

# The Mansergh-Woodall Club

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This is the history of a remarkable building in Hill Road, St.John's Wood, which is a legacy from a few determined people over the past 125 years to create a "golden gateway of the sun" [1] – a building which during the last 15 years has been completely re-built in a mighty altruistic effort to suit the social changes and economic escalation of modern society. The two principal creators over past years were Paul Neuman and Leslie Kirby [2], aided munificently by two dedicated Congregationalists. It is too soon after the recent re-building to assess the undoubted dynamism of the living possessors.

Its nearest underground station is Maida Vale, but the walk across the Roman road of Watling Street, from W9 into NW8 and up the hill to cross Hamilton Terrace, with its plush *des-reeses*, is to enter what is now the height of fashionable St.John's Wood. Yet only fifty years ago the Hill Road area was teeming with residents, their children playing boisterously in the streets. I have wartime memories of the tatty rear of the row of tall houses in Gloucester Terrace, seen from the train coming into Paddington, with assorted washing projecting on pulley-lines from windows, whereas now they are renovated and with no visible signs of life.

## My Motivation for this Paper

I first became interested in the building fifty-five years ago, when I was a scout leader at Brynmawr (then in Breconshire) assisting the 1<sup>st</sup> Brynmawr Boy Scout Troop. During the winter months I used to take parties of the older scouts to stay at some indoor accommodation, and we stayed in the headquarters of the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Boy Scout Group for a week in November 1952. How I first contacted that Group I can guess, as they were well known internationally for their Scout hospitality. I had earlier that year been to an Indaba camp for international scout leaders at Gilwell Park. I recall that we visited the Ford Motor Works at Dagenham, went to a classical-music concert at the Royal Festival Hall [3] and visited the Houses of Parliament where we were met and shown around by our M.P. Tudor Watkins [4]. I cannot imagine that nowadays one could take a random early-adolescent party to a symphony concert! I remember that on the frontage of the building in Hill Road, London NW8, was the mysterious title The Mansergh Club.

Their headquarters was unusually large and palatial for a scout group, quite unlike the many others I had seen. What was, or had been, the Mansergh Club? Evidently someone (with the surname Mansergh?) had had plenty of money to build its large premises. Now that I have retired in London with leisure time I have had the opportunity to find out.

## Recollections of the Mansergh Club building

Its frontage on Hill Road was imposing. Even in that heyday of the scout movement it seemed palatial as a headquarters. It had a front courtyard but no garden at the sides, though there was a small yard at the rear. Behind was a very large hall at ground level, the floor of which was smooth concrete. On this floor was outlined in coloured sticky-tape the positions of notional scenery for television rehearsals – during the daytime, the hall was let for these rehearsals, which when we were there were for the early science-fiction serial *Quatermass and the Pit*. I remember there was no actual scenery on the premises. That serial was broadcast live by the BBC in 1953 [5]. Some internet articles declare that *Quatermass* was actually broadcast live from the Club building, but I doubt that. A later series of *Quatermass* was filmed, perhaps at the Club. We did see the actors on occasions, but during most of the daytime we were out investigating London.

The front of the building had normal-sized rooms, corridors and stairs, and there was a small chapel on the first floor, with altar and the scout-group flags – a memory which dates from a much more devotional society than the present-day! Somewhere was a kitchen we used, on the ground-floor. I cannot remember where we slept, but it was not in the main hall. Around the left-side and back of the hall was an indoor passage with various facilities, including a small circular plunge-pool, 6 or 7 feet deep and only about 8ft across, which was empty and derelict. This I clearly remember was near the back wall. The electoral rolls show that up to the 1930s no one was occupying the building, but from 1946 there were married couples living there who must have been caretakers of the building for the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone. I cannot recall any. They probably lived in the rooms on the top floor. I must have contacted and met Leslie Kirby (mentioned below), whose name and photograph ring faintly a bell in my memory.

## Plaques in the Modern Building

My early work on the history of the Mansergh Club building was largely confirmed by visiting the building on a Monday morning, when it was being rented by a kindergarten organisation, and I was able to copy the contents of three commemorative plaques which have been fixed during the last three years. After planning approval in 1996, the building which I had known was completely demolished and a new structure built, part of which is still the headquarters of the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scout Group. I have been told of protracted difficulties with a contractor over water penetration of the new low-level hall for the scouts below the water table.

This rebuilding was done in collaboration with a property company (who financed the scheme), and was completed in 2004. Through the generosity of The Scout Association Trust Corporation (based now at Gilwell Park) I have been provided with copies of the Land Registry documents. The whole property is leasehold, the term 999 years, and is held by a consortium of the Scout Association Trust Corporation, two commercial companies and the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scout Group. Sub-let are six separate flats leased for 125 years to private persons, two on each of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors, and the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone headquarters itself is on a 999-year lease. The front of the building is not unlike the original one, of three floors topped with a parapet, and a fourth roof storey. The name of the building is now just "MANSERGH".

The approach for scouts is now separate, narrower and on the left but with room for a car to be parked, and occupies some of the ground-floor frontage, but further back there are stairs down, and a large hall with its height occupying both the lower ground floor and ground floor levels (the original building had no lower ground floor). The flats extend over the scout hall, with acoustic insulation. On a blank wall of the staircase three plaques are fixed, which are most informative of the history of the Mansergh Club:

Centre, large tablet:

THIS TABLET  
IS PLACED IN THE OLD HOME OF  
THE MANSERGH-WOODALL BOYS CLUB  
in affectionate & grateful memory of  
Mr. JAMES MANSERGH. F.R.S. M.Inst.C.E.  
and  
SIR CORBET WOODALL. D.Sc. M.Inst.C.E.  
the Founders, whose imagination  
and generosity not only made this building  
possible, but gave new opportunities for  
education & recreation to the boys of  
this neighbourhood:  
and of  
Mr. B. PAUL NEUMAN  
the Warden, by whose inspiration the Club  
was originally formed at New College Chapel,  
Avenue Road, in 1887, and who from the  
foundation until his death in 1942,  
devoted his life to the needs of his  
Big Family in Hill Road.  
Club Motto: *It's dogged as does it.*

On either side of the above plaque are two smaller ones:

TO THE MEMORY OF  
LESLIE JAMES KIRBY  
BORN 22.5.97 DIED 24.6.71  
FOUNDER OF  
THE 8TH ST.MARYLEBONE SCOUT GROUP  
("THE DIEHARDS")  
OCTOBER 1921  
A TRIBUTE FROM HIS BOYS AND FRIENDS  
"THROUGH MANY YEARS OF SCOUTING,  
YOU CARVED THE DIEHARDS' NAME  
AND FORGED SOME MIGHTY FRIENDSHIPS  
AS YOU FOUND THE UNSEEN CHAINS"

This plaque is dedicated to the return of the  
8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scout Group (The Diehards)  
to their new Headquarters Building  
The Mansergh  
The building has been redeveloped and rebuilt  
through the efforts  
and hard work of the following 'Old Scouts' Trustees  
Mike Harvey / Derek James / Tony Thomas  
supported by the other Executive Committee members  
Don Hart, Nigel Hart, John Larkin, Cliff Jordan  
& Phil Peeling

September 2004

Who were these founders and warden?

**James Mansergh** (29/4/1834-15/6/1905) was the second son and child of John Birkit Mansergh, a draper of Lancaster. He was one of eight children, all baptised at High Street Independent Chapel, Lancaster [6]. James must have shown good promise at a local Lancaster school, for when he was aged 13 he was sent to Queenwood College, in Hampshire. This was a newly-created school specialising in mathematics and science, and was the first school in Britain to have a chemistry laboratory.

The buildings of Queenwood College dated from 1841 as Harmony Hall, built by Robert Owen as a socialist (an early communist) community. It was financed by considerable donations. The venture lasted barely 5 years, and failed. Participants from the north of England did not like the isolated country position. The building was then let to the famous Quaker educator George Edmondson (1798-1863) and in August 1847 he became the first headmaster of Queenwood College [internet information]. James Mansergh entered at that time. The college was on south-facing chalk downland a mile or so SSW of the village of Broughton, grid reference SU 299-311, and was burnt down in 1903. Queenwood Farm is near the site.

