Two Hundred Years of Dulwich Radicalism

by

Duncan Bowie

Community Languages

In association with the *Socialist History Society*

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Contents

INTRODUCTION....4
POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND SOCIAL REFORM IN DULWICH…7
The Area....7
Governance....9
Representation and Political Organisations....12
Political activists and social reformers....20
THE 60 BIOGRAPHIES....23
1. City Radicals....23
BRASS CROSBY: Radical Lord Mayor....23
GEORGE AND HARRIET GROTE: Philosophical Radicals....26
2. Radical MPs....32
AUBREY BEAUCLERK: Friend of Mary Shelley....32
CHARLES BUXTON: Critic of Slavery and Colonial Government....33
3. Radical Activists....37
JOHN RUSKIN: No Wealth but Life....37
SAMUEL OLIVER: Radical Democrat and Internationalist....41
MALTMAN BARRY: Tory Socialist....48
LOUISE MICHEL: Anarchist in East Dulwich....53
4. Theists and Birth Control Campaigners....58
THOMAS SCOTT AND CHARLES VOYSEY: Theists....58
ANNIE BESANT: Secularist and Socialist....61
ALICE VICKERY, CHARLES AND GEORGE DRYSDALE: Birth Control Advocates....66
5. Radicals, Socialists and Social Reformers....70
JOHN MORRISON DAVIDSON: Radical Democrat....70
HARRY QUELCH: Working Class Marxist....74
RUSSELL SMART: Socialist Propagandist....77
MARY ALGER: Headmistress and Suffrage Petitioner....80
MARIA SAXTON SALÉS: Feminist and Tax Reformer....83
EBENEZER HOWARD: Founder of Modern British Town Planning....88
HENRY ALDRIDGE: Housing Reformer....95
6. Radical Liberals....102
ALLAN OCTAVIAN HUME: Botanist, Indian Nationalist and Radical Advocate....102
CHARLES MASTERMAN: Proponent of New Liberalism....106
JOHN AND ALICE HARRIS: Anti-Slavery Campaigners....112

7. Republicans, Suffragettes and Pacifists.....116
JAMES AND AGNES O'MARA: Irish Nationalists.....116
ALISON NEILANS: Suffragette and Campaigner for Moral Hygiene.....119
PERCY AND LYDIA HORTON: Conscientious Objectors.....122
ARTHUR CREECH JONES: From East Dulwich to Africa.....127
ALLEN AND PHILLIS SKINNER: Pacifists and Vegetarians.....133
JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY: Literary Critic, Pacifist and Socialist.....136
8. Interwar Labour Politicians.....140
JIMMY THOMAS: Trade unionist, Minister, drinker and golfer.....140
CHARLES ANDREW SMITH: Trotskyist to Anti-Communist.....145
FRED HUGHES: Clerk and parliamentary candidate.....150
HELEN BENTWICH: From Palestine to the London County Council.....153
JIM DELAHAYE: Disarmament and the Popular Front.....161
JOHN BECKETT: From Revolutionary Socialist to Fascist.....169
9. Communists.....179
EDWARD UPWARD: Communist School Teacher in Dulwich.....179
GEORGE THOMSON: Classical Scholar and Communist committee man….182
JONATHAN AND FRIDA KNIGHT: Free France and Communism.....185
JEAN AND MONTE SHAPIRO: Communism and Self-Help.....192
Dulwich Communist Party statement on Labour Government's Foreign Policy April 1949.....195
10. Post-war Labour.....197
WILFRED VERNON: MP and Spy.....197
LESLIE HALE: Bevanite.....205
LEWIS, SAM and JOHN SILKIN: Labour Dynasty.....208
GEORGE BROWN: From Court Lane to Foreign Secretary.....214
ALBERT BOOTH: Employment Minister.....218
CHRISTOPHER PRICE: MP and Educationalist.....220
11. Local Heroes.....222
JACK AND EVELYN JONES: Socialist Activists.....222
SAM KING: From Empire Windrush To Mayor of Southwark.....224
WILFRED WOOD: From Barbados to Bishop of Croydon.....226
TESSA JOWELL: The People's Politician.....228
ANNEX: RADICALS IN YOUR STREET.....231
Clubs, political offices and meeting halls.....231
Where the radicals (and a few other local politicians) lived.....231

Two Hundred Years of Dulwich Radicalism by Duncan Bowie is a fascinating read for anyone who is interested in British political and social history, the history of the Dulwich area, or both. It documents the lives of men and women, some of them - like John Ruskin, Ebenezer Howard and Sam King - celebrated figures whose stories are well known, others less so, but no less fascinating.

We learn the stories of men and women who were driven by a passion for change, a desire to make the world a fairer, better place, and their stories are brought to life as Duncan Bowie locates them in the physical geography of Dulwich. Who knew that radical reformers from George and Harriet Grote in the 1830s, suffragette Agnes O'Mara and her Sinn Fein MP husband James O'Mara in the 1900s, Lewis Silkin in the 1920s and Leslie Hale MP for Oldham and champion of decolonisation in the 1940s, all lived on College Road? The biographies enable us to imagine a hive of political activity taking place across the Dulwich area over time, from campaign meetings to pamphlet writing, dinner party conversations, organising and speech writing.

Many of those featured in this book were parliamentarians, but we also learn of those who made vital contributions outside of Parliament in areas like housing and education reform, and women's suffrage. I was fascinated to learn that long before women achieved the right to stand for Parliament and sit as MPs, they could stand for election to the London School Board. For Annie Besant, who is commemorated with the Blue Plaque on Colby Road in Gipsy Hill, this provided an important platform for achieving education reform.

Some of the biographies are a reminder that for many, politics is complex and views can change over time - no-one more so than Michael Maltman Barry who was a socialist and colleague of Karl Marx who later stood as a candidate for the Conservative Party. For others, most especially the extraordinary Silkin family, three of whom served as MPs, it is an inextricable part of their identity.

It is wonderful to read the stories of people I was privileged enough to meet. Christopher Price who served as an MP and an MEP, Sam King, a Second World War RAF airman, passenger on the Empire Windrush and first Black Mayor of Southwark, and my predecessor Tessa Jowell who is loved and remembered by many across Dulwich and West Norwood.

Duncan's book is a source of inspiration. It is a reminder of what can be achieved by passionate people, driven by a desire for justice and fairness, working together; and it is a fascinating insight into our local history and the contribution that the Dulwich area has made to social and political change across three centuries.

***Helen Hayes MP* - Member of Parliament for Dulwich and West Norwood**

INTRODUCTION

This book originated in a series of articles for the Dulwich Society journal. The Society published in 2002 a pamphlet on *Who was Who in Dulwich* featuring short biographies of 100 notable people with Dulwich connections. I was interested in Dulwich radicals and socialists who had not been covered, and on expanding on the material on the few that had been. Of the sixty people covered in this book, some seven were included in the earlier booklet. The criteria I have used for inclusion is that the individuals were at some time either resident or politically active in the area, the latter normally meaning standing to represent the area and its residents on some government body - the House of Commons, the London County Council, the London School Board or the borough of Camberwell and latterly the borough of Southwark. Not all the individuals were involved in party politics in the Liberal, Labour or Communist Party. Some were social reformers.

I have not included right-wing radicals, though it will be noted that three of the left-wing radicals moved to the radical right, most notably John Beckett, a Labour MP who became a leading fascist. Defining the Dulwich area was a little more difficult - I have assumed Dulwich Village, East Dulwich, North Dulwich West Dulwich and what could be called South Dulwich which extends to the borough boundary at Crystal Palace and Gipsy Hill' The part of West Dulwich just over the border with Lambeth has been included but only up to Rosendale Road. East Dulwich covers the area up to Forest Hill and Honor Oak, but not west of Peckham Rye which is properly Nunhead. North Dulwich extends to the borders of Camberwell to the north and Herne Hill to the west, but not beyond the Southwark border towards Brixton. The area selected is therefore roughly equivalent to the area covered by the Dulwich society.

It should however be noted that the selection of biographies is biased in favour of radicals and reformers who were from a middle- class background and in professional occupations. This is because these individuals left records of their lives - either in the form of autobiographies, diaries, or other published works, or were themselves subjects of biographies. Working class activists rarely left records other than dates of birth, marriage and death and records of residence in the decennial census. A few are recorded briefly in local newspapers as names attending meetings. It would be fascinating to know more about Edward Cray and the other socialists and working-class members of the Dulwich Radical Club, the Social Democratic Federation, the Independent Labour Party and local trade unions in the 1890's and early 1900's. Even in the interwar years, the Labour and Communist activists recorded are all middle-class professionals. This no doubt reflects the nature of Dulwich village, though it

could be expected that not all political activists in the East Dulwich area were in professional positions, as was clearly the case in neighbouring Peckham.

This area definition means that some interesting radicals, socialists and social reformers are left out - for example Joseph Chamberlain and Karl Marx who lived at one time in Camberwell, the radical Liberal MP for Camberwell North, Thomas Macnamara who lived in Rollscourt avenue off Denmark Hill, Helen Taylor, who attempted to stand for parliament for Camberwell North in 1885, George Clarke , who was Mayor of Camberwell and very briefly MP for Peckham, Una Marson, Jamaican born poet and broadcaster, Herbert and Clara Cole, artists and anti-war militants who lived in Camberwell Grove, Darcus Howe, Claudia Jones and C L R and Selma James in Brixton, the Russian revolutionary Hester Serebriakoff in Forest Hill, Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling in Sydenham, Margaret and Rachel McMillan in Deptford and later on Peckham Rye, Perceval Chubb in Thornton Heath and Hubert Bland and Edith Nesbit in Grove Park, and many others less well known. There is one individual who meets the criteria but has been intentionally omitted, Eveline Lowe, who became chair of the London County Council - she only moved to Dulwich Common after her political retirement, and although she was for a time chair of the governors of James Allen's Girls School from 1940 to 1952, she represented Bermondsey throughout her political career, it seemed to me somewhat invidious for Dulwich to claim her.

On sources, the Dictionary of National Biography was a starting point for many of the entries. Also essential were the *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (now up to 15 volumes) and the less well-known *Bibliographical Dictionary of British Radicals* edited by Baylen and Gossman, published in 1988 in four parts. Also of use was Elizabeth Crawford's *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide*, published in 2001 and W P Bliss's *Encyclopaedia of Social Reform, published in 1909*. The series of Reformers Yearbooks and Labour Yearbooks published in the 1890's and early 1900's was helpful in providing residential addresses for a number of individuals who might otherwise have been missed. The British Library's British Newspaper Archive was essential for providing references from the *Labour Herald*, the *South London Press* and a wide range of journals and provincial newspapers. For the five communists, and the Labour MPs, John Beckett and Wilfred Vernon, security service files were fascinating, if somewhat partisan, records of their day-to-day activities, political and more personal. Some material on four individuals involved in housing or planning was taken from one of my previous books, not that I was aware of their Dulwich connections before researching this new work. I have also made considerable use of the record of elections to parliament, the London School Board and the London County Council which are available on line.

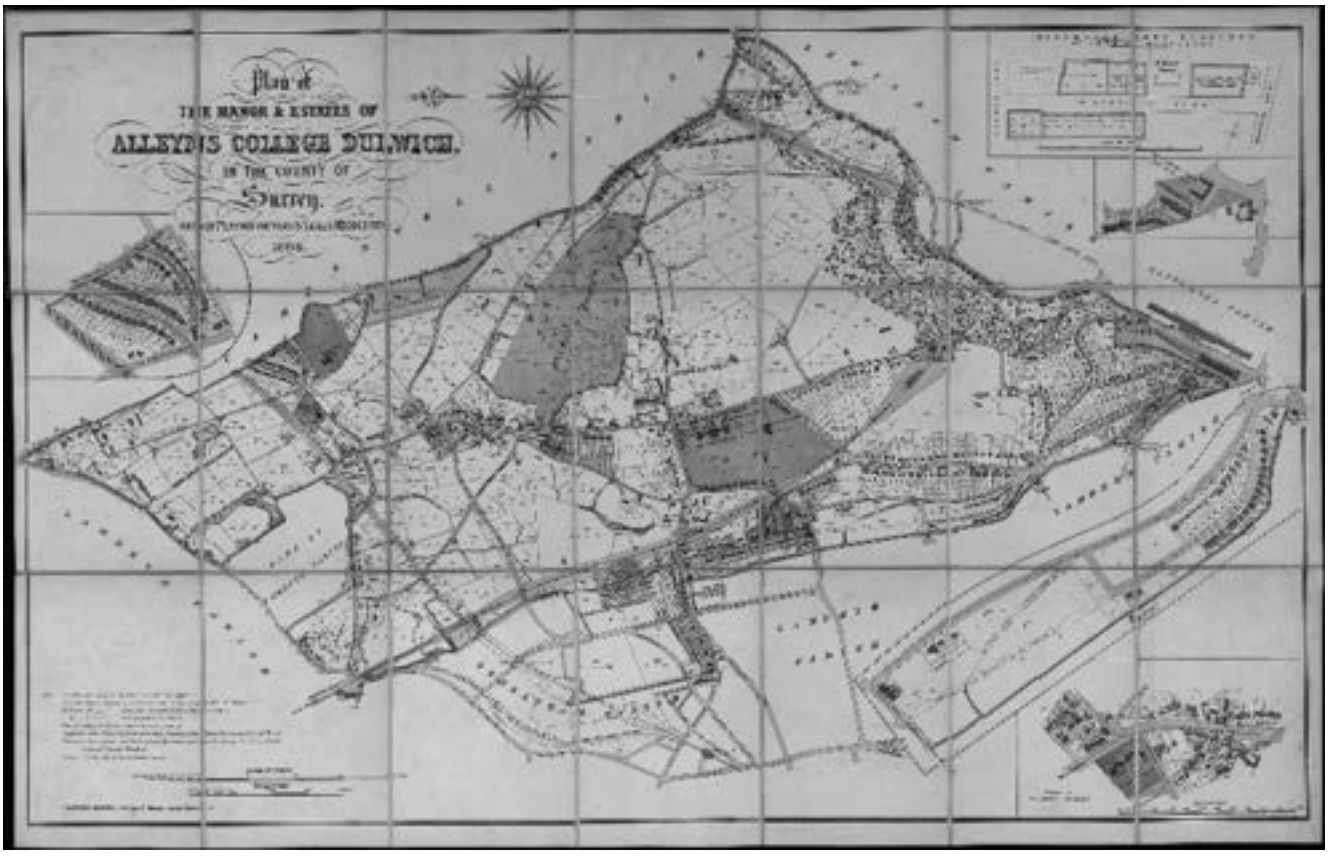
Unfortunately, the records for elections to Camberwell and Southwark councils are not available digitally and could not be consulted during the lockdown.

I must also acknowledge assistance from a number of colleagues in Dulwich - Brian Green, Sharon O'Connor and Ian McInnes from the Dulwich Society, and from Michael Walker, Peter Hore, Gill Bennett, Neil Gordon-Orr, Tim Powell, and Deirdre Forster as well as from my family, Jackie, Jenny and Chris. My thanks to Steve Cushion for his work on preparing the book for publication.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND SOCIAL REFORM IN DULWICH

The Area

Dulwich would perhaps not be normally viewed as an area in which you would find many radicals, socialists or communists, and only a few social reformers, so this research produced a few surprising discoveries. It is important to remember that much of what we now know as Dulwich - East, West, North and South, was not developed until the end of the 19th century. Until then, only Dulwich Village existed as an out of London settlement, with a few large mansions to the south towards Sydenham (Crystal Place did not then exist) and west towards Brixton. The Dulwich estate was the dominant landowner but city merchants such as Brass Crosby and Thomas Wright had estates in the area, as did politicians such as Lord Thurlow, the Lord chancellor, and George Grote. Significant residential development followed the opening of the railways - with the Victoria to Bromley line in 1862-3 with stations at Herne Hill, West Dulwich and Sydenham; a branch of the London, Chatham and Dover Line through Dulwich woods with stations at Lordship Lane and Crystal Palace (high level) in 1863-5 (the line being now closed), and the London Bridge to Croydon line with stations at North and East Dulwich in 1868. The sale of land by the Dulwich estate to the railway companies was managed by Reverend Frederick

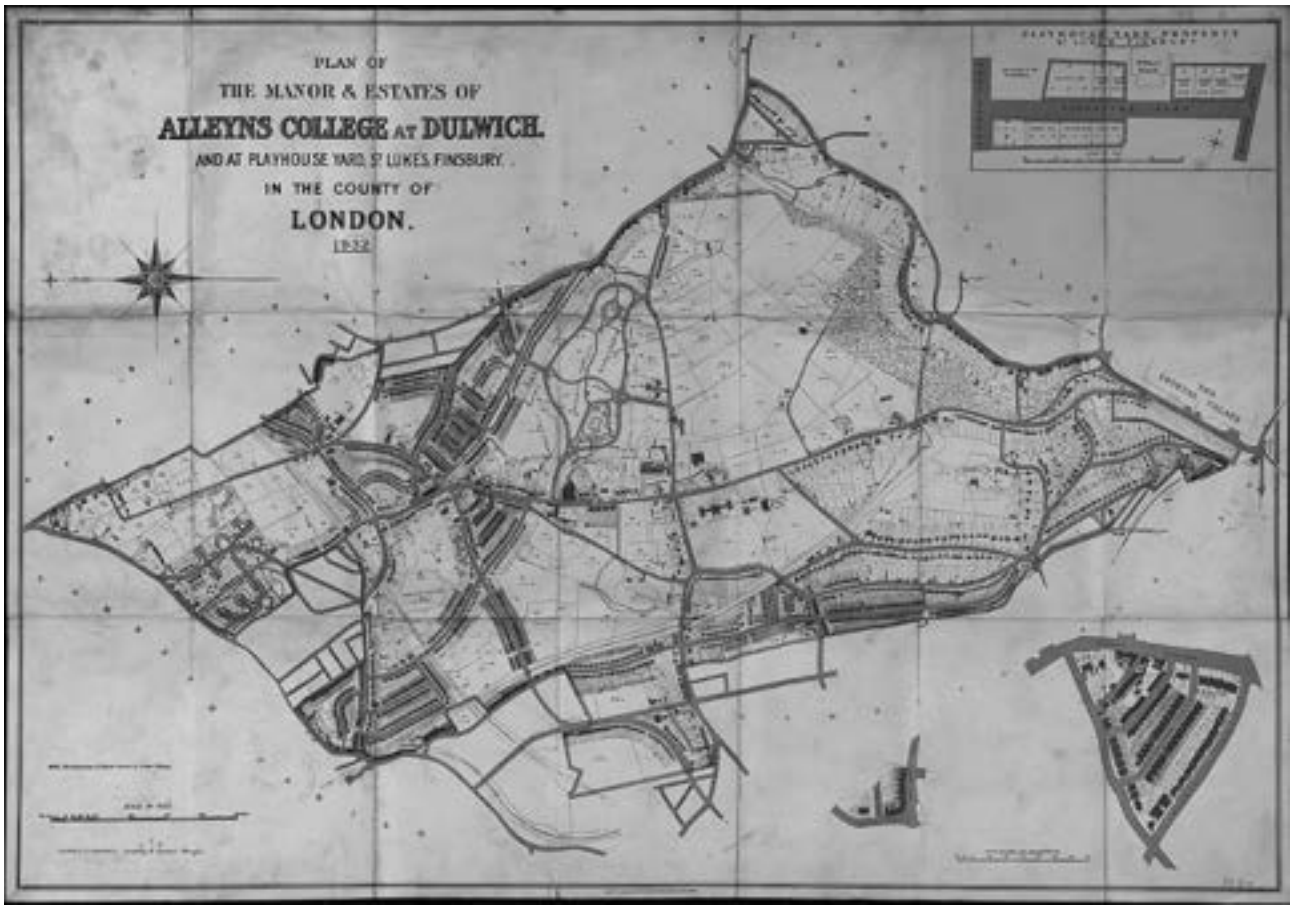


Map of Dulwich Estate 1866

Rogers, the vicar of St Botolph's, Bishopsgate in the city, who became chairman of the governors of Dulwich college in 1862, a position he held until his death in 1896. Rogers was the principal agent of change in the Dulwich village area in the late Victorian period.

Until the later 19th century, there was little organised local party-political activity, village politics consisting mainly of disputes between property owners and the Dulwich estate. The vestry and later the borough of Camberwell were based in Camberwell rather than Dulwich. with the vestry hall, later the Town Hall on a site in Havil Street, near St Giles' church. The original vestry hall was demolished and replaced by the Camberwell Town Hall in 1934, which in 1964 became the Town Hall for the London Borough of Southwark.

The population of Camberwell, which included Dulwich, grew slowly in the first half of the 19th century, but much more rapidly after the opening of the railways.



Dulwich Estate in 1932

Camberwell Vestry 1801-1899

Year	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Population	**7,059**	**11,309**	**17,876**	**28,231**	**39,868**	**54,667**	**71,488**	**111,306**	**186,593**	**235,344**

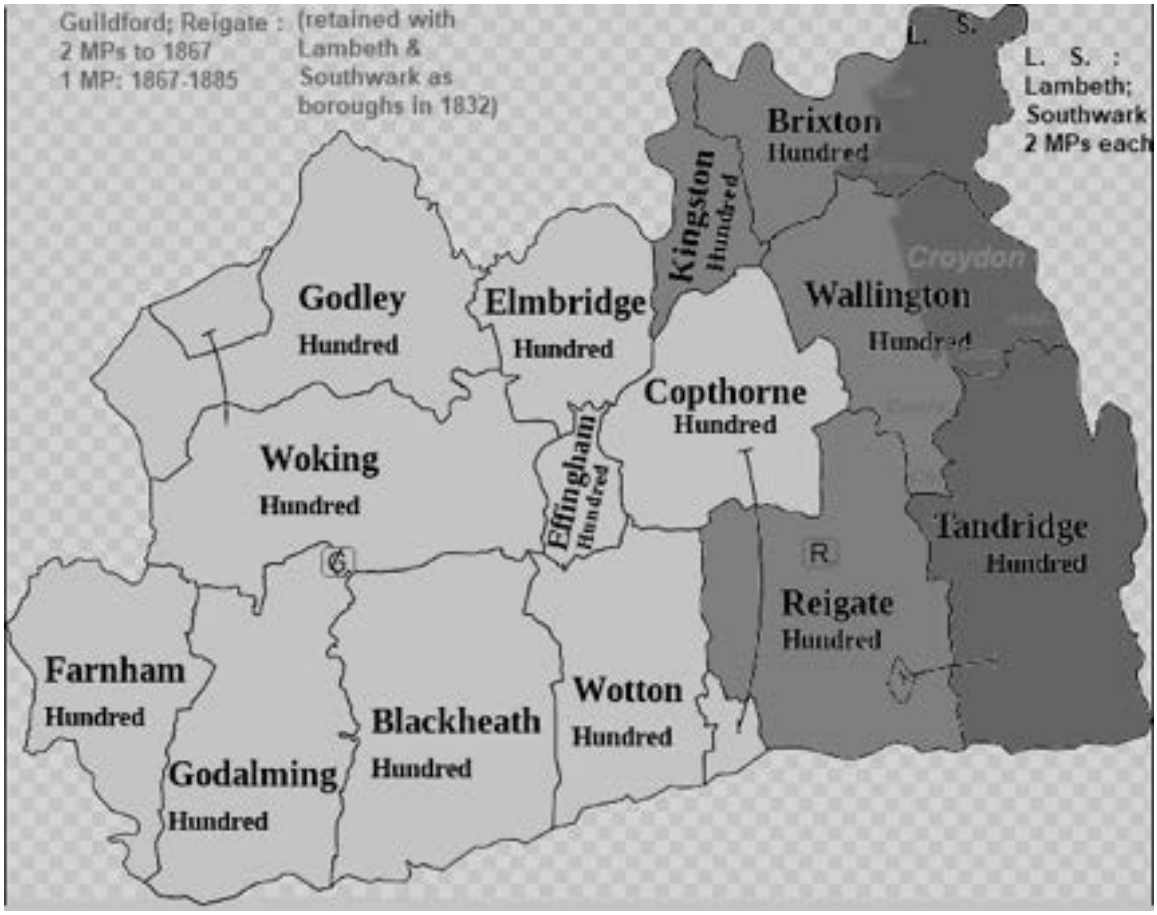
Metropolitan Borough 1900-1961

Year	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961
Population	**259,339**	**261,328**	**267,198**	**251,294**	**N/A**	**179,777**	**175,304**

Governance

Between 1832 and 1885, Dulwich, part of the Brixton hundred of Lambeth parish, was still a mainly rural area, and was included in the county constituency of East Surrey constituency, while the more urban northern parts of the Lambeth parish were included in the constituency of Lambeth, which had two representatives, some of whom were of radicals, including the municipal reformer, Charles Pearson, who campaigned for a metropolitan railway and the Christian socialist, Thomas Hughes. Although both these individuals are of considerable interest, they are however excluded from this study as they had no links to the neighbouring Dulwich area.

Dulwich within the Brixton hundred



East Surrey parliamentary Constituency

Lambeth parliamentary constituency

In 1885, following the new Reform Act, the constituencies were reorganised with increased representation being given to the newly urbanised areas. Camberwell was

awarded two seats - one for Camberwell North and another for Camberwell South: Dulwich. Until 1918, the Camberwell: Dulwich seat included the parish of Penge, including Anerley, when these areas were excluded. There were further adjustments in 1949, while in 1997, the boundary was redrawn significantly as the constituency was merged with the former seat of Norwood to become Dulwich and West Norwood, with part of the East Dulwich area being transferred to the Peckham constituency.

Dulwich constituency 1885- 1918

1918-1949

1950-97

since 1997 (Dulwich and West Norwood)

From 1870, Dulwich was represented on the new London School Board, as part of the electoral district of Lambeth, which had between five and eight representatives ,

and from 1885 as part of the smaller district of Lambeth East which had four representatives.. From 1889 to 1965, Dulwich had two representatives on the London County Council (and three from 1949), and from 1965 to 1986, one representative on its successor body, the Greater London Council. Southwark and Lambeth now share one directly elected member on the London Assembly, established in 2000.

From 1674 to 1899, the local government authority for Dulwich was the Camberwell vestry, which was from 1855, also represented on the London-wide Metropolitan Board of Works. From 1899, the local government authority was the Borough of Camberwell. This covered the southern half of what is now the London borough of Southwark. The Borough of Southwark was established in 1964, with the merger of the boroughs of Camberwell, Southwark and Bermondsey.

Camberwell Borough in Inner London

Southwark Borough in Greater London

Representation and Political Organisations

(Persons with names in **bold** are included in Biographies)

Dulwich, as part of the East Surrey constituency was represented between 1832 and 1885 by two members, a mixture of Tories, Whigs and Radicals and latterly Liberals as the Whig and Liberal parties combined. Most of these representatives were based in rural Surrey or the city of London, often having more than one residence. None of them actually lived in Dulwich.

The radical **Aubrey Beaufort** was a member between 1832 and 1837, living in Horsham as well as having a castle in County Down, partnering a Whig, John Briscoe who was based in Chertsey. Between 1837 and 1847, the constituency was represented by Conservatives, one of whom, Henry Kemble, lived in Camberwell. Between 1847 and 1865, one of the members was the Liberal, Peter Locke King, who had homes in Weybridge and St James', Westminster, and held his seat until 1874. He was joined in 1847 by another Whig, Thomas Alcock, who after 1859 was categorised as a Liberal, who lived in Reigate. He was succeeded in 1865 by another

Liberal, **Charles Buxton**, who retained his seat until 1871. The Conservatives captured one seat in 1871 and the second in 1874.

The Dulwich parliamentary seat created in 1885 was held by a Conservative until 1945, when it was won by Labour. The closest the Liberals were to capturing the seat was in the 1906 general election, when the Liberals returned to government, when the Conservative majority in the seat fell to only 357 votes. Since 1945, the seat alternated between Labour and Conservative, being held by Labour from 1945-51 by **Wilfred Vernon**, from 1964-1983 by **Sam Silkin** and since 1992 **by Tessa Jowell** and from 2015 by Helen Hayes, the current MP (since 1997 in the redesignated Dulwich and West Norwood seat).

There was a branch of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in East Dulwich as early as 1894, with committee rooms at 27 Whateley Road. The secretary was Francis McDonald of 222 Crystal Palace Road, succeeded by H Foard, with Edward Cray as treasurer. The branch appears to have collaborated with the local SDF branch to select candidates for both the vestry and the board of Guardians elections.

Candidates included Cray, W Holford, W Williams, H Bannister, H Foard, J Smy, T Watson and F Butler. The ILP branch, which had formed an 'ILP and trade unions election committee' claimed the support of the municipal labourer's union, the carpenters and joiners, the navies, bricklayers and general labourers union, the 'working men's slate club' and 'the Order of the Total Abstinence Sons of the Phoenix'. J E Dobson of the Camberwell SDF, who transferred his allegiance to the ILP was elected to the Camberwell vestry in 1896. The ILP branch appears to have dissolved by 1899.

There was a branch of the Social Democratic Federation in the Camberwell borough area from 1886., An East Dulwich branch was established in March 1892, meeting at the Crystal Palace Coffee Tavern in Crystal Palace Road, though it appears to have lapsed after a few months.. A branch of the Independent Labour Party was re-formed in the Camberwell area in 1903, with a second being established in 1907. A branch was clearly active in East Dulwich in 1912 when Arthur Creech Jones was secretary, and it met at the Hansler Hall in Hansler Road in East Dulwich. H R Taylor of the Bricklayers Union, who represented North Camberwell for the Progressives on the London County Council and was also Mayor of Camberwell, apparently blocked the establishment of any local Labour Party for the Camberwell area. An attempt by a G F Woodward to establish a Labour Representation Committee for Camberwell in 1904 was not progressed. A Labour Party branch for Camberwell was not established until 1914. After the war, with the new Labour party constitution of 1918, Labour party branches were established for individual parliamentary constituencies. While **Arthur Creech Jones** was secretary of the borough Labour Party, the secretary of the Dulwich Labour Party in 1924 was Miss Stephenson of 22 Tyson Road, Forest Hill. There were separate district Labour parties for Peckham, Camberwell North and Camberwell North -West. There were no Labour candidates for the Dulwich parliamentary seat until Charles A Smith stood in 1924. In 1929, an office was opened at 95 Grove Vale, East Dulwich which remained the headquarters of the Dulwich Labour Party until the constituency boundary was changed in 1997, when the office moved to 264 Rosendale Road in Herne Hill.

There was a Camberwell branch of the Communist Party from 1920. The first secretary was Bill Rust, editor of the *Daily Worker* and a long-time member of the national executive of the party. Sylvia Pankhurst’s short lived Communist group, based on her Workers Suffrage Federation had meetings on Peckham Rye and in Grove Vale in East Dulwich, with the main speaker being a trade unionist, J Nicholson. The Camberwell CP published a newspaper during the 1926 general strike, the *Camberwell Worker*, and established a Joint Committee with the Peckham ILP, with the ILP’s John Robert Riding as secretary. In 1937, the Camberwell CP

supported a rent strike at Nigel buildings in Peckham, with a Tenants Defence League being led by Alf Maunders. A Dulwich branch of the CP was established after the Second World War, with **Frida Knight** and **Jean Shapiro** as joint secretaries. The Dulwich CP campaigned against the foreign policy of the post-war Labour government and the foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin as being anti-Soviet. The Communist Party did not stand candidates in elections in the Dulwich area, though a Communist parliamentary candidate, Tom Ellis, stood for the Peckham seat in 1951, coming bottom of the poll with 886 votes.

In the pre-First world war years, there was a Dulwich Liberal Association and a Dulwich Radical Club, the president of which from 1894 to 1912 was **Allan Octavian Hume**, who had been one of the founders of the Indian National Congress. Of the Liberal candidates who contested the Dulwich parliamentary seat before the First World War, two could be viewed as radicals: George Clarke, who stood unsuccessfully in 1895 was a druggist in Peckham, who lived on Champion Hill in Camberwell. He was elected to the LCC for Peckham as a Progressive in 1898, 1901 and 1904. He became a Camberwell alderman in 1900 and was Mayor for 1902-3. In 1906 he was elected to parliament as Liberal MP for Peckham, where he was considered to be a Lib-Lab. He died in 1908. **Charles Masterman**, the Liberal candidate in the 1903 by-election was a key figure in radical New Liberalism and is therefore included in this set of biographies. Of the other unsuccessful Liberal parliamentary candidates: George Collins, who stood in 1885 in the first election for the new constituency was editor of the *Schoolmaster* newspaper and a founder member of the National Union of Elementary Teachers. He was a member of the National Liberal Club who lived in New Cross and was involved in the Sydenham and Forest Hill (amateur) House of Commons. His main interest appears to have been in constitutional matters - he tended to speak on the rights of English citizens, Magna Carta and the dis-establishment of the Church of England. He does not appear to have had any connection with Dulwich before he was selected, or for that matter, after his defeat. He was elected to the London School Board representing Greenwich in 1888. James Henderson, the candidate in the 1887 by-election was President of the Dulwich Reform Club and a journalist and publisher - his journals included the *South London Press*, *The Weekly Budget*, *Young Folks*, *Penny Pictorial*, *Prize Paper*, the *Magnet* and *Funny Folks*, which is considered to be the first English comic. He was born in Scotland and was a strict Presbyterian, moving to Dulwich in 1854, building a villa, Adon Mount, as well as developing a number of other properties in the area between Lordship Lane, Friern Road and Overhill Road. He retired to Worthing in Sussex in 1900. Arthur Clayden, who stood in 1892 was a New Zealand journalist, a lecturer on emigration to New Zealand and involved in the Royal Colonial Institute, who was later knighted. In a talk to the Dulwich Working Men's Club, Clayden commented, as

a colonist, that he was surprised 'at the slowness of reform in Britain - he had been living for years under the most absolute Home Rule - all such reforms as the Newcastle programme have long been accepted as a matter of course'. He went on to attack 'past aristocratic domination' and the 'plutocratic control of the press'. David Williamson, who stood in the 1906 by-election and the subsequent general election, was a journalist with the *Daily Mail*; Evan Cotton, who stood in the 1910 election against the Conservative Bonar Law, was a journalist and a former Indian civil servant, who was later elected to the London County Council as a Progressive for Finsbury East and also sat in parliament for that constituency for five months in 1918.

The Dulwich Working Men's Radical Club was founded in 1887 after a public meeting in February 1885 called to 'secure the co-operation of working men and others in furthering Liberal and Radical principles in the constituency'. It met at the Shawbury Hall, off Lordship Lane (the building is now used as a Sikh temple). Charles Bradlaugh, the republican MP, was invited to the opening though there appears to be no record of his attendance. The club campaigned on local issues such as the cessation of trams running between Lordship Lane and Peckham and the cost of railway tickets for working men but was also active on national issues. For example, in August 1889, the Dulwich Radical Club organised a protest meeting on Peckham Rye to oppose parliamentary grants to the royal family. This was attended by radicals from across South London. The motion was proposed by the club secretary Joseph Davis and seconded by Ben Ellis of the Dulwich and Peckham Radical Club. The Dulwich Radical Club was active in supporting the Progressive candidates in the 1892 London County Council elections. They also appointed delegates to a 'United Democratic Committee' to select candidates for municipal elections – the Vestry and Board of Guardians elections – the delegates being Jeremy Davis (one of the LCC candidates) and Mr Edwards. A progressive, J Baylis stood unsuccessfully for a Dulwich seat on the vestry in 1899. The Working Men's Slate Club met at the Radical Club and there was also a cricket club and a library of 50 books. The radical club held concerts, a Sunday evening discussion on 'events of the week' and speaker meetings – for example in March 1892, Mr Palmer spoke on 'Lessons of the County Council elections' and Mr Woodmansee spoke on 'Homes for the Villages and Back to the Land'. The club was affiliated to the Metropolitan Radical Federation. The club invited both radical and socialist speakers – for example in 1891, the Scottish socialist Shaw Maxwell, who was the first national secretary of the Independent Labour Party spoke, as did Progressive LCC member, William Saunders. The club had several speakers supporting Irish Home Rule. The club organised a demonstration on Peckham Rye in May 1890 to oppose the Irish Land Purchase Bill. Subjects of lectures ranged from Oliver Cromwell to the taxation of

ground values and rents, the latter being given by Frederick Verinder of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values. In February 1894, a Mr Coulsson spoke on ‘Socialism – A leap in the Dark’. Leading members of the club included Edward Cray, Jeremy Davis, J Bevan, Frederick Rubie, W H Pearce, J Chase and G Hancock. Successive club honorary presidents were John Burns, the Scottish Labour MP Robert Cunningham-Grahame, and the journalist Ernest Parke who was jailed for libelling Lord Euston in the case of the Cleveland Street rent boy scandal. The Club was still running in 1907, when the secretary was Mr Last, who was involved in a deputation protesting that the Government’s proposed licensing bill would lead to working men’s clubs being forced to close.

The Peckham and Dulwich Radical Club was based at 114 Rye Lane, later at 188 Rye Lane, Peckham and was founded in 1885, closing down in 1896 having become insolvent. The club, despite its name, focused its political activities mainly on the Peckham constituency and appears to have been critical of alliances with Liberal radicals, increasingly adopting an independent socialist viewpoint, with the secretaries Mr Benjamin Ellis and Mr Cooper attacking the Peckham Liberal LCC member, Edwin Jones and associating the club with the position of the Social Democratic Federation.

In June 1885, the club proposed that the lawyer and Indian nationalist Lalmohan Ghosh stood as radical candidate for parliament for Dulwich. Ghose was presented in this role at a meeting of Newington radicals. However, Ghosh was selected to stand as Liberal candidate in the Deptford constituency, where he was narrowly defeated by the Conservative, and the Peckham and Dulwich radicals then switched their support to the official Liberal candidate in Dulwich, James Henderson. Returning to India, Ghosh later became president of the Indian National Congress.

In 1888, the Club supported Harry Quelch's SDF candidacy for the London School Board. The club was also active in supporting demonstrations in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, with Ellis speaking on Irish coercion at other radical clubs. Ellis claimed to be a radical and not a socialist. However, by 1888, the Peckham SDF branch was meeting at the Club and Ellis was known as an 'SDF' man. The Club was affiliated to the Metropolitan Radical Federation, with Ellis playing a significant role within the Federation, for example presiding at the annual dinner in February 1890. In 1891, Ellis was elected to the Camberwell vestry but disqualified on the grounds that being secretary of the Radical Club was not sufficient to meet the ratepayer qualification. However, in April 1892 the Club did hold 'a grand vocal and instrumental concert' presided over by Harry Quelch, to cover Edward Cray's election expenses contesting the Dulwich LCC seat, even though Cray had stood as a Progressive rather than as an Independent socialist candidate.

In 1892, the club supported Ellis, who was a member of the Brushmakers union, as an Independent Labour candidate for the Peckham parliamentary seat. Ellis got 95 votes – the Conservative majority over the Liberal candidate, Edwin Jones being only 183 votes. On 23 February 1892, the club held a ‘monster entertainment’ in aid of the Free Speech Fund, with Ellis in the chair. This included a play – 'The Nihilist Conspirators', performed by the Battersea SDF dramatic company, under the direction of H Dalchow and H Hall.

The Rye Lane club premises was the base for both the Peckham branch of the SDF and the Peckham anarchists. On 18 November 1897, a meeting was held to celebrate the martyrdom of the Chicago anarchists executed after the bomb explosion in that city’s Haymatrket. The Peckham anarchists also participated in a rally in Hyde Park with a banner proclaiming ‘Away with authority and Monopoly. We demand free access to the means of life’. Speakers at meetings at the club included Harry Quelch, Henry Hyndman, Herbert Burrows and Annie Besant. On 12 January 1886, William Morris delivered his lecture on ’Socialism’ at the club. Peckham Rye was used for other meetings. For example, after a rally in 1888 to support the matchgirls strike, the club provided bread, cheese and coffee for the strikers. The club also ran a campaign to defend the right to have public meetings on the Rye - the Peckham Rye Commons Defence League.

Margaret Dilke, the widow of the radical MP Ashton Dilke and sister-in-law of the republican MP, Charles Dilke, was a member of the Club in the mid 1880’s and sometimes chaired club meetings. Active in the Metropolitan Radical Federation, she sat on the London School Board for Lambeth West between 1888 and 1891 advocating free education. She was an active suffragist, becoming treasurer of the Central National Society for Women’s Suffrage in 1896.In 1885 she published *Women's Suffrage: A Treatise on Equality*.

In addition in 1886 a Dulwich Reform Club was established, with premises at Norland House, East Dulwich Road on Goose Green. The main funder was Frederick Horniman, founder of the Horniman Museum and Liberal MP for Penryn and Falmouth in Cornwall. This was the base for the more established Liberals and of the Dulwich Liberal and Radical Association and of the Liberal Ladies League. In 1888, the President was James Henderson, who was succeeded by Mr G C Whitley. The initial secretary was Mr White who was succeeded by Mr Falecki. Mr Fabritus was treasurer. The Club hosted an annual dinner to commemorate Gladstone's birthday. The Club also held dinners in restaurants in the city - for example, Charles Conybeare, the Liberal MP for Camborne in Cornwall spoke at a dinner at the Holborn restaurant in April 1892, presided over by the Club's new president, **Allan Octavian Hume.** One diner commented that there were not many Liberals in

Dulwich village, where their president lived. The club hosted Friday evening political discussions as well as the Liberal Association meetings. It was reported as having the best bar in the area. It was closed in 1901 and the property sold off. In 1888, there was also a Peckham and Dulwich branch of the National Secular Society. In August, Mr Dipper spoke on 'Reasons for Rejecting Christianity', while in the following month, Mr Heaford spoke on 'Questions for Theists'.

Working class candidates stood for the London School Board from the first elections in 1870, as did feminists who despite being excluded from voting in parliamentary elections, were able to stand for school boards. The trade unionists Robert Applegarth and Thomas Mottershead, both former members of the First International and colleagues of Karl Marx, both stood unsuccessfully in the Lambeth division in 1870. The feminist Henrietta Muller, who was active in the Women's trade union movement, stood in 1879 as an independent candidate and was elected top of the poll. In 1891, Muller was to drop out of politics and join **Annie Besant,** who had also been elected to the London School Board, in the theosophist movement. The feminist, Helen Taylor, was elected as an independent for the Southwark district, which included Camberwell, in 1876. In 1882, a journalist, J A Giles, claiming to represent the 'labour interest' stood unsuccessfully in the Lambeth division. In 1885, the Lambeth division was divided in two, with a new Lambeth East district which included Dulwich, having four representatives. The Social Democratic Federation (SDF), the first organised socialist party in Britain, decided to contest a number of seats across London. Their candidate in Lambeth East was the trade unionist **Harry Quelch**, who had led the Southside Protection League, the dockers union for the Surrey docks, and was editor of the SDF journal, *Justice*. Quelch stood without success in the School Board elections in 1885, 1888, 1887 and 1900. In the 1894 election, Quelch's place was taken by another SDF member, James Dobson, who was similarly lacking in success. No SDF candidate stood for Lambeth East in the 1891 election, though C F Cooper, a journalist standing as a 'socialist and secularist' failed to obtain enough votes to be returned.

The London County Council Dulwich seats have normally been won by Conservatives, originally known as the Municipal Reform Party. A paviour and SDF member, Edward Cray, did however stand in the 1892 election as a Progressive (the Liberal-Labour alliance), in conjunction with a jeweller, Jeremy Davis, with the support of the Dulwich Liberal and Radical association and the Dulwich radical Club, polling 1899 votes, but losing to two Moderates. Davis was secretary of the Liberal and Radical Association. Two years later, in October 1894, Cray stood for the Dulwich Board of Guardians on behalf of the ILP, with the ILP organising a series of meetings in his support. Cray had previously lived in Great Dover Street and been a

member of the St George's vestry. Active in the SDF, he had spoken in October 1888 at a meeting in Southwark Park with Harry Quelch and Annie Besant and then at Walworth in July 1891 with Quelch. He was paviour foreman for the Camberwell vestry. Moving to East Dulwich, he lived at 42 Goodrich Road, joining the ILP in June 1894. By 1904, he had moved to 25 Landcroft Road. He was involved in the re-establishment of the Dulwich ILP branch that year. He was also treasurer of the Southern Federation of the ILP.

Progressive candidates won one of the two LCC seats in 1901 for George Hardy and both in 1904; Hardy being joined by Thomas Gantry. Labour held two of the three LCC seats from 1952 to 1955 (Wilfred Vernon and Amy Crossman) and all three seats from 1958 until abolition in 1965 (Harry Lambourn, Albert Murray and Edgar Reed). For the first three elections to the Greater London Council in 1965, 1969 and 1973, representation was by borough with Southwark having four representatives - Labour won all four sets in all three elections. From 1964, Dulwich elected its own GLC member, with Labour returning Richard Balfe in 1973, the Conservatives returning Gerald Bowden in 1977 and Labour returning Lesley Hammond in 1981, the GLC then being abolished in 1986.

The Camberwell vestry, which had in the 1880's been chaired by the reformer, E Dresser Rogers, was in the 1890's controlled by the Moderates, though by 1895, the Progressives and radicals were a substantial opposition with 55 members to the Moderates 64. The meetings were reported to be lively. Camberwell Borough Council was controlled by the Progressives from 1900 to 1906, when they undertook a programme of building council houses on a site just off Grove Vale in East Dulwich (now Copleston, Oxenford and Oglander Roads), using the new powers under the Housing of the Working Classes Act. In 1906, control was lost to the Municipal Reformers (Conservatives) who ran the council until 1934. Labour had control from 1934 until the council was abolished in 1964, though the Dulwich seats were generally represented by Conservatives. Southwark Council has been controlled by Labour since its establishment in 1964, with the exception of 2002-2010 when there was no overall control, and for part of this period, the council was in practice managed by a Conservative-Liberal coalition. Until 2010 most of the Dulwich wards were represented by Conservatives. Subsequently some Dulwich seats were won by Liberals and Labour candidates and in the 2018 local elections, Labour won all the Dulwich seats.

Political activists and social reformers

Dulwich has provided a home for many political activists and social reformers who were active at a national and international level. There are two early radical MPs - **Brass Crosby** and **George Grote,** who lived in the area, as well as another radical

who represented Dulwich in parliament, **Aubrey Beauclerk** and a reforming Liberal MP, **Charles Buxton**, both of whom represented the area when Dulwich was within the large rural East Surrey constituency. George Grote's wife, **Harriet Grote** was an active radical in her own right. There are radical writers and political activists from the mid-Victorian period - the social theorist **John Ruskin**, the radical democrat **Samuel Oliver**, the First Internationalist **Maltman Barry** and the Anarchist exile from the Paris commune, **Louise Michel**. Included in this book are the theist, **Thomas Scott**, the theist and birth control campaigner **Annie Besant**, the birth control campaigners, **Alice Vickery, Charles and George Drysdale.** Four housing, planning and land reform campaigners from the pre- First World War period lived in Dulwich- **John Morrison Davidson**, **Maria Saxton Sales, Ebenezer Howard** and **Henry Aldridge**. There are the anti-slavery campaigners, **John and Alice Harris**, the pioneer headmistress, **Mary Alger** , three militant suffragettes, **Alice Vickery**, **Alison Neilans**, and **Lydia Smith Horton,** and one constitutional suffragist - **Agnes O'Mara.** Lydia Horton was also an active opponent of conscription in the First World War, together with her husband, the artist **Percy Horton,** as was **Arthur Creech Jones. James O'Mara** was an Irish republican and Sinn Fein member of both the House of Commons and the first revolutionary Irish republican Dail in Dublin. There are two leading members of the Indian National Congress, **Annie Besant,** before she went to India and **Allan Octavian Hume**, after he returned to Britain. There are a number of MPs who lived in the area, who at one time represented constituencies elsewhere: **Jimmy Thomas, John Beckett, Arthur Creech Jones, Lewis Silkin, John Silkin, Albert Booth, Leslie Hale, George Brown** and **Christopher Price**. There are several Labour MPs for other constituencies currently living in Dulwich who are still in parliament who have not been included as their political careers remain unfinished. As well as including the first three Labour MPs for Dulwich - **Wilfred Vernon, Sam Silkin and Tessa Jowell,** I have included radical and Labour candidates who stood for the Dulwich parliamentary seat without success, while living outside the constituency, **Charles Masterman** for the Liberal Party, who was later returned for another constituency, and for the Labour Party, **Charles Smith, Fred Hughes, Helen Bentwich** and **Jim Delahaye**, all significant figures in the party, but who never reached the House of Commons. There are leading members of the Independent Labour Party, the propagandist **Russell Smart**, the literary critic **John Middleton Murry**, and the pacifists **Allen and Phillis Skinner**. Also included is the first candidate to represent the Dulwich area on a public body on an explicitly socialist platform, **Harry Quelch** of the Social Democratic Federation, who stood four times for the London School Board. There are five Communists, the novelist **Edward Upward,** the Marxist classical scholar**, George Thomson,** the biochemist **Jonathan Knight** and his wife

Frida Knight, and the feminist journalist**, Jean Shapiro** and her husband, the psychologist **Monte Shapiro.** It will be noted that **Wilfred Vernon** also had close connections with communists**.** Also included are the leading trade unionist **Jack Jones** and his wife **Evelyn Jones** and two leading race campaigners who lived in Dulwich, the first Black councillor in Dulwich and Southwark Mayor, **Sam King** and the first British Black Bishop, **Wilfred Wood**, who of all our biographical subjects, is the only one still alive at the time of writing.

