

# *History of Universities*

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VOLUME XXXVI/1

2023

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OXFORD  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# City of Refuge: Evacuation of University of London Colleges to Cambridge during the Second World War

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During the Second World War, the whole of the University of London was evacuated to the provinces. The largest concentration, of seven colleges, went to Cambridge: the London School of Economics (LSE) to Peterhouse, Queen Mary College (QMC) to King's, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) to Christ's, Bedford College to Newnham, St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College (Barts) to Queens', and The London Hospital Medical College and the Bartlett School of Architecture to St Catharine's. This article represents the first time that the story of these seven evacuations has been told. It draws from published sources; from visits to both of the relevant university archives and the 14 college archives;<sup>1</sup> and from contacts with six former QMC evacuated students, now in their mid/late nineties.<sup>2</sup>

## THE GOVERNMENT'S EVACUATION POLICY

The University of London evacuation was part of a much wider Government evacuation policy. In summer 1938 the Government appointed a committee, under the chairmanship of Sir John Anderson (the Lord Privy Seal), to 'review the various aspects of the problem of transferring persons

<sup>1</sup> The Bedford Archives have now been located within the Royal Holloway Archives and Special Collections, following the merger of the two institutions in 1985; the Archives of The London Hospital Medical College have been integrated into the Bart's Health NHS Trust, following its merger with the St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College in 1995.

<sup>2</sup> These contacts were through the Queen Mary's Alumni Manager, whose help is gratefully acknowledged.

from areas which would be likely, in time of war, to be exposed to aerial bombardment'. Its report<sup>3</sup> was the basis of the extensive evacuation scheme which became operational in September 1939. Priority was given to schoolchildren (removed as school units under the charge of their teachers), younger children (accompanied by their mothers or some other responsible person), expectant mothers, and adult blind persons and people with disabilities. The initial scheme, Operation Piper, officially relocated 1.5 million people; others followed after the fall of France in 1940. This massive evacuation was credited by Richard Titmuss<sup>4</sup> with paving the way for the establishment of the National Health Service, by stimulating public, professional, and government awareness of the problems of the urban working classes; though this thesis has subsequently been contested.<sup>5</sup>

The universities part of this evacuation policy was initiated in January 1939, when Sir John Anderson asked the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) to submit a scheme for inter-university co-operation in the event of war – particularly in the light of the perceived need for London colleges to be evacuated from the capital so as to free up their buildings for government use.<sup>6</sup> The Committee identified twelve universities, including Cambridge, which were asked to indicate how many students they might be able to receive from areas that might have to be evacuated. At the same time, the University of London, in particular, was requested to indicate how many students it might want

<sup>3</sup> Anderson Committee, *Report of Committee on Evacuation* (chaired by Sir John Anderson), Cmd. 5837 (London, 1938).

<sup>4</sup> Richard M. Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy*, History of the Second World War: United Kingdom Civil Series (ed. W.K. Hancock) (London, 1950).

<sup>5</sup> Jennifer Crane, 'Rethinking how evacuees influenced post-war British thinking on health', *Retrospectives*, 2, Spring 2013, 13.

<sup>6</sup> QMC, for example, had been informed by the War Office in 1938 that in the event of war its main college buildings would be requisitioned to provide accommodation for an infantry regiment which was needed to find guards for the London Docks; later they were used by Stepney Borough Council (Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944)). The LSE Houghton Street buildings were occupied by the Ministry of Economic Welfare, headed by Hugh Dalton (a former LSE lecturer) (Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 343 (Oxford, 1995)), and later by the Ministry of Aviation (<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsehistory/2018/02/21/evacuation-to-cambridge/>). The main buildings of London University in Bloomsbury were used to house the Ministry of Information (Peter Gosden, *Education in the Second World War: A Study in Policy and Administration*, 140 (London, 2007)). Several of the main Bedford buildings were destroyed by enemy action in May 1941 (Anon., 'The centenary of Bedford College for Women', *Nature*, 163 (4151), 21 May 1949, 791–792). The Barts buildings, too, suffered much war damage (BBC People's War Archive: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/10/a7884110.shtml<us>>).

to transfer.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, in March 1939, the CVCP agreed an initial distribution of the London colleges, other than medical: four (Bartlett, QMC, SOAS, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) were to go to Cambridge, two to Oxford, and others to Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Nottingham, and Wales. It also agreed that negotiations with receiving institutions should be made in the first instance through the heads of the universities concerned and not through individual colleges.<sup>8</sup>

The medical colleges were treated somewhat separately, because they were linked to plans being made for treatment of casualties and for an Emergency Medical Service, a state-run network of free hospital services organised by the Ministry of Health<sup>9</sup> – also credited as influential in the development of the National Health Service.<sup>10</sup> This included a medical service for London, spread out in a fan-like fashion for a thirty-mile radius, leaving the central hospitals with as small a population as possible in the event of an attack being made on the City. Contingent preparations accordingly needed to be made for the teaching of the students in the medical colleges. The University of London asked the medical faculties elsewhere in the country to assist, and indicated to each college a university that would be prepared to house (and contribute to the teaching of) its students.<sup>11</sup> Barts and The London were allocated to Cambridge; others to Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow, Manchester, Oxford, Sheffield, and Wales.<sup>12</sup>

The CVCP allocations seem to have been based on some consultation with London colleges about their preferences. But not all were received with favour by the colleges concerned. Bedford, for example, was initially assigned to Exeter, an option which ‘everyone disliked’; then ‘made an effort to get taken in at Oxford’ which was resisted by the Office of Works because it had other designs on the allocated accommodation; and finally

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Principal of University of London to its colleges, 7.2.1939. Bedford Archives; SOAS Archives.

<sup>8</sup> Organisation of the University in the Event of War: Statements (6.3.1939) by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London. Senate House Archives.

<sup>9</sup> Geoffrey Rivett, *The Development of the London Hospital System 1823 until 2020*, <http://www.londonhospitalsystem.com/> (2020).

<sup>10</sup> ‘The *Luftwaffe* achieved in months what had defeated politicians and planners for at least two decades’. Charles Webster, *The National Health Service: A Political History* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn), 6 (Oxford, 2020).

<sup>11</sup> Sir Girling Ball, ‘To the students of Bart’s’, *St Bartholomew’s Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 3 (2), November 1941, 23–24.

<sup>12</sup> Minutes of The London Hospital College Board meeting, 15.5.1939. Bart’s Health NHS Trust Archive.

approached Newnham in Cambridge to see whether it could help.<sup>13</sup> The LSE, too, was told that it was to move to Scotland, split between Aberdeen and Glasgow. The Director, Alexander Carr-Saunders, wrote to Lord Stamp, Chairman of the LSE Court of Governors:

‘The Vice-Chancellor said that the wishes of the Colleges had been met as far as possible. I pointed out that as far as I could see, every College except our own had got more or less what it had asked for, but that we had been sent to Scotland whereas we had asked for Reading. I emphasised the extraordinary inconvenience of this. Indeed I said it was more than inconvenient; it would seriously militate against keeping the School together in war time.’<sup>14</sup>

Lord Stamp duly wrote to the Vice-Chancellor, also pointing out that a move to Scotland would militate against plans to use LSE staff on government service.<sup>15</sup> The Principal of Glasgow University acknowledged that ‘I am afraid it is a long journey’.<sup>16</sup> With the Reading option ruled out because of the importance of its agricultural department for land-worker training, an offer was received from Oxford, but this too fell through – mainly because of Government plans to requisition university buildings there, more extensively than in Cambridge. At this point Sir Patrick Duff, Permanent Secretary of the Office of Works, wrote to Carr-Saunders stating that he had approached Cambridge on behalf of LSE:

‘I have written to the Cambridge University Authorities to enquire whether they could reserve you accommodation in some College... I am sorry we had to disturb your proposed Oxford allocation, but the accommodation position is a little complicated, and we thought it better in your own interest to divert you to Cambridge, if possible, so as to avoid any last moment changes.’<sup>17</sup>

The continued involvement of the Government in the detail of these arrangements is worthy of note.

In the event, one of the London colleges initially allocated to Cambridge (the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) remained in London. But the other three (Bartlett, QMC, SOAS) duly came to Cambridge, along with Bedford, the LSE, and the two medical schools (Barts and The London). Of the other London colleges, Imperial was the

<sup>13</sup> Handwritten letter from Geraldine Jebb (Principal of Bedford) to Joan Strachey (Principal of Newnham), 12.7.1939. Newnham Archives. Joan Strachey was always known by her second Christian name, Pernel.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Alexander Carr-Saunders to Lord Stamp, 7.3.1939. LSE Archive.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Lord Stamp to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, 25.3.1939. LSE Archive.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Hector Hetherington to Alexander Carr-Saunders, 20.3.1939. LSE Archive.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from Sir Patrick Duff to Alexander Carr-Saunders, 27.7.1939. LSE Archive.

only major college to remain largely in place in London:<sup>18</sup> most of University College went to Aberystwyth, Bangor, and Swansea; most of King's to Bristol; Westfield and the Slade School of Fine Art to Oxford; and Goldsmiths' and the Institute of Education to Nottingham.<sup>19</sup> But it was Cambridge that became "the great academic host of the war."<sup>20</sup>

In some cases, the next level of discussions in Cambridge was with faculties rather than colleges. In the case of the medical schools, in particular, the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University consulted the Departments of Anatomy and Physiology to ascertain whether they would be able to provide joint instruction to students of both universities.<sup>21</sup> Thereafter, the universities continued to play a role in co-ordinating financial arrangements. Rather than assessing separately the charges to each London college based in Cambridge, the General Board of the Faculties at Cambridge resolved to make a lump-sum charge to London University, set initially at £2,000 a term:<sup>22</sup> this figure was retained until late in the war when it was reduced as the London colleges began to return to their home bases.<sup>23</sup>

In general, however, the key relationships were college-to-college.

## COLLEGE MATCH-MAKING

The formal process of decision-making and allocation was top-down: from Government level, through university level, to college level. Unsurprisingly, however, this process was lubricated by informal, bottom-up channels.

The most conspicuous example of this was SOAS. In September 1938, before the CVCP scheme was discussed, the School's prescient Director, Ralph Turner, made an unofficial approach to Christ's, of which he was a former Fellow. As he later reported: 'the Master very kindly expressed the willingness of the College, subsequently confirmed by a College Meeting,

<sup>18</sup> Hannah Gay, *The History of Imperial College London, 1907–2007: Higher Education and Research in Science, Technology and Medicine*, 234 (London, 2007).

<sup>19</sup> Negley Harte, *University of London: An Illustrated History: 1836–1986*, 235–6 (London, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then: A History of Everyday Life during the Second World War*, 206–7 (London, 2002). In addition to the London colleges, Cambridge also hosted Chichester Theological College, whose own buildings in Sussex had been taken over by the military authorities. See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chichester\\_Theological\\_College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chichester_Theological_College)

<sup>21</sup> Minutes of General Board of the Faculties meeting, 4.9.1939. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>22</sup> Minutes of General Board of the Faculties meetings, 29.11.1939 and 6.3.1940. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>23</sup> Minutes of General Board of the Faculties meetings, 18.10.1944 and 17.10.1945. Cambridge University Library Archives.

to offer facilities for housing the School provided that such an arrangement was approved by the two Universities'.<sup>24</sup> It was indeed Turner who in October 1938 first notified Cambridge University of the London University evacuation plans, in a letter<sup>25</sup> subsequently reported to Cambridge's General Board of the Faculties: this stimulated the establishment of a committee chaired by the Vice-Chancellor to formulate plans for the possible emergency.<sup>26</sup> Turner's networking skills no doubt lay behind the SOAS allocation to Cambridge in the CVCP plan.