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John Birkit Mansergh, draper of Lancaster                      THE MANSERGH FAMILY  
 |  
 O-Robert Mansergh (1/3/1833-12/2/1914), linoleum manufacturer of Lancaster  
 |  
 O-James Mansergh (29/4/1834-15/6/1905)  
 | | m.(1) Mary Lawson of Skirton, Lancashire, July 1859  
 | |  
 | | O-Amy Frances Mansergh (1862- ) m. William Mainwaring Palin 1901  
 | |  
 | | O-Edith Annie Mansergh (1864- ) m. Seymour Price-Williams at Hampstead 1891  
 | |  
 | | O-Ernest Lawson Mansergh (c.1866-1933)  
 | | | m. Emma Cecilia Fischer Hogg at Paddington 1892  
 | | |  
 | | | O-Maurice James Mansergh, Admiral Sir, (14/10/1896-20/9/1966)  
 | | | | m. Violet Elsie Hillman 1921  
 | | |  
 | | | O-Cecil Aubrey Lawson Mansergh, Vice-Admiral Sir, (1898-1990)  
 | | | | m. Helen Raynor Japp 1928  
 | | |  
 | | O-Walter Leahy Mansergh (1871-1941) m. Annie Price-Williams at Hampstead 1899  
 | | |  
 | | | m.(2) Harriet Irons (née Branford, c.1844- ) September 1898  
 | |  
 O-Elizabeth Mansergh (1836- )  
 |  
 O-Mary Mansergh (1838- ) m. John Calvert at Lancaster 1861  
 |  
 O-John Mansergh (1839- )  
 |  
 O-Edward Mansergh (1842- )  
 |  
 O-Anne Mansergh (1844- ) m. Hodgkinson  
 |  
 O-Emily Mansergh (1847- ) m. Thomas Lawson Varley at Lancaster 1878

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Mansergh worked his way rapidly up the civil engineering ladder, and travelled the world advising on sewerage and water-supply works. His major project was planning the huge Elan Valley Water Scheme for Birmingham, which involved building an aqueduct in which the motive power was by gravity only. There were “inverted siphons” of strong pipes crossing the river Severn and several other valleys, and the final destination was a reservoir at Frankley, in the SW outskirts of Birmingham, still at a good height for gravity delivery. He planned the first sewage farm, at Carlisle.

In 1859 James Mansergh married Mary Lawson, and by her had two boys and two girls. The boys, Ernest Lawson Mansergh and Walter Leahy Mansergh, both became civil engineers and latterly joined their father as partners in a successful business. Two of Ernest’s sons attained high rank in the Royal Navy – Admiral Sir



Records show that Corbet Woodall, and a number of his descendants, were directors of various large gas companies, more importantly his son **Henry Woodall** (1867-1948) who was intimately connected with the Mansergh Club, being president in 1925 [9], and paying the rates of the new Mansergh Club building (which James Mansergh never saw) right up to World War II. Henry Woodall married Bertha Nettlefold at Birmingham in 1899 (she was quite likely of the family manufacturing screws) and in 1901 was living in Flat 7, 13 Embankment Gardens, Chelsea with his wife and very young first child Mary. His obituary [10] recounts that he too retired in Kent, and was the centre of a considerable extended family. The merchant navy steamship Henry Woodall (625 tons) was named after him; it was sunk by a mine in 1940, off Withernsea. Neither his will, nor that of James Mansergh, show any sign of bequests for the Mansergh Club building project.

**Berman Paul Neuman** (1853-3/12/1942) was born in the Marylebone district (as Newman) in 1853(4) [11], probably at 59 Baker Street, son of a Russian immigrant Jacob Elias Neuman (c.1822-1903) and an English mother. Elias applied for, and attained, British nationality in 1852 [12]. It appears from the censuses that the family lived on investments, but with mention of Elias being a Missionary to the Jews (1851) and a teacher in mathematics & languages (1861). There seems a mystery about his marriage [13]. By the 1861 census they were at 3 Pembroke Villas, Albion Road, Swiss Cottage (now named Harben Road) with children Adle and Berman aged 9 and 7. They were still at 34 Albion Road in 1891. The family were evidently well-educated. Berman gained his matriculation at London University and was awarded an Equity scholarship which enabled him to study at the Inner Temple, where he was ‘called to the bar’ in 1878 and became a barrister [14]. For the period 1879-1896 he had professional addresses, up to 1887 at 89 Chancery Lane, then at 6 New-court, Carey Street [15]. From 1897 he was mentioned in the Law List, but with no address given, right up to 1935 (when he was aged 82). For the 1891 census, when he was working from New-court, he was a bachelor aged 37 living with his parents and sister Adel Rachel.

There are strong signs that Neuman gradually changed his life interests. On his death certificate, his occupation was Novelist. In the period 1886-1917 he published 22 books (listed in the Appendix), starting with a 2-volume book on Equity Law written jointly with another author, but that was his only published legal effort (equity had been the basis of his former scholarship). All his subsequent books were novels, apart from his book *The Boys' Club in theory and practice* [16] published in 1900, and one of his poetry, passable but not really inspired. In his book *The Boys' Club* he stated that he was associated with the New College Chapel Boys' Club, with no further details. The book lists some sample boys' clubs in London, most of which apparently met in religious premises they did not own, true of the New College Chapel Boys' Club.

His early novels were loaded with moralising – the kind of books given as Sunday School prizes for good attendance – but developed later into good tales, with an irony more of interest to adults than children. They must have brought him a small income. However, his father in the 1901 census was living on investments, and his sister Adle was a journalist and author, so the family fortunes are not easily determined. Neuman and his sister were well literate. It would be interesting to know of their school education.

During the late 1890s the building of the Great Central Railway from Marylebone caused the demolition of houses in Albion Road, and No.34 was not mentioned in Kelly's 1896 directory, nor in the 1901 census. This railway was built by cut-and-cover in the Finchley Road and Swiss Cottage area, under the east side of Lords Cricket Ground (parallel with the Metropolitan Railway and just west of it) and beneath the basement of John Barnes' store in Finchley Road, in which pillars supporting the building above may be seen in a curve. Meanwhile, the Neuman family had moved to 12 Minster Road, where for the 1901 census Neuman was still a barrister and solicitor. This was a newly-built road just east of the top of Shooters Hill where Kilburn meets Cricklewood. By 1914 they had left Minster Road, and Berman Paul Neuman was living at 49 Avenue Road, Regents Park [17]. This address still existed in 1923 [rates records] but a map of 1937 shows that alterations of the buildings had caused No.49 to disappear. It had been on the south corner of the meeting of Acacia Road with Avenue Road.

Kelly's Directories from 1922 to 1933 list Neuman as living at Gothic House in Chislett Road, West Hampstead. This was a short road linking West End Lane with Priory Road, re-named as extension of Compayne Gardens in 1934, in which the house was henceforth No.71. It is a 3-storey detached house now divided into flats, and has two further houses built in its back garden with an approach lane on the site at the side, but in its time it was an imposing single residence.

The listing of residents of Gothic House, in the annual registers of electors for Hampstead (Camden Archives) raises more problems than it solves. For 1929, there were “Paul and Hedy Neuman” and four female servants. For 1930, the Neumans plus two female servants (all different). But for 1931-33 there were just Paul

and Hedy, and in 1934-35 just Hedy Neuman alone. Also, *Kelly's Hampstead and Childs Hill Directory* (also Camden Archives) lists "Mrs. Paul Neuman" as living in Gothic House 1934-35. There was another family there in 1936. I had been tempted to think that "Hedy" was a pet name for Paul's sister Rachel – it is an unusual foreign name, though the Neumans were a foreign family and unusual – but the evidence of Kelly's would confirm that Paul Neuman had married. I have been unable to find any trace of Paul Neuman's marriage (or indeed of his sister Rachel), nor have I found any sign of Paul Neuman's abode after 1933. The cutting down of their servants in a large house would indicate an intention of the Neumans to withdraw to elsewhere, or possibly a domestic difficulty. 1935 was the last year in which Paul Neuman appeared in the Law List. He had been listed in the electoral registers as a Special Juror – someone with qualifications useful in a jury – and intriguingly Hedy Neuman was so listed after Paul had departed from Gothic House.

