

The Female Student on Trial, 1910-15: Dorothy M. Gladish *versus* University College Nottingham *versus* Oscar Wilde

Sarah Edwards

Abstract

This article examines the student career of Dorothy M. Gladish at University College Nottingham from 1910-15. By drawing on little-studied archives, I analyse a range of narratives about Gladish's multiple embodiments of the female student. In particular, I situate these narratives within the representational contexts of the *Gong* student magazine, which are marked by re-writings of Victorian literary texts that re-invent the contemporary female student. In the case of Gladish, the symbolic and literal 'trial' was also a feature of her student career. I will read a 'Mock Trial' of Gladish alongside accounts of the college council's examination of Professor R. G. F. Dolley, following a complaint by the Gladish family, and their responses to the trial of Oscar Wilde in 1895, contained in a hitherto restricted archive. I will thereby consider how this case study extends our knowledge about women's roles in civic universities at this period.

Keywords

Dorothy Gladish Meads; University College Nottingham; trial; Gong magazine; Dolley; Oscar Wilde; Salome

Biographical note

Dr Sarah Edwards is Senior Lecturer in English Studies in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Strathclyde. Her research interests are in Edwardian and neo-Edwardian literature and culture, life writing, and the architectural humanities. Her recent publications include *Writing the Modern City: Literature, Architecture, Modernity* (Routledge, 2011, with Jonathan Charley), *Nostalgia in the Twenty-First Century* (special issue of *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 2014, with Kathy Hamilton et al), articles in *Women's Writing* and *Life Writing*, and chapters in Marie-Luise Kohlke and Christian Gutleben (eds.), *Neo-Victorian Families: Gender, Sexual and Cultural Politics* (Rodopi, 2011) and Tammy Clewell (ed), *Modernism and Nostalgia: Bodies, Locations, Aesthetics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Correspondence to: Dr Sarah Edwards, Room LH 403, Lord Hope Building, 141 St James Road, Glasgow G4 0LT. Email: sarah.m.edwards@strath.ac.uk

On Saturday 29 November 1914, a 'Mock Trial' was held at University College Nottingham. According to *The Gong* student magazine, the 'Large Theatre' was transformed into a 'Court' and academic staff, students and family members donned wigs and gowns to play the roles of barristers, witnesses, judge and jury in the trial of Dorothy M. Gladish.¹ Gladish – then Vice-President of the Students' Union - sat silently in the dock, charged with 'despotism in Union affairs'. As the trial proceeded, both Gladish's sister and a male student disguised as her future husband were 'compelled to bear witness against her'; another prosecution witness, a female student, took the stand disguised as a female lecturer who was 'induced to speak ill of her most brilliant and intellectual pupil'. Finally, the cross-dressed prosecution counsel was unmasked as 'Miss Cox', the leader of a 'rascally conspiracy' of female students. This gang was motivated by 'petty feminine jealousy' of the accused - of her 'influence in the College...high intellectual attainments, and lofty moral character' - to 'blacken' her reputation. However, despite this unmasking of the conspiracy of women, Gladish was pronounced 'Guilty' by the 'Judge' – a male Professor of History - who had previously appeared in his own character as a witness for the defence.²

This 'trial' clearly enacted a number of contemporary debates – and anxieties – about the roles of female students at an historical moment when women were still a relatively new, and minority, population in the universities, and when the recent onset of World War One was unsettling and re-forming gendered roles and organisational structures. I take this 'Mock Trial' as the starting-point for a case study of the student career of Dorothy Gladish at UCN from 1910-15. Besides her Union Vice-Presidency, Gladish held a number of prominent positions in the academic, cultural and sporting domains; she was also the only student to be singled out for such a cross-examination.³ By drawing on little-studied archives - University College Calendars and student registers, Students' Union Records and minute books, articles in *The Gong* magazine, and letters - I will analyse a range of narratives about Gladish's multiple embodiments of the female student. In particular, I will situate these narratives within the representational contexts of the *Gong* magazine, which are marked by their frequent re-writings of Victorian literary texts to enact, question and re-invent the identity of the contemporary female student. I will thereby consider how this case study extends our knowledge about women's roles in civic universities at this period.

These narratives drew on a range of literary and dramatic conventions, but in the case of Dorothy Gladish, the symbolic and literal ‘trial’ was a recurrent feature of her student career. I will, then, read the ‘Mock Trial’ alongside accounts of two more ‘trials’: the examination of Professor R. G. F. Dolley at University College Nottingham which has until now remained in a restricted archive; and the responses of Dolley and the Gladish family to the considerably more famous trial of a literary figure, Oscar Wilde, in 1895, which was re-interpreted in their own narratives. In November 1915, Dolley, the Professor of History at UCN – who had played the roles of defence witness and judge in the ‘Mock Trial’ of Dorothy Gladish exactly one year earlier - was summoned in front of the college council, following a complaint by Gladish’s father.⁴ Dolley was accused of sexually harassing Dorothy’s younger sister, Kathleen, during a series of one-to-one tutorials. There were no charges of physical assault: instead, Dolley was claimed to have threatened Kathleen’s honour by introducing salacious conversations about Oscar Wilde and his trial for ‘homosexuality’, and lending her ‘offensive’ books. In his ensuing defence, Dolley drew Dorothy into the proceedings, exposing her apparently sexual affair with her fellow student and future husband, John Meads, and implying that she was the instigator of the complaint against him, and even the author of Kathleen’s written account of their meetings. Dolley also claimed that ‘misconduct’ between Dorothy and Meads had begun in the months leading up to the ‘Mock Trial’, thus adding a further layer of symbolism to this event.⁵

As real and imagined (gendered) identities were blurred in the ‘Mock Trial’, so these narratives mined a range of literary, sexual and legal discourses to set parameters of acceptable behaviour for the real-life female student. On trial were questions about women’s access to different types of knowledge, roles and spaces – intellectual, sporting, sexual, speaking – within the academy, and the impact of their student experiences on their wider lives. The narratives of the three ‘trials’ of female student, male professor and ‘homosexual’ literary author illuminate the inter-dependence of these categories of knowledge, and reveal how contested and contradictory these questions were.

Dorothy M. Gladish and University College Nottingham

The name of Dorothy May Gladish recurs frequently in the archives of University College Nottingham for 1910-15. The Calendars record that she registered at UCN in 1910, and graduated with a Bachelor of Honours degree in History three years later. In 1912, she was awarded a Gladstone Prize for the ‘best essay in History, Politics or Economics’ and she later

won a Heymann Research Scholarship to work for a master's degree.⁶ Her thesis was published as a book, *The Tudor Privy Council* (1915), which remains a well-cited work.⁷ As well as being a 'brilliant and intellectual' student, Gladish was a ubiquitous presence in many areas of college life. She served as Vice-President of the Students' Representative Council from 1912-15 and played an important role in developing the constitution of the modern-day Union.⁸ She was also the editor of the first Union handbook, published in 1914.⁹ From 1912 onwards, references to her in college documents increased, as she became, in turn, Ladies' Hockey Captain, Chair of the Women's Common Room, and a member of the *Gong* magazine's editorial committee. She was also a frequent participant in college social events and theatrical performances, occasionally playing satirical versions of herself (as in the 'Mock Trial').

