

Stockton-on-Tees in Hard Times: Harold MacMillan and the Stockton Social Services Centre

*“it is a great undertaking,
and if it can be carried out successfully,
it will be a really fine piece of service”¹*

Harold Macmillan, April 1936.

Harold Macmillan served as Member of Parliament for Stockton-on-Tees from 1924 to 1929 and from 1931 to 1939. The twenties and the thirties were tough decades for the industrial areas, and MacMillan’s political ideas were strongly shaped by his experience of unemployment, poverty and healthcare issues in the town. His deliberations on unemployment, industrial strategy and economic management have been extensively discussed and referenced, but his Stockton constituency papers have not been thoroughly examined by historians. Although he did not always keep detailed notes on his constituency cases, he commented that he preferred to engage and follow up personally and there is enough correspondence in the records to show that he seldom ignored a plea for assistance, and regularly acted on behalf of his constituents in dealing with medical boards, the Ministry of Pensions, the Ministry of Labour and the local Employment Exchange. He also acted to encourage collective and collaborative action in support of poor, unemployed and hard working families, not just to occupy idle hands but to create new social facilities, offer wider opportunities for education, recreation and skills development. In the thirties, he took a personal interest and stake in the Stockton Social Services Centre, which aimed to contribute in all of these areas. The community’s energetic engagement in response to this initiative does not quite tally with the image of indolent unemployment and defeatism which is sometimes used to characterise the north-east in the thirties.

J.B. Priestley’s observation, on his visit in 1933 that *“The real town is finished.”*² was fortunately wrong. The town was down but not out, as it had showed in the Battle of Stockton, not long before Priestley’s visit. A visiting crowd of Blackshirts, Oswald Moseley’s British Union of Fascists, trying to exploit the economic situation to generate support and foment dissent, had been sent packing, rather violently, by the combined forces of the National Unemployed Workers Movement, the Labour Party and the small Teesside Communist Party.³ By 1936 the shadow of a larger conflict with fascists was looming, and Macmillan would play a significant role in that period, working with former political opponents, ever the pragmatist and never ideologically opposed to state and local government intervention, especially in tackling industrial strategy and unemployment. But he was still engaged in constituency work, heavily involved in responding to

the townspeople, trying to improve their lot, and supporting community groups and initiatives, very often with his own money. ⁴

Harold Macmillan was fairly well-to-do and well connected, though his family's wealth had been created from the ground up by his grandfather and father through their publishing company. He went to Eton and Oxford, and was fond of grouse shooting and country life. But he was also a survivor of the Great War, having been wounded three times, the third time very seriously. His hip would take four years and a series of operations to heal. Throughout his political career he looked down on those politicians who had not served in either world war, but in his early days as an MP, he often identified with ex-servicemen and put considerable effort into helping them with medical care, pensions and employment. The Great War cast a long shadow, and Macmillan's constituency work and papers repeatedly feature former Tommies and their families. He never refused to help, even when his political agent, who often did much of the legwork, suggested that certain individuals were "bad 'uns", or when the pension and medical systems and rules were rigidly unchallengeable.

From the outset, and throughout his time as MP for Stockton, he received numerous requests for help. A few examples will illustrate the issues and hardships being faced by many of his constituents. In January 1924, a letter from the unemployed father of a sick seven year old boy who "needed a lot of building up" and had been ordered to have eggs, milk and Virol, thanked Macmillan for money he had sent towards this.⁵ In 1928 a 65 year old widow sought compassionate discharge from Durham Light Infantry for her son, who was serving in Egypt on a seven year enlistment. Another of her sons was working at Bowesfield iron works, giving her thirty shillings a week. The third son had lost both hands in an accident at the Synthetic Works (the future ICI) and could not work or look after himself. Macmillan wrote to the Secretary of State for War and secured the serving son's discharge.⁶ At around the same time a lady whose husband had been killed in action towards the very end of the war, in October 1928, wrote about her daughter, aged almost 16, who was going blind. The girl's mother had remarried, to a moulder who had been unemployed but was back in work. There were two other children aged 14 and 9. The widow's pension was about to be stopped. In March the Ministry of Pensions allowed an extension to 1929. Macmillan wrote to the Ministry and asked for a further year's extension to 1930. This was granted.⁷

