting and recreational facilities for further and higher education. This was clearly different from the Act of 1921, which had given LEAs permission to provide such facilities, but had not insisted on them doing so. The judge decided at the beginning of the hearing to adjourn the open court to determine whether or not he had the jurisdiction to decide on the matter. In the event, he decided that he had no legal authority and ruled that the Charity Commission was the body to make such a decision. Faced with the glare of publicity and embarrassed that one of its departments had legally failed to absolve itself of one of its duties, the Commission reluctantly decided in 1955 in favour of the polytechnics.<sup>22</sup>

Round three was not long in coming. Following the CPF's embarrassing set-back, the 1960 Charities Act was passed. This provided the Charity Commissioners with further powers to alter the application of its charitable property. Armed with this, in June 1961, the CPF informed the polytechnics

21 Morley College is an adult education college, founded in 1889 as a charitable institute, on the South Bank in the Waterloo district of London.

22 *Action Concerning the City Parochial Foundation Grants*, 1955, Details of Statistics for Bartlett & Gluckstein: CPF Grants, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/13].

in London in June 1961 that it was applying to the Charity Commission to withdraw its grants. As in 1954–55 the Regent Street Polytechnic assembled an alliance of London's polytechnics and colleges to fight the CPF and protect their statutory grants. The alliance included Regent Street, Borough, Northern and North Western Polytechnics and Morley College. Battersea College of Technology, Chelsea College of Science and Technology, City of London College and Northampton College of Technology did not take part in legal action (as they did in 1954–55) but gave their support and voiced opposition to the Charity Commissioners. This time, however, there was no opportunity to go to court as the Charity Commission now had the final say on the matter.<sup>23</sup> On 27 September 1961, the Charity Commission informed the polytechnics' solicitor that it had decided in favour of the CPF and that its statutory grants would now be diverted to educational work in the Metropolis that was outside the scope of London Education Authority. The Commission gave two principal reasons for its decision. The first was that under the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937 and the Education Act 1944, local authorities now had powers and obligations to establish sporting and recreational facilities. The second was that in their view the nature of the education and training of the polytechnics had radically changed since their origins in the 1890s. Whereas originally they had been institutes that served the needs of their individual districts, they now were specialised units in a system of technical education provision that served not just London but also the nation. On this basis, their original purpose of providing educational, social and athletic facilities for the poorer classes of London was no longer tenable.<sup>24</sup> In 1962 the Commission refused a request from the polytechnics for a formal hearing on the matter. By 1963 the CPF had effectively severed its relationship with the Institute. Its fixed grants had been terminated and the Institute was forced to apply to the LCC for help.

With the termination of grants and financial support from the CPF, a chapter had ended in the history of the Polytechnic. While the Institute staggered on for four more decades, it was a body that was starved of funds and increasingly shorn of younger members. The *Polytechnic Student Handbook* of 1966–67, for example, commented, '... the average age of the Institute membership is older than that of the student body and is getting older all the time because the Institute is failing to attract sufficient numbers of younger people from the student body or wider public'.<sup>25</sup> Quintin Hogg's vision had ended. The Polytechnic had ceased to be a charitable institution designed to help the poor. While this dream had been seriously weakened in 1911 as a result of the bifurcation of educational and recreational provision between the LCC and the CPF, the departure of the latter marked its final demise. In some respects it was a victim of the educational success of Regent Street Polytechnic. In others, it was a casualty of an overbearing state and centralist ideology that since 1945 had begun to monopolise social and welfare provision and was not prepared to brook any rivals in either the private or charitable sectors. Yet just as one department of the State in the 1960s left, another – the Department for Education

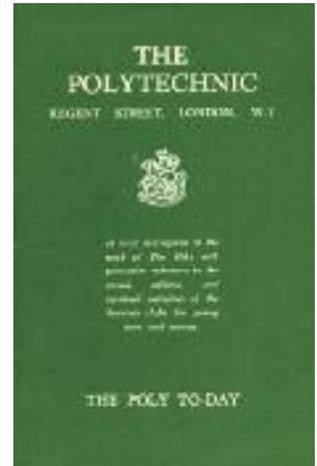


Fig. 56

*The Polytechnic's social, athletics and spiritual activities were advertised separately to the educational side, and were initially aimed at those aged 16–26, though this changed over time.*

- 23 City Parochial Documents – Legal Case, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/7].
- 24 Letter from Charity Commission to Messrs. Bartlett and Gluckstein, 27 September 1961, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/13].
- 25 *GEN: The Polytechnic Students Union Handbook and Diary 1966–1967*, p. 14, UWA RSP/8/2 [P134].



Fig. 57

*Gen was produced by the Students' Union as a guide to Polytechnic life, including both the traditional sports clubs of the Athletics Union and the newer student societies and committees.*

and Science – fortuitously arrived, brimming with visions of technological progress and the populist expansion of higher education. Before this can be discussed, however, the history of educational policy under the wardship of the LCC between 1900 and 1950 needs to be briefly explored.

#### THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY AT REGENT STREET POLYTECHNIC, 1900–50

The LCC was able to formulate educational policy at the Polytechnic through its funding. Initially this was based on a basic annual £1,000 grant, partial payment of teaching staff salaries and subsidies for each student ranging from 1d to 6d per student per hour depending on subject and grade. Assistance was also given for equipment and classrooms. In 1910 a new system of funding was introduced. Polytechnics had to send the LCC an annual report showing the work done, an account of their expenditure, and a statement showing estimated receipts and expenditure for the next year with an explanatory memorandum. Based on this the LCC provided a grant that made up the annual forecasted deficit in the forecasted budget. While this system sounded relatively benign, it actually signified a seismic shift in power towards the Council. The LCC could now strike out or reduce any item in the budget of a polytechnic that did not meet with its approval. All work now had to be justified, whereas previously it only had to be claimed for.<sup>26</sup>

Power over educational policy, however, did not reside completely with the LCC. Regent Street Polytechnic charged student fees for its classes, received income from its buildings and activities such as its travel services, and of course received grants from the CPF until 1963. Following 1945, national government became increasingly involved in technical education. It was therefore not totally financially dependent on the Council. In addition, both bodies agreed on the need to develop and enhance technical education within London. In reality the relationship was more of a partnership, with the Regent Street Polytechnic being relatively free to deliver its teaching and develop its subjects and courses while the LCC elaborated broad strategic policy such as the focus of colleges in terms of students and level of teaching. It concentrated on the integration of colleges into a coherent system in London. An example of this is its report on the work of polytechnics in London prepared by the Polytechnic and Evening Schools Sub-Committee of the LCC in 1909.<sup>27</sup> While supportive of the educational work of the polytechnics, the report was concerned at the growth of day schools that taught degree courses in these bodies. It advised that these should be left to universities with polytechnic day schools focusing instead on teaching subjects at intermediate level to those unable to afford the fees of universities. They were to act as feeders to these more prestigious institutions, channelling to them promising students who could receive grants from the LCC. Polytechnics were to provide a twofold function; the promotion of technical and industrial skills among working people (principally

<sup>26</sup> *City Parochial Foundation Report on Policy Relating to Grants, 1935, Appendix VI, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST80/7].*

<sup>27</sup> *London County Council Education Committee. The Polytechnics And Some Other Institutions. Preliminary Report by the Education Officer, 1909, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108f].*

through evening classes) and the preparation of those who showed promise and talent for a higher level instruction at the colleges of the University of London. What was emerging was a tri-partite system of basic, intermediate and advanced technical colleges. As the report noted:

... the entire organised system would combine, first a number of institutes adapted to the ordinary workman; secondly, a higher grade of instruction suited to the more skilful and more advanced pupils; and thirdly, a provision for instruction in the highest levels of applied science, and for opportunities of pursuing researches and experiments by which the industrial arts may be advanced and perfected.<sup>28</sup>

The 1909 Report also highlighted the need to harmonise teaching between the assisted polytechnics and its own technical institutions and evening schools. Polytechnics were to specialise in advanced subjects with lower level work being moved to LCC schools.<sup>29</sup> This policy developed in the interwar period with the LCC encouraging polytechnics to specialise in one professional or related area.<sup>30</sup> While Regent Street Polytechnic built up a reputation in engineering, architecture and the building trades, and taught these at an advanced level, its sheer size precluded such specialisation. Thousands of its students studied a wide array of subjects, mostly at intermediate and basic levels, particularly in its evening schools. Whereas smaller polytechnics were able to focus more on one area, Regent Street Polytechnic was unable to do this because of the large number of students that it taught. The Polytechnic was unable consequently to obtain the cherished College of Advanced Technology (CAT) status, introduced by the Government in the late 1950s, which was obtained in London by other polytechnics who had focused more on providing advanced higher education.<sup>31</sup>



28 *LCC Education Committee: Preliminary Report*, 1909, p. 3, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108f].

29 *LCC Education Committee: Preliminary Report*, 1909, p. 3, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108f].

30 *London County Council Education Act, 1918: Scheme of the Local Education Authority*, 1920, p. 33, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108k].

31 Examples in London include Battersea Polytechnic Institute, which became the University of Surrey in 1966, and Acton Technical College, which became Brunel University in the same year.



Figs. 58, 59  
*Electrical engineering (opposite) and mechanical engineering (above) were taught at the Polytechnic from at least 1882 and remained popular throughout the twentieth century. Although all classes were open to both sexes, the Engineering School was male-dominated until well after the Second World War. Students could work towards National Certificates, Diplomas or a University of London degree.*

By 1960 a national structure of four types of technical colleges existed in Britain. At the top were the CATs that focused on advanced work delivered through full-time day and sandwich courses. Then came Regional Colleges, which provided a substantial amount of advanced work provided in full, sandwich and part-time courses, but also provided intermediate education taught both in full and part-time classes. These included most of the London polytechnics. Next came Area Colleges, which provided intermediary, part-time courses at Ordinary National Certificate and equivalent level, and finally there were the local colleges that were intended mainly for younger people under the age of 18. As a Regional College, Regent Street Polytechnic was in the rather ambiguous position of being a college whose teaching was too advanced to be an Area College but insufficient to be a CAT. This situation was soon resolved, however, by the decision of Harold Wilson's Government to embark on a radical expansion of higher education across Britain.<sup>32</sup>

#### THE EMERGENCE OF THE UK POLYTECHNICS, 1945–70

Until 1945 central government had little to do with technical education. After the Second World War, Whitehall was actively engaged with its development. Technical education had grown in stature due to several factors such as the role of science and technology in winning the war, the growth of the Welfare

<sup>32</sup> *Review of the London Scheme of Further Education 1949*, 1 March 1961, pp. 1–2, UWA RSP/2/4 [P1080].

State and central planning by government, the increased importance of science and technology to the economy and Britain's global standing. In 1947, nine Regional Advisory Councils (RAC) were established to assist Whitehall in the planning and development of technical education in the UK. They were made up of educational and industrial interests, and were to have a powerful influence on the development of technical education in postwar Britain.<sup>33</sup> In 1952 the Government introduced a special 75 per cent grant to foster the development of advanced work in technical colleges in England and Wales.<sup>34</sup> Regent Street Polytechnic was one of the 24 colleges to receive this grant. Thereafter educational policy at the Polytechnic, encouraged by central government and now by the LCC, focused on the development of advanced courses. In 1956 the government announced a huge increase in spending on advanced technological education in England and Wales over five years outside of the university sector. The sum of £70 million was to be spent on doubling the number of students studying advanced courses (degrees and Higher National Diplomas) at technical colleges and also doubling the numbers released by employers for part-time courses during the day. A new class of College of Advanced Technology was announced, which would receive the bulk of this new money in order to develop and foster advanced studies.<sup>35</sup>

The extent of central government and the RACs' influence can be seen in the minutes of the advisory committee for the College of Engineering and Science held at Regent Street Polytechnic on 7 February 1964. Here it was reported that the Ministry of Education had been unable to approve a Technical Diploma (Dip. Tech.) course in Mechanical Engineering, which the Polytechnic had hoped to launch in September 1964. This was due to a RAC review which showed that existing courses in the region were under-enrolled. As a result, the Ministry was not prepared to approve additional courses. In the same meeting it was also announced that the Polytechnic's School of Photography, with the assistance of the photography industry, was to launch a full-time three-year Polytechnic Diploma course in Photographic Technology. It was commented that the LCC, the RAC and the Ministry of Education had all been very helpful in the development of the course.<sup>36</sup> These minutes clearly disclose the extent of involvement of both local and national government in the development of educational policy at the Polytechnic. This was micro-management by a state premised on central planning and would last until Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government reforms of the 1980s. The Department for Education and Science (DES), for example, formed in 1964 from the merger of the Ministries of Education and of Science, played an active part in the government's manpower planning work. It was a co-member of the Committee on Manpower Resources for Science and Technology with the Ministry of Technology, and was responsible for ensuring that the requisite number of scientists, engineers and technicians were trained at Britain's universities and technical colleges for Britain's planned economy.<sup>37</sup> Under these conditions Regent Street Polytechnic became, on one level, simply a cog in a vast, Kafkaesque machine of central governmental planning and strategic development.

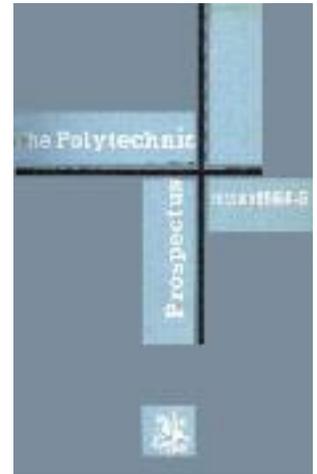


Fig. 60

*The design and vivid colours were typical of polytechnic and student publications in the mid to late 1960s.*

33 *Technical Education, Parliamentary Report for the Ministry of Education* (London: HMSO, 1956), pp. 10–11, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108n].

34 *Technical Education, Parliamentary Report*, p. 16, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108n].

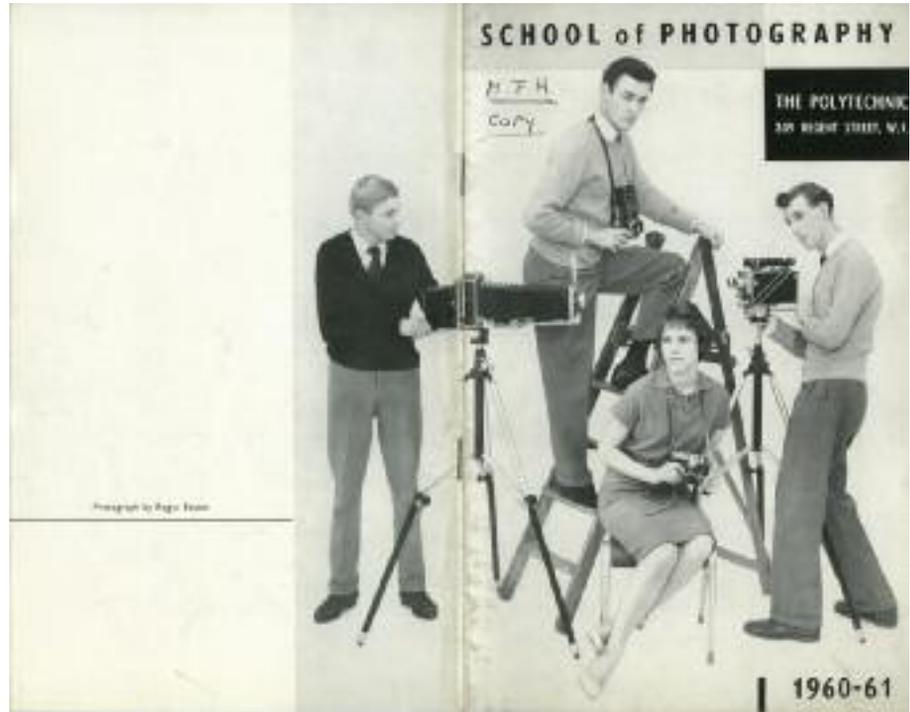
35 *Technical Education Parliamentary Report*, UWA RSP/2/4 [P108n].

36 *Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Committee for the College of Engineering and Science*, 7 February 1964, UWA RSP/1 [ST9].

37 *Memorandum – University Development 1960–66*, p. 4, TNA ED188/19.

Fig. 61

In 1960 the Regent Street Polytechnic established the first full-time three-year diploma in Photography, with the world's first BSc Degree in Photography following in 1966.



The Report of the Committee on Higher Education, commonly known as the Robbins Report, of 1963, led to a massive expansion in universities and higher education in Britain. The report recommended the creation of new universities, the awarding of university status to CATs and a large increase in the number of students in higher education.<sup>38</sup> From 1960 to 1966 the number of universities in Britain nearly doubled from 24 to 43, while the number of students rocketed from 107,699 to 168,000.<sup>39</sup> It is against this background that Harold Wilson's Labour Government published the White Paper *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges* in 1966. The paper recommended the establishment of 30 polytechnics across England and Wales. These were to be technical colleges of higher education produced predominantly by the merger of regional technical colleges. They were to focus on technical, vocational and professional education, which they would teach to degree and HND level via full-time, sandwich and part-time courses. They were also intended to form close links with industry, business and the professions.<sup>40</sup> The Government envisaged the polytechnics as forming a binary structure of higher education that would complement the existing universities. The two would be equal in status but different in nature. As the Education Minister Anthony Crosland outlined in a speech at Woolwich Polytechnic on 27 April 1966, the new polytechnics would constitute, 'a vocationally orientated non-university sector which is degree-giving and with an appropriate amount of postgraduate work with opportunities for learning comparable with those of the universities, and giving a first class professional training'.<sup>41</sup>

The new national polytechnics can be seen as a continuation of the expansion of higher education that had begun in Britain in the 1950s. Further

38 *The Robbins Report (1963), Higher Education. Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins, Cmd. 2154* (London: HMSO, 1963), BL.

39 *University Development 1960-66*, p. 1, TNA ED188/19.

40 *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges, Cmd. 3006* (London: HMSO, 1966).

41 *Department of Education and Science Memorandum - Future Pattern of Higher Education within the Further Education System*, p. 1, TNA ED46/952.



Fig. 62

*Education Minister Anthony Crosland envisaged polytechnics as providing first-class professional training to complement the traditional universities.*

attempts in the 1960s to rationalise and concentrate the provision of higher technical education aligned with the Wilson Government's policy of creating a more modern and technologically advanced Britain, instigated by central planning.<sup>42</sup> The new polytechnics were instructed to hand over their intermediary courses to local technical colleges and these were ordered, in turn, to desist from providing advanced courses. Yet the creation of the polytechnics also had a social angle. It can be viewed as an attempt by the then Labour Government to make higher education available to a broader range of individuals in Britain who had previously been excluded from it. It complemented the Government's other major educational policy of abolishing grammar schools in order to create a more inclusive and comprehensive education system.<sup>43</sup> In this respect these new national polytechnics owed a great deal more to Quintin Hogg and Regent Street Polytechnic than mere nomenclature.

#### THE CREATION OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF CENTRAL LONDON, 1970

The Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) was created in May 1970 by the merger of Regent Street Polytechnic with Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce, a specialist LCC technical college that had been founded in 1884. The establishment of PCL was orchestrated by the DES and the newly founded Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), set up in 1965 by the creation of the Greater London Council (GLC). With the assistance of the

42 Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties*, (London: Abacus, 2007), p. 12.

43 Maurice Kogan, 'Antony Crosland: Intellectual and Politician', *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 2006, pp. 71–86.

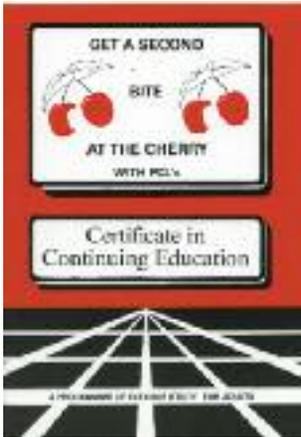
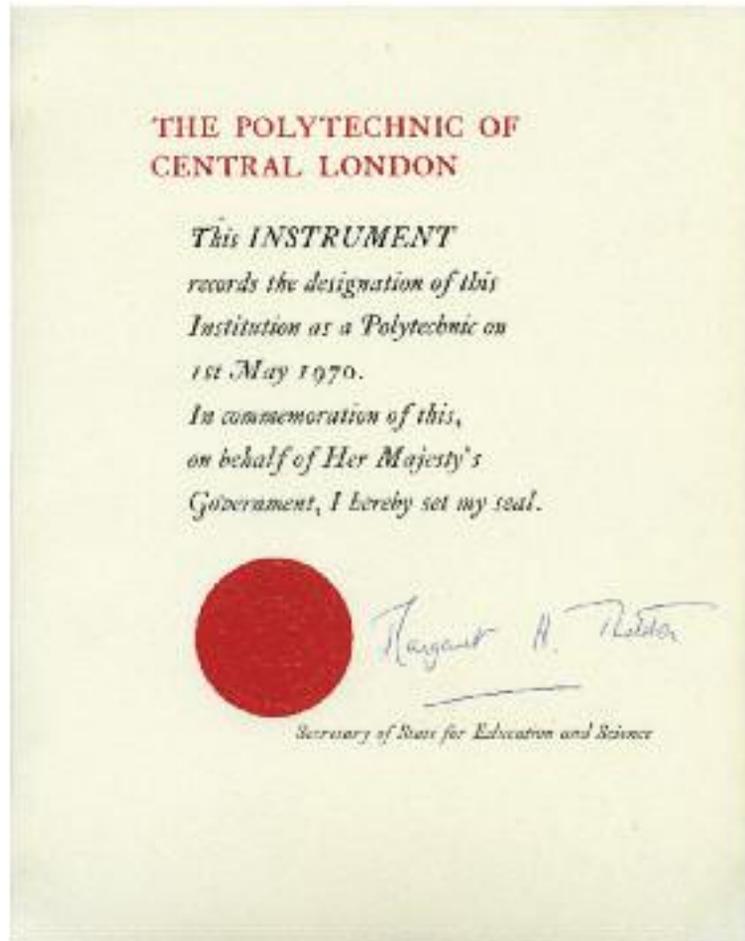


Fig. 63  
Alongside its degree-level qualifications, the Polytechnic continued its commitment to adult evening education.

Fig. 64  
The new Polytechnic of Central London was created on 1 May 1970.



RACs and LEAs, the DES had drawn up a national list of colleges that were to be merged to create the new polytechnics. Local Education Authorities were entrusted with the creation of the Articles and Instruments of Government of the new polytechnics, which were based on a DES-created scheme. The Authorities contacted the designated colleges and took part in the ensuing negotiations, which drew up the schemes of government of the newly merged polytechnics. The DES, in turn, sanctioned these schemes. The process thus involved central and local government and the individual colleges. Colleges were enticed by the promise of increased funding and the granting of new internal degree courses sanctioned by the recently created government body, the Council for National Academic Awards (est. 1964).<sup>44</sup>

The founding principle of the new polytechnics was the creation of institutions that were able to provide a broad range of technical and vocational courses at advanced level. Regent Street Polytechnic was strong in engineering, science and architecture. Merger with Holborn College would add law and strengthen its provision of business, languages and communication. It would create a polytechnic with 3,500 full-time students taking undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses comparable to any university in Britain. In

44 *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges*, TNA ED46/952; *A Series of Files on the Government White Paper on Polytechnics*. Polytechnic of Central London, 1968–69, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11. The CNAA was a degree-awarding authority for the whole of Britain that existed until 1992. It sanctioned and awarded degrees at polytechnics and other colleges of further education.

many respects, the creation of PCL was the finishing touch to a major expansion of the Polytechnic that took place in the 1960s. In April 1960 the LCC had approved proposals for the reorganisation of the Polytechnic as a federal institution based on three autonomous colleges of Architecture and Advanced Building Technology, Engineering and Science, and Commerce, Social Studies and Languages. The College of Architecture and Advanced Building Technology was to be housed on a new modern campus on the Luxborough Lodge site in Marylebone, and the College of Engineering and Science was to be based in another new campus in New Cavendish Street.<sup>45</sup> The ultimate goal of both Regent Street Polytechnic and the LCC for this expansion was the acquisition of university status.<sup>46</sup> While the Polytechnic failed to become a university following the Robbins Report, partially due to delays in building, and the planned collegiate system never came to fruition, the Marylebone and Cavendish campuses were finished in time to house the new PCL. This was an educational institution that dwarfed in scale and scope its predecessor and laid the foundation for the present-day University of Westminster.

PCL was incorporated as a private limited company on 22 April 1970, in contrast to the charity status of its predecessor the Polytechnic. Yet like so much in its history, this was a significant turning point that was marked as much by continuity as by change. The objectives of the new polytechnic were broadly similar to those of its predecessor. It was to ‘advance learning and knowledge in all their aspects and to provide industrial, commercial, professional and scientific education and training’. It was charged with providing, ‘courses of education or technical study both full time and part time for students at all



**Figs. 65, 66**  
*The official opening of the New Cavendish and Marylebone buildings took place on 21 May 1971, along with the formal designation ceremony of PCL. It was attended by Baron Hailsbam of Marylebone, grandson of Quintin Hogg.*



45 ILEA Report – *The Polytechnic Scheme of Reorganisation*, 31st October, 1966, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

46 ‘New Poly Will Have Hostel and Car Parks’, *The Polygon*, December, 1963, p. 1, UWA RSP/8/1 [P156].

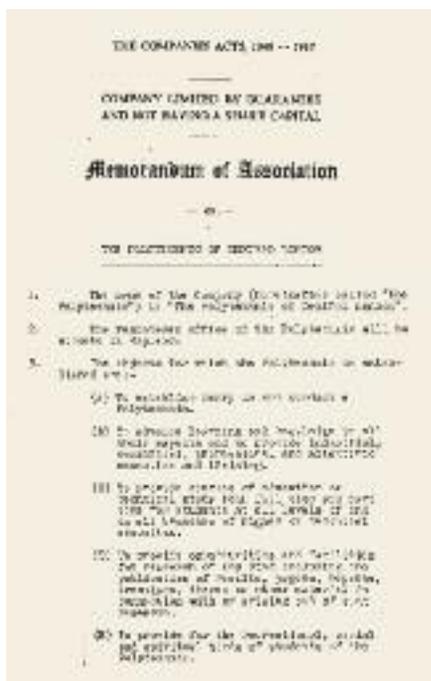


Fig. 67  
*The 1970 Memorandum of Association required the Polytechnic to continue to provide for the 'recreational, social and spiritual needs' of its students alongside the educational provision.*

levels of and in all branches of higher or technical education'. The 'poorer classes' had now gone, and the emphasis was on higher education, yet with a nod to Quintin Hogg and the heritage of the Polytechnic Institute the fourth objective of the new body was, "To provide for the recreational, social and spiritual needs of students of the Polytechnic." Part of the former Polytechnic would live on in the new PCL.<sup>47</sup>

Fig. 68  
*The College of Architecture and Advanced Building Technology was created as part of a new federal collegiate future proposed for the Polytechnic and became PCL's Marylebone campus.*

#### PCL AND THE ROAD TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

In 1971 the Director of PCL, Dr Colin Adamson, gave a speech in which he outlined the new polytechnic's strategy. In addition to outlining its organisational structure, he described the goals and ethos of PCL. Adamson summed this up as comprehensiveness:

... the notion of comprehensiveness implies that the polytechnics should have a wide range of studies starting below degrees on the academic ladder, and extending through the full spectrum to post-graduate activities of various kinds, but particularly those which have some direct relevance to the world of commerce, industry, business and the general social environment.<sup>48</sup>

In this notion of comprehensiveness we see a new ethos at PCL. Its principal role was to provide a broad range of subjects that covered all aspects of technical and vocational education. It did this by teaching these subjects at a range of levels from short-term professional courses, to sub-degree, degree

<sup>47</sup> *Memorandum and Articles of Association of The Polytechnic of Central London*, 22 April 1990, p. 7, UWA PCL/2/1/1 [P49c]; LMA ILEA/CL/E/FHE/09/007.

<sup>48</sup> 'Policy of PCL - the Director Speaks', *McGarel*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1971, pp. 2-3, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

and postgraduate levels. In turn, these were taught on full-time, part-time and sandwich courses. In addition, the Polytechnic targeted all types of students. These were not only the traditional 18–21 year olds who had passed ‘A’ levels, but also mature students, working students and individuals who did not have the traditional qualifications for higher education. It is this comprehensiveness that established the policy of PCL over the next 20 years and clearly differentiated it from its peers in the university sector.

The 22 years of PCL were dynamic ones. This was especially the case in the 1970s when it developed a comprehensive range of CNAAC-accredited degrees for its diploma courses. It was one of the first higher education institutes in the UK to offer a degree in Media Studies in the 1970s based on the decades of experience of its Communications Department. A wide range of sandwich courses was also developed in its School of Engineering and Science, and in its School of the Environment, created in 1974 by the merger of the architecture, building, civil engineering, surveying and planning departments.<sup>49</sup> A comprehensive programme of master degrees was created across its Schools. PCL also continued its tradition of developing part-time and professional education. In the 1970s it designed a substantial programme of mid-career short courses across the whole range of its academic disciplines. As the name suggests these were compact programmes, usually lasting four to eight weeks, which focused on developing professional and vocational skills. These courses grew at a prodigious rate, from 1,063 students in the 1971–72 academic year to 9,613 in the 1976–77 period.<sup>50</sup> The Polytechnic also continued to offer evening classes. An ILEA budget report in May 1977, for instance, commented that PCL had the highest evening enrolment in the Authority’s area and the highest of any polytechnic in the country.<sup>51</sup>

PCL’s ability to develop policy and act independently, however, was extremely limited. This was despite the fact that it was legally an independent corporate institute. Much of what the Polytechnic did and could do was decided by national and local government. The Secretary of State for Education and Science, for example, determined the number of polytechnics in Britain and could control their building programmes and the approval of courses.<sup>52</sup> The ILEA was able to control PCL through its provision of 98 per cent of its budget. It also ultimately determined appointments at both academic and administrative levels, decided on salary levels, sanctioned the creation of new courses, limited the number of students who could be educated at the Polytechnic and controlled the fees that they paid. It owned both the Marylebone and Cavendish sites and controlled rents at PCL’s student accommodation.<sup>53</sup> No maintenance or building work could be done without its permission. Even the prices in its canteens were decided by the Authority.<sup>54</sup> This inevitably led to a series of confrontations between PCL and ILEA in the 1970s. During this period ILEA imposed overseas student quotas and increased student fees, which PCL opposed but was unable to prevent. PCL was also powerless to stop steep increases in rents for its student accommodation, in spite of reductions in student grants due to inflation. As explored further in Chapter 4, this

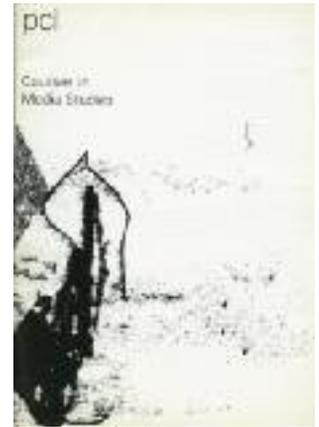


Fig. 69  
*Media Studies was one of a number of new courses taught at PCL in the 1970s and 1980s.*

49 *Guide for Applicants: Undergraduate Courses Session, 1980–81*, p. 23, UWA PCL/5/4/15.

50 *Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee, Report by Education Officer*, 20 September 1977, LMA ILEA/CL/E/FHE/09/007.

51 *Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee, Report by Education Officer*, 23 May 1977, LMA ILEA/CL/E/FHE/09/007.

52 *Administrative Memorandum No. 8/67, Parliamentary Statement by the Secretary of State for Education and Science on 5 April, 1967*, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

53 Ownership of student accommodation did not revert to Poly ownership until the creation of the University of Westminster in 1992.

54 *Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee, Report by Education Officer*, 20 September 1977, LMA ILEA/CL/E/FHE/09/007.

enraged PCL's student union (PCLSU) and led to a series of confrontations between PCLSU and the DES and ILEA in the form of stoppages, occupations, marches and rent strikes.

Such tensions erupted in 1980 with the publication of the Baker Report. In Margaret Thatcher's first Conservative Government, the London MP and future Education Secretary Kenneth Baker published a report in 1980, which recommended the break-up of the ILEA. This led to the establishment of a Commission to investigate the Authority chaired by Baroness Young, Minister of State at the DES. While ILEA survived the investigation, the commission provided the opportunity for criticisms to be aired against the Authority by inner London's five polytechnics, including PCL.<sup>55</sup> In August 1980 the Secretaries of the London polytechnics published a discussion paper entitled, *Polytechnics in Greater London*. The paper criticised ILEA as being an inappropriate body to supervise polytechnics, arguing that it was designed to administer a wide range of dispersed schools across inner London rather than manage large-scale providers of higher education. This was reflected in unsuitable financial procedures and the fact that most ILEA members on polytechnic governing bodies never attended and, when they did, knew very little about polytechnic matters. The paper recommended that control over London's polytechnics be taken away from ILEA and awarded to a Polytechnic Planning Authority under the control of the GLC, which would distribute resources but exercise

Fig. 70

*Terence Burlin, a medical physicist and expert in radiation, spent 33 years at the Polytechnic, having first joined RSP in 1962 as a Senior Lecturer. He was Rector (Vice-Chancellor) from 1984–95.*



55 The five institutions were The Polytechnic of Central London, City of London Polytechnic, North London Polytechnic, Polytechnic of the South Bank and Thames Polytechnic.



Fig. 71

*By the 1970s the Polytechnic was able to grant degrees under the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). Degree ceremonies continue to take place in central London venues, including the Barbican and the Royal Festival Hall.*

no detailed control.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, the report to the Baroness Young Commission submitted by the five London polytechnics criticised the level of control that ILEA exercised over them, particularly in areas of human resources, educational policy and finance. While the report did not advocate abolition of ILEA, it did recommend that the polytechnics be given far more freedom.<sup>57</sup>

A report by the Association of Polytechnic Teachers was not so coy. It argued that ILEA was a totally unsuitable body to administer London's five inner city polytechnics. The latter were national institutes attracting students from across Britain and abroad, while the former was a London-based body that acted on behalf of the Capital's ratepayers. The Report argued that it lacked the expertise to govern polytechnics and was wracked with political patronage. The Association further suggested that control over polytechnics in general should be given to a central body such as a Polytechnic Grants Committee, in the same way that Britain's universities were funded by the state body, the University Grants Committee.<sup>58</sup>

The Baker Report and the investigation of ILEA can be seen as the beginning of the end of the polytechnics and their transformation into universities. In 1983 Margaret Thatcher's Government abolished the GLC, and the ILEA was dissolved five years later. Shortly before this, the 1988 Education Reform Act, under Secretary of State Kenneth Baker, removed the funding and control of polytechnics from LEAs and the National Advisory Board for Higher Education (successor to the RACs) and transferred these to the Polytechnic and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), a government-controlled body. Colleges that were deemed to be too small were forced to merge with larger institutions. The short-term impact of this was that Harrow College of Higher Education was forced to merge with PCL, adding a fourth campus

56 *Polytechnics in Greater London, August 1980, Baker Report (ILEA), UWA PCL/2/4/2.*

57 *Committee of Directors of London Polytechnics, Report for the Baroness Young Committee, 1980, Baker Report (ILEA), UWA PCL/2/4/2.*

58 *Association of Polytechnic Teachers Response to Baker Report on the Future of ILEA, May 1980, Baker Report (ILEA), UWA PCL/2/4/2.*

Fig. 72

*Harrow College of Higher Education merged with PCL in 1990 as a result of the 1988 Education Reform Act. It was noted for its work in photography, the creative arts, design and business.*



to the sprawling Polytechnic.<sup>59</sup> Less than 55 per cent of Harrow's educational work was in higher education and it was associated with PCL due to the latter validating its degree work. Despite competition from Ealing College of Higher Education, Harrow joined PCL in 1990.<sup>60</sup> In the longer term, a movement emerged which advocated that polytechnics should become universities. Freed from the control of the LEAs and constituted as independent corporate higher education colleges with government funding, it was only a matter of time before the polytechnics began to call for parity with Britain's universities and the removal of what had become known as the binary divide in higher education.<sup>61</sup>

Calls for university status among Britain's 30 polytechnics began in 1989. They were supported by nearly all the polytechnics and were voiced collectively by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (CDP). The CDP published papers outlining the arguments for the acquisition of university status and launched a highly effective press campaign. Ministers and MPs were contacted and lobbied over the issue.<sup>62</sup> A key argument was that polytechnics were unfairly treated in relation to the universities. They educated more British students than the universities – 280,600 compared with 259,300 in 1986 – yet received less in funding from the Government. For the academic year, 1986–87, for example, universities received £5,276 for each student while polytechnics obtained only £3,325, much of the difference being due to the former receiving far more in research funding.<sup>63</sup> Five core arguments were presented and repeated. The first was that there was a confusion of meaning. Even after 20 years of existence there was a widespread misunderstanding in society among Members

59 *McGarel*, 3 October 1988, p. 3, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

60 Interview with Dr Geoffrey Copland (PCL Deputy Director 1987–96, University of Westminster Vice-Chancellor, 1996–2007), 26 May 2011, UWA OHP/16.

61 See Interview with Dr Geoffrey Copland for the importance of the 1988 Baker Education Reform Act in the obtaining of university status by PCL, UWA OHP/16.

62 *Change to University Status files from Rectorate*, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47(2)].

63 *Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, Notes for Members of the House of Lords*, 2 May 1989, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47].



Fig. 73  
*Foreign languages had been taught at the Polytechnic since 1882 and remained popular with the addition of specialist interpreting and translation teaching in the 1970s.*

of Parliament, employers, parents, teachers and pupils about what a polytechnic actually was. The second was that polytechnics had a perceived inferior status compared with universities among the above mentioned groups, which severely hampered their effectiveness. A third argument was that employers had a poor attitude towards polytechnics, often refused to recruit from them on the so-called annual 'Milk Rounds', and discriminated against polytechnic graduates when interviewing. The fourth was that because of adverse perceptions polytechnics were unable to market effectively in the UK in their attempt to obtain students, funding and collaboration with the private sector. This was particularly pernicious in the face of Conservative Government policy that higher education institutes be more entrepreneurial. The final argument was that polytechnic status severely hindered the recruitment of overseas students. Most foreign students looked down on polytechnics, and this was exacerbated by the fact that polytechnic degrees were often not accepted in the students' home countries.<sup>64</sup>

Initially the Government was opposed to polytechnics becoming universities. This quickly changed, however, in 1990 when a senior civil servant, Richard Bird, published a report on the CNAA that called for greater academic autonomy for some polytechnics. This was used as a pretext by John Major's Government to launch an enquiry into the status of Britain's polytechnics.<sup>65</sup> It resulted in the publication of the White Paper, *Higher Education: A New Framework* in 1991, which recommended that polytechnics should be allowed to adopt a university name, that they be permitted to award their own degrees and that a single funding body be established for all Britain's higher education institutes. The paper also called for the number of students receiving higher education to increase from one in five to one in three school leavers

64 Paper CDP-88-182, Proposal to introduce the title 'Polytechnic University' following incorporation, 25 July, 1988, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47].

65 'Polytechnics may be given the status of universities', *The Times*, 10 December 1990.

and for the further encouragement of market forces in the university and higher education sector.<sup>66</sup> In May 1991 a bill was introduced into Parliament by Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Clarke, to allow for a change in the status of polytechnics and other higher education colleges. It became law the next year. On 11 May 1992 the Privy Council agreed that PCL could use the title, The University of Westminster. The name itself had been earlier tested by market researchers on 1,000 lower-sixth form students alongside other possible titles such as Westminster University, Westminster Polytechnic University, Central London University, Regent Street University and Quintin Hogg University. Students were presented with a list of 20 universities and asked which ones they wished to attend to study a degree, ranking them numerically. ‘The University of Westminster’ performed best, coming third overall, the fictitious ‘City of London University’ being the most favoured destination. ‘Regent Street University’ was ranked tenth, with ‘Quintin Hogg University’ at number 19.<sup>67</sup>

In April 1989, Professor Laing Barden, the Director of Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic and a fervent advocate of university status for polytechnics, prepared a report entitled, *Proposals for the development of mass Further and Higher Education in the UK*. In it he wrote of the spontaneous disintegration of the binary line in higher education in Britain brought about by the effects of, ‘the Education Reform Act, the loss of LEA insulation, the separation of teaching and research [funding], and the Government’s strong belief in competitive free markets and consumer power’.<sup>68</sup> Barden could not have been more succinct in his reasoning for the collapse of the polytechnics, which would meet their demise three years later. The polytechnics were a creation of a top down policy by an interventionist state, assisted by a local education authority bathed in a culture of planning and micro-management. Once these factors disappeared in the Thatcher revolution of the 1980s, with its insistence on market forces and competition, the days of the polytechnics were numbered. With its structural supports and ideology gone, the binary divide in Britain’s system of higher education was simply unsustainable.

## CONCLUSION

Policy at the Polytechnic, through its various manifestations, was distinguished by a process of continuity and change. Some aspects, such as its spiritual mission, were eclipsed in the face of changing social patterns. Others, such as the recreational and social aspects of the Institute, lost their centrality due to government policy and the development of a more affluent and consumerist society that was no longer dependent on charity for the provision of social amenities. In this context the Polytechnic’s charitable role of helping London’s poorer classes became increasingly untenable. The move by Quintin Hogg to a more affluent part of London began this process, the change in the social composition of those using the Polytechnic continued it, and the growth of a national welfare state after 1945 made this policy more or less moribund. Finally, the Polytechnic changed from an institution that originally served Londoners to one that

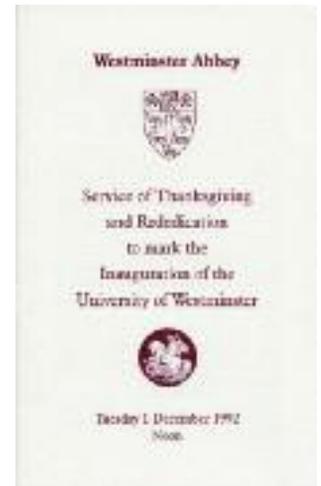
66 *Higher Education: A New Framework*, Cmd. 1541 (London: HMSO, 1991), BL.

67 *Report of an Empirical Survey on Naming for Polytechnic of Central London, Heist Marketing and PR for Education*, 15 October 1991, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47].

68 *Proposals for the development of mass Further and Higher Education in the UK* by Professor Laing Barden, 30 April 1989, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47].



Figs. 74, 75  
*The rededication ceremony for the University of Westminster was held at Westminster Abbey, London, on 1 December 1992.*



catered to the nation and increasingly to the world. In this context its role and policies inextricably changed as it became more and more successful. The adoption of the polytechnic model in London in the 1890s and across Britain in the 1960s is indicative of this. The University of Westminster in 1992 with its four sites across central and north west London providing undergraduate and postgraduate degrees to thousands was a very different animal from the Polytechnic of 309 Regent Street a hundred years earlier.

Yet alongside this there are clear signs of continuity. In the hundred years covered in this chapter the Polytechnic continued to focus on technical and vocational subjects. It remained an institution for preparing people for the workplace and as such it kept its close links with government and business throughout the period. In terms of academic disciplines there was little change. Architecture, Engineering, Photography, Business, Science, Technology, Lan-

guages and Communication continued to be taught, with Law and Media joining this vocational family in the 1970s. While it is true that full-time higher education became increasingly pronounced, this should not blind us to the fact that in 1991 PCL had more part-time students on professional short courses and in evening classes than it did full-time graduate and undergraduate students. As seen earlier, it remained the largest provider of part-time, vocational adult education in London. Finally, the Polytechnic did maintain its commitment to ‘the poorer classes’ by its continuation of policies of opportunity and inclusivity. This was clearly articulated in 1991 by the Rector of PCL, T.E. Burlin in a report on the then Government’s recently published White Paper, *Higher Education: A New Framework*. Even with the word university in its title, Burlin insisted, the institution would still, ‘... retain its mission to reach out to the less privileged, to those who live and work in London so as to enable them to progress as far as their career demand or personal aspiration would take them and equip them with professional competence’.<sup>69</sup> These are words that barely differed from Quintin Hogg’s sentiments a hundred years earlier.

On Tuesday, 1 December 1992, a service of thanksgiving was held at Westminster Abbey to mark the Inauguration of the University of Westminster. Towards the end of the service the Chairman of the Court of Governors, Sir Cyril Pitts, read the Statement of Intent for the new university. George Cayley and Quintin Hogg were respectfully referred to. The University confirmed its commitment to the enlargement of knowledge and teaching. Yet it was the last two declarations that were so resonant to the theme of this chapter and deserve to be quoted in full:

The University will seek to meet the cultural, recreational, social and spiritual needs of its students that they may be better able to fulfil themselves and to respond to the challenges of their personal and professional lives.

The University pledges to remain faithful to the vision and ideals of those who established it and to continue to serve this city, the nation, the international community and the future generations of students as befits its high calling to the name and status of the University of Westminster.

This I declare in the name of the University to be its mission.<sup>70</sup>

Despite its change of name and the national and global expansion of its constituency, the policy and mission of the University of Westminster was deeply entwined with its history of more than one hundred years of continuous technical education and the provision of opportunity and self-improvement. A large part of the old Polytechnic would remain in the new University.

69 *Comments from the Rector on Government White Paper, 8 July, 1991, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47].*

70 *Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication to mark the Inauguration of the University of Westminster, 1 December 1992, at Westminster Abbey, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47].*

## POLYTECHNIC PARLIAMENT

The Polytechnic Parliamentary Debating Society formally began on 23 April 1883. Prior to this, in 1881, the Temperance Society had held a Mock Parliamentary Debate and there had been a short-lived Elocution and Debating Society. The creation of a 'Mock House of Commons' was suggested in March 1883 as an 'enjoyable and useful means of recreation' and 'more interesting and successful than an Ordinary Debating Society'.<sup>1</sup> The proposer, James Abbs, Junior could not imagine how successful his Parliament would prove to be, going on to celebrate its 75th anniversary and producing at least one serving MP (Arthur Skeffington (1909–71), Labour).

The Poly Parliament was part of a wider movement of Parliamentary Debating Societies, or Local Parliaments, that rose to popularity in the late nineteenth century. By 1880 the *England* newspaper had published a list of pamphlets that might be of use to such Parliaments, and by 1883 there were enough societies across the country for a Conference to be held in London.

After Abbs' initial suggestion, 160 members joined the Society for its first session, a number that rose to over 250 by October. Members of the Parliament selected a constituency to represent and organised themselves into Radicals, Conservatives and Liberals. Motions debated in the first session included the opening of National Museums on a Sunday (lost by a majority of 23) and a Prohibitory Liquor Bill, reflecting Hogg's Christian vision for the institution.

As well as fulfilling their Parliamentary duties, the political parties also met regularly to decide their stand on various issues, and for social events. The reports of these socials in the *Polytechnic Magazine* suggest the Parliamentary sessions themselves were taken so seriously that other time had to be taken for frivolities. As with most Polytechnic occasions, the socials were enlivened by musical entertainment and washed down with tea.



Fig. 76

Fig. 77



By 1933, some of the women members were attempting to start their own Parliament, although six months later they were still trying to drum up enough support to get beyond a dozen members. The Women's Parliament was supported and chaired by Quintin McGarel Hogg's first wife, Natalie. In January 1934 the men's Parliament invited the women to join them, with Natalie Hogg having the honour of being the first woman to speak in the house. It must have been quite an intimidating environment though, as by April the jocular motion that 'women be excluded from public life and industry and their efforts directed to channels such as child-raising and nursing' was proposed 'with the idea of inviting (or inciting) the ladies to make themselves heard'.

With the introduction of women into the Parliament, there was an increased programme of outings throughout the 1930s, including trips to the Isle of Wight and rowing in Regent's Park. The Parliament continued to meet socially during the Second World War, recommencing its political activities in 1946 with 75 members, with a regular sideline in both theatre trips and rambles.

The Polytechnic Parliament celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1958, and throughout the early 1960s enjoyed debates on topics such as nuclear disarmament. However, numbers dwindled and the Parliament was adjourned for the last time in May 1965.

1 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1883.

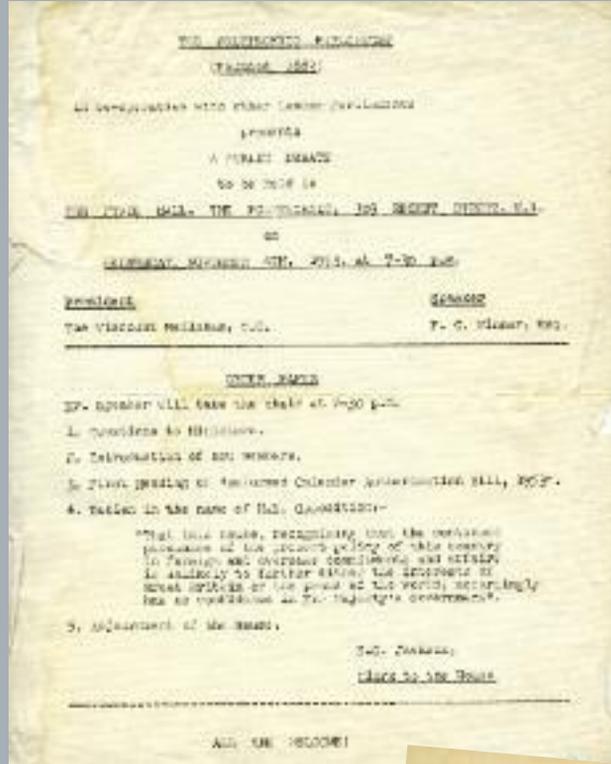


Fig. 78



Fig. 79



Fig. 80



Fig. 81



# *A history of student life at the Polytechnic*

Michael Heller

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the history of the students of Regent Street Polytechnic (RSP), and the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL), between 1882 and 1992. It will outline the education students received, their changing profile, motivations for attending the Polytechnic, and the history of student politics. It will also highlight student exploits during Rag Week and the centrality of music to student life. Over the period, an evening school that trained working Londoners was transformed into an educational institution that matched universities in Britain and provided the blueprint for an alternative style of higher education that was both inclusive and vocational. A student body emerged that gained important concessions and created a student union that was vocal and effective in the protection of its members. It was also at the forefront of student activism and politics in Britain from the 1960s to the 1990s. This chapter will argue that it was the environment of the Polytechnic that conditioned the development of its student body. Students at the Polytechnic had to fight against controls and a patrician culture created by the erection of a Victorian evangelical institution which, in its early years, was more interested in religion and associational life than education. For most of its history its full-time day students were in the minority and had to fight to obtain their freedoms and position. Such tensions, combined with a relatively tolerant administration and a diverse student body located in the heart of London led to the development of a student body and culture that was creative, ambitious and outspoken. It is one that rightly deserves its place in the history of student life in Britain in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Unlike other chapters in this book, this one focuses heavily on the 1960s. This is felt to be necessary because this decade had such a revolutionary impact on student life at the Polytechnic in terms of education, admission, student representation, social and cultural life, and, perhaps most importantly, in the areas of student identity and student politics. The so-called 'Swinging Sixties' brought about profound changes in student life in Britain and was strongly evidenced at the Polytechnic, which was located in the heart of London and



Fig. 82

*Space was at a premium at 309 Regent Street and many of the spaces were multi-purpose. Tailoring classes made use of the large cinema and in the winter the swimming pool was drained to become a reading room.*

therefore at the epicentre of many of these social, political and cultural upheavals. This chapter will argue that in many respects it is possible to talk about the pre-1960s and post-1960s Poly student, with the caveat that the decades of the 1930s, 1940s and particularly the 1950s contributed to this rupture. The archival research that was undertaken for this chapter has formed the basis for this argument, and the concomitant focus on the 1960s as a result.

### EDUCATION AT THE POLYTECHNIC

Prior to the First World War education at the Polytechnic was mostly part-time and taught in the evening. The Polytechnic also had a school from 1886 until 1956 for boys between the ages of seven to 17.<sup>1</sup> Day technical classes (taught in subject-themed Schools) were also established in engineering, architecture and commerce. Education at the Polytechnic before 1914 was overwhelmingly vocational. The Polytechnic offered opportunities to working people from its inception. The scope of its educational provision was extensive. It can be divided between education for professions such as engineering, architecture and photography, for skilled manual workers such as cabinet makers, bricklayers and electricians, for office workers in sectors such as commerce, government, banking and insurance, and science classes that were designed to provide those working in industry with a more theoretical approach to their vocations. Classes were also provided in subjects such as English, art, languages and music. The Polytechnic awarded its own diplomas and certificates, and also prepared students for national examinations such as those set by the City and Guilds of London Institute, the London Chamber of Commerce and the Royal Society of Arts.<sup>2</sup>

- 1 The School later became the Quintin Kynaston School and is now based in St John's Wood, North London. A short-lived school for girls existed from 1888–1907. See p. 138.
- 2 *Polytechnic Young Men's Christian Institute General Prospectus: Session 1888–89*, UWA YCI/5/4; *Regent Street Polytechnic General Prospectus: Winter Session 1901–02*, UWA RSP/5/4/2; *Regent Street Polytechnic General Prospectus: Session 1910–11*, UWA RSP/5/4/18.



Figs. 83, 84

*Printing was taught in the Polytechnic from at least 1882. Admission to the classes was limited to those already working in the profession.*



Fig. 85

*Evening classes in Hairdressing began at the Poly around 1900. In 1929 the department became part of the Craft Schools and moved into the new Little Titchfield Street building.*



In the interwar period courses became more advanced and systematic. In the evening students could now take Grouped Courses in subjects such as architecture, surveying and building, engineering, and commercial and business training. These were taught over three years and successful students were awarded diplomas and certificates. During this period the day technical classes began to expand rapidly. By the 1930s there were Day Schools in Architecture, Surveying and Building, Art, Chemistry, Commerce, Craft Schools, Engineering, Mathematics and Physics, Matriculation, Modern Languages



**Fig. 86**  
*The Polytechnic was a major pioneer in the teaching of photography at a senior level before 1914. Students made the most of its location, using the roof of 309 Regent Street, with its fabulous views of central London as a backdrop for photo shoots.*

**BUSINESS SIMULATION SUITE**

Others see them at the completion of each session — surely a fundamental part of management training.

Inter-Group communication is obtained by a telephone system linking all four rooms. The Suite can be used, amongst other things, for:

- all types of business games and simulation exercises
- syndicate simulating repetition-with-feedback training
- group dynamics
- syndicate project work
- teaching and interviewing techniques

One of the most far-sighted ideas in the White Street Building plan was the inclusion of the Business Simulation Suite. Unique in Britain, this set of rooms is especially designed so that students will be able to work under realistically simulated business conditions in four areas under the guidance of a teacher who will be located at a central control point.

Closed circuit television, complete with audio-visual recording facilities, will make it possible not only for students to work under observation without outside distractions, but also to see themselves as

**Fig. 87**  
*The first courses in Management were held at the Polytechnic in the Department of Industrial Administration in 1923. This image is taken from a 1967 brochure advertising the new facilities at the Poly.*

and Photography. Most classes prepared students for matriculation and degrees at the University of London, which Poly students entered as external candidates. This meant that while successful students received degrees from the University of London, the Polytechnic had no control over the content of the courses it taught and was forced to adhere to the degree content of the former.

It would not be until the 1960s that the Polytechnic would be able to develop and award its own degrees. Nonetheless, students were awarded Institute qualifications from the Polytechnic and were prepared for professional and national examinations. The Physics and Mathematics Department and the Engineering Department taught up to degree level standards.<sup>3</sup> The Polytechnic also pioneered new courses in higher education including journalism in 1922, management in 1924 and urban planning in 1934.

The shift towards the teaching of advanced courses continued in the 1940s and 1950s. The Diploma from the School of Architecture provided exemption from the final examination of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Teaching also became more focused on the professional and academic and less on the trade and manual sides, which were gradually shifted to technical colleges operated by the London County Council (LCC).

The founding of the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) in 1970 accelerated this development, and transformed the Polytechnic into an institute of higher education providing courses on a par with universities in Britain. The craft, technical and art schools were removed. There was a shift to teaching only advanced level courses such as higher national diplomas and certificates (HNDs and HNCs) and degrees. The Poly now offered its own degrees validated by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). Four-year undergraduate sandwich courses also emerged in areas such as business studies, electrical engineering and civil engineering, where students took a work placement in their third year.

