Abstract

Education during the First World War is generally overlooked. Schooling was seriously undermined by the demands of war, and the principal educational measure to emerge from the war offered little recompense. Similarly, studies of education and opportunity in the early twentieth century pass quickly over the war years and the 1918 Education Act to focus on the inter-war period. This article argues that an important sector of education, that of part-time, post-compulsory vocational education, has not received due recognition as a factor during the war, and in studies of social mobility more broadly. Through a close analysis of student cohorts who attended the Harris Institute in Preston, we show that there were significant new opportunities arising during the war. Different kinds of students, notably younger people, women, and from poorer backgrounds, took advantage of the expanding opportunities. Combining details of students' courses of study with evidence of their family and occupational backgrounds, gives insights into the aspirations of these working people to advance their careers, move into new sectors of work, or broaden their cultural horizons.

Keywords: Education, opportunity, social mobility, First World War

Introduction

The centenary commemorations of the First World War prompted renewed attention to the conflict, including a welcome surge of interest in the home front. Several major reviews consolidated the field and a wealth of new research, notably community-led studies probing previously disregarded corners, emphasised the effects of the war on British society and everyday life.[1] As society was disrupted, perhaps transformed, in places devastated, there were also openings for different kinds of people to do different things in different ways. In accounts of the domestic upheavals of the war and the new opportunities arising, however, there is little consideration of the place of education, even as the experiences of children and other young non-combatants have begun to receive greater attention.[2] In some respects, it is clear why this is the case. As with many other aspects of social welfare, education was badly affected during the war so, for the vast majority of children, their already limited experiences were curtailed even further.[3] On the other hand, the technical demands of the war emphasised the need to enhance levels of expertise, which combined with an acknowledgement that there should be some recompense for the lost schooling many young people had experienced. There was much discussion of a new educational settlement, which resulted in valuable initiatives for higher education and research, and a major piece of

[1] G. de Groot, *Blighty. British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London; 1996). A. Gregory, *The Last Great War. British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge; 2008). A. G. V. Simmonds, *Britain and World War One* (London; 2012). M. Andrews & J. Lomas (eds), *The Home Front in Britain. Images, Myths and Forgotten Experiences since 1914* (Basingstoke; 2014) S. Heffer, *Staring at God: Britain in the Great War* (London; 2019). The pioneering study of the British Home Front during the First World War is A. Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (London, 1965). For an indication of the variety of home front projects inspired during the centenary see, https://everydaylivesinwar.herts.ac.uk/

[2] R. Kennedy, *The Children's War: Britain, 1914-1918* (Basingstoke, 2014); M. Brown, *Children in the First World War* (Stroud, 2017). M. Andrews et al. *Histories, Memories and Representations of Being Young in the First World War* (Palgrave, 2020). The most important study of education during the war years remains G. Sherrington, *English Education, Social Change and War 1911-20* (Manchester, 1973).

[3] Sherrington, *English Education, Social Change and War*. D. H. Parker, ' "The talent at its command": The First World War and the vocational aspect of education, 1914 – 39' *History of Education Quarterly* 35 (1995): 237-259. Kennedy, *Children's War*.

legislation.[4] The 1918 Education Act, however, is widely regarded as a failure, both in terms of what it achieved and in its underlying aspirations.[5] The central feature of the Act was a policy to establish compulsory, part-time continuation schools for 14 – 16 year-olds. While initially attracting a good deal of support, the proposal was diluted and the whole scheme felled by Geddes' Axe before it had chance to take root. At the same time, educational reformers rapidly turned against the plan for continuation schools as wholly inadequate compared to that of enhancing access to full-time secondary education. It is a familiar trope that ambitious proposals for social provision devised during the war proved woefully disappointing in the difficult post-war years. For education, it seemed, even the aims were lacking. The attention of educationalists at the time, and historians subsequently, readily turned to the more enticing prospects of secondary education for all.[6] Otherwise, Adult Education, predominantly the 'Great Tradition' of liberal education championed by the Ministry of Reconstruction's 1919 Report, is widely regarded as the highlight of educational development arising from the war.[7]

It is hardly surprising, then, that other potentially relevant strands of literature also largely ignore education. The well-established discussions on women during the war make barely a nod to it.[8] Nor does it merit much attention in the pivotal debates about the impact of

[4] L. Andrews, *The Education Act 1918* (London, 1976). K. Vernon, 'Science and technology' in S. Constantine, M. W. Kirby & M. Rose (eds), *The First World War in British History* (London; 1995), pp. 81-105.

[5] Andrews, *The Education Act 1918*. D. W. Thoms, 'The Emergence and Failure of the Day Continuation School Experiment' *History of Education* 4 (1976): 36 – 50.

[6] G. McCulloch, *The Secondary Technical School: A Usable Past?* (London; 1989). G. McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings. Education for Leadership in Modern England* (Cambridge; 1991). G. McCulloch, *Failing the Ordinary Child? The Theory and Practice of Working-class Secondary Education* (Buckingham, 1998)

[7] M. Freeman, 'Adult Education History in Britain: Past, Present and Future (Part I) *Paedagogica Historica* 56 (2020): 384 – 395; (Part II): 396 – 411.

[8] Gail Braybon, *Women Workers in the First World War: The British Experience* (London: Croom Helm, 1981); Gail Braybon & Penny Summerfield, *Out of the Cage: Women's Experiences in Two World Wars* (London: Pandora, 1987). Angela Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend: Munition Workers in the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). Gerry Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain since 1840* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005). D. Thom, *Nice Girls and Rude Girls: Women workers in World War 1* (London; 1987). S. R. Grayzel, *Women's Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood and Politics in Britain and*

the war on changes to work practices. A key text on class relationships does pay a little more attention to education, but is again largely sceptical of its relevance.[9] On this view, education only really had an impact on the working classes when it became a means of transition into the middle classes, and it was greater access to secondary schools during the inter-war period that began to make a difference. Similarly, established debates about social mobility doubt the significance of formal education.[10] A select few working-class children might draw on enhanced literacy to cross the social and cultural gulf into certain bureaucratised occupations. For the vast majority, schooling constrained their horizons rather than offered new opportunities, and any improved prospects came through other avenues. Secondary technical education is dismissed; it might allow for some movement within the working class, but not genuine advancement, and it only affected very small numbers.[11] Some more recent studies of social mobility, however, have begun to present a more nuanced and dynamic view of the extent of movement between the upper working and lower middle classes, with education and literacy sometimes helping in the transition. They re-emphasise the significance of intra-generational pathways, with continuing study, whether formal or self-directed, making a difference across a life span.[12] As noted above, adult education has, overwhelmingly, been considered in terms of WEA-style evening classes in liberal arts.[13] We know almost nothing about part-time vocational education for adults, who pursued it, or why. Yet, it was clearly far more prevalent than other forms of post-compulsory

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France during the First World War (Chapel Hill N. C.; 1999). S. R. Grayzel, *Gender and the Great War* (Oxford; 2017).

