Manchester Art Gallery's Rutherston Loan Collection

Modern Art and Cultural Value in the North of England, 1890-1950

Volume 1 of 2 – Text

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ABSTRACT

In September 1925 the Bradford businessman Charles Rutherston agreed to donate a collection of modern English art to Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) on the condition that it would be used as a loan scheme for the purpose of educating ordinary people in Lancashire and Yorkshire about modern art. Drawing extensively on archive materials, the thesis provides a new insight into modern art in England in the first half of the twentieth century, examining the development and use of a collection in the artistic periphery of Northern England rather than the established art historical focus on artists and London as the metropolitan centre. It gives a place in art history to Rutherston, previously mainly known for being the older brother of the artist William Rothenstein, and to his wife Essil, who following her husband's death worked with MAG for twenty years to ensure the success of the scheme but remains virtually unknown. The thesis could also be categorised as a sociological study exploring the relationship between art and society and the potential for art to deliver social benefits, addressing a previously under-researched period between the cultural philanthropy of the late nineteenth century and state patronage of the arts after the Second World War. Rutherston's gift and the subsequent evolution of the loan scheme are interpreted in terms of the shifting concept of cultural value and in particular the relationship and tension between the artistic merit attributed to art by a metropolitan elite and art's broader social, particularly educational, role. By exploring the dynamics between these two aspects of cultural value the thesis therefore has relevance to the contemporary challenges faced by MAG and other public galleries as they attempt to ensure their expanding collections continue to preserve our cultural heritage whilst serving a social purpose for their local communities.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I first approached Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) early in 2019 about the possibility of researching the Rutherston Loan Collection (RLC) for my PhD and my proposal was received enthusiastically by two of MAG's curators, Hannah Williamson and Kate Jesson. Throughout my research MAG has been hugely supportive, facilitating access to their records and archives and involving me in their work with colleges and schools, and in addition to Hannah and Kate I would also like to thank, Emma Carroll, Lesley Cheung and Lisa Burton. I also acknowledge the crucial role played by an MAG volunteer, Hazel Hewitt, who before her work was brought to a premature end in early 2020 by the Covid pandemic had documented the contents of MAG's RLC archive in an Excel spreadsheet creating an embryonic catalogue and transcribed many of the most important documents, work which provided an invaluable start point for my own research.

Of the many organisations which borrowed artworks from the RLC during the period covered by my research, I would like to thank two Manchester schools for providing relevant primary source materials from their own archives and records which I have referenced in my thesis, Manchester High School for Girls (MHSG) and Levenshulme High School. I would particularly like to thank MHSG's archivists, Gwen Hobson and Pam Roberts, for the enthusiastic support they provided for my research. I would also like to thank the Houghton Library at Harvard University for digitising many letters from their collection of Sir William Rothenstein's papers for me after my planned research visit to Harvard in 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic.

As my research evolved, I started to appreciate the pivotal role played in the emerging narrative by Rutherston's widow, Essil (née Elmslie) and in 2023 I was fortunate to make contact

with Essil's great niece, Caroline Elmslie, who I would like to thank for providing copies of family documents and photographs and images of artworks by Essil which still remain in the family's possession. I would also like to thank University College London (UCL) for providing me with access to the archives of the Slade School of Art and to artworks produced by Slade students during Essil's time there.

I also offer my grateful thanks to the academic staff and fellow PhD students in the History of Art department at the University of York, in particular Professor Michael White who has been my supervisor throughout. Michael has guided me expertly through the process of researching my PhD and producing this thesis, and has provided insightful, constructive and, where appropriate, challenging feedback on my work at every stage.

Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful wife, Sue, for all her love, encouragement and support over the last seven years. However, I am sure she is secretly relieved that I am coming to the end of my PhD and that I can now focus more on enjoying our retirement together!

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualification at this University or elsewhere. All sources are acknowledged as references. Some of the early research which contributed to Part 1 of this thesis was previously published as Martin Brook, "Charles Rutherston's 'Gift to Manchester': The Evolution of a Modern Art Collector, 1890-1926," *Aspectus*, no. 4 (2022): 13-29. DOI: 10.15124/yao-f52t-2w83.

INTRODUCTION

In September 1925 the Bradford businessman Charles Rutherston (1866-1927) (Fig.1) agreed to donate almost five hundred paintings, drawings and sculptures, comprising most of his modern art collection, to Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) on the condition that the artworks would be loaned to galleries and art schools throughout Lancashire and Yorkshire to educate the general public about modern art and inspire a new generation of artists.[1] Rutherston's gift was transferred to MAG in 1926 creating the Rutherston Loan Collection (RLC), and the Rutherston Loan Scheme (RLS) was established the following year, the start of a public lending scheme which continued in various forms until 1997 after operating for seventy years.[2]

This thesis provides a case study into a collection of modern English art in the North of England between 1890 and 1950, including its transition from a private to a public collection and its use as a loan scheme.[3] The endpoint has been chosen to follow the first major re-organisation of the RLS since its inception reflected in the publication of a new RLC catalogue which definitively identifies the artworks comprising the RLC at that time, and bringing the wider

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[1] This thesis refers to Charles as 'Rutherston' throughout, except when directly referencing correspondence and other primary source material written prior to his change of surname (from Rothenstein) in April 1916. This thesis also standardises on the name Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) other than in references to primary source documents where the gallery's name at that time is used. The term 'art schools' is used to refer generically to the institutions in the further education sector concerned with the provision of art education, although over the period under review some of them were renamed as colleges of art.

[2] Manchester Art Gallery, Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund second stage application, 2024, 4, provided in personal email from Emma Carroll, Learning Manager: Schools and Colleges, MAG, 2 Dec 2025.

[3] The term 'modern English art' used in this thesis includes not only the work of English artists but also of those artists who despite not being English have become part of the narrative of modern English art through working and exhibiting in London and being part of the various artist groups which developed there.

historical context of the period immediately following the Second World War within the scope of the research.[4]

This thesis expands the historiography of the development of modern art in England in the first half of the twentieth century, given that Rutherston's collection and its subsequent development by MAG as the RLC does not feature in any established narratives. The thesis therefore contributes to this scholarly field by providing a new insight, examining the development of a collection in the artistic periphery of Northern England rather than the established art historical focus on artistic production and London as the metropolitan centre. In doing so it also gives a place in art history both to Rutherston, previously a peripheral figure about whom there is little published literature and who is best known for being the older brother of the artist William Rothenstein, and to his wife Essil Rutherston née Elmslie (1880-1952) (Fig.2) who following her husband's death at the end of 1927 played a major role in the development of the RLC and RLS but remains virtually unknown.

The thesis also examines the changing relationship between art and society in England in the first half of the twentieth century, and as such could be categorised as a sociological study into the use of an art collection. The thesis shows how the emergence of Rutherston's ideas resulting in his Manchester gift and the subsequent evolution of the RLS represent an attempt to provide modern art with a social, primarily educational, purpose during a period which existing secondary literature has generally regarded as a gap in attempts to engage art and society, falling between the cultural philanthropy of the late nineteenth century and the emergence of state patronage of the arts after the Second World War.

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[4] Manchester City Art Galleries, *Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection* (Manchester: Manchester City Art Galleries, 1950).

The analysis in this thesis uses a theoretical framework based on the shifting concept of cultural value focussing on the evolution of, and the relationship and tension between, two different aspects of cultural value, firstly the artistic worth attributed to artworks by a metropolitan cultural elite (*Art Value*), and secondly the contemporary usefulness of artworks to society focusing on the educational use of art (*Use Value*). Using this methodological tool, the thesis argues that the evolution of the RLC and its use as the RLS can, to a significant extent, be interpreted in terms of the wider cultural, social and political context of the period. Although Rutherston had agency in the choice of art he collected and the plans for the future of his collection, the thesis will demonstrate how his Manchester gift was increasingly focused on tracking, contributing to, and educating the public about the *Art Value* of modern English art as it became assimilated into the English national culture. And following Rutherston's gift, although MAG and individuals such as Essil Rutherston had some influence, the thesis will show that the development of the RLC was largely responsive to the demands placed on it by the RLS, which in turn reflected the evolving *Use Value* of modern art in the changing educational context of the period.

At its heart, this project has involved the research of a wide range of unpublished archive materials which will shortly be described in detail. However, the thesis also draws on published secondary and primary sources which mostly relate specifically to either one of the two scholarly fields of study to which this thesis contributes. Charles Harrison's seminal text on the history of modern art in England in the period before the Second World War, first published in 1981, provides an historical background for assessing the development of Rutherston's collection and the RLC, supplemented by the more recent work of Lisa Tickner, David Peters Corbett and Paul

Edwards.[5] Brandon Taylor's *Art for the Nation* on the history of public galleries in London is referenced in relation to the Tate Gallery and Charles Aitken, the Tate's Director between 1911 and 1930, who was a significant influence on Rutherston.[6] Margaret Garlake, Brian Foss and James Hyman provide an insight into the evolution of modern art in England during and immediately after the Second World War, and the context for assessing the RLC at the end of the period reviewed in this research.[7] Garlake's writing is perhaps an exception amongst the secondary literature on modern English art contributing to this thesis as she also considers the relationship between modern art and society in the period after the Second World War, in particular the formation and evolving role of the Arts Council.

Turning to the relationship between art and society, Frances Borzello's book *Civilising Caliban* is a key text as it tracks the transition from the cultural philanthropy of the late-Victorian period through to the state patronage of the arts after the Second World War.[8] But where Borzello asserts that the use of art to support education only began in earnest with the state-sponsored initiatives of the late 1930s, I also consider Emma West's argument that the period between the

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[5] Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism 1900-1939*, 2nd ed. (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); Lisa Tickner, *Modern Life & Modern Subjects. British Art in the Early Twentieth Century* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000); David Peters Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art 1914-30* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997); Paul Edwards, "Wyndham Lewis and the *Rappel à l'Ordre*," in *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past, 1880-1940*, ed. David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt, and Fiona Russell (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

[6] Brandon Taylor, *Art for the Nation: Exhibitions and the London Public 1747-2001* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

[7] Margaret Garlake, *New Art, New World. British Art in Postwar Society* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998); Margaret Garlake, "Introduction," in *Artists and Patrons in Post-war Britain. Essays by postgraduate students at the Courtauld Institute of Art*, ed. Margaret Garlake (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 1-16; Brian Foss, *War Paint: Art, War, State and Identity in Britain, 1939-1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2007); James Hyman, *The Battle for Realism. Figurative Art in Britain during the Cold War, 1945-1960* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001).

[8] Frances Borzello, *Civilising Caliban: The Misuse of Art 1875-1980* (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987).

two World Wars was a particularly rich one in terms of attempts to engage ordinary people in the arts in the name of education.[9] The thesis also draws on secondary literature on art education, including Stuart MacDonald's writing on art schools and child art, Bruce Holdsworth's biography of Marion Richardson, a pioneer in the development of art education in schools and one of the architects of the New Art Teaching movement of the 1930s and 1940s, and Roy Lowe's book on education in England after the Second World War which includes an assessment of the impact of the 1944 Education Act.[10]

Natalie Bradbury's research on the *Pictures for Schools* initiative which started in 1947 provides an insight into the use of art in schools in the period immediately after the Second World War, and the context for the reorganisation of the RLC/RLS at the end of the period under review.[11] Bradbury's research is the only secondary source I have found which directly addresses the use of art to support education during this period, providing a further indication of the gap in the secondary literature which this thesis helps to address.

The thesis also draws on a range of primary source material to establish the context for the relationship between art and education, in particular the Miers report of 1928 and the Markham report of 1938 on the role of museums and art galleries in the provision of education, *The Visual Arts* published by The Arts Enquiry in 1946 which recommended the establishment of

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[9] Emma West, "'within the reach of all': Bringing Art to the People in Interwar Britain," *Modernist Cultures* 15, no. 2 (2020): 225-252.

[10] Stuart Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* (London: University of London Press Ltd., 1970); Bruce Holdsworth, "Marion Richardson (1892-1946)," in *Histories of Art and Design Education: Collected Essays*, ed. Mervyn Romans (Bristol: Intellect, 2005), 161-175; Roy Lowe, *Education In The Post-War Years. A Social History* (London: Routledge, 1988).

[11] Natalie Bradbury, "Education, Art and Activism in Post-War Britain: Nan Youngman and *Pictures for Schools*," *History of Education*, no. 53(2) (2024): 320-339.

the Arts Council, and guidance on art education produced by the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of the 1944 Education Act.[12]

This project has focussed on the research of unpublished primary source materials, in particular MAG's own records and archives including the RLC Archive which contains material covering a period of more than one hundred years, from Rutherston's correspondence beginning in the 1890s to records from the 1990s relating to administration of the last iteration of the RLS. The provenance of the RLC Archive is unclear although the material consulted as part of this research mostly comprises a combination of MAG's own surviving records and material donated by Essil Rutherston and Rutherston's daughter from his first marriage, Jeannette Powell. The RLC Archive has not previously been subject to extensive research and at the time the research for this project was conducted (between 2019 and 2024) it did not constitute a fully documented and catalogued archive. However, prior to the outbreak of the Covid pandemic in 2020 an MAG volunteer had documented the contents of the RLC Archive in an Excel spreadsheet creating an embryonic catalogue and transcribed many of the most important documents. This work provided a valuable start-point for my own research.

The research has also drawn extensively on MAG's other records, including the computerised collection management system (MAG EMu) which I used as the basis for assembling my own detailed records of Rutherston's gift and the evolution of the RLC, artists files containing physical records for many of the artists represented in MAG's collections (MAG

[12] Ministry of Reconstruction. Adult Education Committee, *Third Interim Report. Libraries and Museums* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1919); Sir Henry Miers, *A Report on the Public Museums of the British Isles* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1928); S. F. Markham, *A Report on the Museums and Art Galleries of the British Isles* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1938); The Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts* (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1946); Ministry of Education, *Art Education. Ministry of Education Pamphlet No. 6* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1946).

AF), files containing material relating to donors and bequests to the RLC (MAG DB), and MAG's Annual Reports produced each year by the main Art Gallery Committee.

The thesis is presented in two chronological parts addressing the periods before and after the pivotal year of 1926 when Rutherston's gift transferred to MAG.[13] Part 1 presents an essentially chronological account of Rutherston's collecting, describing how he built a collection including works by some of the most well-known artists associated with modern English art of the early twentieth century.[14] The analysis is underpinned by a database of the artworks included in Rutherston's gift, assembled as part of this project by supplementing the base data contained in MAG EMu with material from MAG's physical records and the RLC Archive, including Rutherston's original index cards for the artworks and his lists of the two batches of artworks comprising the gift which transferred to MAG in June and September 1926.[15]

A wide range of archive material was used to analyse Rutherston's art collecting, covering both his Manchester gift and his wider collecting. Rutherston provided his own reflections on his collecting in the speech he gave at the opening of the exhibition of his gift in July 1926 and this is an important source particularly in terms of the way Rutherston's narrative

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[13] 1926 can also be considered a "pivotal year" in terms of the wider context, including the General Strike in Britain in May and (in terms of art) the opening of the Tate's new galleries for the display of "modern foreign art" in June, a few weeks before the opening of the exhibition of Rutherston's Manchester gift – see "Tate Gallery. Extension Opened by the King. Modern Foreign Art," *Times*, 28 June 1926, 11.

[14] Appendix A contains an approximate chronology of Rutherston's acquisition of the artworks included in the Manchester gift. Appendix B lists the artworks included in Rutherston's gift for each of the artists used as case studies in Part 1.

[15] Rutherston's original index cards contained in RLC 1/18, MAG RLC; Charles Rutherston, list of artworks sent to the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 10 June 1926, RLC 1/32 file 2, MAG RLC; Charles Rutherston, list of artworks sent to the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 30 Sept 1926, RLC 1/32 envelope, MAG RLC. In this thesis where information about artworks in Rutherston's gift has been derived from MAG's records and archives individual citations are not provided.

contributed to the construction of his identity.[16] Letters to Rutherston in the RLC Archive from some of the artists whose work he collected, including Charles Conder, Augustus John, Wyndham Lewis and Paul Nash, provide an insight into his relationship with the artists and provenance information about specific artworks. Correspondence between Rutherston and his brother William contained in the Sir William Rothenstein papers held by the Houghton Library at Harvard University (the HLH Archive) gives a sense of the two brothers' relationship and how Rutherston's collecting became less dependent over time on his brother's advice and artistic network.

The analysis of Rutherston's collecting has been supplemented using a range of published primary and secondary sources, including autobiographical material of some of the artists whose work Rutherston collected, in particular Wyndham Lewis and Paul Nash who make explicit references to Rutherston as a collector of their work, as well as artists' biographies, particularly those which refer to the artists' relationship with Rutherston and his brother William, including Anne Galbally on Charles Conder, Wendy Baron on Walter Sickert, and Michael Holroyd on Augustus John.[17] In the absence of published material about Rutherston, the three volumes of William Rothenstein's memoirs, *Men and Memories*, together with Samuel Shaw's and Robert Speaight's biographies of Rothenstein, provide an insight into Rutherston's family background,

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[16] Charles Rutherston, "Manchester's New Art Treasures. Mr. Rutherston's Address," *Manchester Guardian*, 16 July 1926, 11. This speech is the source of the epigraphic quotations used at the start of each section in Part 1 of this thesis.

[17] Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering: An Autobiography (1914-1926)*, rev. ed. (London: Calder & Boyars, 1967); W. K. Rose, ed. *The Letters of Wyndham Lewis* (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions, 1963); Paul Nash and Margaret Nash, *Paul Nash: Outline, An Autobiography* (London: Lund Humphries, 2016); Gordon Bottomley and Paul Nash, *Poet and Painter: Letters between Gordon Bottomley and Paul Nash, 1910-1946* (Bristol: Redcliffe, 1990); Ann Galbally, *Charles Conder: The Last Bohemian* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002); Wendy Baron, *Sickert* (London: Phaidon, 1973); Michael Holroyd, *Augustus John*, rev. ed. (London: Pimlico, 2011).

the artistic networks William introduced Rutherston to and William's artistic philosophies which influenced Rutherston.[18] Contemporary press coverage relating to exhibitions by the artists whose work Rutherston collected, the groups or movements with which they were associated and the broader reception of modern art help to position Rutherston's collecting within its art historical context.

Archive materials also provide some insight into Rutherston's engagement with the London art world, including Rutherston's and his brother William's correspondence with Charles Aitken (held in the HLH Archive), other correspondence in the RLC Archive, for example between Rutherston and Charles Dodgson from the British Museum, and documents relating to the creation and early exhibitions of the Contemporary Art Society (CAS), also from the RLC Archive. Records of the Bradford Arts Club (BAC) and Cartwright Hall Art Gallery held by the West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS) provide background into Rutherston's relationship with the art institutions in his home city of Bradford. Bradford-born J. B. Priestley's *English Journey* provides an insight into the social and cultural histories of Bradford and Manchester, which this research has used to draw the comparison between Manchester as a cultural centre outside London and the provincialism of Bradford which was central to Rutherston's decision to choose MAG.[19] Contemporary press coverage of exhibitions held by both MAG and Cartwright Hall

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[18] William Rothenstein, *Men And Memories. Recollections of William Rothenstein 1872-1900* (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 1931); William Rothenstein, *Men And Memories. Recollections of William Rothenstein 1900-1922* (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 1932); William Rothenstein, *Since Fifty. Men And Memories, 1922-1938. Recollections of William Rothenstein* (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 1939); Samuel Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism. William Rothenstein and the British Art World, c.1880-1935* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2024); Robert Speaight, *William Rothenstein: The Portrait of an Artist in his Time* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1962).

[19] J. B. Priestley, *English Journey* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1934).

prior to Rutherston's decision gives a sense of the two galleries' histories and differing philosophies.

Correspondence in the RLC Archive between Rutherston and MAG and press coverage of both the announcement of Rutherston's gift in September 1925 and the opening exhibition of the gift in July 1926 have been used to construct a detailed account of Rutherston's choice of MAG, the subsequent discussions culminating in the transfer of the gift and the establishment of the management arrangements for the RLC/RLS. Correspondence between Rutherston and his brother William in the HLH Archive provides some insight into the brothers' positions regarding their German-Jewish heritage, including their deliberations about whether to anglicise their surnames in 1916, and Priestley's *English Journey* provides a comparison of Bradford's German-Jewish community before and after the First World War. William's recollections, in *Men And Memories,* of his work in the early 1900s painting the Jewish community in the East End of London is also relevant here, alongside Samuel Shaw's interpretation of Rothenstein's stance on his Jewish heritage.[20] And Brandon Taylor's description of how the London art world, and modern art in particular, became a focus for antisemitism during the period in which Rutherston was building his collection gives a further insight into the relationship between Rutherston's art collecting and his identity.[21]

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[20] Samuel Shaw, "'Equivocal Positions': The Influence of William Rothenstein, c.1890-1910" (PhD Thesis, University of York, 2010), accessed 23 May 2025, http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/1106/. Also see the chapter on London in Shaw's 2024 biography of Rothenstein - Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 245-260.

[21] Brandon Taylor, "Foreigners and Fascists: Patterns of Hostility to Modern Art in Britain before and after the First World War," in *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past, 1880-1940*, ed. David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt, and Fiona Russell (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 169-198.

Part 2 of the thesis examines the parallel evolution of the RLC and RLS between 1926 and 1950, with the starting point for the analysis involving the assembly of relevant data from MAG's records and archives. The RLC catalogue published in 1950 provides a definitive record of the artworks included in the RLC at the end of the period researched.[22] The RLC's transition from Rutherston's original gift in 1926 to the collection as documented in this catalogue has been constructed from MAG's records and archives, supplemented by other sources such as the Annual Reports of the CAS which identify the CAS's gifts to both the RLC and MAG's permanent collection.[23] A record of RLS loans over the period in terms of the number of loans and the borrowing institutions has also been created from MAG's records. This material is by no means comprehensive, for example there are no documents recording which artworks made up the individual loans other than occasional incidental references. Furthermore, the most complete data relates to the period between 1927 and 1940 meaning that after 1940 it has been necessary to construct a general picture based on fragmentary data.[24]

An insight into how and why the RLC evolved as it did between 1926 and 1950 has been derived from a range of sources including Essil Rutherston's correspondence with MAG about possible gifts and acquisitions (contained in the RLC Archive), correspondence relating to the gifts by Eric Gregory, Dr. Jane Walker and Jeannette Powell (in MAG DB), and published material including Valerie Holman's biography of Gregory, which references Gregory's

[22] Manchester City Art Galleries, *Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection*. Appendix D provides a breakdown of the RLC in 1950 by medium and the source of the artworks.

[23] Contemporary Art Society, "Our Story. Annual Reports," n.d., accessed 4 Feb 2026, https://contemporaryartsociety.org/about/story#Annual_Reports.

[24] Appendix C includes an indicative analysis of the loans made from the RLS by type of borrowing institution between 1927 and 1940.

friendship with Rutherston although Gregory's continuing relationship with Essil Rutherston after her husband's death is not mentioned.[25]

The RLC Archive contains limited evidence of the use of the RLS by borrowing institutions, with Essil Rutherston's reports and letters on her visits to borrowers providing the most useful material and a key source for the analysis in Part 2.[26] The research also attempted to identify primary source material relating to borrowers' use of the RLS held in other archives including the borrowing institutions themselves. However, no relevant material was found in the extant records of art schools, but the research was more successful for schools discovering material either specifically related to their use of the RLS or more generally to their overall art education philosophy. The most fruitful source was Manchester High School for Girls (MHSG) which has its own extensive, actively managed archive from which the archivists extracted a wide range of relevant material. However, this provides limited evidence about how the RLS was used although it does give an insight into art education at the school during the period it was borrowing from the RLS. A second Manchester school, Levenshulme High School for Girls, provided examples of artworks produced by pupils during the time the school used the RLS taken from school magazines from that period.

A wider search of public archives identified material held by the WYAS relating to Ovenden Senior School, Halifax, comprising several newspaper cuttings and copies of original catalogues for two RLS loans in 1939, which are the only primary source documents discovered during this research explicitly identifying artworks borrowed from the RLS and how they were

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[25] Valerie Holman, *Peter Gregory: Publisher and Patron of Modern British Artists* (London: Lund Humphries, 2024).

[26] Each section in Part 2 of the thesis starts with an epigraphic quotation from Essil Rutherston mostly taken from her feedback on visits to borrowers.

displayed by the borrowing institution. For another school, the Liverpool Institute, relevant information was obtained from the old boys' association website including school magazines, some referring explicitly to the RLS and comprising the only sources discovered during this research containing comments written by pupils themselves.[27]

Primary source material on the state-sponsored initiatives to which the RLS contributed from the mid-1930s onwards has been used to interpret the RLS in relation to those initiatives, including the report published by the British Institute of Adult Education (BIAE) on its three initial *Art for the People* exhibitions in 1935 and the Arts Council's Annual Reports, in particular the Report for 1947-48 which covers the period of the RLS loans.[28] Extensive use has also been made of contemporary newspaper and art press coverage including reviews of exhibitions held by other art galleries, art schools, the BIAE and the Arts Council to which the RLS contributed, which help to position the loaned artworks within their art historical context and in some cases give an indication of the artworks' educational role. The research has also drawn on press coverage relating to the shift in the educational philosophies of the borrowing institutions over the period as part of the wider context for interpreting the RLS's evolution, including for example the closer alignment of art schools with the needs of industry.

Given the crucial role played by Essil Rutherston in the evolution of the RLC/RLS, this research has involved an investigation into Essil's background to understand how, at forty-five years old when she married Rutherston in October 1925, she was able to make such a significant

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[27] The Liobians' Website, "Liverpool Institute High School for Boys," n.d., accessed 4 Feb 2026, https://www.liobians.org/.

[28] British Institute of Adult Education, *Art for the People. Report of the British Institute of Adult Education experiment in providing three loan exhibitions at Barnsley, Swindon and Silver End* (London: s.n., 1935); The Arts Council of Great Britain, *Third Annual Report 1947-48* (London: The Arts Council, 1948).

contribution. Some biographical information about Essil is available online compiled by Essil's nephew, James Elmslie.[29] Although Elmslie died in 2020, I was able to contact his daughter (and Essil Rutherston's great niece) Caroline Elmslie, who provided copies of family documents and photographs relating to Essil's life. Records held by University College London (UCL) have been referenced in relation to Essil's time at the Slade School of Art between 1898 and 1906.[30] Contemporary press coverage provided an insight into Essil's involvement with the London art world before the First World War and her role managing the Redfern Gallery between 1923 and 1925, which she gave up to marry Rutherston. The only secondary literature I have drawn on which references Essil is Mengting Yu's reassessment of the women who attended the Slade School of Art in the early twentieth century, but who (like Essil) have been largely ignored by art history.[31]

Given the extensive role of archives in this research, some reflection on my use of archives as sources is important and Michel-Rolph Trouillot's book *Silencing the Past* provides a theoretical basis for this.[32] Trouillot describes a four-stage "process of historical production" in which archives play a fundamental role, comprising: the making of sources, the physical traces of events that turn those events into facts; the making of archives through the assembly of those facts; the making of narratives through the retrieval of facts from archives; and the making of

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[29] James Elmslie, "Essil Forrest Elmslie," *Sobraon*, 2017, accessed 29 Dec 2025, http://www.sobraontingira.com/elmslie-archives/cecilia-elmslies-family-material/essil-forrest-elmslie/.

[30] UCL Library Services, "Digital Collections," n.d., accessed 29 Dec 2025, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/digital-collections; Stephen Chaplin, *Slade Archive Reader, volume 1*, (UCL Library Services, 1998), accessed 29 Dec 2025, https://ucl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/delivery/44UCL_INST:UCL_VU2/12362768840004761.

[31] Mengting Yu, *London's Women Artists, 1900-1914: A Talented and Decorative Group* (Singapore: Springer Singapore Pte. Limited, 2020).

[32] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 20th anniv. ed. (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2015).

history by interpreting the "retrospective significance" of these narratives.[33] For Trouillot, facts can be "silenced" at any stage in this process through the choices that are made about what to include or exclude and how the material is subsequently organised and made available for retrieval. Trouillot's process provides a useful framework which is applied below in respect of my use of the RLC Archive and the HLH Archive.

Beginning with sources, the research focused primarily on the material (mostly letters) in both archives obtained from the Rutherston and Rothenstein families and documents originally produced by MAG itself held in the RLC Archive. For Trouillot, "[s]ilences are inherent in the creation of sources" and these silences are reflected in the sources used in two ways.[34] Firstly, the letters examined in both archives tended to be clustered around specific time periods interspersed by long gaps with few letters, suggesting that letters written during these gaps have not survived. For example, although the correspondence between Rutherston and his brother William in the HLH Archive covers the whole period from 1890 to 1920 there are no letters from the end of 1903 until 1910. And similarly, the correspondence between Essil Rutherston and MAG in the RLC Archive covering the period from 1927 to 1950 is focussed on specific periods, in particular 1928-1931 and 1941-1946. This pattern could be down to pure chance and, in MAG's case, the practicalities of managing the large amount of documentation it accumulates, which means some choices inevitably have been made about what is kept. However, in the case of the personal documents it is possible that some selections were made either at the time by the recipients of letters or subsequently by family members who may have edited the material as part of a process of protecting the legacies of Rutherston and Rothenstein.

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[33] Ibid., 26.
[34] Ibid., 51.

Secondly, silences are also implicit in the surviving sources in terms of what has been written down, the language used and what has not been said, reflecting the social mores and conventions of the time and, in some cases, the writers' desire to use letters as part of the construction of their identity, all of which means some 'reading between the lines' is required when interpreting these sources.

Turning next to the archives as physical entities, for Trouillot "the making of archives involves a number of selective operations", but neither archive appears to have been edited in this way indicating there has been no further "silencing" at this stage in the process.[35] However, there is a significant difference in the two archives' degree of organisation and their visibility and accessibility to the outside world. The HLH Archive has a public online catalogue and some of the sources are available digitally, whereas the RLC Archive has no online presence and until now has only been available for researchers visiting in person. Although some information held in the RLC Archive has been captured in MAG EMu this is by no means comprehensive, and it could therefore be argued that this has already resulted in the accidental "silencing" of much the RLC Archive material, which this thesis helps to address.

This significant difference in the accessibility of the two archives means that only the HLH Archive has been used previously in the construction of narratives, the moment in historical production "when events that have become facts (and may have been processed through archives) are retrieved", for example in Speaight's and Shaw's work on William Rothenstein.[36] In fact, Shaw's work draws on Speaight's biography as well as the HLH Archive and my research has drawn on these secondary sources, reflecting Trouillot's observation that

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[35] Ibid., 53.

[36] Ibid.; Speaight, *William Rothenstein*; Shaw, "'Equivocal Positions'"; Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*.

"[h]istorical narratives are premised on previous understandings."[37] By contrast, as far as I am aware this thesis is the first significant narrative constructed from the material contained in MAG's RLC Archive and, in writing it, I am aware that I have selected material to construct (and subsequently support) my own narrative, illustrating how any archive research project makes choices about which facts are retrieved and which remain silenced.

Furthermore, in the same way that this project has been influenced by earlier research of the HLH Archive, my selections will have a direct impact on the retrieval of material from both archives in the future. Firstly, the HLH Archive now holds digitised versions of the specific material I requested thereby making it accessible online to future researchers, and secondly MAG could potentially provide access to the material I selected and digitised as part of this research, effectively leaving the remainder of the RLC Archive "silenced." This illustrates Trouillot's observation about the "unequal frequency of retrieval" of facts from archives to create narratives, with "[s]ome facts […] recalled more often than others", which this analysis suggests is almost an inevitable consequence of archival research particularly in the digital age.[38]

The final stage in Trouillot's process of historical production is concerned with "[t]he unearthing of silences, and the historian's subsequent emphasis on the retrospective significance of hitherto neglected events, […] a project linked to an interpretation."[39] Speaight's biography of Rothenstein might be considered to be a straightforward narrative rather than a work of historical interpretation and this is perhaps true of many biographies or monographs. However, like Shaw's writing on Rothenstein, this thesis aims to meet this broader definition of "a project linked to an

[37] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 55.
[38] Ibid., 53.
[39] Ibid., 58.

interpretation", providing both an historical narrative and interpreting that narrative to assess its "retrospective significance" thereby, in Trouillot's terms, making history.

This thesis uses a theoretical framework as the basis of the analysis and interpretation, with the concept of cultural value providing a linking theoretical theme. Cultural value is a difficult concept to define and measure in any objective way but cultural economist David Throsby provides a helpful starting point, stating that cultural value "subsists in certain properties of cultural phenomena, expressible […] in general terms as an indication of the merit or worth of a work, an object, an experience or some other cultural thing."[40] He develops this further in relation to artworks by saying, "[a] long tradition in cultural thought […] sees the true value of a work of art (for example) as lying in intrinsic qualities of aesthetic, artistic or broader cultural worth which it possesses."[41]

This idea that cultural objects have an absolute or inherent value is, as Throsby notes, reflected in the elevation of objects with "essential cultural worth" into the cultural canon.[42] However, Throsby (writing in 2001) goes on to say that more recent thinking "[i]n the postmodern period" has resulted in "an expanded, shifting and heterogeneous interpretation of value in which relativism replaces absolutism."[43] However, Throsby notes the difficulty associated with defining and measuring such a fluid concept, suggesting an approach which disaggregates cultural value "into at least some of its more important constituent elements" to provide "a clearer sense of the material from which cultural value is formed."[44]

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[40] David Throsby, *Economics and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 19.
[41] Ibid., 27.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid., 28-29.

The analysis in this thesis has adopted this idea of disaggregation by distinguishing between two aspects of cultural value, firstly the artistic worth or *Art Value* attributed to artworks and secondly the contemporary usefulness or *Use Value* of artworks to society. The definitions of these terms applied in this thesis draw on art history rather than economics, specifically Alois Riegl's 1903 paper *The Modern Cult of Monuments.*[45] Riegl's work has been an important source in relation to the conservation of the built environment and recent assessments have confirmed its continuing relevance to contemporary heritage management.[46] However, Riegl used the term "monument" in a broader sense than its usual meaning in the English language to mean any form of cultural artefact ("human creation […] either artistic or literary"), and many of the examples Riegl uses to illustrate his ideas are drawn from the visual arts highlighting the relevance of his work to this field.[47] Riegl's approach reflected a growing pluralism in artistic taste and style rather than a static idea of the artistic canon as modern art began to challenge the academic tradition at the start of the twentieth century and it is perhaps no coincidence that Riegl was writing at precisely the moment Rutherston was starting to build his collection of modern art.

The Modern Cult of Monuments sets out a typology for cultural value comprising six qualitative measures, four of which underpin the definitions of *Art Value* and *Use Value* used in this thesis.[48] *Art Value* subsumes three of the values from Riegl's typology reflecting the ways in

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[45] Alois Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirado, *Oppositions* Vol. 25, Fall, 1982 (1982): 21-51.

[46] See for example Camila Burgos Vargas and Susana Mora Alonso-Muñoyerro, "About the validity of Alois Riegl's *The Modern Cult of Monuments*," *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 28, no. 3 (2022): 183-196.

[47] Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments," 21.

[48] The two values in Riegl's typology not used in the analysis are "age-value", which values a cultural artefact because it is (or appears to be) old and "intentional commemorative value", which is attributed to a cultural artefact by its makers to serve a specific commemorative purpose, for example by giving it a name or marking an event – see ibid., 31-34, 38. "Age-value" is of limited relevance given the focus of Rutherston's collection and the RLC on modern art. "Intentional commemorative value" could apply to

which artworks can be considered to have artistic worth at different stages in their lives: the value attributed to contemporary artworks because they are new or appear to be new ("newness-value"); the value attributed to artworks from any period or place measured against a present-day benchmark of what constitutes artistic worth ("relative art-value"); and the value attributed to artworks from any period or place which may no longer be to contemporary tastes but have been culturally significant in the past ("historical value").[49] This definition of *Art Value* therefore combines the absolute measure of historical value with the relativism of newness-value and relative art-value. The definition of *Use Value* used in this thesis expands Riegl's essentially functional definition of "use-value" to include the broader contemporary usefulness of artworks to society.[50] This mirrors the suggested expansion of Riegl's typology to include social value in other recent applications of his work in the field of heritage studies.[51]

Given the importance of the concept of *Use Value*, it is important to differentiate the definition used here from Marxist political economic theory within which the concept of use-value is a central tenet. Marx's *Capital* first published in 1867 describes the wealth of bourgeois societies as an accumulation of commodities where a commodity is a product of human labour which "by its properties satisfies human wants of one sort or another."[52] Commodities have both a use-value reflecting "the utility of a thing", and an exchange-value reflecting the value of a commodity in relation to other commodities.[53] Marx makes a clear distinction between

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an art collection once it becomes specifically identified with its donor as in the case of the RLC, but this interpretation has not been used in this analysis.

[49] Ibid., 34-38, 42-50. Historical value is closely related to the idea of the artistic canon, a term which is not used in this thesis.

[50] Ibid., 39-42.

[51] See for example Burgos Vargas and Mora Alonso-Muñoyerro, "About the validity of Riegl," 188-189.

[52] Karl Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1932), 41.

[53] Ibid., 42-43.

(qualitative) use-value and (quantitative) exchange-value, although the two concepts are inextricably linked in that commodities are produced specifically for the purpose of exchange in order to create use-value for their acquirers and surplus-value for the capitalist owners of the means of production.[54]

But Marx also notes that a man-made item might not necessarily be a commodity but could still have a use-value, saying, "[a] thing can be useful, and the product of human labour, without being a commodity. Whoever directly satisfies his wants with the produce of his own labour, creates, indeed, use-values, but not commodities."[55] Whilst this statement does not explicitly refer to artistic production, it does highlight an ongoing debate in Marxist theory about whether artworks behave as commodities in the Marxist sense of producing surplus-value for the capitalist in an exchange economy. The contested position of art in Marxist theory, and its relationship with value, has continued to be a theme in recent literature, for example in Sven Lütticken's 2016 article.[56]

Turning specifically to Marx's application of the concept of use-value in relation to art, a selection of the writings of Mark and Engels on art and literature published in 1974 includes just one example referencing this issue, quoting Marx from *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859) saying, "[s]uppose we have a commodity whose use-value is that of a diamond. We cannot tell by looking at the diamond that it is a commodity. When it serves as a use-value, aesthetic or mechanical, on the breast of a harlot or in the hand of a glasscutter, it is a

[54] Ibid., 207.

[55] Ibid., 47-48.

[56] Sven Lütticken, "The Coming Exception. Art and the Crisis of Value," *New Left Review*, no. NLR 99, May-June 2016 (2016): n.p.

diamond and not a commodity."[57] Three points emerge from this statement: firstly, it provides a further illustration of the ambiguity in Marx's writing about the status of aesthetic objects as commodities; secondly, it recognises the concept of aesthetic (as distinct from mechanical) use-value; and, thirdly, the inappropriate language gives a further indication that the idea of aesthetic use-value was never subject to rigorous, academic analysis. Certainly, the extracts in this compilation make no further reference to Marx's and Engel's ideas on the use-value of aesthetic objects, which is reflected in Lütticken's 2016 article which makes only passing reference to use-value at all.[58] This analysis suggests that aesthetic use-value is marginal to the main thrust of Marxist theory, and therefore clearly differentiates the definition of *Use Value* used in this thesis forming part of a broader conception of cultural value.

The thesis links this idea of cultural value with the concept of an English national culture, drawing on Philip Dodd's writing on the relationship between class and culture and in particular his assertion that the English national culture was defined in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by the "dominant English" comprising the public school and Oxbridge educated professional classes and the institutions they established and controlled.[59] As such, this metropolitan elite group was actively responsible for assimilating modern art into the English national culture, in other words gradually attributing it with *Art Value*, during the first half of the twentieth century. This idea is used to interpret Rutherston's collecting and his Manchester gift in terms of his identity and his desire to align himself with this cultural elite group, and uses *Art*

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[57] Karl Marx et al., *Karl Marx & Frederick Engels on Literature and Art* (Nottingham: Critical, Cultural and Communications Press, 2006), 43.

[58] Lütticken, "The Coming Exception," n.p.

[59] Philip Dodd, "Englishness and the National Culture," in *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, ed. Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 27-31, 44-45.

Value as a measure of the extent to which artworks form part of the national culture at any specific time.

For Dodd the idea of an English national culture disseminated to the rest of the country by a metropolitan cultural elite forms part of the construction of an English identity and exemplifies the application of the centre-periphery model in a cultural context, a concept which is also used in this thesis to interpret the cultural relationship between the London art world and small provincial towns mostly in Northern England.[60] The thesis also introduces the concept of major cities like Manchester and Leeds forming a regional semi-periphery, providing a cultural conduit between the metropolitan centre and the provincial periphery.[61]

Whereas *Art Value* is integral to Dodd's idea of a national culture the thesis also demonstrates the more fluid nature of *Use Value* as it evolved from the original idea behind Rutherston's gift in 1926, that the public needed to be educated about the *Art Value* of modern art, to by 1950 being increasingly defined by the RLS borrowers themselves. The emergence of this more democratic idea of *Use Value*, and its gradual separation from *Art Value*, reflects Raymond Williams' social definition of culture and cultural value, formed as a by-product of local communities and the everyday lives of ordinary people.[62]

The thesis also draws on secondary sources on collectors and collecting as a theoretical basis for interpreting Rutherston's collecting and the development of the RLC. Susan Pearce positions collections within the framework of value which societies bestow on objects, providing an important theoretical link between collecting and collections and cultural value, drawing on

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[60] Ibid., 36.

[61] The idea of a semi-periphery is attributed to Wallerstein's world-system theory, see for example Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the Capitalist World-Economy," in *Sociological Worlds* (Routledge, 2013), 50-63.

[62] Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 41.

Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "habitus" and "cultural capital" which this thesis also references.[63] The interpretation of Rutherston's collecting also takes account of Russell Belk's link between collections and identity and his idea of collections (as a special category of possessions) forming part of an "extended self", and Frederick Baekeland's analysis of the psychological motivations behind art collecting.[64] And Dianne Sachko Macleod supports this thesis in positioning Rutherston in relation to his peers as industrialists in the North of England who became art collectors.[65]

It is important to note that, in this thesis, cultural value is treated as distinct from any financial or economic measure of value, reflecting Throsby's position that "economic and cultural value […] need to be separated in considering the valuation of cultural goods and services in the economy and in society."[66] Throsby recognises that, for some cultural artefacts (and here he uses artworks as an example), there is a relationship between the two, with high cultural value being reflected in higher market prices and hence higher economic value.[67] Although this thesis focuses on cultural value, points in the narrative are highlighted where the financial value of artworks impacted on Rutherston's collecting and the subsequent development of the RLC/RLS.

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[63] Susan M. Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 20-21, 254, 285, 366, 387; Pierre Bourdieu and Tony Bennett, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 19-25.

[64] Russell W. Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self," *The Journal of Consumer Research* 15, no. 2 (1988): 152, 154-155; Frederick Baekeland, "Psychological aspects of art collecting," in *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan M. Pearce (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 206, 213.

[65] Dianne Sachko Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class: Money and the Making of Cultural Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4,15-16.

[66] Throsby, *Economics and Culture*, 31.

[67] Ibid., 34.

Part 1 of this thesis considers the evolution of Rutherston's art collection, and of Rutherston as a collector, between 1890 and 1926, the emergence of his growing belief in the educational benefits his collection could provide to society, and the rationale behind his decision to choose MAG as the institution most likely to realise those benefits. Drawing on Pearce's definitions, Part 1 argues that between 1890 and 1926 Rutherston evolved from an "accumulator" of modern art acquired from artists he knew personally and was keen to support financially, into a purposeful, proactive "collector" with a clear view of the collection as an entity and the artworks he wanted it to comprise.[68] Rutherston's collecting came during a transitional period for modern art as it was gradually becoming accepted within the English national culture and he was therefore collecting art which had already acquired, or he hoped would soon acquire, *Art Value*. This focus was increasingly driven by Rutherston's desire to create a legacy for his collection based on the potential it offered to educate people in the North of England about modern art, an emerging idea of his collection's *Use Value* which culminated in his Manchester gift in 1926.

Part 1 argues that through his modern art collection and his Manchester gift, Rutherston was constructing an identity for himself in terms of his nationality, ethnicity and social class. By collecting modern art Rutherston was demonstrating he possessed an understanding of the framework of cultural value required to identify with the metropolitan cultural elite and differentiate himself from his background as a German-Jewish Bradford textile merchant, and his choice of MAG as the beneficiary of his gift provided further validation of the *Art Value* of his gift and therefore his own cultural elite status. By stipulating that the gift should form the basis of a loan scheme, Rutherston was attributing his collection with a *Use Value* focused on

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[68] Pearce, *On Collecting*, 21.

educating the public and aspiring artists about the *Art Value* of modern English art, and was therefore actively participating in the dissemination of culture from the metropolitan centre, via MAG representing a cultural semi-periphery, to the provincial periphery of the North of England.

Part 2 of the thesis analyses the expansion of the RLC from 1926 to 1950 and the parallel evolution of the RLS in terms of the significant growth in the popularity of the scheme and its transition from an initial focus on loans to smaller galleries in provincial towns and art schools as originally envisaged by Rutherston, to an increasing emphasis on schools (following the extension of the RLS in 1930) and (from 1936) support for state-sponsored initiatives. Part 2 argues that the *Use Value* of the RLS was initially focused on educating the public and aspiring artists about the *Art Value* of modern art in a continuation of Rutherston's original philosophy. But the evolution in the *Use Value* of the RLS was predicated on a change in the educational context of the period in two respects. Firstly, the popularity of the RLS with art schools declined as the educational focus of many art schools changed from training artists to teaching the design and vocational skills required by local industries. Secondly, the use of art by schools began to evolve from using art to teach art appreciation or specific skills to support art making, to encouraging individuality and self-expression as part of an emerging child-centred approach to education.

Part 2 argues that by 1950 the RLC had evolved from a focus on its *Art Value* as a representative collection of the best works of modern English art, to an emphasis on its educational *Use Value*, particularly for schools. The RLC had begun to reflect the needs of the RLS and its borrowers, and a more democratic idea of educational *Use Value* than Rutherston's original vision had emerged, exemplifying a shift in the idea of culture from Dodd's top-down

construct imposed on societies by a cultural elite to Williams' product of the everyday lives of ordinary people.

The Conclusion to the thesis begins by briefly summarising the evolution of the RLC and RLS after 1950 and MAG's *Art Works in Schools* project which began in 2025 and which is attempting to determine whether a largely forgotten group of RLC legacy artworks whose *Art Value* is limited to their value as historical objects could still have contemporary *Use Value* in the twenty-first century.[69] The Conclusion then draws together the findings from Part 1 and Part 2 as two narratives covering the whole period from 1890 to 1950 relating to the main fields of study addressed by this research linked by the theme of cultural value: firstly, the development of modern art in England focusing on *Art Value*; and secondly, the emergence of education as a social purpose which art could support focusing on *Use Value*. The Conclusion argues that, for much of the period under review, both aspects of cultural value remained closely linked as part of a top-down construct, built upon the idea that art's educational *Use Value* was primarily concerned with educating the public about modern art's *Art Value.* However, by the late 1940s a different idea of *Use Value* had begun to emerge as schools as well as the wider population began to make their own choices about how they engaged with art, marking the start of a separation of art's social function, its *Use Value*, from its artistic worth, its *Art Value*, a distinction which remains central to MAG's current work and to which this thesis can therefore contribute.

[69] Manchester Art Gallery, "Art Works in Schools," n.d., accessed 20 May 2026, https://manchesterartgallery.org/art-works-in-school/.

PART 1 – CHARLES RUTHERSTON'S ART COLLECTION AND MANCHESTER GIFT, 1890-1926

Part 1 of this thesis examines in detail the evolution of Rutherston's art collection between 1890 and 1926, the reasons why the collection developed in the way that it did, and the ways in which this reflected Rutherston's evolution as a collector. It also analyses the emergence over this period of Rutherston's growing belief in the educational benefits his collection could provide to society and the rationale behind his decision to choose MAG as the institution most likely to realise those benefits. In terms of the focus of this research on the idea of cultural value, Part 1 examines Rutherston's collecting in relation to the *Art Value* of the artworks he acquired, and particularly the evolving *Art Value* of modern art over this period, alongside the emergence of his ideas about the potential educational *Use Value* of his collection, considered within the wider cultural and art historical context.

Rutherston's gift of 464 works of mostly modern English art formed only part of his collecting over a period of more than thirty-five years.[70] Although the gift included a significant proportion of the modern art Rutherston collected he retained other artworks which were inherited by his wife Essil following his death at the end of 1927, some of which eventually became part of the RLC through subsequent gifts by Essil and Rutherston's daughter Jeannette (described in Part 2). Rutherston also collected art from other periods and schools and although a small number of examples were included in the gift the majority were not, and Part 1 considers the gift as part of this wider collecting. As Part 1 will illustrate, Rutherston's collecting

[70] This introduction to Part 1 will go on to define the scope of 'modern English art' used in this thesis, and the extent to which this is reflected in Rutherston's Manchester gift.

encompassed an eclecticism which has been lost as, except for his Manchester gift, his collection has since become widely dispersed.[71]

Rutherston was the eldest son of German-Jewish immigrants who, soon after leaving grammar school, joined the textile merchant business established by his father which he eventually went on to run until retiring in 1919.[72] Rutherston lived in Bradford his whole life whereas his two brothers William and Albert were allowed to go to London as teenagers to train as artists, and perhaps collecting art was the only means open to Rutherston to express his own artistic side. In some respects, Rutherston followed in the tradition of Victorian textile business owners, many from the industrial north of England, who became collectors and patrons of the arts.[73] Dianne Sachko Macleod characterises such a collector as "a middle-aged male actively involved in business […] educated at respectable, if unpretentious schools before entering the family business which frequently caused him to travel within the British Isles or abroad", a description which certainly applies to Rutherston.[74] These collectors "expected art to perform a host of non-aesthetic functions, ranging from the edification of the working class to the fomentation of patriotic pride", and they typically collected narrative paintings and portraits painted in a classical, academic style.[75]

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[71] This means that the analysis which follows, for example when quantifying the works Rutherston acquired from an individual artist, a specific gallery or exhibition, or in a particular year, only takes account of artworks in the gift.

[72] For a brief biography of Rutherston see "Death Of Charles Rutherston," *Manchester Guardian*, 30 Dec 1927, 4.

[73] Bradford had its share of middle-class industrialist art collectors in the second half of the nineteenth century such as John Maddocks and Abraham Mitchell – see Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 44.

[74] Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class*, 4.

[75] Ibid., 15-16.

Rutherston therefore represented a break from this tradition by becoming one of the first people from his background to collect modern art. Early twentieth-century supporters of modern art were more typically drawn from the public school and Oxbridge-educated professional upper middle class, including important figures in the development of modern art in England such as Roger Fry and Clive Bell, many of Rutherston's better-known contemporaries as collectors of modern art such as Sir Michael Sadler, and key people who influenced Rutherston, including Charles Aitken, Director of the Tate Gallery, whose advice Rutherston sought regarding the plans for his collection, and Lawrence Haward, MAG's Curator at the time of Rutherston's gift.

Rutherston's belief that his art collection could be used to deliver benefits to society could be seen as a continuation of the late-Victorian idea of cultural philanthropy which, according to Frances Borzello, evolved as a consequence of the expansion of "the concept of gentleman […] from aristocrat to someone with the right kind of liberal education", a category of the new wealthy middle classes into which Rutherston fitted.[76] Borzello describes how, in the late nineteenth century, cultural philanthropy was focussed on using art with a clear narrative content to preach a message of moral and religious improvement to the lower classes, exemplified by Samuel Barnett's "pictures for the poor" initiative, delivered via the Whitechapel Fine Art Exhibition held between 1881 and 1898 before transferring to the new Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1901.[77] In Manchester, Thomas Horsfall also attempted to bring art to the working classes, opening the Manchester Art Museum in 1886 which operated independently of MAG until 1918 when it transferred to the City of Manchester Corporation.[78] Horsfall's approach

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[76] Borzello, *Civilising Caliban*, 31.

[77] Ibid., 51-53.

[78] Michael Harrison, "Art and Philanthropy: T. C. Horsfall and The Manchester Art Museum," in *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester*, ed. Alan J. Kidd and Kenneth W. Roberts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 120-147.

differed from Barnett's by attempting to improve the quality-of-life of the urban working class (and children in particular) more broadly, by providing them with access to images representing the beauty of the natural world.[79]

Borzello suggests that, at the start of the twentieth century, the focus of cultural philanthropy began to shift towards the potential educational use of art as "the new professionals in museums and education […] replaced the missionary belief in art's power to refine with a missionary belief in art's power to educate", and here she specifically references the exhibitions held at Whitechapel Art Gallery during the first decade of the twentieth century with Charles Aitken as Director.[80] Borzello notes that the emergence of modern art in England was also a factor in this shift as "this art could not so easily be related to society, and people could not so easily understand it. […] It demanded to be taken on its own terms as an object in the world, and people were interested in discovering what those terms were. The age of art education had begun."[81]

For Borzello this change only began to have a real impact from 1935 onwards with the BIAE's *Art for the People* initiative (which will be discussed in Part 2).[82] However, in her article on the Arts League of Service (ALS) formed in 1919, Emma West challenges this view by asserting that "in the aftermath of the Great War, there was an explosion in British arts organisations seeking to bring art to *all* the people."[83] For West (and in this she agrees with Borzello) this ambition was closely linked with an increased emphasis on the potential for using

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[79] Borzello, *Civilising Caliban*, 34-35.
[80] Ibid., 119-120.
[81] Ibid., 122-123.
[82] Ibid., 123 and 126.
[83] West, "'within the reach of all'," 227.

art to support a wider educational agenda saying, "[i]n the broader context of demobilisation, adult education became a new priority."[84] The ALS was divided into a Dramatic Section and an Art Section and despite the attempts of the Art Section to reach a broad audience, due to a lack of funding or state sponsorship it ultimately met with limited success, certainly in comparison to the Dramatic Section which took a more pragmatic, populist approach.[85]

The importance of creating a more culturally-aware population in the immediate aftermath of the First World War is supported by primary sources, such as Professor William Boyd Dawkins' October 1917 paper proposing a scheme for the development of the museums and galleries in Manchester which illustrates the emerging spirit of the time saying, "[t]he keys of knowledge must be within the reach of all classes, if we are to win the commercial struggle before us […]. The victory will go to those who are best organised and are armed with the best education."[86] The appointment of William Rothenstein as Professor of Civic Art by the University of Sheffield in April 1917 (discussed in 1.5) is a further example of the importance given to art education during this period.

At a policy level, the 1918 Education Act gave local education authorities the power to make grants to museums and art galleries to support visits by school parties and the funding of dedicated teachers.[87] MAG was one of the institutions which benefited from these new powers, its Annual Report for 1918 recording that:

> The scheme for educating the school children in the elementary principles of art […] has been carried on and developed with the assistance of the Education Committee. There

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[84] Ibid., 229.

[85] Ibid., 239-244.

[86] W. Boyd Dawkins, "The Organisation of Museums and Art Galleries in Manchester," in *Memoirs and Proceedings of the Manchester Literary & Philosophical Society (Manchester Memoirs). Volume lxii (1917-18)* (Manchester: Manchester Lit. & Phil. Society, 1918), 2.

[87] legislation.gov.uk, "Education Act 1918," n.d., accessed 11 Jul 2025, https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/8-9/39/section/23/enacted.

> appears to be no doubt now that what was in its inception a measure of necessity […] will not remain a mere wartime device, but will become part of the regular educational curriculum.[88]

The 1919 interim report on libraries and museums of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction states that the museum (and gallery) should be seen as "an educational institution of the highest value and should play an important part in the educational life of the community", going as far as recommending that museums and galleries should come under the jurisdiction of Local Education Authorities.[89] However, this proposal was never implemented in the face of strong opposition from the museums sector itself which did not regard education as the primary function of museums and galleries.[90]

So, despite the immediate priority given to education at the end of the First World War and the enthusiasm for opening up access to art as part of this educational agenda, the limited success of initiatives such as the ALS's Art Section combined with a failure to fully engage museums and galleries in this agenda perhaps gives some support to Borzello's view that little progress was made in harnessing the educational potential of art before 1935, suggesting that Rutherston's gift was still something of an exception in the 1920s and an early attempt to fulfil an unmet need.

Rutherston collected modern art during a significant time of change in its production and reception in England, and Part 1 positions his collecting within this wider art historical context. Charles Harrison characterises art in England in the last decades of the nineteenth century in terms of competing artistic philosophies. In particular, the continuing influence on English art of

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[88] Manchester City Art Gallery, "Annual Report of the Committee 1918", 10, MAG Archive.

[89] Ministry of Reconstruction. Adult Education Committee, *Libraries and Museums*.

[90] See for example "Museums Association. Annual Meeting at Oxford," *Oxford Chronicle*, 11 Jul 1919, 394.

the Royal Academy and its commitment to classical, academic art was beginning to be challenged: firstly, by art which represented the real world and attempted to connect art with society epitomised by the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood and the Arts and Crafts movement; and secondly, by the growing interest in the idea of an autonomous art focused on the use of formal properties to create aesthetic effects, reflecting the influence of French Impressionism, which for Harrison was synonymous with the idea of an artistic "modernism".[91] Harrison highlights Roger Fry's two exhibitions of French Post-Impressionist art at the Grafton Galleries in 1910 and 1912 as particularly significant, stating that the 1910 exhibition marked the real start of a "Modern Movement" in England.[92] This was reflected in the response of artists in England and the emergence of avant-garde movements such as the Vorticists, established in 1914 by Wyndham Lewis.[93]

The First World War had a significant impact on all aspects of life in England and the trajectory of the evolution of modern art was no exception. As Harrison notes, the War led to "the first major exercise in this country in state patronage of modern art" as artists reflecting the wide diversity of styles from the period immediately preceding the War were employed as war artists.[94] The stated purpose of the commissions was to create a pictorial record of the War with the intention "that priority should be accorded to eye-witness over imaginative reconstruction" and this resulted in the creation of "a quite remarkable record of the war in a wide variety of

[91] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 13-17.
[92] Ibid., 46.
[93] Ibid., 75-113.
[94] Ibid., 120.

styles."[95] However. Harrison goes on to suggest that there was some stylistic convergence as all artists sought an appropriate language to represent the War, saying:

> Where the radical modernists were forced by the actual experience of war to adopt more naturalistic styles, those younger artists whose work was already steeped in naturalism were generally prompted by the subjects of war to extend the emotional range of their work as they might never otherwise have done.[96]

So, rather than just producing realistic representations of the War, some of the artists exploited the potential of modern art to provide the viewer with a sense of experiencing the War through the aesthetic effects they were able to create.

