FORUM
Volume 55, Number 2, 2013
www.wwwords.co.uk/FORUM

The Wallsend Owenites

NIGEL TODD

ABSTRACT The nineteenth-century British Co-operative Movement included a commitment to education. Although only a minority of consumer co-operative societies offered educational facilities for their members, there was a willingness to experiment among those Co-operators whose grasp of Co-operation extended ideologically beyond remaining content with operating shops. This pioneering strand found its most advanced expression at Wallsend, on Tyneside, where Co-operators founded the Movement's only Co-operative elementary school.

The day before the centenary of the birth of Robert Owen on 14 May 1871, the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, owned by the prominent Tyneside Radical Joseph Cowen, published a lengthy editorial celebrating Owen as inspiring 'the onward path along which we have been travelling'. Owen, a 'great and good man', was described as the guiding influence behind many movements for reform, despite being 'assailed by bigotry and intolerance ... in the name of religion'. He had been 'the persevering advocate of universal education, when education had few friends'. And Owen's pioneering efforts in establishing infant schools, his insight that 'crime was the product of ignorance and neglect', and his fostering of the Co-operative Movement with its 'material and educational advantages' were all listed as lasting achievements. Owen, it was said, 'did not live in vain' and 'no one now questions' that his belief that social circumstances shape human behaviour 'contains a large amount of truth'.[1]

The Owenite 'Diaspora'

These were bold statements, even in the setting of a widespread political and industrial ferment that gripped Tyneside in the early 1870s. Yet they had deep roots in an Owenite heritage informing not just individual activists, such as Cowen, but were embedded in the co-operatives. Though long finished as an organised movement, Owenism could still count adherents in the 1860s and 1870s, constituting an informal Owenite intellectual 'Diaspora', especially

among co-operators who regarded Owen's ideas as a formative influence on their own movement. For the latter, Owen's championing of the value of education in 'the system of co-operation, not only in the work of distribution, but in that of production' underpinned their principles and ambitions.[2]

The dispersal of Owenites and their 'fellow travellers' over the 1840s-1870s into 'separate channels: trade unionism, practical co-operation, social science, spiritualism, freethought (which after 1850 was known as Secularism) and the new women's movement' was well described by Barbara Taylor in her book, *Eve and the New Jerusalem* that focussed principally on women.[3] Men also followed the Diaspora, including a robust Tyneside fragment. Joseph Cowen, for example, has already been mentioned. He regarded Owen's methods as 'dreamy', but Owen's portrait had been one of those displayed to inspire people at the huge garden party held by Cowen to celebrate the radical Blaydon Mechanics' Institute in 1859.

There were others, too. Cowen's friend, John Elliott, a former Chartist and a Tyneside detective folk-hero, controversially became Gateshead's chief constable in 1863. As 'a follower of Mr Robert Owen, who laboured so assiduously to popularise the maxim that man is a creature of circumstances', Elliott invented an early form of social enquiry report, used with the local magistrates when he considered that poverty and illiteracy had contributed to the criminality of those he prosecuted.[4] Others included Charles Haslam, another one-time Chartist and later a Newcastle chemist and restaurant owner, who had known Owen in Manchester at the end of the 1830s. Haslam was central to Secularism on Tyneside in the 1860s and 1870s.[5] W.E. Adams, Cowen's crusading editor of the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, was another who had glided into the fringes of Owenism in the 1840s and who retained connections with ex-Owenites, such as George Jacob Holyoake.[6]

It was Holyoake and the co-operators who provided the main bridge between the Owenite period and the rest of the nineteenth century. Many leading co-operators, like Holyake, had been deeply involved with Owenism, including E.T. Craig, E.O. Greening, Lloyd Jones, William Pare, and several of the Rochdale Pioneers, and they remained significant in the Co-operative Movement as it grew during the second half of the century. As elsewhere, several North East co-operative societies owed something of their origins to reading groups that studied Holyoake's book, *Self-Help by the People: history of co-operation in Rochdale*, published in 1858, and the author maintained frequent contacts with the area, notably through Cowen, and then in the active republican and secularist movements of the early 1870s.

