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## **Borstal reform in the 1930s**

### QUESTIONING THE RHETORIC OF BRITISH BORSTAL REFORM IN THE 1930s

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In 1938, the Reverend Digby Bliss Kittermaster, chaplain at Rochester Borstal in Kent, started a diary in which he recorded his everyday interactions with the institution's inmates and staff. This hitherto neglected source in the Mass Observation Archive stands out from a long tradition of prison chaplains chronicling the lives of offenders for its focus on the voices and opinions of young inmates.<sup>1</sup> Kittermaster was writing at a time when borstal's reputation was at its height due to relatively low re-conviction rates which has been responsible for a nostalgic view of its success exemplified by the popular 2015 ITV series, 'Bring Back Borstal', set in the 1930s.<sup>2</sup> Borstal's effectiveness was attributed to the Prison Commissioner, Alexander Paterson, who dominated penal reform between 1922 -1947 and whose borstal reforms were based on the structures and character-building ethos of the elite British public school.<sup>3</sup> Paterson became a 'household word' in the interwar years, when his 'image of a progressive and reformatory prison system' was promoted across the expanding media market of newspapers, magazines and journals.<sup>4</sup> Young people's voices were rarely heard in discussions of these reforms and Kittermaster is unusual in the literature on youth institutions for articulating them. His record of what inmates told him and what he overheard subverts uncritical narratives of successful rehabilitation with its attention to the humiliation, fear, and helplessness that boys in borstal often experienced.<sup>5</sup> This was, however, a mediated account and something of a coda to a long career as a public school housemaster and lifelong involvement in welfare work with working-class boys. These experiences attuned him to the tensions of trying to control adolescent boys but also to how hierarchical systems accentuated the failings of adults placed in charge over them. As a housemaster at Harrow School, he had

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been belittled by colleagues for his compassion and tolerance to pupils, especially non-conformists who did not fit in, and his role at Rochester reinforced awareness of how a paternalistic and autocratic rehabilitative system based on the public school model worked in practice to demoralise inmates and make cynics of idealistic staff.<sup>6</sup> Rochester disappointed his conviction that boys, regardless of class, shared the same nature and could be reached through sympathetic guidance and education. It exposed the hollowness of an ostensibly reformed system whose rhetoric obscured the affective failings and emotional costs of coercion, intimidation and unofficial brutality endemic to both borstal and public school.

Kittermaster retired, in 1937, from his long career at Harrow public school and started shortly after as chaplain at Rochester. Why he took up this work is difficult to say. He may have been encouraged by Paterson, a charismatic persuader of individuals, who described ‘a good chaplain’ as ‘the most potent factor in the betterment of an inmate’.<sup>7</sup> Very likely was the influence of Kittermaster’s nephew, Tom Harrison who, with Humphrey Jennings and Charles Madge co-founded Mass Observation (MO) in 1937. Kittermaster described himself as ‘a keen voluntary observer’ and took pride in his ‘amateur knowledge’ of Mass Observation.<sup>8</sup> MO diarists were encouraged to reflect on their own ‘feelings and behaviour’ and Kittermaster pondered with ‘directness and honesty’ on his frustrations with Rochester and inability to effect change there.<sup>9</sup> MO volunteers have also been described as ‘looking for a meaning and purpose in their lives’ and Kittermaster’s new post certainly represented a significant moment of transition, as he returned in ‘old age’ to his ‘first love’, working with troubled working-class boys of a kind he had encountered as a young priest in Liverpool.<sup>10</sup> His diary consequently offers a challenging mix of mediated voices, Kittermaster’s own convictions and post-retirement sensitivities, and personal and emotional struggles – his own, and those of inmates. What follows sets these in context by outlining how the borstal training identified with Paterson’s reforms developed in the interwar years. It then introduces

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Kittermaster as chaplain, voluntary worker and public school housemaster, before turning to his diary, whose contribution to the history of young adult offenders and youth justice is both original and suggestive counter to how borstal has often been depicted in the Paterson era of reform.

### I

Rochester was the original borstal institution, trialled in 1902 as an alternative to prison for young offenders aged 16 to 21 by Evelyn Ruggles-Brise, whose successful ‘experiment’ to keep youth offenders in an separate institution away from adult prisoners was rolled out nationally in 1908, under the Prevention of Crime Act, part of broader youth justice changes which included a separate juvenile justice process for children up to 16, and custodial alternatives such as probation.<sup>11</sup> Borstals were for male and female offenders aged between sixteen and their early twenties, who fell between reformatory schools for younger age groups and adult prisons and who were considered likely to benefit from the education and training they offered; some still went to adult prison.<sup>12</sup> Despite its ‘enlightened’ ideals, the borstal system was severely criticized after the First World War by a Prison System Enquiry Committee in the wake of a suicide and escapes from a new borstal facility at Portland, a former prison with the ‘blackest and gloomiest criminal traditions’, whose warders dealt with inmates in the ‘old brutal way’.<sup>13</sup> The press severely criticized Portland’s failure to implement educational principles of ‘reform and redemption’ and public disquiet led eventually, in 1922, to Paterson, social reformer and progressive, being appointed to implement change, as Commissioner of Prisons and Director of Convict Prisons.<sup>14</sup> Paterson’s paternalistic belief in character, self-discipline and personal responsibility diffused public school values into borstal in ways already familiar in the state education system, by introducing the house system, abolishing uniforms for borstal staff, changing the name of

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inmates' cells to 'rooms', and encouraging sports competitions to promote group pride, loyalty and 'corporate spirit'.<sup>15</sup> Borstal's overwhelmingly working-class inmates were the immature 'other', unable to self-regulate or behave like 'normal' middle-class youth, a view reflective of Ruggles-Brise's belief that the brain did not fully mature until the age of twenty-one, and not until twenty-five or twenty six in the case of working-class youth.<sup>16</sup> Youth offenders' enduring, malleable adolescent personalities were considered well-suited to the character-building discipline of the reformed public school, whose structure and ethos had transformed 'England's elite' in the nineteenth-century.<sup>17</sup> Paterson successfully 'wooed' many young men from public schools and universities to work as borstal housemasters in the belief that the 'ex-public school teacher – housemaster type' was ideally suited to work with borstal boys, who would respond well to personal influence and not want to let them down, if they felt trusted.<sup>18</sup> These men, expected to take a close personal interest in inmates, were ideal monitors of the reformed borstals, given their familiarity with the codes and expectations of a hierarchical public school system based on conformity, deference to authority, constant activity and closely regulated time.<sup>19</sup>

Compulsory chapel, team games, housemasters, matrons and the ideal of 'the young lad and his master, playing the game' were useful propaganda in persuading opponents of reform<sup>20</sup> that public school 'traditions' which would reform 'lads' and enable them to exercise 'as much authority as the old governor did with his bread and water punishment'.<sup>21</sup> In reality, borstal was, of course, much tougher than the idealised system on which it was modelled, although both inmates and public school pupils were subject to a similar emotional regime and marched to 'to the same disciplinary cadence' of fear and distrust.<sup>22</sup>

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Digby Bliss Kittermaster was educated in precisely these public school traditions. Born in 1877, the son of a Shropshire vicar, he attended Shrewsbury School and Clare College Cambridge and was ordained in 1902.<sup>23</sup> Shortly after starting his pastoral life as a curate in Gateshead, he was invited by the Head of Shrewsbury School, the Revd. H. Moss, to become Superintendent of the Shrewsbury School Mission and Boys' Club in one of the poorest areas of Everton, in Liverpool.<sup>24</sup> Kittermaster managed the Boys' Club, which opened in 1903, 'two miserable little rooms' in the dark unhealthy cellar' of a disused 'beer shop', which 'took nearly the lowest class of Liverpool boy'.<sup>25</sup> Members were often suspicious of the organizers' 'do-gooding' motives and there were frequent fights, rows and closures.<sup>26</sup> In 1907, successful fund-raising allowed the club to move to new premises, including a 'poor boys' lodging house', which was intended in part for 'old boys' of the Reformatory Training Ship, H.M.S. Akbar, where Kittermaster was chaplain.<sup>27</sup> He also became a probation officer in a period when the 'system was in its groping infancy, and we were unpaid volunteers who did little except cast an occasional friendly eye on our charges'.<sup>28</sup> Kittermaster's life-long interest in the welfare of working-class boys started in these heady, pioneering days, recalled nostalgically in 1930, when he wrote how 'Some of us, looking back, believe that we were probably more simply happy then than at any time before or since'.<sup>29</sup>