By the 1980s all degrees at PCL were CNAA-validated and thus designed, delivered and examined by the institution. This enabled PCL to develop degrees in areas it specialised and excelled in such as photography, business

**Fig. 88**

*In the 1920s, enrolment for evening classes took place over a week in September, with former students advised to enrol early to be sure of a place.*



<sup>3</sup> *Regent Street Polytechnic General Prospectus: Session 1920–21, UWA RSP/5/4/26; Regent Street Polytechnic General Prospectus: Session 1930–31, UWA RSP/5/4/35.*

studies and later media studies. These were areas that were not usually covered in the more traditional universities and enabled PCL to develop a reputation for academic excellence and innovation. From the 1970s PCL also began to develop postgraduate education, including master's degrees and PhDs.<sup>4</sup>

#### A PROFILE OF STUDENTS AT THE POLYTECHNIC

Who were the students who attended Regent Street Polytechnic and PCL? One problem in answering this is the diverse nature of the Polytechnic. As already discussed, when considering the institution one is dealing with multiple organisations. There was the Polytechnic Institute and Regent Street Polytechnic. The former was a social and sporting club, while the latter was an educational establishment. One could be a member of the Institute, or a student at the Polytechnic, or both.<sup>5</sup> While until 1914 this distinction was not so pertinent, the division became more marked in the interwar period and particularly after the post-1945 period when students began to dominate the Polytechnic, and when its educational role began to take precedence over its social, spiritual and sporting functions. In addition, as explained in the previous section, the Polytechnic had day classes and evening classes, with mainly full-time students in the former and part-time students in the latter. While part-time students were preponderate in the period up until 1914, they became less so in the interwar period, and in the post-1945 period full-time, day students emerged as the most important student grouping.

There were an estimated 14,000 to 15,000 students and members at the Polytechnic from 1890 to 1914. A tabulation of enrolled students for the period May 1888 to May 1889 showed that of the 10,019 enrolled students, 4,700 were members of the Polytechnic.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that a third of those using the Polytechnic were pure Institute members (using it only for its social and sporting facilities), one third were both members and students and another third were students only. Of the 8,700 members from 1888 to 1889, 1,600 were young women. In addition, the occupation of students for this period reflects the scope of its provision:

#### Student Occupations at Regent Street Polytechnic May 1888 to May 1889<sup>7</sup>

Boot Trades	173	Metal Plate Workers	103
Building Trades	1,765	Occupations not known	704
Cabinet Makers/Furniture	262	Photographic Trades	189
Carriage Building Trade	135	Printing Trades	281
Clerks and Others	2,054	Salesmen	105
Confectioners and Bakers	75	Scientific Instrument Makers	93
Draughtsmen	81	Tailors	304
Electricians	194	Teachers	232
Engineers	383	Various Trades (Mechanics)	150
Engravers	54	Watchmakers and Jewellers	157

4 *Polytechnic of Central London General Prospectus: Session 1970–71*, UWA PCL/5/4/1; *Polytechnic of Central London Guide for Applicants: Undergraduate Courses: Session 1980–81*, UWA PCL/5/4/15; *Polytechnic of Central London Guide for Applicants: Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses for Entry 1990*, UWA PCL/5/4/35.

5 See Chapter 3 for more details.  
6 'Annual Distribution of Prizes', *Polytechnic Magazine*, 1 May 1890, p. 279.

7 'Annual Distribution of Prizes', *Polytechnic Magazine*, 1 May 1890, p. 279.

Fig. 89

*Peter Studd, 643rd Lord Mayor of London, member of the Court of Governors and President of the Old Members' Association, talking to a student at the Designation ceremony for the Polytechnic of Central London.*



Fig. 90

*Throughout its history the Polytechnic educated thousands of working Londoners and the popularity of its evening courses – particularly in vocational areas such as business, computing, architecture and design – often led to long queues at enrolment.*



The majority of students were skilled working class, a social demographic that Quintin Hogg had originally targeted. They represented 59 per cent, of the occupations given. Yet within this cohort were a large number of white-collar occupations who were attracted by the educational opportunities that the Polytechnic offered. They were an emerging social group in London during this period. The largest single occupational group listed were clerical workers, who, together with salesmen and teachers made up 35 per cent of the total number of students whose occupation was given.

Important information on the background of students at the Polytechnic was provided to the City Parochial Foundation in 1932 (see page 55). Of the 9,771 students at RSP, 50.7 per cent had received their education at public elementary schools and 66 per cent came from families earning £250 or less a year, the typical level for a working-class household. It was estimated that 20 per cent of students were artisans. These figures suggest a mixed working class/lower-middle class student cohort as students receiving a secondary education (i.e. grammar school or private) in the interwar period tended to come from better-off families.<sup>8</sup> Of the total student body only 4.6 per cent had permanent residence outside the London Metropolitan Police area. Only 1.5 per cent of students had taken university courses at the Polytechnic over the last five years.<sup>9</sup>

By 1968 a report by the Governors to ILEA giving an overview of student numbers shows the Polytechnic to have 3,000 full-time students, 6,500 part-time and evening students and 2,800 Institute members.<sup>10</sup> Further insights into polytechnics were published in 1976 by Julia Whitburn, Maurice Mealing and Caroline Cox for the period 1972–73.<sup>11</sup> Out of a national sample of 9,035 students Whitburn et al. found that 77 per cent of polytechnic students were male and 23 per cent were female. The median age of a polytechnic student was 23.3 years. Whereas 27 per cent of students in polytechnics were over 25 years in age, in London the figure was 37 per cent, suggesting an older cohort of students.<sup>12</sup> In relation to social background, 64 per cent of London polytechnic students were from non-manual backgrounds, the figure being 66 per cent for degree students, 69 per cent for other full-time students and 60 per cent for part-time students.<sup>13</sup> Nationally 66 per cent of degree students were educated in grammar or private schools – 60 per cent of full-time students and 51 per cent of part-time students.<sup>14</sup>



Fig. 91

*The Polytechnic educated large numbers of overseas students in the 1920s and 1930s when students came from Commonwealth countries. The Polytechnic also had a long tradition of educating immigrants to Britain including Jews in the first half of the twentieth century and immigrants from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia after the Second World War.*

8 See also Martin Pugh, *We Danced All Night: A Social History of Britain Between the Wars* (London: Vintage Books, 2009), pp. 210–12.

9 Correspondence with Trustees of the City Parochial Foundation re Polytechnics and The Poorer Classes, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST72/2].

10 *Report from The Polytechnic to ILEA Concerning Recent Student Demonstrations*, 11 October 1968, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

11 Julia Whitburn, Maurice Mealing, Caroline Cox, *People in Polytechnics* (Guildford: Society for Research into Higher Education, 1976).

12 Whitburn et al., pp. 61–2.

13 Whitburn et al., p. 75.

14 Whitburn et al., p. 66.

Fig. 92

*PCL developed strong links with China in the 1970s that still continue at the University of Westminster today.*

Fig. 93

*Matriculation student Robert Marshall was photographed at home with his wife in 1949 as part of a government publication titled 'The Working Man's University'. The caption notes that the pumpkin was a gift from his parents and was so large it could only be housed in the spare room be used as a study.*



Another comprehensive overview of students at PCL is provided in a grant application to the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) in 1985.<sup>15</sup> From 1982 to 1983 there were 3,787 full-time and 458 sandwich course students at PCL. Of its full-time students 946 studied Engineering and Science, 799 Social Science and Business Studies, 792 Environment (architecture, surveying and building), 681 Languages, 331 Communication, 282 Law and 43 Management. PCL also had 440 part-time day advanced students, 654 part-time day and evening advanced students and 3,058 evening advanced students, 68 full-time non-advanced courses, 95 part-time day non-advanced courses and 1,566 evening non-advanced courses. This gave a total of 10,126 students comprising 5,502 day students and 4,624 evening students, 8,397 of whom were studying advanced courses and 1,729 non-advanced courses. Of these, 44.9 per cent were female students. In relation to age, 35.2 per cent of first-year undergraduate students were over 21 years old, 79.7 per cent of part-time day advanced students, 91.9 per cent of evening advanced students, and 89.6 per cent of evening non-advanced students. Overall, 36.5 per cent of advanced course students lived in inner London.<sup>16</sup> Finally, many of those who studied at the Polytechnic, particularly after 1945, were from overseas.

In 1967 25 per cent of its students came from outside of Britain compared with 10 per cent nationally in higher education.<sup>17</sup> Many would go on to leading positions in their fields such as the Trinidadian artist Sybil Atteck, the Moroccan politician Asma Chaâbi and the American poet and academic Mary Jo Bang. Some would descend into infamy such as the Venezuelan global terrorist Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, otherwise known as Carlos the Jackal, who studied chemistry at the Polytechnic in the early 1970s, something that he noted came in useful later on for making bombs.<sup>18</sup> In addition, many home students

15 *Finance Maintenance Grant 1984–85 Application*, UWA PCL 3/4/5.

16 *Finance Maintenance Grant 1984–85 Application*, UWA PCL 3/4/5.

17 'The Hidden Apartheid', *West One: the Journal of the Polytechnic Student Union*, 16 March 1967, p. 8, UWA RSP/8/1/11.

18 'Why Carlos the Jackal is enjoying his days in court', *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 November 2011.

studying at the Polytechnic were from ethnic minorities creating a distinctly multi-cultural student body. In 1990 43 per cent of students described their origins as 'non-white'.<sup>19</sup> The rich diversity of the Polytechnic's student body derived not just from the social class, age and educational status of students but also from its multi-ethnicity.

The number of students studying at the Polytechnic remained fixed at around 10,000 students between 1980 and 1990. Yet within this cohort there was considerable change. There was a shift from part-time ordinary and intermediate education to full-time advanced provision. The number of female students advanced to be nearly on a par with male students by the mid-1980s. There was a movement away from working-class students to middle-class students. The student body became increasingly multi-cultural. Yet part-time evening education provision remained a major factor within the pedagogical make-up of PCL, and a substantial part of this was non-advanced. Most students were in their mid to late 20s, many of them were working and a large number were from London and the South East. In addition, what they studied remained, broadly speaking, career-oriented and similar throughout the period: engineering, architecture, building, commerce and management, and languages. The social sciences were an addition from the 1950s with other vocational subjects such as law and communication added from the 1970s.

### STUDENT MOTIVATION

Why did students choose to study at the Polytechnic? One of the most important reasons was career development. Quintin Hogg's original education goal was to educate those in work, and vocational education remained at the



Fig. 94

*Up until 1950 commercial education at the Polytechnic always included typing classes for both sexes.*

<sup>19</sup> *PCL Stop Press*, 11 December 1991, UWA PCL/2/6 [ACC1995/47/2].

Fig. 95

*The School of Architecture was founded in 1891 although trade classes in Building and Geometry had already been taught since 1882. A dedicated architecture library was created when the School moved into the Little Titchfield Street building in 1929.*



heart of the pedagogical philosophy of the Polytechnic. Much of this should be viewed within the economic and professional context of the period. Britain's economy became increasingly more sophisticated. Its industries and manufacturing became more specialised and based on science, its large-scale corporations grew, and its service sector burgeoned. In this context what one knew became of paramount importance to one's work and career prospects.<sup>20</sup>

At the same time the learning and demonstration of knowledge became more formal. National examining institutions such as the Royal Society of Arts, the Oxford and Cambridge Examining Boards and the City and Guilds of London Institute emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This development was mirrored in industry and the professions with the development of examinations by the Civil Service, and groups such as the London Chamber of Commerce, the Institute of Bankers and the Royal Institute of British Architects.<sup>21</sup> The historian Harold Perkin has described this process as the emergence of a professional society.<sup>22</sup> It was one in which the professional – the doctor, the lawyer, the engineer, the architect – became the social ideal rather than the landlord or the industrial entrepreneur. Notions of expertise, efficiency and merit became pre-eminent, and at work the career established its dominance. It was also a society in which science and technology became more pronounced. The social historian Ross McKibbin, for example, has noted that there were five times as many engineers and ten times as many scientists in the UK in 1951 as there were in 1911.<sup>23</sup> The number of laboratory technicians increased from 5,000 in 1921 to 69,000 in 1951 and the number of draughtsmen from 38,000 to 134,000. In 1948 engineering apprenticeships were the most popular choice for those leaving grammar school. The middle-class professions

20 John Wilson, *British Business History, 1720–1994* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

21 Michael Heller, *London Clerical Workers, 1880–1914: Development of the Labour Market* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), Chapters 6–7.

22 Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London: Routledge, 1989).

23 Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918–51* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 46.



Fig. 96  
*The indoor swimming bath in 309  
 Regent street, opened in 1884, was  
 in use for nearly a hundred years.*

of 1911 had been based on the classical professions of the doctor, the lawyer and the clergyman. Those of 1951 were based on technology, science and commerce.<sup>24</sup> These were areas in which the Polytechnic excelled, and they acted as a magnet to the socially ambitious who wished to better their position in life.

Many former students include among their reasons for attending the Polytechnic its reputation in areas such as architecture, engineering and sociology, the practicality of its education and the opportunities it provided. In the 1950s Regent Street Polytechnic was one of only three places where architecture was taught at professional level in London. One architecture student who studied at the Polytechnic from 1949 to 1955, stated that, 'The Poly tended to have a more practical approach ... it didn't hark back to classicism, it accepted modern architecture. One tended to be more useful or better able to hold a job after one qualified.'<sup>25</sup>

Another, who studied architecture from 1954, called it, 'the poor man's school', contrasting it with the affluence of the Architectural Association's School of Architecture.<sup>26</sup> One student from the 1960s had previously begun a degree in English and Philosophy at Hull, but switched to the Regent Street Polytechnic because he wanted to do something modern and practical and knew it was a good place to study. He chose Economics and later was able to specialise in Sociology, which he saw as an up-and-coming subject at the time.<sup>27</sup> For others, PCL in the 1980s was one of the few places where photography studies were funded and its broad range of courses was appealing.<sup>28</sup> The mixture of practice and theory on the degree in Film and Photographic Arts was also attractive; and for one student, his interest in Freud, which was taught on the course, led to a later career in educational counselling.<sup>29</sup>

24 McKibbin, pp. 46–7.

25 Interview with Max Neufeld, 17 December 2010, UWA OHP/5.

26 Interview with Martin Frishman, 18 April 2011, UWA OHP/12.

27 Interview with Ian Glover, 28 December 2010, UWA OHP/6.

28 Interview with Stephen Moulds, 8 March 2011, UWA OHP/9.

29 Interview with Donald Lush, 9 February 2011, UWA OHP/8.

Fig. 97

George Rose, photographed at Great Bitter Lake near the Suez Canal, undated.



Fig. 98

The Queen's Hall, original home of the 'Proms' concerts, seated 2,500 people. Due to its proximity to the Polytechnic it was popular among members and often used for fundraising concerts.



Yet many chose the Polytechnic not simply because of work, career or reputation, but because of its centrality and because it was in London. This was certainly the case for part-time evening students and explains the high numbers of office workers and retail assistants on its courses who could easily reach the Polytechnic buildings after work. For students living outside of London, the location of the Polytechnic in one of the world's most dynamic cities was also highly appealing. In addition, the student body itself was also an attraction. On being asked why he chose RSP, one sociology student at the Polytechnic between 1964 and 1970, explained that he was awed by the Oxbridge system. He was not impressed by its 'Hooray Henrys' and thought he would be more comfortable at the Poly.<sup>30</sup> Some students were attracted by the diversity of their classmates in terms of age, background and ethnicity. One recalled his flat-mate commenting that it was good to be among such a diverse group of students rather than being with people just like yourself in a provincial university.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, the facilities of the Polytechnic had always been an attraction. It had a cinema, a swimming pool, a gymnasium, a snooker room, a library, hot showers, a cafeteria and other facilities in central London for a few shillings a year. It offered unprecedented access to facilities to its students and members. Opposite was the Queen's Hall, a major concert hall and one of London's largest music venues until destroyed by bombing in 1944 (see page 193). It was regularly used by the Polytechnic for large concerts.

The Poly's athletic ground at Chiswick provided some of the best sporting facilities in London at subsidised rates.<sup>32</sup> A series of articles in the *Polytechnic Magazine* in 1921 entitled 'What the POLY Means to Me' all emphasise the attractiveness of the sporting facilities of the Polytechnic and the close friendships formed there.<sup>33</sup> An insight into the life of one student of the Polytechnic before the First World War is left by George Rose in his diaries.<sup>34</sup> Rose was from Ongar Chipping in Epping Forest, Essex and was a clerical worker in

30 Interview with Owen Spencer-Thomas, 20 October 2010, UWA OHP/4.

31 UWA OHP/6.

32 See Mark Clapson, *An Education in Sport: Competition, communities and identities at the University of Westminster since 1864* (Cambridge: Granta, 2012).

33 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January and April 1921.

34 *Diaries of George Rose, 1900–14*, ERO D/DU/418.

the Commercial Gas Company in Stepney, East London. He joined Regent Street Polytechnic's Art School on 7 October 1905, was a part-time evening student there for many years and the Secretary of the Poly Sketch Club between 1909 to 1912. Rose was a talented artist and loathed his work as a clerk. His diary entries are filled with details of his time at the Polytechnic, the people he met there and the music he loved at the Queen's Hall. As he wrote in 1910, it was only in his hours after work that he felt really alive.<sup>35</sup> Rose never achieved his goal of living off his art, yet by 1914 he was a member of the Royal Academy and, helped by the skills he had learnt at the Polytechnic, was earning a secondary income by selling art to several dealers in London.

A final motivation for entering the Polytechnic was its accessibility to applicants compared with the higher requirements of universities. A profile of a student in 1964 in the student newspaper *The Polygen*, stated:

He came to the Polytechnic because – like many people – even with three A-levels he ‘couldn’t get in anywhere else.’ He wanted to read Physics at University, but after being turned down by Cambridge, London, Manchester and Durham, he came to the Poly to do Chemistry; and he will, at the end of three years, take a London University external BSc. degree.<sup>36</sup>

*The Polytechnic Student Handbook, 1961–62* similarly ironically commented that a student's reason for coming to the Polytechnic was often given as, ‘I couldn't get into Oxford or Cambridge, so it had to be the Regent Street Polytechnic’, or ‘I couldn't get any other establishment to utilise my blossoming genius’.<sup>37</sup> This is reflected in the study by Whitburn where by far the biggest reason for coming to a polytechnic for a degree was, ‘Did not obtain A-level grades required by university.’ This represented 44 per cent out of a sample of 4,122 polytechnic students across Britain.<sup>38</sup> In the case of the Polytechnic the full extent of this cannot be known. While, in some ways, this is denigrating to the institution, in other respects it demonstrates that the Polytechnic was fulfilling its organisational mission of widening access to education and realising Quintin Hogg's vision of broadening opportunities in further and higher education, particularly among lower income groups. Without the existence of polytechnics the doors to higher education for many of its students would have remained firmly shut.

## STUDENT POLITICS

Student politics was a fundamental element of student life at the Polytechnic. While not all its students were activists, politics did impinge on the daily lives of students and had important outcomes in terms of their experience as students. This operated on two levels: the internal and external. Internally it influenced the ability of students to do things in the Polytechnic such as organising political or religious associations, using its buildings and expressing opinions. It affected the extent to which students had a voice in the policies

35 *Diaries of George Rose*, 13 May 1910, ERO D/DU/418.

36 *The Polygen*, 28 February 1964, p. 2, UWA RSP/8/1/10.

37 *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1961–62*, p. 9, UWA RSP/8/2/1.

38 Whitburn et al., p. 90.



Fig. 99  
*Poly-hoo was one of a number of short-lived magazines sponsored by the Students' Council before the creation of a formal Students' Union.*



Fig. 100  
*The canteen at Regent Street provided low-cost hot meals for both day and evening students but was the subject of regular complaints.*

and operations of the Polytechnic in areas such as education, discipline, catering and accommodation. It also had an important impact on the social lives of students and their ability to create leisure and enjoyment within the confines of the Polytechnic. Externally, politics affected the ways in which students were able to interact with the wider student body of Britain. It also provided students with a collective voice in relation to areas that affected them directly such as student grants, entrance fees and the cost of student accommodation. Finally, it gave students a voice in national debates that were felt to be relevant. Areas such as foreign policy, national educational decisions, and from the 1960s, social and economic issues. In all these areas, the students of RSP and PCL acquired a reputation for political activism and radicalism.

#### STUDENT POLITICS AND THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL, 1933–64

Students acted collectively throughout this period. Although Regent Street Polytechnic did not have a Students' Union, it did have a Student Representative Council (SRC) which, while not as powerful, operated fundamentally in the same capacity. The SRC was founded on a permanent footing in 1933. This initiative did not come from students, however, but from the Polytechnic management. It did so with the aim of expanding the social activities of the day students, to create a sense of unity, and as a means of creating a channel of communication between the Polytechnic's management and its student body.<sup>39</sup> In May 1933, Douglas Humphrey, the Director of Education of the Polytechnic reformed the SRC by appointing Mr Gillanders, a member of staff in the Matriculation Department, to the permanent position of Secretary and

39 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1933.



Treasurer. Previous student councils had lacked permanency due to their inability to carry funds over from one year to the next. Any surplus money from one year was spent by outgoing council members on a good night out in the West End.<sup>40</sup> Under the reformed system the ten departments of the Day School sent 15 representatives to the SRC, which also elected a chairman and student secretary. The SRC was given continuous (though limited) coverage in the *Polytechnic Magazine* and by 1938 had its own publication, *Poly-boo*, which lasted until the outbreak of war in 1939.

Until 1939 the activities of the SRC were principally social. It was given a small office and a student common room and organised dances, music and cinema for students. It also helped facilitate the establishment of student sports clubs, which existed separately (though often used the same facilities) from the clubs of the Polytechnic Institute. In addition, the SRC affiliated itself to the National Union of Students (NUS) in 1935, though the chief benefit in doing so appears to have been social. On announcing its membership to the NUS, for example, the SRC noted ‘the advantages of this step are manifold and not the least is the opportunity afforded to Polytechnic students of cheap travel abroad’.<sup>41</sup> NUS card holders were given opportunities of discounts on international rail travel and accommodation in hotels and guest houses.<sup>42</sup>

After the Second World War the SRC emerged as a more robust body with a political agenda and keenness to improve the position of day students at the

**Fig. 101**

*The canteen at Marylebone was spacious and light but the quality of and prices of its food continued to be a contentious issue for the Students’ Union throughout the 1970s.*

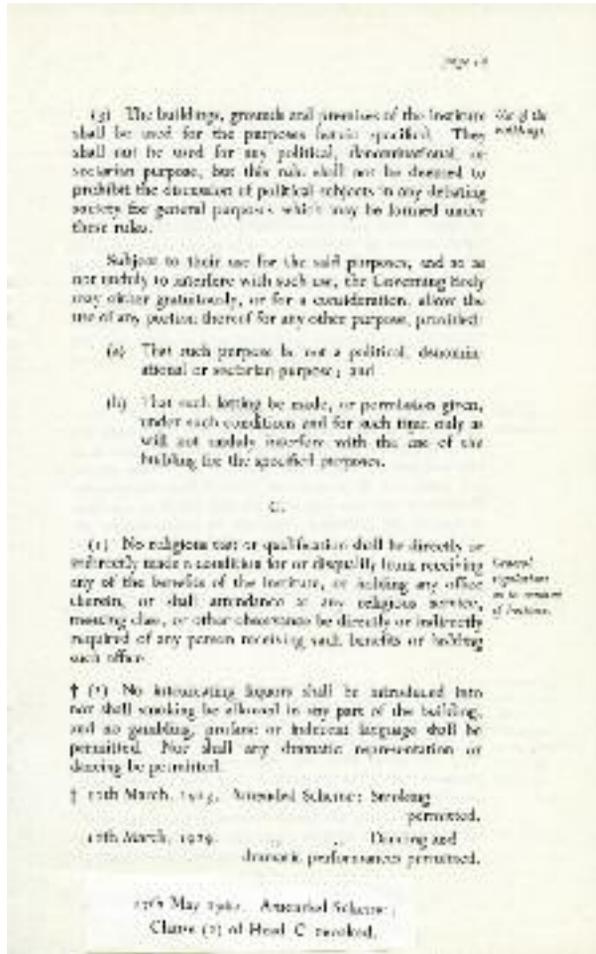
40 *Poly-boo: the Polytechnic Day Students’ Magazine*, July 1939, UWA RSP/8/1/1/2.

41 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1935.

42 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1935.

Fig. 102

Although smoking was allowed from 1913, and dancing from 1929, it took until 1961 for alcohol to be allowed on Polytechnic premises. It was a further six years before the first SU bar was opened at the Polytechnic.



Polytechnic. The large number of ex-servicemen at the Poly, the establishment of a Labour government and its introduction of a welfare state, the availability of government grants to students and the national consensus on the need to modernise Britain's economy all contributed to this agenda.<sup>43</sup> Externally the SRC engaged through the NUS in debates over the extension of higher education, increases in student fees and the provision of income grants to students. Apartheid in South Africa and the atom bomb were also hot issues.<sup>44</sup> Another debate was over affiliation of the NUS to the International Union of Students. This was a student body based in Prague, which advocated world peace and international student solidarity, but whose opponents saw it as a communist front. In the strained conditions of the Cold War of the 1950s and 1960s this debate was both pertinent and ideologically divisive.

Yet it was internal issues within the SRC that dominated debate and activity. There were three main issues; the restaurant at the Poly, the Sectarian Ban and the establishment of a student union. In each, the Council used or threatened direct action, and on all three it achieved some success. In relation to the first, the principal grievance concerned the cost and quality of the food. Due to the food shortages of the post-war period and the continuation of rationing

43 'Students and the Crisis', *The Poly Student*, January 1948, p. 5, UWA RSP 8/1/5/3.

44 See Figs. 226, 227 on p. 199.

the issue was pertinent. In early 1945 the SRC had organised a special committee to investigate conditions at the Regent Street restaurant. A report was sent to the caterer. Following a refusal to take action, a boycott was organised. This attracted full support and resulted in a victory for the SRC who were able to force the caterer and Polytechnic authorities to improve the quality of the food and set lower prices.<sup>45</sup> A Restaurant Advisory Committee was also established which included student representation. This success galvanised the student body. As the President of the SRC wrote, ‘... the most important part of the whole incident was that, for the first time, the students showed that they were capable of acting as a united body behind the Council’.<sup>46</sup> Conflict continued to fester, however, over the topic. In 1961 the former president of the SRC wrote that the struggle for better canteen facilities bore some resemblance to the struggle of trade unions for better working conditions. Strikes, lockouts, sit-ins, boycotts, threats and the use of the press and television had all been used in the attempt to improve culinary provision.<sup>47</sup> A precedent for the direct student actions of the 1960s, 70s and 80s had been established in the unlikely domain of student food. While this may seem somewhat parochial, one of the earliest recorded outbreaks of student protests in North America took place at Harvard University in 1766 when students revolted against being served rancid butter. It has been estimated that 25 per cent of student protests in the United States for the academic year 1967–68 were motivated by issues concerning unsatisfactory facilities for food and refreshment.<sup>48</sup> Closer to home, students at Durham University organised protests against increases in campus cafeteria prices in 1967, which, similar to RSP, escalated into wider protests and increased student radicalisation.<sup>49</sup>

The Sectarian Ban was another major issue for students during this period: a contested topic that went to the heart of the Polytechnic. Under the *Scheme of Administration of Regent Street Polytechnic* of 1891, swearing, smoking, dancing, the drinking of alcohol, theatrical performances and the use of the premises for political, denominational or sectarian purposes were banned.

The ban on smoking was lifted in 1913, and that on dancing and theatrical performances followed suit in 1929. Yet the Sectarian Ban remained. As a consequence students were unable to form political or religious societies though political discussion was tolerated in the form of a Polytechnic Parliament, established in April 1883, and a Student Discussion Group set up after the Second World War (see pages 78–9). It also led to the censorship of student publications by the Polytechnic authorities. The ban was bitterly resented by students and was seen as an affront to their rights of free association and free speech. As one student wrote in an essay in the *Poly Student* magazine in 1951,

As you see, students in this enlightened age are not allowed any of the normally accepted freedoms that our people have enjoyed for centuries. We suffer a sectarian ban, which limits our Freedom of Speech and political and religious opinion; censorship and banning of our publications to limit Freedom of the Press ...<sup>50</sup>

45 *The Poly Student*, September 1945, p. 5.

46 *The Poly Student*, September 1945, p. 5.

47 *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1961–62*, p. 13, UWA RSP/8/2/1.

48 Nella Van Dyke, ‘The Location of Student Protest: Patterns of Activism in American Universities in the 1960s’ in Gerrard J. De Groot (ed.), *Student Protest: The Sixties and After* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 28.

49 Sylvia Ellis ‘A Demonstration of British Good Sense: British Student Protest During the Vietnam War’ in Gerrard, J. De Groot (ed.), *Student Protest: The Sixties and After* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 57.

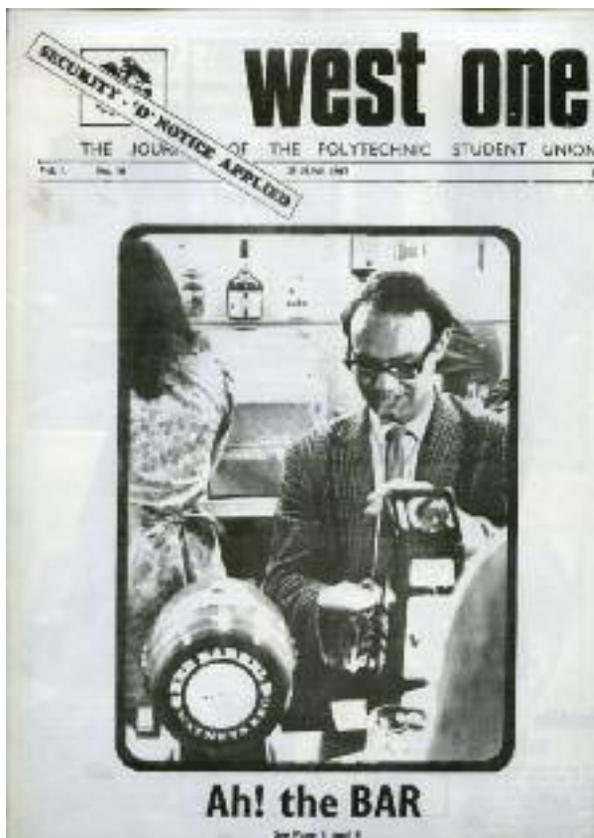
50 *The Poly Student: Festival Edition*, 1951, p. 27, UWA RSP/8/1/5/9.

In 1948 Catholics at RSP bemoaned their inability to meet as a group in the Poly, 'We regret', they protested, 'that we cannot, owing to the ban, publicise ourselves and thus contact other Catholics.'<sup>51</sup> The Sectarian Ban was finally ended in 1962 as a result of a petition organised by the SRC and a threatened march with the support of the media.<sup>52</sup>

The struggle for a union at Regent Street Polytechnic began in 1950 and would last until 1965 when a student union was finally granted.<sup>53</sup> There were two major arguments for the establishment of a full union. The first was that the SRC was too weak to represent student interests to the Polytechnic authorities. It sat, for example, on a Restaurant Advisory Committee, a Liaison Committee and a Sports and Social Finance Committee but had no real power on any due to the limitations of its authority. On the Restaurant Committee it could not discuss terms of contract with appointed caterers, on the Liaison Committee it was unable to talk about education policy. The ten shillings the SRC received for each day student was felt to be too little to do anything meaningful and even this could be withheld by the authorities. The second argument was to do with a feeling that the activities of students at the Polytechnic were far too circumscribed and only the creation of an independent union could ameliorate this. Full-time students complained that they were forced to share Regent Street Polytechnic with the Polytechnic Institute, evening students and secondary students. Representing only 2,000 out of a total of 20,000

Fig. 103

*The Students' Union Bar in Elsley Court, opened in 1967, was an immediate success.*



51 'A Catholic Society: The Religious Ban', *The Student Forum*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1948, p. 1, UWA RSP/8/1/6/1.

52 *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1962-63*, p. 13, UWA RSP/8/2/2.

53 'Battle Over Union Begins', *The Student Forum*, Vol. 4, No. 3, February 1950, UWA RSP/8/1/6/6.



Fig. 104

Former students remember folk  
and comedy gigs taking place in  
the Elsley Court bar as late as the  
1980s.

individuals using the Poly in the 1950s they felt that their interests were never taken seriously. They were forced to leave the premises after 5pm to make way for Institute members and evening students and had nowhere to go in the evening. As a result there was no associational life since there was nowhere to associate. This clearly was at odds with Hogg's vision of the Polytechnic as a space in which friendships could be engendered and clubs formed. The Sec-tarian Ban and the ban on the consumption of alcohol in the Poly simply ex-acerbated this.<sup>54</sup> These protests were clearly articulated in an article in the Poly student magazine, *The Student Forum* in 1952:

What other organisation in London, or indeed in England, tries to combine within one building a College and a public social centre? That is the unhappy anomaly that exists here. During the day the students occupy the building and try to regard themselves as students. Then five o'clock arrives and in come the other sources of revenue, the evening students and the Institute members. The result is that it is neither a college nor a public social centre!

... One of the greatest benefits derived from college life is the social development and enjoyment to be gained from taking part in evening activities, and meeting students from other classes. These evening activities, as far as we day students are concerned, just do not exist. Officially we are supposed to be off the premises by five o'clock each evening! What sort of a college is that?

54 'Blueprint for Castles in the Air', *Poly Student*, Festival Edition, 1951, pp. 26-7, UWA RSP/8/1/5/9; 'The Enterprise is Sick', *The Student Forum*, March 1950, p. 5, UWA RSP/8/1/6/8.

Fig. 105

*Roger Bevil was the second President of the Student Union and was elected in 1967, to serve during the 1967–68 academic year. West One was a highly creative student magazine in the late 1960s at the Polytechnic and was instrumental in giving students a greater voice in Polytechnic and student politics and in the emergence of a vigorous student union.*



An attempt to create a union in 1953 at a General Meeting of the SRC failed due a lack of students to make it quorate. Between 1953 and 1965 it gained, however, substantial concessions from the Polytechnic authorities. Much of this was due to the development of a more assertive student body politic that was less deferential and was more politically motivated. A potted history of the SRC (or Union as it was then called) in the Student Handbook of 1961–62 stated:

The early period of the Union, immediately after the War, was typical of all colleges: well organised activity by ex-servicemen, who passionately wished to live the life of gay students. These men were realistic and experienced, what they had seen made them want to create a new life everywhere. Their contribution to the Union was considerable.

After this era the picture changed and the vogue was for fervent political activity. Elections were held on party slogans, the most prominent group were the Communists ...<sup>55</sup>

55 *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1961–62*, p. 23, UWA RSP/8/2/1.

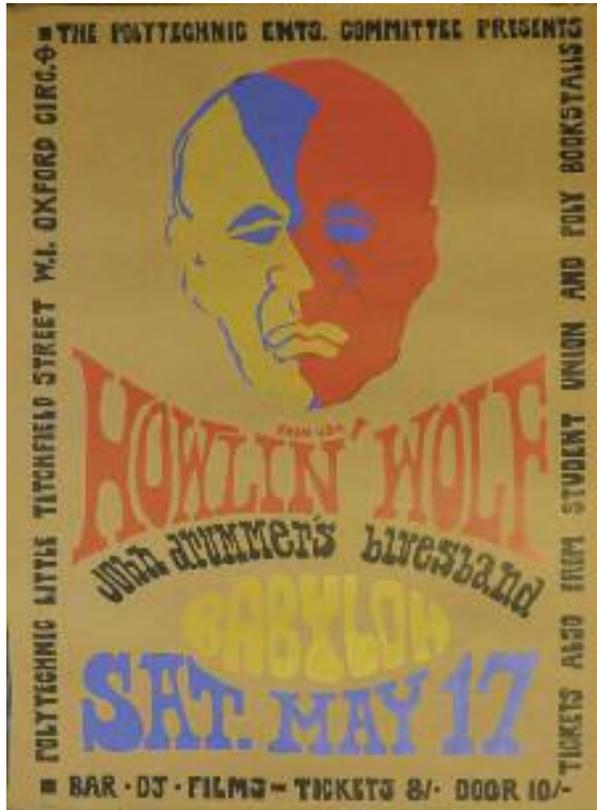


Fig. 106

By the late '60s the Portland Hall in Little Titchfield Street was a major venue for rhythm and blues music. The gigs often included films, exhibitions, a bar and other student activities. They were open to people outside of the Poly, providing a major source of funding for the Students' Union.

In the late 1950s, the SRC obtained an office and a separate student common room in the basement of the Little Titchfield Street building. In 1960 a Wednesday Sports afternoon was granted to students.<sup>56</sup> In 1962 the SRC doubled its income to £2 10s per student.<sup>57</sup> In the same year the Sectarian Ban was removed. The final push came in 1964 with the drafting of a new constitution for the establishment of a union, which was accepted by the Polytechnic's Governing Body in 1965. The new Students' Union (SU) was listed as a charity, which gave it legal rights and protection. It also gained autonomy in the conduct and financing of its activities.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) also published in 1964 a report that emphasised the lack of space within RSP for student organisation and activities. This was discussed in a meeting on 9 December 1964 attended by members of the Governing Body, the Institute, the Teaching Staff Association, the SRC and officers of the Polytechnic. This eventually resulted in the furnishing of the first floor of Elsley Court, in Great Titchfield Street for the students of the Polytechnic in 1967.<sup>58</sup> Students were supplied with nine rooms including a student bar, student union offices, a television room and a reading room.<sup>59</sup> In 1965 the Polytechnic also provided a one-year sabbatical post for the Students' Union President and this was extended in 1968 to its Secretary. In that year the Polytechnic also allowed final-year students to stand for SU posts for which a year of extended study was granted.<sup>60</sup>

56 *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1961–62*, p. 13, UWA RSP/8/2/1.

57 *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1962–63*, p. 13, UWA RSP/8/2/2.

58 *Note on the Relations between the Governing Body and the Students Union of the Polytechnic*, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

59 'The Bar is Open', *West One: the Journal of the Polytechnic Student Union*, Vol. 1, No. 10, 30 June 1967, p. 8, UWA RSP/8/1/11.

60 *Files on a Government White Paper on Polytechnics, 1958–1970*, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

Fig. 107

*It was hoped that the new College of Architecture and Advanced Building Technology would alleviate many of the students' frustrations in terms of housing and parking at the Poly.*



#### THE STUDENTS' UNION 1965–70 – THE STRUGGLE FOR REPRESENTATION

By 1967 the Students' Union had achieved nearly all its goals. It had official and legal recognition, comprehensive and autonomous funding, and generous student facilities. Yet one thing eluded it – the ability to gain representation on the Board of Governors of the Polytechnic and other bodies such as the Academic Council. In many respects this authority was the most important. What was the point of having a students' union if it was unable to represent directly the educational interests of its student members? While there had been calls for student representation by the SRC since 1950, by the mid-'60s two factors had emerged that made the goal of student representation more realistic.<sup>61</sup> The first was the emergence of the student movement across Britain in the latter half of the 1960s. The second was the establishment of polytechnics by the Wilson Government in the late 1960s.<sup>62</sup>

The student movement saw the rise of a much more assertive and radical student body in Britain after 1965. It was one that demanded its rights and took direct action such as sit-ins, strikes and marches to achieve these. This change in students can be detected in a change in the way they dressed. Until the mid-'60s the attire of students reflected the professional adult world they aspired to belong to. Men wore slacks and jackets and often sported a tie, women wore pencil skirts and smart blouses. The standard student dress after the late '60s was jeans and t-shirts, men often wearing their hair long.<sup>63</sup> Students now emphasised their separate identity from the adult working world. This change was due to several factors. A key reason was the rise of an affluent,

61 'Battle Over Union Begins', *The Student Forum*, Vol. 4, No. 3, February 1950, p. 2, UWA RSP/8/1/6/6.

62 See Chapter 3 for more details.

63 Paul Addison, *No Turning Back: The Peacetime Revolutions of Post-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 163.

consumerist society in which for the first time in its history a majority of Britons were free from the age-old fears of poverty and unemployment.<sup>64</sup> The emergence of a distinct youth culture in the late 1950s and early 1960s, including the rise of popular music (often associated with the Beatles and the Rolling Stones) and youth fashion had marked ramifications for student life.<sup>65</sup> The increase in student numbers in the 1960s in Britain from 216,000 in 1962 to 310,000 in 1965, now one in ten young people, further boosted the confidence of its students.<sup>66</sup> The emergence of the new left and the counter-culture in British university campuses led to a radicalisation in their culture, especially among those studying arts, languages and the social sciences.<sup>67</sup> Across British universities students rose up in protest. In London this was particularly marked in the occupations, marches and arrests at the London School of Economics 1967–69, the occupation of Hornsey College of Art in North London in the summer of 1968, as well as the protests at RSP.<sup>68</sup>

The first President of the Students' Union from 1966–67 has described the changes that took place among students in the mid-'60s. In its early history the Polytechnic had been a philanthropic and benevolent institution with rich families like the Hoggs and Studds helping poorer people to get education and opportunities in life. There was a conformist and subservient culture among students who were expected to be thankful to their social superiors. The Polytechnic was perceived by some to be a 'benevolent dictatorship'.<sup>69</sup> In the 1960s

**Fig. 108**  
*The students occupied 309 Regent Street in November 1981 for 12 days. The action resulted in 12 arrests after police first barricaded and then stormed the building to end the protest.*



Fig. 109

*The protests continued throughout the 1980s, on both local and national student issues.*



this changed due to the explosion in new universities and student numbers, an increase in funding and the rise of a more transparent and meritocratic culture. Students now saw higher education as a right rather than a gift, and challenged the old order, which they perceived as an obstacle to their values and interests. There was thus a fundamental shift in attitude, which became the student revolution of the 1960s. Students began to believe that, 'we are as good as the people who are teaching us, we are part of it and we have a stake in it'.<sup>70</sup> While this interpretation was not exhaustive, students were already radical and had won important concessions at Regent Street Polytechnic from 1945 to 1965. This certainly helps to explain decisive changes in students' attitudes and behaviour during this period.

The second factor was the decision by the Wilson Government to establish 30 polytechnics across Britain that would have the same status and funding as universities and would widen access to higher education. Within the governance of these new polytechnics the Department of Education and Science (DES) advised Local Education Authorities, who were entrusted with their delivery, that student unions should be given representation within polytechnics. As the DES wrote in a memorandum in 1967, '... arrangements should enable representation on matters of proper concern to students to be made on their behalf to the governing body, the Director or the academic board as may be appropriate'.<sup>71</sup> This policy was vital in the achievement of student representation at the Polytechnic. The SU realised that while Regent Street Polytechnic and Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce were negotiating the constitution for the amalgamation of their two institutions into the Polytechnic of Central London, the actual role of the SU within the new polytechnic was ultimately decided by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), which in turn was monitored by the DES. As a result, the students' unions at both the Polytechnic and Holborn directed their efforts for representation towards not just the two respective colleges, but also towards the ILEA, the

64 Addison, Chapter 6; Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties* (London: Abacus, 2007), Chapter 28.

65 Addison, Chapter 6; Sandbrook, Chapter 28.

66 Sandbrook, Chapter 6.

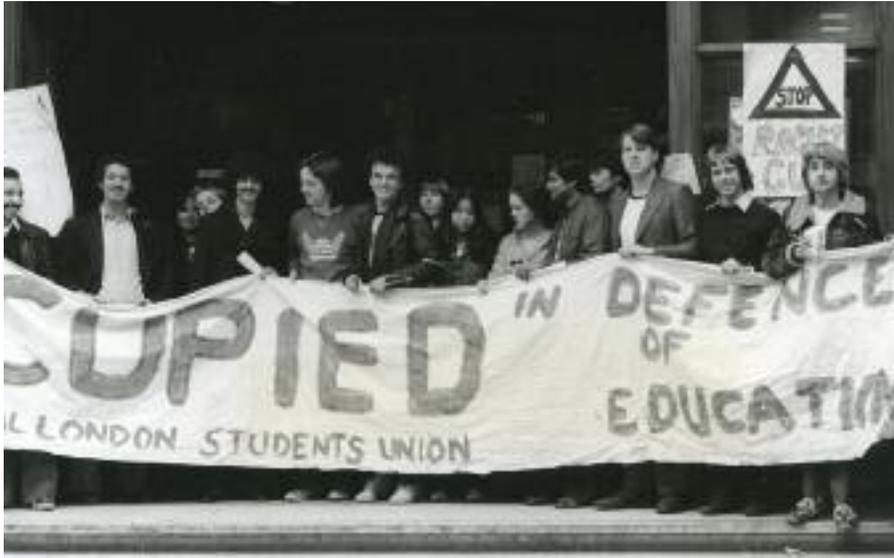
67 Sandbrook, p. 537.

68 David Caute, *Sixty-Eight: The Year of the Barricades* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1988), Chapter 18.

69 Interview with Owen Spencer-Thomas, 20 October 2010, UWA OHP/4.

70 Interview with Owen Spencer-Thomas, UWA OHP/4.

71 *Letter and Memorandum from Department of Education and Science to Local Education Authorities*, 4 April 1967, TNA ED188/19.



**Fig. 110**  
*Occupations of the Polytechnic's buildings were common throughout the 1970s and 80s. They usually occurred at the end of term and often lasted for several days.*

DES and the general public. Members of Parliament were petitioned, newspapers were written to and a dialogue emerged between the SU and ILEA.<sup>72</sup> In December 1967, for example, students from RSP and Holborn living in East Willesden wrote to their MP, Alderman Reg Freeson, protesting at their treatment from their respective college authorities. He in turn wrote a letter to Sir William Houghton, Director of Education for ILEA, criticising the lack of consultation with the student bodies from these colleges over the matter of student representation. This was then sympathetically reported on 29 December 1967 in the local newspaper, the *Willesden & Brent Chronicle*.<sup>73</sup> Matters came to a head on 7 December 1967 when students staged a mass sit-in at Regent Street and a march of over 500 students across central London to Lincoln's Inn Fields. Student agitation, in terms of direct action, political dialogue and publicity, was designed to put pressure on the two colleges from not only the students themselves but also from ILEA and the DES.<sup>74</sup> This strategy paid off. The offer in 1968 from RSP of a Liaison Committee was rejected. In 1969, under pressure from ILEA, the Polytechnic allowed the Students' Union to have two representatives on its Board of Governors, four (later increased to eight) on its Academic Council and further representation on its faculty, departmental and course boards.<sup>75</sup> This was a major victory for the SU and the students of the new PCL and was reflected across polytechnics in London who were granted similar powers.

#### THE POLITICS OF STUDENT PROTEST, 1970–92

Between 1970 and 1992 the Polytechnic of Central London Students' Union (PCLSU) engaged in a strategy of protest and direct action against PCL, ILEA and the Government. This was the period of the occupation, student strikes, protest marches and the rent strike amid a background of deep economic recession, militant trade unionism and mass strikes. It was one in which PCLSU

72 *Note on the Relations between the Governing Body and the Students Union of the Polytechnic*, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

73 *Letter from Ald. Reg Freeson to Sir William Houghton*, 15 December 1967 and Newspaper Clipping from *Willesden & Brent Chronicle*, 29 December, 1967, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

74 *Note on the Relations between the Governing Body and the Students Union of the Polytechnic*, LMA ILEA/PS/FHE/41/11.

75 'Minutes of the Meeting of the Governors' Joint Working Party Together with Representatives of the Academic Staff and Students Held at the Polytechnic on Friday 10 January 1969' as reported in the *Polytechnic Governing Body Minutes*, 20 January 1969, UWA RSP/1/BG.





Fig. 112

*In the early days of the Poly the majority of students lived at home during their studies but by the 1960s many wanted more independence and there were campaigns to improve the provision of student accommodation.*

In 1969, following fresh outbreaks of student protests at the London School of Economics, an editorial in *The Times* newspaper wrote of a new phenomenon of the ‘labourization’ of students in Britain. The newspaper observed:

Relations within universities are coming to resemble relations within industry. Both are divided into them and us – management and workers, authorities and students, plus some sympathizing dons. The sit-in and demo, like the unofficial strike, are widely regarded on one side of the divide as legitimate tactics. Solidarity among students is comparable to solidarity among workers, and ‘victimization’ is an equally potent cry.<sup>80</sup>

Students’ unions protested and demonstrated in support of their state-funded grants, which they saw as coming under attack from inflation and government cut-backs. Many of the grievances of PCLSU and the NUS in general in the 1970s resulted from the failure of governments to increase grants in line with inflation, which led to a fall in students’ income and their standard of living.<sup>81</sup> PCLSU also argued against the fact that grants were means-tested, leading

<sup>80</sup> *The Times*, 28 January 1969, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup> ‘Grants: A Protracted Campaign’, *McGarel*, Vol. 5, No. 9, p. 1, January 1974, UWA PCL/8/1/1.



Fig. 113  
In 1974 PCLSU's *McGarel* newspaper mocked the motives of some of the students in joining protest marches.

many to rely on parental contributions, and also that students studying below degree level received discretionary grants from their local authorities. In the 1980s the threat of increases in parental contributions and the introduction of student loans also galvanised PCLSU. To some extent it was successful. An attempt to reform student union funding and to allow students to contract out of their unions by the then Minister for Education, Margaret Thatcher, was successfully resisted in 1971. Students achieved a major increase in their grants in 1974 reversing most of their losses due to inflation, and in 1984 national student protests, with PCLSU at the forefront, prevented the Government from doubling parental contribution for their children's education.<sup>82</sup>

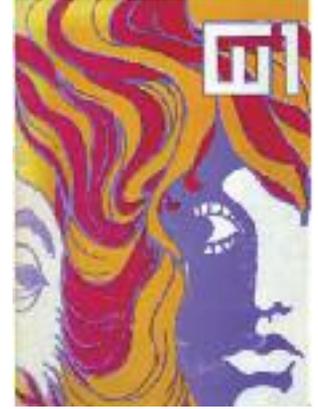
In 1967 the DES sharply increased university and higher education fees for overseas students.<sup>83</sup> In the 1970s this policy continued with quotas imposed by ILEA on the number of overseas students studying in polytechnics in London and hefty increases in their accommodation fees.<sup>84</sup> While overseas students had previously been subsidised to the same extent as students in England and Wales, this began to diminish from the 1960s. Financial support for students from outside Britain was also felt to diminish funding for home students in higher education, which government was keen to increase. PCLSU opposed this policy. It argued that Britain had a responsibility to educate those from overseas and government policy was perceived as racial discrimination against a vulnerable but valuable minority. The consequence was a wave of strikes, pickets and marches in support of overseas students from the 1960s to the 1980s. On 20 November 1969, for example, PCL students supported by students from other colleges and the Black Panthers marched to the DES in protest against government policies against overseas students.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, PCL students took part in a march down Oxford Street on 12 March 1976 in a demonstration in support of overseas students, which numbered up to 25,000 students.<sup>86</sup> On 1 March 1977 a one-day strike by students shut down PCL.<sup>87</sup> While such direct action did not prevent an increase in fees and costs for overseas students, they did raise the issue nationally and also resulted in the provision of hardship funds for these students. An attempt by the ILEA in 1976 to reduce the proportion of overseas students to 10 per cent was also resisted by PCLSU and other polytechnic students' unions, with the tacit approval of their governing institutions.<sup>88</sup>

The third area of student protest were rent strikes. In the 1970s the 300 students in PCL accommodation were faced with almost constant annual

- 82 'Action Day: Total Closure Success', *McGarel*, Vol. 3, No. 9, 1971, p. 1; 'DES Postpone for a Year', *McGarel*, Vol. 3, No. 11, p. 2; 'Grants up to £655 Full demands Not Met', *McGarel*, Vol. 5, No. 20, p. 2; 'Cop-Out Students Force Own-Goal as Joseph Backs Down on Grant Cuts!', *McGarel*, 10 December 1984, p. 1, UWA PCL/8/1/1.
- 83 'Overseas Students Increased Fees Protest', *West One: the Journal of the Polytechnic Student Union*, 17 November 1966, p. 4, UWA RSP/8/1/11/3.
- 84 'Overseas Students', *McGarel*, 13 November, 1976, Supplement, p. ii, UWA PCL/8/1/1.
- 85 'Demo 12th November'. *McGarel*, 20 November 1969, p. 1.
- 86 'Good Turnout for Demo'. *McGarel*, 13 March, 1976, p. 6.
- 87 'All Out On Day Of Action Strike Closes Poly', *McGarel*, Vol. 8, No. 21, 7 March 1977, p. 12.
- 88 'Interview with ILEA leader, Sir Ashley Bramall', *McGarel*, 24 April 1978, p. 9, UWA PCL/8/1/1.



increases in rent, sometimes as high as 20–40 per cent.<sup>89</sup> These rises were imposed by ILEA, who owned the accommodation, rather than PCL, which further complicated the situation. The reaction of PCLSU was the tactic of the rent strike. The tactic originated in Glasgow in 1915 when, faced with large increases in rents by landlords, tenants collectively refused to pay. It was used by British students during the student uprisings of 1967–68. At PCL students continued to pay rent (at the original rather than contested rate) to PCLSU rather than the Polytechnic. This was kept in a rent strike fund that was retained by the union and returned to PCL once agreement between the two had been reached over the cost of rent. This tactic meant that the Polytechnic was unable to evict students for non-payment of rent because if they did so they were faced not only with the threat of bad publicity, but also of being challenged in court by PCLSU, who would argue that students were technically paying rent. They were simply giving it to their union rather than their polytechnic, who were happy to return it to the authorities once they had resolved their dispute.<sup>90</sup> In the 1970s there were four rent strikes at PCL, which sometimes lasted up to two years. The first lasted from 1972 to 1974, the second from 1975 to 1976, the third from 1976 to 1977 and the fourth from 1978 to 1980. They also intermittently appeared in the 1980s and early 1990s. In all cases PCLSU was successful and was able to achieve reductions in rent increases.<sup>91</sup> The protest was in reality against ILEA who imposed the rises rather than PCL.



**Fig. 114**  
*The West One magazine was produced by the Polytechnic Students' Union 1966–69 and the cover designs often reflected the psychedelic culture of the time.*

**Fig. 115**  
*The swimming bath was closed in 1981 due to health and safety concerns but some students continued to sneak in, including student Donald Lush who took this picture for his photographic portfolio, c.1984.*

89 'The Towering Inflation. Hall Fees Up – Rent Strike Restarted', *McGarel*, 4 October 1976, p. 1, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

90 'Rent Strike Picket', *McGarel*, 9 October 1978, p. 1, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

91 'Rent Strike Gold We've Won', *McGarel*, 23 November 1974, p. 1, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

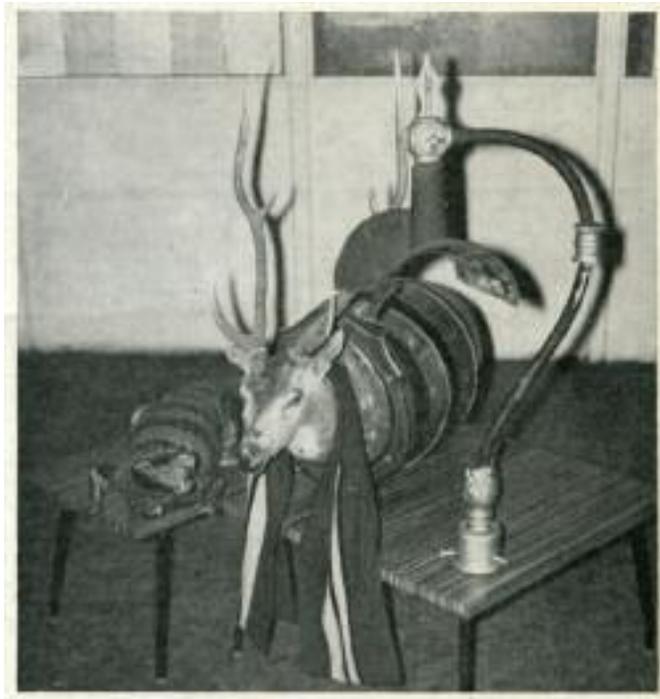
Flats continued to be cleaned during the strikes and the Polytechnic was generally tolerant towards student demands. Both sides, for example, actively co-operated with each other concerning students who refused to pay rent to either the Polytechnic or PCLSU. During a strike in 1982, for instance, the President of PCLSU warned students who failed to pay rent to the fund that if they continued to do so their names would be passed to the Polytechnic's solicitors; they would be served with notices of eviction and a bill for arrears in rent. The letter closed with the ominous threat, 'You've been warned, so don't f\*\*\* us about any longer or we might get really nasty ...'<sup>92</sup>

#### DEGREES OF POLITICAL ACTIVISM

A final question concerns just how politically active were students at the Polytechnic? To what degree were they a group of left-wing revolutionaries who wanted to overturn the 'system' and who represented a united political bloc? There are grounds to question all of this. A survey in 1964, for instance, showed that half of students at the Polytechnic supported the Conservative Party.<sup>93</sup> There was always a split between the more conservative engineering and science students and the more radical elements who tended to study the social sciences and communication. An engineering student at the Poly in the early '60s spoke about the distaste he and fellow engineering students had towards left-wing students from the LSE who visited RSP: 'We thought they were really left-wingy ... loud mouthed [and] shallow, you know, "I'm better than the rest of you" and all the rest of it.'<sup>94</sup> Such a split was demonstrated at

**Fig. 116**

*During rag week the Poly's mascot was the subject of regular kidnap attempts by other polytechnics.*



92 Letter from PCLSU to Margaret Blaver, Secretary of PCL, 6 October 1982, Rent Strike 1982, UWA PCL 8/2/3.

93 'So Many Conservatives at The Polytechnic', *The Polygen*, 20 November 1964, p. 1, UWA RSP/8/1/10.