From its inception, the mission of University College Nottingham was to offer education to all who desired it. UCN opened in 1881 and, from 1884, offered the external degree courses of the University of London. Women were eligible for scholarships and all other honours on equal terms. In this respect, UCN subscribed to the common ethos of the civic universities, making 'no distinction of sex' - as Carol Dyhouse has observed in her pioneering work on female students at these institutions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - nor of class, financial means or religious denomination.¹⁰ However, Dyhouse has also suggested that there was considerable ambiguity in attitudes towards female students, their behaviour and aspirations, despite ostensible terms of equality. Female students comprised a steadily growing minority: by 1900, they formed about sixteen per cent of all university students, and this figure had risen to about twenty-four per cent by 1920. At UCN, the Student Registers for 1911-12 indicate that there were 373 students, of whom 162 (more than 40%) were women. However, most of the male and female students were taking part-time courses at secondary school level, for matriculation or intermediate-level diplomas, which did not lead to a bachelor's degree.¹¹ Most of the students at UCN came from neighbouring counties and many classes were held in the evening, in order to ensure that local workers were able to share in the educational opportunities offered by the College. E. Becket has described the opportunities offered by UCN to working-class and lower middle-class young men such as Gladish's future husband, John Meads, who was the son of a blacksmith and gained admission to UCN at secondary school level, via a series of county scholarships.¹²

Of the women students at UCN in 1911-12, seventy-four were 'Normals' undertaking teacher training, and only ten women were enrolled on science courses (including one medical student). Nine of the eleven students registered for the BA (Honours) degree were women; Gladish was the only student registered for the BA (Honours) in History that year. This picture is consistent with that of other universities, where women generally undertook courses in teacher training and the arts; a teaching career (to be abandoned after marriage) was often presumed to be the destination for women graduates.¹³ Anna Bogen has noted that women students were often associated with the civic universities and with professional, rather than liberal, education; but also notes that their admission on terms of equality meant that they were linked with radical change.¹⁴ Indeed, women taking Honours degrees in Arts at UCN were prominent figures in cultural and social activities.¹⁵ In this respect, their existence challenged a claim from the 1912 debate on 'Arts v. Sciences' reported in *The Gong*, when the proponent for Science argued that 'the ideal of Art was too emotional and ornamental and compared it with woman's use of brooches, bangles – and paint'. The gendered nature of this debate was clear: the arts were associated with feeling and leisure, rather than with rational or useful work. However, the humanist association of 'Art' with the 'moral, intellectual and political life' also implied a range of scholarly and professional identities which outstanding female university students - such as Heymann Research Scholar and Vice-President Gladish - could claim.¹⁶

Gladish was in many ways a typical UCN student from a commercial, rising lower middle-class background. She was the eldest child of a master grocer and corn miller from the market town of Retford in Nottinghamshire, and the first member of her family to attend university. Her father owned a prosperous business ('Gladish and Sons') which employed several staff. She attended the local Retford County High School for Girls, which had been founded in 1893 to complement the boys' school. The school's ethos is indicated by the fact that its first governors hoped that the school would form part of the Girls' Public Day School Company, formed in 1872 to create institutions that would provide a high standard of academic education for girls (the proximity of similar schools in Nottingham and Sheffield had put paid to this idea). From 1908-10, Gladish attended a boarding-school - Stoneygate College, Leicester - which qualified her for university entrance.¹⁷ As Sally Mitchell has pointed out, the new girls' schools mimicked boys' public schools, also offering sporting opportunities.¹⁸ Mitchell has written about the changing concept of girlhood in the period from 1880-1915, observing that the new 'girl' was a cross-class figure, in part due to the introduction of

compulsory secondary education in 1902, and thus the possibility of higher education and professional work for a wider range of young women such as Gladish. She has also noted the importance of cultural representations of girlhood, and of the educational institutions within which they were increasingly found, in shaping perceptions of girls. Magazines such as *The Girls' Own Paper* and school stories by authors including L. T. Meade portrayed the boarding-school and 'college' as the setting for a lengthy transitional period before marriage when girls could experiment with a range of identities and activities which were not always acceptable for adult women: 'college supplied an imaginative frame that let a girl reconceptualise her sense of life's potential'. The school or college represented an 'escape from home, economic potential, freely chosen friendships, a whiff of heterosexual romance and a certain amount of quiet subversion'.¹⁹

Within UCN's student magazine, *The Gong*, the latent identities which these possibilities offered for the female student were explored and interpreted through a range of genres and viewpoints. There has not been a great deal of work on the college magazine during the late Edwardian period. Most work on college magazines has focussed on Victorian productions which pre-date female university entrance such as the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, to chart the intellectual and social influences of influential men.²⁰ However, Margaret Beetham has studied the rise of women's magazines until 1914, and has shown how its 'fractured and heterogeneous form' meant that these periodicals were dynamic sites for continually re-defining feminine and class identities.²¹ Claire Brock has examined some university magazines of female medical students in the first decade of the twentieth century and noted how the publication enabled these students to form a 'collective identity' and - like *The Gong* - preserved the voices of little-known students.²² In her study, Carol Dyhouse includes examples of exclusionary practices, and negative representations of female students, in magazines from the civic universities in order to challenge the 'penetration' and 'consolidation' model of gradual acceptance of women into universities during the early twentieth century.²³ While I would concur with Dyhouse's view that these two phases overlapped, more attention should be paid to the active engagement of women students with college magazines and with the magazine's cultural role in both reflecting and shaping events through its representational strategies.

The Gong was published three times per year (March, June and December) and featured reports from student societies and entertainments, sporting fixtures, lectures on topical

subjects, as well as student fiction, journalism and illustrations. The magazine featured many anonymous authors (sometimes using pseudonyms). Both the creative and ‘factual’ writing drew on various satirical and humorous forms; both these generic features, and/or authorial anonymity, were effective disguises of authorial intention and thus enabled playful and subversive writing. However, the reports of events and performances, in particular, re-interpreted their meaning in specific and didactic ways, often drawing on literary and dramatic allusions to both fix meaning, and to extend its symbolic possibilities. Therefore, the magazine’s depictions of its female students were heavily dependent on readerly knowledge of textual and dramatic allusion, as well as on the serial history of its representations of individuals such as Gladish.

The magazine also depicted – both incidentally and within more considered discussions – the gendered organisational structures of UCN which can be found in the Calendars and Union minute books. Some offices and committees were sex-segregated: for example, there was a Women’s Common Room and Christian Union. However, women were represented on the chief decision-making bodies. There were usually several women on the Union Executive Committee, although there were no women Presidents.²⁴ Dyhouse suggests that women often experienced exclusion from debating societies and had to found their own clubs; however, at UCN, women were full members and were often sent to debates at Manchester or Birmingham universities.²⁵

However, *The Gong*’s inclusion of rhetorical and fictional debates indicates a more fractured and uneasy attitude towards women’s occupation of space than minutes and quantitative data suggest. Dyhouse has noted the range of meanings that separate organisations and spaces could represent, such as enforced segregation, or protected women-only areas which might indicate feminist separation.²⁶ In the anonymously-authored Socratic dialogue ‘Queries’, the use of the question and answer form, and the lack of resolution, meant that the women’s common room might represent both imperatives:

QUESTION: Why is the Hall the exclusive prerogative of male students between gongs?

ANSWER: Women prefer their palatial common-room, decorated after the manner of Morris and *plentifully* supplied with contemporary literature.

QUESTION: Why have women the privilege of being labelled in the library?