[9] B. Waites, *A Class Society at War. England 1914 – 1918* (Leamington Spa, 1987).

[10] D. Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture. England 1750 – 1914* (Cambridge, 1989). A. Miles and D. Vincent (eds), *Building European Society. Occupational Change and Social Mobility in Europe, 1840 – 1940* (Manchester, 1993). A. Miles, *Social Mobility in Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Century England* (London, 1999). Miles speculates that the situation might have been different after the First World War.

[11] McCulloch, *The Secondary Technical School*. P. Summerfield & E. J. Evans (eds), *Technical Education and the State since 1850* (Manchester, 1990). M. Sanderson, *The Missing Stratum. Technical School Education in England, 1900 – 1990s* (London; 1994).

[12] C. de Bellaigue, H. Mills and E. Worth, ' "Rags to Riches?" New histories of social mobility in modern Britain - Introduction' Special edition of *Cultural and Social History* 16 (2019). See especially, M. Johansen, ' "The supposed paradise of pen and ink": Self-education and social mobility in the London Public Library (1880 – 1930)' *Cultural and Social History* 16 (2019): 47 – 65.

[13] Freeman, 'Adult Education History in Britain'

education. In 1914, the Board of Education recorded over 700,000 students in this category against 180,000 in secondary schools.[14]

This article seeks to address questions about who pursued vocational evening classes and for what reasons. In focussing on the war years, we also examine the impact of the war on this kind of education and the people who pursued it. Our focus is on the specific case of the Harris Institute in Preston, Lancashire; a typical example of its kind, to be found in most industrial towns.[15] We are fortunate in having a systematic set of institutional class registers, which provide personal details of the students who attended, including their name (from which gender can usually be determined), age, address, occupation or father's occupation, as well as what they studied. Charting changes in the overall profile of the student population shows how the demography and subject choices were transformed during the war. With supplementary sources, we have been able to construct the familial backgrounds of a sample of students.[16] Detailed analysis shows that different cohorts of working people, especially women, were taking up the expanding educational opportunities becoming available to them. Moreover, in assessing how these students drew on education to enhance their prospects, we gain insights into their aspirations and motivations. To begin with, we consider the nature of the Harris Institute, its curriculum and role in the town at the outbreak of war, and how it adjusted to meet the demands of wartime. The following section analyses the overall student population, to assess what kind of person went to the Harris Institute, what they studied and how this changed over the course of the war. Finally, a specific cohort is examined to probe for evidence of motivations for study at an individual level. Our study is of the wartime years, 1914 – 18, but extrapolating the findings more broadly indicates much greater significance for the role of part-time vocational education during the early twentieth century.[17] This mode of study was not for the casually interested,

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[14] *Report of the Board of Education 1915 – 16* [Cd.8594] (HMSO, 1917)

[15] R. Pope & K. Phillips, *The University of Central Lancashire. A history of the development of the institution since 1828* (Preston, 1995).

[16] This article draws on research carried out by volunteers as part of an AHRC-funded First World War Community Engagement project, 'Beyond the War Memorial. Life, Work and Study in Preston during the First World War'. It was arranged under the 'Everyday Lives in War' centre operated by the University of Hertfordshire. For the specific project pages, see <https://everydaylivesinwar.herts.ac.uk/category/uclan-project/> [accessed 14 July, 2020].

[17] Other studies are examining what happened to samples of students after the war. K Vernon and O. Wilkinson, 'Students, Service and Sacrifice. Wartime Education, Adolescent Experiences and Understandings of the First World War' in M. Andrews et al. *Histories,*

demanding significant investment of time, effort and resources, yet large numbers of working people recognised the benefits of what it offered and were prepared to devote considerable resources to pursuing it.

The Harris Institute and the First World War

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Preston was a medium-sized industrial town over-shadowed by its giant neighbours Liverpool and Manchester, but distinctive within Lancashire as the administrative centre for the county, and pivotal to the west coast communication routes.[18] Its economy was dominated by cotton textile manufacture, which was the principal employer and included a significant female workforce. Preston had a broader economic base than other Lancashire cotton towns, with larger engineering, administrative and professional sectors; it also served as the centre of a large agricultural region. The Harris Institute was the principal provider of post-compulsory vocational and adult education for Preston and its hinterland, and typical of a kind found in industrial towns throughout Britain.[19] It originated in 1828, as part of the wave of Mechanics Institutes, prospered sufficiently to erect an impressive new building in 1849, but struggled through the mid-Victorian period, with rising costs and fluctuating student numbers.[20] A substantial injection of funds from the bequest of local philanthropist, Robert Harris, in the 1870s revived its fortunes. Through the late nineteenth century, local authority and central state funding became more prominent as technical education came to be seen as a means of sustaining industrial development and economic competition. A substantial new technical school was

Memories and Representations of Being Young in the First World War. An analysis of women students is underway by Helen Howell (MA Dissertation, forthcoming.)

[18] D. Hunt, *A History of Preston* (Lancaster, 2009). H. M. Allanson, 'Social and Economic Changes in Preston During the First World War' (M. A. Local History, CNAA; 1982). M. Savage, *The Dynamics of Working-class Politics. The Labour Movement in Preston, 1880 – 1940* (Cambridge, 1984).

[19] M. Tylecote, *The Mechanics Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire Before 1851* (Manchester, 1957). T. Kelly, *A History of Adult Education in Great Britain* (Liverpool, 1992). Sanderson, *Missing Stratum.*

[20] Pope and Phillips, *University of Central Lancashire*.

opened in time for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, supported by the Borough Council and philanthropic funds.

By the summer of 1914, the Harris Institute was a core feature of the town, serving a variety of constituencies.[21] Its overall aims were described, modestly, as providing 'a thorough knowledge of the scientific principles underlying the daily work of the student, so as to enable him to take that intelligent interest in the work which is so essential to success.[22] The institute encompassed Schools of Art, and Domestic Science, which were semi-autonomous in their organisation, curricula, clientele, funding and regulation. There was a good deal of daytime work for younger students in their early teens which, under the Board of Education regulations of 1913, had been organised into Junior Technical and Commercial schools. The principal component of the Harris Institute's work was evening classes, catering primarily for those already in employment and geared towards the main industries and trades of the town.[23] The classes were arranged into five main departments, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Building Trades, Textiles, and Commerce. Through the late Edwardian period, the Board of Education launched a major initiative to reorganise and enhance technical education. One aspect was to replace the plethora of classes that had characterised post-compulsory education in the late nineteenth century with more coherent and progressive courses of study.[24] Accordingly, the Harris Institute overhauled its curriculum to identify sets of classes in related subjects and present them as organised courses of study that students took as a package and which progressed from one year to the next. Some classes, primarily in non-vocational subjects, such as pure sciences, languages, literature, and music were offered individually. It was possible to take one of the subjects that made up an organised course as an individual class, but this was discouraged. Students were charged the same fee for an individual class as those taking an organised course paid for the whole set.[25]

Pursuing an organised course was a demanding undertaking, typically entailing six hours tuition in three subjects spread over three evenings a week, usually between 7.30 and

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[21] 'Report of H.M. Inspectors on the Preston Harris Institute for the period ending on the 31 July, 1914.' This helpfully-timed report is incorporated into the minutes of the Harris Institute Council meeting, 11 Nov, 1914. All records of the Harris Institute are held by the University of Central Lancashire Special Collections.