A further list of 'informal negotiations' by London colleges, produced by London University in February 1939, linked SOAS to Christ's, but also University College and Westfield College to Girton, and QMC to Sidney Sussex and Jesus<sup>27</sup> – none of which materialised. Neither did an approach made by The London Hospital to Corpus Christi.<sup>28</sup>

So how were the Cambridge colleges chosen, and how were the London colleges matched to them? In Cambridge, a meeting of College representatives was called by the Vice-Chancellor on 28 February 1939, presumably to identify what accommodation each college might be able to offer.<sup>29</sup> There were also relevant requests from elsewhere. In particular, the Air Ministry wrote to universities on 6 April 1939 appealing for help in starting Initial Training Schools, as a result of which nine colleges – Clare, Downing, Emmanuel, Jesus, Magdalene, Pembroke, St John's, Selwyn, and Trinity Hall – all offered accommodation, each for around 100 men.<sup>30</sup> Significantly, none of these colleges was involved in the London college evacuation arrangements.

There is no direct evidence on the process followed in relation to the London-Cambridge college matching process. In at least two other cases there were pre-existing individual links between the matched colleges: Geraldine Jebb, the Principal of Bedford, had been a student and later

<sup>24</sup> Letter from R.L. Turner to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, 30.3.1939. SOAS Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from R.L. Turner to J.T. Saunders at The Registry, University of Cambridge, 4.10.1938. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>26</sup> Minutes of Cambridge University General Board of the Faculties meeting, 12.10.1938. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Principal of University of London to its colleges, 7.2.1939. SOAS Archives. There is no record of this approach in the Sidney Sussex or Jesus archives, suggesting that it may have been purely informal.

<sup>28</sup> See minutes of The London Hospital Medical College Board meeting, 20.2.1939. Bart's Health NHS Trust Archives.

<sup>29</sup> I have been unable to find any record of this meeting. It is however referred to in the minutes of a Queens' College Meeting held on 27.2.1939, which records the College's position to be presented at the Vice-Chancellor's meeting. Queens' Archives.

<sup>30</sup> Memorandum of Claim, 17.10.1939; Average Daily Messing Numbers, May/June 1940. Jesus College Archives.

Director of Studies and Lecturer in Economics at Newnham; and Michael Postan had been a student and research assistant at the LSE before becoming Professor of Economic History at Cambridge and a Fellow of Peterhouse. Whether these links caused or merely facilitated the matches is unclear.

Elsewhere, it would seem that a more impersonal process operated. For example, Sir Girling Ball, the Dean of Barts, reported that 'To Bart's, together with the London Hospital, accommodation was allocated at Cambridge University, and in that seat of learning our School was put in touch with Queens' College', adding: 'No better arrangement could have been made.'<sup>31</sup> Again, in the case of QMC, Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, the Principal, had made contact with the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, who notified him that King's had agreed to take a number of its men students into residence and that Girton would do the same for its women students.<sup>32</sup>

At least two of the matches were somewhat counter-intuitive. One was between the LSE, a large and traditionally left-wing London college, and Peterhouse, the smallest and notoriously conservative Cambridge college. The other was between the Bartlett School of Architecture and St Catharine's, a Cambridge college which had never displayed any interest in architecture as an academic discipline (its few architecture students seem always to have had their Director of Studies in another college).<sup>33</sup> Yet, paradoxically, both of these proved to be among the closest inter-institutional relationships established during the evacuation.

Certainly the nature and extent of the relationships varied considerably across the seven pairings. Some were essentially transactional in nature: in other words, they were viewed largely as administrative arrangements rather than anything more. This was clearly the case with The London and St Catharine's. During 1939/40 a little under 50 students from The London were housed in St Catharine's (with a further 30 or so in lodgings), but it was two to a set, which was not seen as satisfactory, and the college was unable to supply a common room. So in the following year the students all moved out into lodgings, and Corpus provided them with a

<sup>31</sup> Sir Girling Ball, 'To the students of Bart's', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 3 (2), November 1941, 23–4.

<sup>32</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>33</sup> Tony Watts, 'College of refuge', *The St Catharine's Magazine*, 2021, 98. This contrasted markedly with SOAS, the other non-medical specialist college evacuated to Cambridge: its host college, Christ's, had 'a long tradition of Oriental scholarship in Cambridge'. Letter from R.L. Turner to the *Christ's College Magazine*, XLVI (148), Easter Term 1940, 64–65.

common room.<sup>34</sup> Although The London remained in Cambridge until 1943, its link with St Catharine's was largely severed (except that Dr W.F. Harper remained in the college and gave valued help with medical teaching<sup>35</sup>).

More surprisingly, the relationship between Bedford and Newnham was also somewhat transactional. Although an obituary of Geraldine Jebb in a Newnham magazine said of the Bedford visitors that 'We learned much from them and they were a welcome addition to our academic and social life',<sup>36</sup> and although Miss Jebb referred repeatedly to the 'kindness' which Newnham had shown,<sup>37</sup> there was only one reference to Bedford in the Newnham magazine's 'Present Student's Letter' during the war years, which simply recorded the letting of 'various lecture rooms'.<sup>38</sup> Most of the correspondence between the institutions referred to the details of room availability, where the limitations of what Newnham could offer led Bedford to lease various other buildings<sup>39</sup> – including, from 1942, a separate Club House in Fitzwilliam Street.<sup>40</sup> There are no records of Fellowship or High Table links as was the case at other colleges (see page 199), and the only substantive Bedford post-war link with Cambridge was not with Newnham but with the Department of Geography, in the form of Bedford Travel Grants available to its students.<sup>41</sup>

The other five evacuations were more strongly relational in nature. The nature of these relationships will be explored in more detail later in this article.

<sup>34</sup> Archibald E. Clark-Kennedy, *The London: A Study in the Voluntary Hospital System, Volume 2: 1840–1948*, 242 (London, 1963).

<sup>35</sup> 'Dark interlude: the story of S. Catharine's at war', *St Catharine's College Magazine*, September 1947, 57.

<sup>36</sup> *Newnham College Roll Letter*, 1960, 38–9. Newnham Archives.

<sup>37</sup> Letter from Geraldine Jebb to Joan Strachey, 17.8.1940. Also minutes of Newnham College Council meeting, 29.7.1944. Newnham Archives.

<sup>38</sup> *Newnham College Roll Letter*, January 1942, 24–6. Newnham Archives.

<sup>39</sup> Initially, in 1939, these comprised Springfield in Sidgwick Avenue (for administration and the Principal's residence), Merton House in Queens' Road (for lecture rooms and classrooms), the Oast House in Malting Lane (for the Students' Union), and 16 Newton Road (for students' residence). Bedford College Council Minutes, 25.9.1939. Bedford Archives.

<sup>40</sup> Letter from Geraldine Jebb to Myra Curtis (new Principal of Newnham), 3.6.1942. Newnham Archives. A subsequent letter from Olive Monkhouse (Secretary) stated that the move to Fitzwilliam Street 'will enable the activities of the College generally to be more concentrated'. It also expressed the hope that Newnham would be able to continue to offer the teaching accommodation which it had provided to Bedford College in the previous session. A later undated list of Bedford College premises in Cambridge showed almost all subject departments housed at Fitzwilliam House or at 21, 22 or 25 Fitzwilliam Street, with the Staff Common Room at Fitzwilliam House, and the Students' Union at 19 Fitzwilliam Street. Newnham Archives.

<sup>41</sup> See *Compass* (The Magazine of the Cambridge University Geographical Society), December 1948, 48, and December 1949, 140. Also email from Tim Bayliss-Smith to Tony Watts (13.5.2021) which records his receipt of such a grant in 1967.

## THE EVACUATED STUDENTS

The numbers of London University students evacuated to Cambridge during the war is shown in Table 1. In some cases, there are substantial discrepancies between figures taken from different sources;<sup>42</sup> the merit of the figures quoted in Table 1 is that, from 1940/41 onwards, they are taken from a single standard source, *The Cambridge Review*, in October of each year,<sup>43</sup> and are therefore likely to be broadly comparable across colleges and across years. The figures for 1939/40 are from other sources,<sup>44</sup> and may not be comparable with the later years. The 'Other' students were Law students from King's and UCL (under a long-standing tripartite arrangement with LSE for legal teaching) and Economics students from UCL, all of whom moved to Cambridge with their departments as part of the LSE evacuation.<sup>45</sup> In total, the figures suggest that the number of London students evacuated to Cambridge during the course of the war was around 10,000, though this includes some double/triple-counting of those who stayed more than a year: the number of individuals was probably closer to 5,000. The figures taken from *The Cambridge Review* in Table 1 show that the number of evacuated students increased between 1940/41 and 1942/43; they also indicate that the proportion of women students grew, from 50.5% in 1940/41 to 66.4% in 1943/44.

The changing gender balance was linked to the regulations for conscription. Throughout the war, medical, dentistry, science and engineering students were able to complete their courses, compressed as much as the

<sup>42</sup> For example, the figure published for the Bartlett School in the UCL *Annual Report* 1940/41 (UCL Archives) was 104 rather than the 64 shown in Table 1 (the figures for later years are more closely comparable). Again, the figures for students given in the LSE annual *Prospectus* were, for all years, higher than those given in the table: for instance, 753 day students, including 526 regular day students, for 1940/41 (*Prospectus 1941–42*, 8–9), in comparison with the 458 shown in Table 1. In general, it seems that at least some of *The Cambridge Review* figures were under-estimates, possibly based on restricted definitions of 'students'.

<sup>43</sup> 11.10.1940, 23; 11.10.1941, 19; 17.10.1942, 18; 23.10.1943, 22; 28.10.1944, 38; 27.10.1945, 42.

<sup>44</sup> The LSE figure is from Dahrendorf (Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 343 (Oxford, 1995)); the QMC figure from Maurice (Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944)); the SOAS figure from Brown (Ian Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies: Imperial Training and the Expansion of Learning*, 98–9 (Cambridge, 2016)) and Supple (Barry Supple, 'The two World Wars', in Reynolds, D. (ed.): *Christ's: a Cambridge College over Five Centuries*, 163 (London, 2005)); and the Barts figure from Waddington (Keir Waddington, *Medical Education at St Bartholomew's Hospital 1123–1995*, 264 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2003)).

<sup>45</sup> See LSE *Prospectus 1940–41*, 7–8; LSE *Prospectus 1941–42*, 8–9; Friedrich Hayek, The London School of Economics 1895–1945, *Economica*, 13 (49), 1946, 28–9.