Ben Ellis

Margaret Dilke

THE 60 BIOGRAPHIES

1. City Radicals

BRASS CROSBY: Radical Lord Mayor

Crosby was a radical MP and Lord Mayor of London who lived in Dulwich. He was a close associate of the reformer John Wilkes. He lived in Dulwich between 1756 and 1772, when, following the death of his first two wives, he married Mary Mead, the wealthy daughter of a London wine merchant who owned the manor of Chelsfield in Bromley, Kent and the couple moved into Court Lodge. His Dulwich property, which he kept until 1785, was on the south side of Half Moon Lane, which was then called Ireland Green or Island Green, on the site which was King's College Botanical Department and is now the Judith Kerr school. The house had 16 acres of land. Crosby lived at Chelsfield until his death in 1793 and he was buried in Chelsfield churchyard.

Crosby was born in Stockton, County Durham in 1725. His unusual name came from his mother, Mary whose father was John Brass. He was apprenticed to a solicitor in Sunderland but moved to London to practice as an attorney. Crosby was elected to the Common Council of the City of London corporation in 1758, representing the Tower ward. One of Crosby's colleagues in the Common Council was Thomas Wright, the first owner of Bell House in College Road, who also later became Lord Mayor of London.

In 1760, Crosby purchased the post of City Remembrancer, which was the City Corporation's parliamentary agent responsible for defending the City's interests with the right to attend parliament, and later served as Sheriff. In 1765, he was elected Alderman for Broad Street ward, and in September 1770 was elected Lord Mayor. In 1768, he had been returned as Member of Parliament for Honiton in Devon, a position which he had in effect purchased, as the seat had been advertised for sale in the London newspapers.

Crosby asserted that both in the Commons and the City Corporation, he acted on 'the principles of the Whigs of 1688'. He was a partisan of John Wilkes and the radical John Horne Tooke and a vigorous opponent of the government led by Lord North between 1770 and 1782. Crosby's main political activity related to defending the rights of the City Corporation against the interference of the national government. As Lord Mayor, he sought to stop the government's agents recruiting in the City for sailors to fight against Spain in an anticipated war over the Falkland Islands. In the commons he supported Wilkes' and Horne Tooke's attempts to defend the freedom of the press. This centred on the right of newspapers to report on the debates in parliament. At the time, publication was regarded as a breach of parliamentary

privilege. The Commons sought to arrest the printer, John Miller, but Crosby sitting as Lord Mayor, supported by John Wilkes, who was a city alderman and had been MP for Middlesex, as well as Richard Oliver, the radical MP for the City, ruled that Miller's arrest was illegal, and instead arrested the Commons official, William Whittam. Crosby was then summoned to parliament. Crosby defended his actions in parliament and was supported by the City's Common Council for defending the rights of the City. The city established a legal defence fund with £500. On 25th March 1771, parliament was surrounded by a crowd wearing labels in their hats with the words 'Crosby, Wilkes, Oliver and the Liberty of the Press'. Lord North was jostled and lost his hat. Two days later, another crowd forced the Prime Minister out of his coach by smashing the coach windows and then demolished the vehicle. Charles James Fox, a supporter of North and as yet not a radical, was pelted with mud, oranges and stones. Oliver and Crosby were then charged with breach of privilege by the House of Commons and committed to the Tower of London, Crosby at the time being ill with gout and covered in bandages.

One member of Lord North's administration who was most persistent in seeking Oliver and Crosby's imprisonment was the attorney-general, Lord Thurlow, who was Crosby's near neighbour in Knights Hill. with a thousand-acre estate, reaching from Streatham to Herne Hill. In the Commons, He referred to Crosby as 'an ignorant Mayor' and to Wilkes as a 'turbulent alderman' and asked "is this House authorized to execute its processes within the precincts of the City of London? On the part of the City, it is insisted that the privilege of this House does not extend to the City. But that appears to me so definitely a question of the privilege of Parliament….. Is the chief magistrate of London to usurp a power which the King himself does not aspire to? The Mayor was sworn to obey the laws of the land as well as the laws of the City!...Have we so long defended our privilege against the tyranny of kings to fall at last before the turbulence of a seditious city magistrate?"

The prisoners were visited by Lord Rockingham, the opposition leader who was to succeed Lord North as Prime Minister in 1782, following the final defeat of British forces at Yorktown in the American War of Independence.

On 8th May, Crosby and Oliver were released from the Tower, and escorted back to the City's Mansion House by a large procession which included fifty-three carriages and a twenty-one artillery burst. Crosby however failed to be re-elected as Lord Mayor, but the Common Council voted their thanks and presented him with a silver cup worth £200. Following Crosby's victory. a parliamentary register was published by John Debrett from 1773, while William Cobbett's reports were published by Thomas Hansard from 1809. Hansard only became an official Commons publication in 1909.

In 1774, Crosby tried to be elected MP for the City but failed and was also defeated in a by-election in 1784. He continued to be active in city politics as chair of the City Corporation's general purposes committee (in effect its executive committee) and three other city committees. In February 1780, he chaired a Committee of Common Council to support the campaign for parliamentary reform, initiated by the Yorkshire committee of Christopher Wyvill and the Westminster Committee of Charles James Fox. The political reformer, John Wilkes was a member. Crosby represented London in a national assembly in 1782 organised by Wyvill and John Jebb of Huntingdonshire, which also included John Cartwright from Nottingham, who was to lead the parliamentary reform movement in the 1790's and 1800's and campaign for universal suffrage. Crosby, by now one of the reform veterans, joined the 36- member committee of the Association.

The city erected an obelisk in Crosby's memory at St George's circus in Southwark, which still stands. He died in 1793. His vigorous defence of the City Is the origin of the phrase 'Bold as Brass'.

Brass Crosby

The Obelisk

Brass Crosby in the Guildhall
(Brass Crosby as arrowed; Thomas Wright of Bell House is at bottom left)

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GEORGE AND HARRIET GROTE: Philosophical Radicals

George Grote, historian of Greece and MP for the City of London between 1832 and 1841, lived at Dulwich Wood, later known as Wood Hall on College Road on the east side, south of the Toll Gate between 1832 and 1837. The house was hit by a bomb during the second world war and was demolished in 1955. The site was redeveloped as Woodhall Drive.

Grote was a leading radical, a follower of Jeremy Bentham, who originated the ideology of 'utilitarianism'. The followers of Bentham were also known as the 'philosophical radicals' and included James Mill, the economist and historian of India, his son the philosopher John Stuart Mill, Sir William Molesworth, the MP for East Cornwall, J A Roebuck , MP for Bath and later for Sheffield, Charles Buller, MP for Liskeard, Joseph Parkes the Birmingham radical, Lord Durham , later governor of British North America (Canada), the lawyer Charles Austin, the journalist Albany Fonblanque and Grote's wife Harriet.

George Grote was born at Clay Hill, between Beckenham and Bromley in 1794. His father was a banker - his grandfather Andreas Grote was a migrant of Dutch and German extraction. George Grote left school to join the family bank at the age of 15, his father not believing in the value of university education. Grote was largely self-taught, studying Latin, Greek, German, history, literature, philosophy and political economy. He knew the economist, David Ricardo, who encouraged his economic studies and Grote sent Ricardo a paper on foreign trade. Grote was also a member of a literature society which met in chambers in the Temple, to which Grote contributed a paper on the Roman poet and philosopher, Lucretius. In 1819, Grote met James Mill and Bentham. Bentham was an active writer on political reform and in 1821, at the age of 27, Grote published a *Statement on the Question of Parliamentary Reform*, James Mill having published his *Essay on* Government the previous year. The pamphlet was accompanied by a letter to the *Morning Chronicle,* critical of an anti-reform speech of George Canning, who at the time was President of the Board of Trade in Lord Liverpool's Tory government. Grote argued for an unrestricted franchise (that is without any property or educational qualifications), the secret ballot and annual parliaments, at the time an extreme radical position, which Grote was later to moderate somewhat. Like his fellow utilitarians, Grote was sceptical of established religion. In 1822, he published *An Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind.* This was actually published by the radical atheist, Richard Carlile, who at the time was imprisoned in Dorchester gaol for blasphemy, and written under the pseudonym of 'Philip Beauchamp', his authorship only being revealed after Grote's death. The pamphlet was apparently based on Bentham's notes, Bentham being noted for having difficulty structuring his own writings. The general argument of the pamphlet was that religion did more harm than good. Grote also wrote a philosophical discourse on magic for *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* which despite promotion by James Mill, was never published. Given that from 1816, Grote was the main working partner in his family bank, the extent of his studying, writing and political activity is impressive. Grote's radicalism did not seem, at least initially, to impact on his role as city banker.

In the 1820's, Grote lived first at Fortis Green in North London and then in Stoke Newington. Grote also had a house next to the bank in Threadneedle Street and it was there that the initial group of young radicals met, apparently two mornings a week, including John Stuart Mill, Charles Buller, J A Roebuck and Grote's banking partner, W G Prescott. Grote got married in 1821 to Harriet Lewin, daughter of a member of the East India Company. The couple married secretly as Harriet's parents disapproved of Grote's views on religion. Harriet was a strong personality and regarded by some of the philosophical radicals as much more dynamic than her husband. As well as being a hostess to the radical group, she had an extensive correspondence with a

much wider circle. She was to write a history of the philosophical radicals, which focused on the Grotes' friendship with Sir William Molesworth, and a very personal biography of her husband after his death as well as publishing many of his early works and papers. It was Harriet who, clearly constrained by living next to the bank, in 1832 sought out a new home and found the house in Dulwich, which had been built some twenty years earlier and had 15 acres of grounds, bordered Dulwich wood and had a view over the city. Harriet described the house as 'naked and a wilderness, not papered, painted or warmed or anything'. The Grotes paid £4,500 for the house and spent £2,000 on making the house into an attractive country residence. They also rented five more acres. What is now Dulwich and Sydenham golf course was then agricultural land.

From 1822, Grote started on his magnum opus - his history of Greece. However, before the first volumes were ready for publication, he had to put aside his work to focus on political activity, with the resurgence of the movement for parliamentary reform. Grote's father died in 1830 and the Beckenham house was sold. Grote inherited his father's banking interests as well as estates in Lincolnshire. Grote was now in a position to finance the reform cause. Following the July revolution in France which led to the deposition of the Bourbon monarchy, Grote gave £500 to the French radicals, through his contacts, the French sociologist and founder of 'positivism' Auguste Comte and the economist, Jean-Baptiste Say. The following year, he revised his earlier reform pamphlet as *Essentials of Parliamentary Reform.* His views had been moderated - he now advocated the phased lowering of the property qualification, suggesting that the electorate be increased to one million, and while still preferring annual parliaments proposed triennial parliaments as a more pragmatic alternative. Grote argued that increasing the electorate would reduce patronage and would purify government, ensure economy, produce an improvement in law and an abstinence from unnecessary wars. The pamphlet made no reference to whether women should be eligible to vote, which Bentham had supported. James Mill had opposed female suffrage, though his son John Stuart Mill was later to be a leading advocate of women's right to vote.

With the dissolution of parliament in April 1831, Grote was urged, apparently by John Stuart Mill, to stand for parliament for the City of London. He declined. However, by October, he was actively engaged in the reform movement and corresponding with Francis Place, the radical tailor of Charing Cross, and with Joseph Parkes, the leader of the Birmingham radicals. Grote organised a petition in favour of reform from city bankers and merchants and presented it to the Prime Minister, Lord Grey. The Reform Bill was carried in the Commons but rejected by the Lords. Grote organised a protest meeting in the City at Mansion House, which led

to a further petition being submitted. Grote was still hopeful that parliament would carry the Bill while Place was more pessimistic. This led to a dispute between Place and Grote over tactics, with Harriet unable to resist the temptation to intervene, writing a scathing letter to Place, saying that he was creating divisions in the reform movement. Place invited Grote to join the new Birmingham based National Political Union, but Grote declined on the basis that this would alienate his banking colleagues. Grote admitted that " You will think me a timid politician. I lament it but I cannot avoid it." Grote nevertheless donated £50 to the Union on the condition that he was not publicly named as a donor. He also continued writing in support of reform, arguing that delay had paralysed commercial activity. The letter was passed to Henry Brougham, the reforming Lord Chancellor. When the Lords again rejected the Bill, and there was a possibility that the Tory leader and former Prime Minister, Lord Wellington, would form a government, Place sought to force the issue by calling for a run on the banks - "To stop the Duke, Go for Gold." Grote was opposed to this tactic as he thought it would damage the reform cause and wrote to *The Times* to express his disapproval. Wellington however could not form a government, as Robert Peel and his moderate Tories in the Commons supported reform. Grey had persuaded the King to appoint sufficient new peers to drive the Bill through the Lords. Grey returned to the position of Prime Minister, and the Bill was carried. Place wrote in triumph to Grote claiming that it was his own more radical tactics which had forced the issue. The main features of the Act, popularly known to all history students as the Great Reform Act, were an extension of the franchise and a redistribution of seats from rural to urban areas. It did not include the secret ballot or triennial parliaments.

When another general election was called, this time Grote agreed to stand for one of the four parliamentary seats for the City of London. His manifesto focused on the need for the two further reforms - triennial parliaments and the secret ballot. He also argued for limiting public expenditure, economy in taxation with regard to taxes which 'either press peculiarly on persons of low income, or cramp the operations of industry'. He opposed taxes on knowledge - the stamp duty on newspapers. He also called for the abolition of church tithes and opposed the Corn Laws - the tariffs on imported corn, condemned slavery and called for universal education as necessary 'to advance the well-being and improve the character of the LABOURING classes.'. In the election in December 1832, Grote topped the poll. He was cheered by a crowd of 4,000 outside Guildhall. A band played *The Conquering Hero*. His three colleagues, including two former Lord Mayors, were reforming Whigs but not as radical as Grote.

Harriet Grote wrote of these early parliamentary years 'We could not sleep and the day seemed ever big with events.' The Dulwich house became the centre of the radical parliamentary group, of which Grote was seen as the leader - Molesworth and Buller both represented Cornish constituencies so often stayed in Dulwich during parliamentary sessions. The radical group also included Roebuck representing Bath, Henry Warburton representing Bridport in Dorset and John Romilly, also representing Bridport and Edward Romilly, representing Ludlow, both sons of Sir Samuel Romilly, the legal reformer and former solicitor general. At a meeting at Threadneedle Street, attended by James Mill as well as the small group of radical MPs, it was agreed that Grote take the lead on the issue of the secret ballot. Grote raised the issue successively in 1833, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838 and 1839, but not successfully, though the majority against the ballot fell from 173 in 1835 to 51 in 1836. Models of ballot boxes were distributed around the country - an image of one was to appear in the Chartists *Charter* of 1842.

Harriet Grote

In 1834, Melbourne succeeded Grey as Prime Minister, though early in the following year Peel led a Conservative ministry, to be replaced by Melbourne's Whigs in April. Grote and his colleagues tried to establish a Radical party separate from the Whigs and their Irish nationalist allies. Most of the radical MPs however wanted to maintain the Whig alliance as did the Irish MPs led by Daniel O'Connell. This however did not stop some Radicals standing against Whigs in the 1835 election. By 1837 the Grotes were favouring this alliance but a grand dinner at Drury Lane on 23 January to celebrate the alliance was a disappointment. Grote argued for the true Radical doctrine, but found that the Radicals were drawn into supporting the Ministry without winning any concessions. Harriet Grote recorded with reference to her husband that 'never have I seen him so ashamed and contrite'. A general election followed the death of William IV and the succession of Queen Victoria in July 1837 resulting in a Whig government under Melbourne, opposed to reform, and the radicals weakened. The parliamentary session was dominated by a debate over the future of British North America. The radicals split- Buller supporting Lord Durham's recommendations for self-government of what became Canada, while Grote following Bentham supported independence for the colonies - Bentham having previously published a pamphlet entitled *Emancipate Your Colonies*.

George Grote

Despite the lack of further progress on parliamentary reform, the radical-Whig alliance did produce some results. Harriet Grote records a celebration in 1835 at the Dulwich house of the passage of the Municipal Corporations Act and the reform of the poor laws. However, by 1837, the radical group was in decline. Grote only scraped back into parliament by 6 votes, coming 4th out of the four-seat contest. By 1841, Grote had become disillusioned with parliament and decided to stand down. He would probably have been defeated as the city was no longer that radical -it elected two Whigs including Lord John Russell, the future Prime Minister, known as 'Finality Russell' for his 1837 speech opposing further parliamentary reform, and two Conservatives. In 1837, the Grotes left Dulwich and moved to Eccleston Street in Belgravia. Grote was apparently tired of spending nights in lodgings in the city after late night sessions as it took too long to travel to Dulwich - the railway line to Sydenham Hill station, just opposite the Dulwich house had not yet opened. Harriet was reluctant to leave Dulwich - "I had bestowed a great deal of time, trouble and expense on our present house and grounds, it had become suited to our wants, and I knew that London would prove injurious to my health." Bentham never managed to get to Dulwich although a visit was arranged and a room prepared for him. Unfortunately, the great philosopher was too ill to travel and soon died. Harriet noted that Bentham could have died in her house and seemed a bit disappointed that this did not happen.

What was left of the radical group therefore moved their social hub to Belgravia, where Harriet continued her role as hostess. In fact, with the dispersal the radicals, the Grotes began to circulate in more establishment circles, including being invited to Holland House, the social centre of the traditional Whigs, and to Buckingham Palace for the Queen's ball. In Grote's last few years in parliament, despite his declining interest in politics, he managed to speak in favour of an unsuccessful household suffrage bill in 1839, support self-government in Jamaica, comment on penal policy in New South Wales, suggesting this be funded by the home country which had transported the convicts and criticise Palmerston's imperialistic adventures in the Middle East. Grote was however clearly happy to return to his academic studies and his history of Greece. The first two volumes were published in 1846, with the twelfth volume in 1857. Grote then moved on to detailed studies of Plato, published in 1860 and 1867 (4 volumes) and Aristotle (4 volumes published posthumously in 1880). Though no longer active in radical politics, Grote nevertheless continued to write on contemporary matters, notably a series of letters on the politics of Switzerland in 1847. He also continued a correspondence with the French writer and politician

Alexis de Tocqueville. He also turned his attention to higher education. Despite never having himself gone to university, he joined the council of the new University College, known at the time as 'the Godless college', becoming president in 1868. He also joined the senate of the reformed London University, becoming the third vice-chancellor in 1862, a post he held until his death in June 1871 at the age of 76. He used his position to argue for the right of women to take degrees. He did not live to see the passage of the Ballot Act the following year, which introduced the secret ballot in British parliamentary elections.

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2. Radical MPs

AUBREY BEAUCLERK: Friend of Mary Shelley

Beauclerk was a Radical MP, representing the constituency of Surrey East, which included Dulwich, between 1832 and 1837. Beauclerk was born in 1801, an aristocrat, descended from the Dukes of St Albans, Marlborough and Richmond. He lived at Ardglass Castle in County Down, Ireland and at Leonardslee House in Horsham. He was an army major. Aubrey's great grandfather was the younger son of the 1st Duke of St Albans. He is not to be confused with the successive Dukes of St Albans, the 5th, 6th and 7th Dukes, who were all called Aubrey Beauclerk.

Beauclerk supported the abolition of slavery and the abolition of tithes. He supported a small fixed tariff on corn imports, reform of the Anglican church and an end to taxes on knowledge - the stamp duties on newspapers. As well as being twice married, and having six children from his marriages (one of whom drowned in the Horsham lake in 1839 apparently having fallen in during a fit of giddiness) and an illegitimate son. Beauclerk may also have had a relationship in the 1830’s with Mary

Shelley, the daughter of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft and the author of *Frankenstein* in the 1830's (Mary's husband, the poet, Percy Shelley, had died in Italy in July 1822). He supported the Shelleys' son, Percy Florence Shelley (his middle name derived from his birthplace) in his unsuccessful attempt to become an MP. The young Shelley's main interests appear to have been yachting and the theatre.

After standing down as an MP in 1837, Beauclerk was appointed High Sheriff of County Down. He died in 1854 at his Irish castle.

Beauclerk's house in Horsham

Mary Shelley

Source:

Wikipedia entry which lists primary sources, including biographies and journals of Mary Shelley. I could find no references to Beauclerk in the standard academic histories of the politics of the period.

CHARLES BUXTON: Critic of Slavery and Colonial Government

Charles Buxton was MP for Surrey East (including Dulwich) between 1865 and 1871. He was born in 1822 in Cromer, Suffolk, the son of the brewer and reforming MP, Thomas Fowell Buxton. The Buxton family owned the Truman, Hanbury, Buxton brewery in Brick Lane, Spitalfields. The older Buxton was one of the leaders of the anti-slavery movement.

Charles Buxton followed his father's reforming politics. Educated privately, he went to Trinity College, Cambridge in 1841 When his father had died in 1845, Charles wrote a memoir, which went through thirteen editions and was translated into French and German. He then bought an estate in County Kerry in Ireland, which he tried to run as a model farm. He wrote a pamphlet on education in Ireland, which promoted denominational education , delivered lectures on birds (his father had been one of the founders of the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals, together with William Wilberforce, his anti-slavery colleague) and also published an article on the sale of strong drink, which, given his role as a brewer attracted some attention.

Buxton first became an MP in 1857, as a Liberal, representing Newport on the Isle of Wight, then representing Maidstone in 1859, followed by East Surrey from 1865. Like many of his colleagues, he was a rather peripatetic parliamentarian. He supported arbitration in the case of international disputes - in 1861, the US navy had taken two Confederate diplomats from a British postal packet, which neatly led to British involvement in the American civil war. In 1859, Buxton published an article in the *Edinburgh Review - An Inquiry into the Results of Emancipation*, concluding that the impact was positive. In 1860, he published a book arguing that British colonialism was progressive and had spread civilization in West Africa and generated economic prosperity in the West Indies. When Thomas Hughes was elected to parliament for Lambeth in 1865, Buxton presided at the celebratory banquet. He also supported a form of electoral reform, known as 'cumulative voting', also advocated by John Stuart Mill, which would have allowed for the representation of minority interests in parliament. (The system allows a voter to cast more than one vote for a single candidate in a multi-member constituency.)

Buxton was a reforming independent Liberal but not viewed as a radical. He however supported disestablishment of the Church of England and security of tenure for Irish peasant farmers. He was opposed to Lord Palmerston's aggressive imperial policy, preferring peace to war, though he recognised any country had the right to defence. He was an enthusiast for a volunteer citizen army - the volunteer movement was popular following the Crimean war of 1853-6. He was commissioned a lieutenant in the Tower Hamlets Rifle Volunteers. In 1865, he designed the Victorian gothic fountain to commemorate his father's anti-slavery labours which survives in the gardens next to the Houses of Parliament. In 1866, Buxton published *The Ideas of the Day on Policy*, which was largely a summary of other people's views rather than his own, and in 1869 a pamphlet on self-government for London, which, picking upon the arguments of John Stuart Mill and James Beal, argued for centralisation of local government in London through the establishment of a single London-wide body. Buxton's 'notes and thoughts' were published after his death - a curious volume of some 684 jottings on a wide range of seemingly random topics.

Buxton was an active member of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and often spoke on behalf of the society in parliament and joined Society deputations, for example to Queen Victoria or Prince Albert. He defended the use of the navy's West African squadron to suppress the slave trade, commenting that "no other nation had ever pursed such an unselfish, generous and noble policy as that which England took with regard to the suppression of the slave trade.". He however disagreed with some of his Society colleagues on the issue of importation of labour into the West Indies to replace the freed slaves, which the Society opposed. In 1859 he proposed that that

parliament establish an inquiry into the best means promoting immigration, as 'with millions of fertile acres under a tropical climate being untilled, it would be an unmixed good if we could fill every island full of people.' He however recognised that the conditions in which coolies were transported from India and China to the West Indies might need to be improved. Buxton also supported the establishment of a cotton importing business - the London Native Agency Committee to assist native West African chiefs to develop cotton farming, using free labour, to replace the freed slaves. Buxton claimed that the price and quality of the cotton produced under this initiative superseded that cultivated by slaves in the western world', the reference being to the southern United states. However in 1863, Buxton was to state his opposition to the use of force of arms by the northern US states to suppress slavery in the southern states, though he welcomed the fact that the American civil war generated significant support amongst working men in Britain for the anti-slavery cause. He was later to admit that he had been wrong to have doubted Abraham Lincoln's emancipation proclamation.

Charles Buxton

Given his interest in the West Indies, Buxton was to play a key role in the political debates in Britain in what is known to historians as the Governor Eyre controversy. In 1865, there were slave riots in Jamaica. These were harshly suppressed by the Governor of Jamaica, Edward Eyre. Eyre who in his earlier career was an Australian explorer, had previously served in the official position as 'protector of aborigines'. British critics of Eyre's actions in Jamaica established a 'Jamaica committee'. This included liberal figures such as the Christian socialist Thomas Hughes, recently elected as MP for Lambeth, John Stuart Mill, recently elected MP for Westminster, the unitarian MP for Leicester, Peter Taylor, the Birmingham radical reformer and Quaker, John Bright, Edward Baines from Leeds, and leading members of the anti-slavery movement and the Aborigines Protection Society such as Frederick Chesson. Buxton was made chairman of the committee. A royal commission was sent to Jamaica to investigate the reasons for the outbreak and the governor's response. The affair divided political opinion in Britain, with Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Charles Kingsley, Charles Dickens and Alfred Tennyson defending Eyre. The Commission it is report tried to make a balanced judgement, supporting the action Eyre took to control the riots but then criticising the severe punitive measures which followed, which included executions, floggings and the burning of 1,000 homes.

Buxton memorial fountain

The Jamaica committee however divided over how to respond to the report. A group which included Mill and Bright wanted to prosecute Eyre. Other members including Buxton argued that while Eyre's actions were shameful and criminal, he should not be prosecuted for 'wilful murder', He was concerned that a jury would never convict Eyre, and that any trial would result in him receiving a royal pardon, which would clearly be counterproductive in terms of the committee's objectives. Mill, Bright and Baines all attacked Buxton, who was forced to resign as committee chairman, to be replaced by Mill. However, as Buxton had predicted, after a series of court cases, Eyre was exonerated. Buxton however campaigned for a formal parliamentary censure of Eyre. Buxton argued that not only should Eyre be reprimanded for excessive punishment of the rioters, that perpetrators of excesses should be punished, that the government should compensate those whose property had been destroyed and the families of those who had been put to death illegally. He also demanded that all those accused of rioting who were still in prison should be released. In concluding the debate in the House of Commons on his motion, Buxton argued that 'the question on which we shall divide is simply as to whether England will or will not sanction these butcheries… It would indeed be a blow to the cause of humanity, it would indeed be a dark stain on the character of the British people, should the House bestowed its sanction upon such doings." Thomas Hughes and John Stuart Mill both spoke to support Buxton. The government opposed the motion arguing that Buxton was being one sided in his response to the Royal Commission report, endorsing the criticism of Eyre without acknowledging the more supportive conclusions. However, following the intervention of the conservative MP and future Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, the Commons passed a compromise motion which condemned the excessive punishments, and 'especially the unnecessary frequency with which the punishment of death was inflicted', but without any reference to compensation, prosecution of perpetrators of excess punishment or release of imprisoned rioters. The Jamaica committee then tried to prosecute Eyre for 'high crimes and misdemeanors', a prosecution which Buxton supported, Eyre was however again acquitted. The British government paid Eyre's legal expenses and he was awarded the state pension due to a retired colonial governor.

Buxton combined his affection for animals with a love of hunting. He designed his own country seat, Fox Warren at Wisley in Surrey. In 1867, Buxton fell off his horse while hunting, suffering concussion from which he never recovered. Apparently at one point, he asked his secretary to shoot him, though this assisted suicide attempt failed. He died in 1871, with his wife dying on the same day. One of their sons,

Sydney Buxton, became a leading political writer and radical Liberal MP, becoming under- secretary of state for the colonies, postmaster-general, President of the Board of Trade and Governor of South Africa.

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3. Radical Activists

JOHN RUSKIN: No Wealth but Life

Ruskin and his family lived in a house on the west side of Herne Hill from 1823, when Ruskin was four years old. Ruskin's father was a wine merchant. In 1843, Ruskin moved to a larger house on the east side of Denmark Hill, just inside the manor of Dulwich. This was 163 Denmark Hill, which later became the Ruskin Manor Hotel, until it was demolished in 1949. Ruskin and his family moved to the Lake District in 1872.

John Ruskin

Ruskin's reputation as a socialist thinker derives to some extent from a survey in 1906 by the journalist William Stead of the authors which Labour MPs claimed had influenced them, when Ruskin shared top billing with Thomas Carlyle. Ruskin's 1860 book of essays *Unto This Last* is often quoted as his most influential work. This owed much to the following paragraph:

"*There is no wealth but life. Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest numbers of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest, who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others."*

Ruskin is best categorised, like his friend Thomas Carlyle, as a 'social romantic'. The main argument of *Unto this Last* and his later political and economic works, was that political economy should have a moral basis and that labour had inherent value

which was not to be determined by a capitalist system based on profit. His approach was based on a biblically derived notion of social justice - the phrase 'unto this last' was taken from the parable of the vineyard in the Gospel of St Matthew. This perspective was shared by the mid-Victorian Christian Socialists such as Frederick Maurice, John Malcolm Ludlow, Thomas Hughes, Charles Kingsley and E V Neale and in fact can be traced back to a much earlier Christian tradition including the Christian economists of the early 19th century and many of the associates of Robert Owen, though Ruskin had a tendency to quote biblical and classical Greek sources such as Plato rather than his contemporaries. Ruskin instead mounted an attack on the classical political economists such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo, not because of their analyses but because they perceived political economy as a science, disregarding the Ricardian socialists such as Thomas Hodgskin, William Thomson, John Gray and the Chartist, John Francis Bray, who introduced an explicit moral perspective into their Ricardian analysis of labour and value, authors whom Ruskin had apparently not read. Ruskin, while criticising the capitalist system, was however no socialist. He was strongly opposed to any concept of equality, public ownership or collectivism. In *Fors Clavigera*, letters 'to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain', published between 1871 and 1874, he supported private ownership of land with hereditary tenure and opposed those such as Alfred Russell Wallace who argued for land nationalisation.

163 Denmark Hill

As a 'sage', Ruskin was disengaged from contemporary politics. Socialising, so far as he socialised at all, with painters and writers, he appears to have had little or no contact with politicians of any party. He was of the view that he could influence the thinking of others through his writings. Perceiving himself as a Tory and an 'illiberal', he was in fact dismissive of both parliament, which he saw as a 'talking shop' and of social reform movements. Unlike the Christian socialists and positivists such as Frederic Harrison, who published his own study of Ruskin in 1902, he saw trade unions as divisive. Ruskin was also a strong opponent of democracy. In his view, order required a sovereign. At times, he argued for a theocracy, with a sovereign imposing order and moral behaviour on the populace. Like Carlyle and the positivists, Ruskin had an admiration for great men (always men) - for heroes. He was a great admirer of Napoleon III and welcomed Napoleon's coup d'etat in 1851 to overturn the French Second Republic. One of his few explicit political interventions was his support in 1865 for the Jamaican Governor Eyre who was criticised by liberals such as John Stuart Mill and James Fitzjames Stephens for his violent suppression of

a peasant rebellion which had been led by a Baptist preacher, Paul Bogle. Ruskin saw himself as a teacher rather than a politician. He saw his role as educating a new generation of teachers. One of his students was the historian Arnold Toynbee, who was later to inspire the university settlement movement including Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel. Ruskin tended to read his lectures to various assemblies. For example, his lecture 'work', later published in *The Crown of Wild Olive* was first read to the Camberwell Working Men's Institute.' Traffic' was delivered at Bradford Town Hall; 'War' at the appropriate venue of the Woolwich Royal Military Academy (Ruskin saw fighting as a 'manly' activity), and 'the Future of England' at the Royal Artillery Institution at Woolwich.

Ruskin in his later years supported a number of reform projects, believing that change came from philanthropy and from benevolent employers. He is remembered for the Hinksey road building project in Oxford when he led a group of Oxford students (including Arnold Toynbee, W H Mallock, Alfred Milner and Oscar Wilde). As far as I am aware this was his only intervention in civic life in Oxford in his many years as an Oxford academic. In a detailed study of Victorian radical and liberal politics in Oxford, I could find no record of Ruskin's attendance at any reform meetings in the city (though one source refers to his attendance at one of Morris' university lectures), although he did found a school of drawing and the trade union college in Oxford is named after him at the instigation of the American philanthropists, Charles Beard and Walter Vrooman, who founded it in 1899, the year before Ruskin's death. Ruskin is also known for providing financial support for Octavia Hill's housing management scheme in Marylebone - Ruskin became a landlord, as well as buying land in Sheffield for an agricultural colony through the St George's Guild, a project based on medieval guild principles, reflecting Ruskin's medieval romanticism and his anti-urbanism, both of which were to be shared by William Morris. Morris however differed from Ruskin, whom he admired, by also engaging in productive as well as literary activity in running William Morris and company as a retailer of internal design products such as tapestry and furniture for the top end of the market as well as being a political activist, polemicist, protester and journal editor and founder and leader of the Socialist League and then the Hammersmith Socialist Society.

Ruskin's only engagement with working class socialists was in the Sheffield project and this experience was not a happy one. His connection was with Henry Swan, a Sheffield engraver, who Ruskin had met when he was teaching drawing at the London Working Men's College in 1855. In 1875, Ruskin funded Swan to buy a cottage in Walkley in Sheffield, to run a one room museum for the St George's Guild, comprising pictures, manuscripts and books from Ruskin's personal collection. In April 1876, Ruskin visited the cottage museum to meet a group of Owenite co-

operators who had formed a Mutual Improvement Society which met at the Hall of Science initiated by the Chartist councillor and journalist Isaac Ironside. The group also involved George Harrison Riley, an engraver and newspaper editor, who had been involved in the First International and had also met Walt Whitman in the United States. Riley had edited the International's journal in London and now ran a journal called *The Socialist,* which was more Whitmanite Christian Socialist than Marxist. Ruskin however disapproved of Riley's communistic tendencies, arguing that any attempt to 'communize' a neighbour's property ended up in 'ruin and shame'. The Sheffield socialists were originally interested in establishing a community to engage in cooperative manufacture such as boot-making. The project however, possibly under Ruskin's influence, turned to agriculture with Ruskin funding the purchase of a farm on the outskirts of Sheffield at Totley. Swan recommended a group of tenants. Unfortunately, the group comprised bootmakers, ironworkers and opticians who knew little about agriculture. The group also wanted to operate as a collective, making decisions by majority vote. Ruskin objected to this and he considered the project should be run by a 'simple and orderly tyrant'. The group wanted to give Ruskin his money back. Ruskin however appointed Riley to take over the project, which was resisted by the co-operators. Riley then threatened the co-operators with violence. They complained to Ruskin who refused to intervene, at which point the co-operators said they were no longer responsible for the farm. Edward Carpenter who had moved to a farm nearby and knew the Sheffield socialists, commented that 'the would-be Garden of Eden had become a scene of such confusion that Ruskin had to send down an ancient retainer of his (with a pitchfork instead of a flaming sword) to bar them all out'. This was his Scottish gardener, David Downes. Carpenter tried unsuccessfully to intercede on Riley's behalf. Riley returned to America, where he returned to following Whitman (of whom Ruskin had apparently been unaware). Downes managed the farm till 1886, at which point it passed to George Pearson, a socialist friend of Carpenter's. Apparently, the incident led to Ruskin's nervous breakdown in 1878. Ruskin's authoritarian approach to the Sheffield socialists contrasts with Carpenter's much more successful libertarian engagement with the same group.

Much of Ruskin's influence on earlier socialists was in fact indirect and through ethical socialists such as Morris and early members of the Independent Labour Party such as Thomas Barclay, who in 1888 published a pamphlet summary of Ruskin's teachings (a pamphlet which in my view is much more readable than Ruskin's own writings), Fred Jowett , who inherited Ruskin's anti-parliamentarianism, Katharine Conway, John Bruce Glasier and even Tom Mann, before he turned from the ILP to Communism. However, the fact that Phillip Blond, the author of the 2010 critique of contemporary politics *Red Tory and* director of the think tank *Respublica*, also cites

Ruskin as a precursor, demonstrates that his legacy is not just limited to the political left. Ruskin's approach to craft and his hatred of mechanisation not only influenced the arts and crafts movement, but also more recent thinkers, such as the philosopher Richard Sennett, whose Ruskinian work of 2009 is entitled *The Craftsman*. Frederic Harrison may have referred to Ruskin as a 'medieval reactionist' and an 'aristocratic absolutist' but Ruskin's social theory still has some supporters.

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SAMUEL OLIVER: Radical Democrat and Internationalist

Samuel Oliver was active in London radical politics from the late 1860's. He lived at 14 Eynella Road from 1908 until his death at the age of 76 in 1916. He was recorded in the 1911 census as a 'grinder of coal dust for foundries'.

Oliver was at one time secretary of a London based radical group, the International Democratic Association. The International Democratic Association had been formed in July 1869 by George Reynolds, the editor of the radical weekly journal, *Reynolds's News,* which had been founded in 1850. The IDA's first secretary was John Johnson who was known as the 'Marat of Wandsworth Common'. The objectives of the Association were announced as:

"*The provisional committee of the International Democratic Association solicit the co-operation of all true Democratic Reformers, Socialists, Republicans, and other proletarians, in their forthcoming battle with 'the powers that be,' for the abolition of slavery, the emancipation of the labouring classes from the bondage of oppressive and unremunerative labour, the tyranny of landlords and money lords, the misrule and arbitrary legislation of hereditary usurpers, and the depredations and impositions of an aristocratic clique of soi-disant 'right honourables' and purchase-elected (mis) 'representatives.' England is ripe for a change, and the sooner it takes place the better*."

The IDA was initially led by followers of Bronterre O'Brien who had been members of his National Reform League in the 1850's and then joined Edmund Beales' Reform League in the 1860's. John Johnson and William Osborne had opposed the winding up of the Reform League in March 1869 and as well as being

active in the IDA, called the three day conference of working men to discuss policy on land in October 1869 at the Bell Inn at the Old Bailey which led to the foundation of the Land and Labour League (although Marx was later to claim the credit for founding the organisation).

The IDA organised support for the Irish nationalist Fenians, demanding the release of imprisoned Fenians. In September 1869, the IDA held a public meeting in Clerkenwell Green, chaired by Mr Edgington, which was attended by over 500 people. The meeting agreed that 'all professions of conciliation towards Ireland are shams while Irish patriots are kept in British dungeons'. This was followed a week later by an amnesty demonstration, with several thousand people marching from Finsbury to Trafalgar Square. The Trafalgar Square meeting was chaired by the Irish nationalist MP for Mayo, George Henry Moore. The *Globe* newspaper reported that Moore delivered a speech 'of greater vehemence than delicacy of expression'. Moore had argued that 'the English law and the English government for all time had been exceptionally cruel, barbarous and bloody…. It's sceptre had been the sword, its diadem the black cap, and its throne the gallows, during the seven centuries of its rule over Ireland.'

John Johnson, as secretary, wrote to the Clerkenwell News, which was reporting on the IDA's activities, acknowledging that he had stigmatized 'Gladstone, Bright and co' as 'traitors to the working class' for 'carrying on the government of the country under false pretences and misappropriation of the revenues'. In early 1870, lectures were being held weekly on Sunday evenings at the White Horse in Grays Inn Road. Oliver became IDA secretary in June 1870, taking over from John Keeley, who had foiled the position for a couple of months. In July 1870, the IDA published a statement of its objectives and means.

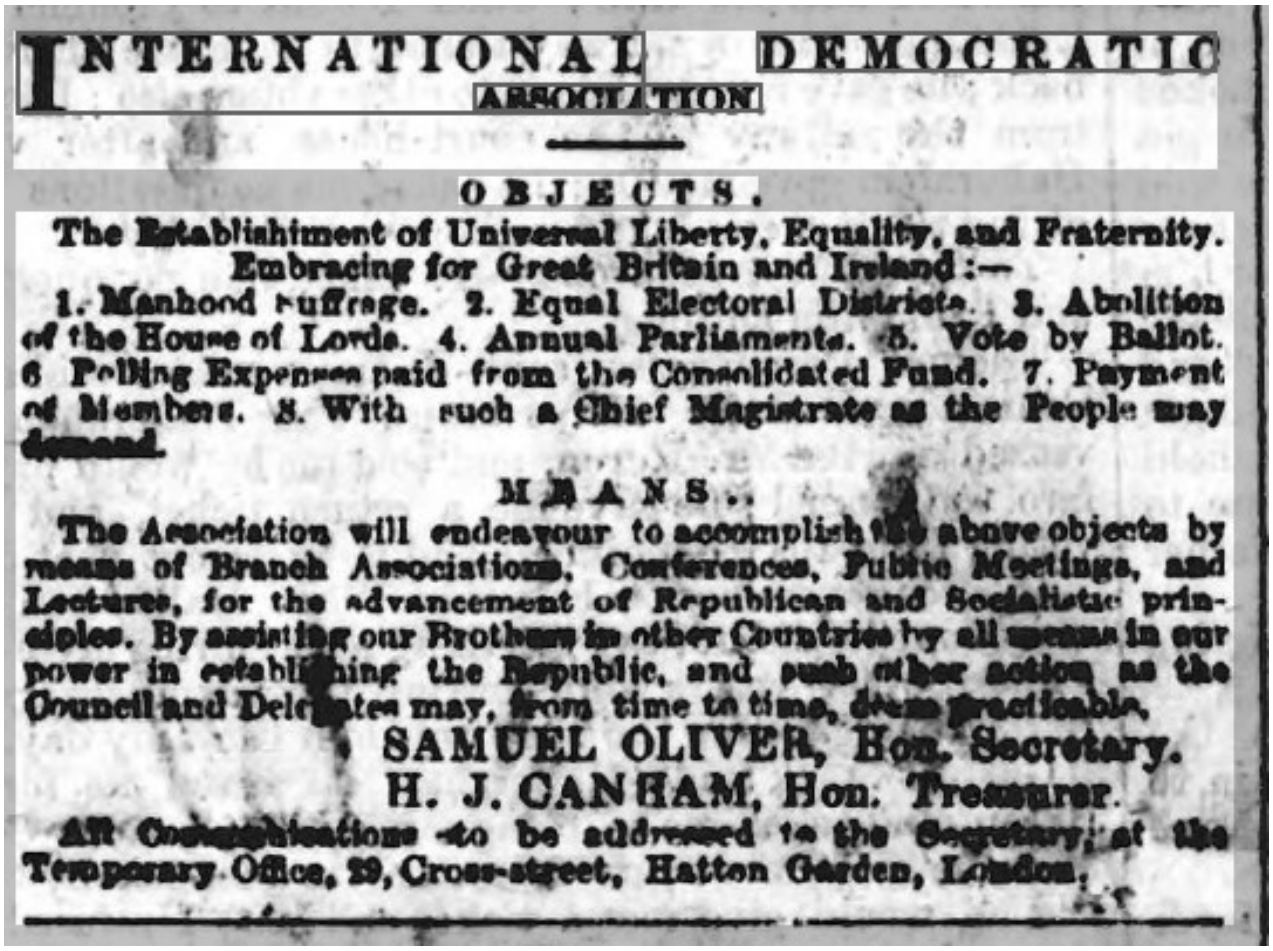
" *OBJECTS - The Establishment of Universal Liberty, equality and Fraternity. Embracing for Great Britain and Ireland:*

1. *Manhood Suffrage.*
2. *Equal Electoral Districts.*
3. *Abolition of the House of Lords.*
4. *Annual Parliaments.*
5. *Vote by Ballot.*
6. *Polling expenses paid from the consolidated fund.*
7. *Payment of Members. With such a chief magistrate as the People may Demand.*

MEANS - The association will endeavour to accomplish the above objects by means of Branch Associations, Conferences, Public Meetings, and Lectures, for the advancement of Republican and socialistic principles. By assisting our brethren in

other Countries by all means in our power in establishing the Republic, and such other action as this Council and Delegates may, from time to time, deem practicable."

The statement was signed by Samuel Oliver as secretary and H J Canham as treasurer, and issued from a Temporary Office, 29 Cross Street, Hatton Garden, London. Five of the objects were taken from the six points of the Peoples Charter of 1838. Rother oddly, the only point missing was no property qualification for members of parliament.



INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION

OBJECTS.

The Establishment of Universal Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Embracing for Great Britain and Ireland:—

1. Manhood suffrage. 2. Equal Electoral Districts. 3. Abolition of the House of Lords. 4. Annual Parliaments. 5. Vote by Ballot. 6 Polling Expenses paid from the Consolidated Fund. 7. Payment of Members. 8. With such a Chief Magistrate as the People may demand.

MEANS.

The Association will endeavour to accomplish the above objects by means of Branch Associations, Conferences, Public Meetings, and Lectures, for the advancement of Republican and Socialistic principles. By assisting our Brothers in other Countries by all means in our power in establishing the Republic, and such other action as the Council and Delegates may, from time to time, deem practicable.

SAMUEL OLIVER, Hon. Secretary.
H. J. CANHAM, Hon. Treasurer.

All Communications to be addressed to the Secretary, at the Temporary Office, 29, Cross-street, Hatton Garden, London.

International Democratic Association: Objects and Means July 1870

Much of the group's activity was based around regular public meetings in Clerkenwell Green - outside where the Marx Memorial Library now stands - which were frequently attended by large crowds. Large demonstrations were called or supported by the IDA, notably a meeting in Trafalgar Square on 20 September and a monster march attended, Engels said, by about 100,000 people to Hyde Park on 24 October 1869. The IDA was clearly a significant part of a wave of English republican protest and it is curious that the role of the organisation has been largely ignored by historians, whose focus has been on the International Working Men's Association (IWMA) of Marx and Engels.

Yet this wave did not break but carried on throughout 1870 and for much of 1871 with the IDA holding regular meetings. These were advertised in the *Irishman*, one of the most radical Irish nationalist papers of the day - the IDA was keen to work with the Irish nationalist currents in London. The group attracted the attention of the police; a meeting in May 1870 to rally support for a demonstration in support of French Republicans was reported in *The Times* as having 'several police detectives … scattered about the meeting'. The IDA weekly meetings were held in the Wellington Music Hall in Brook Street, Holborn

In March 1870, they campaigned against royal dowries, specifically the dowry being awarded to Princess Louise. This won the support of leading republican Liberal MPs - Charles Dilke, Henry Fawcett and Peter Taylor. The IDA sought to convene a conference of all republicans to combine 'all republican and democratic societies in one grand republican organisation'. Oliver was appointed a member of a fifteen-member committee to pursue this. The committee also included the French republican, Victor Le Lubez, John Weston, the former Reform League activist and member of the Land and Labour League, who was on the IWMA General council, and the Irish nationalist, Miles McSweeney, who was a member of the Marylebone Radical Club.

In October, the IDA held a meeting to demand the recall of parliament to discuss intervention in the Franco-Prussian war. In December a meeting at the Wellington Hall heard an address from a French republican, Monsieur de Fonvielle, editor of the Paris paper, La Liberte, on 'the present state of France'. About 500 were present. The meeting passed a resolution urging the British government to support the French republican government. In December, the IDA organised a demonstration in Trafalgar Square to support the French republicans. The meeting was chaired by A Salomons. The speakers included Charles Bradlaugh, the republican MP for Northampton. De Fonville also spoke, pointing out that the British government had not recognised the French republican government, because Queen Victoria was related to German princes. After the demonstration, the protestors marched down Piccadilly to the French embassy, led by a band playing The Marseillaise, with the resolutions being handed to the embassy porter. The IDA collaborated with the Land and Labour League to establish an Anglo-French Intervention Committee. This new group held a meeting 'of representative working men' on 13 October 1870 at the Sussex Hotel, Bouverie Street. The meeting was chaired by Josiah Merriman. A lawyer who had been active in the Reform League and had been a member of the IWMA General council, and speakers included the positivists, Professor Beesley and Dr Congreve. Contributions were also made by IDA members, Osborne and McSweeney. According to the report of the meeting in *Reynolds Newspaper*,

McSweeney bitterly denounced all peace movements in the present crisis a contemptible cowardice. The meeting agreed that if Prussia persisted in her aggression, Britain should form a defensive alliance with the French republic.