His work in Liverpool also had a darker side. H.M.S. Akbar, for example, introduced him to the harsh conditions typical of naval training establishments. The ship was scrapped in 1907 due to its deteriorating physical state, with the boys transferred to a temporary camp for eighteen months before entering the Nautical Training School at Heswall, which in 1909 became a Reformatory School, although boys and staff still referred to it as the Akbar.<sup>30</sup> In October 1910, *John Bull* published an exposé of conditions there under the headline 'Reformatory School Horrors – How boys at the Akbar School are Tortured – Several Deaths', based on information from the former deputy superintendent and matron, who went

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to the press after their complaints were ignored by the Home Office and MPs. Alleged abuse included brutal punishment for the smallest misdemeanours, with ‘sick boys’ drenched in cold water, others made to stand all night or ‘tied down and gagged before flogging’.<sup>31</sup> The revelations precipitated a Home Office investigation by C.F.G. Masterman, the Under-Secretary of State, who rejected ‘all claims of brutality’ and exonerated the Akbar’s superintendent, Captain Buettler, whose punishments were characterized as ‘irregular’, but perhaps understandable given type of boys in his care.<sup>32</sup> *John Bull*’s furious response was to attack Masterman as a ‘whitewasher’, contributing to a national scandal which although eventually a ‘catalyst’ for change, exemplified an endemic ‘divergence of view’ between supporting children or protecting the system.<sup>33</sup>

By May 1910, Kittermaster had already resigned his posts in Liverpool and travelled to Buenos Aires, invited by Bishop Avery, his former vicar at Gateshead, to become archdeacon at St John’s Pro-Cathedral. Whether his experiences on the Akbar and at Heswall encouraged him to leave is difficult to say. His time in both places certainly left its mark. He had already revealed abuses on the old Akbar ship, and at Masterman’s request, sent ‘a very full and interesting report’ about his experiences at Heswall, in which he admitted that he had felt so strongly that ‘something was wrong with the School’ that ‘he lost all heart’, because the boys ‘smarted’ under such a strong ‘sense of being unfairly treated’.<sup>34</sup> This sensitivity to boys’ feelings of injustice remained throughout his life. He thought no officer was ‘purposely cruel’, ‘could not say that any of the punishments were actually undeserved and unfair’, or describe ‘instances of actual bullying. Nonetheless, he believed the School was ‘turning out heartless and hardened boys’ who ‘in essentials’ were ‘unreformed’, despite the ‘superficial smartness and paper returns’, an equivocal response which became more forceful in his later years.<sup>35</sup> In 1939, for example, he reflected on the ‘bad old days of thirty years ago’ when he had seen boys ‘flogged almost to pieces in a Reformatory’, and after the Second World War

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described the punishment he had witnessed forty years earlier as ‘sometimes downright cruel’.<sup>36</sup>

Kittermaster returned from Argentina in January 1912 and in July married Margaret Elizabeth Bennett.<sup>37</sup> He abandoned full-time welfare work with working-class boys to become a public school teacher, first as assistant master at Shrewsbury then, in 1913, at Harrow, where he was recommended by a friend.<sup>38</sup> He described this change in career as moving from one kind of ‘youthful delinquency’ to ‘work amongst a different type of delinquent in Harrow School’.<sup>39</sup> His views were sufficiently ‘unorthodox’ to shock the Head, Lionel Ford, who initially insisted that there were no vacancies, although he offered Kittermaster a teaching post after experiencing first-hand the power of his preaching at an evening service in Harrow Chapel.<sup>40</sup>

Kittermaster became an army chaplain in the First World War, when he won the Military Cross, and returned ‘an ardent pacifist’ to Harrow, as House Master of Newlands.<sup>41</sup> ‘Naturally rebellious’, Kittermaster was unusual in a school where progressive ideas and hints of non-conformity were repressed and staff and pupils avoided standing out for fear of attracting ‘unwelcome attention’.<sup>42</sup> His Anglo-Catholic colleagues disliked his ‘evangelical vocation’ and regarded him as ‘at heart... a lay slum worker’, as he persisted with his welfare concerns persisted and profoundly influenced some pupils, such as Peter Cox, founder of Dartington College, who spent school holidays at Harrow Mission in London and Nottingham Borstal.<sup>43</sup> Kittermaster’s work with poor working-class boys seems to have shaped ‘a special sympathy for pupils who did not fit in’, whom colleagues disparaged as ‘Kitter’s criminals’.<sup>44</sup> Among the most significant of these was Tom Harrison, Kittermaster’s nephew and godson, born in Buenos Aires the same year his uncle had arrived in Argentina. Harrison joined Newlands in 1925 and as an adult recalled the unusual freedom Kittermaster had allowed as housemaster, recalling his uncle as ‘a splendid man to



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whom I owe much. He put up with all kinds of stuff. I was always bloody-minded and trying to start something new or saying, ‘why do we have to do this?’<sup>45</sup> Like other artists and intellectuals who came of age in the interwar years, such as W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, Harrison reacted strongly against the disciplining ethos of their preparatory and public schools and the petty rules and system of privilege to which pupils were expected to adhere.<sup>46</sup> Tellingly, Harrison’s introduction to a Mass Observation *Report on Juvenile Delinquency*, admitted to a strong sense of feeling ‘There...for the Grace of God, go I’.

After all, let us face it. Who of us can truly say that in different times, with a different parental or income background – or even in the background and conditions that we had when aged 17 – by some slight circumstances we might not have ended with the dishonourable title of Juvenile Delinquent.<sup>47</sup>

### III

Borstals were more varied than the original borstal ‘experiment’ by the late-1930s, when Rochester had become one of five closed borstals for boys, of which Portland, Dorset, and Sherwood, Nottingham, were the most severe.<sup>48</sup> Portland applied ‘rigid discipline’ to its older, ‘less co-operative’ repeat offenders, who had often been institutionally hardened through the army, industrial school or prison.<sup>49</sup> Sherwood received ‘mature lads, of the “tough”, “gangster”, “hooligan” variety; ‘difficult and restless’.<sup>50</sup> Camp Hill, an ex-Approved School, took ‘hardened’ young offenders, likely to abscond.<sup>51</sup> Feltham, Middlesex, for less physically and mentally able ‘immature’ boys, also served as the Borstal Reception Centre.<sup>52</sup> Rochester was known for inmates of ‘a fairly high intelligence, ‘immature boys’ with ‘better records’ who had often failed on probation and were judged to have a ‘considerable criminal tendency’.<sup>53</sup>

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Starting at Rochester, Kittermaster was initially 'impressed' at 'what great progress had been made in many directions in the treatment of young offenders in a quarter of a century' since he had first worked in Liverpool.<sup>54</sup> He began gathering material for a book on juvenile delinquency and encouraged 'lads' whom he 'knew intimately' and 'mostly' trusted, to write their life stories; 'intimate personal accounts' of life in borstal and how they had come to end up there.<sup>55</sup> These notes and what he described as his 'spasmodic' diary continued until 1940, when the war swept away much of the borstal system established since the 1920s, as staff were called up and two thirds of inmates were dispersed, often to the armed services.<sup>56</sup> Five borstals were closed.<sup>57</sup> Like many other retired teachers, Kittermaster returned to teaching during the war, first at Tonbridge, Campbell College Belfast (1941-43), where he was described as 'a very odd retired housemaster', and then at his old school, Shrewsbury.<sup>58</sup>