ANSWER: the general public, being unintelligent, might mistake them for human beings. Now they know they're only "students".²⁷

The description of the common room as 'palatial', and the use of italics for 'plentifully', implies a privileged space. Yet, as Mitchell says, the ladies' common room decorated in Morris papers was a staple of contemporary literature, and so this passage may be gesturing towards stereotypical, rather than real, spaces. This possibility is reinforced by the following 'query', which foregrounds both negative 'general public' perceptions of women and their marking within the academic space of the library - which, in light of their dubious qualification as human beings, and their banishment from the 'exclusive' space of the hall, seems anything but a 'privilege'.²⁸

During this period of agitation for women's suffrage, *The Gong* indicated a generally supportive stance at UCN and in its own fictional representations. In their report on the student 'Parliamentary Debate' of 1910, the bill for women's suffrage was debated by the 'Home Secretary' - played by a woman, Miss D. E. F. Jones. As a performance of female leadership, her speech was hailed as 'a triumph of Student-oratory and was loudly applauded. She dealt cleverly and caustically with the various objectors' and 'the bill was carried by a substantial majority'.²⁹ However, the presence of these objectors indicated some dissent, which was shared by the college council, at least as far as militancy was concerned. In 1907, UCN students had arranged a visit by the leader of the Women's Social and Political Union, Emmeline Pankhurst, but due to the resignation of two council members, the event had to be arranged off-campus.³⁰ These negative reactions to militancy were enacted and interpreted by *The Gong* several years later. In their account of the UCN 'Parliamentary Election' of 1912, several comic characters interrupted proceedings onstage. During the Home Rule debate, 'a wild-looking figure, in bright-hued female garb, then burst from the nether regions near the lantern, brandishing a hatchet, and obviously desirous of the franchise; rough hands, however, grasped "her" and "she" was seen no more'. These images of 'wild' irrationality and violence suggest an archetypal deranged suffragette, whose brief and futile appearance might indicate both student defiance and/or acquiescence with the college authorities.³¹

Sport was another area in which women were well-represented in the magazine, especially hockey and tennis. Hilary Marland has noted that narratives of feminine frailty had been challenged by the introduction of these games into girls' schools in the later nineteenth

century.³² In one assessment of the ladies' hockey team, Captain Dorothy Gladish was described in military terms as 'D. Gladish – the dashing leader of a gallant band. A splendid shot, hard and fast. Holds her forward line together admirably, is all that a captain should be'. Other descriptions of players employed words and phrases including 'sturdy', 'plucky' and 'made of cast iron'.³³ As the positive description of Gladish shows, playing hockey demonstrated leadership, co-operation, and a well-regulated life of work and play. This attitude was frequently endorsed by *The Gong*, notably in the short biographies of new female lecturers which often emphasised their desire to develop such qualities through sport. Miss Heath, a new science lecturer, 'thought more interest in games might be shown by the women students' while Miss Browning's (a physics lecturer and former student of UCN) 'chief recreations' were hockey, tennis and various other sports.³⁴ Browning also wrote an article on 'Food' which reiterated the claims of many contemporary doctors that women were more 'highly strung' than men, and that while few women could 'withstand the buffets of the world' those students who did 'become famous' would 'mix their study with judicious exercise and pleasure'.³⁵ Gladish, then, seemed to be an entirely admirable role model in the sporting domain.

The magazine featured a woman editor-in-chief throughout the period, and overall female numbers on the board and committee increased from 1916, as many male students departed to the Front.³⁶ From December 1913 until the end of 1915, the editor-in-chief was Nina Brameld who, like Gladish, was a master's student undertaking research in Tudor history (she also played the female academic in Gladish's 'Mock Trial').³⁷ Under her editorship, *The Gong* featured increasingly lengthy 'Rolls of Honour' and 'In Memoriam' sections, obituaries and photographs of former students in uniform. Her editorials framed *The Gong*'s initial response to the conflict, and in her editorial for June 1915 she chose to emphasise women's new leadership powers, albeit described in conventional terms of 'duty' and custodianship: women were now the 'guardians' of 'civilisation' and 'the responsibilities of the women at the College are indeed great. They must show themselves worthy of the men, for in their hands lies much of the happiness of the nation of tomorrow'.³⁸ Within the context of *The Gong*, this stronger female editorial voice created further dissonances between personal narratives like Brameld's and representations of women students within the magazine.

'She-Who-Must-Be-Obedy': the female student and the Victorian heroine

Dorothy Gladish joined the editorial committee of *The Gong* in 1914. Her role in the production of the magazine is not recorded, but her editorial presence further complicates questions around authorship, intent and tone. Gladish's multiple student roles were mirrored by her numerous, and potentially conflicting, roles for the magazine: she was also a rare contributor ('D.M.G'), was written about in her various roles such as Vice-President and Ladies' Hockey Captain, and she performed in plays – as either a fictional character, or as a fictionalised version of herself - which were then narrated in the magazine. She was often given alternate names which were distantly related to her real name, thus signalling her multiple roles and the multiple perspectives on display in the magazine.

Creative writing was an important feature of the magazine: student poems, travel and war narratives, and satirical dialogues were common (such as the aforementioned 'Queries'). While there has been some scholarly work on women's university fiction, fictional works in student magazines have not received much attention.³⁹ Many of the pieces in *The Gong* re-cast famous literary texts at present-day UCN, drawing on imaginary characters and genres from the recent Victorian past to re-imagine women's intellectual and physical presence in the modern university.

For example, the June 1913 issue contained a re-visioning of Lord Tennyson's 'Lady of Shalott', a poem which has generated much debate for its ambivalent portrait of the Lady, who has been read as both a symbol of female imprisonment and/or artistic endeavour. In the *Gong* version, the university classroom, known as 'Shall-swot' was the Lady's tower/prison - 'it is a low, a darksome room/Less like to class-room than to tomb' - filled with anxious, claustrophobic students: 'up and down these maidens go/Without its wall, with footsteps slow/They learn there all they want to know/The Ladies of Shall-swot/Faces whiter/limbs a quiver/These four maidens sit and shiver'.⁴⁰

The male university teacher was re-cast as 'their own Knight' Chivalier de Cram-a-lot (Lancelot) whose paternalistic role encompassed intellectual, personal (and implicitly sexual) evaluation of his female students: 'within their lecturer crits all day/Their dress, their looks and all they say'. The refrain cast the students as 'dull ladies of Shalott' who hero-worshipped their male teacher: 'Tho your wits be dull as lead/You shall have aid from Lancelot!' Dyhouse has noted that female students were often ridiculed in university magazines as dull 'swots' who faithfully transcribed everything said in lectures, and that such

magazine articles were, like this one, ‘characterised by a tone of satire or nervous ridicule’ (197). However, as ‘Shall-swot’ progressed, there was a shift in tone and perspective. The female students were initially cast within their familiar roles: as domestic caretakers, whose learning better fitted them for house-keeping: ‘they study well economy/and thus it is they know, you see/the cheapest buns to buy for tea’; and for primary teaching: ‘and thus, they’ll spend two years or so/then from their classroom they will go/to teach small children in a row’. But in the final lines of the poem, there was some attempt at empathy with their frustrated intellectual desires, which unsettles this narrative: ‘but oft, with many a heartfelt sigh/and sometimes with a watr’y eye/they’ll think of how they used to try/to scribble rhymes in Cram-a-lot’. This version, then, reveals some awareness that women students were imprisoned within a narrative of future school-teaching and marriage which served to quash their intellectual ambitions. Although these early twentieth-century students were seemingly free to escape their tower – unlike the Victorian Lady of Shalott – they only exchanged one prison/classroom for another.⁴¹

Many of the reports on student entertainments featured similar re-workings of literary texts, and these performances often blurred historical and literary, local and national, male and female identities. The frequent use of farcical language and physical humour emphasised the playfulness of the performances – as Mary Jean Corbett says, ‘performative acts generate rather than undermine the cultural fiction of the stable self’ – while also deflecting the verbal and physical aggression contained within them.⁴² I will now examine various performances which featured Gladish and expand the meanings of the ‘Mock Trial’: many of these narratives featured in the same magazine issue, or recent issues, and depended on serial reading of Gladish’s depictions within *The Gong*.

