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Youth Movements and Ireland, 1888-1914

Brendan Power

Submitted for the degree of doctorate in philosophy to the
Department of History, Trinity College, Dublin

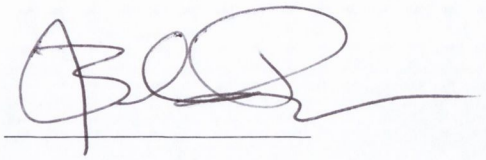
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Summary

The methodologies used in this thesis have been empirical and statistical research. Employing these methods has situated these organisations in their proper historical context and provided vital information about the function they played in Ireland. It has been found that youth movements had diverse functions in the lives of members and these functions have highlighted wider social issues in Ireland. The major findings have been that youth movements were an example of how Irish society engaged with the emergence of the concept of adolescence and catered for members within this age group. These voluntary agencies attempted to provide members with the skills and values necessary to attain employment and provided outlets for, and a supervisory role over, the leisure time of adolescents in Ireland. This leisure time was facilitated by youth movements who provided numerous activities ranging from sport, camping, and drill, to games and reading rooms. These were activities otherwise unattainable to many members and ensured members received healthy exercise and regular retreats from the urban environment in which they lived. Youth movements sought to provide answers to the social concerns of the period ranging from fears of physical deterioration to deficiencies in educational facilities. They were significant in encouraging a civic sensibility amongst members and actively encouraged contributing to their local communities and engaged in charitable work. The military aspect of youth movements demonstrates the diffusion of military sentiments amongst voluntary agencies for adolescents in Ireland and provides an insight into how conventional military values were deemed desirable in society and that this was a topic that had entered civil discourse.

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BP

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Introduction

This thesis will investigate a number of youth organisations on the basis of a number of criteria relating to religion, nationality, and gender. Two Protestant organisations will be considered, the Boys' Brigade as they were composed of a number of Protestant denominations, and the Church Lads' Brigade as a specifically Anglican group. One Catholic group, the Catholic Boys' Brigade, will be examined as it provides evidence that the Brigade model was not an exclusively Protestant phenomenon. The Boy Scouts were non-denominational and are examined on the basis of this religious diversity, and for their development of a different programme, one not related to military drill. Fianna Éireann and the Hibernian Boys' Brigade are examined on the basis that they were indigenous manifestations of the desire to group adolescents together and because they were the most overtly political and militarised of the youth movements considered. A number of female organisations are considered to demonstrate that groups for adolescents held an appeal that crossed sexual lines, while the differing programmes adopted by female organisations highlight the gender specific roles encouraged. However, investigation of female organisations is more difficult than male organisations as a result of the smaller range of sources available and the greater emphasis that was placed on adolescent males by contemporaries as males provoked a greater level of anxiety. Equally, some of the themes that have been chosen for investigation do not lend themselves to female experience in the period. For example, concerns around militarism were rarely expressed regarding females and the concerns surrounding education and its relationship to the labour market was less frequently focused on females. This reflects Alan Megahey's argument that in youth movements 'there is no doubt that boys were the prime target' and 'there was not the same concentration on the needs of girls as of boys'.[1] Similarly, David Fitzpatrick has written that 'Irish youth movements were almost exclusively masculine in composition as well as ethos'.[2] It may also be a reflection of the tendency for girls to remain in school longer than boys and their higher attendance rates.[3]

Following John Springhall, a youth movement will be defined

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[1] A. Megahey, *The Irish Protestant churches in the twentieth century* (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 58, 61.

[2] D. Fitzpatrick, 'Militarism in Ireland, 1900-1922' in T. Bartlett, K. Jeffrey, eds., *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 383.

[3] D. Fitzpatrick, '"A Share of the Honeycomb": education, emigration and Irishwomen', in M. Daly, D. Dickson, eds., *The origins of popular literacy in Ireland: language change and educational development 1700-1920* (Dublin, 1990), p. 172.

> by its willingness to admit unlimited numbers of children, adolescents, and young adults, with the aim of propagating some sort of code of living. It should also encourage the participation of its youthful members as leaders and organizers, allow for the possibility of competing for awards and badges, and provide them with a specific identity or status in the form of a uniform.[4]

Restricting the thesis to this definition allows a concerted investigation of the uniformed youth organisations founded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It excludes the paramilitary organisations formed during the period, foremost among these being the Irish Volunteers and the Ulster Volunteers, as these were composed of adults over the age of eighteen. However, consideration is given to the relationship between these organisations and the youth movements examined. It further excludes a number of voluntary religious organisations that dealt with young people in the period such as the Young Men's Christian Association, the Church of Ireland Young Men's Society, the Catholic Young Men's Society, and the Girls' Friendly Society. The youth movements founded for a religious purpose were seen as providing a bridge to adult organisations and the YMCA in Dublin commentated that the Boys' Brigade represented 'the widening of its borders to find a home for those young boys at this critical period'.[5]

However, the exclusion of other organisations dealing with young people should not obscure that youth movements were just one manifestation of attempts to cater for them by a large number of voluntary agencies, both Catholic and Protestant, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[6] Situating youth movements within the broader spectrum of philanthropic associations active in Ireland also serves to highlight the close identification of moral and social reform in many organisations.[7] It provides insights into the interaction between the voluntary and state sectors in Ireland in catering for the social problems concerning youth and highlights their understanding of their respective functions. Voluntary agencies' understanding of their role was that those with the means to contribute to the welfare of children had a social obligation to do so. This was consistent with the state's

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[4] J. Springhall, *Youth, empire and society* (London, 1977), p. 13.
[5] *Irish Times*, 28 Nov. 1896.
[6] O. Walsh, *Anglican women in Dublin: philanthropy, politics and education in the early twentieth century* (Dublin, 2005); M. Luddy, *Women and philanthropy in nineteenth-century Ireland* (Cambridge, 1995).
[7] N. Acheson, B. Harvey, J. Kearney, A. Williamson, *Two paths, one purpose: voluntary action in Ireland, north and south* (Dublin, 2004), p. 20.

understanding of its obligations which sought to encourage voluntary agencies whilst rejecting any measure of compulsion through redistributive legislation: 'charity should be voluntary; compulsion might diminish the instinct for voluntary giving'.[8] Their understanding was that society was not solely dependent on the state but on the collective action of individuals for the promotion of the good of the community. This was associated with active citizenship, civic pride, and cooperative communal duties, attributes encouraged by youth movements. This voluntary principle 'was part of the social philosophy of the Victorian era' and combined 'work, thrift, respectability and above all self-help'.[9] Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, subscribed to such an understanding and saw it as 'the duty of the élite to set standards and help their inferiors'. [10] The encouragement of self-reliance and self-improvement were essential features of youth movements in Ireland and they attempted to provide members with skills and values that would aid in securing employment and enable them to contribute to the civic life of their local communities. For example, in 1913 Sir Maurice Dockrell, the businessman and later Unionist MP, provided fifty copies of *Self-Help* by Samuel Smiles to the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade for distribution amongst members.[11]

The state placed great reliance on the philanthropic contribution of local communities and the active participation of its citizenry in civic life. It was essentially concerned with encouraging care of the community as 'the corporate life of society was seen as expressed through voluntary associations and the local community, rather than through the persona of the state'.[12] However, it would be wrong to suggest that the distinctions were definitive as there was always a 'mixed economy' of welfare and a continuous interrelationship between the state and voluntarism. [13] This complementary relationship was reflected in youth movements in Ireland where there was a degree of overlap in their functions. Youth movements attempted to supplement the provision of the state where they judged there were deficiencies and the state recognised that youth movements were significant organisations in

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[8] P. Thane, 'Non-contributory versus insurance pensions 1878-1908', in P. Thane, ed., *The origins of British social policy* (New Jersey, 1978), p. 87.
[9] M. Oppenheimer, 'Voluntary work and labour history', *Labour History*, 74 (1998), pp. 1-2; D. Fraser, *Evolution of the Welfare State* (London, 1981), p. 95.
[10] T. Jeal, *Baden-Powell* (Yale, 2001), p. 572.
[11] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Feb. 1913.
[12] K. Laybourn, *The evolution of British social policy and the welfare state, c.1800-1993* (Keele, 1995), pp. 129-31; J. Harris, 'Society and the state in twentieth century Britain', in F.M.L. Thompson, ed., *The Cambridge social history of Britain, 1750-1950*, 3, *social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 67.
[13] G. Finlayson, *Citizen, state, and social welfare in Britain, 1830-1900* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 6-12; J. Lewis, *The voluntary sector, the state and social work in Britain: the charity organisation society/family welfare association since 1869* (Aldershot, 1995), p. 3.

enhancing their function. For example, the educational function of the Boys' Brigade was emphasised by the Anglican clergyman Evelyn Charles Hodges, chaplain in the 21st Dublin company. He criticised aspects of state involvement in education arguing that it 'seemed to succeed best in providing recruits for the public house and the poorhouse'.[14] As Allen Warren has pointed out, the Scouting organisations supplemented the education provided by the state. The deficiency in 'national training for the young in citizenship' within the conventional curriculum was noted with the Boy Scouts being seen 'as the most comprehensively acceptable voluntary attempt to encourage such a development'.[15] This has also been appreciated by John R. Gillis who has argued that the desire to provide education to adolescents 'was one of the strongest motives of the extra-curricular youth-movements. What schools could not accomplish, they would attempt to achieve'.[16]

There are many sociological, psychological, and ideological contexts in which youth movements can be placed and by examining these models the extent to which groups in Ireland conformed to these international standards can be determined. The study of youth movements reveals deeper sociological trends and provides an example of associational culture in Ireland amongst adolescents.[17] The Protestant organisations allowed members to visibly demonstrate their religion and, in the case of the Boys' Brigade, provided a forum where members could coalesce as Protestants rather than along denominational lines. The Catholic Boys' Brigade served to make members more aware that they were part of a wider organisation and sought to help them understand 'that they belong not only to this or that parish or mission, but that they are also members of the Catholic Church'.[18] For the nationalist youth organisations it provided an opportunity for the inculcation of political ideas and they emerged as conscious alternatives to the British based organisations. For women, youth movements allowed them to attain positions of authority and could serve to integrate them into the public sphere and they undertook a number of charitable efforts. As will be seen, this associational culture provided an opportunity for the inculcation of values amongst adolescents.

Sociological insights have also led to a greater appreciation of how childhood was conceptualised which is significant in appreciating the emergence of youth movements in the

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[14] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 20 Nov. 1915.
[15] A. Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the Scout movement and citizen training in Great Britain, 1900-1920', *The English Historical Review*, 101 (1986), p. 398.
[16] J.R. Gillis, *Youth and history: tradition and change in European age relations, 1770-present* (London, 1974), p. 144.
[17] J. Kelly, R.V. Comerford, eds. *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010).
[18] *Plum Duff*, Oct. 1905, p. 14.

period. These have highlighted the ways in which childhood is socially constructed and emphasises the means by which lives and institutions are social productions created by humans rather than natural occurrences. This has led to an enhanced appreciation that childhood 'always relates to a particular cultural setting' and that 'ideas or concepts of childhood have not remained constant'.[19] It is important to make the conceptual distinction between a child and childhood as while the former refers to a person under a certain age the latter is a social institution and this distinction demonstrates that chronological age was not always a determinant of childhood.[20] Philippe Ariés was one of the first to conceptualise childhood in such a way and demonstrated that it was not always a fixed concept but rather socially variable and flexible and dependent on different cultures and historical periods. This relativised analysis emphasised social context as a key determinant in the construction of families rather than natural disposition and his work was a 'study of the family as an historical form rather than a fixed biological form in history'.[21] Thus childhood was not always the same in Western society and definitions of childhood differ between social classes throughout time and are a 'shifting set of ideas' and 'though biological immaturity may be natural and universal, what particular societies make of such immaturity differs throughout time and different cultures'.[22] Consequentially, it is shaped by cultural and social factors and is 'now seen less as a natural phase than as a socio-historical construct' within specific cultures throughout different times.[23]

Childhood as a conceptual framework had gone through numerous developments with differing perceptions of children and changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries 'were further stages in what was a continually shifting process'.[24] Prior to this many differing and contradictory conceptions of children were prominent. The concept of the 'evil

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[19] M. Hill, K. Tisdall, *Children and society* (London, 1997), p. 14; C. Jenks, *Childhood* (London, 2005), pp. 6-7; H. Cunningham, *The children of the poor: representations of childhood since the seventeenth century* (London, 1991), p. 7.

[20] M. Smyth, 'The concept of childhood and the experience of children in violently divided societies', in J. Dunne, J. Kelly, eds., *Childhood and its discontents: the first Seamus Heaney lectures* (Dublin, 2003), p. 160.

[21] P. Ariés, *Centuries of childhood: a social history of family life* (New York, 1962); R. Sennett, *The fall of public man* (London, 1992), p. 92. Although there have been criticisms of the approach of Ariés and Linda Pollock argued that there is a need to focus on the actuality of family relationships rather than ideas about childhood, L.A. Pollock, *Forgotten children: parent-child relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge, 1983).

[22] S.C. Aitken, *Geographies of young people: the morally contested spaces of identity* (London, 2001), p. 121; J. Walvin, *A child's world: a social history of English childhood, 1800-1914* (Harmondsworth, 1982), p. 12; H. Cunningham, *Children and childhood in western society since 1500* (London, 1995), p. 1; H. Hendrick, *Children, childhood and English society, 1880-1990* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 9-10.

[23] J. Dunne, J. Kelly, 'Introduction: changing perspectives on childhoods', in J. Dunne, J. Kelly, eds., *Childhood and its discontents: the first Seamus Heaney lectures* (Dublin, 2003), p. 5.

[24] Hendrick, *Children*, p. 9.

child' contended that corruption and immorality were primary elements in the child and these had to be shaped by asserting restraint on this intrinsic nature by the assertion of discipline and punishment.[25] This was partly derived from biblical sources and laid great stress on the doctrine of original sin and a belief that if 'left to themselves children, will turn out bad. Their wills must be broken'. Many were 'convinced that outward body language revealed inward thoughts and emotions, (and) they laid great stress on demeanour and behaviour'.[26]

In the late seventeenth century John Locke's work on education was significant in enhancing the understanding of childhood.[27] He argued there were no *a priori* categories of understanding or innate capacities and that all knowledge was derived from experience and mental processes would be developed given the appropriate environment.[28] For him the child was a blank slate awaiting inscription with reason and experience with knowledge being accumulatively acquired and the only innate characteristics were the processes through which the mind could develop reason.[29] Locke's work was a significant step in creating a more child centred society and was 'a recognition of the individuality of each child' whose inquisitiveness was to be encouraged, but the emphasis remained on developing an adult and seeing childhood as a preparatory phase to becoming an adult citizen.[30]

In the middle of the eighteenth century Jean-Jacques Rousseau reconceived the idea of childhood and developed the notion of childhood innocence arguing that children were intrinsically innocent and it was only though interaction with the world that they became corrupted and for Rousseau there was a 'pre-social moral goodness in children'.[31] He asserted the right of a child to be happy and childhood as a period to be emphasised in its own right and not as a preparatory ground for adulthood. While he was concerned with developing an adult his emphasis was upon allowing a child to develop in harmony with nature, discovering the world for themselves. He conceived a much diminished role for the imposition of moral rules arguing that adults should not be anxious to imprint their version of the world onto

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[25] A. James, C. Jenks, A. Prout, *Theorizing childhood* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 10.

[26] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, pp. 48, 50.

[27] J. Locke, *Some thoughts concerning education* (London, 1693).

[28] James, Jenks, Prout, *Theorizing*, p. 16.

[29] Aitken, *Geographies*, p. 41.

[30] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 64; Aitken, *Geographies*, p. 40.

[31] Aitken, *Geographies*, p. 31; J. Clarke, 'Histories of childhood', in D. Wyse, ed., *Childhood studies: an introduction* (Oxford, 2004), p. 8; James, Jenks, Prout, *Theorizing*, p. 13; Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 46.

children.[32] His arguments became the starting point which 'question notions of children as little adults or incomplete adults'.[33]

Further developments arouse from the rise of the Romantic Movement in the early nineteenth century that incorporated ideas from both Locke and Rousseau but produced a different emphasis that 'sought to recover for childhood a freedom of imagination which utilitarianism would have quashed'. For example, the poet William Wordsworth shared Locke's contention of the mind as a *tabula rasa* but instead of arguing for useful knowledge to produce an adult Wordsworth emphasised that it should also be open to sensations derived from nature. He also shared Rousseau's belief in a child learning from nature, but while for Rousseau this was experience, Wordsworth conceived if it was a foundation of moral virtues.[34]

The cultural variety of how childhood was conceived also found expression in Irish nationalism, spearheaded by Patrick Pearse at his school St Enda's. His interpretation demonstrates how the conception of childhood came to be seen in the context of a variety of other issues such as national identity and reflects Hugh Cunningham's point that 'childhood became inextricably implicated in the most critical public issues of the time'.[35] His rendering of childhood was partly a reaction against the dominant cultural discourses of Irish culture. A strand of Victorian perceptions of Celtic culture rendered it as feminised, emphasising its character as sensitive and emotional, which some cultural critics claimed led to emasculation. Elaine Sisson has argued that such an emphasis must be situated within Victorian social discourse which held that women could not hold political responsibility and by extension such feminisation held that Ireland was not capable of political autonomy.[36] Such a representation provoked anxieties amongst some cultural commentators reflecting the argument of Caroline Magennis and Raymond Mullen that 'the male subject, in any way feminized, is troubling to the national consciousness.[37] While for many cultural nationalists the image of the Gael was an acceptable alternative to such a model, Pearse argued for the adoption of both models. He refashioned them as complementary identities 'by mapping many of the perceived 'feminized' attributes of Celtism onto a masculine ideal of pagan

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[32] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, pp. 66-7; D. Wyse, 'Interdisciplinary perspective: the demonization of childhood', in D. Wyse, ed., *Childhood studies: an introduction* (Oxford, 2004), p. 206

[33] Aitken, *Geographies*, p. 32.

[34] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, pp. 72-3.

[35] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p. 190; See also, H. Hendrick, *Images of youth: age, class, and the male youth problem, 1880-1920* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 92-6.

[36] E. Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots: St Enda's and the cult of boyhood* (Cork, 2004), pp. 11-12.

[37] C. Magennis, R. Mullen, eds., *Irish masculinities: reflections on literature and culture* (Dublin, 2011), p. 4.

Gaelic civilisation' in an attempt at creating an educational philosophy aimed at 'remasculinizing' Irish culture.[38]

Like childhood itself masculinity is a culturally specific concept 'and norms of masculine behaviour are almost always temporally and culturally specific' and it has been noted that the homosocial environment of a single sex school such as St Enda's was essential in forming an accepted notion of masculinity. Such shifting conceptualisations of masculinity were prevalent in the period and 'emphasis on the virtues of moral earnestness and purity of feeling made way for the values of athleticism, physical prowess and moral courage' as a result of anxieties which feared the undermining of manhood. Rather than adopt contemporary models Pearse embodied contemporary virtues in a specifically Irish context taking inspiration from the bardic culture of Ireland's Gaelic past. At St Enda's such a conceptualisation was centred on children and this 'cult of boyhood…engaged the influences of Christian Celticism and Gaelic warrior pagan culture in the formation of a particular concept of Irish 'manliness''. The exemplars of the respective traditions were held as Colmcille and Cúchulainn, with the former representing Christian ideals of humility and love and the latter representing the 'the pagan ideals of strength and truth' which represents a concurrence of differing models and virtues of masculinity.[39] This emphasis reflected wider concerns in cultural nationalism in the period and John Wilson Foster has argued that 'if the Irish Literary Revival was bent on redefining Irish masculinity as much as Irish nationhood, and redefining masculinity so that nationhood could be achieved more decisively, clearly it was no time for any serious undermining or diffusion of the integrity of the Irish male'.[40] It should also be noted that Pearse's rendering of Irish childhood did not occur in a cultural vacuum and owed much to wider British conceptions and this cultural exchange highlights his ability 'to recognize *imperial* pedagogical and cultural forms and reinvent them for an Irish audience'.[41]

As a result of these intellectual developments 'some people began to see childhood not as a preparation for something else, whether adulthood or heaven, but as a stage of life to be valued in its own right'.[42] The belief in original sin decreased in significance and was replaced by a belief in childhood as a protected space and the idea of children as corrupt by

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[38] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, pp. 13-14.

[39] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, pp. 16-17, 18-19.

[40] J.W. Foster, 'Corrigibly Plural?: masculinity in life and literature', in Magennis, Mullen, *Irish masculinities*, p. 15.

[41] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, p. 9. See also J. Valente, *The myth of manliness in Irish national culture, 1880-1922* (Illinois, 2010), pp. 162-3.

[42] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 61.

nature was replaced by belief in their innocence.[43] These developments can be characterised by long term secularisation of attitudes and a more restricted role for Christianity in informing perceptions of children and by the nineteenth century 'the art of child-rearing became one of hearkening to nature, giving free rein to growth, rather than bending twigs to a desired shape'.[44] However, the heightened awareness of children and enhanced appreciation of childhood was limited in its practical manifestation as many children's lives remained characterised by hard labour. Despite these intellectual developments and differing conceptions of childhood 'there was a contradiction between a romantic idealized view of childhood rooted in eighteenth-century Enlightenment and the brutal reality of most children's lives' and 'the desire to provide a proper childhood for every citizen forced changes both in education and the public mind'.[45]

Consequently, these intellectual constructions of childhood must also be related to wider social and economic trends. As a result of social and economic disparity childhood was experienced differently and was highly dependent on class which 'meant that children of the lower classes were unlikely to enjoy what was increasingly conceived of as a proper childhood' which was a cause of much anxiety in Victorian social discourse.[46] The prevalence of child labour in the nineteenth century led to an increasingly interventionist approach on the part of central government and while legislative action outlawed the worst excesses of the juvenile labour market there was still an economic necessity in many instances for children to contribute to the household economy which was delayed by the development of compulsory schooling in the late nineteenth century.[47] The introduction of compulsory schooling was however an important development in attempting to universalise childhood across the social spectrum and was a significant factor in the way in which 'childhood was reconceptualised in British society' in the late nineteenth century.[48]

The institutionalisation of childhood as a result of compulsory schooling was a major development in this reconceptualisation of what was conceived as a 'proper' childhood and

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[43] M. Flegel, *Conceptualizing cruelty to children in nineteenth-century England: literature, representation, and the NSPCC* (Farnham, 2009), p. 55; Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 46

[44] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, pp. 61-2.

[45] Clarke, 'Histories of childhood', p. 8; J. Somerville, *The rise and fall of childhood* (London, 1982), p. 193.

[46] Flegel, *Conceptualizing*, p. 14.

[47] Jenks, *Childhood*, p. 57; Clarke, 'Histories of childhood', p. 9; H. Cunningham, *The invention of childhood* (London, 2006), p. 172; Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 80.

[48] C. Steedman, *Childhood, culture and class in Britain: Margaret McMillan, 1860-1931* (London, 1990), p. 62.

as a result schooling became the main occupation of children rather than employment.[49] Compulsory schooling and child labour laws provided a specific status to children and reinforced changing perceptions of childhood which came to be defined and accepted as a special phase, separate and different from the adult world, and economic developments allowed 'for the emergence of the idea that childhood should be a time of dependency'.[50] This shift in the late nineteenth century became widely accepted and public action reflected a growing consensus on the issue across the political establishment. Legislative developments in schooling and children's rights placed limits on the autonomy of parents and established the principle of children with rights independent of their parents and was a movement away 'from viewing them simply as miniature adults to seeing them as a distinctive group in need of particular treatment and care' and 'fixed childhood, not just as a category of experience, but also as a time-span'.[51] As a result of these changes a new concept emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which heralded a more sophisticated understanding of the development of children, the stage of adolescence.

Like childhood, adolescence varies between cultures as well as throughout historical times in one culture and is more than a life stage with certain biological components and can be seen as a culturally defined concept. While biological maturity is a universal experience what particular societies attribute to this stage of life is culturally variable.[52] The experience of adolescence, and childhood more generally, tended to be strongly segregated by social class with middle and upper class children experiencing a much more protracted adolescence than working class children as a result of educational advancement. Many public schoolboys would still be receiving formal educational training when a child from a working class family would have been in employment for many years and 'this contradiction became the basis for the campaigns to limit and eventually to abolish child labour which ran through the century'

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[49] E. Hopkins, *Childhood transformed: working-class children in nineteenth-century England* (Manchester, 1994), p. 231; P.N. Stearns, *Childhood in world history* (London, 2011), p. 72.

[50] C. Piper, 'Moral campaigns and children's welfare in the nineteenth century', in H. Hendrick, ed., *Child welfare and social policy: an essential reader* (Bristol, 2005), p. 15; Clarke, 'Histories of childhood', p. 9; D. Elkind, 'The cosmopolitan family: social adaptation to a changing world', in J. Dunne, J. Kelly, eds., *Childhood and its discontents: the first Seamus Heaney lectures* (Dublin, 2003), p. 56; Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 3.

[51] Walvin, *A child's world*, pp. 194, 198; Gillis, *Youth*, p. 156; L. Rose, *The erosion of childhood: child oppression in Britain, 1860-1918* (London, 1991), p. 216; Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 134; C. Steedman, *Strange dislocations: childhood and the idea of human interiority 1780-1930* (London, 1995), p. 7.

[52] D.C. Kimmel, I.B. Weiner, *Adolescence: a developmental transition* (New York, 1995), p. 7; J. Springhall, *Coming of age: adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin, 1986), p. 8.

and the imposition of compulsory schooling was a significant development.[53] As a result the emergence of the concept in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries should be related to the increasing segregation between children and adults as a result of the cumulative experience of restrictive child labour legislation, extended periods of formal compulsory schooling, and economic developments.[54] The emergence of the concept was also a result of an increasing sophistication of what constituted children through insights from the social sciences and in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century adolescence came to denote 'a specific splice of childhood that had never before been identified, having been subsumed in the more general category of "youth"' and between 1890 and 1914 adolescents 'came to be seen as a distinct age group with its own peculiar problems of physical and social development and adjustment'.[55]

The first substantive textbook relating to adolescence was Granville Stanley Hall's *Adolescence* and his research 'was the most effective statement of adolescence as an independent age group between childhood and adult life'.[56] In this seminal work Hall adapted Darwin's evolutionary theory to psychology and gave new weight to the theory of recapitulation which held that individual human growth stages were representative of the different stages of the development of the human race as a whole.[57] His analysis of the characteristics of adolescence emphasised the turbulence and vulnerability of the period and a lack of self-control 'was said to exemplify the very 'nature' of the age-group'. As a result 'young people found themselves imprisoned by their own physiological and psychological development since, according to their critics, they had not yet learned how to control either their bodies or their psyches' with consequent fears that if not catered for 'they posed a number of social, economic and racial threats'. The result of such analyses 'was to cast an uneasy shadow over youth as its strongest lines emphasized upheaval, instability, confusion, and plasticity, all of which necessitated sensitive handling in a carefully controlled environment' and 'appeared to confirm the importance of regulating both their environment

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[53] Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 12; Clarke, 'Histories of childhood', p. 9; Kimmel, Weiner, *Adolescence*, p. 7; Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 26.

[54] Elkind, 'The cosmopolitan family', p. 57; Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 8.

[55] Stearns, *Childhood*, p. 80; Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 186.

[56] Kimmel, Weiner, *Adolescence*, p. 7; Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 186.

[57] G.S. Hall, *Adolescence: its psychology and its relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and education* (New York, 1904); Aitken, *Geographies*, pp. 41, 127; Hendrick, *Children*, p. 13; J.R. Gillis, 'Birth of the virtual child: origins of our contradictory images of children', in J. Dunne, J. Kelly, eds., *Childhood and its discontents: the first Seamus Heaney lectures* (Dublin, 2003), p. 42; Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 30; Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 101.

and their behaviour'.[58] These insights provoked an 'oppositional structure' to the conception of children and 'the tensions between perceptions of the boy as romantic 'other' and as social deviant fixed attention on boyhood as a site of potential disaster as well as of nostalgic longing' by challenging the narrative of the child as innocent and calling into question 'the boundary between supposed childhood dependence and adult independence'.[59] For John Gillis the consequence of these developments was that increasingly the children of the rich were held to be as potentially deviant as children of the poor and delinquency was 'no longer linked with different classes but were considered the opposite faces of a certain age-group' with social and economic factors no longer perceived as the fundamental cause of delinquency.[60] John Springhall has similarly argued that Victorian and Edwardian middle classes saw juvenile delinquency as more closing related to psychological growth rather than social and economic circumstances and as a result as 'a stage of life, adolescence, had replaced the poverty of the working classes, as the perceived cause of delinquent behaviour by the 1900s'.[61] However, Harry Hendrick has disputed the contention that the concept superseded social class as a framework for understanding behaviour and has argued that social class continued to inform perceptions.[62]

These psychological insights led to increased apprehension surrounding adolescents and their perceived instability and vulnerability. Of particular concern were working class adolescents and there were anxieties surrounding permissiveness in working class households and 'a common form of laxity was to allow the children to knock about the streets till late at night'.[63] Many of these adolescents were already active in the labour market and their presence on urban streets provoked fears and anxieties about unruly behaviour and inadequate socialisation.[64] These adolescents in a state of semi-autonomy were still perceived 'as immature and in need of adult guidance and direction' and needed to be provided 'with limits, guidance and direction during their passage to adulthood'.[65] They were held to lack 'all of what had become the accepted characteristics of children. A mark of this was their

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[58] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, pp. 104, 106, 110.
[59] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, pp. 121-2; Flegel, *Conceptualizing Cruelty*, p. 147.
[60] Gillis, *Youth*, p. 172.
[61] Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 27.
[62] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 10.
[63] Rose, *The erosion of childhood*, p. 218.
[64] G. Valentine, T. Skelton, D. Chambers, 'Cool places: an introduction to youth and youth cultures', in T. Skelton, G. Valentine, eds., *Cool places: geographies of youth culture* (London, 1998), p. 4; Piper, 'Moral campaigns', p. 17.
[65] Elkind, 'The cosmopolitan family', p. 57.

independence from adults' as in many instances 'they were thrust prematurely into the world of adult responsibilities'.[66]

There are also economic factors that contributed to increased awareness of adolescents. The 'boy labour' problem concerned employment by adolescents in occupations such as messengers and errand boys that many social commentators believed led to longer term instability in their job prospects. These occupations provided higher wages than an apprenticeship but most were dismissed when they reached eighteen and this was seen as being a primary cause of large numbers of unskilled casual labourers. These anxieties also fed into wider concerns about moral and physical health issues and a belief that these jobs led to inefficiency, deterioration, and deviant behaviour and there was 'a worrying correlation between dead-enders and delinquency'.[67] Increased wages from these occupations ensured a lucrative market attractive to adolescents emerged and increased disposable income led to frequent complaints of anti-social activity and rowdiness amongst adolescents.[68] The enhanced insights offered by psychology were thus invoked to buttress anxieties surrounding the economics of boy labour and other social concerns and provided these concerns with 'intellectual respectability and coherence'.[69]

Youth movements were one manifestation of this enhanced concern with adolescents and philanthropy was central in addressing the problem of urban youth.[70] Developmental psychology's characterisation of adolescence as a period of stress and turmoil meant that adult influence 'came to be regarded as essential if the proper course of mental and physical growth was not to be impaired'.[71] These insights from the social sciences were held to be significant in dealing with adolescents and provided a reference point for many of the methods adopted by many youth movements:

> if the instincts of children at particular ages were gauged accurately then they could be controlled through play rather than be allowed to run wild. If children were allowed to develop these instincts on their own without supervision to the correct environmental provision, then the benefits of the

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[66] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 146; Rose, *The erosion of childhood*, p. 218.
[67] Springhall, *Coming of age*, pp. 84, 107-8; Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 81; Rose, *The erosion of childhood*, pp. 70, 212.
[68] Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 89; Walvin, *A child's world*, pp. 187-8.
[69] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, pp. 11, 97
[70] Cunningham, *Children and childhood*, p. 134.
[71] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 123.

> instincts would be lost to anti-social behaviour. So, for example, the instinct of adolescent boys to clubs together in street gangs (tribes) could be redirected towards team sports on the playground.[72]

Thus they were designed to cater for those at an age when many adolescents were leaving school and entering the labour force and this abrupt ending to schooling, coupled with scientific insights, raised fears that the habits and values taught such as punctuality, obedience, order, self-control, and cleanliness, would be too easily forgotten.[73] How youth movements catered for adolescents in Ireland is one of the main aims of this thesis and complements work carried out on youth movements both in Ireland and in the wider United Kingdom.

Historical investigation into the development of youth movements in Ireland is limited. The studies that have been produced dealing with the Boys' Brigade and the Boy Scouts have primarily focused on the development of the organisations with little investigation of the social context that underlay their growth.[74] Fianna Éireann's early development has been investigated by Marnie Hay and this thesis aims to complement this by highlighting the varied function that it played in the lives of members and shall place them in the wider context of other contemporary youth movements and examine their relationship with other organisations.[75]

John Springhall has produced the largest body of work dealing with youth movements in the period. His *Youth, empire and society: British youth movements, 1883-1940* remains the standard survey of the youth movements considered here with its focus firmly on the development of these organisations in Britain. He examined the social and cultural context in which youth movements emerged and emphasised the development of adolescence as a concept, coupled with the internal and external issues facing Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. His assessment is that youth movements were designed to safeguard middle class interests while making sufficient provision for the leisure of the working classes: 'fear and self-interest had as much to do with the setting up of the early youth movements as

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[72] Aitken, *Geographies*, pp. 127-8.

[73] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 123.

[74] W. R. Kelly, *Firm and deep: a history and account of the formation of the 1st Belfast (1st Irish) company, the Boys' Brigade and the subsequent formation and development of the Belfast battalion* (Belfast, n.d. [1982?]); M. Bell, *A history of scouting in Northern Ireland*, (Antrim, 1985); J. Anthony Gaughan, *Scouting in Ireland* (Dublin, 2006); A. Totten, *The tenth: a century of scouting at the 10th Belfast* (Belfast, 2009).

[75] M. Hay, 'The foundation and development of Na Fianna Éireann, 1909–16', *Irish Historical Studies*, 36 (2008).

altruism'. In relation to the Boy Scouts he argues that the intellectual climate of the early twentieth century ensured that that 'imperialism, social Darwinism, the cult of national efficiency and certain fashionable attitudes towards social reform are among the intellectual currents which all found their way into the influential Scouting ideology of the pre-1914 phase'. One of his main conclusions is that youth movements were designed to 'smooth the way for upper-working-class and lower-middle-class assimilation into the urban-industrial order of British society' whilst also appreciating the varied benefits that could be accrued by membership.[76]

Most research into youth movements has focused on the contrasting views of the initial aims of the Boy Scouts. Damian Lawlor, in his history of Fianna Éireann, has characterised Baden-Powell as a 'racist bigot...who was determined to serve the British empire by training young men to adequately staff its administration'.[77] Samuel Hynes bluntly stated that when the Boy Scouts were organised the clear motive was 'to prepare the next generation of British soldiers'.[78] In 1971 John Springhall's 'The Boy Scouts, class and militarism in relation to British youth movements, 1908-1930' argued that youth movements were 'manipulated in the interests of social-political groups led by the old and middle aged, against the absence of compulsory military service'. He sees the Boy Scouts as part of the cultural climate of Britain in the early twentieth century which 'saw a tolerance towards military leadership of the young'. For him 'the ideology under-pinning Scouting was a combination of Baden-Powell's own personalized brand of social-imperialism, an omnipresent social Darwinism and the Edwardian cult of national efficiency'. He highlighted the close links between the national Boy Scout leadership and military veterans and suggests that sustained political pressure was exerted on youth movements by the National Service League and the War Office to allow organisations 'to become vehicles for the militarization of the young and platforms for adult political "protest" against the absence of compulsory military training for boys in Britain' and that the Boy Scouts in their early years were 'more overtly political than educational'. Springhall balanced this emphasis on the political and military aims of the Boy Scouts by stressing that it would be wrong to discount 'both the grass-roots appeal of the movement and Baden-Powell's genuine desire to share the open-air life with those less fortunate in their social and family background than himself'. While he

[76] Springhall, *Youth*, pp. 14-16, 59, 121-6.
[77] D. Lawlor, *Na Fianna Éireann and the Irish Revolution* (Offaly, 2009), p. 27.
[78] S. Hynes, *The Edwardian turn of mind* (London, 1968), p. 27.

placed more weight on the political goals of youth movements he argued that 'this imbalance is the price to be paid for an attempt at readjusting historical boundaries'.[79]

Michael Rosenthal's *The character factory: Baden-Powell and the origins of the Boy Scout movement* firmly argued that the aim of the Boy Scouts was social control and encouraging military service. It developed a very valuable cultural setting for the organisation, highlighting the fears of Edwardian culture ranging from external military and industrial threats, to anxieties concerning physical deterioration and the failings highlighted by the Boer War. However, it lacks a nuanced approach as it is dependent on the theoretical aims and view of those at the top of the organisation. This focus is self-evident as 'it is primarily the theory and ideology behind the movement that interest me, not the point of view of a particular Scout enrolled in a particular patrol'. Rosenthal saw the emergence of the organisation as indicative of 'the anxieties of an imperial power at the turn of the century' with the Boy Scouts 'intended to produce efficient recruits for the empire for generations to come'. He argued that they were 'from the beginning conceived as a remedy to Britain's moral, physical, and military weakness' while acknowledging that it 'went beyond the need to prepare Britain's youth for the discipline of military service'. There is much to be praised in his analysis as it placed the organisation in its historical context, but his emphasis on the desire for social control and his insistence on the organisation being 'firmly rooted in the self-interest of the upper classes', requiring the 'complete submissiveness' of members, requires clarification.[80] Such an understanding of the organisation masks the varied function that the Boy Scouts played in the lives of members at local level and discounts the altruistic motivations of local leaders who voluntarily gave their time to leading the Boy Scouts. It further disregards the amount of autonomy granted to members at local level as well as how empowering the experience of the organisation could be for a boy. Rosenthal attempted to bolster his case in 1980 when he published what he believed to be the first form of the Boy Scout scheme that was to be implemented in 1907. Published in the Eton *College Chronicle* on the 22 December 1904 it consisted of a letter written by Baden-Powell outlining a training scheme for boys. Rosenthal argued that it highlighted the paramilitary intent of the Boy Scouts as it makes no reference to character training or good citizenship that was to be later found in the Boy Scouts with its primary focus being on military training. He argued that it reinforced his interpretation that the organisation contained 'far more militaristic features

[79] J. Springhall, 'The Boy Scouts, class and militarism in relation to British youth movements, 1908-1930', *International Review of Social History*, 16 (1971), pp. 126, 128, 136-8, 157-8.
[80] M. Rosenthal, *The character factory: Baden-Powell and the origins of the Boy Scout movement* (London, 1986), pp. 14, 3, 131, 7, 8.

than its advocates would admit' and saw it as an attempt 'to train the rising generation to be both willing and able to take up arms in defence of the Empire'.[81]

These interpretations have been significantly modified by a number of scholars who have examined discrete aspects of the organisation such as Tammy Proctor who has explored the material culture of the Scouting organisations and highlighted the complex meanings surrounding uniforms and accessories.[82] Martin Dedman has contended that many academics who have examined the Boy Scouts 'have misunderstood its character'. He emphasised the disparate views of those seeking to augment the regular army and argued that the influence of the National Service League had been overemphasised. He sees in the 'Knights and Retainers' letter highlighted by Rosenthal two 'quite separate and unconnected schemes' consisting of Baden-Powell using his ideas on military scouting in two distinct ways, one for national defence, the other for citizenship training. He analysed the range of influences on the development of the Boy Scouts based on contemporary psychological and educational theories and convincingly argued that it was Baden-Powell's failure to attribute some of his influences that heightened fears surrounding militarist objectives. He concluded that 'Scouting was an educational movement aimed at character development and citizenship training, firmly grounded in contemporary psychological theory and educational methods' that was composed of a 'complex mixture of different ingredients'.[83]

Sam Pryke has emphasised the 'nationalism' of the Boy Scouts as a means of highlighting the wide appeal that the organisation engendered amongst members. He argues that it was not 'an insidious effort to capture British youth through sugar coating a militarist core' and, like others, places the organisation in the context of fears surrounding external and internal threats. His interpretation argued that the essential appeal of the organisation was that it 'sought an interior morality, not simply a willingness to obey orders' and as a result members were 'afforded a degree of autonomy not found in rival youth organizations'.[84]

Others have adopted a biographical approach which has revealed a great deal about the formation of the Boy Scouts. Tim Jeal's *Baden-Powell* is the standard biography and provided a necessary counter balance to Rosenthal's largely critical account, described by

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[81] M. Rosenthal, 'Knights and retainers: the earliest version of Baden-Powell's Boy Scout scheme', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 15 (1980), pp. 604, 615, 607.

[82] T.M. Proctor, '(Uni)forming youth: Girl Guides and Boy Scouts in Britain, 1908-39', *History Workshop Journal*, 45 (1998), pp. 103-34. See also T.M. Proctor, 'On my honour: Guides and Scouts in interwar Britain', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 92 (2002).

[83] M. Dedman, 'Baden-Powell, militarism, and the 'invisible contributors' to the Boy Scout scheme, 1904-1920', *Twentieth Century British History*, 4 (1993), pp. 201-2, 205-7,210-13, 218, 221.

[84] S. Pryke, 'The popularity of nationalism in the early British Boy Scout movement', *Social History*, 23 (1998), pp. 310-11, 322-3.

Jeal as 'the single most vitriolic attack on Baden-Powell's character and life's work ever published'. Jeal's biographical approach, and more thorough mining of documentary material, reveals much more complex and varied motivations in the formation of the Boy Scouts. He highlights how Baden-Powell's interest in character training and the educational potential of scouting began in South Africa and argued for a greater appreciation of his benevolent motivations in forming the Boy Scouts providing a haven for boys against the social dangers they were exposed to in urban life by engaging in rurally orientated activities. His assessment of Baden-Powell was 'of a man interested more in boys becoming good citizens than soldiers' and saw the Scouts as 'more a civil than a military institution'. To this end he emphasised Baden-Powell's social consciousness and revealed a man who 'hated extremes of affluence and poverty', and saw the organisation as offering members 'freedom beyond anything most of them had ever encountered'.[85]

An alternative context for the emergence of the Boy Scouts was most fully developed by Allen Warren who disputed the influence of the National Service League, highlighting Baden-Powell's opposition to conscription, and argued that the lack of an explicit religious purpose were what fuelled the accusations of militarism. For him the Boy Scouts were a fusion of a range of ideas relating to character enhancement and civic training which incorporated three elements of citizen training; the militarist which stressed duty, honour, and obedience; the educational emphasising character development and public service; and the Christian, with denominations seeing the organisation as a means of solving their difficulties of keeping adolescents attached to religious organisations. He correctly highlighted how the development of military values was a complex undertaking and not the sole preserve of those who wanted compulsory military training.[86]

This alternative interpretation has been challenged by John Springhall who attempted to reassert the conventional understanding of the Boy Scouts and argued that there was one primary aim in organising the Boy Scouts: 'to prepare the next generation of British soldiers for war and the defence of the Empire'. He contended that Warren excluded contrary evidence and argued that Baden-Powell 'saw scout training as travelling to the same destination of greater military efficiency as cadet training but by a different route of character

[85] Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, pp. x, 409, 87-8, 365, 410, 412, 395.
[86] Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell', pp. 387-8, 381, 390, 397.

formation and training in individual citizenship' and this is reinforced by examining evidence of military ambition at grass-roots level.[87]

While much of the academic attention has focused on the Boy Scouts little has been published on the Boys' Brigade in the United Kingdom. The most comprehensive treatment has been Springhall's analysis in *Youth, empire and society* and *Sure and stedfast: a history of the Boys' Brigade, 1883 to 1983* by Springhall, Brian Fraser, and Michael Hoare. The Boys' Brigade was an innovation in terms of attracting adolescents to church related activities and their significance as a religious organisation has been appreciated by Allen Warren who wrote that it was 'the most significant development in the churches' attitudes to the young in the decades prior to 1900, providing both a new approach and a supplement to the Sunday School and Bible class and a bridge to the world of adult church membership'.[88] John Springhall argued that the Brigade provided an alternative model of religious organisation for members, contrasting it with earlier organisations who 'were almost entirely concerned with religious and moral training within the framework of traditional Christianity'.[89] The unique combination of military training and religious teaching proved an important attraction for members in Britain, and Ireland was no different in this respect. *Sure and Stedfast* sees the Boys' Brigade as a reflection of a number of trends in Victorian society, including a favourable public image of the military, the diffusion of public school ideas amongst largely working class adolescents, and concerns surrounding conditions in many industrial cities. The aim of the Brigade was to ensure boys would remain in touch with their religion when they had become too old for a Sunday school yet too young to join an adult religious organisation. To this end they provided activities such as drill and sport which interested members while also providing religious instruction. For them the Brigade was a significant agency in giving a 'status to adolescents who had never achieved it before'.[90]

The prevalent themes of academic studies highlight a number of influences that were brought to bear on youth movements in the period. The emergence of adolescence as a distinct period of growth ensured renewed focus on youth within society. The favourable image of the military led to the adoption of military structures as a means of attracting members and improving discipline. External threats centred on increasing industrial competition and the growing might of German naval expansion, coupled with anxieties

[87] J. Springhall, 'Baden-Powell and the Scout movement before 1920: citizen training or soldiers of the future?', *The English Historical Review*, 102 (1987), pp. 935-6, 939-40.
[88] Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell', p. 382.
[89] Springhall, 'The Boy Scouts, class and militarism', p. 128.
[90] J. Springhall, B. Fraser, M. Hoare, *Sure and stedfast: a history of the Boys' Brigade, 1883 to 1983* (London, 1983), pp. 19-20, 256.

surrounding the poor performance of the armed forces in the Boer War, heightened apprehension surrounding the ability of Britain to retain its vast empire. Internal threats surrounding the growth of organised Labour and fears surrounding physical deterioration in urban centres led to a growing appreciation that working class leisure had to be catered for to develop increased physical health.

This thesis aims to complement these works by providing an Irish perspective on the development of youth movements and argues that they were important voluntary agencies in catering for Irish adolescents. One of the aims is to ascertain whether the same concerns that were identified in Britain found an outlet in Irish organisations and to examine whether they fulfilled similar functions in both countries. I shall assess their role by analysing the military, social, civic, educational, religious, moral, and health functions that they played in Ireland and shall stress the need to place these organisations within their proper historical and social context and emphasise the broad function of their programmes. I shall argue that they gained a wide appeal primarily because they were seen as offering a solution to widely held fears and anxieties that were being highlighted by contemporaries.

The regional basis for this study highlights issues that can only be analysed most fully by an examination of their activities at a local level and reveals substantial variety in their motivations and activities. Adopting a regional framework to examine youth movements also provides insights into youth movements in a United Kingdom context. It attempts to focus on the experience of rank and file members, both adolescents and leaders, and not the policy making aspects of central organisations. This is beneficial as it demonstrates the level of flexibility that leaders in a local capacity had from the central leadership and provides a more complex understanding of the function they played. However, as a result of much of the source material the voice of the adolescent member is in most instances filtered through the perspectives of adult leaders and thus the actual viewpoint of the member is more difficult to discern. The tendency of adult members may have been to affirm the beneficial effects of their programmes, and their success in imbuing the values they prided, rendering precision in analysing whether these values were accepted by the members problematic. Despite this, it is also probable that the perspectives of adult leaders at a local level had a greater appreciation of their members as a result of meeting them on a weekly basis than the views of leaders at a national level who would have had little contact with rank and file adolescent members. As a result it is possible to gain an insight into members by distinguishing between the aims of leaders and the difficulties that they encountered in practically enacting these ambitions. This demonstrates that many of the values youth organisations wished to impart were challenged

by adolescent members whose compliance cannot be presumed. The selection of uniformed youth movements as a subject of study also serves to highlight broader issues in Irish society. This is not only a reflection of the variety of activities in which youth movements were engaged but also how they engaged with issues of wider public concern. Examination of the military aspects of youth movements provide insights into the place of military values and structures within Irish society and demonstrates the range of motivations associated with the adoption of military principles and provides evidence that in Ireland, as in Britain, it embraced a 'whole range of hopes and intentions from the narrowly military to the explicitly spiritual'.[91]

The broader social context provides significant insights into Irish society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and underscores the commonality of experience between youth movements in Britain and Ireland with similar concerns given expression in both countries. The activities youth movements engaged in were a response to contemporary social and cultural trends and their examination provides an opportunity to highlight these issues and their manifestation in Ireland. The developing understanding of adolescence and the need to provide moral guidance and recreational activities for those in this age group was one of the primary motivations of youth movements in Ireland. They provided a forum for members where they could engage in a range of activities in a safe environment under proper supervision. Fears surrounding the youth of Ireland wandering the streets because they had no place to congregate were prevalent in urban centres. Youth movements were responsive to such concerns and actively promoted activities such as reading rooms as an alternative to loitering on street corners. Here they provided games and books to entertain and educate members. This anxiety surrounding urban centres was given an added impetus as a result of fears surrounding physical deterioration and in order to combat this youth movements discouraged a range of unhealthy practices amongst members and engaged in a range of physical activities whose motivation was increased physical health. Sport was one of the primary means in the Boys' Brigade to promote physical activity amongst members. However, the study of sport in the Brigade reveals deeper motivations centred on the inculcation of values. It provided an opportunity for the inculcation of standards traditionally associated with the British public school system and youth movements were a significant outlet for diffusion of these ideals in Ireland. As will be seen sport played a multifaceted function capable of encapsulating a range of ambitions. The educational function of youth

[91] A. Warren, 'Baden-Powell: a final comment', *The English Historical Review*, 102 (1987), p. 948.

movements in Ireland provides insights into the educational curriculum in Ireland with youth movements encouraging skills and values they believed were neglected aspects of Irish education. This serves to highlight the interaction between state and voluntary agencies in Ireland in providing educational training. The deficiencies in the provision of technical education were supplemented by youth movements who encouraged knowledge of manual skills and in some cases acted as adolescent labour exchanges. They actively engaged with local employers, ascertaining the skill sets that they required, and provided practical assistance to members in gaining employment. The examination of British based youth movements in Ireland also provides a context for the emergence of nationalist organisations which sought to cater for adolescents in Ireland and highlights the general commonality of experience between all of these organisations, both Catholic and Protestant. These commonalities demonstrate that fears surrounding issues such as physical deterioration, educational deficiencies, and the conditions associated with urban life, were not exclusive to any religious denomination or political ideology.

This thesis adopts a thematic analysis as a mechanism to interrogate the historical significance of these groups rather than providing a chronological narrative. Part I examines the broader function of youth movements in Irish society and emphasises the social context in which they emerged. I examine the social conditions that existed in the period and argue that the development of youth movements in Ireland mirrored the social concerns of the population relating to issues such as physical degeneration and the welfare of the young. I examine the civic and religious functions that they fulfilled; their role in educating young boys of the dangers of immoral activities; how they attempted to provide members with the skills necessary to gain employment, and their role in encouraging sport and physical culture. I also analyse relations between some of these organisations and examine both the conflicts and commonalities that existed demonstrating the extent to which they influenced one another and the extent to which they were reactions against one another. Part II will examine the military aspects of these organisations and investigates to what extent the accusations of militarism levelled at these organisations were justified. The aim is to provide a more nuanced appreciation of the military values espoused by these organisations by arguing that they were encouraged in so far as they were applicable to civilian life. Also considered is the military context in which they emerged; the military training carried out in some organisations; how they modelled themselves upon military units, as well as the relationship between some of these youth movements with the armed forces and paramilitary organisations.

1 A Survey of Youth Movements

1.1 Boys' Brigade

The Boys' Brigade was a Protestant organisation and one of the largest youth movements in pre-war Britain and Ireland open to boys between the ages of 12-17. It was founded in the Free Church Mission Hall, a Sunday school in Glasgow, on 4 October 1883 by William Smith. Within two years of its foundation there were fifteen companies active in Scotland, twelve in Glasgow and three in Edinburgh. That year the organisation marked its first development outside Scotland with the formation of companies in England at Manchester and Liverpool. It was formed in Wales in 1887, firstly at Newport and then in Cardiff and Swansea. The organisation reached Ireland in 1888 when the 1st company was formed in Charlotte street in Belfast in connection with the church of St Mary Magdalene and by 1893 there were eighteen companies in the Belfast battalion with branches of the organisation in ten towns around Ulster. The organisation was formed in Dublin in 1891 in connection with St Matthias's church and by 1893 there were twenty-one companies active in the city. It quickly spread beyond the British Isles and by 1903 there were 802 registered companies and 36,000 members outside the United Kingdom.[1] The declared aim was 'the advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys, and the promotion of habits of obedience, reverence, self-respect, and all that conduces to Christian manliness'. William Smith was the son of a retired army officer and became a member of the Young Men's Christian Association. He was a Sunday school teacher at the Free College Church, while also being a volunteer soldier in the 1st Lanarkshire Rifles. The combination of these experiences was to prove crucial in his development of the Boys' Brigade method.[2] This included a combination of military drill and religious practice combined with sport and athletic activities.

The organisation in Ireland received its first impetus from William McVicker, secretary of the Mission Sunday School in Charlotte street. He had gone to meet William Smith in Scotland with a view to inaugurating the movement in Ireland. He had been impressed by the ideals of the organisation and was keen to develop something along similar lines in Belfast. An application for enrolment was submitted on the 29 October 1888 but was rejected by city magistrates who advised McVicker not to pursue the matter. McVicker and the brigade executive, committed to the idea, tried to get a definite statement on the matter

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[1] Springhall, et. al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 72.
[2] P. Wilkinson, 'English youth movements, 1908-30', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4 (1969), p. 5.

from Dublin Castle but to no avail.[3] The city magistrates feared that the formation of a religious youth movement, which adopted military drill and the use of rifles as its methods, was a hazardous undertaking in Belfast and had the potential to provoke sectarian violence. The lord lieutenant, the marquess of Londonderry, was pursued on the matter and after much wrangling acceded to their request and granted permission with the first company being enrolled on the 31 December 1888. The 1st Belfast (and first Irish) company was formed with forty boys in connection with the parish church of St Mary Magdalene, Donegall Pass with McVicker becoming captain, a position he held for more than twenty-five years.[4] The first Boys' Brigade inspection to be held in Ireland was by this company on 31 May 1889 and took place in the exhibition hall of Belfast botanic gardens with William Smith himself being present for the inspection as well as Charles C. Connor, the mayor of Belfast. By 1910 there were forty companies in the battalion and in 1892 the 8th Belfast company was the fourth largest in all of the United Kingdom.[5]

Rev. William Monk Gibbon, who was at the time the Church of Ireland curate at St Matthias' in Dublin, visited Rev. R.H.S. Cooper, a Church of Ireland minister (later president of the Belfast battalion), and was impressed by the growth of the Boys' Brigade in Belfast. He became convinced that such an organisation was needed in Dublin and returned to tell his rector, Canon (later bishop) Frederick Richards Wynne, who approved of the idea.[6] The Dublin battalion council was formed at a meeting held at St Matthias's schoolhouse on 31 March 1892.[7] An analysis of the size of battalions in the United Kingdom reveals that in 1900 the Dublin battalion was the fourth largest in the United Kingdom with 1132 boys, only being smaller than London, Manchester, and the stronghold of Glasgow. Belfast was the ninth largest with 740 boys.[8]

Progress was slow and subject to many difficulties as in Ireland 'they had to encounter exceptional difficulties on account of the disturbed political state of the country'.[9] James Carfrae Alston, president of the Boys' Brigade, argued at the Brigade council in London in 1891 that 'the Boys' Brigade in Ireland has not yet gone beyond the experimental stage' and the numbers were 'so small as to scarcely make the movement known throughout

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[3] Kelly, *Firm and deep*, p. 4.
[4] Boys' Brigade, 1st Omagh company, *1st Omagh Boys' Brigade: 1892-1992 centenary* (Tyrone, 1992), p. 3; Kelly, *Firm and deep,* p. 3.
[5] Kelly, *Firm and deep*, pp. 15, 22; *Irish Times*, 18 May 1912; *Belfast News-Letter*, 27 Apr. 1892.
[6] Kelly, *Firm and deep*, p. 8.
[7] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 31 Mar. 1892, Boys' Brigade Archive, Dublin (BBAD), Box 9.
[8] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Jan. 1900.
[9] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 1, Oct. 1893, p. 10.

the county'. Even amongst those that had been brought into contact with the organisation 'there exist wonderfully erroneous ideas as to what its object and methods really are; and this in spite of repeated explanation and carful statements in public and in private'. Despite this he argued that 'there seems, however, to be growing by degrees a feeling, especially among the Protestant Churches of the North of Ireland, that there *is* something in The Boys' Brigade, and that, if it can be managed, it *is* a good thing to have at work'. He identified two issues which prevented progress being made. Firstly, there was a prevalent belief that the organisation of a successful company was a difficult and arduous task with the results not being as successful in proportion to the work involved in other branches of Christian work. Secondly, there was caution surrounding identification with the brigade as 'through the action of injudicious or foolish' officers the work was 'discredited in the eyes of staid and sensible men, who, in consequence, feel shy of identifying themselves with a work which otherwise commends itself to them'. He concluded that despite this 'the prospects of the movement in Ireland are, I think, promising'.[10] Donald M. McFarlan has noted that 'the more prosperous Belfast citizens were cautious. They did not supply the powerful leadership which Glasgow city merchants and churchmen gave so enthusiastically and where almost every B.B. Captain was also an Officer in the Volunteers'.[11] Boys' Brigade membership between 1889 and 1918 is outlined below in Table 1.

[10] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 2, Dec. 1891, pp. 29-30.
[11] D.M. McFarlan, *First for boys: the story of the Boys' Brigade, 1883-1983* (Glasgow, 1982), p. 35.

Table 1. Boys' Brigade U.K. membership, 1889-1916.[12]

	Ireland		Total England, Wales and Scotland excluding Ireland	
	Companies	Boys	Companies	Boys
1889	1	44	317	14, 328
1890	12	620	382	16,132
1891	23	982	395	16,277
1892	33	1,461	457	19,541
1893	60	2,531	534	23,472
1894	64	2,579	610	26,270
1895	71	3,053	671	29,326
1896	64	2,629	699	30,233
1897	60	2,361	711	30,762
1898	59	2,528	727	31,681
1899	66	2,637	746	32,511
1916	108	4,022	1,238	51,579
1918	88	3,096	990	43,490

The social composition of the leadership can be examined by an analysis of the occupations of the officers of one of the battalions in Ireland, the Dublin battalion, and one company outside the main centres of Boys' Brigade activity, the 1st Carlow company. An examination of the occupations show that in Dublin it was composed predominantly of higher professionals followed by lower middle class and upper working class workers, and in Carlow higher professionals followed by lower middle class workers.

[12] Sources: Calculated from statistics compiled by Miss M.D. Ellis, senior records assistant, Boys' Brigade headquarters, London. From 1900 to 1915 only total U.K. figures are available, cited in Springhall, *Youth*, p. 27. Membership for 1916 and 1918 calculated from figures cited in *Sure and stedfast*, p. 258.

Table 2. Occupations of Officers of the Dublin Battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1891-1918 (Sample: 472).[13]

	No.	%
Higher Professional	166	35
Lower Professional	15	3
Employers and Proprietors	12	3
Administrators and Managers	32	7
Clerical Workers	155	33
Foremen, Supervisors, Inspectors	2	0.4
Skilled Manual Workers	57	12
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	28	6
Unskilled Manual Workers	5	1

Table 3. Occupations of Officers of the 1st Carlow Company of the Boys' Brigade, 1903-1912 (Sample: 15).[14]

	No.	%
Higher Professional	9	60
Lower Professional	0	0
Employers and Proprietors	0	0
Administrators and Managers	1	7
Clerical Workers	5	33
Foremen, Supervisors, Inspectors	0	0
Skilled Manual Workers	0	0
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	0	0
Unskilled Manual Workers	0	0

The social composition of the rank and file of the organisation can be determined by an analysis of the occupations of the head of the household in which the boys lived. Tables four and five show that in Dublin members came mainly from families of upper working class workers while in Carlow they came from lower and upper working class families.

[13] Sources: *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, 1891-1918; *Irish Times*, 1891-1918; *Freeman's Journal*, 1891-1918; *Irish Independent*, 1905-1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1897-1918; National Library of Ireland (NLI), FitzMaurice Papers; *Thom's Directory*, 1891-1918; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 1898-1918, BBAD, Box 10; Annual reports of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1908-1912, BBAD, Box 11; Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1892-1918, BBAD, Box 9; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion athletic sports programmes, 1897-1919, BBAD, Box 11; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion register, BBAD; Minute book of the bands committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1896-7, BBAD, Box 10; Census Records 1901 and 1911. For occupational classifications see G. Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain, 1906-79* (London, 1980).

[14] Sources: *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* 1904-1912; NLI, FitzMaurice Papers; Census returns 1901 and 1911. For occupational classifications see Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain.*

Table 4. Head of Household's Occupation of NCOs and Privates of the Dublin Battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1891-1918 (Sample: 664).[15]

	No.	%
Higher Professional	44	7
Lower Professional	35	5
Employers and Proprietors	49	7
Administrators and Managers	87	13
Clerical Workers	92	14
Foremen, Supervisors, Inspectors	18	3
Skilled Manual Workers	233	35
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	83	13
Unskilled Manual Workers	23	3

Table 5. Head of Household's Occupation of NCOs and Privates of the 1st Carlow of the Company Boys' Brigade 1904-1912 (Sample: 58).[16]

	No.	%
Higher Professional	2	3
Lower Professional	1	2
Employers and Proprietors	6	10
Administrators and Managers	9	16
Clerical Workers	3	5
Foremen, Supervisors, Inspectors	0	0
Skilled Manual Workers	11	19
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	18	31
Unskilled Manual Workers	8	14

1.2 Church Lads' Brigade

There was another religious brigade inspired by the Boys' Brigade active in Ireland. The Church Lads' Brigade was an exclusively Anglican organisation founded by Walter M. Gee in 1891, partly as a result of a disagreement over the undenominational structure of the Boys'

[15] Sources: *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1897-1918; *Irish Times*, 1891-1918; *Thom's Directory*, 1891-1918; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion employment register, BBAD, Box 10; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion register, BBAD; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion, November 1915, BBAD; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion athletic sports programmes 1897-1919, BBAD, Box 11; Census records 1901 and 1911. Twenty-six boys whose mother was listed as head of household and listed no occupation on their census returns have been omitted from the analysis.

[16] Sources: NLI, FitzMaurice Papers; Census returns 1901 and 1911. Five boys whose mother was listed as head of household and listed no occupation on their census returns have been omitted from the analysis.

Brigade. Gee is reported as saying in Dublin that the true work which the brigade system aimed at accomplishing was a spiritual work and that 'the real object of a church company was, therefore, to give Church teaching and it seemed a great objection to the Boys' Brigade that owing to its undenominational nature no help could be given in this most important respect'. In the Church Lads' Brigade the life of the organisation 'was bound up in the very life of the Church, and the unity between its members was the unity of those who belonged to the same communion'. Gee stated that he had approached William Smith with a view to organising a separate Anglican section of the Boys' Brigade but the idea was rejected by Smith. Smith later stated that he had only met Gee briefly on one occasion after the Church Lads' Brigade had already been formed. He had been in correspondence with Gee and informed him that he would put the idea to the executive committee of the Boys' Brigade but before this was considered Gee had formed the Church Lads' Brigade. Smith wrote that Gee was wrong in his assertion that he would not agree to a church branch of the Boys' Brigade as it was ruled by the executive, in the name of the brigade council, that the executive alone could come to such a decision and argued that any other account was 'manifestly absurd'. John William Morgan, a twenty-seven year old Church of Ireland book-keeper from the 3rd Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade, pointed out that it was at the discretion of each individual company as to the religious instruction imparted stating that 'apparently Mr Gee thinks that a Church Company of the Boys' Brigade is not at liberty to teach distinctly church doctrines'. Every company was attached to a definite religious organisation and a minister was free to give the boys in his company whatever kind of religious instruction he thought fit. Morgan believed that 'a Church company of the Boys' Brigade is quite as closely connected with the church as a company of the Church Lads' Brigade'. That the Boys' Brigade was flexible in the religious instruction that members received is borne out by an order from the Boys' Brigade headquarters executive who ruled that that every company was at liberty to provide instruction on church teaching. The memorandum was issued on the 25 September 1893 and stated that 'when companies not having the same ecclesiastical connections are associated together, those responsible for, or in charge of, each company must exercise their own judgement as to what is the proper course of action when the companies are invited to unite in religious service'.[17]

H.C. Browne, a thirty-five year old Church of Ireland curate of St Stephen's parish and honorary secretary of the Dublin Church Lads' Brigade, believed that any church work

[17] *Irish Times*, 30 Oct. 1896, 31 Oct. 1896, 6 Nov. 1896.

that was done in the Boys' Brigade was extraneous to the organisation itself, arguing that the organisation was spiritually defective as it did not ask members upon joining whether or not they were baptised or confirmed.[18] The Boys' Brigade president, James Carfrae Alston, addressing the brigade council in 1891, rejected a denominational structure for the Boys' Brigade arguing that 'in an unsectarian and broadly based organisation like the Boys' Brigade there is no call to lay any stress on denominational strength'. He did accept that there were misapprehensions, with the Brigade 'being deemed a Scottish, or perchance a Nonconformist, institution' but he asserted that 'its scope was never thus limited, either geographically or ecclesiastically'.[19] Despite their differences relations seem to have been cordial between the two brigades and William McVicker commented in 1902 that 'there is not the slightest jealousy or friction'.[20] In 1912 Rev. R.H.S. Cooper, president of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, even accepted the chaplaincy of the Church Lads' Brigade company in Lisburn.[21]

The formation of the Church Lads' Brigade was seen as a sectarian move but Gee argued that if a boy moved to a place where a non-conformist church operated, his zeal for brigade work may have caused him to join the local Boys' Brigade but in doing so he would be lost to the Anglican Church.[22] William Smith looked upon the formation of the Church Lads' Brigade as needless stating that, 'I have never looked upon the formation of the C.L.B. as other than an entirely unnecessary departure'. The Church Lads' Brigade lacked the support of many influential churchmen, with the archbishop of Canterbury even becoming patron of the Boys' Brigade. The Church Lads' Brigade did not prove to be an organisation which attracted all Anglican boys and William Smith argued that 'scarcely a week passes in which we do not enrol Church of England companies in the Boy's Brigade'.[23] In Ireland the organisation was founded in Dublin in 1893 but progress was slow and by 1901 they had eleven companies enrolled which fell to nine in 1902, six in 1903, three in 1905, with no companies existing in 1909.[24]

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[18] *Irish Times*, 3 Nov. 1896.
[19] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 2, Dec. 1891, p. 28.
[20] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/6/2.
[21] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 9 Feb. 1912, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 24 Apr. 1912.
[22] *Irish Times*, 30 Oct. 1896.
[23] Springhall, *Youth*, p. 39; *Irish Times*, 6 Nov. 1896.
[24] J. Conn, 'The Dublin battalion of the Church Lads' Brigade', *The Irish Sword*, 25 (2007), pp. 71-3. There was also the much smaller Jewish Lads' Brigade, which was formed in Ireland in 1907 but collapsed before World War I, See *Irish Times*, 27 Mar. 1908; Conn, 'Dublin battalion of the Church Lads' Brigade', p. 72

1.3 Catholic Boys' Brigade

The conventional account of the Catholic Boys' Brigade is that it was founded in London in September 1896 at a club for boys in Bermondsey, the Docklands Students' Institute, by the local catholic curate, Fr Felix Segesser, as a means of 'stemming the great tide of leakage from the Church' and its formation was 'not without some ignorant opposition'.[25] The Catholic Boys' Brigade in Dublin was founded by a Dublin priest, Fr Beneventus, with their headquarters in Church street, having moved there from Smithfield due to the increasing number of boys becoming members. In 1896 they held their first meeting to publicly call for funds for the organisation.[26] Contrary to the conventional account of the organisation, the Brigade was operating in Dublin as early as 1894, predating the organisation founded in London by two years.[27]

In the Catholic Boys' Brigade there was the same mixture of religious teaching and military training that existed in both the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade. Like other youth organisations there were physical exercises, ambulance classes, sports, and camping. In time a red and green uniform was adopted by the organisation, symbolising the relationship between Ireland and England. It fulfilled a similar role to that which the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade performed for the Protestant religious community, and it was a means of keeping adolescents close to the Church and safeguarding their morals and faith after they left school but before they could join a senior organisation such as the Catholic Young Men's Society and it 'proved most useful and successful in training Dublin boys to be both good Catholics and good Irishmen'.[28] The ambition of the Brigade was 'to give the lads an opportunity of mixing with each other, of gaining friends amongst their own Catholic companions'.[29]

The objects of the Brigade were 'to crush vice and evil habits amongst boys, to make them religious, to promote their moral, physical and temporal well-being, and to give them habits of strict sobriety' and 'to instruct them thoroughly in the Christian Doctrine; to prepare them for the worthy reception of the Sacraments; to give them habits of obedience, discipline, and self-respect; reverence and love for ecclesiastical authority and our holy religion'. It was

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[25] *The Universe*, 4 June 1909, p. 11, cited in Springhall, *Youth*, p. 43; *Catholic Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 1, June 1910, p.7.
[26] *Irish Times*, 27 Apr. 1896.
[27] *Irish Times*, 17 Nov. 1894.
[28] *Irish Independent*, 14 June 1915.
[29] *Plum Duff*, Oct. 1905, p. 14.

open to boys between the ages of ten and seventeen.[30] The aim of the Catholic Boys' Brigade was 'to have hundreds of our young population away from doubtful companionship, to have the too often uncared-for child removed from immoral surroundings (and) to hold out enticements to the already misguided youth'.[31] In 1896 they had 781 members on their roll and by 1907 the total register in Ireland was 6,400 boys.[32]

1.4 Boy Scouts

The Boy Scouts were founded in 1908 by Robert Baden-Powell. He had been a distinguished officer in the British army, most famous for his defence of Maefking during the Boer War. While he was on leave in Kashmir he wrote a new army training manual, *Aids to scouting for N.C.O.s and Men*, which was published in 1899. It provided advice on methods of deduction and observation designed to improve judgment and provide new sources of military intelligence. Despite the niche market that it was aimed at, he was surprised to discover on his return to Britain that the manual was widely used by officers of the Boys' Brigade. In June 1906 *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* published a draft of Baden-Powell's scheme for boys, suggesting tests for proficiency in open-air observation and camping and launched a scout badge scheme, awarding the fleur-de-lys badge (which later became the Scout movement's own badge) to those who successfully completed the tests. Baden-Powell had a long association with the Boys' Brigade and had become a vice-president of the organisation in 1902.[33] He insisted that it was not his intention to form a new organisation, stating that 'the Boy Scout Movement was hit upon more or less by accident and so none of us claim any special authority for dealing with it'.[34] The organisation made rapid gains in terms of membership which in 1909 was 51,467, in 1910 100,298, and by 1914 a little under 150,000.[35]

The Boy Scouts were formed in Ireland in 1908, the same year as the parent organisation. The earliest troops in the country were founded in Dublin, Bray and Greystones, in Co. Wicklow, Dundalk, Co. Louth and in Belfast. In Dublin the inauguration of the

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[30] *Irish Times*, 14 June 1915; *Freeman's Journal*, 29 Nov. 1909; *Irish Independent*, 27 May 1907.
[31] *Freeman's Journal*, 17 Apr. 1899.
[32] *Irish Times*, 27 Apr. 1896; *Irish Independent*, 28 May 1906, 27 May 1907; *Irish Times*, 27 May 1907.
[33] Wilkinson, 'English youth movements', pp. 8, 12. It has been argued that this was not the first draft of the scheme, See, Rosenthal, 'Knights and retainers', pp. 603-17; Cf. Dedman, 'Baden-Powell, militarism, and the 'invisible contributors' to the Boy Scout scheme', pp. 203-7.
[34] *Leitrim Observer*, 11 Apr. 1914.
[35] Wilkinson, 'English youth movements', p. 14; Pryke, 'The popularity of nationalism', p. 310.

organisation was due to a boy, A. Allen, who had become interested in what was being done in Britain and wrote to Baden-Powell. He advised him to form a patrol and to apply to the local contingent of the Legion of Frontiersmen for a scoutmaster. R.P. Fortune, who was the 'leading spirit' of the Legion in Dublin and a former merchant seaman, undertook the work and on 15 February 1908 he formed the 1st City of Dublin troop, the first troop formed in Ireland.[36] The Legion of Frontiersmen was founded in 1905 by Roger Pocock and was designed to reinforce the defensive capability of the British empire. Pocock had a similar outlook to Baden-Powell in his belief that military drill did not tend to produce leaders and gave little scope of individual expression. For Pocock 'men were useful in war not by drill but by competition in initiative'.[37]

The growth of the Boy Scouts necessitated the formation of a local controlling body and in accordance with instructions from Boy Scout headquarters a central committee was formed with Charles Denham, a twenty-four year old Presbyterian medical student, acting as secretary. Dublin city was divided into territorial districts and the committee consisted of scoutmasters representing these districts which were four in number-north and south city, and north and south county. The scheme was prompted by the suggestion of Colonel Ulick de Burgh, who acted as the representative of the chief scout, Baden-Powell. The organisation quickly extended beyond its Dublin base and formed in towns in Leinster when it was found advisable to form a council for the whole province. The meeting to form the council was held at provost's house in Trinity College and a Scout council was elected for Leinster with Provost Anthony Traill becoming chairman and R.P. Fortune becoming treasurer. It proved difficult to attract people who could dedicate sufficient time to form an executive committee to undertake the active administration of Leinster and it was decided that the central council should undertake the work.[38] In 1912 a resolution was adopted 'expressing the desire to advance the movement in Ireland amongst all classes and denominations'. It was requested that the Scout commissioner for Ireland, Lord Meath, and the three commissioners for the organised provinces of Ireland, joined by the earl of Fingall and three catholic 'gentlemen of influence', form a provisional committee. The three provincial commissioners were the earl of Bandon for Munster, Viscount Powerscourt for Leinster and Viscount Massareene and Ferrard for Ulster. This committee was to prepare a list of representative Catholic and

[36] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 Sept. 1912, 31 Dec. 1910, 15 Feb. 1913.
[37] *Irish Times*, 22 Jan. 1907.
[38] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.

Protestant men interested in the movement who were willing to form a Scout council for the whole of Ireland.[39]

However, there was opposition to the creation of an Irish Boy Scouts Association and greater centralisation. In 1912 the Belfast association of the Boy Scouts considered a series of resolutions which were to be proposed at a meeting of the leadership of the Boy Scouts in Ireland to be held Dublin which aimed to form the association. It was unanimously agreed by members that the chairman, Councillor R.J. McMordie, lord mayor of Belfast, and the secretary Alister Fraser, draft a letter in opposition. Baden-Powell wrote in 1915 that he was 'quite confident that if the right steps are taken the movement will now go ahead well in Ireland and will be a most valuable institution for the country'. He agreed with the Belfast Association and wrote that, 'I do not think that a central executive body is feasible for Ireland. The most that seems possible is for each Province to administer itself'.[40] Similarly, Alfred Smythe, a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and Boy Scout commissioner for Dublin city, wrote that while in Dublin 'the associations work harmoniously together in the common cause' there was little desire for greater integration. He wrote that 'it has been found wiser to keep them distinct, as better results can thereby be obtained; while a little wholesome rivalry proves a necessary and beneficial stimulant to the Movement generally'.[41]

Dermot James has noted that the early years in Dublin were characterised by confusion which was 'compounded by the fact that there were up to five different Associations in the city and county, a situation which was not regularised until eight years later, in 1916'.[42] In February, 1909, when the Dublin committee was formed, the number of scouts enrolled within its area was 800 which had risen by the end of the year to 1,500.[43] By 1915 the movement in Dublin was composed of three separate associations. The county of Dublin had seventeen troops, composed of 800 scouts. The city association had eleven troops and between 200-300 scouts. The Sea Scouts (formed in 1912) had four troops and before the outbreak of World War I, 100 scouts.[44] In 1918 there were 750 boys in the Dublin Boy

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[39] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 5, May 1910, p. 21. Lord Meath had been on the Boy Scouts council since 1910, *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 5, Nov. 1910, p. 1; *Irish Independent*, 28 Aug. 1912. Lord Meath was appointed Scout commissioner for Ireland in 1912, replacing the earl of Shaftsbury who had been commissioner since 1909.

[40] Bell, *A history of scouting in Northern Ireland*, p. 9.

[41] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 11, Nov. 1915, p. 295.

[42] D. James, *A history of the 33rd Dublin (Sandford) scout group, the purple scarf* (Dublin, n.d.), p. 7.

[43] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.

[44] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 11, Nov. 1915, p. 295; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 10 Feb. 1912. It was not until September 1918 that the first Sea Scout troop was founded in Belfast, See Troop registration forms, Scout Council of Northern Ireland Archive (SCNI).

Scouts.[45] In 1916 the Belfast local association reported that there were twenty-three troops comprising 872 Scouts in Belfast. This represented a yearly increase of one troop and twenty-five Scouts and by 1917 the number of troops increased to twenty-eight. [46] Boy Scout membership is outlined below in Tables 6-8.

Table 6. Membership of the Irish Boy Scouts, 1911-1913.[47]

	1911	1912	1913
Associations	13	-	-
Troops	58	-	-
Scoutmasters	56	-	-
Assistant Scoutmasters	62	-	-
Scouts	1651	-	-
Total	1769	1713	2505

Table 7. Membership of the United Kingdom Boy Scouts excluding Ireland, 1911.[48]

	England	Scotland	Wales
Associations	494	-	46
Troops	3189	510	141
Scoutmasters	3242	538	145
Assistant Scoutmasters	2995	511	139
Scouts	81,267	13,766	3614
Total	87,504	14,815	3898

Table 8. Total Membership of the United Kingdom Boy Scouts, 1911.[49]

Associations	553
Troops	3898
Scoutmasters	3981
Assistant Scoutmasters	3707
Scouts	100, 298
Total	107, 986

The social composition of the leadership of the Irish Boy Scouts can be examined by an analysis of the occupations of the scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters of the Dublin Boy Scouts. An examination shows that they were composed predominantly of higher professionals followed by clerical workers and skilled manual workers.

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[45] *Irish Times*, 24 Oct. 1918.
[46] B.E.C.E. minute book, 25 Oct. 1916, 7 Mar. 1917, SCNI.
[47] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1910-1913.
[48] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1911.
[49] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1911.

Table 9. Occupations of Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters of the Dublin Boy Scouts, 1908-1918 (Sample: 118).[50]

	No.	%
Higher Professional	32	27
Lower Professional	7	6
Employers and Proprietors	8	7
Administrators and Managers	11	9
Clerical Workers	31	26
Foremen, Supervisors, Inspectors	0	0
Skilled Manual Workers	20	17
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	6	5
Unskilled Manual Workers	2	2
Private Income	1	1

The social composition of the rank and file of the Dublin Boy Scouts can be determined by an analysis of the occupations of the head of the household in which members lived. The analysis shows that in Dublin they mainly came from working class families. This is in marked contrast to the assertions of a number of historians who argue that the majority of early members came from middle class backgrounds.[51]

[50] Sources: *The Scout*, 1908-1918; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1909-1918; *Irish Times*, 1908-1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1910-1918; *Thom's Directory*, 1891-1918; Census Records 1901 and 1911. For occupational classifications see Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain*. Of the sample of 118, thirty-seven were students at time of the 1911 Census and to determine their social class their occupational classification has been replaced by that of their father in 1911. The 'Private Income' category is composed of one man who derived his income from the interest on stocks and shares.

[51] Springhall, 'The Boy Scouts, class and militarism', p. 138; Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, p. 412; S. Pryke, 'The Boy Scouts and the 'Girl Question'', *Sexualities*, 4 (2001), p. 193.

Table 10. Head of Household's occupation of Dublin Boy Scouts, 1908-1918 (Sample: 567).[52]

	No.	%
Higher Professional	60	11
Lower Professional	16	3
Employers and Proprietors	51	9
Administrators and Managers	73	13
Clerical Workers	49	9
Foremen, Supervisors, Inspectors	13	2
Skilled Manual Workers	140	25
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	106	18
Unskilled Manual Workers	50	9
Private Income	9	1

1.5 Girls' Organisations

It was not only males who were exposed to youth organisations and it would be misleading to situate them solely within the realms of masculine experience. There was a parallel development of organisations designed to appeal to females. The Girls' Brigade was formally founded in 1893 with the first company being located at Rutland square in Dublin, but such an organisation may have existed in Dublin as early as 1892.[53] Religion was important and they conformed to many of the conventions of their reciprocal male groups. In order for girls to qualify for membership of the Girls' Brigade in Church street, Dublin they had to be enrolled in the bible class connected with local church, thus giving prominence to religious aims above any other concerns.[54] The organisation was modestly successful and by 1915 there existed nine companies comprising some 400 members ranging in age from eight to twenty.[55] Thomas Bernard Kerford, a civil servant based in the chief secretary's office and honorary secretary of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 'hoped it would be the case

[52] Sources: *The Scout*, 1908-1918; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1909-1918; *Irish Times*, 1910-1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1910-1918; Census Records 1901 and 1911. For occupational classifications see Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain*. The 'Private Income' category is composed of three females with an allowance from their husbands and six people with income from dividends, annuities, and securities. The classification of forty-three boys could not be traced and these have been excluded from the analysis. Seven were boys whose parents could not be traced as they were away at school, ten were boys who were orphans, and twenty-six boys were attending the Royal Hibernian Military School. Thirty-three boys where females were the head of household and registered no occupation have also been excluded from the analysis.

[53] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1894.

[54] *Irish Times*, 3 May 1912.

[55] *Irish Times*, 13 Feb. 1915, 14 Feb. 1914.

that wherever a Boys' Brigade was found a Girls' Company would be found united with it'.[56] However there seems to have been a lack of awareness of their work in some quarters as in 1908 there were still calls for the formation of an organisation specifically for girls.[57]

Prior to the official formation of the Girl Guides women in Dublin took it upon themselves to form troops of girl scouts. In July 1910 the 1st north county Dublin troop of the Boy Scouts reported that girl scouts had been organised in connection with the troop and were called the 1st Dublin troop of Girl Scouts. Their scoutmistress was Mary Granger, their patrol leader was Grace Spencer, with Katie Brown as their troop corporal, all of whom were Roman Catholic. However, within weeks of this report the Boy Scouts wrote that 'as Girl Scouts are not recognised in this city, notes from their Troops cannot be published'.[58] The Girl Guides was an outgrowth of the Boy Scouts and was formed in 1910 specifically for girls, with the Boy Scouts stressing that it 'should be kept entirely distinct'.[59] In Ireland it was in Dublin where 'the Movement made its most rapid strides'. The first company of Guides in Dublin was founded at Harold's cross in September 1911 with another being formed in late 1912. By 1915 there were 300 Guides in Dublin spread over ten companies and mostly concentrated in the south of the county and by 1917 membership had risen to 500 members in twenty companies. In 1915 Lady Olave Baden-Powell, Chief Guide, inspected over 200 Girl Guides at Merrion square in Dublin.[60] It was also established in other parts of the country in at least thirteen counties.[61] The Girl Guides suffered in their early years from a lack of awareness of their existence and activities and 'for some time Guiding remained at the stage of improvisation, commissioners had no thought of uniforms beyond that of adding silver cords to their ordinary dress, and Guiders wore feather cockades in their hats and carried walking sticks'.[62] A more formal leadership structure was introduced in 1918. Lady Powerscourt was the Irish deputy for the Chief Guide, with four provincial commissioners for Ireland: the duchess of Abercorn for Ulster, Lady de Freyne for Connaught, Dorothy Hignett for Leinster, with no commissioner for Munster until the countess of Kenmare in 1929.[63] Margaret K. Dixon, the forty-six year old commissioner of the Dublin Girl Guides, stated that

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[56] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 June 1906.
[57] *Irish Times*, 16 July 1908.
[58] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 July 1910, 16 July 1910; Census Returns, 1911.
[59] Bell, *Scouting in Northern Ireland*, p. 28.
[60] R. Kerr, *Story of the Girl Guides, 1908-1938, official history of the Girl Guides association* (London, 1976), p. 185; *Girl Guides Gazette*, no.14 , Feb. 1915, p. 14, no. 18, June 1915, p. 15; *Weekly Irish Times*, 20 June 1917, 3 July 1915, 16 April 1915; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 June 1917; G. Finan, *A hundred years a growing: a history of the Irish Girl Guides* (Liberties Press, 2010), p. 41.
[61] Finan, *A hundred years a growing*, pp. 35, 40.
[62] Kerr, *Story of the Girl Guides*, p. 185.
[63] Finan, *A hundred years a growing*, p. 43.

the organisation received very little encouragement from the general public and it was not until they began aiding the St John Ambulance Association (which began admitting female members in 1909) and the Red Cross that they were brought to larger public notice.[64]

1.6 Hibernian Boys' Brigade and Fianna Éireann

The growth of youth movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also prompted specifically Irish responses. These groups also reflected a growing appreciation of the young in nationalist circles that had been occurring throughout the late nineteenth century.[65] As early as 1895 there is evidence of an organisation called the 'Parnell Irish National Boy's Brigade'. On the fourth anniversary of Parnell's death, held at Glasnevin cemetery, in what was deemed 'an innovation in Parnell anniversary demonstrations', four battalions of the organisation took part in the procession. Most of the boys present wore 'neat green caps of a similar shape to that of the original Boys' Brigade' with members being reported to have 'walked in good order' and lending 'a certain degree of picturesqueness to the gathering'.[66] Documentary evidence of their existence is limited but they were established in Dublin and Cork with the Cork branch presenting an attendance of 200 at the Parnell anniversary in 1895 and were reported as 'far better disciplined' than their Dublin colleagues who 'were far younger than the Cork Brigade Boys'.[67]

Another such response was the Hibernian Boys' Brigade, founded in 1911, with the aim of establishing a juvenile section which would act as a feeder to the parent organisation, the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Here boys would gain an insight into the working of the adult branch of the organisation and become members when they left the Brigade 'and in that way help to swell its membership'.[68] The Order was initially founded in America before spreading to Ireland with its primary function being working class welfare. In America it satisfied a great need within the Irish immigrant community but in Ireland it suffered from a difference of opinion between its rural and urban divisions as to what its primary purpose should be. The urban divisions were interested in registering the body as a benefit society under the Friendly Societies Act which would involve fixed contributions from its members, while the rural divisions were more interested in the organisation as a base for social

[64] *Irish Times*, 1 Dec 1914.
[65] R. Nic Congáil, 'Young Ireland and *The Nation*: nationalist children's culture in the late nineteenth century', *Éire-Ireland*, 46 (2011), pp. 37-62.
[66] *Irish Times*, 7 Oct. 1895.
[67] *Kildare Observer*, 12 Oct. 1895.
[68] *Hibernian Journal*, Aug. 1911, Dec. 1914; *Connacht Tribune*, 16 Oct. 1915.

activity.[69] In the years prior to the founding of the Hibernian Boys' Brigade, the Ancient Order of Hibernians had experienced an enormous increase in membership. In the autumn of 1905 membership was recorded as 10,000 which by 1909 had risen to 60,000.[70]

The object of the Hibernian Boys' Brigade was 'to foster the spirit of manly independence in accordance with the teachings of our Catholic faith and Irish Patriotism' and aimed 'at organising young Irish Catholics for the protection of their faith and morals, as well as imbuing them with patriotic principles and love of their native land'.[71] For them it was important that boys 'receptive minds should be properly trained and their energies directed into the proper channel' arguing that 'a knowledge of the language and traditions of one's own country is all important in the upbringing of youth'.[72] The organisation was open to boys aged between ten and seventeen with an entrance fee of six pennies with two pennies being contributed per week and companies could affiliate for five shillings.[73] The Brigade was encouraged in all branches of the parent organisation and was established outside Ireland, at Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland, and by 1915 had twenty-one companies.[74] At the annual general meeting of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1912 Dublin county President James J. Bergin argued that the Brigade 'offered every possible amusement and intellectual attraction which goes to mould in the young temperament the characteristics which we would all like to see predominant in our Irish youth'. Despite this it was stated that the Hibernian Boys' Brigade, which was 'confined to sons of members of the Order or their younger relatives, had not received the support which its organisers had every right to expect'.[75]

Fianna Éireann was another group that sought to aid in the development of Irish youth. An earlier organisation of the same name had been founded in Belfast by Bulmer Hobson in 1902.[76] The 1909 incarnation was a nationalist organisation whose objects were the re-establishment of an independent Ireland. Upon joining the organisation each boy had to make the declaration that, 'I promise to work for the independence of Ireland, never to join England's armed forces, and to obey my superior officers'. The means adopted for the achievement of these aims were 'the training of the youth of Ireland, mentally and physically, by teaching scouting and military exercises, Irish history and the Irish language' and the

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[69] A.C. Hepburn, *Catholic Belfast and nationalist Ireland in the era of Joe Devlin, 1871-1934* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 90-2.
[70] Hepburn, *Catholic Belfast*, p. 93.
[71] *Hibernian Journal*, Apr. 1915; *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Jan. 1915.
[72] *Roscommon Herald*, 25 Apr. 1914.
[73] *Hibernian Journal*, Feb. 1915, Dec. 1914; *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Jan. 1915; *Connacht Tribune*, 16 Oct. 1915.
[74] *Connacht Tribune*, 16 Oct. 1915; *Meath Chronicle*, 12 Dec. 1914; *Southern Star*, 28 Aug. 1915.
[75] *Southern Star*, 2 Mar. 1912.
[76] See Fianna Minute book, NLI, Bulmer Hobson Papers, 12,176.

organisation aimed 'at making Irish boys strong and self-reliant and self-respecting'.[77] It was founded in Dublin in 1909 and the first meeting was held 'in a dingy hall at the rear of 34 Lower Camden Street'. This meeting was advertised in the nationalist newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis* and it was estimated that between fifty to 100 people attended. This was interpreted by Michael Lonergan, one of those present, as a significant new departure as 'previous to that, nothing whatever was being done by any organisation in a military way'.[78] In order to encourage recruits a boy was stationed to stand outside the hall and direct boys indoors.[79]

In terms of personnel the leading figures were Constance Markievicz and Bulmer Hobson. Markievicz was a labour and republican activist and had the initial idea for starting Fianna Éireann. In an effort at attracting members Markievicz contacted a schoolmaster, William O'Neill, from St Andrew's national school on Brunswick street. Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) veteran Tom Clarke believed that the formation of such an organisation was a good idea but argued that as Markievicz was not a Catholic she may have been suspected of proselytising. She was accompanied on her visit by Sean McGarry, later president of the supreme council of the IRB, and the boys they met became the nucleus of the new organisation.[80] Hobson was an influential nationalist, a member of the IRB, and was described by one Fianna Éireann member as 'the very incarnation of the spirit of the movement'.[81] The initial executive council of the organisation consisted of Hobson as president, Markievicz as vice-president and Padraig O'Riain as honorary general secretary.[82] In 1915 this was replaced by a more comprehensive organisational framework with more specific roles attached to individual members. O'Riain became chief of the Fianna with Hobson becoming chief of staff and A.P. Reynolds becoming Adjutant. Sean Heuston became director of training and Eamon Martin became director of organisation with Leo Henderson and Garrett Holohan becoming directors of equipment and Barry Mellows acting as director of finance. In August 1915 Fianna Éireann in Dublin were formally organised into a battalion of nine companies.[83] According to the constitution of Fianna Éireann a sluagh was to consist of eight to sixteen members with an affiliation fee of two shillings and six pence

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[77] *Fianna handbook* (Dublin, 1914), pp. 13, 12, 3; Joseph Reynolds, Bureau of Military History Witness Statement (BMH WS) 191.
[78] Michael Lonergan, BMH WS 140; Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[79] Seamus Pounch, BMH WS 267.
[80] A. Marreco, *The rebel countess* (London, 1967), p. 114; Sean McGarry, BMH WS 368, cited in Hay, 'The foundation and development of Na Fianna Éireann, 1909–16', p. 55.
[81] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[82] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[83] Joseph Reynolds, BMH WS 191; *Fianna*, Aug. 1915.

with members contributing a penny a week. In order to establish a sluagh permission was needed from the central governing body, the ard-choisde. Each boy upon entering served three weeks approbation and was required to pass preliminary tests and only after this was he administered the declaration and given the Fianna Éireann badge.[84]

[84] Constitution of Na Fianna Éireann, NLI, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, 31,130; *Fianna handbook*, p. 175; *Irish Volunteer*, 22 Aug. 1914.

