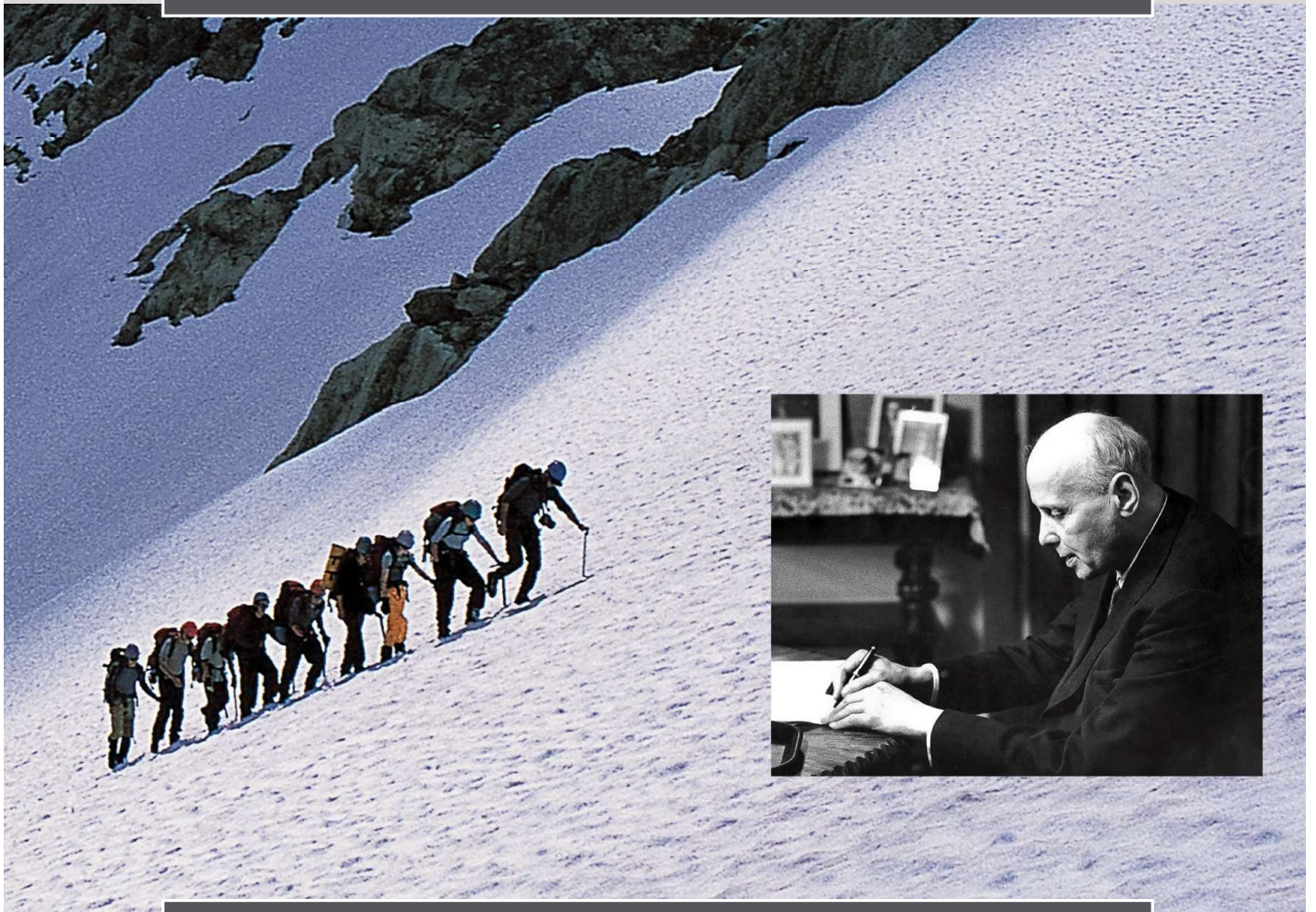


Kurt Hahn

Inspirational, Visionary, Outdoor
and Experiential Educator

Nick Veevers and Pete Allison



SensePublishers

Kurt Hahn

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the most honourable man I have ever met, my father, Jim Veevers, who died after a long illness during its construction. To him I owe my love of the outdoors.

Adam Arnold-Brown was one of the first students at Gordonstoun and later he became the first Warden at Outward Bound Eskdale (the second Outward Bound Centre opened in 1950). At Eskdale his right hand man, whom he described as invaluable, was Vince Veevers, a relative of mine. So this book, detailing the historical development of Adventure Education, which Vince was a part of, is also dedicated to him.

I was lucky enough to go to a school where we were taken to do outdoor activities. There were others but the main teacher who inspired me was Mr. (Tony) Mugan. Having been involved in the outdoors for over twenty years I know that he inspired many other students, some of whom are now presidents of mountaineering clubs and heads of Outdoor Education Departments in colleges. While for me it was him, this dedication is also to those unnamed educators, in schools and centres, who have inspired and continue to inspire their students and who sometimes don't get the full thanks they deserve at the time, like Mr. Mugan.

Nick Veevers

From a young age I was encouraged to spend time outdoors. This, not surprisingly, led to a great deal of exercise and to forging strong friendships with a range of people from around the country. At school Malcolm Jones was responsible for the Duke of Edinburgh Award which I engaged with enthusiastically. Subsequently I was involved with the British Schools Exploring Society, Outward Bound, (And) outdoor education provision through local education authorities and several voluntary organisations. Through these contacts I developed passion, understanding and a critical eye to education generally and more specifically to outdoor and experiential learning processes. I also developed some wonderful friendships which continue today. I am thankful to all of these people who influenced my own development – most of whom were volunteers concerned with sharing their own passion.

I believe that the philosophy of Kurt Hahn is as relevant today as it was during the early part of the twentieth century. I hope this book helps to illustrate the philosophy that Hahn developed and to contribute to everyday practices around the world. I remain convinced that educators can always improve what they do and through their work make the world a better place. I dedicate this book to experiential educators around the world.

Pete Allison

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The money raised through the sale of this book will be split equally between the following two charities.

