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CHAPTER 1

AN OVERVIEW OF METHODS AND SOURCES

1. Introduction

As noted in the Preface, the researcher's interest in the present topic developed over a long period as a practising librarian and as an educator, but even during the course of the investigation itself the emphasis changed as new sources were discovered and new information became available. Nevertheless, there has been an overall plan which, however flexible in responding to new leads, has driven the way in which the project itself has been undertaken.

During casual reading, certain parallels had been observed between the work of the literary, mechanics' and other similar voluntary institutions during the first half of the nineteenth century, and the services offered by many public libraries during the second half. An investigation into the origins of the 1845 Museums Act (which led to the 1850 Public Libraries & Museums Act)¹ had revealed Buckingham's parliamentary Bills of 1835-1837, which attempted to enable local authorities to provide Public Institutions from a special rate. Various concepts of Public Institutions were prevalent among proponents of workers' education in the early nineteenth century, by which it was advanced that central or local governments should be responsible for the provision of a form of community post-school institution for educational, educative and recreational activities.

This pre-research reading and investigation suggested several possible research questions, from which a simple hypothesis was derived. Questions asked included:-

- (1) What educational philosophies were common to the advocates of the voluntary institutions movement and to the local authority library movement?
- (2) What services were common to the voluntary institutions and to local public libraries?
- (3) What was the socio-economic relationship between the voluntary institutions and the public libraries?

¹ Reid-Smith, Edward R. *Parliament and popular culture in the early nineteenth century: some strands in the history of libraries and adult education*. (Oldham: Research in Librarianship. 1969.)

- (4) What was the legal authority for the introduction and development of public library services?
- (5) What further services did the public libraries develop, and why?
- (6) Why did local government authorities use public library committees and public library facilities instead of other means to provide post-school educational services?

From such questions was formulated a simple and basic hypothesis, which determined the research project: *"that the local government authority facilities provided under the Public Libraries & Museums Acts in effect created the Public Institutions for which socio-political reformers had called in the 1830s and 1840s"*. The problem was then to find ways of gathering and evaluating information which could be used to test this hypothesis which, because qualitative rather than quantitative data were envisaged, was not expressed negatively as would normally have been the case with statistical methodology.

2. Methodologies

Basically, the methodology of this enquiry has fallen into the four main areas or steps of:

- (i) literature searching for the acquisition of data and information,
- (ii) other acquisition methods,
- (iii) the practical manipulation of data in order to create new information, and
- (iv) the synthesis of such information into knowledge in order to write the text of this thesis.

These four steps are described below.

2.1 Literature searching

Most of the data and information acquired during the course of this research project have been found by means of searching the literatures. By 'literature' is meant those recorded sources, whether in manuscript or printed form, which were sought out and consulted for their potential contribution to the knowledge process of the project. The word is here used in the plural form because the literature of several areas had to be consulted; the topic of this thesis lies within an area where the disciplines (and therefore the literatures) of legislative history, government administration, adult education, technical instruction, librarianship and museology overlap. The literature of each was examined not only to ascertain any relationships between them, but to provide the context

for the provision of post-school facilities by English local governments through nineteenth century Public Libraries & Museums legislation.

One of the dangers to be avoided in the literature searching was that of a 'hit and miss' approach, and so a methodical search was instituted from the outset. In outline this process consisted of:

- (a) the use of indexing and abstracting services, in both print and electronic formats;
- (b) the widening of the search by following up bibliographical references in books and periodicals;
- (c) personal visits to identified townships to consult local records;
- (d) contact with persons likely to have pertinent knowledge.

It may be argued that any text constructed by using information gathered from such a variety of sources is liable to conscious bias, or at least to a lack of balance due to incomplete information. In the case of the present thesis, as in all historiography, some information certainly had to be discarded, though only when it was believed that this would not materially affect the search for and presentation of a true picture. At the same time, a conscious effort was made to present an unbiased account whilst recognising that the interpretation of recorded information is naturally influenced by personal factors.

Although initially the search for pertinent literature sought out bibliographical reference works, these were not found to be particularly fruitful. Kelly's annotated bibliography² did suggest a number of works on the history and organisation of adult education in the nineteenth century, and a few about other movements such as libraries, museums, galleries and university extension. However, because that work is comprehensive in scope it is also very selective in its coverage. Another multi-volume reference work which collectively yielded very few pertinent books and periodical articles was the ABHB Annual Bibliography³ which has a world-wide coverage. Reference works relating specifically to periodicals and theses are noted below.

2.2 Other acquisition methods

Although not part of the research plan, serendipity also contributed somewhat to the growing appreciation of the concept of public libraries as community cultural and

² Kelly, T. (ed.). *A select bibliography of adult education in Great Britain, including works published to the end of the year 1972*. (London: National Institute of Adult Education. 3rd ed 1974.)

³ Vervliet, H.D.L. (ed.). *ABHB: annual bibliography of the history of the printed book and libraries*. (The Hague: Nijhoff. 1973-1985.) 15 vols.

educational centres, by providing evidence of a less official viewpoint from nineteenth century fictional literature. Both Disraeli ⁴ and Albert Smith, ⁵ for example, included facetious comments about the value of lectures in the early part of the century, which were echoed in serious works on mechanics' institutions. Towards the end of the century Sir Walter Besant provided, in one of his novels, an idea for a cultural community centre, ⁶ and a People's Palace based on the concept in his book was in fact soon established in London with the aid of a London Guild. At about the same period, Oscar Wilde with dry humour made Lady Bracknell comment that her daughter Gwendolen's father was: "under the impression that she is attending a more than usually lengthy lecture by the University Extension Scheme on the Influence of a permanent income on Thought". ⁷ These quotations suggest that lectures were not only an established feature of adult educational life, but also (apart from Besant's more grandiose concept) that they could be rather an object of fun to many people. Despite such interesting references, however, fiction (and drama) was not systematically explored as a source of information on lectures offered by mechanics' institutes and similar bodies. It was concluded that any factual details or information about attitudes derived from fiction and drama would not have been central to the unfolding argument of this thesis, and that it would require considerable additional time to be spent on the research in order to ensure an adequate representation of viewpoints. In fact, the chief reference work on themes in English fiction (mainly 20th century but also others in print) contained no entries for either mechanics' institutes or lectures. ⁸

Nevertheless, it was noted that suggestions similar to those of Besant had been made much earlier by the Chartists ⁹ and other reformers, and the present author saw a congruence between the vision of these early reformers and the concept of the public library as a community education centre. The realisation of their ideas came, at least in part, when many local government authorities in the late 19th century charged their public library committees with organising museums, art galleries, lectures, and schools of

⁴ Disraeli, B. *Popanilla* [first published 1827].

⁵ Smith, A. *The adventures of Mr. Ledbury and his friend Jack Johnson* [first published c.1841].

⁶ Besant, W. *All sorts and conditions of men: an impossible story* [first published 1882].

⁷ Wilde, O. *The importance of being Earnest*. third act. [first published 1895].

⁸ Cotton, G.B. and Glencross, A. *Fiction index*. (London: Association of Assistant Librarians. 1953.)

⁹ Lovett, W. *The life and struggles of William Lovett...* [first published 1876 but dealing with the 1830's and 1840's].

science and art. This dual educational movement of mechanics' institutes and public library complexes became the major focus of the present research.

Personal communication with a number of educationists and librarians was an ongoing method of information acquisition (and exchange) during the course of the research, and such personal or postal discussions contributed in a myriad of small ways which are difficult to acknowledge. For example, an attempt to check Greenwood's simple assertion ¹⁰ that "Leicester had a rate-supported museum from 1844, under the James Silk Buckingham Act of 1843" was necessary because (1) it was known that Leicester had adopted the Museums Act of 1845, (2) no Museums Act of 1843 had been located, and (3) earlier research on Buckingham had failed to associate him with any museum legislation. This simple quotation resulted in (a) a further intensive search of the literatures on parliamentary, museum and library history, (b) a letter of enquiry to Leicester City Library, and (c) a correspondence with a writer on museums in British education. In the event no solution could be found to this particular problem, which remains a mystery capable of several interpretations which could not be confirmed.

In addition to such interpersonal contact throughout the research project, towards the end of the project was a particular period when a number of minor points needed to be clarified. At this time it was not possible to revisit townships to check these. For example, at Winsford there was uncertainty as to whether the Gilchrist lectures held in the library had been organised by the full council of the local authority or by its library committee. Sometimes (as at Winsford) these queries could not be resolved because documentation could not be located.

Generally speaking, it was not possible to employ other methods of data and information acquisition in the research process, than those noted above. Although a brief attempt was made to locate persons who may have had unrecorded details of library lectures and lecturers, this was not successful. The length of time which had elapsed since the lectures were held in the latter half of the nineteenth century ruled out the possibility of employing oral history as a means of gathering data and information from those who had attended or organised them. Further, an initial though limited enquiry failed to find anyone who had second-hand details (such as by having heard parents' comments in former years), and this line of enquiry was not pursued because of the low probability that any such hearsay recollections would in any case add significantly to what could be discovered elsewhere.

¹⁰ Greenwood, T. *Public libraries: a history of the movement and a manual for the organization and management of rate-supported libraries.* (London: Cassell, 4th ed. 1894). p.68.