Part I

Youth Movements and Irish Society

2 The Social Functions of Youth Movements

2.1 Social Function

Youth movements were responsive to the broader social framework of adolescence and this is vital to an understanding of their formation in the period. The Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland (today the Royal College of Psychiatrists) noted in 1903 that there had been an increasing number of cases of mental breakdown among those going through puberty and adolescence. For them this was 'a condition evoked by the great strain of education and the worries of life upon brains which a quarter of a century ago, living under less stress and worry, were able to tide over this critical period of brain evolution'.[1] At the age of fourteen the restraining influence represented by school life was for the most part withdrawn as compulsion to attend school was removed. The lack of adequate supervision, and more importantly the potential lack of proper influences, ensured that an organisation that catered for this period in a boy's was welcomed by many. Rev. William MacDonald Sinclair, the archdeacon of London, argued that too many boys were leaving school before their 'habits and character are properly formed'. They had more free time and spent 'too much of it in the streets, for the reason that he has nowhere else to spend it'.[2] Amongst youth movements there was a sympathetic appreciation of the difficulties encountered by boys in this developmental stage. The Anglican clergyman Rev. John Frank Moncrieff Cox, chaplain in the 21st Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade, argued that

> few of us older people realise...how many are the difficulties which beset the *transition* stage of life. The old nature is breaking up; the new nature is rapidly dawning. Desires and impulses unknown in boyhood, come sweeping through the soul, and shake it to its very depths. Comrades in the office, or business house, persuade to evil habits. In the face of such

[1] 'Annual meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1903), p. 200.
[2] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 10, June 1893, p.242.

difficulty, I often wonder that our lads are as true and as pure as so many of them are.[3]

There was a developed appreciation of the changes, both physical and mental, that took place during adolescence and a greater recognition that opportunities needed to be provided so as not to deny 'mental stimulus of the proper kind' which 'were not to be found by the majority of boys and girls engaged in wage-earning occupations'. It was increasingly understood that adequately dealing with adolescence as a distinct period of growth was important in laying a solid foundation for adult life. A contemporary warned that 'if we never get rid of the idea that youths are half-grown men and treat them accordingly, we shall fail miserably' in providing a sound basis for adulthood as 'the citizenship of to-morrow depends in a very large degree upon the growth of an adequate social organisation in which the adolescent of to-day may satisfy his deepest needs'.[4] Many boys that left school at fourteen had no recourse but to engage in the adult world and 'acted the man on every possible occasion, smoked his cigarette, read his halfpenny paper-with a preference for the sporting columns-and would even make a small bet when the state of his pocket allowed'. The boy would then 'spend his evenings at some favourite street corner, or perhaps in the gallery of a music hall…(and) waste his hours and his opportunities of social and business advancement'. This was the result of neglect 'because there was no one to take a real interest in him, and provide him with healthy and rational amusement and recreation'.[5] Youth organisations sought to fulfil such a need and John R. Gillis had noted that in the period 'the model adolescent therefore became the organized youth, dependent but secure from temptation, while the independent and precocious young were stigmatized as delinquent'.[6]

Youth movements fulfilled a social function in Ireland especially within densely populated urban areas. It was a reciprocal relationship as these groups did not impose themselves upon a society that had little interest in their activities but engaged with a public that saw them as a potential solution to their problems with young people. The *Irish Independent* complained in 1898 about the amount of begging in certain areas of Dublin commenting that the streets were 'literally infested with them'.[7] Similarly Sir Francis Cruise, an influential and innovative medical practitioner, stated that 'the way in which the streets of

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[3] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 6, Feb. 1904, p. 83.
[4] 'The nation's youth', *Athenaeum*, 4615 (1917), pp. 119-21.
[5] W.M. Spencer, 'Looking after the lads, a chat about our boys' brigades', *Quiver*, 759 (1900), p. 577.
[6] J.R. Gillis, 'The evolution of juvenile delinquency in England 1890-1914', *Past & Present*, 67 (1975), p. 97.
[7] *Irish Independent*, 28 Oct. 1898.

Dublin are beset with boys and girls begging, and, I fear, qualifying for the criminal classes, is truly deplorable, and very little or nothing is being done to amend the scandal effectively'. So bad were the conditions he witnessed he could 'truthfully say that this crying evil never was never so bad as at present. I have travelled much, but never saw a city so bad in this respect as Dublin at present, and all visitors say the same'. Cruise was anxious about the long-term consequences of such conditions remarking that 'it would be bad enough if it ended there, but only think of what these children of both sexes must be in ten or fifteen years hence'.[8] Cruise was not an alarmist commentator. He was hailed as a pioneer for his introduction of the endoscope into Dublin, as well as being a former president of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland and an honorary physician in ordinary in Ireland to King Edward VII.[9]

Arnold Wright noted in *Disturbed Dublin* that organisations for young boys would aid in their social development, writing that 'the boy who has been turned loose into the streets from earliest infancy is quick and resourceful, and courageous to boot. He has probably a precocious knowledge of evil, but his finer qualities are usually intact, to be brought out by sympathetic treatment combined with discipline'.[10] The provision of organisations where boys would be amongst good influences was advanced by a Dublin priest, identified only as 'PFF'. He wrote that the street-boy was a 'gregarious animal' whose companions influenced him for good or for evil but these influences were transient and 'may be counteracted by home or school influences'. He argued that in some cases a boy developed habits that later in life made him 'a dissipated loafer, a menace to social order and a drag on the nation's progress'. As these boys were the future citizens of the country he called for 'the intelligence, the high, ardent spirits, (and) the vivid imagination of our average Irish boy' to be channelled into constructive ends in order to 'put him on the right path that leads to true patriotism and good citizenship'. While it was easy to gather boys together, the difficulty was to hold them as he believed boys would not submit to being lectured at and 'tire of continual theorising' and 'cannot understand being an audience for some theorist'. Treating them in this way was bound to fail 'because such a method ignores their viewpoint and their tastes as boys' and the only hope of success was if the work appreciated the viewpoint of the boys themselves with the responsibility for success being shared amongst them. While it was necessary to have an attractive programme 'the boys themselves must be allowed to work it as far as is consistent

[8] *Irish Times*, 10 June 1910; *Freeman's Journal*, 31 May 1910; *Irish Independent*, 31 May 1910.
[9] *British Medical Journal*, 1 (1912), p. 586; *Dublin Journal of Medical Science*, 133 (1912), pp. 314-18.
[10] A. Wright, *Disturbed Dublin: the story of the great strike of 1913-14, with a description of the industries of the Irish capital* (London, 1914), p. 40.

with good order and discipline' and 'all their abounding energies, fresh imagination, love of adventure, can have free scope, yet are wisely directed and controlled, without any oppressive appearance of being managed'.[11] This child-centred approach was shared by William Smith. In 1887 he argued that in the Boys' Brigade 'we try to realise not only that "boys will be Boys", but that Boys ought to be Boys, and that it would be a thousand pities if they ever became anything else'. He wished to appeal to them in terms which they would appreciate and in 1899 argued that 'for the Boy everything must be short and sharp and clear and crisp. It must harmonise with his restless nature. He doesn't want to hear long sermons, to make long prayers, to read long dry books'.[12]

Youth movements addressed social concerns and provided a forum for the social development of Irish youth. An organisation that would take a boy and train him in habits such as discipline, honour, and obedience held an attraction in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ireland as they sought to provide alternative attractions to wean adolescents away from more questionable pursuits. The *Irish Times* saw their function as averting the 'depression, demoralisation, and blasphemy, which was rapidly taking root in the lower stratum of youthful life' and by the work they carried out replace this with 'self-respect, orderliness, submission to disciplinary rule, and last, not least, cleanliness'.[13] It is clear that organisations aimed at developing these attributes had wide public appeal. The *Northern Whig* claimed that the Boys' Brigade could recruit from 'the classes which in Belfast are largely responsible for the manufacture of the hooligan'. It continued that,

> Hundreds blush for the primitive manners of our ordinary national schoolboy and are scandalised at the growing prevalence of the youthful hooligan. They would fain improve the existing state of things. Experience shows that there is no better agency for such improvement than The Boys' Brigade. If this be pressed home upon our people so that they acknowledge its truth there ought not to be any more coolness, indifference, or want of sympathy towards the Movement. Too much of young Belfast crouches and shambles rather than walks at the present moment; too much of young Belfast spends its evening leisure on the streets; too much of young Belfast

[11] *Irish Volunteer*, 7 Feb. 1914.
[12] *Wm. A Smith, a man who had something to say*, pp. 9, 11, BBAD, Box 18.
[13] *Irish Times*, 26 Aug. 1897. See also, J.H. Whitehouse, 'Boy labour and unemployment', *Saint George: a national review dealing with literature, art and social questions in a broad and progressive spirit*, 13 (1910), pp. 94-100.

> is qualifying for hooliganism at the street corners. Better for a schoolboy to belong to The Boys' Brigade than to drift into one of these 'clans' of which we have heard so much lately in the Police Courts-the 'Bogey', the 'Wow-wow', the 'De Wet', the 'Bulldog' and half a dozen other hooligan organisations.

The newspaper concluded that the Boys' Brigade 'deserves the support of every teacher, every parent, and every worker for the social good'.[14]

In attempting to realise their aims youth movements provided recreational facilities which were lacking in Ireland. Arthur FitzMaurice, captain of the 1st Carlow company of the Boys' Brigade, wrote that the organisation was 'the finest thing for banding the Boys together, as it influences a boy at the time in his life when his character is being formed, and instead of loafing in the streets at night and meeting with bad companions, he had the Brigade to look to'.[15] This function was appreciated by the civil authorities, and in in 1916 the Home Secretary, Sir John Simon, convened a conference of the leading youth organisations to ask for their advice 'in connection with the deplorable increase in juvenile offences'. It was recommended that the education authorities encourage youth organisations 'so that lads may have some place to go to in their spare evening hours, instead of wandering about the streets'. The Boys' Brigade saw this as a vindication of their work and noted that 'at last it is being recognised in high places that the Boys' Brigade has done much to develop a strong clean, healthy manhood with high ideals, and that it deserved encouragement and support'.[16]

The lack of suitable places for spending free time was noted in the report of an inter-departmental committee charged to investigate the employment of school age boys in 1902. In his evidence Sergeant Coen of the Cork Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) commented that 'with the exception of this Boys' Brigade…there is no house or club where they can sit down and amuse themselves'. Fr Bernard, founder and president of the Cork Catholic Boys' Brigade, believed that the organisation had the capacity to provide attractions to youths who were engaged in street trading. He told the commission that in his opinion all the Catholic boys, especially those who were not attending school, should be made members of a Boy's Brigade, arguing that if they were present at roll call at least three nights a week 'they would be under close supervision, and we should be all able to see their home circumstances. They

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[14] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[15] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[16] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Feb. 1917.

would also have the benefit of a recreation hall, and the use of a savings' bank attached to the Brigade'.[17]

The Catholic Boys' Brigade passed a resolution stating that the organisation was needed in the country in order 'to safeguard the rising generation against the evil influences of the times' and was necessary 'to prevent the demoralisation that was present, or was coming'. The lord mayor of Dublin lauded the benefits of the organisation noting that 'it rescued young boys from the streets of Dublin, educated and trained them in habits of obedience and a stronger sense of religion and fitted them for the battle of life'.[18] They formed reading and recreation rooms for members 'in order to keep the boys off the streets at night and to prevent them from attending undesirable entertainment'. Here the boys could be closely supervised and the material supplied would be approved by the committee who had the recreation rooms 'furnished with a good supply of instructive books and harmless amusements good for boys' that proved very popular amongst the membership.[19] They noted that 'boys must be attracted before they are instructed' and emphasised that 'harsh dragooning is no part of the system'.[20] Their reading rooms were open to members every evening from 8.30 to 9.45.[21] They aimed 'to encourage the too-often despondent hopes of the young, and to lessen the burden of labour and study by healthy, instructive, and rational amusement'. Concerts were a regular feature which 'afford the members of the Brigade a few hours of refined pleasure each recurring week'.[22] However, there were concerns that such attractions ensured only transient support from members. In the Catholic Boys' Brigade in Cork the president, Fr Bernard, reported that, 'if we have a tea party, or a play, we will have 500 willing to come. They will come one or two nights, or sometimes three and four nights, and then the attendance gets slack'.[23]

The Boys' Brigade in Belfast identified similar problems and a 'boy's room was inaugurated and games were engaged in and suitable literature was provided'.[24] The 1st

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[17] *Report of the inter-departmental committee on the employment of children during school age, especially in street trading in the large centres of population in Ireland appointed by his excellency the lord lieutenant together with minutes of evidence and appendices* [Cd. 1144] (1902), pp. 122, 126.
[18] *Irish Times*, 31 May 1910.
[19] *Irish Times*, 28 May 1906; *Freeman's Journal*, 1 Jun. 1908; *Irish Independent*, 28 May 1906.
[20] *Freeman's Journal*, 1 Dec. 1898.
[21] *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Mar. 1908
[22] *Freeman's Journal*, 21 Mar. 1899.
[23] *Report of the inter-departmental committee on the employment of children during school age,* p. 128. See also, J.R. O'Connell, 'The juvenile street trader and the state: the problem of the waifs and strays', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 12 (Dublin, 1911), pp. 489-507.
[24] Boys' Brigade, *1st Omagh Boys' Brigade,* p. 17.

Belfast company reported that 'this is felt to be a most useful adjunct to the company'.[25] This proved a popular feature amongst the membership as 'there were no picture houses or other forms of entertainment available'.[26] In the 1st Newry company a reading room that they had established was deemed 'a great benefit to a Company' with the 20th Dublin company arguing that their recreation room was 'a great means of banding them together'.[27] By 1895 the 3rd Dublin company had 350 books in their room as well as weekly and monthly magazines.[28] The 2nd Dublin company argued that their club provided 'social intercourse, mental and moral improvement and rational recreation' and it was open three nights a week from 7.30-10 pm with members paying an annual subscription of three pennies with a weekly subscription of one penny.[29] The Dublin battalion wondered in 1905, 'who can estimate the good done by thus gathering our boys together to discuss their weeks doing in a pure atmosphere rather than the corners of city's streets'.[30] However, in 1911 they noted that a room for boys was only of value 'for such companies as draw their recruits from the poorer lads of our city'.[31] It was hoped that reading rooms would attract older members as it was difficult to maintain an interest amongst them. Lord Guthrie believed that 'some of those earning good wages were spending their evenings in a more lively if less valuable and helpful manner than going to evening classes or attending Boys' Brigade drill'.[32] The inauguration of a room for boys was not universally welcomed with some arguing that they 'were undermining home influences and seeking to break up the family circle'. The Boys' Brigade stressed that they were 'not meant as a counter-attraction to home, but as a preventive against the formation of the objectionable practice of "corner standing", with its attendant evils, or as an inducement to abandon such habits if they have already been acquired'.[33]

The Catholic Boys' Brigade advanced the potential social benefits of membership arguing that 'the comradeship, the spirit of street discipline, the sense of being a member of a great and dignified body, all combined to impress the boy tremendously, and to take his narrowness and selfishness out of him'.[34] Dr Edmond Joseph McWeeney, a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Ireland's first professor of pathology and bacteriology at

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[25] *Belfast News-Letter*, 24 Apr. 1894.
[26] Kelly, *Firm and deep,* p. 7.
[27] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 2, Nov. 1893, p. 46; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Feb. 1899.
[28] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 4, Jan. 1895, p. 96.
[29] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 Jan 1899.
[30] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Dec. 1905.
[31] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 Jan. 1911.
[32] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 25, no. 2, Oct. 1916, p. 19.
[33] *The Boys' Brigade Magazine*, no. 2, p. 12.
[34] *Catholic Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, July 1910, p. 8.

University College Dublin, wrote that the Catholic Boys' Brigade was an important organisation in ensuring that young people would not be 'growing up in ignorance, idleness, and anti-social habits' and that 'it strives hard, and strives successfully, to turn these poor wanderers into the path of straightness, self-respect, and good citizenship'.[35] Alderman Irwin, of Dublin Corporation, wrote that 'the organisation was an important factor in promoting the social welfare of the working classes in Dublin'.[36] Rev. Anthony, a leader in the Catholic Boys' Brigade, argued that they 'touched the fundamental grievance under which every large city had to groan. The members of society which is contemplated were…what he might distinctly call helpless, fixed, stuck in a moral rut, out of which it was extremely difficult to lift them'. These people 'suffered under an immense hopelessness to help themselves. Therefore it was that they appealed to those who had the power and could help them to stretch out a helping hand which would raise them up out of the demoralising condition into which they were unhappily cast'.[37]

Youth movements sought to provide additional support to the actions of government and it was argued that supporting their work would result in their members being able to find gainful employment and not become a burden on the state. Rev. James Fottrell, speaking at a Catholic Boys' Brigade meeting, argued that 'a paternal and far-seeing Government' should help such an institution and 'it would be well-spent money, because it would save many from being supported by Government afterwards in a very disreputable way'.[38] The annual report of the Irish Catholic Boys' Brigade in 1910 noted that

> it is almost unnecessary to point out that, apart altogether from the Catholic and National interests at stake, it is sound business and commonsense to contribute to the support of an organisation whose chief work is to train up to be self-respecting citizens and useful members of the community, boys, many of whom, if cast adrift on their own resources, might become burdens on the rates in addition to losing their manhood and self-respect within the precincts of the workhouse.[39]

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[35] A. E. Muskett, 'Mycology and plant pathology in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Section B: Biological, Geological, and Chemical Science*, 76 (1976), p. 400; See also T.M. Healy, 'E. J. McWeeney: Ireland's first professor of pathology', *Irish Journal of Medical Science*, 158 (1989), pp. 165-7; *Freeman's Journal*, 1 June 1908.
[36] *Irish Times*, 28 May 1906.
[37] *Irish Times*, 27 Apr. 1896.
[38] *Irish Independent*, 8 June 1909; *Freeman's Journal*, 8 June 1909.
[39] *Freeman's Journal*, 31 May 1910.

The *Catholic Boys' Brigade Gazette* commented that,

> It would be well if people realise how much their safety, their comfort and their peace depend upon the work of the Brigades in this country. Were it not for the self-sacrificing efforts of the men who labour amongst our lads in the slums of London and other large cities, it might well be that those who are now asked to give their little guinea to the work, might be called upon to pay very substantially for a largely augmented police force. This, from the point of view of the general public, is a matter for honest consideration. To a Catholic, how great a matter should be the saving of the soul of even one Catholic boy.[40]

Similar motivations are noticeable in the overtly nationalist youth movements. The Hibernian Boys' Brigade hoped to gain members at a young age as it was 'a time when minds are impressionable, and habits unformed' and 'by discipline and training have its character fashioned along right lines and its energies directed into proper channels. The pitfalls in front of the rising generation in this age are growing materialism and irreligion'.[41] It was noted that 'in the present age it is more than ever necessary that the youth of the country should be properly disciplined, and have inculcated in them those qualities of self-restraint and self-reliance so necessary to the manhood of the nation'.[42] Joe Devlin believed that the organisation would produce 'useful citizens, when Ireland has secured her liberty'.[43] The Brigade argued that 'the necessity for such clubs in Dublin and throughout the large centres is being more and more recognised daily and their establishment is becoming more essential' and claimed the Brigade was 'supplying a long felt want in the City, and doing good work in safeguarding them from the seductive influences so prevalent in the City, which are so detrimental to the faith and morals of the young'.[44] At the Ancient Order of Hibernians headquarters at 31 Rutland Square a drill hall, classrooms, band rooms, a concert hall, and a ball alley were established as well as a recreation room where 'instruction and amusement suitable to youthful minds and temperaments are provided'.[45] T.P Curley, president of the Glasnevin division of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians in Dublin, argued that it was

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[40] *Catholic Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, July 1910, p.5.
[41] *Hibernian Journal*, Sept. 1914.
[42] *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Jan. 1915.
[43] *Anglo-Celt*, 17 May 1913.
[44] *Roscommon Herald*, 25 Apr.1914; *Connaught Telegraph*, 18 Apr. 1914; *Roscommon Herald*, 18 Apr. 1914.
[45] *Connaught Telegraph*, 18 Apr. 1914; *Roscommon Herald*, 18 Apr. 1914.

> better for their Catholic boys, morally, mentally and physically, to be in that Brigade than to be running about the streets…instead of rambling around they took part in parades, gymnastic exercises, etc., and attended once a week at one of the halls of the Order in a Catholic atmosphere, to be taught to cultivate a spirit of manly independence.[46]

They provided parents with a place where their children could be properly supervised after school and relieve any anxieties that may have been connected with their care reflecting prevalent social concerns that the young needed moral protection and adequate supervision during hours of freedom.[47] The Brigade believed that their organisation was vital to the local communities in which they operated and was especially 'necessary in large centres of population, where the long hours and laborious work some parents have to undergo render close supervision and guardianship over their children almost impossible, with the result that many youths fall a prey to the temptations strewn so plentifully in their path'.[48] They argued that 'parents will find the Brigade a useful adjunct to home training and will be sure to welcome its establishment'.[49] They saw their role as educating their membership in order to make them useful members of society and the organisation aimed 'at training the youth of the nation in a manner calculated to fit them for careers of usefulness in after life and to make them worthy of their country'.[50]

The Boy Scouts fulfilled a similar function in terms of their social role, and while Michael Rosenthal has characterised the organisation as being 'firmly rooted in the self-interest of the upper classes', this does not do justice to the benevolent aims of the organisation.[51] Thomas Galway Houston, principal of Coleraine Academical Institution, stated that the Boy Scouts had the potential to capture a boy's love of adventure and channel it towards constructive ends. A Boy Scout troop had been started in the institute and he believed that the organisation was 'one of the finest things ever started for the improvement of the race'. For him the organisation was an undertaking designed 'to turn to profit all a boy's love of adventure, the feeling that made him devour tales of moving incidents by field

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[46] *Westmeath Examiner*, 11 May 1912.
[47] Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 154.
[48] *Hibernian Journal*, Dec. 1914, Feb. 1915; *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Jan. 1915; *Roscommon Herald*, 16 Jan. 1915.
[49] *Anglo-Celt*, 5 Aug. 1916.
[50] *National Volunteer*, 16 Jan. 1915.
[51] Rosenthal, *The character factory*, p. 7.

and flood, that prompted him to run away from school of home for a life of adventure at sea or some happy hunting ground in the Far West'. He thought that it was particularly necessary in contemporary life as 'it was the feeling that made him turn hooligan or Apache' and 'the feeling often long outlasted boyhood'. He continued that in previous times 'there had been plenty of vent for it in constant wars, in crusades, in voyages of discovery' but 'in modern life there was little opening for it, and it had to be bottled up to a degree that was often painful and sometimes dangerous to the young heart that was possessed by it.[52]

Addressing a meeting in Naas town hall, Co. Kildare, Colonel Ulick de Burgh, the deputy chief commissioner of the Boy Scouts, commented that 'no lover of boys could fail to be grieved at the careless, forlorn, neglected way in which the boys of the town used to spend their spare time after school or business hours'. He declared that the Boy Scouts 'hoped to give the boys a better time and to help them, through their amusements, to become more self-reliant, more self-respecting, and more self-restraining; to become better disciplined in mind and better developed in body'.[53] Baden-Powell argued that they 'were trying to make the lads into good useful citizens...who would be able to make their way successfully through life' and by giving support 'parents would be doing a great and good work on behalf of the rising generation'.[54] He wrote that the organisation 'consists simply of trying to get hold of the lads of the next generation and making them an asset and a credit to the nation, instead of allowing such a large proportion to drift into useless wasters and dangerous people to the community'.[55] This emphasis on the prevention of crime was again highlighted in 1917 when he wrote that 'the proper function of the Boy Scout movement is to prevent juvenile crime in future generations' noting that due to the war 'it is difficult to repress crime with 70 per cent of our best men away with the naval and military forces'.[56] The Dublin Boy Scouts reported that the organisation was needed as 'there can be no doubt that our nation shows signs of slackness'.[57] Lord Dunleath, president of the 3rd Belfast troop, wrote that the organisation was 'making them into useful citizens instead of loafers, as some would turn into if left alone'.[58] J. Haley and A.J. Weller, the scoutmasters of the 1st and 2nd troops of the Curragh Boy Scouts in Co. Kildare, stated that the organisation aimed 'to bring boys up as good citizens-strong, healthy, self-reliant, useful, and honest' and to 'to counteract the influences

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[52] *Irish Times*, 8 Sept. 1910.
[53] *Irish Times*, 20 Aug. 1912.
[54] Bell, *Scouting in Northern Ireland*, p. 34.
[55] *Leitrim Observer*, 11 Apr. 1914.
[56] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 25 Jan. 1917
[57] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Dec. 1911.
[58] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 14 Feb. 1912.

of idle lounging about when schools are closed'.[59] There were also concerns that the organisation would interfere with the home life of members and the Irish Lord Chief Justice, James Campbell, noted that nothing equalled the companionship of home and 'was therefore glad to see that the (Boy Scouts) association, recognising that truth, arranged it hours of instruction so as not to interfere with the home life of the boy'.[60]

For Baden-Powell the Boy Scouts played an important national function. The decline of civilisation and the effects of urbanisation were recurring themes in his writings where the analogy was made between the fall of Rome and the potential decline of the British empire. Here he was heavily influenced by Elliot Mill's, *The Decline and Fall of Rome*, published in 1907. Mill's argued that the Roman empire had fallen as a result of their weakness at home, its inhabitants 'having grown indolent and too prone to easy living'. Baden-Powell perceived similar signs of weakness in the United Kingdom centred in the inner cities and their inhabitants with the urban centre being seen as central to both physical and moral decline.[61] He encouraged people to read the pamphlet and stated that 'if you will carefully study it personally, each one of you, no matter what his line of life may be, you will see what should be his share in saving his country from the possibility of disaster'.[62] He identified the development of character as a necessary component in the future success of the British empire and was conscious that this would be seen as a reactionary position. He wrote that 'most of us old busters going downhill are prone to think that things are not as they were in our time, and we are fond of saying that everything is going to the dogs'. He noted that 'I am not a pessimist at all' but did stress that 'we see other nations coming up, and we have got to keep ahead of them if we can, and it is all matter of character' and that was what was needed 'in the great race which lies before us'.[63]

Girls' organisations also fulfilled an important social function. The programme in the Girl Guides was wide and varied and ranged from cooking and housekeeping to physical development and more conventional scouting activities including map reading, swimming, cycling, signalling, and camping. Baden-Powell argued that character training was important for girls as well as boys, writing that is was more important 'among the future mothers of the nation than among the sons'. However, he noted that this could be carried too far and warned

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[59] *Kildare Observer*, 17 Aug. 1912.
[60] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 1, Jan. 1918, p. 9.
[61] Pryke, 'The popularity of nationalism', p. 6.
[62] Hynes, *The Edwardian turn,* p. 26, cited in K. Beckson, *London in the 1890s: a cultural history* (London, 1992), p. 378.
[63] *Leitrim Observer*, 11 Apr. 1914.

that 'so long as they do not rush into tomboyisms, or do too much parading or 'show-off', nobody can reasonably find fault with them'. He commented that 'girls should be partners and comrades, rather than dolls' and lauded the benefits that had been accrued by membership noting that 'those who have seen the wonderful effect of the training on some of the worst classes of girls in our big factory slums have the very highest praise for the Movement'. For him the result of this work was 'making good, clean Christians among a number who would otherwise have drifted down among the dregs, or who would, at least, have been dull, characterless drudges'.[64] Margaret Dixon wrote

> the good work done among the girls by means of this movement was very noticeable. It helped them to become useful members of the home, and more conscientious and responsible in any occupation they took up. They were also encouraged to attend the technical school, where they learned cooking, dress making and so forth.[65]

Lady Powerscourt, a Girl Guide vice-president, commended the Guide movement to 'parents ambitious for their young daughters to become helpful members of society'.[66]

They had to contend with prevailing cultural prejudices militating against organised groups for females and the organisation was anxious not to be confused with the male Boy Scouts and the activities in the Girl Guides were highly gendered and established clear lines of demarcation between males and females. Members were told that 'they are not allowed to parade the streets with boys nor loaf about-on the contrary they are engaged in every way to retain their womanliness, so that they may be good mothers and good guides to the next generation'.[67] The leadership of the Girl Guides were careful to ensure that members 'were not going to be seen as a bunch of 'tomboys' parading noisily in the streets'.[68] Upon the creation of the Girl Guides, Baden-Powell was adamant that the two schemes 'should be kept entirely distinct' and the idea of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides training together was deemed 'most undesirable'.[69] In the early years of the organisation the leadership 'found themselves

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[64] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 2, Feb. 1912, p. 52; Finan, *A hundred years a growing*, p. 25.
[65] Finan, *A hundred years a growing*, p. 37.
[66] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 17, May 1915, p. 15.
[67] *Irish Times*, 26 June 1915.
[68] Voeltz, 'The antidote to 'khaki fever'', p. 628.
[69] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p. 2; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 8, Aug. 1912, p. 227.

on the defensive, explaining a movement that to parents looked unfeminine and dangerously public'. Thus the early history of the Girl Guides was 'an exercise in persuasion for leaders who needed to convince both parents and girls that the movement could combine Scout adventure with womanly pursuits'.[70] A letter written to Baden-Powell from 'one of the leading ladies in the land' argued that while it was praiseworthy to develop character, a sense of responsibility, and to induce and foster high ideals amongst girls, the dangers inherent in their activities were numerous. She wrote that

> the points that have always gone against the grain with me are the dress and perhaps the name, and the feeling that the girls are rather aping the boys and following them into a sphere which, to my mind, ought and can belong to boys only and which is brought rather near the line of ridicule when it comes to a serious and officially recognised movement. I have a very strong feeling about this, and fear that it may lead to a spread of such horrors as women pretending to be soldiers, and going about as recruiting 'officers', dressed up in uniform and calling themselves 'Sergeants' and 'Corporals', etc.[71]

Olave Baden-Powell, later Chief Guide, remarked that they were not like Boy Scouts and wished to encourage 'true womanliness as opposed to a "tomboy" spirit of militarism' arguing that the Girl Guides had 'our own particular feminine jobs'. She noted that 'in our sphere of life we do not want to do boxing and running or fencing and that sort of thing, do we?'.[72] There was a multitude of reactions from members themselves. Former member Shelia Findlater believed that 'it was a terrific character-building organisation'.[73] However, not all members conformed to the roles assigned to them by the aspirations of the leadership. One former Girl Guide recalled on becoming a member that, 'one can still remember the feeling of anti-climax, of being let-down, almost insulted. Who wanted to be womanly at our age?'.[74]

The Boys' Brigade was firm that any organisation for girls should not adopt the name 'brigade' as 'we chose the term "Brigade" for our organisation because of the manly, military ring about it' and 'we certainly do not want to make our girls manly' and any organisation

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[70] Proctor, 'On my honour', p. 67.
[71] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 18, June 1915, p. 9.
[72] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 7, July 1914, p. 3.
[73] Finan, *A hundred years a growing*, p. 35.
[74] Typed reminiscences of Evelyn Goshawk, 1977, early days of Guiding box, Guide Association, London, cited in T.M. Proctor, 'On my honour', p.22.

'should be based on *womanly* lines'.[75] The Church of Ireland archbishop of Dublin, Joseph Ferguson Peacocke, commented that organisations which promoted religion as well as fostering obedience and discipline were needed amongst girls but cautioned there were elements to be warned against. He stated that 'those who had charge of the brigade ought to see that the girls do not become hoydenish in their manners-that they do not seek to imitate boys. No one liked to see a womanly man or womanly boy'. He continued that 'they should not seek to grow up as boys do, but to grow up with the true instincts of women and the feelings of women'.[76]

For some there was a specific reason why there should be an organisation devoted to girls. A writer with the *Irish Times* commented that 'girls are more apt naturally even than boys to gather into *cliques* and cherish petty distinctions. Outdoor games, under wise direction, form the best way of gradually eliminating such feelings when they arise'.[77] It was hoped that youth organisations would have the result of 'inculcating in them a public spirit' and once this was achieved 'the parochial mind will disappear, and a broader outlook take its place'.[78]

Many of the activities engaged in by the Girl Guides reflected the dominant discourse entrenched in the Irish education system which was highly gendered. Practical skills such as needlework were of great importance in the curriculum and were accorded high status next to reading and writing. The home was promoted as the natural sphere for women with education orientated towards providing females with the necessary skills to enable them to carry out domestic tasks and 'the national schools system institutionalised the dominant ideology regarding the role and function of women in society'.[79] There was a fear amongst some that females engaging in scholarly activity equated to a reciprocal decline in their knowledge of the traditional activities of housewives and organisations which instructed them in such activities were seen as developing skills underdeveloped in the traditional education system. Towards end of the nineteenth century there were concerns that girls' education was too literary and bore little relevance to everyday life which ensured the adoption of a 'pragmatic and functionalist approach towards elementary education' and as a result more practical instruction was introduced including lesson in cookery, laundry, and domestic service.[80]

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[75] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 4, Dec. 1902, p. 56.
[76] *Irish Times*, 10 Nov. 1910.
[77] *Irish Times*, 19 Aug. 1911.
[78] *Weekly Irish Times*, 4 Sept. 1915.
[79] D. Raftery, S. M. Parkes, *Female education in Ireland 1700-1900: Minerva or Madonna* (Dublin, 2007), pp. 40-1.
[80] Raftery, Parkes, *Female education*, p. 56-7.

However, some felt that these skills were neglected in the national school system. For example, the Roman Catholic bishop of Ross, Denis Kelly, stated 'that female teachers of Ireland have much less knowledge of housewifery than the ordinary woman'. He commented on the treatment of a girl who was earmarked for further education in order to become a school teacher that,

> at present they go through a course of training of two years in the training colleges; the training is purely literary, with a little of what I might describe as mechanical work of sewing, but they have no knowledge of the ordinary work of a housewife. In fact the female teachers of Ireland have much less knowledge of housewifery than the ordinary women. Their history is this: a little girl of fourteen or fifteen is appointed monitaress in the school. After the appointment it becomes a sort of unwritten law of the family that she is not expected to wet her hands afterwards; the mother and sisters do all the housewifery, and in fact they do the personal work for this child; she is supposed to devote herself exclusively to books. She serves five years as a monitress, and when eighteen, nineteen or twenty years of age she is sent to a training college in Dublin, and spends two years there exclusively at literary work with the exception of needlework, which is part of the course. Therefore she comes out with no knowledge whatever that a woman ought to have with regard to housekeeping-with far less knowledge than her mother or her sisters-and she is set then to teach the girls of the parish.

Sir Charles Cameron, chief medical officer of the public health department of Dublin corporation, noted that 'in very few of the primary schools for girls is cooking taught'.[81] Similarly, Sir Lambert Ormsby, a Dublin surgeon and president of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, commented that 'although it is a very dangerous thing to enter upon, I do not think that the ladies entering universities is to the advantage of their physique afterwards. I think the more they develop their brains the less they impress strength and robustness upon their offspring'.[82] This is reflective of the female education curriculum which buttressed arguments regarding the inferior intellectual capacity of females and the suitability of

[81] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration. minutes of evidence taken before the inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration, list of witnesses and minutes of evidence*, 2 [Cd. 2210] (1904), p. 416; Cameron, *Reminiscences*, p. 169.
[82] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 466.

providing a scholarly education.[83] Thus the encouragement of domestic pursuits was an attempt by youth organisations to supplement the existing educational curriculum and develop abilities that were seen as neglected in the education of Irish girls.

A related issue is the treatment of women within Fianna Éireann. At an ard-fheis it was recommended to extend membership to girls on the suggestion of a group from Belfast, but this was rejected.[84] However, a newspaper report of the third annual congress in 1912 records that 'it was decided that the organisation be open to girls, and that girls' branches be formed'.[85] Sean Healy, a former member, wrote how within the organisation 'discipline was strict' and that 'there was an order that members of the Fianna would not appear on the streets in uniform in company with girls'.[86] Girls however were permitted to hold honorary membership of the organisation.[87] Despite Constance Markievicz being a high ranking official within the organisation, and very popular amongst the boys, there was still uneasiness in the ranks at both her position and her behaviour. Sean Prendergast, a former Fianna member recalled how,

> Madame was in our minds a truly strange lady. Some of us might think she was forward-even her smoking in our presence often shocked some who themselves thought no lady should smoke, at least not in public. Sometimes some of the boys were not even pleased at her wearing our uniform tunics. She generally walked beside us and not in the ranks...she was a truly unique, distinctive personality, full of energy, talented, brimming over with enthusiasm for the Fianna idea.

There was a disparity between the reaction of members to her behaviour and the genuine warmth and admiration in which they held her. Sean Prendergast remarked that 'were she a boy or a young man, she should have ranked high, possibly have been accorded the status of a Baden-Powell...notwithstanding the limitation due to her sex, she fitted into the sphere wonderfully well, because as a promoter and figurehead she guided the destiny of the

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[83] Raftery, Parkes, *Female education*, p. 42.
[84] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[85] *Irish Independent*, 15 July 1912; *Irish Freedom*, Aug. 1912. The resolution to admit girls was later rescinded, see Hay, 'Foundation and development', p. 60.
[86] Sean Healy, BMH WS 47.
[87] *Fianna*, Mar. 1915.

Fianna'.[88] This prejudice had been prevalent from the beginning and there had always been divisions over whether a woman should be involved in the organisation. At the foundation of Fianna Éireann many were not inclined to give Markievicz election to office on the grounds that she was a woman. According to Hobson, 'I had on many occasions to point out privately that they could not accept her financial help and refuse her membership or office. This feeling against the presence of a woman in the organisation continued in varying degrees of intensity for many years and probably never completely disappeared'.[89] Despite this 'it was still considered expedient that Madame should not be too openly antagonised'.[90] This may have been because Markievicz provided rent of ten shillings to allow them sole use of their hall.[91]

2.2 Civic Function

An appreciation of the civic function of these organisations is important in developing a rounded understanding of their role. This civic function was encouraged by the means adopted by youth movements to group members together. At a Boys' Brigade demonstration it was outlined that the object of the organisation was attained by

> banding the boys together in companies under duly qualified Christian men as officers; by creating among them and *esprit de corps*, which gives them a proper pride in their company and a strong incentive to do nothing unworthy of it; by taking up everything that should enter into healthy boy life, and bring it all under Christian influence and control.[92]

However, *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* reported that this was lacking in many companies and 'the *majority* of our companies do not possess one-half or one-tenth enough of that indefinable something we call Esprit de Corps'. Even those that did maintained misconceptions about what the term denoted. For them many companies possessed a distorted and exaggerated understanding: 'if a feeling of company pride is followed by a

[88] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[89] Hobson, 'Foundation and growth', p. 19.
[90] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[91] Seamus Pounch, BMH WS 267.
[92] *Irish Times*, 13 Feb. 1912.

feeling of contempt for others it is clear that the Esprit de corps has "gone wrong", and the sooner pride has a fall the better for all concerned'.[93]

At the ninth annual inspection of the 1st Belfast company, the dean of Connor, Charles Seaver, stated that boys were 'dreadfully exposed to temptations which beset them all around in this mortal life' and in combating these 'he could not conceive of anything very much better to enable them to accomplish that warfare than to be brought into a combination such as was represented there, drilled and commanded and watched over by kind officers'. Here they were surrounded by good influences and like-minded peers as there was 'nothing more injurious than bad associates'.[94] The sense of belonging that was engendered by membership of a youth movement provided opportunities to encourage virtues and inculcate values. The Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade argued that the

> gang spirit is so strong in boys there is a danger that, if left to themselves, boys may drift into hurtful associations, and lose their independence in loyalty or submission to an irresponsible gang leader. In the B.B. the gang spirit or desire of fellowship and comradeship is organised and influenced in a right direction.[95]

The aspiration was that the collective rather than the individual would be the primary focus of the organisation and this had the potential to foster a greater sense of morale amongst the membership. Anthony Traill stated that in the Boys' Brigade 'their first duty was to learn to obey, to sacrifice their own individuality and their own personal wishes' by 'becoming a part of a large machine'.[96] Major Law, addressing the 21st Belfast Company, stated that 'the welfare of the company not only depended on the hard work of the captain, officers, and non-commissioned officers, but every member of it'.[97] In 1900 Sir George White, an honorary vice-president of the Boys' Brigade, inspecting the Belfast battalion, told members that 'it takes you out of individual selves and makes you lose your ideas of yourselves in what is best for the corps to which you belong'.[98] The Dublin battalion told members to bear in mind that

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[93] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 9, May 1903, p. 131.
[94] *Belfast News-Letter*, 6 May 1897.
[95] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Jan. 1916.
[96] *Irish Times*, 24 Feb. 1905.
[97] *Belfast News-Letter*, 28 Apr. 1894.
[98] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 1, Sept. 1900, p. 13.

> there are eyes upon us all our time, and the conduct of every boy on parade and off, but especially off, is what is gradually making people form their opinions as to the value of the B.B....our movement is likely to be judged by the conduct of its members at their worst, and this thought should make us all try every moment of our lives so to act that the true value of the Boys' Brigade will be recognised by those around us.[99]

Members were informed that their 'conduct goes a long way to make or mar his company's reputation' and if their behaviour is seen by the public as 'not much better than that of an ordinary assembly of boys, they are quite justified in concluding that our lessons are so much wasted time, our talk about discipline mere words'.[100]

Placing the focus of the company's good name on the actions of members encouraged conformity as the company was promoted as only being as strong as its weakest boy. It was hoped members would be less prone to act in a manner which would damage their company's reputation, and consequently their position within it, as this would affect the respect that they drew from the leadership and the respect that they received from their peers. Allan Hoben argued that 'the boy has profound respect for the judgment of his equals. And wherever the leader can make the group ideals right he can be practically assured of the conformity of all who come within the group influence'. He believed that the moral leverage of the consensus of opinion would 'be more effective in securing good conduct than the father's neglected or fitful discipline or the mother's endless forbearance'.[101] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* maintained that where there was such pressure 'woe betide the unhappy urchin who turns up without a previous and liberal application of soap to his face. The Officers' correction is superfluous, for "public opinion" will express itself in no uncertain tone'. This however could be taken too far and

> if a desire for the smart appearance of the company induces the Boys to treat in a similar fashion the mother's darling whose nether garments bear traces of use by previous and older generations, then there is an indication

[99] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Nov. 1902.
[100] *Dublin Evening Mail,* 14 Feb. 1903.
[101] A. Hoben, 'The minister and the boy, VIII, the church boys' club', *The Biblical World*, 39 (1912), p. 384.

> of a false esprit which is not healthy, and which can only conduce to make the Company "too respectable"-a crime of heinousness.[102]

In the 1st company of the Carlow Boys' Brigade the penalty for breaking a company rule was 'a black mark against the Boys' name, and such marks shall count more than anything else against this promotion'. These marks were cancelled 'for continuous steady good conduct'.[103]

The majority of Boys' Brigade companies were attached to a parish and required the patronage of their local church and this model could foster a sense of civic pride and an enhanced awareness amongst the boys of their place within their locality and it has been argued that they 'injected a colourful, lively, element into local village and town life'.[104] Good behaviour was encouraged as members were promoted as representative of their local parishes and envisaging themselves within such a context had the potential to cultivate self-reflection and a consideration of their place and role within the local community. There were also practical outlets for this civic role and the Boys' Brigade aided many local institutions and contributed to the civic life of their communities. In 1902 members of the Belfast battalion collected on tramcars for the Royal Victoria Hospital.[105] They helped the Cripples' Institute of Ireland make a house to house collection and in 1916 Brigade companies assisted in raising over seventy pounds for Dr Barnardo's Homes.[106] The Dublin battalion organised a street collection for the Dublin branch of the British Red Cross and collected over fifty-three pounds with the society reporting that Brigade members were 'greatly admired for their courtesy and behaviour and general conduct'.[107]

The Boys' Brigade also encouraged members to engage and reflect on the social problems affecting their communities. In 1914 the Dublin battalion ran an essay competition on the means of improving the conditions of the poor in the city of Dublin. The entries were said to be 'of a very advanced character' with boys displaying a knowledge of the social conditions and an appreciation of the underlying causes, with some entries 'bordering, in

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[102] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 9, May 1903, p. 131.
[103] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[104] Springhall et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 255.
[105] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 15 Dec. 1902, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.
[106] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 4 Feb. 1914; Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 13 Nov. 1913, 14 Sept. 1916, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/1; Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 14 Dec. 1916, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/2; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 7 Nov. 1917.
[107] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 Nov. 1914, 12 Dec. 1914; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 11 Jan. 1915', BBAD, Box 10; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 23, no. 5, Jan. 1915, p 70.

many cases, on the Socialistic'. They commented on how there was a need of improved housing, increases in wages, greater efforts in dealing with issues surrounding alcohol, with one boy recommending 'the abolition of picture houses'. Another stressed the need for increased taxation arguing that he would 'put smart taxes on wealthy people'. The battalion hoped that the competition would imbue members with 'a deeper sympathy with the poor and a greater desire to do something practical to better their condition in the future'.[108] This ambition was given a practical outlet at Christmas in 1908 when the Dublin battalion provided meals 'for a number of ragged boys in the poorest parts of the city'.[109]

The Catholic Boys' Brigade similarly aimed to create unity amongst its membership. Rev. Doherty, catholic curate of the Pro-Cathedral, believed that 'this cohesion of boys for mutual moral support does a world of good' and commented that 'its main object is to secure the timely salvation of its youthful members by affording them an opportunity of segregating themselves from bad and introducing them to healthy and manly good company'.[110] There were fears expressed surrounding the company that boys kept with the Brigade providing amusement for members and saving them 'from the dangers that accompanied bad associations'.[111] In order to maintain the bonds created in the Brigade, former members were enrolled in the 'Irish Brigade' which consisted of members who had passed the age limit of seventeen and 'the sole object of the new association of past members was with a view to solidifying the forces of the scattered Catholic youthhood'.[112] They sought to foster an appreciation amongst members of Irish goods and sought to encourage Irish manufacturing. Alderman Corrigan 'urged them to make a resolution to eat, drink, and wear nothing else but Irish manufacture. If they encouraged their own native industries, one industry would create another, and there would be plenty of employment for the members of the Boys' Brigade'.[113]

The Hibernian Boys' Brigade attempted to manage members by the same means as other youth organisations. They sought to develop similar respect for terms such as honour and duty, key values within youth organisations for encouraging good behaviour. The officers of the organisation were asked to instil a high sense of honour amongst members as

> very frequently the fear of corporeal punishment is the driving force actuating a boy to make an effort...The intrinsic righteousness of his work

[108] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Mar. 1914.
[109] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 16, no. 9, May 1908, p. 132.
[110] *Freeman's Journal*, 31 May 1910.
[111] *Irish Independent*, 1 Jun. 1908.
[112] *Freeman's Journal*, 22 Nov. 1910.
[113] *Irish Independent*, 27 May 1907.

> seldom appeals to his higher senses. In the Brigade, therefore, HONOUR should be substituted for reward and punishment. The boys should be taught to make an effort and do their best more because it is their DUTY to do so than the mere fact that a shilling book may be their reward.[114]

Their attempt at creating an *esprit de corps* sought to encourage uniformity of action amongst members. Boys were told that 'personal cleanliness, regular and punctual attendance, and careful attention to their duties-not only in the Brigade, *but also at home and in school*-should be rigidly insisted upon'.[115] They declared to members that if they were in the uniform of the Hibernian Boys' Brigade they should 'not bring discredit by acting in a way that people will denounce the movement as a whole'.[116] It sought to keep the membership together once they had become too old for the Brigade and a corps was established for those over seventeen.[117]

The civic role of the Boy Scouts sought to develop self-reliance and to teach members the value of earning money. It was insisted that Boy Scouts could not, under any circumstances, beg for money but only earn it by using the skills that they learned and by employing the techniques that their training taught them.[118] The Belfast Boy Scouts believed that this policy 'makes troops dependent on their own talent'.[119] The Dublin Boy Scouts wrote that 'a very large proportion of the distress and unemployment in our country is directly due to want to thrift on the part of the people themselves'. The Boy Scouts could act a corrective to this and they argued that 'if the rising generation could be started on a career of saving and thrift a great difference would result in the character and prosperity of the nation in the near future'. They actively promoted a positive attitude to saving and to qualify for a second class badge a Scout was required to have six pennies in the bank, for the first class badge this increased to one shilling.[120]

They were keen to exhibit their worth to the communities in which they operated and to show the merits of the training undertaken. In 1914 Baden-Powell wrote a letter to all scoutmasters asking for their help in raising funds for the National Institute for the Blind, suggesting that Boy Scouts could work for a day with the proceeds going to the

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[114] *Hibernian Journal*, Apr. 1915.
[115] *Hibernian Journal*, Apr. 1915.
[116] *Hibernian Journal*, Jan. 1916.
[117] *Freeman's Journal*, 27 May 1914.
[118] *Irish Times*, 20 Aug. 1912.
[119] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 17 Jan. 1912.
[120] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 16 Dec. 1911.

organisation.[121] In 1914 Hedley Craig, a Trinity College student who was the Boy Scouts organising secretary for Ireland, wrote to the press to inform the public that the Boy Scouts in Dublin were prepared to do any work for a fair wage with all of the proceeds being given to the National Institute for the Blind to raise money for a supply of books for the blind. He believed that this was a worthy undertaking as 'it leaves no one the poorer and involves no element of begging'. By this initiative he hoped to showcase both the skills of the Boy Scout organisation in training young boys and to validate the worth of the organisation to the public. It was an effort at counteracting the charges levelled against the organisation from its foundation, as when it was established, he explained, it was the 'subject of much ridicule and contempt'. Craig saw the programme of work being undertaken as 'one of the ways in which the movement is demonstrating its value'.[122] In 1914 the Dublin Boy Scouts helped at a ball in the Gresham hotel in aid of the city of Dublin Skin and Cancer Hospital in Hume street.[123] In 1911 the 3rd north county Dublin troop collected subscriptions to the value of nine pounds which allowed them to provide a Christmas dinner to 150 poor children with Boy Scouts themselves serving the meals.[124] In 1912 the Belfast Boy Scouts collected on behalf of the Royal Victoria Hospital and in 1916 collected for the Cripples Institute of Ireland.[125]

The Sea Scouts also played a civic function. They patrolled the port of Dublin in order to aid any boats that experienced difficulties and in 1913 the 'Alphe' was helped by the Sea Scouts after it was unable to reach its mooring.[126] The skills that the Sea Scouts taught were advanced as beneficial to the community at large. It was noted that by teaching children to swim 'many of the regrettable drowning accidents which annually occur during the summer season could be prevented by the simple means of teaching all boys and girls to swim'.[127] Boy Scouts often aided the police and the fire brigade at displays where they helped to keep the ground clear and Baden-Powell wrote that this civic function gave 'the boys an idea of their duties in rendering assistance to the Government forces when required, thus promoting the spirit of patriotism and duty to the country'.[128] They also engaged in helping individuals in their communities. Baden-Powell wrote of the case of Irish troop which aided 'a nearly destitute and helpless old lady'. Her plight had come under the notice of their scoutmaster

[121] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 May 1914.
[122] *Irish Times*, 30 Apr. 1914.
[123] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 31 Jan. 1914, 21 Feb. 1914.
[124] *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 196, 13 Jan. 1912, p. 464; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Dec. 1911.
[125] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 5 June 1912; B.E.C.E. minute book, 6 Sept. 1916, SCNI.
[126] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 June 1913, 28 June 1913.
[127] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Jan. 1913.
[128] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p.4

and he asked for volunteers from within his troop to help her with various tasks such as cooking, cleaning-up, fire lighting, and looking after a grand-child she had in her care. The whole troop 'at once held up their hands'. Fourteen Scouts were selected and while the scoutmaster did not refer to the matter again, 'they have not forgotten, they have not slacked off, and the work goes on to-day as efficiently as when they first started out upon it to the benefit of the old lady and to the credit of those lads'.[129]

Youth movements were also the victims of impersonation and both the Boys' Brigade and the Boy Scouts were imitated by a number of crafty individuals in an attempt to elicit money which had the potential to undermine their civic efforts. The president of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade wrote that 'it has been brought to my notice that boys, wearing old and battered Boys' Brigade equipment, have been calling at houses in different parts of Dublin, asking for money to carry on the Brigade work'. He wrote that 'I need hardly say that no company of the Boys' Brigade would adopt such a method of raising funds, and that these boys have no numbers on their caps. A boy in Boys' Brigade uniform without a number on his cap may always be taken as an impostor'.[130] In 1912 Henry W. Moss, a Dublin chemist and honorary secretary of the Dublin Boy Scouts Association, drew attention to several areas in Dublin where boys were collecting money by means of cards headed 'Boy Scouts'. Moss commented that no members of the Boy Scouts was permitted to obtain money in such a way stating that 'it is a principle of the movement that all funds shall be earned, on the part of the boys, by public displays or other similar means, and not obtained by begging'.[131] During World War I there were further reports of boys in uniform collecting money on behalf of the Boy Scouts 'for their own benefit' who were not members and were 'bringing discredit on the Scout organisation'.[132] In the early days of the Boy Scouts Baden-Powell had warned about the potential for such activity, noting that without a proper system of control 'it can be given a doubtful reputation by youngsters who may use the Scout badges as a license for lawless deeds'.[133] He wrote in 1909 that Boy Scouts should never go 'hat in hand, begging'.[134] He had written to the police to alert them 'that collectors dressed as Scouts are probably frauds' in order 'to protect the public against imposters'.[135]

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[129] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 9, Sept. 1915, p. 229.
[130] *Irish Times*, 30 July 1915.
[131] *Irish Times*, 24 Feb. 1912; a similar instance was also reported in the *Irish Independent*, 14 Feb. 1913.
[132] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Apr. 1915, 28 Nov. 1914.
[133] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1909, p. 3.
[134] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p.4
[135] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 17, May 1915, p.7.

The Girl Guides also contributed to civic life and offered themselves for activities such as garden work with the money accumulated being added to company funds.[136] Baden-Powell also expressed himself against the practice of asking for contributions in the Girl Guides, writing that 'personally, I am all against it, no matter how good the cause. It teaches begging, it teaches very undesirable accosting of strangers, and moreover, it opens the way to swindlers to dress up as guides and rob the public'. [137]

Fianna Éireann attempted to display their value to the local communities in which they operated and in Dublin they developed the 'Fianna Post'. Former member Joseph Reynolds wrote that 'this activity related to the collection and delivery of letters in the Dublin area, on the lines of the system operating in the post office'. In order to make it a success 'circulars were sent to sympathisers intimating to them that they could leave their correspondence in certain call offices when they would be collected at certain periods and delivered at charges obtaining in the post office'.[138] Receiving depots were established in each district and the main aim of the scheme was 'to deprive the British Post Office of revenue'. [139] They envisioned themselves as contributing to the economic prosperity of Ireland and exerted their influence in an attempt at fostering the idea that the economic wellbeing of the country was synonymous with the national duty to which they had pledged themselves. At a lecture members were told that 'as many candles were imported last year as would keep 25 men employed all the year round; as much soap as would keep 100' and 'you may not think that it matters much when you buy a halfpenny worth of matches, but through people not thinking and buying foreign matches, £85,000 worth of matches were imported last year, and just think what a lot of good all that money could have done'. [140] They encouraged the development of Irish industry and manufacturing and had a Fianna supply store which only sold products produced in Ireland.[141] Constance Markievicz told members to buy goods of Irish manufacture as 'every article of Irish manufacture purchased helps to keep an Irish man or woman at home in Ireland'.[142] In Cork the organisation was involved in attempts at ensuring an increase in Irish products. Here they were 'utilised in the campaign for the encouragement of Irish industries by being sent frequently to shops to ask for articles

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[136] *Weekly Irish Times*, 11 Dec. 1915.
[137] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 17, May 1915, p.7.
[138] Joseph Reynolds, BMH WS 191.
[139] Seamus Pounch, BMH WS 267.
[140] *Freeman's Journal*, 10 Nov. 1909.
[141] *Fianna*, May 1915; Jan. 1916.
[142] *Meath Chronicle*, 11 Aug. 1917.

of Irish manufacture which were known to be available but not stocked by the shops concerned'.[143]

During World War I they played a civic role by attempting to discourage shopkeepers from profiting from wartime shortages. A resolution was passed which reminded

> all manufacturers, producers, and retailers of Irish goods that their trade has been mainly built up and their prosperity assured by the patriotism and self -sacrifice of Irish men and women...the members of Na Fianna Éireann, who are drawn mainly from the poorer section of the community, have always given preference to Irish goods, even when such preference entailed increased expenditure. Now is the time for Irish traders to show their appreciation of the support they have received by refraining from unduly increasing their prices, and thereby entailing great hardship on their supporters in this time of stress and need.

The central council of the organisation told each member that they should prepare a list of the provision shops in their district and note the retail prices of the ordinary articles of food such as flour, bacon, butter, cheese, sugar, and tea. The lists were to be verified weekly and handed to the chief Scout officer in each district who would then forward them to headquarters. They were told that 'picketing is suggested in the case of those who increase prices unduly'.[144]

2.3 Youth Movements and Social Class

Youth movements were conscious of class issues and their programmes were advanced as providing values, skills, and influences, that would allow members an opportunity for social advancement. They argued that the relationship between the leader and members of youth organisations was vital for the attainment of these ambitions. This was an attempt at providing role-models for members and had a distinct class basis as, in general, leaders were from a higher social grade than the boys under their authority. William Smith believed that one of strongest forces in the Boys' Brigade was the personal influence that officers exerted over the boys under their command with one of the most valuable features being the benefit that the officers themselves received 'in the calling out of the sympathies and the

[143] Typescript history of the Irish Volunteers in Cork to 1916, NLI, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, 31,437/1.
[144] *Irish Independent*, 8 Aug. 1914; *Irish Volunteer*, 15 Aug. 1914.

development of the characters towards a nobler and stronger manhood'. He recalled that Henry Drummond, a Scottish evangelist, university lecturer and Boys' Brigade supporter, had stated that the Boys' Brigade 'would have been worth starting if it had only been for the sake of the officers'.[145] Drummond believed that an officer was 'not only their guide, philosopher, and friend, but their brother. In distress, in sickness, they can count upon him. If they are out of work, or wish to better themselves in life, they know at least one man in the world to whom their future career is a living interest'.[146] George William Shannon, a barrister and Dublin battalion vice-president, argued that 'when a boy realises that his officer is in earnest in his desire to help, he gives a whole-hearted trust which may develop in the hero-worship so characteristic of this period of life'.[147] This role as a mentor was appreciated by the Dublin battalion who that wrote that officers 'must encourage the boys to confide in him and have them regard him as an elder brother'.[148]

James Carfrae Alston commented that an officer's relationship with his boys was 'closer and warmer than that of the ordinary teachers to his class; than that of the military officer to his men; even than that of the pastor to his flock'.[149] This was attested to by Rev. Philip B. Johnson, a Church of Ireland clergyman and captain of the 28th Dublin company, who wrote that the Boys' Brigade 'have been a great help to me as a clergyman in bringing me into contact with the boys and giving me a knowledge of them which I could not otherwise attain'.[150] A former officer in the Dublin battalion argued that officers would gain an insight into members by visiting their homes where they would 'get to know the boy's father's views, surroundings, and occupation'. This would encourage officers interest in social questions as 'for the first time he will touch them practically and feel their acuteness' and realise that 'the most burning problem for his Christianity are these very social questions which his boys and their homes have raised for him'.[151] This relationship was appreciated by those outside the Brigade and in 1903 a royal commission commented that in the Boys' Brigade 'officers hold a more intimate relation to them than is possible between the ordinary teacher and his pupils'.[152] Lord Guthrie, Boys' Brigade president, wrote in 1913 that, 'I

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[145] W.A. Smith, 'The Boys' Brigade', p. 662; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Dec. 1913.
[146] H. Drummond, 'The Boys' Brigade', *Good Words*, 32 (1891), p. 99.
[147] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 23, no. 1, Sept. 1914, p. 4.
[148] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1 Oct. 1904.
[149] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 2, Oct. 1898, p. 21.
[150] Philip B. Johnson to J.W. Morgan, 27 Nov. 1899, Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, BBAD, Box 9.
[151] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Nov. 1908.
[152] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland), report and appendix*, 1 [Cd. 1507] (1903), p. 35.

seriously believe that an efficient Boys' Brigade officer is doing more for the future of his country than most members of Parliament'.[153]

While this was the ambition, the difficulty of getting the right men to be officers was impressed upon the Brigade. Companies were advised that lieutenants as well as captains should be carefully chosen and 'it is better to tell those who wish to start work in the Brigade, but without being fully qualified, that their doing so is almost certain to end in disappointment'. Even those that were officers posed difficulties as 'some Officers have a knack of making difficulties for themselves, or of magnifying those they have'.[154] William McVicker appreciated that the position of an officer required a specific combination of skills. He commented that 'there are plenty of good drill instructors who would be bad comrades and poor mentors in moral and religious matters. And there are plenty of earnest Christian workers who would be helpless in appreciation of smart and soldierly company drill'.[155]

The influence of the scoutmaster in the Boy Scouts was similarly cited as vital in the success of the organisation. Cecil W. Price noted that 'it may be doubted if even the average parent understands his child as well as the Scoutmaster does, for the father and mother are naturally biased in favour of their offspring'. He wrote that parents tended to 'exaggerate the value of any act of intelligence or cleverness he may show, and are naturally inclined to be indulgent to his weakness' while 'the Scoutmaster who has a great number of boys under his control is free from this natural bias, and therefore better able to form a sound opinion of the qualifications of a boy'.[156] Baden-Powell wrote of scoutmasters that 'it no doubt developed character in them just as much as it did in the boys'.[157] Sir Francis Vane recounted speaking to a vicar who had raised a troop of Boy Scouts and how he appreciated the importance of choosing the correct scoutmaster. He stated that, 'I feel the greatest responsibility in choosing my Scoutmaster, for he will be much more closely in touch with the boys, and will have much more influence on their lives than I, as vicar, can ever hope to have'.[158] The organisation in Ireland was always anxious to induce applications from prospective scoutmasters and anyone over the age of eighteen was asked to apply with the qualifications being 'enthusiasm and a love of outdoor life'.[159] However, in 1913 the Dublin Boy Scouts expressed their difficulty in attracting potential scoutmasters. James Woods Jackson wrote

[153] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 25 Jan. 1913.
[154] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 2, Dec. 1891, p. 30.
[155] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[156] C. W. Price, 'The development of the Boy Scout movement', *Fortnightly Review*, 96 (1914), p. 125.
[157] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 2, Feb. 1911, p. 8.
[158] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p. 7.
[159] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.

that 'it is not an easy matter to procure gentleman with the necessary qualifications willing to devote their time in training the boys'. He reported that more than half of the 7,000 scoutmasters in the United States of America were university graduates and noted that in Ireland 'there is plenty of room for this class here should they be willing to offer their services'.[160] The position of a leader in a youth movement could confer social advantages and may have been an important motivation for engaging in philanthropic endeavour. It has been argued that membership of a youth movement was a means of affirming social status and 'contributions to philanthropic causes were a sign of that much sought after status, respectability'.[161] This was also noted by contemporaries and the Scottish rector W.B. Irvine commented that when in uniform 'they look upon themselves as officers and gentlemen'.[162]

The efforts at encouraging social advancement were also appreciated by those outside youth movements. Lord Rossmore of Monaghan supported the Boy Scouts as he believed it would be 'the making of many good, brave, honest men out of what would otherwise mostly remain in the gutter'.[163] Lord Kitchener stated that the Boy Scouts were worthy of support as 'it broke down class prejudice, and promoted comradeship, discipline and resourcefulness'.[164] This was seen as one of the key benefits of the Boy Scouts programme and the methods adopted complimented these efforts. Arthur M. Hope wrote that 'class distinctions are difficult to maintain amid the healthy rivalries of the open air'.[165] Referring to the Boys' Brigade, Lord Roberts stated that 'anyone who will take the trouble to inquire personally into the matter cannot fail to recognise the benefit conferred on the boys who belong to the Brigade'. He argued that 'not only are they cleaner, brighter, and better measured than boys of their class generally, which shows that they have risen above their fellows in the social scale, but those by whom they are employed bear strong testimony to their increasing usefulness and their uniform good conduct'.[166] In 1900 he stated that 'I believe if the parents of all the Dublin boys realised as clearly as I do the benefit their sons would derive from belonging to the brigade, they would not let a day pass without having them enrolled as

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[160] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1 Mar. 1913.
[161] Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 19; F.K. Prochaska, 'Philanthropy', in F.M.L. Thompson, ed., *The Cambridge social history of Britain, 1750-1950*, 3, *social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 366.
[162] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland), minutes of evidence and index*, 2 [Cd. 1508] (1903), p. 139.
[163] *Irish Times*, 15 May 1914.
[164] *Irish Times*, 19 Apr. 1911.
[165] A.H. Hope, 'The breaking down of caste' in J.H. Whitehouse, ed., *Problems of boy life* (London, 1912), p. 301.
[166] *Irish Times*, 1 Feb. 1898.

members of the Battalion'.[167] W.B. Irvine commented that 'I can tell the difference in the demeanour of a boy in the corps from that of another boy who may be fairly good'.[168]

In Baden-Powell's vision the Boy Scouts were 'influencing lads born in our tragic slums, pulling them out and turning them into something good for the country and good for themselves-happy, hard-working, hopeful citizens, equipped with a knowledge of useful handicrafts'. He wrote that with the Boy Scouts 'we can give them a start in life. That is why so many fail; they have never had a start. It is not their fault; it is our fault. It is all due to bad organisation and bad training'. This was more than empty rhetoric and found a practical outlet in Ireland. In some instances the Boy Scouts provided proactive aid to single parent families and Baden-Powell wrote that 'there is one fine troop of boys where the chief qualification for being in the troop is that the boy must not know who his father was. All these boys are turning out very fine men now, whereas many of them would have been wasters without us'.[169] He held a deep commitment to the alleviation of poverty and wrote that 'probably the majority of us are in sympathy with the Socialist ideal, though we may not see with the same eye the practicability of its details or its methods'.[170] The organisation tried to place limited attention on issues of class and Scout Law no. 4 told boys to be 'a friend to all...no matter to what social class the other belongs'.[171] This emphasis on merit over class was appreciated by the Irish Lord Chief Justice, James Campbell, who wrote that 'in the future the individual was going to count, not by reason of his rank or money, but by his personal worth and character, and the contribution he could make to the common good'.[172] The Boy Scouts were conscious of class divisions and at a sports day held at Abbeyview House, organised by the Boyle Boy Scouts in Co. Roscommon, they were keen to emphasise that 'a feature of the day was the fact that the poorest child was made as welcome as the descendent of the richest noble of the land'.[173]

Baden-Powell wrote of class that, 'I would like to see that word abolished for ever, with all the harm that it has done'. For him 'the class boundary is an entirely artificial erection, and can, therefore, be pulled down, if only we set our minds to it'. His aim with the Boy Scouts was 'to mingle class with class, and to bring about a happier and more human life for all, so that the poorer shall reap his share of enjoyment just as much as his more well-to-

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[167] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Mar. 1900.
[168] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 2, p. 139.
[169] *Leitrim Observer*, 11 Apr. 1914.
[170] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 6, June 1912, p. 162.
[171] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Sept. 1912.
[172] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 22 Nov. 1916; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 1, Jan. 1918, p. 9.
[173] *Roscommon Herald*, 9 Aug. 1913.

do brother'. He wrote that at the end of World War I, '"God Forbid!" if we allow the fellow-feeling thereby engendered to be dissipated by a revival of those miserable party politics and social barriers and industrial quarrels'.[174] It could be argued that Baden-Powell's belief in policies of social reform, aiming to improve the conditions of the working class and ensuring the avoidance of class antagonisms, was not solely concerned with individual social advancement and had an imperial motivation. He stated that 'if a strong enemy wants our rich commerce and colonies, and sees us in England divided against each other, he would pounce in and capture us. For this you must begin, as boys, not to think other classes of boys to be your enemies'.[175]

Practical efforts were implemented in order to place limited attention on issues of class. Uniforms were important in attempting to eliminate class distinctions amongst members and also had the added benefit of acting as a useful recruiting tool. At a Boys' Brigade demonstration in Clontarf, the *Irish Times* commented that 'the boys' uniform is exceedingly smart...a good many lads not members of the Brigade were just a little envious of so nice a dress, and if there is a large accession immediately to the ranks of the Brigade we shall not be surprised'.[176] In 1910 the newspaper reported that the uniform of the Boy Scouts was 'exceedingly picturesque' and 'it gives the boy who wears it for the first time a new appearance of neatness, smartness, and dignity; it makes him worth looking at-twice the boy he has been. His drab clothes for everyday he exchanges for a uniform of harmonious colour'.[177] The adoption of a uniform by youth movements also served to encourage self-reliance. Members of the Church Lads' Brigade were encouraged to keep their uniform clean and presentable and to 'do this work for themselves, and not to be dependent upon mothers and sisters'.[178]

Despite this ambition there were practical and subtle impediments to uniforms fulfilling their aim as in some instances they simply served to impose more indirect forms of discrimination amongst the membership.[179] While uniforms functioned as an outward sign of a rejection of class divisions this 'classless' ambition did not mean that indicators of status had disappeared. Uniforms were available in a variety of fabrics with each costing varying amounts. Tammy Proctor has argued that the Boy Scouts 'created a seductive consumer

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[174] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 9, Sept. 1918, p. 161.
[175] Wilkinson, 'English youth movements' , p. 11.
[176] *Irish Times*, 15 May 1894.
[177] *Irish Times*, 4 June 1910.
[178] Spencer, 'Looking after the lads', p. 579.
[179] J.R. Gillis, 'Conformity and rebellion: contrasting styles of English and German youth, 1900-33', *History of Education Quarterly*, 13 (1973), p. 255.

paradise for members' and while uniforms may have looked identical to outsiders, members were extremely conscious of the differences in class and wealth displayed in the subtle distinctions of the uniform.[180] Baden-Powell was conscious of these indicators and criticised the various uniform alterations that had developed. For him 'they mean "show" and a danger of "swank", whereas we want to be appreciated and recognised only by the *results of our work*'. He argued that

> the best and smartest companies that I have inspected have been those who were plainest in their dress, and the worst company happened to be the one that was above all others in its brilliancy of uniform. I am afraid I do not see any importance in showy uniforms as compared with efficiency and good tone.[181]

Uniforms also provided more practical difficulties as their purchase was difficult for some members and the Boy Scouts noted that many boys wished to join but were 'prevented by the cost'.[182] In the Curragh troops in Co. Kildare boys who could not afford the Scout uniform were given it on the promise of a payment of 2d per week with Scouts who brought in new members receiving a monetary reward and promotion.[183] In Dublin, the Boy Scouts noted that every effort would be made to get a uniform for any boy unable to pay for it.[184]

Similarly, the Church Lads' Brigade in Belfast noted that procuring uniforms was difficult as 'the expense was prohibitive' and 'beyond the means of the lads of our Companies'. There were concerns that this would impact upon the growth of the Brigade as 'the lads who benefit by the C.L.B. would be debarred from joining on account of the expense'.[185]

Fianna Éireann members also had to equip themselves with uniforms at their own expense which was not an easy task for all and necessitated much sacrifice on the part of the membership.[186] Sean Prendergast recalled that a system was adopted where members could procure one article at a time:

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[180] Proctor, '(Uni)forming youth' , p. 104.
[181] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 18, June 1915, p. 9.
[182] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 2, Feb. 1912, p. 57.
[183] *Kildare Observer*, 17 Aug. 1912.
[184] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Oct. 1914.
[185] Minute book of the Belfast battalion of the Church Lads' Brigade, 1 Nov. 1912, 7 Nov. 1913, PRONI, D950/1/148.
[186] Patrick Hearne, BMH WS 1742.

> one could pay weekly into a uniform fund, and so dress oneself as per amount subscribed. This method of dressing oneself was tiresome and required much sacrifice and self-denial to many of us who were 'just ordinary boys' who would hardly be said to possess much of worldly goods or treasures. In addition to these payments, we had to have available a few coppers for outings and camping to pay for the little extras that might be required on occasions.[187]

Those members who were of the labouring class would have found it difficult to procure uniforms due to the small amount of money at their disposable. In the period Sir Charles Cameron noted that 'amongst the labouring population the children are worst off for proper clothing. They rarely get new articles to wear, and are frequently clothed in the worn-out garments of their parents, ill-adjusted to the size of their new wearers'.[188]

It was a similar case in the Boys' Brigade and the captain of the 1st Carrickfergus company of the Boys' Brigade commented that 'bad clothing however appeared to have a somewhat deterrent effect' on boys joining the Brigade. A lieutenant in the 1st Lisburn company noted that 'there were boys in his company who were badly clothed' and recommended a uniform jacket which 'would make them equal in appearance to boys who were better clothed' and proposed that 'those boys who were able to do so should purchase the jacket, while the other should have the jacket given to them'. However, William McVicker argued that making some members purchase the uniform with others having it given to them 'would probably have a tendency to pauperising those boys to whom the coats were given'.[189] The Dublin battalion noted that in the United States of America the equipment required by the Boys' Brigade included hat, leggings, belts, and overcoats with the cost being 'staggering', noting that in Ireland the simple uniform 'answers its purpose effectively and at trifling expense'.[190] The Dublin battalion did however provide aid to boys who were in need. In 1918 Jonathan M. Baldwin, captain of the 13th company, wrote to the

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[187] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[188] Cameron, *Reminiscences*, pp. 168-9.
[189] Minutes of a Boys' Brigade conference of 22 Feb. 1890, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, T1773/1.
[190] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Dec. 1904.

battalion executive requesting that a grant be provided to his company for boots as they were 'badly in need' and a fund was opened for this purpose with £10 provided to start the fund.[191]

Uniforms helped to provide a visual distinction between members and non-members. J.R. Gillis has argued that youth organisations helped establish a moral distinction between rough and respectable youth and the 'athletic uniforms of the model adolescent produced their antithesis in the wide leather belts and bell-bottomed fustian trousers which were becoming the costume of many working youths at the turn of the century'. Within such a context 'boys in short trousers were exposed to savage mockery by working lads who proudly modified adult dress as a suitable symbol of their independence and maturity'.[192] There is evidence of concerns amongst Boy Scouts in Dublin of being seen in their uniform. In 1911 there were claims that Boy Scouts were hiding their Scout hats under their coats when going to and from their headquarters. The Dublin Boy Scouts commented that 'boys who are ashamed of wearing their uniforms in public when going to their troop parades are poor spirited scouts' and hoped that the practice would cease.[193] This is indicative of the difficulty some working class members experienced as a result of youth movement membership. It has been argued that membership often entailed a betrayal of community values, political principles, and family life. Within this context membership 'often set a child apart, which could be both liberating and isolating'.[194] The Irish writer Frank O'Connor was an avid reader of boys' magazines and recalled that he behaved 'in the simple, manly way' that was recommended in the school stories he read. However, his attempts to imitate the public school values that they encouraged were met with social exclusion and condemnation from both for his peers and his superiors. He wrote that, 'they said I was mad or that I was 'shaping', and even the teacher seemed to regard it as an impertinence'.[195]

Despite the ambitions of youth movements to promote an egalitarian outlook it would be wrong to assume that the elimination of class divisions was successful based solely on the evidence provided by leaders and the difficulties of implementation must also be considered. Douglas Eyre, who was connected with many youth organisations, attested to the class divisions that existed amongst the boys themselves which invariably limited the extent to

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[191] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 14 Oct. 1918, BBAD, Box 9.
[192] Gillis, 'Evolution of juvenile delinquency', p. 122.
[193] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 10 June 1911.
[194] Proctor, '(Uni)forming youth', p. 104.
[195] J. Springhall, 'Building character in the British boy: the attempt to extend Christian manliness to working-class adolescents, 1880 to 1914', in J.A. Mangan and J. Walvin, eds., *Manliness and morality: middle-class masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, 1987), p. 69.

which social integration could be achieved. Eyre believed that the roughest elements were willing to join youth organisations but that this necessitated the creation of special clubs limited to this class of boy. He commented that,

> If you start a club in a district, it soon gets filled by people who are not composed of the roughest element, and even a club which induces originally lads of the roughest portion of the community gets, as time goes on, to be respectable, and then these members do not wish to have the roughest class in their club.[196]

There were recommendations that forming companies of boys composed of the same class would be preferable to mixing classes but these were advanced on the basis of proper organisation rather than a desire to segregate classes. C.E.B. Russell argued that forming clubs solely for the very poor would be advisable as 'it would be possible to permit for the first year or so a laxity which would never do in cases where a company drew it members from boys in a better walk of life'. A boy such as this was 'his own master' and lived 'a life free of restraint'. He argued that the Boys' Brigade was not the best means 'to teach them habits of discipline, etc., *unless the company is strictly limited to boys of the same class*'.[197] However, he did warn of the danger 'that the very lads for whom the work was first commended may gradually be overlooked, and the easier managed, better dressed, better brought-up boys take their place'.[198] The Dublin battalion were similarly conscious of potential difficulties and instructed members not to snub a boy 'because he wears shabby clothes…(or) because his house is plain and unpretending…(and) he chooses a humbler trade'.[199] George Bennett Mitchell, speaking at an officers' conference in Dublin, argued that all boys should be welcomed into the Brigade stating that 'sometimes people speak as if the Boys' Brigade existed only for the poorer class of Boys'. William Monk Gibbon stated that 'wealth, social standing and education were all advantages, but they were not essentials, and that the love of Jesus Christ was the finest qualification' for membership and argued that the Brigade attracted all boys: 'sharp city boys, quiet country boys, boys, good, bad, and indifferent'.[200]

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[196] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 153.
[197] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 2, Oct. 1901, p. 28.
[198] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 4, Dec. 1901, p. 60.
[199] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Jan. 1914.
[200] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 3, Nov. 1909, pp. 37, 39, vol. 21, no. 10, June 1913, p. 148.

It was argued that the Boys' Brigade did not reach the poorer classes and only held an interest for those who were socially aspiring and not the children of the slums. The first development of the Brigade in Glasgow did not reach this class and the participants were primarily the sons of artisans and a similar situation existed in the Boys' Brigade in Ireland.[201] The Dublin surgeon Sir Lambert Ormsby commented on the Boys' Brigade that it 'is about the only thing that taps the poorer classes. But those who join the Boys' Brigade, I think probably, are the better class of the poorer class'.[202] In 1892 Lieutenant Colonel Glencross, commander of the Lancashire Fusiliers, stated at a Boys' Brigade demonstration in Belfast that 'the brigade only reached the more respectable class of boys'.[203]

Despite their efforts the Boys' Brigade was restricted by being a religious organisation and this meant that they could not attract the most neglected elements in society.[204] Douglas Eyre believed that in many organisations religion was too much to the forefront and commented that, 'I do not think you will get hold of the rougher sort of boy or girl originally in that way'.[205] Lord Meath similarly argued that a broader organisation was needed believing that those operated along religious lines were limited in their reach and scope and did not attract adolescents from the labouring classes. He argued that 'these lads, unfortunately, reject all attempt at being influenced by any religious association, and, unfortunately, the majority of lads are excessively shy-very wrongly, of course, of connecting themselves with a Christian Association, or anything which is of a definite religious character'.[206] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* attested to this and reported that 'the average boy has a prejudice against religious talk…he hates to talk about it'.[207]

Youth movements fulfilled a varied social function and provided a supervisory role over the leisure time of members. This chapter has highlighted that organisations for girls played an equally important social function and attempted to provide members with skills that were underdeveloped in the Irish education system. In attracting members youth movements appreciated the viewpoint of members themselves and attempted to provide attractive activities which appealed to them. The development of an *esprit de corps* had the potential to foster civic pride and give members a renewed appreciation of their place within their communities. They engaged with the communities in which they operated and were

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[201] Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 40; See Table. 4-5.
[202] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 465.
[203] *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 May 1892.
[204] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 1, p. 36.
[205] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 153.
[206] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 2, p. 341.
[207] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 8, no. 7, Mar. 1900, p. 98.

keen to highlight the civic function that they played, providing assistance to numerous charities and contributing to civic life. In some organisations this civic function extended to aiding in the development of the local economies in which they operated and emphasising the purchase of Irish goods. One of the aims in addressing these social concerns was to encourage upward social advancement and class cohesion. To this end they emphasised the responsibilities of citizenship and encouraged self-reliance and attempted to develop a greater work-ethic amongst members. This examination of the social functions of youth movements has demonstrated the diverse range of activities they engaged in and highlighted the contribution that they made the communities in which they operated. Developing activities that allowed them to retain a supervisory role over members also provided an opportunity to educate members on issues which were of public concern. One of these concerns was anxieties over the health of children and youth movements were significant outlets for instructing adolescents on the benefits of improved physical health.

3 Youth Movements, Physical Deterioration, and Health

3.1 Physical Deterioration

The role that youth movements played in encouraging improved physical health amongst their members must be understood in the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century anxieties surrounding the prevalence of physical deterioration and the social conditions of children. The social conditions of the period not only provided one of the impetuses for the emergence of youth movements but also the opportunity to engage in issues of public anxiety. An examination of how voluntary youth movements responded to issues of physical health contributes a different perspective on welfare provision in Ireland and complements efforts to situate the history of welfare provision in Ireland outside the confines of administrative developments or a narrow focus on the medical professions. It offers the perspectives of other aspects of welfare, highlighting the contribution that religion and social factors had on the practical operation of welfare in Ireland and in the formulation of national policies.[1] Concerns surrounding issues of physical health had been a growing concern throughout the nineteenth century especially in developing urban areas where public health, mortality, and disease were among the major social problems of many nineteenth century cities and in Ireland 'few things struck the visitor to the country more than the dirt and squalor of many Irish cities'.[2] The prevalence of slum areas in some urban centres led to growing incidences of infant mortality, infectious diseases, insanitary conditions, drunkenness, neglect of children, and criminality. The heightened public anxiety surrounding these issues was accelerated by increasing sophistication in the methodologies employed to chart their prevalence. The accumulation of statistical information in Ireland allowed direct comparison with other urban centres in the United Kingdom and was utilised to chart both progress and deterioration and highlighted both the geographical and class incidence of poor physical health which led to increased investigation of its social causes.[3] The initiation of legislative action was rendered difficult by complicating factors. Jacinta Prunty has demonstrated that statutory responses were hamstrung by competing political philosophies.

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[1] V. Crossman and P. Gray, eds., *Poverty and Welfare in Ireland, 1838-1948* (Dublin, 2011), p. 1; G. Jones, E. Malcolm, eds., *Medicine, Disease and the State in Ireland, 1650-1940* (Cork, 1999), p. 1.

[2] M.E. Daly, *Dublin: the deposed capital, a social and economic history, 1860-1914* (Cork, 1984), p. 240; R. Barrington, *Health, medicine and politics in Ireland, 1900-1970* (Dublin, 1987), p. 13.

[3] J. Prunty, *Dublin slums, 1800-1925: a study in urban geography* (Dublin, 1999), p. 7; G. Jones, *Social hygiene in twentieth century Britain* (London, 1986), p. 6.

Those who advocated a more interventionist approach were countered by prevailing economic orthodoxy which was critical of increased state involvement on the basis that it could erode individual autonomy as well as involve substantial financial outlay.[4]

The urgency of the problem in Ireland, coupled with developing attitudes to poverty and public health in the late nineteenth century, resulted in an increasingly interventionist approach on part of central government and a growing recognition that poverty required the intervention of the state and as a result central government became more invested in Ireland than in any other part of the United Kingdom.[5] Increasing recognition of the need for sanitary reform resulted in a number of governmental enquiries and the passing of public health acts in the late nineteenth century. However, despite recommendations and legislative reform improvements were slow to materialise and while they mitigated some of worst features of urban life there implementation was characterised by inertia and apathy. Even when powers were granted to help ameliorate the worst effects of urban conditions the authorities lacked the determination to enforce them and 'the problem in Ireland was that few local authorities approached the problem of eradicating infectious disease with determination'.[6] Mary Daly has noted that in tackling public health issues the authorities were 'singularly ineffective' and has demonstrated that increasingly public health issues were not solely affecting the working classes as Dublin was 'unhealthy for all residents' as a result of inefficient administration of the existing legislative powers and a general lack of public interest in sanitation.[7] Ruth Barrington has concluded that while on paper Ireland had an impressive legislative and administrative structure to increase public health the governmental response was limited to controlling disease and their actions had to be supplemented by voluntary organisations. A combination of the scale of the problem and disinterest meant that the health risks in Ireland were greater than any other part of the United Kingdom with public health not a priority for government at the beginning of the twentieth century.[8] Governmental initiatives were seen as piecemeal and ineffective with local administrators seen as apathetic and indifferent. Within such a context it is understandable why voluntary agencies were significant forces in the provision of social services and they contributed to the improvements in the state's

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[4] Prunty, *Dublin slums*, pp. 7-8.

[5] Crossman, Gray, *Poverty*, p. 10; V. Crossman, *Politics, pauperism and power in late nineteenth-century Ireland* (Manchester 2006), p. 217; Jones, Malcolm, *Medicine*, p. 6.

[6] Prunty, *Dublin slums*, p. 155; E.M. Crawford, 'Typhus in nineteenth-century Ireland', in Jones, Malcolm, *Medicine*, p. 135; Barrington, *Health*, p. 12.

[7] Daly, *Dublin*, pp. 270-1.

[8] Barrington, *Health*, p. 22.

responses.[9] The prevalence of fears surrounding the health of young children ensured that organisations aiming to provide for their physical development would generate considerable public interest. An *Irish Times* investigation into the conditions of the poor within the city of Dublin in 1894 remarked that 'compared with other large centres of population in the Kingdom, Dublin is deplorably deficient in philanthropic resources for the rescue of the children of the poor from the evil influence and contamination of their environment'. The report concluded that organisations devoted to physical culture would 'be attractive to young people, and calculated to lure them from evil companionship and debasing habits'.[10]

The social conditions of the period acted as an incentive to the growth of youth movements and in 1914 Arnold Wright stated in *Disturbed Dublin* that the Dublin slums were 'a thing apart in the inferno of social degradation. Nowhere can there be found concentrated so many of the evils which are associated with the underworld of our modern civilization. To say that men and women live like beasts of the field is the merest truth'. He recorded that there were 5,322 tenement houses, accommodating 25,822 families, comprising 87,305 persons, with 20,000 of those families occupying one room each.[11] According to the census of 1911, 33.9 per cent of the total families lived in one room and Sir Charles Cameron estimated that the dwellers in tenements consisting of a single room had a much higher death rate than those who had two or more rooms as well as suffering higher rates of tuberculosis.[12] Dublin was singled out as worse than many other cities within the United Kingdom with Sir Charles Cameron arguing that, 'I have long been of opinion that the proportion of the population belonging to the poorest classes is greater in Dublin than it is in the English and Scotch towns'. He suggested that there were many proofs of the poverty of a considerable proportion of the Dublin population. In 1911, 41.9 per cent of the deaths in the Dublin metropolitan area occurred in the workhouses, asylums, lunatic asylums, and other institutions, whereas in English towns the average proportion of the deaths in these institutions was about 22 per cent.[13] Sir Lambert Ormsby explained that 'in the lower strata of society in large towns I consider their surroundings and domestic home life are in a very depressing condition; there is a total neglect of every hygienic and sanitary rule of life'.

