Robert Snape

An English Chautauqua: the National Home Reading Union and the development of rational holidays in late Victorian Britain.

Published in Journal of Tourism History Volume 2, Issue 3, November 2010, pages 213-234

Abstract

The success of the Chautauqua Assembly in providing educational holidays in North America in the final quarter of the nineteenth century raised interest in the development of a similar type of holiday in Great Britain. Following the establishment of university extension summer schools, which were themselves influenced by the example of Chautauqua, the Congregationalist social reformer John Brown Paton organised such a holiday in 1889 under the auspices of the National Home Reading Union in Blackpool, a popular seaside resort in the north of England. Adopting the values and practices of the Chautauqua Assembly, this combined informal education, non-conformist Christian morality and socially respectable leisure activities. Although not successful in establishing an English Chautauqua in Blackpool, Paton later mediated the Chautauqua ideal through his sponsorship of the Co-operative Holidays Association, a pioneer organisation in the development of rational holidays. It is argued that both the Chautauqua movement and the National Home Reading Union exercised a crucial influence on the development of rational and respectable holidays in Britain that has not previously been fully recognised.

Keywords

Chautauqua Blackpool Respectability Education Religion Serious Holidays

Introduction

By the end of the nineteenth century a holiday visit to the seaside was within the means of all but the poorest stratum of English society, with approximately one hundred and fifty coastal resorts providing accommodation and entertainment for tourists (Thompson, 1988 p.291; Walton, 2000 pp.27-30). While there were considerable variations in the appeal of individual resorts and in clientele, the largest and most popular resorts, most notably Brighton and Blackpool, were those which attracted substantial crowds of working class holidaymakers through a combination of easy railway access and a wide range of affordable and popular entertainments and diversions, many of which tended to indulge in excess. However, while the most commercially successful resorts depended upon their working class appeal, it should not be inferred that all working class people aspired to the popular holiday they offered. By 1914 countryside holidays on foot or on bicycle based upon a reflective enjoyment of the landscape and moderation in leisure had become increasingly available to working class people through organisations such as the Co-operative Holidays Association and the Holiday Fellowship (Prynn, 1976). The origins of these rational holidays have been variously
attributed to the expansion of education in the final quarter of the nineteenth century (Marquis, 1934) and more recently to the establishment of the National Home Reading Union, an organisation founded by John Brown Paton in 1889 which, it has been suggested, was the progenitor of the holiday movement of the twentieth century (Taylor, 1997, p.195). Both of these assertions contain some truth, but neither fully acknowledges the prior influence of the Chautauqua Assembly of North America on British thinking on rational holidaymaking in the late nineteenth century. This paper accordingly explores the means through which the Chautauqua ideal was adopted, mediated and negotiated as a model for rational self-improving holidays in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain.

**Tourism, education and self-improvement**

Although the historical associations of tourism with self-education are well established (Ousby, 1990; Towner 1996), there has been relatively little research on the development of educational holidays – or learning vacations as they are sometimes referred to in America (Kalinowski and Weiler, 1992 p.15) – in Great Britain. Ousby (1990) has shown how tourism in England originated in a pursuit of the educational benefits to be gained through visiting literary shrines, ancient monuments, medieval ruins and country houses. In the eighteenth century the Grand Tour functioned as a cultural finishing school for aristocratic young men, while the fashionable resort of Bath, in addition to its array of shops and assembly rooms, provided a liberal supply of bookshops and circulating libraries for its visitors (Towner, 1996 p.83). By the final third of the nineteenth century holidays away from home were becoming established amongst all social classes, albeit increasingly characterised, in some seaside resorts, by working and lower middle class visitors who preferred ‘immense but apparently aimless activity’ and disorder to the more orderly and sober holiday sought by the higher classes (Pimlott, 1976 pp. 123-4; Thompson, 1988 pp. 289-90). However, the popular entertainments and relaxed behavioural boundaries of the seaside resort were not of universal appeal and as Walvin (1978, p. 73) notes, many Victorians found seaside holidays dull and reverted to the pursuits they followed at home or, once arrived at the seaside, turned to a study of the natural science of coastline and sea; Philip Gosse (1856), for example,
undertook and published a scientific investigation of the natural history of Tenby while on holiday there. An interest in self-improving holidays is also evident amongst working class people, substantial numbers of whom travelled from the north and midlands of England to the Great Exhibition, often staying for a week in London to see important buildings and places (Barton, 2005 pp. 58-66). Thomas Greenwood (1888, p.26), the public library and museum pioneer, promoted museum visiting as an improving and cheap way of spending a holiday and by the eighteen-seventies exhibition visiting was a popular activity amongst working class holidaymakers, a party of Bolton artisans venturing as far afield in 1867 as the Paris Exhibition. Music making too offered opportunities to combine travel with leisure as choirs and brass bands travelled from the north to London to attend festivals (Bailey, 1978, p.92-5).

There was, thus, a constituency of working and lower middle class people with little aspiration to become part of what Cross and Walton (2005 p.5) have identified as the ‘playful crowd’, that is, one in unrestricted pursuit of pleasure and abandonment, and formed instead an inchoate market for a more serious and self-improving holiday (Walton, 1981). However, although there was working class interest in self-improvement and adult education (Rose, 2002), and while lectures and scientific demonstrations were a common feature of many seaside resorts, attempts to engage working class holidaymakers in didactic entertainments were generally unsuccessful (Walton, 1983a, p.170); neither was there any significant attempt to provide working class people with an alternative to the popular seaside holiday.

In America, however, the Chautauqua movement was, from the mid eighteen-seventies, organising an annual summer assembly which combined rational holiday making with informal education and drew thousands of visitors annually. This led to the establishment of numerous regional ‘Chautauquas’, with fifty five in Nebraska and almost two hundred in Iowa by 1912 (Pearson 1912). However it is the ‘resort Chautauquas’, which included the original Assembly and other ‘Chautauquas’ of between six days and ten days duration, which promoted holidays combining religious instruction, secular education and respectable leisure, that are of primary relevance to the growth of rational holidays in Britain. The success of the Chautauqua movement attracted the notice of leisure reformers in Britain and led to an attempt by the National Home Reading Union to establish an English Chautauqua in Blackpool in July 1889.
As the National Home Reading Union later facilitated the growth of the Co-operative Holidays Association which in turn contributed to the founding of a number of other holiday organisations which included the Holiday Fellowship and the Youth Hostel Association, the influence of the Chautauqua movement on the development of self-improving holidays in Britain was substantial and sustained. Less well understood, however, is the process through which the Chautauqua movement became known in Britain and the means through which it was adopted and mediated to establish a durable form of educational holiday in Britain. In particular the relationship between the university extension movement and the National Home Reading Union, notably through its founder John Brown Paton, in the development of rational holidays has not been fully investigated. Further questions surround the Union’s attempt to replicate the Chautauqua Assembly in Blackpool and the responses to this by political and civic leaders and holidaymakers. Finally, the attempt to establish an English Chautauqua invites some exploration of the socio-demographic and cultural appeal of the serious and respectable holiday it represented. The next section discusses the roughly parallel development of the Chautauqua Assembly in North America and university extension summer schools in Great Britain and outlines the growth of interest in establishing an English Chautauqua.