MAGGIE’S EDINBURGH

Maggie’s centre is a place that anyone affected by cancer can turn to for help. The centre is open to everyone, not just to people who have been diagnosed with cancer, but also to their families, friends and carers. Maggie’s is entirely funded by public donations. www.maggiescentres.org (Charity number SCO24414)

THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The National Hospital Development Foundation is the charity dedicated to raising funds for The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery which, together with the Institute of Neurology, is a worldwide leader in the research and treatment of brain disorders. Ten million people in the UK suffer from a neurological condition, either from birth, through injury, or a slowly developing illness that occurs later in life. These include multiple sclerosis (MS), brain and spinal cancer, epilepsy, Parkinson’s disease, stroke, Alzheimer’s disease and head injury. www.nhdf.org.uk/ (Charity number 290173)

FOREWORD

Outdoor activities are widely accepted now as a core part of education. *Kurt Hahn: Inspirational, visionary, outdoor and experiential educator* traces the link between this acceptance and explosion in popularity to the educator and social reformer, Kurt Hahn.

There have been previous books about the life of Hahn and the institutions he inspired and founded, which include Outward Bound, United World Colleges, Round Square Schools and the Duke of Edinburgh/International Award program. This is the first book to provide a detailed historical account of the early development of outdoor activities centred on Kurt Hahn. An example of this is the close relationship and links between Outward Bound and the Badge Schemes (which later evolved into the Duke of Edinburgh Award).

Hahn's development, use and promotion of outdoor activities in an educative context was a distinctive part of his work and now forms part of formal education in many countries around the world. This book provides the reader with a number of contexts which came together through Hahn, and the movement which surrounded him, and led to what we see today. The book celebrates the past, informs the present and encourages the future.

The authors of this book are noted for their personal outdoor adventures and their long engagement with adventure education in many forums, including Outward Bound. They have put considerable efforts into researching the book to give the fullest historical account possible of the development of outdoor activities. Above all the book shows the authors' commitment to the ideals Kurt Hahn espoused and his efforts to reverse the declines in civilized values.

Hahn believed "That the challenge of the sea and of the mountains be part of training for all students"; that "The destiny of character is shaped outside the classroom" and in "being Actively Compassionate". These ideals have been incorporated into the curriculum and practice of many educational organizations now and this book chronicles how it all took place.

Ian Wade
Executive Director
Outward Bound International

INTRODUCTION

There is little doubt that Kurt Hahn has had a significant influence on the fields of outdoor and experiential learning, adventure education, progressive schools and, not least, badge schemes throughout the world. Leafing through books from the above fields (and many more) it is hard to get beyond the first few pages without finding at least some mention of Hahn, his life, his work and his philosophy. However, on a closer look it is surprising to find that there is very little work in depth. Indeed, there is no book that concentrates on the interest which Hahn clearly had in outdoor activities. It is no surprise then, that our experience is of seeing all kinds of work undertaken ‘in the name of Hahn’ which has left us wondering what Hahn would have to say about this (and many other things) if he were alive today.

Over the years as we have witnessed these things happening we have asked questions and gently enquired regarding people’s understandings of the life, work and philosophy of Kurt Hahn. We have been, and remain, underwhelmed by the absence of a sound grasp of his beliefs but this has also helped us to understand the plethora of practices that are undertaken in the name of Hahn. Our motivation in writing this book was to learn more ourselves and as we did so, to share our learning in the hope that his work will be understood and respected in a more coherent and comprehensive manner.

Writing such a text is not easy as Hahn wrote very little. Typically references are based on transcripts from lectures he gave. However, in preparing this book we have translated work from German to English and we have drawn together literature which has previously not been done. We have then taken a view on this literature and interviews with key people to shed light on what Hahn saw as the role of outdoor activities as a means for education.

As Hahn was one of the field’s greatest advocates, a historical study tracing his development of outdoor activities is needed. The aim is to provide the most in-depth, historical account possible (up to and including the Education Act 1944) and so provide a clearer version of events.

We believe an important part of understanding the events leading to the development of outdoor activities, and to their expansion, is to understand the people associated with Hahn and the complex relationships between them. Appendix A therefore contains a synopsis of the people involved, to provide background to their involvement.

In a UK context, Hahn, alongside the scouting movement (Barret & Greenaway, 1995; Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Hunt, 1989; Loynes, 1999) and Brathay Hall (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993), is cited as having had an important influence on the provision and philosophy of outdoor education. Various authors believe that this influence extends to much of the current practice (when the articles were written) seen in the UK (Allison & Telford, 2005; Roberts, White & Parker, 1974). None of this is particularly surprising given that Hahn lived most of his life in the UK and is probably best known for starting Gordonstoun School and Outward Bound at Aberdovey.

INTRODUCTION

Barnes (2004) reflects on Hahn's influence in a wider context:

Whilst it is very hard to generalise about an area as broad and diverse as outdoor education there are some common traits in philosophy which lend themselves to examination. Perhaps in many ways the most widely acknowledged of these traits is the influence and ethos of Kurt Hahn (1886–1974) and through him the Outward Bound movement. (p. 8)

In the review of literature concerning outdoor education, the view that Hahn has played an important role is expressed by other authors (including Flavin, 1996; Horwood, 1999; Itin, 1997; James, 1980; Kraft, 1988; Loynes, 1999; McCormack, 2003; Miles & Priest, 1999; Miner, 1999; Morgan, 2002; Raiola & O'Keefe, 1999; Washington & Roberts, 1999; Watters, 1986). The influence of Hahn on outdoor education has spread throughout the world, most notably through the Outward Bound movement. There are currently 43 Outward Bound centres in 35 countries creating opportunities for over 240,000 people (Outward Bound International, 2009).

The name Outward Bound is now an international brand and, as Hopkins and Putnam (1993) state, is so well known that in many locations the term is now being used synonymously with outdoor pursuits. Wurdinger and Steffen (2003, p. 7) state that "the Outward Bound phenomena also spawned an entire movement of adaptive Outward Bound programs". Although they were referring to the United States we believe this can be seen around the world to varying degrees.

Hahn had a massive influence on the expansion of outdoor activities around the world and is viewed as a symbol by many movements – as seen by the naming of various awards in his name. He did not produce a specific piece of work which traced, in detail, his development of outdoor activities. The most detailed historical account left by him is perhaps 'Outward Bound' (Hahn, 1957a) – an extended version of a chapter he wrote in 'Outward Bound' (James, 1957). However, as the title suggests, this work deals predominantly with Outward Bound.

Although there have been studies examining Hahn's educational theory, there have been no detailed studies which have specifically investigated his development of outdoor activities in an historical context. Therefore, this work is based on the premise that for someone who had such a major influence on the development of outdoor activities, research is needed to specifically document, in detail, Hahn's development of outdoor activities. The aim of this work is to provide the most in-depth historical account possible. We believe, because Hahn was one of the field's greatest advocates and because none exists already, there should be a single study which deals specifically, and in detail, with charting his introduction and development of outdoor activities.