After the War, many of the avant-garde artists from the pre-1915 period including Lewis retained a strong representational element in their work, a trend associated by art historians, such as Paul Edwards, with the *rappel à l'ordre* in art which followed the horrors of the War and the rejection of the political and cultural context which resulted in it.[97] And Harrison gives the title "Haitus" to his chapter covering the period 1919-1924, indicating that this period represented a pause in his narrative of the evolution of English modern art. In this context, the avant-garde artists of the pre-1915 period sought to replace "the dynamic organizational principles" of their earlier work with the "means to embody qualities of order and stability", with their art now referencing "the products rather than the procedures of mechanisation."[98] In other words, these artists reverted to a language which represented the real world rather than attempting to depict the feelings of being in the world. This brought these artists "closer in spirit to their fellow

[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid., 131-133.
[97] Edwards, "Wyndham Lewis," 144-145.
[98] Ibid., 157.

consumers in post-war society", making their art more accessible to the public than their earlier work.[99]

Harrison's linear narrative of the development of modern art in England, including his somewhat narrow definition of an artistic modernism, has been much critiqued by subsequent writers, who have tended to define modern art, and modernism, as more fluid and inclusive concepts. For example, Lisa Tickner says:

> A distinction is often made between 'modernism' and the 'avant-garde', where 'modernism' is the inclusive term (embracing Manet and Baudelaire in the 1850s and Pollock and Eliot in the 1950s), and 'avant-garde' is reserved for the self-consciously radical subgroups of cultural militants (Futurists, Vorticists, Imagists, Dadaists), prominent from around 1910.[100]

Part 1 will show that in many respects Rutherston's gift exemplifies this broader conception of modern art, as it comprised works reflecting a range of artistic styles and movements, including: nineteenth-century works by Rossetti and Burn-Jones and twentieth-century works following in the tradition of the Pre-Raphaelites; the realism of artists working in London in the early twentieth century for whom modern art was as much about depicting modern subjects as adopting modern styles; and art produced in England (mostly after the First World War) reflecting the stylistic focus on form and colour of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism.[101]

In terms of the relationship between art and society, in the late nineteenth century art's *Use Value* was focussed on the belief in the ability of art to either project a narrative of moral improvement or to improve quality-of-life using images of the real world. The *Use Value* of the emerging modern art was quite different, with its impact on the viewer being increasingly

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[99] Ibid.

[100] Tickner, *Modern Life & Modern Subjects*, 187.

[101] One notable exception to the inclusivity of Rutherston's gift is the avant-garde art of the pre-1915 period which, as Part 1 will go on to describe, Rutherston did not collect.

focussed on the direct aesthetic response which could be achieved rather than the reading of legible content. The art of the First World War perhaps represented a coming together not only of different artistic philosophies but also of art's *Use Value* through the representation of the War either in a literal way or in terms of the aesthetic response the art could generate. The priority given to education in the years immediately following the First World War resulted in a focus on the potential educational role of art, a new idea of art's *Use Value* which went on to be at the heart of Rutherston's gift.

Part 1 describes how Rutherston built his collection during a transitional period for art in England during which modern art was beginning to acquire *Art Value* (see Appendix A for an approximate chronology of Rutherston's acquisition of the artworks included in the Manchester gift). It tracks the development of Rutherston's collection, beginning in the 1890s when he was introduced to his brother William's artistic networks in Paris and London through which Rutherston was able to take his first steps as an art collector, particularly by becoming friends with and acquiring the work of the artist Charles Conder (1.1). It goes on to consider Rutherston's collecting during the period 1900-1914, which was centred on London and in particular the New English Art Club (NEAC) when Rutherston collected work by artists such as Augustus John and Philip Wilson Steer, and many of the seventy works in the Manchester gift by his brother William, and developed his own artistic network in London which was to play a significant role in the remainder of his collecting career (1.2). It then examines the period 1915-1926 during which Rutherston became increasingly focused on collecting art by artists in England who adopted the stylistic languages of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, many of whom were subsequently to become part of the established art historical narrative of early twentieth-century English modernism including C.R.W. Nevinson, Wyndham Lewis, Edward

Wadsworth, Paul Nash, Walter Sickert and Lucien Pissarro (1.3). For each period the analysis draws on case studies of artists who were particularly important to the collection (see Appendix B for a list of the works included in the Manchester gift by these case study artists).

Part 1 also examines Rutherston's emerging belief in the educational *Use Value* of his collection, focused on its potential to educate the public and a new generation of artists about the *Art Value* of modern art, an idea which ultimately resulted in his Manchester gift. It examines Rutherston's artistic relationship with his home city of Bradford (1.4) before going on to consider the evolution of his ideas for the use of his collection in the early 1920s through a series of small loans to educational establishments (1.5). It examines the personal and institutional relationships established by Rutherston which influenced his thinking, and his eventual choice of MAG as the institution which he believed could realise this potential rather than, for example, Bradford's Cartwright Hall Art Gallery (1.6). Part 1 concludes by interpreting Rutherston's collecting and his Manchester gift (1.7), arguing that they formed part of an identity he wanted to construct in terms of his nationality, ethnicity and social class as a member of an English metropolitan cultural elite, differentiating himself from his background as a Bradford textile merchant of German-Jewish heritage.

1.1 1890-1899: Paris, London and the Seeds of a Collection

> During my early business career I frequently had occasion to visit Paris, where my brother Will Rothenstein was studying painting […], and I spent most of my leisure time there with him and his friends. Among these I might mention that remarkable young artist, Charles Conder […]. We became intimate friends. As his work appealed to me and he was in a constant state of financial stringency […] I acquired a number of his paintings in order to help and encourage him.
>
> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[102]

Rutherston's earliest acquisition included in his Manchester gift was *The Moulin Rouge*, 1890 (Fig.3) by Charles Conder, an English-born painter who emigrated to Australia as a teenager before returning to Europe in 1890 to work in Paris where he met William Rothenstein who had gone to Paris the previous year to study art.[103] Rothenstein introduced his older brother to Conder in October 1890 when Rutherston visited William in Paris and Conder gave Rutherston *The Moulin Rouge* to commemorate their first meeting.[104] Rutherston went on to acquire Conder's work throughout the 1890s, a combination of purchases from the artist and further gifts including several painted fans for which Conder became well known. In December 1893 Conder wrote to Rutherston from Paris about one such acquisition, probably referring to Rutherston's purchase of *The Rose Fan*, 1893 (Fig.4), saying, "[a]bout the fan I shall be delighted to think of its being in such good hands and hope it will give you pleasure. I need not say from the commercial side what a good turn you do me just now & how I appreciate it."[105] A few days later, Conder wrote to Rutherston again saying, "Thanks for the cheque for 220 francs. […] I shall be pleased to sign

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[102] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

[103] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1872-1900*, 55-56.

[104] Correspondence referring to Rutherston visiting his brother in Paris in late 1890 and his early relationship with Conder cited in Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 30-31. Confirmation that *The Moulin Rouge* was a gift from the artist to Rutherston on 30 Oct 1890 in Rutherston's original index card for the work, RLC 1/18, MAG RLC.

[105] Charles Conder, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 27 Dec 1893, RLC 1/24 file 4, MAG RLC.

the sketch whenever you like & if you bring it to Paris next time you come I shall be delighted", although it is unclear to which sketch Conder is referring.[106]

These letters are typical of the seventeen letters to Rutherston from Conder held in the RLC Archive written between 1893 and 1899, and give the sense of a growing friendship and of Conder's appreciation of Rutherston's patronage. Ann Galbally's biography of Conder acknowledges Rutherston's importance to Conder as both friend and patron, noting how he "became thoroughly embroiled in Conder's cycle of loans, sales and gifts, yet he remained a stalwart believer in Conder's talent […]. Their friendship remained strong throughout the 1890s."[107]

The loose, impressionistic style of *The Moulin Rouge* and the subject matter of late nineteenth-century Paris nightlife show the direct influence of French Impressionism on Conder's work. However, Conder was also influenced by the romantic art of an earlier generation of artists, epitomised by a decorative style of painting often depicting scenes of fashionable society at leisure, exemplified by *The Masqueraders,* 1899 (Fig.5) which Rutherston acquired from an 1899 exhibition at the Carfax Gallery. The Carfax had been opened earlier that year by Rothenstein and John Fothergill with Rothenstein commenting that Conder "there did better than ever before […]; for the first time in his life Conder was assured of a regular source of income."[108] However, the opening of the Carfax seems to have soon resulted in the breakdown of Rothenstein's relationship with Conder following a contractual dispute.[109] It is perhaps no coincidence that *The Masqueraders* is the last of Conder's works Rutherston purchased directly

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[106] Charles Conder, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 1 Jan 1894, RLC 1/24 file 4, MAG RLC.
[107] Galbally, *The Last Bohemian*, 163.
[108] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1872-1900*, 343-344.
[109] Ibid., 345.

from the artist and there is no correspondence from Conder to Rutherston in the RLC Archive after 1899, suggesting that Rutherston's own relationship with Conder also cooled around this time. However, Rutherston did acquire several works in the gift by Conder after 1899 from other sources including *Self-Portrait*, 1895-1900 (Fig.6), one of two works purchased from his brother William in 1912. However, this acquisition resulted from Rothenstein's need to raise money to buy a cottage in Gloucestershire rather than Rutherston's specific desire to add to his collection of Conder's work.[110]

Conder does not feature in the established art historical narratives of English art of the period and only more recently have revisionist accounts, such as Galbally's, begun to reappraise Conder's contribution.[111] Contemporary reviews of his work were mixed, perhaps summed up by his obituary in the *Times*, following his premature death in 1909 aged forty, which describes him as "a charming and original artist, though one whose range and power were alike limited."[112] But for Rutherston, a young businessman from Bradford, being introduced to the late nineteenth-century Paris art world by his brother must have been an eye-opening experience and becoming friends with Conder, who perhaps epitomised the idea of the bohemian Parisian artist (to draw from the title of Galbally's biography), would have been particularly so.

Conder's work possibly "appealed" to Rutherston because it combined the late-Victorian taste for the aesthetic with the modern influence of French Impressionism and the depiction of a Paris nightlife which Rutherston had experienced with Conder. In terms of *Art Value*, Conder's work would have had newness-value for Rutherston, although contemporary reviews and art history suggest that his work did not go on to acquire relative art-value (and therefore historical

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[110] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 8 Sept 1912, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.
[111] Galbally, *The Last Bohemian*.
[112] "Obituary. Mr. Charles Conder," *Times*, 11 Feb 1909, 11.

value) either at the time Rutherston was acquiring it or subsequently. But at this embryonic stage in his collecting career, Rutherston acquired Conder's work because he had become friends with the artist and wanted to support him, not because his work had significant *Art Value*. Even though Conder's work featured little in Rutherston's collecting after 1900, Conder was the first contemporary artist Rutherston patronised and was therefore an important first step towards building a collection of modern art.

Rutherston's 1926 speech implies that, following his brother's return to London, the 1890s continued to be important for the development of his collection, saying:

> After I had been meeting my brother and his circle of friends in Paris for a year or two […] he moved to London […] and again through him I met a number of young artists. […] Among them, besides my brother Will, I might mention Charles Ricketts, Charles Shannon, Max Beerbolm and Walter Sickert. This group inspired me to commence acquiring a few examples of interesting work amongst the younger English Artists.[113]

However, the Manchester gift only included around thirty works acquired before 1900 and, of these, thirteen were by Conder, three were by his brother William and nine were drawings by the Japanese artist Hokusai (1760-1849) or his followers (Fig.7) which Rutherston acquired in 1898 and 1899 and, being neither English nor modern, are amongst a small number of exceptions in the gift.

It seems likely that Rutherston acquired the Hokusai drawings from his brother, who had developed a keen interest in Japanese art and in Hokusai in particular.[114] In a February 1899 letter, William responds to Rutherston seeking to clarify their authenticity saying:

> As for the Hokusai drawings, of course I can find no provenance, nor for that matter will any dealer, unless he has unquestionable documents. All Hokusai's […] are a question of opinion, which in many cases differ […]. All the drawings "by or attributed to" as the

[113] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.
[114] Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 273-285.

> catalogues say, I have of Hokusai came from Captain Brinkley's collection, that is all I can guarantee.[115]

At that time Rutherston was not collecting French Impressionist art nor the embryonic response to it by English artists, but in the late nineteenth century the idea of Japonisme had become popular and acknowledged as a stylistic influence on European modern art, and perhaps Rutherston was attracted to the *Art Value* these works had therefore acquired and their relative affordability.[116] In 1926 Rutherston went on to include the Hokusai drawings in the Manchester gift which suggests that he considered them to still have some *Art Value* and educational *Use Value* in relation to the development of modern art.

Of the artists in his brother's London network Rutherston mentioned meeting in the 1890s, only Walter Sickert had a significant representation in the Manchester gift, although, contrary to Rutherston's inference, his first acquisition of these works was not until 1918. Rothenstein had become aware of Sickert soon after his arrival in London to study art in 1888 through the NEAC of which Sickert was a member and the two men went on to become friends.[117] Rothenstein's memoirs and Wendy Baron's biography of Sickert both give a sense of their close relationship in the 1890s, for example in 1899 Rothenstein and his new wife Alice spent part of their honeymoon with Sickert in Dieppe who was living there at the time.[118] Like Conder, Sickert had financial problems and, in his memoirs, Rothenstein recalls that he "could do little to help all these gifted men; indeed, I found it difficult to keep my own head above

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[115] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 27 Feb 1899, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

[116] See for example Paul Wood, "Avant-garde and modern world: some aspects of art in Paris and beyond c.1850-1914," in *Art and Visual Culture 1850-2010*, ed. Steve Edwards and Paul Wood (London: Tate Publishing in association with The Open University 2012), 26-37.

[117] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1872-1900*, 31.

[118] Ibid., 346; Baron, *Sickert*, 60.

water."[119] By introducing his brother to Conder he had been able to help indirectly, but despite their friendship and the artist's financial difficulties Rothenstein does not appear to have encouraged Rutherston to patronise Sickert in the same way.

This is possibly because Sickert's art was not to Rothenstein's tastes as, writing about his time in London in the 1890s, Rothenstein describes Sickert's paintings as "the dingy tones of women lying on un-washed sheets, upon cast-iron bedsteads" (a subject perhaps more relevant to Sickert's work of the 1900s than the 1890s); and Sickert's loose, impressionistic style provoked him to comment, "there were other things in Walter's pictures that puzzled me."[120] Here Rothenstein (and, by association, Rutherston) was perhaps reflecting the fact that, in the 1890s, the work of Sickert and the other English artists influenced by French Impressionism was not yet to contemporary tastes in England and therefore had not acquired significant *Art Value* beyond the possible attraction of its newness-value.

Correspondence between Rutherston and his brother from the 1890s highlights that Rutherston also collected other art in addition to the works included in the Manchester gift including French nineteenth-century prints, the majority by Daumier, and several Goya lithographs.[121] His acquisition of the Goyas clearly amused William, a May 1898 letter saying, "[y]ou unprincipled ruffian – what are you doing with Goya? […] I hope you don't mean to collect everything – if you do, we shall all have to be careful what we tell you."[122] This illustrates the extent to which Rutherston was at this early stage in his collecting career an enthusiastic

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[119] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1872-1900*, 343.
[120] Ibid., 168.
[121] Rutherston donated his collection of nineteenth century French prints to the British Museum in 1918, discussed in 1.5. The whereabouts of his Goya prints is unknown.
[122] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 4 May 1898, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

accumulator of an eclectic range of art rather than the focussed collector of modern English art he was to become.

1.2 1900-1914: The New English Art Club and a Changing Cultural Context

> Shortly afterwards I became a regular visitor to the Exhibitions of the New English Art Club which brought me into touch with such personalities as Muirhead Bone, Gerard Chowne, Augustus John and his sister Gwen John, C.J. Holmes, Ambrose McEvoy, David Muirhead, William Orpen, Joseph Southall, Wilson Steer, Henry Tonks, and, of course, my brother Albert.
>
> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[123]

The increasing interest in French Impressionism in England in the last two decades of the nineteenth century was epitomised by the formation of the NEAC in 1886 by a group of artists who had studied in Paris and who were beginning to challenge the conservativism of the Royal Academy.[124] Of the artists subsequently represented in Rutherston's Manchester gift these included Philip Wilson Steer, who Harrison notes "was one of those who made a sympathetic and original response to French Impressionism at the end of the century", and Walter Sickert joined in 1888.[125] William Rothenstein's longstanding involvement with the NEAC resulted in this group becoming the focus of Rutherston's collecting in the early part of the twentieth century, although during this period he was still acquiring art in relatively modest quantities – around 130 artworks in the Manchester gift were acquired between 1900 and 1914 and of these more than fifty were by his two brothers.

Apart from his brothers, the artist most patronised by Rutherston during this period was Augustus John, with Rutherston's gift including twenty-three works by the artist. John's relationship with the Rothenstein family began around 1898 towards the end of John's time at the Slade School of Art where he became friends with Rutherston's youngest brother, Albert, who

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[123] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.
[124] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 19-21.
[125] Ibid.

soon introduced John to middle brother William.[126] In his memoirs, Rothenstein recalls how after first meeting John he "became more and more attached to John, and to his wonderful intellect […]. While his drawings and pastels got better and better, his painting was still uncertain; he found it difficult to control his palette, but now and again he gave promise of astonishing genius. […] Yet it was hard to persuade collectors to buy his drawings."[127] This observation suggests that Rutherston's first purchases of John's work, a set of six drawings acquired in 1900 and three drawings purchased from the Carfax Gallery in 1902, might have been encouraged by Rothenstein. William certainly claimed the credit for Rutherston's acquisition of *Merikli*, 1902 (Fig.8) from the NEAC's November 1902 exhibition saying, "John […] was beginning to show astonishing promise as a painter too. […] I thought this portrait of his wife masterly; and when it was shown at the New English Art Club, I persuaded my brother Charles to buy it for £100."[128]

John wrote to Rutherston saying, "I am delighted *Merikli* is in your hands, following so much of my best work", presumably alluding to the drawings Rutherston had already purchased.[129] In 1903 Rutherston purchased another drawing by John from the NEAC, and the following year he purchased two further works, including the second oil painting in the Manchester gift, *Ardor*, 1904 (Fig.9) also acquired from the NEAC. Rutherston acquired another nine drawings by John in the gift between 1907 and 1913 but only one more after this date, *Dorelia Standing*, 1919 (Fig.10), which Rutherston's index card states was acquired in exchange

[126] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1872-1900*, 332-334.
[127] Ibid., 340.
[128] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 3.
[129] Augustus John, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 15 Nov 1902, RLC 1/24 file 22, MAG RLC.

for three other John drawings, perhaps suggesting that by 1919 Rutherston had decided not to spend more money on John's art.[130]

Correspondence in the RLC Archive refers to Rutherston also acquiring John's etchings in the early part of the century. For example, in March 1906 John wrote to Rutherston saying, "I am sending you a set of 20 etchings at the price of £35 I don't know whether you wanted all my new etchings I have about 60 I suppose that you haven't seen"; and several days later he wrote again saying, "I am very pleased indeed to have your enthusiastic appreciation of the etchings."[131] Then, in December 1906, John let Rutherston know that he was "very pleased with the results of the Chenil show", a reference to an exhibition of John's etchings which seem to have been an important part of his artistic production, and of Rutherston's patronage, during these early years of the century.[132]

However, there were no prints by John in Rutherston's Manchester gift and, according to a 1919 article by Campbell Dodgson from the British Museum (a precursor to a full catalogue of John's etchings which Dodgson published in 1920), it appears that Rutherston had sold his collection of John's etchings.[133] I have been unable to ascertain why Rutherston sold them or to whom but this might give a further indication that, by 1919, Rutherston was focusing on acquiring work by other artists, and perhaps believed that John's etchings did not contribute in *Art Value* terms to his embryonic collection of modern art as much as the artist's paintings and drawings.

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[130] Index card for *Dorelia Standing* in RLC 1/18, MAG RLC.

[131] Augustus John, letters to Charles Rothenstein, 21 Mar 1906 and 26 Mar 1906, RLC 1/24 file 22, MAG RLC.

[132] Augustus John, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 22 Dec 1906, RLC 1/24 file 22, MAG RLC. Holroyd's biography suggests that John continued to produce etchings "on a gradually diminishing scale" until around 1910, see Holroyd, *Augustus John*, 200-201.

[133] Campbell Dodgson, "Mr. Augustus John's Etchings," *Country Life* 46, no. 1191 (1919): 547.

The letters referenced here are typical of the correspondence from John to Rutherston between 1902 and 1906 held in the RLC Archive, although these might represent only a snapshot of a dialogue which took place over a longer period. The letters are informal and friendly and refer to visits the two men and their wives made to each other's houses, suggesting they became quite close over this period with John appearing grateful for Rutherston's appreciation and patronage of his work at this early stage in his career.

A review of the 1902 NEAC exhibition in the *Times* gives John, and *Merikli* in particular, a mixed reception, saying that an artist who can draw and model hands so well "ought to go very far", but the painting as a whole "lacks delicacy, the surface has a certain commonness which mars the whole impression."[134] But, within two years, John was beginning to attract more positive reviews; for example the *Athenaeum* magazine's review of the 1904 exhibition from which Rutherston purchased *Ardor* says, "[t]his year for the first time Mr. John gives promise of becoming a painter; hitherto he has been a brilliant draughtsman who painted."[135] Rutherston acquired another work in the Manchester gift from this NEAC exhibition, Philip Wilson Steer's *Portrait in Black*, 1904 (Fig.11), which the *Athenaeum* describes as "one of the most perfect colour harmonies even he has realised."[136] This review also suggests that the 1904 exhibition marked a high point for the NEAC as a whole saying, "it would be difficult to recall another recent exhibition of exclusively contemporary painting in which there was a display of such varied and distinguished work backed up by so good a general level of achievement."[137] The review also highlights Rothenstein's own status in the NEAC at that time, describing him as a

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[134] "The New English Art Club," *Times*, 8 Nov 1902, 9.
[135] "New English Art Club," *Athenaeum*, No. 4021, 19 Nov 1904, 700.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.

"connecting link between the older and the younger groups […] whose influence as a critic, perhaps even more than as an artist, counts for much in the formation of the younger men's ideas."[138]

This positive review is typical of the press coverage of the early 1900s, indicating that the NEAC, including artists whose work Rutherston was collecting such as John, Steer and Rothenstein, was regarded as representing the best of contemporary English art, perhaps for the first time giving Rutherston a taste of how it felt to own art that was culturally significant. In terms of *Art Value*, Rutherston's collecting had started to progress from art by young artists he wanted to support financially and whose work had some level of newness-value, to art that was beginning to receive critical acclaim and therefore be attributed with relative art-value as it became assimilated into English culture.

Correspondence between Rutherston and his brother William during this period suggests that Rutherston increasingly purchased contemporary work directly from London exhibitions and, although he still valued William's opinion and approval of his purchases, he was gradually becoming less dependent on his advice. For example, in November 1903 Rutherston tells his brother about visiting both a Conder exhibition and the NEAC the previous day. Although Rutherston did not buy anything from the Conder exhibition he "found several most interesting works there", but says, "I lost my head" at the NEAC exhibition, buying works by John, Henry Tonks and Philip Wilson Steer, and asks William "[w]hat do you think of my modest selection there?"[139] And, in December 1911, Rutherston wrote to his brother about a significant acquisition he had made from the NEAC, Ambrose McEvoy's *The Ear-Ring*, exhibited 1911 (Fig.12), a

[138] Ibid., 701.
[139] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 21 Nov 1903, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH.

work that was not part of the Manchester gift as Rutherston gifted it to the Tate in 1917 (see 1.5).[140] Rutherston's letter suggests that William had not already recommended the work to him and that he was also buying in competition with some other significant collectors including Sir Hugh Lane, indicating that by this time Rutherston was already becoming a serious collector in his own right.

The breadth of Rutherston's collecting during the years leading up to the First World War is illustrated by a lengthy letter later the same month in which he is complimentary about brother William's work saying, "I am not surprised to know that so many want the picture of Rachel. […] I am so glad to hear that you are at last meeting with so much success."[141] This is a reference to *Rachel Queen*, 1911 (Fig.13), a portrait of Rothenstein's elder daughter which Rutherston had bought from his brother, and early the following year he went on to purchase a painting of Rothenstein's younger daughter, *Princess Betty*, 1911 (Fig.14). These two paintings, which are typical of Rothenstein's realistic, somewhat conservative style, were placed on prominent display at Rutherston's home as shown in a contemporary photograph held in the RLC Archive (Fig.15).

Rutherston's letter goes on to discuss their brother Albert, referring sarcastically to him as "Lord Albert" and saying:

> What a time that boy has and how little he worries about his work. If it were not for his captivating personality – I don't know what the boy would do for a living. You know, I bought 3 watercolours from him. Well, I am bound to confess that they don't gain on acquaintance. There is nothing beneath the surface.[142]

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[140] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 10 Dec 1911, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH.
[141] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 26 Dec 1911, MS Eng 1148 Box 38: 1297, HLH.
[142] Ibid.

At the time "that boy" Albert was thirty years old, but Rutherston still treated him like his young brother, acquiring his work purely to support him financially and encourage him as an artist even though, unlike William's work, he clearly did not regard it as having any real *Art Value*.

Although most of the artworks acquired by Rutherston during this period were relatively contemporary there were some exceptions, for example the Manchester gift included several works acquired by Rutherston from the London galleries he was now visiting by artists working in England earlier in the nineteenth century, including a William Blake watercolour dated c.1804, two drawings from the 1850s by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and a study by James McNeill Whistler from 1873. These works would have had some historical value when Rutherston acquired them in the early 1900s, and including them in a gift mostly comprising art from 1890 onwards indicates that Rutherston recognised the influence these artists were having on the evolution of modern English art.[143]

During this period Rutherston also began to collect antique Chinese pottery, bronzes and ceramics which as he went on to say in his 1926 speech "developed into an ever-increasing mania."[144] The HLH Archive contains several letters from 1910 and 1911 in which Rutherston talks about this aspect of his collecting. For example, in April 1911 Rutherston tells his brother about visitors to his house being impressed by his "Chinese things", an observation supported by a second photograph of Rutherston's Bradford home from around this time from the RLC Archive (Fig.16) showing Rutherston proudly displaying what appear to be several jade carvings

[143] The place of Blake, Rossetti and Whistler in the history of British art at around the time of Rutherston's gift is illustrated, for example, in Manson's book on the Tate Gallery's collections – see J. B. Manson, *The Tate Gallery* (London: Jack, 1929).

[144] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

or small bronzes on the mantlepiece beside him.[145] In December 1911 he goes on to tell William "I have acquired some very fine early things […]. It will amuse you to hear that I have at last reached the stage where I can look at nothing later than Ming which is as far as I go now", indicating that Rutherston was already becoming discerning and knowledgeable in this aspect of his collecting.[146]

This correspondence does not clearly articulate the motivation for Rutherston's passion for Chinese antiques which could have been entirely down to personal taste, but it seems possible that although the Chinese works shown in the photograph are essentially figurative the modernist aesthetic reflected in the emphasis on form of ceramics such as *Vase*, 960-1127 (Fig.17) would have been attractive to him. At the start of the twentieth century the *Art Value* of such works resided not only in their historical value as antique objects but in their relative art-value resulting from their growing stylistic appeal to contemporary tastes.[147] Rutherston did not dispose of his collection of Chinese antiques before his death, and his widow Essil kept much of the collection before selling it through Bluett & Sons in 1948, resulting in the collection being widely dispersed including several pieces which were acquired by the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A), including *Vase*.[148]

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[145] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 17 Apr 1911, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH. It is not clear when Rutherston started to collect Chinese antiques as the HLH Archive holds no correspondence between Charles and William from the end of 1903 until December 1910.

[146] Charles Rothenstein to William Rothenstein, 26 Dec 1911.

[147] Rutherston loaned his collection of Chinese pottery and porcelain to Leeds Art Gallery in 1922 which is indicative of its popularity at that time, with a review in the Yorkshire Post remarking that the exhibition would appeal to "all who have the flair for what is finest in art" – see H.T., "Leeds Art Gallery Loan Exhibition," *Yorkshire Post*, 30 Sept 1922, 10.

[148] Bluett & Sons, *The Rutherston collection of old Chinese works of art* (London: Bluett & Sons, 1948). The V&A website identifies six pieces of antique Chinese pottery acquired from this sale – see V&A, "Explore the Collections," n.d., accessed 23 Sept 2025, https://collections.vam.ac.uk/search/?page=1&page_size=15&q=c+l+rutherston.

The period 1900 to 1914 was important to the development of Rutherston's collection not just in terms of the artworks themselves but also because of the artistic network Rutherston developed as he got to know some of the leading figures in London's art galleries and museums who, along with his brother William, were to become important influences on Rutherston's future collecting and his ideas for the potential use of the collection. As early as 1906 Rutherston was in correspondence with Campbell Dodgson from the British Museum, a relationship which in 1918 was to result in Rutherston donating a collection of prints to the Museum. But probably the most significant relationship Rutherston established during this period was with Charles Aitken, who Rutherston would later credit as being an important influence on his decision to gift his collection to MAG. Although the earliest correspondence between Aitken and Rutherston held in the RLC and HLH Archives is not until 1916, Rutherston is mentioned in several earlier letters from Aitken to William Rothenstein and it seems likely that Rutherston would have got to know Aitken before the First World War, through either his brother or the CAS. Aitken was the first Director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery when it opened in 1901, a position he held until 1911 when he became first Keeper (from 1911-16) and then Director (from 1917-30) of the Tate Gallery.[149]

Aitken's relationship with William Rothenstein and his wife Alice goes back to the early 1900s when Aitken was a close neighbour of the Rothensteins in Hampstead for a time.[150] A February 1911 letter from Aitken to Alice Rothenstein acknowledges Alice's congratulations on his appointment at the Tate, saying:

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[149] D.S.M., "Obituary - Charles Aitken," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 69, no. 402 (1936): 137.

[150] Rothenstein's son John recalls as a young child being neighbours of Aitken - see John Rothenstein, *Summer's Lease: Autobiography 1901-1938* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965), 1-2.

> Thank you very much for your encouragement at this alarming juncture […]. It may not be perfection to contemplate the Chantrey acquisitions, but if you are responsible for having something on the walls, it has its good side. I was beginning to fear the horror of blank walls after so many shows at Whitechapel.[151]

Whilst Aitken's trepidation about his new role is interesting, of more relevance to this research is his reference to the Chantrey Bequest which at the time was the primary source of funding art for the Tate's collection, with academic English art dominating acquisitions using the Bequest, and this continued to be a challenge for Aitken during his time at the Tate as he sought to modernise its collection, as will be discussed in 1.5.[152]

Aitken's letter to Alice Rothenstein also highlights his early involvement with the CAS, referring to his intention to gift several artworks, including one by Gwen John. The CAS was established in 1910, the *Times* recording both Aitken and Dodgson as early subscribers and reporting its objective as being "to acquire works by artists of merit who have not found favour with official purchasers."[153] The scope of the CAS was to be "limited to artists living or recently deceased; it will be chiefly concerned with British art", and it would "make a practice of lending its acquisitions as a circulating collection or collections to public galleries."[154] D. S. MacColl's introduction to the catalogue of the first CAS exhibition held in Manchester in December 1911 and January 1912 states that a key objective of the CAS was to compensate for the conservatism of the Chantrey Bequest by building a collection of contemporary art which would fill "the void left in the national representation of our later artists by the manner in which the Chantrey

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[151] Charles Aitken, letter to Alice Rothenstein, 9 Feb 1911, MS Eng 1148 Box 1: 11, HLH.

[152] The Chantrey Bequest of 1876 was provided with the specific objective of creating a public national collection of British fine art and since the opening of the Tate in 1897 as the National Gallery of British Art the Tate's collection had grown largely through the Bequest - see Taylor, *Art for the Nation*, 105, 136-138.

[153] "The Contemporary Art Society," *Times*, 20 July 1910, 13.

[154] Ibid.

Bequest has been applied."[155] He goes on to highlight the key role Aitken played in the CAS from the outset, saying that by "working on the lines he [Aitken] made so familiar at Whitechapel, a collection has been brought together from which none of the more recent artists of standing or of promise has been willingly omitted."[156]

The CAS's Annual Report for 1911 identifies Aitken as a member of the CAS committee which also included MacColl, Dodgson and other key advocates of modern art such as Roger Fry and Clive Bell.[157] Rutherston (but not brother William) is listed as a subscribing member and, although no primary source evidence has been found as to how this came about, it probably resulted from his relationship with people such as Aitken and Dodgson.[158] The CAS was therefore significant as Rutherston developed his relationship with key people in the London modern art world in the years leading up to the First World War, and given its objective of circulating examples of modern British art to provincial art galleries it seems likely that the CAS also contributed to Rutherston's emerging ideas about the possible future role for his own collection.

As described in the introduction to Part 1, the period 1900-1914 was important for the development of modern art in England with Roger Fry's two exhibitions of French Post-Impressionist art at the Grafton Galleries in London in 1910 and 1912 being particularly significant. These exhibitions highlighted a growing tension between two distinct artistic philosophies, the continuing belief of the NEAC artists including William Rothenstein that

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[155] D. S. MacColl, "The Origins and Aims of the Contemporary Art Society", 1911, ix, photocopied extract from Exhibition Catalogue for the Loan Exhibition of Works, 8 Dec 1911 - 28 Jan 1912, RLC 1/24 file 23, MAG RLC.

[156] Ibid., xvii.

[157] Ibid., xvii. Contemporary Art Society, *Report 1911*, (London: Contemporary Art Society, 1912), n.p.

[158] Ibid.

painting should represent real life contrasting with the emergence of art which increasingly focussed on form and aesthetic effects, a philosophy supported by Fry and Bell. Rothenstein's own account of these exhibitions and his artistic disagreement with Fry begins by saying, "I imagine the great split between the older and younger painters in England came about through the Post-Impressionist Exhibition of 1910."[159] He recalls how Fry had approached him to exhibit at the Grafton Galleries earlier in 1910, an offer which Rothenstein declined saying, "I still felt the New English Art Club to be the body with which I had most sympathy. […] since I held aloof, the good Roger […] discovered that my work was no longer of any importance."[160]

The Post-Impressionist exhibitions were initially not well received. A review of the 1910 exhibition by the *Observer* art critic P. G. Konody said that the exhibition, headlined by artists such as Cézanne, Van Gogh and Matisse, was "sending the great majority of London art-lovers into fits of laughter."[161] Rutherston visited the exhibition himself and he too was not impressed, saying to his brother, "[a]s for the Grafton – well! […] I am afraid that I shall never be in sympathy with the 'Post Impressionist' school."[162]

A December 1911 review in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of the first CAS exhibition in Manchester which took place between the two Grafton Galleries Post-Impressionist exhibitions provides a further insight into the reception of the work of English artists influenced by Post-Impressionism, saying:

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[159] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 209.

[160] Ibid., 212. Samuel Shaw provides a more nuanced view of the relationship between Rothenstein and Fry and their artistic differences. He suggests that the main reason Rothenstein was not involved in the 1910 exhibition was because at that time he was focused on developing his interest in Indian art. However, Shaw also accepts that Rothenstein found the formalist language of Post-Impressionism promoted by Fry and Bell "increasingly dry and intellectual" - Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 297-298.

[161] P. G. Konody, "Art Notes. Post-Impressionists at the Grafton Galleries," *Observer*, 13 Nov 1910, 9.

[162] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 1 Dec 1910, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH.

> [W]e get an epitome of every possible type of modern work, ranging from a more or less academically painted canvas down to the latest exploits of the revolutionaries. […] This […] applies to the small group of men who are following the fashion set by the Post-Impressionists at the Grafton Galleries just over a year ago. Whether the work of these painters is art at all is, of course, a matter for debate. At any rate, one cannot deny that it is contemporary.[163]

Questioning whether the work of these artists "is art at all" suggests that this work had yet to acquire any *Art Value*, for this critic at least. The article does not specifically identify the "revolutionaries" but Fry's "Prefatory Note" in the exhibition catalogue gives some clues, describing a group of artists whose work reflected the "new direction" in art including Henry Lamb, Sickert, Charles Ginner and Duncan Grant, all artists who went on to be represented in Rutherston's Manchester gift.[164]

Just three years after the first Grafton Galleries exhibition, Konody's review of a Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Doré Gallery is much more positive, referring to a "beautiful landscape" by Cézanne, some "early works of rare beauty and colour" by Van Gogh and a work by Matisse as "a remarkable achievement."[165] However, Konody is less convinced about the response to Post-Impressionism demonstrated by English artists involved in the exhibition, stating that they were still "a long way behind France."[166] Here Konody refers specifically to Vorticist artists including C. R. W. Nevinson and Wyndham Lewis saying, "Mr. Nevinson shows so little originality in the emulation of the French cubists", and whilst he compares Lewis's work favourably with many of the other "so-called cubists" he states that Lewis's work "threatens to

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[163] "Contemporary Art. Fine Exhibition at the Manchester Gallery," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 15 Dec 1911, 3.

[164] Roger Fry, "Prefatory Note. With reference to the work of the Younger Artists", extract from catalogue for the loan exhibition of works organised by the Contemporary Art Society, 8 Dec 1911 - 28 Jan 1912, xix-xxii, RLC 1/24 file 23, MAG RLC.

[165] P. G. Konody, "Art & Artists. Post-Impressionism at the Dore Galleries," *Observer*, 26 Oct 1913, 10.

[166] Ibid.

become mechanical and is clearly incapable for further development."[167] It is important to note that Rutherston did not collect the work of these artists at that time, perhaps due to their abstract style not being to his tastes and the influence of critics, such as Konody, which suggests that this art had not yet acquired relative art-value and become accepted in England, but as the next section will discuss Rutherston went on to acquire their work later in his collecting career.

At the end of 1913 just a few weeks after the Doré Gallery review, the *Times* describes the NEAC as "one of the strongest conservative forces in the artistic life of the country", and one of John's works although "delightful" would be regarded as "commonplace by the most up-to-date artistic opinion […] in the sense of setting down every-day experience in a natural manner."[168] And in March 1914 Professor Reilly from the University of Liverpool (and an important figure in Liverpool's Sandon Studios Society) gave a lecture to students at the Leeds School of Art, in which he says, "[a] few years ago Mr. John was thought a revolutionary; today he is accepted as a conservative."[169] Reilly goes on to encourage the students to adopt the philosophies of Post-Impressionism in their work saying, "art is the creation of significant form […]. If the forms you make have no significance to you who make them - if you have not felt them intensely - what significance will they have to the beholder."[170]

Secondary sources also reflect this narrative of a declining popularity during this period in the representational art of artists such as John, with Holroyd's biography stating that from

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[167] Ibid.

[168] "The New English Art Club. The Fiftieth Exhibition," *Times*, 1 Dec 1913, 71.

[169] "The Artist and his Art. Professor Reilly's Address to Leeds Students," *Yorkshire Post*, 14 March 1914, 10. The Sandon Studios Society was a Liverpool-based art club which supported modern art, for example in 1911 holding the first Post-Impressionist exhibition outside London – for more information see Bluecoat, "Sandon Studios Society," n.d., accessed 24 Oct 2025, https://www.thebluecoat.org.uk/library/sandon-studios-society.

[170] "The Artist and his Art," 10.

being one of the leading artists of the early twentieth century, John's artistic reputation "plummeted" as he failed to respond to the challenge of modernism.[171] And Harrison says that from 1904 "for half a dozen years, he [John] might have looked to some like England's most modern artist […] but after 1910 no one as entirely unaffected by the art of Cézanne as John was and was to remain could fairly have claimed leadership of the avant garde."[172]

These primary and secondary sources illustrate the extent to which by 1914 the cultural context had evolved, which can be interpreted in terms of a change in the *Art Value* (and specifically relative art-value) attributed to the two contrasting artistic philosophies as the popularity of the essentially representational art of artists such as Augustus John waned, and modern art influenced by Post-Impressionism began to become more accepted in England. But despite this evolving cultural context, Rutherston's pattern of collecting did not change significantly before the First World War as he continued to acquire a broad range of art, focussing on collecting work that he liked and which had some level of *Art Value*. At this stage Rutherston had not yet begun to focus on the composition of his collection as an entity and its potential *Use Value*, although his involvement with the CAS would no doubt have given him food for thought about the potential for the wider circulation of modern art in provincial England. And the growing acceptance in England of modern art influenced by developments in France during this period combined with the impact the First World War was to have on art went on to have a significant influence on Rutherston's collecting after 1914 and the evolution of the philosophy which culminated in his Manchester gift.

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[171] Holroyd, *Augustus John*, xxxii.
[172] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 23.

1.3 1915-1926: "Cultivation of the Modern School"

> I had now come to the conclusion that the cultivation of the Modern School of English Art was well worth while and I decided that this must be my definite policy, I think I may say that I have consistently carried it out right up to the present day as you may observe from the works on these walls of such painters as Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Mark Gertler, Eric Kennington, Henry Lamb, Wyndham Lewis, J. B. Manson, John and Paul Nash, C. R.W. Nevinson, Lucien Pissaro [sic], F. J. Porter, William Roberts, and Edward Wadsworth and amongst Sculptors, Frank Dobson, Jacob Epstein, Eric Gill and William Symonds.
>
> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[173]

As described in the introduction to Part 1, during the First World War artists who before the War had different artistic philosophies coalesced around a common desire to represent the horrors of war, including avant-garde artists of the pre-1915 period such as Nevinson and Lewis. William Rothenstein had worked as a war artist, and his memoirs describe an exhibition of war art organised for the Canadian War Records after the end of the War:

> Augustus John showed a superb cartoon, Wyndham Lewis an austere and impressive Calvary, while Walter Bayes, Paul and John Nash, Roberts, Nevinson, Kennington, and Meninsky contributed works of remarkable quality. Each painter was at his best, as though a great subject brought to the surface his sincerest and most personal powers. Aesthetic interest was, for once, perfectly united to a full and dramatic content […]. To my mind the work produced by English painters during the war remains a significant contribution to the European art of our time.[174]

So, for Rothenstein, this shared desire to represent the War was a high point in English modern art, but Rothenstein was soon to be disappointed when, after the War, the pre-1915 avant-garde artists once again moved away from representational art, a trend which Rothenstein greatly regretted, saying, "[t]he heightened emotion produced by the war slowly cooled; the tendency to separate form from content spread to England from France, and a great opportunity for making

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[173] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

[174] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 350.

painting a vital part of religious and social life was missed."[175] But contrary to Rothenstein's perception, in practice many of the avant-garde artists including Lewis did not return to the level of abstraction of their earlier work. This provided the context within which Rutherston's collecting expanded beyond his brother's immediate circle to focus on "the cultivation of the Modern School of English Art" which, as the list of artists identified by Rutherston in his 1926 speech indicates, largely comprised the work of artists influenced by Impressionism and Post-Impressionism as it gradually became assimilated into English culture, acquiring, in *Art Value* terms, relative art-value.

Rutherston's first purchase of a work by one of the pre-1915 avant-garde artists was in October 1916, C.R.W. Nevinson's *Motor Lorries*, 1909-1916 (Fig.18), which Rutherston acquired from a one-man show of Nevinson's work at the Leicester Galleries, in which the representation of men as machines and the unnaturalistic forms using strong lines and angles still reference Nevinson's earlier Cubist-influenced work. A review of this exhibition in the *Times* is positive about Nevinson's effective application of Cubism to the representation of the war, saying that he represented men as machines "with plausibility, […] his cubism is justified by what he has to say."[176] Rutherston went on to purchase three Nevinson prints from the Fine Art Society in 1917 and another painting and six prints from the Leicester Galleries in 1918, all images of the war. In a letter to his brother, written in March 1918 when he was in France serving as a war artist, Rothenstein says, "I am interested to hear you have purchased a Nevinson. I gather from what you write the show is very good."[177] This letter is typical of references to Rutherston's collecting in the correspondence between the two brothers during this

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[175] Ibid.
[176] "Personality Or Process. Mr. Nevinson's Pictures of Men as War Machines," *Times*, 29 Sept 1916, 9.
[177] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 18 Mar 1918, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

later period, indicating that Rutherston no longer sought his brother's advice or approval of his purchases. Indeed, some of the correspondence highlights the extent to which Rutherston was moving away from art which was to his brother's tastes; for example, in a December 1918 letter Rothenstein says, "I hear you have bought some of Mrs. Adeney's pictures (Miss Lessore). Do tell me about her show. She & Adeney have a cottage near us, but being very advanced they don't show me their work or take any interest in mine."[178] Rutherston's gift included three works by Thérèse Lessore including *Theatre Interior (The New Middlesex)*, c.1918 (Fig.19), which exemplifies the "advanced" style, strongly influenced by Post-Impressionism which Rothenstein disparagingly refers to in his letter.[179]

Rutherston's gift included twenty-four works by Wyndham Lewis all acquired between 1919 and 1922. Lewis was a student at the Slade School of Art from 1899-1901 at the same time as Rutherston's youngest brother Albert and, in his memoirs, William Rothenstein recalls getting to know him at that time.[180] However, it appears that the two men then had little direct contact until 1922 when Rothenstein returned to live in London and became a close neighbour of Lewis and, along with Rutherston, a regular visitor to Lewis's studio.[181] Lewis's pre-1915 Vorticist work would not have been to Rothenstein's tastes and, although Rothenstein appreciated his war art, Lewis perhaps exemplified what Rothenstein regretfully saw as the return to a more abstract style after the War. In his memoirs Rothenstein compliments the design aspect of Lewis's

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[178] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 18 Dec 1918, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.
[179] Lessore was at that time married to another artist, Bernard Adeney, who has one work in the Manchester gift acquired by Rutherston in 1923.
[180] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 26-27.
[181] Ibid., 378.

drawings of this period but continues to associate Lewis's work with "cubism", a style which he considered more appropriate to design than to the fine art of painting.[182]

All but one of Lewis's works in the Manchester gift were created between 1918 and 1922, the exception being the Cubist-influenced *Girl Asleep*, 1911 (Fig.20) acquired by Rutherston in 1921. The first two works in the gift acquired by Rutherston, *Drag Ropes*, 1918 (Fig.21) and *Battery Pulling In (II)*, 1918, are examples of Lewis's war art purchased by Rutherston from Lewis's *Guns* exhibition at the Goupil Gallery in 1919 in which the metallic machine-like forms of the human figures still reference his earlier Vorticist work.

The remaining twenty-two works by Lewis in Rutherston's gift comprise twenty-one drawings and a single oil painting, *Portrait of the Artist as the Painter Raphael*, 1921 (Fig.22), which exemplifies the more realistic style of Lewis's work after the First World War although still retaining the strong geometric lines and blocks of bold colour representative of Lewis's pre-war work. Rutherston acquired this painting and seven drawings in the gift from Lewis's *Tyros and Portraits* exhibition at the Leicester Galleries in 1921, and purchased a further ten works in the gift directly from Lewis at his studio after becoming a regular visitor there, which Lewis recalls positively in his autobiography:

> The late Charles Rutherston, the art collector, was always a welcome visitor at my studio […]. He thought nothing of buying two or three dozen designs at a time, the best of which are now in the Manchester Museum and are sent out to tour the country for the instruction of art-masters.[183]

The RLC Archive contains three letters from Lewis to Rutherston all written in the summer of 1922, in the last of which Lewis says:

> Should you be going to Paris in 1, 2 or 3 weeks time, let me know, & I might run up to Paris for a couple of days & look round with you. I have not much money, & should not

[182] Ibid., 379.

[183] Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering*, 219.

> be there long […]. I have to go to Paris some time or other, & it would be nice to make it coincide with your visit if possible.[184]

Rutherston seems to have taken up this suggestion as Lewis recalls in his autobiography:

> Another 'Post-war' excursion of mine was a notable visit to Paris in the company of Charles Rutherston and Frank Dobson, the sculptor. My days were spent with Rutherston and Dobson, visiting collections of Chinese art, my nights with James Joyce; an exquisitely balanced arrangement.[185]

So, during the period when Rutherston was collecting Lewis's work the two men seem to have established a friendship, which as Lewis's quote intimates would have been a relationship between two men with different personalities but a shared interest in art.

After the First World War, Lewis began to attract a positive critical response with the *Observer* review of the 1919 *Guns* exhibition describing his work as "among the most significant interpretations of war experience. […] Lieut. Wyndham Lewis is out for essential truth. […] He gives grim experience of tragic facts in appropriate terms."[186] The *Manchester Guardian* was also positive, highlighting the successful evolution of both Lewis's and Nevinson's work:

> Things move so quickly nowadays that Mr. Wyndham Lewis has become a sort of old master […]. He is, at any rate, an artist who, like Mr. Nevinson, has found the way of the rebel paved with gold and enthusiastic collectors. […] he has given us with real invention and power a vision of war that is authentic and worth having.[187]

This article illustrates how, in *Art Value* terms, the work of Lewis and Nevinson had progressed from the newness value of their pre-1915 avant-garde art which was yet to be fully accepted in England to the relative art-value of the war art produced by established modern artists. And in 1921 Konody's review of Lewis's *Tyros and Portraits* exhibition describes it as a "remarkable exhibition which cannot fail to establish Mr. Lewis as one of the dominant figures in

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[184] Wyndham Lewis, letter to Charles Rutherston, 19 July 1922, RLC 1/24 file 22, MAG RLC.
[185] Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering*, 235.
[186] "Art & Artists. "Guns" by Lieut. Wyndham Lewis," *Observer*, 2 Feb 1919, 7.
[187] "Our London Correspondence. A Vision of War," *Manchester Guardian*, 21 Feb 1919, 6.

contemporary British art."[188] Konody was particularly impressed by Lewis's drawings, for example describing *A Woman Seated in a Windsor Chair*, 1920 (Fig.23), one of the drawings bought by Rutherston, as "a little masterpiece of stylish drawing in rich, clean, fluent, springy crayon line."[189]

However, Konody describes Lewis's portrait painting as "more controversial", contrasting the "perfectly normal" essentially representational works such as *Portrait of the Artist as the Painter Raphael* with the "quasi-geometric treatment" and "touch of caricature" of the Tyros paintings which gave the exhibition its name but which significantly Rutherston did not buy; see for example *Mr Wyndham Lewis as 'Tyro'*, c.1920-1921, (Fig.24) now in the collection of the Ferens Art Gallery in Hull.[190] A review of the exhibition in the *Manchester Guardian* was also generally positive but, in contrast to Konody, this review compliments his paintings, including the Tyros, for "the high energy that pulsates through it all", whereas the drawings "falter more, and despite a general stylishness they lack the expressiveness of his paintings."[191] However, other reviews of the exhibition were more negative than these two, for example the *Times* describes Lewis's work as "images of an alien art" and, whilst "some of the drawings are beautiful", Lewis's Tyros paintings "are expletives rather than expressions."[192] These mixed reviews suggest that Lewis's work still divided opinion and, as such, its *Art Value*, and specifically its relative art-value as work that was to contemporary tastes, was still being debated.

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[188] P. G. Konody, "Art and Artists. Mr. Wyndham Lewis's "Tyros And Portraits"," *Observer*, 10 April 1921, 8.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid.
[191] "Our London Correspondence. The Turn of the Bad," *Manchester Guardian*, 13 April 1921, 6.
[192] "Mr. Wyndham Lewis. Haunting Images of an Alien Art," *Times*, 14 April 1921, 8.

Significantly, Lewis's art did not go on to enjoy commercial success in the inter-war period, with Rutherston's patronage being something of an exception as Lewis himself acknowledged. Writing in 1937 to Oliver Brown, a partner at the Leicester Galleries, Lewis decries what he saw as a lack of public recognition for his work:

> In the many institutions for the encouragement of art in this country – such as the Contemporary Art Society, the numerous public galleries, in London and the Provinces – I am unrepresented. The only exception to this rule is the group of drawings left to the Manchester Museum by the late Charles Rutherston.[193]

Even though Lewis's pre-1915 work had not been critically acclaimed at the time, secondary literature on twentieth-century English modern art have tended to focus on Lewis's emergence as an important artist during the period 1909-1915, culminating in the establishment of the Vorticist movement and its journal, *Blast.*[194] The inter-war period is generally considered as a decline in Lewis's career, and although Harrison describes some of his drawings of the period immediately following the First World War (when Rutherston was acquiring them) as "among the best English drawings of this century" he goes on to say, "[t]he drift of English culture had been inexorably away from him since 1914. […] So far as the development of art was concerned Lewis was to be a virtual outcast from the early 1920s to the 1940s."[195] David Peters Corbett seems to ignore the positive reviews of the *Tyros and Portraits* exhibition, focusing on the more negative reception of Lewis's work after the First World War and how this led a disillusioned Lewis to abandon painting in the early 1920s and concentrate on writing for the next decade.[196]

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[193] Wyndham Lewis, "To Oliver Brown, Feb. 11. 1937," in *The Letters of Wyndham Lewis*, ed. W. K. Rose (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions, 1963), 243.

[194] See for example Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 75-114; Tickner, *Modern Life & Modern Subjects*, 79-115.

[195] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 160-162.

[196] Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art*, 130-132.

It therefore seems that Rutherston was buying Lewis's work during a brief period just after the First World War when Lewis was beginning to attract positive reviews from respected critics such as Konody, which combined with a critical reappraisal of Lewis's earlier work perhaps led Rutherston to believe that Lewis was an important modern artist whose work was evolving in *Art Value* terms from newness-value to relative art-value and therefore needed to be part of his collection. However, this moment did not see Lewis go on to be recognised as an important modern artist during the remainder of the inter-war period, and his work did not therefore at that time acquire the relative art-value Rutherston had envisaged. But Lewis and his whole oeuvre, not just his pre-1915 work, have subsequently become an integral part of the story of English modernism and, as such, in *Art Value* terms Lewis's work has gone on to acquire historical value. Rutherston was therefore ultimately proved right to believe in the *Art Value* of Lewis's work, and he could therefore be regarded as the "prescient collector" of Jane Farrington's 1980 article.[197]

In addition to Nevinson and Lewis, after the First World War Rutherston went on to acquire works included in the Manchester gift by other artists associated with the pre-1915 avant-garde including William Roberts, Jacob Epstein, and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, and six works by Edward Wadsworth, an artist who, before the War, had been "Lewis's most loyal disciple at the time of the publication of *Blast*" in 1914.[198] The only significant reference to Wadsworth in Rothenstein's memoirs relates to the two men becoming near neighbours in London in 1922, with Rothenstein remarking, "Wadsworth had lately made a series of remarkable drawings of Staffordshire slag-heaps."[199] This would seem to reference Wadsworth's

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[197] Jane Farrington, "Wyndham Lewis and a Prescient Collector," *Apollo* 111, no. 215 (1980): 46-49.
[198] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 108.
[199] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 378.

drawings from his 1920 *The Black Country* exhibition at the Leicester Galleries at which Rutherston acquired five works including *Ladle Slag*, 1919 (Fig.25), the stark realism of which clearly appealed to Rothenstein. However, the more overtly Cubist style of *Fortune's Well, Portland*, 1921 (Fig.26), acquired by Rutherston in 1923 also from the Leicester Galleries, perhaps exemplifies the return to an emphasis on form which Rothenstein regretted.

Paul Nash is also an important artist to consider in relation to this phase of Rutherston's collecting, as Rutherston's gift included fourteen works by Nash acquired between 1913 and 1925 which essentially track Nash's development as an artist during this transitional moment for modern art in England. Unlike Nevinson, Lewis and Wadsworth, Rutherston had already begun to acquire Nash's work before the First World War on his brother William's recommendation. Rothenstein's memoirs recall first getting to know Nash in 1910 and advising him to go to the Slade School (which Nash did), and, in his own autobiography, Nash describes how Rothenstein went on to buy a painting at Nash's first one man exhibition at the Carfax Gallery in November 1912.[200] In November 1913 Rothenstein wrote to the collector Michael Sadler suggesting that he should go to an exhibition of the work of Nash and his brother John at the Dorien Leigh gallery later that month.[201] It seems entirely possible that Rothenstein made a similar suggestion to his brother as this was where Rutherston made his first purchase of Nash's work in the Manchester gift, *A Landscape at Wood Lane*, 1913 (Fig.27). Nash recalls Rutherston's purchase in a letter to his friend the poet Gordon Bottomley saying, "[o]n Saturday morning Charles Rothenstein the collector who had been in before & obviously meant to buy, came in & took my Landscape at

[200] Ibid., 184; Nash and Nash, *Outline*, 107-108.
[201] James King, *Interior Landscapes: A Life of Paul Nash* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1987), 63-64.

Wood Lane – don't think you've seen it. A good one."[202] This somewhat impressionistic landscape is characteristic of Nash's early work, exemplifying what Konody referred to, in a 1916 review, as "the usual naïve charm" of Nash's landscapes.[203] This was probably meant as a criticism at the time, but the romanticism of Nash's early work perhaps explains why William recommended him to his brother.

Rutherston and Nash seem to have quickly established a good relationship as, in 1914, Nash wrote to Bottomley to tell him about a trip to Yorkshire with his wife where they visited both Sadler and Rutherston to see their art collections, with Rutherston's collection making the better impression on Nash:

> [W]e lunched with Sadler & saw his very excellent collection. […] From there to dear Charles Rothenstein at whose house we stayed that night & half the next day. He was delightful and entertained us splendidly. His is far the more interesting show really. Stunning early Johns, all sorts of Conders […]. His collection of ancient bronzes & Chinese pots is the finest I ever saw – simply gorgeous they are. Among other pictures there were two knock-out early drawings by Rossetti, […] Whistler, M. Bone, Steer, McEvoy & many others & O such a Hokusai! Everything is first rate. I felt v proud to see my drawing hung up there.[204]

Nash's letter therefore provides a useful commentary on the reception of Rutherston's embryonic art collection, illustrating the contemporary appeal in 1914 of much of the art Rutherston had collected up to that time including his Chinese antiques and Hokusai drawings.

The RLC Archive contains three letters from Nash to Rutherston, the earliest being in September 1916 shortly before Nash went to France to fight in the First World War:

> I was extra pleased to know my pictures went to you I am glad you like these newer drawings and want them sufficiently to buy them for that exquisite collection of yours. […] It is very kind of you to offer to take The Elms to be photographed […]. I am

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[202] Bottomley and Nash, *Poet and Painter*, 66.

[203] P. G. Konody, "Art & Artists. The Goupil Gallery," *Observer*, 26 Nov 1916, 7.

[204] Bottomley and Nash, *Poet and Painter*, 73.

> collecting all the pictures I like to remember to have photographed & made into a book for my wife before I get over the other side.[205]

The reference to "my pictures" could allude to both the works by Nash in the gift acquired by Rutherston in 1916 from the NEAC, *The Elms*, 1914, referred to in Nash's letter, and *Edge of the Wood*, c.1914, both works which continue to be representative of Nash's early work. By referring to Rutherston's "exquisite collection" Nash is both describing a cohesive entity rather than a disparate group of artworks and attributing it with *Art Value*, feedback which would certainly have been of great encouragement to Rutherston.

Nash's depictions of the First World War marked a change both in his style and in the critical reception of his work. For example, a *Times* review of Nash's war art exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in 1918 says, "he has found a way of his own of expressing [the War's] effect on him. […] he has been struck by the strange, unaccountable beauty of the meaningless shapes of things so tortured and battered."[206] These qualities are evident in the strong, clearly defined lines and the realistic, stark representation of a woodland partially destroyed by war of *Chaos Decoratif*, 1917 (Fig.28), one of two examples of Nash's war art in the gift, acquired by Rutherston in 1917 from an exhibition at the Goupil Gallery.

