

THE MAGIC LANTERN AND THE CINEMA:
ADULT SCHOOLS, EDUCATIONAL SETTLEMENTS AND
SECULARISATION IN BRITAIN, C. 1900–1950

Mark Freeman

University of Glasgow, Scotland

ABSTRACT

This article examines the impact of an increasingly secularised demand for adult education in the first half of the twentieth century on two movements with which Quakers were closely associated: the adult schools and the educational settlements. It argues that the educational settlements, originally established to extend and enhance the work of the adult schools, were better able to accommodate to a secularised climate, and this ensured their survival. Neither movement flourished in the same way as the secular Workers' Educational Association and adult education provided by local education authorities, and this reflected the weakness of religious adult education in a climate of secularised demand among adult students.

KEYWORDS

Quakers, educational settlements, adult schools, secularisation

Quakers' involvement in adult education in Britain during the last two centuries has been widely discussed. The pioneering role played by Quakers in the development of adult schools has been repeatedly emphasised in Quaker historiography, and regularly described by historians of adult education more generally.¹ More recently, and occasionally in the past, historians have explored other aspects of Quaker adult educational work, especially the educational settlement movement.² This article compares the experience of these two related educational movements, both of which were inspired by Quakerism and involved many members of the Religious Society of Friends. It explores the impact of the secularisation of adult education on the two movements, and argues that the educational settlement movement, or at the least the model of non-residential institutional provision that it pioneered, was better able to adapt to the changing educational circumstances of the mid-twentieth century. Although the educational settlements struggled to retain their niche in the market,

they, and the model they inspired, proved more adaptable in the longer term than the adult schools. By contrast, the latter were harshly and memorably characterised by one observer, W.E. Williams, as 'a movement which has fallen between the two stools of evangelism and education and which for all its merits is as incapable of surviving the pressure of modern educational needs as the magic lantern is of competing against the cinema'.³

The extent and nature, and even existence, of secularisation in modern societies has been widely disputed by historians of religion, and the concept must be employed with care. David Nash has recently argued that the historiography of modern religion has been 'unduly constrained' within the parameters set by the secularisation thesis.⁴ The assumption of secularisation as a constant, ongoing process, often accepted with little evidence or critique, is something of which historians have certainly been guilty. In my own recent study of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT), I casually and confidently referred to a 'rapidly secularising society' during and after the first world war and to a 'secularising world' around the period of the second world war, offering no supporting evidence in either instance.⁵ Nash argues that historians should concentrate 'more upon what individuals are doing, saying and thinking, and less upon structures, empirical measures or survey results'.⁶ In the case of adult education, the crude numbers enrolled in classes or joining a particular organisation can certainly not be used as a simple proxy for the vitality and influence of a movement. However, the sharp decline of the membership of adult schools after its peak in 1910, in contrast to the rapid growth of other adult education providers, especially the secular Workers' Educational Association (WEA), and the expansion of local authority provision, suggests that the adult schools were failing to meet the secular demand for adult education in the interwar period and after, and that other providers were taking their place. The demand among potential adult students, and the supply in the form of adult education provision, were both being secularised, and the institutions most closely associated with religious education, and in particular with the Religious Society of Friends, were rapidly becoming marginalised. Contemporaries certainly noticed these secularising pressures, and devoted considerable attention to them. For example, as early as the mid-1920s the JRCT repeatedly convened conferences and seminars to discuss the condition of the adult schools and other Quaker educational ventures, and continued to express concern about their effectiveness throughout the 1930s.⁷ By 1941 a leading adult school campaigner admitted that the movement was in 'crisis', attributing this to 'an alteration in the attitude of men and women to religion'.⁸ Much of what these individuals were 'doing, saying and thinking' related to secularisation (apparent or real) and how the churches should respond to it.