After the war, Kittermaster returned to the idea of writing up his borstal experiences, but concluding he lacked sufficient material for a complete book, handed over his diary, autobiographies and personal accounts to H.D. Willcock, to be 'creamed' off for a planned Mass Observation publication called *Report on Juvenile Delinquency*.<sup>59</sup> This 'documentary presentation of a worm's eye view' was intended to show how the ordinary experiences of juvenile offenders differed from the 'moral', judgemental assumptions which usually surrounded them.<sup>60</sup> Harrison, who introduced the book, was sensitive to how it might be received. The 'elaborate arrangements' required to get any outsiders into offender institutions had largely precluded direct observation of everyday activity there. Officials feared institutional regulations and potential disciplinary action and off-the-record conversations, even when heavily disguised, could not be quoted because specific institutions and individuals were too easy to identify.<sup>61</sup> Even so, Harrison claimed that the report had 'produced quite anxious enquiries' from the Prison Commissioners before publication,

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possibly following recent ‘dramatic breakdowns’ and ‘scandals’ in the care system for young people and the elderly, revealed by the 1945 Curtis Committee on young and homeless children and the 1947 Nuffield Foundation Report, *Old People*.<sup>62</sup> In a familiar and persisting pattern, adolescents fell between the needs of the younger child and the elderly; Harrison believed that an impartial and thorough investigation into *every* type of unit dealing with the adolescent and the ‘young person’ would show an equally ‘surprising’ situation’.<sup>63</sup> The MO Report did little to fill this gap. Scathing reviewers described it as a ‘very serious flop’, a haphazard, unscientific one-sided report which discounted differences between youth offending institutions, and which mixed evidence from the pre-war and post-war periods.<sup>64</sup> Kittermaster’s own insights and reflections were sidelined in ‘a carelessly concocted hotch-potch’, stitched together with more than a dozen other contributors and 30 case histories, extracts from his diary anonymised and deliberately mis-dated, largely concerned with sexual behaviour, sexual relationships and inmates’ mental states.<sup>65</sup>

## IV

Despite initial optimism, Kittermaster had become increasingly frustrated as he got to know the ‘lads’ at Rochester. His evangelical belief that the ‘common salvation of faith’ bound rich and poor together combined with idealisation of a shared ‘boy nature’ common to the boys’ club movement and he viewed much of the inmates’ criminality as little different from the rebellion, social non-conformity and anti-authoritarian attitudes of the ‘young criminals’ he had taught at public school.<sup>66</sup> It was ‘interesting’

to discover how often stealing is a symptom of ferment going on in the adolescent.

This was proved frequently at Harrow, but the Harrovian outgrows it. The out-of-

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work Manchester lad or London hooligan gets into the clutches of the police and after a spell of probation finds his way to Borstal.<sup>67</sup>

The ‘stupid’ ‘disparity of ages’ in borstal, which ranged from sixteen to twenty-five,’ meant the public school model for controlling adolescent behaviour was a quixotic mix of treating ‘grown men... like preparatory school boys one minute and like unreasonable “criminals” who need “breaking” the next’.<sup>68</sup> Borstal housemasters exemplified ‘the normal attitude of a schoolmaster to immature boys at school... “We are the good people and we are here to show you bad boys how to be good”’.<sup>69</sup> Inmates employed since the age of fourteen were emasculated, forced to abandon the long trousers of their working lives for ‘prep-school’ shorts.<sup>70</sup> It was, Kittermaster observed, ludicrous that a ‘burly ruffian of nineteen’, a ‘great hardbitten fellow’, who had ‘only a small thieving escapade against him’ and had not only ‘been drunk every Saturday night for years’ but had also had ‘had his woman regularly since he was sixteen, should be dressed up in shorts and called a Borstal ‘boy’’.<sup>71</sup> He similarly criticized the annual camp, typically regarded as one of borstal’s highpoints: ‘These grown men do not enjoy camping in the heart of the country, where there are no girls to meet, no cinemas, no shops to see. It is a fundamental weakness of this place that these men are spoken of, and treated as, boys’.<sup>72</sup> He described Bromley, a self-confessed loner, ‘the naughty boy of the family’, who as a child had been frequently beaten at home and at school. He joined the army as a band boy but was discharged because of getting into trouble and contemptuously observed of his fellow inmates, who were supposed to be ‘toughs’:

Look at them, great men of twenty-three like me, dressed up like schoolboys in shorts, sitting in corners reading comics, with Crippen (*Rawson, the housemaster*) treating

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‘em like school kids. Bah, they knock all the manhood out of you here. What sort of man am I now, after twenty six months of this place.’<sup>73</sup>

Inmates survived by keeping a low profile and doing what was expected, but the infantilisation of having to adhere to a notion of adolescent ‘boyishness’ reinforced resentment. A young married man, ‘reasonable’ but ‘violent tempered’, convicted for one car theft offence was ‘determined to do his full three years rather than knuckle under to officers’ orders and as a result had spent eighteen months at Portland borstal, mostly in the cells, ‘often on a number 1 diet – bread and water’.<sup>74</sup>

Kittermaster often commented how resentment and rebelliousness were exacerbated by the unfairness of a system in which some were detained for serious crimes, while others were kept in for minor offences to deter them from worse trouble. One inmate named King had lost his father when aged ten and been sent to an orphanage. He returned to live with his mother at fifteen and started work but was restless and went on the tramp, only to be arrested as a wanderer of no fixed abode, eventually sentenced to three years at borstal after absconding from several reformatories. King had been regularly beaten at the orphanage and reformatory, yet few other than Kittermaster seem to have considered its effects on his mental state. Ending up in borstal with no criminal charge against him had produced a ‘deep grievance’ and ‘permanent state of rebellious depression’, worsened when his application for a special discharge after eighteen months on the basis of not having a criminal conviction was turned down, due to his house-master’s belief that he was not ‘fit to go out’ because he showed no interest in his work.<sup>75</sup>

Similar patterns of un-premeditated rebellion and resistance were familiar across a range of residential care facilities for young people in the first half of the twentieth-century, depending on ‘the age of inmates, style of leadership, and quality of staffing’.<sup>76</sup> Borstal

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inmates who contested authority and drew attention to themselves by refusing to show deference and respect were intentionally humiliated in front of their peers, isolated physically and emotionally to ensure compliance.<sup>77</sup> Much to Kittermaster's disgust, compulsory chapel was part of this disciplinary routine. 'The governor quoted as an argument for the unsatisfactory state of one youth's mind the fact that he refused to take any part in compulsory chapel services and always stood during the hymns with folded arms and tightly compressed lips'.<sup>78</sup> Many ended up in the cells for minor transgressions, such as using obscene language and other 'fatuous offences'.<sup>79</sup> A 'lad' aged twenty-two, a 'hard-bitten army deserter', was made to do an hour's scrubbing' because he had wrongly hung his towel at the end of the bed.<sup>80</sup> A young man whom Kittermaster described as the 'pyjama rebel', who had always slept naked or in his spare shirt at home, was punished for insisting on still sleeping 'stark naked' at borstal.<sup>81</sup>

'Insolence' encompassed very petty misdemeanours and the cells at Rochester were 'full of boys ordered there' for behaviour such as "being a general nuisance" and swearing', 'using a form of speech' which was 'common currency' in their 'walk of life', and which was the same language that officers often used.<sup>82</sup> 'It should be impossible for a lad to be charged with "insolence"'.<sup>83</sup> 'Three-quarters of the offences' were made into violations by 'the piqued vanity of Outraged Authority. "Insolence", "obscene language", "slackness at labour" – these are the charges constantly appearing on boys' reports'.<sup>84</sup> Regular interviews closely monitored inmates' conduct, documenting demeanour, character and progress, with bad behaviour punished and good rewarded through an ascending scale of rewards and privileges.<sup>85</sup> Public school expectations such as house loyalty coloured how inmates were judged in monthly meetings to consider their promotion and discharge. Early release was at the discretion of borstal staff and two young people convicted of similar crimes could remain incarcerated for very different lengths of time, with release refused if they failed to