94 Interview with Andrew Baxter, 8 April 2011, UWA OHP/11.

the Polytechnic between 1950 to 1975 by the creation of a separate Athletics Student Union. It was made up predominantly of the above engineering and science students and looked down on what it saw as the chaotic politicking of the union and its left-wing tendencies.<sup>95</sup>

The body was recognised by the Polytechnic authorities and received 35 per cent of student funding. In 1962 this amounted to seventeen shillings and six pence for every student in the Polytechnic, regardless of whether they actually used the facilities of the Athletics Student Union, and thus represented a significant sum of money. In addition, PCLSU was never a unified movement, with infighting at times being endemic. This was the result of a diverse student body that contained a multitude of political opinions and movements. In 1977, for example, PCLSU President-Elect Randy Fields took the Union President, the General Secretary and an ex-Union President to the High Court over accusations of nepotism and a failure to follow union procedure. While doing so, a PCLSU general meeting attempted to suspend him and pay the legal costs of the defendants. Field's victory in both arenas did little to heal divisions, and there was a further attempt by the PCLSU to impeach him later that year.<sup>96</sup>

One can also question the level of student involvement in demonstrations and occupations. They rarely involved more than 200 students, around 5 per cent of the total student population. They were often met by student complaints that they undermined the cause they fought for and brought PCL students a bad reputation.<sup>97</sup> Student inactivity at PCL appears to have been no different from any other institution of higher education. Even at the height of political

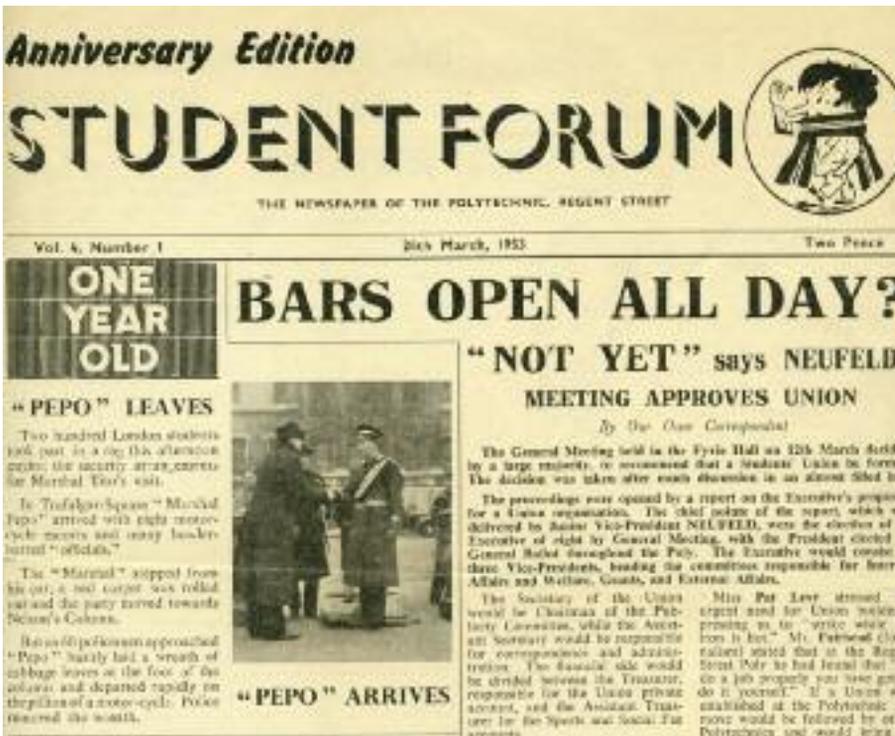
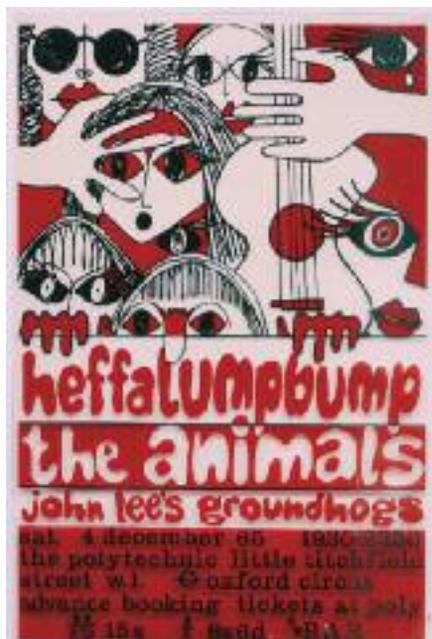


Fig. 117  
The Student Forum newspaper reports the Tito prank, as well as early attempts to form a Students' Union.

- 95 'Compatibility or Chaos Students' Athletic Union', *West One: the Journal of the Polytechnic Student Union*, 16 March 1967, p. 4, UWA RSP/8/1/11/6.
- 96 'The Court Case: The History of Last Term's Injunction', *McGarel*, 23 September 1977, pp. 6-7; 'Randy's Stand Lasts', *McGarel*, 24 April 1978, pp. 1-2, UWA PCL/8/1/1.
- 97 'Letters to the Editor', *McGarel*, 23 February 1974, p. 4, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

Figs. 118, 119

Gigs were held regularly in the Little Titchfield Street building throughout the 1960s.



action of the London School of Economics in 1967, for example, only four in ten students took part in the protests, and fewer than one in ten took part in a sit-in for more than four days.<sup>98</sup> Additionally, student apathy rather than student activism appeared to be the rule. In March 1975, for example, it took five attempts to obtain a quorum for a general meeting for PCLSU.<sup>99</sup> Most students, it would appear, in the 1960s, 70s and 80s were more interested in drinking, getting stoned, having sex, listening to The Animals, Led Zeppelin, or The Smiths, or watching *The Avengers*, *The Professionals* or *EastEnders* on television rather than the exertions of a rather boring meeting, a demanding march or the discomfort of an occupation. It is interesting to note that the latter activity often appeared towards the end of term, when examinations were over, and was never usually sustained for more than two or three days.<sup>100</sup>

By the 1980s the PCL management appears to have greeted them with resigned tolerance. In addition, the politics of the personal, of feminism, of vegetarianism, or of homosexuality, for example, were certainly evident at PCL, especially by the 1970s and 1980s, but were never quite as vocal.<sup>101</sup> There were many ways in which one could be political that did not mean direct action. All of this, of course, is not to undermine the achievements of politics and the Students' Union at the Polytechnic. It is only to question its nature and its extent. It is, however, safe to assume that most students were proud of their union and supported it when they saw that it was in their interest. Calls for rent strikes, boycotts and student strikes were generally adhered to. As one student at PCL in the early '80s commented, 'It was felt that generally the student union was 'right-on'.... People generally thought that the union was a good thing.'<sup>102</sup>

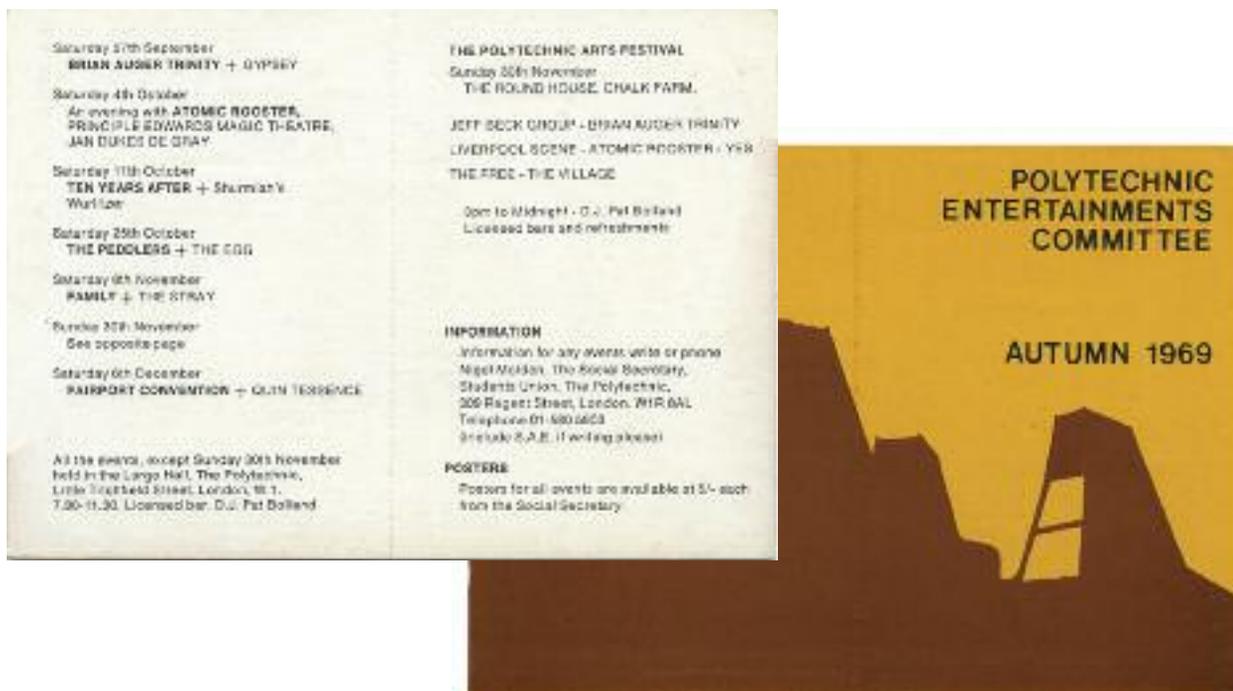
<sup>98</sup> Sandbrook, p. 541.

<sup>99</sup> 'Quorum or Bust', *McGarel*, 10 March 1975, p. 1, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

<sup>100</sup> Occupation in Retrospect', *McGarel*, Vol. 5, No. 8, 1974, pp. 1-2, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

<sup>101</sup> 'Homosexual Equality?', *McGarel*, Vol. 4, Nos. 11 & 12, Christmas Edition, 1972, p. 9, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Donald Lush, 9 February 2011, UWA OHP/8.



### FUN AND RELAXATION – RAG AND MUSIC

Life at the Polytechnic was not all studying and politics. Nor was it simply inebriation, sexual adventure or just lounging around in front of the television. Associational life was strong at the Polytechnic with clubs in sport, politics, drama, hobbies and lifestyle. By the 1960s the creation of the Student Union, the supply of more dedicated space for student social life, and the lifting of restrictions on students and their access to the Polytechnic resulted in an upsurge in student associations. Two areas that do not quite fall in this area but which were an important part of student life were Rag Week and music.

It is not clear when Rag Week began at the Polytechnic although there were certainly efforts to raise money for charity by members and students in both the Institute and the day and night schools before the First World War. The annual Christmas Dinner Fund, when hundreds of Poly students, staff and members collected money and provided hampers of food to London's poor during the festive season is an example of this. By the 1950s, however, Rag Week, a period of collecting money for charity among British students, was an established practice in the Polytechnic. During the Week students performed pranks in an attempt to raise money. The London to Leicester Pram Race, for example, was a sponsored event in which teams of up to 20 from higher education institutes took it in turns to push a pram 75 yards, while those not pushing followed in a coach. Drinking and accidents appeared to be the rule in this event.<sup>103</sup> By all accounts, the 1950s and 1960s were the 'golden age' in the extent of practical jokes played by students. One student, who studied Architecture in the 1950s, recalled two escapades in which he and fellow students took

Figs. 120, 121

*The 1969 entertainments included bands and musicians still well-regarded today, such as the guitarist Jeff Beck, Yes and The Fairport Convention.*

<sup>103</sup> 'London–Leicester Pram Pushing Race', *The Polytechnic Student Handbook 1961–62*, pp. 47–49, UWA RSP/8/2/1.

part. In the first they got dressed in grubby overalls, equipped themselves with picks and shovels and drove off to the Strand in a lorry where they subsequently dug up several square metres of the area. They encircled it with traffic cones and warning signs and then drove off. The Metropolitan Police dutifully directed traffic around the site for almost one week.<sup>104</sup>

Another incident involved the official state visit to London of the Yugoslavian Head of State Marshall Tito, an event which involved high levels of state security. The students decided to create their own Tito, choosing an appropriate look-alike and dressing him in their own self-concocted uniform of the Yugoslav Army. They escorted him with a troupe of similarly dressed body guards down to Trafalgar Square where they presented a wreath and gave a speech in Serbo-Croat, which a large audience listened to in 'sincere respect'. The police and security forces, bemused that Tito was now in two different places, safeguarded the ceremony. Only after the speech did they move in, at which point the students threw off their disguises and ran back to the relative safety of Regent Street.<sup>105</sup>

Music was another integral element of student life at the Polytechnic. As evidenced in the historical paper trail of the archives, the beat of music was a key part of the student experience. From the 1880s, students were given discounts to hear concerts at the Queen's Hall in Regent Street and hosted their own shows there, performed by the Polytechnic Popular Entertainments.<sup>106</sup> One of the first acts of the SRC in the 1930s was the provision of music for students. In 1935 it bought a state of the art HMV radiogram which was capable of playing eight records without being changed.<sup>107</sup> Dance classes and classical music recitals were given at lunch-time, and in 1937 swing music was played every Monday.<sup>108</sup> Following 1945 student music was a major feature at the Polytechnic with jazz and swing being highly popular.<sup>109</sup> Dances were regularly organised by the SRC both within and outside the Polytechnic. By the 1950s a Friday Hop Dance was held in the extension building in the Portland Hall, Little Titchfield Street, and was an established feature of student life. Another event was the annual Swots Ball. This was a yearly formal dance held at the Royal Festival Hall that went on until dawn.<sup>110</sup> By the early '60s it was held in conjunction with the Northern Polytechnic and attracted thousands of students.<sup>111</sup>

This long tradition of student music laid the foundation for an outburst of music at the Polytechnic in the London of the Swinging Sixties. During this period, along with venues such as the Marquee Club and Middle Earth, the Portland Hall of the Polytechnic became one of the principal centres in London for live music. Bands such as Manfred Mann, The Animals, Cream and Fleetwood Mac all played at the Poly. Jimi Hendrix's first ever live performance in the UK was in the Portland Hall, when he was invited by Eric Clapton and Cream to join them for a jam in October 1966.<sup>112</sup> It became a major venue in the late '60s for rhythm and blues and psychedelic music, the latter pioneered by Pink Floyd, a band originally formed from architecture students from the Polytechnic.<sup>113</sup> From October to December 1968, for example, Julie Driscoll,

104 Interview with Martin Frishman, 18 April 2011, UWA OHP/12.

105 Interview with Martin Frishman, UWA OHP/12. See also Fig. 117, p. 112.

106 'Polytechnic Popular Entertainments, Queen's Hall', *Polytechnic Magazine*, 2 January, 1895, pp. 16–17. See also pp. 156–7.

107 'The Students' Council', *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1935, p. 59.

108 'Musing on the Lunch Hour Music', *Poly-boo*, December 1938, p. 40, UWA RSP/8/11/1.

109 'Boogie Woogie', *The Poly Student*, January 1948, pp. 12–13, UWA RSP/8/1/5/3.

110 *The Polytechnic Students' Handbook* 61–2, p. 37.

111 *The Student Guide to the Polytechnic* (c.1960), p. 6, UWA RSP/8/2 [P133].

112 Charles R. Cross, *Room Full of Mirrors: A Biography of Jimi Hendrix* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005), pp. 161–2.

113 Sandbrook, pp. 442–4; Mark Blake, *Pigs Might Fly: The Inside Story of Pink Floyd* (London: Aurum, 2007), pp. 36–40; Glenn Povey, *The Complete History of Pink Floyd* (Chesham: Mind Head Publishing, 2007), pp. 13–15.



Fig. 122  
*Pink Floyd's Nick Mason and Roger Waters met while studying Architecture at the Regent Street Polytechnic – here they are at work in the Year One studio.*

Brian Auger, Blossom Toes, Fleetwood Mac and The Family all performed live. Much of this had to do with the creation of the SU. The Union had much more money in the late '60s and was able to buy in big bands. Prices were also incredibly low. The performance by Cream with Jimi Hendrix in 1966, for example, cost only two shillings and six pence a ticket.<sup>114</sup> Such shows were (un-surprisingly) highly popular with students, many often not being able to secure tickets. One student described the Portland Hall as coming alive with students chanting the words together with the music and the band.<sup>115</sup> Another recalled, 'In the place where they held them I used to think the building would collapse it was so heaving'.<sup>116</sup> While the late 1960s were something of a golden age for live music at the Poly, it continued to attract and buy in large bands. In the 1980s, for example, groups such as New Order, the Boomtown Rats and the Stone Roses all played at PCL's New Cavendish Street building.

## CONCLUSION

What is fascinating when surveying student life at the Polytechnic is both its sense of continuity and change. In some respects the students at the end of the period were very different from those at the beginning. They studied full-time degree courses, were made up equally of men and women, were multicultural and looked and behaved very differently from those of the earlier period. Yet the continuities were still there. Most took vocational courses, many were Londoners or lived near to the capital, and a large number were from working, less privileged backgrounds. Many still studied on evening courses. Much of this was due to Quintin Hogg's legacy. His emphasis on technical and vocational education for individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, offering

114 'Intro', *West One: the Journal of the Polytechnic Student Union*, 13 October 1966, p. 3, UWA RSP/8/1/11/1. This is the equivalent of £14.47 in 2005. [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency).

115 Interview with Owen Spencer-Thomas, UWA OHP/4.

116 Interview with Ian Glover, 28 December 2010, UWA OHP/6.

opportunities for self-improvement and career development, was still resonant nearly a hundred years after his death. Even those aspects of the students of RSP and PCL which were so divergent from their predecessors – their radicalism, expressiveness and autonomy – owed some of this to the founder of the Polytechnic. Some came from the fiery evangelism which had so motivated Hogg and his early pioneers. Yet much was due to the unique circumstances within which the student body developed. In any story there is never a protagonist without an antagonist, and for the history of students at Regent Street the latter was Hogg and the Victorian legacy which he had so deeply installed at the Polytechnic. This acted as a foil against which the student body emerged. Their struggles for recognition and rights in the 1940s and '50s created a student culture and collective which came of age in the vibrant and turbulent decades from the late 1960s to the 1980s. It was one that was politically active, culturally dynamic and highly expressive. It was also one which left a deep impression on many of those that passed through the doors of 309 Regent Street.

STUDENT SOCIETIES

The educational classes at the Polytechnic were never just about improving the mind, but were also about socialising and community. By 1888 there were organised societies for current or former students of the Printing, Shorthand, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering classes, as well as French and German mutual improvement clubs. These societies enabled members to continue to study in a less formal environment, and they regularly held social events and outings.

In March 1893 an Architectural and Engineering Society was formed, with an organised programme of Saturday visits to various building works around London, such as Tower Bridge and German-born British artist

Sir Hubert von Herkomer's unusual house 'Lululand'. The Society disbanded during the First World War and it was 1921 before a Polytechnic Engineering Society (PES) was re-formed. The PES became one of the most successful of the student societies, even awarding its own diploma in the 1930s for the three best papers read by members each year. Other departments soon followed suit and soon the Architectural Society was hosting lectures by Marcel Breuer, Berthold Lubetkin and John Betjeman, as well as publishing its own journal, the *Double Elephant*. The departments also organised their own sports teams, who competed both against one another and against the sports clubs of the Institute.

From 1933 the students' extracurricular activities were co-ordinated by the Students' Council, the representative body of the Day Departments whose

Fig. 123



P. J. Williams, C. W. Edwards, F. W. Whittam, G. A. Baker, W. H. Price, R. Williams, Secretary, J. Denton, G. Lusk, J. E. Y. Mansley, W. H. Andrews, J. R. Dore, E. J. Lewis, L. C. Cole, J. Murray, Treasurer and Director.

**POLYTECHNIC SHORTHAND SOCIETY.**  
 Meets weekly for advanced shorthand teaching. Special evening lectures for special students. Attendance of students admitted free. A Member of the Institution, as well as the usual diploma for "Mastery" and "Proficiency" of Phonography, and thoroughly practical in system. An "Advanced Shorthand Class" by the Institute. J. K. Williams, Secy. 209.

**TYPOGRAPHICAL & PRINTERS' SOCIETY.**  
 President, E. R. Anderson, Esq. Vice-President, G. Hill, Esq. Secretary, Egan. Meets the 1st Monday each month for talks, discussion. A Working Collection of specimens, photographs, engraved and printed in great quantity from Europe and America, are displayed in the Society's Meeting-rooms. Only students Members and students of the Printing Classes eligible. Address: Alder, Secy.

**BOBT & SHOE MANUFACTURE & LEATHER TRADES SOCIETY.**  
 The Society is formed for the technical advancement of its Members in all matters connected with the Printing and Allied Leather Trades. Meetings are held from time to time in order to consider questions of the Commerce. President, John Watson, Esq. Treasurer, Hill, Alder, Secy.

**POLYTECHNIC GERMAN SOCIETY.**  
 Every Thursday Evening at 8.15. For the general improvement of its Members in the German Language by such means as the Conversation and from time to time Recitations. Quarterly subscription, 6s. F. W. FORDGATE, Alder, Secy.

**POLYTECHNIC FRENCH SOCIETY.**  
 Every Monday at 8.15. To improve and assist the study of the French Language by the introduction of a Library of French literature, and such other means as shall be determined by the Committee. C. LINDSAY, Alder, Secy.

**POLYTECHNIC ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING SOCIETY.**  
 Meets of Members of the Institute and Students of engineering for the purpose of reading papers and holding discussions upon matters connected with the subject. Contains of Instruments and Apparatus, a Lecture Laboratory and Air Light, connected with a 4-Tools, etc. Address: Alder, Secy.

**IG ENGINEERING SOCIETY.**  
 Held to read Papers and discuss papers of students and lecturers in London. Their Members of Students and Lecturers holding one of the Members for reference. Arrange to give occasional entertainments in and social events. W. H. H. Alder, Secy.

Fig. 124

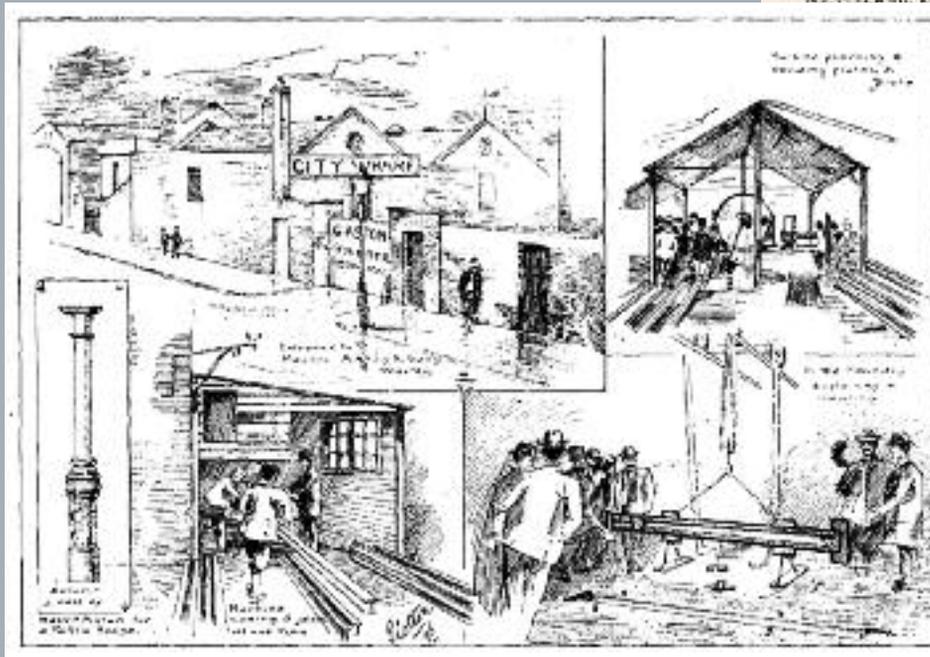


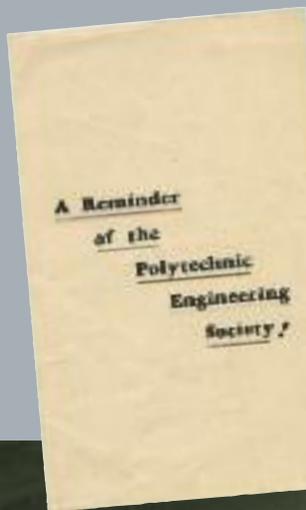
Fig. 125

function was to bring students from across the Polytechnic together. The Council was initially criticised for ‘limiting its activities and interests wholly to dancing and table tennis’,<sup>1</sup> a charge it refuted in print but did little in practice to dispel. Indeed, the Students’ Council seemed to get its best ideas from the Polytechnic Institute, instigating a Rambling Club and organising inter-departmental water polo matches. In 1938 the Students’ Council published *Poly-boo*, a journal for the Day Students, which ran alongside the *Polytechnic Magazine* until the outbreak of war. Although the Council was not a particularly popular body, as the first attempt to organise activities for all students it provided the foundations for later powerful bodies such as the Students’ Representative Council and ultimately, the Polytechnic Students’ Union.

The post-war period saw a boom in student societies, and a mini-publication war broke out between the Students’ Council sanctioned *Student* and a short-lived rival, *The Poly Tribune*. The Maths & Physics Department also followed in the footsteps of the Architectural Society and published its own Journal, with the influx of women into the department chief among their concerns.

The Architectural Society continued to go from strength to strength, and co-organised a Congress of Architectural Students in London in 1951 with the Architectural Association, to coincide with the Festival of Britain, the buildings of the South Bank having been designed by many former Poly students including architect Trevor Dannatt.

<sup>1</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, April 1934, p. 74.



Figs. 126, 127



Fig. 128

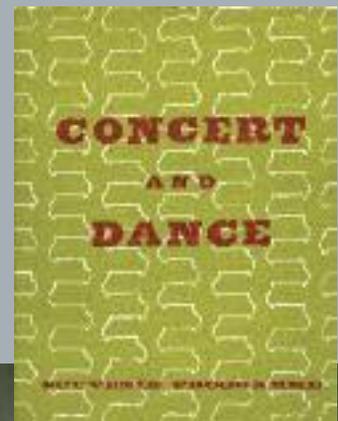


Fig. 129





# Women at the Polytechnic

Helen Glew

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores women's participation in the Polytechnic from its move to Regent Street until the founding of the University of Westminster in 1992. The chapter will chart the educational and social opportunities the Polytechnic provided for women, and consider these alongside the existing historiography of women's education, social opportunities, career prospects and life cycles.

The period 1882–1992 clearly spans immense change in women's position in society, and many of these changes are reflected in discussions and events at the Polytechnic. Personalities also provided continuities for several decades: Alice Hogg (1846–1918), Quintin Hogg's wife, whose early contributions have been discussed in Chapter 2, and his daughters Elsie (1873–1965) and Ethel (1878–1970), were all involved in the Polytechnic. The appreciation and deference shown to these women is testament to the memory of Quintin Hogg, to what was known as the 'Poly spirit', and the personal investment of time and energy by these three women.

Alice had married Quintin Hogg in 1871 and supported him in his pre-Polytechnic ventures, as well as leading Bible classes and offering support to young women alongside Hogg's sister Annie. Just as Quintin Hogg was synonymous with the Polytechnic and the YMCI before it, Alice would become identified with the young women's section at the Poly, acting as a maternal figurehead and offering her time and guidance over the course of many evenings.

Ethel Wood (née Hogg) is the best known of the Hogg women in her own right. Though few of her personal papers have survived, she was a prominent figure in social policy and charitable circles, including the League of Nations Union. In 1925, she was appointed by the Baldwin Government to chair the Committee into Conditions in Domestic Service. At the outbreak of the Second World War, she became Honorary Secretary of the Committee on Woman Power, which was devoted to pressuring for better use of women's skills and qualifications during the national emergency. In connection with this work, she wrote *Mainly for Men*, a 100-page volume on women's work which, as its pointed title suggests, lamented the obstacles to women's work in public and private enterprise.<sup>1</sup> Her

<sup>1</sup> Ethel Wood, *Mainly for Men*, (London: Victor Gollanz, 1943). For discussion of her work for the Woman Power Committee, see Helen McCarthy, 'Service Clubs, Citizenship and Equality: Gender Relations and Middle-class Associations in Britain Between the Wars', *Historical Research*, Vol. 81, No. 213, 2008, pp. 531–52, and on Wood's work for the League of Nations Union, see Helen McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations: Democracy, Citizenship and Internationalism, c.1918–45* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 24.



Figs. 130, 131

*The women of the Hogg family played prominent roles at the Poly. Quintin's wife Alice (far left) led the YWCI. Elsie (left), their eldest daughter, was the president of the Young Women's Institute from 1929–45 and a governor of the Poly.*

involvement in the Polytechnic came comparatively late whereas her older sister, Elsie Hoare (née Hogg), was involved in the Polytechnic as a young woman. Both women, like their parents, were also deeply religious.<sup>2</sup> Elsie found her faith during a trip to Norway with J.E.K. Studd and his wife and resolved then to dedicate her life to the endeavours of the Poly. She married her brother Douglas's close friend from Eton, Vincent Hoare, and together they had five children. When Vincent was killed in 1915, Elsie was left as a lone mother with a widow's pension to support her children.<sup>3</sup> Between them, Alice, Elsie and Ethel served the Polytechnic for the best part of a century, and while the Polytechnic was much more than one family, it was the continuities in the female line of this figurehead family that helped to give definition and character to women's activities at the Polytechnic for many decades. These women were joined by a considerable number of other women who were lifelong members and made many and various contributions to the Poly throughout their lives. These included women like Miss Edith M. Bowditch and Mrs Gwyneth Dewen, who were involved during the First World War in Polytechnic charitable and sporting activities and remained involved throughout the interwar years and beyond, in both the women's section and the Women's Old Members' Association. Other such women are discussed throughout this chapter.

As much as there were continuities in personalities and buildings, the Polytechnic also understandably and inevitably underwent much change in this period, particularly when the form and function of the organisation changed in the years after 1945. Though the significance of gender changed in the later period, this was both reflective and constitutive of wider changes in society. While the Poly as a whole, and its constituent men's and women's institutes, often embraced tradition, it would be too simplistic to suggest that the organisation was wholly conservative in this period. Indeed, in terms of its offerings for young women, the Polytechnic was in some respects a pioneer.

2 Wood collected Bibles, which she donated to Senate House Library in 1950. She also endowed a lecture series at King's College, London, which continues to this day. See <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/trs/events/ethel/index.aspx>, accessed 15 June 2012.

3 'Obituary – Mrs Elsie Hoare', *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1965, p. 425. See also Chapter 6.

The historiography on the growth of higher education for women is vast, particularly for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,<sup>4</sup> but far less attention has been paid to educational opportunities outside of British universities. This applies to commercial training and the Polytechnic Movement in the early part of the period, and polytechnics in general after the expansion of higher education opportunities in the 1960s. Studies do exist on the educational provision at Regent Street Polytechnic in the early part of its existence, and on some of the offerings for women at the London polytechnics that followed the establishment of Regent Street Polytechnic in 1891.<sup>5</sup> However, far more work needs to be done on the opportunities – both educational and social – offered to women in institutions like the Polytechnic. This chapter, in presenting a case study on women at Regent Street, is a contribution to this field. It also adds to understandings of women living and working in late nineteenth- and twentieth-century London, by offering a means to examine their work, leisure and socialising patterns.<sup>6</sup>

4 See, for example, Carol Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex: Women in British Universities, 1870–1939* (London: UCL Press, 1995) and for examples of women at specific institutions, see Pauline Adams, *Somerville for Women: An Oxford College, 1879–1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) and Laura Schwartz, *A Serious Endeavour: Gender, Education and Community at St Hugh's, 1886–2011* (London: Profile Books, 2011).

5 Julie Stevenson, 'A neglected issue in the history of education and training: women students of University College London and the Polytechnic at Regent Street, c.1870–1930', unpublished PhD thesis, Thames Valley University, London, 1996; Julie Stevenson, '“Among the qualifications of a good wife, a knowledge of cookery certainly is not the least desirable”: Women and the curriculum at the Polytechnic at Regent Street, 1888–1913', *History of Education*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 1997, pp. 267–86; Miriam E. David, 'Class and gender aspects of higher education in London: the origins of London Polytechnics', in Roderick Floud and Sean Glynn (eds.), *London Higher* (London: The Athlone Press, 1998), pp. 107–8.

6 For related work, see Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850–1920* (London: Virago, 1985).

7 See Chapter 2.

8 It is likely that this was Lilius Graham, who later became a missionary in China. However, Victorian naming conventions in official publications render this difficult to ascertain.

9 *Home Tidings*, 16 July 1879, p. 53; *Home Tidings*, July 1880, pp. 259–61.

10 *Home Tidings*, July 1880, p. 260.

#### WOMEN AT THE POLYTECHNIC, PRE-1888

Women were part of Quintin Hogg's venture before 1882 and the move to Regent Street.<sup>7</sup> In the 1870s, the newly-wed Alice Hogg, and her sister, Miss Graham, ran Bible study classes for women.<sup>8</sup> These appear to have been aimed at the sisters and close female friends of Young Men's Christian Institute (YMCI) members.<sup>9</sup> This tradition of single-sex Bible study classes would continue for many years and be a key element in the Polytechnic's provision for women. Like her husband, Alice believed in personal engagement with those for whom the Institute was working and she retained this stance throughout her life. She often travelled with her husband and while away in 1880, for example, she wrote at length to her female tutees, offering spiritual guidance and also encouragement to keep up their attendance:

I was indeed glad to hear of the increased attendance at the Class, and to find a good many missing names back again on the register. I see some of you have *never* missed a Monday, and that others who were absent at first have found their way back again, so I do indeed feel cheered and thankful about you, and I hope that when I get back to you all I shall find not only all my old friends but some new ones as well added to our number.<sup>10</sup>

Though Quintin Hogg's provisions for men have a much more central place in the collective memory of the Polytechnic, it is worth remembering that there was distinctive early provision for women, even if Hogg himself, in the traditions of late nineteenth-century philanthropy, left much of this work to the women in his family. For example, the Of Alley school, later known as the York Place Ragged School and Mission, began with the provision of Bible classes for women, and Annie Hogg ran classes for girls in the Castle Street



**Fig. 132**  
*Most art classes at the Polytechnic were mixed, but life drawing classes were always held in single sex groups.*

building. Once the allocation of building space was amended in 1871, Alice Hogg continued to use the York Place buildings to run a women's refuge.<sup>11</sup> Few records of this remain, but in 1871 the Annual Report remarked that night classes were held three evenings a week for young women. The report concluded that this was among the more difficult of Hogg's work:

The results here are not so manifest as they are among the boys, but a class attend which are most difficult of access; and which when we think of the state of many of the flower girls about Charing Cross, we feel that their hearts are a soil which may need to be often watered ere the day of reaping comes. The promise is not less sure.<sup>12</sup>

From the Bible study classes of the 1870s other opportunities emerged for women to join classes. For the 1883–84 academic year, for example, the YMCI opened a number of classes to women as well as men, including: photography (if employed in the trade), animal physiology, elementary inorganic chemistry, elementary magnetism and electricity, practical plane and solid geometry, elementary and advanced French. Soon added to these were classes to pass the University of London matriculation, and exams for entry into medical and legal degrees, and clerical and secretarial classes such as shorthand, book-keeping and writing.<sup>13</sup> In 1887, a very popular Ladies Ambulance Class ran.<sup>14</sup> Polytechnic publications record women's successes in their studies. In the 1887–88

11 Ethel Hogg, *Quintin Hogg: A Biography*, 1st edition (London: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd., 1904), pp. 59–60; p. 73; p. 91.

12 *Fifth Annual Report of the Castle Street, Long Acre, Boys' Home, Ragged Schools and Mission, and the York Place, Strand, Ragged Schools and Mission*, 1871, UWA YPS/4 [P52d].

13 *Home Tidings*, July 1883, November 1883.

14 *Home Tidings*, 5 February 1887.

Fig. 133

Male and female students shared shorthand classes at the Polytechnic.



session, eight women received first-class certificates and there were eighteen second-class certificates awarded to female students, as well as several prizes.<sup>15</sup> In a number of respects, the Polytechnic was particularly innovative here. At a time when training and educational opportunities were still limited for working and lower middle-class women, the Polytechnic was one of a handful of organisations to offer a wider range of subjects for women.

The Poly was all the more unusual in that women could study alongside men, in certain subjects. A few other contemporary organisations permitted this, such as the Royal Victoria, later Morley College, but many more insisted on sex segregation.<sup>16</sup> Hogg, too, had concerns about permitting women to take the same classes as men, but these were assuaged by the success of his experiment:

When I first moved into the Poly. [sic] I had a strong feeling against admitting young women to any of our classes... Every step, however, we have since made in admitting young women to our Technical and Art classes, has been such a success, and the young women who have joined have been altogether such admirable students ...<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 3 May 1888.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, the comparison with the Working Men's and Women's Colleges in Thomas Kelly, *A History of Adult Education in Great Britain*, third edition (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), p. 187; p. 194; p. 227.

<sup>17</sup> *Home Tidings*, 7 January 1888.

#### A NEW WOMEN'S COMMUNITY: THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE, 1888–1914

It seems that the admission of women to these classes began a momentum that resulted in the Polytechnic increasing its provision for women. Though it would be erroneous in many ways to compare the Polytechnic directly to the handful of universities accepting women students around the country, it is worth noting that there was a culture of expanding educational opportunities for

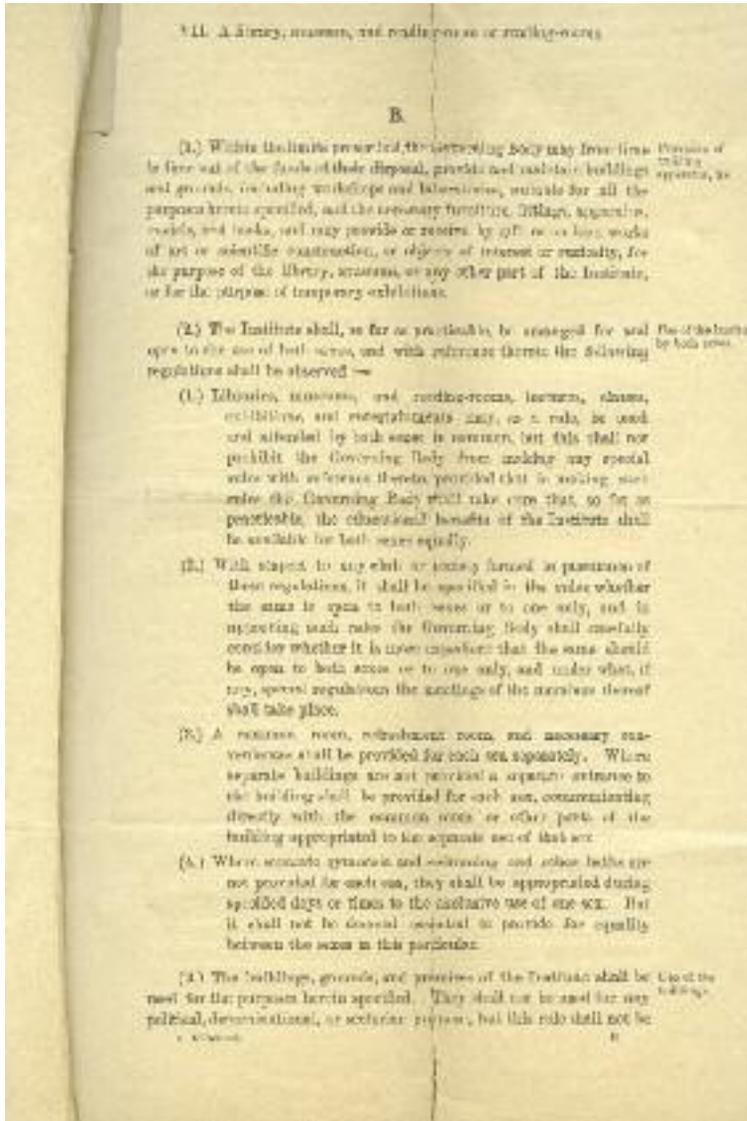


Fig. 134  
*The Regent Street Polytechnic Scheme of Administration in 1891 established the Poly for 'the use of both sexes'. Note, however, that it was not 'deemed essential to provide equality between the sexes' for use of the gymnasium and swimming pool.*

women in the 1870s and 1880s. Such ventures at Oxford, Cambridge, London and at the Polytechnic, owed their existence to pioneering individuals who found means to finance provision of classes for women and who believed in higher education or further training for women.<sup>18</sup> At the start of 1888, Quintin Hogg announced the formation of the Young Women's Christian Institute (YWCI), situated just north of the Polytechnic building on the corners of Cavendish Place and Langham Place in a newly-acquired building:

we propose to form special classes for their benefit. Our first move in this direction will be made this month, when we shall start special classes for young women in Dressmaking, Millinery and Mantle Making. I have no doubt they will be well patronised, and I hope their success will be such as to justify extension in this direction ...<sup>19</sup>

18 See, for example, Dyhouse, Chapter 1; and, most recently, Schwartz. For a discussion of attempts to gain more training and work opportunities for women, see Ellen Jordan, *The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

19 *Home Tidings*, 7 January 1888.



Fig. 135  
*Hilda Studd, first wife of J.E.K. Studd, took part in a number of YWCI functions and endeavours.*

Fig. 136  
*The Young Women's Christian Institute and Polytechnic Girls' School were located at 15 Langham Place from 1888. The YWCI relocated to new purpose-built premises in Little Titchfield Street in 1929.*



The educational consequences of the expansion of provision for women are worth considering further. Whereas, hitherto, they had joined subjects offered to both sexes, now that women had their own premises a distinctive women's curriculum was offered. Dressmaking, millinery and mantle-making did indeed take place, and were followed by a range of subjects such as cooking, clerical subjects (book-keeping, commercial correspondence), piano and needlework, as well as a programme of lectures on housewifery.<sup>20</sup>

Although, as Julie Stevenson has shown for the period up to 1914, women did not necessarily confine themselves to women-only classes, it is notable that the occasion of separate buildings also led to partial curriculum segregation.<sup>21</sup> While some women clearly would have found the women's curriculum suited to their needs, it is evident that many welcomed wider opportunities too. At the beginning of the Poly's existence compulsory elementary education was in its infancy, and state-supported secondary schooling took until the first decade of the new century to be established. Education for girls was often also thought of as less important to that for boys and young men. Therefore, with its day

20 The Polytechnic seems to have set this trend of a separate women's curriculum as other Polytechnics, once formed, followed suit. For the Borough Polytechnic, for example, see Miriam E. David, pp. 107–8. For the Northern Polytechnic, see John Izbicki, 'The London Polytechnics' in Floud and Glynn (eds.), p. 214.

21 Stevenson, 'Women and the curriculum at the Polytechnic at Regent Street, 1888–1913', *History of Education*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 1997.



and evening classes and range of subjects, the Poly provided considerable opportunities for women to further their education.

Besides his initial opposition, it is difficult to establish definitively what Quintin Hogg felt about women's education at a time when the topic was being heatedly debated. While on the one hand he advocated cookery classes as delivering 'the qualifications of a good wife', he was also one of the first to advocate typing classes (or typewriting as they were more commonly called) for women as a means to enable them to earn a good living.<sup>22</sup> The YWCI also offered classes for the Civil Service examinations (as a number of commercial

22 *Home Tidings*, 28 January 1888, 'Our Sisters' Institute' column, *Home Tidings*, 31 October 1889, p. 275. Typing was initially seen as a career for men but was feminised around the turn of the century. See Meta Zimmeck, 'The Mysteries of the Typewriter': Technology and Gender in the British Civil Service, 1870–1914', in Gertjan de Groot and Marlon Schrover (eds.), *Women Workers and Technological Change in Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1995).

Figs. 137, 138, 139

In 1889, Hogg encouraged women to join typing classes (Fig. 139), asking 'What in the world are our members doing in not taking more advantage of the type-writing classes recently formed...? I think if they had the least idea of what a suitable accomplishment these offer their sex they would soon wake up to the situation.' Alongside the typing classes, more traditionally female subjects such as cookery (Fig. 137, opposite top) and needlework (Fig. 138, opposite bottom) were offered.



colleges also began to do), as well as the University of London external syllabus. Essentially, though the Polytechnic's founders apparently continued to believe that women should become wives and mothers, as did wider Victorian social discourse, the wider opportunities offered by the mixed-sex curriculum gave women greater educational and employment choices for the years of their lives in which they engaged in paid employment.

With the formation of the YWCI, women members and students had more space than hitherto to socialise and to form a community that would parallel the men's. The YWCI was open every evening except Sundays and classes were spread throughout the week. The subscription was 1s 6d per quarter or 5s per year, which was less than the equivalent for men both because the women's building and facilities did not yet match the men's, and because women also earned less than men.<sup>23</sup> Membership provided use of a reading room, social room, admission to Polytechnic lectures and events at reduced fees, and the use of the swimming pool in 309 Regent Street once a week (when the young men were asked to 'sacrifice' it).<sup>24</sup> As with the men's section, members and students could be separate categories: members could take classes for additional discounted fees, but were not compelled to, and students taking classes did not have to be Institute members. However, space seems to have been a particular problem in the early years, which is testament at least in part to the popularity of the YWCI's provision.

Preference for membership was initially given to those nominated by current male members, but within a matter of weeks, 750 women had put their names forward for membership. Reportedly, a number of these already knew Alice Hogg because they had attended her Bible classes.<sup>25</sup> Preference then had

23 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 15 March 1888. This is equivalent to £4.50 and £15 respectively in 2005. [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency).

24 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 15 March 1888.

25 *Souvenir Programme of the Jubilee of the Women's Institute, 1888–1938*, foreword by Mrs V.R. Hoare, UWA RSP/6/1 [P64].

The image shows a handwritten ledger or 'candidate book' with columns for names, dates, and other details. The page is aged and yellowed, with some entries underlined and circled in blue ink. The text is written in cursive and includes names like 'Miss A. B. B. B.', 'Miss C. D. E.', and 'Miss F. G. H.'.

Fig. 140

*The candidate book, into which women members' details were entered when they joined, provides a fascinating snapshot into the lives of the young women.*

*Registers of this type survive in the University Archive for October 1904–September 1958, for YWCI members; and February 1891–June 1958 for YMCI members.*

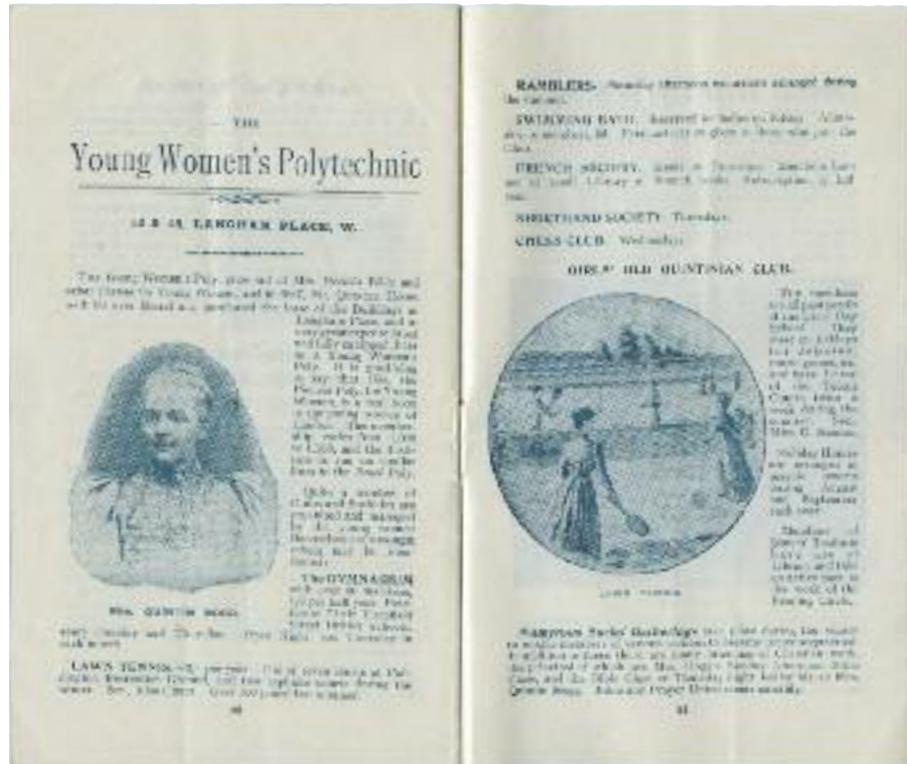
to be given to women who also intended to take classes, or those who had 'lately arrived from the country'.<sup>26</sup> This latter point attests to what the Polytechnic clearly wanted to be: a focal point for community and social life and a means for women to find friendship and companionship. Although data on membership renewals and average length of membership cannot be ascertained, there is evidence to suggest that many women found the Polytechnic beneficial enough to continue their membership throughout their lifetime. In late 1889, for example, more than 1,000 members renewed their memberships for that quarter, and in 1938, when the YWCI celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, Elsie Hoare took public pride in noting the number of early members who stayed involved with the Polytechnic throughout their lives.<sup>27</sup>

The Polytechnic was not alone in providing such services for young women at this point in time. With the late nineteenth-century growth of clerical, governmental, educational and retailing work for women, large numbers of young, single women came to central London from the provinces or the suburbs for employment opportunities. For young women who had grown up outside of London, suitable housing was often the primary consideration, followed by a need to find friends, a social base and a suitable sense of community.<sup>28</sup> In 1877 Mary Jane Kinnaird (1816–88) and Emma Robarts (d. 1877) had combined

- 26 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 19 April 1888; *Polytechnic YWCI Committee Minute Book*, 26 April 1887–30 April 1891, meeting of 7 September 1888, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].
- 27 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 7 November 1889, UWA RSP/6/1 [P64].
- 28 There is a vast literature on the growth of employment for women from the 1870s. Among the most prominent, see Anna Davin, 'City Girls: Young Women, New Employment and the City, London, 1880–1910' in Mary Jo Maynes, Birgitte Soland and Christina Benninghaus (eds.), *Secret Gardens, Satanic Mills: Placing Girls in European History, 1750–1960* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005), pp. 209–23; Jordan, *The Women's Movement and Women's Employment*; Lise Shapiro Sanders, *Consuming Fantasies: Labor, Leisure and the London Shopgirl, 1880–1920* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2006); Lee Holcombe, *Victorian Ladies at Work: Middle Class Working Women in England and Wales, 1850–1914* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1973).

Fig. 141

This Clubs' booklet from the 1890s conveys the range of social activities available to members at the YWCI.



two separate ventures to found the international organisation the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in London.<sup>29</sup> It provided accommodation, restaurants for women at Welbeck House, Mortimer Street and Regent Street – at a time when places for young women to dine alone were problematically scarce – and opportunities for evening socialising and to take Bible or other educational classes.<sup>30</sup> Notably, it did not, until the interwar years, provide its own educational classes.<sup>31</sup> The YWCA and the YWCI in fact operated in overlapping geographical areas and were both rooted in the same evangelical philanthropic traditions. There were also longstanding personal connections between the Kinnairds, the Hoggs and the Studds, as have been explored in previous chapters. However, it is significant that the YWCI and the YWCA nonetheless appear to have operated organisationally very separately. Both the Polytechnic and the YWCA were located on Regent Street for a period in the 1880s, Arthur Kinnaird was involved with both the Polytechnic and his mother's organisation, Annie Hogg was part of the YWCA governing body in the 1880s and friendships between the two families appear to have lasted.<sup>32</sup> The difference between the two appears to have been in approach: as Emily Kinnaird, daughter of Mary Jane, noted in her autobiography, Quintin Hogg took a much more personal approach to philanthropy, whereas the YWCA created a large network and committee to enable wider concerns and interests to be developed.<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, whatever their differing organisational strategies, both the YWCI and YWCA appear to have identified the growing need for provision for young women in London's West End in the late nineteenth

29 Jane Garnett, 'Kinnaird, Mary Jane, Lady Kinnaird (1816–88)', *ODNB*.

30 David Doughan and Peter Gordon, *Women, Clubs and Associations in Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 87–8; Vicinus, *Independent Women*, pp. 297–8.

31 Kelly, p. 206; p. 277.

32 Emily Kinnaird, *Reminiscences* (London: John Murray, 1925), pp. 39–40; p. 45. Nicholas Fishwick, 'Kinnaird, Arthur Fitzgerald, eleventh Lord Kinnaird of Inchture and third Baron Kinnaird of Rossie (1847–1923)', *ODNB*.

33 Kinnaird, p. 116.

century. The YWCA's publications reveal a preoccupation to ensure young, working and lower middle-class women did not 'fall' into prostitution.<sup>34</sup> This fear was prevalent in late Victorian society and so undoubtedly the YWCI also shared it, at least to an extent.<sup>35</sup> However, it was less conspicuously expressed by the Polytechnic Governing Body and in other Polytechnic publications.

Beyond the YWCA, there were numerous other clubs and organisations for young women in central London, and the Polytechnic's YWCI should be seen in the context of these expanding endeavours and as further indication of the need for such provision. The number of women living in lodgings and joining the Polytechnic for social gatherings or for education is particularly striking. For example, a number of women lodged at Ames House, Mortimer Street, and others at Store Street, off Tottenham Court Road. In some cases, it is clear that women enrolled with their business address (which may have also been their home address, if they 'lived in') but the geographical radius from which the Polytechnic attracted women was notable. Some women also clearly joined with sisters or friends, as indicated by two or more members consecutively enrolled and residing at the same address. For example, Florence and May Kirby, both typists in their twenties from Norwood, joined at the beginning of 1912. In 1908, two teachers living at the same Notting Hill address joined together.<sup>36</sup>

Like a number of other communities for women in metropolitan areas at this time, the YWCI appears to have primarily attracted single women who had fewer domestic obligations than married women. This is not to say that married women were not welcome, but there was a clear expectation and understanding that married women would not have the same freedom to attend the Poly. When Nellie Honeyman married, for example, it was noted that '[w]e shall miss her considerably from our social gatherings where she gave us most valuable assistance. We feel sure that all our members will join with us in wishing her every blessing, and we hope she will, from time to time, still be able to be present with us.'<sup>37</sup> That said, there were a handful of identifiably married women who joined the Polytechnic in the early twentieth century, listing themselves in the candidate books as 'Mrs' and, predictably perhaps, giving no occupation.<sup>38</sup> By the mid-twentieth century, records indicate that husbands and wives who had met at the Polytechnic continued to be part of the Old Members' Associations applicable to their gender. So while participation often took a different form once they were married, ties to the Polytechnic could and did remain.

The popularity of both educational classes and sporting and leisure societies attest to the various reasons women had for joining the Polytechnic. Harder to find, however, is data on the lives of these students after they finished a course of study at the Polytechnic. Information does exist, however, in snapshot form. Appointments secured by female students who attended the Polytechnic's Business Training School in the period 1908–09 include various London department stores, insurance agencies, City firms, the national telephone company and the civil service.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps not representative, but nonetheless important,



**Fig. 142**  
*Margery Allingham, a student at the Poly in the 1920s, went on to write numerous best-selling crime novels including those featuring the detective Albert Campion.*

34 On the YWCA's fears over the dangers of prostitution, see YWCA Directory Series, 1884–1954, WMRC MSS.243/2/7.

35 The literature on Victorian prostitution is extensive, see Paula Bartley, *Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England 1860–1914* (London: Routledge, 1999). For London in particular, see Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

36 *Polytechnic Women's Institute Candidate Books*, 1904–58, UWA RSP/2/6/24–28.