In April 1871, the IDA organised a demonstration in Hyde Park in support of the Paris commune. Oliver signed the appeal to 'Men of London'. The appeal concluded 'Long Live the Universal Republic, Social and Democratic'. Oliver attended the IWMA's General Council meeting on 11 April 1871, as leader of a deputation from the IDA together with James Murray and a 'citizen' Taylor, to seek support, including financial support, for the demonstration. Murray read out the IDA's manifesto. Members of the General Council were not happy about being asked to support an event which had already been organised. Frederick Engels asked why the IDA was not already affiliated to the First International at which point Oliver apparently said that they thought the First International was not sufficiently radical. He had been involved in the Reform League, which he thought had been a 'sham' and that the speeches made by Benjamin Lucraft, the former Chartist, Reform League activist and now member of the First International's General Council, were too mild. John Weston proposed that the IWMA support the demonstration but this was objected to by some other members. Thomas Mottershead, who was chairing the meeting, sought to defend Lucraft's reputation - Lucraft was not at the meeting. Karl Marx was also not at the meeting as he was ill. A proposal that the IWMA support the demonstration, but not send delegates to the IDA's meeting to plan the demonstration, was carried on a 6-5 vote. A proposal to seek to agree a joint statement with the IDA was however rejected. A footnote to the minutes of the meeting, published in Moscow in 1967, refers to the International Democratic Association rather unfairly as including 'French and German petit-bourgeois emigrés in London and British bourgeois republicans.' Interestingly the meeting also noted a request for information about the IWMA from a Mr Spalding of Herne Hill.

Some 2,000 attended the Hyde Park rally. A procession from Finsbury was joined by another group at Clerkenwell Green and after a delay caused by heavy rain, about 300 people marched along the Strand, Pall Mall and Piccadilly. The main speaker was James Murray, who should not be confused with his brother Charles, who was at the time a member of the IWMA's General Council and a supporter of Marx. John Johnson, Weston and Le Lubez also spoke. Murray claimed that the commune represented 'the liberation of labour from the trammels of capital'. The meeting agreed to send a statement of support to the Commune, which included appreciation of the Communards' "sublime work on behalf of human liberty and defence of your rights. We recognise you as the pioneers of progress and the architects of a new and purer social state … an example likely to increase the love of liberty among our

down-trodden fellow countrymen and thus hasten the day when the fraud begotten power of all tyrants shall disappear before the power and intelligence of united peoples of all lands."

Rose Street as seen in an original sketch of 1851

Marx's statement for the IWMA on *The Civil War in France*, was published in June. This led to divisions within the IWMA General Council, with some leading British trade unionists disassociating themselves from Marx's position. Oliver was later to be associated with some of the dissident republicans within the First International, including John Hales, John Weston and the French republicans, Victor Le Lubez and Pierre Vesinier. The IDA's John Johnson was however one of the speakers at the public meeting in March 1872 at St George's Hall, Langham Place to celebrate the first anniversary of the commune, with Marx, Hales, Weston and some sixteen French republican exiles also on the platform. The event was announced as 'under the auspices of the International, the Democrats of London and the Refugees of the Commune'. In 1872, the International Democratic Association became the Universal Republican Brotherhood which became a component of a Universal Republican International which rivalled the Marxian First International. Le Lubez and the German exile Ludwig Weber who was a follower of Marx's rival Ferdinand Lassalle, were both active in the League. The League was supported by the French exiles London based branch of the IWMA, and also appears to have co-operated with the English Federation of the IWMA established by John Hales in September 1871, which challenged the authority of the General Council which was dominated by Marx.

In the later 1870's, Oliver was a member of the Rose Street club in Manette Street, Soho. The club was probably the most radical and international of London's clubs. One of its founders was the anarchist, Frank Kitz. It was divided into national sections, including French, German (the remnants of the Communist League) and Italian sections. The English section included radicals such as Edwin Dunn of the Marylebone Radical Club, who was later to help initiate the meetings which led to the foundation of the Democratic Federation. In the early 1880's, the Rose Street club was the base for the anarchist international correspondence bureau, which included the Italian anarchist, Enrico Malatesta.

In 1881, Oliver was actively involved in the campaign to release the German anarchist, Johan Most, from prison. Most, a former socialist member of the German *Reichstag* had fled to London where he edited the anarchist journal *Freiheit*, initially based in the Rose Street club. He had written in support of the assassination of the Russian Tsar Alexander II, for which he received 18 months in prison. On release, Most moved to the United States, where he continued to be active in the anarchist movement, publishing *Freiheit* from New York. Most was imprisoned again after the assassination of President McKinley, for writing that it was not a crime to kill a ruler. The treasurer of the London based *Freiheit* Defence Committee was John Lord, who was a member of the Rose Street club

In the early 1880's, Oliver was a member of the Social Democratic Federation, founded by Henry Hyndman as the Democratic Federation in 1881, and remained a member until his death. He was probably one of the founding members, as his friends from the IDA, Charles and James Murray, together with other followers of the Chartist Bronterre O'Brien were founding members of the organisation. Oliver was an active member of the Peckham SDF branch and organiser of their 'monster entertainment' in 1892. While he was not on the SDF national executive committee, according to his obituary in the SDF's journal, *Justice*, he was a regular attender at international congresses from 1889 - this must refer to the congresses of the Second International, which was founded that year. Apparently, whenever he visited Paris, he went to the *Mur des Fédérés* in the Pere Lachaise cemetery - the memorial to the executed communards.

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MALTMAN BARRY: Tory Socialist

Michael Maltman Barry was a colleague of Karl Marx who was active in London radical politics for over thirty years. For his last years, he lived at 'Roseneath' 51 Beauval Road, where he died in 1909.

He was a socialist radical, but as a strong opponent of Gladstonian liberalism, he sought to ally the independent working class movement socialists with the Conservative Party and in his later years stood as a Conservative parliamentary candidate.

Maltman Barry

Born in Glasgow in 1842, the son of a shoemaker, and educated at Glasgow grammar school, he moved to London in 1864 to become a journalist on the *Standard* - a Tory supporting newspaper, reporting on parliamentary debates and on labour matters. He met Marx who provided him with information for his articles. Barry shared Marx's hostility to William Gladstone, the Liberal leader and Prime Minister from 1868 and especially to his policy on the 'eastern question'. Both Marx and Barry were Russophobes, and whereas Gladstone supported Bulgarians against the Turks, Marx and Barry were more supportive of the Turks as was the leading propagandist on the eastern question and Russia, David Urquhart.

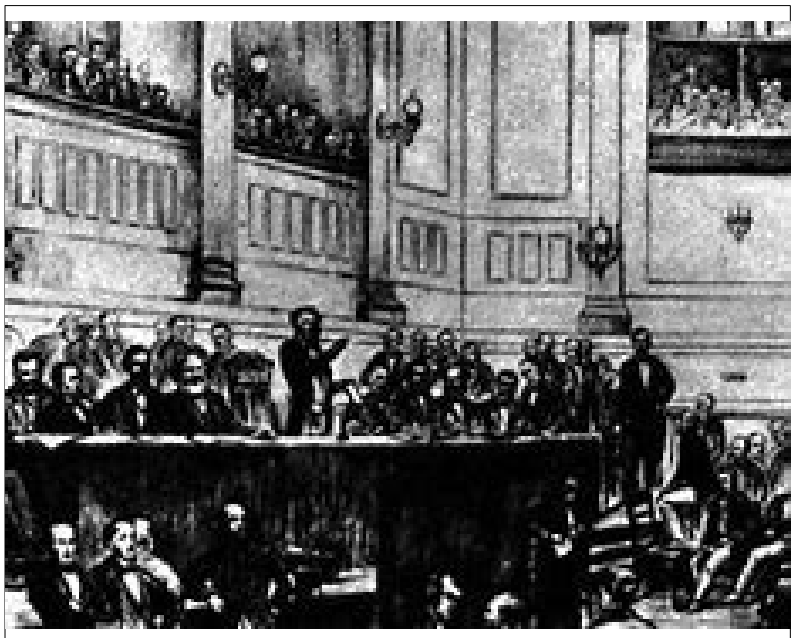
In October 1871, Barry became provisional chairman of the English Federal Council of the International Working Men's Association or First International. Although the IWMA had been established in 1864, and other European countries had national councils, the London based General Council had initially acted as coordinator of English branches as well as executive committee of the wider international body. Marx was not an enthusiast for a separate English federal body. However, in 1871 many of the leading London based trade unionists had left the General Council after disagreements with Marx. The English Federal Council, initially established at the initiative of John Hales, who had been the General Council's secretary, was seen as challenging the General Council's authority, in other words the supremacy of Marx

who dominated that body. Barry was appointed as one of the Federal Council's delegates to the General Council, which he had been attending informally since June. Barry soon had an argument with Hales, who was a libertarian radical who was more supportive of Gladstone, and Marx supported Barry, with Hales being forced to give up his Federal Council position. Hales retaliated by persuading his supporters on the Federal council to rescind Barry's role as their General Council delegate, on the grounds that he was reporting on meetings in the London newspapers and had also refused to attend a demonstration in support of the radical republican MP, Sir Charles Dilke. However. Marx ensured Barry could stay on the General Council, being his ally against Hales. Barry had also argued that the IWMA should be open to middle class radicals, and that the words 'Working Men's should be deleted from its statutes, a proposal that was rejected by his colleagues, including Hales, who were mainly from working class backgrounds, Marx himself being a notable exception.

Barry, like Marx, was a supporter of the Paris commune and was secretary of a Society for the Relief and Employment of Political Refugees. Barry stopped attending General Council meetings, but reappeared at the IWMA conference in the Hague in August 1872, claiming a mandate from German IWMA members in Chicago, but in practice acting as a reporter for the Tory *Standard*. The British trade unionist, Thomas Mottershead, challenged Barry's mandate, but again Barry was protected by Marx. Barry supported Marx in proposing that the General Council should be transferred from London to New York, a proposal which was agreed and which in effect led to the decline and winding up of the organisation. The libertarian socialists within the General Council, such as Hales and the Belgian Cesar de Paepe, continued to organise socialist conferences in Europe, including the Ghent socialist conference in 1877, which Barry attended. The anarchists established their own International. Barry then focused his efforts on the Labour Protection League, a trade union body trying to block use of blackleg labour during strikes, and on the London radical club circuit, including the Paddington Free Discussion society and the Rose Street Social Democratic club in Soho. He also attended a worker's congress in Paris in 1875. He became secretary of a Working Men's Parliamentary Association and also joined the Trades Alliance Association, which in 1875, became the Manhood Suffrage League, with Barry taking over the role of secretary from the anarchist, Frank Kitz in 1877. The League included a number of ex-chartist followers of Bronterre O'Brien, who were later to help establish the Democratic Federation (later the Social Democratic Federation) with the Tory supporting Henry Myers Hyndman. In 1873, Barry stood in the second London School Board elections in Marylebone as a working-class candidate, winning 2,187 votes, coming 11th out of 15 candidates for 7 seats. Interestingly he is listed in the official record as a bootmaker, not as a journalist. The only existing working-class representative on the London School Board was the ex-chartist and

IWMA member, Benjamin Lucraft, who had been first elected in 1870 and was re-elected in Finsbury. George Potter, the trade unionist and former editor of *The Bee-hive* labour newspaper was elected in Westminster.

In 1876, Barry became editor of a radical journal, the *People's Advocate,* which advocated land nationalisation, republicanism, secular education and law reform. It supported Irish nationalism and the German social democratic exiles in London and reported on the activities of the growing network of London radical clubs. It however collapsed after only five issues. In November 1876, Barry stood again as a 'working men's' candidate for the London School Board in Marylebone. This time, he came second bottom of the poll with only 1,844 votes, again recorded as a bootmaker. The suffragist, Alice Westlake, came top of the poll. Potter was re-elected in Westminster while Lucraft came head of the poll in Finsbury.



Meeting of the First International in London

In 1877, Barry collaborated with Marx on articles on the Eastern Question for *Vanity Fair* and this journalism helped to turn the anti-Russia agitation into a popular cause. Barry organised meetings in support of Turkey in Trafalgar Square in July 1876 and in Hyde Park in October and the following May, using the Manhood Suffrage League as a vehicle. Russia was criticised and the Bulgarian atrocities blamed on Balkan agitators. At the latter meeting, Charles Wade of the Workmen's Peace Association who opposed this view, reported he was 'hustled by roughs.' Barry and his colleagues were apparently chased out of the park by 30 members of the Marylebone branch of the Labourers Union. In May 1877, Barry tried to move a pro-government amendment at a meeting organised by the Eastern Question Association and the Labour Representation League at St James Hall. In August 1877, he became secretary of a National Society for the Resistance of Russian Aggression and the Protection of British Interests in the Middle East. A meeting on 29 December culminated in a riot, followed by a procession to the Turkish embassy. In January 1878, Barry sought to disrupt a meeting of the anti-Turk Neutrality Committee at the Cannon Street hotel and then addressed a meeting at Exeter Hall on the Strand a week later. In a pamphlet on the Eastern Question published

in 1880, *The Catechism of the Eastern Question*, he claimed that he was independent of both Liberal and Conservative parties, but a plan to stand in Dundee in the 1880 general election as an 'advanced democrat', but one explicitly supporting Disraeli's Eastern policy, was not pursued. Both seats were won by Liberals. In October 1880, Barry appeared at a meeting organised by the Peace Society and the Quakers, proposing a pro-government amendment. By now he was associated with a Working Men's Conservative Association. He also started attending meetings of the National Union of Conservative associations and apparently briefed Lord Randolph Churchill on the activities of the German anarchist, Johan Most, who was in London, publishing *Freiheit,* welcoming the assassination of Tsar Alexander II and suggesting that other leaders could follow, statements for which he was sent to prison. On release. Most emigrated to America.

As well as collaborating with the Conservatives, Barry started working with another Tory supporting socialist, Henry Champion, who was a member of the executive of Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation. Champion was also Scottish and had a military background. Barry and Champion wanted to set up an Independent Labour party. However, their initiative to run SDF candidates in the 1885 general election was funded by £340 from the Conservative Party, the Conservatives wanting to split the anti-Tory vote. John Williams in Hampstead and John Fielding in Kennington however polled very poorly. This became known as the 'Tory gold' scandal, and Hyndman, who was party to the agreement, was heavily criticised by other socialists. Keir Hardie of the Scottish Labour Party also accepted money from Barry to contest a parliamentary by-election in Mid-Lanark. Champion then become involved in the London District Committee of the Labour Electoral Association and started to publish the *Labour Elector.* This reviewed the policies of parliamentary candidates and recommended his readers on the preferred candidate. One of Champion's first interventions was in the December 1887 Dulwich by-election, when Champion recommended the Liberal candidate, James Henderson over the Conservative, John Maple. Dulwich was a fairly safe Conservative seat and Maple won with a significant majority.

In June 1888, Barry and Champion both moved to Aberdeen from where they continued to publish the *Labour Elector*, though this only ran initially for two years. In July 1892, Barry stood for parliament in Banffshire as a' Conservative Democrat' advocating Irish Home Rule, land nationalisation, manhood suffrage, equal electoral districts and payment of MPs. In a straight fight, he was defeated by the sitting Liberal MP, Robert Duff, 2,293 to 1,424 votes. Engels referred to Barry as the 'manager of the socialist wing of the Conservatives'. However, Barry did not contest the by-election the following year, held because Duff had been appointed as Governor of

New South Wales. The by-election was won by the Liberal, William Wedderburn, a former Indian Civil servant, who had been one of the founders of the Indian National Congress with the Indian nationalist G K Gokhale and Alan Octavian Hume, who on his retirement was active in the Liberal party in Dulwich and has a separate entry in this pamphlet. Barry no longer denied being a Conservative. In September, Joseph Burgess, who edited the *Workman's Times*, accused Barry of being a Tory agent. Burgess replied "The Conservative Party is in my opinion, the most honourable party in the state and I am certainly not ashamed to belong to it'. Barry apparently attempted to take control of the *Workman's Times.* Burgess, in his 1926 volume *Will Lloyd George Supplant Ramsay Macdonald*? was to devote two chapters to giving a detailed narrative of what he considered to be 'the Machinations of Maltman Barry'.

In publishing a new run of the *Labour Elector* in 1893, Champion claimed the paper was the organ of the newly established Independent Labour Party, but this was repudiated by the national ILP leadership. In May 1894, Barry and Champion however appear to have persuaded the Aberdeen branch of the ILP and the local Trades Council to support the Liberal Unionist/Conservative candidates against the Liberals. Champion had stood unsuccessfully for Aberdeen South as a Trades Council candidate in 1892 against both Liberal and Liberal Unionist candidates, the latter allied with the Conservatives - the Liberal, James Bryce had won. Barry sought the Conservative/Liberal Unionist nomination for South Aberdeen, but was rejected in favour of the Lord Provost, David Stewart. It is not difficult to see how Barry's advocacy of an eight-hour day and legislation 'to secure for workers in the future a fuller measure of the value of their labour' would hardly have impressed the selection committee. The seat was held by James Bryce. The ILP put up John Lincoln Mahon in Aberdeen North, and Tom Mann in the by-election the following year. Barry instead stood in Morpeth as a Conservative, polling 1235 votes, being defeated by the sitting Lib-Lab MP, agricultural workers trade unionist and peace advocate, Thomas Burt. Barry stood again against Burt in the 1900 election, this time receiving 46% of the vote, no doubt enhanced by his support, and Burt's opposition, to the Boer war.

Barry failed to secure the Conservative nomination for Montrose, so stood again for North Aberdeen in 1906, this time explicitly as a Conservative and opposed by Tom Kennedy who was standing for the Social Democratic Federation. Barry, who had changed his name to Barrie to sound more Scottish, came in third place with only 831 votes. Kennedy got 1,935 votes, the sitting Liberal MP, Duncan Pirie winning with 4852. The Independent Labour Party's Frank Rose was to capture the seat in 1918. Barry (or Barrie as he now was) seems to have then disappeared from political life, and his reasons for returning to London and moving to Dulwich are not known. He was apparently writing a history of the labour movement, as well as a novel, but

neither were finished and no manuscripts have been found. He died of pneumonia at his home in Beauval Road on 5th April 1909 and was buried in Kensal Green cemetery.

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London School Board. Election results

LOUISE MICHEL: Anarchist in East Dulwich

Louise Michel, anarchist and veteran of the Paris Commune of 1871, lived in East Dulwich between 1893 and 1898, first in Placquett Road (which is now Copleston Road) and then at 25 Chesterfield Grove, before moving to Albion Villas in Sydenham and then to Dahomey Road in Mitcham. She returned to France in 1899.

Born in 1830, Louise Michel was a teacher in Paris from 1865, becoming involved in radical politics and from 1869 in a feminist group *Société pour la Revendication du Droits Civils de la Femme* (*Society for the Demand of Civil Rights for Women*), together with André Léo, the pseudonym of the French novelist Victoire Léodile Béra**. T**he group's main focus being the improvement of education for girls and women. During the siege by the German army, Michel joined the National Guard. Being dissuaded from a plan to assassinate the French government's leader, Adolphe Thiers, she joined a battalion at Montmartre and organised ambulance stations.

Arrested in May 1871, accused of trying to overthrow the government, Michel like many of the Paris *communards* was deported to New Caledonia in August 1873, after 20 months in prison in France.

In New Caledonia, she taught the indigenous Kanaks French and in 1878 sided with them in their revolt against the French colonial administration. She was allowed to teach in the main town, Noumea the children of other deportees, including Algerians from the rebellion of 1871. With the amnesty of 1880, Michel returned to Paris. Her exile had hardened her revolutionary views, having developed anarchist views from her contact with Natalie Lehmel, a fellow communard deportee who had been involved in the International Workers Association or First International.

Louise Michel in the Paris Commune

Michel attended the anarchist conference in London in 1881. In France she campaigned successfully for the amnesty to be extended to Algerian rebel deportees in New Caledonia. In March 1883, she was involved in demonstrations of the unemployed, which turned into riots, with Michel apparently carrying a black flag, leading rioters to loot bakeries. She was arrested and sentenced to six years in solitary confinement. Released in 1886, she was arrested again in 1890. Avoiding committal to a mental asylum, Michel fled to London.

On arriving in London, Michel moved into rooms at 28-30 Fitzroy Street, which had been rented by the anarchist Ernest Delebeque, a cabinet maker from Lille, before moving into a house on Fitzroy Square with Charlotte Vauvelle and her brother, Achille, Charlotte (sometimes called Carlotta) being her closest friend who had taken refuge in England with her. Fitzrovia was a centre for Communard exiles and other French anarchists. Margaret MacMillan commented that the lodging was 'less fitted for human habitation than for a wild beast'. Louise had three or four Persian cats; graceful with gem-like eyes and thick silky furry coats, leaping on dirty cushions with the air of jungle queens, and spoken to, as in old Egypt, with reverence and doting love…. On a gilt cage was a very insolent parrot.'. The parrot was called Coco. Michel however soon moved to East Dulwich.

Michel established an international anarchist school at 19 Fitzroy Street, helped by her anarchist colleague Auguste Coulon. The teachers included the young journalist Henry Nevinson, who together with Nannie Dryhurst, was responsible for instructing the 'little Anarchs in the elements of drill and orderly behaviour'. Dryhurst, the translator of Kropotkin's study of the French Revolution, was at the time Nevinson's lover. Over eighty children attended the school, which was in two dingy basement rooms,

mainly the children of Russian, Polish and Italian refugees. Michel taught piano to the children and French to Nevinson. Teaching was child-centred and according to Nevinson, the children decided what they wanted to study 'to avoid the hideous poll-parrot system of the Board schools.' Teachers at the school included the Irish anarchist, Agnes Henry, who lived in the communal Fellowship of the New Life at 29 Doughty Street with Ramsay Macdonald among others, insisting on discussing anarchism at breakfast, and Rachel Macmillan, the socialist educationalist, who later established a nursey in Deptford with her sister, Margaret Macmillan. Margaret Macmillan recorded that the school aimed to 'develop among children the principles of humanity and justice'. French, English, German, Music, Drawing, Sewing and Etching were on the curriculum as well as technical teaching. There were also adult classes for 'foreigners arriving in London'. The school had a 'directing committee' which included Petr Kropotkin, Enrico Malatesta and William Morris. Macmillan commented that 'Anarchie' was written in large letters on a blackboard, beneath which were two pictures:

"One of them showed the gibbets and bodies of the anarchists hung at Chicago, the heads covered with a white cloth. The shrouds or coverings were pulled tight with cords at the neck. The stiff limbs were half-exposed. The shrouds hung white and stiff. It was more awful than if the dead faces had been uncovered. There was another picture representing the shooting of Communists in Paris…. It was even more terrible. The men, bound and helpless, were ranged against a wall."

Louise was reported as commenting "We are teaching history, you see … They will never forget it."

The school was closed after two years when bomb making material was found. It was thought that it had probably been stored there by August Coulon who lived on the premises. Auguste Coulon was later caught up in the Walsall bomb plot in 1891. He was cleared though suspected by many of being an agent provocateur.

Louise Michel was a popular speaker on the London radical and socialist scene. In April 1892, she spoke at the funeral of the wife of the anarchist Charles Mowbray, which the anarchists turned into a public rally. Mowbray and his fellow *Commonweal* editor, David Nichol, had been subject to a police raid and Michel spoke in French at a protest rally on May Day. In December 1892, Michel spoke at a meeting at the Grafton Hall, off Tottenham Court Road, on the corruption of the bourgeoisie - this was in the light of the Panama scandal in which directors of the Panama Canal company were arrested and led to the fall of the French government. Louise perhaps somewhat tactlessly contrasted the corruption of the bourgeoisie and its parliament with 'the purifying fire of the bomb blasts'. She also spoke at a fundraising fete in the Grafton Hall in March 1893. The entertainment included a

short play by Malato - 'The Marriage of Dynamite'. After further sketches and a poetry recital Louise's speech, reported as 'inspired, eloquent and acclaimed' was followed by dancing. She also spoke at the annual commune commemoration the same month at the South Place Institute. Olive Garnett recorded in her diary that she spoke in French - a poetical speech on past sufferings and hope, which was translated into English by Kropotkin. Michel was on the anarchist platform at the Mayday Hyde Park rally in 1894, speaking with Mowbray.

Louise Michel

Michel was apparently short of money, though appears to have received some financial support from a friend in Paris, Ernest Vaughan, and from the Paris journal, *L'Intransigeint*. Kropotkin and her fellow Communard Henri Rochefort helped her to get articles published in journals. Kropotkin was worried that Michel was too friendly to French visitors, and that there was a risk she was unintentionally introducing police spies or informers into the exile networks.

Malato, who had been with Michel in New Caledonia, in his memoir - *Les Joyeusetes de L'Exil*, described Michel as "an arresting figure. She did not seem to belong to our prosaic age at all, but to the past or the future instead…The priestess of the Social Revolution …in whose veins the old Gaullish blood still seethed and bubbled.". Michel was apparently surrounded by dogs and cats and an ancient parrot that cried 'Long Live Anarchy!'.

Michel always wore black in commemoration of the commune. Nevinson remembered her old black bonnet 'flung anyhow on the top of her wild and copious grey hair' … her 'thin white face, lined with mingled enthusiasm and humour', her eyes 'eagerly peering out on the world'. A CID inspector, John Sweeney, in his memoir, referred to Michel as a 'fragile, thinly-clad creature haranguing the crowd from the plinth of Trafalgar Square or in some hall in the neighbourhood of Cleveland Street or Soho'.

In December 1893, the French newspaper, *Le Matin* sent a reporter to visit Michel at home to ask her view of the anarchist, Vaillant who threw a bomb in the French chamber of deputies. Michel said she approved of the act: "I think it is a good thing that courageous men sacrifice themselves in these acts of violence. The risk is entirely their own and the purpose is to terrify the government and the bourgeoisie." When the reporter objected that innocent people were killed, Michel responded "You must balance it out. On one side a few voluntarily sacrificed lives of our own people

plus a few other lives; on the other side, the happiness of all humanity, and the end of want and war which together claim more victims than do a few explosions." On being asked to define what anarchy stood for, she asserted: "no more authority, no government; absolute liberty…. Men raised in a different atmosphere will have different ideas and principles. No more theft or crime. Everyone will have work. Society itself will create order…"

In 1892, Michel joined a Committee for the defence of the Right to Asylum in response to the British government agreeing an extradition treaty with the French government. Other committee members were Agnes Henry, Kropotkin and the young Rosettis, Arthur, Helen and Olive, who published an anarchist journal *The Torch* from the basement of their parents' house in Ossoulton street in Somers Town. Michel was also involved in an International workingmen's group set up in October 1900, which involved European socialists and anarchists from a range of tendencies and held conferences on social issues as well as entertainments and language classes. This may be the same group as a club called the Cosmopolitans, which involved Michel as well as Malatesta and Morrison Davidson, and was hosted by Tom Mann, at that time a syndicalist, at his pub in Long Lane, The Enterprise. The Italian anarchist, Silvo Coro, who was the partner of Sylvia Pankhurst, was also involved in a bilingual journal which emerged from the group - *La Greve Generale/ Il Sciopero Generale*. An English version *The General Strike* was then published, with the syndicalist Sam Mainwaring, a former member of the Social Democratic Federation and the Socialist League as editor. Michel spoke at the May Day rally in Hyde Park supported by a Peckham based anarchist group, which included H B Samuels and W C Hart. Samuels, James Tochatti and Charles Mowbray also spoke on the anarchist platform. The Peckham anarchist banner read "Away with authority and monopoly- We demand free access to the means of life."

Michel spent much of her time in East Dulwich writing her memoirs, being visited by Malato. She also wrote a play. In March 1895, Michel was again at the commune memorial event, this time at Milton Hall. Speaking with Kropotkin and Malatesta, she attacked stupidity at the greatest enemy. In September, she spoke at the South Place Institute. She was joined by the American anarchist Emma Goldman, who spoke on the death sentences on the Chicago anarchists in 1886 following the bombing at the Haymarket. Michel spoke on the Panama scandal and revolutions in Latin America. Michel had planned to visit the US, but instead was persuaded by the French anarchist, Sebastian Faure, to return to Paris. According to Edith Thomas, Michel did not like living in East Dulwich in her neat little house- she had felt cut off from her friends and hated suburbia

She spent two years in France, taking an active role in anarchist propaganda, before returning to London early in 1898, but made at least two further trips to France, before moving there permanently sometime in 1900. She undertook lecture tours of the French provinces in 1903 and 1904, before dying in Marseilles in 1905.

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4. Theists and Birth Control Campaigners

THOMAS SCOTT AND CHARLES VOYSEY: Theists

Thomas Scott was a leading theist who lived in Farquar Road from 1870 at 11 The Terrace. His home became a centre for a group of secularists, theists and radical intellectuals. Scott was born in France in 1808 and brought up as a Roman Catholic, the son of a Scottish professor. He served as a page at the court of the Bourbon king, Charles X. Of independent means, he travelled widely, spending time among the North American Indians, apparently camping out for two years without sleeping in a house. He was interested in the history of the bible and learnt Hebrew while also studying pagan mythology. Returning to England in the late 1850's, Scott settled in Ramsgate. In his search for truth, Scott published a series of pamphlets, his subjects including the development of beliefs and ceremonies at the time of Solomon and phallic worship. Claiming to be a 'beneficed clergyman', Scott sought to discredit the

Church of England. He met the theist, Charles Voysey, who at the time lived in Dulwich at Camden House in Dulwich Village. Scott became Voysey's patron, publishing his The Sling and the Stone, a set of his sermons. In 1870, Scott moved from Ramsgate to Farquar Road, so he could be close to Voysey. Scott became Voysey's main financial supporter in Voysey's initiative to establish a theistic church.

Thomas Scott

Voysey's theological position amounted to the rejection of the creeds, biblical inspiration, the sacramental system, and the divinity of Christ, and his teaching was the inculcation of a pure theism, without any miraculous element This was judged as heretical by the court of the Archbishop of York, which in 1881 was confirmed by the judicial committee of the Privy Council and Scott was deprived of his living as a vicar of Healaugh near Tadcaster. The theistic church met first at St George's Hall, Langham Place and then in Swallow Street, Piccadilly, continuing for thirty years. Apparently, the services were quite similar to Anglican services. Voysey was not a radical in politics, but an ardent Conservative Unionist. Voysey's son, the architect C F A Voysey, who was educated at Dulwich College, continued to live in Dulwich before moving to Bedford Park in West London in 1885.

Charles Voysey

Scott's circle included John Colenso, Bishop of Natal, a campaigner for the rights of the Zulus as well as a critical theologian, Marcus Kalissch, a Jewish refugee from Germany who was a biblical critic, John Muir, orientalist and Sanskrit scholar, Thomas Lumisden Strange, a theist and formerly a judge in India, Vansittart Neale, the Christian socialist co-operator, the humanitarian and occultist Edward Maitland, Charles Bray, socialist philosopher and author of *The Philosophy of Necessity*, Charles Hennell, who had published *An Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity* in 1838, and his sister Sara Hennell, who in 1858 had published a volume on *Christianity and Infidelity*. Sara's elder sister, Mary, had published in 1841, *An Outline of the Various Social Systems & Communities which have been Founded on the Principle of Co-operation*, but had died in Hackney of tuberculosis two years later. The author, George Elliott, whose real name was Mary Ann Evans, and her partner George Lewes, were also members of this circle. Scott maintained a correspondence with William Gladstone, who in

addition to his political activity published a series of theological studies. In 1872, Scott's circle was joined by Annie Besant who had taken refuge with the Voyseys from her orthodox and autocratic husband, the Rev Frank Besant. Besant wrote pamphlets which Scott published, her first being on *The Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, by 'the wife of a beneficed clergyman'*. Scott however once commented that his protégé was very young, and in all worldly matters very foolish' and that 'when the fit is on her, will do and say any mad thing'. Besant moved to Colby Road to be close to the Scotts, and the Scotts helped to furnish the house. When Besant published a set of thirteen essays as *My Path to Atheism*, the volume was dedicated to Scott 'as the first who aided me in my need'.

Scott was a close friend of the socialist, co-operator and secularist, George Jacob Holyoake. In his memoir, Holyoake records that it was Colenso who in 1858 suggested they meet. Scott published a wide range of authors, including Colenso. He himself wrote an English Life of Jesus, as well as a set of commentaries on the Bible, both Old and New Testament. While liberal in his theology, according to Holyoake, who was a radical, Scott was a Tory in politics. Holyoake described Scott as being 'a tall man, of military bearing, with a long grey beard, abundant hair, and a voice of explosive power'. Besant described Scott in 1872 as 'an old man, with beautiful white hair, and eyes like those of a hawk gleaming from under shaggy eyebrows… He had been a man of magnificent physique, and though his frame was then enfeebled, the splendid lion-like head kept its impressive strength and beauty, and told of a unique personality'.

Scott's wife, some twenty years younger than him, had apparently been Scott's ward. Her main job, as well as playing host to numerous visitors, was parcelling up the pamphlets for posting, the house being according to Holyoake 'a theological pamphlet manufactory'. Scott published some 200 pamphlets - according to Holyoake 'a pamphlet library of controversy never equalled'.

Scott died at 11 The Terrace, Upper Norwood on 30 December 1878.

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ANNIE BESANT: Secularist and Socialist

Annie Besant, secularist, socialist, theosophist and Indian nationalist, lived at 39 Colby Road, West Dulwich from 1874. Besant was co-leader of the secularist movement with Charles Bradlaugh and Henry Aveling. Having left her husband, a rural clergyman, orthodox and authoritarian, questioning her religious beliefs, she became attracted to the theism of Charles Voysey who lived in Dulwich Village and Thomas Scott, who lived in Farquar Road. Having written theistic pamphlets for Scott, Besant became increasingly active in the secularist movement, becoming vice-chairman of the National Secular Society and editor of Bradlaugh's paper, the *National Reformer.* She achieved national notoriety through campaigning for birth control, publishing in 1877 with Bradlaugh a pamphlet by Charles Knowlton *The Fruits of Philosophy*, for which they were both prosecuted for immorality. At the trial, she was supported by Alice Vickery and Charles Drysdale, who also lived in West Dulwich. Besant then published her own book on birth control: *The Law of Population*. Besant's former husband was awarded custody of her daughter. In 1878, Besant published *Marriage, As It Was, As It Is and As It Should Be: A Plea for Reform*. Besant participated in the Men and Women's club in Hampstead which was initiated by the socialist mathematician and eugenicist, Karl Pearson. The club hosted frank discussions on the relations between the sexes. Its membership included feminists Olive Schreiner, Henrietta Muller, Elizabeth Cobb and Emma Brooke.

Annie Besant

Besant published a large number of articles in the *National Reformer*. She also published a number of pamphlets through the Freethought Publishing Company, some based on lectures, with titles such as *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, English Republicanism, The English Land System, Landlords, Tenant Farmers and Labourers, civil and Religious Liberty, the Trades Union Movement.* Some publications related to Women's rights*: The Political Status of Women, The Legitimation of Female Slavery in England, the social aspects of Malthusianism.* Besant also wrote for the *National Reformer* on Britain's aggressive colonial policy - on Afghanistan, the Transvaal, Egypt, the Sudan and on coercion in Ireland.

In 1884, Besant joined the Social Democratic Federation, encouraged by the Darwinian scientist Edward Aveling who was her tutor and had at one time lived in the same house. Aveling later was to set up home with Eleanor Marx, the youngest daughter of Karl Marx, in Jews Walk in Sydenham. Besant had previously opposed Hyndman and the SDF, supporting Charles Bradlaugh in his famous debate with

Hyndman. She attended a series of meetings at the south Place Institute to discuss secularism and socialism. It was here that in May 1884 she heard Shaw talk on socialism. Shaw and the Austrian libertarian socialist, Andreas Scheu, started attending Besant's freethought lectures and heckling her. Besant's secularist friend, John M Robertson, had already adopted socialism. Shaw and Besant also both participated in meetings of the Dialectical Society.

In 1885, Besant, having become a close friend of Shaw, joined the Fabian Society, and soon joined the Society's executive committee. Shaw later commented that Besant was 'the best orator in England, perhaps in Europe'. When the Fabians organised a mock parliament at Charing Cross, Besant became Home Secretary to Henry Champion's Prime Minister, Webb as chancellor and Shaw as President of the Local Government Board (Shaw had been a member of the St Pancras vestry: Webb was to become a London County Council alderman). Besant joined Shaw in defeating the anti-parliamentary wing of the Fabians, which was led by the anarchist, Charlotte Wilson. She then organised a sub-group - the Fabian Parliamentary League, which published its own manifesto in 1887.

Besant was also involved in extra-parliamentary demonstrations - she marched with Shaw in the great Trafalgar Square demonstration on 13 November 1887, which was a protest against the imprisonment of an Irish agitator, which became known as Bloody Sunday as two people were killed. Besant became a pallbearer at the funeral of Alfred Linnell, which she helped to organise. She also established, with the campaigning editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, W T Stead, a 'Law and Liberty Defence League'.

Besant maintained her membership of the National Secular Society. Her declaration in favour of socialism had a major impact on the secular and republican movements, leading to a famous debate with Bradlaugh who continued to oppose socialism. Between 1883 and 1888, Besant edited her own journal *Our Corner*, subtitled *A Monthly Magazine of Fiction, Poetry, Politics, Science, Art and Literature,* in which a number of essays reflecting Besant's move towards socialism were published. *Why I am a Socialist* was first published in 1886, followed by *The Socialist Movement* in 1886. *Our Corner* included *A Political Corner*, which was written mainly by Charles Bradlaugh, *a Science Corner,* which Besant wrote, an *Art Corner*, initially written by Edward Aveling, who focused on the theatre, a *Gardeners Corner*, a *Publishers Corner,* in which Besant reviewed books, an *Inquisitive Corner*. a *Young Folks Corner,* which included puzzles, games and stories, a *Chess corner,* which lasted only a year and in later issues a *Fabian corner* reporting on the Society's activities and was also used to publish works by other socialists, such as Shaw as well as the extensive debate had with other secularists -

for example a debate she had with Bradlaugh in November and December 1887. A debate she had with the freethinker, G W Foote on *Is Socialism Sound? (*Besant responded positively, Foote in the negative) was too extensive to be published in *Our Corner*. The debate was over four nights at the Hall of Science in Old Street in February 1887 and the pamphlet transcript is 152 pages. Besant was an impressive advocate for socialism and demonstrated a wealth of knowledge.

Besant then in 1888 established a new journal, *The Link: A Journal for the Servants of Men*, with W T Stead. This gave publicity to the issue of 'white slavery', the trafficking of women into prostitution. Besant contributed an essay on *Industry and Socialism* to *Fabian Essays* in 1889. She was a prominent supporter of the match worker's strike at Bryant and May in Bow in 1888, collaborating with Herbert Burrows. Besant was secretary of the strike committee, Burrows was treasurer.

Annie Besant, Herbert Burrows and the Bryant and May strikers

In the same year, she was elected, together with the Christian socialist, Stewart Headlam, as a member of the London School Board. Besant drove about with a red ribbon in her hair, speaking at meetings. "No more hungry children", her manifesto proclaimed. She combined her socialist principles with feminism: "I ask the electors to vote for me, and the non-electors to work for me because women are wanted on the Board and there are too few women candidates." Besant came out on top of the poll in Tower Hamlets, with over 15,000 votes. She wrote in the *National Reformer*: "Ten years ago, under a cruel law, Christian bigotry robbed me of my little child. Now the

care of the 763,680 children of London is placed partly in my hands." Besant was central to the decision of the Board to only place business with contractors who paid fair wages, a policy later adopted by the Progressives on the new London County Council.

A pamphlet on Radicalism and Socialism written in 1887, summarises Besant's views at this time:

"Among the various features of public life in England at the present time there is none which appears to me to be more regrettable, or more fruitful of evil consequences in the near future, tan the antagonism between Radicalism and Socialism - or rather between Radicals and Socialists - which is so strongly marked on the platform and in the press…. The position that I desire to advance is that Socialism is the outcome, the legitimate and necessary outcome, of Radicalism; that the main current of Radical legislation, despite little eddies and backwaters, sets toward Socialism…. It means the substitution, as method, of co-operation for competition in every department of human life; it means the substitution, as aim, of the common good for the personal profit of the individual; it means the placing of the production and distribution of wealth, as well as of all public affairs in which men and women are associated, under the control of bodies elected by and responsible to those who are concerned in them, whether as workers or as citizens, instead of leaving them, as so many of them now are, under individual authority." "Socialism is no wild scheme, no Utopia impossible of realisation. It is a carefully reasoned scheme of production, distribution, and administration, which it is contended is better than the monopoly system of today. It would put an end to the war of classes, for it would substitute a community of workers for the present gradations of social rank. It would bid all healthy adults work, but it would also give to each leisure to enjoy. And since of all the political parties it is the Radicals only who claim liberty and equality for all, who admit no hereditary rights, who demand from all discharge of social duty, who base society on justice, not on privilege, who look to reason as guide, and not to authority, therefore it is to them that the Socialists must naturally turn for alliance, seeking to march with them against the common foe."

A selection of Besant's political articles, including *Radicalism and Socialism* were published as *Essays in Socialism* by the Freethought Publishing Company in 1887. Besant supported a range of other campaigns. She spoke at an SDF demonstration opposing sweated labour. This was followed by her actively involved in the dock strike of 1889, helping the docker's leader, Ben Tillett and speaking at docker's meetings. However, in May of the same year she decided to devote most of her energies to the mystical religious philosophy of theosophy, becoming a follower of

the Russian occultist Helena Blavatsky, and withdrew from the socialist movement. In her *Why I Became a Theosophist*, published in 1889 by the Freethought Publishing Company, she sought to defend her new belief against the criticism of her fellow freethinkers, including Foote. Besant rejected materialistic science for an answer to what she called 'the questions of Life and Mind'. The objectives of the Theosophical society were;

1. To be the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood;
2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions and sciences; and
3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Besant believed that the theosophists had "thrown light on the nature of man and guided him along the path to a higher life." She thought that she had discovered the Karma that was the basis of both spiritual and social improvement. In 1890, Besant resigned from both the National Secular Society and the Fabian Society.

It should be remembered that many early socialists including the supposedly rational Fabian socialists were interested in spiritualism. Robert Dale Owen, Robert Owen's son, became a spiritualist leader in the United States. Frank Podmore and Percival Chubb (Chubb lived in Thornton Heath), early Fabians and founders of the Fellowship of the New Life were both interested in in spiritualism. Edward Pease, the first secretary of the Fabian Society also convened meetings of the Society for Psychical Research, the research consisted of visiting haunted houses, in which a number of leading Fabians participated.

Annie Besant in India

In 1893, Annie Besant moved to India, where as well as her continued role in the theosophy movement, including a role as president of the Theosophy Society from 1907, Besant became a leading light in the Indian nationalist movement. She established the Home Rule League in 1916. Interned by the British during the First World War, Besant in 1917, she became president of the Indian National Congress. She wrote a number of books in India, and sponsored a Commonwealth of India Bill introduced into parliament in 1925 by her old friend, George Lansbury. Retaining her theosophical beliefs, she and her fellow theosophist Charles Leadbetter, claimed that her adopted son, Krishnamurti, was the new 'messiah' and 'world teacher'. Besant died in Madras in 1933.

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ALICE VICKERY, CHARLES AND GEORGE DRYSDALE: Birth Control Advocates

Alice Vickery

Alice Vickery, a physician and campaigner for women's rights, lived with Charles Drysdale, at 28 Carson Road in West Dulwich - the couple were apparently never married, though Alice often used her common law husband's name.

Alice Vickery was born in Devon in 1844, but in 1861 joined her family who had moved to Peckham in 1851 - she had been left at a local school in Somerset. Alice's father was a piano maker and organ builder. Alice became a pupil teacher in Camberwell and in 1869 undertook training at the Ladies Medical College in Fitzroy Square, which had been established in 1864 by the Female Medical Society and trained midwives. Charles Drysdale taught at the college and like Alice being opposed to the institution of marriage became her life companion as well as her co-worker. Alice gained her midwifery certificate in 1873 and then registering with the British Pharmaceutical Society, attended its courses and passing its qualifications,

the first woman to do so, and became a chemist and druggist. She still sought a medical qualification and as British medical schools would not accept women, travelled to France where she qualified at the University of Paris. Her first son, known as Charles Vickery Drysdale, was born while she was studying. In 1877, she returned to London to complete her medical training at the recently established London Medical School for Women. She only obtained her medical qualification in 1880 through the King's and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland.

In 1877, Alice was called as a witness at the trial of Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh for publishing Charles Knowlton's birth control handbook *The Fruits of Philosophy*. Alice and Charles Drysdale both accepted Thomas Malthus' law of population - that overpopulation generated poverty. but believed that corollary was the desirability of restricting population growth through birth control. Alice's main testimony was on the dangers of over-lactation as a form of contraception and the harmful effects on women's health from having too many babies too closely spaced. Together with Charles' brother, George Drysdale, Alice and Charles established, apparently at the suggestion of Annie Besant, the Malthusian League, to promote birth control. Alice believed that birth control was an essential element of the emancipation of women. The initiative also involved the London Dialectical Society (whose main focus was the investigation of spiritualism), whose secretary R G Hember became one of the main League speakers. Charles Drysdale became president of the Malthusian League and edited their journal *The Malthusian*.

Alice Vickery and Charles Drysdale moved to West Dulwich in 1885. They had not previously lived together and it seems to have been assumed that they were now married. They were joined by Charles' brother George Vickery, who was a freethinker and secularist. Charles and George Drysdale were sons of Sir William Drysdale, the Tory leader on Edinburgh council, who was interested in sanitary reform and a correspondent of Sir Edwin Chadwick. Their circle included Charles Dickens, Charles Darwin and the educationalist and phrenologist, George Combe.

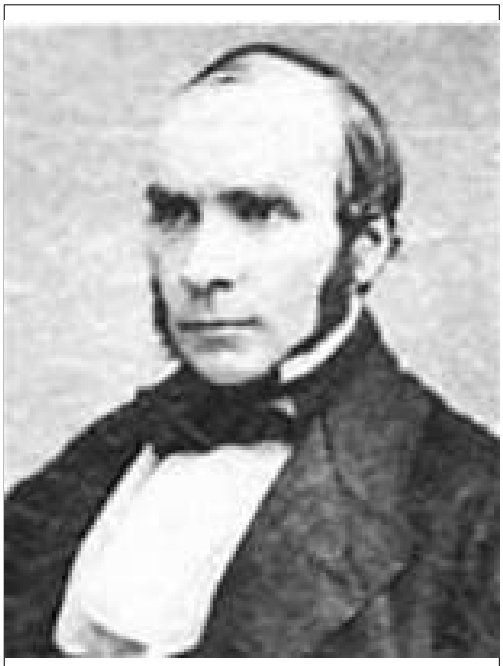
The Drysdale boys were both educated at Edinburgh Academy. George dropped out of Glasgow University to walk round Europe, returning after two years in Hungary (his family thinking he had drowned in the Danube in Vienna) to study medicine at Trinity College, Dublin and then in Edinburgh, during which he wrote *Physical, Sexual and Natural Religion*, later known as *The Elements of Science*, which was published in 1857 by the free thought publisher, Edward Truelove, in London. The main argument of the book, reflecting George's own youthful crisis, was that it was everybody's duty to engage in joyous sexual activity to preserve physical health and mental balance. The book rejected Malthus' argument that population growth could only be restrained through sexual abstinence. It also criticised the

church for denaturing women by prescribing a crippling model of excessive modesty and sexual shame. George Drysdale also advocated for women doctors on the basis that male doctors would not understand gynaecological problems or provide advice to women on contraception as they were 'ill-informed, prudish and incapable of examining them properly'. The book gained notoriety as the 'Bible of the brothel' but sold 80,000 copies. George Drysdale later added appendices on the *State Remedy for Poverty*, recommending fines for those who did not limit their families. George also promoted his ideas, pseudonymously in Charles Bradlaugh's *National Reformer*. However, it was widely thought that his brother Charles, who was a propagandist for the Malthusian League had written the book, and the authorship was only acknowledged after both brothers had died.

The young Drysdale brothers

There was considerable opposition to the Malthusian League's advocacy from other radicals and socialists, who argued that land reform and greater equality of wealth and income were the most effective response to the challenges of population growth and that working people should not have to restrict the growth of their families - it was inequality which caused poverty not the absence of family limitation. Charles argued that large families were the main cause of low wages and that only the Malthusian League 'possess the key to human happiness'. Lecturing for the League at the Commonwealth club in Bethnal Green in April 1878, Charles was opposed by the radical socialist, John Hales, who had been a leading member of the First International and colleague and rival of Karl Marx. The co-operator and Owenist socialist, Llloyd Jones dismissed the League's arguments - there was never anything published more fallacious than Malthus's geometrical ratio of population increase'. When Alice Vickery addressed the Lambeth Democratic Radical Association in 1881, she was attacked by another First International veteran,

Maltman Barry, and a former Chartist, called Hill, who was apparently the father of twenty-one children. At the League's Annual General Meeting in May 1882, the birth control advocates were opposed by the socialist and secularist, Herbert Burrows, who continued to attend meetings to argue against the Leaguers over the next decade. One contributor to *The Radical* argued that the Malthusians were 'reactionary and an endeavour to perpetuate the current condition of society'. Most radicals and socialists turned to the land reform ideas of Henry George and Alfred Russell Wallace as a better response to the challenges of population growth and poverty. Wallace believed that the neo-Malthusians were serving to 'uphold landlordism and Tory rule'. The neo-Malthusians were seen by socialists as defenders of private property and economic liberalism. The socialist J L Joynes dismissed the neo-Malthusians as irrelevant to contemporary problems. The neo-Malthusians were also opposed by the anarchist Petr Kropotkin and the land reformer (and former member of the First International) Gavin Clark. Kropotkin, speaking at a Socialist League meeting, attacked the neo-Malthusian argument as 'humbug' and a 'mere expedient on the part of the governing classes to draw our attention from the real evils of society'.