Table 1. Numbers of London University students evacuated to Cambridge

College	1939/40			1940/41			1941/42			1942/43			1943/44			1944/45		
	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total
Bartlett	70	22	92	47	17	64	38	34	72	26	40	66	15	38	53	25	47	72
Barts	176	—	176	200	—	200	221	—	221	212	—	214	214	—	225	—	225	
Bedford	?	?	?	—	468	468	—	509	—	509	—	527	527	—	515	515	—	
The London	80	—	80	79	—	79	88	—	88	94	—	94	—	—	—	—	—	—
LSE	?	?	?	620	244	214	458	183	290	473	159	397	556	124	444	568	193	459
QMC	?	?	?	278	187	74	261	219	105	324	248	136	384	214	151	365	196	171
SOAS	?	?	?	150	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17	8	25	21	12	33	34	9	43
Total	?	?	?	757	773	1530	749	938	1687	756	1108	1864	588	1160	1748	673	686	1359
															261	—	261	

M - Men; W - Women.

\*King's College; University College.

In addition, 28 students were recorded for Chichester Theological College in 1940/41, and 16 in 1941/42 (cf. footnote 20).

syllabus allowed,<sup>46</sup> before entering essential work or the Forces.<sup>47</sup> Arts and social science students, however, were subject to being called up. Initially this applied to men aged 20+, enabling many such students to study for two years;<sup>48</sup> but by 1942 this had been reduced to 18+ (and women aged 20+<sup>49</sup>). In 1942, 60–70% of students in Cambridge University were only there for one year,<sup>50</sup> usually planning to return after their national service. Many universities began to suggest that students should come up at 17, instead of 18/19, to extend their period of residence; so the student body became appreciably younger.<sup>51</sup>

The arrival of the London students certainly altered the gender balance among the student body in Cambridge as a whole. In Cambridge University, all the colleges were single-sex: 18 for men and only 2 for women. Of the evacuated London colleges, Bedford was all-female, while the two London medical schools were all-male;<sup>52</sup> but the other four evacuated colleges were mixed. With the growing conscription of men, the proportion of women students increased: at the LSE, for instance, the pre-war ratio of 70% men and 30% women had by 1944 been almost precisely reversed.<sup>53</sup> As the proportion of women in the mixed colleges rose, the impact of the London evacuation on the gender distribution of students in Cambridge was enhanced. As a female Cambridge student observed: 'The students of Girton and Newnham return to Cambridge this term only to discover that the inequality of the sexes under which they have long been accustomed to

<sup>46</sup> In the early years of the war, a 46-week year experiment compressed the work of five terms into an almost continuous session of 12 months. 'Cambridge news', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 2 (3), December 1940, 53–54.

<sup>47</sup> Roger Broad, *Conscription in Britain 1939–1964: The Militarisation of a Generation*, 183 (London, 2006).

<sup>48</sup> Keir Waddington, *Medical Education at St Bartholomew's Hospital 1123–1995*, 271 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2003). Cambridge University responded with the introduction of two-year degrees for the duration of the war (Barbara Megson & Hilary Goy, 'World War II: War-time memories of life at college', in Rubery, E. & Watson, D. (eds.): *Girtonians and the World Wars: The Influence of the War Years on the Lives of Girtonians*, The Girton Project Journal, 1, 8 (Cambridge, 2009)).

<sup>49</sup> Conscription of women seems to have operated in different ways than for men, and to have borne less severely on them. There seems to be no serious study of this.

<sup>50</sup> University of Cambridge Bursars' and Stewards' Joint Committee minutes, 9.6.1942.

<sup>51</sup> Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then: A History of Everyday Life during the Second World War*, 207 (London, 2002). Friedrich Hayek, The London School of Economics 1895–1945, *Economica*, 13 (49), 1946, 29.

<sup>52</sup> They did not admit women students until after the War (Cecil E. Morris, The Medical College in the twentieth century. In Victor C. Medvei & John L. Thornton, *The Royal Hospital of Saint Bartholomew 1123–1973*, 89–90 (London, 1974)). Though some other London medical schools, including King's College Hospital and University College Hospital, had been admitting women since 1915 (Hilary Bourdillon, *Women as Healers: A History of Women and Medicine*, 41 (Cambridge, 1988)).

<sup>53</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 345 (Oxford, 1995)).

profit is now almost annihilated by an influx of females from the University of London'.<sup>54</sup> This influx also provided impetus for the founding in 1941 of the Cambridge University Women's Boat Club.<sup>55</sup>

What arrangements were made for the women students in the mixed London colleges that were paired with all-male Cambridge colleges? In the case of QMC, paired with King's, the initial solution was to establish a parallel partnership with the all-female Girton College, where the 56 female students and two staff members could be accommodated. But it was a tight fit, requiring some sharing of rooms.<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, for the following year QMC found two adjoining private houses in Hills Road where their female students and staff could be accommodated,<sup>57</sup> with some students in lodgings.<sup>58</sup> It was hoped that they would still be able to make Girton to some extent their headquarters, but the hostels were too far away for this to prove practicable, so the link with Girton was discontinued.<sup>59</sup>

A similar but more limited arrangement was made by the Bartlett with Newnham. With its male students based at St Catharine's, 11 of its female students were accommodated at Newnham in 1939/40,<sup>60</sup> and some were also located there in the following year (in preference to senior staff from Bedford).<sup>61</sup>

In the case of the LSE and SOAS, the women students were from the outset based in lodgings. In these and the other two cases, however, it seems possible that women students were included in the invitations from the host male colleges' societies to join in their activities. There is no direct evidence that they did so, though one former QMC student, interviewed in her nineties, recalled that when going to services in King's College Chapel, she was taken to a seat in the choir stalls as a member of the College would have been.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, arrangements were made for the Bartlett women students to have access to the social and athletic facilities available to the LSE at Peterhouse and at the LSE's own rented

<sup>54</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 4.11.1939, 3.

<sup>55</sup> Gill Sutherland & Kate Williams, *Walking on the Grass, Dancing in the Corridors: Newnham at 150*, 114 (London, 2021).

<sup>56</sup> *Girton College Cambridge Annual Report*, December 1939, 7. Girton Archives. Also Editorial in *The Girton Review*, III, Michaelmas Term 1939, 1. Girton Archives. Maurice states that 80 QMC students were accommodated at Girton (Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944)).

<sup>57</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>58</sup> *Queen Mary College Prospectus 1942-43*. QMC/TEMP/194. QMC Archives.

<sup>59</sup> *Girton College Cambridge Annual Report*, December 1940, 7. Girton Archives.

<sup>60</sup> Newnham College Council Meeting minutes, 4.11.1939. Newnham Archives.

<sup>61</sup> Letter from Joan Strachey (Principal of Newnham) to Geraldine Jebb (Principal of Bedford), 23.9.1940. Newnham Archives. This reinforces the suggestion above that the relationship between Bedford and Newnham was largely transactional.

<sup>62</sup> Interviews with Audrey Smith in April and July 2020.

buildings,<sup>63</sup> presumably because they felt more comfortable with the LSE's women students there than in the more exclusively male environment of St Catharine's. At Christ's, for the first time in the college's history, SOAS women students and staff were allowed to have lunch in hall – but not dinner.<sup>64</sup>

In general, more students lived in lodgings than in college. In the case of Bedford and LSE, no students at all lived in their host college. By contrast, with SOAS, in its one year in Cambridge, all of its male students seem to have lived in Christ's.<sup>65</sup> In the case of QMC, 89 students in 1939/40 were accommodated in King's, and 55 in Girton, while lodgings had to be found for 134;<sup>66</sup> thereafter, 50 each year were housed in King's,<sup>67</sup> with the vast majority in hostels or lodgings. With Barts, the majority of the initial 176 students were resident in Queens,<sup>68</sup> but many complained about the cost of living in college as opposed to lodgings<sup>69</sup> and the somewhat spartan conditions,<sup>70</sup> and a large number left to find lodgings<sup>71</sup>, leaving only 26 in Queens' by late 1944.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1941–1942*, 5. LSE Archives.

<sup>64</sup> Charles E. Raven, 'Cambridge during the War: Christ's College', *The Cambridge Review*, LXVII (1650), 15 June 1946, 458. An anonymous article in the St Catharine's magazine records that when the Director of the American Red Cross was invited to dinner and unexpectedly turned out to be a woman, the Chaplain 'promptly sacrificed himself to a private meal in his rooms, and the sanctity of High Table was preserved' ('Dark interlude: The story of S. Catharine's at war', *St Catharine's Society Magazine*, September 1947, 58).

<sup>65</sup> This is indicated in several documents (e.g. Ian Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies: Imperial Training and the Expansion of Learning*, 98–9 (Cambridge, 2016)), though they do not comment on the arrangements made for women students, who were presumably in lodgings. It seems likely that the proportion of women students was low: the only direct reference – Ralph Turner's initial estimate in April 1939 of likely student numbers for October 1939 (which proved to be a substantial under-estimate) – was 21 men and 3 women. Letter from R.L. Turner to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, 28.4.1939. SOAS Archives.

<sup>66</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>67</sup> King's College *Annual Reports*, 1941–44. King's Archives.

<sup>68</sup> Sir Girling Ball, 'Bart's in the War of 1939', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 1 (3), December 1939, 32–33.

<sup>69</sup> In 1940 the charge made for board and lodging by two colleges to London students was £3 a week; for lodgings it was from 35/- to 45/- a week with full board. Letter from Secretary-General of the Faculties, University of Cambridge, to the Principal of University College, Southampton, 5.7.1940. Cambridge University Library archives.

<sup>70</sup> Outsiders were always expected to share, and priority was given to Queensmen when more space was available (John Twigg, *A History of Queens' College, Cambridge, 1448–1986*, 359 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1987)). Many of those sharing had to bring their own mattresses (Keir Waddington, *Medical Education at St Bartholomew's Hospital 1123–1995*, 271–2 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2003)). 'We are all grumbling at the price – three guineas a week – for the honour, as someone put it, of sleeping on the floor and walking across a cold court for the necessities' ('Report from Queens' College, Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 1 (1), October 1939, 7).

<sup>71</sup> Keir Waddington, *Medical Education at St Bartholomew's Hospital 1123–1995*, 271–2 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2003).

<sup>72</sup> *Dial*, Easter 1947, 6. Queens' Archives.

The process of finding lodgings, however, was not easy. Even in 1939 the Dean of Barts reported that 'Cambridge is so full of all varieties of students that it is almost impossible to find rooms outside the walls of the College'.<sup>73</sup> It was not just students: there were also pressures on accommodation in Cambridge from evacuated children and civil servants, and from the armed forces. These pressures grew as the war progressed.<sup>74</sup> The city became almost intolerably crowded: a Trinity don complained in December 1941 about the long queue outside Marks & Spencer for acid drops, and in October 1943 about the near impossibility of getting one's hair cut.<sup>75</sup> Finding lodgings was a slow process, involving personal visits to each house.<sup>76</sup> The LSE's Reader in Commerce, Vera Anstey, became the School's accommodation officer, cycling round Cambridge to identify lodgings and deal with the delicate problems that could arise between landladies and lodgers, to achieve her twin goals: 'that no student should have nowhere to sleep; and that no court case should be instituted'.<sup>77</sup> Particular difficulties were experienced in finding lodgings for Black LSE students from West Africa, because of 'the strong race prejudice of the residents'.<sup>78</sup>

Many of the lodgings were in the form of billeting, with students counted against the total number of persons that households were required to accommodate under the Government's general billeting scheme. Thus if a householder who had agreed to accept four children would prefer to have four students, the London college would notify the Ministry of Health billeting officer and arrangements for the children would be made elsewhere. Among the possible relative attractions of university students was that they required accommodation only during term time, and would be under the control and discipline of the college, which would make the payments.<sup>79</sup>

Those who were living in college passed their ration books to the college, so usually had their meals there; those in lodgings passed the

<sup>73</sup> Sir Girling Ball, 'Bart's in the War of 1939', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 1 (1), October 1939, 7–8.