The March 1914 issue reproduced a cast list for the recent Christmas pantomime, ‘Alice in Wonderland’. Once again, a Victorian text was transposed to modern-day UCN: Lewis Carroll’s literary nonsense was set in the ‘College Entrance Hall, first day of term’.⁴³ The novel had enjoyed considerable popularity throughout the previous decade, its allegorical and fantastic qualities chiming with literary and visual trends of the Edwardian period. It had, for example, been used by Saki as a vehicle for contemporary political parody in *The Westminster Alice* (1902), when Alice tried to interpret and understand the thinly-disguised politicians.⁴⁴ Similarly, *The Gong*’s ‘Dramatis Maleficientes’ signalled its playful interrogation and re-imagining of university structures, including alternate versions of

Carroll's fictional characters (such as a Mad Hatter who was responsible for student societies rather than tea-parties) and a cast of staff and student caricatures played by some of the real-life characters. However, no one played themselves – instead, they swapped gendered and professional identities. 'A Choyce Filbert from Barcelona', then, represented the student A. P. Choyce, who played an academic, 'The Eleventh Pharaoh, frae Egypt'. The 'Black King' was played by a female student, while a fictional version of WSPU suffragettes Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney - 'Christabelkenney, a militant' - could make a brief appearance at UCN in defiance of the college authorities.⁴⁵

A thinly-disguised version of Gladish appeared as 'Miss Autocratica Sadish, BA (The Hockey Captain)'. Gladish herself was cast as 'The Spirit of Propriety: a recognised authority upon the subject'; in the pantomime review, it was stated that she 'summarised the opinions of the students upon the ideals of dress and demeanour, which obtain among the powers that be'. In this show of a 'singularly libellous description', Gladish, then, was represented twice: as a version of the outspoken student ambassador that she represented as Vice-President; and, in a foreshadowing of the 'Mock Trial', as a (sadistic?) autocrat. In this latter role, two of her student identities - the woman with the best academic credentials and the sporting captain – were chosen. Again, the chosen literary work enabled and developed this 'Autocratica' persona: her nearest analogue in Carroll's novel is the autocratic Queen of Hearts who orders executions and plays croquet (and who was otherwise absent from the cast list).

Like the 'Mock Trial', this pantomime was organised by Professor Dolley, who duly appeared in fictional form as the Carroll/author figure, 'Drofessor Dodo, M.A. (Oxon), (The professor of over-pressure)'. Several future participants in the 'Mock Trial' and *Gong* editors – Mr Choyce and Miss Cox - were also members of this cast. While *The Gong*'s report stated that no-one raised any objections to their caricatures and that staff-student relations had been improved by the event, a serial reading of the magazine indicates that Gladish's fictionalised roles were increasingly being used to cast her as an overbearing leader.

One year later, in the March 1915 issue – which featured the 'Mock Trial' - Gladish was also depicted in a poem: 'Our Alphabet, being the first part of "A Child's Guide to Knowledge"'. Each alternate line began with the next letter of the alphabet, and the two lines presented a critically humorous portrait of a student or staff member. Again, Gladish was the only person featured twice, as: 'D for our D...determined and dark/Who keeps the Exec. well

up to the mark' and as 'I for the influence, with which, some people say/ Miss D.M.G gets her own little way'. This repetition reinforced the impression of Gladish's multiple personae and, indeed, her 'influence' at UCN.⁴⁶ Indeed, this poem needs to be read alongside the 'Mock Trial', for it expands the connotations of this word in both pieces.

As an active leader in the public spaces of the college, Gladish did not exercise Victorian domestic feminine 'influence'.⁴⁷ Nor was she an unproblematic guardian of civilisation, as Nina Brameld imagined the wartime female leader in the subsequent issue of *The Gong*. Gladish was researching what would prove to be an innovative work of scholarship in Tudor history, had reformed the Students' Representative Council and was seemingly defying conventional sexual morality. In the 'Mock Trial', I read the male professor's (Dolley) dual role as both defence witness and judge as a symbol of the collective ambivalence about Gladish's performance as female student. Throughout the 'Mock Trial' report, the language is similarly ambiguous, conveying both light-hearted humour (the 'boisterous jury' had an 'air of light comedy' and the evening was 'hilarious'), and aggression (the judge Dolley had a 'stern voice...calculated to terrify even the boldest of witnesses').

There was no disagreement from the 'Court' about Gladish's intellectual brilliance. It was her leadership qualities – her 'influence' and her 'despotism' – that were the focus of controversy. The 'conspiracy' of female students both draws attention to the significance of Gladish's gender in her performance as student, and displays a similar mixture of hostility and admiration. Their 'petty feminine jealousy' of Gladish's 'influence in the College' and 'high intellectual attainments' suggests their lack of such qualities, as well as a lack of female solidarity and effective organisation (such as that of the WSPU), symbolised by the disguising of their leader as a male barrister. It is notable that, during her 'trial', Gladish remained silent throughout, 'calm' and 'restrained' in the face of 'insults'. Even the mock female academic (Brameld, enacting a role that she would soon occupy at UCN) turned on her most brilliant *protegee*, although the use of the word 'induce' ('she was induced to speak ill') hints at an enforced conformity and passivity, potentially mirroring the 'righteous indignation' of her silenced student in the dock. Brameld's response was mirrored by Gladish's sister and lover: they were similarly 'compelled' to bear witness against her, and their presence in the trial implies that her student persona was perceived to have potential consequences for her private familial existence.

Indeed, the negative sexual connotations of Gladish's persona were also developed in the magazine.⁴⁸ In the December 1914 issue, there was a report on 'Union Meetings'. Once again, in the midst of a factual description, a fictional set-piece was introduced. On this occasion, the literary mode was a pastoral dialogue between two first-year students/shepherdesses, 'Phyllis' and 'Clio' and, thus, the university was briefly imaged as Arcadia. One of these freshers was described as being awed by 'members of the Executive, moving majestically like Gods and Goddesses', and especially by Gladish: "'And oo is zat prety lady zere, Phyllis? I sink I sud luv her!" even while She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed, our V-P, swept across the room'.⁴⁹

This exchange introduced several new images for Gladish.⁵⁰ Her ability to instantly arouse 'luv' in the 'sweet young' student draws on the motif of the schoolgirl crush on a female teacher, which was commonplace in novels of the period.⁵¹ While this might only seem to be a source of humour, or the upholding of Gladish as a worthy role model, the sexual connotations of a community of female students would soon be used against her during Professor Dolley's trial. Furthermore, this hint at Gladish's erotic power was quickly cemented by the literary comparison to 'She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed', the (anti) heroine of another Victorian literary text, Rider Haggard's adventure novel *She* (1886). This phrase is the fuller version of the novel's title, which alludes to Ayesha, the white queen of an exotic island. 'She' transfixes the two male heroes with her beauty, intellect and power, but ultimately her attempts at immortality and all-powerful leadership fail. It was an ominous image for a student who would soon be accused of rousing sexual obsession in two men at UCN.

Haggard's novel is often cited as a fictional example of the *fin-de-siecle* crisis in masculinity and sexuality, and Ayesha was one of the most famous figures of emasculating femininity from the period. The image of the New Woman abounded in fiction and the press, and her freedom was linked to opportunities for higher education and greater mobility. Furthermore, new discourses of sexology, psychoanalysis and degeneration, and landmark events such as the Labouchere Amendment of 1885 and the Wilde trial of 1895, combined in the image of the decadent artist of ambiguous gendered and sexual identity.⁵² The Wilde trial marked the coming together of discourses from law and literature, as his works such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and his letters, were scoured for evidence of coded homoerotic

discourses. Twenty years later in wartime Nottingham, this trial still held relevance for the idea of the university.