On the other hand, the Owenite Diaspora also represented an adaptation to the changed conditions of mid-Victorian Britain. Now, Owenite ideas shaped more limited social reform, leaving behind the ideal of self-supporting Villages of Co-operation and communities as the basis for a New Moral World. This was evident even in the more radical co-operators' commitment to the value of education, where they faced an incomplete and uneven framework of charity,

church, colliery, and private enterprise schools catering for working-class children.

Co-operation and Education

The Rochdale Pioneers adopted the Owenite zeal for schools and education, providing 'a school for young persons' between 1850 and 1855. This had to close when the Industrial and Provident Societies' Act was amended in 1855 in a way that made provision for education technically illegal, and it was not until 1862 that the authority to spend co-operatives' money on education was clearly restored.[7] Yet the aspiration did not fade away. Although the legal restriction probably dissuaded numbers of new societies from including education in their original objects, members of the Rochdale Pioneers' Society worked hard to keep the flame alive, with Abraham Greenwood telling a co-operative gathering in July 1860:

> in time they expected to behold a people's college, where they could send their children to be educated, and they would neither be sent to one charity school or another (Loud applause). He felt that in course of time they would be able to engage first-class teachers, and give their children a first-class education.[8]

Adverse trading conditions, accompanying the Lancashire 'Cotton Famine' produced by the American Civil War, prevented the Rochdale Society from re-opening a school, though one of the founding Pioneers, William Cooper, was optimistic in November 1866:

> We also entertain the hope that the day is not too far distant when Schools will be established in connection with the [Rochdale] society, to educate the rising generation of Co-operators.[9]

Sadly, Cooper died two years later at the early age of 46, and while Greenwood continued to promote education within the Movement, his energies were largely required in building up the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

Fortunately, education had other allies, and not least Henry Pitman, editor of the influential monthly magazine, *The Co-operator*, from 1860. Many societies got around the legal ban on spending money on education by distributing copies of *The Co-operator* to their members as 'propaganda'. And Pitman gave editorial prominence to the whole range of co-operative principles. In 1865, the year when he made a speaking tour of North East co-operatives, most issues of the magazine contained a lead feature stressing education as good in itself. In the spirit of adaptation, Pitman argued that societies should take the lead in campaigning for a national system of state schools by organising petitions and deputations. Whilst displaying a degree of over-confidence in the potential power of the Movement to head a growing national discontent about the piecemeal provision of education – a pressure for reform that led to the foundation of the National Education League in 1869 to promote non-sectarian

schools – it also marked a change from envisaging schools run directly by co-operators.

Wallsend

One of the societies that subscribed to *The Co-operator* was at Wallsend whose secretary, Robert Douglass, wrote to Pitman in November 1865:

> The 'Co-operative Dialogues' you sent were distributed amongst the members, with the request that when read by them they would give them to some person unacquainted with Co-operation and the benefits to be derived therefrom, and a recommendation to read 'The Co-operator', 12 doz. of which we take every fortnight. A resolution was unanimously passed [at the Society's 13th quarterly meeting] that we subscribe 1d. per member annually to the Editorial Fund. Enclosed you will find P.O. order for £1. 1s., our number of members being at present 250.[10]

The Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society had its origins in 1861, as Robert Douglass explained in an earlier report to *The Co-operator*:

> In November, 1861, a few working men of this village, with much difficulty, got up a meeting to try and impress on the minds of their fellow workmen the utility of bettering their condition by Co-operation. 30 names having been taken down as subscribers, and a room got for holding meetings on Saturday evenings, after toiling for the space of six months we found we had raised a sum of £86. 12s. We took a dwelling-house, the only suitable place we could get, to commence a grocery and provision store ... We opened on 1st May last, to the great disappointment of our shopkeeping neighbours and other opponents of the Co-operative movement who kept firing upon us with unabated fury until we held our first quarterly meeting, when they found that their shot had taken no effect on either our ship or crew, for every man was still at his post, with our ship in first-rate trim.[11]

Douglass was astute about the ferocity of the opposition. The original members had to deflect ferocious hostility from their competitors and local cynicism, so much so that children were sent furtively to pay the members' initial subscriptions in a room above the Duke of York public house so that their parents could avoid a disparaging 'banter'. There were obstacles in renting shop premises until the sympathetic Charles Adams, who acted as a property manager for a colliery company, offered a shop at Long Row. Douglass recalled that 'Mr Adams was subject to great insults and was very much censured by the opponents of the Society'. But Adams knew his co-operator friends very well. As a former coal miner who had become an 'efficient' self-educated teacher after an accident, Adams had taught Douglass and some of the others as children at

his colliery school. Even so, parts of the initial activity necessarily displayed a 'cloak-and-dagger' flavour. The first consignments of flour, for instance, had to be sent 'from the mill in strange carts, as there was always a risk of the miller losing his trade if it became known who the merchants and millers were who had the audacity to supply the store. An intimation to this effect was made known to some of them previously'.