<sup>74</sup> 'At Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, 48 (10), November 1944, 164–165.

<sup>75</sup> Andrew S.F. Gow, *Letters from Cambridge 1939–1944*, 116, 199 (London, 1945).

<sup>76</sup> Draft Principal's Report, October 1939. QMC/PS/163. QMC Archives.

<sup>77</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 347 (Oxford, 1995). See also Vera Anstey, 'L.S.E. yesterday, today and tomorrow', *London School of Economics Society Magazine*, 1, January 1951, 2–5.

<sup>78</sup> Betty Evans (née Bond), 'The LSE in Cambridge 1941–44' (typed document). LSE Archives. Also Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 346 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>79</sup> Letter from Principal of Bedford College to Cambridge householders, 2.8.1939. Newnham Archives.

documents to their landladies. This restricted the latter's contact with their host college.<sup>80</sup> One former QMC student remembered going to a few services in King's College Chapel, but had no recollection of eating in the college or going there at all for other purposes;<sup>81</sup> another recalled going to one or two concerts in King's and thought he might have had one or two 'fancy dinners' there.<sup>82</sup> An LSE student reported that he never set foot in Peterhouse.<sup>83</sup>

Students accommodated in their host college were often competing for rooms with other groups. These included military cadets on six-month courses, who were matriculated as members of Cambridge University. They were not admitted until they were at least 17 years and 9 months old, and could not be chosen if they had reached the age of call-up. The courses included time for military training, and satisfied one-third of the requirements for an Ordinary BA degree. By 1943/44 there were 660 such students in the university.<sup>84</sup>

Further 'incomers' included members of various government departments and RAF training units,<sup>85</sup> and other military groups – including Americans – who passed through from time to time.<sup>86</sup> In 1940 the colleges had to cope at very short notice with hundreds of soldiers evacuated from Dunkirk:<sup>87</sup> they 'slept the clock round' and pronounced the colleges 'the best billets they had ever struck.'<sup>88</sup>

In addition, the Government requisitioned some buildings owned by the Cambridge colleges. In particular, the Bull Hotel at St Catharine's was requisitioned by the Ministry of Works from 1942 to 1946, to provide a hostel or club for members of the American Forces stationed in or near Cambridge: in October 1945 it became 'Bull College', housing 89 of the

<sup>80</sup> Though Queens' permitted Barts students in lodgings to lunch and entertain their male friends in the college, and also to dine in the Hall at a charge of 2s/9d a night if they did so regularly. Minutes of Barts College Committee, 5.6.1940. How this was reconciled with ration-book arrangements is unclear.

<sup>81</sup> Zoom interview with Maurice Stack, 7.6.2021.

<sup>82</sup> Facetime interview with Alan Jeffs, 31.12.2020.

<sup>83</sup> Maurice Vile, quoted in Matthew Willis, 'The School, war, and exile', *The Beaver* (LSE Students' Union newspaper), 11 November 2008, 13–14.

<sup>84</sup> James A. Steers, 'The College during the Second World War', *St Catharine's College Society 1987*. It is not clear whether or not these were included in the figure for one-year students cited above (p. 190).

<sup>85</sup> John P.C. Roach (ed.), *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume III, the City and University of Cambridge*, 307 (London, 1959).

<sup>86</sup> See e.g. King's College *Annual Report*, 1945, para.XIX. King's Archives.

<sup>87</sup> John Twigg, *A History of Queens' College, Cambridge, 1448–1986*, 358 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1987).

<sup>88</sup> Henry J. Chaytor, 'Cambridge during the War: St Catharine's College', *The Cambridge Review*, LXVII (1631), 1945, 80.

149 US servicemen attending Cambridge University.<sup>89</sup> In 1942, the Ministry of Works also notified Peterhouse that they wished to requisition its Hostel to house the offices of the Infantry Training Centre, and had to be gently reminded that it had already in 1939 requisitioned the building for use by the LSE.<sup>90</sup>

There were some tensions between the colleges and the military ‘incomers’. At King’s, letters between the Bursar and an RAF squadron leader show ‘a war of words over bicycles, light bulbs, potatoes, powdered eggs, china mugs, filing cabinets and sausages’ throughout the period the squadron was based there.<sup>91</sup> In general, the colleges preferred to use their rooms for the accommodation of students studying in the university – which included the London students – rather than to divert them to other uses.<sup>92</sup> When the Director of the LSE was told of signs of damage at a private house, Grove Lodge, which the LSE had taken over, he wondered what the state of the house would have been had it been taken over by one of the branches of the Forces.<sup>93</sup>

## TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS

The general plan of the arrangements made by Cambridge University for the reception of the London colleges was ‘to provide accommodation for lectures and laboratory work, and to allow the students and staff to use the University Library and Departmental Libraries in the same way as our own students and staff are allowed to do’.<sup>94</sup> This resulted in some pressure on space in lecture rooms and on facilities generally, but ‘nothing worse’.<sup>95</sup> London staff were permitted to borrow books from the University Library, but students were not;<sup>96</sup> it was however viewed as ‘the warmest place to

<sup>89</sup> James A. Steers, ‘The College during the Second World War’, *St Catharine’s College Society 1987*, 57–8.

<sup>90</sup> Minutes of the Governing Body, 26.1.1942. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>91</sup> See <https://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/archive-centre/online-resources/online-exhibitions/the-battle-for-britain-kings-on-the-home-front>

<sup>92</sup> Letter from Secretary-General of the Faculties, University of Cambridge, to the Principal of University College, Southampton, 5.7.1940. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>93</sup> Letter from Alexander Carr-Saunders to Mr Butler, 11.4.1945. LSE/CFR/402. LSE Archives.

<sup>94</sup> Letter from Secretary-General of the Faculties, University of Cambridge, to the Principal of University College, Southampton, 22.6.1940. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>95</sup> Peter Gosden, *Education in the Second World War: A Study in Policy and Administration*, 140 (London, 2007).

<sup>96</sup> War-time arrangements, Box III. War 204: London Colleges. (5) Library facilities, 1939–1941. Cambridge University Library Archives.

study'.<sup>97</sup> In the case of laboratories, Barts students noted that 'although these University laboratories are in some cases not quite as modern as our own in Charterhouse Square, it is possible that many a Bart's man will be heard in the future to tell his grandchildren that he did his physics in the great Cavendish Laboratory'.<sup>98</sup>

Some host colleges provided lecture rooms for their guest colleges. This was the case at Christ's, for example, which provided SOAS with several lecture rooms, as well as one of the College Combination Rooms to use as a Staff Common Room.<sup>99</sup> It was also true – as we have seen – at Newnham.<sup>100</sup> The LSE moved part of its own library to Cambridge to act as a lending library, and took over Grove Lodge to house this and to provide facilities for lectures and classes; in addition, it rented rooms for tutorial/seminar and other purposes from Peterhouse in St Peter's Terrace and from Corpus Christi in King's Parade.<sup>101</sup>

From the outset, there was strong encouragement on both sides for collaboration in teaching, in terms of mutual assistance and even in some instances arranging courses suitable for students of both universities. As the General Board at Cambridge stated, 'such economy of effort in teaching is most desirable, since the avoidance of duplication will save unnecessary expense, and it will make it easier to provide accommodation for lectures in the reduced number of rooms which will be available'.<sup>102</sup> It also made it possible to fill gaps left on both sides by teaching staff leaving for war work. The pooling of teaching resources enabled both universities to continue their full range of courses with much reduced personnel.<sup>103</sup> Thus, for example, some joint teaching took place between the Bartlett and the Cambridge School of Architecture;<sup>104</sup> and arrangements were made with QMC and Barts for Cambridge students to attend their classes

<sup>97</sup> Recollections of Mary Wilson. In BBC WW2 People's War Archive: (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/13/a4200913.shtml>)

<sup>98</sup> 'Cambridge news', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 2 (4), January 1941, 73.

<sup>99</sup> School of Oriental and African Studies, *Report of the Governing Body and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ending 31st July, 1940*. SOAS Archives.

<sup>100</sup> Letter from Joan Strachey (Principal of Newnham) to Geraldine Jebb (Principal of Bedford), 23.9.1940. Newnham Archives.

<sup>101</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 343–4 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>102</sup> Letter from J.T. Saunders (Secretary General of the Faculties) to Chairmen and Secretaries of Faculty Boards, and Heads of Department, 8.9.1939. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>103</sup> *The Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1939–1940*, 5. LSE Archives.

<sup>104</sup> Andrew Saint, *The Cambridge School of Architecture: A Brief History* (2006) <https://www.arct.cam.ac.uk/aboutthedepartment/aboutthephthome>

in Elementary Physics and Elementary Chemistry.<sup>105</sup> Sir Lawrence Bragg, head of the Cavendish Physics Laboratory, was quoted as saying that he would not have been able to keep the Cavendish open but for the help of the QMC Physics Department.<sup>106</sup>

Co-operation was particularly strong in Economics, where the respective Departments were 'virtually integrated'.<sup>107</sup> A joint lecture programme was devised at the outset which covered most of the needs of London BSc (Econ) and BCom candidates and of Cambridge Parts I and II Economics Tripos candidates; each side made special provision for topics which did not appear in the syllabus of the other. In addition, it was agreed that nearly all London and Cambridge lectures could be freely attended by any student of either university.<sup>108</sup> Thus 'LSE students found themselves listening to A.C. Pigou, C.R. Fay and Joan Robinson; Cambridge students could cram the Mill Lane lecture-theatres to hear Harold Laski,<sup>109</sup> R.H. Tawney, Nicky Kaldor, and Morris Ginsberg – the latter exposing them to the illicit subject of Sociology<sup>110</sup> like a bootlegger suddenly licensed to sell gin in public'.<sup>111</sup> Ex-LSE students later referred to the 'creative ferment' of the war years in Cambridge.<sup>112</sup>

The level of integration in Economics was particularly notable because of the tensions there had been in this field between Cambridge and the LSE in the 1930s, largely focused around the intellectual and political differences between John Maynard Keynes on the one hand and Lionel Robbins and Friedrich Von Hayek on the other. Keynes advocated public investment to fight the Depression; Robbins and Hayek supported a balanced budget policy. It was felt in Cambridge that the intention at the

<sup>105</sup> Letter from the First Assistant Registrar to Senior Tutors, 10.10.1941. General Board of the Faculties War File 153, Emergency Arrangements 1939. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>106</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>107</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 345 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>108</sup> *The Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1939–1940*, 5. LSE Archives.

<sup>109</sup> Laski was especially popular. One ex-LSE student recalled him 'filling a Saturday morning Cambridge lecture hall to the last seat on the last available step'. Barbara Sternberg: 'The view from Colorado', *LSE Magazine*, 64, November 1982, 9.

<sup>110</sup> For a brief account of the long resistance of Cambridge University to Sociology as a subject, see Geoffrey Hawthorn, 'Sociology in Cambridge', *London Review of Books*, 8 (19), 6 November 1986.

<sup>111</sup> Norman MacKenzie, in Absc, J. (ed.): *My LSE*, 46–7 (London, 1977).