Many authors, as has already been discussed, believe that Hahn's influence can be seen in current practice. This supports the view that what happens in the present, and what will happen in the future, is very much governed by what happened in the past.

It is intended that this work should be used as a resource by those interested in the historical development of outdoor activities, centred on Hahn, and more specifically by students of Hahn, Outward Bound, the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, and those interested in sail training. The work may also help to inform debates concerning

Hahn's influence on outdoor education, such as Barnes (2004) and Brookes (2003a, 2003b), by providing the first in-depth historical account of the development of outdoor activities, centred on Hahn.

We have tried to remain true to a chronological exploration of the development of outdoor activities, although some areas which occurred at the same time have been split into different chapters for clarity. The work ends with a discussion of various themes, in relation to outdoor activities, which occurred throughout Hahn's educational endeavours including the aphorism 'your disability is your opportunity'.

We take a historical standpoint and centre around various interrelated contexts: German educational practice; Hahn's and Prince Max's (owner of Salem) experiences of the First World War and its aftermath; Hahn's and Prince Max's inclusive agenda; British educational practice; the Second World War; and Hahn's expansionist aims.

KURT HAHN

Kurt Hahn was the founder and Headmaster of Salem School (Germany) in 1920 and then Gordonstoun School (Scotland) in 1934 (Kurt Hahn Archive, 2006). At both of these fee-paying schools activities such as sailing and hill-walking, often through expeditions lasting more than one day, played a prominent role in the education of the students. At Gordonstoun, Hahn expanded his educational ventures, through the use of badge schemes to include young people from the surrounding district who were not students at his school. Hahn's badge schemes involved local children partaking in set activities including an expedition (which could be sailing or hill-walking) organised by Gordonstoun, which on completion resulted in a badge being awarded.

Hahn tried to expand his badge schemes, firstly across the county in which Gordonstoun was situated, Morayshire, and then across Britain. Outward Bound, a training centre where students could go for four week courses, followed the badge scheme syllabus. It was founded by Hahn and Lawrence Holt, a shipowner, at Aberdovey (Wales) in October 1941 (Hogan, 1968). On a number of occasions before 1944, Hahn tried to influence national educational policy to include badge schemes in the education of all children. The badge schemes (Norwood Report, 1943) and Outward Bound (Holt, 1942) were drawn to the attention of the Norwood Committee (set up by the government to investigate educational change). This report influenced the *Education Act 1944* (Board of Education, 1944) which is arguably the most influential act in the history of education in the UK.

This book offers an in-depth account of the development of outdoor activities, centred on Hahn, up to and including the *Education Act 1944*. For our purposes outdoor activities are defined as sailing, hill-walking, climbing and canoeing activities which take place out of doors with an educational aim. It is not our intention to state that this should be the definition for outdoor activities but that for clarity and convenience it is the one that we will be using here. It is also a definition which is coherent with the work that Hahn undertook and the main activities that he used for educational purposes. Since that time there have been many changes and much of what is discussed can be applied (with some care) to the spectrum of activities that are offered as part of outdoor education in different parts of the world.

INTRODUCTION



Figure 1. A young Kurt Hahn.

The influence of Kurt Hahn and Outward Bound extended to the United States in the 1950s through an American, Joshua Miner who taught at Gordonstoun School (Miner, 1976, 1999; Miner & Boldt, 1981, Rubacha, 2002). Outward Bound USA has an award, named after Kurt Hahn, which recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the mission of Outward Bound (Outward Bound, 2002).

Once established in the United States, Outward Bound influenced others.

Someone once said that Kurt Hahn was the ‘moving spirit’ of Outward Bound when it began in Britain during World War II. Imported to the United States two decades later, Outward Bound, in turn, became the moving spirit of the experiential education movement. (James, 1980, p. 17)

Hahn, through Outward Bound, is considered influential in the wider context of experiential education. This influence is illustrated by the Association for Experiential

Education, in 1983, inaugurating the Kurt Hahn Address which has continued since (Association for Experiential Education, 2005). This Address is given annually to the person who exemplifies the Kurt Hahn spirit in contributing to the development and advancement of experiential education (Nold, 1995).

Hahn's influence has reached other countries through Outward Bound but also with other organisations and people such as Project Hahn in Australia (Lan, Sveen & Davidson, 2004) and Finland with the interest shown there by Professor Matti Telemaki (Bowles, 2002).

The extent of Hahn's influence can also be seen through the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The award was first introduced in 1956 at the instigation of Hahn (Duke of Edinburgh, 2005; Hunt, 1976) but it was a direct descendent of the badge schemes operated by him at Gordonstoun (Carpenter, 1957, 1970, 1974; Duke of Edinburgh, 2005). Each participant in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme has to complete an expedition to obtain the award (Duke of Edinburgh Award, 2006) – which, as will be seen, was the same as the earlier badge schemes. Since 1956, four million people have taken part in the award in the UK (Duke of Edinburgh Award, 2009). On an international scale, in the year 2000, there were 58 'member' countries taking part in the scheme with another 53 who had a scheme in their country (Rattan, 2004).

What is perhaps less well known is Hahn's association with the 'Round Square' association and 'United World Colleges'. Together these organisations have a membership of over 60 schools around the world (Round Square, 2005a; United World Colleges, 2005a). They both follow Hahn's educational philosophy (Round Square, 2005b; United World Colleges, 2005a) and both organisations contain outdoor activities in their school curriculum (Round Square, 2005c; United World Colleges, 2005b). The Round Square association has only one award. This is earned by a student, at one of their schools, for an act of distinction and it is named after Kurt Hahn (Round Square, 2005d).

Images of Outward Bound, Round Square, and United World Colleges can be seen in many places but a particularly striking collection can be found in Zelinski (2010).

THE AIMS OF THE BOOK

When, where, why, how, and to whom did Hahn introduce, or try to introduce, outdoor activities. The 'how' element includes the different organisations and different ways which were used to introduce outdoor activities. It also includes the specific educational philosophy and method used when the activities were taught. However, it must be stated at the outset that this book is not an in-depth study, or critique, of Hahn's educational philosophy as a whole, for that the reader needs to go to other works (Day, 1980; James, 1980, 1990; Stewart, 1968, 1972; Skidelsky, 1969; Stabler, 1987; Richards, 1981; Rohrs, 1970). This work is a historical study charting the development of outdoor activities by Hahn and his associates. The study goes up to, and includes, the *Education Act 1944*, and involve some analysis, in the context of outdoor activities, of its effects on outdoor centres, starting with the White Hall Centre.

