Danskernes Historie Online
Danske Slægtsforskeres Bibliotek

Dette værk er downloadet fra Danskernes Historie Online

Danskernes Historie Online er Danmarks største digitaliseringsprojekt af litteratur inden for emner som personalhistorie, lokalhistorie og slægtsforskning. Biblioteket hører under den almennyttige forening Danske Slægtsforskere. Vi bevarer vores fælles kulturarv, digitaliserer den og stiller den til rådighed for alle interesserede.

Støt vores arbejde – Bliv sponsor

Som sponsor i biblioteket opnår du en række fordele. Læs mere om fordele og sponsorat her: https://slaegtsbibliotek.dk/sponsorat

Ophavsret

Biblioteket indeholder værker både med og uden ophavsret. For værker, som er omfattet af ophavsret, må PDF-filen kun benyttes til personligt brug.

Links

Slægtsforskernes Bibliotek: https://slaegtsbibliotek.dk
Danske Slægtsforskere: https://slaegt.dk

THE STORY OF RUSKIN COLLEGE

THE STORY OF
Ruskin College

PRINTED AT THE
UNIVERSITY PRESS, OXFORD

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1949
REVISED SECOND EDITION 1955
REVISED THIRD EDITION 1968

The Story of Ruskin College

1. THE EARLY DAYS

1899–1918

RUSKIN COLLEGE has now been in existence for some seventy years. The College was founded in Oxford in 1899 as Ruskin Hall and was devoted to the then novel purpose of providing a liberal education in a residential college for working men. Two of its very first students have been able to contribute to this record. The last of the three founders, Dr. Charles A. Beard, who died in 1948, wrote shortly before his death to say how he was given pause for thought when he realized that the College he had helped to found in the brashness of his youth was preparing to celebrate its jubilee.

Ruskin College has long been a well-known name in the Labour movement and in the world of education. It has been fiercely criticized and as ardently defended. Not only the diminishing number of those who have associated higher education with social privilege, but more disinterested educationalists, have had doubts about it at times. Earnest Socialists, as well as many in the broader membership of the trade union movement, have sometimes wondered whether Ruskin did not water down the zeal of potential revolutionaries instead of tempering their weapons for active use. Bernard Shaw, asked by Dennis Hird to lecture in 1899, refused on the grounds that 'a workman ought to have a vulgar prejudice against Oxford . . . the business of Oxford is to make a few scholars and a great many gentlemen; and that will remain its business until the latter half of the process loses its social importance sufficiently to make a sweeping measure of University Reform possible'. Herbert Spencer, on the other hand, refused to send copies of his books because of 'a profound aversion to the teachings of Mr. Ruskin, to Socialism, and to free libraries'.

But the College has continued. It still bases itself, as it always has, on the need for education felt among the workers of this country and expressed through their organizations. It

still stands, as it always has, for genuine education as distinct from partisan propaganda of any kind. Its history, and especially that of its former students, offers some support for the idea that it is possible for education to be informed by a strong sense of social purpose while holding firmly to the ideal of a disinterested search for the truth.

Whereas in its first years Ruskin Hall had as its home simply a house in St. Giles' Street, it now owns the freehold of its building in Walton Street and the freehold of a 'campus' in Headington with over twenty acres of ground. Whereas it used to have between thirty and forty students, it now has over 160. Its former students are to be found in many walks of life, and especially in responsible positions in the Government of the country, in the socialized industries, in the leadership of trade unions and other working-class organizations, and in social and community service of many kinds. Founded against all the traditions, it may now be said almost to have a tradition itself.

Contrary to a common and not unnatural supposition, the College has no direct connection with John Ruskin. It was, of course, named in honour of his work, and especially in recognition of his lectures to working men and of his conception of a society in which wealth was no longer defined in narrow acquisitive terms. In the early days of the College a representative of the Ruskin Societies that existed to propagate his teaching served on the governing body of the College. But the conception of such a college, in England and in Oxford, came from a visiting American, Walter Vrooman, supported by his wife, and by Charles Beard, another visiting American student.

Walter Vrooman came from St. Louis, Missouri, and according to the *Daily Telegraph* he was already known in the United States as an 'ultra-democrat'. His wife, Mrs. Amne L. Vrooman, was a daughter of a wealthy American, and was entirely in sympathy with her husband's plan to found a college for working men and women, and ready to devote money as well as personal endeavour to the purpose. Indeed, Mrs. Vrooman's connection with the College was longer than her husband's, for she returned here during the First World War to help to keep the College in being, and especially to work in its Correspondence Department, while the College was closed for residential study. A Foundress scholarship reserved for mineworkers is awarded every year from a fund given by her.

Vrooman was an enthusiast—many would no doubt say a 'crank'. Both he and Beard had to explain on occasion why they, as Americans, should come to England for such a purpose. He said on one such occasion: 'We don't class ourselves as foreigners. We believe in the Anglo-American alliance; we are citizens of the English-speaking empire, and we come to the English educational headquarters to set this plan going.'

The *Oxford Chronicle* carried an article which succinctly stated their purposes. 'The idea of the promoters', it said, 'is to establish an institution where working men of every degree will be able to spend at least one year in Oxford; to put within their reach opportunities of sharing in high branches of education; leisure to pursue such studies as interest them, and a sojourn among elevating and beautiful surroundings. Then they may use what they have acquired as they will; but it is hoped that many will go back to their trade, and that the general tendency of the movement will be to implant in the working-classes of England a leaven of men who will bring to their daily work wider minds, and artistic perception.'

Charles Beard, who probably deserves much of the credit for turning a generous enthusiasm into practical form, wrote in December 1945 to recall how he came to be connected with the project. He arrived in Oxford in the autumn of 1898 to pursue 'graduate studies' in English History, under Professor York Powell, himself to be one of the staunchest supporters of the new Ruskin Hall. He soon met Walter Vrooman, who had come to Oxford to study philosophy, and found that they had many common interests, especially in economic theory and in the Labour movements of England and the United States. 'Vrooman also believed', said Beard, 'that the Labour movement would become increasingly powerful in England and the United States and that the Labour leaders of the two countries should go beyond trade union interests and equip themselves for statesmanship. He was convinced that this cause could be aided by establishing a Labour college in Oxford, with branches in various parts of Great Britain, and by establishing similar institutions in the States. Out of this undertaking, he thought, the workers of the two countries could be brought into a better understanding of their historic role.'

The Vroomans and Beard began to canvass their idea, and discovered a number of persons in the city and the University

who were willing to help. A tentative plan was drawn up and presented by Beard to the Oxford Trades Council, where he won their approval. Some initial support having been gained in the city and the University, approaches were made to the trade unions, co-operative societies, and other national working-class bodies, and steps were taken to find a home for the new College. The first plan was to lease Paradise House, in St. Ebbe's, built by Sir Matthew Hale in 1649 (a neighbourhood appropriate if only because that was where Hardy's Jude had lived while excluded from the colleges of the University). An inaugural meeting was planned for 22 February 1899, George Washington's birthday.

