University Extension in Scotland c. 1886-1896

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Contents

Abstract

The aim of this research was to re-examine the history of university extension in Scotland. The extension movement in England made an important contribution to the development of university adult education, but in Scotland a similar scheme survived for less than ten years and had very little impact. Previous historical examinations of extension have suggested that the main reason for its failure was the relatively open nature of Scottish higher education. Because Scotland's universities (three of which were in large cities) were more accessible than those in England there was – according to this argument – little demand for the access to university-level education that extension could provide. However, this research suggests that the level of demand for extension in Scotland has been consistently underestimated. An examination of the early records of extension organisations suggests that there was substantial initial demand for extension courses and the success of two other university education schemes (the LLA and Patrick Geddes' summer schools) supports this interpretation. However, interest in extension declined very rapidly after the first two years and the evidence points to several significant weaknesses in the Scottish organisation of extension which undermined the appeal of the courses. Firstly, the certificates awarded to serious students had no academic value and were only 'university certificates' by association. The universities were passing through a period of fundamental reform and were perhaps reluctant to validate any scheme which might deprive them of students. Secondly, the local associations had great difficulty in arranging course which offered continuity of study – there was a limited supply of competent extension lecturers and the situation was exacerbated by territorial rivalry between the universities. Overall, this research has found that the lack of genuine university commitment to extension was particularly damaging to the movement. In its early years, the universities had an opportunity to pool their limited resources in a national organisation but, in the face of Glasgow's opposition to united action, went their separate ways. A national organisation with a paid full-time secretary was arguably the only way in which the Scottish universities could have achieved the level of organisation of Oxford, Cambridge or London University. They failed to promote extension independently and by 1896 the movement had collapsed.

University Extension – Introduction and Literature Review

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Oxford, Cambridge and the new London and Durham Universities became involved in the extension of university education to towns and cities across England. Despite the fact that the universities involved did not generally act in concert with each other their activities came to be known as the university extension movement. Like the temperance or women's suffrage movements, extension was viewed by many (both inside and outwith the movement) as a social mission which, in this case, sought to take systematic courses of higher education to the great majority of the English population excluded from university. Many of the remarkable individuals involved in extension were driven by a missionary zeal related to their religious beliefs or the philosophical idealism of T.H. Green which stressed the value of education as an agent of social cohesion and progress.[1] The extension movement lasted until the early decades of the twentieth century and, although it generally failed to reach significant numbers of working-class students, it marked an important early stage in the evolution of university adult education and, to some extent, formed the basis of future developments including the foundation of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and the closely associated tutorial class movement. In Scotland, from 1887, various extension schemes were inaugurated which emulated the English system of organisation. Despite notable early successes, the Scottish movement quickly lost its impetus and lasted for less than ten years. This research aims to both re-examine the historical evidence concerning extension in Scotland and re-assess existing explanations of its limited impact and early demise.

In a recently published, comprehensive history of adult education in Scotland, Anthony Cooke ably summarises the historical consensus on the short-lived Scottish university extension movement of the 1880s and early 1890s.[2] The overall failure of extension is

[1] L. Goldman, *Dons and Workers: Oxford and Adult Education since 1850,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) pp 54-57.
[2] A. Cooke, *From popular enlightenment to lifelong learning. A history of adult education in Scotland 1707-2005,* (Leicester: NIACE, 2006) p 119.

explained by the urban location of the country's major universities; by the lower cost, in comparison with England, of attending university; and by what the 1919 Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction described as the 'democratic character' of Scottish higher education.[3] All of these points are arguably correct but a review of the literature reveals that very little has been written about this ill-fated chapter in Scottish adult education since R.M. Wenley's short account of the movement was published in 1895. And Wenley's account was certainly not historical research: the movement, though in terminal decline, was still organising some classes in that year and Wenley had been active in it as secretary of the Glasgow University Extension Board. Perhaps it is the movement's limited impact and seeming irrelevance which have been responsible for the lack of interest in it. However, as Turner's work on the Tutorial Class Movement and Duncan's work on the early Workers' Education Association in Scotland demonstrate, examinations of unsuccessful projects can illuminate relevant characteristics of the society in which they failed and make a significant contribution to social and educational history.[4] Thus, a more comprehensive examination of university extension may augment our understanding of the complex relationship between different sections of society and the universities in late-Victorian Scotland.

Much of the literature discussed here relates specifically to the development of university adult education in England. Given that the short-lived Scottish extension movement tried to import the extension scheme which was enjoying qualified success in England, this seems appropriate. Since the Scottish movement adopted, almost to the letter, the English system of organising extension lectures, a detailed examination of the roots and progress of the movement in England and of the types of problem it faced may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the Scottish experience. There was also an element of intellectual 'cross-fertilisation' between Scotland and England, especially in the ideology which came to underpin much of university adult education. For instance,

[3] Cooke, *From popular enlightenment*, p 119.
[4] See: R. Turner, 'The Globalisation of the Tutorial Class Movement and Adult Education in Scotland, 1907-1939', in B. Hake, B. van Gent and J. Katus (eds), *Adult Education and Globalisation: Past and Present* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2004) and R. Duncan, 'Ideology and Provision: The WEA and the Politics of Workers' Education in Early Twentieth-century Scotland', in S. K. Roberts (ed), *A Ministry of Enthusiasm: Centenary Essays on the Workers' Education Association*, (London: Pluto, 2003) p.178-9.

Oxford University, and Balliol College in particular, occupy a prominent place in the history of adult education - and Balliol and Glasgow University scholars played a particularly important role in the development of the British school of philosophical idealism that inspired many to become active in the project of extending university education.[5]

The origins of the university extension movement as it first developed in England have been traced back to the 1830s when Oxford and Cambridge reluctantly began to respond to calls for their modernisation.[6] By this time, both these ancient universities were facing an increasingly hostile evaluation of their place in Victorian Britain. They still educated the country's aristocratic élite for careers in law, the Church and government but their academic reputation was surprisingly poor and many members of the growing entrepreneurial and professional middle classes of industrial Britain regarded them as little more than irrelevant bastions of privilege.[7] Working-class people, who knew anything of them, saw them as remote citadels of esoteric learning, the gatekeepers of an alien culture: the 'Strange Country' of Sheila Rowbotham's groundbreaking work on the experiences of working-class extension students.[8] This mood of alienation, reflecting the rigid English class structure underpinned by the universities, is also captured in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. In the novel, Jude Fawley, a stonemason and gifted autodidactic scholar, dreams of studying at Christminster University (a thinly disguised Oxford) but after seeking advice from the Master of one of the colleges is informed: 'I have read your letter with interest; and, judging from your description of yourself as a working-man, I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your own trade than by adopting any other course'.[9] The novel was actually published in 1895, when the extension movement was in full swing, but it undoubtedly reflects an earlier and persistent view of the élitism

[5] See P. Gordon and J. White, *Philosophers as Educational Reformers: The Influence of Idealism on British Educational Thought and Practice*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979).
[6] K. Kunzel, 'The Missionary Dons: prelude to university extension', *Studies in Adult Education*, 1975, 7, pp 34-52.
[7] E. Royle, *Modern Britain: A Social History 1750 -1997*, (London: Arnold, 1997) pp 375-9.
[8] S. Rowbotham, 'Travellers in a Strange Country: Responses of Working Class Students to the University Extension Movement 1873–1910', *History Workshop Journal*, 1981, 12, pp 62-95.
[9] T. Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002 first published 1895) p 110.

of the universities. At the beginning of the nineteenth century few, if any, substantive challenges had been made to the privileged position and status of Oxbridge and the two institutions looked forward to a future where they would retain their coveted position as training academies for England's ruling class. But change was on the horizon, and as the century progressed the universities faced a growing number of questions about their place and value in a society undergoing rapid economic, political and social change. The internal process of modernisation, which gained impetus from around the middle of the century, was, in large measure, a response to these challenges.[10] The systemised provision of extramural lectures was part of that process, or a result of it, and the history of the extension movement must, therefore, be considered within the broad context of university reform in the nineteenth century.

Calls for Oxford and Cambridge to modernise emerged from several interests and as Marriott suggests 'A spontaneous, if confused, alliance against the *Ancien Regime* on the part of Dissent, economic individualism and rational utility promised to create a new kind of educational system indifferent to the values in which Oxford and Cambridge men were schooled'.[11] Thus non-Anglicans, excluded from Oxbridge by the Religious Test Acts, began to take stake steps, both political and practical, to fulfill their educational needs. These nonconformists who had often been forced, like George Birkbeck, to pursue higher education in Scotland, and who now represented an increasingly powerful constituency within the growing industrial middle class, began to lobby against their exclusion from Oxford and Cambridge and to question the place of the ancient universities' traditional concept of liberal (and decidedly non-technical) education within an industrial economy. One aspect of this challenge to the status quo was their significant involvement in alternative forms of educational provision such as the mechanics' institutes, and they were active in the foundation of technical and university colleges like Owens College in Manchester, established through the bequest of the nonconformist industrialist John Owens, some of which would become major universities in their own right. Another

[10] See S. Marriot, *Extramural Empires: Service and Self Interest in English University Adult Education 1873-1983*, (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1984) and Goldman, *Dons and Workers*.
[11] Marriott, op cit, p 15.

threat to Oxbridge's position was the foundation of England's first secular university in London which, by the 1850s, had established itself as an important national centre, running examinations and awarding degrees for its constituent colleges, and through its external system.[12] Even the conservatives within the old universities acknowledged these challenges to their hallowed position but their response was obdurate resistance rather than reform and as Marriott observes they 'exhausted themselves in fighting off outside interference' seemingly convinced that their traditional attachment to the aristocracy and the Church of England would enable them to weather the prevailing storm.[13] The early university reformers were more pragmatic, though it would be a mistake to suggest that their inclination to reform was motivated by a deep-seated wish to change the fundamental nature of their universities. They generally accepted that some things would have to change in order to save what really mattered: Oxbridge's central role in the British establishment. But they acknowledged that their place in society now had to be justified and that they could no longer simply depend on tradition. There was a growing realisation that if the universities did not reform themselves then reform would be imposed upon them and even the conservatives were forced to acknowledge that possibility when the government appointed the first Royal Commission to investigate the universities in 1850.[14] It was against this backdrop of impending statutory intervention, that the universities began to modernise themselves in some important areas: most noticeably in the surprisingly novel emphasis on academic excellence typified by the Cambridge tripos. At Oxford Benjamin Jowett was prominent amongst the reformers: he introduced radical changes to the curriculum, he improved teaching methods and was instrumental in removing the residential requirement that prevented less wealthy but academically gifted students from entering the university.[15] The repeal of the Test Acts meant that nonconformists were no longer excluded and this final opening of the door to membership of the élite, which Oxford and Cambridge could confer on its graduates, to all the sons of the wealthy, aspirational middle class helped the universities to

[12] Marriott, *Extramural Empires*, pp 15-16.
[13] Ibid, p 16.
[14] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p16.
[15] Peter Hinchliff and John Prest, 'Jowett, Benjamin (1817–1893)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15143, accessed 20 Sept 2006]

reconsolidate their central position in British society. As Arno Mayer argues, in an important examination of political and cultural change in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe, élite education 'deflected the sons of the apostatizing bourgeoisie from disesteemed industry, trade, and engineering, which were considered unworthy, into honourable careers in the civil and colonial service, the Church the military and the law'.[16] Oxford and Cambridge thus silenced much of the criticism of their role as gatekeepers of privilege by enabling and encouraging members of the previously hostile middle classes to pass through the gate and become members of the élite.[17]

In the early stages of the reform process, it was recognised that internal reform on its own might not be enough to deflect the attack on the universities. Consistent criticism was levelled at the detachment, both geographical and attitudinal, of Oxford and Cambridge from most of industrial Britain.[18] The attitude of the industrial middle classes to the universities has been discussed above but in understanding the roots of extension it is important to appreciate that such feelings of antipathy were frequently reciprocated from within the university walls.[19] This is typified by Matthew Arnold's attack, in his 1869 book *Culture and Anarchy*, on the 'philistine' values of the industrial and commercial classes which he contrasted unfavourably with the almost mystical qualities of the traditional liberal education provided by the universities. Arguably, university extension, as it was first considered, was not simply a means of extending the universities physically to counteract institutional competition: it was also seen by some university men as a proselytising mission to take the values of the ancient universities to the unenlightened.[20] One of the earliest schemes was proposed by William Sewell of Oxford who in 1850 put forward plans for the university to send out lecturers to literary, philosophical and scientific societies and mechanics' institutes in several major cities.[21] However, as

[16] A.J. Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War*, (London: Croom Helm, 1981) p 92.
[17] R.D. Anderson, *Universities and Elites in Britain since 1800*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992) pp 38-42.
[18] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, pp 11-19.
[19] R.D. Anderson, *Universities and Elites*, p 33.
[20] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 25.
[21] Ibid, p 18.

Marriott points out, Sewell was a conservative dreamer and his proposal did not represent any genuine wish to extend university provision – under the cloud of the Royal Commission, it was simply an attempt to fend off both criticism and the possible imposed reform of his beloved Oxford.[22] A far more radical and ambitious plan was devised by Benjamin Jowett who sought to make Oxford the centre of a large federal university with colleges in several major provincial cities. He saw the principal role of these colleges as preparation for degree study at Oxford which would retain the power to award degrees and argued 'that colleges planted in the great centres of population would continue school education; they would afford to the more active-minded of the working classes the opportunity of self–culture; they would solve the problem of higher education for women'. Demonstrating that he was in sympathy with Arnold's cultural critique, he also suggested that they would introduce 'a body of highly educated men into a commercial and manufacturing society' thereby, presumably, healing some of the divisions between the universities and the middle classes.[23] These words were written two years after Jowett, Master of Balliol College, had co-operated with a local committee in Bristol in the foundation of a technical school which would become a university college and, later, Bristol University. One of the members of the Bristol committee was the Reverend John Percival, headmaster of Clifton College and an early activist in the promotion of women's higher education, whose pamphlet 'The Connection of the Universities and the Great Towns' attracted the interest of several Oxford progressives.[24] Jowett also succeeded in enlisting the support of New College and its warden JE Sewell for the project in Bristol and both Balliol and New College offered the college financial support of £300 a year for its first five years.[25] Despite this early and notable success, Jowett was unable to convince the university authorities to support his impressive plans for a federal university and, crucially, events were overtaken by Cambridge's introduction of a less radical system of university extension.

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[22] Marriott, *Extramural Empires,* p 17.
[23] Bejamin Jowett, 'Suggestions for University reform, 1874' in L. Campbell, *On the Nationalisation of the Old English Universities,* (London, 1901) pp 183-208.
[24] John Sadler, 'Percival, John (1834–1918)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35471, accessed 27 Oct 2006]
[25] Goldman, *Dons and Workers,* p 27.

In 1873 Cambridge University established a Local Lectures Syndicate whose task was to organise the supply of peripatetic lecturers to deliver educational courses, of or near a university standard, in provincial towns and cities. James Stuart, a fellow of Trinity College, was instrumental in persuading the university to commit itself to this experiment and was appointed the syndicate's first secretary. Since 1867 Stuart, a member of an influential and politically-progressive Fifeshire family, had been delivering well-attended lectures for the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women, the Crewe Mechanics' Institute and the Rochdale Pioneers; and his experiences had made him aware of the significant demand for higher education in the north of England.[26] To meet this demand, he formed an alliance with the formidable Josephine Butler, president of the North of England Council, and representatives of other organisations committed to education, which began a concerted campaign to induce Cambridge to establish a formal scheme for organising lectures.[27] He also proposed a radical way of linking extension and university reform: in a paper written for the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, he questioned the wasteful system of fellowships in both Cambridge and Oxford whereby successful graduates received remuneration for little or no actual teaching and suggested that they would be more productively employed in extension work.[28] Unsurprisingly, Cambridge chose not to link fellowships to extension teaching but the university syndicate's system for organising extension lectures proved to be successful and within a few years lectures were being delivered across the north and midlands of England. Oxford continued to consider more ambitious schemes for a few years more but finally acknowledged the apparent value of the Cambridge system and, fearing a loss of influence, began, in 1878, to organise lecture courses in a similar way.[29] London University had become involved in extension two years earlier and the new movement experienced varying degrees of success and expanded intermittently throughout the rest of the century. In 1888 the first summer meeting, which enabled extension students of all social classes to gain some experience

[26] Cooke, *From popular enlightenment,* p 118.
[27] R. Fieldhouse and Associates, *A History of Modern British Adult Education,* (Leicester: NIACE, 1996) p 37.
[28] James Stuart, *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,* (London: Longman, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1872).
[29] N.A. Jepson, *The Beginnings of English University Adult Education,* (London: Michael Joseph, 1973), pp 31-45.

of life within the university walls, took place at Oxford. It was attended by nine hundred Oxford, Cambridge and London extension students and its success was reflected in the following year's attendance of more than a thousand students – some of whom had been given scholarships to attend by Co-operative Societies and private individuals.[30] Sheila Rowbotham's 'Travellers in a Strange Country', gives a fascinating account of the experiences of predominately working-class students at these summer meetings – it shows how many of them had an intense love of learning for its own sake and were deeply affected by the experience of active participation in a 'community of scholars'.[31]

The extension movement carried on into the early twentieth century but came to be regarded by many of those involved in adult education as increasingly moribund and irrelevant. Writing in 1912, GDH Cole opined that:

> The Extension classes developed into gaping rows of the unoccupied and unemployable middle-class. The unsuccessful husband-hunter and the scholastic blue-stocking took notes assiduously and received prizes and certificates of merit without end; but for education in the wider and truer sense very little was achieved.[32]

This is undoubtedly a rather uncompromising and partial assessment of extension but it is clearly an indication that the movement was losing credibility amongst many intellectuals who by this time were actively promoting other forms of adult education.

Most assessments of the work of the extension movement in England highlight the problems it faced and an understanding of these may enhance an analysis of the failure of extension in Scotland. One crucial point is that the association of extension organisers was arguably never a movement in the sense of having unified goals. They may have tried to create an impression of unity by, for instance, publishing a University Extension Journal but as Marriott cogently argues the three universities involved were determined to defend and expand their spheres of influence through a process of academic 'empire-

[30] Fieldhouse, *History*, p 40.
[31] Rowbotham, *Travellers*.
[32] G.D.H Cole, 'Education and Socialism', GDH Cole Papers, Nuffield College, Oxford quoted in Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 98.

building'.[33] This meant that the universities were, perhaps, less motivated to co-operate in the development of a strategy that would have enabled extension to be adapted to changing educational needs. The fact that extension centres had to be entirely self-funding without any financial support from the universities or local or central government (except for a few years in the early 1890s when local government funding for technical education, known as 'whisky money', was available) was the most insurmountable problem faced by local organisers.[34] The cost of providing lectures was reasonably high and the centres needed a minimum number of people enrolled on each course to cover all their costs. These minimum attendance levels were not always achieved and many centres became dependent on subsidies while others simply closed.[35] Cheaper six-lecture courses were frequently offered to try and increase student numbers and subjects were often selected on the basis of popular appeal. All of this had a detrimental effect on the quality and continuity of courses: students could often only take one course or find that after taking one course the next one was on an entirely different subject. The movement was also, with a few notable exceptions, dominated by the middle classes and this affected the extent to which other sections of society became involved. An atmosphere of patronage and condescension, which was a common characteristic of this top-down movement, may have discouraged prospective working-class students from taking classes. However, the biggest obstacle to working-class participation was the cost of the lectures and it has been argued that beyond that apathy, limited literacy and long working hours were as much of a deterrent to participation as resentment of the middle classes.[36]

The recruitment and retention of competent lecturers could also be problematic – it was demanding work, which often involved a lot of travelling, and did not, generally, offer a stable income. It did, however, attract a body of men who had a strong belief in the worth of extension and made a remarkable contribution to it. The variability in the abilities of the lecturers, who received virtually no support or training, did have an effect on the success of courses and the most successful centres were frequently those that

[33] Marriott, *Extramural Empires*, pp 35-52.
[34] Jepson, *Beginnings*, pp 143-78.
[35] Ibid, pp 99-103.
[36] Fieldhouse, *History*, pp 36-41.

enjoyed the services of talented and popular lecturers – in Hebden Bridge the inimitable GW Hudson Shaw drew around six hundred people (one fifth of the town's population) to his classes in the 1888-89 session.[37] Concerns were also voiced about the academic rigour of some of the courses: the standard of the lectures was generally high but many students did not, or could not, pay the higher fee that enabled them to participate in class discussions. When they did participate in the classes, there was generally insufficient time for in-depth discussion or feedback on written papers and this may be one of the reasons that the optional examinations were taken by a relatively small number of extension students.[38]

What then were the successes of the extension movement in England? One of the most significant contributions it made was the opening up of educational provision for middle-class women previously excluded from higher education, and many involved in the movement saw this as its greatest achievement. Opportunities for participation in higher education were also extended to a significant number of schoolteachers who were able to gain certain certificates from Oxford and Cambridge that gave them exemption from examinations for the Queen's Scholarship (which funded formal teacher training). The universities established close links with associated extension colleges and four of these at Sheffield, Nottingham, Bristol and Exeter became independent universities in the early twentieth century. Through the narrow, pragmatic paradigm of extension that was adopted, developments had thus taken place which ultimately led to a limited realisation of Benjamin Jowett's dream of physically extending the universities. Additionally, extension may have helped to steer the ancient universities along what Fieldhouse has called the 'paths of democracy' whereby it became possible for them to be influenced by forces questioning or challenging the status quo.[39] Finally, the movement's generally abortive efforts to promote the higher education of working people convinced a new generation that this project could only succeed in the hands of a national organisation devoted to that goal. In that sense it can be argued that one of the extension movement's

[37] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 79.
[38] Fieldhouse, *History*, p 40.
[39] Ibid, p 41.

greatest legacies is the influence its history had on the foundation and strategies of the Workers' Education Association.[40]

Most historical assessments of the impact of extension in Scotland have been based on the work of R.M. Wenley and W.H. Marwick, two early historians of the movement. Wenley, a professor's assistant in logic at Glasgow University and lecturer in moral philosophy and logic at Queen Margaret's College, was the secretary of the Glasgow University Extension Board from 1890 to 1896.[41] He was a central figure in Scottish extension and his 1895 account of the movement is a well-informed, critical assessment of the problems it faced.[42] W.H. Marwick was the first staff tutor employed by the WEA in Scotland and his short 1937 article, which drew heavily on Wenley, examined extension within the wider history of adult education in Scotland.[43] Both accounts locate the origins of extension firmly within the campaign to open up higher education to women and emphasise the important role played by women's higher education associations in laying the groundwork for university extension. Similarly, they highlight developments in Dundee where, following on the success of extramural lectures delivered by St Andrews University staff, a university college was founded (mirroring the foundation of colleges in some English cities). A re-examination of the archival evidence has shown that their accounts of the progress of the movement in Scotland are, in general, very accurate and record how, after an initial unsuccessful attempt to form a unified body to organise extension across Scotland, three of Scotland's universities initiated independent schemes which all failed after a few years. Since the historical development of extension will be examined in substantial detail below, their actual accounts of the course of the movement will not be detailed here. However, their analyses of the reasons for extension's failure in Scotland have informed the current consensus of historical opinion and therefore merit careful consideration.