A mixture of antagonism and disbelief was not uncommon, but Douglass and his colleagues had to contend, as well, with the hard circumstances of Wallsend as Tyneside's 'wild west' town that did not always make for social solidarity. Wallsend was growing rapidly based on coal, chemicals and shipbuilding, but housing and public health conditions were primitive, and there were few school places before the 1870 Education Act. Opposition to improvements was fierce and generally driven by manufacturers keen to minimise their rates bills. Yet the social pressures were accumulating as the recorded population rose from 6715 in 1861 to 10,458 by 1871.[12]

In some ways, the formation of the Wallsend Society was typical. Led by a few working men – in this case enginemen and pressers from various oil works and the shipyards – the first foodstuffs were collected in a handcart from Newcastle and wheeled to Wallsend where the 'shop' was run by volunteers. Mistakes were made, of course, and one of the original members later recalled, jokingly, that 'when they first began to purchase, they bought sugar that no one could use, tea that no one could drink, and butter that no one could eat'.[13] Ultimately, experience and dedication won through, combined with a passion for social change and an acknowledgement that 'the commencement of a co-operative society was in itself an education to all who were identified with it'.[14]

The Wallsend pioneers evidently developed very competent people among their leaders. Chief of these was Robert Douglass. Born at Wallsend in 1831, Douglass began working life as a Tyne waterman and then as crane engineman removing ships' ballast at the Carville Shore. At the age of 30, he learned an entirely new trade, serving as manager and secretary of the Society for the next 37 years, as well as spending 21 years as an elected member of the Wallsend Board of Health and then the Urban District Council. When he died in 1900, his obituary recorded that 'his name has been synonymous with Co-operation not only in Wallsend but generally in northern co-operative circles'. A particular reference was made to his 'commercial integrity' and 'administrative ability'. He was known for 'simple tastes, frugal habits, and mild pursuits' namely gardening and his rather soft dogs. Regarded as 'ever ready to assist' others, he was seen as someone with a 'strong personality' and a man for whom 'organised religion had ... little or no appeal'.

Douglass was not alone in his scepticism about religion. Another principal initiator of the Society, Thomas Blenkinsop, who served as treasurer, trustee and cartman, and general operational problem solver, until his death in 1891, 'made no pretensions to piety' either. Together, they were a classic double act. The 'reserved, genial and kindly' Douglass, a bachelor who preferred to live quietly

with his brother and other relatives, made a fine contrast with Blenkinsop, an 'ardent' member of the Wallsend Cycling Club, and a 'character' of 'ponderous physical proportions, brusque in manner, and unceremonious in deportment' who, once met, was not easily forgotten.[15]

A key point to register about Robert Douglass and the Wallsend Co-operative Society was their wider vision for Co-operation than simply shop keeping and paying dividends. In 1873, the *Co-operative News* noted, tellingly:

> This society may be said to take the first place among the stores in Northumberland. They do not merely confine their attention to the sale of tea and coffee, butter and eggs, but seek to elevate the social and intellectual condition of the members.[16]

The Militant Democracy

Context was significant, too. Reforming zeal placed Douglass and the Wallsend co-operators at the heart of Tyneside's distinctive 'militant democracy' in the early 1870s. This was a dynamic episode shaped by a mixture of industrial militancy, political radicalism, Irish nationalism, and Co-operation that had been germinating since at least the middle of the 1860s. It spanned the trade unions' Nine Hours League that won shorter working days across the British engineering industry in 1871 after an intense struggle with the Tyneside employers. Strikes and disputes broke out in other trades, and there were overlaps with political campaigns for abolishing the monarchy and promoting Secularism (with republican clubs and Secular Society branches formed in villages and towns around Newcastle). The National Education League that had a strong branch at Newcastle in1869 (with Cowen at its head) held meetings in surrounding districts, and there was local sympathy for the Paris Commune. In addition to a vibrant Irish agitation for Home Rule and the release of Fenian political prisoners, there was a considerable demand to win the vote among the miners who had been left out of the 1867 extension of the household franchise due to their housing tenure arrangements. Women added to the mix in 1872 by boycotting butchers who had increased their prices in the mining villages of Northumberland and Durham, revealing as their mass campaign swept the coalfields and into Tyneside, an ability to organise meetings and demonstrations that articulated an acute awareness of the politics of women' rights.

