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'Untiring' in her efforts on behalf of the team and discharging her duties 'in the most capable manner'; female coaches in Edwardian Britain

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ABSTRACT

The compliments paid to Clara Jarvis by the Amateur Swimming Association in recognition of her contribution as trainer to the women's swimming team at the 1912 Olympics marked a unique public recognition of the role of the woman as coach in the Edwardian era (1901–1914). The absence of similar references to women as coaches or trainers in the archives could easily persuade the observer that Clara was an isolated example, but the reality was very different in that women were actively coaching in several sports and activities, if coaching is interpreted in the sense of helping others to improve their physical performance. The key to researching these women is to look beyond the terminology 'coach' or 'trainer'. This paper uses a range of search terms to uncover women involved in skating and riding, and as physical culturalists and games mistresses, from the 1911 census and explores the characteristics of each group as well as uncovering some individual life courses. The paper concludes that these women were not unique, in that similar communities can also be identified in activities such as swimming and dance, and that the notion that few women coached in this period needs to be revised.

KEYWORDS Coaching; women; Edwardian; instructor; biography

Thanks partly to a coaching heritage established by male amateurs in the nineteenth century, the British 'Coach' has invariably been assumed to be a man in the coaching historiography, an approach that is challenged in this paper, which uncovers the hidden histories of several early twentieth-century women coaching at both participation and elite levels of sport. The introduction of women's swimming in the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, for example, was accompanied by the appointment of Britain's first female

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Olympic coach, Clara Jarvis, born in 1882 to house painter John Jarvis and his wife Elizabeth. Although the 1901 census does not record her occupation, she was already teaching swimming and only a year later she was appointed honorary instructor to the Leicester Ladies' Swimming Club, which was founded in 1902.[1] In 1903 the club engaged her professionally, as did the Leicester Ladies' Junior Branch and the Ladies' section of the Coventry Swimming and Life Saving Society. Clara held the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) professional teacher's certificate, together with the Royal Life Saving Society certificate and bronze medallion and the Society subsequently awarded its diploma to Clara in 1909, making her as qualified as any male professional.[2] The 1911 census records Clara as a 'Swimming Teacher', and after she married Robert Rayns that year, she resumed her duties with the Leicester, Loughborough, Burton, Coventry, and Hinckley Ladies' swimming clubs, as Madame Jarvis.[3] Clara was instrumental in coaching Jennie Fletcher to six ASA 100 yards titles and several world records between 1906 and 1912,[4] when the ASA appointed Clara as 'professional trainer and attendant' to the female swimmers selected for the Stockholm Olympics. The team left Hull on the SS. Eskimo on June 29,[5] reaching Stockholm on July 2 when the ladies were billeted under Clara's supervision at the Hotel Excelsoir, where the arrangements were 'all that could be desired'.[6] The women, who had been 'assiduous in their training' subsequently won the 400 m team relay[7] and the ASA recorded in October that Clara had been 'untiring' in her efforts on behalf of the team, discharging her duties 'in the most capable manner'.[8] After the Games, Clara continued teaching and coaching and the 1939 National register records her as a 'Teacher of Swimming', although she retired as physical training and swimming instructress from Melton school that year.[9]

Clara may be the best known of the women teaching and coaching swimming in the Edwardian period but she was by no means unique. Swimming had become popular for women during the nineteenth century when concerns about maintaining the segregation of the sexes resulted in swimming teachers teaching their own sex and encouraged several women to follow a career as a professional swimming teacher. In the 1911 census 108 women were recorded as using the term swimming 'instructor/instructress' (64), 'teacher' (34), or 'mistress' (10), although this is a significant underrepresentation given that many women did not have their occupations recorded, especially if they were married, and several individuals who appear as swimming teachers in other research material are never logged as such on the census. Prominent contemporaries of Clara included Laura Saigeman, a 'most able teacher' who gave as many as fifty swimming lessons in one morning, as well as teaching sculling, dancing, and cycling.[10] The 1881, 1891, 1901, and 1911 censuses record sisters Charlotte and Jane Humphreys as single women living together and working as swimming teachers while

Nellie Easton, who remained childless throughout her thirty-four years of marriage, had a long career teaching swimming between 1881 and 1911, when she was a self-employed swimming mistress working out of the County Council public baths.[11] The ASA introduced a Professional Certificate in 1899, to standardise swim teaching, and sixteen women had gained certificates by 1903, with 108 women being registered out of 356 certified teachers in 1913.[12] These women often had connections to established swimming families, but where women adopted this career independent of familial influences, their class origins, which is assessed throughout this paper by a father's occupation, remained consistent with practitioners generally emerging from the margins between the working and middle class.[13]

