

## **‘Experimental’ secondary modern education in Britain, 1948-1958**

### **Introduction**

In his 1963 study of the secondary modern school William Taylor warned against underestimating the impact of inter-war educational ideas. ‘Untrammelled by the requirements of external examinations; officially encouraged to experiment and find its own way; the Modern school was particularly open to the influence of new progressive ideas’.<sup>1</sup> A decade earlier, former *Times Educational Supplement* editor Harold Dent had toured secondary modern schools in England and Wales. His account also paid lengthy homage to earlier experiments, protesting that ‘Too little credit has been given to the teachers and administrators who, between the wars and during the 1939-45 war, built up this body of experience’.<sup>2</sup> Both texts, even from their contemporary vantage points, wanted to rehabilitate the early ‘experimental’ period of secondary modern education and its antecedents. Their defiant tone is unsurprising; by 1963 the term ‘secondary modern’ officially connoted an inferior mode of secondary education.

These two accounts underscore the contribution of educational ideas formulated before the 1944 Education Act (or Butler Act), not in grammar schools but in secondary modern schools, to the construction of mass secondary education in postwar Britain. Secondary modern education in the 1940s and 1950s was not compliant with the ‘vocational versus liberal’ model commonly used to understand the postwar tripartite or bipartite system. This dichotomy has tended to depreciate the long-term legacies of the secondary modern school. The early secondary modern school drew on inter-war precedents, leaving a legacy of ‘all round’ secondary education to the comprehensive school. This article will suggest that this early

‘experimental’ period was central to the construction of a ‘modern’ education that encouraged personal growth as an aspect of ‘vocational’ training. It uses a particularly striking set of sources documenting educational experimentation in one early secondary modern school. More importantly, this study will highlight the secondary modern school, which educated the majority of the population aged 11-15, as a neglected site of socialization and identity-formation in postwar Britain.

As a field of historical enquiry, education is enjoying a renaissance. Discussions of schooling are appearing increasingly in accounts of twentieth-century British cultural and social history.<sup>3</sup> Apart from these relatively new developments, however, the ‘history of education’ has become isolated from the scholarly mainstream and is far more of a niche than seems intuitive. From the end of the Second World War to the start of the 1960s social experiences in Britain were marked by the negotiation of innovation and tradition.<sup>4</sup> The place of mass secondary education in this story is essential, and is still woefully underwritten in the shadow of the more alluring ‘meritocratic’ rise of the working-class grammar-school kid.<sup>5</sup> This trend reflects an introspective, academic preference for studying elite education, as well as an ingrained tendency to regard class and social mobility as the only suitable frameworks for historical educational research. The dominant ‘meritocracy’ narrative is, however, beginning to be challenged, bringing decades of sociological research on education into our accounts of the postwar period.<sup>6</sup>

As far as it has been charted, the trajectory of the secondary modern school saw an early period of experimentation, faced with heavy criticism, give way to specialization and formalization as the 1950s drew on. Some schools moved towards a technically vocational focus whilst a significant number sought to mimic the grammar schools in their quest for ‘parity of esteem’.<sup>7</sup> Brooks has argued that through

contracting into a system of national competition, examinations such as the new GCE (established in 1951) gradually functioned as ‘astonishing enablers’ in the secondary modern schools’ search for acceptance.<sup>8</sup> Beyond identifying this pattern, attempts to write the secondary modern schools into history have been fatally tied to the political failings of the Butler Act.<sup>9</sup> This preference for policy has had dire consequences for our understanding of mid-twentieth-century education. McCulloch and Sobell argued for the need of ‘social histories of secondary modern schools’ in 1994, suggesting a move away from the political focus.<sup>10</sup> However, it is still tricky to locate histories that are not predicated on exposing the secondary modern school as a facet of a wider, unequal, and class-bound system.<sup>11</sup>

Failing the eleven plus and entering the secondary modern school has been conceptualized as a defining collective ‘experience’ of twentieth-century class inequality.<sup>12</sup> But this narrative has undermined efforts to understand the subjective cultural and social identities that the secondary modern school could play host to. Scholars have mentioned in passing the early period of secondary modern ‘experimentation’ but it is primarily regarded as the foundation for mounting critiques of these schools by the late 1950s, a story which ‘ends’ with the decline of the secondary modern in the 1960s. This course often seeks to portray comprehensivization in the 1960s as the logical culmination of democratic progress towards ‘secondary education for all’.<sup>13</sup> I will instead consider the first ten years of the secondary modern school on contemporary terms as a site of mass education, rather than simply as a barrier to equality.

The timeframe 1948-1958 is delineated by turning points, which justify my characterization of this decade as the early ‘experimental’ period. In 1947 the school leaving age was raised to fifteen. By this point most local education authorities’

(LEAs') five-year 'development plans' under the 1944 Act were underway, and secondary moderns were still being officially encouraged to 'experiment'.<sup>14</sup> By the end of my period, the secondary modern school was beginning to be reformulated as one foundation for the new comprehensive.<sup>15</sup> In 1959 the Crowther report recommended extended courses and examinations in the secondary modern schools.<sup>16</sup> This brought to boiling point public debates over the fundamental organisation of secondary schooling, which had been brewing at a local level since (at least) the mid 1950s.<sup>17</sup>

### **Constructing 'modern' education**

The secondary modern school was the main site of secondary education in England and Wales in the postwar period, educating three quarters of pupils aged 11-15.<sup>18</sup> Over one million pupils were attending these schools by 1953.<sup>19</sup> As the 'baby-boomers' came of age into the early 1960s, there were almost four thousand secondary modern schools, schooling over 1.5 million pupils.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, 'modern' education remained an elusive construct. Policymakers and educational thinkers had theorized upon it long before 1944. Three policy documents contributed to its confused genesis: the Hadow report (1926), the Spens report (1938), and the wartime Norwood report (1943). It was the first of these documents that clearly established the 'modern' curriculum as an educational conundrum. Neither the Spens nor the Norwood report addressed the 'modern' question directly. Instead they emphasised and thus consolidated the distinctiveness of the traditional academic or liberal curriculum of the grammar schools.<sup>21</sup> The Hadow report recommended the development of a curriculum for the modern school 'more closely connected with the pupil's environment' than that of the grammar school.<sup>22</sup> It confirmed that something

alternative to the liberal schema was necessary but refused to fully commit to vocational education *proper* as the alternative.

How this ambiguous, ‘semi-vocational’ formulation might work in practice was a question initially for the experiments of the inter-war years. Although Board of Education ‘Suggestions’ for teachers touched upon the ‘modern’ curriculum by the later 1930s, one commentator in 1942 described the available advice as ‘frankly ludicrous’, on account of its nebulosity.<sup>23</sup> It is clear from the government’s 1947 pamphlet *The New Secondary Education* that no sharper definition of the ‘modern’ school’s aim had been reached after 1944 either. For the postwar Labour government this lack of clarity reflected attempts to placate voices on the Left, who objected to the sacrifice of working-class teenagers to industry, whilst still appeasing the nation’s employers who did not necessarily want ‘academically’ educated workers populating their factories.<sup>24</sup> The pamphlet explained that appealing to pupils’ interests would ‘interpret the modern world to them’, and that drawing on their surroundings would ‘enrich the liberal education’.<sup>25</sup> The deliberate absence of a clearly defined vision from above prepared the ground for a culture of ‘freedom’ to grow up in the secondary modern schools of the late 1940s.<sup>26</sup>