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demonstrate sufficient evidence of character; a twenty-three year old young man was turned down because he had been reported for talking and laughing at his work.<sup>86</sup> A long discussion took place on one occasion about the advisability of promoting 'one lad' because he lacked 'house spirit'. This talented clock and watch repairer spent every spare hour on his hobby, yet was criticized for 'wasting' too much time, preferring to do carpentry in the house hobby room, rather than take part in games.<sup>87</sup> Curtailment of boys' healthy enthusiasms and skills useful for their eventual release, exasperated Kittermaster: 'Oh though spirit and soul of the Prep School Master, bless though the Public School Spirit, praise it and magnify it for ever! Rawson is obsessed with the delusion that anything a boy likes is "bad for him"'.<sup>88</sup>

House leaders, the equivalent of prefects in public school, had to report back regularly on house misdemeanours. Kittermaster called them 'housemasters' spies'.<sup>89</sup> 'The housemaster sets a thief to catch a thief, and often the thief does the catching in order to curry favour with the authorities or because he has a down on the fellow he is out to catch'.<sup>90</sup> Mark Benney, in borstal for eighteen months in the mid-1920s, thought perhaps only one in ten 'house captains' took the job seriously. For most, it was simply an opportunity to acquire more privileges. Benney, bullied at industrial school and in borstal, recalled how when he in turn became a house captain, he felt inclined to 'pass on some of the pains' he had had inflicted on him: 'It gave me an excuse to get better food and more cigarettes; it gave me a chance of dominating. I do not think I was at all abnormal.'<sup>91</sup> A neglected child brought up in poverty, Benney had been in and out of the youth justice system and prison, escaping the borstal bullies by reading and using the borstal library to teach himself. He became a successful journalist, writer, and criminologist and despite his own views, might be seen as a borstal success, although a biographer suspected that 'the psychological costs of his early upbringing and his later spells of incarceration were more extensive than Benney was prepared to admit'.<sup>92</sup>

Borstal and public schools deployed ‘rituals of humiliation’ to enforce the ‘rules, scripts and vocabularies’ of ‘appropriate’ masculinity and emotional behaviour, and awareness of personal weakness and vulnerability.<sup>93</sup> During the early months of their sentence, inmates were subject to high levels of surveillance, discipline and punishment. Thought to be doing well, they could be released early, with discharge possible on licence after six months, although recall was likely if behaviour deteriorated. The less biddable were continually knocked back by indeterminate sentences and a seemingly arbitrary release process, causing considerable stress and anxiety. As their discharge date approached, some became ‘over-excited’ and less careful of the regulations, so release was deferred with several more months added to their sentence.<sup>94</sup> Inmates who refused to show evidence of reform served sentences far in excess of their original minor offences. At Rochester, the more naïve inmates who did not know how to play the system were often held longest:

‘The way to get on in this place,’ said a lad, ‘is to be a nuisance at first, then get in lots of trouble, and after that seem to turn over a new leaf. Then your housemaster says: ‘See what Borstal is doing for him. How different he is from when he first came.’ But if you behave yourself from the start, the housemaster says: ‘He is a cunning, crafty fellow. We must keep him here a long time’.<sup>95</sup>

Hard cases, knowing there is little hope of release before twenty months, do not begin to “behave themselves” until the time of release approaches. Then they “turn over a new leaf” and it goes down on their record that they are “doing better”, have “turned



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the corner”, are “co-operating”; all very suddenly. In nine cases out of ten, records mean nothing. In any case, the boys with records of troublesome conduct are often the most worth-while and the least criminal.<sup>96</sup>

Rochester’s ‘pompous, well-fed, good-hearted, unimaginative committee, sitting round a table, deciding the fate of lads of whom they know nothing’, irritated Kittermaster ‘beyond words’.<sup>97</sup> Their ‘imposition of authority from above, instead of the attitude of friendliness and equality, is a typical example of the wrong approach’.<sup>98</sup> He thought Rochester ‘almost useless’, because the numbers were ‘so huge’ that it was impossible to give inmates the individual treatment in which Paterson believed.<sup>99</sup>

Borstal punishment did not centre on corporal chastisement, as with Approved Schools and public schools, but on the demoralising withdrawal of privileges.<sup>100</sup> Those who refused to conform were shamed, compliance often enforced by solitary confinement in the cells, with a basic diet of bread and water. Those refusing work slept on ‘a miserable thin flock mattress spread on a hard plank of wood’ and broke up lumps of new flint for eight hours a day with a ‘top heavy iron pounder’, watched over by an officer who had to stand for as long as the inmates were at work, so was hardly likely to be sympathetic towards them.<sup>101</sup>

Visited the cells. Crawford, a poor half-witted creature is there on a number 2 diet. To-day, a bitter day of snow driving out the northern sky, he has been pounding for eight hours (pounding flint onto powder with an iron crowbar), with an officer standing in the bleak exposed yard watching him. Senseless and useless cruelty for both parties. ‘A medieval show,’ said the officer tonight.<sup>102</sup>

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Another 'lad' on a number 2 diet collapsed at his pounding and was taken to hospital, 'starved and too weak to go on with his task', having subsisted on a diet of dry bread for breakfast, porridge and potatoes for dinner and a piece of bread for tea.<sup>103</sup>

Pounding, a Victorian punishment intended to break the spirit, took a heavy toll of the pounders' hands, which often ended 'swathed in bandages' to cover up 'raw red blisters' so they could carry on. Pounding would be abolished by the end of World War Two but was still going strong when Kittermaster was at Rochester, much to his dismay: 'If parents in Bethnal Green so treated their child, they would be prosecuted by the R.S.P.C.C.'<sup>104</sup> 'What conceivable benefit can the miserable victims of this medieval barbarity be receiving? I believe that the authorities dare not put a man on pounding in a convict prison'.<sup>105</sup> Pounding was one of the punishments that absconders had to endure, with the amount of stone they produced judged as a mark of their work ethic. On an occasion when two absconders were placed to work together, the one who managed to fill three boxes was released from the task because he had done so well. The other, whose 'bruised and blistered right hand' was 'swathed in bandages' only managed to fill two and a half boxes. He was visited by the Governor, to be told that the only way of telling whether he was sorry for his offence was by the amount of flint he pounded.

'I cannot tell by your behaviour, for you have no temptations here. I can only tell by the amount of work you do.'

'Christ,' said the boy, 'he can tell how sorry I am by the way I pound my stones. Christ, can he. But I suppose you can't expect the Governor to talk sense'.<sup>106</sup>

The many reasons for absconding included a desire to escape the general atmosphere of intimidation:

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‘I have not been bullied, but I see much of it. It gets on your nerves, so I scarpered (absconded).’ The poor little devil wept and showed me his hands covered with sores and great black blisters, after one day’s pounding’.<sup>107</sup>

Another inmate, who ‘talked very freely’ on the ‘psychology of absconding’, suggested that ‘lads’ ran off

not with any real hope of getting away, but because at intervals they get fits of depression. The months stretch interminably ahead of them, and they feel they must do something to let themselves go.