‘The man is not fit to have girl students anywhere near him’: Professor Dolley and Oscar Wilde on trial

The ‘Mock Trial’ also featured Dorothy Gladish’s eighteen-year-old sister, Kathleen, who had begun studying for the Intermediate Arts degree at UCN in October 1914.⁵³ One year later, her father made a formal complaint about Professor Dolley’s conduct to the college council, in respect of his younger daughter. Dorothy had left the college, having completed her MA in March 1915, and was teaching at Mexborough Grammar School.⁵⁴ However, despite her lack of involvement in the events, her own conduct became a focal point of scrutiny. Thus began a trial by correspondence that searched for evidence and proof of ‘misconduct’, and which escalated into a wider conceptual debate regarding the bounds of female intellectual and sexual knowledge, within and beyond the university.

The details of this case have, until now, been kept in a restricted archive at the Special Collections of Nottingham University. File UR43 contains a series of loose documents, mainly letters, dated from September-December 1915. Most of the letters were exchanged between Dolley and various members of the Gladish family, and the college council. The file also contains Dolley’s lengthy statement of defence to the council; this statement was, in part, a response to Kathleen’s letter of complaint to her father, which recounted the same events from her perspective. Some of the letters are scribbled over in red pen, by council members, who were clearly analysing the documents for evidence of ‘guilt’. For example, the following section of Dolley’s letter to Kathleen - dated 24 September 1915, when teacher and student were still on good terms - contains red pen marks in the margins, and the final sentence and a half are underlined:

Room 42 is very different to Room 32 and there is a most commendable old Yorkshire proverb ‘See all, hear all, say nowt’. Observance of it, especially when in company of two such individuals as the two elder girls tends to secure a quiet life. I have every confidence in Miss Kathleen-Gladish’s prudence?, but less in her patience and endurance. And yet ‘Suffer fools gladly’ is the secret of popularity. This is a most valuable tip, and it comes from an intensely unpopular individual.⁵⁵

In addition, file UR43 contains some anonymous scribbled notes written in pencil, listing particular events, or asking questions:

Timetable – What was done in half an hour –
/ Did not say anything....about Homosexuality
/ Pointed out most of the things in the manuscript
Explained them
/ Many times said things which might have been left unsaid-
/ Went to Sheffield to show sister “Salome”

Like *The Gong* magazine, then, this file is a multi-authored text. Both texts contain anonymous voices and documents which attempt to interpret real-life events through responses to Victorian literary texts. However, UR43 has not been subjected to a final editorial process, as its disordered material state indicates. It is a collection of ‘official’ documents, private letters and notes (which may nonetheless have been intended for several audiences), and re-examined documents on which the ‘editorial’ process is writ large. There are gaps in time and perspective, as many replies are missing. Together, these documents form a mosaic – rather than a straightforwardly linear – narrative of events. There is, however, an overarching ‘legalistic’ framework of Dolley’s ‘trial’ by the college council which searched for ‘truth’: many of the letters outline official procedures and charges by UCN and the Town Clerk’s department which led, finally, to a resignation from Dolley that pre-empted his dismissal.⁵⁶ Within this framework, the correspondents constructed their own version of events and thus created, as Earle says of letter-writers, ‘fictions of the self’.⁵⁷ I treat these letters, then, as texts which draw on a range of educational, literary and sexual discourses. This awareness of the letter as constructed text is embodied within the letters themselves, as claims of authorship are disputed and literary works form part of the dispute and the ‘evidence’.

In the narrative which is formed by the documents in UR43, the earliest document is the aforementioned letter from Dolley to Kathleen. This letter provides the only indication of their relationship before the complaint, and thus inevitably frames readings of the later documents. However, some of the contexts and dynamics for this web of relationships were indicated when Dolley chose to foreground Dorothy’s apparent notoriety at the college:

I saw Miss Brameld at the College on Tuesday and she said she had seen you and Mrs Gladish yesterday, and had had some conversation with you both. I didn't appear interested, for I never discuss Dorothy Gladish or any other Gladish with other people. There were plenty of attempts made to draw both Dorothy and myself into conversation about each other in the old days, and they may continue it with you when you return to UCN – especially the elder girls may attempt it with you. I repeat, often, that I showed no interest in the subject, altho I would have given much to be able to ask a few questions. I trust you gathered enough to be able to write to Dorothy and assure her that her fears were quite unfounded.

Dolley's sudden insertion of Dorothy into a letter about Kathleen's timetable was justified by a series of meetings between him, Kathleen and Nina Brameld, which served to ground his otherwise vague claims in specific encounters. The other features of this letter – Dolley's familiar, quasi-paternal relationships with the Gladish daughters and their wider family, his projection of traits and emotions on to a physically absent Dorothy, and fears about Dorothy's reputation - were also repeated and amplified in the subsequent letters.

On 8 November, Kathleen wrote to her father her only account of the objectionable knowledge which was imparted at her tutorial with Dolley:

He asked me if I knew anything of homosexuality. I said 'No', and neither did I. He then asked me if I had noticed how some people's own sex had an attraction for them, if I had seen girls who were fond of kissing one another, and men who were similarly attracted to other men.

The letter then described how Dolley continued this lesson with the example of a literary figure, Oscar Wilde:

As I had never heard of Oscar Wilde he told me that he had been sentenced to a term of imprisonment some twenty years ago for gross indecency connected with various men, and especially his relations with Lord Alfred Douglas, whom, he said, he had debauched. He informed me that a Leeds professor was at the present time being tried for similar offences. He went on to tell me about Oscar Wilde's books, his friendship with an artist Aubrey Beardsley whom he said had illustrated works for him. He asked me if I had seen Wilde's 'Salome' with the Beardsley illustrations.

In this letter, Kathleen made several assumptions which proved to be shared by Dolley, despite his vehement objections to her interpretations. She conflated the life of the author with the content of his books and, by noting the trial of the ‘Leeds professor’, hinted at the contamination of the university by such gross influences. Following the subsequent complaint by Mr Gladish (which is not present in the file), Dolley was asked to appear before the college council and to write his account of these events. This account contained more explicit views about the ways that books should be used to establish norms of gendered and sexual, as well as intellectual, knowledge:

She asked if any books on the subject existed. I replied in the affirmative.

She inquired if I had any, and, if so, could she borrow them?

I told her I took no interest in books of this description and that I had only two books even approaching such subjects.

She inquired what they were.

I replied that they were ‘Salome’, by Oscar Wilde, illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley, and Vol I No I of ‘The Gypsy’, a modern magazine.

[These are presumably the books referred to. The illustrations in the former are strongly tinged with homosexuality, but the text is perfectly innocuous. With regard to ‘The Gypsy’, the magazine circulates mainly among persons of ‘advanced’ views, and, altho it may contain nothing very distinctive to which definite exception might be taken, I do not regard it as having at all a healthy influence.]⁵⁸

Aubrey Beardsley’s illustrations for the 1894 edition of Wilde’s play added new layers of meaning to the text. He produced portraits of Salome that were both ambiguously gendered and quite different from each other, thus hinting at the performative and unstable nature of identity; and his illustrations also depicted the same-sex desire which is implicit in the ‘innocuous’ text.⁵⁹ In his statement, then, Dolley used the idea of ‘influence’ - already used by *The Gong* to describe Dorothy’s personal effect/affect on the university community - to locate a single, unhealthy meaning in a text. He thus situated himself - a twenty-eight year old professor - as a conservative parental figure who interpreted to students these ‘advanced’ texts of the aesthetic and decadent artists, and rejected their challenge to heteronormative sexuality. Instead of ‘Wilde-worship’, Dolley recommended to Kathleen the ‘official’ accounts of Wilde’s trial in *The Times* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*: ‘both of

which are devoid of salacious details and pornography. I may say that I was convinced if I did not provide her with access to some such sources of information as I did, she would begin to discover for herself access which might be more undesirable’.