By then the site of Ruskin Hall had been changed, and a lease had been taken from Balliol College of 14 St. Giles' Street. This, too, was an appropriate home for a college of adult education, for it had formerly been the house of Professor T. H. Green, who had used it for the accommodation of extra-mural scholars who had been awarded places at Balliol from a fund established by him for that purpose. Shortly before the date for the inaugural meeting of the Hall a meeting was held in this house, to get into final shape a scheme of Mrs. Vrooman's for enlisting the help of Oxford women who were willing to assist the future students with their studies and to organize the social side of the community.

The inaugural meeting took place in the Town Hall on the evening of 22 February 1899. The *Oxford Chronicle* reported that the meeting was crowded to overflowing. The Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes were hung alternately round the walls. Another report says that the audience was slightly perturbed to hear the 'Marseillaise' rendered on the organ, but that equanimity was restored by the strains of 'Yankee Doodle', which sounded very quaint on that instrument. Respectability, however, was finally re-established when the proceedings proper began with the National Anthem.

The Chairman of the meeting was Professor York Powell, who gave a most generous welcome to the new College on behalf of those in the University who wished it well. These, perhaps, were rather few at that time, but they were generous men, willing to give not merely sympathy but their time, their learning, and their active help. Among them, it may be interpolated here, were numbered such men as Dr. A. J. Carlyle,



TOWN HALL MEETING, OXFORD, FEBRUARY 22ND, 1899



STAFF AND STUDENTS, MAY 1904

A. J. Hacking (*English Tutor*)

Miss Giles (*Secretary, Correspondence Department*)

D. Hird (*Principal*)

Miss Williamson (*Treasurer*)

H. B. Lees-Smith (*Vice-Principal*)

B. Wilson (*Secretary*)

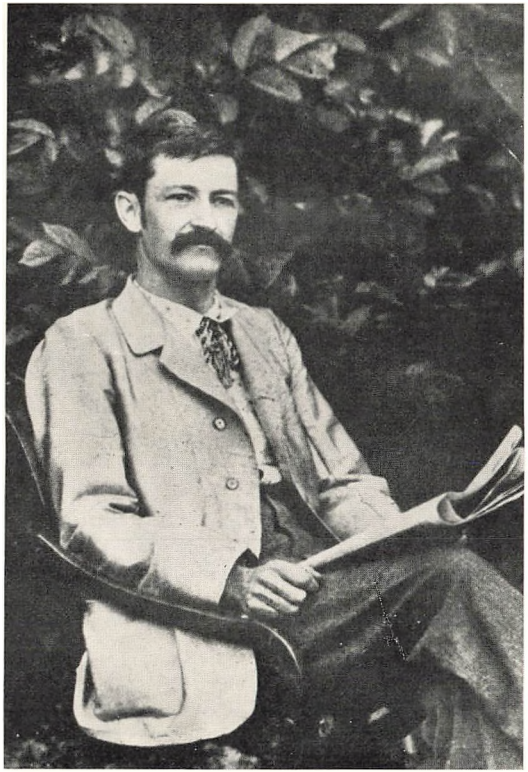
the distinguished medieval historian, who acted for some while as voluntary secretary of the Governing Council (and whose presence was essential at all meetings, so that the minutes in his handwriting could be deciphered and approved!); Sir William Markby, of Balliol, who acted as treasurer of the appeal for funds to buy the site to which the College moved in 1903; Sidney Ball, A. E. Zimmern, and other Oxford men who, like R. H. Tawney and G. D. H. Cole after them, acted as advisory members of the Governing Council. Many distinguished Oxford scholars and many Oxford men to be famous later have given single lectures or courses of lectures in the College: to name any is to seem individious, but among the latter one must mention C. R. Attlee, later Labour Prime Minister, who gave a course of lectures and contributed to the College magazine in the year 1912.

To return to the inaugural meeting: the Chairman, after his own remarks, called on the secretary of the Oxford Trades Council, Mr. George Snow, to announce the support for the new College received from British working-class organizations. Mr. Snow read out a list, from which it was evident that over 300,000 organized workers were represented at the meeting itself; and there was a large number of letters and telegrams received in addition, including one from Keir Hardie. Among those present on the platform was C. W. Bowerman, of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, who was to have a most remarkable association with the new College. He became the first Chairman of its Governing Council under the new Constitution of 1910, and retained this position until his death in 1947. Post-war students in the College have heard him make a speech in it and so provide a living link with its first day.

The speech at the inaugural meeting welcoming the proposal on behalf of British workers was to have been made by Ben Tillett, the famous dockers' leader. He was called back to London, and it was left to later occasions for him to speak at Ruskin. Tillett's place was taken by Jim Sexton, then secretary of the National Dock Labourers' Union. He made a speech of warm welcome, and of amusing discrimination between illiterate ignorance and educated ignorance, and said that he felt sure that the trade union movement would do all they could to support the new College.

When, in a recent letter, Charles Beard referred to the 'brashness' of his youth he may perhaps have had in mind the surprising moment in the inaugural meeting when he was called upon to conduct the first 'matriculation' ceremony, he being at that time a young new and foreign research student in the University. After Mr. Snow had announced the volume of working-class support for the College, Beard got up and (as his words are rendered by one of those who responded to them) called out, 'Stoodents of Ruskin Hahl!' Some 70 to 80 men stood up, including both the students proper and those living in Oxford who had enrolled for evening classes. The 'matriculation' ceremony, as this was a new and very modern college, took place in English, not in Latin, and Beard said: 'It is my duty as secretary of Ruskin Hall to thus formally admit you to membership and fellowship in that institution. And while you yet stand upon the threshold of this new life, may I not give you a few words of advice and encouragement? I would have you seekers after truth, for that alone will make you free. Work earnestly, work faithfully, and your toil shall be rewarded. Your reward will not be in pounds and pence, but it will be a far richer reward—that of a broadened and deepened life. . . . Remember, fellow students, that the eyes of those who distrust the working men are upon you. You are the foundation of Ruskin Hall, what you do, how you live, will determine our fate. May you learn charity and patience. I know our fellowship together will result in vast good, and may our lives be richer, our sympathies greater, and our intellects keener, and may you, who will in after years leave Oxford, bear with you pleasant memories of the welcome by the citizens, students and teachers of the University. If this comes to pass Ruskin Hall will be worthy of the great name which it bears, its founders will be rewarded, and its ideals will be perpetuated.'