The crude statistics for the first half of the twentieth century show a decline in the numbers and proportions of the population who participated in organised Christian activities, although the decline was neither uninterrupted, spectacular nor common to all denominations. Total membership of Christian churches as a percentage of the adult population fell from 30% in 1900 to 25% in 1950, and membership of the Church of England from 13.5% to 9.2%.⁹ Parochial Easter Day communicants per 1000 people aged 15 and over fell from 95 in 1900 to 80 in 1930, 64 in 1940 and 58

in 1950.¹⁰ Although the 15 years or so after the second world war saw something of a revival in participation as measured by a number of indicators, the levels of the early twentieth century were never reached, and decline continued for most of the second half of the twentieth century. More revealing in the context of education is the sharp decline in the number of Sunday school teachers in England, which peaked at 206,000 in 1910 and fell to just 127,000 in 1939 and 98,000 in 1953, while the proportion of children aged 3–14 attending Sunday schools in England fell from almost 30% at the start of the twentieth century to 21.8% in 1939 and 17.7% in 1953.¹¹ These figures show that non-compulsory religious education declined more rapidly than participation in other religious activities, suggesting a contraction of the wider societal functions of the churches, which can be interpreted as secularisation, and which was certainly noticed by religious observers at the time.

Alan Gilbert has suggested that churches can respond to secularisation in two different ways: through resistance or accommodation. Resistance usually results in a further cultural and social marginalisation of the organised churches, and eventually often in sectarianism and division. In the accommodation model, the churches come to 'endorse the dominant values, norms and assumptions of the wider culture, and to accept the appropriateness of a limited, segmental influence for Christian principles within it'.¹² The demands of accommodation encouraged the churches to abandon their ambition to act as 'basic' institutions within society—a function they had enjoyed in previous centuries when they were the main political and moral authority in parochial communities—and to rest content with acting as 'serving' institutions, and exercising influence along secular social vectors.¹³ This strategy was adopted as the most practical means of retaining at least some of the moral authority they had formerly enjoyed. For example, Gilbert points to the significant expansion in the numbers of non-parochial Anglican clergymen in the twentieth century—working, for example, in the armed services, workplaces and educational institutions, and on radio and television—as an example of how the established church adopted more 'serving' functions in the wake of secularisation.¹⁴ This article examines how Quaker and other adult education providers accommodated to a secularising adult education context, and shows how the more adaptable, and therefore successful, institutions were able to exercise a stronger influence on adult education after the second world war.

The long history of Quaker involvement in adult education has been told many times, and need only be summarised here.¹⁵ Friends had established and staffed adult schools from the early nineteenth century, and although these schools were non-denominational, a powerful Quaker influence was exerted within them. The adult schools met on Sunday mornings, and taught basic literacy and numeracy as well as Bible study. The adult schools had around 45,000 members by the end of the nineteenth century, and grew rapidly in the Edwardian period. They aimed to promote 'fellowship' among their students, as well as to provide basic instruction and an opportunity to read and discuss the Bible. A National Council of Adult School Unions, later renamed the National Adult School Union (NASU) was established in 1899 to co-ordinate the schools. In 1909, initially under the auspices of the adult school movement, two educational settlements—the Swarthmore settlement in Leeds and the St Mary's settlement in York—were established, followed by settlements at

Lemington-on-Tyne in 1913 and Beechcroft in Birkenhead in 1914. These were followed in the early post-first world war period by a number of settlements, enthusiastically promoted by the Educational Settlements Association (ESA), established in 1920, and its main source of financial support, the JRCT. These new institutions usually had a resident warden and sub-warden and gave permanent premises for a variety of adult education classes and associated activities. As well as the adult schools, the educational settlements were influenced by the university settlements of the 1880s, which had emerged from evangelical endeavour in the slums of the East End of London and survived into the twentieth century. In some cases the educational settlements were involved in a range of social work activities, and the older institutions participated in adult education provision, to the extent that the distinction between the two bodies could be somewhat blurred. Like many of the older settlements, the new institutions were often initially associated with a particular denomination;¹⁶ and, importantly, the educational settlement pioneers saw the new bodies as potential replacements for organised worship-based religion. Joseph Rowntree hoped that the settlements would help to forge the 'spiritual fellowships of the future', for which the churches themselves seemed ill-equipped.¹⁷ The early successes of the educational settlement movement—some 500 individuals were attending classes at St Mary's in the early 1920s, and 14 settlements were affiliated to the ESA by May 1921¹⁸—suggested that Rowntree's optimism was not entirely misplaced. The early educational settlements concentrated on teaching religious and ethical subjects, and on training teachers for the adult schools.¹⁹ It was emphasised by Arnold Rowntree, Joseph Rowntree's nephew, that the establishment of the first educational settlements did not mean 'any break in connection with the past history of the Adult School Movement', but was rather 'only the necessary growth and extension of the activities of that movement'.²⁰

