‘Women students at UCL in the early 1880s’

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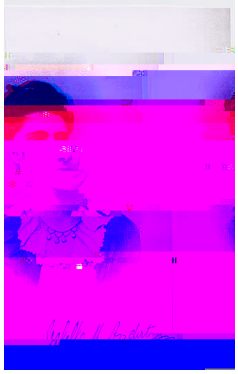
This paper was a discussion of a sample of about 175 women students who all attended lectures given by Henry Morley, professor of English Language and Literature at UCL, during the academic years 1881/2, 1882/3 and 1883/4.

The records of former students at UCL are not very accessible, and they have not been much studied. Though many schools and universities have compiled and often even published lists of previous students, UCL has no overall list of those who registered, although a MS list exists for the period 1828-1868 and a file of index cards covering approximately the period 1900-1950 (which includes some earlier students). For the period 1868-1900 we fall back on the MS Annual Fee Books and the annual volumes of the *University of London Calendar*. By diligently searching these sources it is possible to discover the bare names and addresses of those who registered at the college in any particular year. However, recent developments in technology, especially the digitization of the census returns, have made it possible to assemble information on residents of Victorian England much more easily than was possible even a few years ago. It proved possible to compil

residents of Bedford Square and Endsleigh Gardens to have stepped over the road to lectures. For both these reasons this list of women includes some from families already well-known to the Bloomsbury Project.

One of my conclusions was that there are links to be made between UCL's weaknesses and its strengths. Both in the nineteenth century and today UCL appeared to some observers to lack the friendly collegiality which for many people is a desirable characteristic in a university. It has long been urban rather than urbane, workmanlike rather than luxurious. The absence of institutional patriotism and sentimentality about its own past (connected to its cavalier attitude to its own internal archives and the lack of a master-list of former students) is related to its central London position, the non-residence of most students, and a comparatively weak sense of community. But those characteristics are closely linked to its flexibility about part-time attendance, to the fact that women could attend quietly without advertising their bluestocking aspirations, while living at home or while working, and the way it offered economical assistance to people preparing for vastly different exams. The diversity of its student body in terms of religion, sex, class and age no doubt inhibited some kinds of communal feeling from developing but was in itself a great strength. Again, the fact that many of the best students (especially men) went off to Oxford and Cambridge with their more lucrative and prestigious prizes and fellowships, has often been lamented as weakening the London colleges. Even so small a sample as this group of women suggests, however, that UCL was cooperating with many other colleges and teacher training schools, that it in practice stood at the centre of a network of institutions including Oxford and Cambridge: if it acted as a halfway house perhaps it should be celebrated for doing so. But in any case attendance at the college is decidedly under-reported



1861 she is with her father, Alfred Benecke, merchant; in 1891 she is living on independent means with one servant in Hampstead. Her father is described as 'of Cleveland Lodge, Dorking, Surrey', where he was a neighbour of George Meredith, whom she evidently consulted about her plan to come to lectures at UCL. She translated one of his novels and he later referred to her as 'that absurd but pestilent gadfly'. She also translated Heine's writing about Shakespeare. Her will was proved by P.V.M.Benecke, grandson of Mendelssohn, who was probably her first cousin. Her address on enrolment was 40 New St., E.; her parent A. Benecke, Cleveland Lodge, Dorking. UCL Arts Fee Book 1883/4 C/477. Deneke, *P.V.M. Benecke,* does not mention Ida but fills in the background. *Letters of George Meredith* ed C.L. Cline, II, 578, III 1644; the MSS of Meredith's letters to her are in the HRHRC, University of Texas; *London Gazette* (5 Jan 1909, 22 Mar 1935);probably the Miss Benecke mentioned by Millicent Fawcett in correspondence in the Women's Library;

list of recommended tutors in the College Hall Annual Reports (1891 *etc.*) which indicates she did coaching although the 1891 census suggests that, like Burstall, she had a job as well, describing her as 'classical teacher in high school' at 1 Talbot Road. In the 1901 census she is 'teacher of classical languages' with her widowed mother at 1 Alwyne Rd. Canonbury. The fee book for 1881/2 shows that she was studying only English and paying no fee. UCL index card. UCL Arts Fee Book 1881/2 D/735; *The Times* 1 July 1885); death *The Times* (24 Aug 1950); Anne Hardy, 'Buchanan, Sir George (1831–1895)', ODNB.