The Chautauqua Assemblies and University Extension Summer Schools: American and British experiences.

The Chautauqua Assembly originated in the religious travelling camp meetings of nineteenth century America, many of which acquired permanent sites (Snyder, 1985). Several of these sites became established as religious resorts, combining Bible readings and religious instruction with a highly regulated regime of leisure in which drinking, gambling and dancing were normally proscribed. Notable examples include Wesleyan Grove, Ocean Grove and the Rehoboth Beach Camp Meeting (Aron, 1999, pp 108-111). In 1874 the Methodist Bishop John H. Vincent and Lewis Miller selected Chautauqua, a popular summer holiday resort on the shores of Lake Chautauqua in New York, as the venue for the first National Sunday
School Assembly in north America (*Leeds Mercury*, 1880). Chautauqua differed from the previously established camp meetings in its attitude to leisure. While behaviour was regulated, Chautauqua displayed a more positive approach to leisure by adapting it to the pursuit of education and self-improvement (Aron, 1999 pp. 110-111). Thus bible classes were complemented by a range of respectable recreational activities such as boating, fishing, athletic games, archery, croquet and lawn-tennis and Chautauqua became a place where parents could bring their children for a holiday in the confidence that they would not be exposed to the ‘dissipations of the usual resorts’ (Vincent, 1887 p. 732-3). In 1876 it introduced secular classes to gain the financial support of larger attendances (Vincent, 1886, pp. 30-31) and its popularity increased with an expansion of what Scott (2005) has identified as a market for a ‘vacation with a purpose’, with some camps attracting crowds of thirty thousand (Morrison, 1974 pp. 41-5). By 1880 it had grown into a holiday village with five hundred summer cottages, temporary shops, hotels and an amphitheatre with seating capacity for five thousand people (*Leeds Mercury*, 1880). Above all, Chautauqua grew as a respectable resort through its combination of fun, study and holiday making (Case, 1948; Uminowicz, 1992). As Vincent (1887 p.732) described it:

people gather – probably seventy-five thousand different persons during the summer, some for one day, some for a week, several thousands of them for from four to eight weeks. They come to hear courses of lectures on science, on history, on philosophy; to witness experiments in chemistry; to study the stars through telescopes; to take, if they so desire, courses of lessons for six weeks in Hebrew, Latin, Greek, the modern languages, physical science, chemistry, political economy, and all the branches relating to the department of pedagogy.

The Chautauqua camp thus evolved from a religious gathering to a summer holiday of informal education, cultural activities and rational entertainments (Morrison, 1974, p 36-7). Its reputation for respectability was grounded in the nature of its regulated leisure activities and as Gould (1961, p.10) observes, ‘healthy fun, wholesome recreation, religious reverence, good taste and honest enquiry’ became the qualities associated with the word “Chautauqua”. To extend the work of the Assembly throughout the year, the Chautauqua Literary and
Scientific Circle (1887) was formed in 1878 to organise local reading groups that would meet in the winter months for instruction and discussion. This gained an almost immediate popularity throughout the mid west – in 1885, for example there were more than one hundred circles in Iowa – and its membership of 100,000 in turn increased interest in the Summer Assembly.

The Chautauqua Assembly became known in Great Britain through Vincent’s visit to England in 1886, his account of Chautauqua in the *Contemporary Review* (Vincent, 1887) and the publication in the *Nineteenth Century* of a report by John Girling Fitch (1888) which described it as a Summer School and noted the popular appeal of its blend of education and leisure. Of particular interest was its proscription of alcoholic drink and as Fitch observed, although not everyone was a student, everybody appeared ‘bent in some way or other on self-improvement’. Fitch argued that a replica of Chautauqua was needed in England and, recognising that the climate militated against the establishment of a camp community, proposed that the university extension systems then being developed at Oxford and Cambridge might serve as the foundation upon which an English Chautauqua could be nurtured.

Although more formal than Chautauqua, university extension teaching shared its aim of providing educational opportunities for adults. The growth of the university extension system was principally due to the interventions of James Stuart and John Brown Paton, a social and educational reformer and a leading Congregationalist (Paton, 1914, pp. 157-163). The first extension classes were provided by Cambridge University in 1873, followed by London in 1876 and Oxford in 1878 (Edwards, 1961; Kelly, 1950). In the following decade university extension adopted the practice of organising residential summer schools, first at Oxford and Cambridge where, as the Secretary of the Oxford Extension Scheme noted, the example set by Chautauqua of bringing people together in a ‘Vacation University’ had been instrumental in their development (Draper, 1923 p.48; Kelly,1950 p.28). The Oxford University Extension summer meeting in August 1888, for example, attracted nine hundred students for a week-long programme of lectures (*Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 1888) while in Scotland the University of Edinburgh held a summer gathering of popular lectures and concerts for working class people (*Glasgow Herald*, 1889). Like Chautauqua, these summer meetings combined
learning with recreation; that organised by Oxford University in the summer of 1889 was expected to attract over one thousand young men and women ‘partly to listen to lectures, partly to breathe the academical and cultivated atmosphere of the old University and partly to amuse themselves through receptions, at homes, concerts, boating, tennis, racquets and excursions” (Times, 1889). University Extension was not, however, popular amongst working class students, many of whom were uncomfortable with its formality (Rose, 2002 p.88).

The failure of university extension to attract working class people was of concern to Paton, who was primarily committed to the engagement of working class young adults in programmes of informal education with a leisure component and had founded the Recreative Evening Schools Association in 1885 on the grounds that the young “were not all self-help heroes a la Samuel Smiles” (Paton, 1914, p.202). Paton’s adaptation of the Chautauqua ideal to the British context of university extension summer schools was crucial to the expansion of rational holidays in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1887 he organised an independent Summer Assembly of classes and reading schemes in Oxford and when in 1888 the Oxford University Extension scheme proposed to establish local reading circles on the Chautauqua model (Jacksons Oxford Journal, 1888), there appeared to be a possibility that Paton’s proposed Home Reading Union might become part of the university extension system. However, Paton believed that the middle class nature of university extension would limit the capacity of any organisation associated with it to engage working class people and subsequently founded the National Home Reading Union in April 1889, modelling it on the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Reading Circle. He intended that the Union would become ‘an English Chautauqua’ though one less ‘bourgeois’ than its American counterpart (Paton, 1914, pp. 272-277).