While they were among the first sports coaches, women swimming teachers were not alone in coaching sport during the Edwardian period, whether that be through professional or voluntary face to face engagement, or through other forms of instructional material, such as Mrs Lambert Chambers's book, *Lawn Tennis for Ladies* (1910), which became the standard work for a generation.[14] The limited historiography to date on women operating in this arena has drawn attention to their contribution to equestrianism, golf, and martial arts. Erica Munkwitz has chronicled women's engagement as Masters of Hounds and argued persuasively that their roles as teachers, trainers, mentors, managers, and employers qualifies them to be considered as among some of the first female sport coaches. Though female Masters were not called 'coaches' in contemporary literature, their roles and duties mirrored such positions and they fulfilled many of the functions associated with coaching sports.[15] The same is true of the female golf professionals who emerged before 1914, whose lives have been researched recently by Jodie Neville.[16] These roles were a long time in the making. As early as 1880, it was recognized that the 'lady professional is bound to come sooner or later',[17] and in an article in *Golf* in 1894, Miss M.E. Bradshaw-Isherwood suggested that giving lessons in golf, supervising the groundsman, and taking care of the pavilion would be a 'pleasant way' of working for ladies wanting to make a little money or a change from the monotony of home life. Lady 'Di' argued that, as in most 'professions and accomplishments', women would have more confidence in a 'teacher of the sterner sex' but Miss Bradshaw-Isherwood replied that, since women had more 'patience and exactness' than men, a woman would be the most efficient teacher for other women.[18] It was 1905, however, before the first lady golf professional, Mrs Gordon Robertson, 'struck out a line for herself as an instructor in golf'. She possessed 'a rare natural gift for teaching and a wonderful eye to detect the fault',[19] and she became the lady professional at the Prince's Ladies' Club, Mitcham, and professional teacher to the West Middlesex Ladies' Club,[20] while her *Hints to Lady Golfers* manual was published in 1909.[21] In 1911, Lily Freemantle, daughter of the professional at the

Costebelle Club, Hyeres (South of France) and engaged as lady golf instructress in St Moritz, was appointed professional to the Sunningdale Ladies Golf Club, while Diana Smyth was appointed as a professional to Le Touquet Ladies' club the following year.[22]

During the Edwardian period several British women became proficient in jujutsu and some of them turned to coaching. In September 1905 it was claimed in *Sandow's Magazine* that a Miss Williams was teaching at the Anglo-Japanese Institute, Phoebe Roberts appeared in the *Sporting Life* in 1906 at the Japanese School of Ju-jitsu in Oxford Street, while Emily Watts, who published a manual, *The Fine Art of Jujitsu*, also in 1906, was teaching at the Prince's Skating Rink in Knightsbridge. Edith Garrud began studying jujutsu around 1903 and ran classes with her husband, William Garrud, before opening her own London dojo, where she subsequently taught jujutsu classes for Women's Social and Political Union members, including training thirty recruits in 1913 as part of a bodyguard unit for Emmeline Pankhurst. The importance of these women to the progression of martial arts, as role models, protagonists, and promoters should not be underestimated.[23]

With respect to team sports, the first decade of the twentieth century saw a growth in the number of ladies' hockey clubs, which expanded from the fifty-seven clubs affiliated to the governing body in 1898 to 300 clubs within six years.[24] It was unsurprising that clubs initially turned to men for coaching advice, as when coaching was provided to Liverpool Old Girls' Hockey Club by members of a local 'gentlemen's club in 1899,[25] but women increasingly took on the coaching duties themselves as they gained more experience. As early as 1897, the Tonbridge Ladies captain was arguing that coaching could be done much better by an experienced captain than by a professional coach.[26] Because of the shortage of coaches there were moves to persuade the All-England Women's Hockey Association (AEWHA) to create a coaches' association, a body of qualified players who would visit new clubs to coach and give advice. Expenses would be defrayed by the clubs, although it was suggested that there were probably many ladies 'whose time is at their own disposal and would not consider an afternoon spent in coaching a new club to be a waste of time, so this scheme did not necessarily mean the institution of anything approaching professionalism'.[27] Some coaching advice was subsequently made available through the publication in 1905 of *Hockey as a Game for Women* by Edith Thompson, a future president of the AEWHA and founding editor of *The Hockey Field*.[28]

A 'coaching' vocabulary

It is clear, then, that several women were actively engaged in coaching sports, although, with the exception of hockey, they might be referred to as

'teachers', 'instructors', 'Masters', or 'professionals', rather than 'coaches'. As a social activity, 'coaching' has always been socially and politically constructed and defined and it has been interpreted differently in different situations, cultures, and time periods. Throughout the Victorian period the term 'coach' was normally referred to in the public school and university sports of rowing and cricket, while in sports such as swimming the term 'Professor' was used to denote an expert practitioner, and in working-class sports that relied on physical fitness, such as pedestrianism and boxing, the term 'trainer' was commonly employed. What was consistent across the British sporting landscape was that these terms were rarely applied to the increasing number of women who were adopting coaching roles. This has significance, because language is used to create and communicate beliefs, customs, and values that are central to a particular culture and it reveals the unique ways that a community understands and interacts with the world around them,[29] including the ways in which it both reflects and reinforces social and cultural norms concerning gender.[30] Language contains 'subtle mechanisms that maintain blockage'[31] and in a patriarchal society it is used to reinforce the biases and assumptions that underpin gender as when masculine pronouns are used as the default in emphasising that coaching is a man's domain.[32] Language thus acts in an exclusionary capacity, helping to sustain coaching traditions intergenerationally.[33]