Burd, Eleanor Mary (Shrewsbury 1853/4–1933) of Shrewsbury, UC 1882/3, 1883/4, 1884/5; PFB 1882-3. In the 1881 census she is living with 5 sisters and 3 brothers at Newport House Shrewsbury with father Edward B, MRCS. She was one of the earliest students to live in College Hall, joining it in January 1883 and giving her address on enrolment as 1 Byng Place, W.C.. Initially she studied only Fine Art, but signed up for English later in January. She was an art student at the Slade and won a prize for life drawing in June 1885. In the same year she married Stephen Paget, surgeon and pro-vivisectionist; her occupation is blank in 1891 and 1901. She does not appear in the accounts of College Hall old girls in the Annual Reports, though there is mention of a fuss by the anti-vivisectionists when her husband came to give a lecture. UCL Arts Fee Book 1882/3 D/670, E/883, F/1181; 1883/4 B/281. C. S. Sherrington, 'Paget, Stephen (1855–1926)', rev. M. Jeanne Peterson, ODNB; Copping, *Story of College Hall*; U of L CH 2/1/1, College Hall second Annual Report (July 1884); one daughter was mother of Christopher Mayhew WWW.

Burstall, Sara Annie (Aberdeen 1859-1939), UC 1883/4, 1884/5; PFB 1883-

452.

Dickinson, Annie Josephine (Painswick 1864-1953), of Wandsworth, UC 1882/3; PFB 1882/3. In 1871 she was with her parents at Beacon Hill House, Painswick. Daughter of Sebastian Stewart Dickinson MP (d.1878), she enrolled at UCL with her mother **Frances Dickinson**, her sister **May Dickinson** and her aunt Stephana Hyett. In 1901 she is an 'artist', living in London. But during this year 1882/3, like her sister, mother and aunt, she was studying only English. Her obituary tells the story of an intriguingly complex career, including contact with Ernest Gimson and work as a furniture designer; service as a VAD with her brother-in

landowners in Forest Gate. Although members of the Church of England they were much intermarried with the Quaker Fry, Gurney and Buxton families; they had strong links with the City of London. Alice Mabel Pelly (1866/7-1927), the only eligible candidate among his daughters, married (1885) the Rev. Arthur Durrant, vicar from 1899 of Holy Trinity, Leverstock Green. Barbara Chapman's website 'The Leverstock Green Chronicle' tells the remarkably gripping and romantic story of the Durrants' life there, including the information that their youngest child Dorothy Durrant (1906-1933) is said to be the model for the heroine of *The English Patient*. It is however possible that another member of the Pelly family may have been the UCL student. She studied only English; her age is not given. UCL Arts Fee Book 1882/3 E/886. Information from Richard Durack, Newham Local Studies Library; Barbara Chapman, 'The Leverstock Green Chronicle', www.lgchronicle.net, includes a group photograph of about 1920 in which Mrs Durrant can be glimpsed; Burke, PB, Pelly Bt..