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[40] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 108.
[41] A. W. Innes, *A Roll of the Graduates of the University of Glasgow, 1727-1897*, (Glasgow: Maclehose, 1898).
[42] R.M. Wenley, *The University Extension Movement in Scotland*, (Glasgow: Robert Maclehose & Co, 1895).
[43] W.H. Marwick, 'The University Extension Movement in Scotland' *Edinburgh University Journal*, 1936-37, vol 8, pp 227-234.

In Robert Wenley's detailed examination of 'Conditions which have militated against the scheme in Scotland' he separates the problems faced by the extension movement into two broad categories: those related to the 'conditions of popular life in Scotland' and those connected with the organisation of the universities.[44] In the former category he firstly points to the popular nature of education in Scotland and, in particular, to the relative openness of its universities. However, acknowledging the significant changes that were sweeping through Scottish higher education he observes:

> It is possible that, after the severe entrance examination now imposed had done its work of exclusion for some years, the demand for Extension teaching may become more clamant. At all events the Extension movement ought to be kept alive, and the organization should receive careful attention, in order that should there be a sudden call upon it, as a consequence of the new regulations, it may be ready for active work.[45]

Secondly, he refers to the network of philosophical, literary and 'dialectic' societies across Scotland which provided popular but generally unsystematic education. Thirdly, he discusses the activities of the Combe and Gilchrist Trusts which funded lecture courses in science at a cost substantially lower than the price of attendance at extension lectures. Again, he suggests that these lectures were largely unsystematic and did not offer instruction beyond a fairly basic level. Fourthly, he cites the way in which – outside the cities and a few larger towns – Scotland's population was too thinly spread to enable the establishment of a significant number of extension centres. Finally, he suggests that when, for a brief period, county councils were able to fund lecture courses, the extension movement was already too weak to take advantage of this development.

The first problem he associates with the organisation of the universities relates to the process of transition they had been going through for some years. This he suggests led to the formation of factions within universities which took opposing positions on various aspects of reform. Further, in the first few years of the extension movement, these factional disputes had become increasingly bitter so that 'Deliberating thus on the machinery of their own organization, the more influential University men had little time,

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[44] Wenley, *University Extension*, pp 43-49.
[45] Ibid, p 43.

and perhaps little inclination, to enter upon new paths'.[46] Interestingly, Wenley also suggests that the public's perception of these factional disputes may have influenced attitudes towards extension and evoked a degree of cynicism about the real aims of the scheme. This led to accusations that most of the universities' professors were too bound up in their own self-interests to make a genuine commitment to extension and, more damagingly, that some of them saw the involvement of their assistants in the scheme as a way of avoiding paying them full salaries. Wenley's response to the second, more serious allegation was to point out that in Glasgow the four professors who had delivered lecture courses for the board had received no payment for their services. Secondly, the lack of lectureships and fellowships in Scotland's universities meant that academic teaching was a precarious career so that many of the universities' best graduates – who may have been persuaded that extension was a stepping stone to a more stable academic career – were lost to the movement. Thirdly, the movement was undermined by ineffective organisation and, although Wenley largely blames the universities for this, he suggests that it was a result of the oppressive workloads of university staff rather than their apathy towards extension. Fourthly, and rather ironically (given Glasgow's determination to act independently which will be discussed below), Wenley points out that the lack of any central organisation had been identified by local organisers as one of the movement's greatest weaknesses and that 'there is no reason why Glasgow, now left in undisputed possession of the field, should not make an attempt in this direction single handed'.[47] Finally, the certificates awarded for success in course examinations had no academic value which undoubtedly deterred potential students who sought recognised qualifications. Wenley argues that until the certificates facilitated exemption from the early stages of degree study or teacher training (as some did in England), they would continue to be widely regarded as worthless.

Wenley clearly viewed the extension movement as a missed opportunity; his analysis of the problems it faced consistently suggests ways in which the scheme could have been organised more effectively. Although he points to factors which limited demand for

[46] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 45.
[47] Ibid, p 47.

extension in Scotland, at no point in his analysis does he suggest that the level of demand for extramural education was so low that it could not have been successfully exploited by an effectively organised system. Marwick's account, on the other hand, implies that there was a degree of inevitably about the failure of extension since 'the exclusively cultural emphasis of its promoters awakened little response in a community inured to the cash value conception of education'. According to Marwick, the democratic nature of the nation's universities meant that there was little demand for extension teaching and he argues that, unlike its English counterpart, the Scottish university extension movement had no real influence on the development of adult education in the twentieth century. [48] Rather curiously, given his assertion that were was very little demand for extension-style teaching in Scotland, the account notes the considerable success of the Edinburgh summer schools organised by Patrick Geddes. After a modest beginning in the Granton Marine Station, the summer schools moved to Edinburgh, expanded their curriculum to include social science, and became increasingly popular, especially amongst women. They acquired an impressive international reputation and attracted men like William James, Edmond Demolins and Ernst Haeckel to deliver lectures.[49] The high point was reached in 1896 when the summer school was split into two sessions and Geddes' Outlook Tower overlooking Edinburgh Castle was opened as a dedicated venue for innovative educational activities. It was designed to physically illustrate how different intellectual disciplines might be applied to the study of humanity and to show how these could be regarded as the interconnected parts of a holistic synthesis of human knowledge.[50] Another important innovation Geddes introduced was the establishment in 1887 of a self-governing university hall of residence which was used to accommodate summer school students thus enhancing the collegiate aspect of their experience.[51] The schools continued into the twentieth century but declined in popularity after Geddes left Edinburgh.[52]

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[48] Marwick, 'University Extension', pp 227, 233.
[49] Ibid, p 233.
[50] H. Meller, *Patrick Geddes: social evolutionist and city planner*, (London: Routledge, 1990). pp 102-3.
[51] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity* p 330.
[52] Marwick, 'University Extension' p 233.

Marwick and Wenley both refer to a second remarkably successful experiment in nineteenth-century adult education: the LLA scheme of St Andrews University. However, unlike extension, this scheme has attracted the interest of several historians who have assessed its significance in the development of women's higher education. The scheme - devised by Professor William Knight of St Andrews - was very different to the model of English extension but it was born out of the same crusade for the doors of academe to be opened to women. Before the 1890s women were largely excluded from the intramural courses of Scottish universities but the combined pressures of feminism and the practical need for well-educated teachers were creating a groundswell of opinion that demanded female access to higher education. Knight's scheme, which began in 1877, was one response to this and planned to offer women a qualification gained through distance learning that was of, or close to, university standard.[53] Initially the scheme had been intended to compete with the higher certificates being awarded by other Scottish universities but Knight wanted to offer a qualification which would not be considered inferior to the male-only Master of Arts degree. Accordingly, the qualification offered by his scheme was called the Licentiate in Arts – enabling successful students to put the letters LA (later LLA) after their name. This emphasis on the degree equivalence of the qualification was probably one of the chief reasons for its success. And it was a remarkable success – from humble beginnings with Knight and one secretary sending out learning materials and organising examinations it grew to have links with 37 examination centres in Scotland, 57 in England, 41 in Germany, 21 in India, 12 in the USA, and others throughout the world.[54] Its place in the general expansion of women's education was significant: Marion Gilchrist, the first female medical graduate of a Scottish university, had earlier studied for an LLA as had Elizabeth Fish, the first woman president of the Educational Institute of Scotland, and a significant number of head teachers, suffragists and women politicians.[55] The eventual demise of the LLA was a result of a gradual growth in the numbers of women entering university after 1892, and the decline of the British Empire which had created a substantial demand for educated governesses to serve

[53] R. Bell and M. Tight, '*Open Universities: A British Tradition?*', (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993) pp 76-87.
[54] R. Smart, 'Literate Ladies: a fifty year experiment', *St Andrews University Alumnus Chronicle*, 1968, 59, pp 21-31.
[55] Bell and Tight, *Open Universities*, pp 86-7.

overseas.[56] Arguably, the success of the LLA scheme – which remained active in Scotland after women were first allowed to enter university – suggests that previous historical assessments of the causes of extension's limited impact in Scotland may have underestimated the demand for access to flexible university-level education.

For most of the nineteenth century the Scottish Universities were more accessible than those in England: virtually any male could attend a lecture regardless of their previous education and without a strict requirement to matriculate.[57] Class was not, in itself, a barrier as long as the student had money to pay the lecturer directly; JM Barrie recalled choosing an Edinburgh University English professor's class because of the way his pockets bulged with cash - a sure indication of his merit.[58] As Anderson shows, it was certainly also the case that students in Victorian Scotland came from a far wider range of social backgrounds than their counterparts in England. For instance, at Glasgow in 1880, 23.7% of students were working-class (although they were predominately the sons of skilled artisans).[59] By the end of the century, however, the traditional openness of the Scottish universities was being undermined by the pressure to conform to an English model of higher education: after the 1889 Universities (Scotland) Act, professors were paid salaries; minimum ages and new entrance requirements were imposed; and Scottish degrees were changed to more closely match the increasingly specialised degrees on offer in England.[60] Professional groups began to regard universities as providers of prestige (or social capital) as well as education and, as Bell and Tight suggest, they were becoming rather more middle-class in nature and outlook as the 'democratic intellect' lost ground to a new professionalism and emphasis on specialisation.[61] After 1901, Carnegie scholarships went some way towards maintaining working-class representation in Scottish higher education but it is certainly true that, by the last decade of the nineteenth

[56] Bell and Tight, *Open Universities*, pp 86-7.
[57] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 29.
[58] J.M. Barrie, *An Edinburgh Eleven*, (1894) p.18, cited in A. McPherson, 'Selection and survivals: a sociology of the ancient Scottish universities', in R. Brown (ed.), *Knowledge, Education and Cultural Change* (London: Tavistock, 1973) pp170-71.
[59] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 311.
[60] Bell and Tight, *Open Universities*, pp 22-6.
[61] Ibid, pp 25-6.

century, the universities were becoming more selective.[62] And yet it was at this very point in time that attempts to establish an extension movement failed. Bell and Tight rather controversially suggest that the universities may not actually have worked very hard at extension because they were revelling in their 'new found exclusivity', although they offer no evidence in support of this analysis.[63] The reasons for extension's failure in Scotland are clearly more complex than they first appear and are certainly worthy of further research.

[62] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 276-7.
[63] Bell and Tight, *Open Universities*, p.25.

Scottish University Reform in the Nineteenth Century - the Context of Extension

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the contrast between Scotland's five college-universities and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge was striking.[1] The English universities were wealthy, private institutions accustomed more to educating future members of government than being the subject of government scrutiny and legislation; while those in Scotland were, to a large extent, part of an essentially public and national system of higher education whose independence had been assured by the 1707 Act of Union.[2] Scottish universities were partly funded by parliamentary grants which, in the 1830s, amounted to between £5,000 and £6,000, and the government helped to pay for the upkeep and construction of university buildings. A significant number of new university chairs were also founded by the Crown so that, by the 1820s, it controlled appointments to almost half of all university chairs in Scotland.[3] There was, therefore, a well-established tradition of government involvement in Scottish higher education while, prior to their examination by nineteenth-century Royal Commissions, both Oxford and Cambridge had enjoyed a far higher degree of administrative and financial independence underpinned by their strong links with, and service to, the established church and the English aristocracy. Different as the two systems were, over the course of the nineteenth century the universities in both England and Scotland faced growing calls for their modernisation and underwent fundamental reform which was both internally-driven and imposed through parliamentary legislation. In Scotland the universities were the subject of two Royal Commissions, which began their deliberations in 1826 and 1876, and the Universities (Scotland) Acts of 1858 and 1889, and were arguably under continuous parliamentary examination and the concomitant threat of legislative change from the 1820s until 1897, when the second executive committee set up by the government concluded its work. The idea that English plans for extending university teaching were, to some extent, one aspect of the internally-driven reform process has been examined above,

[1] For a detailed examination of the different characteristics of Scottish and English universities see: G.E. Davie, *The Democratic Intellect: Scotland and Her Universities in the Nineteenth Century*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964).
[2] R.D. Anderson, *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) p 56.
[3] Ibid.

but to what extent is this true for extension in Scotland? While the main criticisms of Oxford and Cambridge centred on their exclusivism and increasing irrelevance to an industrialising nation, the Scottish universities were being attacked for quite different reasons, including their declining standards and undemanding entry requirements. If English extension was, in part, aimed at countering their universities' comparative remoteness from modern society it seems less likely that such a direct link can be identified between extension and university reform in Scotland. Nonetheless, the reform process had far-reaching effects on Scotland's universities - it affected their governance, curricula and the career structure of teaching staff, as well as the universities' attitude to, and relations with, the wider community. These changes, in different ways and to varying degrees, influenced the universities' engagement with extension schemes and thus form an important backdrop to the history of the extension movement.

In the early nineteenth century, while Scotland's universities continued to bask in the afterglow of their outstanding contribution to the Enlightenment, they were confronted by an increasingly persistent and influential campaign for their reform in three significant areas. Firstly, they were criticised for their relatively low admission standards and, in particular, the fact that some university lectures were attended by boys as young as fifteen. The national educational 'ladder of opportunity' outlined in the First Book of Discipline (1560) described a system in which the nation's burgh and parochial schools would, through instruction in Latin, Greek and mathematics, prepare their brightest pupils for university study. In the seventeenth century, as the system expanded, a growing shortage of appropriately educated schoolmasters meant that higher schools were no longer able to keep pace with the universities' demand for qualified entrants.[4] This represented something of a crisis for the university teachers who had come to depend on the direct payment of class fees to augment their fairly meagre salaries. In response to this, the universities introduced junior classes to ease the transition from school to university. During the eighteenth century there was a general relaxation of admission requirements and other changes were introduced that enabled poorer and less well-

[4] D. J. Withrington, 'The Idea of a National University in Scotland c1820 - c1870' in J. Carter and D. J. Withrington, *Scottish University: Distinctiveness and Diversity*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1992) p 40.

prepared scholars to undertake university study. To ease the financial barriers, university terms were shortened both to make attendance less costly and to give students longer to work and save money to support themselves, and the requirement to eat and lodge within the college was gradually dropped.[5] In addition the rules relating to matriculation and graduation became increasingly flexible so that a growing number of students attended university on an occasional and selective basis – they chose the classes they would attend and paid the fee directly to the professor. Over time these changes made Scottish university education far more accessible to students of fairly moderate means and by the 1830s, when the annual cost of attending Oxford or Cambridge had risen to around £250, a typical Scottish 'student could attend his local university for a few pounds'. [6] These changes meant that the universities' student bodies became increasingly diverse and the Royal Commission of 1826 observed in its subsequent report that the universities of Scotland, in addition to teaching matriculated and graduating students,

> … have always embraced Students of every variety and description; men advanced in life, who attend some of the classes for amusement, or in order to recal [sic] the studies of early years, or to improve themselves in professional education, originally interrupted; or persons engaged in the actual occupations of business, who expect to derive aid in their pursuits from the new applications of Science to the Arts; or young men not intended for any learned profession, or even going through any regular Course of University Education, but sent for one or more years to College, in order to carry their education farther than that of the schools, before they are engaged in the pursuits of trade or of commerce. [7]

Critics charged that because the universities were now meeting the educational requirements of such heterogeneous student bodies there had been a decline – to a lower common denominator - in general academic standards and in the rigour of teaching and assessment. This was the second area of Scottish higher education singled out for particular criticism by the reformers who voiced their concerns particularly stridently over the impending threat to Scottish medical education. Between c.1750 and c.1850,

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[5] Withrington, 'National University' p 41.
[6] E. Royle, *Modern Britain A Social History 1750 – 1997*, 2nd edition, (London: Hodder Arnold, 2005) p 380.
[7] *Report made to His Majesty by a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the state of the Universities of Scotland* (1831) (Parliamentary Papers 1831, xii) p 9.

while Oxford and Cambridge educated about 500 doctors, the Scottish universities educated around 10,000.[8] However, in the 1820s there was a danger that Scotland's medical degrees would no longer be recognised in England and the growing British Empire – one of the most pressing reasons for the establishment of the first Royal Commission.[9] Later in the century similar concerns were raised over the lack of success of Scottish graduates in the new Civil Service examination which was first used by the East India Company in 1855, and by the home civil service in 1870.[10] Although the exams were intended to test fairly the abilities of all graduates, they were set by Macaulay, the eminent classicist and historian, and their emphasis on the classics may have favoured Oxford and Cambridge graduates.[11] The issue of the high number of Scottish graduates who failed the examination added weight to the attack on the traditional Scottish arts curriculum. The Master of Arts degree, in particular, was criticised for its broad subject base and its strong emphasis on philosophy, and there were calls for its curriculum to be modernised. Reformers also advocated the introduction of more specialised honours degrees and more demanding entry requirements.[12]

The third area targeted by the reform campaign was the internal management and organisation of the universities. In many respects the universities of Scotland had become professorial oligarchies – although they were still part of what was regarded as a public system supported by an element of government funding, the internal governance of financial and academic matters was largely in the hands of a cloistered professoriate who certainly represented their own vested interest and were often accused of corruption and inefficiency.[13] Arguably this particular criticism of university governance was part of the early nineteenth century's tentative movement towards political and administrative reform across a wide range of public offices and institutions. Accusations that public

[8] L. Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation 1707 – 1837*, (London: Pimlico, 2003) p 123.
[9] Withrington, 'National University', pp 43-44.
[10] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 64.
[11] Ibid.
[12] In *The Democratic Intellect* Davie suggests that this was all part of a campaign to Anglicise Scotland's universities but Anderson argues that the motivation of most of the reformers was far more complex and rooted in their identification of the need for significant modernisation of the higher education system. See Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, pp 358-361.
[13] Royle, *Modern Britain*, p 380.

institutions were riddled with sinecures, nepotism and general corruption were being levelled more frequently – and the universities in both Scotland and England were not immune from such charges.[14] In Scotland the universities' reputation was also blighted by internecine squabbling between professorial factions. At Glasgow, for instance, in the early nineteenth century, there was a long-running dispute caused by the exclusion from the 'Faculty' (comprised of the established chairs of the old college) of Regius professors who occupied government-founded chairs, notably in medicine.[15] Such disputes were frequently personal and acrimonious and even led to internal accusations of financial impropriety, and since they occasionally involved discrimination against government appointees they strengthened the campaign for an official and far-reaching investigation of university affairs.

One of the most strident critics of the Scottish university system was the radical MP Joseph Hume who, shortly after his election as rector of Marischal College in 1824, convened the first rectorial court in almost a hundred years and used the opportunity to air student grievances concerning graduation regulations and berate the professors who had been obliged to attend.[16] Hume and the Senate of Edinburgh University, which had a unique and problematic relationship with Edinburgh Town Council, simultaneously petitioned William Rae, Lord Advocate of Scotland, and the Home Secretary, Robert Peel, to establish a Royal Commission to investigate the problems of Scottish university education.[17] The Commission, which began its deliberations in 1826, was a fairly large and influential body – of its twenty-two members, ten were lawyers (including the country's law officers and most distinguished judges), nine were noblemen, and three were representatives of the Church of Scotland. Notably, none of its members were university professors and, in practice, almost all of its work was carried out by the lawyers and clerics, although it was chaired successively by Lords Aberdeen and Rosebery.[18] Its report, which was submitted in 1830 and published in 1831, was highly critical of the current system and put forward a wide range of proposals for fundamental

[14] Withrington, 'National University', pp 42-43.
[15] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 39.
[16] Ibid, p37.
[17] Withrington, 'National University', p 43.
[18] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 38.

reform of the curriculum and the way in which universities were governed. It was another twenty-seven years before parliament enacted a number of the Commission's recommendations but in the intervening period the debate on university reform lost little of its intensity. Several specific proposals for university reform were advanced but perhaps the most radical of these were proposals that Scotland's universities should effectively be amalgamated in one national university. Advocates of this reform argued that it would be a straightforward way of maintaining academic standards and that, by lessening the independent authority of the universities, it would deal with the problem of corruption and maladministration within their walls.[19] In 1856 John Shairp of St Andrews University wrote:

> It is much desired that, if possible, the four universities should combine for the purpose of granting literary degrees and only for this purpose; and that *one* board of examiners be appointed from among the professors and graduates ... who shall preside over the yearly examinations and grant all Scottish degrees ... It is clear that if our universities separately grant degrees the worth of the degree will be measured by the size and importance of the university which grants it, and the degree of one may be lightly esteemed compared with that of another university.[20]

In general, it was the representatives of Scotland's smaller universities who seem to have been more in favour of the plans for a federal university.[21] Given their recent struggles to maintain or increase their authority, it is hardly surprising that the majority of the professoriate in Edinburgh and Glasgow opposed the scheme and Glasgow University was instrumental in blocking its progress.[22] However, although they had successfully opposed the initial proposals they were aware that the campaign to persuade parliament to establish a federal university continued. They could see this system in operation in London and Ireland and in 1863 Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, wrote:

> I confess it to be my decided opinion that the most practical and most practicable measure which could be adopted towards elevating the Scotch degrees would be the constitution among the four universities of a superior and distinct examining body on which the

[19] Withrington, 'National University' pp 48-49.
[20] J. Shairp, 'The Wants of the Scottish Universities and the Some of the Remedies' (Edinburgh, 1856) pp 13, 41, cited in Withrington, *National University*, p 49.
[21] Withrington, 'National University' pp 45-50.
[22] M. Moss, J. Forbes Munro, and R.H. Trainor, *University, City and State: The University of Glasgow since 1870,* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2000) p 26.