In defining 'coaching' as 'Coaching, instruction, training or tuition in ANY sport or physical activity, outside of formal education and in any environment', the 2019 National Coaching Foundation survey recognised that the terms that contemporary coaches use as self-descriptors varies from activity to activity. Participants receive coaching in a range of different settings and coaches play a number of different roles, from coaches in sports clubs, to community activators and helpers, PE teachers, and exercise and fitness instructors[34] and the survey demonstrated a clear link between coaching title, gender, and activity. Women predominantly refer to themselves as teachers, possibly reflecting the traditional ways in which women have been involved in educational environments, and are most likely to be involved in activities such as dance, gymnastics and trampolining, and exercise, fitness and personal training. Men are most likely to be involved in invasion games, target sports, and combat sports, and they describe themselves as 'coach' much more often (51% compared to 32% of women) as well as citing titles that imply leadership, such as 'Sports Leader' or 'Head Coach'. Coaches in activities such as dance or exercise, fitness and personal training are the least likely to refer to themselves as a 'coach' whereas those coaching combat sports, invasion games or water sports are the most likely to refer to themselves as a 'coach' in some way. Those most likely to refer to themselves as a 'teacher' in some form tended to coach athletics, dance, or gymnastics and trampolining, and

other terms used by survey respondents included 'activator', 'facilitator', 'instructor', 'helper', 'trainer'.[35]

This cultural response to, and interpretation of, the word 'coach' illustrates how British coaching has been framed as a masculine domain since the nineteenth-century and reinforced across generations through an intangible cultural heritage that has consistently marginalised women. The impact of this heritage is reflected by women's lack of visibility in the historiography of coaching, with authors invariably omitting women from their narratives on the basis that they did not exist, a perspective that fails to stand up to rigorous scrutiny. As women became more experienced in their sport they shared their expertise by adopting coaching related roles, sometimes formally, sometimes in an unofficial capacity, and there was clearly a thriving female coaching community operating in Britain during the Edwardian period, as evidenced by the presence of swimming teachers, golf professionals, martial arts instructors, and hockey coaches. There is a hidden history of these women coaches that extends across a range of sports, situations, and time periods, but space permits consideration here of only four constituencies, skating instructors, physical culturalists, games mistresses, and riding instructors. The paper takes the form of the presentation of a basic prosopography, compiled from the 1911 census, highlighting the age and marital status of women operating as coaching actors in these groups in the Edwardian period, as well as employing additional biographical techniques and sources to illustrate the nature of some female coaching careers. The paper concludes by arguing that the assumption of the exclusively masculine nature of sports coaching has been preserved through an uncritical acceptance of the traditions of Britain's coaching heritage, not least by historians of coaching.

'New' women and working lives

Concerns over the 'Woman Question' in the Victorian era had encouraged the adoption by some middle-class families of a 'separate spheres' approach, which restricted women to the domestic realm, although this philosophy was always aspirational at best, given the fluidity of the socially defined margins established for appropriate class and gender behaviour.[36] By the beginning of the Edwardian period, an expanded middle class was enjoying a higher standard of living and was beginning to see a change in the place of women in society with the emergence of the 'New Woman', not the character depicted in fiction but professional career women who entered the public sphere in roles such as typists, secretaries, teachers, bookkeepers, and writers. Women were growing up in a world where the imbalance between the numbers of men and women meant that many women could never expect to marry, leading to changes in ideals of feminine domesticity.[37] As the

number of women affected by changing social conditions grew more young women had to be trained to be self-supporting,[38] and the label 'New Woman' and all that it stood for became applicable less to the radical few, and more to the larger band of women who believed that women deserved greater social and personal freedom.[39] Women's real and sustained employment advances took place in office work, state school teaching, and nursing,[40] as well as in a variety of managerial and supervisory positions. While there were some reservations about these developments well into the Edwardian period, in particular questions about their potential lack of commitment as wives and mothers, the fact that women normally abandoned their careers upon marriage alleviated most concerns,[41] although male commentators were always a little hesitant. One writer in 1906 remained conflicted about whether or not these developments should be applauded. As the result of a commitment to education by middle-class parents, women considerably outnumbered men 'in the intellectual division of the middle class' and often earned reasonable salaries, their work providing them with a financially rewarding substitute for marriage and childrearing and giving the professional woman independence. However, 'The sense that she depends for her livelihood upon her own efforts, that she is beholden to no one', gave to the professional woman a 'wholly illogical feeling that she has a right to her own opinion', which she was 'apt to misuse'. He concluded that 'Perhaps in an ideal state of society there would be no professional women, or not enough to form anything which could be called a class. But we are a long way from any ideal state'.[42]