Rutherston's next acquisition of Nash's work in the gift was *Red Night*, 1919 (Fig.29) purchased in 1919 from an exhibition at the artist's studio. A letter from Nash refers to Rutherston buying two drawings at that time saying, "I am delighted you possess two of my new mood as Will calls it."[207] Nash did not elaborate on Rothenstein's opinion of his "new mood" but

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[205] Paul Nash letter to Charles Rutherston, 16 Sept 1916, RLC 1/24 file 8, MAG RLC.

[206] "Art At The Front. War Pictures by Mr. Orpen and Mr. Nash," *Times*, 25 May 1918, 9.

[207] Paul Nash letter to Charles Rutherston, Nov/Dec 1919, RLC 1/24 file 8, MAG RLC. The second work referred to by Nash was not included in the Manchester gift and is identified as *Backwater* in King, *Interior Landscapes*, 96.

correspondence between Nash and Bottomley suggests that Rothenstein was not impressed with the direction Nash's work was taking, perhaps illustrated by the somewhat post-impressionistic flatness, emphasis on form and unrealistic colours of *Red Night*. In a letter to Bottomley, Nash describes Rothenstein's reaction to his 1919 exhibition saying, "[m]y new work is rather away from his highest ideals […]. It is sad when old enthusiasts wag their beards & say dear, dear, the lad is turning out rather sadly."[208] In his reply, Bottomley actually supports Rothenstein's position and encourages Nash to stay true to the traditions of English art saying, "I am sad and sorry when I see you doing even the most surface service to the artistic internationalism that was springing up before the war", alluding to the influence of Post-Impressionism on Nash's work.[209]

Despite these concerns Nash's work continued to evolve, and this is reflected in the seven works in the gift acquired by Rutherston after 1919. For example, *The Shore, Dymchurch, Kent*, 1922 (Fig.30) represents a seaside landscape although the strong lines, geometric forms and limited use of colour give this work a minimalist abstract aesthetic, and *Sandling Park, Kent*, 1924 (Fig.31) reflects a return to a more representational art, although the unrealistic composition, geometric forms, pastel colours and dark shading give the work a surreal quality, a style which Nash would go on to develop later in his career.

There is no correspondence between Nash and Rutherston in the RLC Archive after 1919 although a letter from Nash to Essil Rutherston written just a few days after her husband's death at the end of 1927 acknowledges Rutherston's long-standing patronage:

> He was such a very staunch friend to me, he was one of the very first buyers of my work […] and he has never ceased from before the war to show he wanted to possess my work […] - other collectors have fallen off and I have known I had failed somehow - bored

[208] Bottomley and Nash, *Poet and Painter*, 113.
[209] Ibid., 116.

> them or offended them by some change, experiment or development they did not understand or care for – Charles never so.[210]

Clearly Nash was in part writing positively about Rutherston given the circumstances, but there is no reason to suggest that Nash was not being genuine in the sentiments expressed. Certainly, Rutherston continued to acquire Nash's work after the First World War despite his brother's concerns about the direction Nash's work was taking, and Nash might have considered Rothenstein to be one of the people who "did not understand or care for" some of his later work.

Over this period Nash gradually became established in England as an important modern artist; for example in his review of the 1922 London Group exhibition from which Rutherston acquired *The Shore, Dymchurch*, Konody traced the lineage of Nash's "captivating landscapes" back to Cézanne whose work Konody had been so critical of as part of the 1910 Post-Impressionist exhibition.[211] The evolution in Nash's style and the increasingly positive critical response to his work exemplifies the transition in the *Art Value* attributed to English modern art during this period. Whilst before the War Nash was a young artist who Rutherston knew personally and was keen to support, in the second half of Rutherston's collecting career Nash had become an important artist Rutherston wanted to be fully represented in his modern art collection.

Returning to Sickert, Rutherston's first acquisition of his work in the Manchester gift was not until 1918, a drawing *Girl Musing*, c.1914 (Fig.32) and the gift went on to include eight works by Sickert of which five were oil paintings. Rutherston's last acquisition of Sickert's work was in 1925, *The Blue Hat*, 1911-15 (Fig.33), which perhaps exemplifies the loose, impressionistic style which had "puzzled" Rothenstein. Although Sickert had been respected in

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[210] Paul Nash letter to Essil Rutherston, 8 Jan 1928, RLC 1/24 file 8, MAG RLC.
[211] P. G. Konody, "Art and Artists. The London Group," *Observer*, 14 May 1922, 10.

the art world from the 1890s, he gained popularity as part of the wider assimilation of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism in England from 1910 onwards. For example, a *Manchester Guardian* review of a Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in April 1914 says:

> The only two artists of older reputation will be Mr. Walter Sickert and Mr. Pissarro because, although at one time classed with the New English Art Club group, it is now plain that they were a source of new phases that are now prominent, and Mr. Sickert's development of himself is one of the most exciting things in contemporary art.[212]

After the First World War Sickert's reputation continued to grow, for example in his review of Sickert's Eldar Gallery exhibition in 1919 (from which Rutherston acquired *Façade of St Mark's, Venice*, c.1896) Konody describes Sickert as "an active force in modern British art – a leader, and a master […]. He stands outside all cliques and movements."[213] A 1919 letter from Rutherston to his brother William gives an important insight into Rutherston's acquisition of Sickert's work. Perhaps alluding to the fact that Sickert was not taking advantage of his popularity by inflating his prices, Rutherston says, "Sickert too is having a boom but he is not benefitting by it. I consider his conduct admirable & beyond praise for he could easily profit by it and is not doing so. Although I don't admire his work very much he is behaving as a true and sincere artist."[214] This perhaps suggests that Rutherston had not bought Sickert's work earlier because his altruism at that time only extended to acquiring art that he liked, the exception to this perhaps being his brother Albert's work. But by 1919 Sickert was recognised as an important modern artist whose work was now attributed with relative art-value and therefore someone Rutherston wanted to be

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[212] "Post-Impressionists for Whitechapel," *Manchester Guardian*, 9 April 1914, 6.
[213] P. G. Konody, "Art & Artists. Mr. W. Sickert's Pictures at the Eldar Gallery," *Observer*, 9 Feb 1919, 7.
[214] Charles Rutherston, letter to William Rothenstein, 1919 (undated), MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH.

represented in his collection despite any personal reservations he might have had about the artist's work.

It is significant that the other artist singled out for praise in Konody's 1914 review of the Whitechapel Gallery's Post-Impressionist exhibition, Lucien Pissarro, was also an artist whose work Rutherston acquired from 1914 onwards, his gift including twelve works by Pissarro of which seven were oil paintings. William Rothenstein recalls meeting Pissarro at his (Rothenstein's) first exhibition in Paris in April 1892 after which the two men became friends, although Pissarro is mentioned infrequently in Rothenstein's memoirs after this initial meeting.[215] However, Pissarro was part of the same artistic circle as Rothenstein and was exhibiting at the NEAC by 1906 which perhaps makes it surprising that Rutherston did not acquire any of Pissarro's work before 1914.[216] *The Hills from Cadborough, Sunset,* 1913 (Fig.34) purchased from the Carfax Gallery in 1914 (and also the earliest work by Pissarro in the gift) exemplifies Pissarro's somewhat impressionistic use of thick brushstrokes and bold blocks of colour. It is therefore conceivable that, like Sickert, Pissarro's work was not initially to Rutherston's (or his brother's) taste, and he only began to acquire it once Pissarro was receiving critical acclaim and becoming an important modern artist whose work, in *Art Value* terms, was beginning to acquire relative art-value and fitted the profile of Rutherston's evolving collection.

Although Rutherston's collecting during this period was increasingly focused on "the Modern School of English Art", he also continued to collect art by artists he knew personally through his brother's artistic network. In particular, the Manchester gift included seven works each by Birmingham artists and friends Joseph Southall and Alfred Gaskin who were part of the

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[215] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1872-1900*, 101.

[216] For an overview of Pissarro's involvement with the NEAC and his subsequent membership of Sickert's Campden Town Group from 1911 see Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 28-38.

informal Birmingham Group of artists and craftsmen at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. This Group was associated with the Arts and Crafts movement in Birmingham, with the Birmingham School of Art playing a central role as many of the Group (including both Southall and Gaskin) studied there and some (including Gaskin) went on to teach there.[217] Southall was a key figure in the Group and, although he never taught at the School of Art, his Birmingham studio became "an informal school of tempera painting for Birmingham artists."[218] According to Alan Crawford, "the Arts and Crafts, and particularly the Birmingham Group, was tied up with art teaching in Birmingham in all sorts of ways", with Southall and Gaskin playing central roles.[219]

It is not clear when Rutherston first got to know Southall and Gaskin although brother William would almost certainly have known them by 1908 when he was invited to give an address at the Birmingham School of Art.[220] In his 1926 speech Rutherston mentions Southall as one of the artists he met through the NEAC before the First World War and contemporary press coverage confirms that Southall (but not Gaskin) exhibited with the NEAC from around 1911. But it seems likely that Rothenstein's (and hence Rutherston's) friendship with Southall and Gaskin really developed when the two artists became regular visitors to Rothenstein's Gloucestershire home from around 1916 onwards.[221] Rutherston's acquisitions of Southall's and Gaskin's work seem to have been during this later period with, for example, Southall's *A Bucket of Salt Water*, 1912 (Fig.35), previously exhibited with the NEAC in 1912 when it was described

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[217] Alan Crawford, "The Birmingham Setting," in *By Hammer and Hand. The Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham*, ed. Alan Crawford (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1984), 28.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid., 30.
[220] See for example "School of Art. Mr. Rothenstein's Praise For Birmingham," *Birmingham Gazette and Express*, 14 Feb 1908. Southall (but not Gaskin) is listed as one of the people attending.
[221] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 323-324.

as depicting a "Pre-Raphaelite workman quickened by the space of wildness in the white figures behind", and Gaskin's *A Barley Field*, 1918 (Fig.36), both being acquired by Rutherston from a Birmingham Group exhibition in 1919.[222] In January 1918 Rutherston had commissioned a portrait of his daughter Jeannette from Gaskin, a clear indication of the high regard in which he held the artist and his work although understandably as a family portrait this work was not included in the Manchester gift.[223]

Stylistically the realistic and somewhat decorative work of Southall and Gaskin rooted in the Arts and Crafts movement and the art of the Pre-Raphaelites was different to most of the work Rutherston collected during this period, and had more in common with the art he was collecting before 1915 including the work of his brother William and the NEAC. Given the earlier analysis it seems possible that, like William, he had a personal preference for art from this earlier English tradition but was beginning to recognise that, in terms of *Art Value*, such work was gradually being superseded in contemporary culture by modern art influenced by developments in France rather than England. Nevertheless, the inclusion in the gift of works by Southall and Gaskin suggests that Rutherston still believed they had some *Art Value*, and hence educational *Use Value*, as part of a collection representing a broad conception of modern art.

The evolution of Rutherston's collecting from around 1915 onwards was reflected not only in the art he acquired but also in how he acquired it, and in particular the London galleries he used to supplement his purchases directly from the artists. Before the First World War, NEAC exhibitions and the Carfax Gallery had been important sources for Rutherston's collecting, both

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[222] J. B., "The New English Art Club," *Manchester Guardian*, 23 Nov 1912, 10.

[223] Rutherston's original index card for *Portrait of Jeannette Bertha Rutherston* is annotated "Given to Manchester" possibly in Jeannette's handwriting but the work is now lost - Charles Rutherston, index card for "P110. Gaskin, Arthur J.", 1918, file for Rutherston, MAG DB.

of which were closely associated with his brother William and his immediate circle. But as his collecting increasingly began to focus on "the Modern School", inevitably he began to acquire art from galleries which promoted modern art including the Goupil Gallery, the Mansard Gallery, and particularly the Leicester Galleries. The Leicester perhaps led the way in promoting modern French and English art in the inter-war period and was by far the largest single source of works in Rutherston's Manchester gift from 1915 onwards, including works by Nash, Lewis, Nevinson, Wadsworth, Epstein, Sickert, Pissarro and others. In some respects, the evolution of the Leicester mirrors that of Rutherston's collecting as its market position changed from relative conservatism before the First World War to becoming an advocate of modern art after the War.

Before the War the Leicester focussed on retrospective exhibitions of Whistler and the Pre-Raphaelites and contemporary shows by NEAC members including Charles Conder and William Rothenstein, although Rutherston bought little work from the Leicester during this period.[224] The change in the Leicester's market position perhaps began with its exhibitions of war art by Nevinson, Nash and Eric Kennington in 1916 and 1918, and Rutherston's first significant acquisitions from the Leicester were works by Nevinson and Kennington from these exhibitions.[225] Oliver Brown from the Leicester recalls, in his memoirs, how they decided to take advantage of the significant change in the public for, and attitude towards, modern art in England following the First World War:

> The insular taste of pre-war years seemed to be on the wane. The visitors at the end of the war were very different in character from those we used to know in 1914. They were much younger and had a more adventurous outlook […]. This new public for art was intensely interested in our French allies and in their work as artists.[226]

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[224] Oliver Brown, *Exhibition: The Memoirs of Oliver Brown* (London: Evelyn, Adams & Mackay, 1968), 12-33.
[225] Ibid., 49-52.
[226] Ibid., 62.

This strategy resulted in an impressive programme of exhibitions of some of the established names of European modern art, combined with exhibitions of the work of modern English artists which were to become the source of many of Rutherston's later acquisitions.[227]

The Leicester Galleries' strategy can be seen both as a response to and a driver for the changing tastes in modern art in England during the period immediately following the First World War as art influenced by Impressionism and Post-Impressionism became more accepted, with a corresponding shift in *Art Value* from newness-value to relative art-value as this art gradually became assimilated into the English national culture. It was precisely this change that was being followed, and to some extent shaped, by Rutherston as he rapidly grew his collection of modern art, increasingly focussing on the composition of the whole collection. In his 1926 speech Rutherston rationalised his collecting in these terms through the language he used, giving the sense that before 1915 acquiring art was an almost accidental consequence of the social networks he had become part of, before he made it his "definite policy" to focus on collecting modern English art, a change of language inferring a new sense of purpose.[228]

[227] Ibid., 65-66, 72-64, 83-67 and 91-63.
[228] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

1.4 Rutherston and Bradford

> For several years past I have been casting about in my mind how to dispose of my collection. […] I experimented […] in my native City and commenced some years ago to lend original drawings as well as reproductions of ancient and modern paintings and sculpture to the Bradford School of Arts and Crafts.
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> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[229]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Bradford had an active art market focused on a small group of middle-class industrialists who became art collectors.[230] However, although Rutherston was collecting art from around 1890, there is little evidence that he was actively involved in the art world of his home city at that time. The history of Rutherston's relationship with Bradford's art world and the key individuals who shaped it perhaps begins with the opening of Cartwright Hall in 1904 as part of the Bradford Exhibition celebrating Bradford's industrial and cultural heritage.[231] Rutherston's home at the time was close to Lister Park, the site of the exhibition, and therefore only a short walk from Cartwright Hall where the art exhibition (one element of the overall exhibition) was held and for which Rutherston was on the organising committee.[232] Butler Wood, Bradford's Chief Librarian since 1885, had day to day operational responsibility for organising the art exhibition and in this post which he held until his retirement in 1925 he subsequently took on responsibility for Cartwright Hall and is therefore an important figure in the Rutherston story.[233]

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[229] Ibid.

[230] Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 44.

[231] See for example "Prince and Princess of Wales Open Bradford Industrial Exhibition," *Leeds and Yorkshire Mercury*, 5 May 1904, 8.

[232] "Cartwright Memorial Hall. Proposed Art and Textile Exhibition. The Election of Committees," *Bradford Daily Telegraph*, 28 Nov 1902, 3.

[233] "Mr. Butler Wood, Bradford. Former Chief Librarian and Art Gallery Director. 50 Years' Service," *Yorkshire Post*, 21 Dec 1934, 5.

According to Butler Wood, the art exhibition was to comprise "oil paintings, water-colours, black and white drawings, sculpture, and other forms of art", including "a historical section covering British art in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."[234] William Rothenstein recalls in his memoirs how he was invited to serve on a London committee of artists which was set up to organise the art exhibition, saying:

> We got together what was probably the best exhibition of contemporary art that had ever been held in Yorkshire, not without opposition from Bradford however. They thought we were being too revolutionary. […] The exhibition, however, drew crowds of people, and was a great financial success.[235]

I have not found evidence of how this London committee came about or the scope of its responsibilities and, given Bradford's conservatism (reflected in the opposition Rothenstein refers to), it is perhaps surprising that a London group was given this important role. By this time Rutherston was already a regular visitor to London art galleries and was beginning to collect work by modern artists and it is conceivable that the more progressive members of the Bradford organising committee such as Rutherston were behind this initiative.

In a December 1903 letter Rothenstein tells his brother about being asked by Butler Wood to produce a poster for the exhibition, which he refused to do for the price he was offered, and expresses his frustrations saying, "it is amusing to me to get to know something of the habits of these local big wigs. No amount of money is spared where giving lunches & business is concerned […]. It is only because I think that something will be done for living art […] that I am staying on the London committee."[236] This gives an indication of Rothenstein's relationship with

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[234] "Cartwright Memorial Hall," 3.

[235] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 57.

[236] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 20 Dec 1903, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

Butler Wood at that time, and more generally his opinion of local council officials and their attitude to art.

The 1904 art exhibition attracted mixed reviews in the press with an article in the *Times* being particularly critical, saying that the exhibition was "to attempt the impossible" with the selection of works purporting to represent the history of British art not fully reflecting the "absolute catholicity and the unbiased truth of the careful historian."[237] The article goes on to say, "[o]f present-day schools, that known as the New English Art Club is most in evidence. […] the prominence given to this particular style, to the exclusion of others, might be open to very serious criticism."[238] The dominance of the NEAC in the contemporary section is perhaps not surprising given the composition of the London organising committee, although the article does not specify which other styles it would like to have seen represented. This article perhaps captures a moment in time when contemporary art epitomised by the NEAC was only just starting to acquire *Art Value*, even in the London press.

However, a July 1905 article in the *Athenaeum* (probably written by Fry) is complimentary about the previous year's exhibition, describing it as "what may be considered the best retrospective of modern British art that has ever been held."[239] The article praises the London committee for organising an exhibition "arranged on lines the very opposite of those followed by the ordinary provincial showman, […] the standard of admission one of artistic excellence rather than one of popularity or academic prestige", an observation which provides a contemporary view of the perceived *Art Value* of the works included in the exhibition.[240] The

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[237] "Art At The Bradford Exhibition," *Times*, 3 Sept 1904, 9.
[238] Ibid.
[239] "Municipal Art Patronage at Bradford," *Athenaeum*, No. 4053, 01 Jul 1905, 24.
[240] Ibid.

article goes on to suggest that this exhibition, rather than works acquired through the Chantrey Bequest which at that time provided the main source of funding art for the Tate Gallery, represented the best of modern English art, and makes the case for the *Art Value* of modern art compared to the academic art still being acquired through the Chantrey Bequest.

The article goes on to criticise Bradford's Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee for its subsequent acquisitions, using the profits made from the exhibition "not in the purchase of any of the masterpieces […] which hung in their galleries last year […] nor in the work of those modern artists […] to whom they owed their success, but […] in just that trivial and popular kind of painting which claims and receives official and State recognition in this country, and against which the Bradford exhibition was a triumphant protest."[241] Butler Wood responded to this criticism by correcting the assumption that the exhibition profits had already been made available for new acquisitions and confirmed the intention of "securing the best examples possible of the great English painters for the Cartwright Memorial Hall."[242]

However, contrary to Butler Wood's rebuttal of the criticism in the *Athenaeum*, in his memoirs Rothenstein recalls how he "tried to persuade the Bradford Committee to use some of the money they made out of the exhibition to purchase a Steer and a John, but without success. […] Among other pictures they might have bought was a Whistler; but finally the Bradford committee purchased nothing."[243] And, in an August 1905 letter to Rutherston, Philip Wilson Steer, also a member of the London organising committee for the Bradford exhibition and one of the artists whose work Rothenstein had encouraged Bradford to acquire, acknowledges this debate in the press, and goes on to say, "I had a visit some time ago from a Mr. Kitson who

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[241] Ibid.
[242] Butler Wood, "Municipal Art Patronage at Bradford," *Athenaeum*, no. 4055 (1905): 89.
[243] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 58.

represented the Leeds Art Gallery and he seemed to be very keen that we should all send there and I promised to do so if possible so perhaps they will give Bradford a lead."[244] This debate highlights how Cartwright Hall's opening exhibition can be seen in terms of a centre-periphery model in a cultural context with the exhibition's London organising committee and Fry's criticism of Bradford's subsequent approach representing the metropolitan centre attempting (and perhaps failing) to disseminate an idea of modern art to the provincial periphery of Bradford. Steer's observation, indicating that Leeds Art Gallery was more accepting of modern art at that time, perhaps positions Leeds as a regional semi-periphery in this cultural model.

Annual Reports of Bradford's Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee seem to confirm the general point made in the *Athenaeum*, even if their timing was incorrect regarding the spending of exhibition profits. Although Rothenstein's assertion that the Committee "purchased nothing" was also incorrect, it is certainly true that the positive reception for modern art at the opening exhibition did not result in Cartwright Hall going on to acquire modern works for its own collection. The Report for 1904/5 confirms that the Committee was allowed to retain £10,000 from the profits of the inaugural exhibition "for the purchase of works of art and furnishings for the building."[245] This Report lists the artworks purchased from those exhibited at Cartwright Hall's 1905 Spring Exhibition, largely comprising landscapes, portraits and history paintings in a traditional (academic) style, but makes no reference to purchases from the 1904 inaugural exhibition so presumably there were none.[246] A March 1905 article in the local press suggests that some of the profits from the inaugural exhibition should be spent on "the formation

[244] Philip Wilson Steer, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 3 Aug 1905, RLC 1/24 file 14, MAG RLC.
[245] City of Bradford, "Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee, for the Year Ending August 12th, 1905", BBD7/1/31, WYAS-B.
[246] Ibid.

of a gallery of portraits of men who have been the builders of Bradford. One room of the Cartwright gallery might well become our Pantheon or the Valhalla of distinguished citizens".[247] This provides an indication of local tastes and the popularity of portraiture at that time and suggests that *Art Value* derived more from the reputation of the sitter and the historical value this attributed to the artwork, than the artist and the artistic quality of the work.[248]

The failure of Cartwright Hall, and of Bradford's art collectors in general (Rutherston excluded), to purchase modern art in the first decade of the twentieth century prompted William Rothenstein to complain that "the collectors who bought canvasses by La Thangue, Charles, Clausen and others were not friendly to me. […] There was no work of mine in its art gallery, nor, except in my brother's, in any of the private collections."[249] But in 1910 William Rothenstein at last received the recognition he had desired from the city of his birth when Cartwright Hall held an exhibition of his work, and it is perhaps significant that in January the previous year Butler Wood had visited Rutherston at his home.[250] It seems possible that this visit was an attempt by Rutherston to persuade Butler Wood to be more sympathetic towards his brother's work, and perhaps plans were made for the following year's exhibition. Rutherston lent four oil paintings and four pastel drawings to the exhibition, and Moritz Rothenstein (Rutherston's father) also lent three paintings.[251] The Art Gallery Committee's 1909/10 Annual

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[247] "Day by Day," *Bradford Daily Telegraph*, 1 March 1905, 2.

[248] The popularity of portraiture as a form of visual history was not unique to provincial Bradford and had been a major factor in the relocation of the National Portrait Gallery to its more prestigious and current location less than ten years earlier – see for example "The New National Portrait Gallery," *Times*, 3 Apr 1896, 6.

[249] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 177. Samuel Shaw specifically identifies John Maddocks and Abraham Mitchell as the collectors Rothenstein might be referring to here – see Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 57.

[250] Rutherston's Visitors Book, RLC 1/8, MAG RLC.

[251] City of Bradford, *A Catalogue of Paintings and Drawings by William Rothenstein, Exhibited at the Cartwright Memorial Hall, Bradford, June 25th, 1910* (Bradford: City of Bradford, 1910).

Report records that, "[t]he Committee have purchased some of these [exhibited works] for the permanent collection", going on to identify the oil painting, *Carrying the Law*, 1907 (Fig.37), two unnamed drawings and three unnamed lithographs.[252]

In a 1910 letter to his brother about these acquisitions, Rutherston says, "I am very pleased that the Cartwright has at last bought one of your pictures & that they now have some drawings as well. […] It is my intention, now that the Cartwright has purchased one of your pictures, to offer to lend them one of your pictures out of my collection for an indefinite period."[253] This letter indicates that, at this time, the relationship between the two brothers and Cartwright Hall had improved significantly, although there appears to be no reference to Rutherston's proposed indefinite loan in subsequent Annual Reports so it seems likely that this did not happen. However, the 1910/11 Report records that, during the year, Moritz Rothenstein presented Cartwright Hall with Rothenstein's oil painting *The Browning Readers*, 1900 (Fig.38) and Rothenstein also gifted "a set of twelve fine lithographs, by himself", again indicative of a cordial relationship between the Rothenstein family and Cartwright Hall.[254]

The 1911/12 Report records that Cartwright Hall had at last purchased a work by Wilson Steer, the oil painting *The End of the Chapter*, 1911 (Fig.39), although this work is more in the style of a late-Victorian narrative painting than Steer's more impressionistic works.[255] However, Cartwright Hall did hold some exhibitions of modern art including, in 1912, being one of the

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[252] City of Bradford, "Fortieth Annual Report of the Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee, for the Year Ending August 12th, 1910", BBD7/1/36, WYAS-B.

[253] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 1910 (undated), MS Eng 1148 Box 38: 1297, HLH.

[254] City of Bradford, "Forty-first Annual Report of the Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee, for the Year Ending August 12th, 1911", BBD7/1/37, WYAS-B.

[255] City of Bradford, "Forty-second Annual Report of the Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee, for the Year Ending August 12th, 1912", BBD7/1/38, WYAS-B.

venues chosen for the CAS's opening exhibition about which the 1911/12 Annual Report says, "[a]lthough some of the pictures are difficult to understand, all of them are charged with the modern spirit, and therefore have helped the citizens to become acquainted with the current phases of artistic activity."[256] This statement gives the sense that the Bradford Committee (or perhaps Butler Wood who no doubt had a key role in writing the Reports) regarded the CAS artworks as an interesting experiment, but one which was unlikely to immediately impact on the Committee's acquisitions policy.

The 1911/12 Report also records Rothenstein donating a range of drawings and prints to Cartwright Hall by artists from his circle including John, Orpen, Conder, Shannon and Ricketts.[257] And the following year's Report refers to an exhibition of oil paintings from Michael Sadler's collection which "contained splendid examples of work by Wilson Steer, William Nicholson, Augustus John, Gerard Chowne, and C. J. Holmes", but this positive comment was still not reflected in Cartwright Hall's own acquisitions that year.[258] The only reference to Rutherston in the Reports between 1904 and 1917 is in 1913/14, which records him presenting a Wedgewood bowl to Cartwright Hall, which after the positivity of 1910 seems a somewhat token donation suggesting that Rutherston's relationship with Cartwright Hall had cooled once again.[259]

Rutherston's attempts to get involved in, and indeed to influence, the art world in his home city before the First World War are further illustrated by his involvement with the Bradford

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[256] Ibid.

[257] Ibid.

[258] City of Bradford, "Forty-third Annual Report of the Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee, for the Year Ending August 12th, 1913", BBD7/1/39, WYAS-B.

[259] City of Bradford, "Forty-fourth Annual Report of the Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee, for the Year Ending August 12th, 1914", BBD7/1/40, WYAS-B.

Arts Club (BAC) for a short period from 1909 to 1912. The BAC had been established in 1902 as "'The Loft' Art & Literary Union" and the BAC Committee minutes describe how, in 1909, the BAC moved from its original loft home, which was unsuitable for the exhibitions and other events the BAC wanted to hold, to larger premises.[260] This move was funded by Rutherston who committed to pay £25 per year for up to three years "to enable the new rooms to be taken & to ensure the club a fair start" and, although the minutes record Rutherston as being on the Committee, he was soon appointed as Chairman, perhaps because of his financial contribution.[261]

The BAC's exhibition of Charles Conder's work which opened in December 1909 (Conder had died earlier that year) is the earliest reference I have found in the press to Rutherston's involvement with the BAC and was perhaps the first BAC exhibition which reflected his influence.[262] Rutherston is reported as presiding over the exhibition's opening and he is quoted as saying that the BAC "intended holding small 'one man shows' of works of art twice a year", an approach now made possible by having a larger exhibition space.[263] The exhibition was opened by Gerard Chowne, a friend of Conder's and another artist Rutherston got to know through brother William's network and who went on to have six works in the Manchester gift, who:

> congratulated Bradford in having an institution like the Arts Club, whose members were further to be congratulated on their enterprise and good taste in getting this exhibition together. He believed that such a collection as this would have an educational value far greater than the miscellaneous picture feasts which were got together by the Corporation.[264]

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[260] Bradford Arts Club, committee minutes Nov 1909 - Jun 1919, 40D87/1/2, WYAS-B.
[261] Ibid.
[262] "Bradford Arts Club. The Work of Chas. Conder," *Bradford Weekly Telegraph*, 24 Dec 1909, 4.
[263] Ibid.
[264] Ibid.

Chowne's observations provide an early reference to the emerging idea of the educational *Use Value* of modern art which was to become central to Rutherston's plans for his collection. Furthermore, Chowne's criticism of provincial public art galleries, and Cartwright Hall in particular, perhaps reflects the BAC's (and Rutherston's own) thinking at the time as Chowne stayed at Rutherston's house for the opening of the exhibition, and it therefore seems likely that the two men would have discussed Chowne's speech beforehand.[265]

I have found primary source evidence of only two further "one man shows" held by the BAC under Rutherston's Chairmanship. The first was an exhibition of the work of Bradford-born artist William Shackleton in April 1910 which received positive coverage in the local press.[266] Rutherston's influence is again illustrated by the fact that Shackleton stayed at his house for the opening of his exhibition, and Rutherston's Manchester gift included two works by Shackleton both acquired around the time of this exhibition.[267] The second exhibition was of Augustus John drawings held in April and May 1911, some of which may have been loaned by Rutherston although I have found no evidence to support this. The BAC committee minutes for May 1911 record that the opening of the exhibition by William Rothenstein was well attended but go on to comment on the poor subsequent attendances, expressing disappointment that "more of the general outside public did not see the drawings."[268] Combined with the lack of press coverage for this exhibition, this suggests that the BAC had failed to publicise the exhibition adequately

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[265] Rutherston's Visitors Book.

[266] See for example "Bradford Arts Club. The Pictures of Mr. W. Shackleton," *Yorkshire Observer*, 11 April 1910, 12. The article refers to Rutherston presiding at the opening and quotes from his opening remarks.

[267] Rutherston's Visitors Book.

[268] Bradford Arts Club, committee minutes.

particularly given John's emerging status as an artist by 1911 and the opportunity afforded to a conservative Bradford public to see his drawings.

The failure of the John exhibition was an indication that the BAC was not meeting Rutherston's expectations and at an Extraordinary General Meeting in March 1912, in a strongly worded statement, Rutherston moved to have the club wound up saying, "that the Club had come to Belle Vue on a 3 years trial & that the aims of the Club […] had not received sufficient response to justify its continuation", evidenced by the poor attendance figures for recent exhibitions and concerts.[269] The motion was carried, but there was also a second motion proposing that the BAC should continue in some form, yet to be determined, and this was also carried.

The BAC had failed to meet Rutherston's idea of what a local arts club might achieve, providing the people of Bradford with the access to contemporary art which was not being delivered by Cartwright Hall. Perhaps the model he had aspired to was that of the neighbouring Leeds Arts Club which has subsequently become established in art history as a focus of modernism in the North of England in the early part of the twentieth century.[270] Certainly BAC committee members had visited (and been impressed by) the Leeds Arts Club before they decided on the move to new premises in 1909.[271]

Given the limited primary source evidence, it is only possible to speculate about the reasons for the BAC's failure under Rutherston's chairmanship. The tone of Rutherston's motion at the March 1912 meeting suggests that he did not take personal responsibility for the BAC's

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[269] Ibid.

[270] For a detailed history of the Leeds Arts Club see Tom Steele, *Alfred Orage and the Leeds Arts Club, 1893-1923* (Aldershot and Vermont: Gower Publishing Company, 1990).

[271] Bradford Arts Club, committee minutes.

failure, but as Chairman and with his already extensive artistic network this seems like an opportunity missed. Perhaps Rutherston was not the dynamic, influential personality that would have been required to drive such an initiative forward, in contrast to Leeds Arts Club.[272] And perhaps given Rutherston's business (and art collecting) commitments which took him away from Bradford for long periods he was unable to give the BAC the time commitment needed. Or perhaps conservative Bradford (compared to more progressive Leeds) was not yet ready to engage with contemporary art in the way that Rutherston and the BAC had envisaged.

The BAC did continue after 1912 under a new committee and although as a BAC member William Rothenstein continued to contribute to their exhibitions I have found no evidence that Rutherston had any further involvement.[273] Press coverage suggests that the BAC's exhibitions after this date mostly comprised annual exhibitions of members' work, and the plans to hold one man shows of works by well-known artists announced by Rutherston in 1909 seem to have been short-lived.[274] It also appears that the BAC moved away from its original ethos of challenging the conservative approach of Cartwright Hall and began to work more closely with the Bradford Corporation and Cartwright Hall.[275]

This analysis suggests that before the First World War Rutherston had a difficult relationship with art institutions in his home city, although in 1917 it appears that Rutherston and his brother still maintained a cordial relationship with Butler Wood and Cartwright Hall. For

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[272] Key figures credited by Tom Steele for the success of the Leeds Arts Club are, from its foundation in 1903, Alfred Orage and Holbrook Jackson and, from 1911 onwards, Michael Sadler and Frank Rutter – see Steele, *Leeds Arts Club*.

[273] Bradford Arts Club, committee minutes.

[274] See for example "Bradford Arts Club," *Yorkshire Post*, 2 Nov 1912, 8; "Bradford Arts Club," *Yorkshire Post*, 3 Oct 1914, 6.

[275] For example, a 1916 article mentions that the BAC's president had been elected as a member of Cartwright Hall's committee advising on the acquisition of artworks – see "Arts Club Lecture on Gounod," *Bradford Weekly Telegraph*, 1 Dec 1916, 10.

example, Rutherston loaned Ambrose McEvoy's *The Ear-Ring*, a work he was to give to the Tate later that year, to Cartwright Hall's 1917 Spring Exhibition which included "pictures selected from the works of ten eminent modern artists, together with a local section for the work of painters in the Bradford district."[276] The "eminent modern artists" involved were a conservative group, with only McEvoy having been involved with the NEAC or other progressive movements. However, correspondence between Rutherston and his brother suggests that by the summer of 1918 the relationship with Cartwright Hall had deteriorated. In June, Rutherston says:

> I have been considering very seriously an idea which has occurred to me and which I am much disposed to carry out, viz. of forming a collection of war paintings, drawings & lithos, and of presenting the lot to the Cartwright Hall on the occasion of my severing my connection with Bradford. But let that be entre nous for the moment. It would of course include all I already possess including yours.[277]

This letter is interesting in two respects. Firstly, Rutherston was thinking about gifting some artworks to Cartwright Hall and, secondly, he was planning on leaving Bradford, neither of which came to fruition. Whilst this letter suggests Rutherston was positive about Cartwright Hall, the following month his brother expresses frustration with arrangements for moving his work from Sheffield to Bradford for an exhibition at Cartwright Hall, including direct criticism of Butler Wood.[278] And after visiting this exhibition Rutherston is vitriolic in his criticism of Cartwright Hall:

> I went into Cartwright Hall on Thursday […] to see your show. It looks very well but not a soul was there. […] I spoke to Preston […] and he was so apathetic about it – yawning 3 or 4 times while I spoke about it – that I gave him a piece of my mind & told him that in the face of such apathy he must not wonder if people like myself are disinclined to do anything for the Cartwright Hall. This is simply another proof of what I have long

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[276] "Bradford Art Exhibition," *Leeds Mercury*, 3 March 1917, 4.

[277] Charles Rutherston, letter to William Rothenstein, 12 June 1918, MS Eng 1148 Box 38: 1297, HLH.

[278] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 16 July 1918, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

> realised – viz. that the Cartwright people are simply incorrigible and as long as Butler Wood and he are there nothing better can be expected of them.[279]

This is damning, and it is perhaps unsurprising that Rutherston did not go through with the plan to give Cartwright Hall the collection of war art outlined in his June letter.

Given the breakdown in Rutherston's relationship with Cartwright Hall in 1918 Rutherston's artistic relationship with his home city became increasingly focussed on supporting the Bradford School of Arts and Crafts, which Rutherston acknowledged in his 1926 speech was important to the development of his ideas for the potential educational *Use Value* of his collection.[280] Limited primary source evidence has been found regarding this relationship, the most relevant material being an article in the *Yorkshire Observer* in February 1921 which decries the lack of access to works of art for students in provincial cities, particularly to examples of "the modern movement in France" and to "knowledge of the great art of the past and the present" which was "essential to the modern art student."[281] The article goes on to say:

> The School of Arts and Crafts, the centre of art education in Bradford, possesses practically no original works of art, and its library, while comparing favourably with those of other schools of art, is yet quite inadequate. A serious effort is being made, however, to alter this state of affairs. Recently Mr. C.L. Rutherston offered to lend to the Education Committee, for the benefit of the students at the School of Art, drawings, water-colours, prints, books, &c., from his collection. […] Practically the entire field of art will be covered. Modern art will be represented by original works, and the art of the past by photographs or prints.[282]

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[279] Charles Rutherston, letter to William Rothenstein, 20 July 1918, MS Eng 1148 Box 38: 1297, HLH. Preston was Butler Wood's deputy at Cartwright Hall.

[280] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

[281] "Education of the Art Student. Mr Rutherston's Loan," *Yorkshire Observer*, 11 Feb 1921. This was the year after Rutherston's first loans to the University of Sheffield discussed in 1.5 although it seems likely that Rutherston's relationship with the Bradford School of Arts and Crafts had begun much earlier, which is certainly the implication given by Rutherston in his 1926 speech.

[282] Ibid.

In terms of *Art Value*, linking the word "modern" with the idea of originality emphasises the newness-value of the original artworks loaned by Rutherston, whereas the contrasting reference to "art of the past" is less positive although the photographs and prints of these older works would certainly have had some historical value. The educational *Use Value* of the loaned works would therefore have been broad, ranging from helping the students to emulate examples of modern art in their own practice to providing a broader appreciation of art and art history.

The only significant material I have found in the RLC Archive relating to Rutherston's relationship with the Bradford School of Arts and Crafts is an exchange of correspondence in 1979 between Sandra Martin from MAG and the Bradford artist Richard Eurich who was a student at the School from 1920 to 1924.[283] Eurich's letter recalls Rutherston's relationship with the School:

> Charles Rutherston took a good deal of interest in the Bradford School of Art and loaned us drawings by John, J. Kramer and Wyndham Lewis, also those wonderful facsimiles of drawings by Renoir, etc. […] C Rutherston once invited a few students to see his collection – I don't remember much about the house in Heaton, we only went into two rooms I think – The paintings I remember were Augustus John's two portraits […] - upstairs C.R. had a room rather like a studio where he showed us drawings.[284]

This recollection is significant in that it demonstrates that not only did Rutherston loan artworks to the School, including original drawings by English artists and reproductions of French modern art, he also invited to students to his home where they could see other works including his paintings, which presumably he was not prepared to loan to the School. This illustrates Rutherston's seriousness about enabling art students in his home city to see examples of modern

[283] For a timeline of Eurich's life including his time at Bradford School of Arts and Crafts see Christine Clearkin and others, "Richard Ernst Eurich (1903-1992)," n.d., accessed 24 Oct 2025, https://richardeurich.co.uk/life/timeline/.

[284] Richard Eurich, letter to Sandra Martin, 12 Dec 1979, RLC 1/15, MAG RLC.

art which he presumably hoped would enhance their art education and inform their own art practice.

Despite the tone of Rutherston's July 1918 letter it appears that Rutherston's (and his brother's) relationship with Cartwright Hall did not break down permanently at that time as, for example, Rutherston went on to loan over forty artworks to Cartwright Hall's "Coming of Age" exhibition in early 1925, the majority of which went on to be included in Rutherston's Manchester gift.[285] An article about the exhibition in the *Manchester Guardian* focuses on the announcement of gifts made to Cartwright Hall including two of his brother's paintings donated by Rutherston, *The Old Quarry, Hawksworth*, 1904 (Fig.40) and *Self Portrait*, c.1906 (Fig.41).[286] Rutherston's significant contribution to this exhibition including these two gifts perhaps indicates that by 1925, the year Butler Wood retired, Cartwright Hall was already beginning to change its attitudes to modern art.[287] However, this shift came too late to impact on Rutherston's decision about a future home for his collection, which in any case might have been influenced not just by Cartwright Hall itself but by Bradford's reputation as a culturally conservative and insular city.

Bradford-born J. B. Priestley's *English Journey*, writing about a trip in 1933, provides a useful insight here:

> Its [Bradford's] provincialism was largely due to its geographical situation. It is really in a back-water. The railway main lines went to Leeds, ten miles away, and not to Bradford, with the result that Leeds, though it has never had the world-wide reputation of Bradford,

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[285] "Cartwright Memorial Hall. Catalogue of the "Coming of Age" Exhibition. 1925", 68D88/15/52, WYAS-B.

[286] "Art Gallery's Coming-of-Age. Lady Cunliffe-Lister at Bradford," *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Feb 1925, 3.

[287] These two artworks, a self-portrait of a Bradford-born artist and a local landscape, could perhaps be considered 'safe' donations as they were primarily concerned with Bradford's local identity. However, the depiction of the Jewish community in London's East End in *Carrying the Law*, acquired by Cartwright Hall in 1910, would today be regarded as a modern subject, although even here it seems likely that this work was acquired because of its relevance to Bradford's Jewish community rather than its inherent modernity.

> is a larger city and of much greater, local importance. It was Leeds, and not Bradford, that became the great marketing centre of West and Mid-Yorkshire. Leeds has a university and law courts; Bradford has not. I have always thought that there must be proportionately fewer university graduates in Bradford than in any other large town in England. Then again, the wool business was so much a local trade that a man might spend all his life in it […] A city that has mixed trades will probably have some of its corners rubbed off; it must work with other places; but Bradford, with its one trade, was all corners, hard provincial angles. There was no mistaking a Bradford man.[288]

The approach of Bradford's Libraries, Art Gallery and Museums Committee during the period to 1925 exemplifies Priestley's observations about Bradford's "provincialism", and the influence of Butler Wood who retired that year and perhaps epitomises Priestley's idea of "a Bradford man" was clearly significant. However, to counter the suggestion that Bradford was a provincial "back-water" it could be argued that Cartwright Hall was attempting to retain some sense of local identity in the art it chose to collect rather than succumb to pressure to acquire modern art dictated by a London-centric metropolitan elite. But Cartwright Hall did also look to the London art market for some of its acquisitions but before 1925 mostly chose academic art which reflected a different version of English culture (and perception of *Art Value*) to Rutherston's modern English art. In a sense, the antipathy of Cartwright Hall, and Butler Wood in particular, to modern art can be seen simply as a provincial reflection of the transition that was still taking place in the London art world as modern art acquired *Art Value* as it became assimilated into the English national culture, which in turn was gradually being disseminated from the metropolitan centre to a provincial periphery such as Bradford.

[288] Priestley, *English Journey*, 125.

1.5 Rutherston's Philosophy Evolves

> News of my experiments in Bradford penetrated to other centres and I have lent selections to Schools of Art in Halifax, Harrogate, Birmingham, Leicester and Oxford as well as to Sheffield University.
>
> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[289]

As discussed in the introduction to Part 1, one characteristic of the cultural context in the aftermath of the First World War was the idea that having an educated population was crucial to reconstructing society after the War, with museums and art galleries seen as playing an important role. And this was also a period when modern art was starting to be assimilated into the English national culture which, as Borzello suggests, was itself a driver for cultural education as people wanted to understand this new art.[290] This was the prevailing mood that Rutherston was responding to as he began to formulate plans for the future use of his collection, beginning on a relatively small scale by donating and loaning works to art galleries and museums before the idea of creating a more substantial collection of modern art which could then be used as the basis of a loan scheme began to emerge.

The relationships Rutherston had established with key figures in the London art world before the First World War such as Charles Aitken (described in 1.2) were to become significant as he grew his collection and developed plans for its future use. As Director of the Tate Gallery Aitken oversaw a crucial period in the Tate's development, including in 1917 its separation in management terms from the National Gallery, Joseph Duveen's endowment of a new extension to the Tate specifically for "modern foreign" art which opened in 1926 and Samuel Courtauld's gift of £50,000 in 1923 which enabled the Tate to acquire examples of French Impressionist and

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[289] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.
[290] Borzello, *Civilising Caliban*, 122-123.

Post-Impressionist art to populate the new galleries.[291] The 1917 separation of the Tate from the National Gallery to create the National Gallery of British Art was reported in the *Manchester Guardian* which said, "[t]his reform has been long overdue. […] its activities have constantly suffered from being under the control of the National Gallery Trustees, whose sympathies were almost entirely given to the old masters."[292] Members of the Tate's new Board of Trustees, the article goes on to say, had demonstrated "close interest in and knowledge of modern English art" which was to be the Tate's focus under its new management arrangements.[293]

The correspondence between Rutherston and Aitken from 1916 and 1917 held in the RLC and HLH Archives is mostly concerned with Aitken's efforts to strengthen the Tate's collection of British, particularly modern, art as part of this change in status, which for Aitken seems to have largely comprised work by artists from the NEAC including William Rothenstein. It might be argued that, by this time, the NEAC was hardly cutting edge, although it was not unreasonable for Aitken to include the NEAC in his attempts to build a representative collection of British art. In July 1916, Aitken made a direct approach to Rutherston, saying:

> I am venturing to write to you about a scheme we have for getting the New English painters adequately represented in the National collections. […] The nucleus of this could consist of works in the possession of the Contemporary Art Society […]. One I want particularly is your brother's "Doll's House". Could you possibly consider the question of presenting it and if possible McEvoy's 'Necklace' which would represent him at his best. I will not attempt any defence of this bold attack.[294]

The two works referred to here are *The Doll's House*, 1899-1900 (Fig.42) and McEvoy's *The Ear-Ring*, not *Necklace* as Aitken referred to it.[295] Rutherston must have responded positively to

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[291] For a detailed account of this period of the Tate's development see Taylor, *Art for the Nation*, 132-166.

[292] "Reform at the Tate Gallery," *Manchester Guardian*, 27 March 1917, 4.

[293] Ibid.

[294] Charles Aitken, letter to Charles Rutherston, 5 July 1916, MS Eng 1148 Box 1: 11, HLH.

[295] Rutherston purchased *The Doll's House* from his brother in 1902 and McEvoy's *The Ear-Ring* from the NEAC in 1911.

Aitken's request as, later the same month, Aitken wrote to him again saying, "[i]t is most kind and generous of you to write as you do. I have longed to have the "Doll's House" ever since we had it at Whitechapel."[296] Aitken was also in touch with William Rothenstein from whom he also obtained promises of gifts, with Rothenstein telling his brother that Aitken "told me about your handsome decision. He is very pleased indeed, I think, & so of course am I. It is most generous of you & will of course incidentally be very pleasant for me."[297]

There is no further correspondence between the three men about Rutherston's possible gift until May the following year, when Aitken wrote to Rutherston to update him on the situation at the Tate and to invite him to become an Associate:

> Things are advancing rapidly with our new Board. In the first place it has decided to create a body of Associates consisting of past benefactors and present well-wishers. These will be publicly associated with the Trustees and their advice & opinions asked as occasions arise. I was authorized to ask you to join this body.[298]

He then goes on to ask Rutherston about the two paintings he had promised to donate:

> At the next meeting of the Board on June 19 a large group of interesting pictures are being offered largely from the C. A. Society. […] It would add enormously to the completeness of this group if you feel you can let us have the 'Doll's House' and McEvoy. If possible I should like to have the pictures up about June 10 so as to hang them well for the Trustees to see before the meeting.[299]

Aitken's letter later the same month confirms the successful delivery of Rutherston's two artworks which must have been accepted by the Trustees as *The Doll's House* and *The Ear-Ring* became part of the Tate's collection in 1917.[300] At that time these two oil paintings would have had significant *Art Value* in England as evidenced by Aitken's dogged pursuit of them, and this

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[296] Charles Aitken, letter to Charles Rutherston, 12 July 1916, MS Eng 1148 Box 1: 11, HLH.

[297] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 15 July 1916, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH. The letter is annotated 1915 but this must be incorrect and 1916 fits in the sequence.

[298] Charles Aitken, letter to Charles Rutherston, 18 May 1917, MS Eng 1148 Box 1: 11, HLH.

[299] Ibid.

[300] Charles Aitken, letter to Charles Rutherston, 25 May 1917, RLC 1/24 file 13, MAG RLC.

gift perhaps provides the first clear indication of Rutherston's emerging desire to make his collection accessible to a wider audience. Aitken's letter goes on to say, "I do hope you will consent to be an Associate [of the Tate]. […] I want to identify those with real taste and intelligence with the Gallery and its policy."[301] It is unclear whether Rutherston took up this role and, if so, what it entailed as no evidence has been found as part of this research, but the recognition it afforded to Rutherston would have been important to him and well worth the gift of two important works from his collection.

In the early 1920s Aitken continued in his attempts to enhance the Tate's collection of modern British art mostly through loans, presumably given the ongoing difficulties he experienced acquiring contemporary work through the Chantrey Bequest, with Angela Summerfield describing how during this period "loans of contemporary British art to the Tate Gallery were welcomed by Aitken as 'filling gaps' in the Gallery's national presentation of Twentieth-Century British Art."[302] Rutherston's relationship with Aitken and the Tate continued as, in September 1922, Aitken wrote to Rutherston to thank him for further loans, saying "I am very sorry to lose them but it has been a great privilege to have the loan of them for so long."[303] No information has been found about the artworks Rutherston loaned to the Tate during this period and this is the last letter from Aitken to Rutherston in the archives consulted. However, the archives contain later correspondence between Aitken and William Rothenstein relating mostly to Aitken's attempts to acquire more of Rothenstein's work for the Tate and to his

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[301] Ibid.

[302] Angela Summerfield, "Interventions: Twentieth-century art collection schemes and their impact on local authority art gallery and museum collections of twentieth-century British art in Britain - Volume I" (PhD thesis, City University, London, 2007), 29, accessed 23 May 2025, http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/17420/. Summerfield's evidence for this assertion is Aitken's oral evidence of 14 December 1927 to the *Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries.*

[303] Charles Aitken, letter to Charles Rutherston, 29 Sept 1922, MS Eng 1148 Box 1: 11, HLH.

continuing frustrations purchasing work using the Chantrey Bequest which was still the Tate's primary source of funding for British art.

At that time Aitken was also overseeing the acquisition of French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art for the Tate's new foreign galleries drawing on the Courtauld Fund. It is perhaps significant that in 1926, when the Tate's purchasing of French art was at its peak, Rutherston gave the Tate another gift, Charles Dufresne's *Spahi Attacked by a Lion*, 1919 (Fig.43). Post-Impressionist in style and painted by a French artist, albeit less well known than the artists who were the focus of the Courtauld Fund, it is possible that Rutherston, perhaps in consultation with Aitken, felt this work was more suited to the Tate than his Manchester gift of predominantly English modern art. *Spahi Attacked by a Lion* was originally included in the list of works Rutherston intended to be included in the gift but he withdrew this work and donated it to the Tate instead.[304]

Following his 1917 gifts to the Tate, in 1918 Rutherston donated around 440 of the prints he had collected earlier in his career to the British Museum, including about 370 by Daumier, building on the relationship he had established with Campbell Dodgson before the First World War. In February Dodgson wrote to Rutherston about his proposed donation saying, "I am quite sure the collection you described would be a most valuable accession to this Department; it is just one of the things we very specifically want. Probably we should accept all of them as they are fine impressions."[305] This implies that Dodgson had not yet seen the prints in question although Rutherston's visitors' book records that Dodgson stayed at his house in June 1918 when he would have presumably seen some of the prints offered by Rutherston.[306] Just a few days after

[304] Charles Rutherston, list of artworks sent to the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 30 Sept 1926.
[305] Campbell Dodgson, letter to Charles Rutherston, 12 February 1918, RLC 1/24 file 9, MAG RLC.
[306] Rutherston's Visitors Book.

his visit, Dodgson wrote to Rutherston again saying, “I find that all the lithographs are wanted, and I am accepting them on behalf of the trustees with hearty thanks.”[307] The exact timing of the transfer of these prints to the British Museum is unclear although they all have 1918 accession numbers.[308]

Turning next to Rutherston’s loans in the 1920s, in his 1926 speech Rutherston said that following his initial experiments with Bradford School of Arts and Crafts he went on to extend his loans to other educational establishments, and the earliest such loans for which significant primary source evidence has been found were those made to the University of Sheffield in 1920. Rutherston’s brother William had been appointed as Professor of Civic Art at the University in April 1917, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* reporting the University’s aims in establishing the new Chair being “to bring industry and art in Sheffield into closer relationship with each other.”[309] This seems to have been a largely honorary position which involved Rothenstein giving several lectures each year but involved no teaching responsibilities, and was a post Rothenstein held until 1926.[310]

Through this role, William was able to facilitate the loan of works from Rutherston’s collection to the University, writing to his brother in October 1919 to let him know the University would be contacting him about a possible loan saying, “have they written you from

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[307] Campbell Dodgson, letter to Charles Rutherston, 29 June 1918, RLC 1/24 file 9, MAG RLC. The prints donated by Rutherston are identified on the British Museum’s website – see British Museum, "Explore the Collection," n.d., accessed 22 Sept 2025, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?agent=Charles%20Rutherston..

[308] Ibid. This search also identifies around twenty Indian drawings and paintings purchased from Rutherston in 1925 which Rutherston had presumably acquired from his brother William. Rothenstein had spent time in India and was interested in Indian culture drawing on it in some of his own art including examples in Rutherston’s Manchester gift.

[309] "Civic Art. Professor Appointed for the University of Sheffield," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 April 1917, 8.

[310] "University Changes," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 12 June 1926, 8.

here about lending a collection of drawings? I think they are going to."[311] This clearly came to fruition as, in February 1920, Rothenstein wrote again saying, "[y]our drawings at Sheffield look beautiful. Southall came up - was greatly pleased; […] the Hall, while I was up, was full of students." [312] The reference to Southall is to the brothers' friend, the Birmingham artist Joseph Southall, who was no doubt "greatly pleased" to see his own work included in the exhibition (highlighted in the press coverage examined below). In April 1920 Rothenstein again wrote to his brother about the loaned artworks, recognising the support they provided to one of his lectures, saying "[m]y lecture was, I think, the best, & the best attended, I have ever given & your loan was of the greatest possible service. I am most grateful to you. I think if something of the kind were done in many places it would help things – I wish it had been possible for you to have been here."[313] These observations provide an early indication of the educational *Use Value* of the loaned artworks although Rothenstein is not specific about what this comprised.

A *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* review of this initial loan begins by suggesting that Sheffield was not an obvious candidate for an exhibition of modern art saying, "Sheffield enjoys little reputation as an art centre, and still less as a field wherein the modern forms of art expression are likely to find an appreciative public."[314] The article goes on support the idea that art had a social value, suggesting that the exhibition resulted from "the spirit which animates Sheffield's principal seat of learning […] keeps a watchful eye on any and every possibility of being of educational service […] not only to its own students, but to the citizens of Sheffield

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[311] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 24 Oct 1919, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.
[312] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 13 Feb 1920, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.
[313] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, April 1920, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH. The correspondence between the two brothers suggests that Rutherston was in France for much of the early part of 1920 and was therefore unable to see the exhibition.
[314] "University and Art. Unique Collection of Pictures," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 1 March 1920, 6.

generally."[315] The article comments on several of the artworks included in the loan, contrasting Wyndham Lewis's "mode of presenting a subject by the elimination of all detail in an almost diagrammatic summary of the utmost severity" with the "delightful precision" of Southall's realistic work "perpetuating for this generation all the traditions of the earnest men of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood."[316] The article suggests that the two contrasting styles "may well be compared […] by any student who cares to see at a glance two diametrically opposite, though equally representative, schools of modern art."[317] This article therefore emphasises a *Use Value* of the artworks which was focused on educating the public about the *Art Value* of contemporary art reflecting two different artistic philosophies.

Rutherston made a second loan to the University in August 1920, once again reviewed in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* with the writer again providing a helpful commentary on the contemporary art of the period, saying "[i]n this small collection of Mr. Rutherston's […] the pictures selected are excellent for their purpose of demonstrating the range and varying characteristics of British art, within our own memories, making an excellent teaching collection."[318] The article challenges the negative reception of modern art by some viewers and repeats the point made in the coverage of the previous exhibition that the breadth of modern art represented provided a positive aid to educating the public. However, the article goes on to criticise the University for not providing the public with more support for engaging with the art on display, saying:

> If the University had a competent layman capable of analysing, comprehending, and explaining the types and their related methods he might breathe a spirit of beauty and

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[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid.
[317] Ibid.
[318] "Art at University. Pictures on Exhibition This Week," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 31 August 1920, 4.

> light on to the whole city, so dreadfully languishing in the darkness produced by the absence of the capacity to appreciate and realise the ennobling radiance of art. This can not be accomplished by a silent exhibition.[319]

Again, this emphasises the potential *Use Value* of modern art, suggesting that if the Sheffield public had a better understanding and appreciation of modern art this would improve their quality-of-life. But, the review suggests, the public needed some expert help if this objective was to be achieved, and as Part 2 will go on to describe, the limited support provided to borrowers went on to become an important issue for the RLS. Nevertheless, the loans to the University of Sheffield and the positive reception they received provided Rutherston with an early indication of the potential *Use Value* of his collection and must have been a great help to him as his ideas began to take shape.

In early 1920, at around the time of Rutherston's first loan to the University of Sheffield, correspondence between Rutherston and his brother William includes a discussion about Rothenstein's decision not to take a teaching post he was offered at the Birmingham School of Art which alludes to the ideas Rutherston was beginning to have about the potential educational *Use Value* of his collection. As previously discussed, Rothenstein had a relationship with the School of Art going back at least to 1908 and the two brothers became friends with the Birmingham Group artists Southall and Gaskin who had close connections to the School of Art. In January 1920 Rothenstein wrote to his brother from Birmingham where he had been in discussions about the position at the School of Art:

> I am not taking up the appointment here. I couldn't work with the present staff without seeming to condemn their methods. These are amateurish & feeble, at least in the drawing side of the work, & I don't want to make trouble for the school or myself. So I

[319] Ibid.