Despite the close association between the two movements, it can be argued that the establishment of educational settlements, apparently a sign of vigour in the adult schools, actually initiated or hastened their decline. Certainly the first sharp fall in the adult schools' membership occurred at the same time as the establishment of the first educational settlements. Adult school membership peaked at 113,789 in 1910, fell by 19.4% to 91,751 in 1914, and then by a further 44.7% to 50,761 by 1922–23.²¹ Membership fell further to 33,301 by 1937–38, and then to 13,576 in 1946–47.²² It is more difficult to find accurate figures for the membership and usage of educational settlements—in any case, membership was a rather more nebulous concept in the case of the settlements—but it is clear that there was a significant expansion of numbers and usage in the 1920s, just as the adult schools were in their period of sharpest decline. The reasons for this supplanting of the adult schools were not hard to find. The salaried staff and permanent premises of an educational settlement allowed courses to be held throughout the week, and not just on Sunday, and made the pursuit of other activities much easier. Settlements housed dramatic and musical societies and branches of clubs and societies such as the League of Nations Union, and hosted educational courses held under the auspices of other providers, including university extension and WEA classes. These activities were mostly secular in inspiration and in content, and their popularity outstripped that of the traditional religious teaching that

had formed the core of the original curricula of the settlements. Moreover, drawing on the older tradition of social service epitomised in the university settlements, the educational settlements found themselves able to fulfil wider social functions than the adult schools. Although, as Edward Grubb had pointed out in 1917, 'Every real Adult School gathers other activities round it than the Sunday morning or afternoon lesson', such as temperance organisations, savings clubs and libraries, there was obviously much more scope for such activities at a settlement than in an adult school. It was unsurprising that many Quakers turned away from the schools and towards the settlements, and that the latter expanded as the former declined: Friends saw more potential in the new institutions, and appear to have deserted the adult schools.²³

However, the momentum of the educational settlements was not sustained, and by the 1930s both movements seemed to be under threat. The close unity between them, envisaged by the early settlement pioneers, had not been maintained. The settlements had been viewed as potential resources for the adult schools, where teachers could be trained and where students could progress once their ambitions had been awakened by the adult schools.²⁴ Ultimately, the hope had been that students would progress from educational settlements and into Quaker Meetings.²⁵ However, the settlements failed to attract many new members to the Religious Society of Friends, and failed to provide both leadership for the adult schools and a coherent programme of activities in their own right. Although there were 32 ESA-affiliated settlements by 1935,²⁶ much of this numerical expansion was due to a flurry of activity in the south Wales coalfield which resulted in rather different kinds of settlement from those established in the early years of the movement.²⁷

In the wider adult education context, the most significant growth of the interwar period was that of the secular WEA. Although not without its problems, the WEA 'flourished':²⁸ it could claim 11,430 members in 1914; around 25,000 members and over 30,000 enrolments by 1925; around the same number of members but as many as 60,000 enrolments by 1938; and 40,000 members and 100,000 enrolments by the end of the 1940s.²⁹ There was also a steady growth in enrolments on university extension courses. In the shadow of the apparent successes of other bodies, the educational settlements needed to re-evaluate their own role. In 1938 the JRCT commissioned W.E. Williams, secretary of the British Institute of Adult Education and editor of the WEA journal *The Highway*, to write a report on the educational settlements.³⁰ Williams was highly critical. He characterised the settlements as 'the slums of adult education', and castigated the apparent amateurishness of settlement administration, the poverty of their premises and the smallness of the movement as a whole.³¹ Only the new settlements in south Wales, which offered a broader and more informal educational vision, were likely to attract significant financial support and to survive relatively unchanged into the future.³² Williams argued that the educational settlements should ally themselves with the nascent community centres and associations, and participate in a more broadly conceived 'community education', which had a chance of meeting the secular needs of the population. In this context, the adult school movement, even more hidebound than the settlements, had no discernible future at all, and Williams was moved to make his scathing remark about the magic lantern and the cinema.³³