Gerstenberg, Leonora (Camberwell 1862-1915), UC 1879/80, 1880/1, 1881/2; PFB 1881/2. A politician and suffragist, her ODNB entry says she was a student at the Slade, but like many such she also attended English lectures. She and her sister Elfrida (who also attended UCL) entered Bedford College in 1876. Her address on enrolment at UCL was 22 Park Square, Regent's Park. She married (1888) John Wynford Philipps, created (1908) 1st. Lord St. Davids. In the 1871 census she was living with her father Isidor G, member of the Stock Exchange. Her brother was at UCS, and died young, after which she endowed a scholarship there. She subscribed £10 to the foundation of College Hall, was engaged in many progressive and philanthropic causes, and published *A Dictionary of Employments open to Women* (1898). Widdowson, 'Pioneers of Women's Education'; Linda Walker, 'Philipps, Leonora , Lady St Davids (1862–1915)', ODNB; Bedford College Archives, Royal Holloway, Bedford College Register BC/AR 201/1/3&4; U of L CH2/1/1 College Hall First Annual Report (1883).

Green, Marian (b. Newington, London 1851/2), of London, UC 1881/2, 1883/4; PFB 1881/2, PFB 1882/3. Daughter of William N. G., tea broker, in 1881 she was a 'teacher of

College for Men and Women in Queen's Square as early as 1875. It appears that all four of the Wallich sisters were trained as Kindergarten teachers by Emily Lord. In 1881/2 she and Beatrice Wallich enrolled at UCL on the same sheet, studying only English. This cluster of Froebelites at UCL at this moment is puzzling and may be connected to some scheme of training kindergarten teachers. UCL Arts Fee Book 1881/2 D/657. Widdowson, 'Pioneers of Women's Education'; archives at Norland College, Hungerford; p

Maitland, Sophie Beatrice (Hampstead 1865-1942), of London, UC 1882/3; PFB 1882/3. She was admitted with her sister Edith to North

1882/3 only English. While she was studying at the Slade Mary Petrie's mother recommended her for the job at Westfield, and she enlisted Petrie as a teacher. Her subsequent attendance at UCL and Morley's lectures was, her memoirs indicate, an intellectual pleasure. Her students, including **Catherine Porter**, attended other classes at UCL as part of their course at Westfield. An interesting and conf

Mondy, Maria Charlotte (b. Bristol 1843), of London, UC 1879-80, 1882/3 [as Maria C. Moudy]; PFB 1882/3. In 1871 she is assistant governess Denmark Hill Grammar School, in 1881 and 1891 visiting governess lodging 37 Crowndale Road St Pancras. This was her address on enrolment at UCL (Widdowson) and in 1882. As Miss M. C. Mondy she has publications for the National Home Reading Union c. 1891. As secretary of the NHRU she wrote letters to *Times*, signed Maria C. Mondy (4 Sept 1899, 7 Oct 1903). **Annie Barlow** was a benefactor of the NHRU. UCL Arts Fee Book 1882/3 C/404; interview in *The Women's Signal* (1 Feb 1894); Snape, 'The National Home Reading Union' ; she registered for but did not take the St. Andrews external examinations in 1879; information from Elisabeth Smith, Special Collections, St. Andrews University.

Morley, Edith Caroline (Hampstead 1864-1945)**,** of London UCL 1883/4, PFB 1883-4. Daughter of Henry Morley, professor of English Language and Literature at UCL, she is with him in 8 Upper Park Road, Hampstead in 1881. She enrolled at UCL aged 19 in 1883, giving this address; her parent is Prof. Morley; she studied only English; she went free. Her elder sisters Violet and Margaret had enrolled at UCL in 1871 and 1879. She married (1889) the Rev. Edgar Innes Fripp, minister in the Free Church, seventh son of the artist George Fripp, and is with him in Mansfield, Notts. in 1901 (he is 'Free Christian Minister'). Fripp himself was enrolled at UCL in 1878/9 and was there in 1881/2. His address was Manchester New College, where **Mary Drummond**'s father was head. Also one of Morley's students, he published widely on Shakespeare and theology. In his *Shakespeare: Man and Ad*

time when I was presiding in choir and I feared her desire would be frustrated. However, there was a free interval in which I ran up to the infirmary and sang her chosen pieces. She was unable to speak, but was quite conscious and so grateful. Half an hour later she was dead.