INTRODUCTION

Much of the research involved people who were ‘there at the time’ and this is contained in a written format. The literature reviewed includes those authors who have written about Hahn since.

In what might be referred to as standard texts, Stewart (1968, 1972), Skidelsky (1969), Stabler (1987) and Rohrs (1970) have carried out detailed examinations of Hahn’s educational theories. These have included a historical context but have not focussed specifically on providing a full and detailed account of the development of outdoor activities.

Two authors, James (1980, 1990, 1995) and Richards (1981, 1991, 1999, 2003a, 2003b), have produced various articles on Hahn over a number of years. Richards carried out his Doctoral thesis on Hahn in 1981, and is known to have lectured on him for *Outward Bound* (Outward Bound, 2004). Day, a former Headmaster of a Round Square school also produced a Masters thesis on Hahn in 1980. These works contain historical accounts but they do not specifically focus on giving a full and detailed historical account of the development of outdoor activities.

Cook (1999, 2000, 2001) has produced three historical accounts of the development of outdoor education which have included Hahn but have not focused solely on him, and these have not provided a detailed account of his development of outdoor activities. Cook’s work has been used to give a British context to Hahn’s activities and the *Education Act 1944*. Alexander and Parker (1930) have also been used to provide a German context to Hahn’s activities.

Through the literature search, in the field of outdoor education, it appears that there are few academic studies, with a historical emphasis, where a methodology could be viewed. Those that were located had a variable historical content: Carpenter (1958), Cook (2000), Day (1980), McCulloch (2002), and Nicol (2001). However, they were helpful in providing ideas in terms of methodology; most used some form of thematic or chronological analysis (also recommended by McDowell, 2002) and have helped to inform the way we have displayed information in this book. A more detailed explication of the process of researching the book is included in appendix B.

CHAPTER 1

CHANGES IN GERMANY

The German educational system towards the end of the 19th and at the start of the 20th century underwent profound change. This change involved a number of inter-related factors which will be highlighted in this chapter - the work of Kerschensteiner (an advocate of a new educational movement), the development and influence of the *Wandervogel* (variously translated as birds of passage, wandering or migratory birds) movement, the founding of Country Boarding Schools, and the development of *Schullandheim* (School Outdoor Centres).

German teachers, prior to these changes in education, treated their students “with studied coldness and severity” and “they assumed little responsibility for the personal development of their pupils” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 320). This is highlighted by one of the authors (an American teaching at a German school) who, in 1913, took his pupils on hikes but “did not know at first that I should not associate with my own pupils” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 321). The formal and authoritarian teaching style, with rows of desks and students “reciting memorized lessons” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 4), was gradually replaced by a more student centred approach with “education going far beyond the traditional ‘three R’s’ subjects of instruction” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 283).

Dr. George Kerschensteiner advocated, in 1880, that there should be “five definite angles of approach to the educational problem: the physical, intellectual, social, aesthetic and moral phases of human nature” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 121–122). This through an *Arbeitsschule* (School of Activity), where pupils could be involved in a number of activities, including, woodwork, metalwork, projects, arts, crafts, or poetry. Therefore, there was a movement away from the three R’s to a wider curriculum with the aim being more than just instruction, and involving all round development. This is perhaps highlighted by the headings, from a student’s report, circa 1924 (Table 1). In an article in 1928 Hahn describes the educational theories of Kerschensteiner, quoting extensively from him, and is obviously familiar with the concept of the School of Activity.

In 1921 the New Educational Fellowship was founded, an international organisation which contained a German Branch (Alexander & Parker, 1930). Rohrs (1970) describes this movement and places it in a world context.

The New Education movement had its origins in the quarter-century before the First World War, and was based on cultural criticism and dissatisfaction with the acknowledged educational system. The main representatives of this global movement were Dewey, Kilpatrick, Ferriere, Decoly, Kerschensteiner, and Blonsky. The idea of founding new schools...spread all over Europe and North America (country boarding schools, Landerziehungsheime, country day

CHAPTER 1

Table 1. German student report headings (Circa 1924)

- I. Family situation.
- II. Physical condition.
- III. School record.
- IV. Mental characteristics:
 - 1. Intellectual tastes and vigor.
 - 2. Temperament.
 - 3. Will, initiative and social adaptation.
 - 4. Method of work.
 - 5. Endurance.
 - 6. Attention.
 - 7. Power of observation.
 - 8. Memory.
 - 9. Imagination.
 - 10. Powers of understanding, thought and judgement.
 - 11. Language.
 - 12. Special interests and talents.

(Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 306)

schools, laboratory schools)...In 1921 the New Educational Fellowship, with sections in several countries, was founded as an organizing centre of the movement. (p. 136)

Flavin (1996) states that in Germany, by 1930, there were about a dozen, independent, Country Boarding Schools which had appeared as an alternative to the state system. These included those schools founded by Hermann Lietz and known as the *Landerziehungsheime* (Country Home Schools) which “belonged to the vanguard of Germany’s ‘modern schools’” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 179) – the first using the activity method. It is worth noting here that Lietz and Cecil Reddie, the founder and Headmaster of Abbotsholme School in the UK, knew each other and influenced one another’s educational thinking (Cook, 2000). It is also worth noting that Hahn had been familiar with, and impressed by, the educational thought of Lietz and the *Landerziehungsheime* from 1902 (Arnold-Brown, 1962; Stewart, 1972).

Another group of schools (Alexander & Parker, 1930) within the Country Boarding Schools movement was the *Freie Schulgemeinden* (The Free School Communities). These schools were similar to the *Landerziehungsheime* in many respects, they also had the aim of giving their students a “well rounded education” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p.180). In 1925, at a meeting of the Central Institute of Education and Instruction in Berlin, involving the leaders of both the *Landerziehungsheime* and the *Freie Schulgemeinden*, these schools placed physical, moral and social education on a par with knowledge (Alexander & Parker, 1930). Hahn, in 1928, mentions and describes both the *Landerziehungsheime* and *Freie Schulgemeinden*.

Martin Luserke’s ‘School by the Sea’ (opened 1924) was one of the *Freie Schulgemeinden* (Kolde, 2000). It included various practical activities in its curriculum: drama; teaching through nature; dune stabilisation; metal work; book-binding (Luserke, 1925); morning gymnastics and morning swim in the sea; sailing, with

the students sailing the boats (dinghies) they had built themselves (Kolde, 2000). Sailing played a major role in the school and its function was that of ‘team building’ (Kolde, 2000). Hahn, in 1928, specifically mentions the ‘School by the Sea’.