> Degrees should depend, whether this body were clothed with the name of a National University or not. In the abstract it should, but it does not seem necessary, and might be dispensed with if the measure were thereby made more acceptable to the present governing bodies which are naturally reluctant to surrender their ancient rank and title. On the elevation of Degrees, influence and even endowment would be likely to follow by what I should think is the easiest as well as the most natural and legitimate process.[23]

Neither a national university nor a national examining body was ever established in Scotland but in the senate rooms of Glasgow and Edinburgh, throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, an enduring awareness of the possibility or 'threat' of these innovations may have steered the universities away from any path which could insidiously lead towards amalgamation, and engendered or maintained a reluctance to co-operate with other universities on projects like extension – which might have benefited from the synergies of national organisation.

The bill which was introduced to parliament by the Conservative judge John Inglis in 1858 disappointed many of the reformers. When Inglis introduced the bill he argued that its chief aim was to breathe new life into Scottish higher education by generally raising standards and by encouraging more students to complete degrees and graduate.[24] However, the Act itself included few measures which could achieve these aims and the responsibility for their realisation was placed in the hands of a temporary executive commission, chaired by Inglis, with powers to issue ordinances on university matters. The most significant change introduced by the Act was the establishment of two new 'layers' of university governance – University Courts and General Councils – which were intended to reduce the administrative powers of the professoriate and make the universities more accountable to disinterested opinion.[25] The Court drew its membership from the professoriate, the student body and graduates of the university, and was presided over by an elected rector. The latter was elected solely by the students but, with a few notable exceptions, the role was largely honorary and the rector's place in the court was normally taken by the principal. The Senate relinquished its powers of patronage but

[23] D. Thorburn, *The University Extension Movement*, (Edinburgh, 1866) p 33.
[24] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 67.
[25] Moss, Munro, and Trainor, *University, City and State*, p 27.

retained its control of matters relating to university property and, crucially, finance. The General Councils consisted of graduates of the respective universities and were a concession made by Inglis to the increasingly vocal lobbying by graduate associations for a greater say in the future of their universities. In practice they could only meet twice a year and their powers were strictly limited – they could make suggestions on university issues but decisions on the implementation of any of these remained firmly in the hands of the Senates and Courts.[26] However, their largely advisory role in university governance had at least created a mechanism for greater public involvement and provided an opportunity for informed debate on the universities' future - as Anderson suggests, 'the General Councils represented the section of public opinion likely to be best informed on university matters'.[27]

The limited changes introduced by the 1858 Act did little to weaken the campaign for university reform in Scotland and after 1870 the calls for reform were predominately focused on two issues – the need for greater flexibility in the curriculum which would allow more specialisation and a greater emphasis on pure science; and the introduction of entrance examinations to raise academic standards. Although there was now some agreement across the universities, that reform was necessary and unavoidable, they were legally constrained from acting independently and making any significant changes to the curriculum.[28] Increasingly frustrated by their inability to effect change, the General Councils of Scotland's universities, working in concert, produced a proposal to enhance the administrative power of the Courts and concomitantly increase the General Councils' representation on them. In 1875, accompanied by Lyon Playfair, MP for the Universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews, and William Hunter, a radical Aberdeen MP, a delegation representing the General Councils of three of the universities travelled to parliament to urge the Home Secretary to set up a second Royal Commission. Inglis again chaired the Commission appointed by the Conservative government the following year but the inclusion amongst its membership of Playfair and TH Huxley, who both advocated radical reform and a greater emphasis on science, were an effective counter to the

[26] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 68.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid, p 92.

chairman's undiminished conservatism. In effect Huxley and Playfair dominated the work of the Commission and significantly influenced the recommendations put forward in its final report.[29] The 1889 Universities (Scotland) Act implemented several of these recommendations and set up another temporary executive which, during the early 1890s, introduced a series of ordinances which were to transform Scottish higher education.

The most important change introduced by the Act itself related to constitutional reform and met the demands of the General Councils for a transferal of administrative power from the Senate to the Court – the Court now took charge of university buildings and financial management while the Senate retained control of discipline and academic affairs.[30] Most of the reforms of this period were implemented by the 169 ordinances of the executive commission chaired by Lord Kinnear which continued its work until the end of 1897. Many of these dealt with fairly minor administrative matters but amongst their number were ordinances which led to far-reaching change in four important areas. Firstly, the commission oversaw the introduction of a new degree structure - - students could now take three-year ordinary or four-year honours degrees with opportunities for specialisation in single disciplines at honours level. Secondly, the equal right of women to higher education was finally recognised and they were allowed full admission to the universities in 1892. Thirdly, the commission was responsible for the introduction of more stringent entry requirements and admission examinations which led to the eventual demise of the much-maligned junior classes. Finally, the commission introduced important changes to the career structure of university teachers which effectively transformed the inflexible Scottish professorial system. The work of non-professorial teaching staff – such as tutorial and laboratory teaching – was extended significantly, and class fees were now pooled so that the professors were paid fixed salaries.[31]

The financial implications of these changes and the general rationalisation of higher education in Scotland were enormous. The new emphasis on specialisation meant that new chairs in 'modern' academic subjects like history, English and political economy had

[29] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 91.
[30] Ibid, p 268.
[31] Ibid, p 273.

to be financed as did the growing requirement for universities to focus on scientific research. At the same time the cost of new buildings and the administrative costs of re-structuring the curriculum and organising admission examinations increased steadily. The 1889 Act had set the total government grant for the four Scottish universities at a figure of £42,000 per annum. However, after an appropriate amount was placed in reserve for the payment of pensions, only £9,000 was left to finance new measures. An additional sum of £30,000 was awarded in 1892 which enabled the commission to offer the universities more financial support and establish ten new chairs. Nonetheless, it is probably not an exaggeration to suggest that for the universities the 1890s represented a period of financial crisis and that this was exacerbated by falling student numbers largely caused by the introduction of new, more rigid admission requirements. At Glasgow, for instance, student numbers, which had been rising steadily throughout the nineteenth century, fell by almost 15% between 1889 and 1895 (from 2156 to 1835).[32] The total decline in student numbers across the four universities was even more alarming -- between the same two years student numbers dropped by 17.5% (from 6854 to 5654).[33] The general air of crisis may well have been added to by the recent memory of proposals made in 1883 for the effective privatisation of Scotland's universities. The unsuccessful 1883 bill had set a final figure of £40,000 for the grant paid to Scottish higher education and included a clause which gave government the option of paying a lump sum, the equivalent of thirty-three and one-third years of this grant, and ending its financial support of the universities.[34] At a time when universities, especially in Scotland, were still generally seen as an important part of the public sphere, governed more by a sense of duty to the nation than by commercial considerations, this prospect was anathema to almost everyone involved in higher education. Reflecting this, James Donaldson, Principal of the United College in St Andrews, wrote:

> This conception of our Scottish Universities and the proposals based on it run counter to the entire history of these institutions and to the ideas of the Scottish people in regard to them. The Scottish Universities are not private corporations -- they are national seats of learning, existing for the nation, and controlled by the Parliament of the nation. And the

[32] Moss, Munro, and Trainor, *University, City and State*, p 63.
[33] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, pp 351, 357.
[34] Ibid, p 259.

> Universities have no wish to become independent of the State, or to be removed from the control of the State.[35]

The 1883 bill was rejected and, although the 1889 Act retained the link between government and higher education, the universities, in the face of growing costs and declining student numbers, were undoubtedly aware that a consistent inability to manage their financial affairs within existing levels of government funding carried a risk of renewed parliamentary consideration of the state's relationship with them.

The final aspect of the reform debate to be examined here, which significantly influenced university politics and provoked lengthy discussion of the universities' place in society during this period, is the 'extramural question'. The crux of this issue was what was regarded by some as a virtual professorial monopoly of university-level teaching in Scotland. It had first been raised by associations of university graduates in the 1850s, who argued that suitably qualified university graduates should be given the right to deliver lectures outside the university walls. Extramural teaching had become a significant part of medical education in Scotland and graduates were now calling for this flexibility to be extended to arts teaching.[36] The matter was considered by the Royal Commission of 1876 but, believing that it would lead to a type of extramural teaching which was little more than 'cramming' for examinations, they rejected the proposal.[37] Undaunted, the reformers continued their campaign and successfully engineered the inclusion of the extramural issue (as a matter to be addressed by the next executive commission) in several university bills introduced in the 1880s. In Glasgow and Edinburgh reformers pressed their case through the medium of the General Council and formed extramural associations (with 900 members in Glasgow and 1200 in Edinburgh) which sought to influence the wider community.[38] While the Edinburgh General Council threw its weight behind the campaign, the situation in Glasgow was more complex and in the mid-1880s the General Council became the locus of an ongoing struggle between the

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[35] J. Donaldson, *Addresses delivered to the University of St Andrews from 1886 to 1910*, (Edinburgh: printed for the university by T. & A. Constable, 1911) pp 47-48.
[36] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 261.
[37] *Report of the Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Universities of Scotland, with Evidence and Appendix, I. Report with Index of Evidence* (Parliamentary Papers 1878, xxxii) pp 81-4.
[38] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, pp 261-2.

extramural and intramural camps in or associated with the university.[39] The most forceful and persistent advocates of the expansion of extramural teaching were Dr David McVail and William Herkless, founders of the University Council Association of Glasgow. Herkless was particularly critical of the concentration of power within the Senate and questioned the educational value of lectures delivered by professors to classes of five or six hundred students.[40] His Association mounted a sustained attack on the Senate whose members, it suggested, had 'private or corporate interests of their own to serve.' [41] It campaigned for the transferal of decision-making powers from the Senate to the University Court (whose meetings should be held in public) and for the formal affiliation of external institutions like St Mungo's College in Glasgow – where Herkless lectured in law – with the university. The Senate argued that the proposed affiliation would ultimately lead to the university becoming little more than an examining body.[42] Edward Caird was a central figure in the debate and, although he was known to favour the reform of intramural teaching, he successfully infiltrated the Glasgow University Association where:

> The difference of view as to extra-mural teaching was successfully obscured and suspended, and Caird was forthwith made a member of the innermost committees of the Association, there to be managed and used. But the experiment was not prosperous; he did not prove either malleable or ductile.[43]

In 1886 the General Council endorsed a report submitted by a committee chaired by Caird that called for the foundation of several new chairs and proposed the introduction of two new ranks of university teacher – junior professors and lecturers – that would share the workload of the professors and enable far more flexible teaching. For the majority of the Association, the scheme did not go far enough and, in response to its continued support for a parliamentary bill proposing the affiliation of extramural teaching institutions, Caird withdrew his membership and aligned himself with the newly-founded

[39] Moss, Munro, and Trainor, *University, City and State*, p72 and Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, pp 262-3.
[40] W.R. Herkless, *Scottish university reform: the main problems and its solution; with an appendix on university government.* (Glasgow: Morison Brothers, 1884) p 4.
[41] H.J. Jones and J.H. Muirhead, *The Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, (Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson & Co., 1921) p 104.
[42] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, pp 262-3.
[43] H.J. Jones and J.H. Muirhead, *Edward Caird*, p 105.

Glasgow University Club set up to counter the propaganda of the Association and advance the intramural cause.[44] Nationally, the reformers were almost successful in having a clause dealing with extramural affiliation included in the 1889 bill but, in the end, a decision on this matter was left to the executive commission. However, the commissioners decided against the effective separation of teaching and examination which, they argued, would threaten the principles of sound university education. The Glasgow and Edinburgh Associations challenged the 1892 ordinance dealing with this in parliament but, despite the support of prominent MPs like Trevelyan and Haldane, they failed to overturn the commission's decision.[45] Thereafter, the extramural campaign steadily lost both direction and impetus – its challenge to the educational status quo was effectively over.

Clearly, the reform process had followed a very different course in Scotland and left the universities in a more precarious position than their southern counterparts. The reforms which were implemented, and those which were proposed, challenged the universities to reassess their place in Victorian society. At the most fundamental level, they faced the real possibility that their position as independent institutions responsible for both teaching and the award of degrees might change. Pressure to modernise the traditional Scottish curriculum forced them to reconsider their relations with, and responsibilities to, a changing society; and the financial difficulties resulting from the implementation of reform hung ominously over university affairs and contributed to a sense of crisis as the century closed. The reform process which had begun in the 1820s, and progressed intermittently throughout the century, reached its zenith in the late 1880s and early 1890s. It is not without significance that this difficult period for the universities also saw the birth and early demise of the Scottish University Extension Movement. The question of how far the major changes the universities were undergoing at this time impacted on the progress of the extension movement will be examined below.

[44] Jones and Muirhead, *Edward Caird*, p 106.
[45] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 275.

The Precursors of University Extension

The earliest experiments in university extension in Scotland were closely associated with the campaign to open up higher education to women. Although there was a long-standing tradition of university professors – like John Anderson in the eighteenth century – lecturing to public audiences, the first systematic course of lectures for women (on botany) was given by Professor Hutton Balfour of Glasgow University in 1845.[1] No evidence concerning the success of these lectures has survived and, although the fact that the course was only delivered in one year might suggest that it attracted little interest, its short life can in fact be explained by Balfour's departure, in the same year, to take up his new appointment as Professor of Medicine and Botany at Edinburgh University.[2] However, it was not until 1868 that several young professors at Glasgow University – Veitch, Nichol, Young and Edward Caird - renewed the experiment and began delivering short courses of lectures to women in Glasgow.[3] By this time similar courses were also being organised by ladies' educational associations in Edinburgh and St Andrews.[4] Edward Caird and his brother John, who was appointed Principal of Glasgow University in 1873, were particularly active in the cause of extending higher education to women and Edward recalled that his brother 'took every opportunity of pleading publicly for the extending to them all the privileges of the university... He was unwearied in the discussion of the well-worn commonplaces as to the capacity of women for such education and its importance to them'.[5] In 1874 the Cairds were the only members of Glasgow Senate who voiced opposition to its decision to petition parliament against a bill which would have admitted women to Scottish universities. Edward Caird's amendment, seconded by his brother, failed to gain the support of any other members of the Senate

[1] R.M. Wenley, *The University Extension Movement in Scotland*, (Glasgow: Robert Maclehose & Co, 1895) p 18.
[2] D. E. Allen, 'Balfour, John Hutton (1808–1884)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1192, accessed 5 Jan 2007]
[3] H.J. Jones and J.H. Muirhead, *The Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird*, (Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson & Co., 1921) p 96.
[4] L. Moore, 'The Scottish Universities and Women Students 1862 -1892' in J. Carter and D. J. Withrington, *Scottish University: Distinctiveness and Diversity*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1992) p 140.
[5] *Memoir of Principal Caird*, p 108 cited in Jones and Muirhead, *Life and Philosophy*, p 97.

and Edward took the unusual step of 'formally dissenting from the decision of the majority'.[6]

During the 1870s the links between the Edinburgh Association and the university were placed on a more formal basis – the university's professors became involved in the provision of more courses and the university began to award Certificates of Art in literature, philosophy and science to students who were successful in examinations.[7] In 1877 the Glasgow Association for the Higher Education of Women was formed – with John Caird as its president - signalling the beginning of the systematic organisation of women's education in Glasgow that would within a few years lead to the establishment of Queen Margaret College. In its first session, Veitch, Caird and Young were joined by three new lecturers including their university colleagues Grant and McKendrick, and its first prospectus proclaimed that:

> The subjects have been so arranged that students may proceed from the course of Psychology and Logic to that of Moral Philosophy, from the course of Natural History to that of Physiology, or from the introductory course of French Literature to that on the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the same time each course is complete in itself, and may be taken separately.[8]

Clearly the Association's aim was to provide opportunities for serious and prolonged study, and the high fees (one Guinea for a single course of twelve lectures) would almost certainly have deterred less committed students. Family tickets (admitting three) could be purchased for two Guineas and for 'Ladies engaged in or preparing for the profession of Education' the fees were reduced by fifty percent.[9] A bursary scheme was introduced to support the most able students but there can be little doubt that the cost of the scheme excluded the vast majority of working-class women and a substantial proportion of those from the lower-middle class. Nonetheless, the association provided educational opportunities to significant numbers of women during its six years of existence – it organised courses ranging in length from six to forty lectures and in its most successful

[6] Jones and Muirhead, *Life and Philosophy*, pp 87-8.
[7] Moore, *Universities and Women Students*, pp 140-1 and A. Cooke, From popular enlightenment, p 120.
[8] Prospectus of the Glasgow Association for the Higher Education of Women (GAHEW) for the Session 1877-78, Glasgow University Archives (GUA) DC 233/1/2/1.
[9] Ibid.

year (1878-79) around 700 class tickets were sold (although John Caird did admit a small number of men to his lectures on 'The Philosophy of Religion').[10] Interestingly, the most popular single course – for which 456 tickets were sold – consisted of six lectures on 'Practical Education in Music'.[11] This suggests that many of the students were indeed planning careers in education or that they were already employed as governesses by more affluent families who paid for their attendance.

In April 1879 the Glasgow General Council submitted a report on the subject of the extension of university teaching to the University Court. The report suggested that in addition to extending educational opportunities to provincial towns the scheme would prepare young people more thoroughly for university study. It stressed that in implementing any such scheme steps would have to be taken to ensure that it neither interfered with the work of secondary schools nor lowered university standards. To address the first issue it was suggested that the minimum age for students attending extension lectures should be set at 17 or 18, but that an exception might be made for younger boys prevented from attending school by distance or work commitments. With regard to the second issue, the report stated that 'The Committee do not propose that attendance at the lectures should count towards graduation'.[12] Despite the fairly modest proposals put forward in the report is was rejected by the Senate – the majority report, prepared by Sir William Thomson (later Lord Kelvin), saw no merit in the idea of using extension to improve preparation for university study:

> It seems to your Committee that this must be sought for in the development of our higher primary and our secondary schools, and that, by the organization and conduct of local examinations, the University is doing what it can to establish a connection between itself and these institutions, and to promote their efficiency by endeavouring, in some measure, to set marks on their success.[13]

Its reasons for rejecting the university's involvement in extension lectures in provincial towns are rather more ambiguous:

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[10] GAHEW, Second Annual Report 1878-79, GUA DC 233/1/2/6
[11] Ibid.
[12] Glasgow University General Council Records, 23 April 1879, GUA.
[13] *Report of Committee on Extension of University Teaching*, 3 March 1880, GUA.

> Your Committee have had this proposal under their careful consideration, and while admitting the possibility in some instances of good results from the delivery of such lectures, they do not see their way to recommend the Senate to undertake the responsibility of corporate action in the matter at present.[14]

This undoubtedly reflects the innate conservatism of most of the Senate's members, but the idea of university extension was at least kept alive by Veitch's minority report which argued that the university should reconsider involvement in extension in the future, if it could be demonstrated that the scheme could be financed and managed locally.[15]

After the establishment of Queen Margaret College, the pioneering work of the Glasgow women's education movement was carried on by a new organisation, the Queen Margaret Guild, which aimed to reach out to working-class women. In Wenley's view, those involved were motivated by a sense of responsibility to repay society for the educational gifts they had received.[16] This may well have been true for Edward Caird, the Guild's convenor, but given that higher education was only in the very early stages of opening its doors to women – and not yet completely – this seems a rather tenuous explanation for their involvement. Participation in this educational project may simply have reflected the general growth of middle-class philanthropy in late-Victorian Scotland.[17] Between 1885 and 1887 the Guild organised lecture courses in Helensburgh, Ayr, Kilmarnock, Paisley and Hamilton which were attended by a total of around five hundred women and a small number of men.[18] However, the Guild failed to attract significant numbers of working-class women - in a letter to Patrick Geddes, who lectured for the Guild in the 1886-78 session, its secretary Elisa Paterson wrote 'I regret however to say that we have not yet reached the working classes [and] I would gratefully receive any hints as to how we could do so'.[19] In April 1887 Caird advised the Guild Council that the university intended

[14] *Report of Committee on Extension of University Teaching*, 3 March 1880, GUA
[15] Ibid.
[16] Wenley, *University Extension*, pp 20-21.
[17] See O. Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland; social welfare and the voluntary principle*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980).
[18] Wenley, *University Extension*, p21.
[19] Letter to Patrick Geddes from Miss Elisa M. Paterson, ND, The Papers of Sir Patrick Geddes, Strathclyde University Archives (SUA), T-Ged 12/3/1

to set up an extension board and the Guild subsequently transferred its role in organising extension lectures to the new body.[20]

The first lecture courses not specifically targeted at women were those organised by William Smart, president of the Glasgow Ruskin Society.[21] From January 1884, three twenty-four lecture courses on English literature, moral philosophy and political science were run by the Society in the Philosophical Institution of Glasgow. The courses were taught by WS McCormick, JH Muirhead and Smart, all young academics associated with Glasgow University.[22] Muirhead and Smart had both been taught by Edward Caird and were greatly influenced by his philosophical idealism which stressed the importance of public duty and the value of education as an agent of social cohesion.[23] Fees were set at ten shillings for one course, fifteen shillings for two, and one pound for three; according to Wenley 'the lectures paid expenses and no more'.[24] To broaden the appeal of the lectures and attract a more working-class audience, the venue for the 1885-86 session was changed to Bridgeton Cross Hall and the fees were reduced to two shillings and sixpence for a single ten-lecture course and four shillings for two. The reduction in course length and fees suggests quite clearly that Smart and his colleagues in the Ruskin Society were conducting a fairly bold and carefully-considered experiment in working-class education. Two series of lecture courses were delivered; the subjects chosen were English literature, moral philosophy, and anatomy and physiology. Smart expressed some disappointment in the outcome of the East End lectures:

> We wished to test the 'need' in the heart of the factory district. Here also we had good audiences, though not so good. But they were working men, whereas our first audiences were a grade or two higher in the social scale. Yet as my audience was chiefly Land

[20] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 21.
[21] Ibid, p 19.
[22] Ibid, Appendix 1, Dr Smart's Staff with the Session in which each Lecturer was Engaged, p 51.
[23] See C. G. Robertson, 'Muirhead, John Henry (1855–1940)', rev. Peter P. Nicholson, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35145, accessed 4 Jan 2007] and M. C. Curthoys, 'Smart, William (1853–1915)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/48818, accessed 19 Dec 2006]
[24] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 19.