[22] *Prospectus, 1914*, p.95.

[23] *Harris Institute, Preston. Prospectus. Session 1914 – 15*. (Preston, 1914).

[24] Sherrington, *English Education, Social Change and War*

[25] *Prospectus, 1914*.

9.30pm.[26] Before they could start, applicants for an organised course had to complete a two-year preliminary course at an evening continuation school, enabling the transition from elementary school. By permission, older students with school long behind them, could come straight onto the organised courses if they could show a capacity to benefit. The courses themselves varied in length; the commercial course could be completed in two years, whereas that in mechanical engineering could take five. Fees for the organised courses were usually charged at a flat rate of 7/6 a year, but extensive financial support was available from a trust fund. On completing the preliminary course, fees for the first year were paid. In addition, the subsequent years' fees were paid for those who passed the end of year examinations, providing there was evidence of satisfactory performance, and that they committed to continuing their course the following year. There were also attractive prizes for those gaining First Class in the examinations held by external bodies such as the City and Guilds. A diligent student, then, could have their studies largely paid for, but it was not for the faint-hearted or those lacking ability, commitment and ambition. A successful student had to complete a two-year preparatory course, commit to several hours of classes over three evenings a week, submit homework and pass the examinations, continue this over several years, all the time working during the day.

Some of the larger Preston employers actively encouraged further study.[27] In the HMI report on the institute in July 1914, it was noted that the Corporation Tramway and Post Office Engineering Department made attendance at classes a condition of employment and promotion. Others paid employees' fees or allowed time off in lieu for attending an evening class. The major engineering firm, Dick, Kerr & Co, took attendance and attainment into account when considering promotion in the works and some of the cotton manufacturers made similar allowances. Nevertheless, the HMI's were disappointed that local employers were not more supportive of the institute, suggesting that Preston was falling behind other towns in this regard. This may have been exhortatory language, as it is likely that the HMIs were constantly disappointed with the level of employers' encouragement for technical education. The implication, though, is that attendance at the classes was, predominantly, a voluntary activity, and there was a demand; at the start of the 1914-15 academic year, there were over 2,700 individual students on the books.[28] The rest of this article is devoted to exploring who these students were and why they were prepared to make the necessary

[26] *Prospectus, 1914*.

[27] 'HMI Report', 1914.

[28] *Harris Institute Annual Report for the year ending, 30 Sept, 1915*.

commitment. Before that, it is worth looking briefly at how the Harris Institute fared during the war.

The HMIs' 1914 report found much to praise, alongside some areas in need of improvement.[29] Engineering, building, domestic science and the miscellaneous scientific and cultural subjects were doing well. Textiles was less good, although largely through lack of direction in the temporary absence of a head of department. The commercial curriculum was regarded as crowded and confused, but mainly required some reorganisation. Overall, they pronounced the Harris Institute to be doing well, yet somewhat on a cusp. The accommodation was cramped and many of the faults were the result of trying to squeeze too much into the space and staffing available. Through the summer of 1914, then, the main priority for the institute was responding to the HMI's recommendations and completing some new developments.[30] The natural science department was reorganised. A new bacteriological laboratory was fitted out for dairy work at the request of the agricultural committee of the County Council. A hostel was bought and refitted for students attending the Training School in Domestic Science. At the start of the new academic year, there was little to suggest any major change in circumstances, and the first intimation of wartime constraints was a decision to postpone the annual prize-giving event.[31] There was soon far more serious disruption as students and staff enlisted and the institute had to adjust to meet changing educational demands.

It was recorded at the institute's annual meeting held at the end of 1914 that over a hundred students had enlisted during the first year of the war.[32] Four hundred more who were students at the outbreak of war, had joined up by the following year.[33] Further figures are not reported, but students continued to enlist and, after 1916, were conscripted. Overall numbers enrolling at the institute dropped over the war years, but not precipitously and, in some areas of its work, even increased. At the opening of the 1914-15 academic year, there were 2,709 individual students on the books, which was slightly lower than the previous year, although this picked up to 2,753 the following year.[34] This total dropped to 2,306 in 1917-18, reviving to 2,479 in the last intake before the Armistice. As explored below, these headline figures mask considerable changes in the constitution of the student body. Staff

[29] 'HMI Report', 1914.

[30] *Harris Institute Annual Report for the year ending, 30 Sept, 1914*.

[31] Harris Institute Council. Minutes of meeting, 9 Sept, 1914.

[32] 'Proceedings of Annual Meeting, 30 Dec, 1914' in *Harris Institute Annual Report 1914.*

[33] *Harris Institute Annual Report for the year ending 30 Sept, 1916.*

[34] Harris Institute Annual Reports.

also joined up, although many were exempted by age or the essential nature of their subject areas.[35] The institute appealed against the conscription of several members of staff, sometimes successfully. Others moved to jobs in industry and there is little evidence of new recruitment, so those teachers who remained seemed to have picked up additional work.

During the war, the institute responded to specific requests to put on particular courses, responding to novel opportunities arising from the conflict. One of the first initiatives was to provide free English classes for Belgian refugees who were arriving in Preston.[36] Building on the situation, classes were started in Belgian lacemaking, which offered employment for refugees, and was thought could form the basis of a new rural industry in Lancashire. The classes proved popular as 60 students turned up against an expected intake of 18 - 20. Another means of mitigating the consequences of war was through classes for wounded ex-servicemen.[37] Initially offered in handicrafts, and then in commercial subjects, more followed until, by the end of the war, there was instruction in commerce, boot and shoemaking, tailoring, with plans for classes in textiles. Several special short courses were arranged to train more women as replacements for men joining up.[38] At the request of the Home Office, a six-week commercial course was arranged for women over the age of 17. In the summer of 1917 another short course in weaving, designing and textile calculations was also created for female students. This had potentially more far-reaching implications as textiles courses had declined during the war and marrying up weaving with design was identified as a strategic initiative. More traditionally, the School of Domestic Science offered demonstrations on economy in food and fuel, and on finding substitutes for meat.[39] Large numbers attended lectures on 'Food and Food Values' and 'Economy in Food'. Less immediately pressing were new classes in Russian, Spanish and Italian introduced in 1915-16, with satisfactory attendance at the first two in particular.[40] Conspicuous by its absence at a centre of technical education located in an industrial town was any specific innovation in technical or scientific subjects. Early in the war, a sub-committee from the institute met with the local munitions committee and, in June 1915, a

[35] Staff movements are documented in the Harris Institute Council minutes and there was continual discussion by the council with staff and with the Board of Education about enlistment and conscription.