'New women', sport, and exercise

Collins argued that attention to women's health and fitness and their participation in sports and games became a major factor in the creation of the 'New Woman' in the Edwardian period when the 'pleasure of the movement of the human body in exercise, work, athletics, and sports was being enjoyed as never before by women'.[43] In 1904, Dr Elizabeth Pace noted that women's lives were changing and that a sound basis in physical education was important for unmarried women, 'following the various professions', because good health was required to bear the strains of professional life.[44] Many middle-class women enjoyed a wide range of hobbies and suffrage activists, for example, took part in the same physical activities as less politically involved women. The 1913 *Suffrage Annual and Women's Who's Who* (SAWWW) contained self-penned biographies of more than 650 women active in suffrage societies, almost half of whom included an item on recreation, with 178 mentioning sport.[45] Even the politically active had to be circumspect in their participation patterns, however, and middle-class women's involvement in sport was characterised by negotiation as the 'New

Woman' adopted strategies so as not to challenge prevailing masculine-dominated social norms too radically because to do so would have threatened women's limited autonomy over their sports.[46] Vestiges of the nineteenth-century medical discourse over women's physicality persisted, particularly with respect to the muscular effort required when cycling and to women playing team sports, which might lead to these sports being feminised and women masculinised. These medical debates sat alongside a broader social discourse, much of it driven by the sporting patriarchy as reflected in correspondence on the 'nuisance' of women in sport in the *Daily Mirror* in 1909,

> Perhaps the real reason why women are considered a nuisance in sport is that so few of them really care for it. Many women merely play games and indulge in sports to please their husbands or brothers. Others simply to find husbands. They acquire by practice a certain proficiency, but their hearts are never truly in their games and consequently they omit to observe many of the nice points and details of etiquette that are so essential to the enjoyment of the game by men, who play purely for pleasure and endeavour always to do their very best.[47]

Despite patriarchal opposition, self-help manuals, magazines, and correspondence courses relating to health abounded as the 'sporting girl' was increasingly framed as modern and aspirational, particularly by those with a vested interest in promoting sport and physical activity for girls.[48] The rise of female physical culture was also informed by anxieties about extensive physical deterioration among Britain's urban masses and the overworked, under-fed, and chronically ill working-class woman remained a powerful image.[49] For one 1900 commentator, none of the advances made during the previous century had been more striking than those related to the physical education of women, although walking the streets in the large towns constantly drew attention to fact that this had not penetrated throughout all social classes. Many working-class girls not only lacked 'elasticity' in their step and colour in the face, but there was usually some form of distortion with bodies stooped and shoulders uneven. There was also a 'deeper mischief hidden in the form of weak lungs, feeble circulation, and want of energy'. Added to this the fact that many of these girls had to 'struggle for bare livelihood under the most adverse conditions', and the 'tale of misery' was complete.[50]

For the middle classes, concerns about girls' inactivity stimulated the introduction of intensive exercise programmes, including competitive team sports, at many girls' schools[51] after the British Endowed Schools Act of 1869 had created a new kind of educational establishment, one which emulated the curricula and organisation of the large public boys' schools. Because their Boards of Governors were usually male, headmistresses negotiated carefully the adoption of exercise and games and whereas boys played

games rather than undertaking physical education, girls' schooling included gymnastics and calisthenics.[52] Dr Elizabeth Pace argued that the Swedish system of gymnastics, developed in the early 1800s by Pehr Henrik Ling and favoured by the physical education colleges, should be taught by fully trained women teachers who had a knowledge of hygiene and physiology.[53] This need for physical education specialists in girls' schools became even more important with the rapid expansion in the playing of team sports.[54] St Leonard's School had space for four simultaneous cricket matches, and four hockey pitches for use in the winter, which were turned into lacrosse pitches after Christmas as well as tennis and fives courts. Daily cold baths were part of the routine and the school had two gym mistresses and two games mistresses,[55] although Elizabeth Pace remarked that the ideal arrangement to be found in many high schools was where the gymnastic mistress was also the games mistress.[56]