> Nationalization people, who came to teach me, I cannot be sure that we struck a level of genuine demand.[25]

The Ruskin Society men had encountered one of the perennial problems of middle-class involvement in adult education – the style and content of the education offered frequently failed to match working-class needs or interests. In any event, the experiment was short-lived and the venue was changed to the Christian Institute in the city centre for the 1886-87 session. After the 1887-88 session the Society's lecture courses were discontinued as Smart and other Society members involved in them became increasingly active in Glasgow University's new extension scheme.[26]

During the 1870s and early 1880s, similar extension lectures were delivered on the east coast by lecturers from Edinburgh and St Andrews Universities. Notably, from 1874 several series of well-attended lectures were delivered in Dundee – Scotland's only major city without its own university – which tapped into a rich seam of demand for liberal, scientific and, in particular, women's education.[27] This clear and growing interest in higher education in Dundee, which reflected similar trends in several major English cities, culminated in the foundation of its University College in 1881. Mary Ann Baxter, the college's principal benefactor, donated £140,000 to establish 'a college for promoting the education of persons of both sexes and the study of science, literature and fine arts'.[28] The college opened in 1883, the same year as Queen Margaret College, and for the first time in Scotland, women were formally admitted to institutions of higher education. From the outset UCD was keen to accommodate its female students and – until it quickly realised that it was entirely unnecessary – took steps to counteract their gender-specific 'disadvantages'.[29] Significantly, however, they were not initially allowed to become matriculated students of the college and it, in turn, could only award degrees to its male students through London University's external examination system. Outwith Dundee extension-style lectures continued in larger provincial towns like Dunfermline and Perth

[25] Wenley, *University Extension*, pp 19-20.
[26] Ibid, p 20.
[27] Cooke, *From popular enlightenment*, p 119.
[28] M. Schafe, *University Education in Dundee 1881-1981*, (Dundee: University of Dundee, 1982) p 11.
[29] Cooke, *From popular enlightenment*, pp 119-20.

where, for instance, in 1883, Professor William Knight of St Andrews, delivered a course of eight lectures on 'The Poets of the Victorian Era' (Matthew Arnold was included) for the Perth Ladies Educational Association.[30] Knight, the driving force behind the successful LLA scheme, was in as good a position as any of his contemporaries to assess the demand for higher education amongst women living in provincial towns. It is significant that in the same year that higher education institutions finally opened their doors to women he was continuing to respond to this demand through both the LLA and external lectures.

In less than forty years the landscape of higher education in Scotland had changed dramatically. Tentative steps towards providing extension lectures to a broad cross-section of society – men and women, working-class and middle-class – had been taken but the results had been mixed, and very little progress had been made in reaching the working class. However, when extension was targeted exclusively or principally at women the lecture courses were markedly more successful and represent an important early stage in the evolutionary process which led to the full admission of women to higher education. Important as the influence of individuals like the Cairds and SS Laurie in Edinburgh University (and TH Green from afar) was, it would be naïve to suggest that their ideological commitment to women's education had suddenly convinced the patriarchal universities and educational policymakers that the exclusion of half the nation's population from higher education was fundamentally unjust. Questions of principle undoubtedly exerted some influence but the opening of higher education to women was, arguably, far more closely linked to the reform of Scotland's schools. The universities began to exhibit a more progressive attitude towards women's education shortly after the Argyll Commission was set up to examine the school system, and the movement seemed to gain considerable impetus after the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act was passed. The Act – which introduced compulsory education until the age of thirteen - fundamentally changed the Scottish educational system forcing the universities to reconsider their role in the professional education of teachers. Subsequently, chairs of

[30] Advertising flier, Perth Ladies' Educational Association, January 1883, St Andrews University Archives, UY 470/2

education were founded in Edinburgh and St Andrews Universities, local examinations were instituted enabling women to gain a range of qualifications, and relations between the universities and women's educational associations were formalised.[31] The Act led to a very substantial growth in demand for schoolteachers, particularly for elementary schools, and many of these posts were filled by pupil-teachers for whom – working long hours, often in remote locations – attendance at college was impossible. For these young, unqualified teachers extension lectures had the potential to become an important alternative means of gaining professional training but, crucially, only if the courses could lead to the acquisition of recognised, university-endorsed qualifications. Significantly, the Educational Institute of Scotland which had been established to develop, and protect the interests of, the profession endorsed the idea of a national extension movement in the late 1880s.[32]

[31] Moore, Op. Cit., p 140.
[32] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p265.

Scottish Extension - an Optimistic Beginning

In 1886 the idea of extending university teaching in Scotland began to gain impetus both within and outwith the universities. In April, William Smart proposed to the General Council of Glasgow University 'That steps be taken to extend university teaching to the people by way of evening classes under recognition of the University and that this be made a representation to the University Court'.[1] Given that the Senate had opposed an alternative proposal for an extension scheme just seven years earlier, it is hardly surprising that Smart's proposal was acted on fairly cautiously. The Senate finally agreed to the implementation of an extension scheme (with important caveats which will be examined below) in March 1887 although the establishment of the extension board proposed by the Senate was delayed until February 1888.[2] William Knight and other professors in both St Andrews and Edinburgh Universities had demonstrated considerable commitment to extension but, in the initial absence of corporate university involvement, the baton of promoting university extension was enthusiastically taken up by Patrick Geddes and a coterie of men committed to educational reform which included J. Martin White, Robert Pullar and J.W. Munro, the influential secretary of the Perth extension society.

Patrick Geddes was an enigmatic figure who has been variously described as an 'academic deviant'[3] and a 'throw back to the universal intellect of the Enlightenment'.[4] His was certainly an unconventional and pioneering intellect: he achieved considerable recognition in both the natural and social sciences and is perhaps best known for his outstanding contribution to the embryonic disciplines of civics and town planning. His inter-disciplinary approach to learning was not generally mirrored in the universities of late-Victorian Scotland and it was this, combined with his strong belief in the social value

[1] University of Glasgow General Council Minutes, 28 April 1886, Glasgow University Archives DC 183/1/2.
[2] University of Glasgow Court Minutes, March 1887, GUA C1/1/2 and *The Glasgow Herald*, 2 February 1888.
[3] P. Abrams, *The Origins of British Sociology: 1843-1914: An Essay with Selected Papers*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968) pp 102-3.
[4] C. Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics 1707-1994*, 2nd edition, (London: Routledge, 1994) p 101.

of education, which led him to become involved in university extension.[5] Writing in 1888, Professor William Knight of St Andrews University commented:

> In any account of the steps taken to organize the movement [university extension] in Scotland, special mention must be made of Mr Patrick Geddes, to whose zeal and energy the formation of a large Provisional Committee of University Professors and others favourable to the movement is entirely due. He has advocated the scheme, and laboured at it with unwearied patience and disinterested ardour.[6]

In many respects Geddes was something of an academic outsider. Undoubtedly brilliant, he was employed as a zoology demonstrator by Edinburgh University but, largely because of his lack of conventional qualifications, he was unsuccessful in his application for appointment to the university's Chair of Botany.[7] He was also a trenchant critic of Scottish higher education questioning both its emphasis on preparation for examination at the expense of high-quality teaching and learning, and what he perceived as a bias against science as an academic discipline. He appears to have seen the involvement of academics in extension as a way of breathing new life into an overly conservative system. Barely masking his contempt for some aspects of university teaching he told the people of Dunfermline:

> Were the proposed Extension to consist of university instruction as it now exists, I for one would not be asking the manufacturers and merchants of Scotland and the provincial towns to provide themselves with it. Undoubtedly something very different is required.[8]

He also accused the Scottish universities of exhibiting a high degree of complacency which stemmed from an almost romantic fixation with the past glories of the Enlightenment when Scotland had been at the heart of European intellectual life. He contrasted their inertia with the dynamism of the modern, progressive universities of

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[5] P. Boardman, *the Worlds of Patrick Geddes; biologist; town planner, re-educator, peace- warrior,* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) p 124.

[6] William Knight, Pamphlet: *University of St Andrews Scheme for the Extension of University Teaching by means of Local Lectures and Classes in the counties of Fife, Forfar, Perth, Kinross, and Clackmannan,* (Dundee: John Leng & Co., 1888) p 11.

[7] See Meller, 'Geddes', DNB. Geddes' unsuccessful application was supported by outstanding references from prominent scientists including TH Huxley under whom he had trained in London. The chair was awarded to Baylcy Balfour, a candidate from a more traditional university background, who was, rather ironically, the son of Hutton Balfour who had pioneered extramural teaching in Glasgow.

[8] The Dunfermline Journal, 19 February 1887, newspaper cutting, The Papers of Sir Patrick Geddes, Strathclyde University Archives (SUA) T-GED 12/2/13.

Germany and France and suggested that Oxford and Cambridge, once moribund bastions of privilege, were now largely superior to their Scottish counterparts:

> There is no use in making mere jeremiads over our present low standing among the Universities of Europe, but it is worth while reflecting on the meanings of such a fact as this, that the majority of our professoriate (every man of us here) have got their education, at any rate their essential education, outside Scotland altogether. Even our best men are constantly beaten for such appointments as they may be fully ready for, until in despair they go away to Oxford and Cambridge, and begin all over again. And thus, despite all we hear of the cheapness of Scottish Universities, it is little wonder that so many Scotsmen are finding it cheaper and quicker not to study there at all.[9]

It is unclear when Geddes first became interested in extension but in his early recorded involvement he worked closely with his lifelong friend and financial supporter J. Martin White.[10] The Geddes papers contain a letter to White written by R.D. Roberts of the Cambridge Extension Syndicate in November 1886.[11] This was in reply to a letter White had written to Professor Stuart (who by this time had left higher education for a career in politics) seeking advice on the feasibility of initiating an extension movement, based on the English model, in Scotland. The letter contains a detailed outline of how extension lectures were organised in England. It suggests that courses should consist of twelve lectures, that lectures are followed by class discussions, and that printed syllabuses should be prepared for all the courses. It also outlines the detailed financial requirements of course provision, suggesting that five shillings has been found to be the most appropriate fee for attendance at a twelve lecture course. And it advises on the qualities required of effective extension lecturers:

> ... I would say that the one indispensable condition of success is that you should secure the right sort of man to lecture. Not only is a good academical position necessary but the Lecturer should be an attractive public speaker, and should have the art of putting his subjects in a clear and interesting way.[12]

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[9] Patrick Geddes, *Scottish University Needs and Aims. Closing Address at University College, Dundee,* (Perth: Cowan & Co., 1890).
[10] White, a wealthy industrialist, who later became a Liberal MP, founded a Chair of Botany at University College Dundee which Geddes held for twenty years.
[11] Letter from R.D. Roberts, Clare College, Cambridge to J. Martin White, 6 November 1886, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.
[12] Ibid.

Roberts also emphasises the vital importance of well-organised local committees in the establishment and management of courses. Clearly, Geddes and the organisers of the various extension schemes generally believed that the English model was appropriate for the administration of extension lectures in Scotland and it was in due course adopted by all the universities and local societies involved in the movement.

In March 1887 the first meeting of the General Committee for the Extension of University Teaching in Scotland was held in Edinburgh University. This meeting was part of an ambitious plan to inaugurate a national organisation to promote and manage extension. It was attended by several university professors with an interest in extension including: Caird from Glasgow, Laurie from Edinburgh, Knight from St Andrews, and Principal Peterson from University College Dundee. Henry Dyer, a governor of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College and F. Grant Ogilvie, Principal of Herriot-Watt College, were also present at the meeting as were Robert Pullar and J. Martin White, prominent businessmen with an interest in education, and several representatives of local extension societies. Aside from making spirited declarations about the value and aims of extension little took place at this meeting other than the election of an acting committee with Patrick Geddes as secretary and convenor.[13] Although its precise origins are unclear, a draft constitution for a national extension association was put before this meeting and, although it was never adopted, it clearly demonstrates the early emphasis placed on inter-university co-operation (see Appendix I). However, reflecting a counterbalancing apathy towards substantive joint action, the first formal meeting of the acting committee did not take place until February 1888. At the meeting Geddes reported on the work of the movement since their last meeting. The inaugural lecture course organised under the auspices of the acting committee had been held in Dunfermline in the spring of 1887 - twelve lectures on botany were delivered by Geddes and attracted an appreciative audience of around 70. In the winter of 1887 J. Arthur Thompson, a close associate of Geddes from the Granton Marine Station, delivered a course at Dunfermline (attendance, 90) on animal life; Dr HR Mill, a recent fellow of Granton, and Mr W Renton delivered

[13] Minute Book of the General Committee for the Extension of University Teaching in Scotland, 27 March 1887, SUA T-GED 12/1/22.

courses in Perth on physiography and English literature respectively (attendances, 230 and 145). At the time of the meeting in February 1888, courses with attendances of over 100 were running in Coupar Angus, Blairgowrie, Alyth and Perth; and a course in Dumfries was attracting around 70 students.[14] The mood of the movement in the small corner of central Scotland where it initially flourished was generally optimistic and upbeat reflecting, in some ways, the 'missionary zeal' of English extension. Most of the letters from secretaries of local societies and associations Geddes received at this time were confident about the movement's future - one such letter written to Geddes in January 1888 by Dan S. Calderwood, Secretary of the Blairgowrie University Extension Society, voiced the optimism typical of the movement in its early years. In his letter, Calderwood describes the enthusiastic response of the people of Blairgowrie to Renton's lectures on English literature and buoyantly predicts the continuing success of university extension lectures in the town (see Appendix II). Geddes' report to the acting committee meeting echoed this confident belief in the continuing growth of the embryonic movement.

Glasgow University's position on inter-university co-operation was rather ambiguous. At the acting committee meeting Edward Caird gave an account of the extension work which had been undertaken in Glasgow though, rather curiously, given the detailed account of extension activity in which Geddes was involved, none of the Glasgow details were recorded in the minute book. There are two possible explanations for this. The first possibility is that Professor Caird may not have gone into any great detail about the university's current activities and plans. Alternatively, Geddes may have felt that Glasgow's extension scheme was being organised without any acting committee involvement and that Glasgow was operating as an independent organisation. If either of these interpretations is correct, it would seem that from the outset an element of competition, or at least limited cooperation, characterised the relationship between Glasgow and the other universities in the extension movement. Caird went on to describe the role and constitution of the Board for the Extension of University Teaching which had

[14] Minute Book of the General Committee for the Extension of University Teaching in Scotland, 4 February 1888, SUA T-GED 12/1/22.

been established by the Senate of Glasgow University. In the minutes Geddes stated that this board had been recently formed.[15] In fact, the inaugural meeting of the Glasgow board – at which an executive committee was appointed to run the scheme – had taken place three days earlier on 1 February.[16] It is intriguing that this meeting took place on the eve of the first acting committee meeting. It may simply have been coincidental: on the other hand it may have been seen as important that Glasgow University should have taken a step, albeit an eleventh-hour one, which would enable it to assert its independence or assume a position at the forefront of the movement. The fact that the Herald's detailed report on Glasgow's planned expansion of extension teaching makes no mention whatever of the Acting Committee for the Extension of University Teaching in Scotland seems to support the conclusion that Glasgow did indeed prefer (and plan) to act independently. Wenley's account of the movement gives further weight to this – he describes the formation of 'an Inter-University Committee for Promoting Scottish University Extension' in 1887 and lists the involvement of Aberdeen, St Andrews and Edinburgh Universities and University College Dundee, but, despite Caird's membership of the acting committee, Glasgow is not mentioned.[17]

After discussing the organisation and significance of university boards those present at the meeting seemed to conclude that they had the potential to improve the organisation of extension and passed the resolution 'That the secretary be instructed to communicate with the Senates of the Universities of St Andrews, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, and of University College Dundee, and convey to them the opinion and earnest desire of the meeting that boards should be established for University Extension'.[18] It was also requested that Geddes should add a statement to these communications emphasising the great importance attached to the establishment of such boards by the secretaries of the local committees who were present.[19] This suggests that the local committees – even at this early stage - were dissatisfied with the universities' level of involvement in the promotion and organisation of extension courses, and that they believed that extension

[15] Minute Book of the General Committee, 4 February 1888.
[16] *Glasgow Herald*, 2 February 1888.
[17] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 22.
[18] Minute Book of the General Committee, 4 February 1888.
[19] Ibid.

boards would facilitate the establishment of a more formal and productive relationship between them and the individual universities. The only other substantive matter which was discussed at this meeting related to the administrative arrangements for employing extension lecturers and, in general, the meeting achieved very little. There is no mention in Geddes' papers of any further meetings of the Committee for the Extension of University Teaching in Scotland and after this abortive attempt to establish a national organisation to promote extension the universities generally worked independently.

Glasgow University's proposed extension scheme, which was approved by the Senate in March 1887, was not without its critics. The Senate and University Court had made it clear from the beginning that successful completion of extension courses would not in any way contribute to graduation and that any certificates awarded would be endorsed by the extension board rather than the university. A pamphlet outlining the scheme states that 'Those certificates will indicate that the holder has not only attained to a certain standard of knowledge, but has followed a continuous course of work under University superintendence'.[20] However, the implications of this policy were acknowledged by the authors of the pamphlet (it was written by Caird and other members of the executive committee of the board) –

> Under the Cambridge Scheme, a Vice-Chancellor's Certificate is granted to candidates who have secured six certificates, that is to say, after examination in subjects included in six consecutive courses of three months each, - these courses being always in the same group of studies, but not necessarily in the same subject of that group. This certificate exempts from attendance for one year at the University. The Board are unable, under the statutory arrangements of the University, to offer any such certificate entitling the holder to similar University privileges; but it may be pointed out that if the scheme be largely taken advantage of, there can be little doubt that the certificates would be of value to the holders in the way of a recommendation both to public services (Post Office, Inland Revenue etc.) and to employers in private business. It is also possible that new legislative enactments might enable the University at a future time to recognize these certificates for

[20] Pamphlet: *University of Glasgow. Extension of University Teaching by Local Lectures and Classes. An Account of the Scheme and of the Mode of Working It,* (Glasgow: Maclehose and Sons, 1888) GUA 43063, p 13.

various purposes. The Board, however, cannot in the meantime go further in this direction.[21]

This almost apologetic explanation of the limitations of the extension scheme clearly suggests that some members of the executive committee had the foresight to realise that the restricted value of the certificates – which were really only university certificates by association – might limit the appeal of the lecture courses. This point had certainly been forcibly made by several members of the General Council at its meetings in April and October 1887. Dr David McVail – a trenchant university reformer and one of the key figures in the extramural debate – had moved a fairly strong denouncement of the University Court's decision on the matter but after lengthy discussion the Council accepted a more diplomatic amendment moved by Professor McKendrick (soon to assume office on the extension board's executive committee) which stated:

> That whilst the Council approves of what has been done by the University Court with regard to the extension of University Teaching to the people, it expresses the opinion that steps be taken towards the granting of a certificate showing that such courses of lectures and relative examinations have been conducted by the Authority of the University; further, the Council refer the matter to the Business Committee for consideration and report.[22]

In fact, although this issue was raised on several occasions during the ensuing years, it was never effectively resolved: the detrimental effect that this devaluation of extension certificates had on the movement will be examined in some detail below.

From early in 1888 the executive committee of Glasgow's board, under the chairmanship of Edward Caird, began to organise courses in the west of Scotland, building on the foundations already laid by the Queen Margaret Guild. Professor John McKendrick and Archibald Craig (a Glasgow solicitor in whose city-centre offices most of the board's meetings were held) acted as its honorary secretaries and among its more diligent members were William Smart and Henry Dyer. At its first meeting the committee resolved to place advertisements in several newspapers to publicise the extension scheme and planned to have 500 prospectuses printed detailing the courses on offer, although a

[21] Pamphlet: *University of Glasgow, Extension of University Teaching*, pp 13-14.
[22] University of Glasgow General Council Minutes, 19 October 1887, GUA DC 183/1/2.

decision on this was actually delayed until the next meeting of the whole board in April.[23] Where possible, it also sent out representatives of the board to address local meetings at which adoption of the extension scheme was being considered. Often these 'missionaries' had homes in, or connections with, the area: Edward Caird, for instance, attended a public meeting in his native Greenock where he, McKendrick and Dyer successfully raised interest in the movement.[24] The first annual report submitted to the board in April 1889 echoed the early rose-tinted optimism of the movement:

> Applications for lectures were received from the following centres:- Paisley, Greenock, Stirling, Ayr, Hamilton and Pollokshields, in each of which place local committees were formed on lines more or less in accordance with those suggested in the Prospectus…The Board will be gratified to learn that at the whole of the local centres the scheme has been taken up with energy, and has met with very great success.[25]

The report lists the courses organised by the board (see Appendix III) and suggests a total attendance at the lectures of around 1300; it does not, however, specify the numbers of single lecture and whole course tickets sold. The figures also indicate a progressive diminution in the numbers of those on each course who attended the tutorials, submitted written work, and sat the examination. At Stirling, Mr McCormick's course on 'The English poets of the Nineteenth Century' had 225 students of whom 180 attended the tutorial class, 50 submitted essays, but only 15 took the exam. Mortimer Wheeler's English literature classes in Pollokshields – one of the most affluent areas of Victorian Glasgow – drew around 300 students although only 15, or one in twenty, undertook any written work. This clearly indicates that a significant proportion of those attending these courses may have seen them as recreational rather as a means of gaining worthwhile qualifications or access to further higher education. However, it is important to remember that a similar situation obtained in England where as Fieldhouse points out:

> The other problem that lecturers encountered was apathy. Students were prepared to sit and listen, but not necessarily to do more than this….It is therefore not surprising that

[23] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 22 February 1888, GUA 31220.
[24] Ibid, 20 November 1888. The minutes reported that a local committee had been appointed at this meeting.
[25] *Glasgow University Extension Board, Report by the Executive Committee to the Annual Meeting of the Board, to be held on Wednesday, 17th April, 1889*, SAUA, UY 470/2, p 1.

examinations, which were optional, were taken by a disappointingly small proportion of the students.[26]

The figures also reveal a significant difference between Pollokshields and Stirling where a more respectable one in five submitted essays. Apart from the obvious issue of distance from the university, a feeling of educational deprivation seems to have increased interest in accredited university-level education in several medium-sized towns with a growing sense of their civic status. Although Glasgow was first to arrange lecture courses in Stirling, Dr John McLaren, of the Stirling Educational Trust, responded with some enthusiasm to an initial approach made by Geddes in March 1887:

> I have duly received your bundle of Circulars and Prospectuses of the University Extension Scheme. I shall most willingly do anything in my power to promote an object for which I have often pleaded. I would fair hope that my colleagues in the Stirling Educational Trust will take the matter up, and make Stirling what, for forty years I have been exhorting the civic authorities to make it, a true Educational Centre for the Midland district of Scotland.[27]

This civic ambition demonstrated by Stirling, Perth and to a lesser extent Paisley mirrors the demand for access to higher education which led to the foundation of university colleges, and ultimately universities, in larger cities like Dundee and, in England, Sheffield, Manchester, Exeter and Nottingham.