After this the founder, Walter Vrooman, was called upon to speak. He announced that within the short space of five months, since they had arrived in England, they had had an amazing volume of support for their proposals. Apart from the residential students there were already over four hundred students enrolled in the associated Correspondence School. The people of Great Britain, quick in their sympathies, had leapt at the suggestion with an enthusiasm unprecedented in the history of education. They had built in honour of John Ruskin, but not of



WALTER VROOMAN
(*Founder*)



CHARLES A. BEARD
(*Co-Founder*)



RUSKIN HALL, 1903
(3 Walton Street)



THE OLD LIBRARY

Ruskin the eloquent art critic so much as Ruskin the labourer, with his trouser-ends turned up (here Vrooman held up a large cartoon of Ruskin going out to build the famous road at Hinksey—a picture that may still be seen in the College hall). It had been said that the new College would only produce a lot of windbags. On the contrary, the aim of the College was to gather in the windbags and prick them, letting the air escape, and filling them with substance. Their aim was to take men who had merely been condemning our institutions and teach them how to transform them. Scholarship had been too long confined to the library, philosophy too long closely walled about in colleges. The new College would never attack the ideal of scholarship, but it would attack the ideal of a gentleman that required ignorant men for his servants. When the founding meeting was over it might have been said that something had been started in Oxford that many men and women now would not willingly let die.

But a meeting alone does not start a college. Before the inauguration in the Town Hall there had been a business meeting at 14 St. Giles' Street, when trustees for the College were appointed. There were three from the trade unions (Messrs. C. W. Bowerman, Ben Tillett, and A. Sellick), one from the co-operative societies (W. Millerchip), and one from the Ruskin societies (J. Howard Whitehouse). The College in Oxford was, it should be noted, to be only the central institution of a wide movement (this was before the days of the Workers' Educational Association and of Tutorial Classes). There were to be halls of residence in other important cities, if only as places where working men lived, returning in the evening from their day's work to study systematically in their spare time. And there was to be a network of correspondence classes and individual correspondence students from which promising residential students would be drawn. As to the central Hall in Oxford, this was to be a very simple community, and the fee for residence, apart from tuition, would be the extremely low one of £26 a year. (Simple the life may have been, but it sounds not too bad now—for breakfast, the founder said, there would be 'only' porridge, bacon, and herrings!). The chief economy was to be in domestic service. There was to be none—the students would do all this themselves, cooking and cleaning included.

The first lecture was given in the Hall on 27 February by

Charles Beard, on 'English Constitutional History'. But there is no doubt that, for a while, academic work suffered badly because of the unorganized domestic arrangements. An amusing account of these first weeks was given by Mr. Bruce Forrest (a student who came up to the Hall just before the opening meeting) in the *Independent Review* for April 1906. When Mr. Forrest arrived a day or two before the inauguration the house was not even furnished, and there were five students so far in residence. The house was old and rambling, there was no one in charge, and twenty or so working men with little experience in this sort of thing were to keep it in order and provide meals. The result was anarchy, and no study.

After three weeks of this the students took charge and provided themselves, as was said, with their first working model of a social contract. A meeting was called, and a document entitled 'Regulations for the Domestic Organization of Ruskin Hall' (popularly known as 'The Constitution') was adopted. Ultimate domestic sovereignty rested with the whole body of resident students, which met from time to time in a 'House Meeting' (the name and the institution, without quite the same onerous domestic responsibilities, still survive in the College); but three managing delegates were appointed as an executive, each holding office for three weeks, and one retiring each week. They were to be responsible for the domestic side and for the preservation of good order, and their responsibilities were jointly to the House Meeting and to the Faculty. Jobs were assigned in rotation to the different resident students, and the general principle was that all possible domestic work was to be dealt with before ten in the morning or after six in the evening, leaving the middle of the day free for study. One very sound instinct of the new House Meeting was to end the founders' original idea of having two classes of students, one of paying students, who did a little domestic work, and the other of non-paying students, who did more. The House Meeting ordained that everyone should do an equal share, whatever he paid towards his costs. For two jobs, the 'Saturday morning scrub' and that of cook, volunteers were called for at first; but in due time these jobs too were taken into rotation, and the pleasing habit was instituted that the cook had to appear in the doorway of the dining room half-way through the meal to receive the comments of his victims.

Such, then, were the early days of this very unusual Oxford institution. What in fact was its value? Mr. Bruce Forrest describes the nature of the House Meetings, sometimes almost violent and yet in the end bowing to the rule of the Chair. He says: 'It was a capital training. . . . It was perhaps a ponderous system; but it had to meet curious conditions. Along with this possible defect, there came in compensation an interest and a value that must be estimated very highly. So much so, that the writer, for one, will never regret the experience and the knowledge gained in the course of conducting the business of the house. One saw an institution managed by debate through an assembly, following all the rules of parliamentary procedure. Its members started, in ignorance and without precedent, an entirely new experiment. Their minds were full of political and social thoughts, and theories, and aspirations. Any one who reflects upon all this will see what a valuable laboratory of political phenomena we created for ourselves. It was a great lesson to watch precedents in their curious fashion winning a power all of their own, and to notice the final consummation of our reign of law, when the weekly distribution of house duties became an almost automatic deduction from a stereotyped Plan, accepted with full confidence as an ultimate and irrefutable authority.' Mr. Forrest ends with a quotation from Plato: 'If we imagine the State in the process of creation we shall see the justice and the injustice of the State in process of creation', and with the comment that something of this they did see, as well as read about, within the four walls of the first Ruskin Hall.

But of course, as Mr. Forrest says, all this was a little too rigid. It was rather unwise to insist that everybody take his turn as cook, for cooks (and, one might add, caterers) are born, not made. And it was not very many years before Ruskin had its cook, its caterer and matron, and in due time its Domestic Bursar. But there is still a House Meeting, there are still considerable duties, domestic and social, fully undertaken by resident students, and there is still the spirit of co-operation in good temper and with good sense with which the College began.

And what of the Faculty and the teaching? By 1902 Walter Vrooman had returned to the United States, having contributed largely to the financing of the College in its first years.

Charles Beard, after a brief return to America, had come back to England in 1900 with his bride, Mary Beard, and had settled in Manchester to lecture in the industrial north in Ruskin classes and to promote the Correspondence Department. He returned to America in 1902. The Hall in Oxford was conducted principally by Dennis Hird and by H. B. Lees-Smith (who by 1902 were styled respectively Principal and Vice-Principal), while A. J. Hacking lectured on Constitutional History and was academically responsible for the Correspondence Department. Bertram Wilson was secretary and lectured on Local Government. Courses of lectures during the years 1901–2 were delivered on Sociology, Evolution, Logic, Psychology, English Grammar, Political Economy, Industrial History, the History of Social Movements, Political and Social Problems, Constitutional History, Practical Phonetics, and Local Government, and there was a class in Public Speaking.