“Breaking all the windows of the institution,” he said, “would do just as well. But they don’t do that. They scarper”.<sup>108</sup>

Institutional and peer bullying exacerbated depression and mental health problems among vulnerable inmates. At high risk of self-mutilation and suicide, they were more likely to be regarded as manipulative and needing discipline than vulnerable. In May 1938, Kittermaster recounted the fourth case of ‘attempted suicide’ he had reported since arriving at Rochester:

A poor simple creature, who was doing time in the cells for an attempt at absconding. Sick of the senselessly cruel pounding and the miserable Penal Class diet, his hands a mass of raw and bloody blisters, he planned an escape from his wretched lot by hacking at his wrist with a table knife. He was removed to hospital and placed under observation. He had felt queer for two days, had had a continuous headache and not slept for two nights. He had been beaten over the head by the Chief Officer the day

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before for not pounding hard enough. He hadn't dared to report sick to the doctor on his daily round of the cells.<sup>109</sup>

This 'wretched half-wit' was still in the cells almost three weeks later, having spent a month there. Slashing his wrist again with a knife, he had been confined for some hours in a 'strait-waistcoat' and then returned to 'his eight day torture'.<sup>110</sup> Later in the same month, Kittermaster 'had it out' with the Governor', about 'Penal Class Diet and Pounding', having discovered that Rochester was the only institution that used this system. The Governor was sympathetic, but claimed he could find no alternative and feared how the commissioners might respond to its discontinuation, a disinclination to act which Kittermaster described as the 'most ignoble' aspect of Rochester.<sup>111</sup> He continued to criticize the 'barbarity and uselessness of pounding and dietary punishment', complaining about it at a conference of borstal housemasters towards the end of the war when, despite opposition, he managed to get resolutions passed to abolish dietary penalties and to stop pounding 'if a suitable alternative could be found'.<sup>112</sup>

Kittermaster's insistence on treating inmates as individuals and his concern for the emotional well-being needs of borstal inmates, based on an 'elementary knowledge of psychology' was unusual, although his social concerns were not unique.<sup>113</sup> Many former army chaplains like Kittermaster, often sensitised by their war experiences, became involved with an 'impressive' range of social and industrial issues in the interwar years, when pastoral work, as in Kittermaster's case, was coming under influence of the new discipline of psychology.<sup>114</sup> Kittermaster's own sympathies exemplified a 'more individualistic, humanitarian and "caring" approach to offender treatment', which had yet to find expression within the borstal system.<sup>115</sup> Child psychiatry was becoming established as a medical specialism and child guidance clinics were using therapeutic approaches with emotionally

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disturbed children, although such methods were contentious and not common among educationists until the 1960s.<sup>116</sup> They were more accepted in the probation service than in borstals, which ‘were almost totally unaffected’, largely due to resistance from staff, who clung to penal discipline and the character-building public school model.<sup>117</sup> At Wormwood Scrubs, a psychologist, possibly ‘the first non-medical psychologist in the prison service’, who saw and tested ‘the Borstal receptions’, found ‘nearly all his recommendations overridden in one way or another’. The only ‘congenial spirit’ he had found there was the ‘padre’, who had ‘apparently resigned, browned off’.<sup>118</sup> Group therapy was not introduced to borstal until after the Second World War and there were few alternatives to treat young men who clearly would have benefited from a therapeutic rather than punitive intervention.<sup>119</sup> Kittermaster cited ‘an illegitimate child’, ‘cruelly beaten with a leather belt by a stepfather almost since infancy. ‘He stammers badly since falling into a river and being nearly drowned when he was seven. He needs skilled treatment. Force and violence and punishment have been tried for the last three years and failed’.<sup>120</sup> Several inmates whom Kittermaster described seem to have had mental health issues. A young man called Reeves, ‘the lunatic who has been here twenty-seven months’, was continually threatened with prison by his housemaster, Rawson, ‘simply because

he cannot resist playing the fool on every possible occasion. He told me that he deliberately cut buttons off his coat and shirt before inspection, just to see Rawson fly into a rage and order him to sew them on again. Rawson was making a speech to the house the other day and Reeves, who had a bit of metal in his hand, could not resist dropping it on the floor, just to hear Rawson blow up. So Rawson wants to send him to prison.<sup>121</sup>

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Acute anxiety and depression were ignored and when noticed, seen as an expected and even desirable outcome of the borstal approach. On visiting one of his former inmates, now serving six weeks in Wandsworth Prison, the Governor of Rochester was told by the boy that he was 'very down'. "Ah," said the Governor, "I am glad to hear it. That is what we want you to be".<sup>122</sup>

For Kittermaster, Paterson's public school ideals of trust, responsibility and character stood little chance of success in a coercive environment which ground down not only inmates, but staff.<sup>123</sup> It was all too easy to become cynical and time-serving, idealism dissipated by the daily grind of institutional routine, poor working conditions and long hours.<sup>124</sup> The 'imaginative and enlightened' Deputy Governor of Portland told Kittermaster that he took little notice of an officer's report if it was delivered on a cold day when an east wind was blowing, because 'the officer's mood and conditions ... were the most important things to consider', rather than the report itself.<sup>125</sup> The atmosphere at Rochester was 'calculated to break the spirit of any enthusiast who joined the staff', who had to toe the line and not get above himself, as a junior assistant housemaster realised when hauled up by the Governor because he had presumed to invite a Prison Commissioner to tea.<sup>126</sup>

Kittermaster agreed that borstal was a deterrent for some inmates, but his diary is littered with growing resentment at his own powerlessness, largely ignored by the Governor and housemasters, described by a younger colleague whom he invited to tea as a 'conceited old humbug with a soft job'.<sup>127</sup> As at Harrow, colleagues distrusted his attempts to cultivate relationships with inmates. He described how he was 'becoming accustomed to pin pricks from the curious little race of jealous men who rule over the houses, and to their institutional minds'.<sup>128</sup> Even some boys kept their distance, recognising how accepting his friendly overtures was likely to cause trouble with other members of staff. After an absence of diary entries for several days, he wrote how 'This place is rapidly getting me down... as a force

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that counts for anything here, I simply do not exist'.<sup>129</sup> 'I do not think I can stand this job much longer'.<sup>130</sup>

At Harrow, Kittermaster had endeavoured to mitigate pressures for conformity by giving pupils an unusual degree of autonomy and personal freedom. This was impossible at Rochester, where institutional inflexibility and assumptions about the 'otherness' of working-class youth exposed the pretence of attempting to run borstals on public school lines. In a survey of borstals by the Howard League for Penal Reform, Kittermaster described the 'house spirit' in borstal as nothing more than a sham.<sup>131</sup> It could, of course, be little else given borstal's character as a highly regulated 'total institution' in which inmates, separated from the world outside, were controlled by borstal staff whose power to expose the most intimate aspects of their lives elided the boundaries of public and private. Public school pupils shared this experience. Both they and borstal inmates led highly regulated lives in confined communities, yet where public school pupils were regulated and humiliated to make them understand the niceties of social status and prepare them for their roles as future leaders, borstal deployed similar methods with a very different intent - to ensure that inmates re-entered society as law-abiding citizens, knowing and accepting their place at the bottom of the hierarchical moral order of class and citizenship. Erving Goffman described the calculated undermining of individual dignity in such 'total institutions' as the 'mortification of the self', whereby individuals were deliberately humiliated to break resistance and enforce conformity.<sup>132</sup> This 'deficit of compassion' was especially powerful in adolescence, when pubertal and cognitive changes accentuated emotional anxieties and intensified 'the pains of emotional and sexual isolation', although the short and longer-term effects of this psychological damage were hardly noticed.<sup>133</sup>

As chaplain, Kittermaster was free to listen to inmates and gain insight into their

