

Managing Mass Education, and the Rise of Modern and Financial Management

Managing Mass Education, and the Rise of Modern and Financial Management:

Footsteps and Foundations

By

Ian Waitt

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To the Memories of the late Dame Jocelyn Barrow,
John Bell and Robert, 9th Baron Dimsdale

with

Tony Stevens and Cliff Winlow: stalwarts of the BFSS Reform Group.
May your efforts to return that charity to its proper purposes be continued
and meet with full success.

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It is unusual in Management Studies for a text to be extensively illustrated, even more extraordinary for there to be extensive use of colour. Management is a human activity, carried out in the human construct of society. Appreciation of significant persons contributing by thought, word or deed to the performance of management is enhanced by sight of their images, and even more so when illuminated by the colour spectrum. Presentation of many such portraits, photographs and depictions is offered to the reader to enrich the experience of learning from and reflecting upon this work, and to emphasise the essential human element in the managerial process.

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Any and all errors are my responsibility alone.

Ian Waitt, Gateshead and Montréal, 3 July 2023.

PREFACE

The aim of this book, so began its predecessor, is firmly to set the study of management within real and true contexts. If the proper study of mankind is man, within the whole human experience, so the consideration of management must be equally comprehensive. This aim has not changed but its expression is subject to variation, as do the foci of the narratives chosen as expressive vehicles. In the previous work the dominant, heroic figure was the indomitable Ambrose Crowley III. Here it is the deeply flawed Joseph Lancaster, the child-like *enfant terrible* who produced the means for mass education, enabling the global expression of the industrial revolution.

These stars of our passing show were and are assisted by another mass of supporting actors. In standard Management Studies texts illustrations, where they exist, are usually dry, confined to a few glossy pages; or in black and white only, restricted in number. In the hardbacked version of this book they abound in full colour; in the paperback to suit the student purse, they are rendered in monochrome. In either case, in their different sizes, posing or freely expressed, they help bring the past to life, adding to the realities of varying expression. Managing and managed, as with the place of the apparent origin of the term itself, these figures become the actors in our theatre. Only one pose, shot, or image perhaps, but character is illuminated. Look upon the face of Nicholas Barbon and tremble, at Byron and see the attraction to him of the ladies, and why they dared involvement with one who was mad, bad, and dangerous to know, kept a tame pet bear and drank from human skulls.

It is not just the players whom our text brings to life but their habitats: the aspects of the Marshalsea Prison before and after closure; the exuberance of Southwark Fair; the frozen River Thames during the four-day freeze of 1816; and the choice presented by Hogarth between Beer Street and Gin Lane. Managing and managed, this was all part of what formed the routine existence of the people and processes which made for progress in the business, financial and social worlds. Our planet was younger then but many of our managerial systems were deep rooted while still growing, others beginning in the darkness of chaotic slums, or the dormitory of Eton College, where Satan stalked the debaucheries of the night; yet finding the

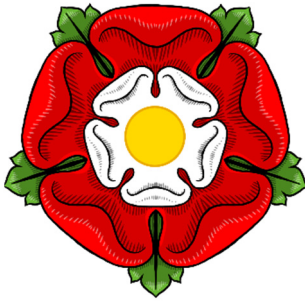
way to forms of humdrum salvation, to government office or to becoming the “the best domestic servants, labourers, clerks and faithful assistants”.¹ The former were products of the elite; the latter of the voluntary society founded to action the Idea and Plan of Joseph Lancaster.

The introduction to my previous book, *Management Footsteps and Foundation: History, Education Management and Management Education*, carried the author’s observation of the power of Ideas: “*Ideas are ruthless. In the right time, context and place they are unstoppable.*” The book also carried the reflection, based on experience, that: “*...Wise, just, sustainable application is thus essential to their management.*” Ideas have to be managed. Not all ideas are good, or practical at a given point in time or context. Inspiration, by definition, is not of itself manageable; but the management of those ideas is, whether by individual self, group, or legislative control. This latest book, a historical tour of the period which saw the emergence of “manager” as a distinct occupation, is one of the flourishing of new ideas and managerial approaches to long-established activities.