<sup>112</sup> Barbara Sternberg: 'The view from Colorado', *LSE Magazine*, 64, November 1982, 9. Also George Brand, 'Letter', *LSE Magazine*, 65, June 1983, 20. Though not all shared this 'roseate view' (Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 352 (Oxford, 1995)).

LSE was 'to set up Hayek as an idol to serve as an antidote to Keynes' (Kahn, 1984, p.181). Keynes and Hayek subsequently became perhaps the two most prominent and politically influential economists of the twentieth century, at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum (Hayek was widely regarded as Margaret Thatcher's guru<sup>113</sup>). During the war, however, the ideological gap between them was reduced, as even Hayek recognised the need for a command economy, and supported the measures advocated by Keynes for controlling inflation. Moreover, when Hayek arrived in Cambridge as part of the LSE evacuation, they became more personally close. Hayek had difficulty in finding a residence for his family in Cambridge, and lived in rooms which Keynes arranged for him in King's.<sup>114</sup> Keynes also helped to secure a place for Hayek's son Laurence at King's College School.<sup>115</sup> Laurence later recalled that his father and Keynes took shifts together watching for fires at night from the roofs of King's College.<sup>116</sup> Eric Samuels subsequently wrote a play *On the Roof with Hayek and Keynes*, speculating on what their conversation might have comprised.<sup>117</sup>

Some teaching staff lived in their host Cambridge college. This included Newnham and Peterhouse, both of which accommodated staff but not students: Newnham provided rooms for nine Bedford staff,<sup>118</sup> Peterhouse for five LSE staff.<sup>119</sup> Of the others, King's provided accommodation for seven QMC staff;<sup>120</sup> Queens' for six Barts staff;<sup>121</sup> St Catharine's for two Bartlett staff.<sup>122</sup> Other teaching and administrative staff found housing elsewhere, sometimes for their families too. A number, however, commuted from London on a daily or weekly basis (with the difficulties this involved in wartime conditions). This was partly for family reasons; partly because some teaching continued for a while in London, particularly for

<sup>113</sup> 'She had read Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* as an undergraduate at Oxford, and in the 1970s used to pull his *Constitution of Liberty* out of her handbag, declaring "This is what we believe" (Charles Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorised Biography, Volume I, Not for Turning*, 343 (London, 2013)).

<sup>114</sup> Alan Ebenstein, *Friedrich Hayek: A Biography*, 106 (New York, 2001).

<sup>115</sup> Obituary of Laurence Hayek by Harry Phibbs, *The Independent*, 7 September 2004.

<sup>116</sup> Alan Ebenstein, *Friedrich Hayek: A Biography*, 106 (New York, 2001).

<sup>117</sup> *Catalyst*, February 2014 (<https://catalystmagazine.net/on-the-roof-with-hayek-keynes/>)

<sup>118</sup> Bedford College Staff in Newnham College, 30.9.1939. Newnham Archives.

<sup>119</sup> Minutes: Meetings of the Governing Body, 9.10.1939, 23.10.1939. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>120</sup> Lancelot P. Wilkinson, *A Century of King's 1873–1972*, 101 (Cambridge, 1980).

<sup>121</sup> Minutes of College Committee, 5.6.1940. Queens' Archives.

<sup>122</sup> James A. Steers, 'The College during the Second World War', *St Catharine's College Society* 1987.

LSE evening students (in temporary accommodation at Canterbury Hall),<sup>123</sup> and partly because some staff had other war duties there.<sup>124</sup>

In the somewhat arcane world of Cambridge colleges, dining rights are the currency of status and acceptance. Most of the host colleges provided dining rights to their guest college's teaching staff. Christ's, for example, made male members of the SOAS teaching staff members of the high table, on the understanding that no more than six would avail themselves of dining facilities on any one night;<sup>125</sup> as noted earlier, women members of the teaching staff were given lunch in hall but not dinner. King's seems to have confined High Table membership to the seven QMC teaching staff living in the college.<sup>126</sup> This was initially the case also at Peterhouse,<sup>127</sup> but soon such membership was extended to all visiting LSE staff;<sup>128</sup> it is unclear whether or not this included women staff. In addition, at least two host colleges elected senior visiting staff to Honorary Fellowships: Queens' did so with F.L. Hopwood, the Vice-Dean of Barts responsible for the administrative arrangements of its evacuation to Cambridge<sup>129</sup> (a 'compliment which was returned when Dr Venn was made a Perpetual Student of St Bartholomew's'<sup>130</sup>); St Catharine's with Albert Richardson and Patrick Abercrombie, both eminent Bartlett academics.<sup>131</sup>

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Cambridge during the War experienced the same air-raid precautions, black-outs, rationing and material shortages as the rest of the country. In summer 1940 many students went home early in case of invasion;<sup>132</sup> one LSE student, Pat Jefferies, recalled emerging from his final exams to be

<sup>123</sup> SOAS, too, continued some teaching in London (Brown, 2016, 98–99).

<sup>124</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 343 (Oxford, 1995). Also Friedrich Hayek, The London School of Economics 1895–1945, *Economica*, 13 (49), 1946, 28.

<sup>125</sup> Minutes of Christ's College Council meeting, 7.10.1939. Christ's Archives.

<sup>126</sup> King's College Annual Report 1939, para. VII. King's Archives.

<sup>127</sup> Minutes of meeting of the Governing Body, 9 October 1939 and 23 October 1939. In Peterhouse College Order Book, 297 and 300. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>128</sup> Minutes of meeting of the Governing Body, 11 December 1939. In Peterhouse College Order Book, 310. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>129</sup> Cambridge news, *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 2 (3), December 1940, 53–54.

<sup>130</sup> 'During the war', *The Dial*, 95, Easter Term 1947. Queens' Archives. Dr J.A. Venn was President of Queens'.

<sup>131</sup> Minutes of College Meetings, 24.5.1940 and 8.6.1942. St Catharine's Archives.

<sup>132</sup> Barbara Megson & Hilary Goy, 'World War II: War-time memories of life at college', in Rubery, E. & Watson, D. (eds.): *Girtonians and the World Wars: The Influence of the War Years on the Lives of Girtonians*, The Girton Project Journal, 1, 8 (Cambridge, 2009).

met with posters announcing the fall of France – his immediate thought was that it would now not matter too much whether he passed or not.<sup>133</sup> Throughout the war the black-out was strictly enforced: there were no street lights and every window had to be completely screened or curtained,<sup>134</sup> the windows of King's College Chapel were replaced with black tar paper which 'rattled thunderously in the wind'.<sup>135</sup> Both students and teaching staff undertook fire-watching during air raids, usually in pairs, sometimes for a couple of hours and sometimes throughout the night.<sup>136</sup> The university and college buildings escaped from the air raids with negligible damage, though the Union buildings were badly harmed in 1942. It was commonly believed that the German air force largely refrained from bombing Cambridge on the understanding that this would deter the RAF from bombing Heidelberg.<sup>137</sup> A former QMC student later recalled that when there was a lot of fuss about a bomb that had fallen in Royston, 15 miles away, he and his friends showed little sympathy because they were so used to bombs, including the V-1 flying bomb or doodlebug, in London.<sup>138</sup>

A major extra-curricular activity for male students in particular was service in the Home Guard and other military activities, both in term time and during vacations. An LSE report noted that much of their time was occupied in performing duties as members of the Cambridge University Senior Training Corps and the Cambridge University Air Squadron, anxious to justify the privilege of being at university in war-time by taking full advantage of activities that would enable them later to be of more service to their country.<sup>139</sup> The female president of the LSE Students' Union stated that every student should be doing a minimum of part-time war work, and the union sought to facilitate this.<sup>140</sup> War work undertaken by students included driving ambulances and provisions to schools and

<sup>133</sup> Telephone interview with Jill Shields, 12.9.2020.

<sup>134</sup> Peter Mason, 'St Catharine's at war', *St Catharine's College Society Annual Magazine*, 2007, 99.

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/archive-centre/online-resources/online-exhibitions/the-battle-for-britain-kings-on-the-home-front>

<sup>136</sup> St Catharine's College JCR Suggestion Book, October 1941. St Catharine's Archives. Senior members of Cambridge University who volunteered for fire-watching were expected to do an all-night stint once a fortnight. General Board of the Faculties War File 153, R. 1940–41, 422. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>137</sup> John P.C. Roach (ed.), *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume III, the City and University of Cambridge*, 307 (London, 1959). Roach attributed the main source of this belief to Sir William Spens, Master of Corpus Christi College, who during the War was Regional Commissioner for Civil Defence for the Eastern Region.

<sup>138</sup> Facetime interview with Alan Jeffs, 31.12.2020.

<sup>139</sup> *The Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1940–1941*, 6. LSE Archives.

<sup>140</sup> Matthew Willis, 'The School, war, and exile', *The Beaver* (Newspaper of the London School of Economics Students' Union), 11.11.2008, 13–14.

airfields,<sup>141</sup> land work, and factory shifts – one LSE group took over completely the manning of one machine in a factory during the night shift.<sup>142</sup>

There were other ways in which the war intruded into student life. Around 20–25% of the LSE students were from overseas, many of them from occupied Europe, German exiles, Polish officers and refugees from South-Eastern Europe.<sup>143</sup> Joan Abse later recorded that her own LSE student memories were much bound up with her encounters with these often older students.<sup>144</sup> In May 1940 the Director of the LSE wrote to landlords/landladies of male students who had been interned because they were regarded as enemy aliens.<sup>145</sup> His letter gave notice that these students' accommodation would no longer be needed, offering to settle their accounts and store their belongings. The reverse of the letter included a handwritten list of 18 students, all with Germanic surnames.<sup>146</sup>

While the context of the war was omnipresent, it also often felt strangely distant, particularly to London students accustomed to heavy bombing and pervasive bomb-sites. Norman MacKenzie referred to the LSE's Cambridge years as 'a student utopia';<sup>147</sup> Joan Abse as 'a delightful oasis of happiness and fulfilment in a world bent on destruction'.<sup>148</sup> For many students it was a happy, carefree time: the daughter of one Newnham student later recalled that her mother and a QMC friend often quoted to each other Wordsworth's lines: 'Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven'.<sup>149</sup> In the summer in particular, St Barts students remembered 'Grantchester and the river, the madrigals and may-balls, the "bumps" and pints of beer at the Anchor or the Bath, swimming in Byron's pool and coffee in the K.P., and possibly some work'.<sup>150</sup> These were perhaps somewhat rose-tinted memories. More measured was Ian

<sup>141</sup> Sir Anthony Alment, 'A student's war', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, Summer 1993, 14.

<sup>142</sup> Matthew Willis: 'The School, war, and exile', *The Beaver* (Newspaper of the London School of Economics Students' Union), 11.11.2008, 13–14.

<sup>143</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 346 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>144</sup> Joan Abse (ed.), *My LSE*, 10 (London, 1977).

<sup>145</sup> For details of the Government's internment policies and practices, see David Cesarani & Tony Kushner (eds.), *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (London, 1993). Also Rachel Pistol, *Internment during the Second World War: A Comparative Study of Great Britain and the USA* (London, 2019).

<sup>146</sup> Letter from A.M. Carr-Saunders to landlords/landladies of interned students, 14.5.1940. LSE Archives.

<sup>147</sup> Norman MacKenzie, in Joan Abse, (ed.): *My LSE*, 50 (London, 1977).