The games mistress

In 1906 it was observed that the 'posts for which the services of superior and energetic women are in demand are those of games mistresses, workhouse matrons and matrons of institutions of various kinds'. As a rule, candidates had to be young, highly educated, and 'must combine a good manner with a sound judgement'.[57] Five physical education training colleges for women, Dartford, Anstey, Chelsea, IM Marsh, and Bedford, were in operation by 1903 and graduating substantial numbers of games mistresses.[58] Dartford had originated as Madame Osterberg's Hampstead Physical Training College where the end of term celebrations in July 1891 included gymnastics, fencing, swimming, lawn tennis, and cricket and the 'professional students' who had completed their training gave lectures on anatomical, physiological, and hygienic subjects. Training took two years but successful candidates were guaranteed appointments.[59] In July 1898 Rhoda Anstey, head of The Hygienic Home and College of Physical Culture based in Halesowen gave a lecture on Swedish gymnastics, accompanied with demonstrations by her students. Observers highlighted the advantages of her courses as a way of qualifying as teachers of gymnastics and hygiene, 'a profession in which remunerative openings are, at present, more numerous than those able to occupy them'. The course lasted two years and included theoretical and practical training in hygiene, Swedish gymnastics, and vegetarian cookery, as well as gardening, dancing, elocution, and games.[60] After a display by students at the Physical Training College for Women at Chelsea Polytechnic in June 1904 it was observed that while there were many ways in which a woman could earn a living none of them offered 'so good a chance of romping happily through life' as that of the gymnastic teacher, especially if she were also a games mistress. The writer reflected that the fifty 'charming

performers in their pretty costumes' were all on their way to earning good salaries in a healthy way and that a century previously they would have had no alternative but to become the 'dreary drudge known as the governess'.[61]

In Scotland, the Royal Commission on Physical Training stimulated interest in the profession of games mistress, who had become a 'valued adjunct to every private school' while Board Schools had a visiting director of physical education. This 'grand, new, lucrative, healthy and ever-widening' career was attracting 'high-spirited, well-educated girls' to the Dunfermline College of Hygiene, founded in 1905, where there was a large baths, a gymnasium containing all the latest Swedish and British equipment and a highly qualified staff headed by Miss Ethel Adam Roberts, a pupil of Madame Bergman Osterberg. In 1907, the college was taking in students aged between 18 and 30 with terms beginning in September, January and April and a year's training, inclusive with residence in the hotel, cost £80. The fees were £20 for those residing outside or £35 with partial residence. The prospects for engagement were significant since demand was increasing. Six of the ten outgoing students of the previous session had immediately obtained posts at salaries ranging from £60 (with board and residence) to £100 (non-resident), figures which compared favourably with the returns of any other skilled work.[62]

The Gentlewoman weekly illustrated paper commented regularly on the role of the games mistress throughout the Edwardian period and responded to correspondence in its 'Education Bureau' section about the best way to enter the profession as well as providing advice as to alternatives, such as medical gymnastics. If women wanted to become a games mistress in a school where, in addition to cricket, tennis, hockey, swimming, and bicycling they would also give instruction in gymnastics, they were advised to go to the Physical Training College at Dartford, which had such a good reputation that students had 'no difficulty in obtaining a good post' on completion of the course. If the woman wanted to specialise in medical gymnastics they were pointed towards the Institution for Medical Gymnastics in South Kensington, which worked on the modern Swedish system and was under medical supervision with several of the teaching staff having been trained in Sweden and holding Government diplomas. Students aged twenty-one to forty were accepted and they took one year's training in anatomy, physiology, hygiene, ambulance work, medical gymnastics, theory of movement and massage. Before their final examination with two medical men and a specialist in curative work students had to pass the Board of Examination in physiology and hygiene as well as the examination of the Incorporated Society of Masseuses.[63]

A trawl of the 1911 census using a range of descriptors has identified 41 women indicating that they were following careers related to the role of

'games mistress', with twelve describing themselves as such and another twelve combining this with 'gymnastics'. A variety of other terms were employed and there is undoubtedly some crossover between the careers of these women and those who were using similar descriptors in the physical culture table that follows. Of the 41 women recorded here, 32 were in the 21- to 30-year-old age bracket and all but one were single, the exception actually being Madame Osterberg. Three of the gymnastics teachers here were on the staff at Dartford as was the only 'Games Coach' that appears on the census (See Table 1).

Many of these women were affiliated to the AEWHA and, as Joanne Halpin has pointed out, professionalism and coaching became an issue for the AEWHA, which in every other respect was firmly committed to the ideals of amateurism as espoused by their male counterparts. AEWHA members drew on their love of hockey to offer coaching and organisational help in setting up clubs for working girls and women. England international and honorary secretary of the Northern LHA Florence Mack, for example, coached a factory girls' club in Liverpool. However, in October 1900, the AEWHA secretary Ethel Robson observed at the Annual General Meeting that a paid coach in the men's game would be regarded as a professional and excluded from playing with amateurs. The women, however, felt that this position was not 'quite final', and that being paid to coach was not the same as being paid to play. Their discussion centred on an instructor's sex, their standard of qualification, and the amount charged, with one club stating they had 'paid as much as 10s 6d an hour for a coach'. It would have been problematic for the AEWHA to follow the men's attitudes towards professional coaching because physical education teaching was a distinctive career path and many AEHWA members were earning their

Table 1. Games mistresses in the 1911 census.