Departing from the university's policy of leaving the organisation of extension lectures in the hands of local committees, the Glasgow board also directly arranged lectures in two socially disparate areas of the city. Two courses of lectures, on English literature and physiography were delivered in the Bridgeton Mechanics' Institute in the East End and three evening courses were organised within the university. This was a bold experiment and probably the only example of the board specifically targeting a working-class audience. In addition, the executive committee stated that any surplus from the West End lectures would be used to support the Bridgeton courses. With this in mind the cost of attending the courses in the two areas was set at markedly different levels – one course

[26] Roger Fieldhouse and Associates, *A History of Modern British Adult Education,* (Leicester: NIACE, 1996) p 40.
[27] Letter from the Rev. John McLaren DD, Manse of Larbert, Stirlingshire to Patrick Geddes, 14 March 1887, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.

could be attended in Bridgeton for 2s 6d and two for 4s while the cost of attending a single course on Gilmorehill was 10s 6d.[28] The Senate allowed the use of university rooms for cost of service charges (heat, light and cleaning) and the Mechanics' Institute also charged a nominal fee. The East End lectures attracted audiences of between 80 and 90 for literature and 46 for physiography and most students stayed on for the tutorials: the numbers who gained certificates were six and ten respectively. The Gilmorehill lectures were a spectacular failure – tellingly, the annual report avoids giving actual attendance figures and simply states that 'Two of these classes were fairly attended; but taking the Glasgow evening classes as a whole [including Bridgeton], the income from them has not been sufficient to meet the expenditure'.[29] If this was a social experiment, it was almost as misguided as it was bold. The East End courses were advertised in the Evening Times and handbills were distributed throughout the area, so the intended audience for the West End lectures were probably aware that they were being charged more than four times the cost of the Bridgeton classes and twice the typical cost of similar courses elsewhere.[30] The lectures in the university may simply have been unpopular; on the other hand it seems possible that the middle-class citizens of Glasgow realised that they were, in effect, being asked to subsidise working-class education and that, on this occasion, not enough of them were willing to do so. This had been a painful and rather humiliating lesson for the extension board and it made no further attempts to run extension courses within the city.[31]

At the meeting at which the plans for the ill-fated city lectures were finalised the board also demonstrated that it had territorial ambitions out with its immediate catchment area:

> A letter was read from Mr C. M. Aitken, Lecturer in Chemistry, [on the Glasgow list] enquiring how such places as Perth, Falkirk, Galashiels, Cupar, Brechin, and Dumfries are looked upon by the Board. The Secretaries were instructed to reply that no agreement

[28] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 16 October 1888 and 5 November 1888. It seems likely that Smart suggested the Bridgeton lectures – he was certainly given the responsibility of securing the services of Wheeler for the literature classes. He also delivered one of the West End courses on the subject of 'Political Economy'; the other courses were 'Planets, Comets and Meteorites' (Professor Grant) and 'The Principles and Structures of Vertebrate Animals' (Professor Cleland).
[29] *Glasgow University Extension Board, Report* (1889) p 2.
[30] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 5 November 1888.
[31] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 33.

> has yet been come to between the various Extension Boards as to Districts and that in the meantime there is nothing to prevent Mr Aitken from stirring up local interest in these places in the Scheme of the Board.[32]

This policy was hardly conducive to a harmonious relationship between university boards – the Glasgow board must have known that Patrick Geddes had organised courses in Perth and Dumfries – and further eroded the possibility of all the interested bodies working together in a national extension movement. In an attempt to maintain at least a semblance of unity a meeting was called between representatives of the St Andrews, Edinburgh and Glasgow boards in Edinburgh on 1 December 1888. The meeting, at which Professor McKendrick was Glasgow's sole representative, tried to establish some common ground for the administration of lecture courses across Scotland. It outlined the qualifications required of lecturers and in a rather clumsy attempt to resolve the territorial issue stated that:

> ... each Local Committee shall be affiliated for Examination purposes to the area belonging to the area in which it is situated (the areas to be afterwards defined); but in the case in which a Lecturer is brought from a sister University, the University to which the Lecturer belongs shall receive from that to which the centre is affiliated a sum not exceeding £5.[33]

What this meant was that if the local committee of, for instance, Perth, wanted to employ a lecturer from the Glasgow list it would pay the course fee of £32 to the St Andrews association which, after paying the lecturer £25, would then have to pay up to £5 to Glasgow. Throughout its short history Scottish extension operated within very severe financial constraints and rather than promoting a free interchange of talented, popular lecturers this policy had the opposite, unintended effect of exacerbating rivalry – the university boards were simultaneously keen to lend lecturers, since they received £5 towards their expenses, but reluctant to borrow lecturers for whom they had to pay £5.

The Glasgow board's second session (1889-90) was its most ambitious. The year had started badly: not only had the city lectures failed but the accounts for the first session had shown a deficit of £148 12s 6d which the board put down to the initial costs of creating

[32] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 5 November 1888.
[33] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 7 December, 1888.

interest in and launching the scheme. This deficit was cleared 'by the liberality of thirty-four ladies and gentlemen interested in the movement' after the annual meeting of the whole board in April 1889.[34] In the second session, as a result of the board's sustained campaign to propagate the movement, the number of centres was increased from six to ten and a total of fifteen lecture courses were delivered (see Appendix IV). However, despite this organisational expansion of the scheme total student numbers dropped to an aggregate figure of between 1100 and 1200 and attendances at all of the centres which had held classes the year before fell. At Paisley, for instance, the combined audience for McCormick's evening and afternoon classes on Scottish literature had been 190 – in the new session Baldwin Brown's lectures on 'Art and the Arts' (afternoon) and 'The Decorative Arts' (evening) drew a combined audience of only 50 and, even if the Paisley committee had charged as much as 10s for a class ticket, the money taken would have fallen short of the board's £48 fee for the two classes by around £23.[35] At a very early stage in its existence the Paisley centre had thus learned the lesson that it was not enough to simply provide university-level lectures and expect a grateful audience, whatever the subject. One of the problems which led to the demise of several extension centres in England was their inability to provide subject continuity and this became critical in Scotland as, over time, many extension centres found it increasingly difficult to find competent lecturers for the courses they wanted to run. Clearly, the members of the board were aware of the crucial importance (and difficulty) of providing lecturers with the ability to attract students. Indeed, John McKendrick, Regius Professor of Physiology in the university, stepped into the breach in the second session; his three courses were attended by 340, more than a quarter of the total student body. McKendrick, who had taught the formidable Sophia Jex-Blake in Edinburgh, was a skilful and accomplished lecturer who pioneered practical experimentation in place of the observation of demonstrators in his university classes. His Combe lectures attracted audiences of a thousand; as Fullerian Professor of the Royal Institution, he gave numerous public

[34] *Glasgow University Extension Board, Report by the Executive Committee to the Annual Meeting of the Board, 6th June 1890*, p 4.

[35] The decision on what was charged for lecture courses was left to the local committees. However, Wenley's suggestion (p15) that some centres charged as much as 21s and 'successfully' ran courses should be treated with some caution. Given that the Scottish organisers emulated the English system in almost every respect it seems likely that the average cost of a class ticket for twelve lectures was around 5s.

lectures – including Christmas lectures to children – and was, according to his biographer, 'one of the best popular lecturers of his time'.[36] This was exactly the calibre of lecturer that extension needed but, given the demands of his university teaching and his role as joint-secretary of the board, it is hardly surprising that McKendrick was unable to maintain this level of personal commitment to the movement.[37]

Local committees where numbers had fallen sharply were experiencing considerable financial difficulty. In February 1890 the Hamilton committee wrote to the board asking for Dr Colville's courses to be discontinued, or for an acceptable compromise.[38] A second letter explained that several Hamilton guarantors, who would have been called upon to meet the shortfall, had withdrawn their support suggesting that 'the class for whom the lectures were intended had not availed themselves of them, and that those who did attend were in a position to pay for themselves without any guarantee'.[39] The board replied that in fairness to Dr Colville and his students the courses could not be cancelled, but they did reduce the board's fee from £48 to £40.[40] There is no indication of how this impasse was resolved but it marked the end of university extension in Hamilton. The executive committee was not, in any sense, blind to the difficulties it faced in promoting extension:

> From the experience which they have already gained, the Committee cannot but feel that in various districts the financial difficulty is not inconsiderable. On the one hand, in order to popularize courses, local Committees are obliged to fix fees at a low figure; while, on the other hand, the Board find it practically impossible to charge less than their present figure. The Committee would therefore earnestly appeal to the wealthier members of the community within the respective districts to aid local Associations with an annual subscription guaranteed for a number of years in case of deficit In this way they would hope that , where there is a population of sufficient number, the movement will not be in danger of being precipitately given up or even allowed to lapse for a time, and will thus

[36] Margaret H. Gladden, 'McKendrick, John Gray (1841–1926)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38996, accessed 23 Nov. 2006]
[37] McKendrick did not lecture in the 1890-91 session but, in response to rapidly falling numbers, he once again offered his services as a lecturer in the following year. By this time Wenley had taken over as secretary of the board.
[38] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 18 February, 1890. Thirty-one students attended these courses and class tickets only raised £9 9s 6d.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.

> have a fair chance of ultimately becoming entirely self-supporting. The Committee have made considerable additions to the number of Lecturers, and they are at present in course of revising the whole list, both as regards names and subjects, so as to place within the reach of local Committees the best ability and widest range of subjects that the University can command.[41]

Both directly and more subtly, these two paragraphs address all the problems faced by the board – with the exception of the lack of university endorsement of extension certificates which would have meant criticising the university in a published report. Arguably, this suggests that these were not misguided idealists dedicated to a hopeless cause. Idealists they may have been, but they were also pragmatic and it seems incredible, indeed unlikely, that they would have pursued the cause of extension in the face of the overwhelming climate of apathy which has been cited as the principal cause of the failure of extension in Scotland.

The extension movement failed to take hold in Aberdeen, and Edinburgh University's attempts to establish an extension scheme within its own catchment area met with little success. The university established a Lecture-Extension Association in May 1888 with Geddes and HB Baildon as its honorary secretaries - in its inaugural year the association organised nine extension courses with an aggregate attendance of 1075.[42] The first annual report tried to make the best of what even the enthusiastic Geddes must have seen as an unpromising start:

> The Committee of Management in submitting this first Annual Report, think they may fairly congratulate the Association having made during the past year a sound and satisfactory, if not a surprising or brilliant, beginning to its operations. They have, indeed, thought it better to "hasten slowly," and to refrain from forcing the movement along at a pace that could not be maintained, and especially to avoid undertaking anything they were not prepared to carry through effectually.[43]

What the report does not highlight is that seven of these courses were in centres that were associated with St Andrews University. At this stage most of these were centres which

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[41] *Glasgow University Extension Board, Report by the Executive Committee, 6th June 1890*, p 4.
[42] Edinburgh University Lecture-Extension Association, First Annual Report, April 1889, SUA T-GED 12/2/18 pp 3-4.
[43] Ibid.

had first established links with Geddes' inter-university committee, and Geddes was joint honorary secretary of the Edinburgh association, so the distinction was probably less clear than it now seems. Of the two lecture courses within its own sphere of influence, one took place in Stirling and the other in the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution: the examination paper for this course gives an intriguing insight into the level of work required of extension students (see Appendix V).

Outwith central Scotland, the provincial towns within Edinburgh's own area which might have been expected to show some interest in extension were all in the textile-manufacturing region of the Borders. Despite the best efforts of Geddes to proselytise the movement in the area around Selkirk, Hawick and Galashiels, it proved almost impossible to generate any lasting interest. At a meeting in Galashiels, addressed by Perth's MP, CS Parker, and JW Munro, its extension secretary, the town's Reverend Matheson voiced serious misgivings about the impact of extension lectures:

> The expense of the scheme would be considerable, and it must fall upon those who were bearing the greater part of the burden of the science and technical classes. Were they likely to bear this new burden? The courses of lectures proposed for Perth would cost about £150, and in Galashiels they could not hope for as large a number of students as at Perth, with about double the population, and a large surrounding population likely to furnish students. Besides, the scheme practically asked the community to form Universities without any assistance from the national endowment for university purposes. For these and other reasons he thought it would be unwise to go into the system until technical teaching had been placed on a sounder and broader basis in the town.[44]

Mr James Brown added that 'the Manufacturers were carrying on science teaching in the class for chemistry, as well as technical instruction, and that students devoted four nights a week to these studies'.[45] Mr Somerville voiced slightly less utilitarian objections to extension:

> The time of our young people is fully taken up with technical classes, debating societies, the choral union, young men's guilds, girls' friendly societies, and such like; and if the proposed University classes were introduced amongst us, they could only succeed by

[44] *The Scottish Border Record*, ND, Book of Newspaper Cuttings on University Education Scheme, SUA T-GED 12/2/13.
[45] Ibid.

> displacing or weakening some of our present educative institutions. Besides, these University classes would be costly, and just now we could lay out any money we have to spare to better advantage'.[46]

There was clearly some opposition to the introduction of extension lectures to the Borders towns: local employers were already supporting technical education – a textiles college had been founded in Galashiels in 1883 - and it was felt that extension would simply represent a costly distraction from this.[47] It is significant that a local minister chose to oppose the scheme so strongly whereas in the towns where it was taken up ministers were often in the vanguard of the movement. Arguably, he was simply reflecting the opinions of a local middle class closely associated with textile manufacturing that considered scientific and technical training more worthwhile than liberal education.

In the autumn of 1889 a university gathering was held in Edinburgh 'To draw public attention to the means provided in the University Extension Scheme for improving the knowledge and elevating the tastes of the people'.[48] The educational content of the gathering was series of single lectures – intended to provide an introduction to extension teaching - on a wide range of subjects but, although there was a reasonable attendance at some of the lectures, the gathering was a financial disaster and did very little to enhance interest in extension in the Edinburgh area.[49] In its 1889-90 session the association continued to supply lecturers to centres linked to other universities (including Professor Baldwin Brown to Paisley), and Stirling, its single active provincial centre, used McCormick from the Glasgow list. It organised only one lecture course within its own area – to the Edinburgh Trades Council, and understandably played up the significance of this in its second annual report:

> The formation of Lecture Committee by the Edinburgh Trades' Council is an event of good augury, and your Committee most cordially wish the Council success in what seems to be a most promising attempt to interest the artisan classes in the movement. For there is

[46] R. Somerville, Galashiels, 27 December 1887, Letters to the Editor, 'The University Extension Movement', a Borders newspaper, Newspaper Cuttings, SUA T-GED 12/2/13.
[47] In the 20th century this college became the Scottish College of Textiles and subsequently amalgamated with Herriot-Watt University.
[48] Pamphlet: *Edinburgh University Gathering, autumn 1889*, SUA T-GED 12/2/19.
[49] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 32.

> nothing that would so much ensure its success as a great increase in the support it has as yet received from this very quarter. [50]

The latter point was undoubtedly true but the association's optimism proved to be unfounded and its inflence continued to decline until, after supplying only two lecturers to Glasgow and St Andrews in the 1891-92 session, it suspended its operations.[51]

St Andrews, Scotland's smallest university, asserted from the outset that extension should be a co-operative national venture; a report to its senate meeting of 12 February 1887 proposed 'That the scheme, if proceeded with, should be organised and managed by a central board representative of the four Universities'.[52] Indeed it was St Andrews which first suggested the inter-university meeting held in Edinburgh to consider this.[53] When Glasgow finally signalled its intention to act independently St Andrews was compelled to follow suit and set up its own Lecture-Extension Association, with Geddes and Knight as its secretaries, in February 1888.[54] The association's pamphlet which introduced the scheme highlights three distinct benefits of extension. Firstly, it restates the familiar argument that it would reach 'a stratum of the population which our existing Universities do not and cannot reach'.[55] Expanding on this, it gives a distinctly élitist description of what the lecture courses could offer:

> Almost every town of importance in Scotland already has its Literary Institute, or Scientific Society, or Naturalists' Club, at which lectures are delivered annually - single addresses on miscellaneous subjects. It is not proposed that these should necessarily, be given up, or merged in the University Extension Scheme. But it will be admitted that however interesting and suggestive such lectures may be, their effect is slight and ephemeral. A systematic course of not fewer than twelve lectures on a single subject, by an expert who has mastered it, who is a clear expositor and a trained speaker,

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[50] Edinburgh University Lecture-Extension Association, Second Annual Report, April 1890, SUA T-GED 12/2/18, p 4.
[51] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 30.
[52] University of St Andrews Senatus Minutes, 12 February 1887, SAUA UY 452/21.
[53] Ibid.
[54] W. Knight, *University of St Andrews Scheme for the Extension of University Teaching by means of Local Lectures and Classes in the Counties of Fife, Forfar, Perth, Kinross, and Clackmannan,* (Dundee: John Leng & Co., 1888), SUA T-GED 12/2/23, p 4.
[55] Ibid, p 7.

> and who carries with him a University "License to Teach," must be every way superior in educational value to the most brilliant discourse by an ordinary lecturer.[56]

Secondly, it suggests that extension would create an important opportunity for 'the more distinguished [recent] Graduates of the Universities to do a work which the ordinary Professors cannot possibly overtake'.[57] Given the professorial style of teaching which was still prevalent in Scottish higher education at this time, this rather contradicts the above assurance that extension lecturers would be experienced and expert teachers.[58] Thirdly, it asserts that by taking university-level education to the people extension would raise interest in higher education and 'stir up many a parent to think of sending his (sic) son or sons to College'.[59] St Andrews, like Glasgow, added an important caveat: that rigorous and demanding as extension courses would be, they could be no substitute for a 'real' university education. The overbearing influence of a university senate struggling to increase student numbers can clearly be detected in the statement that:

> ... no course of University Extension Lectures, however thorough, or brilliant, or original - even though it should happen to contain the most noteworthy scientific discovery of the year, the most felicitous criticism, or even a wholly new philosophy – could possibly take the place of the *academic training that is given at a University seat.*[60]

Like Glasgow, St Andrews was thus indicating that extension certificates would not carry the true 'university stamp' and would therefore have limited educational currency.

Although it had been careful to qualify the value of extension teaching, the extent to which St Andrews University involved itself in the movement was unparalleled in Scotland. Principal Donaldson and most of the university's professors offered their services as lecturers or examiners, and the association benefited from the administrative experience and skills of Knight (who had established the successful LLA scheme), and the enthusiasm and contacts of Geddes. In its first year it organised a total of 21 courses in 15 centres spread across Fife, Forfar, Perth, Kinross and Clackmannan. Its first annual report proclaimed that the results of the lectures had been 'beyond all expectation'; that

[56] *Scheme for the Extension of University Teaching*, p 8.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Lectures delivered to large classes were still the norm. Tutorial classes - an important part of teaching in Oxford and Cambridge – were being introduced, but were still uncommon.
[59] *Scheme for the Extension of University Teaching*, p 9.
[60] Ibid.

over 1900 people had formally enrolled as students; and that interest in extension was growing steadily.[61] Dr HR Mill's physiography course in Cupar Fife was the most popular single course, attracting 184 students, and even the tiny, picturesque village of Alyth drew an audience of 80 to extension lectures in chemistry. However, the most significant achievement of the extension movement in central Scotland during this year was the organisation of six courses in Perth, with a total attendance of 520.[62] The Perth University Education Society assumed such importance within the St Andrews area that its history and that of the association are virtually inseparable. As, one by one, the other centres closed down the association's influence declined steadily until all that was left was the Perth society. Extension in Perth ultimately failed but for a time it represented a 'beacon of promise' for the Scottish movement. What were the specific circumstances in, and characteristics of Perth that gave the town this unique place in the history of extension? This question merits extended and detailed consideration.

[61] University of St. Andrews University Lecture-Extension Association, First Annual Report, 1889, 5-7, SUA T-GED 12/2/23, pp 5-7.
[62] Ibid, p5. This figure exceeds Perth University Education Society's total of 409 but includes a course on Botany delivered by Geddes which did not begin until after the Perth Society's first annual report.