2.3 Manipulation of data

In addition to the acquisition of data and information from recorded sources, the research project involved some practical work which resulted in the creation of new information from that data. During the course of the research a special attempt was made to create complete lists of lectures offered by public library committees—including in each case the name of the lecturer, title or subject of the lecture, when held, and miscellaneous details such as numbers of people attending. These data are recorded individually for nine townships in Appendix 2, and for eight of them have been combined in Appendix 3 to create an alphabetical listing of the people who gave the lectures, together with the titles and dates.

From these data it was then possible to create information which could subsequently be used in the text of this thesis. For example, Appendix 2 yielded information concerning the relative popularity of different lecture subjects in each of the townships, which in most cases could be compared with details of the subject matter of the library books held in stock and of those issued to members. Such information has given an indication of the varied use of these several public libraries as sources of self-education by means of reading, and of attending lectures and classes. Similarly, data in Appendix 3 have been used to provide information about the degree of involvement of individual people as lecturers and tutors in library adult education, some of whom went on to contribute to the work of other educational agencies. Appendices 2 and 3 have provided information which has been used particularly in Chapter 6, but also to a lesser extent in Chapters 7 and 8.

A reasoned attempt was also made to determine the actual subject matter of individual lectures (not always easy, especially when fanciful titles were given to them) which were then classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification (D.D.C.) scheme as far as possible. The D.D.C. is one of the main schemes by which books are classified in public libraries, and towards the end of the nineteenth century was replacing the home-grown schemes which public libraries had been using. Such data are presented in both tabular and bar chart formats, to facilitate interpretation. This has allowed comparisons to be made more easily between the subjects of lectures and the subjects of the printed materials held in stock and with the books issued to readers.

2.4 Knowledge creation

The process of analysing data, creating information from them, and of synthesising knowledge from the mass of information acquired from various sources, made possible the writing of the thesis itself. The unravelling of "the tangled threads and

stubborn knots" to which Richard Middleton referred (page xvii above) as being a skill of the historian highlights the essential selectivity of the process of knowledge creation. In this necessary simplification by selection, implicit in historiography, lies the major danger of over-simplification—of conscious or subconscious or even accidental bias.

Knowledge creation (like scientific discovery) is a continuing process which is based on the work of others, and on which others will build in their turn. Even though historical writing cannot, therefore, claim to represent "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth", there is a responsibility to attempt to maintain balance or at least to make it clear that the new knowledge is in one area only. In the present research project culminating in the writing of this thesis, emphasis has been laid on the part played by local government authorities through the Public Libraries and Museums Acts. It must be remembered that local authorities and their library services were only one category of agency in the field of post-school education. However, it is maintained that the value of knowledge creation in this particular area of the field helps to correct the imbalance of educational historiography which has virtually ignored the contributions of English local government through their public libraries during the nineteenth century.

3. The sources of data and information

It became apparent that the research needed to examine contemporary sources of data and information, and so a schedule was drawn up to ensure adequate coverage of 'open' (public) and 'closed' (working documents) sources. In the former category were periodicals, newspapers and annual reports, whilst manuscript minutes and other archival materials fell into the second category. These categories are, of course, only useful as a guide to probable accessibility and are not meant to form a definitive classification.

All sources depended almost entirely on an increasing knowledge of which local authorities had offered pertinent services. This led to the compilation of a complex spreadsheet as a working tool assisting the research process itself by recording brief details of data acquired, and which (much simplified) forms the basis of Appendix 1. The identification of townships was greatly facilitated by the various publications of Thomas Greenwood noted below, and by the news items sections in contemporary professional periodicals.

3.1 Primary sources

Although some secondary sources were used to identify places where post-school educational services were definitely or possibly offered by local government authorities, most of the data and information were gathered from primary sources. These consisted of printed works such as local government and library reports, and of manuscript records such as committee minutes, located in local history libraries and records offices throughout the country.

3.1.1 *annual reports*

In spite of their potential value to the social historian, annual reports as a class of document are often presented in an unattractive format, and possibly for this reason many have not survived. There is no national collection of them as far as English public libraries are concerned, and relatively few libraries themselves have complete sets of their own committee reports let alone those of other community bodies such as mechanics' institutes. However, useful though far from complete collections are held by the Library Association in London and by Manchester City Library. The former are presumably the annual reports sent to the Association on a voluntary basis, and which were usually the source of news-items in the professional periodicals noted in (3.1.4) below.

Where annual reports have survived either in local libraries or archives, these were consulted and some provided information which has been incorporated in this thesis. Occasionally these annual reports were a source of details concerning lectures and other activities, though generally they have only been the source of data concerning book-stocks and issues from which the tables and charts have been compiled. In addition to the annual reports of local voluntary bodies, the reports of town councils, library committees (and museum and art gallery committees where these were separately published), as well as technical instruction committees were all sought out.

3.1.2 *autobiographies*

Although biographies are a form of secondary historiography, it may be argued that autobiographies are primary literature which (bearing in mind possible deliberate falsification and inaccuracy of memory) may be used to undertake textual data analysis in order to determine at least what an author believed (or wished to be seen as believing) at a given period about earlier events. One problem is, of course, that autobiographies are not written to record complete and accurate information about a given topic, but are selective and usually wide-ranging. Nevertheless, they may provide valuable information to assist in appreciating the environment in which events took place, and offer an insight into motives and attitudes.

So the autobiography of William Lovett,¹¹ first published in 1876 but dealing with his early life and middle-age, provided one man's view of his involvement in the Chartist movement of the 1830s and 1840s. One call was for "Parliament to enact that a sufficient number of *District Halls*, or commodious buildings be erected in every voting district to be used, when not needed for the elections, for the purpose of public meetings, lectures, evening schools, concerts, or other district purposes".¹² This was expanded in a later document as a call for:¹³

libraries and reading-rooms, in sufficient numbers, in different districts of your towns and villages, to which the young and old of both sexes should have free access after the labours of the day; as well as to borrow books from them to take to their homes; as also to have some share in the management. In addition to which, you should aim at establishing halls of science, where the young might extend the knowledge they acquired at school or obtain a more extensive knowledge of any particular science. Our museums and galleries of art should also be freely accessible to the people... and if large halls were connected with them, and men of science and art employed to give daily lectures on their contents, they would form schools of instruction of the first importance to our people.

This was the environment in which public libraries were proposed, which in turn often developed into educational centres for the post-school community.

Lovett was also associated with the Working Men's Association, which was the subject of a standard account by Howell who used the original minute books to compile his work which was written in 1900 (though never completed).¹⁴ In fact, much of his booklet consists of extracts from the minute books, though with interpretations which Rowe (editor of the published version) considered wrong in emphasis. Rowe wrote: "This is partly due to the wide range of material covered in outlining the events leading up to the formation of the Association and partly to a tendency to exaggerate the importance of working-class activity".¹⁵ Following this movement in the first part of the century was that of the Working Men's Clubs, which grew up at the same time as the public library movement during the second half of the century. The second edition of Henry Solly's book¹⁶ was the chief source of details for these institutes, which were formed because "The Mechanics's Institutes have done vast good, but not generally to the

11 Lovett, W. *op.cit.*

12 *ibid.* p.421.

13 *ibid.* p.440.

14 Howell, G. *A history of the Working Men's Association from 1836 to 1850: compiled from the Minute Books of the Association, with elucidations from other sources.* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Frank Graham. 1970.)

15 *ibid.* p.7.

16 Solly, H. *Working Men's Social Clubs and Educational Institutes.* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Kent & Co. 2nd ed 1904.) The first edition appeared in 1867.

working men".¹⁷ By the beginning of the twentieth century the Working Men's Club and Institute Union had just under a thousand affiliated bodies.

Another person writing his own life-story set largely in the 1830s and 1840s was James Silk Buckingham,¹⁸ an East India Company man elected to the British Parliament in the Reform Election of 1832. Like the promoters of the future Working Men's Clubs (and of many public libraries), he was a committed teetotaler who worked for educational and recreational facilities for the working poor. His autobiography sets the scene in which his ideas developed, leading him to propose the Public Walks and Public Institutions Bills which (if passed) would have helped to bring about the public library community complexes some twenty years earlier than in fact they began to be established by local government authorities.

3.1.3 *committee minutes*

The records of contemporary decisions are mainly in the form of committee minute books, and these were examined for each relevant township if still available. They tell who attended the meetings at which decisions were made, and usually who proposed the motions authorising the execution of policies. In some cases during the nineteenth century the arguments are also given, which may often be of more interest than the resulting motions themselves.

Four categories of committee minutes were examined wherever possible; these were those of :

- (a) mechanics' and similar institutions,
- (b) local government councils,
- (c) public library committees, and
- (d) technical instruction committees.

It was found that many minute books had not survived (especially those of the voluntary adult education bodies), and that the quality of information and data which this class of document contained varied considerably. Minute books were usually housed in public library local history collections, in town clerks' offices, local archives or county records offices. Local government reorganisation could result in problems; at Abingdon (formerly in Berkshire but now in Oxfordshire) the public library believed that its older Minute Books had been deposited with the Berkshire Record Office, whose Archivist

¹⁷ *ibid.* pp.36-37.

¹⁸ Buckingham, J.S. *Autobiography*. (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans. 1855.)

believed that the borough records were still kept by the Town Council.¹⁹ After more than a year these have still not been located. On the other hand, the Minute Book 1892-1901 of the Loughborough Public Library Committee was given to the Leicestershire Record Office in 1982 by a widow clearing out her late husband's papers, an official recording: "I don't know whether it is ours and therefore an overdue special loan or not. If not, I think we could 'adopt' it."²⁰ Local government reorganisation very occasionally resulted in the mislaying of records which had been noted at the beginning of this research project. Where Minute Books and similar records survived, detailed indexes to their individual contents were often either completely lacking, or existed only in a rudimentary form. This meant that such sources had to be read page-by-page for potentially pertinent details—a process which was time-consuming but which nevertheless also provided the general background of local government activities and of the attitudes of committee members.