Descriptor	N	17–20 yrs	21–30 yrs	31 + yrs	Single	Married	Widow
Games Mistress	12	2	9	1	12	0	0
Gymnastics and Games Mistress	12	0	12	0	12	0	0
Gymnastics Teacher *(Dartford Staff)*	3	0	0	3	2	1	0
Teacher Gymnastics and Games	4	2	2	0	4	0	0
Teacher of Drill and Games	2	0	2	0	2	0	0
Swedish Drill Games Mistress	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Gymnastics Lecturer	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Gymnastic Dancing Games Mistress	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Games Mistress and College Tutor	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Games Coach and Gymnastics Teacher	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Drill, Games and Dancing Mistress	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Drill Mistress	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Calisthenics and Dancing Mistress	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
All	**41**	**5**	**32**	**4**	**40**	**1**	**0**

living, in part at least, from teaching or coaching hockey in schools and colleges, possibly even with their clubs, so they would have been unable to play amateur sport according to the male Hockey Association's regulations.[64]

The physical culturalist

The 1911 census illustrates nicely the variety in language that was used to refer to women involved in coaching physical activities as gymnastic teachers, drill instructors, and physical culturalists, both inside and outside of the education system. While not addressed directly in this paper the 695 women who indicated in the 1911 census that they were engaged in coaching dancing in some way used terms such as 'teacher' (465), 'mistress' (72), 'professor' (36) and 'instructress' (10), often incorporating activities such as gymnastics, calisthenics, swimming, and music, within their titles alongside 'dance'. This range of self-descriptors is replicated among physical culturalists and of the 219 identified here, 87 referred to themselves as a 'teacher', 102 as an 'instructress', 6 as a 'mistress' and 4 as a 'professor' (See Table 2).

While the 21- to 30-year-old age group dominated again there were 59 women in the over 31 years old category, the vast majority of whom remained unmarried, who were presumably generating a career in the field and for some entrepreneurial women the qualification obtained from the physical training college could be used a vehicle to develop an independent

Table 2. Physical culturalists in the 1911 census.

Descriptor	N	17–20	21–30	31+	S	M	W
Teacher of Physical Culture	72	5	43	24	68	3	1
Gymnastic Instructress	51	4	38	9	50	1	0
Instructress of Physical Culture	20	4	13	3	20	0	0
Physical Culture	15	2	6	7	14	0	1
Teacher of Dancing and Physical Culture	13	2	7	4	11	1	1
Physical Instructress	9	1	8	0	9	0	0
Drill Instructress	5	0	5	0	5	0	0
Physical Culture Mistress	5	0	3	2	5	0	0
Instructress of Physical Training	4	0	3	1	4	0	0
Professor of Physical Culture	4	1	2	1	4	0	0
Instructress of Physical Education	3	0	2	1	3	0	0
Physical Training Instructress	3	0	3	0	3	0	0
Principal Physical Culture and Dancing	2	0	0	2	2	0	0
Instructress of Swedish Gymnastics	2	0	2	0	2	0	0
Instructress of Physical Exercises	2	0	1	1	2	0	0
Teacher of Gymnastics and Swimming	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Teacher of Drill and Dancing	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Physical Culture Specialist	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Physical Training Mistress	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Physical Culture and Massage	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Organiser of Physical Instruction	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Instructress in Gymnastics and Calisthenics	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Gymnastics and Drill Instructress	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Gymnastic and Dancing Instructress	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
All	219	20	140	59	211	5	3

career not tied to any educational institution. Women like Daisy Humphreys drew on their training to establish businesses that offered educational and medical gymnastics, as well as swimming teaching, to the public at large.

Daisy Humphreys

Daisy Humphreys, born London St Marys' but living at 15, Cheriton Place, Folkestone, who had reportedly qualified from the Hampstead Physical Training College, was advertising swimming lessons both 'Practical and Theoretical' in June 1895. Single lessons or a course of twelve for £1 1s (a guinea).[65] Five years later she was advertising her Swedish gymnastic classes, details of which could be had from her at Shakespeare Cottage, 133 Sandgate Road, Folkestone. Advertisements were headed 'Lings Swedish System of Educational, medical Gymnastics and Massage' with Daisy now declaring that she had trained at Mdme. Bergman Osterberg's Physical Training College at Dartford Heath, Kent. The recipient of the 'highest testimonials', she held classes for ladies and children, could offer special terms to schools for educational and medical gymnastics, and she could receive resident patients for Weir-Mitchell Nauheim treatment (for heart complaints and spinal curvature).[66] The 1901 census records Daisy as a Medical Gymnast, a single thirty-year-old head of household working on her own account at home, accompanied by Emelie Franzen, a twenty-eight-year-old 'General Servant' from Sweden.[67] Daisy expanded her normal advertising content in 1903, pointing out that the college where she trained shared with the Royal Central Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, the distinction of being one of the only two existing colleges training students in Ling's Swedish system. She was resuming her classes at the Woodward Hall on May 11 although ladies and children, with special classes for little boys, could attend Shakespeare Cottage, where she had all the Swedish apparatus, or be attended at home for Ling's Medical Gymnastics and Massage. In June 1903, Daisy, medical gymnast and masseur, relocated from to 10 West Terrace (corner of Leas, telephone number 0358), Folkestone, where she could carry out educational as well as medical gymnastics in a gymnasium 30 feet by 22 feet, and she was continuing to advertise her swimming lessons in 1906.[68] In the 1911 census the single, forty-year-old Swedish Medical Gymnast was recorded as a boarder at the same address as Sarah A. Bielling, a single fifty-year-old Swedish Graduate of the Royal Gymnastic Institute in Stockholm, who was also self-employed.

