

The state high school in history

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In recent times, one version of state secondary schooling, the comprehensive high school, has been the subject of widespread criticism. This has occurred not only in Australia, but the United Kingdom and the United States of America as well. This article surveys the history of state-provided secondary education, and finds reasons in that history for many of the current discontents. The changing relationships of secondary schooling to the different social classes is a major theme of the article, which suggests that the common conception of secondary education in the nineteenth century as 'middle class' education lasted far too long into the twentieth century.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the physical evidence of dramatically different, and unequal, secondary school provision is very apparent in the major cities of Australia. In the Parramatta district of New South Wales, within a kilometre or two of one another, are The Kings School and Macquarie Boys High School. The Kings School (1831-) is probably Australia's oldest surviving secondary school. It is a boys' school situated on many acres of well-kept grounds. Its sporting and teaching facilities are marvellous. Though a Church of England school, it has recently celebrated a massive influx of new state funding, courtesy of the Australian (Liberal-National Coalition) Government.

Macquarie Boys High School (1956-) is a mid-twentieth-century foundation of the state, wedged between two noisy highways. There is a constant struggle against truancy and low retention rates here. The buildings are mean in architectural character, a response to the crisis of the mid-twentieth-century baby boom entering secondary education. Its vulnerability to vandalism was dramatically signified at the beginning of 2001 when fire damaged its buildings.

In reviewing these most basic of descriptions, which have nothing to say about the quality of the educational activity occurring within the schools, the relationship of the history of secondary schooling to the hard politics of capitalism and social class seems very apparent. This article revisits a popular discussion in the historiography of schooling of some 20 to 30 years ago. It also asks the question of whether the processes associated with the production, reproduction and dissolution of social classes should continue as a fundamental construct in explaining the emergence of modern systems of secondary education. Do arguments about the relationships between social class and secondary

schooling continue to enable explanations of the foundations and practices of secondary schooling over the last two centuries?

Such questions cannot be discussed with the same conceptual and theoretical tools of a quarter century past. There are many indicators of how our understandings of the secondary school in history need to be responsive to recent phenomena. I take another example from The Kings School, Parramatta. This school is currently seeking to reinvent its gender relations. As a ruling-class boys' school, with strong and continuing traditions deriving from athleticism and militarism, it advertises itself now as a school attuned to and providing solutions to the modern boy crisis. A clear set of contexts for this is not only the publicly visible panic in many places in Australia over the apparent decline in the success rates of boys in public examinations, but the forced adaptation of ruling-class masculinity to the new circumstances of globalising economies. These issues resonate in a different manner for the boys nearby at Macquarie Boys High, as their employment prospects change and their working-class families adapt to post-industrial economic and social conditions. The argument that secondary schools have been fundamental sites for the making of masculinities and femininities within and across class contexts has grown stronger over time (Connell 2000; Heward 1988; Kenway & Willis 1998).

Circumstances such as these cause new reflection on the meaning of the high school in history. The problem of how the 'high school' is to be defined cannot be avoided for an article such as this. In one sense all schools that have been interested in issues other than basic literacy in the vernacular language were 'high' schools, but for my purposes I shall be projecting a modern definition of the 'high school' back into history.

In Australia we think of the 'high school' as having characteristics such as these:

- a school that is devoted to students of a certain age, roughly between the ages of 12 and 18
- a school that is not only funded by public taxation but also controlled directly by the state through its departments of education
- a school that is likely to be more open than other schools to coeducation
- a school that has some pressure on it to provide a curriculum that is modern and has direct vocational relevance rather than a full commitment to the traditional humanist curriculum
- a school that is open, in theory, to all students of the age range, even though 'merit' may be used to discriminate within that age range, and
- a school that is staffed by teachers making a career in a state system of education and likely to be unionised.

Not all 'high schools' will meet all of these defining characteristics, though most will meet a fair number of them.