Charles Drysdale

Alice Vickery did however campaign on issues other than birth control. She supported Josephine Butler's campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts. In the 1890's she became involved in the Legitimisation League, which campaigned against legal penalties borne by the illegitimate. A second child, George, had been born about 1881. She joined the National Society for Women's Suffrage and then the more militant Women's Social and Political Union. George Drysdale died in 1904 in Penge. Charles Drysdale died at Carson Road in 1907. Alice continued to practise as a doctor. In 1910, she collaborated with Anna Martin to give birth control advice to working women in Rotherhithe. She joined the Eugenics Education Society and also supported reform of the divorce laws. Alice Vickery moved to Brighton, where her son lived, in 1923. She became active in the Brighton branch of the Women's Freedom League. She died in January 1929.

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5. Radicals, Socialists and Social Reformers

JOHN MORRISON DAVIDSON: Radical Democrat

Morrison Davidson was a radical lawyer and journalist, who in the 1900's lived at 56 Marmora Road, East Dulwich. Brother of Thomas Davidson, the 'wandering scholar' who founded the Fellowship of the New Life which was the crucible out of which the Fabian Society grew, Morrison Davidson was a prolific journalist who contributed to a number of advanced radical and socialist campaigns, trying to unite the two groups in a new political movement.

John Morrison Davidson

Morrison Davidson, a Scot, though London based for most of his career, was a land reformer and Scottish nationalist. Davidson was born in Aberdeenshire. His parents were both farm labourers but not married. He went to Aberdeen grammar school and then on a scholarship to Aberdeen University. In 1863, he left without a degree in an abortive attempt to join the Polish uprising. He married Rose Fowlie, a former schoolmate and with whom he had eleven children. After teaching in Glasgow and Edinburgh, Davidson read for the bar in Edinburgh, transferring to London in 1874. He had chambers at 6 Pump Court in the Middle Temple from 1878 to 1887, at which point he ceased to practice, turning his attention to radical politics and journalism. While in Scotland, he had contributed to several Scottish newspapers, and in London, he contributed to the Edinburgh Daily Review.

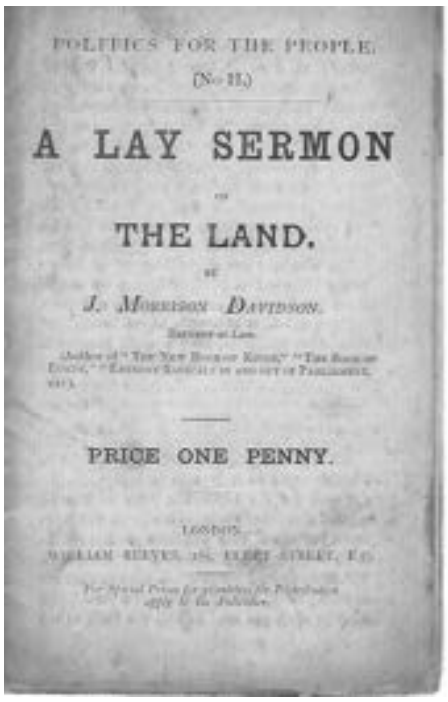
In Edinburgh, Davidson was secretary of the Advanced Liberal Association but left it in 1870, in a dispute over religious teaching in schools which he opposed, to become corresponding secretary of the Edinburgh Republican Club. On moving south, Davidson joined the London Municipal Reform Association and the Lambeth

Radical Association. The Lambeth Radical Association had been formed by Sam Bennett, a journalist with *The Scotsman*, with the intention of replacing the two Liberal MPs for the constituency with radicals. According to Davidson, two thirds of the Association's members were working radical journalists. Davidson was a vice-president. Other leading members were A J Wilson of *The Standard* and Stewart Ross of the *Agnostic Journal* and the MP, T P O'Connor. The association organised a meeting in Hyde Park against the Liberal government's policy of coercion in Ireland. Davidson claimed that the meeting was 'the foundation stone of the alliance between the British and the Irish Democracy'. The attempt to replace the existing Liberal MPs did not succeed. Davidson later reminisced that in the association "much good fellowship prevailed, and many knotty social and political questions were dusted out with much ability by men who have since well served the cause of Democracy with voice and pen."

Davidson and Bennett also launched the *Radical* journal. According to Davidson, "its columns were thrown open to all manner of wild men and women, and nothing was too heretical in religion, politics, or economics for insertion. It shared the premature mortality of so many similar enterprises, but not before it had sown much good seed of which Democracy is still reaping the benefit." *The Radical* was one of the first journals to promote land reform, with Davidson's friend, William Webster of Aberdeen, contributing a series of articles reviewing the American land reformer, Henry George's new book *Progress and Poverty*.

Signed card

In 1880, Davidson undertook a tour of the United States and met President Rutherford Hayes at the White House. He wrote a series of 'letters from the Far West' for a group of British provincial newspapers. Back in Britain for the 1880 General Election, he acted as an adviser to the radical editor of the *Weekly Dispatch* , Ashton Dilke, who was the brother of Sir Charles Dilke and was returned to parliament for Newcastle in tandem with the radical Joseph Cowen.


POLITICS FOR THE PEOPLE.
(No. II.)
A LAY SERMON
ON
THE LAND.
BY
J. Morrison Davidson,
PRICE ONE PENNY.

Davidson was active in the campaign against the Egyptian war, collaborating with Liberal anti-imperialists such as Sir Wilfred Lawson and Henry Richard, as well as opposing , together with William Morris, the proposal to put a statue of the Prince Imperial, the son of the exiled Napoleon III who died fighting for Britain in the Zulu war, in Westminster Abbey. Morrison Davidson attended an early meeting of Hyndman's Democratic Federation, although he claimed that he walked out together with the Austrian libertarian socialist Andreas Scheu, when Hyndman refused to discuss abolition of the monarchy. Scheu later joined William Morris' Socialist League. Davidson was secretary to the People's League for the Abolition of the House of Lords and edited the *Democrat*, a land reform journal. In 1885 he stood unsuccessfully for parliament in Greenock on behalf of the Scottish Land Restoration League, obtaining only 65 votes - 1% of the total votes. In 1899 he published a book on land reform with the rather clumsy title - *Concerning Four Precursors of Henry George and the Single Tax as also the Land Gospel according to Winstanley the Digger* - the other precursors were William Ogilvie (1782), Thomas Spence (1775), Thomas Paine (1796) and Patrick Edward Dove (1850). Davidson also edited *The Democrat*, which was a land reform journal. He also lectured on land reform to the Cosmopolitans club at Tom Mann's pub, *The Enterprise*, in Long Acre, where he mixed with European exiles such as Louise Michel, Petr Kropotkin and Enrico Malatesta. Tom Mann's memoirs include extracts from the lecture.

Morrison Davidson published in a number of journals - the *Bradford Observer*, the *Leeds Mercury*, the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Star,* the *Weekly Times and Echo* and *Reynolds Newspaper*. He published these articles in a series of volumes -*Politics for the People* (in 1892), *Let There be Light* (1895), *The Old Order and the New - From Individualism to Collectivism* (1902). Many of his pamphlets and letters were written from the United Democratic Club in Chancery Lane. He also wrote a popular history of radicalism from the Romans to the land reform campaigns of the 1880's and the founding of the socialist societies in the 1880's and 1890's. - *Annals of Toil,* and a book of biographies of *Eminent Radicals in and out of Parliament,* as well as books on Scottish and Irish nationalism. He was an advocate of 'Home Rule All Round' a form of federalism. and *The Gospel of the Poor- Christ of the Commune*. He defined his political position as 'Opportunist Liberal Republican Communist Anarchist Christian.' He sometimes preached in Unitarian churches. He was an anti-clerical,

publishing in 1906 a volume with the provocative title *That Great Lying Church of England*, but also an ethical radical volume entitled *The Son of Man: Standard-Bearer of Humanity*. He also wrote *Gospel of the Poor- Christ of the Commune*.

The following extract from his Democrat's Address of 1892 gives an idea of his political views:

> *" FELLOW- DEMOCRATS - You are now in the midst of a very grave political crisis. For centuries aristocratic force and fraud have robbed you and your forefathers of the two most elementary Rights of Man - the Right to the Suffrage and the Right to the Soil. At last your time has come. It is your duty- your duty to yourselves and to posterity - to form a New Party in the state: The People's Party. It will be the business of this New Party persistently and fearlessly to strike at Privilege and Monopoly in every form.*
>
> *Experience has shown that the two historic parties, the Liberals and the Tories, are about equally your enemies when in office. The mimic warfare which they wage with each other is only meant to divert electoral pit and gallery from the conspiracy of grab to which both Liberal and Tory are sworn. The interests of princes, peers, parsons, publicans and plutocrats with their hydra-headed parasites are really one and indivisible.*
>
> *The 'long firm' of Rentmonger, Interestmonger and Profitmonger is the common enemy for whose suppression it is the duty of every honest toiler with hand or brain energetically to strive.*
>
> *The first goal is the United States of Britain - the BRITISH REPUBLIC - Federal, Social and Democratic.*
>
> *The second is the Federation of the English-speaking Race. The third is the PARLIAMENT OF MAN, THE FEDERATION OF THE WORLD"*

Morrison Davidson died at Marmora Road in December 1916.

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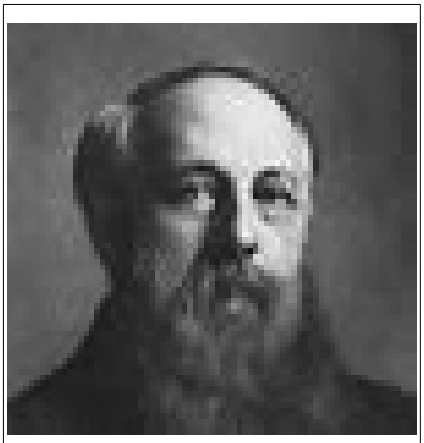
HARRY QUELCH: Working Class Marxist

Harry Quelch

Harry Quelch was a trade unionist and Marxist socialist who was the first working man to stand for the London School Board for Lambeth East, the electoral district which included Dulwich. He stood four times - in 1885, 1888, 1897 and in the final School Board elections in 1900 - education functions being transferred to the London County Council in 1904 following the 1902 Education Act. Quelch was unsuccessful in all four contests. Quelch stood on behalf of the Social Democratic Federation. In each election, three of the four seats went to candidates of the Progressives (the Liberal/Labour alliance), while one went to the Moderates (Conservatives).

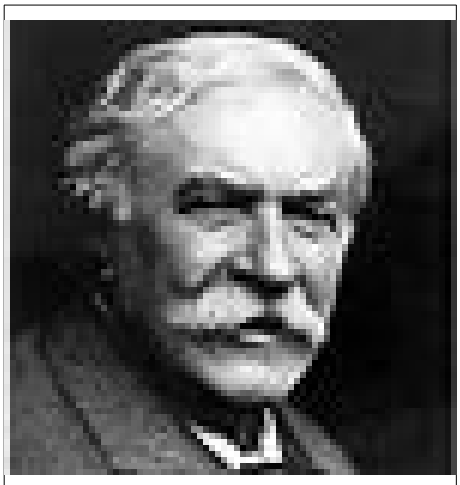
Quelch was probably the most prominent socialist in South London in the 1890's and early 1900's. He was also active in the international socialist movement. Born in 1858 in Hungerford, Berkshire, the son of a village blacksmith, he started work at the age of ten, making his way to London at the age of 14, working in a biscuit factory, a skinyard, an iron foundry and then in a wallpaper warehouse in Bermondsey. Quelch joined the Bermondsey Radical Club, whose membership included the veteran radicals, Fred Soutter and Samuel Barnett. Soutter and Barnett had formed an Anti-Coercion Association and published a small weekly paper, the *Radical,* from December 1880. Quelch was one of the first working class members of the Democratic Federation. He heard the Democratic Federation leader, Henry Hyndman, speak at the Southwark Radical club at the end of 1881 and joined the Democratic Federation sometime before 1883, joining the DF executive committee, the DF becoming the Social Democratic Federation in August 1884. When William Morris and Belfort Bax led a group of executive members out of the SDF to form the Socialist League that December, Quelch stayed with Henry Hyndman in the SDF. He started contributing to the SDF paper, *Justice* in 1884, two years later taking over from Hyndman as the journal's editor. Quelch became well known in London radical and socialist circles. For example, he chaired a rally at the South Place Institute in June 1885 to commemorate the Paris commune. The platform included Hyndman, William Morris, the Danish-American socialist, Lawrence Grunland, James Macdonald and J E Williams of the SDF, Henry Aveling and Ernest Belfort Bax, the



Henry Hyndman

Belgian freethinker and anarchist Victor Dave and the Socialist League anarchists, Frank Kitz, Joseph Lane and Charles Mowbray.

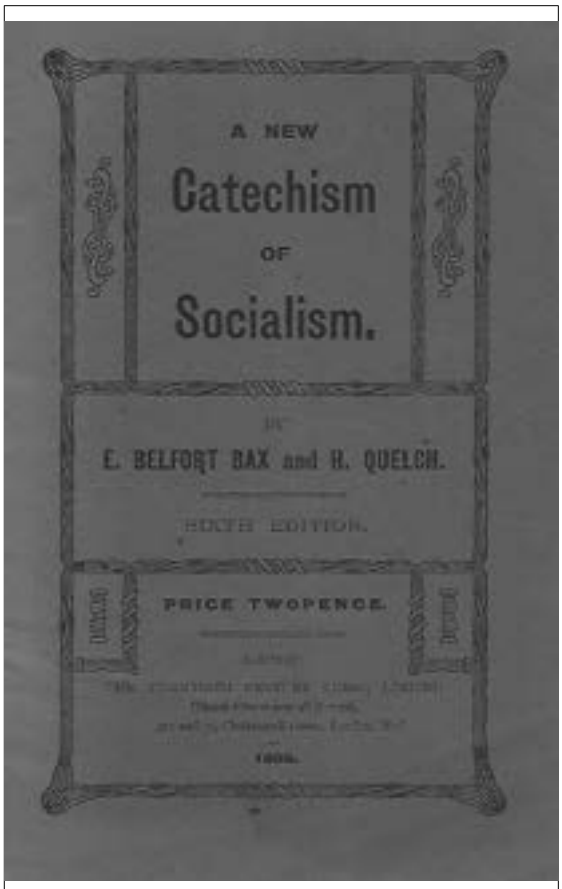
In 1889, following the successful dockers strike, Quelch became secretary of the South Side Labour Protection League, which was the docker's union for the Surrey Docks, but returned to his editorial role in 1891, also taking on the role of manager of the SDF's printing press, the Twentieth Century Press, which was based at 37A Clerkenwell Green, which is now the Marx Memorial Library. Quelch led the Bermondsey contingent to Trafalgar Square on 13 November 1887, the demonstration which became known as 'Bloody Sunday'. He apparently drilled his contingent in his backyard in Bermondsey which led to some speculation that he was preparing an insurrection. He attended the conference of the French Marxist socialists in Roubaix in March 1884, and represented the SDF at successive conferences of the Second International between 1889 and 1910. He was also regularly the SDF representative at the conferences of the German Social Democratic Party. He taught himself French so he could read Marx's *Das Kapital*, before it was translated into English and then translated Marx's *Poverty of Philosophy* from French to English. He then taught himself German. He spoke at the Russian Social Democrats 1907 London conference as the SDF fraternal delegate, pointing out that ' the very possibility of your Congress meeting in this place, were won by our previous struggle'.



Ernest Belfort Bax

Quelch was a loyal supporter of Hyndman's leadership of the SDF. He shared Hyndman's critical view of the trade union movement, though not his chauvinism and his anti-Semitism. In 1902, Quelch, with the Marxist theorist, Ernest Belfort Bax, published a *New Catechism of Socialism.* As well as standing for the London School Board, Quelch stood for the London County Council - in 1889 for Walworth and in 1892 for Chelsea. He stood for parliament four times - for Reading in 1898, Dewsbury in 1902, Southampton in 1906 and Northampton in January 1910, his best result being 2,146 votes in Reading. Quelch represented the SDF on the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), the precursor of the Labour Party, at its first conference in 1900. However, the following year, the SDF withdrew from the LRC on the grounds that the LRC was not committed to socialist policies, a decision which Quelch supported. Quelch however attended conferences of the Labour Party, founded in 1906, either as a delegate from the London Trades Council, which he chaired in 1904-6 and 1910-13, or from his trade union. At the 1907 conference, with support from Ben Tillett

and Will Thorne, he tried without success to commit the Labour Party to an explicitly socialist programme. He also supported agitation by the unemployed and in 1905 joined the National Right to Work Council. The Labour Party conference of 1907 accepted a motion proposed by Quelch that local councils should provide work for the unemployed. This led to the Labour Party proposing a 'Right to Work' Bill in parliament the following year. He organised a demonstration of the unemployed in Trafalgar Square on October 10th 1908. This was intentionally unruly - Quelch's tactic was, as he himself stated, to "make the unemployed a menace… institute a reign of terror… make the governing class howl with affright at the danger to their skins and their stolen wealth."



Catechism of Socialism (1909)

Quelch supported Hyndman in his battle with the various dissident groups within the SDF. He opposed the 'impossibilists', who left the SDF to set up The Socialist Party of Great Britain, and the Socialist Labour Party in Scotland. Quelch did not sympathise with syndicalism and he saw the suffragettes as a diversion from class-based politics - he considered them to be 'anti-proletarian, anti-Socialist and anti-democratic'. At the 1905 LRC conference, Quelch persuaded the LRC to support complete adult suffrage for male and female alike. His opposition to the suffragettes was because they supported legislation which proposed a property qualification. Quelch supported Indian nationalists and the Russian social democrats - in exile Lenin edited *Iskra* from Quelch's office at the Twentieth Century Press. Quelch helped Lenin to get his ticket for the British Library. He supported the defence of Britain by a citizen army - in 1900 publishing *Social Democracy and the Armed Nation*. In 1910, the SDF was divided over the issue of defence against the perceived threat from Germany. At the 1911 conference, Quelch not only argued for a 'citizen army' but for an 'adequate navy.' This was opposed by an internationalist group led by Theodore Rothstein, W P Coates and Zelda Kahan. Quelch's position was carried by a 47-33 majority.

Quelch became ill in 1909, and gave up his *Justice* editorial role, but carried on contributing to the journal. He managed to give a series of lectures at Ruskin College

in Oxford in the autumn of 1912 on the history of socialism. In August, at the recommendation of the German socialist leader, August Bebel, he travelled to Bad Nauheim for a cure, but this was unsuccessful.

Quelch died on 17 September 1913 at his home in Nunhead at 35 Limesford Road. He was buried in Camberwell Old Cemetery in Forest Hill. It was reported that 10,000 attended his burial, including many of the leading British socialists as well as a representative of the Belgian socialists. His brother Lorenzo Quelch was an active socialist in Reading, while his son Tom became a founding member of the Communist Party in 1920, having been imprisoned as a conscientious objector in 1917. Harry Quelch was dogmatic, but according to one historian, his socialism was based on 'an almost puritanical moral foundation.' He did not support half measures or any accommodation with the Liberal Party. His view was that "social freedom and equality could only be won by fighting the class war through to the finish, and thus abolishing for ever all class distinction." Quelch wrote several pamphlets and numerous articles, some of which were published after his death in a volume of *Literary Remains*, together with a biographical sketch by his colleague, Ernest Belfort Bax. Bax called Quelch 'the most eminent among the working-class protagonists of Socialism in Great Britain'. This volume and many of Bax's other writings are available on the web at:

https://www.marxists.org/archive/quelch/index.htm

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RUSSELL SMART: Socialist Propagandist

Russell Smart was a leading socialist propagandist in the years before the First World War. Born in London in 1858. His father was an elocution teacher at St George's, Hanover Square. Russell's father however died when he was eight. Russel then lived with his mother Ellen and his paternal grandfather near Hanover Square, before moving to West Dulwich. Russell transferred from Hurstpierpoint School in West Sussex to Dulwich College, though only staying for a year, leaving in December 1873 before taking any exams. Russell later lived in Brixton, Stockwell and Clapham. Russell first worked in a solicitor's office, a career he described as 'brief and inglorious'. He then became an actor 'experiencing for ten years all the

vicissitudes of a provincial actor short of actual starvation'. Changing career again in 1884, Smart became a sanitary engineer, focusing on heating and ventilation. Politically ambitious with an interest in becoming an MP, he joined the Social Democratic Federation and the Fabian Society. He also joined the Independent Labour Party on its foundation in 1893, attending the first conference in Bradford in 1893, while retaining his membership of the SDF.

Russell Smart

In October 1893, Smart was invited to stand as the ILP parliamentary candidate for Huddersfield. In the general election in 1895, Smart received 1594 votes, coming third behind the Conservative sitting MP, Joseph Crosland and the successful Liberal candidate, James Woodhouse. Labour was not to capture the seat until 1923. Smart was a prolific pamphleteer. In 1893, he co-wrote with ILP leader Keir Hardie a pamphlet setting out the Policies and Programme of the ILP. This was followed by pamphlets on *Trade Unionism and Politics*, *Socialism and Drink*, *The Economics of Temperance*, *Municipal Socialism*, *Socialism and the Budget* (1907), *The Right to Live* (1908) and *Socialism for the Middle Classes* (1909). Smart was a member of the ILP's National Administrative Committee.

In the early 1890's, by which time he had married for the second time, Smart lived in Clapham. In 1895, the *Labour Annual* listed him as lecturing on 'Competition: The Root of All Evil', 'Poverty. Its Cause and Cure', 'The Development of Social Democracy', 'What a Socialist Parliament Would Do', and on 'Socialism and Drink'.

Smart was an opponent of British participation in the Boer war, arguing against the 'patriotic' position taken by Robert Blatchford's *Clarion*. Smart wrote in the ILP News that "the infamous conduct of the government in its negotiations with the Transvaal must be a cause of rage and humiliation to every honest patriot. .. It concerns the honour of every self-respecting lover of his country to protest with all the power that is in him against the atrocious crime which we are apparently about to commit". The ILP national committee supported this position.

In 1907, Smart wrote a series of articles in the ILP's *Labour Leader* promoting constitutional reform. He supported the proposal put forward by Fred Jowett, the MP for Bradford, that the House of Commons should be reformed to replace the cabinet with a system of committees, to which individual Ministers were accountable, and that this was more important than abolishing the House of Lords. Smart argued that the Commons had been seized by the 'plutocracy' and party 'wire-pullers', while the

upper house was just 'effete'. Smart also criticised Ramsay Macdonald, the Labour leader in the Commons for not being sufficiently accountable to the ILP.

In 1910, Smart was a signatory to Leonard Hall's *Green Manifesto*, which called on the ILP to distance itself from the Labour Party's "revisionist" positions. Smart argued that the ILP and SDF should merge. He considered that the ILP had become 'a mere machine for registering the decrees of three or four able men. He was referring to the ILP inner circle of Hardie, MacDonald, Philip Snowden and Robert Bruce Glasier: " all wires are in their hands, the newspaper is theirs, one of them always occupies the chair at Annual Conference, and the power that they have acquired enables them to impose their will upon the Conference and the Party even when the general sentiment is opposed to them." Glasier, as editor of the *Labour Leader*, refused to publish an article by Smart titled 'The ILP in Danger'. The article was published in the *Huddersfield Worker* instead. Smart encouraged ILP branches to submit conference resolutions calling for MPs to be excluded from the party's National Administrative Committee. When these proposals were rejected by a Special Conference, and after failing narrowly to be re-elected to the Committee, Smart left the ILP in 1911 together with Hall, becoming a founding member of the British Socialist Party (BSP), which was largely based on the SDF, and he served on its first executive, often deputising for the party leader at the 1911 Socialist Unity convention.

Smart was however opposed to the Marxist dogma, inherited from the SDF old guard led by Henry Hyndman and Ernest Belfort Bax that still dominated the BSP's thinking. Smart wrote in the BSP journal *Justice*, that "Socialism, as it appears to me, is not diverted to fighting this or any other class war to a finish, but to organize society on an entirely different basis which would remove the causes of these fratricidal struggles, and the more of real Socialism we get the less the class war is apparent."

After their 1912 conference, the BSP launched a 'Great Propaganda Campaign' aiming to increase its membership to 100,000 within a year and a million within 5 years. Smart was given responsibility for this initiative. Smart wanted to make BSP membership attractive by offering choral singing and lantern shows, with 'organised and persistent house-to-house propaganda and distributing of literature'. An appeal to raise £10,000 in fact raised only £150.

There were significant political disagreements within the BSP. The 'old guard' led by Hyndman and Harry Quelch sought to maintain an orthodox Marxist position. In October 1912, the BSP executive committee issued a manifesto on 'Political Action and Direct Action', emphasising the primacy of political action and denouncing the supporters of direct action as anarchists, levellers and Luddites belonging 'to a lower

stage of economic development'. Smart, Hall and the radical priest Conrad Noel refused to sign the manifesto. Huddersfield and Doncaster branches supported the dissidents but, disappointed at the BSP's rejection of syndicalism, both Smart and Hall, left. Hall joined the Socialist Labour Party, which supported syndicalism, a form of workers control advocated by Tom Mann, the former ILP secretary who was later to join the Communist Party. Smart still advocated a united socialist party, but his former party colleagues were instead focused on affiliating to the Labour Party, a proposal which was narrowly carried following a referendum of the BSP membership.

In contrast to the position he had taken on the Boer war, in 1914, Smart, disagreeing with both the ILP leadership and the internationalists in the BSP, supported British involvement in the First World War. Smart, together with his colleague, Hunter Watts, sought to recruit soldiers for the armed forces, apparently using bribes and intimidation. Smart was then expelled from the party. Smart later joined the National Socialist Party, a pro-war party founded in 1916 by Hyndman. After the war, in 1923, Smart joined the reconstituted Social Democratic Federation. He died suddenly in October that year, apparently while playing chess. In 1924 the SDF was in effect absorbed into the Labour Party, which had become the party of government with the ILP'er Ramsay Macdonald as the first Labour Prime Minster.

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MARY ALGER: Headmistress and Suffrage Petitioner

Mary Jemima Alger was Headmistress of Dulwich High School for Girls between 1875 and 1894. The school was in Thurlow Park Road and is now Rosemead school. Alger lived next to the school at 55 Lancaster Avenue.

Alger was born in 1838 at Diss in Norfolk, daughter of a corn merchant. Having taught in private schools, in 1875, aged 37, she was appointed as headmistress at a new school in Clapham, on Clapham Common, opened by the Girls' Public Day School Company (GPDSC), which later in 1905, became the Girls Public Day School

Trust. The school was the Company's fifth venture, the company having been established in 1872 by Maria Grey and her sister Emily Shirreff, in response to the findings of the Taunton Schools Enquiry Commission of 1864-7 (comprising 12 men) which had identified a deficiency in secondary educational provision for girls.

Ager was clearly successful in her role and in 1878 she was transferred to Sheffield to as headmistress of a new girls' high school. But after only a few months, the Company decided that instead she should take over the running of the new school in Dulwich which was also due to open. The establishment of new schools was driven by local demand as each dependent on there being sufficient local investors.

Dulwich High School for Girls (now Rosemead School)

The education provided was both liberal and broad with students encouraged 'to think, to judge, to ponder'. Each teacher was allowed considerable flexibility in their teaching methods and the academic standard was high. By 1855, there were 400girls in the school, coming from Sydenham, Streatham Hill, Norwood, Bromley, Balham, Clapham and Camberwell as well as from Dulwich. Between 1882 and 1892 many university scholarships were gained by Dulwich girls, with nine girls going to Girton college, Cambridge, one to Newnham college, three to Somerville college, Oxford, one to Bedford college, and five to Royal Holloway college. One pupil who became an assistant mistress remembered that "'it was such a comfortable school one felt so cared for, so confident of sympathy and of justice."

The school however faced competition from the establishment of James Allen's Girls School by the Dulwich foundation, whose fees were apparently competitive, as

well as from the new GPDSC schools in Sydenham and Brixton, which were opened respectively in 1887 and 1889. Apparently, there were not enough daughters of well-off families to go round. In 1891, Alger was given a term's sick leave, but although she returned to her role, by March 1894 she was too ill to work and died of chronic kidney failure in March 1894 and buried in Norwood cemetery The GPDSC established a scholarship fund in her memory. Miss Cooper from Gateshead High School took over as headmistress.

As well as being one of first prominent Girls high school headmistresses, Mary Alger was also a supporter of women's suffrage. In 1884, together with her teaching staff and two male school doctors, she signed a petition to both Houses of Parliament arguing for votes for women to be included in the Bill which was to become the 1884 Representation of the People Act, otherwise known as the third Reform Act, in succession to the Acts of 1832 and 1867. The petition protested that while

"By this Bill two millions of the least educated section of the Community will be added to the electorate, while educated and intelligent women, who are heads of households, are excluded from the operation of the Bill although they contribute equally with men to the taxation of the Country. That among the persons excluded are women landowners, who form one seventh of the land proprietors of the country; women of means and position living on their own property, schoolmistresses and other teachers, women farmers, merchants, manufacturers and shopkeepers besides large number of self-supporting women engaged in other occupations…. the claim of these householders for admission within the pale of the Constitution is as reasonable as that of the County householders and that they would be at least equal in general and political intelligence to the great body of agricultural and other labourers who are to be enfranchised by the Government Bill."

The petition went on to point to the anomaly that a lady who paid rates and taxes for a property would not be able to vote while her male servant would be able to. The petition did not argue for universal suffrage , but for a vote for 'duly qualified women'.

The petition was signed by Mary Alger and the following teachers- Joan Grunner, Clara Arnold, Helen Cemions, Dora Knight, Mary E Swindells, Linacre Everfield, Ada B Hurrell, Emily Collyns, Maud M Escott, Anna Barth, Sarah Luker, Gertrude Smith, Ida Savage, Bertha Taylor, Alice Russell, Margret Morrison, Grace Louise Brassime, Catherine S Jones, Mary A Burrell, and by William Mann and Humphrey Ward MD.

With school number declining, management of the High School was transferred to the Church Schools Company in 1913 and the school was closed in 1938.

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MARIA SAXTON SALÉS: Feminist and Tax Reformer

Maria Saxton Salés was a social reformer who lived at Beltwood House, 41 Sydenham Hill (a large house next to the Sydenham Wood House pub) from 1851. Maria's father Edward Saxton was a solicitor., originally from Shropshire. The Saxtons had moved from Hackney to Sydenham Hill. Maria was born in 1845, the eldest of nine children, and was baptised in Islington. Her mother was formerly Harriet Somes and was from Stepney. Maria went to boarding school in the early 1860, Hazelden House in Cranbrook Kent, with two sisters, returning to Beltwood House. In 1874, according to the *Norwood News*, she married Emile Giraud Salés in Paris. Emile Salés was a lieutenant in the Dragoons, a former member of the Imperial guard and a chevalier de la Legion D'Honneur. In 1888, Maria published a book: *The Master-Key of Social Reform*. The book was published under the name 'Mme Salés'. She refers to having lived in France for seven years, and many of the examples of reforms are taken from French experience. The pamphlet also ends with a poem she wrote entitled 'A Voice from France. 'At the time of writing the book, Maria had one daughter. Edward Saxton lived in the house until his death in 1911 at the age of 97. Maria died in Uckfield, Sussex in 1923.

The book's subtitle was 'the gradual abolition of hereditary property.' Her claim was that this would secure, without any injustice or taxation '1. The abolition of imperial and local debts, 2) The nationalisation of land and most other property, and 3) The certain maintenance of the four classes having a moral right to live without working: children, bearing and nursing mothers, the sick in body and mind, and the aged'. It was claimed that abolition of inherited property would also secure work for all and 'the abolition of the curses of excessive labour and excessive childbearing'. The book was dedicated 'to the disinherited of the earth; and to my only child, in the hope that he may live in realization of this new social economy, thus hastening the time when sorrow and sighing shall flee away'. Salés recognised her own privileged position. In the preface she wrote "I may mention that as I am personally one of those who have both property to leave and property to inherit, my advocacy of the abolition of hereditary property must be from conviction and not from any interested motive."

Salés was influenced by the American land reformer, Henry George and by the naturalist Alfred Russell Wallace, the founder of the Land Nationalisation Society, whose works she referenced in the preface to her book. Salés however argues that these reformers' both fail to indicate a satisfactory method for restoring it (land) to the community to which it rightfully belongs'. Salés also references John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, as well as quoting Shelley's poem 'Queen Mab'. The pamphlet gives facts on aristocratic land ownership, contrasting this with overcrowding in Finsbury. Salés then seeks to distinguish between earned wealth and inherited wealth, setting out the privileges accrued by those who inherit wealth - 'a class of people able to live in idleness and luxury'. She then extends the argument - 'It enables persons mentally or physically inferior to compete successfully with superiors who may be without fortune in the securing of desirable partners in marriage'. Adopting a eugenicist perspective, she comments that this 'tends to mix up good and bad specimens', which combined with the subjection of women leads to the 'degeneration of the human race'. She points to evidence from the French Department of the Seine that half of males were declared unfit for military service. Ten years later there was a similar finding in England following medical inspections of potential recruits to fight in the Boer war which led to a eugenicist debate among Fabians and other socialist as well as among the establishment. Salés takes a strongly feminist perspective noting that inheritance puts the daughters of the better off into a state of dependence on their parents and pressurises them to marry for independence rather than affection. She also notes that the hereditary principle gives children a pecuniary interest in the death of their parents which puts natural affection and interest in antagonism.

Salés's proposition was to limit inheritance to an annual sum of £3,000 and then phase out completely over two generations, with all subsequent property holdings reverting to the state on the death of the owner. All church endowments would also transfer to the state, which could then rent out churches for worship or secular activities. It was calculated that the transfer would generate an annual income for the state of £408 million. Salés then calculated in great detail the cost of support for children, bearing and nursing mothers, the sick in body or mind and the elderly, This included amongst other services, food for all children at £90m, clothing for all children at £20 , education up to 16 at £20m, university and technical education at £10.5m pensions for over 60's at £60m , free public hot and cold baths for all at £5m, free gymnasiums and Olympic games at £2m and even free cradles and iron beds for children at £3m. The total came to £408m. Salés then set out the case for compulsory state maintenance of children "Until the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are applied to children, it will be in vain to seek to realize them amongst adults. By 'equality', I mean equality of *rights* and *opportunities*, not of *results* - what is necessary to fairness is that all should have the same *start* in the race of life, not that

all should be equal at the goal.". Salés then makes the case for a minimum wage and restrictions on hours of work - supporting the notion of an eight- hour working day. She rejects any notion of a fixed income for everyone irrespective of work - income has to be earned. In response to concerns that state maintenance of children will encourage population growth, she argues that poverty leads to larger families rather than the inverse, and that the more intelligent tend to limit procreation - Salés at one point references the work of Annie Besant on population .She also comments on the impact of distribution of income on population growth, pointing out that those who are better off tend to have fewer children - " the more the mind is cultivated and absorbs vitality, the less of it will go towards reproduction. Thus, universal education might tend to diminish population."

The last thirty pages of the pamphlet deals with twenty-seven possible objections to her proposals. These are all rebutted in a logical and specific manner. These include objections from the libertarian Hebert Spencer that state ownership would lead to a tyrannical state and the suppression of individual freedoms, and objections from the radical secularist and republican, Charles Bradlaugh that the socialising of wealth would remove the stimulus to thrift, that there would be no liberty of the press and that it would be impossible to dispossess tens of millions of people of their property. Salés makes a clear distinction between inherited property and personal property and goes to explain how a democratically accountable government could avoid state tyranny, setting out a clear frame for democratic governance. She argues strongly for the removal of all restrictions on women taking specific positions and for universal adult suffrage : " The coming introduction of women to political power, who, from their clear intuition, more delicate consciences, and greater unselfishness and sympathy for distress, combined with their greater capacity for detail than have in general the male sex, may be expected to be favourable to such reforms , and to have more capacity for carrying them out, more especially as it is they who, of the two sexes, suffer most from the evils of the current system."

Salés notes that in the recent debate between Bradlaugh and Henry Hyndman, the leader of the Social Democratic Federation, Hyndman failed to respond to Bradlaugh's challenge to define socialism. Salés therefore gives her own definition: "Socialism is the doctrine of the advantages of association for most purposes as opposed to the doctrine of leaving everything to individual effort, and of the benefits to be derived from the substitution of co-operation for competition - in other words, of the law of love in place of the law of selfishness." She concludes that "Individualism is the essential condition of barbarism and anarchy. while Socialism, or association, necessarily involves organisation, order and civilization - in fact , all

that is most essentially human in contradistinction to the animal struggle for existence as seen in the brute creation…..The more civilised we become, the more Socialistic."

Maria's poem, which closes the pamphlet, ends:

"*So shall we feel the great redeeming power*
Of this the first stainless, bloodless revolution,
Transferring power from brute to moral force -
Let future generations name that day
And call it blessed, date from it the dawn
Of Wisdom's advent (long delay'd) to break
All laws but one, her only law of Love."

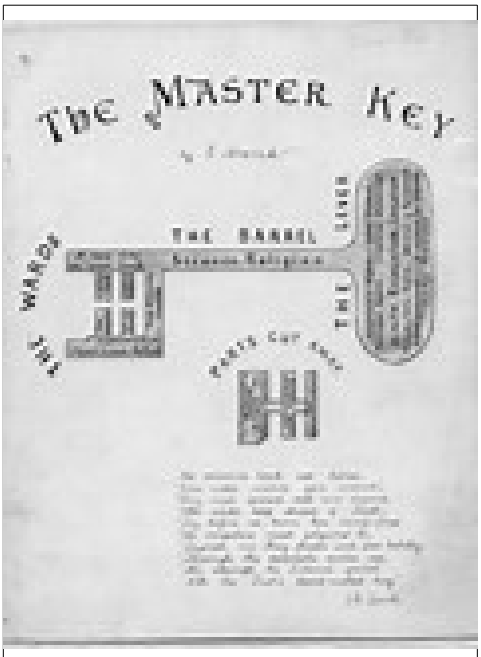
Salés joined the committee of the Nationalisation of Labour Society which was formed in 1890 by British followers of the American Edward Bellamy, whose utopian novel, *Looking Backward* was published in 1888. It is significant that Salés's pamphlet was published before Bellamy's work was available, and there is therefore no reference to Bellamy in it.

Beltwood House, 41 Sydenham Hill

The Nationalisation of Labour Society (NLS) had as president, John Orme, a dealer in photographic supplies and as secretary, Walter Godbold, a printer. Another member was Evacustes Phipson, a painter based in Croydon. The Society published a journal, *Nationalization News*, to promote Bellamy's ideas. The group promoted the establishment of a co-operative colony in England, following the examples of the colony of Kaweah in California and that of Topolobampo in Mexico, the former established on the principles set out in the Danish American Gronlund's *Co-operative Commonwealth*, the latter in an attempt to fulfil Bellamy's dream. The group identified a site at Hockley in Essex for its first English colony, though it failed to raise the funds to establish it.

One of the leading members of the NLS was the Congregationalist Minister John Bruce Wallace. Wallace was a follower of Henry George and after his association with the Bellamites, set up the Brotherhood Trust, which in partnership with the Tolstoyan, J C Kenworthy, ran the *Brotherhood* magazine and established two

Brotherhood churches and co-operative stores on Tolstoyan principles in Southgate, North London and in Croydon. Bruce Wallace was to be one of the founding members of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City Association in June 1899.

The Bellamy group published a magazine - *Nationalisation News* and had planned to set up a Home Integral Cooperative Colony, but the group soon collapsed having failed to win the support of working-class movements. Sidney Webb, who was later to be critical of Howard's initiatives, commented that a cooperative commonwealth would not be created overnight but through "such pettifogging work as slowly and with infinite difficulty building up a Municipal Works Department under the London County Council." *Nationaliisation News* was incorporated in Bruce Wallace's *Brotherhood*.

Ebenezer Howard's use of Maria Saxton Salés's concept of 'The Master Key'

The Nationalisation of Labour Society included a wide range of reformers: socialists, trade unionists, co-operators, theosophists and members of the Good Templars temperance organisation. There were branches across the country. A branch of the NLS in Walworth claimed over 80 Members. There was also another branch in Southwark. By March 1892 the NLS was claiming 1200 members nationally. The LNS encouraged its members to participate in other reform organisations, for example the Fabian society, the labour church movement and the Brotherhood Church. Tom Mann. Leader of the docker's strike, spoke at one meeting; Keir Hardie, then chair of the Scottish Labour Party and about to lead the new Independent Labour party, spoke at the Walworth branch. *Nationalization News* welcomed efforts to form a Labour party and urged support for the Progressives in the London County Council elections.

Ebenezer Howard was to use the concept of the 'master-key' in his book *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Reform*, which was published in 1898. Howard was in contact with the Bellamite group as his initial outline of his garden city proposals was published as early as February 1893 in *Nationalization News.* In fact, Howard was listed as one of the original twenty supporters of the Nationalisation of Labour Society. It is probable that Howard knew Salés, who lived only half a mile away from him, and it is possible that Howard borrowed the concept from Salés, though, unlike Bellamy's work, her pamphlet is not referenced in Howard's book.

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EBENEZER HOWARD: Founder of Modern British Town Planning

Ebenezer Howard

Ebenezer Howard, widely regarded as the founder of British town planning, lived in Dulwich between 1879 and 1885 at 4 Ildersley Grove, Croxted Road. While not active in party politics and perhaps not seeing himself as a socialist or radical, his proposals for garden cities certainly drew on radical and socialist influences and were to serve as a basis for radical and socialist thinking on planning for the following hundred years and remain today the core values of the Town and Country Planning Association which he founded.

Howard was not a professional town planner, but a shorthand writer for the House of Commons. At the time he published *To-morrow - A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in 1898, the profession of town planner did not exist in England. Howard stood in a long tradition of reformers who sought to set out a framework for the development of a new society It could be argued that he was the first writer on planning, at least in England, to successfully bring his plans into effect, notably in the development of Letchworth and Welwyn, England's first two modern garden cities. The utopian experiments undertaken by philanthropists, Owenites and the followers of Cabet and Fourier had generally been on a smaller scale.

London in the 1880's and early 1890's witnessed a vigorous debate over a wide range of alternative solutions to the crisis of overcrowded slums in the major cities of England, with the focus being mainly on the East End of London. The followers of Henry George were advocating the taxation of land, while the naturalist and environmentalist, Alfred Russell Wallace, was arguing for the outright nationalisation of land, a position that had been long argued by the followers of the Chartist, Bronterre O'Brien, who had also put forward proposals for new settlements beyond

London as 'home colonies' to provide homes and employments for slum dwellers. As early as 1893, Howard had collaborated with Alfred Russell Wallace's Land Nationalisation Society on a proposal to establish a Co-operative Land Society. At that time Howard supported the municipal ownership of enterprises.

Howard seems to have first picked up the idea of a planned city from reading Benjamin Richardson's *Hygeia*, which was published in 1876, while Howard was in Chicago. The term' garden city' may have derived from Chicago itself, which at that time was often known as 'the garden city'. In fact, in 1893, Andreas Simon was to publish a book describing its parks, boulevards and cemeteries under the title *Chicago: The Garden City*.

Howard was not the first advocate of dispersing the overcrowded population of London. The economist Alfred Marshall in 1884 published a polemic in the Contemporary Review entitled '*The Housing of the London Poor: Where to house them',* which proposed the formation of a 'colony in some place well beyond the range of London smoke' In the year Howard published *Tomorrow*, the Russian anarchist and geographer, Petr Kropotkin in exile in England, published *Fields, Factories and Workshop*s. Kropotkin's ideas had previously been published as a series of articles in *The Nineteenth Century*, and would therefore have been available to Howard at the time he was writing, though interestingly Howard only cited Kropotkin in the second edition of his own work published in 1902. Howard had become a member in 1880 of the Zetetical Society, many of whose members were followers of Herbert Spencer, who had advocated land nationalisation in his *Social Statics*, and it was at the meetings of this group that Howard met the leading Fabians, Bernard Shaw and Sidney Webb, both of whom supported the taxation of land but not land nationalisation. Howard's lecture to the Zetetical Society was however on the subject of 'spiritual influences towards social progress' rather than garden cities. Howard was also involved in two unspecified 'very small social experiments' with Thomas Davidson, founder of the Fellowship of the New Life.

Through his role as a writer of Hansard, the official parliamentary report, Howard would also have been aware of the debates within parliament and on the Royal Commissions. Though Howard does not appear to have been involved in the Royal Commission on Housing of the Working Classes of 1883-5, he was the official reporter of the Royal Commission on Labour of 1892-4. Howard was also an official reporter for the London County Council, which as discussed above, was actively debating the merits of taxing development land as well as redeveloping slum areas. It was however the utopian novel of the American socialist, Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, which was published in 1888, that appears to have most impact on Howard. He was so enthusiastic that he paid the publisher William Reeves to publish

an English edition, and went so far as to compile the index. In 1910, Howard recalled that Bellamy had convinced him 'that our present industrial order stands absolutely condemned and is tottering to its fall and that a new and brighter, because a juster order must ere long take its place'. Howard decided to test out Bellamy's ideas and first drafted a paper entitled '*The City of Health and How to Build It*', which he sent to the elderly Benjamin Richardson. He then started promoting his ideas to various nonconformist meetings under the title '*Commonsense Socialism'.*

Howard's interest in Bellamy brought him into contact with the small circle of Bellamy's English supporters. In 1890, a group of admirers of *Looking Backward* established a Nationalisation of Labour Society. The group identified a site at Hockley in Essex for its first English colony, though it failed to raise the funds to establish it.

Howard rejected Bellamy's assumption of integral co-operation in favour of individual leaseholds. His 1893 paper included the main features of *Tomorrow:*

> *" The mingling of agricultural and industrial employment, the creation of municipal facilities, the planning of communal services, the existence of a master plan of development, and the hope that the financial success of the project would lead ultimately to the extinction of landlord's rents and the municipalizing of capitalist undertakings.*"

Howard in *Tomorrow*, in a chapter which was entitled rather grandly '*A Unique combination of Proposals*' that he was combining three distinct projects, which he believed had not been combined before:

> *"(1) the proposals for an organised migratory movement of Wakefield and of Professor Marshall; (2) the system of land tenure first proposed by Thos. Spence and afterwards (though with an important modification) by Mr Herbert Spencer; and (3) the model city (of somewhat different design, however) of Jas. S Buckingham."*

In a footnote Howard however pointed out that these works reaffirmed rather than influenced his thinking:

> *"I may perhaps state as showing how in the search for truth men's minds run in the same channels, and as, possibly, some additional argument for the soundness of the proposals thus combined, that, till I had got far on with my project, I had not seen either the proposals of Professor Marshall or of Wakefield (beyond a very short reference to the latter in J S Mill's Elements of Political Economy')nor had I seen the work of Buckingham, which, published nearly fifty years ago, seems to have attracted but little attention."*

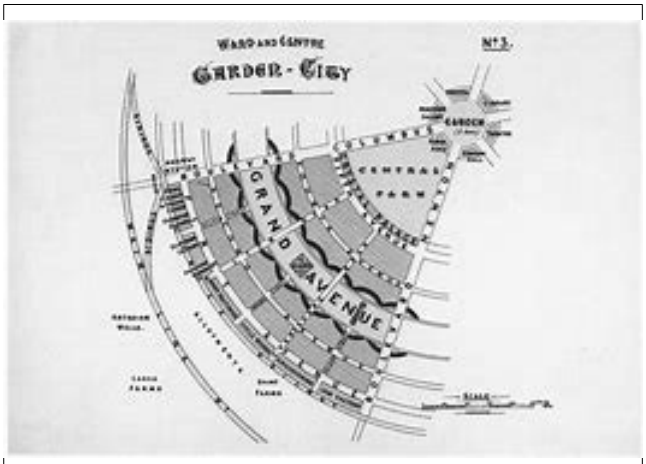
Howard was well-read and used a wide range of sources. It is perhaps significant that in the introductory chapter of *Tomorrow*, focusing on the need to reduce overcrowding in the cities, Howard quotes not only Lord Rosebery, Liberal leader, previously chair of the London County Council and former prime minister, but also quotes two leading socialist trade unionists, Tom Mann, Ben Tillett. His first main chapter opens with a quote from John Ruskin's *Unto this Last* The second chapter opens with quotes from the republican Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* and from Dr Benjamin Richardson's *Hygeia;* the third chapter with an extract from Marshall's *Housing of the London Poor.* The fourth chapter uses material from Marshall and the London School Board but also includes a footnote referring to John Richardson's *How it Can be Done.* John Richardson was a Lincoln based mechanical engineer who was a member of the Social Democratic Federation, the English Marxist party led by Henry Hyndman. Richardson's book subtitled *Constructive Socialism*, a term which Howard himself had used, was published by Howard's publisher Swan Sonnenschein in 1894.The book had been written as a riposte to Blatchford's *Merrie England*, in which Blatchford had stated that he had not sought to answer the question as to how socialism could be accomplished. As a 'man of business', and as he puts it himself 'an intensely practical person', Richardson considered he was in a position to answer the question. His 'Plan of Campaign' was intended to complement Blatchford's 'Call to Arms.'