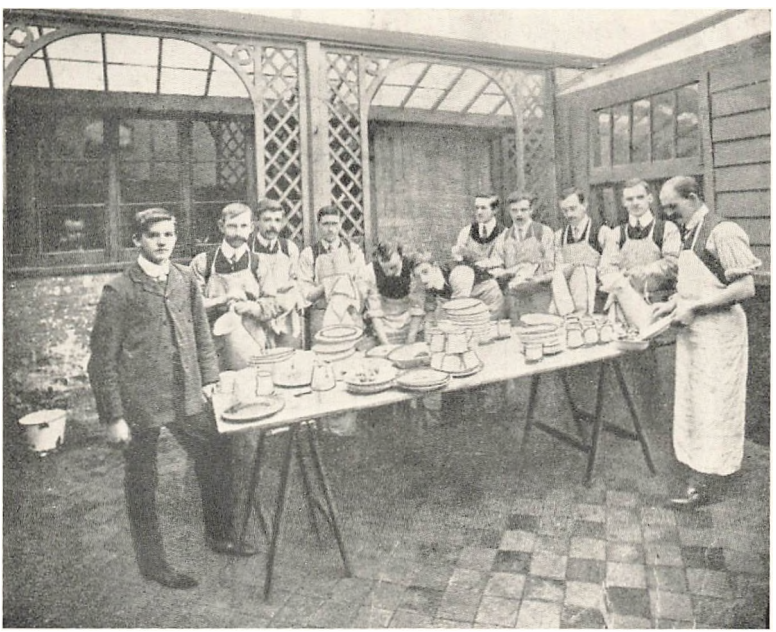
By this time also the Hall was incorporated and was governed by a Council consisting of representatives of the Trades Union Congress, the London Trades Council, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and the Co-operative Union, and a rather larger number (eleven as against six) of public men and women 'who had the confidence of the working class'. These included Mrs. Vrooman (now known as Mrs. Amne L. Grafflin), Keir Hardie, Professor York Powell, Professor Goudy, and Sir William Markby.

Not the least interesting item in the Report for 1902 is the Statement of Accounts (covering a period of ten months, not a full financial year, owing to a change of system). The total income was £1407. 13*s*. 4*d*. (compared with over £94,000 for 1966–7). The favourable balance was £131. 14*s*. 0*d*., but as there was a donation of £500 from Mrs. Grafflin the real position was obviously a deficit of some £368 on ten months' working. Provisions had cost only £265. 11*s*. 3*d*., salaries £458. 13*s*. 10*d*., and wages for the cook and office boys the remarkable sum of £62. 3*s*. 0*d*.

And who were the students? There is no doubt that the new College really was serving the people for whom it was meant, for the twenty students in residence in 1903 were four miners, two compositors, a brushmaker, a joiner, an engineer, a warp-dresser, a weaver, a docker, a billposter, a clerk, a tailor, a shop assistant, a postal worker, a farmer, and two trade union officials.



THE SATURDAY SCRUB



STUDENTS ON THE WASH-UP



RUSKIN HALL 1899
(14 St. Giles' Street)

7.

RUSKIN HALL.

Certificate of Membership.

Student's Name William C. G. Claridge

Address 10 Newton Road, Oxford

Age 31 Occupation Newspaper Overseer

This is to Certify that _____

has been awarded a FREE SCHOLARSHIP (covering all Entrance and Tuition Fees) for a period of Six months, from February 22nd 1899 to August 22nd 1899.

(Signed) Walter Vrooman Principal
Charles A. Bird Correspondent

Some of these were supported by special levies made by their trade unions to send some of their members to the College, and other unions had special levies to contribute to the Building Fund. (Among such unions were the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, that sent, among others, its future secretary and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Robert Young, the London Society of Compositors, and the British Steel Smelters, Mill and Tin-plate Workers' Association.) The Trades Union Congress strongly backed the appeal for funds made in the spring of 1903.

It was in this year that Ruskin moved to its present main site in Walton Street, fittingly enough situated just beyond the last of the colleges of the University and at the beginning of an old working-class area known popularly as Jericho. (The walls of privilege, however, were in the other direction, and although Ruskin men might trumpet loudly they had not yet fallen.) On the site were three old cottages and some larger buildings. An appeal was made for the sum of £3,000 to alter and extend these so as to accommodate fifty students, and if possible for another £5,000 to erect buildings that would accommodate a hundred. As so often happens, however, those temporary buildings remained until the new College was opened on the same site in 1912. The old cottages were barely safe, and the large building was dark and hardly adaptable for its purposes. However, makeshift as all this might be, it began to look like a college with the buildings grouped round a yard. As an Oxford urchin said to a new student who asked his way at the station: 'Ruskin College? Well, I suppose it's a college. It's got a quad, anyway.'

A very interesting account of life at Ruskin in the years before the present building was erected on the Walton Street site is given by Jack Lawson (Secretary of State for War in the 1945 Labour Government, later Lord Lawson) in his autobiography, *A Man's Life*. Jack Lawson was a miner, twenty-five years old, and married. A workmate had put into his head the idea of 'going to Oxford' and Lawson as a first step had joined a correspondence class run by Ruskin. He was offered a scholarship worth £26 if he could find the other £26 then necessary to carry him through the year at Ruskin. Somehow, through his parents and the help of a friendly clergyman, that impossible second £26 was found. But it was financially a very

tight thing, and Mrs. Lawson, with a heroism that ought not to be expected (and would not be now, one can say, although many of the wives of Ruskin students do make great sacrifices to help their men), took work in domestic service in Oxford while her husband was at the College. Not that he was immune from domestic service either, for, as he says, in a year the Ruskin student had not only attended lectures but had learned to scrub every portion of a building, to cook porridge, bacon and eggs, to make the tea, wash the dishes, and be responsible for the proper performance of all duties for sixty students.

After a tribute to the Principal, Dennis Hird ('an uncompromising, unconventional man') and Lees-Smith ('a persuasive, patient, enthusiastic teacher, who gave many years of ungrudging, sacrificing labour to the College in its unpopular days'), Mr. Lawson describes the feeling between Ruskin and the University in his time. Thanks to the efforts of A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol, H. A. L. Fisher, Dr. Streeter, Dr. Carlyle, and William Temple (later Archbishop of Canterbury), Ruskin men were in 1907 admitted to many University lectures, but more popularly they were 'never allowed to forget' that they 'lived in a hostile centre'. This feeling towards Ruskin in the University, of course, produced its natural reaction, 'overcompensation' as it would be called, and Lawson tells how Ruskin men would deliberately wear their dingiest clothes, arrange Socialist meetings at the Martyrs' Memorial knowing there would be a row and a fight, and imply 'Oxford University' whenever they referred to 'the capitalist class'.

This kind of tension was felt much less in the inter-war years, and has now happily disappeared. But in the early years the meetings at the Martyrs' Memorial, the running fights down Beaumont Street, and on occasion a minor siege of the building with the defenders using fire-hose, became part of a tradition. They were the reaction of independent working men to intolerable educational and social privilege. No doubt the reaction was carried with a touch of bravado. A change has come in the post-war years, not because Ruskin men and women have less of a proper pride than they had, but because conditions are changing, and happily so. The social structure of undergraduate Oxford, and its living conditions, are considerably nearer to

those of Ruskin than they used to be. The democratic leaven is working, in both directions.