The National Home Reading Union and its Summer Assemblies

The National Home Reading Union was not formed primarily as a holiday organisation, though as will be argued, it fulfilled an important function in this context. It was, as its title suggests, conceived as a reaction to the widespread concerns about popular reading and the
emergence of a mass market for cheap popular literature, typified by publications such as *TitBits* and *Pearson’s Weekly*, in the wake of the 1870 Education Act (Strahan, 1875; MacColl, 1891; Neuburg, 1977; Snape, 2002; Vincent, 1989). The Union was intended to address these concerns by promoting systematic and guided reading through local reading circles in which members would work under the direction of a Circle Leader to read and discuss books chosen from prescribed lists issued by the Union. Unlike the university extension schemes, the Home Reading Union was not intended to appeal to earnest students in pursuit of educational qualifications but to working men and women who wished to advance their knowledge in a relatively informal way. Like the Chautauqua Reading Circle, it aimed to offer a blend of informal instruction and leisure, providing, as Fitch (1888) noted, some education to those who would otherwise have none. Although established as a secular body the Union retained a strong element of social Christianity and was actively supported within the Anglican Church, notably by William Farrar3 and John Percival4 and by leading figures in non-conformist denominations, particularly Congregationalism. It also received support from within the labour movement through the Liberal MP George Howells and Benjamin Jones of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

The significance of the National Home Reading Union to the development of rational holidays lies in its adoption of the Chautauqua practice of holding Summer Assemblies. These were considered an essential element of the Union from the outset to enable members to maintain their learning through the summer months and to retain contact with each other (Churton Collins, 1890). They were also seen as a means of promoting and popularizing the Union and were, in Paton’s (1914, p.278) words, the ‘dynamos by which we shall generate the electricity’. The venue for the launch and first summer assembly of the Union in 1889 was Blackpool, a popular seaside resort in the north west of England, chosen at the suggestion of James Wayman5, a supporter of the embryonic Home Reading Union, minister of the Victoria Congregational church in Blackpool and editor of the *Blackpool Times* (Churton Collins, 1890; *Daily News*, 1889a). Taylor (1997, p.195) has cited the availability of cheap accommodation and easy rail access as reasons for the choice of Blackpool, but to these can be added the fact Blackpool was the resort most likely to enable ready access to large numbers of working
class holidaymakers, for as Paton (1914, p.278) noted, its concentration of the ‘hard-headed folk of the northern manufacturing districts’ whom the Union was most anxious to engage made it the ‘best pulpit for preaching the new crusade’. Furthermore, through its status as a major commercial resort Blackpool had halls and assembly rooms large enough to accommodate the hoped for attendances at lectures and social gatherings. Additionally, Blackpool offered suitable accommodation not only for working class holidaymakers but also for the middle class Union organisers and the university extension teachers who were essential to the presentation of the assembly.

The feasibility of holding the assembly in Blackpool required the co-operation of both the local council and the owners of the venues for the lectures and gatherings. This postulated a broad range of envisaged benefits which would embrace not only the altruistic social and educational aims of the Home Reading Union but also the commercial and civic interests of Blackpool, particularly of those businesses which depended on the holiday market. The potential economic gain to Blackpool was substantial. Throughout the late spring and early summer of 1889 the forthcoming assembly was widely likened in both national and local newspapers to the American Chautauqua camp, typified in the Daily News' (1889b) proclamation that

Blackpool is to be the Chautauqua of Great Britain on this inaugural occasion.
The town has remarkable accommodation for this purpose, and is well fitted to a gathering intended to combine recreation and instruction.

The claims of the Union’s supporters that its American prototype regularly attracted 200,000 people over its eight week duration raised hopes that a proportionately similar number of visitors might be brought to Blackpool at little cost to the town in terms of advertising. For the proprietors of the large halls and assembly rooms, the lettings for lectures, meetings and conversaziones represented attractive business opportunities, and the Opera House and Winter Gardens, the Palace Gardens Company and the North Pier Company all agreed to let their premises to the Union. Furthermore, as Wayman reminded civic and business leaders, there remained the possibility that the Assembly might become an annual event of much longer duration than a fortnight (Blackpool Times, 1889c).
A further potential benefit to Blackpool was the likelihood that the assembly would bolster the resort’s appeal to middle class visitors and the *Blackpool Times* (1889b) welcomed the probability that it would attract people of a ‘superior class’. The town council was anxious to maintain this market by separating middle class visitors from working class excursionists through planning policies designed to ensure that the middle class character of the north shore was not diluted by an influx of working class visitors (Webb, 2005). The North Shore cliffs, for example, were accessible only on payment of a toll (Cross and Walton, 2005, p.23) and as the venues and hotels the Assembly would occupy were in the main located close to this area of the resort, it would serve to reinforce the middle class patronage of these facilities. Indeed, the Assembly came at a critical point in the social and cultural zoning of middle and working class visitors to Blackpool, with both the Winter Gardens and the Opera House finding it difficult to resist the temptations to move towards a more popular form of provision (Walton, 1983a, p.172; Walton, 1983b, p.165). The *Blackpool Gazette* (1889d) therefore welcomed the Assembly as an event that would demonstrate that Blackpool was not simply a resort of popular entertainments and one that would help retain its mixed social appeal, noting that ‘Blackpool can be, and is, all things to all men. It caters equally well for the aristocratic visitor as for the plebeian weekender and it has attractions both for the fastidious student and the uncultured tripper’. However, the Council’s policies of limiting working class access to the North Shore ran counter to the Union’s objective of engaging working class holiday makers in the Assembly’s educational and cultural activities.

In other quarters enthusiasm for the Assembly was muted. Although the Council was eager to attract better-class visitors to extend what was in effect a short summer season (Walton, 1998 p.82), the Union was not able to further this aim because it could only logically hold its Assembly in high season if it was to recruit working-class holidaymakers. Thus, unlike other interventions such as the Battle of Flowers, which preceded the Assembly, it did not extend the season. The potential cost of hosting the assembly was a further concern. While there was sufficient interest to establish a local committee and to ensure attendance at public meetings, which were well attended by representatives of the clergy (*Blackpool Herald* 1889),
it was nevertheless necessary to raise a guarantee of £600. Although, as Wayman argued, every pound would be more than returned to the people of Blackpool (*Blackpool Times* 1889c), it proved impossible to raise this sum. The council guaranteed £100 and Aldermans Cocker and Whittaker also contributed, though both council and residents were criticised for their scepticism and restrained support (*Blackpool Times* 1889a; 1889f).