> am acting at once, so as not to waste more time; I think the staff at the school is rather relieved than otherwise. [320]

Rutherston replied by saying:

> [I]f that is the state of affairs in Birmingham, the one place in England (outside London) which has produced and maintained a "school" of painting of value, what will happen in other places with no tradition? It is that which I have feared all along would make my ideas so difficult to carry out – the opposition of the staff. I remember mentioning it at the time to Southall & Gaskin and they agreed that it was an obstacle with which I should have to contend if I carried out my scheme.[321]

This highlights that Rutherston had already discussed a possible "scheme" for his collection with Southall and Gaskin, and had expressed concerns that the current teaching methods Rothenstein encountered at Birmingham would potentially be "an obstacle" to the achievement of his objectives. Rothenstein went on to elaborate further on his concerns:

> Birmingham School is run on a system of memory drawing, good up to a point, but needing severer and more exact methods when it came to figure work – the suspicion with which art masters look on practising artists' influence is too obvious to be disregarded. An artist must either control the school, or remain outside.[322]

This correspondence is not explicit about the brothers' concerns but Speaight's interpretation of Rothenstein's views is useful:

> William had long believed that the principal weakness of English art schools was that they were designed to produce not artists but art masters. […] he was constantly wrestling with the problem of how, under modern conditions, the old apprenticeship of pupil to master in the master's studio might be recovered.[323]

So, William believed that art schools should be primarily concerned with training new artists which could best be achieved if they were taught by other artists, and this focus on supporting

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[320] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 30 Jan 1920, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

[321] Charles Rutherston, letter to William Rothenstein, 1 Feb 1920, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH.

[322] William Rothenstein to Charles Rutherston, 13 Feb 1920.

[323] Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 307.

the education of a new generation of artists was becoming a central part of the philosophy behind Rutherston's emerging idea of the *Use Value* of his collection.

Soon after Rothenstein's rejection of the Birmingham position he was appointed Principal at the Royal College of Art (RCA) in London, a position he was to hold until 1935.[324] He wrote to his brother in May 1920 to tell him about his appointment, saying:

> I formally accepted my appointment yesterday. The Board has been generous. I am only to be at the College 3 days a week & then without any administrative duties. I am to be accessible to students & Professors, but have a studio of my own to work in. Further, I am to have a free hand in the conduct of the College.[325]

So, at precisely the time Rutherston was developing his ideas about how his collection might be used to support art education his brother was Principal at the most prestigious art educational establishment in the country and was actively involved in teaching aspiring young artists. Rothenstein was therefore arguably ideally placed to advise his brother but the extent to which Rothenstein influenced Rutherston's plans and his decision to choose MAG as the institution to deliver the scheme is unclear. Certainly, the RCA was not one of the establishments Rutherston used to test his ideas during the early 1920s and Rothenstein's recollections of his time at the RCA in his memoirs perhaps provide some insight here:

> [A] new spirit pervaded the students. Another new spirit was sometimes trying. There stood the model, one of a succession of marvellous figures, each a miracle of form and colour. But God's work was no miracle to some students, who looked rather at Cézanne's and Picasso's.[326]

So Rothenstein's philosophy that art should represent the real world ("God's work") and his antipathy to art influenced by Impressionism and Post-Impressionism continued at the RCA, causing him to attempt to enforce a regime of academic training on his students:

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[324] "Sir William Rothenstein's Retirement," *Manchester Guardian*, 2 Jul 1935, 10.

[325] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 20 May 1920, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

[326] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 381.

> At the Royal College of Art I tried, by demonstration before the students, to hint at logical method of both drawing and painting, only to find it consistently disregarded; […] It was useless to tell the students of the severe practice which Degas, whose name was constantly on their lips, had to endure; further, that Matisse and others of his generation went through strict academic training.[327]

It therefore seems entirely possible that Rothenstein believed that his London-based students already had more than enough access to modern art and his challenge was to get them to focus on learning traditional skills such as drawing.

The primary source materials relating to Rutherston's loans and gifts prior to his decision to gift his collection to MAG only hint at the philosophy for realising the potential educational *Use Value* of his collection. It is not clear whether Rutherston believed his collection would support the rigorous art school education favoured by his brother William, or provide a more general awareness of modern art to stimulate artistic ideas and imagination. Certainly, William's failure to draw on Rutherston's collection for his work at the RCA would suggest that William did not believe his brother's collection could contribute to the kind of art education he was seeking to provide.

In 1920 William had facilitated Rutherston's loans to the University of Sheffield and had been positive about their impact, and the two brothers seemed to agree about the obstacles the teaching methods of Birmingham School of Art might present to the achievement of Rutherston's objectives. But, over the next five years as Rutherston grew his collection of modern art and his ideas for the use of his collection developed further, it seems possible that the two brothers became less closely aligned, perhaps resulting from Rothenstein's continuing preference for representational art and commitment to traditional methods of art teaching whilst Rutherston

[327] Rothenstein, *Since Fifty*, 196-197.

gradually more fully embraced the evolution of modern art and as a result he possibly developed a different idea to his brother of its potential educational *Use Value*.

Certainly, there is little evidence that Rothenstein played a major role in shaping Rutherston's philosophy after 1920 although Rutherston continued to keep his brother updated. It is also important to recognise the limitations of the archive materials consulted including significant gaps in the correspondence between Rutherston and William over this pivotal period. But in the account of Rutherston's Manchester gift in his memoirs Rothenstein does not claim any credit for the idea but nor does he attempt to describe the educational philosophy behind it, only saying that Rutherston "thought much about social conditions" and wanted his collection to "be of practical service".[328] This seems to distance Rothenstein from the idea that the gift had a specific educational *Use Value* and give further weight to the possibility that by 1925 the brothers' views were not entirely aligned.

[328] Ibid., 148.

1.6 Choosing Manchester

> I had now gained the conviction that my entire Collection might be made use of in connection with Art Galleries as well as Schools of Art and I decided to offer it to some Central distributing Institution with that object in view. […] I consulted Mr. Aitken […] and we both agreed that the best solution would be one of the big centres outside London such as Birmingham, Liverpool, or Manchester. Of the three, Manchester appealed to me most.
>
> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[329]

Primary source evidence suggests that Rutherston did not establish a close relationship with MAG until 1925, although he did have some contact before then. The earliest reference I have found in either the RLC or HLH Archives was in 1910 when Rutherston let his brother William know about being approached by MAG about lending artworks for an exhibition saying, "I received a letter from Butterworth of the Manchester Gallery asking me when he […] could come over to select pictures &c. out of my collection for their show."[330] Walter Butterworth was the Chairman of MAG's Art Gallery Committee from 1907 until 1912 when Councillor Frederick Todd took over the position.[331] The "show" referred to was probably MAG's Autumn exhibition in September 1910, with coverage in the *Manchester Guardian* referring to works by Charles Conder, Augustus John and William Rothenstein any of which could have been loaned by Rutherston although the article does not explicitly identify specific donors.[332] Shortly after the exhibition Butterworth wrote to Rutherston asking if he would consider selling Augustus John's

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[329] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

[330] Charles Rothenstein to William Rothenstein, 1910 (undated).

[331] "Mr. Alderman Joseph Thompson. Fifty Years of Public Service," *Manchester Guardian*, 11 Dec 1907, 5; "Manchester Art Gallery. Mr. Butterworth Declines the Office of Deputy Chairman," *Manchester Guardian*, 19 Nov 1912, 7. Councillor (later Alderman) Todd remained Chairman until 1929 when he was succeeded by Alderman Sutton, meaning he was Chairman at the time of Rutherston's Manchester gift – see Manchester City Art Gallery, "Annual Report of the Committee 1929", 10, MAG Archive.

[332] B.D.T., "Manchester Autumn Exhibition. First Notice," *Manchester Guardian*, 9 Sept 1910, 6.

Merikli and Rothenstein's *Reading the Book of Esther*, 1907 (Fig.44) to MAG, saying "our intercourse has sufficed to show me that you buy fine things and keep them for the love of them […]. You are I know, friendly disposed to our Gallery and its aims."[333] Rutherston must have declined Butterworth's proposition as both works went on to be included in Rutherston's Manchester gift.

The artists involved in MAG's 1910 exhibition indicate that, before the First World War, MAG was already beginning to embrace developments in modern art. And, in late 1911, the *Manchester Guardian* reports on a gift of a Rodin sculpture and two other works by Rodin purchased by MAG and quotes Butterworth who describes "the desire of the Committee to make a real substantial beginning to form a collection of modern sculpture."[334] MAG also hosted the first CAS exhibition in December 1911 and January 1912 which is not in itself necessarily significant as, later in 1912, the exhibition transferred to both Leeds and Bradford.[335] However, what distinguishes Manchester from the other major industrial cities is that the Corporation of Manchester first subscribed to membership of the CAS in 1911, one of only three local councils to do so and well before Bradford and Leeds (neither subscribed until 1927), Birmingham (1928) and Liverpool (1931).[336] The exhibition was opened by CAS committee member Robert Ross who explained why Manchester had been chosen to host the first exhibition saying, "[t]here is some reason for us to make our *début* in Manchester. For what Manchester thinks to-day about a good many things besides art England is apt to think to-morrow, or at least the day after to-

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[333] Walter Butterworth, letter to C. L. Rothenstein, 3 Oct 1910, file for Augustus John, MAG AF.

[334] "M. Rodin's Bust of Victor Hugo. Gift to Manchester Art Gallery," *Manchester Guardian*, 23 Dec 1911, 14.

[335] "Contemporary Art. New Manchester Exhibition Opened," *Manchester Guardian*, 8 Dec 1911, 7; "The Contemporary Art Society's Exhibition at Leeds," *Yorkshire Post*, 17 Feb 1912, 8; "Bradford Art Gallery. Contemporary Art Society's Exhibition," *Yorkshire Post*, 16 July 1912, 6.

[336] Contemporary Art Society, "Annual Reports".

morrow", which highlights Manchester's reputation as a culturally progressive, forward-thinking city.[337]

A further indication of MAG's progressive approach came in 1914 with the appointment of Lawrence Haward as Curator, following the death of his predecessor, William Stanfield, at the end of the previous year.[338] Haward was the public school and Cambridge-educated son of a London surgeon who studied art and foreign languages in Europe and, since 1906, had been on the staff of the *Times* as an art writer.[339] The *Manchester Guardian* reported that "Mr. Haward was strongly recommended to the Manchester Committee by Sir Charles Holroyd, Director of the National Gallery; Mr. Charles Aitken, Keeper of the Tate Gallery; and Sir Whitworth Wallis, of the Birmingham Art Galleries."[340] Haward was therefore part of the metropolitan cultural elite and his appointment could be seen as a bold move by the Art Gallery Committee given his predecessor was a local man who had been the Curator of MAG and its predecessor organisation the Royal Manchester Institution since 1874.[341]

Rutherston's 1926 speech credits Haward with being an important factor in his choice of MAG saying, "I have known Mr. Haward, your Curator, for some years. He and I have frequently discussed modern ideas as applied to the planning of museums and art galleries, and I have always been in sympathy with his views in connection with that problem."[342] Most of the

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[337] "New Manchester Exhibition Opened," 7.

[338] "Manchester Art Galleries. New Curator. The Appointment Made Yesterday," *Manchester Guardian*, 24 April 1914, 11.

[339] Ibid.

[340] Ibid.

[341] "Mr. William Stanfield. The Death of the Art Gallery Curator," *Manchester Evening News*, 8 Dec 1913, 5. For more information about MAG's early history see Stuart Macdonald, "The Royal Manchester Institution," in *Art and Architecture in Victorian Manchester*, ed. John H. G. Archer (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 28-45.

[342] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

correspondence between Rutherston and Haward in the RLC Archive is from 1925 onwards and relates specifically to discussions around Rutherston's gift, with letters before 1925 being limited to two exchanges in 1918 and 1922. An October 1918 letter from Rutherston lets Haward know about "a small show of Eric Gill woodcuts" to be held in Manchester, and offers Haward "[m]y hearty congrats. on your acquisition of that fine collection of Chinese and other porcelain."[343] Haward's reply acknowledges the information about the Gill show and tells Rutherston he was coming over to Bradford the following month to give a lecture at the BAC and asks Rutherston if he would be in Bradford then as "I should very much enjoy seeing you again."[344] He then refers to having seen Campbell Dodgson who mentioned Rutherston's prints (presumably the prints Rutherston donated to the British Museum that year described in the previous section) which Haward thinks he had not seen "when I came to see your pictures and should much like a chance of having a look at them some day."[345]

And then, in November 1922, Rutherston asks Haward "if it is possible to visit the collection of Mr. Kullmann who has a very interesting collection including pictures by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, &c.?"[346] In his reply Haward says he had only seen Kullmann's collection once some years ago and suggests that Rutherston should contact him directly (referring to him as H. C. Coleman).[347] This exchange highlights Rutherston's interest in French Post-Impressionist art even though he did not collect it himself, possibly because its prices were

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[343] Charles Rutherston, letter to Hayward [sic], 4 Oct 1918, R 78/27, MAG Archive.

[344] Lawrence Haward, letter to C. L Rutherstone [sic], 10 Oct 1918, R 78/27, MAG Archive. The misspelling of both men's names in this exchange suggests that this was early in their relationship

[345] Ibid.

[346] Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 7 Nov 1922, RLC 1/15, MAG RLC.

[347] Lawrence Haward, letter to Charles Rutherston, 8 Nov 1922, RLC 1/15, MAG RLC. Like Rutherston, Coleman was of German heritage and also anglicised his name in 1916 – for a brief biography see British Museum, "Herbert Charles Coleman," n.d., accessed 20 Oct 2025, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG122276.

already beyond Rutherston's financial means, and he seems to have followed up Haward's suggestion as he went on to become friends with Coleman who visited Rutherston's home in Bradford on several occasions between 1923 and 1927.[348]

It is possible to infer from these letters that Rutherston and Haward already knew each other by October 1918, they subsequently corresponded and met reasonably regularly, and their relationship focussed on their shared interest in art. Contemporary press coverage provides evidence of Haward's ideas about art and the role of art galleries in society, ideas which Rutherston shared and was perhaps influenced by. For example, a 1922 article in the *Manchester Guardian* reporting on a paper Haward presented to the Royal Society of Arts outlines Haward's thoughts on how MAG and other provincial galleries were "attempting, with varying degrees of success, to play some part in the artistic and educational life of the community surrounding it."[349] Although Haward does not specify whether he is referring to the education of artists or educating the public to appreciate art he is nevertheless explicitly recognising the *Use Value* of art in society, a philosophy which was to become central to Rutherston's gift. Haward goes on to explain the problems MAG was facing through a combination of lack of gallery space and a growing collection and how this was impacting on MAG's ability to play an educational role in the community, and makes a strong case for a new art gallery in Manchester.[350] However, Haward does not indicate that he had considered the idea of a loan scheme as a way of overcoming MAG's space problems and Rutherston's proposals just three years later might have provided Haward with the solution he was seeking.

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[348] Rutherston's Visitors Book.

[349] Lawrence Haward, "The Art Gallery & The City's Life. Manchester's Example. Mr. Haward Outlines A Live Policy," *Manchester Guardian*, 1 June 1922, 16.

[350] Ibid.

In June 1925 the winning design for the proposed new Manchester art gallery was announced and this seems to have been the catalyst for Rutherston to approach MAG about the possibility of gifting his collection.[351] Rutherston and Haward exchanged correspondence about arranging to meet on 10 July and it seems likely that this was when Rutherston outlined his proposals.[352] Haward must have discussed Rutherston's proposals with his Chairman immediately as Rutherston wrote to Alderman Todd on 16 July suggesting that he should join Haward on a visit to his home to look at his collection.[353] Todd and Haward visited Rutherston on 30 July and Rutherston wrote to Haward again the following week saying:

> As regards the scheme, I have ruminated over it and have talked it over with my brother Will and the more I think of it, the more I like it and I think the Didsbury Parsonage will do admirably as a temporary home for my collection and the scheme while the new Gallery is being built so you have my permission to go ahead & have it put before the Committee.[354]

The proposal that Didsbury Parsonage could be used to house the collection was not followed through, and Platt Hall became its "temporary home" as will be discussed in Part 2.

Rutherston formalised his offer to MAG in a letter to Alderman Todd on 12 September 1925, saying:

> I write to make an offer of the gift of my collection of oil-paintings, water-colours, drawings, wood-cuts, sculptures, etc. to the City of Manchester […]. That my collection as a whole be considered to form the nucleus (to which others, besides myself, may add) of a loan collection from which various works may be distributed on loan, as required, amongst the various Galleries and Schools of Art in Lancashire and Yorkshire, this area to be extended as time goes on if deemed advisable […].
>
> The reason that I propose making this gift at the present moment rather than at my death is that I may see the scheme working during my lifetime. With this intention I shall

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[351] "Manchester Art Gallery. London Architect's Winning Design," *Times*, 11 June 1925, 11.

[352] Lawrence Haward, letter to Charles Rutherston, 7 July 1925; Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 8 July 1925; Lawrence Haward, copy of wire to Charles Rutherston, 9 July 1925, all RLC 1/9 file 3, MAG RLC.

[353] Charles Rutherston, letter to Alderman Todd, 16 July 1925, RLC 1/9 file 3, MAG RLC.

[354] Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 8 Aug 1925, RLC 1/9 file 3, MAG RLC.

> probably settle in or near Manchester in order that I may take a personal share in the development of the scheme.[355]

In the end Rutherston did not move to Manchester as he had intended and his involvement in the scheme was curtailed by his poor health and his death at the end of 1927, although his widow Essil continued to play an active role in the scheme which will be examined in Part 2.

Rutherston's letter also offers to include as part of his gift "a comprehensive collection of reproductions of many of the most important works of Art, ancient and modern, throughout the world."[356] Rutherston emphasised the potential "educational value" of these reproductions and although he was not explicit about their specific *Use Value*, he was perhaps alluding to the broader art appreciation and understanding of art history which they offered compared to his modern art collection. However, this part of Rutherston's offer was not taken up at the time although many of his reproductions were subsequently given to MAG by Rutherston's widow Essil and daughter Jeannette, and MAG went on to acquire more reproductions as part of its development of the RLS as will be discussed in Part 2.

Rutherston's offer was formally accepted by Alderman Todd in a letter of 18 September 1925 saying, "allow me to express my most cordial appreciation of your very public spirited action in the matter of this gift and of the confidence you have placed in Manchester as the best centre for administrating the gift on the lines you desire."[357] That day's *Manchester Guardian* contained extensive coverage of the announcement of the gift including a transcript of Rutherston's offer letter and short interviews with both Haward, who describes the gift as "the very best private collection of English art in the country", and Alderman Todd, who outlined

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[355] Charles Rutherston, letter to Alderman Todd, 12 Sept 1925, RLC 1/9 file 3, MAG RLC.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Alderman Todd, letter to Charles Rutherston, 18 Sept 1925, RLC 1/9 file 3, MAG RLC.

plans for an exhibition of the collection at MAG and the Committee's intention "to secure a special building for the display of the collection."[358] The *Manchester Guardian* also provided the following assessment of Rutherston's collection:

> It represents, with great fullness and variety, the most vigorous movement in English art during the last half-century […]. The list of artists whose work is included in the collection is a striking list of distinguished names. But when Mr. Rutherston began to collect their works, their names were hardly known, or known only to the discerning few.[359]

This article therefore articulates the evolution in the *Art Value* of the collection, from the newness-value of the artworks when Rutherston acquired them, in many cases by artists who were "hardly known", to the relative art-value of the "distinguished names" represented in the proposed gift.

The *Manchester Guardian* also included a short article by the Bradford correspondent which focuses on Rutherston being from that city, saying:

> He has made many gifts to the Bradford Corporation's art collection at Cartwright Hall. Last year, for example, he gave two paintings by Professor Rothenstein, one of them a portrait of the artist. The Bradford School of Arts and Crafts has also benefited from his munificence, especially in books and drawings.[360]

This emphasises the positive relationship Rutherston had with his home city despite his decision to gift his collection to MAG, and this tone is repeated in the *Bradford Daily Telegraph's* coverage on the same day which focuses on Rutherston's contribution to Bradford and justifies his decision to take his collection away from the city being the result of Manchester's plans for

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[358] "Splendid Gift to Manchester. A Notable Collection of Modern Pictures," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Sept 1925, 9; "Mr. Lawrence Haward On The Gift," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Sept 1925, 9; "The Art Gift to Manchester. Early Exhibition in Mosley Street," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Sept 1925, 11.

[359] "The Art Gift to Manchester. A Representative Collection. Tribute to the City and its Gallery," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Sept 1925, 11.

[360] "The Art Gift to Manchester. Former Gifts to Bradford," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Sept 1925, 11.

the new gallery which provided Rutherston with "the opportunity to put his scheme into practice."[361]

The article also describes the collection as being "worth many thousands of pounds" but suggestions in other publications of a much higher financial value was a sensitive issue for Rutherston.[362] In particular, he was unhappy about the value of his gift being "estimated at £500,000" in the *Times* on 19 September and complained about this to Haward, requesting that "[s]hould the same error have appeared elsewhere, will you be so kind as to have it corrected?"[363] Haward replied by saying, "[h]eaven only knows where these figures came from. […] its monetary value was the last thing I was interested in", to which Rutherston responded:

> I fully agree with you that the monetary value of my collection ought to have no interest but as the absurd amount of half a million has crept into several papers […] I confess to being annoyed, firstly because a completely false impression of my means is being conveyed and secondly because I am now open to undue molestation in the shape of begging letters […]. However, I suppose I shall have to pay the penalty for having unwittingly and quite unintentionally stumbled into the limelight.[364]

This letter supports the general impression that Rutherston was essentially a private and modest person who was uncomfortable about his personal affairs being reported in the press, especially when it was inaccurate and gave the wrong impression about him and his financial means.

Rutherston's correspondence with MAG leading up to his formal offer refers to him discussing the idea with his brother William although, as noted earlier, I have found little evidence to suggest that the brothers discussed Rutherston's plans, including the specific

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[361] "Heaton Man's Art Gift. Valuable Collection for Manchester," *Bradford Daily Telegraph*, 18 Sept 1925.

[362] Ibid.

[363] "A Loan Collection For Manchester. Gift of Works of Art," *Times*, 19 Sept 1925, 12. Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 21 Sept 1925, RLC 1/9 file 3 of 5, MAG RLC.

[364] Lawrence Haward, letter to Charles Rutherston, 22 Sept 1925, RLC 1/9: File 3, MAG RLC; Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 23 Sept 1925, RLC 1/9: File 3, MAG RLC.

proposition that MAG might be the beneficiary of his gift, at any great length. The RLC Archive contains few letters between the brothers with just one letter from Rothenstein around this period, in September 1925 following the announcement of the gift (and the ensuing press coverage) in which Rothenstein says:

> Your munificence has been magnificently acknowledged by Manchester, & acclaimed by the world. […] You now have a place among the public benefactors of the country. […] I am delighted that your long contemplated scheme has matured so happily, & that your generosity should be acknowledged so fully in your own lifetime. The papers are full of you. […] Manchester has certainly risen to the occasion, & your example will I believe prove infectious. Essil's wedding gift has been given to the country, & I have no doubt she will prefer such a present to many ropes of pearls.[365]

Rothenstein's praise comes across as being over the top, slightly tongue in cheek or even facetious including the reference to "Essil's wedding gift", although as Rutherston and Essil were married in October 1925 just a few weeks after the confirmation of Rutherston's gift it is not entirely inconceivable that these two events were connected in some way.

The tone of Rothenstein's letter supports the impression given by much of the correspondence between the brothers that Rothenstein was somewhat self-centred and attention-seeking and perhaps did not take kindly to his elder brother taking the limelight. And, as discussed earlier, it seems possible that, by 1925, the two brothers were not in total agreement about the potential educational *Use Value* of Rutherston's collection of modern art, particularly where art schools were concerned. But by that time, as with his art collecting, Rutherston was very much his own man and perhaps for Rutherston obtaining his brother's blessing once the specific Manchester opportunity arose was to an extent a formality.

The discussion so far has focussed on Rutherston's choice of MAG as the beneficiary of his gift rather than his home city of Bradford, but were galleries in other cities ever considered?

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[365] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 20 Sept 1925, RLC 1/5 file 2, MAG RLC.

In his 1926 speech Rutherston said that he had originally considered finding (or founding) an institution in London to act as the base for a loan scheme which would cover the whole of England but had been "unsuccessful in finding an ideal solution."[366] John Rothenstein recalls in his autobiography:

> It was at one time his [Rutherston's] intention to present or bequeath his collection to the Tate, but Charles Aitken […] received his approaches in a manner which Charles [Rutherston] considered slighting - a manner due more, perhaps, to a kind of frosty shyness rather than to unqualified indifference to the proffered benefaction about which, however, he can hardly have been enthusiastic.[367]

This statement is not borne out by the evidence presented in this thesis regarding Rutherston's relationship with Aitken and in his speech Rutherston says, "I consulted Mr. Aitken, the Director of the Tate Gallery, to whom I explained my scheme […]. He gave my suggestion his hearty approval", indicating that the two men were on good terms. [368] There is no indication that Rutherston ever considered the Tate as the beneficiary of his gift or that Aitken had rejected the idea as John Rothenstein suggests, and if a discussion ever took place, it seems entirely possible that the idea was not pursued for perfectly valid reasons. In many respects Rutherston's collection replicated the collection of modern British art Aitken had already managed to build at the Tate over the previous decade (to which Rutherston and his brother William had contributed) and acquiring Rutherston's collection may therefore no longer have been a priority for Aitken.

In his speech Rutherston goes on to say, "I came to the conclusion that as London provided ample opportunities for seeing the work of modern Artists and Craftsmen, I preferred that the provinces should have the use of it", and that in discussions with Aitken they had agreed that "the best solution would be one of the big centres outside London such as Birmingham,

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[366] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.
[367] Rothenstein, *Summer's Lease*, 216-217.
[368] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

Liverpool, or Manchester."[369] Perhaps this statement was the genuine outcome of any discussion that took place between Rutherston and Aitken about London, and there is no evidence that either Birmingham or Liverpool was ever seriously considered. Of the two, Birmingham seems to have been the more likely option given Rutherston and his brother had strong connections with the city, particularly through their friendship with the Birmingham Group artists Southall and Gaskin, and Rutherston had already loaned works from his collection to the Birmingham School of Art.[370] Perhaps the concerns raised in 1920 when William Rothenstein rejected the opportunity to take up a teaching post there and Birmingham's strong association with the Arts and Crafts movement rather than later developments in modern art meant that Rutherston did not see Birmingham as a viable option.

In his 1926 speech Rutherston mentions that Manchester was "near my native city, so that my own county of Yorkshire could easily be included in my scheme", so it is perhaps surprising that Rutherston did not consider Leeds, also in Yorkshire and much closer to Bradford than Manchester, as a possible home for the collection particularly given Leeds's status relative to Bradford as the major economic and cultural centre in Yorkshire.[371] However, at the time Rutherston was making his decision Leeds Corporation had a poor reputation for its commitment to art and investment in its art gallery, illustrated by a December 1924 article in the *Yorkshire Post* saying, "[a] collector will not be induced to bequeath his works to a dingy, badly preserved, or insufficiently protected gallery, and a cheese-paring policy in such matters shows very little

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[369] Ibid. Given that Rutherston used the term "provinces" in his speech it seems likely that this did not have the negative connotations at the time that it now has.

[370] Correspondence indicates that in 1925 Rutherston was actively loaning artworks to the Birmingham School of Art – see for example Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 17 Nov 1925, RLC 1/9 file 3, MAG RLC.

[371] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11; Priestley, *English Journey*, 125.

foresight."[372] And even though Rutherston had connections to the progressive Leeds Arts Club and key people who had close associations with art in Leeds such as Sir Michael Sadler, perhaps the local rivalry between the two Yorkshire cities was such that Rutherston would never have considered Leeds as an option.

Priestley's *English Journey* provides a useful insight into some of the factors that might have attracted Rutherston to Manchester:

> [W]hen I was a boy, Manchester had the best newspaper and the best orchestra in the country, which is saying something: its citizens, who could read the Manchester Guardian in the morning and listen to the Hallé under Richter in the evening, were not badly off and could be said to be in touch with civilisation. […] Both the newspaper and the orchestra, like the cotton trade, are still there, but, also like the cotton trade, are not quite what they were; though both are much more like what they were than the cotton trade.[373]

Here Priestley is talking about Manchester in the 1930s, reflecting the impact of the depression and the demise of the cotton trade. Priestley was in Manchester partly to try out a new play, saying:

> A great many pieces are performed for the first time in Manchester nowadays, and the reason given […] is that Manchester audiences are good judges of the drama and that what pleases Manchester is sure to please the easy idle set of playgoers in London. […] Manchester […] happens to be at present the fashion, theatrical folk being creatures of fashion.[374]

So, despite the depression, this suggests that Manchester was still regarded as a cultural centre outside London rather than a provincial periphery. In his 1926 speech Rutherston indicated that the cultural achievements of Manchester had been an important factor in his decision, saying:

> I have always felt great admiration for your cultivation of the various arts - your deep interest in music, which led to the formation of the famous Hallé Orchestra […]; the importance of your University; your celebrated Rylands Library; your remarkable experiments in the theatre; your production of one of the greatest newspapers in the world [the *Manchester Guardian*] and your Municipal Art Gallery, so well managed and

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[372] H.T., "Leeds Art Collections. Presentation to the Art Gallery," *Yorkshire Post*, 6 Dec 1924, 14.
[373] Priestley, *English Journey*, 199.
[374] Ibid., 203.

> possessing one of the best collections of pictures, sculpture, and other works of art in the provinces.[375]

At the time of Rutherston's decision to choose MAG there was little evidence he could draw on about the operation of loan schemes similar to the one he had in mind and Rutherston's choice must therefore have come down largely to the confidence he had that the people there, and in particular Lawrence Haward, shared his vision and were committed to helping him achieve it. The prospect of a new art gallery in Manchester was also an important factor in Rutherston's decision which he acknowledged in his 1926 speech saying, "I knew you contemplated building a new art gallery, which I felt confident would be worthy of such a progressive city."[376] As the new gallery was never built it could therefore be argued that MAG received Rutherston's gift partly on a false premise.

Rutherston's Manchester gift was transferred in two batches, the first in June 1926 which formed the basis of an exhibition of the gift held at MAG from 15 July to 11 September 1926.[377] The opening of the exhibition was reported in the press, with the *Manchester Guardian* including a full transcript of Rutherston's speech which is widely referenced in this thesis.[378] The *Manchester Guardian* also quotes from the congratulatory messages which had been received by MAG from some of the key figures from the London art world who Rutherston had got to know over the previous two decades.

Charles Aitken describes Rutherston as a "man of taste, foresight and generosity" whose gift "has extended to thousands of people a source of enjoyment and education", a statement

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[375] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.
[376] Ibid.
[377] Charles Rutherston, list of artworks sent to the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 10 June 1926.
[378] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

highlighting two aspects of the potential *Use Value* of Rutherston's gift.[379] D. S. MacColl says, "this addition to what you [Manchester] have already will bring you incontestably into the first place among English provincial galleries for the range as well as the quality of your display of modern art", a comment which emphasises the *Art Value* of Rutherston's gift.[380] Sir Charles Holmes (Director of the National Gallery) says, "[t]he movements in England which Mr. Rutherston had supported […] would occupy a far higher place in English art history than most people gave them as yet", again a comment on the *Art Value* of the gift and specifically its newness-value at what was still a transitional moment for modern art in England.[381] Sir Robert Witt (Trustee of the National Gallery and Chairman of the National Art Collections Fund) describes Rutherston's collection "as an example of what could be done […] in the spirit of leading and not following public opinion", acknowledging that Rutherston's collecting had not only tracked the evolution in the *Art Value* of modern art in England but had contributed to it.[382] And Lord Henry Bentinck (Chairman of the CAS) states that, as a result of Rutherston's gift, "Manchester will in future possess a collection of works admired, valued, nay more - coveted by all lovers of modern art", another comment reflecting the transitional moment in the *Art Value* of modern art and the significance of Rutherston's gift.[383]

The second batch of artworks comprising Rutherston's Manchester gift was transferred to MAG in September 1926 immediately after the opening exhibition, with Rutherston's list of the artworks including the following statement:

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[379] "Manchester's New Art Treasures. Congratulatory Messages," *Manchester Guardian*, 16 July 1926, 11.
[380] Ibid.
[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid.
[383] Ibid.

> The one hundred and seventy seven items as contained in this and the preceding eight pages, together with the two hundred and eighty seven items as contained in the printed catalogue constitute the details of the collection presented to the Corporation of Manchester by Deed of Gift dated 15th July 1926.[384]

Rutherston confirmed these arrangements in a letter to Haward of 13 November 1926 with which he enclosed two signed copies of the list together with a copy of the opening exhibition catalogue annotated by Rutherston.[385] One copy of each document countersigned on behalf of MAG was returned to Rutherston with Haward's reply of 16 November, completing the legal formalities of the transfer of Rutherston's gift.[386]

For many years, and certainly since 1918, Rutherston had been formulating his ideas about how his art collection could be of future use to society but before 1925 he had been unable to identify a suitable vehicle for achieving his objectives. But the June 1925 announcement of MAG's plans to build a new art gallery provided the impetus for Rutherston to approach MAG about the possibility of gifting his collection, by September the basis of Rutherston's Manchester gift had been agreed and within a year the 464 artworks comprising the gift had been transferred to MAG to create the RLC.

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[384] Charles Rutherston, list of artworks sent to the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 30 Sept 1926.

[385] Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 13 Nov 1926, RLC 1/9: File 3, MAG RLC; "Exhibition of the Rutherston Gift of Modern Works of Art" signed and annotated by Charles Rutherston, RLC 1/4, MAG RLC.

[386] Lawrence Haward, letter to Charles Rutherston, 16 Nov 1926, RLC 1/9: File 3, MAG RLC. MAG's RLC Archive contains correspondence relating to the drawing up of the legal Deed of Gift (referred to as the Deed of Trust in some documents) prior to the transfer of the first batch of artworks in June 1926 although I have been unable to locate a copy of the Deed itself.

1.7 Interpreting Rutherston

> It seems to me that a possessor of works of Art is a trustee to the public and is not entitled to be so selfish as to keep them to himself.
>
> Charles Rutherston, 1926.[387]

Susan Pearce asserts that "[t]he usual distinction between 'collector' and 'miser/accumulator/hoarder' is that the collector has a 'rational' purpose in mind which the other does not. […] collections seldom begin in a deliberate way."[388] In these terms, the account of Rutherston's collecting set out in Part 1 illustrates how he began as an "accumulator" of art acquired from artists in his brother William's immediate circle, exemplified by Conder in the 1890s and Augustus John in the 1900s, before, from around 1915 onwards, evolving into a proactive "collector" of modern art with a clear view of the collection as an entity and the artworks he wanted it to comprise, including work by artists such as Nevinson, Lewis, Wadsworth, Nash, Sickert and Pissarro. Following his father's death at the end of 1914 Rutherston had inherited the financial means to accelerate his collecting although, unlike contemporaries such as Samuel Courtauld, his wealth was not at the level which enabled him to buy any art he desired.[389] It therefore seems likely that financial value did impose some constraints on Rutherston's collecting, and was a factor in his decision to focus on English modern art rather than, say, French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art.[390]

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[387] Rutherston, "Mr. Rutherston's Address," 11.

[388] Pearce, *On Collecting*, 21.

[389] "Obituary. Mr. M. Rothenstein," *Bradford Weekly Telegraph*, 11 Dec 1914, 7.

[390] Following Rutherston's death at the end of 1927 his estate was valued at £95,647 – see "Mr. C. L. Rutherston's Bequests," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 28 Feb 1928, 9. In comparison, in 1923 Courtauld gifted £50,000 to the Tate Gallery specifically to acquire French modern art for its new galleries, as discussed in 1.5.

Rutherston acquired around three hundred works in his Manchester gift, almost two-thirds of the total, after 1915 and although he continued to support unrecognised young artists and acquired work by his two brothers throughout his collecting career, he also broadened his collecting to include work by many of the artists who went on to become part of the established narrative of English modern art in the early twentieth century. In terms of *Art Value*, Rutherston therefore progressed from a focus on the newness-value of work by relatively unknown contemporary artists to acquiring work by artists whose work already had (or Rutherston hoped would soon have) relative art-value, as modern art influenced by Impressionism and Post-Impressionism gradually became an accepted part of the English national culture.

This change in Rutherston's collecting was also driven by his emerging idea of the potential *Use Value* of the collection, focussed on educating the public about the *Art Value* of modern art and encouraging the next generation of artists. Rutherston's gift also included a small number of artworks whose *Art Value* largely consisted of their historical value, in particular several examples of English art from earlier in the nineteenth century and a small group of Hokusai drawings from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. But these were exceptions in a collection largely comprising modern English art, and Rutherston must have included them in the gift because he felt that, from an art historical perspective, they also had some educational *Use Value.*

As Part 1 has described, Rutherston was building his collection during a transitional period in English art from the academic art of the Victorian period to the emergence of early twentieth-century modernism but, as such, the collection was certainly not unique. What makes the collection particularly significant is that Rutherston, a Bradford textile merchant of German-Jewish heritage, was not a typical collector of modern art at that time. Rutherston's collection of

modern art can be interpreted as forming part of an identity he wanted to construct for himself in terms of his nationality, ethnicity and class, in line with Belk's notion of collections forming an "extended self" and Pearce linking identity and collecting, saying that "[o]ur collections […] offer us the romantic chance to complete ourselves […]. They are both autobiography and monument."[391]

Along with younger brother Albert, in April 1916 at the height of the First World War Rutherston took the significant step of anglicising his surname because of the anti-German sentiment experienced by the family during the War, illustrated by correspondence between Rutherston and his brother William. Following the sinking of the British liner Lusitania by the Germans in May 1915 Rutherston said, "[t]his Lusitania business is dreadful and for the first time I seriously wish that my name were less German. I am afraid […] that a terrible odium will be cast upon all Germans."[392] Rothenstein replied by suggesting that Rutherston should consider changing the name of Rutherston's Bradford wool merchant business, and Rutherston must have taken his brother's advice around this time as, when Rutherston retired in 1919, the business was trading as Rutherston, Hayburn and Company.[393]

Letters from William to Rutherston highlight the soul-searching the three brothers must have gone through before Rutherston and Albert changed their name. Initially, William had also agreed to the name change, saying on around 18 April, "I signed the deed yesterday, so we

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[391] Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self."; Pearce, *On Collecting*, 254.

[392] Charles Rothenstein, letter to William Rothenstein, 10 May 1915, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 1: 9, HLH.

[393] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 13 May 1915, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH. The business had traded under the name Kafka, Rothenstein & Co. until September 1914 when the partnership was dissolved on the retirement of Moritz Rothenstein and Emil Kafka – see "Partnerships Dissolved," *London Gazette*, 8 Sept 1914. The business was taken over by Rutherston and Edward Heilborn although I have been unable to find out the new partnership's trading name prior to its subsequent anglicisation - see "Partnerships Dissolved," *London Gazette*, 12 Sept 1919.

brothers have now all the same name. I confess to some feeling of regret – I have no doubt you had it too – but John [Rothenstein's son] very emphatically wanted me to follow your & Albert's example […] to remove difficulties from my children's path later on."[394] But just a few days later, William wrote again to say he had changed his mind:

> I signed my deed poll as I wrote you. But I found that having done so the wisdom of the change seemed in my case so doubtful […]: the advantage to John & Billy [Rothenstein's sons] may partly be countered by the disadvantage of giving up one that is, in a way, fairly well known […]. On the whole I am inclined to leave things as they are.[395]

Correspondence with William almost two years later indicates Rutherston went on to regret the decision to change his name, although he decided to retain the new name primarily for his daughter's sake:

> You wrote me in your last letter that as I had serious thoughts about taking back my old name you feared I had had further unpleasantness. No, I had simply begun to realise what a mistake I made at the time when deciding to change it but in the meanwhile I have decided for Jeannette's sake not to change it back.[396]

I have not seen any other correspondence in which Rutherston elaborates on the reasons why he now believed he had made a mistake and there are no indications that he revisited this issue again. Perhaps Rutherston eventually became more comfortable with the change over time, and it may certainly have been helpful in establishing his own identity as an art collector which differentiated him from his more famous artist brother.

The above evidence suggests that Rutherston's change of name was primarily related to his desire to identify as being English rather than German, but it is less clear whether Rutherston also wanted to distance himself from his Jewish heritage. Rutherston would have no doubt

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[394] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 18 Apr 1916, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH. This letter is annotated 23 April (possibly by Rutherston) but it must precede the 21 April letter, and the day (Tuesday) would suggest 18 April.

[395] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rothenstein, 21 Apr 1916, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

[396] Charles Rutherston, letter to William Rothenstein, 26 Feb 1918, MS Eng 1148 Box 38: 1297, HLH.

experienced antisemitism throughout his life, but I have found no specific evidence about this although primary and secondary source material about brother William's relationship with his Jewish heritage may provide some insight into Rutherston's own position. The only significant reference I have found in correspondence between Rutherston and William is a letter William wrote at the end of 1903 just after he had begun work on a series of paintings of the Jewish community in London's East End in which he says:

> I am hopelessly ignorant of things Jewish, having neglected my early opportunities. […] if anyone had told me a dozen years ago I should now regret having neglected semitic ritual, I would have laughed at the notion. The Jews are servile, suspicious, secretive & tragically attracted by the clunk of coin, but they have a noble element in them.[397]

Even though William expresses regret at not having retained much knowledge of his Jewish heritage, his description of the Jewish community is that of an outsider rather than of someone who identifies with them. In his memoirs written almost thirty years later William describes the time he spent in the East End of London painting the Jewish community there:

> The Jews here, I saw, were suspicious of strangers […]. I was suspected, since I was ignorant alike of Hebrew and ceremonial, of being a missionary from a society for the conversion of Jews. […] It was the time of the Russian Pogroms and my heart went out to these men of a despised race, from which I too had sprung, though regarded as a stranger among them.[398]

William goes on to say, not quite so empathetically, "I was tired of painting the greasy clothes and shawls of East-End Jews."[399] Writing in the 1930s when antisemitism was rife (in England as elsewhere in Europe) it is possible that William chose to distance himself from his Jewish heritage, although there is also some consistency with the opinions he had expressed in his 1903 letter to Rutherston.

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[397] William Rothenstein to Charles Rothenstein, 20 Dec 1903.

[398] Rothenstein, *Men And Memories 1900-1922*, 35-36.

[399] Ibid., 97.

Several secondary sources have analysed William Rothenstein's Jewish identity in some detail, for example Samuel Shaw's 2010 thesis describes Rothenstein's "relatively ambiguous relationship with his own Jewish identity", one aspect of the *Equivocal Positions* of the thesis's title.[400] Shaw's analysis indicates that Rothenstein's antipathy to the Jewish community he encountered in East London did not necessarily signify the total rejection of his own Jewish heritage, but rather reflected the difference between the son of German-Jewish immigrants already assimilated into English society and the impoverished recent immigrants from Russia saying, "[i]t is as if his principal desire is to make a connection with the history, the traditions and the essential concept of the Jews; less so with the Jews themselves."[401] So, Rothenstein seems to have identified with the Jewishness of the people he was painting in the East End of London but not with their nationality and class, which raises the question as to whether Rutherston had a similarly "ambiguous relationship" with his Jewish heritage.

Priestley's *English Journey* provides a useful insight into the German-Jewish community in Rutherston's Bradford home, with Priestley remarking on the difference in attitudes between when he was growing up in Bradford before the First World War and going back to the city in the early 1930s:

> And then there was this curious leaven of intelligent aliens, chiefly German-Jews and mostly affluent. They were so much a part of the place when I was a boy that it never occurred to me to ask why they were there. […] they had always been with us and would always remain. […] And in those days a Londoner was a stranger sight than a German. There was, then, this odd mixture in pre-war Bradford. […] Bradford was determinedly Yorkshire and provincial, yet some of its suburbs reached as far as Frankfurt and Leipzig. It was odd enough. But it worked.[402]

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[400] Shaw, "'Equivocal Positions'," 222.

[401] Ibid., 218.

[402] Priestley, *English Journey*, 126.

So, before the First World War, Bradford was a cultural mix of "Yorkshire and provincial" and the cosmopolitanism of its German-Jewish community, exemplified by the Rothenstein family.[403] But Priestley goes on to say:

> The war changed all that. There is hardly a trace now in the city of that German-Jewish invasion. Some of the merchanting houses changed their names and personnel; others went out of business. I liked the city better as it was before, and most of my fellow-Bradfordians agree with me. It seems smaller and duller now. I am not suggesting that these German-Jews were better men than we are. The point is that they were different, and brought more to the city than bank drafts and lists of customers. […] Bradford is really more provincial now than it was twenty years ago. But so, I suspect, is the whole world. It must be when there is less and less tolerance in it, less free speech, less liberalism.[404]

As noted above, Rutherston's business was just one of the Bradford "merchanting houses" that changed its name, and Priestley gives a sense that after the First World War Bradford had become more provincial, and a more uncomfortable place for its German-Jewish community, than before it.

Brandon Taylor describes the rise of far-right politics in Britain after the War, and how the art world, and modern art in particular, became a focus for antisemitism in the right-wing press.[405] Taylor identifies specific targets, all of whom were part of the art world Rutherston had become part of, including the artist Jacob Epstein, the art critic P. G. Konody, "the Jewish-controlled Leicester and Goupil Galleries" and "[p]atrons and collectors like Sir Michael Sadler and Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, both of them Jews and modernists."[406] Although

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[403] Samuel Shaw examines the impact on William Rothenstein's life and work in terms of this mixture of the provincialism and cosmopolitanism of his Bradford upbringing – Shaw, *Art, Identity and Cosmopolitanism*, 89.

[404] Ibid., 127.

[405] Taylor, "Foreigners and Fascists," 179-181.

[406] Ibid., 182-183. Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck played a leading role in the Contemporary Art Society from its foundation in 1910 until his death in 1931, and "whose enthusiastic services as Chairman so largely contributed to its success" – see Contemporary Art Society, *Report 1930-1931* (London: Contemporary Art Society, 1932), 7.

Rutherston seems to have not overtly identified as Jewish, particularly after changing his name, his Jewish heritage would no doubt have been widely known not least in his home city. Perhaps in the 1920s it felt more comfortable for Rutherston to be Jewish as part of his London art network despite the antisemitism it was subject to, than at home in provincial Bradford. It therefore seems possible that, like his brother, for Rutherston the relationship between his Jewish heritage and class was an important factor in the construction of his identity.

Rutherston's focus on collecting modern art clearly had class connotations as at that time modern art was largely the preserve of an English metropolitan cultural elite, Philip Dodd's idea of a "dominant English" who shaped the English national culture.[407] This national culture included the gradual assimilation of modern art during the early part of the twentieth century, corresponding to an evolution in modern art's *Art Value* from newness-value to the relative art-value of art that was increasingly to contemporary tastes. The emerging emphasis of Rutherston's collecting on the *Art Value* of the works of modern art he acquired reflects Pearce's assertion that collections are fundamentally concerned with the "symbolic value" societies bestow upon objects and the impact which this has on the selections made by collectors.[408] Pearce draws on Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "habitus" and "cultural capital", saying:

> Bourdieu sees material possessions as representing the individual's possession of symbolic and cultural capital and the way in which taste can be displayed. Not all possess this capital to the same extent since each has his 'habitus' or personal cultural inheritance which limits his ability to move up the social hierarchy.[409]

Bourdieu's "habitus" is primarily concerned with class and the distinctions societies make between the cultural value attributed to objects essentially following class divisions, Pearce

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[407] Dodd, "Englishness," 27-29 & 44.
[408] Pearce, *On Collecting*, 285.
[409] Ibid., 9-10; Bourdieu and Bennett, *Distinction*.

noting that Bourdieu's "cultural code, his *habitus*, is only available to those who have been educated to understand it", that is only to those possessing the necessary cultural capital, or in other words possessing an understanding of the framework of cultural value.[410] So, by collecting modern art which mirrored, and helped to shape, the evolution of its *Art Value*, and identifying a *Use Value* for his collection concerned with educating society about the *Art Value* of modern art as part of the dissemination of the national culture, Rutherston was demonstrating he had acquired the "cultural capital" required to identify with a metropolitan cultural elite.

Frederick Baekeland's observations are relevant here when he says, "[i]n the case of the rich industrialist, […] vanity and a desire for social advancement seem to play major roles. […] owning paintings makes him feel more educated."[411] Baekeland describes how through collecting art a collector can move in different social circles to his home or work life, saying that collecting art "involves regular personal and epistolary contacts with other collectors, with artists, with dealers and with museum staffs [sic]. In many cases these contacts have broadened his social life by developing into friendships with people with very different personalities and backgrounds", which as Part 1 has demonstrated was certainly true for Rutherston.[412]

The two photographs of Rutherston's home taken in about 1912 introduced earlier provide some insights here, suggesting that even before the First World War Rutherston was using art in the construction of his identity. The photographs can be interpreted in terms of Belk's assertion that people maintain "a hierarchical arrangement of levels of self, because we exist not only as individuals, but also as collectivities [sic]", the most relevant "collectivities" for Belk

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[410] Pearce, *On Collecting*, 366.
[411] Baekeland, "Psychological aspects of art collecting," 206.
[412] Ibid., 210.

being family, community and group.[413] The first photograph (Fig.15) shows the drawing room where guests were received and entertained with three paintings by his brother William displayed, two of Rothenstein's daughters, *Rachel Queen* (Fig.13) and *Princess Betty* (Fig.14) either side of *Reading the Book of Esther* (Fig.44). *Rachel Queen* and *Princess Betty* project Rutherston's strong identification with "family" whilst *Reading the Book of Esther* acknowledges Rutherston's Jewish heritage and the "community" he chose to identify with, at least whilst his parents were still alive and likely to have been regular visitors to his home.[414]

It is interesting to note that in 1917 Rutherston described in a letter to William how he had rehung some of his paintings, including moving *Reading the Book of Esther* from its prominent position above the drawing room fireplace where all visitors would have seen it to the dining room, replacing it with a recent landscape painting by William, *St. Martin's Summer*, 1915 (Fig.45), although the paintings of his two nieces remained in the drawing room.[415] By 1917 both Rutherston's parents had died and Rutherston had changed his name, so perhaps Rutherston no longer had a reason to publicly display his Jewish heritage and wanted this aspect of his identity to remain more private.

The second photograph (Fig.16) is of a more personal, private space, showing Rutherston standing by the fireplace with John's *Merekli* displayed behind him. Although Rutherston had acquired *Merekli* when John was relatively unknown, by the time the photograph was taken

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[413] Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self," 152.

[414] Rutherston's mother, Bertha, died in July 1912 and his father, Moritz, in December 1914 see "Deaths," *Times*, 17 Jul 1912, 1; "Obituary. Mr. M. Rothenstein," 7. Compared to the portraits and landscapes comprising the majority of William Rothenstein's oeuvre, the social realism of his works depicting the Jewish community in the East End of London such as *Reading the Book of Esther* could be regarded as a distinctly modern subject. However, Rutherston's acquisition of the work from his brother and its prominent display alongside family portraits seems unlikely to have been motivated by its modernity.

[415] Charles Rutherston, letter to William Rothenstein, 30 Sept 1917, MS Eng 1148 Box 38: 1297, HLH.

around ten years later John had become acknowledged in England as an important contemporary artist. This photograph might therefore suggest that Rutherston already wanted to be identified with modern English art as its *Art Value* was beginning to transition from newness-value to relative art-value and become assimilated into the national culture, the class associations of which are emphasised by Rutherston's own dress and pose. This provides an early indication of the "group" identity as part of a culturally educated elite he was to develop further in the second half of his collecting career, and chose to project to the many visitors to his home from his growing artistic network.

Both these photographs include objects from Rutherston's wider art collection, specifically his Chinese antiques which, at the time the photographs were taken, formed an important part of Rutherston's collecting as described earlier. As with his modern art collecting, he could have been motivated by the *Art Value* of these objects, either their historical value or their increasing relative art-value resulting from their stylistic appeal to modern tastes in the early twentieth century. Alternatively, Rutherston's "ever-increasing mania" for Chinese antiques might have simply been about the individual objects themselves and the personal pleasure they gave him. However, it is also possible that in this aspect of his collecting he could have been what Baekeland describes as a "snob collector […] especially concerned that his area of interest be one that is followed by few, if any, others. His primary demand is for uniqueness."[416]

The possible significance of Rutherston's collection of Chinese antiques to the construction of his identity can perhaps be illustrated by the loan of antique Chinese ceramics he made to Leeds Art Gallery in 1922.[417] Sir Michael Sadler, then Vice-Chancellor of the University

[416] Baekeland, "Psychological aspects of art collecting," 213.
[417] H.T., "Leeds Art Gallery Loan Exhibition," 10.

of Leeds, wrote to Rutherston to thank him for the loan saying, "[n]othing so fine has been seen at any Leeds show in my memory."[418] Sadler goes on to say that he was unlikely to be able to afford to purchase early Chinese ceramics and asks for Rutherston's advice on the best books on the subject, providing an example of the enduring attraction of the luxury art book as a proxy for the artworks themselves.[419] It must have been gratifying for Rutherston to get positive feedback on his collection of Chinese antiques from such an important figure in the art world as Sadler, and even more so to be asked to offer advice to him. Through collecting modern art Rutherston had been able to identify with an English cultural elite exemplified by fellow collectors such as Sadler. But with his Chinese antiques he was able to demonstrate that even within this cultural elite group he was a real connoisseur able to take a lead in an unfamiliar field, not just following the evolution in the *Art Value* attributed to works of art but in this area helping to shape it.

Given the limited primary source evidence, it is not clear exactly how and when Rutherston's belief in the potential educational *Use Value* of his modern art collection developed although the analysis in Part 1 suggests he was already beginning to formulate his plans by 1918. However, even before the First World War, and before he had evolved into the purposeful collector of modern art he was later to become, Rutherston demonstrated a desire to broaden access to modern art in the North of England, perhaps exemplified by his ultimately unsuccessful involvement with the BAC between 1909 and 1912. Rutherston's emerging philosophy was given further impetus by the priority given to education in general, and cultural education in particular, in the aftermath of the First World War, with 1920 being a particularly significant year in the development of Rutherston's thinking. Firstly, his brother William was able to facilitate

[418] Sir Michael Sadler, letter to Charles Rutherston, 23 Sept 1922, RLC 1/24 file 10, MAG RLC.
[419] Ibid.

loans from Rutherston's collection to the University of Sheffield and the constructive feedback these small exhibitions received in the local press must have encouraged Rutherston greatly. Secondly, in the same year William decided not to take a teaching position at the Birmingham School of Art before, a few months later, being appointed as principal at the RCA and art education was a significant topic of discussion between the two brothers in their correspondence during this period. Around this time Rutherston started to loan artworks to the Bradford School of Arts and Crafts and over the next few years other loans to art schools followed as Rutherston refined his plans.

Although Rutherston was able to test out his ideas for a loan scheme from the perspective of potential borrowers (in particular, art schools) it would have been more difficult to trial the scheme from the perspective of a host institution and, to some extent, Rutherston was taking a leap of faith when he chose MAG as the recipient of his gift. In the early 1920s, except for the V&A's well established Circulation Department within which the visual arts played a relatively minor role, no significant loan schemes were being run by either London or provincial art galleries.[420] Rutherston therefore had no examples to draw on, or any information about the capabilities of art institutions in operating such a scheme. In a sense, this supports Borzello's assertion that this was a fallow period for concerted attempts to educate the public about art, and the lack of institutional support partly explains why schemes such as the ALS's Art Section met with limited success.

[420] A broad survey of art in the UK undertaken as part of The Arts Enquiry identifies the Rutherston Loan Scheme, the Arts Exhibition Bureau (a commercial concern established in 1919) and a small number of school loan schemes set up by local authorities in the 1930s as the only other circulating schemes in operation before the Second World War – see The Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 135-142.

As with his collecting, Rutherston's decision to give most of his modern art collection to an art gallery on the condition that it should form the basis of a loan scheme, and his choice of MAG rather than Cartwright Hall in his home city of Bradford as the beneficiary of his gift, can also be interpreted as another step in the construction of his identity. Pearce describes how museums sit at the top of the system through which societies bestow cultural value on objects and collections saying, "[m]useums overarch the system of collections; they are the final, eternal resting-places of those collected objects which are deemed to be paradigms of their kind within the framework of value."[421] Rutherston wanted his collection to be associated with the progressive approach of MAG and its Curator, Lawrence Haward, who was part of the metropolitan cultural elite, rather than the conservatism of Cartwright Hall and Butler Wood which epitomised a background Rutherston was seeking to distance himself from. Having his gift accepted by MAG therefore provided the ultimate validation of the cultural value of his collection of modern art, and the *Art Value* of the artworks it comprised, and therefore of Rutherston's own cultural capital identifying him as a member of the English cultural elite. This personal validation was reinforced by the congratulatory messages sent to MAG by key figures from the London art world following the formal transfer of the gift.

By stipulating that his gift should form the basis of a loan scheme to be used for educational purposes, Rutherston was also expressing a belief that modern art had an important *Use Value* in society. But Rutherston's idea of art's *Use Value* was concerned with educating the public and aspiring artists about the *Art Value* of modern art, meaning that *Use Value* and *Art Value* were inextricably linked as part of a top-down construct of cultural value imposed on society by the cultural elite Rutherston sought to identify with. Part 2 will go on to demonstrate

[421] Pearce, *On Collecting*, 387.

how a more democratic idea of the *Use Value* of art, reflecting Raymond Williams' social definition of culture as something which develops from the everyday lives of ordinary people, began to emerge during the first twenty-five years in the life of the RLC and RLS.[422]

[422] Williams, *The Long Revolution*, 41.

PART 2 – EVOLUTION OF RUTHERSTON LOAN COLLECTION AND LOAN SCHEME, 1926-1950

Part 2 of this thesis examines the development of the RLC between 1926 and 1950 and the extent to which this reflected the specific demands placed on it as a loan collection by the RLS. It also examines how and why the RLS evolved as it did over this period in terms of the change in the institutions which borrowed from the RLS, with schools (which had not been part of Rutherston's initial vision) emerging as the main beneficiaries, the ways in which the artworks were used by borrowers, and the extent to which this reflected wider social changes over the period particularly in relation to education. In terms of the focus of this research on the idea of cultural value, Part 2 therefore addresses the evolution of the relationship between the *Art Value* of the RLC as a collection of modern art, and its educational *Use Value* delivered via the RLS, considered within the wider educational and art historical context.

Once the transfer of Rutherston's Manchester gift was completed in September 1926, MAG established a sub-committee of its main Art Gallery Committee on which Rutherston would sit to oversee the management of the RLC and RLS.[423] The earliest meeting of the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee for which records have been found was in November 1926 with Rutherston attending "in an advisory capacity."[424] Following Rutherston's death at the end of 1927, in April 1928 his widow Essil accepted an invitation to take her late husband's place

[423] This requirement was stipulated in a letter from Rutherston which formed part of the Deed of Trust – see Charles Rutherston letter to Alderman Todd, Art Gallery Chairman, 9 June 1926, RLC 1/9 file 3 of 5, MAG RLC.