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[9] Prunty, *Dublin*, p. 272.

[10] *Weekly Irish Times*, 12 May 1894.

[11] Wright, *Disturbed Dublin*, pp. 29-30. See also, *Report of the departmental committee appointed by the local government board for Ireland to inquire into the housing conditions of the working classes in the city of Dublin* [Cd. 7273] (1914).

[12] *Census of Ireland, 1911, area, houses, and population: also the ages, civil or conjugal condition, occupations, birthplaces, religion, and education of the people, province of Leinster* [Cd. 6049] (1912), p. 215; Cameron, *Reminiscences*, p. 165.

[13] Cameron, *Reminiscences*, p. 165.

These conditions were as a result 'of the insanitary dwellings, the insufficient and improper food, insufficient clothing, and breathing and rebreathing from week's end to week's end the same polluted and contaminated air; and then they have no means of recreation or athletic exercises to throw off these effects'.[14]

These comments are indicative of wider concerns surrounding the physical health of the population and youth movements emerged and grew when there was a widespread anxiety surrounding the issue of physical deterioration.[15] Military recruiting statistics provided the initial focal point of the debate with reports that between 40 and 60 per cent of recruits who applied to the army were rejected on the basis that they were physically unfit.[16] The inspector general of recruiting, in his report for 1902, reported that the subject which caused most anxiety for the future regarding recruiting was the gradual deterioration of the physique of the working classes from which the bulk of the recruits were drawn. He wrote that 'when it is remembered that recruiters are instructed not to submit for medical examination candidates for enlistment unless they are reasonably expected to be passed as fit, one cannot but be struck by the percentage considered by the medical officers as unfit for service'. An analysis of recruiting statistics demonstrates that between 1893 and 1902 the number of men medically examined for enlistment was 679,703, and of those, 234,914 were rejected as medically unfit for service, giving a rejection rate of 34.6 per cent. Of the men passed fit, 5,849 broke down within three months of enlistment, or 0.9 per cent, while 14,259, or 2.1 per cent, were discharged as invalids with under two years of service.[17] Recruitment for the South African War provides further evidence of the impaired health of many volunteers and it is important to make the distinction between volunteers and recruits. These were not interchangeable terms with many more men volunteering to serve than were accepted into the forces. In 1899, 33 per cent of those men medically inspected were rejected as unfit and this dropped in 1900 to 28 per cent but in 1901 increased to 29 per cent.[18] Apart from the military consequences this had serious social implications as appreciated by Sir William Taylor, the director-general of the army medical service. He wrote in 1904 that it 'is

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[14] *Report of the inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 462.
[15] See for example 'Education and deterioration', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1903), pp. 1541-2.
[16] 'Physical degeneration: the case for inquiry', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1903), p. 1338.
[17] *Annual report of the inspector-general of recruiting for the year 1902* [Cd. 1417] (1903), p. 30; *Memorandum by the director-general, Army Medical Service, on the physical unfitness of men offering themselves for enlistment in the army* [Cd. 1501] (1903), p. 5.
[18] Miller, 'Volunteering for the South African War', p. 699.

not only serious from its military aspect, it is serious also from its civil standpoint, for if these men are unfit for military service, what are they good for?'.[19]

The superficial evidence led some observers to conclude that a serious condition of physical deterioration existed. Recruits for the army were mostly drawn from the poorer classes in urban areas, and since the urban population had increased from 50 to 77 per cent over the previous fifty years, it was deemed highly probable that physical deterioration was spreading over a larger percentage of the population.[20] To investigate this further an inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration was convened and they submitted their final report in 1904. The committee judged that claims concerning physical deterioration were premised upon inadequate information and that a comprehensive assessment of the health of the population was impossible as there were no earlier figures with which they could be contrasted. The report concluded that 'no sufficient material (statistical or other) was at present available to warrant any definite conclusions on the question of the physique of the people by comparison with *data* obtained in past times' and 'that a partial investigation, as for instance into the condition of the classes from which recruits are at present mostly drawn, might be very misleading, however carefully conducted, and might give rise to erroneous conclusions on the general question unless checked by expert knowledge'.[21] Most medical professionals agreed that there was limited evidence of physical deterioration and argued that it was unscientific to judge the entire population on the basis of military recruiting statistics.[22]

These conclusions left many observers unsatisfied and they argued that while direct evidence of deterioration may be unavailable there was circumstantial evidence that warranted much closer scrutiny. J. Ellis Barker, a German born homeopath, argued that there was sufficient evidence that attested 'unmistakably to the fact that the change of Great Britain from a principally agricultural to a principally industrial country is responsible for that unsatisfactory state of the physique which we observe in the population of our large towns'. Barker believed that evidence could be provided from a comparison with German recruiting statistics arguing that if industrial occupations and urban life had brought about a deterioration of the national physique in Germany it was reasonable to conclude that a similar deterioration had taken place in the United Kingdom. An analysis showed that in the

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[19] *Report of the inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration, report and appendix*, 1 [Cd. 2175] (1904), p. 95.
[20] 'Physical deterioration', *Man*, 5 (1905), p. 83.
[21] *Report of the inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 1, p. 1, cited in, J.E. Barker, 'National military service and national physique', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1908), p. 555.
[22] A.S. Wohl, *Endangered lives: public health in Victorian Britain* (London, 1983), p. 333.

principally agricultural provinces of East Prussia up to 70 per cent of the men of military age reached the standards required while the standards of the men of military age in Saxony, a predominantly manufacturing area, declined to 50 per cent.[23] In the period British workmen had travelled to Germany to observe the prevailing conditions in the country and reported their findings in *The brassworkers of Berlin and of Birmingham: a comparison*, published in 1905. They wrote favourably of the health and physique of the population recording that,

> one cannot help being struck with the superior physique and bearing, whether of the soldier in uniform or out of uniform, in observing the populace of Berlin. The effect of the training is seen in the people as distinctly as the effect of the cleaning and washing is noticeable in the streets. There is not the physically deteriorated, untrained, unmended look about the people.[24]

Sir John E. Gorst, former solicitor general for England and Wales and former vice-president of the committee on education, argued that investigations revealed a particular prevalence of ill-health amongst children writing that,

> These investigations leave no doubt that in the poorer districts of Great Britain and Ireland, a large proportion of the children-the exact proportion there is no evidence to determine-is growing up so deteriorated by starvation and from insufficient and improper food, that they can never become normal citizens, that they will be the seed-bed of disease and crime, and that as long as they live they must remain a burden on society.[25]

There were also fears expressed by the medical profession concerning the health of adolescents. *The British Medical Journal* noted that,

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[23] Barker, 'National military service', p. 555.
[24] R.H. Best, W.J. Davis, C. Perks, *The brassworkers of Berlin and of Birmingham: a comparison* (London, 1905), p. 18.
[25] J.E. Gorst, 'Physical deterioration in Great Britain', *The North American Review*, 181 (1905), p. 2.

> We live, all of us, in continuous fear of the effects on boys of unhealthy surroundings, bad habits, cigarette smoking, drink, the love of loafing, and the present craze for picture palaces and football matches. We know how boys born of some, weedy or infected stock go under; we are tired of advising and physicking undersized, narrow chested, slovenly boys, who will not see what they are here for, but are content to ape the manners, and look forward to the vices, of men.[26]

There were others who were concerned about the extent to which degeneracy could be transmitted from one generation to the next and a proposed solution was a greater emphasis being placed on the role that women played as mothers. It was argued that women who engaged in the manufacturing industry had little opportunity of nursing their children. In Ireland the level of unemployment ensured that this was not as pronounced as there was comparatively less work for females in Dublin than in most English towns. Sir Charles Cameron argued that this provided unintended benefits as 'owing to the scarcity of employment for women, the vast majority of them remain at home, and can, therefore, unlike factory women, nurse their children'. In Ireland the proportion of bottle-fed to nursed children was not as large and was cited as accounting for the comparatively low infantile mortality in the country.[27] However, others have argued that this may in fact have contributed to infant mortality and Jacinta Prunty has noted that bottle-feeding would have been preferable as infants would have been receiving food from a mother who was herself underfed. Initiatives had been implemented in order to provide guidance to women on proper feeding and clothing of infants by the public health authorities but Mary Daly has argued that many women would have been unable to read them.[28] Infantile mortality statistics can act as an indicator of the general health of children and a tabulation of statistics from 1891-1910 show that the death rate was indeed smaller in Ireland than in England and Wales and the medical officer of the local government board reported that this was because 'a smaller proportion of infants are exposed to the risks of urban life' and highlighted 'that the conditions of urban life are responsible to a greater extent than poverty alone for excessive infant mortality'. However, a comparison of urban centres reveal that the death rate was much higher in Dublin than London over a consistent nineteen year period.

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[26] 'The Boy Scouts endowment fund', *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1914), p. 1086.
[27] Cameron, *Reminiscences*, p. 168.
[28] Prunty, *Dublin*, p. 161; Daly, *Dublin*, p. 265.

Table 11. Annual Deaths of Infants under One Year to 1,000 Births.

	1891-95	1896-1900	1901-05	1906-10
England and Wales	151	156	138	117
Ireland	102	106	98	94

Table 12. Annual Deaths of Infants under One Year to 1,000 Births.[29]

	1891-95	1896-1900	1901-05	1906-10
London	156	162	139	114
Dublin	169	175	158	146

At the annual meeting of British Medical Association in Belfast, Sir John Byers, a noted obstetrician and president of the Belfast branch of the Irish Medical Association, commented that that 'if we are to succeed in making a healthy nation, to get rid of physical degeneration, and to regain our ability and our energy-so much of which has been lost through crime, ignorance, and apathy we must cease to neglect the mothers of our people'. He believed that 'the more we elevate motherhood the more we dignify the home and the more we raise our race...Four-fifths of the value of an infant's start in life, and its chance of living, depended upon the proper nutrition of its mother before its birth'.[30] The Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland argued that 'the social and economic conditions to-day tended to marriages later in life than a quarter of a century ago, and this did not conduce to the production of a healthier stock physically or mentally'.[31] There were calls to make medical examinations a prerequisite to marriage in order to limit degeneration. Dr David Walsh stated that 'it was useless to bewail the prevalence of race degeneracy unless steps were taken to hinder the marriage of persons who could produce nothing but degenerates. Medical sanction should be obtained as an essential preliminary to marriage'.[32] Such a policy had support at the highest levels of government. Winston Churchill, as Home Secretary in 1910, had advocated the forcible sterilisation of 100,000 'mental degenerates' and was keen to introduce incarceration in forced labour camps for 'mental defectives'. He wrote to the Prime Minster, Herbert Asquith that

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[29] *Forty-second annual report the local government board, 1912-13, supplement in continuation of the report of the medical officer of the board for 1912-13, containing a second report on infant and child mortality by the medical officer of the board* [Cd. 6909] (1913), p.74.
[30] *Irish Times*, 31 Jul. 1909; *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1920), p. 531.
[31] 'Annual meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1903), p. 200.
[32] *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Nov. 1910.

> the unnatural and increasingly rapid growth of the feeble-minded and insane classes, coupled as it is with a steady restriction among all the thrifty, energetic and superior stocks, constitutes a national and race danger which it is impossible to exaggerate...I feel that the source from which the stream of madness is fed should be cut off and sealed up before another year has passed.[33]

In Ireland fears surrounding deterioration led to many outrageous claims regarding its causes. Denis Kelly, the Roman Catholic bishop of Ross, believed that there had been general deterioration which he partly attributed to the immigration of Jews to Ireland and the popularity of tea. He commented that,

> they sell tea of the vilest character; they go to the doors of the peasantry and sell them the tea and other articles. It is nearly impossible to keep the people from dealing with them. That is one of the causes of physical deterioration, because they are getting the vilest stuff from the Jews.

He stated that 'in the opinion of many medical men excessive tea-drinking is largely responsible for it and for many nervous affections, as well as for a marked decline in the general health of the country'.[34]

Sir Charles Cameron believed that physical deterioration had taken place in the country and stated that the general health of the population was a subject that had been popular for many years, recalling that 'great interest was taken in sanitary subjects by the general public'.[35] Daniel John Cunningham, professor of anatomy at Trinity College and later Edinburgh University and chairman of the anthropometric committee of the British Association, stated that 'if there is any part of the United Kingdom in which physical deterioration is to be expected more than another it is in Ireland'.[36] Emigration was seen as one of the major causes of deterioration in the country and it was noted that it was the weakest members of the population that were left behind and continued to reproduce. Dr Charles R. Browne, a Dublin surgeon and anthropologist, in his evidence to the committee on

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[33] C. Ponting, *Churchill* (London, 1994), pp. 102-3; Winston Churchill to Herbert Asquith, 1910, Bodleian Library, Asquith Papers, 12, f 224-8, cited in Ponting, *Churchill*, p. 102.
[34] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 414.
[35] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 400; Cameron, *Reminiscences*, p. 75.
[36] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 96.

physical deterioration commented that 'it is only the more enterprising and the more active that go as a rule'.[37] The forty-first report of the inspectors of lunacy in Ireland reported that on the 1 January 1892 there were 16,689 lunatics in Ireland. The numbers in Ireland had increased from 249 per 100,000 in 1880 to 355 per 100,000 in 1891 and the inspectors called attention to 'the rapid increase of insanity' in the country. They laid the blame on the rate of emigration arguing that it removed 'the healthy and strong both in mind and body, and leaving the weak and infirm as a burden on the public rates' and 'must be considered as one of the principal factors in the explanation of this large increase'.[38] *The British Medical Journal* reported that many young men and women were attracted to the urban centres by the desire 'to see life' as 'they think the town will be livelier and more amusing, and they contrast the music halls, and even the brightly-lighted streets, with the quiet homes and muddy roads of the country'. However, the desire to experience urban living only partly explained their desire for town life. The two root causes were given as 'the fact that the agricultural labourer has little or no prospect of improving his position and making some provision for old age, and secondly, the failure of the elementary schools to give the kind of education which reconciles him to remain in the country'.[39]

Youth movements were seen as potential aid in reducing this rural migration. George N. Hunter, a Dublin scientist, lamented that the Boy Scout organisation had not incorporated rural Ireland. He wrote that 'much has been done to make content the lot of the town boy…but so far these movements are successfully taken up in the large towns, where many boys can congregate', complaining that 'little has been done for their rural brethren'. He believed that the extension of the movement would reap enormous benefits for rural Ireland and fulfil an important function in re-invigorating country life and stem the tide of rural migration.[40] This is indicative of an ideological position that country life was superior to urban living and this was given practical expression when it was sanctioned that destitute children be moved from towns to rural areas for the benefit of their moral and physical health.[41] As Anthony Wohl has noted, 'the town was regarded by many as the inevitable nexus of disease and premature death'.[42]

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[37] *Report of the inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 1, p. 37; *Irish Times*, 29 July 1904.
[38] *The forty-first report (with appendices) of the inspectors of lunatics (Ireland)* [C. 6803] (1892), pp. 1-4; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 Oct. 1892.
[39] 'Physical degeneration (concluded)', *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1904), p. 272.
[40] *Irish Times*, 10 June 1912.
[41] Prunty, *Dublin*, p. 4.
[42] Wohl, *Endangered lives*, p. 3.

Dr Charles Browne commented that 'the evil influences of town life on the physique' ensured conditions of squalor and bad ventilation which contributed to the 'stunting of growth and the blunting of some of the faculties'. For him a comparison could be made between the urban and rural populations, commenting that 'the difference in physique between the men of the farming class and the working people of the towns is very striking'. This contrast was noticed at large political processions 'in which bands of lodges of farmers and of city artisans are to be seen side by side, when the greater stature and bulk of the farmer are at once noticeable'. However, it was difficult to procure accurate anthropometric statistics which could substantiate these claims in relation to physical deterioration and in 1904 only 270 Irishmen were listed on the British Association's register. Browne elucidated two root causes of such a low baseline figure, 'one was a dread of conscription...and another was a certain amount of superstitious feeling on the subject'. He believed that these fears were not insurmountable and could be overcome by introducing a counter-superstition to combat them. He reported that in Ireland 'there is the belief in the efficacy of measuring the head for various forms of headache, and this is practised by the wise women and quacks throughout the country'. Browne took advantage of this and generally 'found it successful even when it was passed off as a joke-a laugh generally brought about consent'. He talked to local priests, schoolmasters, and police in advance and as a result the problems would largely disappear. The work was given a competitive element amongst a local population and 'when they began to see their neighbours getting measured they were ambitious to see how they compared with the people of the next district'.[43]

Despite the evidence of medical professionals it is difficult to categorically state that physical deterioration was more prevalent in Ireland than in the rest of the United Kingdom due to a lack of concrete evidence and John Story, a Dublin doctor, noted that there were 'no statistics whatsoever' about the state of Irish physical health. However, while there may not have been definitive evidence Elaine Sisson has rightly noted that the very existence of committees dedicated to its investigation 'was enough to stimulate fears and lend weight to existing anxieties'.[44] While infant mortality was indeed worse in Dublin than in other major British cities contemporary prejudice and ideological positions render accurate analysis difficult. While poor conditions in urban environments promoted poor health in large industrial cities Jacinta Prunty has argued that 'the same was held to be true for Ireland in

[43] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, pp. 357-8, 362.
[44] E. Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots: St. Enda's and the cult of boyhood* (Cork, 2004), p. 120.

general'.[45] Public health issues also reflect the intellectual context in which policy was formulated with many instances of an equation between medical and moral disease. The endemic nature of poverty and degradation in some Irish urban centres produced prejudice and led to generalisations concerning the sanitary standards of the Irish population which ignored the fact that such conditions were related to poverty rather than race. Popular prejudices contended that poverty was in many instances voluntary and due to profligate practices and thriftless ways 'owing to a temperament peculiar to the Irish'.[46]

The debate on physical deterioration focused minds and by 1911 a discernible improvement had been noted. Surgeon General Sir Thomas Gallwey, the senior medical adviser to the armed forces, drew up a report on the health of the army in 1910. He wrote that he was 'forcibly impressed that the main reasons for its present excellent health, both physically and mentally, were to be found in physical training and discipline since the South African war'. He noted that 'the British soldier of to-day, although recruited from exactly the same people as before, was far more intelligent and active, and better in every way than in the old days' and that the improvement in the health of the army 'had really been most extraordinary'. *The Irish Times* reported in 1910 that the men admitted to hospital were only half in number when compared with those admitted in the previous five years with the waste of the army also showing a striking decrease. The returns showed that it was at a rate of nine per one thousand which represented a reduction of nearly two-thirds.[47]

While the committee on physical deterioration did not find evidence of deterioration they did compile new information on the prevalence of a low standard of physical health, especially amongst children.[48] Physical health and the conditions in which children lived was a significant concern particularly in the area of housing reform and the effect that poor residential conditions had on children. A housing report commissioned by the Local Government Board for Ireland noted that children 'acquire precocious knowledge of evil from early childhood' and such conditions 'form the worst possible atmosphere for the up-bringing of the younger generation'.[49] In terms of physical health children were particularly vulnerable to disease and ill-health and Mary Daly has noted that the most significant

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[45] Prunty, *Dublin*, p. 3.

[46] Prunty, *Dublin*, p. 339; Wohl, *Endangered lives*, p. 202; J.V. O'Brien, *Dear, Dirty Dublin: A city in distress, 1899-1916* (London, 1982), pp. 103; 163.

[47] *Irish Times*, 19 Jan. 1911.

[48] Wohl, *Endangered lives*, p. 338.

[49] *Report of the departmental committee appointed by the Local Government Board for Ireland to inquire into the housing conditions of the working classes in the city of Dublin* [Cd. 7273] (1914), p. 9.

determinant of children's health was social class.[50] The fear of physical deterioration amongst children ensured the promotion of policies designed to encourage a greater emphasis on cleanliness. Thomas John Alexander, head inspector of Cork for the Irish Commission of National Education, reported that teachers were required by the rules of the Board of Education to promote cleanliness and to satisfy themselves by personal inspection every morning that children had their faces and hands washed. However, he observed that these rules appeared to be 'very imperfectly observed'.[51] Anthony Roche, a member of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland and professor of medical jurisprudence and public health at the Catholic University Medical School, reported that very few students on the rolls had passed in the subject of hygiene. This may have been as a result of the training that teachers received as in only one of the five teacher training colleges was the subject of hygiene taught and of the 843 students in these colleges only three had passed it.[52] F.H. Dale, in his report into Irish primary education in 1904, wrote that classrooms were frequently of insufficient size to accommodate pupils and the condition of the average school buildings in Belfast and Dublin was 'markedly inferior' to those in other parts of the United Kingdom. Of the buildings that were classified as bad he wrote that, 'it is difficult to give in words any adequate conception of the buildings'. In schools the most 'marked defect' was 'the want of cleanliness'. He described classrooms were 'the floors were generally dirty; and the walls and cupboards often covered with dust'. The out-offices were described as 'indescribably filthy'. He wrote that

> out of the hundreds of Schools that I have inspected in various districts of England, I have never seen any in which the offices were kept with such utter disregard of health and decency as several cases that I saw during my short stay in Ireland. It is hardly necessary to point out that this neglect prevents the primary Schools from accomplishing one of their main objects- the training of the children in habits of cleanliness and order.[53]

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[50] Daly, *Dublin*, p. 266.
[51] *The sixty-fourth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland* [C. 9038] (1898), p. 92
[52] A. Roche, 'The sanitary condition of our national schools', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 10 (1900), p. 546.
[53] *Report of Mr F.H. Dale, his majesty's inspector of schools, Board of Education, on primary education in Ireland* [Cd. 1981] (1904), pp. 3-4.

In this regard improvement had been slow to materialise as the same issue had been highlighted by the royal commission into Irish primary education thirty-four years earlier.[54] In 1902 William Joseph Myles Starkie, resident commissioner for national education in Ireland, wrote that 1,100 schools were 'scarcely habitable'.[55]

Lord Meath emphasised that there was a need to lay greater stress upon the physical development of the citizenry especially with regards to the health and physical fitness of the young. He saw that for those who were poor the chance of enhancing and improving their physical fitness was necessarily limited and believed that a sense of national efficiency and patriotism could only be instilled if social conditions were improved: 'beginning with the building up of the material structure by physical education, proceeding with moral development, and thence inculcating the principles that make for good citizenship-discipline, duty, mutual service, and patriotism'.[56] While an advocate of the benefits of military drill he encouraged other means of physical culture. In 1891 he wrote that

> school boards should be encouraged to do more than simply instruct their scholars in military drill. Military drill is by no means to be neglected. It is invaluable as a means of teaching prompt obedience and alertness of mind and body; but...military drill cannot compare with gymnastics in the development of chest and limbs'.[57]

John Springhall has argued there was an element of Social Darwinism within his thought which may explain his passionate interest in the social conditions of the poor at the turn of the century, arguing that 'national efficiency and patriotism could be instilled into the poor only when their social conditions were improved'.[58] This is reinforced by reference to an article Meath published in 1891 where he argued that 'in rougher times the strong alone survived, and handed on their strength to succeeding generations; now the weaklings are

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[54] *Royal commission of inquiry into primary education (Ireland), containing the report of the commissioners, with an appendix*, 1, [C. 6] (1870), p. 321. See especially evidence of James William Kavanagh, a former head inspector under the Commission of National Education, who reported that the out-offices were bad or non-existent in 44.6 per cent of Irish national schools, *Royal commission of inquiry into primary education (Ireland), containing evidence taken before the commissioners from March 12th to October 30th, 1868. questions and answers 1 to 17608*, 3 [C. 6-II] (1870), p. 439.

[55] W.J.M. Starkie, *Recent reforms in Irish education, primary and secondary, with a view to their co-ordination* (Dublin, 1902), p. 24.

[56] A. Guest, 'Social ideals: the earl of Meath' *The Court Journal*, 16 Feb. 1910, p. 212 cited in J. Springhall, 'Lord Meath, youth, and empire', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (1970), p. 99.

[57] The Earl of Meath, 'Compulsory physical education', *The North American Review*, 152 (1891), p. 685.

[58] Springhall, 'Lord Meath', p. 99.

enabled to transmit their weaknesses to posterity'.[59] He did display an interest in the provision of recreational facilities in Ireland. He owned a large amount of property in the Coombe area of Dublin where he opened playgrounds and 'put a man there in uniform who sees the children do not indulge in any dangerous form of recreation from the swings and so on'.[60] This is the environment in which youth movements operated and it is only within such a context that an analysis of their role in promoting physical health can be appreciated.

3.2 Youth Movements and Physical Health

Youth movements rallied against what they saw as unhealthy practices amongst adolescents and were determined to increase the physical health of their members. One of the major concerns was the prevalence of smoking amongst adolescents. The issue of smoking amongst the young had been a serious health concern over the preceding years and youthful smokers were a 'common spectacle of the street'.[61] A conference in Dublin was told that an estimated 100 million cigarettes were sold every week in the United Kingdom with 15 million of them smoked by boys under sixteen.[62] Many cigarette manufacturers in the period sold packets containing cards depicting many of the famous sportsmen and military officers of the time, as well as other topics such as birds, ships, trains, etc. and this seems to have been a popular hobby amongst boys. Robert Roberts commented that 'before 1914 it would have been hard indeed to have found a boy in the working class without at least a few dog-eared cards about his person, dreaming of making up, by swap and gambling games, that complete set of fifty'. C.E.B. Russell argued that this represented 'a most direct incentive, of course, to the lad to buy more packets of the same brand, and to induce his comrades to join him in the venture'.[63] In Ireland in 1908 Murray's cigarette packets contained photographs of well-known members of parliament and by 1914 they were selling cigarettes with photographs of famous footballers in every pack.[64]

In parliament there were protracted promises of legislation. In 1907 the Irish Tobacco Act repealed the earlier Tobacco Cultivation Act of 1831 which prohibited the cultivation and

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[59] The Earl of Meath, 'Compulsory physical education', p. 682.
[60] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 465.
[61] See M. Hilton, '"Tabs", "fags" and the "boy labour problem" in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *Journal of Social History*, 28 (1995), pp. 587-607; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 8, Mar. 1899, p. 106.
[62] *Freeman's Journal*, 7 May 1909.
[63] R. Roberts, *The classic slum* (Manchester, 1971), p. 134; C.E.B. Russell, *Manchester boys at work and play* (Manchester, 1905), p. 99, cited in Hilton, '"Tabs"', p. 591.
[64] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Oct. 1908, 20 June 1914.

exportation of tobacco in Ireland.[65] In the House of Commons Thomas MacNamara asked whether or not the recommendation of the inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration, which suggested that a bill should be brought before parliament to prohibit the sale of tobacco and cigarettes to those under a certain age and to prohibit the sale of cigarettes in sweet shops frequented by children, was to be implemented. The Home Secretary, Aretas Akers-Douglas, stated that there were no plans to bring forth such legislation, arguing that 'the public attention which has been called to the evils of juvenile smoking is likely, I think, to do good, by arousing parents to exercise more control over their children in this respect'.[66] In 1908 Lord Reay stated in the House of Lords that there was a broad consensus amongst teachers and medical practitioners who shared the conviction that 'the evil of juvenile smoking has gained alarming dimensions, especially among small boys from ten to fourteen years of age'. There was already legislation concerning tobacco in place in many parts of the world. For example, in Newfoundland and New Zealand it was forbidden to sell tobacco to children under the age of fifteen, in Bermuda, New South Wales, and South Australia it was under sixteen and in Tasmania under thirteen.[67] From 1904-1906 three bills aiming to prevent juvenile smoking were debated in the House of Commons but it was not until 1908, with the introduction of the Children's Act, that youths were prevented from purchasing tobacco and cigarettes.[68]

It was not only in terms of physical health that the issue was discussed, demonstrating the relationship made between physical and moral health. Lord Reay believed that the prohibition of smoking would 'contribute to preserve the moral, mental, and physical fibre of boys'. Similarly, Sir William Broadbent, a noted cardiologist and neurologist, stated that 'smoking tends to establish habits of self-indulgence which, with the enervating influence of

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[65] 'An act to repeal the law which prohibits the growing of tobacco in Ireland', 4 July 1907, *The Law Reports: the public general statutes, passed in the seventh year of the reign of his majesty King Edward the seventh, 1907*, 45 (London, 1907), pp. 10-11; 'An act to repeal an act of the nineteenth year of King George the third, for repealing so much of several acts as prohibit the growth and produce of tobacco in Ireland, and to permit the importation of tobacco of the growth and produce of that kingdom in Great Britain', 23 August 1831, *A collection of the public general statutes passed in the first and second year of the reign of his majesty King William the fourth: being the first session of the Tenth Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (Dublin, 1831).

[66] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 141, 21 Feb. 1905, col. 776.

[67] House of Lords Debates, 4th series, vol. 157, 22 May 1906, col. 1100.

[68] *A bill to provide for the prevention of juvenile smoking* (Bill 295) (1904); *A bill to provide for the prevention of juvenile smoking* (Bill 99) (1905); *A bill to provide for the prevention of juvenile smoking* (Bill 76) (1906); 'An act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the protection of children and young persons, reformatory and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders, and other wise to amend the law with respect to children and young persons', 21 December 1908, *The Law Reports: the public general statutes, passed in the eighth year of the reign of his majesty King Edward the seventh, 1908*, 46 (London, 1908), pp. 453-529.

the tobacco, are fatal to efficiency and strength of character'.[69] The *Dublin Evening Mail* reported that the inhaling of cigarettes was 'a habit which has only come into vogue in this country during the last few years, and which in the next few will inevitably tell a great tale upon the mental bodily capacity of the nation'. The object, they claimed, was 'the gratification of the senses in one way or another' with inhalation resulting in 'a momentary semi-paralysis'.[70] The Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade commented that boys who were smokers suffered 'from mental and moral slackness'.[71] The close identification of moral and physical health was again in evidence when it was argued that smoking amongst young boys could encourage them to engage in criminal activity. It was noted that 'youngsters have not infrequently stolen money in order to provide themselves with cigarettes or tobacco'. Such a position was bolstered by a report from Portadown, Co. Armagh, in 1906 when a resident magistrate remarked that 'all the trouble of two boys who were charged with theft was caused by their desire for cigarettes'.[72]

Smoking had much to do with the social world inhabited by adolescents. Boys who had to work were amongst adult males in their daily lives and may have attempted to conform to their attitudes. Those who had to engage in work at such a young age were termed 'a species of man-child, in whom the natural instincts of boyhood are almost overwhelmed by the feverish anxiety to become a man'.[73] Rev. A.C. Marshall, chaplain to the forces at the Curragh camp in Co. Kildare, stated that 'some lads got the impression that to be a man one had to swear, drink, and smoke cigarettes'.[74] Lord Aberdeen believed that when boys were smoking they 'seemed to be always imitating men'. For him, the thought of being a man was a fine thing but argued that 'spurious imitations are not fine'.[75] However, to many boys smoking represented an action of independence as they had a limited amount of money earned by their own labour. A contemporary noted that 'there is for most of the young wage-earners a new sense of independence, and freedom from restraint; they are surrounded by false standards, and attracted by the meretricious and gaudy experiments which provide a reaction against the distasteful, drab, and ugly elements of their working lives'.[76] Smoking was a display of this independence as 'hitherto the smoking of cigarettes was a furtive prank,

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[69] House of Lords Debates, 4th series, vol. 157, 22 May 1906, cols. 1100-1101.
[70] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Jan. 1903.
[71] *Dublin Evening Mail,* 30 Jan. 1904.
[72] *Irish Independent*, 16 Feb. 1906.
[73] E.J. Urwick, ed., *Studies of boy life in our cities* (New York, 1904), p. xii, cited in Hilton, '"Tabs"' , p. 593.
[74] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 Nov. 1910.
[75] *Irish Independent*, 23 Feb. 1906.
[76] 'The nation's youth', *Athenaeum* , 4615 (1917), p. 120

only delightful because forbidden; now it becomes a public exhibition, denoting manhood, independence, and wealth'.[77]

Henry Drummond noted that in Boys' Brigade companies there were rules which forbade 'the use of intoxicating liquor as a beverage' as well as 'dirty habits, tobacco chewing, smoking, etc.'.[78] At the sixteenth annual demonstration of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade in 1908 the lord lieutenant, the earl of Aberdeen, encouraged the boys present to continue 'the habit and tradition of the brigade as to non-smoking'. He referred to the recommendations of Field Marshal Lord Grenfell, commander in chief of the British forces in Ireland, on the subject and stated that 'if smoking is harmful for young soldiers, it cannot be good for boys'. Addressing members, the archbishop of Dublin, Joseph Ferguson Peacocke, stated that 'when he saw a boy of 12 or 13 or 14 smoking a cigarette on the streets he was very much tempted to knock the cigarette out of the boy's mouth'.[79] Aberdeen stated that he was satisfied to know that in Dublin recently a branch of the Junior Section of the Anti-Tobacco League had been formed.[80] By 1909 the Dublin branch of the Juvenile Anti-Tobacco League had a membership of over 1,050 boys who had pledged not to use tobacco until at least twenty-one years of age and in 1910 this figure had risen to over 1,500.[81] The League invited the co-operation of the Boys' Brigade to form local branches.[82] Archbishop Peacocke was convinced of the health risks associated with the practice stating that it was 'injurious to the growth and health of boys'. He believed that 'it was a strong argument against the practice to find that of the men rejected as unfit for the Army nearly all of them were given to the practice of cigarette smoking as boys'. He stated that even if there was no law which banned the practice it should still be discouraged and argued for the introduction of 'a rule in the Brigade preventing each boy up to a certain age from smoking tobacco in any shape or form'.[83]

In a circular sent in 1901 the Brigade secretary, William Smith, advised officers to discourage boys from smoking as the practice 'militates against our efforts to influence the boys for good' with officers having 'very special opportunities for checking this evil'. The Brigade decided that discouragement would suffice and 'did not consider it expedient to take

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[77] A. Paterson, *Across the bridges* (London, 1911), p. 125.
[78] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 1, Oct. 1891, p. 6.
[79] *Irish Times*, 22 Feb. 1907; *Irish Independent*, 22 Feb. 1907.
[80] *Irish Times*, 11 May 1908.
[81] *Irish Times*, 4 Jan. 1909; *Freeman's Journal*, 17 Nov. 1910.
[82] *Irish Times*, 4 Jan. 1909.
[83] *Irish Times*, 22 Feb. 1907.

any steps in the way of initiating legislation'.[84] However in 1906 the Brigade council passed a resolution on the need for juvenile smoking legislation.[85] Rules against smoking were introduced in the Boys' Brigade in Carlow with the annual report of the 1st Carlow company in 1904 including a rule that the membership must 'not use tobacco in any form'.[86] In 1893 the Dublin battalion executive passed a resolution 'to impress on officers...the urgent necessity of suppressing in every way the injurious practice of smoking among the boys of the battalion'. In 1899 the 16th Dublin company reported that they were altering their rules, 'laying special emphasis on the Smoking Rule, which will be rigorously enforced this session'. That year the majority of companies reported that 'measures had been taken on various lines to discourage smoking amongst our boys'.[87] However, members were not always perfect in the observance of this rule. In 1908 an officer in the Dublin battalion wrote that at the end of Boys' Brigade football match he saw a number of members 'smoking cigarettes under cover of the trees'.[88] Despite condemnation the Brigade noted in 1909 that smoking 'somehow seems to have for many Boys the greatest attraction'.[89]

Baden-Powell was also critical of boys smoking and frequently rallied against what he termed, 'those beastly cigarettes'.[90] Addressing a Boys' Brigade demonstration in 1903 he commented that 'sometimes we see boys smoking pipes and cigarettes, and they think they are great men, but really they are-LITTLE ASSES. If you want to be manly, the way to do is to help those that are weaker than yourself, in however small a thing'.[91] He believed that smoking was 'liable to do a great deal of harm to lad while he is growing'.[92] He wrote that he would be 'greatly disappointed' if he discovered that any Boy Scout was 'a fool, or a swanker, or a coward; and any fellow under twenty who smokes is almost bound to be one of these'. Despite this, in 1912 a member of the Dublin Boy Scouts reported seeing a boy in Dublin 'wearing a Scout's badge smoking a cigarette'. Scoutmasters themselves were also encouraged not to smoke and while this was not an official regulation Baden-Powell believed that they would 'probably think that it is better never to smoke in uniform'.[93] Similarly, the

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[84] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 2, Oct. 1901, p. 18.
[85] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 15, no. 2, Oct. 1906, p. 26.
[86] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[87] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1 Sept. 1893, 4 Dec. 1899, BBAD, Box 9; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 Oct. 1899.
[88] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Dec. 1908.
[89] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 17, no. 8, Apr. 1909, p. 118.
[90] *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 192, 16 Dec. 1911, p. 338; *Irish Times*, 23 Feb. 1905.
[91] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 10, June 1903, p. 153.
[92] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 19, June 1904, p. 157.
[93] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 9, Sept. 1916, p. 228; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 June 1912.

Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade had a ban on smoking by officers at battalion councils, conferences, and socials.[94]

Baden-Powell sought to discourage smoking by providing greater information to Boy Scouts on the dangers of the practice rather than an outright condemnation with no supporting arguments. This ensured a reasoned condemnation as opposed to members providing blind obedience to the wishes of the leadership and underlines the rational and educative basis of the Boy Scouts. In February 1907 Baden-Powell wrote to the secretary of the Anti-Tobacco Association that 'personally I am not very anxious to see fellows sign pledges not to smoke; it looks rather as if they could hardly trust themselves; whereas a sensible fellow, on learning what a real harm smoking does to a growing lad, would not think twice about it'.[95] For him 'to repress desire by imposing a pledge is an artificial way of curing a failing...far better prevent it by the more natural and more efficacious way of developing the young man's character, so that his self-discipline, his conscience, his moral tone combine to place him above and proof against the temptation'.[96] Despite the condemnation of smoking amongst boys, the Boy Scouts still contributed to the 'Soldiers and Sailors Tobacco Fund' which aimed to provide cigarettes for soldiers and sailors.[97]

Fianna Éireann also criticised unhealthy practices amongst members. Constance Markievicz told members that 'you must stop smoking and drinking'.[98] *Fianna*, the unofficial journal of the organisation, wrote 'how many young men there are whose aim in life appears to be to strut about with a cigarette dangling rakishly at an angle from the mouth!'. They argued that their members were different and 'on them our fate as a nation depend' while 'the others provide the Johnny officer, and the khaki clad conscript of hunger'.[99] Despite this *Fianna* continued to advertise cigarettes in its pages and it seems business revenue took precedence over moral instruction.[100]

Youths were also warned of the dangers of drinking alcohol and gambling as detrimental to their well-being reflecting contemporary concerns over the levels of intemperance in Ireland.[101] In 1899 members of the Dublin battalion were given a lecture by

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[94] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 11 Nov. 1912, BBAD, Box 9.
[95] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 15, no. 7, 1 March 1907, p. 108.
[96] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 6, June 1915, p. 142.
[97] *Irish Times*, 21 Dec. 1916.
[98] *Meath Chronicle*, 11 Aug. 1917.
[99] *Fianna*, July 1915.
[100] *Fianna*, June 1915.
[101] A. Megahey, *The Irish Protestant churches in the twentieth century* (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 48; Daly, *Dublin*, p. 82.

Rev. Charles Benjamin Dowse, later Church of Ireland bishop of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross and professor of pastoral theology at Trinity College, Dublin, on the effects of drinking alcohol early in life.[102] Sir Thomas Pile, an honorary vice president of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, stated that 'drink was the greatest curse of the country. It was bringing ruin to the homes of very many, and it was especially the children's enemy' and declared that he 'wanted every lad...to be a sworn enemy of drink'.[103] Benjamin Plunket believed that intemperance was 'the greatest curse that hung over this country'.[104] Archbishop Bernard commented that 'the efficiency of the nation was woefully impaired by the nuisance of strong drink'.[105] The Boys' Brigade was seen by temperance associations as being significant in discouraging the use of alcohol amongst adolescents and in 1916 the Irish Temperance League asked the Belfast battalion to appoint five delegates to an upcoming conference.[106] In 1910 the Band of Hope offered to give free temperance lectures to Boys' Brigade members and the Dublin battalion accepted.[107] The 26th Dublin company wrote that 'we cannot advocate too strongly the Temperance cause, and pray that every boy enrolled in the Boys' Brigade is, or will be, enrolled a member of the Band of Hope'.[108]

William Smith did not lend his encouragement to pledge taking by boys, emphasising the benefits of moderation rather than teetotalism.[109] Archbishop Peacocke believed that alcohol was 'one of the deadliest enemies to the building up of a sound body', and in this connection he noted that a report by Dr Conolly Norman, where he stated that 33 per cent of the males in the asylum were there as a result of alcohol.[110] The potential of the Boys' Brigade to tackle alcohol abuse was recognised by Lord Meath who believed the Boys' Brigade was important in ensuring children would not be seen hanging around public houses.[111] In 1900 the 17th Dublin Company had thirty-nine boys on their roll and thirty-three of them had signed the total abstinence pledge.[112] In the Carlow and Dublin Boys'

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[102] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 28 Oct. 1899.
[103] *Irish Times*, 25 Apr. 1901; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 10, June 1901, p. 156.
[104] *Irish Independent*, 23 Oct. 1906.
[105] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 18 Oct. 1916.
[106] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 12 Oct. 1916, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/2.
[107] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 24 Jan. 1910, BBAD, Box 10.
[108] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Feb. 1907
[109] Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 32.
[110] *Irish Independent*, 23 Feb. 1906.
[111] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland),* 2, p. 342.
[112] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 June 1900.

Brigade there was a rule that all members were to be total abstainers.[113] In discouraging the practice it was beneficial for boys to be surrounded by youths who were under similar moral obligations to themselves and this diminished the pressure from their peers that boys would be subjected to outside the framework of the Brigade structure. There were accounts of boys being ostracised by their peers for not partaking in activities such as drinking alcohol. Many boys may have found it difficult to reject the group consensus surrounding these activities and those that did refuse alcohol when it was offered to them were subjected to the common retort of telling him to 'go home to his mother'.[114]

Baden-Powell similarly discouraged the drinking of alcohol amongst adolescents but was against pledge taking by Boy Scouts as 'there is the danger of the drink habit being thus advertised to them as a possible though forbidden joy to which they would be tempted to give a trial'. Despite this he did understand the function that alcohol played in the lives of many people, writing that while he had no problem abstaining from alcohol he appreciated that this would not have 'the slightest effect on the workman in the squalid slums whose only taste of brightness and enjoyment after his grinding work is to be got at the public house bar'.[115] Fianna Éireann similarly rallied against the dangerous effects of alcohol. *Fianna* argued that alcohol was attractive to boys as it was perceived as a confirmation of adult status. They argued that 'it brings him into the society of men a few years older than himself, and he feels himself emancipated-a real man at last' and Fianna Éireann sought to discourage alcohol 'by example and ridicule'.[116]

Girls' organisations fulfilled a similar health function and lobbied for issues which were of social concern. The Girls' Brigade in Rutland Square introduced a rule which imposed a policy of total abstinence on their membership. The Girl Guides in Dublin signed a petition in 1915 to be presented to the Prime Minister which warned him of the injurious effect of alcohol and called upon him to curtail the sale of alcohol in Ireland.[117] There were fears surrounding the use of alcohol specifically amongst women and the Roman Catholic bishop of Ross commented on the increase in drunkenness in Ireland, especially amongst women.[118] Sir Charles Cameron stated that there was too much intemperance amongst

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[113] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,558; Membership card of Robert Dalton, session 1910-1911, 15th Dublin company, Boys' Brigade, BBAD, Box 28; See also membership card of J.A. Mitchell, Session 1909-1910, 20th Belfast company, Boys' Brigade, SCNI.
[114] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 4, Apr. 1892, p. 70.
[115] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 6, June 1915, p. 142.
[116] *Fianna*, Dec. 1915.
[117] *Irish Times*, 25 Nov. 1909; *Weekly Irish Times*, 17 Apr. 1915.
[118] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 415.

women 'who formerly were rarely seen intoxicated, are now frequently to be observed in that state'.[119]

Youth movements were also important in encouraging greater awareness of the dangers of disease and aided in decreasing their prevalence. In 1910 and 1911 leaflets were distributed by the Boy Scouts to all houses where a birth had occurred on the care of infants.[120] The final report of the royal commission on venereal diseases concluded that voluntary agencies such as the Boy Scouts and the Boys' Brigade were providing valuable assistance in tackling the diseases.[121] Boy Scouts were given an outline of the wide range of subjects that could be utilised in the teaching of good citizenship, including awareness of issues of public health. They were informed of the role they could play in stifling the spread of tuberculosis, a particular concern in Ireland.[122] The issue for December 1910 of the *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette* included a short account by Baden-Powell elucidating the main facts about tuberculosis, its causes and its prevalence, as well as instruction on the part that the organisation could take in the work of prevention, and this ensured that 'much may be done towards the hygienic education of the younger generation which should bear good fruit in a few years' time'.[123] In 1903 Dr Alfred Ernest Boyd wrote to the Dublin battalion executive of the Boys' Brigade for their aid in limiting the spread of tuberculosis and copies of his information on the means of prevention were circulated amongst all company captains.[124] Dr James Kerr-Love, a surgeon, in his evidence to the royal commission on venereal diseases, when asked whether there was any institution which was concerned with 'inculcating purity amongst men', replied that there was the Boys' Brigade.[125]

This emphasis on health was appreciated by businesses who marketed their products as wholesome and healthful to Boy Scout members. In 1914 'Quaker Oats' were advertised beneath a banner bearing the Boy Scouts name and stating that 'quaker oats will give him strength of brain and body because it is the perfectly balanced, all-food food (sic)' and would

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[119] Cameron, *Reminiscences*, p. 170.

[120] *Forty-second annual report the local government board, 1912-13, supplement in continuation of the report of the medical officer of the board for 1912-13, containing a second report on infant and child mortality by the medical officer of the board* [Cd. 6909] (1913), p. 133.

[121] *Royal commission on venereal diseases, final report of the commissioners* [Cd. 8189] (1916), p. 61.

[122] See G. Jones, *"Captain of all these men of death": The history of tuberculosis in nineteenth and twentieth century Ireland* (Amsterdam, 2001); G. Jones, 'The campaign against tuberculosis in Ireland, 1899-1914', in Jones, Malcolm, *Medicine*, pp. 158-75.

[123] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, Dec. 1910; *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1911), p. 202.

[124] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 10 June 1903, BBAD, Box 9.

[125] *Royal commission on venereal diseases, appendix to first report of the commissioners* [Cd. 7475] (1914), p. 145.

ensure that he did not grow 'into a weak, scrawny man'. Similarly, 'White's Wafer Oatmeal' was marketed as ideal for members as 'they are healthy, splendid specimens of youth' and 'have been raised on White's Wafer Oatmeal, and this fact is in itself a sufficient guarantee of their enduring powers'.[126]

Fears surrounding the social conditions of children and the increasing alarm surrounding physical deterioration ensured that organisations committed to developing the physical health of adolescents gained prominence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Fear of physical deterioration in the wider United Kingdom also found an outlet in Ireland and youth movements were responsive to these concerns and it is clear they attempted to discourage unhealthy practices amongst their members and provided a safe and secure environment in which adolescents could be supervised in an attempt to dissuade indulgence in smoking and alcohol. In this they were discouraging practices that were not covered by statutory regulation and were in advance of the state in recognising the inherent dangers of children smoking and drinking alcohol from a young age. Their main mechanism for dissuading indulgence was attempting to forge a group consensus amongst members whereby they were believed to have been less prone to pressure from their peers as all were under the same moral obligations. They placed discouraging unhealthy activities as an integrated part of their programme and this was aided by the range of other activities that they provided to members. In this youth movements were innovative as other groups such as the Band of Hope and the Anti-Tobacco League were specifically focused on their respective areas of interest while youth movements incorporated their aims as a constituent element within a much wider programme. In doing this youth movements were able to provide a greater supervisory role over the leisure time of their members than organisations dedicated to more specific interests by incorporating drill, reading rooms, sport, education, and other social activities as alternative attractions to smoking on street corners or entering public houses. This was appreciated by these single issues organisations and they tried to engage with some youth movements in furthering their objectives, seeing them as beneficial allies.

Youth movements attempted to change the understanding that members may have had of alcohol and smoking by highlighting the dangers and understood that attitudes are not changed by a legislative act of parliament. They adopted a variety of means for eliciting a satisfactory response. In the Boys' Brigade rules were introduced to limit these activities while in the Boy Scouts rational and educative means were adopted which emphasised the

[126] *Irish Independent*, 19 Mar. 1910, 23 Feb. 1910, 10 Oct. 1914.

logical reasons why members should not engage in unhealthy practices. Pledge taking was seen as an ineffective means of discouraging indulgence if it was not underpinned by logical arguments. Fianna Éireann, while largely in agreement as to the causes of boys indulging in these activities, framed their arguments for discouragement in national terms arguing that smoking amongst boys limited their ability to work for Irish independence and attempted a moral and national justification for their stance by emphasising that boys who were smokers were neglecting their duty to national ambitions and would provide material for enlistment in the British Army.

Youth movements attempted to appreciate the viewpoint of the members themselves and tried to understand the motivations that boys may have had in indulging in these practices. They were responsive to the environmental factors associated with these activities and they appreciated the function that they may have fulfilled for adolescents. As many members would have left school at fourteen and entered the world of work they would have been surrounded by adult men for a sizeable portion of each day and grouping them together with others of a similar age allowed the opportunity to counteract the values and attitudes they may have imbibed from a workplace environment and was an attempt to shield them as far as possible from adult status. To the boys themselves these activities may have been an attempt at portraying adult status and denoted an assertion of their independence. However, for all their ambitions, evidence suggests that not all members were responsive to the wishes of the leadership with a clear distinction to be made between ambition and reality. It is dubious that that they were successful as members continued to engage in these activities and it would be unrealistic to presume the obsequious acquiescence of members. Despite this it is possible that merging this ambition within a wider programme may have elicited a more responsive attitude.

In investigating the physical health motivations of youth movements wider trends associated with other public health objectives are discernible, especially the equation of medical and moral health. While smoking and indulgence in alcohol were deemed physically unhealthy they were also perceived as revealing moral weakness, encouraging indulgent habits, as well as promoting actual criminality. It is clear that youth movements were less concerned with the major aspect of public health, disease, than with providing information on unhealthy practices and understood that the absence of disease did not mean good physical health and appreciated that bodily stamina was the key to good health.[127] To this end they

[127] Wohl, *Endangered lives*, pp. 330, 338.

provided outlets for healthy recreations and foremost amongst these was the encouragement of physical activity.

4 Youth Movements, Sport, and Camping

4.1 Youth Movements and Sport

There are many factors that contributed to the development of modern sport ranging from industrialisation, demographic change, urbanisation, and technological advancements in the nineteenth century.[1] Social and economic factors also facilitated the development of sport in Ireland. The general rise in incomes, coupled with increased leisure time as a result of industrial reforms, ensured that more disposable income and free time was available for leisure pursuits. The increasing urban centres of Dublin and Belfast ensured a greater proximity of people which made competitive sports more practicable and developing transport links rendered travel between these centres more feasible. The beneficial effects of these developments was felt most strongly in Ulster which had a greater proportion of industrial workers who accrued the benefits of decreased working hours and a greater level of financial security. In Dublin only a quarter the population was engaged in manufacturing with more than half the workforce composed of unskilled labourers with generally higher levels of unemployment and less disposable income and as a result 'potential participation in sport of any kind (was) curtailed by its economic situation'.[2]

Organised sport amongst adolescents was pioneered by British public schools from the middle of the nineteenth century when it became integrated into their formal curriculums as prior to the introduction of games pupils had freedom to carry out their own leisure activities away from the supervision of school authorities.[3] Organised games had been seriously undertaken in early decades of the nineteenth century but it was not until the mid to late nineteenth century that public school authorities gave them official encouragement and saw them as a character building force. David Newsome has written that 'between 1860 and 1880, games became compulsory, organised and eulogised at all the leading public schools' and in the period excellence in games became more significant in a pupil that spiritual zeal or religious piety.[4] The role of the public schools in disseminating sport, and more importantly how they conceptualised sport, are necessary considerations in examining how sport was

[1] P. Rouse, '*Sport* and Ireland in 1881', in A. Bairner, ed., *Sport and the Irish: histories, identities, issues* (Dublin, 2005), p. 7.
[2] N. Garnham, *Association football and society in pre-partition Ireland* (Belfast, 2004), pp. 8-11.
[3] T.W. Bamford, *Rise of the public schools: a study of boys' public boarding schools in England and Wales from 1837 to the present day* (London, 1967), p. 74; D. Newsome, *Godliness and good learning: four studies on a Victorian ideal* (London, 1961), p. 38
[4] Newsome, *Godliness*, pp. 81, 222, 26.

eventually transmitted to non-public school children. There was a growing belief that sport, especially team games, had an ethical basis and that the moral training imbued could be beneficial in the world beyond school.[5] The ideology of athleticism permeated these schools and rested on a belief that sport was a highly effective means of instilling valuable social and educational values such as physical and moral courage, loyalty, team-work, fairness, capacity to accept defeat, and teaching boys how to both obey and command. The application of athleticism encompassed a range of ambitions and motivations such as social control, increasing physical health, sporting pleasure, and the development of moral values and J.A. Mangan has emphasised that is was a 'complex manifestation'.[6] Growing numbers of pupils, disciplinary problems, and the idealism of educationalists all played a role in the development of athleticism and Mike Huggins has noted that it was a 'civilising offensive' that countered ill-discipline and promoted school identity. These schools were also significant in the regulation of modern sport as former pupils developed sports beyond the public school walls and in doing so transformed the purpose and nature of sport.[7]

While this process had begun in the public school system it eventually spread to the state sector. In 1906 games were introduced into British elementary schools and it became 'state pedagogical policy' that the values of athleticism could also provide benefits for working class children. Similar to the public school system games encompassed a multiplicity of functions including control, pleasure, recreation, and physical fitness, but the primary educational purpose was moral.[8] In the diffusion of these values teacher training colleges have been seen as pivotal in ensuring that athleticism was filtered down to elementary school pupils.[9] However, there were essential differences between athleticism in the public and state systems ranging from the limited freedom that state schools had to control their own curriculums to the differing age groups which each system catered for, as well as the limited facilities that state schools had at their disposal. However, despite these impediments 'athleticism was so pervasive and dominant an ideology that is was adapted to suit the conditions of the elementary schools and did bring new values and ideals into these

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[5] P. McIntosh, *Fair play: ethics in sport and education* (London, 1979), p. 27.

[6] J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian public school: the emergence and consolidation of an educational ideology* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 9.

[7] M. Huggins, *The Victorians and sport* (London, 2004), p.31.

[8] J.A. Mangan and C. Hickey, 'English Elementary Education Revisited and Revised: Drill and Athleticism in Tandem', in J.A. Mangan, ed., *A Sport-Loving Society: Victorian and Edwardian Middle-Class England at Play* (London, 2006), pp. 69, 72.

[9] Mangan, Hickey, 'English Elementary', p. 73; J.A. Mangan and C. Hickey, 'Athleticism in the service of the proletariat: preparation for the English elementary school and the extension of middle-class manliness', in *A Sport-Loving Society*, p. 129.

schools'. Even prior to their inclusion in the formal curriculum games were encouraged amongst elementary school children and supervised by teachers as early as the 1880s. It is clear there was popular support for games playing amongst elementary school pupils themselves and amongst teachers as a means of recreation, providing a distraction from more mundane elements of the curriculum.[10]

The perceived benefits of sporting engagement are also germane in the development of sport in Ireland. The advantages of improved physical prowess and stamina were seen as providing industrial benefits in manufacturing works, coupled with a belief in the moral benefits accrued through sport in strengthening ethical norms, promoting social stability, improving relationships between different classes and creeds, and providing alternative attractions so as to divert men from potentially dangerous activities and attempting to create a new forum for social intercourse other than the public house.[11] In the provision of sport the emphasis was increasingly on 'rational' sport, ones which it was believed could build morale and make players more efficient and productive and act as counter temptations to what were perceived as less reputable activities. Amongst the young it was 'a missionary endeavour drawing the young away from temptation and vice by offering self-improving physical, healthy and wholesome outlets for their misdirected energies'. Religious bodies were significant forces in the provision of these activities and by the 1880s 'sport slowly became an important focus of recreational activity for young churchgoers of whatever class' as it was believed 'playing team games encouraged co-operation and discipline'.[12] This emphasis on 'rational' pastimes led to the denigration of other less reputable outlets such as drinking and gambling.[13] This chapter will outline the variety of sports that were encouraged in youth movements in Ireland and examine the development of athleticism in the Boys' Brigade through the medium of association football. This demonstrates that the values of athleticism found an outlet in Ireland outside the structures of formal education and was specifically encouraged amongst largely working class members in a voluntary organisation. It also provides an opportunity to highlight the differences between the ambitions of leaders and its practical application by members. Such a distinction allows us to examine the reception of

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[10] Mangan, Hickey, 'English Elementary', pp. 73-4; Mangan, Hickey, 'Athleticism', p. 137.
[11] Garnham, *Association football*, pp. 13-14.
[12] M. Huggins, *The Victorians and sport* (London, 2004), p. 36, 40-1.
[13] J.M. Golby, A.W. Purdue, *The civilisation of the crowd: popular culture in England, 1750-1900* (New York, 1984), p. 92; J. Hargreaves, *Sport, power and culture: a social and historical analysis of popular sports in Britain* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 205; T. Mason, *Association football and English society, 1863-1915* (Sussex, 1980), p. 226.

athleticism and to develop a distinction between the rhetoric associated with the concept and how it was received in practice.

As has been examined, the physical health of children was a major concern as were prevalent fears surrounding deterioration. These anxieties ensured a growing appreciation that physical activities needed to be provided to school children. For example, in Scotland, a report on physical training recommended greater emphasis on physical education in elementary schools. They commented that 'the improvement in regard to physical training will be brought about chiefly by a more intelligent conception of the proper aim of education, by recognition of the fact that the education cannot be based on sound principles which neglects the training and development of the bodily powers'. They recommended that agencies such as the Boys' Brigade be utilised in this regard as they were of 'supreme importance...as a means of disciplining the disorderly elements in society, and also of strengthening the available resources of the country'. They believed that they were so important that the payment of an education grant should be made to encourage their growth.[14]

In Irish schools the introduction of physical drill in 1901 was deemed desirable with the benefits of greater physical fitness being emphasised. The commission on manual and practical instruction reported in 1898 that drill was important, particularly in urban areas, 'where bodily training in games, garden-work, and out-door occupations can rarely be obtained by children of the working classes'. They believed that the introduction of drill was a significant development in the Irish educational system and advised that it should be introduced with every encouragement being given to schools to introduce a regular scheme of instruction in drill and physical exercises, recommending the introduction of a grant to be offered on the condition that the school held such classes on a regular basis.[15] Prior to its introduction into the school system one of the few outlets for drill was in a youth movement and the development of drill in the school system did have an effect on youth movements. In the 1901-1902 session (one year after drill had been introduced into the school curriculum) the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade argued that the decrease in the number of boys was as a result of the development of drill in primary schools as 'for some drill is no longer a novelty, as in all our primary schools it is compulsory'.[16] Dublin battalion President Gilbert Mahaffy wrote to members that 'some of you have now the advantage of learning drill in

[14] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 1, p. 38; 'The royal commission on physical training (Scotland)' *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1903), p. 817.
[15] *Commission on manual and practical instruction in primary schools under the board of national education in Ireland, final report of the commissioners* [C. 8923] (1898), pp. 51-2.
[16] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Jan. 1903.

your daily schools, but we hope this will not lessen your interest in the varied work of your companies'.[17]

However, the recreational facilities in urban areas were limited and the provision of drill was hampered by the lack of suitable playgrounds within the school system. In Dublin in 1904, of 168 schools, thirty-nine had no playground, or a very unsuitable one. In 1910 education inspector Elliot Paxton Dewar reported that sixty-nine schools in Belfast had no playground, or practically none.[18] Anthony Roche noted that in Irish national schools the playground was middling or bad in 2,344, with no playground in 1,577.[19] Even those schools that did have them were deemed unsuitable and Joseph Lynam, district education inspector for Templemore in Co. Tipperary, reported that playgrounds in the schools were 'more like a pen for domestic animals than a place of recreation for young people'.[20]

Youth movements supplemented these policies and aimed to reduce the deficiency in recreational facilities for young people in Ireland. In 1911 the *Irish Times* wrote that the facilities boys had of receiving gymnastic and physical culture training were 'in striking contrast to the conditions prevailing even less than a decade ago. Then our gymnastic classes were composed almost exclusively of young men ranging from 16 to 27 or so years, and the 'youngsters' had no place in the clubs' but with the emergence of the Boys' Brigade and the Boy Scouts, gymnastics for the young became more readily available. They argued that the beneficial effects of this training would result in 'healthy citizens, well set up, deep-chested, with sound lungs, able and willing to acquit themselves as men'.[21] The potential for increasing the popularity of gymnastics through the medium of youth movements was appreciated by the Irish Amateur Gymnastic Association who in 1901 and 1903 offered competitions for teams from the various boys' brigades in dumbbells and free gymnastics.[22] Three teams entered from the 1st and 3rd companies of the Boys' Brigade and one company from the Catholic Boys' Brigade.[23] This was an attractive feature of their programmes and the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade reported in March 1900 that 'gymnastic displays are coming more and more to the front'. While the encouragement of gymnastics was welcomed they argued that it should not interfere 'with the very short time at present given to

[17] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 June 1903.
[18] *Report of Mr F.H. Dale...on primary education in Ireland*, p. 3; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 14 Apr. 1910.
[19] Roche, 'The sanitary condition', pp. 545-6.
[20] *The sixty-fourth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland*, p. 211.
[21] *Irish Times*, 9 Dec. 1911.
[22] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 26 Jan. 1901, 17 Jan. 1903.
[23] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Mar. 1901.

squad and company drill'.[24] That same month the 4th Dublin company noted that other aspects of the Brigade programme were 'gradually pushing drill in the background' and far from being regarded as one of the most important features of a company 'it is given only the spare moments'.[25] In 1904 the 32nd Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade wrote that 'we find gymnastic work the most attractive all round'.[26]

The Boy Scouts placed a premium upon attaining an enhanced state of physical well-being through physical activities and Baden-Powell noted the difficulties of gaining physical exercise and experience of the outdoors. He commented that while modern circumstances necessitated living in a house 'any man of spirit naturally wants to be out in the open'. For him many people were 'working in an office or place of business with only occasional tastes of open life in games and cycling'.[27] The *Irish Times* reported that the Boy Scouts were 'largely restoring to our life the old Greek ideal of a perfectly educated man'. They argued that 'although the need of developing the body as well as the mind was never entirely lost sight of...it came to be regarded as of minor importance in an age when intellect ruled the world'. The newspaper noted that the physical exercises of the early Greeks were an essential factor in the training of their young as a citizen prepared for all the responsibilities of life. This was seen as the aim of the Boy Scouts, to create 'the budding citizens of an unheroic age'.[28] Another source of concern was the perceived debilitating effects of modern living and the extent to which improving technologies diminished the necessity of physical exertion in everyday life. The *Irish Independent* noted how improving transport facilities meant that 'buses, trams, trains, and motors carry them everywhere; many people are always more or less run-down and so debilitated that they become depressed and quite unable to enjoy life'.[29] Baden-Powell was equally aggrieved, noting that 'the increase in civilization tends more and more to destroy manliness and character. Tubes, trams and taxis don't tend to harden us. Paid football, cinematography and test matches are making us into a civilization of lookers-on instead of leaders in enterprise'.[30] This was one of the reasons why an imperial life on the frontier of empire was to prove attractive. For Baden-Powell the British empire provided a means for the rediscovery of manhood because it 'lacked the refinements that were weakening the metropolitan centre'. The frontier of empire was the site 'where men were

[24] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Mar. 1900.
[25] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Mar. 1900.
[26] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 31 Dec. 1904.
[27] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1911.
[28] *Irish Times*, 23 Apr. 1914.
[29] *Irish Independent*, 10 Jan. 1913.
[30] W.S. Adams, *Edwardian portraits* (London, 1957), p. 144.

pitted against a hostile natural environment and local population and forced to rely upon their own physical and mental resources that, perforce, manliness was forged'.[31]

The Dublin Boy Scouts engaged in a variety of sports including rifle shooting and athletics. In 1910 they were represented at the All Ireland Miniature Rifle meeting at Ballsbridge and each troop of Boy Scouts was permitted to enter a team of four to shoot for the 'Cooper Challenge Cup', and individual Scouts were allowed to enter for the 'Irish Times Cup'. The 1st south county Dublin troop reported that 'rifle practice is a very strong point in the troop' and in this competition came first amongst the Boy Scout teams.[32] The Boy Scouts had access to a rifle range at the Royal Dublin Society's premises in Ballsbridge which was open to Boy Scouts every Thursday with ammunition available at two pennies per ten rounds.[33] Running was also encouraged and in 1910 the 3rd north county Dublin troop held a cross-country championship where participants had to run a course of six miles.[34] The 2nd north county Dublin troop had boxing and fencing classes, as did the 6th south county Dublin troop. [35] The 10th city of Dublin troop held a boxing championship in 1910.[36] The 1st Dublin Sea Scouts also had boxing classes as well as jiujitsu lessons.[37] They may have been influenced in starting jiujitsu by Baden-Powell's favourable impression of it after his trip to Japan in 1912.[38] The Boy Scouts were also seen as an effective means of developing sports. In 1912 the Naas hockey club in Co. Kildare resolved to contribute one pound to the local Boy Scouts with the funds 'to be devoted in aid of the promotion of hockey amongst them'.[39]

There was a concern shown in Fianna Éireann for various aspects of physical culture. Sean Prendergast recalled that route marches gave great 'scope for exercising our limbs and our lungs' recalling that the 'distance seldom upset us as we boasted the fact that we were young and active'.[40] Sport played a role in Fianna Éireann and there were regular sports days.[41] Fianna Éireann organised a hurling league, and former member Seamus Pounch noted that 'sports held their proper balance in our strict military training. Boxing was a prominent item in the early days of the Fianna'.[42] The Hibernian Boys' Brigade were keen on

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[31] Pryke, 'The popularity of nationalism', p. 316.
[32] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 26 Feb. 1910, 16 Apr. 1910.
[33] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Feb. 1913.
[34] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 26 Feb. 1910.
[35] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Feb. 1911, 16 Apr. 1910.
[36] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 July 1910.
[37] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Feb. 1913.
[38] *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 216, 1 June 1912, p. 922.
[39] *Kildare Observer*, 28 Sept. 1912
[40] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[41] *Freeman's Journal*, 5 Sept. 1910.
[42] *Irish Volunteer*, 14 Feb. 1914; Seamus Pounch, BMH WS 267.

encouraging physical activity and sought to improve the health of its membership with one of their battalions becoming affiliated with the Gaelic Athletic Association and entering a team in the Co. Dublin minor league.[43]

The leadership of the Catholic Boys' Brigade reported that their object was gained 'partly by encouraging a spirit of rivalry in games, etc. (for a healthy body encourages a healthy mind); and thus by looking after their bodies'. [44] They also had an annual sports day, as well as a swimming club and hurling and football teams, 'to encourage good conduct and regular attendance'.[45] The Brigade affiliated to the Leinster Football Council in 1907.[46] An international footballer stated that he had been first taught football in the Catholic Boys' Brigade, attesting to the importance of the sport in the Brigade.[47] It was not just Irish games that were encouraged as one delegate from the Catholic Boys' Brigade noted that 'he had always urged the adoption of Irish games, but he would not coerce the boys into playing any one set of games'.[48] However, others contrasted the values and attitudes of players of Gaelic games with other popular sports. Rev. Gwynn, a Jesuit priest connected with the Catholic Boys' Brigade, commented after attending a Gaelic football match between Kerry and Louth that 'from beginning to end he did not hear a single syllable or word that the purest-minded boy or girl on the face of God's earth could not listen to. The same thing, however, could not be said of other games that were played in the metropolis'.[49]

Boys' Brigade companies' had clubs for cricket, cycling, rambling, boxing, gymnastics, debating, ping-pong, and swimming attached to them as well as an annual sports and athletics day.[50] In 1917 the 2nd Dublin company reported that 'boxing is also occupying some of the members'.[51] There also seems to have been acceptance of all sports. The 26th Dublin company reported that members played association football and rugby 'and yet some others Gaelic'.[52] By 1908 the 21st Dublin company had both football and rugby clubs; football was for working boys with rugby organised for schoolboys.[53] Non-physical sports were also catered for and the Dublin Boys' Brigade hoped that the recreation committee 'will

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[43] *Hibernian Journal*, Dec. 1914, Nov. 1915.
[44] *Plum Duff*, October 1905, p. 14.
[45] *Freeman's Journal*, 19 Sept. 1910, 1 Jun. 1908; *Irish Independent*, 22 May 1905, 22 July 1905.
[46] *Irish Independent*, 12 Sept. 1907.
[47] *Freeman's Journal*, 31 May 1910.
[48] *Irish Independent*, 24 May 1907.
[49] *Anglo-Celt*, 5 Jul. 1913.
[50] H. Drummond, 'The secret of managing street boys', *Review of Reviews*, 3 (1891), p. 155; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Apr. 1898, 7 May 1898, 22 Oct. 1898, 19 May 1900, 11 Jan. 1902, 18 Jan. 1902; *Irish Independent*, 13 June 1910; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 4, January, 1894, p. 109.
[51] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 May 1917.
[52] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Apr 1909.
[53] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 16, no. 9, May 1908, p. 132.

not forget those who prefer mimic warfare on the chessboard to its practical application on the football field'.[54] In Belfast there was a battalion cricket competition, as well as chess and draught competitions.[55] Their inter-company cricket match was said to have 'created much healthy interest amongst the boys of the Battalion'.[56] The 'Henderson Trophy' was awarded annually to the winners of the inter-company cricket competition, having been donated by Sir James Henderson, an honorary vice-president of the Belfast battalion.[57] Despite the popularity of the sport in the Belfast battalion *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* reported that 'cricket does not appeal to the average brigade Boy'.[58] This seems to have been the case in Dublin and in 1899 the Dublin Boys' Brigade noted that 'cricket does not seem to occupy a prominent position in our Battalion'.[59] While there were occasional cricket matches held at summer camp there were only a small number of clubs in Dublin companies and it was reported that that 'the game receives little or no support in the battalion'. The reason advanced for this was the development of cycling and it was argued that 'cycling is, of course, to a great extent accountable for the decline of interest in summer games'. Several companies had cycling clubs with regular runs throughout the summer months.[60]

The Boys' Brigade was influential in introducing new sports to adolescents in Ireland. In 1898 the 1st Dublin company gave an exhibition of basketball which was noted as being the 'first public exhibition of this favourite Canadian and American game in Dublin'. The 1st Belfast company started to play basketball in 1899 and the Boys' Brigade were probably one of the earliest groups in Ireland to take up the sport.[61] Hockey was not very popular in the Boys' Brigade and the 21st Dublin company was the only company which had a hockey club.[62] The Dublin battalion noted that there should be more hockey clubs arguing that in Dublin the sport had 'as many followers as Football'.[63] The Boys' Brigade also held an annual battalion sports day which was reported to be 'one of the most important junior athletic meetings in Ireland'. Despite this it had resulted in 'a serious financial loss' for the battalion every year it was held and they reported that 'the sports have not been well attended

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[54] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Dec. 1897.
[55] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 2, Nov. 1895, p. 37; *Belfast News-Letter*, 10 May 1895.
[56] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 1, Oct. 1891, p. 11.
[57] *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 Feb. 1899.
[58] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 4, Nov. 1896, p. 53.
[59] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 May 1900, 10 June 1899.
[60] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 16 Mar. 1901.
[61] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 May 1898; *Belfast News-Letter*, 3 Mar. 1899. Basketball had been created by James Naismith in 1891.
[62] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Nov. 1897, 26 Nov. 1898.
[63] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 Oct. 1900.

either by the general public or by members of the Battalion'.[64] In 1906 William Connor, former honorary secretary and an honorary vice-president of the battalion, wrote that the battalion athletic sports were the 'best junior gathering of its kind in Ireland' and criticised those who questioned the cost incurred and asked 'does nothing pay only what leaves a profit in gold?'.[65]

In the Boys' Brigade individual companies seem to have focused on individual skills and many companies became the virtual full-time holders of many prizes. For example, in 1902 the 8th Dublin company won the battalion football league for the seventh time in the eight years it had been running.[66] In 1900 the 9th Belfast company won the inter-company drill competition for the fifth year in succession.[67] At the nineteenth annual inspection of the Dublin battalion in 1911 Sir Neville Lyttleton commented on the victory of the 19th company in the inter-company drill challenge trophy. He expressed his disappointment that there were not more competitors and believed the reason was 'one or two companies had so distinguished themselves that the others were discouraged'.[68] The dominance of certain companies did lead to a decrease in interest among other companies in many competitions. So notable had this become that at an officers' conference in Belfast in 1903 J.W. Morgan noted the small entries in competitions with 'always the same few companies in one competition'. He believed that 'companies did not care to enter if they felt they were sure of a bad place' and to overcome this he recommended a rule that a company winning in successive years must drop out of the competition.[69] In 1905 the Dublin battalion introduced a rule that a company could not win a competition for four consecutive years. They could enter and if they won would receive a prize equal in value with the second placed team taking first prize.[70]

Association football was certainly the most popular sport in the Boys' Brigade in Ireland and its development provides an opportunity of examining the extension of athleticism to largely working class youths outside the structure of formal education. The development of formal sporting activities was aided by the expansion of both national and professional sports bodies. This had the effect of encouraging the participation of a wider social spectrum in sporting activities and extending access to include those who had hitherto

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[64] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 May 1901, 4 May 1901.
[65] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 28 Apr. 1906.
[66] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Apr. 1902, 4 Apr. 1903.
[67] *Belfast News-Letter*, 11 Apr. 1900.
[68] *Irish Times*, 20 May 1911.
[69] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 3, Nov. 1903, p. 42.
[70] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Nov. 1905.

been excluded. These activities had largely been limited to those with the means to participate and had been virtually the exclusive preserve of those attending public schools.[71] The public school system had long been seen as an important institution in improving the physique of the boys who attended. C.W. Haig-Brown commented on the public schools that the boys that entered 'changed from the rather puny specimens that they are on their entry into them to the very fine examples of young manhood that they have become by the time of their departure from them-a change, in fact, very much like that of pupa to imago'.[72] The Boys' Brigade attempted to disseminate such a public school ethos and this represented an attempt to filter these values through a range of social classes and they were a significant outlet for the dissemination of these values in Ireland. This reflected a desire on the part of the Brigade to instil a similar conception of the function that sport could play and this was a widely held view that amongst the Brigade leadership. Thomas W. Cuthbertson, honorary treasurer of the Boys' Brigade, believed that membership inculcated 'an esprit de corps parallel to the sort of school feeling that you have in an English public school'.[73] William Monk Gibbon argued that 'the brigade has created an esprit de corps which has made Battalions the equivalent of public schools'.[74] Within this context sport was not solely a leisure pursuit but an educational tool by which the values which sport was believed to imbue could be extended to a larger audience. The provision of sport was about providing a supervisory role over the leisure time of members and in the eyes of the leadership represented an opportunity of developing a more complex understanding of the role that sport could play in their lives.

Within the United Kingdom, Ireland was relatively late in the adoption of association football. It was not until 1880 that the Irish Football Association was formed, seventeen years after its counterpart in England, with the Irish Football League formed in 1890. In 1892 the Leinster Football Association was formed in Dublin and affiliated to the Association and they began organising competitions amongst Dublin affiliated clubs and by 1901 there were 259 clubs affiliated to the Irish Football Association rising to 420 by 1910.[75] In 1912 the Boys' Brigade headquarters ran a competition asking members what their favourite sport was and of

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[71] Springhall et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 58.
[72] C. W. Haig-Brown, 'The physique of boys entering public schools', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1898), p. 1786; On the development of sport in public schools see, J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian public school: the emergence and consolidation of an educational ideology* (Cambridge, 1981).
[73] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 2, p. 562.
[74] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 21, no. 10, June 1913, p. 148.
[75] Garnham, *Association football*, pp. 4-7.

the 484 entries considered football was the most popular garnering 255 votes.[76] By 1894 there were nine football clubs attached to Dublin companies and by 1905 there were twelve company teams in the Boys' Brigade league. Association football proved a popular attraction for a number of reasons. It was seen as a relatively safer sport than other football codes and Neal Garnham has concluded that part of its popularity lay in the fact that 'association football was a simple, cheap, exciting and safe sport that offered a measure of satisfaction to those who partook in it with only a minimal risk'.[77] Tony Mason has noted that it was a simple game that was easy to play and follow as 'relatively little equipment was required to join in. It was inexpensive to play and could be played almost anywhere, even in the streets of towns'.[78] The popularity of sport in the Brigade can also partially be accounted for by the lack of a formal outlet for sport in national schools as physical training was not formally introduced into the curriculum until 1901.[79]

The Boys' Brigade adopted a pragmatic approach to the development of sport and appreciated that they would not succeed in discouraging participation and instead attempted to facilitate sport within the framework of the Brigade and control its supply. Speaking in London the captain of the 1st Bessbrook Company in Co. Armagh, argued that officers needed to be 'rational beings, who do not think that Boys lose their souls if they play a game of football'.[80] The Boys' Brigade reasoned that boys would play football irrespective of their concerns and the choice lay between leaving them to play it outside the Brigade, and thus beyond its control, or providing facilities for their playing it inside the Brigade, 'surrounded by all the influence for good that the organisation, through its officers, is capable of exerting'. The conditions in outside football clubs were seen as potentially morally corrupting and it was noted that many boys were members of clubs 'where the play and language were often of rough nature' and the leadership became convinced that a Brigade club would be preferable as 'the discipline and esprit de corps of the brigade could be used as a purifying and elevating influence'.[81] They warned that if sport was not carried out under proper control 'much evil may be the outcome' and noted that 'the lives of many boys have been permanently injured owing to the conditions under which they obtained their football or other physical

[76] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Apr. 1912.
[77] Garnham, *Association football*, p. 40.
[78] Mason, *Association football*, p.1
[79] Garnham, *Association football*, p. 22.
[80] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 5, June 1892, p. 90.
[81] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 3, Feb. 1892, p. 54.

recreations'.[82] Their provision of sport was also an attempt to take the game off the urban streets where playing football often led to conflict with the authorities.[83] There were also other grounds for concern as there were instances of injury and even death as a result of playing football on streets. There were also fears surrounding the safety of the game and many saw games as consisting of 'rough and brutal play' and it has been argued that the level of physical contact in the Irish play was greater than that in England.[84] The role that the organisation played in supervising sport was appreciated at the highest levels of the Brigade. Brigade President James Carfrae Alston noted 'the immense value of supervision of the Boys' sports and games, the power lying in the Brigade to rectify abuses and provide reforms in the surroundings of modern athletics'.[85] In 1897 Joseph Ferguson Peacocke, then bishop of Meath, believed that cricket, hockey, and football were 'exercises of a healthy nature' but lamented the fact that 'there were many Boys who could not engage in them in the day time. Here was where The Boys' Brigade came in, and gave these Boys the advantage of a physical training'.[86] Thus the development of an adequate supervisory role over the boys was important and sport was encouraged insofar as it could be controlled by the leadership and represented an adjunct of the church asserting their control over the leisure time of the young members of their congregation.

There were also practical considerations in their encouragement of sport and they saw it as a marketing ploy to attract potential members and hoped that this would be a means of them gaining influence over the spiritual life of a member. They hoped that if a boy joined the Boys' Brigade for its physical activities he would later be influenced by the religious aspects and it was argued that 'many a boy joined for the recreation, and, once in, has been influenced for time and eternity by its teaching and training'.[87] Sport was also seen as having the potential to retain members and as a key inducement to continued membership of the Brigade. The Dublin battalion argued that 'if there is no Company team, the boys who want to play join clubs whose members are very often not desirable companions. The boys gradually lose touch with the Company, and too often learn many bad habits that the Company would have helped them to avoid'.[88] There were certainly some grounds for this concern. The 2nd Dublin Company found it difficult to successfully organise a football club

[82] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 25 Apr. 1914.
[83] M. Taylor, *The association game: a history of British football, 1863-2000* (Harlow, 2008), pp. 46, 123.
[84] Garnham, *Association football*, pp. 38, 33-4.
[85] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 1, Oct. 1893, p. 8.
[86] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 8, Apr. 1897, p. 122.
[87] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 4, Dec. 1896, p. 53.
[88] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Oct. 1902.

as many of their members joined Trintonville Football Club.[89] This team had a reputation as vigorous opponents and in 1906 the Irish Football Association was asked to prevent them from entering the Irish Cup 'at least partly on the grounds that there players were simply too brutal'.[90] The control that the leaders of the Brigade sought to exert could be beneficial to members and ensured that they were engaging the leisure time of their members in a safe and secure environment governed by proper rules.

Sport in the Boys' Brigade was also given a military application. Lord Roberts equated an emphasis on enhanced physical culture and sport with military training, commenting on boys that 'if they are good at games they generally make still better soldiers'.[91] *The Brigadier*, a Boys' Brigade magazine for boys, told readers that 'the playing fields of Eton may have won the Battle of Waterloo, but it has been the open spaces and commons, on which the majority of us depend for our cricket and football, that have helped most in winning the Boer War'.[92]

There was also a belief in the religious and moral benefits to be secured through sport. Rev. A.C. Marshall, chaplain to the forces at the Curragh camp in Co. Kildare, told boys that they needed physical strength and 'had a duty to God whose workmanship their bodies are, to develop their muscles, and become strong men'.[93] The Boys' Brigade believed that they had a distinctive contribution to make to the development of sport. The Presbyterian clergyman Rev. William McKean, addressing a demonstration of the Belfast battalion, argued that members could aid in increasing the character of sport. He stated that in Belfast, as in other towns, there was a danger of being 'demoralised' by the development of athletics and he 'looked forward to the time when respect for decent language, good temper, and respect for one another would be carried into the football field by Boys trained in their Companies, and when the moral tone of their public games would be elevated through the influence exerted by these Boys'.[94] This reflected concerns amongst educators in the public school system. Dr Hely Hutchinson Almond, school headmaster and sporting enthusiast, believed that football could be made 'the training-ground of virtue' and that 'the practical lessons which it preaches, are worth all the books that have been written on youthful purity'.[95] The development of sport amongst adolescents encompassed a range of motivations and James Lewis Paton, a school

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[89] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Nov. 1898.
[90] Garnham, *Association football*, p. 34.
[91] *Irish Times*, 23 May 1899.
[92] *The Brigadier*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan. 1901, p. 11.
[93] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 Nov. 1910.
[94] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 3, Feb. 1892, p. 52; *Belfast News-Letter*, 15 Jan. 1892.
[95] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 3, Dec. 1893, p. 63.

headmaster, encouraged football as a means of young people resisting the temptations they were exposed to. He forwarded the lack of exercise as a cause 'of our having so many young people who are just like pistols at full cock, strongly oversexed'.[96]

The values of athleticism certainly found an outlet in the Brigade in Ireland with football being lauded as a game that taught a boy 'how to take punishment cheerfully, to control his temper even when provoked, to keep his body in a good, healthy state'.[97] Sport was believed to highlight the character of members and the Dublin battalion noted that 'nowhere does a boy show himself so clearly in his true colours as in his sports'.[98] Thomas W. Cuthbertson argued that sport had an important function in teaching valuable moral lessons. He stated that 'we form those clubs, referee the games and matches, teach the boy to play fair, to subordinate himself to the good of his team, to keep his temper, to accept the referee's decision, to be able to take defeat'.[99] Sport was also seen as a distraction from morally corrupting practices and provided healthy recreation for members during their leisure time. Rev. John Frank Moncrieff Cox, a chaplain in the 21st Dublin company, wrote that 'the young life which does not delight in active exercises...will find its pleasure in what is morbid, unhealthy, and degrading. It will lack that element of courage and *grit*, which is learned in manly sport'.[100]

However, the development of athleticism in the Brigade was rendered difficult by a number of factors ranging from the provision of adequate facilities to the actions of officers and members which undermined attempts to present sport as morally uplifting and as an activity for the development of ethical behaviour. The growth of football in the Boys' Brigade's was hampered by the lack of suitable facilities on which it could be carried out. The Dublin battalion secretary, W.M. Connor, wrote that 'Dublin is very badly provided with recreation grounds, the Phoenix Park being most inconveniently situated for all the companies, with the exception of three or four'.[101] Despite this, the conditions were much improved by the early twentieth century when compared with the early days of the Brigade. The battalion recalled situations where 'coats were the regular (if not the League) means of marking touch'. In many instances the facilities were makeshift and the equipment rudimentary as 'the posts were very variable in height as the state of the ground determined

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[96] *Royal commission on venereal diseases, appendix to final report of the commissioners, minutes of evidence* [Cd. 8190] (1916), p. 213.
[97] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Sept. 1902.
[98] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Dec. 1910.
[99] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 2, p. 561.
[100] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 6, Feb. 1904, p. 83.
[101] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 7, Apr. 1894, p. 186; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Nov. 1905.

how far they could be pushed down; the cross-bars were mere pieces of tape, always, or nearly always, about a foot lower in the middle than at the sides'. [102] The provision of footballs was also limited. At a game in 1899 between the 1st Dublin company and the band boys of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders the match had to be abandoned after the ball burst and there was no replacement. In 1905 a match between the 1st and 8th Dublin companies had to be abandoned when the ball went over a hedge and was confiscated by the owner of the land as a trespass. [103]

As the facilities for football were limited the battalion relied on communal grounds at the Phoenix Park. These pitches were granted by the Commissioners of Public Works in 1901 with dressing rooms added in 1907. These proved popular with sportsmen and by 1904 there were 3,000 applications for their use and by 1906 there were thirty-one football pitches with twenty-nine of them devoted to association football.[104] Prior to their availability, during winter games came to be played late into the day and ensured that the quality of football suffered as a result of darker evenings. For example, in 1900 a match between the 17th and 2nd companies suffered as the second half 'was played in black darkness' with a report that it was 'quite impossible for the referee to distinguish one side from another, or for the players themselves to see where the goal posts were placed'.[105] Football matches were supposed to begin at 3pm but the Boys' Brigade football correspondent wrote that this was 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance'. As a result in November 1901 he observed a match still being played at 5pm and wrote that 'it was so dark that in one case I had to walk round the field to discover where the goal posts were situated!'.[106] Some companies were fortunate to be able to maintain private grounds. The 1st Dublin company had access to a recreation ground for football and cricket in upper Leeson street until 1897 when they purchased their own private ground at Chalgrove park, south circular road, popularly known as 'The Barn'.[107] In 1909 the 17th Dublin company secured a football pitch from Pembroke Urban Council.[108] In some cases they were able to acquire facilities from the military. In 1907 an inter-battalion match between Dublin and Liverpool was played on the grounds of

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[102] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Nov. 1902.
[103] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Nov. 1899, 14 Jan. 1905.
[104] Garnham, *Association football*, p. 12.
[105] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 Dec. 1900.
[106] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Nov. 1901
[107] *The Boys' Brigade, 1st Dublin Company Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 16, BBAD, Box 18; I. Wilson Power, 'To school in the city', *Dublin Historical Record*, 51 (1998), p. 141.
[108] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 16 Oct. 1909.

the Cameron Highlanders on Serpentine avenue in Sandymount.[109] Thomas W. Cuthbertson reported that 'to get the full benefit of such games as football and cricket, time, money, and space are required to an extent that is quite beyond the reach of the majority of boys of the working-class'. This was one of the reasons why drill was so important in the Boys' Brigade as it could 'easily, and comparatively inexpensively, be brought to their very doors'.[110]

Their attempts to encourage sportsmanlike behaviour amongst members were not always successful and there were fears that the provision of sport could lead to arrogance and spite. A Dublin officer commented after a visit to Belfast that more emphasis should be placed on 'developing a more 'sportsmanlike' feeling among the rank and file', writing that 'the temptation to take example by the tricks of outside football clubs, and to regard victory as everything, will require some stamping out'. He deemed this a very serious issue as 'few things militate more than this against the success of our great organisation, and the greatest mutual cordiality among the officers is necessary for its suppression'.[111] The Dublin battalion criticised players that sought to make excuses for defeat noting that 'looking out for the flaws in the eligibility of a team that has been victorious is an attitude that is bound to do a great deal of harm, and most of all to the person who indulges in it'.[112] They warned that it was unsportsmanlike to beat opponents by a large number of goals and criticised teams that 'add goal after goal even when the record has reached double figures' which was characterised as 'uncharitable' and 'anything but a record to feel proud of'.[113] Boys were told that,

> the stronger team should not go upon the field with fixed determination of absolutely crushing the other, but rather to give the weaker team a chance. This could be done in many ways without loss of dignity to either side, and a much more pleasant game would ensue. Above all, remember that in such games as these you are laying the foundation of your manliness, so play the game in a sportsmanlike fashion.