Given this lack of definition, practitioners drew on inter-war experiments in ‘modern’ education, as well as their experiences in the teacher-training colleges.<sup>27</sup> Progressive methods were influential, providing a bridge between the ‘pre’ and ‘post’ 1944 era. The progressive movement in education had been developing since the early twentieth century and flourished between the wars. Progressivism privileged personal development: it was ‘child’ rather than ‘teacher’ centered, and drew on the European educational philosophies of Froebel and Montessori. Although these methods were initially conceived for elementary education, it was hoped they would have a ‘trickle-

up' effect on the new senior classes and secondary schools of the Hadow era.<sup>28</sup> Steedman's innovative essay on creative writing in postwar state schools explores how progressivism fostered a widespread culture of self-expression. This practice embedded personal growth and self-awareness in postwar English teaching, drawing on the intellectual resources of the Leavisite tradition.<sup>29</sup> But progressive practice also allowed for non-textual forms of education that engendered self-expression. One important example is Joseph Cowham's school journey concept, outlined in his treatise of 1900 and institutionalized by the School Journey Association (established in 1911). School journeys were residential trips, often to the coast or countryside, which aimed to expose pupils to new environments and in doing so improve behaviour and social skills.<sup>30</sup> Writing in 1937, educational administrator George Lowndes identified progressivism as pivotal to the 'silent social revolution' in education, observing 'a growing tendency to make the park or farmyard an extension of the classroom'.<sup>31</sup>

Progressive LEAs such as the London County Council (LCC) were in the vanguard of such experiments, through inter-war school journeying and open-air schools, and field studies and rural camps in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>32</sup> Another important development occurred in Cambridgeshire. The county's Chief Education Officer Henry Morris (in post 1922-1954) opened his first Village College in Sawston in 1930. Also influenced by progressive ideas, Morris's Village Colleges placed secondary education at the heart of the village, integrated with all other aspects of rural community social life.<sup>33</sup> These institutions could avoid 'The dismal dispute of vocational and non-vocational education...because education and living would be equated'.<sup>34</sup> Echoing this, the poet and literary critic David Holbrook (having himself been a tutor at Bassingbourn Village College from the mid 1950s) observed in the

1960s that ‘vocation, class, and status have little to do with the need for every individual to be equipped to meet the large and small crises of everyday life’.<sup>35</sup> The experimental secondary modern school had the potential to create space for self-discovery and self-understanding. Progressivism helped to reshape the ill-defined ‘semi-vocational’ remit, and fed postwar appetites for schooling to reach beyond practical career preparation. The investigation of a remarkable set of surviving sources can give insight into how novel and diverse such activities could be.

### **The case study – Coleridge School**

Coleridge School in Cambridge followed the path of a typical British secondary school of the mid twentieth century. The school first opened on 6 September 1937, as a Hadow-era modern school.<sup>36</sup> Following the Butler Act of 1944, it expanded and became two separate secondary modern schools for girls and boys, on the same site. In 1966 the separate schools were amalgamated into a co-educational comprehensive.<sup>37</sup> This case study considers the work of one teacher at Coleridge, Philip Howden Southam, during the early years of the boys’ school’s secondary modern phase, 1948-1958. Southam himself embodied prewar continuity; he first took up a teaching post at Coleridge School in November 1938.<sup>38</sup> (He was therefore not a product of the national emergency teacher training scheme like many secondary modern schoolteachers).<sup>39</sup> After serving with the Army Cadet Force in wartime, he began teaching again at Coleridge School on 8 September 1947.<sup>40</sup> By this time he was aged 38 and had a wife and young family at home.

Southam bequeathed twenty-four scrapbooks detailing the school trips he ran during his time as deputy headmaster at Coleridge. Each year during the ten year period Southam led a summer residential journey, mainly for third and fourth year

pupils, lasting between eight and twelve days. Intermittently there was also a summer camp for the younger boys in July, lasting up to two weeks. A number of one-day journeys to more local destinations were also recorded. The residential journeys ventured to a variety of remote and scenic locations across England and Wales. The average number of pupils on these journeys was nineteen, although sometimes the groups were larger, and on those occasions a second teacher accompanied Southam. The 1961 edition of the school magazine described a hostelling journey but made no mention of Southam, suggesting that he moved on from Coleridge School between 1958 (the date of his last scrapbook) and 1961.<sup>41</sup>

These sources provide a detailed window onto progressive practice in one school, during a period that so many commentators would look back upon and identify as the unmaking of secondary modern education.<sup>42</sup> Placing this example in context will point to patterns in the early years of secondary modern education and address some of the historiographical misgivings already laid out. Intimate ‘micro-histories’ are increasingly punctuating twentieth-century British history writing.<sup>43</sup> These individual stories are making the cultural and social history of modern Britain a far richer field in the study of gender and class. In education we sorely lack such vignettes except in the cases of the most prominent head teachers and policymakers.<sup>44</sup> Historians routinely make use of contemporary sociological surveys in twentieth-century British history.<sup>45</sup> These surveys have the benefit of encompassing family perspectives, but for education they are often concerned with the system as a whole and usually with tripartism.<sup>46</sup> Given the lack of a national curriculum and the leading role played by LEAs in school administration in this period, most histories will be local by definition, allowing space for individual experiences.<sup>47</sup> Cunningham and Gardner’s project on teachers’ oral histories staked a claim for recovering



professional voices and argued that the collective experience of teacher training generated ‘one story to be told’.<sup>48</sup> Conversely, Kate Rousmaniere’s work on New York teachers found that the diversity of individual experience hampered teachers’ abilities to organize around single issues.<sup>49</sup> Both studies testify to the fruitfulness of seeking alternative source bases, although there are inevitably far fewer personal accounts from secondary modern teachers and pupils, than from their grammar school counterparts. One recent oral history project did carry out interviews with teachers who worked in secondary modern schools, and many of them specifically recalled how a culture of freedom allowed for experimentation with school visits and non-traditional teaching methods.<sup>50</sup>

Coleridge School was one of the first schools to provide state secondary education in the area. Average attendance in the boys’ senior school in 1938 was at 265. After the Butler Act had been implemented roll numbers rose annually, peaking at 572 in 1956.<sup>51</sup> Despite structural improvements in 1949 this continuous increase in pupil numbers, as in many secondary moderns, was not met with the required expansion in accommodation.<sup>52</sup> Both HMI reports from the school’s secondary modern period (1950 and 1965) attested overwhelmingly to the influence of the headmaster’s pastoral focus.<sup>53</sup> They referred to his ‘well thought-out ideas on the nature and scope of Secondary Modern Education’.<sup>54</sup> Thus the ‘spirit’ of the school was highly commended by the HMIs, despite reservations about overall academic standards.<sup>55</sup> A 1948 Ministry of Education report recorded equivalent trends nationwide, praising the ‘more human atmosphere in the [secondary modern] schools’, citing their ‘increased spiritual awareness’.<sup>56</sup> The Coleridge curriculum was considered unexceptional but was seen to positively reflect ‘the Headmaster’s conviction that modern education should fit the boys for practical life’.<sup>57</sup> Here we find

another hazy, yet official, definition of the purpose of ‘modern’ education. In 1950, Coleridge taught English, Religious Studies, Science, and Arithmetic, supplemented with practical subjects including Rural Science, Art and Craft, and Handicrafts.<sup>58</sup> But the strength of the school was its ‘corporate’ life, in line with the Village College manifesto for community education.<sup>59</sup> Boys’ individual tastes were channeled into practical pursuits that would stimulate their interests further, creating a ‘wholesome community life...to prepare the boys for the problems of work and leisure which await them when they leave’.<sup>60</sup> Southam held a ‘post of special responsibility’ with the fifth form (or leavers). This fifth-year provision, indicative of the flexible, pastoral life of the school more broadly, eschewed a formal curriculum and was based around assignments, which taught the boys to ‘seek out’ and ‘interpret’ information. Southam was praised overall: ‘The Second Master gives valuable support to the Headmaster, and brings the same enthusiastic interest in boys to bear upon his work’.<sup>61</sup>