[424] Minutes of Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee meeting, 25 Nov 1926, Curator's Instruction Book No 17, 15/1/25 to 21/7/27, MAG Archive. The thesis has standardised on the name Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee although this is slightly misleading as management of the Rutherston Loan Scheme was a key part of the Sub-Committee's remit.

on the Sub-Committee and, as Part 2 will demonstrate, in this role Essil was to make a major contribution to the development of the RLC and RLS for the next twenty years.[425]

Essil was forty-five years old when she married Rutherston and entered the RLC/RLS story and it is therefore important to understand how her previous life equipped her to make such a significant contribution. Essil was the youngest of James and Cecilia Elmslie's four children, her father being a captain of ships sailing between Britain and Australia in the late nineteenth century.[426] Essil attended the Slade School of Art in five out of eight academic years between 1898 and 1906 when she was registered as living at the family home in Bedford.[427] During her time at the Slade she was a fellow student of Rutherston's younger brother Albert, and it is possible that she may have first met Rutherston then although I have found no evidence to confirm this. Essil was a prize winner during her time at the Slade, including her *Portrait of an Old Man* (Fig.46) which was awarded joint second prize for Head Painting in 1901.[428] The Slade archive contains a photograph taken in about 1903 of a group of women students (Fig.47), described in the archive as "the Elmslie Circle of women" which suggests that Essil (on the left of the photograph) was seen as a leader amongst her group of contemporaries at the Slade.[429]

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[425] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 20 Apr 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC; Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 24 Apr 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC. At the end of 1929 Rutherston's daughter Jeannette Rutherston (later Powell) also agreed to become a co-opted member of the Sub-Committee – see Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 28 Nov 1929, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[426] Elmslie, "Essil Forrest Elmslie".

[427] Attendance records for the Slade School of Art are included in the UCL Calendar for each academic year, available online at UCL Library Services, "Digital Collections".

[428] The Public Catalogue Foundation, *Oil Paintings in Public Ownership in London: The Slade School of Fine Art & University College London Art Collections* (2005), 102. Note that in this publication Essil Elmslie's surname is incorrectly recorded as "Emslie".

[429] Chaplin, *Slade Archive Reader, volume 1*, 10.

After leaving the Slade, in the years leading up to the First World War Essil was active as an artist in London, exhibiting with both the NEAC and the Friday Club although she is rarely mentioned in contemporary press coverage.[430] As Rutherston was a regular visitor to London art exhibitions during this period, particularly the NEAC, it seems possible that they would have met, perhaps renewing their acquaintance from Essil's time at the Slade. Essil's painting *Emma, Covent Garden*, 1909 (Fig.48) was produced during this period, and as far as I am aware this work and her Slade *Portrait of an Old Man* are the only paintings by Essil held in UK public art collections.[431] Essil's involvement with the Friday Club originally formed in 1905 by Vanessa Bell (then Vanessa Stephen), Essil's contemporary at the Slade, extended beyond Essil's own artistic production, as by 1910 she had taken over from Bell as club secretary.[432] The Friday Club was progressive for its time, beginning its life as a home for Bell and other artists in London's Bloomsbury group and going on to promote the emerging English response to Post-Impressionism. Essil was therefore well integrated into the London modern art world during this formative period even though she was not a prolific artist in her own right.

However, it appears that by 1914 Essil had withdrawn from the London art world and in about 1916 she began a new career as an art teacher and although the reasons are unclear this might have been prompted by the pragmatic need for Essil to earn an income, with teaching providing a more reliable source of income than being an artist, particularly for a woman.[433] Again for reasons which are unclear, Essil returned to the London art world in 1923 to run the

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[430] I have found two articles with explicit references to works by Essil Elmslie - "Art. The New English Art Club," *Truth*, 15 Dec 1909, 1440; Martin Hardie, "The World of Art. The Friday Club," *The Queen, The Lady's Newspaper*, 1 Feb 1913, 211.

[431] Caroline Elmslie has provided details of other artworks by Essil which are still in the possession of the Elmslie family, in England and Australia.

[432] Richard Shone, "The Friday Club," *The Burlington Magazine* 117, no. 866 (1975): 280, 283.

[433] Elmslie, "Essil Forrest Elmslie".

newly-opened Redfern Gallery, recalled by Jeannette Powell (Rutherston's daughter and Essil's stepdaughter) in a 1983 letter to MAG saying, "[s]he subsequently gave up teaching and went to work in the old Redfern Gallery in Bond Street, where my father re-met her, and she left to marry him", which confirms that Essil already knew Rutherston by this time.[434] Rutherston and Essil were married on 15 October 1925 (Fig.49) a month after he made the formal offer of his Manchester gift, and just over two years later Essil was a widow and had taken on the responsibility for ensuring her husband's vision was achieved.

A few days before Rutherston and Essil married, the *Manchester Guardian* had reported that Platt Hall had been secured by the Art Gallery Committee as a temporary home for the RLC pending the completion of the new Manchester art gallery.[435] However, following the transfer of Rutherston's gift, the RLC was temporarily stored at the Queen's Park branch gallery whilst the renovation of Platt Hall was completed, with Sydney Cleveland, the Assistant Curator at Queen's Park, taking on responsibility for the RLC.[436] Platt Hall was eventually opened in May 1927 as "a new branch Art Gallery for Manchester, housing the Rutherston collection of pictures and drawings."[437] Cleveland also moved from Queen's Park to become Platt Hall's Assistant Curator retaining responsibility for the RLC/RLS, a role in which he went on make a significant contribution including establishing a close working relationship with Essil Rutherston.

When Platt Hall opened, plans for the proposed new Manchester art gallery were on hold and although there were several attempts to resurrect these plans over the next few years

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[434] Jeannette Powell, letter to Jane Farrington, 20 Sept 1983, file for Essil Elmslie, MAG AF.

[435] "The Future of Platt Hall. Temporary Centre for the Rutherston Gift," *Manchester Guardian*, 9 Oct 1925, 13.

[436] Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee minutes, 25 Nov 1926.

[437] B.D.T., "Platt Hall. A New Branch Art Gallery," *Manchester Guardian*, 23 May 1927, 11. Manchester City Art Gallery, "Annual Report of the Committee 1927", 2, MAG Archive.

(reported in the *Manchester Guardian* in March 1930, for example) they were finally abandoned in 1936 as a result of a major financial restructuring by the Council.[438] Platt Hall remained the home of the RLC until the end of 1940 when it was taken over by the police authorities for the remainder of the Second World War and the RLC was transferred to Queen's Park which continued as the home of the RLC for the rest of its life.[439] Although in 1925 the prospect of a prestigious new gallery for his collection had been attractive to Rutherston, the analysis in Part 2 will suggest that the delays and eventual abandoning of plans for the new gallery did not have a detrimental effect on the RLC/RLS and, after Rutherston's death, this does not seem to have been raised as a significant issue. This perhaps reflects the fact that although having a prestigious new home for his gift may have been important to Rutherston in the construction of his identity (as discussed in Part 1), having a permanent exhibiting space for the RLC was of secondary importance to its function as a loan collection.

The opening of Platt Hall marked the official launch of the RLS although some loans had taken place before then. A circular was issued in July 1927 under a covering letter from Lawrence Haward setting out the mechanics of the scheme, with a view to it being fully operational for the forthcoming autumn term.[440] Loans were restricted to a maximum of thirty works with three twelve week loan periods each year coinciding with art school terms.[441] The first RLC catalogue published in 1929 restated this system for administering the RLS which

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[438] "The New Manchester Art Gallery," *Manchester Guardian*, 25 March 1930, 12; "Manchester's Five-Year Plan to be Scrapped?," *Manchester Guardian*, 15 Feb 1936, 15. In 1938 the Athenaeum building next door to the City Art Gallery was secured by the Council to provide the additional exhibition space which MAG had been seeking for many years – see "Athenaeum as Art Gallery Extension. Purchase Scheme Approved," *Manchester Guardian*, 2 June 1938, 13.

[439] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 20 Dec 1940, RLC 1/32 file 4, MAG RLC.

[440] Lawrence Haward, "Rutherston Loan Scheme", July 1927, RLC 1/32 file 2, MAG RLC.

[441] Ibid.

remained broadly unchanged for the next twenty years, until the scheme was reorganised in 1948, as will be discussed in 2.6.[442]

Appendix C sets out an indicative analysis of the RLS loans by type of borrowing institution between 1927 and 1940, a period for which it has been possible to derive relatively good data from the primary source materials in the RLC Archive. This shows the significant increase in the annual number of loans over this period, from an average of twenty-five loans per year between 1927 and 1930 to almost one hundred loans per year between 1938 and 1940, growth which was predicated on the expansion of the RLS first to secondary schools in 1930 and then to elementary schools in 1936. Insufficient data has been found in the RLC Archive to compile a detailed analysis for the period after 1940, but the RLC Archive does contain data on the total annual number of loans showing an increase to 182 loans in 1945, 242 in 1947 and (following the 1948 reorganisation of the RLS) 339 in 1950.[443]

Initially MAG did not attempt to support borrowing institutions' use of the loaned artworks and therefore had no systematic way of judging the success of the RLS other than by counting numbers of borrowers and loans. The impetus for visiting borrowers initially came from Essil Rutherston who in February 1930 wrote to MAG's Chairman to let him know that Eric Gregory had arranged for the two of them to visit some of the art schools and galleries in Yorkshire which had already borrowed from the RLS, and to suggest that something similar might be arranged for borrowers in the Manchester area perhaps accompanied by Sydney Cleveland.[444] Essil's proposal was wholeheartedly supported by the Chairman including her

[442] City of Manchester Art Gallery, "Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection", 1929, RLC 1/4, MAG RLC.
[443]Manchester City Art Gallery, "Borrowing statistics 1928-1968", c.1969, RLC 1/20 file 5, MAG RLC.
[444] Essil Rutherston, letter to Alderman Sutton, 16 Feb 1930, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

suggestion about Cleveland's involvement, and Essil's first visits under the auspices of MAG took place in March 1930 and were documented in a report produced the following month.[445] Visits to borrowers soon became an integral part of MAG's management of the RLS with Essil Rutherston playing a central role, continuing to visit borrowers and provide feedback on her visits to MAG until at least 1945 which provides an important source of primary source evidence for this research on the use and reception of the RLS.[446]

The first twenty-five years of the RLS was a period of significant change in education in England, culminating in the implementation of the 1944 Education Act as part of the Labour government's policies for social change after the Second World War. Two distinct aspects of the relationship between art and education are relevant here, firstly the role of museums and galleries in education provision which (as discussed in Part 1) remained separate to mainstream education provision following the museum sector's rejection of proposals to align its work more closely with education after the First World War. Two reports commissioned by the Carnegie Trust during the interwar period, the Miers Report of 1928 and the Markham Report of 1938, give an insight into the educational role taken on by museums and art galleries during the period between the two World Wars.[447]

The Miers Report notes that education was provided by around twenty percent of museums and galleries focused on organised visits by schoolchildren, with Manchester

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[445] Alderman Sutton, letter to Essil Rutherston, 19 Feb 1930, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC; Essil Rutherston, "Mrs. Rutherston's Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme. April 1930", RLC 1/19 box 2, MAG RLC.

[446] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1945", 7, MAG Archive. It is possible that Essil Rutherston continued to visit borrowing institutions after 1945 although no primary source evidence has been found confirming this.

[447] Miers, *Report on Public Museums*; Markham, *Report on Museums and Art Galleries*.

complimented specifically for its work.[448] However, Miers also highlights the limitations of this system as it could only support children able to access the central institution and recommends "the establishment of travelling museums working from a central museum […] which would carry the appropriate materials to the schools."[449] This could have been describing the RLS although Miers does not reference the RLS specifically, but it is possible that this report influenced MAG's decision in 1929 to extend the RLS to schools. In terms of adult education, Miers notes that since the Adult Education Committee's 1919 report (discussed in the introduction to Part 1) "no practical scheme has emerged for utilising museums in adult education."[450]

Miers is more positive about the growing practice of inter-gallery loans and here highlights the RLS as a scheme established specifically "to supply temporary exhibits to other art galleries", which of course was only one aspect of the RLS's intended role.[451] However, in noting the absence in most art galleries "of any arrangement which would help to explain such things as the history of art, the development of a particular school, or the different periods of any given artist" Miers indicates that he regarded the *Use Value* of art galleries as primarily being to provide the general public with a basic education in art history.[452]

Markham's report a decade later highlights the general lack of progress made by provincial museums and art galleries in developing their visual educational function, although

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[448] Miers, *Report on Public Museums*, 31. Part 1 of this thesis highlighted the educational work undertaken by MAG as a continuation of a service initially provided during the First World War.
[449] Ibid., 58.
[450] Ibid., 35.
[451] Ibid., 45.
[452] Ibid., 46.

like Miers he highlights Manchester as one of the places where progress had been made.[453] Markham also reports that around eighty museums and galleries were now operating loan schemes although the majority of these involved museum collections rather than artworks with the RLS being highlighted as an exception, "a unique development."[454] Markham notes that the sector's education provision was still focused on organised school visits and that the educational potential of museums and galleries for the population as a whole was not being realised, although he acknowledges the attempts being made by the BIAE to address this issue although he does not refer explicitly to *Art for the People*.[455] Markham concludes his discussion of adult education by saying:

> The future depends on the vision that our young men and women bring to the problems that will confront them. […] I think it is true to say that where there is no vision the people [are] robbed of all that perspective and idealism that lifts them from being cogs in an industrial machine into actual participators and creators in the evolution of a finer civilisation.[456]

So, writing in the late 1930s as Europe headed towards another war, Markham reinforces the importance of having a culturally educated population, a *Use Value* for art which had emerged as a key theme following the First World War and had influenced Rutherston's plans for his collection.

Turning next to the education sector and the evolving role of art in education, the period from 1926 to 1950 can be characterised by two distinct educational philosophies. Firstly, the established approach to art education focused on teaching specific technical skills such as drawing and design as an academic discipline continued, but during this period became

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[453] Markham, *Report on Museums and Art Galleries*, 90-91.
[454] Ibid., 124-127.
[455] Ibid., 143.
[456] Ibid., 143-144.

increasingly focused on meeting the needs of industry rather than training artists. At a policy level, there were concerted attempts to more closely align art education with the needs of industry as part of a response to the slump in demand for British manufactured goods, with the 1932 Gorrell Report noting that "cooperation between Industry and Art Schools is not always so close as it should be."[457] Following the Report's recommendations, the Board of Education "proposed a hierarchy of art classes, art schools, and art colleges", as a result of which art schools at Leicester, Birmingham, Bradford and Leeds became designated as regional colleges of art before the Second World War and many provincial schools of art, particularly those with aspirations to become regional colleges, adapted their educational philosophies accordingly.[458]

Secondly, a progressive approach to art education emerged during this period which focused on the encouragement of individual self-expression and creativity rather than the didactic teaching of technique, based on the ideas of educationalists such as Franz Cizek and Marion Richardson.[459] Through the 1920s and early 1930s, educationalists continued to advocate for its adoption not only for younger children but into adolescence and beyond, supported in particular by Richardson's work with pupils at Dudley Girls High School.[460] Here it is worth noting the link that was established in the early twentieth century between child art, art education and modern art through the relationship between people like Marion Richardson and Roger Fry, who knew each other and influenced each other's ideas, for example with Fry exhibiting the work of Richardson's Dudley pupils at his Omega Workshops in 1917.[461] Richardson first

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[457] Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education*, 302.
[458] Ibid., 303.
[459] Holdsworth, "Marion Richardson (1892-1946)," 163-165.
[460] Ibid., 163-167.
[461] Ibid., 165-167.

outlined her educational philosophy at the end of the same year, and, according to Holdsworth, all her subsequent writing "was essentially an elaboration of this basic philosophy, indicating that by 1917 she had arrived at a coherent and original theory of art education based on sound practice."[462]

Richardson's educational philosophy went on to form the basis of the New Art Teaching movement of the 1930s and 1940s with which Richardson was closely associated as Inspector of Art for London County Council (LCC).[463] *The Visual Arts* published in 1946 provides a useful position statement regarding art education provision at that time, and notes the changes taking place as a result of the New Art Teaching movement, with art providing "one of the readiest means of developing the child's creative ability."[464] However, the report also notes that whilst some schools and local authorities had taken a lead, progress had been hampered by teachers "with only a superficial understanding of the aims of the new movement", and this mixed picture is reflected in the use of the RLS examined in Part 2.[465]

The 1944 Education Act and its implementation provide the specific context for the RLC/RLS in the period immediately following the Second World War, including the reorganisation of the RLS in 1948 and the new catalogue for the RLC published in 1950. Before the 1944 Act the English educational system comprised two distinct, essentially class-based, components, elementary education, available to all children up to the age of fourteen and secondary education (including grammar schools) only accessible to children on scholarships or

[462] Ibid., 167.
[463] Ibid., 167, 170-171.
[464] The Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 151-153.
[465] Ibid., 154.

on a fee-paying basis.[466] The 1944 Act was particularly significant in terms of the structural changes it introduced, including raising the school leaving age to fifteen (an unimplemented provision of the 1936 Education Act) and making secondary education for all children a reality through the introduction of a "tripartite secondary system of grammar, technical and modern schools."[467] However, in terms of its underpinning educational philosophy, according to educational historian Roy Lowe the Act was "essentially conservative in nature" although as much of the responsibility for implementing the Act was delegated to Local Education Authorities (LEAs), some authorities were able to adopt progressive educational approaches with Lowe specifically identifying Leicestershire (Stuart Mason) and the West Riding of Yorkshire (Alec Clegg) as the most notable examples.[468] In terms of the impact on art schools, the 1944 Act placed a statutory duty on LEAs to ensure adequate provision of further education in their area.[469] But given the post-war demands for technical education, particularly created by returning ex-servicemen and second language courses for newly arrived immigrants from Europe, it is perhaps not surprising that art appears to not have been a high priority for LEAs in their consideration of further education provision.

If the 1944 Education Act did not in itself directly bring about radical changes in art education, subsequent publications by the Ministry of Education provided a framework which gave LEAs (and individual schools, colleges of further education and teachers) the flexibility noted by Lowe regarding their educational philosophy. In particular, guidance was issued in 1946 on the provision of art education at each stage in the educational system established by the

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[466] Lowe, *Education In The Post-War Years*, 21.
[467] Ibid., 37.
[468] Ibid., 6, 18.
[469] Ibid., 178.

Act.[470] For primary schools, the guidance reinforced the idea that up to the age of eleven education in the arts and crafts should focus on enabling individual creativity combined with the gradual introduction of specific technical skills only where appropriate.[471] For secondary schools, with some differences in emphasis across the new "tripartite" system, the guidance stressed the importance of including arts and crafts in the curriculum and, whilst teaching specific technical skills continued to be important, supported the idea that encouraging self-expression and individual creativity should continue to be part of art education, essentially legitimising ideas developed in the 1930s as part of the New Art Teaching movement.[472] And for art schools, the guidance recognised the need for them to adapt to the specific requirements of the areas they served, supporting local industries in manufacturing areas whilst continuing to develop "the cultural aspect" in smaller schools away from the industrial centres.[473]

Part 2 also considers the evolution of the RLC and RLS between 1926 and 1950 in relation to the wider art historical context of the period, and particularly how this impacted on the evolving *Art Value* of the RLC and of the artworks added to the collection. As described in Part 1, Charles Harrison considered the period immediately following the First World War as an hiatus in the development of modern art in England, and he categorises the remainder of the 1920s as a period which was focussed on "the further development of a technical autonomy for painting."[474] For Harrison this led to the emergence of abstract art in England in the early 1930s, most notably through the Unit 1 group of eleven English painters, sculptors and architects

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[470] Ministry of Education, *Art Education*.
[471] Ibid., 7.
[472] Ibid., 13-19.
[473] Ibid., 24.
[474] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 168.

formed in 1933 under the leadership of Paul Nash which also included Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore.[475] Amongst the Unit 1 artists Nicholson and Hepworth are probably the most closely associated with abstract art in the 1930s, whereas Nash and Moore became increasingly influenced by the Surrealist movement in Europe and were amongst the English contributors to the International Surrealist Exhibition held in London in June 1936.[476] But although, according to Harrison, Surrealism was "a subject of interest and debate in England" in the late 1930s, it did not go on to have real significance to the history of English modern art, its influence mostly seen in the stylistic languages of artists who followed.[477]

As Europe headed inexorably towards war at the end of the 1930s, Harrison describes a revival of Romanticism in English art exemplified by the work of younger artists such as John Piper and Graham Sutherland who applied the stylistic languages of modernism including Surrealism to depictions of the romantic ideas of the picturesque and the sublime.[478] Margaret Garlake describes neo-Romanticism as "the dominant trend in wartime art" as it provided the stylistic language to express the emotions of a nation at war.[479] During the Second World War artists moved away from abstract art, recognising that "[p]ropaganda, factual record and poetic allusion were all better expressed […] in figurative terms", mirroring what had happened to avant-garde art during the First World War as described in Part 1.[480]

Rather than returning to abstraction in the years immediately following the Second World War artists tended to focus on realistic art, again repeating the trend which followed the First

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[475] Ibid., 239-240.
[476] Ibid., 309-311.
[477] Ibid., 317-318.
[478] Ibid., 313-324.
[479] Garlake, *New Art, New World*, 85.
[480] Ibid., 99.

World War. James Hyman argues that the development of modern art from the end of the Second World War until the late 1950s could be categorised as "a battle between two competing visions of realism": firstly, what Hyman calls "Modernist realism", an umbrella term for a plurality of styles drawing on modernist languages of the previous decades; and secondly, social realism concerned with the representation of real life often highlighting specific social or political issues which followed a twentieth-century lineage including Walter Sickert's Camden Town Group before the First World War and the Euston Road School of the late-1930s.[481] And Garlake describes how abstract art once again became part of the story of English modern art but not until the 1950s, including geometric abstraction, which followed on from the pre-war work of artists such as Nicholson, and went on to influence art and design teaching in art schools and, later in the decade, gestural art or Action Painting influenced by American Abstract Expressionism.[482] Although the accounts of Hyman and Garlake have different emphases, where they do agree is that, by 1950, the end of the period under review in this thesis, abstract art had yet to re-emerge as a significant feature of modern art in England.

Part 2 begins by describing the growth of the RLC between 1926 and 1950 considered in relation to the evolving *Art Value* of modern art during this period (2.1). The analysis includes the further gifts made by Essil Rutherston and Rutherston's daughter Jeannette, Eric Gregory, Dr. Jane Walker, the CAS and the War Artists Advisory Committee (WAAC), the transfer of artworks from MAG's permanent collection, and the acquisition by MAG of artworks specifically for the

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[481] Hyman, *The Battle for Realism*, 2-3 & 45. For more reading on the Euston Road School, see Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 333-343.

[482] Garlake, *New Art, New World*, 102-107. Garlake also makes the link between the basic design courses drawing on Bauhaus methods developed by art schools in the 1950s and the development of abstract art, influenced by the philosophies of artists such as Victor Pasmore and Tom Hudson who became teachers. Ibid., 30.

RLC. Part 2 goes on to examine the parallel evolution of the RLS and its *Use Value* as an educational resource, using case studies drawn from primary source materials to illustrate the use of the RLS by each of the three main categories of borrowing institutions, other art galleries (2.2), art schools (2.3), and secondary and elementary schools (2.4), highlighting how the initial focus of the RLS on galleries in provincial towns and art schools as originally envisaged by Rutherston changed to an increasing emphasis on schools. For each category of borrowing institution, the use of the RLS is considered within the wider cultural, particularly art educational, context described in this introduction.

Part 2 also assesses the RLS's contribution to the state-sponsored initiatives which emerged from 1935 onwards with the *Use Value* of broadening access to, and educating the public about, art (2.5). This includes the BIAE's *Art for the People* initiative; the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) created in 1940 as a response to the specific circumstances of the Second World War; and the transition of CEMA to form the Arts Council in 1946 as key part of the Labour government's plans for social change in the years immediately following the War. Part 2 provides an analysis of the RLC and RLS during this post-war period under the leadership of a new Curator at MAG and in the context of the government's policy for supporting the arts (2.6), in particular examining the re-organisation of the RLS in 1948 reflected in the new catalogue for the RLC published in 1950 (see Appendix D for an analysis of the RLC based on this catalogue).[483] Part 2 concludes with an overall assessment of the evolution of the RLC and RLS between 1926 and 1950 (2.7), focusing in particular on the pivotal contribution played by Essil Rutherston in developing both the *Art Value* of the RLC as a collection of modern art, and its *Use Value* delivered by the RLS.

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[483] Manchester City Art Galleries, *Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection*.

2.1 Growing the RLC

> In order to carry out what we believe to be the wishes of the late Charles Lambert Rutherston, and from our desire to further the interests of his scheme, we, his wife and daughter, wish to offer to the City of Manchester as an addition to the Rutherston Loan Scheme now housed in Platt Hall the bronze bust by Jacob Epstein called "Sunita", fifteen paintings and drawings and two carvings in wood as catalogued in the accompanying list: also nine portfolios of reproductions published by the Marées Society and the Ministry of Fine Arts in Paris.
>
> Essil Rutherston and Jeannette Rutherston, 1928.[484]

Following Rutherston's death at the end of 1927, his widow Essil and daughter Jeannette immediately decided to donate further works to MAG which had been collected by Rutherston but not included in his original gift.[485] The works offered included Matthew Smith's *Pomegranates*, 1928 (Fig.50) and two early works by Henry Moore purchased from the artist by Rutherston in 1923, *Head of a Girl*, 1922, and *Standing Woman*, 1923 (Fig.51), both artists not represented in Rutherston's original gift, as well as additional works by artists already represented, including Jacob Epstein's *Sunita*, 1925 (Fig.52), Gwen John's *Flowers*, c.1920 (Fig.53) and works by Vanessa Bell, William Roberts and William Rothenstein.[486] Rutherston's rationale for keeping the artworks he did rather than including them in his Manchester gift is unclear, although it seems likely that he held on to works that he and his family particularly liked or had sentimental value. But it is also possible that, for Rutherston, artists such as Moore and Smith were too early in their careers for their art to have achieved the *Art Value* required to be included in his conception of the gift as an entity.[487]

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[484] Essil Rutherston and Jeannette B. Rutherston, letter to Alderman Todd, Chairman of the Art Gallery Committee, 13 March 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[485] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 11 Jan 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[486] The date of 1928 attributed in MAG's records to Matthew Smith's *Pomegranates* must be incorrect.

[487] Moore credits Rutherston with being his first patron - see Henry Moore, "Introduction," in *The Gregory Collection* (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1959), n.p. Rutherston bought the two wood carvings in Essil's offer in 1923 whilst Moore was still a student at the Royal College of Art. Smith

Essil wrote to Haward again at the end of February to make a further proposal, offering MAG several portfolios of reproductions including works by modern French artists (including Manet, Renoir, Degas and Cézanne) and by "old masters" such as Rubens, Watteau, Fragonard and Tiepolo saying, "[w]e thought at first of giving them to the Art Schools round here, but would prefere [sic] to give them to Platt Hall if they would really be made use of. […] It would give very little trouble or expense to Platt Hall and be of great educational value."[488] Here Essil is reflecting Rutherston's suggestion, in his original offer in 1925, and alluding to the potential the reproductions offered to extend the *Use Value* of the RLC to include a broader education in art appreciation and art history. Haward responded positively to this proposal which suggests a tacit agreement between Essil and MAG to extend the RLC's scope beyond the focus on modern English art of Rutherston's original gift.[489]

Later the same year Essil and Jeannette gave MAG more than three hundred prints by a range of artists, including around 140 by Eric Gill and one hundred by Gwendolen Raverat, which had presumably originally been acquired by Rutherston although I have found no specific provenance information. As with reproductions, original prints went on to be significant to the expansion of the RLC during the period under review, with both media providing the means to maintain and enhance the *Art Value* of the collection and its potential *Use Value* as an educational resource.

Essil and Jeannette went on to donate further portfolios of old master reproductions in 1932 and 1933 although no more original works were gifted until the late 1930s and 1940s, when

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did not come to prominence in England until his first one-man exhibition in London in April 1926 – see for example John Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters: Sickert to Smith* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), 235-236.

[488] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 28 Feb 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[489] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 6 March 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

Essil gave the RLC more than twenty works, some from Rutherston's original collection and others acquired later by Essil herself. These later acquisitions included five pieces of studio pottery which she gave to MAG following a letter to Haward in January 1943 which said, "I am very keen to start a pottery section. Several schools make pots and they see so little to say nothing of the schools of art."[490] This suggests that Essil was interested in the potential *Use Value* of the RLS to support teaching practical skills such as making pottery although it appears that this proposal was not taken forward as only these five pieces were included in the RLC in 1950.[491]

An interesting example of the paintings acquired for the RLC by Essil during this period, also in 1943, is John Armstrong's *Black Pyramids*, 1942 (Fig.54) about which Essil said to Haward, "I thought it a good example of surrealist work and might be good to add to the collection."[492] But in a subsequent letter to Cleveland she admitted that although *Black Pyramids* "is very good of its kind, as you know they [Surrealist pictures] are not my sort but I do think more are wanted."[493] This was possibly the most abstract work added to the RLC during the period under review, illustrating that Essil tried to ensure the collection included contemporary works even though they were not necessarily to her own taste. This example indicates that Essil was focused on the RLC as an entity and endeavoured to add works which would enhance its *Art Value* as a collection mostly comprising modern English art, mirroring Rutherston's approach twenty years earlier.

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[490] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 5 Jan 1943, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[491] Manchester City Art Galleries, *Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection*, 19.
[492] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 28 Jan 1943, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[493] Essil Rutherston, letter to Sydney Cleveland, 10 Feb 1943, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

The latest reference I have found to a gift made by Essil was in June 1946 when she offered Rupert Shephard's still life *Hedgerow,* 1943 (Fig.55), a work she had purchased two years earlier, together with the loan of nine other works whilst she was in the process of moving house, including works by Rothenstein, Wilson Steer, Paul Nash and Maresco Pearce.[494] All these loaned works were returned to Essil although several of them were included in a group of around twenty works gifted by Jeannette Powell in 1953 following Essil's death, including Essil's own *Emma, Covent Garden*.

Considering the additions to the RLC by Essil and Jeannette as a whole, the original paintings and sculptures they added generally maintained the *Art Value* of the RLC as a collection of modern English art, including supplementing it where possible by the addition of more contemporary works exemplified by Armstrong's *Black Pyramids*. The extension of the RLC to include reproductions also extended its *Art Value* beyond its original focus, and Essil's primary motivation here seems to have been the potential reproductions offered to enhance the educational *Use Value* of the RLC to include the broader appreciation of art and art history. Essil's ultimately unsuccessful proposal to include pottery in the RLC was motivated by the potential to extend *Use Value* in a different way, in this case beyond the fine arts of painting and sculpture to support the teaching of more practical craft-based skills. So, it seems that Essil was continually seeking opportunities to broaden the potential educational *Use Value* of the RLC beyond that offered by the original collection of modern English art, perhaps reflecting her assessment of the evolving needs of borrowing institutions (discussed in the following sections).

The first additions to the RLC after Essil and Jeannette Rutherston's 1928 gifts were made by Eric Gregory (1887-1959), also known as Peter, who was a friend of the Rutherstons

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[494] Essil Rutherston, letter to David Baxandall, 14 June 1946, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

and was one of the Executors of Rutherston's will.[495] Gregory was also from Bradford and, like the three Rothenstein brothers before him, attended Bradford Grammar School before joining the Bradford printing and publishing firm Percy Lund, Humphries & Co. (later Lund Humphries), eventually becoming first a Director (in 1919) and then Chairman (from 1945).[496] The earliest reference I have found to Gregory's relationship with Rutherston is Henry Moore's recollection of first meeting Gregory in 1923 at Rutherston's house in Bradford.[497] Moore says that his relationship with Gregory was "the closest friendship of my life", and describes how Gregory gradually developed into an important collector of modern art in his own right.[498] After Rutherston's death, Gregory remained close friends with Essil, and this friendship was crucial in securing some of the gifts Gregory went on to make to the RLC, their relationship helped by the fact that, during the 1930s, Gregory increasingly spent time in London on business where Essil was now living.[499]

In January 1928 Gregory, Essil and Haward were in close contact, their immediate priority being to action Rutherston's will and Essil's further gifts to the RLC from her late husband's collection. But these discussions may have moved on to the possibility of Gregory himself contributing to the RLC as, in April, Gregory wrote to Haward to make his first offer:

> I am wondering whether the Manchester Art Gallery would like to accept five original woodcuts, suitably mounted, by Eric Daglish, as an addition to the Rutherston Loan Scheme. […] I should be glad to present them in the hope that this addition – although

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[495] Charles Rutherston, "Last Will and Testament", 15 Oct 1925, 56D94/10/1, WYAS-B.

[496] Holman, *Peter Gregory*, 10-11, 14, 137.

[497] Moore, "Introduction," n.p. Holman's biography also cites this source as the earliest evidence of Gregory's friendship with Rutherston – see Holman, *Peter Gregory*, 28.

[498] Moore, "Introduction," n.p.

[499] Holman, *Peter Gregory*, 33-34.

> very trifling – may help to encourage others to make gifts. Perhaps at a later date I might be able to present something more worthy of acceptance.[500]

Gregory clearly recognised that this "trifling" addition, comprising realistic illustrations of birds and animals including *Eagle Owl*, date unknown (Fig.56), did not have the *Art Value* of the majority of the RLC artworks, being neither stylistically modern nor by a well-known artist, but nevertheless MAG gratefully accepted Gregory's offer.[501] The next month Gregory also offered a series of woodcuts by Eric Gill, some of which he acknowledged duplicated those already given by Essil Rutherston, and these were also accepted.[502]

In January 1929 Gregory offered to give the RLC five oil paintings including Harold Gilman's *Portrait of a Lady*, 1915-1916 (Fig.57) and Charles Ginner's *Landscape with Farmhouses*, c.1912-1913 (Fig.58) and a watercolour sketch by Frank Dobson, which were all accepted.[503] Between 1930 and 1936 he made further gifts including, in January 1930, the first of several works he was to eventually contribute by the Yorkshire-born modern artist Vivian Pitchforth.[504] But Gregory's most important contribution to the RLC began in September 1937 when Haward approached Gregory about the possibility of a loan and Gregory, having already discussed this with Essil, responded positively, culminating in a formal offer:

> I should like to lend to the Scheme a number of pictures for a period of say, two years, with the ultimate object of presenting outright all or some of them at the end of that period. […] This offer is made as a gesture of goodwill […]. I do feel you deserve the

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[500] E. C. Gregory, letter to Lawrence Haward, 1 Apr 1928, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[501] Lawrence Haward, letter to E. C. Gregory, 4 Apr 1928, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[502] E. C. Gregory, letter to Lawrence Hayward [sic], 8 May 1928, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[503] E. C. Gregory, letter to Chairman of the Committee, Rutherston Loan Scheme, 7 Jan 1929, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[504] E. C. Gregory, letter to Chairman of the Sub-Committee, Rutherston Loan Scheme, 6 Jan 1930, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

> deep gratitude of all for the sympathetic and able way you have interpreted the original idea of Charles Rutherston.[505]

This loan comprised twenty-three oil paintings, seven watercolours and three prints which were mostly works by modern English artists, including Vanessa Bell's landscape painting *The Well*, 1928-1938 (Fig.59), Henry Moore's drawing *Seated Female Nude*, 1929 (Fig.60) and eight works by Vivian Pitchforth, for example *Still Life*, 1931 (Fig.61). Overall, the loan complemented the RLC's ethos and *Art Value* as a representative collection of modern English art, but it also included prints by Matisse and Gauguin which added to the RLC's growing collection of modern French art (and the broadening of its potential educational *Use Value*), in this case original prints rather than photographic reproductions of paintings.

At the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 Gregory joined the Ministry of Information (MoI) and wrote to Haward about the immediate future of his 1937 loan, suggesting that MAG should keep the artworks until the War was over.[506] By 1944 when the end of the War was in sight, Gregory was again thinking about the future of the loaned artworks, saying in a letter to Cleveland:

> I shall have to think about the ultimate disposal of these pictures, because I have been adopting a scheme in connection with Leeds University. This doesn't start until 1950 or the date of my death, but part of that scheme is that I shall supply them with pictures for a club-room. […] when I next see Mrs. Rutherston I will talk to her about the whole idea. You will admit that you have had the pictures for seven years now, instead of the original two years for which they were promised, so in that way I have treated you generously![507]

So, Gregory was considering giving the works to Leeds University as part of a "scheme" that was eventually to become the Gregory Fellowships, and appears to have forgotten his original

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[505] Lawrence Haward, letter to E. C. Gregory, 24 Sept 1937, MAG DB; E. C. Gregory, letter to Lawrence Haward, 27 Sept 1937, MAG DB; E. C. Gregory, letter to Dr. Tylecote, 24 Oct 1937, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[506] E. C. Gregory, letter to Lawrence Haward, 15 Sept 1939, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[507] E. C. Gregory, letter to S. D. Cleveland, 27 Sept 1944, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

intention had been to present some or all of the works outright at the end of the loan.[508] Gregory's conversation with Essil must have taken place as, two months later, Essil wrote to Haward to ask him to send Gregory a list of recent RLS loans as part of an attempt to "turn his heart which I fear has lately gone astray."[509] Essil's intervention seems to have succeeded as, in April 1946, Gregory wrote to David Baxandall, MAG's new Curator, to confirm he was "presenting the pictures which had been on loan to you such a long time", on the condition that Leeds University would be able to borrow artworks from the RLS, an offer which Baxandall accepted.[510]

The largest single addition to the RLC after Rutherston's original gift was the collection of Dr. Jane Walker (1859-1938), a doctor from Dewsbury in West Yorkshire who practised from Harley Street in London and who had pioneered open-air treatment for tuberculosis, establishing the East Anglian Sanatorium at Nayland in Suffolk for treating patients with the disease.[511] Rutherston had been aware of Dr. Walker and her idea of leaving her art collection to her home town as early as 1917 when his brother William met her when she was staying at his neighbour's house in Gloucestershire. William told Rutherston that she "talks of presenting a collection of pictures to her native place – Dewsbury I think it is - & of buying one of mine."[512] So, in 1917

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[508] In 1942 Gregory proposed to fund a series of art fellowships at the University of Leeds with the objective of bringing young artists together with other young people to bridge the gap between art and society. The University approved the scheme in 1943, the Fellowships were launched in 1949 and the first Fellows appointed in 1950 – see Holman, *Peter Gregory*, 123-129.

[509] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 30 Nov 1944, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

[510] E. C. Gregory, letter to David Baxandall, 5 Apr 1946, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB; David Baxandall, letter to Eric C. Gregory, 17 May 1946, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB. It is probably not a coincidence that later in 1946 the RLS loaned a collection to the University of Leeds – see W.T.O., "Rutherston Pictures on View in Leeds," *Yorkshire Post*, 22 Oct 1946, 6.

[511] "Obituary. Dr. Jane Walker," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Nov 1938, 6.

[512] William Rothenstein, letter to Charles Rutherston, 17 July 1917, MS Eng 1148.6 Box 4: 18, HLH.

Dr. Walker was already thinking about the future of her collection at around the same time that Rutherston was beginning to formulate his own plans.

In 1926 Rutherston obtained Dr. Walker's agreement to gift her collection to the RLC after her death, writing to Lawrence Haward in November about what he called "an important matter":

> I daresay you will have heard of Dr Jane Walker, one of the earliest lady doctors to practise in England. She has a collection of paintings, drawings and wood cuts which she had intended to leave to her native town, Dewsbury, not far from Bradford, but was so impressed by my Manchester Scheme that she expressed a keen desire through mutual friends […] to meet me and discuss my scheme. My wife and I went to her house at 122 Harley Street to lunch there and see her collection on Monday last with the result that she has definitely decided to make another will and leave her collection to the City of Manchester to be added to my scheme.[513]

Rutherston had received a letter from Dr. Walker that day confirming her decision to gift her collection to MAG following her death in which she said:

> I want to dispose of my collection of pictures so as to be of the greatest advantage to the public. I had thought […] of leaving them at my death to Dewsbury where I was born and where they have no pictures at all at present to form the beginnings of a gallery for them. But when I saw the way in which you are disposing of yours I felt it was so much better than mine that I desired to be in some way associated with the same scheme.[514]

Rutherston's letter goes on to describe Dr. Walker's collection to Haward:

> It contains 3 oil paintings by my brother Will who is an old friend of hers […]. On the walls & up the staircases are watercolours, drawings & wood cuts of varying interest which form a collection quite different from mine, suitable for many galleries. […] It is on the whole rather a curious collection but I think it contains many things which will be useful to the M/c scheme.[515]

Rutherston updated the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee (in confidence) about the possibility of Dr. Walker's bequest and MAG's acceptance of the gift seems to have been taken

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[513] Rutherston to Haward, 20 Nov 1926.

[514] Dr. Jane Walker, letter to Charles Rutherston, reproduced in Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 20 Nov 1926, RLC 1/15, MAG RLC.

[515] Rutherston to Haward, 20 Nov 1926.

as read, presumably because of Rutherston's personal role in securing it combined with a strong desire to grow the RLC at this early stage in its life.[516]

The following year the idea of establishing an art gallery in Dewsbury attracted some attention in the local press which prompted Dr. Walker to write to the Editor of the *Dewsbury Reporter* to say that she had considered offering her collection to form the basis of a collection for the town.[517] The letter goes on to say that she now favoured the establishment of a loan scheme referring specifically to the RLS, believing that a small permanent collection in a provincial gallery would initially attract "a small passing interest" before becoming neglected and unseen by the public.[518] However, she was still positive about Dewsbury having its own gallery and was happy to offer works from her collection on short-term loans as part of the establishment of such a scheme.[519] Her letter and the press coverage which quoted from it were not explicit about her existing commitment to MAG which resulted in some concerned correspondence between Rutherston and Haward. However, Rutherston was soon able to confirm that Essil had met with Dr. Walker and was "quite satisfied that [she] is as determined as ever to identify herself with the Rutherston Scheme as announced by me […] a year ago."[520] It is interesting to note how more than two years after his commitment to the Manchester gift Rutherston continued to identify himself with the RLC/RLS and take personal credit for securing Dr. Walker's gift.

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[516] Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee minutes, 25 Nov 1926.
[517] Dr. Jane Walker, letter to the Editor, *Dewsbury Reporter*, 26 Oct 1927, file for Dr. Jane Walker, MAG DB.
[518] Ibid.
[519] Ibid.
[520] Charles Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 16 Nov 1927, RLC 1/9 file 3 of 5, MAG RLC.

Dr. Walker went on to honour this commitment as, following her death in November 1938, her will bequeathed "all my pictures prints and drawings or such of them as they may desire to take to form part of the Charles Rutherston Trust Scheme."[521] However, this still seems to have come as a surprise as some press coverage indicated that she was still expected to leave her collection to Dewsbury, which in 1938 still did not have its own art gallery.[522] The gift comprised an eclectic mix of almost a hundred artworks, reflecting what Rutherston described as "a curious collection" when he first saw it in 1926. Works such as William Rothenstein's *Eli the Thatcher*, 1913 (Fig.62), Lucien Pissarro's *On the Dart*, 1922 (Fig.63), Tom Nash's *The Sermon on the Mount*, 1911-1939 (Fig.64) and Richard Eurich's *Lyme Regis*, 1930 (Fig.65) certainly fitted with the RLC's modern English focus and, in 1938, would have held some *Art Value* given the status of the artists concerned. But the bequest also included works representing the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century English schools and a variety of styles by lesser-known contemporary artists, none of which seem likely to have been to contemporary tastes in 1938 and if they had any *Art Value* at all this would have been limited to their historical value and newness-value respectively. Dr. Walker's will was specific about the bequest being to the RLC and rather than lose some of the offered works, MAG accepted the whole collection, meaning that some works were acquired which were unlikely to be loaned out as part of the RLS and were eventually removed from the RLC when it was re-organized in 1948 (as described in 2.6).

Part 1 described how Rutherston and Manchester Corporation both became CAS subscribers from 1911 soon after the CAS had been formed, but although a key part of the CAS's role was to loan or donate modern artworks to provincial art galleries MAG appears not to have

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[521] A. W. Stanton, letter to Lawrence Haward, 21 Dec 1938, file for Dr. Jane Walker, MAG DB.
[522] "Dr. Jane Walker's Bequest," *Manchester Guardian*, 2 Jan 1939, 11. Dewsbury did eventually get its own art gallery but not until 1950 – see "Dewsbury makes a start," *Yorkshire Observer*, 4 Apr 1950, 4.

received any artworks before 1928. In that year, the RLC became a subscriber to the CAS in its own right, organised by Essil Rutherston with Eric Gregory contributing to the payment of the first annual subscription.[523] In its first year as a subscriber, the RLC was successful in obtaining its first gift from the CAS, Mark Gertler's *Still Life*, 1917 (Fig.66), and it seems unlikely to have been a coincidence that MAG also received its first two CAS gifts that year, Duncan Grant's *Boats at St. Tropez*, 1928, and Edward Wadsworth's *Ships in Dock*, 1924 (now known as *Dunkerque*), both of which went on to be transferred to the RLC in 1935.[524] In the same year the CAS also made the first of many loans to the RLC comprising seventeen oil paintings by contemporary artists.[525]

The second work gifted to the RLC by the CAS was in 1929, Alan Walton's *The Sand Boat*, c.1927 (Fig.67), with Haward writing to Essil in September, saying:

> Mr. Cleveland told me on my return that you had suggested that Allan Walton's little oil painting "The Sand Boat" would be the most suitable gift from the Contemporary Art Society amongst the pictures on loan from them. […] we brought it before the General Committee yesterday when it was unanimously accepted.[526]

This highlights the important role played by Essil in selecting works for the RLC from the CAS and this is further illustrated by Essil's letter to the Art Gallery's Chairman in December 1930:

> I have just heard today from Mr. Ede [the CAS's Assistant Secretary] that the Executive Committee of the Contemporary Art Society have agreed to present the two pictures which we asked for to the Rutherston Loan Collection. "Sarah" by W. Roberts & Landscape with Farm" by Fergus Graham. I am sure you will be please [sic].[527]

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[523] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 15 July 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[524] Contemporary Art Society, *Report 1928* (London: Contemporary Art Society, 1929), 11. City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the Year 1935", RLC 1/19 box 2, MAG RLC.

[525] Report of the meeting of the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee, 11 Jan 1929, RLC 1/32 file 2, MAG RLC.

[526] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 20 Sept 1929, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[527] Essil Rutherston, letter to Alderman Sutton, 15 Dec 1930, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

The two works referred to here, William Roberts' *Sarah*, c.1922 (Fig.68) and Fergus Graham's *Landscape with Farm*, c.1929 (Fig.69) along with Raymond Coxon's *Model Resting*, c.1929 (Fig.70) were gifted to the RLC in 1931, and in the same year MAG was itself given four works by the CAS of which two, Harold Gilman's *Interior with the Artist's Mother*, 1917-1918 and Edward Wolfe's *Aisha of the Kasba*, c.1928-1929 were among a group of twelve paintings transferred to the RLC from MAG's permanent collection in 1932.[528]

These early CAS gifts to MAG between 1928 and 1931 which became part of the RLC either by specific gift or by subsequent transfer from MAG's permanent collection complemented the RLC as a representative collection of modern English art. They therefore contributed to its *Art Value* through a combination of the relative art-value of works by established modern artists (Gertler, Grant, Wadsworth, Roberts and Gilman), and the newness-value of works by lesser-known contemporary artists (Walton, Graham, Coxon and Wolfe). This is perhaps not surprising given the CAS's philosophy and purpose were closely aligned with the RLC and this could only have been strengthened by Essil Rutherston's role in helping to choose the artworks. The CAS continued to give at least one artwork to the RLC in most years during the period under review as well as loaning works to the collection throughout, and the two gifts in 1949, Ben Nicholson's *1931 (St Ives Bay: sea with boats)*, 1931 (Fig.71) and a lithograph by Matisse, illustrate how the CAS's contribution of works by established modern artists continued to enhance the *Art Value* of the RLC.[529]

The last significant gift to the RLC before 1950 was an allocation in 1946 of more than fifty works by the WAAC, facilitated by Eric Gregory with Essil Rutherston's input. The WAAC

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[528] Contemporary Art Society, *Report 1930-1931*, 13. Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1932", 19, MAG Archive.

[529] Contemporary Art Society, *1948-49* (London: The Tate Gallery, 1950), 10.

was set up in November 1939 "[t]o draw up a list of artists qualified to record the war […] and advise on such questions as copyright, disposal and exhibition of works."[530] A substantial collection of war art was created comprising six thousand works by more than four hundred artists "ranging from the famous to the unknown", with only a few of the WAAC artists (such as Paul Nash, Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland and John Piper) becoming part of the established art historical narrative of the period.[531] Brian Foss argues that the WAAC was concerned not with modernism per se but with "modernity" in its widest sense, commissioning a large group of artists using "multiple vocabularies of artistic expression […] to define the nation and its unity", in a repeat of the artistic coming together which had been a feature of the art of the First World War.[532]

Administratively the WAAC was part of the MoI, the government department "responsible for the production of publicity and propaganda" where Gregory worked for the duration of the War.[533] He became the last secretary of the WAAC in July 1943, holding the post until the WAAC was dissolved at the end of December 1945 when he then became a member of a joint Imperial War Museum-MoI subcommittee charged with concluding the work of the WAAC, including the dispersal of the art collection.[534] Through this subcommittee Gregory secured the allocation of artworks for both the RLC and MAG's permanent collection, confirmed by Essil in a letter to David Baxandall in March 1946:

> [T]he War Artists Advisory Committee have allocated from 40 to 50 war pictures for the Rutherston Collection besides those they are already giving to the Art Gallery. […] He [Gregory] wrote me in November to ask if I would write asking for War pictures for the

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[530] Foss, *War Paint*, 9.
[531] Ibid., 1-3.
[532] Ibid., 3-4.
[533] Ibid., 4.
[534] Ibid., 168 and 189.

> Rutherston Collection, but as it was very much in the air then I did not speak about it to you.[535]

Essil's final comment probably alludes to the fact that, in November 1945, the process for distributing the artworks was still to be resolved. Baxandall wrote to Gregory to thank him for securing both allocations, his letter suggesting that MAG had left the choice of works to Gregory, saying that "we feel very strongly that you have done remarkably well for us on both counts."[536]

The WAAC presented fifty-three works to MAG's permanent collection and fifty-two to the RLC although it is unclear how much freedom Gregory had regarding the choice of works and the extent to which he applied different criteria in his choices for the two allocations.[537] Certainly, many artists are represented in both which suggests that there was no attempt to differentiate between the two collections and given the variety of the works in the WAAC's gift, it is unclear to what extent any judgements of *Art Value* would have been a factor in the choices. Works by established modern artists would have been to contemporary tastes, and therefore had relative art-value, including for example the neo-Romanticism of Graham Sutherland's *Mouth of hot metal container pouring molten iron*, 1942 (Fig.72) and John Piper's, *Coventry Cathedral, 15 November, 1940*, 1940 (Fig.73). And some of the works by less well-known artists would have had resonance with the public and therefore had, in *Art Value* terms, newness-value, exemplified by the social realism and particularly the depiction of the key roles played by women during the War of Evelyn Mary Dunbar, *Potato Sorting, Berwick*, 1943-1944 (Fig.74) and Elsie Dalton

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[535] Essil Rutherston, letter to David Baxandall, 2 Mar 1946, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

[536] David Baxandall, letter to Eric C. Gregory, 27 Mar 1946, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.

[537] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1947", 10-11, MAG Archive. The 1950 RLC catalogue includes sixty-one works given by the WAAC so either additional works were given to the RLC after the initial allocation, or some were subsequently transferred from the permanent collection.

Hewland, *Assembling a Hawker Hurricane*, 1940-1947 (Fig.75). But some of the works may not have had significant *Art Value* at the time, and the six atmospheric watercolours by Thomas Hennell drawing on an earlier tradition of English art, for example *Reykjavik From Main Quay, Frosty Morning, Iceland*, 1943-1945 (Fig.76), might be in this category.

As mentioned earlier in relation to the CAS's gifts, during the period under review MAG's permanent collection gradually became an important source of artworks for the RLC including both loans and permanent transfers. In 1928 a discussion took place between Essil Rutherston and Lawrence Haward about the relationship between the two collections and the movement of artworks between them, culminating in the main Art Gallery Committee rejecting a Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee proposal that loans should be made to the RLC from the Permanent Collection, suggesting that, at this stage, the Art Gallery Committee wanted to maintain a clear separation between the two collections.[538] However, at the January 1929 Sub-Committee meeting it was reported that, "[a]t Councillor Simon's suggestion the picture "Searchlights" by C.R.W. Nevinson given by him to the Permanent Collection some years ago has been transferred to the scheme."[539] Presumably the Art Gallery Committee could not object to this transfer given the artwork in question, Nevinson's *Searchlights*, 1916 (Fig.77), had originally been Councillor Simon's gift and subsequently there seems to have been growing acceptance that the permanent collection could be used to supplement the RLC.

The minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting in June 1932 identify twelve artworks which it was suggested might be transferred on loan to the RLC, including the works by Gilman and Wolfe given to MAG by the CAS the previous year, Charles Ginner's *Flask Walk, Hampstead*,

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[538] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 17 May 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC; Alderman Todd, letter to Essil Rutherston, 3 July 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.
[539] Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee, 11 Jan 1929.

1922 (Fig.78) and further works by Nevinson and Lucien Pissarro.[540] The Art Gallery Committee must have supported this suggestion, in fact MAG's Annual Report for 1932 records that the paintings had been "transferred" to the RLC, implying a permanent transfer rather than the requested loan.[541] Transfers to the RLC from MAG's permanent collection went on to contribute to the expansion of the RLC for the remainder of the period under review including, for example, the allocation of fifteen works from gifts received by MAG in 1947, presumably as part of attempts to strengthen the RLC in response to the increasing popularity of the RLS after the Second World War. These included Augustus John's *Lady with a Mantilla,* c.1916 (Fig.79) and seven works by Walter Sickert, an early oil painting, *Dieppe*, c.1885 (Fig.80) and six drawings.

Throughout the period under review, the RLC was continually boosted by loans in addition to those from Essil Rutherston, Eric Gregory, the CAS and MAG's permanent collection. One of the most significant was a series of loans from Sir Cyril Butler which began in 1931 and continued until Butler's death in 1936, facilitated by Essil Rutherston who probably knew Butler through his long-standing involvement with the CAS.[542] These loans certainly complemented the RLC (and its *Art Value*) as they included works by many modern British artists already represented in the collection such as Wilson Steer, Ambrose McEvoy, Wyndham Lewis, Derwent Lees, Augustus John and Walter Sickert.[543]

Loans such as these were crucial to the RLC's ability to support the increasing demands placed upon it by the RLS, particularly given the limitations on MAG's ability to purchase works

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[540] Minutes of Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee, 24 June 1932, RLC 1/32 file 2, MAG RLC.
[541] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report 1932", 19.
[542] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 12 Oct 1930, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.
[543] City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the year 1931", 4-5, RLC 1/19 box 2, MAG RLC; City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the year 1935", 7.

for the RLC as no specific funding was available with any acquisitions needing to be funded from MAG's limited general budget for new purchases. Original paintings purchased specifically for the RLC tended to be inexpensive works by relatively unknown, often local, artists, a typical example being Hannah Ritchie's *Meije, Upper Savoy*, 1928 (Fig.81) about which Haward wrote to Essil in February 1930:

> My Committee bought to-day an interesting little picture by Miss Ritchie – a very talented artist and teacher at the High School for Girls whom Mr. Simon and I know quite well. We propose to bring this up at the next Rutherston Sub-Committee, if you approve when you see it, with a suggestion that it be added to the Collection.[544]

The acquisition of such works may have maintained the RLC's focus on modern English art although their *Art Value* (in the form of newness-value) was probably time-limited, unless the artists concerned subsequently became recognised as significant, which was probably not the case with Hannah Ritchie.

Given these financial constraints and the demands placed on the RLC particularly following the extension of the RLS to secondary schools in 1930, MAG increasingly looked to original prints and reproductions of paintings as a relatively inexpensive means of growing the RLC and adding artworks to the collection which were perhaps more suited to school loans. Some of the prints but particularly the reproductions also extended the RLC's scope beyond modern English art to include old masters and modern French and European art, providing a way of adding artworks to the RLC with *Art Value* (both relative art-value and historical value) which would otherwise have been out of MAG's financial reach (as they largely had been for Rutherston), and expanding the potential educational *Use Value* of the RLS to include the broader appreciation of art and art history.

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[544] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 20 Feb 1930, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC. The relationship with Ritchie and Manchester High School for Girls is discussed in 2.4.

This analysis has illustrated how the growth of the RLC between 1926 and 1950 was crucially dependent on gifts and loans, with MAG generally being keen to accept those it was offered to expand the RLC which sometimes meant compromising on the *Art Value* of the artworks added to the collection. In particular, some of the works in Dr. Walker's bequest were not a natural fit with the RLC, and the *Art Value* of the artworks in the WAAC gift was variable although the involvement of Eric Gregory at least ensured some level of artistic judgement had been applied to the selection. Nevertheless, of the major additions to the RLC, with the exception of some of the prints and reproductions, the gifts of Essil and Jeannette Rutherston, Eric Gregory and the CAS generally maintained the focus (and the *Art Value*) of the RLC as a collection of modern English art, as did most of the works transferred from the permanent collection which was one area MAG could certainly control. However, the analysis also indicates that the growth of the RLC was responding to the increasing demands placed upon it by the RLS and its evolving *Use Value* as an educational resource, which Part 2 now goes on to examine.

2.2 Borrowing from the RLS – Art Galleries, Museums and Libraries

> The curator of the Art Gallery in a small town is too often burdened with masses of not very interesting pictures, sculpture and casts, to say nothing of a mixed ethnographical collection […]. It is hard to find proper space to hang any loan exhibition in such a gallery and very little educational value to the public can be derived from it.
>
> Essil Rutherston, 1930.[545]

In 1926 Rutherston envisaged that other art galleries would be amongst the main beneficiaries of the RLS, in particular smaller galleries in provincial towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire which otherwise had limited access to modern art. Such galleries (including museums and libraries in towns without a dedicated art gallery) were amongst the first borrowers from the RLS, with Rochdale Art Gallery being the first recipient of a loan of eight paintings for an exhibition in October and November 1926, immediately after the RLC's opening exhibition at MAG.[546] As Appendix C shows, during the period 1927 to 1940 loans to other galleries remained at a consistent level of around eleven per annum but made up a smaller proportion of an increasing number of loans overall. However, this is a slightly misleading picture given that the figure for 1934 onwards includes loans to MAG's own branch galleries, Platt Hall, Queen's Park and the Horsfall Museum, which together accounted for thirty-five of the seventy-eight loans between 1934 and 1940, meaning that by 1940 less than five percent of the RLS loans were to galleries external to MAG. Although the data after 1940 is more limited, the overall pattern of borrowing relating to individual terms in each of 1942, 1943 and 1944 indicates that although other galleries

[545] "Mrs. Rutherston's Report. April 1930", n.p.