**The 1889 Summer Assembly**

The 1889 Assembly was held between 16 and 26 July and was anticipated as an event of some importance. The Union sought to moderate exaggerated claims made on its behalf and Wayman cautioned that it did not expect to establish a large membership in Blackpool (*Blackpool Gazette* 1889a). The venues for the Assembly were in the main those at which middle class visitors would feel comfortable and included the Winter Gardens Opera House, Prince of Wales Theatre, Theatre Royal, the Winter Gardens Pavilion and Royal Palace Gardens. As if to symbolise its desire to compete with Blackpool's popular entertainments and attractions, which that fortnight included Ohmy's New Grand Circus, Newsome's circus, a dramatic production of *East Lynne*, Walker's waxworks, with its Chamber of Horrors, and a display of swimming by the Misses Johnson, the Union placed an advertisement in the *Blackpool Gazette* (1889b) announcing that the Assembly would offer courses of lectures in English History, English Literature, Elementary Chemistry, Economics, Physical Geography and Geology, Folk Lore, Electricity, Vocal Music and Teaching. The majority of these were to be delivered by Cambridge University extension lecturers including Courtney Kenny, R.D. Roberts, T.J. Lawrence and Dr. Kimmins and other speakers including James Stuart, Professor Symes (University College Nottingham), T.W. Rhys Davids, Dr. E.D. Roberts, (London University), J.G. Fitch and Churton Collins. Admission to the full programme of events of lectures, entertainments and meetings was ten shillings (fifty pence) with a one week ticket at half this price. Artisan tickets were available at the reduced price of four shillings through trade associations and co-operative societies. Taking into account the additional expenditure on board, lodgings and excursions, Paton (1889) estimated that a working man might enjoy the whole fortnight for one pound. On the eve of the Assembly the *Blackpool Times* (1889d) noted, somewhat triumphantly and, as it would prove, prematurely,
that the Union had confounded those who, having thought that linking Blackpool to the culture of the age was an ‘altogether too utopian scheme’, had shown little desire to aid the effort.

Other than newspaper reports there are few contemporary records of the Assembly, though John Churton Collins (1890) report in the Contemporary Review offered a colourful and probably exaggerated picture:

Never before did an English town present so unwonted, but assuredly so interesting, a spectacle as Blackpool presented in July 1889. Within a few hours one of the gayest and idlest of watering-places found itself transformed, as if by magic, into a University. Bewildered visitors and inhabitants gazed in wonder at theatres and concert-halls placarded with names which they had never seen anywhere but on the title-pages of books and in the columns of literary and scientific reviews. For the old programmes, gaudy with the attractions of melodrama and the opera-bouffe, had been substituted programmes grave with the syllabuses of academic professors. Winter-gardens, pier-head, assembly-rooms, all had been subsidised for addresses and lectures.

The schedule of activities organised by the Assembly represented the epitome of middle-class respectability and restraint. The inaugural meeting in the Winter Gardens Opera House attracted five hundred mainly middle class people and was followed by an evening conversazione in the Victoria Hall of the Winter Gardens, again with a ‘large and select audience’ (Blackpool Gazette 1889c). Lectures were delivered between Wednesday and Saturday in the first week and between Tuesday and Friday in the second week. The morning sessions offered courses on, for example, Chemistry, English Literature, Geology, Political Economy and Vocal Music with an afternoon schedule of short courses on, for example, English Charities, Our Thinking Apparatus, the Bayeux Tapestry and one on Electricity delivered by Professor Barrett to an audience of almost 1,500 people in the Opera House (Manchester Times 1889). At the end of the first week the lectures were reported to have been well attended, albeit by predominantly middle class audiences, and the Assembly concluded with a Garden Party at the Royal Palace Gardens which commenced with a promenade at 5.00 p.m. followed by a band concert, a performance by a children’s choir, a presentation on photography and a fireworks display. This programme drew superlative
acclaim from the *Blackpool Gazette* (1889d) as one of the most brilliant Blackpool had known, though one which seems unlikely to have been easily accessible by working class holiday makers. The respectability of the Assembly was further underpinned by a cross-denominational Christian ethos and a series of Sunday sermons by visiting clergy in several churches, some by speakers of a national standing such as Canon Farrar and Paton himself (*Blackpool Gazette* 1889a).

Churton Collins (1890) considered that the Assembly had demonstrated that future meetings would be of moral and intellectual benefit, offering recreation and pleasure to thousands, while Paton (1914 p.280) believed it had proved the existence of a body of people of all classes who were ready to take advantage of the purposeful and educational holiday it represented and that if arranged annually it would be as great a success as its American counterpart. The Union’s view was not however widely shared, as even by the end of the first week it was apparent that lectures had not attracted large attendances (*Blackpool Times*, 1889e) and had failed to engage artisans, with few if any working class holiday makers having been drawn away from the resort’s public houses and popular entertainments. Furthermore, the Assembly was in financial deficit and to avoid jeopardising its being held in Blackpool in the following year, the guarantors were not called upon and the deficit was carried forward to the 1890 Assembly (*Blackpool Gazette* 1889e). Nevertheless, the Assembly had brought additional visitors and although some lodging house keepers felt they had been misled about the volume of business, it was accepted that the first event should not be judged in isolation and that it remained possible that future Assemblies would bring considerable benefits to the resort (*Blackpool Gazette* 1889e). Ultimately, however, these benefits had to be economic in nature and there remained the hope that the Assembly might yet fulfil its commercial potential, the *Blackpool Times* (1889e), for example, commenting than there was no reason why it should not attain similar dimensions to the Chautauqua Assembly and Blackpool become the permanent home of the ‘Chautauqua of Great Britain’.
The 1890 Summer Assembly

The National Home Reading Union held its second annual summer assembly in Blackpool between the 15 and 25 July 1890. By this point the Union had gained approximately seven thousand members (Leeds Mercury 1890), leading the Blackpool Gazette (1890a) to welcome the event in the hope that a large attendance would bring business to the resort. As in the previous year, the Assembly commenced with an inaugural meeting in the Opera House attended by five hundred people. At the moderately attended evening Reception and Conversazione in the Indian Pavilion of the North Pier John Bickerstaffe, the Mayor of Blackpool, praised the symbiotic relationship between the Assembly and the resort (Blackpool Gazette 1890b) to an audience comprising mainly members and officials of the Union rather than residents and holiday makers.