A former member reported in 1909 that in one match the score was 18-0 and argued that 'such a score is surely more disgrace to the winning team than to the losers, and represents conduct so unsportsmanlike as to bring discredit, not merely on the Company concerned, but

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[109] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 16 Mar. 1907.
[110] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 2, p. 561.
[111] *Belfast News-Letter*, 26 Jan. 1899.
[112] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Sept. 1902.
[113] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Oct. 1903.

on the Battalion'.[114] A former officer wrote in 1913 that 'the primitive savage would have been content with the massacre and blood of victims, but the produce of the twentieth century civilisation often takes a fiendish delight in the gloating over the downfall of the defeated team'.[115]

Boys were advised that it was better 'to lose than to win unfairly, and if we cannot play straight-forwardly and without losing our tempers, then we are not sportsmen, and had far better give up the game'. They were warned not to 'rag' the referee as 'a good sportsman should always be perfectly loyal to his decisions and, however much he may disagree with them, never even murmur a complaint'.[116] This was a concern in Irish battalions and in 1904 there were complaints regarding the treatment of the referee during a game between the 1st and 7th companies at Croydon Park in Fairview. The Dublin battalion commented that 'practically all through he was badgered by those on the touch line, which certainly ought not to be the case, more especially in B.B. matches where referees give their time solely in the interest of the League'.[117] It was not only the boys were guilty of disrespecting the football officials and in 1908 the battalion had to 'complain of the annoyance given to referees by officers in charge and followers of certain teams'.[118] The two battalion football teams attempted to put into action the values that were encouraged and in the fourth annual inter-battalion football competition in 1899 the Dublin battalion won 2-1 with 'not one single free being given against them during the entire match'.[119]

While there were many benefits, the Brigade also identified disadvantages and the development of sport was never wholehearted, betraying an uncertainty over its provision to members. In 1899 the Dublin battalion was ambivalent about the role that football played and argued that there were

> more opportunities on the football field for the exercise of the spirit of kindliness and true manliness than anywhere else, but it is equally true that without thoughtfulness there is no place more calculated to draw forth very different qualities to these. Competitions of this kind must either do great good or great harm to all participating in them.[120]

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[114] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Jan. 1909.
[115] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Apr. 1913.
[116] *The Brigadier*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan. 1901, p. 12.
[117] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Dec. 1904.
[118] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 Mar. 1908.
[119] *Belfast News-Letter*, 15 Apr. 1899.
[120] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Oct. 1899.

There was some basis for their fears and in the Dublin battalion there were instances of less than sportsmanlike behaviour surrounding the football competitions. Despite their claims to provide more wholesome football than outside clubs the battalion wrote in 1907 that, 'we are sorry to see a rough element displayed in some recent matches' and reminded players that the football league trophy had 'not been turned into a boxing trophy'.[121] In 1906 the battalion publicly acknowledged that two teams were thrown out of the battalion football league 'on account of irregularities'.[122] Privately, Hugh F. Foxall, chairman of the Dublin battalion recreation committee, alerted the battalion executive that the 12th Company were fielding two boys that were over age and when the company captain was officially informed of this he 'had taken no notice of the matter'. The 3rd Company were thrown out of the league for allowing a boy to play who was not a member of the company and playing under the name of a boy that was.[123]

In the Belfast battalion in 1902 the 22nd Belfast company withdrew from the battalion league 'owing to several reports of misconduct by members'.[124] In the same year James Heslip, captain of the 2nd Belfast company, wrote to the battalion recreation committee arguing that the points awarded to the 19th Belfast company in a recent match with his company should not be given on the grounds that there were 'spectators trespassing on (the) field of play' who were 'threatening the players', with the goalkeeper of the 2nd company 'being interfered with and kicked by spectators'. Heslip wrote that throughout the game

> the play was very rough, and aggravated by expressions used by one of the officers and the teams supporters. One of the corner flags was drawn and used on one of the spectators who expressed his disapprobation of their conduct, and chased into the pavilion which was attacked with sticks and stones

Even when the match ended telephone poles were placed across the road and members of the 2nd Company were attacked with sticks and stones 'with one receiving a wound on the face' and the boys had to take refuge in local houses. It seems that the attacks were based on a former meeting of the two teams. There was an intended assault on the father

[121] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1 Feb. 1908.
[122] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 May 1906.
[123] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 7 Jan. 1906, BBAD, Box 9.
[124] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 12 Feb. 1902, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.

of a boy in the 2nd Company who was described as a 'respectable member of our church and a Christian worker'. In a previous encounter between the teams he had given offence by sending a player off. Heslip argued that 'conduct such as this does not raise the organisation in the eyes of the public, nor in that of the parents of friends of the boys'. He wrote that he had already been met with a 'sneer' from one spectator who stated to him that, 'I thought the Boys' Brigade was a Christian organisation but I have played in matches myself for years and neither the language or conduct could have been equalled in the old days of Falls Park. I am disappointed in the views I took of the brigade'.[125] Thus there is a key distinction between the ambitions of some leaders and the practical application of athleticism on the football field.

Sport in the Brigade was never solely concerned with athleticism and there were a variety of other functions that sport fulfilled in the life of the organisation. It provided more practical opportunities in the Boys' Brigade and had the potential for developing links between various companies throughout the country and was an important means of fostering relations, especially with remote companies. The arrival of other companies must have been welcomed by these isolated units and provided them with an opportunity of engaging with like-minded individuals. Stanley G. McMurtrie, captain of the 1st Kilkenny company, stated that they experienced difficulties as 'the number of boys was very small and the large majority of the population was in opposition to the work on account of its being Protestant'.[126] Arthur J.W. Fitzmaurice, captain of the 1st Carlow company, wrote that his company had 'the great disadvantage of being an isolated Company, the nearest neighbours being the 1st Kilkenny, 20 miles, and the 1st Stradbally, 16 miles distant, while the Dublin Battalion is a matter of 56 miles away'.[127] In 1908 they visited the 1st Kilkenny company for a football match and in 1906 the 1st Waterford company visited Carlow for a hockey match.[128] There was also an annual battalion football match between the Dublin and Belfast battalions.[129] The inter-battalion football competition was 'conducive not merely to improved football, but to much pleasant intercourse between the two Irish Battalions' and the match was 'the only practical link between the two Irish battalions'.[130]

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[125] James Heslip to Charles Hill, 11 Mar. 1902, The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 11 Mar. 1902, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.
[126] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 2, Oct. 1909, p. 23.
[127] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 22, no. 4, Dec. 1913, p. 60; The 1st Carlow company joined the Dublin battalion in 1917, Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 13 Nov. 1916, BBAD, Box 9; The Boys' Brigade battalion register, BBAD; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Feb. 1917.
[128] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[129] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 10, July 1894, p. 263.
[130] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 3, Nov. 1896, p. 44, vol. 8, no. 7, Mar. 1900, p. 107.

Sport also provided the opportunity for the Dublin battalion to host companies from other parts of the world. In 1899 they hosted a football match with the Sheffield battalion.[131] In 1901 the Dublin battalion travelled to Liverpool for an inter-battalion match. They lost the match 3-2 and the battalion reported that they were taught a valuable football lesson by the Liverpool team and it was noted that the Dublin boys 'have not yet learned to be backs and forwards', while the manner in which the Liverpool team played made them seem like on the attack 'to have eight forwards, and defending to have five backs'.[132] In 1901 the Dublin battalion played an inter-battalion match against the Glasgow battalion on the football ground of Rangers Football Club. The match resulted in a 4-2 win for the Dublin battalion, the reason given for Glasgow's defeat being that they 'put far too much "finesse" into their play'. A Glasgow correspondent wrote that 'they were much impressed with the physique and superior training of the Dublin team'. The Dublin battalion hailed their victory as 'the greatest achievement ever done on behalf of the Dublin Battalion in the football field; that we had invaded the home of football, and carried back the honours of victory'.[133] The Dublin battalion had planned to travel to Liverpool in 1915 but this had to be cancelled as the battalion executive decided 'it would not be safe to allow the boys to travel'. In 1916 it was again cancelled 'as owing to the war it would not be feasible to go to Liverpool'. Instead they organised a match against the Belfast battalion, but this too had to be cancelled owing to the outbreak of the Easter Rising.[134]

Sport also had the potential to keep former members in touch with each other after they left the Boys' Brigade and former members were influential in starting football clubs. This provides evidence for role that sport played in the formation of social relationships and Mike Huggins has argued that sport provided 'a key source of friendship, fellowship and fraternal identity' as 'clubs were a masculine sanctuary, part of the wider world of male society' and helped foster self-esteem, companionship, sociability, and cultural improvement.[135] Corinthian Athletic Football Club in north Dublin was started by former members of the 8th Dublin company as a means of keeping the membership together once they had become too old to remain in the Boys' Brigade. In 1902 their club had former Boys' Brigade members from six other Dublin companies. They were members of the Leinster

[131] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Mar. 1899.
[132] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 Apr. 1901.
[133] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 4 Jan. 1902, 11 Jan. 1902.
[134] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 12 Apr. 1915, 14 Feb. 1916, 10 Apr. 1916, 7 June 1916, BBAD, Box 9.
[135] Huggins, *Victorians*, pp. 100-1, 109.

junior league and had won over half their matches. Many of the features of the Boys' Brigade found their way into the club. They planned to start swimming and cycling clubs as well as holding a summer camp. A bible class was also started in connection with the club 'at the unanimous wish of the members'.[136] Similarly, William Woods, honorary secretary of St Matthew's Football Club, wrote that this club had been formed by past members of the 17th Dublin company and included members from four other companies.[137] The Swift's Football Club was composed of former members of the 1st company and had a private ground on south circular road and this was an advantage over other clubs 'who have to rely on the chance of securing a playing pitch in the Phoenix Park each week'. Members of the club argued that it was 'a club which can claim to be one of the oldest and best junior clubs in the city' and was stated to be the 'second oldest club playing football in Leinster'.[138] By 1902 these three teams were affiliated to the Leinster Football Association.[139]

The importance of the Boys' Brigade in encouraging the spread of football is also significant and this function was recognised by the Leinster Football Association in 1892 when it was granted honorary affiliation.[140] The recreation committee of the Dublin battalion, who had charge of the football competitions, referred any technical disputes to them.[141] In 1898 the Boys' Brigade in Dublin argued that their companies had done much 'to foster the growth of the Association Football game in Dublin' and claimed that their football league was the oldest in Leinster, having been run since 1894.[142] The Dublin battalion argued that 'football players get much better football with their company teams in our league than with the junior clubs'.[143] They noted that 'not only have we been the means of starting several of the junior clubs in this city, but several of our old members have found their way into the ranks of the seniors'. For example, Colour Sergeant J. Curtis, who was a former member of the 8th Dublin company, played for Bohemians Football Club and was chosen for a Leinster inter-provincial team.[144] In 1912 at least four Dublin players in the Irish Football League 'received their early football training in the B.B.'. These were Charles Magwood, Albert George Woodman, William E. Linton and Frederick Morrow. Linton was a player for

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[136] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Apr. 1902.
[137] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Apr. 1902.
[138] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Nov. 1907, 7 Nov. 1908, 29 Oct. 1910.
[139] *Irish Times*, 8 Sept. 1902; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Apr. 1902.
[140] G. Briggs and J. Dodd, eds., *100 years of the Leinster football association* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 60-1.
[141] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 14 Jan. 1902, BBAD, Box 10.
[142] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Jan. 1898, 7 Oct. 1899, 21 Jan. 1911.
[143] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Oct. 1898.
[144] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Jan. 1898, 29 Oct 1898, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion athletic sports programme, 1897, BBAD, Box 11.

Bohemians and Morrow played for Trintonville, then Bohemians, and finally Shelbourne. He was later killed during World War I, having been a member of the Royal Field Artillery.[145] In 1909 the Dublin battalion claimed that many former Brigade boys were playing in Irish and English football leagues and some even at international level.[146] There is also evidence of increasing football skill amongst Boys' Brigade members as a whole. An indication of the development of football in the Brigade can be gleaned by an examination of the average goals per game of the league champions over the first eight years of the league. In the eighth year the average was four goals per match while in the second year it was ten, indicating increasing skill amongst Boys' Brigade members.[147]

Despite the advantages and encouragement there were fears surrounding the development of sport in wider public discourse. The journalist Joseph Thorp claimed that 'sport was beginning to claim too much attention; it was made an excuse for idling in all classes; and as regards the workers the tendency to watch and wager was more marked than the inclination to take active part in sports'.[148] Henry Drummond commented that 'so striking has been this development in recent years, and especially among the young men of the larger towns, that the time has come to decide whether athletics are to become a curse to the country or a blessing'.[149] During World War I these fears were intensified. A writer for *The British Medical Journal* complained that 'it makes a lover of his country blush with shame to see the amount of space still devoted by certain newspapers to records of the doings of "muddied oafs" who struggle over a ball like schoolboys instead of doing their duty as men in the trenches and on the battlefield'. It was argued that 'what is "sport" to them might possibly be death to their country'. The heaviest responsibility was laid on those 'who encourage the players by looking on. If, as they say, they want recreation, the proper place for it at present is the drilling ground'.[150]

While church orientated youth movements encouraged sport, both as an alternative to commercial forms of leisure and for its moral value, there were also difficulties. The *Freeman's Journal* reported that 'no churches could compete against the counter attractions of golf and tennis'. The newspaper continued that it was 'generally felt that the week-end rest

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[145] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Nov. 1912; *Irish Times*, 11 Nov. 1911, 18 Oct. 1913, 17 Oct. 1914, 2 Jan. 1915, 27 Oct. 1917.
[146] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 Mar. 1909.
[147] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Apr. 1902.
[148] J. Thorp, 'Thoughts on national service and national unity, *Athenaeum*, 4612 (1916) p.572
[149] Drummond, 'The Boys' Brigade', p. 98.
[150] 'The prevention of national decadence', *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1915), p. 655.

was not meant to be spent, not any moment of it, in badly-ventilated places of worship, were the soul was not likely to be nourished and body was sure to be impoverished'.[151]

In some cases sport also exacerbated political tensions in Ireland. In 1900 the Church Lads' Brigade in Cootehill, Co. Cavan invited some local nationalist boys to compete in a football match in Bellamont Forest and a correspondent to the *Anglo-Celt*, identifying himself as 'Good Old Kruger', condemned the 'scandalous proceedings' and characterised the Church Lads' Brigade as being composed 'of the real true-blue type'. He condemned the nationalist organisers for accepting the invitation as they 'spent some hours at the match under a large Union Jack that was floating from the battlements of the castle'. He described them as 'milk-and-water Nationalists', arguing that 'boys ought to know better than disgracing their National principles'. A letter in response signed by 'Fair Play', who was captain of the team of nationalists, reported that they had 'an enjoyable and friendly game' which surely 'did not take away from our Nationalist principles'. He argued that he had not seen the Union Jack flag, but wondered whether they could 'have stopped a pre-arranged match on account of it'.[152]

The development of sport also had other disadvantages especially since mass participation and the rise of professionalism turned sport into a spectator event which had the potential to exacerbate the problem that youth movements hoped it would solve. *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* told officers that 'our policy should be to encourage all kinds of amateur sports, and to cry down the spirit of professionalism which has become the bane of many forms of it in the country'.[153] A writer with the *Freeman's Journal* commented on sport that,

> it is the enormous organisation of the thing that has ruined it. The people were so furiously sportive that the great meetings became the one thing they lived for outside of their business. They wanted to see the great heroes. They gather in their thousands and their tens of thousands to watch. There was no time for them to play. At one time it is fairly certain that almost no one went to a great match but those who in a little way were doing the same things in their leisure time. Now out of 25,000, mad with excitement over a football game, perhaps there are not a thousand who ever kick a ball, perhaps scarcely five hundred. The sporting public is made up of judges and

[151] *Freeman's Journal*, 25 Jul. 1910.
[152] *Anglo-Celt*, 14 Jul. 1900, 21 Jul. 1900.
[153] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 4, Dec. 1901, p. 59.

> gossipers...hundreds of youths who should be kicking their own football are cheering the skill and strength of the champions: they criticise the play and smoke cigarettes...Sport, understood in this way, is actually a national danger.

He argued that 'there is much more true sport in the blood of the small boy actually and physically kicking a tin about the streets than in the vast majority of the shilling-a-head spectators deeply learned in names and records but innocent of the exercise'. Hurling was advanced as an alternative precisely because it had avoided such growth. It was described as 'a maddish game, not a dawdling moment in it, not too much parade of chilly science, something primitive and fiery, a hardy, play, sport that every healthy youth wants to take active part in, not a paper-sport to read about and to discuss in pale-faced spectatorship'. The reason why it was encouraged was that it was never likely to become 'merely spectative'. He continued that 'the lively extension of this game, in every village of Ireland, would go far to save us from the stagnation of which the English are complaining, from that dangerous, pale-faced, cigarette-smoking spectatorship which brings no personal test and does nothing for character but harm'.[154] *The Brigadier* wrote that the country was 'football mad' and lamented 'what a pity it is that so fine a sport should run a great risk of being spoilt by the roughness and trickiness which one so often sees, and the gambling which one does not see, but which goes on all the same'.[155]

Sport was not advocated unequivocally and the moral value it could imbue was dependent on the type of sport played with the encouragement of team games taking predominance. H.H. Almond considered football of great value, while golf was characterised as 'a selfish game' which did not cultivate moral or social qualities.[156] James Campbell Percy, the Dublin publisher of a number of sporting publications, told the students of St Andrew's College in Dublin that 'golf was only a game for old people'.[157] Similarly, a writer for the *Dublin Evening Mail* argued that golf was a bad sport for boys as it 'fosters conceit' and was 'essentially a selfish game, and it does not influence character for good'. For him sports such as cricket and football taught boys to 'to endure pain and make no sign, to keep his tongue from evil speaking under provocation, and his hands and feet from doing murder, when the

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[154] *Freeman's Journal*, 23 Jul. 1909.
[155] *The Brigadier*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan. 1901, p. 11.
[156] 'Royal commission on physical training in Scotland', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1902), p. 1257.
[157] *Irish Times*, 23 June 1917.

temptation is great. Golf teaches none of these lessons; rather its influence is evil'.[158] Even within sports the specific form that games took was a source of concern and Boys' Brigade companies were advised that football league competitions were preferable to cup ties as 'when so much depends on a single match, the players are apt to get excited and forget themselves'.[159] This was echoed in the Dublin battalion where it was noted that 'there is less likelihood of rough play…than in a tie on which everything depends'.[160]

There were also concerns surrounding the prominence given to sport in companies. *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* cautioned that while some boys would always join a company for the benefit of the athletic programmes this could not become the primary aim and 'where the majority have joined for football and happen to be the biggest boys in their company, and take little or no interest in the Sunday School or their fellow-members of the company, the football team is anything but an advantage'. This could impact upon the conduct of the leadership especially where the officer in charge of the team 'obviously gives the members of it a greater amount of rope and requires from them a less high standard of discipline than from the rest of the company'.[161] George Bennett Mitchell, speaking at a conference in Dublin, stated that 'some men want to run a military school, a junior football club, a cricket club, etc., and one-sided growth has its inevitable end-the ruin of the company'. He believed that 'while every branch of good sport may be used as a help it is worse than a hindrance when the Officers think that some favourite hobby can take the place of the all-round development of the Boy'.[162] The Dublin battalion told officers not to try and 'get boys to join your Company because they are good footballers, and will help your team to head the League, or because they are good athletes and will be an acquisition to your gymnasium'.[163] The Brigade consistently emphasised that true value in a company 'depends upon more than drill and football trophies and flags...the company whose esprit depends solely upon winning football matches, or even proficiency in drill, has not the stability or tone of the Company whose esprit has been built up by slow degrees, by general all-round efficiency'. Such material success was 'of little value or no value in itself' and members were told to remember that 'the object of our football clubs is to provide recreation of a healthy kind for our boys not to supply them with a supply of trophies to exhibit to the world at large'.[164] Thus the

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[158] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 28 Apr. 1900.
[159] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 4, Dec. 1896, p. 53.
[160] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 Jan. 1911.
[161] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 7, Mar. 1898, p. 106.
[162] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 3, Nov. 1909, p. 37.
[163] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Oct. 1914.
[164] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 9, May 1903, p. 131; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Nov. 1902.

encouragement of sport could have unintended consequences for those who supported its development.

4.2 Youth Movements and Camping

The development of camping for adolescents was also an innovation pioneered by youth movements. In the summer of 1892 one of the first summer camps to be organised by the Boys' Brigade in Ireland took place in Killough, Co. Down, with seventy members of the Boys' Brigade taking part. It was composed of thirty-nine boys from the 1st Belfast company, twenty-five from the 12th Belfast company, two from the 9th Belfast company, and was supervised by four officers.[165] The 1st Dublin company also held their first camp in July 1892 at Bride's Glen in Shankill, Co. Dublin and held their annual camp there until 1895.[166] Seventy-four boys participated and this camp was a highlight of their session as 'a camp of any sort being an entire novelty in our district'. The camp was adjacent to the sea with each boy contributing ten shillings for a week at camp. Here they had four rooms in a farm house and a large barn at their disposal. A typical day at camp involved rising at 6am followed by bathing, breakfast, and morning prayers. These were followed by camp inspections and parades with dinner in the afternoon along with sport, athletics, and hill walking. In the evening there were prayers with lights out at 10pm.[167]

In the Boys' Brigade the annual camp was an eagerly anticipated outing and provided an opportunity for interaction between the organisation throughout the country. In 1901 the 1st Dublin company was joined by the 1st Waterford company for a day at camp in Arklow, Co. Wicklow.[168] In 1906 the 1st Carlow company camped with companies from Wicklow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Dublin, and Plymouth. In 1908 they camped with the Dublin battalion and in 1913 joined the 1st Dublin company in Silverstrand, Co. Wicklow for a nine day holiday where they had games, bathing, route marching, and camp concerts.[169] An inter-company camp was held between 31 July and 9 August 1909 at Delgany, Co. Wicklow, with seven companies from Dublin, and one each from Carlow, and Kilkenny. There were 103 officers and boys present and of this number seventy-nine were in camp for the first time.[170]

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[165] *Belfast News-Letter*, 23 July 1892.
[166] *The Boys' Brigade, 1st Dublin Company Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 14, BBAD, Box 18.
[167] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 6, Oct. 1892, p. 139.
[168] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 1, Sept. 1901, p. 7.
[169] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[170] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin Battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, pp. 18, 20, BBAD, Box 11.

In 1905 the south of Ireland companies camped together in Fethard, Co. Wexford from 31 July to 10 August.[171]

Camp provided an opportunity for concerted teaching of members over a prolonged period of time as opposed to weekly drill and bible classes. The twenty-first annual report of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion in 1913 stated that 'the committee believe that this branch of brigade life is probably the most attractive to boys, and, as it is one of the best opportunities for personal intercourse with them, it is very important that every company should endeavour to hold camp annually'.[172] The twentieth annual report noted that testimony from camps 'testify to the great amount of good derived by the Boys in every way'.[173] The 12th Belfast company reported in 1893 that 'the insight into the Boys' characters, and the experience gained during a week in Camp, have lessened considerably the difficulties of this session, and produced better discipline and order'. They advised all companies to have a summer camp, 'well regulated and under good discipline, and the result in every way will be surprising'.[174] J.W. Morgan argued that camp allowed officers to develop a keener insight into the personalities of members, as 'one can never get really at the bottom of a boy's character by seeing him solely at the Bible class or in the ranks'. He believed that camp also provided members with an opportunity of developing a closer relationship with officers away from the strict environment of drill classes, and helped members appreciate that officers 'are of the same flesh and blood as themselves'. The Dublin battalion commented that camp 'unites officers and boys as few other means can'.[175]

For many participants camping represented a break from the urban environment to which they were accustomed and for some their first break from family restraints.[176] Here 'healthful sports of various kinds were indulged in by the boys for several hours' with 'the outing being equal to a country excursion for young lads living for the most part in the most crowded portions of the city'.[177] A camping trip was deemed to be of 'incalculable benefit to the class of boy who would otherwise spend the time in the close streets of a city, or among the questionable attractions of a popular watering place'.[178] Henry Drummond believed that 'anyone who knows how difficult it is for a working lad to carry out a really satisfactory

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[171] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 13, no. 10, June 1905, p. 157.
[172] *Irish Times*, 17 Dec. 1913.
[173] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 9, BBAD, Box 11.
[174] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 2, Nov. 1893, p. 46.
[175] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 Feb. 1898, 17 Jan. 1903.
[176] Springhall et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 64-65
[177] *Irish Times*, 6 Jul. 1896.
[178] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 2, p. 561.

holiday on his own account will appreciate the value of this idea'.[179] Allan Hoben argued that indoor life was particularly difficult during times of hot weather and that long hours and late nights were spent 'upon the street or in places of public amusement where immoral suggestions abound'. He wrote that 'high temperature always weakens moral resistance and there is no telling into what trouble the boy may drift'.[180] George Henty saw the benefits of camps as boys being taken from the 'crowded workshops, factories and mines, unhealthy employments, and insanitary homes and neighbourhoods, and gaining strength and vigour in the fresh air, with all the advantages of healthy exercise and wholesome food'.[181]

Life in camp taught boys valuable domestic skills as well as how to care for themselves. They had to learn to prepare food and it was reported that in camp 'there are a thousand and one useful things to be learned, even to the sewing on of buttons or mending a pair of boots, that one learns simply because they must be done'.[182] Henry Birrell Dawson, captain of the 4th Dublin company, wrote that camp 'forms the pleasantest events in a boy's life' as it provided a break from the routine elements of Brigade life. He argued that 'drill for several months on end may become a bit wearisome at times, there being in it so much of the same thing to be done over and over again'. He emphasised the benefits to be gained from camp, telling members that 'at home most of you don't think of doing household work, but in camp you must take your share of this', as they had to wash dishes, sweep up, help the cook, etc. and he wrote that 'it's a very good thing to be able to do things for yourself'.[183] Camp provided members with 'an education in thrift' and for many camp was 'not only a break in the daily grind, but, for the town boy and dweller in close and dreary streets, the change of scene should open his eyes to glories that can lift him to a higher plane'.[184] The seventeenth annual report of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade in 1909 noted that 'only those Officers who have spent a week in camp with their Boys can fully realise what this means. But for the Boys' Brigade many of these Boys would have enjoyed no holiday at all'.[185]

Similarly, in Fianna Éireann camps were advanced as beneficial as they 'would strengthen the bond of comradeship through the whole organisation'.[186] In the Catholic Boys' Brigade the holding of an annual camp was deemed beneficial as a whole week 'in the clean,

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[179] Drummond, 'The Boys' Brigade', p. 98.
[180] Hoben, 'The minister and the boy: VIII', p. 393.
[181] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 10, July 1894, p. 254.
[182] *The Boys' Brigade Magazine*, no. 1, p. 9.
[183] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Feb. 1898.
[184] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 2, Oct. 1900, p. 21.
[185] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 8, BBAD, Box 11.
[186] *Irish Volunteer*, 23 Jan. 1915.

pure air and sun, seven whole days away from his grimy monotonous toil and surroundings, gives a boy something to look forward to throughout the year, and provides a stimulus to the thrift that shall save five whole shillings out of his meagre earnings'. Camp provided an opportunity for concerted religious instruction and a chapel tent was set up with daily prayers and benedictions which,

> brings home to a boy more directly perhaps than his parish church can do, the fact that he is a Catholic and that his religion is part of his every-day life. It is for this crowded week of pure delight and invaluable influence that the Council appeals specially to all Catholics who care to see a Catholic boy's soul safeguarded'.[187]

In June 1898 the Catholic Boys' Brigade organised an excursion to the Avondale estate in Co. Wicklow, opened to them by John Howard Parnell, MP for South Meath and elder brother of Charles Stewart Parnell. The Brigade noted that 'it is not easy to set down in prosaic words the aggregate of enjoyment that such an excursion affords to the denizens of the dingy streets of a great city. They are morally the better of this long, happy day in the glorious country' emphasising that 'in the young lives of most of them enjoyment has too small a part'.[188]

In the Boy Scouts camping was advanced as both a leisure pursuit and a means of encouraging self-reliance and independence. The role of camps was appreciated by James Lewis Paton who beleived they were important in developing self-restraint and beleived camps 'encourage hardiness' and fostered a love of fresh air and outdoor life. He concluded that, 'I am convinced that all this helps the boy's self-control. It preoccupies his mind with manly things, and it postpones the sexual impulse'.[189] The first Boy Scouts county camp held in Ireland was in 1914 in Co. Down as 'county camps are not common in Ireland as yet'.[190] It was noted that 'in camp the boys do everything for themselves, and many a lad who was formerly helpless without his mother to feed him now is able to make a good fire and to cook himself a substantial and economical meal'. It provided an opportunity to instruct members in physical health as they were 'advised as to thorough mastication, and in this connection is taught to take care of his teeth and study his digestion, not to the extent of faddiness, but in a

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[187] *Catholic Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, July 1910, p. 8.
[188] *Freeman's Journal*, 1 Dec. 1898.
[189] *Royal commission on venereal diseases, appendix to final report of the commissioners, minutes of evidence*, p. 213.
[190] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 8, no. 10, Oct. 1914, p. 304.

commonsense way'.[191] In camp Scouts carried out all the work themselves including erecting tents and cooking.[192] Their independence and sense of responsibility was developed by ensuring they cleaned their own boots and did not wait for them 'to be cleaned by their mothers, who already do so much for them...and so allowing the mother to have a well-deserved extra ten minutes in bed'. This effort was shown to reflect on their position within a patrol, as 'a Scout in camp, who left some of his work for the others to do, would soon get the name of a "shirker", and a fellow who shirks at home is just as bad as one who shirks in camp'.[193] The Dublin Boy Scouts believed that camping taught members 'self-reliance and resourcefulness, besides giving him health and development' as in camp there was 'no room for the shirker'.[194] As members had to raise the money for their summer camps themselves it encouraged them to be innovative and developed their work ethic. In 1910 the 3rd north county Dublin troop boxed shamrock and sold it to Boy Scouts all over the United Kingdom for six pennies, and through this raised thirty-two shillings for their camp fund.[195] In 1916 the 16th Dublin troop did gardening work to earn money for camp.[196] In 1912 the 3rd Belfast troop held a cake sale to cover the cost of their camp.[197]

While knowledge of cooking was obviously a social quality, the potential military benefits were also emphasised. A Board of Education report in 1913 noted that Boy Scouts were encouraged to learn cookery 'because this helped to make them handy and useful in after-life, and enabled them to look after themselves when in the field'. It was argued that that 'there was no doubt that many deaths amongst soldiers during the South African War were attributable to the fact that so many of the men did not know how to look after themselves and could not cook their own food properly'.[198] It also proved useful during World War I when Boy Scouts who were engaged in coastguard duty cooked their own food, and Baden-Powell remarked that 'the wonderful thing is that none of them are dead yet'.[199]

However, some Scouts did not implement the skills taught to them. In 1911 the Dublin Boy Scouts complained of the condition of a patrol camp site. They recalled that 'a litter of papers and refuse covered the field in which the tent had been pitched, and made the

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[191] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910. See also *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 188, 18 Nov. 1911, p. 247.
[192] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 20 July 1912.
[193] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, pp. 23-4.
[194] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 July 1915.
[195] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Apr. 1910.
[196] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 June 1916.
[197] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 24 Apr. 1912.
[198] *Board of education, report of the consultative committee on practical work in secondary schools* [Cd. 6849] (1913), pp. 368-9.
[199] *Leitrim Observer*, 2 Jan. 1915.

place an eye-sore to the passer-by'.[200] In 1913 the Dublin Boy Scouts had to complain about a troop that had camped on facilities by permission of the coastguard service and left the area without cleaning up. They noted that 'it seems a pity that such kindness should be abused'. The description of the area by the coastguards was said to be 'far from creditable' and 'the return for the kindness rendered was several days' hard work in cleaning up'.[201] In Belfast in 1915 the police complained about 'fires which had been lit on the cave hill by some Boy Scouts and left unextinguished'.[202]

Boy Scouts camps also aimed to improve relations between Ireland and other parts of the United Kingdom. Hedley W. Craig argued that 'it would do much to promote good feeling' if some English troops spent their summer camp in Ireland. He wished to encourage boys from the two countries to get to know each other better and develop a greater understanding of each other, 'so that in future generations ignorance may not be an obstacle to international peace and goodwill'.[203]

Girls also became interested in camp. The first Girl Guides camp in Ireland took place in 1918 due to the tenacity of Ms Figgis, a scoutmistress from Greystones, Co. Wicklow. At the time 'it was frowned upon for girls to camp, as it was seen to be unladylike' so Figgis sought and was granted permission by the parents of each Girl Guide so that they could carry out their camp.[204]

Youth movements were influential in encouraging the adoption of physical exercise in schools and attempted to provide recreational facilities that were lacking in the traditional school system. Their emphasis on the development of physical training amongst boys was not limited to their own organisations but a response to wider social issues concerning the debilitating effects of urban life. Within such a context it becomes clear that they engaged with issues of public concern and were a significant force in attempting to address the deficiencies in the provision of physical training within the Irish educational system. The role that the Boys' Brigade played in the development of sport and the nurturing of association football in Ireland deserves recognition. They were not only a means of encouraging football through playing it but also contributed football players to the senior ranks, with former

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[200] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 June 1911.
[201] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 16 Aug. 1913.
[202] B.E.C.E. minute book, 6 Oct. 1915, SCNI.
[203] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 4, Apr. 1912, p. 118.
[204] G. Finan, *A hundred years a growing*, p. 45.

members establishing football clubs, and Neal Garnham has called the Boys' Brigade a 'nursery' of football in Ireland writing that they acted as 'acted as emissaries for the game'.[205]

The aim of encouraging sport was to improve the physical health of their members but it also had other motivations and it is clear that athleticism found an outlet in the Brigade. To many proponents of sport it was not simply idle recreation but an educational tool for the encouragement of values such as discipline, obedience, team-work, honesty, integrity, and submission to authority, coupled with a desire to provide alternative attractions to commercial forms of leisure. For much of the leadership it was an opportunity for the inculcation of values and the development of attitudes applicable to their everyday lives and the role of sport was complex, encompassing religious and moral functions. The belief in the power of sport to develop values had long been associated with the public school system and youth movements were significant forces in the dissemination of these values to non-public school adolescents in Ireland and provided members with attractions which were virtually unattainable to the average adolescent.[206] It is clear that the development of athleticism was rendered difficult by a number of factors and did not always result in the desired outcomes. The facilities for sport were inadequate in the early development of the Brigade and the values displayed on the pitch were sometimes at variance with the ideals espoused by the leadership. This demonstrates that it is untenable to presume that the values championed by adults were readily and wholeheartedly adopted by adolescents and this distinction involves an appreciation of the gulf between aspiration and actuality. While moral and ethical values were espoused they were often received with apathy and indifference.

For leaders it was about much more than a glorification of team games and it had ambitions beyond athleticism which was not the only motivation in providing sport. A supervisory role, moralising, and proper regulation, all played a role in the development of sport amongst adolescents. It is also noteworthy that not all sports were advocated unequivocally and their moral value was determined by their rules, regulations, form, and structure. There was a key distinction between engaging in sport within the structure of the Brigade and sport outside their control. The anxiety surrounding disorganised leisure time ensured that in the Brigade the organisation of the recreational time of members was not rudimentary but had a formal structure and they were committed to developing a supervisory role over the leisure time of members. It also fulfilled a practical role for religious organisations such as the Boys' Brigade as it was hoped sport would attract and retain

[205] Garnham, *Association football*, pp. 98, 17.
[206] Springhall et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 247.

members which was utilised not for its own sake but as a means of later developing spiritual ambitions. It also encompassed practical concerns as it provided a nexus between peers throughout Ireland and the wider United Kingdom and later between former members and was a locus around which sociability and bonds with former peers could be maintained. As a religious organisation the Boys' Brigade was aware that sport could not become the main focus of their work and they were consistent in their advocacy of sport as a constituent element within a much broader programme that had ambitions beyond adolescent sporting participation. The Brigade was ambivalent about the role that sport played in the organisation and saw it as providing both positive and negative opportunities, an opportunity to develop ethical norms but also the potential to provide an outlet for violence and moral corruption, and this complexity must be appreciated in analysing its function.

Camping was an important physical activity promoted and youth movements were pioneers in the development of camping amongst adolescents. Here once again it was much more than a pleasant excursion to the countryside and provided an opportunity for teaching valuable social lessons. While providing a break from the urban environment it also encouraged the attributes of resourcefulness, self-reliance, responsibility, and independence. Camp provided an opportunity for concerted interaction with members over a prolonged period and fostered interaction between groups from all over Ireland and the United Kingdom. The motivation was to foster relations amongst boys of different religions as well as generating greater understanding amongst different nationalities. While sport and physical culture was a significant activity in youth movements there were fears surrounding its prominence in the Boys' Brigade at the expense of the spiritual aims of the organisations. Thus it is important to appreciate this religious motivation and examine the role that youth movements played in developing the morality of members.

5 Youth Movements, Religion, and Morality

5.1 Youth Movements and Religion

This chapter will analyse the role that religion played in youth movements. For the Boys' Brigade religion was central to their activities and consequently underpinned all of their activities, while for the scouting organisations, as multi-denominational, religion was not the foremost objective. However, this did not diminish the concerns expressed regarding their religious influence and sectarian anxieties found expression with measures implemented to ameliorate apprehensions. In the Girl Guides there was an emphasis on the non-denominational nature of the organisation with leaders trusted 'on their honour' not to influence Guides 'in either religious or political matters and not to involve them in appearing to be partisans of any contested cause. We leave such matters to the parents of the Guides to decide'.[1] While the organisation was non-denominational a number of Girl Guide companies were attached to religious organisations. For example, in Dublin they were attached to St Matthias' and St Anne's churches, as well as a Methodist church in Abbey street and Zion Church, Rathgar.[2]

The issue of religion was one that the Boy Scouts grappled with from their inception. Baden-Powell himself stated in Dublin that 'all we insist is that everybody should observe his own religion'. However, internationally the issue was not easily resolved. In France the Roman Catholic bishop of Bayonne condemned the institution which he considered 'a Protestant inspiration'.[3] Similarly, an officer in the Catholic Boys' Brigade commented that the Boy Scouts could not be adopted by Catholics as 'he had attended the Scout rallies, and had found the boys obliged to sing Protestant hymns', and thus 'the movement was associated with danger to young Catholics'.[4] The issue of religion was one which the Boy Scouts attempted to resolve and the lack of an exclusively religious purpose may have fuelled suspicions that the organisation was primarily militarist. The position was somewhat resolved at a scoutmaster conference in 1909 where it was agreed that the organisation should declare itself favourable to religion by expressing a fundamental belief in God but avoid a denominational stance. It was decided that a governing council be established to include leaders of the differing religious denominations. Baden-Powell was more focused on eliciting

[1] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 5, May 1914, p. 7.
[2] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 23, Nov. 1915, p. 15, no. 24, Dec. 1915, p. 14.
[3] *Irish Independent*, 16 Mar. 1910; 20 May 1914.
[4] *Irish Independent*, 7 Aug. 1911.

religious sensibility by encouraging an appreciation of nature and through service to other people rather than conventional worship or scriptural instruction.[5] The organisation was anxious to emphasise their non-denominational stance and Sir Francis Vane wrote that 'it would be indecent to introduce any question which could raise sectarian opposition'.[6] The religious affiliation of a sample of scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters is outlined below and demonstrates that their commitment to attracting all religions was reflected in grassroots activity in Ireland.

Table 13. Religious Affiliation of Dublin Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters, 1908-1918 (Sample: 118).[7]

	No.	%
Episcopalian	70	60 (16)
Presbyterian	9	7 (2)
Methodist	14	12 (1)
Roman Catholic	19	16 (79)
Other	6	5 (1)

Table 14. Religious Affiliation of Dublin Boy Scouts, 1908-1918 (Sample: 643).[8]

	No.	%
Episcopalian	370	58 (16)
Presbyterian	32	5 (2)
Methodist	20	3 (1)
Roman Catholic	175	27 (79)
Jewish	22	3 (1)
Other	24	4 (1)

Troop leaders and members in Dublin were predominantly Episcopalian but Roman Catholics constituted the second largest denominational group within troops. The under representation of Roman Catholic scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters may be partly

[5] A. Warren, 'Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the Scout movement and citizen training in Great Britain, 1900-1920', pp. 389-90; Wilkinson, 'English youth movements', p. 14.

[6] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p. 6.

[7] Sources: *The Scout*, 1908-1918; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1909-1918; *Irish Times*, 1908-1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1910-1918; Census Records 1901 and 1911. The 'Other' category is composed of two members whose religious affiliation could not be traced and one each who listed themselves as the following: Society of Friends, Plymouth Brethren, Christian and Independent. The figures in brackets represent the size of each denomination amongst the population of Dublin in 1911 calculated from *Census of Ireland, 1911... province of Leinster*, pp. 97, 181, 216, 253.

[8] Sources: *The Scout*, 1908-1918; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, 1909-1918; *Irish Times*, 1910-1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1910-1918; Census Records 1901 and 1911. The 'Other' category is composed of six members whose religious affiliation could not be traced and eighteen members who were classified as the following: two Congregationalists, four members of the Society of Friends, four Baptists, three members of the Plymouth Brethren, one Christian Scientist, two Undenominational Protestants, one Unitarian, and one Independent. The figures in brackets represent the size of each denomination amongst the population of Dublin in 1911 calculated from *Census of Ireland, 1911... province of Leinster*, pp. 97, 181, 216, 253.

explained by their general under representation in professional and white collar employment, the occupational categories that provided the majority of troop leaders, whilst Protestants were disproportionality numbered and over represented amongst these occupations.[9] Despite this under representation the presence of Roman Catholics is significant and the Boy Scouts in Ireland were keen to stress that they were 'entirely unconnected with any sectarian institution' emphasising that 'one can say at a guess that a large number of the members are Roman Catholic boys; but no inquiry is made, and sectarian and class considerations are left entirely outside the movement'.[10] In attempting to encourage recruits the Dublin Boy Scouts stressed that 'your religious denomination is immaterial-we are a non-sectarian organisation'.[11] Addressing a meeting of Dublin scoutmasters in 1911 Colonel de Burgh 'laid great stress upon the importance of maintaining its undenominational…character'.[12] He noted that the aims and methods of the organisation were 'neither non-religious or anti-religious' and 'whatever religion a Scout belongs to he must attend its services and clergy of all denominations are asked to act as chaplains of troops in order to supervise the religious training of the boys of their denomination'.[13]

Boy Scouts were encouraged to attend religious service on Sundays and then go scouting and by doing so Baden-Powell hoped 'Scouting may take the place of the usual loafing which is so largely prevalent throughout the country on Sundays'.[14] On his visit to Ireland in 1910 he stated that the organisation 'gives priest or pastor a better hold over the more thoughtless of his lads' emphasising that 'it does not interfere in any way with religion'.[15] He did not wish to encourage religious animosities and emphasised to members that 'when you meet a boy of a different religion from your own, you should not be hostile to him, recognise that he is like a soldier in your army, though in a different uniform, and still serving the same king as you'.[16]

They were conscious of religious issues and made provisions for members of different denominations in troop camps. The 'A' Division of the Dublin Boy Scouts, comprising the 2nd, 5th, 7th, and 11th troops of Dublin city, camped in Tallaght at Easter 1910 and during

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[9] *Census of Ireland, 1911… province of Leinster*, pp. 145-51, 232-9; Daly, *Dublin*, pp. 124-7; F. Campbell, *The Irish establishment, 1879-1914* (Oxford, 2009), p. 79.
[10] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.
[11] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 Oct. 1911.
[12] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Sept. 1911.
[13] *Irish Times*, 20 Aug. 1912.
[14] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p.4
[15] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 5, May 1911, p. 4, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, p. 4.
[16] *The Scout*, vol. 1, no. 2, 25 Apr. 1908, p. 22.

the weekend 'the Catholic Scouts attended at the chapel at Tallaght for Divine Service'.[17] Similarly, in 1912 at a Boy Scout camp in Powerscourt, Co. Wicklow, a church parade was held with each boy proceeding to his own denominations service.[18] The Dublin Sea Scouts had members of various denominations on their rolls, 'all working together in harmony' with discussion of religion 'strictly forbidden'.[19] In 1915 the Dublin Boy Scouts reported that they 'would like to see Catholic county troops, officered by Catholic gentlemen' and if this was done 'the hand of fellowship would be extended to them in the same brotherly spirit which animates the entire movement and its members'.[20] By 1915 there were six troops in Cork composed of Roman Catholic boys.[21]

However, certain churches do seem to have disliked the lack of an exclusively religious purpose in the Boy Scouts. The 17th Belfast troop of the Boy Scouts was initially connected with the parish of St Donard's, Bloomfield under Scoutmaster J.H. Norritt.[22] In 1913 he wrote that there had been 'a large amount of indifference on the part of the powers that prevailed in the church'. He had initially formed the troop from the Sunday school class but eventually, 'we were given to understand we were not wanted, and we were, therefore, obliged to sever our connection with the church and parish, and seek pastures new'. They then became connected with the YMCA in east Belfast.[23] Despite religious concerns, in the period 1908-1918, Boy Scout troops in Dublin were attached to at least nine churches.[24] The issue of religion seems to have diminished as time progressed and by 1918 the Church of Ireland archbishop of Dublin became one of the patrons of the Dublin Boy Scouts Association.[25] The lack of religious instruction as a central element in the Boy Scouts, and the greater emphasis on individuality, may have attracted members and the Boy Scouts were sensitive to the issue of religion and ensured that the non-sectarian character was maintained. Judging by the religious classification of members they attracted a cross section of religions and catered for these, ensuring that if on a troop outing religious service was arranged for all members where possible.

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[17] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Apr. 1910
[18] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 Apr. 1912.
[19] Dublin Evening Mail, 11 Jan. 1913, 7 Dec. 1912.
[20] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Oct. 1915.
[21] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 9, Sept. 1915, p. 226.
[22] J.H. Norritt had been a member of the 27th Company of the Belfast Boys' Brigade as a boy, *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 8, 1 Apr. 1904, p. 117.
[23] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 11, Nov. 1913, pp. 345-6.
[24] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Oct. 1911, 13 June 1914, 14 Nov. 1914, 1 Aug. 1914, 30 Jan. 1915, 6 Feb. 1915, 19 Jun. 1915, 6 Nov. 1915, 29 July 1916.
[25] *Irish Times*, 27 July 1918.

The relationship between the Boys' Brigade and the Catholic Boys' Brigade, as the largest religious organisations catering for Protestant and Roman Catholic adolescents respectively, is worthy of examination and highlights how youth movements of differing religious denominations could work together. While there was an undoubted denominational outlook and ethos in the Catholic Boys' Brigade this was not seen as necessarily restricting its appeal: 'the objects of the brigade were such as should commend the Brigade, not only to the Catholics of Dublin, but to every citizen who liked to see youths brought up in the way they should go'. They did not see their role as in opposition to the Boys' Brigade but rather as two organisations that wished to promote similar values and encourage similar attributes. It was widely acknowledged that the Boys' Brigade were influential in the decision to inaugurate the Catholic Boys' Brigade. The leaders of the Catholic Boys' Brigade noted that 'it was in consequence of the very good example set in the city and other places by the Protestant Boys' Brigade that the Catholic Boys' Brigade was started' and that 'anybody who had been watching the progress of that brigade, and had looked at them as they marched through the city, must have felt proud that they made such a fine show and displayed so well the results of control and discipline'. They were open in their praise of the organisation and were keen to stress that 'it was in consequence of the admirable manner in which that Brigade conducted itself, and the fine appearance it presented on parade that the Catholic Boy's Brigade was started'.[26] R.J. Kelly stated at a Catholic Boys' Brigade meeting that, 'I could never see why Irish Catholics should be either afraid or ashamed to follow such good examples, and to show a healthy rivalry with their neighbours and let the world see that physically and morally our young Catholic men are the equals and peers of their Protestant fellow-citizens'.[27] For him 'very shortly there would be no distinction of class or creed, and he hoped that before long members of the Protestant Boys' Brigade and of the Catholic Boys' Brigade would be seen marching shoulder to shoulder through O'Connell Street'.[28] Other Catholic organisations also seem to have accommodated the Boys' Brigade. In 1899 the 14th Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade went for a route march and reached a field they wished to use as their headquarters. This field belonged to a Roman Catholic monastery who gave their permission to the Boys' Brigade to use.[29]

The Boys' Brigade also welcomed the formation of a similar body to cater for Catholic boys. William McVicker commented on the formation of the Catholic Boys'

[26] *Irish Times*, 27 Apr. 1896.
[27] *Freeman's Journal*, 8 June 1909.
[28] *Irish Independent*, 18 June 1912.
[29] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Apr. 1899

Brigade that, 'if it seeks, like ours, only the physical setting-up and moral improvement of the boys, it is a good thing, and I for one would wish it success' hoping that 'every well-wisher of the community will give it their blessing'. For McVicker it was not about competition and he argued that 'so long as such agencies reach the boys and exercise a healthy influence we do not care how many of them there are'.[30] The Dublin battalion secretary of the Boys' Brigade wrote of the formation of the Catholic Boys' Brigade that 'most BB officers here wish it every success'.[31] At an annual meeting of the Catholic Boys' Brigade the honorary secretary of the Boys' Brigade, T.B. Kerford, was present and the lord mayor of Dublin, William Coffey, commented that 'it was most gratifying to him and to others that they had decided to co-operate with them at this meeting and in their work'. Kerford replied that the Catholic Boys' Brigade in Dublin 'had ever since its inception worked harmoniously with the Protestant Brigade'.[32] Kerford later stated that the Boys' Brigade and the Catholic Boys' Brigade were 'all working with the same object in view'.[33] Rev. Gilbert Mahaffy, the Anglican president of the Dublin battalion, wrote that 'so far from awakening dislike or hostility', the Boys' Brigade had 'called forth the hearty admiration of our Roman Catholic fellow citizens, and they have proceeded to form a Brigade on lines as near to ours as they could adopt.' He did warn of the dangers of confusion concerning identification of the different brigades and hoped that 'the friends of The Boys' Brigade at a distance will not attribute to us the doings of the "Catholic Boys' Brigade", or the "Parnell Boys' Brigade" when these are spoken of in some of the newspapers, as they occasionally are, under the name of "The Boys' Brigade"'.[34]

The denominational difference between the two organisations did not undermine their accord in terms of the problems identified and there was a general consensus as to how these should be addressed. Both organisations identified similar problems and both believed that the existence of their respective organisations could aid in addressing these concerns. They also worked together on issues of common interest. At a meeting of the general council of the Irish Association for the Prevention of Intemperance the bands of the Catholic Boys' Brigade and the 1st Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade took part in the proceedings.[35] In 1900 the Catholic Boys' Brigade were invited to attend the final round of the Boys' Brigade

[30] Kelly, *Firm and deep*, p. 169; *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[31] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 7, Mar. 1899, p. 107.
[32] *Irish Times*, 31 May 1910.
[33] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[34] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 6, Feb. 1897, p. 91.
[35] *Irish Times*, 15 Nov. 1910.

ambulance shield to observe the proceedings.[36] When the Boys' Brigade council was held in Dublin in 1909 the secretary of the Catholic Boys' Brigade was invited to the excursion to Glendalough, Co. Wicklow that was organised for the visiting members.[37] In 1901 the 8th company of the Boys' Brigade played a friendly football match against the Catholic Boys' Brigade from Rathmines on a field at Richmond Hill, Rathmines. The Boys' Brigade wrote that they hoped it would be 'the first of a series of friendly encounters with this organisation, which is founded much on the lines of our own B.B.'. The Catholic Boys' Brigade won the match 2-0 despite the 8th Dublin company being the best team in the Boys' Brigade league, having won the league title for six of the previous seven years. It was commented that the Rathmines team were 'slightly bigger all round' and they congratulated the Catholic Boys' Brigade on their victory and for the 'kind hospitality after the match'.[38] In this way sport could act as a means for breaking down divisions between denominations and provide a forum for improving social relations between boys of differing religious affiliations and sporting engagement between teams composed of Catholics and Protestants was not unprecedented.[39]

This evidence of good relations may seem peculiar given the contemporary context in which they operated and Senia Pašeta has noted that discussion of a variety of issues was permeated by religious rhetoric with anxieties over Catholic fraternisation with Protestants. She argued that in the period there was an 'explosion of overtly sectarian social and political organisations' with points of difference being emphasised which served to widen the gulf between both communities.[40] However, in the provision of support to urban inhabitants, while there was denominational competition between Catholic and Protestant churches and pronounced fears of the proselytising, Jacinta Prunty has argued that 'there is more to unite than separate them'. Both Catholic and Protestant churches were motivated both by genuine conviction and an understanding of social issues having both material and moral dimensions. For Prunty the denominational differences, while significant, can be overstated and has highlighted the commonalities of their approaches with the civilising effects of relief being

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[36] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Feb. 1900.

[37] Minute book of the bands committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 8 July 1909, BBAD, Box 10.

[38] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Apr. 1901, 11 May 1901. They played each other again in 1903 with the Catholic Boys' Brigade winning 4-1, *Dublin Evening Mail*, 10 Jan. 1903.

[39] M. Maguire, 'The organisation and activism of Dublin's Protestant working class, 1883-1935', *Irish Historical Studies*, 29 (1994), p. 70.

[40] S. Pašeta, *Before the revolution: nationalism, social change and Ireland's Catholic elite, 1879-1922* (Cork, 1999), pp. 81, 95, 103-4, 115.

emphasised. [41] Both Catholics and Protestants shared many common approaches to philanthropy with common characteristics such as an emphasis on work and self-discipline and Fergus Campbell has noted that despite tensions there were efforts 'to retain a sense of mutual respect during this period of intensifying sectarianism'.[42] Similarly, Alan Megahey has argued that 'occasionally the inter-church co-operation crossed the great sectarian divide' and there were common endeavours organised by both Roman Catholics and Protestants, especially relating to social issues.[43] This is indicative of Simon Gunn's argument that 'the means by which the working class were to be rescued from an alleged state of moral and spiritual destitution were typically shared across denominations' and while there was a 'competitive edge' to their activities 'this was increasingly undercut by the fundamental congruence of means and ends across denominational lines' and a 'substantial transcendence' of sectarian divides.[44] The congruence of values espoused has also been noted by Vincent Comerford who wrote that despite increasing denominational rivalry in the period and the greater emphasis placed on religious distinctions the 'Catholic ethos was to a great extent identical with the style and content of contemporary Protestantism' and both were characterised by the promotion of 'puritanical mores'.[45]

However, these similarities should not obscure that there were also concerns surrounding the potential for controversy when the different brigades entered competition with each other. In 1905 an interdenominational tug of war competition was organised and all brigades were invited to enter, but one member of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade warned that it could result in 'stirring up sectarian animosities and ill feeling'. The executive of the Dublin battalion decided to allow companies to enter at the discretion of their commanding officers.[46] Others also drew unflattering comparisons between the two brigades. Michael J.F. Fitzgerald, a Trinity educated barrister, characterised the Catholic Boys' Brigade as 'one of those unpractical organisations which has the outward appearance of well-doing, but which effects no real good'. He had often seen the Catholic Boys' Brigade on their outings and drew an unflattering comparison with the Boys' Brigade, writing that 'they strike me as being a very loosely drilled brigade in comparison with the Protestant brigade'. He

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[41] P. Maume, *The long gestation: Irish nationalist life, 1891-1918* (Dublin, 1999), p. 22; J. Prunty, *Dublin slums, 1800-1925: a study in urban geography* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 9-11, 239, 262, 273.

[42] V. Crossman and P. Gray, eds., *Poverty and Welfare in Ireland, 1838-1948* (Dublin, 2011), p. 11; Campbell, *The Irish establishment*, p. 296.

[43] A. Megahey, *The Irish Protestant churches in the twentieth century* (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 124.

[44] S. Gunn, 'The ministry, the middle class and the 'Civilizing Mission' in Manchester, 1850-80', *Social History*, 21 (1996), pp. 33, 36.

[45] R.V. Comerford, *Inventing the nation: Ireland* (London, 2003), p. 113.

[46] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 25 Mar. 1905, 1 Apr. 1905.

drew distinctions between the activities of both brigades, as 'the Protestant boys join their brigade as a means of physical exercise and social improvement, and it improves them. If there are prayers in connection with it, they are of the simplest kind, such as lessons in Scripture. That is not so with the Catholic Boys' Brigade'. Here 'they learn nothing patriotic, nothing useful, their energies are diverted from practical pursuits calculated to advance them in after life'. Despite this he did conclude that 'perhaps it is better for those boys to be enrolled in that brigade than not to be enrolled in it'.[47]

The relationship between the two organisations highlights that there was consensus concerning the social problems of the period and that they were not overly hampered by their respective denominational outlooks in co-operating with each other to deal with these issues. There was an appreciation amongst the Catholic Boys' Brigade for the lead that the Boys' Brigade provided in establishing the Brigade model and equally the Boys' Brigade were keen to see that the Catholic adolescent population were catered for in the same way as the Protestant population. The interaction between the two organisations demonstrates that harmony could exist and highlights how both groups engaged in dialogue with the primary ambition being the social improvement of Irish youth.

As the Boys' Brigade was founded on religious grounds we must examine the role that religion played in the organisation as it was central to their identity and activities. The Dublin battalion noted that the organisation was primarily religious and 'everything is subsidiary to this idea'.[48] While it was consistently stressed that religion was the primary focus of the organisation this aspect has been obscured by criticisms that it was a convenient facade behind which lay militarist intent. To understand the religious function of the Brigade it is first necessary to explore the broader place of religious institutions in the period. Throughout the nineteenth century there were many challengers to traditional religion from the effects of industrialisation and urbanisation as they reduced the effectiveness of the extant religious infrastructure and tested 'how they could adapt to the realities of urban living'.[49] In the period there was widespread anxiety concerning the failure of organised religion to attract working class members to formal worship and 'the churches which had good attendance from working class people were few'.[50] It was noted by many observers that the working classes were essentially indifferent to religious institutions as the doctrinal instruction was not

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[47] M.J.F. Fitzgerald, *Priests and People in Ireland* (Dublin, 1902), pp. 334, 324.
[48] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 4 Mar. 1904.
[49] D. Hempton, M. Hill, *Evangelical Protestantism in Ulster society, 1740-1890* (London, 1992), p. 106.
[50] J.M. Goldstrom, *The social content of education, 1808-1870, a study of the working class reader in England and Ireland* (Shannon, 1972), p. 183.

appealing to them and there was a 'general lack of interest in dogma, theory, abstraction, as things remote from the everyday practice of life'.[51] While many working class members attended churches for certain rites of passage such as baptisms and marriages 'they seldom went to church at any other times' and 'formal church attendance was largely limited to certain solemn moments in life'.[52] This lack of attendance was particularly prevalent amongst adult males who maintained a distrust of institutionalised religion and Owen Chadwick argued that 'the working men never quite understood what the churches were doing in their midst', but despite this 'apathy was much more common than enmity'.[53] This was a concern in Ireland but it was not an issue peculiar to the United Kingdom and most parts of Western Europe in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century 'saw the breakdown of religious unity in the cities'.[54]

This indifference amongst the working classes was not solely concerned with religious issues and had an important social basis. It has been argued that working class participation in religious worship was an act of separation from their community and men that did attend seemed 'to defy and even to disassociate himself from his working-class surroundings' and this 'powerful sense of community solidarity led to a suspicion of anyone who was conspicuously different'.[55] Membership marked an individual out as someone 'trying to stand out from his neighbours, and might be suspected of looking down on them' and the pressure of 'communal solidarity' was strong.[56] Even if a working class man wished to attend a place of worship it seemed contrary to his social position, an act that 'seemed outside his way of life', and Owen Chadwick has argued that 'he would feel as incompatible in church as if he suddenly appeared among his friends in a top-hat and morning-coat'.[57] There was also an economic consideration as to attend worship required appropriate attire and many were discouraged from participation as a result of their inability to procure proper clothing.[58]

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[51] J. Kent, 'Feelings and festival: An interpretation of some working-class religious attitudes', in H.J Dyos and M. Wolff, eds., *The Victorian city, images and realities, 2* (London, 1973), pp. 855-6; H. McLeod, *Religion and the people of Western Europe, 1789-1989* (Oxford, 1997), p. 125.

[52] McLeod, *Religion and the people*, pp. 118, 124.

[53] O. Chadwick, *The Victorian church, Part II* (London, 1970), pp. 222, 266, 268.

[54] A. Acheson, *A history of the Church of Ireland, 1691-2001* (Dublin, 2002), p. 226; Megahey, *Irish Protestant churches*, p. 48; McLeod, *Religion and the people*, p. 89.

[55] K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the working classes in Victorian England* (London, 1963), p. 335; Kent, 'Feelings and festival', p. 864; McLeod, *Religion and the people*, p. 125.

[56] H. McLeod, *Class and religion in the late Victorian city* (London, 1974), p. 282.

[57] Chadwick, *Victorian church*, p. 268.

[58] Hempton, Hill, *Evangelical Protestantism*, p. 112.

As a means of attracting wider social groups towards religion, religious institutions provided ancillary attractions in communities and their provision was an attempt to meet the material as well as spiritual needs of their congregations. They began to appreciate the advantages of greater participation in the life of their adherents and recognised that 'they faced challenges which could satisfactorily be met only by employing new methods and by presenting the Gospel with a different focus and different emphasis'.[59] It was a pragmatic response to their anxieties as they 'drew new members into the church's orbit and strengthened the bond between those who already belonged'. [60] There was a major undertaking 'towards making the church or the agency more 'attractive', towards advertising it more widely and in better ways, towards adding to it something aside from its main purposes which would attract the public'.[61] The aim was to make the church the central agency of the community and there was a realisation amongst religious institutions that they needed to create alternative social outlets and a recognition 'that to engage successfully in competition with popular cultural activities it was necessary to offer not only morally, but socially acceptable alternatives'.[62] These ancillary activities were provided as a counter attraction to other undesirable forms of entertainment and religious organisations aimed to offer purer forms of amusement as the 'growing indulgence in worldly pleasures offered both a practical and a spiritual threat to the churches'.[63] They aimed to win converts to religious worship and they saw these activities as a means of breaking down prejudice and this 'represented a conception of the role of church or chapel wider than that of simply a place of worship or 'soul-saving' agency'.[64] The aim was to generate greater religious worship and this was not supplementary to their activities but was 'the ultimate rationale for the whole array'.[65]

The concerns regarding low levels of religious attendance were particularly focused on adolescent boys and exercising religious influence over them as 'the leaving of day school was the signal for leaving the Sunday school'.[66] There was a direct correlation between earning their own wages and ending attendance at worship and males 'often gave up going to

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[59] Kent, 'Feelings and festival', p. 867; Hempton, Hill, *Evangelical Protestantism*, p. 112; Megahey, *Irish Protestant churches*, pp. 48, 53.

[60] McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848-1914* (London, 2000), p. 271.

[61] S. Yeo, *Religion and voluntary organisations in crisis* (London, 1976), p. 175.

[62] McLeod, *Class and religion*, p. 111; Hempton, Hill, *Evangelical Protestantism*, p. 118.

[63] McLeod, *Secularisation*, p. 271; Inglis, *Churches and the working classes*, pp. 77, 75.

[64] McLeod, *Class and religion*, p. 113.

[65] Yeo, *Religion and voluntary organisations*, p. 167.

[66] Chadwick, *Victorian church*, p. 259.

church when they started work' as irreligion was seen as a 'normal part of manhood'.[67] This perception was one of the motivations of religious youth movements and Hugh McLeod has noted that they 'were the means of retaining their loyalty'.[68] The attraction of youth movements was that they were predicated on providing activities to members that they enjoyed and in doing so religious organisations 'adapted themselves to elements in the culture thought to be of special appeal to their age-groups'.[69] Religious organisations had always been significant at specific rites of passage such as baptisms, marriages, burials, and in the period 'they began to do so in that more secular and more drawn out transition from boyhood to manhood'.[70] The attempts by religious organisations to attract adolescents were also pragmatic responses to increasing leisure opportunities and a realisation that the adolescent male 'had more choice as to what he did with his spare time in the 1890s than ever before'.[71]

This context was central in the motivation for the establishment of the Boys' Brigade and they provided attractions to adolescents as means of encouraging religious sensibilities and as a practical means of providing alternatives to perceived morally suspect activities. To understand the religious aspect of the organisation we must also appreciate a contemporary conception of Christianity. What has been termed 'Christian manliness' had the effect of bringing a public school ethos which lauded the physical and moral value of 'masculine' team games in opposition to the 'effeminate' and intellectual pursuits of scholarship.[72] This intellectual conceptualisation was not solely an obscure abstraction and also manifested itself in providing practical benefits. The bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, Thomas James Welland, an honorary vice-president of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, believed that Christian manliness was 'a wonderful thing' as 'the objection which a boy has to religion is removed by it. Religion was once thought to be a mark of a soft spirit and a stupid life, whereas we know that truly religious life is full of liberty and courage'.[73]

One of the motivations of the Boys' Brigade was to enliven Christianity and to make it relevant and appealing to adolescent life. A vigorous Christian activism was both encouraged and promoted with a renewed emphasis on physical fitness enlightened by

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[67] McLeod, *Class and religion*, p. 29; McLeod, *Secularisation*, p. 135; L. Rose, *The erosion of childhood: child oppression in Britain, 1860-1918* (London, 1991), p. 204.
[68] McLeod, *Class and religion*, p. 113.
[69] Yeo, *Religion and voluntary organisations*, p. 167.
[70] Megahey, *Irish Protestant churches*, p. 59.
[71] Mason, *Association football*, p. 2.
[72] Springhall, et al. *Sure and stedfast*, p. 25.
[73] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 10, July 1894, p. 257.

Christian teaching and ideals. Physical fitness was emphasised not only for the consequent health benefits but as a foundation for strengthening moral character. The president of the Dublin battalion stated that by being members of the Brigade boys 'learnt that religion was not an unmanly thing; and that they might be as distinguished as possible in their athletic exercises, as brave and courageous as could be in everyday matters, and at the same time devoted servants of Christ and faithful servants of the Church to which they belonged'.[74] William Monk Gibbon argued that the Brigade 'has made religion a real thing'.[75] The lord lieutenant, Lord Aberdeen, was of a similar opinion and 'wished to assist in clearing away the old delusion, the old humbug, that religion necessarily meant less brightness, less sport than if it were not religious'. The boys that were members, 'by showing that they were clever at athletics, gymnastics, and like things, would greatly help to clear away that old delusion about religion, which was a device of the devil to prevent people from being religious'.[76] The battalion wanted members to be proud of their religion and wished to show them that religion could be a stimulating force in their life and that 'a man's religion was not to be measured by the length of his face'.[77]

The popular stereotype of religion amongst boys was attested to by the moderator of the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, David Alexander Taylor, who commented that 'some boys thought religion was for the sick and the old people'.[78] Archbishop Peacocke was anxious to address this issue, believing that 'there was an idea in the minds of some that the man who was religious was a weak sort of man-a man of no pluck, no manliness...true manliness was allied to true religion' and 'he wanted to impress upon them that religion and manliness went hand in hand'.[79] This was one of the objectives of William Smith in founding the Brigade. He argued that 'by associating Christianity with all that was most noble and manly in a boy's sight, we would be going a long way to disabuse his mind of the idea that there is anything effeminate or weak about Christianity'.[80] In 1887 he wrote that 'we determined to try and win the Boys for Christ, by presenting to them that view of Christianity to which we knew their natures would most readily respond'. He noted that 'it surely could not be altogether the fault of the boys. Might it not be that we had gone

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[74] *Irish Times*, 18 Feb. 1914.
[75] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 21, no. 10, June 1913, p. 148.
[76] *Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1909.
[77] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 Dec. 1902.
[78] *Belfast News-Letter*, 11 Apr. 1900.
[79] *Irish Times*, 9 Mar. 1900; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 8, no. 8, Apr. 1900, p. 118.
[80] C.H. Spurgeon, *A good start* (London, 1898), pp. 16-17; W.A. Smith, *The story of the Boys' Brigade* (Glasgow, 1888), pp. 8-9; Springhall, *Youth*, p. 22.

too much on the lines of ignoring the boy-nature in them, and assuming that religion for a boy should be the same thing as religion for his grandmother?'. For him 'the service of Christ for a Boy is a very different thing from the service of Christ for an old man'.[81] Allan Hoben commented that 'those who know the boy best can hardly be persuaded that the Sunday school can be made to satisfy his intense demand for action' and that scholarly endeavours did 'not fully meet his desire for doing'. He believed that 'the character of the Sunday school, its place of meeting, and the proper observance of the day preclude the more noisy, varied, and spontaneous activities which may be made to carry moral and religious value'.[82] Henry Drummond wrote that the organisation wished to present a 'view of Christianity to which their natures would most readily respond, being fully conscious how much more there was to show them after they had been won'.[83] This was one of the reasons for the formation of the Brigade, 'to devise something that would appeal to the boy from the heroic side of his nature-something that would let him see that in the service of Christ there was surely as much scope for all that was brave and true'.[84]

Benjamin Plunket believed that 'a boy's spiritual life is a hidden thing. It is against his nature to show much outward expression of his deepest feelings'.[85] It was argued that fear of ridicule held boys back from being religious with expressions such as 'goody-goody' and 'molly-coddle' being directed at them. An Irish boy wrote to *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* in 1894 that 'it is worse to be laughed at or sneered at than to get a good thrashing' and this sense of isolation was very strong. The Brigade argued that this attitude stemmed from a misconception of religious organisations and that membership entailed 'giving up games and fun of all kinds'.[86] William McVicker wrote that the drill carried out in the Brigade was good for boys as it removed 'any suggestion of namby-pambyism which might by prejudice otherwise attach to lads joining a religious guild. We quite encourage the 'muscular Christianity' idea'.[87]

The organisation created a forum for the expression and inculcation of religious teaching at a time in a boy's life when the church had little scope, and even less mechanisms, to keep boys at the heart of parochial life. The traditional liturgical practices were cited as a reason for a decrease in church attendance as was the rise in leisure time and counter

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[81] *Wm. A Smith, A man who had something to say*, pp. 9, 19, 13, BBAD, Box 18.
[82] Hoben, 'The minister and the boy: VIII', p. 383.
[83] Smith, *Henry Drummond*, p. 492.
[84] Smith, 'The Boys' Brigade', p. 660.
[85] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 21, no. 5, Jan. 1913, p. 67.
[86] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 4, Jan. 1894, pp. 96-7.
[87] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.

attractions which placed an increasing pressure on congregations. The *Freemans' Journal* reported that churches were empty 'because the services were stale, the music flat, and sermons unprofitable'. The newspaper continued that 'the empty church indicated a love of frivolity and folly, and because it went to show that there was in our midst a growing lack of self-discipline, which in time would lead inevitably to the degeneration and degradation of the natural character'.[88]

The Boys' Brigade was capable of maintaining supervision over members during their leisure time by engaging in activities that interested them and having it all filtered through the prism of religious education. William Smith believed that a uniformed organisation would appeal 'to a boy's sense of patriotism and the martial spirit would serve as a useful instrument for a primarily religious end'.[89] One commentator wrote that 'it is generally admitted that the religious bodies begin to lose their hold upon young people when they are freed from compulsory attendance at the day school'.[90] One of the original members of the Boys' Brigade recalled that

> When we reached thirteen most of us felt we were too big for the Sunday School, and there was a gap of a few years until we were able to join the YMCA at seventeen. To fill this gap, Captain Smith formed the Boys' Brigade. During that gap period, many working-class boys ran wild, became hooligans and street-corner loafers. What else was there for them in those days, to do?.[91]

At its core was a desire to provide alternative attractions to the other forms of leisure and 'it was a persistent belief of Victorian middle-class reformers and youth workers that commercial forms of leisure acted as a morally corrupting influence on the young, and that this could only be combated by the provision of alternative, morally healthy, church-related recreational outlets'.[92] This was the role that many churchmen saw for the Brigade. The archbishop of Dublin posited 'what is to become of those who were too old to remain at school and not young enough to take part in the Young Men's Christian Association. Where

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[88] *Freeman's Journal*, 25 Jul. 1910.
[89] Springhall, *Youth*, p. 24.
[90] 'The nation's youth', p.120.
[91] W. Wylie cited in R. Fogg, 'A Scotsman started it all', *The Scotsman* (1954) p. 24. See also, 'The two surviving members talk to stedfast magazine' in *Stedfast Magazine*, 4 (1954), p. 3, cited in Springhall, *Youth*, p. 24.
[92] Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 25.

are they to find friends? How are they to be bound together?'. For him that was the significance of the Brigade as, 'it fills up the gap in our Christian organisation'.[93] Lord Grenfell commented that 'at the age of 14 a boy, as a rule, changes his habits; he breaks away from all moral, social, and very often religious influences, and that is the time when he most requires a guiding hand'.[94] Rev. James Robertson, from Charleston road Methodist Church in Dublin, believed that the Boys' Brigade could be 'a healthy adjunct of Church work'. Rev. William Proctor, from the United Presbyterian Church in Dublin, stated that it was 'invaluable in getting at the lads in connection with our Churches at perhaps the most critical time of their lives'.[95] William Smith noted that by dealing with boys between the ages of twelve and seventeen the Brigade had 'entered upon ground that was to a large extent unoccupied'. The holistic approach adopted by the Brigade ensured greater supervision and greater opportunity for interaction with the membership. Smith was 'not content with having the Boys for an hour or two on Sunday, and leaving them to themselves for the rest of the week' and the Brigade 'by its many-sided agencies, seeks to surround them with influences that make for good from Sunday morning till Saturday night'.[96]

It was believed that religious practice was encouraged by membership and the president of the Dublin battalion, Rev. Gilbert Mahaffy, 'urged the desirability of Captains making every effort to see that their boys attended their place of worship regularly'.[97] John Hind, commanding the 6th Belfast company in 1891, stated that their intention was 'to bring the boys into closer connection with religious life, and more intimate relationship to the Churches with which they were already connected'.[98] In 1898 the Boys' Brigade argued that in many instances the Brigade was 'one of the most important and useful branches of the Church's organization'.[99] In the 2nd Dublin company, Rev. Edmond Robinson, rector of St Mark's, was anxious to stress that he and his company were committed to fulfilling the religious aims of the organisation. He emphasised that bible classes were the chief feature of the work carried out by the company and stressed that there was a strong missionary and charitable ethos within his company. This was underlined in a souvenir programme issued on the occasion of their 'coming of age' inspection. It emphasised that for many years the company had supported a cot in the Fuh-Ning hospital in China and had during the previous

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[93] *Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1895.
[94] House of Lords Debates, 5th series, vol. 22, 26 July 1916, col. 941.
[95] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 7, Mar. 1901, p. 101.
[96] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 10, June 1897, p. 153.
[97] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 15 Jan. 1900, BBAD, Box 10.
[98] *Belfast News-Letter*, 9 May 1891.
[99] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Oct. 1898.

fourteen years contributed sixty-two pounds.[100] In 1910 over thirty pounds was collected by the Dublin battalion for Brigade branches of foreign missions.[101] Similarly, in Belfast all boys contributed small sums each week to support a cot in the Church Missionary Society hospital at Amritsar in India.[102] In 1891 the 6th Belfast company issued collecting cards to thirteen boys in order to raise funds towards the building of a Mission Church, and over five pounds was raised on eleven cards in one month with two cards being unfilled. It was noted that 'the heartiness which the Boys evinced in making the collection, betokened an interest in the movement which cannot fail to bind them more closely to the Church in after life'.[103]

At the annual meeting of the council of the Boys' Brigade in 1911, an officers' missionary conference was held with the aim of increasing awareness and interest in missionary work amongst members.[104] J.W. Morgan argued that 'missionary work was not put before the boys in a sufficiently attractive form, and that missionary literature was not attractive enough for them. He could conceive of no greater honour for any of his Boys than to become missionary'.[105] This aspect of the organisation was emphasised as superior to the athletic programme and it was asserted that 'we think it a far greater honour for a company to subscribe the £5 which supports a cot for a whole year in a mission hospital than to be able to win the Battalion Football League or any other athletic competition'.[106]

William McVicker commented that as a result of the Brigade attendance at Sabbath school had been 'greatly improved'. Similarly, James Stevenson, captain of the 2nd Belfast company, noted a 'decided improvement' in Sunday school attendance.[107] The 1st Newry company in Co. Down recorded that the Brigade 'has been the means of getting the Boys to attend Sunday school better, and has generated a friendly feeling among them'.[108] An indication of the religious contribution of the Boys' Brigade can be gleaned by a comparison of statistics between British and Irish companies. These show that in Ireland 75 per cent of members of the Boys' Brigade were attending the religious organisation to which the company was attached. In England this figure was 65 per cent and in Scotland 66 per cent. Bible classes were held in 52 per cent of companies in England with 44 per cent in Ireland

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[100] *Irish Times*, 25 Apr. 1912.
[101] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 9, BBAD, Box 11; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 9, May 1910, p. 138.
[102] *Belfast News-Letter*, 6 May 1897.
[103] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 1, Oct. 1891, p. 18.
[104] *Irish Times*, 12 Sept. 1911.
[105] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 1, Oct. 1895, p. 10.
[106] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Dec. 1898.
[107] Minutes of a Boys' Brigade conference on 22 Feb. 1890, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, T1773/1.
[108] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 8, Dec. 1892, p. 186.

and Scotland, however Irish attendance was larger by 5 per cent.[109] At a Brigade council meeting in Dublin in 1895, the first time it was held in Ireland, James Carfrae Alston stated that in relation to bible classes, 'Ireland outshines the sister countries' and the increase in attendance was 'far ahead of that in the other two countries'.[110] In the Dublin battalion in the 1908-1909 session there was an aggregate attendance at bible classes of 622 boys. In 1910 the Dublin battalion reported 68 per cent attendance at bible classes.[111] In 1894, in the 1st Belfast company, average attendance at bible class was 91 per cent. This was lower than previous years and was accounted for by the company rearranging the time from 6pm on Sundays to 10am and 'an unusual number of the boys have had during the winter to work overtime'. By 1897 this had dropped to 89 per cent.[112]

In the 1st Carlow company of the Boys' Brigade bible classes were of fundamental importance, being 'the most important part in the working of a company'.[113] The Belfast battalion believed that 'a company without a bible class is incomplete'.[114] In the 1st Dublin company the introduction of a bible class proved a success in the religious instruction of members. Here short papers were read each Sunday afternoon by one of the boys on the subject of the lesson. At the inception of the class the company reported that they 'were in much doubt as to how it would work out, but its success has far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Some of the papers read were of exceptional merit'.[115] In 1901 the Dublin battalion argued that 'there can be no doubt that a very large number of boys attend the Company Bible class whom it would not be easy to retain in Sunday school'.[116] The form and structure the bible classes took was important in encouraging boys to participate and presenting them with an approach to religious instruction which they may not have been accustomed to. The Dublin battalion noted that boys were compelled to attend Sunday school 'and then subjected to torture that makes everything religious distasteful to him by being required to sit still and do nothing while the dullest people on earth drone nothing at him'.[117] In contrast, bible classes in the Boys' Brigade by their use of dialogue and engagement with the subject matter aimed to make religion a personal influence in the lives of their members,

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[109] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 1, Oct. 1893, p. 9.
[110] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 1, Oct. 1895, p. 6.
[111] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 7, BBAD, Box 11; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 9, May 1910, p. 138.
[112] *Belfast News-Letter*, 24 Apr. 1894, 6 May 1897.
[113] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[114] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 8, May 1894, p. 211.
[115] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 7, Apr. 1894, p. 184.
[116] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Jan. 1901.
[117] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 June 1904.

encouraging them to reflect on religion and not simply be instructed. William McVicker believed that the class 'should be a lesson and not an address'.[118] The understanding of religious instruction in the Brigade was that 'we must work from the concrete to the abstract. We must present facts before ideas...we must begin teaching religion not in terms of theology but in terms of life'.[119]

The role that the Boys' Brigade played within the structure of religious organisations is also important. As most companies were attached to a parish church they were an integral part of parochial life and the focus of young church members. These connections were very important for the leadership and there was a rule that no officers were allowed to enrol a boy living in another parish, or connected with another congregation, through attending either their church school or church services, without the written permission of the captain of the company in that parish.[120] While the parish played an important function in patronising their local company, the Boys' Brigade also fulfilled a role within the life of the local church community. A reporter for *The Belfast News-Letter* wrote that the organisation 'furnishes the boys with an added interest in the church and school to which they belong, and instils into their receptive minds important moral lessons which cannot but produce good fruit in helping to make the men of the future'.[121] In 1917 the bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, Charles D'Arcy, wrote that the Boys' Brigade was 'one of the most important branches of Church work to-day'.[122] At a service in connection with the 15th Dublin company Bishop Plunket of Tuam emphasised the role that they played in the life of the Church of Ireland and asked members to reflect upon their position and their commitment to the Brigade, not solely for the sake of the Brigade, but as a constituent element within the broader framework of the church. He stated that it was a pivotal time within the Church of Ireland and he 'wanted to have their real and enthusiastic support...not by reason of an accident of birth or baptism' but by a dedicated commitment to the church that they were a part of. He told parishioners that 'the religious training of the boys on these lines had been left very much in the hands of the Boys' Brigade and he asked all the parishioners, for the sake of the parish, to give them support'.[123] In 1900 the Dublin battalion argued that 'there are few religious organisations

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[118] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 2, Nov. 1903, p. 43.
[119] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 25 Mar. 1905.
[120] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 31 Mar. 1892, BBAD, Box 9.
[121] *Belfast News-Letter*, 18 May 1896.
[122] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 21 Nov. 1917.
[123] *Irish Times*, 16 Feb. 1914.

that will give so large a return for a small expenditure of time and money as the Boys' Brigade'.[124]

Their role was as part of a process of renewal within church life and as a way of keeping boys close to the church that they would one day be adult members of. J.W. Morgan, at a conference for the officers of the Dublin battalion, read a paper on how to keep the past members in connection with the churches after they had left the Brigade. He believed that it was necessary for young people to be given important roles within the church structures and criticised the leaders of parochial life. These leaders should 'let the church give the opportunity of service, let the older men, instead of holding their positions until they had almost one foot in the grave, hand them over to the young men'. For Morgan, the infusion of young blood would be beneficial both to the boys themselves and for the broader health of the Protestant community. They could fulfil the dual role of both reinvigorating and renewing the life of the churches and giving the boys a prominent role which would maintain and stimulate their interest.[125]

William Monk Gibbon believed that 'church membership would be the normal result of Company membership'. He argued that the active participation of the laity in the Boys' Brigade would ensure that the boys would have more regard for religious teaching. He wrote that boys did not fully trust a minister as, 'there is inevitably in the back of the Boys' mind the suggestion of professionalism. It is our business to say these things. We want to fill our churches. That is what we are paid for'.[126] The Brigade provided an opportunity to encourage lay members of the churches to engage in parochial life. G.W. Shannon believed that it was difficult to enlist the laity in any definite church work 'due to their inability to find a really congenial sphere of work, and one in which their particular talents can have free scope'. He argued that the Boys' Brigade fulfilled this role.[127] The Dublin battalion commented that 'somehow or other, the ordinary forms of Christian activity have not that attractiveness for young men which is necessary to enlist their sympathy and co-operation' but in the Boys' Brigade 'a young man finds his natural sphere of work'.[128]

However, in some cases the Boys' Brigade failed to receive adequate support from the clergy of the parishes with which they were connected. The numerical decreases in the Dublin battalion in the 1903-1904 session was blamed on the lack of support by local clergy

[124] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Mar. 1900.
[125] *Irish Times*, 20 Nov. 1913; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 29 Nov. 1913.
[126] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 24, no. 5, Jan. 1916, pp. 70-1.
[127] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 23, no. 1, Sept. 1914, p. 4.
[128] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Dec. 1913.

and the battalion reported that at least four companies ceased work 'owing to the lack of officers and the want of support from the churches to which they were attached'. They argued that the difficulty in attracting officers was exacerbated 'by the indifference shown in some instances on the part of the Church-using this word in the widest sense-in the welfare of its youthful members, and the particular company or companies of the Brigade to which it owes a duty'.[129] In 1907 the Dublin battalion wrote that in some cases they made little effort to get to know members and 'the local clergy never darken the door of some Company parades'. An officer in the Belfast battalion wrote that the clergy needed to 'take a more visible interest in the B.B.' and 'it would appear to the boys that there was no interest being taken in the Company by its parish clergy'.[130] Rev. E.C. Hodges, chaplain in the 21st Dublin company, argued that the formation and growth of the Boys' Brigade had been 'unconscious criticisms' of the church which had 'failed to teach true religion'. He wrote that 'the easy-going attitude of the State, and the antiquated methods of the church, allowed thousands of boys of all classes and creeds to reach manhood without any useful sense of citizenship and without virile religion' and the church had 'failed to secure its material to occupy either the pulpit or the pew'. For him the coming of the Boys' Brigade 'was a powerful critic of those responsible for dealing with the Boy in previous years'.[131]

William Smith saw the Brigade as providing a central function within the Protestant community 'in the direction of drawing the churches together in bonds of helpful sympathy and interest in their common work'.[132] In 1895 the 12th Dublin company from Clontarf held the distinction of the being the only company in Ireland which was worked jointly by the several Protestant churches active in the district.[133] James Carfrae Alston, Brigade president, believed this was easier to carry out in Ireland, commenting that 'the various Protestant Churches in Ireland perhaps stood closer together than in any other portion of the Queens dominions'.[134] The 4th Dublin company wrote in 1906 that they hoped 'the spirit of union will spread more and more among the Companies of every denomination in the Dublin Battalion'.[135] In 1912 the Dublin battalion suggested that where possible companies should combine for outings arguing that 'it brings their members into contact with each other, and impresses upon them the fact that they are part of a great organisation which is connected

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[129] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Dec. 1904.
[130] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Mar. 1907, 16 Mar. 1907.
[131] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 24, no. 6, Feb. 1916, p. 87; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 20 Nov. 1915.
[132] W.A. Smith, 'The Boys' Brigade', p. 662.
[133] *Irish Times*, 13 Mar. 1895. The company was affiliated to both Church of Ireland and Presbyterian churches.
[134] *Irish Times*, 7 Sept. 1895.
[135] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1 Dec. 1906.

with all Christian denominations'.[136] In the Dublin battalion there was evidence of increasing co-operation between companies of different denominations. In 1913 two Brigade companies, one a Church of Ireland and the other a Presbyterian, meet for a parade service in a Methodist Church. The Dublin Battalion noted that 'we hear a great deal of talk about the union of churches, but in a very real sense the Brigade is doing it while others are only talking about it'.[137] The archbishop of Dublin, William Conyngham Plunket, believed that it was an 'excellent thing' that boys could 'at the earliest stages in their lives, learn how possible it was for Irish Protestants to come and join together on behalf of some common object that they had all so dearly at heart'.[138] The religious affiliations of the companies in the Belfast and Dublin battalions are outlined in tables fifteen and sixteen and show that in Belfast they were predominantly composed of Presbyterian companies and in Dublin predominantly Episcopalian companies.

Table 15. Religious Affiliation of Boys' Brigade Companies, Belfast Battalion, 1888-1918 (Sample: 121).[139]

	No.	%
Episcopalian	17	14 (39)
Presbyterian	77	64 (46)
Methodist	20	17 (8)
Other	7	5 (7)

[136] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 26 Oct. 1912.
[137] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Dec. 1913.
[138] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 4, Jan. 1894, p. 104.
[139] Sources: *Boys' Brigade Gazette*, 1891-1918; *Belfast News-Letter*, 1899-1918; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 1911-1918; PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383, T1773/1. The 'Other' category was composed of one Baptist, one Moravian, one YMCA, and four Congregationalist. The figures in brackets represent the size of each denomination amongst the non-Catholic population of Belfast in 1901 calculated from *Census of Ireland, 1911, area, houses, and population: also the ages, civil or conjugal condition, occupations, birthplaces, religion, and education of the people, province of Ulster* [Cd. 6051] (1912), pp. 191, 228.

Table 16. Religious Affiliation of Boys' Brigade Companies, Dublin Battalion, 1891-1918 (Sample: 47).[140]

	No.	%
Episcopalian	33	70 (79)
Presbyterian	10	22 (8)
Methodist	3	6 (5)
Other	1	2 (8)

The underrepresentation of Episcopalian companies in Belfast may partly be explained by the existence of the Church Lads' Brigade as an alternative organisation for these members and from 1895-1924 at least twenty-one churches in Belfast were attached to the Church Lads' Brigade with cadet battalion membership standing at 1108 in 1917.[141] It may also be related to the difficulties in encouraging ecumenical dialogue. In Belfast as a result 'of strong denominational feeling' it was not possible to arrange for any battalion church parades, or for any direct supervision of the bible classes, but it was noted that 'the very feeling that prevents these ensures that individual classes are exceptionally well looked after'.[142] In 1902 some officers of the Belfast battalion wished to have a united church parade but this had to be abandoned owing to the actions of 'certain Church of Ireland Companies...and opposition displayed by them'. The battalion council noted their regret, reaffirming that the Boys' Brigade was an 'entirely a non-sectarian organisation, and should be conducted as such'.[143] This was appreciated by William McVicker who noted that 'any suggestion of proselytising influences being at work in connection with the brigade would be utterly without foundation'.[144] In 1899 a Dublin officer of the Boys' Brigade wrote after a visit to Belfast that more attention needed to be given 'to the intercompany relations as regards the boys'.[145] Also, not all denominations were allowed to become members of the Boys' Brigade. In 1910 they refused to allow a Unitarian church to be enrolled and deemed it

[140] Sources: *Boys' Brigade Gazette*, 1891-1918; *Irish Times*, 1891-1918; *Freeman's Journal*, 1891-1918; *Irish Independent*, 1905-1918; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion register, BBAD; Annual reports of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1908-1912, BBAD, Box 11; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 1898-1918, BBAD, Box 10; Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 1892-1918, BBAD, Box 9. The 'Other' category was composed of one company attached to Ringsend United Services and YMCA. The figures in brackets represent the size of each denomination amongst the non-Catholic population of Dublin in 1901 calculated from *Census of Ireland, 1911... province of Leinster*, pp. 181, 253.

[141] Battalion roll of the Down, Connor, and Dromore Church Lads' Brigade, 1895-1924, PRONI, D950/1/150-152; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 10 Oct. 1917, 7 Nov. 1917.

[142] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 3, Nov. 1896, p. 44.

[143] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council', 15 Dec. 1902, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.