[546] City of Manchester Art Gallery, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme. July 1928", 7, RLC 1/4, MAG RLC.

continued to borrow from the RLS during the 1940s they accounted for a small proportion (less than ten percent) of a growing number of loans increasingly dominated by schools.[547]

Even before the RLS, education had formed part of MAG's core activities through the provision of lectures (for adults) and classes (for schoolchildren) in the central art gallery and the branch galleries.[548] This work contributed to the positive comments about the educational activities of Manchester's museums and galleries in both the 1928 Miers Report and the 1938 Markham Report described in the introduction to Part 2. The use of the RLS to support these activities can be traced to a dialogue in February 1934 between MAG's Sydney Cleveland and Essil Rutherston about ideas for developing the RLS through closer co-operation with Manchester Council's Education Committee.[549] MAG's Annual Report for 1934 summarises the outcome of these deliberations which in addition to proposing the extension of the RLS to elementary schools (discussed in 2.4) also reported that the RLS should be used to support classes at MAG's branch galleries.[550] This resulted in loans to Platt Hall and Queen's Park (1935-1940) and, later, to the Horsfall Museum (1938-1940) which enabled MAG to use its own staff (including dedicated teachers) to support educational activities utilising the RLC artworks.

MAG's 1934 Report also suggests that the branch gallery teachers "would welcome the Curator's and Branch Curator's guidance on works […] so that they could make the fullest use of

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[547] "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Progress Report July 1942", RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC; "Rutherston Loan Scheme. List of Borrowers from the Scheme January to March Term 1943", RLC 1/32 file 4, MAG RLC; "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Report of Progress – April, 1944"; RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[548] These core educational activities are summarised in MAG's Annual Reports which suggest this work remained relatively unchanged throughout the period under review, although on a reduced basis during the Second World War.

[549] See S. D. Cleveland, letter to Essil Rutherston, 13 Feb 1934 and Essil Rutherston, letter to S. D. Cleveland, 15 Feb 1934, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[550] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1934", 6-7, MAG Archive.

these varied forms of art expression in their lessons."[551] This statement hints at how it was envisaged the artworks would be used in these classes, with a focus on encouraging the children to express themselves through art, reflecting the emerging art educational philosophy of the 1930s. This also highlights a fundamental difference between using the RLS to support MAG's educational work conducted in the branch galleries, where MAG had specific teaching resources available including the support of the curators, and the RLS loans to other institutions, where MAG's engagement was limited to the occasional visits by Essil Rutherston and gallery staff.

Material in the RLC Archive suggests that loans to other galleries were not a priority for MAG's (and particularly Essil Rutherston's) visits to RLS borrowers, which is perhaps not surprising given (as the examples which follow demonstrate) most of the loans were used as part of conventional gallery exhibitions rather than for specific educational purposes. Essil's report on her first round of visits to RLS borrowers in 1930 focussed on art schools although she also visited some art galleries, and her report on these visits from which the epigraphic quotation at the start of this section is taken criticises the conditions she found there for displaying the loans. However, on visiting art galleries more than a decade later she is more positive saying, "I may say that it was not easy for the smaller Art Galleries to get loan Exhibitions when the R.L.S. was started and that his [Rutherston's] was the idea that gave birth to much of what is being done in that way now."[552]

This feedback provides little insight into the specific educational *Use Value* of the RLS loans to other art galleries apart from supplementing the general role of gallery exhibitions in providing the public with a basic education in art history. The more useful primary source

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[551] Ibid.

[552] Essil Rutherston, letter to S. D. Cleveland, 5 Oct 1942, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

material in this regard comprises contemporary press coverage of the exhibitions to which the RLS contributed, the majority of which is from the period 1926 to 1934. There is limited press coverage of RLS loans to other galleries after 1934 which perhaps reflects the decline in such loans along with the start of the BIAE's *Art for the People* initiative in 1935 to which the RLS went on to contribute, which will be discussed in 2.5.

The 1926 exhibition at Rochdale Art Gallery which was the first recipient of an RLS loan comprised more than fifty artworks from several sources and was the subject of two reviews in the *Rochdale Observer*, which therefore provide the earliest insight into the reception of the RLC artworks following Rutherston's gift. Two works in particular attracted detailed comments, with the first article describing Augustus John's *Merikli* as "a comparatively early work and not by any means one of his greatest pictures. Yet even in this distinguished company it stands out as the work of a master."[553] Here the writer is educating the public about the development and status of John as an artist and the quality, and therefore *Art Value*, of his work, suggesting an educational *Use Value* which combines art history with art appreciation. The article also notes that "this is, we believe, the first time that he [John] has exhibited in Rochdale", so from the outset the RLS was beginning to achieve its objective of broadening access to modern art.[554]

The second article includes the following comments on Paul Nash's *Sandling Park, Kent*:

> It comes more within the range of post-impressionism, which concerns itself with the central underlying forms rather than with the outer appearances of nature. Probably this work will tax the credulity of the visitor as severely as anything in the present show; but as one studies it more and more one begins to appreciate the artist's point of view and to feel the fine swinging rhythm of the rolling fields, the clear luminosity of the atmosphere and the strong lines of the trees.[555]

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[553] "Rochdale Art Gallery. A Loan Exhibition. First Notice," *Rochdale Observer*, 9 Oct 1926, 9.
[554] Ibid.
[555] "Rochdale Art Gallery. A Loan Exhibition. Second Notice," *Rochdale Observer*, 16 Oct 1926, 10.

Here the writer introduces and attempts to explain a significant development in modern art and how the viewer might engage with the artwork, again suggesting an educational *Use Value* combining art historical development and critical analysis skills. The anonymous reviewer is clearly writing with an understanding of modern art, but we have no sense of the extent to which *Sandling Park, Kent* did "tax the credulity" of the people of Rochdale who visited the exhibition.

Rotherham Museum and Art Gallery secured six loans from the RLS between 1928 and 1936, and the 1928 and 1929 loans were reported in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* by the same critic who also reviewed Sheffield College of Arts and Crafts RLS loans which will be discussed in 2.3. The 1928 article suggests that the two sculptures included in the loan, Epstein's *Dolores* and Dobson's *Miss Myers*, would "arouse some controversy in the comparatively complacent art circles of Rotherham", implying that the works might be challenging for Rotherham's art-viewing public.[556] It describes *Dolores* as "a repulsive but supremely clever piece of sculpture" around which "discussions on all the current theories on modern art and its purpose may well centre", and in the case of *Miss Myers* the writer recognises "the simplicity of its form and […] its surface qualities" which "gets right away from the classical idea of a quarter of a century ago."[557] The writer regards the paintings and drawings as less challenging, saying that overall they demonstrate "the general tendency of the complete Rutherston collection" to show "the English School feeling its way from Victorian prettiness to something stronger."[558]

Commenting on Rotherham's second loan in early 1929, the same writer offers a view on the important role art could play in society, in other words its *Use Value*, saying, "Rotherham is

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[556] B.J.C., "Rutherston Collection at Rotherham. The Challenge of Epstein," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 23 May 1928, 2.
[557] Ibid.
[558] Ibid.

badly in need of art and music to counteract the sombre influences of its industrial pursuits, its architecture, and its materialistic factories."[559] Less than a year after the previous loan, the writer adopts a more positive tone in describing Epstein's sculptures (*Sunita* and *Mrs. Epstein* were included in the loan) as "emphatic pieces […] which exhibit […] the device of accentuating form until it ceases to be realistic and comes under the heading of imaginative or expressionist art."[560]

These two articles provide an insight into the cultural value of the exhibited artworks from the perspective of the art critic of a provincial newspaper. The change of tone between the articles gives a sense of this transitional moment for modern art as it gradually became more accepted in England and acquired *Art Value* (for this critic, newness-value). In terms of *Use Value* the articles attempt to cultivate taste by educating the reader about the emerging *Art Value* of modern art, position modern art in relation to art history in particular the evolution of an "English School" and, by introducing critical terminology and explaining the focus on formal properties, support the reader in understanding and engaging with modern art.

A loan to the Storey Institute Art Gallery in Lancaster in 1929 is of particular interest from the point of view of the reception of the RLS as it attracted detailed reviews in both the local press and the *Yorkshire Post*. The *Morecambe Guardian* reports that the loan formed part of the Summer 1929 exhibition, the sixth of a series of regular art exhibitions held at the Gallery, and the opening was attended by Lawrence Haward.[561] The thirty RLS works were displayed "grouped on the wall facing the entrance to the gallery", presumably a prominent position where they would have been seen by all visitors.[562] The article comments on many works in the

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[559] B.J.C., "Modern Art. Rutherston Collection at Rotherham," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 25 Jan 1929, 2.
[560] Ibid.
[561] "Art Exhibition. Distinguished Works at the Art Gallery. Opening Ceremony," *Morecambe Guardian*, 8 June 1929, 9.
[562] Ibid.

exhibition including several in the RLS loan, describing a group by William Rothenstein including *Reading the Book of Esther* as "exquisite" and Augustus John's *Merikli* as "one of the features of the exhibition", but a reference to Paul Nash's *At Oxenbridge* as simply "another modern picture" suggests that the writer preferred the older work of Rothenstein and John.[563]

Speaking about the programme of exhibitions in general, the Chairman of the Storey Institute and Library Committee said that they "afforded the greatest pleasure to all lovers of art, many of whom had not the time or opportunity of visiting exhibitions in large centres", and were also "of immense value to the young people of the town" with organised visits arranged for the elementary and art schools.[564] Although this observation is not specifically aimed at the RLS and modern art, it highlights the educational *Use Value* of the RLS but also references the potential for art to simply provide pleasure and enjoyment, not an explicit objective of the RLS but a return to the *Use Value* behind the late nineteenth-century cultural philanthropy of Thomas Horsfall's Manchester Museum. Another speaker comments specifically on the RLS loan saying, "they could not appreciate enough this really great and new movement in this exhibition of the best contemporary art that they saw associated with the name of Mr. Rutherston", implying that the RLS loan had achieved its objective of educating at least one Lancaster resident about modern art.[565] This example illustrates how as the RLC acquired *Art Value*, resulting both from the status gradually being afforded to modern art in England and from the reputation of the RLC and the Rutherston name, its *Use Value* also increased as other galleries wanted to be associated with the prestige it offered them and their visitors.

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[563] Ibid.
[564] Ibid.
[565] Ibid.

The *Yorkshire Post* focuses more specifically on the RLS, referring to the "Rutherston Bequest" in the article's headline and describing the RLS loan as the exhibition's "distinctive feature."[566] Like the *Morecambe Guardian* the reviewer is positive about the works of Rothenstein and John, but also comments favourably on several other works from the RLS loan.[567] The Lancaster case study therefore highlights differences in how the RLS was reported between the Leeds-based *Yorkshire Post*, a major regional newspaper, and the local press in North Lancashire. The *Yorkshire Post* had its own art critic who was already familiar with the RLS and chose to elevate it from the rest of the exhibition, with a particular focus (in cultural value terms) on its *Art Value* as a representative selection of modern art. On the other hand, the *Morecambe Guardian* did not separate the RLS works from the rest of exhibition and preferred to focus on the impact of the whole exhibition, its *Use Value*, for the people of Lancaster.

The Hanley Museum and Art Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent was one of the most frequent early borrowers from the RLS, securing eight loans between 1928 and 1935 mainly as a contribution to annual loan exhibitions. These exhibitions received good coverage in the local press with the reviews up to and including the 1931 exhibition being particularly relevant. It is perhaps surprising that as early as 1928 MAG agreed to the RLS being used as part of a wider exhibition and in a location outside the original geographical scope of the RLS, but in other respects Stoke-on-Trent fitted the profile of a provincial industrial town.

The *Staffordshire Sentinel* coverage of the 1928 exhibition suggests that these loans may have resulted from a long-standing relationship between MAG and Stoke-on-Trent, reporting that Lawrence Haward opened the exhibition and quoting the local Libraries and Museums

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[566] H.T., "Lancaster Art Gallery. Works From Rutherston Bequest," *Yorkshire Post*, 4 June 1929, 5.
[567] Ibid.

Committee Chairman saying, “there was no curator in the country to whom Stoke-on-Trent was more indebted than Mr. Haward.”[568] It seems likely that through this link Haward would have established a good relationship with Frank Lambert, the Curator of Stoke-on-Trent’s galleries and museums between 1924 and 1927, particularly as the two men were both public school and Cambridge University-educated and likely to have been part of the same cultural networks.[569] Given the lead times required to plan exhibitions, it is not inconceivable that the 1928 loan would have been agreed before Lambert left Stoke to go to Leeds Art Gallery at the end of 1927.[570] The *Staffordshire Sentinel* singles out the RLS loan as providing a modern contribution to an otherwise conservative exhibition, reflecting differing perceptions of *Art Value* by saying, “[w]hile a number of the pictures are dull and common-place and definitely belong to an art that is past, there are enough good things […] In particular, the loans from the Rutherston Collection of essentially modern art supply the ‘live’ element.”[571] This statement attributes the RLC artworks with newness-value (and perhaps relative art-value) whereas the negative comment about the older works limits their *Art Value* to any residual historical value.

The *Staffordshire Sentinel’s* review of the 1929 Autumn Exhibition states that the exhibition reflected “[c]atholicity of taste” ranging from the Pre-Raphaelite work of Holman Hunt to “an essentially modern self-portrait by Wyndham Lewis”.[572] The review highlights a similar contrast in the perceived *Art Value* of the loaned works to the 1928 exhibition saying,

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[568] "Loaned Works Of Art. Hanley Exhibition Opened," *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 18 Oct 1928, 4.
[569] "Leeds Art Gallery. Mr. Frank Lambert, of Stoke, Recommended as Director," *Leeds Mercury*, 14 Jun 1927, 7.
[570] Ibid.
[571] E.N.S., "Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture. Loan Exhibition in Hanley," *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 17 Oct 1928, 4.
[572] E.N.S., "Paintings, Drawings, and Pottery. Catholicity of Hanley Art Exhibition," *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 26 Sept 1929, 6.

"[t]he more complacent work is naturally that lent by the public galleries […]. The more arresting is that lent by the Trustees of the Rutherston Collection, the Duveen Fund and the Contemporary Art Society, as well as by a few discerning private owners."[573] The reviewer is particularly complimentary about several drawings including two works from Rutherston's original gift by Muirhead Bone and William Rothenstein, as well as unspecified drawings by Augustus John and Wyndham Lewis which could also have been from the RLC.[574] In terms of water-colours the reviewer expresses a strong preference for the modern work, and here he specifically references Wilson Steer's landscapes which he compares to older works which "were not in the same street, artistically, as the best of the modern". So once again the *Art Value* of these older artworks is being diminished through the process of comparison.[575] Turning to paintings, the review is again generally positive about the modern works which he says have "something fresh and arresting to say – even if some of it appears freakish", and in addition to Lewis it references other artists with works in the RLC.[576] The reviewer contrasts these modern works with "a beautiful little tempera painting by Joseph Southall – one of the modern survivors of the Pre-Raphaelites", a comparison which the same writer goes on to make again in his review of the 1931 exhibition.[577]

The *Staffordshire Sentinel's* review of the 1930 autumn exhibition says, "[f]or the third occasion a selection of works from the Rutherston Loan Collection forms the nucleus of the exhibition", identifying Roger Fry, Muirhead Bone, Lucien Pissarro, Augustus John, William

[573] Ibid.
[574] Ibid.
[575] Ibid.
[576] Ibid.
[577] Ibid.

Rothenstein and Jacob Epstein amongst the artists represented although individual works are not specified.[578] The article references comments by Alderman A. Hollins M.P. (who opened the exhibition) which allude to two different aspects of the potential *Use Value* of the exhibition, "the artistic education of the people" and "beautifying the district", the former being an explicit objective of the RLS and the latter (as noted earlier) a throwback to an earlier idea of cultural philanthropy but perhaps still an important role for art in industrial towns in the twentieth century."[579]

In its review of the 1931 exhibition the *Staffordshire Sentinel* comments on specific works from the RLC saying, "William Roberts' austere 'Sarah' will not be to the popular taste. Nevertheless, it strikes a vigorous note and makes 'pretty' things look very sickly by comparison. […] Quite in a school of its own – though primitive or Pre-Raphaelite in manner – is Joseph Southall's 'Old Seaport'. It is fascinating in its illuminative contrast."[580] Here the reviewer attributes Roberts' *Sarah* with some level of *Art Value*, specifically newness-value as a work reflecting the influence of Post-Impressionism which was not yet to "popular taste". And in a repeat of the analysis in the 1929 review by the same writer, Southall's *The Old Seaport*, 1919-1925 (Fig.82) also attracts positive comments, suggesting that although the work represented an earlier tradition of English art it was still to contemporary tastes, in other words had retained relative art-value, at least for this writer. This also provides an indication of the debate that was still taking place in the early 1930s about the respective *Art Value* of work from two distinct artistic philosophies represented by these contrasting works.

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[578] "Art Exhibition Opened," *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 23 Oct 1930, 7.

[579] Ibid.

[580] E.N.S., "Eminent Artists in Hanley Exhibition. Augustus John and Nicholson," *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 12 Oct 1931, 4.

A single loan to Sunderland Art Gallery in 1934 is another example of the RLS extending its geographical reach beyond Lancashire and Yorkshire but, as with Stoke-on-Trent, in other respects Sunderland also fitted the profile of a provincial industrial town which was central to the RLS's ethos, and the loan received good coverage in local press. Firstly, an article in the *Sunderland Echo* immediately prior to the opening of the exhibition provides a positive review which, in suggesting that the exhibition should have wide appeal, adopts a different tone to some of the press coverage discussed earlier saying, "[m]any of the most promising 'moderns' – Sickert, Nevinson, Wilson Steer, John, Jacob Kramer – are well represented; and outside its undoubted value to art students, the collection has much that will interest the general public."[581] The article is positive about the two Epstein busts included in the loan saying, "there is nothing that will shock lovers of the beautiful about them, and much that everyone who admires vitality in art will appreciate."[582] Nevinson's *Motor Lorries* is described as "not a "pretty" picture but one full of power" in which "he has caught the queer half-light of dawn and the atmosphere of apprehension to perfection", and Sickert's *Camden Terrace, Bath* as "an effective study […] more likely to appeal to most people than much of his work", the latter comment perhaps a reference to Sickert's unsettling interior studies.[583]

A follow-up article reflecting on the exhibition, possibly by a different writer, appears two months later saying, "[i]t has been visited probably by more serious students of art than any other exhibition held in the gallery for some considerable time", which suggests that the loan had

[581] E.A.E., "Two Epstein Busts. Sunderland Art Gallery Exhibition," *Sunderland Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 9 May 1934, 3.
[582] Ibid.
[583] Ibid.

some educational *Use Value* for art students.[584] In terms of the exhibition's reception by the general public, the article notes that "[t]he Epstein bronzes usually have an interested visitor gazing at them and admiring their amazing vigour and life", and that "[t]he typical Nevinson war painting on view is one which has attracted more favourable comment among the average visitors than I expected", both comments indicating that by 1934 the public (in Sunderland, at least) was becoming more accepting of modern art and beginning to understand its *Art Value*.[585]

Whilst most of the RLS loans to other galleries during the period under review were to smaller galleries in provincial towns (reflected in the examples described above), one exception was Leeds Art Gallery which borrowed from the RLS over four successive years from 1928 to 1931. Like MAG, Leeds Art Gallery was an established gallery in a major city in the North of England and, as such, these loans did not fit with the RLS's primary objective of broadening access to modern art, and were therefore an exception in the early years of the RLS. The first of the loans in 1928 involved just four works for an exhibition of modern art by the London Artists' Association and press coverage provides an insight into the reception (and perceived *Art Value*) of modern art in the North of England, although the RLC and RLS are not mentioned.[586] The exhibition included artists represented in the RLC such as Paul Nash, Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell and William Roberts and the *Yorkshire Post* explicitly identifies two of the works loaned from the RLC, Roberts' *Sarah* and Bernard Adeney's *The Window,* 1923 (exhib.) (Fig.83), although none of the Nash works mentioned were from the RLC.[587] The review is generally negative, saying that "the one thing which bound these artists together was a cult of clumsiness",

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[584] "From a Window in Bridge Street. Popular Exhibition," *Sunderland Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 4 July 1934, 2.
[585] Ibid.
[586] City of Manchester Art Gallery, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme. July 1928", 7.
[587] H.T., "Modern Art. Exhibition in Leeds Gallery," *Yorkshire Post*, 4 Apr 1928, 8.

which again indicates that modern art was yet to be fully accepted in the North of England even in a regional centre such as Leeds. However, the article is positive about both *Sarah* and *The Window*, perhaps because these works were not at the cutting edge of developments in modern art, reflecting Rutherston's collecting approach (examined in Part 1).[588]

In 1929 the RLS loaned a full group of thirty works to an exhibition of contemporary art at Leeds Art Gallery built around recent acquisitions through the CAS's prints and drawings fund, supplemented by loans by three other public galleries including MAG.[589] Again, the RLC/RLS is not mentioned although the *Yorkshire Evening Post* refers explicitly to two Epstein works in the RLC in an article providing a balanced view of the exhibition:

> Old-fashioned folk with fixed ideas as to the function of Art and beauty will have a series of shocks as they walk round the gallery. Anything with a suggestion of prettiness has been carefully eliminated, and […] has resulted in what seems to be some almost crude and brutal impressions. But there is always life and vitality in the canvases.[590]

This comment contrasts the view of the writer with his expectations of the likely reception of the artworks by the Leeds public, which is an emerging pattern in the press coverage examined here. The "life and vitality" of the works override the "crude and brutal impressions" they might create suggesting that, for this writer, the works had newness-value although were not yet to contemporary tastes. Meanwhile, older art is condemned for its "prettiness" (rather than praised for its beauty) and therefore represented an art of the past, implying that any *Art Value* it retained would be limited to its historical value.

The 1930 exhibition at Leeds Art Gallery focused on modern water-colours and a *Yorkshire Post* review suggests that the artworks in the exhibition "represent very fairly and fully

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[588] Ibid.

[589] "Contemporary Art. Exhibition Opened in Leeds," *Yorkshire Post*, 16 May 1929, 16.

[590] J.A.D., "The Elimination of Prettiness. Striking Examples of Contemporary Art in a Leeds Exhibition," *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 13 May 1929, 9.

contemporary work. A few recently deceased masters are represented […] but the large majority are artists still working among us."[591] This time the RLC is mentioned explicitly as "[a]nother public collection which has contributed generously to the exhibition", specifically lending drawings by several artists "of what may still be styled the 'advanced' type", including Paul Nash, Albert Rutherston, Thérèse Lessore and Edna Clarke Hall.[592] So the RLC works were considered amongst the more "advanced", perhaps confirming the implication given by many of the other artists referenced in the review that this exhibition was more conservative than those in the previous two years.

These reviews of the Leeds exhibitions do not refer explicitly to the RLS although they provide some insight into the reception of works from the RLC (and other works by some of the same artists) and their *Art Value* as perceived by the Yorkshire regional press. A common theme is the difference between the writers' own opinions of *Art Value* and their views of the public response, and the contrast between the positivity used to describe modern art and the more negative terms applied to older works can be seen as attempting to educate the readers about the emerging *Art Value*, specifically the newness-value, of modern art. I have found no primary source evidence about the reasons for the Leeds loans given they did not fit the overall ethos of the RLS, although they coincided with Frank Lambert's time as Director there (1927-1931) and it seems possible that the loans were the result of Lambert's relationship with Lawrence Haward established while Lambert was curator at Stoke-on-Trent.[593]

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[591] H.T., "Works of Modern Artists. Exhibition at Leeds Art Gallery," *Yorkshire Post*, 11 Oct 1930, 14.
[592] Ibid.
[593] In 1931 Lambert was appointed Director of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool - see "Mr. Frank Lambert," *Yorkshire Post*, 3 Oct 1931, 8. The RLS made a single loan to the Walker Art Gallery in 1933, another exception to the RLS's usual policy and perhaps a further consequence of Lambert's relationship with MAG (or specifically Haward).

The examples examined above illustrate how for around a decade after the first loan to Rochdale Art Gallery in 1926 the RLS played an important role in the development of the system of inter-gallery loans which gradually became normalised during this period, a contribution which as described earlier was noted by Essil Rutherston in her October 1942 letter to Sydney Cleveland. So, the *Use Value* of the RLS could be interpreted as the role it played as part of these exhibitions in disseminating an idea of the *Art Value* of modern art to the visiting public, mostly in towns which otherwise had limited access to modern art. The only loans to other galleries where an explicit educational *Use Value* was identified were the internal loans to MAG's branch galleries, and one specific reference in the press coverage of the Lancaster loan to educational visits to the gallery by schools and art schools. The contemporary press coverage was mostly concerned with assessing (and educating the readership about) the *Art Value* of the artworks included in the exhibitions, with *Use Value* being implicit at best with little direct reference to educational benefits.

Two further points of note can be drawn from the above analysis. Firstly, the press coverage illustrates the transition taking place in the acceptance of the *Art Value* of modern art in provincial towns in the North of England, from 1926 when Paul Nash's work might "tax the credulity" of the people of Rochdale and 1928 when Epstein's sculpture would "arouse some controversy" in Rotherham, until 1934 when the Sunderland public admired the "amazing vigour and life" of Epstein's bronzes, and Nevinson's war painting attracted "favourable comment." Secondly, whilst many of the articles adopt a didactic tone in attempting to educate their readers about art, some differences can be noted between the reporting in the regional and the local press, perhaps most evident in the two articles on the 1929 Lancaster exhibition with the Leeds-

based *Yorkshire Post* focusing on the *Art Value* of the exhibited artworks and the *Morecambe Guardian* being more concerned with the *Use Value* of the exhibition to the local community.

This analysis suggests a hierarchy in the idea of the cultural centre-periphery relationship, with London as the metropolitan centre, the major northern cities of Manchester and Leeds with art galleries led by curators drawn from the cultural elite and the press associated with each, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Yorkshire Post*, as a regional semi-periphery, and towns such as Rochdale, Rotherham, Lancaster, Stoke-on-Trent and Sunderland and their local press comprising a provincial periphery. However, although it is possible that some of the galleries may have organized lectures for adults and school visits for children around the exhibitions there is limited primary source evidence of this. Even MAG, which had offered such core educational support at its own galleries since the First World War, only had the resources to support the internal RLS loans. This picture reflects Markham's criticism of the museums and galleries sector in his 1938 review and meant that the potential educational *Use Value* of the RLS loans to other galleries was unlikely to have been fully realised.

2.3 Borrowing from the RLS – Art Schools

> I must begin by saying that I found the Art Schools much more interesting than the Galleries. They appear to have the opportunity of being able to do much more. […] Here the students from the beginning of their career see them [drawings and paintings] daily during their hours of work and gain more knowledge from these few than from many visits to a gallery.
>
> Essil Rutherston, 1930.[594]

In 1926 Rutherston envisaged that along with other art galleries the main beneficiaries of his proposed loan scheme would be art schools where his collection would be used to educate the next generation of artists about modern art. Following the first RLS loan to Rochdale Art Gallery at the end of 1926 discussed in the previous section, the second loan comprising forty-four drawings was to Bury School of Art in February and March 1927 and this was followed by further loans in 1927 to art schools in Bradford, Hyde, Sheffield and Bingley.[595] The analysis of RLS borrowing for the period 1927-1940 contained in Appendix C shows that loans to art schools accounted for forty-three percent of the loans between 1927 and 1930 but then tailed off significantly, particularly after 1933 with art schools accounting for less than seven percent of the RLS loans between 1934 and 1940. Although the data after 1940 is more limited, information relating to individual terms in each of 1942, 1943 and 1944 indicates that although art schools continued to borrow from the RLS throughout the period under review, after 1940 they accounted for a small proportion (around ten percent) of a growing number of loans increasingly dominated by schools.[596]

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[594] "Mrs. Rutherston's Report. April 1930", n.p.

[595] "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme. July 1928", 7.

[596] "Progress Report July 1942"; "List of Borrowers January to March 1943"; "Report of Progress April 1944".

Essil Rutherston's report on her first round of visits to RLS borrowers in early 1930 focused particularly on art schools and her positive impression overall is reflected in the epigraphic quotation above. However, although she compliments some of the art schools she visited she also expresses concerns about the conditions in which the loaned artworks were exhibited in some others, her feedback already indicating that some art schools were using the RLS loans to hold small exhibitions rather than in the direct education of students.[597] The primary source material relating to the use of the RLS by art schools combines contemporary press coverage where the loans were used to create such public exhibitions with documents from the RLC Archive including further feedback from Essil Rutherston's visits. However, no relevant material has been found in the surviving records of the art schools themselves.

As discussed in Part 1, Rutherston had a long-standing relationship with Bradford College of Arts and Crafts in his home city where he tested out some of his ideas for loaning his art collection and donated related items such as art books.[598] Given this relationship it is not surprising that the College was a significant early borrower from the RLS with eleven loans secured between 1927 and 1933, at which point the loans ceased. There is limited press coverage of the early loans to the College, for example in May 1928 the *Yorkshire Post* included a brief note of the loan of twenty works for an exhibition including several Epstein sculptures with the article saying, "Bradford is the first city to obtain the loan of this part of the collection."[599] However, two loans at the end of 1931 and beginning of 1932 which were part of an exhibition of modern art held on the opening of the College's new exhibition room provide the richest

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[597] "Mrs. Rutherston's Report. April 1930", n.p.

[598] In 1927 the Bradford School of Arts and Crafts changed its name to the Bradford College of Arts and Crafts – see "University News," *Yorkshire Post*, 26 Feb 1927, 9.

[599] "Northern Items," *Yorkshire Post*, 2 May 1928, 11.

source of material about the College's use of the RLS. The exhibition was arranged by Eric Gregory who wrote to Lawrence Haward in August 1931 to tell him about the exhibition and to ask him if he would be happy to give a lecture as part of it, a rare example of MAG providing additional support for the use of RLS loans.[600] Gregory's letter contains a list of the artworks in the exhibition which in addition to the RLS loan included contributions from the CAS, Sir Michael Sadler (who opened the exhibition), Gregory himself, Essil and Jeannette Rutherston and several other Bradford collectors.[601]

This appears to have been a conventional exhibition essentially using the College's new exhibition room as a public art gallery. The only press coverage I have found referring to the exhibition is an August 1931 article in the *Manchester Guardian* about the RLC which references the ongoing redevelopment at the College and the forthcoming opening exhibition, saying:

> The Bradford College of Art is in the throes of extensive structural development, and included in the new buildings is an exhibition-room, the opening of which will be commemorated by an exhibition of modern art. To this local collectors and galleries are to contribute, and the Rutherston collection will have a section to itself.[602]

The high profile given here to the RLS loan reflects both the growing reputation of the RLC and Rutherston's link to the College and his friendship with Gregory who arranged the exhibition.

The article goes on to bemoan the lack of suitable spaces to display artworks in many art schools, expressing the hope that "Bradford will lead other colleges to contemplate a similar development."[603] The only reference I have found to Bradford College in Essil Rutherston's feedback on her borrower visits is in April 1933 when Essil praised the display of the loaned

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[600] Eric Gregory, letter to Lawrence Haward, 27 Aug 1931, file for E. C. (Peter) Gregory, MAG DB.
[601] Ibid.
[602] "The Rutherston Collection. Many Applications for Loans," *Manchester Guardian*, 19 Aug 1931, 11.
[603] Ibid.

works in the College's new exhibition room which (mirroring the views of the 1931 *Manchester Guardian* article) she contrasted with some of the poor conditions she had found at some other art schools, saying "the whole Exhibition Room is devoted to the loan during the term in which it is shown, and hung with great care."[604]

The last loan to Bradford College recorded in MAG's records was at the end of 1933 which perhaps not coincidentally was the year in which the Board of Education announced plans to create a regional structure of art colleges as part of the closer alignment between art education and the needs of industry, as discussed in the introduction to Part 2. It seems likely that, from this point onwards, the College focused on becoming a regional art college and to do so its educational priorities changed from teaching fine art to aspiring artists, to meeting the needs of local industries. Certainly, many of the exhibitions held by the College after 1933 in its new exhibition room reflected this shift to a more vocational focus, including a 1934 exhibition of furniture designed and made in Yorkshire art schools, a 1936 exhibition of London North Eastern Railways poster art and a 1938 exhibition of school building designs.[605]

In 1938 the Bradford College of Art was accredited as one of the first regional colleges of art in the country with the announcement in the local press noting that the Board of Education had specifically complimented the College "for the special facilities it has afforded to advanced study, especially in regard to the major industries of the district."[606] The article goes on to describe how the College in conjunction with Bradford Technical College now provided "a

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[604] Essil Rutherston, letter to A. P. Simon 8 Apr 1933, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[605] "Furnishing the £600 House. Bradford Exhibition to Help the Tenant," *Yorkshire Post*, 13 Oct 1934, 12; "L.N.E.R. Poster Art in Bradford," *Yorkshire Post*, 7 May 1936, 18; A.H.A., "The Schools of To-Day. Progress in Building Designs. Exhibition at Bradford," *Yorkshire Post*, 23 May 1938, 5.

[606] "Training for Industrial Needs. Bradford College of Art's High Prestige," *Yorkshire Observer*, 11 Feb 1938, 4.

comprehensive scheme for training in textile design", textiles being Bradford's major industry, "which make the two institutions the leading centres in the country for the teaching of design adapted to the needs of the woollen and worsted industry."[607] Coverage in the local press illustrates how this focus on support for the local textile industry continued during the Second World War and I have found no records of any further RLS loans to the College in the remainder of the period to 1950.[608]

Sheffield College of Arts and Crafts was also an early borrower from the RLS securing six loans between 1927 and 1933, and coverage in the local press of the first three of these loans provides a useful insight into their reception.[609] The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* review of the 1927 loan exhibition (by the same critic who in 1928 and 1929 went on to cover the Rotherham Art Gallery loans discussed in 2.2) credits the College's principal for securing this early loan, and describes the exhibition as "one of the most notable displays of modern art held in Sheffield for several years."[610] The article also offers a positive assessment of the collection in relation to the development of modern art saying, "[i]t is such variety as this, […] embodying something of most of the movements in contemporary and recent art that give to this exhibition its significance and its attractiveness."[611]

To illustrate this "variety" the article offers a comparison between "Miss Geres' [sic] pre-Raphaelite portrait", probably Margaret Gere's *Mrs Alfred Thornton*, 1916 (Fig.84), and William

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[607] Ibid.

[608] See for example Susan Butler, "A Woman's Gossip," *Yorkshire Observer*, 18 March 1940, 2; Susan Butler, "Art College and Textiles," *Yorkshire Observer*, 24 Feb 1943, 2.

[609] The name "Sheffield College of Arts and Crafts" had only been adopted the previous year, having previously been called Sheffield Technical School of Art – see B.J.C., "Art In 1926. A Review of the Past Year. College of Arts and Crafts," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 8 Jan 1927, 10.

[610] B.J.C., "Modern Art. Rutherston Loan Collection in Sheffield," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 15 Nov 1927, 3.

[611] Ibid.

Roberts' "mild example of some of the principles which the Cubists so cleverly misused", probably *Portrait of a Woman*, 1919 (Fig.85).[612] A similar comparison between art representing two distinct artistic philosophies went on to be made by the *Staffordshire Sentinel's* reviews of exhibitions at Hanley Museum and Art Gallery in 1929 and 1931 discussed in 2.2. This comparison represents a moment when works drawing on a tradition of representational English art were exhibited alongside art influenced by Post-Impressionism with both being attributed with *Art Value*, in the form of relative art-value and newness-value respectively. In a follow-up article the same critic goes on to say:

> The value of the exhibition […] is two-fold. So far as the general public is concerned it provides an instructive and suggestive display of some of the modern movements which really count […]. It also provides […] a stimulating impetus for such professional artists and art students as may aspire to achieve distinction in what may be broadly labelled expressionist art. [613]

The reference here to "some of the modern movements which really count" reinforces the earlier comparison and the idea that stylistically diverse artworks had *Art Value* during this transitional period for modern art. This in turn suggests an educational *Use Value* concerned with providing the public with an overall appreciation and understanding of modern art and the variety of styles which it comprised. But the emphasis given here to "expressionist art" suggests that the *Use Value* of the exhibited artworks in supporting the College's students in making art was focussed on emulating the stylistic influence of Post-Impressionism.

Moving on to two loans in 1930, the *Sheffield Daily Independent* reported on the first of these in January referencing a speech by the College's head of drawing and painting in which he

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[612] Ibid. Rutherston's Manchester gift included works by Margaret Gere and her brother Charles March Gere who were both involved with the Birmingham school of artists discussed in Part 1 – see Crawford, "By Hammer and Hand," 28.

[613] B.J.C., "Modern Art. Manchester Works in in Sheffield," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 26 Nov 1927, 10.

encourages the students to demonstrate "a greater spirit of adventure, more originality of method" in their work, an indication that the educational *Use Value* of the RLS artworks resided in the encouragement they gave to the students to express themselves.[614] A review of a second loan in 1930 in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (by the same writer as the 1927 articles) also directly references *Use Value*, saying that the exhibition's primary purpose was "to afford the students of the college an opportunity of becoming acquainted with a phase of modern art of which Sheffield possesses no examples of its own."[615] As with his 1927 reviews, the writer attempts to position the artworks within their art historical context, saying:

> Together they show us some of the beginnings of the open rebellion which these early 20th century artists preached against all conventional art, […] the pioneer efforts […] which first set the pace in an effort to shake off the mustiness of academic Victorianism. […] [Rutherston's] judgement still remains, on the whole, justified; nothing so far has superseded this new early 20th century outlook in English art.[616]

Here the writer is attributing the RLS artworks with significant *Art Value*, in particular suggesting that the art resulting from "the pioneer efforts" of artists earlier in the twentieth century was still to contemporary tastes, in other words had relative art-value. The pejorative use of the term "academic Victorianism" references art following the classical academic tradition to which modern art had developed in opposition in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (as described in Part 1).

The Sheffield College aspired to become a regional college of art which, as with Bradford, might be the main reason borrowing from the RLS ceased after 1933 as the College increasingly aligned its educational priorities with the needs of local industry. This aspiration

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[614] "New Field for Artists. Mr. Anthony Betts Urges Originality," *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 30 Jan 1930, 8.
[615] B.J.C., "Modern Art. Manchester Exhibits in Sheffield," *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 20 May 1930, 5.
[616] Ibid.

was dependent upon the construction of a new building with a 1935 article in the local press describing "[t]he great regional college of arts and crafts to be built in Sheffield […]. It will be one of the two colleges of art in Yorkshire to be recognised by the Board of Education."[617] The following year plans for the new building had stalled due to difficulties in obtaining a suitable site although negotiations were continuing with the Board of Education as the College was struggling to meet the demands being placed on it by local manufacturers for trained staff.[618] Plans for a new building continued until 1939 when they were finally shelved due to the outbreak of the Second World War which meant that Sheffield failed to achieve its objective of being accredited as a regional college.[619] Nevertheless, the College's close alignment with the needs of industry was by now well established and there appear to have been no more loans from the RLS during the remainder of the period to 1950.

Skipton Science and Art Schools was another early borrower from the RLS with four loans between 1928 and 1931 which, as an art school in a small town away from the major industrial centres in the North of England, provides a contrast to the previous examples of Bradford and Sheffield. The 1928 loan was exhibited to the public and was reported in the press, the *Leeds Mercury* describing the work on display as "of an advanced character, designed to portray typical and varied aspects of the Modern School."[620] Citing the Principal's lectures given as part of the exhibition, an example of the borrowing institution providing its own support for

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[617] "New College of Art Hope. Official Recognition For Sheffield Centre," *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 19 June 1935, 7.

[618] "Plans for Sheffield Regional Art College," *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 17 June 1936, 7.

[619] "Regional College. Sheffield Scheme to Serve Parts of West Riding," *Leeds Mercury*, 11 Feb 1939, 4. In 1946 only six regional schemes for art education were in existence, including Bradford and Leeds but not Sheffield (or Manchester) – see The Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 102.

[620] "The Modern School. Some Features of the Rutherston Loan Collection," *Leeds Mercury*, 2 Oct 1928, 7.

the RLS loan, the article goes on to give a sense of the educational *Use Value* of the artworks for both the students and for the visiting public saying, "the idea of the modern artist is to infuse the spirit rather than to show photographic natural production, and to realise the idea in the artist's mind. In the collection different technical methods are used by the artists to produce the same idea."[621] This comment reflects how encouraging students to express themselves freely was beginning to become a popular art educational philosophy during this period, as described in the introduction to Part 2.

The article provides mostly positive observations on some of the artworks, describing William Rothenstein's *George Bernard Shaw*, 1916 as "marvellous in its simplicity"; saying of Wyndham Lewis's *Man with a Pipe*, 1920 "there is nothing true to nature, but the spirit is behind it"; and complimenting both Augustus John's *Miss Schepeler*, 1906 for its "subtlety and an expression full of life", and Eric H. Kennington's *The German Prisoner*, 1917 for being "masterly in line and form."[622] These positive comments indicate that the works held significant *Art Value* for this reviewer, and suggest a *Use Value* concerned with educating students and the visiting public about the characteristics of modern art, including its use of formal properties rather than realistic representation and its expressive capabilities and vitality.

Essil Rutherston visited Skipton as part of her first round of visits to borrowers in early 1930 and was positive about the way the RLS loan was being used there, saying:

> Here I should like to make a suggestion for exhibitions which would be particularly helpful to students in schools where there is very little room to hang a complete exhibition. Loans of sets of drawings or paintings illustrating one line of study such as say a dozen water-colour landscapes, or wood engravings, or a set of portrait drawings showing examples of different approach in technique and medium. This is being done at

[621] Ibid.
[622] Ibid.

> Skipton and lectures given on these particular lines of work, using the examples on the wall.[623]

This feedback gives an insight into the perceived educational *Use Value* of the artworks which Essil believed could be a useful approach for other art schools with similar space limitations. Essil's suggestion that the artworks might be grouped according to medium or genre indicates that she felt the loans should be used to support an aesthetic education through close observation supported by lectures, rather than a chronological display focussed on the teaching of art history.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its close proximity to MAG, Manchester School of Art was a regular borrower from the RLS with ten loans between 1932 and 1935 and seven loans between 1938 and 1940, and the limited data relating to the period after 1940 also shows that the School continued borrowing throughout the Second World War. [624] The lack of press coverage of these loans suggests that, unlike many other art schools, Manchester did not use the RLS loans for public exhibition purposes. In fact, apart from annual exhibitions of the students' work there is virtually no press coverage of any public exhibitions at the School until 1940 onwards when the conditions of wartime seem to have resulted in more frequent public exhibitions. Among these was a 1943 exhibition of Augustus John drawings and although the *Manchester Guardian* states that this was a BIAE *Art for the People* exhibition it coincided with an RLS loan, so it seems likely that the RLS contributed to it.[625] The article says that the selection of artworks "from so rich an output over so long a period" had been made "with an eye to the instruction of the practising rather than the critical student", suggesting that the artworks' educational *Use Value*

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[623] "Mrs. Rutherston's Report. April 1930", n.p.

[624] "Progress Report July 1942"; "List of Borrowers January to March 1943"; "Report of Progress April 1944".

[625] D. S., "Augustus John Drawings," *Manchester Guardian*, 2 Feb 1943, 3.

was most relevant to teaching drawing to aspiring artists.[626] Certainly, the positive tone of this review implies that, for this reviewer, Augustus John's work still had significant *Art Value* in 1943.

The RLC Archive contains useful material on Essil Rutherston's visits to the School, beginning in a highly critical April 1933 letter in which she says:

> I was really shocked at the way the loan had been treated at the Manchester School of Art. I know that the Exhibition had been hung in the big hall at first but at the time of my visit - which was only half way through the term – they had been placed in a small room, very badly hung, without any attempt at arrangement. […] a better arrangement should be made or they should be withdrawn altogether. They do not either do justice to the collection, or to the reputation of a large School of Art.[627]

Essil's reference to the lack of "arrangement" of the artworks can perhaps be clarified by the feedback from her visit to Skipton in 1930 described earlier in which she was suggesting the works might be grouped according to medium or genre. It is not clear if any action was taken to improve Manchester's display of the artworks, but loans continued until the 1935 summer term when borrowing paused until 1938. I have found no evidence to suggest that Manchester aspired to become accredited as a regional college but nevertheless press coverage that year points to the School attempting to align its work more closely with local industry and, like Bradford and Sheffield, this may well have been a factor in its pause in using the RLS.[628]

However, Manchester School of Art began borrowing again in the summer term of 1938 and, on a return visit in 1940, Essil Rutherston was more positive about what she saw there than she had been in 1933 saying, "[t]hey are now having frequent exhibitions of all kinds lasting about a fortnight and will also use the Rutherston loans in the same way. The present one is hung

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[626] Ibid.

[627] Essil Rutherston to A. P. Simon, 8 Apr 1933.

[628] For example, see "Manchester School Of Art. Value To Industry," *Manchester Guardian*, 9 March 1935, 15.

at the moment in various departments for special study."[629] The reasons why Manchester School of Art returned to using the RLS from 1938 onwards are unclear, and this may seem surprising given that Manchester was one of first art schools in Britain to embrace the Bauhaus-inspired design philosophy which ultimately led to the Basic Design movement of the 1950s, with Stuart Macdonald noting, "Britain did not follow the German lead until the fifties. There was an isolated example of a preliminary course set up in 1940 at Manchester School of Art. […] The course had many features of the Bauhaus course."[630] However, he goes on to say, "[t]he course never developed fully in the years following […] because the senior art staff, engrossed in representational work and possessed of vague ideas of the Bauhaus as a school of functional architecture, were uncertain what it had to do with fine art."[631] It therefore seems conceivable that Manchester School of Art's renewed use of the RLS during the late 1930s and 1940s was part of attempts by some of the staff to re-enforce the teaching of fine art as a response to this initiative.

The King Edward VII School of Art at the Armstrong College in Newcastle-upon-Tyne was another early borrower from the RLS with three loans in 1928, 1930 and 1931 and is of interest primarily because it represents one of the only examples in the RLC Archive of explicit feedback from borrowers about the educational benefits of the loans. The RLS Report for October 1930 records, "[a]n appreciation of the value of the loans has again been expressed by Professor Dickey, of Armstrong College, Newcastle. He attributes the recent success of his students in the Board of Education Painting Examination in a very great measure to the study of

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[629] Essil Rutherston, letter to the Chairman, City Art Gallery, 1 Apr 1940, RLC 1/32 file 4, MAG RLC.
[630] Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education*, 367.
[631] Ibid.

the works borrowed."[632] Dickey was the school's professor of fine art and director during the period it borrowed from the RLS and he was an artist as well as an art teacher having previously taught in schools. [633] As an early borrower outside Lancashire and Yorkshire there must have been some specific reason for approving these loans and it seems likely that Dickey's relationship with MAG was a factor, Dickey having had his work exhibited at MAG in 1924 with MAG acquiring one of his artworks from that exhibition.[634] In 1927 Dickey wrote to the *Times* describing the art education available at Armstrong College, and in this letter he gives a sense of the educational philosophy which led to him borrowing from the RLS saying, "[m]uch can be done to stimulate boys and make them think by endeavouring to interest them in works of art; as much, perhaps, as by teaching them to draw, most valuable though that be."[635] So, for Dickey the educational *Use Value* of the RLS loans was as much about developing students' overall art appreciation as it was about teaching technical skills, although his feedback to MAG suggests that he needed to focus teaching at Armstrong College on achieving examination success which inevitably required demonstrating an appropriate level of art technique.

The above analysis has illustrated how the decline in popularity of the RLS with art schools during the period under review can be related to a shift in their educational focus, from the education of the next generation of artists as envisaged by Rutherston in 1926 to the development of the workforce for local industry with an emphasis on teaching design and vocational skills. This was particularly the case for art schools which aspired to become

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[632] "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Quarterly Report – October 1930", RLC 1/32 file 2, MAG RLC.

[633] Art UK, "Edward Montgomery O'Rorke Dickey," n.d., accessed 24 Nov 2025, https://artuk.org/discover/artists/dickey-edward-montgomery-ororke-18941977.

[634] Acquisition of "a spaciously designed landscape painted in the Italian hills" by Dickey, probably *Monte Scalambra from San Vito Romano*, 1923, reported in City of Manchester Art Gallery, "Annual Report of the Art Gallery Committee. 1924", 19, MAG Archive.

[635] E. M. O'R. Dickey, "Letters to the Editor. Art In Education," *Times*, 20 June 1927, 10.

accredited as regional colleges of art following the Board of Education's 1933 announcement, including Bradford and Sheffield, neither of which used the RLS after this date. Manchester was the only art school in one of the major industrial cities in the North of England which continued to borrow regularly from the RLS after 1933 and although it too increasingly recognised the need to support industry it seems to have had no aspirations to become a regional college and continued to maintain a fine art focus into the 1940s. Except for Manchester, the art schools which continued to use the RLS into the 1940s were those in smaller provincial towns in the North of England, including Todmorden, Scarborough, Oldham, Rochdale and Shipley.[636] Even though most of these places were industrial towns and developing skills for local industry would therefore have been important, it appears that these smaller art schools maintained a focus on fine art in a way that some of the larger schools such as Bradford and Sheffield chose not to. This pattern of borrowing mirrored the Ministry of Education's 1946 guidance referenced in the introduction to Part 2 which suggested that smaller art schools located in provincial towns rather than the major industrial cities might continue to focus on fine art rather than support for local industries.

Many art schools used the RLS loans to create public exhibitions, and, in this regard, the art schools were effectively acting as small art galleries with a focus on broadening public access to modern art. As such, much of the press coverage approaches these exhibitions from an art criticism perspective focusing on the *Art Value* of the exhibited artworks, which, as with the press coverage of the art gallery exhibitions discussed in 2.2 (some by the same writers), reflects the period of transition in the reception of modern art in England. However, some of the press

[636] "Progress Report July 1942"; "List of Borrowers January to March 1943"; "Report of Progress April 1944".

coverage also gives an insight into the educational *Use Value* of the loaned artworks to the schools' students, for example encouraging originality and self-expression at Sheffield in 1927 and 1930, demonstrating different techniques for encapsulating an idea or "spirit" at Skipton in 1928 and using the artworks to support the teaching of drawing at Manchester in 1943. Essil Rutherston's feedback on her visits to art schools also hints at the use of the RLS artworks to support both the teaching of art appreciation as well as specific technical skills, and highlights the different conditions for displaying the artworks she encountered which, in a purely practical way, would have affected their educational *Use Value* to the students.

2.4 Borrowing from the RLS – Secondary and Elementary Schools

> We also went to Burnage Boys School where the head of "Sunita" had created a good deal of interest, the result being several attempt [sic] not only to model heads, but to make casts, and cast them in metal.
>
> Essil Rutherston, 1933.[637]

In April 1929 the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee agreed to extend the scope of the RLS to secondary schools, which had not been part of Rutherston's original vision.[638] The first loans took place early in 1930 and this extension was highlighted in the report on the RLS covering the period from July 1928 to December 1930:

> During 1930 preliminary loans of about 20 works, selected by the Art Inspector, were sent in turn for periods of one month to various secondary schools in the Manchester district. In this way the attention of the art teachers was drawn to the possibilities of the scheme as a helpful factor in their work and there is already ample indication […] that loans to these schools may become an important feature of the future development of the scheme. [639]

An August 1931 article in the *Manchester Guardian* provides evidence of the immediate popularity of the RLS with secondary schools saying, "many schools are now making their own selections, through their art teachers, and courses of study are being based on these loans. […] it is noteworthy that the teachers are not afraid of making selections from the more difficult and experimental artists."[640] And the 1933 report on the RLS notes the geographical expansion of school loans beyond Manchester saying, "[a]fter the successful experiment with Manchester schools in the past three years, the scheme's facilities were extended to other secondary schools

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[637] Essil Rutherston, letter to A. P. Simon 10 Jan 1933, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[638] Minutes of the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee, 25 Apr 1929, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

[639] City of Manchester Art Gallery, "Second Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme. July 1928 to Dec. 1930", 5, RLC 1/19 box 2, MAG RLC.

[640] "The Rutherston Collection," 11.

in the Lancashire and Yorkshire area, and as a result many applications were received and loans made."[641]

Following the 1934 review of MAG's educational activities described in 2.2, MAG's Annual Report for that year records the agreement to further extend the RLS to elementary schools and this proposed extension began as an experiment in the 1936-37 school year.[642] Sydney Cleveland's Autumn 1936 report to the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee states:

> The most noteworthy development, however, has probably been the extension of the scheme to include a number of senior elementary schools in the Manchester area. Most of the local secondary schools are now borrowing regularly and it is expected that the loan of trial selections, made by the Art Inspector, to 10 elementary schools in the course of the present school year, will result in still greater advantage being taken of the collection by the Manchester Education authorities.[643]

As the analysis in Appendix C shows, the popularity of the RLS with schools grew rapidly following the scheme's extension to secondary schools in 1930 and to elementary schools in 1936, resulting in schools going on to account for more than seventy percent of the loans between 1938 and 1940. Although the Second World War changed the profile of borrowing as the RLS was extended to war-time institutions, schools remained significant borrowers throughout the period to 1950 with information relating to individual terms in each of 1942, 1943 and 1944 indicating that schools continued to account for more than seventy percent of the loans.[644] And, as this thesis will go on to show in 2.6, the reorganisation of the RLC/RLS in 1948

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[641] City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the year 1933", RLC 1/19 box 2, MAG RLC.

[642] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report 1934", 6-7.

[643] S. D. Cleveland, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Autumn Report, 1936", RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC. Before the 1944 Education Act elementary education was provided for all children up to the age of fourteen with senior elementary schools covering the 11-14 age range.

[644] "Progress Report July 1942"; "List of Borrowers January to March 1943"; "Report of Progress April 1944".

(reflected in the 1950 RLC catalogue) was targeted specifically at supporting the increasing number of schools wishing to use the RLS.

The RLC Archive includes limited primary source evidence of how the loaned artworks were used by schools, primarily comprising feedback from Essil Rutherston's visits, and the most relevant material is included in the case studies which follow. In addition, this research involved working with a small number of schools in the Manchester area (jointly with MAG) to identify material from the schools' own records and archives, either relating specifically to their use of the RLS or more generally to their overall art education philosophies. This work was most successful at MHSG which has its own extensive actively managed archive, but even here the available material provides little direct evidence about how the loans were used and how the loaned artworks directly supported art education at the school.

MHSG borrowed from the RLS every term from the summer of 1931 until the summer of 1939, shortly before the school was evacuated from its Dover Street location in September following the outbreak of the Second World War.[645] Only one reference has been found in the RLC Archive to a visit to MHSG by Essil Rutherston in the 1930s, an April 1933 letter which makes no specific observations about her visit.[646] The limited information in the RLC Archive shows that MHSG continued to use the RLS after 1939, for example in November 1944 Essil reports on a wartime visit during which she "saw what a good use, under great difficulties, they are making of the loans in their difficult surroundings of the temporary buildings."[647] However, MHSG's own archives contain many references to the RLS, particularly MHSG's School

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[645] Angela Worden et al., *Dover Street: The Building, People and Heritage* (PSSRU, The University of Manchester, 2015), 17.

[646] Essil Rutherston to A. P. Simon, 8 Apr 1933.

[647] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 13 Nov 1944, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

Reports and School Magazines between 1931 and 1949 and two histories of the school.[648] These references are factual in nature, acknowledging and expressing gratitude for the loans, and although they provide no direct evidence about how the loans were used the MHSG archives are a valuable source of material on the wider context in which the school used the RLS.

The drivers behind MHSG's approach to art education during the period the school was using the RLS were Hannah Ritchie and Jane (formerly Dorothy) Saunders, both longstanding art teachers at the school, Ritchie from 1911 until 1949 and Saunders from 1914 until 1947.[649] Both women were artists and evidence relating to their own artistic practice suggests that they were modernists, exemplified by the emphasis on form, colour and the flatness of the painted surface of Ritchie's *Meije, Upper Savoy* which, as discussed in 2.1, MAG purchased from the artist for the RLC in 1930. Ritchie and Saunders were part of the Manchester art world in the 1920s and 1930s and were close friends with the New Zealand-born modern artist Frances Hodgkins who lived with them in Manchester for a period in the late 1920s.[650] Contemporary press coverage confirms that their work was included in several exhibitions and, although no surviving works by Saunders have been identified, the press coverage alludes to the modern style of both women's work. For example, a review of the Society of Modern Painters exhibition held in Manchester in 1927 notes that "[t]he pictures by Miss Hannah Ritchie and Miss Dorothy

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[648] Gwen Hobson and Pam Roberts, MHSG archivists, "11 10 2021 References to the Rutherston Loan Scheme", sent by personal email on 17 Nov 2021.

[649] MHSG's archives contain extensive material on the two women. Biographical details obtained from Dr. Christine Joy, "Notes - curriculum, Art", received by personal email from Gwen Hobson and Pam Roberts, MHSG archivists, 17 Nov 2021.

[650] For material on the two women's friendship with Frances Hodgkins see, for example, Linda Gill, ed. *Letters of Frances Hodgkins* (Aukland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 1993).

Saunders are distinguished in colour and in the charming arrangement of masses. It is interesting to see how colour and direction is used by these artists to intensify expression."[651]

The history of MHSG published to celebrate the school's centenary in 1974 provides some insight into the two women and art education at the school during the 1930s:

> Miss Ritchie had a very modern desk and chair of tubular steel which was her own, for both she and Miss Saunders took a keen interest in contemporary design. […] Miss Saunders particularly encouraged new ideas, and when Surrealism had everybody by the ears her Sixth Form group was urged to have a go and release their subconsciouses, which they did to such an effect that the press reproduced some of their work under the headline "SCHOOLGIRL Surrealists Amaze Parents." […] With Miss Ritchie, drawing was the essential ingredient and formed a firm basis for later development.[652]

This suggests that although both women were modernists, Ritchie in particular saw the value in traditional teaching methods based upon sound drawing technique whereas Saunders was perhaps more an advocate of self-expression.

This extract highlights how art teaching at MHSG was influenced by Surrealism in the 1930s and material from MHSG's archive indicates this was particularly the case immediately after the International Surrealist Exhibition in London in June 1936. A photograph from that month (Fig.86) shows a girl painting a still life study in a modern (post-impressionistic) style but not yet reflecting the influence of Surrealism. But in September an exhibition at MHSG of pupils' work included examples of Surrealist art and the *Manchester Guardian* described the exhibition as consisting of "studies in the groupings of incongruous objects […] suggested by references to surrealism in an art appreciation class which was held about the time of the International Surrealist Exhibition in London."[653] The press coverage referenced in the above

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[651] "Society of Modern Painters," *Manchester Guardian*, 3 Feb 1927, 11.

[652] *100 Years of Manchester High School for Girls, 1874-1974,* 73-74, extract provided (by email) by Gwen Hobson and Pam Roberts, MHSG archivists, 24 Jan 2022.