37 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 4 July 1889, p. 1.

38 *Polytechnic Women's Institute Candidate Books*, 1904–08, UWA RSP/2/6/24.

39 Application to the London County Council for a grant in aid of maintenance for the educational years ending July 1912, July 1913 and July 1914, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST3/12].

Fig. 143

*The sculptor Jacobine Jones studied at the Regent Street Polytechnic in the 1920s.*

Fig. 144

*Miss Louie Bagley, who originally planned for a career on the stage, became a much-loved and pioneering member of Poly staff as Head of the School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art from 1913 until her death in 1926.*



are individual women who went on to become household names or well known in their field. Examples of this include the crime writer Margery Allingham and the sculptor Jacobine Jones.

Ida Mann eventually became the first female professor of ophthalmology at Oxford. Loathing her job as a writing assistant at the Post Office Savings Bank, she decided she wanted to attend the University of Oxford and came to the Poly to study the requisite subjects for university entry. Mann reminisced warmly about her time spent in Poly classes and her comments are revealing not only about the atmosphere at the Poly but also the way in which many young women and men engaged with the Poly:

The classes were at night, so I got a meal at home at 5.30, took a train to Baker Street, walked down to Upper Regent Street and so went back to school at the age of twenty. It was delightful. The classes were mixed; boys and girls, all in jobs, older men and women, all sorts, all bent on escape through knowledge. The teaching was superb, much better than I was to experience in the university. Indeed, later I sought out the chemistry and physics masters and had private coaching from them when I was at sea over the vague university lecturers whose minds were often set on higher things than getting youngsters through their pre-medical year.<sup>40</sup>

Alongside religious instruction and educational classes, the Polytechnic provided social and welfare services for its women members in the era before the development of the welfare state. By July 1888, the YWCI had its own Savings Bank society to mirror that of the men's institute.<sup>41</sup> In addition to swimming one night per week, the YWCI provided a gymnasium twice a week. It also operated a circulating library, and a women's sick fund appears to have

<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Imlay Buckley and Dorothy Usher Potter (eds.), *Ida and the Eye: A Woman in British Ophthalmology: From the Autobiography of Ida Mann* (Tunbridge Wells: Parapress Ltd, 1996), p. 22.

<sup>41</sup> *Polytechnic YMCI Committee meeting of 10 July 1888, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].*

operated from August 1889, after negotiations to allow the women to join the existing men's fund failed.<sup>42</sup>

Such services also provided women with opportunities to develop leadership and organisational skills. As would befit gender norms of the time, it was decided early in the life of the YWCI to 'arrange for women or girls to fill all offices such as Secretary &c &c [sic] which involved personal presence during the evenings'.<sup>43</sup> This began a tradition of structured female committees and roles which spanned into the interwar years and then into the women's Old Members' Association. Women members also ran their own clubs and activities, including, for example, a mutual improvement society, which was an informal educational and knowledge-sharing group, a missionary working party, which sought to support various missionary initiatives, and day trips out of London. There were also numerous sporting clubs, which grew more various in the new century.<sup>44</sup> YWCI members were encouraged to take part in philanthropic work, both to raise funds to continue the Institute's work and to help fund missionary work abroad as well as good causes in the capital. One such ongoing cause was the support of an orphan, named 'Polly' after her sponsors, who lived at the Dr Barnardo's home in Barkingside.<sup>45</sup> Until her death in 1918, Alice Hogg spent many evenings at the Poly, and besides the support she gave to young women members – in much the same way as her husband supported the men – it was arguably her own volunteering, and later that of her daughter Elsie, which helped to inspire charitable endeavour among women members.

Polytechnic life could therefore be educationally integrated, in spite of the separate women's curriculum, but socially was often segregated along gendered lines in the early years, though this is not to suggest that individual men's and



**Fig. 145**  
*The Poly produced several successful female fencers including Barbara Screech and Dame Mary Glen Haig.*

42 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 29 August 1889.

43 *Polytechnic YWCI Committee* meeting of 7 September 1888, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].

44 For more on sport at the Polytechnic, see Mark Clapson, *An Education in Sport* (Cambridge: Granta, 2012).

45 Polly later emigrated to Canada, where she married. *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1945, p. 78.



**Fig. 146**  
*The YWCI enabled women to participate in a growing number of sporting activities. Cycling was becoming increasingly popular for women in Britain at this time.*

**Fig. 147**  
*Amy Gates, 1885–1953, joined the Poly Day School at the age of four and went on to join the YWCI where she was gym instructor from 1914–19. She remained connected to the Poly for 64 years.*

46 *Home Tidings*, 26 July 1888; 15 September 1892. See also Fred A. McKenzie, 'The Regent Street Polytechnic: England's largest educational institute' *Windsor Magazine: an illustrated monthly for men and women*, October 1898, p. 547.

47 *Polytechnic YMCI Committee* meeting of 22 November 1888, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].

48 Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast: English Feminism and Sexual Morality, 1885–1914* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 144.

49 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 8 September 1892, p. 116.

50 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 8 September 1892. It was noted in subsequent editions that women were permitted to sit in the gallery, providing that they, or other 'strangers', did not assent to or dissent from the motions being debated.

women's Institute members did not socialise. The numbers of marriage announcements between members suggest that members of the opposite Institutes managed to find opportunities to meet.<sup>46</sup> In particular, as the Polytechnic grew more established, there were some mixed Bible classes and occasional joint sessions between men's and women's clubs. At the same time, as members grew to exercise more of an influence over the running and shape of the clubs and societies, more restrictions sometimes emerged on women joining the YMCI's clubs. Propriety no doubt dictated the separate use of the swimming baths, and may have been a factor in the Governing Body's decision to prevent women becoming members of the Roller Skating Club in 1890.<sup>47</sup>

In the 1890s, coinciding with the emergence of the 'new woman',<sup>48</sup> there appear to have been several skirmishes regarding women's rights to access certain Polytechnic leisure activities. The first of these was when women asked to join the Polytechnic French Society but were refused, apparently because of Polytechnic rules.<sup>49</sup> While the Polytechnic Parliament was active and theoretically open to all, women members found themselves refused entry to its sessions. One letter of complaint pointed not only to women's exclusion from the Parliament – a timely subject given the growing campaign for women's enfranchisement – but also to women's exclusion from full membership of the Poly.<sup>50</sup> There ensued a seemingly-fleeting discussion between several members regarding whether the men's and women's Institutes could be amalgamated,





Fig. 148

*The YWCI offered women the chance to partake in a varied range of formal and informal activities. Here, women attend a fancy dress party to celebrate the New Year in 1910.*

and, by implication, the extent to which the boundaries between men and women in wider society could be broken down further.<sup>51</sup> Brief though this correspondence was, three possible arguments about women's position in relation to the men's Institute were expressed: that the YWCI and the YMCI should remain separate; that they should have equal but separate facilities and opportunities; and that the two Institutes should be combined. These, then, were an extraordinary mirroring of wider discussions about women's place in society, and other organisations for men and women would continue to face similar and recurring debates.<sup>52</sup>

These occasional contestations over membership and space aside, there appears to have been little discussion within the Poly about women's changing position in society. In the YWCI's first year, the Polytechnic Governing Body turned down a request from an E. Morris to deliver a lecture entitled 'The Equality of Woman to Man', though the reasons for objection were not recorded.<sup>53</sup> The Polytechnic Debating Society hosted a debate in 1892 over women's right to vote, which a number of women reportedly attended,<sup>54</sup> and in 1899 Dr A.T. Schofield spoke on 'Women's Work: Its Successes and Failure'. The report of this lecture suggests that Schofield discussed women's mental and physical capabilities compared with men's and offered conclusions symptomatic of their time regarding women's supposed limitations.<sup>55</sup> There was no commentary in the *Polytechnic Magazine* over women's suffrage at the height of the campaigns after 1908, nor when they were granted the vote in 1918 and 1928. One women's issue that was promoted was the possibilities available through emigration to British colonies. The advocacy of this issue is not surprising in the context of Quintin Hogg's promotion of emigration as a new start for his Castle Street and Long Acre boys, and indeed there had been rising concern about young, single women with every census, which showed that women were outnumbering men in the national population. In 1914, J.E.K. Studd joined a chorus of numerous others advertising emigration as a

51 See, for example, *Polytechnic Magazine*, 9 November 1892; 30 November 1892, p. 347.

52 The literature here is vast. See, for example, Dyhouse; Ellen Jordan, "The great principle of English fair play": male champions, the English women's movement and the admission of women to the pharmaceutical society in 1879', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1998, pp. 381–410.

53 *Polytechnic YMCI Committee* meeting of 23 October 1888, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].

54 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 27 October 1892, 3 November 1892.

55 'Signals from our Watch Tower', *The Woman's Signal*, 9 February 1899, p. 88.

*The table shows the range of occupations for women joining the Polytechnic as members in 1908. The most popular occupations are consistent with upper working and lower middle-class women's occupations at this time. Note that as women self-declared their occupations, the category 'none' may also indicate women members choosing not to list an occupation. The term 'domestic' is likely to refer to domestic service. The average age of the women who joined in 1908 was just under 22.*

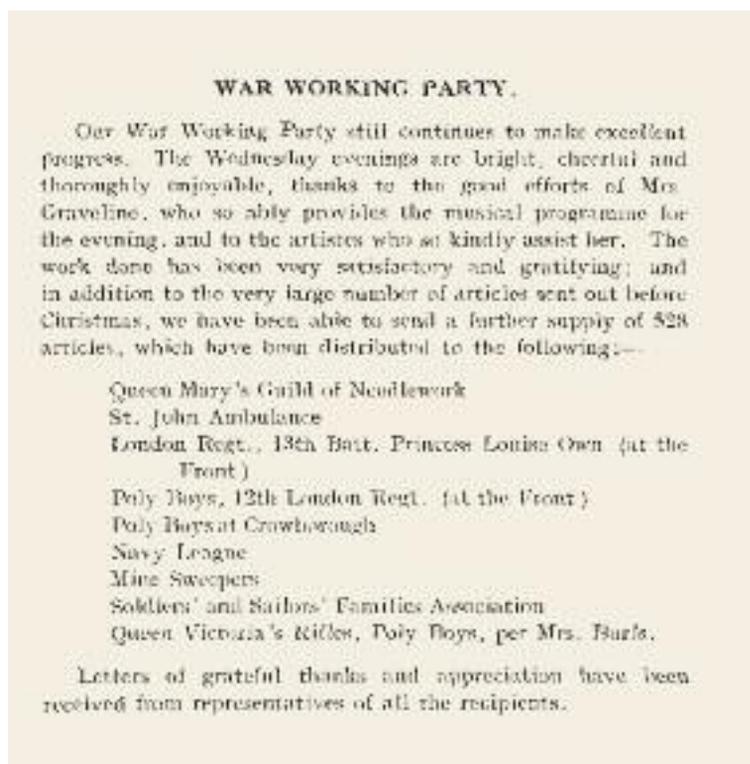
### Occupations of YWCI members in 1908

Occupation	No. of new women members
None	89
Clerk	60
Dressmaker	42
Retail	25
Milliner	22
Teacher	20
Domestic	18
Business	18
Typist	13
Book keeper	11
Shorthand Writer	9
Draper	9
Secretary	8
Stenographer	7
Student	6
Assistant	5
Embroideress	4
Foreign Correspondent	4
Waitress	4
Apprentice	4
Telephonist	3
Telegraphist	3
Artist	3
Photographer	3
Hairdresser	2
Florist	2
At Home	2
Nurse	2
Furrier	1
Wig Maker	1
Plate Polisher	1
Mantle Maker	1
Lace Mounter	1
Companion	1
Tracer	1
Stock Keeper	1
Civil Servant	1
Compositor	1
Writer	1
Bootmaker	1
Servant	1
Ostrich Feather Mounter	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>412</b>

solution to the ‘surplus woman’ problem by announcing that he had a sum of money at his disposal to assist any YWCI members wishing to emigrate to ‘any English colony’.<sup>56</sup>

From March 1888, the Polytechnic also ran a Day School for girls aged between seven and 17 along the same lines as the boys’ school, established in 1886. Initially, spaces were reserved for the sisters of those attending the boys’ school, then were opened for nominations, and then finally for general application. The curriculum was varied, though obviously gendered, and included ‘arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, history, literature, grammar, writing, religious instruction, Latin, French, German, shorthand, freehand and model drawing, painting ... mathematics, chemistry, electricity, domestic kindergarten, domestic economy, dressmaking, garment making, art needlework, cookery ... and calisthenics’, with extra fees for piano, violin, singing, swimming and Hebrew tuition.<sup>57</sup> By 1892, the school had an intake of over 200 pupils.<sup>58</sup> Unlike Hogg’s earlier endeavours – and to some extent the YWCI – this was a venture aimed specifically at the middle classes, as the curriculum also suggests. The fees for the school increased as pupils became older with, for example, the fees for a 13 year old being £2 12s 6d per term.<sup>59</sup> Pupils were prepared for Civil Service entrance exams, the University of London examinations and the Cambridge Local Examinations.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, the girls’ school did not last for long. It was shut down in 1907 as it was no longer economically viable.

Fig. 149  
*During the First World War Poly women met to knit clothes to send to the troops.*



- 56 *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1914. For more on women’s emigration to the colonies, and the associated imperial impulse, see Lucy Noakes, ‘From War Service to Domestic Service: Ex-Servicewomen and the Free Passage Scheme 1919–22’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 2011, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 3–4.
- 57 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 15 March 1888.
- 58 *Polytechnic (YMCI) Governing Body Minutes*, 24 July 1891–29 October 1903, UWA RSP/1/BG.
- 59 This is equivalent to £157.00 in 2005. [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency).
- 60 *Polytechnic YMCI General Prospectus: Session 1888–89*, pp. 89–90, UWA YCI/5/4 [P109].

WOMEN AND THE POLYTECHNIC IN  
THE FIRST WORLD WAR

When war broke out in 1914, J.E.K. Studd's appeal to Poly members included a request for women members to help by volunteering as nurses, or by making garments for the Red Cross Society.<sup>61</sup> Alice Hogg made a similar appeal, and the Institute focused intently on forming working parties to produce garments for the war effort. Women's sporting societies also chose to devote time to this endeavour, and the French society made garments while conversing in French.<sup>62</sup> A Needlework Working Party was formed, too, consisting of Alice Hogg, J.E.K. Studd's first wife, Hilda (1858–1921), Elsie Hoare, Robert Mitchell's wife, Isabella (1857–1949) and Alice's daughter-in-law, Elizabeth

Fig. 150

*Douglas Hogg's wife Elizabeth (later Lady McGarel Hogg) served as Honorary Commandant of the No. 2 London Voluntary Aid Detachment of the Red Cross from early 1916. Lady Hogg's service was an example of Polytechnic leaders epitomising and encouraging the Poly values of service and voluntarism.*



61 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1914.

62 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1915.

Hogg. Significantly, the working party made reference in its announcements to female unemployment in the needlework trade, a well-known and evident problem at the beginning of the war, and their announcements suggest that they debated whether to create their own garments, or to employ skilled needlewomen to undertake the work. It was eventually decided to allow members to do both, on the understanding that they were not rich and could not necessarily contribute to wages, but would want to feel they were helping the war effort. The YWCI was relatively unusual in making this consideration.<sup>63</sup>

The momentum of needlework, knitting and other sources of support was maintained throughout the war, with garments being sent to both the Polytechnic Company of the Rangers and to the war effort more generally. Organisation and reporting on these issues dominated the women's pages of the *Polytechnic Magazine* but occasionally there was more emotional writing, which spoke of the divide between the home front and the battle front, and the place of those left at home versus those fighting in the war:



Fig. 151

*The Polytechnic's contribution to the Lord Mayor's parade in 1928 was a pageant about the history of knowledge and education. Art and costume students and staff designed the costumes and figures, which featured depictions of Gog and Magog.*

63 The only other organisation that appears to have considered this was the Association of Post Office Women Clerks. See Helen Glew, 'Women's Employment in the General Post Office, 1914–39', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 2010, p. 183.

64 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1914.

... Here in London we go on our way with only a darkened street to tell us the world is at war, but the men on our ships who are guarding our shores – know no rest – no freedom from anxiety, but are ceaselessly watching, in angry seas, blinding fog, and biting winds, with death a possibility at any moment. These are the men who make our security possible and we intend to do our share in helping to provide them with the necessary comforts.<sup>64</sup>

Fig. 152

*The 1938 Lord Mayor's parade included members of the Polytechnic Ladies' Fencing Club.*



Fig. 153

*Always keen to take exercise, the members of the YWCI found novel uses for the new facilities at Little Titchfield Street.*





Figs. 154, 155  
 Opened by HM Queen Mary in 1929, the Great Portland Street Extension in Little Titchfield Street provided new facilities for the YWCI, including social rooms, gymnasium and concert hall. The building was constructed in memory of Alice Hogg and a portrait of her by the Head of the School of Photography, Albert J. Lyddon, was unveiled by HM The Queen.

The YWCI maintained many of its normal activities alongside its drive to assist in the war effort. The Mutual Improvement Society continued to meet, as did the social club. The Polytechnic as a whole remained attentive to women's unemployment at the beginning of the war and carried information in the pages of the *Polytechnic Magazine* about the ways in which women might find work.<sup>65</sup> It also became involved in the Queen Mary's Work for Women Fund, which was set up to provide for women unemployed because of the war. The Marylebone Committee of the Fund was chaired by Mr J. Fettes, a Poly member, and a number of female Poly members were successful in obtaining work from it, in a workroom on Little Portland Street. As the *Polytechnic Magazine* pointed out, '[t]he money is not much, about 10s. a week, but it might help to tide over the bad times through which we are passing'.<sup>66</sup>

### THE INTERWAR YEARS

The interwar years saw a number of organisational changes in the YWCI. In her 1965 history of the Polytechnic, Ethel Wood argued that it was 1925 which saw 'established the definite partnership status of the YWCI in the Polytechnic'.<sup>67</sup> It was this year that the Polytechnic knew it had acquired the Little Titchfield Street premises, to which the YWCI would move four years later, and in 1926 the YWCI Council was formed. The Council's purpose was to oversee the development of the Little Titchfield Street site, which was to be developed in memory of Alice Hogg.<sup>68</sup>

While the elected Women's Council was a significant step in the Polytechnic's history, it is debatable how much of a cultural shift this really was in

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1914.

<sup>66</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1914. See also *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1915.

<sup>67</sup> Ethel Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic* (London: Macdonald, 1965), p. 90.

<sup>68</sup> *Polytechnic Governing Body Minute Book*, 29 April 1926–21 January 1935, meeting of 21 October 1929, UWA RSP/1/BG; *Polytechnic Magazine*, 1926.

Fig. 156

*The Home Management classroom, 1929, complete with vacuum cleaners, irons and electrical cooking equipment.*



terms of women in the Polytechnic, and how much of an equal partnership in the Polytechnic the YWCI really constituted. While the Women's Institute had formal representation on the Polytechnic Governing Body, in practice they had already had this informally through the membership of Alice Hogg. Furthermore, there remained a separation in men's and women's activities, and the tone and organisation of the *Polytechnic Magazine* further underlines the fact that the men's organisation was the more prominent. The publication continued to have a separate page for the YWCI and much of the rest of the magazine appeared to be addressed to the men's clubs and activities. Unfortunately, papers of the Women's Council for this period have not survived, so it is difficult to gain an impression of its character and stance and its own impression of its position in the wider organisation. Elsie Hoare served as the YWCI Council's first president and was given an honorary seat on the Polytechnic Governing Body, and a seat in her own right after the resignation of Lord Kinaird in 1932.<sup>69</sup> She appears to have been as popular as her mother had been: when travelling on a cruise in 1939, she recorded in a letter to her brother that the 'Poly girls' had sent her a bouquet of flowers to the ship.<sup>70</sup> The YWCI also created the position of Lady Superintendent, whose holder had a teaching role as well as overseeing the day-to-day activities of the Institute and having a strong presence in the evening social life, in much the same way as Alice Hogg had once had. During the 1930s, the YWCI appears to have dropped the 'C' (for 'Christian') from its name, though it has not been possible to decipher exactly when this change took place, whether or for what reasons a definite decision was made, or whether the new name just emerged as a shorthand.

In parallel with other elements of gendered organisation in the Polytechnic,

<sup>69</sup> *Polytechnic Governing Body* meeting of 29 April 1926, UWA RSP/1/BG.

<sup>70</sup> Letter from Elsie Hoare to Douglas Hogg, 9 January 1939, CAC HAIL 4/24.



Fig. 157



Fig. 158



Fig. 159

women and men had also formed their own separate Old Members' Associations (OMAs), which offered, principally, an opportunity to retain Polytechnic networks, connections and friendships. The YWCI had started having dedicated gatherings for old members in 1916<sup>71</sup> and offered initially one or two social evenings throughout the year, an annual general meeting and an annual dinner. Gradually, further activities such as dance practice and outings were added.

The separate OMAs and the involvement of a number of women in them (membership of the women's OMA was about 100 in the 1930s) point to the part that the YWCI and the Poly had played in women's lives, and might suggest that they had felt part, more particularly, of a single-sex community. Significantly, too, the OMA spanned both the Regent Street Polytechnic years and the move into, and beyond, the institution's existence as the Polytechnic of Central London. As an overlapping sub-set of the YWCI, the Women's OMA became a distinct community among the growing population of day students and the gradual decline in numbers of the Institute itself after the Second World War. Despite the fact that a number of members of the men's and women's OMAs were married to one another, the organisations remained segregated by sex, mirroring the organisations out of which they had grown. The Women's OMA continued some of the institution's earlier charitable impulses. It maintained a sick club, a fund for donations (for example, the widow of the boxing coach was awarded £2 in 1953), co-organised children's parties with the Men's OMA (not always without disagreement) and donated to various other charities.<sup>72</sup> Ethel Wood, Elsie Hoare and Lady Studd remained prominent figures at OMA gatherings throughout their lives, a testament to the mutual affection between members and the Poly's prominent families.

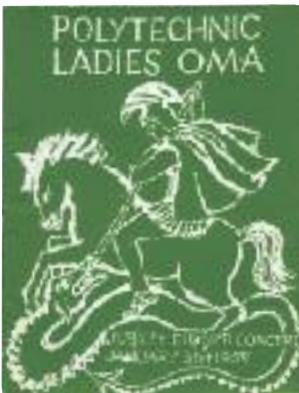
Figs. 157, 158, 159  
*Mrs Grace Hall (née Edwards, above), was the first chairman [sic] of the Women's Council in 1926, and was succeeded by Mrs Sally Price (above centre), and later Miss Edith M. Bowditch (above left). Both Hall and Price were named as Companions of the YWCI in recognition of their service. Bowditch, who worked as a compositor and lived in Battersea, joined the Polytechnic in 1908 because she was interested in singing and from 1914 served as Secretary of the Women's 'Mutual Improvement Society'. She was named Companion of the YWCI in 1960.*

71 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1916. See also pp. 238–9.

72 Women's Council Minutes and Reports, 1953–1979, UWA PIN [ACC1996/40].

## WOMEN IN THE POLYTECHNIC DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Like other large organisations, the Poly experienced significant disruption on the outbreak of war in 1939. However, in the knowledge that war was looming, the Poly undertook its part in preparing in the early part of 1939. In February, for example, the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) attended the Poly to recruit women members and offered them the opportunity to form their own units. Though it is unclear by whom the initial approach was made, the Poly was clearly keen on women's service at a time when there was public debate on the merits and suitability, or otherwise, of service in the forces for women. Mrs Natalie Hogg, wife of Quintin McGarel Hogg (1907–2001), grandson of



**Fig. 160**  
*The Ladies Old Members' Association celebrated their 50 year Jubilee in 1959, with 191 members sitting down to dinner in 309 Regent Street.*

**Fig. 161**  
*Women at the Polytechnic were actively encouraged to join one of the women's auxiliary services and contribute to the war effort at the outbreak of the Second World War, and many did so.*

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## National Service

Attention is called to the fact that groups of Polytechnic members and students have already been enlisted or enrolled in the following National Service organisations:—

**THE RANGERS (K.R.R.C.).**

The Polytechnic has been recruited with this regiment for many years and during the late war over half the regiment consisted of Polytechnic members and students. Arrangements have now been made to form a Polytechnic Company. The regiment is entirely mechanised and all recruits are trained in driving as well as in using the new weapons. Further particulars may be obtained from the local quarters of the regiment, 16, Chenies Street, W.C.1.

**BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY.**

The earliest detachments of the V.A.D.'s were formed in the Polytechnic in 1908 and during the late war the Polytechnic was an important Red Cross centre. A new detachment for girls has been formed in the Polytechnic and a men's detachment meets at All Souls Schools, Foley Street, W. Full particulars can be obtained from Mrs. Freeland, Hon. Secretary, 30 Highwood Court, N.W.11.

**AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE.**

Many members of the Women's Institute have joined this organisation in groups and there are vacancies for clerical workers, cooks and drivers in various regiments, including The Rangers referred to above.

Further particulars regarding National Service arrangements at the Polytechnic may be obtained from the Secretary of The Polytechnic.

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Quintin Hogg, commented at the meeting that ‘as the Poly’s keynote is “service”, we feel sure the movement will appeal to many of our members’.<sup>73</sup> A significant number took up this opportunity, and by April their training was being detailed in the *Polytechnic Magazine* with the comment that ‘fun seems to run high in the Women’s Service, and Miss “Poly” Atkins is thoroughly enjoying herself’.<sup>74</sup> The YWCI page in the Magazine also began advertising openings for women in other auxiliary or war-related services. By July, the British Red Cross had its London 34th Division headquarters at the Poly and a Voluntary Aid Detachment for girls had been formed.<sup>75</sup> By 1941, women were also offered rifle training by the Poly’s rifle range instructor in return for the cost of ammunition only. Though information about the training comprised two sentences in the *Polytechnic Magazine* in late 1941, this was a more significant offering than it first seemed: from mid-1940, there had been a fierce national debate, in Parliament and elsewhere, about whether women should be armed and able to use weapons in the case of enemy invasion.<sup>76</sup> It is worthy of note, then, that this was offered at the Poly without, it seems, particular debate or controversy.

When war broke out in September 1939, the Polytechnic rapidly became a different place and members noted the contrast in this respect with 1914.<sup>77</sup> The exigencies of the blackout and the need to prepare for air raids meant that the Polytechnic largely shut down, though it continued to hold Saturday night dances throughout the war years, where possible, for which service personnel were charged a reduced fee. The swimming pool was drained to provide air raid shelter space, and the YWCI swimming club moved its practice sessions to Battersea for those who were still able to travel to them.<sup>78</sup> Significantly, new emphasis was laid on the library and the importance of using its offerings as a means to keep studying when formal classes were disrupted. The Women’s Council joined with the Men’s Council and the Christmas Dinner Fund Committee to develop a war comforts section, of which Alys Hamilton was chair. This mirrored the organisation in the First World War, providing gifts and



Some of the buyers at the Sale.

Fig. 162

*The women of the Poly did their bit for the war effort by holding fundraisers such as White Elephant Sales. By the end of 1944 around £5,000 had been raised for the War Comforts Fund.*

73 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1939. For a discussion of the recruitment to the ATS in the Second World War and the varying public attitudes to women in uniform, see Lucy Noakes, *Women in the British Army* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 106–14.

74 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1939; April 1939.

75 *Polytechnic Magazine*, July 1939.

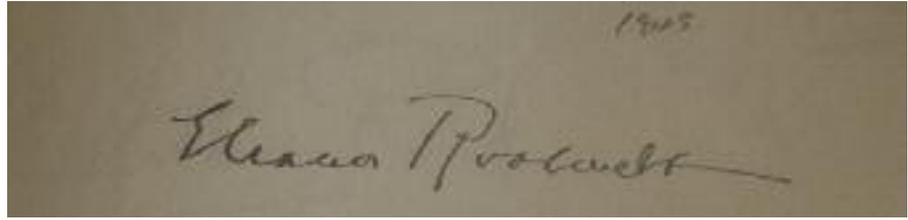
76 *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1941. For a discussion of this wider issue, see Penny Summerfield and Corinna Peniston-Bird, *Contesting Home Defence: Men, women and the home guard in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 63–80.

77 *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1939.

78 *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1939.

Fig. 163

*Eleanor Roosevelt signed the Visitors' Book after giving a lecture at the Polytechnic in 1945.*



comforts for Poly members serving in the armed forces.<sup>79</sup> Though the majority of the recipients were men, there was also a particular effort in 1943 to ensure that all women serving in the auxiliary forces were being duly recognised by the Polytechnic's scheme.<sup>80</sup> Just as they had done in the First World War, the women of the Poly knitted for men and women in the forces, though their efforts were recorded in less detail.<sup>81</sup> The contributions of Hamilton, who lost close relatives in the London Blitz, and her committee occupy a central place in the story of the Poly at war. In 1945, the Men's Council recorded 'for all time the highest appreciation' of Hamilton's efforts, and in 1946 she became the fifth woman to be named Companion of the YWCI.<sup>82</sup>

The women's pages of the *Polytechnic Magazine* increasingly listed details of women members and their wartime activities. Some had joined war services units away from London, or had been evacuated with their employers to other areas outside of London, or chose to move closer to their families. The *Magazine* thus acted as a means for members to keep in touch with one another. At the same time as many women members joined war services, the Poly also reached out to women in the community. In November 1939 the Governors agreed to let the Social Room in the YWCI to women in uniform from 2.30pm on weekdays so that they could use the facilities on offer in between their duty shifts.<sup>83</sup> The Czechoslovak Welfare Association also used Fyvie Hall to train female refugees to become Red Cross nurses.<sup>84</sup>

#### WOMEN AT THE POLYTECHNIC AFTER 1945

The changes brought about by the Second World War posed an opportunity for the Men's and Women's Councils to assess social provision at the Polytechnic. At a meeting in late April 1945, Mrs Gwyneth Dewen, chair of the Women's Council, raised the issue of differences between the two councils and 'the modern tendency towards mixing of the sexes'. There was general agreement that sports clubs should become mixed, once financial issues arising from the war were resolved. The comment on the creation of the mixed tennis club was perhaps telling: '[f]or many years this has been a contentious question, and it will need no imagination to realise how out-of-date and Victorian the Poly clubs are'.<sup>85</sup>

That the Men's and Women's Councils should meet to discuss the future of sporting provision is an indicator of the shape of the YWCI in the postwar years. More and more, the public persona of the Institute came via its sporting activities: each club had its own column in the *Polytechnic Magazine* and the

79 *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1939.

80 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1943.

81 *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1945.

82 *Polytechnic Magazine*, May 1941; April 1945; May 1946. The others were Grace Hall (1935), Sarah Price (1937), Bessie Bromhall (1938) and E. Hilda Andrew (1938).

83 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1939.

84 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1940.

85 *Report of a joint meeting of Men's and Women's Councils, called to discuss matters affecting both Institutes in connection with social and sports activities*, 23 April 1945, UWA PIN/MWC [ST2b].



Fig. 164  
*Students in the School of Commerce had access to the latest bi-tech printing equipment, including a mimeograph machine in the 1950s.*

Fig. 165  
*Ethel Wood, the second daughter of Quintin Hogg, shown here aged c.23 years old, played a key role at the Poly as a Governor and as President of the Women's Council from 1945–70. She married Major Herbert Wood.*

references to mutual improvement endeavours and the sick club largely disappeared. There were still hints of Christian tradition, Bible study and worship but these, too, were considerably more muted than they had once been, though they remained more evident in the Ladies' Old Members' Association.

There was another significant change in late 1945. Elsie Hoare tendered her resignation as President of the Women's Council on health grounds: she had suffered from rheumatoid arthritis for a number of years, and the illness would eventually render her bedridden.<sup>86</sup> Ethel Wood was appointed President in her place. Despite her numerous accolades in public and professional life outside the Poly, these two worlds appear to have been kept very separate. Though she spoke from time to time about her lecture tours to the USA, her striking feminism and her government appointments relating to women's issues appear not to have been discussed at any length in Poly circles. In an article in *Polygen*, a student publication, in 1964, Wood was reported to have not been interested in the Polytechnic until the 1940s, despite being the author of its official histories. She worked on the campaigns to fundraise for the creation of the YWCI's space in Little Titchfield Street in the late 1920s but the fact that she was referred to in the *Polytechnic Magazine* as 'Mrs Wood (Mr and Mrs Quintin Hogg's younger daughter)' suggests that she would have been unfamiliar to Poly members at this time.<sup>87</sup> Interviewed about her decision to become involved, however, Wood stated that the Poly 'gets its tentacles around you, but in the nicest possible way'.<sup>88</sup>



86 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1945; *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1965; Letter from Elsie Hoare to Douglas Hogg, 9 January 1939, CAC HAIL 4/24.

87 *Polytechnic Magazine*, April 1926.

88 *Polygen*, 20 November 1964, p. 5, UWA RSP/8/1/10/5 [P156].



Fig. 166  
 A fairly typical example of the women's pages in Polygen in the 1960s. This issue included an interview with Etbel Wood, who remained involved in the Polytechnic throughout her later life.

As is explored in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4, the nature of the organisation changed profoundly in the second half of the twentieth century. As Regent Street Polytechnic became the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL), the provision of daytime study and degree courses rapidly increased. Student profiles and the *raison d'etre* of the organisation changed markedly. It is difficult to assess how many Poly students also became members of their respective Institute as figures appear not to have been consistently recorded. Data from 1968 and 1969 suggest it was a mere fraction.<sup>89</sup> Increasingly, the Institute and PCL moved in distinct spheres. In 1978–79, the men's and women's Institutes were advertised to Poly students in terms of sport alone.<sup>90</sup>

Although it is difficult to recapture the experiences of women students at the Polytechnic after 1945, the student publications are illuminative for the ambiguous attitudes they convey towards women students. Though the Poly had always had a number of mixed classes and the institutional divisions between the sexes in the postwar era were fewer than previously, gender would of course remain a feature of the Poly student's experience. For example, on one front page of *Polygen* in 1964, there was an article on the first co-educational housing provided by PCL, then a piece about Joyce Godsell, aged 23 and the first female graduate in Civil and Mechanical Engineering. The article noted that her success was 'despite the prejudice of the male members of the department'.<sup>91</sup> In her own quotation in the magazine she was more politic, citing prejudice against women engineers in wider public life. The article ended with a slightly

89 *Polytechnic Governing Body Minutes*, 1969, UWA RSP/1/B6.  
 90 *PCLSU Gen*, 1978–79, UWA PCL/8/1/2/1 [P134].  
 91 *Polygen*, 24 January 1964.

uncomfortable attempt at humour: 'look out fellas, more and more it's becoming a woman's world'. The article next to it was an invitation for women to take part in a fashion contest sponsored by *The Evening Standard*. The following issue printed a photograph of the Poly's entrants under the title 'Our Beauties'. Similarly, the most prominent depiction of women in Polytechnic handbooks of the early '60s was a photograph of 'Miss Poly' for the year and an accompanying description of her attributes.<sup>92</sup>

The *Polygen* women's pages of the mid-1960s often featured fashion, perfume, or hairstyle articles, and drew criticism on at least one occasion for comprising 'material that could easily have been lifted out of any popular women's magazine'.<sup>93</sup> This public handling of gender relations was not new: in 1944, the short-lived *Pi* magazine of the Maths & Physics department had responded to the challenge of women taking a greater part in the department by writing about the feminisation of departmental space, and women themselves had written about wearing trousers and what this symbolised about gender relations.<sup>94</sup> Both of these were no doubt examples of men and women addressing changes in women's social position with humour, lightheartedness and even satire. Nor was the use of humour and the general ambiguity in the portrayal of women throughout this period unique to the Polytechnic. Beauty contests had become staples of popular press coverage by the 1950s and were also used by trade unions as an attempt to recruit women.<sup>95</sup> This varying coverage of women in Poly publications mirrored that of other publications as well as debates and conflicts about women's place in society in the postwar decades.<sup>96</sup>

As Chapter 4 in this volume shows, the Polytechnic student community in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s was often radical and outspoken. However, it is harder to find strong evidence of the influence of second wave feminism or the women's liberation movement among Poly student activities. Although it predated the emergence of 1960s feminism, the response of the Polytechnic to the introduction of the contraceptive pill appears to have caused significant debate.<sup>97</sup> The Poly employed student welfare staff and in 1966, students asked for a re-writing of the institution's birth control policy. In the end, the matter was dropped but it was debated at several Court of Governors' meetings.<sup>98</sup>

Dyhouse has argued that the student demand for contraceptive information was high in the late 1960s and early 1970s, so Poly students' request to the governors was clearly not unusual.<sup>99</sup> By 1980, there were advice articles about contraception in *McGarel*, though these seem to be missing throughout the 1970s. By the 1980s there was a Women's Group that 'believes that the fight for Womens[sic] Liberation is bound up with the struggle for socialism' which, predictably perhaps, became involved in several significant tussles in the pages of *McGarel* over its views on sexist language, women's rights and relations between men and women.<sup>100</sup> It is not clear how many women joined the group, though it also had some male supporters. By 1986, the Student Union Women's Officer wrote with concern that '[i]t was evident from the conference that Women's Groups in other polytechnics and universities are significantly more active than has been the case at PCL'.<sup>101</sup>



Fig. 167  
Miss E.J. Godsell was the first woman to take and complete the Diploma in Technology in Civil Engineering in 1964.

92 *Polytechnic Student Handbooks*, 1961, 1964–65.

93 *Polygen*, 17 April 1964, UWA RSP/8/1/10/4 [P156].

94 *Pi*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 13 Dec 1944; No. 2, January 1945.

95 Adrian Bingham, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life and the British Popular Press, 1918–78* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 206; *Red Tape*, Magazine of the Civil Service Clerical Association, 1950–54.

96 Stephanie Spencer, *Gender Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Sarah Boston, *Women and the Trade Unions* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1987).

97 Though she concedes that causality is near-impossible to prove, Carol Dyhouse has argued that the introduction of the pill, in allowing women to control their fertility, allowed women to alter their outlooks and to take greater advantages of the possibilities of higher education. Carol Dyhouse, *Students: A Gendered History* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), p. 206.

98 *Polytechnic Governing Body Minutes*, 1966–67, UWA RSP/1/BG.

99 Dyhouse, *Students: A Gendered History*, p. 106.

100 *McGarel*, 6 October 1990; 24 November 1980 and 1 December 1980.

101 *McGarel*, 27 October 1986.



Fig. 168

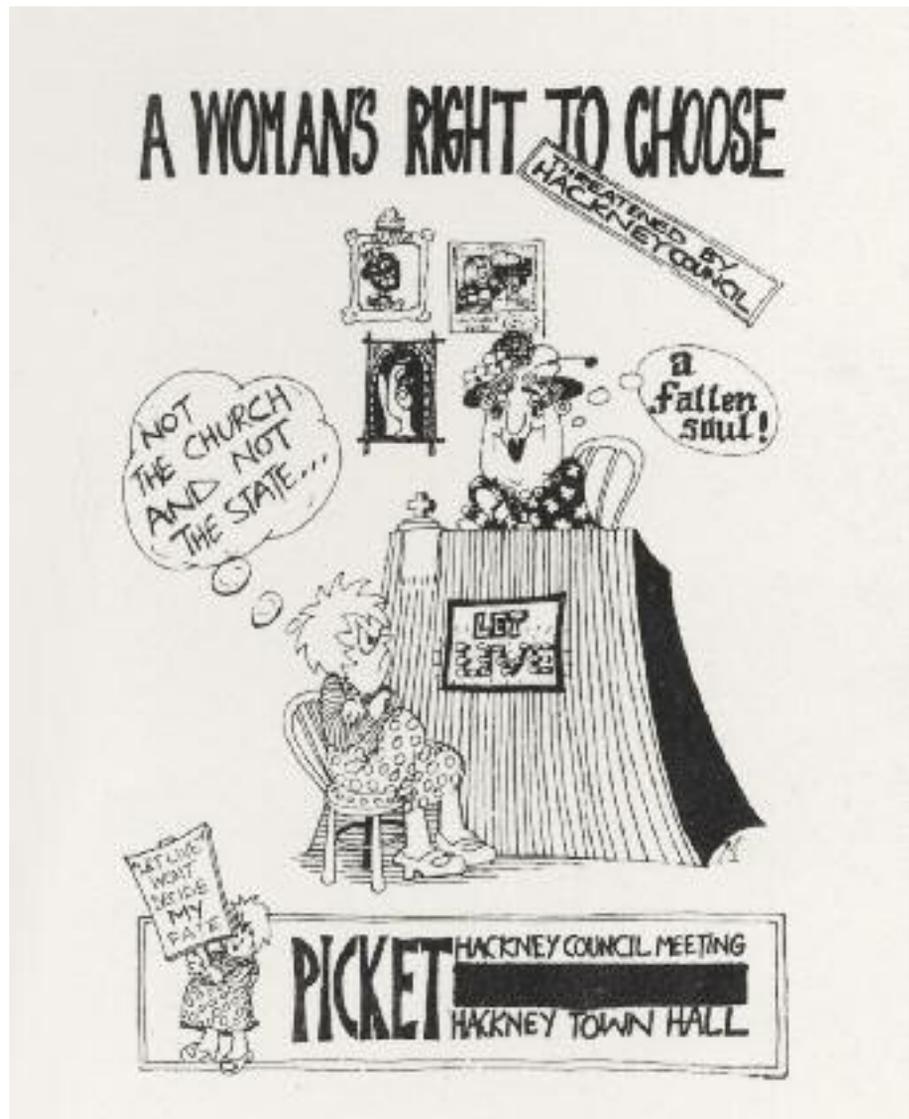
*Margaret Harker attended the Poly as a student in 1939. She went on to join the staff of the School of Photography in 1943 and was Head of the School from 1959–80.*

Fig. 169

*By the late 1970s the Students' Union was running a number of campaigns on a wide range of issues affecting women.*

The PCL does appear to have run awareness campaigns on a number of issues affecting women, if the pages of *McGarel* are anything to go by. In 1988, for example, the campaign issues were sexual harassment and abuse, women's reproductive rights, lesbian and gay liberation and 'time off for women', which was a campaign to include all women's work, paid and unpaid, in the gross national product of each country.<sup>102</sup>

Existing records make it difficult to offer definitive conclusions about what women studied at the Polytechnic in the postwar years, but publications suggest that women studied subjects across the curriculum. Until the early 1960s, the Poly continued to offer domestic science, needlecraft and dressmaking classes taught by largely all-female staff, along with a short-term, intensive housewifery course marketed at 'the more mature student, whose time is limited'.<sup>103</sup> Rather than being abandoned completely, this part of the curriculum was transferred to Westminster Technical College's domestic science



102 *McGarel*, 3 October 1988.

103 *Regent Street Polytechnic General Prospectus: Session 1960–61*, UWA RSP/5/4/56.



Fig. 170  
*Ethel Wood, Bernard Studd (centre right) and Quintin McGarel Hogg (right), pictured here at an event c.1960, all continued their families' legacies by supporting the Poly throughout their lives.*

unit, though Ethel Wood believed that 'the Poly will greatly regret the termination of courses of study which have been of the utmost value to thousands of women faced with the highly technical process of home-making'.<sup>104</sup> Few sets of student statistics offer a breakdown by gender, so specific subject comparisons are difficult, but in 1982–83, 3,598 women were students on advanced courses, comprising nearly 43 per cent of all such students. Women students made up 45 per cent of the total student body.<sup>105</sup> Again, this mirrored national trends.<sup>106</sup>

PCL was instrumental in the development of women's studies as a subject of study. The subject had strong roots in the women's liberation movement and, therefore, developed outside the mainstream academy. It was often taught initially in adult education centres and, likewise, it was first offered as a short-term evening course at the Poly. From the academic year 1978–79, termly courses were offered in women's studies, varying in focus from women's history, to women's literature and more contemporary legal and social issues. The PCL Cultural and Community Studies Unit organised a conference in conjunction with the National Council for Civil Liberties in 1978 on the theme of sex discrimination and social security in Britain and in the same year the Marylebone Road building hosted an exhibition by the radical Bradford Women's Group.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, although radical feminism among women students might be less evident, it is clear that in academic circles, the Polytechnic was actively engaging with some of the contemporary debates about women in society.

104 Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic*, p. 91.

105 Finance: Maintenance Grant 1984–85 Application, Student statistics 1982–83: Female Students, UWA PCL/3/4 [ACC2004/15/9].

106 Carol Dyhouse, *Gaining Places: Stagnation and Growth in the Proportion of Women in Universities*, ESRC End of grant report, RES-000-22-0139, 2004.

107 *Cultural and Community Studies: Courses, Conferences and Activities, 1978–79*, UWA PCL/5/3/e/19 [ACC1997/14].

Figs. 171, 172

*In the 1980s women's education at the Poly had completely moved away from domestic skills and female students were taking degrees in languages, history and science.*



## CONCLUSION

Over the course of one hundred years, the Polytechnic, its students and its social context changed markedly. A woman joining the YWCI at the Poly in the late 1880s would have joined a defined, Christian and in many ways a feminine and maternal community, with the opportunity to meet other women but also to take part in mixed educational opportunities and Poly-wide events. A woman joining in the 1930s would likely have been of a similar social class to her 1880s counterpart, and would have been joining a quite similar community, more traditional and conservative than many other opportunities open



Figs. 173, 174

*While one of the Poly's significant offerings for women in the late 19th century was dressmaking and needlework, women were studying a much broader range of subjects by the late 20th century, including science and engineering subjects.*



to her and her peers. By the postwar years, and especially with the growth of the PCL, the women's curriculum faded – with the exception of the growth of women's studies – and women, many likely from the middle classes, joined a more 'typical' higher education organisation offering full-time courses of study, accommodation and a more typical student experience. The separate Institutes continued, but were overshadowed by the main, more academic functions of the Poly and newer conventions for mixed-sex socialising.

In the first half century or so of the Poly's existence, the provision for women appeared to mirror Quintin Hogg's vision for women's formal and social education as he broadly began to conceive it in 1888. This was reinforced and carried out, successively, by Alice Hogg, Elsie Hoare and (to a lesser extent, because of organisational changes), Ethel Wood. Educational opportunities allowed specific training for women as well as a wider range of subjects, and the emphasis of the YWCI and the Polytechnic in these earlier years remained focused upon structured and often gendered leisure, and on charitable service. With the changes to higher education in the postwar decades, and the new demands thereby made on the Poly, the organisation changed the focus of its provision and what was left of the original Poly values were now to be found in the Old Members' Associations. Although the founder and his female relatives were remembered by the Poly, by the end of the twentieth century it was, as other chapters in this volume also suggest, a markedly different organisation.

## MUSIC AND DRAMA SOCIETIES

The performing arts have been at the heart of Polytechnic life from the beginning. As early as 1886 there was a Shakespeare Class whose purpose was ‘the study of “Shakespeare”, and other high-class dramatic works’.<sup>1</sup> This two hours-long class, which was open to both sexes, involved not only the study of the texts but also dramatic recitations and scenes. In the early days of the Poly there were mixed opinions on the performing arts and in 1889 the Mutual Improvement Society held a debate on the moral influence of the stage. The 1891 *Scheme of Administration of Regent Street Polytechnic* banned ‘any dramatic representation and dancing’.<sup>2</sup> The ban was not officially repealed until 1929.

Nonetheless, amateur dramatics was important to the members and students and the first attempt to

create a dramatic society was in 1908. However, despite this early interest, it was not until 1934 that a Dramatic Society was actually established with J.E.K. Studd as its President. In its first year there were 90 applications for membership. The first production was *Nothing But The Truth* (1934) in the Portland Hall and other productions over the years included *Alibi* (1935), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1947), *An Inspector Calls* (1948), *Major Barbara* (1948) and *The Philadelphia Story* (1958).

Music was also popular and in 1894 the Choral Society was recorded to have approximately 100 members. Despite its popularity, only a year later the Society was disbanded due to ‘inefficiency’. Nevertheless, the Poly’s Select Choir (which required members to audition) continued. In 1908 the Select Choir was renamed the Choral Society and by 1928 the name had changed again to the Choral and Orchestral Society. Following

Fig. 175



Fig. 176

Fig. 177



suspension during the Second World War, attempts were made in 1946 to revive the Society.

Operatics were a popular pastime at the Polytechnic and an Operatic Society was in existence by 1911 with a subscription rate of 1s. Unfortunately, once again war took its toll and the Society ceased in 1915. It was not re-formed until 1929 when it became the Dramatic and Operatic Society. After the Second World War it became the Amateur Operatic Society and 30 members took part in the first post-war production, a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Gilbert and Sullivan's mix of comedy and opera seems to have been popular at the Poly as productions by the Society included *The Pirates of Penzance* (1947), *Patience* (1948), *The Mikado* (1949), *The Yeoman of the Guard* (1952) and *Iolanthe* (1960), all receiving favourable reviews in the *Polytechnic Magazine*.

The Amateur Operatic Society was an ambitious

society and its shows were not cheap to produce. Initially it filled such venues as the Portland Hall for three-night runs but over time audience numbers dwindled and financial assistance had to be sought from the Governors on more than one occasion. This suggests that in spite of the early debates on the morality of the performing arts, the Governors and senior management of the Institute were supportive of such societies. Furthermore, members of the Hogg and Studd families were often on their organising Committees.

From the 1960s entertainment moved towards pop concerts with many famous musicians playing at the Poly but interest in music and drama societies continues with the student union carrying on the tradition at the University today.

- 1 *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1886.
- 2 See Fig. 102, p. 97.

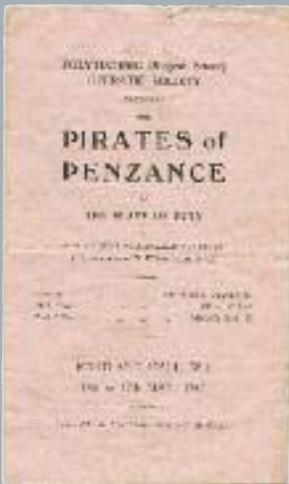


Fig. 178



Fig. 179



Fig. 180



Fig. 181



# *‘Those who did fall in’:<sup>1</sup> war, military service and the Polytechnic*

Anthony Gorst

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the relationship between the Polytechnic and war, patriotism and military service, together with its participation in Britain’s wars of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. It argues that the attitudes of the Polytechnic and its people to these issues were transformed as the century wore on, moving from a distinctly patriotic attitude, represented by a willingness to assume the burden of voluntary military service in the Territorials, to a more questioning one. This can be seen particularly after the Second World War, when the attitudes displayed by students at the Polytechnic in, for example, the 1980s to conflicts such as the Falklands War, bore little resemblance to those of their Victorian predecessors to the Boer War. In part this change can be attributed to the transformation in wider society’s attitudes to King and Country wrought by the two great wars of the twentieth century, but particularly by the Second World War. The Polytechnic itself made a substantial contribution to these two wars, a contribution that is little known and analysed outside of the limited literature on the Polytechnic itself; this contribution is also the subject of this chapter.

## PATRIOTISM AND THE POLYTECHNIC BEFORE 1914

It has been argued that there was a direct link between the Muscular Christianity of Victorian and Edwardian England, of which Quintin Hogg (1845–1903) was one of the prime proponents, and patriotism and military service.<sup>2</sup> This was most obvious in the public schools, and given the public school background of many of its leaders it was also the case in the Polytechnic. Hogg himself had been a rifle volunteer and a unit of volunteers was supported for a time at the late Victorian Polytechnic. His friend and successor J.E.K. Studd (1858–1944) was also a volunteer and later became a senior figure in the Territorial Forces Association.<sup>3</sup>

A pamphlet published in 1892 by the Polytechnic Reception Bureau,<sup>4</sup> contained an appeal by Colonel Howard Vincent of the volunteers that put the case for ‘patriotic men’ from the Polytechnic to join them. In language typical of

- 1 The phrase ‘those who did fall in’ was used as the heading for the lists of those who had volunteered for the armed forces in the First World War printed in the *Polytechnic Magazines*.
- 2 See for example Gerard J. De Groot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 31–42 and Alan G.V. Simmonds, *Britain and World War One* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 42–4.
- 3 G.S. Woods, rev. Roger T. Stearn, ‘Quintin Hogg (1845–1903)’, *ODNB*; B. Studd, rev. M.C. Curthoys, ‘Sir (John Edward) Kynaston Studd, first baronet (1858–1944)’, *ODNB*.
- 4 Little is known about the Polytechnic Reception Bureau but it appears to have been based in 309 Regent Street and existed to provide a contact point for men and women new to London.

July 4, 1900. **THE POLYTECHNIC MAGAZINE.** 3

**Polg. Boys on Active Service.**

TROOPER A. E. KIRKWOOD, and Life Guards, was in our Day School from April, 1892, to April, 1893. Following the footsteps of his father, who is Quartermaster Sergeant Kirkwood, in the Life Guards, Bert Kirkwood enlisted, and is now serving as Col. North's orderly with the Composite Regiment of Household Cavalry, and was present at the relief of Kimberley, surrender of Orange, the occupation of Bloemfontein, &c. Twice he has been laid up with fever, and when Lord Roberts advanced from Bloemfontein, Bert's colonel found him a post at the base of that city.



TROOPER A. E. KIRKWOOD.

TROOPER DICK BAINCLIFFE, No. 13,473, 72nd Imperial Yeomanry (Pagan's Horse).—Dick Baincliffe is twenty years of age, a younger brother of Louis, and a few years ago was one of our best known Commercial boys. He was with us from September, 1895 to July, 1897, and will be well remembered by some of our readers as the boy who, for three or four years, succeeded in heading the list of school boys who collected for the Christmas Dinner Fund. He is attached to General Carrington's command.



TROOPER DICK BAINCLIFFE.

TROOPER C. GOULDING, Rhodesia Field Force, is a member of the Imitate, and was most frequently seen in the Gymnasium. He left England on March 23th, and was seen afterwards sent round the coast to Beira to join Carrington's force. He will be next heard of entering the Transvaal from the north.



TROOPER C. GOULDING.

TROOPER L. H. BAINCLIFFE, 135, B Squadron, Lord's Horse (Robert's Horse).—Louis Baincliffe is twenty-five years of age, and was formerly in our Technical School (Jamaica, 1892 to February, 1896). He is attached to General French's force, and has consequently been engaged in most of the fighting that has taken place from the battle of Paardeburg onward.



TROOPER L. H. BAINCLIFFE.

Fig. 182  
*The Polytechnic Magazine printed photographs and biographies of members serving in the Boer War, as well as many letters sent back by the men.*

the period and fully in tune with Hogg's ideas of educating the whole man, the Colonel concluded that among the advantages conferred by voluntary military service were:

the gain of health, by muscular development, by the training of the eye and the body, the kindling of nobler and higher instincts. It brings with it too that betterment in social condition, that opportunity of individual advancement from the lower grade, to the higher sphere, the superior rank, which

constitutes the nobility of this latter end of the Nineteenth Century of the Christian Era – which is the aim of the Polytechnic and the Technical School.

Therefore let all the best of the Polytechnicites elect to become a Volunteer Soldier, a Free Defender of England and England's Queen, and so deserve well of their country.<sup>5</sup>

Something of Hogg's attitudes to patriotism can be gleaned from a published letter dated 14 June 1897 reminding members of the Polytechnic of the forthcoming service of thanksgiving for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in which he told members of the Polytechnic that "the Lord is our strength" is still our motto... While the Colonies – which the coming century will move into great nations of our own blood who can make or mar our future – are taking their share in this great gathering of English peoples, it would ill befit us who still inhabit the Island House of our Race to stand aside.' His address at the service was replete with patriotic themes with references to the power of the Empire and Britain's naval power, alongside reference to the Polytechnic tradition of service for the common good.<sup>6</sup> Hogg's last address, published in the *Polytechnic Magazine* after his death, contained some reflections on the future of the Empire and again has an undertone of patriotism and service:

Fig. 183

*Major Vincent Hoare, husband of Elsie Hogg, was a governor of the Polytechnic from 1898 and took part in many Poly sports. He helped establish the Poly Rangers and was a member of the 12th London Regiment in the First World War. He was killed in action in February 1915.*



5 *The Social Centres of London being a comprehensive guide to the Social and Educational, Recreative and religious clubs of the metropolis.* The Polytechnic Reception Bureau, 1892, p. 28, BL.

6 *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1897.