In Australia the first high schools roughly conforming to these characteristics were Adelaide's Advanced School for Girls (1879) and, from 1883, the high school foundations in Sydney, Goulburn, Maitland and Bathurst. But enrolment in these schools was not based strictly on merit. Fees were demanded for the education they provided. Nor were

they coeducational. There is little doubt that these early high schools of Australia were conceived as middle-class schools.

The only rigorous analysis of enrolment for these very early state high schools that I am aware of was inspired by North American work, at the time of that exciting and conflict-ridden conjunction between the new social history and the history of education. In Alison Mackinnon's (1984) hands, the Advanced School for Girls became as historiographically significant as Beverly High School in Massachusetts, perhaps more significant, because married to an argument about class was an argument about the education of late nineteenth-century colonial girls.

These nineteenth-century Australian high schools were to provide for a certain element of the middle class whose access to corporate and private schools was problematic for one reason or another. It was not only fees that were crucial arbiters of their class character. John Hartley's definition of a secondary school in South Australia, as any school that charged more than one shilling and sixpence a week, makes the point about fees and class clear; that is, secondary education was defined as education that working-class families could not afford (Miller 1986, p.50).¹

Mrs Hatley Boyd will be my indicative guide to some of the non-meritocratic and non-economic influences on early Australian high school enrolments. Mrs Boyd was a Headmistress of Bathurst Girls' High School in the nineteenth century. According to E. Dunlop, she set about attracting the daughters of wealthy pastoralists to the high school by opening a boarding house, and policing the subsequent enrolment by doing things such as dissuading 'the daughter of a hotel-keeper from enrolling at her school lest its tone be lowered' (Dunlop 1965).

It is clear that the nineteenth-century state high schools were pre-modern in some respects. There was little attempt to suggest that they might be open to the meritorious of all classes. They existed and struggled in a market that tended to be dominated by private and church or corporate schools. The Goulburn high schools could not survive in this market. In Bathurst, Edward Bean's offer from All Saints' College that any boy qualifying for high school entrance would be welcome to his school with greatly reduced fees damaged the nineteenth-century high school there.

This is a very important point, quite apposite to the present moment in the history of the state high school. In Australia, at least, it was only when such schools were literally separated from the market, that is they became free or non-fee-paying schools, that they were able to flourish and begin their halting moves toward universal provision. This is not the whole point, however, since with universal provision often came substantial divergences in the curricula offered, and that also had its effects on the strength of state secondary school systems.

If we look beyond Australia we can find similar perspectives, and possibly histories. The now venerable controversy between American historians Michael Katz and Maris Vinovskis over the meaning of the closing of Beverly High School in Massachusetts in 1860 may be usefully revisited (Katz 1968; Katz 1987; Vinovskis 1985). The closing was an act of the local taxpaying citizens by referendum. A majority of voting taxpayers

appear to have resented the expense of the High School, which so manifestly served the children of a minority of families.

It was Katz's argument that the school was rejected by democracy along class lines. The continuing presence of the high school simply represented an unfair use of taxation monies. All the people were taxed to support the higher education of the very few who could afford to keep their youth in extended dependency relationships within the family. Very few poor farmer or labouring-class families could contemplate the possibility. In the United States, as well as Australia, the nineteenth-century state (tax-funded) high school, despite some of the claims made for it, was not an institution readily accessible to the people in general.

These days one would need to go beyond the fact of the expense involved to consider the relevance of the nineteenth-century high school curriculum and the nature of the cultural assumptions and practices associated with these schools. David Allmendinger (1975) and others taught us many years ago about poor scholars who travelled long distances to attend academies, sometimes paying for tuition in kind, often attending in winter, when there was no farm work to be done. But even these poor students of the academies were likely to be members of the old middle class — that is, students from families that owned farms or small businesses. Pursuing a higher education in the academies was as unlikely among the rural or urban labouring classes of North America as in Europe or Australia.