[653] "In Manchester. In the Surrealist Manner," *Manchester Guardian*, 19 Sept 1936, 13. The International Surrealist Exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries, London opened on 11 June 1936.

extract from the school's centenary publication also related to this exhibition, an article in the *Daily Mail* describing how "[s]urprise was expressed by parents and friends […] about 30 of these weird paintings and strange verse" and including a photograph of one of the Surrealist works (Fig.87).[654]

Later the same month, a work by another MHSG pupil, Alice Heap (Fig.88) was reproduced in the *Listener* magazine's coverage of an exhibition of art in public schools, one of three "remarkably accomplished and agreeable works" by MHSG pupils included in the exhibition.[655] The *Manchester Guardian* was also positive about this exhibition, observing that "[i]n many cases a common denominator in the exhibits […] betrays the influence of the teacher. […] Manchester High School [is] formal almost to the point of abstraction", a statement reflecting the modernist focus of art teaching at MHSG.[656]

The girls at MHSG were being taught about Surrealism at precisely the moment it was beginning to acquire *Art Value* (and specifically newness-value) in England, reflected in the evolution of the work of artists such as Paul Nash and Henry Moore. Although MHSG borrowed from the RLS throughout the 1930s no evidence has been found of the direct use of the borrowed artworks in art teaching, and as the RLC did not include any Surrealist work by 1936 the loans could therefore not have provided the direct inspiration for this aspect of the girls' art making. However, although the girls were exposed to examples of the latest developments in modern art, rather than being asked to copy them slavishly, they were "urged to have a go and release their subconsciouses."[657] MHSG's consistent use of the RLS during this period therefore suggests that

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[654] "Schoolgirl Surrealists Amaze Parents," *Daily Mail*, 18 Sept 1936, 11 & 13.
[655] Raymond Mortimer, "Art in the Public Schools," *The Listener* 16, no. 403, 30 Sept (1936): 619-620.
[656] "Our London Correspondence. Art in the Public Schools," *Manchester Guardian*, 15 Sept 1936, 10.
[657] *100 Years of Manchester High School for Girls*,74.

the educational *Use Value* of the loans would have been the contribution they made to an overall art educational philosophy based on encouraging individuality and self-expression in the making of art. MHSG was therefore a school which was beginning to adopt methods influenced by the New Art Teaching movement described in the introduction to Part 2, bringing about a change in educational *Use Value* from a didactic approach to teaching children about art and how to copy it, to using art to inspire the children's own imaginations.

A second Manchester school involved in this research, Levenshulme High School for Girls, did not have a formal archive but was able to provide images of artworks produced by pupils during the time the school used the RLS taken from school magazines from the 1930s and 1940s. Levenshulme was among the first group of seven Manchester secondary schools to use the RLS, reported in the *Manchester Guardian* in February 1930, and went on to borrow every term until summer 1939.[658] As previously noted, MAG's records of RLS loans are limited for the 1940s but Levenshulme was still borrowing in 1944 evidenced by a letter from Essil Rutherston referring to a visit there.[659]

The school magazines provided by Levenshulme do not include specific references to the school's use of the RLS but contain examples of linocuts produced by pupils, for example *Swimming* by Norah King, 1935 (Fig.89) and *Washing Day* by Phyllis Coulthard, 1937 (Fig.90), giving some insight into how artworks such as the RLS loans might have contributed to art education at the school, and hence their potential *Use Value*. The loans could have simply provided practical examples of the linocut medium for pupils to follow, although both examples appear to be stylistically modern in terms of their flatness and their emphasis on line and form

[658] "In Manchester. Modern Art in the School," *Manchester Guardian*, 4 Feb 1930, 13.
[659] Essil Rutherston to Lawrence Haward, 13 Nov 1944.

with the 1937 example even appearing to reflect the influence of Surrealism. This suggests that in addition to using the RLS loans as examples to inform the pupils' art making, they could also have contributed to a broader art education.

A third Manchester secondary school for which relevant primary source evidence has been found, Burnage High School for Boys, borrowed consistently from the RLS from the school's opening in 1932 until 1939, and continued borrowing into the 1940s. Coverage of Burnage in the *Manchester Guardian* provides some context for the school's use of the RLS; for example a June 1935 article entitled "An Adventurous Stripling" gives a sense of a new school aiming to provide its pupils with a rich and varied cultural education saying, "[a]lready the school has a remarkable range of activities […]. A literary and debating society, geographical, historical, scientific, dramatic, photographic, and artistic societies all appear to find both members and active organisers."[660] Essil Rutherston visited Burnage several times, her first visit being in autumn 1932 which she refers to in the epigraphic quotation which starts this section.[661] Essil's reference to Jacob Epstein's *Sunita* is rare evidence of how a specific loaned artwork was being used by a school, indicating its educational *Use Value* as a practical example of modelling a head for the boys to copy in their own work. The Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee's April 1933 Quarterly Report went on to highlight Burnage as an illustration of how loaned works were being used:

> [T]he efforts of the children usually give some indication of their association with the works. This was especially so last term at the Burnage High School where Van Gogh's trees and Pissarro's snow effects were clearly reflected in several imaginative

[660] "In Manchester. An Aventurous Stripling," *Manchester Guardian*, 10 June 1935, 11.
[661] Essil Rutherston to A. P. Simon, 10 Jan 1933.

> compositions by the boys, and reference has been made before to the attempts at modelling which the loan of Epstein's "Sunita" inspired.[662]

These sources provide clear evidence that, at Burnage, the loaned artworks were being actively used in art classes, not just as examples to be copied, as in the case of *Sunita*, but also to stimulate the boys' imagination, perhaps indicating that the school was already beginning to adopt the more progressive approach to art education which was beginning to emerge during the 1930s.

Moving away from Manchester, the next case-study school, Ovenden Senior School in Halifax, is of particular interest due to the primary source material obtained from the WYAS. Ovenden was a new senior elementary school (opened in October 1937) with a progressive approach to the education of academically under-achieving and socially under-privileged boys and girls aged eleven to fourteen which borrowed regularly from the RLS from January 1939 until at least 1944, although no records have been found after this date.[663] The school focused on equipping children for life after school by providing them with a rounded set of life skills rather than focussing on academic qualifications. Less than a year after the school opened, a local newspaper reviewed its progress under the heading "A New Kind of Education", contrasting "the long-established methods of so-called mind training" with the school's emphasis on "training for life […], the creation of a fitness for all phases of decent human existence in which a young person might find himself."[664] The article notes that the school's pupils "are largely the residue from which secondary school candidates have been removed", and, as such, the school focused

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[662] City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Quarterly Report – April 1933", RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[663] "Ovenden's New Senior School," *Halifax Daily Courier and Guardian*, 26 Oct 1937, 7.

[664] "A New Kind of Education. The Work and Play at Ovenden's Senior School", newspaper article, 17 Sept 1938, WYC 1643/10/1, WYAS-C.

on teaching practical skills and craftsmanship, with visits to "the places where they can learn at first-hand what their teacher wishes them to know" playing a key role.[665]

It is important to consider the school's use of the RLS in this context particularly given the elitism usually associated with art, and a 1987 article commemorating fifty years since the school opened refers to its use of the RLS at that time. It describes the school as being "a step ahead of its time" and "a landmark in the replanning of education" in Halifax, employing some of the "best and brightest young teachers."[666] The article reports that the school's progressive approach included borrowing from the RLS, through which original paintings and drawings by artists such as Augustus John and Wyndham Lewis were exhibited in the school's library, art and music rooms.[667] The WYAS holds original catalogues for two of the loans, both in 1939 (Fig.91 and Fig.92), which are the only primary source documents I have found for any school which explicitly identify the works loaned and where they were displayed in the school.[668] Despite the richness of these two sources I have found no specific evidence of how the artworks contributed to the children's education, but the display of drawings in the art room might imply that these works in particular provided some practical support for art teaching.

This practical *Use Value* of the RLS loans is demonstrated in Essil Rutherston's April 1940 letter in which she reports on the use of linocuts at the school saying:

> This time during a day spent at Halifax we saw a loan hanging in Ovenden Senior School where the boys and girls come from mostly poor homes. […] A group of Linoleum cuts from the Rutherston Collection were hanging on the walls, and one in a place of honour

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[665] Ibid.

[666] "'Model' School was a Step Ahead of its Time. Different Class ..." *Halifax Evening Courier*, 12 Sept 1987, 6.

[667] Ibid.

[668] Ovenden Senior School, Halifax, "Exhibition of Pictures Loaned from the Rutherston Collection, January to March 1939", WYC 1643/8/6, WYAS-C; Ovenden Senior School, Halifax, "Exhibition of Pictures Loaned from the Rutherston Collection, May to July 1939", WYC 1643/8/7, WYAS-C.

> on the stairs is changed every week. […] I should like to say here that Linoleum cut are very popular in the schools of this type as the children do them themselves.[669]

This makes it clear that, by 1940, linocuts were included in the RLS loans, reflecting schools' focus on linocuts as a medium demonstrated by Levenshulme in the 1930s, and that these were used as practical examples which the children could attempt to emulate in their own art making. However, it seems likely that the *Use Value* of the RLS artworks, which as the 1939 catalogues demonstrate were displayed in various locations around the school, was also about giving the pupils broad exposure to modern art, with the loans including prints by Cezanne, Degas and Van Gogh in addition to the core of works by modern English artists.

This interpretation is supported in the feedback reported by Albert Frape from MAG on a visit to the school with Essil Rutherston in March 1940, saying that the school's chief aim "is to develop good citizens out of the children who come from poor and in some cases ill-kept homes. […] The headmaster encourages the appreciation of music and conducts parties of children to orchestral concerts."[670] This illustrates that the school's educational approach was not limited to exposing children to demonstrations of practical skills and hints at how the RLS loans may have contributed to an overall philosophy of improving working-class children's cultural awareness as a key part of developing "good citizens." So here the *Art Value* and educational *Use Value* of the loaned artworks were inextricably linked as part of a top-down construct of the idea of cultural value and an English national culture and identity.

The final school for which relevant primary source evidence relating to the use of the RLS has been found is the Liverpool Institute, a boys grammar school which used the RLS for fourteen terms, from Autumn 1930 until Summer 1935. The school's initial interest in the RLS

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[669] Essil Rutherston to the Chairman, City Art Gallery, 1 Apr 1940.
[670] See A. Frape, "Mrs Rutherston's visit, March 1940", RLC 1/32 file 4, MAG RLC.

resulted from the circulation of Essil Rutherston's April 1930 report on her visits to borrowers and, as a grammar school outside the Manchester district, its application required special consideration by the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee.[671] Several school magazines available on The Liobians' (old boys' association) website refer to the RLS, beginning with the school's first loan in Autumn 1930, with the January 1931 magazine providing an interesting insight into the boys' reception of the loaned artworks:

> The school has benefited by the Manchester Art Gallery's 'Rutherston Scheme,' from which a number of pictures by modern artists were secured and hung during the latter half of the term, in Maecenas' Corridor. We entertain a shrewd suspicion that the renowned Augustan would have preferred an immediate transformation of himself into the likeness of an inebriate gentleman rather than suffer the harm to his artistic susceptibilities caused by endeavouring to outface for the length of half a term what we have ourselves heard described as 'obvious products of drunkenness'. We admit frankly that several of the pictures have exercised a disturbing influence on our own preconceived ideas of the correct shape and colour of a tree.[672]

The reference to Maecenas is to a marble bust displayed in the first-floor gallery given to the Institute by the British Association in 1837 and perhaps gives an indication of the classical focus of the school's cultural education at that time.[673] And the fact that the loaned works were displayed in a corridor suggests that they were not used directly for teaching, which is perhaps confirmed by the somewhat facetious comments suggesting both unfamiliarity with, and a snobbish dismissal of, modern art.

This tone continues in a brief reference to the RLS in the January 1932 magazine saying, "[w]e are grieved to see that the Rutherston scheme last term failed to call forth any inquiries as

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[671] "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Quarterly Report – October 1930".

[672] "Chat on the Corridor," *Liverpool Institute Magazine*, Jan 1931, 4-5, accessed 9 Dec 2025, http://www.liobians.org/documents/pdfmag/1931-01.pdf.

[673] Herbert J. Tiffen, *A History of the Liverpool Institute Schools 1825 to 1935*, (The Liverpool Institute Old Boys' Association, 1935), 42, accessed 9 Dec 2025, http://www.liobians.org/files/TiffenBook.pdf.

to whether a spade still was a spade."[674] However, by the April 1933 edition of the magazine the pupils seem to have become more familiar with, and appreciative of, the RLS artworks, the Editorial noting, "we saw another step forward in the policy of making 'Beauty prevail over Ugliness' which has already given us […] the Rutherston pictures on the main landing […] and many other things for which we take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude."[675]

Herbert Tiffen's 1935 book on the history of the Liverpool Institute credits Rev. Henry H. Symonds, the school's Headmaster from 1924 to 1935, with introducing the RLS to the school, one of several changes intended to enhance pupils' wider cultural education:

> He extended the artistic education of the boys by himself giving illustrated lectures on sculpture and architecture, by obtaining successive loans of pictures under the Rutherston bequest, and by taking a party to London to see the exhibition of Italian art. He also did much to increase the aesthetic interest of the boys in their surroundings. […] the gallery on the first floor was embellished by the removal of the lockers, by the addition of the Rutherston pictures, and by the display of the athletic trophies and shields.[676]

This implies that the primary *Use Value* of the artworks was to create a more pleasing environment for the pupils, but the lectures and the art trip to London suggest a desire to broaden pupils' appreciation and understanding of art and art history. Perhaps the initial reactions to the RLS works displayed at the school reflect how modern art was generally regarded by the boys, or how they had been taught to regard it. But the evident change in tone by 1933 suggests that the RLS works were becoming more accepted at the school, perhaps indicating that, under Symonds' leadership, the *Art Value* of modern art was gradually being recognised and assimilated into the art historical narrative being taught at the school. It is significant that

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[674] "Chat on the Corridor," *Liverpool Institute Magazine*, Jan 1932, 6, accessed 9 Dec 2025, http://www.liobians.org/documents/pdfmag/1932-01.pdf.

[675] "Editorial," *Liverpool Institute Magazine*, Apr 1933, 74, accessed 9 Dec 2025, http://www.liobians.org/documents/pdfmag/1933-04.pdf.

[676] Tiffen, *A History of the Liverpool Institute Schools,* 101.

borrowing from the RLS ceased once Symonds was no longer headmaster, perhaps signifying a further change of philosophy under his successor.

The school case studies examined above illustrate the educational *Use Value* of the RLS in schools during the 1930s and early 1940s in two respects. Firstly, the RLS loans raised awareness and understanding of the *Art Value* of modern art during a period when it was beginning to be an accepted part of the national culture. Ovenden Senior School took this *Use Value* further by using the RLS loans to contribute to an overall educational philosophy focused on producing good citizens for which some level of cultural education was a prerequisite. Grammar schools such as MHSG and Liverpool Institute offered a more academic approach, raising awareness of modern art by teaching art appreciation and art history as part of the curriculum, reflecting a *Use Value* concerned with teaching children about the *Art Value* of modern art. The change of attitude to RLS artworks of pupils at Liverpool Institute in the early 1930s perhaps captures a moment in time when modern art was beginning to become an accepted part of the national culture. The class difference in how this *Use Value* manifested itself should be noted, between the grammar schools where art appreciation and art history were taught as part of the curriculum or through extra-curricular activities, and Ovenden, a senior elementary school, where the pupils' exposure to art was part of wider attempts to raise their awareness of the English national culture and a sense of national identity, which is particularly significant given Ovenden's borrowing began in 1939, the year the Second World War broke out.

Secondly, the primary source evidence suggests that the RLS loans also had an educational *Use Value* in supporting pupils to make art, by providing examples to be copied or to teach specific skills appropriate to different media, exemplified by the observed use of Epstein's *Sunita* at Burnage, the paintings created by the pupils at MHSG and teaching the practical skills

of printmaking at Ovenden and Levenshulme. There is also some indication that during the 1930s art education was starting to be influenced by the New Art Teaching movement and the progressive ideas of Marion Richardson and other influential educators, an educational philosophy of self-expression which is particularly evident in the modernist approach of the two art teachers at MHSG and in the reference to Burnage pupils using the loaned artworks to help them create “imaginative compositions.” This can be interpreted as the start of a shift in the idea of culture from something imposed on societies by a cultural elite to the product of the everyday lives of ordinary people, in this case through the art produced by schoolchildren drawing on their own ideas and creativity.

2.5 Supporting State-Sponsored Initiatives

> On another day Miss Jeboor, Regional Officer of the Y.M.C.A. drove us to Clitheroe to see one of her clubs. Two rooms were hung with about twenty pictures, mostly oils, and seemed to be very much enjoyed by the hundreds of men and women of the Forces who came there every evening. […] Miss Pilkington also came with us to Risley to see over a M.O.S. Hostel for 1,000 workers. Six large oils were hung in the theatre on a plain wall on each side of the hall and looked particularly well, and others were in the reading rooms.
>
> Essil Rutherston, 1944.[677]

The BIAE was formed in 1921 as part of the focus on education in the aftermath of the First World War discussed in Part 1.[678] During its first few years it prioritised support for the provision of core adult education classes but, by the 1930s, it was pursuing a wider, more experimental programme including *Art for the People*, which for Frances Borzello represented the first organised attempt to broaden access to art in the name of education since the First World War. [679] *Art for the People* began with three exhibitions in 1935 at Barnsley, Swindon and Silver End (near Braintree, Essex) which the BIAE's own report describes as an experiment which was seeking to address the "paucity of opportunities for looking at works of art", and was intended to support adult education as well as "the needs of the man in the street."[680] The initial exhibitions comprised 230 mostly modern English artworks across the three locations, the majority of which came from private collections obtained through contacts of the members of the BIAE's Art Committee, including Sir Michael Sadler who lent fifty artworks to the Barnsley exhibition, his home town.[681] Dr. Jane Walker was involved with the BIAE as both a Council member and a

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[677] Essil Rutherston to Lawrence Haward, 13 Nov 1944.

[678] Roger Fieldhouse and Associates, *A History of Modern British Adult Education* (Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, 1996), 49.

[679] Ibid., 50; Borzello, *Civilising Caliban*, 123.

[680] British Institute of Adult Education, *Art for the People*, 8-9.

[681] Ibid., 15, 41-42.

member of the Art Committee, and she loaned some of her collection, which, as described in 2.1, in 1939 was bequeathed to the RLC in its entirety, to the Silver End exhibition.[682]

The BIAE report summarises the detailed feedback from questionnaires completed by visitors to the exhibitions, noting that overall there was a strong preference for traditional, representational painting rather than modern art which the report attributes to the visitors' "illiteracy" which existed "because their innate conservatism has never been educated by contact with new ideas."[683] This observation suggests a key objective of the exhibitions was to educate the public about what constituted good (particularly modern) art, in other words the BIAE saw the potential *Use Value* of the initiative as being to educate people in provincial England about the *Art Value* of modern art, essentially mirroring the philosophy behind Rutherston's Manchester gift a decade earlier.

The first RLS loan to the BIAE was in May 1936 for an exhibition of modern art at Harlech Residential College for Adult Students, and as this loan fell outside the RLS's normal geographical and institutional focus it was described as a "special" loan in Sydney Cleveland's Autumn Report.[684] In April 1936 the *Observer* reported that Harlech was one the four locations chosen for the BIAE's 1936 exhibitions following the success of the previous year's experiments but MAG's records indicate that only Harlech included an RLS loan.[685] The opening of the exhibition was reported in the local press but the article does not mention any of the artists or artworks included or their source.[686]

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[682] Ibid., 3.
[683] Ibid., 31.
[684] Cleveland, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Autumn Report, 1936".
[685] Jan Gordon, "Art and Artists. Loan Exhibitions," *Observer*, 12 Apr 1936, 10.
[686] "Contemporary Art. Canadian Commissioner to Open Exhibition," *Western Mail & South Wales News*, 4 June 1936, 13.

In 1937 the BIAE borrowed works through the RLS for exhibitions in Accrington and Blackburn, recorded in the Spring 1937 report to the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee:

> Arrangements have also been made for another loan to exhibitions organized by the British Institute of Adult Education which has previously held shows in several parts of the country where there is little or no provision for the public display of works of art. The centres affected are Accrington and Blackburn, the same loans serving both places in successive months. It is possible that the Institute and the Rutherston Loan Scheme may find similar ways of working together kin [sic] the future, within the terms of the scheme.[687]

The *Manchester Guardian* announced these forthcoming exhibitions, saying:

> The British Institute of Adult Education is continuing its experiments of taking art to the people. […] Art galleries only exist in the larger towns, and nowadays they get little publicity. In nearly all small towns there is no opportunity for people to expose their sensibility to works of art and find out whether art has any refreshment to give them.[688]

The language used here feels like a throwback to the cultural philanthropy of the late Victorian period described in Part 1, when exposing ordinary people to art was seen as a way of improving their quality-of life, supporting Borzello's assertion that little progress had been made in broadening access to art since the First World War until the BIAE's initiative. The article did not refer to the RLS, prompting Lawrence Haward to write to the *Manchester Guardian* pointing out that the RLS had been doing for some years what the BIAE was hoping to achieve and indicates that the RLS was still relatively unknown despite having been operating for a decade.[689] In a subsequent article on the opening of the Blackburn exhibition, the *Manchester Guardian* describes it as "[a]n exhibition of original paintings and drawings representing the development of modern art from the early English watercolourists to the present" and identifies many of the

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[687] S. D. Cleveland, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Spring Report 1937", 6 Apr 1937, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[688] "Bringing Art to the People," *Manchester Guardian*, 24 March 1937, 10.

[689] Lawrence Haward, ""Bringing Art To The People". The Rutherston Scheme," *Manchester Guardian*, 27 March 1937, 22.

artists represented, addressing the omission from the earlier article by crediting the RLS as the source of most of them.[690] The article also reports that the exhibition was supported by a series of lectures on the exhibited artworks by "experts" including Sydney Cleveland from MAG and by special classes for children. The BIAE's initiative therefore attempted to enhance the educational *Use Value* of its exhibitions by providing support to help visitors develop their art appreciation skills, something which the RLS had previously only been able to do in its own galleries due to MAG's limited resources.[691]

In 1938 the RLS again loaned works to the BIAE, this time for its exhibitions at Wigan and Ulverston.[692] W. E. Williams from the BIAE wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* to publicise these exhibitions, noting (perhaps in response to Haward's complaint the previous year) that "pictures come from such admirable sources as the Rutherston Loan, which is lending a splendid collection this year."[693] The *Manchester Guardian* also acknowledged the RLS as one of the contributors, describing the exhibition as offering "immense variety" covering "the different aspects of French and English painting for 150 years."[694]

The RLS continued to loan to BIAE exhibitions during the Second World War, although following the outbreak of the War in 1939 "the collection [the RLC] was depleted by the evacuation of the more important works to a safe place" where they remained until after the end

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[690] "Development Of Modern Art. A Blackburn Exhibition," *Manchester Guardian*, 4 May 1937, 21.
[691] Ibid.
[692] City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the year 1938", 5, RLC 1/19 box 1, MAG RLC.
[693] W. E. Williams, "Lancashire Art Exhibitions. Wigan And Ulverston," *Manchester Guardian*, 26 March 1938, 7.
[694] "Spreading Interest in Modern Painting. A Notable Exhibition at Wigan," *Manchester Guardian*, 7 April 1938, 15.

of the War in 1945.[695] There is no information about which works were evacuated or how "the more important works" were selected, although this suggests some kind of judgement was made of their *Art Value,* and possibly also their financial value, and as subsequent wartime loans mostly comprised watercolours and drawings it seems likely that many of the oil paintings were amongst the works temporarily removed.[696] The Spring 1940 report on the RLS records that negotiations were taking place with the BIAE regarding the possibility of further loans, and also that *Art for the People* was now benefitting from a grant from the newly created CEMA.[697] And MAG's Annual Report for 1941 records that the RLS loaned works to *Art for the People* exhibitions at Carlisle, Maryport, Halifax and Keighley, all towns in Northern England so with the exception of Harlech in 1936 the BIAE loans largely maintained the RLS's geographical focus as originally envisaged by Rutherston.[698]

A review of the Halifax exhibition in the local press describes it as an exhibition of water colours and drawings covering "an eventful forty years in the development of art […] from the scholarly pastels of Henry Tonks, the romantic portraits of Ambrose McEvoy, and the magic water colours of Wilson Steer […] to the later violences and vigours of our younger school of thought."[699] The article therefore attempts to educate the public about modern art in two ways reflecting different aspects of the educational *Use Value* of the RLS, combining educating the

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[695] City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the year 1939", 5, RLC 1/19 box 2, MAG RLC; "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Report of Progress October 1945", RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[696] It is perhaps significant to note the change in terminology in MAG's Annual Report for 1941 which now describes the artworks withdrawn from the scheme as "the more valuable works" – see Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1941", 4, MAG Archive.

[697] A. Frape, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Spring Report 1940", RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[698] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report 1941", 4.

[699] Jack Lindley, ""Art For The People". A Bank Field Exhibition," *Halifax Daily Courier and Guardian*, 1 Nov 1941, 3.

reader about the chronology of the development of modern art with support for broader art appreciation.

CEMA's formation at the end of 1939 was announced in the press in January 1940 as follows:

> To assist in the maintenance of cultural activities in war-time the Pilgrim Trust has made a grant f £25,000 to the Board of Education. The Board will be advised in the administration of these funds by a new Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts in War-time. […] The business of the committee will be to encourage musical, artistic, and other cultural activities which fall outside the large and more prosperous organizations.[700]

Further details of the proposed scheme were set out later that month under the three headings of Music, Drama and Art Exhibitions, with the last of these essentially building on *Art for the People*:

> Each exhibition will run for a month in selected towns in cooperation with the local authorities. There is a list of such authorities eager to share these facilities in the pigeon-holes of the British Institute for Adult Education. This scheme of "Art for the People " will be under the joint direction of Sir Kenneth Clark and Mr. W. E. Williams.[701]

However, in 1942 CEMA also began its own touring exhibition programme which focused on wartime establishments rather than provincial art galleries and therefore served a different purpose to *Art for the People*.[702] In March 1942 Lawrence Haward wrote to Essil Rutherston to let her know that MAG had been approached by CEMA to support this new initiative:

> A letter I have just received from the Deputy Secretary of CEMA […] enquires whether their scheme for arranging for small collections to be sent to Social Clubs, Settlements, hostels for factory workers, convalescent homes for wounded men and so forth, could receive help by having loans from the Rutherston Collections, in return for which Cema [sic] would be prepared to let us have financial aid.[703]

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[700] "Cultural Activity In War-Time. £25,000 Grant From The Pilgrim Trust," *Times*, 4 Jan 1940, 9.

[701] Lord Macmillan, "War-Time Support For The Arts. The Pilgrim Trust Grant," *Times*, 25 Jan 1940, 7.

[702] The Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 139.

[703] Lawrence Haward, letter to Essil Rutherston, 31 Mar 1942, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.

Although Essil needed to ask "What does C.E.M.A. stand for?" and wanted more information about CEMA's activities, she expressed her wholehearted support for "anything that helps on general education", perhaps reflecting Essil's initial misunderstanding that CEMA did not have an explicit educational focus.[704] Haward's letter suggested arranging a special meeting of the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee to discuss this request with the Progress Report for that meeting reporting:

> The possibility of a wartime development of the scheme is raised by a letter from the Council for the Encouragement of Music and Arts who ask if the collection could be drawn upon for loans to local factory canteens, hostels, British Restaurants, military convalescent homes, etc. […] Should it be decided to accede to C.E.M.A.'s request as a contribution to the war effort in the endeavour to brighten the surroundings of those negaged [sic] in production or recovering from the efforts of war service […] it would be advisable to reduce the thirty works hitherto allowed per loan.[705]

MAG must have agreed to CEMA's request (no records relating to the decision have been found) as MAG's Annual Report for 1942 notes that "fresh ground was broken by the arrangement with C. E. M. A. to extend the scheme's facilities to local canteens, hostels and military convalescent homes. Loans under this head have already been made to a factory hostel and a women's naval establishment in the Warrington district."[706]

MAG responded to the further demands placed on the RLC by the extension of the RLS to wartime establishments by creating a supplementary pool of artworks by local artists, as reported in the RLS Progress Report for October 1943:

> Following the last meeting of the Rutherston Sub-Committee in March, demands on the loan collection again increased owing to the extension of the scheme's facilities to war establishments such as service camps and factory hostels, and the Art Galleries Committee at their meeting in May sanctioned an approach to a number of local artists

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[704] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 7 Apr 1942, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[705] "Progress Report July 1942".
[706] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1942", 2, MAG Archive.

> for contributions to a supplementary pool of works to help meet these wartime requirements.[707]

The report names the thirty-five artists who contributed a total of eighty-four artworks which included few well-known modern artists and the *Art Value* of this supplementary collection was therefore not at the level of the core RLC, although Edward Wadsworth stands out as one exception.[708] The report also lists some of "the new borrowers whose needs these additional works have enabled the scheme to meet" including RAF stations, factory hostels, a Civil Defence Reserve Centre and a YMCA hostel.[709]

There is little material in the RLC Archive relating to visits to wartime establishments which the RLS supported, one exception being the November 1944 letter from Essil Rutherston to Lawrence Haward from which the epigraphic quotation at the start of this section is taken. This letter highlights the positive impact the loaned artworks were having, and observations that the artworks "seemed to be very much enjoyed" by the men and women at the YMCA in Clitheroe, and that the oil paintings displayed at the M.O.S. Hostel in Risley "looked particularly well" indicate that the objective of the loans was to decorate otherwise drab surroundings to provide enjoyment and improve morale rather than to educate about art, a different *Use Value* for the loaned artworks compared to the previous educational focus of *Art for the People*.[710] The lower priority given to education during wartime was certainly understandable, but there may also have been class connotations in this implicit assumption that an art education was not appropriate for everyone given that the audiences for the CEMA exhibitions would have

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[707] "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Report of Progress, October 1943", RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.
[708] Ibid.
[709] Ibid.
[710] Essil Rutherston to Lawrence Haward, 13 Nov 1944.

represented a broader cross section of society than the visitors to the *Art for the People* exhibitions.

The RLS loans to wartime establishments continued until 1945, with the RLS Progress Report for October 1945 (by which time CEMA was transitioning into the Arts Council) noting that loans had continued "to service camps, factory hostels, workers clubs and the like."[711] This report also records the return of the RLC artworks evacuated from Manchester and their re-inclusion in the RLS, and the return to the artists of the artworks comprising the supplementary loan scheme, providing a further indication that these works were not regarded as having the *Art Value* required to be retained permanently by the RLC.[712]

After the Second World War the work of CEMA was taken forward by the Arts Council, the establishment of which was a key outcome of The Arts Enquiry. This was established in 1941 by the Dartington Hall Trustees to produce four reports on the Visual Arts, Music, Drama and the Factual Film which were "designed to give some account of the place of these arts in our national life, their economic and administrative background, their social importance and their value in education."[713] *The Visual Arts* was substantively completed by early 1945 but not published until the following year and recommended the formation of The Arts Council, describing its three main functions as, firstly, to oversee the work of the National Museums and Art Galleries; secondly, to promote "a nation-wide service of art galleries and art centres" including providing financial support to local authorities; and, thirdly, "to provide a wide variety of loan collections and travelling exhibitions, both for art galleries and art centres, and for those

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[711] "Report of Progress October 1945".
[712] Ibid.
[713] The Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 5-6.

places which, for lack of such institutions, have no opportunity of seeing art."[714] The transition of CEMA into the Arts Council of Great Britain was announced in June 1945 including the transfer of responsibility from the Ministry of Education (which had overseen the work of CEMA) to the Treasury, and the Arts Council was formally founded by Royal Charter on 9 August 1946.[715]

Richard Weight asserts that the creation of the Arts Council could be seen as the "triumph of an elitist arts policy."[716] Certainly, in the first few years of its existence the Arts Council saw part of its remit was to continue the aim of *Art for the People* by arranging exhibitions in provincial towns to educate the public about art and in particular what constituted good art, again reflecting the original philosophy behind Rutherston's Manchester gift twenty years earlier. However, the Arts Council soon changed its position with Margaret Garlake observing that "the creative phase of postwar socialism ended as early as 1948, though the labour government survived until a few weeks after the end of the Festival of Britain in 1951, which acted as both celebration and threnody for this short-lived period."[717] For Garlake, the Festival of Britain therefore represented the last attempt by the establishment to use art as a means of educating the population, a trend which could be traced back to the nineteenth century and Samuel Barnett's Whitechapel exhibitions.[718] Richard Weight takes a similar position describing "the failure of the [Art's Council's] cultural experiment of the 1940s"; by the end of the War through initiatives such as *Art for the People* and CEMA "a basic knowledge of Britain's cultural heritage had given

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[714] Ibid., 34-36.

[715] "C.E.M.A. Will Continue Its Work Under A New Title "The Arts Council Of Great Britain"," *Manchester Guardian*, 13 June 1945, 3. The Arts Council of Great Britain, *Fourth Annual Report 1948-49* (London: The Arts Council, 1949), 3.

[716] Richard Weight, "'Building a new British culture': the Arts Centre Movement, 1943-53," in *The Right to Belong. Citizenship and National Identity in Britain, 1930-1960*, ed. Richard Weight and Abigail Beach (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2018), 160.

[717] Garlake, *New Art, New World*, 7.

[718] Garlake, "Introduction," 3-4.

its people a sense of unity and purpose", but after the War "such comforts were not needed by Britons to the same extent. Many […] returned to more digestible forms of recreation when it became available again."[719] So, after the Second World War the public was no longer prepared to accept the idea of culture imposed by the establishment as they started to make their own choices of the cultural activities they engaged with, such as the going to the cinema, watching television and, as the youth culture of the 1950s began to develop, going to pop concerts.[720]

MAG's relationship with CEMA continued through its transition to the Arts Council and MAG's new Curator David Baxandall wrote to Essil Rutherston in August 1946 to let her know that MAG had agreed to use the RLS to loan works to the Council arguing that this would be "an excellent means of spreading knowledge of the Rutherston scheme in those parts of the country where it does not operate."[721] Baxandall wrote to her again in October, once again making the case for the loan by saying, "[t]his will not interfere very greatly with the normal sending out of loans, as only 60 to 70 pictures are to be chosen for it."[722] The RLC Archive does not contain Essil's letters on this topic but Baxandall's reassurances suggest she might have expressed concerns about the potential impact of the Arts Council loan on the core RLS. Baxandall's curator's report for 1947 states that the Arts Council loan comprised "two travelling exhibitions consisting of the best oils and water-colours in the collection", so despite his reassurances to Essil the loan did weaken the core RLS, in the end for more than a year given the initial loan in 1947 was extended into 1948.[723]

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[719] Weight, "'Building a new British culture'," 175-176.
[720] Ibid.
[721] David Baxandall, letter to Essil Rutherston, 2 Aug 1946, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[722] David Baxandall, letter to Essil Rutherston, 30 Oct 1946, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[723] David Baxandall, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Curator's Report for the year 1947", 10 Oct 1947, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC. The two Arts Council loans had their first exhibition in January 1947 and were

The Arts Council's Annual Report for 1947-48 acknowledges the contribution of public galleries, in particular the Tate and MAG, to its travelling exhibitions during the year, but despite the initial enthusiasm of both MAG and the Arts Council the RLS did not make further significant loans until 1955.[724] In part this reflected the shift in the Arts Council's position by the end of the 1940s away from its initial centralist policy, but after demonstrating its support for the newly-created national organisation through the 1947-48 loan it seems likely that MAG needed to retain "the best oils and water-colours in the collection" following the 1948 re-organisation as these works formed the core of the pool of artworks which was central to the relaunched scheme, which will be described in the next section.

The 1947-48 Arts Council exhibitions received extensive coverage in the local press particularly for the group of oil paintings with the most useful articles being for exhibitions at Nottingham, Gloucester and Taunton. The exhibition at Nottingham Chapel-bar Art Gallery opened in January 1947 which the *Nottingham Journal* identifies as comprising a selection of thirty-three pictures from the RLC, describing them as "but a glimpse, to whet the appetite, so to speak" of the whole of the collection.[725] The article references most of the artists and some specific artworks, a list which confirms that the Arts Council loan did indeed include many of "the best" works in the RLC, defined by the *Art Value* likely to have been attributed to them at that time.[726] In addition to works from Rutherston's original gift by artists such as Augustus and Gwen John, Wyndham Lewis, Walter Sickert, Wilson Steer, Lucien Pissarro and William

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subsequently extended until April 1948 – see Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1948", 5, MAG Archive.

[724] The Arts Council of Great Britain, *Third Annual Report 1947-48*, 10-11; The Arts Council of Great Britain, *A Selection of Paintings and Drawings from the Rutherston Collection* (London: The Arts Council, 1955), 2.

[725] "East and West in Art Endeavour," *Nottingham Journal*, 25 Jan 1947, 5.

[726] Ibid.

Rothenstein, the article specifically refers to “two canvases that will enchant the moderns”, Tristram Hillier’s *The War in Somerset*, 1943 (Fig.93) purchased for the RLC in 1943, and Winifred Nicholson’s *Primulas*, 1921-22 (Fig.94), an Essil Rutherston gift in 1928.

The exhibition at Gloucester Guildhall in June 1947 was opened by Sir Kenneth Clark who is quoted in the *Gloucester Citizen* as saying:

> he could not imagine a small exhibition which could be of more value to a town which unfortunately had no picture gallery. The best way to understand modern art was to nurture one’s eye on the painting done 40 or 50 years ago. That was still fresh enough to be contemporary, but done long enough ago for critics to be sure of its relative value.[727]

Here Clark is commenting positively on the *Art Value* of the exhibited works and the meaning he attributes to the term “relative value” mirrors the concept of relative art-value used in this thesis. A follow-up article provides an art critic’s appreciation of the exhibition, for example describing Sickert’s *Camden Terrace, Bath*, now known as *Paradise Row, Bath* , 1917 (Fig.95), acquired by Rutherston in 1920, as having a “poetic quality”; an unnamed work by Wadsworth “painted with meticulous intensity” and “one of the first to stress the trend towards surrealism”; Wyndham Lewis’s *Portrait of the Artist* “a disturbing picture, painted by an artist who fears and resists the march of science”; and William Rothenstein’s *Alice by the Fireside,* 1901-1913 (Fig.96) “a charming portrait study of Lady Rothenstein” who “just happens, simply and naturally, on the canvas.”[728] These observations seem to reflect a group of artworks which were still, in their different ways, to contemporary tastes, meaning in *Art Value* terms they retained relative art-value even though they were all more than twenty years old, reflecting Clark’s observations in the previous article.

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[727] ""Cemetery of Great Architecture". Sir Kenneth Clark on Vandalism in Glo'ster," *Gloucester Citizen*, 11 June 1947, 9.

[728] M.L., "Noted Art Collection in Glo'ster," *Gloucester Citizen*, 18 June 1947, 5.

The exhibition at Taunton School of Art was held in August 1947 with an article in the *Somerset County Herald* stating that the exhibition comprised "works of representative British painters which belong to their best period."[729] Like the reviews of the Nottingham and Gloucester exhibitions, this article goes on to identify many of the artists involved, who it divides into two groups, "the older artists", including Sickert, Steer, Conder, Rothenstein, Wyndham Lewis, Augustus John, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, and "[t]he younger school […] represented by Christopher Wood, Sine Mackinnon, John Aldridge, Vivian Pitchforth, Tristram Hillier and Richard Eurich."[730] The article concludes positively by saying, "[i]t is certain that all those who wish to add to their cultural experience and to assess for themselves the spiritual and technical values of modern British painting will express their appreciation to the Arts Council by making the most of the opportunity it has provided."[731] This can be interpreted as commenting directly on the *Art Value* of the exhibited artworks, although rather than imposing its own view the article suggests that the viewer could make their own assessments of the artistic merits of the works.

These three examples all confirm that the 1947-48 RLS loan of oil paintings to the Arts Council included works by some of the best known modern artists working in England in the early decades of the twentieth century, which in terms of *Art Value* meant their work had both relative art-value (it was mostly still to contemporary tastes) and historical value (by 1947 it had been assimilated into the national culture), an assessment of the *Art Value* of this group of paintings articulated at the time by Sir Kenneth Clark at the opening of the Gloucester exhibition.

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[729] H.G.A., "British Painting. Coming Exhibition At Taunton," *Somerset County Herald*, 26 July 1947, 3.
[730] Ibid.
[731] Ibid.

The articles also highlight more recent works by artists from "the younger school" the *Art Value* of which would have largely comprised their newness-value.

The BIAE's *Art for the People* initiative (starting in 1935) and the Arts Council's touring art exhibitions (from 1946) shared one of Rutherston's key objectives when he committed to gift his collection to MAG in 1925, that of providing access to modern art to people living in provincial towns. In terms of cultural value, the objectives of both initiatives could therefore be seen as a continuation of the idea that the primary *Use Value* of the artworks was to educate people about *Art Value* as it applied to modern art. In the case of *Art for the People*, this formed part of attempts to disseminate an idea of the English national culture and a sense of national identity in the years leading up to (and continuing during) the Second World War. After the War the Arts Council was aiming to give art a social, particularly educational, purpose as part of the Labour government's attempts to rebuild society in the immediate post-war period, for the first time treating art as part of social provision and the responsibility of central government.

During the period reviewed in this thesis, despite the difficulties MAG faced in acquiring additional works for the RLC the collection retained sufficient *Art Value* to make it an attractive source of loans first for *Art for the People* and then for the Arts Council, evidenced in particular by the positive newspaper coverage of the Arts Council exhibitions in 1947 and 1948. Despite the withdrawal from the RLS of some of "the more important" works (probably including most of the oil paintings) during the Second World War, the positive review of the 1941 *Art for the People* exhibition in Halifax indicates that it was still possible to maintain the *Art Value* and hence the educational *Use Value* of the loans. However, the RLS loans to CEMA's own exhibitions during the Second World War differed from *Art for the People* in terms of the artworks involved, the locations where they were displayed and the objectives the loans aimed to

achieve. Alongside their music concerts and drama productions the objective of CEMA's art exhibitions (and therefore the *Use Value* of the loaned artworks) was not to educate but to provide enjoyment for the men and women using the facilities. So even though the *Art Value* of the supplementary pool of artworks created specifically to support the CEMA exhibitions was generally not at the level of the core RLC (and these works were not retained at the end of the War), this was not a significant issue given the different idea of *Use Value* the loans were intended to support. This may in turn have had class connotations given the different audiences for the CEMA exhibitions compared to the gallery-visiting public targeted by *Art for the People* and the Arts Council.

2.6 Preparing for a New Era – The RLC/RLS in 1950

> I am afraid I have been a long time in answering your very kind letter – really because I did not know what to say about coming to Manchester next month. […] if I could only be transferred to the Art Gallery on a magic carpet it would be so easy & nice to be there with you all.
>
> Essil Rutherston, 1949.[732]

In July 1949 Essil Rutherston had arranged to visit MAG but had to cancel that visit due to ill health, and, in the above letter to Sydney Cleveland the following month, she prevaricates about whether she would be able to attend a follow-up meeting. The last letter from Essil in MAG's RLC Archive in May 1950, also to Sidney Cleveland who she had worked with on the development of the RLC and RLS since 1928, discusses the further deterioration in her health and the unlikeliness of her being able to visit Manchester again, and therefore seems to mark the end of her involvement.[733] In the same year, the new catalogue for the RLC was published reflecting the major reorganisation of the RLS in 1948 so, in more than one respect, 1950 can be seen as the end of an era (and the start of a new one) for the RLC/RLS and therefore a suitable end point for this research.

The system for administering the RLS established in 1927 remained broadly unchanged for around twenty years, with two adjustments. Firstly, by 1933 the number of oil paintings in a loan selection had been limited to a maximum of ten, presumably as these were amongst the works which were most in demand.[734] Secondly, in 1942, to meet the increased war-time demand for loans including the support provided to CEMA, the maximum number of artworks per loan was reduced from thirty to twenty.[735] After the Second World War schools became the main

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[732] Essil Rutherston, letter to S. D. Cleveland, 23 Aug 1949, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[733] Essil Rutherston, letter to S. D. Cleveland, 6 May 1950, RLC 1/32 file 3, MAG RLC.
[734] City of Manchester Art Galleries, "Report on the Rutherston Loan Scheme for the year 1933".
[735] "Progress Report, July 1942".

focus of the RLS, illustrated by the wording in MAG's Annual Reports for 1946 and 1947 which refer to other loans "in addition to the normal loans to schools."[736] The further growth in popularity of the RLS with schools in this period could be seen simply as a continuation of the trend which had begun following the extension of the RLS to secondary schools in 1930. However, as described in the introduction to Part 2, after the Second World War the cultural, social and political context was very different to the 1930s which meant that the child-centred educational philosophy of the New Art Teaching movement could begin to prosper, supported at policy level by the 1944 Education Act and its implementation which gave freedom to LEAs to adopt progressive educational approaches.

Within this context, although using art in schools to support education had increasingly been the focus of the RLS during the 1930s, after the Second World War this educational practice became more widespread. This is illustrated by the *Pictures for Schools* initiative established in 1947 by the artist, teacher and educationalist Nan Youngman with the objective of selling original, affordable artworks to schools.[737] In her research of *Pictures for Schools* Natalie Bradbury summarises the late 1940s educational context as a combination of structural changes to the education system and a shift in educational philosophy towards a more child-centre approach to learning.[738] Bradbury describes how Youngman's ideas around art and education had developed during the interwar period, drawing on experience such as her training with Marion Richardson whose educational philosophies Youngman closely followed.[739] *Pictures for Schools*

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[736] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1946", 7, MAG Archive; Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report 1947", 8.

[737] Bradbury, "Nan Youngman and *Pictures for Schools*," 1.

[738] Ibid., 3.

[739] Ibid., 4.

was supported by the newly established Arts Council which gave the initiative (and the use of art in schools more generally) some legitimacy within the post-war educational environment.[740]

Bradbury references the application form used to submit artworks to *Pictures for Schools* in 1948 which stated, "[c]hildren of all ages will see them, and for many they will be the first original works of any value which they have seen. […] To see and live with such works is an essential part of the formation of taste and judgment, alongside the equally essential practice of the arts by children."[741] The explicit reference to "value" implies two possible ways in which it was envisaged that original artworks could provide educational *Use Value* in schools, supporting the development of children's overall visual and art appreciation skills as well as their own art making. This mirrors the evolution in the use of the RLS by schools before the Second World War described in 2.4, once again illustrating how the RLS was ahead of its time. Bradbury also notes that the two progressive Directors of Education cited by Roy Lowe, Stuart Mason from Leicestershire and Alec Clegg from the West Riding of Yorkshire, were both engaged with *Pictures for Schools*, maintaining the initiative's clear link with progressive, child-centred education.[742]

This broader educational context contributed to the further increase in the popularity of the RLS with schools in the late 1940s which resulted in MAG's new Curator, David Baxandall, proposing a complete reorganisation of the scheme in his report on the RLS for 1947:

> [M]ore and more schools and educational bodies have applied for loans. […] it has been impossible, in spite of the reduction of the number of works in any one loan […] to satisfy every applicant […] and under these conditions it is felt that only a complete re-organisation of the present system of borrowing will have any effect. A further increase in the number of schools wishing to use the Scheme is expected […] and without re-

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[740] Ibid., 3.

[741] Ibid., 2.

[742] Ibid., 14-15; Lowe, *Education In The Post-War Years*, 35.

> organisation it will be impossible for more than a small number of these schools to borrow from the Collection.[743]

Baxandall's report the following year notes that his proposals had been approved by the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee in October 1947 (although no records of this meeting have been found) and describes the basis of the new system as follows:

> [T]he greater part of the collection should be arranged in groups of about twelve pictures, each group having a uniting theme. In addition, the best works in the collection for which the keenest competition existed, should be placed in a pool. Each borrower should then be allowed to choose, for each term's loan, one group and one picture from the pool.[744]

This approach was therefore intended to maximise the potential number of loans, provide borrowers with flexibility to choose artworks which fitted their educational priorities, ensure the "best works" could be accessed by as many borrowers as possible, and simplify the mechanics of the RLS for both MAG and borrowers. The new arrangements were put into operation for the 1948 autumn term with Baxandall reporting, "the results for the first term are highly satisfactory. […] Reports from individual teachers on the new system are most encouraging, and from an administrative point of view there is no question that the scheme has gained in efficiency."[745]

Baxandall also notes that in the first term of loans under the new system, of the seventeen new borrowers fifteen were schools and the other two were teacher training colleges, once again highlighting the growing importance of the RLS in supporting children's education. The emergence of teacher training colleges as a new group of borrowers in 1947 and 1948 indicates that teachers were starting to be trained in the use of art in education as this became more

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[743] Baxandall, "Curator's Report for the year 1947". Lawrence Haward retired as MAG's Curator at the end of 1945 after 31 years in the role and was replaced by David Baxandall – see Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report 1945", 8-9.

[744] David Baxandall, "Rutherston Loan Scheme. Report for the year 1948", 14 Oct 1948, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.

[745] Ibid.

formally integrated into education practice. MAG's Annual Report for 1949 confirms Baxandall's initial positive feedback, the reorganised scheme by that time having been in operation for a complete school year, recording that the number of loans during the year was thirty-three percent higher than any previous year, providing "a good indication of the increasing success of the scheme" which, the Report goes on to say, "is now working to capacity."[746]

In terms of cultural value, the RLS's reorganisation in 1948 can be seen as a response to an increase in the perceived educational *Use Value* of artworks for schools. The analysis of the use of the RLS in schools in 2.4 combined with Bradbury's research of *Pictures for Schools* illustrates how the *Use Value* of artworks varied according to the specific educational philosophies of individual education departments, schools and teachers. The *Use Value* of the RLS loans ranged from a broad aesthetic education and understanding of art history to support for making art including both practical skills such as drawing and print making and, increasingly as the 1930s and 1940s progressed, encouraging individual creativity and self-expression as part of the child-centred educational approach advocated by educationalists such as Marion Richardson and Nan Youngman.

However, unlike initiatives such as *Art for the People* and the Arts Council exhibitions, apart from internal loans to its own branch galleries MAG did not have the resources to directly support schools' use of the loaned artworks and, as such, was unable to influence the delivery of *Use Value* from the RLS loans. The only levers MAG really had at its disposal were the contents of the RLC itself and the organisation of the RLS and even here MAG was constrained by the artworks it had been able to add to the RLC since Rutherston's original gift in 1926. The 1948 reorganisation can be seen, firstly, as an attempt to refocus the *Art Value* of the RLC as a

[746] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1949", 9, MAG Archive.

collection of modern art, suggesting that this was regarded as being important to borrowers' ability to realise *Use Value*; and, secondly, on increasing the capacity of the RLS by reducing the number of artworks in each loan enabling more schools to benefit from the scheme.

The press coverage of the RLS loans to the Arts Council in 1947 and 1948 discussed in 2.5 gives a sense of the perceived *Art Value* of the RLC at the time of the reorganisation, as a collection combining artworks from the early twentieth century which had already become an accepted part of the national culture (historical value) but were still to contemporary tastes (relative art-value) with the newness value of more recent works by younger artists. And an April 1946 review in the *Manchester Guardian* of an exhibition of "about one-quarter" of the RLC held at MAG to re-introduce the public to the collection after the Second World War groups the exhibited artworks in a similar way.[747] The article describes the chief merits of Rutherston's original gift being "the comprehensiveness and individual excellence with which it represented the membership of the New English Art Club and its spiritual heirs the Camden Town and London groups", with the article specifically referring to Augustus John's *Merikli*, a group of John's drawings and some Epstein busts as artworks by established artists which by 1946 had already been attributed with historical value.

The article goes on to credit Rutherston's "eye for promise among younger artists then unknown" and compliments MAG for pursuing "the same policy of encouraging fresh talent wherever it emerges."[748] This had resulted in a group of works in the exhibition "which admirably illustrates the growth of Paul Nash to full stature as a water-colourist, besides a number of immature – but in their way delightful – works by artists like Eurich, Pitchforth and

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[747] D. S., "The Rutherston Collection," *Manchester Guardian*, 18 April 1946, 3.
[748] Ibid.

Suddaby who have since gained popularity."[749] Describing Nash's growth to "full stature" suggests that his work still had relative art-value and was beginning to be attributed with historical value. In terms of the other three artists referenced here, by 1946 the RLC included five works by Richard Eurich including *Lyme Regis* from Jane Walker's 1939 gift, ten works by Vivian Pitchforth of which eight were from Eric Gregory's 1937 loan which was converted to a gift in 1946, and two works by Rowland Suddaby, *Still Life*, 1936 (Fig.97) purchased from the Redfern Gallery in 1936 and *Regents Park*, 1936 a watercolour gifted by Hazel King-Farlow in 1938.[750] Although most of the works in the RLC by these three artists were created in the 1920s and 1930s, this article suggests that their modernist stylistic languages which had often been contested before the Second World War was by 1946 to contemporary tastes and their work had therefore acquired relative art-value.

The article concludes by highlighting some of the recent additions to the RLC, paintings by Hans Tisdall, Keith Vaughan and Terry McGlynn, one work by each of these artists having recently been acquired for the RLC and these remained the only works by them in the 1950 catalogue.[751] It seems likely that in 1946 Tisdall's *Moorings at Kew*, 1946 (Fig.98), for example, would have been regarded as a contemporary, stylistically modern artwork by a little-known artist and would therefore have had newness-value, supporting the article's assertion that these works "show that the Rutherston tradition is being maintained."[752]

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[749] Ibid.

[750] This work by Suddaby is one of seven in the 1950 RLC catalogue gifted by Hazel King-Farlow, Peggy Guggenheim's sister, between 1936 and 1939. The RLC also included two works by King-Farlow who was an artist herself. For a brief biography see Art UK, "Hazel King-Farlow," n.d., accessed 21 Dec 2025, https://artuk.org/discover/artists/king-farlow-hazel-19031995.

[751] D. S., "The Rutherston Collection," 3.

[752] Ibid.

This 1946 example of the reception of the RLC provides the context for analysing the RLC following its restructuring to support the reorganisation of the RLS in 1948, based on the catalogue for the RLC published in 1950 which definitively identifies the artworks in the RLC at that time.[753] This catalogue identifies the 1,355 artworks comprising the RLC organised in line with Baxandall's original proposals into: a "pool" of 111 pictures (paintings, watercolours and drawings) deemed to be "the most important works in the collection"; a "pool" of twenty-seven sculptures; a "Case of Studio Pottery" comprising just five works; and 101 themed groups each of twelve works, made up of 714 paintings, watercolours and drawings, 287 prints (woodcuts, etchings and linocuts) and 211 reproductions. A standard loan under the new system comprised one of the groups of twelve artworks plus a single work from the pool. It seems likely that the artworks were chosen for the pool based upon an assessment of their *Art Value*, combining the historical value of works by established modern artists (including many works from Rutherston's original gift) with the relative art-value of works by younger artists which were now to contemporary tastes.

Although 427 works from Rutherston's original gift remained in the RLC in 1950, this means that thirty-seven works were excluded indicating that a consolidation of the RLC to meet the needs of the RLS based upon a reassessment of the balance and the *Art Value* of the RLC as a whole was seen as more important than retaining the idea of Rutherston's gift as an entity. It is possible that some of the exclusions were based on the condition and fragility of the works including some works on paper and Conder's paintings on silk, and MAG's records also show that two works from the original gift were missing by 1950. Although some examples of war art

[753] Manchester City Art Galleries, *Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection*. Appendix D provides a breakdown by medium and the source of the works.

from the First World War remained in the RLC, fourteen works by important artists such as Nevinson, Kennington and Rothenstein were excluded which I argue later may have been a consequence of the addition to the RLC of the WAAC's gift of Second World War artworks. Seven other drawings and prints by Rothenstein were also excluded, which may have been a pragmatic decision resulting from the large number of works by Rothenstein included in Rutherston's original gift. It is also worth noting that nine drawings by Hokusai (or his school), which being neither English nor modern were an exception in Rutherston's original gift, remained in the RLC in 1950, suggesting that the early twentieth-century appeal of art from East Asia to English modernist sensibilities was still in evidence in 1950.

Most of the paintings, drawings and sculptures gifted to the RLC by Essil Rutherston and Jeannette Powell, Eric Gregory and the CAS as well as those transferred to the RLC from MAG's permanent collection remained in the RLC following its 1950 reorganisation, indicating that these works were considered to have the *Art Value* required for the RLC going forward. This is perhaps not surprising given that most of these additions complemented the core of Rutherston's original gift as a collection of modern English art. However, of the major additions to the RLC between 1926 and 1950 Jane Walker's bequest was an exception as it included works which were not a natural fit with the RLC, for example late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century English paintings, and the reorganisation provided the opportunity to address this anomaly by excluding around twenty works which did not have the *Art Value* required to remain in a collection focused on modern art.

The analysis in 2.1 highlighted how original prints and reproductions of paintings provided the means to grow the RLC to meet increasing demand, particularly following the expansion of the RLS to schools. In 1950 the RLC included almost five hundred prints and

reproductions whereas Rutherston's original gift of 464 artworks had included only thirty prints and no reproductions although he also offered MAG his collection of reproductions, an offer which was subsequently accepted from Essil in 1928. Many of the prints added to the RLC were by well-known modern English artists at a time when their paintings were becoming increasingly unaffordable to MAG, and the addition of reproductions extended the RLC's scope beyond modern English art to include old masters and modern French and European art. Prints and reproductions also had the advantage of being relatively inexpensive and easier to replace on a like-for-like basis and were therefore less risky to loan to schools than paintings and drawings, and provided a way of adding examples of artworks with *Art Value* (both relative art-value and historical value) to the collection which would otherwise have been unaffordable to MAG.

It should be noted that the old master reproductions which had been added to the RLC were excluded from the 1950 catalogue, although reproductions of modern European and British art were included making up thirteen of the 101 groups of artworks in the catalogue, an indication that one objective of the reorganisation was to re-establish the RLC's identity as a collection of modern art.[754] However, there were still some exceptions to this, for example reproductions of fourteen Chinese woodcuts from the seventeenth century given by Essil in 1928 but presumably acquired by Rutherston were retained, perhaps providing a further indication of the stylistic link between East Asian art and European modernism.

The WAAC gift in 1947 was the last significant group of artworks added to the RLC prior to its reorganisation and provides an exception to idea that the reorganisation focused on maintaining the RLC's *Art Value* rather than attempting to directly influence its *Use Value*. All

[754] The old master reproductions had been originally gifted by Essil Rutherston in 1928 and on their withdrawal from the RLC it appears that they were returned to Essil by David Baxandall – see Essil Rutherston, letter to S. D. Cleveland, 6 May 1950.

the WAAC's initial gift to the RLC, plus several WAAC works subsequently transferred from MAG's allocation (sixty-two works in total), were retained in the RLC in 1950, suggesting that all these works were deemed to be of sufficient cultural value to remain in the re-organised RLS. Some of these works would have had *Art Value* as examples of modern art resulting from the established reputations of the artists or the stylistic qualities of the artworks themselves, but this was certainly not the case for all of them. The WAAC artworks were concerned with representing the War rather than necessarily exemplifying the best of modern English art, and their cultural value was therefore not primarily about their *Art Value* but was more concerned with their potential *Use Value* as a way of recording and sharing images of the traumatic events of the recent past and contributing to creating a national sense of unity in the immediate post-war period. This might also help to explain the exclusion from the 1950 catalogue of some of the war art from the First World War from Rutherston's original gift as, by then, their relevance (and hence their *Use Value*) had been superseded by the art of the more recent War.