But looking back historically one can see how profoundly important for the whole balance of his character was the Ruskin man's first reaction to what 'Oxford' symbolized. Could he take what he should take, and reject what he should reject? Could he concede what he should concede, and refuse to concede what no man should? This really made the psychological and social background for the cleavage that so deeply disturbed the College and had such wide repercussions in 1908–9.

The reasons for the dispute were complicated. The first Principal, Dennis Hird, who had been invited by Walter Vrooman to become Warden at 14 St. Giles' Street, was a forceful personality who inspired the affectionate allegiance of many of the students and others who came within his orbit. Formerly a Church of England clergyman, he had reacted against Christianity, and became deeply interested in Evolution. He was a well known and popular propagandist at I.L.P. and other Socialist meetings. He lectured in the College on Sociology and Logic, and his educational views were of an unorthodox kind. His informal pedagogical and disciplinary methods led to friction with Lees-Smith, the Vice-Principal, and other members of the staff. From 1906 onwards a House Committee consisting of the Principal, Vice-Principal, and Secretary was made responsible under the Executive for the curriculum and internal administration. In 1907 Lees-Smith left to take up the position of Professor of Economics at Bristol, though he retained his connection with the College as Chairman of the Executive Committee. He persuaded the Governing Council to appoint Charles Buxton, the brilliant and likeable son of a Liberal Minister, as Vice-Principal, and Sanderson Furniss as Tutor in Economics. They introduced regular individual tuition, essay writing, and internal examination papers. The differences of opinion on the aims and methods of the College continued.

In the years since the College was founded the climate of opinion in the Labour Movement had become increasingly militant, both politically, with the foundation of the Labour Representation Committee and the emergence of the Labour Party, and industrially, under the influence of syndicalist ideas. Many of the students had come up to Oxford with a passionate

hatred of the unjust social system in which they lived, and looked to the College primarily to turn them into more effective agitators for its overthrow. They were deeply suspicious of the University, and visits of A. L. Smith, the Master of Balliol, Lord Curzon, the Chancellor, and others, were interpreted as designed to bring the College under University control. The publication of a Report on 'Oxford and Working Class Education' by a joint committee of University and Working Class Representatives, recommending recognition by the University of second year Ruskin students as qualified for admission to a Diploma course, was interpreted as another move in a similar direction. Sanderson Furniss and Buxton were new to the problems of workers' education, and the former admits frankly in his biography that they were often too academic in their approach. 'We did not give them nearly enough information about the Socialist and Labour Movement, and insufficient attention was paid to trade union problems and co-operation.' Many of the students were eager and somewhat dogmatic Marxists, and resented Furniss' critical approach to the labour theory of value. A number of them espoused the syndicalist tenets of the Industrial Workers of the World. In 1908 the Plebs League was founded to advocate 'independent working class education', to win over the College to this standpoint, bring it into closer association with the Labour Movement and eliminate the University influences to which it was believed to be increasingly subject.

Efforts were made to induce Hird to confine his teaching to Literature, Rhetoric, and Temperance, and he was refused permission to become the Editor of the Plebs League. In November 1908 the Executive appointed a subcommittee consisting of Mr. Albert Taylor of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (Chairman), Richard Bell (Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants), C. W. Bowerman (London Society of Compositors), Sidney Ball, and Dr. A. J. Carlyle, to inquire into the administration of the College. After interviewing members of the staff, and a number of former students, they presented a full report, setting out the differences between the Principal on the one hand, and the Executive and the House Committee on the other. They concluded that there had been some 'indiscretion' on the part of the Principal in promoting Socialism and Atheism, while on the other hand Sanderson Furniss' teaching had been



THE 1909 STRIKE: GROUP OF STUDENTS MOVING OUT

(*Including* HUBERT BEAUMONT, M. F. TITTERINGTON (*later to become Labour M.P.s*), FRANK HODGES, *and* W. CRAIK (*later Principal of the Central Labour College*)



THE RT. HON. C. W. BOWERMAN

(Member of Governing Council 1899–1947)

Mrs. F. Smith

Mr. F. Smith
(Secretary)

(Reproduced by courtesy of the *Daily Herald*)

somewhat one-sided in its approach to Economics. The function of the College, they felt, should be to train men for public life in relation to the new (i.e. political), as well as the old forms of activity of the Labour Movement.

After considering the Report, the Executive Committee decided to call for the resignation of Mr. Hird, offering him six months' salary in lieu of notice, a pension amounting to nearly half his salary, and a public testimonial for his past services to the College. Mr. Hird explained the position in his own way to the students, and a 'strike' was declared, the majority of the students refusing to attend any lectures other than Mr. Hird's. They also petitioned the full Governing Council of the College, which nevertheless unanimously adopted the Executive Committee's Report. The strike problem was solved by closing the College for a fortnight, the students' request for fares and boarding expenses being conceded by the Vice-Principal, who offered also to refund the return fares of all students who would undertake to abide by the rules of the College. A number of the students, as the full facts came to light, realized that they had been the victims of their own first generous loyalties, and of some skilful organization by a small group who did not want the kind of place that the College was and had always been intended to be. Forty-four out of fifty-four returned on 20 April, agreeing to accept the decisions of the Executive Committee, though a number of these were by no means reconciled and the atmosphere for a time was very strained. Many of those involved in the strike participated with Mr. Hird in the formation of a 'Central Labour College' which opened in north Oxford in September, with the backing of the Plebs League. Some twenty former Ruskin students, including three future Labour M.P.s, Hubert Beaumont, Arthur Jenkins, and M. F. Tittering-ton; and Frank Hodges, later centre of a famous controversy as General Secretary of the Miners Federation at the break-up of the Triple Alliance, formed the new College. This institution later transferred to London, and continued with the support of a number of unions, notably the South Wales Miners and the National Union of Railwaymen, until the depletion of their funds in the General Strike of 1926 led to its termination. The National Council of Labour Colleges developed in association with this College after the First World War.

This is not the place to comment on their work—though it is

worth noting that students who had been in their classes came readily enough to Ruskin in the post-war era, just as those do who have been in classes organized by the Workers' Educational Association, with which the College is fully associated. What may be said here, and should be said, is that on the major point of educational principle the Governing Council of the College was incontestably right, and had it not been for the strong stand they made, and especially had it not been for the courage and good sense of Lees-Smith and Charles Buxton, the College could never have continued to serve the purpose for which it was formed.

One good thing did come out of this trouble. The secessionists argued that only a minority of the members of the Governing Council were representatives of working-class organizations. This point was made at the Trades Union Congress of September 1909, where the whole matter was debated and the point of view of the College vigorously put by David Shackleton, M.P. A conference of all the working-class organizations that had ever supported the College was called in Oxford on 30 October 1909, and a new constitution was adopted, under which the Governing Council was to consist of two representatives each of the Trades Union Congress, the General Federation of Trade Unions, the Co-operative Union, and the Working Men's Club and Institute Union, with one representative of every working-class organization that contributed to the College. There were in addition to be three academic advisory members, without votes. This is substantially the constitution under which the College still works. (The name Ruskin Hall had been changed to Ruskin College in 1907.)