Richardson's book is an early and reasonably comprehensive statement of how to implement a socialist programme, complete with draft legislation. The book covered schools, technical schools and universities, state industries and how to fund them, public hospitals and orphanages, socialistic settlements, co-operation, the abolition of private property, emigration, poor law reform, prohibition of the drink traffic, the eight hour working day , municipal factories, allotments and small holdings, reform of the land laws, abolition of the standing army, currency reform (bi-metalism), provident societies and sick clubs, old age pensions as well as democratic reforms such as payment of members and abolition of the House of Lords. Richardson was later to write two further pamphlets for the SDF - *The Education Problem and Its Solution* in 1906 and *Work and Wealth for All* in 1908. Howard in his footnote comments that Richardson '*will, I am sure, welcome my proposals as bringing his suggestions within the realm of practical politics*.'

Howard made considerable use of J S Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*. He also refers not surprisingly to Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* and in fact comments in a footnote that he has derived much inspiration from George's work, though he disagrees with George's attack on private landlords. Howard also referred both to a lecture given by Henry Hyndman in 1893 and to the Social Democratic

Federation's *Principles of Socialism Made Plain,* published pseudonymously under the name of 'Frank Fairman' in 1888, Howard however gave most attention to Blatchford's *Merrie England*, because he disagreed with Blatchford's statement that he 'would make all the lands, mines, factories, works, shops, ships and railways the property of the people'. Howard argues that socialists, whom he refers to as 'our friends', 'miss the essential point. " *Their professed ideal is to make society the owner of land and of all instruments of production; but they have been so anxious to carry both points of their programme that they have been a little too slow to consider the special importance of the land question, and have missed the true path of reforms*" Howard's point, which he thought the socialists were missing, is that land had a different character than other wealth, a point with which George agreed: *"There is however one form of material wealth which is most permanent and abiding… The earth for all practical purposes may be regarded as abiding for ever… as every form of wealth must rest on this earth as its foundation, and must be built up out of the constituents found at or near its surface, it follows (because foundations are ever of primary importance) that the reformer should first consider how best the earth may be used in the service of man."*

Howard's response to the positions of both Blatchford and George was that while a reform of the land system is necessary, rather than nationalising land or appropriating rent values created by others, a more equitable system should be established which protects the individual against expropriation by others of the rent values which he creates or maintains. The method proposed in the book was the collective ownership of land and collectivisation of rent values through a trust.



Concept of 'The Garden City'

In the 1902 edition published as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, Howard also acknowledged the work of William Light and in Adelaide, in fact including a new diagram based on that of Light. As well as a footnote referring to Kropotkin's recently published *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, the new edition added some further references - to J W Petavel's *The Coming Revolution* and to Neale's *Economics of Co-operation*. Captain James W Petavel of the Indian Polytechnical Association in Calcutta published a paper in 1909 on *The Town Planning of the Future* in the *Westminster Review*, which focused on the need for decentralisation of population and industry, the provision of cheap transport and the taxation of development land,

proposing a 'lineal city' with 700 lineal settlements of six miles each, with each 'limb' providing for 12,000 dwellings and 60,000 residents. Petavel also wrote a number of books on Indian economics, self-government and how co-operation was preferable to the class struggle. In his 1911 work on *The Coming Triumph of Christian Civilisation*, Petavel, now living in Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, included an updated version of his earlier essay as an appendix on *Town Planning and Railway Transport.*

Edward Vansittart Neale was a leading Christian socialist who had in 1877 given a series of lectures on the Economics of Co-operation, though the lectures were not actually published until 1885. It is interesting that despite Howard's sympathy with co-operative approaches, that Neale's short volume is the only reference Howard gives to the vast literature on co-operation available at the time he was writing.

One further footnote in *Tomorrow* epitomises the breadth of Howard's sources as well as demonstrating that Howard was far from unique in publishing proposals for new settlements. Howard's footnote to his famous diagram 7 - The Group of Slumless Smokeless Cities comments that "This drawing is, in many respects, very much like one to which (after making it) my attention was drawn in a work entitled *Palingenesia; or the Earth's New Birth. Palingenesia* was published in 1894 by Gideon Jasper Ouseley. Ouseley was an Irish priest who claimed he had discovered the original gospel, called the *Gospel of the Holy Twelve*, from which the four gospels in the New Testament were derived. The Gospel was written in Aramaic, but apparently found by Ouseley in a Buddhist monastery in Tibet, having been hidden there centuries earlier by a member of the Essene society. After being suspended from the Catholic Apostolic Church for anti-Christian views, Ouseley founded the Order of At-One-ment and the United Templars Society. Amongst his numerous works are volumes with the following titles: *The Science of the Aura, Colour Meditations, A Guide to Telepathy and Psychometry, Power of the Rays and the Science of Colour Healing, Changing and Projecting Thought.* Ouseley, who wrote under the pseudonym 'Theosopho', also produced a study of Persian poetry, a book on *How to Keep a Cat in Health, Why Eat Corpses* and *England Regenerated through justice to Ireland or a programme of reform proposals to a reformed parliament, with appendices on food and drink reform, burial and cremation*. The notion of planning new settlements based on religious and mystical imagery was part of a long-standing tradition, traceable at least back to planning of New Haven based on a text from Ezekiel.

It can be concluded that Howard's extensive study in developing his project had led him to derive ideas from a range of influences, many of which were radical and socialistic. He appears to have to a certain extent shared the anti-urbanism of Ruskin, though his approach to the need to disperse the overcrowded population of London

was more practical than aesthetic and owed more to the hygienist and economic writings of Benjamin Richardson and Alfred Marshall. There is little evidence of the anarchistic self-help approach of Kropotkin, who is referred to more for his anthropological and geographical perspective than for his politics. Howard was in no way opposed to the state, though to a certain extent he shared Kropotkin's views on self-help and avoiding reliance on the state. In his references to John Richardson and to the work of the London County Council progressives, and specifically to John Burns, he was clearly a supporter of constructive socialism. However, Howard, while sharing the reforming objectives of the socialists, rejected the arguments for nationalisation and also rejected the Georgite argument for the taxation of land values. He believed that land and property owners could be won over to his project and that attacking landlords and other wealth owners was not a constructive way of realising his project. His promotion of his garden cities project was dependent on winning the support of the liberal and reforming establishment and his initial Garden Cities Association in 1899 was to be comprised mainly of Liberal MPs and municipal Liberal activists, including LCC progressives.

Howard's influences were essentially English. Apart from Kropotkin, who lived in England and Henry George, a regular visitor to England, the only non-English source was the American writer, Albert Shaw and the reference was to Shaw's study of Municipal Government in Europe. There is no evidence of Howard being familiar with European writing on town planning, municipal governance and economics. This is perhaps surprising given the extent of contact between British municipal reformers and architects with their colleagues on the continent. This is in contrast with the writings of other contemporary British writers on planning such as Inigo Triggs, Budget Meakin, Thomas Horsfall and A R Sennet.

In 1902, a new edition of Howard's book was published under the title '*Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. The development of Letchworth was initiated in 1903, with Welwyn Garden City after the First World War. In 1919, the Garden Cities Association became the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association and survives as the Town and Country Planning Association. Howard also initiated an International Garden Cities Association, now the International Federation for Housing and Planning. Howard moved to Letchworth where is buried.

Howard died in 1929, having been knighted in 1927.

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HENRY ALDRIDGE: Housing Reformer

Henry Aldridge, the housing and planning reformer, lived at 86 Oglander Road in East Dulwich, before moving to Leicester in 1906.

Aldridge was secretary of the National Housing and Reform Council (NHRC). The National Housing Reform Council was initiated in 1900 by the Land Nationalisation Society. The organisation actually grew out of a series of provincial housing conferences organised by Land Nationalisation Society supporters in the co-operative and trade union movements, culminating in a meeting in Leicester. The NHRC focused on parliamentary work and by 1906 had 130 vice-presidents in parliament. Its policy was that all insanitary dwellings should be destroyed without compensation, that local authorities should implement the 1890 Housing Act, including using compulsory purchase powers to acquire unfit property. Its policy on land acquisition was based on rateable value - 'not on the basis of extortionate demands by landlords'. The NHRC however soon became independent of the LNS and developed a broader base of support, with its chairman, the housing reformer, William Thompson of Richmond, and its secretary, Henry Aldridge becoming prominent in debates over housing reform.

The organisation was established 'to advocate and work on non-party lines for practical housing reform' Its membership included housing reformers such as Edward Bowmaker, George Haw, George Dew of the LCC, and the LibLab MPs - Sam Woods, Thomas Burt and John Wilson as well as trade unionists, George Barnes and Richard Bell, both later Labour MPs. It supported councils having the power to acquire land and build homes, the extension of co-operative enterprise in housing supply and the taxation of land values.

The NHRC collaborated with the Fabian Society to publish in 1900 William Steadman's pamphlet on *Overcrowding in London*. Steadman was general secretary of the bargemen's trade union and a Progressive member of the London County Council, who had become Lib-Lab MP for Stepney in a by-election in 1898. The pamphlet was based on Streadman's speech in parliament on a Bill to amend the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act, a bill which was enacted as the Housing of the Working Classes Act 1900. Steadman claimed that in ten years, the LCC had spent £2 million and housed 42,000 people, but was restricted in what it could do by the Local Government Board and the Home Office. He argued that because the LCC could only borrow at the market interest rate, the rents were so high "that the places rebuilt do not come within the purview of the poor unskilled worker or general labourer, and therefore, we are accommodating people today who could find not better but other accommodation elsewhere, and the poor people are entirely neglected." Steadman argued for lower interest loans, which were repayable over 100

years rather than the norm 60-year term. He argued that land should be treated as an asset and not as a charge on the building repayable through rent. He also objected to the requirement of part III of the 1890 Act that compulsory purchase had to be on the basis of 10% above market value. He also proposed that vacant land should be taxed. He referred to the previous argument put forward by Joseph Chamberlain, now Colonial secretary, that private owners should demolish unfit buildings and rebuild at their own expense without compensation. Steadman claimed that his proposals had support of a trades union movement of 1,250,000 working men and referred to a recent mass meeting in Hyde Park attended by 100,000 trade unionists.

In October 1894, Aldridge gave a talk to the East Dulwich Radical Club on 'The Town Problem and the Land'. He referred to 'the unhappy environment in which the worker existed - his clothing, shelter and food were of the meanest description, and his life one of drudgery and ceaseless toil.' He commented that ' much credit was due to the Socialist party for bringing the need for reformation so prominently to the front'. He then advocated what he called 'a sound and practical Radical programme': This included the nationalization of land. One listener commented that while Aldridge was 'treading on the confines of socialism, but fearing to take the needful step'.

In its early years, Aldridge and the NHRC collaborated with the Workmen's National Housing Committee (WNHC), a radical organisation established by Fred Knee of Clapham, who was a member of the Social Democratic Federation and who had been elected to Battersea Council. He became secretary of the London Trades Council and then in 1914 the first secretary of the London Labour Party, a post later filled by Herbert Morrison. In August 1901, the NHRC and the WNHC organised a Housing and Transit conference. The conference supported suburban development, It was recognised that the provision of cheap public transport was essential if working people living in the suburbs were to get to their workplaces in central London. The demands included:

1) the provision of money from savings bank deposits and other sources for housing loans at low rates of interest
2) the relaxation of building regulations imposed by the Local Government Board
3) extension of loan repayments
4) more effective dealing with slum areas by means of increased powers of representation and registration of slum ownership; and
5) the granting of larger powers to acquire land on the basis of its assessable value for the purposes of developing municipal housing estates"

These proposals were put to parliament in January 1902 in a bill by Dr T J Macnamara, the radical Liberal MP for North Camberwell who lived in Rollscourt Avenue in Herne Hill (Steadman had lost his seat in the 1900 General Election). The Government responded by appointing a select committee on the repayment of loans, which proposed extending the loan repayment period from 60 years to 80 years - the WNHC had wanted a 100-year period. The WNHC annual conference however decided that it should have a Labour MP to be its parliamentary advocate rather than a Liberal. Macnamara had won third place in the ballot for private members bill but decided to pursue legislation on land values rather than housing. (In 1907 Macnamara was to become Parliamentary Private Secretary at the Local Government Board in Campbell- Bannerman's administration).

The labour movement was beginning, somewhat belatedly, to recognise the importance of the housing issue, with the Trades Union Congress holding a special conference on housing at Holborn Town Hall in March 1903. In April 1904, the TUC general council declared "that for the future it has confidence in any MP or candidate who is not a direct Labour representative. Fred Knee wrote to Keir Hardie asking him to take up housing reform, but Hardie said he was too busy working on other issues. Knee attempted to get adopted by the Independent Labour Party as parliamentary candidate for Clapham. Although he had local support, he appears to have been blocked by the national ILP leadership, not surprising that as a prominent SDF member, he had been critical of Hardie and other ILP leaders.

In 1906, the NHRC took a delegation to meet the prime minister, Henry Campbell-Bannerman and the President of the Local Government Board, John Burns. The delegation led by William Thompson, the chairman, had 18 members, including Aldridge as secretary, T H Horsfall, George Cadbury, the Bishop of Wakefield, Sybella Gurney who was secretary of the Co-Partnership Housing Association, and councillors from Sheffield, Newcastle and Hull. The delegation presented a twelve-point programme - in effect a draft Bill:

1. Local Authorities should be stimulated to carry out their duties under the Health and Housing acts
2. Amendments to Public Health Acts
3. Closing and demolition of unhealthy dwellings
4. Clearance of slum areas
5. The creation of model suburbs
6. Acquisition of land by agreement
7. Compulsory purchase of land
8. Establishment of a national town and village development commission

9. Rural housing, smallholdings and other village development

10. Town extension planning

11. Cheaper money

12. Revision of bye-laws

Thompson gave an introductory presentation on the case for reform:

> *"Intemperance, lunacy, physical deterioration, unemployment, poverty and hooliganism followed in the train of other evils arising largely from bad housing conditions, although these by no means exhausted the consequences of the body-blighting, soul-destroying conditions of overcrowding and the slums. The cost of the products of bad housing conditions was also a serious matter for the ratepayers and taxpayers. … Local authorities had failed to do what was necessary under the Health and Housing Acts, partly because of apathy, ignorance, prejudice, and vested interests, but even more largely perhaps because of costly and difficult procedure or the inadequate powers contained in those Acts, while so far as sanitary improvements in existing dwellings were concerned, the scarcity of other suitable accommodation resulted in the penalising of the tenants by increased rents following on execution of sanitary repairs."*

Thompson claimed that many of the proposals were similar to those of the 1886 Royal Commission and that the overall reform package had been endorsed by the recent Trades Union Congress. One of the more novel proposals was for:

> "*A central Town and Village Developments Commission acting through local bodies, such as county or borough councils, or special statutory committees established for suitable areas, should have large powers over land, housing and transit, the three great factors in town and village growth, and also a special fund and borrowing powers if necessary for doing this work effectively …. Special powers for securing land for main roads, recreation grounds, sites for public buildings and workman's dwellings, together with facilities to encourage the provision of small holdings, the promotion of agricultural co-operation, and the improvement of transit might be conferred on these central and local authorities. It was therefore, essential to have improved facilities for compulsory purchase of land, which should be based upon the amount at which it was assessed for rates and taxes.*"

George Cadbury followed Thomson, and focused on the creation of garden suburbs. He suggested that each city should set up a development board to control development of the surrounding area from 5 to 20 miles around it, with board

controlled by representatives on the pre-existing developed area. Horsfall then spoke on the case for town planning powers to be given to local authorities, following the example of Germany and other European countries -

> "*the power to make extension plans for all land within the town boundaries, no matter to whom it belongs, the arrangements indicated in which all owners of land and all builders on it are compelled to comply with… The plan indicates the direction and width of every street; care is taken that some streets shall be pleasantly curved, that the new districts shall be beautiful as well as conveniently arranged and wholesome; that a sufficient number of playgrounds, planted open spaces, tree-planted streets, sites and schools and other public buildings shall be provided. The plan and the building regulations together can create districts of different character, some for dwellings, some for manufacture, and, in the districts of dwellings, prevent the erection of long rows of monotonous houses, and the covering of too large a portion of each site with buildings*."

After a further eight presentations, John Burns had the opportunity to reply. He quoted from Robert Burns whom he claimed to be a housing reformer:

> *"To mak' a happy fireside clime-*
> *For weans and wife -*
> *That's the true pathos and sublime*
> *Of human life"*

He then said that he accepted that 'the moment for practical ameliorative achievement was nearer to hand than it was some years ago.' He disputed claims that continental countries had more comfortable cities, even if they appeared to be better planned. Burns was not convinced that new powers were needed and that local authorities already had the powers to achieve most of what the NHRC wanted. Campbell Bannerman was similarly reluctant to give a commitment to bringing forward new legislation, commenting only that 'I hope we may find some time within a very few months to do something at least towards carrying out the object you have in view', a comment which the NHRC deputation seems to have taken as a firm commitment.

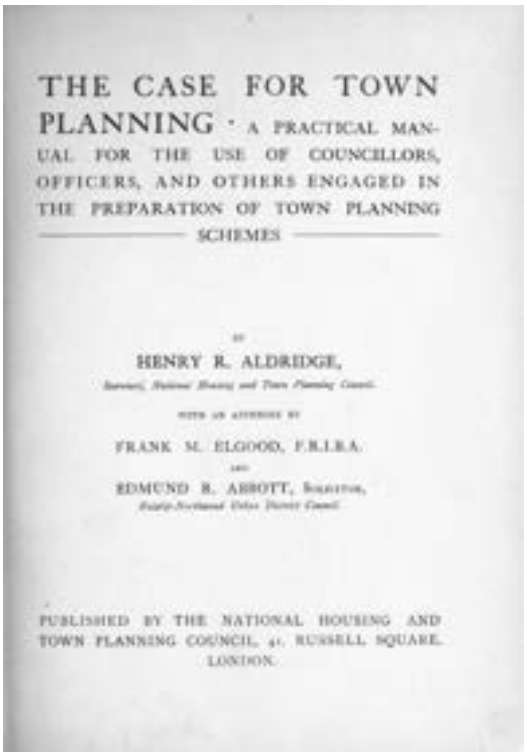
In June 1907, the prime minister, Henry Campbell Bannerman announced that the proposed housing and planning legislation would now be deferred. Knee attacked the NHRC for being too timid:

> *"We played our part as a workman's organisation in kicking and prodding the Conservative government of 1900 and 1903 and legislation ensued; but if the policy of the NHRC … is to continue to express unwarranted confidence in the premier and Mr John Burns, and to persuade the latter that housing is after all only a speculative fad of 'town planning' (a play term which signifies nothing'*

and can wait till all the other fads have been dealt with), then they are playing directly against the interests of the workers and against the housing problem being solved… through the action of professional housing reformers, the slum dweller, the overcrowded, the rack rented have been sold once more."

The NHRC believed that it had "a well-defined and practical programme of municipal housing work, including the efficient usage of existing powers under the Housing and Public Health Acts. It strives also for the extension of these powers and the granting of new powers to local authorities to enable them to acquire municipal estates, to stop the process of new slum creation by proper methods of planning."

In 1907, Henry Aldridge organised an exhibition of cottage buildings in Sheffield, including a number of new homes on the Flower Estate. The organising committee included W H Lever (later Lord Leverhulme), who had sponsored the Port Sunlight development in Liverpool and John Tudor Walters, the MP for Sheffield Brightside and later author of the Tudor Walters report of 1918 which introduced the first national housing standards, and Thomas Nettlefold, the Birmingham municipal reformer. The winning entry was by architects from Bournville, the Cadbury sponsored new settlement in Birmingham, using concepts advocated by the garden city architect, Raymond Unwin.


THE CASE FOR TOWN PLANNING · A PRACTICAL MANUAL FOR THE USE OF COUNCILLORS, OFFICERS, AND OTHERS ENGAGED IN THE PREPARATION OF TOWN PLANNING SCHEMES

BY

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In 1909, the National Housing Reform Council, changed its name to the National Housing and Town Planning Council (NHTPC) in 1909, to reflect the enactment of the Housing and Town Planning Bill. It established an Advisory Committee on Planning. Its purpose was to advise Local Authorities 'in the work of practical administration of the Town Planning clauses' of the 1909 Act. The committee held a number of conferences, with an initial conference being held in Liverpool in February 1911. Three hundred local authorities were represented with a total of nearly 600 delegates. The conference was organised by Aldridge. Alderman Thompson gave a presentation on the Northwood garden suburb, Thomas Adams and Raymond Unwin both gave presentations. The Council then held a conference in Newcastle on the housing clauses of the Act, chaired by William Straker of the Northumberland Miners Association, with Aldridge as the main speaker. The advisory committee announced a list of experts including Professor Adshead of Liverpool University, W H Lever, George Cadbury, Seebolm

Rowntree, Raymond Unwin, Patrick Geddes, T C Horsfall, T H Mawson and George Pepler, together with a number of French and German planners. The group also established a Greater London Town Planning committee with the object of 'bringing together the Local Authorities in the area of unbuilt-upon land around the central zone of London and the evolution of a wise policy of Garden Suburb development.'

It is interesting to note that the three main pressure groups which had pushed for the 1909 legislation, the National Housing and Town Planning Council, the Workman's National Housing Council and the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, do not appear to have played any role in the establishment of the Town Planning Institute in 1913. Aldridge, like other founders of the town planning movement, not having the appropriate professional qualifications, was only allowed to become an associate member of the new Institute. He nevertheless was very active within the Institute, arguing that town planning should be mandatory for local authorities rather than optional.

Aldridge and the NHTPC continued to promote housing and town planning practice after the 1909 Act was passed , with their advice aimed primarily at local councils, who now had new powers, as well as promoting further reforms, which generated the post-war 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act, known as the Addison Act after the Minister of Housing , Christopher Addison. Aldridge was indefatigable. For example, in 1911-12, the NHTPC annual report recorded that he spoke at three national conferences 12 district conferences and delivered 32 lectures in 23 towns during the winter. In 1915, Aldridge wrote for the NHTPC, *The Case for Town Planning*, which is a 680 page (and very heavy) 'practical manual for the use of councillors and others engaged in the preparation of town planning schemes.' Aldridge was an optimist. In the book's preface, he commented that "the sense of common citizenship was never greater than it is to-day, and proposals in regard to the improvement of the conditions under which the masses of the people live will receive warm support." The volume was dedicated to the former NHPC chairman and fellow housing and planning reformer and Richmond alderman, William Thompson, who had died the previous year. Aldridge continued his campaigning after the war. In 1923, he wrote for the NHTPC , the National Housing Manual, which was both a guide to implementing the 1919 Act and a survey of what had been achieved so far.

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6. Radical Liberals

ALLAN OCTAVIAN HUME: Botanist, Indian Nationalist and Radical Advocate

Hume was a retired Indian civil servant who lived at the Chalet, 4 Kingswood Drive and founded the South London botanical Institute in Norwood Road. He was chairman of the Dulwich Liberal association between 1894 and 1912 and the most prominent radical Liberal in Dulwich in the 1890's and 1900's, leading the Liberal challenge in six parliamentary elections. The Chalet was later demolished to provide a site for the Catholic church.

Allan Octavian Hume

Hume was born in St Mary Cray, Kent in 1829, the son of the radical MP, Joseph Hume. Brought up in a radical circle, centred on his family home in Bryanston Square, which included John Stewart Mill and Herbert Spencer, he studied at University College London and then at the east India College, Haileybury. He was critical of institutional Christianity, but believed in the immortality of the soul, which led to his association with the theosophists. Posted to India in 1849, he was appointed magistrate at Etawah in the North Western Provinces, where he undertook a number of progressive initiatives in developing secular education, health care. municipal administration and improvement of roads and public buildings. In the uprising of 1857 (also known as the Indian mutiny or First War of Independence), he took refuge in the fort of Agra, before recruiting a force of Indian troops. He was critical of British administration, arguing that it was their ineptitude which led to the uprising. For the following two years, Hume worked on reconstruction and reform initiatives, trying to involve Indians in municipal administration and was critical of the use of flogging by the provincial government. He was on medical leave in Britain for two years, before returning to continue his work at Etawah. In 1867, he was promoted to commissioner of Inland customs, and noticed by the reforming Viceroy, Lord Mayo, was appointed to head up a new agriculture department. His outspokenness however led to his demotion in 1879 and he was sent back to the North Western provinces. He *published Agricultural Reform in India,* an indictment of the government's neglect of agricultural modernisation. Indian ornithology had been his main hobby and he had assembled a vast collection of bird skins, eggs Hume stayed in post in order to finance publication of a three volume work on *Game Birds*

of India, Burmah and Ceylon. Hume's collection is now in the Natural History Museum in South Kensington.

Hume took early retirement in January 1882. However, he decided to stay in India. He had become involved in theosophy, which had been introduced to India by Helena Blavatsky and Henry Olcott in 1879, attracted by the movement's focus on the philosophical roots of world religions and the notion of a new universal brotherhood. Hume abandoned alcohol, became a vegetarian and stopped shooting birds. He however became sceptical of Blavatsky's occultism, and while retaining his belief in transcendental communication, switched his focus to the development of Indian national political organisations. He retained his vegetarianism, becoming a vice-president of the British Vegetarian Society in 1885.

Hume supported the legal reforms proposed by the viceroy, Lord Ripon, which included giving Indian judges some jurisdiction over Whites. These reforms, known as the Ilbert Bill after the lawyer who drafted it, were opposed by the establishment in Britain as well as in India. Hume collaborated with some Indian leaders to raise support for the reforms, initially through an appeal to graduates of Calcutta University. The appeal included the following:

> "*If you, the picked men, the most highly educated of the nation, cannot, scorning personal ease and selfish objects, make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourselves and your country, a more impartial administration, a larger share in the management of your own affairs, then we, your friends, are wrong and our adversaries right.*"

This led to the creation in 1885 of the Indian National Congress, with Hume becoming the general secretary, a post he retained for nearly ten years. Hume argued for both political and economic reform, but also sought to broaden out the base of the reform movement by bringing together townspeople and peasant proprietors, Hindus and Muslims. The Congress leadership however was divided over the issue of the minimum age for marriage of Indian girls and also was not supportive of Hume's focus on overcoming poverty as well as achieving Indian political self-government. Hume was worried that without economic and political reforms, there was a risk of an agrarian uprising. He was supported in this view by the Congress nationalist radical, B G Tilak, who later co-founded the Indian Home Rule League with Annie Besant, and by Henry Hyndman, the Social Democratic Federation leader in Britain, who had an interest in the politics and economics of India, publishing the *Bankruptcy of India* in 1886. The Congress nationalist Dadabhai Naoroji, Congress president in 1886, had also published books on the Indian economy. He was to move to Britain, becoming MP for Finsbury in 1892 and to publish *Poverty and un-British rule in India* in 1902.

In 1894, Hume, disappointed with the lack of support for reform from Indian leaders, returned to Britain, becoming involved in the British Committee of the Congress, which he had helped to initiate in 1890, and which was initially chaired by Sir William Wedderburn and included Naoroji, and other Liberal MPs, with William Digby as secretary. Digby had been secretary of the Indian Relief Fund and had published *India for the Indians*, advocating Indian self-government in 1885.

Hume also focused on establishing the South London Botanical Institute, which sought to focus on educating working class youth. He also became involved in the Dulwich Liberal party, working with its secretary, Seth Coward. In 1891, Hume became vice-president of the Dulwich and Penge Liberal and Radical Association (Penge being included in the Dulwich constituency established in 1885) and president of the Dulwich Reform Club. In the 1892 election, he acted as agent for the Liberal candidate, Sir Arthur Clayden, though Clayden was defeated by the Conservative sitting MP, John Blundell Maple, by 5,318 votes to 3,138. Clayden was an advisor to Joseph Arch, the leader of the National Agricultural Workers Union and a Lib-Lab MP, and had accompanied Arch on a visit to Canada. Clayden had been a journalist in New Zealand and had read a paper on New Zealand emigration to the Royal Colonial Institute. He later became principal of University Technical Extension College, Exeter.

In 1894, Hume became president of the Dulwich Liberal Association, a position he held until his death in 1912. According to Wedderburn's biography of Hume, Hume was "a profound believer in the reign of law instead of force, of arbitration instead of war, intensely in earnest in giving to the poorest the advantages of education, equality of opportunity for all was with him a passion. All the movements of the day for the improvement of the lot of the poor of our great city found in him a strong supporter. The progressive policy in London and the country was to him the inseparable outcome of the radical changes, which he so ardently desired to see in the laws of the country."

Hume himself stated that 'Truth in the People' was "the faith in which I was reared, a faith which has never faltered, a faith, despite the shortcomings of individuals, in goodness and wisdom of the people as a whole, and in the certain and ultimate triumph of the people's cause, as of all other true and righteous things." Hume argued for the abolition of the House of Lords, electoral equality, equality before legal tribunals, reform of the land laws, equitable taxation and Home Rule for India and Ireland. A talk he gave in November 1891 focused on his support for a legal maximum on working hours for those working in manual labour– the Eight Hour Day, referencing the campaign of the Progressives within the London County

Council and proposing that workers should have the right to determine their hours of work..

In the 1895 election, the Liberal candidate, Charles Clarke lost to Maple by 5,259 to 2,156 votes and in the 'Khaki' election of 1900, Maple was returned unopposed. Maple however died in 1903 leading to a by-election. The conservative candidate was Fredrick Rutherfoord Harris. The Liberals selected as their candidate, the radical journalist, Charles Masterman. Harris was however returned with 5,819 votes to Masterman's 4,382. Masterman then moved constituencies to stand in West Ham South in 1906, where he was elected.

In the general election of 1906, which brought the Liberals under Henry Campbell-Bannerman to power, the Liberal candidate, David Williamson, came close to defeating Harris, whose majority fell to only 357 votes. When Harris died later that year, the Conservative candidate was Andrew Bonar Law, who had been a junior minister in Balfour's administration but had lost his seat in Glasgow in the general election. Bonar Law increased the Tory majority to 1,279, defeating the Liberal candidate, Williamson, by 6,709 votes to 5,430. The turnout was high for a by-election at 79% of the electorate. It was suggested that the swing to the Conservatives was mainly due to the Liberal Government's unpopular Education Bill, with possibly 700 Roman Catholics supporting Bonar Law, somewhat ironic given Law was a Scottish Presbyterian. Bonar Law was to hold onto his seat in the January 1910 general election, increasing his majority over the Liberal candidate, now Evan Cotton, to 2,418. Evan Cotton was the son of Sir Henry Cotton, a friend of Hume's and a former Indian civil servant who was Liberal MP for Nottingham East. Evan Cotton was elected to the London County Council for Finsbury East and was elected MP for Finsbury East in a by-election in July 1918, though lost his seat in the subsequent general election, when the two Finsbury parliamentary seats were combined.

The Dulwich Liberal candidacy was then taken up by Evan Spicer, the resident of Belair in Gallery Road, who was the LCC member for Newington, and a future LCC chairman, later knighted in 1916 in Asquith's resignation honours. Spicer fought the second general election of 1910, being defeated by 7,796 votes to 5,495 by the new Conservative candidate, Frederick Hall, Bonar Law having stood in Manchester, where he managed to lose the contest. Hall had lived at Eastlands off Court Lane since 1905. Hume was then involved in selecting his final parliamentary candidate in Christopher Cooke-Taylor, a psychiatrist at the Maudsley hospital, whose first opportunity to fight the seat only came in the 1918 general election, when Hume had been dead for six years. Cooke-Taylor was to have eight attempts to win the seat, all

unsuccessful. The Liberal Party never won a parliamentary election in Dulwich, the 1906 election being the closest they got to victory.

Hume was 80 in 1909. He offered to step down as president of the Dulwich Liberals on the grounds of age, but no replacement could be found. The Dulwich Liberals had a garden party to celebrate his birthday. The party thanked him for his work in the constituency over two decades, trusting that he would 'be spared to witness further triumphs of the great Liberal and radical principles for which he had so fearlessly and consistently fought both in England and India'. Hume died in 1912. He was remembered for his courtesy and for 'his great power of securing enthusiastic and harmonious co-operation of all classes of Liberal workers'. His biographer commented that 'discord was unknown in the presence of his unselfish devotion to the cause of progress'.

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CHARLES MASTERMAN: Proponent of New Liberalism

Masterman was a journalist who was the Liberal candidate in the 1903 Dulwich by-election. Though defeated in Dulwich, he later became an MP and a junior Minister in the Asquith's government in 1910 and briefly a cabinet minister in 1914. He was editor or author of several books and became a leading proponent of New Liberalism, a liberalism which abandoned laissez-faire and recognised the need for state intervention to provide a welfare state.

Masterman was born in Wimbledon in 1873. His father was a farmer; his mother came from Brixton from a Quaker family. The family were evangelicals. Educated in Brighton, he went to Christ Church college at Cambridge university to study natural science and moral science, becoming president of the Cambridge Union Society in 1896. After graduating, he ran a boarding school with his brothers, which went bankrupt, so he returned to Cambridge to undertake research in psychical research, becoming elected as a fellow of Christ Church in 1900.

Masterman was attracted to Christian Socialism, joining the Christian Socialist Union. He was later to write a biography of the Christian Socialist, Frederick Maurice. He had spent time at the Cambridge House university settlement in Camberwell, which he had helped to found, and in 1900 he moved to London to live in Albany Buildings a tenement block in the area. In 1901, Masterman edited his first book, *The Heart of Empire*, which was a survey of domestic social issues in the context of Britain as an imperial power, with contributions from fellow Cambridge graduates. Masterman wrote the introductory chapter, entitled 'Realities at Home'. This set out a reform programme:

Charles Masterman

"Back to the land, from gigantic mass populations to healthier conditions of scattered industry; housing reforms; temperance reform; a perfected system of national education; the elimination of the submerged; the redemption of women's labour; - all these are immediate necessaries. But all these are but palliatives of the one fundamental malady – attempts in some degree to check the ravages of selfishness, indifference and isolation. Accompanying all these must be whole hearted endeavour to deal with the disease at its very centre."

Heart of Empire was followed by two single authored studies on the state of Britain: *From the Abyss (*subtitled *Of its Inhabitants, by one of them*, published in 1902 and *In Peril of Change (*subtitled *Essays written in a time of tranquility.* in 1905. Masterman joined the Camberwell Board of Guardians and of the local unemployment committee. He also developed an interest in Balkan affairs, specifically Macedonia, and became a member of the Balkan committee, formed in 1903 by Noel and Charles Buxton, which, in the Gladstonian tradition, sought to protect Balkan Christians from Turkish oppression..

Masterman was only thirty years old in 1903 when he was selected as Liberal candidate to fight the by-election which followed from the death of the sitting Conservative MP, John Maple. Masterman, who was persuaded to stand by the Liberal chief whip, Herbert Gladstone, was however well known in the constituency from his work in Camberwell, Dulwich being part of the borough of Camberwell and of the area covered by the Board of Guardians and the unemployment committee, although Dulwich was the most prosperous and most Conservative part of the borough. The Conservative candidate, Frederick Rutherfoord Harris, was a friend of Cecil Rhodes, secretary of the British South Africa Company and a former member of the Cape Province House of Assembly. He had briefly been MP for Monmouth in

Wales, before being disqualified for electoral irregularities, though apparently no blame fell on Harris and although disqualified from standing again in Monmouth, he was not disbarred from standing in another constituency.

Frederick Rutherfoord Harris

The debate over tariff reform dominated the by-election, which was held on the same day as a by-election in Lewisham. The Duke of Devonshire, the Liberal Unionist leader who was a leading figure in the Unionist coalition, was opposed to the tariff reform campaign initiated by Joseph Chamberlain, his Liberal Unionist Colleague, who was now Colonial secretary in the Unionist government. Devonshire, who was president of the Unionist Free Food League, wrote a letter saying he could not support the Government candidates in the by-elections. Rev Jennings, incumbent of St Clement's Church wrote a letter to dispute comments in the Church Times by Rev Percy Dreamer and Father Adderley that from the church point of view, Masterman was an ideal candidate, arguing that Masterman was opposed to the maintenance of church schools and had failed to give a commitment to support church marriage laws. The Camberwell and Dulwich Free Church Council wrote to the London Daily News to support Masterman's candidacy. Masterman also had a letter of support from Canon Scott Holland of the Christian Social Union. Masterman commented in a letter to his friend Arthur Ponsonby, who was fighting a by-election in Taunton, that he was "defying the narrow Protestants in the constituency who in consequence placarded the constituency with appeals to the good Protestants not to vote at all." Masterman was later to be a vigorous advocate of disestablishment - the separation of church and state.

Masterman was supported at meetings by Sidney Buxton, MP for Poplar (and future President of the Board of Trade) Thomas Macnamara, the Liberal MP for Camberwell North, G P Gooch, the Liberal journalist and political historian (and a friend of Masterman from Cambridge) and a South African merchant called Weager, who was no doubt critical of the Conservative candidates record in South Africa - Harris was apparently associated with the infamous Jameson Raid on the independent Transvaal Boer republic in 1895. Masterman attacked the government's conduct of the Boer war. Sir Harry Johnston, the colonial administrator, was also present at the meeting and argued that the Liberal's record on empire was preferable to that of the Conservatives.

At a meeting at Dulwich Baths, John Burns, MP for Battersea, spoke for an hour and threequarters 'with characteristic eloquence and energy.' The South London Press

called the speech ' encyclopaedic' – "Facts and Figures were marshalled with marvellous skill and lucidity, and so telling and convincing were the arguments, that the few opponents – two or three at the most- who ventured on interjectional protests, were soon answered and silenced." To Burns, the fiscal question of tariff reform was a red herring – 'and it smells'. "It promised people the New Jerusalem in their front garden – Mount Pisgah on Peckham Rye and the Promised Land down by the river in Battersea." Burns undertook an analysis of Chamberlain's arguments, which apparently held his audience 'spellbound'… "the torrent of cheering fairly shook the rafters of the hall." The Liberal posters had 'Vote for Masterman for No Tax on Food'.

Masterman received support from the Camberwell Trades Council – there was no Labour candidate standing. H R Taylor, Progressive member of the London County Council for Camberwell North, spoke at a meeting which the South London Press referred to as being for the 'labouring section of the community'. The meeting was also addressed by the suffragette and member of the Independent Labour Party Charlotte Despard. Masterman also had a letter of support from the Fabian H G Wells, whom the *South London Press* referred to as 'an out and out imperialist'. Wells wrote that he objected to the imperialism of Harris - "The tune of empire resonates on their tin pans. But indeed, theirs is Imperialism not worthy of the name. They want the mandate of the electors to fight German trade … I hope most earnestly that you will inflict an exemplary defeat upon the particularly wild Empire-breakers before you. The Conservatives attacked Masterman as a 'Little Englander'. The licensed victuallers issued a statement in support of Rutherfoord Harris. Masterman stated that he would not support the use of funds to compensate license holders or limitations on the powers of local licensing magistrates to 'adjust the number of licenses to the needs of the locality;' Not surprisingly the temperance organisations wrote to support Masterman. Masterman also received letters of support from the Liberal party leader, Henry Campbell-Bannerman and from Herbert Gladstone.

Harris was returned by 5,819 votes to 4,382 for Masterman. Masterman's showing was a good result for the Liberals – 43% of votes cast, especially since the Liberals had not actually contested the seat in the general election three years earlier, and in 1895, the last time they had fought the seat, their candidate got less than 30% of the vote. After his valiant campaign in Dulwich, Masterman was adopted as the Liberal candidate in West Ham North and was returned to parliament in the Liberal landslide in the 1906 general Election, which brought the Liberals to power under Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister. Masterman's manifesto argued for a graduated income tax, the rating of land values, far colonies and public works programmes for the unemployed, small holdings, better housing for the poor and old age pensions.

Masterman found time for two more books. *To Colonise England: A Plea for a Policy* set out a programme for rural resettlement. It included brief contributions from no less than thirteen other Liberal MPs. Masterman then published in 1909 *The Condition of England.* Other New Liberals were to publish volumes on the need for a more interventionist liberalism to respond to social problems, for example Percy Alden in his *Democratic England,* published in 1912. The introduction to this volume was written by Masterman. Alden had been warden of the congregationalist Mansfield House settlement, a member of the executive of the Christian Socialist League and secretary of the National Unemployed Committee before being elected Liberal MP for Tottenham in 1906.

In 1908, Masterman was appointed under-secretary to John Burns at the Local Government Board, by the new Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, where he drafted a Land Valuation Bill. However, his attempts to promote land value taxation and strengthen the 1909 Housing and Town Planning Act were frustrated. In 1909, he was moved to the post of under-secretary at the Home Office pursuing a Shops Bill in 1911 which sought to regulate the working hours of shop assistants. He helped Lloyd George draft the land valuation clauses in the controversial People's Budget and worked on the propaganda for the Budget League which argued for the budget proposals. He then worked on the proposals for national insurance for the National Insurance Act of 1911. In February 1912, Masterman became Financial Secretary to the Treasury, leading on the administration of the new health insurance system. In 1913, he became one of the leading proponents of Lloyd George's land reform campaign. In February 1914, Masterman at last joined the cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. However, on being appointed to the cabinet, Masterman was required to face a by-election and managed to lose his seat of Bethnal Green (Southwest) by a margin of 24 votes. In May, he attempted to return to parliament in a by-election in Ipswich and was again defeated.

No longer a member of parliament, Masterman was appointed as head of the British War Propaganda Bureau at Wellington House, where he was assisted by John Buchan, H G Wells and Arthur Conan Doyle as well as utilising the paintings of war artists such as Paul Nash and Francis Dodd. He also commissioned propaganda films about the war, targeted primarily at attracting the isolationist Americans onto the side of the allies. The Bureau was closed when the war ended. Masterman then transferred his energies to promoting the cause of Armenians who were being massacred by the Young Turk led government and military. In 1920, Masterman published what was perhaps his most important book, *The New Liberalism*, which was a summary of the New Liberal ideology and programme.

Masterman attempted to get back into parliament but was defeated as Lloyd George issued the coalition ticket of support to his Conservative opponent. He made a further attempt by fighting the Clay Cross seat in Derbyshire in 1922 and was again defeated. He did however return to parliament in 1923, being elected for the Manchester, Rusholme constituency. His main role in parliament was to provide Liberal Party support for the Minister of Health in the minority Labour government, John Wheatley, to pilot his Housing Bill through parliament, often seen as the one significant legislative achievement of the first Labour government. Masterman however lost the seat the following year on a significant swing to the Conservatives. He won only 30% of the vote, the Conservatives taking 50%, with the remaining 20% going to the former Labour candidate, William Paul, who was now standing on behalf of the Communist Party. Masterman returned to his journalism, becoming parliamentary correspondent for *The Nation.* In 1922. He published a book on *How England is Governed*, and in 1923, a study of *England after the War.* He also contributed to Liberal Party policy making, including a report on Coal and Power and to *Britain's Industrial Future*, known as the *'Yellow Book'.*

However, Masterman's health declined rapidly, hastened by drug and alcohol abuse and he died in 1927, being buried in St Giles' Church, Camberwell, where he is commemorated by a plaque. A key proponent of New Liberalism and one of the key figures in the foundation of the welfare state, a recent biography of him by Eric Hopkins rather unfairly refers to him as 'a Splendid Failure'. An earlier biography by his widow, Lucy Masterman, is somewhat more favourable.

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JOHN AND ALICE HARRIS: Anti-Slavery Campaigners

Alice Harris

John and Alice Harris, anti-slavery campaigners, lived at 191 East Dulwich Grove from 1910 to 1921. John Harris was born in Wantage, Oxfordshire in 1874, son of a plumber. He attended King Alfred School in Wantage. He worked in the city of London at Cooks, a gentleman's outfitter while training to be a protestant missionary, carrying out evangelical social work in common lodging houses. He was ordained at Cliffs Theological College in Derby. Alice Seeley was daughter of a silk works manager, who was a civil service secretary, and an active Christian who heard a 'call' to go out to Africa from the Baptist preacher, Dr F B Meyer of Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, later known as 'the archbishop of the Free Churches', the same preacher who had 'called' John Harris. Although they had apparently known each other for several years, Alice's parents had objected both to Alice's wish to be a missionary and to marry a fellow missionary. John and Alice were nevertheless married on 6 May 1898 and within a few days the newly married couple sailed to the Congo on behalf of the Region Beyond Missionary Union, which had been founded in 1892 as an inter-denominational protestant mission by Henry Grattan Guinness and his wife Fanny, the name taken from Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which the Lord Jesus Christ Cares for Central Africa'. It seems reasonable to assume that the Harrises had read the book before leaving England and had some idea of what to expect. The Harrises appear to have kept a house in Croxted Road in West Dulwich, where they stayed while they were on furlough from the Congo mission.

John Harris

Arriving at the mission at Bololo, the Harrises first sought to learn the local language and teaching the natives basis skills such as housebuilding, but soon found themselves shocked by the way in which both the rubber plantation managers and the agents of King Leopold of the Belgians, the personal owner of the so-called Congo Free State, treated the natives. In 1903, the Harrises supplied Edmund Morel of the Congo Reform association with evidence of the abuse, including a series of photographs taken by Alice on her Kodak camera. The photos were shocking, showing natives being whipped and workers and children whose hands and feet had been amputated as punishment. Some of the photographs were published in Morel's book *King Leopold's Rule in Africa*, which was published in 1904. John Harris also published a

pamphlet *Rubber is Death. The Story of the Bonguranga Rubber Collectors,* giving the names of victims and their children. On returning to England, the Harrises became active campaigners for the Congo Reform Association, of which in May 1906, they became joint organising secretaries, speaking at some six hundred meetings between them, including an American tour, giving lantern lectures using Alice's photographs and displaying shackles and chicottes – the slavedrivers whips. John Harris presented the evidence to the public enquiry established in 1904 by King Leopold in response to the agitation. When the enquiry report was published it excluded the Harisses evidence and photographs. The British consul in the Congo, Roger Casement, submitted his own report to the British foreign office in 1904, which was published in a censored version. The Congo Reform Association established a 'parliamentary committee', which included the leading Liberal MP, Sir Charles Dilke, a Conservative MP, Sir Gilbert Parker and the Labour leader Ramsay Macdonald. In 1903, Henry Fox Bourne, the secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, had published his own critique of King Leopold's Rule – *Civilisation in Congoland*, with the sub-title *A Story of International Wrong-Doing,* with a forward by Sir Charles Dilke. In July 1909, John Harris had an argument with Edmund Morel after he had interviewed the foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, without informing Morel, The Harrisses therefore dropped out of the Congo Reform Association. Morel published a second book on the Congo, *Red Rubber*, in 1908. Books critical of the Congo regime were also published by Arthur Conan Doyle, The American Mark Twain and the Belgian socialist politician Emile Vandervelde.

Congo children with amputated hands

In 1910, John Harris became secretary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, the two separate organisations having merged, a post he held until his death. Moving to Dulwich, he became president of the Dulwich Liberal Association, in succession to Allan Octavian Hume. John Harris was extremely prolific published a number of books and pamphlets: *Coolie Labour in the British Crown Colonies and Protectorates* (1910), *Domestic Slavery in Southern Nigeria* (1911), *Dawn in Darkest Africa* (1912), *Present Conditions in the Congo* (1912), *Portuguese Slavery* (1913), *Germany's Lost Colonial Empire* (1917), *The Struggle for Native Rights in Rhodesia* (1918), *Africa – Slave or Free? League of Nation Mandates*, (1919), *The Fight for Vegetable Oils*

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Alice in the Congo

John Harris was keen to get into parliament. In the 1922 general election, he stood as an independent (Asquithian) Liberal against the sitting National Liberal MP and Minister, Dr T J Macnamara in North Camberwell. Macnamara was returned. Harris came third with 3,270 votes, with the Labour candidate, Hyacinth Morgan in second place. Morgan was to win the seat for Labour in 1929, the Conservatives having captured the seat in 1924. Harris switched his candidacy to North Hackney, where he was elected in general election in November 1923, narrowly defeating the sitting Conservative, Walter Greene. However, his time as an MP was short-lived as in the election in December 1924, he was defeated by the Conservative candidate, Austin Hudson. He tried to recapture the seat in 1929, but this time came in third place. He made a final attempt to return to parliament in 1931 this time as the Liberal candidate in Westbury, Wiltshire, coming in third place again. In 1933, John Harris was awarded a knighthood for his services to the Anti- Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society. He only retired from his position as general secretary in1940. Harris had lobbied on behalf of the anti-slavery society at the Paris Peace conference in 1919.

He became a leading advocate of mandates to manage the former German colonies in trust for their native populations, publishing articles in the press as well as pamphlets on the issue. He had a special interest in the 'B' mandates in Tropical Africa – Togo, the Cameroons and Tanganyika (formerly German East Africa). He represented the anti-slavery society at the League of Nations annual assemblies in Geneva. One of his main concerns was to avoid the abuses he had witnessed in the Congo where Leopold II had asserted a humanitarian trusteeship in his personal kingdom, when the practice of his administration was neither humanitarian or operating in the native interest. He was also a member of the executive committee of the League of Nations Union. Harris, give his experience, acted as an advisor to the League of Nations mandates commission and staff.

Alice continued to contribute to the Anti-Slavery Society campaigns, lecturing widely as well as writing articles. She was active in opposing lynching in South Africa and in the southern states of the US. She wrote about slavery in the Portuguese colony of Sao Tome, stressing the impact on women and family life. John Harris died in 1940. Alice died in 1970, at the age of 100.