The programme of lectures was similar in nature to that of the previous year and included John Churton Collins on ‘English Puritans and their Literature’, C.W. Kimmins on ‘Digestion’ and Jane Harrison on ‘The Parthenon Marbles’. Possibly as a result of the carrying over of the deficit of the previous year’s assembly some lectures were held in less costly school halls rather than large commercial premises. Attendances were again reported to be ‘good’, the Blackpool Gazette (1890c) recording an ‘extremely large’ audience for Marriott’s lecture on ‘The making of modern Italy’ at the Tyldsley Road School. However, notwithstanding the Union’s desire to engage working class holidaymakers, some of its supporters disliked close physical proximity to the working-class holiday crowd. Questions were raised amongst its helpers as to the fixed commitment to hold the summer gatherings at Blackpool, (Blackpool Herald 1890a) and it was suggested that an alternative venue might be considered for future assemblies. This unrest brought into focus the question of respectability insofar as it exposed the fundamental difference between the rougher element of the working class holiday crowd from which the Union hoped to recruit members and the more respectable middle and lower class visitors who came to Blackpool for a more family–orientated and essentially sober holiday. The clash of the rough and the respectable was of growing concern to Blackpool from the eighteen-eighties onwards as its middle class appeal was being weakened by increasing numbers of working class excursionists and holiday makers whose behaviour disrupted previously accepted norms. The ensuing tension led the Manchester Times (1891) to observe
that Blackpool wished to retain a degree of decorum in order to retain its respectability and that while visitors might drink, it was expected that they would start to do so later in the day. The friction between the respectable and non-respectable crowds in public spaces engendered correspondence in local newspapers which complained of the rowdiness of the town and evinced a disinclination to visit in future as ‘the place has got so frightfully common’ (Blackpool Gazette 1890d). A further correspondent warned that the overcrowding between the piers – a physical and a cultural space that Union officials had to traverse in order to connect with artisans – would not much longer be tolerated by better class visitors (Blackpool Herald 1890c). Bailey (1979) has suggested that middle class patrons of leisure reform experienced challenges in engaging with the non-respectable and this appears to have been the case with Union helpers who, when they did eventually come into physical proximity to working class visitors at the Assembly’s concluding Garden Party in the Royal Palace Gardens, were shaken by the exuberance of the holiday crowds in other parts of the building which interfered with the speakers’ ability to be heard and largely spoiled the event (Blackpool Herald 1890b). The second assembly, like the first, thus failed to attract a large influx of visitors and was also unsuccessful in engaging working class people.

The 1891 Summer Assembly

Despite the disappointments of the previous two years the Union returned to Blackpool in 1891 for its third summer assembly, albeit now reduced to the one week of 25 July to 1 August. As it became clear that the hoped-for crowds were again unlikely to materialise, the previously cordial relationships between the Union and the town became strained. The Blackpool Times (1891), which under Wayman’s editorial influence adopted a positive attitude to all the assemblies, remained supportive, commenting that the Assembly had brought large numbers of ‘influential ladies and gentlemen interested in education and culture’ from the south of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland which had benefited the hoteliers and lodging house keepers who catered for the better class of visitor but also remarked upon the lack of interest in the lectures and events among residents. At the opening ceremony in the Indian Pavilion on the North Pier, Robert Yerburgh described the attendance of two hundred as ‘miserable’ and in reporting that the Union had abandoned its Artisan section, effectively
conceded the failure of the Union and its assemblies to attract working class members
(Blackpool Herald 1891a). Nevertheless, attendances at lectures were widely reported as
being ‘good’ (unfortunately no numerical data are available to expand upon this) and
Bickerstaffe remained hopeful that the Union would come to Blackpool again. However, by
the close of the Assembly the relationship between the Union and Blackpool had become
acrimonious with on the one hand, the Union regretting the lack of interest amongst
Blackpool’s residents (Blackpool Herald 1891b) and on the other the local press criticising the
Union for its failure to establish the English Chautauqua that had been anticipated three years
earlier:

it is very evident that the Home Reading Union cannot be profitably ‘run’ in
Blackpool upon the present lines …It is no use attempting to blame the
Blackpool people for the comparative non-success of the Assembly. The majority
of the residents of Blackpool are at present too much occupied with their
business affairs to spare the time to attend lectures. If the Assembly were
intended for the benefit of Blackpool people, we take it that it would be held at a
different time than July. The declared object of those interested, however, is to
attract the students from all over the country who have formed the membership
of the various ‘circles’ during the winter. Comparatively few of these have
favoured Blackpool with their presence despite the comprehensive programme
which has been arranged. The council of the Union, therefore, would do well to
fathom the reason why the Assembly has been ignored by the great majority of
members of ‘circles’ in other towns. Until the Union has made far greater
progress in the country generally it seems futile to expect the Summer Assembly
to be a pronounced success, either financially or otherwise. Blackpool has done
its best and it remains with the officials of the Union to discuss the secret of the
success of the American Chautauqua which so far does not seem to be in their
possession. (Blackpool Gazette 1891).

Several factors contributed to the failure of the Assembly to establish an English Chautauqua
in Blackpool, not least that at the time of the first Assembly the Union did not have the critical
mass of a national membership. While the Chautauqua Reading Circle was an extension of
an already established assembly with a large membership, the Union used its Blackpool Assemblies to attract a membership. Paton’s protestation that the Blackpool assemblies had been abandoned for financial reasons (Paton, 1914 p.283) failed to acknowledge that this was a reflection of the Union’s inability to engage the working-class holiday crowds at Blackpool. As noted above, the practicalities of engaging with working class holidaymakers had not been seriously considered and as Alex Hill, a leading figure within the Union noted in hindsight, Blackpool had been an infelicitous choice of venue (Temple, 1921).

**Chautauqua, the National Home Reading Union and the Co-operative Holidays Association**

After 1891 the Union retreated to middle class inland resorts and spas such as Bowness, Ilkley, Buxton, Leamington, Chester and Exeter. Its assemblies continued to combine leisure and study through educational visits, talks and middle class social gatherings such as receptions and conversazioni (*Leeds Mercury*, 1893); the 1904 Assembly in Ross on Wye for example included visits to churches, Norman castles and the Wye Valley and lectures on history, architecture, intelligence in animals and the poems of Robert Browning. It also retained a strong Christian ethos, albeit one inclined to Anglicanism rather than non-conformity with sermons by the Deans of Westminster and Hereford and visits to the Hereford and Gloucester cathedrals. However, Paton renewed his effort to establish an English Chautauqua by nurturing the embryonic Co-operative Holidays Association within the National Home Reading Union. Like the Union, the CHA emerged from non-conformist social Christianity through T. A. Leonard, a former pupil of Paton and a Congregationalist minister in Colne, Lancashire. In August 1891 Leonard delivered a sermon (*Colne Times*, 1891) on the philosophy of holidaymaking which urged his congregation to abandon Blackpool, with its brass bands and crowds, for rational and purposeful holidays in the countryside. These would embody a different set of leisure values to those which informed commercial resorts:

> We have seen people doing things away from home that they would never have dreamt of doing at home. We need to beware of the gaiety of those whose headaches nail them to a noon-day bed, whose haggard eyes flash desperation
and betray their pangs. We love merriment and gaiety of the right kind ... no holiday is worth the name unless it makes us eager to do right and strong for honest toil.