Paul Neuman's death certificate shows that he died of sudden splitting of the aorta, at 40 Chichele Road, Cricklewood on 3/12/1942 [18] aged 89, at a time when his life's work ended in the misery of war, with his boys fighting in the trenches and his club building taken over by civil defence. But Kelly's Directories for 1935-38 give only Peter Millett as resident there. The lack of any obituary notices in the local paper indicates that Neuman was only a visitor to Cricklewood. Nearby to where he died was Cricklewood Congregational Church in Chichele Road, now a Muslim temple with a fibreglass onion-dome on top of the tower.

**Adle Rachel Neuman** was Berman Paul Neuman's sister, also born in Marylebone, nearly two years older than him. They were both living at home at least up to the 1901 census, in which she was stated as a journalist and author, aged 49. The British Library lists three books under the name Rachel A. Neuman [19] who I think was the same person. The forename of Adel must have been a liability in a country in which *addle* is a pejorative word! Two books are eminently sensible and practical books on nursing (with no clues to the author's life), the other a short biography of Dr. Barnardo (1845-1905) for whom she worked in his early years in Stepney Causeway (from 1870) up to his death. It seems probable that Rachel and Paul Neumans' dedication to helping children were not unconnected with their Christian upbringing.

### **Trinity Independent Chapel, Edgware Road**

This was deeply concerned with the origins of Berman Neuman. It was run at the time of Neuman's birth by its pastor Rev. Ridley Haim Herschell (1807-1864), who is listed in the Dictionary of National Biography. Herschell was born in Strzelno, Prussian Poland, into a Jewish family. His grandfather had been a Rabbi. He visited England in 1830, and was baptised into the Church of England by the Bishop of London. Henceforth he did missionary work amongst the Jews, but as a Christian was not convinced of the beliefs of particular denominations, and in 1846 moved to Trinity Chapel on the southern corner of John Street West (now the Edgware-Road end of Crawford Place) and Newnham Street (now Brendon Street) [20] which he declared as Independent. These streets were renamed in 1912. Shortly after Herschell's death, when the Chapel had become heavily in debt, it was taken over by the Baptists and remained so through to the 1930s. After World War II it became a Jewish synagogue [21] and is now a chapel of the Seventh Day Adventists. The frontage in Crawford Place, and the interior of the main hall, have been extensively altered in an opulent way, and its buildings on the street-corner are recent, but the original pastor's house in Brendon Street (now no.37, still belonging to the chapel) is practically unaltered. On the left of that is the back wall of Woolworth's in Edgware Road, and modern flats, but the other side of Brendon Street retains its old character of three-storey houses.

Herschell was moved to do charity work [22], particularly to help immigrant Jews. Jacob Elias Neuman emigrated from Russia c.1847 and was helped by Herschell. For four years 1847-1851 he was living at 3 John Street West [12], a house immediately next to Trinity Chapel with the local rates of £6-15-0 (in 1851) being paid by Herschell. For the 1851 census the house was uninhabited, as Neuman had moved to 59 Baker Street, a much larger house owned by, and rates of £20-5-0 paid by, others so that it was probably a lodging house. Rev. Ridley Herschell, who lived at 36 Newnham Street next to his Chapel, was one of the four persons to declare that they knew Neuman well, in support of his application for British nationality [12]. The others were a *gentleman* of John Street, a bookseller and a publisher. Neuman was already mixing with intelligent Londoners, and must have been of good education. By the time of his application Neuman had married an English woman and she had borne a child, a girl Adle. In the next year of 1853, their son Berman was born.

### **The Congregational Church Connection**

There is a consistent connection between the persons principally concerned with the Mansergh Club, and the Independent Dissenters, or Congregationalists. Paul Neuman's enthusiastic ideas over running a boys' club found fertile soil in Swiss Cottage.

It seems very probable that the Neuman family remained independent Christians, after their evangelising by Herschell, for later Berman became involved with New College Chapel, an Independent chapel in Swiss Cottage. Elias Neuman's move to 59 Baker Street after four years was still not far away from Trinity Chapel, but his further move to Albion Street, Swiss Cottage when Berman was not over 7 years old, was in a different area. The dissenters' New College Chapel was built in 1863 when Berman was 10 years old, and close to their home in Albion Street (now Harben Road).

The New College of Independent Dissenters (Congregationalists) was an institution for the training of their ministers. It was built on what was then the edge of residential London at the north end of Finchley Road, and opened in 1851 [23]. The 50" map of London of 1863 shows it on the land between Finchley Road and College Crescent, and very near the (then new) Metropolitan terminus station of Swiss Cottage. This Metropolitan Line was a branch off the first underground line, Bishop's-Road (now Paddington, Hammersmith & City) to Farringdon, at Baker Street which itself was opened in 1863. It was built by cut-and-cover up Finchley Road, and had stations at St.John's Wood (near Lord's) and Marlborough Road; the sites of which may be seen from the train. That Swiss Cottage station – not to be confused with the more recent station on the Jubilee Line – was just west of Finchley Road on the corner of Belsize Road, marked now only by a ventilator on the pavement a little to the north, being superseded by Finchley Road station. It was the beginning of the commercial development of John Betjeman's "Metroland".

New College was later absorbed as a clerical college by London University, and a new building was constructed further north on Finchley Road. Many illustrations of New College are of that building. The old buildings were demolished in 1934 for the construction of shops and flats. New College Chapel was a dissenters' church built in 1863 soon after New College, and associated with it, nearby in Adelaide Road on a site now occupied by Swiss Cottage Public Library. It was not a part of New College, though closely linked. It closed in 1941, and the building was used as a store until the 1960s.

Paul Neuman was still living with his parents in Albion Road, Swiss Cottage in the 1880s, and in 1887 at the age of 34 he started the New College Chapel Boys' Club which met at that Chapel, not far from his home. Probably his family worshipped there. That church was a large building in its own grounds, and must have had a hall other than the main chapel. This was the *status quo* when Neuman published his book on boys' clubs in 1900 – like nearly all others his club was meeting in a building not its own. The date of 1887 is not only given on the large plaque mentioned above, but is implied by a report of a meeting at the Mansergh-Woodall Club in The Times of 1927, when Neuman was quoted as warden [9]. There are vague hints in his books that he might have been connected with a "Sunrise Club" near Elephant and Castle, earlier than 1877.

From about 1883 until 1905 the two benefactors named on the large plaque were both living in Fitzjohn's Avenue, again not far from New College Chapel. Both were millionaires by modern values. James Mansergh's elder brother Robert was also born in Lancaster, and became a business man there. They were the eldest of eight children, all of whom were baptised in High Street Independent Chapel, Lancaster [6]. Robert's obituary [24] makes abundantly clear that he was a lifelong Congregationalist, and though James Mansergh's obituary does not do likewise, the fact that his funeral service was held in New College Chapel [25], shows that James also adhered to the religion of his Lancaster youth. Corbet Woodall too had his funeral service at New College Chapel [8] and had been educated at a school in Liverpool run by Congregationalists [7] so very likely came from such a family. Corbet's sister Edith was married at New College Chapel in 1900 [26]. James Mansergh and Corbet Woodall were both well-known civil engineers, both members of their professional Institute, and it is inconceivable that, living in the same avenue with the same religious convictions, they did not know one another. Corbet Woodall, the younger by 7 years, moved to a larger house up the avenue from No.50 to No.69, higher up and only six doors from James Mansergh.

A brief account of a meeting in The Times of 1891 [27] records that Corbet Woodall chaired a meeting of the New College Chapel Club (the boys' club) at which a Naval official gave a talk on "Our Warships", which was a subject certain to interest boys. This was well before the construction of the Hill Road building, and shows that Corbet Woodall was at that early stage in the club's history (merely four years old) taking a practical interest in the progress of it as an educational foundation. He also had a reputation in the gas industry as a social reformer, inaugurating in 1909 a system of copartnership in which many thousands of employees held stock in the industry worth £156,000 [28].