[36] *Harris Institute Annual Report, 1914*.

[37] *Harris Institute Annual Report for the year ending 30 Sept, 1918*.

[38] *Harris Institute Annual Report, 1915*.

[39] *Harris Institute Annual Report, 1918*.

[40] *Harris Institute Annual Report, 1916*.

scheme of instruction in munitions work was announced. Of over 100 applications, however, 60% were from young men of military age. The scheme did not run on the rather dubious stated grounds that there would be difficulty in finding work for the students after their training. Perhaps more pertinent was an observation that the applicants may not have had entirely patriotic motives in signing up for the course![41]

The junior departments of the institute continued to be heavily over-subscribed.[42] At the beginning of the 1914 session, the Board of Education approved the organisation of a full-time Day Commercial School to run alongside the Junior Technical School. The commercial school was full on opening, and the annual report was keen to note that proper standards were being maintained, with every new pupil having a preliminary exam. Demand for places at the Junior Technical School remained high throughout the war. An exception was in agriculture, where the Board of Agriculture suddenly withdrew its annual grant, seriously damaging this element of the institute's work.[43] To help maintain numbers, and as a measure of widening participation, a one-year course in agriculture was introduced for boys coming straight from elementary school. The first year was deemed a success and the council considered that it could be developed further in normal times. On a broader scale, the war-time annual reports expressed much optimism that technical education would be boosted after the war, but there was little concrete planning.[44] In many respects, the Harris Institute responded during the war years as it always had, by catering to specific requests from government and industry, or capitalising on the serendipitous opportunities that presented themselves.

The Student Population, 1914 – 1918

How the Harris Institute reacted to wartime conditions was one side of the equation; on the other side was how students responded. Here we can identify significant changes in the balance of the academic curriculum, and in the demographic make-up of the student population. The evidence comes from a set of institutional class registers, which record the name (from which gender can usually be deduced), age, address, occupation or father's

[41] Harris Institute Council, minutes of meeting 9 Sept, 1915. 'Proceedings of Annual Meeting 30 Dec, 1915'.

[42] *Harris Institute Annual Report 1915, 1917*.

[43] *Harris Institute Annual Report 1915, 1916.*

[44] This was a recurring theme in each Annual Report

occupation, previous education, and course of study.[45] The registers relate to students attending the evening classes in the technical, scientific and commercial departments, whether as part of an organised course or as an individual class.[46] The information from the class registers for the war years has been digitised into a searchable database, which formed the basis for a First World War community engagement project.[47] What follows is a comparison between the 1914 – 15 cohort, arriving at the very beginning of the conflict, and the intake for 1918 – 19, when the war was still expected to continue for some time.

Beginning with the overall demographic profile of the student population, in September 1914, a total of 901 students was listed in the class registers. Of these 767 (87.5 per cent) were male and 110 (12.5 per cent) female.[48] The majority of students were in the 16 to 24 age-bracket, and overwhelmingly still in their teens. About 16 per cent of the cohort were under the age of 16 and 11 per cent over 25.

Table 1 Age of students, 1914-15 session[49]

By September 1918, the recorded numbers had increased almost 10 per cent to 996. The proportions of male and female students had changed noticeably with 626 (64 per cent) male and 355 (36 per cent) female.[50] The age distribution had also changed with, unsurprisingly, a significant reduction of those in the 18 – 24 bracket, although not to negligible levels. This was more than offset by increases in the younger 14 – 17 cohorts. At the other end of the spectrum, there were increases of the over 30s, and over 40s.

Table 2 Age of students, 1918-19 session[51]

[45] The original class registers are held in the University of Central Lancashire Special Collections. Digitised versions for 1914 - 15 to 1918 - 19 are available here: https://uclandata.uclan.ac.uk/43/.

[46] The class registers also contain records of students at the Junior Technical and Commercial Schools, but not for the Schools of Art or Domestic Science.

[47] 'Beyond the War Memorial' A group of about ten volunteers participated to research the lives of a defined set of students.

[48] It was impossible to determine the gender of the remaining 24.

[49] HI Class Register, 1914 – 15.

[50] Again, some 15 were of uncertain gender.

[51] HI Class Register, 1918 – 19.

As the demographics of the student body shifted, so too did the subjects being studied. In the 1914 – 15 session, 547 (61 per cent) students were pursuing organised courses, while 354 (39 per cent) took individual classes. A few students took an individual class alongside their organised course, but such instances were rare. As effectively discrete cohorts, they will be separated out in the following analysis. Also for ease of analysis, the subjects have been classified into broader categories, corresponding to the arrangement of the departments at the institute.[52] On this basis, the technical and commercial courses each accounted for a little under a third of students, the textile courses a quarter, with the balance made up of those studying trade-related courses.

Table 3 Academic distribution of students taking organised courses, 1914-15 session[53]

There is a clear and close correlation between the students' occupations and their course of study. Of the 79 students taking the trade courses, only five have occupations that are not obviously related to a trade activity, including four clerks and one traveller. For the textiles and commerce students, there is a small, but noticeable cross over from one set to the other. Fifteen students giving their occupation as clerk were taking a textiles course. Although they may have been clerks in cotton factories, they were not, or did not see themselves as, cotton operatives. A wider range of occupations feature among the students on the commerce course, including four weavers, a plater, a creeler and a coach builder. There were also three ironmongers and three tailors, who may have been shop keepers seeking some commercial training to run small businesses, but who were also not obviously office workers. In the technical category, those studying mechanical engineering were overwhelmingly engineers of some sort. The most mixed groups were on the electrical engineering and technical electricity courses. Among 54 students were seven weavers and a spinner, three clerks, a warehouseman and one of the very few students identified as a labourer. It is noticeable that the novel subject areas attracted the most mixed range of backgrounds, perhaps of those seeking opportunities in the nascent industry.

Almost 40 per cent of the students on the registers studied individual classes. Some of the classes were in the same subjects as the organised courses, such as Bookkeeping, Shorthand, Cotton Spinning, and Weaving. Since the cost for an individual class was the

[52] 'Trade' covers courses in Building, Carpentry and Joinery, Plumbing; 'Technical' covers courses in Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering; 'Textile' covers courses in Spinning, Weaving.