The Wandervogel movement began to emerge in the last decade of the 19th century but was formally created as an association in November 1901 (Koch, 1975). This was a youth movement whose wish was that youth should rediscover and experience nature (Koch, 1975). This involved young people hiking through the countryside and finding shelter each night wherever they could (Koch, 1975). They opposed smoking and the use of alcohol by their members (Alexander & Parker, 1930).

A large number of different organisations were formed, in the traditions of, and as a part of, the Wandervogel movement. According to a National Council of German Youth Organisations Report in 1927, 40% of all young people aged between fourteen and twenty-one belonged to an organisation of this type (Alexander & Parker, 1930). The combined membership of these organisations was one million in 1914, rising to more than eight million in 1930 (Alexander & Parker, 1930). They were heavily involved in hiking,

As their desire for longer excursions and several days’ stay in the country they were eager to acquire huts or camps that would shelter them and where they would feel more free and at home than in rural inns. In a short time there were dozens of nests, either owned or leased by the Wandervogel...” (Alexander & Parker, 1930. p. 19)

Alexander and Parker (1930) state that these ‘nests’ or hostels contributed to the development of the *Wandertag* and Schullandheim and these will be mentioned later in this chapter. During this period, and from their formation, the Landerziehungsheime had organised and placed importance on school journeys. They had taken students to Italy, Egypt, England, Holland, Austria, France, Switzerland and Scandinavia (Alexander & Parker, 1930). Influenced by the New Education Movement and the Wandervogel movement, a trend developed for teachers in state run schools to lead their classes out of doors which developed into longer and longer journeys:

In the beginning an hour or two of exploration in the neighbourhood would suffice. Then, with knapsacks on their backs, pupils and teachers were off for a whole day in nearby villages or forests. Soon it came about that nightfall would find a class far from home, seeking shelter with a good-natured farmer, taking lodgings at a quiet inn, or putting up at one of the hostels for youth, which had spread like a network over the land to accommodate just such wandering bands of young people. (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 6)

It was considered that there was “no better procedure or method than school excursions [when] seeking to educate children through self-activity” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 43).

The expansion in school led journeys is pronounced with “classes of older boys and girls...travelling and tramping through the country” (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 268). In a chapter entitled ‘The Average School Today’ they emphasise that outdoor

sports have expanded in “endless variety” and to all parts of the German educational system.

A visit to a German rural school gives proof that the reform of education has penetrated to the remotest corners of the land, making the activity method and education through experience common-place phrases to the village school-master and realities in his daily practice. (Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 260)

A law was passed requiring every school class to spend one day a month, to be known as a Wandertag (wandering day), outside the school grounds. Parker and Meldrum (1973) specifically mention Articles 142–150 of the Weimar constitution which “actively encouraged the principles of the Schulwandering (school journey) and the Wandertag (expedition day) – indeed the whole of the Mittelschule syllabus offered progressive training in expedition work culminating in fifteen-mile hikes” (p. 44). These changes had a number of aims – to encourage student’s health; enrichment of the curriculum and to reshape society, particularly after the First World War when Germany economically, politically and socially was in a state of turmoil (Alexander & Parker, 1930).

Some schools established their own Schullandheim (school expedition centre) as an annex to the regular school (Alexander & Parker, 1930; Parker & Meldrum, 1973). This can be compared with a *Landheim* (outdoor educational centre) which does not belong to a school but can have the same role (Alexander & Parker, 1930; Parker & Meldrum, 1973). The Schullandheim were often funded and built by the school communities (students, parents, teachers) themselves with the aim being to support the school journeys (Alexander & Parker, 1930). A description is given by Alexander and Parker (1930),

The schools began to develop out of their own organisms a new educational type, the Schullandheim, which Dr. Hilker defines thus:

The Schullandheim are rural homes which are occupied by single schools or clubs of pupils for days, weeks or months, and which are under the control of the teaching staff in order to foster the physical development and educational achievement of youth. In most cases some instruction is given, incidentally, in concentrated units, or in subject courses, yet study may be dropped altogether if a group is making only a short stay. The essential thing in the Schullandheim is the educational and developmental influence of social life in a rural, healthful situation. (p. 67)

Classes could be sent there for two to four weeks of regular school time, as well as in the holidays (Alexander & Parker, 1930). The numbers of Schullandheim increased with five established in 1919, fourteen in 1922 and thirty-three in 1923 (Alexander & Parker, 1930). The total numbers involved were 120 in 1925, 140 in 1926, and an estimated 200 in 1930 (Alexander & Parker, 1930).

Hahn indicates that he is aware of the Country Boarding Schools in 1903 and 1928, but we can find no specific mention of Schullandheim or Wandervogel in his writings. Although, given the radical and profound nature, and extent, of these developments, and the fact that Hahn wrote a book about education in 1910 and helped found a school in 1920, it seems reasonable to speculate that he was aware of them.

CHAPTER 2

SALEM

KEY EVENTS

Salem School was founded on the 21st April 1920, in a castle, in the state of Baden, southern Germany (Ewald, 1970; Kurt Hahn Archive, 2006). Prince Max, a German aristocrat, politician, and a former chancellor of Germany, owned the property. Hahn had been his private secretary during the latter stages of the war and afterwards helped write his memoirs. Together they founded the school, and Hahn became its Headmaster (Kurt Hahn Archive, 2006).

The school expanded with other branches being added: Hermansberg, 1925; Spetzgart, 1929, on the shores of the Bodensee (Lake Constance); Hohenfels, 1931; Birklehof, 1932 (Kurt Hahn Archive, 2006). It is important to note that these schools were located some distance away from each other and only Spetzgart was located near an area where sailing could occur (Flavin, 1996). Therefore, from 1929, it became possible, or at the very least much easier, to use sailing as an educative activity, during the school day, simply because Spetzgart was located near a lake. Sailing as a medium for learning is discussed further later in this Chapter.

G. Winthrop-Young first met Hahn at Salem in 1926, while he was carrying out educational research, although he knew of Salem's existence prior to this because his two nieces studied there in the early 1920s (Hankinson, 1995). G. Winthrop-Young's son, Jocelin, started at Salem in March 1931 and G. Winthrop-Young spent two months teaching there in 1932 (Hankinson, 1995). Flavin (1996) reports that Salem had a flourishing exchange programme at the time (Prince Philip of Greece was also a pupil).