Although Rutherston's Manchester gift had included some anomalies, the RLC essentially started its life in 1926 as a representative collection of modern English art of the previous thirty-five years. The constraints on MAG's ability to grow the RLC and the approach it took to meet the increasing demands placed on it by the RLS meant that by 1950 the RLC perhaps lacked the cohesion and focus of the original gift. This exemplifies the Durost quote cited by Pearce, that the "nature of the value assigned to the objects" included within the RLC had changed from "being one of a series, part of a whole" to being "valued primarily for use" and therefore comprising a more disparate grouping of artworks which no longer constituted a collection in the sense meant by Pearce and others.[755] The reorganisation of the RLC reflected in

[755] Pearce, *On Collecting*, 20-21.

the 1950 catalogue to some extent addressed this by excluding works which were no longer deemed to have the *Art Value* necessary for them to have educational *Use Value* as part of the re-organised RLS, and attempting to re-establish the RLC's identity as a collection of modern art. As discussed in Part 1, Rutherston had focused on collecting modern English art, perhaps because it was more affordable than the French and other European art collected by contemporaries such as Courtauld. However, the retention of the reproductions of modern French and European art which had been acquired for the RLC extended its scope beyond English art, perhaps reflecting the fact that, in the immediate post-war period, it was now possible to accept that Europe had produced modern art with *Art Value*, both relative art-value and, by 1950, historical value. This meant that by 1950 the RLS could be used to educate borrowers about modern European art in general, in terms of both art appreciation and teaching art practice, rather than its earlier focus on promulgating an idea of the English national culture and identity.

2.7 The RLC/RLS 1926-1950 – Essil Rutherston's Story

> At the beginning I went to see a good many outlying places round Manchester, Liverpool and also in Yorkshire […]. During the ensuing years I have visited many of these places again, and have been impressed with the changes which have taken place in most of them. […] the Rutherston Loan Scheme […] has become a great influence by showing what can be done to interest the public with even small loans […] and it is very encouraging to see how […] the pictures and sculpture have become an intimate part of the school life.
>
> Essil Rutherston, 1940.[756]

Part 2 has highlighted the important role played by key people at MAG in managing the evolution of the RLC and RLS between 1926 and 1950, in particular Lawrence Haward and Sydney Cleveland. Haward, who was MAG's Curator from 1914 until 1945, had been an important factor in Rutherston's decision to gift his collection to MAG, and he remained closely involved with the RLC/RLS throughout his tenure as Curator, including maintaining a close relationship with Essil Rutherston, evidenced by the correspondence between them in the RLC Archive. And Cleveland had day to day responsibility for the RLC/RLS from 1926 until 1937 when he was appointed Assistant Curator at the City Art Gallery and was replaced at Platt Hall by Albert Frape, before taking over responsibility for the RLC/RLS again between 1941 and 1946 to cover Frape's absence on national service.[757] The extensive correspondence in the RLC Archive, particularly during this latter period, is indicative of the close working relationship, and probably friendship, that Cleveland had established with Essil Rutherston. Certainly, Essil appreciated Cleveland's contribution to the RLC/RLS, for example saying, in a 1935, letter that

[756] Essil Rutherston to the Chairman, City Art Gallery, 1 Apr 1940.

[757] Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report of the Committee 1937", 12, MAG Archive; Manchester City Art Galleries, "Annual Report 1941", 5.

Cleveland "has proved himself such an admirable keeper and organiser of the Scheme ever since he first began the work at Platt Hall with Mr. Rutherston."[758]

But at its heart Part 2 is a story about Essil Rutherston and the significant contribution she made over a twenty-year period to the evolution of the RLC and RLS, starting in 1928 just a few weeks after her husband's death with her offer to gift further works to the RLC and her acceptance of MAG's invitation to sit on the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee. However, in the early stages Essil's relationship with the Sub-Committee was sometimes difficult; for example at the end of 1928 she raised concerns about the way MAG had prevaricated about two potential donations to the RLC, expressing her displeasure in a letter to Lawrence Haward saying, "I feel very strongly that […] the way their offers have been received has not been encouraging to them, or to others who hear of it, to offer further gifts. […] The important point is not so much whether we lose one or two pictures now, but that we cannot afford to lose friends."[759] This gives the sense of a woman who was prepared speak her mind in the face of some initial opposition to her ideas for the development of the RLC and RLS.

Essil's growing influence on the Sub-Committee is illustrated by the pivotal April 1929 meeting at which two key decisions were taken. Firstly, it was agreed that "Mr. S. D. Cleveland be empowered to visit London once or twice during the year, as occasion arises, for consultation with Mrs. Rutherston with view of obtaining further loans to the Scheme."[760] After her husband's death Essil had sold their house in Bradford and moved to London, enabling her to become an important link between MAG and the London art world, and the analysis in Part 2 has illustrated the importance of this arrangement, including Essil's working relationship with Cleveland, in

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[758] Essil Rutherston, letter to Dr. Tylecote, City Art Gallery, 22 Nov 1935, RLC 1/21 file 1, MAG RLC.
[759] Essil Rutherston, letter to Lawrence Haward, 7 Dec 1928, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.
[760] Minutes of the Rutherston Collection Sub-Committee, 25 Apr 1929.

securing the gifts, loans and acquisitions which were crucial to the growth of the RLC. Secondly, it was also agreed "[t]hat the Director of Education be informed that, if desired, loans can be made to Schools, where suitable, from the Rutherston Collection."[761] It seems likely that this decision would have been influenced by Essil given her own background as an art teacher, with Cleveland remarking, in his tribute to Essil following her death in 1952 by which time Cleveland had become MAG's Director, that "[a]s a one-time teacher she was much interested in the extension of the loan facilities to schools."[762] As Part 2 has demonstrated, this turned out to be a crucial decision for the future of the RLS with loans to schools beginning the following year and going on to become the primary focus of the RLS by 1950.

It appears that these important decisions were only reached at some personal cost to Essil as in a letter to the Art Gallery's Chairman referring specifically to this meeting she said, "I have complete confidence in your being able to put a stop to any recurrence of the distressing time I went through at the last meeting."[763] The letter is not explicit about the nature of the "distressing time" but it is unfortunately inevitable that, advising a Sub-Committee mostly comprising male Manchester councillors, Essil would have encountered misogyny and cultural conservatism, which makes her achievements even more impressive.

Part 2 has interpreted the development of the RLC and RLS between 1926 and 1950 in terms of an evolution in cultural value, considering the *Art Value* of the RLC as a collection of modern art and its *Use Value* delivered through the RLS, and Essil's contribution can be assessed in relation to both these perspectives. In terms of *Art Value*, Essil played a significant role in the growth of the RLC over this period and although, unlike her husband, Essil was not a prolific

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[761] Ibid.
[762] S. D. Cleveland, "Mrs. E. R. Rutherston," *Manchester Guardian*, 28 Nov 1952, 4.
[763] Essil Rutherston, letter to Alderman Todd, 8 July 1929, RLC 1/32 file 1, MAG RLC.

collector, she did loan and gift many artworks to the collection. Although some of these were her own acquisitions the majority were originally acquired by Rutherston but were not part of his original gift, including a significant number of the prints and reproductions which were retained in the RLC in 1950. When Essil did acquire artworks for the RLC herself she seems to have considered the RLC as an entity and the *Art Value* of the artworks it should comprise, exemplified by her 1943 acquisition of John Armstrong's Surrealist painting *Black Pyramids* which she admitted was not to her personal taste but added to the representation of contemporary works in the RLC.

However, her more significant contribution to the RLC was the influence she had on other people who also contributed works through gifts and loans, which were significant to the *Art Value* of the RLC in 1950. Firstly, because of her friendship with Eric Gregory she was able to persuade him to convert his 1937 loan of thirty-three works into a permanent gift in 1946 and, in the same year, she liaised with him to secure the WAAC gift to the RLC of more than fifty works. Secondly, Essil had got to know Dr. Jane Walker before Rutherston's death and, although no primary source documents have been found confirming this, it seems likely that Essil remained in touch with her particularly as the two women lived in London, helping to ensure Dr. Walker maintained her 1926 commitment to gift her collection to the RLC until her death in 1938. Thirdly, Essil established the RLC as a subscriber to the CAS, managed the payment of the annual CAS subscription until her death in 1952 (when this responsibility was taken on by Jeannette Powell) and initially played a key role in the selection of works the CAS gifted and loaned to the RLC. And finally, Essil was also instrumental in securing other gifts and loans to the RLC, including for example Sir Cyril Butler's important loans of modern British art from 1931 until 1936.

Turning to *Use Value*, Part 2 has demonstrated how the RLC's *Use Value* delivered through the RLS evolved from, in 1926, the idea that the RLS could be used to educate the public and aspiring artists about modern art, its *Art Value*, to, by 1950, a focus on its educational *Use Value* in schools, with individual schools and teachers increasingly influencing the artworks they borrowed from the scheme aligned with their educational philosophies. Essil's role was central to this evolution, beginning with her involvement in the key decision made in 1929 to extend the RLS to schools which led to a significant shift in the potential beneficiaries of the RLS, from adults and art students to schoolchildren. And in 1930 Essil initiated the idea of visiting borrowers to observe and where possible support borrowers' use of the loaned artworks, and Essil's visits, often accompanied first by Sydney Cleveland and then by Albert Frape, soon became an integral part of the operation of the RLS. Her initial visits in 1930 were to smaller galleries and art schools in line with the original focus of the RLS but, as the RLS evolved, her visits increasingly became focused on schools, which she continued to visit until at least 1945.

In her April 1940 letter to the Art Gallery Chairman from which the epigraphic quotation at the start of this section is taken, Essil reports on returning to some of the galleries, art schools and secondary schools she had previously visited over the previous decade, and she highlights the difference the RLS had made in both stimulating public interest in modern art and integrating art into education practice in schools. And Sydney Cleveland's 1952 tribute acknowledges the contribution Essil's visits to schools made, saying, "[h]er discussions with the teachers did much to encourage them in their work, and in their grasp of the possibilities which the loans offered to stimulate youthful interest in art activities generally."[764] Although as noted earlier, due to limited resources, MAG was generally unable to influence how borrowers used the RLS loans, in other

[764] Cleveland, "Mrs. E. R. Rutherston," 4.

words the *Use Value* realised, this statement reflects how Essil was a notable exception to this, particularly in the schools she visited where she worked closely with teachers to ensure the children benefited from the loans.

Mengting Yu reassesses the women who attended the Slade School of Art in the early twentieth century and became part of the London art world, but who, apart from Gwen John (a predecessor of Essil's at the Slade) and Vanessa Bell (Essil's contemporary), have been largely ignored by art history.[765] Yu notes that, during this period, an art school education was still considered a suitable pastime for young women before they married, but that contrary to this perception "there were also those who had serious ambitions, both in art and in life", and she includes Essil amongst this group.[766] However, Essil's patchy pattern of attendance at the Slade, the few surviving artworks by her and the limited evidence of her exhibiting her work does not necessarily support Yu's assertion that Essil ever had "serious ambitions" to become an artist. This may not have necessarily been Essil's free choice as she may have been responding to family and societal pressure to take on the domestic role expected of her.

Cleveland's 1952 tribute to Essil suggests that her contribution was recognised in her lifetime, but this memory has been largely lost over the intervening period and if Essil has any identity in art and wider cultural history, like many women she has been defined by her gender in

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[765] Eliza Goodpasture's 2024 PhD thesis examining friendship groups of female artists includes as one of its case studies a group of women studying at the Slade between 1895 and 1898, including Gwen John – Eliza Goodpasture, "Friendship as Methodology: Women Artists Working in Britain, 1871-1939" (PhD Thesis, University of York, 2024), 119-157, accessed 16 Sept 2026, https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/35737/. Considering all the artists across her four case studies covering a period of almost seventy years, Goodpasture concludes that so far only Gwen John "has received significant art historical attention", although she argues that, as the result of recent revisionist art historical accounts such as this one, some of the other artists are now also "on the cusp of […] canonical status" – ibid., 191.

[766] Yu, *London's Women Artists, 1900-1914*, 34.

relation to the men in her life, in Essil's case as Rutherston's widow. The evidence presented in Part 2 has indicated that, for Essil, a key concern was to ensure that the RLC and RLS delivered her husband's vision and, in doing so, fulfilled his legacy, and in this respect, she seems to have been more concerned with her husband's identity than her own and establishing the RLC/RLS as his monument, performing the role of the dutiful wife and widow by implementing her husband's wishes.

But the evidence presented in Part 2 redefines Essil's identity as a strong, talented and independent woman in her own right. Through her art training at the Slade, her involvement in the London art world in the years leading up to the First World War, and her work at the Redfern Gallery in the 1920s, she developed broad art appreciation skills including understanding the emerging *Art Value* of modern art. And her experience as an art teacher gave her an insight into the contribution art could make to children's education, its educational *Use Value*. This background, combined with her personality and intellect which shine through the primary source material examined during this research, help to explain why Essil made such an important contribution to the evolution of the RLC and RLS.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has focused on the evolution of the RLC/RLS until 1950 but a review conducted by MAG in about 1969, described as "an attempt to trace some of the causes of its present difficulties", provides an insight into the period after 1950.[767] The "difficulties" referred to here concern the decline in the popularity of the RLS with the annual number of borrowers reducing from around 340 every year from 1950 to 1955, to 240 by 1959 and then to 165 in 1968, less than half the 1950 figure.[768] The review is critical of the development of the RLC going back to the 1930s, stating that MAG's acquisition policy did not follow Rutherston's original wishes for the collection to remain "representative of the work of contemporary artists and craftsmen", although the financial constraints within which MAG was operating were also recognised.[769] However, the review asserts that perhaps the major factor in the reduction in the quality of the collection was the extension of the RLS to schools which resulted in a definite policy of acquiring artworks for the RLC specifically for schools, which is consistent with the analysis in this thesis illustrating how supporting schools increasingly impacted on the evolution of the RLC and was the focus of the reorganisation of the RLC/RLS in 1948 discussed in 2.6.[770]

The 1969 review goes on to say that this acquisition policy had led to the "baneful result […] that the style of the collection was frozen to that current in the artistic backwaters of 1930" which had "remained popular right into the fifties when we woke up to Modern Art", a comment which is also consistent with this thesis's analysis of the *Art Value* of the RLC in 1950.[771]

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[767] Manchester City Art Gallery, "Rutherston Report", c.1969, n.p., RLC 1/24 file 23, MAG RLC.
[768] "Borrowing statistics 1928-1968".
[769] "Rutherston Report".
[770] Ibid.
[771] Ibid.

Artworks from the first quarter of the twentieth century including many from Rutherston's original gift which still had relative art-value in 1950 were soon no longer to contemporary tastes, and in 1962 many of these older works were transferred to MAG's permanent collection reflecting that they were now attributed with historical value rather than relative art-value.[772] Although not mentioned explicitly in the 1969 report, it also seems likely that the financial value of these historically significant artworks resulting from art price inflation after 1950 made the potential for damage to be incurred as part of their continued inclusion in the RLS increasingly risky. Again, reflecting the analysis of the RLC in 1950 in this thesis, these artworks had not been replaced by more recent works with the *Art Value* required to ensure the RLC remained a representative collection of modern English art.

This ultimately impacted upon the educational *Use Value* of the RLS as evidenced by the rapid decline in the number of loans in the late 1950s and 1960s which suggests that borrowers (particularly schools) were by now expecting the loans to include more artworks which were to contemporary tastes, such as abstract art which during this period had re-entered the story of English modern art. It is also worth noting that the RLC does not appear to have benefitted significantly from the addition of new gifts, for example even though the RLC had continued to subscribe to the CAS in its own right, in 1968 Jeannette Powell (who paid the CAS subscription after her stepmother's death in 1952) and MAG's Director agreed that the RLC had fared badly over the previous decade in terms of the gifts received from the CAS, having only been given four artworks between 1957 and 1968.[773]

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[772] Ibid.

[773] Jeannette Powell, letter to G. L Conran, 16 Nov 1968, file for Jeannette Powell, MAG DB; G. L. Conran, letter to Mrs. C. Powell, 22 Nov 1968, file for Jeannette Powell, MAG DB.

No records have been found about the outcome of the 1969 review but the RLS continued to run in various forms until 1997 when it was finally closed down after operating for seventy years.[774] In late 2023 MAG began a review of the RLC artworks it still possessed but which were not being actively used as part of MAG's permanent collection, one of four collections reviewed as part of MAG's National Heritage Lottery funded *Taking Stock* project.[775] Since 1997 the legacy RLC artworks had remained at the Queen's Park branch gallery where they were effectively in permanent storage, but as part of *Taking Stock* were transferred temporarily to the central art gallery at the end of 2023 to which limited public access was provided.[776] MAG summarised its objectives for the review as follows:

> As part of Taking Stock, we are revisiting this collection to make sense of a century of collecting and sharing to best understand its use now. […] How relevant and what creative educational value does this collection still hold, how can it be most useful to Manchester residents and what can a sharing collection look like now?[777]

Taking Stock can therefore be seen as an attempt to reassess the cultural value of the legacy RLC artworks in terms of their contemporary usefulness (*Use Value*) rather than their artistic merit (*Art Value*). The project included working as part of MAG's established *Future Creatives* collaboration with The Manchester College (TMC) which enabled current and former TMC visual arts students to engage with the artworks and develop their own creative responses, starting the process of understanding what contemporary educational *Use Value* the artworks might have.[778]

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[774] Manchester Art Gallery, Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund second stage application, 2024, 4.
[775] Manchester Art Gallery, "Taking Stock," n.d., accessed 13 Jan 2026, https://manchesterartgallery.org/taking-stock/.
[776] Ibid.
[777] Manchester Art Gallery, "Collection Review – Rutherston Loans Scheme," n.d., accessed 13 Jan 2026, https://manchesterartgallery.org/collection-review-rutherston-loans-scheme/.
[778] Ibid.

Building on this initial work, MAG applied successfully for funding from the Art Fund and Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund to support its *Art Works in Schools* pilot project which began in 2025 with the objective of testing out new ways in which the legacy RLC artworks could be shared with schools and colleges to help students "build visual literacy, express themselves creatively, and support their mental health and resilience."[779] In other words, the pilot project is attempting to identify the contemporary educational *Use Value* of the artworks which will potentially result in the establishment of a new loan scheme appropriate for the needs of the community MAG serves and will help to inform MAG's future collecting policy. The project involves working with eight primary and secondary schools, colleges and alternative provision settings with support provided by artist facilitators in areas of Manchester where children and young people have limited access to art.[780] In doing so, MAG is endeavouring to give new life to largely forgotten artworks and address a fundamental challenge faced by public art galleries in managing the two (often conflicting) aspects of cultural value underpinning the analysis in this thesis, maintaining the *Art Value* of their collections as the custodians of cultural heritage whilst ensuring their collections provide a social function, in other words have a *Use Value*, for their local communities.

Art Works in Schools has already begun to write another chapter in the one-hundred-year history of at least one artwork which was part of Rutherston's original gift in 1926, Frederick James Porter's *Snow in Hanover Square, London*, 1926 (Fig.99). Rutherston purchased this work in May 1926 from an exhibition at the Leicester Galleries of works by the London Artists' Association (LAA), an offshoot of the London Group comprising the sculptor Frank Dobson and

[779] Manchester Art Gallery, "Art Works in Schools".
[780] Ibid.

six painters (Porter, Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell, Roger Fry, Keith Baynes and Bernard Adeney) which was established to provide the artists with income guaranteed by a small group of patrons.[781] At the time of the exhibition Rutherston already owned works earmarked for his Manchester gift by five of the seven artists, the exceptions being Porter and Vanessa Bell, and he filled this gap by also acquiring Bell's *Red-Hot Pokers*, 1921 (Fig.100) from this exhibition as well as another sculpture by Dobson.[782] These purchases must have been made with the gift in mind as all three were included in the first batch of artworks transferred to MAG in June 1926 immediately after the LAA exhibition.[783]

The *Manchester Guardian* describes the six painters as "a thoroughly homogeneous group, united by the strong link of their Cézanne worship", in other words they represented a response to Post-Impressionism by English artists at what was still, as this thesis has described, a transitional period for modern art in England.[784] These acquisitions are therefore representative of the art Rutherston was seeking to include in his gift at the moment when the *Art Value* of the works he was acquiring was evolving from the newness-value of contemporary work to the relative art-value of work which was fully assimilated into the English national culture. So, in May 1926 it could be argued that for Rutherston there was little difference in the *Art Value* of the two paintings by Porter and Bell, and hence in their potential *Use Value* as part of his Manchester gift. It is also worth noting the similarity in the financial value of the two works at that time, as Rutherston paid £42 for Porter's work and £47-5-0 for Bell's.[785] But from this point onwards, the

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[781] "The London Artists' Association," *Observer*, 23 May 1926, 4.

[782] Another work by Vanessa Bell, *Still Life*, 1894-1928 was gifted to the RLC by Essil Rutherston in 1928 and it is possible that this was also acquired by Rutherston around the same time as *Red-Hot Pokers* although no provenance information has been found.

[783] Charles Rutherston, list of artworks sent to the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 10 June 1926.

[784] "The London Artists' Association," 4.

[785] Obtained from Rutherston's original index cards for the two artworks, RLC 1/18, MAG RLC.

art historical trajectories of the two artists diverged with Porter hardly featuring in the history of modern art in England in the first half of the twentieth century (for example he is not mentioned at all in Harrison's account) whereas Bell has become a significant figure in the narrative.[786]

Snow in Hanover Square, London was included in an RLS loan to Ovenden Senior School, Halifax in early 1939 where, as shown in the school's catalogue (Fig.91), it was displayed in the library, a location which perhaps suggests a *Use Value* concerned with raising the children's general awareness and appreciation of art rather than contributing directly to art teaching. And in 1950 this work was considered to have sufficient *Art Value* to remain in the RLC at that time, possibly combining relative art-value resulting from its stylistic appeal to the late-1940s taste for picturesque and romantic landscapes, and historical value reflecting Porter's association with the London Group and the LAA.

Snow in Hanover Square, London remained in the RLC for the remainder of its life as it was one of the legacy RLC artworks brought out of storage to be reviewed as part of MAG's *Taking Stock* project.[787] And it has gone on to be one of the artworks students have engaged with as part of *Art Works in Schools*, with MAG noting halfway through the pilot project that:

> [T]here have been profound moments of curious encounters. When we pulled out a rack in the art store, out of all the paintings, pupils were again drawn to the snow scene that had once been in Halifax. Some were keen to express ideas, while others simply looked with extreme concentration.[788]

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[786] Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*. Note that Harrison references the formation of the LAA, 184-185. An account of the LAA identifying the seven original artists including Porter and the sponsoring patrons is also included in Brown, *Exhibition*, 93-94.

[787] List of legacy RLC artworks temporarily transferred from storage to the central art gallery provided in personal email from Lisa Burton, Collections Management Officer, MAG, 3 Jul 2024.

[788] Lesley Cheung, "A century of collecting and creative learning," *AD, The National Society for Education in Art and Design magazine* Summer 2026, no. 46 (2026): 27.

It could be argued that prior to MAG's current work *Snow in Hanover Square, London* and the other unseen RLC legacy artworks had neither *Art Value* nor *Use Value*. However, the above observation provides an encouraging early sign that it might be possible for these largely forgotten artworks to acquire cultural value once again. *Art Works in Schools* is hoping to identify a new *Use Value* for the artworks appropriate for the twenty-first century, and defining what that *Use Value* might comprise will be a key output of the pilot project. In terms of *Art Value*, providing young people with access to what to them are unfamiliar artworks could attribute the works with some degree of newness-value, at least from the perspective of this new audience. And by reconnecting *Snow in Hanover Square, London* with a history going back not only to Rutherston but to a Halifax school in 1939 my research has given the work new historical value which MAG has already been able to draw upon. This example therefore shows how by highlighting historical connections the research underpinning this thesis can contribute both to a reassessment of the cultural value of the RLC artworks and to the contemporary debate about their future use.

This thesis is essentially concerned with two inter-related narratives for each of the main fields of study addressed by this research. Firstly, the analysis of Rutherston's collecting, his Manchester gift in 1926 and MAG's subsequent development of the RLC over the period to 1950 contribute to the historiography of modern art in England in the first half of the twentieth century. The thesis has interpreted the development of the collection in terms of the evolution in the *Art Value* attributed in England to modern art representing two different artistic philosophies, the shifting (but mostly enduring) popularity, and hence relative art-value, of realism over the period, alongside the gradual acceptance into the national culture of art influenced by

Impressionism and Post-Impressionism as it acquired first newness-value and then (for some artists) relative art-value.

Part 1 demonstrated how in the early part of his collecting career (before 1915) Rutherston acquired a broad range of art motivated by a combination of personal taste and a desire to support struggling young artists. At this stage he was not focused on the collection as an entity and any interest he may have had in the *Art Value* of the artworks he acquired related to the possible attraction of the newness-value of modern art and the historical value of older artworks. But Rutherston's collecting increasingly tracked, and contributed to, the transition in the *Art Value* attributed to modern art in England as he rapidly grew his collection and began to focus on its composition as his ideas about its possible future role began to evolve. Rutherston therefore progressed from a focus on the newness-value of work by relatively unknown contemporary artists, to acquiring work by artists whose work was acquiring relative art-value as it became assimilated into the English national culture. And by growing a collection which mirrored, and indeed contributed to, the transition in the *Art Value* of modern art Rutherston demonstrated that he possessed the cultural capital required to identify with a metropolitan cultural elite, with his art collection therefore forming part of the construction of his own identity.

Part 2 went on to show that following the transfer of Rutherston's gift to MAG in 1926 to form the RLC, during the period to 1950 most of the major additions generally maintained the focus of the RLC as a collection of modern English art and its *Art Value*, combining the relative art-value of works by established modern artists with the newness-value of more recent works. However, there were some exceptions where compromises in *Art Value* were made and the reorganisation of the RLC/RLS in 1948 (reflected in the 1950 RLC catalogue) provided the

opportunity to address some of these anomalies and re-establish the RLC's identity and *Art Value* as a collection of modern art. Maintaining this focus whilst continuing to grow the RLC was partly achieved over this period through the addition of a significant number of original prints, the majority by English artists, and reproductions of mostly modern French and European paintings where the originals would have been unaffordable to MAG.

By 1950 the strength of the RLC in terms of its *Art Value* still resided in its holding of works from the first quarter of the twentieth century, the majority originally collected by Rutherston, many of which had by this time acquired historical value as well as still retaining some level of relative art-value resulting from a resurgence in the popularity of realism during and immediately after the Second World War. But due to the financial constraints on MAG's ability to add original contemporary works to the RLC, by 1950 the holding of works from the second quarter of the twentieth century was weaker, for example by that time the RLC included no fully abstract works and few examples of Surrealism. Although this had not impacted on the popularity of the RLS by 1950, as MAG's 1969 review highlighted over the following two decades this would eventually lead to a dilution in the RLC's *Art Value*, and specifically its relative art-value, as the artworks from Rutherston's original gift which were still at the heart of the collection in 1950 were gradually consigned to art history.

Secondly, the philosophy which resulted in Rutherston's Manchester gift and the subsequent use of the RLC through the RLS provide an insight into the changing relationship between art and society in the first half of the twentieth century and the emergence of education as a social purpose which art could support, interpreted in terms of *Use Value*. Part 1 described how late nineteenth-century cultural philanthropy had ascribed a *Use Value* to art which focused on the ability of art which represented the real world to either project a narrative of moral

improvement or to improve quality-of-life using decorative images often drawn from nature. But the evolution of modern art combined with the focus on education in the aftermath of the First World War resulted in a *Use Value* for art concerned with educating the public about modern art as part of disseminating an idea of an English national culture, which was precisely the role Rutherston envisaged for his gift in 1926.

Part 2 demonstrated how this idea of the *Use Value* of the RLS to help create a culturally educated population through its loans to other art galleries continued throughout the period under review, including being part of the Arts Council's initial focus in the first few years of its existence at the end of the 1940s. And the evidence presented here indicates that the RLS contributed to an increasing acceptance of modern art, and an understanding of its *Art Value*, in provincial towns in the North of England over the period. The RLS loans to art schools were initially driven by a similar idea of *Use Value*, although in this case the focus was on helping aspiring artists to create modern art rather than to just appreciate its *Art Value*. But Part 2 described a decline in the popularity of the RLS with art schools during the period related to a shift in their educational focus to teaching the design and vocational skills needed by local industry, and the RLS only retained *Use Value* for those art schools which continued to focus on teaching fine art.

The most significant factor in the evolution of the RLS's *Use Value* over the period was the extension of the RLS to schools from 1930, resulting in a change in the focus of the RLS from adults and art students to the education of children. The evidence presented in this thesis shows how the RLS's *Use Value* for schools included supporting children's broad understanding and appreciation of art as well as their own art making by providing examples to be copied or to teach specific skills and techniques. However, Part 2 argued that the *Use Value* of the RLS to

schools was increasingly related to a progressive child-centred approach to art education which began to emerge during the 1930s and was given further impetus by the political, cultural and social context of the period immediately following the Second World War which enabled education departments, schools and teachers to make their own choices about their use of the RLS.

Drawing together these two narratives, this thesis has demonstrated how the evolution first of Rutherston's collection between 1890 and 1926 and then of the RLC/RLS from 1926 to 1950 can be interpreted in terms of the cultural value attributed to art which, for much of the period under review, was created by a cultural elite (with which Rutherston identified) and disseminated via MAG, representing a regional semi-periphery, to the population of a periphery of provincial towns mostly in the North of England.[789] *Art Value* fits this idea of cultural value as a top-down construct almost by definition, but this research has shown that for much of the period the idea of art's potential social function, its *Use Value*, was also imposed on society by the same cultural elite. In particular, this focused on the fundamental idea that the public needed to be educated about art, fitting Borzello's idea of art being used (to borrow the title of her book) as a means of "civilising Caliban".[790] This idea was central to the original philosophy behind Rutherston's gift in 1926 and continued to be a significant factor in the evolution of the RLC/RLS for the next twenty years. And whilst this remained art's primary social function, the

[789] The RLS borrower case studies in Part 2 indicate how borrowers were concentrated in the North of England, although covering a broader geographical area than Yorkshire and Lancashire as originally envisaged by Rutherston, including Stoke-on-Trent in Staffordshire and Newcastle and Sunderland in North-East England (Fig.101). The clear outliers here are the *Art for the People* loan in North Wales and the two Arts Council exhibitions in South-West England.

[790] Borzello, *Civilising Caliban*.

Art Value and *Use Value* of art were inextricably linked as part of a top-down construct of cultural value forming part of Philip Dodd's idea of the English national culture.

However, this research has highlighted the emergence, by the end of the period under review, of a different idea of the *Use Value* of art. After the Second World War there was no longer a need for the population to understand and identify with an idea of the national culture constructed by a cultural elite as people began to make their own choices about the cultural activities they participated in. And, perhaps of most significance for the RLC/RLS, by the late 1940s schools were also making their own choices about their use of art to support education which increasingly focused on using art to stimulate children's imaginations and creativity rather than solely as examples of good art to be copied. This thesis has therefore highlighted the start of the separation of art's social function, its *Use Value*, reflecting Raymond Williams' idea of culture as something which is created from the everyday lives of ordinary people, from its artistic merit or *Art Value* imposed on society by a cultural elite.

By shaping an understanding of the wider dynamics which impacted historically upon the RLC's development and its use as the RLS, this thesis therefore provides a unique insight into a fundamental shift in the idea of cultural value during the first half of the twentieth century. And as this separation between *Art Value* and *Use Value* remains central to the collection management challenges faced by public galleries, the thesis and the wider research upon which it is based have a contribution to make to the contemporary debate about the future use of the legacy RLC artworks as MAG endeavours "to strike a fine balance between the long life the works will have being preserved in perpetuity and the good life they can enjoy being placed in schools".[791]

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[791] Cheung, "A century of collecting and creative learning," 27.

APPENDIX A – RUTHERSTON'S MANCHESTER GIFT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF ACQUISITION

The table below provides an approximate chronology of Rutherston's acquisition of the artworks in the Manchester gift based on the consolidation of information contained in MAG's records and archives (RLC Archive, Artists' Files and Collection Management System). Informed judgements have been made about the timing of some of Rutherston's acquisitions given limitations in the provenance information available.

Year	Acquisitions by artist	Total
1890	Conder (2)	2
1891	Conder (2)	2
1893	Conder	1
1894	Conder	1
1895	Conder, Anquetin, Rothenstein, Von Hoffman (2)	5
1896	Conder (4), Ricketts (3)	7
1897	Conder?	1
1898	School of Hokusai (4)	4
1899	Conder, School of Hokusai (5), Millet, Rothenstein (2)	9
1900	Augustus John (6)	6
1901	Whistler, Rossetti, Rutherston (3)	5
1902	Augustus John (4), Rothenstein (3), Bone	8
1903	Augustus John, Tonks, Steer, Rothenstein	4
1904	Augustus John (2), Bone, Steer (2), Rothenstein (4), Rutherston, Muirhead	11
1905	Bone, Conder(?), Holmes, Rutherston (2)	5
1906	Chowne, Von Hoffman, Rothenstein, Rutherston	4
1907	Augustus John (5)	5
1908	Fothergill (2), Rossetti	3
1909	Augustus John, Barye, Gwen John, Rothenstein, Rutherston (2), Sichel	7
1910	Augustus John (2), Newbould, Rothenstein, Rutherston, Shackleton (2)	7
1911	Conder, Chowne (2), Bussy (2), Gilbert, Rothenstein (8), Rutherston (6)	20
1912	Conder (2), Blake, Cave, Ihlee, McEvoy, Tonks, Rothenstein (6), Rutherston (2)	15
1913	Augustus John, Chowne, Paul Nash, Charles March Gere, Rothenstein (3), Rutherston (6)	13
1914	Clarke Hall (4), Gertler, Eric Gill, Ihlee (2), Kramer (3), Pissarro (3), Rothenstein, Rutherston (2), Schwabe	18

Year	Acquisitions by artist	Total
1915	Bayes, Eric Gill, Kramer (2), Rothenstein (3), Rutherston, Schwabe	9
1916	Chowne, Eric Gill, Kennington (2), Kramer, Lees, Paul Nash (2), Nevinson, Pissarro, Rothenstein (4), Schwabe, Southall	16
1917	Bone, Clausen, Gaskin, Eric Gill (3), Kennington, Paul Nash (2), Nevinson (3), Nicholson, Orovida (8), Pissarro (2), Rothenstein (4), Southall	28
1918	Cheston, Dodd, Gaudier-Brzeska, Margaret Gere, Eric Gill (2), Gosse, Goyder (2), Kennington (7), Lamb, Lessore (2), John Nash, Nevinson (7), Orovida, Rothenstein (6), Schwabe (6), Sickert, Southall, Hagreen	43
1919	Augustus John, Bianco, Dobson (2), Gaskin (3), Margaret Gere, Eric Gill (3), Ginner, Hamnett (2), Lessore, Wyndham Lewis (2), Meninsky (4), Modigliani, Paul Nash (2), Pissarro, Hope Read (2), Rothenstein, Sickert, Southall (2), Tryon, Tyrwitt, Burne-Jones (7)	40
1920	Dobson (2), Gaskin, Gaudier-Brzeska (2), Gwynne-Jones, Kennington, Wyndham Lewis (5), Marchand (3), Maresco Pearce (2), Rothenstein, Segonzac, Sickert (4), Chowne, Wadsworth (5), Wheatley (2), John Nash, Hagreen (2), Ravarat (6), Roberts	41
1921	Beerbohm (2), Derain, Dobson, Hagreen, Hill, A. N. Lewis, Wyndham Lewis (9), Modigliani, John Nash, Rothenstein (3), Rutherston (4), Signac, McCulloch, Roberts (2)	29
1922	Bomberg, Epstein (2), Fry, Gertler, Colin Gill (2), Gregory, Kapp, Wyndham Lewis (8), Marchand, Paul Nash (2), Pissarro (2), Prax, Rothenstein (7), Southall, Simmonds (2), Zadkine	34
1923	Adeney, Carr (3), Cundall, Epstein (3), Manson, Steer, Rothenstein (3), Wadsworth, Walton	15
1924	Baynes, Craig (6), Epstein, Farleigh, Grant, Gwen John (2), Leech, Paul Nash (4), Pearson-Righetti, Pissarro, Rothenstein (8), Thornton	28
1925	Eric Gill, Coxon, Despiau, Dunard, Knox, Paul Nash, Pissarro (2), Hope Read (3), Rothenstein (2), Rutherston, Sickert (2)	16
1926	Conder (from Essil), Bell, Dobson, Gaudier-Brzeska, Orovida, Porter, Rutherston (from Essil), Gilbert Spencer	8
Total		**470**[792]

[792] This figure is slightly higher than the 464 artworks in the Manchester gift identified by Rutherston in the two documents comprising the formal Deed of Gift. Whilst an exact reconciliation of information extracted from MAG's disparate records and archives has not been possible, the difference can be accounted for by, firstly, a small number of artworks which Rutherston treated as single works but which have been counted as two works in the above list and, secondly, two artworks explicitly excluded from the gift by Rutherston (crossed out on his 10 June 1926 list) but which went on to be transferred to MAG as part of the gift – a School of Hokusai drawing, *Three Men Fishing* (MAG accession number 1925.596) and an Eric Gordon Craig woodcut, *Group* (MAG accession number 1925.604).

APPENDIX B – SELECTED WORKS FROM RUTHERSTON'S MANCHESTER GIFT

The table below provides summary information for the artworks in Rutherston's Manchester gift for the main artists referenced in the text of Part 1, based on the consolidation of information contained in MAG's records and archives - RLC Archive (in particular Rutherston's original index cards in RLC 1/18), Artists' Files and Collection Management System.

Many of the purchase prices noted on Rutherston's index cards are in Rutherston's private code, details of his system are held in the RLC Archive (RLC 1/24 Box File) and have been used to derive the actual prices paid by Rutherston (denoted 'coded' below). It is unclear why Rutherston chose to only record some prices in code.

Artist	**Title**	**Date created**	**MAG accession number**	**Medium**	**Approx date of acquisition**	**Provenance**
Charles Conder	*The Moulin Rouge* (Fig.3)	1890	1925.270	Oil on canvas	1890	Gift from the artist 30 October 1890, the day after the two men first met.
Charles Conder	*Smoke and Chrysanthemum Flowers*	1890	1925.264	Oil on canvas	c.1890	Purchased from the artist for 100 francs when he was living in Montmartre, date not specified.
Charles Conder	*Mardi-gras Week in Paris*	c.1887	1925.428	Pen and ink on paper	1891	Gift from the artist.
Charles Conder	*Study for the Rose Fan*	c.1891	1925.428a		1891	Gift from the artist (on reverse of *Mardi-gras Week in Paris.*
Charles Conder	*The Rose Fan* (Fig.4)	1893	1925.242	Watercolour on silk	1893	Purchased from the artist in Paris for 100 francs.
Charles Conder	*The Cupid Fan*	1894	1925.247	Watercolour on silk	1894	Purchased from the artist in Paris for 100 francs.
Charles Conder	*Dieppe*	1895	1925.268	Oil on canvas	1895	Gift from the artist in return for various loans "amounting to about" 200 francs.
Charles Conder	*Venus*	c.1896	1925.238	Watercolour on silk	1896	Purchased from the artist for 200 francs, no date on index card.
Charles Conder	*Fantasia (A 'Bal Masque' at the Moulin Rouge, Paris in 1896)*	1896	1925.243	Watercolour on silk	1896	Gift from the artist (a souvenir of an evening spent together at the 'Bal Masque').
Charles Conder	*The Blue Fan*	1896	1925.245	Watercolour on silk	1896	Purchased in London from the artist for £5.

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
Charles Conder	*The Conversation Fan*	c.1896	1925.248	Water and body colour on silk	1896	Purchased in London from the artist for £10.
Charles Conder	*Fête Galante*	c.1895/6	1925.241	Pen ink and colour wash on vellum	1897?	Unknown, no index card in RLC 1/18. Note on Artist's File: "missing since 1966".
Charles Conder	*The Masqueraders* (Fig.5)	1899	1925.244	Watercolour, and gouache on paper	1899	Purchased from the Carfax Gallery for £20.
Charles Conder	*Study for 'The Rose Fan'*	c.1895	1925.436	Black chalk on paper	Before 1906	Gift from William Rothenstein, date not given on index card.
Charles Conder	*On the Beach, Swanage*	1901	1925.278	Oil on canvas	1911	Purchased from Gerard Chowne for £125.
Charles Conder	*Self-Portrait* (Fig.6)	1895-1900	1925.291	Oil on millboard	1912	Purchased from William Rothenstein for £150 (coded).
Charles Conder	*Madame et Bovary*	1899	1925.249	Pencil, watercolour, and gouache on paper	1912	Purchased from William Rothenstein for £25 (coded).
Charles Conder	*L'Alcalde dans l'Embarras*	1899	1925.557	Lithograph, brown ink on paper	1926	Index card notes "The property of my wife Essil R (January 1926)".
Augustus John	*Miss Ida Nettleship*	1900	1925.365	Pencil on paper	1900	Purchased from the artist for £2.10.0 (one of a set of 6 for £15).
Augustus John	*Gwen John*	1900	1925.379	Pencil on paper	1900	Purchased from the artist for £2.10.0 (one of a set of 6 for £15).
Augustus John	*Death Approaching*	1900	1925.375	Watercolour and ink on paper	1900	Purchased from the artist for £2.10.0 (one of a set of 6 for £15).
Augustus John	*Death Passing*	1900	1925.420	Watercolour and ink on paper	1900	Purchased from the artist for £2.10.0 (one of a set of 6 for £15).
Augustus John	*Allegorical Female Figure*	1900	1925.377	Watercolour and ink on paper	1900	Purchased from the artist for £2.10.0 (one of a set of 6 for £15).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
Augustus John	*Sketch of a Hooded Figure in a Landscape*	c.1900	1925.421	Black ink on paper	1900	Purchased from the artist for £2.10.0 (one of a set of 6 for £15).
Augustus John	*Le Chateau de Polignac, Auvergne*	c.1901	1925.364	Watercolour, chalk and crayon on paper	1902	Purchased from Carfax Gallery for £4.
Augustus John	*Causerie Intime*	1902	1925.433	Pastel on paper	1902	Purchased from Carfax Gallery for £10 (coded).
Augustus John	*The Fair Jewess*	c.1902	1925.434	Pastel on buff paper	1902	Purchased from Carfax Gallery for £10 (coded).
Augustus John	*Merikli* (Fig.8)	1902	1925.292	Oil on canvas	1902	Purchased from New English Art Club for £100.
Augustus John	*Miss McNeill*	1903	1925.368	Black chalk on paper	1903	Purchased from New English Art Club for £8.8.0.
Augustus John	*Ardor* (Fig.9)	1904	1925.289	Oil on canvas	1904	Purchased from New English Art Club for £35.
Augustus John	*Head of Dorelia in Profile*	1904	1925.374	Sanguine (red chalk) on paper	1904	Purchased from the artist for £7.0.0.
Augustus John	*Head of a Girl*	c.1906	1925.366	Pencil on paper	1907	Purchased from the Carfax Gallery for £10.10.0.
Augustus John	*Hark the Lark*	c.1906	1925.369	Pencil on paper	1907	Purchased from the Carfax Gallery for £10.10.0.
Augustus John	*Dorelia in a Hat*	c.1905	1925.370	Sanguine (red chalk) on paper	1907	Purchased from the Carfax Gallery for £12.12.0.
Augustus John	*Study for an Undine*	1906	1925.367	Pencil on paper	1907	Purchased from the Carfax Gallery for £15.15.0.
Augustus John	*Miss Schepeler*	1906	1925.378	Pencil on paper	1907	Purchased from the Carfax Gallery for £10.10.0.
Augustus John	*Wandering Sinnte*	1909	1925.372	Black chalk on paper	1909	Purchased from Chenil & Co for £40.
Augustus John	*The Lady in Brown*	c.1907	1925.371	Pencil and watercolour on paper	1909	Purchased from Chenil & Co for £10.

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
Augustus John	*Study for a Portrait of Lady Ottoline Morrell*	1909	1925.373	Watercolour, pencil and chalk on paper	1910	Purchased from Chenil & Co for £10 (coded).
Augustus John	*Study for a Portrait of Gwen John*	unknown	1925.380	Watercolour, pencil and chalk on paper	1913	Purchased from Will Rothenstein for £10 (coded).
Augustus John	*Dorelia Standing* (Fig.10)	c.1919	1925.376	Pencil on paper	1919	Acquired from the Eldar Gallery "in exchange for trio of my drawings […] which together cost me" £17.2.0 (coded)
C.R.W. Nevinson	*Motor Lorries* (Fig.18)	c.1916	1925.322	Oil painting	1916	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £21 (coded)
C.R.W. Nevinson	*Making Aircraft: Making the Engine*	1917	1925.548	Lithograph	1917	Purchased from the Fine Art Society for £2.2.0 (coded).
C.R.W. Nevinson	*Making Aircraft: Acetylene Welder*	1917	1925.549	Lithograph	1917	Purchased from the Fine Art Society for £2.2.0 (coded).
C.R.W. Nevinson	*Making Aircraft: Aircraft Banking at 4000ft*	1917	1925.550	Lithograph	1917	Purchased from the Fine Art Society for £2.2.0 (coded).
C.R.W. Nevinson	*A Front Line Near St. Quentin*	c.1918	1925.314	Oil painting	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £42 (coded)
C.R.W. Nevinson	*That Cursed Wood*	1918	1925.535	Drypoint	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £3.3.0 (coded)
C.R.W. Nevinson	*The Great War: After a German Retreat*	1918	1925.552	Lithograph	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £2.2.0 (coded).
C.R.W. Nevinson	*Reliefs at dawn*	1918	1925.553	Lithograph	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £2.2.0 (coded).
C.R.W. Nevinson	*The Great War: After a Push*	1918	1925.554	Lithograph	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £3.3.0 (coded).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
C.R.W. Nevinson	*The Great War: The Road from Arras to Bapaume*	1918	1925.555	Lithograph	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £3.3.0 (coded).
C.R.W. Nevinson	*Hauling down an observation balloon*	1918	1925.556	Lithograph	1918	Purchased from the Leicester Galleries for £3.3.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Drag Ropes* (Fig.21)	1918	1925.487	Watercolour ink, chalk and pencil on paper	1919	Purchased from Goupil Gallery – index card missing.
Wyndham Lewis	*Battery Pulling In (II)*	1918	1925.488	Watercolour, pencil and ink on paper	1919	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £20 – priced at £50 at *Guns* exhibition.
Wyndham Lewis	*Reading*	1919	1925.489	Watercolour, pen and chalk on paper	1920	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £15.
Wyndham Lewis	*L'Ingenue*	1919	1925.495	Crayon and watercolour on paper	1920	Purchased from the artist for £25 (coded) the day before it was exhibited at Frank Rutter's Adelphi Gallery.
Wyndham Lewis	*Nude*	1920	1925.496	Crayon and watercolour on paper	1920	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £60 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Woman Knitting*	1920	1925.234	Pencil on paper	1920	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £20 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Red Nude*	1919	1925.575	Watercolour, ink and crayon on paper	1920	Purchased from the artist for £25 (coded) the day before it was exhibited at Frank Rutter's Adelphi Gallery.
Wyndham Lewis	*Girl Asleep* (Fig.20)	1911	1925.504	Watercolour and pencil on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (*Tyros and Portraits* exhibition) for £12.12.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*A Woman seated in a Windsor Chair* (Fig.23)	1920	1925.212	Black crayon on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £15.15.0 (coded).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
Wyndham Lewis	*Study for Painting (Seated Lady)*	1920	1925.505	Watercolour, gouache, ink and pencil on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £15.15.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Woman Seated at a Table*	1921	1925.506	Pencil on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £21 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Portrait of Ezra Pound - Poet Seated*	1921	1925.507	Black crayon on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £8.15.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Portrait of Miss 'E'*	1920	1925.508	Black crayon on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £8.15.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Portrait of a Girl Standing*	1920	1925.210	Black crayon on paper	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £8.15.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Portrait of the Artist as the Painter Raphael* (Fig.22)	1921	1925.579	Oil on canvas over hardboard	1921	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (Tyros and Portraits exhibition) for £52.10.0 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Man with a Pipe*	1920	1925.231	Watercolour and crayon on paper	1921	Purchased from the artist for £20 (coded) in part exchange for another work.
Wyndham Lewis	*Profile of a Girl's Head*	1920	1925.510	Black ink on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £7 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Profile of a Girl's Head*	1920	1925.209	Black crayon and black chalk on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £7 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Girl Seated Facing Right*	1920	1925.511	Pencil on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £10 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Girl Seated*	1920	1925.512	Watercolour and pencil on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £7 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Old Man Seated Holding Hat and*	1921	1925.513	Pencil and watercolour on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at studio for £12 (coded).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
	Stick in Right Hand					
Wyndham Lewis	*Girl Seated with Legs Crossed*	1920	1925.514	Watercolour and ink on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £12 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Woman seated in armchair*	1921	1925.515	Pencil on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist at his studio for £12 (coded).
Wyndham Lewis	*Portrait of Topsy*	1922	1925.215	Pencil on paper	1922	Purchased from the artist (probably at his studio) for £22 (coded).
Edward Wadsworth	*Windmill End*	1919	1925.181	Indian ink drawing	1920	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (*The Black Country* exhibition).
Edward Wadsworth	*Blast Furnaces*	1919	1925.185	Indian ink and watercolour drawing	1920	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (The Black Country exhibition).
Edward Wadsworth	*View near Bilston, West Midlands*	1919	1925.186	Indian ink drawing	1920	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (The Black Country exhibition).
Edward Wadsworth	*Ladle Slag* (Fig.25)	1919	1925.188	Pen and ink and watercolour	1920	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (The Black Country exhibition).
Edward Wadsworth	*Netherton Furnaces*	1919	1925.494	Indian ink and black wash drawing	1920	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (The Black Country exhibition).
Edward Wadsworth	*Fortune's Well, Portland* (Fig.26)	1921	1925.584	Watercolour	1923	Purchased from Leicester Galleries (one man show).
Paul Nash	*A Landscape at Wood Lane* (Fig.27)	1913	1925.217	Watercolour, chalk, pastel and pencil on paper	1913	Purchased from Dorien Leigh Gallery for £15.15.0 (coded).
Paul Nash	*Edge of the Wood*	c.1914	1925.220	Watercolour and gouache on paper	1916	Purchased from New English Art Club for £4 (coded).
Paul Nash	*The Elms*	1914	1925.227	Watercolour, gouache, ink, chalk, crayon and	1916	Purchased from New English Art Club (Suffolk Street Galleries) for £10.10.0 (coded).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
				pencil on paper		
Paul Nash	*Desolate Landscape, Ypres Salient*	1917	1925.476	Watercolour, gouache, ink and pencil on paper	1917	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £10 (coded).
Paul Nash	*Chaos Decoratif* (Fig.28)	1917	1925.218	Watercolour, ink and pencil on paper	1917	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £10 (coded).
Paul Nash	*Red Night* (Fig.29)	1919	1925.574	Watercolour, ink and pencil on paper	1919	Purchased from the artist (Fitzroy Street studio) for £12.12.0.
Paul Nash	*Trees and Shrubs*	1914	1925.224	Watercolour, gouache, ink and pencil on paper	1919	Gift from the artist
Paul Nash	*The Shore, Dymchurch, Kent* (Fig.30)	1922	1925.219	Watercolour and pencil on paper	1922	Purchased from Mansard Gallery (London Group exhibition) for £15.15.0.
Paul Nash	*Drawing at Oxenbridge*	1922	1925.225	Watercolour and pencil on paper	1922	Gift from the artist to Essil Elmslie.
Paul Nash	*Sandling Park, Kent* (Fig.31)	1924	1925.318	Oil on canvas	1924	Purchased from Leicester Galleries £92 (coded).
Paul Nash	*Downs*	1924	1925.588	Watercolour and pencil on paper	1924	Purchased from Leicester Galleries £16 (coded).
Paul Nash	*The Angle*	1924	1925.222	Watercolour, gouache and pencil on paper	1924	Purchased from Leicester Galleries £16 (coded).
Paul Nash	*Roadside*	c.1922	1925.589	Watercolour, chalk and pencil on paper	1924	Purchased from Leicester Galleries £16 (coded).
Paul Nash	*The Walnut Tree*	1924	1925.223	Chalk (brown) and pencil on paper	1925	Purchased from Leicester Galleries £18.18.0 (coded).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
Walter Sickert	*Girl Musing* (Fig.32)	c.1914	1925.182	Pencil drawing	1918	Purchased Twenty-one Gallery, Adelphi for £10 (coded).
Walter Sickert	*Façade of St Mark's, Venice*	c.1896	1925.187	Black chalk drawing with touches of watercolour	1919	Purchased from Eldar Gallery for £52.10.0 (coded).
Walter Sickert	*The Mirror*	c.1914-1915	1925.272	Oil painting	1920	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £15.15.0 (coded).
Walter Sickert	*Paradise Row, Bath*	1917	1925.311	Oil painting	1920	Purchased from Goupil Gallery – index card missing.
Walter Sickert	*Two Figures: What Maisie Knew*	c.1912	1925.576	Oil painting	1920?	Provenance unclear (Goupil Gallery?) – index card missing.
Walter Sickert	*Nude Seated on a Couch*	Early 1914	1925.578	Oil painting	1920	Purchased from Eldar Gallery for £63 (coded).
Walter Sickert	*Study for 'La Gaite Montparnasse'*	c.1897	1925.518	Black chalk drawing touched with white chalk	1925	Purchased from Leicester Galleries for £15.15.0 (coded).
Walter Sickert	*The Blue Hat* (Fig.33)	1911-1915	1925.265	Oil painting	1925	Purchased from A. B. Clifton for £100 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*The Hills from Cadborough, Sunset* (Fig.34)	1913	1925.309	Oil painting	1914	Purchased from Carfax & Co for £57.15.0 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*Landscape with Fir Trees*	1914	1925.563 A	Two watercolours in one frame	1914	Purchased from Carfax & Co for £2 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*Landscape with Cottages*	1914	1925.563 B	Two watercolours in one frame	1914	Purchased from Carfax & Co for £2 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*View of the Valley, Coldharbour, Surrey*	1916	1925.353	Coloured chalk and wash drawing	1916	Purchased from New English Art Club for £5 (coded).

Artist	Title	Date created	MAG accession number	Medium	Approx date of acquisition	Provenance
Lucien Pissarro	*The Common, East Knoyle, Wiltshire*	1917	1925.361	Coloured chalk and wash drawing	1917	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £6 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*Wild Boar Fell, Brough*	1914	1925.306	Oil painting	1917	Purchased from Goupil Gallery for £78.15.0 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*November Sunset on the Thames, Kew*	1919	1925.305	Oil painting	1919	Purchased from the artist for £63 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*The Dorking Road, Coldharbour, in Snow*	1916	1925.298	Oil painting	1922	Purchased from Leicester Galleries for £47.5.0 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*Kingswear through the Mist*	1922	1925.312	Oil painting	1922	Purchased from Leicester Galleries for £78.15.0 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*La Pierre d'Avignon, Le Lavandou*	1923	1925.308	Oil painting	1924	Purchased from Leicester Galleries for £125 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*Crockers Lane, Coldharbour*	1916	1925.302	Oil painting	Aug 1925	Purchased from Leicester Galleries for £94.10.0 (coded).
Lucien Pissarro	*Bourton-on-the-Water: Snow (Gloucestershire)*	1919	1925.591	Watercolour drawing	Aug 1925	Purchased from Leicester Galleries for £9 (coded).

APPENDIX C – LOANS FROM THE RUTHERSTON LOAN SCHEME, 1927-1940

The table below provides an indicative analysis of the loans made from the RLS by type of borrowing institution for the period 1927-1940. The data has been derived from primary source material held in MAG's RLC Archive, particularly the Annual Reports published on the RLS. It appears that these reports were not produced after 1940, or if they were they have not been retained in MAG's archives. The information available about RLS loans after 1940 is more limited and does not support the type of analysis shown below. For the period in question a 'loan' typically comprised thirty works from the collection loaned for a period of twelve weeks organised around the three academic terms operated by art schools and schools.

	1927-1930	**1931-1933**	**1934-1937**	**1938-1940**	**Total**
Total loans for the period	100	174	317	295	886
Average loans per year	25	58	79	98	
Art schools/colleges					
Loans for the period	43	42	17	23	125
% of total	43.0%	24.1%	5.3%	7.8%	
Average loans per year	11	14	4	8	
Other galleries, museums and libraries					
Loans for the period	46	34	45[793]	33[794]	158
% of total	46.0%	19.6%	14.2%	11.2%	
Average loans per year	11.5	11	11	11	
Secondary and Elementary Schools					
Loans for the period	9	83	221	215	528
% of total	9.0%	47.7%	69.7%	72.9%	
Average loans per year	2	28	55	72	
Other borrowers[795]					
Loans for the period	2	15	34	24	75
% of total	2.0%	8.6%	10.7%	8.1%	
Average loans per year	0.5	5	8.5	8	

[793] Includes loans to the BIAE *Art for the People* exhibitions at Harlech and Blackburn. Also includes 15 internal loans to MAG's branch galleries.

[794] Includes loans to the BIAE *Art for the People* exhibitions at Wigan and Ulverston. Also includes 20 internal loans to MAG's branch galleries.

[795] These mostly comprise other further and higher education institutions in the Manchester area.

APPENDIX D – THE RUTHERSTON LOAN COLLECTION IN 1950

The table below provides a breakdown of the 1355 artworks included in the 1950 catalogue of the RLC which reflected the 1948 reorganisation of the RLS.[796] The new scheme organised these artworks into a "pool" of 111 pictures (paintings and drawings) and twenty-seven sculptures, a "Case of Studio Pottery" comprising just five works, and 101 themed groups each of twelve works. Each loan comprised one of the groups of twelve works together with one work from the "pool".

Source	**Paintings**	**Watercolours and drawings**	**Sculpture**	**Prints**	**Pottery**	**Reproductions**	**Total**
Rutherston's original gift	76	302	19	30			427
Essil Rutherston and Jeannette Powell	15	17	3	64	5		104
Eric (Peter) Gregory	25	11		13			49
Dr. Jane Walker	21	33		22			76
Contemporary Art Society	20	12					32
War Artists Advisory Committee	15	46					61
Other gifts	25	22		26			73
Acquisitions for RLC	39	60	5	122			226
Transfers from MAG's permanent collection	38	48		10			96
Various sources[797]						211	211
Total	**274**	**551**	**27**	**287**	**5**	**211**	**1355**

[796] Manchester City Art Galleries, *Catalogue of the Rutherston Loan Collection*.

[797] It has not been possible to exactly reconcile the reproductions included in the 1950 catalogue with their specific sources.

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Manchester Art Gallery – Rutherston Loan Collection archive (MAG RLC)

Manchester Art Gallery – Donors and Bequeathers files (MAG DB)

Manchester High School for Girls archive (MHSG Archive)

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