[53] HI Class Register, 1914 – 15.

same as for an organised course, presumably the students studying in this mode could not manage the time and effort required for an organised course.[54] The majority of the individual classes were in pure science subjects such as Mathematics, Chemistry, Experimental Mechanics and Physics; in creative fields such as Art and Music, or in languages including French, German and Latin, in which organised courses were not offered. Just over a third of the students were studying commercial, trade and textiles-related subjects, with a close correlation between subject and occupation for these more clearly vocational classes. The occupational connections were less obvious for the other categories, although probably still to the fore. Those in the science category included 18 clerks, mainly studying mathematics or arithmetic. Similarly, languages and art had potentially, but not necessarily, industrial or design aspects. Much more mixed groups assembled for the language and music classes, which seemed to be largely about leisure learning and attracted people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Table 4 Academic distribution of students taking individual classes, 1914-15 session[55]

In the last intake of the war years, there was a slight increase in the proportion of those registered for organised courses to 632 (64 per cent) with 364 (37 per cent) just taking an individual class. There had been a clear decline in the numbers taking trade and textiles-related courses, a slight increase in those on the technical mechanical and electrical courses, but the clearest change was the large increase of those taking commerce.

Table 5 Academic distribution of students taking organised courses, 1918-19 session[56]

For the most part, the correlation between students' occupation and course of study remained close. Just four clerks and one spinner were taking trade-related courses. The cross over between commerce and textiles also continued, with 24 clerks taking textiles courses, and 10 cotton operatives taking commerce. There were also 15 industrial or trades people and an agricultural labourer studying commerce, which made it the most varied course. In the technical category, numbers studying mechanical engineering had leaped to 198, while the electrical strand had fallen away markedly. Only a handful of clerks, and cotton operatives could be found studying mechanical or electrical engineering.

[54] *Prospectus, 1914*.

[55] HI Class Register, 1914 – 15.

[56] HI Class Register, 1918 – 19.

Among the individual class cohort, the correlation between student occupation and subject of study also continued, although there are some noticeable changes in the popularity of different subjects. Within the commercial category, those taking bookkeeping stayed almost exactly the same, but there was a sharp increase in the shorthand classes. Trade kept about the same numbers, although 18 of the 50 were farriers studying farriery, and a new class in coachbuilding was popular. Very noticeably, textiles disappeared as a subject choice for these students. The numbers studying languages stayed about the same, although 17 of the total had taken up Esperanto, while music was almost as popular as before. Interestingly, the numbers taking science subjects fell away, while those in the art classes rose.

Table 6 Academic distribution of students taking individual classes, 1918 -19 session[57]

There were clear changes in the nature of the student body attending the Harris Institute evening classes between the first and last intake of the war years. The first point is that the overall numbers increased by almost 10 per cent. Demographically, there were many more female students, up to over a third from a little over 10 per cent. While the feminisation of the student cohort is not unexpected, it is still significant. Another clear finding is that the age distribution became notably younger, which is explored elsewhere.[58] Academically, the most obvious change was the large increase in those studying commerce, and a decline in those studying trade and textiles-related courses. These reflect the commonly observed decline of the cotton industry during the war and the waning of building and maintenance work.[59] The growth of office-based work is also known, if rarely highlighted, so it is to be expected that courses in commerce would expand. Against that, there is little evidence of a significant expansion in technical courses. An initiative in munitions work did not turn out happily, but there were few other developments. The numbers taking mechanical engineering increased, although those on electrical engineering declined. Similarly, there was no greater take-up of science subjects among the individual class students. The great majority of students seemed to study for occupational purposes and this pattern did not change over the course of the war. Most studied a course obviously related to their occupation, presumably seeking advancement within it. An appreciable proportion, however, seemed to be using education to move in a different direction. Among

[57] HI Class Register, 1918 – 19.

[58] Vernon and Wilkinson, 'Students, Service and Sacrifice.

[59] Simmonds, *Britain and World War One.*

the individual class students, there are some indications of an increasing desire for recreational study, for example through the increase of those taking art classes, and the new internationalist language, Esperanto.

Focus on Fishwick

Evidence on the age, gender and course of study of the student body as a whole indicates noticeable and important changes through the duration of the war. In this section, we probe more deeply into the lives of some of the students to examine how their part-time studies may have intersected with their occupations and aspirations. Using the evidence derived from the class registers and correlating this with information from the 1911 Census, allows insight into the students' familial backgrounds, which can indicate socio-economic mobility. A subset of students, based on a geographical area in the south east of Preston known as Fishwick, was selected for closer analysis.[60] Fishwick in the early twentieth century was a predominantly working-class district, characterised by terraced housing of variable quality, interspersed with mixed industrial and commercial premises, although dominated by the vast Horrockses cotton-manufacturing complex.[61] We start with an assessment of the student population from this area who attended the Harris Institute, and whether this sub-set showed any differences from the institutional pattern. We then consider a sample of these students in more detail.

A total of 79 people from the Fishwick area was entered on the class registers for 1914-15. Of these, 73 (92 per cent) were male and just 6 (7.5 per cent) female, a rather more masculine gender balance than that of the institute as a whole. The age distribution indicates a slightly smaller percentage in the younger and older categories and somewhat more in their early twenties.

Table 7 Age profile of Fishwick students, 1914-15 session[62]

[60] The choice of area was made and defined by the volunteers on the 'Beyond the War Memorial' project.

[61] Hunt, *A History of Preston*. N. Morgan, *Deadly Dwellings. Housing and Health in a Lancashire Cotton Town* (Preston, 1993).

[62] HI Class Register, 1914 – 15.

By the last session of the war, the total number of students from Fishwick had risen to 108, a 36 per cent increase, which was a significantly larger increase than that for the institution as a whole. The gender balance also shifted noticeably, comprising 64 (66 per cent) male and 36 (34 per cent) female (plus 3 uncertain). This was now in line with the institutional average, but represented a much larger feminisation for the Fishwick cohort. Similarly, the age range showed a marked shift to a younger population, predominantly in the mid-teens. There was also an increase in students over the age of 30.

Table 8 Age profile of Fishwick students, 1918-19 session[63]

The proportion of Fishwick students taking organised courses was a little higher than the institutional average, at 52 (64.5 per cent) with 25 (33 per cent) taking individual classes. The academic profile, however, was quite different, with a much larger proportion studying textiles-related courses, surely reflecting the dominance of the cotton industry in the district. Commerce remained popular and the trade and the technical courses less so. Overwhelmingly, the course studied was clearly related to the student's occupation, although there were still a few apparently moving in a different direction. Two weavers were taking technical courses, two industrial workers were studying commerce and three clerks were on textiles-related courses.

Table 9 Academic distribution of Fishwick students on organised courses, 1914-15 session[64]

For those taking individual classes in commerce and trade there was again a close correlation between occupation and subject studied. Oddly, there was nobody studying textiles-related classes. A few found time for classes in language and music, including a weaver, a student, and a clerk in the English class and two clerks attending French; the two music students were a weaver and a machinist.