The title of 'first high school' in the United States has traditionally been granted, as might be expected, to a school of Massachusetts; that is, Boston's 'English Classical School', quickly renamed 'English High School'. As its second name suggested, it was immediately separable from grammar schooling on curriculum grounds. It would concentrate on English subjects, useful for commerce, rather than the classical languages considered vocationally appropriate for the old professions. It would be a school accessible to the children of the growing commercial middle class on a day basis. This was a beginning of the end for rural boarding academies, the secondary schools that dominated the ante-bellum period of United States history.

The best historical sociology we have of an early nineteenth-century high school of the new type is David Labaree's study of Central High School, Philadelphia (Labaree 1988). There he traced the complex politics of a high school successfully competing in its market for students. He traced the adaptations of the school across the nineteenth century to the changing demands, indeed formations, of the middle class. This in a city that was rapidly urbanising, industrialising and developing a working class significantly different from the middle class in terms of its ethnic and religious character. (See also Perlmann 1988.)

Of great interest to the study of the high school in history is Labaree's analysis of the high school in relation to reconceptualisations of republican civic virtue and usefulness. That reconceptualisation saw the transition of the high school from an alternative and competitor to the American college to its eventual subordination to the colleges and universities. By the end of the century, the most prestigious course one might do in the high

school was merely that leading to college entry, rather than direct entry into the world of commerce and industry. This subordination is at the heart of Jurgen Herbst's mourning for the loss of the high school as 'the people's college' (Herbst 1992, 1996).

Looking back to Australia, we realise there is no high school history that parallels this. The Australian high schools, even in their rickety late nineteenth-century phase, were well subordinated to the universities, even though the foundation of the University of Sydney in New South Wales (1850) only preceded the first high schools by some 30 years. Attempts by high school controllers to break free of university subordination in the twentieth century would rarely be seriously attempted as a middle- or ruling-class demand. The arguable needs of working-class children and the damage done to them by the competitive academic curriculum would provide a stronger foundation for resistance to the universities (Connell 1982; Miller 1986).

The other story I wish to note from the era of the first high school foundations in Massachusetts concerns the first high school for girls. Boston Girls' High was founded in 1826, five years after the English High School for boys. It was immediately popular, attracting 286 girls to its entrance examination, 133 of whom secured enrolment. The school was closed two years after its opening. According to the city mayor, there were no economic benefits to the city from girls attending high school, middle-class parents were using the school as a cheap alternative to other forms of socially exclusive education, and the rate at which girls were flocking to enrol would cause untold expense in the future.

This is an important story because it tells us not only about discrimination against women. It also tells us about the fractures within the middle and ruling classes around issues of gender and schooling. Elements of the middle class were alert to using state-provided schooling in their own class interest, in this case on behalf of their daughters. More important is the fact that elements of the urban middle class in the north-eastern American states, even in the early nineteenth century, were favourably disposed to more modern forms of schooling for women.

It was not only the new city high schools that responded to these emergent demands for a different kind of schooling for girls. Writing about the new Australian secondary schools for girls, private and corporate, such as Melbourne's Presbyterian Ladies College (1875-), Marjorie Theobald argued that:

They were called into existence by two quintessentially middle-class movements, the emancipation of women and the invention of the meritocracy. (1996, p.126)

In Australia of course, the second phase of state high school foundations in the early twentieth century was subject to rather different discourses of reform. These allowed domestic arts (or domestic science) to be represented as a progressive curriculum for girls, as a progressive and rational response to nationalist, imperialist, eugenicist and even socialist anxieties in the new century. Too often Social Darwinism provided the driving set of assumptions for governments and their agencies.