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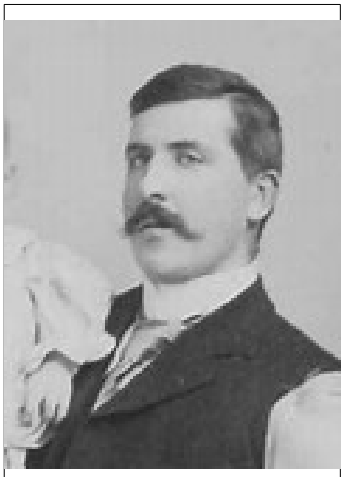
7. Republicans, Suffragettes and Pacifists

JAMES AND AGNES O'MARA: Irish Nationalists

James and Agnes O'Mara lived at St John's Wood House, College Road. James O'Mara was an MP. Agnes O'Mara was a suffragette and, in 1913, was Hon Secretary of the Dulwich Branch of the New Constitutional Society for Women's Suffrage. Agnes was also from a republican family; her sister Alice Cashel was a leading member of Sinn Fein in Cork and secretary of the Cork Irish volunteers.



James O'Mara

The house had previously been the vicarage for St Stephen's Church but had been sold as too large for the new vicar appointed in 1907, who was less wealthy than his predecessor. The O'Maras called the house 'Dunlica'. The family also had a home in Ireland, Cashel House in Connemara.

James O'Mara had been born in Limerick in 1873, where he was educated at the Christian Brothers School, then at Clongowes Wood College in Dublin and then at the Royal University of Ireland. In 1893 he abandoned his studies to go to London to take over the London end of a bacon importing business set up by his grandfather as his uncle who had died. He moved to Epsom. He completed his degree in 1898. His family was republican. In 1985 he married Agnes Cashel, whose sister Alice joined Sinn Fein in 1907 and was later involved in the Easter Rising in 1916 and in Roger Casement's gun-running (Casement was executed by the British for treason).

Agnes's sister, Alice Cashel

James O'Mara was elected in 1900 to the House of Commons as the member for South Kilkenny, in succession to his father, representing the Irish Parliamentary Party (also known as the Home Rule Party). His election was unopposed. In 1903, he introduced a bill which became the Bank Holiday (Ireland) Act, making St Patrick's Day (17th March) a national holiday. The Act also required pubs to be closed that day, a provision only repealed in the 1970's. He was re-elected unopposed in the 1906 general election, when the Liberals were returned to power. O'Mara was an active participant in his Party's tactic of obstructionism – obstructing the business of parliament in an attempt to force the Government to

pursue the legislation for Irish Home Rule, which had been abandoned by previous Liberal administrations in 1886 and 1893. On one occasion, O'Mara spoke on the subject of trawling off the Irish coast for four hours.

In 1907, the year he moved to College Road, James changed his political allegiance from the Irish Parliamentary party to the newly formed Sinn Fein, the first MP to do so. He then resigned from parliament, on the grounds that Sinn Fein did not support the House of Commons and the British government having jurisdiction over Ireland. In the consequent by-election, the seat was retained by the Irish Parliamentary Party without a contest. The O'Mara family returned to Ireland shortly after the outbreak of WW1 in 1914. O'Mara avoided involvement in the Easter rising of 1916, which he considered to be 'suicidal'.

In Ireland, O'Mara was appointed Sinn Fein Director of Finance and Director of Elections, his three predecessors all having been imprisoned. Sinn Fein decided to contest the 1918 General Election and O'Mara was returned for his old seat of Kilkenny South, this time as a Sinn Fein MP, defeating the Irish Parliamentary Party candidate, by 8,685 votes to 1,855. Sinn Fein however decided to boycott the British parliament, so O'Mara, together with his 72 elected Sinn Fein colleagues, did not take his seat. Instead, he joined the first Dail, the provisional illegal Irish parliament, which comprised the MPs elected to the Commons. The elected Irish Parliamentary Party and Unionist MPs did not attend. The majority of elected Sinn Fein MPs did attend, though the 34 in British prisons were unable to do so.

Dunlica, 100 College Road

O'Mara became a trustee of the Dail funds and travelled to the United States with the Sinn Fein leader, Eamon de Valera to raise funds. The fundraising was very successful and financed the war of independence. Valera and O'Mara issued bonds in the name of the Republic of Ireland, which at that time did not legally exist, on the basis that subscribers would have a certificate of indebtedness against a future Irish state. The bonds were not interest bearing. The project raised 5.1 million dollars. 303,578 people, mainly Irish Americans, bought certificates. O'Mara also set up a system for laundering the funds, to get them back to Ireland, dodging British intelligence and sidestepping US law. One batch of $200,000 was drawn down by a

New York priest, who passed the money to the Bishop of Killaloe, Michael Fogarty, who also happened to be a Dail trustee.

O'Mara resigned his seat and his trustee role in 1921, having had an argument with De Valera over the management of the fund. O'Mara supported the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty, which created the Irish Free State, He was then appointed as the first Irish ambassador to the United States.

Sinn Fein led by De Valera had opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty so O'Mara changed political parties and joined Cumann na nGaedheal, which later became the Fine Gael party. Which was led by Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins and William Cosgrave. When, Cosgrave's brother, Philip, who was the Dail member for Dublin South died in 1923, O'Mara stood in the subsequent by-election and was returned to the Dail, where he sat until 1927. In 1927, he stood down and retired from political life. He died in November 1948. Agnes lived until June 1958. Patricia Lavelle in her biography of her father, James O'Mara, commented on his funeral: "There was no tricolour over his coffin, no bugles sounded over his grave. No guns were fired in salute but we paid silent tribute to him for all he had done and suffered that Ireland might be free."

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ALISON NEILANS: Suffragette and Campaigner for Moral Hygiene

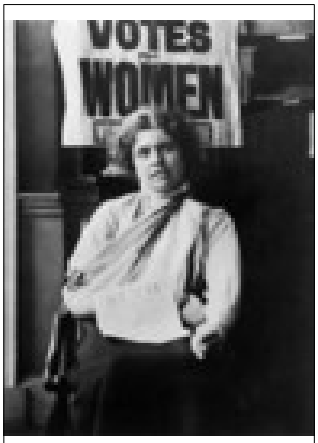
Alison Neilans was a prominent suffragette and leading member of the Women's Freedom League. She was also a campaigner for moral and social hygiene. She was born in 'Ellesmere' Friern Road, East Dulwich in 1884, later moving to 'Zelia' 264 Lordship Lane. Her father was a commercial traveller, originating in Coldstream-on-Tweed on the Scottish borders. The family were Catholics. Alison was privately educated at Langley House school in Dulwich, until her father died when she was twelve. She then had to be financially independent, living in lodgings and hostels, finding work as a book-keeper.

Neilans as moral hygiene campaigner

In 1908, Neilans joined the Women's Freedom League founded by Charlotte Despard and Teresa Billington-Greig as financial secretary. The Women's Freedom League consisted of members of the Women's Social and Political Union who had been unhappy with what they saw as the autocratic behaviour of Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. Despard was from an aristocratic Anglo-Irish background, but had been a supporter of the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party and had been a delegate to the Second International conference in in 1896. She had been an anti-war campaigner during the Boer war, despite being the sister of General French

Neilans was a militant and arrested twice in 1908, firstly for a protest outside the house of Lewis Harcourt, who was a Minister in the Liberal cabinet and then for a protest outside the Houses of Parliament. In both cases, she was imprisoned for refusing to pay a fine. Together with Alice Chapin, Neilans attacked polling stations during the Bermondsey by-election in October 1909, in which the pacifist ILP'er Alfred Salter, who was a supporter of the suffragettes, was Labour Party candidate. Neilans and Chapin smashed bottles containing corrosive liquid over ballot boxes in an attempt to destroy votes. A presiding officer, George Thornley, was blinded in one eye in one of these attacks, and a Liberal agent suffered a severe burn to the neck. The count was delayed while ballot papers were carefully examined. 83 ballot papers were damaged but legible but only two ballot papers became undecipherable. Neilans and Chapin were sentenced to three months each in Holloway Prison. Neilans went on hunger strike and was as force fed twice a day. On release, Neilans continued to be active in the Women's Freedom League, also

working with the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, the Church League for Women's Suffrage and with Sylvia Pankhurst's East London Federation of Suffragettes. In 1913, Neilans organised the Women's Freedom League summer camps on the west coast of Scotland.



Neilans as suffragette

Neilans developed an interest in the issue of prostitution. In 1912, she joined the International Abolitionist Association, which had been founded by Josephine Butler as part of her campaign for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, which required prostitutes to be subject to medical inspections. In 1915, the Association merged with the Ladies National Association for the Reform of the Contagious Diseases Acts, which had also been founded by Butler, to create the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene. Neilans became secretary and took over responsibility for editing its journal, *The Shield*.

During the First World War, the government tried to introduce compulsory testing and treatment of venereal disease. This was opposed by the Association, which also campaigned to reform the law on street prostitution, where, although prostitution was not actually illegal, street solicitation was held to be a public nuisance. Neilans saw the legislation as unequal between men and women and as stigmatising women:

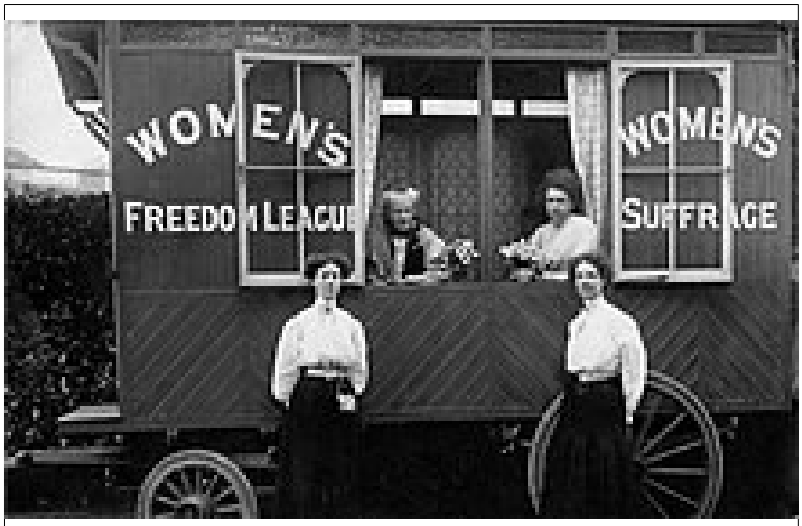
> "*Justice is higher than mere morality, and the test of our justice is the way we treat those who are held to be of little esteem. The solicitation laws can only be carried out by riding carelessly over the principles of law. They depend upon lack of proper definition, lack of proper evidence, and their foundation is the double standard of morality.*"

Neilans also believed that if the police force and judiciary included women, law enforcement would be less discriminatory. She opposed the National Vigilance Society and other purity societies who supported the incarceration of girls under 18 who had been convicted of prostitution related offences. Neilans had a firm commitment to the principles of individual liberty, justice, sexual equality and personal responsibility. In 1922, she argued that:

> "*The prostitute is the scapegoat for everyone's sins, and few people really care whether she is justly treated or not. Good people have spent thousands of pounds in efforts to reform her, poets have written about her, essayists and orators have made her the subject of some of their most striking rhetoric; perhaps no class of people has been so much abused, persecuted, hated, or,*

alternatively, sentimentalized over as prostitutes have been, but one thing they have never had yet, and that is simple legal justice."

Neilans succeeded in mobilising a wide range of organisations behind her cause, including the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship , the National Council of Women and the National Association of Women Teachers. The Salvation Army and the Young Women's Christian Association supported much of her work. With the support of Lady Astor, she drafted several parliamentary bills to reform prostitution laws. She testified before the Government street offences committee in 1928 and argued against its conclusions.



Neilans in window with Charlotte Despard

Neilans' interests were not limited to prostitution and venereal disease. She supported unemployment insurance for women and argued against the eugenicists who advocated voluntary sterilisation. From 1929 to 1935, she was a member of the board of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. In 1934 she joined the executive committee of the Open Door Council, initiated by Lady Rhondda, which campaigned for economic opportunities for women. She contributed a chapter on *Changes in Sexual Morality* to Ray Strachey's 1936 volume on *Our Freedom and its Results*. She participated in international conferences, serving as the British representative on the League of Nations advisory committee for social questions. She travelled widely and lectured in continental Europe in the Middle East as well as corresponding with feminists in India, the Far East and the United States. She even organised a women's rally at the sultan's palace in Istanbul. She never married or had a known partner. Her entire life seems to have been devoted to her work.

In the late 1930's, Neilans feared the revival of militarism, worried that personal liberty was under threat. At a celebration of 50 years since the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, Neilans was referred to as the 'Josephine Butler of her age'. A celebration of Neilans' 25 years' work for the Moral and Social Hygiene Association was held in November 1938 and was attended by William Temple, who at the time was Archbishop of York (he later moved to Canterbury) and the feminist and former suffragette, Maude Royden. Neilans became ill at the beginning of the Second World War and gradually lost the use of her limbs and being able to speak.

She died in July 1942 at her home in Hampstead Garden Suburb. A memorial service was held at St Martin's in the Field.

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PERCY AND LYDIA HORTON: Conscientious Objectors

Percy (self-portrait)

The artist, Percy Horton, and his wife Lydia lived at 11 Pond Cottages, next to Dulwich College in the 1920's and 1930's. Percy had been a conscientious objector during the war, while Lydia, who was eleven years older, had worked for the No Conscription Fellowship during the war, having been a suffragette before the war. The Hortons next dour neighbours at 10 Pond Cottages were the artists, James and Margaret Fitton, and when the Hortons moved out, the Fittons combined the two houses into one. One of Horton's pupils at the Royal College of Art was the North American-born artist, R.B. Kitaj, who also lived in Dulwich in the 1960's in Burbage Road.

Percy was born in Brighton in 1897. His father was a bus conductor, his mother a nurse. After being taught with his two brothers at the Brighton Municipal Secondary School, he attended the Brighton School of Art from 1912 to 1916. Percy Horton had become a socialist and a member of the Labour Party through the influence of the *Labour Leader*, the weekly publication of the Independent Labour Party which was anti-war. Following the introduction of conscription in 1916, he joined the Brighton branch of the No-Conscription Fellowship, and refused to be called up, maintaining an absolutist conscientious objection. On 21 March 1916, as an absolutist, he argued at Brighton Military Service Tribunal against undertaking non-combatant service, but his request for complete exemption was refused. Although being a conscientious objector, he was still considered a soldier subject to military discipline, and upon not reporting for duty with the Royal Fusiliers, he was arrested by the civil police, brought before Brighton Magistrates' Court, fined and handed over to the Army. For disobeying orders he was court-martialled in Edinburgh on 7 August 1916 and sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour, served at Calton Prison, Edinburgh. He was

court-martialled twice more before his release, on grounds of serious ill-health 'to the care of his friends' in December 1917. Percy's friend and fellow conscientious objector, Royle Richmond had died from heart trouble, probably as a result of his incarceration. This resulted in the Home Office releasing some vulnerable conscientious objectors, including Horton, before the war ended.

Lydia in 1916

Lydia Sargent Smith was from a Quaker family in Fritchley, Derbyshire. She had travelled to America in 1905 with a group of Fritchley Quakers. She then became a suffragette. Lydia had become a school teacher and secretary of the Brighton branch of the No Conscription Fellowship, where she had met both Royle Raymond and Percy Horton. Lydia then joined the No Conscription Fellowship office in London as head of the press office, with the Bermondsey socialist , Ada Salter, and Violet Tillard, both former suffragettes, as her colleagues. She became the named editor of the weekly newspaper of the NCF, *The Tribunal*, in late 1917 after the male editor, Bernard Boothroyd, went to prison. She combined her press work with the editing of the paper and other publications, including more than one million leaflets.

Lydia stayed with a family of strong suffragists, and made friends with a fellow lodger, Joan Beauchamp, whom she persuaded to join the NCF staff, working with her. They rented Chalkpit Cottage, at Norbury Park, near Dorking about twenty miles from London, and for the next three years were caught up in a whirlwind of absorbing activity. They interviewed some of the absolutist COs after their imprisonment and heard terrible stories of persecution from some. One of her brothers, Henry, was an absolutist, and she visited him regularly, bringing him up to date with efforts to secure release of the COs. His interview with the Imperial War Museum about his experiences is available on the IWM website. Another brother did alternative service. Lydia wrote to newspapers in defence of conscientious objectors. In a letter to the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* in August 1916, she quoted Edith Cavell, the nurse executed by the Germans – 'Patriotism is Not Enough' and argued that "To the conscientious objector has come the vision of internationalism, of the underlying unity of mankind, and it is in individual faithfulness to this vision, which is the only way of ushering in the days when war shall be no more…. They feel that the greatest service they can render humanity at this time is to hold a hand uplifted against hate." The same letters column included a letter from Lydia's then

fiancé, Royle Richmond who wrote that " I wish to state that the exemplification of pacifism is the greatest service I am at present able to render to the community."

In 1917, Lydia wrote a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, outlining the futility of the kind of work that those COs who had accepted the Home Office scheme were expected to do in their various work centres: "What outlet did the Home Office find for the energies of these men, who are drawn from the thoughtful section of the community, whether they be doctors, accountants, University men or tradesmen and skilled artisans? Has the government, which is calling so insistently for efficiency, made any attempt to use the talents of these men in a way which will be most helpful to the community? The answer is unfortunately in the negative. Not only is the work futile, but the conditions under which it is performed are those most calculated to discourage the worker." She pointed out that the agricultural work was penal - designed to make work, the harder and more physically tiring the better. "I saw a gang of eight men harnessed to a hand-roller engaged in rolling a field - work that one man and a horse could have performed in a third of the time....The coke for the gasworks and furnaces is carted by hand, teams of ten men being harnessed to a cart. And yet there appear to be a large number of horses on the farm." One of the COs told her that 'no one can pretend that it is work of national importance.' She said "There is absolutely no incentive to work when they cannot but feel that what they are given to do is essentially punishment work and economically valueless. In spite of this, the farm bailiff has repeatedly stated that the farm work, both as regards quantity and quality, is better done than it was by the convicts. This is the more significant in view of the fact that the food is poorer and the hours of labour longer than under the old regime when convicts filled the prison."

By the time Lydia became editor of the *Tribunal*, the police were doing their utmost to close down the publication. After police raids on previous printers of *The Tribunal* and dismantling of their presses, the detectives who ransacked the NCF offices told Lydia 'We've done for you this time.' But Lydia had been empowered to secretly purchase a small hand-press and type, and hidden stocks of paper where no one else even in the office knew they were. The *Tribunal* appeared three days later as a one-page leaflet, proclaiming defiance: "The press in this country is no longer free, it is...the servile tool of those who would fasten militarism upon us. But...we are not daunted. We shall go on with the message we believe it is our duty to deliver. We are trying the show the world - Scotland Yard included - the vision of that new way of life in which the methods of violence have no part. We have no fear of the ultimate results of the conflict between the spirit of violence and the ideal for which we stand."

Lydia said that they knew the police were camped out in York Buildings opposite the publishing office, (and at the top of the street) but the police never discovered who was producing the *Tribuna*l, partly because they didn't believe that she, as a woman, was capable of doing it and they assumed the editor was a man. The scheme for her to be editor, while Joan Beauchamp was the named publisher, was devised in conjunction with the NCF committee. Lydia wasn't being so closely watched and followed as Joan Beauchamp. For a whole year they evaded the police, who tried again and again to find the press, which was hidden in a back room in a private house where two young ingenious printers worked at all hours, sometimes shut up for days. On one occasion they heard that the noise of the press was being commented on by neighbours and they moved elsewhere with the press being transported on a handcart, disguised as a piano. Copy for printing was smuggled out of the office in a baby's pram past the police, by an old woman and taken to her home before being taken by someone else to the printers. Copies were distributed and posted from six different localities, so no single post office or box could be raided. Only 2,000 copies could be produced instead of the usual 6,000 but they were able to keep publishing.

After police raids, all copies of the *Tribunal* at the office were seized. The British Museum later complained they had not received their copy (a legal requirement), so Lydia referred the librarian to Scotland Yard.

The First Metropolitan Police Women

Lydia was taken to Bow Street Magistrates court in May 1918, with Violet Tillard, for refusing to give the name of the printer of the *N.C.F*. (an internal news sheet for NCF members which the NCF argued was a private document). But the charge against Lydia was dismissed as the magistrate thought she was clearly a mere subordinate (she looked younger than she was). Miss Tillard was given a fine and costs which she refused to pay and as a result she served 61 days imprisonment.

After the war, Incensed by the treatment of suffragettes by the male police force, Lydia decided to join the newly formed women's constabulary, which was formed in 1919. Lydia, who had been engaged to Royle Raymond, in 1921 married Percy Horton. Percy Horton continued his political activism. Before the war, he was on the advisory committee of the Artist International Association and supported artist

refugees who had fled from Germany through the Artists Refugee Committee, including Edmund Mehimann, who married Percy and Lydia's daughter, Katherine.

During the Second World War, Horton received a number of short-term commissions from the War Artists Advisory Committee to paint portraits of civil defence staff and civilian factory workers. Possibly the most notable of these is his depiction of blind workers in a Birmingham factory. Percy joined the Home Guard, his opposition to fascism over-riding his conscientious objection

In 1947 together with Paul Hogarth. Laurence Scarfe and Ronald Searle, Horton was invited to Yugoslavia to observe and record a 150-mile railway being built through voluntary labour; Horton drew the leading figures of the project. His interest had begun to lie in portraiture and landscape. This led to portrait commissions from Oxford Colleges, and to the renting of a gamekeeper's tower near Alfriston where he painted during weekends and vacations until the end of his life.

Lydia continued writing. In 1952, she published an article on the welfare state in the journal, *Britannia and Eve*, which was 'A Monthly Journal for Men & Women'. *Britannia and Eve* contained general news articles, as well as sections dedicated to fashion, home, and short stories. Lydia's article, entitled 'Jam Today' examined who benefited most from the welfare state – the lower income groups or the middle classes. The conclusion, clearly aimed at a middle- class readership is that the middle class do benefit and that their National Insurance contribution is not wasted. The article also examined the benefits of education, further education, regulation of consumer standards and the youth employment service.

On Percy's retirement in 1964, retirement, Percy and Lydia moved to Lewes and lived at The Broads, 48 Southover High Street, a property they had leased in 1954. Percy died in St George's hospital Tooting in 1970 at the age of 73. Lydia died in Lewes in October 1975.

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ARTHUR CREECH JONES: From East Dulwich to Africa

Creech Jones lived in East Dulwich before the First World War and founded both the Camberwell branch of the Independent Labour Party and the Camberwell Trades and Labour Council. In his political career, he had two main interests – workers education and colonial self-government. He served first asunder-secretary of state and then as Colonial Minister in the post-war Labour government – from 1945 to 1950 and has been regarded as the founder of the modern Commonwealth. Creech Jones is one of the least known members of Attlee's cabinet – he has not been the subject of any monograph, and does not have an entry in the fifteen volume Dictionary of Labour Biography, though there is an entry by Patricia Pugh in the Dictionary of National Biography.

Creech Jones was born in Bristol in 1891. Having passed the civil service junior clerk's examination, he moved to London in January 1907 to work as a clerk in the war office. Known as Arthur Jones (adding the middle name of 'Creech' later), he lived at 46 Keston Road near Goose Green, lodging with relatives, the Tidman

family. He appears to have been a Methodist, joining the Liberal Christian League. He was secretary of the Dulwich branch of the League of Progressive Thought and Services and also joined the London Egyptian Debating Society. In 1910, he became lecture secretary for the Liberal Christian League study group. Creech Jones was secretary of the Dulwich ILP from 1912 to 1916 and of the Camberwell Trades Council from 1913 to 1924. He became secretary of the Camberwell Borough Labour Party on its establishment in 1914. The Dulwich ILP was based at Hansler Hall in Hansler Road, off Lordship Lane. Jones organised anti-conscription meetings for the ILP. A member of the No Conscription Fellowship and the South London Federal Council against Conscription, he was an absolute pacifist. The Dulwich branch of the No Conscription Fellowship had 200 members from a wide area, including Lewisham, Peckham and Camberwell and met in the Hansler Hall. Creech Jones was secretary. He applied to join the Society of Friends (Quakers) ambulance unit but in September 1916 he was court-martialled and sentenced to six months hard labour, which he served in Wormwood Scrubs, not being released until April 1919. His role as secretary of the Dulwich NCF was taken over by Sarah Cahill, who lived at 60 Limes Grove, Lewisham. Sarah's son, William was a conscientious objector. The Dulwich NCF published a pamphlet on *What are Conscientious Objectors?* The branch membership included Sarah Gilbert Cole, who lived at 85 Camberwell Grove and her artist husband, Herbert Cole, who provided illustrations for Sylvia Pankhurst's paper, *The Workers Dreadnought*. Sarah Cole was a former suffragette, anti-militarist and later became an anarchist. She collaborated with Sylvia Pankhurst, wrote poems, was involved in the early 1920's with the Camberwell Organised Unemployed campaign and in 1936 published a pamphlet *The Objectors to Conscription and War: a record of their suffering and sacrifice, their letters and tribunal appeals, their testimony for liberty of conscience*, in 1936. Another member of the Dulwich NCF branch was Annie Beacham, whose son, Victor, was a conscientious objector. Annie, who lived at 9 Costa Street in Peckham, addressed an anti-war meeting on Peckham Rye in March 1916.

Having lost his civil service post, Creech Jones did some research for the Labour Party on prison conditions before being appointed organising secretary of the Docks, Wharfs and Shipping Staffs union, of which Charles Ammon (later MP for Camberwell, then Baron Ammon), London County Council member for Camberwell, ILP'er and leading member of the No Conscription Fellowship, was secretary. This union, originating in the Port of London Authority staff association, was in 1922 incorporated into the Transport and General Workers Union. He therefore became a colleague of Ernest Bevin the union's general secretary, who was to become his political mentor. In July 1920, Creech Jones married Violet May Tidman, a second cousin with whose family he had been lodging, and who had also been active in the

NCF. Creech Jones was elected to the London Labour Party Committee in 1921. The TGWU sent him to the Ruhr with Ben Tillett (the veteran trade unionist and TGWU international and political secretary) in 1923 to report on the effect of the French occupation of the Ruhr on the workers. In the 1920's Creech Jones lived at 79 Red Post Hill. In 1924, the Labour Year Book recorded that he was still secretary of the Camberwell Trades Council and of the Camberwell Borough Labour Party.

Creech Jones' interest in Africa apparently originated in being inspired by the campaigns of Edmund Morel and Roger Casement against colonial atrocities in the Congo. In 1925 he was asked to help Clements Kadalie, who had established a union for black workers in South Africa, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU). He commented later that "I felt that the struggle of the African workers in South Africa could be helped by a type of organisation which had contributed so much to the making of British democracy….". He had been in contact with Winifred Holtby (the subject of Vera Britain's *Testament of Friendship* and later the author of *South Riding*) who was an active feminist and member of the ILP, who had visited South Africa and who had contacts with liberals there. Holtby had already been seeking to obtain funds and books for ICU libraries through the ILP's *New Leader* paper. Holtby had asked the ILP's Noel Brailsford to support the ICU and then approached Creech Jones. Kadalie also wrote to Creech Jones and then visited London to seek support. Holtby acted as host and the ILP's imperialism committee, which included Creech Jones and Fenner Brockway, the ILP secretary who also had a lifelong interest in Africa, organised a promotional tour of England. Kadalie also attended the TUC conference as a visitor, though his request for delegate status was turned down on the grounds that the ICU was not affiliated to the (white) South African Trade Union Congress. Holtby and Creech Jones set up a fund to send a British trade unionist to South Africa to help Kadalie – a trade unionist from Motherwell was selected -William Ballinger. Holtby in fact supported the fund from the sales of her African novel *Mandoa Mandoa!* Kadalie and Ballinger however soon fell out though Ballinger stayed in South Africa supporting the African National Congress , serving in the senate between 1948 and 1960 as a representative of Africans in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State (Africans not themselves being allowed to sit in the parliament), while his wife Margaret Ballinger also sat in parliament and became a vice--president of Alan Paton's Liberal Party.

Creech Jones also had an interest in workers education, becoming a governor of Ruskin college, the trade union college in Oxford, in 1923 and was an active member of the Workers Education Association, who in 1928 published his handbook *Trade Unionism Today*, which was widely used in the colonies. He unsuccessfully contested the Heywood and Radcliffe parliamentary constituency in Lancashire in the 1929

election. Creech Jones had been involved in the Workers Travel Association since 1921, and in 1929, following his failure to get into parliament, left the TGWU to take up the post of WTA organising secretary. He was to lead trade unionist delegations to most countries in Europe and also visited Palestine. Through the WTA, he was later to direct the emergency rescue of hundreds of Czechoslovakian socialists and Jews by train, ship, and aeroplane from Prague after Chamberlain signed the Munich agreement in 1938.

Arthur Creech Jones

Creech Jones became involved in the New Fabian Research Bureau established by G D H Cole and with the fall of the Labour government in 1931, Creech Jones joined the Socialist League, a Labour left group established by Stafford Cripps, which involved a number of Fabians and ILP'ers, though his association with the League was brief. With the ILP being disaffiliated from the Labour Party in 1932, Creech Jones left the ILP focused his involvement in the Labour Party and was selected to stand for Shipley in Yorkshire in the 1935 general election. On election to parliament, Creech Jones joined the Labour Party's committee on imperial questions, also joining the Colonial Office's advisory committee on education in the colonies. He had been a member of the Fabian Society executive committee since 1925. In 1940 he helped to found the Fabian Colonial Bureau, which was to be the main focus of his political activity until 1945, when he became a Minister. Creech Jones also helped to set up a Trades Union Congress colonial affairs committee in 1937. Together with the Fabian Colonial Bureau secretary, Rita Hinden, he became the leading supporter of African nationalists, an advocate of both colonial self-government and native education in the colonies as well as a constructive critic of British colonial policy under the succession of wartime coalition government colonial ministers, Malcolm Macdonald, Lord Lloyd, Lord Moyne, Viscount Cranborne and Oliver Stanley. He campaigned against the suppression of African associations in Kenya. In 1942, he argued that "There must be a recognition of Africans' rights and status. There must be a big drive in social services, in education and in economic development. We must also associate the African in the administration of local government. We should nationalise the mineral resources of these areas. We should redistribute the land and there should be planned development of smaller industries… " Despite being a critic of government colonial policy, Creech Jones served as vice-chairman of the Government's commission on higher education in the colonies, visiting Africa with the chairman, the Conservative MP, Walter Elliott. This led to the publication by the government of a report on *Mass Education in African Society* in 1943. In 1945 he contributed the

introduction to *Fabian Colonial Essays*, edited by Rita Hinden, as well as writing an essay on the need for an accelerated policy of social reconstruction in the colonial empire.

Between 1940 and 1944, Creech Jones was Parliamentary Private Secretary to Ernest Bevin, minister of Labour in the wartime coalition. With the election of a Labour government in August 1945, Creech Jones was appointed under-secretary of state in the colonial office, with George Hall as Minister. In promoting the Colonial Development and Welfare Bill in parliament, Creech Jones acknowledged that the Labour government was aiming at 'the liquidation of colonial status', commenting that " I doubt if any Imperial Power has ever before embarked upon a policy of deliberately disintegrating its Empire." In August 1946, Hall was given a peerage and Creech Jones was promoted to the cabinet position, which he held until his defeat in the 1950 general election. In this role, Creech Jones focused his attention on the social and economic development of the colonies, preparing them for self-government and with a continuing focus on the role of education. In 1948, he published a report on *Education for Citizenship in Africa*. He established the Colonial Development Corporation (later renamed the Commonwealth Development Corporation) to support agricultural development in the colonies. The independence of India and Ceylon threatened the continuation of the Commonwealth as an institution, but Creech Jones managed the transition of the organisation to a voluntary federation of independent countries and self-governing colonies. He chaired the first conference of the West Indian Federation in 1947 and then the London conference of African colonies held at Lancaster House in 1948. His memorandum on local government issued in 1948 confirmed the government's intention gradually to

Lagos, 1944. Arthur Creech Jones, dressed as a Yoruba chief (seated), flanked by the veteran nationalist Herbert Macaulay on the left and J.O. Balogun of the 'Nigerian Farmers' on the right.

Creech Jones as Minister

transform indirect rule to responsible government. The Fabian Colonial Bureau published in 1947 a pamphlet by Creech Jones outlining the Labour Government's colonial policy.

On leaving parliament, Creech Jones continued to use the Fabian Colonial Bureau to promote colonial self-government. In 1951 he published a pamphlet on the *Future of the African Colonies* and in 1959 he edited the *Fabian New Colonial Essays*, contributing a positive review of the Labour government's colonial policy and achievements. He also worked with the Anti-Slavery Society and the more radical Africa Bureau established by Rev Michael Scott. He was active in the opposition to the Central African Federation (which federated Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland under white leadership) and supported Seretse Khama of Bechuanaland, who was exiled from his country by the incoming Conservative government in 1951. Creech Jones failed to get re-elected to parliament in 1951, this time standing in Romford, but succeeded in fighting a by-election in Wakefield in 1954. He retired from parliament in August 1964 on the grounds of ill-health and died two months later. In his final years he continued to visit many commonwealth countries, many of which were attaining independence, often as a delegate from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. He was a vice president of the Workers Education Association as well as involved in the Oxford based Institute for Commonwealth Studies. He was also on the committees of the Ramblers Association and the Youth Hostels Association, having piloted the Access to Mountains Act through parliament in 1939 as a private members bill.

As Patricia Pugh's biographical entry in the Dictionary of National Biography comments, Creech Jones "was unimpressive in appearance; he was not a brilliant or witty speaker; but he was one whom the House of Commons greatly respected for his knowledge, integrity, and sincerity." It may be appropriate to leave the last word to Ernest Bevin, trade union leader and Foreign secretary who on Creech Jones losing his seat in the 1950 election wrote to his former cabinet colleague –

" Looking back over the history of colonial development, I do not think anyone has a greater record – the constitutional changes you have carried through, the development of education, the promotion of universities, the constant attention you have given to economic development, the way you have applied your mind to the problems of soil erosion and transport. If only it had been done long ago. What a different world it would have been!"

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ALLEN AND PHILLIS SKINNER: Pacifists and Vegetarians

Allen Skinner was born in Glengall Road, Peckham in January 1880, son of a cabinet maker, who came from Sheerness. After elementary school, he started work as a telegraph boy, before becoming a postman and then a post office sorter, living at 2 Tyrrell Road, East Dulwich. He was a practising Christian and had apparently considered entering the church. He was married when he was still young to Phillis Emerson, who had been married before and was ten years older. Phillis' father was a trade unionist and freethinker. Phillis was herself a vegetarian, secularist and radical and clearly influenced her younger husband. Allen was a reader of Orage's *New Age* and he and his wife were politically active before 1914, probably as members of the local branch of the Independent Labour Party.

When war broke out, Allen was opposed to the war as a socialist and as an absolute pacifist. Called up for military service in 1916, he refused alternative employment and was sent to Wormwood Scrubs prison. The prison did not serve vegetarian food, so Skinner went hungry. Released in March 1917, he again refused military service and was returned to prison, where he caught tuberculosis of the bone. Despite several operations to his knee and elbow, he remained disabled. Phillis Skinner was sent to prison for three months under the Defence of the Realm Act for distributing anti-war leaflets.

In 1919, Allen Skinner was appointed to a position at the postal union headquarters. In 1920, the union office was moved from London to Manchester and the Skinners moved as well, with Allen becoming assistant to the editor of the union journal, the *Post*. He also wrote book reviews and reviewed films. He then moved back to London and became active in the ILP. He stood as Labour candidate in parliamentary elections in Hendon in 1924 and in Wandsworth in 1929. He was secretary of the London and Home Counties division of the ILP, chairman of the London central branch and sat on the ILPs industrial policy committee, where he advocated workers control, including worker's control of the Post Office. He was a strong supporter of the living wage and also published in the ILP's *New Leader* his support for Fred Jowett's earlier proposals to reform parliament by replacing the cabinet by a set of cross-party specialist committees. In 1931, the *Post* editor, George Middleton, who was also a Labour MP, resigned. There was pressure from branches for Skinner to take over the role. However, the position was given instead to Francis Andrew, an ILP member who was a guild socialist. Andrew stayed as editor until

1945. Allen Skinner continued to promote workers' control. In 1951, Allen was secretary of the London League for Workers Control.

Allen Skinner remained in the ILP after it disaffiliated from the Labour Party in 1932. In fact, it was Skinner who proposed the motion to disaffiliate at the ILP's Bradford conference, a decision which the historian, R K Middlemass, referred to as 'suicide during a fit of insanity'. The London division of the ILP however became increasingly dominated by the pro-communist members of a group who called themselves the Revolutionary Policy committee, led by Jack Gaster and Carl Cullen, so Skinner, who was opposed to merger with the Communist Party, resigned his positions as divisional chair and divisional representative on the ILP's national committee. Gaster took over his national committee post. Some London ILP branches then began holding joint meetings with Communist Party branches, notably in Camberwell and Wimbledon. Skinner instead focused his main energies on the pacifist movement. He was a member of the Peace Pledge Union from its foundation in 1934. He helped run the Pacifist Research Bureau. This was based at 51 Ruskin Walk, Herne Hill, which appears to have been the home of the bureau secretary, Mabel Styles. Skinner was bureau chairman. At the time, the Skinners appear to have lived at 43 Cromwell Road, Kensington.

Allen Skinner

Throughout the late 1930's, Allen Skinner spoke at meetings on a number of platforms. In November 1934, he spoke for the No War Movement at the Bullring in Birmingham. In September 1935, he was in the chair at the No War Movement conference at Kingsway Hall in London. In October 1935, he spoke at a war resisters rally. In March 1936, he spoke at the Cambridge exhibition against Fascism and War. In May 1936, he chaired a No War Movement meeting at the Memorial Hall in Faringdon Street, at which the speakers were William Mellor, former editor of the *Herald* and later editor of *Tribune* and Reginald Reynolds, who was general secretary of the No War Movement. In June 1939, he chaired a No Conscription Fellowship meeting at Caxton Hall at Westminster, which included a mock tribunal and a speech by the ILP leader, Fenner Brockway. In February 1940, he spoke at a West London Rally for Peace at the King's theatre in Hammersmith attended by about 1,000 people. Skinner was also involved in supporting anti-colonial movements. He had links with the League against Imperialism, and in March 1934 participated in the Meerut prisoners release committee with communists, Percy Glading and Ben Bradley and Reginald

Bridgeman from the League against Imperialism. In 1937, he participated in discussions on establishing a new Marxist journal to be published by the communist publishing house, Lawrence and Wishart. The group involved Harold Laski, Cecil Day Lewis, the communist geneticist, J B S Haldane, the archaeologist, Gordon Childe, the biochemist Joseph Needham, the Oxford anatomist, Wilfred Le Gros Clark, the physicist Patrick Blackett, the communist biologist, J D Bernal, the economist Eric Roll, the linguist David Abercrombie and the historian of ancient Greece, George Thomson, who was a member of the Communist Party's central committee, and, incidentally, was also born in Dulwich. The *Modern Quarterly* started publication in 1938, as the first explicitly Marxist academic journal.

During the Second World War, Skinner advised the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors. The Skinners were recorded as living at the time at 9 Myddleton Drive, Joel Street, Pinner and at 23 Deodar Road in Putney, the latter being used as a basis for the Peace Pledge Union. They also had a cottage at Cargreen, near Saltash in Cornwall, as well as a caravan in West Drayton. Skinner also acted as tribunal judge at mock conscientious objector tribunals at another property in Putney, Keswick Lodge.

After the war, Allen became secretary of the No Conscription Council and was chairman of the board of *Peace News*, which he edited between 1952 and 1955. He collaborated with the American pacifist, A J Muste, to support the 'Third Way Movement', a movement for independence from both the Cold War western and eastern blocks, linked to the Bandung conference of April 1955. Skinner was one of the sponsors of the campaign against the nuclear bomb, with Bertrand Russell and Reginald Reynolds (the Quaker who had been secretary of the No War movement before the war, and was married to the socialist writer, Ethel Mannin) which led to the establishment of the Emergency committee for Direct Action against Nuclear War (known as the Direct Action Committee). After a demonstration at the Harrington rocket base. Skinner was sent to Brixton prison for two months, where he spent his 70th birthday. Skinner continued to help the Peace Pledge Union to monitor foreign affairs, especially in relation to China. Skinner worked closely with the Quakers, though he never joined the Society of Friends. Allen died in January 1974, and a memorial meeting was held in the Westminster Friends Meeting House. Phillis had died some years earlier. Their son, John was also a pacifist and went to Brazil just before the second world war with a troop of ballet dancers, possibly, according to the police file, to escape conscription. I assume that this is the same John Skinner who became a ballroom dancing teacher, band leader and trumpet player.

Hugh Brock, a pacifist colleague of Allen Skinner who was a Quaker and an editor of *Peace News*, remembered that Skinner was a self-effacing committee man, with a

"patient ability to expound policies and tactics to the politically inexperienced that brought him the lasting friendship of so many young people.."

Both Allen and Phillis were monitored by MI5 from before 1933 until 1951 (only the second file starting at 1933 has been released). Some of the file contents are taken from MI5's monitoring of the Communist Party. However, MI5 were clearly also monitoring the activities of the Peace Pledge Union, the Pacifist Research Bureau, the No Conscription Fellowship, the No War Movement, the Board of Conscientious Objectors and possibly also the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation. They were clearly reading *Peace News.* One police report in the MI5 file lists 13 members of the Putney branch of the Peace Pledge Union, commenting that they may visit the Saltash cottage!

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JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY: Literary Critic, Pacifist and Socialist

John Middleton Murry grew up in East Dulwich. He was born in Peckham, at which point his parents lived in Ethnards Road, off the Old Kent Road in 1889. His father had been a clerk in the War Office and in the Inland Revenue and then became a gardener, at one time employed at Somerset House. His mother was only 19 years old when he was born, the father ten years older. The young Murry went to infant school at the Rolls Road board school. His family then moved to a house in Copleston Road, East Dulwich and Murry went to the Bellenden Road board school. Murry recounted his time growing up in East Dulwich in some detail in his autobiography *Between two Worlds*, published in 1935. One of his teachers at Bellenden Road, a Mr Grubb, was an atheist. Murry attended Sunday school at the Unitarian chapel in Avondale Road, taught by a Mr Gittins – 'black -haired, dark-faced with gold-rimmed spectacles'. Murry wrote about the ginger beer factory at the bottom of the garden and the path along the railway cutting called 'cut-throat ally'. The family then moved to a smaller house in Worlingham Road, which cost £214. In 1901, at the age of 12, Murry won a scholarship to Christ's Hospital school in Newgate Street in the city. Four years later, his parents moved from East Dulwich to Kingston-upon-Thames.

From Christ's College, Murry went to Brasenose College, Oxford, where he was a friend of the novelist and travel writer, Joyce Cary. Before graduating, Murry became the editor of an avant-garde literary journal, *Rhythm*, which was followed by another journal, the *Blue Review*. While still at university, he met the writer Katherine Mansfield, the New Zealand born writer who was ten years older than him and at the time married to a singing teacher, George Bowden and already had a child from a previous relationship. Murry first became Mansfield's lodger at her flat in Clovelly mansions, Gray's Inn Road, and then her lover. Mansfield joined Murry in editing his magazines. The couple became close friends of D H Lawrence and his partner (later wife) Frieda. Murry and Lawrence edited a magazine *The Signature*. The foursome also moved to Cornwall to Tregerthen to experiment in communal living – an experiment which failed, though it acted as an inspiration for Lawrence's *Women In Love.* Murry and Mansfield also became friends of the Liberal MP Philip Morrell and his wife Otttoline Morell who had turned Garsington manor near Oxford into a centre for radical intellectuals.

John Middleton Murry

During the war. Murry worked in the political intelligence department of the War Office, editing the confidential *Daily Review of the Foreign Press*. Murry and Mansfield married in May 1918, having had to wait until Kathleen's divorce was finalised. They moved to Hampstead Heath. Katherine then developed pleurisy. By 1921, she had separated from Murry. She was to spend much of her time in sanatoria both in England and in France, becoming a follower of the Russian philosopher and mystic, Gurdjieff, before dying in 1923. Murry had started a relationship with the artist Dorothy Brett, the daughter of the Liberal Peer, Viscount Esher, the previous year.

In 1919, Murry took over the editorship of *The Athenaeum*, a literary journal featuring contributions from various members of the Bloomsbury group, including Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey, Clive Bell and T S Eliot. In 1923, Murry became editor of the *Adelphi*, another literary journal which he edited until 1930. By then, the

Katherine Mansfield

Adelphi had become a political journal, associated with the Independent Labour Party. Murry claimed that he had become interested in socialism after reading Tawney's *Equality* to review in the *Adelph*i in March 1931. He then reviewed a number of books on contemporary Russia and also read Marx's *Das* K*apital*. In December 1931, he published an article *Towards a Marxian Revolution*. In 1932 he attended an ILP summer school and also published *The Necessity of Communism*. Murry saw himself as an ethical Marxist. He disliked the Communist party intellectuals, who he considered to be play-acting at revolution – "the intellectual can talk the rankest Communism in a London restaurant with the chief of the metropolitan police at the next table, and nothing will happen to him – absolutely nothing.". He explained that "by Communism I *do* mean the economic revolution that has taken place in Russia. I do *not* mean the political forms I which the revolution has taken place in Russia." When the *Necessity of Communism* was published, the ILP's *New Leader* gave the book front page coverage, with a photograph of Murry. He explained he had joined the ILP, as for an English Marxist, the ILP had "more of the true faith within its ranks- the absolute will to revolution, but not to bloodshed for its own sake, than any other Labour organisation in England." Murry then published a series of articles in the *New Leader* on the *Fundamentals of Marxism*.

In 1932, Murry moved to Norfolk and became active in the local branch of the ILP. He supported the break with the Labour Party, but did not support the pro-Communist Party group, the Revolutionary Policy Committee, led nationally by Dr Carl Cullen and Jack Gaster. Murry supported class warfare but not class hatred. He supported the ILP's *Socialism in Our Time* statement, and advocated an immediate minimum wage, nationalisation of the banks and taxation on incomes so none exceeded £1,000 a year. Murry's ethical socialism had a religious basis – He argued that "revolutionary socialism is the modern form of the Christian religion." Murry however also took inspiration from Lenin. Claiming that the ILP had already achieved Lenin's first guiding principle of 'constant contact and penetration of the working class' , Murry argued that they should now concentrate on the other two guiding principles - 'a clearly apprehended Marxist theory animating a nucleus of dedicated men' and ' an inwardly apprehended necessity of discipline'. There were the precepts of a vanguard party. While Murry was not anti-parliamentary, he argued that the ILP should be 'consciously non-parliamentary'. This was in essence reflecting the reality, as with dis-affiliation from the Labour Party, the ILP's parliamentary representation was reduced to a small rump. Murry supported the ILP's youth wing, the Guild of Youth or 'redshirts' and advocated the taking up of physical training - "a young revolutionary socialist should feel that he is capable of taking care of himself in a fight - Physical courage and moral courage make the true revolutionary combination . A red shirt is a little forlorn without a straight left to implement it." It

was only later that Murry was to take up the cause of pacifism, being editor of *Peace News* between 1940 and 1946.

Despite his belief in a disciplined vanguard party, Murry argued for more autonomy for the ILP's branches. When the Lancashire branch of the ILP, who saw themselves as non-Communist revolutionary socialists and opposed the ILP leadership's advocacy of a united front with the Communist Party, seceded to form the Independent Socialist Party (ISP), they were joined by Murry. Murry took the lead in forming a London branch of the ISP and took the chair at the ISP's summer school in 1936, at which the anarchist philosopher, poet, historian and literary critic, Herbert Read was a speaker, as did George Orwell, John Strachey, Reinhold Niebuhr, the American theologian and ethicist and J Allen Skinner, the pacifist and post office trade unionist. Murry had hoped that the Labour Party would allow ISP members to also be members of the Labour Party, but the Labour Party decided to make the ISP a proscribed organisation. Murry then wanted the ISP to apply for affiliation to the Labour Party. However, the Lancashire members, who had working class backgrounds and a long record of activity in the labour movement, in contrast with Murry and his small London based group of newly converted intellectuals (Skinner excepted), were insistent on keeping the ISP independent. Murry therefore resigned from the ISP to join the Labour Party as an individual member.

Murry, having remarried, lived on a farm in Norfolk. He then tried to establish a commune in the area as the Adelphi centre, but this collapsed in 1937, when the house 'The Oaks' became a home for Basque refugee children from the Spanish civil war, under the auspices of the Peace Pledge Union, of which Murry was now an active member. Murry had declared himself to be a pacifist in 1936 and in 1937, Murry published *The Necessity of Pacifism*. He supported Chamberlain's attempts to appease Hitler and believed that the Nazis should be allowed to control continental Europe and that although the Nazi regime was tyrannical, it was preferable to the horrors of war.