Thus the Mansergh-Woodall Boys' Club had its roots firmly in Congregational Church history, organised practically by a devoted leader Paul Neuman, and financed by two stalwarts of the Church. Moreover, three generations of the Woodall family helped in the finances of the building, right up to 1967.

### Inferences from the Book “Raymond’s Folly”

This book, *Raymond’s Folly. The story of an Experiment in Utopia* (Unwin 1893), is to some extent a *roman-à-clef* of Neuman and his boys’ club (or clubs) and in it, fact is difficult to sift out from fiction. Various fictitious names are evidently aliases – the surname *Goodall* for Woodall, the *Fenton Street Chapel* (situated on a corner site) for New College Chapel. Berman brings in his own name only near the end, as a helper of the *Fenton Street boys’ club*. Near the end is the Club Song, in five verses, which would have fitted in with the pre-TV desire to produce one’s own entertainment.

The title *Raymond’s Folly* is explained by a conversation on pp.7, 8: ‘What on earth is *Raymond’s Folly*, and what have these boys to do with it?’ ‘Why, you see,’ said my new acquaintance, ‘it’s a sort of club for boys – at least, it’s three or four in one, and a jolly good thing it is for the youngsters, too ...’ The book has dedication: *To / J.M. and C.W. / WHOSE UNFAILING SYMPATHY AND LARGE / GENEROSITY HAVE MADE POSSIBLE / FOR US A LITTLE FOLLY / OF OUR OWN* which makes it clear that early on in its existence the New College Boys’ Club had as benefactors James Mansergh and Corbet Woodall, the book being published only six years after the founding of the club in 1887. This was when James Mansergh was alive (he had died before the Hill Road club base was built). Neuman’s book *Alchimie Gold* (1916) also has a dedication: “FOR REMEMBRANCE” / OF A / LONG AND HAPPY FRIENDSHIP / TO / SIR CORBET WOODALL.

*Raymond’s Folly* gives an account of alterations to the *Fenton Street Chapel* basement to accommodate the club, and mention of the Congregational minister as being involved. It is fairly evidently romantic fiction! That Chapel basement (if there was one at New College Chapel) was adapted to form a swimming pool for the club! Anyone acquainted with buildings, and the problems of keeping water in, will realise how impractical it would be. Much of the book refers to academic teaching in the clubs (which is explained likewise in Berman’s 1900 book on boys’ clubs, and supported by his letter of 1902 to *The Times*). An example of hyperbola is the specimen example for a Membership Examination on page 120: Divide £401-4s-3d by £2-11s-5 d. I have never seen such a difficult question posed – the division isn’t even exact! But I once saw a colleague’s father’s exercise book written in copperplate, in which he was squaring sums of money, there being of course 400 square shillings in a square pound, and 144 square pence in a square shilling!

There is however evidence in maps that alterations to New College Chapel were made in the interval 1866 to 1893, which covered the first 16 years of Paul Neuman’s club [29]. Refer to the plans opposite. A small vestibule was added to the Chapel, and an extension to the E.N.E. on a plot of ground vacant in 1866, a room approximately 33 feet by 17 feet. There are no signs of stairs down to a basement in 1893, though in the 1866 plan there are steps in the far outside corner which might have descended to a basement heating plant.

The title page of *Raymond’s Folly* gives a sonnet, which surely was an outlet for Neuman’s own convictions? It would seem to me to be more inspired than the poems in his published book of them:

Oh Youth, that standeth at the mountain base,  
 Rich in thy treasure of unwasted hours,  
 Exulting in the sense of opening powers,  
 The light of hope unbaffled in thy face,  
 How many are the paths thine eyes can trace –  
 Smooth, broad and level, fringed with laughing flowers –  
 And at the end of each the festal towers,  
 And Pleasure beckoning with her wanton grace?

One rugged path there is, that from those meads  
 Strikes upwards till the long ascent is done,  
 Through mist and storm it plunges, but it leads  
 Straight to the golden gateways of the sun.  
 Oh ye who feel the spur of noble deeds,  
 Scorn ye the many paths, pursue the one.

On p.108 is a motto in the *Fenton Street Club*, *It’s dogged as does it*, which was on the Mansergh Club building when I stayed there in 1952, and is now in stained glass lettering, from the former building, over the stairway of the Scout part of the modern building. An asterisk refers to a footnote:

\* Borrowed by Raymond from *The Last Chronicle of Barset* [a novel by Trollope, published in 1867]. In that novel, *It’s dogged as does it* is the heading of Chapter 61, which contains the motto.



## Pioneers of Their Time

Charles Dickens, in his novel *Oliver Twist* (1838), aired many of London's underworld activities including Fagin's abuse of children, but did nothing more about them – the musical *Oliver* romanticised Fagin's relation with boys, altering Dickens' intention. Thomas Barnardo as a young man of 25 did much to help destitute children in Stepney, and almost certainly Rachel Neuman assisted him for years, up to his death in 1905. Paul Neuman realised the general lack of secondary education for the poor, and early organised his boys' club to fill that need. This is well illustrated by a letter he wrote to *The Times*, published 22 September 1902:

THE TEACHING OF LATIN IN PUBLIC / SCHOOLS. / TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES. / Sir,- Our experience here strikingly confirms the views expressed by Mr. Trippel. This is a Boys' Club worked as far as possible in connexion with the nearest Board school. We try to get the boys while they are in the upper standards, and so attach them to the club before they leave school. In this way we have lately had several boys who, after winning Junior County Council scholarships, have an interval of a few months before they begin work at a secondary school. In most cases Latin forms part of their new curriculum, and we try to give them a start at the club. The results have surprised me. In December, 1900, a boy came to us just beginning the declensions. One of our workers, a former Uppingham captain, coached him in grammar, and on Saturday afternoons he came to me and had about a couple of hours' reading. The first month or two we spent on sentences and easy short stories. Then I plunged him straight away into the ninth book of the Aeneid. At first I went through it with him word by word, and we revised elaborately. He soon asked if he might prepare by himself, and in six months' time he was bringing me from 30 to 40 lines a week. We finished the book comfortably by November. In December last he passed the Junior Cambridge Local, and Latin was one of the subjects in which he satisfied the examiners. / At the present time we have two scholarship boys, 12 years of age, following the same course. They have been learning Latin for less than two months, but are making excellent progress, and have reached the short story stage. / My Uppingham friend remarked to me, with reference to the first lad, that after 12 months' work he knew about as much as the average public school boy after three or four years. / Yours faithfully B. PAUL NEUMAN, / New College Chapel Club.

1902 was at a time when both benefactors James Mansergh and Corbet Woodall were alive, but the site for the new Mansergh Club building had not yet been acquired, or perhaps even thought of. As far as it is possible to discover from records, there are indications that Neuman's boys' club kept up educational facilities over many years. On 8 December 1891 there was a lecture on "Our Warships", at which Corbet Woodall was chairman [27]. In 1900 Neuman published his book on running boys' clubs. On 13 October 1925 barrister Augustine Birrell (1850-1933) addressed a distribution of prizes at the Club, at which Henry Woodall presided [9]. On 25 May 1929 the Mansergh Woodall Cricket Club played an away match with Farnham Grammar School, losing but by a narrow margin [30]. In Kelly's London Street Directories for the 1930s the club building was listed as the Mansergh-Woodall Educational Boy's Club.

Education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was largely in the hands of private fee-paying schools. Some towns had no schools at all. Francis Rivers Freeling moved from Tenby to Oundle in the early 1850s, probably for the sake of his four sons to go to the old foundation Oundle Grammar School, endowed by the Grocers' Company and now a public school – there was no school in Tenby then. I spent my childhood in Tenby, and went to the "County" School, so called because it was founded by the Pembrokeshire County Council under the Welsh Education Act of 1889, actually in 1896. I did not go to the "Council" School (elementary school founded by the town council), so I sat a scholarship exam for entry, and from 1934 for some years I brought each term a token payment of fees. In 1938 when I was sitting School Certificate (now O-level) I concentrated on gaining Latin, as universities still then had a demand for its proficiency. I recount all this to illustrate how slow educational progress had been before World War II. In Tenby there was also the "Parochial" school, an elementary school provided by the Church. London had its free "board" schools when Neuman started his Club, but secondary education was a matter of paying fees, or achieving a difficult-won scholarship.