It is not until the twentieth century that high schools in Australia were established that conformed to the five conditions I have proposed as defining the modern state high

school. Rightly, Peter Board, Frank Tate, Alfred Williams and Cecil Andrews have been the names associated with the foundations of the second phase.²

The founders of the emergent modern state high schools looked to the academies and private schools rather than the grammar schools for their curriculum. The new high schools in Australia were supposed to provide courses of relevance to modern agriculture, industry and commerce. What happened in fact has been traced many times. In Victoria a number of historians have shown how the new state high schools there became much more attached to Latin and mathematics than they were supposed to be. But what the new state high schools clearly were, was systematic in their approach. They were resolutely opposed, as most modern state schools have been until the last decade or two, to flexible arrangements of curriculum — and, in another area, irregular attendance.

The fact that they were either free, or charged low fees, meant that the experience of the rural high schools of New South Wales in the 1880s and 1890s was not repeated. Though these schools had not been well supported, there seems not to have been a taxpayer revolt against them. An obvious reason for this is that, unlike in Massachusetts, the taxpayer base was state-wide not district-wide. In so far as there was resistance to state-provided secondary schooling, the resistance was from the wealthier classes, who supported modest to high-fee private and corporate secondary schooling. It was the proprietors of the private schools in particular who correctly perceived the threat of low-fee or no-fee state high schools, with the resources of the state itself to sustain a teaching force with salaries and tenure based on public service provisions (Hooper 1999).

Some of this resistance to state high schooling remains with us today, lasting over a century. The arguments employed have changed in character, but the object has remained remarkably consistent: to keep corporate schools (there are virtually no genuinely private schools left) viable, strong, well-resourced, and superior in what they have to offer in the way of the curriculum. But the curriculum is only part of the story. More important has been the determination to preserve the capacity of certain secondary schools to confer 'distinction' and enhance 'cultural capital' of one kind or another (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990). The means by which certain schools are accepted as providing this 'distinction', and others are not, is not solely a function of the relationship of schools to state ownership and management. But often the nature of that relationship has been a crucial factor. Occasionally historians of education are implicated in the continuing production of this 'distinction' that allows many state secondary schools to be seen as inferior. Richard Teese described the process succinctly when discussing the production of commissioned school histories:

Every grammar school seeks to be historical, to be an object of continuous cultivation to itself through its deeds of foundation and growth, its chronicles, its hagiography. (Teese 1984, p.116)

State schools rarely get the same attention.

State high school foundations were successfully opposed in parts of Australia. As Carole Hooper (1999) and others have shown for Victoria, even the offering of higher

subjects in state elementary schools was successfully opposed in the nineteenth century, to preserve superiority and to engineer distinction. A mere 25 years after the free state high schools were established, the Depression of the 1930s saw a resurgence of attempts to impose fees and to reduce enrolments. Nor could the post-World War Two expansion of state secondary schooling as part of social reconstruction plans and the meeting of the pressure of the baby boom be left as a semi-permanent settlement for the late twentieth century. From the 1960s Protestant corporate schools and their non-systemic Catholic equivalents rapidly overcame their fear of state interference through the acceptance of state aid. In many cases this aid allowed the development of facilities that would eventually become vastly superior to those of neighbouring state high schools.

Nevertheless, during the twentieth century there has been an acceptance by most of the people that state high schooling has been a necessary part of Australia's attempts at social democracy. This is not to say that these schools have been or have always seen themselves as schools for democracy. Pavla Miller has argued convincingly that state schooling has had a long history of embedded, structural discrimination against Aboriginal and working-class children, with a gendered dimension to its racial and class discriminatory practices. Her argument in *Long Division* (1986) shows how apparently neutral class, gender and racial discourses such as 'merit' and 'intelligence' sustained the structural advantages in education of the few against the many.

In New South Wales the historians of state selective high schools, Armitage (1983) and Horan (1989), in discussing the resistance of the Fort Street and Newcastle high schools to Wyndham-style 'comprehensive' reforms, amply demonstrate the desperation of certain state schooling communities to maintain the distinction they had wrested from within the state system.³

Nevertheless, by the early twentieth century the labour movement was strongly in favour of state high schooling. More often than not there was little criticism of the meritocratic basis of that schooling. If there was it was easily diverted into the argument that state secondary schools offering a technically based or domestic science based curriculum would alleviate the mismatch between the academic curriculum of the high schools and the needs of most working-class youth.