<sup>148</sup> Joan Abse (ed.), *My LSE*, 10 (London, 1977).

<sup>149</sup> Email from Catherine Crosland to Tony Watts, 7.1.2021. Catherine Crosland was the daughter of a Newnham student who was a close school and university friend of Cecil Dione ('Donie') Armitage (née Rowlatt), an evacuated QMC student.

<sup>150</sup> 'At Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, 47(7), August 1943, 203–204.

Gilbert's comment when remembering his year at Cambridge as 'the best year of my life': 'We worked hard in an extremely stimulating environment. We also played hard, athletically and socially, and even had time to prepare for our war service.'<sup>151</sup>

Certainly London students engaged in a wide range of sports and other activities. The partnership arrangements with their host Cambridge colleges gave them access to the colleges' sports facilities, while the Senior Treasurers of the Cambridge University Athletics Clubs opened their doors to London male students on the same terms as Cambridge students.<sup>152</sup> The proximity of the sports facilities – far nearer than in London – encouraged more students to use them. The LSE, for example, recorded that 'Peterhouse provided excellent facilities for games of all kinds, of which full advantage was taken'.<sup>153</sup> Rowing was particularly popular, many London students taking it up for the first time. For other sports, restrictions on travel constrained away fixtures,<sup>154</sup> so most fixtures were inter-collegiate.

London students also had access to college societies in their host colleges, and to many university societies. There were some complaints that the higher subscriptions of Cambridge societies, and the higher costs of entertainments, may have restricted access for London students.<sup>155</sup> Nonetheless, London students debated at the Union and performed at the Amateur Dramatic Club (ADC) Theatre.<sup>156</sup> Some were mystified that the Union was 'a boys' club with good debates', rather than 'the government of the students, by the students for the students' as in the case of their own unions.<sup>157</sup>

There was considerable interest in left-wing politics. A number joined the Communist Party: the daughter of one of them later attributed this to their reasoning that since fascism was clearly evil, the other end of the political spectrum must be 'good'; the left wing, including Fabians, tended also at this time to paint a romantic picture of Russia.<sup>158</sup> Within the LSE in particular, the Socialist Society included the majority of the students,

<sup>151</sup> Ian Gilbert, 'LSE at Cambridge', *LSE Magazine*, Winter 1998, 28.

<sup>152</sup> Letter from the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University to Sir Frederick Maurice, 9.10.1939. QMC Archives. No reference is made to women.

<sup>153</sup> Minutes of meeting of LSE Court of Governors and Council of Management, 4.7.1940, item 11. LSE Archives.

<sup>154</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>155</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 21 October 1939, 2.

<sup>156</sup> Betty Evans (née Bond), 'The LSE in Cambridge 1941–44' (typed document). LSE Archives.

<sup>157</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 21 October 1939, 6.

<sup>158</sup> Email from Catherine Crosland to Tony Watts, 7.1.2021.

and was extremely active; much the same was true of Cambridge students at this time. Harold Laski, as the most radical member of the Labour Party National Executive, was an influential figure in this respect.<sup>159</sup> A Students' Convention held in 1941 attracted several hundred students, who 'declared their uncompromising opposition to the present Government', with several hundred more attending related commissions to discuss 'important questions with a seriousness and tolerance hitherto absent from Cambridge'.<sup>160</sup> LSE students also 'turned Cambridge upside down by campaigning vigorously for Leslie Symonds, the Labour candidate, in the city by-election', which he won – 'sweet victory for them'.<sup>161</sup> Much of the student political activity, however, was on a more ambitious scale: a member of the Communist-dominated student union board later remembered Alexander Carr-Saunders, the Director of the LSE, 'wearily asking our deputation whether we didn't think we could focus on some matters over which we might conceivably have some influence, instead of motions exhorting Churchill to open a Second Front in Europe'.<sup>162</sup>

For several of the guest colleges, the common rooms and other social areas available within their host colleges were limited. With The London, as we have already seen, the lack of a common room within St Catharine's was one of the main reasons why the relationship between the two colleges was severed, with a common room being provided by Corpus instead. Barts had to leave the issue 'for further investigation'<sup>163</sup> and there is no evidence of it being resolved. In 1941 Newnham agreed to let to Bedford its Old Hall with its dining hall, kitchen and scullery;<sup>164</sup> in 1942 (as noted on page 187) this was replaced by the Club House secured by Bedford itself in Fitzwilliam Street.<sup>165</sup> The most satisfactory arrangements were made by the LSE, involving the use of Grove Lodge, a large private house with its own gardens located near Peterhouse.<sup>166</sup> This 'rambling, over-crowded' building<sup>167</sup> became 'an all-purpose centre for the life of the School', with 'a small canteen, a common room, a Union office and the never-empty room for table-tennis'.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Kingsley Martin, *Harold Laski: A Biographical Memoir*, 133 (London, 1953).

<sup>160</sup> 'Comment', *Clare Market Review*, XXVI(1), June 1941, 1.

<sup>161</sup> Betty Evans (née Bond), 'The LSE in Cambridge 1941–44' (typed document). LSE Archives.

<sup>162</sup> Barbara Sternberg, 'The view from Colerado'. *LSE Magazine*, 64, November 1982, 9.

<sup>163</sup> 'Round the sector: At Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 3 (4), January 1942, 75.

<sup>164</sup> The Agreement on which this was based, dated 8.9.1941, is in the Newnham Archives.

<sup>165</sup> Letter from Geraldine Jebb (Principal of Bedford) to Myra Curtis (Principal of Newnham), 3.6.1942. Newnham Archives.

<sup>166</sup> Kingsley Martin, *Harold Laski: A Biographical Memoir*, 129 (London, 1953).

<sup>167</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 21.10.1939, 2.

<sup>168</sup> Norman MacKenzie, in Abse, J. (ed.): *My LSE*, 46 (London, 1977).

## ASSIMILATION V. IDENTITY MAINTENANCE

To what extent did the London students assimilate into Cambridge, and to what extent did they preserve their own identity? With teaching, as outlined earlier, there was some degree of assimilation, with joint teaching and even, sometimes, a joint lecture programme. But syllabuses and examinations remained separate.

Student disciplinary arrangements, too, were separate. It was agreed at an early stage that the Heads of the London colleges should be responsible for the behaviour of their undergraduates. They instructed their students to obey the orders of the proctors – who patrolled the streets of Cambridge in the evening to ensure that Cambridge students were wearing gowns, not wandering about or congregating in the streets<sup>169</sup> and perpetrating no misdemeanours – and to give them their name and college when required to do so. Whenever a proctor had reason to complain of the behaviour of a London student, the problem could be reported to the Head of the student's own college for disciplinary action.<sup>170</sup> The proctor system was viewed with some derision by London students, who saw it as 'mediaeval' and treating them 'like kids',<sup>171</sup> designed to act as 'a chastity belt separating gown from the more depraved elements of the town'.<sup>172</sup> The proctors complained about the blacked-out streets being filled with gownless young men and women who were not members of Cambridge University, providing camouflage for those who were;<sup>173</sup> 'teasing' the proctors became something of a student sport.<sup>174</sup> Efforts to get the London students to wear gowns did not have much success.<sup>175</sup> It was though agreed that London students should wear in their buttonholes a metal disc inscribed with the initials or crest of their college.<sup>176</sup> At the end of the war the Director of the LSE reported 'with some pride' that in their six years in

<sup>169</sup> John Twigg, *A History of Queens' College, Cambridge, 1448–1986*, 356 (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1987).

<sup>170</sup> Letter from the Principal of QMC to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, 8.10.1939. QMC Archives.

<sup>171</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 21.10.1939, 2.

<sup>172</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 21.10.1939, 6.

<sup>173</sup> Norman MacKenzie, in Abse, J. (ed.): *My LSE*, 47–8 (London, 1977).

<sup>174</sup> Sir Anthony Alment, 'A student's war', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, Summer 1993, 14.

<sup>175</sup> They always wore gowns when dining, but not when out in the streets. Zoom interview with John Frith (former QMC student), 31.12.2020 (and subsequent emails).

<sup>176</sup> Minutes of The London Hospital College Board, 13.11.1939. Also Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

Cambridge 'no student of the School was reported to me by the proctors for any infringement of regulations or any misconduct'.<sup>177</sup>

In many other respects as well, there were strong pressures towards identity maintenance. This was officially encouraged: Bedford, for example, organised ceremonial College Assemblies annually in the Guildhall to encourage a 'corporate feeling'.<sup>178</sup> The sense of identity was also promoted by the students themselves. Dances were usually organised by individual London colleges under their own auspices, often in the local Dorothy Ballroom.<sup>179</sup> Bedford students were recorded as sacrificing precious clothing coupons on scarves in their college colours, to assert their Bedford identity.<sup>180</sup>

With sports, London students sometimes played for their host Cambridge college's teams: thus QMC students 'filled the gaps in King's teams for inter-College games',<sup>181</sup> and efforts were made 'to integrate Queen Mary and King's students in team games and such activities as communal country walks'.<sup>182</sup> But QMC started to launch its own boats, and soon 'developed a habit of bumping King's (and some other ancient colleges)'.<sup>183</sup> In the March 1940 'Eights' there were two boats from QMC, and one from each of the LSE and Barts.<sup>184</sup> In other sports, too, London colleges increasingly fielded their own teams. Barts, with its strong rugby tradition, won the College 'Cuppers' in 1945,<sup>185</sup> and indeed played against the full Cambridge University team.<sup>186</sup>

The issue of assimilation was a sensitive one. An article in a Barts journal complained that 'we have now almost lost whatever little there was of Bart's left to us' and that there had been 'a shameless copying of Cambridge's ways'.<sup>187</sup> A subsequent riposte commented that this statement 'is so ill-founded that it scarcely deserves a reply'. It noted that Barts remained 'a complete and very independent unit': 'Bart's men mix very little with the

<sup>177</sup> *The Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1944–1945*. LSE Archives.

<sup>178</sup> Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Governors, 21.11.1941. BC GB 122/2/1. Bedford Archives. Also Linna Bentley, *Educating Women: A Pictorial History of Bedford College University of London 1849–1985*, 63 (Surrey, 1991).

<sup>179</sup> See e.g. ticket in GCPP Blacklocks papers. Girton Archives. Also 'Cambridge news', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 2 (3), December 1940, 53–54.

<sup>180</sup> Marigold Pakenham-Walsh, Bedford College 1849–1985, in J. Mordaunt Crook (ed.), *Bedford College University of London: Memories of 150 Years*, 34 (London, 2001).

<sup>181</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>182</sup> Lancelot P. Wilkinson, *A Century of King's 1873–1972*, 101 (Cambridge, 1980).

<sup>183</sup> 'News and notes: Departure of Queen Mary College', *The Cambridge Review*, LXVI (1626), 9.6.1945, 382.

<sup>184</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 16.3.1940, 8.

<sup>185</sup> 'Sport: Preclinical rugby', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, 49 (5), 1.6.1945, 69.

<sup>186</sup> 'At Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, 47 (11), December 1943, 272.