What Williams meant was that neither of the two functions of the adult schools—the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy and the study of the Bible—could really be counted among ‘modern educational needs’, and that the schools could not possibly compete with other providers of adult education. Even within Quaker Meetings themselves, there was declining interest in Bible study,³⁴ and the ageing leaders of the adult school movement were increasingly frustrated at the lack of interest taken by the younger generation of Friends in adult school work. For example, Frederick Gillman, a veteran leader of the movement, called in 1939 for a more ‘missionary’ outlook among adult school workers; and Ernest Champness (later president of the NASU), writing in 1941, emphasised the importance of the Bible and urged young Friends to seize the initiative and revitalise the adult school movement.³⁵ There had been some attempts, mostly half-hearted, to establish adult schools on the new housing estates that were such a noticeable feature of the interwar landscape.³⁶ However, there must have been a stark contrast between the modern, comparatively well-funded community centres that were appearing on these estates, and the ‘mildly-musty aroma’ of the adult schools and educational settlements.³⁷ Young Quaker energies were being directed to different purposes, not least to pacifism and international affairs, and even within the Religious Society of Friends the adult schools must have seemed rather anachronistic. It cannot have helped that, in a period when ecumenism was being increasingly pursued among the churches as a potential alternative to resistance and accommodation in the face of secularisation, the Religious Society of Friends remained ‘definitely associated’ with the adult schools just as it had been at their first establishment a century earlier.³⁸ As late as the early 1940s, Champness noted the importance of the Quaker influence on the ‘Adult School Spirit’, even in non-Quaker adult schools.³⁹

The curriculum and practices of the adult schools changed little during the interwar period. This is demonstrated by a comparison of two accounts of a typical adult school Sunday morning meeting separated by 30 years. In 1911 Edgar Hobley and Thomas Mercer, in a pamphlet on the adult school movement written at the apogee of its membership and self-confidence, described a meeting as lasting, on average, an hour and a half; it was ‘customary’ to begin with a hymn and a prayer. Then half an hour would be spent either writing in copy-books—a legacy of the role of the early adult schools in teaching basic literacy, and perhaps an indication of a continuing need for this fundamental instruction in the Edwardian period—or listening to a ‘short lecture’ on ‘some social or scientific topic’. Then about an hour was devoted to discussing the Bible, characterised as ‘the text-book of the movement’, following a list of readings annually distributed by the National Council of Adult School Unions. This discussion might involve the whole group, or be carried on by smaller sub-groups: although the topics for discussion were determined by the National Council, the schools had autonomy in pedagogic practice. The meeting closed with another hymn and prayer.⁴⁰ Thirty years later, in 1941, Ernest Champness described an imaginary adult school meeting, presumably based on his own experience.⁴¹ At this meeting there was no teaching of basic literacy, although Champness noted that it was an historic feature of the movement, dating its demise to around 1890.⁴² The meeting opened and closed with hymns and prayers, and the remainder of the session

was devoted to the Biblical 'lesson'. Here, a teacher spoke for about half an hour on the subject of the lesson—in this case 'To consider our relationships to those of other races according to the mind of Jesus'—which was supported by Biblical texts.⁴³ There was then an open discussion among the whole group, chaired by the president of the school, 'an elderly man, who is a member of the Society of Friends'. Reading between the lines of the account of this imaginary meeting, it appears that the president had to try to steer the discussion of the controversial topic back to its Biblical foundations, while other speakers ranged more widely.⁴⁴ By and large, although the specific topics for discussion may have changed, there seems to have been very little difference between the adult school meetings of 1911 and 1941. This reflected the fact that many adult schools were 'conservative in spirit' and resistant to broadening their approach.⁴⁵ As Hobley and Mercer had remarked, the study of the Bible was 'the central feature of the Adult School movement to which all its other agencies and activities should be subordinated';⁴⁶ there was no scope for shifting this educational emphasis without turning it into a different movement. Only in the context of their work in the depressed areas in the 1930s did the adult schools de-centre Bible study from their curriculum: as Champness bluntly put it, 'most unemployed miners did not want religion'.⁴⁷ Nor, increasingly, did other adult students, and the adult schools proved ill-equipped to serve their more secular needs.⁴⁸

