

Education, economic change and society in England 1780–1870

Second edition



### New Studies in Economic and Social History

Edited for the Economic History Society by Michael Sanderson University of East Anglia, Norwich

This series, specially commissioned by the Economic History Society, provides a guide to the current interpretations of the key themes of economic and social history in which advances have recently been made or in which there has been significant debate.

In recent times economic and social history has been one of the most flourishing areas of historical study. This has mirrored the increasing relevance of the economic and social sciences both in a student's choice of career and in forming a society at large more aware of the importance of these issues in their everyday lives. Moreover specialist interests in business, agricultural and welfare history, for example, have themselves burgeoned and there has been an increased interest in the economic development of the wider world. Stimulating as these scholarly developments have been for the specialist, the rapid advance of the subject and the quantity of new publications make it difficult for the reader to gain an overview of particular topics, let alone the whole field.

New Studies in Economic and Social History is intended for students and their teachers. It is designed to introduce them to fresh topics and to enable them to keep abreast of recent writing and debates. All the books in the series are written by a recognised authority in the subject, and the arguments and issues are set out in a critical but unpartisan fashion. The aim of the series is to survey the current state of scholarship, rather than to provide a set of prepackaged conclusions.

The series has been edited since its inception in 1968 by Professors M. W. Flinn, T. C. Smout and L. A. Clarkson, and is currently edited by Dr Michael Sanderson. From 1968 it was published by Macmillan as Studies in Economic History, and after 1974 as Studies in Economic and Social History. From 1995 New Studies in Economic and Social History is being published on behalf of the Economic History Society by Cambridge University Press. This new series includes some of the titles previously published by Macmillan as well as new titles, and reflects the ongoing development throughout the world of this rich seam of history.

For a full list of titles in print, please see the end of the book.



# Education, economic change and society in England 1780–1870

Second edition

Prepared for the Economic History Society by

Michael Sanderson University of East Anglia





## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521552745

© The Economic History Society

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

Education, Economic Change and Society in England 1780–1870: second edition first published by The Macmillan Press Limited 1991 First Cambridge University Press edition 1995

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data Sanderson, Michael.

Education, economic change, and society in England, 1780–1870/ prepared for the Economic History Society by Michael Sanderson. –2nd ed.

p. cm. -

(New studies in economic and social history)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 55274 5. – ISBN 0 521 55779 8 (pbk.)

1. Education - England - History. I. Economic History Society. II. Title.

III. Series. LA631.5.S25 1995 370'.942–dc20

95-18023

CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-55274-5 Hardback ISBN 978-0-521-55779-5 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.



# **Contents**

Acknowledgements Note on references			page vi	
			vi	
1	Literacy and mass elementary education		1	
	(i)	Before 1830: conflicting trends	1	
	(ii)	1830-1870: the drive to mass literacy	11	
2	Was there a technical education?		20	
	(i)	The eighteenth-century scientific culture	20	
	(ii)	The mechanics' institutes	25	
	(iii)	South Kensington and after	26	
3	A 'middle-class' education		30	
	(i)	The private schools, grammar schools		
		and social change	30	
	(ii)	The rise of the public schools	33	
4	The	universities	39	
	(i)	Oxford, Cambridge and liberal education	39	
	(ii)	Provincial reflections	45	
	(iii)	A radical alternative	47	
5	Aspirations and ideologies		49	
	(i)	Political radicals	49	
	(ii)	Feminism and the education of women	55	
	Conclusion		61	
Select bibliography			64	
Index			75	

v



# Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my colleagues, Professor Roy Church and Dr David Smith and also to Professor Christopher Smout and the members of the publications committee for helpful comments and suggestions during the production of this pamphlet.

I am also especially indebted to my wife whose interest and encouragement have lightened the task.

### Note on references

References in the text within square brackets relate to the numbered items in the Select Bibliography, followed, where necessary, by the page numbers in italics, for example: [5: 27].

vi