[144] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.

[145] *Belfast News-Letter*, 26 Jan. 1899.

'inadvisable to entertain a proposal for the enrolment of a Unitarian Company in The Boys' Brigade'.[146] In Dublin the first church parade of the battalion took place in 1898 when the three largest denominations, (Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, and Methodist) held simultaneous parades in three different locations.[147]

Despite this there were efforts at greater interaction between different denominations. Officers' social conferences could aid in bringing officers of differing affiliations into closer contact. The Dublin battalion noted that these were not a forum for 'formal discussion' but rather a means 'to enable officers from various parts of the city to meet each other in friendly intercourse'.[148] The same was true of rank and file members and apart from the annual camp opportunities for interaction between various companies was limited. In Belfast in 1914 the 1st company visited the boys' room of the 39th company and it was noted that such meetings 'were all too few; such evenings did much to promote the good feeling which ought to unite all sections of the brigade'.[149] In Dublin social gatherings were organised for senior boys where they met members from other companies with the hope that it would teach them 'to cultivate a wider spirit of comradeship than can be found within the smaller circle of their own company'. The aim was that it would encourage them 'to value more highly the worth and work of those not immediately associated with them' in the Brigade, as 'it gives a wider outlook and a deeper interest in the larger work of the battalion'.[150]

An analysis of one company can provide an insight into the extent of co-operation between different Protestant denominations. In the 1st Carlow company of the Boys' Brigade the religious composition was diverse and contained numerous denominations. In 1903 the company was attached to St Mary's Church, a Church of Ireland congregation in Carlow, and unsurprisingly the company was dominated by this denomination. If we take a sample of sixty-two boy members between 1904 and 1912 we find that fifty-four were from the Church of Ireland. However, the ethos of the church which the company was attached to did not discourage members from other denominations. Of the sixty-two members examined four were Presbyterians and four were Methodists. A similar situation emerges if we examine the leadership of the company. An analysis of fifteen officers between 1903 and 1912 reveals that thirteen were members of the Church of Ireland with two being Methodists.[151] The emphasis of the Boys' Brigade on ecumenical dialogue provides an insight into inter-

[146] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 10, June 1910, p. 146.
[147] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Nov. 1898; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 4, Dec. 1898, p. 60.
[148] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 28 Oct. 1899.
[149] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 11 Feb. 1914.
[150] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Dec. 1913; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 22, no. 5, Jan. 1914, pp. 73-4.
[151] Sources: NLI, FitzMaurice Papers; Census returns 1901 and 1911.

Protestant relations in Ireland and highlights some of the difficulties in fostering greater co-operation between the different Protestant denominations.

An analysis of religious conversions by members provides an opportunity to examine the commitment of members to their denominations and there were a number of conversions by Boys' Brigade officers and boys. For example, Samuel Robert Couser, an officer in the Presbyterian 3rd Belfast company, listed his religion as Presbyterian in his 1901 census return and as Baptist in his 1911 return. George Ashwood was an officer in the Methodist 11th Belfast company in 1909 but in 1901 had been a member of the Church of Ireland. Nelson Leech was an officer in the Presbyterian 29th Belfast company in 1904 but in 1901 was a member of the Church of Ireland. It was a similar situation in the Dublin Battalion. James Barclay Walker was a lieutenant in the Presbyterian 5th company in 1899 but by 1911 had become a member of the Church of Ireland. William Edward Hill, captain of the 22nd company attached to a Church of Ireland congregation in 1895, had become a Methodist by 1911.[152] How far the religious teaching received was internalised by some of the rank and file can be gauged by the actions of former members with some converting from the religious affiliation of the companies they were formerly attached to. For example, Gibson Perry Kelso, a boy in the 16th Dublin company in 1897, and later an officer in the company, had converted from being a member of the Church of Ireland to being a Presbyterian by 1911. It was not just intra-Protestant conversion that took place and one boy, Thomas Henry Arthurs, a member of the 1st Dublin company in 1897, had converted from being a member of the Church of Ireland to Roman Catholicism by 1911.[153]

The religious affiliations of officers and boys could also be different to those of their families. George Woodhead was a lieutenant and captain in the eighth and twenty-fifth Dublin companies and a member of the Church of Ireland while his wife and children were Roman Catholics. Similarly, Frederick G. Gillespie, a lieutenant in the 13th Dublin company, was a member of the Church of Ireland while his wife and children were Methodists. Thomas Richard Howe, a lieutenant in the 10th Dublin company, was member of the Church of Ireland while both his parents and all his siblings were Presbyterians. William Moloney was a lieutenant in the 20th Dublin company and a member of the Church of Ireland while his daughters were Roman Catholics. There was a similar situation amongst some boys. Ernest

[152] Sources: *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, 1891-1918; Census Returns 1901 and 1911.
[153] Sources: *The B.B.*, 1896-1900; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion athletic sports programme, 1897, BBAD, Box 11; Census Returns 1901 and 1911.

Freeman Lewis was a boy in the 24th Dublin company and a member of the Church of Ireland while both his parents and all his siblings were Baptists.[154]

The commitment to the Boys' Brigade on the part of officers and boys also survived relocation within Ireland. James Cunliffe Leask was an lieutenant in the 7th Belfast company in 1900 and after a move to Dublin in 1906 became captain of the 9th Dublin company. Similarly, Keith Malcolm Dunlop was an officer in the 1st Carlow company in 1905 and by 1910 had become captain of the 7th Dublin company. George F. Davis was captain of the 31st Dublin company in 1900 and after moving to Cork in 1916 became a lieutenant in the 2nd Cork company. Frederick McConnell was captain of the 1st Stradbally company in Queen's County in 1908 and captain of the 12th Dublin company in 1910. Albert Williams was a boy in 1st Belfast company in 1898 and later became a lieutenant in the 2nd Dublin company in 1901 and captain of the 17th Dublin company in 1903.[155]

The commitment of officers to the Boys' Brigade also survived emigration. H.W. Campbell was captain of the 20th Dublin company and after a move to Liverpool organised a company in connection with St Chrysostoms' parish.[156] William J. Black was a lieutenant in the 17th Dublin company and following a move to Canada joined the 2nd Calgary company. Similarly, John T. Keyser was a former lieutenant in the 19th Dublin company and following his move to Canada became captain of the 1st Saskatoon company.[157] Francis S.A. Graves was a former lieutenant in the 21st Dublin company and later captain of the 3rd Dublin company. In 1902 he left Ireland to take up a position in South Africa where he became captain of the 2nd Johannesburg company. He was assisted in South Africa by Richard G. Drury, another former Dublin officer who had been Graves' lieutenant in the 3rd Dublin company and later captain upon Graves' departure, and it was commented that 'much of the work and responsibility of running the Boys' Brigade in Transvaal rest with Dubliners'.[158] The Brigade played a notable moral role in South Africa where they were influential in challenging racial prejudice and exclusion. In the country both companies comprised of white and black children met together for drill and William Smith believed that 'the work of the

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[154] Sources: *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, 1891-1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1899-1918; *The B.B.*, 1896-1900; Census Returns 1901 and 1911.
[155] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, 1891-1918; Census Returns 1901 and 1911.
[156] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Mar. 1900, 14 Dec. 1901.
[157] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1 Mar. 1913.
[158] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 Mar. 1903, 16 Jan. 1903, 30 Jan. 1903, 29 Apr. 1905.

Brigade has helped in no small degree to break down the racial feeling which is still so strong in many parts'.[159]

Further evidence of the commitment of the Boys' Brigade to their religious aims is the prevalence of members and supporters who argued against the spiritual aim of the organisation being overshadowed by the methods employed to fulfil it. Lord Aberdeen, addressing a Boys' Brigade demonstration, directed them to always have in the forefront of their minds the spiritual objectives of the movement. He stated that 'some people had not yet learned the real meaning of the work. They, no doubt, thought that it was a splendid thing for making boys smart, for improving their physique, and for making them proficient in drill...They should be perfectly clear that religion was an essential feature of the movement'.[160] Similarly, Rev. Edward Griffin, the Anglican president of the 18th company of the Dublin battalion, stated that 'those in charge of the company had striven to impress upon the boys the all-important fact that the spiritual side of the Boys' Brigade was by far the more important'. However, he lamented how often this central aspect of the Brigade was overlooked, admitting that 'drill was made the great object in many companies of the Boys' Brigade'. While he argued that in his company they aimed at making the boys as proficient in drill as possible this was not important within the context of the fundamental ambition of the organisation. He stated that 'if they failed in this side it mattered but little. But it mattered a great deal if they failed in the spiritual, if they failed to play the part of a soldier in Christ's Army'.[161] Within the various companies of the Brigade the most important aspect of their work could be whatever was dictated by the leadership. They decided how much weight would be attributed to the differing aspects of the work and decided how much emphasis would be placed on each.

The extent to which the Boys' Brigade provided a bridge to adult religious organisations is difficult to gauge although it is noteworthy that in Dublin there was a branch of the YMCA specifically formed for former Boys' Brigade members and it was reported by the Dublin battalion executive that there was a 'number of Brigade Officers actively connected with Y.M.C.A.'.[162] The *Northern Whig* argued that there should be a 'closer

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[159] Smith, 'The Boys' Brigade', p. 662; The same was not the case for the Boy Scouts and Baden-Powell wrote that in South Africa the policy of being open to all classes, creeds, and colours was found to be impossible in practice as 'white parents would never allow their boys to consort with black. Any attempt on the part of the Scout movement to bring this about would have meant its boycott by the whites', R. Baden-Powell, 'A new development in the Scout movement in South Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 35 (1936), p. 368.

[160] *Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1909.

[161] *Irish Times*, 15 May 1915.

[162] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Apr. 1898; 15 Oct. 1898; Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 248; Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 19 Jan. 1908, BBAD, Box 9.

relation' between the Brigade and adult religious organisations and that 'the battalion should be a feeder to the societies, and the societies should largely furnish the officers of the Battalion'.[163] In Belfast the 39th company arranged that when boys became too old for the company they would be transferred to the east Belfast YMCA.[164] However, a past member of the Dublin battalion wrote in 1902 that the YMCA 'have long been trying to reach the boys as they leave the Brigade'.[165] Another former member in Dublin wrote that only 'a very small proportion of "past Members" join their ranks'.[166] There was a need for the development of associations to cater for former members and in the absence of an official organisation the members developed their own clubs. The battalion did appreciate the necessity of developing an outlet for former members and noted that it would be a waste, 'if the moment our boys leave the B.B. we encourage them to leave their own Church organisations to go into the city clubrooms'.[167]

The approach of the Boys' Brigade to religion took account of the viewpoints of members and their innovative methods attempted to ensure that young people were attracted to religious organisations. They were an integral part of parochial life in the parishes where they were active and were a significant force in attempting to cater for adolescent members of the Protestant community in Ireland. The internal debates surrounding the spiritual aim being overshadowed by the methods adopted to fulfil it clearly demonstrate the fundamental ambition of companies being religious and not primarily focused on ancillary activities. Despite this, fears of the religious motivations being overshadowed by the means employed to fulfil them is reflective of difficulties experienced by other ancillary groups attached to religious organisations and Stephen Yeo has argued that 'they seemed to acquire too vigorous a life of their own' and the pressure to allow the means to become the end was a common experience.[168] The provision of agencies such as the Boys' Brigade was grounded in a recognition that for adolescents to be more amenable to religious instruction they had to be attracted by a range of social, educational, and recreational activities which meant that the provision of activities other than religious instruction were always a significant factors in their success and as a result 'the boundaries between religion and recreation became increasingly blurred, the distinctively religious element increasingly reduced'. However, this

[163] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[164] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 15 May 1912.
[165] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Apr. 1902.
[166] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 Feb. 1902.
[167] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Apr. 1902.
[168] Yeo, *Religion and voluntary organisations*, pp. 167, 317.

development was a progressive move on the part of religious organisations and was a pragmatic response to social and cultural developments and as a result they were 'more this worldly than their predecessors of even a generation earlier...more ready, not only to sanction, but themselves to provide facilities and agencies, societies and clubs for straightforwardly recreational as well as devotional and educational activities'.[169]

While it is difficult to categorically assert that membership of the Boys' Brigade was successful in increasing religious worship it must be appreciated that religiosity cannot solely be determined by devotional attendance. To do so would be to adopt the dominant middle class definition of religiosity in the period while the working class approach was more focused on practical considerations such as mutual aid and good behaviour and they largely rejected the middle class conception of religion which placed greater emphasis on regular Sunday worship and support of the minister and building.[170] The provision of ancillary activities also enhances our understanding of religious influence, as whatever the deficit in formal worship many adolescents were attached to the informal 'vast parochial and philanthropic network' of clubs and societies provided by religious organisations which provided some sphere of moral influence.[171] However, it could also be argued that members largely took away what they chose from ancillary activities provided by religious institutions rather than developing more regular formal worship patterns which the clergy hoped these activities would achieve.[172] Within such a context it is not appropriate to solely apply quantitative criteria in attempting to understand the religious function of youth organisations. It is necessary to investigate the religious influence exerted in the wider community and how their values were diffused by mechanisms such as the Boys' Brigade rather than solely in the setting of formal worship.

5.2 Youth Movements and Morality

Youth movements acted as a moral guardian ensuring that their members were made aware of the ways in which they could be morally corrupted. Lord Roberts argued in 1898 that 'the Boys' Brigade will help more than almost anything else to raise the moral tone of the youth

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[169] G. Parsons, 'Controversies in perspective', in G. Parsons, ed., *Religion in Victorian Britain, Vol. II, Controversies* (Manchester, 1988), pp. 7, 12.

[170] Mcleod, *Religion and the working class*, p. 11; Kent, 'Feelings and festival', p. 864.

[171] J. Cox, *The English churches in a secular society: Lambeth, 1870-1930* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 5-6.

[172] J. Obelkevich, *Religion and rural society, South Lindsey, 1825-1875* (Oxford, 1976), p. 339.

of the country'.[173] One of the means adopted was the encouragement of literature which reinforced the values that the Brigade wished to inspire. Authors such as G.A. Henty, who was an honorary vice-president of the Boys' Brigade, possibly aided in the development of the organisation. His books provided many young readers with an escape from their ordinary existence and exposed them to the splendour of military and imperial adventure 'and possibly created a frame of mind receptive to uniformed organizations'. Adventure stories, often situated in the outposts of the British empire, appeared in popular magazines and accustomed their readership to the military image and the use of ranks and titles, as used in the Boys' Brigade, were to prove popular elements.[174]

There had been a shift in emphasis in literature directed at boys in the period 1892-1914 from moral issues to social issues, from a desire to inculcate purity, honesty, and integrity to a concern for patriotism and citizenship. This was a reflection of the contemporary context of the Boer War, the invasion scare of 1906, and the emergence of Germany as a military threat. There was also an economic context related to market conditions. Many of the new magazines exploited the desire for military related themes which increased the difficulty of magazines grounded in a tradition of hostility towards military themes to ignore what was obviously popular to readers.[175] This increasingly made it commercially expedient to target the leisure market of the poorer and younger sections of society. This coupled with the growing spread of youth literacy ensured a lucrative provision of potential readers.[176]

This was aided by educational advancements. The 1870 Education Act led to a substantial increase in the volume of publications directed at the young and boys' books and periodicals occupied one of the largest sectors of the contemporary publishing industry.[177] The Intermediate Education Act of 1878 helped to swell the market for such work as it increased school attendance and child literacy in Ireland. By the 1870s and 1880s periodicals directed at boys were available widely and cheaply all over Ireland and Ciaran O'Neill has

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[173] *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 May 1898.

[174] Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, pp. 21, 25. On Henty see G. Davies, 'G.A. Henty and history', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 18 (1955), pp. 159-67; R.A. Huttenback, 'G.A. Henty and the imperial stereotype', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 29 (1965), pp. 63-75.

[175] R.H. MacDonald, 'Reproducing the middle-class boy: from purity to patriotism in the boys' magazines, 1892- 1914', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 24 (1989), pp. 519-20.

[176] J. Springhall, ''Pernicious reading'? 'the penny dreadful' as scapegoat for late-Victorian juvenile crime', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 27 (1994), p. 328.

[177] P. A. Dunae, 'Boys' literature and the idea of empire, 1870-1914', *Victorian Studies*, 24 (1980), p. 106.

argued that 'there can be no doubt as to the fact that there was a market for such material'.[178] William Starkie attested to this, writing that 'publications have recently appealed to an immense class which had never previous been reached by any form of serious literature'.[179]

Such literature was cited as influential in encouraging recruiting for the South-African war. Henty himself was in no doubt regarding the significance that his works had in encouraging recruiting stating that, 'I know that very many boys have joined...the Army through reading my stories, and at many meetings at which I have spoken, officers of the Army and Volunteers have assured me that my books have been effectual in bringing young fellows into the Army'. [180] At a parade service of the Dublin regiment of the Church Lads' Brigade the bishop of Ossory, John Baptist Crozier, later archbishop of Armagh, hoped that 'one of the results of the present war (the Second Boer War had been declared a month earlier) was that men and women, many of them who had wasted their time over silly and sensual novels, were reading with a keener zest to-day the story of England's battles'.[181] The *Irish Times* reported that 'the life of General Gordon is a good illustration of the kind of book that will always be in demand among a community of healthy boys'. They recommended that 'a large number of biographies of men of action who have led healthy outdoor lives are suitable for inclusion in a school library'.[182]

Authors such as Gordon Stables wrote fictional accounts which included organisations such as the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade involved in defending the mainland against invasion after the regular forces had been overrun.[183] This was indicative of an increase in literature which dealt with the threat of invasion, reflecting contemporary fears surrounding technological advances in naval power which rendered an invasion of Britain more feasible than had previously been the case.[184] Invasion fears in literature were also given an outlet in Ireland. *An Englishman's Home* by Guy du Maurier had a long run in London theatres and highlighted the dangers posed by invasion.[185] His niece Daphne du Maurier wrote that the play had been a cautionary tale about civilians who fought

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[178] C. O'Neill, 'Pearse, Parnell or the priests? The politics of identity in the Irish schoolboy novel', in K. Jencova, M. Markova, R. Markus, H. Pavelkova, eds., *The politics of Irish writing* (Prague, 2010), p. 71.
[179] Starkie, *Recent reforms*, p. 26.
[180] *Boys' Own Paper*, Dec. 1902, cited in Miller, 'Volunteering for the South African war', p. 709.
[181] *Irish Times*, 16 Nov. 1899.
[182] *Irish Times*, 29 Jul. 1911.
[183] G. Stables, *The meteor flag of England: the story of a coming conflict* (London, 1905), esp. pp. 47, 224-8.
[184] Dunae, 'Boys' literature', p. 118; D.A.T. Stafford, 'Spies and gentlemen: the birth of the British spy novel, 1893-1914', *Victorian Studies*, 24 (1981), pp. 489-509; On the invasion scare see M.W. Ryan, 'The invasion controversy of 1906-1908: Lieutenant-Colonel Charles á Court Repington and British perceptions of the German menace', *Military Affairs*, 44 (1980), pp. 8-12.
[185] G. du Maurier, *An Englishman's home* (London, 1909).

to defend their homes as 'he knew what invasion would mean to us who have never known'. With its production 'people everywhere became alive to the problem of national defence'.[186] The *New York Times* reported that the National Service League 'considered it (a) remarkable object lesson in their favour, and it is proposed to station recruiting officers for volunteers at the theatres where the play is put on'. The play exposed 'the ignorance of volunteer troops, the incompetence of officers, the complacency and worthlessness of the idle classes' and with its production 'the lesson of preparedness has been vigorously enforced'.[187] The play was staged in Ireland and 'was to open for an equally long run in the Irish capital to stir us to take precautions against invasion'. Constance Markievicz brought a number of Fianna boys to see the play where they proceeded to interrupt the production.[188] Guy du Maurier had seen active service in South Africa and was later killed during World War I.[189]

Other genres of literature caused concern amongst the leaders of youth organisations especially the availability of 'immoral' literature specifically targeted at young people. J.W. Morgan commented that one Dublin newsagent told him that 'the only things which boys really enjoy reading are "penny dreadfuls"'. For him such works undermined their ambition and condemned boys who were 'following the phantom of a cheap hero, whom, if he did exist, would only be followed by the most degraded beings'.[190] In the period there were direct correlations being made between the availability of literature which people believed prompted 'immoral' behaviour and actual criminality, especially amongst young boys. In 1895 two boys were arrested and convicted of carrying out a burglary and there was a belief that one of the causes was the prevalence of this literature. It was commented that these boys were dangerously exposed to the 'evil influence of the stories of highwaymen and burglar heroes with which they had crammed their imagination'. They were reported to have previously been in regular employment, with the inference being that these were young men who were not in dire financial straits or in a position which necessitated such an action. The result of their actions was 'two more lives wrecked at the outset by the corruptors of youth who are responsible for this rubbish'.[191]

The Church of Ireland bishop of Meath cautioned Boys' Brigade members that they should be careful about the books that they read if they wished to maintain a true Christian character and warned them to avoid 'literature which appealed to the lowest and basest

[186] D. du Maurier, *Gerald: a portrait* (London, 1934), pp. 126, 128.
[187] *New York Times*, 31 Jan. 1909.
[188] Skinnider, *Doing my bit*, pp. 25-6.
[189] *Irish Times*, 11 Mar. 1915.
[190] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Dec. 1905.
[191] *Weekly Irish Times*, 7 Sept. 1895.

passions'.[192] The Anglican archbishop of Dublin warned of the influence of books which 'did an immensity of mischief, and tended to produce unhealthy and unsound minds'.[193] J.W. Morgan advised that 'Officers should do their utmost to lead public opinion to procure the suppression of post-cards of questionable character which, at present, are exposed for sale in shop windows'.[194] The lord lieutenant warned the membership about 'objectionable cards and printed matter [which] were being sold in Dublin'. He asked 'what could be more mean and despicable than, for the sake of money, to spread what is harmful and debasing' and advised boys that 'if you see anything of that kind which you know ought not to be allowed, send word to those who can deal with it'. For him 'one essential part of Christian manliness was the duty of opposing whatever has a lowering, contaminating influence'.[195] Rev. John Frank Moncrieff Cox, chaplain in the 21st Dublin company, wrote that a boy who spends 'his days in morbid thoughts; devouring pictures and books which would be better in the fire; without interest in sport and play, or even mischief; developing soft muscle, an ill-formed body, and narrow shoulders-such a lad is...laying up for himself a future full of moral danger and conflict'.[196]

A letter was sent to the *Irish Times* in 1894 by a supporter of the Boys' Brigade who was seeking advice on how the organisation could create a lending library to be attached to the organisation and enquired as to which societies in Ireland would be willing to support such an endeavour. They believed that by providing such a service they could counteract the poor influence that immoral literature was having on adolescents and could give them 'a substitute for that low class literature, the evil influence of which is so often apparent'.[197] Despite fears it has been argued that the misrepresentation of the dangerous effects of such fiction on the young suggests that the authorities 'preferred to target a convenient cultural scapegoat, rather than lend credence to more fundamental social and economic explanations of delinquency'.[198] John Springhall has concluded that they were 'read in unwitting rebellion against middle-class moralising and polite standards of taste'.[199]

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[192] *Irish Times*, 11 Mar. 1897.
[193] *Irish Times*, 23 Feb. 1906.
[194] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 14, no. 3, Nov. 1905, p. 44.
[195] *Irish Independent*, 11 May 1908; *Irish Times*, 11 May 1908
[196] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 6, Feb. 1904, p. 83.
[197] *Irish Times*, 26 Apr. 1894. See also *Daily Express* 19 Sept. 1904, newspaper clipping in NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[198] Springhall, 'Pernicious reading', p. 327.
[199] J. Springhall, *Youth, popular culture and moral panics: penny gaffs to gangsta-rap, 1830-1996* (New York, 1996), p. 69.

There were criticisms that the books available for boys related little to everyday lives. *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* argued that there was a need for books dealing with the home life 'of the ordinary working lad', as many other books then available depicted a life 'quite unknown to the average Boys' Brigade boy'.[200] The second annual report of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion recommended that steps be taken to establish a magazine that would appeal to its members and they believed that it would create 'a favourable impression on the public mind'. In 1889 *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* had been introduced, but this only catered for officers.[201] *The Boys' Brigade Magazine* had been introduced in 1892 for boys but received criticism. A writer in *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* argued upon the publication of the first issue that the magazine 'would need to be on quite different lines from this trial number if it were to become a permanent and attractive feature of Brigade Boy life'.[202]

The Brigadier was formed in 1900 with the ambition of 'enlarging the boys' ideas as to the bigness of The B.B.' with the first issue selling 20,000 copies. It found it difficult to develop a niche for itself in the competitive market of publications for boys. In a survey carried out by the Boys' Brigade, where boys were asked for the name of their favourite magazine, *The Brigadier* did not enter the top five with publications such as *Boys' Friend*, *Chums*, *Boys of Our Empire*, *New Penny Magazine* and the *Boys' Own* all being more popular. By October 1902 *The Brigadier* was selling an average of 15,000 issues and had a deficit of thirty-three pounds.[203] Herbert Reid, editor of *The Brigadier*, believed that it could 'never compete with certain papers which boys like. It must rather supply what the Brigade Boy cannot get elsewhere' with something that would 'make them feel they belong to something larger than their company'. He recommended that the stories it contained needed to be more honest but 'some officers think everything about the brigade should be shewn (sic) as ideal; but you can't write a story without a villain, and possibly it might be an officer'.[204] The Dublin battalion argued that it 'was a capital production so far as interesting literary matter was concerned but as a Brigade paper it left very much indeed to be desired'.[205] Despite this in January 1901 they reported that the magazine 'appears to have caught on well

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[200] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 6, Oct. 1892, p. 124.
[201] *Irish Times*, 12 Oct. 1894; Springhall et al. *Sure and stedfast*, p. 248.
[202] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 5, June 1892, p. 86.
[203] *The Brigadier*, 1 Oct. 1903, p. 4; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 4, Dec. 1900, p. 56, vol. 9, no. 6, Feb. 1901, p. 83, vol. 10, no. 9, Feb. 1902, p. 92, vol. 11, no. 2, Oct. 1902, p. 22.
[204] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 2, Nov. 1903, p. 43.
[205] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Dec. 1900.

in Dublin'.[206] In Belfast in 1903 its circulation was only 255 but efforts were made at localising the contents which resulted in its circulation rising to 950.[207] William Smith believed that the 'real interest to the Boys lies in the matters in which they themselves are concerned, and in which their own Company's names appear, such as Battalion and Company Football matches, and it is obvious that the best way to satisfactorily provide for this is by means of Battalion localisation'.[208] When the paper was cancelled the Dublin battalion council resolved to write to the Brigade executive asking them to re-issue it, but William Smith wrote that 'the executive regret that they do not see their way to reissue this paper'.[209]

The Boy Scouts expressed similar concerns regarding the literature available to boys. They issued *The Scout*, a weekly magazine aimed at Boy Scouts, in 1908 and by 1909 it had a circulation of 100,000. Baden-Powell's ambition in establishing *The Scout* was 'to provide interesting and attractive matter such as will tend to wean the boys from the pernicious literature which is so freely available to them'. While *The Scout* attempted to provide an alternative publication to the popular magazines of the period Baden-Powell received many complaints regarding 'the sensational type of story that now and again appears in *The Scout*'. He appreciated that the publication had to compete with other magazines and had to appeal to boys, not on the basis of what they should be reading, but on the basis of what attracted them. He wrote that 'if we offer him the *Times* or the *Saturday Review* as a substitute, it is just possible that he might not be lured from his first love. So we offer him something more to his taste; sensational it may be, but not harmful'. For him a boy was like 'a shy fish' and 'in order to catch him you must use the bait that he is fond of; not merely the kind of food which you yourself prefer'.[210] Members were also encouraged to produce their own troop magazine and *The Scout* provided advice on how this could be done. The 10th Belfast troop put this into action and produced *The Kit-Bag* to be distributed amongst members of the troop.[211] Organisations for girls also catered to the intellectual development of their members. The 2nd lone company of the Girl Guides ran a library with 101 books on Guide subjects.[212]

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[206] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Jan. 1901.
[207] *The Brigadier*, 2 Nov. 1903, p. 31.
[208] William Smith to T.B. Kerford, 13 Sept. 1905, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10.
[209] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 10 Apr. 1905, BBAD, Box 10; T.B. Kerford to William Smith 26 June 1905; William Smith to T.B. Kerford, 13 Sept. 1905, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council', BBAD, Box 10.
[210] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p. 4, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1909, p. 1.
[211] *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 212, May 1912, p. 833; Copies of the magazine are held in the museum of the 10th Belfast troop.
[212] *Girl Guides Gazette*, no. 16, Apr. 1915, p. 3.

The Hibernian Boys' Brigade were active in encouraging members to ignore 'bad prints, bad pictures, the reading or sale of bad books and papers'. They wished to encourage self-sufficiency amongst members and inculcate a sense of patriotism by advocating that they 'give preference to all Irish publications, products and enterprises'.[213] They organised literary classes, taught the Irish language, and held classes in Irish history. Their educational policy stressed that there was not enough of these subjects taught in schools and their ambition was that 'denationalising tendencies must be completely eradicated'.[214] It was not just in the Hibernian Boys' Brigade that such a view was prevalent. Florence O'Donoghue, a member of the Irish Republican Army in Co. Cork during the Irish war of independence, later recalled that the national school education of the period 'nourished no natural feelings of love of country, it told children nothing of the story of their own land except what was so remote that the link between it and the living present was lost; nothing that would cause pride in their own localities was ever mentioned'.[215] Patrick Pearse stated that education in Ireland was 'designed for the express purpose of Anglicising Irish boys and Irish girls, of making the boys and girls slaves, that the future generations in Ireland might be slaves'. He noted that in his own experience 'in spite of the fact that I had been taught by my grandfather who had been a Fenian…I began to write school compositions about "our empire", and "our fleet", and "our army" and "our colonies'.[216]

The Ancient Order of Hibernians, the parent organisation of the Hibernian Boys' Brigade, provided an important forum for the discussion of important issues of public concern. Many halls were purchased or erected by the Order and 'these form rallying grounds in the various districts of Ireland for a free interchange of views on social and political questions, and have proved excellent training grounds for the education of those upon whose shoulders rests the local government of the country'.[217] These halls were stated to 'have been the means of brightening the lives of thousands of our rural workers'.[218] However, certain churchmen were not convinced of the advantages of such facilities. Cardinal Logue, Roman Catholic archbishop of Armagh and primate of Ireland, in his 1909 pastoral letter, attacked the Ancient Order of Hibernians and commented that 'they have erected halls and converted them into dance-houses, where young people of both sexes are kept away from parental

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[213] *Hibernian Journal*, July 1915.
[214] *Hibernian Journal*, Sept. 1914, Oct. 1915, July 1915.
[215] Unpublished typescript autobiographical accounts by Florence and Josephine O'Donoghue about their lives to ca. 1920, pp. 14-15, NLI, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, 31,124/1.
[216] Report of addresses by P.H. Pearse, Bulmer Hobson and others, 17, 634.
[217] *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Jan. 1915.
[218] *National Volunteer*, 16 Jan. 1915.

control and the prudent supervision which decency requires, till the small hours of the morning'.[219]

Fianna Éireann was also concerned about the reading material available to their members. In 1914 a Christmas annual was launched called 'Nollaig na bhFian', edited by two Fianna members. This publication did not meet with the approval of all of the Fianna leadership with Padraig O'Riain writing that 'it is the most unboyish boys' paper I have ever seen' and contained 'heavy articles' by James Connolly and Bulmer Hobson and 'neither are very interesting'.[220] It was commented that 'nearly every boy from twelve to sixteen years of age reads at least one boys' paper every week, and until there is one published in Ireland, they will continue to subscribe to those imported from England'. There was an awareness that condemnation merely encouraged their growth and it was noted that 'there is no use preaching against them, for preaching against them only acts as an incentive to a wider reading of these papers'.[221] J.S. Sheehy wrote that British works were

> excellent for *English* boys, whether they are Catholic or Protestant. They show forth types of healthy-minded, brave, truthful, open-air boys. But they are essentially English. Thus unconsciously, Irish boys, during their plastic years, are being West-Britonized. Their heroes are English warriors of the past, or English public school boys of today, or English adventurers and detectives. . . .I am anxious to get the Irish boy to look at home for his models, to see in Irish boys, like himself, examples of bravery, truth, "playing the game", culture, self-respect, also fun and diversion, as well as among English boys.[222]

The *Meath Chronicle* argued that

> the boys of Ireland have been a long time dependent on the publishing houses of London for their literary fare, and what they got, if it wasn't silly, was harmful and tended to make them confirmed West Britains (sic), instead of good clean-minded Irishmen, proud of the land that bore them

[219] *Irish Independent*, 22 Feb. 1909.
[220] Irish Volunteer, 19 Dec. 1914.
[221] *Irish Volunteer*, 13 Feb. 1915.
[222] J.S. Sheehy, "The Need of an Irish 'Boys' Paper", *The College Chronicle, Castleknock,* 2 (1909), cited in C. O'Neill, 'The Irish schoolboy novel', *Éire-Ireland*, 44 (2009), p. 151.

and true to the ideals that have been her mainstay in dark days of gloom and sorrow.[223]

For members of Fianna Éireann a newspaper called *Fianna* was established in 1915, and while not an official organ was directed by Fianna members and pitched towards Fianna members. The paper sought to fill a gap in the market by offering an Irish alternative to British publications aimed at young people. Under the title 'killing Irish nationalism' the newspaper argued, 'that-and worse-is what the English boys' periodicals are doing'. Despite their concerns they acknowledged that these were far more popular than their own publication, writing in 1915 that 'these English weeklies and monthlies have a very large circulation in Ireland-practically every boy reads them-and "Fianna", which is an Irish boy's monthly, has a comparatively small circulation'. Members could subscribe to the publication at a rate of one shilling and sixpence for twelve months.[224]

Despite the aim of *Fianna* it was accused of hampering the growth of Fianna Éireann. One reader wrote that 'our little paper, like all other National papers ever started, has one failing-it's too local', suggesting little effort was made to make the journal interesting for the rural units of the organisation. This was not necessarily the fault of the newspaper editorial staff but the result of the actions of the rural members themselves and the journal responded to such criticism by arguing that 'we have appealed time after time to Fianna Sluagthe in the country for reports, etc., but without response'.[225] *Fianna* found it difficult to obtain a wide enough circulation amongst the young and businesses were reluctant to advertise in the publication as they believed it did not pay them to do so. As a result the journal had to widen focus and in June 1915 made the decision to change its content in order to make it attractive to both men and boys in an attempt at increasing its appeal. Police authorities estimated that by November, 1915 it had a circulation of 859 and this had risen to 1,094 by January 1916.[226]

The Catholic Boys' Brigade established a library and argued that they 'do everything possible to wean the boys from the streets, and to help in their moral and intellectual education'. A library was opened in the Co. Cork branch in 1905.[227] Rev. P.F. Tighe thought that immoral literature 'tended to corrupt morals and lower the standard of the people'.[228]

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[223] *Meath Chronicle*, 17 Oct. 1914.
[224] *Fianna*, Mar. 1915, Apr. 1915.
[225] Fianna, May 1915.
[226] *Fianna*, June 1915; *The royal commission on the rebellion in Ireland, minutes of evidence and appendix of documents* [Cd. 8311] (1916), p. 118.
[227] *Irish Independent*, 22 July 1905, 31 Oct. 1905.
[228] *Irish Independent*, 18 June 1912.

These anxieties were also felt by other Catholic organisations. In 1914 the Christian Brother's established a periodical called *Our Boys* aiming 'to interest, instruct, and inspire the boys of our Catholic schools, to create in them a taste for clean literature, to continue the character-forming lessons of their school days...to inflame their love of country, and to help in preserving them as devoted children of our Holy Mother Church'.[229] They sought to produce a periodical that would not only instruct the young but also be both entertaining and accessible. J.C. Craven, a Christian Brother from Belfast, wrote of the new publication that 'the character of our new venture is - bright, cheery, amusing, instructive and healthy. We are avoiding everything philosophical or heavy, or written in a style above the heads of young people'.[230] The cost of the periodical was one penny and by 1915 the periodical had a circulation of 30,000.[231] One of the motivations of the publication was 'for the purpose of counteracting as far as possible the ill effects of the poisonous literature that comes across the water' as 'the fifty or more boys' papers that come across the Channel to them were sapping the morality of their boys'.[232] Michael Flanagan has argued that 'there was a perceived need for a magazine that would reflect the values of Irish culture, that would present an alternative, Irish heroic model, one that would be acceptable to the tastes of New Nationalism'.[233] For Irish nationalists of the revival period 'the consumption of these distilled tales of imperial power by Irish youths was at best corrupting and at worst invidious and anti-Irish'.[234]

There was a widespread campaign which attempted to limit the sale of 'objectionable papers' organised by the Dublin Vigilance Committee which in 1912 had acquired the signatures of 187 newsagents in Dublin who agreed not to stock the offending material.[235] This campaign had the approval of much of the Catholic hierarchy with William Walsh, archbishop of Dublin, going so far as to say that those who trafficked in corrupt literature were unworthy to be admitted to the Sacraments. Bishop Jacob Naughton of Killala believed

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[229] *Irish Independent*, 4 Sept. 1914.
[230] J.C. Craven to Roger Casement, 20 Jul. 1914, NLI, Joseph McGarity Collection, (Dr Wm. J. Maloney), 17,582/1.
[231] *Irish Volunteer*, 12 Sept. 1914; Report to be submitted to the newspaper sub-committee, NLI, Maurice Moore Papers, 10,545/3.
[232] Craven to Casement, 20 July 1914, NLI, Joseph McGarity Collection, (Dr Wm. J. Maloney), 17,582/1; *Irish Independent*, 6 Nov. 1911.
[233] M. Flanagan, 'For the triumph of the patriot arms: the Christian Brothers, *Our Boys* and militant nationalism in Irish popular culture, 1914-1922', *Working papers in Irish studies*, 01-4 (Florida, 2001), pp. 2-3. See also M. Flanagan, ''There is an isle in the western ocean': the Christian Brothers, *Our Boys* and Catholic/nationalist ideology', in M. Shine Thompson and C. Keenan, eds., *Treasure islands: studies in children's literature* (Dublin, 2006), pp. 43-52.
[234] O'Neill, 'The Irish schoolboy novel', p. 148; See also R. Nic Congáil, '"Fiction, Amusement, Instruction": The Irish Fireside Club and the educational ideology of the Gaelic League', *Éire-Ireland*, 44 (2009), p. 41; Nic Congáil, 'Young Ireland', pp. 37-62.
[235] *Irish Independent*, 5 Jan. 1912.

that 'no one can continue to read them without fostering an unbroken series of infidel and immoral thoughts' and Cardinal Logue declared this literature 'a plague that destroyed the soul'. Many were convinced that the origin of these publications ensured that they were dangerous to Catholic morality. Bishop Henry O'Neill of Dromore stated that these works came 'mainly from England in the shape of illustrated papers and sensational works of fiction' and that 'the reading matter, if not directly opposed to Catholic doctrine, is sure to be un-Catholic in tone and sentiment. Even when not openly and grossly licentious, it is always suggestive of much that it destructive of purity of mind and innocence of heart'. James Browne, bishop of Ferns, quoted a Dublin priest who said that 'three tons of filthy weekly Sunday papers are discharged weekly on the quays of Dublin alone' and Browne believed that 'the irreligion and immorality that disgrace many of our cities and towns are attributed to reading dirty English newspapers'.[236]

Despite condemnations, the popularity of these publications in Ireland cannot be denied. Rev. Henry Glendon commented that the country people 'were the best customers for the English papers'.[237] Similarly, Cardinal Logue's denunciation from the pulpit of a publication had the opposite effect and he commented that the sale 'instead of diminishing had increased fourfold'.[238] The behaviour of Irish newspapers also came in for criticism as they sought to reproduce similar stories in order to increase their popularity. At a meeting convened by the St Columba's branch of the Catholic Young Men's Society, Rev. Myles V. Ronan, the spiritual director of the branch, stated that 'attention must be called to the gross pandering of some of their Irish newspapers to that tendency of the sensational and shady', and that 'it seemed outrageous and degrading for the Irish Press to lavishly imitate their fellow-Pressmen across the Channel in that vile pandering to a depraved taste and low moral sense'.[239]

There were local initiatives to counter the influence of English publications. In 1911 a parcel containing British newspapers was seized at Kilmallock railway station in Co. Limerick and burned in the street.[240] In Co. Sligo in 1906 a number of publications such as *Boys' Herald* and *Boys' Friend* were publicly burned in a bonfire of the vanities in the yard of the Catholic cathedral. This was carried out by order of the missioners then conducting

[236] *Irish Independent*, 19 Feb. 1912.
[237] *Irish Independent*, 6 Nov. 1911.
[238] *Irish Independent*, 19 Apr. 1912.
[239] *Irish Independent*, 6 Nov. 1911; *Irish Times*, 11 Nov. 1911.
[240] *Irish Independent*, 20 Dec. 1911.

nightly services in the cathedral who said that 'it was not right for Catholics to read Protestant books'.[241]

Rev. William Joseph Harpur, a catholic curate at Ballykelly in Co. Wexford, believed that a counter to such publications would be the substitution of alternative traditional Irish practices and publications. He stated that 'modest Irish songs and dances would take the place of suggestive English songs and dances, and Irish history and stories would displace the immoral and irreligious English newspapers and novels'.[242] In a letter to the *Irish Independent* John A. Gibney argued that,

> if we succeed from weaning them back from the pernicious to the sound and wholesome, we must get writers who, without coming under the ban of the Censor, can weave into song and story the thread of romance, incidents of war and adventure-thrilling episodes from Ireland's story-the heroism of her sons; their prowess in war; their battles, triumphs, their defeats-writers who will create a literature catchy, grippy, fascinating, elevating-robust with a morality racy of the soil, tempered and chastened with poetry, pathos, etc., and permeated with a spiritualism that will elevate the moral sense.[243]

P. O'Daly, general secretary of the Gaelic League, commenting on the spread of such literature, argued that 'an effective antidote to the spread of that plague in Ireland would be the spread of Irish and with it the old reverential spirit of the Gael'.[244]

Concerns surrounding 'immoral' literature were shared by all youth movements and all put mechanisms in place to deal with it. The literature directed at young people could be approved of by youth movements so long as it reinforced the values that were taught by the leadership, such as honour, discipline, and loyalty. Other genres which were perceived as undermining these values were condemned. The youth movements themselves provided their own literature to cater for members but many found it difficult to replace other publications and it is clear that condemnation was not sufficient to discourage readers. In Ireland, especially amongst the organisations founded in the country, there were efforts to provide substitutes to British publications. However, in most cases these did not attract a wide enough

[241] *Irish Times*, 23 Mar. 1906.
[242] *Irish Independent*, 24 Nov. 1911.
[243] *Irish Independent*, 7 Dec. 1911.
[244] *Irish Independent*, 25 Mar. 1912.

readership to displace the publications they condemned and a market for British publications certainly continued, fulfilling a desire for such material amongst the reading population. The key distinction between the youth movements founded in Ireland and those founded in Britain was that while the latter condemned publications because of their content and the values they believed they promoted, the former were more likely to criticise them for both their content and their English origin. Doing so enabled them to establish a contrast between the two countries and highlight the contribution that indigenous Irish literature, based on specifically Irish models and advanced as less sensational and more wholesome than their counterparts, could make to the moral advancement of Irish youth.

6 Youth Movements and Education

6.1 Educational Values

While increasing literacy was one of the main functions of national schooling the development of appropriate moral qualities was also high on the agenda. It was seen as the function of schooling to teach pupils attitudes and values that were deemed deficient in their homes and the local environment in which they lived. This was an important function of elementary education and it has been argued that in Ireland schools were 'seen as the most powerful social institution for the dissemination of 'correct' ideas'[1] Education was utilised as a means of communicating cultural values and allowing pupils to integrate into the existing framework of society and in elementary education 'young people were exposed to intensive attempts to instil desirable values and behaviours at an impressionable age'.[2] An indication of this can be appreciated by the content of school textbooks which contained strong moral and social values aiming to encourage acceptance of the prevailing social and economic order.[3] The reading material provided to elementary school children reflected the accepted values of 'respectable' society and were encouraged in an attempt to imbue these to largely working class children. While Irish textbooks were secular to avert denominational controversy the underlying tone was predominantly Christian and there was an emphasis on religious tolerance. This affected the pattern of curricular development with Irish education open to a wider degree of diversity than schools in other parts of the United Kingdom. Political economy was a prominent part of late nineteenth century Irish elementary education and was utilised to justify social stratification and teach respect for the existing political, social, and economic order as well as encouraging habits of industry. Social values of thrift and frugality were emphasised as essential and profligacy and improvidence were held as central to the existence of poverty. These social virtues were seen as a central function of national schools and 'Irish teachers were instructed to give order, tidiness, and hygiene priority even over reading, writing and arithmetic'.[4] It was not just from a social perspective that the moral

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[1] T.A. Boylan, T.P. Foley, *Political economy and colonial Ireland: the propagation and ideological function of economic discourse in nineteenth-century Ireland* (London, 1992), p. 122.

[2] S. Wright, 'Citizenship, moral education and the English elementary school', in L. Brockliss, N. Sheldon, eds., *Mass education and the limits of state building, c.1870-1930* (Hampshire, 2012), p. 37.

[3] J. Coolahan, *Irish education: history and structure* (Dublin, 1981), p. 20.

[4] J.M. Goldstrom, *The social content of education, 1808-1870, a study of the working class reader in England and Ireland* (Shannon, 1972), p. 81, *passim*.

dimension of education was considered and the encouragement of these attributes and values was held to have beneficial economic effects and the social function of schooling was appreciated by industrial and commercial interests.[5]

There was a prevalent concern that the discipline of school children was a neglected aspect of the Irish educational system. The author George Henty wrote that 'discipline has to the vast majority become an almost forgotten word'. He recommended that every boy should be made join a youth organisation until they reached seventeen which he believed would result in the 'end of the noisy rowdiness, the coarse horseplay and the foulness of the language of our streets, that are among the most disagreeable, and I may say disgraceful, features of the age'.[6] Similarly, Lord Meath rallied against what he saw as disregard for the development of discipline within society. He argued that 'it was an unwise sentimentality that unnecessarily interfered between parent and child and between teacher and pupil in the maintenance of a reasonable discipline. Such influence tended to destroy the moral fibre of the race, and to produce soft, flabby self-indulgent, conceited, self-centred men and women'.[7] He 'deplored the lack of discipline in the home from the desire to make things too easy for children', commenting that 'this weakened the moral fibre and led to the production of loafers'.[8] These concerns were also reflected in the state education system and Edmond Downing, head inspector for Co. Londonderry for the Irish Commission of National Education, noted that the training of children 'in deportment, good manners, and neat and orderly habits' was important but 'very little is done in these directions'.[9]

S.E. Stronge, district inspector of Waterford, felt that lack of discipline had much to do with teachers' conception of their responsibilities and the remit of their authority. He commented that 'there are a few schools in this district in which it is plain that the teachers think that good discipline and training come under the head of school-keeping'. He strongly advocated the introduction of drill to improve discipline and believed the advantages would be felt, not only in school, but in the wider social community when the children played sports. He wrote that 'it is the very restraint imposed by learning drill and acquiring form that enables us in future to exercise self-control and to know how to govern others'. He argued that this self-control and submission to the judgement of authorities had not been learned,

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[5] P.W. Musgrave, 'The labour force: some relevant attitudes', in G. Roderick, M. Stephens, eds., *Where did we go wrong? Industrial performance, education and the economy in Victorian Britain* (Sussex, 1981), pp. 56-7.
[6] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 10, July 1894, p. 254.
[7] *Irish Independent*, 20 July 1910.
[8] *Freeman's Journal*, 29 Oct. 1908.
[9] *Appendix to the sixty-first report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland (for the year 1894)* [C. 7891] (1895), p. 43.

stating that, 'anyone may see for himself by attending a local football match, and marking how both sides do what is right in their own eyes, in total disregard of the umpire, and how the ending of the match frequently occurs by one side leaving the field'.[10]

While there was a difficulty in the imposition of discipline the blame was not wholly directed at teachers but towards the way in which they were trained and the narrowness of their experience. A royal commission into Irish primary education reported in 1870 that untrained teachers constituted fifty-eight per cent of the total number of teachers in the Irish national school system.[11] An inspector in Co. Clare in 1880 noted that the majority of teachers had never received any other training for their profession other than that received 'at second hand' in another national school. The limited scope of their experience meant that 'having spent their lives within the bands of their own narrow circle, they know almost nothing' and 'their ideas are of the parish-parochial'. While he acknowledged that many of them were earnest and hard-working in implementing the rules of the commissioners of national education he wrote that, 'it must be admitted that, in ideas of discipline, order and form, they are not much superior to the pupils they teach'.[12] William MacMillan, district inspector for Co. Wexford, noted that the ability of teachers was not what it should be, arguing that 'few indications of intelligent knowledge or judicious training are noticeable' with 'only pitiable bewilderment, and the hopeless dullness and stupidity, almost everywhere to be met with'.[13] F.H. Dale and T.A. Stephen, two English inspectors from the Board of Education, wrote of Irish teachers that, 'no Irish graduate, save in exceptional circumstances, will enter the teaching profession if any other career presents itself to him'.[14] This was noted by the leadership of the Boys' Brigade. William McVicker argued that 'teachers as a rule do not make the best officers' as in many cases 'there is a lack of the necessary sympathy between them and the boys for Brigade purposes'.[15]

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[10] *The fifty-fifth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland (for the year 1888)* [C. 5738-I] (1889), p. 154; For an example of such an unruly game see Fianna minute book, 10 Sept. 1902, NLI, Bulmer Hobson Papers, 12,176. Here a protest was received from 'Conan Maol' objecting to 'Oscar' being awarded the points in a match due to 'the encroachment of spectators here by causing interference with the match' and 'the supporters of Oscar doing all in their power to obstruct their club [Conon Maol] from scoring, kicking the ball at every available opportunity in the direction of Conan Maol goal'. The protest was upheld.

[11] *Royal Commission of Inquiry into primary education (Ireland), containing the report of the commissioners, with an appendix*, 1 [C. 6] (1870), p. 248

[12] *Appendix to the forty-seventh report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland (for the year 1880)* [C. 2925-I] (1881), p. 94.

[13] *Appendix to the fifty-ninth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland (for the year 1892)* [C. 7124-I] (1893), p. 150.

[14] *Report of Messrs' F.H. Dale and T.A. Stephens, his majesty's inspectors of schools, Board of Education, on intermediate education in Ireland* [Cd. 2546] (1905), p. 43.

[15] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.

The want of punctuality amongst school boys was also cited as an obstacle to educational attainment in Ireland. Peter Connellan, head inspector for Dublin, noted that there was an 'eleven o'clock rule' in many national schools for marking the roll which encouraged unpunctuality and had a consequent effect on a pupil's character. He argued that 'it would be idle to deny and wrong to hide that the Irish lower classes set little value on time' and it was damaging 'to encourage the idea that pupils who are in attendance at eleven o'clock are supposed to be in time, although the business of the school begins nominally at ten o'clock.'. William James McClintock, district inspector for Cavan, argued that teachers were complicit in this. He wrote of students' attendance that, 'not only do they attend intermittently, but when they do come they arrive so late so as lose the first half hour's instruction. I find teachers occasionally conniving at this evil by not commencing the day's work till after ten o'clock'.[16] Addressing the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland Charles Dawson argued that 'the evil of unpunctuality is absolutely encouraged in the present National System of Education'. [17]

In this regard it is noteworthy to analyse the attendance records of Irish schoolchildren and contrast these with those from other parts of the United Kingdom. Low school attendance rates were a constant concern in Irish national schooling with 'sporadic attendance the norm'[18]. In 1902 out of every one hundred children enrolled in English schools the average attendance was 83.9 per cent while in Ireland it was 65.1 per cent.[19] Ireland had the worst attendance record in the United Kingdom with Scottish and Welsh attendance records standing at 82.9 per cent and 77.4 per cent respectively. Even the worst English county, the Isle of Ely, had an average attendance of 79.7 per cent and the worst Welsh county, Anglesey, obtained 73.6 per cent average attendance. It is thus unsurprising that William Starkie, resident commissioner for national education in Ireland, wrote that 'the irregularity of attendance at our schools is nothing less than lamentable'. [20] As has been noted, one of the ambitions of primary education was the training of working class children in moral values and habits that it was felt they were not exposed to in their home environment, such as cleanliness, discipline, and punctuality, the same qualities that were given prominence in

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[16] *Appendix to the sixtieth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland (for the year 1893)* [C.7457-I] (1894), pp. 102, 189.
[17] C. Dawson, 'The want of industrial and practical education in Irish national schools', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 10 (1896), pp. 221-2.
[18] Raftery, Parkes, *Female education in Ireland*, p. 36; D.H. Akenson, *A mirror to Kathleen's face: education in Independent Ireland, 1922-1960* (London, 1975), p. 4; Coolahan, *Irish education*, p. 30.
[19] *Report of Mr. F. H. Dale...on primary education in Ireland*, p. 53.
[20] Starkie, *Recent reforms*, p.21.

Irish youth movements. School attendance was thus essential in order to inculcate these moral attributes as non-attendance 'would have undermined attempts to teach these and any other qualities'.[21] Initiatives to improve attendance were rendered difficult by the opposition of the Catholic hierarchy who saw the introduction of compulsory attendance as an infringement of parental rights and this was possibly why the provisions of the Education Act of 1892 was limited to areas under corporation control. The Act introduced statutory regulation of attendance yet poor attendance remained an issue.[22] The provision was only intermittently enforced and was heavily dependent on the locality.

The Roman Catholic bishop of Ross, Denis Kelly, commented that compulsion to attend school was rarely applied and that 'it is found to be somewhat useful in the large cities, but in the small towns and the rural districts it has had the very opposite effect; it has set up the backs of the people against education altogether'.[23] In the House of Commons Captain Anthony John Charles Donelan, Irish National Federation MP for East Cork, highlighted a resolution adopted by the Cork school attendance committee asserting that the system of fining parents and guardians under the act was 'ineffective and unjust' and recommended powers be given to the courts of summary jurisdiction to order 'incorrigible boys' to be given 'a certain number of strokes of the birch rod as an alternative to such fines'.[24]

However, schools were but one institution in attempting to encourage moral education which 'was promoted by various interest groups, many outside the formal remit of the state education system'. Due to the deficiencies noted, it is clear that the inculcation of these values and habits was less than satisfactory and the encouragement of these behaviours in youth movements may have been an attempt to supplement the deficiencies in the state system. Susannah Wright has written that the existence of 'organised youth movements through the period could also, arguably, point to a perception that the school itself was not enough to socialise the young into appropriate attitudes and behavior and that alternative were required'.[25]

Youth movements were significant voluntary agencies in attempting to develop the education of Irish adolescents. This ambition encompassed the development of values and

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[21] Wright, 'Citizenship', p. 25.

[22] T.J. McElligott, *Secondary education in Ireland, 1870-1921* (Dublin, 1981), p. 150; Raftery, Parkes, *Female education in Ireland*, p. 39; 'An act to improve national education in Ireland', 27 June 1892, *The Law Reports: the public general statutes passed in the fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth years of the reign of her majesty Queen Victoria, 1892: with a list of the local and private acts, table showing the effect of the sessions legislation, with a copious index*, 29 (London, 1892), pp. 329-37.

[23] *Inter-departmental committee on physical deterioration*, 2, p. 415.

[24] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 77, 19 Oct. 1899, col. 243.

[25] Wright, 'Citizenship', pp. 37-8.

attitudes amongst members that would allow them to develop their educational abilities and youth movements provided instruction in values that were perceived as lacking in other institutions catering for young people in Ireland. The benefits of discipline were encouraged by youth movements and were seen as essential in ensuring that members led productive lives, with the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade noting that 'an undisciplined company is a rabble'.[26] Youth movements were seen as providing a remedy to the disciplinary deficiencies in the school system. Major Gregg Wilson, commanding officer of the Queen's University Officer Training Corp and the first professor of zoology at the university, wrote that the Boys' Brigade 'was one of the best educational organisation(s) that he knew'.[27] The *Northern Whig* argued that Boys' Brigade members would become 'more amenable to the ordinary discipline of the school or the home through the influence of the teaching they have received', noting that teachers 'would heartily welcome the introduction of a system which improves the docility and orderliness of their pupils; parents would approve with equal heartiness a course of teaching which improved the physique, bearing, and conduct of their boys'.[28] Thomas Sinclair, later professor of surgery in Queen's University, Belfast and Ulster Unionist Party MP for the university, commented that 'no better training could be given to a boy than to be taught to rule himself. Men who were now degraded and drunkards had commenced their career by the inability to say "no"'.[29] John Henry Bernard, then dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, 'urged the boys to remember that the habit of obedience, swift and unquestioning, was an indispensable condition of achievement when great things were to be done'. He noted that there was a specific need for such teaching in Ireland and contended that Irishmen needed to learn the lesson more than most. He argued that 'they had been slower to learn it perhaps than most of the other civilised races of the world. Until they learned something of the dignity of law and of the honour of obedience they would not take their proper place as a nation in the world's polity'.[30] The economic benefits to be accrued were also emphasised and Colonel Kelly, an adjutant general inspecting the Dublin Boys' Brigade, told the assembled crowd that that there was a specific need for such groups in Ireland if the country was to reach its full potential stating that, 'I cannot help thinking that it

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[26] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Dec. 1904.
[27] *The London Gazette*, 16 Dec. 1910; R.A. Baker and R.A. Bayliss, 'A comment on the life and work of Professor Gregg Wilson (1865-1951) of Queen's College and University, Belfast and the links between professional and amateur naturalists in Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', *The Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 27 (2003), pp. 174-83; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 28 Apr. 1915.
[28] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[29] *Belfast News-Letter*, 28 Apr. 1894.
[30] *Irish Times*, 20 Nov. 1907.

is the want of these attributes in this country…that has made Ireland less prosperous than it should be'.[31] Similarly, Irish Lord Chief Justice James Campbell stated that 'the one virtue above all others which they needed to cultivate was the virtue of discipline'.[32] The discipline encouraged by the Boys' Brigade was given a specific aim by the archbishop of Dublin, Joseph Peacocke. At the Boys' Brigade annual demonstration in 1912 he hoped that he was addressing boys who would in the future 'be placed in positions of having to govern others', arguing that 'if they wanted afterwards in life to teach others to obey their orders, the first thing that they had to learn themselves was to obey the orders of those placed over them'.[33]

The encouragement of discipline was given a concrete objective as boys were informed of the role that discipline would play in ensuring enhanced employment prospects. General Fry, presiding at a Boys' Brigade demonstration, commented that discipline was necessary 'in the ordinary affairs of civil life'.[34] Colonel Kelly argued that Boys' Brigade activities ensured that members acquired the discipline that would serve them well in later life, remarking that 'discipline and drill are often taught to be the special attributes of a military organisation…this is not so, for discipline must be maintained in every house of business in every office, in every shop, and in every manufactory'.[35] General Sir George Richardson, inspecting the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade in 1915, emphasised the value of discipline and obedience and advised them that 'in whatever trade or profession in life they might elect, those factors would be a passport to success'.[36]

By encouraging these values the organisation was equipping members with the critical faculties, the standards, and the values, which would allow them to be placed in positions of responsibility and authority. By the promotion of discipline and the qualities of leadership the Brigade was seeking to inculcate principles and ideals to a generation that they believed would be to the forefront in the development of the country and influential in determining its future trajectory. The bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, Benjamin Plunket, commented in 1914 that, 'I look upon some of you boys of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade as being amongst the future leaders of the Irish people'.[37] At a Boys' Brigade demonstration in Belfast the Anglican clergyman Rev. John Bristow argued that the

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[31] *Irish Times*, 4 June 1897.
[32] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 1, Jan. 1918, p. 9.
[33] *Irish Times*, 14 Feb. 1912; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Feb 1912.
[34] *Irish Times*, 16 Mar. 1917.
[35] *Irish Times*, 4 June 1897.
[36] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 22, no. 10, June 1914, p. 154.
[37] *Weekly Irish Times*, 21 Feb. 1914.

training was beneficial 'to a country of which in after years these boys would be the bone and sinew'.[38]

The encouragement of these values was equally important in Catholic and nationalist organisations. Sean T. O'Kelly, a future president of Ireland, wrote that he was a firm believer in the value of discipline, stating that 'if there were more discipline in the homes and in the schools and colleges there would be less delinquency'.[39] Eoin MacNeill, then vice-president of the Gaelic League, commented at a Catholic Boys' Brigade meeting that 'the people of this country had been very deficient in discipline. Had it been otherwise, the Irish, instead of being a struggling people, would be one of the most successful and admired nations on the face of the world'.[40] At a meeting at Munsterconnaught in Co Cavan T.P. O'Brien commented that the Hibernian Boys' Brigade members 'were being educated in a manner to fit them to take their places as worthy representatives of a future generation of Irishmen in the public life of the country'.[41] The leadership of the Hibernian Boys' Brigade reported that 'as a result of the instruction imparted, they will be better fitted for the careers which lie before them in life'.[42]

The Boy Scouts were also keen to supplement the educational provision of the state education system and emphasised the encouragement of character as central to their programme. The need for improved character training was also held by those outside the organisation. In 1916 Sir Oliver Lodge, the noted physicist, argued that 'education for boys who left primary school was chiefly needed in the direction of bodily discipline and character training'.[43] Irish Lord Chancellor, Sir James Campbell, noted that the Boy Scouts made a contribution in this regard, writing that they 'provided for its members many opportunities for developing the faculties which the crowded hours of school life were compelled more or less to neglect'.[44] Baden-Powell highlighted this deficiency, noting in 1914 that the school system did not develop character and that this was 'one of the secrets of making a successful career in life'. He argued that proper education needed to be about more than increasing literacy standards and advocated a more holistic approach, writing that 'no reading, writing, and arithmetic within school walls make a man a success'.[45] He had been struck by the

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[38] *Belfast News-Letter*, 9 May 1891.
[39] Typescript in English of Sean T. O'Ceallaigh's memoirs, NLI, Sean T. O'Kelly Papers, c.1963-1971, 27,707.
[40] *Irish Independent*, 28 May 1906.
[41] *Anglo-Celt*, 15 Feb. 1913.
[42] *Southern Star*, 31 July 1915.
[43] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 Jan. 1916
[44] *Irish Times*, 5 May 1919.
[45] *Leitrim Observer*, 11 Apr. 1914.

insufficient attention to the realities of life for many years prior to the formation of the Boy Scouts and later wrote that while he had been serving in the army, 'I came to realise how little the school training of those days prepared he average boy for the exigencies of life'.[46] The Dublin Boy Scouts noted a similar dearth of character training in the Irish education system, arguing that while it was encouraged in some public schools

> there is nothing of that kind amongst the poor class of boy in the elementary schools. There is nothing inside or outside the school walls which trains them in character. That is where the Boy Scout movement, and others of its kind, are doing good work; they are trying to inculcate in the lower order of boys some sort of character by the institution of organised games and discipline.[47]

Their efforts at supplementing the education of members were welcomed by many leading politicians and academics who noted that they were having a beneficial effect. The president of the Board of Education, Joseph Albert Pease, commented on the Boy Scouts that, 'I regard the boy scout movement generally as a most useful agency for supplementing and continuing the work of the elementary schools in the formation of character and the cultivation of a spirit of co-operation and good citizenship'.[48] A Board of Education report in 1913 asserted that 'there was evidence that the things the boys did as Boy Scouts were re-acting favourably on their school work. Many schoolmasters had stated that it had made a great difference in the way the boys did their school work'.[49] Sir William Mather, a former Liberal MP, praised the educational function that the Boy Scouts played. *The Times* stated that for Mather, 'education was in fact his life study', and he was involved in many educational institutions. He was a member of the council of Owen's College and Manchester University, as well as chairman of the Frobel Educational Institute, so was in an authoritative position to comment on educational initiatives. Mather wrote that 'boys seem to acquire higher qualities of character and intelligence in two years as Boy Scouts than they do in eight years at school'.[50]

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[46] *Irish Times*, 31 July 1929.
[47] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 10 Feb. 1912
[48] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 53, 28 May 1913, col. 169.
[49] *Report of the consultative committee on practical work in secondary schools* [Cd. 6849] (1913), p. 368.
[50] *The Times*, 20 Sept. 1920; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 8, no. 9, Sept. 1914, p. 275.

The prevailing educational policy was also influenced by the success of youth organisations and Baden-Powell commented in 1914 that 'the movement is having a marked effect upon the ordinary curriculum which obtains in schools'.[51] This was the case in Ireland and Boy Scout troops were attached to at least six educational institutions, including two orphanages, one in Swords, with the other being the Royal Hibernian Military School.[52] Manor School in Fermoy, Co. Cork, which was, according to its headmaster R.F. Russell, a preparatory school 'run on English lines', had a troop since 1912 composed of fifty-four boys. Russell lauded the initiative encouraged in the Boy Scouts and wrote that 'if it could be brought into existence in all preparatory schools, I am convinced the tone of every school would benefit greatly in a few months'. As a result elements of Scouting became integrated into the educational curriculum of some schools, with Russell stating that 'the working up for badges is part of the general education of the boys'. While Scouting was integrated into the school programme he acknowledged that 'the main obstacle to this state of affairs is the question of time-for no existing school institution must suffer'. To overcome this he stated that

> in the majority of preparatory schools there is one afternoon in the week on which boys can, in recreation time, do what they like and which generally means that some are playing punt-about or stump-cricket, and a few are doing nothing definite. Scouting can with advantage be utilised on this day, and surely as an occupation for the long and rather dreary Sunday it will be heartily welcomed by many preparatory schools.

He wrote that 'once introduced Scouting is bound to exercise an enormous influence on the many questions and difficulties connected with preparatory school life'.[53]

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[51] Price, 'Development of the Boy Scout movement', p. 127.

[52] J.H. Britton, *Scouting Memories*, p. 2, SCNI; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 1, Jan. 1916, p. 15; *Irish Times*, 8 Sept. 1910; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 29 Jan. 1916, 29 May 1915, 29 July 1916, 21 Nov. 1914, 30 Oct. 1915.

[53] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 1, Jan. 1916, p. 15; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 29 Jan. 1916.

6.2 Educational Training

Youth movements attempted to provide their members with educational training in the practical skills which would be necessary for ensuring enhanced employment prospects. During the period in which youth movements emerged there was growing recognition of the need to develop a system of technical education. The need for enhanced technical abilities was as a result of the increasing sophistication of the industrial sectors of the economy and the awareness that improved education was necessary for an efficient labour force.[54] In the last quarter of the nineteenth century production became more complex and the manufacturing industry required employees to possess more practical knowledge and Joachim Goldstrom has argued that while 'elementary education met the economic needs of the time...(it) failed to foresee the future needs of the economy'.[55] Despite this need, throughout the United Kingdom practical training and technical education was held in low esteem and were not prioritised in public schools or in Oxford or Cambridge universities.[56] This was replicated in elementary education where a narrow curriculum containing inadequate scientific or technical knowledge did not provide a significant base for technical education.[57] Education was seen as too 'clerkly' and the attitudes encouraged were largely unfavourable to work in industry, both as a result of teachers and the aspirations of parents, and thus there was the 'institutionalisation of values antipathetical to practical training in the educational structure'.[58] In general, curriculums were geared towards white-collar occupations and thus emphasised a classical curriculum and the emphasis on practical education that was needed in developing technical education was generally sneered at: 'the practical component in technical education confirmed its low status character'.[59] Hugh Mcleod has noted that 'there was the feeling that manual work, however skilled or highly

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[54] Musgrave, 'The labour force', p. 49.

[55] Goldstrom, *The social content*, p. 189.

[56] M. Le Guillou, 'Technical education, 1850-1914', in G. Roderick, M. Stephens, eds., *Where did we go wrong? Industrial performance, education and the economy in Victorian Britain* (Sussex, 1981), pp. 182, 176; L. Rose, *The erosion of childhood: child oppression in Britain, 1860-1918* (London, 1991), p. 212. However, there were some exceptions to this emphasis such as Uppingham School under Edward Thring, Newsome, *Godliness*, p. 271.

[57] A. Green, 'Technical education and state formation in nineteenth century England and France', in G. McCulloch, ed., *The RoutledgeFalmer reader in history of education* (London, 1995), pp. 101, 112.

[58] Musgrave, 'The labour force', p. 58; P. Summerfield, E.J. Evans, eds., *Technical education and the state since 1850: historical and contemporary perspectives* (Manchester, 1990), p. 17.

[59] P. Maume, *The long gestation: Irish nationalist life, 1891-1918* (Dublin, 1999), p. 44; T. Garvin, *Nationalist revolutionaries in Ireland, 1858-1928* (Oxford, 1987), p. 43; Summerfield, Evans, *Technical education*, p. 4.

paid, was not really respectable', despite skilled tradesmen claiming comparable income to clerks and teachers.[60]

A similar deficiency was evident in Ireland which was behind other European countries in recognising the contribution it could make. The developing emphasis placed on technical education was at a slower pace due to the dominance of the agricultural economy and the limited scale of heavy industry.[61] There were some initiatives in the area 'but technical education lacked the coherence, sense of purpose and official backing to make an effective contribution to society'.[62] This lack of suitable training for young boys in Ireland had been noted for many years. Charles Dawson, in an address to the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland in 1896, noted that, 'Irish people are behind the rest of the world in industries, and there is a consensus of opinion that the reason is the unindustrial and impractical character of our primary education'.[63] Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, in an address to the Society for the Revival of Irish Literature, noted that having lived in Australia for many years, he was struck by the lack of skills amongst Irish emigrants. He argued that while some of them were 'bright, intelligent young fellows', many of them 'were wholly untrained in any business...they had no *profession* and no *trade*' with these multitudes becoming 'waiters in hotels and cabmen', while the man with a trade 'prospered in a wonderful manner'. He argued that in Ireland, 'we learn little thoroughly and little of a useful or re-productive character, and we commonly pay the penalty in a lower place in the world'.[64] Dr William Kirby Sullivan, president of Queen's College, Cork, in his evidence before the select committee on Irish industries, argued that Irish national schools had directed the population mainly towards literary matters while 'diverting the people's attention altogether from practical subjects', with the result that 'the majority of the young men prefer to be clerks or anything in which they were not called upon to labour'.[65] A similar view was expressed by J.H. Jolly, president of the Cork Trades Council, who argued that 'to judge by the present provision for intermediate and higher education in Ireland, it would seem as if all the youth of

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[60] H. McLeod, *Class and religion in the late Victorian city* (London, 1974), pp. 12-13; J.R. Gillis, *Youth and history: tradition and change in European age relations, 1770-present* (London, 1974), p. 119; J. Springhall, *Coming of age: adolescence in Britain, 1860-1960* (Dublin, 1986), p. 40.

[61] S. Ó'Buachalla, *Education policy in twentieth century Ireland* (Dublin, 1988), p. 33.

[62] Coolahan, *Irish education*, p. 83.

[63] Dawson, 'The want of industrial and practical education', p. 216.

[64] *The revival of Irish Literature: addresses by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, K.C.M.G., Dr. George Sigerson and Dr. Douglas Hyde* (London, 1894), pp. 23; 43.

[65] *Report from the select committee on industries (Ireland), together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix* [288] (1885), p. 2.

the country were destined to be clergymen, physicians, lawyers, or civil servants. Industry has certainly no place in it'.[66]

While the deficiencies in the provision of technical education were noted for some time the basis for improvement was adequate reform of the primary education system. In 1884 the royal commission on technical instruction reported that 'no marked progress in the direction of technical education can be effected in Ireland, until primary education in that country has been placed on a proper footing'.[67] Progress was slow and fourteen years later the situation had improved little. The commission on manual and practical instruction reported in 1898 that many pupils were 'not fit to enter a technical school, even if they had such a school at their doors'.[68] One of the reasons for this neglect was that from 1872 until 1899 the Irish national school system was run on a 'payment by results' basis. In 1870 it was determined that primary education in Ireland was of poor educational quality with poor attendance and low literacy rates. The recommendation of a royal commission was the introduction of a system of payment by results, which was introduced in 1872. This policy determined that school funding was conditional on pupil performance in assessments carried out by education inspectors. As a result attendance rates improved, many more pupils progressed further in the curriculum, and literacy levels were increased.[69] Despite these improvements it led to a narrowing of the curriculum and practical skills were largely neglected. The curriculum has been described as 'too narrow and bookish' and as a result 'industrial concerns took little interest in the national school programme'.[70] According to John Coolahan the system of payment by results 'did not encourage probing for comprehension or grasp of principles'. It 'fostered a narrow focus both in content and method-course content became stereotyped with mechanical rote learning being applied' with the programme being 'divorced from the realities of life and work outside the school'.[71] F.H. Dale, in his report on Irish primary education in 1904, wrote that 'its retention far beyond the time when it had done its work has tended to crush out real intelligence and interest, and to confine the efforts of the Teachers within an unduly narrow channel'.[72] William Starkie wrote in 1902 that the system was

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[66] Dawson, 'The want of industrial and practical education', p. 216.
[67] *Second report of the royal commissioners on technical instruction*, 1 [C.3981] (1884), p.532.
[68] *Commission on manual and practical instruction*, p. 6.
[69] D. Raftery, M. Relihan, 'Faith and nationhood: church, state and the provision of schooling in Ireland, 1870-1930', in Brockliss, Sheldon, *Mass education*, pp. 76-7.
[70] D.H. Akenson, *The Irish education experiment: the national system of education in the nineteenth century* (London, 1970), p. 373; Coolahan, *Irish education*, pp. 7-8; L. Rose, *The erosion of childhood: child oppression in Britain, 1860-1918* (London, 1991), p. 211.
[71] Coolahan, *Irish Education*, pp. 29-30.
[72] *Report of Mr F.H. Dale...on primary education in Ireland*, p. 66.

'essentially vicious' and provided a 'mercenary motive to teachers', and was a system where 'originality and initiative were not encouraged'. The development of practical skills was minimal and 'wood-work and hand-and-eye training were practically unknown'.[73] Irish educational facilities were deemed so poor by the director general of military education that he wrote in 1896 that 'the education imparted in National schools in Ireland differs so widely from that given in Great Britain that it would be inadvisable to send the children of soldiers to them'.[74]

The growing recognition of the need for curricular reform led to the introduction of a new programme in 1900 which aimed to give greater scope to the role that education played in the everyday lives of pupils.[75] While much emphasis was given to the child centred nature of the programme, the introduction of more practical orientated subjects was difficult as curricular reform was dependent on adequate implementation by teachers. Foremost amongst the difficulties was the training teachers received and their attitudes towards practical subjects. Teachers were unhappy due to a lack of consultation in developing the new programme and the poor level of training they received in the new topics.[76] While training courses were run 'few who attended got sufficient grasp of the subject to make them enthusiastic pioneers of it'. Contemporary attitudes also militated against development and Thomas Durcan has argued that woodwork made little advancement as there was 'prejudice against the subject by the national school teachers because of their ignorance of the principles of educational woodwork' and 'many teachers regarded such work with contempt'.[77] John Coolahan has similarly argued that a reason for the slow development of practical subjects was 'the low social status enjoyed by manufacturing, manual or trade work generally'.[78] After only four years of the new programme F.H. Dale reported that instructional methods 'remained in nearly all Schools unchanged in essential respects notwithstanding the recommendations made in the new Programme'.[79] William Starkie reported that many teachers neglected to read the instructions issued to them for implementation of the new programme. He wrote that

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[73] Starkie, *Recent reforms*, pp. 12, 19, 18.
[74] *Sixth report on army schools by the director-general of military education* [C. 8241] (1896), p. 28.
[75] Coolahan, *Irish education*, p. 33.
[76] Ó'Buachalla, *Education Policy*, p. 51.
[77] T.J. Durcan, *History of Irish education from 1800 (with special reference to manual instruction)* (Bala, 1972), pp. 113, 88, 48.
[78] Coolahan, *Irish education*, p. 83.
[79] *Report of Mr F.H. Dale...on primary education in Ireland*, p. 59.

'on the present state of learning in this country the reading of serious literature is worse than penal servitude and it was utopian to expect that our instructions should be read'.[80]

Intermediate education was even more deficient in the provision of practical skills. The 1878 Intermediate Education Act placed intermediate education on a statutory footing and provided funds to secondary schools by establishing a Board of Intermediate Education that distributed funds to schools on the basis of success rates at public examinations. Similar to the rest of the United Kingdom the curricular pattern was firmly in a grammar school tradition with language and literary studies to the fore and 'the intermediate system emphasised a classical education'.[81] Technical education in intermediate schools was hindered by prejudice against practical instruction and by the system of examinations. The system of competitive exams became the dominant element in intermediate school provision with teaching geared towards the examination process. Different subjects attracted different marks in the examinations with English, Latin, and Greek, attracting the highest marks and thus overtime the curriculum narrowed with more monetary incentives being attached to proficiency in these subjects. The range of subjects was predominantly focused towards subjects necessary to enter the professions and it was felt that industrial development was hindered by guiding pupils towards university education and away from industrial employment. T.G. McElligott has argued that the intermediate system fostered a 'rigid programme...more concerned with instruction than with education' as the course work was 'excessively literary' with studies preparing pupils 'for clerkships and similar work of a routine nature while setting before them the learned professions as the highest goal in life'.[82] By focusing on classics, languages, and mathematics, the intermediate certificate became a vehicle for entry into the civil service and universities, opening up well-paid professional occupations to Irish Catholics and these schools 'did little to orient students towards careers in agriculture, industry or commerce'.[83]

This emphasis on the professions reflected a wider social trend where parents encouraged their children to aspire to white collar employment with the hope of accruing security, status, and comfort which was not felt to be found in commerce and industry and 'professional life exercised many attractions, financial as well as cultural'.[84] As Senia Pašeta

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[80] Starkie, *Recent reforms*, p. 19.
[81] Coolahan, *Irish education*, p. 53; Pašeta, *Before the revolution*, p. 30.
[82] McElligott, *Secondary education*, pp. 70-71, 148, 152.
[83] Raftery, Relihan, 'Faith and nationhood', pp. 77-8; Coolahan, *Irish education*, p. 54.
[84] J. Lee, *The modernisation of Irish society, 1848-1918* (Dublin, 1973), p. 17; Maume, *The long gestation*, p. 61.

has noted, 'education signified more than the acquirement of intellectual capital'.[85] This emphasis has been cited as a reason for the low level of interest in industrial education and John Coolahan has concluded that 'there was a strong prejudice against technical education among the general public and many parents were anxious that their children should gain white collar employment and they tended to regards practical and manual work, and the preparation for it, as inferior'. As a result the education system underrated the value of manual occupations, instead emphasising a liberal education as most beneficial to Irish pupils. This was influential in determining the greater estimation of academic subjects and concerns about overcrowding in the professions did not discourage their appeal.[86]

Contemporaries also warned against this emphasis on middle class employment patterns. *The Belfast News-Letter* rallied against 'the thoughtless parents' who,

> give their sons a fair elementary education and forthwith draft them into offices to swell, in most instances, the great army of underpaid clerks; to perform the routine duties for which they are barely fitted, and never to have an ambition to attain anything higher. Failing the finding of a situation, they are allowed to drift about the streets, to cultivate idle and vicious habits, and ultimately form a pest to society.

The newspaper argued that a corrective to this was the 'the march of technical education' which was 'opening out untold possibilities for the younger generation, and they are not wanting in friends who strive to bring home to them the importance of seizing upon their opportunities'.[87] Technical education was also not specifically directed at those unable to secure higher education. Spencer Cavendish, duke of Devonshire, stated that 'it should not be supposed that higher education need to any degree withdraw men from the ranks of manual labour', arguing that, 'a good sound practical education extended far beyond the years of school life, was just as necessary for the man who worked in his shirt sleeves as for the man who worked in a black coat'.[88]

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[85] Pašeta, *Before the revolution*, p. 6; See also H. Hendrick, *Children, childhood and English society, 1880-1990* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 63; Garvin, *Nationalist revolutionaries*, p. 47.
[86] Coolahan, *Irish education*, pp. 92, 84; Pašeta, *Before the revolution*, p. 82.
[87] *Belfast News-Letter*, 20 May 1895. For more on the development of technical education in Ireland see D. McCloy, *Creating Belfast: technical education and the formation of a great industrial city, 1801-1921* (Dublin, 2009); J. Cooke, *A history of the Irish Vocational Education Association, 1902-2002* (Dublin, 2009).
[88] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Oct. 1892.

The educational emphasis in the Boy Scouts was centred on teaching skills and knowledge by activities. They saw this as a means of imparting knowledge in a way that members would relate to and would engage them. Baden-Powell was keen to point out that the Boy Scouts 'was not merely a pastime or a game' and while there were fun activities 'there was a good deal of educational value underlying them'.[89] For him, the organisation was 'the realisation of juvenile romance in every-day life...but the romance is tempered by a hardly-suspected utilitarianism and more than an ounce of idealism'. He stated that 'it may be whispered to parents in confidence-it is not to be broached to the boys themselves-that the scouts gain a great deal of knowledge which would prove unpalatable to them in any other form'. By being members of the Boy Scouts they would learn 'lessons in first aid, tracking, observation, swimming and lifesaving, thrift, and the laws of health and sanitation, all of which are taught by means of boyish games and hobbies'. He argued that for 'many a boy who thinks he is only playing at Buffalo Bill is really learning geology and natural history. He is, moreover, receiving a moral discipline which he would resent if administered through any other agency'.[90] In this approach Baden-Powell was influenced by the educational ideas of Frobel and Montessori and emphasised the need for self-directed learning of boys in order for them to act independently in the world outside school. It was a realisation that children lived for the most part in contrived environments which led to disaffection as children entered adolescence which was demonstrated by their desire for exploratory adventure. The Boy Scouts provided an outlet for these desires within an adult supervised structure which appreciated the perspective of boys themselves.[91]

In the Boy Scouts there was an emphasis on providing educational training that would ensure enhanced employment prospects in the future and could supplement the education of boys after they left formal education. Baden-Powell argued that the organisation 'could give a foundation in character on which a man might build his career; it could fill up the blanks left in a boy's education when he had ceased going to school'.[92] This aim was given a practical expression in Ireland and Boy Scouts were encouraged to attend evening schools and to read widely to develop their education and the Dublin Boy Scouts had an employment bureau to match members with local employers.[93]

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[89] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 2, Feb. 1911, p. 6
[90] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910, 20 Aug. 1912.
[91] Dedman, 'Baden-Powell, militarism, and the 'invisible contributors', pp. 210-13.
[92] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 2, Feb. 1911, p. 7.
[93] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Dec. 1910, 6 June 1914.

Scouting was encouraged as ensuring boys would become disciplined and trustworthy constructive citizens. Upon hearing of boys before the juvenile courts the organisation declared that 'if Scouting had gotten into the system of these other lads who did go up before the court at all in that case, for they would have kept the law'. They informed members that they must get hold of boys who were not Scouts, and the membership was encouraged to bring in new recruits and were told that 'we can't keep Scouting to ourselves...it is too big and too good'.[94] Employment prospects were seen as essential in stemming criminal offences amongst adolescents and the *Leitrim Observer* argued that 'lack of occupation is the greatest cause of child criminality'.[95] This fear of idleness was also in evidence when Baden-Powell wrote that in Ireland,

> the sole aim is to turn the boys into capable, healthy men of character, who will be capable of seizing their opportunities and of making happy and successful careers for themselves, and who, instead of becoming loafers and drifting off to people other lands, will be making Ireland a rich and prosperous country.

The Boy Scouts aimed to open up opportunities for members and saw themselves as contributing to the economic improvement of Ireland. Baden-Powell noted the economic progress of Ireland at the time and wrote that 'Belfast of course has always had its shipbuilding, and linen, and other industries, but factories are now appearing in the centre and south, and agriculture is looking up in all parts of the country with the establishment of creameries and improved farming'.[96] He hoped that if members qualified for an occupation it would 'convert many parents who at present see danger of catching cold in the bare knees, or who prefer that their boys should be earning a few coppers a week instead of equipping themselves for the battle of life in which they will have to struggle in a few years'.[97]

The organisation sought to ensure enhanced employment prospects for the majority of its members so it was not solely intellectual pursuits that were encouraged. This emphasis on manual skills is in stark contrast to the state educational structure where, as has been noted, practical skills were undervalued. Cecil W. Price commented that 'the boy who has received

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[94] *Boys' Life: The Boy Scouts' Magazine*, Oct. 1919, p. 27.
[95] *Leitrim Observer*, 5 Aug. 1916.
[96] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, pp. 3-4.
[97] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 1912, p. 3.

a scout training can claim to have graduated in the university of practical life'.[98] Colonel de Burgh noted that in the Boy Scouts they hoped to teach members 'the rudiments of useful trades and to bring them into contact with people who would be helpful to them in after life', and 'he was glad to have an opportunity of trying to get their boys to utilise the opportunities placed within their reach by technical schools'.[99] The development of manual skills was encouraged in Irish troops and in 1910 the commanding officer of 'A' Division of the Dublin Boy Scouts, Bernard C. Cunningham, who was employed as a clerk in the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, offered a prize of ten shillings to the Scout of the division who produced 'the best article manufactured by himself unaided'.[100] In 1914 the Dublin Boy Scouts noted that the activities Sea Scouts engaged in 'fits them for general handy-man jobs, not only on boats, but at home'.[101]

It was noted that 'in several business houses Boy Scouts only are employed, and in very many, preference is given the Boy Scouts in the selection of employees'.[102] In 1917 Baden-Powell wrote that

> it is known that the demand from employers of labour for first-class youngsters in the Scouts is always so great that we have no difficulty in finding suitable employment for boys. We place a boy according to the qualifications we know him to possess. In fact, we do all we can to find him the job for which he is best fitted.[103]

Addressing a conference of employers he commented that a corps of Boy Scouts could be started in connection with every big factory works, arguing that it would benefit employers 'to encourage parents to induce their sons to become Scouts by giving preference to those who had been trained' in the organisation. This would benefit industry because, 'boys who have spent their leisure hours in the open air, and whose physical development has consequently been promoted, are likely to be more healthy than those who have lounged about town pavements'.[104]

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[98] Price, 'Development of the Boy Scout movement', p. 123.
[99] *Irish Times*, 20 Aug. 1912; *Kildare Observer*, 21 Sept. 1912.
[100] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 July 1910.
[101] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 25 Apr. 1914.
[102] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 1912, p. 3.
[103] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 25 Jan. 1917
[104] Price, 'Development of the Boy Scout movement', pp. 127-8.

This was more than rhetoric and was given a practical expression in Ireland. F.J. Romanes, former Boy Scouts chief commissioner for south east London and then scoutmaster of the 1st Dublin Troop, addressed the Dublin Rotary Club on the importance of business leaders and employers co-operating in the Boy Scout movement. He stated that the organisation was not 'a mere plaything or a recreation after a day's work', but a place where values and skills of enterprise and business were developed, noting that 'the scout movement trained leaders…the whole essence of their training was to train men to be leaders in business'.[105] Irish troops engaged with local employers and it is evident that local industries saw some benefit in the organisation. In 1918 a troop of the Dublin Boy Scouts was established in connection with a manufacturing firm in the city and in Belfast the 33rd and 34th troops, both formed in 1918, were attached to Workman, Clark, and Company, prominent city shipbuilders.[106]

Michael Rosenthal has argued that while they attempted to develop work habits they did not encourage 'any unhealthy desires for self-betterment to fester'.[107] However, Baden-Powell was keen to enable members to gain employment and lamented that many boys left school and drifted into casual labour 'simply because they have never had a chance of acquiring the elements of a skilled trade'. He was anxious to extend the development of handicrafts among the Scouts, commenting that 'of all that has been accomplished by the Scout movement for the good of the nation nothing can excel in usefulness the development by which a boy is encouraged to take up hobbies and handicrafts which may be useful in gaining for him a livelihood'. For him, 'the value of this training can hardly be accounted too highly when one remembers the large army of casual labourers which go to make up the ranks of the unemployed-workaday misfits, who, mayhap, have never had the chance of acquiring the elements of any trade'. As a result of membership, a Boy Scout was 'never likely to become one of the submerged tenth, because his training enables him to find a useful place in the work of the world'. [108] While it could be argued that a class dimension permeated Baden-Powell and the Boy Scouts thinking and that they advocated training in practical skills solely to working class boys, this is undermined by reference to the occupational spread of members which reveal that on the basis of a sample of 567 members in Dublin, 45% were from middle class homes.[109]

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[105] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 July 1917, 11 Aug. 1917, *Irish Times*, 2 Oct. 1917.
[106] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Jan. 1918; Troop registration forms, SCNI.
[107] Rosenthal, *The character factory*, p. 8.
[108] Price, 'Development of the Boy Scout movement', pp. 124, 127.
[109] See Table 10.

The Boy Scouts were aware of the reality of emigration and had in place a Scout commissioner for emigration who ensured that the transition was as comfortable as possible. The Scout emigrants who went to Australia and New Zealand were sent out with government assisted passages which included the guarantee of a situation on arrival. In this way the Scouts played an important role, aiding in the adjustment to a new living surroundings. Cecil W. Price noted that 'when the lads disembark in Australia they have two supports to back them-the Government guarantee of employment and the Scout machinery'.[110] If boys were travelling to India, W.P. Pakenham-Walsh, assistant commissioner for India, wrote that he would meet any Scout from Dublin and may 'be able to help them'.[111] Baden-Powell argued that 'if it is going to do the boys good and to open up to them a better and more prosperous career than they could get in our overcrowded old country, it is surely right to give them the chance'.[112]

The Catholic Boys' Brigade were also concerned with employment prospects and ran an employment agency, securing positions for a number of boys, and commented that 'they hoped large employers would give the Brigade an opportunity for recommending its members for vacancies'.[113] They highlighted the employment opportunities provided by members 'to those who insist on solid, material, palpable advantages in an institution of this kind'.[114] The Brigade work 'confers inestimable advantages on the community by giving to these young boys a disciplined training, and equipping them to render efficient and honest work to their employers when they enter into service'.[115] In the Brigade one of the questions that the leadership sought to address was what members would do after they left the organisation. They believed that the teaching delivered would equip them in their future careers both in Ireland and abroad. Rev. Keane wrote that the Brigade was a necessary organisation, stating that 'the possibilities of emigration were considerably diminished, and he trusted that not a single boy would be tempted to emigrate'. However, he was aware that emigration was for some not a personal choice but an economic necessity. For him the teaching delivered would safeguard their morals by inculcating religious teaching prior to emigration. Of particular

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[110] Price, 'Development of the Boy Scout movement', p. 133.