Joseph Cowen stood at the centre of the agitations. In fact, he coined the phrase the 'militant democracy' at a meeting connected with the national Co-operative Congress held at Newcastle upon Tyne in April 1873. Cowen, chosen to preside over the Congress, marshalled all his political stage-management skills and press resources to make the event absolutely spectacular. During the Congress, and at a coincidental trade union rally of 200,000 people on Newcastle's Town Moor, held in support of the miners' claim for the franchise, Cowen argued that the 'militant democracy' required strong trade unions, a co-operative economy to end the divide between labour and capital, and a

parliament elected on a wide suffrage which, for Cowen, like Holyoake, included women as well as men.

Co-operation was fundamental to the 'militant democracy'. The Movement's North East launch took place in 1858 at Blaydon, where Cowen had read chapters from Holyoake's book about Rochdale each week to potential co-operators. It reflected the rapid growth of the consumer co-operatives in the North East, numbering over 43,000 members in Northumberland and Durham by 1873. And within 15 years of Blaydon Co-operative Society opening its doors, Co-operation was marking out a niche in industrial production. Producer co-operatives appeared in cabinet making, tailoring, corn milling, printing, coalmining, shipbuilding, brush making, gas and lighting, and dairying. Then, in the hothouse of the Nine Hours Strike, a large, high profile co-operative engineering works was started at Ouseburn, Newcastle, in July 1871, managed by Cowen's associate, Dr John Rutherford, a popular local educator and Radical.

To help fund the producer co-operatives, and particularly the Ouseburn Engineering Works, Cowen and Rutherford appealed to trade unions and co-operatives to come forward as investors. 'The Wallsend Society became the first of many to respond', earning its chairman barbed criticism from a hostile newspaper that portrayed him as 'an honest if simple minded gentleman' because he advocated that co-operatives were right to limit each member to one vote instead of weighting votes in favour of the largest investors.[17] A corollary of the Ouseburn Works was the creation of an Industrial Bank to process and direct investments, and Wallsend's Robert Douglass became one of the Bank's directors.

The story of the 'militant democracy' and the co-operative adventures of the early 1870s is fascinating, but it has been told elsewhere.[18] For present purposes, it is sufficient to note these developments as the broad milieu in which the Wallsend Society grew and flourished.

The Wallsend 'Owenites'

By April 1873, the Wallsend Society had almost 1000 members, substantial reserves and share capital, and was profitable enough to pay a members' dividend of 2s 6d for each pound of purchases in its shops.[19] The Society was planning to build new central premises in Long Row that would contain, at its opening in 1876, shops for grocery, drapery and millinery, boots and shoes, hardware and furnishing, as well as committee rooms and offices, a library, reading room, and a hall seating 600 people.[20] It was an impressive record made more interesting by the concern for elevating 'the social and intellectual condition of the members'.

The Society had started to buy land and build houses for sale 'at cost price' for its members in 1868, partly to utilise surplus share capital, but improving social conditions may have been an extra motivation (offering allotments on land bought by the Society was a clue). In doing so, it was not

unusual. Many other North East co-operatives soon became active in house building, though Wallsend may have been one of the earliest, and certainly saw itself as 'a pioneer of house building and allotment holders in the Co-operative Movement'. Forty-three houses had been erected by 1876. Robert Douglass and his brother, William, eventually took one of the later houses at 6 Industrial Terrace, and Douglass credited Charles Adams with teaching him the skills of 'land survey and measurement' at school which proved so useful subsequently.[21]