3.1.4 *contemporary periodicals and newspapers*

In addition, a comprehensive search was made of professional periodicals published in the nineteenth century and later, and of volumes of published conference proceedings of the time. It was discovered that the indexes to individual volumes were often not sufficiently comprehensive to ensure retrieval of all pertinent references, and so a somewhat laborious page-by-page search had to be undertaken. The major contemporary professional periodicals were (a) the Library Association of the United Kingdom *Monthly Notes*, 1880-1883; (b) the *Library Chronicle: a Journal of Librarianship and Bibliography*, which was published for the Library Association, 1884-1888; (c) *The Library: a Magazine of Bibliography and Literature*, which was the organ of the Library Association, 1889-1898 and new series from 1900; (d) the *Library World*, from 1898; (e) the *Library Association Record*, from 1899 to date; and (f) *The Record of Technical and Secondary Education*, from its first issue in November 1891 to 1899. All of these were searched for relevant news-items and articles.

As noted above, the contents pages of a small number of professional periodicals led to several older papers bearing on the topic of this research, so that the search was extended by employing several more general indexes. These, however, did not add greatly to the number of papers, and scarcely at all to the quality of information. It would appear that apart from some contemporary interest in certain aspects of post-school

¹⁹ letters from John Pilling of Abingdon Library (24 March 1993), and Peter Durrant, Berkshire County Archivist (18 May 1993).

²⁰ loose pencilled note in, Borough of Loughborough: Public Library Committee. *Minute Book* [14 November 1892-5 July 1901].

educational services offered by public libraries, there has been little written on this topic for very many years. A search of the American ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) online database was unproductive, and even the British LISA (Library and Information Science Abstracts) was not fruitful. On the other hand, two American indexes published in book form yielded references to several articles in periodicals concerning library lectures. Although small in number they were of considerable interest as an indication of how the concept was spreading to the United States. These were (a) *Poole's index to periodical literature* (six volumes covering 1802-1907), and the *Nineteenth century readers' guide to periodical literature* by Cushing and Morris (two volumes covering 1890-1922).

In some though not all cases, local newspapers were scanned during key dates for possible references to items of relevance to the research project. One major difficulty was the almost total lack of indexes to local newspapers, which meant that either time-consuming page-by-page searches would be needed or the possibility faced that useful items may be missed. Because of the very large number of townships examined during the research project, close scrutiny of unindexed newspapers was not usually feasible. There were exceptions—for example, the two Oxford newspapers received special attention and became one of the main sources of information concerning the library lectures which are listed in Appendices 2 and 3. In Northampton and other townships, scrap-books containing newspaper cuttings and other ephemera in local history collections have proved fruitful, and sometimes suggested that a closer examination of local newspapers would be worth while.

3.1.5 *government department reports*

Although the national parliament had passed the legislation which enabled local government authorities to offer certain community services, these were not overseen by the central government and so few departmental resources exist. A major exception is the Science and Art Department in South Kensington. By the end of the 19th century, the Department was publishing five series of 'blue books' each year: ²¹

- (a) The Directory, or Code of rules, for establishing and conducting Science and Art Classes;
- (b) The Calendar, History and General Summary of Regulations, which gives a history and general summary of the Department, with a summary of the rules and a list of the Science and Art Schools and Classes, &c.;
- (c) The Annual Report, which gives full information as to the operations of the Department during the past year;

²¹ *Forty-third report of the Department of Science and Art of the Committee of Council on Education, with appendices.* (London: HMSO. 1896.) p.ii.

(d) Drawing and Manual Instruction in Elementary Day Schools, &c. Supplement to the Annual Report, giving the details with regard to instruction in Drawing and Manual Instruction in Elementary Schools and Drawing in Evening Continuation Schools during the past year; and

(e) Annual Return made to the Department, showing the extent to which, and the manner in which, Local Authorities in the United Kingdom are applying funds to the purposes of Technical Education (including Science, Art, Technical, and manual Instruction), under the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, and the Technical Instruction Acts, &c.

The Calendars and the Annual Reports were found to be particularly valuable for identifying those science and art classes held in public libraries, between them giving comprehensive information on all such classes wherever held. The data included name of town and place where classes were held, names of Secretary and Teacher, numbers of students, subjects offered, and details of grants and fees. The Calendar also listed Medallists, Whitworth Scholars, Royal Exhibitioners (Science) and National Scholars (Art), giving place-names for the first two categories.

3.1.6 *illustrations*

Graphic illustrations (including drawings, photographs, maps and plans) were also sought to provide data of a non-verbal kind, and several of these have been reproduced in this thesis (see contents list). Elevation of buildings are valuable in indicating what joint-use buildings looked like to the people who enjoyed their educational and educative facilities in the nineteenth century, whilst floor plans show the internal arrangements and the degree of physical relationship between the various departments. These illustrations were mainly taken from published works as acknowledged, few others being located in local collections.

3.1.7 *parliamentary papers*

Considerable use has been made of various parliamentary papers, including Bills and Acts of Parliament, as well as the Reports printed under the authority of either House. For the proceedings of parliamentary business, the *Journal of the House of Lords* and the *Journal of the House of Commons* have been searched for references to libraries and associated educational institutions from 1509 and 1547 respectively. The Journals have been supplemented whenever possible by Hansard²² and by Barrow²³. The most intensive use of parliamentary papers to investigate the legislative history of libraries in the first part of the nineteenth century was published by the present writer as a

²² Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*. especially vol 29, 1835.

²³ Barrow's *Mirror of Parliament*. especially for 1831-1838.

pamphlet,²⁴ and this has been used extensively as the basis of Chapter 3 of this thesis. Without the *Journals* in particular, the importance of Buckingham's Bills would have remained unrecognised. They were also the primary source of details of petitions to parliament on such matters as relief of stamp duties ('taxes on knowledge' as they were popularly and politically known) and of local rates for cultural institutions. During this earlier period the Sessional Papers provided valuable details of Parliamentary Reports on such pertinent aspects as education (including public libraries), public institutions, and alcohol abuse.

For the second half of the nineteenth century, Parliament passed a series of Public Libraries Acts (see bibliography) and published several reports on such libraries in its sessional papers. These have been used extensively in Chapter 4, and referred to throughout the thesis as appropriate. Four reports of the Select Committee on Public Libraries were issued in 1849, 1850, 1851 and 1852 respectively,²⁵ of which the first two are of considerable value and importance particularly in connection with the passing of the first Public Libraries Act of 1850. Much emphasis was laid on the voluntary adult education institutions, and on the value of lectures. It is apparent from the questions asked of witnesses (and especially of Edward Edwards) that the two reports were not so much a record of newly ascertained information as a means of publicising what was already known and decided upon. The three later reports, which gave details of libraries overseas, were used somewhat belatedly to support the contention that the U.K. lagged far behind continental Europe in providing access to public libraries. They served not only to justify the Act which had already been passed, but to support extension of that Act especially in the provision of science and art.

3.1.8 *posters*

No national collection of library posters exists, but a few survive in local history library collections. Such ephemera can provide valuable supplementary information—

²⁴ Reid-Smith, E.R. *op.cit.*

²⁵ Parliament: Select Committee on Public Libraries. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, together with the proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix.* (1849.) Paper 548, vol XVII.

Parliament: Select Committee on Public Libraries. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, together with the proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index.* (1850.) Paper 655, vol XVIII.

Parliament: Select Committee on Public Libraries. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, with an Appendix.* (1851.) Paper 630, vol X.

Parliament: Select Committee on Public Libraries. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, with an Appendix.* (1852.) Paper 532, vol V.

and where they survive are sometimes the only source of some details. Posters from the local collections in Aston and Ashton-under-Lyne public libraries are reproduced as illustrations in this thesis.

3.1.9 *year-books*

Two year-books edited by Thomas Greenwood proved to be invaluable contemporary sources of data and information. The first of these was published in 1897 and in particular provided useful for details of library lectures and Schools of Science and Art.²⁶ The next edition did not appear until 1900, but in addition to lectures and the Schools it was especially useful for details of technical instruction, museums and galleries.²⁷ It is not always clear, however, whether the lectures were of the 'liberal adult education' type offered by libraries or were technical ones in connection with classes in science or art. Unfortunately, the Library Association did not begin to publish its own year-books until well into the twentieth century, so that this series could not be used in this research project.

3.2 Secondary sources

In addition to contemporary records, many works published (or written) during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been consulted for either background information (the general environment in which the subject matter of the thesis was set), or more particular topics which emerged and which form the various strands which the thesis has tried to weave into a valid and balanced account. These were accessed in a number of ways. For books the initial general bibliographical source searched was the *British National Bibliography* from 1950, and those for more specialised topics are noted below.

3.2.1 *historiography*

Many historical studies have been consulted for their potential relevance, some of which are noted here in order to indicate their value and interest. The Hammonds' account of the Chartist period²⁸ provides a readable and wide-ranging account of the years which saw the growth of the concept of public institutions, and the introduction of

²⁶ Greenwood, T. (ed.). *Greenwood's library year book 1897: a record of general library progress and work*. (London: Cassell. 1897.)