[111] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 Apr. 1913; As for the Boys' Brigade, the Dublin Battalion told members that if they were emigrating to Canada it would be organised for them to meet a member of the Canadian Boys' Brigade who would provide them with advice on finding employment, *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Mar. 1913.

[112] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 1912, p. 3. See also, A. Warren, 'Citizens of the empire: Baden-Powell, Scouts and Guides, and an imperial ideal, 1900-40', in J.M. Mackenzie, ed., *Imperialism and popular culture* (Manchester, 1986), p. 246

[113] *Irish Independent*, 1 June 1908; *Irish Times*, 5 Dec. 1898.

[114] *Freeman's Journal*, 1 Dec. 1898.

[115] *Irish Independent*, 8 June 1909.

concern was the education bill of 1906 which sought to address the non-conformist grievances arising from the Education Act of 1902 and would have ended state support of religious schools. It was argued that if the proposed education scheme which was then before parliament was passed 'it was perfectly certain that in generations not far distant there would be a great diminution of Christian teaching in the population of English towns, and it would amongst these populations that boys who emigrated would have to mix'. Therefore, 'there was a great need that they should be provided with these strengthening and invigorating influences which the Boys' Brigade brought to bear on them'.[116] Expressing similar fears Sir Joseph Glynn, chairman of Galway county council, commented that 'in the large cities of England religion was a thing of the past. They had now among the working classes practically a free-thinking people'.[117]

J.J. Darragh, secretary of the Catholic Boys' Brigade, outlined at a meeting of the organisation how members at work had benefited from attendance at a night school.[118] The Brigade believed this school offered an excellent opportunity to boys whose education had been neglected or to those who were anxious to improve themselves. The course of instruction included reading, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping, as well as the study of the Irish language and Irish history. All necessaries were provided free and no fees were charged. The membership of this night school was limited to active members of the Brigade who were working boys and they insisted that other members attend their respective parochial or other day schools.[119] However, night schools, by their nature, only provided limited benefits to participants. It was commented that 'the evening school, with its eight or less hours a week attendance for six months of the year, has too slight a hold on youths…spending ten or more hours a day all the year round in an industrial environment'.[120]

Instruction in practical subjects was also of importance in the Boys' Brigade and ambulance classes were held in the Dublin battalion from 1893.[121] Those who completed an ambulance course received a certificate from St John's Ambulance Brigade.[122] The Dublin battalion encouraged a knowledge of first aid as, 'in the football field, in the school, in business, and in the streets of our city, accidents are constantly occurring, and all this

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[116] *Irish Times*, 28 May 1906; *Irish Independent*, 28 May 1906. The bill did not pass the House of Lords.
[117] *Irish Independent*, 22 Nov. 1911.
[118] *Irish Times*, 1 June 1906; *Freeman's Journal*, 20 Dec. 1909.
[119] *Freeman's Journal*, 11 Jan. 1909;1 June 1908; 3 Oct. 1910.
[120] 'The nation's youth', p.120.
[121] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 23 Jan. 1893, BBAD, Box 9.
[122] *Dublin Evening Mail,* 3 Oct. 1903.

suffering and pain would be greatly mitigated if our boys were competent to attend to them'.[123] The training was given a practical encouragement by reports that many members had administered assistance to members of the public, tending to everything from applying an improvised tourniquet to securing temporary splints to a fractured leg, 'and many instances have come to light which prove that the instruction given has been of a most practical kind'.[124] It was argued that ambulance classes could 'possibly prevent further injury being done by people who, though meaning well, have not the knowledge of how to treat an injury properly'.[125] At an inter-company camp at Delgany, Co. Wicklow in 1909, the instruction was given a practical outlet when a cook was burnt and detained in hospital for six weeks but 'owes his life, humanely speaking, to the prompt action of L.-Corpl. Liddy, 15th Dublin Company'.[126]

The Brigade sought to encourage members to gain useful skills and trades with as much stress being laid on skilled manual jobs as there were on clerical positions. *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* appreciated that not all boys were suited to office work and encouraged officers to 'take some trouble to find some suitable works in which the lad might learn a *trade* instead of becoming a fourth-rate clerk'.[127] George Shannon 'favoured the giving of bursaries to enable boys to be apprenticed to a trade, and thought apprentices should be allowed off during the day to attend necessary classes'.[128] Such bursaries existed in the Belfast battalion and in 1910 they offered bursaries worth five pounds to boys who had served for three years in the battalion. The money was secured from an anonymous donor who suggested that they should be given to orphans or boys whose father earned less than twenty-five shillings per week with the bursary 'primarily intended to help towards the Boys' education'. These were seen by the battalion as an example of 'practical Christianity'.[129]

With the development of technical education in the early twentieth century the Boys' Brigade argued that their work suffered. In 1903 the Dublin battalion reported a decrease in membership which they reasoned was 'partly accounted for by the fact that an increasing number of our boys are now attending technical schools, and, therefore, cannot attend the

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[123] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Oct. 1906.
[124] *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1888), p. 1410; Drummond, 'The Boys' Brigade', pp. 98-9; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 3, 1896, p.44.
[125] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Nov. 1907.
[126] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 19, BBAD, Box 11.
[127] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 8, no. 7, Mar. 1900, p. 99.
[128] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 22, no. 3, Nov. 1913, p. 38.
[129] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 18 Aug. 1910, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/1; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 28 Feb. 1912.

drills'.[130] In 1905 the 14th Dublin company lost members 'owing to their going to night schools'.[131] In 1906 the 11th Dublin company reported that the number of boys who had not re-joined for that session was 'accounted for by night school attendances'.[132] Despite this, Dublin battalion President Gilbert Mahaffy wrote that one of his concerns was to ensure the Brigade was 'not interfering with their prospects in life by taking up time that should in some cases be spent in gaining such knowledge as our technical schools provide'.[133]

Boys were encouraged to develop manual skills and told, 'whilst you are a boy learn to work with your hands-that will make your brain strong'. The Dublin battalion advised boys to learn a trade instead of becoming errand boys and messengers as 'many grown men are out of work who earned high wages when they were boys; but it was at work which lead to nothing'.[134] This emphasis on skilled trades reflects wider fears surrounding the perceived problem of boy labour which was seen as a chief factor in subsequently leading to adult unemployment.[135] The limited career prospects for boy messengers after they were discharged were attested to by the Post Office in both Belfast and Dublin. In Belfast, the 'majority drift into unskilled labour', while in Dublin in 1909, of the boys who had left employment in the previous twelve months, 60 per cent were unemployed, 25 per cent were in casual employment, while only 15 per cent obtained permanent employment.[136]

However, in some cases the emphasis on skilled trades vied with the wishes of parents. While qualifying in a trade would ensure enhanced employment prospects the time that it took to qualify meant that many parents were not willing to sanction a period of training. If children were in education households would be deprived of money as the income derived from a working child was seen as a necessary adjunct to family income.[137] A royal

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[130] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Jan. 1903.
[131] *Dublin Evening Mail,* 21 Oct. 1905.
[132] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Nov. 1906.
[133] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 31 Jan. 1903. This reflects the argument of Alan Gilbert that religious institutions fulfilled various needs of their adherents until they were provided by other means, A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and society in industrial England: church, chapel, and social change, 1740-1914* (London, 1976), p. 69.
[134] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Mar. 1911.
[135] Although John Springhall has argued that it 'was as much a result of the obsession of adults with the image of an undisciplined, free spending, potentially delinquent adolescence, as it was of their concern for finding solutions to adult employment'. Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 105.
[136] *Appendix to the royal commission on the poor laws and relief of distress, report by Mr Cyril Jackson on boy labour together with a memorandum from the General Post Office on the conditions of employment of telegraph messengers*, 20 [Cd. 4632] (1909), p. 81.
[137] See Musgrave, 'The labour force', p. 55; Le Guillou, 'Technical education', p. 175; McElligott, *Secondary education*, p. 149; Wright, 'Citizenship', p. 25; Gillis, *Youth*, p. 122; H. Hendrick, *Children, childhood and English society, 1880-1990* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 20; J. Walvin, *A child's world: a social history of English childhood, 1800-1914* (Harmondsworth, 1982), pp. 61, 195.

commission reported that 'at present much is done by the individual officers of the Boys' Brigade to induce their lads to qualify for trades, but much opposition is raised to this by parents who desire large wages immediately, without regard to the boys' future'. Colonel J. Smith Park, a ship owner, noted that upon leaving school, 'there is an undoubted tendency with all boys of the working class to take the biggest price they can get at first'. He regretted that 'neither they nor their parents, speaking generally, seem to realise the benefit of sacrificing a little in their earlier years for the benefit of the better pay arising from knowing a trade'. He noted the difficulty of holding boys who had taken up an apprenticeship. He recalled a sixteen year old Irish boy who had been offered a position in Glasgow as an apprentice joiner who within a month of taking up his apprenticeship left 'because he found he could earn so much more as a labourer' and could not be convinced 'to give up the temptation of the extra pay'.[138]

The Boys' Brigade provided the networks that could in time lead to a job for a dedicated and disciplined young man as it would be beneficial to receive the recommendation that came from membership. Lord Roberts stated that 'in some centres a practical scheme has been started by which an 'Employment Register Committee' undertakes to assist boys in obtaining situations'.[139] Such a scheme existed in the Boys' Brigade in Carlow and Dublin.[140] They acted as a medium between boys and employers and this ensured that employers would be supplied with boys whose character and suitability for employment had been attested to by the Brigade leadership as 'only boys who can be recommended by their respective Company Officers are placed on the Register'. The Dublin battalion stated that those they were looking for were 'junior clerks, apprentices, or assistants'.[141] The employment agency informed employers that they should contact the Brigade if they required 'well-trained boys, accustomed to prompt obedience to commands, smart in appearance, and eager to work'.[142] In 1912 the battalion reported that 'a suitable opening was found for almost every boy who applied' but 'regretted that this Agency is not better supported by the various companies'. The battalion appealed to officers to be more supportive of the employment agency stating that better results could be obtained 'if Officers would more readily lend their assistance'.[143]

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[138] *Royal commission on the poor laws and relief of distress, minutes of evidence (140th to 148th days, 150th to 156th days, and 158th day) with appendix*, 9 [Cd. 5068] (1910), pp. 359, 30.
[139] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1896.
[140] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557; Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 17 Sept. 1897, BBAD, Box 9; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 1, Sept. 1896, p. 10.
[141] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, BBAD, Box 11.
[142] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Dec. 1911.
[143] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 21, BBAD, Box 11.

Herbert Reid, at a Boys' Brigade inspection, expressed a hope that when local employers had a position to fill they would apply to the nearest company while an anonymous correspondent to the *Irish Times*, identified only as 'An Old Boy', believed that 'it will be found that employers will give preference to boys who have had the great advantage of this training'.[144] Lord Roberts told boys in Belfast that

> when you attain man's estate, and are called upon to earn your own livelihood, you will realise how much cause you have to be thankful to the captains of your companies for teaching you to think and act for yourselves, and thus become useful members of society.

He argued that Boys' Brigade members 'are preferred for situations, as they are better fitted for positions of trust than boys who have not had the same good training'.[145] As John Springhall has written in the context of the Boys' Brigade in Glasgow: 'discipline, punctuality and a strict obedience…were, after all, as desirable to the...dock employer or manufacturer as to the Boys' Brigade drill sergeant'.[146]

The Dublin battalion not only provided a mechanism for providing members with employment but engaged with city employers in order to understand the skill set that they required. In 1902 the battalion ran a business letter writing competition where boys would be judged on their writing style, spelling, punctuation, and neatness, with the winner receiving ten shillings. The judging panel was composed of members of city firms and consisted of William Millar, managing director of A. Millar and Co. Ltd., J.F. Keatinge of Messrs J.F. Keatinge and Sons, and S.G. Robinson from Standard Life Assurance Company. One of the judges commented that in the senior division competition the spelling was forty-four per cent accurate which he believed was 'as high as it would be amongst an average lot of adults'. Another judge commented that 'good handwriting, correct spelling…will always help a young fellow forward in business, and unfortunately too little attention is now devoted in schools to such simple subjects'.[147] In 1904 the employment agency ran a competition where boys wrote a letter of employment from a selected newspaper advertisement and had to complete two mathematical problems. In the letter, spelling and punctuation were taken into

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[144] *Irish Times*, 9 Sept. 1895, 30 May 1892.
[145] *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 May 1898
[146] Springhall, *Youth*, p. 26.
[147] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Oct. 1902, 27 Dec. 1902.

account while for the arithmetic accuracy and neatness was necessary for high marks.[148] In 1908 they organised practice interviews for members of the Brigade to be held with 'one of the merchant princes of the city'. They argued that many boys did not get positions through nervousness and the holding of these interviews could be a corrective to the 'awkwardness, bashfulness, or kindred failings, and enable a boy to give himself a fair chance when he in future presented himself as a candidate for a situation'.[149] This function was appreciated by the civil authorities and in 1912 the Labour Exchange wrote that they would be willing to co-opt members of the Boys' Brigade onto their juvenile advisory committee and Thomas Kerford was selected. In 1915 they suggested greater co-operation between youth movements and the juvenile department of the Labour Exchange.[150]

Youth movements were significant groups in attempting to develop attributes and skills amongst Irish adolescents to enable them to attain and retain employment. The perceived deficiencies in the promotion of discipline in the school system may have been one of the reasons for their encouragement in youth movements and was an alternative means of developing these attributes. By supplementing the work of the education system in the development of discipline voluntary youth movements emerge as a significant force in attempting to enhance the education received by Irish adolescents. Their activities led to greater appreciation of their value amongst the educational establishment with reports that membership was producing a beneficial effect in the school work of members and elements of their programmes being integrated into some schools.

Similarly, deficiencies in the provision of technical education in Ireland were augmented by youth movements as they taught manual skills to members. The role that youth movements adopted in not only teaching skills but engaging with industry was a significant attempt to cater for adolescent employment needs. These voluntary agencies appreciated the need for labour exchanges to provide opportunities for individuals to secure employment. The approach of the state for much of the period was hamstrung by their ideological reluctance to interfere in the labour market due to their commitment to laissez-faire economic principles. This was not an issue for youth movements as private organisations and they were much more proactive in engaging with industry. They were in advance of the state in appreciating the benefits of such an approach and this was an innovative element in their programmes. Their teaching of the fundamentals of trades could be beneficial to potential

[148] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Dec. 1904.
[149] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Mar. 1908.
[150] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 19 Feb. 1912, 13 Dec. 1915, BBAD, Box 9.

future workers and their role in developing skills and moral attitudes applicable to an economic environment was appreciated by industry as evidenced by the attachment of Boy Scout troops to manufacturing firms in both Dublin and Belfast.

The skills accrued by membership were also attractive to many parents and some boys, an attractiveness accentuated by concerns surrounding the lack of emphasis on these skills in schools. The appeal centred on providing adolescent boys with abilities that had a practical application in their future lives. It also no doubt proved an attraction to members more orientated towards practical rather than academic learning. This economic aspect is reinforced by how the Boys' Brigade was utilised as a means of learning practical skills and the concerns expressed by the Boys' Brigade that the development of technical education had an adverse effect on battalion numbers.

While youth movements were active in attempting to provide skills to secure enhanced employment prospects this aspect also had other motivations and was not exclusively an undertaking centred on social improvement of individuals. The broader social consequences of unemployment and the anxiety provoked by idleness were motivating factors. The effect of low-skilled employment by adolescents that provided little opportunity for advancement and generally terminated within a short number of years was noted and concerns surrounding the problem of boy labour found an outlet in Ireland. The anxiety caused by large numbers of idle adolescents in urban environments raised consequent fears of delinquency and criminality and what youth movements provided was a structured environment under adult supervision which aimed to place boys on what was considered an appropriate path to adulthood.

There was a definite paternalistic tone underlying much of the commentary, orientating members towards a path largely defined by middle class leaders which was derisive towards working class adolescent occupational patterns. This paternalism was not necessarily a hindrance to members and there was certainly a benevolent motivation evident in much of their activities. This emphasis was underpinned by a pragmatic understanding that not all members could aspire to middle class white collar occupations, and indeed that not all were inclined to such employment, and it was an attempt to promote alternative manual occupations which did not necessarily entail less wages but did entail lower social status.

However, it would be wrong to gauge the success of these endeavours solely on the basis of what the organisations themselves suggested were successes. Despite the rhetoric of youth movements concerning the educational and employment benefits accrued from membership it is clear that their priorities were sometimes at odds with the aspirations of

some boys and their parents. The emphasis that youth movements placed on skilled occupations as providing more secure employment was at variance with those who saw the short-terms benefits of increased wages as out-weighing the long term investment in training. The desire of youth movements to encourage members towards manual occupations was also met with disinterest and Senia Pašeta has noted that despite encouragement, 'Irish students did not take to technical instruction'.[151] While youth movements argued that technical skills and moral values were deficient in the state sector, and attempted to supplement such deficiency, there is limited evidence that their efforts were any more successful, or that youth movement leaders were any better equipped than teachers to develop these skills. Youth movement leaders were undertaking their roles voluntarily so it can be argued that their enthusiasm was more self-evident than that of the professional educator and their activities were underpinned and supported by an ideological outlook that prided itself on providing child centred activities. This is not intended to suggest that there were no enthusiastic paid teachers but rather to highlight that voluntary leaders had more freedom within which they could develop their programmes as they had a large amount of autonomy within their companies and troops in contrast to teachers who were restricted by the priorities of school managers, education inspectors, and the limitations imposed by the exam systems.

Youth movements were also restricted by the amount of time they had with members. While drills and troop outings, as well as the myriad ancillary activities, took up a portion of the leisure time of members this could not hope to compete with the daily structured environment of the school system which rendered the adequate reinforcement of values and skills difficult. Commenting on the success of youth movements in imbuing values amongst members is rendered difficult by a lack of empirical data that would verify such claims and even if such data was extant it would be arguable to what extent these could be directly attributable to membership of a youth movement. While numerous educational commentators lauded the efforts of youth movements to provide moral and practical education the prevalence of such values amongst members will always remain, to a certain extent, matters of conjecture. Importantly, this chapter has also demonstrated that the concerns surrounding the lack of facilities for these skills and values were equally shared by organisations composed of both Catholic and Protestant members. This highlights the commonalties amongst youth movements in Ireland and to investigate this further it is necessary to examine the relationship that existed between a number of these organisations.

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[151] Pašeta, *Before the revolution*, p. 122.

7 Relations between Irish Youth Movements

7.1 Relationship between Boys' Brigade and Boy Scouts

The relationship that existed between the Boy Scouts and the Boys' Brigade bears closer scrutiny. Baden-Powell had been an honorary vice-president of the Boys' Brigade since 1902 and had been encouraged by William Smith to write *Scouting for Boys* with one of the earliest expositions of Scout methods published in the Brigade magazine in June 1906. At the first event held by the Boy Scouts in Brownsea Island half the participants were Brigade members.[1] Foreshadowing the ideas that he was to espouse in the Boy Scouts he commented in 1905 that the Boys' Brigade 'was self-supporting, which was a good thing. Owing to its virility and strength it did not need to go about begging from other people-it helped itself'.[2] Baden-Powell later wrote that one of his motivations in writing *Scouting for Boys* was that it 'would prove of interest and assistance to organisations, such as the Boys' Brigade, which were doing good work amongst the boys of our country'.[3]

For some they were complementary organisations which had nothing to fear from each other. Lord Lieutenant Aberdeen, at a Boys' Brigade demonstration in 1912, spoke about the Boy Scouts, and because it was a rival organisation, 'was the very reason he referred to it, because good, healthy rivalry was a good thing so long as it kept away from anything like jealously'.[4] Archbishop Peacocke believed that the Boys' Brigade could work in co-operation with the Boy Scouts in the pursuit of its objects. For him, the difference between the organisations was that 'the Boys' Brigade was largely confined for its exercises to the drill room and to the gymnasium, while the Scouts went all over the country at times and got plenty of exercise'. This distinction was appreciated by the Dublin battalion who in 1913 noted that as so much of the Boys' Brigade work was indoors, 'every opportunity for an expedition into the country should be taken advantage of'.[5]

Despite the willingness of the Boys' Brigade to co-operate with the Boy Scouts there was a fear that they would have an adverse effect on their membership and the support that they received from the general public. Sir Arthur Paget, an honorary vice-president of the Dublin battalion, then general officer commanding the forces in Ireland, inspected the Boys'

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[1] Baden-Powell to Henrietta Grace Baden Powell, 20 Mar. 1884, Boy Scouts of America, cited in Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, p. 261; Springhall, et al., *Sure and Stedfast*, p. 101.
[2] *Irish Times*, 23 Feb. 1905; *Irish Independent*, 23 Feb. 1905.
[3] *Irish Times*, 31 July 1929.
[4] *Weekly Irish Times*, 17 Feb. 1912.
[5] *Irish Times*, 17 Feb. 1911; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Apr. 1913.

Brigade at their annual inspection in 1912 which was held at the Irish Rugby Union football grounds at Lansdowne road. This was a new departure for the Boys' Brigade and it was commented that 'one missed the picturesque surroundings of St Anne's and Clonskeagh Castle, where the inspections used heretofore be held'. Despite this nostalgia there may have been an added motivation for the Boys' Brigade to carry out their parade and inspection at Lansdowne road. They were obviously keen to gain support and with the growing strength of the Boy Scouts may have felt compelled to choose a more convenient location capable of attracting and containing a larger crowd. The ambition was to make the Boys' Brigade inspection a more attractive spectacle and a more easily accessible excursion for the people of the city. It was noted that the new location had 'the dual advantage of convenience to the city and excellent accommodation at the grounds. There was consequently a larger attendance than usual of visitors'.[6]

R.L. West, a civil servant with the Irish land commission and an officer in the 5th Dublin company, presented a paper in 1913 on 'the importance of the battalion demonstration and inspection'. He suggested that 'one of the means by which the standard of the displays might be raised would be to have one night for the demonstration instead of two, and allow only those companies who had been selected by competition to contribute to the programme'.[7] It may have been that the battalion wished to present the most attractive and well organised companies at the demonstrations in order to impress upon those attending the high level of ability amongst the membership in order to encourage greater support. Henry McLaughlin, an honorary vice-president of the Dublin battalion, wrote in 1915 that he wished more people could see the good work done by the Brigade at its annual demonstration. These were held indoors or on private grounds, 'where admission has to be paid', and thus 'it is really those who are already interested in the work who attend'. He recommended that it be held in the Phoenix Park so that 'all classes of Citizens would be drawn'.[8] This had been a concern to the Brigade for many years and in 1908 the battalion executive discussed 'the necessity for introducing something new into the demonstration programme, in order to attract the public'.[9] However, cost was always a consideration in in the choice of venues. In 1908 Charles Helmsley Gick, honorary treasurer of the Dublin battalion, wrote to J.H.

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[6] *Irish Times*, 13 May 1912.
[7] *Irish Times*, 20 Nov. 1913; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 29 Nov. 1913.
[8] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 8 Mar. 1915, BBAD, Box 10.
[9] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 30 Oct. 1908, BBAD, Box 9.

Hadden, honorary battalion secretary, that the annual athletic sports day (held at Balls Bridge) should be re-located as the venue 'is far too expensive'.[10]

The Boys' Brigade was keen to emphasise their fundamental aims and highlighted the differences in their programme from that of the Boy Scouts. At a demonstration of the Dublin battalion in 1910, which was attended by Boy Scouts for the first time, the bishop of Clogher, Maurice Day, argued that Boy Scouts were 'essentially an organisation for entirely secular purposes'.[11] The archbishop of Dublin emphasised that the Boys' Brigade was a religious organisation and stressed the need for the members to attend their bible classes as 'nothing would tend more to keep them steady in life than knowing their bible and what God taught in it'.[12] The battalion appreciated that the religious aim of the Brigade ensured they were not in competition with rival organisations. The secretary of the Boys' Brigade wrote that, 'I deprecate an attitude of hostility either to Cadets or Scouts', noting that the religious aspect was the fundamental aim of the Brigade 'and in this we do not need to fear any competition from Cadets or Scouts'.[13]

The Boy Scouts equally indicated the distinctions between the different organisations and the Boys' Brigade's emphasis on military drill was one such point. Lord Shaftsbury, then Scout commissioner for Ireland, recalled how Baden-Powell had emphasised that in the Boy Scouts 'they carefully avoided military work as much as possible'.[14] Colonel De Burgh stated that 'a little drilling is necessary in order to make any body of people capable of orderly and safe movement in the street or in confined spaces; but military drill tends to produce machines instead of cultivating character and individuality, and so is contrary to the spirit of scouting'.[15] A Dublin priest commented that in working out a programme for boys, 'the great difficulty is to attain discipline while avoiding monotony', and while drill taught discipline and self-control, 'it is mostly dull with very little else'. He noted that variety was necessary in the programme and it was the 'varied programme together with its common-sense recognition of all that appeals to a boy's love of adventure and the open-air life' that made the Boy Scout movement a success.[16]

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[10] Charles Helmsley Gick to J.H. Hadden, 30 March 1908, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10.
[11] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 8, Apr. 1910, p. 124.
[12] *Irish Times*, 17 Feb. 1911.
[13] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 9 Dec. 1918, BBAD, Box 9.
[14] *Irish Times*, 15 Mar. 1910.
[15] *Irish Times*, 20 Aug. 1912.
[16] *Irish Volunteer*, 7 Feb. 1914.

The Boy Scouts attempted to draw lines of demarcation between themselves and the Boys' Brigade and highlighted that they were offering a credible alternative to the work carried out by other youth movements, emphasising that they developed the individual characters of members. Baden-Powell had maintained a distrust of military drill, commenting that it gave 'a feeble unimaginative officer a something with which to occupy his boys'.[17] He wrote that the tendency of military training was 'to repress individuality instead of bringing it out' and produced 'merely drilled machines'.[18] This was an advantage for prospective members as many boys would not have been amenable to the development of discipline through religious instruction and military drill. For them, the emphasis on individualism would have proved an attractive feature and that church activities were not compulsory invited a greater level of mass support.[19] Sam Pryke has argued that part of their popularity 'lay in their distance, both perceived and actual, from youth organizations which modelled themselves on military lines'.[20] This rejection of drill had official support in so far as it was recommend by a royal commission that drill tended towards monotony and was not conducive to maintaining the attention of the young. While it was admirable in theory and 'nearly perfect in its adaptation of certain exercises to attain certain results', it was defective 'as it is exhausting, and tends to 'staleness' if thoroughly carried out, and its lack of interest and variety renders it unsuitable as a system to be pursued throughout nine years of school life'.[21]

Despite efforts at drawing distinctions between the methods adopted Baden-Powell was emphatic in his condemnation of the Boy Scouts recruiting members from other youth organisations. He wrote that, 'I strongly deprecate taking recruits for the Boy Scouts from other organisations, unless it is with the special consent and approval of the officer from whom the boy is taken'. He sought to work in collaboration with similar groups, and in order to maintain co-operative relations, was keen to stress that the Boy Scouts were not in competition with them. He wrote that, 'we do not want boys who are already under good influence, our object being to get those who have been missed out by other organisations, or who from the first prefer to come to us. We must work in co-operation and not in any way in opposition or in rivalry to others'.[22] He felt that they were all engaging in common work,

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[17] Baden-Powell, *Scouting for boys* (London, 1909), p. 301, cited in Springhall, *Youth*, p. 54.
[18] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 6, June 1915, p. 144, vol. 12, no. 7, July 1918, p. 129.
[19] Springhall, et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 247; 102.
[20] Pryke, 'The popularity of nationalism', p. 320.
[21] *Report of the royal commission on physical training (Scotland)*, 1, p. 31; 'The teaching of hygiene in schools, no. XV. Physical Exercises', *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1905), p. 689.
[22] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, Aug. 1909, p. 4.

writing to William Smith that, 'I see nothing more than very partial results if we are all working as separate organisations taking our separate lines'. He heaped praise on William Smith, crediting him with discovering 'that we can take even the worst class of boy and make a man of him if we only take the trouble. We can take the slum boy and put him on his honour and trust his honour just as well as that of the better-class boy'.[23] Upon William Smith's death in 1914 he wrote that, 'a smaller man would naturally have resented or been jealous of a rival organisation...it was thanks to his large-mindedness that there has existed a strongly fraternal spirit'.[24]

There is evidence of this collaborative spirit in Ireland. In 1914 the Dublin battalion executive of the Boys' Brigade was asked by the secretary of the Boy Scouts if any of their members were willing to join the local Boy Scout Association. Similarly, the Boys' Brigade secretary wrote to the Dublin battalion executive that in Ireland it was important 'to group together people who are working in the same direction or amongst the same class of people so as to avoid competition, and go in for mutual help'.[25] Camping was one activity that provided an opportunity for interaction between the two organisations. In 1913 the 25th Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade camped at Powerscourt, Co. Wicklow with some Dublin troops of Boy Scouts. Lord Powerscourt wrote to the Dublin battalion secretary that the company 'seemed to get on well with the other organisation'.[26] They also worked together for the benefit of local charities. In 1912 the 5th Belfast company of the Boys' Brigade played a football match against the 13th Belfast troop of the Boy Scouts, both champions of their respective leagues, with all the proceeds donated to the Ulster Hospital for Women and Sick Children. The Scouts won 1-0.[27] In 1917 the Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion played a football match against the Belfast Boy Scouts, with the Brigade winning 2-0.[28] In 1912 the Boys' Brigade and Boy Scouts in Belfast took part in a field day together with the Brigade seeing this as 'evidence of the good-fellowship existing between the organisations'.[29]

The Boys' Brigade was also influenced by the activities carried out in the Boy Scouts. Even prior to the formation of the Boy Scouts there was a developing appreciation of the role

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[23] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 Apr. 1913.
[24] The Boys' Brigade, *The Boys' Brigade and Scouting* (London, 1983), p. 6.
[25] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 9 Feb. 1914, 9 Dec. 1918, BBAD, Box 9.
[26] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 26 Apr. 1913, 17 May 1913.
[27] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 10 Apr. 1912.
[28] B.E.C.E. Minute Book, 4 Apr. 1917, 6 June 1917, SCNI.
[29] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 5 June 1912.

that scouting could play in the Dublin battalion. In 1904, four years before the inauguration of the Boy Scouts in Ireland, a member of the battalion wrote that

> something might be done towards developing the boy's mind by increasing his powers of observation and teaching him to notice details. If some form of scout training could be devised in the Brigade it would be very popular and could do a great amount of good. Preliminary training in this line might include practice in nothing and remembering details of strangers, contents of shop windows, appearance of new streets, etc. The results would not only sharpen the wits of the boy, but would also make him quick to read character and feelings, and thus be a better sympathiser with his fellow men.[30]

This was actively promoted and in 1905 the 21st company held a lesson in scouting.[31] The Boys' Brigade admitted that the development of scouting had 'a magnetic influence'. With scouting being taken up in the Boys' Brigade the leadership had to provide guidance. They advised that it be treated like any other auxiliary activity in companies and sanctioned the appointment of local scout committees. However, scout patrols in the Boys' Brigade were not allowed to register with the central or local committees of the Boy Scouts 'as this would inevitably lead to confusion of Regulations and all the obvious disadvantages of dual control'.[32]

In 1909 the Brigade council commented that scouting had 'formed an interesting and instructive addition to the usual routine' and provided figures that 414 officers and 4369 boys had taken up scouting.[33] Scouting was favourably received in the Belfast battalion and by May 1910 scouts had been formed in connection with eight Belfast companies with membership numbering 192.[34] The Brigade calculated that in total from 1909-1916, 561 members became first class scouts with 2409 becoming second class scouts.[35] However, in 1912 the scout committee of the Dublin battalion reported that an examination for certificates and badges had been held but only three boys applied and they stated that 'there are now no

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[30] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 24 Dec. 1904.
[31] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 30 Dec. 1905.
[32] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 17, no. 5, Jan. 1909, pp. 72, 66.
[33] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Sept. 1909.
[34] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 20 Oct. 1910, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 9, May 1910, p. 137.
[35] The Boys' Brigade, *The Boys' Brigade and Scouting* (London 1983), p. 5.

Patrols or Troops working in connection with any Company'. They suggested that 'Officers should encourage, as far as possible, any desire shown by the boys to start a troop'.[36] J.W. Morgan argued that boys should be encouraged to form patrols or troops, 'keeping membership confined to members of the Brigade'. He was concerned about the level of supervision within the Boy Scouts and commented that when boys wished to take up scouting 'there should be ample opportunity given for doing so within the B.B. and so eliminate the danger of there being advised to join Troops where there is no proper control whatsoever'.[37]

The development of the Boy Scouts did have an effect on United Kingdom membership levels of the Boys' Brigade. Lord Guthrie, president of the Boys' Brigade, reported in 1910 that there had been a decrease in numbers 'and this is probably accounted for by the number of other organisations for boys which are now in the field'. He contended that 'however attractive some of these new organisations may be, we are satisfied that they are not of themselves calculated to produce the same deep and lasting impression on the lives and characters of the boys as the brigade has shown itself capable of doing'.[38] In 1909, only a year after the formation of the Boy Scouts, the *Irish Times* commented on the Dublin Boys' Brigade that 'the various companies are seldom seen out route-marching accompanied by their bands'. 'Huckleberry Finn', writer of their physical culture notes, wrote that, 'I have not up to the present seen a single Brigade Boy in uniform this session' and believed 'that the newly organised Boy Scouts are taking away large numbers from the older organisation'.[39] Less than three months later it was reported that Boy Scout 'membership equals, if it does not exceed that of the Boys' Brigade'.[40] Despite such claims the inauguration of the Boy Scouts had minimal effect on membership levels in the Boys' Brigade in Dublin. In 1906 the Dublin battalion was composed of twenty-five companies, 119 officers and 972 boys. In 1910 there were the same number of companies, a fall of twelve officers and an increase of thirty-eight boys. By 1912 they had an increase of one company, but lost a further twelve officers and the number of boys decreased by ninety-five.[41] The twentieth annual report for the session 1911-1912 noted that,

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[36] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 18, BBAD, Box 11.
[37] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 24 Sept. 1909, BBAD, Box 10.
[38] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 19, no. 2, Oct. 1910, pp. 17-18.
[39] *Irish Times*, 20 Nov. 1909.
[40] *Irish Times*, 5 Feb. 1910.
[41] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Feb. 1907, 22 Oct. 1910; *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 6, BBAD, Box 11; *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 8, BBAD, Box 11.

> it had been feared by some that the starting of new organisations for boys in the city would have seriously affected the numbers and efficiency of the Brigade, upon which, as the original movement, all other work among boys has been largely modelled. Happily this has not been the case, and it is most satisfactory to find that a definitely religious movement like the Boys' Brigade has more than held its own against the new-comers, whose primary object is merely recreation or physical improvement.[42]

However, there was a degree of duplication in membership and it seems the Boys' Brigade executive had little problem with this. In 1910 they awarded the brigade cross for heroism to Private Albert Marrs of the 20th Belfast company despite the fact that he was also a member of the 2nd Belfast troop of the Boy Scouts.[43] Similarly, R.B. Wylie Irwin, a lieutenant in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1918, had been a leader in both the Boys' Brigade and the Boy Scouts.[44] In 1916 Cecil James Dodds, a captain in the Royal Munster Fusiliers, was killed on active service in France. He was a former member of the 21st Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade and the 3rd county Dublin troop of Boy Scouts. [45] Charles A. Hill was a captain in the 20th company of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade as well as a scoutmaster in the 2nd Belfast troop of Boy Scouts. He later became the first organising secretary for the Boy Scouts in Ireland.[46]

In some cases there was little to distinguish the Boys' Brigade from the Boy Scouts and the two organisations were conducted by the same people with 'the boys in the winter attending the drills of Boys' Brigade, and in the summer resolving themselves into Boy Scouts and thereby enjoying to the full the healthy outdoor exercise, and at the same time not neglecting the regular drill and discipline of the Boys' Brigade'.[47] This was the case in the 1st company of the Carlow Boys' Brigade where a number of their boys joined the Urglin troop of Boy Scouts during the summer months.[48] The 10th Dublin company reported in 1909 that their Boy Scouts carried out scouting throughout the summer and 'active operations ceased at

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[42] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 7, BBAD, Box 11.
[43] *Irish Times*, 1 Oct. 1910.
[44] *Weekly Irish Times*, 13 Apr. 1918.
[45] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 30 Sept. 1916.
[46] M. Bell, *Scouting in Northern Ireland*, pp. 6-8.
[47] *Weekly Irish Times*, 10 May 1913.
[48] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.

the recommencement of the Brigade Session, when we were happy to find these Scouts promptly turned their whole energies to making the Company work a success'.[49]

The Boy Scouts gained members from the Church Lads' Brigade and the *Irish Independent* reported that 'the boy scout movement in this country is depleting very seriously the ranks of the Anglican Church Lads' Brigades' and the brigade founded a new body, the 'diocesan scout corps', to meet the challenge.[50] The Church Lads' Brigade launched their scout patrols in 1908 and this was incorporated in 1909.[51] The Boys' Brigade also attracted Church Lads' Brigade members. The 28th Dublin company, formed in 1901, was formerly a Church Lads' Brigade company. In 1906 Rev. Harvey from St Stephen's Parish wrote to the battalion executive asking them to assist him in finding a captain for his Church Lads' Brigade Company 'and expressing a desire to join the Boys' Brigade'.[52]

Both the Boys' Brigade and the Boy Scouts also faced competition from the cadet corps'. The 1st City of Dublin Cadets were formed in May 1911 and the *Irish Times* reported that they were at the time 'the only recognised Cadet Corps in Ireland'. They initially owed their existence to a nucleus of former Boy Scout members, both from the rank and file and the leadership. They were formed from four troops of the Dublin Boy Scouts known as 'A' Division and were recognised by the war office. Membership was restricted to boys between the ages of twelve and seventeen and they met at Wellington barracks where they had use of a gymnasium. By August 1911 they were undergoing training with the 1st Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers at Donard, Co. Wicklow and at the Curragh camp, Co. Kildare. In August 1914 they joined the 7th battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers. In 1914 fifty serving and former cadets volunteered for active service. In 1915 a soldier from the 7th battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and a former cadet, wrote a letter from the front stating that 'there are very few of the 1st City of Dublin Cadets left…all the cadets, with very few exceptions, were either killed or wounded'.[53]

The Dublin Schools Cadet Corps was established in May 1913 for boys aged between thirteen and seventeen who were 'attending, or who have attended, the well-known colleges and schools', and they 'are alone eligible for membership'. Within a year of its formation nine collegiate schools were represented. They were commanded by an ex-officer of the

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[49] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Mar. 1909.
[50] *Irish Independent*, 6 Aug. 1909.
[51] Church Lads' Brigade, *The incorporated church scout patrols* (London, 1909).
[52] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 9 Dec. 1901, 5 Nov. 1906, BBAD, Box 9.
[53] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Sept. 1911, 3 Jan. 1914; *Irish Times*, 20 May 1911, 5 Aug. 1911, 20 May 1911, 1 June 1911, 5 Aug. 1911, 21 Nov. 1918; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 8 Aug. 1914; *Irish Independent*, 6 Sept. 1915.

auxiliary forces, and ex-regular non-commissioned officers were to act as sergeant instructors. The organising officer was James R. Ramsay. During World War I he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and was gassed in 1918. Their first commanding officer was Captain H.H. Hayden, an officer in the Anglesey section of the national reserve with twenty-five years' experience, and later by Captain R.J. Murray-Wright. Ramsay was keen to emphasise that the corps was arranged so 'as not to interfere with home studies' and that membership 'incurs no military obligation whatever'. It had the support of Lord Roberts who stated that 'when they grow up to become the future governors of the country, they will approach all questions relating to its defence with a certain amount of sympathy and knowledge'. They were granted official recognition and were under the control of the war office. This brought with it the advantage of access to facilities such as the staff gymnasium at Portobello barracks. They were supplied with army rifles and trained in drill and shooting as they were given use of a miniature rifle range. They also took the oath of allegiance upon being granted membership. During the war they became officially affiliated to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and by October 1915 had supplied fifty recruits to the armed forces with nineteen of these receiving commissions. By 1918 this had risen to over 200 members.[54]

T.B. Kerford wrote to Andrew McClure, honorary secretary of the Glasgow battalion of the Boys' Brigade, that the 21st Dublin company 'finds a drift of some of its senior boys to these Cadets. It would appear that a deliberate attempt is made to capture such boys and we believe that the Scouts have met with a similar effort'. The number of schools which had a cadet corps attached to them concerned Kerford who argued that the effect of this 'is and will be to stop the boys of a school, where such Corps exists, joining the Boys' Brigade'. He wrote that 'it does not appear to us how this can be prevented. The School esprit de corps would rightly urge boys into their own Corps', although he did concede that recruits from these schools 'were never very numerous'.[55] Viscount Powerscourt stated that 'the cadet movement had been in existence for many years, but hitherto had not flourished as much in Ireland as in England'.[56] Despite this, there were certainly grounds for Kerford's fears. The

[54] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 May 1913; *Irish Independent*, 24 May 1913; *Irish Times*, 8 May 1913, 18 Oct. 1913, 29 Nov. 1913, 8 May 1913; *Weekly Irish Times*, 15 June 1918; *Irish Times*, 15 Nov. 1913, 22 Oct. 1915, 24 June 1913, 4 Sept. 1913, 15 Nov. 1913, 8 Nov. 1918, 22 Oct. 1915,28 Oct. 1918. The schools represented by May 1914 were Mountjoy School, High School, Rathmines College, St Andrew's College, Belvedere College, St Patrick's Cathedral School, Blackrock College, King's Hospital School and Wesley College, *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 May 1914.

[55] T.B. Kerford to Andrew McClure, Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion, of the Boys' Brigade, 7 June 1916, BBAD, Box 9.

[56] *Freeman's Journal*, 18 Mar. 1914.

commanding officer of the 1st City of Dublin Cadets was Captain Bernard C. Cunningham, who had been a scoutmaster in the Dublin Boy Scouts. During World War I he joined the 7th battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and was killed at Cambrai in France in 1918. Amongst the 1st City of Dublin Cadets, Robert Cyril Porter, a member of the 7th battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, was killed in the Balkans during World War I. He had previously been a member of the 12th and 32nd companies of the Dublin Boys' Brigade.[57] A similar situation existed in the Dublin Schools Cadet Corps. Ernest G. Birch and Charles Helmsley Gick were lieutenants in the corps and had previously been members of the Boy Scouts and the Boys' Brigade. Birch was a scoutmaster in Dublin and Gick was a former captain of a number of Dublin companies, as well as a former treasurer of the Dublin battalion executive.[58]

Both the Boys' Brigade and the Boy Scouts attempted to highlight the differences in their respective programmes. The development of the Boy Scouts led to a greater appreciation of scouting within the Boys' Brigade who organised their own scout patrols and there were even those who were members of both organisations at the same time. It is clear that Baden-Powell appreciated the role played by the Boys' Brigade as an organisation for adolescent boys and the influence it had on his own development of the Boy Scouts. The organisations were keen to engage in issues of common concern and there is evidence of interaction between both groups which make it clear that they fostered and maintained good relations. Each group identified specific models through which to advance their programmes based on their respective motivations. The Boys' Brigade focused on military drill as a means of providing the discipline necessary for their religious aims and as an activity that was attractive to members. The Boy Scouts organisations saw drill as inimical to their aims, focused as it was on individual character training.

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[57] *Irish Times*, 9 Sept. 1911, 21 Nov. 1918; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1909, p. 12; *Weekly Irish Times*, 22 Jan. 1916.

[58] *Irish Times*, 22 Jul. 1916, 8 Aug. 1916, 23 Apr. 1917; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1909, p. 12; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 10, June 1893, p. 267, vol. 8, no. 3, Nov. 1899, p. 47, vol. 14, no. 5, Jan. 1906, p. 79; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 July 1916; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 26 Sept. 1904, BBAD, Box 10.

7.2 Relationship between the Boy Scouts and Fianna Éireann

The relationship between Fianna Éireann and the Boy Scouts highlights the commitment on the part of Fianna Éireann to clearly distinguish the organisations from one another. They had emerged as a conscious rival to the development of the Boy Scouts in Ireland. The *Morning Post* noted that 'this organisation was formed in order to prevent the young of the country from joining the Baden-Powell Boy Scouts system, and it is now being used to encourage separatist ambitions among its members'.[59] A former Fianna member stated that the formation of the organisation was to tackle 'the forces of Anglicisation and West Britonism, which in this case was represented by the Baden Powell organisation, then showing signs of flourishing in England, and making no little headway in our country at the time'.[60] Early in Fianna Éireann's development Markievicz gave a lecture where she stated that,

> there was an organisation then getting a very strong hold on the country known as the Baden-Powell Boy Scouts and she emphasised the fact that the purpose of this organisation was really to prepare the youth of the country for the British Army and engendering British ideas into them. It was, therefore, essential that an organisation be started in opposition.[61]

Fianna Éireann saw themselves as a weapon to be employed in order to 'combat the anglicising influence of the Baden Powell Scouts' and members were told that 'no Anglicising influences will be tolerated'.[62] Bulmer Hobson explained at the outset of the organisation that 'one of the immediate aims would be to counteract the influence of this pro-British body'. Despite this, they had enlisted an ex-British army soldier to teach them drill. The concerns regarding the Boy Scouts militarist ambitions was also noted by Patrick Pearse who had been approached by Baden-Powell to help him organise the Boy Scouts in Ireland. Pearse refused as he 'did not care to make potential British soldiers out of Irish boys'.[63]

However, despite this antagonism towards the Boy Scouts the influence they had on nationalist organisations was welcomed by Baden-Powell. He wrote that 'the Nationalists themselves recognise the uses of Scouting, and have already raised some Troops, and I see

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[59] *Irish Times*, 28 Dec. 1911.
[60] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[61] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280.
[62] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755; *Irish Volunteer*, 25 Apr. 1914
[63] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591. See also M. Skinnider, *Doing my bit*, pp. 56, 15-16.

most promising signs of growth in various parts of the country where last year it had never been heard of'.[64] He wrote that they engaged in most of the scout training 'except that they do not take the oath of allegiance'. For him this was 'for the moment...a detail'. What he took from it was that 'the principle of the Scout Movement is no longer taboo'. He noted in 1911 that this was a significant development as

> a short time ago a Boy Scout in uniform was the object of chaff, if not of brickbats, in many parts of Ireland; that time is now over; people cannot tell whether he is a Nationalist or not-in fact the Irish Boy Scout may be said to be a loyal Nationalist-loyal to the King and to Ireland, and what more do you want than that?

He wrote that, 'I have no doubt that Scouting will receive the more sympathetic acceptance on all hands so soon as the people realise that it is practical and National, and, at the same time, a loyal Movement for making the boys into happy, prosperous citizens in their own country'.[65] On his visit to Cork in 1915 Baden-Powell noted the change in public reaction to the Boy Scouts. He wrote that

> when I visited the Scouts in Cork a few years back they were few in number, consisting for the most part of sons of soldiers there, and their rally had to be carried on in a private manner, out of the way of public criticism-and brickbats. This time the streets of the city echoed with the drums and gleamed with the colours of the Scouts as they marched to their rendezvous, confident of the sympathy of their fellow townsmen.[66]

He wrote that 'as regards the Scout Movement, there was in the south a feeling against it, the impression being that it was a Movement promoted with a view to getting boys enthused with the idea of becoming soldiers and eventually joining the British Army'.[67]

The development of Fianna Éireann mirrored many of the ambivalences that characterised other nationalist organisations in the period. The cultural revival in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century represented a search for a version of nationality that

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[64] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 5, May 1911, p. 2.
[65] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, pp. 3-4.
[66] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 9, Sept. 1915, p. 226.
[67] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, p. 3.

would validate national autonomy and emphasised the dissimilarity and distinctiveness of Ireland from rest of the United Kingdom. Many looked to indigenous Irish culture on which to shape this identity and 'projected Ireland as a superior rural Gaelic communalist civilization' and 'the cultural tradition to which they came to appeal was essentially rural'. It was an enterprise that was 'essentially inward-looking' and emphasised sole reliance on 'domestic cultural and intellectual forms'.[68] It was a recurrent feature of much cultural nationalism that British cultural forms were undermining the virility of Irish culture and contributed to the Anglicisation of Irish people with British mass culture seen as degenerate and corrupting and there was a pronounced desire expressed to insulate Ireland from English influences through cultural initiatives.[69] However, this was rendered difficult due to the historical links between Ireland and the rest of Britain 'and similar, often identical, institutions, language and cultural forms'.[70] Such tensions in Fianna Éireann highlight the ways in which, while criticising the influence of the Boy Scouts, they embraced much of their rhetoric and methodology and owed much to their influence. Such influence provoked tensions and a means of undermining their influence was to adapt their techniques and present them as an indigenous enterprise by emphasising their historical lineage as being centred on indigenous Irish culture rather than British forms. One of the attempts in the period to emphasise the historical pedigree of nationalist youth organisations was the cult that developed around the figure of Cu Chulainn as a role model who became of 'central importance within the nationalist popular cultural imaginations', providing 'a narrative of continuity between the authentic past and revolutionary future'.[71]

However this was rendered difficult as while Fianna Éireann placed themselves in a lineage which drew inspiration from mythical and heroic Irish sagas the Boy Scouts placed themselves in a similar lineage in what has been termed a 'gesture of reverse cultural appropriation'.[72] Addressing the Boy Scouts in Dublin, Baden-Powell stated that 'scouts began-he did not know how many hundred years ago- with Cuchulain, a great Irish warrior. He trained his young men to take the place of the knights at that time, who had fallen in the

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[68] J. Hutchinson, *The dynamics of cultural nationalism: the Gaelic revival and the creation of the Irish nation state* (London, 1987), p. 115; Garvin, *Nationalist revolutionaries*, p. 10; Pašeta, *Before the revolution*, pp. 119, 121.

[69] Maume, *The long gestation*, p. 59; P.J. Mathews, *Revival: the Abbey Theatre, Sinn Fein, the Gaelic League and the Co-operative movement* (Cork, 2003), p. 95; Hutchinson, *The dynamics of cultural nationalism*, p. 116.

[70] Pašeta, *Before the revolution*, p. 120.

[71] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, pp. 79, 92; E. Sisson, 'Masculinity and citizenship: boyhood and nationhood at St Enda's', in R. Higgins, R. Uí Chollatáin, eds., *The life and after-life of P.H. Pearse, Pádraic Mac Piarais: saol agus oidhreacht* (Dublin, 2009), p. 214.

[72] Valente, *The myth of manliness*, p. 164.

fight for their country'.[73] He wrote that he aimed at 'founding the tenets of the Movement largely on the code of the ancient Irish "Knights of the Red Branch", and their junior organisation of what were the Boy Scouts of a thousand years ago'.[74] Writing in 1914 he commented that 'many of our ideas were taken from the customs of the Zulus and Red Indians and Japanese, many were taken from the codes of the Knights of the Middle Ages, many were cribbed from other people, such as Cuchulainn of Ireland'.[75] This was part of the Boy Scouts own attempt to claim historical roots. A play produced by the 6th Dublin troop of Boy Scouts entitled, 'The Spirit of Chivalry', promoted such a view. It was commented that 'the idea running throughout was that the modern Scout is the descendent of the old knight- the same oath, the same badge, the same ideals of Chivalry and usefulness'.[76] Baden Powell argued in 1911 that the Boy Scouts were 'the young knights of today, because they were carrying out the ideals practised by the knights of old'.[77] This is reflective of the popularity of the chivalric knight in the Victorian and Edwardian period. However, this interest bore little relevance to historical representativeness and was more a 'reflection of contemporary virtues and values, cloaked in chivalric raiment'.[78]

The weight attached to mythic legends fulfilled a contemporary ambition in evoking an archetypal model that was deemed to possess an authenticity as a result of its ancient derivation. The tension that arose from this appropriation by both organisations demonstrates that in their self-conceptualisation they were characterised more by commonality than division and both were susceptible to contemporary trends diffused throughout the United Kingdom. Such an emphasis in Irish organisations was more an adaptation than a solely Irish creation and owed much to wider United Kingdom models. Elaine Sisson has noted the tensions inherent in Patrick Pearse's attempts to formulate an 'authentic' model of Irish masculinity and this can usefully be extended to Fianna Éireann. What both attempted was

> to import the language and ideology of imperial patriotism, heroism and chivalric masculinity and to reshape it in a language which, while using the ideology of Edwardian masculinity, manages to suggest that Irish manhood

[73] *Irish Times*, 16 Aug. 1915; *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 9, Sept. 1915, p. 230.
[74] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, p. 4.
[75] M. Bell, *Scouting in Northern Ireland*, p. 2.
[76] *Irish Times*, 20 Apr. 1917.
[77] M. Bell, *Scouting in Northern Ireland*, p. 34.
[78] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, p. 81.

is natural, a historic and, by predating English versions of maleness, is more authentic.[79]

The values and attributes deemed to characterise Irish nationalist youth were often identical to the attributes encouraged throughout the United Kingdom and to a large extent 'Irishmen were subject to the same prevailing ideologies of Edwardian manhood that were being circulated in England'.[80]

Attempts to undermine such similarities characterised much of the activities of Fianna Éireann and as a result what they successfully accomplished was that they 'assiduously mapped the idols of the Gaelic sages onto an Anglo-imperial educational and disciplinary framework, in order to give Irish boys a developmental purchase upon the metropolitan norms of manliness while allowing their influence to be disavowed'.[81] The uniform chosen by Fianna Éireann highlights the extent to which they wished to define points of disparity. Felix O'Doherty, a Fianna member from Cork, recalled that the Boy Scout uniform did not appeal to him as it 'bore close resemblance to the army of occupation'.[82] From the beginning they wore 'cotton shirts made like the Catholic Boy scouts' shirts, with green slouch hats and blue knickers'. Later Michael Lonergan, an Irish Volunteer company commander who was on the clerical staff at Cleary's department store in Dublin, designed a new uniform with a double breasted shirt with the brass buttons, a style adopted from the uniforms of the American army. Lonergan was later to move to America where he was employed as a chief organiser of the Catholic Boy Scouts.[83] Eamon Martin wrote of Michael Lonergan that he 'had the figure and walk-the dapper style of dress, the typical crisp voice of command and all the mannerisms, without the slightest sign of embarrassment, which add up to the making of the perfect officer'.[84] Sean Prendergast stated that he had a 'military bearing' and 'he was dressed in his neat and evenly fitting uniform-so distinctive, so elegant, so truly military'.[85] The newly designed uniform 'was to be more striking still, and distinctly military in style and appearance- an absolute departure from the ordinary boy scout pattern!'. The new uniform was not universally adopted by all branches, 'some of whom clung to the kilts, particularly an

[79] Sisson, 'Masculinity and citizenship', p. 213.
[80] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, p. 82.
[81] Valente, *The myth of manliness*, p. 164.
[82] Felix O'Doherty, BMH WS 739.
[83] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[84] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[85] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.

Céad Sluaigh, Camden Street'.[86] Despite an official design many branches throughout the country were reported by headquarters to have different uniforms. One reason advanced was that certain cloths were not available locally and in an effort at encouraging local industry they procured whatever was available in their own locality. While this was seen as a laudable ambition they were implored to ensure their uniforms were in accordance with the official pattern.[87] However, their uniform may not have been as distinctive as they wished. Former member Joseph O'Shea recalled that at a Fianna Éireann camp the woman who owned the land on which they were camped provided them with eggs and milk free of charge, 'but as Union Jacks and pictures of the Royal family were prominent in the house I think she must have been under the impression that we belonged to the Baden Powell Scouts'.[88]

To avoid the inherent tensions Fianna Éireann attempted to distance themselves from the Boy Scouts and establish lines of differentiation between them. At a lecture given to Fianna Éireann members on their national duty Seamus Deakin criticised the Boy Scouts as 'an English thing planted in the country'. He drew a contrast between the organisations, stating that 'those boys are only playing, you are in earnest; you all hope to fight for Ireland'.[89] One member wrote that 'the founders and promoters of the Fianna while embracing the scout idea, and accepting the principle of scouting were no imitators of the Baden Powell Scout organisation'. In Fianna Éireann there was 'no room or thought for many of the fol-de-dols (sic) [*folderol*?], ribbons and decorations so characteristic of the Baden Powell Scouts'. A method adopted with the hope of discrediting the Boy Scouts in Ireland was by emphasising that they were an English organisation, controlled by Englishmen, and the initiator of policies from headquarters in England. It was commented that the Boy Scouts were 'responsive to the teachings and commands of its parent body in London, to whom was given full and filial obedience'. The Boy Scouts in Ireland were characterised as 'true protégés of their British associations; they were one in allegiance, tradition and in many cases in flesh and blood, because of their English birth, English extraction or English proclivities'. It was argued that 'they could not claim or demand that they were anything but an English organisation; they proclaimed themselves in favour of one flag, one king and one empire, and had little, if any, use for such things as Irish nationhood or Ireland's will to be free' and the

[86] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755; The use of kilts was an attempt to utilise an 'authentic' Irish costume, Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, p. 126.
[87] *Fianna*, Sept. 1915.
[88] Joseph O'Shea, BMH WS 21.
[89] *Freeman's Journal*, 10 Nov. 1909.

organisation existed 'only for the purpose of teaching the boys that England not Ireland is their country, and that the Union Jack is the flag of the Irish'.[90]

Baden-Powell sought to dispel such notions and after a visit to Dublin wrote that 'the public have to learn that the Irish branch is not an English agency for getting recruits for the English army', arguing that 'it is an Irish organisation, solely for helping parents and pastors, of whatever class or creed, in training their boys to be manly, healthy, able to earn their own livelihood, and to do kindness to other people'. He stressed that military drill was not encouraged and that troops could be formed of any denomination and that the movement was entirely non-political.[91] On his visit to Ireland in 1911 he stressed that 'we want the movement in Ireland to run itself for Ireland', but did acknowledge that the difficulties experienced in Ireland 'are very much more varied and intense than anything that we meet with on this side of St. George's Channel. North, mid, and south Ireland are totally distinct from each other in sympathy, aims, and almost in temperament'.[92] He wrote that 'our aims are entirely disinterested...we merely give the suggestion, and leave it in the hands of the Irish executive to carry it out for Ireland' and that 'we want the Movement in Ireland to run itself for Ireland'.[93] Similarly, Colonel Ulick de Burgh commented that 'it was not an English, but an Irish business-the government of boys by boys' and 'they wanted to make the organisation in Ireland an absolutely Irish one, managed by Irishmen, and carried through successfully by Irishmen'.[94] Baden-Powell argued that this was evident in the establishment of the *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette* which had liberated the organisation from excessive bureaucracy as 'by linking all together with a Gazette, we are decentralising and giving more individual freedom to the different officers'. The *Gazette* set out to explain the chief aims of the Boy Scouts and provide advice on the 'best steps towards attaining them' and 'leaving them to work for these each in his own way'.[95]

Fianna Éireann's rhetoric was also similar to the Boy Scouts and many of the statements could easily have been made by Boy Scout leaders. Instruction in Fianna Éireann 'differed little' from Boy Scout manuals and Joseph Valente has argued that Fianna Éireann 'shamelessly plagiarized the Boy Scouts program'.[96] The *Fianna Handbook* stated to its members that the organisation,

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[90] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755; *Irish Volunteer*, 7 Feb. 1914.
[91] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1911.
[92] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, p. 3.
[93] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 5, May 1911, p. 2, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, p. 4.
[94] *Irish Independent*, 26 Jan. 1912.
[95] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1909, p.1.
[96] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, p. 125; Valente, *The myth of manliness*, p. 164.

> trains them and teaches discipline and obedience. It seeks to make them thoughtful and manly and independent. In a word, it makes them good citizens and good Irishmen...by obedience to their officers and the discipline of their sluagh they learn to obey and to be self-controlled.[97]

The programme in Fianna Éireann was broadly comparable to that of the Boy Scouts in terms of the activities engaged in and consisted of first aid, signalling, scouting, map reading, and 'generally all those subjects and recreations calculated to hold the interest of boys'.[98] They participated in many public displays of activities such as camping, field drill, rifle drill, and bayonet exercises carried out with dummy rifles, as well as sword drill with single sticks, which were undertaken at open air fetes. They staged several plays of Irish character which were 'all helping to revive the love of Ireland and the hate of England again in the Irish people and generally rouse the rebel spirit'.[99] Anyone who wished to learn the Irish language could enrol at a Fianna Irish class, and while many people were very enthusiastic about this, the difficulty was that 'there were very few simple books and no one knew how to teach'.[100] The organisation in Co. Wexford organised a lending library which had twenty-five books.[101] In the winter they conducted route marches and the summer activities consisted of camping and manoeuvres.[102] This was one of the most pleasant aspects of membership as 'young lads knocked great enjoyment out of camp life, cooking their own food and singing songs around the camp fire, finishing the night with that grand Irish custom- the Rosary'. It was not only in their physical exercises that they resembled other youth movements but also in their emphasis on education, as one member recalled how they 'tried to teach us shorthand'.[103] There was also a social aspect as they engaged in 'singing and dancing and the holding of concerts'.[104]

In Fianna Éireann there was a similar emphasis placed on the self-governing nature of the organisation. Willie Nelson (Padraig O'Riain) wrote that 'self-government in the Fianna is next in importance to its great object, and is most valuable as an object tending towards

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[97] *Fianna Handbook*, pp. 23-4.
[98] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[99] Seamus Pounch, BMH WS 267.
[100] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[101] *Irish Volunteer*, 28 Mar. 1914.
[102] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[103] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[104] Thomas Dwyer, BMH WS 1198.

leadership'. He argued that 'it not infrequently happens that the responsibilities of office often brings out the good qualities of a boy who has hitherto been unpromising'. In the organisation 'the training which a boy gets from looking after the funds of his sluagh very often gives him a different idea of the use and value of money' and 'the whole idea of making the members manage their sluaighte and do things for themselves is part of the boy's training in the Fianna'.[105] Similar to the Boy Scouts they wished that the programme carried out should strike a balance between theoretical and practical activities noting that 'the programme ought not to be carried out as a series of lectures or classes of instruction, as some officers think, for the idea is not to cram a fellow's head with drill, signalling, etc.'.[106] Fianna Éireann experienced the difficulty of adopting the methods of the Boy Scouts while decrying their motivations.

Fianna Éireann was susceptible to contemporary trends which sought to instil into young boys the habits of proper hygiene and cleanliness. One former member recalled that Con Colbert 'often lectured boys on how they should keep their bodies. He used to tell them that they should wash their feet as often as they washed their face'.[107] Sean Heuston was equally keen to ensure strict habits of proper hygiene and every drill night he inspected his group of boys to ensure proper standards of hygiene and insisted on cleanliness and tidiness.[108] In 1914 the organisation called attention to the untidiness of some boys attending parades who were told that 'every Fianna boy should take a pride in being neat and smart...untidiness and carelessness go hand in hand with rowdyism and rabble'.[109]

Despite these similarities it is also important to highlight the distinctiveness of Fianna Éireann and their development of the methods formulated by the Boy Scouts. Fianna Éireann adopted much of the methods and discourse of the Boy Scouts relating to health, physical fitness, and the dangers associated with urban living, but also developed the Scout model and tailored it to explicitly military ends. While ancillary activities were provided, Fianna Éireann was explicitly promoted as a revolutionary organisation whose members were oath bound to pursue Irish independence. In this regard it is important to appreciate the role of the IRB. By the 1890s the organisation was 'divided internally' with the movement being 'effectively moribund', but underwent resurgence in the early twentieth century.[110] As a result a rejuvenated and more focused organisation emerged and Fianna Éireann's development owed

[105] *Irish Volunteer*, 15 May 1915.
[106] *Irish Volunteer*, 6 Feb. 1915.
[107] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280.
[108] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[109] *Irish Volunteer*, 7 Mar. 1914.
[110] Garvin, *Nationalist revolutionaries*, p. 48.

much to this separatist revival which helped to radicalise a committed core of young men and women. They were particularly powerful in Fianna Éireann with many influential members such as Bulmer Hobson, Padraig O'Riain, and Con Colbert holding positions within the organisation. Bulmer Hobson's motivations in helping establish Fianna Éireann were conditioned by membership and the practical benefits to be accrued by working with the young as 'he believed children were easier to convert to the gospel of physical force' and its growth was a potential source for the development of separatist ambitions in members and increasing IRB membership.[111] Patrick Ward noted that, 'it seems to me that the Fianna had originally been started with the definite purpose of recruiting young blood for the IRB'.[112] It has been argued that it's most significant success was the politicization of a number of members who would late take part in the Easter Rising with seven current and former members being killed.[113]

The IRB was particularly adept at infiltrating movements which had begun as non-political groups and utilising them as a cloak for their activities. For example, the Colonel John O'Mahoney hurling club in Dublin was almost entirely composed of IRB members. This mode of operation was also evident in Fianna Éireann where Liam Mellows travelled around the country organising the youth organisation while at the same time, as a member of the IRB, was strengthening the organisation and this dual role aided in the growth of both groups.[114] In 1912 a new circle of the brotherhood, officially called the John Mitchel literary and debating society, was founded which was 'mostly composed of students of St Enda's and Fianna officers'. Con Colbert was the centre of this circle and Fianna Éireann members included Padraig O'Riain, Eamon Martin, Michael Lonergan, Garrett Holohan, Sean Heuston, and Liam and Barney Mellows.[115] This group exerted an influence over the brotherhood at national level as it was because of the initiative of the members of this circle that the organisation began the active military training of their own members.[116] The brotherhood virtually monopolised power within Fianna Éireann and exerted huge influence over the organisation. The most important players in Fianna Éireann were brotherhood members and

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[111] F. McGarry, *The Rising, Ireland: Easter 1916* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 29, 30, 32; M. Hay, *Bulmer Hobson and the nationalist movement in twentieth-century Ireland* (Manchester, 2009), pp. 79, 204.
[112] Patrick Ward, BMH WS 1140.
[113] McGarry, *The Rising*, p. 32; Hay, *Bulmer Hobson*, p. 110; Hay, 'foundation and development', p. 53.
[114] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[115] Patrick O'Daly, BMH WS 220; Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336; B. Hobson, 'The I.R.B. and the Fianna' in F.X. Martin, ed., *The Irish Volunteers 1913–1915: recollections and documents* (Dublin, 1963), p. 21; Hay, 'foundation and development', p. 60.
[116] Michael Lonergan, BMH WS 140.

they ensured that no decision was taken with which they were not in agreement. Eamon Martin later claimed that by 1913 practically every senior Fianna Éireann officer in the country was a member of the IRB. The meetings of the John Mitchel circle were attended by country brotherhood officers when they were in Dublin. The practice developed whereby this circle would hold a meeting with all the members and the country delegates who were brotherhood members on the night before the Fianna ard-fheis 'and at this meeting all matters of policy were decided'. The agenda was examined and discussed with decisions arrived at before the ard-fheis met with resolutions which were of no great importance being left to a free vote. Power was vested in this elite group with even important Fianna Éireann personnel such as Constance Markievicz being excluded from the decision making process. According to a Eamon Martin 'she really had no voice in shaping policy and was overruled or out voted whenever her ideas ran counter to the decisions of this group'.[117]

As a result of this influence Fianna Éireann attempted to harden members' attitudes towards Britain and sentiments of sedition were openly fostered in the organisation. One member stated that the organisation 'was the breeding ground of rebellion, for here was instilled into our youthful minds the hatred of the Sassenach, and there grew in us a burning desire to see our country freed from the chains of bondage'. They were told 'how other Irishmen down through the centuries had fought against overwhelming odds and died in a glorious attempt to rid Irish soil of a foreign foe'. In Fianna Éireann 'we learned of the rebellions of Owen Roe, or Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen, of Rossa and the Fenians, and we longed for the day when we too might join in the fight against pour common enemy'.[118] The teaching of Irish history was seen as a particularly important subject for the members to learn with specific focus on Ireland's battles against England.[119] Former member Eamon Martin recalled that the teaching of Irish history was vital to the organisation as 'in this way the boys were being given a reason for their own military training'.[120] Robert Holland, a Fianna member, recalled that Markievicz argued that in previous centuries each generation had staged a rebellion in order to attain freedom and that if this was to be done in the future those who would stage it would require some military knowledge.[121] Thus in order to emphasise the differences between the two organisations 'the Fianna was fashioned on a semi-military basis, fabricated on a pattern that was truly Irish of the Irish, and, having its

[117] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[118] Thomas Dwyer, BMH WS 1198.
[119] Irish history classes were also held in the Fianna Éireann organisation founded by Bulmer Hobson in 1902, See Fianna minute book, 25 Nov. 1902, NLI, Bulmer Hobson Papers, 12,176.
[120] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[121] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280.

foundations firmly established on Irish soil, sought to cater for the Irish boys in accordance with the cultural and historical background centred in the past' and 'it adopted the idea of scouting, but not the trimmings and still less the policy and patronage associated with their rivals whom we looked upon with disfavour, suspicion and antagonism'.[122]

The organisation was much more anxious to actively seek out and openly attack other youth groups reflecting a growing militancy in Fianna Éireann. A display was organised by a group of Liverpool Boy Scouts who were planning to camp at Crumlin in Dublin 'and whose advance guard arrived to prepare the ground'. This group was attacked by Fianna members who 'took anything of a military nature and returned everything else'. They succeeded in capturing flags and military equipment and ordered the boys to go home which led to 'the cancellation of the proposed invasion'. When a group of British Cadets had come to Ireland and set up a camp at Three Rock Mountain in Dublin, 'the Fianna challenged them to a battle and arranged for use of everything short of firearms, but they refused to accept the challenge' with the result that 'we were not troubled by their presence afterwards'.[123] In 1913 a group of Cadets were camping at Sandyford with Fianna Éireann camped at Balally, Co Dublin. The proximity of these two campsites, less than a mile apart, resulted in an incident with two differing accounts of what took place. According to the Cadets one of their members was passing Balally in the company of two girls when he was attacked by a number of Fianna members and had to be escorted back part of the way to Sandyford by a policeman. The Fianna version tells of how one of their members was set upon by a number of Cadets and forced to say, 'I am a little English boy', and upon refusing was 'roughly handled' in what Constance Markievicz described as 'a little scrimmage'.[124] The Cadets were anxious to find a resolution to the incident and allowed Fianna members to attend their camp in order to identify those accused of attacking them. The Fianna boy could not identify his assailants 'though the cadets seemed anxious to give him every facility to do so'.[125]

Another incident occurred when a troop of Boy Scouts from Manchester visited Dublin and set up camp at Drimnagh, Co Dublin. When they had gone to get provisions one of their tents was pulled down and damaged by some young men 'believed to have some animus against the Boy Scout movement'. As a result the Scouts mounted guard at the campsite for the rest of their stay and there was an increased police patrol in the vicinity. Later that week a further incident occurred when stones were thrown at the Boy Scouts as

[122] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[123] Seamus Pounch, BMH WS 267.
[124] *Irish Times*, 16 Aug. 1913; *Irish Independent*, 13 Aug. 1913.
[125] *Irish Times*, 18 Aug. 1913.

they walked along the canal bank at Inchicore and were 'pursued by a number of men and boys, many of whom threw stones'. This resulted in one of the Scouts sustaining a head injury which had to be dressed by the scoutmaster. However, the scoutmaster, G.E. Wright, was anxious to avoid any further publicity for the confrontations and objected to a political character being applied to the occurrences, stating that 'a mountain was being made out of a molehill' and that 'the whole thing was the result of a little excitement, and he was willing to call it rough play'. The *Irish Independent* noted that although the matter was said to have been reported to the police 'inquiries at the headquarters, Castle Yard, yesterday revealed no official cognisance of any such report'.[126] While there was no explicit evidence that the incident had any connection to Fianna Éireann it is probable, given their track record, that some of their members may have been involved. Upon coming to the end of their stay in Dublin, the Manchester Scouts attributed the occurrences to a lack of understanding of the objectives of the Boy Scouts Association. They commented that 'the whole trouble has arisen from the mistaken idea of the object of the Scout movement and the false impression that it performs the functions of a recruiting agency for the Army'. He argued that 'of course, the Boy Scout movement had nothing whatever of a military character' and noted that this was a recurring phenomenon as 'the Dublin Scouts have previously suffered owing to the misconception and have been assaulted in the streets of the city'.[127]

The altercation with the Manchester Boy Scouts gained a large amount of attention and was discussed on the floor of the House of Commons. Ronald McNeill, a Unionist MP, asked Augustine Birrell, chief secretary for Ireland, if he was aware of the incident where the Scouts 'were attacked by a Nationalist mob…chased back to their camp; that the scouts' tents were torn down and property carried away; [and] whether he is aware that the antipathy of the Nationalist mob of Dublin to the boy scouts arises from the fact that they carry the Union Jack and are affiliated to the British scouts'. Birrell was keen to play down the incident and stated that the matter was 'greatly exaggerated' and he was informed by the police that the Boy Scouts were followed 'by a number of idlers, who made jeering remarks and threw some stones'. He continued that one of the tents was interfered with which caused it to fall and that a kit bag and a few pans were all that was stolen. He was anxious to emphasise that 'this was not the doing of a mob, but of a knot of corner boys' and that the carrying of Union Jacks was

[126] *Irish Times*, 1 Aug. 1913; *Irish Independent*, 26 July 1913, 28 July 1913
[127] *Irish Times*, 2 Aug. 1913.

not referred to at all. Birrell asserted that Fianna Éireann were 'a perfectly independent and quite trivial association'.[128]

The willingness of members to attack other groups was not solely the result of them acting on their own initiative and reflects Elaine Sisson's point that Fianna Éireann had a 'much more military, and ideological, agenda'.[129] One member recalled that, 'we were taught to be aggressive to the R.I.C., and the boys in Camden Street would avail of every opportunity to attack the Protestant Church Boys' Brigade, who at that time were very strong and would carry the Union Jack'.[130] A former member wrote that Fianna Éireann 'was not a very popular organisation. It had plenty of opposition from the Baden Powell Scout movement and the A.O.H. Boys' Brigade, who had their Headquarters in the South Mall and Morrison's Island, within two hundred yards of the Fianna Headquarters'.[131]

These activities do not seem to have discouraged members, and may have attracted them, as one member recalled how it was an anti-British organisation and 'we never claimed it to be otherwise and were inordinately proud of the fact'.[132] Liam O'Callaghan and Christy Monahan, two Fianna members, had been in the Boy Scouts and had gone to see the King on his trip to Dublin in 1912, with their expenses being paid for by the Earl of Bandon. They asked whether it was possible to join Fianna Éireann and when they received word that it was they and about twelve others left the Boy Scouts to join the organisation. Despite the fact that they had been in the Boy Scouts there does not seem to have been any ill will towards these new recruits. Christy Monahan was even appointed a Fianna scoutmaster.[133]

There were also disputes with former members who had left Fianna Éireann and these were also targets for attack. In 1913 a number of branches broke away from Fianna Éireann with one member writing that, 'I think they did not take the organisation seriously and were just in it for a good time'. These members were about ten in number and were around seventeen or eighteen 'when it was considered in those days childish to be a Scout'. Upon their departure they took a number of tents as they felt they were entitled to them, having been in the organisation from its inception. Fianna Éireann member Garry Holohan reported that 'this was a procedure that could not be tolerated by an organisation that believed in physical force', so they bided their time until they heard that the group was camping opposite

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[128] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 56, 31 July 1913, cols. 708-9; *Irish Times*, 1 Aug. 1913; *Irish Independent*, 1 Aug. 1913; House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 34, 20 Feb. 1912, col. 460.
[129] Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots*, p. 123.
[130] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[131] P.J. Murphy, BMH WS 869.
[132] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[133] Sean Healy, Liam O'Callaghan, BMH WS 47.

the Martello tower in Malahide. The group was attacked at two o'clock in the morning and, 'we pulled down the tents and tore them up' and 'cut the tyres off their bicycles so that they could not call the police'.[134] On the foundation of the Irish Citizen Army in 1913 many boys left Fianna Éireann to join the youth section of this new body.[135] Later on, despite the declaration required for entry, some members even left to join the British army. [136]

This examination of the commonalities and distinctions between both groups has demonstrated that while Fianna Éireann was an explicitly military organisation designed for pursuing Irish independence this did not necessitate the exclusion of a wide and varied programme being enacted whose motivation was increased physical health, the encouragement of virtues such as cleanliness, and the provision of a recreational outlet for adolescents. While they feared the cultural import of the Boy Scouts there answer was to large extent fashioned by their methods. They shared many common concerns and it is clear that they were both susceptible to contemporary trends concerning physical fitness, hygiene, and cleanliness, and both responded by providing instruction to their respective members in developing greater awareness of these issues. They were both concerned by the anxieties provoked by urban environments and encouraged the development of rurally orientated activities. For the Boy Scouts the urban centre was seen as morally corrupting and the site for physical degeneracy and Fianna Éireann held similar, often identical, anxieties. What Fianna Éireann provided was a change of emphasis and held that these undesirable environments were associated with Anglicisation and the retreat to the rural environment for them was a means of engaging with a more 'authentic' Irish atmosphere. This was a means of highlighting their distinctiveness from the Boy Scouts but was also related to the wider context of the cultural revival which lauded the rural over the urban and glorified pre-industrial society. The relationship between the two organisations demonstrates the extent to which Fianna Éireann adopted the methods and values of the Boy Scouts and tailored them to their needs by 'disavowing a colonial debt' and then 'lodging a proprietary claim on the borrowed material'. [137] While the Boy Scouts encouraged discipline, self-control, and obedience as necessary for members to become good citizens of the United Kingdom, Fianna Éireann encouraged these exact values solely in a nationalist context.[138] Similarly, despite the efforts of Fianna Éireann to place the organisation in a historical lineage by invoking

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[134] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[135] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755; *Irish Independent*, 29 July, 1914.
[136] Joseph O'Shea, BMH WS 21; Patrick Hearne, BMH WS 1742.
[137] Valente, *The myth of manliness*, p. 166.
[138] Hay, 'foundation and development', p. 54; McGarry, *The Rising*, p. 32.

mythical figures such as Cu Chulainn in order to differentiate themselves, the Boy Scouts adopted similar models and equally credited Cu Chulainn as an inspiration. This is indicative of how both groups felt the need to provide an historical lineage for their respective organisations. While Fianna Éireann has been primarily seen as a political and military organisation for their later role in the Irish revolution it must be appreciated that they were initially a youth organisation and this aspect is important in investigating their significance. The key distinction between the Boy Scouts and Fianna Éireann was not one of methodology, rhetoric, or discourse on a range of perceived social ills, but on the ideological outlook that underpinned both organisations. For Fianna Éireann the revolutionary potential of their members was held to be essential in furthering the pursuit of independence while the ideology that characterised the Boy Scouts was essentially conservative, designed to defend the existing order of society and dedicated to developing social change within the existing political framework. While Part I has highlighted the varied function of youth movements and their contribution to Irish society, a central issue that youth movements in the period had to deal with was accusations of militarism. To what extent these were justified is the subject of Part II.

Part II

Youth Movement and Militarism

8 Youth Movements in Context

8.1 Military Context

The development of the National Service League provides an opportunity to examine the contemporary military sentiment and the context in which youth movements emerged and grew. The league lobbied unsuccessfully for the introduction of compulsory military service and compulsory training for adolescents and young men. It was founded in 1901 with the Dublin branch being formed in 1907. Their aim was to secure the peace and safety of the empire and the country, as well as improving its physical and moral condition, by lobbying for the adoption of universal military training.[1] The organisation had the support of many influential public figures such as Lord Meath and Lord Roberts, the president of the League, and by 1911 had a membership of 91,000.[2] By 1912 this had risen 98,931 and if adherents, a different level of support which involved signing up to the League and making a penny donation, are included the total rose to 218,513.[3] In Ireland the list of subscribers to the Dublin branch in 1907 was thirty, in 1908 150, in 1909 250, and in 1910 over 500.[4]

Under the proposed plan of the National Service League every man between the ages of eighteen and thirty would be liable for home defence. Boys from fourteen to eighteen would receive physical education and drill in a boys' brigade or a cadet corps under state supervision before they reached military age. Men from the ages of eighteen to twenty-one, without distinction of class or creed, would receive four months of infantry training with a maximum additional two months for training in other arms. This would be followed by an annual musketry course and a fortnight's training in camp for the following three years and in a national emergency they could be called up by parliament up to the age of thirty.[5] The aim of the league was to add compulsion to the Territorial Army (formed in 1908)[6], which they

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[1] *Irish Times*, 6 Apr. 1907.
[2] I.F.W. Beckett, *The amateur military tradition* (Manchester, 1991), p. 219.
[3] Summers, 'Militarism', p. 113.
[4] *Irish Times*, 16 Apr. 1910.
[5] *Irish Times*, 2 Feb. 1909.
[6] 'An act to provide for the reorganisation of his majesty's military forces and for that purpose to authorise the establishment of county associations, and the raising and maintenance of a territorial force, and for amending the acts relating to the same forces', 2 Aug. 1907, *The Law Reports: the public general statutes, passed in the seventh year of the reign of his majesty King Edward the seventh, 1907*, 45 (London, 1907), pp. 17-41.

believed contained fatal defects as it could not provide sufficient numbers of trained men, with even the training that was carried out deemed inadequate. As the system was voluntary it made it difficult to introduce reforms or augment the training received by members. Lord Roberts and the vice-presidents of the League stated that 'under that system any attempt to increase the training is attended by an immediate falling off in the enlistments'. They argued that the organisation of the Territorial Army was unfair as under the prevailing conditions of training both the men engaged in the army and their employers were placed at a disadvantage in an industrial context when compared with those who 'by abstaining from taking part in the work of national defence, are able to devote the whole of their time to business or pleasure'.[7] Lord Roberts wrote that it was 'hopelessly inefficient' and 'consisted chiefly of boys'.[8]

Due to their campaign the National Service League was held responsible for the loss of Territorial Army recruits. In the House of Lords, Lord Haldane, the secretary of state for war and founder of the Territorial Army, commented that as many as 20,000-30,000 men were lost as a result of activities of the League.[9] Sir John French, inspector general of the forces, reported that, 'complaints were made to me by more than one commanding officer that their endeavours to obtain recruits were much hampered by agents of the National Service League, who are said to go about certain districts advising men not to take service with the Territorial Force'.[10] The League dismissed these claims and pointed to the fact that they had asked the War Office to enrol a Territorial regiment in Dublin, but to no avail, characterising this as a 'remarkable instance' of 'No Irish need apply!'.[11] Rev. John Mahaffy, a Trinity College academic and later provost of the college, believed the suspicion that the British government felt of seeing Irish men trained and armed was 'one of the greatest blunders that England was always committing with regard to Ireland'.[12]

In 1911, in an effort to encourage participation in military training amongst adolescents, the executive committee of the Dublin branch of the League resolved to offer prizes to teams of four boys from schools and troops of Boy Scouts in Leinster for miniature rifle shooting. The competition was to be an annual fixture of the Civil Service Rifle Club who offered a prize to the boy with the highest individual score.[13] One of the ambitions of the

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[7] The vice-presidents of the League were Lords' Meath, Wellington, Milner, Curzon and Raglan, *Irish Times*, 2 Feb. 1909.
[8] *Irish Times*, 8 Feb. 1911.
[9] House of Lords Debates, 5th series, vol. 10, 20 Nov. 1911, col. 257.
[10] *Report by the inspector-general of the forces on the territorial force* [Cd. 5998] (1911), p. 2.
[11] *Irish Times*, 9 Feb. 1912.
[12] *Irish Times*, 22 Feb. 1911.
[13] *Irish Times*, 13 Jan. 1911.

League was to make rifle shooting a national pastime.[14] Rifle shooting as a sporting activity was advanced as a means of ensuring active rather than passive participation. *The British Medical Journal* argued that if this was encouraged a 'good many of the young townsmen who take a vicarious part in football by crowding to see much advertised matches between professional or semi-professional teams, might with advantage to their own character and bodily training employ their leisure afternoons in rifle practice'. The objective was to increase the defensive capacity of the country, but also aimed to foster a feeling of camaraderie amongst participants as 'sport brings men together where business tends to separate them, and the formation of rifle clubs or corps establishes amongst the members a feeling of comradeship such as only sport in some form is able to do'.[15] J.B. Story, a fifty-eight year old ophthalmologist, fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and honorary secretary of the Dublin branch of the National Service League, believed that such training 'would give to the children of the poor much of the advantage which the children of the rich obtained in public schools'.[16] Charles Reid, honorary secretary of the Dublin Civil Service Rifle Club, praised the potential of such a plan and appreciated that superior skill in rifle shooting constituted the strength of the Boer positions in South Africa during the Boer War, 'when a body of untrained farmers not only held at bay the best disciplined and most expensively equipped army in the world, but at one time threatened its overthrow'. In the aftermath of the Boer War the popularity of rifle clubs increased, partly reflecting a growing appreciation of the role of the ordinary citizen in national defence. Reid condemned the absence of efficient military training amongst the Territorial Army where he believed rifle shooting was only regarded in most regiments as of secondary importance, noting that 'many battalions had never even fired a shot in a miniature range!'.[17]

There were reasons advanced why their programme should be introduced specifically in Ireland. J.B. Story commented that 'if Home Rule did come, and they had no military training, they might find themselves swallowed up by a well-trained military nation'.[18] Sir Thomas Myles, a supporter of home rule and former president of the Royal College of Surgeons, stated that 'they had no volunteers in Ireland, and when they were asked to make sacrifices it was simply asking Englishmen to defend them. That did not appeal to him'. He had become a supporter of the National Service League as he looked upon the organisation

[14] *Irish Times*, 10 May 1907.
[15] 'Rifle shooting as a national pastime', *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (1900), pp. 399-400.
[16] *Irish Times*, 28 Mar. 1908.
[17] *Irish Times*, 17 Jan. 1911.
[18] *Irish Times*, 28 Mar. 1908.

'as a possible means whereby the inequality between England and Ireland might be abolished, and that they might unite in a common service under a common flag'.[19] He was echoing the principle that to be free necessitated taking a role in national defence. Former Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone had earlier commented that,

> no community which is not primarily charged with the business of its own defence is really, or ever can be, in the full sense of the word, a free community. The privileges of freedom and the burdens of freedom are absolutely associated together; to bear the burden is as necessary as to enjoy the privilege, in order to form that character which is the great ornament of freedom itself.[20]

The potential danger of conflict emerging within Ireland was forwarded as a reason why the League's objectives should be realised in Ireland. John Mahaffy posited that

> supposing that there was a danger of civil war in Ireland-which let God forbid-and that all of them had to go to fight, he for one would infinitely sooner have to fight against a disciplined army that knew the rules of war than against a band of wild peasants, who were often guilty of outrages that no soldier would tolerate. He would like to be opposed by honest soldiers, properly drilled, who knew how to fight and knew the rules of war. The training was one of the most important that the Irish could possibly get, even those who were possibly disloyal to the Crown. It would be for the good of the nation.

The social benefits were also emphasised. The businessman, Sir John Nutting, believed that it would yield benefits in terms of physical health and ease class tension in Ireland. He commented that it would 'greatly benefit the physique of the people, and then, when they were training, would it not lead to mutual understanding of one class with another? All would be then joined together with a common object, the possible defence of their country, and it would develop a practical patriotism'. The National Service League was

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[19] *Irish Times*, 4 Mar. 1908.

[20] *Report from the select committee on colonial military expenditure; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, appendix and index* [Cd. 423] (1861), p. 257.

promoted as egalitarian in its object and Nutting believed that it was equally important that the rich, as well as the poor, received training. In this regard it was not one class asserting a role for another but a nationally orientated movement that saw national defence, and the pitfalls in front of the rising generations, as transcending social class. For Nutting 'there was the loafer in the club and on the racecourse quite as much as in the streets of the slum. The National Service League would take the loafer of every class and teach them discipline and inculcate patriotism, which all quite equally required'.[21] Similarly, Lord Curzon, the Conservative former viceroy of India and later foreign secretary, stated that there were too many people 'fomenting war' between classes 'and there could not be a healthier antidote to these pernicious tendencies than a system such as theirs which put the Duke and costermonger side by side in the healthy comradeship of the playground and the camp'.[22] The potential for developing class harmony through military service was also appreciated by Baden-Powell. During World War I he wrote that conscription would apply to 'rich and poor without distinction with its common sharing of hardship and danger, and its common sacrifice for a common ideal at the Front, coupled with the common sorrow and the common service of those behind the scenes at home'.[23]

The National Service League sought the improvement of national physique, coupled with a renewed appreciation of the responsibilities of citizenship, 'dulled amid the business and pleasures of a highly civilized community'. The ambition was to provide to 'hundreds of thousands a valuable training in methodic work, cleanliness, punctuality, order and discipline, which could not fail to have a beneficial effect upon industrial and commercial efficiency, and hence upon the wealth and prosperity of the Nation'.[24] J.B. Story wrote that if this plan was carried out many men would have for the first time in their lives 'a healthy life in wholesome surroundings, good food, fresh air, and an education in discipline, order, self-respect and self-control which would stand them for the rest of their lives'.[25] Lord Curzon stated that apart from defence 'universal military training was required to arrest the physical degeneration of the people-to take hold of the narrow-chested, anaemic, listless denizen of their great towns, and turn him, if they could, into, a citizen and a man'.[26] The Irish born and Trinity College educated dean of Norwich, William Lefroy, wrote that 'the nation stands in sore need of discipline' adding that 'I have a suspicion that a few years of Spartan severity

[21] *Irish Times*, 22 Feb. 1911.
[22] *Irish Times*, 30 June 1910.
[23] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 12, no. 9, Sept. 1918, p. 161.
[24] *The National Service Journal*, Nov. 1903, pp. 3-4, cited in Summers, 'Militarism', p. 114.
[25] *Irish Times*, 22 May 1909.
[26] *Irish Times*, 30 June 1910.

would go a long way to stemming the tide of enervating softness, selfishness, and luxury which threatens millions of men and women'.[27] J. Ellis Barker, a German born homeopath, was convinced that the introduction of military service would benefit the national physique by aiding in the improvement of the bodies and habits of the recruits. He drew a comparison between recruits from the British Isles and their Indian counterparts. The British Isles recruits were for him 'undersized, under-developed, and half-starved weaklings, taken from the ranks of the unemployed and born in the slums', while the Indian battalions were 'filled with tall, broad-shouldered, muscular men, the very finest specimens of British manhood'. He concluded that if universal and compulsory physical training was introduced 'it would very likely lead to a physical regeneration of the people, seeing that at present the majority of our workers receive practically no open-air exercise whatever'. [28] Thus, the introduction of military training for adolescents and young men had support amongst many influential public figures and was a topic that had entered public discourse.