Fig. 184

*Lieutenant Colonel Ian Hogg, second son of the founder, had a successful military career in the 4th (Queen's Own) Hussars. He was killed in action in 1914.*

Never in the history of the world has such a burden rested on any empire as that which rests on the shoulders of our country today. This century which we have just entered will make or mar the British Empire. If we carry out the spirit of the text which we have read, and strive to bear the burdens of those other races which have been committed to us – if we live as though we desired their well-being, and rise to a higher conception of empire than that reached by Greece or Rome, then, in the strength of duty manfully performed and of national honour splendidly upheld, will England shine forth at the end of the twentieth century a hundred fold brighter than she does today.<sup>7</sup>

It is clear then that Hogg's Muscular Christianity had a distinctly patriotic tone, and following the outbreak of the Boer War in October 1899, men from the Polytechnic responded to these sentiments and volunteered to serve with the colours. Douglas Hogg (1872–1950),<sup>8</sup> the son of the founder, was, for example, initially rejected for service: undaunted he travelled to Scotland and was accepted as a trooper in the Imperial Yeomanry with whom he saw active service before being invalided home.<sup>9</sup> His elder brother Lieutenant Ian Hogg (1875–1914), a regular soldier, also served in the war, while other senior figures from the Polytechnic such as Vincent Hoare (1883–1915) also volunteered. The Polytechnic did not keep detailed records of its students and members serving in the armed forces during the Boer War, although the correspondence

Fig. 185

*Douglas McGarel Hogg, (1872–1950) 1st Viscount Hailsham, continued his father's legacy as Vice-President of the Polytechnic c.1920–49. He also had a distinguished political career as a Conservative Member of Parliament.*



<sup>7</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 23 January 1903.

<sup>8</sup> John Ramsden, 'Douglas McGarel Hogg, first Viscount Hailsham (1872–1950)', *ODNB*.

<sup>9</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1950.

Fig. 186

During the Boer War the Polytechnic Cinema showed Alfred West's *Our Navy & Army* films daily to encourage support for the soldiers.



columns of the *Magazine* published regular despatches from members of the Polytechnic at the front. It is therefore not known how many served in the conflict (although 47 men had volunteered by January 1900), nor is it known if any were killed on active service, although the absence of obituaries in the *Magazine* or memorials in 309 Regent Street is suggestive in an age given to the memorialising of the war dead.

The Polytechnic seems to have been fully supportive of the Boer War with displays supporting the war effort mounted in 309 Regent Street where the Great Hall 'filled every afternoon' to watch Alfred West's *Our Navy* recruitment film. A War Fund was established which, in a little over three months, raised £458 9s 7d; clothes were also collected for despatch to the Cape via the St John Ambulance Service.<sup>10</sup> The *Magazine* noted 'Quite a patriotic outburst in the Gym when our assistant gym instructor took leave of our fellows ... to join his Regiment which left for South Africa last Saturday'<sup>11</sup> while one volunteer received 'heartiest congratulations upon your patriotic action in volunteering to proceed to the front in South Africa and to assist in upholding the glorious and honourable traditions of our race.'<sup>12</sup> One old boy noted simply 'The war will be glorious!'<sup>13</sup>

Not all were swept along on the wave of patriotism. One member of the audience for the Polytechnic Queen's Hall Concert in October 1899 wrote to the *Magazine* lamenting the jingoistic sentiment that he alleged pervaded the atmosphere, criticising the repeated renditions of *God Save the Queen* and *Rule Britannia* and the booing of lantern slides of President Kruger and other Boer leaders. Another member of the audience deplored the 'rowdyism' as worthy

10 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 8 November 1899, 6 December 1900 and 20 December 1900. The equivalent of over £26,000 in 2005, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/) currency.

11 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 25 October 1899.

12 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 17 January 1900.

13 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 1 November 1899.



**Fig. 187**  
*The Queen's Hall in nearby Langham Place was a popular venue for Polytechnic concerts. Sadly it was damaged beyond repair during the air raids of the Second World War.*

of the Music Hall rather than the Polytechnic. Hogg acknowledged that he had some sympathy with these sentiments but he nonetheless felt 'the war to have been inevitable' and believed 'it is in the interest of all parties that the miserable oligarchy in Pretoria should lose their power'.<sup>14</sup> Issues of the *Polytechnic Magazine* for the period continued to reflect a broad support for the war during its three year duration with some calling for the establishment of a rifle club while others suggested the establishment of volunteer companies based at the Polytechnic.<sup>15</sup>

Such an idea had to await the appointment of the reforming Secretary of State for War Richard Haldane, who, as part of the military reforms set in train by the Boer War, in 1908 established the Territorial Force (TF) by merging the various volunteer units such as the Militia and the Imperial Yeomanry that had evolved over the previous century.<sup>16</sup> The TF was to be a part-time volunteer county-based force for home defence with no obligation for overseas service but which would allow regular Army units to be formed into the British Expeditionary Force in the event of war. This idea was embraced with some enthusiasm by key figures within the Polytechnic, with Vincent Hoare, by now married to Hogg's eldest daughter, Elsie, and a member of the Governing Body of the Polytechnic, noting that:

14 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 8 November 1899.

15 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 7 February 1900.

16 H.G.C. Matthew, 'Richard Burdon Haldane, Viscount Haldane (1856–1928)', *ODNB*.

At this time when the County Associations are making a special effort to rouse the young men of this country to a sense of their own responsibility, it is only fitting that the Poly should make a ready response.<sup>17</sup>

Hoare took on the task alongside his friend Lionel Fairfax Studd (1891–1915), the son of the President, and in calling for volunteers he played on the Polytechnic ethos of sport and self-improvement as well as patriotism commenting that ‘the game is worth playing from a personal as well as from a national point of view’.<sup>18</sup>

A meeting was held on 3 March 1909 ‘of all those interested in as well as members or their friends who are in any way identified with the Territorial Force’.<sup>19</sup> In March 1909, the *Magazine* noted that ‘room has been made for us in the 12th Battalion London Regiment’: the 12th (County of London) Battalion (The Rangers) was part of 3rd Brigade of 56th (1st London) Division, a Territorial infantry division which had its headquarters in nearby Chenies Street.<sup>20</sup> This bald statement that the Poly formed a company specifically for the Rangers seems, however, to conceal a more complex story that is suggestive of the sense of comradeship that underpinned both the Polytechnic and its Polytechnic Company. According to E. Hutchins, in an account written in 1977:

When V.R. [Hoare] had raised enough men to form a company (the number would be about 180) he scouted around to find a unit that would take us. The 9th London (Queen Victoria’s) ... would have had us if we were split up throughout their Battalion. V.R. wasn’t having that and at last found the Rangers ... The Rangers had taken us in as a complete Company as V.R. wanted.<sup>21</sup>

The determination of Hoare that the ‘Poly boys’, as they came to be known, an echo of the paternalism of Hogg, should serve together was maintained into the First World War and no doubt helped to sustain them through the rigours of trench warfare.

Despite the enthusiasm of some, the Polytechnic Company, more formally F Company, initially seems to have had some difficulty in raising the necessary 180 men: the stumbling block appears not to have been a lack of enthusiasm but the physical condition of potential recruits as ‘nearly one in three of those who presented themselves were rejected by the Medical Examiner’.<sup>22</sup> The company organisation mirrored that of the Polytechnic with platoons made up separately of former schoolboys, the Polytechnic Athletic Club (PAC), The Harriers and Cyclists, and finally the Gymnasium together with other sections and clubs.<sup>23</sup> Eventually the target number was secured. Indeed such was the success of the company that in October 1913 the Rangers asked the Poly to form a second: this briefly became E Company but the two companies were soon amalgamated into A Company when TF battalions were reorganised into four companies to mirror the Regular Army.<sup>24</sup>

17 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1909.

18 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1909.

19 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1909.

20 The Rangers, like many units of the British Army, has a somewhat complex lineage. Its history goes back to the late eighteenth century but it came officially into existence as 40th Middlesex Rifle Volunteer Corps (Central London Rifle Rangers). On the formation of the Territorial Army in April 1908 it became part of the London Regiment. In August 1937 it became the Rangers, The King’s Royal Rifle Corps and in March 1939 became 1st Battalion, the Rangers, KRRC. After a complex series of mergers after 1945, today the Rangers survive as part of The Rifles.

21 Extract from letter from Mr E. Hutchins to Secretary of Polytechnic Men’s Old Members’ Association, 12 March 1977, UWA OMA/4/9.

22 *Polytechnic Magazine*, April 1909.

23 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1909.

24 *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1913. For the sake of simplicity the normal structure of a battalion following the 1913 restructuring was as follows: a Battalion Headquarters under a Lieutenant-Colonel of about 70 men including signallers, pioneers and stretcher bearers; four companies lettered A to D each commanded by a Major and each with a small company HQ and four platoons of about 50 men under a Lieutenant, the platoons being made up of sections of 12 men. At full strength the establishment would be between 900 and 1,000 men.



Fig. 188

*Rev. Lionel Studd, J.E.K.'s third son, briefly worked in the accounts department, played hockey for the Poly's 2nd team, and was a captain in the 12th London Regiment. He died in France in February 1915.*

The first of the regular 'Territorial Notes' column in the *Polytechnic Magazine* reported that a month after being raised the company had already taken part in 16 to 20 drills and although the training was interesting they expected it to become more so when they started 'skirmishing and regular company drill out of doors': the company had 'been taken in hand by Sergeant Instructors from the Brigade of Guards', an experience described as 'rather alarming'.<sup>25</sup> Service in the TF involved a substantial commitment of time including regular evening attendance for drill (up to 40 hours per year) together with an annual two-week summer camp and periodic shorter weekend camps, but it would seem the Poly Company expected more of its men as it secured exclusive use of the new 25 yard small bore rifle range on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The range was constructed in the basement of 309 Regent Street in the 1912 refurbishment.<sup>26</sup>

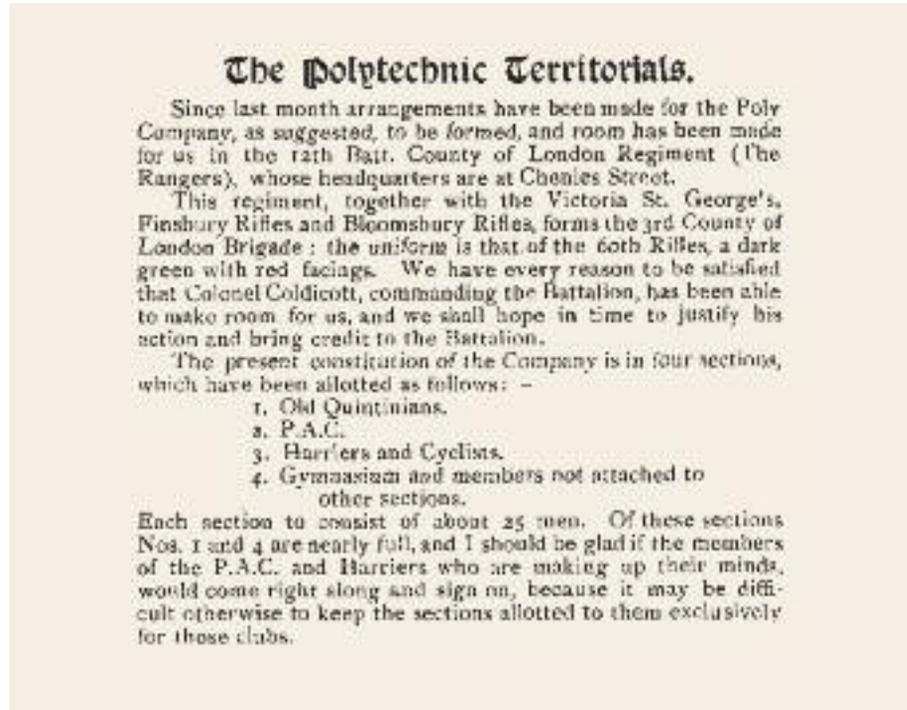
In addition to the military weekly drills and periodic camps, the Poly Company also organised a range of social activities that mirrored those held by other clubs and societies at the Polytechnic including concerts, dinners and dances. The *Polytechnic Magazine* records the wide range of activities conducted by the Polytechnic Company in summer 1913 while the Territorial season was in full swing. In terms of training, the Poly Company had a weekend shooting camp and 'the shooting throughout the company has greatly improved'. This was followed by training in skirmishing at Richmond Park. Next was the

<sup>25</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, April 1909.

<sup>26</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1912.

Fig. 189

Vincent Hoare was instrumental in establishing the Polytechnic Territorials.



London Territorial sports meeting held at Stamford Bridge in which men from the Polytechnic Company recorded some successes, if not outright victory: A.L. Treble came second in the mile, while F.L. Hawes came third in both the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile and mile cycle races. Sports of a less serious kind also formed a prominent theme. In an account of a weekend camp held at Chiswick, in typical language, the *Magazine* recorded the following activities:

Bicycle polo has provided the young bloods with splendid opportunities of letting off superfluous energy. There is only one rule to be observed in this game and that is you must use another fellow's bike.<sup>27</sup>

Nor was this the end of a busy summer calendar, as the same column advertised the upcoming Poly Company Garden Fête. Activities ranged from a puttee rolling competition for the men and potato and apple races for 'ladies and gents', together with miniature rifle shooting.<sup>28</sup>

An account of the summer camp of 1913 reinforces the point that life in the Territorial Force was not just about training. Football was a particular enthusiasm of the Polytechnic Company and E. Hutchins recorded with a note of pride some 60 years after the event that the Rangers team that won a prewar London Territorial Football Cup final was made up almost entirely of Poly boys bar one man. According to Hutchins, Hoare seems to have pursued some recruits for his company specifically for their sporting prowess.<sup>29</sup> Both companies continued to enjoy the full range of military, sporting and social activities in the winter and spring of 1913–14 but their seemingly idyllic routine was soon to be rudely interrupted by the cataclysm of the First World War.

<sup>27</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, July 1913.

<sup>28</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, July 1913.

<sup>29</sup> Extract from letter from Mr E. Hutchins, UWA OMA/4/9.

## THE POLYTECHNIC AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A close reading of the *Polytechnic Magazine* through the summer of 1914 does not suggest any premonition that war clouds were gathering as the crisis unfolded across Europe from July 1914. Indeed, on 3 August 1914 the Polytechnic Company was on its way to summer camp when it was recalled to Chenies Street where it mobilised as the British ultimatum to Germany expired.<sup>30</sup> The Polytechnic Company was billeted temporarily in the more or less empty Regent Street building, it being the summer holidays, while 200 men from the Queen Victoria's Rifles were billeted in the Balderton Street annexe so that 'the Poly wears the appearance of a soldiers' encampment'. The Polytechnic also quickly began to mobilise its resources for war with First Aid classes being run for 1,500 students while the third floor of Regent Street was given over to the British Red Cross Society.<sup>31</sup>

Following ten days of drill in Regent's Park and route marches to Hampstead Heath, the Rangers marched by stages to a training camp near Guildford. Here a vital step was taken in readiness for war when officers and men of the Rangers were asked if they were willing to volunteer for overseas service: addresses by battalion officers elicited a disappointing response and it took the intervention of senior officers from the Brigade and the Division together with the Bishop of London to secure sufficient responses.<sup>32</sup> Approximately 100 men from the battalion declined the opportunity for overseas service (it is not known how many, if any, were Poly boys), and were returned to the depot to form the nucleus of the newly formed 2nd/12th Battalion whose task was to recruit and train volunteers for drafts to the now renumbered 1st/12th Battalion. Some 1,000 men volunteered for the 2nd/12th in a week, bringing the battalion immediately up to strength: training commenced in the streets and buildings of Central London, including the Gymnasium at the Polytechnic until they moved to White City in early October 1914.<sup>33</sup>

The appeals that generated such a rush to the colours came at both national level, such as those by Lord Kitchener, and at local level by J.E.K. Studd who

**Fig. 190**  
*The Territorials attended a two-week camp every summer, with practice exercises against other companies and intra-battalion sports competitions.*



30 Captain A.V. Wheeler-Holohan and Captain G.M.G. Wyatt (eds.), *The Rangers' Historical Records from 1859 to the Conclusion of the Great War* (London: Harrison & Sons Ltd., 1921), p. 18.

31 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1914.

32 Wheeler-Holohan and Wyatt (eds.), p. 20.

33 Wheeler-Holohan and Wyatt (eds.), pp. 251–2.



Figs. 191, 192

*Although most of the war was spent in France, the Rangers were initially billeted in the more familiar surroundings of 309 Regent Street. The gymnasium was converted into a dormitory for soldiers.*



played on the institutional ethos to encourage men from the Polytechnic to enlist together in a new company for the Rangers (presumably in the 2nd/12th Battalion) saying:

Poly members have ever been foremost in Education and Athletics, and have shown a splendid spirit of unanimity in all they have undertaken. They will, I am sure, respond no less heartily and effectively to this call on their services.

Encouraged, therefore, by your previous help, and still more by the knowledge that a deep and fierce patriotism and an unselfish readiness to help inspires every true member of the Poly, I make this appeal to one and all, and am convinced that in this hour of the Nation's need she can count on all Poly members to do their utmost.<sup>34</sup>

Individual clubs and societies encouraged their members to respond, the Football Club to such effect that 'fixtures [were] generally cancelled for the present', while the Rifle club encouraged members to make use of its facilities.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly the Polytechnic Cycling Club showed a marked preference for the Cyclists Corps with 29 serving with 1/25th Battalion of the London Regiment.<sup>36</sup> Herbert H. Gayler of the Cyclists was to be killed in the Waziristan campaign, India, in 1917, a reminder of the wider dimensions of the First World War.<sup>37</sup>

#### ON ACTIVE SERVICE

A list published in the October 1914 *Magazine* contains the names of over 900 Poly boys 'who did fall in', around 600 in the Rangers.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1914.

<sup>35</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1914.

<sup>36</sup> *Polytechnic Cycling Club Gazette*, Vol. 8, 1912–15, September 1914, UWA PCC/10/1/8.

<sup>37</sup> Figs. 213, 214, p. 185. See also Mark Clapson, *An Education in Sport: Competition, communities and identities at the University of Westminster since 1864* (Cambridge: Granta, 2012), pp. 61–3.

<sup>38</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1914.



By January 1915 some 1,414 had volunteered for the armed forces with a total of nearly 2,000 by the middle of 1915.<sup>39</sup> In all nearly 4,400 men from the Polytechnic served during the war, the overwhelming majority of them in the Army, of whom 394 are known to have lost their lives.<sup>40</sup> It is not known how many were wounded but if national trends apply then probably around 1,000 would have been wounded, some several times. Polytechnic members served in a wide range of infantry units including, not surprisingly, the London Regiment, as well as some of the nearby County Regiments such as the Middlesex Regiment and the Essex Regiment. Others, no doubt for reasons of familial ties or previous regional loyalties, joined Regiments with no obvious connection to London: no fewer than five men were killed while serving with the Sherwood Foresters, a Nottinghamshire Regiment. It was of course the infantry who were to bear the brunt of the casualties of the First World War. Still others served in the support and technical arms of the Army such as the Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery, branches for which the kind of technical education in engineering and electrical engineering provided by the Polytechnic made them well suited, as well as new combat arms that were created in the First World War such as the Machine Gun Corps and the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). Others, who for whatever reason were unable to serve in the armed forces, served with the two Volunteer Aid Detachments raised and supported

**Fig. 193**  
*Before conscription was introduced during the First World War, recruitment services were held at the Poly to encourage young men to enlist.*

39 Polytechnic Governing Body papers, 1914–18, UWA RSP/1 [ST59/1].

40 These statistics are derived from the names on the First World War Memorial in the foyer of 309 Regent Street, which lists 87 officers, 78 non-commissioned officers and warrant officers and 229 other ranks. At the time of writing 10 individuals remain unidentified. It would appear that the Memorial does not list the name of all of those who were killed in the First World War as there are references in the *Polytechnic Magazine* to at least a further 10 deaths attributable to the war.



Fig. 194  
 Recruitment marches took place in 1915 to foster support and persuade men to join up.

by the Polytechnic to provide medical aid and support for the armed forces within the capital, including caring for wounded soldiers returning on hospital trains from France, and treating those injured in the Zeppelin and Gotha raids on London between May 1915 and May 1918.

In addition to those who enlisted immediately, there were also those who joined the Polytechnic Volunteer Training Corps (PVTC) established in October 1914 and so indicated a willingness to keep fit and undergo some basic training in readiness for future service. By November 1914 some 400 had enrolled and by the end of the war a total of 1,148 had been members of the PVTC and its successor the Marylebone Volunteer Training Corps, many of whom of course subsequently served in the armed forces.<sup>41</sup> Around the same time the boys of the Polytechnic School were also formed into the Polytechnic Cadet Corps to undergo training in preparation for the time they too came of age and enlisted.

It was not long before the Polytechnic sustained its first casualty. The *Polytechnic Magazine* claimed that 'it was fitting' that the second son of the founder, by now Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hogg DSO, who died aged 39 on 2 September 1914 was 'first on the Poly Roll of Honour'. Lieutenant-Colonel Hogg was wounded on 1 September, shot through the lungs while leading the rear-guard of the 4th Hussars. His second in command recorded that 'when shot,

41 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1914 and January 1919.



Fig. 195

*In 1915, a week-long Poly Cadet Camp was held at the Pavilion, Eastcote. The cadets' daily routine involved field operations, trench digging, range-finding, route marches and battalion drills.*

he was standing in an open clearing, signalling with his hat for some men to retire ... he refused to budge till certain that all of his men were back' whereupon he was carried to the village of Haramont where he died the next day.<sup>42</sup> In fact, as the same edition recorded, the first member of the Polytechnic to die was actually Lieutenant Jules Marie Paul Genarion, killed in action leading his men in a bayonet charge in Alsace on 13 August 1914 while serving with the French Army. He had been a member of the Polytechnic Athletic Club and a member of the Hockey team and he represents the cosmopolitan nature of the prewar Polytechnic as no fewer than 19 men from the Poly were to serve with the French Army during the war.<sup>43</sup>

News of further casualties from France soon began to reach the Polytechnic and was published in the November and December 1914 editions of the *Magazine* recording the deaths of two officers, including Captain Kinnaird of the Scots Guards. Thus began the tradition in the *Polytechnic Magazines* of publishing a roll of honour of photographs and short obituaries of fallen members.<sup>44</sup>

The Polytechnic Company of the Rangers sustained their first casualty even before they went to France: on 22 November 1914 Lance-Corporal Ernie Taunt was run over and killed by a train while guarding a railway line near the Rangers camp at Crowborough.<sup>45</sup> Sadly, Private Douglas McNicol, one of the Poly's most distinguished athletes and holder of the Studd Trophy, died of pneumonia while serving with the Sherwood Foresters on 29 November 1914 while still in Britain.<sup>46</sup>

By the time the Rangers went to France to reinforce the hard-pressed British Expeditionary Force, four Poly boys had already been killed serving with the London Scottish, another TF battalion. The Rangers landed at Le Havre

42 *De Ruigny's Roll of Honour: A Biographical Record of His Majesty's Military and Aerial Forces Who Fall in the Great War 1914-18 (Military Rolls)*, new edition (London: Naval & Military Press Ltd, 2001).

43 *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1914.

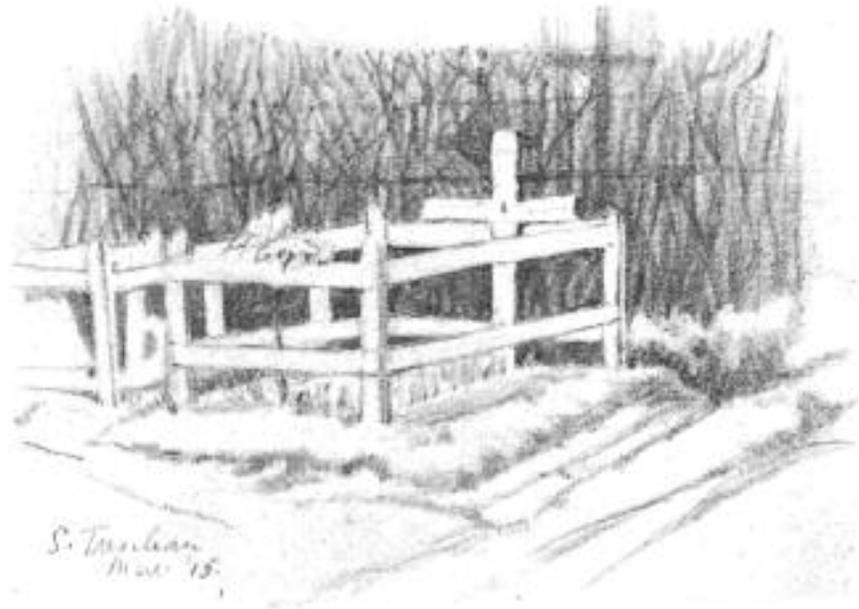
44 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November, December 1914.

45 Wheeler-Holohan and Wyatt (eds.), p. 23.

46 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1914.

Fig. 196

*Vincent Hoare and Lionel Studd were killed a day apart and are buried side by side at the Menin Cemetery near Ypres, Belgium.*



on Christmas Eve 1914 and entered a further period of training and fatigues to familiarise them with life in and around the front-lines. While adapting to the realities of military life the Poly boys of the Rangers did not forget the institution and the values that had shaped them and maintained the tradition of holding a Founder's Day service in remembrance of Quintin Hogg in their billets in January 1915. Captain Lionel Studd, an ordained minister, took the service while Major Hoare gave an address summarised as 'whatever you're told to do, get on with it, even if you think it is wrong. Get on with it and complain afterwards.'<sup>47</sup> Nor did the Polytechnic forget their enlisted members, with comfort parcels collected at the Poly beginning to flow to the front via the Polytechnic War Comforts Section which was run mainly but not exclusively by women from the Polytechnic.<sup>48</sup> By the end of the war £3,000 had been raised by a range of activities, including the exhibition in September 1916 of pieces of the wreckage from the Zeppelin shot down by Lieutenant Leefe Robinson; nearly 6,000 parcels were despatched by the end of the war.<sup>49</sup>

The Rangers arrived at Ypres on 8 February with the Poly Company going into line on the night of 12 February. The Poly suffered a grievous loss almost immediately when Hoare and Studd together with several other Poly boys were killed in action on 15 February. Hutchins believed that Hoare was eager 'to show how good his men were' and volunteered his company to cover a sector of the front that was in any case covered by fire from other troops. He was killed by an overhead shell burst and, in the convention of the time, his body was described as unmarked.<sup>50</sup> Tributes to their leadership, character and bravery were paid at a memorial service held at the Polytechnic.<sup>51</sup> They were buried side by side in graves marked by a cross carved by members of their company.

The Poly lost another 22 men, the majority of them Rangers, to the attrition of trench warfare in March and April 1915. The Rangers were particularly

47 Extract from letter from Mr E. Hutchins, 12 March 1977, UWA OMA/4/9.

48 The role of women from the Polytechnic in the war effort of 1914-18 and 1939-45 is covered in Chapter 5.

49 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1919.

50 Extract from letter from Mr E. Hutchins, UWA OMA/4/9.

51 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1919.

hard hit on 8 May 1915 and given the proportion of Poly boys with the battalion, so was the Polytechnic. The Rangers, by now only 200 strong, were ordered to advance but were caught by machine gun fire while attempting to pass through gaps in barbed wire and were then heavily shelled. Although the Rangers succeeded in reaching the German trenches they were unable to hold them and, the senior survivor, a Poly boy Sergeant Walter James Hornal, gathered the 53 survivors and returned to the British lines.<sup>52</sup> Although remembered by the brigade commander as ‘the finest local counter-attack which I had the honour to see’, the Poly paid a heavy price at the battle of Frezenberg (8–13 May 1915) with 18 men killed, and perhaps another four dying of wounds in the immediate aftermath.<sup>53</sup> The Rangers had to be pulled out of line to be reconstituted. A draft of men from the depot brought the Rangers up to 250 strong and for the remainder of the summer it formed a composite battalion deployed on duties to the rear with the Kensingtons.<sup>54</sup>



Fig. 197  
*Many soldiers sent photographic postcards of themselves home to loved ones, such as this image of Lieutenant Frank Jenkins, taken in November 1914.*



Fig. 198  
*Many of the Polytechnic's serving members wrote back regularly to the Polytechnic Magazine and expressed their appreciation for the food and clothing parcels sent by the Poly War Comforts Fund.*

52 Wheeler-Holohan and Wyatt (eds.), pp. 35–6.  
 53 Wheeler-Holohan and Wyatt (eds.), p. xii.  
 54 Wheeler-Holohan and Wyatt (eds.), pp. 38–9; Brig. E.A. Jones, (Comp.) *Historical Records of British Infantry Regiments in the Great War 1914–18* (London: Samson Books, 1978), p. 194.

Fig. 199

*The links to the Poly were not forgotten during times of war. The Founder's Day Service was observed by soldiers at the front, in this case taken by Major Hoare. The artist C.S. Tresilian was a Poly boy and Ranger who later became a Senior Lecturer in the Polytechnic School of Art.*



The next major action for the Rangers was on the Somme when they attacked on the first day of the battle at 7.30 am on 1 July 1916 as part of a diversionary attack on Gommecourt.<sup>55</sup> Although they were successful in reaching the German lines they suffered badly in crossing No Man's Land and by early afternoon, apart from cut-off isolated parties, were back in their trenches. As at Ypres in May 1915, the concentration of men from the Polytechnic in the Rangers led to heavy losses for the institution with 33 Poly boys lost with the Rangers, together with another nine from other regiments. As the battle settled into a stalemate that lasted until the end of the campaign in November, the Polytechnic continued to lose men, with another 50 dying during that period. Thereafter the Rangers continued to serve on the Western Front throughout the war, including at Passchendaele (the third battle of Ypres) in 1917, latterly forming a single battalion when the first and second battalions were amalgamated in 1918.

<sup>55</sup> The literature on the Somme is vast but the best work on the battle as a whole is William Philpott, *Bloody Victory: The Sacrifice on the Somme and the Making of the Twentieth Century* (London: Little, Brown, 2009); while A. MacDonald has written on the Gommecourt attack by 56th London Division in *Pro Patria Mori: The 56th (1st London) Division at Gommecourt, 1st July 1916* (London: Exposure Publishing, 2006).

<sup>56</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1919.

## THE HOME FRONT

While so many of the men of the Polytechnic went to war, the institution placed itself at the disposal of the war effort. Short training courses in the use of wireless telegraphy were run with some 695 men being recruited and trained in the first 16 months of the war.<sup>56</sup> The majority of these were for the infant Royal Flying Corps, the swimming pool in the basement of the 309 Regent Street being converted into a workshop. Accounts of these men survive in a history of the Flowerdown Apprentices, the Royal Air Force radio school in



the 1920s, whose wartime antecedents were trained at the Polytechnic. One account gives a flavour of wartime life at the Polytechnic:

From the Poly we were allowed to sleep at home and come in for breakfast roll call ... I used to come up by tube in the mornings ... just like going to business each day! We did our drill in Regent's Park under very strict Guards NCOs ... and did recruiting marches through London's West End – a small squad of 64 in our 'posh' maternity jacket uniforms and with two bands which would march the recruits behind us to Chelsea barracks for them to sign up.<sup>57</sup>

The Polytechnic ran courses on behalf of the RFC for airframe riggers and mechanics using its modern workshops, and also hosted the RFC Photographic School and Bombing School in its premises in Langham Place. Physical evidence of these men also survives not only in the names of RFC men on the Polytechnic war memorial but in the graffiti carved into the lead flashing of the 309 Regent Street building parapet.

Given its central location the Polytechnic was also used as a recruitment centre. One RFC recruit remembered:

I was shown an advertisement from a daily newspaper in which the RFC were appealing for volunteers to train as wireless operators and to report that day to the London Polytechnic in Upper Regent Street. This I did and having passed a very easy examination – written – about a dozen of us were medically examined and told to wait our call to service.<sup>58</sup>

**Fig. 200**

*Those on active service were registered with their name, Polytechnic department, regiment and rank. Details of demobilisations and fatalities were later added.*

57 L.L. Burch, *The Flowerdown Link: A Story of Telecommunications and Radar throughout the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Air Force* (Sherren, 1980), p. 11. See also the *Polytechnic Magazine*, July 1967, which evidences that some RFC men who had been trained at the Polytechnic were still in contact with the institution some 50 years on.

58 Burch, p. 67.



Fig. 201  
*Graffiti from the roof of 309 Regent Street, including carvings by a member of the Royal Flying Corps.*



Fig. 202  
*During both world wars the Polytechnic provided vital training for service personnel such as the First World War wireless training in this image.*

The Polytechnic also ran first aid and medical courses for the Voluntary Aid Detachments of the Red Cross and for the St John Ambulance Service. The Polytechnic also used its facilities in the war effort: its engineering workshops, for example, were used to make parts for munitions while ‘the workshops were busy night and day in training munitions workers’.<sup>59</sup> Later the Polytechnic, under the leadership of its Director of Education Robert Mitchell, who was appointed Director of Training for the Ministry of Pensions, also helped to establish rehabilitation centres for those disabled as a result of their war service. The holiday chalets owned by the Polytechnic Touring Association in neutral Switzerland were used as hospitals for interned wounded members of the British and Imperial armed forces.<sup>60</sup>

#### MEMORIALISATION OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR FALLEN OF THE POLYTECHNIC IN THE 1920s

As the guns fell silent after the armistice, a Union Flag was raised over the Regent Street building and in characteristic fashion the Polytechnic held a Service of Thanksgiving presided over by its ruling dynasties.<sup>61</sup> Returning ex-servicemen were made welcome at the Polytechnic with a reunion held in April 1919 and an Old Comrades Association (OCA) was founded which later met regularly on Friday evenings at fortnightly intervals throughout the interwar period with some familiar names from the War Notes pages of the *Polytechnic Magazine*, such as former Sergeant-Major Dex Rayner, to the fore. In characteristically sentimental fashion they were welcomed back into the Polytechnic fold in a verse by J.H. Deas, which referenced loyalty, service, patriotism and Empire and which concluded:

59 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1919.

60 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1921. See Chapter 7 for more information about the Polytechnic Touring Association.

61 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1919.

Did we miss you – of course we did –  
 The Poly ne'er looked the same  
 and all were sure that things would seem wrong  
 until you returned again;  
 Hurrah! the gladsome day has come  
 The long, weary years are past  
 There's music in the very air –  
 Our boys are safe home at last.<sup>62</sup>

With the war over the Polytechnic rebuilt itself and by early 1921 it had doubled its prewar numbers including 4,000 evening students, 2,000 day students, over 10,000 members, and 600 secondary school pupils.<sup>63</sup> It continued to provide training courses for disabled ex-servicemen; in May 1919 the *Magazine* records 2,000 men as having being trained alongside its students and members.<sup>64</sup> The war could not be easily dismissed from the collective memory of the institution, not least because men from the Polytechnic continued to die as a result of the war: six men including Private Rowson, in Sydney, Australia, succumbed postwar to wounds or illnesses incurred on active service. Indeed some remained on active service around the world: Lieutenant Douglas Thompson of the Royal Air Force was the last to be killed in action supporting the White forces in the Russian civil war on 24 October 1919. Obituaries for those who had fallen during the war continued to be published in the *Magazine* as their fate became clear and their names were reported to the Polytechnic.

The process of remembrance, begun by the wartime obituaries, gathered apace with a memorial service for the Rangers conducted by the chaplain of the London Regiment, the Rev. K.J.F. Bickersteth MC, in July 1919, while the



Fig. 203

*The Polytechnic formed the first two Voluntary Aid Detachments of the British Red Cross Society in England, numbered Nos. 1 and 2. By January 1916, over 2,500 other detachments had been formed.*

62 *Polytechnic Magazine*, April 1919.

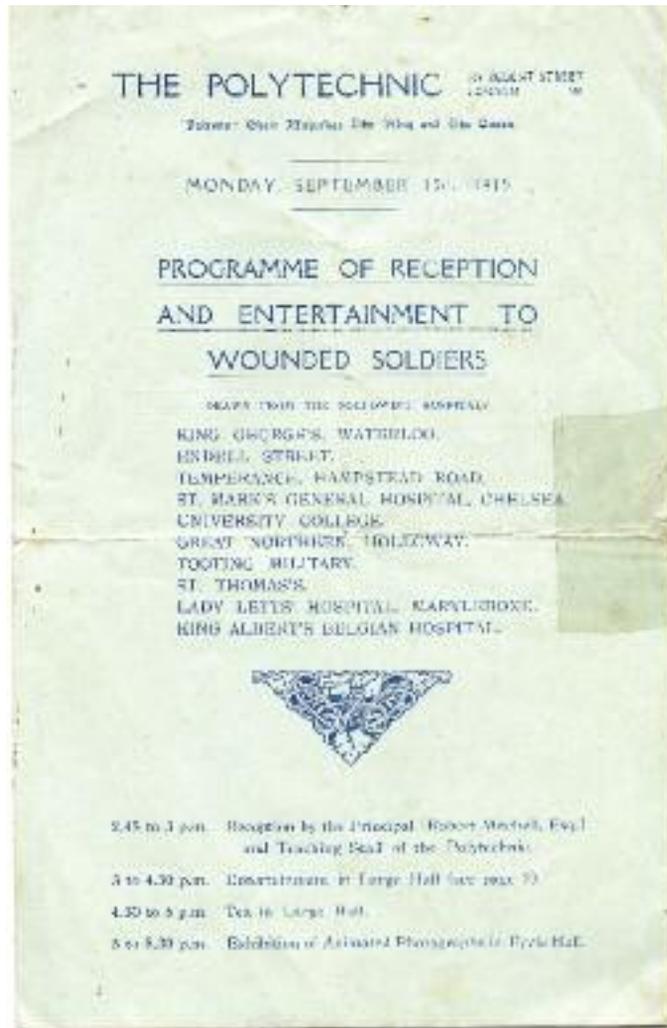
63 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1919.

64 *Polytechnic Magazine*, May 1919.



**Fig. 204**  
*During the war, Isabella Mitchell remained in Switzerland managing the chalets-turned-hospital. She received a War Services Ribbon for her efforts.*

**Fig. 205**  
*As well as organising concerts, members of the Polytechnic regularly visited hospitals in London to entertain wounded soldiers with animated photographs and singing.*



first postwar Armistice Day was marked by a service at the Polytechnic.<sup>65</sup> However, the Polytechnic wished to honour its own and, after several appeals for names, a war memorial to the Poly boys who had died in the war was unveiled on 14 November 1920. This was originally installed on the south side of the foyer of 309 Regent Street but was moved in 1955 to its present position on the lower west side of the foyer. The memorial reflects the hierarchical nature of British society in the early twentieth century in that the names, all male and all members of the armed forces so far as is known, are grouped by rank. Moreover, only the medals for gallantry awarded to officers and non-commissioned officers during the First World War are detailed.<sup>66</sup> Approximately 360 of the dead served in the Army, of whom around 300 served in the infantry; of these 200 served in the London Regiment with 139 of them in the Rangers.

Individual clubs, which had played such a crucial role in encouraging men towards the war effort, also honoured their fallen members with memorials appropriate to their sport: in 1921 the Rowing Club opened a Rowing tank at

<sup>65</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, July 1919 and November 1919.

<sup>66</sup> Sixteen individuals named on the War Memorial were decorated, including three – Major John Bromhall, Captain Sydney Silver and Captain George Goodes who received bars to their Military Crosses, Britain's second highest decoration for valour; Company Sergeant-Major Walter James Hornal won a Military Medal.

Chiswick in honour of their 12 fallen members including Vincent Hoare, while the Cycling Club contributed the Gayler Memorial Trophy for the winner of an annual 12-hour road race. A more public expression of remembrance was the statue of a seated Quintin Hogg reading from a Bible to two children, one carrying a football, in reference to both the Bible classes that had been held by Hogg and the sporting traditions of the Polytechnic. The statue was originally erected to honour Hogg in a prominent position at Langham Place outside the Polytechnic's headquarters building, but was adapted as a war memorial with the inscription *Pro Patria* added.<sup>67</sup> A final physical memorial is that to the Rangers, in an obelisk located close to their former headquarters in Chenies Street. The Polytechnic had a double connection to this memorial as it was designed by L.A. Culliford MC, formerly of the Polytechnic School of Architecture.

The number and variety of memorials to the fallen of the Polytechnic is a testament to the impact of the First World War on the institution and its clubs. In his New Year address in 1926, President J.E.K. Studd made his own contribution to the lost generation myth when he stated baldly 'the Institute as we know it was practically blotted out'.<sup>68</sup> This was obviously not the case, after all 394 killed and an unknown number wounded, of the approximately 4,400 men connected to the institution who enlisted is better than the national picture, which might be attributable to the high number of Poly boys serving in technical arms likely to be in the rear echelons behind the lines. It is, however, a measure of the sense of loss of individuals such as Hogg, Hoare, Studd, McNicol, Gayler and many others who were at the centre of the institution and its life. It would have been both expected, and in the dynastic tradition of the Polytechnic, that these men would take on the duties and obligations of their elders as they retired. That they were unable to do so placed an extra burden on the Polytechnic and the survivors of the First World War who threw themselves into the work of rebuilding the Poly. For example, Commander Ronald

Fig. 206

*The memorial to the Poly boys who fought in the First World War was unveiled in the foyer of 309 Regent Street in 1920. The first name on the Roll of Honour was Quintin Hogg's son Ian.*



Fig. 207

*Wounded soldiers were rehabilitated at the Poly and given training in motor repairs.*

67 The statue was moved in the early 1930s to its present position some 200 yards north of the Regent Street building to Portland Place.

68 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1926.



Studd (1889–1956) became head of the Polytechnic Touring Association and Robert Mitchell (1855–1933) returned as Director of Education. Other returning veterans, such as Harry and Dick Ryan in the Cycling Club or Frank Parks of the Boxing Club, occupied prominent positions in the Clubs and Societies of the Poly.

Remembrance takes forms other than the physical. The Polytechnic continued to remember its dead in the annual Remembrance Day Service held throughout the interwar period. Sometimes to cope with the numbers of mourners two services had to be held, one in Regent Street and another in the new Polytechnic extension building in Little Titchfield Street. A mark of growing reconciliation with former enemies, if not of a receding sense of loss, was the presence in November 1930 of 20 German students on the platform.<sup>69</sup>

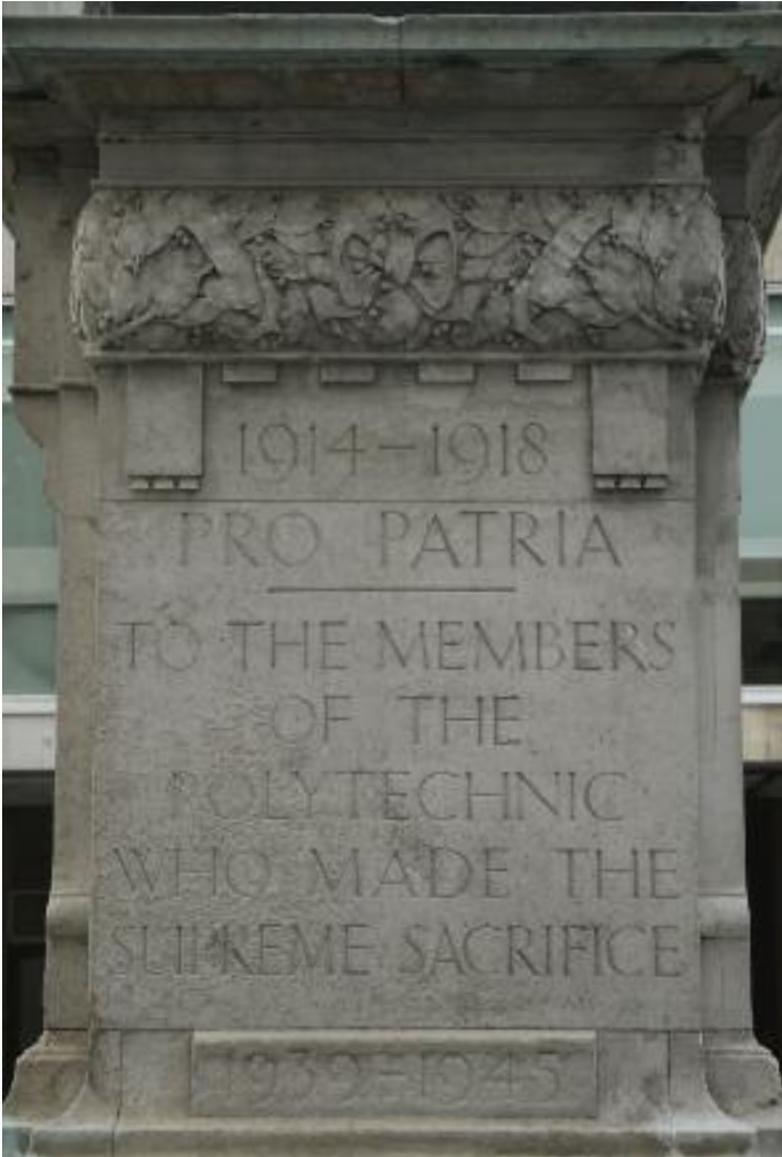


Fig. 208

*In addition to the memorials at Regent Street, inscriptions were also added to the Hogg statue to commemorate the Poly members who died in both world wars.*

<sup>69</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1930.



Fig. 209

*Corporal Gordon Bennett of the 12th London Regiment was one of the many casualties the Poly suffered during the war.*

Other manifestations of remembrance can be found in the accounts of battle-field tours mounted by the Polytechnic Touring Association from May 1920 and reported in the *Polytechnic Magazine*.

The First World War dead of the Polytechnic are buried and remembered all over the world. Most are buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries, large and small, which are dotted along the old Western Front in Northern France and Belgium or are remembered among the missing of the iconic battles of the Somme and Ypres on the Thiepval Memorial and the Menin Gate. Others are commemorated at places that reflect the wider dimensions of the First World War including the Helles Memorial for those who died at Gallipoli and the Suez War Memorial for those who fell in the Palestine campaign. Still others are remembered in further flung overseas cemeteries and memorials including the traditional outposts of Empire such as Calcutta (Bhowanipore) cemetery. Others died as prisoners of war in Germany and are buried there. Still others lie in more homely circumstances in graveyards of churches in Britain as they died, either of the effects of wounds, illness or accident while on active service in the United Kingdom.

Perhaps typical of the men from the Polytechnic who gave their lives in the First World War was Corporal Gordon Bennett who was killed in action on 7 October 1916 aged 22 while serving with the Rangers. The son of Walter, a metal merchant, and Clara Bennett of Streatham, London he was one of six children. He was a student at the Polytechnic Technical Day School, a Polytechnic Member from September 1911 and a member of the Polytechnic Athletic Club. He went to France with the Rangers on Christmas Eve 1914. A comrade wrote after his death:

Figs. 210, 211

*Harry and Dick Ryan, 12th London Regiment, were two of five brothers, four of whom were members of the Poly Cycling Club. Harry (left) went on to win a bronze medal at the 1920 Olympics. Their brother Thomas died in the First World War.*



... He had more of the ideal Christian qualities than those of the ideal soldier and it made his nobleness very appealing that he had to nerve himself to do his duty and always carried it out unflinchingly and with a quiet confidence. His last action was quite typical of him for in the attack he might very easily have detached another man of his team to carry his Lewis gun, but he preferred to do it himself and by doing so made himself an obvious target.<sup>70</sup>

Those who died reflected the Polytechnic's cosmopolitan make-up and that of the city it served, names such as Bertoglio and Fuhrberg are suggestive of a non-British ancestry, indeed one, L. Groenings, whose father was born in Germany, changed his name to that of his maternal grandfather and was killed serving as William Birkbeck. They also reflected the fact that the Polytechnic was participating in an imperial war effort with members of the Polytechnic killed while serving with Dominion forces. It is of course entirely possible that either they were born in the United Kingdom, or that their parents or themselves emigrated, given Hogg's enthusiasm for empire and emigration, before they returned with their national contingents to serve King and Country. For example, Private Francis Rowson of the 18th Battalion Australian Infantry who died in June 1919 was born in Willesden Junction.

It is not hard to find tragedy among the names on the Memorial. The youngest man from the Polytechnic to die was Private Sydney Wyllie, of the 1st/1st Royal Fusiliers, who was killed in action on 9 May 1915 aged 15. (His parents suffered a double loss, when another son, Private F.W. Wyllie suffered the same fate on 19 November 1917.) Second Lieutenant Donald Heriot Anson Cheers, was serving with the Royal Air Force when he was killed in a flying accident on 17 April 1918. He had enlisted in August 1915 in the 30th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers giving his age as 19 and his occupation as student: as the *Polytechnic Magazine* put it 'like other high spirited boys he joined His Majesty's Forces with a misstatement as to age', he too was in fact only 15. By the time his parents reported this in November 1915 he was already serving in France: he was released from the Army in February 1916 and sent home. He then joined the Polytechnic Cadet Corps and was later commissioned into the 3rd East Surreys before transferring to the RFC.<sup>71</sup>

There are at least four pairs of brothers listed on the Memorial. Perhaps the most poignant are the Fippard brothers who died on 4 June 1915. The eldest, Corporal Herbert Fippard, was killed serving with the 9th Battalion London Regiment, Queen Victoria's Rifles, at Ypres while his brother, younger by two years, Captain Richard Clift Fippard of the West Yorkshire Regiment and the Lancashire Fusiliers was killed at the Dardanelles. Some individuals served almost throughout the war before being killed. Gunner Harold George Tombleson of the Royal Artillery had enlisted at the age of 18 one month after the outbreak of war and died just two months before its end on 22 August 1918.



Fig. 212  
*The Poly Rangers had their headquarters in Chenies Street. Their war memorial is outside the deep level shelter that was used as General Eisenhower's London headquarters during the Second World War.*

70 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1918.

71 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1917.



Figs. 213, 214

*Herbert Gayler joined the Polytechnic Cycling Club in 1909 and competed in the 1912 Stockholm Olympics. After his death in India in June 1917 (a photograph of the funeral can be seen on the right), the cycling club named a trophy after him.*



#### DESCENT TO WAR: THE 1930s

Perhaps surprisingly in an era characterised by phrases such as ‘the war to end all wars’ and ‘never again’ the Polytechnic Company of the Rangers was immediately revived in 1920 as part of the now renamed Territorial Army (TA). A letter from Colonel A.D. Bayliffe of the Rangers acknowledged that those ‘that had been through the furnace of war [might] desire to forget its horrors and are reluctant to take up soldiering again’ but argued that the war had brought ‘rare friendships and many precious memories and it is due to the memory of our gallant dead that we should carry on the work in which they gave up their lives’.<sup>72</sup> A further letter from Captain Dunlop who commanded the Poly Company after the death of Hoare used the traditions and history of the Poly Company to play on the memories and conscience of those who had served in the war by asking them to serve in the Rangers in order that they might hand on their experience to a new generation:

as they would have handed over a trench or battery position. Not by just clearing out and letting the next man take his chance but by stopping a little while in with the new men and not going until they knew the new men knew the lie of the land.<sup>73</sup>

Although there are sporadic references in the magazine in the 1920s, it is not known how successful this appeal was (although by the early 1930s it seems there was a platoon made up entirely of members of the Polytechnic), nor is it known how many men from the Polytechnic either joined or rejoined the

<sup>72</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1920.

<sup>73</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1920.

Rangers. Further connections were forged as Poly boys remained active in the Rangers' Old Comrades Association.

What is certain is that the connection was solidified in October 1933 when Quintin Hoare (1908–92) and his brother, Graham (1913–84), resolved 'to revive the splendid work of their father ... in connection with the Territorial Army'.<sup>74</sup> This was not to be accomplished without controversy as shown by an account of a meeting chaired by Douglas Hogg, by now Lord Hailsham and Secretary of State for War in the National Government. After a showing of a 1914 film of the Rangers:

One section of the audience seemed to misunderstand the purpose of the meeting and to consider it a justification for war. We all detest war quite as much as the most ardent pacifist, but realise that, as training is needed to win races, so preparation is needed for the defence of that we love more than ourselves. The Chairman pointed out that the meeting was not a public gathering in support of war, but was a purely Poly affair to restart an old activity.<sup>75</sup>

The matter was not to rest there and the unease felt by some within the Polytechnic about the conflict between a still overtly religious institution seemingly encouraging its members into military service, albeit voluntary, was registered in a letter addressed by a new member to the President and published in the *Polytechnic Magazine* of December 1933:

I am very seriously disturbed and disappointed by the proposal, because I was under the impression, when I joined the Poly, that it was organised by men inspired by the teachings of Christ and that they genuinely desired peace and understanding between the nations of the world ... . Therefore I have no doubt that you will strenuously oppose any attempt to form a military unit in an organisation which is doing excellent work in other directions.

The author was given short shrift by J.E.K. Studd who in his reply acknowledged that the Polytechnic was still a Christian organisation and 'that the Governors are as opposed to war and militarism as anyone else in this country'. However, he went on:

The Territorial Army is not formed for purposes of aggression but for the purpose of encouraging and preserving peace and the proposal for the Poly to form a connecting link with the Rangers is one that has my most cordial support ... There can be no question of organising official opposition in the Poly to members who wish to join the 12th London Regiment and so re-form an old, honourable and greatly valued link. Each member of the Poly is entirely free, and must be allowed to be entirely free, to support or decline participation in any activity promoted by, or in, the Poly.<sup>76</sup>

74 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1933, p. 132.

75 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1933.

76 *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1933.



Fig. 215  
A cadet inspection at 309 Regent  
Street, 1933.

It is true that in the same month the Polytechnic Parliament carried a motion calling for the manufacture of armaments to be brought under public control, while the Lecture and Debating Society discussed how to avoid future wars; it could be argued that this was evidence of some pacifist feeling within the institution.<sup>77</sup> A branch of the League of Nations Union was also established in the secondary school.<sup>78</sup> However, two caveats must be made against using such evidence as conclusive proof of attitudes to war within the Polytechnic. First, for every debate in the Polytechnic Parliament supporting the League of Nations and disarmament, there are others suggesting more ambiguous attitudes such as the one in 1933 that concluded by supporting the aggression of Japan against China in the Manchurian Incident.<sup>79</sup> Second, as the Polytechnic Parliament was in effect a debating society, radical and controversial positions were taken as a matter of course in order to score points. Frustratingly, there is a passing reference to a peace ballot conducted in 1937 in response to a perception that a large section of the secondary school was pacifist, but no further details are recorded that would have provided at least some firmer indication of mid-twentieth-century attitudes to war at the Polytechnic.<sup>80</sup>

77 *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1933.

78 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1935.

79 *Polytechnic Magazine*, April 1933.

80 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1937.

As successive crises occurred with gathering pace in Europe after the rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany, one might expect an institution like the Polytechnic to reflect this in its clubs and societies and within the *Magazine*. Curiously this is not the case and there seems to be little or no comment on events in Central and Eastern Europe beyond the odd passing reference such as the one in the Polytechnic Parliament in 1935 to the effect that the rearmament of Germany should be ‘carefully watched while the country takes adequate measures to improve her defences’.<sup>81</sup> As the international crisis deepened, however, by early 1939 the Polytechnic was encouraging its male members to join the Rangers and its female members to join the Auxiliary Territorial Service.<sup>82</sup>

### THE POLYTECHNIC AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In September 1939, with Europe once again at war for the second time in 25 years, the Polytechnic, alongside London, braced itself for the expected onslaught from the Luftwaffe. The experience of the Polytechnic in the Second World War was rather different from that in the First World War as the distinction between the battlefield and the home front blurred and all citizens were *de facto* combatants. From the start, as the *Magazine* noted:

The contrast between August 1914 and September 1939 is extraordinary. In 1914, the national order was to carry on as usual, and we did....today owing to the enormously increased danger of aerial attack many of the principal banks and big commercial houses have transferred their headquarters and valuables to the country. Schools are evacuated, classes closed and all meetings and entertainment prohibited.<sup>83</sup>

The Polytechnic was not immune and it was noted that there had been ‘the practical cessation of all Poly activities’ with the headquarters moved out to Beaconsfield, and the craft schools and the secondary school both evacuated to north Somerset (to Winscombe and Minehead, respectively). With 309 Regent Street effectively empty, the Polytechnic once again began work as a training centre in support of the war effort with a course for the Signals Corps, units of which were billeted at the Sports Ground in Chiswick, from 13 September 1939.<sup>84</sup> Nor was this the end of the parallels to the First World War as men, and this time women too, either volunteered or were conscripted into the armed forces and supporting civilian organisations. By February 1940, 338 members of the Polytechnic were serving in the armed forces, 90 of them in the Rangers.<sup>85</sup> Immediately a War Comforts Section was set up, organising dances, concerts and White Elephant sales to support its activities and it is clear from the *Magazines* that the contents of its parcels were as gratefully received by those on active service as they had been during the First World War.<sup>86</sup>

As the period of the Phoney War began, a degree of normality returned to the Polytechnic. Some of the clubs continued to meet, including the Table Tennis Club, the Ramblers and the Cricketing Club among others, while

81 *Polytechnic Magazine*, May 1935.