## Origin and Naming of the former Mansergh Club Building

According to Kelly's Directory the Mansergh Club, as a building in Hill Road, came into existence in 1910. The title to the freehold of the block 24, 26 and 28 Hill Road was transferred on 24 January 1905 [31]. This provides a starting date for the proposed Mansergh Club building. It was just within the lifetime of James Mansergh, and must have been preceded in 1904 by debate and disbursement on the part of its benefactors. I think it probable that the boys' club members tackled the demolition of the three old houses on the site, to cut down costs. The next clue is an application for altering the drainage [32], given in November 1908. The sewerage arrangements of the houses would have been at the rear, to be adapted in the same location according

to the new plans – the wording of the application implies that the new building was at least already planned. There would have been an architect's fees for the Woodall family to pay.

The rate books (Westminster Archives, on microfilm) show that in 1909 houses Nos.24-26-28 in Hill Road had been pulled down, and the Mansergh College Club on the site was given a rateable value of £84 in January 1910. This title Mansergh College Club persisted into the 1950s, being on the 1:2,500 ordnance map of 1955 though the building was by then leased to the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scouts.

There was a significant change of name for a period including the 1920s and up to 1939 (Kelly's London Street Directories, Holborn Archives) when the club was named "The Mansergh-Woodall Educational Boy's Club" indicating that Corbet Woodall had been recognised as a benefactor. Over the years, into the 1950s, successive generations of the Woodall family helped the Club, and the Scouts, but no mention of the Mansergh family has been found after James Mansergh's death.

### **After World War II – The Scouting Connection**

Earlier in 1921, Leslie Kirby had been assisting the 5<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Boy Scouts, who met at Emmanuel Church, Aberdeen Place, and he edited their monthly newsletter *The Dandy*, but there was some sort of personal friction, and he founded his own 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Group later that year and produced their own monthly newsletter *The Diehard* starting in January 1922. They met at Capland Street L.C.C. [London County Council] School, and adopted the sobriquet *Diehards*, the motto of the 8<sup>th</sup> Middlesex Regiment, with their permission. A measure of Kirby's thoroughness is illustrated in a legend that he wrote annually to the commanding officer for continued permission, until told that there was no need to re-apply for it! After 21 years of the Group's existence, on 17 June 1943 a Group Building Fund was started (with old Minute Book preserved in the new building). The use of Capland Street School continued throughout the war.

The large plaque on the Mansergh Club building tells us that Sir Corbet Woodall and James Mansergh financed the structure in the early 1900s. James Mansergh was still alive when the site (of 3 houses) was purchased but died soon after. Corbet Woodall certainly saw the building in use, but he died in 1916 and his son Henry Woodall took up the challenge and paid the rates on the building right up to World War II. The building must have been owned legally by a trust involving the Woodall family, and perhaps also the Mansergh one. The club leader Paul Neuman died early in that war, the building was taken over by Civil Defence, and the boys' club must have ceased functioning altogether. There is heresay that a language school used the building pre-war. The rates records [33] show that in 1945 the building was still used as an A.R.P. (Air Raid Precautions) depot, but the 1946 rates divulge a transition from A.R.P to "L.J.Kirkby & E.C.Woodall OBE", a note "23/7" probably meaning a takeover on Tuesday 23 July 1946. That was after VE day (Victory in Europe) on 8 May, but before the atom bombs on Japan and VJ day (Victory over Japan) in August.

The newsletter of the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scout Group [34] recorded that it met in Marylebone buildings other than the Mansergh Club in Hill Road before World War II [35]. But in February 1946 [36] Edward Corbet Woodall became its Group President, and was instrumental in obtaining the tenancy of the Hill Road building for the Group. One senses a plot on the part of Leslie Kirby, who had known about the building previously, to inveigle Woodard in his Group's affairs – and why not? Edward Woodall (grandson of Corbet Woodall) had founded a scout troop at Mereworth in Kent in 1926 (when he was aged 22 and living at home with his father Henry Woodall, who had retired there) and at Kimpton, Hertfordshire in 1933. He was a barrister. The building in Hill Road was about to be de-requisitioned from Civil Defence, the trustees were considering renting it, the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scout Group applied for the tenancy (there were other applications) and they were successful!

*The Diehard* for April 1946 contains an address from Edward Woodall to the scouts:

#### FROM THE GROUP PRESIDENT

I have been asked to write a few lines for the DIEHARD and am very glad to have the opportunity of introducing myself to you in this way. First of all I want to tell you how very proud I am to become President of a Group which, from all I have heard and read, is so clearly imbued with the true spirit of Scouting, and how much I look forward to meeting you at your new home.

It seems to me very fitting that the Diehards should now take possession of the premises of the Club whose motto was "It's Dogged as Does it". I expect some of you know something of the history of the Mansergh-Woodall Club but I would like just to remind you of the object for which it existed. Founded many years ago, it aimed at helping boys, for whom at that time very few opportunities existed, to cultivate their minds and bodies in order that they might not only be able to gain good positions for themselves, but

also that they should learn to be useful to others and to become good citizens of this great Country and Commonwealth. Now, aren't we Scouts trying to do very much the same thing; to become self-reliant; to understand and serve the needs of others, and to become useful and loyal citizens of our Country and the World?

During the war it was part of my duty to visit a large number of isolated A.A. [anti-aircraft] detachments. In the first months especially there was often a great lack of accommodation and equipment; the men were confined most of the time to a very small area, and the duties were hard and often monotonous. Almost invariably when I came across a happy and contented detachment I found that there was at least one Scout among them, who had improvised gadgets for their comfort and organised some form of entertainment for their brief hours of leisure. This experience of mine was shared by many of my friends, and it did bring home to us the value of the Scout training in the small things of life. But, as you and I know, the influence of the Scout movement goes deeper than that and it is up to all of us to see that it permeates our lives and those of our fellow men and women.

I have already said that I hope soon to see you all in your new Headquarters, but I hope too that some of you will come and see me. I have a small place in Hertfordshire which I think would make quite a pleasant camp site and I shall look forward to welcoming any of you who would like to come during the Summer. / Good luck to you all, and good Scouting  
E.C.WOODALL

The first troop evening at their new headquarters was on 16 May 1946, when they met their Group President Mr. Woodall [*The Diehard*, June 1946]. Leslie Kirby's plans were working rapidly! The "super" parquet floor of the old hall had been taken up by Civil Defence for concreting, and attempts were being made for reinstatement by the Ministry of Works, but it would probably be not for a long time [*The Diehard*, April 1946]. In fact it was never done – the scouts filled in an A.R.P. drainage channel with concrete. The Group had a 7-year lease from the Mansergh-Woodall Club, from July 1946 [*The Diehard*, January 1950]. The excellence of the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Marylebone Scouts, owing to the continuous efforts of Leslie Kirby, had carried over from their meetings in the Capland Street School, because in December 1949 the Group had an official visit from the Duke of Gloucester [37]. The subsequent *The Diehard* has an account of the visit, and a letter from its President:

THURSDAY, 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 1949

The above date will ever rank high in the annals of the Group. Chosen to receive H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester K.G., to witness the NORMAL activities of a Scout Group ... they were, too, aware that the possession of a fine H.Q., influenced the selection ...

His Royal Highness was received by the Chief Scout [Lord Rowallan], The County Commissioner and His Worship the Mayor of St. Marylebone, ... the Duke addressed the Group and paid tribute to the work, to the spirit and to the atmosphere of the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Marylebone Scout Group. The Chief Scout replied ...

After the Duke's departure, the Chief and his party and the Group Scouters repaired to The Cabin where refreshments were served ... [at the front of January 1950, four photographs of the visit].