From the beginning, however, the process referred to as 'embourgeoisment' may be seen in the relationship between labour and emergent state high schools. The idea that a working-class 'boy' should have the opportunity through free state high schooling of an open road to university, as offered in most corporate schools, was very powerful in the early labour movement — and remains so today.

In the South Australian Parliament in 1913 a Labor Minister of Education said of Adelaide High School and its scholars:

A boy in after years liked to talk about his college life; and, from an academic point of view, at any rate, a boy who had passed through the Adelaide High School had received a college education. (F.W. Coneybeer, 26 November 1913, *SAPD 1913*, p.980)

Coneybeer himself was a horse-collar maker whose formal education had been completed at the national school in Orange, New South Wales. He believed that the state high school would provide to the youth who attended it the same kind of distinction as the colleges.

The continuing existence in Australia of the King and Amy O'Malley home economics scholarships remind us that, early in the twentieth century, elements of the labour movement were also strongly committed to gender-differentiated and class-divided state secondary schooling. The domestic arts curriculum was supported not only by bourgeois matrons wanting to solve the domestic service crisis (Bessant 1976; Matthews 1983) but strong elements within the labour movement who shared a nationalist, racist and eugenicist vision of improved working-class families producing healthier children.

The argument about delivering opportunity to the clever working-class boy was especially strong in New South Wales, and even today may partially explain why that state, unusually for the rest of Australia, retains an extensive and academically selective high school system, with its necessary adverse impact on neighbouring comprehensive high schools. Despite the pioneering work in New South Wales along with Western Australia in founding comprehensive state high schools, the New South Wales Labor Party never quite committed itself to full state comprehensive high schooling (Brown 1998). Too many of its leaders were Fort Street High old boys, and the Wyndham Scheme for comprehensive state high schooling remained flawed, perhaps in the long term fatally, by the continued and continuing presence of academically selective state high schools.

Mark Peel and Janet McCalman have given important weight to arguments such as these in their comparative study of the schooling origins of the governing, cultural and business elites of the different states of Australia (Peel & McCalman 1992). The elites of New South Wales were far more likely to have been educated in academically selective state high schools than those in Victoria.

After World War One in particular, the move towards universal secondary schooling gathered pace. The reasons for this were various. We should resist mono-causal explanations. The Hadow report of 1926 from England, with all its problems, was seen at the time and for many decades after as progressive in its intent, a major attempt that coincided with that rousing cry inspired by R.H. Tawney: 'Secondary education for all' (McCulloch 1998, p.29). Also lurking in the background was the new creature, the 'adolescent', invented by the new social sciences and waiting for new technologies of social and educational management to supervise and civilise it. As Stanley Hall so lovingly described them: the boys, paradoxical in their confidence and vulnerability with their tendencies to both noble-heartedness and cruelty; and the girls, with their maidenly blushes, vulnerable both to too much Latin homework and coeducation (Hall 1904).

In Australia the directors of education Peter Board, Frank Tate, William McCoy and Alfred Williams are all reliable guides to the many arguments that pushed the state toward the provision of universal secondary schooling. But theirs are not the only arguments (see Campbell, Hooper & Fearnley-Sander 1999, pp.2-4).

The price of universal state secondary schooling was high levels of differentiation. Indeed, not only should all young people, adolescents, be drawn into schools that were devoted to their age group, but their individual 'capacities' were also to be considered. There would be different courses and different schools for diverse groups of young people.

Until the 1960s the makers of Australian high schools attempted to ignore the great manifesto of universal secondary education produced in the United States in 1918. Rather than *The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* (reproduced in Cohen 1973, vol.4, pp.2279-2289) the gaze of Australian educators looked to England, where convenient assumptions about the needs of the different social classes were increasingly supported by the occasionally unethical and perhaps malicious educational psychology of Cyril Burt.