<sup>187</sup> 'Sector news', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 1 (4), 1.1.1940, 65.

undergraduates, not because there is any bad feeling between them, but because they are members of two separate bodies, and a mere shifting of quarters does not alter the fact'.<sup>188</sup>

There were some tensions between Cambridge and London students. In part this was linked to their rather different school and social-class backgrounds: a QMC student later recalled that he and his QMC friends regarded the King's students as being 'a bit snooty', whereas 'we were a very common lot'.<sup>189</sup> A lively correspondence was stimulated in the *Cambridge University Journal* (a precursor of the Cambridge student newspaper *Varsity*) by a provocative article from a London student, Craven Archer, who criticised Cambridge for, among other things, its cost of living, its primitive sanitary facilities and its lack of intellectual stimulation.<sup>190</sup> Among various rejoinders, Eric Hobsbawm, a King's student who was later a distinguished Marxist historian, responded with his thoughts about 'the Londoners': 'We think that they have an inferiority complex, and go about imagining Cambridge despises them. We think in many cases they make rash generalisations about Cambridge before they have had a chance to try it out. And that they stick to themselves far too much.'<sup>191</sup> A Peterhouse report mused that 'the effects of the contiguity and mutual intercourse of LSE and Cambridge undergraduates would provide material for a sociological study':<sup>192</sup> sadly, no such study seems to have been undertaken.

There were also complaints from some of the more conservative Cambridge teaching staff about the London students. A Trinity don remarked on the 'growth of undergraduate soviets of one sort or another, fostered, I fancy, largely by the London School of Economics, whose left-wing predilections incline them favourably to soviets'.<sup>193</sup> Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Professor of English Literature and Fellow of Jesus, wrote a tetchy article in the *C.U. Conservative Review* complaining that the 'London visitants' were overstepping their status as guests by criticising Cambridge teaching methods and mores.<sup>194</sup> This produced a response from the Presidents of the Students Unions of Bedford, LSE and QMC protesting that they were proud of their own traditions but had made 'no

<sup>188</sup> 'Cambridge news', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 1 (6), 1.3.1940, 106.

<sup>189</sup> Zoom interview with John Frith: 31.12.2020.

<sup>190</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 21.10.1939, 6.

<sup>191</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 28.10.1939, 4.

<sup>192</sup> *Peterhouse 1939-1943*, 9. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>193</sup> Andrew S.F. Gow, *Letters from Cambridge 1939-1944*, 31 (London, 1945).

<sup>194</sup> Sir Arthur Quiller Couch, 'Thoughts for guests', *C.U. Conservative Review*, 1941 (month unknown), 1-2. Original in School History file 116B. LSE Archives. Quiller-Couch was a prolific novelist, writing under the pseudonym 'Q'.

attempt to interfere with the internal arrangements of Cambridge University'.<sup>195</sup>

London students further expressed their separation from Cambridge University by engaging in activities which demonstrated their sense of identity as members not only of their college but also of the University of London.<sup>196</sup> Thus an athletics match was arranged between four London colleges based in Cambridge.<sup>197</sup> When the Barts magazine reported on the December 1943 Time Races on the river, the only other crews mentioned were from LSE and QMC,<sup>198</sup> suggesting that London rather than Cambridge colleges provided their main reference point. Barts persuaded the Cambridge University Hockey Club to grant them a fixture on condition that their side would be diluted with a few players from other London colleges and would 'masquerade as a London University team'.<sup>199</sup> Bedford, LSE and QMC organised a joint dance.<sup>200</sup> A UCL Cambridge Society was formed to bring together the Bartlett students and UCL's intercollegiate students in Law and Economics 'in hours of recreation':<sup>201</sup> a group of these students removed the LSE's 'beloved Beaver mascot' from Grove Lodge, and LSE students had to 'avenge this insult' and rescue it.<sup>202</sup> There was also some joint teaching between different London colleges: for example, between Barts and The London medical colleges.<sup>203</sup> All these examples both reflected and strengthened the bonds between the London colleges.

At the same time, there was a strong awareness of the differences for the London colleges between their lives at Cambridge and, previously, in London. This was especially the case with the LSE, which established a powerful sense of community in Cambridge, particularly through their occupation of Grove Lodge and the proximity of their teaching and their accommodation. As well as becoming predominantly undergraduate (for

<sup>195</sup> Letter to the Editor of the *C.U. Conservative Review*, 17.11.1941. LSE Archives.

<sup>196</sup> The University of London at that time was a more strongly integrated institution than it has subsequently become. It was, for example, the degree awarding body for students of all its constituent colleges. More recently, under the University of London Act 2018, its member institutions ceased to be termed 'colleges' and gained the right to seek university status, awarding their own degrees, while still remaining members of the federal university.

<sup>197</sup> 'At Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 3 (11), August 1942, 185–186.

<sup>198</sup> 'At Cambridge', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, 47 (12), January 1944, 292–293.

<sup>199</sup> 'Cambridge news', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 2 (3), December 1940, 53–54.

<sup>200</sup> *Cambridge University Journal*, 11.5.1940, 5.

<sup>201</sup> *University College Annual Report 1943–44*, 21–22.

<sup>202</sup> Ian Gordon, 'LSE at Cambridge' (Letters section), *LSE Magazine*, 10 (2), Winter 1998, 28.

<sup>203</sup> Sir Girling Ball, 'Bart's in the War of 1939', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal War Bulletin*, 1 (3), December 1939, 32–33.

the first and only time in its history) and predominantly female,<sup>204</sup> it took on – in Tönnies's classic distinction<sup>205</sup> – the communal character of *Gemeinschaft* in place of the associational character of *Gesellschaft*.<sup>206</sup> 'Now smaller in size, it was able to offer more personal tuition and a degree of intimacy which was never possible in the crowded rabbit-warren on Houghton Street', where 'the tiled passages and the tiers of classrooms and studies were always thronged with students, most of whom were virtual strangers to each other and to all but their most intimate teachers'.<sup>207</sup> The result of this experience was to alter the LSE's policy on accommodation: having previously never had hostel accommodation for its own students in London, its Director declared that it would now 'like to make hostel life sufficiently attractive to cause most students to wish to spend at least part of their university career in a hostel'.<sup>208</sup> While funding the implementation of such a policy was recognised as problematic, a start was made soon after returning to London, and by 1949/50 it seemed likely that there would soon be accommodation for 110–120 students.<sup>209</sup> By 2022, the number of students to whom the college allocated accommodation in its own halls, in University of London intercollegiate residences and in private halls had risen to over 4,000.<sup>210</sup>

Throughout their sojourn in Cambridge, the prospect of returning to London remained strongly in the London colleges' collective consciousness, enhancing their determination to maintain their sense of identity. SOAS had been particularly reluctant to leave London and was keen to return as soon as possible: its Director felt it needed to be in day-to-day contact with Government departments and with its library (which remained in London) in order to make a full contribution to the war effort, including its teaching work for the intelligence branches of the three armed services and its translation services.<sup>211</sup> The Government

<sup>204</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 344–5 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>205</sup> Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1887).

<sup>206</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 360 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>207</sup> Kingsley Martin, *Harold Laski: A Biographical Memoir*, 129 (London, 1953).

<sup>208</sup> *The Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1942–1943*, 4. LSE Archives.

<sup>209</sup> *The Director's Report on the Work of the School for the Session 1949–1950*, 5. LSE Archives.

<sup>210</sup> <https://www.lse.ac.uk/student-life/accommodation>

<sup>211</sup> Cyril H. Phillips, *The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1917–1967: An Introduction*, 33 (London, 1968). Also Ralph L. Turner, *SOAS History* (<https://blogs.soas.ac.uk/archives/2015/08/04/soas-history-ralph-lilley-turner/>) (2015). And Ian Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies: Imperial Training and the Expansion of Learning*, 98–9 (Cambridge, 2016). For details of the extent of these SOAS services

position in April 1940 remained that in general 'it would be a disservice to the national interests, not to mention the interests of the University, by returning now'; it was also clarified that 'the object of the evacuation of important activities from London is not primarily to remove those concerned from danger but to secure dispersal and so to reduce the dislocation and loss of efficiency which would result from sustained enemy attack on London' – in other words, not so much 'to secure the safety of individuals' as 'to sustain the national effort'.<sup>212</sup> It was also recognised, however, that it was for each college to weigh the pros and cons, and the Minister of Home Security indicated elsewhere that he was sympathetic to SOAS's special case.<sup>213</sup> Accordingly, in late June 1940 – less than a year after leaving London – the SOAS Governing Body decided that that it should return,<sup>214</sup> a decision supported by the staff.<sup>215</sup>

Several other colleges looked into the possibility of returning to London in 1940, but eventually accepted the Government's general policy. The Bedford staff decided, against its Principal's better judgement, to return, and it was only when the first bombs began to fall in London that the decision was reversed, with the vans carrying college equipment to London being turned back to Cambridge.<sup>216</sup> Similarly, at LSE a decision to return was taken, and the trucks loaded, but the extension of bombing to London led first to the suspension and then to the abandonment of this plan<sup>217</sup> – much to the ire of the Master of Peterhouse.<sup>218</sup> Nonetheless, despite some differences of view among the LSE staff and students, the LSE Director affirmed that 'It was clear to all that the proper place of the London School of Economics is in London'.<sup>219</sup> Barts, too, accompanied its decision with

during the war years, see School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, *Calendar 1983–1984*, 54–55. SOAS Archives.

<sup>212</sup> Letter from Sir John Anderson (Minister of Home Security) to Professor Frank Horton (Vice-Chancellor, University of London): 27.4.1940. SOAS Archives.

<sup>213</sup> Reported in letter from W.R. Halliday (Principal, King's College, London) to R.L. Turner (Director of SOAS): 24.4.1940. SOAS Archives.

<sup>214</sup> School of Oriental and African Studies, *Report of the Governing Body and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ending 31st July, 1940*, 15–17, 21. SOAS Archives.

<sup>215</sup> Of the 44 staff, 28 were in favour, 1 was in favour provided other colleges returned, 5 were not in favour, and 10 did not reply. Document in SOAS Archives.

<sup>216</sup> 'Gem Jebb: A Portrait by Francesca Wilson'. No date. Newnham Archives.

<sup>217</sup> Minutes of meeting of LSE Court of Governors and Council of Management, 3.7.1941. LSE Archives. Also Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 344 (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>218</sup> 'I should expect this particular institution to be very stupid in judgement and unscrupulous. It has certainly shown itself to be the first.' Letter from P.C. Vellacott to Roy Lubbock (Senior Bursar of Peterhouse), 23.9.1940. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>219</sup> Quoted in Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 344 (Oxford, 1995).

a declaration that it should return to London at the earliest possible date:<sup>220</sup> 63% of students had expressed a desire to go back to London.<sup>221</sup>

During the 1942/43 session the war situation began to improve, and London University was informed that the Government, which had hitherto advised against a return of the London colleges, was now neutral in the matter – though if the return of a college involved expense on repair of buildings, special permission to spend money in this way would have to be obtained.<sup>222</sup> In the event, The London returned in summer 1943; Bedford in summer 1944 ('in spite of the flying bomb menace in July'<sup>223</sup>); the Bartlett, the LSE and QMC in summer 1945; and Barts – whose London buildings had been 'knocked about by the enemy'<sup>224</sup> – in early 1946.