The first year after the secession was naturally a difficult one. The College reopened in September with thirty-one students. A great burden fell on the new Principal, Dr. Gilbert Slater, a distinguished economic historian, who had been Mayor of Woolwich, and had an intimate knowledge of the working-class movement. Charles Buxton left the College in November 1909 (he died in 1911, and the Buxton Hall and the Buxton Memorial Scholarship, which brought a rural worker to the College, commemorated him, and his generosity, in Ruskin). Sanderson Furniss had a temporary breakdown in health, and Bertram Wilson left to take up a post as manager of a Labour Exchange. Mr. Henry Allsop was appointed as Vice-Principal and secretary half-way through the year, and a number of University

tutors, including Mr. Leys, of University College, and Mr. R. H. Tawney, of Balliol, gallantly took over a good deal of the college teaching. The College was soon 'on the up-grade' again, and indeed academically it was a much more serious place than it had been before.

This was signalized in 1910 by the opening of the University Diploma in Economics and Political Science to Ruskin candidates. Two sat for the examination in that year, and both passed with distinction. In the following year twelve students entered, all of whom passed, eight with distinction. All of them were working men who had left school at fourteen years of age. In general as well as in academic matters, Sanderson Furniss points out that relations between the College and the University were now very friendly.

In 1911 the Ruskin Fellowship of old students was formed and the yearly reunions were inaugurated. The Fellowship has had a continuous existence since then, though owing to the gap of the war years it needed reconstitution in 1947.

The year 1913 marked the opening of the new buildings on the Walton Street site and the end, at last, of the cottages. The foundation stones were laid in February 1912 by Sidney Buxton, C. W. Bowerman, Mrs. Grafflin, and Miss Giles, the much-loved secretary of the Correspondence Department, whose pervasive kindness had made her a College personality far beyond her official post. At the opening of the new buildings Ben Tillett made a speech that was long remembered by those who heard it, and that phrased with the sincerity and eloquence of which he was a master the aims and hopes of the College. He said, in part:

'I want to see this College teach its students what their lives mean under the law of their country. . . . I want the commonplaces of life to be understood, and the difficulties that our social system presents to the working classes. We talk so much about what the working class is, what it ought to be, and what should be done to it, but up till now we have been rather patronized, and the workers of the country love a lord—they love the sight of opulence and the sight of office and distinction, but I am hoping that this College is going to kill that form of flunkeyism, at least in everyone who comes to it. . . . We ought to feel like giants, strong in a new resolve; we ought to appreciate and value all life itself; we ought to fight against conditions that

belittle life, which degrade life, which subject our fellow creatures to unnecessary pain and suffering, and bring death where there should be joy, bring disease where there should be health, bring to a premature grave men and women who might have lived to be grey in the service of mankind.... I want the idealism of life to be taught even in this College, that it may inspire you to go out with such aim and such energy that whatever the fight may be that you have to make in the future, you will carry in your souls the conviction, in your brains the strength, in your bodies the energy, that will carry you through to fight evil, and to fight oppression, to give liberty of mind and liberty of body.'

Just as the hopes at the foundation of the College had been dashed somewhat by the difficulties of the Boer War, so (but much more) the hopes of the new period in the new buildings came up against the realities of the war of 1914–19. The College was closed for residential purposes, though the Correspondence Department was kept going. The buildings were used by the War Office as a Nurses' Hostel. Dr. Slater remained in residence for a while in an honorary capacity, and Mr. Sam Smith (originally a student at the College from the Club and Institute Union, who took over the secretarial work from Mr. Allsop) continued to serve the interests of the College 'on the spot'. Mr. Philip Baker (now the Rt. Hon. Philip Noel Baker, M.P.), who had been appointed Vice-Principal on coming down from Cambridge, where he had had a brilliant career as scholar and athlete, left to organize and serve with the Friends' Ambulance Unit. Mr. Sanderson Furniss acted as secretary of the south-eastern district of the W.E.A. It was at the beginning of 1915 that Miss Giles, the Secretary of the Correspondence Department, died at the age of seventy-seven.

In April 1916, owing to the resignation of Dr. Slater (who had been appointed Professor of Economics in the University of Madras), a new Principal was appointed, without salary. This was Mr. Sanderson Furniss (who later became Lord Sanderson). Furniss, who had had very poor sight from his early years, was now almost completely blind, and it was a great tribute to his personality and ability that the Governing Council should have asked him to take a post that would involve constant personal supervision. Furniss at once took steps to keep the College in people's minds although it was formally



HOUSE OF COMMONS DINNER, 26 FEBRUARY 1954

Allen, George Wallis, J.P. (*President, Ruskin Fellowship*) Mrs. Hughes F. Smith, M.A. (*Gen. Sec.*) Mrs. M. Allen (*Governing Council*) Sir Wm. Bowen, C.B.E. (*Chairman, Governing Council*) Mrs. Smith Sir Vincent Tews C.B.E., M.C. (*Gen. Sec., Trade Union Congress*)



H. D. HUGHES, PRINCIPAL, AND A GROUP OF STUDENTS IN THE OLD COMMON ROOM, 1958



R. WILLIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE T.U.C., OPENING BOWERMAN HOUSE, RUSKIN HALL, 1959

(Visitors include Lord Lawson, Rt. Hon. George Woodcock, Sir William Bowen and others)



'STOKE', RUSKIN HALL

(acquired 1965)

closed. A series of conferences was called during the later years of the war under the auspices of the College, to discuss important problems and matters of principle that would need to be faced when the war was over.

2. DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The College reopened in the autumn of 1919; Mr. F. Smith ('Ferdie' to many generations of Ruskin men and women), who had been head clerk in the office, was appointed secretary of the College on his demobilization from the army, and Mr. Sam Smith became a tutor. Three new tutors were appointed, among them Mr. Stephen Schofield, who remained until his retirement in 1953, and to whom the College owes much, not only for his teaching of history but for his delightful writing and production of plays.

In his autobiography Lord Sanderson says that while he was at Ruskin there was one point about which he always felt most strongly—that the College should maintain the highest educational standard, and that it was a great mistake to get slack with the idea of 'making it easy for the workers'. It was no doubt because this aim was being successfully achieved that in 1920 the Board of Education recognized the College as an institution of higher education and made it an annual grant.

The reopening in 1919 was also noteworthy for another departure, though one entirely in line with the intentions of the founders—the admission to residence of women students. The women (thanks chiefly to the energetic work of Mrs. Sanderson Furniss) were housed in a hostel, Queen's Gardens, in Linton Road. The number of women students began at twelve, increased to nineteen, and then fell away in the more difficult years until the hostel had to be closed in 1922. But the College remained open to women, and accommodation has been found for them either in the college buildings or in lodgings.