Thus, the Dutch, British, Spanish, and Portuguese engaged in armed trade and the slave trade, until brave Quakers, escaped slaves, and some remarkable British politicians stopped much of the latter while engaging with formidable success in the former. For this was a time which overturned managerial nostrums. Chinese sage Sun Tzu had written that warfare did not bring prosperity. The British proved that it did. As the Elizabethan Idea of a British Empire came into reality a century later, so the first of the industrialising nations was able to purchase the defeat of Napoleon.

Such constructs require a further return to that ancient essential of any management: the need for confidentiality, and so to the previous meditation on the topic. In Greek and Roman mythology, possibly from an Egyptian root, roses were symbolic of secrecy. The Greek god of silence, Harpocrates, was given a rose by Eros (Cupid) so that he would not reveal the secrets of Aphrodite (Venus). Fashion among the Roman elite grew to the decoration of banqueting rooms with rose carvings, suspension of the cut flower above dining areas, and at such places of refuge where secrecy was at a premium. The symbolism made a late transfer into the Christianity of Roman origin whereby roses were carved into confessionals to emphasise the secrecy of revelations.

¹ See Chapter 15, Endnote 9.



Later still, the burgeoning secrecy industry of 16th century England was reflected in the ubiquity of the Tudor rose as a ceiling carving in the greater houses of the land. In 20th century London the tradition took a further turn with the 1927, refined 1992, invention at the Royal Institute of International Affairs of the Chatham House Rule. Sometimes also adopted by the European Central Bank and other

organisations, this provides the condition that anyone attending a meeting is free to use information from the discussion but not allowed to reveal speaker or other participant identities.

As reminders of origins and continuing symbols of management, each book in our sequence has a classical *sub rosa* presence. The secret to be progressively revealed concerns a new model for Management Studies: of foundations with a core of sustainable ethical development through appreciation of history, following the footsteps of previous adventurers.

Classically chosen and derived deities are presented as they are most evidently referenced in the Anglo-American tradition which has dominated in the creation of Management Studies. This is not to detract further from the influences of the Eastern, Christian, and Islamic worlds, so important in their belief and behavioural systems. The progress to Enlightenment, the industrial ages, and the post-modern may be marked successively through aspects of Apollo, Mercury, Columbia, Athena, Zeus, Demeter, and Persephone. Essentially, this classical board of managing deities has a very full agenda of issues to face, with humanity needing all the assistance it can get. As the Demeter and Persephone symbols will mark the summation and renewals of experience to come, so the **Improvements**, the first of which makes its appearance in our final case study of this book, will be put forward as instruments to assist the bringing forth of a new dawn. Eos and Aurora await.

Management is forever concerned with having to deal with whatever is presented. The invitation is thus extended to the reader to enter the world symbolised here by Mercury, instrumental to the achievement of mass education, the business of trade and the growth of modern and financial management. It is the communication of ideas and the human dimension of management which is especially important now; as previously stressed by

Morgen Witzel in his foreword to *Management Footsteps and Foundations: History, Education Management and Management Education*: the need for “a more human-centered paradigm.”



Procuratio Sub Rosa: Mercurius Nuntius Difficilis
Management Sub Rosa: Mercury Tricky Messenger



MERCURY

The ancient Greek, fertility god version of Hermes had significant home and estate management duties. His name, possibly derived from *herma*, meaning heap of stone or rock, came to be expressed in boundary markers. Tapered rectangular stones were made into representations of the god, characterised by a facial imaged statue with an erect phallus; purposed not to be worshipped, but rather treated with respect for demarking property limits, perhaps also serving as milestones for travellers.

By Roman times, Hermes' transformation into Mercury brought many additional management responsibilities. Winged-heeled and helmeted, mediator between the invisible and visible planes, often bearing divine messages from the gods during sleep, Mercury was the herald, the orator, the god of communication and eloquence, by now also deity of merchants, trade and commerce, of negotiation, barter, money and financial gain.

The Latin root of his name, *merx*, meant business: literally, as in merchant and merchandise; and heads or busts of Mercury were often depicted on the early bronze coins (the *sextans* and *semuncia*) of the Roman Republic.² This busy deity's influence and protection had extended from boundaries and roads, to all travellers, merchants and those passing on messages or communicating information. For information-seekers too, he also had special appeal, as the god of searches, the lucky find, and bringer of good luck. As guide of souls to the underworld, protector also of thieves and vagabonds, he also had knowledge of all the tricks of the trade.