The school also gave extra support to boys aiming to take the entrance examination for Cambridge Technical College at fourteen plus.<sup>62</sup> However, when a governor asked whether the school should be aiming for external examinations in 1950, the HMI’s response was ‘probably not’.<sup>63</sup> In line with national patterns, the situation was markedly different by the 1960s. In 1963 seven boys attempted some subjects for the GCE at ordinary level for the first time.<sup>64</sup> Union of Educational Institute examinations also featured, a qualification described by one contemporary as ‘a comparatively simple examination involving English, mathematics, general science, and technical drawing, but for the boys who are allowed to take it is a far from simple task’.<sup>65</sup> The school magazine of 1961 reported ‘news of old boys’ who were working in careers as an automobile engineer, a coach trimmer, a draughtsman’s apprentice, and a gardener at one of Cambridge University’s colleges.<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless,

by 1965 the HMI warned against a conscious ‘narrowing’ of the curriculum at the top of school. Subjects geared towards new ‘white heat’ employment prospects such as ‘technologists, technicians, and operatives’ were considered too limiting, and stifling to the ‘growth of creative imagination’, gained through studying traditional arts subjects.<sup>67</sup> Inspectors celebrated a handful of recent leavers who had ‘established themselves in the professions’, with one accepted to read law at Selwyn College, Cambridge.<sup>68</sup> The pastoral side of school life was increasingly diminished by outside pressures on academic standards. Coleridge School thus traversed a fairly typical trajectory ahead of the introduction of the CSE examination in 1965. As secondary modern education emerged from its ‘experimental’ years, formalization through public examinations brought with it a degree of prestige as pupils used their qualifications to enter the expanding professions of Britain’s changing labour market.

Both contemporary and more recent research has confirmed that the make-up of the secondary modern schools was predominately working class.<sup>69</sup> The HMI report of 1950 noted that Coleridge School had a wide catchment area ‘which includes the older district of Romsey Town, and new housing estates’.<sup>70</sup> To judge from fathers’ occupations from a sample of thirty-three boys who took part in a 1948 school exchange, it is fair to assume that the boys were generally from working-class families. The majority of fathers worked in low or semi-skilled manual jobs. The most common occupations listed were lorry, bus, and locomotive drivers, although a number also worked as roadmenders and fitters, and two as engineers. This employment came predominantly from the large railway companies. There was some presence of shop workers, listed as storekeepers and assistants. No professional occupations were recorded.<sup>71</sup> We can also ascertain from letters Southam received from parents regarding the financing of visits that the boys were from families on

restricted budgets, during a time of national austerity. One mother explained in 1948 that thirty shillings was ‘a lot to us with limited incomes’.<sup>72</sup> Another father was regretful that his son could not go away in 1949 since he was ‘only a General Laborer earning £4 10s. a week’, with five other younger children to care for.<sup>73</sup>

### **‘An essay in the treatment of boys’: local journeys**

The first of any type of excursion recorded by Southam took place in April 1948 and was a school journey to London with a group of fourth years.<sup>74</sup> The 1948 trip was evidently an experimental endeavor, which convinced Southam wholeheartedly of the value of taking the boys out of school. He later wrote that, ‘A new light is thrown on individual boys by living with them without visible classroom walls’.<sup>75</sup> The journey had two clear objectives: to provide focus for a term’s history, geography, science, and civics, and for ‘the opportunity it gave for living together, for cooperation and mutual help’.<sup>76</sup> The boys’ parents received this idea very positively, as is evident in the letters granting them permission to go. These letters provide a window onto working-class parental attitudes to secondary modern education, a constituent of opinion that has proven difficult to distill. In his 1963 study, Taylor emphasized that parental interest in education was mainly expressed locally during the early years.<sup>77</sup> This is one reason why it has been harder to pin down everyday parental opinion from this period, than it has for the later national discourse over the advent of comprehensivization. The letters discussed here suggest that these parents (usually mothers) were very invested in the idea of secondary schooling as an agent of socialization.<sup>78</sup> One parent saw Southam’s ethos as ‘a step in the right direction’ towards encouraging boys not to rely on others.<sup>79</sup> Another valued the trip as ‘a change for the boys from their normal walk of life’, and in its capacity to help the boys ‘take

an interest in what is going on around them’, as well as to look after themselves and find their way around.<sup>80</sup> These parents valued the broadening of horizons and social training for their boys, many of whom were about to leave school.

One parent assured Southam, ‘I must thank you for what you are doing for my boy, I think you work very hard, and I am sure the parents do appreciate it’.<sup>81</sup> Another correspondent felt that parents should allow children to reap the full benefits of the education and welfare opportunities provided ‘these days’, and added that her son was thoroughly enjoying his last year at school: ‘I am sure he will have a very happy year, one that he will remember for a long time’.<sup>82</sup> These sentiments came from a generation of parents whose own experiences of formal education would have been confined to the poorly resourced and under-staffed inter-war elementary schools, which the large majority of pupils left before the age of fourteen.<sup>83</sup> Similar comments are found in letters relating to a later trip in 1949, with one mother highlighting ‘the interest you are displaying towards my son, and all the other boys in this venture’, and another wishing to express ‘thanks for giving him such a lovely memory’.<sup>84</sup> Lawn has suggested that wartime experiences forged a new role for teachers in the postwar period.<sup>85</sup> This professional self-identification was shored up by parental expectations, increasingly regarding the education service as part of the wider welfare state which ordinary people were keen to make the most of, even once their children were placed in a less-favored secondary modern school.<sup>86</sup> Todd and Young have argued that postwar parents were more aspirational and encouraging in the opportunities for their children as they embraced their new economic security.<sup>87</sup> This conclusion is especially borne out in my sources, and testifies to the continuing importance of uncovering parental opinion.

Returning to the 1948 London trip, preparation work at school involved looking at London ‘intelligently’, ‘thinking of it as the capital of a great nation, as a commercial city with a long history of self-government’.<sup>88</sup> The programme exposed the boys to a variety of sights of national significance, including the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, and the Tower of London.<sup>89</sup> Southam prepared a handbook for the journey to help the boys understand the national environment through local points of comparison. London monuments were explained with reference to analogous landmarks in Cambridge.<sup>90</sup> The trip to London does not appear to have been an occasion for reinforcing national identity. As Conekin has observed, the construction of postwar British identities was multifarious and relied as much on regional and local coordinates as on national ones.<sup>91</sup> Southam did not harbour a grand scheme to teach the boys how to be citizens of Great Britain, or how to behave within state structures of power.<sup>92</sup> Far more important was the removal to an alternative environment in which a kind of communal good citizenship might be rehearsed.<sup>93</sup>

Southam hailed the 1948 London trip as ‘an essay in the treatment of boys’. ‘From start to finish no comparisons were drawn, no one vaunted above another; there was only a healthy feeling of being members one of another.’<sup>94</sup> LEAs diverged significantly in this period in their attitudes to secondary pedagogy and organization, rendering the importance of exploring well-documented cases even more apparent. Known for its progressivism under Henry Morris, Cambridgeshire LEA was particularly supportive of Southam’s endeavors from 1948, subsidizing many excursions all round. Throughout the later 1930s, and just as Southam commenced his career at Coleridge, Morris had been campaigning energetically for funding and opened a further swathe of his Village Colleges at Bottisham, Linton and Impington. Secondary education was, for Morris, part of an ‘organic whole’. He rejected the

notion of schools being ‘isolated and insulated’ from other aspects of community life.<sup>95</sup> Likewise for Southam, a sense of community might be inspired through freedom from the ‘competition culture’ of examinations, as a preparation for living and working in cooperative environments.