The skating instructress

Commenting in 1907 on the opportunities opening up for women as games mistresses Marguerite pointed out that new openings for women were

almost weekly occurrence but that they were not all of the same value. For any new employment for women to be worthwhile it must have an element of permanence, connected not with a passing phase of life, but with the promise of growth and not susceptible to the caprice of fashion. Some of these new roles were transitory states, impermanent posts, which were not worth qualifying to fill because they were the outcome of a passing fad rather than the satisfaction of a radical need.[69] She could so easily have been talking about becoming a roller-skating instructress, a coaching role that flowered briefly in the late Edwardian period, but one that, like riding mistress, required no formal training or certification.

The first few indoor roller-skating rinks had opened in London in the late 1850s and as skate designs improved the activity became more popular and the number of rinks multiplied. Roller skating catered for both men and women and, when one of the 'expert performers' from the Harrogate rink, Tom Harrison, was invited to attend the opening of a new rink at the Victoria Rooms, Bridlington, on 20 September 1875, to teach beginners in the sport, he was accompanied by Miss B. Harrison, an expert skater from the Scarborough rink, who also demonstrated 'fancy skating'.[70] The fortunes of the activity ebbed and flowed but 'rinking' as it was called (which proved to be a useful search term in the 1911 census) had a major revival in the late Edwardian period and by 1910 there were 526 Rinks in Britain. The industry employed thousands of people, professional fancy and trick skaters, including women, toured the country, and keen amateur skaters formed racing and hockey clubs, but by the end of 1911 the fad had passed,[71] and for the majority, if not all, of the skating instructresses recorded in the 1911 census this was a brief excursion into the world of sports coaching. These were predominantly single women (51 out of 60) from the two younger age groups, with only one of the 60 women identified aged over 30 (See Table 3).

The riding mistress

Horses featured as a means of women's liberation in Victorian novels, often portraying women acting in an independent way,[72] and, in contrast to the

Table 3. Skating instructresses in the 1911 census.

Descriptor	N	17–20	21–30	31+	Single	Married	Widow
Skating Instructress	32	9	22	1	27	4	1
Instructress Skating Rink	10	4	6	0	9	1	0
Rink/ing Instructress	10	2	8	0	8	1	1
Skating Instructor	3	1	2	0	2	1	0
Skating Rink Instructor	3	2	1	0	3	0	0
Teacher Roller Skating	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Instructress Roller Skating	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
All	60	20	39	1	51	7	2

skating instructresses, the riding mistress was a well-established profession that became a long career path for some women. Female instructors enabled women to learn to ride via other women, rather than men and Erica Munkwitz has described how one such riding mistress, Alice Hayes, who taught at Ward's Riding-School on Brompton Road, went systematically about her work and she concludes that riding mistresses like Hayes, who charged a guinea an hour, were regarded positively as paid professionals.[73] Some riding mistresses were in the vanguard of adopting innovations in riding styles and one commentator in 1907 observed that in Wanstead was an 'unusual riding-school' where the riding 'master' was a lady who was endeavouring to persuade her lady pupils to ride astride. Miss Murfitt, the lady jockey, always rode astride on the basis that it benefited both horse and rider and when she was asked about dress the 'business-like' Miss Murfitt said she wore breeches and a coat.[74] Unlike many physical culturalists, games mistresses, and skating instructors, the relatively few riding mistresses identified in the 1911 census were generally more mature and more often married or widowed, showing a similar profile in some ways to swimming teachers (See Table 4).

Table 4. Riding mistresses in the 1911 census.

Descriptor	N	19–20	21–30	31+	Single	Married	Widow
Riding Mistress	12	1	5	6	7	3	2
Riding Instructress	3	0	1	2	2	0	1
Teacher of Riding	2	0	1	1	2	0	0
Riding School	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
All	18	1	8	9	11	4	3

Reflections

When the 1911 data is combined a picture emerges of large numbers of women using self-descriptors in their census returns that imply that they were engaged in professional coaching related activities. The 446 women identified in this paper are almost certainly not the only ones earning a living in this way at that moment in time and, of course, it does not reflect the voluntary coaching efforts of women that were clearly taking place in sports like hockey. This cohort of 446 women does suggest some tends of course with a significant majority being single, as with the dancing coaches (553 out of 695), and the 21–30 years age range dominating but there are clear differences between activities in this respect since swimming teachers and physical culturalists are significantly represented in the 31 plus age range, as are riding mistresses (See Table 5).