The Society had been circulating *The Co-operator* but felt that a more substantial commitment to education ought to be made. Accordingly, an education committee was elected in October 1870 charged with opening a library and newsroom. Their discussions to frame 'rules and regulations' led to a ban on alcohol, smoking, games and Sunday opening. There was also a tussle with a sitting tenant at the house that was rented for the library, delaying the newsroom for three months, but ultimately the new library began during the evenings at 119 High Street West in July 1871, and the newsroom was opened by Dr Rutherford in October. Books were found from the remains of a defunct local library and from book sales, and a librarian was appointed at a salary of £5 a year. Over 800 books were stocked by 1873 and 3 daily and 13 weekly newspapers together with magazines were available in the newsroom. Pointedly, one of the first items bought to decorate the new library in 1871 was 'a bust of Robert Owen'.[22]

In embracing education, the Wallsend Society was fairly distinctive in the North East. Most societies were too small to do more than circulate *The Co-operator*, or its successor the *Co-operative News*, and gradually open newsrooms, but some, including Newcastle, showed little interest in education until later in the century (or even into the next century). Wallsend, differently, quickly emerged as one of the 'big four' North Eastern societies that regularly spent hundreds of pounds on members' education – libraries, classes, newsrooms, lectures, social events – each year from the 1860s-1870s. The others were Blaydon, Jarrow and Sunderland.[23] Where Wallsend was strikingly unique was in opening an elementary school and combining this with the creation of a co-operative housing estate.

The Wallsend Co-operative School

The proposal to open an elementary school emerged from a mutual improvement class (or discussion and lecture group) set up by the education committee in November 1871 – 'from it sprang the idea of starting an elementary day school'.[24] Holyoake had suggested in 1870 that any organisation, not just churches and charities, could claim a Government grant for a school, and the 1870 Act made this more feasible (if highly unusual). As Wallsend had no school board and, as usual, there was little rush to set one up, there was an opportunity for independent action. Interestingly, the Wallsend co-operators were in touch with the National Education League that held a public

meeting in support of its programme at the 'new Temperance Hall, Wallsend' on 16 April 1872. It was addressed by John Burnett, recently the secretary of the Nine Hours League, and James McKendrick, a well-known co-operator from the Ouseburn Engineering Works episode.[25] Wallsend's co-operative day school seems to have opened in the same hall the following month.[26]

The Temperance Hall in Blenkinsop Street was part of the Primitive Methodists' new chapel, erected in 1871 on land owned by the Wallsend Society. Described rather grandly as being of 'Gothic [style] of the early English period', and built with red bricks and stone dressings, the building was:

> used by the education committee formed in Wallsend under the financial guarantee of the Co-operative Society, for the purpose of a day-school, under the management of a certificated master, and on the undenominational system as advocated by the national education league.[27]

The education committee's endorsement of a school had resulted in a circular to parents inviting interest in sending their children to the school, and 'nearly 300 children were promised to commence with'. This convinced the committee, and the mutual improvement class, to jointly seek financial support from the Wallsend Society's next quarterly meeting in April 1872, asking 'for a guarantee for the payment of salaries and other expenses'. Approval 'was readily given', which was quite remarkable. Co-operative members' meetings were often loath to spend money on ventures that could detract from dividends, but possibly the 'militant democracy', clear evidence of demand, and the Owenite tendencies of influential members, combined to make a difference.[28]

The Society met the costs of the school that was formally opened with 130 children on 1 July 1872. To claim the government grant, Robert Douglass acted as 'correspondent for the school'. The first teacher, Alex McClintock from Dumbarton, was appointed at £90 a year, or a quarter of the government grant, and a Miss Pullen became 'the infant and sewing mistress' and was responsible for the 'teaching of the girls'. It looks as if the school had its own committee for the first month, but then control passed to the Society's education committee.[29]

Frustratingly, the story of the school is one of conflicting fragments. Neither the school log books nor the school inspector's reports have survived, and the Wallsend Society's records for the period have vanished. Part of the story may be found in positive accounts published by the *Co-operative News* and Cowen's *Newcastle Chronicle*. The *News*, keen to encourage other societies, said in January 1873 that:

> The different educational departments in connection with the society, namely, reading room, library, and elementary day school are progressing satisfactorily. This fact we note with much pleasure, and commend to the attention of other societies. Co-operation exists not for the pecuniary advancement of its members merely, but for their moral and intellectual elevation as well.[30]