The British Education Act of 1944, passed by the wartime national government which included Labour, consolidated the two nations approach around tripartism. In most Australian states, where population density had allowed it, different kinds of schools — central, junior technical, technical and domestic arts schools — all with differing class and gendered enrolments, also roped the apparently unclever or 'good with their hands' off from the academically oriented state high schools. This had been a common pattern from the 1920s. The Australian high schools in this era were, in the end, conceived more as state grammar schools than high schools of the type that were emerging in the United States. Bob Bessant for Victoria, with Pavla Miller for South Australia and Bob Connell and colleagues, remain the most perceptive analysts for the historical sociology of the working class in state secondary education in Australia (Bessant 1983; Miller 1986; Connell 1982).

With their confusing reconfigurations and differentiations, state high schools in Australia have, in the main, been popular institutions, with most of their publicly articulate enemies coming from the wealthier supporters of the corporate schools.

The major working-class population that has not supported state high schooling has been Roman Catholic, in particular those who have accepted the leadership of their church in educational matters. This opposition has not been as destructive as the class-based opposition since the focus of the Catholic Church has not necessarily been antagonistic, at least for the latter part of the twentieth century, to the broad access of working-class people to higher education. Rather, the focus of the Catholic Church has been to persuade the state to fund an alternative system. Its argument has been that the state should fund religiously based schools. Most of the mainstream Protestant churches until recent times have covertly agreed with the Catholic Church that much of the tone of public schooling was in fact Protestant. This debate sustained a relevance until the mid-1970s, at which time the state began formally to commit its schools to multiculturalism rather than implicit Protestantism.

The general, if not universal, acceptance of state secondary schooling was inevitably based on the prospect that it gave families and classes an extension to educational opportunities, especially to those who had not accessed 'higher education' previously.

In Australia the state high school was being invented at the same time as Deakin was advocating the New Protection, and Kingston and Higgins were advocating a new industrial order. Bourgeois ideology was in the process of being reframed, its most clearly class-interested features being blunted by promises of fairer access to opportunity, as the basis of a new nationalism that might overcome class division. The free state high school would carry through the promise of the bourgeois ideology at its most attractive: educational opportunity open to all regardless of birth and apparently class. The fee-paying school could never carry that promise. The fee represents educational opportunity on the basis of wealth, and therefore class.

In the United States during the nineteenth century, in the North rather than the South, the high school defeated the academy as the most popular institution promising educational opportunity. Its attractions to the rising urban middle class were several. While academies had also originally offered elements of modern, commercial, scientific and 'English' curricula, the courses offered in the high schools tended to be fewer, more sustained and better credentialled. Importantly the high schools were almost always day schools; the academies had often been rural institutions with boarding establishments. The rising middle class, and this can be traced in England as well as the United States, viewed family life differently. The family as a patriarchal institution was barely questioned, but what was questioned were unsatisfactory models of family and social life, whether found in the ruling or labouring classes. Part of this reform led by the urban middle class depended on the more consistent engagement of fathers with their children and the raising of children within the family, not boarding schools. There would also be a new model of middle-class womanhood, increasingly educated in ways similar to men, and the taking of new roles in the rediscovered possibility of the companionate marriage (Davidoff & Hall 1987; Miller 1998).

The new high school in the United States supported these social transformations. The high school, especially if it also supported a normal school course, provided higher educational opportunities to women, allowed the return of young people to the family every day, and supported the republican and Protestant virtues of merit gained by application to work and the moral virtues of honesty, competitive individualism and so forth.

William Reese (1995) and David Tyack (1974) among many others, including most notably the pioneering Edward Krug (1969), have traced the history of the high school through the Progressive Era to its universal, rather than middle class, stage. Though similar debates took place in an extended and truncated fashion in England, a consequence of that country's persistent and vicious social class relations, we see some acceptance of comprehensive high schooling as the preferred model of universal secondary schooling there in the 1960s and 1970s. In one form or another, state-supported selective secondary schooling re-emerged in strength from the Thatcher period (Benn & Chitty 1997; McCulloch 1998; Rubinstein & Simon 1973).