²⁷ Greenwood, T. (ed.). *British library year book 1900-1901: a record of library progress and work*. (London: Scott, Greenwood. 1900.)

²⁸ Hammond, J.L. and B.H. *The age of the Chartists, 1832-1854: a study of discontent*. (London: Longmans, Green. 1930.)

the first legislation permitting town councils to establish and maintain public museums and libraries. The 'drink problem' (which is closely allied with these proposals) is dealt with in their Chapter 10, and voluntary institutions in Chapter 17 entitled 'The beginnings of popular culture'. Parks, public libraries and concert rooms are included in Chapter 18 'The beginnings of common enjoyment', which vividly portrays the jumble of activities which the discontented English population of various classes was creating.

Rather more soberly, the collection of papers on chartist studies edited by Asa Briggs²⁹ looks more closely at the activities of these social and political reformers in various towns and counties in Great Britain. No chapter deals specifically with education (as there are for the land plan, anti-corn laws, and government relationship for example), but education, lectures and libraries are briefly noted in several.

Other specialist works on particular problems of the period have provided useful information and ideas. W.B. Stephens on literacy³⁰ helped to set the socio-demographic context of reading skills, so necessary for increasing exploitation of book-based library services as well as helping to explain why non-bibliographical services were introduced. Another study found useful for its information and views on literacy was a paper by Smith,³¹ whilst the uses of literacy were described by many writers including Harold Perkin on the press³² and Webb on literacy in the years before the first Public Libraries Act.³³ The latter work is now somewhat dated, but Collet's account of the campaign to remove the newspaper stamp duties ('taxes on knowledge') remains an interesting starting point for understanding the politics of increasing literacy in the nineteenth century.³⁴

²⁹ Briggs, A. (ed.). *Chartist studies*. (London: Macmillan. 1959.)

³⁰ Stephens, W.B. *Education, literacy and society, 1830-1870: the geography of diversity in provincial England*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1987.)

³¹ Smith, D.E. Literacy in West Yorkshire and West Sussex 1660-1835. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, vol 24, no.1, January 1992. pp.58-73.

³² Perkin, H. The origins of the popular press. *History Today*, vol VII, no.7, July 1957.

³³ Webb, R.K. *The British working class reader 1790-1848: literacy and social tension*. (London: George Allen & Unwin. 1955.)

³⁴ Collet, C.D. *History of the taxes on knowledge: their origin and repeal*. (London: Watts & Co, 1933.)

3.2.1.1 *biographies*

Monographs about people form a special category of historiography, and may be classed as person-oriented case-studies allied with (but distinct from) autobiographies as noted in Section 3.1.2 above. For example, to complement Buckingham's book about himself is Turner's account of his life and work.³⁵

3.2.1.2 *histories of education*

There is no lack of books on English educational history, and several were consulted for information about the wider context in which the research was set. Few of these even mention public libraries and not one acknowledges the role of the Public Libraries & Museums Acts in enabling local government authorities to develop post-school institutions of the type described in this thesis. They did, however, note such topics as technical education and university extension, with both of which the public library complexes had connections.

The main works used in this way were Curtis's history (which in two paragraphs mentioned libraries only in connection with children, but which has a chapter on 'Adult education and the development of scientific and technical education');³⁶ Curtis and Boulwood's introductory history (which has a chapter on adult education but does not mention public libraries at all);³⁷ and Barnard's history of English education (whose chapters on university education and technical education again helped to set this study in its wider educational context).³⁸

3.2.1.3 *histories of adult education*

A useful starting point of bibliographical research was Kelly's select bibliography of adult education³⁹ with the update by Thomas and Davies.⁴⁰ Of the general histories

³⁵ Turner, R.E. *James Silk Buckingham: 1786-1855*. (London: Williams & Norgate, 1934.)

³⁶ Curtis, S.J. *History of English education in Great Britain*. (London: University Tutorial Press. 7th ed 1967.)

³⁷ Curtis, S.J. and Boulwood, M.E.A. *An introductory history of English education since 1800*. (London: University Tutorial Press. 4th ed 1966.)

³⁸ Barnard, H.C. *A history of English education since 1760*. (London: University of London Press. 2nd ed 1961.)

³⁹ Kelly, T. *A select bibliography of adult education in Great Britain including works published to the end of 1972*. (Leicester, National Institute for Adult Education. 1974.)

⁴⁰ Thomas, J.E. and Davies, J.H. *A select bibliography of adult continuing education in Great Britain including works published to the end of 1981*. (Leicester, National Institute for Adult Continuing Education. 1984.)

of British adult education, Tom Kelly's is perhaps one of the most interesting to read. Chapters eight to fourteen inclusive cover the nineteenth century in some detail, from the mechanics' institutes to university extension.⁴¹ His treatment of public libraries, museums and galleries occupies only a few pages,⁴² but even this treatment exceeds that of most other works on educational history.

The first three chapters of the history of Liverpool University, also by Kelly,⁴³ were useful for background details of the history of the Liverpool University College, with which the Public Library Committee enjoyed a good working relationship during the nineteenth century. In addition, details concerning the academic careers of many of the library lecturers at Liverpool were culled from this work, and used to enhance the reference value of Appendix 3.

Nineteenth century adult education also expressed itself strongly in the activities of the mechanics' institute and university extension movements, and these are dealt with in more detail in Sections 4.1 and 4.5 below.

3.2.1.4 *histories of libraries and librarianship*

Many histories of libraries touch on educational aspects but do not deal with them in any great depth. Ollé's examination guidebook has a chapter on the mechanics' institutes which concludes that: "The literature of the MI libraries, as distinct from that on the MI movement generally, is slender",⁴⁴ and this situation has not changed in recent years. The centenary of the passing of the first Public Libraries Act of 1850 produced several commemorative works (but strangely the centenary of its forerunner, the Museums Act of 1845, did not—possibly because of wartime concerns in 1945). Munford's *Penny Rate* was a typical popular account,⁴⁵ which noted the educational origins of the movement but failed to detail the subsequent activities of the kind uncovered by this research project. Indeed, it was this lack of information in bibliothecal historiography which made the research topic so intriguing.

41 Kelly, T. *A history of adult education in Great Britain*. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 1970.) pp.112-242.

42 *ibid.* pp.173-180.

43 Kelly, T. *For advancement of learning: the University of Liverpool 1881-1981*. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 1981.)

44 Ollé, J.G. *Library history: an examination guidebook*. (London: Clive Bingley. 2nd ed 1971.) p.65.

45 Munford, W.A. *Penny rate: aspects of British public library history, 1850-1950*. (London: Library Association. 1951.)

On the other hand, Greenwood's *Public Libraries*⁴⁶ and his other publications noticed elsewhere in this chapter are now a valuable source of information for the historian. Only the first part of this work was written from an historical viewpoint, but like other contemporary publications consulted in this research the details which he gathered for his surveys and year-books form a bridge between primary and secondary materials.

An historian of adult education who has also written about public libraries is Professor Thomas Kelly of the University of Liverpool, whose two major works on British public libraries cover the period from mediaeval times to 1965. The first of these covers the period before the 1850 Public Libraries Act, and deals with various libraries open to the public. These included church and parish libraries, subscription libraries, national and university libraries.⁴⁷ In many cases, of course, actual access was restricted to those with the money and the desire and facility to read the kinds of books provided, and they were not public in the later sense of being rate-supported. In his second work, Kelly brings the history up to date and includes mention of extension activities including lectures.⁴⁸ However, these are primarily histories of the library movement in Britain, and library adult educational activities are not covered in any great detail.

3.2.2 *periodicals (twentieth century)*

A search was made in the periodical press for articles on the history of adult education and allied topics for this thesis. Relevant articles often appear in sources which are not expected, and because most subject-related indexing services work from a limited list of periodical titles these 'strays' are rarely picked up. One small work consulted to overcome this limitation was number 9 in the History of Education Society's 'Guides to sources in the history of education' series.⁴⁹ This covers forty-four English-language periodicals, but the papers deal with education in many different countries and from antiquity to the present day. Author and subject indexes are included.

⁴⁶ Greenwood, T. *Public Libraries: a history of the movement and a manual for the organization and management of rate-supported libraries.* (London: Cassell. 4th ed. 1894.)

⁴⁷ Kelly, T. *Early public libraries: a history of public libraries in Great Britain before 1850.* (London: The Library Association. 1966.)

⁴⁸ Kelly, T. *A history of public libraries in Great Britain 1845-1965.* (London: The Library Association. 1973.)

⁴⁹ Szreter, R. *The history of education in non-education learned journals 1939-84.* (Lancaster: History of Education Society. 1986.) Guides to sources in the history of education no.9.

3.2.3 *theses and dissertations*

Unpublished theses and dissertations often form an especially useful class of literature for the researcher, affording clues to particular services in addition to filling in the general background against which the services were offered. In searching for potentially useful ones in connection with the present research, it was possible to consult a few printed and electronic indexes of varied usefulness. For England the relevant sections of the annual Aslib indexes were first consulted,⁵⁰ and then the more specialised ones such as Blackwell's lists⁵¹ and the microfiche edition of BETI 3 for education.⁵² Legge's register⁵³ was consulted in printed format, and the online library catalogues of English universities through the Hynet facility (via Internet and Janet electronic media). The fellowship theses of the Library Association (now in the British Library Information Science Service) were also examined, but many of the previous syllabus F.L.A. essays which had been noted at the beginning of the research project did not survive the transfer of the professional library which was housed in the Association's headquarters.