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feelings without the presence of other staff, yet the limitations of these relationships also undermined his own confidence and faith in being able to ‘do good’. Borstal officials consistently ignored his views about boys’ psychological health and he chafed that despite his pastoral responsibilities, he had no managerial influence over disciplinary procedures or institutional policy.<sup>134</sup> ‘Excessive irritation’ held him in its grip and a weary sense of being unable to make much difference seems to have kindled a desire to return to teaching. He noted in his diary, however, that ‘Alec Paterson’ insisted he was doing a ‘wonderful job’, and had persuaded him to abandon his idea of being an Education Officer and to ‘continue for a while’ in his ‘present position of a humbug chaplain’.<sup>135</sup> His self-confessed failure to fulfil Paterson’s idealised view of the borstal chaplain’s role exemplified the ambiguities of modernizing reforms, which tempered the State’s ‘right’ ‘to punish’ with rehabilitation. Kittermaster found to his cost how humane emphasis on individual potential was subverted by the coercive structures of traditional prison improvement, which affected not only inmates but the staff charged with their care.<sup>136</sup> In revealing the damaging mental and emotional harms that have been largely neglected in the scholarship of borstal in the 1930s, Kittermaster’s diary offers a rich personal perspective which complicates rehabilitative narratives and goes against the grain of the rhetoric of borstal reform and the ‘modernising’, progressive assumptions typically associated with ‘inter-war criminology’.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mass Observation Archive (MOA): Topic Collection (TC) 'Juvenile Delinquency 1946-47', 11/1/A, 'A Borstal Diary', Rev. D.B. Kittermaster. The diary is dated in the archive as 13 Feb. 1945 - 14 Aug. 1946, probably due to being filed with correspondence and research material for a Mass Observation book, *Report on juvenile delinquency*, published in 1949. The dates should be 13 Feb. 1938 - 15 Aug. 1939.

For work on young offenders which uses chaplains' reports and diaries, see Helen Rogers, 'Kindness and reciprocity: liberated prisoners and Christian charity in early nineteenth-century England', *Journal of Social History* 47:3 (Spring 2014), pp. 721-745; Matt Houlbrook, 'Fashioning an ex-crook self: citizenship and criminality in the work of Netley Lucas', *Twentieth Century British History* 24, 2013, pp. 10-30, at p. 3. Young people in borstal were described as 'inmates' or 'offenders' rather than prisoners. They served a 'period of detention' rather than a sentence. 'Institutional power and the Irish borstal boy, 1906-21', Conor Reidy, 'Institutional power and the Irish borstal boy, 1906-21', *Irish Historical Studies*, 38, (May 2012), pp. 36-51, at p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Yvonne Jewkes, Ben Crewe, Jamie Bennett, eds., *Handbook on prisons*, (London, 2007), p. 44. In 1938, 'around 60 per cent' of discharged male offenders had not been reconvicted after a three year follow-up: R. Cross, *Punishment, prison and the public* (London, 1971), p. 132; A. Rutherford, *Growing out of crime: the new era* (Winchester, 2002), p. 56; <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2121843/Brutal-exercise-hard-work-strict-education--topped-bit-musical-theatre-The-days-Borstals-knocked-yobs-shape.html>

<sup>3</sup> S. Moseley, *The truth about Borstal* (London, 1926), p. 165; Houlbrook, 'Fashioning an ex-crook self', p. 6., citing H. Rogers, 'The way to Jerusalem: reading, writing and reform in an early Victorian gaol', *Past and Present*, 205 (2009), pp. 71-104; Susanna Menis, 'More insights on the English Borstal: 'shaping' or just 'shaking' the young offender?', *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory*, 5 (November 2012), pp. 985-998, at p. 996, citing Report on the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons for the year 1947, Home Office (London, 1948), p.59.

<sup>4</sup> Alyson Brown, 'Class, discipline and philosophy', *Prison Service Journal*, March 2011, pp. 3-5, at p. 4; Hugh Fraser, HC Deb. 14 November 1968 vol. 773, cc643.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, John M. Moore, 'Prison—more than detention?', *Criminal Justice Matters* 102 (2015), pp. 11-12, at pp. 11-12.

<sup>6</sup> Morris Norval, David J. Rothman, *The Oxford history of the prison: the practice of punishment in western society*, (New York; Oxford, 1995), p. 143.

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<sup>7</sup> Cited in A.R. Hyland, 'A prison chaplain's program', *Proc. Ann. Cong. Am. Prison Ass'n* (1939), p. 480. See, also, Sir Alexander Paterson, 'The prison chaplain', *The Spectator* 17 July 1947, p. 11

<sup>8</sup> MOA: File Report (FR) 1080 D.B. Kittermaster. Campbell College, Portrush, N. Ireland. Report on Adolescents in Wartime, 7 April 1942, p. 1. In 1948, Kittermaster described submitting monthly directives: MOA: Topic Collection (TC) Material relating to *Report on Juvenile Delinquency*, 11/2/A, Letter, 2 Feb. 1948, Kittermaster to W.D. Willcock.

<sup>9</sup> James Hinton, *Nine wartime lives: mass observation and the making of the modern self* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 3, 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2; MOA: TC 11, 11/2/A 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency: A Critical Survey' by Rev. D.B. Kittermaster, p. 1; Christopher Tyeman, *A history of Harrow School, 1324-1991* (Oxford, 2000), p. 457.

<sup>11</sup> See David Garland, *Punishment and welfare: a history of penal strategies* (Aldershot, 1985). For the nineteenth-century aftercare system, see Barry Godfrey, Pamela Cox, Heather Shore, and Zoe Alker, *Young criminal lives: life courses and life chances from 1850* (Oxford, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> The age limit could be increased 'by order'. In 1936, the maximum age was raised to twenty-three. Rutherford, *Growing out of crime*, pp. 50-1, 53; Menis, 'More insights', p. 987.

<sup>13</sup> *Daily Herald*, 27 Dec. 1921, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Scotsman*, 27 December 1921, p. 8; *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 14 Nov. 1921, p. 5; Cross, *Punishment, prison and the public*, p. 31. For influences on Paterson's rehabilitative approach, see Melanie Tebbutt, *Being boys: youth, leisure and identity in the interwar years* (Manchester, 2012), p. 49.

<sup>15</sup> *Times*, 28 August 1928, p. 13; <http://infed.org/mobi/alexander-paterson-youth-work-and-prison-reform/>, accessed January 2018; Bailey, *Delinquency and citizenship*, p. 196. On Paterson, see S. K. Ruck, ed., *Paterson on Prisons: The Collected Papers of Sir Alexander Paterson* (London, 1951); Fox, *The English prison*, p. 358.

<sup>16</sup> Menis, 'More insights', p. 990.

<sup>17</sup> Zsuzsa Millei, Tom G. Griffiths, & Robert John Parkes, eds., *Re-theorizing discipline in education : problems, politics, & possibilities* (New York ; Oxford, c2010), p. 98; Proceedings of the international penitentiary congress, p.12, H.L. 1910 (5286) xxxix, 6, cited in Reidy, 'Institutional power and the Irish borstal boy, 1906-21', p. 38; John Phillips Conrad, *Crime and its correction: an international survey of attitudes and practices* (Berkeley, 1975), p. 88; John Warder, Reg Wilson, 'The British borstal training system', *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 64:1 (1973), pp. 118-27, at p. 118.

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<sup>18</sup> Benedict S. Alper, 'Borstal briefly re-visited', *Brit. J. Criminology* 8 (1968): 6, pp. 6-19, at p. 10; Jacqueline A. Dunn, 'Breaking the hegemony of the prison: an analysis of the emergence and development of the detention centre system', PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1985, p. 97.

<sup>19</sup> B. Coldrey, "'The extreme end of a spectrum of violence": physical abuse, hegemony and resistance in British residential care', *Children & Society*, 15 (2001), pp. 95-106, at p. 90.

<sup>20</sup> See, *The principles of the borstal system* (Great Britain. Home Office Prison Commission [S.I.]: Home Office, 1932); Morris Norval, David J. Rothman, *The oxford history of the prison: the practice of punishment in western society* (New York; Oxford, 1995), p. 142; Catrin Smith, 'Paterson, Sir Alexander Henry (1884–1947)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35405>, accessed 30 April 2016].

<sup>21</sup> J.C.W. Methven in *Times*, 21 June 1928, p. 11. Methven was a borstal governor and an assistant prison commissioner, *Maclean's Magazine* 1 Jan 1934, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Coldrey, "'The extreme end'", p. 98; Michael Ignatieff, *A just measure of pain: the penitentiary in the industrial revolution* (London, 1978), p. 215.