On March 11th 1933 Hahn was arrested, for speaking out about the Potempa (Beuthen) murder (Flavin, 1996). He was released on March 16th and exiled from Baden (Flavin, 1996). It was around this period that many pupils left Salem, including J. Winthrop-Young and Prince Philip. Hahn was helped, in Germany, at this time, by Lady Cumming, G. Winthrop-Young and Ka Arnold Forster (Hankinson, 1995) - the latter two subsequently urged him to demonstrate what became known as the 'Salem system' in the UK (Hahn, 1950). Hahn left Germany and arrived in England on the 12th July, 1933 (Hankinson, 1995).

THE AIM

In 1924 the reasons for the founding of Salem were stated:

The school was founded in the conviction that the most pressing task of the hour was to save the younger generation from falling victim to the moral

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degeneration, which calamity has brought on the German people. (Hahn, 1924, p. 1)

Hahn stated this on a number of other occasions (Hahn, 1938a, 1950). It must be remembered that Germany after the First World War was in a state of political, economic, and social turmoil. Hahn (1950, p. 1), when talking about the formation of Salem, states that Prince Max's "ambition was no less than to heal the diseased state". Therefore, education was seen as a way of 'healing' the German nation.

Hahn (1950) called the defeat in the First World War, and the turmoil afterwards caused by it, the 'first lesson' that influenced Prince Max's thinking (Hahn, 1950, p. 1).

The second lesson was learnt through his (Prince Max's) bitter disappointment with wise and learned men who raise their warning voice and then withdraw into noble helplessness, lacking what Lord Wavell calls the 'toughness in pursuit'. The worth of a faith, so he said, does not consist in the clarity with which it is stated but in the steadfastness with which it is defended.

From these lessons grew the Rule of Salem. This rule is embodied in the final report from which the parents learn about their boy's public spirit, his sense of justice, his ability to give precise evidence, his power to pursue what he thinks is right when facing discomforts, dangers, boredom, his own scepticism, a hostile public opinion. They also learn about his scholastic work and his physical fitness. (Hahn, 1950, p. 1)

Due to Prince Max's experience at this time, he felt that the German people had been let down by politicians who were 'wise' but did not 'possess toughness in pursuit'. Consequently, to try to ensure this did not happen again in the future, for the sake of the nation, education should include the development of character. Some authors (Brereton, 1968; Flavin, 1996; Mann, 1970) think that this is aligned with Hahn's own experience during the war with his work for the German Foreign Office when he met people who were not prepared to stand up for what they believed to be right. Consequently Hahn felt "there was a need to educate people to speak out and act upon their convictions" (Flavin, 1996, p. 7–8). These experiences, combined with protecting the young from the turmoil in Germany at that time, influenced Salem's educational aims.

The Salem Report headings in the previous quote (and contained in more detail in Table 2) show that the character of the pupil, at Salem, is given at least equal importance to their academic achievements. This concept is not unique to Salem as other schools also had this motivation. This included both independent and state schools – if the Report Headings in the state system are compared with Salem's Report headings, it can be seen that they are similar (Table 2).

At Salem education was seen as including more than just the academic, involving the development of character, and in many ways can be seen as holistic education, which can be summed up in this quote:

We do not let ourselves be enticed by remarkable gifts in any one direction to permitting the one-sided development of a child. It has been Germany's ruin

Table 2. Comparison of German and Salem report card headings

<i>German student report headings (Circa 1924)</i>	<i>Salem report card (Circa 1928)</i>
Family situation.	Esprit de Corps
Physical condition.	Sense of Justice
School record.	Ability to state facts precisely
Mental characteristics:	Ability to follow out what he believes to be
1. Intellectual tastes and vigor.	the right course in the face of discomforts,
2. Temperament.	hardships, dangers, mockery, boredom,
3. Will, initiative and social adaptation.	scepticism, impulses of the moment
4. Method of work.	Ability to plan
5. Endurance.	Ability to organise shown in the disposition
6. Attention.	of work [and] in the direction of younger
7. Power of observation.	boys
8. Memory.	Ability to deal with the unexpected
9. Imagination.	Degree of mental concentration – where
10. Powers of understanding, thought and	the task in question interests him – where it
judgement.	does not
11. Language.	Conscientiousness - in everyday affairs – in
12. Special interests and talents.	tasks with which he is especially entrusted
	Manual dexterity
	Manners
	Standard reached in school subjects:
	German, Ancient languages, Natural
	Sciences, Modern languages, mathematics,
	history
	Practical work (Handicraft etc.)
	Art Work:
	Physical exercises:
	Pugnacity
	Endurance
	Reaction time
(Alexander & Parker, 1930, p. 306)	(Hahn, 1928, p. 3–4).

that the world of thought and the world of action have lived in distinct and often hostile camps. We had men of foresight in plenty, but they lacked either the nerve or the common-sense to lead us on the way that they had pointed out. We regard it as the duty of Salem to trin [*sic*] the born intellectuals to decisive action, not merely for their sake but for the sake of Germany. (Hahn, 1924, p. 2)

The underlying theme can be seen in 1917 from a speech by Prince Max (Hahn, 1948a, p. 20) when he states that “he who would help his people must unite the power to think with the will to act”. It appears that Hahn hoped to achieve this all round development, at least in part, through the use of activities - those things organised by the school, for the pupils, but not involving academic work.

This work is not intended as an in depth examination of Hahn’s educational thought and development, for this see Day (1980) and Richards (1981). However, to

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understand the development of outdoor activities (centred on Hahn) the reader must have an understanding of what Hahn was trying to achieve at Salem, within the interrelated contexts of German history and German educational thought, and Hahn's and Prince Max's personal history.

A theme, which occurs throughout Hahn's educational endeavours, is that of opening his educational enterprises to all sections of society, and this can be seen at its start at Salem. Hahn (1950, p. 1) quotes Prince Max when they discussed, at a meeting in June 1919, the starting of a school: "...make the school independent from wealth by grading the fees according to the income of the parents". This concept is based on Prince Max's and Salem's association with the Cistercians who had owned Salem in the past and while there had assisted all sections of the community (Hahn 1950; 1957a). From the very beginnings the concept of an independent school which is open to a wide range of students is present.