[Figure 1 here] - Figure 1: London, 1948.<sup>96</sup>

The success of the 1948 London residential encouraged Southam to develop his ideas. Later in the same year, he arranged a five-day exchange with a secondary modern school in Lowestoft, a seaside town in Suffolk. In his log of the exchange Southam differentiated the Cambridge and Lowestoft boys by their locality. The groups spent time rowing on the edge of Oulton Broad and Southam wrote ‘it is difficult to remember that they came from Cambridge’, referring to how well these Fen boys took to coastal activities.<sup>97</sup> A sea trip on a converted minesweeper was favoured as an inclusive activity which promoted good feeling amongst the boys, over the ‘interschool sports rivalry’ of the previous evening.<sup>98</sup>

The pupils were assigned to billets in the homes of Lowestoft pupils, and mixing with these peers was an important aspect of the undertaking.<sup>99</sup> One Lowestoft mother, who received a Coleridge boy, wrote: ‘I know what the real evacuations did for my own two children, it helped them to meet and mix with people they would otherwise have never met’.<sup>100</sup> The motif of wartime evacuation reoccurred in the Lowestoft records; its social impact appears to have been one motivation behind the 1948 exchange.<sup>101</sup> Historians have noted how such wartime experiences contributed to the expanded welfare role of schooling.<sup>102</sup> In the early secondary modern school, there was plenty of scope for these social activities, especially with leavers free from

the requirements of examination preparation. The Lowestoft exchange was mentioned several times in the HMI report carried out two years after the event. It was praised for ‘giving the boys experience in the establishment of happy social relationships’.<sup>103</sup> The chief inspector assured sceptical school governors that school journeys were of ‘definite educational value’, ‘particularly as carried out here’.<sup>104</sup> In his ambitious plan for postwar education Harold Dent had advocated methods very similar to Coleridge’s programmes: physical exploration to allow the pupil to become ‘master of his environment’, and social training to enable him or her to learn how to live ‘happily and usefully’ in a community.<sup>105</sup>

#### **‘An exercise in living together’: hostelling journeys**

In the 1952 school magazine Southam advertised the opportunity of undertaking hostelling journeys: ‘if your Dad could be persuaded to have a look at the photos of the journeys to Wales and Derbyshire there might be a chance of a place for you’.<sup>106</sup> By the time of writing, Southam had already run a number of successful school journeys, hill walking in rural districts and staying in hostels, with Coleridge boys. The 1951 Derbyshire journey entailed close inspection of the geology of Dovedale and observation of agricultural practices from enclosure to the modern day.<sup>107</sup> During the 1956 Dorset journey boys studied the stratification of the cliffs from Burton Bradstock to Abbotsbury.<sup>108</sup> They examined a limestone cave at Ingleborough, one of the highest peaks of the Yorkshire Dales.<sup>109</sup> Deep local study also had a social element. Their school journey notebooks held verses of popular regional folk songs, and in ‘Olde Derbyshire’ they watched local girls folk dancing on Royal Oak Day, 1951.<sup>110</sup> A press release dispatched to the Cambridge Daily News ahead of the 1949 Yorkshire journey explained, ‘Besides comparing the lives of hill farmers today with



that of the more familiar Fenland farmers, they will see the remains of another age...they intend to walk down Wharfedale to the heather country of Ilkley Moor, all baht' 'at'.<sup>111</sup>

Many of the destinations, especially in the north of England, were industrial regions. Southam observed in 1951 that 'industry interests the boys as much as natural beauty'.<sup>112</sup> In Derbyshire, the group actually visited a steelworks and a colliery.<sup>113</sup> Southam's routine teaching method was to call the boys up one by one to explain a particular natural feature or phenomenon that had been studied in their preparation work.<sup>114</sup> Exploration and discovery are central methodological tenets, highlighting the progressivism of this school journeying. Southam recorded 'days discovering' in Derbyshire, noting that stepping stones as a way of crossing a major river 'hadn't occurred to Fen boys'.<sup>115</sup> Southam characterized his charges by the landscape of their locality. Many of the journeys were planned in undulating coarse countryside specifically to 'induce the feeling of awe proper to hill country and needed by boys from cultivated fenlands'.<sup>116</sup> Thus Southam reinforced a local, landscaped identity through exposure to new environments. The emphasis placed on folk culture is also telling. The journeys were intended to bring the boys close to the cultures of ordinary people because these were the modes of life and work they might identify with. A snippet of a simpler, untainted 'Merrie England' was contrasted with immense industrial realities, but both linked the boys to their labour heritage.<sup>117</sup>

Progressive education allowed pupils to take inspiration from the environment, avoiding more structured or 'traditional' didactic teaching methods. Southam's encouragement of detailed local studies of outdoor environments echoed the 'project-method' of teaching.<sup>118</sup> This technique was first experimented with in secondary education in the inter-war years, and was then championed as a teaching

method for the secondary modern schools.<sup>119</sup> David Holbrook made the case for freedom from ‘chalk-and-talk’ methods in a series of texts for secondary modern English teachers published in the 1960s.<sup>120</sup> He argued that the school’s aim should be to ‘supply new positives’ to the social and cultural lives of its pupils, increasingly plagued by advertising and mass culture.<sup>121</sup> He hoped that such changes would lead to ‘demands for sound popular culture established in the school experience’.<sup>122</sup>

Similarly, Southam wrote to parents in 1952: ‘a strenuous day in the open air is worth many a cinema seat’.<sup>123</sup> He encouraged the Coleridge boys to value the natural, pre-industrial world on school journeys, another indication of his affiliation with the ideal of the ‘organic community’: ‘Spiritual freedom, due to living close to nature, is combined with freedom from many of the restrictions of civilization’.<sup>124</sup> Aesthetics were central to the pleasures of shared acts: ‘The spots we found for lunches were beautiful. Why cannot all our meals be in beautiful places? Must “utility” be ugly, “school” bare, and “communal” mean “unsocial”?’<sup>125</sup> This, too, echoed Henry Morris’s blueprint for an alternative secondary education structured around shared meals taken in inspiring architectural environments.<sup>126</sup>

[Figure 2 here] - Figure 2: Hostelling in the Cotswolds, 1952.<sup>127</sup>

Southam espoused three objectives in his report on the first hostelling journey to Yorkshire in June 1949: to study ‘the life and work of hill people in relation to their surroundings’, to ‘observe and relate scenery and use of the country with its geology and build’, and to learn ‘country manners, hostel ways, self-negation and dogged perseverance’.<sup>128</sup> This final point marked Southam’s conviction that remote and rural environments were the best setting for social training, drawing on Cowham’s idea that

the new environment of the school journey could prompt different behaviour.<sup>129</sup> Similarly, at Saddleworth Upper Mill Secondary Modern School in Greater Manchester, educational excursions and camps became essential to ‘helping children to widen their outlook and to gain self reliance by living away from their parents in a new environment’ from the late 1940s and into the 1950s.<sup>130</sup> These practices had been developed in inter-war progressive experiments in secondary education; they were institutionalized by the LCC and very actively promoted in Board of Education literature.<sup>131</sup>