<sup>23</sup> J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses; a biographical list of all known students, graduates and holders of office at the University of Cambridge, from the earliest times to 1900, Part II, From 1752 to 1900*, Vol. 4, Kahlenberg - Oyler (Cambridge, 1951), p. 60.

<sup>24</sup> It was also a 'Certified Home' for boys on licence from Reformatory. Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from D.B. Kittermaster, 'Early days at Shewsbury House', *Liverpool Salopian*, (1930), 1:2. <http://www.shrewsburyhouse.org.uk/history-2/>, accessed January 2018; 'Extract from "The Liverpool Boys" by Adrian Struve', undated, Shrewsbury House Archive Team, Shrewsbury House, 37 Langrove Street, Everton, L5 3PE.

<sup>26</sup> Kittermaster, 'Early days at Shewsbury House'.

<sup>27</sup> *Wellington Journal*, 8 June 1907, p. 12. The Akbar was managed by the Liverpool Reformatory Association for Church of England boys.

<sup>28</sup> Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p.2.

<sup>29</sup> Kittermaster, 'Early days at Shewsbury House'; Christopher Tyerman, *A history of Harrow School, 1324-1991* (Oxford; New York, 2000), p. 457.

<sup>30</sup> *Saint George*, No. 37. Vol. X, January, 1907; *Crockfords clerical directory for 1930* (Oxford, 1930), p. 749;

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Heswall Nautical School. Report of inquiry by Mr. C. F. G. Masterman, M.P., under secretary of state for the Home Department, into charges made concerning the management of the Heswall Nautical School, 1911, Cd. 5541, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> *John Bull*, 22 Oct. 1910; Julius Carlebach, *Caring for Children in Trouble* (London: 1970), pp. 83-4. Heather Shore, 'Punishment, reformation, or welfare: responses to "the problem" of juvenile crime in Victorian and Edwardian Britain' in Helen Johnston, ed., *Punishment and control in historical perspective* (Basingstoke, 2008); Coldrey, "'The extreme end'", p. 102.

<sup>32</sup> Carlebach, *Caring for Children*, p. 84.

<sup>33</sup> Julian Symons, *Horatio Bottomley* (London, 2001, c1955), p. 90; Carlebach, *Caring for Children*, p. 86.

<sup>34</sup> D.B. Kittermaster, 'The cane and the "cat"', *Spectator*, 20 January 1939, p. 11.

<sup>35</sup> Report of an Inquiry by C.F.G. Masterman M.P. into Charges Made Concerning the Management of Heswall Nautical School CD. 5541 HMSO 1911, p. 15; HC Deb 23 February 1911 vol 21 cc2159-202, 2191.

<sup>36</sup> Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> His wife was the only child of George Latham Bennett. *Coventry Herald*, 23 & 24 August 1912, p. 2. Bennett may have been Captain Bennett of the Akbar, who was described as ahead of his time in wanting to show the boys more kindness. He resigned his post in 1907: *Liverpool Echo*, 29 June 1985, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> The friend was Cyril Alington, an ordained minister, who became a housemaster at Eton College in 1904, head of Shrewsbury School in 1908, and head of Eton in 1917: Tim Card, 'Alington, Cyril Argentine (1872–1955), headmaster and dean of Durham', *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. 6 Jan. 2011. Oxford University Press, accessed 22 Sept. 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> *The Times* 8 March 1965, p. 15.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Cox, Founder-Principal, Dartington College of Arts, 29 April 2015, 'A celebration of Peter's Life, Frampton on Severn in Gloucestershire': <http://petercoxdartington.net>, accessed June 2016.

<sup>42</sup> Judith M. Heimann, *The most offending soul alive: Tom Harrisson and his remarkable life* (Honolulu, 1999; 2002), p. 13; *The Times* 8 March 1965, p. 15; Matthew J. Hornsey, Louise Majkut, Deborah J. Terry and Blake M. McKimmie, 'On being loud and proud: non-conformity and counter-conformity to group norms', *British Journal of Social Psychology* (2003), 42, pp. 319-335, at p. 333.

<sup>43</sup> Tyerman, *A history of Harrow School*, p. 457; Peter Cox, "'A celebration of Peter's Life'.

<sup>44</sup> Heimann, *The most offending soul*, p. 13.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid; Fox, *The English prison*, p. 365.

<sup>46</sup> See David Garrett Izzo, *W.H. Auden encyclopedia* (London, c2004); Timothy Green, *The adventurers: four profiles of contemporary travellers*, (London, 1970), p. 104.

<sup>47</sup> H.D. Willcock, *Report on juvenile delinquency* (London, 1949), p. 12.

<sup>48</sup> Menis, 'More insights', p. 994. There was a girls' borstal at Aylesbury. The graded system of borstals included four 'open', less strictly supervised ones, a typology which also characterised the adult prison system and, 'less formally', the earlier industrial school system. Training ships like the Akbar, for the most difficult boys, had the highest rates of recidivism. Heather Shore, email correspondence Sept. 2018; Mitchell P. Roth, *Prisons and prison systems: a global encyclopedia* (Westport, CT., 2006), p. 203; New Zealand Parliamentary Debates. Legislative Council and House of Representatives, 1 September – 7 October 1939. (Wellington: E.V.Paul, Government Printer, 1940), p. 359; Norman S. Hayner, 'English schools for young offenders', *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 27:5, Winter 1937, pp. 627-778, at pp. 702-3.

<sup>49</sup> Hermann Mannheim and Leslie T. Wilkins, *Studies in the causes of delinquency and the treatment of offenders, I. Prediction methods in relation to borstal training* (London:1955), pp. 28, 31.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>51</sup> Hayner, 'English schools', p. 702; New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, p. 359.

<sup>52</sup> Mannheim and Wilkins, *Studies*, p. 30.

<sup>53</sup> Hayner, 'English schools', p. 702; New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, p. 359; Lionel W. Fox, *The English prison and borstal systems: an account of the prison and borstal systems in England and Wales after the Criminal Justice Act 1948, with a historical introduction and an examination of the principles of imprisonment as a legal punishment* (London, 1952), p. 336; *The Times*, 17 September 1951, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid; MOA: TC 11, 'Juvenile Delinquency 1946-7', 11/1/D Typed ms, autobiographies of Borstal inmates, dated 15 Aug. 1938.

<sup>56</sup> Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 1; *The Times*, 17 Sept. 1951, p. 5; Jewkes, et al, *Handbook on prisons*, p. 44. The diary in the MOA is a typescript, probably based on handwritten notes which were subsequently prepared for publication. The final page comprises a hand-written list of original names of inmates and staff and pseudonyms. This article uses these pseudonyms.

<sup>57</sup> R. Hood, *Borstal re-assessed* (London, 1965), p. 63; Fox, *The English prison*, p. 365.

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<sup>58</sup> Mervyn Archdale, 'Memories of Demesne Farm', (From a letter written in 1993 to his cousin, Ann Perfect Carpenter) <http://www.archdale.ie/funeral/Memories%20Of%20Demesne%20Farm.pdf>; *Times* 8 March 1965, p. 15.

<sup>59</sup> MOA: TC 11/2/A letter, Kittermaster to Willcock, 23 May 1947; letter Willcock to Kittermaster, 24 May 1947; Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> MOA: FR 2474. Note for Convoy Books, Juvenile Delinquency pamphlet. Introduction by Tom Harrisson, p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11; Stephen Katz, *Disciplining old age: the formation of gerontological knowledge* (Charlottesville and London, 1996), p. 114.

<sup>62</sup> Willcock, *Report on juvenile delinquency*, pp. 11, 15; Elaine Chase, Antonia Simon, Sonia Jackson (eds), *In care and after: a positive perspective* (London & New York), p. 13.