The inverse aspect or dark side of this archetypal communicator, the passing on of false information, half-truths or downright lies, divulging secrets, ill-willed curses, espionage, and treachery, also carries a lesson to teach. Human progress from early civilisation to the present is well illustrated within Mercury's context in the management and mismanagement of all the

² Ref: Sear, David R. 2000. *Roman Coins and Their Values – the Millennium Edition*. Volume 1: *The Republic and the Twelve Caesars, 280BC-AD96*.



main arenas of life – be it educational, commercial, political, ecclesiastical, or other - often with devastating consequences.

Yet on the bright side, the positive expression of new ideas and key messages have kept getting through to propel humanity forward. The slogan of the French Revolution of liberty, equality and fraternity found aspirational and enduring representation, not only in their early republic, but as ideas travelled around the world. In the then upcoming constitution of the United States, the USA's Founding Fathers boldly seized on the concept of liberty as their banner of intent for all citizens in their gaining of freedom and independence from British rule in the victorious 1775-1783 War of Independence. It took another conflict, this time of the Civil War of 1861-65, for the further concepts of equality and fraternity to gain some penetration in USA state management.

This was a time of monumental expansion, rise in global trade, raw capitalism, and rapid change, fuelled by the revolution in industrial technology, exploration, and resource exploitation, in an untrammelled pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit.

As this book begins in an initial time-frame of the 18th century, the earlier aspirations of Aristotle and Islam might have concurred with an Aquinas-inspired reconciliation of ideas and ideals in a good life, with good profit in fair trade. The mercantile class was strengthened by profits from seaborne warfare, armed trade, territorial acquisition, the Protestant work ethic, networking Quakers, and the multiple profit centres created by the slave trade. Yet the slavery link to the reverse aspect of Mercury persisted through enslavement itself, plunder, and exploitation of the poor; messenger-merchant Mercury having the means to do quick, effective, if not necessarily always ethical business. Though great the temptation to shoot the messenger, his vital safeguarding of communication also allowed truth to be spoken unto power, and the real state of the world conveyed. Such messages could sometimes be ruthless, and occasionally deadly like poisoned darts; and with the embryonic shoots of the new industrial technology, their speed was increasing.

In the growth of modern management, and particularly in regard to the beginnings of education management on a wider scale from 1803, the communication of new ideas and their context, with the latter's implicit message of freedom being dominant subjects of this book, quick-witted, silver-tongued, Mercury, originally the youngest son of the best and greatest



Mercury

of the gods, Jupiter, the Roman reincarnation of Zeus, makes an apt message bearer.

The people conveying those messages were living often in grim, difficult, even desperate conditions, be they the slum squalor of Georgian London, the privations of a New England winter where only sustenance from the natives allowed survival of the early English settlers, or the millions of African slaves, degraded, transported across the Atlantic, no longer human beings, merely goods, a cargo commodity, insured for the slavers' protection and benefit, not theirs. Regardless, throughout ran the spirit of the frontier, freedom and the pursuit of liberty: passing on the messages that new worlds were there to be won, be they the vastness of North America or the steves of south London.

To seek and to make improvements was a distinctive feature of the times. Ideas abounded. They needed dedicated people with an implementation mission. The creation of mass education was an example of mixed messages, through which the central idea – education for all – eventually won through (albeit tardily for newly freed USA slaves) bringing with it further advances in management. New management and forms of management were necessary to cope with the growth of industrialisation. Mass education management brought forward the manpower essential to the spread of the industrial revolutions, first in Britain, then in Europe, but particularly in the USA.

The mercurial Joseph Lancaster, a natural teacher, holy fool, monomaniac with a mission, accidental entrepreneur, and all too human in his manifold flaws, was an oddly fitting vessel for the sport of sometimes tricky messenger Mercury. Lancaster's triumph and tragedy has been neglected in obscurity. Yet he, despite himself, from humble beginnings, was one of the greatest men of his times, the true enabling founder of mass education management, who, under the influence of Mercury, initiated a big Idea and managed to get his message across the world.