## REFLECTIONS AND SEQUELS

All the London colleges departed expressing gratitude for the hospitality provided by their host Cambridge colleges. At the LSE, Hayek reported that 'the hospitality shown by Peterhouse will long remain for many teachers one of their pleasantest memories of the war years'.<sup>225</sup> Tawney commented to the Bursar of Peterhouse that while the 'invasion by a host of strangers... must have been a nuisance' and 'occasional... irritation... more than pardonable' (the Master's comment cited in footnote 218 being an example!), 'you were kindness itself, and not only made everything easy for us, but continued to seem to enjoy having us', making 'new friendships, which our return to London will not break'.<sup>226</sup> T.S. Ashton, Professor of Economic History at the LSE, stated that 'you have treated me not merely as a guest but as a member of your community'.<sup>227</sup> The Director recorded to the LSE Governors the college's 'unexampled kindness', with a vote of thanks which was 'recorded with acclamation'.<sup>228</sup> LSE also presented

<sup>220</sup> Minutes of Barts College Committee, 5.6.1940. Barts Archives.

<sup>221</sup> Minutes of Barts College Committee, 6.3.1940. Barts Archives.

<sup>222</sup> Minutes of meeting of LSE Court of Governors and Council of Management, 1.7.1943. LSE Archives.

<sup>223</sup> Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Governors, November 1944. BC GB 122/2/1. Bedford Archives.

<sup>224</sup> Sir Girling Ball, 'To the new students', *St Bartholomew's Hospital Journal*, 48 (9), 1 October 1944, 140.

<sup>225</sup> Friedrich Hayek, The London School of Economics 1895–1945, *Economica*, 13 (49), 1946, 29.

<sup>226</sup> Letter from R.H. Tawney to Roy Lubbock, July 1945. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>227</sup> Letter from T.S. Ashton to Roy Lubbock, 17.6.1945. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>228</sup> Minutes of meeting of LSE Court of Governors and Council of Management, 19.7.1945, item 3. LSE Archives.

Peterhouse with a silver standish.<sup>229</sup> QMC had similarly provided King's with a silver wine trolley as a token of their gratitude.<sup>230</sup>

This appreciation was reciprocated by several of the Cambridge colleges. St Catharine's looked upon the connection with the Bartlett as 'one of the happiest outcomes of the war'. Their guests 'did their utmost to repay any help they received'. In particular, they 'gave expert advice on the erection of air-raid defences and the preservation of buildings'; they also 'measured and photographed the College so thoroughly that, had it been damaged, full information for its reconstruction would have been available'; as well as entering 'wholeheartedly into College life'.<sup>231</sup>

At Queens', too, the relationship with Barts was viewed as 'extraordinarily happy'. It was recognised that 'the position could have been most difficult', but the Barts authorities had 'smoothed the way through rough passages' and 'all the intercollegiate business was conducted with unfailing friendliness'.<sup>232</sup> A Fellow of Queens' commented: 'There can be few instances of so long a co-operation with so little friction'.<sup>233</sup> In 1946, the Queens' Governing Body agreed to 'put on record our appreciation of the remarkably happy relations between us since their arrival in September 1939, which must have been unique in the story of evacuation to Cambridge during the recent war'.<sup>234</sup>

One of the benefits to Cambridge University in general and the host colleges in particular was to avoid the empty rooms and attendant financial losses that Oxbridge colleges had faced in the First World War, as their students were conscripted for military service. By 1915, the total number of students housed in Oxford had been reduced by two-thirds; by 1918 only 12% of the pre-war population were in residence. Although some of these places had been taken by billeted soldiers, many had been left free, substantially reducing the income of both the university and the colleges.<sup>235</sup> The same financial pressures in Cambridge, along with other factors – notably the expansion of science and the pressure to broaden access to students from state-aided schools – had led to the establishment in 1919 of the Asquith Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities,

<sup>229</sup> Peterhouse 1944–1948, 9. Peterhouse Archives.

<sup>230</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>231</sup> 'Dark interlude: The story of S. Catharine's at war', *St Catharine's Society Magazine*, September 1947, 57.

<sup>232</sup> 'During the war', *The Dial*, 95, Easter Term 1947, 8.

<sup>233</sup> Henry St. J. Hart, 'Cambridge during the War: Queens' College', *The Cambridge Review*, LXVII (1645), 11 May 1946, 360.

<sup>234</sup> General College Meeting, 15.3.1946. *Queens' College Conclusion Book, 1937–63*. Queens' Archives.

<sup>235</sup> Jay M. Winter, 'Oxford and the First World War', in Harrison, B. (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford*, VIII, 9–11 (Oxford, 1994).

which had recommended a substantial increase in the extent of government funding and the establishment of the University Grants Committee.<sup>236</sup> In the Second World War, the evacuated colleges helped to avoid a similar financial crisis.

In several cases, relationships with the host institutions were sustained after the guest institutions had returned to London. King's agreed to provide a Soley Scholarship of the value of £100 a year to a QMC postgraduate student,<sup>237</sup> to 'ensure that QMC shall always have a representative at King's';<sup>238</sup> it also annually invited four male QMC students to attend its Long Vacation period of residence, and in the late 1950s extended this invitation to four women students – viewed as a small but not insignificant step in the gradual process towards the admission of women students to the college.<sup>239</sup> Conversely, Barts offered two studentships in clinical medicine for members of Queens' proceeding to Barts to complete the clinical part of their training.<sup>240</sup> Continuing links were also sustained through Cambridge college Honorary Fellowships bestowed on members of the London colleges: at King's, on Major General Sir Frederick Maurice, former Principal of QMC;<sup>241</sup> at Peterhouse, on Alexander Carr-Saunders, Director of the LSE,<sup>242</sup> and R.H. Tawney;<sup>243</sup> as well as continuation of the Honorary Fellowships noted on page 199. Some reunions were also organised later between the paired colleges: between Girton/King's and QMC in 2006;<sup>244</sup> and between Peterhouse and the LSE in 1989 (linked to the

<sup>236</sup> John Prest, 'The Asquith Commission, 1919–1922', in Brian Harrison (ed.): *The History of the University of Oxford*, VIII (Oxford, 1994). Also Robert Neild, *The Financial History of Cambridge University* (London, 2012).

<sup>237</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Postscript*, inserted in George Godwin, *Queen Mary College: An Adventure in Education* (London, 1944).

<sup>238</sup> John T. Sheppard, 'Cambridge during the War: King's College', *The Cambridge Review*, LXVII (1648), 1 June 1945, 420–421.

<sup>239</sup> Lancelot P. Wilkinson, *A Century of King's 1873–1972*, 152 (Cambridge, 1980). The Archivist of King's College has confirmed (email, 25.4.2022) that the Soley Scholarship has been discontinued but that King's still offer a Long Vac exchange to QMUL (previously QMC) every year. Six King's graduates go to QMUL, and 8 of their students come to King's. For the former, the exchange is intended to provide a base in London to enable graduate students to have easier access to library facilities and reference material not available in Cambridge; accommodation is free but other costs (food, travel etc.) are paid by the participant.

<sup>240</sup> General College Meeting, 29.5.1946. *Queens' College Conclusion Book, 1937–63*. Queens' Archives.

<sup>241</sup> John T. Sheppard, 'Cambridge during the War: King's College', *The Cambridge Review*, LXVII (1648), 1 June 1945.

<sup>242</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, *LSE: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1895–1995*, 360 (Oxford, 1995). This was a full Fellowship with Governing Body rights.

<sup>243</sup> Lawrence Goldman, *The Life of R.H. Tawney: Socialism and History*, 251 (London, 2013).

<sup>244</sup> Notes received from A.H.V. Smith, former QMC student, 2.1.2021.

installation of a plaque on the wall of the Graduate Students' Hostel in Trumpington Street, opposite the main part of the college)<sup>245</sup> and again in 2019.<sup>246</sup>

There was a coda to this saga. In 1951, at the height of the Cold War with Russia and following the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, there were concerns that Korea was a diversion or prelude, and that West Germany would be next. The risk of a European war was greatly exaggerated,<sup>247</sup> but the Government started to make provisional emergency arrangements, including the evacuation of universities in areas of particular risk of damage by enemy action: London was in the top-priority category, for action at the 'precautionary stage' before the outbreak of war.<sup>248</sup> Subsequent discussions at Cambridge about its possible contribution reported that tentative arrangements were being made between three of the earlier pairings – Christ's/SOAS, Peterhouse/LSE and Queens'/Barts – as well as a new one between Trinity and Imperial.<sup>249</sup> The revival of the Peterhouse/LSE link was initiated by the Master of Peterhouse, who wrote to the Director of the LSE that 'while we should not welcome the circumstances, we should welcome you if those circumstances were to arise'; the LSE replied that 'in the event of another emergency nothing could possibly be more welcome than an arrangement under which we would once again be the guests of Peterhouse'.<sup>250</sup> In the end, the emergency passed, and no action was required. But the incident demonstrated the continuing strengths of the links that had been forged during the Second World War.

## CONCLUSION

The war was a time of severe dislocation for many people, including students. The evacuation of seven London colleges to Cambridge was a major project, testing for both hosts and guests. It seems to have been managed

<sup>245</sup> Reunion for 1940–47 alumni: 'Cambridge revisited'. October 1992. School File current CF 117/4/13. LSE Archives.

<sup>246</sup> *LSE News*, 30.9.2019 (<https://www.lse.ac.uk/News/Latest-news-from-LSE/2019/i-September-2019/Peterhouse-anniversary>).

<sup>247</sup> Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*, 151 (London, 2007; first published 2005).

<sup>248</sup> Secret memorandum from Secretary of the University Grants Committee, 27.7.1951. GBR/0265/UA/R2709/A/1952 Box 287. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>249</sup> Letters from D.W. Logan (Principal, University of London) to Professor E.D. Adrian (Master, Trinity College), 12.3.1952 and 17.3.1952. GBR/0265/UA/R2709/A/1952 Box 287. Cambridge University Library Archives.

<sup>250</sup> Letter from P.C. Vellacott (Master of Peterhouse), 24.10.1950; letter from A.M. Carr-Saunders (Director, LSE), 25.10.1950. In Reports of Committees, Peterhouse, Volume 5. Peterhouse Archives.

remarkably well, with effective liaison and harmonious relationships between the Government and the institutions involved. The universities and colleges had their traditional rivalries, but clearly saw themselves as partners in the shared enterprise of research and teaching, rather than business competitors, and as working together in the national interest. Their co-operation enabled the London colleges to continue much of their teaching work, and the Cambridge colleges to avoid the financial problems of having many empty rooms once conscription began to bite. The two sets of institutions were also able to merge their teaching resources to some extent, while preserving their own identities.

Bringing together colleges from two such very different universities, with different traditions and styles of provision, provided opportunities for mutual learning. In general, the London colleges proved to be quicker learners. As noted earlier, the LSE in particular learned the benefits of residential accommodation for building a sense of community that enhanced the student experience, and quickly decided to seek to extend such provision on their return to London. The Cambridge colleges, on the other hand, were able to have some access to such subjects as Sociology, not previously taught in Cambridge, and to explore the possibilities of making provision for male and female students within the same college. But in both cases, a quarter of a century elapsed before any serious action was taken: the first Professor of Sociology at Cambridge was not appointed until 1970;<sup>251</sup> and the traditionally male colleges only started to admit women from 1972.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Geoffrey Hawthorn, 'Sociology in Cambridge', *London Review of Books*, 8 (19), 6 November 1986.

<sup>252</sup> Nancy W. Malkiel, 'Keep the Damned Women Out: The Struggle for Coeducation, ch.22 (Princeton, NJ, 2016).