### **Contextualizing Southam’s journeys**

These modes of outdoor education can also be mapped onto other organised leisure practices in mid twentieth-century Britain. Southam’s message clearly echoed that of the Youth Hostel Association (YHA), founded in 1930, in the promotion of simple community life and respect and love of the countryside.<sup>132</sup> As Matless has noted, the YHA’s emphasis on simplicity and community constituted a particular ‘moral environment’.<sup>133</sup> Another obvious parallel is Robert Baden-Powell’s Boy Scout movement. Just as scouting utilized activities such as trekking, tracking, and camping to instill codes of behaviour, Southam promoted similar activities as a form of social training.<sup>134</sup> Both the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides had expanded rapidly in the inter-war years, amassing over one million members by the late 1930s. Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, the Boy Scout movement was undergoing significant changes but it remained a growing presence in British youth culture.<sup>135</sup> There are also similarities with the Outward Bound movement of the postwar years, which Freeman has charted as a twentieth-century manifestation of older forms of ‘character-training’.<sup>136</sup> Outward Bound can also be seen as deriving from Hahnian, and thus

militaristic, forms of training. Despite his own military experiences however, Southam's ethos is also akin to the lesser-known inter-war offshoot of the scouting movement, the Woodcraft Folk. The Woodcraft Folk had similar methods to the scouts but replaced their militaristic and nationalistic tendencies with an internationalist and nature-loving message.<sup>137</sup> In his rejection of competitiveness, Southam was also rejecting the conventional 'masculine' mentality that pervaded scouting and other similar strands of outdoor education left over from the early twentieth century.<sup>138</sup> The 'moral environment' he promoted placed personal and spiritual development alongside physical prowess.

Southam trained the Coleridge boys for fellowship over leadership, service to a community over struggling to get ahead. Southam introduced prefects to Coleridge School, and they became an important part of school life. A prefect instruction booklet dated 1964 explained, 'the quality of the school greatly depends on how the Prefects respect the Staff, themselves and the boys they serve'.<sup>139</sup> The prefect model betrays an emulation of the cultural forms of the grammar and public schools.<sup>140</sup> Todd has suggested that such extra-curricular activities in 1950s grammar schools generated a school culture that 'perpetuated social elitism', but in the experimental secondary modern school these imitations could achieve different ends.<sup>141</sup> Many secondary moderns sought to invent new traditions in order to differentiate themselves from the 'all-age' elementary schools whose buildings they continued to occupy.<sup>142</sup> At Dover Road Secondary Modern School in Folkestone, for example, the school's name was changed in 1951 in order to 'convert the pre-war elementary school into a good secondary school with its own tradition'.<sup>143</sup> At Coleridge, Southam used but re-worked the prefect institution for his secondary modern school. He cultivated emotional awareness more than physical dominance in the older boys

selected as prefects. His ideal prefect was, ‘A leader, but under orders. Able to insist, barred from bullying. A confidant but with a limited knowledge of things’.<sup>144</sup>

One of the most interesting exchanges of correspondence occurred between Southam and an ‘old boy’ who had begun a manual apprenticeship. The boy contacted his old teacher hoping to join an upcoming hostelling journey in 1956.<sup>145</sup> However, he was put off when Southam reminded him that he would necessarily be under the charge of the prefects, which offended the boy’s working identity. He wrote, ‘I don’t want to come youth hostelling with you and come under the prefects’ thumb...I shall be sixteen then and to obey orders from prefects who are perhaps thirteen along with first years would not altogether be right’.<sup>146</sup> Southam’s response demonstrated the value he placed on the structured group dynamic. ‘The party has got to be ‘managed’ and I shall pass to prefects as much detail as I can...You’d join his gang, not because he was giving ‘orders’ but because that is the way the Group works – somebody has to do them and you want to do your share of the chores’.<sup>147</sup>

Eventually, the boy conceded and followed Southam’s guidance. Shrewdly, he sought a concession that would confirm his superior status in the eyes of his fellows: ‘Would it be all right if I wore a pair of jeans because I have grown out of my shorts’.<sup>148</sup> Southam’s pastoral responsibility was not obscured by the status-change that has occurred, and he expressed concern about the boy’s job security. ‘I’d be very careful over things which might annoy your workmates’.<sup>149</sup> The very occurrence of this correspondence, which included a secretive interjection from the boy’s mother supporting the teacher, testifies to Southam’s concern to cultivate personal growth in his former charge. The ‘vocational’ training imparted was social and moral, hence Southam’s concern for the continuing value of ‘fellowship’ for this juvenile apprentice.

Southam's journeys were intended to mitigate the hierarchy of the school playground: 'The tinsel of football or cricket ability shows threadbare and the quality of the boy himself begins to show'.<sup>150</sup> He lamented the incapacity of the school system to provide cooperative values; his school journeys are 'an exercise in living together, a subject that our normal school life neglects or prostitutes'.<sup>151</sup> His reference to 'normal school life' implied the competitiveness associated with assessment and selection, something which other secondary modern teachers also chose to cast off after the traumas of the eleven plus. Reflecting on his career as a secondary modern headmaster in Derby, George Hutchinson was glad that 'never being plagued by the stress of public examinations' meant the school could participate in activities as one whole group, such as staging Gilbert and Sullivan operas.<sup>152</sup> Similarly, Alex Bloom, the headmaster at St-George-in-the-East (a secondary modern school in Stepney), became notorious for his progressive experiments. He built a school ethos specifically around the idea of fellowship, in his own words 'a consciously democratic community...without regimentation, without corporal punishment, without competition'.<sup>153</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The early 'experimental' period of secondary modern education merits further study as a significant episode in its own right, instead of remaining the preface to a 'decline and fall' narrative of tripartism. Southam's propensity to strike out afresh was facilitated by the freer institutional nature of the early secondary modern school. It is also clear that his practices were rooted in inter-war experiments in secondary education. They enacted coherent idealist thinking - from Joseph Cowham in the 1900s, to Henry Morris in the 1920s, through to David Holbrook in the 1960s - about

the purposes of a new ‘vocational’ education. This tradition helped teachers to negotiate ‘modern’ education for mass cohorts in the postwar period. Seen in light of this continuity, progressive education in the new comprehensive schools looks less like a product of the ‘excesses’ of the 1960s. Instead, comprehensives inherited a progressive legacy worked out through ‘experimental’ secondary modern education, just as much as they inherited the rigor of the grammar schools.

Southam believed imparting values of fellowship would stand boys in better stead for their future, probably in manual occupations. He did have aspirations for his pupils, only they were centred on productive and happy leisure and workplace practices achieved within the existing parameters of class and locality, more than on academic achievements that would facilitate entry into dizzying new professional or social spheres (a story all-too-dear to propagators of the ‘meritocratic’ narrative). Out-of-school education allowed for self-expression and self-discovery that would aid their transition into adulthood. Using these modes, the idea of ‘vocational’ education for boys was recast, acknowledging that the skills needed for a working life were social and personal as well as practical and technical.

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## Image captions

Figure 1: London, 1948

Figure 2: Hostelling in the Cotswolds, 1952

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> William Taylor, *The Secondary Modern School* (London, 1963), p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Harold Dent, *Secondary Modern Schools. An interim report* (London, 1958), p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Chris Hilliard, *English as a vocation: the Scrutiny movement* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 79-90, 109-41; David Kynaston, *Modernity Britain: opening the box, 1957-59* (London, 2013), pp. 210-45.

<sup>4</sup> See Becky Conekin, Frank Mort and Chris Waters, 'Introduction', in Becky Conekin, Frank Mort and Chris Waters, eds., *Moments of modernity: reconstructing Britain: 1945-1964* (London, 1999), pp. 1-21.

<sup>5</sup> A tradition established by Richard Hoggart, *The uses of literacy* (London, 1957). As a cursory indication, a search on the IHR/RHS 'Bibliography of British and Irish History' for the period 1940-1965 yields 191 results for 'Grammar schools' and twelve for 'Secondary modern schools', see 'Bibliography of British and Irish History', <http://libsta28.lib.cam.ac.uk:2264/bbih/search.cfm>, accessed 13 March 2015.