Other evidence presents a chaotic picture. The official history of the Wallsend Society, published in 1912, drew on oral history from 'the late Mr Jos. Bormond, who was secretary to the education committee at this period', and from 'reading the school log book and the inspector's reports'. School discipline was considered 'lax' and 'it was impossible for the master to work so large a school without a qualified assistant or pupil teacher'. The inspector threatened to reduce the government grant unless the school improved and staffing was increased (the school received only 2s 0d in grant in 1873, though it had 143 children on the roll). McClintock was dismissed, his successor being recruited only with difficulty, and he then had to be 'dispensed with when the school was struck off the government list in 1874. The Society's education committee carried on with the school for another year, but 'after many vicissitudes, it was decided to close it on August 6th 1875' due to rising costs and the refusal of the new Wallsend School Board to accept a transfer of the school.[31]

It is impossible to piece together the whole jigsaw, but a few questions could be posed if only for the record. Would government inspectors have been objective in assisting a school managed by working-class co-operators in the midst of the 'militant democracy'? There is evidence that inspections in this formative period of state elementary education sought to close down 'working class private schools'. What other vested interests were seeking to determine the future of schooling in a town that was deeply divided along class lines? Was 'lax' discipline unusual at this time when children were not used to the routines of the school day (Chief Constable Elliott, in nearby Gateshead, had to station constables in school yards to keep order)? And many schools struggled to find trained and qualified teachers in the early 1870s.[32]

Annoyingly, nothing is known about the school curriculum, other than it was, apparently, undenominational. Given the circumstances of the time, Peter Gurney's conclusion that the school probably supplemented state education, rather than substituting for it as the original Owenites would have done, is almost certainly correct.[33] Still, there was a hint of Owenism in the location of the school. The Temperance Hall stood on co-operative land in the middle of the new co-operative housing estate (Blenkinsop Street was named after Thomas Blenkinsop, and stood adjacent to Douglass Street). The people who lived in the houses were co-operative members whose mortgages were paid, in part, out of the dividends that they earned from shopping in the Wallsend Society's shops, and they may even have used the nearby co-operative allotments. Equitable Street, Mutual Street, and Rochdale Street would soon grace the immediate neighbourhood. Surely, somewhere in all of these contrived coincidences was more than just a hint of Owenite community thinking?

Aftermath

The closure of the only co-operative school in late nineteenth-century Britain was not the end of Co-operative education in Wallsend by any means. The

town's co-operators were even urged to re-start a school by a Co-operative Wholesale Society official who 'trusted before long that the committee would again see their way to open another school'.[34] It was unlikely that this could happen. The new Board schools rapidly occupied the ground for schooling, and the Wallsend Society had to meet the costs of its new central premises together with absorbing a temporary dip in sales 'due to the great depression of trade in the district'.[35] In any event, the Society's educators moved towards adult education, initiating a series of lectures at the Temperance Hall in 1875-1876, the first 'by a lady, and was entitled "women's rights"'; and the second, 'the social future of the working classes'. A night school was tried from November 1876, but was not successful 'and had to be discontinued at the end of two months', though the library flourished into the next century and remained open as late as 1954. More luck came with the formation of the Women's Co-operative Guild in 1883. The Wallsend branch of the Guild, the first in the North East and the seventh in the entire country, was launched with enthusiastic support from the Society's leadership in their committee room in 1884 [36] Wallsend was still ahead of the game.

Notes

[1] *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 13 May, 1871, p. 2.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Barbara Taylor (1983) *Eve and the New Jerusalem: socialism and feminism in the nineteenth century*, chap. IX, p. 263. London: Virago.

[4] Nigel Todd (1992) His Majesty the Chief Constable: Tyneside's chartist policeman, *North East Labour History*, 26, 36-46; *Newcastle Daily Leader*, 5 November, 1888; *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 5 November, 1888.

[5] *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 22 February 1902.

[6] R. Owen &W.E. Ashton (1991) *Adams: chartist, radical and journalist (1832-1906)*, pp. 31, 58. Whitley Bay: Bewick Press.

[7] Catherine Webb (Ed.) (1906) *Industrial Co-operation: the story of a peaceful revolution*, pp. 205-206. Manchester: Co-operative Union.

[8] *The Co-operator*, August 1860, p. 37.