Table 10 Academic distribution of Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1914-15 session[65]

[63] HI Class Register, 1918 – 19.

[64] HI Class Register, 1914 – 15.

[65] HI Class Register, 1914 – 15. The numbers are too small to make percentages meaningful.

In the last academic session of the war years, there were 77 (71 per cent) taking organised courses with 32 (29 per cent) taking an individual class, another greater shift than for the institution as a whole. In terms of the courses studied, the textiles-related ones held up slightly better, but the move towards commerce was even more marked for the Fishwick sample. The connection with occupation remained strong, with just four of the commerce students not clearly in clerical occupations. Elsewhere, one clerk was studying mechanical engineering, and another clerk and a bookkeeper were studying weaving.

Table 11 Academic distribution of Fishwick students on organised courses, 1918-19 session[66]

For those taking individual classes, all of the students in the commercial, trade and science classes were in occupations related to the subjects. There was an increase in those studying language, music and art, and these were quite mixed groups. The five language students comprised a teacher, apprentice draughtsman and one with no identified occupation taking French, plus a chipper and a police officer taking Esperanto. The music class had two weavers and one with no stated occupation. In the Art class there was a woollen warehouseman, a teacher and a clerk plus three youngsters of 13 and 14 with no occupation, presumably still at school.

Table 12 Academic distribution of Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1918-19 session[67]

At the beginning of the war, the subject choices of students from Fishwick were clearly influenced by the local economy, with a much higher proportion opting for textiles-related courses. Textiles held up as a choice for Fishwick students, despite the problems facing the industry during the war. In other respects, the profile of the Fishwick cohort moved noticeably towards the institutional average in terms of gender balance, age range and subject choice, but which represented a more marked movement than for the student population overall. In addition, the increase in number of students from this industrial working-class district, in those taking organised courses, and in the range of individual subjects suggest a greater recognition during the war years of the benefits of part-time education, and capacity to undertake it.

[66] HI Class Register, 1918 – 19.

[67] HI Class Register, 1918 – 19.

To understand more about the nature of the students who attended the Harris Institute during the war, to gain deeper insight into their socio-economic status, and to seek evidence of inter-generational mobility, a sample of the Fishwick students was selected and their backgrounds researched in greater detail. Life histories have been compiled for almost 50 of these students from across the war years.[68] Here we offer indicative stories of who was pursuing part-time education during the First World War and suggest reasons regarding their motivations. Approximately a quarter of the students from the 1914-15 and 1918-19 sessions, chosen at random, are listed below with some of their biographical data, their occupation, course of study or individual class taken. To this has been added their father's occupation derived from the 1911 Census.

Table 13 Sample of Fishwick students taking organised courses, 1914-15 session[69]

All of the students shown here are male with ages predominantly in the late teens / early twenties. Edward Halliwell, Arthur Phillipson and Frank Wilson were all weavers studying weaving. Only Edward Halliwell had a father with an occupation in the industry, and that not of a skilled operative, perhaps indicating mobility into a more skilled role. Richard Clayton's job as a storekeeper suggests his choice was a move towards a more skilled occupation. Thomas Thompson was working as a clerk, but he seems to be moving back towards the cotton industry his father came from. Among those studying Commerce, three were already working as clerks and one was in metal working. None had fathers with commercial occupations and two came from metal working, perhaps indicating a shift from heavy industry and retail towards office work. The three young men studying engineering were all apprentices, from distinctly diverse family backgrounds, generally representing a move to stable skilled occupations.

Table 14 Sample of Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1914-15[70]

This small sample of students taking individual classes appears more mixed. There are some women and the age range is wider, although on average younger than the Fishwick

[68] The research was carried out by volunteers on the 'Beyond the War Memorial' project. The findings are currently held by Keith Vernon.

[69] HI Class Register, 1914 -15. 1911 Census.

[70] HI Class Register, 1914 -15. 1911 Census.

students taking organised courses. There are some clear correlations between occupation and subject, for example Frank Addison, Agnes Sykes and William Norris. There are also some interesting anomalies. Frank Simpson's interest in experimental mechanics and physics may have been inspired by his occupation but, at age 16, may have been preparation for an examination and academic study. Similarly, Arnold Towler's study of French may have been connected with his job but, equally, may not. Fred Dobson and Mary Wiggins, both working as weavers seem more obviously to be studying for recreation.

In the 1918 / 19 session, a random 25 per cent sample of students on organised courses reflects the general patterns shown for the institute, with a clear increase in overall numbers, far more women and a hollowed-out age profile with a younger average age.

Table 15 Fishwick students taking organised courses, 1918-19 session[71]

Looking in more detail, for those on the textiles-related courses, there is a clearer connection between family background, occupation and course of study. Given the general decline in the cotton industry during the war, it may be that those with a family tradition in the industry were more likely to remain committed to it. Almost all of those on the commercial course were already clerks, and the clearest pattern among their fathers is that none of them were in commercial occupations themselves. The rest of the sample were all young men, mostly apprentices and studying subjects relevant to their occupations. Their fathers too show a diversity of backgrounds, mostly skilled or reasonably high status, even if Frederick Cave's father was unemployed at the time.

Table 16 Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1918-19 session[72]

In this sample, all of the students studying commercial subjects were female, in relevant occupations, and all that we can tell were leaving cotton-industry backgrounds behind. Albert Price is pursuing studies relevant to his occupation, presumably part of his training if not explicitly on an apprenticeship. Guy Nicolson seems to be continuing in a family business, where his subject choice may be relevant, or at least inspired by his trade. The more intriguing cases are, again, those who are studying something quite different from their day-time job, apparently for leisure; Isabel Parkinson the weaver in the music class, and Richard

[71] HI Class Register, 1918 -19. 1911 Census.

[72] HI Class Register, 1918 -19. 1911 Census.

Nicholson, a mature person from a humble background, working as a clerk, studying art in his spare time.

The range of occupations represented in this sample, both of the students and their fathers, come predominantly from a spectrum of skilled industrial workers, small retailers, agents and commercial roles. There are very few obviously unskilled labourers, nor are there any in clearly professional posts, although a few, such as Hotel Proprietor or Financier suggest greater prosperity. Given the character of the district, this is not surprising. It was not an area of Preston where many middle-class professionals would choose to live, and poorer workers could not sustain the cost of further study. With a small sample, there is little indication that this changed very much over the course of the war, although the last table may suggest a slight expansion, including a labourer and a financier. There is no space here to consider the lives of the students after the war, although almost 50 life-stories of Fishwick students have been compiled, some of which are discussed elsewhere.[73] Nevertheless, these findings indicate increasing educational and social opportunity arising during the First World War. There are few signs of family traditions being maintained. The main exception is evidence of those with cotton industry backgrounds sticking with the sector, despite its wartime decline. Undoubtedly, this is connected to the dominance of the cotton industry in the district. On the other hand, there is evidence of young women with cotton operative fathers not following them into the mills, but moving into offices and having sufficient aspirations that they and their families invested in further study. A number of men were also leaving trade and industrial jobs and backgrounds to go into commercial occupations. Another clear pattern is that almost none of the students studying commerce came from a commercial family background. An interesting and unexpected finding is that a number of clerks appear to have pursued the reverse trend to study textiles or other industrial subjects. Perhaps they were dissatisfied with being confined to an office or saw the potential for higher rates of pay and status in skilled industrial work. Thus, it is apparent that education was associated with mobility within and between occupations, and between one generation and the next. Although study was predominantly connected with work, this was not obviously the case for an appreciable number of students from this relatively poorer part of Preston. Indeed, there is evidence that increasing numbers by the end of the war chose to study cultural and creative subjects.