As many of the youth movements considered had a religious basis we must examine the implicit connections made between the military and religion. The hybrid nature of the methods used in the organisations founded on religious grounds, fusing as they did religious and military themes, developed an already established trend. What has been termed 'Christian militarism' was a phenomenon evident since mid-Victorian times and owed much to the religious literature of the time which emphasised evangelical military generals cast in the image of the Christian soldier as hero.[29] The Boys' Brigade was consciously placed in a religious lineage to show the tradition from which they took encouragement and highlights this fusion of the military and religion. The Church of Ireland archbishop of Armagh, and primate of Ireland, John Baptist Crozier, stated that 'it seemed strange that in Sir William's time no such idea of bringing to bear the qualities of discipline and self-sacrifice, such as existed in a soldiers life, was ever thought of'. He argued that the idea was not a novel one 'for St. Paul recognised the advantages of the training and discipline of a soldier's life. He found in the discipline of a Roman soldier the something that was needed to build up the character of the Christian soldier'. His understanding of their role encouraged military values enlightened by Christian ideology with evangelistic overtones. He stated that 'they sometimes thought that in the Church of Christ they would find safety. They should remember that the Church of Jesus Christ was not an army of safety but an army for conquest. It appealed to the

[27] *Weekly Irish Times*, 23 Sept. 1905.
[28] J. E. Barker, 'National military service and national physique', *The British Medical Journal*, 2 (1908), p. 558.
[29] O. Anderson, 'The growth of Christian militarism in mid-Victorian Britain', *The English Historical Review*, 86 (1971), p. 46.

chivalrous spirit in boys, and it needed defenders'.[30] At a Boys' Brigade demonstration in 1889 Rev. Walter Riddall, a Church of Ireland rector, stated that 'the time of Abraham down to the time of Gordon…proved that there was nothing incompatible or contradictory between the military and religious ideas'.[31] Samuel J. Platt, captain of the 39th Belfast company, believed that

> the first great B.B. Officer of modern times was Oliver Cromwell. Whatever our opinions may be as to the actions of the Great Protector amidst the storms which surged around his giant frame, he is our greatest exponent of the combination of religious training and military discipline which, in more tranquil times, forms the framework of the Boys' Brigade movement.[32]

In the period the image of the soldier was undergoing a transition and British officers became national heroes and a model to be exalted whose likeness appeared on board games, cookie tins, and cigarette cards, with popular cults developing around officers such as Lord Roberts and Charles Gordon. In this context 'loyalty, duty, self-help, and patriotism were ideals attached to the military and the empire and were ideals to which all graduating teens, working and middle class alike, had been thoroughly exposed'.[33] This was in marked contrast to earlier attitudes towards British soldiers which characterised them as from low social grades forced through hunger into the ranks. In 1891 there were still complaints that soldiers in army uniforms were being refused admission to bars and theatres.[34] Lord Brownlow, a Conservative politician who was under-secretary of state for war from 1889-1892, remarked that 'in old days the average villager had no idea of the duties of a soldier, whose occupation was described as "being shot at for a shilling a day"' and 'the idea existed that the soldier's time was divided betwen (sic) fighting and debauchery, and the enlistment of a son was looked upon as a family disgrace'. He desired to see a greater appreciation of the role that the military played and described how 'many villagers never saw troops under arms in their whole lives, and the soldier and civilian were as much separated as if they were different

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[30] *Irish Times*, 18 May 1914.
[31] *Belfast News-Letter*, 4 May 1889.
[32] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 24, no. 6, Feb. 1916, p. 84.
[33] S. M. Miller, '"In support of the "imperial mission"? volunteering for the South African war, 1899-1902', *The Journal of Military History*, 69 (2005), p. 702.
[34] House of Commons Debates, 3rd series, vol. 350, 19 Feb. 1891, col. 1143.

races'. Such views were diminishing, which he attributed to improvements in the conditions of members with increased care shown for their welfare by the authorities.[35]

There had been many complaints regarding the conditions of a soldier's life and it was commented that the majority of barracks were 'infinitely less commodious and more archaic than our workhouses and convict prisons', with their appearance being 'calculated to chill the heart of the newly-joined recruit, and which would arouse the official ire of a Government factory inspector'. A member of the Royal Scots Grey regiment wrote that

> I didn't get any wages last week, and only 2s. 6d. on Friday, and I am in debt through getting a new pair of khaki trousers, which cost 10s. 6d. I am getting sick of the way they twist our wages about, and I am beginning to feel the effects of not eating any meat. Some days I only get two slices of bread and butter to eat. I wish they had different food. They say all the regiments get the same, or else I would transfer to another regiment.[36]

However, there had been improvements. Sir Charles Cameron, who had served on the army sanitary, army hospital, and army medical advisory committees, wrote that in the period 'a great improvement had been effected in the condition of the rank and file; they have libraries, good canteens, and improved diet'. For him it was 'sound policy to make the condition of the soldiers as comfortable and as respectable as possible, so as to promote their self-respect'.[37]

The earl of Brownlow believed there were other reasons for this improvement, as civilians 'are now able to give some attention to, and gain practical knowledge of, military affairs by means of volunteering'. This achieved a much closer unity between the armed forces and the civilian population and he saw men proudly wear an army uniform and come into contact with regular troops in military centres. Here they made friends with the men from the regular army 'and learn from them the details of military life'. There was a shared exchange of views and it helped develop a greater understanding of each other as 'Tommy Atkins is delighted to make friends with the volunteer, and the volunteer takes a military pride in "chumming" with Tommy Atkins, and thus they gain a mutual respect and regard for each other'.[38] General Goldsworthy, British army officer and Conservative politician, stated that he wanted to see the uniform of a soldier respected by everyone and that 'the best way to

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[35] Lord Brownlow, 'The British volunteer system', *The North American Review*, 170 (1900), p. 752.
[36] NLI, Thomas MacDonagh Papers, 10,853/4.
[37] C. A. Cameron, *Autobiography of Sir Charles A. Cameron* (Dublin, 1920), pp. 75-7.
[38] Brownlow, 'British volunteer system', p. 752.

get the uniform respected is to induce the best class of men to enter the service'. Similarly, an anonymous contributor to the *Fortnightly Review* noted that 'whatever our country may be, it is at least 'respectable', and the army must be placed in harmony with respectability, so that decent men may not dread association with it'.[39] The committee which was appointed to inquire into military preparations for the Boer War noted that 'there must be some co-relation between the circumstances of the recruit and the training to which he is subjected'. They reasoned that if the terms offered were only attractive to men whose intelligence was underdeveloped it was impossible to make them efficient soldiers with the same amount of training that would have been sufficient for men whose calibre was higher upon entry.[40] Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny, adjutant general to the forces, reported to the royal commission on the war in South Africa that soldiers in the United Kingdom did not have as good an education as their continental counterparts. He commented that, 'I would say that his mental qualifications are not up to the general run of European soldiers, and the reason of it is, that we get them mostly from a class where education is not looked to as much as it is in Germany and in France'.[41] The ambition was to reform the perception of the armed forces amongst the general public and that youth organisations adopted the military as their model served to further the aim of improving the public profile of the army. Rev. William Monk Gibbon, founder of the Dublin Boys' Brigade, stated in 1906 that 'it was always a great assistance to them to know that the military authorities valued their work'.[42]

Youth movements should also be understood in the context of fears surrounding the adequacy of the armed forces for military conflict. It has been argued that the professionalism of the army was inadequate and the Duke of Wellington's comment in 1808 that 'nobody in the British Army ever reads a regulation or an order as if it were to be a guide for his conduct, or in any other manner than as an amusing novel' still resonated regarding discipline.[43] Bernard Law Montgomery later commented that 'it was not fashionable to study war and we were not allowed to talk about our profession in the Officers' Mess'.[44] As an indication of the contemporary military intellect it is noteworthy to record the estimate that while Germany

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[39] House of Commons Debates, 3rd series, vol. 350, 19 Feb. 1891, col. 1143; Anonymous, 'The army and the democracy', *Fortnightly Review*, Mar. 1886, p. 344, cited in Summers, 'Militarism', p. 108.

[40] *Report of his majesty's commissioners appointed to inquire into the military preparations and other matters connected with the war in South Africa* [Cd. 1789] (1904), pp. 44-5.

[41] *Minutes of evidence taken before the royal commission on the war in South Africa,* 1 [Cd. 1790] (1904), p. 194.

[42] *Irish Times*, 5 Jun. 1906.

[43] B. Poe II, 'British army reforms, 1902-1914', *Military Affairs*, 31 (1967), p. 132.

[44] B.L. Montgomery, *The memoirs of field-marshal the viscount Montgomery of Alamein, K.G.* (New York, 1958), p. 29.

and France were providing 50 per cent and 25 per cent respectively of the military literature of the period, England was only contributing 1 per cent.[45] It has been argued that the British army in the second half of the nineteenth century had been 'conscientiously unprofessional' and 'noted for its gallantry, its self-indulgent amateurism, its loyalty, and the well-bred bearing...it had not been noted for its ability, its efficiency, its attention to sound administration, and its regard for doctrinal purity, or, indeed, its view on the importance of systematic "thinking" or planning'.[46] In his evidence to the royal commission which followed the Boer War, Robert Baden-Powell emphasised the qualities which he was to later encourage in the Boy Scouts, those of personal responsibility and the provision of scope for initiative to individual members. In relation to the army his opinion was that 'junior officers should be given responsibility from their first entry into the service' and 'should be made to really command their unit, however small, and be answerable for its efficiency and success'. He argued that 'the large majority of officers are keen enough and intelligent enough, but want to be given a real job in which to make their name, and develop their professional interest'. He was critical of the structure of the armed forces and believed that 'the so-called chain of responsibility is too often one of irresponsibility'. For him 'resource and cunning in the field should be encouraged, especially at manoeuvres' and 'barrack-square drill and deadening routine should be reduced as much as possible'.[47]

It was not only Baden-Powell who believed that greater initiative was needed by individual soldiers. Lieutenant General Sir Ian Hamilton, an honorary vice-president of the Boys' Brigade, believed that developments in modern warfare necessitated greater individual skills. He pointed out to the royal commission that 'the conditions of modern warfare with long-range arms and smokeless powder involve an immense extension of lines of battle, diminish the power of control by commanding Officers, and increase the degree of individual intelligence required in each individual private, both in attack and defence'.[48] Lord Roberts, commander in chief of the forces, the professional head of the British army, was adamant that the confusion of the South African campaign was a product of the military system. For him the volume of civilian controlled agencies and politically stimulated regulations suppressed

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[45] A. Vagts, *A history of militarism* (New York, 1959), p. 226.

[46] N. D'Ombrain, *War machinery and high policy: defence administration in peacetime Britain, 1902-1914* (Oxford, 1973), p. 141.

T. C. Kennedy, 'Airing the dirty linen of an unreformed army: the Kinloch affair, 1902-1903', *Military Affairs*, 43 (1979), p. 69.

[47] *Minutes of evidence taken before the royal commission on the war in South Africa,* 2 [Cd. 1791] (1904), p. 424.

[48] *Report of his majesty's commissioners appointed to inquire into the military preparations and other matters connected with the war in South Africa*, p. 45.

individuality, hindered initiative among soldiers, and prevented a systematic reform of either the war office or the army. He felt that improvements could be made by 'a clear definition and enforcement of individual responsibility'. 'The administration of the Army', he argued, 'should be based on business principles and Military requirements rather than on considerations of political expediency'.[49] Lord Haldane too had reflected on the performance of the army in South Africa and had concluded that a better system of organisation was necessary. For him, 'it taught the nation to be sober, to be serious, to put aside the spirit of militarism and to reflect upon war as well as other things with a view to better preparations and better organisation'.[50]

8.2 Military Training in Education

The fears concerning military training in education account for some of the misapprehensions surrounding the motivations of the leadership of youth movements. Many decried the use of the classroom as a forum for the inculcation of military principles. The economist and imperial critic John Hobson wondered how a society could allow 'the persistent attempt to seize the school system for imperialism masquerading as patriotism'.[51] This had been an issue in the public school system and it has been argued that there was a substantial degree of militarism in the culture of these schools.[52] This was also a concern for legislators, and when Lord Haldane introduced his territorial force bill in 1907, a combination of pacifists and socialists defeated the provision of a cadet clause as they objected to the idea of military service while children were still at school.[53] Many disapproved of what was perceived as 'attempts to civilise our boys by familiarising them with drill for slaughter'.[54] Others satirised the naivety of those who believed that military training could act as a panacea for the difficulties that were identified. W.L. George commented that many wrongly asserted 'that a man in uniform ceases to be a man in so far as he ceases to be imperfect'. He rallied against those who believed military training ensured people became diligent, altruistic, brave, and

[49] Roberts to Arnold-Foster, 7 Oct. 1903, British Library, Arnold-Foster Papers, Add. Ms 50,335, cited in T. C. Kennedy, 'Airing the dirty linen', p. 69.
[50] House of Commons Debates, 4rd series, vol. 153, 8 Mar. 1906, col. 672.
[51] J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: a study* (London, 1902), p. 217.
[52] C. B. Otley, 'Militarism and militarization in the public schools, 1900-1972', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 29 (1978), pp. 321-39.
[53] A. Bloomfield, 'Drill and dance as symbols of imperialism', in J.A. Mangan, ed., *Making imperial mentalities: socialisation and British imperialism* (Manchester, 1990), p. 101.
[54] 'Wanted-a national boys' brigade', *Review of Reviews*, 16 (1897), p.67.

efficient and quipped that 'at the very back of their theology is, I suspect, a belief that if uniforms had been worn in the Garden of Eden there would have been no Fall'.[55]

There were others who believed that youth movements and schools that taught military drill actually discouraged enlistment to the army. The lord bishop of Bath and Wells, George Wyndham Kennion, believed it was more difficult to get recruits from those who had been obliged to drill from a young age 'than it was to get recruits from young men who had come up from other schools', as 'compulsory drill for boys does kill out a good deal of the love of soldiering which they have when they are allowed to enter into it in a free manner as at present'.[56] The trade unionist John Burns argued that the government would not succeed in developing a greater sense of patriotism by advancing drill in schools, noting that 'if you want to stimulate patriotism you are not going to make generals by giving men gaudy uniforms, or make patriots by teaching children barrack yard drill'. The two great recruiting sergeants he identified were poverty and patriotism and he believed that the former accounted for 95 per cent and the latter for 5 per cent. Burns observed that the ambition of drill in schools was to increase that 95 per cent 'by fictitious and adventitious aids', arguing that this plan would fail as members of the working class would not assent to it. For Burns, 'if you force upon them the drill sergeant, as against the schoolmaster...the working people will withdraw their children, and send them to schools where only physical exercises are taught'.[57] The Conservative politician, the marquess of Tullibardine, similarly argued that it was possible 'these units are injuring the military spirit in this country'.[58] David Lloyd George later commented that 'the pre-war conscriptionists were associated in the popular mind with extreme jingoism, and in consequence opposition to any suggestion of national military service had become an article of faith of faith for some Liberals and Socialists'.[59]

The fact that drill was accepted as a form of physical exercise in the Irish school system meant that the authorities were accused of promoting military training. In 1900 a new educational curriculum was introduced in Ireland which formally included the provision of drill as a subject to be taught in Irish schools. This was on the recommendation of the commission on manual and practical instruction which in 1898 argued that drill exercises 'contribute largely to the health, the spirits, and the general well-being of the children'.[60] Mr Browne, an education inspector reporting on the Omagh district in Co. Tyrone, argued that

[55] W. L. George, *Daily Chronicle*, 8 Jun. 1915, cited in Summers, 'Militarism', p. 119.
[56] House of Lords Debates, 5th series, vol. 2, 12 July 1909, col. 351.
[57] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 81, 30 Mar. 1900, col. 847.
[58] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 29, 1 Aug. 1911, col. 170.
[59] D. L. George, *War memoirs, I* (London, 1938), p. 248.
[60] *Commission on manual and practical instruction*, p. 4.

drill was necessary in Irish schools as 'the pupils often do not walk firmly, speak distinctly, or obey orders promptly'. Another education inspector, Edmond Downing, reported that 'there is very little attempt at drill, and consequently both boys and girls stand in clumsy attitudes and walk awkwardly'.[61] The new subject was largely greeted with eagerness and was reported to be the most popular subject in the new curriculum. The inspector for the Dublin circuit wrote that drill was the only subject of the new revised programme that was 'taken up with actual enthusiasm'. However, this was not the case in all parts of the country which underlines the ambivalence which surrounded the introduction of military activity into civilian life. In 1901 the first reports into the implementation and reception of the new curriculum amongst the general public were completed. The district inspector for Cork reported that during the year he had witnessed a discernible decline in the number of pupils attending school in his area. He attributed this to aspects of the new programme, commenting that 'the institution of Drill was by many regarded as a step towards conscription, and the senior boys were kept at home accordingly by the frightened parents....the scare regarding Drill has now almost subsided, but it will require some time before the pupils become reconciled to the new scheme'. This was also the case in Co. Limerick where there was a notable decrease in attendance, with the inspector stating that 'some parents and pupils caught up the notion that the Drill being introduced had some connection with the war in South Africa, and as a result a large number of children remained away from school for a time'.[62]

The military context in which youth movements grew is essential in situating them in their proper historical context and understanding the military models that many of them they adopted. The values and attitudes of the army were changing, both internally through reform, and externally by the greater appreciation of their function amongst the general populace. The campaign of the National Service League in lobbying for compulsory military service for adolescents highlights an important current in the contemporary debate regarding the military preparedness of the country and demonstrates that the adoption of the military model was an issue that had entered public discourse. The benefits of developing the military training of adolescent boys was attaining greater significance with the image of the army bring promoted by the adoption of military methods. The anxiety surrounding the performance of the United Kingdom in the Boer War prompted a sober reflection on the capability of the armed forces

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[61] Dawson, 'The want of industrial and practical education', pp. 219, 224.

[62] *Appendix to the sixty-eighth report of the commissioners of national education in Ireland for the year 1901, section 1, general reports on the state of national education by inspectors* [Cd. 997] (1902), pp. 35, 22, 48.

and highlighted the need for improved training. The intersections between religion and the military provided a key ingredient in the formation of the organisations founded on a religious basis and the fusion of military and religious values was to become an important element in their programmes. This incursion of military values into a civilian context met with much disapproval and in Ireland the adoption of drill in the school system heighted anxieties surrounding military service. Youth movements played a role in the diffusion of these sentiments and an appreciation of this military context is vital in understanding the environment in which they developed. To better appreciate the military basis of many youth movements it is necessary to analyse their relationship with other military organisations, primarily the armed forces and paramilitary groups.

9 Youth Movements, the Armed Forces and Paramilitarism

9.1 Youth Movements and the Armed Forces

The Volunteer movement was an important element in the development of many of the youth movements under consideration. It had been formed in 1859 in the aftermath of the Crimean war and was a part-time force raised for the home defence of the British mainland.[1] Most of the general public drew their image of the military from Volunteer corps rather than the regular army and it was perfectly plausible to distinguish between popular enthusiasm for military training while simultaneously displaying a deep aversion to the regular army. As Anne Summers has noted, 'it was politically possible and respectable to preach the ideal of a citizenry united in defence of the homeland while simultaneously decrying the imperialistic adventures of the Regular Army'.[2] William Smith, the founder of the Boys' Brigade, was a member of the Volunteer movement as was Walter Gee, the founder of the Church Lads' Brigade, and this had an influence on the structure their movements were to take as 'the drilling, parades and route marches of The Boys' Brigade represented the traditions and forms of the Army and Volunteers transferred to an adolescent environment'.[3] William Smith contrasted the conditions that prevailed in his Volunteer regiment with those in his Sunday school stating that he 'could not fail to contrast the discipline and *esprit de corps* which prevailed in that regiment with the looseness of the tie that bound the boys to their Sunday school'. This comparison suggested a solution to the difficulty of dealing with older boys. He pondered why it was 'that in this British land of ours every boy is proud to be thought a British boy, and yet in this Christian land of ours comparatively so few boys would be proud to be thought Christian boys'.[4]

The Volunteer movement formed in 1859 was not extended to Ireland despite efforts in 1860, 1879, and 1880. This was the ambition of many in Ireland who had witnessed boys being drilled. A reporter with the *All Ireland Review* had witnessed a company of boys from the Christian Brothers being drilled and noted that they 'presented a very smart and soldierly appearance whenever they appeared in public'. He believed that they represented the future Volunteers of Ireland writing that

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[1] For a fuller account see I.F.W. Beckett, *Riflemen form* (London, 1982); H. Cunningham, *The volunteer force: a social and political history, 1859-1908* (London, 1975).
[2] Summers, 'Militarism', p. 107.
[3] Springhall et al., *Sure and stedfast*, p. 25.
[4] W.A. Smith, 'The Boys' Brigade', *Quiver*, 44 (1909), p. 660.

> such boys, it must be remembered, will be the future Volunteers of this country, for it is ridiculous to suppose that we shall go on forever paying our proportion of the cost of British Volunteers while tamely surrendering our Constitutional right to have Volunteers of her own, at the cost, proportionately, of the English, the Scotch, and the Welsh.

For him 'our drilled boys transformed into soldiers of a Territorial Force will…be a defence to this western flank of the Empire and a guarantee for the maintenance of internal order'.[5] The territorial and reserve forces bill in 1907, under which the Volunteer force was reorganised into the Territorial Army, did not make provision for Ireland and was rejected by the Irish Party. Stephen Gwynn, Irish Parliamentary Party MP for Galway City, did not wish to prevent the government from improving the state of the army but was concerned at the appeal not being extended to Ireland. He declared that 'what was regarded as a virtue in this country would still remain a crime in Ireland'. He proposed to vote against the third reading of the bill 'not so much for what it expressed but for what it implied. It stigmatised the position of Ireland as one of inferiority—as that of a conquered country held down by force of arms'. For him the bill was 'a perfect monument of distrust' whereby 'Ireland was to be left maimed and helpless, a captive and not a soldier, in a great scheme of Imperial defence'.[6]

The close connections between the Volunteer force and youth organisations caused anxiety in some quarters and in an effort to allay these fears Henry Drummond commented that a war spirit did not exist amongst members of the Brigade 'and if it did arise it would as certainly be checked'. He argued that the anxieties were based on an irrational fear of the armed forces amongst those who had condemned the Brigade and quipped that 'one has even known Volunteers whose souls were not consumed by enmity, hatred, and revenge; and it is whispered that there are actually privates in Her Majesty's Service who do not breathe out blood and fire'.[7] At Rathmines castle, Colonel Brown of the Cornwall regiment, inspected a company of the Church Lads' Brigade and commented that he had seen both the Volunteer movement and the Church Lads' Brigade in operation in England and was in favour of them, believing that they brought civilians and the military into much closer contact and 'tended to

[5] 'Our boys', *All Ireland Review*, 1 (1900), p. 7.
[6] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 176, 19 June 1907, cols. 512-15.
[7] G.A. Smith, *The life of Henry Drummond* (New York, 1898), p. 491.

promote that harmony and union of interest that should exist between them'.[8] Lieutenant Cowell, a member of the Rifle Brigade, inspecting the 2nd Dublin company of the Boys' Brigade similarly considered it a disadvantage that no Volunteers were allowed to be drilled in Ireland, believing that because of this members had no means of keeping in touch with one another after they passed out of the Boys' Brigade. His suggestion was the formation of a veteran company in order 'to retain the good influence the Boys' Brigade exercised over them'.[9] For others the organisation could act as a catalyst for the creation of a Volunteer force in Ireland. Jonathan Phenix, a justice of the peace, stated at the annual inspection of the 1st Belfast company in 1892 that 'its success would create a desire for the formation of an Irish corps similar to the English Volunteers, and the country might well be proud to possess a body of Irish Volunteers leavened by men of the type aimed at in the training sought to be imparted to these boys'.[10] Colonel F.J. Graves, commanding the 83rd regimental district, Royal Irish Rifles, noted that

> he looked upon it as a paramount duty and privilege that in some shape or form every man ought to serve his country. (Hear, hear.) It was an unfortunate thing that owing to certain elements which obtained in Ireland, they (the Irish) need not apply in the sense of asking for volunteers.[11]

The lack of a Volunteer force in Ireland was a difficulty noted at the highest levels of the Boys' Brigade. James Carfrae Alston, president of the Brigade council, believed that in Ireland it was difficult to procure suitable officers in the Brigade as 'they had not the Volunteer movement to assist them in getting officers of the right sort'.[12] This was also noted amongst the Belfast battalion. William McVicker wrote that 'the absence of a volunteer force has rendered it difficult, not only to get officers, but also to arouse and maintain that military mode of thought which is so striking a characteristic (to Irish Officers, at least) of some of the Scotch and English Battalions' and admitted that in Belfast 'drill is rather a weak point with us'.[13] This deficiency was credited with the lapsing of many companies as officers were unsure about their work and 'this would rarely occur if the Officers were qualified in all

[8] *Irish Times*, 15 May 1894.
[9] *Irish Times*, 3 June 1895.
[10] *Belfast News-Letter*, 30 Apr. 1892.
[11] *Belfast News-Letter*, 6 May 1897.
[12] *Irish Times*, 7 Sept. 1895.
[13] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 3, Nov. 1896, p. 44; McFarlan, *First for boys*, p. 35.

points'.[14] McVicker argued that 'we are handicapped by not having, as the Glasgow people have, a volunteer system to manufacture our drill instructors for us'. This difficulty was exasperated by the lack of interest shown by many influential citizens in Belfast. The *Northern Whig* noted that one of the 'great drawbacks of the progress of the movement in Belfast seem to be the lack of active interest among our influential citizens...powerful names appear among the honorary vice-presidents, but few of them have more than a merely nominal connection with the Belfast Battalion'. McVicker agreed and argued that 'if the Brigade were popularised by the active backing of more of our leading people I don't think we should have any difficulty in obtaining officers'.[15] Despite this deficiency the high level of competence in drill was noted. Addressing the Belfast battalion, Lieutenant Mitchell, adjutant 1st battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers, stated that 'when they realised, as he did, the difficulty that the Officers of the Boys' Brigade in Ireland had to contend with in having no Volunteer force where they could really learn their work, the result was little short of marvellous'.[16] In order to overcome this deficiency in Belfast an annual course in squad, company, and battalion drill was open to officers to take place eight weeks before the opening of the season in September. Here they were instructed by staff from the 4th battalion the Royal Irish Rifles.[17] However in 1905 the Battalion wrote that that these were 'not being taken advantage of by several of the Companies'.[18]

Similar sentiments were expressed in the Dublin battalion. Rev. Gilbert Mahaffy wrote that 'owing to the absence of anything like the volunteer movement, it was difficult to find Officers having sufficient acquaintance with military drill' and 'this must always affect our work to some degree'.[19] His successor as battalion president, William Monk Gibbon, noted similar difficulties, writing in 1909 that 'in many companies Drill is lamentably weak-many Officers have only the faintest and most inadequate ideas on the subject'.[20] In the Dublin battalion classes were held for officers to study drill but in 1907 the battalion executive noted that 'a very small number of officers had taken advantage of drill classes'. It was resolved that unless twenty or more officers enrolled they would discontinue the classes,

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[14] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 6, Feb. 1897, p. 86.
[15] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[16] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 3, Feb. 1892, p. 52.
[17] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 15, no. 10, June 1907, p. 154.
[18] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 15 Dec. 1902, 11 Dec. 1906, 24 Sept. 1905, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.
[19] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 6, Feb. 1897, p. 91.
[20] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 3, Nov. 1909, p. 36.

which they did in November 1907.[21] Upon closing the classes the Dublin battalion wrote that 'we cannot but deplore that fact that the classes received support from so few officers of the Battalion at a time when the drill of the Battalion is so far from being efficient'.[22] Classes were later reinstated, but in 1912 the battalion reported that they 'regret that so few Officers availed themselves of this opportunity'.[23]

The issue of cadet recognition is one which highlights the disparity between the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade in their relations with the armed forces. Despite objections that militarist intent was not at the heart of these organisations fears were intensified by the Church Lads' Brigade attempting to gain recognition as a cadet unit of the Territorial Army. Regular army officers were granted permission from the army council to provide advice and assistance to the Church Lads' Brigade in their efforts to secure recognition.[24] The Church Lads' Brigade became a cadet unit in 1910 and their desire for recognition can be explained by the fact that they had a large amount of support from important military figures and a heavily pro-conscriptionist national executive with Gee himself, as well as other members, having spoken in favour of conscription. However, affiliation would later damage the organisation, both internally and externally, as by accepting War Office recognition they had compromised their religious objectives, thus exacerbating the internal tension between the religious and military wings of the organisation and in the public mind identified the organisation with military recruitment.[25]

Lord Haldane's plan was to gain the support of all of the uniformed youth organisations and in time reorganise them as cadet units which were to be affiliated to, and act as feeders for, their local Territorial Association. The ambition was 'to have a nucleus of highly trained youths, capable of the greatest expansion, and of giving the country wave upon wave of trained and disciplined men'.[26] He wished to see all different forms of military organisation such as rifle clubs and cadet corps' prepared to come to the aid of the regular army in times of conflict. Under this system 'you might perhaps thus form in time of peace a reservoir into which would flow the various streams of people from every class who take an

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[21] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 3 Mar. 1892, 28 Oct. 1907, 21 Nov. 1907, BBAD, Box 9; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 23 June 1902, BBAD, Box 10.

[22] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Nov. 1907.

[23] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 11, BBAD, Box 11; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Dec. 1911.

[24] *Irish Times*, 10 Feb. 1911.

[25] Springhall, *Youth*, pp. 39-40.

[26] *Irish Times*, 11 Oct. 1917; R.B. Haldane, 'The future of the Boys' Brigade and the cadet movement', *Proceedings of the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow*, 49 (Glasgow, 1918), pp. 1-9.

interest in rifle shooting and drill'. Further, 'you might prepare the machinery by which, on the outbreak of hostilities you could turn the streams which had flowed into this reservoir, some of them perhaps rather muddy, into pure streams which would give support of the Regular Army'.[27] He believed that youth organisations could form an important element within the scheme commenting that,

> I have been in the slum regions, and have seen in the areas round the homes from which the boys come all that one would wish not to see, and yet these young fellows were splendid specimens of humanity, and have become so by athletic exercises and physical drill, and of the very type out of which you could very quickly organise a great reserve in time of national necessity.[28]

If this was carried out the Boys' Brigade would become an integrated part of the armed forces and the Brigade executive would in effect lose control over the direction that the organisation wished to take.

In 1910 the cadet regulations regarding non-recognition of quasi-military organisations were issued which, if strictly enforced, would have caused hardship on the Boys' Brigade companies which had made arrangements to have their annual inspection carried out by a regular officer.[29] It was ruled that it would be acceptable for officers to carry out inspections in 1910 but if they wished to continue to gain support from officers who usually carried out inspections they would have to gain recognition as cadet units. In 1911 the Belfast battalion asked Brigadier General Wilson to inspect them but he was unable to accept, 'owing to existing regulations'. The role was filled by Major Frederick Crawford who two months later was made a vice-president of the battalion.[30]

In an attempt to proactively encourage youth organisations to accept the role assigned to them by the War Office the regulations provided an ultimatum. Under these regulations organisations could either apply to their local Territorial association in order to gain official recognition as cadet units or, if they declined, forfeit the military and financial assistance that

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[27] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 153, 8 Mar. 1906, cols. 677-8.
[28] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 1, 4 Mar. 1909, col. 1625.
[29] *Irish Times*, 22 Aug. 1910.
[30] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 20 Apr. 1911, 8 June 1911, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/1.

they were accustomed to receiving from the War Office.[31] These included the purchase of disused rifles, permission to camp on military land, and the loan of camp equipment.[32] The government believed that 'it is not considered justifiable to give military aid to bodies which do not comply with any military requirements and maintain no military connection'.[33] The British Conservative politician Viscount Helmsley commented that as many youth organisations had been formed with a view to teaching discipline, the formation of character, and the duties of responsible citizenship, with many parents assenting to membership on this basis, 'pressure on these organisations to come directly under military authority is likely seriously to prejudice them'.[34] Lord Haldane rejected suggestions that practical pressure was being placed on youth movements to adopt recognition commenting that 'all we wish is that these boys' brigades should have some organisation that is useful and efficient, instead of the present vague state of things'. He remarked that 'they can hardly have their cake and eat it. They cannot be inspected by officers in plumes and scarlet coats yet say that they have no desire to be associated with the military'.[35] Haldane wrote to Brigade president, Lord Guthrie, that he wished the relationship that existed between the local military authorities and units of the Boys' Brigade to exist between the organisation and the county associations. He attempted to allay fears surrounding the scheme and wrote that 'there is certainly no reason to suppose that the Associations will, any of them, wish to interfere with, or even concern themselves with religious or social work which may be carried on in conjunction with the training in military exercises'. He did not believe that recognition 'need in the least interfere with the allegiance that it owes to the Governing Body of The Boys' Brigade'. For him recognition by a County Association 'merely implies' that they were officially recognised as a body to be granted certain privileges. Regarding these privileges he wrote that

> it is, I fear, quite impossible for the War Office to hold out any prospect of privileges or facilities being granted to any bodies of boys who have not been recommended for such privileges by the Association of their County. To act otherwise would clearly be to depreciate the authority of the County

[31] See *Regulations governing the formation, organisation and administration of cadet units by county associations* (London, 1910); The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 26 June 1905, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.
[32] Memorandum re army council's cadet scheme as affecting The Boys' Brigade, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10.
[33] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 22, 15 Mar. 1911, col. 2412.
[34] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 22, 21 Mar. 1911, col. 223.
[35] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 22, 14 Mar. 1911, col. 2045.

> Association and to make the considerable task delegated to it by the Army council most difficult, if not an impossible one.[36]

The issue of whether or not the Boys' Brigade would become an integrated part of the British armed forces came to the fore in 1911. From the inception of the organisation in Ireland there were fears expressed surrounding the connections between the military authorities and the Boys' Brigade, despite no official affiliations. At a demonstration of the Belfast battalion in 1892, the captain of the 1st Bessbrook Company in Co. Armagh, noted that many saw the Brigade as 'a dodge of the War Office, and was a means to introduce conscription or something of that kind'.[37] Later the leadership of the Brigade appreciated that attempts at formal connection would be forthcoming. James Carfrae Alston predicted that in the climate following the Boer War they would be 'face to face with a condition which we have been largely the means of producing' and were 'on the eve of a very marked change in regard to the part physical training in advanced forms is likely to play in the upbringing of our youth'.[38] In 1905 he warned that

> it seems to me that we shall not escape the pressure of circumstances, and that we are very near the point at which Authorities will desire to bring the Brigade under Official cognizance and ask, not so much what they can do for us as, but what we can do for them.[39]

William Smith successfully guided the organisation safely away from co-operation with the War Office. The Boys' Brigade did discuss the idea and considered the implications of affiliation and the position they would be in as a result of the Church Lads' Brigade accepting affiliation, questioning whether it would 'prejudicially affect the popularity of the Boys' Brigade'. They wondered whether they would lose the support of the religious organisations which had companies attached to them and questioned whether it would discourage membership, 'or would the added prestige of a body recognised by the government appeal in such a way as to bring recruits in greater numbers'. There were feelings of gratitude towards the armed forces with acknowledgment of the debt owed to the Volunteers and the Territorial

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[36] Lord Haldane to Lord Guthrie, 22 June 1910, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10.
[37] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 3, Feb. 1892, p. 52; *Belfast News-Letter*, 15 Jan. 1892.
[38] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 2, Oct. 1902, p. 23.
[39] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 14, no. 2, Oct. 1905, p. 23.

Army. William Smith argued that 'it was not too much to say that but for the Volunteer Force the Boys' Brigade would never have existed'.[40]

T.B. Kerford wrote to William McVicker asking his opinion on the matter. He wrote that in Belfast opinion 'varies considerably, but I think the weight of opinion is decidedly averse to accepting the scheme...personally I cannot see how the Boys' Brigade with its object can look at the Scheme at all'. In December 1910 the Belfast battalion council considered whether the scheme would be 'helpful or detrimental' to the primary object of the Boys' Brigade with twenty-six considering it detrimental and only five considering it helpful.[41] Both battalions rejected the army scheme with the Dublin battalion rejecting the scheme with only five votes in favour and fifteen against.[42]

Despite pressure, Smith held firm to his conviction that the Boys' Brigade was primarily and fundamentally a religious organisation and that nothing could detract from this first principle. In 1911 the Brigade stated that their official decision on the proposal was that companies and battalions should not apply for official recognition as cadet units under the cadet scheme. In arriving at their decision the executive acknowledged that this involved the loss of privileges which had been accorded to the Brigade by the military authorities 'which it was intimated would be withdrawn if the Brigade did not come into the Army Council scheme'. Despite these benefits the Brigade decided that in the circumstances it had no option but to come to such a conclusion. They did still hold out the possibility that these benefits would not be withdrawn stating that 'the Executive ventured to hope that the military authorities might yet see it to be in the truest interest of the State to lend such encouragement as might be within their power to an organisation which had admittedly been doing a work of the highest value to the nation'.[43] This did result in a loss to the Brigade and in 1913 the Belfast battalion reported that the 'enhanced cost of supplies, and the refusal of the Army authorities to provide canvases...renders careful husbanding of the camp funds a necessity'.[44]

In 1911 Smith wrote to Gee that 'it is becoming increasingly clear that the Boys' Brigade would make a serious mistake, from the point of view of its true purpose, if it

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[40] Circular memorandum no. 275, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 19, no. 3, Nov. 1910, p. 40.
[41] William McVicker to T.B. Kerford, 16 Nov. 1910, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10; The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 1 Dec. 1910, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1.
[42] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 17 May 1911, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/1; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 21 Nov. 1910, BBAD, Box 10.
[43] *Irish Times*, 12 Sept. 1911.
[44] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 8 Apr. 1913.

accepted official recognition by the Army Council'.[45] The issue over recognition allowed the Boys' Brigade to reaffirm its fundamental commitment to the religious objectives of the organisation and define clearly the lines of demarcation between themselves and the Church Lads' Brigade. In order to clarify any confusion there may have been surrounding the debate over recognition, and possibly to allay the fears of parents anxious over allowing their children to attend an organisation that was courted by the War Office, the eighteenth annual report stated that 'the committee are anxious once again to emphasise the fact that the Brigade exists for a distinctly religious object. All the methods employed to hold the interest of the boys are but means to an end'.[46] Importantly, the decision to decline recognition also had the support of the vast majority of Brigade members. It is significant that it was not an imposition of the Brigade executive but a decision that garnered overwhelming support from within the Brigade's ranks. A plebiscite of rank and file members carried out in November 1910 found that of the 1,161 companies consulted in the decision, 87 per cent of all officers were against official recognition, with 89 per cent of the churches with which they were connected, and 88 per cent of parents, also considered to disapprove.[47] However, the debate did have an effect on membership, evidenced by the fact that in 1909 the Boys' Brigade recorded a membership of 63,122 which had fallen to 55,819 in 1912. It was reported in 1911 that there were sixty fewer companies, 346 less officers, and 4617 less boys, which was attributed to the army council scheme.[48] The extent to which this can be directly attributable to the cadet scheme issue is debatable and may have been as a result of the emergence of the Boy Scouts as an alternative attraction. In any case the decline in membership was short lived and by 1915 numbers had once again climbed and reached 63,373.[49]

Even some sections of the armed forces disapproved of the need for affiliation with some county Territorial associations passing resolutions expressing the opinion that everything should be done to restore cordial relations with the Boys' Brigade as this would be to the benefit of the Territorial Army. As a result of the issue a Boys' Brigade officer warned 'against any tendency to let the drill work of their companies suffer because of the attitude of the Army Council'.[50] In 1912 Lord Haldane paid an informal visit to Brigade headquarters in Glasgow and hoped there would be more drill and physical training done in the education

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[45] William Smith to Walter Gee, 22 March 1911, cadet correspondence file, 1910-1911, Boys' Brigade Archives, London, cited in Springhall, *Youth*, p. 29.
[46] *Irish Times*, 21 Nov. 1911.
[47] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 19, no. 5, Jan. 1911, p. 66; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 May 1911.
[48] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 20, no. 2, Oct. 1911, p. 21.
[49] Springhall, et al. *Sure and stedfast*, p. 103.
[50] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 19, no. 8, Apr. 1911, p. 114.

system and stated that 'it could never be forgotten that it was the Boys' Brigade that had made it possible, by leading the way and showing what could be done'.[51] The rules regarding non-recognition were relaxed in 1913 and military officers were allowed to be inspecting officers.[52]

Later during World War I, J.A. Roxburgh, Brigade vice-president, wondered if recognition should be reconsidered as the war had 'undoubtedly produced a marked change of view in the minds of very many, who in peace time were opposed to everything military'. He recognised that while the war was a factor, it would pass 'and it is difficult to know whether the enthusiasm for military matters which at present exists will then continue'. The advantages of access to camping grounds, as well as drill and camp equipment, would be beneficial and he reported that other groups that had accepted affiliation 'have not found that recognition in any way interferes with their social and religious work, and they have been able to get from the Army Council certain safeguards against such interference. On the other hand, they seem to think that on the military side they have benefited'. The disadvantage he believed was that a new uniform would have to be procured and 'any increased expense in this respect might deter boys from joining'. George Shannon 'doubted if anything was likely to occur in the near future to compel the Boys' Brigade to alter its attitude'. Lord Guthrie asked them to consider that 'the point of view of the working man must be kept in view, and in the case of certain churches recognition would certainly involve loss of Companies'.[53] In 1917 the Belfast battalion council noted that 'it was almost the unanimous feeling of the meeting however, that the Brigade should apply for recognition'.[54] It was decided to allow individual companies to become cadets while maintaining their position as companies within the Boys' Brigade.[55] However, in July 1918 the Belfast battalion received a letter from the Irish Command stating that they 'considered it unwise in view of the condition at present prevailing in Ireland' to recognise any new cadet units.[56]

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[51] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 20, no. 6, Feb. 1912, p. 81.
[52] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 22, no. 2, Oct. 1913, p. 21.
[53] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 24, no. 2, Oct. 1915, pp. 25-7.
[54] The Boys' Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 22 Mar. 1917, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1; Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 28 June 1917, PRONI, D3383/2/2.
[55] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 25, no. 10, June 1917, p. 114.
[56] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 14 July 1918, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/2.

9.2 Youth Movements, Politics, and Paramilitary Forces

The relationship between youth movements and paramilitary forces also merits investigation. The pre-war years witnessed an unprecedented increase in the number of paramilitary groups active in Ireland as a result of the Home Rule crisis and 'during 1913 and 1914, through an extraordinary outburst of mimetic militarism, a large proportion of Irish adult males began to train, dress and strut about in the manner of soldiers'.[57] The two largest were the Ulster Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers, both founded in 1913. They were organised militarily and engaged in drilling and training in the use of arms and represented an increasing militarisation of Irish life. Unionists had begun drilling to resist the implementation of Home Rule prior to the formation of the Ulster Volunteers and this had been an activity established by resistance to previous Home Rule bills. The development of drilling amongst Unionists was thus not inaugurated by the Ulster Volunteers or as a result of the political leadership attempting to quell potential disturbances. It had its initial impetus amongst the Orange Order, the Unionist clubs, and others acting independently of any organisational framework, who had been drilling as early as 1910.[58] The Ulster Volunteers thus emerged from the varied organisations that been engaged in drilling to resist Home Rule and within a short space of time one in every three Protestant adult males in Ulster were enrolled.[59] The stimulus provided by the Ulster Volunteers encouraged the development of the Irish Volunteers. The inauguration of the organisation was an attempt to 'embolden constitutional Nationalism through popular mobilisation', radicalise the constitutional agenda, and ensure the implementation of Home Rule.[60] It was initially outside the control of the Irish Parliamentary Party but in the middle of 1914 they managed to gain formal dominance on the controlling committee of the Volunteers and this helped buttress their demands for Home Rule as it was now underpinned by the veiled threat of force. By July 1914 the Irish Volunteers had an enrolment of 150,000 men and at their peak comprised one-sixth of all adult Catholic males in Ireland.[61] This recourse to paramilitary activity was as a result of political developments in Ireland but it can also be argued that 'the growing menace of European war doubtless

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[57] Fitzpatrick, 'Militarism', p. 383.
[58] T. Bowman, *Carson's Army: the Ulster Volunteer Force, 1910-22* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 16, 18; T. Bowman, 'The Ulster Volunteer Force, 1910-1920: New Perspectives', in D.G. Boyce, A. O'Day, eds., *The Ulster crisis: 1885-1921* (Basingstoke, 2006), pp. 249-50.
[59] Fitzpatrick, 'Militarism', p. 383.
[60] M. Kelly, 'The Irish Volunteers: a Machiavellian moment?', in D.G. Boyce, A. O'Day, eds., *The Ulster crisis: 1885-1921* (Basingstoke, 2006), p. 65.
[61] Fitzpatrick, 'Militarism', pp. 385-6.

contributed to the cult of discipline, training and mastery of arms which swept Ireland, and indeed the world, in the last years of peace', of which youth movements were a 'benign manifestation'.[62] How youth movements engaged with this increasing militarisation provides insights into the military and political aspects of their programmes.

While the Boy Scouts were a declared apolitical organisation their connections with the Ulster Volunteer Force betrays some political consciousness. In late 1913 the *Belfast Telegraph* drew the attention of the government to the Boy Scouts in Ulster, suggesting that they might prove a useful adjunct to the Ulster Volunteer Force. Such fears may have accounted for the National Rifle Association rescinding the affiliation of the Irish Boy Scouts. This meant that Boy Scouts in Ireland were unable to compete with English, Scottish, and Welsh Scouts in juvenile shooting competitions. Despite this the Boy Scouts headquarters in London continued to supply arms to the Boy Scouts in Ulster and in early November 1913 supplied them with a number of Enfield carbines.[63] At an Ulster Volunteer demonstration in Randalstown, in north west Antrim, Edward Carson had his car escorted by a number of Boy Scouts in uniform.[64] Similarly, at field manoeuvres connected with the Tyrone regiment of the Ulster Volunteers the Boy Scouts aided by keeping within bounds the assembled spectators that had gathered to see the regiment.[65] In April 1912 the 16th Belfast Troop took part in welcoming Conservative party leader, Andrew Bonar Law, to Ireland.[66] Hedley W. Craig commented on a press report of a speech by Carson in Glasgow in which he was reported to have said that the government was attempting to disarm the Boy Scouts. For Craig this implied two things. Firstly, that the Boy Scouts were an armed force and secondly, that they were connected with the political crisis in Ulster. He wrote that neither was true as they were not an armed force and only under special circumstances was one patrol (seven or eight boys) allowed to carry rifles and that there was a strict regulation that the Boy Scouts could take no part in politics. He suggested that either Carson was mistaken 'or perhaps, feeling in the North has run so high that even the scouts have turned their blind eye to the Headquarters Regulations, and have given themselves over to party politics?'. He wrote that he had 'the personal assurances of those Scoutmasters in the North who are associated with politics that they will use every endeavour to keep the movement free of political taint'.[67] The Scoutmasters of the 1st and 2nd troops of the Curragh Boy Scouts in Co. Kildare stated that

[62] Fitzpatrick, 'Militarism', pp. 382-3.
[63] *Irish Times*, 8 Nov. 1913.
[64] *Weekly Irish Times*, 27 Sept. 1913.
[65] *Irish Times*, 26 Feb. 1914.
[66] *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 18 Apr. 1912.
[67] *Irish Times*, 14 June 1913.

the organisation was not a political movement arguing that 'surely boys are not interested in politics'.[68] The Dublin Boy Scouts informed potential recruits not to 'think that your political convictions matter-we have nothing to do with politics'.[69] James Woods Jackson, honorary secretary of the City of Dublin Boy Scouts Association, wrote in 1913 that members 'are not allowed to assist as Scouts in any political meeting, and should not attend such in uniform'.[70] However, Alvin Jackson has argued that it is possible 'given the effective limitation of overtly Unionist youth movements like the Young Citizens's Volunteers to Belfast, that organizations such as the Scouts were consciously regarded as filling a gap in rural protestant mobilization'.[71] Such disparities reflect the differences between official and unofficial positions and also the regional differences in the political activities of the Boy Scouts.

The wider political situation also affected the Boy Scouts. In February 1919 the Dublin Boy Scouts made efforts to establish technical classes but 'this was found to be almost impossible on account of political reasons'. In May 1919 a Dublin Boy Scouts troop planned to flare some Welsh Boy Scouts with a bonfire but their scoutmaster wrote that 'the Sinn Feiners would burn it or destroy it probably the night before we had planned to do so. They have succeeded in stopping racing and hunting in Ireland, so that a mere bonfire would be a simple job'.[72] Baden-Powell was aware of the difficulties in dealing with Ireland writing that, 'I have known and liked Ireland for the past twenty years, and have watched her struggles with interest'. His impression in 1911 'from talking with various sections of Irishmen' was 'that as a rule they do not want real out-and-out Home Rule... but they do want to be left alone to carry out their own affairs in their own way without petty interference from England'. He foresaw economic progress as contributing to greater cohesion appreciating that 'politics and religion are strong factors, but...the differences caused thereby appear to me to be growing less than they used to be owing to a gradual increase of prosperity and occupation which is coming over the land'.[73] He saw Scouting as having the potential to transcend political lines and provide an opportunity for unity in Ireland, writing that, 'I really think there is a very important field for Scouting here, since it favours no particular party or creed, and is therefore equally applicable in the North as in the south of Ireland. It only needs

[68] *Kildare Observer*, 17 Aug. 1912.
[69] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 Oct. 1911.
[70] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Feb. 1913.
[71] A. Jackson, 'Unionist politics and Protestant society in Edwardian Ireland', *Historical Journal*, 33 (1990), p. 860.
[72] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 13, no. 1, Feb. 1919, p. 35; vol. 13, No. 5, May 1919, p. 94.
[73] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 1911, p. 3.

to be a little better known and understood to become generally accepted'.[74] In 1915 Baden-Powell wrote after his visit to Ireland that 'the vitality of the Scout Movement in Ireland has been put to a severe test during the political troubles of the past two years, and has come through it most satisfactorily'. For him the country was 'divided within itself by religious and political differences' and was 'a difficult field for the growth of our Movement'. He wrote that 'for some two or three years our brotherhood had heard little of what Scouting is doing in Ireland' and the political crisis did inhibit the growth of the organisation and as a result they deferred any official efforts to spread the movement until 'more settled times came around'.[75]

The Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade were also involved in the political culture of Ulster in the period and Timothy Bowman has argued that both the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade 'quickly became identified with Unionism in this period'.[76] For example, the Boys' Brigade provided escorts for notable Orangemen on marches and were involved in protests against the passing of the third home rule bill. On Ulster Day in 1912, along with the Church Lads' Brigade, they publicly demonstrated their unionism through parades.[77] In 1915 the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade was inspected by Sir George Richardson, then general officer commanding the Ulster Volunteer Force.[78] They also offered practical assistance to Unionist causes. In 1914 they loaned camp mattresses free of charge to the Ulster Volunteers for their Easter week camp at Mount Stewart, Co. Down.[79] In 1917 they paid fifty pounds for a bed in the UVF hospital.[80] In Derry city the Church Lads' Brigade provided dummy rifles and one of their officers acted as a drill instructor to the Londonderry Unionist Club.[81] However, it is important to highlight that while there were relations between youth movements and Unionist organisations there was no formal association and the links that did exist were largely the result of individual initiative at a local level and there was virtually no official pronouncements advocating membership or committing to act as feeder units for organisations such as the Ulster Volunteers or the Young Citizen Volunteers of Ireland (YCV). While the YCV was seen by some as an organisation

[74] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 5, May 1911, p. 2.
[75] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 9, Sept. 1915, p. 226.
[76] Bowman, *Carson's Army*, p. 31.
[77] Jackson, 'Unionist politics', p. 860.
[78] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 22, no. 10, June 1914, p. 154.
[79] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 12 Mar. 1914, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/1.
[80] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 8 Nov. 1917, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/2.
[81] Bowman, *Carson's Army*, pp. 31-2.

that would attract former youth movement members there was no formal arrangement initiated through which members could be transferred.

The Young Citizen Volunteers of Ireland were formed in Belfast in 1912 and failed to spread beyond the city. They were formally non-political and non-sectarian and members were forbidden to take part in political meetings and demonstrations in uniform. It was seen by many as a unit that would attract former members of the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, and the Boy Scouts. It advocated broadly similar values to these youth movements and emphasised the virtues of discipline, self-control, self-respect, citizenship training, and civic engagement and it was hoped it would carry on the training members had received in a youth movement. Despite their early aims they were eventually incorporated into the Ulster Volunteers in 1914 but this was met with some resistance and was not the unanimous wish of members. The committee in charge of the organisation were angered by a lack of consultation prior to incorporation and publicly declared that this was done without their consent. Some members complained that the non-political basis of the organisation had been compromised and it did lead to the four hundred or so Roman Catholic members leaving the organisation.[82]

The Boys' Brigade in Dublin also had to contend with domestic disturbances. In 1893 W.J. McCreery, captain of the 13th Dublin company, wrote that the Boys' Brigade encountered 'exceptional difficulties on account of the disturbed political state of the country'.[83] During the 1913 Lockout their annual church parade was cancelled 'owing to the unsettled state of the city'.[84] In May 1916 a special meeting of the battalion executive was held 'owing to the recent rebellion in the City' and the imposition of martial law. Company captains were informed that there would be no annual inspection and companies were not to hold inspections or drill parades and to 'refrain from appearing in the streets in uniform'. A uniformed organisation that carried out military drill could be deemed suspicious in the aftermath of the rebellion. The battalion executive appreciated this and believed that as the object of the Brigade was 'so well recognised…no fear need be entertained as to the future of the battalion'. Despite this they advised that for the present 'all ostentation should be carefully avoided'.[85] In order to be granted permission to drill and carry out parades the Brigade required the sanction of the military authorities. In December 1916 T.B. Kerford wrote to them emphasising that the Brigade used drill 'as a means of inculcating discipline

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[82] See Bowman, *Carson's Army*, pp. 25-31.

[83] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 1, Oct. 1893, p. 10.

[84] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Oct. 1913.

[85] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 6 May 1916, BBAD, Box 9.

and as a necessary means of controlling a large number of boys'. In order to be granted a permit they submitted the names and addresses of all officers and staff-sergeants.[86] There were similar difficulties in the Belfast battalion who were told by the Irish Command that 'permission could not be given for the holding of Church Parades' and companies were told that they 'should not march through the streets'. They had to abandon their battalion inspection in 1917 as a result.[87] The Boy Scouts in Belfast faced similar difficulties in carrying out parades.[88]

The Catholic Boys' Brigade was also an apolitical organisation yet expressed broadly nationalist sympathies. A demonstration in support of the erection of a memorial to Wolfe Tone, with the objective of reviving interest in the monument and to obtain funds, was participated in by the Catholic Boys' Brigade who took part with their band and colours.[89] At the annual Irish language demonstration the Brigade took part, in the company of other organisations such as the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Gaelic League, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Friendly and National Foresters, and the Fr Matthew Temperance Association.[90] They also took part in the funeral of Charles Gavan Duffy with a reported 2,500 brigade members in attendance.[91]

With the formation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 the Ancient Order of Hibernians saw an opportunity for developing the skills that members experienced in the Hibernian Boys' Brigade. They argued that

> in these days of Volunteers, the younger generation will only be too anxious to have an opportunity of undergoing training under competent instructors and thus fitting themselves for joining the ranks of the Volunteers at a later period. Now, when the martial spirit is alive in the country, is the time for divisions to be up and doing in this respect and thus strengthening the ranks of the Hibernians.

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[86] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 4 Dec. 1916, 11 Dec. 1916, 24 Sept. 1917, BBAD, Box 9.
[87] Minute book of the executive committee of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 14 Dec. 1916, 8 Mar. 1917, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/2/2.
[88] B.E.C.E. minute book, 7 Feb. 1917, 7 Mar. 1917, SCNI; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 20 Dec. 1916.
[89] *Irish Times*, 7 Aug. 1899.
[90] *Irish Times*, 18 Sept. 1911.
[91] *Irish Times*, 9 Mar. 1903.

They argued that 'it is hardly necessary to dwell on the good results which will flow from the establishment of the Brigade in many districts'.[92] The Hibernian Boys' Brigade were highly politicised and regularly attended Hibernian meetings and in 1918 attended a meeting under the auspices of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the United Irish League wearing green sashes and carrying Home Rule banners.[93]

Fianna Éireann also had links with paramilitary groups and it is important to examine their relationship with the Irish Volunteers. Like the Irish Volunteers they were formally an apolitical organisation with members not permitted to attend political rallies in uniform, or if attending in a private capacity, were not allowed to wear the badge of Fianna Éireann.[94] This policy was strictly adhered to and instances where it was compromised were quickly condemned. In 1911 Michael Lonergan, honorary secretary of the Dublin district committee, wrote a letter to the press stating that Sinn Féin had on their programme at a language procession boys wearing the uniform of the Irish National Boy Scouts, 'and fearing a mistaken idea may prevail that we are identified or connected with political organisations', they wished to make it clear that their organisation was non-political and was composed of, and open to, all boys who were willing to take the declaration and work for the furtherance of the movement.[95]

With the foundation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 it was necessary to have instructors who could organise and begin drilling members of the new organisation. This ensured that Fianna Éireann members became influential within the Irish Volunteers and even had five members on the original provisional committee with many more being employed as instructors.[96] The organisation reported that the centres where the Irish Volunteers first began were the centres where Fianna Éireann already existed noting that, 'in many cases our officers hold commissions in the I.V. (Irish Volunteers) as well as in the Fianna. In Dublin two of our captains and two lieutenants hold the same rank in the Dublin Regiment of the I.V.'.[97] In 1914 the *Irish Independent* reported that in many districts 'their officers and leaders were, by their practical knowledge of military matters, quite competent to handle the newly-joined recruits until ex-army instructors were secured'.[98] Former member Robert Holland recalled that the 'elder members of the Fianna assisted in the training of the

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[92] *Connaught Telegraph*, 15 Aug. 1914; *Southern Star*, 22 Aug. 1914; *Westmeath Examiner*, 15 Aug. 1914.
[93] *Anglo-Celt*, 6 Apr. 1918.
[94] Constitution of Na Fianna Éireann, NLI, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, 31,130.
[95] *Irish Independent*, 21 Sept. 1911.
[96] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336; *Irish Volunteer*, 7 Feb. 1914.
[97] *Irish Volunteer*, 1 May 1915.
[98] *Irish Independent*, 15 June 1914.

Volunteers. Con Colbert, Eamon Martin, and Sean Heuston went as whole-time instructors but still remained in the Fianna'.[99] Another former member, Charles J. O'Grady, recalled that 'my experience in foot drill in the Fianna was useful. I was appointed to instruct recruits in foot drill, squad and section drill.[100] Thus the Irish Volunteers were certainly the obvious choice for a Fianna boy once he had reached the age limit and there was a regular transfer of boys from Fianna Éireann to the Irish Volunteers.[101] J.J. O'Connell, chief of inspection for the Irish Volunteers, wrote that 'it could not be the lot of any Instructor to have better material than these boys all of whom in drill and training, and many of whom in action, definitely proved of what soldierly stuff they were made'. He wrote that in his experience 'I found that those who had been officers in the Fianna were subsequently the best officers in the Volunteers'.[102]

The relationship between the two organisations was close but each retained a separate existence despite collaboration. Fianna Éireann members were told that the badge of the organisation was the only one that was allowed to be worn on their uniform.[103] In 1915 Fianna Éireann authorities adopted a new scheme whereby the senior members of the organisation were encouraged to link up with the Irish Volunteers. This came with the provision that the boys must remain members of Fianna Éireann and could only work with the Irish Volunteers on the condition that they were free from Fianna business.[104] While Fianna Éireann officers could simultaneously hold office in the Irish Volunteers it was noted that such a division of energy was 'a serious loss to the boys' organisation'.[105] In Co. Derry for example, a Fianna drill instructor had been busy drilling the Irish Volunteers and it was reported that as a result 'he was compelled to give the Fianna the cold shoulder for some time past'.[106]

While there were advantages to close relations with the Irish Volunteers there were also fears expressed that as a result of co-operation Fianna Éireann was not being maintained as an organisation for boys and there was recognition within Fianna Éireann of the necessity of providing varied training to different age groups. Willie Nelson (Padraig O'Riain) believed that 'boys generally up to twelve of thirteen accept the authority of their officer without

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[99] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280.
[100] Charles J. O'Grady, BMH WS 282.
[101] Sean Healy, Liam O'Callaghan, BMH WS 47.
[102] J.J. O'Connell, Typescript and manuscript autobiographical account by J. J. O'Connell, regarding the events leading to the Easter Rising, in particular the Irish Volunteers, NLI, J.J. O'Connell Papers, 22,114/ii.
[103] *Irish Volunteer*, 18 Dec. 1915.
[104] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[105] *Irish Volunteer*, 26 Dec. 1914.
[106] *Irish Volunteer*, 28 Mar. 1914.

question and leave it to him to settle all the disputes and difficulties that arise in connection with the sluagh'. However, as the boys grew older the conventional methods did not hold the same sway over their actions as 'he begins to be self-assertive and eager for the responsibilities of office. He takes a personal interest in the working of the sluagh' and consequently 'his course of training must be along very different lines from that of "the kids"'.[107] He wrote that 'the maintenance of the boy spirit amongst the older boys seems to me to be one of the greatest problems that beset the future growth of our Organisation'. It was a problem that demanded serious attention 'for when this spirit ceases to be the predominant influence with us the Fianna Éireann ceases to be a boys' organisation'. He had noticed 'a tendency amongst most boys when they reach a certain age to cast from them this boy spirit and assume what they believe to be the man spirit'. He observed that they believed this 'new spirit is very much superior to the boy spirit and consequently adopt a new and very superior attitude towards younger boys'. This was the case amongst many Fianna members in Dublin and he was of the opinion that 'where it exists the Officer has begun to lose his influence with his sluagh'. When this occurred it was deemed better for the boy to leave and join another organisation as 'when he loses the boy spirit he is no longer a boy mentally' and 'can then best work for the object of the Fianna in the Irish Volunteers or some such adult organisation'. He had noticed that many of the Dublin officers were inclined to adapt the Fianna to the requirements of older boys and stated that 'when this means the overlooking in the slightest degree of the younger boys for whom the Fianna was founded, it becomes a danger. The Fianna must not be allowed to drift into an organisation for young men. It must remain a purely boys' organisation'. It was argued that while Fianna Éireann and the Irish Volunteers were complementary organisations there were certain important disparities that needed to be appreciated. It was noted that 'in the Volunteers the training and keeping fit of a large military force as an efficient weapon for national defence is the main issue' while in Fianna Éireann 'it is the *boy himself*, not the scouting or drill that is the main factor. The training in scouting, drill and military exercises is the means to the end'. When a boy had reached a certain age 'the Volunteer organization takes up the work where the Fianna Éireann leaves off' and a 'large and strong Fianna means a steady stream of good material to the adult movement'. O'Riain concluded that 'if the boys of the nation be organised on the right lines

[107] *Irish Volunteer*, 30 Jan. 1915.

it will do much to ensure a constant supply of recruits already to a great extent trained and disciplined for the ranks of the National Volunteers'.[108]

The relationship between the two organisations grew closer as events progressed and in 1915 the reorganisation of Fianna Éireann into brigade and battalion formations was in order 'to bring the organisation more into line with that of the Volunteers'. Later a rule was introduced that all members on reaching the age of 18 years who had not attained the rank of lieutenant would automatically be transferred to the Irish Volunteers. It was decided that a more formal framework should be adopted to establish the relationship that was to exist between the two organisations and that Fianna Éireann would form the 'preparatory training ground' for members of the Irish Volunteers. Battalion commandants were to select a Volunteer officer to develop Fianna Éireann in areas where there was no organisation and this officer was to receive a temporary commission in the Fianna until the boys reached a level at which they could officer themselves, at which time the officer was to relinquish his commission. This was considered desirable as 'the boys should as soon as possible, be got to officer themselves so as to develop initiative amongst them'. In order to facilitate training, selected boys were allowed to attend Volunteer classes. An officer cadet class was to be founded in each Volunteer brigade to be recruited from specially recommended Fianna Éireann officers as it was believed 'this would provide that competent Fianna Officers of suitable character were enabled to continue their training in a manner which would not be possible in the ranks'.[109] It was recorded by former member Eamon Martin that this agreement was advantageous to both organisations as it gave recruits to the Irish Volunteers which were already under training while at the same time solved the problem for Fianna Éireann of what they were to do with young men over eighteen years of age for whom no officer positions could be found.[110]

Fianna Éireann took part in a number of Irish Volunteer operations and were important in their efforts to gain weapons. On Sunday the 26 July 1914 some thirty members, who were over twelve years of age, were mobilised at Parnell square and marched to Howth to take part in the gun-running. At this stage the training that members had received was vital in ensuring a smooth operation landing of arms. One participant, Robert Holland, recalled that

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[108] *Irish Volunteer*, 30 Jan. 1915, 16 Jan. 1915, 1 May 1915, 7 Feb. 1914.
[109] Report on conference between representatives of the head-quarters staff of the Irish Volunteers and Na Fianna Éireann, NLI, Count Plunkett Collection, 11,396.
[110] Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.

> a man whom I believe was Captain White asked for boys who knew the semaphore and Morse signalling. Six of us were picked out...and we were brought up to the Hill of Howth. At this time I saw a yacht about two miles out in the bay together with a number of small boats. Captain White was looking through a telescope and turned around and asked one of the group to send a message to the yacht. The message was 'We are ready, are you?' This message was signalled by Morse and after a short delay it was sent again in semaphore. We received a message back but I did not know what it was.[111]

Patrick Ward, another member who was present at Howth, corroborates this event as he recalled that he saw a 'Fianna boy signalling to Childers in the Asgard'.[112] Once the weapons arrived Fianna members were to bring them to Dublin, not members of the Volunteers, as Hobson believed Fianna Éireann boys 'were at that stage the only body with sufficient discipline to be entrusted with ammunition'. He further felt that 'it would be too serious a risk to allow rifles and ammunition to get into the hands of untrained Volunteers' as they 'were far too raw and undisciplined'.[113] With the ensuing difficulty after British military intervention many members dumped the rifles in their possession and were later dispatched to collect them and store them in a safe place.[114] One witness reported 'that the scouts were even pluckier than some of the Volunteers' and that every one of them 'held his rifle as he would hold his life'. The *Irish Independent* noted that a Fianna member engaged a Scottish Borderer 'and then coolly took possession of his rifle and bayonet'.[115] Fianna Éireann were not as heavily involved in the Kilcoole running, though some members were mobilised and were engaged in cutting telephone and telegraph lines.[116] Members also acted as lookouts and were assigned to alert the gun-runners if the police were approaching. Sean T. O'Kelly, a volunteer at Kilcoole, recalled 'being struck by the alertness and the efficiency of these young lads and remarking to my colleagues how well these young fellows carried out their important duties'.[117] Their aid in the gun-running had shown some members that they did command the trust of the Irish Volunteer leadership and in the aftermath of the operations at

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[111] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280.
[112] Patrick Ward, BMH WS 1140.
[113] Hobson, 'Foundation and growth', pp. 22, 34.
[114] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280; Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[115] *Irish Independent*, 28 July 1914.
[116] Robert Holland, BMH WS 280; Patrick O'Daly, BMH WS 220; Patrick Ward, BMH WS 1140.
[117] Manuscript and typescript draft memoirs by Sean T. O'Ceallaigh, NLI, Sean T. O'Kelly, 27,702/2.

Howth and Kilcoole a Fianna commando was formed. This was an active service unit designed to operate in conjunction with the Irish Volunteers, manned by selected officers and specially selected boys. One member reported how after the formation of the Irish Volunteers, Fianna Éireann enjoyed greater prominence and popularity.[118]

In the week before the Easter Rising was due to take place a camp was organised for Easter week and one member recalled that he had 'heard afterwards that the object of the camp was to get the younger members of Fianna Éireann out of danger during the Rising'.[119] In the lead up the Rising many older members were detailed to watch manoeuvres of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and to raise the alarm if they approached certain areas and buildings.[120] This was a position of responsibility and displayed a large amount of trust in Fianna members. They also carried out intelligence work which would have been virtually impossible for adults to do. Before the beginning of the Rising former member Joseph Reynolds was told to go to Marlborough barracks in Dublin and observe the manoeuvres of the British troops stationed there and did so on Easter Sunday, observing from the nearby railway bridge. He was asked by a Fianna superior to get as much information as possible on the barracks, primarily focusing on the entrances and the exits and all the military stores. He was able to gain access as his father worked in the Dublin corporation abattoir and he regularly delivered food for the officers' dogs and while there he 'had the run of the place'.[121] This was a job that would have been difficult for a man to carry out but the use of a young boy was unlikely to arouse much suspicion. After the split in the Volunteer movement Fianna Éireann were also employed against the National Volunteers at their Easter review in 1915. On the orders of Sean Heuston they were sent to Parnell square where a rally was taking place. Sean Prendergast recalled that they were engaged 'in obtaining information on the strength, the number of arms and the differing types carried in the parades. We worked in pairs, stationed along different parts…each group was required to ascertain particulars under the various categories'.[122] Fianna Éireann members were also used on other military operations and it was thought that their youth ensured that they were less likely to be suspected or detected, but this was not always the case. In 1917 two Fianna Éireann members, John Neeson and Michael O'Carroll, were arrested in Belfast for transporting gelignite to Ireland from Glasgow and were found with despatches sewn into the lining of their coats. The

[118] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755; Eamon Martin, BMH WS 591.
[119] Joseph Reynolds, BMH WS 191.
[120] Thomas Dwyer, BMH WS 1198.
[121] Joseph Reynolds, BMH WS 191.
[122] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.

two boys were sixteen and seventeen years of age and were described as 'of respectable appearance and of more than average intelligence'.[123]

However, for some Fianna Éireann still had a purpose despite the existence of the Irish Volunteers. One former member from Co. Galway recalled how he decided to join them instead of the Irish Volunteers 'as they were drilling and had manoeuvres and route marches, whereas the volunteers there did little or no military training'.[124] Within Fianna Éireann there was an appreciation that the logistics of extending the organisation throughout the country on a comprehensive basis was difficult without the aid of the much larger Volunteer organisation. It was noted that 'the work of organizing the Fianna throughout the country is a task beyond the resources of Fianna Headquarters, unless we receive the active co-operation of the Irish Volunteers'. This however came with a warning to the Volunteers that starting a sluagh was no easy task and would entail sacrifice and 'the chap who imagines that all that is necessary is to teach a bit of drill &c. and to boss "kids" will not take long to discover his delusion'.[125]

Some also saw them as a more unified organisation than the Irish Volunteers. Sean Prendergast, a former Fianna member, wrote that when the Irish Volunteers split over the war, Fianna Éireann had no such split as 'the ordinary boys of the Fianna had neither time nor thought for the political clap-trap of the wily ones who preached that the blood of Irishmen should be shed on 'far foreign fields from Dunkirk to Belgrade''. He believed that the membership of Fianna Éireann 'was not influenced by the actions of the politicians...unlike the Volunteers, the Fianna was more nationally contained, consisting only of those who stood for Ireland first, last and all the time and to the Fianna faith and ideal'. He cast doubt on the rank and file of the Irish Volunteers and betrayed ambivalence towards the organisation, writing that 'we may not have had any sound reason for doubting the sincerity of the large number of men that flocked into the Volunteer movement at the time. But this we knew-they were a mixture' and 'the political situation at the time was responsible, we knew, for some of them taking kindly to the Volunteers'.[126] However, the split in the Irish Volunteers did impact upon membership of Fianna Éireann in certain areas.[127] While the relationship between the two organisations was close, and they co-operated with each other on a regular basis, it would be wrong to see the organisations as synonymous in the early stages. There was hesitancy on the part of some Fianna Éireann members to accept the Irish Volunteers at the beginning of

[123] *Nenagh Guardian*, 8 Dec. 1917.
[124] Patrick O'Daly, BMH WS 220.
[125] *Irish Volunteer*, 1 May 1915.
[126] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[127] Hay, 'foundation and development', p. 66.

the organisation and aloofness with regard to the policies and politics of their membership. Fianna Éireann was not simply a recruiting ground for the Irish Volunteers but a significant and important and part of the nationalist movement in their own right.

The relationship between youth movements and the armed forces highlights how the lack of an official Volunteer movement in Ireland hampered the ability of officers to become proficient in drill. The issue of the cadet scheme demonstrates that the Church Lads' Brigade were willing to dilute their religious aims by becoming an integrated part of the armed forces, while the Boys' Brigade rejection of the scheme allowed them to reassert their fundamental religious objective. Significantly, this had the support of a majority of members at grassroots level demonstrating their lack of appetite for integration into the armed forces. The links between the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, and the Boy Scouts with paramilitary groups were largely based on grassroots activities and not an official position, demonstrating the disparity between the leadership at local and national level. Fianna Éireann's links with the Irish Volunteers were much more definitive than the links between paramilitary groups and other youth organisations. Fianna Éireann supplied a large number of instructors to the Irish Volunteers and formal arrangements for the transfer of members were developed by the two organisations. Fianna Éireann was involved in a number of military operations with the Irish Volunteers as well as carrying out intelligence and reconnaissance work for them. Despite this close relationship Fianna Éireann retained a separate existence and there were tensions surrounding the development of Fianna Éireann and a desire amongst some leaders to ensure that it remained an organisation for boys.

10 Militarism and Irish Youth Movements

10.1 Militarism in the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade

Defining what constituted militarism is problematic. It was a malleable concept meaning different things to different people. Michael Rosenthal has correctly pointed out militarism is 'not a concept with a single meaning. It can sensibly be used in various ways'. For example, Baden-Powell had a 'narrow, almost technical conception of the term' where the Boy Scouts could not be regarded as militarist as they did not practice military drill.[1] For J.A. Mangan militarism is 'a strong concern with military preparation and readiness in the interests of communal survival and success or in the face of a perceived military threat' while for C. B. Otley militarism is 'the doctrine and practice of exalting war and the armed forces over other social functions and institutions in the state'.[2] Such competing interpretations render adequate precision a difficult task. In relation to youth movements the prevalent concerns surrounding militarism amongst parents of members was not likely to be concentrated on perceived external threats or on the place of the armed forces in the functioning of the state. It is reasonable to suggest that their concerns were more focused on whether the organisation that their child was a member of was going to lead him to join the armed forces and thus this is the definition adopted here.

The Boys' Brigade was clear in their position with Brigade president, James Carfrae Alston, asserting that 'militarism is neither advocated nor fostered'.[3] Many did have alternative military agendas in supporting these groups but these were mainly supporters rather than active leaders. The differing strands within these groups needs to be highlighted in order to achieve a more nuanced appreciation of the role that the adoption of military models and values played. While the ambition was not to encourage enlistment into the armed forces these organisations did have enormous admiration for the role of the army and many supporters did extol military principles and praised the status and role of the army but largely on the basis of the influence that these principles could have on civil life.

There were supporters who believed the training boys received in the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade was an important introduction to military life that would lead

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[1] Rosenthal, *The character factory*, pp. 193-4.
[2] J.A. Mangan, ed., *Militarism, sport, Europe: war without weapons* (London, 2003), p. 3; C.B. Otley, 'Militarism and militarization in the public schools, 1900-1972', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 29 (1978), p. 322.
[3] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 2, Oct. 1902, p. 23.

some to later seek a career in the military. At a demonstration of the Dublin battalion of the Church Lads' Brigade, the archdeacon of Lismore, stated that there were many people who looked upon the Church Lads' Brigade as being 'simply an organisation for training up soldiers, and they spoke of that as an objection to it'. He asked, 'was not the profession of a soldier a noble one? Could anyone say that an organisation which might help young fellows to take up that line of life was one not to be supported?'. He argued that if people recalled 'the noble acts' that had been done by their soldiers 'no one could say that that was a profession to be ashamed of or to be shrunk back from'.[4] Neville Lyttelton, a former chief of the general staff, then the general officer commanding the forces in Ireland, stated at a Boys' Brigade demonstration that the methods adopted by the Brigade were calculated to aid the boys in becoming better citizens and 'if the duties of citizenship included self-defence so much the better'.[5] Colonel F.J. Graves argued that what Boys' Brigade members learned 'would be a capital introduction to a soldier's life'.[6] The work of the Boys' Brigade did provide members with a greater awareness of military life and ensured that the activities of the military occupied a larger part in the minds of members. In 1905 Lord Grenfell, an honorary vice-president of the Dublin battalion, then commander of British forces in Ireland, reasoned that by being members of the Boys' Brigade boys gained an 'insight into military life, so that even if they did not join the colours afterwards...they at least would take far greater interest in anything connected with the Army than the pure civilian'.[7]

Many saw these organisations as effective tools in the advancement of wider agendas beyond the religious ambitions of their leadership. Youth organisations were seen as ensuring the maintenance of the British empire. At the annual inspection of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade in 1897 the inspecting officer, Viscount Frankfort de Montmorency, commanding officer of the Dublin district, declared that 'in their schools they saw maps of the world, considerable portions of which were coloured red, representing British possessions-the heritage handed down to us by our forefathers, which it was our duty and privilege to hold on to, and to add as many miles and millions as we can'.[8] In a similar vein Lieutenant Colonel Simpson of the Middlesex regiment stated that 'the youth...must carry on the work of maintaining and perpetuating the great Christian Empire which their forefathers

[4] *Irish Times*, 18 Apr. 1901.
[5] *Irish Times*, 18 Feb. 1911.
[6] *The London Gazette*, 1 Oct. 1895, p. 5406; *Belfast News-Letter*, 23 Apr. 1898.
[7] *Weekly Irish Times*, 17 June 1905.
[8] *Irish Times*, 8 June 1897.

had bequeathed to them'.[9] There were clear imperial overtones expressed by supporters of the Boys' Brigade in Ireland and an emphasis placed on the role and responsibility that the youth of the country had towards the imperial mission.

Lord Roberts, an honorary vice-president of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, had long encouraged the adoption of a system of compulsory military service. He was one of the most distinguished military officers of the time and Sir Charles Cameron wrote that 'no General of the British Army was more popular in the army and out of it than Earl Roberts'.[10] Roberts was aware of the potential of the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade to foster military ambitions. In the years prior to the outbreak of World War I he had constantly raised the prospect of war and the necessity of adequate preparation. He stated that 'his ideal was that there should be no war, but if there was war they should have men able to defend them'. His experiences confirmed that they could not trust untrained men to fight as 'to employ them in war would be like sending innocents to be slaughtered'.[11] In a letter to Lord Meath, Roberts wrote that, 'I agree with you that any measure which contains in it the element 'of compulsion' would not be favourably viewed by the people of the United Kingdom, and that whatever system may be introduced must be voluntary'. He was aware of the suspicion that was aroused by the promotion of compulsory military service and agreed with Meath on the potential of the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade for realising at least some of their objectives. He wrote that, 'your proposal I understand to be an extension of the Boys' Brigade and the Church Lads' Brigade, and with this I am to a great extent in accord' stating that 'the organisation is worthy of every encouragement, and...a wide extension of the movement would do much for the present and future of our country'. He envisaged a more ambitious role for the Brigades in the event of a conflict writing that,

> the habits of order, obedience, and regularity instilled into the members of the Boys' Brigade are as valuable in civil as in military life, and even if any large proportion of them do not join the ranks they would form a considerable section of the population on whom we could draw in the event of a national emergency, and who, from their previous training and discipline, would probably become quite as effective soldiers in an equally

[9] *Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1904.
[10] Lord Roberts to J.W. Morgan, 22 Sept. 1899, *Dublin Evening Mail*, 30 Sept. 1899; C.A. Cameron, *Reminiscences of Sir Charles A. Cameron, CB* (Dublin, 1913), p. 131.
[11] *Weekly Irish Times*, 6 Sept. 1913.

> short space of time as would the reserve men after they had been away from the colours for three or four years.[12]

Similarly, Colonel F.J. Graves stated that,

> there might come a day when, owing to a great crisis in the nation's fortunes, every man might be required to obey the call to arms in his country's defence and interests. He looked upon the foundation laid by the Boys' Brigades work as a grand basis upon which afterwards to build in case of their country's need. (Applause.) Should the need he had spoken of ever arise, he was sure the work done under their officers by the lads of that brigade would never be regretted, but they would look back to it as something of value on account of the help it would be to the, in the time of their country's trouble. (Applause.). [13]

The *Northern Whig* appreciated that the military elements in the programme may have proven discouraging to prospective members arguing that 'possibly many good people may be afraid of encouraging a spirit of militarism among our youth, or of accentuating their inherent pugnacity by drills, parades, bugle practice, and familiarity with language possibly stuffed with epithets of war'. They did not feel that this was the cause and argued that those that did join the army 'would have gone under any circumstances, and the brigade teaching has simply made them better soldiers, just as it would have made them better civilians had their natural tastes not pointed in the direction of the camp'.[14] T.B. Kerford stressed that the brigade 'was not a military organisation' and that the percentage that later joined the army was small. Kerford did not argue that boys should be discouraged from joining the army and submitted that it was a 'worthy profession' noting that 'a young man might do worse than join the army'.[15] Addressing a demonstration in Belfast William Smith asserted that while the War Office had nothing to do with the Boys' Brigade, as long as an army was required 'he would be very sorry indeed to think it necessary to apologize for a Brigade boy joining the Army'.[16] However, the majority of members did not seek a career in the military. William

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[12] *Irish Times*, 1 Feb. 1898.
[13] *Belfast News-Letter*, 12 Feb. 1897.
[14] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[15] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[16] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 3, Feb. 1892, p. 52; *Belfast News-Letter*, 15 Jan. 1892.

McVicker when asked if the brigade 'might induce a love of soldiering and unsettle lads who were just about to be put to a trade' replied that 'there is really no ground for such objections. My experience for fifteen years has been that very few boys, if any at all, would get enamoured of soldiering through belonging to the Boys' Brigade'.[17] There is evidence of this from amongst the rank and file themselves. In 1914 Brigade headquarters ran a competition asking members what occupation or profession they would choose to enter and of 634 entries only 18 choose a soldier.[18]

However, some members did enter the armed forces. An analysis of former members of 1st Carlow company of the Boys' Brigade reveals that 110 boys had been through the ranks between 1903 and 1910, with thirty-one of these on the register in 1910. If these are excluded and we examine the previous seventy-nine members, twelve had joined the army.[19] Throughout the course of the Boer War (1899-1902) there was a substantial increase in Boys' Brigade membership. In the sessions 1899-1901 there was an increase of 202 Companies, 972 0fficers and 12,813 boys.[20] The Methodist clergyman W.B. Lumley, chaplain of the 19th Dublin company, wrote in 1899 that 'there was not a time in living memory that their soldiers stood higher in the public estimation than they did at present'.[21]

Despite increasing numbers in the Brigade as a whole there was a discernible waning of enthusiasm for Brigade work in the Belfast battalion in 1899. At the annual inspection only ten companies were represented with the remaining eight having been disqualified from taking part in the parade on account of presenting themselves an insufficient number of times for preliminary drill. The spectators that gathered were also 'neither as numerous nor as representative as might have been expected'. Even some officers and the clergy attached to the parishes which had a company did not attend. The inspecting officer, Colonel F.J. Graves, stated that 'it was certainly a serious reflection on the movement that the heads of the parishes and congregations represented there by companies were not present themselves to support their own companies'.[22] Even prior to the outbreak of the war there was a substantial decrease in the number of officers and boys in the brigade in Belfast. In 1897 there were eighty-eight officers and 1,022 boys in the battalion. In 1898 the number of officers had

[17] *Northern Whig*, 16 Oct. 1902.
[18] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 4 Apr. 1914.
[19] Statistics compiled from NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[20] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 10, no. 2, Oct. 1901, p. 20.
[21] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Nov. 1899.
[22] *Belfast News-Letter*, 8 May 1899.

decreased to seventy-two and the number of boys had decreased to 855; a decrease of sixteen and 167 respectively.[23]

In 1899 there were 123 officers and 1175 boys in the Dublin battalion and this increased to 131 officers and 1269 boys by 1901; an increase of eight officers and ninety-four boys. There was also a statistical increase in the weekly average attendance at drill standing at 78.8 per cent in 1900, an increase of 3.4 per cent on the previous session. [24] In 1902 they reported a decrease of 139 boys which the battalion accounted for by reporting that 'it may be that parents of some fear that we teach an undue love for military matters' while appreciating that 'the very large increases which took place the previous two years were exceptional, and could scarcely be maintained'.[25] In 1902 the 20th Dublin company disbanded 'owing to want of boys' and in 1903 the sixth, ninth, and nineteenth Dublin companies lapsed through a lack of officers.[26] The decline in numbers continued for three years until 1905 with the Brigade losing eleven companies, fifty-two officers, and 514 boys in the sessions 1902-1904.[27] In subsequent years there was a gradual increase in membership and in 1905 the battalion roll stood at eight-seven officers and 778 boys, an increase of eight officers and twenty-three boys on the previous session and in 1906 there was a further increase of thirty-two officers and 194 boys.[28] Thus the years of the war did result in an increase in membership followed by a swift decline in the two years that followed.

The Boer War had highlighted the role of drill amongst adolescents and Brigade president James Carfrae Alston acknowledged that there was 'a growing appreciation of the value of drill' with the War giving a 'keen edge' to the subject. He claimed that while the success of the Boys' Brigade method had led to more drill being taught in schools 'it is an accident of the hour, and none of our doing, and none of our business, that drill for boys is at present steeped in a War-Office atmosphere'.[29]

Despite the attitude of supporters who had military agendas *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* argued that military drill had an 'essential place' in the Brigade method and that 'its value cannot be overestimated. By itself it is a strong moral force; when combined with the

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[23] *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 May 1898.
[24] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 5 Jan. 1901, 14 Dec. 1901.
[25] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 23 June 1902, BBAD, Box 10; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Jan. 1903.
[26] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 20 Oct. 1902, 2 Dec. 1903, BBAD, Box 9.
[27] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Dec. 1901, 17 Jan. 1903, 23 Jan. 1904, 3 Dec. 1904.
[28] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 7 Oct. 1905, 22 Sept. 1906, 9 Feb. 1907.
[29] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 11, no. 2, Oct. 1902, p. 23.

other parts of the Brigade work it becomes a mighty factor, with boundless possibilities'.[30] The military model also increased the discipline and obedience of members. Henry Drummond wrote: 'call these Boys, Boys, which they are, and ask them to sit up in a Sunday-class, and no power on earth will make them do it; but put a five penny cap on them and call them soldiers, which they are not, and you can order them about till midnight'. For him, 'as class it was confusion, depression, demoralisation, chaos. As Company, it is respect, self-respect, enthusiasm, happiness, peace'.[31]

The adoption of military methods not only provided a solution to the problems associated with dealing with adolescents but was an attractive feature of Brigade life which appealed to adolescents themselves and drill was seen as one of the primary inducements to membership. According to Samuel J. Platt, captain of the 39th Belfast company, the military aspect of the Brigade was also the attraction for officers writing that, 'I believe that the majority come in as a result of the attraction of the military side…the Christian worker who takes up the B.B. from a desire to have an orderly Bible-Class is, however admirable, comparatively rare'.[32] Anthony Traill, provost of Trinity College, Dublin, noted that 'drill in uniform and a martial air had always a great attraction and fascination for boys, and especially for Irish boys. That fact in their nature has been utilised in the formation of the Brigades'.[33] An *Irish Times* correspondent noted that the Boys' Brigade harnessed the 'universal enthusiasm of boys for military pomp and equipment'.[34] One officer wrote that,

> I find that the more nearly the army is imitated, not only in drill, manners, and customs, but also in discipline, so much more do the boys like and take to the boys' brigade; and the more importance one makes of drill, so much more is one able to keep a firm hold of the Boys, and interest them more deeply in the religious side of The Boys' Brigade.[35]

Likewise William Smith believed that,

> there can be no doubt that the military features of The Boys' Brigade constitute one of its chief attractions in the eyes of the Boys. I believe the

[30] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 8, Dec. 1892, p. 184.
[31] Smith, *Henry Drummond*, p.488.
[32] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 24, no. 6, Feb. 1916, p. 83.
[33] *Irish Times*, 24 Feb. 1905.
[34] *Irish Times*, 26 Aug. 1897.
[35] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 3, Nov. 1896, p. 42.