Subsequently the church’s Young Men’s Guild established a fund which enabled 32 working class male members of its Social Guild Walking Club to take a walking holiday in the Lake District. Paton played a crucial role in popularising Leonard’s rational walking holidays on a national basis. Noting the contrast of their popularity with the Union’s failure to engage working class people he enabled Leonard to promote his holidays amongst the Pleasant Sunday Afternoons and Working Men’s Bible classes of the north of England and later on a wider scale by working within the National Home Reading Union (Paton, 1914, p.229). Paton’s ambitions of converting holiday crowds in Blackpool were abandoned and replaced with visions of collective holidays in the countryside:

we should all meet on the wide basis of the holiday comradeship, Churchmen and Nonconformists, socialists and individualists, mill-hands and mill-owners, those who had graduated in the University and those who had graduated in the office or the shop, joining in the same games and the same songs, sharing the same joys and lessons in ‘God’s great out-of-doors’.

(Paton, 1914, p. 230)

The Union supported Leonard in this by opening two holiday centres in August 1892 at Ambleside and at Keswick, each of which had four mixed sex parties staying for one week, accompanied by a lecturer ‘able to chat on the literary associations of the country’ or on natural history (Paton, 1914, p.230). The ‘Co-operative Holidays Association in connexion with the National Home Reading Union’ was thus founded with a Christian ethos and educational objectives (Co-operative Holidays Association, 1900) and maintained the ideal of a moral, rational and self-improving holiday learnt from the Chautauqua Assembly and described as a ‘pleasant educational experiment’ along the lines of the American concept of a summer school (Globe, 1907). The change of location from a popular commercial seaside resort to un-commercialised inland resorts in a region with strong literary associations – both, like Chautauqua, lying on the shore of a lake - was of fundamental importance and was
recognised contemporaneously by T.C. Horsfall, Treasurer of the Manchester Branch of the National Home Reading Union who noted that although the Blackpool Assemblies had been useful,

the land scenery of the place is not of a kind which affects the imagination deeply... therefore the Blackpool meetings have not been as helpful as those held on the banks of Lake Chautauqua. Bowness, should the weather be even moderately favourable, will offer advantages not possessed by any place in America. (Preston Guardian 1892)

Between 1892 and the incorporation of the CHA in 1907 as an autonomous body the National Home Reading Union provided both its own one week Assembly and also a programme of holidays organised by the CHA as a subsidiary organisation. During this period the Union enabled the CHA to become more widely known through the inclusion in its monthly magazines of news of CHA holidays, by supporting the formation of CHA reading circles and through the support of the CHA by local Union officials, some of whom, such as the Barlow family in Bolton, became crucial to the local presence of both the Union and the CHA over several years (Snape, 2004).

The CHA holidays differed from the Union’s Assemblies in their emphasis on walking in the countryside, simple living and informal education (Taylor, 1997; Snape, 2004). Although members of the CHA were encouraged to join the Home Reading Union, only 231 of 7,733 CHA visitors enrolled in the Union in 1904 which suggests that the Union and the Association, though partner organisations with similar objectives, drew from socially differing constituencies (Kitchin, 1905). Though nominally secular, the CHA retained a non-Conformist ethos, reproducing the religious aspects of Chautauqua through hymn singing and impromptu services on the walks which were, as Paton conceded, ‘far more gladsome than that of the heavy, stagnant atmosphere of church’ (Paton, 1914, p.229). While not a camping holiday, its characteristics of collectivism, communal living and practised non-conformity corresponded with the values which infused the embryonic camping movement of the late nineteenth century (Ward and Hardy, 1986) in a way which the Home Reading Union’s Assemblies did
not. Leonard consistently sought a working-class membership through the provision of free and subsidised holidays for families too poor to afford the standard fee and openly criticised perceived middle class displays of consumption amongst members. When the CHA became progressively more middle class he founded the Holiday Fellowship in 1913 in a renewed effort to provide a rational holiday of genuinely working class appeal (Leonard, 1912; Wroe, 2007 p.8). These too retained core characteristics of Chautauqua in combining walking and rambling with excursions and visits to paces of historical interest and organised evening programmes of rational, respectable and non-alcoholic leisure activities such as talks by guest speakers, topical discussions, amateur dramatics, folk dancing and concerts (Wroe, 2007).

**Alternative interpretations: the ‘British Chautauqua’**

Paton’s mediation of the Chautauqua ideal was grounded in the North American Chautauqua Assembly at the point to which it had developed in the late eighteen-eighties. However, an alternative replication of Chautauqua, again emanating from British Nonconformity, was established in the eighteen-nineties. This drew on the earlier tradition of the American religious camps described by Aron (1999) in focusing on religious affairs and eschewing secular concerns. It originated in 1895 as a gathering of Sunday School teachers at Pwllheli, North Wales, which was repeated in the following year as two separate camps in Barmouth and Pwllheli and referred to in the *Manchester Guardian* (1896a) as a ‘Sunday School Chautauqua’. This was attended in total by over 200 people (*Manchester Guardian*, 1896b) and was subsequently established on a permanent basis as a ‘British Chautauqua’.

Organised principally by the Sunday School Union in association with Aberystwyth University College, its purpose was to assist Sunday School teachers and related Christian organisations by providing lectures and talks on ecclesiastical history and religious pedagogy (*Manchester Guardian*, 1896b). It is possible that this camp was the ‘one solitary assembly in the British Isles that partakes of the general nature of an American Chautauqua’ mentioned in the *Boston Evening Transcript’s* (1905) account of the Chautauqua movement. This British Chautauqua was held again in 1897 between 6 and 28 August at Aberystwyth with visiting lecturers and clergymen from America (*Manchester Guardian*, 1897), in 1898 at Edinburgh
(Dundee Courier and Argus, 1898) and in 1899 at Saltburn (North Eastern Daily Gazette, 1899a; Northern Echo, 1899). Though broadly non-conformist, these gatherings retained a strong association with Congregationalism, the Saltburn meeting, for example, being held in part in a Congregational church. Although the British Chautauqua focused primarily on religious classes and discussions it nevertheless assumed aspects of a holiday with time allocated to social leisure activity; at Saltburn for example, this included a ramble, a stroll on the beach at Redcar and a coach excursion (North Eastern Daily Gazette 1899a; 1899b).

Later records refer to a British Chautauqua at Aberystwyth in 1903 (Manchester Guardian, 1903) and in 1909 the Manchester Guardian (1909) reported ‘numerous summer schools’, loosely based on the American Chautauqua, to have taken place that year. These ‘British Chautauquas’ retained a predominantly religious tone and appear to have displayed little interest in reproducing the North American Chautauqua blend of leisure, religious instruction and secular education. They do, however, demonstrate that the influence of Chautauqua on tourism in Great Britain was both pervasive and diverse and they merit further investigation.

Religion, Respectability and Serious Holidays

Although the associations between the expansion of education and the emergence of the holiday movement in England have been acknowledged (Marquis, 1934; Taylor 1997), the precise relationship between them was more complex than previously recognised. In particular, the influence of the Chautauqua movement has been under-estimated. While educational reform increasingly focused on adults after the 1870 Education Act and while university extension adopted the concept of summer schools prior to the establishment of the National Home Reading Union, the influence of the Chautauqua Assembly, mediated and negotiated through John Brown Paton, was a crucial factor in the early development and growth of rational holidays in Great Britain. Paton re-modelled the Chautauqua ideal into a blend of informal education and respectable leisure which informed the philosophies and aims of both the National Home Reading Union and the Co-operative Holidays Association and was later instrumental in the formation of holiday organisations such as the Holiday Fellowship and Youth Hostels Association, which in the mid-twentieth century formed the core of what became the outdoor movement (Taylor, 1997). This process provides insights to two
important and related aspects of late Victorian leisure, namely the role of Congregationalism, and non-conformist religion more generally, in the creation of socially and morally orthodox forms of holiday and secondly, the significance of respectability to the cultural appeal of these holidays.

Although a secular organisation, the National Home Reading Union inherited from the Chautauqua Assembly a strong Christian ethos. The Chautauqua ideal emerged within non-conformist religion in America and its introduction to Britain was substantially aided by prominent Congregationalists, notably John Brown Paton, James Wayman and T.A. Leonard. The mediation of Chautauqua’s combination of the secular and the religious through Congregationalism was enabled by contemporary social thinking within the church in the second half of the nineteenth century as the non-conformist domination of cities such as Birmingham and Manchester contributed to the evolution of a provincial urban culture in which religious values informed social intervention (Parsons (1988, p. 80). This integration of religious belief with social action formed the basis of the civic gospel which was forged in political and Congregationalist circles in Birmingham, notably by George Dawson, Joseph Chamberlain and Robert Dale. The civic gospel reflected a shift within Congregationalism from a long-standing emphasis on evangelicalism to a belief that the gospels had a social context (Briggs, 1968, pp. 199-201). It invoked a set of shared ideals through which municipal and civic administration became a co-operative undertaking between religious and secular bodies as ministers, laymen and politicians worked together to implement social reforms.

Paton, who met Robert Dale as a student at Springhill College and with whom he remained a lifelong friend, was deeply committed to the civic gospel which became the ‘agenda paper’ for the rest of his life (Paton, 1914, p. 186-99). The linking of religious belief with social reform is consistently evident in his work, notably in his pioneering of united action by nonconformists and Anglicans in civic work in Nottingham, his advocacy of working with civil agencies on matters affecting social well-being (Paton 1914, pp. 132-161) and also in his teaching as Principal of the Congregational Institute at Nottingham where T.A. Leonard was one of his students.
However, while Congregationalism and the civic gospel were instrumental in the formation of the Home Reading Union and its summer assemblies, it is important to note that the role of Congregationalism in leisure reform was disputed within the church in the late nineteenth century and that not all Congregationalists shared Paton’s enthusiasm for the civic gospel. Congregationalism had traditionally displayed a cautious approach to leisure and an aversion to ‘ungodly’ or unproductive pursuits (Daniels, 1995, p.16). In the eighteen seventies this restrictive attitude to leisure began to be questioned within the church. Writing in The Congregationalist, Conder (1879) discerned a ‘strong reaction’ against previous rules which had railed against ‘worldly’ amusements, while Hamer (1879) urged Congregationalists to adopt a more positive approach to working in the sphere of ‘amusements and recreations’. This chimed with a wider enthusiasm in Congregationalism for active involvement in social reform in the period in which Paton formed the Social Institutes, the Recreative Evening Schools Association and the National Home Reading Union and also supported Leonard in setting the Co-operative Holidays Association upon a sustainable basis (see for example Reaney, I. 1884; Reaney G.S., 1884; Newman Smith, 1885a, 1885b). During the eighteen nineties there emerged a counter reaction to involvement in social work (Green, 1891; Carvell-Williams, 1899), succinctly expressed in Morlais Jones’ (1897) comment that while societies, crusades and guilds abounded within Congregationalism, the tone of religious life had declined. This shift corresponded with the establishment of the ‘British Chautauqua’ camps which, in contrast to Paton’s ‘English Chautauqua’, abandoned secular education to focus on the Bible and the training of religious instructors. These conflicting attitudes to social intervention suggest that while the civic gospel was strongly associated with Congregationalism, it was not, by the last decade of the nineteenth century, representative of the whole spectrum of opinion within the church. Paton’s mediation of the Chautauqua ideal through a broad alliance of religious and secular bodies was thus grounded in the values of the civic gospel rather than those of evangelical Congregationalism.

A further aspect of the influence of Chautauqua on British holiday-making relates to respectability (see Walton, 2001). In America, Chautauqua’s appeal derived in part from its
blurring of the distinction between work and leisure, thus negating the idea of a holiday as a period of idleness (Aron, 1999 pp.234-235). While this remained important in the context of Great Britain, the respectable nature of holidays based on the Chautauqua ideal was also an important element of their attraction. Although respectability is a loose concept and has been argued to be lacking in definition (Hoppen, 1998 p.68) and inherently unreliable (Bailey, 1979), it nevertheless further explains the influence of the Chautauqua ideal on the expansion of rational holidays in Britain. Thompson (1988, p. 293) for example, has identified one characteristic of respectability in holiday making as an avoidance of the ‘full blast of boisterous or bawdy entertainments’ at the Victorian seaside, while Assael (2005) sees respectability as a dividing line between order and disorder, again a distinguishing aspect of the Chautauqua and Home Reading Union assemblies and popular working class seaside holidays. Huggins (2000) has argued that respectability can be an all-encompassing rather than a performative aspect of leisure behaviour, and it would seem reasonable to suggest that those who chose holidays of sobriety, self-improvement and informal religious practice would have consistently adopted such values in other areas of their leisure lives. Such long-term commitment to specific forms of purposeful leisure has been termed by Stebbins’ (1992; 2007) as ‘serious’ leisure, distinguished from casual, hedonistic and short term leisure by its purposeful nature and commitment to self-improvement. Stebbins’ (1997) distinction between casual and serious leisure reflects important differences between the playful crowd and its pursuit of sensory, intrinsically rewarding and ‘relatively short-lived pleasurable activity’ and the serious holiday makers at Chautauqua, the National Home Reading Union Summer Assemblies and the Co-operative Holidays Association holidays who did not eschew all forms of casual leisure but counter-balanced this with a pursuit of self-fulfilment and intellectual engagement. Serious holidays thus reflected everyday leisure lives which corresponded with nineteenth century working-class intellectual life, in which self-help, sobriety and a desire for education flourished in mutual improvement societies, non-conformist churches and co-operative and friendly societies (Rose, 2002 pp. 58-91).