However, in Kathleen’s letter, Dolley figured as an eager teacher who forced this forbidden knowledge on her, which was purveyed in the marginal spaces of the college timetable and building:

The next morning, Thursday Oct 14th, after the first two lectures in 42, Professor Dolley came to me with a large envelope as soon as Mr Mayfield had left the room. He took out Oscar Wilde’s ‘Salome’ with the Beardsley illustrations and proceeded to show me every one of the drawings, pointing out their bearings upon homosexuality in a most disgusting way...He pushed both into the envelope and gave them to me. I did not know what to do with them. I sealed the envelope and put them in my locker. I dare not tell anyone, and I was afraid that he would again raise the subject at my next lecture alone with him.

In Kathleen’s letter, the book was figured as a physical object that may be the source of contagion and must therefore be sealed and hidden away; and as part of a perverse seduction ritual which engenders shame and disgust. Kathleen repeatedly claims to be ‘afraid’ and dares not speak of the encounter. In his subsequent letter to Mr Gladish, Dolley anticipated and denied this interpretation, claiming of Kathleen’s letter that ‘it is deliberately designed to convey the impression that I have designs upon her honour’. In doing so, he clarified the seriousness of the complaint: that perverse sexuality had been imposed on Kathleen’s virginal mind and body. It was when Kathleen presented the books to her father at their Retford home that this proof of her contamination triggered his complaint against Dolley.

Dyhouse has noted that the introduction of female students into universities generated debates about the need for appropriate chaperoning in order to avoid scandal, but it was unclear whether measures should be taken for ‘protecting women from men, or men from women’.⁶⁰ Indeed, Dolley claimed that he was a victim of ‘two discreditable girls’, having encouraged liberal mixing of the sexes in the university classroom: ‘it has not been at all extraordinary for me to have a single girl student present at a lecture or tuition class’. Dolley also tried to fend off claims of corruption by reiterating that Kathleen was already in possession of this knowledge and thus could not be dishonoured by him because she was

already fallen. In his letter to Mr Gladish, he stated that ‘Kathleen knew far more about the world than either of you was aware. How she gained her knowledge is no business of mine, but she certainly had it long before July last’ and as for his books, ‘she has read others far worse and will probably do so again’. However, Dolley invoked her elder ‘ruined’ sister, Dorothy, as the probable human source of Kathleen’s knowledge.

It is curious that the first few pages of Dolley’s statement, and much of the remaining text, are dominated by discussion of Dorothy, despite the fact that she played no role in the incident. He begins by providing a detailed account of Dorothy’s trips to London in 1914-15, ostensibly to work at the British Museum on her master’s thesis (which had already been published at the time of writing). Dorothy’s scholarly identity was erased, however, when these trips were presented as covert excuses to meet her lover, John Meads: according to Dolley, ‘they stayed together as man and wife at a house of indifferent reputation near Vauxhall Bridge’. Dolley then reveals that he threatened to expose Dorothy’s affair to her parents and goes on to describe being summoned by Dorothy to a meeting in Sheffield, when

after a half-hearted attempt to brazen matters out she broke down, and made an extensive but nevertheless partial confession, not only of her misconduct with her lover, but also of other matters. She then sent a note to her parents admitting the misconduct and begging them to meet me.

He later expanded on these ‘other matters’, revealing that he informed Dorothy’s mother that ‘she had been perverted at boarding school, where she learned self-abuse and also acquired a tendency towards homo-sexualism’. This statement illuminates another of Kathleen’s complaints against Dolley, namely that ‘he then spoke of girls’ boarding schools and what he termed “self-abuse”, which he began to explain’.

Here Dolley invoked a number of linked stereotypes associated both with the educated ‘New Woman’ of the *fin-de-siecle* and with sexologists’ theories of sexual inversion. Girls’ boarding schools were increasingly seen as unnatural environments that encouraged lesbianism.⁶¹ The New Woman was associated with transgressive sexuality, especially following the Wilde trial; as a ‘free-thinking mind and dangerous body’.⁶² Neither Gladish daughter was explicitly imaged by Dolley as a mannish lesbian or sexual invert - he also remarked of Kathleen that ‘some exception had been taken to her conduct in the hall with

male students'.⁶³ Their seemingly polymorphous sexuality involving men, women and autoeroticism was emphasised in his account.

Throughout his statement and letters, Dolley continually recommended that the Gladish sisters should consult their mother and return to the patriarchal family home. Indeed, both 'girls' were ordered by their parents to return home in the wake of their respective misdemeanours, indicating that both Kathleen and Dorothy (who was now employed full-time and living independently) were indeed regarded as 'girls', or as the continuing responsibility of their parents. In Dolley's account, female-led environments are viewed as problematic, even within the family circle. He remarked that 'the two girls during the long vacation stayed together at the seaside, and also at the home of an aunt of exceedingly undesirable moral character, against whom I had already warned their mother'. Indeed, the mobility of the Gladish sisters was a recurring concern, but, most disturbingly, it was their movements into scholarly institutions - research trips to the British Museum, lectures in room 42 and boarding-school - which then contaminated the private sphere. Wilde's *Salome* travelled from room 42, to Kathleen's private locker at UCN (with its obvious sexual connotations), to her home in Retford.

Salome functions as a metaphor for Dorothy throughout the narrative of File UR43. Both were the textual creations of others, as Dorothy had no voice in this exchange. Like 'She-Who-Must-Be-Obedyed', Salome is a fictional symbol of aggressive and deathly female sexuality from the 1890s. In Wilde's text, her unrequited desire for John the Baptist leads her to demand his head on a silver platter, so that she may kiss him. Salome also disturbs familial relations, when she disobeys her stepfather, who desires and then kills her.⁶⁴ As Kathleen was warned away from Wilde's *Salome*, so Dorothy's life was presented as a cautionary tale by Dolley:

I then again urged upon her that it was her duty to her mother and to her sister alike to endeavour to keep the latter straight and truthful; I then asked point-blank whether she herself had kept straight, to which she returned only the evasive reply that she had her sister's example before her.

A phrase attributed to Kathleen - that she was 'worried about Dorothy' - recurs throughout Dolley's statement. Both Dorothy and Wilde's/Beardsley's Salome represented the

worryingly fluid, autonomous sexuality that Kathleen had to avoid in order to maintain the singular identity that Dolley wished to impose on her: to ‘keep straight’, a phrase that connotes the ‘straight and narrow’ way of pre-marital virginity and its modern meaning of (marital) heterosexuality.

Thus, Dolley’s letter to Mr Gladish, dated 13 November, characterised his daughters as duplicitous and disobedient: of Kathleen, he said ‘Deceiver as she is and has been, she will deny this’ and of Dorothy, ‘you pinned your faith for a few hours to the falsehoods of the elder girl. Of the result you do not wish to be reminded; the affair was then hushed up’. He contrasted this behaviour with the honesty which he expected from a man, identifying with Mr Gladish as a fellow *paterfamilias*: ‘I am somewhat surprised that, when your younger daughter framed such a charge against me, that you did not ask me about it at once; most men would have done so’. He also insisted on treating the sisters as a unit, claiming that their father similarly conflated his daughters’ behaviour and reduced them to it – ‘you treated the two matters as inseparable and I must naturally do the same thing’. He claimed that Kathleen’s complaint was an act of revenge for his exposure of Dorothy’s affair and thus implied that Kathleen’s letter was another fiction which had been co-authored, or solely authored, by Dorothy: it is a ‘skilfully compiled written statement, written or at least copied out, by the younger girl’. By contrast, his authored documents were presented as truthful statements of fact.