By contrast, despite W.E. Williams's harsh criticisms of the educational settlements, there was more scope in this movement for accommodation and adaptation. Although the settlements undoubtedly had their problems in the interwar period and after, they adapted to changing circumstances much more effectively than the adult schools. Indeed, many of Williams's criticisms of the settlements related to the aspects of their work and ambience that most resembled those of the adult schools. One critic told him that a settlement was merely an 'Adult School dolled up'.⁴⁹ In fact, as we have seen, a feature of the early history of the settlements was a move away from direct links with the adult schools, reflected in a diversification of curricula and alliances, albeit uneasy, with more secular adult education providers. By the 1930s, at some settlements religious teaching seems to have been almost, if not completely, abandoned. When Wilfred Allott, a lecturer at the Swarthmore settlement in Leeds, addressed the ESA in 1936, explaining his ideal curriculum, he mentioned virtually every subject except religion.⁵⁰ Allott's settlement had been described as 'definitely (though not narrowly) a Quaker organisation at the start',⁵¹ basing its early curriculum around Bible study, religion, ethics and economics. To compete with the attractions of the WEA and the growing range of university tutorial classes available to adult students, settlements needed to expand and secularise the content of their courses. The contrast was emphasised by the fact that many WEA and university extension courses were held on settlement premises, a feature which Williams saw as detrimental to the independent identity of settlements.⁵² However, the settlements at least had the ability to act in partnership with other providers to maintain their *raison d'être*, if only as physical entities. This was more difficult for the adult schools, which had a much more limited range of expertise at their disposal, usually lacked premises, and were much more closely associated, in terms of leaders and in the popular mind, with the Religious Society of Friends. Concerns were repeatedly expressed about the

quality of teaching in adult schools, and in 1939 the Education and Social Service Committee of the NASU was considering the establishment of a residential college to serve the movement and, in particular, to provide more training for adult school teachers.⁵³ This reflected the failure of the educational settlements to provide this service: the settlements had extended their horizons well beyond this function of supporting the older movement.

After the second world war, as Williams had correctly foreseen, the educational settlements became increasingly closely associated with the community centres and associations, which emerged from mostly secular voluntarist activity. The community centres presented a larger vision of 'community education' in which formal educational provision was less important than the promotion of informal communal activities. This was particularly important on the new housing estates, where community centres were commonly situated and where the adult schools had failed to make an impact. At the same time, the educational settlement model was being adopted, shorn of any vestigial religious trappings, by local authorities, which in some places established and supported educational centres as part of a wider development of adult education after the war.⁵⁴ In this context it was almost impossible for any of the religious elements of settlement work to be retained, although some educational settlements survived as independent institutions. The JRCT, although in the process of negotiating its withdrawal from the role of chief financial supporter of the educational settlements, still hoped that some spiritual, or at least ethical, influence might be exerted through the participation of the settlements in the community centres movement. This was expressed in terms of the 'atmosphere' or 'spirit' in the settlements rather than any religious language,⁵⁵ and a certain eclectic spirituality can be seen to have continued to pervade the work of such institutions as the Bristol Folk House and the Percival Guildhouse in Rugby. Other observers in the 1940s and 1950s, including Seebohm Rowntree and G.R. Lavers, expressed the hope that community institutions, especially the community centres, might partially replace the churches, which 'in their present form' could not hope to recapture the loyalty of more than a small minority of the population.⁵⁶ This echoed Joseph Rowntree's call after the first world war for the educational settlements to shape the 'spiritual fellowships of the future'.⁵⁷ Here, Christians were being urged to adopt a 'serving' role, and to accommodate to a secularised culture by abandoning their own institutions, and by participating in new organisations that had usurped, and fully secularised, the functions of the educational settlements.