[73] Vernon and Wilkinson, ‘Students, Service and Sacrifice’. Howell, (forthcoming).

Conclusion

As with most areas of national life, the Harris Institute was caught up in the maelstrom of the First World War. Courses were put on to cater for refugees and disabled ex-servicemen, and to provide training for new wartime roles. Somewhat surprisingly, there was little development of technical classes explicitly related to war industries. Limited by reductions in staff and shortages of materials, the Harris did not have the capacity for major educational innovation and it responded, as such institutions always had, to serendipitous opportunities. The principal changes came from students responding to the fluctuations of the wartime situation. In consequence, the academic and demographic profile of the institution altered significantly. There was a marked decline in those opting for trade and textile-related courses, which was more than offset, primarily, by a huge demand for commercial classes. The nature of the student population correspondingly changed significantly, with a much higher proportion of women attending, and the cohorts became, on average, appreciably younger. It is no surprise that the number of male students in their late teens and early twenties declined. What is noticeable is that they were more than replaced by female, and younger students, which indicates that new types of student, who had not hitherto pursued further education, were taking advantage of the opportunities opening up during wartime.

The most obvious development was the significant increase in the number of female students, predominantly studying commercial subjects. The fortunes of women during the war have been the topic of an important literature, concentrated on the advent of women into the munitions industry.[74] While the novelty of that situation makes it an understandable focus, it remains the case that the largest rise in female occupations during the war was in the clerical sector. Yet the fact has generally been dismissed, most notably in the patronising comment that the development 'hardly seems significant'.[75] This precisely misses the point that we wish to make. For the women in this study, improving job prospects in office work were important enough for them, perhaps supported by their families, to give of their time,

[74] Braybon, *Women Workers in the First World War*. Braybon & Summerfield, *Out of the Cage*. Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend*. Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain since 1840*. Thom, *Nice Girls and Rude Girls.* Grayzel, *Gender and the Great War*. The notable exception is J. Black, '"Educating the Girls!" The clerical and secretarial curriculum at Manchester High School for Girls within its social context, 1900-1920' *History of Education Researcher* 84 (2009): 12-22, and 'Women Clerical Staff employed in the UK-based Army Pay Department establishments, 1914-1920 in A. Laurence, J. Maltby & J. Rutterford (eds), *Women and Their Money, 1700 – 1950* (London; 2008.

[75] De Groot, *Blighty*, p.265)

energy and resources to study in the evening after gruelling days of war-work. Commercial classes offered the opportunity for more women in Preston to pursue further education and potentially to progress in a new career for them. They were pioneers; the great majority of the town's working women remained in cotton mills, although more would certainly follow into offices subsequently.[76] There is no space here to explore what happened to the students after the war, but we do know that some successfully drew on their studies to pursue related careers.[77] Even if they did not continue in a career, they still had a course of training, and an educational experience, that may have applied to their post-war working, family, social and cultural lives in uncountable ways.

The case study of Fishwick students further supports the view that there were expanding educational opportunities due to the war, and offers indications of motivations for study. Between 1914-18, the cohorts from this relatively poorer district grew more quickly, took up the organised courses more assiduously, and represented a greater rate of feminisation than for the institution as a whole. Broadly, the students came from the spectrum of skilled industrial, small retail or commercial sectors. It is apparent that most were taking courses relevant to their existing occupation, yet a noticeable minority seemed to be changing tack, especially into commerce, although it is also the case that some clerks were leaving their offices. There is some evidence of continuing family traditions, primarily in those with a cotton background, although several mill girls were looking to leave. Very few of the clerks studying commerce had fathers with clerical occupations. There is not enough evidence to say whether this really changed in the period considered, although there are some small indications of a broadening of the spectrum of fathers' occupations in the last year of the war. It is also worth noting that not everyone studied for occupational purposes. An increasing number pursued literary, linguistic, artistic, and musical interests, presumably for leisure, pleasure and personal fulfilment. There are no known wartime testimonies of people from this area, and we cannot say for certain why these people were studying or what they hoped to gain by it. Our evidence, however, gives insights into the educational aspirations of working people, otherwise impossible to access.

This study has provided detailed evidence of who attended evening classes during the First World War. It demonstrates the new opportunities arising from the wartime conditions, and that different kinds of students took advantage of them. While continuing to come predominantly from a spectrum of skilled working, retail, and lower bureaucratic

[76] E. Roberts, *A Woman's Place. An Oral History of Working Class Women, 1890-1940* (Oxford, 1984).
[77] Vernon and Wilkinson, 'Students, Service and Sacrifice'. Howell, forthcoming.

occupations, they were a different population of students from the pre-war cohorts. The close analysis also provides insights into why these students devoted substantial personal resources to this type of study. For the most part, although not exclusively, it was clearly to advance their prospects within an occupational area or potentially to move into a different one. In most cases they were moving into different occupational areas than their fathers. It may not have been full secondary education, and they may not have aimed to move into the comfortable middle classes, but it was undoubtedly aspirational and for the purposes of social, economic, or cultural enhancement. From one study of one institution, we cannot make sweeping generalisations; equally, there is no reason to suppose that the Harris Institute, Preston, represents a completely anomalous example. In the likely situation that this case was replicated elsewhere, it suggests that the social importance of part-time, vocational education during the early twentieth century deserves greater appreciation. Working people recognised a value in this kind of study, were prepared to invest in it, took advantage of new opportunities as they arose, and may well have benefitted greatly by it.