Park Spring, / Knebworth / My dear Les, / Thursday was a great occasion in the long and distinguished life of the 8<sup>th</sup> and greatly they rose to it. I am sure that His Royal Highness was not only interested in but really impressed by all that he saw. As your President I would like to send my hearty congratulations to you all and say how proud I am of the Diehards. / Yours very sincerely / EDWARD C. WOODALL

*The Diehard* contains mundane accounts of the period: Letting the Headquarters (BBC &c) £296 [per annum]. Rent of Headquarters £150. Caretaker's wages and National Insurance £82. Rates £73 [March 1952]. *After several months of negotiation the owners of the Mansergh Club have now agreed to renew the lease of our Headquarters on terms which are much more generous than those originally offered ... largely due to the efforts of our Group President, Mr. E.C. Woodall ... for the next 14 years* [July 1953]. The new lease for 14 years had an annual rent of £200. The Group was to meet half the cost of external repairs (about £600), £100 to be paid to the Group in compensation for improvements the Group had already made [August 1953].

The final struggle came in the years leading up to 1967, when the 14-year lease was due to expire: *The HQ Appeal Committee held its first meeting in August 1965 and has held its 23<sup>rd</sup> and last meeting ... job completed ... on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of this month ... the freehold of the property passes into our possession ... The purchase price of our Headquarters is £25,000 plus legal fees of approximately £500* [July 1967]. *"The battle of Hill Road" now nearly won. £25,000 the estimate required and £23,500 possessed ... the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Marylebone Boy Scouts can and will have the finest H.Q. in the country* [June 1967]. The freehold of the property passed into the care of the Boy Scout Trust Corporation. There had to be a temporary loan of about £1,000. At that time, a decent house could have been purchased for £2,500 so that £25,000 was by no means a give-away price, but hard business tempered by consideration. By today's values, the figures seem almost trivial!

Recently, changes in money values and the burgeoning of electronic devices, the demands of “Health and Safety” regulations and the far greater sophistication of adolescents have meant radical changes in the Scout Movement, with difficulties of a meeting place. The now-pejorative appellation “Boy” was removed from the movement’s name c.1990 and girls admitted to the organisation – though the Girl Guides have so far remained reactionary – and the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scout Group has made a massive radical effort and has re-built its headquarters, at the cost of a 7-year hiatus of nowhere to meet of their own in order to suit the present climate, with a property company to bear the enormous cost (and a “finger in the pie” of the freehold). The six flats overhead, with 125-year leases, have fetched astronomical prices while the scouts, with a 999-year lease, charge suitable amounts for renting their hall for which there is a steady demand. The building is now known simply as Mansergh, 26 Hill Road. An officer of the Group has told me that the old walls were massively thick, built of engineering brick and difficult to demolish, and the thick parquet floor remaining in the upstairs rooms was taken up, cleaned of pitch and sold (the main-hall parquet had been removed by Civil Defence during the war).

### **Plans of the Mansergh Club Building** – copied at the end of this paper

I discovered, through the facility A2A on the internet, plans of the building which had been made early in World War II by the St.Marylebone Civil Defence Unit [38]. During our stay in 1952 we had been told that the floor of the main hall had been concreted, with a slight slope and a drainage gutter, for use as a mortuary for blitz victims. There were, it was alleged, still blood stains on it! The plan of the main hall has a faint cryptic pencil note along the north-east wall, which seems to record:

9.B ALL ROUND 4/8 HIGH [“9” has a semi-circular arrow around it]

This may mean “9-inch gutter all round the hall, 4”-8” deep”. I have adapted these plans for reproduction at the end. Those plans are certainly the state of the Mansergh Club building after its demise as a boys’ club. It is possible that the devotional chapel mentioned below had existed years before, for Club purposes.

The building had evidently been planned by a good architect. The main hall, 33’ \_ 61’ \_ 17’ high, had clerestory windows on the longer S.W. wall, which were over a flat-roofed ground-floor utility area 11’6” wide along the S.W. of the site, and the top floor had rooms over the hall with windows over the hall ones. The utility area had skylights only. The front of the building had an extra mezzanine floor between those on the ground and top floors. That had a view of the main hall from above, like a balcony. There were ample rooms on the ground floor for cloakrooms &c at events.

I remember a disused plunge pool sunk in the utility area in the western corner, with sheer walls. It had been much smaller than Paul Neuman’s romantic one in the *Fenton Street Chapel* basement! Somewhere in this area must have been the kitchen which we used. It is likely that the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scouts made minor additions to suit themselves, but they only had a lease in 1952. I recall seeing a scout chapel, with altar and the group flags, in the far mezzanine room overlooking Hill Road (it was small and intimate) and it was walled-in properly, with a door, a devotional place used for investiture ceremonies in a society which is, alas, now merely a memory. I cannot recall a caretaker, or going on the top floor. The voters’ lists show that there were in the 1950s a changing resident personnel of married couples.

It would be interesting to know the story of the Mansergh-Woodall Boys’ Club in the late 1930s. How active had Paul Neuman been in its leadership when he was in his mid-eighties? Had he, after leaving his Chislett Road house c.1935, lived in the Club building as a way of avoiding travel, or had he moved to an old-peoples’ home or hospital? As with all research, the more one finds out the more questions become posed.

### **References**

- [1] This is a quotation from a sonnet written by Paul Neuman, quoted on page 8.
- [2] These men verify the *Great Man* theory, that significant human progress is in the hands of outstanding personalities such as Albert Einstein and Benjamin Britten, some would assert with a measure of autism involving single-mindedness overriding personal relations.
- [3] Remembering the starting overture in the concert at the Royal Festival Hall, I traced its date from a review in *The Times* the following day to Thursday 6 November 1952. The London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Basil Cameron, played Glinka’s overture *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, Beethoven’s *Eroica* symphony,

Grieg's piano concerto (soloist Moura Lympany) and Sibelius' Tapiola. Our visit must have been for the week 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, being the half-term holiday in the Brynmawr schools.

[4] Tudor Watkins was Labour M.P. for Brecon and Radnor from 1945.

[5] Using Yahoo search, "Mansergh-Woodall". The 1955 episodes were one of the first TV programs to be recorded on film, and there is no recording of 1953, which was transmitted live.

[6] Internet for Free-Church Baptisms &c, Baptisms at High Street Independent Chapel, Lancaster

Father: John Birkit Mansergh, mother Elizabeth

Robert Mansergh	b.1/3/1833	baptised 19/5/1833	RG4 / piece 130 / f.18
James Mansergh	b.29/4/1834	baptised 13/7/1834	RG4 / piece 129 / f.51
Elizabeth Jane Mansergh	b.27/3/1836	baptised 26/6/1836	
Mary Mansergh	b.21/1/1838	baptised 22/4/1838	
John Mansergh	b.3/7/1839	baptised 8/9/1839	
Edward Mansergh	b.14/7/1842	baptised 10/9/1842	
Ann Mansergh	b.21/5/1844	baptised 12/9/1844	
Emily Mansergh	b.22/1/1847	baptised 27/7/1847	

[7] Entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography:

Sir Corbet Woodall. Youngest of three sons of William Woodall, manager of Liverpool gasworks. Educated at Crescent School, Liverpool (run by Congregationalists). Travelled the world advising on gasworks.

[8] The Times 18/5/1916 page 3 column 3. Obituary of Sir Corbet Woodall.

Aged 75 ... [He] Inaugurated in 1909 the system of copartnership which embraces many thousands of employees ... the workers hold £156,000 worth of stock ... 'the governor's kindly and brotherly feeling' ... The funeral will take place at New College Chapel, Avenue-road, Hampstead, at noon tomorrow.

The Times 24/8/1916 p.9 col.1 SIR CORBET WOODALL, C.E., of Walden, Chislehurst, Kent and Palace Chambers, Westminster ... left estate to gross value of £97,442, the net personality being £86,679 ... left in trust to pay the income of the testator's wife during widowhood.