Having become editor of the Peace Pledge Union's journal, *Peace News*, Murry in October 1942 made a second attempt to establish a commune – this time at Lodge Farm in the Suffolk village of Thelnetham. Murry was a conscientious objector and the farm was run by fellow conscientious objectors. However, the commune soon reverted to a more conventional farm under Murry's direct management. Murry later published a book on the experiment *Community farm*, illustrated by his brother, Richard.

Mary Gamble, later Middleton Murry

Murry was to renounce his pacifism in 1948, at which point he argued for a preventative war against the Soviet Union. In 1954, he married Mary Gamble - his fourth marriage. Mary had been active in the Peace Pledge Union and had led the Women's Peace campaign against the war in 1939. Middleton Murry died in 1957, having published at least fifty-three books, including writing a biography of Mansfield and editing her journals and letters.

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8. Interwar Labour Politicians

JIMMY THOMAS: Trade unionist, Minister, drinker and golfer

Thomas was a leading trade unionist and served in three governments, the Labour governments of 1924 and 1929-31 and in the National government of 1931-35, as Colonial and Dominions secretary and Lord Privy Seal. From 1920, he lived at 125 Thurlow Park Road, West Dulwich, in a house bought for him by his union, the National Union of Railwaymen. He was also president of the Dulwich and Sydenham Hill golf club. 125 Thurlow Park Road is now part of Oakfield Preparatory School.

Thomas is a largely forgotten figure in British labour history. He has no entry in the 15 volume Biography of Labour History, and there is only one biography of him, by Gregory Blaxland, published in 1964 under the rather odd title of ' *A Life for Unity'*. Thomas published his own autobiography in 1937 as *My Story*. The possible reasons for this disregard is that firstly Thomas, together with Philip Snowden, joined MacDonald's National government after the 1931 economic crisis and is therefore widely seen as a traitor to the labour movement , and secondly that Thomas in later life became a butt of ridicule, especially by the cartoonist, David Low - for drinking too much, for aping the style of the aristocracy (a tendency shared with Ramsay MacDonald) and finally for being caught up in a budget leak scandal, which led to his resignation. The snobbish and puritanical Fabian, Beatrice Webb noted in her diary in December 1929 – " his ugly and rather mean face made meaner and uglier by an almost exaggerated sense of personal failure … Jimmy is a boozer, his language is foul, he is a stock exchange gambler, he is also a social climber…"

This perspective however overlooks the fact that he was one of the leading trade unionists and Labour politicians in the interwar era, and made significant contributions to both industrial and political life. He must have had a sense of humour as several of Low's cartoons are included in his autobiography.

Thomas was born in Newport in Wales in 1874. Like Ramsay MacDonald, he was illegitimate. His mother was a domestic servant – his father is not known. He was brought up by his grandmother, a washerwoman and left school at the age of 12. He worked in shops and as a decorator before joining the Great Western Railway in 1889, at the age of 15, working for five years as an engine cleaner, before promotion to the role of fireman. He joined the Amalgamated Union of Railway Servants, becoming chair of his union branch, president of the Newport Trades Council and a delegate to his union's national conference. He married in 1898. He then transferred to Swindon, where he also became Trades Council president, and in 1901 he was elected to Swindon council, defeating his own railway superintendent. One of his supervisors recorded that 'Thomas is a young agitator of whom no notice need be taken'. Thomas became chairman of the Council's Tramways and Electricity committee and then chairman of the Finance and Law committee. At the same time, he was cooking his breakfast of bacon and egg on the shovel in the fire of his train's engine.

Jimmy Thomas

Thomas had joined his union's national executive committee in 1902. He became union president in 1905, at the age of 31, and was then appointed organising secretary, a full-time post, moving to Manchester, Cardiff and then London. His union had a list pf prospective parliamentary candidates, and when Richard Bell, the union general secretary who had been the Lib-Lab MP for Derby since 1900, and who had been sponsored by the union, disagreed with the Labour Party standing candidates independent of the Liberal Party, the union decided to withdraw his sponsorship and selected Jimmy Thomas to stand in his place. Bell had been chair of the Labour Representation Committee as well as President of the TUC but had left the small Labour group of MPs because he could not stick to the LRC rules which required independence from other parties. Before parliament was dissolved for the 1910 election, Bell took an appointment with the Board of Trade, a move not approved by the union or the LRC.

Thomas was elected MP for Derby in January 1910 in tandem with the Liberal, Thomas Roe, who had first been elected in 1900 – the constituency had two members and as a result of Ramsay Macdonald's agreement with Liberal chief whip, Herbert Gladstone, Thomas like Bell before him was not opposed by the Liberals, on the basis that Labour did not stand two candidates either. Thomas was to hold the seat until 1936. He was also elected assistant general secretary of his union, which became the National Union of Railwaymen in 1913, taking over as general secretary in 1916, a post he continued to hold while a Minister. Thomas came to national prominence in the 1911 railway strike. Thomas was also one of the triumvirate who ran the Triple Alliance of 1914, when the NUR allied with the Miners Federation of Robert Smillie and the Transport workers union, led by Will Thorne and Robert Williams. Thomas supported British entry into the war but was opposed to Labour joining Asquith's government in May 1915. However, he supported Labour joining the coalition government led by Lloyd George in December 1916. He had hoped for a post in the war cabinet, but Arthur Henderson, the Labour Party leader was appointed instead. He then declined the post of Minister of Labour (which went to the Labour MP, John Hodge) and other offers of ministerial posts. He was however appointed to the Privy Council (which caused some controversy in his union) and to the government's reconstruction committee.

In 1920, Thomas published his only book (other than his autobiography*) When Labour Rules*. Thomas set out a programme for government - limited nationalisation, social amelioration and equality of opportunity to be achieved through parliamentary means. He asserted that "Labour rule will be entirely beneficent, and that its dealings with high and low, rich and poor, will be marked with broad-minded toleration and equity." Thomas was an opponent of both syndicalism and Bolshevism. At the time he was both TUC chairman and chairman of the International Federation of Trade Unions. His view was that political strikes would only subvert the Labour Party. Thomas was a union moderate and preferred conciliation to militancy and strike action. In 1921, the NUR withdrew its support for the Miners Federation. In 1926, he had sought to avoid a general strike and helped to bring the strike to an end. He was critical of the miners' more militant policy, and was accused of betrayal of the miners.

Jimmy Thomas as cigarette card

Thomas was one of the leaders of the Parliamentary Labour Party from 1918, many of the pre-war leaders such as MacDonald, Snowden and Henderson having

lost their seats. Thomas was close to MacDonald and had hoped to be foreign secretary, a post which Macdonald kept for himself, when the first Labour administration was formed in 1924. Instead, Thomas was appointed colonial secretary, a post in which he was considered to be fairly successful. Thomas was a patriot and supporter of the Empire, in contrast with internationalists such as E D Morel, who had also hoped for the foreign secretary post. In 1929, in the second Labour government, when Henderson was made foreign secretary, Thomas was given the post of Lord Privy Seal, with responsibility for policy on unemployment. His broader economic policy, so far as he had one, was fairly orthodox. He supported protective tariffs , opposed tax increases and ought to limit expenditure on public works as he considered this would reduce business confidence and the potential for economic recovery. For his junior ministers, he had George Lansbury, Thomas Johnson and Oswald Mosley. Thomas rejected the reflationary programme proposed by Mosley and 16 other Labour MPs including Nye Bevan and John Strachey in the 'Mosley memorandum' which was supported by A J Cook of the miners. The rejection prompted Mosley's resignation. Mosley first established a New Party in February 1931 with other Labour Party radicals from within the Independent Labour Party, before founding the British Union of Fascists the following year.

1930 Imperial conference

Without the support of his junior ministers, Thomas' position became untenable. Macdonald therefore moved him to the post of Dominions secretary, responsible for relations with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.. Sidney Webb, now Lord Passfield, was Colonial secretary. Thomas' term coincided with the 1930 Imperial conference, hosted by George V and chaired by Ramsay Macdonald. This brought together the prime ministers of Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland (not yet part of the Canadian federation) and the Irish Free

State president. India was represented by William Wedgwood Benn, the secretary of state.

Jimmy Thomas as Minister

With the collapse of the Labour government and establishment of a National Government led by MacDonald, Thomas sided with Macdonald. He was a Macdonald loyalist and shared the view of Macdonald and Philip Snowden, the chancellor of the exchequer, that his patriotism required hm to put the country before party. He was an admirer of the King, who apparently supported a National government as the appropriate response to the crisis. An academic, Andrew Thorpe, has however argued that Thomas' main motivation was that he needed to keep his ministerial salary to maintain his lifestyle. It has been suggested that it was Thomas who first put forward the idea of a National government, though it is unlikely he believed that the Tories would led Macdonald stay on as prime minister. Thomas' reward was to retain his position as Dominions secretary. He was expelled from the Labour Party and also lost his trade union position. With Macdonald and Snowden, he became one of the three traitors of Labour mythology. Thomas supported Stanley Baldwin and the Tory leadership in creating a more permanent anti-labour coalition. Thomas had to defend his Derby seat, on behalf of 'National Labour' with Conservative support and in partnership with a Tory candidate, against two Labour candidates. Thomas held the seat under the same arrangement in 1935. He was however demoted to the role of Colonial secretary. In early 1936, he was found to have leaked budget information to two friends enabling them to make gains on the stock market. Thomas was forced to resign from the government and resigned as an MP in June. In the by-election which followed, Philip Noel-Baker won back the Derby seat for the Labour Party. Thomas withdrew from political life, but went into business, becoming chairman of British Amalgamated Transport.

Thomas died at his Dulwich house in January 1949. The newspaper obituaries tended to focus on anecdotes about his habits. Even his friend and colleague Philip Snowden, could get a laugh out of his audience by commenting: "I calculate that Mr Thomas spends 150 days of each year attending lunches and dinners of various societies, smoking 320 cigars, and consuming nine gallons of champagne, with a laundry bill for starched shirts of £18 a year." David Low's most famous cartoons had Thomas as 'Lord Dress Suit.' One anecdote had it that King George V burst a post-operative wound laughing at one of Thomas' rude jokes, just before the 1929 election.

On being appointed colonial secretary that year, Thomas asserted that "one must feel proud to live under a constitution which enables a humble boy with a meagre education to become in so short a time one of his Majesties Principal Secretaries of State." A son, Leslie, an unsuccessful Labour National candidate in 1935, became Conservative MP for Canterbury in 1953.

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CHARLES ANDREW SMITH: Trotskyist to Anti-Communist

Smith stood as Labour parliamentary candidate for Dulwich twice - in 1924 and 1929. In both cases losing to the sitting MP, Frederick Hall, with the Liberal. C R Cooke-Taylor, coming third. The 1924 general election was the first in which a Labour candidate stood in the constituency, Smith winning 27% of the vote; in 1929, this increased to 30%.

Born in 1895 in Bishop Auckland, the son of a commercial traveller, Smith studied at the University of Durham and the University of London, then trained as a school teacher, teaching in Wood Green and later worked as a tutor for the Workers' Educational Association, the anarchist Albert Meltzer being one of his tutees.. During World War I, he served in The Royal Army Medical Corps as a stretcher bearer and received the Military Medal. During World War II Smith taught history at Huntingdon Grammar School.

In the 1920's, Smith lived in Clapham where he was a member of the Clapham branch of the Independent Labour Party. He was a member of the left-wing of the ILP. It was in the local branches of the Communist Party in Balham and Tooting that British Trotskyism originated between 1930 and 1932, in a group of members led by Reg Groves, Henry Sara and Harry Wicks, known as the Balham group. While Smith, as a member of the ILP rather than the Communist Party, was not a member of the group, he shared their criticism of Stalin and was sympathetic to Trotsky's views. He was also a member of the South-West London Anti-War committee in which the Balham group were active, and which was an alliance of various left-wingers, holding meetings on Clapham Common. A joint ILP/CP meeting on 22nd February criticised Labour leaders, Arthur Henderson and Herbert Morrison. However, the committee was soon taken over by the orthodox Communists and the Trotskyists and their ILP sympathisers were driven out.

In 1932, it was expected that Smith would contest Dulwich for the Independent Labour Party, which had disaffiliated from the Labour Party. Smith however instead stood in a by-election in the New Forest and Christchurch constituency in Hampshire. He stood for the ILP, there being no Labour candidate, but was heavily defeated by the Conservative, receiving only 18% of the vote. This was his last parliamentary contest.

By 1932, Smith had joined the London District Committee of the ILP. In March 1932, having the previous month just lost his third parliamentary election, Smith was arguing that parliament was no longer the route to socialism:

> "*The workers must devise their alternative instrument now the time has come for them to rise to the position of ruling class. That instrument is not new; but it must now take on a new and more permanent form… It is the democratically elected Workers' Committee, the Council of Action, the Workers' Council.*"

In 1933, Smith became editor of the ILP's new internal newsletter *Controversy*. He used this role to object to the control that the ILP's small parliamentary group, led by Maxton, exerted over the party. Maxton and his fellow ILP MPs, John McGovern and Campbell Stephen then threatened to resign as they disagreed with the increasingly revolutionary line being taken by the ILP conference. Fenner Brockway managed to negotiate a temporary compromise between the opposing factions. In August and October 1933, Smith travelled to Paris twice to meet Trotsky, with the interviews written up in the ILP's journal, *New Leader*. At the time, a faction within the ILP, the Revolutionary Policy Committee, was advocating a merger with the Communist Party. Trotsky advised Smith to steer clear of the Communist Party. The ILP leaders, James Maxton and Fenner Brockway, were both opposed to the merger with the Communist Party which would require subservience to the Soviet dominated Third International. In 1935, a group of left wing ILP'ers led by Jack Gaster, left the ILP to join the Communist Party, while Smith and other Trotskyist sympathisers stayed in the ILP.

A further split in the ILP came in September 1935 in relation to the Italian invasion of Abyssinia. James Maxton, the ILP leader, supported neutrality as both Italy's Mussolini and Abyssinia's Haile Selassie, were considered to be imperialists, arguing that supporting the Abyssinians would be supporting British imperialism. C A Smith supported a group led by C L R James, the Trinidadian historian and anti-colonialist, who argued that the ILP and the wider socialist movement should support an African nation against a colonial power.

At the ILP's 1938 conference, Smith and Fenner Brockway had argued that "the only party for revolutionary Socialists is the ILP. It alone rejects class collaboration

and raises the slogan of Independent Working Class Action." This was at the time the Communist Party was promoting a 'popular front' to embrace radical Liberals and even Conservatives who opposed Chamberlain's agreement at Munich with Hitler over the occupation of the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia. Smith opposed this initiative on the grounds that 'we either maintain capitalism by a Labour or Popular Front government, or we make a frontal attack on capitalism'. The ILP became increasingly anti-communist; their 1938 conference concluded that" The Communist Party is evidently as much an automaton as any Nazi Party…There can be no hope that a Party of this kind can bring human liberty." The Communist Party responded by claiming that the ILP was allied with Franco in Spain.

In 1939, the ILP discussed whether or not it should reaffiliate to the Labour Party. This time, Smith and Brockway were on different sides of the argument – Brockway supported reaffiliation as did Maxton; Smith was opposed, being supported by the long-term ILP member and former MP, Fred Jowett. Jowett had been critical of the role of parliament in relation to government since writing a pamphlet entitled '*What is the use of parliament?*' in 1909 and now considered the Labour Party to be a reactionary organisation. Maxton argued that the 'isolation of the ILP is no longer justified' and pointed to the wide range of views tolerated within the Labour Party. The ILP National Administrative Committee decided in August to recommend re-affiliation, but the conference to make the final decision was cancelled due to the declaration of war in September. Maxton had however already stood down as ILP chairman, as the ILP conference had criticised the support given to Chamberlain during the Munich crisis – there had in fact been attempts to expel all the ILP MPs from the party. Maxton was replaced by Smith, who had become his leading opponent. The ILP conference then determined that as capitalism was the cause of both war and fascism, the ILP should therefore oppose British involvement in the war as it was a 'fight between the capitalist classes of imperial powers for raw materials and markets.' The ILP in effect entered into an alliance with the pacifists and it assisted the reformation of the No Conscription Fellowship, which had been in abeyance since the end of the First World War. Smith went as far as suggesting that the ILP was prepared to work with 'pacifists, both socialist and non-socialist' to resist conscription. However, when Stalin invaded Finland, Smith argued that Britain should support the Finns against Soviet Russia, and referred to the invasion as 'Stalin's latest crime'. He then argued in the columns of *New Leader* and the new internal discussion bulletin, *Between Ourselves*, that the ILP should oppose both Nazism and Stalinism , This position however did not receive support from his ILP colleagues, and in 1940, Smith resigned both from his position as chair and from his membership of the ILP.

In 1943, Smith joined the Common Wealth Party, a Christian socialist party, founded by the Liberal MP, Sir Richard Acland. With the Liberal and Labour Parties both agreeing not to contest parliamentary seats during the war, the Common Wealth Party attracted the support of a range of left-wing dissidents, such as Tom Wintringham, the former Communist. It also received significant support within the forces. Smith was attracted by the Party's slogan - 'Not- Will it Pay? But is it Right?' Smith apparently now thought that the class war was obsolete as the basis of a political programme as the working class had been bourgeoisified and that the struggle was now between socialists of all classes and capitalism – Common Wealth was very much a party of middle-class professionals like Smith. Smith used the *Common Wealth review* to attack Stalin – in this case the Soviet failure to support the Poles in the Warsaw uprising. This brought him into conflict with the ex-Communist, Tom Wintringham. The party conference at Chelmsford was dominated by arguments over the attitude to Russia. Common Wealth had had a series of by-election successes during the war, but with the war ending, and Labour's return to Government after the 1945 election, all but one of the Common Wealth MPs joined the Labour Party, including Richard Acland. Smith had intended to contest the Hampstead seat but withdrew from the contest, as had a number of other prospective parliamentary candidates.

Common Wealth pamphlet

Smith, who had argued against the dissolution of the party was voted into the vacant position of chairman – the second time he had chaired a political party. The party was now a rump- 1,900 members had responded to a member's survey supporting dissolving the party and only1,300 supported carrying on. However, at a special conference the continuation of the party was supported by 119 votes to 89. Many of the branches disappeared. The party was forced to leave its Gower Street offices which had been funded by Kim Mackay, who had chaired the party in 1943-4 and had now joined the Labour Party and had been elected to parliament for Hull. New headquarters were found and a new policy statement issued. In line with Smith's thinking, this focused on the 'brotherhood of man' and 'vital democracy', the 'importance of the individual' and the importance of principles in politics. It rejected the view that 'the ends justifies the means.' The statement reasserted that 'Common Wealth' is a revolutionary socialist party, arguing that a moral revolution was a precondition for economic and social change, quoting William Morris that 'Fellowship is Life, and the lack of it is death; Fellowship is Heaven and the lack of it is Hell'. It was argued that within a framework of state

planning, the liberties of speech, association and freewill, both political and economic, must be protected as inseparable from genuine democracy. Common Wealth saw itself as a rallying point for men of goodwill. The implication was that Common Wealth was more of a propaganda and educational organisation rather than a political party. The last Common Wealth MP, Ernest Millington, representing Chelmsford, joined the Labour Party in April 1946. In May 1947, Smith stepped down from his position as chairman, leaving the party in 1948.

Smith was then drawn into a number of anti-communist organisations. He collaborated with the Duchess of Atholl's British League or European Freedom, the Conservative MP for Inverness, Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton and the Countess of Listowel, who was Hungarian born and edited the journal *East Europe and Soviet Russia*. He also worked with Jack Tanner of the Amalgamated Engineering Union who was seeking to combat communist influence in the trade union movement. Smith also joined Common Cause, an organisation established by Douglas Hamilton to counter communist influence in the labour movement. The group included Vic Feather, at the time, Trades Union Congress assistant general secretary, Bob Edwards who had led the ILP contingent in the Spanish Civil War , was ILP chairman from1943 to 1948, and later MP for Bilston and Wolverhampton, and Henry Solomons, who had been 'prime minister' in the Cairo forces parliament in 1944 and was later MP for Hull. In 1952, Smith became general secretary of Common Cause and the organisation focused on attacking the British Communist Party as 'Muscovites' and 'the Red Army (British Non-Uniformed section). One of his new colleagues referred to Smith as 'a fanatic who sometimes becomes dangerously near to advocating witch-hunts and also appears to be vain and indiscrete'. At a Common Cause fundraising event for business men including the film mogul J Arthur Rank and the brewer W H Whitbread in 1954, Douglas-Hamilton's successor as chairman, a Catholic barrister called Peter Crane, kept referring to the Communist party as 'the enemy' and the 'anti-Christ'. Rather than merge with a French CIA funded anti-communist group called 'Paix et Liberte', Common Cause was wound up at the end of 1954, with the CIA focusing its support on another anti-communist organisation-the IRD, the Information and Research Department, which had originally been sponsored by Christopher Mayhew, a wartime political intelligence officer who was now MP for South Norfolk and a junior foreign office minister under Ernest Bevin, himself a strong anti-communist, with the support of Denis Healey, who had been international secretary of the Labour Party before being elected to parliament in 1952. At this point, Dr C A Smith disappears from the public record, although he appears to have re-joined the Labour Party in the 1950's. According to his friend, the anarchist, Albert Meltzer, Smith became a Zionist and helped found the Labour Friends of Israel in 1957, though he was not himself Jewish. It is not known when he died.

Smith was known for having puritanical views, with a strong ethical approach to socialism. He was also an advocate of the role of education in promoting socialism. However, by the mid 1940's, his anti-communism had clearly replaced the advocacy of socialism as his driving force.

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FRED HUGHES: Clerk and parliamentary candidate

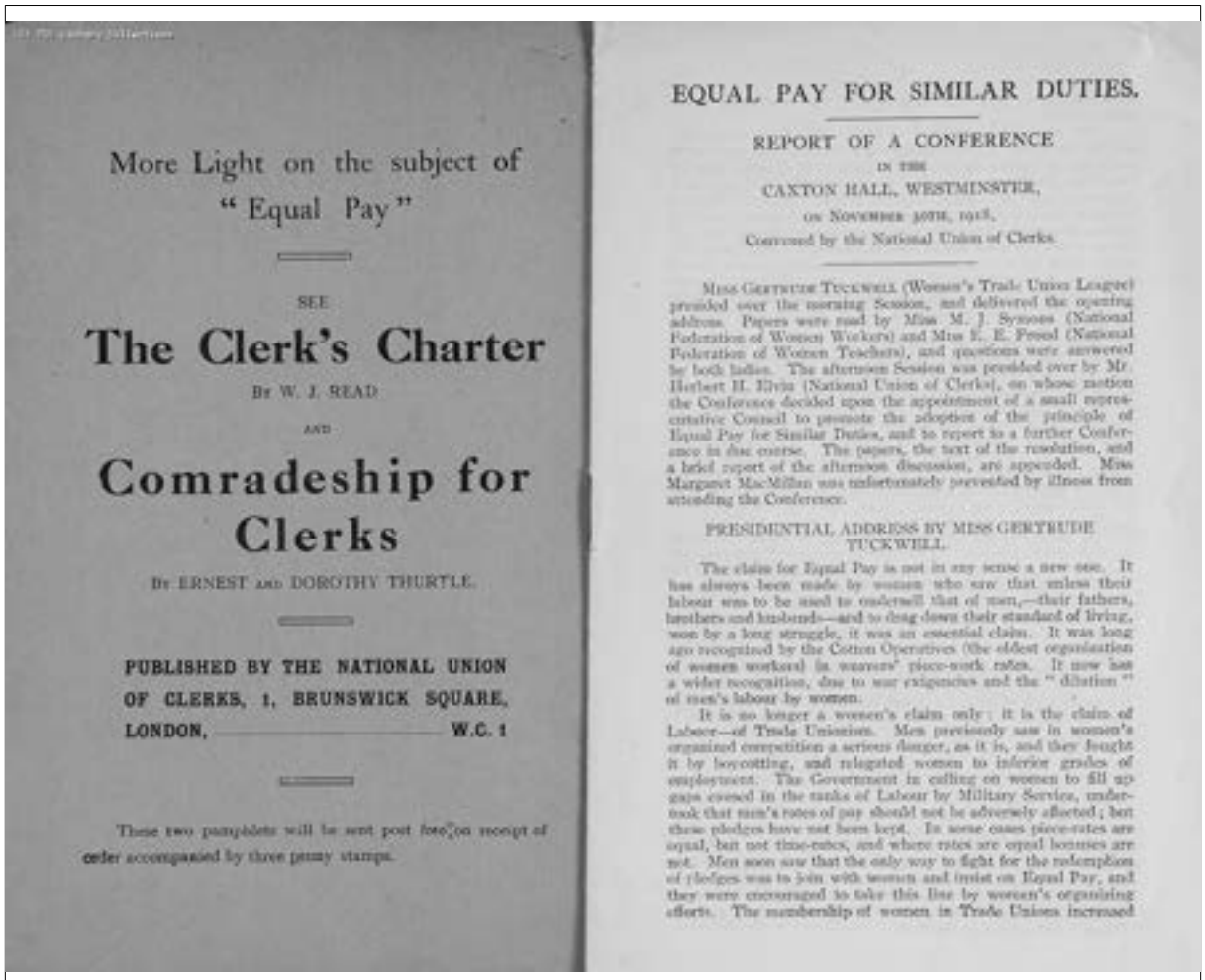
Fred Hughes was Labour candidate for Dulwich in the 1931 General Election. He was defeated by the sitting Conservative MP, Frederick Hall, coming in second place with 16% of the vote, with the Liberal C Cooke-Taylor coming third.

Hughes was assistant general secretary of the National Union of Clerks, a post he held for 27 years. He does not appear to have had any significant connection with Dulwich before being adopted as candidate, and lived in Leyton. He may have come from Leek in Staffordshire as that was where, at a Clarion meet, organised by Robert Blatchford's Clarion newspaper, possibly a meet of the Clarion Cycling Club, he first met Joseph Hazelip, the secretary of the recently founded Clerks Union. As Hughes was employed in the distributive trade, he joined the Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks union. In 1905 Hughes moved to Birmingham where he became secretary of the Birmingham Socialist Centre and secretary of the local Labour Representation Committee. He then founded a Birmingham branch of the National Union of Clerks and represented the branch at their annual conference in Leeds the following year.

In 1907, Hughes was elected president of the Union, a post he held for a year. He was elected in preference to W S Sanders of Battersea, who at the time was secretary of the Fabian Society and was much more prominent in the labour movement. In 1913, Hughes was appointed assistant general secretary of the union and therefore moved to the union's London headquarters which shared premises with Mary Macarthur's Women Trade Union League. Herbert Elvin was the union's general

secretary, a post he held until 1941, serving as president of the Trades Union Council in 1939, his immediate predecessor being Ernest Bevin.

The Union had a large female membership and in 1918, the Union sponsored an equal pay campaign. The Union issued a memorandum on 'Equal Pay for Similar Duties.' with Hughes becoming secretary of the campaign committee. A conference was held in November in Caxton Hall, Westminster, chaired by Gertude Tuckwell of the Women's Trade Union League and by Herbert Elvin. The campaign was supported by the YWCA and the Women's Freedom League, who were addressed by Hughes.


More Light on the subject of
"Equal Pay"

SEE

The Clerk's Charter

By W. J. READ

AND

Comradeship for Clerks

By ERNEST and DOROTHY THURTLE.

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL UNION OF CLERKS, 1, BRUNSWICK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

These two pamphlets will be sent post free on receipt of order accompanied by three penny stamps.

EQUAL PAY FOR SIMILAR DUTIES.

REPORT OF A CONFERENCE

IN THE

CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER,

ON NOVEMBER 30TH, 1918,

Convened by the National Union of Clerks.

Miss Gertrude Tuckwell (Women's Trade Union League) presided over the morning Session, and delivered the opening address. Papers were read by Miss M. J. Symons (National Federation of Women Workers) and Miss E. E. Proud (National Federation of Women Teachers), and questions were answered by both ladies. The afternoon Session was presided over by Mr. Herbert H. Elvin (National Union of Clerks), on whose motion the Conference decided upon the appointment of a small representative Council to promote the adoption of the principle of Equal Pay for Similar Duties, and to report to a further Conference in due course. The papers, the text of the resolution, and a brief report of the afternoon discussion, are appended. Miss Margaret MacMillan was unfortunately prevented by illness from attending the Conference.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS BY MISS GERTRUDE TUCKWELL.

The claim for Equal Pay is not in any sense a new one. It has always been made by women who saw that unless their labour was to be used to undersell that of men,—their fathers, brothers and husbands—and to drag down their standard of living, won by a long struggle, it was an essential claim. It was long ago recognised by the Cotton Operatives (the eldest organisation of women workers) in weavers' piece-work rates. It now has a wider recognition, due to war exigencies and the "dilution" of men's labour by women.

It is no longer a women's claim only; it is the claim of Labour—of Trade Unionism. Men previously saw in women's organised competition a serious danger, as it is, and they fought it by boycotting, and relegated women to inferior grades of employment. The Government in calling on women to fill up gaps caused in the ranks of Labour by Military Service, undertook that men's rates of pay should not be adversely affected; but these pledges have not been kept. In some cases piece-rates are equal, but not time-rates, and where rates are equal bonuses are not. Men soon saw that the only way to fight for the redemption of pledges was to join with women and insist on Equal Pay, and they were encouraged to take this line by women's organising efforts. The membership of women in Trade Unions increased

Comradeship for Clerks

In 1919, Hughes together with the socialist academic GDH Cole and Emil Davis, who was a London County Council alderman, gave a series of lectures to the Union's London branch. Hughes was also put on the panel of union sponsored Labour parliamentary candidates. Hughes' first opportunity to stand for parliament was in the 1923 election, when he was the candidate for North Lambeth. The seat was won by the sitting Liberal MP, Frank Briant, with Hughes in third place with 22% of the vote, behind the Conservative and Unionist candidate. Hughes recorded that he received

support from the communist sponsored Unemployed Workers Committee – the Communist, Saklatvala had been the MP in the adjacent North Battersea constituency, and though losing his seat was to be re-elected the following year. However, the union could not raise sufficient funds for Hughes to stand in the 1924 election, and the seat was contested for Labour by George Strauss, who only lost to Briant by 29 votes after a recount. Strauss won the seat in 1929, representing it (and the successor constituency of Vauxhall) until 1979, with the exception of 1931-4.

Hughes was responsible for keeping his union operational during the General Strike of 1926, as the General secretary, Elvin was seconded to the TUC Headquarters at Eccleston Square to control transport licensing. Hughes stayed at a hotel in Bloomsbury to avoid the 5 mile walk to and from his Leyton home, but spent the Sundays speaking in Leyton In support of the strike.

In 1931, with Labour divided as Macdonald had formed a national government with Conservatives and Liberals, Hughes was selected to stand in Dulwich. Hughes called a meeting of the local Labour Party to find that most Labour Party members supported an independent Labour candidate, there being one exception, a Mr Tickler, who supported Macdonald. In the adjacent Peckham constituency, there were three Labour candidates – John Beckett, the sitting Labour MP for the Independent Labour Party (who lived in Dulwich), E J Titler for National Labour supporting MacDonald, and Hubert Beaumont, the official Labour candidate. Beckett was later to join Mosley in the British Union of Fascists. The result was that the Conservative candidate won the seat, with the official Labour candidate coming bottom of the poll. In Dulwich, Hughes faced the sitting MP, Frederick Hall and the Liberal, C Cooke Taylor. Hughes came in second place with 16% of the vote, a significantly lower share than the 30% achieved by C A Smith two years earlier, reflecting a national swing against Labour after the 1931 economic and political crisis. Hughes was supported by Arthur Creech Jones who now worked for the TGWU and lived in the constituency, Sir Robert Young, the former AEU general secretary, who was MP for Newton and deputy speaker of the Commons and Charles Latham of the London County Council, who had been president of the National Union of Clerks. Hughes blamed the poor result on the attacks made by the former Labour chancellor, Philip Snowden, on his former colleagues, and his claim that a labour government would lead to the loss of everybody's Post Office savings.

Hughes had one more attempt to get into parliament, standing for Chelmsford in the 1935 general election. In a straight fight with a Conservative, he got 29% of the vote. He probably realised he had little chance of winning in either Dulwich or Chelmsford – he was one of the many loyal Labour supporting trade unionists who felt an obligation to represent the party in hopeless seats. Hughes remained active in

the party, for example speaking at the 1938 annual conference to oppose the expulsion of Stafford Cripps for establishing the Socialist League and arguing for a' united front' with the ILP and the Communist Party. He however had to deal with factionalism within his own union – firstly a challenge from syndicalists who opposed the control of union branches by the executive, and then from the Communist Party, who took over the leadership of the union's London district committee. In 1940, the union headquarters in Bloomsbury was destroyed in the Blitz, with the union base being moved to Glasgow. Elvin retired as general secretary, but Hughes continued in his deputy role. In 1941, he handed over his role as editor of the union journal, *The Clerk*, which he had edited since 1914, but carried on contributing book reviews. He retired in 1948, having been in the role for 34 years. He received an OBE and in 1953 published a history of the union, now renamed as 'The Clerical and Administrative Workers Union', entitled *By Hand and Brain*. In 1972, the Union became APEX, and in 1989 joined the GMB

Source:

Hughes, F, *By Hand and by Brain* (Lawrence and Wishart 1953)

HELEN BENTWICH: From Palestine to the London County Council

Helen Bentwich was the Labour candidate for Dulwich in the 1932 parliamentary by-election. The election was called following the death of Sir Frederick Hall, who had been Conservative MP for the constituency since December 1910. Bentwich came in third place with 3,905 votes, just behind the Liberal candidate, C R Cooke-Taylor with 3,998 votes. The successful Conservative candidate, Bracewell Smith was way ahead with 12,342 votes and was to remain MP until 1945 when he was defeated by Labour's Wilfred Vernon. Bentwich's result was worse than that of the Labour candidate in the 1931 General Election, Fred Hughes of the National Union of Clerks, who had come second with 4,747 votes. Bentwich did not live in Dulwich but in Hampstead. In the 1935 general election, she stood for parliament in Harrow, again being unsuccessful. The new Labour candidate in Dulwich, the writer and sociologist, J V Delahaye, was also to be unsuccessful though he came in second place, with the Liberal candidate, still Cooke-Taylor at his eighth attempt, falling back into third place.

Bentwich's involvement in Dulwich politics was shortlived. However, her unusual back story and later career makes her worthy of record. Bentwich was born Helen Franklin to a Jewish banker and his wife in Notting Hill – members of the Anglo-Jewish elite. Helen's uncle was Herbert Samuel, later Liberal Party leader, Colonial Secretary, High Commissioner of Palestine and Home Secretary. One of her cousins was Edwin Montagu, a radical Liberal, who became Secretary of State for India at the age of 38. Samuel and Montagu, together with Rufus Isaacs were the first three

practising Jews in the Cabinet (D'Israeli was of Jewish birth but an Anglican). Helen's family were active in a number of Jewish philanthropic organisations. Her father was treasurer of the Jewish Board of Guardians, President of the Jewish education board and chairman of the Lord Mayor's Mansion House Council for housing the workers of London. Her mother founded a Jewish infant-welfare centre in East London, was a pioneer of the movement for working boys' and girls' clubs and was a member of the Buckinghamshire county education committee. Helen was educated at St Paul's Girls School and then at Bedford College from 1910, initially studying botany and zoology, her first intention being to become a farmer. She left with a diploma in social work. Helen's older sister, Alice, was a Care Committee worker in the East End and persuaded Helen to set up a Girl Guide's company in a London County Council school in Commercial Street, next to Toynbee Hall, most of the guides being Jewish and Yiddish speaking. Helen also helped to teach English to Jewish immigrant girls at the West Central Jewish Girls Club in Soho, which had been founded by Lily Montagu, Edwin's brother who became a leader of Progressive Judaism and Helen's aunt Beatrice, who later married Herbert Samuel. While her extended family were leading Liberals, Helen and her siblings became attracted to socialism. Alice became secretary of a group of young Fabians, who inspired by H G Wells set up a society of 'utopians'.

Helen Bentwich

Helen's brother Hugh became an active supporter of the militant suffragettes, at one point attacking Churchill with a dog whip, then smashing shop windows, later trying to set fire to a train, rather curiously on the line to Chesham, where the family's country residence, Chartridge, was. Not surprisingly he was recognised. He hid above the Charing Cross Road bookshop run by the Norwich libertarian socialist, Fred Henderson, commonly known as the 'bombshop' later to become Colletts. Imprisoned, Hugh went on hunger strike and was force fed. After release, Hugh fled to the continent, first to Dresden and then to Brussels, where he was visited by Helen, Alice and their mother – their father refusing to see him. The Franklin family's London home in Porchester Terrace was kept under police surveillance (police also guarded the Home Secretary, Herbert Samuel's house two doors away), and Helen and Allice were followed, just in case Hugh returned and could be re-arrested. Hugh only returned to England when an amnesty for suffragettes was declared. Due to the fact that he had not recovered from his imprisonment, Hugh was declared unfit for service and obtained work at the munitions factory at the Woolwich Arsenal.

Helen and Alice accompanied their parents on a tour of the Balkans (Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia -all then still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the independent republic of Montenegro) in 1910, having been allowed to miss part of her school Easter term. In Spring 1914, the family returned to the same countries, then on to Egypt (under British 'protection'), Palestine, Syria and Lebanon (all still part of the Turkish empire) and then on to the Turkish capital of Constantinople (now Istanbul). In Cairo, Helen saw a family friend, Norman Bentwich, who was teaching at the Cairo Law School. In September 1915, Helen married Norman at the West London Synagogue, and moved to Cairo to live with him. Norman and his father were active in a range of Zionist organisations, both attending international Zionist conferences. Helen's own father was an anti-Zionist.

Herbert Samuel (uncle)

When war was declared. Helen, engaged but not yet married, had joined a Territorial Nursing Detachment, despite not being a qualified nurse, and was posted to Aylesbury. After marrying, Helen joined her husband in Cairo, first nursing soldiers wounded in the Gallipoli campaign and then being employed as a secretary in the Finance ministry, despite only being a one-finger typist. Norman left the law school to be a lieutenant in the Camel Transport Corps, a deputy to a captain commanding 400 camels and 200 Egyptian fellaheen – the Corps which transported ammunition, food and water from the railhead to the troops comprised a total of 20,000 camels and 10,000 fellaheen.. With her husband away most of the time and bored with the endless formal dinners and parties in the Cairo British community, which discouraged any social contact with the Egyptians, Helen decided to return to London. After training to be a proper secretary at Pitman's and helping with the Whitechapel girl guides and meeting her uncle, Herbert Samuel, now Home Secretary, to brief him on the situation in Egypt, she decided that her contribution to the war effort should be working in the munitions factory at the Woolwich Arsenal, where her brother Hugh worked in the payroll department.

Helen worked as a principal overlooker in the textile department rather than in the more dangerous explosives factory, textiles being used in bombs. Rather cheekily, she gave Herbert Samuel and Edwin Montagu, the latter being Minister of munitions, as references. She worked in 12 hour shifts (day or night) six days a week, commuting from Porchester Terrace. Her father in law offered her a job with a Zionist organisation, but Helen who was never a Zionist decided to stay at the Arsenal, However, she soon became concerned with the working conditions and contacted Margaret Bondfield of the National Union of Women workers (later the first woman cabinet minister as Minister of labour in Ramsay MacDonald's 1924

Government). She also wrote to Seebohm Rowntree who was chief welfare officer at the Ministry of Munitions, who sent an inspector. This not surprisingly got Helen into trouble as the Arsenal came under the War Office not the Munitions ministry. Helen nevertheless recruited women throughout the factory to the union. She was dismissed on the grounds that she was recruiting union members when she should have been working. Her brother Hugh was worried that her activity was jeopardising his own job. Her uncle Herbert also pointed out that she had perhaps not been very tactful in her approach.

Helen decided to join the Women's Land Army which was helping farmers whose farmworkers were in the army. Her sister Alice worked for the women's section of the Agriculture ministry. Helen's job was to persuade farmers to take a woman's gang, to then recruit a gang and then work with them in the fields. She sometimes stayed in digs with farmers, sometimes spending weekends with family friends such as Mrs Humphrey Ward, the author, or with Mrs Alfred Lyttleton (wife and mother of successive Conservative colonial ministers) and travelling back to London by motorcycle and train in full land girl attire to report back to her sister in the ministry. Sometimes her farm was near enough to the family home at Chartridge to commute daily on the motorbike. Given her contacts, Helen was asked to lead a contingent of Land Girls at the 1917 Lord Mayor's show. She also took a contingent to Buckingham Palace to meet the Queen in March 1918 - unfortunately in the photograph in her memoirs, the Queen is visible but Helen 's face is hidden behind a horse's head!

Helen approached the Agricultural Workers Union in an attempt to unionise the land girls, but the union apparently was not interested in women members. This at least avoided embarrassment to her sister, Alice.

Hugh (brother)

Although Helen was committed to trade unions, she does not appear to have joined the Labour Party as an individual member when it was founded in 1918. Her cousin, Olive, to whom she was close, worked for the Fabian Society, of which her brother Hugh was also a member. She had an Australian friend who joined the Industrial Workers of the World (the IWW or Wobblies) only to be sacked, and Helen was nervous of repeating her Woolwich Arsenal experience. She thought of giving up her land girl job to take a job with the Labour party but decided not to. Helen had become a welfare officer for the land girls which mean attending conferences in the London home of Lord Astor, addressed by Mrs Humphrey Ward, Mrs Littleton and by her own sister. She then went down with Spanish flu (the last major global pandemic

before COVID19) but recovered in time for the post-war general election. She helped deliver Labour leaflets and even helped a friend Louise Pullar to steward the big Labour rally at the Albert Hall, which was addressed by Willie Adamson, the Labour leader in parliament, Arthur Henderson, George Lansbury, Margaret Bondfield, Robert Smillie and Mary Macarthur. Helen's father as an ardent Liberal and who considered all Labour politicians as Bolsheviks, was appalled by his daughter's role in the meeting. Helen however apparently did not join the Party until 1931 or 1932; Hugh, who was also to become a Labour parliamentary candidate, only joining in 1931. The result of the 'Khaki' election was that the Coalition government was returned, with Labour losing most of its parliamentary seats, including those of Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden, who had opposed the war.

Norman Bentwich (husband)

Helen then decided to re-join her husband, who had now been posted to Jerusalem to the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration. She arrived on 26 January 1919. The reunited couple found a house in the German colony, a garden suburb of the city. The Bentwiches became close friends with Ronnie Storrs, the Governor of Jerusalem, with whom Norman had worked in Cairo, as well as the arts and crafts architect, C R Ashbee, who had been brought out by Storrs to replan the city. Balfour, the British foreign secretary had recently issued the Balfour declaration, declaring the British government's support for establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This was supported by Norman, who worked with the Zionist Commission (which according to Helen's memoirs, he had actually wished to join), but opposed by many of his colleagues in the Occupation Administration. Helen established a group of Jewish land girls and joined the Jerusalem Council of Social Service, run by the wife of the Anglican bishop. The Council managed to get the administration to close down all the Jerusalem brothels, apparently much to the annoyance of the army. Helen also became secretary of the Palestine Women's Association.

Throughout her time in Jerusalem, Helen wrote letters to her mother in London telling in great detail the conflict between rival factions and the tensions between Jews and Muslims. Some of these letters became public, and Helen found herself as part of the political controversy, almost as much as her husband was. These letters were published by her niece after Helen's death. In June 1920, the military administrator, General Sir Louis Bols, handed over responsibility for Palestine to a civilian High Commissioner, who was none other than Helen's uncle, Herbert Samuel. (The League of Nations British Mandate for both Palestine and TransJordan was not actually confirmed until 1922). The appointment of a British Jewish

politician, who was himself a Zionist, as High Commissioner, was inevitably controversial. The fact that Norman, as a Jewish Zionist, was chief legal officer for the mandated territory added to the controversy. Samuel stayed as High Commissioner until June 1925, when he was replaced by Sir Herbert Plumer. Norman stayed in his post of Attorney-general until 1931. His role in this position was opposed by the Palestinian Arabs and was a contributing factor in Muslim riots – in 1929, he was shot and wounded in a riot. In September 1930, the Bentwiches returned to England on leave.

The following year, both the High Commissioner, Sir John Chancellor, and the British government (with Sidney Webb, Lord Passfield as colonial secretary and an anti-Zionist) decided that retaining a Jewish attorney-general who was known as a supporter of Zionism, was a liability as a provocation to Muslims, and Norman was not allowed to return to Jerusalem. The Passfield White Paper issued the previous year had sought to restrict Jewish migration to Palestine, in an attempt to appease the Arabs. Norman had refused to resign or move to a chief justiceship in Cyprus or Mauritius, and after a year in London was dismissed from the Colonial Office. He however accepted a part-time professorship at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, on the basis of spending six months a year in Jerusalem and six in London. In 1964, The Bentwiches published *Mandate Memories*, a memoir of their time in Jerusalem. The Bentwiches bought a house in the Vale of Health in Hampstead, where they both lived for the rest of their lives. Helen was later to publish a book on the history of the Vale. The Bentwiches had no children.

Helen Bentwich

Returning to England, Helen joined the Labour Party and decided to stand for parliament. She missed the 1931 general election, where Labour was heavily defeated by the national government coalition, Ramsay MacDonald continuing as Prime Minister with Conservative and Liberal support (Samuel as leader of the Liberal Party returning as Home Secretary). The first opportunity was when a by-election was called in Dulwich in June 1932, following the death of the longstanding MP, Frederick Hall. The Bentwiches do not appear to have had any connections with Dulwich, but Helen was fairly well known and as a by-election, the contest got widespread press coverage, with much attention being paid to Helen standing as a Labour candidate, when her uncle was Home Secretary and leader of the Liberal Party. Herbert Samuel had no alternative but to send a letter to support the Liberal candidate, C R Cooke-Taylor, who was a psychiatrist at the Maudsley hospital. Norman Bentwich was in Palestine and missed the campaign.

The Conservative candidate was Bracewell Smith. Born in Yorkshire, he was a property developer, who owned the Park Lane Hotel and the Ritz. He had been a member of Holborn council since 1922 and has served as Mayor in 1931-2. He had also been a member of the LCC between 1925 and 1928. He was later to become Lord Mayor of London and receive a knighthood as well as chairing and part owning Arsenal Football Club. The Independent Labour Party, which had recently disaffiliated from the Labour Party had been expected to stand Dr C A Smith, who had been the Labour candidate in 1924 and 1929 and was later to become chairman of the national ILP, but the challenge did not materialise, which at least meant that the left-wing vote was not divided. The Communist party had never contested the seat.

Helen had a series of public meetings. On 3rd June, at a meeting at Grove Vale school, Helen argued that "A vote for Toryism is a vote to cut pensions of the widowed and the aged, to endanger health, maternity and child welfare services. It is a vote to paralyse building and to stabilise slums." On 5th June, she spoke in opposition to the National Government's decontrolling of rents and against the cuts in education funding, also criticising what she argued was the Government's failure to pursue an energetic peace policy. On 6th June, she was supported by Herbert Morrison, who had been Transport minister and was two years later to become leader of the LCC. Morrison criticised the Government as lacking a coherent policy – "Ministers had no collective mind on the urgent problem of reorganisation and restoring industry at home. Nor had they got any clear policy abroad." On 7th June, the eve of polling, Helen held three indoor meetings and half a dozen out of door rallies. She was supported by Arthur Greenwood, the former Health Minister and later Labour Party deputy leader Dr Arthur Salter, the Bermondsey MP, and Mrs Ayrton Gould, a former suffragette and member of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee. Helen argued that "A win for Labour will deal a great blow at the so-called National Government which has so bitterly disappointed the people who gave it enormous power last October".

On winning the seat, Bracewell Smith commented that " My victory proves that the electorate have unwavering faith in the policy of the National government with its scheme for Protection and Economy." The *Labour Herald* commented that "Mrs Bentwich has fought pluckily in a division which has been Conservative since its history began." One commentator, pointing to the relatively low turnout of 43% (compared with 71% in the general election the previous year) commented that it had been the "dullest and most apathetic by-election in years. It is more like a Sunday School meet than a by-election."

In 1934, Helen was co-opted onto the education committee of the London County Council. In 1935, she made a further attempt to be elected to parliament, standing unsuccessfully in Harrow, where she won 37% of the vote, being defeated by the sitting Conservative MP, Isidore Salmon , who was a vice-president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the seat having previously been held for Labour between 1918 and 1924 by Oswald Mosley In 1937, Helen was then elected to the LCC as a member for North Kensington, which she represented until 1946. She then became a member for Bethnal North East. In 1955 she transferred to Stoke Newington and Hackney North, standing down in 1965, when she was appointed a CBE.

During the war, Helen chaired the further education committee of the LCC, and ensured that the education which had been provided in adult institutes was continued in bomb shelters. Both Helen and her husband also served on civil defence duty. She was chairman of the LCC education committee from 1947 to 1950, promoting the establishment of secondary schools and also continuing to promote evening institutes. She became a vice-chairman of the LCC in 1950 and then in 1956, Helen became chairman of the LCC, which was a high profile largely ceremonial position, involving acting as hostess to various visits by international dignitaries, such as the Soviet leaders, Khrushchev and Bulganin.