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Tables

Table 1 Age of students, 1914-15 session

Age bracket	Number	Percentage
Under 14	27	3
14 – 15	120	13
16 – 17	278	31
18 – 19	200	22
20 – 24	176	19
25 – 29	60	7
30+ / ‘adult’	40	4

Table 2 Age of students, 1918-19 session

Age bracket	Number	Percentage
Under 14	26	2.6
14 – 15	224	22.5
16 – 17	418	42
18 – 19	100	10
20 – 24	97	10
25 – 29	43	4
30+ / ‘adult’	71	7

Table 3 Academic distribution of students taking organised courses, 1914-15 session

Course type	Number	Percentage
Trade	79	14
Commerce	170	31
Technical	157	29
Textiles	140	25

Table 4 Academic distribution of students taking individual classes, 1914-15 session

Subject	Number	Percentage

Trade	49	13.8
Commerce	66	18.6
Textiles	15	4
Science	84	23.7
Language	49	13.8
Music	29	8
Art	63	17.7

Table 5 Academic distribution of students taking organised courses, 1918-19 session

Course type	Number	Percentage
Trade	37	6
Commerce	300	47
Technical	212	33
Textiles	84	13

Table 6 Academic distribution of students taking individual classes, 1918 -19 session

Subject	Number	Percentage
Trade	50	13.7
Commerce	112	30.7
Science	42	11.5
Language	52	14
Music	24	6.5
Art	91	25

Table 7 Age profile of Fishwick students, 1914-15 session

Age bracket	Number	Percentage	Harris Institute
Under 14	0		3
14 – 15	10	12.6	13
16 – 17	25	31.6	31
18 – 19	18	23	22
20 – 24	21	26.5	19
25 – 29	3	4	7
30+ / ‘adult’	2	2	4

Table 8 Age profile of Fishwick students, 1918-19 session

Age bracket	Number	Percentage	Harris Institute
Under 14	4	4	2.6
14 – 15	17	16	22.5
16 – 17	50	47	42
18 – 19	10	9	10
20 – 24	12	11	10
25 – 29	6	6	4
30+ / ‘adult’	7	7	7

Table 9 Academic distribution of Fishwick students on organised courses, 1914-15 session

Course type	Number	Percentage	Harris Institute
Trade	4	7.5	14
Commerce	15	29	31
Technical	11	21	29
Textiles	22	42	25

Table 10 Academic distribution of Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1914-15 session

Subject	Number
Commerce	8
Trade	6
Science	3
Language	5
Music	2

Table 11 Academic distribution of Fishwick students on organised courses, 1918-19 session

Course type	Number	Percentage	Harris Institute
Trade	5	6.5	6
Commerce	39	50	47
Technical	20	26	33
Textiles	13	17	13

Table 12 Academic distribution of Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1918-19 session

Subject	Number
Commerce	10
Trade	3
Science	5
Language	5
Music	3
Art	6

Table 13 Sample of Fishwick students taking organised courses, 1914-15 session

Name	**Gender**	**Age**	**Occupation**	**Course**	**Father's Occupation**
Richard Clayton	Male	20	Storekeeper	Spinning	House joiner
Edward Halliwell	Male	23	Weaver	Weaving	Cotton Mill Labourer
Arthur Phillipson	Male	15	Weaver	Weaving	House and Property Agent
Thomas Thompson	Male	19	Clerk	Weaving	Tape sizer in cotton mill
Frank Wilson	Male	16	Weaver	Weaving	Railway guard
Reginald Jackson	Male	20	Clerk	Commerce	Iron Moulder
William Singleton	Male	14	Clerk	Commerce	Range and mantle moulder
William Clarkson	Male	18	Clerk	Commerce	Deceased
William Craven	Male	18	Plater	Commerce	Beerseller
George Atkinson	Male	18	Junior draughtsman	Mechanical engineering	Fruiterer at home
Thomas Wignall	Male	18	Apprentice engineer	Tech	Turkish Bath Proprietor
George Dunderdale	Male	17	Apprentice sheet metal worker	Mechanical engineering	House Painter

Table 14 Sample of Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1914-15

Name	Gender	Age	Occupation	Individual subject	Father's Occupation
Frank Addison	Male	19	Clerk	Shorthand	Cotton cloth warehouseman
Fred Dobson	Male	15	Weaver	Music Theory	Taper cotton factory
John Heaton	Male	30	Printer	Typewriting	(Lived with in-laws)
Agnes Sykes	Female	16	Typist	Shorthand	Sorting clerk and telegraphist Post Office
Mary Wiggins	Female	18	Weaver	English	Draper
Arnold Towler	Male	15	Clerk	French	Assurance Agent Friendly Society
Frank Simpson	Male	16	Motor Mechanic	Experimental Mechanics and Physics	Hardware dealer
William Norris	Male	21	Printer's clerk	Typography	Friendly Society collector

Table 15 Fishwick students taking organised courses, 1918-19 session

Name	Gender	Age	Occupation	Course	Father's Occupation
Charles Blinkhorn	Male	23	Work splitter	Weaving	Card cutter, cotton weaving
James Gallagher	Male	16	Spinner	Spinning	Cotton spinner
William Gallagher	Male	14	Spinner	Spinning	Cotton spinner
Nellie Briscombe	Female	16	Knitter	Commerce	Secretary of religious denomination
Mary Dunderdale	Female	24	Clerk	Commerce	House painter for painter & decorator

James Eccles	Male	16	Bookkeeper	Commerce	Powerloom overlooker
Nellie Evans	Female	15	Shorthand typist	Commerce	Clog maker for Boot dealer
Ada Ferris	Female	17	Clerk	Commerce	Compositor – general printers
Harold Richmond	Male	17	Clerk	Commerce	Overlooker
Doris Robertson	Female	15	Clerk	Commerce	Tailor's Manager
Thomas Naylor	Male	17	Wire drawer	Commerce	House painter
Arthur Rowland	Male	30	Clerk	Commerce	
Ethel Williamson	Female	21	Clerk	Commerce	Stonemason (deceased)
William Banks	Male	16	Coachbuilder	Building	Coachbuilder, Trams
Henry Tidswell	Male	15	Apprentice joiner	Building	Hotel Proprietor
Frederick Cave	Male	16	Apprentice fitter	Mechanical engineering	Winding master unemployed
John Peet	Male	17	Apprentice draughtsman	Mechanical engineering	
J. Richmond	Male	16	Apprentice draughtsman	Mechanical engineering	Musician in theatre

Table 16 Fishwick students taking individual classes, 1918-19 session

Name	**Gender**	**Age**	**Occupation**	**Individual subject**	**Father's occupation**
Dolly Bagwell	Female	20	Shop assistant	Bookkeeping	Cotton weaver
Beryl James	Female	19	Clerk	Shorthand	Cotton spinner

Violet Bibby	Female	19	Clerk	Shorthand	Tape sizer (cotton)
Winnie Makon	Female	17	Clerk	Bookkeeping	
Isabel Parkinson	Female	25	Weaver	Music	Provision dealer on own account
Ethel Muir	Female	14	None given	Art evening	Architect's assistant
Guy Nicholson	Male	16	Boot polish maker	Inorganic chemistry	Boot polish maker
Richard Nicholson	Male	38	Clerk	Art evening	Labourer in coal yard
Albert Price	Male	16	Analytical chemist	Physics, Mathematics, Inorganic chemistry	Financier