Meanwhile, the adult schools, despite claiming some adherents in the post-war world, were increasingly seen as an irrelevance. In the chapter on adult education in Rowntree and Lavers's book on *English Life and Leisure*, published in 1951, a total of just 50 words were devoted to the adult schools. Rowntree and Lavers noted with understatement that the NASU was 'an old-established organization that has somewhat diminished in importance as the system of public education organized by local authorities has developed'.⁵⁸ Even for Rowntree, a veteran social reformer who dated his own lifelong interest in the problem of poverty to his work as an adult school teacher,⁵⁹ the schools were little more than a footnote to an account of contemporaneous adult education provision. By contrast, Rowntree and Lavers described

the work of the Swarthmore Educational Settlement in Plymouth as an example of one of the 31 'non-residential educational centres' in England and Wales. This settlement, which 'originated as an old type Adult School' but now carried out a 'broader type of work', its curriculum covering 'a remarkably wide sweep from puppetry to philosophy and embracing such courses of study as "Social and Economic Problems", modern languages, "Film Appreciation", "Marriage and the Family", "Trustworthiness of Sources for the Life of Jesus", and maritime biology'.⁶⁰ This curriculum had a religious and ethical content, but this was only a small part of its remit, which also included discussion groups, drama and sporting activities; in general it was felt that Swarthmore 'meets an important need in the life of the people of Plymouth', providing for their 'intellectual and social needs'.⁶¹ Although, assuming Swarthmore's membership of 400 to be around the average for educational settlements, the total membership of the 31 centres would actually be lower than the 13,576 members claimed by the adult schools in 1946–47, the additional activities that were pursued at settlements, together with the diffusion of the settlement model to other adult education providers, meant that considerably more individuals were brought into contact with settlements than with the adult schools. Moreover, adult school membership continued to decline, falling to 9,046 in 1955.⁶² By contrast, Rowntree and Lavers were able to report that the WEA had 'well over' 100,000 members in 1951.⁶³ It is not clear how this was calculated, but Thomas Kelly reports that over 60,000 students were enrolled in WEA courses in 1951, and almost 90,000 in university extra-mural courses.⁶⁴ To put the figures in even starker perspective, 1.26 million attended LEA adult education institutes in 1949–50.⁶⁵

Despite recent challenges to the chronology of secularisation in modern Britain, therefore, and notwithstanding the critique of secularisation as an overarching theme in the history of religion, the experience of adult education in the first half of the twentieth century suggests that the concept retains some validity. Spokesmen for the adult schools and educational settlements in this period continually voiced their concerns about secularisation; so even if historians doubt its importance, it was integral to the mindset of many promoters of religious adult education. Although it may be naïve to extrapolate from 'empirical number crunching' to the religious desires and experiences of the British people,⁶⁶ the rapidity of the numerical decline of adult school membership suggests that a significant shift was taking place away from religiously based adult education in the interwar period. Although membership of the Religious Society of Friends actually grew very slowly during the first half of the twentieth century, standing at 17,346 in 1900 and 21,988 in 1950, Quakers' most noteworthy wider social activity sharply declined.⁶⁷ The introduction of educational settlements, at the very moment when adult school membership peaked and self-confidence abounded, ironically helped to hasten the onset of 'crisis' in the parent movement. As Thomas Kelly pointed out, the interwar period was notable for 'a tendency for the various forms of adult education to be assimilated to a common pattern', and for the 'driving forces of social reform and religious service' to weaken. In this context 'the decline of the adult schools illustrates the general trend towards a broad, undifferentiated form of adult education, inspired mainly by the desire for personal culture, and dominated by the humane tradition of the universities'.⁶⁸ The

educational settlement model was better adapted to survive in this climate than the adult schools, and although the settlements retained some features of the religious inspiration that had guided their foundation in the early years of the twentieth century, they had largely secularised themselves by the late 1930s, and were to be integrated into an even more secular movement, the community centres, after the second world war. They accommodated to the more secular educational demands of adults in this period, and this allowed them to retain a small but useful place in the spectrum of post-second world war adult education provision. By contrast, the adult schools were unable to diversify and to meet an increasingly secularised demand for adult education.