Dolley’s pre-emptive resignation indicated his understanding that neither Mr Gladish nor the college council accepted the absolute truth of his account. Indeed, Dolley’s defensive response in his statement to ‘an absurd idea’ that ‘appears to exist in the minds of Mr and Mrs Gladish that I have acted as a spy upon the actions and movements of their elder daughter’ suggest a belief shared by this reader, that Dolley was obsessed with Dorothy’s sexuality – and with her. Despite declaring that he would ‘sever all connection’ with her, he continued to write to her, ‘requesting the return of books or acknowledging such’. In a narrative where books represent persons, and the act of book-lending represents the transmission of physical and intellectual influences, the ongoing transmission of books from Dorothy to Dolley suggests her continuing ‘influence’ on him.

Conclusion

In the late Edwardian and wartime environment of Nottingham University College, students from largely provincial, commercial backgrounds were encountering ‘advanced’ metropolitan ideas and texts which were frequently interpreted for them by college staff who acted *in loco parentis*. Student publications such as *The Gong* are a valuable record of these students’ own interpretations. The college magazine allowed for ongoing debates and ‘trial’ of these topics through a figure such as Dorothy Gladish whose multiple, and frequently controversial roles made her a site of productive tension. Female students like Gladish, then, were attempting to establish identities within an academy that generated conflicting and rapidly-changing messages about the gendered boundaries of leadership, knowledge and sexuality. Indeed, the youthful Professor Dolley’s hoarding, and disavowal, of Wilde’s *Salome* and a contemporary *avant-garde* periodical, hints at his own, unknowable conflicts over these issues, as he struggled to retain his position. The now-familiar dyad of female *protegee* and possessive male teacher – triangulated by the intrusion of the student-lover Meads – was in this instance moulded by the intrusion of war. The lovers’ weekends in London symbolised a new rhythm of male absence, return and imminent death; and the fates of the central characters indicate some of the consequent post-war shifts in male and female social and sexual roles.

As Oscar Wilde died just two years after his release from prison, having endured hard labour and public censure, both the disgraced Professor Dolley, and John Meads, had died in battle by the end of 1917. Both men were married only several months before their deaths in Flanders. Gladish’s eventual marriage to Meads, on 8 January 1917, was a time-honoured way of redeeming a fallen woman. Thereafter, her academic credentials – and Meads’ death - enabled her to transcend the roles of schoolteacher and wife that most female students appeared destined for. She went on to obtain a doctorate in 1929, and she became the Principal of Bishop Otter Teacher Training College in 1936. Unlike her Victorian fictional alter egos, then, the scandal at UCN appeared to cause no damage to her reputation. She was, however, permanently marked by the association through her new married name, which served both to expose and neutralise her past. Her image as scandalous student was thereafter subsumed into her enduring identit(ies) as early modern historian, college principal – and respectable war widow - Dorothy M. Meads.

Word count (main text and endnotes): 10,698

Acknowledgments

This research was supported by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland (trust reference no. 70178).

I also wish to thank the staff from Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University of Nottingham, especially Hayley Cotterill, for their advice and assistance, and for giving me permission to publish work on restricted File UR43. Finally, this article is dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Edwards, historian of women, whose work introduced me to Dorothy M. Meads.

Notes

¹ Dorothy May Gladish (1891-1958) is better-known as Dorothy M. Meads, editor of (1930) *The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605* (London: Routledge) and Principal of Bishop Otter Teacher Training College, Chichester. For further information about her life, see Elizabeth Edwards (2000) *Women in Teacher Training Colleges, 1900-60: A Culture of Femininity* (London: Routledge) and Sarah Edwards, forthcoming entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2016).

² 'Mock Trial' (1915), *The Gong*, V.1, pp. 32-33.

³ A 'Mock Trial' on the theme of 'Burglary with violence' was held on 2 December 1911 (*The Gong*, 1912, II.2, p. 10) and another was proposed as a Union entertainment at the General Meeting of Students on 23 October 1912 (*The Gong*, 1912, II. 3). These trials were an exercise in debate, being described as 'hard work' for the participants, and a 'novel and interesting entertainment'.

⁴ Reginald Charles Francis Dolley (1887-1917): for further information about his life, see Chris Wrigley, 'Portrait of a Branch: The Historical Association and History in Nottingham before the Second World War', <https://www.history.org.uk/files/download/7580/1296124027> (consulted 26-6-16).

⁵ John Arthur Meads (1893-1917) was Secretary of the Students' Union. He obtained a BSc Honours degree in Chemistry in 1912, and had begun postgraduate research when war commenced. He joined the Officers' Training Corps at UCN, travelled to France with the 10th Sherwood Foresters in the spring of 1915 and was awarded the Military Cross in 1916. See the obituaries in *The Gong* (1918) VII. 4, p. 12 and the *Retford Times*, 26 October 1917.

⁶ University College Nottingham Calendars, 1912-13, p. 323; 1913-14, p. 352.

⁷ Dorothy M. Gladish (1915) *The Tudor Privy Council* (Retford, Gainsborough and Worksop Times). This work was favourably reviewed by A. F. Pollard (1917) in 'The Tudor Period, 1485-1603', *Annual Bulletin of Historical Literature*, 5.1, pp. 24-28; and was later cited in, for example, G. R. Elton (1974) *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government* (Cambridge University Press).

⁸ See Student Representative Council Minute Books, 1912-13.

⁹ 'Union Report and Balance Sheet', *The Gong* (1914), IV.3, p. 29.

¹⁰ Carol Dyhouse (1995) *No Distinction of Sex? Women in British Universities, 1870-1939* (London: UCL Press), pp. 3, 17.

¹¹ See Student Registers, 1911-12. The Intermediate Arts and Science diplomas were two-year general courses.

¹² E. Beckett (1928) *The University College of Nottingham* (Nottingham). The *Retford Times* obituary for Meads notes: 'When a boy, Captain Meads won a minor scholarship and after attending the Derby Municipal Secondary School he gained the Derbyshire Intermediate Scholarship. This involved his attendance at Nottingham University College, where in his first year he matriculated in the first division'.

¹³ See Sally Mitchell (1995) *The New Girl: Girls' Culture in England, 1880-1915* (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 35, 42.

¹⁴ Anna Bogen (2013) *Women's University Fiction, 1880-1945* (London: Pickering and Chatto), pp. 48-49.