82 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February and May 1939.

83 *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1939.

84 *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1939.

85 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1939.

86 *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1939.

the failure of air raids to materialise meant that evening classes in the senior technical schools could reopen.<sup>87</sup> There was inevitably some disruption, for example the German Society was now 'open only to British subjects and is non-political and non-sectarian. It is confined strictly to the study of the German language.' This state of affairs was not to continue for long as the Society was closed for the duration of the war due to opposition from members in March 1940.<sup>88</sup> Even if bombs were not yet falling on London, the blackout had its own hazards as a note from the cyclists revealed: on a Cycling Club run out 'Fred Smart followed a bus up a wrong turning. The bus driver saw his mistake before Smart and promptly put his engine into reverse. Only an undignified yell and scramble saved Smart.'<sup>89</sup> If all seemed relatively quiet on the home front, the Polytechnic suffered its first loss when Surgeon Lieutenant Herbert Cornelius was lost on 14 October 1939 after HMS *Royal Oak* was sunk by a German U-boat at the Royal Navy's main fleet base in Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands.

The war began in earnest on 10 May 1940 when the German *Blitzkrieg* broke over Northern Europe and inevitably Polytechnic members were caught up in the fierce fighting. Pilot Officer Douglas Harriman was lost when his Blenheim bomber was shot down over the Pas de Calais on 25 May 1940. As the military situation deteriorated rapidly, others were caught up in the chaos of the Dunkirk evacuation. Captain Stanley Meteyard of the Army Service Corps was missing in action presumed killed at Dunkirk and Signalman John Ayling was lost when the anti-submarine trawler *Stella Dorado* was torpedoed by an E-boat on 1 June 1940. There were happier outcomes: the *Polytechnic Magazine* reported that:

Peggy Blake who has been in France some time in the Ambulance Corps has had an exciting time. The Germans bombed the small town where they were, and it is now just a mass of ruins. It was a very odd experience driving an ambulance while the bombs were dropping, but she says that her party was getting quite blasé about raids and they even continue to sleep while the planes are overhead.<sup>90</sup>

As the battle for France gave way to the Battle of Britain losses from the Polytechnic continued to mount. Unsurprisingly, most of the casualties were from the Royal Air Force although it is a reminder of the multifaceted role played by the RAF even during the Battle of Britain that several of those listed as killed on the Polytechnic War Memorial were serving with bomber squadrons and were lost in the anti-invasion raids against German-held ports; later others were to be lost in the bomber offensive against German cities. Increasingly heavy German air raids against the capital also began to take their toll on civilians including Edward Eysackers who was killed at Holborn on 9 September 1940 while serving as an Air Raid Precaution stretcher bearer. Perhaps the most affecting case was that of the Poly schoolboy Peter Panting who was killed aged 11 along with his mother Peggy on 16 April 1941 by a

87 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1939.

88 *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1939 and March 1940.

89 *Polytechnic Magazine*, February 1940.

90 *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1940.

German bomb in Great Titchfield Street. The Polytechnic buildings were spared in the first Blitz; although the nearest fell on the Queen's Hall located just one hundred yards away from the Polytechnic in Regent Street. Studd noted that:

The Poly is a comfortable place when you get into it, but the getting there and back is the difficulty owing to the presence of two unexploded bombs, and to damage done to neighbouring buildings ...

The time bomb in Cavendish Square was successfully exploded on Tuesday, and the other one at the far end of Little Portland Street is, I believe being drilled today. It is 22ft down and cannot be extracted on account of gas mains.<sup>91</sup>

Of this incident the *Magazine* noted with a degree of *sang froid* that the September edition was delayed due to an unexploded bomb near the printers.<sup>92</sup> Members of the Polytechnic were deployed on Air Raid Precaution duties, including fire-watching from the roof of 309 Regent Street, and one member of the Polytechnic, Harry Errington, was awarded the George Cross for rescuing two colleagues from a burning building while serving as a volunteer fireman in Soho.<sup>93</sup>

While the evacuated departments attempted to maintain as normal a routine as possible, inevitably the war impinged on them in various ways. The Motor Body Craft School put their skills to good use in 1940 by converting a car for the local Auxiliary Fire Service. A year later they converted two more, one to carry ladders and fire equipment and another for more warlike purposes with mountings for Lewis guns.<sup>94</sup> The evacuated secondary school pupils threw themselves into numerous activities including the collection of iron, paper and other materials for the war effort: they also worked on the land and as one

**Fig. 216**  
*Air raids on London meant that the evacuation of the Secondary School was necessary. The school was moved to Minehead in Somerset.*



91 *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1940.

92 Letter from J.E.K. Studd to Jimmy Tucker, Secretary of the Men's Council, 26 September 1940, *Polytechnic Service League* file, UWA PIN [ACC1994/15/12]; *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1940.

93 Obituary of Harry Errington, *The Guardian*, 4 December 2004; *Polytechnic Magazine*, July–August 1970. Harry Errington was later the Basketball coach at the Polytechnic.

94 *Polytechnic Magazine*, June 1940 and July 1941.

Fig. 217

*For children who had grown up in inner city London, evacuation to the countryside was an eye-opening experience.*

### THE EVAGUATION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL.

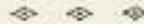
These notes have been written from many different places and in a variety of circumstances, but never in quite such strange surroundings.

The School holidays were shortened by the recall on the wireless of boys and staff. For a week we turned up each day and arranged ourselves in squads in preparation for evacuation to an unknown destination. The School must have been one of the first to move on Friday, September 1st. It was an early start from Oxford Circus, but, before we left, we were very pleased to have Sir Kynaston with us to conduct our Service in the Main Hall. He was good enough to see us off in procession from the Poly steps.

From there we went to Ealing Broadway in a train of our own and then to the main line train, where we learnt that we were on our way to Somerset. The journey was an easy and comfortable one, with kindly people wishing us well along the whole route. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at our destination, where we embarked in buses for surrounding villages. Everyone was most helpful and considerate, and never was there so welcome a cup of tea as that provided for us. And now we are spread over a dozen square miles with four centres, where boys gather every morning to report and receive instructions for the day.

There are many claims as to the superior advantages of being in Wedmore, Blackford, Weare or Theale. It is enough to say that we have all been received with the utmost kindness and goodwill, and the hospitality of Somerset people has been evident everywhere. Boys may be seen riding with the milk to the station, driving cows along delightful country lanes, feeding ducks and chickens, or gathering apples for Somerset cider.

Squad masters are busy inspecting boys' billets, gathering reports on conduct, and making arrangements for laundry, baths, etc. Nearly everyone has acquired a bicycle from somewhere. In the meanwhile, Dr. Worsnop is working hard and touring the countryside in search of a suitable school where we can begin serious work. Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey were good enough to pay us a visit on Sunday, September 10th. We were very pleased to see them, and are looking forward to a visit from Sir Kynaston, who has also promised to look us up. Parents and friends will all be glad to know that everyone is happy, comfortable, and feeling very safe in a district where war seems almost ridiculous. G.A.S.



master noted the boys 'are looking bronzed and fit and many have been heard to say that "were it not for the war, everything would be marvellous down here"'.<sup>95</sup> Again as in the First World War they also prepared themselves for a more active participation in the war when their time came and a cadet corps was organised with the Rangers, while the masters of both the craft and secondary schools enlisted in the Home Guard. Although the recent historiography of evacuation has painted a rather more balanced and less bucolic view of the experience of evacuees, it would seem from correspondence and reports in both the Polytechnic and the School magazines that the experience of the evac-

<sup>95</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1940.



Fig. 218  
*The Poly Clubs and Societies tried to maintain a sense of normality for as long as possible. The Poly Cycling Club's first wartime '25' TT at Girtford took place in September 1939.*

ues from the Poly was a positive one. One early comment will stand for many:

we have all been received with the utmost kindness and goodwill ... Boys may be seen riding with the milk to the station, driving cows along delightful country lanes, feeding ducks and chickens, or gathering apples for Somerset cider.<sup>96</sup>

Back in London the facilities of the Polytechnic were used to support the war effort. Technical training courses, mainly for the Royal Air Force, continued to be run from the Regent Street building; a total of 6,800 were trained in all.<sup>97</sup> As in the First World War, the Polytechnic also trained munitions workers. The Chiswick Sports ground stadium was initially requisitioned by Middlesex County Council for use as an emergency mortuary; it was later occupied by the Army and then by the Royal Air Force.<sup>98</sup> Chiswick was the only property of the Polytechnic directly damaged as a result of enemy action; in April 1944 high explosive and incendiary bombs destroyed the Ladies Pavilion and the boat-house and in July a V1 flying bomb demolished the flat of the groundsman.<sup>99</sup>

The mood of national celebration at the ending of the war in Europe in May 1945, and later that of the war against Japan in August 1945, seems to have been barely reflected in the *Polytechnic Magazines*, certainly when compared with the ending of the First World War a quarter of a century before. The experience of individuals though was one of relief and celebration. As one student of radio engineering at the time recalled:

Our teacher of Engineering Drawing was Mr. Williams; on the morning of V-E Day, most of the students showed up as usual for his class, the first of the day. He looked at us, said 'Have none of you heard of the Arabs who pack up their tents and steal silently away?'. We took the hint and about ten of us,

96 *Polytechnic Magazine*, September 1939.

97 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1947.

98 *Chiswick Ground: Re-planning* file, 1939–46, UWA RSP/2/2/3 [ST54/1]; *Chiswick Occupation* file, 1939–46, UWA RSP/2/2/3 [ST54/2].

99 *Polytechnic Magazine*, April and July 1944.



Fig. 219  
*Remarkably, the Poly Building on Regent Street escaped the air raids intact despite the Queen's Hall, Langham Hotel and All Soul's Church in the next block sustaining heavy damage. The Queen's Hall was bombed beyond repair. On this LCC bomb map dark purple indicates the greatest damage.*

plus some of the students from Architecture, one of whom had a drum, formed a group which marched around the West End for hours, cheering and singing and banging the drum, until we were in front of Buckingham Palace at that iconic moment when the Royal Family, and Winston Churchill, came out on the balcony.<sup>100</sup>

#### POSTWAR POSTSCRIPT

The end of the second great war of the twentieth century did not bring an end to military service for the members, staff and students of the Polytechnic as National Service remained an obligation in Britain until 1963, with men aged between 17 and 21 being liable for up to two years' service. Most chose to defer their service until after they had completed their education and training at the Polytechnic. Notwithstanding this, there remained a tension between servicemen and students that manifested itself in occasional letters from sometimes reluctant conscripts protesting at student high jinks in Rag Week.<sup>101</sup> There is no evidence as to how many people from the Polytechnic served in the armed forces after the Second World War, nor is there any evidence

<sup>100</sup> Email from Jean Shinkle (née Haines), to Anna McNally, 10 June 2011.

<sup>101</sup> *The Poly Tribune*, Issue 1, 4 June 1946, UWA RSP/8/1/3.

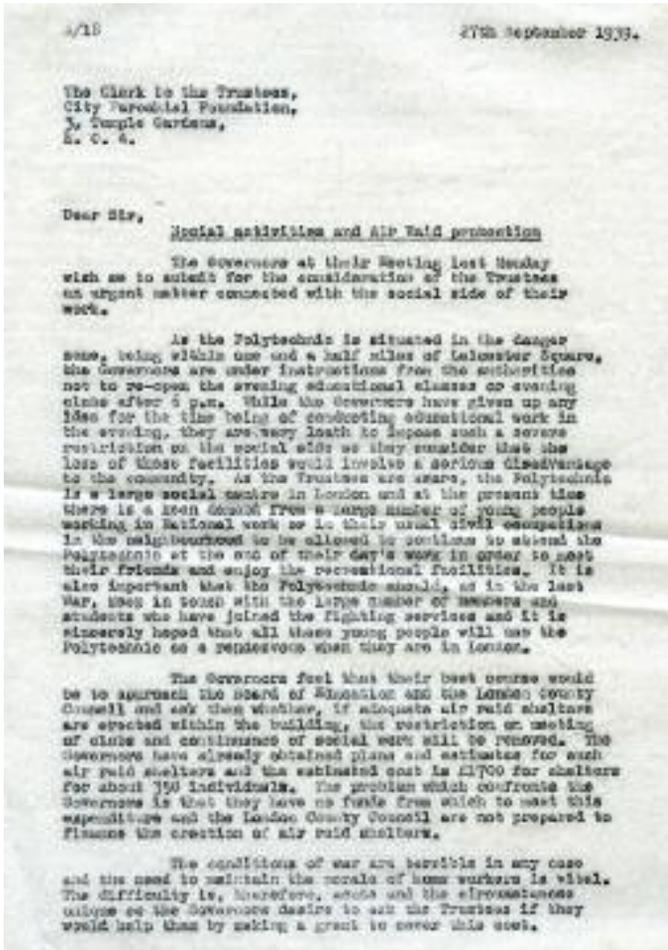


Fig. 220

*During the Second World War the Polytechnic remained open for evening classes as part of the war effort and its Governors were concerned at the genuine possibility of an air raid attack.*

of those who might have died in the less conventional wars of the Cold War or in the counter-insurgency operations that accompanied the postwar decolonisation of the British Empire: although it is known that two pilots died in crashes in the RAF.<sup>102</sup>

The 208 people from the Polytechnic who died in the Second World War were eventually commemorated on the Second World War Memorial erected in 1951 in the foyer of 309 Regent Street (see Fig. 225, p. 198). In a reflection of the changes wrought in society by the 'People's War' their names are recorded alphabetically with no ranks given, suggesting a less hierarchical society than that which earlier erected the First World War Memorial at the Polytechnic. This makes it less easy to identify individuals and the picture of service and sacrifice during the Second World War is much less complete with only 159 individuals firmly identified. However, it is still possible to make some comparisons between the two wars for the Polytechnic. What is perhaps most marked is the higher percentages of officers and non-commissioned officers compared with the First World War, with only 22 per cent of those killed serving in the ranks, almost an exact reversal of the Poly's experience in the First World War. This reflects the more technocratic nature of the British war effort

102 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August 1952 and May 1955.

Fig. 221

*The Polytechnic staged a Navy exhibition in Fyvie Hall in August 1940. Exhibits were lent by private owners and firms, with all money raised going to the War Comforts Fund.*



from 1939 to 1945, particularly in the Royal Air Force and the Navy with whom members of the Polytechnic served in greater proportion during the Second World War compared with the First World War.

#### Comparison of Casualties by War, Rank and Service

	Officers and NCOs	Warrant Officer	Other Ranks
Army First World War	75	85	208
Army Second World War	22	10	25
Navy First World War	0	3	1
Navy Second World War	12	2	6
Royal Air Force (including Royal Flying Corps) First World War	16	1	12
RAF Second World War	35	38	6

As Michael Heller has pointed out elsewhere in this volume, the nature and temper of the student body was transformed in the postwar period reflecting the changes in wider society that were in part caused by the Second World War and its consequences. It is noticeable that student attitudes to the idea of war, military service and patriotism changed radically especially in the 1960s. A Polytechnic branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) was active in the 1960s and again in the early 1980s and Polytechnic students took part in the campaign and protests against the Vietnam War. However, it was not only wars waged by foreign countries that were the object of student criticism; the British Government too came in for its share of the criticism.

What might be loosely termed the 'British military-industrial complex' was



Fig. 222

*The Polytechnic put on a display of its educational work as part of the St Marylebone Youth Week in May 1943.*

the object of some suspicion. In January 1969 a picket was mounted by the Students' Union against a visit to the Poly by the electronics firm Plessey, while a report of a visit to Porton Down in October 1969 recorded the showing of 'a puerile film' about the work of this chemical and biological warfare centre. It should be noted, however, that the picket was not universally popular among the student body with engineering students being anxious for the visit to go ahead, presumably because they were looking for employment in the sector.<sup>103</sup> Nor was it only students who were involved, as staff in one school within the Polytechnic passed a resolution registering their concern over a £35,000 research grant from the US Army although it is possible that this might equally have been engendered by strings that were attached to the money regarding dissemination of the research, rather than the identity of the donor *per se*.<sup>104</sup> In 1981, the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) CND branch put a resolution to the Students' Union to 'actively oppose military research at PCL and recruitment among students by the armed forces and the nuclear industry'.<sup>105</sup> The issue of British Government policy in Northern Ireland during the Troubles was also a cause for concern for students with a 'Troops Out' branch being established at PCL, which called for 'the immediate withdrawal of the forces of occupation including ... the SAS who are a terrorist elite of military assassins'.<sup>106</sup>

However, what caused the most unrest was Britain's participation in two wars of the late twentieth century. The Falklands War in 1982 was roundly condemned in the student magazine as an imperialist war, with resolutions passed by staff trades unions and the Students' Union at PCL condemning 'Tory warmongering' and calling for the recall of the Task Force.<sup>107</sup> The first Gulf War in 1991 was similarly characterised as an imperialist war for oil with anti-war societies being established and staff and students taking part in anti-war demonstrations.<sup>108</sup> Given the political make-up of the Student Union executive,

<sup>103</sup> *Central Issue* (PCL Staff Newsletter), No. 20, 20 March 1980, UWA PCL/5/2.

<sup>104</sup> *Central Issue* (PCL Staff Newsletter), No. 20, 20 March 1980, UWA PCL/5/2.

<sup>105</sup> *McGarel*, Vol. 13, 1981–82, 19 October 1981, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

<sup>106</sup> *McGarel*, Vol. 7, 1975–76, 7 and 14 February 1976, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

<sup>107</sup> *McGarel*, Vol. 13, 1981–82, 3 May 1982, 17 May 1982 and 1 June 1982, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

Figs. 223, 224

The total capacity of both the Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Departments at any one time was 500 service trainees. No fewer than 6,800 sailors, soldiers and airmen passed through the School during the war years.

AIR MINISTRY,  
LONDON, W.C.2.  
10th October, 1939.

*Collected Yes?*

COPY

Ref. A 1052/38/C.25(a).

Training of Technical Personnel

Gentlemen,

I am directed to refer to the Department's letter A.28055/36/C.25(a) dated 27th September 1939, and your quotation DE/RS dated 2nd October 1939 relative to the training of Technical Personnel of the Royal Air Force at the Polytechnic, Regent Street and to inform you that the Department hereby agrees to pay you the sum of 25,766 (five thousand, seven hundred and sixty-six pounds) in respect of the training of the following personnel in accordance with the Syllabus of Training already in your possession:-

Armourers to Fitter Armourers	75	-	51 weeks course.
Electricians to Wireless and Electrical Mechanics	75	-	38 weeks course.
Wireless Operators to Wireless and Electrical Mechanics	75	-	38 weeks course.

The courses will commence on 18th October, 1939.

2. The Department also accepts your quotation of 4/- (four shillings) per man per day in respect of the messing and billeting of the allotted pupils.

3. Payment under paragraph 1 above will be made at the rate of £160 per week. Your claims for such payment should be submitted monthly in arrears on Form 868 to the Officer Commanding, Training Command for certification and transmission to the Air Ministry (F.S.h.) for payment.

4. Claims for payment under paragraph 2 above should be submitted fortnightly in arrears on Form 866 to the Officer Commanding, Training Command for certification and transmission to the Air Ministry (F.S.e.) for payment.

5. You are requested to acknowledge receipt of this letter and to confirm your acceptance of its terms.

I am, Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,  
A.T. Nichols

for Director of Contracts.

The Principal,  
The Polytechnic,  
Regent Street, W.1.

	CLASS	TIME		TEACHING STAFF
		FROM	TO	
	ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS 1/44 DIVISION:-			
1	RADIO GROUP - LABORATORY	9 12	1 2	S. T. SHORT, G. MATHER.
2	RADIO GROUP - ENGINEERING WORKSHOP	9 12	1 4	J. W. MAY, W. BRIDGES, H. FRANKLIN.
3	MOTOR SECTION.	9 12	1 4	R. G. H. FROST, T. S. GANER, E. MAC CARTHY.
4	FITTERS SECTION.	9 12	1 4	J. W. MAY, W. BRIDGES, H. FRANKLIN.



Fig. 225  
*The Memorial to the 208 Polytechnic members who died in the Second World War.*

overwhelmingly of the left and many of the hard left, this opposition to war is not surprising but certainly would not be shared by those students who were not activists. Highlighting this opposition to these two wars perhaps runs the risk of distorting the picture and giving issues about war an undue prominence as a survey of the student magazines from the 1960s to the 1990s reveals that far more prominence was given to local and more parochial issues such as rents for students, entertainment facilities at the Poly, and women’s and gay rights.<sup>109</sup>

### CONCLUSION

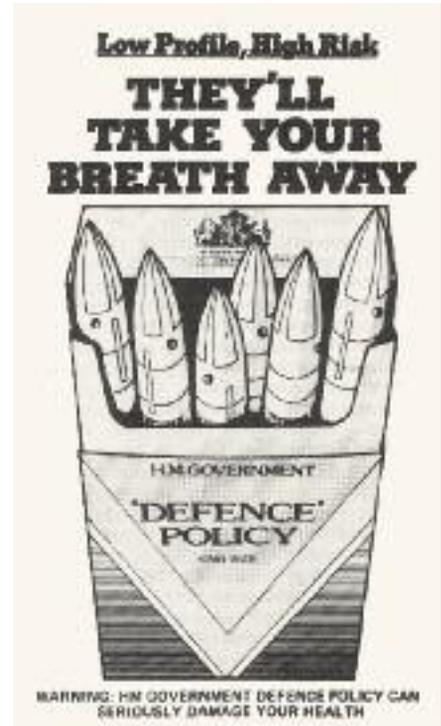
It is clear then that the attitudes of members of the Polytechnic towards ideas of patriotism and military service that were central to Hogg’s ideas and legacy, changed through the twentieth century, moving from a general acceptance of the virtues of these ideas towards a more questioning, and sometimes hostile,

108 *McGarel*, Vol. 22, 1990–91, UWA PCL/8/1/1.

109 See Chapter 4 for a discussion of student politics and activism.

Figs. 226, 227

*Despite various political differences, many of PCL's societies supported the CND movement, joining forces in October 1983 to support a campaign against Cruise missiles arriving in the UK.*



attitude. This had much to do with the changing nature of the institution and its population, as identified in Chapter 4, as the Polytechnic evolved gradually from a late Victorian and Edwardian social, cultural and educational institution with a broad membership to a more narrowly-based higher education institution with its primary purpose being the education of undergraduate students in an era of 'radical' student politics. It also had much to do with the impact of the two world wars of the twentieth century on British society as a whole. The First World War, with its mythology of a lost generation and the memory of the apparent futility of trench warfare undoubtedly began these changes, yet ideas of voluntary military service persisted, though not unquestioned, in what remained an institution with a distinctly Christian ethos throughout the interwar period. In comparison, the Second World War was fought by a largely conscript army and the continuation of national service after the war undoubtedly impacted on ideas about voluntary military service. In addition, the wider social and political changes wrought by the Second World War in British society, symbolised by the expansion of higher education and the emergence of the student, questioned the easy notions of patriotism and military service that were an elemental part of Hogg's legacy.

POLYTECHNIC RAMBLING CLUB

In 1885, while out on a ramble, two members of the Polytechnic, W.K. Davis and Percy Randall, realised that walking was a popular activity. As a result, in 1886 these two men founded what was initially called the Polytechnic Christian Workers' Union Ramblers, later the Polytechnic Rambling Club, as a means of socialising while enjoying some fresh air and exercise. Despite getting off to a slightly disappointing start with only five people turning up to the first ramble, the club, which is still in existence, went on to become one of the Poly's most popular societies, and helped found a movement of rambling clubs at polytechnics throughout Britain.<sup>1</sup>

For the first year the average number on a ramble was only 11 but numbers gradually rose and ramblers ventured as far as Barnet, St Albans, Epping Forest, Shoreham-by-Sea, Chislehurst and Dorking, walking on average 10–12 miles. In the 1890s the ramblers

also started to venture abroad on walking tours to Switzerland, Austria, Boulogne and the Ardennes, walking up to 25 miles each day. During the winter months rambling was replaced with excursions to sites including the Tower of London, the British Museum, the *Daily Mail* and the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Members of the Young Women's Christian Institute soon became interested but initially were only allowed on special excursions such as river boat trips. Nevertheless, by 1888 women were allowed on certain joint rambles which were often attended by as many as 80 members of both Institutes. These occasional excursions sparked sufficient enthusiasm in the YWCI that in 1910 they formed their own club. At the end of the First World War it was agreed that women could join the men once a month. It was not until 1946 that a joint fixture list was formed and the two clubs were finally amalgamated in 1955.

Fig. 228

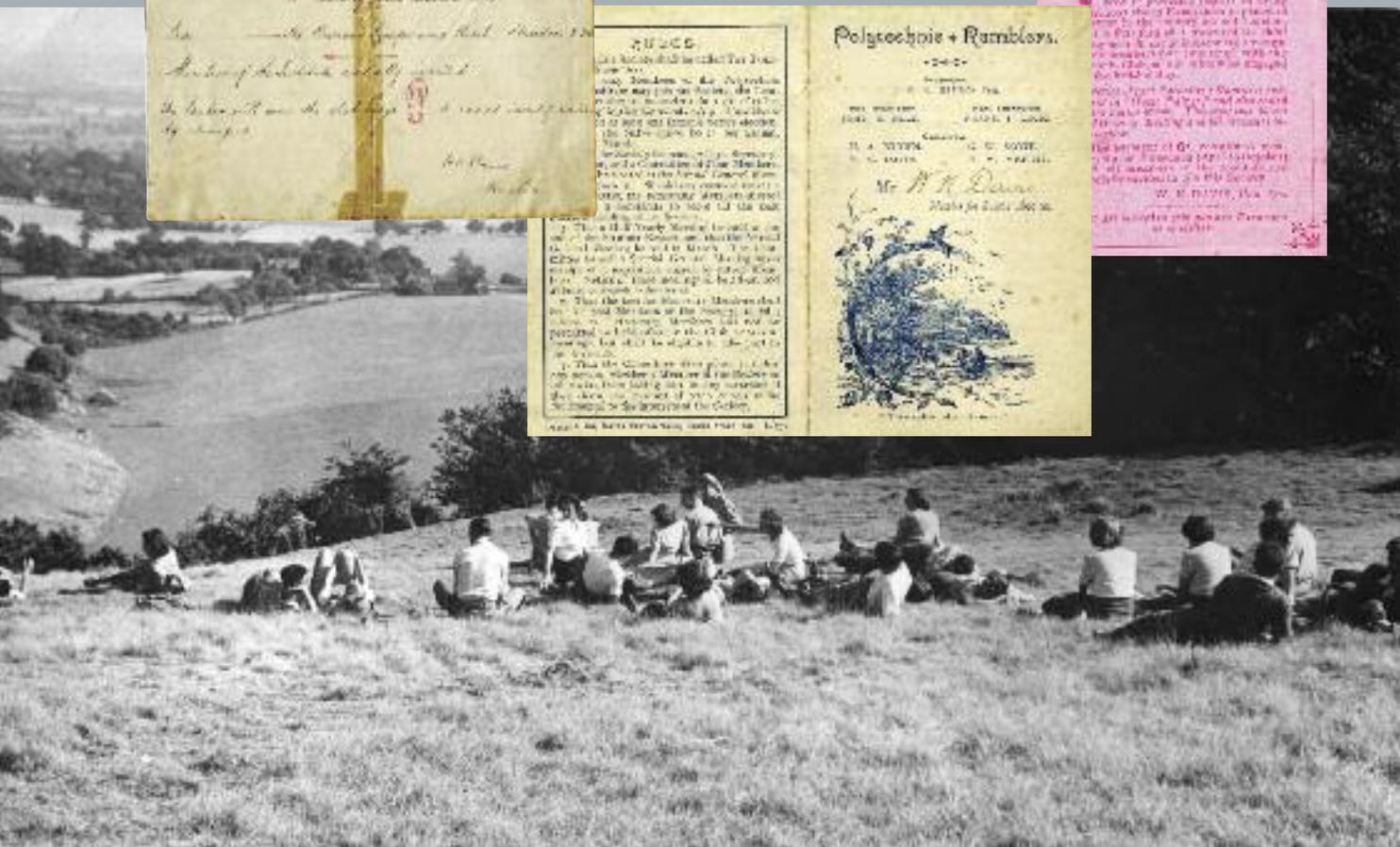


Fig. 229

Fig. 230



Fig. 231



The First and Second World Wars had a considerable effect on both clubs. In 1916 the men's club disbanded until 1919. In 1939 much of the summer programme was cancelled and in 1940 membership had fallen from 153 to 85. The funds of the men's club were frozen and the women took over its administration. In the aftermath of the Second World War rambling became more expensive as day rail fares increased but this did not deter many. Instead the ramblers joined the Youth Hostels Association and weekend rather than day trips became frequent occurrences. The combined membership of the two clubs in 1950 was 300–400.

The ramblers did not lose sight of the ideals and legacy of Quintin Hogg. Hogg believed education to be about the mind, body and spirit and so rambling provided this for many. The members followed Hogg's religious traditions and never walked on Sundays. The members also observed Hogg's views on temperance. In the *Polytechnic Magazine* one early Rambler wrote of them

being 'young men who can go through a hot day in the country with no stronger stimulation than milk and tea'.<sup>2</sup>

However, the clubs were not solely about walking and their socials, including dances, whist drives and garden parties, were some of the most popular at the Poly. The society started to take on a role of a dating agency as many future couples were introduced at such occasions. When the men's and women's clubs celebrated their respective golden and silver jubilees in 1935 around 350 members and friends were present at the Dinner and Dance.

The club saw disruptions by foot and mouth disease in the 1960s and declines in membership in the 1970s and '80s (reaching a low of 40). However, by 2000 membership had risen to over 100 and the club is still going strong today.

- 1 Gloria Chandra, Gerald Kremenstein, Sandra Neilson and Solvig Starborg, *The Polytechnic Rambling Club 1885 to 2002: Walking Through the Years* (The Polytechnic Rambling Club, 2003).
- 2 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 1 May 1886.



Fig. 232

Fig. 233

Fig. 234





# *From philanthropy to commerce: the Polytechnic Touring Association*

Neil Matthews

## INTRODUCTION

Between the establishment of the Polytechnic Young Men's Christian Institute in the 1880s, and its renaming as the Polytechnic of Central London in 1970, holidays in Britain and abroad, once a privilege of the few, became a much-loved annual fixture in the lives of many. The Polytechnic moved into the travel and tourism market in the late 1880s, and its efforts gradually coalesced into the emergence of the Polytechnic Touring Association (PTA). This new venture remained a part of the Polytechnic until 1911 when it became a separate business, and survived until the 1960s when an aviation entrepreneur acquired it. This chapter examines the birth and development of the PTA; its changing relationship with the Polytechnic and with its philanthropic, moral and educational origins; the evolution of its marketing strategies in the face of competition, the disruption of two world wars and economic fluctuations; and the types of holidays it offered. It considers the construction of the meanings of 'abroad' by the Polytechnic and the PTA, through promotional materials, and by Polytechnic members and PTA clients on tours, through their accounts of trips; and it reviews contributions by Polytechnic and PTA holidaymakers to the wider discourse on the purposes of leisure.

## THE ORIGINS OF MASS LEISURE, TRAVEL AND TOURISM

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, class differences divided 'Englishmen at play as surely as [they] divided them at work'.<sup>1</sup> For working-class people, the course of the nineteenth century saw reductions in working hours, through voluntary sector agreements, laws limiting Saturday working hours and the creation of new statutory days off by the Bank Holidays Act in 1871. However, most working people did not yet receive holidays with pay. Voluntary bodies such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and temperance associations promoted middle-class notions of morality and the virtues of self-help. The idea of 'rational recreation' arose as a way of regulating the amusement of the lower

<sup>1</sup> James Walvin, *Beside the Seaside: A Social History of the Popular Seaside Holiday* (London: Allen Lane, 1978), p. 28.

**GENERAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY.**  
(Incorporated by Act of Parliament, 1824.)  
**DIRECT SERVICES. NO TENDERS USED.**

**YARMOUTH**  
DAILY (SUNDAYS EXCEPTED.)

**FARES:**

From London Bridge Wharf at 9 a.m. } Saloon,	Singls.	Return available during the Season.
Or Fenchurch-st. Station at 9.45 a.m. } Fore Cabin	7s. 6d. 6s.	10s. 6d. 1s.

**MARGATE**  
DAILY (SUNDAYS INCLUDED).  
Returning from Margate same day at 4 p.m.

**FARES:**

From London Bridge Wharf at 9.10 a.m. } SINGLE 3s. 6d.	} 4s. RETURN SAME DAY.
Or Fenchurch-st. Station at 10.15 a.m. }	

Or available to Return during the Season, for Children under 12 half-price.

**MARGATE, RAMSGATE, DEAL & DOVER**  
TUESDAY, THURSDAY, and SATURDAY  
(Daily in the Season).  
From LONDON BRIDGE WHARF, at 10.30 a.m.,  
or FENCHURCH-STREET STATION at 11.18 a.m.  
Returning every MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY. For fares, &c., and for particulars of the DOWN BY WATER AND UP BY RAIL (S.E.R. or L.C. and D.R.) trips, see handbills, or apply to Chief Office.

THE GENERAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY'S Superb Fleet of Saloon Paddle Passenger Steamers have been specially designed and built for these services, and are fitted with the latest improvements to secure comfort, safety, and a high rate of speed. The saloons are lofty, spacious, airy, and luxuriously decorated; and there is ample accommodation for all passengers in all kinds of weather. The cuisine is excellent and charges moderate.

GENERAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO., 55, Great Tower Street, E.C.

Fig. 235

*Poly members and students had access to a wide range of excursions thanks to developments in steamboat technology.*

classes, for their own improvement and to integrate them better into society, and of appeasing middle-class uneasiness about the greater availability of leisure time for themselves. 'Rational' referred, among other things, to the stamping-out of working-class hobbies such as pigeon-flying; 'recreation' (as opposed to simple rest or amusement) renewed individuals for their working lives and hence complemented work.<sup>2</sup>

During this period, enhancements to the English transport infrastructure were opening up travel possibilities. The railway network expanded, steamboat speeds rose, journey times and fares fell and more destinations were in reach within a day. Seaside resorts were particularly attractive, as medical opinion began to emphasise the health benefits of sea bathing and sea air.<sup>3</sup> Train-based excursions to the seaside, from towns such as Oldham, were organised by temperance bodies, Sunday schools, literary institutes, factory workers and tea dealers by the 1870s.<sup>4</sup> By the 1880s, pleasure steamers had opened up Ilfracombe to day trippers from the Midlands and some working-class visitors from the North.<sup>5</sup> Londoners took steamboats to Gravesend and Margate initially as regular timetabled services, and later for day trips and special excursions.<sup>6</sup>

Inter-class interactions among the growing numbers of holidaymakers caused tension and, in turn, regulation. At resorts such as Blackpool, social zoning, and the licensing of seaside attractions, developed.<sup>7</sup> Some resorts maintained a reputation for 'better class' holidaymakers and there was criticism of 'rabblies', particularly the so-called 'day-trippers' who often travelled on the

- 2 Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian Britain: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control 1830-1885* (London: Routledge, 1987), p. 4, p. 20, pp. 35-7 and p. 67.
- 3 John Walton, *The English Seaside Resort: A Social History 1750-1914* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1983), pp. 18-22.
- 4 Robert Poole, 'Oldham Wakes', in John Walton and James Walvin (eds.), *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), p. 81.
- 5 F.B. May, 'Victorian and Edwardian Ilfracombe', in John Walton and James Walvin (eds.), p. 199.
- 6 David Williams and John Armstrong, 'The Thames and Recreation, 1815-1840', in *London Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2005, p. 26.
- 7 John Walton, 'Consuming the Beach: Seaside Resorts and Cultures of Tourism in England and Spain from the 1840s to the 1930s', in Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough (eds.), *Being elsewhere: tourism, consumer culture, and identity in modern Europe and North America* (USA: University of Michigan Press, 2001), pp. 285-7.



Fig. 236

Henry Lunn worked at the Polytechnic between 1890–98. Lunn founded a series of travel firms including *The Free Church Touring Guild*, *Alpine Sports Ltd*, *the Hellenic Travellers' Club* and *Sir Henry Lunn Ltd*.

newly-created Saturday half-days off.<sup>8</sup> Away from the seaside, the formation of the Alpine Club, by a group of British mountaineers in 1857 symbolised a middle-class search for 'new status symbols and leisure patterns, such as sports and summer holidays. Mountain climbing combined both of these to perfection'.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, as the prosperity of English spas declined, the more well-to-do – who had patronised the inland spas for health reasons, and followed updated versions of the Grand Tour – travelled to Continental spa locations and to winter residences further afield.

Travel agencies now began to multiply, following the lead of Thomas Cook, whose temperance-inspired efforts were based on a belief in travel as 'a kind of free trade in people ... a form of social enlightenment'.<sup>10</sup> As his agency grew, many 'Cook travellers' travelled independently and the clientele became increasingly middle class. Other agencies ran only partially on a commercial basis and promoted various strains of 'rational recreation'. They included Frames, Dean and Dawson, the Toynbee Travellers' Club and the Arlington Travel Club.<sup>11</sup> The Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA) was created in 1893, inspired by a sermon on holidays by T.A. Leonard, a Congregationalist minister, who contrasted the frivolities of Blackpool with the 'restorative calm of a holiday in the countryside'.<sup>12</sup> Finally, Henry Lunn (1859–1939) founded several firms, one of which would play a part in the PTA's ultimate fate.<sup>13</sup>

#### THE ORIGINS OF THE POLYTECHNIC TOURING ASSOCIATION

The Polytechnic's travel services had their origins in the UK and can be traced back to August 1872, when Quintin Hogg rented a small house at 24 Portland Place at East Cliff in Brighton so that some of the boys under his care could enjoy a stay away from London. This was 'the tentative commencement of the holiday homes now scattered all over the kingdom'.<sup>14</sup> The UK holiday homes were rented for members' use. They also became a focus for Polytechnic members' philanthropy, through a fund set up to enable poor families to have a short holiday in the country or at the seaside.<sup>15</sup> The Holiday by Proxy Fund would be responsible for providing holidays for hundreds of the less fortunate every year – as many as 600 people in 1902 at a total cost of £500.<sup>16</sup>

The event later promoted by the PTA as marking its origins took place in 1888. It happened as a result of a sudden inspiration by Robert Mitchell (1855–1933), the Polytechnic's Secretary and, from 1891, its Director of Education:

Stopping to listen to a geography lesson one day, [Mitchell] asked both master and boys if any of them had seen the mountains and glaciers, torrents and waterfalls that were being described. Not one had ... In 1888 [Mitchell] went off to Belgium and Switzerland, planned a walking tour by the simple expedient of following the proposed route on foot himself, cajoled or bewildered railway companies into granting extremely favourable terms, and

8 Walton, *The English Seaside Resort*, pp. 191–5.

9 Peter Hansen, 'Albert Smith, the Alpine Club, and the Invention of Mountaineering in Mid-Victorian Britain', in *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1995, p. 309.

10 Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 Years of Popular Travel* (London: Martin Secker & Warburg, 1991), p. 98.

11 John Frame, *My life of globetrotting* (London: Camelot Press, 1931), p. 15; J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History* (London: Faber & Faber, 1947), pp. 169–70.

12 Robert Snape, 'The Co-operative Holidays Association and the Cultural Formation of Countryside Leisure Practice', in *Leisure Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2004, p. 145.

13 Stella Wood, 'Sir Henry Simpson Lunn (1859–1939)', *ODNB*.

14 Ethel M. Wood, *The Polytechnic and its Founder Quintin Hogg* (London: Nisbet, 1932), p. 71.

15 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 15 May 1890.

16 Wood, *The Polytechnic and its Founder Quintin Hogg*, pp. 156–7.

sent out a party of sixty boys, three masters and a doctor to study the battlefields of the Franco-German War, and then to make their way to Zermatt while their geography lessons came to life before their eyes.<sup>17</sup>

The touring party departed on 23 July 1888, for 27 days.

The equating of travel with education was one aspect of ‘rational recreation’. Hogg himself believed in ‘the power for good’ of such travels as:

more than mere holiday jaunts, emphasizing the power for good such travels may become – above all, the bringing the created into direct empathy with the Creator.<sup>18</sup>

Others, as we shall see, would echo this message, believing that the tours would refresh or ‘re-create’ them, spiritually and physically.

The success of Mitchell’s Switzerland initiative led to another trip there later in 1888, followed by a series of excursions to the 1889 Paris Exhibition, which nearly 2,500 ‘excursionist’ members joined.<sup>19</sup> 1890 saw the addition of itineraries to Switzerland, Ireland and Scotland. The Polytechnic secured a holiday home in Clapham, London and others in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex and Hastings, East Sussex. The *Polytechnic Magazine* included a 16-page section, publicising these arrangements as well as an itinerary for Madeira and advertising a holiday home at Deal in Kent.<sup>20</sup> A special May 1891 *Polytechnic Holiday Guide* reported that 4,000 people had visited Paris the previous year. Three years later, returning from a trip to Rome, Mitchell ‘stopped at a [hotel] restaurant for tea, and while resting there was struck by the thought of what an ideal place it would be to spend a summer holiday in’. Finding that the place was for sale, Mitchell arranged the purchase ‘and on the journey home worked out the expenses, details of arrangements, and advertisements for a week in “Lovely Lucerne”’.<sup>21</sup> Switzerland, and Lucerne in particular, would remain the cornerstone of Polytechnic, and later PTA, tours.



**Fig. 237**  
*Robert Mitchell was the driving force behind the PTA, making deals with home and hotel owners and transport operators and leading numerous tours.*

**Fig. 238**  
*The holiday home Ascham College at Clacton-on-Sea was managed by J.H. Deas and his wife.*

17 Ethel Wood, *Robert Mitchell: A Life of Service* (London: Frederick Muller Ltd, 1934), p. 23.

18 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 2 October 1891.

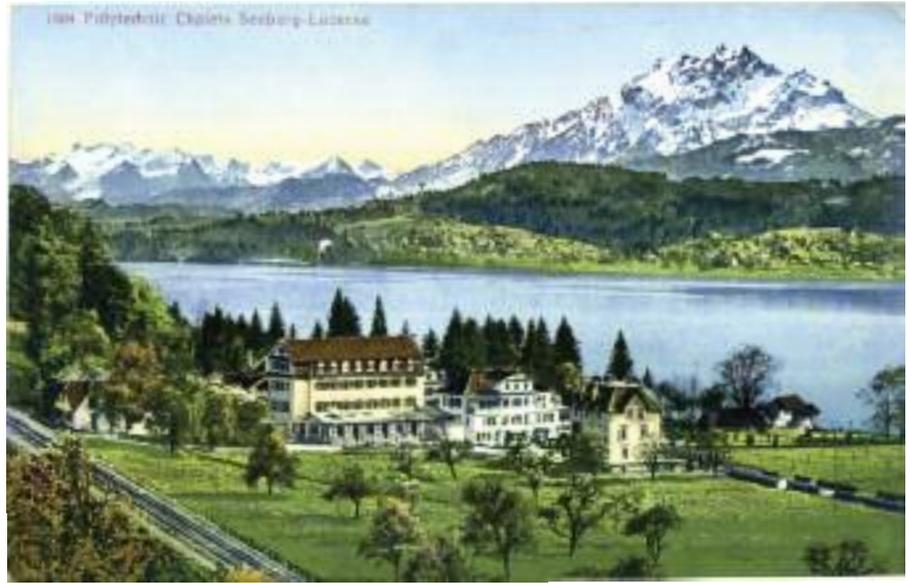
19 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 29 August 1889.

20 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 6 February 1890, 8 May 1890, 19 June 1890 and 26 June 1890.

21 Wood, *The Polytechnic and its Founder* Quintin Hogg, pp. 154–5.

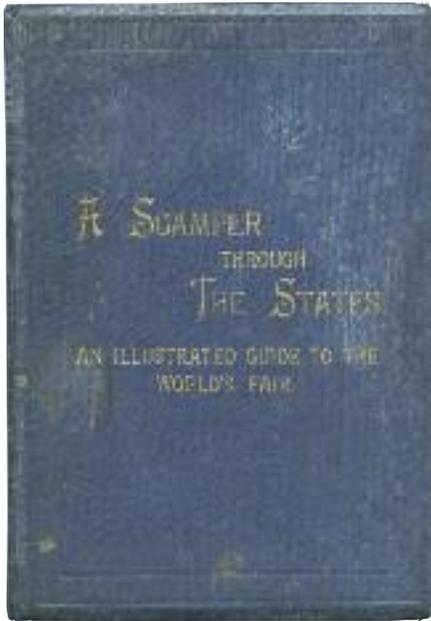
Figs. 239, 240

*Apparently acquired by chance when Robert Mitchell stopped in Lucerne on his return from Rome, the Chalets became a central element of the Polytechnic, and later PTA tours.*



The PTA's basic elements began to fall into place; UK holiday homes inspired by Hogg's personal example and foreign tours subsidised by Hogg's money were supplemented by Polytechnic members' philanthropy to generate funds that would help to finance the Polytechnic. Over the 1890s and 1900s, the PTA continued to take shape, while remaining within the Polytechnic. It did not yet have separate legal status, staff or finances.

For the holiday homes and tours to be viable at all relied on the efforts and goodwill of Polytechnic staff and members in planning and implementation. (The use of volunteers was not unique to the Polytechnic; the Co-operative Holidays Association also used them to host its holiday homes.) A practice evolved of annual 'donations' of up to £3,000 from the PTA accounts to the



Figs. 241, 242  
*Early Poly tours included a programme of visits to Chicago's World's Fair in 1893.*

Fig. 243  
*Louis Graveline, Junior French Master and secretary of the French Society, led various tours to France.*



Polytechnic. This continued long after the PTA had become a separate company in 1911, as recognition of the Polytechnic's input to PTA activities.<sup>22</sup> Years later, Hogg's daughter, Ethel Wood, estimated that tours had contributed £50,000 to Polytechnic finances between 1882 and 1914.<sup>23</sup>

The principal planner of the PTA continued to be Robert Mitchell, who visited the USA with Hogg's son Douglas (1872–1950) in 1892, for example, to arrange for tours to the following year's World's Fair in Chicago.<sup>24</sup>

Mitchell reported regularly to the Polytechnic's Governing Body on his visits to prospective holiday homes and foreign tour locations, and his negotiations with home and hotel owners and other relevant parties.<sup>25</sup> Mitchell led many tours personally, gaining the epithet 'the perennial Mitchell'.<sup>26</sup> Cruise leaders to Norway in June–August 1891 included Mitchell, J.E.K. Studd (1858–1944), Polytechnic President from 1903 and later Chairman of the PTA, and Henry Lunn.<sup>27</sup> Mitchell's wife, Isabella, spent the best part of 30 summers in Lucerne, overseeing their organisation; she also hosted UK holiday homes on occasion.<sup>28</sup> Other tours were led by Polytechnic staff such as Louis Graveline, Robert Avey Ward, William Scott Durrant and David Woodhall.

The close personal involvement of key Polytechnic figures in the growing business of holiday homes and tours came in for some adverse comment. Charles J. Pratt, a member of the Polytechnic Men's Council, argued in 1896 that the time spent on the tours interfered with 'the genuine Institute work'.<sup>29</sup> On another occasion, Mitchell pre-empted criticism by offering to resign his position as Director of Education 'and devote himself to the holiday trips and other sections of the Poly as he realised the importance of the financial help the Polytechnic obtained from the holiday work'. Mitchell was not asked to resign.<sup>30</sup>

The embryonic PTA benefited directly from Quintin Hogg's money. In 1895, a financial 'trip summary' showed, on one side of the balance sheet, costs

22 *Polytechnic Governors Subcommittee Minutes*, 17 December 1938, UWA RSP/2/2/8/4 [ST33].  
 23 Wood, *Robert Mitchell*, p. 37.  
 24 *The Old Quintinian*, April 1892.  
 25 For examples, see *Polytechnic YMCI Committee Minute Book*, 26 April 1887–30 April 1891, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].  
 26 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 14 August 1891.  
 27 *Polytechnic Holiday Guide 1891 season*, 29 May 1891, p. 5, bound in *Polytechnic Magazine*, Vol. 19, 1891.  
 28 Wood, *Robert Mitchell*, pp. 24–8.  
 29 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 16 September 1896, p. 114.  
 30 *Polytechnic Finance & General Purposes Committee Minutes*, meeting of 24 March 1899, UWA RSP/1/FP.

Fig. 244

*The SY Ceylon, a former P&O vessel, was purchased by the Polytechnic in 1895. She made her maiden Poly voyage to Norway in May 1896 commanded by Captain Roach.*



Fig. 245

*Robert Avey Ward, director of the school of chemistry c.1888–1923, led tours and reported on them in the Polytechnic Magazine.*



of about £4,000 to buy the steam yacht *Ceylon* for running cruises to Norway; and, on the credit side, the entry ‘£4,000 Q Hogg’.<sup>31</sup> The cruises, Hogg explained to the Polytechnic Governing Body, ‘had been run as usual at his private expense and he hoped there would be a surplus of £3,000 to £4,000 which would be handed over as before to the Institute’.<sup>32</sup> This echoed an undertaking from Hogg ‘to re-pay myself, through the Governing Body, out of profits on trips which I run at my own risk for the benefit of the Polytechnic, the amount due to me: subject to my life lasting three years’.<sup>33</sup> After Hogg’s death in 1903, the Polytechnic claimed:

These [tours] are not run by the Authorities of the Institute, but are an entirely separate and distinct organisation. In consideration, however, of the financial help given to the Institute, and of the rent paid for office rooms, the Governors are glad for the Tours to be connected with the Polytechnic Work.<sup>34</sup>

It may not have been solely Hogg’s money that enabled the PTA to operate: correspondence between the Lucerne state authorities and the local tax office some years later indicated that the Polytechnic property there was owned by a combination of Hogg and Studds, reflecting the PTA’s ownership after 1911.<sup>35</sup>

The Polytechnic’s Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed that separate accounts should be kept for ‘the various holiday trips, entertainments etc’.<sup>36</sup> The earliest surviving such accounts date back to 1902, from when discrete accounts sheets included a working account, an account for cruises and an account for Continental and General Tours. The major items of expenditure in the working account were advertising, salary and audit fees and printing. Clearly some, if not most, of these costs were linked to the tours, with salary costs probably relating to the crew of the *SY Ceylon* and staff at the Lucerne chalets. As a result, the other two accounts painted an over-optimistic picture.

31 *Polytechnic Holidays Tours Trip Summary*, 1895, UWA PTA/1/5/1.

32 *Polytechnic Governing Body Minutes*, meeting of 4 October 1895, UWA RSP/1/BG.

33 Letter from Quintin Hogg to the Secretary, Charity Commission, 13 November 1894, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST45/15/16].

34 Letter from Clerk of Governors to A.C. Kay, Charity Commission, 18 January 1905, UWA RSP/3/4 [ST45/15/45].

35 *Beschwerde und wiedererwägungsgesuch für Polytechnic Touring Association Ltd*, Tit. Staatswirtschaftsdepartment des Kantons Luzern [received 19 February 1931], SAL 47/1899.

36 *Polytechnic Finance & General Purposes Committee*, meeting of 14 December 1894, UWA RSP/1/FP.

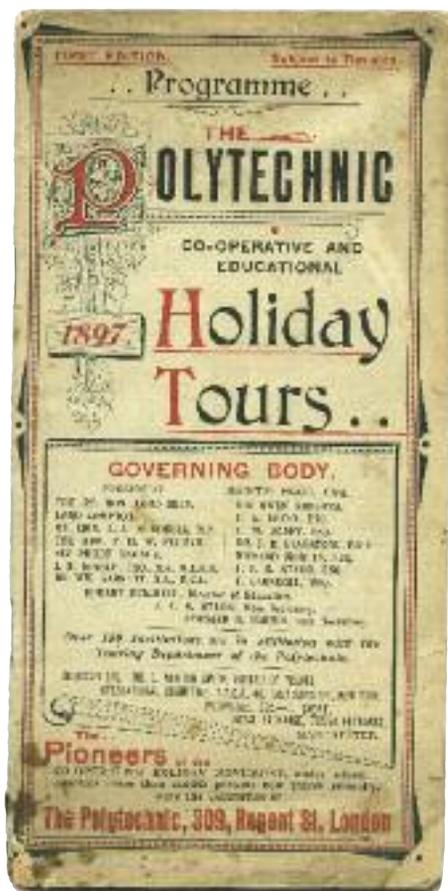


Fig. 246

*The Polytechnic promoted its tours internally and externally, nationally and internationally. This 1897 brochure claimed that over 150 institutions were 'affiliated' to the tours and gave the address of its US representative as the Bureau for Travel of the International Committee of YMCAs in East 23rd Street, New York.*

For the Continental & General account, income rose from £87,553 for 1903 to £151,657 for 1911. Over half of each year's Continental and General Tours income came from Swiss tours. The surplus in this account ranged from £15,000 to £21,000. In other words, profitability did not rise to the same extent as turnover. The income in the cruises account varied within the range £15,000 to £19,000 between 1903 and 1907, with surpluses of up to £1,513 and, in 1904, a small deficit. Cruise income zoomed up to £40,833 in 1908 and was still over £30,000 in 1911. However, deficits of £6,372 for 1910 and £3,803 for 1911 indicated that costs had significantly outstripped income.<sup>37</sup> The early years of the decade had seen a steady rise in tourist numbers, for example, for Switzerland (from 5,290 in 1901 to 6,482 in 1904) and a fall in cruise tourist numbers (from 1,531 in 1901 to 1,134 in 1904).<sup>38</sup>

By 1910, the Polytechnic's accountants Calder Marshall Son & Ibotson were advising that 'the Tours [could be] placed on a paying basis' if cruising losses were eliminated.<sup>39</sup> On 29 September 1911, the Polytechnic Touring Association was registered as a company limited by shares. The shareholders and directors were J.E.K. Studd, Douglas Hogg and Robert Mitchell, each holding one share.<sup>40</sup> Later in the year, £7,500 of share capital was raised, with 7,500 shares worth £1 each being allotted in equal thirds between Studd, Douglas Hogg and Mitchell. The registered office was 309 Regent Street and the Articles of

37 Polytechnic Touring Association Accounts and Balance Sheets, 1895–1911, UWA PTA/1/5.

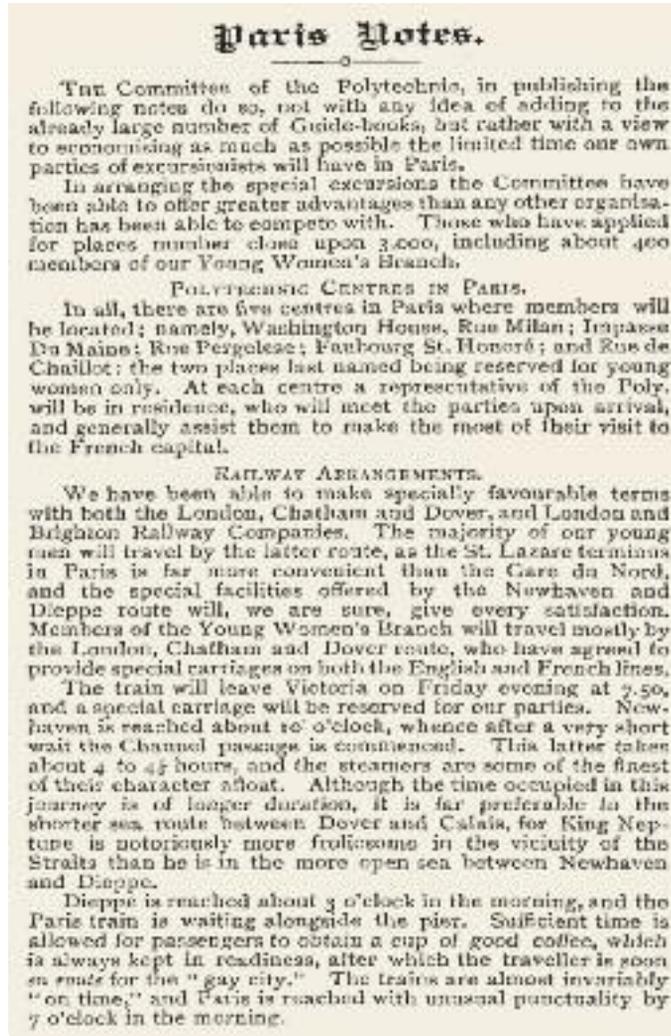
38 Letter from Calder Marshall Son & Ibotson, chartered accountants to the PTA, 24 April 1903, UWA PTA/1/5/5; Letter from Calder Marshall Son & Ibotson, chartered accountants to the PTA, 2 March 1905, UWA PTA/1/5/10.