NOTES

1. Jones, R.M., *The Later Periods of Quakerism*, London: Macmillan, 1921, pp. 678-79, 955-58; Brayshaw, A.N., *The Quakers: Their Story and Message*, York: William Sessions, 1982 (1921), pp. 279-80, 308-12; Martin, G.C., *The Adult School Movement: Its Origin and Development*, London: National Adult School Union, 1924; Kelly, T., *A History of Adult Education in Great Britain*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1970, pp. 149-54, 202-05, 261-65; Hall, W.A., *The Adult School Movement in the Twentieth Century*, Nottingham: Department of Adult Education, University of Nottingham, 1985; Kennedy, T.C., *British Quakerism 1860-1920: The Transformation of a Religious Community*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 44-46, 120-21, and pp. 171-96 for Woodbrooke, summer schools and the wider Quaker educational context.
2. Allaway, A.J., *The Educational Centres Movement: A Comprehensive Survey* (London: National Institute of Adult Education, 1961); Fieldhouse, R., and Associates, *A History of Modern British Adult Education*, Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, 1996, pp. 260-63; Freeman, M., '“No Finer School than a Settlement”: The Development of the Educational Settlement Movement', *History of Education* 31 (2002), pp. 245-62; Davies, J.S., and Freeman, M., 'Education for Citizenship: The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Educational Settlement Movement', *History of Education* 32 (2003), pp. 303-18; Freeman, M., *The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust: A Study in Quaker Philanthropy and Adult Education 1904-1954*, York: William Sessions, 2004.
3. Williams, W.E., 'The Educational Settlements: A Report Prepared for the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust' (1938), p. 114: Joseph Rowntree Foundation archive (JRF) JRCT93/IV/2.
4. Nash, D., 'Reconnecting Religion with Social and Cultural History: Secularization's Failure as a Master Narrative', *Cultural and Social History* 1 (2004), pp. 302-05 (302).
5. Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, pp. 69, 174.
6. Nash, 'Reconnecting Religion', p. 318.
7. Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, pp. 97-98.
8. Champness, E., *Adult Schools: A Study in Pioneering*, Wallington: Religious Education Press, 1941, p. 68.
9. Bruce, S., *Religion in Modern Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 36-37.
10. Wilson, B.R., *Religion in Secular Society: A Sociological Comment*, London: C.A. Watts & Co., 1966, p. 11.
11. Wilson, *Religion*, pp. 8-9.
12. Gilbert, A.D., *The Making of Post-Christian Britain: A History of the Secularization of Modern Society*, London: Longmans, 1980, pp. 102-04.
13. Gilbert, *Making of Post-Christian Britain*, pp. 110-11.
14. Gilbert, *Making of Post-Christian Britain*, pp. 84-85.
15. The account below is based on M.K. Smith, 'Adult Schools and the Making of Adult Education', in *The Encyclopedia of Informal Education*, www.infed.org/lifelonglearning/adult_schools.htm (updated 28 January 2005); Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, pp. 39-41, 66-71; on the Lemington-on-Tyne settlement, see p. 85 n. 27.