University Extension in Perth - a Case Study

A formal scheme for the extension of university teaching in Perth was first proposed by Patrick Geddes early in 1887. Having been brought up close to Perth and educated at its academy Geddes had fairly strong links with the town and sought to make good use of these links to initiate what was, in the Scottish context, a fairly bold educational experiment:

> About last New Year some of us in Perth were waited upon by Mr. Geddes of Edinburgh University, who is pretty well known in Perth; and the question was raised whether Perth and other Scottish towns could not adopt in connection with the Scottish Universities some such system of education for their adult population as had been found to be so much in demand in England.[1]

With an eye to the foundation of civic colleges in England and a university college in Dundee, Geddes saw the extension scheme as the first stage of an ambitious plan to establish a federal college based in Perth. His papers contain a sketch entitled 'Perth as Metropolitan University' which shows the town as the planned hub of a network connected to five other unidentified towns in central Scotland.[2] Plans to establish a local college were not new to Perth, a town whose civic ambition had been growing steadily throughout the nineteenth century. In 1847, for instance, a fairly grandiose proposal had been made to establish an institution – with its own observatory, library and museum – to commemorate the late Professor Adam Anderson, former headmaster of Perth Academy and Professor of Natural Philosophy at St Andrews. At the meeting held to plan the establishment of the Anderson Institution several speakers referred to the growing importance of Perth and argued that the town's status would be greatly enhanced by the acquisition of a college of higher learning.[3] This educational ambition was undoubtedly underpinned by an awareness that on two occasions in its history – in 1426 and 1697 - Perth had almost become the new seat of an uprooted St Andrews University.[4]

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[1] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting, 4th October, 1887,* SAUA UY 470/2, p 2.
[2] 'Perth as Metropolitan University', Sketched on a letter from Professor William Knight, 7 March 1887, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.
[3] Report of the Speeches delivered at the formation of the Perth Anderson Institution (1847), PKCA.
[4] R.G Cant, 'Scottish Paper Universities, A Lost Chapter in Academic History' in *The Scots Magazine*, vol. XLIII, no. 6, Sept 1945, pp 415-23.

The speeches delivered at the meeting offer an intriguing insight into the civic pride of some of the increasingly influential middle-class citizens of Perth – a civic pride which was arguably typical of similar, medium-sized provincial towns across Scotland and England. Epitomising this, the Rev. Dr Young argued that:

> There is talent here where we sit, and there is talent there where you sit, and there is talent not here at all, much of it not the worse for the wear, but greatly the worse for the rust, which now must, without delay, be all rubbed away. Our friend from Dundee (the Rev. Mr Gilfillan) has reminded us that we are the Yorkshire of Scotland; then this far - famed Fair City of ours is the York of Scotland; we are the metropolis; the county is ours; its talent is ours; its science, and its literature, and its enterprise are ours; and if we but get the use of our own, we may be more than well contented. … Pride is very often not a good, but a bad thing. There is, however, such a thing as decent pride, or virtuous pride, or an honourable sense of personal or social degradation. Now, my Lord I do think that this last has something to do with the case in hand. Is it not a disgrace to Perth to have so long been without the benefit we are met this evening to supply?[5]

Despite the confident rhetoric which heralded it foundation, the Anderson Institution proved to be a spectacular failure: its organisers seemed to be unaware that in addition to serving as a memorial to Professor Anderson the institution had to effectively plan its educational provision to meet the needs of the town. Its programme for its first session, lasting from March to September 1847, was hardly inspiring. The highlight was a course of six lectures on health education by Mr Robert Cuthbertson of Dunfermline; several classes simply involved the reading of a paper and the series concluded with a lecture on 'The Properties of the Atmosphere'. Rather ominously the institution's first annual report gives no attendance figures but a declining attendance is suggested by the very early change of venue, from the City Hall to Mill Street Chapel.[6] Even at this early stage, the report was detailing financial difficulties and suggesting methods of cutting some costs and sharing others with the Watt Institution in Dundee. The institution was able to arrange a few more substantial lectures in 1848: as part of his British lecturing tour Ralph Waldo Emerson gave two lectures on 'Eloquence' and 'The Humanity of Science'; two lecturers gave courses of five and six lectures on scientific subjects; and Dr J.W. Hudson

[5] Report of the Speeches delivered at the formation of the Perth Anderson Institution (1847), PKCA, pp 14-15.
[6] First Annual Report of the Directors of the Perth Anderson Institution, (1847), PKCA, p 5.

of the Glasgow Athenaeum, an early historian of adult education, enlightened the citizens of Perth with two lectures on 'Literature should be cultivated by the Labouring Classes' and 'The Domestic Manners of England in the 14th, 15th and 16th Centuries.'[7] There are no subsequent annual reports and there is no evidence that the institution continued its activities after 1848. Its directors completely underestimated the importance of planning and arranging interesting and well-delivered lectures which might have prevented the early collapse of their educational initiative.

After the demise of the Anderson Institution the educational needs of Perth continued to be served by a Mechanics' Library, founded in 1823 (which by 1870 held 3034 volumes on a wide range of subjects),[8] and by more specialised bodies like the Perth Ladies Educational Association and the Perthshire Society of Natural Science founded in 1867 by Dr F. Buchanan White.[9] Perth thus typified the provincial town, described in the St Andrews University outline of its extension scheme, which had developed a fair level of educational provision for adults and enjoyed some access to worthwhile but generally unsystematic university-level lectures.[10] Geddes' proposal for the establishment of an extension scheme was therefore greeted with considerable enthusiasm. A large public meeting was held on 12 March 1887 and, after Geddes and Principal Peterson of UCD spoke on the merits of extension, an executive committee was appointed to initiate the scheme with Robert Pullar and J.W. Munro acting as president and secretary respectively. Pullar, a prominent Liberal whose rapidly-expanding dyeing and dry cleaning business had become one of Perth's largest employers, had a long record of offering philanthropic support to various charitable causes promoting religion, education and temperance,[11] and J.W. Munro, an assistant inspector of schools, proved to be a highly able and committed secretary whose contribution to the extension movement was remarkable. Between March and October 1887 the executive committee, whose membership included Buchanan White and representatives of the Ladies Educational Association, worked

[7] First Annual Report of the Directors of the Perth Anderson Institution, (1847), PKCA, p 5.
[8] Perth Mechanics' Library Catalogue (1870), PKCA, MS 47 3/1.
[9] M. A. Taylor, 'Francis Buchanan White, 1842–1894, and Scottish botany', *Scottish Naturalist*, 98 (1986), pp 157–73.
[10] *Scheme for the Extension of University Teaching*, p 8.
[11] A.W. Harding, *Pullars of Perth*, (Perth: Perth and Kinross District Libraries, 1991) p 155.

carefully on the organisation of the scheme: its report was delivered by Munro at the inaugural meeting of Perth University Education Society on Tuesday 4 October.[12] The report demonstrated that the committee had given careful and realistic consideration to the question of demand for extension lectures:

> ... we were in almost in total ignorance of how great demand there might be for this form of education. We had to fall back on two ideas; first, if small English towns, such as Horsham in Sussex, with 8000 inhabitants, Sudbury with 6000, and miners' villages in Northumberland, found themselves able to carry on courses of lectures – and in England the expenses are about 50 per cent. greater than with us – surely Perth, with 30,000 inhabitants, need not be behind, especially when we remember, as Scotsmen seldom forget, that the Scots are a race distinguished above all others for their thirst after education (Cheers). And our second comforting idea was, that though there might not at first be an overwhelming demand, still it is well known that supply frequently creates demand ... and if, as is not probable, however, the population of Perth should be slow to come forward, the taste of the good things we were to provide, and their visible salutary effect upon all who partake of them, would cause others to desire a share. [13]

To broaden the appeal of the lectures, the committee planned to run 'two parallel lines of work' – one literary and one scientific – in each of its sessions. In the two consecutive sessions of its first year, its literary courses were on English Literature and Greek Life and Thought; its scientific courses were on Physiography and Political Economy. The committee believed that, even at this early stage of the society's existence, distinct preferences were developing amongst its potential students for one or the other of the two educational strands on offer. [14] Critically, it also acknowledged that the future of extension in Perth depended on systematic organisation of lectures to ensure that there would be a degree of continuity between courses delivered in successive sessions:

> ... we must have our courses so arranged that next session will connect itself naturally and educationally with this one, the third with the second, and so on, as long as may be found desirable...By this means a student at the end of three sessions, say in science, be

[12] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting, 4th October 1887*, SAUA UY 470/2.
[13] Ibid, p 3.
[14] Ibid, pp 3-4.

certified as having had a training in his subject at least equal to what is usually got at our universities.[15]

The Perth society, which at this time had no formal link with any university, was optimistic about the future involvement of the universities and, in particular, about university endorsement and accreditation of its extension courses. It pointed out that in England certain extension science certificates were recognised by the Science and Art Department at South Kensington as equivalent to its own certificate which qualified its holders to teach science in schools.[16] As a school inspector Munro was in an excellent position to assess the educational needs of the teaching profession and argued that the extension scheme had the potential to become an important source of training for the country's pupil-teachers. Again pointing to significant developments in England he informed the meeting that:

> At a conference held in March, in the Senate House of Cambridge, of delegates from the various extension centres, the question of recognition of University Extension Certificates by the Education department was being discussed, and one of the delegates, Mr. Brewer, one of H.M. Inspectors of schools in Blackburn, Secretary to the local committee, mentioned that at least one-third of the members of the Blackburn University Extension Society, numbering 130, are elementary teachers, and no fewer than 80 pupil teachers were attending the lectures.[17]

The Educational Institute of Scotland had already given its endorsement to extension which it saw as a way of improving the 'connection' between the universities and the teaching profession.[18] At its 1887 congress in Edinburgh, Principal Peterson of UCD spoke at length on the nature of the proposed scheme and expounded the potential benefits to teachers of lectures held outside normal university hours. Responding to Peterson's address Mrs Burton commented that:

> From a School Board point of view it was a very interesting matter, because they found that a number of young men who were teachers wished to improve themselves in the University. How could they do so if they were teaching in schools through the day? They asked to get away for an hour or two to go to the University, and the School Board was

[15] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting*, pp 6-7.
[16] Ibid, p 6.
[17] Ibid.
[18] A. J. Belford, *Centenary Handbook of the Educational Institute of Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Educational Institute of Scotland, 1946), pp 193-4.

> reluctant to refuse permission, but they had to attend to the interests of the scholars, and everyone knew how it disorganized a school if the teacher was away, and therefore as a rule they were obliged to refuse this to those young people…The movement which has been described might be a great advantage to their [the school boards'] teachers and others.[19]

Clearly the teaching profession was aware of the possible value of university extension as a means of enabling busy teachers to acquire relevant qualifications. At the Perth meeting Munro stated that the society wanted its students to represent a broad cross-section of society but the single occupational group mentioned as a potential source of extension students was teachers, and as an exemplar he mentioned one pupil-teacher from a small rural school six miles outside Perth 'who is coming to study alongside her teacher'[20]

Perth's proposed prices for the courses also show that they wanted to attract students from all sections of the town's society. The committee set the price of a class ticket for attendance at a course of twelve lectures and tutorials at five shillings, and apprentices and young people (a category which would have included pupil-teachers) would pay half that amount. They explicitly acknowledged that setting the price at these levels would not cover the costs of providing the lectures and made a direct appeal to the philanthropic instincts of wealthier middle-class students:

> … any one can be a member of this Society with its ambitious title, and have a share in its deliberations, and it is quite possible might get appointed its president or even its secretary (laughter), for a subscription of ten shillings or more. The fact was, we felt that in charging five shillings per course from artisans and well-to-do people alike we were not acting fairly, seeing that five shillings, everyone must admit, is very much below the value of the education provided; and our hope was that many of the people of Perth who are able to pay more than five shillings per course would put their extra payments in the Treasurers hands in the shape of members' subscriptions.[21]

From the outset the society was also supported by 'liberal donations' from various sources including Pullar, although the value of his first contribution was not publicised. Some emphasis was however placed on the significance on the very early contribution of

[19] Newspaper Cutting, *The Dundee Advertiser*, ND, SUA T-GED 12/2/13.
[20] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting*, p 6.
[21] Ibid, p 5.

£20 made by the local Co-operative Society, which, it was suggested, gave a clear indication of significant interest in extension amongst the town's working class. In fact the Co-operative Society was so keen to arrange extension lectures for its members that, had provision not been organised in Scotland, it was ready to try and to arrange courses through one of the English universities.[22] In England several Co-operative Societies had successfully nurtured working-class interest in extension; as Hudson Shaw observed: 'Nearly all quite successful Working Class Centres, in my experience, have been those financially supported, and entirely organized, by Co-operative Societies and similar institutions, freely open to their own members, paid for out of common funds'.[23] The words 'entirely organized' are particularly significant: this meant that working-class centres were free to select the subjects of their extension lectures, and often showed a preference for lectures, like Hudson Shaw's, that dealt with modern periods of history from an economic and social perspective, and thus contributed to a greater understanding of contemporary issues.[24] The Perth society's lectures on Political Economy probably corresponded with the Co-operative Society's educational agenda in the first year, but it seems likely that its continued support of the extension scheme would have been contingent on the selection of appropriate subjects in subsequent years. Departing from his level-headed and careful assessment of the extension movement's prospects and the problems it might face, Munro (probably with the wallets of his aspirational middle-class audience in mind) ended his address by describing an optimistic vision of the future of higher education in Perth:

> Time forbids my looking forward further; but when one sees splendid provincial colleges springing up in the English towns entirely out of beginnings like ours…He is tempted to dream of the time when there will be a University College in Perth, with its handsome buildings, completing, it may be the line of Tay Street, with its library, its professors, and its students, giving a new tone to the life of the Fair city, and a renown to its inhabitants such as they never had before.[25]

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[22] Newspaper Cutting, Letter to the Editor of a Borders newspaper from J.W. Munro, 16th December, 1887, SUA T-GED 12/2/13.
[23] W. Hudson Shaw 'University Extension Movement', fo.3, cited in Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 81.
[24] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, pp 41, 73-4.
[25] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting*, p 7.

The four extension courses delivered in Perth's first year were attended by a total of 610 ticket holders and 'a large number of less regular auditors'.[26] Certificates were awarded to 108 students who passed class examinations and Mr Brown who examined McLaren's class on Greek Life and Thought commented that:

> As the standard I had before me in examining the papers was a fairly high one, the marks gained bear evidence of a very considerable amount of really sound and thorough work. ... The work was quite up to the average of University work - as it was a labour of love, in some respects it was superior to it. The general level of the work was certainly higher than anything we can attain to in our large and heterogeneous University classes.[27]

The proportion of Perth students who presented themselves for the class examinations in the first year (18%) was fairly impressive - although it declined slightly in subsequent years - and significantly higher than the corresponding figures for extension courses in other Scottish centres. This could be explained by the novelty of extension but the first courses organised by the Glasgow board had very few students coming forward to take the examination: the highest figure was just under 7% for McCormick's literature class in Stirling. The comparatively high Perth figures suggest that not only were the inaugural lectures of a high quality but that many of the students attending them were clearly committed to acquiring qualifications.

On 10 April 1888, to celebrate the end of what it regarded as a successful and promising year, the society held a conversazione attended by some 500 men and women with an interest in the movement. Reflecting the mood of the evening, Robert Pullar, the society's president, suggested that:

> ...they had arrived at a very important period in the history of that movement which had caused so much interest not only in Perth but over the whole country. The founders of the Society, who were anxious to establish a branch in Perth, did so with fear and trembling, but they had now seen the fruits of their labours, and were glad to see that it had proved such a success -- in fact, it was only beginning in Perth.[28]

What had been happening in Perth had certainly created some interest in St Andrews University. Principal Donaldson, who had accepted an invitation to speak at the

[26] *The Perthshire Advertiser*, 11 April 1888.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.

conversazione, spoke warmly of the historical links between Perth and St Andrews and looked forward to the university playing an increasingly influential role in Perth's extension project.[29] St Andrews, which had recently launched its own Lecture-Extension Association, must have been acutely aware that three of Perth's first lecturers were from other universities and the fourth was independent.[30] Given the early promise of extension in the town, St Andrews was keen to stake its territorial claim on Perth which would enable it to influence the choice of lecturers. After Donaldson's speech, Mill and McLaren both praised the considerable efforts of their students and urged them to keep 'up a union with each other for mutual improvement'.[31] The proceedings concluded with the presentation of prizes to the three most successful students of the Political Economy and Greek Life and Thought classes: four of these were women and two were already holders of the LLA.[32] Arguably, the Perth conversazione represented the zenith of the university extension movement in Victorian Scotland: it was imbued with a strong sense of optimism, but that optimism was grounded in the considerable achievements of the society's first year, and the stamp of university approval it craved seemed implicit in Principal Donaldson's attendance and warm words. However, historical assessment of the university extension movement in Perth shows that, even at this early stage, cracks were beginning to appear in the project and there is evidence to suggest that the involvement of St Andrews University – which effectively limited the choice of suitable lecturers - contributed to the demise of the society.

As early as August 1888 Munro was finding it difficult to find appropriate lecturers for the new session from the St Andrews list. In a letter to Professor Knight, joint secretary of the St Andrews Association he wrote:

> I should like you to say what you can give us in the way of lectures…We want still a literary Course. Now we had "English Literature" last year i.e. a survey of the development of English Literature. This year we would like a course more specifically dealing with one period, or one type of literature, or one school of Authors, or one great

[29] *The Perthshire Advertiser*, 11 April 1888.
[30] Mill (Physiography) was from Edinburgh; Renton (English Literature) was independent; and Mavor (Political Economy) and McLaren (Greek Life and Thought) were from Glasgow University.
[31] *The Perthshire Advertiser*, 11 April 1888.
[32] Ibid.

> writer. Hence Mr. Bain who writes to me and mentions your name, does not in his General Syllabus which he sends, meet our case. He offers exactly what we had last year. Could you yourself not think of enlightening us on some such specially chosen portion as I have alluded to? If not, what other besides Mr. Bain can you suggest in Literature or History and what can you give us in Science? [33]

A second letter written to Knight two weeks days later suggests a growing sense of urgency about the choice of lecturers:

> The committee met on Tuesday night. They are unanimous in wishing you to give us lectures on "Philosophy" or whatever title you prefer. It would take long (and I am hurried) to explain all the reasons that render us so anxious to have you. But two are conspicuous. We have had to combat, even among people who have helped us well, the opinion that this movement is only to provide work for young men, "hangers on at the Universities" as they were called once, and that the education provided would be of questionable value. The other is that we wish to have all the help we can from a strong programme and we know enough of ordinary humanity in Perth to feel quite sure that the inclusion of your name in "our staff" will be a very great attraction. It will also silence the objectors I have referred to.[34]

In addition to difficulties surrounding the continuity of its courses, the Perth committee was already facing concerns about the abilities of some of the lecturers recommended by the universities. The committee successfully resolved the second issue: Knight agreed to their request and in Principal Peterson (Roman History), J. Arthur Thompson (Natural History), and Dr R.C. Buist (Astronomy) they had secured the services of an experienced and competent teaching staff for their second programme.[35] To accommodate the wishes of the Perth Ladies Educational Association, which had voted to amalgamate with the society, Knight agreed to deliver two courses: 'Nineteenth Century Poets' on Friday evenings and Philosophy on Saturday afternoons.[36] The extent to which the issue of subject continuity had been resolved is less clear. There were two science courses and two on 'literary' subjects but if the working-class members of the Co-operative Society –

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[33] Letter from Mr J. W. Munro to Professor William Knight of St Andrews University, 2 August 1888, SAUA UY 470/2.
[34] Letter from Mr J. W. Munro to Professor William Knight, 17 August 1888, SAUA UY 470/2.
[35] Perth University Education Society, Report for the year ending 31st March, 1889, SAUA UY 470/2, p 2.
[36] Letter from Mr J. W. Munro to Professor William Knight of St Andrews University, 5 December 1888, SAUA UY 470/2.

which had already made its second contribution of £20 to the society[37] – were looking for education on more contemporary issues, there was little in the second programme to match their interests.

Notwithstanding the society's growing organisational problems, there were some encouraging developments in its second year. Firstly, the amalgamation of the Ladies Educational Association was an acknowledgement that the society was to some extent meeting the demand for women's access to higher education. Secondly, the society received a grant of £50 from the Duncan Trust which, the committee believed, was in recognition of its important contribution to public education.[38] Thirdly, a students' union was formed which, according to the annual report:

> ...aims at mutual helpfulness, in the way of companionship in intellectual pursuits, lending of books, comparing and exchanging of notes, meetings for reading and discussing papers on various subjects in general relation to the curriculum for the year, and generally at the fostering of a healthy *esprit de corps*. It has already a membership of from 50 to 60, and bids fair to become a most valuable auxiliary to the Society.[39]

Although total student numbers dropped to 409 the committee felt that this was to be expected as the novelty of the scheme wore off, and emphasised that the student body, though smaller in size, now contained a higher proportion of committed students.[40] The lecturers' and examiners' reports for 1889-90 support this interpretation and clearly show that each of the courses had a dedicated group of successful, and often outstanding students (see Appendix VI). The Perth Society of Natural Science did not amalgamate with the society but subject choice was clearly influenced by its educational agenda: Mill's Physiography class had attracted the highest number of students in the first year; J. Arthur Thompson's course on Natural History drew 151 students in the second, and Patrick Geddes delivered an extra summer course on Botany to 126 students in 1889.[41] There can be little doubt that Munro's committee - although it could be satisfied with

[37] Perth University Education Society, Report for the year ending 31st March, 1889, List of Subscriptions and Donations.
[38] Perth University Education Society, Report for the year ending 31st March, 1889, p 4.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid, p 2.
[41] University of St. Andrews University Lecture-Extension Association, Second Annual Report, 1890, SUA T-GED 12/2/23, p 5.

balanced finances and healthy student numbers - faced an increasingly difficult task in trying to select courses, delivered by able lecturers, which matched the educational requirements of the society's fairly diverse student body.

By the autumn of 1889, Munro, who had worked tirelessly for the movement, was beginning to voice to his growing frustration with the seemingly insurmountable difficulties of trying to find suitable lecturers:

> I am very sorry we cannot have you to lecture to us this winter and the more so that I don't quite see where we are to get a good literary course. The only literary syllabus I have seen of St Andrews lectures except Professor Knight's which we had are Dr Menzies' and Professor Roberts'. The Committee did not seem inclined for either of Dr Menzies' courses this winter and Prof Roberts was forestalled by Principal Peterson on Roman History. Mr Cameron Morrison's on English Literature is I fear very dull – to judge at least from the syllabus. I am much disinclined to go to the Edinburgh or Glasgow list for another course: we have already chosen two from Edinburgh. But perhaps the best I can do this winter will be to get a tried man from the Glasgow list. There ought to be and must be complete reciprocity between the Universities and possibly the best way of bringing it about would be to act as I say.[42]

The ability, or willingness, of St Andrews to provide the quality of lecturers Perth needed was clearly in question and, despite Munro's best efforts, the programme for the third year shows that the society's plans to provide systematic education were faltering. The four courses on offer were: History of Music, Air and Water, Physics, and Scottish Literature, and student numbers dropped to 305. Even the course delivered by McCormick (an established and previously successful extension lecturer) on Scottish Literature attracted only 49 students[43] which indicates that, after English Literature and Knight's 'Poets' in the preceding years, the Perth extension students probably felt they were simply being offered more of the same.[44] There are no records which indicate whether or not the Co-operative Society continued to support extension in Perth after the

[42] Letter from J.W. Munro to Professor Andrew Seth, Joint Secretary of the St Andrews Lecture-Extension Association, 5 September 1889, SUAU UY 470/2.
[43] The Glasgow Board reported an attendance of 67 (see Appendix IV): this may have included students who did not attend the whole course.
[44] University of St. Andrews University Lecture-Extension Association, Second Annual Report, 1890, p 6.

second year, but it is very hard to imagine that its members found anything to encourage their continued support in the 1889-90 lecture programme.