39 Letter from Calder Marshall Son & Ibotson, chartered accountants to the PTA Committee, 23 March 1910, UWA PTA/1/5/34.

40 *Certificate of Incorporation*, 1911, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7.

Fig. 247

Readers of the Polytechnic Magazine received detailed advance information about every aspect of the series of visits to the Paris exhibition in 1889.



Association referred to support for the Polytechnic.<sup>41</sup> There is no surviving document that states definitively why the Polytechnic relinquished direct control of what it saw as a profitable source of income. The probability is that pressure from external funding bodies for the Polytechnic to focus on its core educational function left it little or no choice; and Quintin Hogg was no longer there to bankroll the tours.

#### EARLY POLY TOURS: A MIDDLE-CLASS ARRANGEMENT

The 1890s and 1900s saw the Polytechnic's embryonic travel service taking members, students and others to various UK and European locations, and sometimes beyond – and taking its own recreational ideology, which incorporated rationality and respectability, at the same time.

The most prominent early tour programme was the series of visits to the 1889 Paris exhibition. The *Polytechnic Magazine* noted at an early stage that

<sup>41</sup> *Certificate of Incorporation*, 1911; *Articles of Association*, p. iv, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/17.



Fig. 248

*The Poly Chalets at Lucerne were in an idyllic position on the lake with views of Mount Pilatus. The facilities included gardens and a promenade along the shore.*

places were not offered to members of the public, although this had been considered. (Higher tour fees on PTA tours for non-Polytechnic members would become common in later years.)<sup>42</sup> Members and students could see the sights of Paris, while staying at one of five locations, each of which would have a Polytechnic representative in residence. Several *Polytechnic Magazine* issues in May and early June gave extensive descriptions of the main sights, organised into three separate days of excursions, as well as advice on money, transport to, from and around Paris, exhibition tickets, postage and ‘aquatic hints’ (boating and swimming bath facilities).<sup>43</sup> Mitchell commended the British section of the exhibition as ‘well to the front, and well worthy of our country’. While in Paris, a Mr St Claire sought the support of Parisian newspapers and local officials to set up gyms and encourage the teaching of cricket and other sports at the local schools. He had also arranged for matches between the Polytechnic cricket, rowing and athletics clubs and their Parisian counterparts.<sup>44</sup>

Polytechnic tours had to promise a sufficiently high level of facilities, demonstrate value for money and maintain social and behavioural norms appropriate to their clientele and Polytechnic values. The fee for an 1891 tour of Switzerland was ‘the lowest fee ever charged for a similar tour ... [but the accommodation] though plain, is respectable’.<sup>45</sup> Members could enjoy Lucerne for a week for £5, in ‘TWO LARGE AND COMMODIOUS CHALETS’ rented ‘in response to very numerous applications from those unable to take advantage of the more expensive Swiss Excursions’. Facilities included ‘Private Bathing House; a Private Boat house. Private grounds on promenade on lake front. Two meals a day except on Sunday when there are 3’. On the three-week tour, ‘A limited number of Ladies may join these parties’ – the limitation possibly being influenced by plans for active mountaineering, including an ascent of the Breithorn at 13,400 feet.<sup>46</sup> Polytechnic tourists to the Ardennes paid £3 in 1892 and two and a half guineas in 1899.<sup>47</sup>

42 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 25 April 1889.

43 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 30 May 1889.

44 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 9 May 1889.

45 *Polytechnic Holiday Guide 1891 season*, 29 May 1891, bound in *Polytechnic Magazine*, Vol. 19, 1891.

46 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 11 April 1894.

47 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 19 May 1892 and 28 June 1899.

Fig. 249

*Quintin Hogg's tradition of rowing extended as far as the Chalets at Lucerne where visitors enjoyed a private boathouse on the lake.*



Fig. 250

*Described in the Polytechnic Magazine, June 1890 as 'pleasantly situated, facing the Victoria Fountains with a general view of ... Charn Pier and sea', the YMCA at Steyne House, Brighton was used as a holiday home by the Poly.*



48 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 26 June 1890 and 1 May 1895.

49 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 7 September 1898. Around this time a skilled industrial worker in full employment could expect to earn over £200 per annum; an elementary school teacher could expect to earn around £150 per annum. See G.R. Searle, *The New Oxford History of England: A New England? Peace and War. 1886–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 96–7. £5 at 1890 rates was the equivalent of £299.45 in 2005, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency).

Longer tours grew more expensive and ambitious. A 23-day trip to Switzerland in 1890 cost £7; by 1895, the final week of a similar trip could be spent in a choice of Italian locations, at a total cost of sixteen and a half guineas.<sup>48</sup> By 1898, those with 33–35 days to spare could join a Polytechnic cruise to Greece, the Holy Land and Egypt.<sup>49</sup>

Similar considerations of price, facilities and social norms applied in the planning and promotion of the UK holiday homes. Their provenances were varied. Steyne House in Brighton was a case of 'join[ing] hands with the YMCA'; West Cliff House in Ramsgate, reserved for members of the Polytechnic Young

Women's Christian Institute, was a private school building, while a member offered his house for Polytechnic use.<sup>50</sup> Between 1890–93, the *Magazine* advertised a week's board and lodging in homes in Hastings, Clacton and Ramsgate at between 15s–18s 6d per week. Steyne House was dearer, at 24s 9d per week, presumably because of superior facilities: 'use of parlour, reading-room, chess, library, writing-room, gymnasium, etc'. If all this was not enough, the Londoner could take a train to 'hundreds of nooks of "real country"' within eight to 15 miles of the capital.<sup>51</sup> By 1899, the Polytechnic was listing holiday homes run by independent landladies in Hastings, Eastbourne, Brighton, Margate and Folkestone, charging within a range of 26s–30s per week (47s–55s for two weeks), with the Isle of Man as a more expensive option at £2 5s per week.

The cost of lodging in holiday homes, and selection of the homes, caused occasional contention. In July 1894 the Polytechnic announced the securing of Lewisham House, Weston-super-Mare, claiming it had done so on the basis of requests from members 'by way of a change from ... Clacton and Ramsgate'.<sup>52</sup> The new home would be available between August and mid-September for 33s 6d per week. The following year, the Holiday by Proxy Fund announced that they had secured a house for nominated people – at Clacton. One member, writing in the *Magazine*, wanted the Polytechnic to return to offering a holiday home at Clacton as part of its mainstream offer to members, as it had done in the past. W.H. Jones commented: 'Weston is all very well for the class of people the Institute are now arranging trips for, viz. the "well-to-do", but it is not the place for anyone who has to work hard for a living to go to recruit their health.' The Editor's response was unsympathetic: 'Clacton ... has no recommendations either of beauty, excursions, or historical interest. The only endurable thing about it is its fresh air, and one's enjoyment of that is largely marred by its obtrusively cockney excursionists.'<sup>53</sup> A letter the following week from Charles Cronin supported Jones' views, disputed the Editor's description of Clacton and asked: 'How many Institute members, earning 25s a week, can afford to spend £4 8s for a week's holiday? Those with small earnings are entirely left out in the cold.' The Editor replied that cheaper alternatives were available and that: 'As to Clacton and its visitors, we must agree to differ.'<sup>54</sup> The Clacton issue rumbled on into the new century, with *Magazine* correspondents criticising the cost of holiday homes and foreign tours as being beyond the reach of some members – a charge that the Editor agreed had truth in it.<sup>55</sup> There was also sniping at the use of commercial guesthouses rather than 'the old Poly Holiday Home ... [which] was much more suitable in every way than the alternative now offered of a week's holiday with strangers, when the very existence of the Poly YMCI is lost sight of'.<sup>56</sup>

Nonetheless, the middle-class compromise of Polytechnic holiday home and foreign tours – balancing economy and comfort – was not short of customers. These were heady days for the emerging PTA or, as it called itself, 'The PIONEERS of the Co-operative Holiday Movement, under whose auspices more than 13,000 Persons now travel annually.'<sup>57</sup> The Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA), which might have contested the status of pioneers,



Fig. 251  
*Johnny Deas, a member of various Poly Committees, superintended several Poly Holiday Homes including Clacton-on-Sea and Ramsgate with his wife and was host on the SY Ceylon and SS Viking for 15 years.*

50 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 26 June 1890; *Polytechnic Holiday Guide 1891 season*, 29 May 1891, p. 5, bound in *Polytechnic Magazine*, Vol. 19 (1891); *Polytechnic YMCI Committee Minute Book*, 26 April 1887–30 April 1891, meeting of 10 July 1888, UWA YCI/1 [ACC2000/20].

51 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 26 June 1890.

52 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 11 July 1894.

53 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 17 July 1895.

54 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 24 July 1895.

55 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 7 June 1899 and 4 June 1902.

56 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 18 June 1902.

57 *The Polytechnic Touring Association Holiday Tours 1905*, UWA PTA/2/1/1.

Fig. 252

The cover of the 1905 brochure shows the number of UK and foreign destinations on offer from the PTA.



advertised PTA continental tours before it launched its own.<sup>58</sup> Its founder recalled that ‘When the CHA started we enjoyed much friendly help from [Mitchell] who gave us publicity and some influential introductions.’<sup>59</sup>

#### ‘UNDER THE POLY FLAG’: REPRESENTATIONS OF ABROAD, 1887–1911

The *Polytechnic Magazine* featured many accounts during this period of foreign tours and stays at the holiday homes. Polytechnic staff David Woodhall and Robert Avey Ward wrote accounts for the *Polytechnic Magazine* of tours to Switzerland in 1889 and 1890; later reports were the work of various members, some under pseudonyms. The overriding discourse which emerged combined jolly japes, close encounters with foreign royalty, assessments of foreign places and reflections on the purposes and benefits of tours ‘Under the Poly Flag’, as one article put it.<sup>60</sup>

58 *Summer holidays by mountain, moor, loch and sea 1900*, pp. 7–8, CHA B/CHA/PUB/4.

59 T. Arthur Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making: Being the Story of the Rise and Development of a People's Holiday Movement* (London: Holiday Fellowship, 1934), p. 141.

60 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 19 July 1893.



As the attractions of the different locations varied, so did accounts of the Polytechnic parties' activities. In European capitals – often on the way to Switzerland – cathedrals, churches and other sites of historical significance would be the priorities, or sometimes special exhibitions. Short trips to Boulogne or Ostend would include shopping; one lucky shopkeeper sold 30 pipes to members of a Polytechnic party.<sup>61</sup> The longer expeditions to Switzerland and Norway included extended walks – members of an 1889 Switzerland party were warned they would be expected to walk 20–25 miles a day – in order to view natural wonders such as glaciers, waterfalls and mountains. Trout fishing was an unmissable reason to visit Killarney in Ireland. Stays at UK holiday homes were an opportunity to rest and enjoy singsongs around the drawing room piano in the evenings, with cricket and tennis grounds often reserved for the daytime. One visitor to Clacton recounted a week of rowing, fishing, bathing, yachting and oyster catching; several of the party joined a temperance parade at Colchester. The party 'sorrowfully left Clacton Pier amid the waving of handkerchiefs from the girls we had left behind us'.<sup>62</sup>

Tour parties enjoyed themselves in various ways. One tourist Percy Lindley depicted an Ardennes holiday as a quasi-military expedition, where the party

Fig. 253  
Switzerland remained at the heart of Polytechnic and PTA tours. This 1901 picture, taken on Pilatus-Kulm, shows some of the 5,290 people who went on Polytechnic Swiss tours that year.

61 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 11 October 1888.

62 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 4 July 1889, 22 May 1890 and 21 August 1891.

Fig. 254

Publicity for a trip to Norway in 1893 stressed the high quality of facilities on the ship, such as electricity, value for money, and Poly values such as temperance and a ban on gambling.

**POLYTECHNIC CO-OPERATIVE YACHTING TRIPS TO NORWAY.**  
OPEN TO LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

In 1890 the Committee of the Poly. made a unique addition to their Excursion Tours by instituting a series of Yachting Trips to the Norwegian Fjords. Five hundred and seventy persons joined these excursions, whilst a considerable number of applications had to be refused for want of room.

Last year the experiment was repeated, when nearly 700 persons took advantage of the same. Yachts of 7000 tons burden were chartered and specially fitted to accommodate from 110 to 120 persons, and four excursions of a fortnight's duration, and one special cruise of three weeks in the North Cape, were made, the vessel becoming the temporary home of the excursionists for the period. The effort was entirely original, the object being to afford those of limited means—to whom, under ordinary circumstances, such an excursion would be impossible—an opportunity of visiting the **grand and beautiful scenery of Western Norway.** The success which attended these Trips exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the Committee. The Fortnightly Tours comprised visits to Stavanger, Hardanger Fjord, Murranger Fjord, Hardfjell Glacier, Fjellingsøe Glacier, Nordheimund, Sør Fjord, Odda, Eide, Bergen, Vossesvengen, Sæhestre, Neundal, Geiranger Fjord, Soga Fjord, Rensdal Fjord, Molde, and Trondhjem. The admission of the journey to Trondhjem last year added such additional interest to the Cruises that the Committee decided, if possible, to secure a slightly larger vessel, and to include a visit to that ancient and interesting town in each of the fortnight's trips next season, without in any way leaving in our way of the other places mentioned in the itinerary. It is with pleasure, therefore, that they now report having concluded a contract with Messrs. Thomas Wilson, Sons & Co., Limited, chartering their **admirable sea-going vessel the "Rollo"** to make a series of trips during the months of June, July, and August, 1893. One of these trips will be of a fortnight's duration each, and will include a visit to the principal places of interest between Stavanger and Trondhjem. The remaining trip will be for three weeks, and will include a visit to the North Cape, affording an opportunity of witnessing the beautiful phenomenon of the Midnight Sun. The **Rollo** will be specially and comfortably fitted for 120 passengers. The length of the vessel is 210 feet, she possesses a fine main and promenade deck, and will afford every comfort to passengers. The large majority of the berths are situated amidships, and correspond to the ordinary first-class cabins of the vessel.

Each cabin will be found commodious and well ventilated.

**THE VESSEL WILL BE LIGHTED THROUGHOUT BY ELECTRICITY**

The Cabin Saloons will be reserved entirely for baggage, in order to afford additional space and comfort in the cabins. The Dining Saloons will be capable of seating with comfort the whole of the party at one meal.

The *Rolle* during these voyages will be

**A TEMPERANCE SHIP,**

no intoxicating liquors or gambling being permitted on board; and the general regulations of the Polytechnic on land will be applied to this, for the time being, "Poly-on-Sea."

The route followed will embrace the most charming scenery of Western Norway, and so during the early voyages there is

**VIRTUALLY NO NIGHT**

whenever in these latitudes excursionists may enjoy a continuous and ever-changing panorama of surpassing beauty. Concerts and various forms of entertainment will, as in previous years, be organised on board, and no effort to ensure a most enjoyable holiday will be spared.

was subject to 'inspection', undertook 'marches', re-enacted the battle of Waterloo and 'mutinied' against a diet of veal cutlets.<sup>63</sup> A cruise to Norway included deck billiards, games and races of various types.<sup>64</sup>

Perhaps the greatest example of general japery occurred in Norway in 1891, with Mitchell hiring every available horse in the Norwegian town of Odde for a trip to a waterfall, just before the German Emperor arrived with the same idea:

On our way home we met the German party doing the journey on foot, the Emperor having stayed on board. As we were leaving we steamed alongside the yacht, the whole party singing the 'Watch on the Rhine', and we fired off four guns as a salute. The Emperor came forward and saluted our party, whereupon, in the most innocent fashion everyone started singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." The Emperor joined with the officers on board in laughing heartily at the sentiments of the song. Our own national anthem followed, and after the Imperial yacht had saluted us we steamed off.<sup>65</sup>

Neither Polytechnic promotional materials, nor accounts of the tours, laid heavy emphasis on interaction with local inhabitants. Nevertheless, some observations and conclusions emerged as Polytechnic tourists and tour leaders wrote up their accounts for the *Magazine*.

63 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 31 July 1891.

64 Dr R. Marshall, 'Jottings In and About Norway', *Polytechnic Holiday Supplement 1903*, bound with *Polytechnic Magazine*, Vol. 43, Mar 1903–Feb 1904.

65 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 14 August 1891.



Before and after the 1889 Paris Exhibition, writers gave a less than flattering image of the Parisians. Mr St Claire's aforementioned sports evangelism 'has had to struggle against strong prejudices, national customs, and the natural dislike that the ordinary Parisian entertains for physical exercise'.<sup>66</sup> A Polytechnic party was overcharged for a poor meal by a 'rogue of a waiter' who gave a 'series of gymnastic performances ... and jabbered out something that none could understand'.<sup>67</sup> In contrast, the 1891 *Holiday Guide* praised Norwegians as 'thrifty, frugal, and industrious, and ... noticeable for their great Courtesy of manner ... There is a total absence of desire to "fleece" the stranger within the gate ...' The Swiss, too, were 'friendly, hospitable and, all things considered, not exacting in their charges'.

France outside Paris received faintly damning praise as 'that country of beautiful monuments of bygone ages'; and Breton towns were patronised as being stuck in the thirteenth century with 'no theatres, no music halls, no Poly Parliament, no hurry'.<sup>68</sup> The Jewish cemetery in Prague was characterised as 'a type of Israel itself' and 'much in need of cleaning'.<sup>69</sup> Not until Rev. John Pate's 1903 article about a Norway cruise, and a visit to a Lapp encampment, did locals gain any voice in Polytechnic travel narratives. The article included a picture of the Lapps (an unusual feature in itself) and Pate surmised that the

Fig. 255

*Trips to Norway were hugely popular and people had to be turned away. Accommodation onboard the SY Ceylon included 49 cabins (195 berths), a ladies saloon, dining saloon and a reading room.*

<sup>66</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 9 May 1889.

<sup>67</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 6 June 1889.

<sup>68</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 31 July and 13 August 1902.

<sup>69</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 11 September 1894.

Figs. 256, 257

Postcards sent back from Norway highlighted some of the sights seen including the Bondhus Glacier, Romsdal Fjord, Stavanger, and the novel experience of midnight sun.



Lapps were amusing themselves at the Polytechnic party's expense as much as vice versa.<sup>70</sup>

Polytechnic parties generally sought fellowship among themselves without craving contact with foreigners – unless it was to get one up on the German Emperor, or a mutual salute with the Prince of Naples. They did, though, enjoy being the centre of attention and recognition, on occasions such as the raising of flags by every ship in Bergen harbour in recognition of the presence of Hogg's daughters on the Polytechnic ship.<sup>71</sup>

The travel accounts offered diverse conclusions as to the purposes and benefits of travel, and their relationship to Polytechnic values, often touching upon aspects of the 'rational recreation' debate. Writing about an 1889 Switzerland

70 Rev. John Pate, 'A Cruise to the North Cape', *Polytechnic Holiday Supplement*, 1903, bound with *Polytechnic Magazine*, 3 Mar 1903–Feb 1904. See also Fig. 258 on p. 220.

71 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August and September 1891.



Samuel J. Beckett, F.R.P.S. 20 Baker Street, W.  
GROUP OF LAPPLANDERS.

Fig. 258

*Poly tourists to Norway could admire its mountains, waterfalls and glaciers and even encounter some of its indigenous Lapplanders.*

tour, R.A. Ward invested physical invigoration with religious and moral significance: 'It is to be hoped that ... we who have seen some of the wonders of Nature in their grandest forms, may have learnt more than ever to appreciate and reverence that Power Who has set them in their ordered places ...'<sup>72</sup> Commenting on an 1896 cruise on the Solent, 'Meteor' declared:

The working-man need no longer discuss the probable advent of the millennium. It is here, and at a cheaper cost than if a Radical Government had been commissioned to buy the cheapest thing in ideal states. Our members and students could not have a better or cheaper holiday in which to recruit exhausted energies.<sup>73</sup>

A letter from 'members of the 25th Polytechnic Chicago party' in 1893 was perhaps most typical of contributions to this debate, thanking the Institute for arranging the trip as 'a holiday unique in itself, delightful in its social features, educationally of the highest value'.<sup>74</sup>

Some writers expressed doubts about relaxing Polytechnic traditions on holiday, or even about whether the tours were good for one's health. In early 1890, when visits to Paris were still a novelty, J.H. Freeman praised the arrangements for one trip, while lamenting 'the forsaking of our honoured and pestful [presumably 'restful'] ways of spending the Sunday ... and ... the following of that pernicious proverb, "When in Rome do as Rome does."<sup>75</sup> Meanwhile, one correspondent believed that Polytechnic holidays could be too much of a good thing. 'TYPO' went on a number of Polytechnic tours and 'came home so ill that after being on the sick list a month, I had to go to Yarmouth and "bask in the sun" to get set up, before I could resume work'. 'TYPO' concluded that open air and rest were what working men 'whose occupation confines them within four walls' should seek while on holiday.<sup>76</sup>

72 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 22 August 1889.

73 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 24 June 1896.

74 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 30 August 1893.

75 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 20 February 1890.

76 *Polytechnic Magazine*, 22 August 1900.

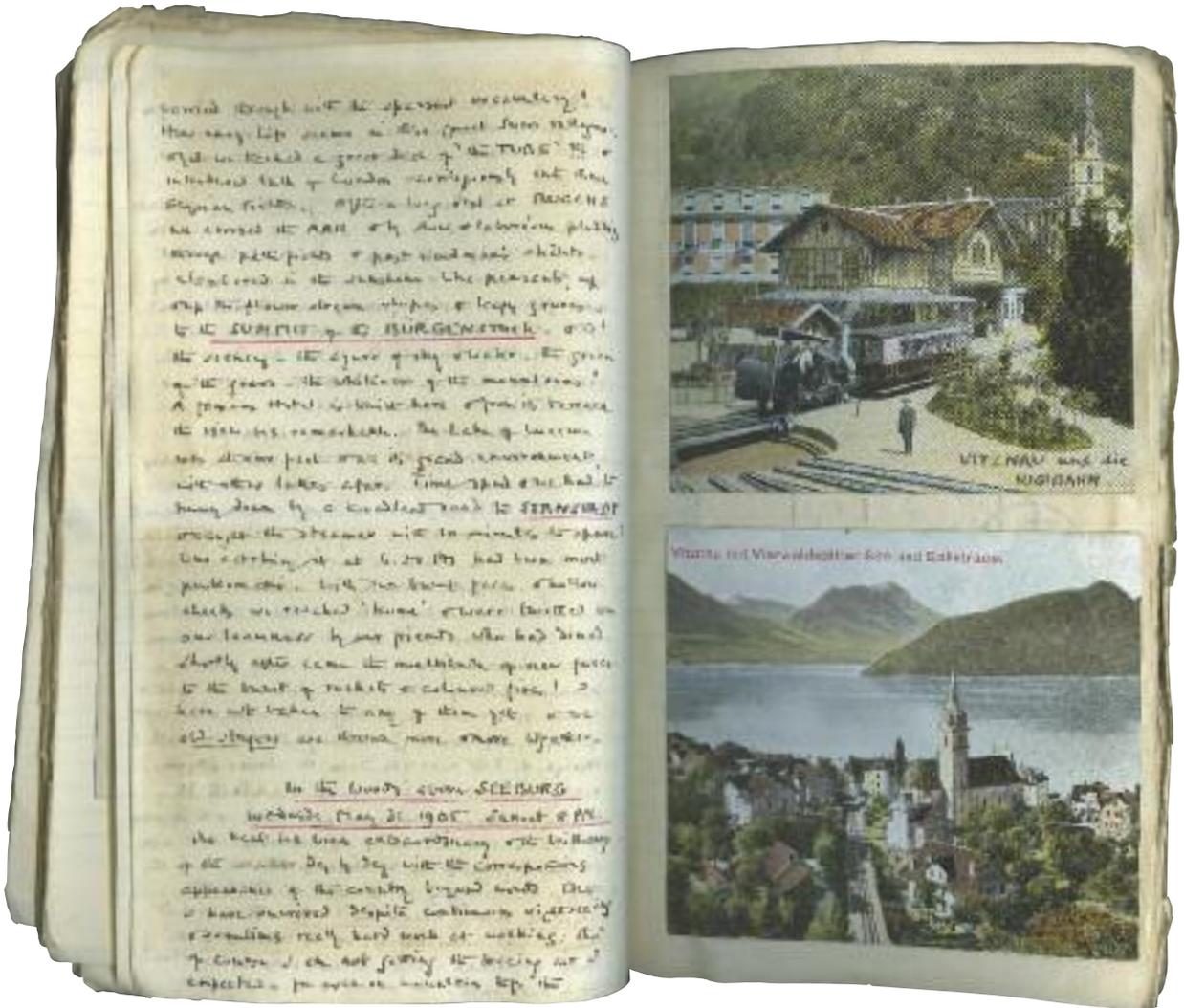
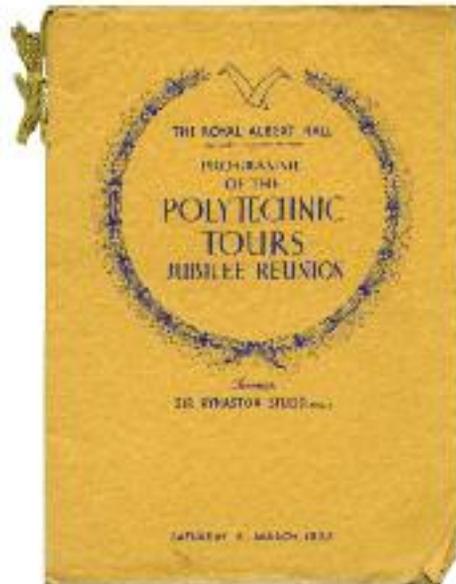


Fig. 259  
 Wilfred Bryant kept diaries of his PTA trips to Switzerland in 1905 and 1909, and Northumberland in 1919. Along with personal accounts of his time abroad he included postcards, press cuttings and photographs. Bryant met his future wife on the Swiss trip in 1909.

Fig. 260  
 The PTA tours didn't end on returning to the UK. Holidaymakers could reminisce at special reunion events.



**Swiss Re=union.**

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**THE POLY CHALETs, LUCERNE.**

The Queen's Hall was given over on the evening of Lord Mayor's Show Day to retrospect and reminiscence, for it was the occasion of the reunion of friends who had participated in the Polytechnic tours in Switzerland this year. The assembled company must have numbered between 3,000 and 4,000 people, and included many friends from the provinces, Liverpool, Ilfracombe, Brighton and Yorkshire, being well represented. The one impelling object of the gathering was to meet again those with whom they had travelled and who had helped to make their holiday so enjoyable. The musical items on the programme were contributed by those who had visited the Chalets this year. Clay's lovely song "She wandered down the mountain side," seemed particularly well chosen, and possibly to some of the company the title was very suggestive. It would, however, be invidious to remark on the items of such an excellent programme, and we must therefore content ourselves with expressing our hearty thanks to those who so ably afforded us entertainment.



Fig. 261

*By 1910, nearly 7,000 people a year were visiting Switzerland with the Polytechnic.*

Fig. 262

*The Polytechnic Magazine reported regularly on the reunion events – another means, in effect, of promoting the tours.*

As an additional method of commemorating and promoting its UK and foreign travels, the Polytechnic started in 1891 to hold a series of reunion events each year, organised by travel location. Tea would be taken, followed by speeches; reconstructions of the holidays using photographs, magic lantern slides and cinematographs; presentations of gifts to Mitchell and other tour leaders; and musical performances, recitals and other diversions. Guests sometimes got more than they bargained for: 'During tea Mr Harding caused much amusement by administering shocks to the ladies with his electric battery.'<sup>77</sup> Hogg or Mitchell often chaired the events. Five hundred Norway 'excursionists' attended the first such event; the better-attended reunions – invariably for Swiss tours – attracted up to 4,000 people and were held in the huge Queen's Hall in Regent Street.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, 11 December 1895.

<sup>78</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1903.



Fig. 263  
*Isabella, wife of Robert Mitchell, managed the Poly Chalets at Lucerne for 30 years. See also p. 179 for details of her service during the First World War.*

## BETWEEN THE WARS: THE POLYTECHNIC TOURING ASSOCIATION UNDER RONALD STUDD

After the First World War, the PTA appointed a new Managing Director, moved to new offices and did its best to adjust to changes in its market. The philanthropic element of the pre-1911 PTA, embodied in the Holiday by Proxy Fund, disappeared, and the moral and educational purposes of travel as preached by Quintin Hogg echoed more faintly than before in PTA literature. The PTA's relationship with the Polytechnic began to show signs of disharmony.

The interwar economic and social context in which the PTA operated was characterised by major economic downturns in the early 1920s and in 1929–33, but was nonetheless one of generally increasing prosperity, available leisure time and leisure-related spending. Four million manual workers received paid holiday in 1938, compared with one million in 1920, while spending on admissions to cinemas, theatres and sports events rose 15 per cent. Sales of bicycles rose from 385,000 in 1920 to over 1.6 million in 1935.<sup>79</sup> There were increases in the sales of daily national newspapers and radio licences.<sup>80</sup>

Many associations and travel agencies competed for the growing demand for holidays. The Working Men's Club and Institute Union enjoyed a membership of 917,000 by 1929, while combined membership of the Co-operative Holidays Association, Holiday Fellowship, Workers' Travel Association, Youth Hostels Association, Camping Club of Great Britain and Cyclists' Touring Club rose between 1930–38 from 106,000 to 245,000.<sup>81</sup> Agencies running tours to Switzerland included Thomas Cook, American Express Co., Alpine Sports, the PTA, George Lunn's Tours and Pickfords.<sup>82</sup>

By 1922 Mitchell was nearing retirement and J.E.K. Studd was devoting time to his duties as a Senior Sheriff in the City of London. Into this senior management vacuum stepped Ronald Studd (1889–1956), son of J.E.K. Studd, who left a career in the Navy at his father's request.<sup>83</sup> Ronald Studd was Assistant Managing Director before becoming MD in 1924. He bought out Mitchell's interest in the PTA in 1929, at which point Mitchell ceased to be a Director. Major Thomas Worswick was added as a Director in 1926, but died in 1932. Ronald's brother Eric (1887–1975) became a Director in February 1939.<sup>84</sup> Studd domination of the ownership of the PTA would continue into the post-1945 era.

Ronald Studd later claimed that the PTA had been 'in a sorry state ... [it] was being hawked around the City and no one would buy it'. The firm's Regent Street operations were 'antique ... redundant ... dusty', and the Lucerne chalets lacked electric lighting, and hot and cold running water in the bathrooms. Ronald Studd believed that the PTA had to emulate George Lunn's emphasis on sunshine holidays and motor tours. He decided to spend money on display advertising, to appoint a general manager, to create a plans division, to expand operations in Belgium and to look for other sites in Switzerland.<sup>85</sup> This last move led to the PTA taking out a mortgage of 110,000 Swiss Francs

79 Stephen G. Jones, *Workers at Play: A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918–1939* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 20, pp. 63–4.

80 D.L. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communication and the Cultivated Mind in Britain Between the Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 229.

81 Jones, pp. 64–71.

82 *Illustrated London News*, 21 May 1921.

83 *Polytechnic Magazine*, August and September 1922; Ronald Studd, *The Holiday Story* (London: Percival Marshall, 1950), p. 83.

84 *Register of Directors or Managers* 1926, 1929 and 1932, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7.

85 Studd, pp. 83–7, p. 94.



Fig. 266

Naval Commander Ronald Studd was the second son of J.E.K. Studd. He took over the management of the PTA in 1924 until his death in 1956.

*To friends old and new . . .*

A message from  
**COMMANDER R. G. STUDD, D.S.O., R.N.**  
Managing Director  
THE POLYTECHNIC TOURING ASSOCIATION, LTD

I had a letter recently, from one of our friends whom I had met on a Polytechnic holiday in England. She was seeking my advice on the idea of spending a holiday in Switzerland this year. She said she thought of visiting the Polytechnic Chalet with her daughter but she had not had the best of health ever (she wrote) and said I think that a holiday at a Swiss Chalet might be a bit too "physical" for her!

My dear lady! Pardon me—our delightful, comfortable Polytechnic Chalets. I really believe that she thought a chalet must be a sort of log hut. She had an conception whatever of our beautiful, inside chalets, with its six massive brick-built host buildings, six strong lovely lawns, flower gardens and orchards. She had no idea at all that our chalets are as well run as any hotel in the whole of Europe, that they are fitted with electric lights, hot and cold running water in every bedroom, hot spring mattresses and electric fans on every bed.

She never even dreamed that what she had in mind was a beautiful lounge with a splendid dance floor, a comfortable sitting room, a billiard room and a delightful balcony overlooking the lake . . .

It is the hardest thing in the world to convey in mere words the charm of a holiday spent at the Chalet. It's not only a question of comfort although, as so many of you know, we have made it very comfortable indeed. It's not only a question of scenery, although the chalets are set among some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in the whole world. It has more to do with a feeling of personal happiness, of being among friends that come to you when you are there.

I go there often in the summer and I think that one of the happiest moments of my life was when, last year, I was able to arrange for the four "Wilkes Tell" Special trains, an entirely new idea for holidays abroad, which brought down the cost of Swiss holidays and so made it easier for everyone to spend their holidays with us at the Polytechnic Chalet, Lucerne.



and athletic work'.<sup>88</sup> Every issue of the *Magazine* from then until July 1928 featured a double-page spread of promotional editorial on the PTA's services; and every issue from October 1927 to July 1930 included a full page advertisement for PTA tours.

The tone and content of PTA editorial and advertising in the *Polytechnic Magazine* in this period was now some way removed from the educational and moral purposes that Quintin Hogg had originally subscribed to the tours. One double page spread did mention 'TRAVEL – AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION', with travel aiding 'the peace of the world [by helping] nation [to] learn to understand nation'.<sup>89</sup> However, for the most part, the editorials focused on practical matters, answering travel-related questions from unnamed correspondents and featuring different destinations each month.

The PTA's 1930s brochures for UK holidays, foreign destinations and (from the mid-1930s) air tours also emphasised the practical and material. Their keynotes were the personal service a PTA client could expect, and 'comfort and economy in travel'. The brochures frequently featured editorials from, and photos of, Ronald Studd. Starting in 1935, the PTA provided brief profiles of some of its resident hosts, highlighting their personal qualities and interests, whether they were lecturers, mountaineers or, in the case of Hugh Pollock at Assmannshausen in Switzerland, 'a good linguist and an expert ballroom

<sup>88</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, October 1927.

<sup>89</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1928.

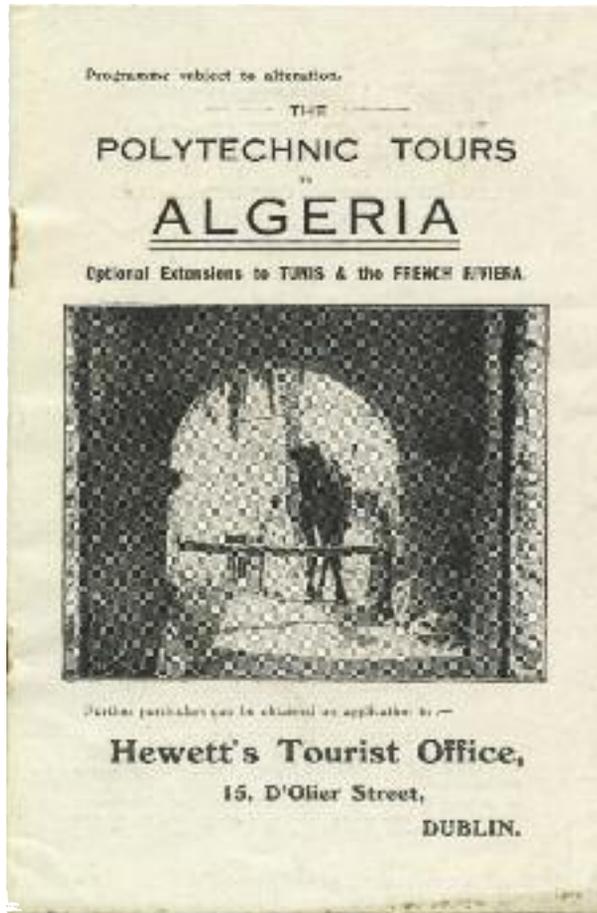


Fig. 267

*By 1923, along with the established European destinations, tours to North Africa were also being offered.*

dancer'.<sup>90</sup> Value for money was never far from the agenda. The 1933 Summer Tours brochure was entitled 'Beating the rate of exchange'; on the other hand, the 1937 Summer Programme referred to the rising value of the pound opening up Europe, with cheaper prices than last year as a result.<sup>91</sup> Overall, the same triumvirate of factors – price, facilities and social norms – informed the PTA's holiday portfolio as during its pre-1911 Polytechnic days. There was one nod to the PTA's educational origins; in various 1930s' brochures, over a dozen PTA hosts were listed as Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society, lending an air of authority to their expertise.

The PTA's depiction of foreign places and people through its brochures showed some continuity with the prewar period, historicising Europe in particular as a repository of the past. Italy was 'the country of Dante and Michel Angelo', filled with monuments, palaces, churches and art history. Austria and Germany were the places to go to 'sense the romance of ancient days' – except for Berlin, a 'super-modern city'.<sup>92</sup> Sometimes the local people were mentioned or shown in brochures, wearing national dress or observing old customs.<sup>93</sup>

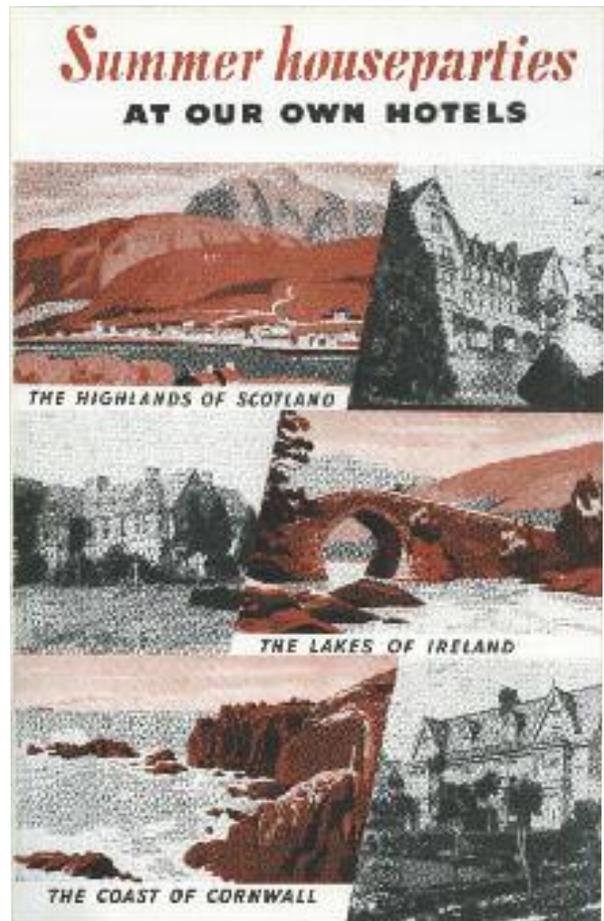
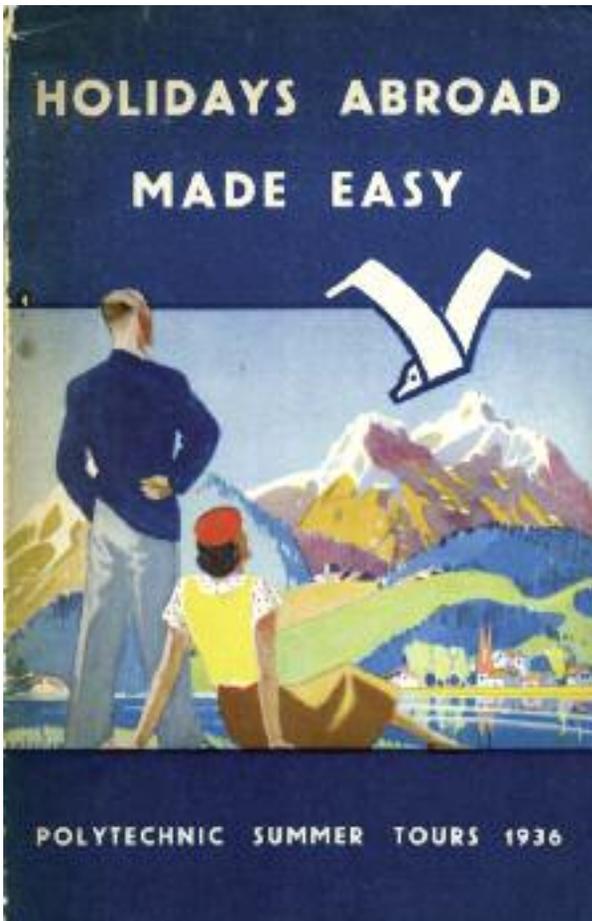
This was, in a sense, complementary to the *Polytechnic Magazine's* constructions of 'abroad' in this period. Its few travel accounts continued a tendency to patronise the destinations as pre-modern. A meditation on walking

<sup>90</sup> *Holidays Abroad Made Easy: Polytechnic Summer Tours 1936*, UWA PTA/2/1/12.

<sup>91</sup> *Let's Go Abroad: Polytechnic Summer Programme for 1937*, UWA PTA/2/1/14.

<sup>92</sup> *Polytechnic Tours for 1929 Summer Programme*, UWA PTA/2/1/7.

<sup>93</sup> *Let's Go Abroad: Polytechnic Summer Programme for 1939*, UWA PTA/2/1/16.



Figs. 268, 269  
 These two brochures from 1936 and 1939 show the different styles of promotion for British and European holidays.

tours praised them as ‘an ideal vacation from the turmoil and unrest of our large cities’.<sup>94</sup> Apart from letters from various Studds and Hoggs about their business trips through India and the Far East, the most notable travel-related content was a series of letters and articles in 1927 about opportunities to make new lives and careers in Imperial outposts such as southern Rhodesia, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. (Emigration in order to make new and better lives had been a long-term enthusiasm of Quintin Hogg, as detailed in Chapter 2.)

In terms of the destinations, Switzerland remained the leading PTA location outside the UK. Substantial numbers of tour options were offered for France, Belgium and Italy and, from the mid-1930s, an increasing number of tours devoted to Germany. Norway, so prominent in the Polytechnic tours pre-1911, barely featured by the late 1930s. The ‘Jubilee Programme’ of 1938, running to over 200 pages, featured ‘special interest tours’ to eastern Europe and, for £134 2s for cabin class, £88 17s for tourist class or £71 9s 6d for third class, a three-week tour of Canada and the USA.<sup>95</sup>

The PTA was not above recycling its competitors’ initiatives. A guarantee of a day’s refund at Menton in France in the event of half an hour or more of daytime rain was inspired by George Lunn’s initiative.<sup>96</sup> Master tickets, which included many extras to try to ensure there were no hidden additional charges,

<sup>94</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1927

<sup>95</sup> *Let’s Go Abroad: Polytechnic Jubilee Programme*, UWA PTA/2/1/15.

<sup>96</sup> *Beating the rate of exchange: Polytechnic Summer Tours 1933*, UWA PTA/2/1/9; Studd, p. 98, p. 148.





Fig. 272

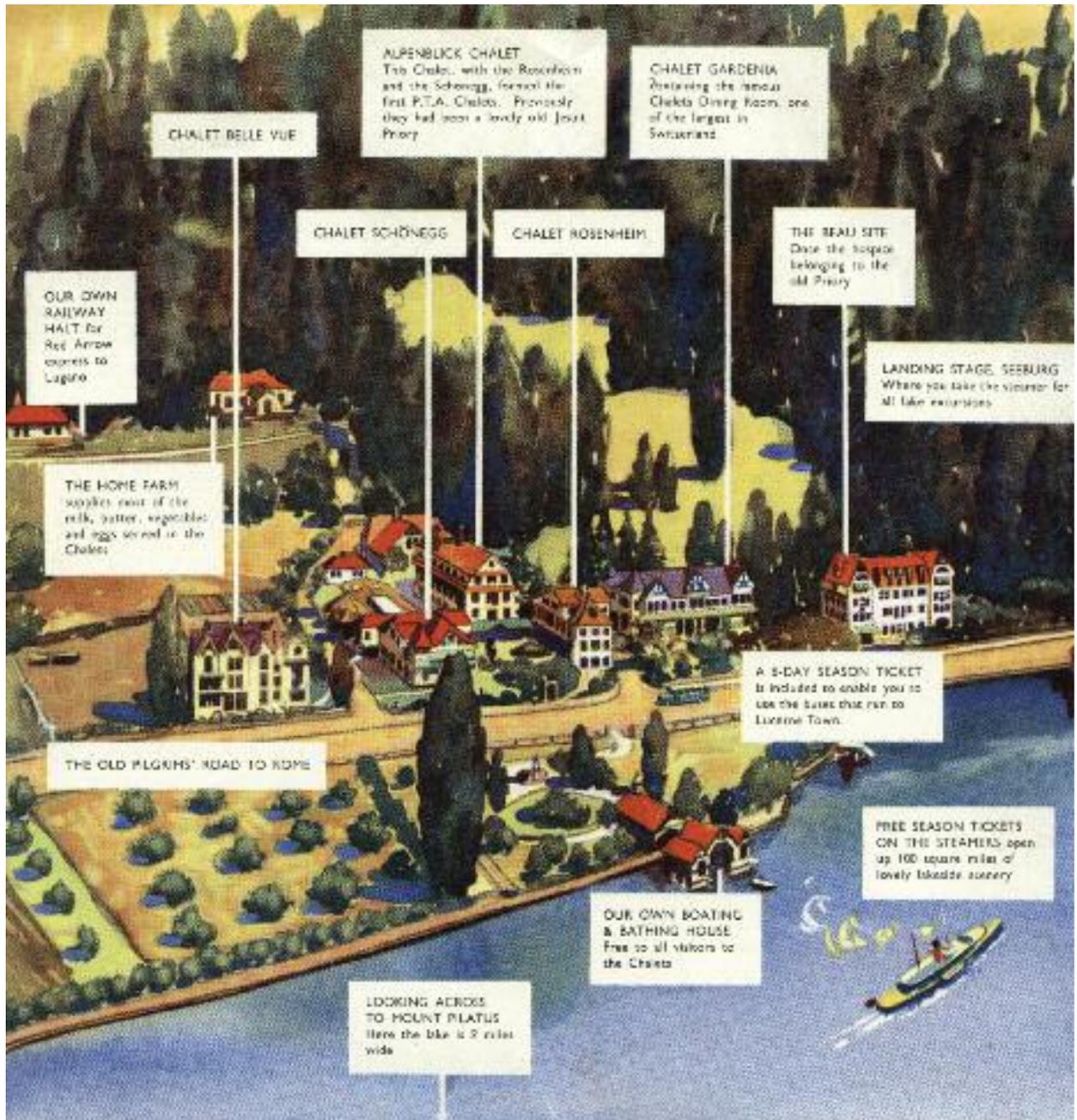
*This photograph of the PTA's first escorted tour by air in 1932 shows the changes in international travel during the PTA's life, from steam yachts to aeroplanes.*

informed that chartered surveyors had estimated the annual rentable value of the Balderton Street space at £1,200, compared with the £920 the PTA had been paying since 1930.<sup>102</sup> The PTA had recently renewed a deed of covenant to pay the Polytechnic £2,000 per annum for the next seven years. These financial issues were raised at a sub-committee meeting of Polytechnic governors on 17 December 1937, with Ronald Studd present. Speaking in his PTA role (as he was also on the Polytechnic Board of Governors), Ronald Studd claimed that publicity for PTA tours 'had contributed very largely to make the name of the Polytechnic a household one' and that the PTA continued to make donations to the Polytechnic despite 'no longer receiv[ing] any clerical assistance from the Polytechnic'. This last comment was met with scepticism: another sub-committee meeting on 1 February 1938 considered a list of services recently supplied to the PTA including use of halls and committee rooms and the supply of typewriters. The disagreement resurfaced after the Second World War.<sup>103</sup>

The PTA's profitability or otherwise is hard to determine as, following its registration as a private company in 1911, it did not submit publicly available accounts until the late 1960s, and none have survived in the University of Westminster Archive collection. Survival, let alone prosperity, was not assured

<sup>102</sup> Letter from C. McKenna to J.E.K. Studd, 1 December 1937, Correspondence with regard to Balderton Street, UWA RSP/2/2/8 [ST42].

<sup>103</sup> *Lease of Balderton Street premises by the Polytechnic Touring Association, 1937–1950*, UWA RSP/2/2/8/4 [ST33].



for travel agencies – especially in the wake of the 1929 economic crash. Studd later recalled the mid-1920s as the moment when agencies began to undercut each others' prices. George Lunn went bankrupt and many of the principal remaining firms, including the PTA, formed the Creative Tourists Agents Conference in order to fix prices.<sup>104</sup> In Lucerne, the PTA tried to minimise its outgoings by disputing an increase in a local tax bill, with its local legal representative claiming that the chalets were 'a philanthropic establishment, and not a profit-making firm'.<sup>105</sup> Nonetheless, the company survived until war came once again.

Fig. 273

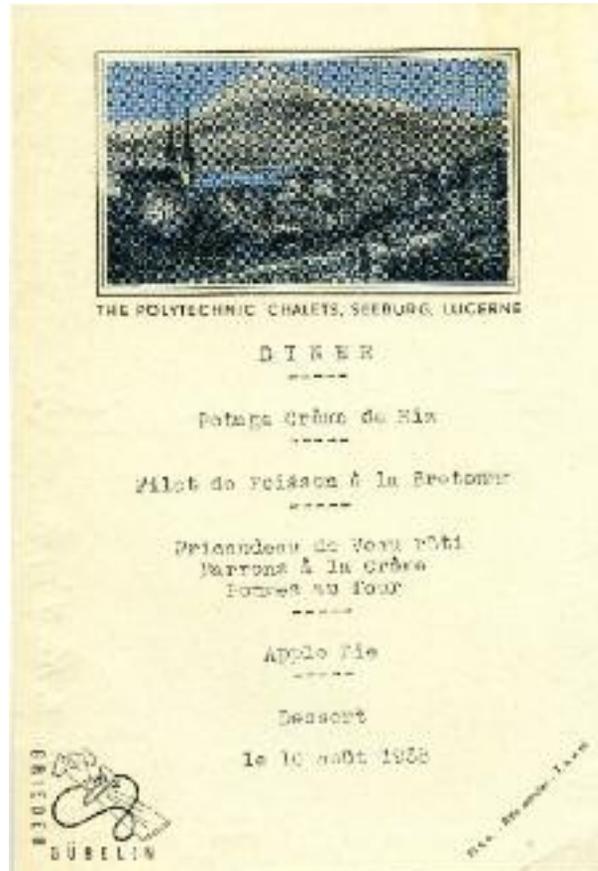
*A map of the Poly buildings at Lucerne from the 1930s shows how popular the holidays were, with five Chalets accommodating guests.*

<sup>104</sup> Studd, pp. 143–7.

<sup>105</sup> Letter from Dr P. Gelpke, Advokat, Luzern to H. Regierungsrat des Kantons Luzern, 27 March 1931, SAL 47/1899.

Fig. 274

Clearly some PTA tourists valued an element of home comforts on holiday, if the inclusion of apple pie on this 1938 menu from the Lucerne Chalets is anything to go by.



#### AFTER 1945: THE LAST YEARS OF THE POLYTECHNIC TOURING ASSOCIATION

The PTA suspended its operations during the Second World War, in which Ronald Studd served in the Navy, as he had done in the 1914–18 war. Immediately after 1945, the popularity of UK holiday camps, and general economic difficulties, presented major challenges for the PTA, which itself entered the holiday camp sector. Then, as the more prosperous 1950s ended, and the prospect of true mass foreign travel arrived, the company was acquired by entrepreneur Harold Bamberg. The last faint echoes of the PTA's philanthropic and educational origins survived in continuing donations to the Polytechnic, despite an increasingly unhappy relationship between the organisations.

According to a 1939 estimate, 1.5 million people holidayed 'under canvas and in camps of all kinds', in comparison with seven million visitors a year to Blackpool and 5.5 million to Southend.<sup>106</sup> Harry Warner and Billy Butlin's camps, set up in the 1930s with licensed bars and without political or religious links, were a long way from 'rational recreation'.<sup>107</sup> During the war, Warner and Butlin worked for the Ministry of Supply, overseeing the construction of industrial villages and wartime camps for service personnel. Butlin found suitable

106 Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, *Goodnight Campers! The History of the British Holiday Camp* (London: Mansell Publishing, 1986), pp. 18–21, pp. 31–42.

107 Sandra Trudgen Dawson, *Holiday Camps in Twentieth-century Britain: Packaging Pleasure* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 33, pp. 50–5.



Fig. 275

By 1958 the PTA had begun to promote Southern Europe more, especially Italy and Spain. However, the company was acquired before it could really benefit from the 1960s' boom in travel to the Spanish Costas.

sites for military training camps and negotiated to buy them from the Government in 1945, while four Warner sites on the south coast were requisitioned to hold troops prior to deployment. When peace came, Warner and Butlin had ready-made camps in place to take advantage of the explosion of holiday demand arising from the 1938 Holidays with Pay Act.<sup>108</sup> The holiday camps' emphasis on cheap, all-inclusive, family-oriented UK breaks, filled with fun and games, fitted serendipitously with the postwar era of high unemployment, rationing, currency crises and (in 1947) a year-long ban on travel abroad for holidays.<sup>109</sup> A 1948 survey revealed that, due to lack of capacity, over 200,000 applications for holiday camp places that year were unsuccessful.<sup>110</sup>

Ronald Studd was well aware of the importance of resuming PTA activities as promptly as possible. He urged *Polytechnic Magazine* readers to book the holidays early as 'by the end of May [1945] practically all the accommodation around the coast will be booked up for the Season'.<sup>111</sup> In time, the PTA achieved a significant level of trading activity, with over 28,000 bookings and 110,000 enquiries by April 1947.<sup>112</sup> In addition to resurrecting existing tours,

108 Dawson, pp. 123–31.

109 David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain 1945–51* (London: Bloomsbury, 2008), p. 194, pp. 226–7; Susan Barton, *Working-class Organisations and Popular Tourism, 1840–1970* (Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 188.

110 Dawson, p. 177.

111 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1945.

112 Studd, pp. 177–80.

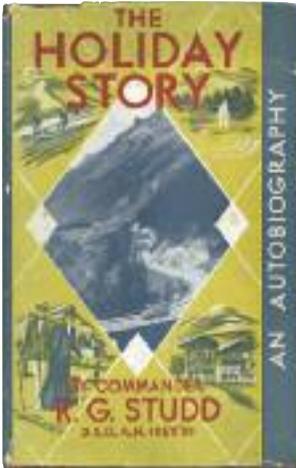


Fig. 276  
The *Holiday Story*, described as an autobiography, tells the story of the growth of the PTA post 1914.