- ¹⁵ For example, ‘Miss Cox’ of the ‘Mock Trial’ (Dorothy Cox) gained a BA (Hons) Philosophy (Calendar, 1914-15, p. 372); Ethel Broughton (*Gong* sub-editor) gained an MA in Modern Languages and English (Calendar, 1918-19), while editor Lilian Ladyman gained a BA (Hons) in Modern Languages (Calendar, 1919-20, p. 96).
- ¹⁶ ‘Arts v. Sciences Debate’, *The Gong* (1912), II.1, pp. 11-12.
- ¹⁷ D. G. Williams, (1964) *Three Score Years and Ten: 1893-1963. A Chronicle of Retford High School* (privately printed). Stoneygate College was founded in 1886.
- ¹⁸ Gladish’s social position may be inferred from her brief attendance at The School of St Mary, Abbots Bromley (1906-7). The School of St Anne at Abbots Bromley was founded to provide an academic education for middle-class women in 1874; in 1880, the Foundation opened the more modestly-priced School of St Mary for the daughters of professional men of limited means, and of the agricultural and commercial classes. See David Gibbs (2011) *In Search of Nathaniel Woodard: Victorian Founder of Schools* (Phillimore and Co).
- ¹⁹ Mitchell, *The New Girl*, pp. 9, 60, 27, 3, 50; Beth Rodgers (2012) ‘Competing Girlhoods: Competition, Community and Reader Contribution in The Girl’s Own Paper and The Girl’s Realm’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45. 3, pp. 277-300. See L. T. Meade, *A Girl’s Favourite* (1908).
- ²⁰ Florence S. Boos (2014) “A Holy Warfare against the Age”: Essays and Tales of the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 47.3, pp. 344-368; Patrick C. Fleming (2012) ‘William Fulford, “The Set” and the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 45.3, pp. 301-319.
- ²¹ Margaret Beetham (1996) *A Magazine of Her Own: Domesticity and Desire in the Woman’s Magazine, 1800-1914* (London: Routledge), p. 1.
- ²² Claire Brock (2015) ‘The Fitness of the Female Medical Student, 1895-1910’, in Francesca Scott, Kate Scarth and Ji Won Chung (Eds.) (2015) *Picturing Women’s Health* (London: Routledge), p. 140.
- ²³ Dyhouse, pp. 189, 238.
- ²⁴ The Union Executive of 1913-14 included four women in a team of twelve.
- ²⁵ Dyhouse 206. Gladish was nominated to attend various debates, and Miss Doris Smith was a particularly successful debater.
- ²⁶ Dyhouse, p. 33.
- ²⁷ ‘Queries’, *The Gong* (1913), III.1, p. 30.
- ²⁸ Dyhouse pp. 48, 106; see Mitchell, pp. 26, 52.
- ²⁹ ‘Students’ Meetings’, *The Gong*, (1911), I.1, pp. 58-59.
- ³⁰ A. C. Wood (1953) *A History of the University College Nottingham, 1881-1948* (Oxford), p. 65.
- ³¹ ‘Parliamentary Election’, *The Gong* (1913), III.1, p. 8.
- ³² Hilary Marland (2013) *Health and Girlhood in Britain, 1874-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- ³³ ‘Miss Heath’, *The Gong* (1913), III.3, p. 81. Philippa Fawcett, who was placed ‘above the Senior Wrangler’ in 1890, was also a ‘hockey star’ (see Mitchell, *The New Girl*, pp. 58, 108). Mitchell and Hilary Marland note that appropriate feminine boundaries were drawn around women’s sports, in, for example, the school stories of Angela Brazil.
- ³⁴ ‘Who’s Who’, *The Gong* (1918), VIII.1, p. 20.
- ³⁵ See Marland, *Health and Girlhood*, chapter one; Helen Browning, ‘Food’, *The Gong* (1917), VII.3, pp. 13-14).
- ³⁶ Miss D. Griffiths and Lilian Ladyman preceded and succeeded Brameld, respectively. In 1912-13, two out of ten editorial team members were women; from 1913-15, three/eight, then three/ten, including Brameld and Dorothy Gladish; six/ten from March 1916, including (briefly) Kathleen Gladish.
- ³⁷ Nina Brameld (1892-1953) obtained her MA in History in 1916; she was appointed as Assistant Lecturer in History at UCN that year. See ‘Interviews with those that be’, *The Gong* (1916), VI. 3, p. 17, and Wrigley.
- ³⁸ Editorial, *The Gong* (1915), V. 2, p. 5.
- ³⁹ See Bogen and Susan J. Leonardi (1989) *Dangerous by Degrees: Women at Oxford and the Somerville College Novelists* (Rutgers University Press). Contemporary novels included H. G. Wells, *Ann Veronica* (1909), Jessie Vaisey, *A College Girl* (1913).
- ⁴⁰ See Dyhouse, p. 119, on the 1911 poem about women’s hostels in the Aberystwyth student magazine, *The Dragon*.
- ⁴¹ I. D.T. ‘The Ladies of Shall-swot’ and ‘The Ladies of Shallot’ (1913), *The Gong*, III.2, pp. 49-54.

⁴² Mary Jane Corbett (2004) 'Performing Identities' in Kerry Powell (Ed.) (2004) *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre* (Cambridge University Press). While musical comedies with young heroines were popular during this period, farces were less common, although one of the best-known recent examples was Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895).

⁴³ 'Alice in Wonderland' (1914), *The Gong*, IV.1, pp. 13-15.

⁴⁴ Arthur Rackham's edition was published in 1907; a film version was directed by Cecil Hepworth and Percy Stow in 1903 and there were film and Broadway productions in 1915.

⁴⁵ Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney were both members of the WSPU and were imprisoned together for attacking Sir Edward Grey in 1905.

⁴⁶ E. H. T. H.W., 'Our Alphabet' (1915), *The Gong*, V.1, p. 28.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Rohan Amanda Maitzen (1998) *Gender, Genre and Victorian Historical Writing* (London: Routledge) for a useful summary of Victorian conceptions of (indirect) female influence, emanating from the domestic sphere (pp. 40-42).

⁴⁸ 'Mock Trial' (1915), *The Gong*, V.1, pp. 32-33.

⁴⁹ 'Union Meetings' (1914), *The Gong*, IV.3, p. 38.

⁵⁰ Bogen (pp. 150-152) notes that the crush on a female teacher could also be viewed as 'practice for real life' and marriage. Mitchell (pp. 164-66) discusses the 'continuum of erotic desire' in these relationships.

⁵¹ A 'sweet young thing' was a common phrase for an innocent young girl, who was clearly being contrasted to Gladish. See L. T. Meade, *A Sweet Girl Graduate* (1891).

⁵² For example, Havelock Ellis, *Sexual Inversion* (1897); Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897). See Beetham, pp. 116-118.

⁵³ Kathleen Mary Gladish (1896-1991) left UCN soon after the Dolley incident. She married, and emigrated to Canada, in 1923.

⁵⁴ Doncaster Archives.

⁵⁵ See C. E. P. I., 'The Model Student of Room 42: Advice To An Intending Inhabitant From One Who Has Been There', *The Gong*, (1914), IV.2, pp. 18-19. This poem was a critically humorous account of Dolley's apparently dictatorial teaching persona; in the final stanza, the 'model student' is defined as an 'animated doll' that would be 'loathed by all the coll!'

⁵⁶ See Dyhouse's account of the Violet Osborn case at Bangor University College in 1892 (pp. 103-05). Osborn was similarly implicated in accusations of indiscretion with a Professor of Philosophy, who had apparently brushed her face with some papers. She was also accused of possessing a similarly contaminated mind. The college authorities launched an investigation which cleared her, but the professor (like Dolley) resigned his post and – unlike the Nottingham case – the scandal was reported in the local and national press.

⁵⁷ Rebecca Earle (1999) 'Introduction: letters, writers and the historian', in Rebecca Earle (ed.), *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers 1600-1945* (London: Routledge), p. 2.

⁵⁸ *The Gypsy* (1915), I.1 (London: Pomegranate Press). This magazine ran for two issues in 1915-16, and was edited by Allan Odle. Contributors included Arthur Symons, Edmund Gosse and Katherine Tynan. Oscar Wilde's ideas about art – 'nothing that happens is of the slightest importance' – were quoted in the 'Foreword' (p. 5).

⁵⁹ See Lizzie Thynne (2008) "'Surely You Are Not Claiming to Be More Homosexual Than I?'" Claude Cahun and Oscar Wilde' on twentieth-century interpretations of Salome, in Joseph Bristow (Ed.) (2008) *Oscar Wilde and Modern Culture* (Athens: Ohio University Press).

⁶⁰ Dyhouse, pp. 59, 192.

⁶¹ For contemporary fictional depictions of girls' boarding-schools and homoerotic relationships, see L. T. Meade, *The Girls of Merton College* (1911), and Clemence Dane, *Regiment of Women* (1917)

⁶² Sheila Jeffreys (1985) *The Spinster and her Enemies: Feminism and Sexuality, 1880-1930* (Melbourne: Spinifex Press), p. 106.

⁶³ See my previous discussion of 'Queries' and women's occupation of space at UCN.

⁶⁴ Wilde's Salome inspired many early twentieth-century works, including operas by Richard Strauss (1905) and Antoine Mariotte (1908) and a ballet by Florent Schmitt (1907).