In the years following the First World War the academic side of the College was brought on to a sounder basis. The new Principal believed that most Ruskin students had tended to go to too many lectures, and to have too little time left for hard reading and writing; and he also believed it to be essential that each student should have a weekly personal 'tutorial' for which

he wrote an essay. He also believed that University lectures (which had been excessively relied on for Ruskin men, who tended to be good in discussion but, at first, very poor note-takers) should be utilized with discrimination rather than wholesale, and that all the main subjects should have internal tutors who were authorities in their fields. This did not in the least mean a less friendly relationship with the University, but an educationally more sensible one. A suggestion that Ruskin students should become matriculated members of the University was rejected by the Governing Council. College teaching continues today on these lines, broadly laid down after the First World War.

After a serious breakdown in health Sanderson Furniss resigned, his resignation taking effect from April 1925. Mr. A. Barratt Brown, who had succeeded Mr. R. H. Gretton as Vice-Principal in 1921, was appointed Acting-Principal, the temporary nature of the appointment being due to the fact that the future of the College was very much under discussion at this time. The Countess of Warwick had offered Easton Lodge, in Essex, as a home for working-class education under the Trades Union Congress. To carry the plan into effect it would obviously be necessary for a more united effort to be made in working-class education, and for the T.U.C. to concentrate its support in the new venture. The Governing Council of Ruskin, especially in view of the increased difficulties the College was finding in getting enough students during the bad years of the middle 'twenties, decided that the best way they could carry out their trust would be to come into the scheme. But the Trades Union Congress that met soon after the General Strike of 1926 turned the proposals down, partly at least because there was not the money available to finance it, and because a further levy on the membership would have been felt by many as intolerable.

Mr. Barratt Brown continued as Principal until his resignation during the Second World War. In his time the College had great difficulties to face, because almost without pause these were years of unemployment and depression. Many good potential students dared not leave their jobs for a year, or two years, at college; some who dared had the bitter experience of leaving Ruskin to go for a long spell 'on the dole'. Nevertheless these were by no means altogether years of rearguard action. In 1936 a new wing was added to the Walton Street building, in a



THE MAIN COLLEGE BUILDING 1955



THE MAIN COLLEGE AFTER DEVELOPMENT 1968



RUSKIN HALL—THE ROOKERY AND BOWEN HOUSE 1968



By permission of the Oxford Mail and Times Ltd.

MAY DAY 1968, MARCH AGAINST RACIAL DISCRIMINATIO
PASSING THROUGH CARFAX

much more attractive style than the original building could show; and the tiny garden was pleasantly laid out by Lady Allen of Hurtwood. The new Common Room was named after Sir Malcolm Stewart, whose generous contribution to the Extension Appeal covered the cost of the building of the extension, and the Walkden Library was so named in appreciation of a donation from Mr. A. G. Walkden (the late Lord Walkden), which made it possible to add to the amenities of the Library. Students continued to enter for the Oxford Diploma in Economics, and to do very creditably in it. Gradually more and more men and women who had been at Ruskin began to make their mark in the trade union and other working-class movements, in adult education, in social service, and in other spheres.

The outbreak of the Second World War marked another cessation in residential work, though the Correspondence Department again continued and developed greatly under the impetus of education in the Forces. The buildings became a war-time hospital.

In September 1945 the College reopened with thirty students. The number increased to fifty three months later, and soon rose to over one hundred. A good start was obtained through greater support from the Trades Union Congress and from individual benefactors like Sir Malcolm Stewart in the provision of scholarships. Students came to the College from war industry or the Services with Further Education and Training Grants, and local Education Authorities greatly increased their provision.

When the College reopened, a new Principal, Mr. Lionel Elvin, took up his duties, and in due course was assisted, as Vice-Principal, by Mr. Henry Smith, who had come to the College in 1937 on the retirement of Dr. Plummer from the posts of Vice-Principal and Tutor in Economics. The new Principal came to the College after he had made his mark as a scholar in the field of English Literature (he was a Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge) and as a war-time administrator. He brought to the re-opening of the College the scale of values natural to the son of one trade union leader and the brother of another, and the standards of scholarship proper to the older universities. While the work of the College continued under his leadership to remain concentrated upon the social sciences, he was responsible for the inauguration of an Arts course, a

combined study of Literature, Social History, and Political Philosophy, which has enriched the cultural life of the College and has produced some notable scholars. Mr. Elvin left in 1950 to become Education Director of UNESCO and was subsequently appointed as Director of the London University Institute of Education. He was succeeded as Principal by Mr. H. D. Hughes, who had been Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Rt. Hon. Ellen Wilkinson as Minister of Education.

In 1946 the College secured the Rookery, Headington, a pleasant house standing in a beautiful site of twenty acres on the outskirts of Oxford. This allowed room for expansion and development, and has been developed as the centre for first-year students. It became increasingly clear with the expansion of the education system in the post-war years that the demand for residential adult and workers' education would continue to grow. The Ministry of Education, recognizing this, steadily increased its financial support to the long-term Residential Colleges, and the Association of Education Committees urged local education authorities to make grants for students more readily available. With the backing of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, Ruskin launched a successful appeal to the trade unions to endow more scholarships for their members, and the trade union scholarship scheme became to an increasing extent the centre of the College's recruitment policy. With the help of the Workers' Travel Association, the British Council, the International University Exchange Fund, a number of Trusts, and later the Ministry for Overseas Development, and the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme, the College was also able to provide for a significant number of students from the developing countries, many of whom have achieved positions of great prominence on their return.

Ruskin has become something of a showpiece for visitors from all over the world interested in Britain's unique contribution to this form of adult education.

In 1960 a former student of the College, Miss Joan Wicken, with the backing of President Julius Nyerere, established a Trust Fund in Tanganyika and founded Kivukoni College, Dar-es-Salaam, on the Ruskin model. Ruskin was invited to help in the initial selection of staff, and following a visit from the Principal and his wife in the summer of 1962, the 'Friends of Kivukoni' were established to raise money for a bursary and

book fund. Contact between the two Colleges has been maintained, a number of Kivukoni students coming to take courses in Ruskin; and former Ruskin students taking teaching posts in Kivukoni. Kivukoni is now well established as an integral part of the Tanzania adult education system and might well prove a model for similar institutions in other developing countries.

The need to enlarge and renovate the College buildings became increasingly pressing. As a first step a tutor's house and a pleasant prefabricated timber block providing ten student rooms was erected in the grounds of the Rookery in 1959, out of the proceeds of the College Jubilee Fund. The new block was named Bowerman House in memory of Charles Bowerman, Chairman of the Governing Council from 1899 until his death in 1947; a sixty-year Jubilee Meeting at the College being addressed among others by Lord 'Jack' Lawson and George Woodcock, both distinguished ex-students, and Earl Attlee, who lectured at the College before the First World War. The College also acquired four cottages adjacent to the Walton Street building, adapting them for use as student rooms.