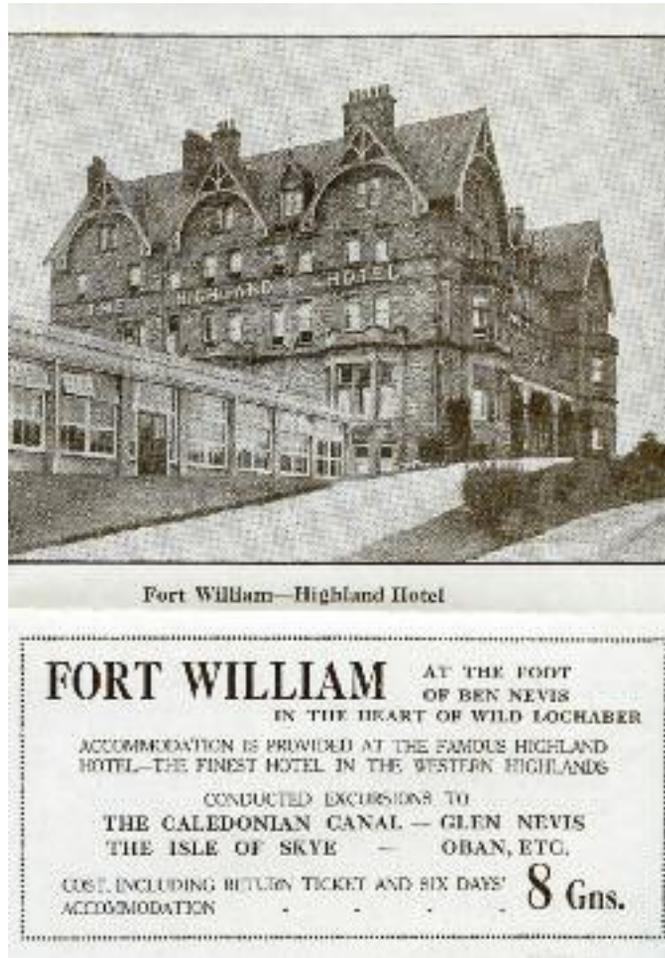


Fig. 277  
The Highland Hotel, Fort William, was used as a Polytechnic and PTA hotel from the 1890s.

the company ventured into the holiday camps sector, booking space in Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Kent and Lancashire, and admitting sheepishly that ‘the holiday camp has “caught on”’.<sup>113</sup> By 1949, it took over the Little Canada Holiday Village on the Isle of Wight.<sup>114</sup> However, the bulk of PTA advertising continued to focus on foreign travel, describing one holiday in Switzerland as ‘travel’s ultimate luxury – summer holidays by private “plane”’.<sup>115</sup>

Meanwhile, the PTA’s relationship with its parent institution became more distant, and on occasion positively fractious. The annual PTA donation to the Polytechnic had been suspended during the war; by 1949, the Polytechnic was pressing Studd to resume annual donations of £2,000 and to pay more rent for the ‘shop’ at 309 Regent Street. After months of negotiation, the PTA agreed to donate £750 per annum and to pay £1,000 per annum for the ‘shop’.<sup>116</sup> In 1950 the PTA moved its main offices out of Polytechnic property for the first time, from 16 Balderton Street to 73–77 Oxford Street. The PTA’s Polytechnic links began to be perceived within the latter as part of the past, rather than a vibrant, ongoing relationship. A Polytechnic report included a suggestion to resume Holiday Homes with a Polytechnic identity ‘at a cost lower than Touring Association charges’.<sup>117</sup> The *Polytechnic Magazine* published publicity for

113 *Holidays in the Homeland 1947*, UWA PTA/2/1/18.

114 *Isle of Wight County Press*, 21 May 1949.

115 *Polytechnic Magazine*, January 1947.

116 *Lease of the Balderton Street premises, 1937–50*, UWA RSP/2/2/8/4 [ST33].

117 Suggestion by Harry Ferris of the Old Members’ Association, *Men’s Council Interim Report on Post-War Planning*, [1945], UWA PIN [ACC1996/15/6].

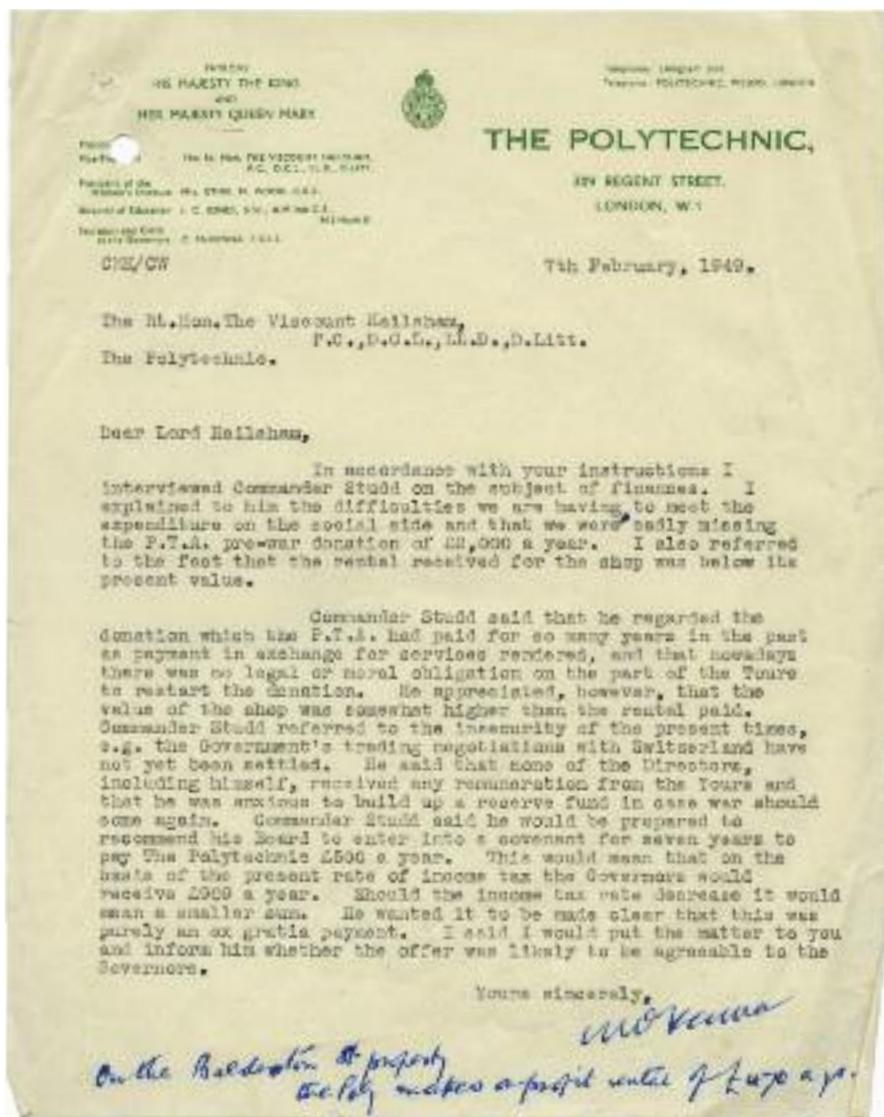


Fig. 278

*After the travails of the Second World War and postwar travel restrictions, this 1947 brochure reassured travellers that the PTA's holiday centres were open for business again and that all the Swiss properties had been refurbished.*

Fig. 279

*The relationship between the PTA and its parent institution, The Poly, became increasingly strained as correspondence about finances illustrates.*

Ronald Studd's book *The Holiday Story*; a short PTA history acknowledging that the PTA and Polytechnic had 'drift[ed] somewhat apart'; mentions of joint Old Members' Association/PTA events; and obituaries of former PTA staff in the early 1950s.<sup>118</sup> By 1953, PTA advertising had virtually disappeared from the *Magazine*.

As might be expected in a period when Britain's Empire was gradually being dismantled, reports in the *Magazine* of travels began to acquire a post-imperial tone, whether in the self-deprecation of a journey to West Africa or in empathising with the Spanish love of bullfights and enthusing about the kindness of Spanish working people.<sup>119</sup> The September 1960 issue carried a brief item about a stay in the Lucerne Chalets but, by now, the PTA presence in the *Magazine* was more an echo than a voice.

Meanwhile, PTA ownership and directorships began to change hands significantly, albeit remaining for the time being within the Studd and Hogg fam-

118 *Polytechnic Magazine*, November 1949, February 1950, March 1951, March 1952 and October 1955.

119 *Polytechnic Magazine*, July 1950, December 1950 and May 1952.



Fig. 280

*This brochure offered tourists the chance to see Spain in a coach complete with radio, reclining seats and a bar – a far cry from the days of ‘temperance tours’.*

ilies. J.E.K. Studd died in 1944, Douglas McGarel Hogg in 1950 and Ronald Studd in 1956. By 1959, of 30,000 shares, almost 22,000 were owned by Studds (Ronald’s brothers Eric and Bernard and Eric’s son Robert Kynaston) or by Ronald’s executors Hyman Stone and Douglas Waghorn, with 8,000 owned by William Neil McGarel Hogg (hereafter ‘Neil Hogg’), younger son of Douglas McGarel Hogg. The directors were Eric, Bernard and Robert Kynaston Studd (Deputy General Manager); Neil Hogg; Reginald May (General Manager); Hyman Stone; Lionel Christie and Harry Greenfield.<sup>120</sup> Eric Studd became Managing Director on the death of his brother, Ronald.<sup>121</sup> The company had two branch offices in Regent Street including part of the ground floor at 309 as a ticket counter, and others in Cambridge, Newcastle, Sheffield and elsewhere. Below director level, there were now four layers of management overseeing departments for Hotels, Air/Rail, Programme Tours and Ticketing, as well as support departments: a typing pool, filing, accounts, personnel and advertising. With commercial TV and radio not yet firmly established, advertising was concentrated in broadsheet and tabloid newspapers.<sup>122</sup>

The new generation of Studds and Hogg may not have worked together as harmoniously as their predecessors. By 1958 Neil Hogg was closely involved in the management of the Swiss properties, and keen to release some of his capital from them:

It is a pity that we cannot bring ourselves to make use of the wonderful opportunities ourselves, but if we can’t (and I am disposed to agree that we are really incapable of it) then we had better get hold of the money and use that. Of course there are the most fantastic difficulties in the way, owing chiefly to the eccentric Wills made by the late Commander [R.G. Studd] ... I have in principle arranged the sale of the two Grindelwald hotels, which were and indeed are still falling down, on terms which will permit the company to go on trading in them as before but without the expense of upkeep ...<sup>123</sup>

During this period, as the British economy recovered, levels of British tourism abroad grew. An estimated 1.5 million holidays of four nights or more were spent abroad in 1951, 2 million in 1955, 3.5 million in 1960 and 5 million in 1965.<sup>124</sup> In addition to more working people having increased paid leave, aircraft technology had improved during the war, making flying faster and cheaper, especially by the use of charter aircraft, of which there was spare capacity.<sup>125</sup> Entrepreneurs such as Vladimir Raitz successfully challenged British European Airways (BEA)’s monopoly on the use of British carriers for holidays, and restrictions on who could be taken on such flights. Travel agents and airlines began to offer credit facilities, the Government raised the foreign travel allowance to £100 in 1955–56 and extended currency allowances for the USA and ‘dollar area’ nations such as Canada.<sup>126</sup>

One of the new travel entrepreneurs was Harold Bamberg, owner of Eagle Aviation. Bamberg wanted to work with a travel agent in order to make joint applications to run routes with low fares. After Thomas Cook turned down an

120 *Annual Return 1959*, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7. See also Family Trees for details.

121 *Polytechnic Magazine*, March 1956.

122 Information based on author’s conversation with Maurice and Sheila Steer, members of PTA staff 1954–64, 20 May 2011.

123 Letter from Neil Hogg to Lord Hailsham, 8 June 1958, CAC HLSM8/12/31.

124 British Travel Association, *Patterns in British Holidaymaking 1951–68* (London: British Travel Association, 1969), p. 9.

125 Barton, pp. 200–1.

126 Roger Bray and Vladimir Raitz, *Flight to the Sun: The Story of the Holiday Revolution* (London: Continuum, 2001), pp. 5–17, pp. 45–52.



**Fig. 281**  
*Despite its acquisition in 1962,  
 Poly Travel retained its own name  
 until the 1980s.*

approach, he acquired Sir Henry Lunn Ltd. Bamberg then became interested in the PTA (which had by now changed its name to Poly Travel).<sup>127</sup> In Bamberg's words:

Poly Travel had 19 branches and we wanted to expedite our national coverage for the purpose of marketing the package holiday ... [by working with travel agents] you could buy the hotel accommodation and the airline fee at the point of sale in England ... we were able to plan ahead and we could allocate large numbers of seats on the airline and accommodation at the hotel.<sup>128</sup>

Through Sir Henry Lunn Ltd, Bamberg acquired Poly Travel on 1 October 1962. Neil Hogg noted sardonically: 'Poly Travel died on Monday – of a surfeit of Studds'.<sup>129</sup> Bamberg and four other directors from Lunn joined the board of Poly Travel, which continued as a separate company under its own name until its trading activities were merged with those of Sir Henry Lunn Ltd on 1 November 1967. Sir Eric Studd and Robert Kynaston Studd remained as directors until 1967–68, as the last connection between the Studd family and the business.<sup>130</sup> A link with the Polytechnic continued in the form of a renewed Poly Travel deed of covenant to pay the institution £1,000 a year for seven years from 1 August 1963.<sup>131</sup>

The subsequent history of Poly Travel was unhappy and confusing, with various changes of owners and directors, a period of financial losses into the 1970s and ten years in which it ceased to trade. Bamberg resigned in 1969 in the wake of the collapse of Eagle Aviation. Curiously, while 'Lunn Poly' was used as a brand name, it did not appear in legal documents until 1976 when one of Poly Travel's shareholders, Sunair Holidays, was renamed Lunn Poly Holidays. In 1981, Poly Travel was renamed Portland Camping, and showed mixed financial results before ceasing to trade in 1987 and being re-registered as an unlimited company and sold to Thomson Travel International SA in 2000.<sup>132</sup> In effect, though, the lifespan of the PTA had come to an end with its acquisition in 1962. By the end of the 1960s, about 2.5 million Britons per year were holidaying abroad, compared with 1 million in 1950.<sup>133</sup> The newly fashionable destination was Spain, whose share of the foreign holiday market rose from 6 per cent in 1951 to 30 per cent in 1968.<sup>134</sup> Intriguingly, a 1958 PTA brochure on European destinations gave more prominence than before to Spain and Italy.<sup>135</sup> A still-independent PTA might have prospered in the 1960s with more focus on southern Europe and less on its traditional destinations, particularly Switzerland.

127 *Special Resolution at an Extraordinary General Meeting*, 1 April 1958, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7.

128 Letter from Harold Bamberg to the author, 16 March 2011.

129 Letter from Neil Hogg to Lord Hailsham, 'Strike Day', 1962, CAC HLSM/8/17/7; *Notification to the Registrar of Companies*, 1 October 1962, 11 October 1962 and 27 April 1963, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7.

130 *Notifications to the Registrar of Companies*, 30 September 1967 and 2 April 1968, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7.

131 *Regent Street Polytechnic Governing Body Minutes*, meeting of 18 February 1963, UWA RSP/1/BG.

132 *Accounts and notes to accounts*, 1967, 1968, 1972; *Annual Returns*, 1970, 1972, 1976; *Reports of the Directors*, 1972, 1973; *Special Resolution of an Extraordinary General Meeting*, 6 August 1981, filed with Companies House, copies UWA PTA/1/7.

133 Barton, p. 198, pp. 212–13.

134 Bray and Raitz, pp. 173–4.

135 *Poly Holidays 1958* (magazine), UWA PTA/2/1/27.

## CONCLUSION

An assessment of the success and significance of the PTA has to take into account its two phases of existence: first as an embryonic agency within Hogg's Polytechnic, then after 1911 as an independent company. In financial terms, the pre-1911 model was an ostensible success, contributing funds to Polytechnic operations – although its accounts did not fully reflect the time devoted to the tours by Polytechnic staff. In the absence of accounts for the period 1911–67, a definitive financial judgement of the independent PTA is impossible. We should note that it survived two world wars, the 1930s' depression and post-1945 travel restrictions, while other travel firms did not; and Harold Bamberg clearly thought the PTA to be worth acquiring in 1962.

As for the PTA's wider significance, the evidence suggests a qualified verdict. A recent analysis of the importance of travel to the Polytechnic has argued that '[t]he Polytechnic's role as an agent of change was an important theme in its institutional narrative', but that its educational travel activities promised more change than they ultimately delivered.<sup>136</sup> The PTA was certainly not a pioneering organisation – it did not, for example, originate 'mass travel', new destinations, new methods of travel or new pricing or marketing techniques. Nor was it unique. The PTA and other emerging travel agencies of the late nineteenth century spoke the language of 'rational recreation', if in differing accents and with differing emphases (and, as we have seen, even after 1911, the PTA retained traces of its philanthropic, moral and educational origins). Ultimately, however, by dint of the many thousands of tourists for whom it catered, the PTA deserves recognition as one of the most influential British travel firms in the era between Thomas Cook and the advent of true mass travel. For its growth and longevity, it owed much to Robert Mitchell and Ronald Studd, among others. However, as this chapter has shown, the PTA could never have come into existence without the personal example, vision and philanthropy of Quintin Hogg.

136 Michele M. Strong, 'Class Trips and the Meaning of British Citizenship: Travel, Educational Reform, and the Regent Street Polytechnic at Home and Abroad, 1871–1903', in *Journal of British Studies*, No. 51, 2012, pp. 126–31.

## OLD MEMBERS' ASSOCIATION

The Old Members' Association (OMA) of the Polytechnic was formed in November 1899, for the purpose of bringing and keeping together members of the Hanover Street and Long Acre Institutes, that is to say those who were members before its move to Regent Street. Prior to this, Hogg had started *The Quintinian*, a monthly round-up of the *Polytechnic Magazine* and the activities of the clubs and societies in 1892. This was aimed at both former day school pupils and old members of the wider Polytechnic, so that they could keep in touch without the expense of subscribing to the weekly (at that time) *Magazine*.

Early meetings of the OMA comprised mostly social occasions, with musical entertainment, the showing of some 'animated photographs', and reading of letters from friends who could not attend in person. In 1904, the

Association organised the first of its Children's Parties, attended by up to 600 children on some occasions. These became a regular feature of Polytechnic life for the next 80 years, only having to take an enforced break during the Second World War. The OMA's social calendar gradually built up and after the Second World War it was organising five or six outings a year by coach and steamer.

By 1907 membership had been opened up to anyone who had been a member for ten years, not just those pre-Regent Street. The following year the OMA declined to allow old members of the Women's Institute to join but offered instead to help them organise a kindred association, which was duly founded in January 1909. The two organisations maintained separate sections throughout their existence, with sub-committees of each organising joint events such as the Children's Party and Old Tyme Dances, not always without disagreement.

Originally an Institute that only admitted youths between the ages of 16 and 21, the Old Members' Association represented a change in the composition of the Polytechnic, albeit one supported by Hogg before his death. Hogg had prided himself on knowing all members of his Institute, and liked to maintain contact with them for as long as possible, continuing to send out birthday cards with a personal message for as long as he had their address. It is not surprising therefore that he

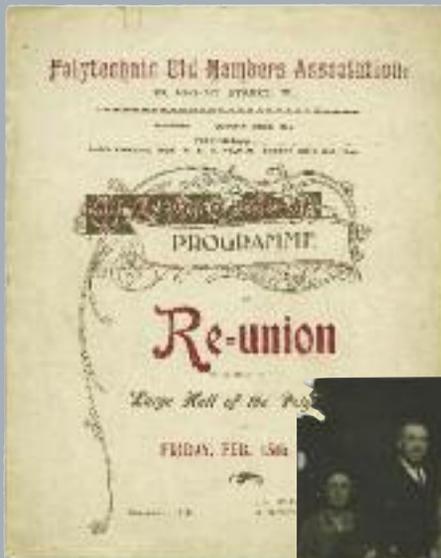


Fig. 282



Fig. 283

encouraged them to return to the Poly three or four times a year, but he couldn't have foreseen how this would ultimately change the demographic of the Institute. 'The Poly keeps one young', remarked Robert 'Uncle Bob' Mitchell in 1919,<sup>1</sup> but by 1945 even the OMA itself was pleading for 'younger' old members to join in their activities, those who had been members for ten years as opposed to the 30 years plus of which many could boast.

In 1957 the *Polytechnic Magazine* profiled Charles Thomas Luck, who, with W.H. Pengelly, had originally petitioned Hogg to form an association of Old Members the previous century and was still attending the Poly's Sunday Service every week. Although it is doubtless that these lifelong members gained a great deal from their membership, the side-effect was ultimately a steady increase in the average age, which made the Institute side of the Poly's activities less attractive to new members. In the early 1980s the Men's OMA still numbered 100. However, their activities were frequently disrupted by 'militant students', while the introduction of room hire charges by PCL made their meetings increasingly unaffordable. By 1990 both the men's and women's Old Members' Associations had ceased their activities, and with them the last link to Hogg's Polytechnic.

<sup>1</sup> *Polytechnic Magazine*, December 1919.

Fig. 289



Fig. 286



Fig. 285



Fig. 287



Fig. 288





# Afterword

Geoff Petts

## INTRODUCTION

Quintin Hogg's vision for the Regent Street Polytechnic incorporated elements of Sir George Cayley's earlier Royal Polytechnic Institution and sustained the development of 'The Poly' and its subsequent manifestation as the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) over a period of more than six decades. In 1992, PCL became the University of Westminster; a new journey began and today we are re-engaging with our heritage, incorporating a modern interpretation of the Cayley-Hogg vision into our strategic planning. Excellence in teaching and research gives our graduates a badge of distinction that is grounded in strong values and founded on a proud and influential heritage.

The Higher Education (HE) sector today is a mass system, very different from that of Quintin Hogg's Victorian England. Relatively low participation in relation to other developed countries persisted until the late 1980s when this was reversed following successive waves of expansion in student numbers. However, widening participation was accompanied by noticeable declines in government funding. To resolve the funding problem, the UK moved from a situation where the taxpayer footed the entire bill for HE to a system where graduates themselves contribute to the cost of their education. An independent review of higher education funding and student finance, published in October 2010, recommended wide ranging changes, increasing fees and student loans, but also a further growth in participation.<sup>1</sup> The subsequent White Paper refers to students as 'informed consumers'; introducing higher fees and student loans and a requirement on institutions to provide a 'Key information set' describing each course to inform student choice.<sup>2</sup>

The 2008 Global Financial Crisis and consequent worldwide recession that continues through 2012, led successive governments to make severe spending cuts to reduce the fiscal deficit. The HE sector had to absorb its share of these cuts. These not only led to the restructuring of institutions but also required a further rebalancing of financial contributions to higher education from the tax payer, from students, from graduates and from employers. Importantly, tuition remains free at the point of delivery. Increased fees, now capped at £9k per annum, are funded by a national loan scheme with deferred

1 *The Browne Review. Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education: An Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance*, 12 October 2010 (London: Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2010).

2 *Higher Education White Paper: Students at the Heart of the System*, Cmd. 8122, 28 June 2011.

fee repayments, contingent on salary, and targeted scholarships supporting the widening participation agenda. Market differentiation has been reinforced by deregulation of the academically-elite student market (those with A-levels at AAB or better, and equivalents) leading to significant growth in some institutions but to the cost of others.

These changes to the funding of HE in England and Wales have led universities into a new era. Channelling funding through students has empowered them to make choices about their university experience that reflects their needs. Institutions have been incentivised to demonstrate the quality of the courses they offer, and the benefits that a graduate would gain from them, and stimulated to innovate in course delivery. The further growth of the sector has been encouraged with quasi-public and for-profit colleges having newly acquired degree awarding powers entering the market. At the same time, the banking crisis has lessened people's appetite for risk and investment in future debt; unemployment has increased and graduate employment come under greater pressure. What is certain is that the sector is experiencing considerable uncertainty and instability that is likely to continue beyond 2014. But are the changes really radical or a continuation of policies that seek to resolve tensions created by the need to continually improve quality, participation and affordability? And how has our institution adapted to the challenges?

#### PARTICIPATION IN HE TO SPUR THE ECONOMY

Two themes have underpinned HE policy since Hogg's time. First, who should participate? An aspiration to achieve access for all with the ability to benefit has been driven by the evolving demands from employers for workforce skills. Second, how should it be financed? The development of higher education in England has been driven by the desire to expand our HE-skilled workforce through widening participation and sustaining excellence on the international stage, but without overburdening the taxpayer with the cost. A strong sub-text is a continuing drive to make the old universities less elitist and less isolated from the industrial and commercial community. Inevitably, this has led to debates about the level of local and national government's control on institutions.

The view by Governments and industry of higher education as a tool to spur the economy and meet emerging challenges and scientific advances, has underpinned developments in HE since the early nineteenth century. The Victorian 'civics' – including Birmingham, Manchester and Sheffield – were founded to meet middle-class demand for HE and to increase the nation's research capacity. However, earlier that century emerging demands for improved skills among the workforce led to the establishment throughout the country of mechanics institutes, technical colleges and schools of art and design. Our own Polytechnic Institution was founded in 1838 to promote the most innovative developments and between 1890 and 1892 'The Poly' was joined by four other London polytechnics: Woolwich, City, Battersea and Borough, establishing

Figs. 290, 291

*Scientific teaching was always at the heart of the Polytechnic, a tradition that has continued in today's University of Westminster.*



the early roots of a binary system that was to reach its zenith in the 1980s before change to a unification process that continues today.

Until 1963 participation in higher education in the UK was one of the lowest in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with under-representation by low socio-economic groups<sup>3</sup> and a concern that the lack of higher education in the workforce would stunt economic growth.<sup>4</sup> The Robbins Report 1963<sup>5</sup> set out a plan for the future of universities but it was the 1966 Crosland White Paper that introduced a new public sector of HE in England and Wales to meet the demand for vocational, professional and industrial-based training.<sup>6</sup> Created mainly in large towns and cities based on colleges of art and design, commerce, engineering and building, these ‘people’s universities’ or ‘urban community universities’<sup>7</sup> committed the Government to a comprehensive education programme. The first 30 of these ‘new’ polytechnics were formed from over 50 existing colleges, including the pre-existing London Polytechnics: Quintin Hogg’s Regent Street Polytechnic incorporated the Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce to become the Polytechnic of Central London.

The driving force of the polytechnic policy was the need to offer higher education more cheaply, concentrating resources and achieving economies of scale. There was also a desire for the majority of HE to be under direct public control and a belief that the ‘old universities’ had too much independence.<sup>8</sup> The polytechnics experienced a five-fold expansion of student numbers over

3 Jo Blandon and Stephen Machin, ‘Educational Inequality and Expansion of UK Higher Education’, *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 51, No. 2, 2004, pp. 230–49.

4 Nicholas Barr and Iain Crawford, *Financing Higher Education: Answers from the UK* (London: Routledge, 2005).

5 *The Robbins Report (1963), Higher Education. Report of the Committee Appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins*, Cmd. 2154, 1963.

6 Anthony Crosland was Secretary of State for Education and Science 1965–7. His White Paper: *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges*, Cmd. 3006, 1966, was outlined in a speech at Woolwich Polytechnic in 1965. See also Chapter 3.

7 Eric Robinson, *The New Polytechnics: A Radical Policy for Higher Education* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1968).

8 Robinson, Chapter 1.



Fig. 292

*From the 1870s the University of London Matriculation examination became the standard of academic achievement required for a professional career, as well as an entrance examination to University. This continued until the introduction of A-levels. This photograph, taken in 1949, shows mature students studying for the qualification at the Polytechnic.*

the next 25 years – double that of the old universities. They led on widening access to non-traditional students, modular approaches to education, and they pioneered the development of degree courses into art and design, business and librarianship.<sup>9</sup> Quality assurance was provided from 1965 by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), which approved first degree and post-graduate courses at over 140 institutions throughout the UK. Under the CNAA, it was established that vocationally oriented higher education could be innovative and of an undisputed high standard. However, the English Polytechnics under Local Education Authority administration became graduate factories, dominated by vocationally-oriented degree courses that successfully attracted students from lower socio-economic groups (34 per cent compared with 20 per cent in the old universities) at the cost of abandoning the broader education traditions, including sport, which apparently were seen as unnecessary and costly luxuries,<sup>10</sup> for example, leading to the demise of most of the ‘Poly’ clubs and societies.

The abolishing of the binary line between Polytechnic and University education was heralded by the 1991 White Paper on Higher Education.<sup>11</sup> This recommended not only the right to use the title university and degree awarding powers for all, but also a single funding structure, greater cost efficiency through more competition, funding-related quality assessment and the introduction of a new UK-wide quality unit.<sup>12</sup> The White Paper recommended that funding should be tied to student numbers and to the results of a Research Assessment Exercise. Quality audit would be the responsibility of individual institutions; quality assessment that of the funding council.

9 John Pratt, ‘1964 revisited: lessons from the history of Mr Poly’, *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 16 May 1997.

10 J. Pratt, ‘Trends in HE: Status – More Than Just a Name’, *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 20 September 2002.

11 *Higher Education: A New Framework*, Cmd. 1541, May 1991.

12 Jennie Brookman and Alison Utley, ‘More Students for Less, Major Promises’, *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 24 May 1991.

## THE FUNDING CONUNDRUM

By 2010–11 the participation rate in Higher Education in the UK had risen to about 45 per cent with 2,501,300 students on full and part-time degrees. Of these 11.9 per cent were non-EU, generating income of nearly £3 billion. The total income to the sector was £27.6 billion but as a percentage of GDP, public expenditure on HE in the UK had fallen to well below the OECD average.<sup>13</sup> Early signs of the deterioration of funding to UK universities had given rise to an emerging fear that quality and competitiveness would be compromised.<sup>14</sup>

Prior to 1963, the Government (the taxpayer) footed the entire cost of HE – teaching, tuition fees and maintenance grants, and buildings. Student funding rose from £6,115 in 1963 with 5 per cent participation to £9,530 in 1989 when participation reached 15 per cent. The ‘elite system’ with an extremely low participation rate among the working classes had given way to a ‘mass system’, partly in response to technological change and the changing demands for workforce skills. In 1990 participation reached 17 per cent but funding fell for the first time, to £8,928. A student loan scheme was implemented, subject to means testing against parental income. Repayments were to be made once a student entered the workforce and was earning 85 per cent of average earnings.<sup>15</sup> The Government covered the costs of student borrowing, in practice providing a substantial subsidy.<sup>16</sup>

The granting of university status to the polytechnics by the 1992 Act further increased participation rate by again reclassifying students.<sup>17</sup> By 1997, participation had grown to 33 per cent but funding per full-time equivalent (fte)<sup>18</sup> had fallen to an historic low of £4,850. Participation reached 40 per cent in 2004 with funding per fte now at £5,489; the funding crisis was deepening and expansion appeared to have resulted in increasing educational inequalities.<sup>19</sup> In response to the emerging funding crisis, the Dearing Report, July 1997 recommended that students should contribute to the cost of their education.<sup>20</sup> In 2006, fees of up to £3,000 were introduced, regardless of background, deferrable until after graduation using government-subsidised loans. Tuition fees were not means tested and no longer paid up front, but now deferrable until after graduation with loans available at zero real interest rate, repayable according to income.<sup>21</sup> Maintenance grants were reintroduced for the poorest students who also benefited from bursaries. Research showed that the introduction of upfront tuition fees in 1998 had a small impact on participation while the package of reforms introduced in 2006 had no impact on participation largely because tuition fees were accompanied by large increases in loans and grants.<sup>22</sup>

FROM A BADGE OF PARTICIPATION TO THE  
STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Since Quintin Hogg’s day, a fundamental academic debate developed in parallel to the debates on participation and funding, and that debate focused on the status of the primary higher education qualification, the bachelor’s degree.

- 13 *Education at a Glance 2011: OECD Indicators* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011).
- 14 David Greenaway and Michelle Haynes, ‘Funding Higher Education in the UK: The Role of Fees and Loans’, *Economic Journal*, Vol. 113, No. 485, 2003, pp. 150–66.
- 15 Nicholas Barr and Iain Crawford, ‘The Dearing Report and Government’s Response: A Critique’, *Political Quarterly*, Vol. 69, No. 1, 1998, pp. 72–84.
- 16 Nicholas Barr, ‘Higher Education Funding’, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 2004, pp. 264–83.
- 17 Greenaway and Haynes.
- 18 Full-time equivalent (fte) is a unit used to measure students and staff in a way that makes them comparable although they may study or work a different number of hours per week. It is one of the key metrics used in the Higher Education sector.
- 19 Barr, ‘Higher Education Funding’.
- 20 Sir Ron Dearing, *Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Education* (London: HMSO, 1997).
- 21 Lorraine Dearden, Emla Fitzsimons, Alissa Goodman and Greg Kaplan, ‘Higher Education Funding Reforms in England: The Distributional Effects and the Shifting Balance of Costs’, *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 118, No. 526, 2008, pp. 100–25.
- 22 *BIS Research Paper No. 11: The Impact of Higher Education Finance on University Participation in the UK* (London: Department for Business Innovation and Skills, September 2010).

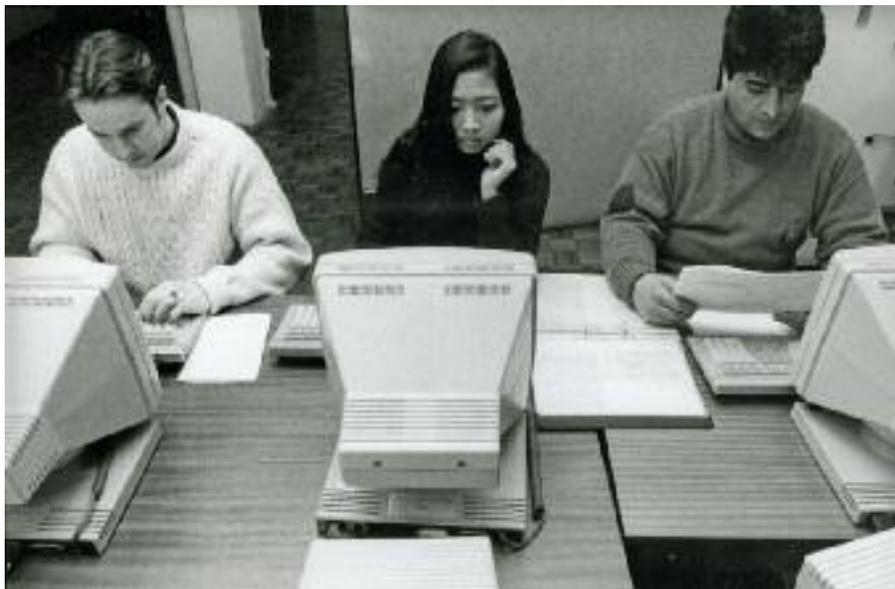


Fig. 293  
*The first computer arrived at the Poly in 1965, and within three years programming was being taught to physics, civil, mechanical electrical and electronic engineering, and photographic science students.*

During the first half of the 20th century, the award of a bachelor's degree moved from a recognition of monastic-residence in a university to a mark of academic attainment. However, there persisted a view that a liberal education for the elite was distinct from the vocational education of the masses. The vocational polytechnics were associated with narrowness of study, rote learning and passivity of the student; concerned with content, action, certainties and facts, serving the state machine.<sup>23</sup> But from 1965, there was a further drive to convert the bachelor's degree from being an elite badge marking a rite of passage to membership of the academic community to a certificate of social mobility. Moreover, the education and training of graduates was no longer seen as a once-and-for-all process but the launching pad for continuing professional development.

A new form of vocational training was to infiltrate every aspect of the curriculum. The former focus of vocational training was on the need for the workforce to comprehend and carry out instructions competently, but not to think; to be educated in reading, writing and arithmetic with appropriate manual skills, but not to be creative. The modern liberal vocational training focused on social skills, the ability to communicate, the analysis of theory and the development of critical comment. In this context, each lecture, seminar and practical required justification beyond itself. The focus moved to the academic experience of methods of study, of ways to acquire new ideas and lose old ones. An academic education became an intensive study of one subject, the vocational basis for academic research. The new polytechnics developed a 'new' brand: creating knowledge for a purpose;<sup>24</sup> a brand that was synonymous with Sir George Cayley's mission in founding the Royal Polytechnic Institution and one that remains at the heart of the modern University of Westminster's mission today.

Our own distinctive mission is to be 'practice informed and research engaged with global influence'. We shall be known for excellence and innovation

23 Robinson, p. 72.

24 Robinson, Chapter 4.

in teaching within a diverse, dynamic, professional learning community, and for fostering creativity. We celebrate cultural diversity and embed internationalism, employability and green-thinking in all we do. Within London we contribute to the 56,000 highly skilled graduates each year, 80 per cent of whom enter employment within the region. Our mission is underpinned by our values (see Table 1) and is being advanced through our Corporate Strategy for ‘Westminster 2015’.<sup>25</sup> Our distinctiveness incorporates core strands that relate to our heritage, the aspirations of Hogg and the imagination of Cayley, presented for the modern student. Three enduring themes extend our tradition: an excellent education for diverse communities, innovation in research and public engagement.

### Table 1: The University of Westminster Values<sup>26</sup>

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**Courageous:** Without risk there’s no innovation. We’re bold enough to question ideas, provoke new ways of thinking, and focus on those things at which we can excel.

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**Rigorous:** We demand excellence and we expect the very highest standards of ourselves and our students.

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**Generous:** We respect and celebrate diversity. We value emotional intelligence as well as knowledge, empowering each other.

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**Connected:** We are about trust, collaboration and connectivity across our different disciplines and throughout the world.

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**Sustainable:** We are committed to sustainable practices, both on the global stage and in our own working environment.

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Fig. 294  
Students helping out at a  
University Open Day.



25 University of Westminster  
Corporate Strategy 2009–2015,  
August 2009.

26 [www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/vision-mission-and-values](http://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/vision-mission-and-values)

## EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION FOR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

A key pillar of Quintin Hogg's Polytechnic was to equip all young people with the skills necessary to secure permanent employment, and to provide for their spiritual, social and physical needs. He wanted to create a centre of education for the artisans of London, providing practical education closely linked to the local economy. The first session, in 1882/3, attracted 6,000 members and students. One hundred years later, the polytechnics had more than two-thirds of the HE students – an average of over 13,000 each – with a strong focus on undergraduate education, in contrast to the universities, 13 of which had fewer than 7,000 students.<sup>27</sup> In 1991, PCL was distinctive among the polytechnics in having the largest postgraduate community (17 per cent of total fte), and the highest proportion of part-time (53 per cent) and mature (77 per cent) students among all institutions.

Today, we see a loss of the part-time market, which has declined nationally, particularly over the past decade, but the University has retained our relatively large postgraduate and mature student communities. Our diversity has been sustained especially in terms of ethnic mix among our Home-EU population as well as with our relatively large overseas student numbers (see Table 2). Some 85 per cent of our Home First Degree students are domiciled within the Greater London area at the time of their application, and the majority live with their immediate or extended families. Westminster's gender, ethnicity and socio-economic group characteristics show breadth and balance. Some 55 per cent come from a lower household income family (<£25k pa), over 26 per cent are



Fig. 295

*In 1949 mature student Charles Key, the 42-year-old director of a surgical appliance manufacturers, studied for a BSc in physics because his company was expanding into manufacturing scientific instruments.*

27 *Profiles of Higher Education Institutions* (Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England, 1994).



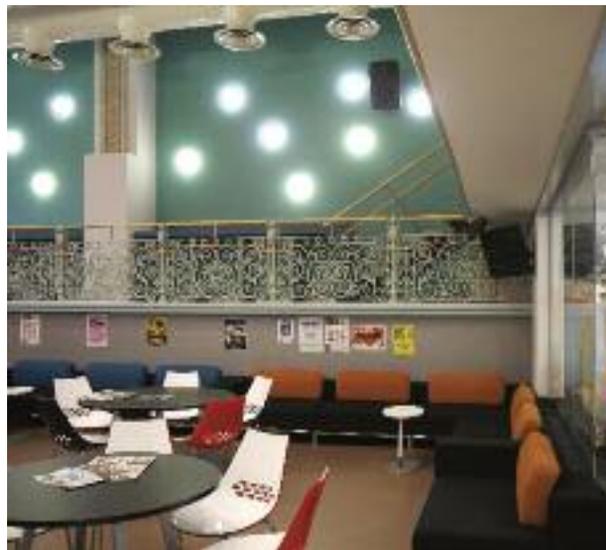
**Figs. 296**  
*During the 1970s and 1980s PCL had one of the largest populations of overseas students, with over 25 per cent of its student body coming from outside Britain, compared with 10 per cent nationally.*

between 21 and 29 years of age, over 6 per cent are aged 30 or over. The University provides high-level support for care leavers and has twice secured the Frank Buttle Trust award in recognition of the focused support given to these potentially vulnerable students. Some 6 per cent of students have declared a disability. Diversity of entry qualifications is another feature: while 58% of new entrants hold A-level qualifications, the other students have a combination of academic and vocational qualifications and/or professional practice and employer-related qualifications.

**Table 2: Westminster 2010–11 Diversity Profile<sup>28</sup>**

Total fte	17,253	Female	56%
Full-time	84%	Mature	41%
Undergraduate	82%	Non-white	52%
Overseas (Non-EU)	14%	(27% Asian, 14% Black, 9% Mixed-	
PG Research fte	207	race and 2% Chinese)	

The University of Westminster, like most Higher Education Institutions, has moved away from the ‘unit of study’ to the ‘student experience’ with course designs considering what students will need post-graduation. The focus is on our ‘Student Charter’, which provides a framework for developing strong, effective learning partnerships between staff and our diverse student population,



defining how we can work together to help promote a culture of respect and opportunity for all. Three elements of the Charter are particularly important to me. I want our University to be an active learning community in which students will have the opportunity to develop and achieve their potential – the first bullet point in the Charter. We pride ourselves in attracting modern academics who are not only fully conversant with the latest theoretical developments in their field, but who are also passionate about using new knowledge to make a difference to people's lives through practice-informing research and to use this experience to inform their teaching and to inspire their students. That is the third bullet point in the Charter. Inspiring young people to achieve is in itself a vital educational experience, acquiring important skills, values and attitudes for their future lives. It is vital that the 'Westminster experience' offers all students opportunities to take part in a wide range of cultural, recreational, social and sporting activities – the fifth bullet point in our Charter. Today, London is our campus. We continue to invest in the Westminster experience, and to complement the Student Charter we are developing new student-centred spaces. Listening to the needs of modern students in our diverse community and supporting them in sustaining their busy, fast-moving lifestyles, we have created a range of new flexible learning spaces on all our sites.

Our sporting prowess has also been re-established. The Olympic values of Excellence and Equality – having the confidence to make the best of oneself and creating opportunities for all in a context of mutual respect – are at the heart of the modern University of Westminster's mission. Thanks to the efforts of the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU), in London's Olympic year the number of students participating in competitive sport more than doubled and the UWSU Dragons were victorious in tennis, football, jujutsu and cheerleading. Quintin Hogg would have been especially proud of our successes in football with the men's 1st and 3rd teams winning their respective leagues and the men's 2nd and women's 1st teams coming second in their leagues.<sup>29</sup>

**Figs. 297, 298**

*Over summer 2012 the University transformed its former swimming pool and old gymnasium into new social spaces for students.*

29 Quintin Hogg was a keen sportsman and played for Wanderers FC as well as in early international competitions between 1865 and 1871. See Mark Clapson's *An Education in Sport: Competition, Communities and Identities at the University of Westminster since 1864* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2012) for more details of the University's sporting heritage.



Figs. 299, 300

*Football is as popular today as it was when Quintin Hogg founded the Polytechnic. Hogg is pictured on the right with the Hanover Football Club (later Polytechnic Football Club), of which he was the President.*

Today, our graduates not only possess the skills required of their chosen discipline but also their ‘Westminster experience’ equips them with a range of transferable skills associated with good citizenship and effective lifelong learning, and the abilities required to make a difference within their communities (see Table 3 for my summary of these skills).

### Table 3: Skills of a Global Graduate

#### High-level Technical Skills:

Rigorous, Analytical, Critical

Creative, Innovative, Adaptable

#### Leadership Skills:

Able to Communicate and Inspire

Recognises that listening as well as speaking is necessary for a genuine conversation

Understands that Freedom of Speech/Thought comes with responsibilities

Respects other people’s freedoms and the right of others to disagree

Learns to understand what others actually believe and value

Avoids imposing views on individuals or communities who are vulnerable

## INNOVATION IN RESEARCH

The ‘new’ polytechnics were funded in proportion to student numbers to carry out teaching, with no formal funding for research. If research was funded at all, it was largely through industrial sponsorship or consultancy. In contrast, until 1986 the universities received research funding per student on the assumption that all university academics were engaged in research as part of their role. Additional funds for specific projects were available upon successful application from the Research Councils according to the principle of dual funding. The

need to introduce some principle of selectivity in funding arose because of the decline, in real terms, of government funding for teaching and research and the cuts to public expenditure during the early 1980s. The 1985 University Grants Committee established a national system for the evaluation of research in universities to facilitate selective research funding.<sup>30</sup> The funding allocation system was founded on the established process of peer review with the focus on assessment of research quality by specialist panels. The first Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was held in 1986.

The 1992 Further and Higher Education Act finally determined that research funding should be allocated entirely on a selective basis. It also ended the divide between polytechnics and universities, enabling the former to compete for research funding via the 1992 Research Assessment Exercise. This RAE received 2,800 submissions, including 43,000 researchers; the former polytechnics captured 7 per cent of the funding.<sup>31</sup> On its creation in 1992, the University of Westminster was distinctive among the polytechnics in having a history of achievement in research and innovation, established by Sir George Cayley.

Research may be defined as:

original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce and industry, as well as to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship, the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances and artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, research is externally sponsored or leads to some output of international quality. If it does neither, it is general scholarly activity which, while valuable, is significantly a cost of teaching.<sup>33</sup>

In the 1992 RAE, the new University of Westminster received recognition for research of the highest international standing in one Unit of Assessment (UoA): communications, cultural and media studies. In 1996 three UoAs received recognition for international work (Italian, art and design and communications, cultural and media studies) and this rose to seven UoAs in 2001 (electronic engineering, law, politics and international relations, Asia studies, linguistics, art and design and communications, cultural and media studies). The number of staff returned in these UoAs had risen from five in 1992 to 75 in 2001. In the most recent RAE, in 2008, the University of Westminster returned the work of more than 200 full-time academics to 20 different Units of Assessment spanning arts, social sciences, sciences and technology. The quality of some work in all UoAs was confirmed as being internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour. In communications, cultural and media studies, 90 per cent of the research activity now met this high standard, and the University of Westminster was ranked first of the 46 institutions that returned to this UoA. Other



**Fig. 301**  
By 1988, PCL held research contracts to the value of £3.5 million, sponsored by industry, government and research agencies.

30 The University Grants Committee was established in 1918 and was succeeded by the University Funding Council (1989–92), and then the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce) from 1992 to present.

31 *Profiles of Higher Education Institutions*.

32 'Definition of Research', *Research Assessment Exercise 2005* (Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England, March 2005).

33 *Circular Letter 10/2008 TRAC Strategy Group*, to the Heads of Hefce-funded institutions, 7 May 2008 (Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2008).

particularly notable performances were in art and design, architecture (returned for the first time), law, and research allied to health professions.

One indicator that a university has a healthy research culture is stimulating successful postgraduate research. High-quality training and researcher development is an increasingly central element of research degree provision. This reflects the changing nature of the PhD from the traditional ‘apprenticeship’ model to one that foregrounds the development of the well-rounded lifetime researcher. To reinforce our external reputation and credibility as a provider of high-quality postgraduate research activity in 2012 we established a Graduate School aligning us with the Bologna Process.<sup>34</sup> It places us in a stronger position to respond positively to Governments’ steer towards greater concentration of postgraduate research in a smaller number of institutions, by our demonstrating critical mass of researchers attached to a vibrant, high-quality institutional research culture. It also provides a hub for applicants, external researchers, alumni and business partners alike. Our Graduate School aims to ensure today’s researchers are nurtured and supported during their development in order to enhance the research workforce and thereby sustain research excellence in the UK, bringing benefits to the economy, and the health and well being of our nation.

#### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Polytechnic Institution at 309 Regent Street opened its doors to the public on 6 August 1838 to show how, using display and demonstration, inventions and discoveries could change people’s lives, their city and their society.<sup>35</sup>

Fig. 302

*The Royal Polytechnic Institution building on Regent Street is here depicted in the 1840s, with the first photographic studio in Europe clearly visible on the roof.*



34 The Bologna Process, named after the University at which it was first proposed, is a series of ministerial meetings and agreements between European countries designed to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications. The first Bologna declaration was signed in 1999. The most recent meeting took place in Bergen in May 2005, resulting in ‘The Framework of Qualifications’ accord.

35 See Brenda Weeden, *The Education of the Eye: History of the Royal Polytechnic Institution 1838–1881* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 2008).

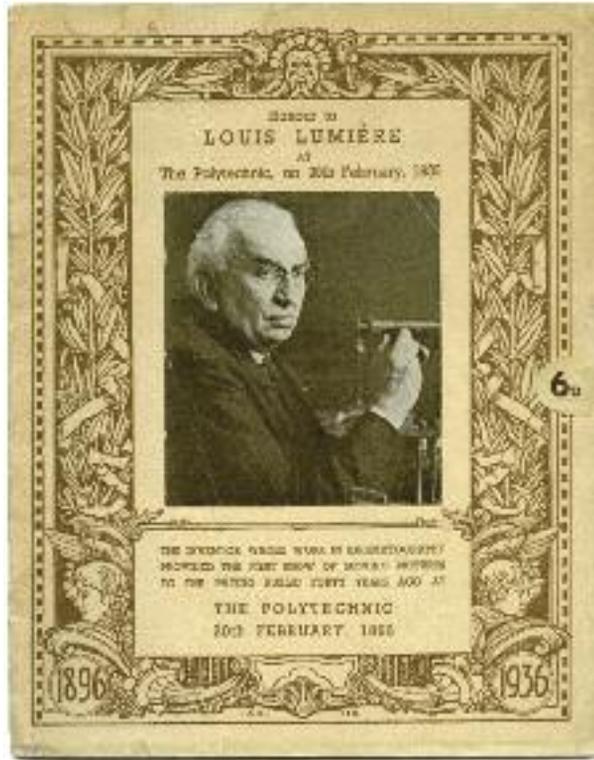


Fig. 303

*In 1936 the Polytechnic Cinema celebrated the 40th anniversary of the first showing of cinema to a paying UK audience, with Louis Lumière in attendance.*

It showcased new technologies and supported the new breed of professional scientists to make a living. The ethos of the Polytechnic Institution was the embodiment of Sir George Cayley's passion: applying his scientific imagination and mechanical ability to address practical problems. Cayley's vision was to create a laboratory, a theatre and a gallery to display novel scientific discoveries before they became public property by publication. His success was exemplified by the work of Henry Langdon Childe who developed optical or magic lantern shows and established arguably the world's first permanent projection theatre at 309 Regent Street.

Following Cayley's death in 1857 the Royal Polytechnic Institution became increasingly renowned for its spectacular magic lantern performances under the direction of John Henry Pepper. However, a fire in 1879 added to the institution's growing financial losses leading it to close in September 1881. Quintin Hogg purchased the Institution and reinstated many of the 'popular attractions' that characterised the Royal Polytechnic Institution. These included lectures, lantern lectures and demonstrations, for example with B.J. Malden's Great Planetarium in 1888 and Pepper's contribution to the annual industrial exhibition in 1889.

Today, the legacies of both Cayley and Hogg are embedded in our twenty-first century mission and our estate benefits from our Victorian heritage. We recognise, as did Cayley, and then Hogg, that one factor in success is 'location'. In 2010 we restored the grand entrance hall at 309 Regent Street to encourage visitors to attend a series of popular lectures and shows that was relaunched in



Fig. 304  
*The University's final year fashion shows are hosted in the stunning Ambika P3 gallery, formerly a concrete testing facility.*

2011–12. This included *Lost in Music* when leading neuroscientist Dr Catherine Loveday, supported by distinguished musician Anna Tilbrook, discussed what happens to the brain when we listen to music and explained the power it has to compel us to dance, move us to tears, or lure us to love. The 1966 Olympian, Tommie Smith, engaged in a Q & A following a premier of his film *Salute* and Professor Joram Ten Brink explored re-enactment in film: from King Kong vs Godzilla to Peter Watkins.

Born out of the magic lantern shows of the mid-nineteenth century, the first photographic studio in Europe and Hogg's cinema, which hosted the Lumière brothers' first display of a moving film to the paying public in February 1896, we continue to build our reputation for media research, production and teaching. Our graduates include filmmakers Michael Winterbottom, Asif Kapadia and Seamus McGarvey, producers Tim Bevan and Paul Trijbits, composer George Fenton, editors Andrew Parker and Lucia Zucchetti, and writers Tony Grisoni and Neal Purvis. The list continues to grow and this summer our graduate David Winstone won the top prize for his short film *For Elsie* at the Academy for Motion Picture Arts and Sciences 9th Annual Student Academy Awards, held in Los Angeles. Cayley's theatre was developed by Hogg to become the 'home of animated photography'.<sup>36</sup> This cinema is currently our focus for fundraising to restore it as a state-of-the-art cinema accessible and available to public audiences, tomorrow's filmmakers and the film industry.

36 *The Times*, 23 February 1896.

Our ambition to re-engage with the public has been further enhanced by the conversion of the once concrete testing centre on the Marylebone campus – a 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> subterranean space – into a multi-purpose exhibition hall. With the support of our first Chancellor, the Lord Paul of Marylebone, we created Ambika P3 that is used throughout the year for student shows and feature exhibitions, including our own annual, high-profile fashion show. Recent exhibitions include the influential pioneer of video art, David Hall's *End Piece* and *Land Architecture People* conceived by award-winning architects Pierre d'Avoine and Andrew Houlton and anthropologist Claire Melhuish, which dispelled the mystique around the architect design process, focusing on land ownership and the symbiotic relationship between architect and client.

### CONCLUSION

The polytechnics era (1965–91) was notable not only for their success in widening participation but also their financial demise. The 1992 Further and Higher Education Act marked the end of the binary divide in Higher Education and the polytechnics gained more than a name: the autonomy from Local Education Authority control provided an opportunity to develop distinctiveness around academic direction and quality, and, practically, it enabled them to compete for research funding from Government. In its drive to bring the old universities to greater accountability, the 1992 Act created a stratified system under old university rules, rather than strengthening the system through diversity.<sup>37</sup> However, throughout the binary period, PCL sustained Quintin Hogg's Regent Street Poly reputation for high-quality education across a broad portfolio of courses, not least in communications, cultural and media studies, and also for postgraduate work.

The twenty-first century university in the UK ranges in size, mission, subject mix and history. At last the drive is for distinctiveness and differentiation rather than uniformity. The cost of arriving at this position has been government-driven competitiveness and an increasingly free market. Diversity achieved during the binary period of HE by national structures is today dependent on institutional freedom and confidence. The UK University Model is founded on four core pillars: (i) freedom of speech with responsibilities, (ii) support for research excellence wherever it is found, (iii) independent academic quality assurance, and (iv) independent governance through appointed 'non-executive' governors. A fifth pillar may be seen as the independence of an institution to determine its own future within a national framework determined by government. Our ability to determine our own mission, distinctiveness and brand founded on our defined values is fundamental to our future success.

At the launch of the 2012 Universities Week, the Rt. Hon. David Willetts MP said: 'Higher Education is always at the cutting edge of human endeavour, driving forward knowledge, skills and achievements'.<sup>38</sup> I think this describes very well what we must evidence across our own institution when we assess the contributions of individuals and academic units (departments, schools, centres



Fig. 305  
*The University of Westminster's  
headquarters building at  
309 Regent Street, site of the  
institution since 1838.*

<sup>37</sup> Pratt, 'Trends in HE'.

<sup>38</sup> Rt. Hon. David Willetts MP, statement made at launch of the 2012 UK Universities Week, 30 April 2012: [www.universitiesweek.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/UniversitiesWeekImpactofuniversitiesonLondon2012revealed.docx](http://www.universitiesweek.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/UniversitiesWeekImpactofuniversitiesonLondon2012revealed.docx)

and institutes) as well as the institution as a whole. Even more so than in the past, Higher Education today has a major impact on national economies as large businesses and as developers of human resources with the high level skills to drive innovation and economic growth. Our uncertain and fast changing economic and environmental futures require global graduates who are adaptable and able to help us navigate through changing times. Our university model develops social skills alongside technical and analytical skills; educating global graduates able to serve their communities as responsible citizens in a cosmopolitan world. This education model has strong roots in Quintin Hogg's Victorian ideals.

One analysis of the current situation is that the Government is seeking to create a market where demand is less than capacity so that student number controls can be deregulated, letting competitive forces drive the success, or failure of institutions. At Westminster, we are well-positioned to meet the challenges ahead, ambitious in advancing our distinctive agenda, and keen to reinforce our future by building on a physical and educational heritage in which we can all be proud.

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**Archive Services staff**

In addition to sourcing and researching the majority of images in this volume, University of Westminster Archive Services staff have also contributed the double-page features that highlight some of the Polytechnic's social activities. Archivist Anna McNally has written Student Societies, Polytechnic Parliament and Old Members' Association; and archivist Claire Brunnen has written Music and Drama Societies, Reading Circle and Polytechnic Rambling Club.

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