**Conclusion**
The principal contribution of the Chautauqua Assembly to holiday-making in Britain was that it informed the development, well into the twentieth century, of relatively affordable holidays.
usually in a rural setting, which blended social leisure activity with opportunities for informal self-improvement. It gave impetus to the establishment of numerous voluntary holiday associations in which ideological principles were more important than commercial gain and contributed to the construction of a cultural conceptualization of the countryside as an “other” to the popular seaside resort. The emphasis within the Chautauqua ideal on accessibility to all classes was widely adopted and while none of the holiday associations became truly classless, they nevertheless provided holidays in which, at least in principle, all social classes could intermingle. Furthermore, the Christian morality of Chautauqua was adopted by the secular organisations whose holidays were inspired by its example, ensuring that respectability and a behavioural code remained core characteristics.

The success of the CHA and related organisations in replicating the Chautauqua ideal in Britain was thus not that they persuaded a playful crowd to become rational and respectable but that they offered rational and respectable holidays to those for whom the playful crowd held little appeal. The difference between the playful crowd and the collective associations of the holiday movement – symbolised in the words such as ‘co-operative’ and ‘fellowship’ with which they described themselves – was partly drawn along lines of social class insofar as the playful crowd was essentially working class in nature while the serious crowd of the holiday movement was drawn from a broad cross section of social class, but it was chiefly a cultural distinction of indicators of respectability such as aspiration, morality, taste and a rational and serious use of leisure time. The mediation of the Chautauqua ideal thus foregrounded the diverging and irreconcilable trajectories of playful and serious holidays in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain by positioning the former as rough, hedonistic, commercial, amoral, unstructured and focused on sensory gratification and the latter as respectable, sober, non-commercialised, moral, organised and focused on self-improvement. The gulf between the two was not only one of content but also one of space and culture, keenly discerned in ‘Cheap Tripper’s’ assessment of the first ‘English Chautauqua’ at Blackpool in 1889 (Blackpool Gazette 1889d):
Culture in Blackpool - A wail from a Cheap Tripper

O haunt best beloved of the tripper,
Oh Blackpool, what mischief is this?
The scornful may dub me a “nipper,”
But I think that I know what is Bliss.
I have sought it with you and have found it,
The holiday bliss, “real jam”
But this congress of “cultchaw” – confound it!
I can scarcely believe where I am.

For a plunge from the van to the briny,
For draughts of unlimited beer,
For parading in tail coat and “shiny,”
For getting the breeze on the pier,
No place was like Blackpool, my honey;
No wonder I went every year.

There was everything nice for your money;
And you couldn’t complain it was dear.
But the town is quite deadly this morning
With lectures and students and things,
And I give you O Blackpool, my warning –
The tripper will take to him wings,
There are Southport and Douglas to woo me
With learning in spite of myself.

I dote on the tramway electric
On niggers and banjos I dote
But this “cultchaw” quite drives me dyspeptic
It’s worse than an hour in a boat.
Begone to your ancient Parnassus,
To Oxford ye lecturers flee,
Leave this place for the lads and the lasses,
Leave Blackpool I tell you, to me!
Notes

2. Liberal Member of Parliament for Hoxton and Professor of Mechanism and Applied Mechanics at Cambridge University.

3. Dean of Canterbury and popular preacher.

4. Promoter of the university adult education movement and later Bishop of Hereford.

5. This occurred at the meeting at the Earl of Aberdeen’s London residence at which the National Home Reading Union was founded. I am grateful to John Walton for pointing out Wayman’s connection with the Blackpool Times.

6. Yerburgh, MP for Chester, was educated at Rossall School at nearby Fleetwood and was a long standing supporter of the Union

References


Blackpool Gazette (1889a). 28 June, pp 6 and 8

Blackpool Gazette (1889b). 5 July, p.4

Blackpool Gazette (1889c). 19 July pp. 6-8

Blackpool Gazette (1889d). 26th July p.5

Blackpool Gazette (1889e). 2 August p.5

Blackpool Gazette (1890a). 11 July p.5
Blackpool Gazette (1890b). 18 July
Blackpool Gazette (1890c). 25 July pp.5-6
Blackpool Gazette (1890d). 8 August, p.8
Blackpool Gazette (1891). 31 July p.6
Blackpool Herald (1889). 28 June
Blackpool Herald (1890a). 25 July p.6
Blackpool Herald (1890b). 1 August p.7
Blackpool Herald (1890c). 15 August p.6
Blackpool Herald (1891a). 31 July p.5
Blackpool Herald (1891b). 5 August, p.5.
Blackpool Times (1889a). 12 June p.5
Blackpool Times (1889b). 19 June p.5
Blackpool Times (1889c). 3 July p.7
Blackpool Times (1889e). 24 July p.5-6
Blackpool Times (1889f). 31 July, p.5
Blackpool Times (1891). 29 July p.5


Carvell-Williams, J. (1899) 'Nonconformity in the Nineteenth Century' Congregationalist Year Book pp. 18-39.


Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle. (1887). Programme


Colne Times (1891). Sermon by the Rev. T.A Leonard: The philosophy of holiday making. p.6


Co-operative Holidays Association (1900). Minute Book.

*Daily News* (1889a). Home Reading. 15 April, p.2.c8

*Daily News* (1889b). A Home Reading Summer Assembly. 6 July, p.8 c.1


*Dundee Courier and Argus* (1898) ‘The British Chautauqua’ 18\textsuperscript{th} August, p.5.


*Glasgow Herald* (1889). Proposed university teaching for the working classes. 8 April, p.9 c6

*Globe* (1907). An educational experiment. 28\textsuperscript{th} June.


Green, T. (1891) ‘The secular element in our Church life’ *Congregationalist Year Book*, pp. 59-75


*Leeds Mercury* (1890). 16 July p.3

*Leeds Mercury* (1893). National Home Reading Union: Summer Assembly at Ilkley. 1 July


*Manchester Guardian* (1896a) ‘Ecclesiastical Intelligence’ 11th June, p.10.


*North Eastern Daily Gazette* (1899a) 11th August ‘The British Chautauqua at Saltburn’


*Northern Echo* (1899). The British Chautauqua at Saltburn. 15th August.


Preston Guardian (1892). 18th June. Correspondence.


Times (1889). Oxford Extension Summer Meeting. 27 July p.6.col.3