In the 1960s one might have concluded that comprehensive state high schooling, at least in the United States and Australia, and perhaps even in Britain, was the likely future form of secondary schooling. But, as we know, this was an optimistic presumption.

In conclusion I wish to make some general comments about the recent historiography of state high schooling. First, we are seeing a resurgence of an angry, tragic and nostalgic view of the state high school in history. The two recent American histories by Jurgen Herbst (1996) and David Angus and Jeffrey Mirel, authors of *The Failed Promise of the American High School* (1999), are resolutely opposed to what they see as threats to meritocracy and excellence by multiculturalism and inclusiveness in curriculum and too many recent trends in school practices in general. Their equivalent among Australian historians of education is Alan Barcan. These authors hold disparate views, but generally agree that working-class youth and, in the case of the Americans, Black youth, are not served well by any diminution and lack of availability of a rigorous and competitive academic curriculum.

A second group, once confident and aggressive, are more defensive these days. Often with a revisionist background they, and I should say 'we', still argue for inclusive, accessible and comprehensive high schooling. The swiftness of the triumph of neo-liberalism in public policy has dented our confidence. Hard-line critical views about public education in terms of social control, correspondence theory and its role in the social reproduction of inequality have had to be severely modified, as public institutions such as public schools emerge as potentially important sites for resistance to the worst of neo-liberalism, at least in education.

This article has failed to satisfy a condition that I usually set myself: it lacks narratives about the real people, the students and teachers who lived the history of the state high school.

Perhaps I can redress these by leaving the last words to Arthur Burfield, an interviewee of mine for the history of South Australian high schooling. His life as student, teacher and headmaster virtually encompasses the whole era of the free state high school in South Australia. This extract from his memoirs is set in 1921. Perhaps the quotation concludes this discussion on the wrong note, because this is about a boy who was exceptionally good at passing exams. He is one of that tiny percentage who passed into the university, not one of that vast majority whom the high school decided were failures, or who left early for other reasons. But maybe we ignore the romance of the scholarship boy and girl at our peril. It may yet play a part in the argument of those who seek a vigorous, inclusive and proud system of public high schooling:

We had first rate teachers [at Adelaide High]. For Pure Maths I & II ... we had Mr Kuchel ... For Physics we had Mr Dinning — rather cold and sarcastic, and for Chemistry we had an elderly lady of German descent, Miss Heyne ('Frau' to us) ...

During the year I made a very important decision, one which changed my life in one way. Because I had done well in Maths and Sciences I favoured engineering as a career, so would have to go to the University. ... but I realised that there [would be] ... many more expenses.

I was aware of the strain on my grandparents in keeping me at school. They were so wonderfully generous. I had proper guernsey, shorts, socks and boots for football, cream pants, shirt and sandshoes for cricket, a racquet for tennis. Dear old Grand-

mother. I recall how proudly she looked at me when I was dressed in my sporting outfits. I could never ask them to help put me through University, so I decided to follow my second choice and become a teacher. When my bursary ended I could become a Probationary Student, and get £50 ... a year — not much to some but a lot to us. ...

It was a real honour to be a prefect at Adelaide High. The prefect induction was a very impressive ceremony, held in front of a whole school assembly. Each one made a solid pledge to uphold school honour and carry out duties faithfully. (Burfield 1995, pp.30-31)

NOTES

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1. John Hartley was the dominating Chief Inspector and Director of Education in colonial South Australia from 1871 to 1896.
2. These were all early twentieth-century progressive directors of state education departments in Australia, respectively for New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.
3. Harold Wyndham, Director of Education in New South Wales, chaired the committee that advocated comprehensive high schooling in New South Wales. The committee reported in 1957 (Wyndham 1957).

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