<sup>6</sup> See Peter Mandler, 'Educating the Nation I: Schools', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (Sixth Series)* 24 (2014), pp. 5-28; Selina Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class, 1910-2010* (London, 2014), pp. 218-9.

<sup>7</sup> Taylor, *The Secondary Modern School*, p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> Val Brooks, 'The Role of External Examinations in the Making of Secondary Modern Schools in England 1945-65', *History of Education* 37 (2008), pp. 447-67, at



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pp. 460-5. On the emergence of the GCE and CSE, see Peter Fisher, *External examinations in secondary schools in England and Wales 1944-1964* (Leeds, 1982).

<sup>9</sup> Thom's work on educational testing demonstrates a shift towards continuity, but is still primarily an argument about policy, Deborah Thom, 'The 1944 Education Act; the 'art of the possible'', in H. L. Smith, ed., *War and social change: British society in the Second World War* (Manchester, 1986), pp. 101-28.

<sup>10</sup> Gary McCulloch and Liz Sobell, 'Towards a social history of the secondary modern schools', *History of Education* 23 (1994), pp. 275-86.

<sup>11</sup> An important example is McCulloch's own book-length study, Gary McCulloch, *Failing the ordinary child?: the theory and practice of working class secondary education* (Buckingham, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Selina Todd, 'Class, experience and Britain's twentieth century', *Social History* 39 (2014), pp. 489-508, at p. 497.

<sup>13</sup> See for example Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Unpopular education: schooling and social democracy in England since 1944* (London, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> Gary McCulloch, 'Local Education Authorities and the Organisation of Secondary Education, 1943-1950', *Oxford Review of Education* 28 (2002), pp. 235-46, at pp. 235-9.

<sup>15</sup> Kynaston, *Modernity Britain*, p. 243; David Rubinstein and Brian Simon, *The evolution of the comprehensive school, 1926-1972* (London, 1973), pp. 54-7.

<sup>16</sup> McCulloch, *Failing the ordinary child?* , p. 110.

<sup>17</sup> Kynaston, *Modernity Britain*, pp. 218-34. Cf. Mandler, 'Educating the Nation I: Schools', pp. 15-6.

<sup>18</sup> Harold Dent, 'To Cover the Country with Good Schools: A Century's Effort', *British Journal of Educational Studies* 19 (1971), pp. 125-38, at p. 135.

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- <sup>19</sup> Rubinstein and Simon, *The evolution of the comprehensive school*, p. 54.
- <sup>20</sup> McCulloch, *Failing the ordinary child?* , p. 6, cf. pp. 59-60.
- <sup>21</sup> Board of Education, *Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education with Special Reference to Grammar Schools and Technical High Schools* (London, 1938), p. xix. On the Norwood report, see Gary McCulloch, *Cyril Norwood and the ideal of secondary education* (Basingstoke, 2007), especially p. 150, 156.
- <sup>22</sup> Board of Education, *The Education of the Adolescent* (London, 1926), p. 109.
- <sup>23</sup> Henry Morris, 'The Post-Primary Curriculum', in Harry Rée, ed., *The Henry Morris Collection* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 76.
- <sup>24</sup> See Martin Francis, 'A socialist policy for education?: Labour and the secondary school, 1945-51', *History of Education* 24 (1995), pp. 319-35.
- <sup>25</sup> Ministry of Education, *The New secondary education* (London, 1947), p. 29, 31.
- <sup>26</sup> Olive Banks, *Parity and Prestige in English Secondary Education: A study in educational sociology* (London, 1970), p. 214.
- <sup>27</sup> On progressivism in teacher training see Peter Cunningham and Phil Gardner, *Becoming teachers: texts and testimonies, 1907-1950* (London, 2004).
- <sup>28</sup> Jenny Keating, David Cannadine and Nicola Sheldon, *The right kind of history: teaching the past in twentieth-century England* (Basingstoke; New York, 2011), p. 80.
- For some examples of 'Hadow' secondary school reorganization see Roger Moore, 'Hadow reorganization in a community setting: A.H. Whipple and the William Crane School in Nottingham 1931-38', *History of Education* 30 (2001), pp. 379-99; David Parker, "'Not worth spending money upon": the demand for variety and parity in post-primary educational provision: the Hertfordshire experience, 1918-1939', *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 32 (2000), pp. 19-45. For a general history

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see Peter Cunningham, *Curriculum change in the primary school since 1945: dissemination of the progressive ideal* (London, 1988).

<sup>29</sup> Carolyn Steedman, 'State-Sponsored Autobiography', in Becky Conekin, Frank Mort and Chris Waters, eds., *Moments of modernity: reconstructing Britain: 1945-1964* (London, 1999), pp. 41-54.

<sup>30</sup> Joseph Cowham, *The school journey: A means of teaching geography, physiography and elementary science, etc* (London, 1900). Cf. W. E. Marsden, 'The School Journey Movement to 1940', *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 30 (1998), pp. 79-95.

<sup>31</sup> George Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution: an account of the Expansion of Public Education in England and Wales 1895-1935* (London, 1937), p. 171.

<sup>32</sup> See Hester Barron, '“Little prisoners of city streets”: London elementary schools and the School Journey Movement, 1918–1939', *History of Education* 42 (2013), pp. 166-81. On the LCC and postwar outdoor education see London County Council, *Education in London 1957-1962* (London, 1964), p. 60.

<sup>33</sup> See Caitlin Adams, 'Rural education and reform between the wars', in Paul Brassley, Jeremy Burchardt and Lynne Thompson, eds., *The English Countryside between the Wars: Regeneration or Decline?* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 36-52.

<sup>34</sup> Henry Morris, 'The Village College – Being a Memorandum on the Provision of Educational and Social Facilities for the Countryside, with Special Reference to Cambridgeshire', in Harry Rée, ed., *The Henry Morris Collection* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 28.

<sup>35</sup> David Holbrook, *English for Maturity (second edition)* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> The National Archives, Kew: hereafter TNA. 'School History Sheet - Cambridge Coleridge County Secondary School', TNA, ED 162/240.

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<sup>37</sup> Cambridgeshire Archives, Shire Hall, Cambridge: hereafter CA. 'Coleridge School Scrapbooks of School outings 1948-1957 - 514/O (1-7) (14-30) - introduction', CA, , p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> 'Registers of teachers appointments 1903-1951', CA, C71/334 p. 120.

<sup>39</sup> Dent, 'To Cover the Country', p. 134. Taylor notes that 20 per cent of teachers in secondary modern schools in 1955 qualified under this scheme, see Taylor, *The Secondary Modern School*, p. 203.

<sup>40</sup> *Supplement to the London Gazette*, 19 October 1943, p. 4623; 'Registers of teachers appointments 1903-1951', CA, p. 171.

<sup>41</sup> 'The Stag Magazine', CA, 1961: 514/O/12, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Taylor, *The Secondary Modern School*, pp. 33-4.

<sup>43</sup> Examples include Carolyn Steedman, *Landscape for a good woman: a story of two lives* (London, 1986); Frank Mort, *Capital affairs: London and the making of the permissive society* (New Haven, Conn.; London, 2010); Melanie Tebbutt, *Being boys: youth, leisure and identity in the inter-war years* (Manchester, 2012).

<sup>44</sup> For example see McCulloch, *Cyril Norwood*; Catherine Burke, *A life in education and architecture: Mary Beaumont Medd* (London, 2013); Julia Stapleton, *Englishness and the study of politics: the social and political thought of Ernest Barker* (Cambridge; New York, 1994).