This was put into action and in 1924 at Salem, out of a school population of 60, there were "17 who paid the full fees, and 13 who were taken entirely free, the rest paying very much reduced fees according to their means" (Hahn, 1924, p. 4). In 1924 massive inflation had drastically reduced the endowments given to the school by Prince Max (Hahn, 1924). The 'Association of the Friends of Salem' was set up to collect funds to contribute to the fees of the free scholars (Hahn, 1924). The appeal stated that "educational and social principles" lie at the heart of Salem and it is "under obligation to support the present large numbers of free scholars" which is "one of the chief justifications for its existence" (Hahn, 1924, p. 5). This is supported by Ewald (1970, p. 23), from first hand experience, who states that "from the first there was a mixture of social classes and backgrounds". Hahn's commitment to this ideal is seen in 1933, after his exile, when he wrote that "he would rather the school shut down than reduce the number of scholarship students drawn from the least elite classes" (Flavin, 1996, p. 150). At Salem, and later at Gordonstoun, Hahn ensured that students from less wealthy backgrounds were welcome at his schools.

ACTIVITIES

"Purposeful activities, intellectual, spiritual and practical" (Hahn, 1948a, p. 21) played an important part in the education of the students at Salem (as at many other German schools at this time). Their origins can be seen in the activity method advocated by Kerschensteiner and employed at the Lietz Schools (see Chapter 1). Hahn (1948a, p. 21) stated that Prince Max used the "framework of the Landerziehungsheim" for Salem.

Various first hand accounts exist of the nature of the activities at Salem between 1920 and 1933 (Ewald, 1970; Flavin, 1996; Mann, 1990). These activities included: morning run; mid-morning athletics break; individual projects; two afternoons a week working on the school farm; Saturday afternoons devoted to guilds – naturalists, landworkers, mechanics, heralds (devoted to dramatic, literary and archaeological pursuits); metalwork; carpentry; choir; school fire department (Flavin, 1996).

Other activities included 'war sports'. Hahn, in 1923, after the occupation of the Ruhr, let his pupils do military drill (Ewald, 1970; Flavin, 1996) and after 1930

allowed his pupils to participate in the “camps for military sports organized by the Stahlhelm” (Ewald, 1970, p. 33). The *Stahlhelm* (Flavin, 1996) was a right wing organisation of World War I veterans.

Activities which occurred outside the school walls included: bicycle tours, some lasting three days, and some without supervision (Mann, 1990; Flavin, 1996); mountain climbing (Mann, 1990); walking tours (Flavin, 1996); map making in the countryside (Flavin, 1996); a girls’ camping expedition to England in 1928 (Hahn, 1930); or simply “expeditions in the surrounding countryside” (Ewald, 1970) which are not specified. Skiing also took place (Hahn, 1930; J. Winthrop-Young, personal communication, January 15, 2006) and huts were used in the nearby Alps for training (J. Winthrop-Young, personal communication, January 15, 2006). It is unclear if these were similar to the Schullandheim mentioned in the previous chapter. As Flavin (1996, p. 18) in his diary at the time wrote “‘adventures’ were...part of the school program”.

In 1948 Hahn, in the context of activities, talked about the discovery and benefits of expeditions:

We discovered that expedition training and expedition tests counteracted the unhealthy effect of undeserved hero worship. Not a few specialist athletes revealed in adversity a certain flabbiness of will-power which was well hidden in their ordinary life. The expeditions were sometimes of an arduous nature - long treks in the Alps, exploratory expeditions to Iceland and on the Payenne and the Seima Lakes in Finland. Again and again the average and even clumsy athlete excelled on such expeditions... (Hahn, 1948b, p. 3)

Hahn (1948b) talks about how he discovered this through Wilhelm Schmidle, the Director of Studies at Salem from 1923 – 1930 (Ewald, 1970) and his “prima donna” athletes:

Schmidle disliked what he considered the exaggerated importance which Salem attached during the late twenties to athletic distinction. He was then, although already 70 years of age, still a wonderful explorer of hills. There was inexhaustible energy in his small body. I record a significant incident. Biberstein, our great rival, had come to Salem for an athletic contest and were beaten by a few points. Victory was surrounded by what Schmidle considered excessive fuss. He surprised me by suddenly announcing that he would take both teams early next morning on a geological excursion just for the day. The heat was fierce and one by one, trekking up and down the hills to examine geological mysteries, the athletes fell by the wayside. Every time he came across groans or grunts indicating exhaustion and hunger and thirst, I understand that there emerged from Schmidle an audible chuckle. He came back and said, ‘I did not think much of your athletes’. When asked why he had arranged the excursion, he twinkled with malice-‘it is the antidote’. (p. 4)

Therefore, Hahn discovered, through the medium of expeditions, another way of developing the all round character of his pupils. J. Winthrop-Young (personal communication, January 15, 2006) reports that walking expeditions were carried

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out at Salem during his stay there. The excursion taken by Schmidle was for a day but this developed into longer expeditions using different activities.

THE FINNISH EXPEDITION 1925

In the summer of 1925 two teachers from Salem, Marina Ewald and Otto Baumann, took twenty pupils on a four week school expedition to Finland (Mann, 1990). A synopsis of the expedition based on various descriptions follows. A fuller account of the expedition is contained in Appendix C. One of the descriptions is a first hand report by a pupil on the expedition, Golo Mann, a student at Salem from 1923–27, who later became a history professor (Mann, 1990). The other is by the leader of the expedition, Ewald (1970).

The idea for the expedition came from Ewald, (Mann, 1990) and “meant the realisation of a dream” for her (Ewald, 1970, p. 34). Ewald was also the leader



Figure 2. Marina Ewald.

(Ewald, 1970) and the only woman on the trip (Mann, 1990). The trip was described as “a long and hazardous expedition” (Hahn, 1930, p. 10–11) and involved travelling by steamer to Finland and buying boats (barges) there (Mann, 1990). These were then tied together in a line with the first having an outboard motor which pulled the rest along (Mann, 1990). The trip started on Lake Saimaa and involved travelling overland by truck and then putting the boats back onto the water on Lake Paijanne (Mann, 1990). The party camped on remote islands (Mann, 1990) and lived “partly by shooting and fishing” (Ewald, 1970, p. 35). It was:

...like a voyage of discovery. For all the participants it was one of the happiest experiences of those years. Because of its success, Kurt Hahn therefore attached the greatest importance to expeditions carefully planned beforehand and carried out with endurance. They have become an essential part of his educational programme. (Ewald, 1970, p. 34)

Ewald was a childhood friend of Hahn’s, who had been involved at Salem from its inception (Ewald, 1970). She was held in the highest regard by Hahn (1968) and became Director of Spetzgart when it opened in 1929 (Ewald, 1970) - see Appendix A. It therefore appears that this event, inspired and organised by Ewald, also influenced Hahn’s future educational thought as regards expeditions. The activities which had been a feature of Salem had been expanded to include expeditions.