The data from the 1911 census demonstrates that assumptions that coaching has always been an exclusively male career are fundamentally wrong. No

Table 5. All women coaches in the 1911 census.

Sport	N	15–20 years	21–30 years	31 + years	Single	Married	Widow
Physical Culture	219	20	140	59	211	5	3
Swimming	108	17	38	53	81	15	12
Skating	60	20	39	1	51	7	2
Games Mistress	41	5	32	4	40	1	0
Riding	18	1	8	9	11	4	3
All	**446**	**63**	**257**	**126**	**394**	**32**	**20**

dominant culture ever successfully encompasses all human activity and dominance cannot be equated with complete hegemony so it is little surprise that it is continually resisted, limited, altered and challenged. Some women, then, chose to earn a living through coaching-related activities, transcending any notional societal boundaries in the process. While the recorded history of early twentieth century coaching has up to now been essentially the history of a male endeavour, it is clear that these women coaches need to be included in the historical conversation. Every life-course reflects the context in which it is lived but, for an increasing number of women at the intersections between the working and middle classes who were prepared to challenge existing masculine norms, sports instruction became an acceptable practice and, in some case, a career choice. This was particularly true for physical educators and for swimming teachers, an occupation that, if properly managed, could lead to a degree of financial security, and, in some cases, social mobility, as the evidence from probates and wills suggests. Women's experiences as coaches differed from activity to activity and the way that patriarchy affected their involvement varied according to sport but there are signs that suggest that women were often able to exert some control over their participation and that Victorian patriarchs never dictated all aspects of their lives.

The critical juncture in female coaching careers was the decision to marry on not. As the prosopographical data presented here shows the overwhelming majority of these 1911 coaches were single, almost exclusively with physical culturalists, games mistresses and skating instructors. The average age for marriage for a woman in 1911 was 26.2 years[75] and the education sector and the new professions operated a 'marriage bar'. This meant that women had to resign their posts when they got married, and this was only ended for teachers by the 1944 Education Act. Local authority bans also affected women doctors and nurses, who generally had to resign on marriage until 1944. For a female bank worker, an engagement was always followed by resignation because it was assumed that married women would rather be at home looking after husbands and children, and would not be properly committed to their work. However, if patriarchy is understood as a negotiated relationship between inherently unequal individuals that was fluid enough to allow a degree of active agency,[76] then it is reasonable to surmise that

some women coaches might have been able to exert a degree of control over their own destinies, even after marriage, and there is some evidence of this in the data, not least with Clara Jarvis, the starting point for this paper. No doubt these women had to carefully negotiate the accepted gender norms and boundaries, but they seem to have found ways to circumvent some of the conventional constraints associated with the patriarchal ideology. In that sense, these women's lives draw attention to how women successfully negotiated with gender expectations in historic patriarchal sporting cultures.[77]

In general, the story of female coaching in the Edwardian period remains a hidden history. The presence of significant numbers of women operating as coaches, instructors, and teachers across a range of sports has been discussed here but that almost certainly represents merely the tip of the iceberg. Substantial numbers of women coaches were almost certainly active, in an amateur if not professional capacity, if the recent research uncovering women's previously unknown participation in a range of sports is anything to go by. As participation expanded it is reasonable to assume that women with expertise adopted coaching related roles within their sport, sometimes formally but more often in an unofficial capacity, especially in sports like athletics. Their absence from the historiography can be at least partially attributed the lack of attention given by coaching historians to the variations in the use of language to describe women's coaching related activities. To redress the balance, different strategies need to be applied when accessing the archives and the historical records, strategies that bear in mind the different nature of patriarchy in different sports and the preferred choice of descriptor used by practitioners. Historians need to look beyond 'coaching' to explore the broader range of descriptors that women engaged in coaching related activities used to describe themselves or to be described by others.

Most of these women coaches have left little trace in the historical record, but that should not dissuade the historian of coaching from making the effort to uncover their life courses using a range of different biographical methods, including prosopography, and collective biography, which has been usefully employed previously in considerations of female physical education teachers in Copenhagen and the influential women involved with Anstey physical training college.[78] Just as important is the individual biographical method and biographies of female coaches need to be constructed from a broad spectrum of key primary sources such as newspaper and periodical archives, photographs, trade directories, census material, contemporary maps, travel documents, and local and family histories, to highlight the continuities and changes in the roles they adopted and to collate key characteristics on their origins, economic class, family connections, social networks, and daily practice. This will not be an easy task and the subsequent narratives

may lack evidence in parts, but they do not need to be 'stuffed with truth'[79] to be able to challenge the dominant masculine discourse that has underpinned the British intangible coaching heritage.

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