<sup>45</sup> Mike Savage, *Identities and social change in Britain since 1940: the politics of method* (Oxford, 2010); Selina Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street: Reinvestigating the Post-War Working Class', *Contemporary British History* 22 (2008), pp. 501-18.

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<sup>46</sup> The major educational survey for this period is J. E. Floud, A. H. Halsey and F. M. Martin, *Social Class and Educational Opportunity* (London, 1956). See also Brian Jackson and Dennis Marsden, *Education and the Working Class* (London, 1962).

<sup>47</sup> R. G. Burgess, 'Aspects of education in post-war Britain', in J. Obelkevich and P. Catterall, ed., *Understanding Post-war British Society* (London, 1994), pp. 128-40.

<sup>48</sup> Cunningham and Gardner, *Becoming teachers*, p. 7.

<sup>49</sup> Kate Rousmaniere, *City teachers: teaching and school reform in historical perspective* (New York, 1997).

<sup>50</sup> See for example the interviews with Patricia A. Dawson, Evelyn Hinde, and Eric Houlder, 'History in Education Project - Interviews', <http://www.history.ac.uk/history-in-education/browse/interviews.html>, accessed 13 March 2015.

<sup>51</sup> 'School History Sheet - Coleridge School', TNA; 'Report by H. M. Inspectors on Coleridge County Secondary School for Boys, Cambridgeshire. Inspected on 9th to 11th February 1965', TNA, 10 August 1965: ED 162/240, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> The HMI noted a 'prolonged period of overcrowding' in 1965, 'HMI report 1965', TNA, p. 2. Cf. J. W. Stone, 'Beating the Timetable', *Times Educational Supplement* (1960), p. 1193.

<sup>53</sup> W. P. Kingdon joined the school as assistant master when it opened in 1937. He was appointed acting headmaster in 1943, and his position was made permanent in 1947, see 'HMI report 1965', TNA, p. 3.

<sup>54</sup> 'Report by H. M. Inspectors on Coleridge County Secondary School (Boys' Department) Cambridge, Cambridgeshire. Inspected on 1st, 2nd and 3rd November 1950', TNA, 21 February 1951: ED 109/8651, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Ministry of Education, *Education in 1948* (London, 1949), pp. 21-6.

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- <sup>57</sup> 'HMI report 1950', TNA, p. 2.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-6.
- <sup>59</sup> Henry Morris, 'The Village College', p. 16, p. 28.
- <sup>60</sup> 'HMI report 1950', TNA, p. 8.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 7, p. 2.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>63</sup> 'Coleridge County Secondary School (Boys' Department), Full Inspection held on 1st, 2nd and 3rd November, 1950 - Report of Conference with Governing Body held in the School at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 8th November, 1950', TNA, 8 November 1950: ED 109/8651, p. 2.
- <sup>64</sup> 'HMI report 1965', TNA, p. 4.
- <sup>65</sup> 'Stag magazine 1961', CA, p. 18; G. J. Dellan, 'Examinations by the Sea: a Success at Hove', *Times Educational Supplement* (1960), p. 1194.
- <sup>66</sup> 'Stag magazine 1961', CA, p. 18.
- <sup>67</sup> 'HMI report 1965', TNA, p. 4, p. 7.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 3.
- <sup>69</sup> McCulloch, *Failing the ordinary child?* , pp. 77-80.
- <sup>70</sup> 'HMI report 1950', TNA, p. 2. The ward of 'Red Romsey' was well known as a Labour stronghold in Cambridge, see 'A community in transition - Romsey Town Cambridge 1966-2006', <http://www.colc.co.uk/cambridge/tours/article3.htm>, accessed 13 March 2015.
- <sup>71</sup> 'Personnel - Lowestoft exchange', CA, 1948: 514/O/2.
- <sup>72</sup> 'Letter from mother to Mr Southam', CA, 8 February 1948: 514/O/1.
- <sup>73</sup> 'Letter from father to Mr Southam', CA, 10 June 1949: 514/O/3.
- <sup>74</sup> 'Report to the Governors - Coleridge IV Year in London April 1948', CA, 514/O/1.

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<sup>75</sup> 'Report to the Governors - Coleridge Boys' school School Journey in Somerset and Devon June 2-10 1955', CA, 514/O/20.

<sup>76</sup> 'Report to the Governors - London 1948', CA.

<sup>77</sup> Taylor, *The Secondary Modern School*, pp. 31-3.

<sup>78</sup> On the differences between mothers and fathers attitudes to secondary education see Todd, *The People*, p. 222.

<sup>79</sup> 'Letter from parent to Mr Southam', CA, 16 February 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>80</sup> 'Letter from parent to Mr Southam', CA, 12 February 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>81</sup> 'Letter from mother to Mr Southam', CA, 18 April 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>82</sup> 'Letter from parent to Mr Southam', CA, 1948: 514/O/1. Examples of similar sentiments evident in 'Letter from mother to Mr Southam', CA, 22 June 1950: 514/O/14; 'Letter from parent to Mr Southam', CA, 1953: 514/O/6.

<sup>83</sup> Gary McCulloch, Tom Woodin and Steven Cowan, *Secondary education and the raising of the school-leaving age: coming of age?* (Basingstoke, 2013), p. 58.

<sup>84</sup> 'Letter from mother to Mr Southam', CA, 6 April 1949: 514/O/3; 'Letter from mother to Mr Southam', CA, 23 June 1949: 514/O/3.

<sup>85</sup> Martin Lawn, 'What is the Teacher's Job? Work and Welfare in Elementary Teaching, 1940-1945', in Martin Lawn and Gerald Grace, ed., *The Culture and Politics of Work* (Lewes, 1987), pp. 50-64.

<sup>86</sup> Jon Lawrence, 'Class, 'Affluence' and the Study of Everyday Life in Britain, c. 1930-64', *Cultural and Social History* 10 (2013), pp. 273-99; Mandler, 'Educating the Nation I: Schools', p. 14.

<sup>87</sup> Selina Todd and Hilary Young, 'Baby-boomers to 'Beanstalkers': Making the Modern Teenager in Post-War Britain', *Cultural and Social History* 9 (2012), pp. 451-67.

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<sup>88</sup> 'Letter to parents', CA, 4 February 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>89</sup> 'Programme', CA, 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>90</sup> 'An introduction to London', CA, 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>91</sup> Becky Conekin, *The autobiography of a nation: the 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester, 2003), pp. 8-9.

<sup>92</sup> This is suggested by Grosvenor and Lawn in a case study of a Birmingham mixed secondary modern school's trips to London in 1949-51, see Ian Grosvenor and Martin Lawn, 'Days out of school: secondary education, citizenship and public space in 1950s England', *History of Education* 33 (2004), pp. 377-89, at p. 387.

<sup>93</sup> See Richard Weight and Abigail Beach, 'Introduction', in Richard Weight and Abigail Beach, ed., *The right to belong: citizen and national identity in Britain, 1930-1960* (London, 1998), pp. 1-17.

<sup>94</sup> 'Report to the Governors - London 1948', CA.

<sup>95</sup> Henry Morris, 'The Village College', p. 28.

<sup>96</sup> Image reproduced by permission of Cambridgeshire Archives; 'Photospread', CA, 1948: 514/O/1.

<sup>97</sup> 'Log of the Lowestoft Visit, 1948', CA, 22 June 1948: 514/O/2.

<sup>98</sup> 'The Green Dolphin', CA, 1948: 514/O/2.

<sup>99</sup> 'Letter from Mr Southam to Lowestoft parents', CA, 1948: 514/O/2.

<sup>100</sup> 'Letter from Lowestoft parent to Mr Southam', CA, 1948: 514/O/2.