[9] Arnold Bonner (1961) *British Co-operation: the history, principles, and organisation of the British co-operative movement*, appendix IV, p. 510. Manchester: Co-operative Union.

[10] *The Co-operator*, November 1865.

[11] Ibid., November 1862.

[12] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), pp. 28-30. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society. See also: William Richardson (1923) *History of the Parish of Wallsend*. Reprint. Newcastle: Newcastle and North Tyneside Libraries, 1999.

[13] *Co-operative News*, 1 August 1876.

[14] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), p. 78. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society.

[15] *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, April 4, 1900; *Co-operative News*, April 7, 1900; (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), pp. 23-26. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society.

[16] *Co-operative News*, April 19, 1873 (citing the *Newcastle Chronicle*).

[17] Joan Allan (2007) *Joseph Cowen and Popular Radicalism on Tyneside, 1829-1900*, p. 61. Monmouth: Merlin Press; *Newcastle Courant*, July 14, 1871, p. 5.

[18] See: Joan Allan (2007) *Joseph Cowen and Popular Radicalism on Tyneside, 1829-1900*, especially chap. 3; G.D.H. Cole (1944) *A Century of Co-operation*, pp. 163-165. Manchester: Co-operative Union; Nigel Todd (1991) *The Militant Democracy: Joseph Cowen and Victorian Radicalism,* chap. 8. Whitley Bay: Bewick Press.

[19] *Co-operative News*, April 19, 1873.

[20] *Co-operative News*, August 1, 1876.

[21] *Co-operative News*, April 19, 1873; (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*). Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society. For an account of the extent of Co-operative house building, see: P.A. Darville (1954) The Contribution of Co-operative Retail Societies to Welfare within the Framework of the North East Coast Area. MLitt thesis, University of Durham.

[22] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), pp. 78-79. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society; *Co-operative News*, October 28, 1871.

[23] P.A. Darville (1954)The Contribution of Co-operative Retail Societies to Welfare within the Framework of the North East Coast Area. MLitt thesis, University of Durham, p. 245.

[24] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), p. 79. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society.

[25] *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, April 20, 1872.

[26] *Newcastle Guardian*, May 11, 1872; the Wallsend Society's Jubilee history gives July 1, 1871 as the starting date, but this was almost certainly simply a formal opening ceremony.

[27] *Newcastle Guardian*, May 11, 1872.

[28] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), p. 79. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society.

[29] Ibid., pp. 79-80; *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, July 6, 1872.

[30] *Co-operative News*, January 22, 1873.

[31] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912*), pp. 78-79. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society; Report of the Committee of Council on Education (England and

Wales), 1873-74, p. 591; Wallsend School Board, Minutes, 5, 9, 22 April, 1875.

[32] For an assessment of the impact of the school boards' system on independently organised working class schools see: Phil Gardner (1984) *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England: the people's education*, p. 194. London: Croom Helm, and for policing see: Susan Vidler (1984) The Gateshead Borough Police of the 1870s, in Newcastle University History Department, *Crime and Society in the Nineteenth Century North East*. Newcastle: Newcastle City Library Local Studies Collection.

[33] Peter Gurney (1996) *Co-operative Culture and the Politics of Consumption in England, 1870-1930*, p. 35. Manchester: Manchester University Press. Two other relevant recent accounts of the history of Co-operative education are: Tom Woodin (2012) Co-operative Education in Britain during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: context, identity and learning, in Anthony Webster, Alyson Brown, David Stewart, John K. Walton & Linda Shaw (Eds) *The Hidden Alternative: co-operative values, past, present future*. Manchester: Manchester University Press and Nicole Robertson (2010) *The Co-operative Movement and Communities in Britain, 1914-1960*. Farnham: Ashgate. The *Journal of Co-operative Studies*, 44(3), 2011 is devoted to reflections on the current and future directions of Co-operative education.

[34] *Co-operative News*, August 1, 1876.

[35] *Shields Daily Gazette*, August 9, 1875.

[36] (1912) *Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society: jubilee history and handbook (1862-1912)*, pp. 80-81. Pelaw-on-Tyne: Wallsend Industrial Co-operative Society; P.A. Darville (1954) The Contribution of Co-operative Retail Societies to Welfare within the Framework of the North East Coast Area. M.Litt thesis, University of Durham, p. 200.

Correspondence: ntodd@wea.org.uk