[9] Article in The Times (by J.K.Munro), Tuesday 13 October 1925 (meeting announced earlier for the 8<sup>th</sup>):

WORK OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS / MR. BIRRELL ON PROGRESS SINCE 1870 / Mr. Augustine Birrell attended a distribution of prizes gained by boys attending the Mansergh-Woodall Club, Hill-road, St. John's Wood. Mr. Henry Woodall presided. The club was started 38 years ago, and Mr. B. Paul Neuman, the hon. warden, explained that it was worked in the closest possible alliance with the public elementary schools in the neighbourhood. / After the distribution Mr. BIRRELL, addressing the boys, said he had never got a prize in his life, not even a consolation prize or one for good conduct. (Laughter) Everybody now was taught to read and write, but they ought always to bear in mind that however much they read and wrote they would always remain very ignorant. The ignorance of mankind was beyond all belief. The thought that they never could be very learned ought not to make them too despairing. If they were only taught to read and write with enjoyment, they did not need to be much pitied. Some of the boys in the old days who learned to read by themselves had become the greatest writers in the English language. He was not prepared to say that since 1870 anything from the enormous field covered by the marvellous progress of education had added to the original genius of the English people. He could not put his hand on any great writer who had received the advantage of the education of a Board School. No doubt there were some, but he had never come across them. Nevertheless, it was important that education should be spread over the whole of the people. There was really no difference between the education the boys got in public elementary schools and what they could get at Eton, if only they would apply their minds to it and take advantage of the opportunities offered them.

[Augustine Birrell (1850-1933), politician and author, barrister, was born of free-church parents. Retirement 1916-1933 at 70, Elm Park Road, Chelsea. His second son was Frankie Birrell, on the edge of the Bloomsbury Group, who died in 1934]

[10] The Times, 29 October 1948, page 6 column 2

FUNERAL / Mr. Henry Woodall / The funeral service for Mr. Henry Woodall was held yesterday at St. Lawrence's Church, Mereworth, Kent. The Rev. Kenneth Hoare officiated. Among those present were: / Mrs. Henry Woodall (widow), Mr. and Mrs. E.C[orbet].Woodall (son and daughter-in-law), Miss [Mary] Woodall (daughter), Mr. and Mrs. C.S.Pryor (son-in-law and daughter), Mr. Antony Woodall (grandson), Mr. Edward Bradby (son-in-law), Mrs. Figgis, Mrs. Knight, Miss Woodall [and] Mrs. De Quincey (sisters), Mr. and

Mrs. J.C.Woodall (brother and sister-in-law), Mr. David Woodall and Colin Woodall, Mrs. Leuchars, Commander and Mrs. J.C.Woodall.

[also by surnames only, alphabetical order] Best-Dalison, Bradby-Lewis, Bidder, Birks, Brookes, Cash, Crawley, Diamond, Dalison, De Quincey, Epps, Farmar, Ferrier, Foster, Garrard, Gibbs, Gulland, Hargrave, Hawkyard, Hornby, Janssens, Jeffrey, Jones, King, Martin, Mersey, Milne-Watson, Palmer, Parkinson, Phillips, Probin, Reed, Robertson, Slade, Smith, Spriggs, Stubbs, Sylvester, Topley, Weston, Williams, Wood.

[11] 1853(4) signifies the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 1853, as in the indexes of births &c at the National Archives, and is the time of the registration of the birth, and not of the event, so that the birth may have been slightly earlier.

[12] Documents at National Archives under HO 1/44/1372. Application 6 March 1852, granted 30 March.

[13] The 1851 census for 59 Baker Street records:

Elias Newman	Head	28	Missionary to the Jews	b.Russia
Anne Newman	wife	38	Milliner & dressmaker	b.Stratford on Avon
Anne Hemings	widow	70	Mother [-in-law?]	b.Henley-in-Arden
Sarah Hemings	unmarried	31	Dressmaker	ditto + dressmaker, house maid

from which one might deduce that Anne Hemings was Anne Newman's mother (and Sarah her sister) hence Elias had married Anne Hemings. A search (in FreeBMD) for Anne Hemings' marriage produced one plausible result, Anne Hemmings, who married in Stratford on Avon district in 1846(4), a date very near Elias' entry. A further search for the bridegroom's name, using the certificate reference Vol.16 p.818 showed that there were four marriages on that page of the register, but none with a bridegroom named Neuman or like it (one could of course obtain a copy of the certificate). It seems odd also that Elias' wife was ten years older than himself.

[14] Biographical details of Neuman: British Biographical Archive, series 2 [British Library, on microfiche] Neuman, Berman Paul, matric. London Univ. 1873, a student of the Inner Temple 30 Oct, 1873 (then aged 20), pupil scholarship in Equity, called to the bar 26 Jan., 1878 (only son of Jacob Elias Neuman, of London); born [blank] 1853. 89 Chancery Lane, W.C. Foster, *J. Men-at-the-bar*, 1885.

[15] Information from Law Lists at the National Archives, for Berman Paul Neuman

1878	Listed, no details.	Year of being called to the bar.
1879-1887	89 Chancery Lane, WC	Equity Draughtsman and Conveyancer [abbreviated]
1888-1896	6 New-court, Carey Street, WC	
1897-1935	listed as a barrister, but no address given	
1936-	not listed	

In some (e.g. 1912) an asterisk \* denotes Equity Draughtsman and Conveyancer.

[16] Berman Paul Neuman; *The Boys' Club in theory and practice*, pp.xii, 184; octavo, 1900

London: David Nutt, 57-59 Long Acre. Pages sandwiched in plastic, though in good condition, and rebound in green cloth. British Library, shelfmark 8282.D.56

Frontespiece states "author of Raymond's Folly &c". Neuman states he helps New College Chapel Club. Chapters on the continuation schools, the Boys' Brigade. Sensible book, if rather idealistic. Sections by other specialists. Helpful in a practical way. Too early for mention of the Mansergh Club.

[17] List of private residents in Westminster Archives

[18] *The Times*, Saturday 5 December 1942, page 1 column 1; Deaths

NEUMAN- on Dec.3, 1942, suddenly, at Cricklewood, B.Paul NEUMAN, novelist and for over 50 years warden of the Mansergh-Woodall Boys Club.

*The Times*, Saturday 5 December 1942, page 6 column 6; Obituary

MR. B.PAUL Neuman / Mr.B.Paul Neuman, novelist and for over 50 years warden of the Mansergh-Woodall Boys' Club, died suddenly at Cricklewood on December 4. Of his novels mention may be made of "Oliver," published in 1915, which was a finished study of English middle-class life; and "Alchimie Gold," a story which varied between the commonplaces of wealth and the commonplaces of poverty, the latter drawn with a surer hand and including a delightful account of the "Sunrise Club" in Walworth.

Berman Paul Neuman's death certificate (copy obtained from Brent Town Hall 6/11/2007) gives:

Where and when died: Third December 1942 40 Chichele Road

Sex: Male Age: 89 years Occupation: Novelist Cause of death: Dissecting Aneurysm of the aorta due to atheroma. Certified by J.B.Gorsky, Deputy Coroner for West Middlesex. After Post Mortem without

inquest. Signature, description, and residence of informant: G.E.Legat. Causing the body to be buried. 37 Evelyn Mansion, Carlisle Place, SW1. When registered: Seventh December 1942. Registrar: W.H.Seabrook.

[19] Three books by Rachel A. Neuman in the British Library:

1. Home Nursing (1886); shelf mark 7688.aa.22. Dedicated to HRH the Princess Christian. A small booklet, full of practical information.
2. Don'ts!! in nursing influenza (1917); shelf mark Mic[rofilm].A.19072([item]3). Dedication as above.
3. Dr.Barnardo (1914); shelf mark 010603.a.15/8. Dedication to F.M.S. A biography. The author worked for Barnardo as editor of a magazine, when the organisation was at 18 Stepney Causeway.

Princess Helena Augusta Victoria (1846-1923) was the 3<sup>rd</sup> daughter of Queen Victoria. She married the Prince of Schleswig-Holstein and was styled Princess Christian. She was Patron of the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, hence probably the dedication in Rachel Neuman's two nursing books.

The early Barnardo monthly *Night and Day* (From 1877, British Library shelf mark PP.1103.cc) seems to have no references at all to his staff, only to VIPs, entirely written by himself, or quoting other articles.

[20] The site of Trinity Chapel is still (December 2007) occupied by religious buildings, the Central London Church and the Advent Centre for Christian Living (both Seventh-day Adventist). Brendon Street (formerly Newnham Street) still retains a terrace of 3-storey old houses.

[21] The chapel in Crawford Place is labelled as synagogue in a book of London plans, dated 1985, seen in the Map Room at the British Library, 19 December 2007.