<sup>101</sup> In 1939 Coleridge School hosted evacuees from Queen's Head Street School in Islington, see 'Admission registers of boys evacuated from London 1939', CA, 514/O/8.



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- <sup>102</sup> Geoffrey G. Field, *Blood, sweat, and toil: remaking the British working class, 1939-1945* (Oxford, 2011), p. 6, 36.
- <sup>103</sup> 'HMI report 1950', TNA, p. 8.
- <sup>104</sup> 'HMI report 1950 - Governors meeting', TNA, p. 2.
- <sup>105</sup> Harold Dent, *A New Order in English Education* (Bickley, 1943), p. 56.
- <sup>106</sup> 'The Stag Magazine', CA, 1952: 514/O/12.
- <sup>107</sup> 'Photospread - caption', CA, 1951: 514/O/16.
- <sup>108</sup> 'Photospread - caption', CA, 1956: 514/O/22.
- <sup>109</sup> 'Reports and Log', CA, 1949: 514/O/3.
- <sup>110</sup> 'Journey notebook', CA, 1949: 514/O/3; 'School Journey preparation booklet', CA, 1954: 514/O/18; 'Photospread - caption - Derbyshire 1951', CA. On folk culture see Clare Griffiths, *Labour and the countryside: the politics of rural Britain, 1918-1939* (Oxford, 2007), p. 84.
- <sup>111</sup> 'Press release sent to the Cambridge Daily News', CA, 14 June 1949: 514/O/3. The reference is to the Yorkshire folksong 'On Ilkley Moor without a hat'. Southam was born in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire.
- <sup>112</sup> 'Photospread - caption - Derbyshire 1951', CA.
- <sup>113</sup> 'Letter from Mr Southam to J. H. Scott', CA, 3 June 1951: 514/O/16. The 1949 Yorkshire school journey included several visits to woollen mills, 'Visits', CA, 1949: 514/O/3. A visit to a coal mine was planned for the 1953 school journey to the South Wales Border but had to be abandoned, 'Coal Mine visit', CA, 1953: 514/O/6.
- <sup>114</sup> 'Photospread - caption - Dorset 1956', CA.
- <sup>115</sup> 'Photospread - caption - Derbyshire 1951', CA.
- <sup>116</sup> 'Coleridge Boys' School School Journeys, 1952, to Cotswolds and the Downs - Report to the Governors', CA, 514/O/5.

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- <sup>117</sup> Griffiths, *Labour and the countryside*, p. 82.
- <sup>118</sup> See Board of Education, *Village survey-making. An Oxfordshire experiment* (London, 1928); C. E. Statham-Norton, 'The Village Church as a History and Geography Book', *Teachers World* (9 January 1930), pp. 716-8.
- <sup>119</sup> See Board of Education, *The New secondary education*, p. 38. Cf. Dent, *Secondary Modern Schools*, p. 35; Taylor, *The Secondary Modern School*, p. 97.
- <sup>120</sup> See Hilliard, *English as a vocation*, pp. 124-31.
- <sup>121</sup> Holbrook, *English for Maturity*, p. 17.
- <sup>122</sup> David Holbrook, *English for the Rejected* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 8.
- <sup>123</sup> 'Letter from Mr Southam to parents', CA, 1952: 514/O/5.
- <sup>124</sup> 'Photospread - caption', CA, 1955: 514/O/21.
- <sup>125</sup> 'Photospread - caption - Derbyshire 1951', CA.
- <sup>126</sup> Henry Morris, 'The Village College', pp. 25-7; Henry Morris, 'Post-War Policy in Education', in Harry Rée, ed., *The Henry Morris Collection* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 73.
- <sup>127</sup> Image reproduced by permission of Cambridgeshire Archives; 'Senior Boys, Cotswolds 1952', CA, 1952: 514/O/5.
- <sup>128</sup> 'Report to the Governors - Coleridge Boys' Tour in Yorkshire June 14-22 1949', CA, 514/O/3.
- <sup>129</sup> Cowham, *The school journey*, p. 41.
- <sup>130</sup> D. J. Peet, *The First Fifty Years 1911-1961 Saddleworth Uppermill Secondary Modern School* (Saddleworth, 1961), p. 61.
- <sup>131</sup> The LCC produced guides to help their teachers make the most of the city's cultural resources, see 'LCC Education Officers Department - Particulars of Facilities for Visits to Places of Educational Interest in London', London Metropolitan Archives, Clerkenwell, 9 April 1935: LCC/EO/PS/01/071. For Board of Education

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progressivism, see Board of Education, *Memorandum on increased co-operation between public museums and public educational institutions* (London, 1931); Board of Education, *Education and the countryside* (London, 1934), especially p. 51, 63.

<sup>132</sup> YHA, *Youth Hostels for Health and Education* (Welwyn Garden City, 1936).

<sup>133</sup> David Matless, *Landscape and Englishness* (London, 1998), p. 72.

<sup>134</sup> Lynn Cook, 'The 1944 Education Act and outdoor education: from policy to practice', *History of Education* 28 (1999), pp. 157-72, p. 160.

<sup>135</sup> W. Bruce Leslie, 'Creating a socialist scout movement: The Woodcraft Folk, 1924-42', *History of Education* 13 (1984), pp. 299-311, p. 307; Sarah Mills, 'Be Prepared: Communism and the Politics of Scouting in 1950s Britain', *Contemporary British History* 25 (2011), pp. 429-50, at pp. 434-5.

<sup>136</sup> Mark Freeman, 'From 'character-training' to 'personal growth': the early history of Outward Bound 1941-1965', *History of Education* 40 (2011), pp. 21-43.

<sup>137</sup> Leslie, 'Creating a socialist scout movement', p. 301. Cf. Griffiths, *Labour and the countryside*, p. 98; Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*, p. 74.

<sup>138</sup> Cook, 'The 1944 Education Act and outdoor education', p. 158.

<sup>139</sup> 'Instructions to Prefects', CA, 29 April 1964: 514/O/9, p. 2.

<sup>140</sup> McCulloch and Sobell, 'Towards a social history', p. 279.

<sup>141</sup> Todd, *The People*, p. 229.

<sup>142</sup> On overcoming 'tradition', see George Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution: an account of the expansion of public education in England and Wales, 1895-1965 (second edition)* (London, 1969), pp. 290-1.

<sup>143</sup> W. T. Cork, *The Story of a School - Dover Road 1835-1958* (Folkestone, 1959), p. 42.

<sup>144</sup> 'Photospread - caption', CA, 1957: 514/O/25.

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- <sup>145</sup> 'Letter from old boy to Mr Southam', CA, 13 March 1956: 514/O/22.
- <sup>146</sup> 'Letter from old boy to Mr Southam ', CA, 7 February 1956: 514/O/22.
- <sup>147</sup> 'Letter from Mr Southam to old boy', CA, 11 March 1956: 514/O/22.
- <sup>148</sup> 'Letter from old boy - 13 March 1956', CA.
- <sup>149</sup> 'Letter to old boy - 11 March 1956', CA.
- <sup>150</sup> 'Impressions of the Boys on the Yorkshire trip', CA, 1949: 514/O/3.
- <sup>151</sup> 'Photospread - caption', CA, 1950: 514/O/14.
- <sup>152</sup> G. W. Hutchinson, *A west end school Derby: reminiscences of a headmaster: Orchard Street School (1826-1947), The Lancaster School (1947-1958)* (Matlock, 1985), p. 24.
- <sup>153</sup> Quoted in Michael Fielding, 'Bringing Freedom to Education' - Colin Ward, Alex Bloom and the possibility of radical democratic schools', in Catherine Burke and Ken Jones, ed., *Education, Childhood and Anarchism: Talking Colin Ward* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 86-98, at p. 88.