In 1890 Munro's employers transferred him to Broughty Ferry and the administration of extension in Perth seems to have virtually collapsed in his absence. The St Andrews archives hold few documents relating to the Perth society after Munro's departure; a final letter from James Clacher, his successor, underlines the extent of the society's decline:

> At a meeting of my Committee held recently, we were reluctantly compelled to curtail our work owing to the intimation by two of our large subscribers of the withdrawal of their contributions. The Committee resolved to arrange for two short courses of six lectures each by lecturers who could give their services at a fee lower than that fixed by your Board...We have arranged with Mr Wenley, Glasgow to give us a short course of six lectures on the Literature of the Victorian Era, to tide us over our difficulty: but as he is connected with the Glasgow Board, he agrees to give them on condition that your Board offers no objection.[45]

The loss of Munro was one of a set of interrelated factors which ultimately led to the end of extension in Perth. The others – including declining interest and loss of financial support – are well-known and impossible to refute. But is it defensible to draw an inference from this - an inference which is central to the current historical consensus - that there never was or never could have been any sustainable demand for extension in late-Victorian Scotland? The evidence from Perth throws considerable doubt on that interpretation. Support and student numbers did decline drastically but why did students turn up in their hundreds and various bodies and individuals offer their support in the first place? The evidence suggests that there was substantial demand for systematic university-level education in Perth - and similar provincial towns across Scotland - and that when interest and support for the movement did begin to fall away it was because of significant weaknesses in the quality and range of education provided by the universities.

[45] Letter from Mr James Clacher, Secretary of the Perth University Education Society, to Professor Menzies of St Andrews University, 12 October 1893.

The Failure of Extension in Scotland - an Analysis

After 1890 the level of extension activity across Scotland declined steadily. The number of extension centres linked to St Andrews University fell from eight in 1888-89 to four in 1890-91, and by 1891-92 courses were only being held in Perth.[1] On the west coast, Glasgow experienced a more gradual decline and even witnessed a brief revival of interest in extension in 1892-93. During that year nine courses were delivered in eight centres with a total attendance of over 1250.[2] However, all but two of these courses consisted of six lectures which decreased their educational value and lowered further any chance of university accreditation.[3] The idea of six-lecture courses had first been officially mooted in Scotland by Professor Andrew Seth, one of the St Andrews secretaries, in 1890.[4] This again emulated earlier developments in England where Michael Sadler, secretary of the Oxford Delegacy, had introduced six-lecture courses to enhance Oxford's position in its competitive struggle with Cambridge. Sadler argued that the lower cost of shorter courses would engage more working-class students but he was criticised for undermining the educational credibility of extension.[5] Glasgow informed Seth that it had no objection to shorter courses being delivered provided that they did not lead to an examination or class certificate.[6] If the introduction of short courses led to the 1892-93 revival, the effect was fleeting: in the following year attendance figures plummeted to 400 in six centres.[7] These figures are the last in Wenley's account of the movement. In its final years the Glasgow board lost the guiding influence of some of its most committed members: William Smart became the university's first dedicated lecturer in political economy in 1892; Edward Caird succeeded Jowett as Master of Balliol College in 1893; and in 1896 Wenley left to become Professor of Philosophy at the University of Michigan.[8] Anticipating its secretary's departure, the board decided to wind up the extension scheme and at its last meeting on 20 July 1896 the balance of its

[1] Lectures Delivered in connection with St Andrews Lecture-Extension, handwritten record, ND, SAUA UY470/2.
[2] Wenley, *University Extension*, p35.
[3] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 16 May 1893.
[4] Ibid, 24 July 1890.
[5] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 65.
[6] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 16 October 1890.
[7] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 35.
[8] A. W. Innes, *A Roll of the Graduates of the University of Glasgow, 1727-1897*, (Glasgow: Maclehose, 1898).

remaining funds (£28 6s) was presented to Wenley as an honorarium for his work as secretary to the board since 1890.[9] This marked the end of university extension in Victorian Scotland.

The historical consensus on the limited impact of the Scottish extension movement places considerable emphasis on the lack of demand for extension lectures and relates this quite specifically to the 'democratic character' of the nation's higher education system. Put simply this argument suggests that the principal reason for extension's ultimate failure was the openness of Scotland's universities and, after 1892, the full admission of women to higher education. That the nation's universities were more open than their English counterparts is beyond doubt: in 1868 the Argyll Commission reported that Scotland's level of participation in higher education was, per capita, six times higher than in England.[10] However, in this favourable comparison with one of the most élitist higher education systems of western Europe there is a danger of overstating the openness and popular nature of nineteenth-century Scottish higher education. In 1881 Scotland's four universities had 6595 enrolled students from a population of around 3.74 million showing that, even though the higher education system had distinctively Scottish characteristics, it was still, essentially, an élite system serving the educational needs of a very small section of society.[11] In his examination of the way in which the Scottish tradition of more open access to university has been eulogised, Anderson has identified an almost mythical representation in Scottish culture of the 'lad of parts' from a poor, generally rural background who, by sheer hard work and determination, makes his way from the parish school to university. He suggests that the true extent of open access to higher education has often been exaggerated and that the glorification of Scotland's more egalitarian educational traditions was, to some extent, part of a campaign of resistance to what was seen by some as an insidious tide of Anglicisation.[12] This nineteenth-century turn to

[9] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 20 July 1896.
[10] Anderson, *Education and Opportunity*, p 157.
[11] Ibid, p351 and General Register Office for Scotland; [http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/annrep/rgs-annual-review-2004/chapter-2/scotlands-population-1855-to-2004/index.html, accessed 27 December 2006]
[12] R.D. Anderson, 'In Search of the 'Lad of Parts': the Mythical History of Scottish Education' in A. Cooke, I. Donnachie, A. McSween and C.A. Whatley (eds.), *Modern Scottish History 1707 to the Present, Volume 4: Readings 1850 to the Present*, (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998), pp 271-281.

tradition was not without its contemporary critics: Geddes was certainly no admirer of this idealised view of Scottish higher education and in 1887 William Peterson, the youthful first principal of UCD, advised an EIS congress that:

> We have had many warnings lately against the spirit of self-satisfaction with which Scotchmen often compare their own educational institutions with those of the sister country; and in this matter of the Universities it will no longer do to advance the old position, that while the English Universities are essentially exclusive the Scotch Universities are essentially popular.[13]

As the principal of a new institution intended by its founder to extend higher education to all, regardless of gender or class, Peterson was certainly no representative of the status quo and clearly felt that too much emphasis was being placed on the rather tenuous democratic credentials of Scotland's ancient universities. If this interpretation is correct it questions the argument that extension failed because the more open Scottish system severely limited demand for this form of educational provision. That explanation is also undermined by the evidence of substantial, initial interest in extension in Perth and several other Scottish towns. Although any such interest appeared to evaporate very quickly, the argument will be developed below that this was largely caused by the failure of the Scottish organisers of extension and the universities involved to provide systematic, high-quality, accredited lecture courses.

The urban location of Scotland's three largest universities has also been cited as one of the reasons for the limited impact of extension, but this reflects a rather narrow interpretation of the aims of the movement: in England, it sought to spread higher education socially and geographically, but not just to major towns and cities. Some of the most successful extension centres, several of which became university colleges, were in larger cities but, at the same time, extension reached out to smaller towns and villages across England. Successful centres were established in Northumberland mining villages; in Sowerby, Todmorden, and Hebden Bridge in the north;[14] and in Horsham and Sudbury in the south. The latter two towns were identified by the Perth committee as providing

[13] Newspaper Cutting, *The Dundee Advertiser*, ND, SUA T-GED 12/2/13.
[14] Goldman, *Dons and Workers*, p 79.

typical examples of the level of demand for extension in smaller provincial towns.[15] Extension was not always seen as the preliminary stage of plans to found a local college – although it was, at first, in Perth – and many of its most committed advocates saw it as a social mission to take higher education to those who, because of their geographical isolation, employment, age, sex or social class, were unable to attend university. The difference between Scotland and England in this respect was one of scale: a far higher proportion of Scotland's population lived near to one of its universities and the size of the potential audience for the lectures was therefore proportionately smaller. However, it is unlikely that it was insignificant: despite the less exclusive nature of Scotland's universities, and even after the full admission of women, the vast majority of the adult population was still effectively excluded from any form of participation in higher education. The true extent of the demand for extramural teaching is, of course, impossible to quantify but the early success of extension between 1887 and 1890 in several provincial towns at least suggests that it may have been greater than has hitherto been acknowledged.

The Scottish organisers of extension shared the missionary zeal of their southern counterparts and emphasised the importance of extending education to the working class. Given the strong Scottish working-class commitment to education demonstrated in mutual improvement societies, the tradition of autodidactic learning, and radical movements – like Chartism – with a prominent educational agenda,[16] there were tenable reasons for believing that extension might tap into a rich seam of working-class enthusiasm for learning, and there is evidence to suggest that in the early stages of the movement it did attract significant numbers of working-class students. In the small town of Alyth, for instance, around 100 tickets were sold for William Renton's lectures on English literature – 'a large part of which have been taken up by working-men'.[17] Dr H.R. Mill who had addressed the Galashiels meeting at which considerable opposition to

[15] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting, 4th October 1887*, SAUA UY 470/2.
[16] J.Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2002) pp 58- 70, and A. Cooke, *From popular enlightenment to lifelong learning A history of adult education in Scotland 1707-2005*, (NIACE: Leicester, 2005) pp 63-69.
[17] Letter from Mr Hugh Leslie, secretary of the Alyth extension committee, to Patrick Geddes, 3 February 1888, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.

extension had been voiced, reported that the 'The working men seemed interested and I think will very likely go on without their employers'.[18] Interestingly, this suggests that it was not the workers of Galashiels who were opposed to extension but their employers who wanted the town's educational resources to remain firmly focused on technical, work-related training. The strongest evidence concerning working-class participation in extension courses comes from Perth where between 40 and 50 'working men' who were members of the town's Co-operative Society attended the first courses[19] and Mill reported that on his physiography prize list were a shoemaker's daughter, a working dyer and a female pupil-teacher.[20] An addendum to the report of the inaugural meeting of the Perth extension society confidently reported that:

> The work proves to be valuable and interesting, and there can be no doubt of the excellence of the education provided. This is not confined to any one class of the community. At the Perth lectures, ladies and gentlemen of the first families in the city and neighbourhood attend, as well as working men and apprentice lads.[21]

However, it is equally clear that across the movement failure to attract working-class interest in some centres, and an early decline in working-class involvement in others, both contributed substantially to the limited impact of extension. In Arbroath more than 100 students attended the first two extension courses, but by 1891 the scheme had collapsed and George Dalgarno, the local secretary, advised Geddes that:

> We failed to get hold of the working man. The manufacturers in town who were willing to subscribe to our funds ceased to do so when they found the class they desired to benefit (their workmen) would not take advantages of the lectures. We tried issuing the tickets at nominal price and by (sic) appealing to the Trades Council and other working men's societies but without success. Indeed in many cases the tickets were refused when offered for nothing.[22]

This mirrored the situation in Hamilton where in 1890 the guarantors of the scheme had withdrawn their support because of low working-class participation. Even in Perth, as

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[18] Letter from Dr H.R. Mill to Patrick Geddes, 26 December 1887, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.
[19] *The Dundee Advertiser*, 19 March 1888.
[20] Letter from Dr H.R. Mill to Patrick Geddes, 26 December 1887, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.
[21] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting*, p 16.
[22] Letter from George Dalgarno, secretary of the Arbroath extension committee, to Patrick Geddes, 18 September, 1891, SUA T-GED 9/46.

early as 1890, the committee was expressing concerns about declining working-class involvement:

> It is a matter for deep regret that more young working men do not find it advisable to attend. The movement for University Extension was in great measure set on foot with a view to benefit the artizan class, and could not well be justified were they excluded . It may be suggested that a series of single lectures on popular subjects might be arranged in order to attract, if possible, numbers of artizans, and other busy men and women, who might afterwards find sufficient interest in the more systematic courses.[23]

The members of the committee were probably unaware that they were, in this respect, experiencing identical problems to those affecting the English extension project which – with the exception of a few centres linked to working-class organisations – had limited success in reaching the working class.[24] Because local societies in both Scotland and England were self-funding they generally depended on financial support from more affluent students and benefactors and were frequently characterised by an air of middle-class patronage which, in an age when class differences were more keenly felt, probably deterred some potential working-class students. The Co-operative students in Perth were undoubtedly aware of the importance of their financial support to the extension society but at the same time may have felt uncomfortable sharing their classes with students – including the Dowager Duchess of Atholl – from some of the wealthiest and most influential families of Perthshire.[25] In addition to the insidious influence of class consciousness, working-class interest was affected by the subjects covered by the extension courses. The Perth committee faced an almost impossible task in trying to meet the diverse educational requirements of the naturalists, the 'bluestockings' of the former Ladies Educational Association, local schoolteachers, and its working-class students. If working-class extension students in Perth, like those in England, were more interested in subjects with some contemporary political or social relevance they were clearly failed by the society after its first year. In other Scottish centres the selection of subjects which only matched middle-class interests would have had a similar detrimental effect on working-class response to extension.

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[23] Perth University Education Society, Report for the year ending 31st March, 1889, SAUA UY 470/2, p 4.
[24] Fieldhouse, *History*, pp 38-39.
[25] Letters from J.W. Munro to Professor Knight, 22 and 24 March 1888, SUAU UY 470/2

The strongest evidence which points to a substantial level of demand for university-level external education in Scotland is provided by the success of two other contemporary educational projects: the St Andrews LLA scheme and Geddes' Edinburgh summer schools. The belief of the two men – Knight and Geddes – who inaugurated these schemes that there was significant, unmet demand for such education across Scotland is clearly shown by their subsequent commitment to the extension movement. The LLA scheme, which was introduced in 1877, enabled women to gain a qualification widely regarded as having degree equivalence: as early as 1879 it had been recognised by the Cambridge University Teacher Training Syndicate as an acceptable qualification for entry to teacher training.[26] It proved particularly useful to teachers and governesses whose circumstances prevented them from attending college and, later, university. Between 1882 and 1891, 3964 candidates passed examinations in one or more subjects and 928 women were awarded the full diploma. In the following decade these figures increased to 6946 and 1189 respectively.[27] Although much of this increase was linked to the growing number of English and international LLA students, the scheme continued to operate successfully in Scotland indicating that for some years after the admission of women to university there was still significant demand for extramural education. Patrick Geddes' summer schools, which began in 1885 at the Granton Marine Station, initially aimed to provide scientific knowledge to elementary schoolteachers and by 1887 the school was using the facilities of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh to enable practical instruction in botany. The first two lecturers who worked with Geddes in the schools were J. Arthur Thomson, an Edinburgh University zoology lecturer, and G.F. Scott Elliot, a botany demonstrator.[28] Thomson, who collaborated with Geddes on his groundbreaking and controversial book, *The Evolution of Sex*, became one of Scottish extension's most successful lecturers, and Scott Elliot tried to establish an extension scheme in his native Dumfriesshire. By the 1890s the schools were based in Edinburgh where Geddes used his Outlook Tower to facilitate a holistic approach to the study of society. The summer schools acquired an impressive international reputation and attracted some outstanding intellectual figures of the day to deliver lectures; the most

[26] Bell and Tight, *Open Universities*, p 78.
[27] Ibid, p 79.
[28] Meller, 'Geddes', DNB and Wenley, *University Extension*, pp 37-42.

successful year was 1896 when the school was attended by around 120 students.[29] In terms of what the summer schools reveal about possible demand for extension it is the composition of the student body which is particularly significant. A large number of the students were young women and many of these were schoolteachers using the schools' summer holidays to gain access to higher education. In 1891 the value of this educational resource was recognised by the Dundee School Board which granted bursaries to enable six teachers to attend the summer school.[30] Taken together, the preponderance of teachers at the summer schools; the evidence from Perth of teachers' interest in extension; and the continuing influence of the LLA scheme clearly indicate that the most promising potential audience for extension lectures in Scotland was the country's sizeable body of predominately female, elementary schoolteachers, whose counterparts made up a significant proportion of extension students in England.[31] It is unlikely therefore that the failure of extension was simply the result of a lack of demand – the movement was also significantly undermined by difficulties related to its organisation and the role of the universities.

One of the fundamental weaknesses of university extension in Scotland was the lack of formal university accreditation of the certificates awarded to successful students. From the outset the vital importance of formal university links - which implied that the courses would form the foundation of degree studies or lead to teaching qualifications – was emphasised by proponents of extension. However, Glasgow University was the first to make it clear that its board's extension certificates would afford their recipients no special privileges within the higher education system but stressed, rather patronisingly, that they might be looked upon favourably by certain employers.[32] This uncompromising attitude to accreditation was probably influenced by the university's continued opposition to the extension of extramural teaching which was regarded by some university conservatives as a threat to Glasgow's role as a teaching university. These traditionalists

[29] Meller, 'Geddes', DNB.
[30] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 40.
[31] Fieldhouse, *History*, p 78.
[32] Pamphlet: *University of Glasgow. Extension of University Teaching by Local Lectures and Classes. An Account of the Scheme and of the Mode of Working It.* (Glasgow: Maclehose and Sons, 1888) GUA 43063, pp 13-14.

may have felt that, in this respect, the recognition of extension certificates would have advanced the extramural cause. Several members of the Glasgow board's executive committee were acutely aware of the damaging effect that lack of accreditation would have on the extension scheme and tried, on several occasions, to gain more formal endorsement of the courses. In 1890 Henry Dyer suggested that the 1889 Universities Act created an opportunity for the official recognition of extension certificates and he, Smart, Wenley, McKendrick and other members of the committee were charged with submitting a proposal on this to the university commission.[33] The minutes do not record the progress of any representations that were made to the commission but if any were made they were clearly unsuccessful: Wenley stated ruefully in his 1895 account that the certificates of all the extension associations had 'no academic value'.[34] While waiting for St Andrews University to act, Perth's extension society had produced its own certificate - signed by the lecturer, the examiner, and the president and secretary of the society – which recorded the candidate's marks for class work and the final examination. Edinburgh and St Andrews, who were less explicit in their opposition to accreditation, eventually produced a shared form of certificate which signified only that the candidate had passed the final examination.[35] Although these were issued in the name of the Edinburgh or St Andrews Lecture-Extension Association they had no more academic value than their Glasgow equivalent. Although the universities did little to enhance the value of extension certificates, a certain amount of the blame for the limited academic acceptance of extension must also be attributed to the University Commission and the Scotch Education Department which both had the power to facilitate some form of recognition but, in the event, seem to have largely ignored the scheme.

The second major difficulty faced by the movement was that of providing course continuity and maintaining the quality of extension teaching. The two issues were very closely linked: it was fairly straightforward to plan lecture courses systematically so that a course on animal life might follow one on botany and a course on Greek life and

[33] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 18 February 1890.
[34] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 47.
[35] University of St. Andrews University Lecture-Extension Association, First Annual Report, 1889, SUA T-GED 12/2/23, p 9.

thought might be followed by one on philosophy, but the difficulty, which proved to be considerable, was finding appropriate lecturers for the subjects chosen. Scott Elliot, one of Geddes' summer school lecturers, was particularly forthright when expressing his opinion of the abilities of some extension lecturers and consecutive letters he wrote to Knight and Geddes show how critical the shortage of competent lecturers became:

> We are at present anxious to start a course in Dumfries... as our subject is English Literature we are quite likely to choose Mr. Wm. Renton...We should also like to have any information you can give us as to his capacity as a lecturer. Our last course has given us great difficulty on account of the lecturer being too abstruse & confused. The very name of Beowulf will frighten the Dumfriessians out of attending.[36]

There is no record of Renton delivering a course in Dumfries and a subsequent letter to Geddes shows that the situation had not improved:

> In answer to your appeal I can only say that we are giving the system another trial this year and I am in a very humble way assisting therein but unless the University Authorities in the course of the next year either do one thing or the other, the movement will be a failure and I shall personally ignore Scotch University Extension and if I can get up a class the year after will just choose the next lecturer available English Irish or Welsh if necessary. There is a very great demand for higher education in the country. It is simply a matter of time that this demand should be supplied in the best possible way and the Scotch professors will simply have to stand aside if they will not see where the opportunity comes in. Please excuse my warmth as I really think strongly on the subject & lukewarm university extension will be spewed out of the mouth of the people.[37]

In another letter – the tone of which suggests that Geddes and Scott Elliot were fairly close friends – he voiced his opinion that the only two 'really good lecturers' on the long Edinburgh list were H.R. Mill and J. Arthur Thompson and suggested that people with an interest in extension felt that the five professor's assistants on the list could not 'possibly have time to deliver really good lectures'.[38] Dumfries was the most geographically isolated of all the extension centres and Scott Elliot's statement that there was 'great demand' for extension in the south-west is particularly significant: it supports the suggestion made above that in Scotland and England alike people in towns and villages

[36] Letter from G.F. Scott Elliot, secretary of the Dumfries committee, to Professor William Knight, 26 October 1889, SAUA UY 470/2.
[37] Letter from G.F. Scott Elliot to Patrick Geddes, ND, SUA T-GED 9/2272.
[38] Letter from G.F. Scott Elliot to Patrick Geddes, ND, SUA T-GED 9/2271.

far removed from the universities saw extension as a potentially important means of gaining access to higher education. Again, however, the universities were not wholly responsible for their inability to provide good extension lecturers. The Scottish universities were far less wealthy than Oxford and Cambridge and, throughout the life of the extension movement, they were experiencing a funding crisis which meant that they struggled to maintain appropriate staffing levels, and their staff had little spare time to devote to extension. In England the scale of the movement meant that several of its most successful lecturers were able to make a reasonable living from extension. Given the lack of any effective central organisation in Scotland, continuity of employment was always doubtful and this may have deterred potentially successful lecturers from entering the field. In addition, the impersonal professorial teaching which was still prevalent in Scottish universities may have been a less appropriate preparation for extension work than the more personal system of tutorial teaching which was increasingly favoured in Oxford and Cambridge.