Senior civil servants often carried military titles, just as Macmillan was referred to generally as Captain Macmillan, and correspondence between them was generally civil and sympathetic. One wonders to what extent Macmillan's war record helped with these cases, at least when discretion was allowed by the rules. Sometimes, however, nothing could be done. A soldier who had served 16 years and 49 days was not entitled to a service pension because he had not served 18 years. Otherwise a permanent pension required the Ministry of Pensions to award Great War Disablement status. He had suffered some injury (hernias) attributable to

the Great War and received £66 5s in respect of it. As he had not appealed that within twelve months he was not entitled to anything else under the War Pensions Act 1921 and there was nothing Macmillan could do for him.⁸ Sometimes the MP and his staff performed a citizens advice bureau style role in helping applicants to understand and complete forms and deal with bureaucracy. A woman died in 1926 with some pension unclaimed or unpaid and it was needed for funeral expenses – many people were living on narrow margins. For some reason the widower objected to filling in page 3. Macmillan secured an explanation from the Ministry of Pensions that page 3 was not needed in his circumstances, and the balance was paid.⁹ In 1929 a claimant was disallowed unemployment benefit due to “non-compliance”, of what variety we do not know, but Macmillan interceded and asked for it to be treated as a hardship case. The appeal was won and the payment made.

This kind of work went on throughout the twenties and into the thirties. While the thirties are often talked about more under the “Great Depression” heading, and there was a massive spike in Stockton’s unemployment in the early thirties due to the closure of the shipyards, it seems that personal circumstances on Teesside were often worse in the twenties and the aftermath of the Great War was huge in that decade. It seems that the cost of food was harder to deal with in the twenties, as wages were falling, but health indicators in Stockton, including infant mortality, improved in both the twenties and thirties, in large part due to Medical Officer of Health G.C.M. McGonigle’s influence – an important story told elsewhere.¹⁰ The general employment situation on Teesside was helped enormously in the mid thirties by the creation of the Synthetic, forerunner of ICI, and eventually by re-armament. But right through this period, Macmillan had a wide range of duties and dealt with large numbers of people and organisations. His 1935 papers include a list of personal calls to be made, for a variety of reasons: means test case, pension case, alleged wrongful dismissal, health benefit, slum clearance and canvassing votes.¹¹

The scale of the “distress” in the area meant that it was beyond one person to remedy or even ameliorate. A Miss A. Ashley would write in 1939 in the journal *Public Administration* that social workers “should be a thorn in the flesh of the powers that be until adequate provision is made”, and that voluntary agencies should pave the way for systematic public policy and help. She was dismissive of “one class helping another” i.e. philanthropy, as inadequate to address the problems and a sop to conscience.¹² But another author more constructively lauded the work of the National Council for Social Service in the thirties, in coordinating and directing voluntary effort, in driving the occupation club movement (with Government support), lobbying for the Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937, which empowered local authorities to provide community centres on housing estates, and arguing for leadership in developing a large body of professional social workers, operating in a mixed economy of state, local authority and voluntary resourcing and funding.¹³

The local authority in Stockton used its own resources and joined in with national initiatives wherever it could. The mayor's unemployed relief fund in the summer of 1932 gave 6000 children a day's outing at Redcar, at a cost of £236. At Christmas, children enjoyed parties at school and trips to the cinema. Older juveniles not receiving benefits received training in horticulture and poultry. Across the land, many schemes attempted to make land available to people to grow their own food. In Stockton, the mayor's fund placed 236 men on allotments in Newham Grange, Norton and Oxbridge Lane. The Society of Friends provided seeds and materials. A further 300 places were planned for the following year. This was not all for personal benefit. Many of the men gave vegetables to nursing homes, nurseries and the hospital. The fund operated two centres, at Bowesfield Lane and Church Row, where a recreational and social club charged men one penny a week. Over 2000 pairs of boots and shoes were repaired, and a clothing bureau was set up.¹⁴

It is against this background of active engagement with social issues, assisting constituents, especially ex-servicemen and their families, and supporting local organizations offering sport, music, education and self-improvement, that the Social Services Centre initiative should be viewed. The wider context was that the National Council for Social Service believed that the unemployed should be given a sense of purpose and direction, which could be instilled through games, sports, concerts and recreation, especially if the community and participants themselves could be involved in the management.¹⁵

It is not clear who exactly first proposed the Stockton Community Centre, as it was initially known, but by April 1936, an office had been set up within Ropner's shipyard.¹⁶ An Executive Meeting was held on the 1st of May, invites being sent out by N.L. Cohen at 22, High Street. Macmillan had sent a prospectus to Captain L.F. Ellis¹⁷ of the National Council for Social Service and had requested support from the Pilgrim Trust¹⁸ and the Carnegie Trust.¹⁹ The Mayor's Unemployed Relief Fund issued an appeal document²⁰ which explained that part of Ropner's shipyard had been purchased for £4,000 and that the plan was to create a children's playground, recreation field, gymnasium, theatre, reading room, wireless room, library, and offices for the Womens Mutual Service Club. The National Council for Social Services (NCSS) gave at least one grant of £500. Macmillan met with Colonel Mitchell of the Carnegie Trust. The trust was unwilling to contribute to unemployment schemes in areas where the NCSS was disbursing funds. Macmillan explained that the facility was for general community use and not just the unemployed, and that Stockton had been denied special area status despite 30-40% unemployment. The London County Council Staff Association had already offered £500 towards site maintenance costs. This association invested a lot of personal time, effort and money in community work in Stockton, which they had "adopted" as a worthy cause and a community in dire straits compared to their own position.

Something which Stockton and London had in common was a handful of medical officers of health who were threatened with being struck off for publishing research which was embarrassing to the government. The Ministry of Health issued a warning against an assistant MOH in the London County Council (LCC) after she had dared to speak out at a Childrens' Minimum Council (CMC) meeting.²¹ Harold Macmillan was sympathetic towards the CMC's goals and supportive of its argument in favour of family allowances. He obviously knew Dr. McGonigle, whose research demonstrating that new housing estates could worsen malnutrition, because the tenants were too stretched by the rents, is now widely known, but who was as a result not popular in the ministry.

The wider story about the Ministry of Health, its minister, Hilton Young, and top officials being smugly self-satisfied, lackadaisical about poor nutrition, and keen to attack its critics, even when they wielded sound research, is truly shocking. The impact of poverty and malnutrition had a bias towards women, who often fed their children before themselves, but the ministry's arrogant behavior towards the views of women campaigners was also applied to distinguished male doctors and medical scientists. One, John Boyd Orr, ignored the threats as he did not intend to practice again, and would go on to win the Nobel Peace Prize for work on nutrition and his work for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The CMC was founded by Eleanor Rathbone, Eva Hubback and Mary Stocks, all with an active and high profile background and track record of campaigning for women and children's rights and improved policies.

The best and fullest explanation of McGonigle's findings and arguments is in his own words. *Poverty and Public Health* by McGonigle and Kirby asserts that "Any endeavor to acquire accurate information concerning social influences which may operate prejudicially to health is inseparable from a study of poverty." This should have been obvious to anyone who had read accounts of Stockton's poor and living conditions before World War One. Mary Leslie, the first female sanitary inspector, who moved to Stockton when her father became Vicar there, had written in 1902 that "it filled me with dismay to see so many small children looking ill, half-starved, covered with sores (often bites) frequently being fed on what even my untrained eye knew to be wrong".²² McGonigle's book comments on the "condition of the population" and summarises the data collated by the Ministry of National Service during the Great War, showing that far from being a prewar idyll, much of Edwardian England was populated by very unhealthy, unfit, badly nourished people, and that in 1933 not a lot had changed – the data on childrens' health from 1933 is equally dreadful.²³

Macmillan asked for a copy of McGonigle's report and met with him before its consideration by the Ministry of Health. Back in 1933, the Town Clerk, Thomas Downey, had corresponded in strict confidence with Macmillan about a request to reduce council rents by 20%. Macmillan's view was that he would like to have seen further surveys on the Blue Hall and

Primrose Hill estates, but didn't dispute McGonigle's figures. The Town Council would have preferred to reinstate a figure of 10%, but would rather have the 20% than see a reduction in income tax, though that was acknowledged to be a burden on the poorest.²⁴

Thomas Downey was still Town Clerk at the time of the Community Centre proposal, when he assisted with conveyancing and the setting up of trusts.²⁵ The project was quickly put on a sound footing. Subscriptions had reached £1000 by 4th June 1936, when Macmillan himself sent a cheque for £3000

"....which I would like to give to the work of founding the community centre in memory of my father Maurice Crawford MacMillan and of my grandfather, Daniel MacMillan. I am now a partner. My grandfather, from very humble origin, was able, before he died, to lay the foundations of a family business, in which I am now a partner.....I like to feel that the spirit in which my grandfather worked through his life and which was carried on by my father and his partners, still continues. My father was always very much interested in the conditions at Stockton-on-Tees, about which I used to tell him, and he realised to the full the immense problems caused by prolonged and heavy unemployment. I am therefore making this gift in his memory and in that of my grandfather, partly as a thank-offering for the more fortunate conditions which have come to us, and in recognition of what I feel we owe to those less happily placed."

He also asked that a small tablet commemorating his father and grandfather be placed in the building.²⁶ This project was important to him. He served on the board of trustees alongside local councillors. There was a management committee, but the key operational manager was the Warden.²⁷ He was based on the site, which was cleared and levelled by unemployed men. By February 1937 the Warden's monthly bulletin reported that "The men have undertaken all that has been required of them, cheerfully and willingly...". Gym classes averaged 24 participants and the library and workshops were in constant use. There were challenges though. The sanitary facilities were "deplorable", more teachers were needed, there was an influenza epidemic, and volunteers would disappear as soon as they could find paid work.²⁸

But lots of activities were up and running. An early leaflet offered billiards, chess, dominoes, badminton, table tennis, quoits, cricket and football, plus classes in furniture making, upholstery, cooking, drama, dressmaking, ambulance, toy making, boot repairing, music and keep fit. Making or repairing furniture, rugs, toys and boots were important skills in a community with very little cash circulating and high unemployment, though the job situation was not quite as horrendous as in the twenties. The leaflet promised a nursery, playground, tennis courts and boating in future. Subscription was one penny per week, paid in advance with no arrears allowed.

There was an intensive programme of educational talks on Mondays at 8 pm. Major Salt must have been around, as he gave lectures on Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa and, closer to home, England and Old Stockton. Other topics included gardening, trawling, keeping pigeons, population, iron and steel, unemployment, tuberculosis and the Mount Everest Expedition of 1934. Public figures also contributed: the Town Clerk on the government of Stockton, the Education Director on education, the Medical Officer of Health on the public health of Stockton and a Mr Salmon, presumably the Town's Treasurer, on the public finances of Stockton. "Man before History" was given by Mrs Elgee, wife of the curator of the Dorman Museum in Middlesbrough.²⁹

A draft progress report written by the Secretary, N.L. Cohen, based at 22 High Street was addressed to a Mr Jessop of "London Town".³⁰ Cohen was keen to stress the "serious distress still existing in the town." Lots of things were still needed: Linoleum, more books, ping pong, workshop materials, cricket gear, boots, badminton equipment, a boxing ring, floodlit sign, and an Ascot geyser. An architect was doing pro bono work on the nursery. A Christmas party had been held for 500 children over the age of 5. Jessop had chosen the presents. It seems likely that Jessop represented the LCC staff association committee.³¹

In August 1937 the new Warden, Major Salt, had been in place for three weeks. He proposed winter classes in ambulance work, toy making, furniture making, upholstery, possibly weaving, drama, music, cobbling, general education for men, cookery, home nursing, keep fit for women. Durham Community Council would provide most of the instructors. He suggested talks on the British Empire, the Roman Wall, the latest Everest expedition and local government. He was worried though, about "young ruffians... gathered from the neighbouring streets", mostly under the age of eleven, in the boy's gymnasium class. He thought that the ruffians should eventually be catered for but he was keener on working with the Boy Scouts and Boys Brigade, police and schools to organize a scheme for attracting the "right type" of boy. Macmillan's attitude to this is not recorded. He was not averse to visiting the roughest of areas on constituency cases, but Major Salt wanted all members of the gym class to be subscribers to the centre.³²

The Warden's report at the end of 1937 reported that the canteen was going well, operating three nights per week with help from the Women Citizen's Union. Concerts were making a profit and the football teams were doing well, though work continued on the centre's playing field. Classes were thriving. Three men had attended an exhibition at County Hall in London, where photographs of the centre had been displayed. The men were fed and housed by the Civil Service Department.³³ The project was attracting attention across the country: in early 1938 the bishop of Jarrow and groups from Liverpool, Lincolnshire and Cheshire had visited.³⁴

While the project was attracting interest as a possible model for other projects, London County Council staff continued to lend focussed and material support. In April 1938 they sent “a magnificent assignment of clothes”,³⁵ and in July they sent 13 more sacks of clothes. The warden wrote that “their continued generosity is beyond praise”.³⁶ An LCC delegation visited in August.³⁷ While this adoption by LCC staff was a specific bilateral arrangement, it was not unique. The National Council for Social Service encouraged such adoptions, and similar initiatives, often called clubs, were widespread across the country, particularly the Special Areas, though in every case they had to be initiated, supported and driven locally. Some 96 schemes were adopted in this way, 53 of them being in Durham and Northumberland, and 14 in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The Inland Revenue adopted West Cumberland, Westminster Bank adopted South East Lancashire, Admiralty staff adopted the Tyneside area (very appropriately given the history and volume of naval shipbuilding there) and the Ministry of Transport staff adopted South Wales.³⁸ On Teesside, the regional NCSS was based in Middlesbrough and the committee included the Mayors of Stockton and Middlesbrough, a representative of the Employment Exchange, and others from the allotments scheme and Personal Services League.³⁹ But the individual initiatives had their own management arrangements, and developed their own programmes. This was one was developing, expanding and succeeding.

During 1938 the first annual sports day was held, a trip to Scarborough took 108 women and 51 men, and there was a day trip to Seaton for delicate and needy children. The Scarborough trip was recorded in the Third Annual Report of the Womens Section:-

*“The arrangements for our summer outing to Scarborough were efficiently carried out by Mrs Gill and Mrs Hannah, “the best outing so far” was the verdict. The fact that the meals were hot and prearranged made all the difference in the world to those who had never experienced the like in their lives before. One could not help but admire the splendid way in which mothers made their little sacrifices in order to pay in their coppers every week for what at first appeared extraordinary extravagance. One hundred and twenty of us were extravagant.”*⁴⁰

The report also recorded that the clothing bureau had dispensed 3871 items of clothing to 285 families and expressed appreciation for the Stockton and Thornaby Hospital, where the bazaar sold clothing and household items made by members of the centre. Sick members received visits from the warden’s wife and a Mrs Adams:

“never a moment does Mrs Salt lose on hearing of sickness, of death or trouble of any kind – someone needs blankets, an overcoat, money, a surgical appliance.....Mrs Salt can cope with them all.”

The poor and unemployed in Stockton had been receiving such assistance since the end of the Great War. At one time about half of the town’s children were shod, courtesy of funds organized

by the mayor and others. The Mayor's Unemployed Relief Fund in 1933 funded the repair of 2000 pairs of shoes and boots.⁴¹

In October 1938 the first adventure talk attracted an audience of 700, Friday Whist drives around 80, and the men's keep fit 206.⁴² In November, the new community hall was opened by Dorothy Macmillan with the mayor. Harold couldn't make it, but the commemorative plaque he had requested was unveiled.⁴³ In December 1938 there was a nativity play and a children's party organized by the LCC gave tea, crackers and present to 750 children.⁴⁴ In the New Year, though, trouble was brewing for Major Salt the warden. He was going bankrupt, being over-committed by £150. A letter from Macmillan to somebody called Edward Watson seems to imply that he had helped Salt financially but would not do so again as it seemed unlikely he would be repaid. Salt proposed to sell his house and resigned from the centre. Macmillan and Watson seemed to have been easing him out and ensuring that his bankruptcy was not seen as due to his position at the centre.⁴⁵

In the middle of 1939, the Steward, E. Harvey, reported that the members and committee were working in close harmony and "there is a lot of good feeling about the centre".⁴⁶ In September 1939 a summary of the income for the women's section from October 1938 until then shows a total income of £323 17s 8 1/2d of which subscriptions were £72, teas £32 7s 5d, the shop £66 18s 6d, and the hospital bazaar £62 19s 8d.⁴⁷ The women's annual report from 1938-39⁴⁸ reinforces the overall impression of a popular, thriving and useful organization. The dancing class was so popular that they "couldn't cope with the numbers". The nursery was "one of our best loved corners". A huge variety of things had been made: rugs, trouser, dresses, aprons, and cushions. The LCC Staff Association continued to contribute: they had paid for the nursery floor covering and a "London gentleman" had donated a rocking horse. The LCCSA table tennis section paid for a good piano. But a worry was creeping in about the location of the centre in the riverside industrial area, a possible target for German bombers: "at the present time, mothers dare not leave their children at home. Schools are closed, and fear of air raids necessitates the mothers being at home, We have done our best re shelters but we are not yet satisfied that it would be safe for too many people to come to the club at present."

There were other forces at play threatening to push the community activities out of the site. Stockton Corporation had wanted to build a railway line from the Corporation Quay to the Malleable iron and steel works. This line would cross the site, which the corporation wanted to purchase for industrial use, suggesting that the centre was holding up industrial development. The Trustees only wanted to surrender the land required for the railway line. Very little mention is made of the centre in the Corporation minutes in this period, though there were councillors among the trustees. It seems that a compromise was reached whereby the corporation exercised its powers to purchase the land but leased back land and buildings to the centre. This was reflected in Heads of Agreement. The Corporation, though, was trying to persuade the trust

to move to North End. This was a site in Tilery for which plans had been drawn up for a sports and recreation centre enabled by the Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937.⁴⁹

The Wardens reports through to 1939 show that the centre did not move, but in 1940 it could not resist the demands of the military, who took over the site. In May, Macmillan wrote to a J. Longland in Durham that “It seems a pity that all our activities should be brought to an end”.⁵⁰ The war effort was reducing unemployment, and London County Council funding was unlikely to continue. The vicar of Stockton, R.T. Heselton, wrote to the Secretary of the Board of Education in Kingsway London, on behalf of the Stockton Voluntary Youth Committee, applying to release of the centre from military control, and requesting financial support for the buildings to be used as a youth centre. The committee had contacts with 2000 young people and there were maybe another 1000 who might benefit. An annual grant of £1650 would be needed.⁵¹ But to no avail. In 1942 the site was broken into by the military and the public, with considerable loss of property.⁵² Macmillan wrote to the Borough Engineer enquiring after the plaque dedicated to his father and grandfather “because it is of personal interest to me”.⁵³ But it had disappeared. There is a gap in correspondence between 1942 and 1945, when a letter from Harold Macmillan to the Vicar implied that that the site had been sold, and discussed what to do with the money.⁵⁴

It took the outbreak of a second great war to end the disastrous economic policies of the twenties and thirties and remove the spectre of unemployment, though the long shadow of the first war remained in the minds and bodies of the survivors. Macmillan had spent many years trying to ameliorate the impact of both economic collapse and physical and mental trauma on his constituents. The Stockton Social Services Centre was just one of many issues and initiatives to which he gave both time and money and lent his authority. His approach to social issues and hardships was a problem-solving one, not one based on stereotypes, ideology or political preferences. The sheer volume of his Stockton constituency papers are testament to the responsible and sympathetic attitude he took towards his constituents.

Later political biographers made much of Macmillan’s “ambiguity” citing the mixture of hardened soldier, classicist, grouse shooter, Old Etonian and fighter for benefits for his constituents, and his “third way” approach to economics, which would assist his wartime role in marrying public and private sector resources in the war effort. His views and attitudes, like everybody else’s, would develop and change over the years, and he became somewhat dismissive of “socialists” in his later years, but he never totally lost the influence of what he saw and dealt with in his time in Stockton-on-Tees. The sheer volume of his constituency papers shows that his time as MP for Stockton, while clearly a stepping stone to larger and greater things, was not a cynical exercise. If ambiguity means a pragmatic approach to improving the lot of ordinary people, having a working economy which gradually improves the lot of all, and not allowing his public school and Oxford background to blind him to the lives and needs of

others, or the need to work in partnership, then perhaps we could do with a little more ambiguity today.

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the Trustees of the Macmillan Family Settlement for access to the Harold Macmillan Archives in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and for permission to quote from relevant records. Thanks to Colin Harris, Superintendent of the Reading Rooms at The Bodleian (who has since retired) and all the staff at the Weston Library there for being so helpful and efficient in giving me access to this material.

Notes

HMA: Harold Macmillan Archive at the Bodleian Library. Followed by file/shelf number and item number within the file. E.g. "HMA C.147 No. 40" is item 40 in file C.147, which is mainly material relating to the Social Services Centre. A complete list of files is available at:-

<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/online/modern/macmillan/macmillan.html>

¹ HMA C.147, No. 41, H.M. to Captain L.F. Ellis of National Council for Social Service, sending prospectus for Stockton Community Centre scheme.

² J.B. Priestley, *English Journey*, p. 341.

³ See David Walsh, *The Battle of Stockton*, guest post on the Peoples Republic of Teesside blog, April 11, 2011. There is also a brief account on the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council website, which was updated in 2015. The Daily Telegraph on 2nd September 2004 carried an obituary of John Warburton, who was a Blackshirt at the event and whose brother Ned lost an eye in the turmoil. Since 2011, awareness of this event has widened and a plaque was unveiled in Stockton High Street in September 2018 to commemorate it, as the result of the work of a committed group of campaigners, and there has been coverage in the local press.

⁴ HM would often, if unable to attend an event to which he had been invited, donate a guinea or half a guinea. He would also regularly support appeals, sports clubs, servicemen's associations etc. A quick scan of 3 of the close to 100 constituency files shows totals of about £13, £10 and £22 given in this way.

⁵ HMA C.46/1 No. 487 Dated Jan 16th 1924.

⁶ HMA C.63 No. 408-416.

⁷ HMA C.63 Nos 339-358.

⁸ HMA C.52 No. 136.

⁹ HMA C.52 Nos. 184-193.

¹⁰ See Katherine Nicholas, *The Social Effects of Unemployment on Teesside 1919-39* for a deeper analysis of unemployment, benefits, health and crime. See Chapter 3, *The effects of unemployment on health*, for more on McGonigle. This book is one of the most important works on Teesside between the wars and one of the essential starting points for any historian of modern Stockton. When Nicholas was writing her book, Macmillan's constituency papers were only accessible to his official biographer. This is a shame, as I feel she would have made very good use of them, and none of his official and political biographers have done justice to, or even touched upon, his day to day constituency work.

¹¹ HMA C.142 Nos 119 and 120. The last entry is for Mr and Mrs Little, 44 Hume Street, a fried fish shop, the purpose of the visit being "votes". This was my grandparents' fish shop. I remember my grandma telling me in the fifties about H.M.'s visit.

¹² Ashley, A, *Social Services Carried on by Voluntary Agencies*, Public Administration, Volume 17, 1939, pp. 350-354.

¹³ Clements, Richard, *The Administration of Voluntary Social Service*, Public Administration, Volume 17, 1939, pp. 355-364.

¹⁴ HMA C.78 Nos. 291-293.

¹⁵ National Council for Social Services, *Unemployment and Community Service*, 1936.

¹⁶ Katherine Nicholas, in *The Social Effects of Unemployment on Teesside 1919-39*, describes the centre as "semi-official". She notes that it was not mentioned in council minutes (I looked for it there too). She did not have access to Macmillan's archives. An oral history interviewee suggested to Nicholas that Councillor Allison used his influence as mayor to benefit the scheme. (Nicholas p. 165). This is interesting because Allison was the local politician whom Macmillan most feared if he ever stood for parliament. In 1945 he wrote to his Dorothy: "With regard to the candidates, I am rather glad that they have adopted Captain Chetwyn from Darlington. I was always a little afraid of Alderman Allison, who, I think, would have carried a good deal of weight...". (HMA C.143 No. 8: Letter dated 5th May 1945, in the run-in to the post war election which he lost to Chetwynd.)

¹⁷ A lot of the people Macmillan dealt with in central government used their military titles, Captain, Major etc. from the Great War, though it was now almost two decades ago. He was often referred to as Captain Macmillan.

¹⁸ HMA C.147 No. 36 dated 16th April 1936.

¹⁹ HMA C.147 Nos 29 and 31.

²⁰ HMA C.147 No. 16.

²¹ Helen Jones, *Women in British Public Life, 1914-50: Gender, Power and Public Policy*, Harlow, 2000, p.99.

²² Leslie, Mary, *Through Changing Scenes*, 1972, p.50.

²³ McGonigle and Kirby *Poverty & Public Health*, Chapters 2 and 3: pp. 25-37 and 38-50.

²⁴ HMA C.79 Nos. 118-120. Letter from Thomas Downey to H.M. dated 8th December 1933.

²⁵ HMA C.147, No. 40. Letter from Thomas Downey to H.M.

Downey had been Town Clerk for some time. He was in post when an important primary source document for the town, the Book of Orders and Accompts, 1626 -1835 had been rediscovered in 1923 at the YMCA. He organized a handover ceremony to present the book to the Mayor.

²⁶ HMA C.147 No. 12. Letter 4th June 1936 from H.M. to Charlie Ward, who is named as Chairman on the centre's leaflets.

²⁷ HMA C.147 Nos. 46-53 contain the constitution and rules.

²⁸ HMA C.147 No. 54 Wardens' report February 1937.

²⁹ They are both still celebrated through the Elgee Memorial Lectures at the Dorman Museum.

³⁰ HMA C.147 No. 61 He enclosed a copy of the North East Gazette dated 25th January 1937 with a leading article by Cllr A.J. Thatcher, the political agent for Labour in Stockton and Thornaby.

³¹ HMA C.147 No. 61.

³² HMA C.147 No. 66 Warden's report for August 1937.

³³ HMA C.147 No. 81 Warden's report for December 1937.

³⁴ HMA C.147 No. 110-114 Warden's report for March 1938.

³⁵ HMA C.147 Nos 115-117. Wardens' report for April 1938.

³⁶ HMA C.147 No. 136-138 Warden's report for July 1938.

³⁷ HMA C.147 Nos. 139-140 Warden's report for August 1938.

³⁸ NCSS, *Unemployment and Community Services*, 1936, p. 47.

³⁹ NCSS, *Unemployment and Community Service*, pp. 79 ff. on regional organisations.

⁴⁰ HMA C.147 Nos. 143-146.

⁴¹ HMA C.78 Nos. 291-293. Mayor's Unemployed Relief Fund 1933.

⁴² HMA C.147. Nos. 147-149 Warden's report for October 1938.

⁴³ HMA C.147 No. 150. Invitation card to the opening.

⁴⁴ HMA C.147 Nos. 159-161 Warden's report for December 1938.

⁴⁵ HMA C.147 Nos. 166-178.

⁴⁶ HMA C.147 Nos. 181-183 June 1939.

⁴⁷ HMA C.147 No. 186.

⁴⁸ HMA C.147 Nos. 188-192.

⁴⁹ HMA C.147 Nos 100-109. Colour drawings for the proposed Tilery facility are also in the archive at HMA C.147 No. 2. They show a cycle track, gymnasium, swimming baths, bowling green, tennis courts and putting green. Tennis courts and a bowling green were already there on the recreation ground. Eric Bellingham, Solicitor and Town Clerk, would write to Macmillan in 1938 informing him that the Tilery proposal had been approved for submission to the then "Area Committee". There was a sports centre there when I was playing 5-a-side in the late 60s and early 70s (good size outdoor pitches) but it has now been replaced by the North Shore Academy and facilities have moved elsewhere.

⁵⁰ HMA C.147 No. 201.

⁵¹ HMA C.147 No. 215.

⁵² HMA C.147 No. 224. Reply from Borough Engineer to HM Letter.

⁵³ HMA C.147 No. 223 Letter from HM to A.S. Enolles, Borough Engineer.

⁵⁴ HMA C.147 No. 228 Letter dated 3rd September 1945.