<sup>63</sup> Willcock, *Report on juvenile delinquency*, p. 11.

<sup>64</sup> *Probation Journal*, 1 Nov. 1949, p. 312; *The British Journal of Sociology* Vol. 1, No. 2 (Jun., 1950), pp. 180-182, at p. 180.

<sup>65</sup> *Probation Journal*, 1 Nov. 1949, p. 312.

<sup>66</sup> Tebbutt, *Being Boys*, p. 96.

<sup>67</sup> MOA: TC 11/1/A, Rev. D.B. Kittermaster, 'A Borstal Diary', 15 October 1938, p. 43.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Oct. 1938, p. 43.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 July 1938, p. 27.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May 1938, pp. 22-3; 27 July 1938, p. 28; 10 Oct. 1938, p. 42.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Feb. 1938, p. 7.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May 1938, pp. 22-3.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Dec. 1938, pp. 62-3; Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency', p. 5.

<sup>74</sup> Kittermaster, 'Borstal Diary', 24 March 1938, pp. 10-11.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 July 1938, p. 26.

<sup>76</sup> Coldrey, "'The extreme end'", p. 97.

<sup>77</sup> Menis, 'More insights', p. 991.

<sup>78</sup> Kittermaster, 'Borstal Diary', 27 July 1938, pp. 27-8.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Aug. 1938, pp. 32-3.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Nov. 1938, p. 49.

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 16, 21 Feb. 1938, p. 3.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 21 June 1938, pp. 23-4.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 23 Feb. 1945, p. 9.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 22 May 1938, p. 20.

<sup>85</sup> Menis, 'More insights', pp. 995, 997.

<sup>86</sup> Kittermaster, 'Borstal Diary', 30 June 1938, p. 25

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 22 Feb. 1938, p. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 15 Nov. 1938, p. 55.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 22 May 1938, p. 20.

<sup>90</sup> Kittermaster, 'The Treatment of Delinquency', notes, p. 6.

<sup>91</sup> Mark Benney, 'Borstal', Report of an Address delivered at a Howard League Luncheon on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1937, *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 5:1, January 1938, pp. 56-7; Mark Benney, 'Borstal as it might be', *Spectator*, 5 March 1937, p. 10. Benney was the pseudonym of Henry Ernest Degras. His autobiography, *Low company*, was published in 1938. Raymond M. Lee, "'The man who committed a hundred burglaries": Mark Benney's strange and eventful sociological career', *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 51 (2015), pp. 410-11, at p. 430.

<sup>92</sup> Lee, "'The man who committed a hundred burglaries"', p. 430.

<sup>93</sup> Yiannis Gabriel, Dorothy S. Griffiths, 'Emotion, learning and organizing', *The Learning Organization*, 9 (2002), pp. 215-16; Matthews, 'Change and Theory in Raymond Williams's Structure of Feeling', *Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 10/2 (2001), p. 182; C. Daley, *Leisure and Pleasure: Reshaping and Revealing the New Zealand Body 1900-1960*, (Auckland, 2003), p. 194.

<sup>94</sup> Kittermaster, 'Borstal Diary', 21 Feb., p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 25 March 1938, p. 11.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 22 Feb. 1938, p. 5.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 23 Feb. 1938, pp. 8-9.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 23 Feb. 1938, p. 9.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 15 Oct. 1938, p. 43.

<sup>100</sup> From 1933, Approved Schools, for children under 17, replaced Reformatories and Industrial Schools.

<sup>101</sup> Kittermaster, 'Borstal Diary', 16 Aug. 1938, pp. 32-3.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 14 Feb. 1938, pp. 1-2.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 4 May 1938, p. 17.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 22 Nov. 1938, p. 57.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 29 March 1938, pp. 12-13.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 29 March 1938, p. 13.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 20 April 1938, p. 15.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 9 Dec. 1938, p. 61.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 4 May 1938, p. 16.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 22 May 1938, p. 20.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 4-6 April 1938, pp. 13-14.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Linda Mary Parker, 'Shell-shocked Prophets: the influence of former Anglican army chaplains on the Church of England and British society in the inter-war years', (PhD. thesis, Birmingham, 2013), p. 291; Michael Roper, 'From the shell-shocked soldier to the nervous child: Psychoanalysis in the aftermath of the First World War', *Psychoanalysis and History* 18.1 (2016), pp. 39-69.

<sup>115</sup> Dunn, Jacqueline A., 'Breaking the Hegemony of the Prison: An Analysis of the emergence and development of the detention centre system', PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1985, p. 101.

<sup>116</sup> For child psychiatry and the rise of therapeutic approaches, see John Stewart, 'I Thought You Would Want to Come and See His Home': Child Guidance and Psychiatric Social Work in Inter-War Britain', in M. Jackson ed., *Health and the Modern Home* (London, 2007), pp. 111-27; John Stewart, '"The Dangerous Age of Childhood": Child Guidance and the "Normal" Child in Great Britain, 1920-1950', *Paedagogica Historica*, 47 (2011), pp. 785-803; John Stewart, *Child guidance in Britain, 1918-1955: The dangerous age of childhood* (London: Routledge, 2015).

<sup>117</sup> Dunn, 'Breaking the Hegemony', p. 105.

<sup>118</sup> MOA: TC 11/2/A, letter 24 May 1947, W.D. Willcock to D.B. Kittermaster. This was probably Dr. W.H. de B. Hubert of St. Thomas's Hospital, appointed in the 1930s as the first 'Visiting Psychotherapist' at Wormwood Scrubs. In 1939, Hubert, with Sir William Norbert East, chief medical inspector of prisons, published *The Psychological Treatment of Crime*, an influential report which recommended various improvements, including psychiatric 'facilities' for prisoners: W.J. Gray, 'The English prison medical service: its historical background and more recent developments', in G.E.W. Wolstenholme, and Maeve O'Connor, eds. *Medical care of prisoners*



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*and detainees* (Amsterdam, 2009, p. 88; Michal Shapira, *The war inside: psychoanalysis, total war, and the making of the democratic self in postwar Britain* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 192.

<sup>119</sup> The benefits of such intervention were recognised in 1932 by the Departmental Offenders Committee, which drew attention to the medical condition of offenders and the likelihood that ‘certain delinquents’ might be ‘amenable to psychological treatment’: Gray, ‘The English prison medical service’, pp. 130-1.

<sup>120</sup> Kittermaster, ‘Borstal Diary’, 21 June 1938, p. 24.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 May 1938, p. 18.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 July 1938, p. 25.

<sup>123</sup> Norval and Rothman, *The Oxford history of the prison*, p. 143.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Kittermaster, ‘Borstal Diary’, 4 March 1938, p. 8.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 May 1938, p. 18; 21 June 1938, p. 23.

<sup>128</sup> Kittermaster, ‘Borstal Diary’, 14 Aug. 1938, p. 32.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Nov. 1938, p. 48.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>131</sup> *The Daily Mirror*, 26 Sept. 1950, p. 3.

<sup>132</sup> Cited in Menis, ‘More insights’.

<sup>133</sup> Ellen Maria Cook, ‘Understanding adolescent shame and pride in a school context: the impact of perceived academic competence and a growth mindset’, (PhD. thesis, Southampton, 2015), p. 20.

<sup>134</sup> Conor Reidy, ‘“The most dangerous, reckless, passionate... period of their lives”: The Irish Borstal Offender, 1906–1921’, *Adolescence in Modern Irish History* (2015), pp. 82-102, at p. 92.

<sup>135</sup> Kittermaster, ‘Borstal Diary’, June 23 1939, p. 88.

<sup>136</sup> The lasting effects of boarding schools on mental health have been similarly neglected. See Joy Schaverein, *Boarding school syndrome: the psychological trauma of the ‘privileged’ child* (London, 2015).

<sup>137</sup> Houlbrook, ‘Fashioning an ex-crook’, p. 1.