[22] The Times published several examples of Herschell's assistance to others. Thus:

Friday 30 September 1853 p.7 col.C The Case of Miss Cunningham: Rev.Ridley Herschell was one of six in an Evangelical Alliance deputation speaking in favour of Miss Cunningham.

Tuesday 6 April 1858 p.3 col.A An appeal for a Turkish student who lost his Turkish support having married a Christian. Rev.Ridley Herschell is quoted as one of two clergymen receiving donations.

For the 1851 census Herschell was living at 36 Newnham Street, St.Marylebone, near his Trinity Chapel. He remained pastor of Trinity Chapel up to 1862, but by 1864 had been replaced by Rev.Dr.Schwartz (from notices of services in The Times).

[23] Victoria History of the Counties of England; Middlesex Vol.XI (OUP 1989)

(p.60) ... and, enclosed by the curve of College Crescent, the New College of Independent Dissenters [Congregationalists], for training ministers, was opened in 1851 in a building designed by J.T.Emmett. He also designed the college's Gothic chapel, opened soon afterwards to the south, at the junction of Avenue Road and Adelaide Road. (p.62) ... New College and much of College Crescent were pulled down in 1934 and replaced by Northways, two concrete blocks of flats and shops ... Redevelopment of the site previously occupied by the school for the blind, St.Columba's Hospital and the new College Chapel ... was considered in 1957 ... civic centre ... and library opened in 1964. (p.154) New College Chapel, built nearby in 1853, was not part of the [New] College, although close linked ... (p.157) New College Chapel closed, 1941; stained glass windows given to Hendon Congregational Church.

[24] The Times, 13 February 1914, page 9 column 5:

The death occurred yesterday of Mr.Robert Mansergh, of Lancaster, who was a well-known Congregationalist and teetotaller. He was a member of the Committee of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and for over 30 years was secretary of the Preston district of the Lancashire Congregational Union. In 1894 he was chairman of the Lancashire Congregational Union. He was one of the first to introduce Good Templary into North Lancashire. [1\_ inches]

[25] The Times, obituary 16 June 1905 page 3: DEATH OF MR. JAMES / MANSERGH / We regret the death of Mr.James Mansergh, F.R.S., who had for many years been one of the world's leading authorities upon water supply and sewage disposal. Mr.Mansergh had been in failing health ... he died at his residence in Hampstead [51 Fitzjohns Avenue] at 6 o'clock yesterday morning ... Queenswood [Queenwood] College ... [when 22] he set sail for Brazil ... Don Pedro II Railway ... 3 years ... laid out the first sewage farm in England [at Carlisle] ... main sewerage contract of West Ham ... Llandilo and Carmarthen railways until the end of 1865 ... his sons were in partnership with him ... 1884 professionally visited the United States, in 1889 the colony of Victoria ... Colombo ... Budapest ... Melbourne ... Elan Valley Water Scheme ... He leaves a widow and four children, two sons and two daughters of his first marriage. His sons, Mr. Ernest L. Mansergh and Mr. W.L. Mansergh, ... have been partners with their father in the firm of James Mansergh and Sons ... The funeral service will be at New College Chapel, Avenue-road, Hampstead ... [1\_ columns]

[26] Information from the internet: [www.freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~bradley6](http://www.freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~bradley6)

[27] The Times, 8 December 1891 page 9 column D

MR. W.H.WHITE ON THE BRITISH NAVY.- Mr.W.H.White, C.B., Director of Naval Construction to the Royal Navy, delivered a lecture last night on "Our Warships" at the New College Chapel Club, St.John's-wood. Mr.Corbet Woodall, C.E., occupied the chair. Mr.White traced the growth and development of seagoing vessels from the earliest times, especially in regard to warships, down to the present day of ironclads and torpedo boats, his remarks being illustrated by magic-lantern views. For 300 years prior to Nelson's ship the Victory the progress in shipbuilding was, he said, very small and the conditions of naval armament were mainly unaltered. It was only after the Crimean war that the steam re-construction of the British Navy was embarked upon, and the first seagoing British ironclad was only constructed 32 years ago. The greatest developments since that time were illustrated and explained, and the lecturer stated that under the New Naval Defence Act 21 fast-sailing vessels were now being built, all of which were more than fulfilling the promises he made at the time they were designed.

[28] Obituary of Sir Corbet Woodall in The Times for 18/5/1916 p.3 col.3

[29] There are three editions of large-scale maps of London (5ft to 1mi, or 1:1,056) in bound copies, the Map Room, British Library (open shelves). They are dated (surveyed or revised in) 1866, 1893, 1937. Only the 1937 edition is available for digital reproduction, and the plans opposite page 8 show this around New College Chapel. By adapting it with sketching from the originals, and increasing the scale 2 to assist, are also the earlier versions of the Chapel surrounds. The 1866 vacant plot next to the Chapel might have already belonged to it. The 1893 map shows that an extension had been built to the N.E. on that vacant plot and three houses had also appeared. The 1937 map confirms that this extension was part of the Chapel. The 1891 and 1901 censuses give no clue as to the house numbers, but probably they were 214, 216, 218 (east to west), and neither do other maps, and the area has changed radically. See 1891 census RG 12 / 108 f.118. For the 1901 census the Chapel pastor, Rev.Donald Macdonald, was living in a flat in Fitzjohn's Avenue, hence No.214 was not a manse.

[30] Using Google search on the internet, "Mansergh Woodall": The Farnhamian, Vol.XVII No.1 December 1929 [magazine of Farnham Grammar School, 250 boys]. Cricket match on 20 May [1929] v. Mansergh Woodall C[ricket].C[lub]. (home). F.G.S. 113, M.W.C.C. 106. The boys' names are listed.

[31] The modern Land Registry maintains an archive of old deeds, of which copies may be had (at a fat fee!) by post, in order to identify the nature of ownership of the Mansergh Club (most probably a trust). I applied at Harrow Land Registry in October 2007 for details of 24-28 Hill Road, and had the preliminary reply:

NGL 843199 Freehold as 24, 26 & 28 Hill Road deeds dated 24 January 1905

Leasehold of part [for 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone] deeds dated 24 December 2004

so that the purchase of the three houses must have been negotiated in 1904, while James Mansergh was alive.

[32] Westminster Archives: Plans of Drainage, HILL RD NW8, "Mansergh Club" Box 774 / 2

A pro-forma application (no layout plan) for altering drainage. Application for drainage of premises, received 30/10/1908, approved 6/11/1908. Premises: Mansergh Club, Hill Road, St.Johns Wood. Drainage: by E.Lawrance & Sons, 14, 15 & 16 Wharf Road, City Road, N. Owner:Mansergh Club. Cast iron pipes, white & salt glazed pipes. 6" main drain, 3" & 4" branch drains. Water closets approached from open area at rear of building, superficial [square] feet 33, 12 & 12.

[33] Westminster Archives, rates records for 24/28 Hill Road (on microfilm).

1944/45 I.FL.IRM S.K. RV £5, £2-18-4 I.FLR.RMDR S.R. RV £15, £8-15-0 (two lines)

1945/46 the same abbreviations as 44/45, but also "A.R.P depot" and slightly lower rates

1946/47 the same abbreviations, rates still lower, also "L.J.Kirby & E.C.Woodall OBE (23/7)"

1947/48 L.J.Kirby & E.C.Woodall OBE RV £80, £50-0-0

1953/54 L.J.Kirby & E.C.Woodall OBE RV £80, £76-13-4

1957/58 L.J.Kirby & E.C.Woodall OBE YOUTH CLUB & PR[EMISES] RV£104, £78-17-4

[RV = rateable value, followed by cash paid per annum]

[34] I am very much indebted to Cliff Jordan, the current 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Group Scout Leader, who has allowed me to examine the past history of the Group, so carefully compiled by the late Leslie Kirby (whom I must have met in 1952) and conserved in their "Cabin" at Hill Road. The records are principally:

The Dandy (monthly newsletter of the 5<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scouts, edited by L.J.Kirby)

The Diehard (monthly newsletter of the 8<sup>th</sup> St.Marylebone Scouts)