The appointment of a Committee on Higher Education in 1961 under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins provided the residential Colleges with an opportunity to state their case for more adequate financial support from official sources. In its evidence to the Committee, Ruskin was able to draw on a valuable thesis prepared by Dr. J. Blumler, a College tutor, surveying in detail the achievements of Ruskin students entering the College in 1945–53. Of a group of 180 students, most of whom had had no secondary education, over a quarter had successfully completed Honours degrees and another fifth had obtained other post-College qualifications. Coming to Ruskin mainly from manual or routine clerical jobs, the majority were holding positions of responsibility in a wide range of occupations, in the trade union and co-operative movement, adult and further education, social work, and industrial relations. Reporting in 1963, the Robbins Committee recommended the Ministry to 'consider giving capital grants to the residential Colleges of adult education and grants to suitable students' and in January 1964 the Department of Education and Science agreed to meet 50 per cent of the cost of approved development plans. The Colleges launched a joint appeal fund to raise their share of the money needed. With the backing of the

Trades Union Congress, a special appeal to trade unions produced donations totalling over £72,000. The response from other sources was disappointing, but nearly £20,000 was received.

The first phase of Ruskin's development plan, based on the Rookery, began in the summer of 1965 and was completed in time to admit an increased intake of students in October 1966. The College was fortunate in acquiring 'Stoke', a pleasant house with 1½ acres of ground immediately adjacent to the Rookery. A valuable legacy of some 3,000 books from Douglas Brown, Professor-elect of English at the University of York, coincided with this purchase, and the Brown Library was duly established in Stoke. A fine new lecture hall, named the Tawney Hall, and a dining-hall were added to the Rookery building, and the Bowen Hall, a block of 26 rooms, was built in the grounds and named after the late Sir William Bowen, Chairman of the Governors from 1947 to his death in 1965. The whole 'campus' at Headington was renamed Ruskin Hall, thus reviving the original title adopted by the College founders in 1899.

Building commenced at Walton Street in the summer of 1966 and was completed a year later. A new kitchen and dining-hall, with a block of student rooms, was added to the west wing of the College facing Worcester Place; a one-storey block in the paved garden provided a sports room, common room, and seminar room. The library was doubled in size with the aid of a grant from the Halley Stewart Trust, and parts of the old College building were reorganized and improved.

By the completion of the £240,000 development plan, the College was equipped to cater for the needs of 140 resident students, with teaching and dining facilities up to 200. This was, as the Annual Report 1966–7 indicated, 'a major landmark in the life of the College'.

In 1954 Ferdie Smith's completion of fifty years' service on the College staff had been marked by the conferment on him of an Honorary M.A. by Oxford University, and by a dinner at the House of Commons attended by a large number of leading trade unionists and other friends of the College. These events symbolized the respect felt for him and the College by the University and the Labour Movement alike. His retirement in September 1956 was unhappily soon followed by his death in August 1957. He was followed as General Secretary by Mr.

J. A. F. Ennals, who after helping to launch the development scheme and to raise the necessary funds, left to become Director-General of the United Nations Association of Great Britain, being succeeded by Mr. Colin Hopley at the beginning of 1966.

The College's role in trade union education has been marked by a number of developments in recent years. The lingering repercussions of the Ruskin strike of 1909 and the subsequent split in workers' education in Britain were resolved in 1964 by the decision of the Trades Union Congress to take over the work of the National Council of Labour Colleges and Workers' Education Trade Union Committee and establish a co-ordinated educational scheme. This involved Ruskin in the loss of its correspondence department established over sixty years earlier. The department had enabled many thousands of students to participate in workers' education, and its courses helped to provide a valuable basis for the new T.U.C. postal courses department.

The growing interest of the unions in trade union education produced an increased need for experienced tutors and for introducing trade union officers to appropriate teaching techniques. Following a successful Conference held at the Rookery in 1960, the College began to experiment with short courses in teaching methods for its own students and for tutors and trade union officers and executives. In partnership with the T.U.C. Training College, special one-term courses for trade union officers in industrial relations and economics were developed. A growing number of Ruskin students began to take up full-time teaching posts in industrial relations and trade union studies in adult and further education, in addition to those who secured direct employment in the trade union movement.

The growth in size of the College's teaching staff with the expansion of student numbers made possible a wider range of courses and greater flexibility. Revised University regulations, for the renamed Oxford University Special Diploma in Social Studies, offered a wide range of choice of subjects. In conjunction with the Central Training Council of the Home Office, the College began in 1963 to cater for a limited number of students wishing to prepare themselves for work in residential child care. Apart from set courses, the College has for many years encouraged its students to pursue appropriate study projects following lines of special interest.

The controversial experiment of 1899 has thus become an established and flourishing, if somewhat unique, part of the British educational system. The greater social and educational opportunities which followed the Second World War, so far from diminishing the need for adult education, have led to an explosion of educational demand at all levels. The increased responsibilities of the trade union and labour movement in British society have intensified the desire of many young workers to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge and intellectual training for leadership at national and local level in the new conditions. Ruskin and the other adult residential Colleges, while providing courses complete in themselves, increasingly provide a bridge to University or professional training for 'late developers', who in youth were rejected by the educational system or who were unable to obtain full benefit from it for sociological or psychological reasons. The valuable contribution that can be made to education and society by 'mature students' is being increasingly recognized. Industrial change and economic growth are creating a more mobile society posing new challenges for adult education.

Whilst adapting itself to social and educational change, the College retains and values its old spirit and traditions. On 1 May 1968 it celebrated International Labour Day by declaring a one-day 'strike' against racial discrimination. Staff and students combined to organize and lead a peaceful and silent march of over 2,000 people, drawn from both University and town, through the streets of Oxford. The photograph facing page 27 shows the head of the procession passing Carfax, and a magnificent 'Workers' Union' banner produced by the Transport and General Workers' Union, which had not been paraded for half a century. International solidarity could not have been more effectively demonstrated.

The College numbers among its former students hundreds of men and women who have used their education to the full in the service of society. They include Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament in the United Kingdom and overseas, trade union and co-operative leaders at all levels, men and women of high academic and administrative attainments, and a host of others who, in part through their residence at Ruskin, have come better to understand, in Ben Tillett's words, the great 'commonplaces of life'. The future lies encouragingly ahead.

References for further reading

Ruskin College Annual Reports.
Oxford and Working Class Education.
A Man's Life, by Jack Lawson.
Memories of Sixty Years, by Lord Sanderson.
Charles Sydney Buxton, by H. Sanderson Furniss.
Learn and Live, by W. E. Williams and A. E. Heath.
Central Labour College 1909–29, by W. W. Craik.
Education and the Labour Movement 1870–1918, by B. Simon.
Young Oxford: A Monthly Magazine (1899–1901).
New Epoch: Ruskin College Magazine (1946–).

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, OXFORD
BY VIVIAN RIDLER
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY