

During Victoria's reign in the middle and second half of the 19th century, a curious phenomenon occurred in British society which continued for the first half of the 20th century: the basic quality of general society improved, reached its peak and then fell again, where "quality" is measured by the level of acquisitive crime (burglary) and violent crime (and consequent size of the prison population), the degree of drug taking and alcohol abuse, and the numbers of illegitimate children (as they were then called). All of these measures were relatively high at the beginning of the 19th century, fell during the course of its hundred years, reached a low in the years immediately before the First World War, and then rose slowly but more or less steadily until the mid-1950s. Since then all these measures have escalated upwards very greatly.

Professor Christie Davies describes all these as going through a U-turn in his book *The Strange Death of Moral Britain*.¹ The following numbers are from the first chapter.

Crime

The number of serious offences recorded by the police in the 1890s was only about 60% of that in the 1850s. Larcenies dropped from 500 for every 100,000 population in 1857 to fewer than 300 in the 1890s. Trials for all crime were 288 per 100,000 people in the early 1860s and 164 in the late 1890s. "The figures reflect a real decline in criminal activity." There was a pronounced long-term fall in both violent and acquisitive crime (which are not of themselves related).

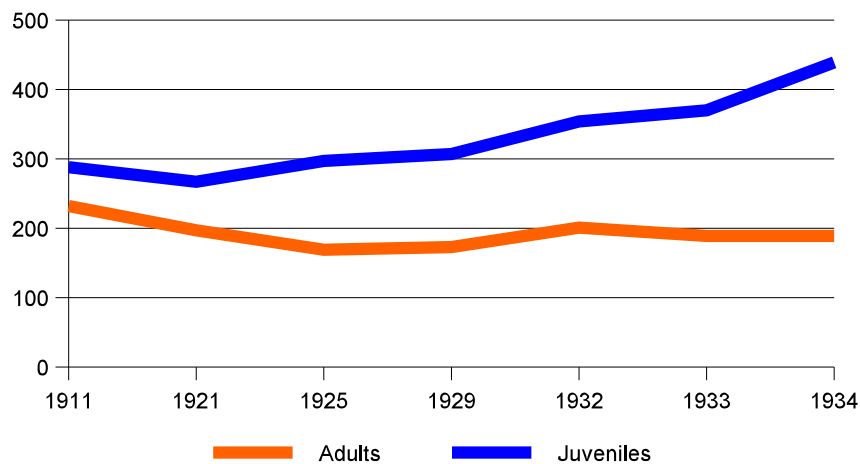
Another factor was that criminals were getting older, that is, they were drawn from a hardened criminal class which was slowly dying out. There were fewer juvenile recruits to crime at a time when crime was falling. There were occasional blips in the trend, such as the temporary larger number of violent crimes in the 1860s, but in 1862 only 3 robberies were recorded per 100,000 people (in total contrast to the 45 in the 1980s!). There was also very little gun crime despite the widespread ownership of guns.

People were able to walk the streets safely. Barrister Luke Owen Pike wrote in 1876 "... any man of average stature and strength may wander about on foot and alone at any hour of the day or night, through the greatest of all cities and its suburbs, along the high roads and unfrequented country lanes and never have so much as a thought of danger thrust upon him unless he goes out of his way to court it."²

"During this time of falling crime the standard of living rose considerably. ... There was far more to steal in 1900 than there had been in the 1850s, as mass as well as luxury consumption rose." There was also greater opportunity as traders took to displaying their goods outside their shops as well as within. People were "simply more honest, more respectable, more moral."³

However, crimes of dishonesty (burglary and theft) began to increase in the late 1920s and early 30s, though whether this was linked to the depression and severe unemployment of the time is unclear. What was beginning to happen was that the age of the criminals was getting younger. In older age-groups the conviction rate fell, but the graph shows the steady growth in the incidence of juvenile crime. The mid 1930s was "a turning point".⁴

Figure 14.4.1: Number of offenders per 100,000 population, by age, England and Wales



There was a steady rise in thefts and burglaries immediately after the Second World War, and there were high black market prices (meaning crime was more profitable). This wave of crime lasted only a few years and by the early 1950s, numbers were decreasing again.

¹ *The Strange Death of Moral Britain*, Christie Davies, Transaction Publishers, London, 2007.

² *A History of Crime in England*, Vol 2, Smith Elder, London, 1876, Page 480.

³ Op cit., Item 1, Page 9, twice.

⁴ Ibid., Page 20, but quoting *Criminal Statistics of England and Wales* 1934.

Violent crime

Violent crime remained low in the 1920s and early 1930s, probably connected to the decline of alcohol abuse in these years. Between the two World Wars the consumption of spirits reduced 80% and beer by 50%. Between 1930-34 there were only a quarter of convictions for drunkenness as in 1900-04, and “there is no reason to suppose that the police had become less vigilant or more tolerant of drunkenness”. In Scotland, it was similar; in 1927 (the best year) there were only 110 robberies and in 1932 (the worst year) just 342.⁵

However, during World War Two violent crime increased and continued into the late 1940s but fell in the early 1950s. Despite the presence of many armed soldiers, much of this violence was gun-less.

Prison

The prison population reduced towards the end of the 19th century as crime fell. Also many convicted of crimes were not sent to prison, and of those who were, many were only given short sentences. In 1894 only 4% of sentences were for more than 12 months. Most of the 22,000 prison inmates had sentences of under 3 months. Lenient sentences were given because the battle against crime was seen as having been won.

While the politicians who made penal policy were pleased with this outcome, Davies suggests that they were nevertheless beginning to doubt the value of having “autonomous, self-controlled, rationally choosing individuals” that were the backbone of “respectable Britain”. The politicians felt they should be organising the welfare of people more, which was to come specially to fulfilment in the 1948 National Health Service. Thus, says Davies, the success of moral Britain contained within it the seeds of its own demise.

The number of people in jail remained very low during the inter-war period, averaging only about 10,000 people at any time (in a population of about 40 million). Even though the level of thefts was increasing, non-custodial sentences were mostly given. The same was true in Scotland – for example, in 1932 5,000 people were sent to prison, under 7% of those convicted of a crime.

Alcohol

It was recognised in the 19th century that excessive alcohol often led to violent behaviour. The amount of drunkenness in society reduced during the latter half of the 19th century and continued well into the first half of the 20th. At the same time, society was becoming less tolerant of drunken people (because it showed a loss of self-control), so there was a social incentive not to drink to excess. After 1900 there was a steady decline in alcohol consumption, which was to continue through the years of the First World War, and afterwards.

There was no prohibition in the 1920s, but Britain was largely sober. There was no upsurge of violence, and little illicit selling (or making) of alcohol. Davies reckons this was largely because licensing hours were strictly controlled. Public houses had earlier closing hours imposed in the evening, with later opening in the morning, and a compulsory closure for at least 2 hours in the afternoon. For those for whom this was too severe a restriction, licensed clubs were available.

Also between 1870 and 1930 there was a steady decline in the number of public houses, and those granting licences took advice from the police on the behaviour of particular licensees. Taxes on alcohol, first raised in the First World War, were kept high.

Drugs

For many in the 19th century opium was an essential drug which could be bought across the counter and was used in a way similar to that of paracetamol today. It was used as cough mixture, cure for diarrhoea, dysentery, to allay anxiety, depression, fatigue or insomnia, and was the only effective pain-killer available. William Wilberforce, W E Gladstone and Rudyard Kipling all used it when they had a difficult task demanding coolness and confidence. Taking opium was not regarded as a loss of self-control, and nor did it lead to further loss of self-control. Many who took it became dependent upon it, but it did not become an addiction whereby they wanted more and more of it. However, after the 1868 Pharmacy Act, opium was only available through pharmacists, and gradually the amount and frequency of use came under greater control. It was also prescribed less by doctors.

The Dangerous Drugs Act of 1920 introduced strict controls over heroin and morphine. In 1921 there were only 251 prosecutions, and 190 of these involved opium or its derivatives (including heroin); in 1925 there were only 35 prosecutions and in 1938 just 6. Britain was largely drug free. However, in 1935 there were 700 addicts known to the Home Office, supplied by doctors who were allowed so to do. That number also was dropping – to 519 in 1938, 367 in 1945 and to 290 in 1953, the lowest ever recorded, although doubtless there were some not known to the Home Office. Most came from respectable backgrounds, most were over 30, and at least half were female. Most were isolated individuals, not mixing with other addicts. Most addicts did not wish to be pushers, and those that were had few to push it to. The equilibrium

⁵ In contrast, in 1970 there were 6,000 robberies and in 1990 36,000.

was based on “the overall respectability of British life in the first half of the 20th century.”⁶ Those in charge did not realise how precarious this system was.

Illegitimacy

The ratio of illegitimate births to all births was 7% in 1845 and fell to 4% by 1900 (and to 3% in the East End of London). Only in 1874 was the registration of births made law, so this decrease occurred when the measurement of births was becoming more accurate. Likewise at the beginning of the 19th century infanticide was common by mothers of illegitimate babies, but this had virtually ceased a century later.

Illegitimacy was low during the first half of the 20th century, rising during the Second World War, but dropping back to just over 4% in the early 1950s.

Society as a whole

There was thus a “decline in violence, dishonesty, drunkenness and illegitimacy in the late 19th century and probably up to the First World War. ... [British] people had created the moral qualities of self-control and self-restraint, of probity and prudence, of decency and sobriety.”⁷ Davies makes it clear that these were the qualities that enabled the British people to survive the times of two World Wars, the slump and massive unemployment in between, and the postwar austerity. “They may not have been good times, but they were the times of a good people.”⁸

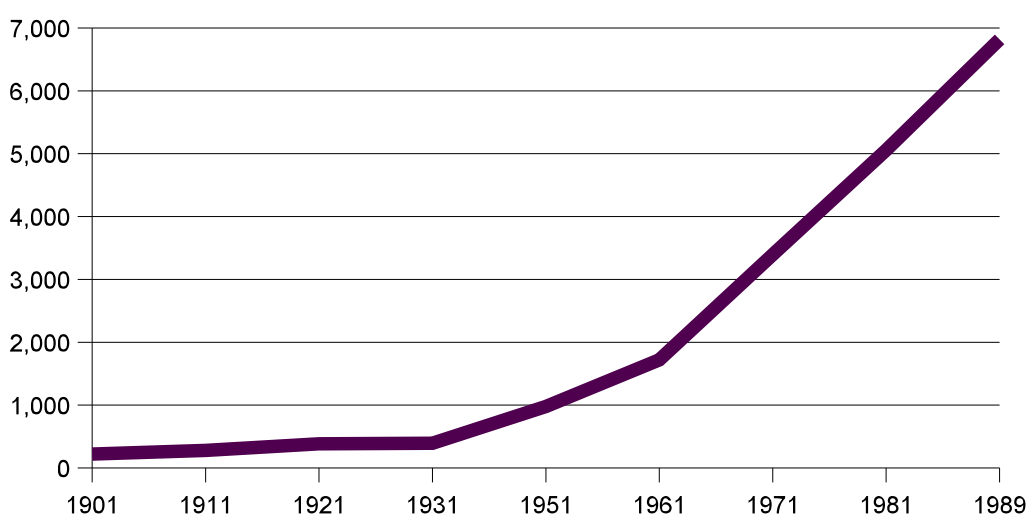
The change in crime in the second half of the 20th century

All this has changed in the last 50 or 60 years. Each of these indices of “moral society” has exploded. After 1960, public drunkenness returned in force. Crime rose rapidly, and violent crime also, the turning point seeming to be 1955-57. In 1957 there were ½ million crimes; in 1997 4½ million. In 1957 there were 1,200 robberies; in 1997 63,000.

In 1957 there were 11,000 crimes of violence; in 1997 250,000. In 1900, violence against the person was 2.4% of all reported crime, dropping to 1.0% in 1937 but increasing to 5.6% by 1997. The conviction rate for murder and manslaughter declined from 0.5 per 100,000 population to half that in 1930, but increased to 0.7 in the 1950s and to over 2.0 in the 1970s.

This increase in crime is against a background of rising incomes and less unemployment, so in no way is it related to poverty or relative deprivation. It might be argued there was better reporting and recording of crime as the century advanced, but the growth is too great for such a simple explanation as the graph in indictable offences recorded in Wales illustrates:

Figure 14.4.2: Number of indictable offences per 100,000 population, Wales, 1901-1989



Prisons

At the same time, the British punitive system became more lenient, so that the increase in numbers in prison was due to the increased amount of crime, especially serious crime. The number serving sentences of under a year decreased and the proportion serving more than 3 years increased (from 9% in 1937 to over 50% by 1997). The desire to use prison less,

⁶ Op cit., Davies, Page 25.
⁷ Op cit., Davies, Page 16.
⁸ Ibid.

as with the Criminal Justice Act of 1991, was simply “overwhelmed by the sheer rise in the volume of crime.”⁹

Drugs

Part of the crime wave was driven by the collapse in abstinence from serious drugs. In 1955 there were 335 known addicts, by 1968 3,000, nearly three-quarters male, and nearly three-quarters under 35 years of age. Their mortality rate rose also because, despite being told the opposite, they shared needles and neglected hygienic precautions. They also injected drugs rather than take them by other means. This addiction led to thefts to pay for the habit. The addicts of the 1960s were behaving self-destructively, and the suicide rate of young men rose (at the same as the suicide rate for women and older men fell). “When the constraints collapsed, young males not only turned to criminality, alcohol and drugs but also increasingly succumbed to the self-destruction that Durkheim had long before associated with a lack of constraints on human desire.”¹⁰

The number of addicts continued to rise dramatically in the last quarter of the 20th century, till at the start of the 21st century there were perhaps 300,000 regular users of heroin in Britain as against 25,000 registered Home Office addicts. The number of addicts was (and is) out of control. A 2001 survey showed that 13 million people said they had taken an illegal drug, almost a quarter of the population, including half of those aged 16 to 24. It did not matter that drug-taking was illegal, “nor, as the previous generation might have done, did they perceive the activity as a questionable form of self-indulgence involving a loss of self-control.”¹¹

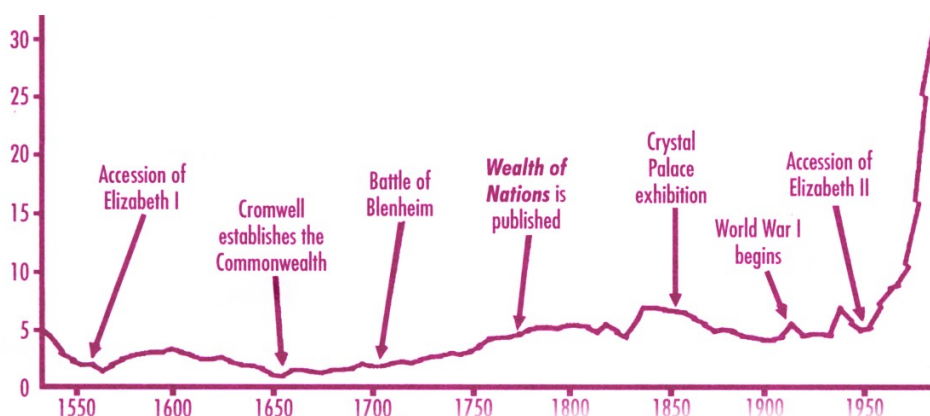
Smoking

As the drinking of alcohol and the incidence of crime fell in the second half of the 19th century, plateaued and slowly rose again in the first half of the 20th century, before rising much faster, so did the amount that British people smoked, but in the opposite direction. In other words, smoking increased in the latter half of the 19th century, was very prevalent in the First World War, and only really declined sharply in the second half of the 20th century. At its peak in 1948 82% of men smoked an average of 15 cigarettes a day. It was a “drug” of convenience and respectability. It could be taken to improve concentration, keep going when tired, and provided calm in stressful circumstances. Further, tobacco does not intoxicate. Its use has drastically fallen only since the discovery of the long-term and fatal consequences of using, which first began to be known in the early 1960s.

Illegitimacy

The rapid rise in the number of babies born outside marriage (a more “respectable” term than “illegitimate”) during the latter half, and especially last quarter, of the 20th century is well known, and illustrated in Figure 14.4.3, which gives a long-term historical perspective.¹²

Figure 14.4.3: Percentage of babies born to unmarried women, England and Wales, 1540-1991



A high proportion of babies born outside marriage are to those under 20. While some brides are pregnant at the time of marriage, such babies did not offend “respectable” Britain as much as those born outside marriage, but the sheer volume of the latter has caused any old-fashioned stigma to disappear long since. At least babies born into a wedded relationship are more likely to grow up with both biological parents until they are 16 (70%) which those born to say a cohabiting couple are much less likely (36%).

⁹ Op cit., Davies, Page 34.

¹⁰ Op cit., Davies, Page 37, quoting Emile Durkheim, *Suicide*, 1897.

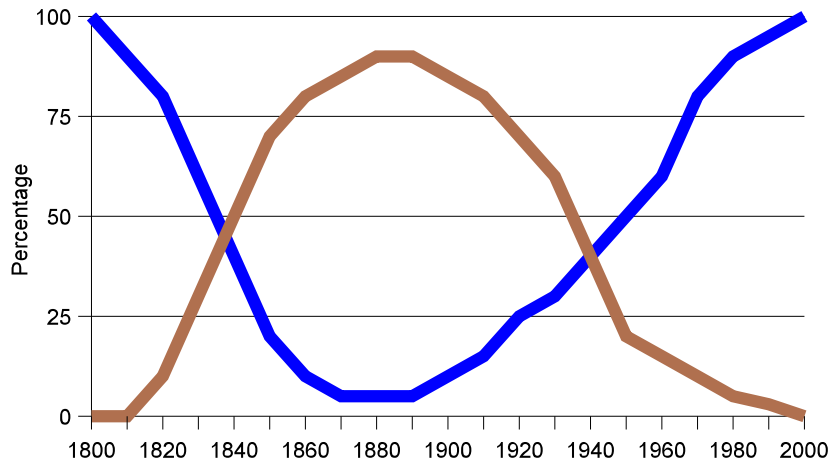
¹¹ Op cit., Davies, Page 39.

¹² *Religious Trends*, No 2, 2000/2001, Christian Research, Eltham, 1999, Figure 4.5.1.

Summary

We thus have a situation in which crime, drug use, alcohol, illegitimacy etc. show a common pattern, broadly shaped like the blue line in Figure 14.4.4. This, of course, is idealised, and none of these measures ever followed such a smooth pattern, but the general nature of this pattern, rightly called a U-Curve, is obvious.

Figure 14.4.4: General trend of elements which fail to promote a moral society

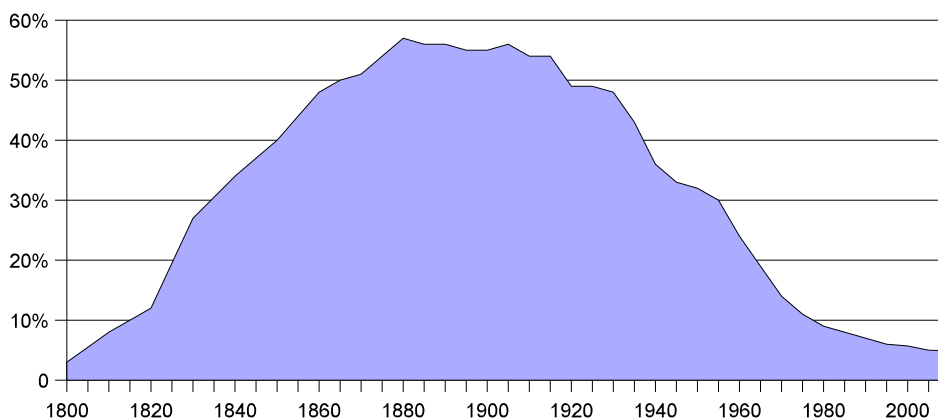


What caused the decline in the early 19th century, leading to an increase in respectability (as Davies calls it), or higher morality? In general terms it is greater honesty, self-control, prudence, concern, sobriety, etc., but these cannot be measured as such. Consequently one has to look at measurements relating to those institutions which promote uprightness and other values of quality. One of these, in fact, the only one that Davies could find, was the numbers attending Sunday School which followed a pattern not dissimilar to the brown line.

Davies charts the growth of the Sunday School movement and shows that while it did not produce greater attendance at church, it did produce generations which valued the facets often associated with being of an upright character – “comparative cleanness, truthfulness, kindness and beneficence” as the leader of the Sunday School Union described the people of Great Britain as showing in 1910. It was the people who emerged from this teaching that fought two World Wars and survived the hardships of the inter-war years.

The numbers attending Sunday School have been counted by denomination for the 20th century and published¹³, but not in such detail for the 19th century. This has, however, now been attempted and the results are available¹⁴. When combined with the 20th century figures of the proportion of children attending Sunday School, as it is in Figure 14.4.5, it may be seen that the curve is very similar to the bell-shaped curve seen in Figure 14.4.4.

Figure 14.4.5: Percentage of children under 15 attending Sunday School 1800-2010



Professor Davies goes on in his book to look in more detail at the abolition of the death penalty (especially for desertion in the Army), the liberalisation of the abortion laws (especially with respect to Roman Catholic feelings), the reform of law on homosexual acts and the easing of divorce in the last half of the 20th century, but comes to no different conclusions about the reasons for moral decline other than those already suggested. He has a useful section in his final chapter comparing Britain with other countries.

¹³ *Religious Trends*, No 2, 2000/2001, Christian Research, Eltham, London, 2000, Table 2.15.

¹⁴ If any reader would like the detail, please just email me on peter@brierleyres.com for a copy.

The only solution?

The above comments hopefully summarise Professor Davies' thoughts reasonably accurately. They lead, however, to the question, could the change in morality really be linked with the rise and fall of the Sunday School movement? There is a further factor closely akin to the changes in numbers attending Sunday School, although the numerical evidence is far more scanty – the number of missionaries (mission workers as they are called today) that set out from these islands in the 19th and 20th centuries follows a similar bell-shaped curve, the decline resulting from fewer children in Sunday School, fewer committed Christian young people and adults, and therefore fewer dedicated mission workers.

There is, however, perhaps a further factor. The latter half of the 19th century and into the 20th century also saw the rise and fall of the British Empire. At its peak, a quarter of the world was coloured red on global maps depicting its extent, and the sun “never set on the Queen’s dominions.”

There are many cons as well as pros for the British Empire, but one pro was that it gave the British a sense of purpose: “to lead the world”, “to educate the nationals”, “to Christianise (civilise) the heathen”, or whatever phrases were used then which today we would reject in their formulation but not necessarily their import. It gave Britain a vision, a global mind-set, a desire in theory to improve other people’s “lot”, though in practice often resulting in their exploitation and submission, driven in part by the expanding manufacturing base in the heartlands of England. It forced at least some of the population to think outside themselves, wider than their own family or employment circle.

Could that perspective have helped to encourage the moral standards that were felt important, the idea that the “civilised” British should be an example to the “uncivilised” world? Sadly the precept often diverged from the practice, resulting in resentment in some parts of the world, the spread of Britain’s post-war moral decline and the rejection of Britain as a significant world power. There is no doubt that such an idea was deeply held, and something that Sir Winston Churchill had no hesitation in calling upon during the Second World War. At the end of his most famous speech, in 1940, he said:

“Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty, and so bear ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth lasts for a thousand years, men will still say, ‘This was their finest hour’.”

So what for the 21st century?

Does any of this have any bearing on the current concerns of church leadership? Everyone calls for greater attention to be given to our young people, who are noticeably absent from our churches. It is interesting that Robert Raikes’ (the founder of the Sunday School movement) primary concern was not necessarily to give young people a Christian faith, but rather to save them from a life of crime. He wanted them to be useful citizens, and knew that part of the answer was to provide alternative activity which they would welcome. Children then accepted the telling of the Bible stories as well as the pragmatic help given in other areas (such as the 3 R’s). Sunday School was not primarily to teach good morals, but to help young people lead constructive lives, albeit recognising that a Christian faith was a key way of achieving this.

What are the equivalents today? Many business leaders complain that too many young people lack the basic qualifications for holding down a reasonable job, even if many are also able to count their GSE and A Level passes. Can churches help give a sense of purpose, encourage and guide young people in finding direction for their lives, recognise and develop their gifts and abilities? Is changing their thinking and attitude more important than training in additional skills? There are no simple answers, but key people engaged in strategic thinking might initiate some useful suggestions to try out. In other words, how can the Church be salt and light among the unchurched children and young people today, so that as they mature, they will be a moral influence in society, just as the Sunday School movement was two centuries ago?

Appendix: Numbers attending Sunday School in the 19th Century

There are two readily available main sources of numbers attending Sunday School in the 19th century – Thomas Laqueur’s 1976 book *Religion and Respectability, Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780-1850*, published by the Yale University Press in New Haven, Connecticut, and the appendices of *Churches and Churchgoers*, patterns of church growth in the British Isles since 1700, by Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert and Lee Horsley, published in 1977 by the Clarendon Press at Oxford, even if both are now out of print (though used copies are available on Amazon). The former gives some estimates of total numbers of Sunday School scholars, but mostly for the 20th century. The latter simply lists the available evidence, year by year, denomination by denomination, but untotaled.

Both are faulty, largely because they omit the number of Sunday School scholars attending the smaller denominations. Laqueur’s estimates for the 20th century are, on average 12½% too small, so one may presume the same is true for his (far fewer) 19th century figures. Currie’s figures are used to derive the 20th century totals, the working of which is given in detail in *Religious Trends* No 2, Table 2.15. However, an attempt to do something similar for the 19th century fails, since, as Currie shows, for most denominations, the numbers simply have never been published. There is also the problem that the 19th century denominations are not the same as the 20th century ones, due to various mergers and splits. The 19th century had fewer denominations – there were no Pentecostal or New Churches in existence, and very few churches for overseas nationals, for example. The Roman Catholics, who were very scarce in the first half of the 19th century, did not (and do not) have Sunday Schools.

There is also the problem of Northern Ireland which came into being in 1922. Prior to that the whole of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom. However, of the perhaps 30 denominations now in Northern Ireland which may have been in existence in 1900, only for one, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, are Sunday School figures known. There are official extrapolations of the population of what was to become Northern Ireland for the period 1900 to 1922, but not for the 19th century. For simplicity it is therefore assumed here that the percentages of the under 15 population in Sunday School in Great Britain during the 19th century are the same as were attending in that part of Ireland which was to become Northern Ireland in the same years. There is insufficient data to make any other assumption.

It is usually taken that Robert Raikes began what became the Sunday School movement about the year 1780 because he wanted to prevent slum children descending into crime. The interdenominational Stockport Sunday School financed and constructed a school for 5,000 scholars in 1805, then the largest in the world, and during the course of the 19th century they became increasingly popular, with most churches in virtually every denomination having one.

Estimates for the numbers by denomination across the 19th century are given in the Table, the first time such detail has been estimated, as far as I know. It will be seen that, if these estimates are approximately correct, that Sunday School numbers peaked in 1880 as far as the percentage of children attending them was concerned, though the percentage was to remain virtually unchanged for the next 25 years, and then began its 20th century descent especially after the First World War. It should be noted that as many Sunday Schools also taught the "3 R's"¹⁵, prior to the various Education Acts, probably a number of those attending were over 15 years of age, reducing these percentages.

The increase in numbers occurred especially in the period 1820 to 1840, and particularly in the Church of England. That was the period in which a very large number of Anglican churches were built: 195 new Anglican churches were opened between 1800 and 1824, but more than 1,400 between 1825 and 1849 and another 1,800 or so in the next 25 years¹⁶, as the Bishops were concerned that churches should be built near to where the newly forming industrial populations were living. Many new Dioceses were also formed during the mid-19th century.

Table 14.4.1: Estimated numbers of Sunday School Scholars, in thousands, Great Britain, 19th century

Year	Church of England	Other Anglican ²	Baptist	Pres + Cong ³	Church of Scotland	Free + United ⁴	Wesleyan Methodist	Other Meth'sts ⁵	All Others ⁶	TOTAL	% of popul'n <15
1800	60 ¹	8	~	~	~	30 ¹	10 ¹	3 ¹	16	100	3
1810	108 ¹	14	~	~	~	49 ¹	21 ¹	7 ¹	101	300	8
1820	218 ¹	26	3 ¹	~	~	73 ¹	47 ¹	16 ¹	215	548	12
1830	870 ¹	46	7 ¹	~	~	98 ¹	106 ¹	39 ¹	260	1,406	27
1840	1,404 ¹	82	16 ¹	~	8 ¹	126 ¹	237 ¹	94 ¹	305	2,272	34
1850	1,591 ¹	148	39 ¹	11	52 ¹	153 ¹	369 ¹	228 ¹	350	2,941	40
1855	1,806 ¹	206	61 ¹	74	75 ¹	167 ¹	434 ¹	283	372	3,478	44
1860	1,991 ¹	265	96 ¹	137	97 ¹	170 ¹	500 ¹	361	395	4,012	48
1865	2,035 ¹	271	150 ¹	243	119 ¹	193 ¹	537	458	417	4,423	50
1870	2,079 ¹	277	203 ¹	349	141 ¹	199	623	524	440	4,835	51
1875	2,129 ¹	283	256 ¹	461	163 ¹	225	700	589	462	5,268	54
1880	2,179 ¹	290	309 ¹	574	187	239	787	667	530	5,762	57
1885	2,217 ¹	295	363 ¹	691	206	253	862	710	521	6,118	56
1890	2,254 ¹	300	416 ¹	791	217	269	933	751	543	6,474	56
1895	2,276	303	469 ¹	845	224	271	965	783	560	6,696	55
1900	2,302	316	525	945	223	235	967	772	511	6,796	55

¹ Estimate ² Taken at 13.3% of the Church of England (the percentage for 1900). ³ Includes the Presbyterian Church of England (numbers before 1880 trended from actuals 1880-1900), the Congregational Unions of England & Wales and Scotland, trended backwards from the early 20th century, and the Presbyterian Church in Wales, taken pro rata with the total of the previous two estimates. ⁴ Free and United Presbyterian Churches of Scotland (which merged into the United Free Church in 1900). ⁵ The United Methodist Free Churches, the Methodist New Connexion, Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodist Church. ⁶ All estimated as residual from the overall total.

¹⁵ Reading, writing and 'rithmetic.

¹⁶ Op cit., *Religious Trends*, No 2, Table 2.5.1.

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The figures for Sunday School attendance in the UK by denomination for the 20th century were first published in *Religious Trends* No 2, 2000/2001, Table 2.15 (Christian Research and HarperCollins, London, 1999) and are repeated here for convenience, updated where necessary and with such figures for the 21st century as are available or may be estimated.

Table 14.4.2: Numbers of Sunday School Scholars, in thousands, UK, 20th century and following

Year	Church of England	Other Anglican ³	Pres + Cong ⁴	Pres Church in Wales	Church of Scotland ⁵	Method-ist ⁶	Other Method-ists ⁷	Baptist	Other Baptists ⁸	Brethren ⁹	Pentecos-tal & New Chu'ches ⁹	All Others ¹⁰	TOTAL	% of pop-ulation <15 ¹¹
1900	2,302	316	768	177	458	1,739	162	525	38	17	~	294	6,796	55%
1905	2,398	311	820	195	480	1,801 ²	155	578	39	18	~	293	7,088	56%
1910	2,437	307	784	187	476	1,761	147	573	40	18	~	292	7,022	54%
1915	2,255	285	698	173	428	1,655	140	545	37	19	~	281	6,516	54%
1920	2,010	264	661	166	392	1,538	132	509	35	20	~	271	5,998	49%
1925	1,915	245	616	160	386	1,501	122	521	34	21	3	259	5,783	49%
1930	1,802	221	568	145	361	1,357	113	478	34	21	5	247	5,352	48%
1935	1,645	204	497	129	350	1,187	95	432	30	22	7	209	4,807	43%
1940	1,400 ¹	187	393	101	251	930	76	372	27	23	9	171	3,940	36%
1945	1,440 ¹	176	319	86	255	717	70	293 ¹	29	22	9	167	3,583	33%
1950	1,342 ¹	189	325	82	290	800	64	318	30	22	10	163	3,635	32%
1955	1,310	160	334	77	326	770	55	320	27	22	12	147	3,560	30%
1960	1,039	149	231	63	296 ¹	587	45	260	24	21	14	131	2,860	24%
1965	834 ¹	125	185	51	263 ¹	482	35	190	22	20	18	111	2,336	19%
1970	671 ¹	96	161	40 ¹	227	287 ¹	24	190	20	19	22	92	1,849	14%
1975	468 ¹	72	123 ¹	22	165 ¹	228 ¹	20	176	21	19	25	74	1,413	11%
1980	273 ¹²	46	89 ¹	18	99	176	17	156	21	19	33	55	1,002	9%
1985	259	44	40 ¹³	14	94	136 ¹	14	140	21	19	45	53	879	8%
1990	226	43	32 ¹³	12	91 ¹	97	11	124	21	19	56	51	783	7%
1995	192 ²	36 ²	23 ¹³	10	76 ¹	74	9	139	24	12	64	45	704	6%
2000	180 ²	33 ²	27 ²	8	66 ¹	52	7	131	26	8	77	39	654	5.7%
2005 ¹	158 ¹⁵	27	20	6	55	40	3	80	26	8	99	40	562	5.2%
2010 ¹	141	24	13	5	47	27 ¹⁴	2	77	24	7	122	42	531	5.1%

¹ Estimate ² Revised figure.

³ Membership totals of Tables 8.2.3-5 in *Religious Trends* No 2 as a percentage of the Church of England and taken pro rata to the previous column.

⁴ Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Unions of England & Wales and Scotland 1900 to 1970; United Reformed Church 1975 onwards.

⁵ Including United Free Church of Scotland prior to Union in 1929, and the continuing United Free Church after 1929.

⁶ After 1991, the numbers refer to "Children and Young People".

⁷ Membership total of Tables 9.10.3-6 in *Religious Trends* No 2 as a percentage of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and taken pro rata to the previous column.

⁸ Membership total of Tables 9.2.5, 9.3.1-6 in *Religious Trends* No 2 as a percentage of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and taken pro rata to the previous column.

⁹ Taken as 78% of the percentage of children in Table 4.9 in *Religious Trends* No 2 for 1979, 1989 and 1998 for 1980, 1990 and 1995 respectively, with similar proportions for earlier years.

¹⁰ Membership total of Tables 8.14.2,4 and 5, 8.15.1-5, 9.7.1 and 3, 9.8.2-5, 9.9.1-9 and 9.32.1 (all denominations not elsewhere included) in *Religious Trends* No 2 as a percentage of the total for all UK members (Table 2.12) and taken pro rata to the total of Sunday School students in the previous columns.

¹¹ Child population including Northern Ireland population prior to 1921.

¹² Figures for 1980 onwards are Sunday attendance figures, as per Table 8.5 in *Religious Trends* No 2, and not necessarily Sunday School.

¹³ Taken as 89% of children in worship (English Church Census percentage), 81% in 1990 and 73% (estimate) in 1995.

¹⁴ As per Table 6.2.3 in this volume.

¹⁵ Actual figure, as per Table 2.3.1 in this volume.