SAILING

Luserke, whose school involved sailing as an educative activity, is mentioned by Hahn (1928) and Ewald (1970, p. 35) with “his school on the sea aimed at bestowing on the pupils the strength he derived from the sea”. In an article published in England, in January 1934, Hahn details his views on the educational effects of sailing:

This second senior school under our responsibility, Spetzgart, was even more successful in bracing the nerve and broadening the chest of the delicate boy.

This was done by the work on the Lake carried on under the direction of two Naval Officers, sailing and rowing in cutters proving particularly effective. The crowning test came to a number of boys, some of them originally delicate, by long and hazardous expeditions, both on water and land which were at intervals planned by the school and which were intended to form a vital part of our system. In the summer vacation of 1925, 18 boys went to Finland. They bought their boats, crossed the Payenne and Saima, lived to a certain extent by fishing and shooting and then sold their boats again. (Hahn, 1934a, p. 3)

It is interesting to note that Hahn specifically mentions the Finnish Expedition, and this appears to be the first time a major expedition was tried by Salem. This is linked with sailing at Spetzgart which indicates the possibility that one led to the other. It must be remembered that Spetzgart opened in 1929, four years after the Finnish expedition. A strong connection is that Spetzgart’s first Director was also the person who had inspired and led the Finnish Expedition, Ewald, and she was also aware of Luserke’s use of sailing as an educative activity. Ewald also had an interest in

sailing, owning her own yacht, the *Schwaben* (which was based close to Spetzgart) on which the pupils sailed (Flavin, 1996).

Spetzgart developed and evolved the educational line followed at Salem. In the first place, it was possible to go in for water sports on Lake Constance. These were entrusted to retired naval officers and based on proper nautical training. These activities furthered accuracy, enthusiasm, team spirit and the spirit of enterprise – at least as much as Salem’s hockey did. Furthermore, sailing encouraged the observation of Nature, developed physique and moreover, gave the girls more chances to excel in sport than were provided for them in hockey. (Ewald, 1970, p. 35)

The archivist at Salem confirms that sailing started at Spetzgart when it opened in 1929 (Weidlich, personal communication, March 10, 2006). It is a possibility that sailing developed at Spetzgart simply because it was situated near to the Bodensee (Lake Constance), rather than being a planned activity, which is the view of Flavin (1996). The other branches in the Salem community of schools were not located near the Bodensee. Sailing at Spetzgart had the same purpose as the other activities at Salem, it simply used a different method to try to achieve this. J. Winthrop-Young (personal communication, January 15, 2006), a student at Spetzgart from 1932–1933 reports that sailing was “part of the normal routine of the school”. It is perhaps also interesting to note that girls went sailing just as the boys did (Ewald, 1970).

Herr Wutsdorf, who had been a submarine captain, was in charge of the sailing (Flavin, 1996). The school had two “cutters for the beginners, propelled either by ten oars or under sail after the two masts had been erected” (Flavin, 1996, p. 73). As the pupils became more proficient they progressed to the yachts *Schwaben* and *Godenwind* (Flavin, 1996). The *Godenwind* was owned by Mr. Chew, an Englishman teaching at the school, who took students sailing and who later joined Hahn at Gordonstoun (Flavin, 1996) - See Appendix A.

Flavin (1996) states that different teachers took students on four day tours in the holidays, one of which was a sailing tour. In the diary that he kept at the time, Flavin (1996) wrote about a tour taking place in the second week in July, 1933, led by Wutsdorf which sailed around the Bodensee. This involved using cutters which could be rowed, sailed or towed by a motor boat – in a similar way to the Finnish Expedition (Flavin, 1996).

Flavin (1996, p. 72) states that sailing at Salem had “never engaged Hahn’s attention” which raises the possibility that Ewald was the driving force behind its inception. J. Winthrop-Young (personal communication, June 6, 2005, p. 9) also describes sailing at Salem as “like yachting, pleasant yachting” and “you can’t say that sailing on the Bodensee added really anything at all” in terms of education. These two views are in contrast to Hahn’s later development and appreciation of sailing at Gordonstoun (discussed in Chapter 4).

EXPANSION

Hahn expanded Salem from one to five schools during his tenure as Headmaster and Ewald (1970, p. 36) states that there were “plans for making the Salem schools

the starting point for a ‘Salem movement’”. Flavin (1996) also states that Hahn had plans to introduce the Salem system to a day school. Hahn’s thoughts, at this stage of his career, were turning towards expansion.

Ewald (1970) also reports that Hahn wanted to pass some of his ideas to the former pupils of the Landerziehungsheime. In what appears to be the same undertaking Hahn (1928) raises the idea of The Confederation of Old Salemers (former students of Salem) and The Confederation of Old Landheimers (ex-students of the “Association of the Free Schools” (*Vereinigung der freien Schulen*) and Landerziehungsheime (Country Home Schools)) undertaking a new challenge.

In 1928 Hahn states that the Confederation of Old Salemers have taken upon themselves the following engagements:

- (a) In every year four weeks of athletic training, “poison-free”, (i.e. without alcohol or tobacco), with the intention of fulfilling the conditions laid down for obtaining the German Sports Badge.
- (b) Attendance at one strictly organised course, such as in addition to improving their physique shall inculcate disciplined subordination within a community.
- (c) Practical social work over a period of at least three months, such as shall bring them into immediate contact with the working classes and facilitate an understanding of the social situation. (p. 23)

Examples of the ‘strictly organised course’ are given which include “courses for Popular Sport in Feldstetten, the Riding and Driving School in Eutin, and the Hansa High Sea Sport Association in Neustadt” (Hahn, 1928, p. 23). It is stated that “there is every prospect that these conditions will be adopted by the Confederation of ‘Old Landheimers’” (Hahn, 1928, p. 23).

This concept is in keeping with Hahn’s theme of expanding his ideas outside of Salem to a greater audience, although it cannot be said with certainty that this expansion was his idea. It has not been possible to gain further information on the Hansa Sea Sport Association so its connection to sailing remains as speculation. Although Mann (1990) makes reference to Salem Alumni taking part in a month of physical activity with no smoking or drinking, three months work in a factory and six weeks in a sailing, flying or riding school. Therefore it does seem probable that Mann (1990) is referring to the same thing and the Hansa Sea Sport Association does involve sailing.

This scheme could be viewed as the precursor to the ‘badge schemes’ which Hahn introduced nine years later at Gordonstoun. Connected with this is Hahn’s intention for the Confederation of Old Salemers to join forces with the Lietz Schools and open a house at one of the German Universities which would act as a sort of training centre for the scheme (Hahn, 1928) - possibly the first of his training centres.