A further organisational problem stemmed from the often weak relationships between university extension boards and their local committees. The Glasgow minutes suggest that members of the board were keen to undertake the initial missionary work which led to the foundation of local societies but after that they generally left the local committees to their own devices. This meant that decisions on course subjects, lecturers and course fees were made at a local level. The Glasgow executive committee was not generally unsympathetic when problems over finance or poor attendance levels arose but its members do not seem to have personally visited struggling centres to offer advice and support. This was probably because of the demands made on their time by their university and professional commitments but it must have reinforced any public conception that the connection between the university and the extension scheme was largely nominal. In 1890 the committee acknowledged that it needed to become more closely involved in the work of its local societies and held a 'conference' with the local secretaries 'with the object of bringing the Board and the Local Centres into closer touch and of offering any useful counsel'.[39] The only firm suggestion which came from this

[39] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 6 October, 1890.

meeting was that the board should appoint a travelling secretary to represent the university locally.[40] When Wenley became honorary secretary of the board he undertook this work although the amount of time he could devote to it was limited by other commitments.[41] St Andrews University was initially very supportive of its local centres, especially Perth where its principal and professors regularly turned up to address meetings and opening lectures. But by 1889 there were signs that the university's enthusiasm for supporting its centres had waned: in a letter to Geddes, J.W. Munro complained that he had found it difficult to get Knight to visit Blairgowrie where the scheme was failing.[42] These imperfect relationships between universities and local societies in Scotland were in marked contrast to the situation in England where R.D Roberts and Michael Sadler, full-time secretaries of the Cambridge Syndicate and the Oxford Delegacy, worked hard at forming close, supportive bonds with their extension centres.[43]

Even in the early stages of Scottish extension doubts were raised about the extent to which the universities would commit themselves to the movement. At the inaugural meeting of the Perth society Charles Stuart Parker the town's MP cautioned that university endorsement of the scheme was not assured.[44] In a private letter he expressed his doubts more strongly:

> ... we have not as yet in Scotland the central force which in England is supplied by the propagandist zeal and steady perseverance of the Universities. In Scotland it seems necessary for individuals and communities to give them a lead.[45]

Parker was well-qualified to assess the situation: as a student at Oxford he had become a friend of T.H. Green; he had been a fellow of University College, Oxford for fourteen years, and was one of the university's first lecturers in modern history. Later, he was involved in framing Scottish educational policy, so it seems likely that his informed

[40] Minutes of the Glasgow University Extension Board, 16 October 1890.
[41] Ibid, 3 November 1890.
[42] Letter from J.W. Munro to Patrick Geddes, 5 September 1889. SUAU UY 470/2.
[43] Marriott, *Extramural Empires*, pp 37-39.
[44] *Perth University Education Society, Inaugural Meeting*, p 9.
[45] Letter from C.S. Parker to Andrew Herbertson, 18 December 1887, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.

comparison of university attitudes to extension in England and Scotland was accurate.[46] Using botanical metaphors which would have appealed to Geddes, Scott Elliot was even more scathing in his criticism of the universities:

> ... I think you must show the Universities that if they do not take their proper place in this way, they will have to make way for new institutions....The point and only advantage of University Extension is its being a University thing and unless you can get your Extension boards to pay & label such planted out slips as you propose, the scheme will not succeed.[47]

Certainly, corporate university commitment to extension was frequently questionable. At the unsuccessful Galashiels meeting, for instance, the cause of extension was advocated by Munro, Mill and Parker, but Edinburgh – in whose catchment area Galashiels was – sent no senior representatives of the university to indicate its endorsement of the scheme.

However, the most damaging aspect of university involvement in the Scottish extension movement was their failure to co-operate with one another in a national organisation; and, for this, Glasgow University must take most of the blame. Given the limited resources of the movement and the as yet untested audience for extension lectures it would have made perfect sense for them to act together and the decision of Glasgow to act independently remains something of an enigma: no justification for this stance was recorded in any of the Glasgow extension records. The university certainly had nothing to gain from the scheme financially and the emphasis placed on social cohesion by Caird's philosophical idealism might have suggested a more collective approach to the extension project. The reasons for their decision may lie in the effect on the university of an ongoing reform process which had lasted for more than fifty years. During this time some of the reform debates in Glasgow had been particularly acrimonious: by 1887 the extramural issue was still controversial and the spectre of enforced amalgamation in a national university may still have hung over the senate room. Having weathered attacks on its corporate integrity and independence, Glasgow University may simply have felt that its long-term interests would be better served by acting alone.

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[46] [Anon.], 'Parker, Charles Stuart (1829–1910)', rev. H. C. G. Matthew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35382, accessed 28 March 2006]

[47] Letter from G.F. Scott Elliot to Patrick Geddes, undated, SUA T-GED 9/2274.

The damaging consequences of the universities' failure to act collectively were exacerbated by an element of territorial competition which developed between Glasgow and St Andrews. As early as 1887 Glasgow showed a willingness to encroach upon areas associated with other universities, although these had not yet been 'officially' allocated. In Perth, Munro reported that he had been approached by Ramsay of Glasgow and informed Geddes of his committee's response:

> We did not feel quite justified in throwing your Committee overboard ... and taking on board the Glasgow Committee as pilot all the more especially as such would weaken your hands in your efforts after the formation of a joint delegacy and strengthen those of Glasgow in its resistance to the same. I expressed personal adherence to former plans and opinion of the impossibility of any other succeeding as a national propaganda. Therefore much reluctance existed to join hands with Glasgow. But, I said, we are so badly in want of some form of University Connection and Certification that we are willing to grasp the hand first extended to us by Glasgow.[48]

Shortly after this St Andrews extended its hand to Perth, and early in 1889 the three universities involved in extension agreed on the areas with which they would be associated.[49] They also agreed on a policy of complete reciprocity of lecturers: local committees could choose lecturers from any board as long as their university paid £5 to the 'lending' board. In practice, this seemingly equitable arrangement drove the universities further apart and led to acrimonious disagreements over apparently trivial matters. St Andrews, whose centres regularly borrowed lecturers from Edinburgh and Glasgow, disagreed with Edinburgh over payments for lecturers and had a particularly heated dispute with Glasgow over who should pay for the printing of course syllabuses which was only resolved by the independent adjudication of Professor Laurie from Edinburgh.[50] St Andrews subsequently began to object to its centres borrowing lecturers from other boards which met with significant local opposition and further undermined the extension scheme. George Dalgarno, the Arbroath secretary, wrote to Geddes to express his disappointment with the St Andrews association:

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[48] Letter from J.W. Munro to Patrick Geddes, 31 December 1887, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.
[49] University of St. Andrews University Lecture-Extension Association, Second Annual Report, 1890, p 7.
[50] Letter from Archibald Craig, joint honorary secretary of Glasgow University Extension Board, to Professor Andrew Seth, joint secretary of St Andrews University Lecture-Extension Association, 5 November 1889, SAUA UY 470/2.

> I am very sorry that already there should be friction between us and St Andrews. When here Prof. Knight expressly told us that we might select out lecturers from any University we liked and we had no idea that this permission was to be qualified in any way.[51]

Deteriorating relationships with its local committees undoubtedly contributed to the very rapid decline of the St Andrews association. In a final ironic twist in the story of Scottish extension, Wenley noted in his account that:

> In the course of this year [1891-92] the Glasgow Board made efforts for the amalgamation of the sister associations into one Inter-University Extension Board, having its seat at Glasgow. A draft agreement, which is still in my possession, was drawn up.[52]

If Glasgow felt that it had won the day its victory was pyrrhic: its 'sister associations' were all but dead and the movement would only last for a few more years in Glasgow.

Finally, in assessing the causes of the failure of extension in Scotland it is worth considering the question of whether or not a national organisation would have had any more impact. Firstly, a national organisation would have been able to pool limited resources and might have been able to employ a full-time secretary (ideally someone of Munro's calibre) to travel around the various centres and coordinate lecture courses. It may also have been able to pool the movement's talented lecturers and offer them fairly stable employment in extension: if a lecturer delivered six courses in a year he or she would receive a reasonable salary of £150. This, in turn, had the potential to draw new lecturers into the field. As the pool of effective lecturers grew it would have become easier to establish continuity between courses. Secondly, the fact that it was a national organisation may have brought formal recognition of its qualifications nearer and might have attracted long-term financial support from one of the charitable trusts. If extension was seen as an effective vehicle for bringing higher education to the nation's schoolteachers it may well have gained the support of the Gilchrist, Combe or Carnegie trusts. Thirdly, as the Scottish universities became more élitist in the 1890s, a thriving national organisation might have continued to provide a less regimented style of higher education for adult students. It seems likely that if a national organisation had been founded its successes would have reflected those of the English extension movement

[51] Letter from George Dalgarno to Patrick Geddes, 25 December 1888. SAUA UY 470/2.
[52] Wenley, *University Extension*, p 35.

which met the educational needs of schoolteachers and middle-class women but generally failed to attract significant numbers of working-class students. This, of course, is entirely conjectural but to extend the conjecture one stage further: is it possible that the failure of extension affected the development of university adult education in the early twentieth century? The WEA and tutorial class movement in England were arguably built on foundations which had been laid by the extension movement. Indeed many of the Oxford academics involved in the establishment of these movements had been involved in extension but had become dissatisfied with its failure to reach the working class. It is conceivable that a centralised Scottish extension organisation might have played a role similar to that of Oxford in promoting working-class university adult education and thus altered the history of adult education in Scotland.

Appendix I

Draft Constitution of a Scottish University Extension Association.

The following was suggested as the basis of an *Association for the Extension of University Teaching in Scotland*:

1. The object of the Association shall be to bring University Teaching, as far as possible, within the reach of persons of all classes, and both sexes, in the provincial towns and districts of Scotland.

2. The government and direction of the Association shall be vested in a Council of twenty-four persons; three members to be elected by each of the University Senates of Scotland, one by the Educational Institute of Scotland, one by the School Inspectors of Scotland, two by the Faculty of Advocates, one by University College, Dundee, one by the School Boards of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee and one by the Association of Higher Class School Schoolmasters.

3. The Association shall elect an Hon. President, a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer; shall determine what Courses of Lectures are to be delivered by accredited representatives of the Universities; and shall nominate and appoint the University Lecturers, having due regard to the interests of the various local centres.

4. That regular meetings of the Council shall take place in Edinburgh, on the first Saturday of each month, from November to April.

5. That Local Committees, formed in the towns where the Lectures are delivered, shall undertake to raise the necessary funds, and to make all the detailed arrangements in connection with the delivery of the Lectures.

6. That the Courses of Lectures shall, as a rule, consist of not fewer than ten in each subject, and be followed by an examination, and the obtaining of a certificate by those who are successful in passing the examinations.

7. That a small (provisional) Committee be appointed further to consider and develop the Scheme, and to report on its practicability to a future meeting of Delegates from the Universities, and others who may be invited to attend.

Source: *Scheme for the Extension of University Teaching by means of Local Lectures and Classes in the Counties of Fife, Forfar, Perth, Kinross, and Clackmannan*, St Andrews University 1888, SUA T-GED 12/2/23.

Appendix II

A letter from Dan S. Calderwood, Secretary of the Blairgowrie University Extension Society, to Patrick Geddes.

Public School
Blairgowrie
3 – 1 – 88

Mr Geddes,
Sir,

I am very sorry that an unexpected difficulty stands in the way of my being at your University Extension Meeting to-morrow, else I should certainly have been present. I sincerely trust that you may have a large gathering and that your deliberations may be productive of much good to "the cause".

You will, I am sure, be glad to learn that our class here is increasing steadily in numbers and in enthusiasm. Our audience at last lecture (sic) numbered about 160. Mr Renton's work is greatly appreciated by one and all, and a surprisingly large number are taking part in the weekly exercises set by the Lecturer and the work done by these students is certainly very creditable. We are receiving support from all classes of the community and I look forward with confidence to our having at least two similar course next winter.

Again wishing great success to your meeting

I am
Yours Very Truly
Dan S. Calderwood

Source: The Papers of Sir Patrick Geddes, SUA T-GED 12/3/1.

Appendix III

Extract from the First Annual Report of the Glasgow University Extension Board (1889).

At Paisley, two series of lectures have been delivered – one by Mr. W.S. McCormick, M.A., on "Scottish Literature," and the other by Mr. R.M. Wenley, M.A., on "Shakespeare" and "The Literature of the Victorian Era." In both cases, the plan suggested in the Prospectus of repeating the course in the evening to a larger and more popular audience has been adopted. Mr McCormick's course commenced on 1st October, and was attended in the afternoon by 60, and in the evening by 130 persons, the greater number of whom also remained to the Tutorial Class. The number who performed the written exercises was 15 in the case of the afternoon class, and 36 in that of the evening class. Of the former, 4 attended the examination and obtained certificates; of the latter 17 were examined and 12 were awarded certificates. Mr. Wenley's course commenced on 14th January, and the numbers in attendance were 50 in the afternoon and 90 in the evening, nearly all remaining to the Tutorial Class. 8 of the afternoon and 13 of the evening class performed the written; 4 of the former were examined and received certificates; and 7 of the latter presented themselves, of whom 6 gained certificates.

At Greenock a course in English Literature, which commenced on 5th January, was delivered by Mr. R. Mortimer Wheeler, M.A., to an afternoon class of 78, and was repeated to an evening class of 105. Nearly all attended the Tutorial Class. 15 members of each class attended for examination, but the results have not yet been ascertained.

At Ayr, Mr. McCormick delivered an evening course, commencing on 14th January, on "The English Poets of the Nineteenth Century," to a class of 145. Of these, 100 attended the Tutorial Class, and 24 took part in the written work. The results of the examination have not yet been declared.

At Stirling, Mr McCormick delivered an evening course, commencing on 8th January, on "The Poetry of the Nineteenth Century," to a class of 225, of whom 180 attended the Tutorial Class, 50 took part in the written work, and 15 were examined and obtained certificates.

At Hamilton, Mr Wenley has been engaged in two courses, which have not yet been completed. In the afternoon the subject of study is "Shakespeare"; the class numbers 50; one half remain to the Tutorial Class, and 11 have performed written exercises. In the evenings the subject is an introductory Philosophical course; the class numbers 70; two thirds remain to the Tutorial Class, of whom 31 have done written work.

The class at Pollokshields is also still in progress. The lecturer is Mr Wheeler, and the subject "A General Sketch of English Literature." The lectures commenced on 12th February, and the audience numbers 300, of whom between 70 and 80 attend the Tutorial Class and about 20 perform the written exercises.

Source: Glasgow University Extension Board Report (1889) pp 1-2, SAUA, UY 470/2.

Appendix IV

Extract from the Second Annual Report of the Glasgow University Extension Board (1890).

Centre	Subject and Lecturer	No. of Students Attending
Greenock (Afternoon),	Shakespeare (Mr. Wenley),	53
(Evening),	" ("),	35
	Economics (Mr. Mavor),	46
Paisley	Physiology of the Senses (Prof. McKendrick).	130
(Afternoon),	Art and the Arts (Prof. Baldwin Brown),	35
(Evening),	The Decorative Arts (Prof. Baldwin Brown),	15
Ayr	Agricultural Chemistry (Mr. Aikman),	60
	The French Revolution (Rev. W. Granger),	116
Moffat	The Victorian Era of English Literature (Mr. Wenley),	55
Pollokshields	Physiology of the Senses (Prof. McKendrick),	100
	Literature of England from Cowper to Wordsworth (Rev. H.G. Graham),	30 to 40
Dumfries	The English Literature of the Present Century (Mr. Mortimer Wheeler),	100 to 200
Ardrossan	Chemistry of Common Life (Mr Aikman),	150 to 250
Hamilton (Afternoon),	Three Representative Leaders – Ben Jonson, John Dryden and Samuel Johnson (Dr. Colville),	15
(Evening),	The French Revolutionary Epoch (Dr. Colville),	16
Lenzie	Physiology of the Senses (Prof. McKendrick),	110
Helensburgh	Modern Metaphysical Enquiry from Descartes to Kant (Mr. Wenley),	31

It will thus be seen that during the Session 1889-90, between 1,100 and 1,200 in the aggregate have been reached by the movement. In all cases, in accordance with the scheme of the Board, a Tutorial Class followed the lecture, and the attendance at such classes has been on the whole very satisfactory. Seventy-four Certificates have been

granted during the year to those students who, after having attended the Tutorial Class and performed the written exercise, were successful in passing the Board's examinations. The centres outside of the area of the Board at which courses have been delivered by a Lecturer of this Board are Stirling and Perth. Mr W.S. McCormick, M.A., has conducted classes at both places, commencing in the case of Stirling, on 8th October, and in that of Perth, on 14th January. The subject at Stirling was "Representative Writers of the 18th Century." The audience averaged 150. The subject at Perth was "Scottish Literature," and the number enrolled was 67.

Source: Glasgow University Extension Board Report (1990) pp 1-2, SAUA, UY 470/2.

Appendix V

Example of a University Extension Examination Paper.

Edinburgh University Lecture-Extension Association

Edinburgh Philosophical Institution
11th April 1889

Examination of Mr Baildon's Lectures on "Modern Poetry."

Examiner:- W. L. Carrie, M.A.

Instructions, - *Not more than Eight questions are to be attempted.*
The questions may be answered in any order.
Two hours are allowed for this paper.

1. State the chief definitions of Poetry that have been referred to. What was the general definition of Poetry given in the Lectures? Give your reasons for rejecting it or accepting it.

2. Define and exemplify *Simile, Metaphor, Personification.* Explain what Mr Ruskin means by the "Pathetic Fallacy." Have you any comment to offer on this expression?

3. What do you understand by "Tone" and "Texture" in verse? Illustrate.

4. Give the main requisites for a successful Epic Poem, and illustrate your answer by reference to the "Paradise Lost" of Milton. Has any English Epic been written since "Paradise Lost"?

5. "Lyrical Poetry finds its highest development when dissociated from music." Critically examine this statement.

6. Explain in what various senses the "Return to Nature" may be applied to the modern movement in Poetry.

7. State briefly what you have learned respecting the life, works, and character of any *one* of the following:- Gray, Collins, Chatterton, Goldsmith, Thomson, Cowper.

8. Show how Crabbe's early surroundings powerfully influenced his Poetry. What do you understand by the "real" and "ideal" in Poetry?

9. What seems to you to be the characteristic excellences of Burns's Poetry? Give quotations in illustration of your answer. Also, state to what poets he was chiefly indebted for his themes and models.

10. What influences are most prominent in the Poems of William Blake? Contrast his earlier with his later style.

11. State and comment on – (*a*) Wordsworth's view and treatment of Nature; or (*b*) His Theory of Poetic Diction.

12. What seems to you to be the chief merits of Scott's Romantic Poems? Illustrate.

13. State the prevalent *literary* influences traceable in the poetry of any *one* of the following:- Keats, Landor, Tennyson, Browning.

14. Compare the characters of Byron and Shelley. Did they influence each other's Poetry?

15. Can any distinction be drawn between the poetic and the practical Ethic? Does this distinction affect our view of Tennyson's "Idylls of the King"?

16. Name the authors of the following Poems, and give a critical estimate of any *one* of the Poems:- The Deserted Village; Elegy written in a Country Churchyard; Tam O' Shanter; The Rime of the Ancient Mariner; The Prelude; Hymn to Mont Blanc*; Maud; Lady Geraldine's Courtship; Le Casquettes; The Earthly Paradise; Paracelsus.

* This is an incorrect title for Shelley's *Mont Blanc: Lines Written in the Vale of Chamouni*. The exam paper is annotated to explain this – presumably the examiner was asked to make this clear to the candidates.

Source: Collection of Papers on University Extension, SAUA UY 470/2.

Appendix VI

Perth University Education Society – Examiner's Report

Report by Professor Seth, Examiner of Professor Knight's Classes
University, St. Andrews, N.B.
22nd April, 1890

Dear Sir,

I return you herewith the Examiner's Report Form for the classes of Literature and Philosophy held by Professor Knight. You will see that all the eight who entered have passed in English Literature – which means that they all show in their papers an appreciable benefit derived from the class, and an intelligent acquaintance with the subjects treated in it. Of four of the papers I could say considerably more; one of these is of a very high degree of excellence indeed, and would do credit to any University student. Although, by agreement with the other Universities, we only grant Pass Certificates, I do not think there can be any objection to my letting you know the four names, which would thus be placed in the first class –

Mitchell, Jane.
Bramwell, Eleanor.
Grant, Agnes M.
Macdonald, Eleanor N.

These are in order of merit, and the first is the paper whose unusual excellence I have alluded to.

In Philosophy six of the seven candidates are in my judgment entitled to a Certificate. This is a subject with which there would in most cases be less previous knowledge, and the results of the course seem to me highly satisfactory. Four of the papers are very well done, two specifically so, and Mr. Bain's, the best of all, is in every way most excellent. The order here is –

Bain, Alexander.
Bramwell, Eleanor.
Grant, Agnes.
Mechie, Christina.
Mercer, Mabel.
Sandeman, Laura S.

The Certificates will be duly forwarded to you, but possibly, owing to Professor Knight's and my own absence from St. Andrews, they may not reach you in time for the 29th. I suppose, however, that his will not matter, so long as you have the Report.

Yours faithfully,

J.W. Munro, Esq.

ANDREW SETH

Source: Perth University Education Society, Report for the year ending 31st March, 1889, p 4, SAUA UY 470/2.

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