> time has gone past for apologising for the adoption of military organisation and training for the purposes of the Boys' Brigade. Without military organisation and military drill, we could never have created that esprit de corps, which is one of the secrets of the Brigade. By pitting company against Company, squad against squad, and Boy against Boy, we stimulate that healthy rivalry and emulation which is one great secret of the keen interest which the boys take in the work. [36]

Drill was popular with members and in 1894 the 1st Belfast company had an average attendance at drill of 89 per cent and by 1897 this had only dropped to 85 per cent.[37] During the 1908-1909 session in the Dublin battalion there was an aggregate drill attendance of 73 per cent.[38] Clearly, the forms, structure, and habits of the military were both attractive to the boys and were beneficial in terms of increasing their discipline and acquiescence to their superiors.

The leadership in Ireland were conscious of the suspicions that were roused by their methods and anxious to avoid accusations of militarism. Inspecting the Belfast battalion in 1898 Colonel F.J. Graves stated that 'he had been warned at the inspection last year not to say too much about young men joining the army'.[39] In 1902 the Dublin battalion executive wrote to the 1st Dublin company of the British Rifle League to disassociate themselves from the new organisation. They wrote that 'the work of the league is outside the scope of the Boys' Brigade' and the executive 'regret the manner in which the name of the BB has been employed in connection with the new organisation in Dublin'.[40] In 1910 J.B. Story of the National Service League wrote to the Dublin battalion offering prizes for teams of thirteen-fifteen boys for rifle shooting. The executive replied that they could not enter as 'no company in the Dublin Battalion has facilities for the practice of Rifle shooting'.[41] There may have been fears surrounding the safety of boys partaking in rifle shooting as the Boys' Brigade in Dublin had already experienced the dangers of shooting. In 1899 Private John Lawrence, a

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[36] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 10, June 1897, p. 153.
[37] *Belfast News-Letter*, 24 Apr. 1894, 6 May 1897.
[38] *Seventeenth annual report (1908-1909) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, pp. 6-7, BBAD, Box 11; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 18, no. 9, May 1910, p. 138.
[39] *Belfast News-Letter*, 23 Apr. 1898.
[40] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 24 Sept. 1902, BBAD, Box 9.
[41] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 11 Apr. 1910, 5 Apr. 1911, BBAD, Box 9.

member of the 3rd Dublin company, was killed by an accidental discharge of a gun at the shooting gallery in George's street.[42]

In an effort to ensure that the military model was only employed for the achievement of their aims precautions were taken to ensure it did not become the primary element. William Smith was careful to ensure that the military aspects would not be emphasised at the expense of the more important spiritual aims and the Boys' Brigade executive resolved that 'while making the military drill of the Brigade as thorough as could be…they would avoid anything like aping the Army, in the way of titles or uniforms'. It was ordered that the highest military title used was that of captain, with junior officers adopting the title of lieutenants. No uniform was allowed beyond the uniform cap for officers, and the cap, belt, and haversack for boys, worn in conjunction with their everyday clothing.[43]

The leadership were always keen to stress their fundamental ambition as being religious instruction and concerted efforts were made to reassert this aim. George Shannon believed that 'the casual observer sees in a company of the boys' brigade only a number of boys pretending to be soldiers, but the officers know that the military drill is used only as the best means of teaching a sense of discipline'.[44] Walter Gee consistently emphasised that 'the true work which the Brigade system aimed at accomplishing was a spiritual work; the military organisation was only a means to an end'.[45] There were concerns that the methods utilised would become too prominent and overtake the primary aims. The fourth annual report of the 1st Carlow company of the Boys' Brigade reminded its members that drill and games were not the ultimate object of the organisation.[46] Rev. Benjamin Plunket, president of the Dublin battalion, and later bishop of Tuam, Killala, and Achonry and chaplain to the lord lieutenant, stressed that if drill 'becomes an end, then there is the danger of losing sight of our true purpose'.[47] James Carfrae Alston noted that a common danger in the working of the Brigade was letting one element of the work take precedence over the other activities. He stated that 'it is only natural that it is always the showy, outwardly interesting drill side that does this' while 'the risk of us overdoing the spiritual part is very slight indeed, and if we always keep before us its importance the chance of lop-sidedness is remote'.[48] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette* warned that 'Drill Inspections show only the *external* aspects of our work,

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[42] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 Oct. 1899.
[43] Smith, 'The Boys' Brigade', pp. 660-1.
[44] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 23, no. 1, Sept. 1914, p. 4.
[45] *Irish Times*, 30 Oct. 1896.
[46] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[47] *Connacht Tribune*, 19 Apr. 1913; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1 Nov. 1910, p. 40.
[48] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 2, Dec. 1891, p. 30.

and that unless we are really getting at the *hearts* of our boys, saving their lives and moulding their characters, the most perfect drill may be of very little avail'.[49] John Henry Bernard, then dean of St Patrick's cathedral, contended that the Boys' Brigade would gain nothing 'by teaching Boys Military drill and discipline if we teach them nothing else'. He noted that the specific spiritual aims of the organisation ensured that it 'has a larger ideal' and 'if it does not live up to its claim, it cannot survive the competition of other associations which have a lower aim and purpose'.[50]

As has been seen the Church Lads' Brigade did dilute their fundamental religious aim by becoming an integrated part of the armed forces while the Boys' Brigade retained their primary objective by rejection of the cadet scheme. The Boys' Brigade was seen by many supporters as supplanting the need for compulsory military service but the leadership consistently emphasised the fundamental religious aim of the organisation. It is possible to overstate the contribution that the Boys' Brigade made to military recruitment. While members did join the armed forces Sir William Quartus Ewart, honorary president of the Belfast battalion of the Boys' Brigade, pointed out that since their formation in Ireland 'her Majesty's recruiting sergeants had not found it had made their work anything the easier or the Queen's army presenting any more attractions than it did when the Boys' Brigade was founded'.[51] While the South African war demonstrates that membership of the Brigade in Dublin did increase during the course of the war, this was followed by a swift decline in the succeeding years. The military programme of the Brigade was advanced on the basis of its attractiveness to members rather than as an inducement to military service. While they held the armed forces in high esteem it would be misleading to characterise this as evidence of militarist intent. The values of the military were encouraged for their applicability to civilian life and the Brigade leadership was always keen to strike an appropriate balance between the military elements of the programme and the spiritual aims of the organisation.

10.2 Militarism in the Boy Scouts

The Boy Scouts in Ireland were also accused of militarist intent and were keen to point out that they did not provide 'incipient Territorials' arguing that 'it is neither the desire of the founder nor the aim of his lieutenants that the movement should become an agency of

[49] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 8, Apr. 1897, p. 113.
[50] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 19, no. 1, Sept. 1910, p. 4.
[51] *Belfast News-Letter*, 12 Mar. 1895.

militarism'.[52] The scoutmasters of the 1st and 2nd troops of the Curragh Boy Scouts in Co. Kildare stated that the organisation was not a military organisation emphasising that 'there is an Army Council Order to the effect that the Boy Scouts are not to be allowed the use of army equipment (such as tents, etc.) and are to receive no help in any way from the army'.[53] Addressing a meeting of the Leinster council of the Boy Scouts at provost's house, Trinity College, Dublin, Baden-Powell wished to assure people that the Boy Scouts were not looking for recruits for the army and conceded that many people were apprehensive of allowing young boys to become members. He stated that while 'a large number of parents conscientiously objected to their boys being taught military ideas and tactics' he believed 'those connected with the organisation sympathised with this feeling' stressing that 'they did not instil military ideas into the boys'.[54] He wrote after a visit to Ireland that 'the idea in the minds of many people there is that we are an English organisation for getting recruits for the Army!'.[55]

While Boy Scouts were being trained with an end in view, army recruitment was not the foremost objective. At an inspection in Dublin he stated that 'they were not merely boys playing games in a pretty dress, but they were also growing up as men ready to do their duty for their country…they need not imagine they were trying to make soldiers of the boys-for they were not. They wished simply to make good citizens of them'. Baden-Powell attempted to counter the accusations of militarism by emphasising the non-military methods utilised in the Boy Scouts stressing that 'the movement was the only boy organisation which did not teach military drill'.[56] When he visited Ireland in 1910 he 'expressed his pleasure that even in combined drill there was not too much of a military savour in the movements'.[57] Similarly, Colonel Ulick de Burgh, addressing Dublin scoutmasters in 1911, 'laid great stress upon the importance of maintaining its…non-military character'.[58] Despite their position on drill Herbert Cornish, scoutmaster of the 11th city of Dublin troop, encouraged a certain amount of drill and wrote that while not necessarily that which was in use in the military, 'should nevertheless be of a kind which will in no way hamper scouts who later enlist or take commissions'.[59] While the Boy Scouts did engage in rifle practice this was in order that they

[52] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.
[53] *Kildare Observer*, 17 Aug. 1912.
[54] *Irish Times*, 27 Apr. 1911.
[55] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 5, May 1911, p. 2.
[56] *Irish Times*, 16 Mar. 1910; *Irish Independent*, 6 May 1910.
[57] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.
[58] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 Sept. 1911.
[59] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 26 June 1915.

would be able to defend themselves, especially overseas. Baden-Powell argued that training in the use of a rifle was essential for those who were to move to the dominions 'where they would be subject to raids by savages'. He recalled situations were men, women, and children 'had been ruthlessly slaughtered because they did not know how to defend themselves' and wrote that he 'would consider it simply criminal not to warn lads going out to learn self-defence by rifle-practice and otherwise'.[60]

Despite efforts to allay anxieties surrounding the organisation, fears surrounding their intentions also came from prominent public officials. Joseph Albert Pease, president of the Board of Education, wrote that many parents believed the organisation was associated with militarism 'and I think there is some justification for that kind of feeling'. In response, Baden-Powell argued that the ambition of the Boy Scouts was 'on a far higher plane' than making soldiers. He wrote that, 'I realise, perhaps better than many others, how unsuitable is military training for the education of boys. It may give an outward veneer, but it cannot produce character; and character is our objective'.[61] He wrote in 1911 that 'it was no part of a Scoutmaster's business to instil into their boys the ideas of fighting and bloodthirstiness'. For him 'too much military training undoubtedly put a boy off in taking up soldiering later on in life, because he became bored with the drill and glamour of the uniform by the time he became a man'.[62] While a number of ex-military officers were involved in the organisation this does not equate to support of militarist objectives. Baden-Powell argued that

> we who have had military titles attached to our names are not necessarily without the hearts and peaceful aspiration of our fellow-citizens. If anything, having seen war and its horrors, we are perhaps more desirous than others to promote peace. We shall not play our war tricks off in a peaceful organisation.

In 1912 he wrote that

> war is a horrible thing. In a peaceful country we rightly think a man who kills a fellow-creature a brutal murderer, and he is tried and condemned to be hanged. But in war every man become a kind of licensed murderer, and

[60] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Apr. 1914.
[61] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 6, June 1913, pp. 180-1.
[62] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 4, no. 2, Feb. 1911, p. 8.

> hundreds are killed in a day without anything being said against it. It is none the less a brutal thing.[63]

He argued that the reason why so many ex-Servicemen appeared in the organisation was that it was difficult to find other men who had both the leisure and energy for such work as businessmen and country gentlemen had other duties to perform whereas 'there are plenty of retired naval and military officers still anxious to do something for their country'.[64]

The Dublin Boy Scouts did not see their work as providing recruits to the military but as promoting civil aims. They saw the organisation as aiding in the development of friendly relations between different nationalities and promoting a 'feeling of sympathy between the rising generations'. They argued that

> international peace can only be built on one foundation, and that is an international desire for peace on the part of the people themselves in such strength as to guide their Governments . If the price of one Dreadnought were made available for us for developing this international friendliness and comradeship, it is certain that we in the Scouts would do more towards preventing war than all the Dreadnoughts put together.[65]

In April 1914, prior to the outbreak of World War I, Baden-Powell wrote that 'as regards war with civilised nationals, that is, no doubt, a brutal and out-of-date method of settling differences'. He noted that peace could be brought about by better education, the development of character, 'and mutual knowledge and regard for each other'. He wrote that

> the only way towards bringing about universal peace in Europe is not by trying to cure the present generation of their respective prejudices, not even by building palaces for peace conferences, but by educating the next generation to better mutual sympathy and trust and the larger minded exercise of give-and-take.

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[63] *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 218, 15 June 1912, p. 971.
[64] E.K. Wade, *Twenty-one years of Scouting: the official history of the Boy Scout movement from its inception* (London, 1929), p. 51.
[65] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 Mar. 1912.

For him the Boy Scouts were the only practical manifestation of trying to bring this about and that building a foundation of common interest and friendship 'will ultimately and automatically bring about disarmament and a permanent peace'.[66] This view was echoed by James P. Woodhead, scoutmaster of the 3rd north county Dublin troop, who wrote that Scouting had the potential to bring about greater social cohesion as 'the old barriers of racial distinction and international distrust fall for ever before such a Confederacy of mankind'.[67]

The accusations of militarism were also levelled from within the organisation itself and resulted in Sir Francis Vane, the Irish born Scout commissioner for London, breaking with the Boy Scouts and organising the Peace Scouts along anti-militarist lines. He believed that many of the former soldiers who were on the executive committee of the Boy Scout governing council (half of them were either serving or retired officers) regarded it as providing members for the Territorial Army.[68] Vane wrote that many leaders in the Boy Scouts were interested in the organisation 'from the military rather than the educational standpoint'.[69] There were also those who supported the organisation for the pursuit of alternative agendas. The National Service League saw the Boy Scouts as fulfilling at least part of their programme. In 1921 the organisation was wound up 'as the main object of the organisation are unattainable under present conditions'. After all their liabilities had been paid there would be £10,000 remaining which they proposed to donate to the Boy Scout Association 'which most successfully teaches the ideals of citizenship of which Lord Roberts's scheme was a part'.[70]

A writer for the *Irish Times* wrote that while 'we do not wish to seem to associate it with militarism in any form...we believe that it will ultimately help to bring grown men to a feeling of their responsibility to their country and so encourage national service'. Anthony Traill, who was also president of the Leinster provincial council of the Boy Scouts, stated that 'there can be no doubt that a million Boy Scouts in England means in ten years a million men able to defend her shores against invasion' continuing that this will 'do away with conscription and compulsory service, to which the nation seems to have an ingrained aversion'.[71] Thus, certainly for some, the organisation was seen a means of ameliorating concerns regarding military preparedness with the Boy Scouts envisioned as supplanting the campaign for military service. While the Dublin Boy Scouts argued that they did not teach

[66] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 18 Apr. 1914; See also his remarks in *The Scout*, vol. 7, no. 218, 15 June 1912, p. 971.
[67] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 11 Sept. 1915.
[68] Wilkinson, 'English youth movements', pp. 14, 17.
[69] *Westminster Gazette*, 1 Mar. 1910.
[70] *Irish Times*, 14 Feb. 1921.
[71] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1911.

soldiering as 'there is a strong objection to it on the part of some parents, and it does not develop individual character as we desire to do' they did believe the training imparted would be useful to those who would later join the armed forces. They wrote in 1912 that

> the recruit will have already obtained skill in such arts as signalling, topography and camp life, which make the lads into the best possible material for soldiers when their time comes for it is a foundation which has hitherto been conspicuously lacking among the generality of lads enlisting into the service of the country. Whether a boy becomes a soldier or not, such training is bound to be of use in after life.[72]

Despite protestations that the Boy Scouts were not trained in military methods Baden-Powell did concede that 'in the Army, commanding officers are glad to get as recruits lads who have been trained as Boy Scouts'.[73] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette* noted in 1914 that Boy Scouts who joined the forces were 'already trained in all the fundamental knowledge and in many of the technical qualities that go to make them the very best of soldiers'.[74]

In Ireland the Boy Scouts were keen to emphasise that the programme was focused on training in good citizenship rather than encouraging military service and the fears expressed about the Boy Scouts were overstated and the apprehensions surrounding militarism that the organisation engendered were exaggerated. They consistently emphasised the non-military character of their programmes and while the training imparted by membership would be a valuable asset to a new recruit to the armed forces, this was not the fundamental ambition of the organisation. Even prior to the outbreak of World War I both Baden-Powell and the Boy Scouts in Ireland were emphasising the potential of the organisation to foster international relations. In any consideration of the organisation it must be appreciated that the aims of many leaders and the attractions to members were not necessarily the same and 'whatever the respective motivations, it is vital not to overlook the basic fact that the Scouts were an organization that appealed to boys because they did fun and interesting activities within it'.[75] As Tim Jeal has rightly pointed out, whether or out the early aims were civil or military 'the Movement itself transcended such considerations from its earliest infancy'.[76] Even

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[72] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Mar. 1912.
[73] *The Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 1912, p. 3.
[74] *Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette*, vol. 8, no. 10, Oct. 1914, p. 298.
[75] Pryke, 'The Boy Scouts and the 'Girl Question'', p. 193.
[76] Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, p. 410.

contemporaries noted the exaggerated fears surrounding the organisation and in the House of Commons R.B. Haldane remarked that 'there is a great deal of nonsense talked about military training in connection with Boy Scouts. It is one of the most valuable movements we have going on just now for the general development and the training of boys'.[77]

10.3 Militarism in the Catholic Boys' Brigade

The Catholic Boys' Brigade also faced opposition to the methods they adopted to meet their objectives with accusations of militarism being directed at the Brigade. To those who argued that militarist intent was the ambition the Brigade responded that 'these remarks emanate from, and are fostered by those who know nothing of its actual organisation and objects, and who seize upon the fact that the boys wear a uniform as a premise from which to draw the logical conclusion, that we are encouraging them to join the Army'. In fact 'every means is taken to guard against this result. The Brigade merely induces the formation of habits which will help boys through life. The drill promotes discipline and obedience; the uniform leads to neatness and self-respect'.[78] There were other supporters who argued that the Brigade was not militarised enough. The Brigade reported in 1910 that 'no sooner have our hard-worked Officers convinced the parents of the lads that no attempt is being made to turn them into soldiers, than another section of the public turns round, points an accusing finger at the Brigade's modest military methods, and sternly calls upon it to flag-wag in the approved manner'.[79]

Fears were intensified by the Brigade enlisting the services of military personal who carried out drill instruction with the boys. In Dublin, drill was directed by Colour Sergeant Dempsey and Sergeants' Walsh and Tracy of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.[80] When the organisation was started militarist fears were certainly expressed. R. Jones, a Dublin justice of the peace, stated that one of the arguments levelled at the Brigade 'was that it would deplete the ranks of the workers and drive them into the Army' which was for him 'an absurd argument'.[81] The Brigade argued that this would not be the case as the army in Ireland was recruited mainly from 'corner-boys', although they did admit that 'now and again a

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[77] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 10, 15 Sept. 1909, col. 2148; *Irish Times*, 16 Sept. 1909; *Irish Independent*, 16 Sept. 1909.
[78] *Plum Duff*, Oct. 1905, p. 14.
[79] *Catholic Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 1, no. 2, July 1910, p.5.
[80] *Irish Times*, 27 Apr. 1896.
[81] *Weekly Irish Times*, 4 July 1914.

respectable man, through want of employment or some other cause, might join the Army'.[82] Alderman Dr James Charles McWalter argued that 'there was no foundation for the apprehension that the training given by that organisation inspired members with a desire to join the British army'.[83] Others noted that membership would have the opposite effect as the skills and values imbued would lead to enhanced employment opportunities and greater ambitions. Thus 'after the training the members of the Brigade received, after the good example they saw, after the habits of obedience, self-respect, and self-reliance, they would look for more remunerative employment than the army afforded'.[84]

Despite the adoption of military methods and employing regular soldiers as drill instructors there was ambivalence towards the armed forces. The lord mayor of Dublin, Joseph Hutchinson, commented that while 'it was stated that bringing a number of young boys together and parading and drilling them had a tendency to drive them into the army later on' he disagreed that this was a tendency promoted within the Brigade. He argued that the pursuit of a military career, while not in itself a dishonourable ambition, was within the specific conditions of Ireland. He believed that 'the young people of Ireland showed the possession of a martial spirit and a love of military display; and the fact of drilling and disciplining them had no tendency whatever to drive them into the army' and that 'such a tendency was commendable in countries free to govern themselves, but in a country circumstanced like Ireland there should be no ambition on the part of any young person to join the Army'.[85] For others the work carried out in the Brigade would encourage members to join adult organisations which incorporated military methods when they reached the age limit of the Brigade. R.J. Kelly, a Kings counsel, at the annual meeting of the Catholic Boys' Brigade in 1914 said that 'he hoped that the members of the Brigade would in future be members of the National Volunteers' and would make 'magnificent material' for the organisation. The boys of the Brigade were told 'when the military spirit was dead in a nation that nation was practically dead. The work of the organisation was to make the young men of the city worthy citizens and noble men in this generation and the next'.[86]

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[82] *Irish Independent*, 8 June 1909.
[83] *Irish Independent*, 1 June 1908.
[84] *Freeman's Journal*, 8 June 1909.
[85] *Irish Independent*, 22 May 1905.
[86] *Weekly Irish Times*, 4 July 1914; *Freeman's Journal*, 1 July 1914; *Irish Independent*, 1 July 1914.

10.4 Militarism in the Hibernian Boys' Brigade and Fianna Éireann

There was a militarist strain within the Hibernian Boys' Brigade. At a demonstration in Cork the boys of the Brigade were told by Joe Devlin that 'the training they were now receiving would fit them to be the soldiers of a free Ireland in the future'.[87] There was also a reaction against this tendency within the organisation and, similar to other youth organisations, the adoption of military principles led to differing degrees of dilution. Officers were reminded that their position meant that they would exert a large amount of influence over members in their charge and possibly have as much influence as a parent or schoolmaster. They were told to fully understand and appreciate the role that they played in the formation of their characters. They were asked to remember that 'membership of the organisation is VOLUNTARY. A healthy discipline is undoubtedly necessary and desirable, but care should be taken to ensure that it does not become *unduly* severe'. Officers were told to remember that 'drill, signalling, first-aid, and other Brigade exercises are only means to an end, and not as some officers seem inclined to think the veritable *raison d'être* of the organisation'.[88]

Fianna Éireann also adopted the military drill of other youth movements and similarly this proved a highly attractive feature to members. Liam Brady, a Fianna member from Derry, wrote that 'the desire for drilling and marching got into my blood, and, without knowing the reason why, I kept looking for somewhere I could drill, drill, drill'.[89] Helena Moloney recalled that 'we made use of Baden-Powell's scout book for training them...the boys loved playing at soldiers'.[90] They were also important in channelling the love of the military spectacle, if not the military, towards constructive ends. Seamus O'Farrell noted that before the Catholic Boys' Brigade and Fianna Éireann there was no outlet for such military endeavours with 'military parades, brass bands, the nobility and gentry stepping out of their carriages at Dublin Castle or the Shelbourne Hotel...(being) the only glimpses the people got of pageantry or style'.[91]

In Fianna Éireann there were debates concerning the extent of militarisation which demonstrates the differences within the organisation. There were some, albeit a minority, who were growing anxious over the increasing militancy of the organisation. Former member Sean Prendergast recalled that at a session of one ard-fheis the question of militarism in the

[87] *Freeman's Journal*, 18 Jan. 1915.
[88] *Hibernian Journal*, Apr. 1915.
[89] Liam Brady, BMH WS 676.
[90] Helena Moloney, BMH WS 391.
[91] Seamus O'Farrell, 'The changing pattern of Irish life', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 40 (1951), p. 429

movement was raised by one delegate 'who expressed his mind against it but did not get much backing'.[92] This issue dominated the ard-fheis in 1915. Captain Eamon Martin, from company A, Camden street, proposed the abolition of the office of president to be replaced by a Fianna chief who was to hold military command of the whole organisation. He argued that the ard-choisde, the central governing body, should be replaced by a headquarters staff. Martin questioned the 'anomaly' of having a president instead of a military chief at the head of their organisation and characterised it as 'ludicrous'. For him 'the movement was essentially a military one, and from the resolutions the Congress had passed he was of the opinion it was their desire to have it even more military than ever'. He received support for his position from both Padraig O'Daly and Garrett Holohan. However, Bulmer Hobson opposed the resolution to replace the ard-choisde as it would hand over the government of Fianna Éireann to a small number of officers. He believed that they should take account of the civil element of the organisation and appreciate it as an important element in the structure of Fianna Éireann arguing that it was 'of even greater importance than the military one'. He was supported in this by Con Colbert who argued that 'character building and the training of boys to be good citizens of the Irish Nation were more important than drill or even musketry'. It was proposed that a central council of twelve be elected with instructions to appoint a headquarters staff at its first meeting. This was the position that prevailed and represented an important assertion of the civil element within the organisation against the encroaching strength of the military aspects of the organisation.[93]

The later role of Fianna Éireann has tended to overshadow their function as a youth movement. For example, if we take the qualifications for officers, it was not military training or indeed a desire to learn military training that was wanted. Willie Nelson (Padraig O'Riain) noted that 'if I were asked the first qualification for officership in the Fianna I would unhesitatingly say "love for boys"'. He argued that if an officer 'had all the military knowledge of all the generals at present fighting in Europe and has not this first qualification he ceases to be a source of influence with his boys-in fact, he ceases to be their leader in any real sense'. He believed that military knowledge for Fianna officers 'is the least important and in any case is more easily acquired'.[94] In Fianna Éireann there was also an appreciation that harsh punishment was not a solid basis on which to build an organisation for boys. A Fianna member recalled having a conversation with a schoolmaster who 'agreed as to the

[92] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[93] *Fianna*, Aug. 1915.
[94] *Irish Volunteer*, 16 Jan. 1915, 30 Jan. 1915.

good work of the Fianna, but was inclined to pooh-pooh its self-governing characteristic'. This schoolmaster 'had a great belief in "firmness" as a means of education. I did not quite grasp what exactly he meant, but somehow I got the impression that his "firmness" was something bordering on violence, an educational method against which I have a fierce prejudice'. He was certain that 'a voluntary boys' organisation would not last long under the strain of this variety of "firmness", and if it were possible, I do not think it would be desirable from any point of view'.[95] However, discipline was strictly enforced and for a serious offence a member could be court-marshalled.[96] In 1914 the Fianna Éireann organisation in Belfast were told that there lack of attendance at drill would not be tolerated and members were informed that 'they will either attend or clear out'.[97] In Co. Wexford, members were informed that if they did not attend for three weeks without reason they would be considered a 'deserter'.[98]

Many saw Fianna Éireann's role as not simply encouraging the development of soldering amongst members, but the development of a military zeal. This was appreciated by the Unionist Association of Ireland who characterised Fianna Éireann as 'an Irish school for young rebels' and noted that though opposed to enlistment in the army 'so far from being deficient in a military spirit, glory in the attributes of the soldier'.[99] Patrick Pearse said of the membership of the organisation that 'when they reach manhood's estate shall set about to do things that our generation but dreams of'.[100] He wrote that 'we hope to train Irish boys from their earliest years to be soldiers, not only to know the trade of a soldier—drilling, marching, camping, signalling, scouting, and (when they are old enough) shooting—but also, what is far more important, to understand and prize military discipline and to have a MILITARY SPIRIT'.[101] Many of these sentiments concerning issues such as discipline, as well as self-control, and self-sacrifice, would have easily found a willing audience amongst the leadership of other youth groups. Fianna Éireann rejected many other youth organisations, yet embraced both their methodologies and social concerns.

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[95] *Irish Volunteer*, 15 May 1915.
[96] Constitution of Fianna Éireann, NLI, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, 31,130; *Fianna handbook*, p. 175; *Irish Volunteer*, 22 Aug. 1914.
[97] *Irish Volunteer*, 7 Mar. 1914.
[98] *Irish Volunteer*, 25 Apr. 1914.
[99] Nationalist Boy Scouts, an Irish school for young rebels, PRONI, Hall Papers, D1540/3/1B.
[100] Report of addresses by P.H. Pearse, Bulmer Hobson and others, Philadelphia, March 1914 relating to conditions in Ireland, the Irish Volunteers, home rule, NLI, Joseph McGarity Collection, (Dr Wm. J. Maloney), 17,634.
[101] P. Pearse, 'To the boys of Ireland' in *Collected works of Pádraic H. Pearse: political writings and speeches* (Dublin, 1924), p. 113; *Irish Freedom*, Feb. 1914.

10.5 Military Training and Weapons

The provision of weapons was a source of contention for youth movements. This has its origin within a wider context than the development of youth organisations. There was notable interest in rifle shooting in Ireland in the early twentieth century and Lord Roberts had advocated the development of miniature rifle clubs 'as a means of national training and of instilling a feeling of self-defence'. The provision of miniature rifle clubs had the added benefit of being relatively cheap to establish and maintain and by 1911 there were between thirty and forty clubs in Ireland.[102] The rules and regulations for the establishment of rifle clubs were virtually the same in England as they were in Ireland with the exception that the approval of the Irish administration was necessary and in 1903 there were eight rifle clubs in Ireland affiliated to the National Rifle Association, with a total membership of 366.[103] In England many rifle clubs were able to avail of a system whereby they could be supplied with government rifles and ammunition through affiliation with the National Rifle Association and this system was extended to Ireland.[104] There was a Dublin battalion of the British Rifle League which in 1902 was composed of four companies and over 200 members.[105] However with the emergence of the Ulster crisis this system came to be seen as problematic. In 1912 the *Irish Times* reported that 'the formation of rifles clubs, which was at one period welcomed as being a step in the direction of Lord Haldane's citizen army, has, so far as the Government can effect it, been arrested by the unprecedented delay in sanctioning the use of new ranges'. This was even the case where ranges had been officially inspected by the authorities and no difficulties had been raised. The stated grounds for withholding the sanction was that the names of club members had to firstly be submitted to the chief secretary's department 'and it is known that the local constabulary in each case advise as to whether in the list of club members the names of recognised Unionists appear'.[106]

In 1912 the 1st Holywood troop of Boy Scouts in Co. Down had proposed obtaining practice in rifle shooting and Scoutmaster Patterson had opened up negotiations with government officials which resulted in the troop procuring a dozen rifles discarded from army use. A quarry was secured where this could be carried out and was inspected by a

[102] *Irish Times*, 10 June 1911.
[103] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 113, 28 May 1903, col. 114.
[104] House of Commons Debates, 4th series, vol. 95, 14 June 1901, cols. 414-15.
[105] *Irish Times*, 30 Oct. 1902.
[106] *Irish Times*, 28 Aug. 1912.

deputation from the War Office, and approved of.[107] However in the House of Commons in 1913 the chief secretary for Ireland, Augustine Birrell, was asked whether some youth organisations had been prohibited by the Irish government from becoming affiliated to the National Rifle Association. Birrell replied that 'in the opinion of the Irish Government it is undesirable in Ireland, where no county associations exist under the Territorial system, that boys should be entrusted with serviceable rifles and ammunition'. It was therefore arranged with the military authorities that the facilities for the obtaining arms and ammunition through affiliation to the National Rifle Association should not be afforded in Ireland.[108] In the absence of sufficient control the potential for exploitation of such a system was seen as too great to be ignored. The heated context of Ireland in 1912 may have been too great even if a Territorial system had been in existence and there was precedent in this regard as the earlier Volunteer force had been open to exploitation. In 1867 the government had been informed that the 64th Liverpool Volunteers was composed mainly of Fenians and that many Irishmen had joined the Volunteers in order to learn how to drill.[109]

The Boys' Brigade in Ireland was initially less militarised than companies in other countries as the use of arms was proscribed by the Brigade. Despite this, in 1904 the Carlow Boys' Brigade purchased eighteen rifles from A.M. Gammage in London.[110] Rev. Gilbert Mahaffy, president of the Dublin battalion, wrote in 1897 that the Boys' Brigade in Ireland did not use rifles as 'the strained relations at that time existing between different sections of the population, made the position of the Brigade very critical. In order to prevent any misunderstanding of the aims and methods of the B.B., it was found expedient to dispense with the use of rifle in our drill'.[111] The use of rifles required the sanction of the battalion executive and they were banned in early 1893. This rule also applied to visiting companies and in 1905 the 13th Sheffield company planned to give a display of physical drill with arms at the annual demonstration of the Dublin battalion but the battalion executive wrote to them that they 'could not on any account accept with Arms'.[112]

Despite the official position of the battalion some companies ignored the rules and insisted on drilling with arms. In 1902 it was brought to the attention of the Dublin battalion executive that the 5th and 23rd Dublin companies were drilling with rifles. They wrote to

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[107] *Irish Times*, 31 Aug. 1912.
[108] House of Commons Debates, 5th series, vol. 54, 26 June 1913, cols. 1234-5; *Weekly Irish Times*, 5 July 1913.
[109] Cunningham, *The volunteer force*, pp. 80-1.
[110] NLI, Fitzmaurice Papers, 23,557.
[111] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 6, Feb. 1897, p. 91.
[112] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 31 Mar. 1892, 23 Jan. 1893, 6 Dec. 1905, BBAD, Box 9.

them that the use of rifles 'in the peculiar circumstance of this country' could serve to 'embarrass the authorities and to arouse hostilities among different classes of the community'. J. Wesley Smith, captain of the 5th Dublin company, refused to discontinue the use of rifles and the company was threatened with suspension.[113] The 5th Dublin company did not stop using rifles until the battalion council passed a resolution condemning them in 1903.[114] In 1911 the 10th Dublin company planned on giving a demonstration with rifles and when this was rejected by the battalion council they refused to give a demonstration at all.[115] It is clear that despite official condemnation some companies deemed the use of rifles appropriate and it is clear that there was a desire for drill with rifles. In 1907 Francis C. Roche, captain of the 25th Dublin company, wrote that 'I have received an offer of about 20 old C.L.B. rifles, and I am anxious to avail of same for Drill purposes'.[116] The Dublin battalion executive wrote to the Brigade executive asking if the battalion had the power to ban rifles. William Smith replied that the battalion 'has no power to control the use of accoutrements and equipment by Companies within their own drill halls'. Despite their use being technically legitimate the Brigade executive 'resolved to express very strongly their opinion that in the exceptional circumstances of Ireland, Officers Commanding Companies should be most careful to conform with whatever may be the prevailing sentiments of the Battalion, in such matters as the use of rifles within their own Companies'.[117] In 1907 the Dublin battalion council passed a resolution permitting companies 'who think it desirable' to drill with rifles in their own halls.[118] There was a gradual softening of the position of the leadership and in June 1914 after 'a long debate' a resolution was passed by the battalion council by twenty-four votes to six that while rifles could not be used on parades the council 'recognising the value of the rifle in the drill training of a Company, strongly recommends its adoption where practicable by individual Companies for use in their own Halls'.[119]

The increasing military activity of Fianna Éireann in the immediate pre-war years can be accounted for by the growing desire amongst the Dublin IRB for members to start drilling. This was in anticipation of the formation of the Irish Volunteer movement with many Fianna

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[113] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 19 Nov. 1902, 29 Dec. 1902, 19 Jan. 1903, BBAD, Box 9.
[114] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 12 Jan. 1903, 30 Mar. 1903, BBAD, Box 10.
[115] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 6 Mar. 1911, BBAD, Box 10.
[116] Francis C. Roche to J.H. Hadden, 28 Sept. 1907, The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, BBAD, Box 10.
[117] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 8 Feb. 1909, BBAD, Box 9; The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 10 June 1909, BBAD, Box 10.
[118] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 28 Oct. 1907, BBAD, Box 9.
[119] The Boys' Brigade Dublin battalion minutes of council, 8 June 1914, BBAD, Box 10.

members who were also in the IRB acting as drill instructors and consequently 'the movement's rhetoric and activities became increasingly militaristic'.[120] This increasing militancy necessitated training in the use of arms. At the 1915 ard-fheis Lieutenant Neil MacNeill of company E, Ranelagh proposed arming Fianna Éireann and argued that a musketry test be formally introduced. Lieutenant Leo Henderson stated that rifle shooting was 'not fully appreciated by the Fianna as a whole, and little or no effort was made by the majority of the boys to become proficient marksmen'. He proposed that greater skill in musketry should be part of the training and added to the necessary qualifications for passing Fianna exams.[121] The first weapons which they managed to procure were French bayonets. While former member Sean Prendergast stated that 'these bayonets were useful adjuncts to us in many ways' the main focus for many members seems to have been on the attainment of these weapons as an end in itself. While they were valuable from a practical point of view, 'chiefly they enhanced our status and made us feel like the real thing' and their introduction was an effort to 'make us look more military'. He continued that 'we had no care that they were illegal by British standards; even the thought that they were such gave us a thrill'. At this stage in the development of Fianna Éireann these weapons were all that could be procured due to a lack of finances, with a single revolver costing about fifteen shillings.[122]

However, it was always possible to purchase guns from various sources. One such route was to buy it from a British soldier home on leave. One Fianna member noted that 'these soldiers were always short of money and they would sell their shirts, socks, boots and brushes to get drink'. At this time, when a soldier came home on leave he was able to bring his rifle and full equipment with him but 'after a time, there were so many guns missing, it was arranged to disarm the soldiers in England before they took the boat'.[123] Fianna Éireann were later provided with guns from America that were thought better than the Howth guns that were landed by the Irish Volunteers, which were characterised as being very heavy.[124]

With the development of the Irish Volunteers there was a discernible increase in the militant activities of Fianna Éireann and a noticeable shift in the tone of the organisation and that of its members. Even before the Howth operation one member reported that in the summer of 1913, before the founding of the Irish Volunteers, 'the Fianna put aside their scout

[120] Hay, 'foundation and development', p. 62; McGarry, *The Rising*, p. 32.
[121] *Fianna*, Aug. 1915.
[122] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[123] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[124] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.

poles and began to drill with wooden rifles'.[125] Another member recalled that there were 'no more broom handles, no more dummy rifles'. Willie Nelson (Padraig O'Riain), writing in the *Irish Volunteer* in 1914, believed that 'it would be a good thing if the Fianna had a law which compelled every boy to fire off twelve shots every Sunday after Mass'. By doing this they would not only become good shots themselves but would 'set an example that, if followed by adult organisations, would result in having in Ireland a nation of marksmen'. In 1915 it was noted that 'the Fianna regards with contempt the Irishman who is not to-day armed and ready for any emergency that may arise for the defence of his country'.[126] Sean Prendergast stated that 'practising soldiering was no easy task for us then, but we loved it-couldn't get enough of it'.[127] This was the next stage in the evolution of the organisation and one which was characterised by a departure from traditional scouting activities.

The actual military training that members of Fianna Éireann received seems to have been on an ad-hoc basis and frequently required the ingenuity of members themselves. Training circulars were issued periodically from Fianna headquarters and these, coupled with what Liam Mellows could impart on his infrequent calls to the various locations around the country, constituted the basis of training. In order to supplement these, British army text books were secured and grading tests were arranged and put to members. Patrick Hearne, a Fianna Éireann member, put the ingenuity which was supposed to characterise a scout to good use. He was able to become friends with some British soldiers and develop his military skills. He recalled, 'I was able to acquire a lot of information…and by showing an interest in military training they were always anxious to teach'. By these means he learned army methods of communication in the field such as semaphore signalling and heliograph, as well as infantry tactics and information about artillery and field training. He, and others, also observed British soldiers training in their barracks. He recalled that 'we could be close observers at the necessary times to absorb the instructions etc., and transmit some to our own members, although hurleys (sic) or wooden guns were the only weapons available for training them'.[128]

As time went on Fianna Éireann became more attuned as a military unit. Sean Healy believed that up to 1915 the organisation was strictly a scouting movement but after that became more of a military body.[129] Garry Holohan recalled that as time went on his

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[125] P.J. Murphy, BMH WS 869.
[126] *Irish Volunteer*, 26 Dec. 1914, 27 Feb. 1915.
[127] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[128] Patrick Hearne, BMH WS 1742.
[129] Sean Healy, Liam O'Callaghan , BMH WS 47.

understanding of the organisation underwent a transformation. He wrote that 'the Fianna was no longer a mere pastime or social function. It became a sacred duty, and I started to bend my every effort towards the freeing of Ireland'. He explained how military protocol gained an increasing grip within the organisation and how it became usual for Fianna members to salute each other in Irish noting how 'we used the form of salute later used by Hitler in Germany. I understand that this was an old Irish form of saluting'.[130] Another member, Sean Prendergast, commented that 'the Fianna had reached the point of being not a mere boy scouts organisation but a progressive semi-military body; having gone through several evolutionary stages to attain that position'.[131] Their training was put to the test during the 1916 Rising in which many members participated. Margaret Skinnider recorded that three Fianna boys managed to maintain effective fire on British troops for three days after the surrender of the majority of rebels. When they were eventually detained and informed their captor that they only received shooting lessons one day a week he replied that 'these great lumps of mine...are drilled twice a day and don't yet know their left foot from their right!'.[132]

10.6 Youth Movements and Military Values

While there is no doubt that militarist intent was the motivation of supporters of various youth movements this should not obscure the fact that many other factors where at play in the decision to support and encourage their growth. The lauding of military principles, and the active encouragement of military ideals, did not in itself equate to support for militarism. At the annual demonstration of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade in 1913 the bishop of Ossory, John Henry Bernard, later archbishop of Dublin and provost of Trinity College, Dublin, declared to the members present to 'remember that they had become members of their brigade not for the purpose of learning to play at soldiers, but that they might learn the habits that had made soldiers honoured and good men of every land'.[133] Rev. Samuel Prenter stated at a Boys' Brigade demonstration in 1895 that 'a beautiful thought lay at the root of the Boy's Brigade: that was the thought of the military principle that entered human life'.[134]

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[130] Garry Holohan, BMH WS 336.
[131] Sean Prendergast, BMH WS 755.
[132] Skinnider, *Doing my bit*, p. 19.
[133] *Irish Times*, 19 Feb. 1913; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Feb. 1913
[134] *Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1895; Prenter was a Presbyterian minister who in 1904 became moderator of the general assembly of the Presbyterian church in Ireland, the most senior office holder in the Presbyterian church in Ireland, 'Proceedings of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society Of Ireland: fifty-eighth session 1904/1905', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 11 (Dublin, 1905), p. 363.

While it gave boys a basic introduction to military life the Boys' Brigade was more focused on providing familiarity with military values. It was the standards and values that were embodied by the military that were encouraged by the leadership rather than the encouragement of members to join the military.[135] The ambition was to inculcate military ideals, such as obedience and discipline, and attune these in order to make them applicable to civilian life, and in doing so, aid in the regeneration of civil life. The Dublin battalion emphasised that 'discipline is not the end we seek, but the means of securing it' as 'an undisciplined company is a rabble'.[136]

Similarly, in Fianna Éireann the emphasis on military ideals and the necessity of developing discipline amongst the membership had a social basis. Willie Nelson (Padraig O'Riain) wrote that the making of 'straight and honourable men' was the first object of the organisation and the Fianna programme was 'the agent through which the principles of chivalry and honour are inculcated' with 'the building up of character and the development of all that is fine and noble in the boy' constituting the chief task of the Fianna officer. He believed that the military training members received should have this end in view. For him 'the training in the arts of war without this aim is but a relapse into barbarism' arguing that 'we need men before we need soldiers; and when the man does not dominate the soldier that is in him he becomes a brute'.[137]

The ambition was to place an emphasis on the role that military ideals sought to achieve within a social context. For those who encouraged and promoted drill there was no contradiction between the two spheres and the promotion of drill would not inhibit, but encourage, the development of character. At a Boys' Brigade demonstration in 1899 Archbishop Joseph Ferguson Peacocke stated that the work of the Brigade 'was not a mere childish imitation of military form and military ideas. It grasped the great truth which underlay the training of the soldier'.[138] Lord Roberts commented that drill was 'the foundation of discipline in the Army, and it inculcates habits of obedience, order, regularity, and organisation-habits which you will find as valuable to you in your games as you will in all walks of life'. The institution of military drill was seen as compatible with the aspirations associated with civil life. Drill was promoted as instilling habits that would be as useful to those in civilian employment as it was for those in the military. Archbishop Peacocke

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[135] This use of military nomenclature was also evident in non-uniformed youth organisations such as the Irish Fireside Club, See Nic Congáil, 'The Irish Fireside Club', p. 101.
[136] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 Nov. 1904, 24 Dec. 1904.
[137] *Irish Volunteer*, 6 Feb. 1915.
[138] *Irish Times*, 16 May 1899.

believed that 'the training and discipline of a soldier appealed to the boy and it brought out all that was chivalrous in a boy's character and taught him righteousness, self-sacrifice, and self-control'.[139] In 1912 the drill committee of the Dublin battalion noted that drill would 'have a permanent influence for good in the lives and characters of our boys'.[140] Major General W.F. Vetch, then commanding the Dublin garrison, and an honorary president of the Dublin battalion, commented that 'he knew of nothing that makes more for comradeship and friendship than assembly for drill'.[141] Lieutenant Mitchell of the Lancashire Fusiliers was convinced of the good effect drill would have on the membership, stating at the second annual inspection of the 12th Belfast company that,

> it often happened that dull, heavy, stupid fellows entered the army, and at the beginning they could scarcely give a sensible answer to a plain question, but after a year's drill, they were changed into smart, intelligent men. If such an immense improvement was effected on men, how much greater would the effect be on boys?.[142]

The application of military ideals and training techniques should be seen within this context as providing the membership with habits which could be readily applied to their civilian lives. The dean of Connor, Charles Seaver, was convinced that the drill carried out in the Boys' Brigade improved the physical health of the membership commenting that 'instead of slouching with their heads down, and not knowing what use to make of their arms, they were taught to walk as erect as a statue along the street'.[143] Drill was promoted and encouraged as its application would be beneficial within a social context. This endorsement reflected a desire on the part of the leadership of youth movements to provide their membership with qualities that were necessary to attain and retain employment as well as promoting the values of obedience and discipline.

The above shows that while accusations of militarist intent were levelled against many youth movements these were generally the unfounded assumptions of those outside the organisation while those in positions of leadership constantly derided such a characterisation of their movements. Those encouraging military service were largely supportive members

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[139] *Irish Times*, 18 May 1914.
[140] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 11, BBAD, Box 11.
[141] *Irish Times*, 24 May 1904.
[142] *Belfast News-Letter*, 13 May 1892.
[143] *Belfast News-Letter*, 6 May 1897.

rather than active organisers. The military model was not intended to encourage military service but to encourage a greater awareness of military ideals and the role that military values could play. These were encouraged insofar as they could be adapted to civilian life. The adoption of these models, and the emphasis that was placed upon them, show that it was a more ambitious and socially motivated undertaking on the part of youth movements than simply the encouragement of military ideals. To limit investigation to this aspect alone can distort objectives and obscure intentions and a more nuanced approach is necessary to avoid a reductionist understanding of their role and motives. In order to fully understand their function and popularity it is necessary to understand the broader social role that they fulfilled.

Conclusion

In concluding we must examine how these organisations reflected on their successes and their self-perceptions of their achievements. Members of the Boy Scouts in Ireland were amongst the most able in the United Kingdom and in 1910 the promoters of the organisation arranged to give six of the best Scouts an all-expenses paid six-week tour of Canada. The selections were made by examination and a personal inspection of the most promising candidates and of the six, two were Irish Scouts, Frank Helmn and J.C Taylor. Helmn was one of the most impressive Boy Scouts in Dublin and in 1910 was awarded the Silver Wolf, the highest honour that could be gained for proficiency.[1] It is clear that the Boy Scouts were a popular attraction and many Scouts were committed to their training. In 1910 George Green, patrol leader of the 3rd north county Dublin troop walked to Lucan and back, a distance of fourteen miles, to take the exam for his First Class Scouting badge. Similarly, Frank Helmn walked to Kingstown and back, a distance of twenty miles.[2]

The organisation believed that their success was based on the qualities and values engendered by membership. It was noted that 'the appeal to the boys' sense of honour and responsibility has a wonderful effect' and that 'the scout code gets into their lives'. They praised the discipline of Scouts when on excursions noting that 'notwithstanding the fact that the boys are more or less "out for a lark" the discipline maintained during their expeditions is uniformly excellent'. They emphasised that many parents agreed on the benefits of Scouting noting that 'parents have given testimony as to the changes for the better in youngsters formerly troublesome'.[3] In 1913 James P. Woodhead, scoutmaster of the 3rd north Dublin troop, received a letter from the father of a member of his troop. It read that 'the Scouts have done more solid mental and physical for Alfie than any other cause of which I know could have done in five times the length of his membership. It put new healthy life and a bright, cheerful, and helpful aspiration into him'.[4] A former leader in this troop, who enlisted in the South Irish Horse during World War I, wrote to his former scoutmaster that 'the good scouting has done me will stand to me all my life, and I never regret the day I joined your troop'.[5] However, there were voices of opposition to the organisation and those who criticised the training provided. When the Naas Boy Scouts in Co. Kildare applied for use of

[1] *Irish Independent*, 22 July, 1910; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 July 1910, 30 July 1910; By 1911 five Dublin Boy Scouts had been awarded the Silver Wolf, *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 June 1911.
[2] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 19 Feb. 1910.
[3] *Irish Times*, 10 Sept. 1910.
[4] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 1 Feb. 1913.
[5] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 June 1915.

the local town hall, a town councillor voiced his opposition questioning whether there was any group 'who would do as much harm to the Hall as these boy scouts or "louts" as I call them'.[6]

The Boys' Brigade also reflected on the success of their organisation. The Boys' Brigade in Ireland was highly successful in comparison with other companies from the United Kingdom and the Dublin battalion excelled in the competitions run by Brigade headquarters. In 1904 an essay competition was run and of the fifty-four prizes offered ten were won by Dublin competitors. On the available statistics for 1904 the Dublin battalion comprised 1.6 per cent of the total strength of the Boys' Brigade in the United Kingdom, yet won nearly 20 per cent of the prizes.[7] It is difficult to gauge the success of the organisation solely in terms of numbers and this was appreciated by the organisation. The annual report of the Dublin battalion in 1899 declared that a 'mere increase in numbers is no adequate test of the internal prosperity of the Brigade' and that 'the result of the Brigade work must rather be looked for in strengthened characters and ennobled lives' with the nineteenth annual report of the Dublin battalion arguing that 'there are deeper results which a report cannot show'.[8] The Dublin battalion report for 1912 argued that

> we may say that statistical tables and Brigade gathering are the outward result of our work. The deeper, inward results can never be tabulated, nor can it be shown in the pages of a report to what extent the Brigade is fulfilling the great purpose of its existence.[9]

William Monk Gibbon warned against the assumption that the existence of a bible class and regular addresses at drill were true indices of success. None of these 'nor even the attendance of boys at other means of grace, can answer for it that their souls are truly touched'.[10] J.W. Morgan wrote that 'we have not yet the glasses strong enough to pierce flesh and blood to see what changes are going on in the hearts and characters of our boys' and the tangible proof was that 'we see boys who come to us lazy, indifferent, careless, disobedient, untidy. A year or two lapses and we find these are the lads who are first to arrive on parade, their uniform speechless, their obedience willing, their enthusiasm unbounded, their readiness for work

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[6] *Kildare Observer*, 17 Aug. 1912.
[7] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 Apr. 1904.
[8] *Irish Times*, 16 Mar. 1899; *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 20, no. 6, Feb. 1912, p. 91.
[9] *Twentieth annual report (1911-1912) of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade*, p. 23, BBAD, Box 11.
[10] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 10, June 1897, p. 147.

unlimited'. He recalled 'boys who before they joined us were forever on the streets, with absolutely nothing to do in the evenings, who are now attending Bible classes, ambulances, bands, drills, and a host of other equally healthy and wholesome classes'.[11]

Others also commented on the practical manifestations of the benefits of the training provided. The archbishop of Dublin recalled that upon meeting a boy who was a member of the Boys' Brigade he had pondered that if he was not a member he would have been 'around the streets with nothing but mischief in his heart'.[12] Lord Roberts commentated 'that the Dublin clergymen attribute the improved behaviour of the boys in their respective parishes to the careful manner in which they are instructed'.[13] At the annual inspection of the Boys' Brigade in 1895 Major General de Montmorency suggested that their work 'accounted for the number of very fine young fellows that one met in the street- the active young fellows that they saw too in the cricket and in the football field'.[14] The bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, Thomas James Welland, stated that 'there could be no question that since the foundation of that organisation there had been a vast improvement amongst that class of boys who belonged to it'.[15] Those who operated at a local level similarly noted the benefits accrued. In 1897 the parochial report of St Barnabas' Church reported that as a result of the Boys' Brigade in the parish 'the conduct of members is improved in a marked degree'.[16] Lieutenant Hind of the 6th Belfast company argued that the Brigade 'seemed to be having a great effect on the boys' and commented on a boy 'who had been a great source of trouble both at school and also in his home and among the neighbours, whose conduct had greatly improved in every way since he had joined the company'.[17] The captain of the 1st Bessbrook company in Co. Armagh stated that one of the results of the work of the Boys' Brigade in his parish had been that previously no boy saluted anybody 'all of them belonging to the Company when they meet an Officer of the Brigade or a lady now most regularly give the salute. I find, moreover, that not only The Boys of the Brigade do it, but that all their comrades have also taken to it'. Those who had become members were formerly boys 'who could not be got to attend anything until they joined the Brigade'.[18] The 6th Dublin company reported that the organisation 'worked a complete change...which otherwise would have

[11] *Irish Times*, 20 Oct. 1894.
[12] *Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1895.
[13] *Irish Times*, 16 Mar. 1899.
[14] *Irish Times*, 4 June 1895.
[15] *Belfast News-Letter*, 4 Mar. 1899.
[16] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 27 Nov. 1897.
[17] Minutes of a Boys' Brigade conference of 22 Feb. 1890, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, T1773/1.
[18] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 5, June 1892, p. 90.

been impossible' with the 4th Dublin company reporting that 'parents frequently speak of the great change for the better in the conduct of their boys'.[19] The captain of the 21st Dublin company wrote that he had 'received testimony from parents of Boys of their improvement generally since they joined the company'.[20] The perceived success of the Boys' Brigade secured a knighthood for William Smith in 1909.[21]

At least some boys internalised the Brigade's teaching and appreciated the benefits of membership. An Irish captain recalled one evening when a boy stayed behind in their club room after it had closed and said to him, 'Sir, I have for a long time intended to give the very first money I earned myself to the B.B. in return for all I have received, and I was paid to-day, I want you to take this and use it for whatever fund you like'. This made the officer 'a prouder and happier man than he had been for many a long day'.[22] While stories such as this may be dismissed as apocryphal there is also practical evidence which demonstrates the courage and civic duty that was supposed to be imbued by membership, although it is of course arguable to what extent these were a result of membership. In 1897 Boys' Brigade member George Kermode was awarded a certificate from the Royal Humane Society for saving a boy from drowning in Dollymount. In 1912 Boys' Brigade member Robert Hughes saved a boy from drowning in the Royal Canal in Dublin and was awarded a certificate from the Royal Humane Society and a silver watch from the Carnegie Hero Fund.[23] The Boys' Brigade Cross for Heroism was initiated in 1902 for acts of heroism by Brigade members with the cross being made of bronze, ensuring that it was of no intrinsic value. By 1914 four members of the Boys' Brigade in Ireland had been awarded the cross. In 1908 Herbert Gardner, a fifteen year old boy from the 1st Kilkenny company, was awarded the cross for saving a boy from being run over by a horse and cart and sustained serious injuries in the rescue. In 1909 James Moody Spratt, a fifteen year old boy from the 37th Belfast company, was awarded the cross for attempting to save a boy from drowning in the River Lagan. In 1910 Albert Marrs, a seventeen year old boy from the 20th Belfast company, was awarded the Cross for saving a child from a burning house. In 1914 Archibald Lappin, a sixteen year old boy from the 39th Belfast company, was awarded the cross for rescuing two men from drowning in the River Lagan at Donegall Quay in Belfast.[24]

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[19] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 8, Dec. 1892, pp. 186-7.
[20] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 7, Apr. 1894, p. 184.
[21] *The London Gazette*, 30 July 1909, p. 5805.
[22] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 5, no. 3, Sept. 1896, p. 42.
[23] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 14 Oct. 1912.
[24] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 17, no. 2, Oct. 1908, p. 18, vol. 18, no. 8, Apr. 1909, p. 22, vol. 19, no. 3, Nov. 1910, p. 35, vol. 22, no. 5, Jan. 1914, p. 66; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 Jan. 1914, 28 Feb. 1914; The Boys'

However, we must appreciate that these glowing appraisals were largely the opinions of those in positions of authority in youth movements and many of their comments must be seen as being underpinned by a desire to advertise the beneficial aspects of membership and as a form of rhetoric designed to advance their agenda. As a result it would be wrong to assume that all members adhered to the high ideals promoted by the Brigade and these self-perceptions must be set against the comments of those less sanguine about the benefits. Despite some parents praising the role of youth movements others expressed concerns regarding the working of the Brigade. In 1905 a boy was removed from the 1st Carlow company because his older brother had left the company and his 'parents thought him too young to remain in the Company after his elder brother had left'. A boy was removed from the same company in 1907 having been taken out by his father, 'he not approving of the Brigade in general'.[25] Philip B. Johnson, a clergyman attached to the Irish Church Missions, wrote to J.W. Morgan in 1899 that the 28th and 29th Companies (both attached to the Irish Church Missions) had been disbanded. These two companies were connected to a boys' home at the Grand Canal in Dublin and the Coombe Boys' Home respectively. The Irish Church Missions had control over the boys' educational and spiritual care and each home had a ladies committee which stood *in loco parentis* and was responsible for their home life. The disbanding of these companies seems to have been as much a result of internal issues specific to the mission rather than a judgement on the Boys' Brigade. Johnson wrote that these committees 'have conceived some objection to the Boys' Brigade and to my going into the House during other than school hours and taking the boys from under control of the house mother'. He believed that continuing with the Boys' Brigade would lead to greater friction and felt disbanding the companies was 'preferable to a split between these committees and the present society'.[26]

Within the Brigade itself there was also ambivalence in the early stages of development and in Belfast in 1890 Samuel Mercer, the first president of the Belfast battalion, commented that he 'could not form a decided opinion as to the effect produced on the boys'. William McVicker was initially cautious regarding the success of the organisation stating that he was 'unable to come to a decided determination one way or another as to the success of the work, the majority of the Boys had undoubtedly been improved, but on the

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Brigade Belfast battalion minutes of council, 20 Oct. 1910, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, D3383/1/1; *Belfast Evening Telegraph*, 10 Dec. 1913. See also, The Boys' Brigade, *Badges of the Boys' Brigade* (London, 1980), p. 5.

[25] NLI, Arthur FitzMaurice Papers, 23,558.

[26] Philip B. Johnson to J.W. Morgan, 27 Nov. 1899, Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, BBAD, Box 9.

other hand the bad side of the characters of some few had been brought out most prominently'.[27] Similarly, the captain of the 8th Belfast company had been cautious about the role that the Brigade could play and when it began he was unsure whether good results obtained by the company 'were the results of a deep interest on the part of the Boys, or were merely spasmodic efforts induced by the novelty of the organisation'. After two years of the company's existence he wrote that 'I am now enabled to say the good has been permanent, and that apparently the longer a Boy is in the Company the more interested and enthusiastic does he become'.[28] For others in the Brigade the values encouraged were lacking in many members and in 1902 the Dublin battalion complained that 'some boys seem to be quite ready to take advantage of all the opportunities given by the B.B., who never seem to be willing to give it anything in return'.[29]

There were also concerns amongst the wider public which found expression in both verbal and physical attacks. James V. Stevenson, an RIC district inspector, reported in 1904 that the Boys' Brigade would often have to be accompanied by police escorts when going through Dublin city as they were in danger of being attacked.[30] In 1900 the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade received a letter of apology from the Dublin United Tramways Company for the conduct of one of their drivers 'who had run his car through the ranks of a Company', although it is unclear whether this was an accident or not.[31] The Boys' Brigade in Cork reported that the organisation there 'had to fight its way patiently through the prejudices of a section of the public who were anything but "sympathetic", and we had to regularly run the gauntlet of the usual "mudslinging"'.[32]

Despite the ambitions of the Boys' Brigade, opinion was not uniform regarding the virtues that were cultivated and members of the public questioned the extent to which they were internalised by members. For some there was a gulf between the noble aspirations of the leadership and the actions of members. An anonymous letter to the editor to the *Irish Times* complained that members of the Boys' Brigade 'seem to regard it as an amusement provided for them once a week'. While the chief object was to make them examples for others, irrespective of creed, 'they seem to take no notice whatever of this all-important clause; on

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[27] Minutes of a Boys' Brigade conference of 22 Feb. 1890, PRONI, Boys' Brigade Papers, T1773/1.
[28] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 1, Oct. 1891, p. 9.
[29] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 22 Nov. 1902.
[30] *Royal Irish constabulary, evidence taken before the committee of inquiry, 1901, with appendix* [Cd. 1094] (1902), p. 205.
[31] Minute book of the executive committee of the Dublin battalion of the Boys' Brigade, 17 Mar. 1900, BBAD, Box 9.
[32] *The Boys' Brigade Gazette*, vol. 20, no. 9, May 1912, p. 135.

the contrary, they delight in making those of different creeds envious'.[33] Another anonymous contributor, identified as 'Steady, Boys, Steady', questioned the moral teaching that members received as part of their training and how far it was internalised. They questioned whether the promotion of values had been achieved and recounted witnessing 'the petty jealousies which exist among the members of the Brigade. But in doing so one would have to listen to language which is very far from being either manly or gentlemanly'. They also objected to the late hour at which drill occurred which they believed tended to develop 'the natural inclination to stay out late at night which is found in most boys between the limits of age for the Brigade'.[34] In the 1st company of the Carlow Boys' Brigade a rule was introduced stating that 'members must conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly way going to and from parades'.[35] Similarly, the Dublin Boy Scouts introduced a regulation forbidding bugle blowing after 9 pm.[36]

In analysing the military features of youth movements it has been demonstrated that one of the reasons for the accusations of militarism was the contemporary context. As Olive Anderson has noted, the period witnessed 'not only an affair of unprecedentedly adulatory attitudes towards Britain's professional soldiers, but also of civilian imitation of military organization, discipline and paraphernalia, and the diffusion of military sentiments and rhetoric in general'.[37] The activities of bodies like the National Service League served to associate military drill and military values amongst adolescents with military service. The ambitions of military standards and culture encouraged in youth movements was misunderstood by many members of the public and when drill was introduced into Irish schools to increase discipline and physical health many perceived it as a recruiting tool for the armed forces. These concerns surrounding the Boys' Brigade were exacerbated by the pronouncements of military officers who inspected and spoke at demonstrations with many emphasising the training that members received as being a valuable precursor to military service. These demonstrations were the highest profile public events which the general public witnessed or read about with the other observations likely to be companies marching in military formation along the city streets. While these perceptions may have been moderated by their charity work and their engagement in civic life it may not have been enough to convince non-members of the religious purpose of the Brigade.

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[33] *Weekly Irish Times*, 6 Oct. 1894.
[34] *Weekly Irish Times*, 13 Oct. 1894.
[35] NLI, FitzMaurice Papers, 23,557.
[36] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 2 May 1914, 15 May 1915.
[37] Anderson, 'The growth of Christian militarism', p. 46.

The refusal of the Boys' Brigade to accept cadet recognition reinforced their position that the spiritual aims of the organisation were paramount and allowed them an opportunity to reassert this aim while the Church Lads' Brigade diminished their religious aims by integration into the armed forces which served to heighten fears surrounding adolescents and the military. Despite accusations of military intent the Boys' Brigade were steadfast in their commitment to drill as an essential element in their method and refused to dilute it as a central component in their programme, demonstrating their commitment to it as a central activity in the fulfilment of their spiritual aims. The Brigade was consistent in their emphasis on the fundamental ambition of the organisation being religious. In Ireland they had limited connections with the military due to the lack of a Volunteer force. However, this hindered the development of proficiency in drill as in Britain officers tended to have a background in military drill gained in the Volunteers with no such pool of potential officers existing in Ireland. The Boy Scouts eschewed the more obviously military activities such as drill on the basis that it was inimical to their aims centred as they were on character development. For them, military drill repressed individuality with its focus on the unit rather than the individual. However, this did not diminish accusations of militarist intent with the Boy Scouts in Ireland having to consistently defend their non-military character. There is limited evidence of a close relationship existing between the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, the Boy Scouts, and the Ulster Volunteers. While they aided in a number of demonstrations and occasionally loaned them equipment there was not an explicit connection or encouragement to members to join the paramilitary body when they had become too old to remain in the organisations. This is an indication of how religion and moral instruction were much more significant elements in their programmes and reflects Alan Megahey's argument that 'most of what was achieved by the churches in the early years of the century was entirely non-political'.[38]

Many youth movements held deferential attitudes towards professional soldiers but it does not necessarily follow that military service was the ultimate objective. While the armed forces were held in high esteem their culture and training were advanced as providing important social benefits and the adoption of the military model was a more complex undertaking than supplementing the need for compulsory military service. While the skills that youth movements encouraged would prove beneficial to members who later joined the armed forces this was not the central ambition and was essentially an ancillary benefit to

[38] Megahey, *Irish Protestant churches*, p. 63.

those who joined. Army recruitment was never the foremost objective in any youth movement considered here. However, while the theoretical ambitions were more nuanced than providing soldiers it is possible that this may have been lost on many members who may have failed to grasp the subtle nuances of military drill as providing social values and skills. The military drill, values, standards, and the exalting of the armed forces, may have encouraged some to join the military although evidence suggests that the proportion that later joined the armed forces prior to 1914 was small.

What must be borne in mind in relation to the military features of youth movements is that they were a powerful attraction for both leaders and rank and file members. In the Boys' Brigade it was not just on a theoretical basis that drill was advanced but as the major attraction in joining the Brigade which harnessed enthusiasm for military imitation and it must be appreciated that 'the boys liked playing at soldiers'.[39] The attraction of drill, military titles, and uniforms amongst boys was utilised for a primarily religious and social end. In the Boy Scouts scouting had its basis in military training but was tailored to suit a civilian application and provided a key attraction to members allowing them to develop skills that, while useful to members that joined the armed forces, were equally useful to the members that did not, developing skills of observation, self-reliance, and leadership. The primary ambition was the encouragement of military values such as discipline, obedience, punctuality, and their applicability to civil life. These values were just as crucial in attaining employment as they were in the life of a career soldier.

However, there were distinctive features of youth movements in Ireland that set them apart from their contemporaries in the wider United Kingdom and in Ireland they became much more enmeshed in cultural and political debates. The cultural environment was distinctive and youth movements emerged and grew in a context in which many were reassessing distinctive indigenous cultural forms for their applicability to contemporary life. For many, anglicising influences had undermined national self-confidence and youth movements that originated in Britain being introduced into Ireland were seen as evidence of this process. As a result, their commonalities were ignored and much greater emphasis was placed upon providing domestic organisations to fulfil near identical social functions. The political context was also distinctive and the close identification of some youth movements with paramilitary forces gave a keener edge to their military aspects. These military activities were accelerated beyond anything experienced in Britain as in Ireland certain youth

[39] R.J. Morris, 'Clubs, societies and associations', in F.M.L. Thompson, ed., *The Cambridge social history of Britain, 1750-1950, vol. 3, social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 423.

movements were explicitly tailored to military and political ends. The Catholic and nationalist youth movements were more militarised than the British based organisations active in Ireland to the extent that they encouraged members to join paramilitary bodies upon their graduation from the youth organisations. This can be seen as providing members with the comradeship and activities that they enjoyed as adolescents transferred to an adult environment. The Irish Volunteers were seen as fulfilling this role and these youth movements, especially Fianna Éireann, were much more proactive in encouraging members to join. In Fianna Éireann it went beyond encouragement and was much more pronounced, having a formal basis with a structural framework developed to delineate the relationship that was to exist between the adolescent and adult bodies. They provided the initial drill instructors to the Irish Volunteers and developed a system whereby Fianna members were transferred to the Irish Volunteers. Fianna Éireann was the youth movement most engaged in aiding the Irish Volunteers and were a significant element in many operations, providing intelligence, reconnaissance, and aiding in military operations, especially the Howth gun-running.

The influence of the IRB must also be acknowledged and this accounts for much of the increasing military posture that Fianna Éireann adopted in the pre-war years. While not dismissing the fundamental aim of Fianna Éireann as being the pursuit of Irish independence it must also be recognised that there were much more varied motivations in working with adolescents which were reflective of wider trends within Ireland and across the United Kingdom concerning physical health, adequate socialisation, and the anxieties provoked by urban life. This is reflected in the tensions between Fianna Éireann and the Irish Volunteers and there were suggestions from within Fianna Éireann that it was not being maintained as an organisation for boys. While they supported the Irish Volunteers some officers were keen to stress that military skills were not the sole aim of training with character development and social instruction also seen as significant. Drill was adopted as an attractive feature to members and while they were the most militarised youth movement considered here there were also those who emphasised the civil ambitions and criticised the increasing military posture of the organisation. They were anxious to maintain it as an organisation for boys and the social and civic benefits were seen as equally significant elements of their programme. They argued that a relationship with members was the most significant element in being a successful leader with military expertise being of little use if not underpinned by an appreciation of adolescent life. Similarly, in the Hibernian Boys' Brigade drill was not advanced solely for its military application but for its social benefits, encouraging discipline

and obedience, and they were keen to highlight that it was a means to an end and not the sole motivation of the organisation. The development of nationalist organisations in the context of other contemporary youth movements provides an alternative framework for their emergence than on purely military or political grounds. While Fianna Éireann was founded in opposition to the Boy Scouts they owed much to their structure and methods. This highlights the commonality of experience and ideological affinities between youth movements and is recognition of their emergence to address similar social concerns in the period. In examining the military features of youth movements it is essential to make the distinction between pride in military values and pride in the armed forces. This was most obviously expressed in the Irish founded youth movements. Fianna Éireann, the Hibernian Boys' Brigade, and the Catholic Boys' Brigade, lauded the values of the military, embraced military drill, and praised the diffusion of military sentiments amongst adolescents, yet criticised those who joined the British army with military enlistment seen as a dishonourable ambition for members. Thus it was possible to laud the military for their values while denouncing them for their activities.

While there were many members of youth organisations that supported them on the basis of alternative military agendas, and as an effective alternative to compulsory military service, this should not obscure that the majority of active organisers supported them for their religious, social, civic, and educational aims. In essential respects it was the social benefits of military values and training that were emphasised and these were seen as compatible with the aspirations of civil life. For youth movements there was no contradiction between the two spheres and they saw themselves as encouraging habits that could be readily applied to civilian life. While the values of duty, discipline, honour, and obedience which were encouraged can be seen as efforts to ensure the maintenance of the existing social order it should not obscure the enabling function that these could play in the life of a member. These attributes could encourage self-respect, confidence, and self-esteem in a member who may have not been exposed to such values in his everyday life. For working class parents the skills accrued by membership were desirable and they were foremost in supporting the extra-curricular activities of youth movements. Both John Gillis and James Walvin have noted that parents sought the skills and values that youth movements encouraged and 'obedience on the part of children was regarded as an especially important status symbol' and 'was seen as the greatest of all virtues in children'.[40] John Springhall has also highlighted the desirability of

[40] Gillis, *Youth and history*, pp. 120-21; Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 47.

these values writing that, 'discipline was a sure sign of prosperity and respectability in working class families'.[41] The adoption of military models was a more ambitious enterprise than simply the encouragement of military ideals. The military elements of youth movements highlight the extent to which military values were seen as desirable in civil life. The essential commonality amongst all youth movements was that they saw military values and military training amongst adolescents as virtues to be exalted rather than dangers to be confronted. Placing sole emphasis on the military aspects of youth movements misrepresents their wider programmes and obscures the motivations of organisers. A more inclusive approach is necessary to determine their function, one which appreciates the broader remit of their interests and their wider social motivations.

As has been seen youth organisations appealed to both male and female adolescents and they responded to broadly similar issues, but the distinctions between the organisations were highly gendered. While their respective activities were gender specific this should not obscure that there was a degree of overlap. While the Girls' Brigade and the Girl Guides focused on traditional female activities such as cooking and first aid, these activities were equally encouraged in male organisations and to this extent they crossed gender boundaries and argued that traditional female pursuits were just as necessary amongst boys. Similarly, while camping was considered a male pursuit the Girl Guides were anxious to partake and were innovative pioneers in the extension of camping amongst women. Camping may have been more acceptable as it was an institutionalised element of their programme and the formal structure may have diminished fears surrounding a lack of supervision. While officially restricted to conventional female pursuits membership of female organisations could prove a liberating force in the life of leaders and rank and file members. For leaders it could provide a re-definition of their social role and while restricted to traditional concerns of dealing with the young it did allow women to attain positions of leadership and authority while not challenging ideological stereotypes concerning their role. For the rank and file it provided activities that engaged women in the public sphere as they were active in many charitable endeavours. This could prove an empowering experience and cause members to reflect more deeply on social policy and this is evident from attempts by the Girl Guides to lobby government over issues relating to alcohol and in this way they were involved in attempting to initiate legislative reform.

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[41] Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 61.

Encouraging female adolescents to engage in philanthropic work allowed them to meet and engage with older women involved in social work which may have provided both inspiration and role models for engagement in public activities when they reached adulthood. The activities they engaged in provided an insight into the world beyond domestic sphere. Female organisations also supplemented the educational curriculum, providing training in skills which were perceived as deficient in the traditional education system. Their focus on domestic pursuits may partially be explained by the perception that teachers were insufficiently qualified to educate girls in such tasks. However, it would wrong to diminish the cultural prejudices surrounding females in uniform and these were foremost in the minds of those engaged in the work and they were often on the defensive, justifying their actions and placating those who were suspicious of their activities. This highlights the variety of responses to organisations for girls. While some saw them as liberating and providing necessary skills that would prove useful to society, others saw them as a danger to females and as imitations of male organisations.

The social function of youth movements highlights how associational culture in Ireland was extended to an adolescent environment which incorporated attractive features for members whilst ensuring an adult supervisory role over their leisure time. While associational culture is a broad context in which to place youth movements, and incorporates all of their activities, it does provide a methodological framework in which to appreciate their activities. This ensured that all members were under similar obligations and provided an opportunity for the inculcation of values and the provision of skills. This broader social function was the predominant aim of most youth movements and they showed themselves responsive to wider social issues. This thesis has shown that the lack of provision for leisure facilities where adolescents could be catered for was a significant issue of public concern and youth movements were significant bodies in providing these. The provision of a reading room where adolescents could meet, read, and play games had at its core a desire to insulate them from other pursuits such as gambling and loitering which were seen as morally corrupting and leading to delinquent behaviour. The ambition was to provide wholesome surroundings both in terms of activities and companions. This ensured adequate supervision and supplied members with games and reading material that they may not otherwise have had access to.

Such concerns about adolescent boys and urban spaces were heightened as a result of psychological insights which in effect served to limit the autonomy of adolescents and 'reduced the opportunity for independent action (real or imagined) on the part of youth' and

their 'very 'nature' was to be the justification for adult control'.[42] This concern was most forcibly expressed regarding working class adolescents and more specifically centred on the labouring class. One of the major deficiencies of youth movements was that they largely failed to attract the labouring poor that were the ostensible targets of their work and in Ireland they comprised the smallest grouping of members from working class backgrounds.[43] Their resistance to membership and to the supervision provided in youth movements helped to develop a contrast between members and non-members, the former in uniform, ordered and disciplined, while the latter were stigmatised as precocious, unrestrained, and a threat to social order. The irony was that the desire of youth movements to provide wholesome activities for the labouring classes actually resulted in those who could not be attracted experiencing an even greater level of vulnerability as it was against these that the police and youth movements were mobilised and 'it seems likely that the success of the boys' organisations left the poorer, less amenable youths even more exposed and isolated as the objects of social concern'. [44] In youth movements working class street culture was characterised as corrupting and their activities helped to initiate what was held to be the proper social behaviour of adolescents, emphasising dependence, discipline, and punctuality and led to the possibility that children not under adequate adult supervision could 'be stigmatised as delinquents'.[45]

The increasing anxiety surrounding juvenile delinquency in the period, which was one of motivating factors in the emergence of youth movements, should be seen as a dominant discourse that distorted the reality. While the number of juvenile offences increased this was largely as a result of the widening of the definition of juvenile delinquency.[46] Increasingly authorities refused to accept the independent and non-conformist tendencies of many members of the working classes and treated credible and recognised traditions as delinquent behaviour. The offences that boys were mostly charged with were largely long-standing traditional elements of juvenile culture, usually minor infractions such as gambling, loitering, and playing games in public spaces. So rather than being more lawless the condemnation of their activities was amplified and they were the targets of enhanced restrictions on these activities. Their regulation redefined what constituted delinquent behaviour and what was to be tolerated in an urban setting. John Gillis has seen such a redefinition as a product of an

[42] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 97.

[43] Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 191-2. See Tables 4, 5, 10.

[44] Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 192.

[45] Springhall, *Coming of age*, p. 63.

[46] Steedman, *Strange dislocations*, p. 116.

urban-industrial age where there was a need for more regulation of the streets.[47] The commitment of youth movements to their aims thus precluded an appreciation of working class adolescent life on its own terms with members encouraged to embrace the manners, modes of thought and behaviour that were perceived as conventional by their leaders but which were often in conflict with members' parents.[48]

The popularity of youth movements lay in providing attractions to adolescents that would have been unattainable outside a youth movement. In their social function Irish youth movements performed a similar function to youth movements within the wider United Kingdom and both had common preoccupations. A boys' room providing reading material, sociability, and a place for adolescents to congregate, was a major benefit of membership. Sport was one of the most attractive activities that youth movements provided and held equal appeal in Ireland as it did throughout Britain and in Ireland youth movements were influential in the development of sport such as association football and basketball amongst adolescents. Sport and camping provided members with organised leisure activities that they enjoyed underpinned by moral and social ideals that leaders wished to impart. For members the lack of suitable facilities in school playgrounds ensured that organisations that provided an outlet for sport proved attractive. For leaders it was an opportunity to provide physical activity to the young in order to increase bodily strength and health, seen as diminished by urban life, physical deterioration, and increasing technological advances, as well as an opportunity for enhancing moral character. Camping allowed members an excursion to a rural environment under adequate supervision which provided a break from the urban environment and family restraints. Here leisure activities were underpinned by instruction in a variety of tasks such as cooking and cleaning which fostered self-reliance, independence, and responsibility. However, it is clear that the values encouraged were sometimes inconsistent with the values demonstrated by members and it is arguable to what extent the values espoused by leaders found expression in the activities of members.

One of the functions of physical activity was to combat physical deterioration and here they provided support to the traditional school system where habits of hygiene and cleanliness were deemed inadequate. Youth movements rallied against unhealthy practices such as smoking and drinking alcohol. They tackled vested interests as in the period there were numerous marketing campaigns amongst tobacco manufacturers which arguably were designed to attract children. Smoking amongst adolescents was held to be encouraged by the

[47] Walvin, *A child's world*, p. 189; Gillis, *Youth*, pp. 177, 182
[48] Hendrick, *Images of youth*, p. 258.

environment in which they lived and worked. If they were in employment they would be in the company of adult males and may have attempted to conform to their habits. It may also have been an assertion of their independence and a signifier of their freedom from restraint. In a youth movement where all boys were under the same obligations in terms of their behaviour it may have been easier to discourage smoking than outside the institutional framework of a youth movement where peer pressure centred on some main peer group leaders would have been more prevalent. However, in practice this proved more difficult with numerous references to members being seen smoking and it would be simplistic to assert that members adopted the values of their leaders unquestioningly.

Youth movements attempted to place limited attention on issues of social class and sought to provide training that would enhance employment prospects for members. This was done partly by providing skills, values, and role-models. Numerous commentators and governmental bodies commented that leaders in youth movements had a closer relationship with members than their school teachers and this was a key component in developing their skills. This was aided by attempting to eliminate issues of class amongst members, but this proved more complex in practice. As has been noted, the use of uniforms did not eliminate the indicators of social status within youth movements and also helped reinforce visual distinctions between members and non-members. Such distinctions possibly left non-members more ostracised than they had been prior to the emergence of youth movements due to the activities of youth movements coming to be seen as appropriate activities for adolescents. For many working class members, membership of a youth movement that promoted values and behaviours that were more associated with middle class aspirations and social mores was seen as a rejection of working class behavioural patterns and a betrayal of community values. This is evidenced by the inclination of some youth movement members to hide their uniforms when in public for fear of verbal mockery and possibly even physical attack.

The focus on certain values and skills highlights the insufficient focus on these in the traditional education curriculum in Ireland with youth movements attempting to augment the lack of provision. The values were primarily focused on a lack of attention to punctuality, discipline, and character training, with youth movements consciously attempting to develop these attributes. The deficiencies were blamed on the quality of teachers and the organisation of the education system. The educational function of youth movements highlights how voluntary organisations were significant bodies in attempting to supplement the education received by Irish adolescents. The values that they encouraged were given a tangible basis

and were seen as a necessary precursor to developing the skills necessary to ensure enhanced employment prospects. One reason for this concern centred on adolescents engaging in work which taught them no valuable skills and in many cases their services were dispensed with once they reached adulthood. However, this was an undertaking that brought some youth movements into conflict with members' parents who resented the encouragement of further training such as apprenticeships due to the lower levels of income and wished their children to earn the highest amount of money they could as quickly as possible. In this regard youth movements were placing the needs of the community as a whole over the needs of individual families. While they associated further training with steadiness and maturity, adolescents who engaged in low skilled employment were characterised as threat to society. However, there was little acknowledgment of the precarious financial situation many families lived with and a lack of appreciation that adolescents' wages were in many instances an essential contribution to family income.

The insufficient focus on industrial education was seen as a reason for a lack of economic progress in Ireland with the education system firmly focused on academic subjects. These deficiencies in technical education allowed youth movements to highlight how they taught members the basics of useful trades and, even more significantly, brought them into contact with employers and tradesmen that could be useful in securing employment for a member. They provided a network through which members could gain employment and acted as unofficial labour exchanges, providing a medium between their members and local employers. To this end they actively engaged with employers to determine the skill sets that they required and integrated these into their programmes. In this way membership of a youth movement could prove a beneficial precursor to entering the world of paid work. However, the educational benefits to be accrued should not be overestimated and there is inadequate statistical evidence to justify suggesting that they were more successful in developing these skills than the traditional education system.

Despite this, many parts of their programmes did influence curricular reform in the state sector. The emphasis on drill in the Boys' Brigade was influential in the adoption of drill in the education system and ensured a growing appreciation of the function it could play ranging from increasing discipline to improving bodily strength. There were many education professionals who believed that the work carried out by the Boy Scouts complemented the work carried out in schools. This underlines the educational function of the Boy Scouts and the manner in which they could provide education through means other than traditional book learning which proved attractive to members. This was given a practical manifestation in

Ireland were many troops were attached to educational institutions with elements of Scouting becoming incorporated into their curriculums. The emphasis youth movements placed on developing the practical skills necessary to gain employment was an attempt to supplement the lack of provision for these skills in the traditional education system and the attempted elimination of these deficiencies highlights the efforts of voluntary groups in enhancing the educational abilities of Irish adolescents.

The social function of youth movements has highlighted their philanthropic motivations and demonstrated that the provision of a supervisory role over members was not an end in itself. They also sought to provide training that would allow members to reflect on the contribution they could make to civic life. While members were the recipients of philanthropic effort they were also taught to reflect on social problems and encouraged to engage in philanthropic effort themselves through charitable works and in this way trained to care for the community. Through this it was hoped that the motivation for voluntary work would be passed to those who had themselves been the recipients of voluntary effort and youth movements were important in encouraging and organising philanthropic efforts amongst adolescents. The specific form that their structures took ensured that they were community based and this relationship with a specific geographical location could encourage civic pride. This is especially true of the Boys' Brigade as they were connected mainly to parishes which may have helped members reflect on their civic duty and situate themselves within the wider community. This allowed members to attain a status in the community hitherto unavailable. The encouragement of pride in their communities was achieved by the development of an *esprit de corps* which reinforced communal values and attempted to teach members that the unit could only prosper by the effort of all its individual parts. By advancing the unity of the organisation as essential, youth movements attempted to develop a group consensus amongst members where the concepts of honour and duty amongst members attempted to displace the sole focus on following instructions from adults. This emphasis on the responsibility of each member could be a powerful influence on the attitudes and behaviour of adolescents as the focus was not solely on following the instruction of adults but on fostering obligations amongst their peer group. Instilling the belief that they were representative of their communities and their peer group had the potential to nurture reflection, restraint, and an enhanced appreciation of their place within the community.

Religion was an issue that many youth movements had to contend with throughout the period. The Boy Scouts consistently emphasised their non-sectarian character and were non-denominational to ensure inclusivity but did express themselves as favourable to religion. It is

clear from statistical analysis that this policy found expression in a local setting in Ireland and the Boy Scouts were composed of adolescents from a number of different Christian denominations and other religions and their spiritual welfare was catered for by the organisation. These provide insights into inter-denominational and inter-religious dialogue in Ireland. The Boys' Brigade was primarily a religious organisation and emerged as a result of a prevalent feeling that the traditional church structures were not attracting adolescent members. Their religious approach demonstrated that 'by dispensing with some of the earnestness and decorum that had burdened Victorian youth organisations it could attract members of the working class'. This was an innovative approach which appreciated that there were boys 'who could not be reached by standing in the pulpit or remaining behind the teacher's desk'.[49] The emergence of the Brigade is also a reflection of the wider context in which increased leisure facilities were offered by churches in the late nineteenth century to compete against the increasing variety of leisure activities.[50] The Brigade model aided in making religion appealing to members and provided them with a version of Christianity that was attractive, with a focus on drill, games, and sport. The Boys' Brigade in Ireland were an integral part of parish life and one that allowed boys to be kept at the heart of parochial life during adolescence. This religious ambition provided supervision over the leisure time of members with all activities filtered through the prism of religious education. The Brigade also held an attraction for leaders and it was a mechanism for allowing the laity to become more actively involved in parochial life by providing them with an area in which to operate. It served a useful purpose within Protestantism in Ireland by allowing social interaction between different denominations with a number of companies run jointly by different denominations. Despite this there is evidence of sectarian divisions which invariably limited the extent to which social interaction could occur.

Religion was the essential distinction between the Boys' Brigade and the Catholic Boys' Brigade. However, this did not hinder their interaction and while the Boys' Brigade were the founders of the Brigade model, the Catholic Boys' Brigade were impressed with their programme and sought to implement it among Catholic adolescents and openly acknowledged the leadership that the Protestant organisation gave in dealing with adolescents. They were many commonalities of approach between Catholic and Protestant organisations with both sharing common approaches and espousing similar social virtues and values. This thesis has demonstrated that dealing with social issues relating to adolescents

[49] Gillis, *Youth and history*, pp. 145, 139.
[50] Morris, 'Clubs, societies and associations', pp. 420-1.

sometimes crossed confessional lines with youth movements providing a forum for interaction between differing denominations. This is in contrast to research that has been carried out on philanthropic work amongst Catholic and Protestant females which has found 'almost no evidence of any interaction between lay Catholic women or female religious with their Protestant sisters'.[51] However, despite these commonalities there were also distinctive features that separated Catholic and Protestant approaches. The growth of Catholic religious orders had the effect of limiting the obligation of the laity to engage in social work as part of their Christian and civic duty with 'few opportunities for lay Catholics…to become involved in any organised way in the field of social work'. The Catholic Church was more focused on political issues and suspicious of the scientific study of social problems. In contrast, the Church of Ireland was much more proactive in encouraging its members to 'study social and industrial problems from the Christian point of view', seeing the provision of social services as primarily the responsibility of the laity.[52] Such a view was noted by P.J. Brady, Irish Parliamentary Party MP for St Stephen's Green, who commented on philanthropic work that, 'hitherto Catholic laymen had not sufficiently recognized this duty'.[53] This disparity between the different denominations has been noted by Mary Daly who argued that Catholic clergymen and laymen were only involved on an individual basis. There was a failure amongst the Church to examine urban issues as a result of their rural orientation and 'the lack of sympathy with the Dublin working class and their problems is in marked contrast with the active clerical involvement in the Irish land question'.[54]

This thesis has shown that youth movements played a wide and varied function in Ireland. They provided a supervisory role over the leisure time of their members and while this has been characterised as a form of social control[55] it could also be an enabling force, providing activities such as sport, camping, and drill in a safe environment under proper supervision which would have been otherwise unattainable for many members. It must be appreciated that the activities they provided were an attractive feature of membership and that these activities were 'shaped as much by the demands of the members as the ideologies of the

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[51] Luddy, *Women and philanthropy*, p. 215.
[52] N. Kearney, C. Skehill, eds., *Social Work in Ireland: Historical Perspectives* (Dublin, 2005), pp. 4-6; See also, M. Luddy, 'Women and philanthropy in nineteenth-century Ireland', in K.D. McCarthy, ed., *Women, philanthropy, and civil society* (Indiana, 2001), p. 12.
[53] *Freeman's Journal*, 18 Dec. 1917.
[54] Daly, *Dublin*, pp. 114-15.
[55] Springhall, 'The Boy Scouts, class and militarism', p. 158; Rosenthal, *The character factory*, p. 7.

suppliers'.[56] It encouraged self-confidence in members by allowing their viewpoint to be appreciated and by allowing the responsibility for success to rest on members themselves. This emphasis on responsibility and honour could develop self-esteem and the trust conferred upon members could encourage their self-respect. The range of their activities demonstrates that the motivations of youth movements in Ireland cannot be reduced to a single objective and their programmes contained a large degree of flexibility, ensuring a diffuse range of ambitions at local level. This reinforces John Springhall's point that 'the aims of national authority, practice at local level, and the expectation of the boys or their parents, are likely to have had little in common'.[57] Youth movements provide a significant insight into how society catered for adolescents in Ireland, both male and female, Catholic and Protestant.

[56] H. Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture', in F.M.L. Thompson, ed., *The Cambridge social history of Britain, 1750-1950*, 2, *people and their environment* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 329-30.
[57] Springhall, *Youth*, p. 123.

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