16. See Koven, S., *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004, pp. 245-48, 251-52.
17. Quoted in Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, p. 69
18. Allaway, *Educational Centres Movement*, p. 17.
19. Allaway, *Educational Centres Movement*, p. 10; Davies and Freeman, 'Education for Citizenship', p. 306; Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, pp. 189-90.
20. Rowntree, A., 'Educational Work in York' (1909), JRF ROWN.FAM.L/93/3.
21. Hall, *Adult School Movement*, p. 213.
22. Hall, *Adult School Movement*, p. 213.
23. See Hall, *Adult School Movement*, pp. 51-52.
24. Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, pp. 189-90; Fleming, H., 'Interim Report on the Society of Friends, etc.', 1928, p. 33: JRF JRCT93/VI/1(e).
25. Fleming, 'Interim Report', p. 33.
26. Pimlott, J.A.R., *Toynbee Hall: Fifty Years of Social Progress 1884-1934*, London: J.M. Dent, 1935, pp. 281-82.
27. On the south Wales settlements, see Naylor, B., *Quakers in the Rhondda 1926-1986*, Chepstow: Maes-yr-Haf Educational Trust, 1986.
28. Stocks, M., *The Workers' Educational Association: The First Fifty Years*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1953, p. 106 (quoted); see pp. 107-08 on criticisms of the WEA in the 1930s.
29. Kelly, *History of Adult Education*, pp. 256-57, 273, 357 (graph).
30. On Williams and *The Highway*, see Atkins, J., "'A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall": The National Association and Internationalism 1918-1939', in Roberts, S.K. (ed.), *A Ministry of Enthusiasm: Centenary Essays on the Workers' Educational Association*, London: Pluto Press, 2003, pp. 111-30 (121-25).
31. Williams, 'Educational Settlements', p. 101 (quote) and *passim*.
32. Williams, 'Educational Settlements', pp. 32-33, 105-06.
33. See n. 3 above.
34. Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, p. 129.
35. Hall, *Adult School Movement*, pp. 147-48; Champness, *Adult Schools*, pp. 65-78.
36. Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, pp. 173-74.
37. Williams, 'Educational Settlements', p. 41.
38. Hobley, E.F., and Mercer, T.W., *The Adult School Movement: What it is and What it May Become*, London: Headley Brothers, 1911, p. 12.
39. Champness, *Adult Schools*, pp. 21-24.
40. Hobley and Mercer, *Adult School Movement*, pp. 21-26.
41. The account below is based on Champness, *Adult Schools*, pp. 59-64.
42. Champness, *Adult Schools*, p. 17. Judging by Hobley and Mercer's account, such teaching persisted into the Edwardian period in some adult schools.
43. In this case Luke 7:1-9; 9:51-55; Acts 10:34-35.
44. Champness, *Adult Schools*, pp. 62-63.
45. Hobley and Mercer, *Adult School Movement*, pp. 35-37.
46. Hobley and Mercer, *Adult School Movement*, pp. 21-22.
47. Champness, *Adult Schools*, p. 48.
48. Even the religious needs of students were imperfectly met by the adult schools. Champness (*Adult Schools*, pp. 27-28) admitted that adult school lessons were not designed for long periods of consecutive study, and that where there was a demand for this, the schools were encouraged to run courses in collaboration with the WEA.
49. Williams, 'Educational Settlements', p. 118.
50. See Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, pp. 129-30.
51. Allaway, *Educational Centres Movement*, p. 10.
52. Williams, 'Educational Settlements', pp. 133-42.
53. Hall, *Adult School Movement*, pp. 147-48, 160-61.

54. See Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, Chapter 8.
55. Davies and Freeman, 'Education for Citizenship', pp. 314-17; Freeman, *Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, pp. 197-98, 203-04.
56. Mark Freeman "'Britain's Spiritual Life: How can it be Deepened?'" Seebohm Rowntree, Russell Lavers and the "Crisis of Belief" c. 1946-1954', *Journal of Religious History* 29 (2005), pp. 25-42 (38-39).
57. See n. 17 above.
58. Rowntree, B.S., and Lavers, G.R., *English Life and Leisure: A Social Study*, London: Longmans, 1951, p. 330.
59. Briggs, A., *Social Thought and Social Action: A Study of the Work of Seebohm Rowntree*, London: Longmans, 1961, p. 13.
60. Rowntree and Lavers, *English Life and Leisure*, p. 328.
61. Rowntree and Lavers, *English Life and Leisure*, p. 329.
62. Hall, *Adult School Movement*, p. 213.
63. Rowntree and Lavers, *English Life and Leisure*, p. 330.
64. Kelly, *History of Adult Education*, p. 352.
65. Kelly, *History of Adult Education*, p. 339.
66. Nash, 'Reconnecting Religion', p. 318.
67. Stroud, C., and Dandelion, P., 'British Quakers and a New Kind of End-Time Prophecy', *Quaker Studies* 9 (2004), pp. 120-25 (122).
68. Kelly, *History of Adult Education*, pp. 285-86.

AUTHOR DETAILS

Mark Freeman is a Lecturer in the Department of Economic and Social History, University of Glasgow. He is the author of *Social Investigation and Rural England 1870-1914*, Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2003, *The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*, York: William Sessions, 2004, and a number of articles on modern British social history. He is now working with Robin Pearson and James Taylor on a project entitled 'Shareholder Democracies? Corporate Governance in Britain c. 1720-1844'.

Mailing address: Department of Economic and Social History, Lilybank House, Bute Gardens, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8RT, Scotland. Email: M.Freeman@arts.gla.ac.uk.