In the case of England it is less easy to find out what M.Ed. theses have been written, particularly because library computer catalogues are incomplete—older works being either not recorded at all or still on catalogue cards which are not accessible through Internet and OPACs. Fortunately the History of Education Society's *Bulletin* has, over the years, listed work in progress and presented. The History of Education Society has been publishing an annual union list of higher degree theses since 1968. These list and index both master's and doctoral theses dealing with the history of education world-wide, presented to British universities.⁵⁴ So far some twenty-one booklets have been issued covering the period 1968 to 1990, and the subject indexes help to indicate the lessening interest of educational historians in nineteenth century adult educational movements.

⁵⁰ Aslib. *Index to theses accepted for higher degrees in the universities of Great Britain and Ireland. vol.1, 1950-51 to date.* (London: Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux.)

⁵¹ Blackwell, A.M. *A list of researches in education and educational psychology presented for higher degrees in the universities of the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic from 1918 to 1948.* (London: Newnes for N.F.E.R. 1950.) Also supplements for 1949, 1950 and 1951. 4 vols.

⁵² Johnson, J.R.V. (ed.) *British Education Theses Index 1950-1980: BETI 3.* (Leicester: Librarians of Institutes and Schools of Education. 1983.)

⁵³ Legge, C.D. *Register of research in progress in adult education 1974 and 1975.* (Manchester: University of Manchester, Department of Adult Education. 1975.)

⁵⁴ History of Education Society. *Research in the history of education: a list of theses for higher degrees in British universities completed in [1968-1990].* (Leicester: History of Education Society.)

For the U.S.A. *Dissertation Abstracts International* is an invaluable tool for locating doctoral dissertations. Little's bibliography⁵⁵ was also consulted—this is arranged under author order and suffers from having no subject index.

Some of the theses and dissertations were consulted in the universities to which they were presented for the award of research degrees, a few were borrowed through the universities' interlibrary loan systems, and several were purchased in photocopy format. However, no thesis was located which covered the whole topic of the present research project.

3.2.3.1 *theses on education*

A very large number of theses on education have been presented, and it was not always apparent from the titles just how useful they would be for the present research. Basically they fell into three main groups:

- (a) those concerned with particular aspects of educational policy and history affecting the country as a whole;
- (b) works dealing specifically with the whole spectrum of education in one particular town or other locality; and
- (c) theses on particular aspects of education in particular townships.

It was found that English Ph.D. theses tended to fall into the first category, whilst M.Ed. theses were a more useful source of information on the educational activities of particular places.

Pertinent to this present research, studies of technical education have been undertaken by a number of research workers and tended to fit into categories (a) and (c) above. A broad survey by David Thomas was written up as a London University doctoral thesis in 1940, and examined the development of technical education between the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the passing of the 1889 Technical Instruction Act.⁵⁶ This study covered such aspects as the work of the Science and Art Department, technical education in the new universities, the city guilds, technical institutes, and legislation. It relied heavily on contemporary published sources such as commission reports and Hansard, and the bibliography listed many cited books published in the second half of the nineteenth century. A later doctoral study by Jeremy Blanchet was more concerned with the people involved, both individuals such as the Rev Henry Solly who founded the

⁵⁵ Little, L.C. *A bibliography of doctoral dissertations on adults and adult education*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, rev ed 1963.)

⁵⁶ Thomas, D.H. *The development of technical education in England 1851-1899, with special reference to economic factors*. (unpublished London University Ph.D. thesis, 1940.)

Working Men's Club and Art Union, and those who combined to form the National Association for the Promotion of Technical Education in 1887. Presented to Oxford University it also relied heavily on published materials, but covered a somewhat different period from that of Thomas.⁵⁷

The work of the Department of Science and Art, noted by both Thomas and Blanchet, formed the subject for a doctoral thesis by Harry Butterworth which was submitted to Sheffield University in 1968. In addition to printed sources such as Hansard and the annual reports of the Department, Butterworth made good use of Cole's manuscript diary for the early years.⁵⁸ This thesis falls neatly into three foolscap volumes dealing respectively with (a) administrative history, (b) institutions and instruments, and (c) political and social settings. Although public libraries receive little mention in any of the three theses noted above, these three theses proved valuable in setting the context for the present research as far as technical instruction was concerned.

Theses dealing with education in particular towns and cities may cumulatively add greatly to our knowledge of the real effects of government measures on local communities, and conversely show how local pressures may lead to national action. Many of these studies note the use of libraries of various types—usually those of mechanics' institutes and similar bodies—but tend to ignore the work of the public libraries. For example, the Leicester University master's thesis by M.J. Millwood in 1969, dealing with technical education in that city, had little to say about public libraries other than the somewhat derogatory remark that: "Most of the Institutes that sprang up throughout Britain rapidly degenerated into free public libraries used by the lower middle class, and only a few (notably London, Manchester and Leeds) managed to fulfil, adequately, the functions for which they were originally intended".⁵⁹ Millwood then went on to say that the Leicester Mechanics' Institute, faced with the difficulties caused by illiteracy, confined the institute's activities from 1858 to a library and reading room which, on the evidence of a former assistant librarian there, also catered mainly for the middle class.

⁵⁷ Blanchet, J. *Science, craft and the state: a study of English technical education and its advocates 1867-1906*. (unpublished Oxford University D.Phil. thesis. 1968.)

⁵⁸ Butterworth, H. *The Science and Art Department, 1853-1900*. (unpublished Sheffield University Ph.D. thesis. 1968.)

⁵⁹ Millwood, M.J. *The development of technical education in Leicester 1860-1938*. (unpublished Leicester University M.Ed. thesis. 1969.) p.19.

3.2.3.2 *theses on library adult education*

There have been few theses and dissertations on libraries and adult education, and these tend to deal with current or recent services rather than with the nineteenth century. Most concern the U.S.A. rather than the U.K. Nevertheless, such works are often valuable for the insight which they give into the topics with which they are concerned, and as such indicate the various forms which library adult education have taken at different times and in various places.

The educational function of the public library was recognised by Robert Lee in his Chicago doctoral dissertation⁶⁰ presented in 1963, which attempted a broad historical survey from 1833. Viewing the educational role as being mainly one for adults, Lee concluded (in a publication based on his research) that: "as public libraries [in the U.S.A.] increased in number and in the size of their collections, services other than those stemming from the educational objectives began to develop. Recreational reading was introduced as a service in a number of libraries during the 1870's".⁶¹ The early period saw books considered as educational tools in their own right, but in later years there were more conscious adult educational activities. The leadership of the American Library Association in library adult education is well documented, as well as the published thoughts of many individual practising librarians. Only printed sources (books, periodicals and reports) were used in this study.

In the previous year, Margaret Monroe presented her doctoral dissertation to Columbia University, based on case-studies of three major American public library systems.⁶² The objectives were to trace the changing basic concepts, to determine to what extent the changes were fulfilling a consistent purpose, and to assess the degree to which library materials had determined the adult education services offered. This work was based on printed reports of the libraries concerned, and on the books and articles written by staff members. Interviews were also held but manuscript sources were not consulted. Monroe found that library adult education had been responsible for the professionalisation of adult services, and had provided leadership and direction to the profession of librarianship in America.

⁶⁰ Lee, R.E. *The educational commitment of the American public library, 1833-1956*. (Chicago University Ph.D. dissertation. 1963.)

⁶¹ Lee, R.E. *Continuing education for adults through the American public library, 1833-1964*. (Chicago: American Library Association. 1966.) p.v.

⁶² Monroe, M.E. *The evolving concept of adult education in three public libraries: 1920-1955*. (Columbia University D.L.S. dissertation. 1962.)

Other case-studies, this time of nine American state library agencies, were used by Donald Foos in his doctoral dissertation presented in 1971 to Florida State University.⁶³ Foos was investigating their involvement in library adult education as well as their supportive role for other adult education bodies. Although the historical background is given, the dissertation mainly deals with the programmes, organisation (giving a structural chart), current role at the time of the study, and workshops held. Although all of the state library agencies were established before 1930, most of the activities date from the 1940s. Foos found in fact that the agencies had concentrated on general programmes rather than on specifically adult educational ones, and that if anything their role was one of passive support. State financial provision did not, apparently, affect either the state libraries' activities in adult education, or encourage the involvement of the agencies themselves.

Peter Hiatt was also interested in the educational usage of books, in his 1962 Rutgers doctoral dissertation.⁶⁴ Based on twenty-nine interviews with adults of eighth grade education or less held at branch libraries in Baltimore and Cleveland, he hypothesised that there is a direct relationship between interest in library use by such adults in metropolitan core city areas and adaptation of branch library services in these areas. Location of high-quality services, accessibility to professional staff, easy reading materials, films and other group programmes, and special atmosphere-building, were all found to be important factors in encouraging such adults to use the library. The actual educational value of the libraries was not, however, measured.

Two studies recognised that the attitudes of supervisory staff may well determine the adult educational services offered by public libraries, and although these were both written up in the 1960s the concepts of the services are those found in the nineteenth century. The first study was presented by Patrick Penland in 1960 as a doctoral dissertation to the University of Michigan, and was based on questionnaires sent to a sample of 260 public librarians in that State.⁶⁵ The study briefly examined the educational objectives and functions of American public libraries before 1900, twentieth century educational concepts and functions of the public library, and the public librarian

⁶³ Foos, D.D. *The role of the state library in adult education: a critical analysis of nine Southeastern state library agencies.* (Florida State University Ph.D. dissertation. 1971.)