Corrigan, *In a Great Tradition* (1956) 224-5; information from Sister Margaret Truran, Stanbrook Abbey; *Newnham College Register*.

Petrie, Mary Louisa Georgina (b. Yorktown Surrey 1857-1935), of London, UC 1878/9,

continuously to 1885/6, then after two years again in 1888/9; PFB 1881/2, PFB 1883. She matriculated from UC in 1879; failed Int. Arts 1880; retook 1881 1st div, from UC; BA (1882) from UC. English Composition Prize 1879-80; English Prize 1879-80. Listed as undergraduate in 1881 census, living Hanover Lodge, Hanover Terrace, off Ladbroke Grove, with parents, father Lt. Col. Martin Petrie. He, his wife and daughter were all involved in the foundation of Westfield College by **Constance Maynard.** According to Sayers, *Fountain Unsealed*, citing her *Irene Petrie*, she attended a finishing school in Brighton. She taught English and History at Westfield College from 1882 to her marriage (sources differ), and married in 1893 Charles Ashley Carus-Wilson (1860-1942), who taught electrical engineering at the Royal Engineering College, Coopers Hill (1887-1890), at McGill University, Montreal (1890-1898), and subsequently at UCL while practising as an engineer. Her daughter became professor of economic history at University of London. As Mrs Ashley Carus-Wilson she published widely on temperance and religion and wrote a memoir of a missionary sister. She was also keen on the PNEU and founded 'College by Post'. WWW also husband; *Times* obituary (21 Nov 1935) (as Mrs A C-W); G. A. Aitkin, 'Petrie, Martin (1823–1892)', rev. Roger T. Stearn, ODNB; Peter Mathias, 'Wilson, Eleanora Mary Carus- (1897–1977)', ODNB; Sayers, *Fountain Unsealed*, 31; Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action*, discusses the College by Post; a UCL index card exists for her. This picture from her article 'Serving one another' in Mary K. O. Eagle ed., *The Congress of Women: Held in the Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition 1893*

studying English Language and Literature, and left in June, going ‘back to teach in a government

1904. However, perhaps because its conception and its governors were old-fashioned and its site restricted, the inspectors found it unsatisfactory in 1904, mentioning that the headmistress was simply the 'business manager'. UCL Arts Fees Book 1881/2 C/499; 1882/3 C/454; 1883/4 C/471; *The Times* (Jul 18, 1890) reports Gladstone's speech at prizegiving there; its 200th anniversary in 1900; *Times* (July 13, 1899); moved to Hammersmith in

Prize 1879-

of the theatrical impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte. Their son Geoffrey was born on 27 November 1884, and she died on the 2nd January 1885. She is listed as undergraduate in 1881 census, living 183 Camden Road with parents, father Henry R. Williams, whose occupation is 'retired from Civil Service Board of Trade'. This was her address both in the University of London register and when she enrolled at UCL aged 20; she studied Latin, Greek, English and philosophy of mind and logic. By 1882 her address was 182 Camden Road. UCL Arts Fee Book 1881/2 B/250, E/822, F/1102; 1882/3 B/282, C/1218;U of London informed of her decease in a letter from Miss A M Buchanan (18 July 1898) (Central Registry); Royal Holloway, University of London, Bedford College Register BC/ AR 201/1/3&4; *Bedford College List of Students 1849-1949*, which however lists her husband's name as Carter; Arthur Jacobs, 'Carte, Richard D'Oyly (1844–1901)', ODNB; 1861, 1881 and 1891 census; marriage and death registers; *The Times* (29 November 1884), (8 Jan 1885); there is a brief biography of Geoffrey Carte, who became an ear surgeon, in Booth, 'Window on the Ear', 9.

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Lilley, Irene May, *The Dissemination of Froebelian Doctrines and Methods in the English System of Elementary Education. 1854 to 1914* MA Education thesis University of London, 1963.
Widdowson, Maria del Carmen, *Pioneers of Women's Education at University College London: The Seminal Decade, 1870-1880*