⁶⁴ Hiatt, P. *Public library branch services for adults of low education.* (unpublished Rutgers University Ph.D. dissertation. 1962.)

⁶⁵ Penland, P.R. *The image of public library adult education as reflected in the opinions of public library supervisory staff members in the public libraries of Michigan over 25,000.* (unpublished Michigan University Ph.D. dissertation. 1960.)

as a professional educator. Guttman's Cornell scaling technique was then employed to measure the attitudes of his sample concerning the librarian as an educator, staff-wide responsibility for adult education, working co-operatively with other bodies, and the librarian as a resource person. Penland concluded that the librarians in his sample held confused ideas concerning library adult education, that they had not yet espoused the then current theory of library adult education, and that they were neither leaders nor good co-operators in the field of adult education.

In 1968, the present writer also employed Guttman's technique to validate specially created opinionnaires derived from the literature of British library adult education.⁶⁶ The attitudes measured were those of chartered (*i.e.* qualified professional) librarians and student librarians in Lancashire and Cheshire concerning the concept of the librarian as an educator, and towards co-operation with formal adult educational bodies. The report was presented as a master's thesis, and concluded that although most chartered staff were mildly favourable to the idea of the librarian as an educator, an important minority was not favourable. Their attitude towards relations with other adult education bodies was more favourable and more strongly held.

This latter study had been preceded by a diploma dissertation by the same researcher, which examined the broad history of library involvement in adult education in England.⁶⁷ This found both library-based and extramural adult educational activities from the mid nineteenth century, of both a consciously educational character as well as those in support of other bodies such as the W.E.A. In Wales, Alun Edwards had presented an essay towards the Fellowship of the Library Association in 1948, which was mainly an account of book provision to adult education classes held outside library premises.⁶⁸ That study looked at the National Library of Wales, County libraries, University College libraries, and the National Council of Music. Staff in these institutions had to consider such matters as the problems of multiple copies needed for groups and classes, methods used to encourage reading, and the provision of materials other than books. Edwards had issued a questionnaire to tutors dealing with the supply of books to adult education classes, and the replies to this were also used in his text.

⁶⁶ Reid-Smith, E.R. *The attitudes of chartered librarians in North West England towards adult education.* (unpublished Manchester University M.Ed. thesis. 1968.)

⁶⁷ Reid-Smith, E.R. *The contribution of public libraries to English adult education.* (unpublished Manchester University Diploma in Adult Education dissertation. 1966.)

⁶⁸ Edwards, A.R. *Adult education and libraries in Wales.* (unpublished F.L.A. essay. 1948.)

There have been few studies of public library-based art and technical classes operated by public libraries, but two theses have provided useful background material. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the present researcher exchanged information concerning technical and other lectures with another library educator, Eric Hunter, who was then undertaking research in the area, and whose master's thesis was presented to Sheffield University in 1973. This work dealt specifically with the association of public libraries with schools of science and art,⁶⁹ but also noted other activities such as legislation and administration. Hunter was not concerned with the wider adult education environment nor with the part played by local authorities, but he was industrious in locating references to U.K. libraries associated with such classes.

A schoolteacher, Patrick Quirke, who became interested in the science and art classes operated by Wolverhampton Public Library, wrote a dissertation in which he set these services against the wider adult educational background of the area.⁷⁰ Quirke was interested not only in these particular post-school educational services, but also in the people who advocated or opposed their introduction in the town. Looking intensively at one educational facility in one place he was able to make an indepth study which, though not necessarily revealing a picture which was typical of the overall situation in England at the time, was nevertheless a valuable contribution to our understanding of local environmental influences. Quirke also examined the registers of students to produce tables such as numbers of students, their mean ages and classification of their occupations.

The present thesis contends that the local government adult education complexes established under the Public Libraries Acts, like the former mechanics' and other institutions, included museums and art galleries as well as libraries. One thesis which looked at these three components as a 'triple alliance' was presented by Alasdair Campbell to the U.K. professional association.⁷¹ Only a few pages of this work actually dealt specifically with the nineteenth century, and Campbell failed to stress the educational role of the three facilities. Nevertheless, he provided a useful general survey of the continued development of these as an integrated service during rather more than a

⁶⁹ Hunter, E.J. *The role of the public library in the development of technical education in Great Britain and Ireland during the nineteenth century.* (unpublished Sheffield University M.A. thesis. 1973.)

⁷⁰ Quirke, P.A. *The Wolverhampton Free Library and its adult evening classes, 1873-1902.* (unpublished University of Birmingham M.Ed. dissertation. 1985.)

⁷¹ Campbell, A.K.D. *Non-book materials and non-bibliographic services in public libraries: a study of their development and of the controversies which have surrounded them from 1850 to 1964.* (unpublished Library Association F.L.A. thesis. 1965.)

hundred years after the passing of the first Act, linking them with the library extension movement of the 1960s by noting other features such as films and music collections.

4. Chief sources of major themes

Although there are several threads running through this thesis, five areas in particular have been selected for special emphasis due to their perceived relevance to the theme. These are (a) the voluntary institutions such as the mechanics' institutes, which both pre-date local authority services and in many cases were diminishing contemporaries of the; (b) lectures, which were an important feature of nineteenth century life and which were provided by both voluntary and public institutions; (c) technical education, which was the *rationale* for the inauguration of the mechanics' institution movement, and was subsequently taken up by local authorities through public library and other legislation; (d) museums and galleries, which were again an educational feature of many voluntary institutions and which were placed on a more permanent basis under the Museums Act of 1845 and other subsequent elective local authority legislation; and (e) the university extension movement with which many of the promoters of local government library services were in agreement if not actually active in the movement itself, and with which many public libraries co-operated in various ways.

Nor are these threads mutually exclusive, although to a large extent this thesis has treated them separately in order to highlight their existence and importance. For example, lectures and university extension are obviously associated, as are many of the voluntary institutions and technical education. However, each of these also had an existence outside the associations noted. Not all university extension departments contributed to public library and museum lecture programmes, and many voluntary institutions were not concerned with technical education. Presenting a balanced view of complex situations is one of the challenges of historiography.

4.1 Voluntary institutions

The research project was not in general concerned with the original records of the various voluntary institutions, though these were examined when readily available. A few annual reports of mechanics' and other institutions were seen in this way, as also were some printed catalogues of circulating libraries of the early part of the century. On the other hand, several contemporary publications were found particularly useful and interesting in filling in the adult educational background.

Parliamentary papers and reports proved to be a valuable source of information, for nineteenth century parliamentarians were not only active in discussing and solving the social problems resulting from (or associated with) the industrial revolution, but were prolific speakers and publishers about the questions of the time. The *Journal of the House of Lords* and the *Journal of the House of Commons* detail the concerns of these voluntary bodies in areas of finance, petitioning for legislation to exempt them from local rates and to abolish the taxes on publications. These official and various unofficial transcripts (such as Hansard, and Barrow's *Mirror of Parliament*) record the progress of Bills through Parliament, and the speeches for and against the several concepts and clauses.

Of contemporary books, one of the earliest was Thomas Pole's 1814 work on the adult schools movement,⁷² active in literacy from the mid-eighteenth century. Without increasing literacy the growth of the publishing industry would have been slower, apprentices' and other self-help libraries would not have been set up, and the mechanics' institute movement might well have died even earlier than it did.

The first half of the century saw the publication of many books and pamphlets dealing with the mechanics' and similar voluntary institutes, of which James Hudson's is probably the best known.⁷³ Although subsequent writers have questioned the accuracy of a few details in this book, it is still a mine of data and information concerning the finance, membership, libraries, classes and lectures provided for members about 1851, before local governments were authorised to offer the same kinds of services. Ten years before this, Thomas Coates published his *Report*⁷⁴ which also included a list of institutions which included details concerning finance, lectures and libraries. Of special interest is a list of lecturers with their addresses and principal subjects taught, also culled from annual reports sent in by voluntary institutions to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge following the distribution of a request distributed in 1839.

Hudson was succeeded by the Radical-Chartist James Hole as secretary of both the Leeds Mechanics' Institute and the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes, and the

⁷² Pole, T. *A history of the origin and progress of adult schools.* .. (London: C. McDowall. 2nd ed 1816.)

⁷³ Hudson, J.W. *The history of adult education...* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans. 1851.)

⁷⁴ Coates, T. *Report of the state of literary, scientific and mechanics' institutions in England. With a list of such institutions, and a list of lecturers.* (London: Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. 1841.)

latter's two books also provided useful information for the research project. The first of these, published in 1853, concentrated on the history and working of the voluntary institutions ⁷⁵ and complemented Hudson's book which had been published only two years previously. Hole was concerned at the failure of institutes to reach the artisan class, and discussed the place of lectures, libraries and classes in their work. He did not foresee that the recently passed Public Libraries Act would contribute to the demise of these institutes, but saw the Union of Institutes as the answer to their financial problems by sharing human and material resources. His second book, published in 1860, was a case study of the educational facilities for both children and adults in a Yorkshire town, and paid special attention to social matters such as crime and popular amusements. ⁷⁶ This work included some interesting statistical tables.

Duppa's manual ⁷⁷ proved to be particularly useful for its comments on libraries, museums and lectures in voluntary institutions, as well as for the suggestion that the government should enable "corporations, both lay and ecclesiastical, to place the books and other documents [to be donated from various libraries in a township] in such public repository... and by enabling municipalities to apply a portion of their borough rate to the maintenance of public libraries". His classification of early nineteenth century mechanics' institutes into several categories according to the services offered provided the research project with a tentative framework for classifying public library complexes in the late nineteenth century. His comments concerning the work of the institutes (and the failure of some of them) help us to understand why he and some of his contemporaries saw public institutions as the answer.

Of the more recent works, that by Mabel Tylecote on mechanics' institutes in the North of England has become a classic, ⁷⁸ and in addition to presenting 'facts' culled from many sources it offers a valuable picture of the movement on the eve of the passing of the Museums Act of 1845 and the Public Libraries Act of 1850. One of the townships noted by Tylecote and other authors is Warrington, the subject of a more intensive study

⁷⁵ Hole, J. *An essay on the history and management of literary, scientific and mechanics' institutions...* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans. 1853.)

⁷⁶ Hole, J. *"Light, more light!" On the present state of education amongst the working classes of Leeds, and how it can best be improved.* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts. 1860.)

⁷⁷ Duppa, B.F. *A manual for Mechanics' Institutions.* Published under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green & Longmans. 1839.) p.56.

⁷⁸ Tylecote, M. *The mechanics' institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1957.)

in the form of a university thesis by W.B. Stephens ⁷⁹ which was subsequently expanded into a wider published work. ⁸⁰ An interesting and not unimportant viewpoint was expressed in the latter: "... in Warrington, and no doubt in other industrial towns too, a desire to promote a community spirit [through adult education] was connected as much with a growing civic pride as with any policy of social control". ⁸¹ The book recounts how a desire for self-improvement led to the formation of the mechanics' institution and other voluntary bodies. In turn the educational provision passed through a stage of 'private control and public finance' before being taken under the complete control of the local government authority.

Tylecote's 'factual' account is well complemented by the work on the 'steam intellect societies' edited by Inkster in the 'Nottingham Studies in the History of Adult Education' series. The first part (Chapters one to seven) of that collection of papers deals with the steam intellect movement Britain, paying particular attention to the technical education role of mechanics' institutes and other bodies during the nineteenth century. ⁸²

4.2 Lectures

Lectures were a feature of English society during the whole of the nineteenth century, and many references to them are found in the various contemporary works on the voluntary institutions mentioned above. In addition, the 1849 report of the Select Committee ⁸³ contains several references to their value. The first lectures offered by a local authority through its public library service were at Manchester as early as 1852, though the first ones were not actually legalised until 1865 when Liverpool's private Act of Parliament was obtained. This Act referred only to Liverpool itself; nevertheless, library lectures became a staple non-book educative service of the public library movement throughout England in the late nineteenth century

⁷⁹ Stephens, W.B. *The development of adult education in Warrington during the nineteenth century*. (Exeter University: M.A. in Education thesis, 1958.)

⁸⁰ Stephens, W.B. *Adult education and society in an industrial town: Warrington 1800-1900*. (Exeter: University of Exeter. 1980.)

⁸¹ *ibid.* pp.52-53.

⁸² Inkster, I. (ed.) *The steam intellect societies - essays on culture, education and industry circa 1820-1914*. (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, Department of Adult Education. 1985.) pp.3-93.

⁸³ Parliament: Select Committee on Public Libraries. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, together with the proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*. (1849.) Paper 548, vol XVII.

It was not until 1878, however, that the literature on this topic may be said to have begun. In that year Councillor Bailey gave a talk *On the value of public lectures on the books in free libraries* to the Manchester Literary Club, which was later printed as a pamphlet.⁸⁴ Between then and 1914, some sixteen more papers were published in periodicals or as conference proceedings. One of these papers was given by Dr Kimmins, Secretary of the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching, at a time when the Society had just initiated an experiment by endowing its lectures in several London libraries. Greenwood included a chapter 'Public library lectures and science and art classes' in the 1894 edition of his work *Public libraries*.⁸⁵ In addition he made a special point of noting lectures in his questionnaire which formed the basis of an important part of the *British library year book 1900-1901*,⁸⁶ but which also failed to differentiate between library lectures and those held in connection with library based schools of science and art. John Ogle's book *The free library* (1897)⁸⁷ is also a useful source of information, for although there is no chapter dedicated to this topic there are many references to lectures scattered throughout the book as the author discusses services offered by particular libraries.

To discover actual details of the lectures at various public libraries, it was necessary to consult contemporary records such as Library Committee minutes and correspondence, librarians' annual reports, and local newspapers. These provided the data from which Appendices 2 and 3 were compiled, and which enabled Chapter 6 and part of Chapter 8 of this thesis to be written. Further contemporary sources of data and information were the various professional periodicals noted in Section 3.1.5 above. In addition, the volumes of conference proceedings of the Library Association provided further details of lectures, and of the attitudes of leading personalities towards their provision by library authorities.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Bailey, W.H. *On the value of public lectures on the books in free libraries; read before the members of the Bibliographical Section of the Manchester Literary Club, December 3rd, 1878.* (Manchester: Ireland & Co. 1879.)

⁸⁵ Greenwood, T. *Public libraries: a history of the movement and a manual for the organization and management of rate-supported libraries.* (London: Cassell & Co. 4th ed. 1894.) pp.470-479.

⁸⁶ Greenwood, T. *British library year book 1900-1901: a record of library progress and work.* (London: Scott, Greenwood & Co. 1900.)

⁸⁷ Ogle, J.J. *The free library: its history and present condition.* (London: George Allen. 1897.)

⁸⁸ Library Association. *Transactions and proceedings of the annual meeting of the Library Association of the United Kingdom... 1878-1897.* (London: Chiswick Press. 1879-1890.) 7 vols.

4.3 Technical education

Technical education or instruction in Britain was of considerable and increasing socio-economic importance in the second half of the nineteenth century, and touched on many aspects of the national life. This period was covered by volume 5 of Singer's *History of Technology*, in which Chapter 32 gives some general background comments ranging from the public schools to mechanics' institutes to the university colleges.⁸⁹ In addition to the theses noted above, a number of published works were also consulted for their background relevance. Roderick and Stephens's book on technical education in the nineteenth century was especially pertinent to this research because the city of Liverpool figured prominently in it. Both authors were members of Liverpool University staff at the time of publication of their study.⁹⁰ As will be seen in the present thesis, Liverpool city council was a leading provider of education through its library committee. Roderick and Stephens help to set the technical education background against which the city library inaugurated its programme of lectures.

The involvement of public libraries in technical education was in two phases. Firstly, the Public Libraries Act of 1855 had enabled local authorities to set up schools of science or art or both, but surprisingly no major reference to these have been located before the publication of Greenwood's *Public libraries*.⁹¹ This included a chapter on science and art classes in which he discussed the role which they could play in the overall library service. The same author's *British Library Year Book 1900-1901*⁹² contains the first attempt to index such schools which had been set up under the Acts. This provided a valuable list of places, allowing searches to be made in the local Council and Library Committees' minutes and correspondence. Publications of the Department of Science and Art were also consulted, one of which in particular⁹³ was used to compile the list of library based classes as Appendix 4 below.

⁸⁹ Singer, C., Holmyard, E.J., Hall, A.R. and Williams, T.I. (eds.). *A history of technology*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1958.) vol 5: 'The late nineteenth century c1850 to c1900', pp.776-798.

⁹⁰ Roderick, G.W. and Stephens, M.D. *Scientific and technical education in nineteenth-century England: a symposium*. (Newton Abbot: David & Charles. 1972.)

⁹¹ Greenwood, T. *Public libraries: a history of the movement and a manual for the organization and management of rate-supported libraries*. (London: Cassell & Co. 4th ed. 1894.) pp.470-479.

⁹² Greenwood, T. *British Library Year Book 1900-1901: a Record of Library Progress and Work*. (London: Scott, Greenwood & Co. 1900.)

⁹³ Department of Science and Art. *Forty-third report of the Department of Science and Art of the Committee of Council on Education, with appendices*. (C.-7941.) (London: HMSO. 1896.)

The second phase concerned services and facilities in connection with the Technical Instruction Acts of 1859-1891. This occasioned another chapter in Greenwood's *Public libraries*,⁹⁴ several references in contemporary professional periodicals, and a paper in 1905.⁹⁵ Once again, details of individual libraries had to be culled from Library Committee Minutes and annual reports. A number of these have been consulted for background viewpoints and information, including Hunter's *The role of the public library in the development of technical education in Great Britain and Ireland during the nineteenth century* (1973), which notes both phases. The Science and Art Department and the Technical Instruction Acts have attracted the attention of several other researchers whose theses have been found useful as pointers to other sources. Those by Thomas,⁹⁶ Blanchet,⁹⁷ Butterworth⁹⁸ and Millwood⁹⁹ were particularly valuable.

The National Association for the Promotion of Technical and Secondary Education was active from the passing of the Technical Instruction Acts, and its journal *The Record of Technical and Secondary Education* proved to be an extremely informative source. First published in November 1891, it carried detailed news concerning how the legislation was used in counties and townships throughout the country. This journal also proved valuable in naming places where public libraries were associated with technical education, directing the researcher to examine their local records.

4.4. Museums and galleries

In addition to the early works on the voluntary institutions noted above, museums and art galleries are mentioned in many of the books, periodicals and archives concerned with libraries which have been used throughout this thesis. Of the monographs which concentrate on these two services, the most valuable was published by Thomas

⁹⁴ Greenwood, T. *Public libraries: a history of the movement and a manual for the organization and management of rate-supported libraries*. (London: Cassell & Co. 4th ed. 1894.) pp.479-485.

⁹⁵ Stewart, J.D. Technical education and public libraries in England. *Public Libraries*, vol 10, no 9, November 1905, pp.455-457.

⁹⁶ Thomas, D.H. *The development of technical education in England 1851-1899, with special reference to economic factors*. (unpublished London University Ph.D. thesis. 1940.)

⁹⁷ Blanchet, J. *Science, craft and the state: a study of English technical education and its advocates 1867-1906*. (unpublished Oxford University D.Phil. thesis. 1968.)

⁹⁸ Butterworth, H. *The Science and Art Department, 1853-1900*. (unpublished Sheffield University Ph.D. thesis. 1968.)

⁹⁹ Millwood, M.J. *The development of technical education in Leicester 1860-1938*. (unpublished Leicester University M.Ed. thesis. 1969.) p.19.

Greenwood in 1888 and paid special attention to their educational role.¹⁰⁰ Chapter 3 of this work is devoted to the topic of 'the place of museums in education', Chapter 12 to 'museum lectures', and there are references throughout the book to other educational features also. In addition to British rate-supported museums, however, Greenwood wrote about university and state museums which were 'public' in a national sense, and museums of other countries. In spite of the title, the emphasis is on museums, and art galleries receive considerably less treatment. Although Greenwood as a writer sometimes suffers more from enthusiasm than from accuracy, this work stands almost alone as a record of nineteenth century museology.

Most of the museums and art galleries about which Greenwood wrote were called 'public' under the Public Libraries and Museums Acts, but before the mid nineteenth century the word 'public' was often used for non-rate supported institutions which were provided nationally or by universities or other bodies allowing free access. In 1840 Edward Edwards (who later turned his attention to public libraries) published his book in which he surveyed "the state and prospects of the Plastic Arts in England".¹⁰¹ This work would appear to support the link between the Schools of Design and the Public Libraries and Museums Acts suggested earlier,¹⁰² and reiterated in the present thesis.

A modern work by Alan Chadwick on museums and galleries in education¹⁰³ was based on the topic of his doctoral thesis, but (unfortunately for the purpose of the present research) is restricted to the present century. Its value therefore lay in its presentation of ideas and details about services which could be compared with the situation in the nineteenth century. Although we do not have a statistical survey of users in the last century such as Chadwick provides for the present one, there is evidence of community use for self-education in both periods. Jevons, in a paper written a hundred years earlier (and which may well have inspired Greenwood's book), regretted that: "hardly anything has been written about their general principles of management and economy. In the English language, at least, there is apparently not a single treatise

¹⁰⁰ Greenwood, T. *Museums and art galleries*. (London: Simpkin, Marshall. 1888.)

¹⁰¹ Edwards, E. *The administrative economy of the fine arts in England*. (London: Saunders & Otley. 1840.)

¹⁰² Reid-Smith, E.R. *Parliament and popular culture in the early nineteenth century: some strands in the history of libraries and adult education*. (Oldham: Research in Librarianship. 1969.)

¹⁰³ Chadwick, A.F. *The role of the museum and art gallery in community education*. (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, Department of Adult Education. 1980.)

analysing the purposes and kinds of Museums...".¹⁰⁴ He stressed their potential educational importance in national life and as instruments of social reform.

4.5 University extension

During the course of the research, occasional references were noted in library annual reports to university extension lectures and classes having been held in public libraries throughout the country. In these cases the libraries were either merely providing central accommodation in the towns, or the university lectures were actually integrated with the libraries' own lecture programmes. Because of this a decision was made to undertake a special search for other examples of co-operation between libraries and the universities, and the results of this were incorporated mainly in Chapter 8 below. Some interesting works were located which helped to put this liaison into the wider context of what the universities themselves were trying to do, although there was little mention of the role of the libraries.

In 1890, Mackinder and Sadler (then both with the Oxford University Extension service) co-operated in the writing of a small but popular book on the movement, which looked mainly at the work by Oxford, Cambridge and London but looked forward to expansion by other universities.¹⁰⁵ Libraries received little mention. Maps are provided showing the English university extension centres in 1885-6 and 1890-1 respectively, and specimen examination papers indicate the level of scholarship required. In the following year, Dr Roberts (then with the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching) published a complementary work¹⁰⁶ which naturally gave more emphasis to London. This also noted the People's Lectures—single lectures to gain mass interest, by which means it was hoped that people would be led to the extension series. In addition to a map showing the centres of the five universities then involved in giving extension lectures, there is a place-name list under English and Welsh counties.

Interest in the history of the university extension movement has continued to flourish in the present century. Stuart Marriott has contributed a fascinating compact

¹⁰⁴ Jevons, W.S. The use and abuse of museums. In, *Methods of social reform, and other papers*. (London: Macmillan. 1883.) p.53.

¹⁰⁵ Mackinder, H.J. and Sadler, M.E. *University extension, past, present, and future*. (London: Cassell. 3rd ed 1891.)

¹⁰⁶ Roberts, R.D. *Eighteen years of university extension*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1891.)

study of some of the politics during over a century of university adult education.¹⁰⁷ He states his own position regarding Raybould's 1951 'thesis' by suggesting: "that the intermingling of economics and morality produced a massively simplified and Manichean view of extramural history. The University Extension movement of the nineteenth century, because it had to cover its own costs, chased popularity and disqualified itself from raising educational standards".¹⁰⁸ Marriott also points out that the universities and university colleges were marking out their local territories by introducing extension activities, though much of this activity lies outside the period of this research. Public libraries were not mentioned either in this work or in a second booklet by Marriott on the employment of university extension lecturers.¹⁰⁹ However, some of these people held their lectures and classes in public libraries, and Marriott helps to show them as people with problems and not merely as names from the past.

A more orthodox account of a century of Cambridge University's extension lectures has been produced by Edwin Welch, working from the archives which had been sorted for the first time by him.¹¹⁰ He also noted the financial problems of the early years, but relatively little about the other institutions which were also competing in the lectures market-place. True, Welch mentioned local bodies sponsoring extension lectures such as the Literary and Philosophical Society or the Mechanics' Institute, but not public libraries (except Liverpool very briefly) in spite of including local archives and libraries in his list of acknowledgments. Nevertheless, this book was found to be a good source of background information about the work (and personalities) of the Local Lectures Syndicate's officers and early lecturers.

In the same year, Norman Jepson's study of the early years of university extension was published, giving yet another viewpoint and emphasis.¹¹¹ Following a section on the historical background leading to university extension, this centenary work paid particular attention to the students themselves, and to the quality of the education

¹⁰⁷ Marriott, S. *Extramural empires: service & self-interest in English university adult education 1873-1983*. (Nottingham: University Department of Adult Education. 1984.)

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.* p.9.

¹⁰⁹ Marriott, S. *University extension lecturers: the organisation of extramural employment in England, 1873-1914*. (Leeds: University of Leeds. 1985.)

¹¹⁰ Welch, E. *The peripatetic university: Cambridge local lectures 1873-1973*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1973.)

¹¹¹ Jepson, N.A. *The beginnings of English university adult education - policy and problems: a critical study of the early Cambridge and Oxford University extension lecture movements between 1873 and 1907, with special reference to Yorkshire*. (London: Michael Joseph. 1973.)

offered by the movement. Amongst the several categories of lecture centres, Jepson notes "free libraries at places like Runcorn, Sale, Chester and Chorley" in Lancashire and Cheshire as being used by Oxford between 1888-1902.¹¹² However, this does not rate a mention in the index.

London's centenary volume was produced by John Burrows, whose account of the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching (taken over by London University in 1902) also notes the financial problems of this area of adult education.¹¹³ Only the first chapter deals with the nineteenth century, however, and although a few centres are mentioned once again local government libraries are ignored. In fact the London Society did not begin seriously to conduct its lectures in public libraries until 1900, when these were followed by classes and voluntary examinations as noted in the *Library Association Record* during 1900 and 1901.

Despite the paucity of references to the work of local government public libraries, either as suppliers of reading matter to university extension students or as places where lectures and classes took place, all of the above works have contributed to an understanding of the environment in which the universities worked.

5. Conclusion

The hypothesis called chiefly for qualitative information, although the use of some quantitative data was not excluded. The research project relied largely on contemporary manuscript and printed sources for the acquisition of the necessary data, information and concepts, but works produced during the present century were also consulted. These resources were scattered throughout England, which necessitated examining local records *in situ*. In turn this had the benefit of the researcher being able to appreciate the actual community environment in which the services had been offered; even though many years had passed since the end of the century, in most cases the context was still apparent and sometimes even still relevant.

It was found that there was in fact rarely even a mention of the post-school educational activities of public libraries in educational and bibliothecal histories, and a complete lack of any real details. Writers such as Greenwood in the nineteenth century,

¹¹² *ibid.* p.160.

¹¹³ Burrows, J. *University adult education in London: a century of achievement [1876-1976]*. (London: University of London. 1976.)

and Kelly in the twentieth, are exceptions. On the other hand there was a wealth of detail in committee minutes and annual reports for individual local authorities, which cumulatively provided evidence of an admittedly minority but certainly widespread movement for providing educational opportunities.