Helen was also active in supporting Jewish refugees. In the 1930's, she became an organiser for the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany, that is for Jewish refugees from Nazism. After the war, she and her husband supported the Jewish Falashas in Ethiopia. She took on a wide range of public positions. She was a governor of Bedford College, the Central School of Arts and Crafts, and Dartford Physical Education College. She was a trustee of the London Museum and the Whitechapel Arts Gallery, a member of the Council of Industrial Design, the Army Education Advisory Board and the National Advisory Council for the Training and Supply of Teachers. She was also president of the Brady Youth club and settlement in East London, which had been founded by her mother.

Helen died in April 1972, her husband having died the previously year. Her memoir of her early life was published the following year, but she had not been able to complete her autobiography and left no record of her years in local government, though she published a short study of local government, *Our Councils* , in 1962. Her husband's memoirs, published in 1962 have very little reference to his wife's political and philanthropic activities, other than to the various functions to which he escorted his wife in her role as chair of the London County Council.

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JIM DELAHAYE: Disarmament and the Popular Front

James Vinor Delahaye was the Labour candidate in the 1935 Dulwich election. He was defeated by the sitting Conservative MP, Bracewell Smith coming in second place with 26% of the vote, the Liberal Cooke-Taylor coming third. Delahaye seems to have had no substantive connection with the constituency, although when he was at Haileybury school in 1908, he was in the team which played rugby against Dulwich college!

Delahaye grew up in Crowborough, Sussex and was a pupil at the Grange school, before going to Haileybury and then to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. He served in Ireland and South Africa and in France during the First World War. In 1919, he was attached to the Inter-allied mission to the Baltic and was British military representative in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, where he focused on reporting on conditions in Soviet Russia. In 1921 to 1923 he was attached to the staff college and from 1923 to 1928 worked at the war office, including visiting America and Canada to study the education of officers. He was now a lieutenant-colonel.

In 1928, Delahaye was commissioned by the Ministry of Labour to investigate conditions of the unemployed in South Wales. He also studied at the London School of Economics, investigating the problems of international finance. In 1929, he published, together with Hilderic Cousins and Philippe Mairet *Politics- A Discussion of Realities.* Mairet was a champion of Christian socialism and was also involved in the social credit movement, an ideology of economic democracy promoted by C H Douglas, with the support of Alfred Orage, editor of the *New Era*. Mairet was also to write biographies of the sociologist and planner, Patrick Geddes, Orage and the prolific author and literary critic, John Middleton Murry.

In 1931, Delahaye was asked by Viscount Cecil, the League of Nations advocate, to organise a Central Disarmament Bureau. He was then put in charge of the Disarmament Department of the League of Nations Union. This campaign for disarmament comprised letters to the press , for example Delahaye was party to a letter published in the *Sheffield Independent* advocating a reduction in armaments, which was signed by a number of radicals and pacifists including Norman Angel, G D H Cole, Ruth Fry, Aldous Huxley, Cyril Joad, Henry Nevinson, Maude Royden, H G Wells and Bertrand Russell.

In 1931, Delahaye was the Labour parliamentary candidate in Exeter. The seat was held by the Conservatives, Delahaye coming in third place after the Liberal with 22% of the vote, a poorer result than his predecessor in the 1929 election. Interestingly, the Labour candidate for the constituency in 1935 was Stafford Cripps, who increased the Labour vote, there being no Liberal candidate, but still lost to the Conservative.

Delahaye was known as a lecturer on peace and war. He had been a member of the Royal Institute since 1921 and had undertaken a study of the role of Russia in international relations, no doubt based on his experience in the Baltic states. By the time he was adopted as Labour Prospective Parliamentary candidate for Dulwich in 1933, he was a member of the British Institute of Philosophical Studies, chairman of the Individual Psychology Society and chair of the2 0th century society, which mainly comprised architects and town planners. He wrote and lectured on education and sociology as well as on the psychological aspects of sex. Delahaye was also active in the National Council of Social Service, participating in a camp for unemployed men in Sandwich, Kent in 1933 and speaking at a conference in Truro the following March.

In January 1932, Delahaye spoke at a meeting of the League of Nations Union and National Disarmament Campaign at Amersham, in the Regent cinema. The chairman, Mr A Woodley introduced the meeting by explaining that "they realised that this country, together with every other country of the world, was passing through a time of acute suffering and distress, and they were of opinion that there was no hope of a solution apart from the expression of a strong public opinion. The world was full of the evidence that the mistakes of mankind were leading humanity toward the abyss of complete annihilation and destruction. Statesmen of the world were out of touch with the desires of the general nubile, and were dwarfed by the spirit of nationalism as opposed to internationalism." Delahaye made his subject, 'The World Crisis, and Disarmament'. He referred to the First World War: "We fought for about 1,500 days. on each one of which men were killed and 15,000 men were wounded. The common folk—the men and women of the world—suffered in the genuine belief that their sacrifices and sorrows were for some fine purpose, and war would be stopped for ever. £1,000.000,000 was spent in the world annually, on armaments: armaments in this country cost us £1,200 per minute; we spent 4/- per minute for peace. "

By 1934 Delahaye had got involved in the New Britain campaign. This was part of the New Europe campaign initiated by Dimitrije Mitrovic, a Serbian philosopher who was attached to the Serbian embassy in London. Mitrovic advocated a metaphysical utopia drawing on the philosophy of Plotinus, Clement of Alexandria, Lao Tzu and the German Christian mystic, Jakob Boehme. Mitrovic also drew on the concepts of

Gurdjieff and Ouspensky as well as from the psycho-analysts, Freud, Jung and Adler. As well as promoting these ideas in Orage's *New Era*, Mitrovic published two of his own journals- *The New Atlantis* and the *New Albion,* the latter jointly with Orage.

The New Britain movement advocated the concept of a threefold social order, a concept developed by the Austrian philosopher, Rudolf Steiner, which was based on the notion of equality in political life, freedom in cultural life and cooperation in economic life.. It had parallels with guild socialism. The movement's journals, *The New Britain Weekly*, the *New Britain Quarterly* and the *Eleventh Hour Bulletin*, attracted contributions from a range of commentators, including Harold Macmillan (the Conservative MP for Stockton who published *The Middle Way* in 1938, advocating radical centrist politics), the radiochemist and currency reformer Frederick Soddy, Bertrand Russell, John Macmurray (the Scottish Christian communist philosopher and author of *Creative Society* and *Persons in Relation*, who inspired Tony Blair), Patrick Geddes and the guild socialist, S G Hobson. New Britain attracted other political thinkers who were seeking a 'third way' between Communism and Fascism, including W J Brown, the trade unionist and MP for Wolverhampton, who had briefly joined Mosley's New Party, later to sit as an Independent, J T Murphy who had been prominent in the Communist Party and George Catlln, the political theorist who was married to Vera Brittain (and incidentally was Shirley Wlliams' father) and who had also flirted with the New Party. *New Britain Weekly* was edited by C B Purdom, the town planner and garden city advocate, who had developed an interest in the Iranian Zoroastrian mystic, Meher Baba,.

During 1933 and 1934, Delahaye spoke at a number of New Britain meetings. In September 1933, he spoke on 'Can we build a better Britain 'at Carluke in Lanarkshire. He spoke at the New Britain conference in Glastonbury on' New Britain Social Psychology.' In April 1934 at Hampstead Garden Suburb, Delahaye explained the system of government which the New Britain movement sought to establish without, he emphasised, 'bloody revolution'. The movement was neither Fascist nor Communistic. It wanted to establish government of three chambers. The first chamber would contain representatives of industry. The workers and employers of each industry would all belong to one Guild, and their representatives would be responsible to the nation for the conduct of their particular industry. Capitalism would he eliminated by the proportionate distribution of the money produced. The second chamber would be entirely political, dealing with the making of laws and with foreign relations. Unhampered by industry, this chamber could get some real work done. The third chamber would be cultural, dealing with religion, all branches of art, recreation and the relation of man with his fellowmen. One of the first things with

which this new government would deal would be the money question. Money should be taken from its institution as a marketable commodity. The control of money would be taken from the Bank of England. Finally, Delahaye dealt with the movement's approach to the people through the 'permeation theory' and the group system. He argued that this methodical approach had come from the heart.

The same month, Delahaye was the main speaker at the launch of the New Britain Finchley branch at Newman's restaurant. He outlined the New Britain movement with its three representative Chambers of Government: the first, industrial; the second dealing with laws and international relations; and the third cultural. The speaker also referred to the danger of Fascism and concluded by emphasising that the time was ripe for everyone to co-operate on a common basis, putting aside parties and names. Delahaye was one of the seven-member leadership group who drew up the New Britain declaration on 'the fundamental changes needed in the social, economic and political life, without violence'. He was also a speaker at the Conference in Leamington Spa in 1934 which adopted the statement.

When he came to speak in Dulwich as Labour candidate, Delahaye's focus was on the League of Nations rather than on the concepts of Mitrovic and Steiner. In a speech in May 1933, he argued that the League of Nations was incapable of maintaining international peace, and the Labour Party should have known that a league of capitalistic States could not possibly bring peace. He commented that there were signs of decay everywhere. It is unclear whether his listeners agreed with this criticism of the official Labour Party position.

Stafford Cripps

In 1934, Delahaye was a member of a Church of England delegation to Germany, where he met Hitler and Dr Rosenberg at Nuremberg. The New Britain movement disintegrated in early 1935. Delahaye and his New Britain colleague, David Richard Davies then joined the Socialist League, a new left wing group established by Stafford Cripps, the MP for Bristol and former solicitor general in MacDonald's Labour government, which drew in many former members of the ILP as well as J T Murphy from the Communist Party, who became Socialist League secretary. Davies was also interested in mysticism and theology, writing a biography of the German Christian mystic, Reinhold Niebuhr, and later a series of books with titles such as *The Art of Dodging Repentance, Thirty Minutes to Raise the Dead, Theology and the Atomic Age, Secular Illusion* and *On to Orthodoxy*

The main political argument of the Socialist League was the case for an alliance of all left- wing groups, seeking to bring together the ILP, the Communist Party and the

left of the Labour Party, referred to as the 'Workers Front'. Delahaye and Davies however wanted a broader alliance- the so called 'popular front', which would embrace radical Liberals and even dissident Conservatives. In July 1936, Delahaye wrote to the *New Statesman*, suggesting anybody who was interested should contact him. While Nye Bevan and Henry Brailsford appeared to have some sympathy with this view, the Socialist League leadership of Stafford Cripps and the journalist William Mellor, wanted to keep to the Workers Front position. Mellor met Delahaye and Davies, who refused to back down. Mellor threatened disciplinary action and was supported by the Socialist League's executive committee. Davies resigned immediately, and after an appeal to the executive committee failed, Delahaye also resigned. Delahaye and Davies then established their own Popular Front Propaganda Committee, together with J T Murphy the former Socialist League secretary and Fenn, the Socialist League treasurer, both of whom left the League. They were supported by Allan Young who had left the New Party when Mosley turned to fascism and was then an adviser to Harold Macmillan on economic policy. The initiative won widespread support, including the Conservative Robert Boothby, John Strachey, the Marxist writer who had also previously worked with Mosley and Young, Richard Acland, the dissident Liberal MP, and the socialist G D H Cole. One public meeting attracted up to 2,000 people. Noel Brailsford was also arguing for a Popular Front.

In June 1936, Delahaye was one of a number of speakers at a rally in Hyde Park, supported by the London Trades Council, to protest against what was seen as the Government's betrayal of the League of Nations in respect of the failure to intervene to stop Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia, or to apply sanctions on Italy. There were six platforms. Delahaye shared a platform with Herbert Morrison, who was at that time Labour leader of the London County Council.

In July 1936, Delahaye circulated the People's Front Propaganda Committee's public statement, which focused on foreign policy. "If British foreign policy continues to be one of wavering and unimaginative timidity the desire of the great masses of the people here and abroad for assured collective security will be frustrated and a new period of war will be thrust upon mankind". The Committee argued for " a campaign supporting a Charter of immediate concrete demands dealing with the League, foreign affairs and the practical daily life of the people, in support of which many National bodies and persons from as far left as the Communist Party and as far right as the democratic Tory could be expected to co-operate."

In August , Delahaye issued a further statement for the Propaganda Committee, as a circular letter to newspapers headed ' The People's Front. Building a New World of Peace':

"Scientists and engineers tell us that we have all the power and knowledge necessary to build a new world of peace, plenty and leisure. Yet most of us are hard put to it to make ends meet: the number of unemployed still approaches the two million mark, and we are steadily drifting towards a devastating war. Why is this? It is because the Government we have put into power will not serve the daily needs of the people, but is living with its head in the pre-war 'balance of power' era, and is trying to conserve a condition of affairs which is already past. Our only alternative leaders are bickering among themselves and are so busy proving themselves right and abusing each other and the Government that they have no time to notice that the Ship of State is drifting on the rocks. In these circumstances and in this democratic country it is high time that the people themselves took a hand in determining their own fate. sufficiently widespread and well-organized demand can force any Government to action. An organization is now being formed, known tentatively as the People's Front. It is not designed to ape the French Popular Front, for political conditions in this country are very different. Its object is the wide-scale gathering of the people in support of an agreed charter of immediate, concrete demands, directly related to the daily needs of ordinary men and women. Philosophies, ultimate objectives, and specialized aims would continue to be the concern of individual parties and organizations, and no one would be asked to forfeit existing loyalties to party, trade union, church, or other grouping. A preliminary statement of the case for a People's Front, and of the general nature of the campaign, has already been issued, and is available for those interested. The next and far more difficult stage is the drafting of a concrete programme for home and foreign policy. May I ask for the expressions of your readers' views?"

At a meeting in Eastbourne of the People's Front Propaganda Committee in April 1937, Delahaye said that during the last few years the world situation had undoubtedly deteriorated, but there was no need for ordinary men and women to look on helplessly. They should ask themselves what they could do individually, now when war was near. Ever since 1919 Europe had been waiting for a lead from Great Britain, but none had yet been given. When Sir Samuel Hoare, in his notable speech at Geneva, spoke in both the spirit and letter of the Covenant of the League Nations he knew from personal knowledge that a sigh of relief and hope echoed throughout Europe. That speech was followed by the Hoare-Laval Pact, and the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. Now we had the Fascist attack on the Spanish Government.

Rather than discipline the Popular Front campaigners, the Labour Party leadership focused its disciplinary procedures on the United Front campaigners. In January

1937, the Labour Party disaffiliated the Socialist League on the basis that its collaboration with the Communist Party was a breach of Labour Party rules, and July, the Socialist League dissolved itself. Arguments for a Popular Front re-emerged in 1938 after Chamberlain's agreement with Hitler in Munich, and a number of Popular Front candidates stood in by-elections, with the support of local Labour parties, though not of the Labour Party leadership.

Delahaye remained interested in Russia. In November 1936, he spoke at a meeting in Crowborough on 'The Russian Experiment'. The local newspaper, the *Courier*, reported that Delahaye spoke of his own experiences in Russia both with the White Army and on subsequent occasions, stressed the need for making an objective effort to understand what the Russians were trying to do. Letters which had been recently published in the *Courier* could only be described as 'hysteria'. He commented that we still heard of such infantile phrases as 'Bolshevism raising its head' and 'Communism the invidious menace'. There was reason why social experiment embracing 100 million people and at least 60 different races should give us in this country cause to think, because it was a challenge to the very deepest things in human life. It was challenge to the power of class, to something that was exceedingly precious to (or to those who had it) —property—because the Russians held a theory of life that all things should be held common. This was the kind life they were trying to build up. and which might yet take two or three generations to finally achieve. The *Courier* reported that Delahaye, referring to the pre-revolution conditions described them as something like those existing in Elizabethan England. Delahaye argued that the Church's social position was ignoble, to say the least of it, it being more or less an instrument for preserving the status quo. The speaker, after an allusion to the violence of the Tsarist regime, added: "If anybody wants to ask about the recent executions, which nobody can condone, I would ask them to remember that the Russians are not people like ourselves.' Delahaye made reference to the Five-Year Plan, and remarked upon the difference he had noted the condition the country when last visited It 1935. He commented that at last Stalin was beginning to talk to the people of happiness. "It was true that the standard the ordinary worker this country was superior, but there had been hardship set purpose in order that the great productive mechanism of the nation could be built ensure prosperity the Russians felt they deserved. The country was genuinely out for peace, and it was painful necessity to the Russian Government to have to arm. There was real alarm the development of the international situation. It should be our part, this country, at least not to hinder the Russians their great experiment. There was much that we could learn, both in regard to what the Russians were doing and the spirit which they were carrying out. Broadly speaking, everybody had a chance in Soviet Russia to-day." It was reported that a somewhat spirited discussion followed the lecture, and several questions were put to Delahaye on the

position Russian women, the Youth Anti-God Movement and the sale of Bibles in Russia.

After his defeat in Dulwich, Delahaye was selected to stand in North Buckinghamshire, but he stood down from the candidacy in 1938. He was a speaker for the Left Book Club, which carried on some of the Socialist League's activities in holding discussions with speakers from arrange of left-wing groups. speaking with the LBC's founder, Victor Gollancz in Sunderland in September 1937. Delahaye wrote the preface to a pamphlet by the poet and author, Lionel Birch entitled '*Why they join the Fascists.'*

Birch had been Labour candidate for Petersfield in the 1935 election, and Delahaye spoke with Birch at a meeting there in April 1937. In February 1938, Delahaye spoke at a meeting of the Berkshire Labour Party in Wallingford, in support of the local parliamentary candidate, Frank Bourne. The meeting was only attended by twenty people. The other speaker was Morgan Phillips, who was Labour Party propaganda officer, and later was party General Secretary.

Lionel Birch's book

Delahaye had clearly maintained his interest in work camps, as in July 1939, he participated in a conference in Dorset on land service camps which could attract unemployed urban youth to rural life and agricultural work. Delahaye suggested that the camps, to be successful, should eventually be run by the nation, so that the criticism that they profited private individuals could not be directed against them. Even then he saw difficulties long as the land remained in private ownership.

During the war, Delahaye was a lecturer for the Army Bureau of Public Affairs. In 1944, he established Freedom House in London as a central base for civilian discussion groups. In 1945, he joined the British Council, being appointed regional officer for South West England, based in Salisbury. He died in January 1948.

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JOHN BECKETT: From Revolutionary Socialist to Fascist

John Beckett was MP for Peckham between 1929 and 1931. At the time of the 1931 election, he lived in Dulwich, according to Fred Hughes who was the Labour candidate in Dulwich in that election. Beckett lost the seat and then became a close associate of William Joyce and a leader of the British Union of Fascists, before joining Joyce in the National Socialist league. Joyce lived in Allison Grove, before travelling with his wife Margaret to Germany in September 1939, just before the outbreak of the war. Joyce and his wife both broadcast German propaganda from Berlin, being captured at the end of the war – Joyce became known as Lord Haw Haw. Beckett, who stayed in Britain was interned in Brixton prison. On release he campaigned unsuccessfully to stop Joyce being executed for treason. Beckett had started his career as a revolutionary socialist and his political trajectory from far left to far right is unusual, though there are some parallels with the trajectory of Dulwich Labour parliamentary candidates, Charles Smith and Jim Delahaye, who both travelled from left-wing socialism to right wing anti-communist politics.

Beckett was born in Hammersmith in 1894. His father was a draper. His mother Eva, was from a Jewish family but was disowned by her family for marrying a gentile. The young Beckett had to leave Latymer Upper School at the age of fourteen when his father lost his investments in one of Horatio Bottomley's con schemes and went to work in a draper's shop. He studied journalism at night school and at 16 got a job on the *Harrow Observer*. When the First World War broke out, Becket signed up. He served in Hong Kong, the Andaman Islands, Singapore and Rangoon, being discharged as unfit for further service, having heart disease. This was perhaps fortunate for him as his battalion were transferred to the Western Front, where they received heavy casualties. Beckett was in hospital for a year, lost his teeth and was a semi-invalid for some time after. In April 1918, he got married.

Beckett got a job in a draper's shop in Sheffield. He heard the Labour MP for Sheffield Attercliffe, William Anderson, speak at a meeting of the Sheffield Ethical Society. Anderson had been chair of the Independent Labour Party before the war, was a pacifist and was married to Mary Macarthur, the suffragist and women's trade union leader. Anderson was to die at the age of 42 a few months later of influenza – 1919 was the year of the Spanish flu epidemic. After the meeting, Anderson gave the 24 year old ex-soldier a batch of socialist pamphlets to read. Beckett was already

involved in the government sponsored Comrades of the Great War, a predecessor of the Royal British Legion.

Beckett joined the ILP. He was apparently asked to stand for council for Labour but his political activities appear to have not been welcomed by his employer so he moved to London. In lodgings in Hackney, Beckett was again active in the Comrades organisation. The organisation apparently encouraged its members to be strike-breakers – there was a wave of strikes, including the first police strike. Beckett did not want to be a strike-breaker so Beckett and an ex-captain Ernest Mander decided to set up a new organisation – the National Union of Ex-Servicemen. Mander became secretary, Beckett president. The union sought to campaign for a better deal for ex-servicemen and the families of those who had been killed. Beckett wrote in the ILP's *Labour Leader* of 'the manner in which the people have been betrayed by lies into fighting for the financial interests of their masters'. The union campaigned for better pensions, jobs for ex-servicemen, better back pay for former soldiers and changes to the court martial system, which had condemned many men to death. Within six months, the union had 100 branches and 100,000 members. The British Legion viewed their rivals as 'a bitter brooding group of militant Marxists'. The newly formed Communist party attempted to take over the ex-servicemen's union, but Beckett and Mander resisted this. They were patriots and saw the Communist Party as a Soviet led Bolshevik group. The union however ran out of funds and was wound up.

Beckett appears to have had a job as an agent for a bookseller, though he soon lost it. He met Ramsay Macdonald who persuaded Herbert Morrison, then secretary of the London Labour party, that Beckett could help them win control of Hackney Council in the forthcoming local elections. Beckett became campaign organiser and ran an impressive campaign, attracting his ex-servicemen's association members to meetings. The election in November 1919 led to Labour winning the council, with Beckett one of the new councillors and with Morrison as Mayor.

John Beckett

Beckett's involvement in the ILP and the ex-soldiers' movement brought him into contact with ex-Major Clement Attlee, who in 1919 had become Mayor of Stepney. Beckett was appointed Attlee's full-time agent, and he and his wife moved into Attlee's house in Limehouse. Beckett ran a monthly periodical *The East London Pioneer*. Atlee, with Beckett's help, was elected to parliament in the 1922 election.

Beckett then became Attlee's private secretary. Beckett was also elected to the London divisional council of the ILP, of which he became secretary, and also became secretary of the London committee of the No More War movement, a successor body to the No Conscription Fellowship, which was chaired by Fenner Brockway. Beckett was clearly respected within the ILP as he was one of a four person committee, with Attlee, Fenner Brockway and Clifford Allen, which drafted the ILP's policy statement for its 1922 Conference: *The Socialist Programme.*

Beckett was then invited by Charles Trevelyan, the MP for Newcastle Central, to contest the North Newcastle parliamentary seat, which Labour had not previously fought. Beckett got 6,000 votes and was close to the winning Liberal candidate. He was then approached to stand in three other seats in the area- East Newcastle, West Newcastle and Gateshead. He chose to stand for Gateshead and in the 1924 election, was elected with a 9,000 majority over the Conservative candidate, with the sitting Liberal MP pushed into third place. Beckett was only thirty and became the youngest MP. He was to represent the seat until 1929, when after a dispute with the local party over his personal life – his rather public affair with the actress Kyrle Bellew, he decided to look elsewhere for a seat. Hugh Dalton, the MP for Peckham was in dispute with his constituency party and appears to have recommended Beckett as his replacement. Dalton had apparently considered swopping his seat with Beckett's Gateshead seat, but this may not have been acceptable to the Gateshead party. Beckett was therefore adopted in Peckham, while Dalton switched his candidacy to Bishop Auckland. The existing MP, Ben Spoor had announced his intention to retire but died some months before the general election was called. Dalton's wife Ruth stood in the by-election, to hold the seat warm for her husband, and was returned. Ruth had won a Peckham seat on the London County Council in 1925 was also a councillor for Southwark council. The Peckham Labour Party, with a mainly working-class membership, had not been happy with Hugh Dalton's aristocratic manner – Dalton was the son of the chaplain to Queen Victoria and had been born at Windsor castle. Dalton had had a feud with his agent, Ernest Baldwyn, who was a milkman, who he suspected of wanting to replace him as MP. Dalton managed to get rid of the Peckham party chair, Taylor, and took over the post himself, an unusual arrangement. Having first sought the advice of Arthur Creech Jones, who lived in the area and had been a candidate for Peckham for the LCC and was at the time a member of the party National Executive committee, Dalton then involved the Labour Party national agent and a sub-committee of the Labour Party National Executive Committee in the dispute. Beckett won the Peckham seat, as a Labour/ Independent Labour Party candidate with a majority of 5,000 over the Conservative candidate.

Beckett's track record as a working-class militant MP clearly was attractive to the Peckham Labour Party members, which was clearly to the left of Dalton. Beckett first came to national attention by investigating, at the suggestion of Clem Attlee, a scandal about the production of nitrogen during and after the war, involving Sir Alfred Mond, the chairman of the chemical firm, ICI, who had been a Minister in Lloyd George's post-war government, when the questionable deal over nitrogen production was agreed. Mond later became Lord Melchett. Beckett was impatient and no respecter of parliamentary tradition and procedures, and in pursuing the Mond scandal, as well as other issues, such as ex-servicemen's pensions, unemployment and the theatre (of which Beckett had considerable knowledge, partly from his relationship with Kyrle Bellow) he antagonised many of his colleagues. In December 1925, Beckett offered to give details of a secret session of the House of Commons to the *Daily Herald*. In May 1927, in a debate on the Trades Disputes Bill, Beckett accused Baldwin, the Prime Minister of lying. Refusing to apologise unless Baldwin also apologised for his 'lie', he was suspended from parliament. With the Labour government now in office, Beckett was suspended again in 1930 in a debate over political prisoners in India, an issue raised by Beckett's ILP colleague, Fenner Brockway. Brockway had refused to follow the Speaker's instruction to sit down, and the Speaker called a vote on Brockway's suspension. Beckett had picked up the ceremonial mace and carried out of the Commons, shouting "These proceedings are a disgrace to the House."

Beckett's action went down well with the Peckham Labour Party. Beckett commented that " I have sat in the House hour after hour silent, without raising any protest, in shame and torture, listening in the same speech on unemployment on at least thirty occasions…. Why listen for hours and hours to the same century-old abominable drivel…. What is the Parliamentary Labour Party? Let's analyse it. They have been very frank about me. Why should I not be frank about them? First, they have eighty-seven occupying offers of profit under the Crown, then twenty-nine parliamentary secretaries, the people who open the doors. Next about twenty sweating at the top line for promotion, afraid to cough in case MacDonald heard about it and scratched their names off the list for the next vacancy… Was it a wonder that there were some rebels in the Party, who would make the snobs, parasites and old men get a move on. He had realised that it was time somebody said these things in public… I am not sorry for what I have done. I would do it again. I am not going to apologise. I am going to fight out this issue." The Peckham party cheered their MP and passed a vote of confidence.

Beckett's relationship with the actress, Kyrle Bellew, who became a local councillor, caused some controversy in the local party. Beckett only divorced his first

wife in December 1929. Bellow had been married to the actor and theatre manager, Arthur Bourchier, who was active in the ILP and had been a parliamentary candidate, coming close to winning Gloucester from the Conservatives. Bourchier had died in 1927. Beckett married Kyrle Bellew in June 1930. While some local members were opposed to being represented by a divorced MP, the Party as a whole decided to continue to support Beckett.

The Independent Labour Party group of MPs acted as a party within the Labour Party in the 1929-31 parliament, with John Wheatley as leader and Beckett as unofficial party whip. Wheatley, who to a certain extent was Beckett's mentor, died in May 1930. In the 1931 election, following Ramsay MacDonald's decision to respond to the economic crisis by establishing a National Government with the Conservatives and a section of the Liberal Party, Beckett found himself fighting not just a Macdonaldite National Labour candidate, E J Titler but an official Labour Party candidate, Hubert Beaumont. Beckett, having been disavowed by the Labour Party, stood for the Independent Labour Party. Beaumont had been a candidate in Harrow in the 1929 election, but this time came bottom of the poll – he was to become MP for Batley in a by-election in 1939. Titler only got a few more votes than Beaumont. Peckham Labour Party was largely loyal to Beckett, as was the local Labour supporting electorate, but the national context and a three-way split in local Labour let in the Conservative candidate, David Beatty, who was son of the Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Beatty. Beatty was to hold the seat in the 1935 election, moving to the Lords when he inherited his father's title the following year. In the consequential by-election, Labour's Lewis Silkin recaptured the seat for Labour.

Kyrle Bellew

Kyrle Bellew had inherited the Strand theatre from her deceased former husband and Beckett focused his energy on theatre management. In 1932, the ILP disaffiliated from the Labour Party. Baldwyn had been sacked as Peckham Labour Party agent and joined the Conservative Party. The Peckham Labour Party branch decided to transfer their affiliation to the ILP and decided to re-adopt Beckett as their candidate. However, Beckett's politics were moving on. By 1935, Beckett's theatrical activities were failing and he was declared bankrupt. Beckett had been impressed on a visit to Italy by Mussolini's government. Beckett did not join his fellow ILP'er Oswald Mosley when he left the ILP to establish the New Party in 1932, although one former colleague recorded that the split was actually initially

Beckett's idea. However, when Mosley established the British Union of Fascists (BUF) in 1934, Beckett was one of his earliest recruits, and together with Robert Forgan (who had joined the New Party) and Mosley's wife , Cynthia, the only other former ILP MPs to join Mosley, though Mosley was also joined by the ILP journalist John Scanlon, who had authored a book on the *Decline and Fall of the Labour Party.* It was apparently Forgan who persuaded Beckett to join the BUF. Beckett became the BUF's Director of Publicity as well as editor of both BUF journals, *Action* and *Blackshirt.*

Beckett was the main speaker at a BUF meeting at the Dulwich baths in October 1934, a meeting with the objective of introducing fascism to Dulwich. According to the Daily Herald report, "the hall was crowded and was patrolled by a Fascist bodyguard. It became impossible for speakers to make themselves heard, and eventually the baths superintendent declined to allow the meeting to go on. Mr Beckett at the head of about 100 Fascists, led the way out of the hall. As he did son, pepper was thrown at them and some were temporarily blinded. Finally, the Fascists were chased by a crowd and escaped in motor-cars."

Oswald Mosley and the British Union of Fascists

Given the number of former ILP members within the BUF leadership, the BUF's propaganda included socialistic elements. Its attacks on the financial establishment were similar to those of the ILP, though now including a more explicit anti-Semitic language. Beckett was however able to claim that his speeches 'were practically the same as those I had made in the ILP'.

In 1937, Mosley sacked Beckett from his full-time job. Beckett and William Joyce then left the BUF and set up their own organisation – the National Socialist League.

This was formed at an open meeting attended by about fifty people at the Prince Albert hotel in Westminster on 2 April 1937, though this initiative had clearly been planned for some months. Beckett and Joyce set up an office in Vauxhall Bridge Road. They were joined by John McNab who had edited the *Fascist Quarterly* for the BUF. The group appointed a number of local officials, including Joyce's brother Frank as an organiser in Camberwell. Another brother, Quentin, who lived in Dulwich, joined. A policy statement was published, which argued for "a people thoroughly united as an organic being – National in spirit and Socialist in achievement, free from class war, free from snobbery, and free from exploitation by privileged pirates." It called for "a scientific government based on authority…. Free from the domination of international finance and Jewish money power. It argued for 'real wealth' and full employment "in a nation free from poverty, free from fear of economic insecurity, and free from cut-throat competition, whether domestic or foreign." It argued for an alliance with National Socialist countries "to shield Europe from the danger of Bolshevism and the oppression of international finance."

Given Joyce's home at 7 Allison Grove, the National Socialist League had a base in Dulwich, where Joyce peddled his anti-Semitic and anti-communist vitriol. The group held regular meetings in Dulwich Library, and had a soap box where Joyce addressed large crowds at the corner of Calton Avenue and Court Lane. St Barnabas Church's parochial council refused him the hire of its hall for the meetings.

The National Socialist League was less anti-Semitic than the BUF, though this was more for tactical than ideological reasons. The League saw itself as more radical and socialistic than he BUF. Joyce published a book *National Socialism Now*, which argued that the League aimed to answer "the revolutionary yearning of the people to cast off gross, sordid, democratic materialism without having to put on the shackles of Marxist materialism, which would be identical with the chains cast off." The League sought to distinguish itself from Mosley's BUF: "Communists and imitative Fascism have served to show the futility of attempting to buy the support of the people with foreign gold." Patriotically British, the League nevertheless urged friendship with Germany – "if Germany needs help in hurling Orientals back to the Orient, she is entitled to receive it from those who prefer white manhood and government to any other." Joyce argued for a Keynesian expansion of the economy within a planned and protectionist framework, as had Mosley in his 1931 memorandum before he had left the Labour Party. Joyce claimed that "Our National Socialist League is openly and unashamedly imperialist."

In September 1938, Joyce and Beckett joined Viscount Lymington in establishing the British Council Against European Commitments, the main objective of which was to avoid a war against Germany.

In December 1938, Beckett and Lymington started another newspaper the *New Pioneer*, which included contributions from A K Chesterton (who had also left the BUF), John Scanlon and Philip Mairet, the Christian socialist editor of *the New England Weekly*, and former associate of the sociologist and planner Patrick Geddes and Alfred Orage of the *New Era* journal. Lymington was editor. Both Lymington and Mairet had been supporters of C H Douglas's Social Credit party, which had argued for financial reform and had had an anti-Semitic tone. The *New Pioneer* argued for peace with Germany and was positive about Hitler's achievements. It also argued that wealthier Jews should support poorer Jews to emigrate to Palestine. It carried on publication till January 1940.

By early 1939, the National Socialist League was effectively defunct. Beckett split with Joyce on the issue of their attitude to Germany. While Beckett wanted to avoid war, Joyce said he would support the Nazis in any conflict with Great Britain. Beckett, with the support of Lymington and the Marquess of Tavistock established a new political organisation – the British People's Party. He was joined by Ben Greene, a former Labour Party activist, and cousin of the writer Graham Greene. Beckett was leader, Tavistock became chairman, Ben Greene became treasurer. The party had two main policy objectives – attacking usury (in effect adopting the economic reform proposals of the Social Credit Party), and opposing war with Germany. The party therefore attracted pacifists, including some members of Canon Dick Shepherd's Peace Pledge Union and the former suffragette and ecclesiastical feminist, Maude Royden.

The BPP stood in the Hythe by-election in July 1939. Their candidate was H St John Philby, ex-diplomat, Arabian explorer, Muslim convert, and, incidentally, the father of Kim Philby (who at the time was using a role at the Anglo-German Association and public support for the Francoists in Spain as a cover for his Soviet espionage). During the campaign, the BPP published a pamphlet entitled *Alien Money Power in Great Britain*. Maude Royden came to speak for Philby and he was helped by some members of the Peace Pledge Union. Philby polled only 576 votes and lost his deposit and the election apparently cost him £1,200. He was to be interned during the war. He claimed that he was standing on the sole issue of opposition to the anticipated war. In the early months of the war, Beckett sought to collaborate with other anti-war groups. He was prominent in the British Council for a Christian Settlement in Europe (BCCSE), which sought to involve pacifists in the Peace Pledge Union, the Fellowship of Reconciliation and various social credit, co-operative and religious organisations. Beckett was secretary and Tavistock was chairman. The group's first public meeting was at Conway Hall in Red Lion Square on 14th October. Beckett and Greene both spoke. It was reported that Beckett said that

he liked Hitler and as an ex-serviceman was now a conscientious objector – He could not take part in this preposterous lunacy'. The *Sunday Express* reported that " About a hundred and fifty Britons met in London yesterday 'to bring peace to the world'. They praised Hitler. They reviled the British government. They ended by sending a resolution to Mr Chamberlain calling on him to start peace negotiations." Greene had " described British policy as one of bluff and treachery, sneered at those who said we could not trust Hitler, declared that Hitler had been justified in all he had done, and used such phrases as ' those of us who admire him'" According to the *Sunday Express*, one member of the audience "referred to Christ having thrown the money changers out of the Temple, and compared this with Hitler having thrown the Jews out of Germany." After the meeting, Maude Royden wrote to the *Sunday Express* to disassociate herself from these views.

The group produced a *Statement on the European Situation*, which was signed by Tavistock, Beckett, Greene and other right-wingers but also by PPU members including Rev Donald Soper, Eric Gill and Laurence Houseman. The pacifist ILP MP and former colleague of Beckett, John McGovern, who was to chair the ILP for most of the war, also collaborated with the group. McGovern was an enthusiastic supporter of Frank Buchman's Moral Rearmament movement, which sought to deepen the spiritual life of its members. In December 1939, Beckett and Greene published a pamphlet *The Truth about this War*, which was also, somewhat provocatively, published in German. In March, Beckett spoke at a BCCSE meeting at the Holborn Hall and then In April 1940, chaired a large peace meeting in the Kingsway Hall, with speakers including the ILP's John McGovern, the BUF's Hugh Ross Williamson and Lord Tavistock who presented his peace plan. McGovern praised Hitler. Williamson attacked Churchill. Objectors were apparently 'thrown out of the hall with the utmost brutality and cowardice, by a gang of unpleasant -looking stewards', somewhat ironic given this was billed as a 'peace meeting'.

In August 1939, on the cusp of the outbreak of the World War II, William Joyce and his wife Margaret, who had also been a member of the BUF, had fled to Germany to support the Nazis, after deciding not to flee to the Irish Free State, believing they would be arrested for treason. Both of the Joyces were to broadcast Nazi propaganda from Berlin, with William Joyce becoming known as Lord Haw-Haw. They were captured at the end of the war. Beckett, anti-war but not pro-Nazi, had in contrast stayed in Britain. However in early 1940, when it appeared that the Germans might win the war, with Joyce broadcasting from Berlin, Beckett drew up a possible cabinet who would no doubt cooperate with the Nazis, with Tavistock as Prime Minister, the ILP's Jimmy Maxton as foreign secretary, Mosley as Lord President of the Council, and John McGovern as Minister of Information. MI5

thought the list had been sent to Germany. In May 1940, Beckett was interned in Brixton prison, as were Mosley and Greene. Tavistock was not interned. Beckett was later transferred to Stafford and then to the Isle of Man

Beckett was released in October 1943. He was required to reside at least 25 miles from London until the war ended. He stayed with Robert Forgan and then was given accommodation by Tavistock, who had become Duke of Bedford. In early 1945, with Tavistock's help, he revived the British Peoples Party. He was joined by Colin Jordan, who was later to found the British National Party.

Beckett was prominent in the unsuccessful campaign to save his former colleague, William Joyce, from execution as a traitor. Joyce was executed in January 1946. In 1946, the British Peoples' Party stood candidates in the London County Council elections in Peckham and Camberwell North, though not in Dulwich. The candidates got only a few hundred votes. The party also contested the Combined English Universities by-election in March 1946, its candidate, Gerard Oddie, polling only 239 votes. The party officially disbanded in 1954, following the death of Bedford.

Beckett, without an income or aristocratic sponsorship, started to publish a fortnightly stock market letter, *Advice and Information*, to small investors, using his networks. Market tips were mixed with political comment. He had developed an interest in religion and became a Roman Catholic. On his death in December 1964, he received a requiem mass in the Brompton Oratory. Beckett and his third wife, Anne Cudmore, who had met Beckett in the BUF, had a son Francis, who became a journalist and political biographer, and wrote two versions of a biography of his father.

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9. Communists

EDWARD UPWARD: Communist School Teacher in Dulwich

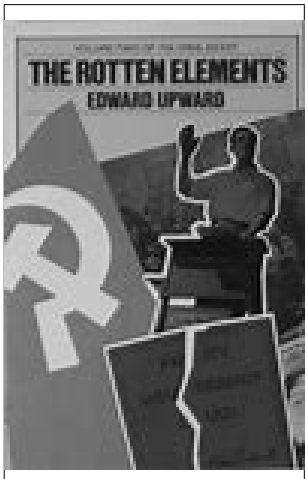
Upward was a communist novelist and school teacher, who lived at 154 Turney Road between 1945 and 1961 and taught at Alleyn's school. Upward wrote a trilogy – *The Spiral Ascent*, a novelised autobiography of his life in the Communist Party from the 1930's to the 1950's in three volumes: *In the Thirties, The Rotten Elements* and *No Home but the Struggle.* Upward lived to the age of 105. He was one of the group of public school intellectual communists -never much of an activist and certainly not a militant street-fighter.

Upward was born in Romford, son of a doctor, the family originating in the Isle of Wight. Educated at Repton school where he met Christopher Isherwood. Upward apparently refused to join the cadet corps or to be confirmed. He then went to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he read history. He wanted to be a poet, winning a poetry prize for a poem' Buddha'. He however gave up poetry when his friend, WH Auden, told him it was no good. At college, he collaborated with Isherwood, who was also at Corpus Christi, on a number of juvenile fantasy writings, centring on a fictional village of Mortmere, where 'all accepted moral and social values were turned upside down and every kind of extravagant behaviour was possible and usual'. Isherwood referred to Upward as 'a natural anarchist – a born romantic revolutionary'. Isherwood was sent down from college for defacing his exam papers with jokes and limericks.

In 1932, Upward travelled to the Soviet Union with the Society for Cultural Relations and joined the Communist Party in Bethnal Green, having canvassed for the Party in the general election the previous year. His wife, Hilda Perceval, whom he married in 1936, had joined earlier. She came from a relatively poor background and

Young Edward Upward

had come to left-wing politics after her father, a clerk, died when she was 12 years old. Her first job was as a teacher in Old Kent Road. Upward first worked as a private tutor in Cornwall and then had temporary teaching positions in a series of private schools, while trying to write a novel based on his parent's golf club in Essex – a novel which was never finished. In 1932, he was appointed to teach English at Alleyn's, staying there until his retirement in 1961, becoming Head of English and a housemaster.

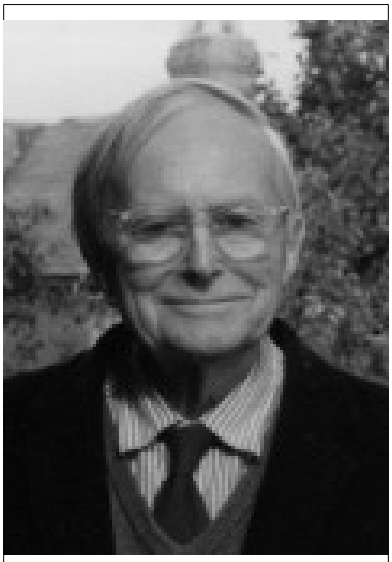


The Rotten Elements

In the late 1930's Upward wrote a series of short stories, and the novel *Journey to the Border*, which one critic commented were 'brilliant but flawed attempts to reconcile the counter-claims of political commitment and personal expression'. By the late 1930's, Upward had lost any romantic anarchistic tendencies and become a somewhat doctrinaire communist as demonstrated in his essay on *Sketch for a Marxist Interpretation in Literature*, he contributed to Cecil Day Lewis' 1937 symposium *The Mind in Chains: Socialism and the Cultural Revolution*. Upward wrote that unless a writer 'has in his everyday life taken the side of the workers, he cannot, no matter how talented he might be, write a good book'. Upward however would not appear to have had much actual contact with the workers, either through his teaching role or through the Camberwell and Dulwich Village branches of the Communist Party, which were dominated by other middle-class intellectuals, as recorded in his autobiographical trilogy. Unfortunately, while Upward records real events – he subtitled the second volume – a novel of facts-, he changed the names of his comrades, so it is not possible to identify individual Dulwich communists. Upward published nothing between 1942 and 1961.

Before the war, Upward contributed to the journal of the Teachers Anti-War Movement, the *Ploughshare.* During the war when Alleyn's was evacuated to Bexley and then to Cleveleys near Blackpool, Upward served in the Home Guard. Upward was increasingly dis-illusioned with the Communist Party, but this was not over the German-Soviet Pact of 1939 or over the invasion of Hungary of 1956 or of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Upward and his wife, Hilda, left the party as early as 1948, criticising the party for being reformist as the Communist Party leader, Harry Pollitt, argued in his book *Looking Ahead*, sought to bring the Party into supporting the Labour Party. Upward's breach with the Communist Party led him to a breakdown, as chronicled in his autobiographical trilogy. The Communist Party was to lose its only post-war MPs, Phil Piratin and William Gallagher in 1950, with subsequent Communist influence largely limited to the trade union movement. The Dulwich

Village Communist Party appears to have been most active in the years after the Upwards had resigned. The Upwards did however support CND, the campaign against the Vietnam war and the anti-apartheid movement, and one commentary has Edward Upward as joining an un-named independent socialist group.



An Older Upward

Upward's dilemma was trying to write readable novels and short stories while at the same time holding to his communist principles. Alleyn's school seems to have been tolerant of their Communist teacher as both head of English and housemaster, clearly not too concerned that he would corrupt their sixth formers and turn them all into soviet agents or communist militants. In many ways, it would appear that Upward was a fairly traditional English teacher. Despite attending Dulwich village branch communist meetings and holding meetings of the Communist writers' group in his house and being active in the teachers' union, he does not appear to have been active politically locally. There is no evidence that Upward or other Dulwich communists actively challenged the activity of Mosley's British Union of Fascists, which was strong in the Dulwich and included William Joyce (Lord Haw Haw) and his brother Quentin.

On retirement from teaching in 1961, Upward and his wife moved to the Ise of Wight to live in his parents' former house. They had two children – Christopher, named after Isherwood, and Katherine, named after Katherine Mansfield. In 1987, Upward published a new set of short stories -*The Night Walk* and in 1994, when he was 90, a further set – *The Unmentionable Man*, as well as republishing some of his earlier works, including the Mortmere stories, and then three further collections between 1997 and 2003, with recollections of Auden and Isherwood. In 2004, Upward moved to Pontefract, his wife having died in 1995. Upward was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature just before his 102nd birthday. He died in 2009, aged 105, the last survivor of the 1930's generation of communist writers. He left his papers to the British Library.

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GEORGE THOMSON: Classical Scholar and Communist committee man

Thomson was born at 2 Allison Grove in 1903, a few doors away from the fascist, William Joyce, Lord Haw Haw. His father was a chartered accountant. Educated at Dulwich prep school and then Dulwich college, he studied classics at King's College, Cambridge, being elected to a fellowship in 1927. He was a member of the select Cambridge society, the Apostles, to which he was introduced by his friend, the mathematician, Alister Watson, who was secretary of the Apostles as well as being a member of the Communist Party.

George Thomson

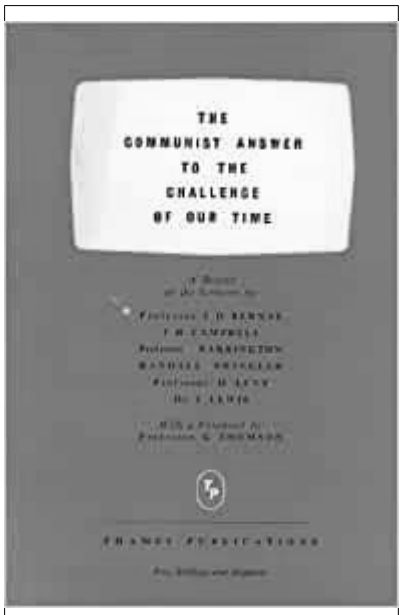
Thomson's maternal grandfather was an Ulster protestant who had been an Irish nationalist and his mother had supported Irish independence. Thomson developed an interest In the Irish language, which he learnt. He made a number of visits to the Blasket islands off the south west coast of Ireland. Where the islanders still lived a pre-capitalist lifestyle and became interested in Irish poetry. He then translated Plato, Euripides, Aeschylus and the book of Common Prayer into Irish as well as editing the memoir of growing up in the Blaskets by his friend, Muiria O'Sullivan.

In 1931, Thomson moved to Ireland to become a lecturer in classics at Galway university, where he taught his subject in the Irish language. His aim was to use Greek plays to demonstrate the values they were losing to the evils of industrialised life. Despite support from the Irish finance minister, there was more limited local support for his approach and in 1934, Thomson returned to his Cambridge fellowship.

Thomson joined the Communist Party in 1936, apparently influenced by his Cambridge friend, Alistair Watson as well as by his fellow academic, Roy Pascal, who wrote a book on the Nazi dictatorship as early as 1934. Thomson's sister-in-law Frida Knight was a communist activist. Thomson was married to Frida's sister, Katharine. In 1965, Watson, who had been head of the Submarine Detection research section of the admiralty, was identified by the soviet agent Anthony Blunt in his confession, was to admit to MI5 that he had met KGB officers but denied passing secrets to them. Thomson’s wife Katharine, whom he married in 1934 was a communist as were Katharine's sisters Frida and Margaret. Katharine had been a student of piano in Germany at the Leipzig conservatoire where she had witnessed Nazi jackboots in the streets. In Birmingham, Katharine joined the Birmingham Orpheus Choral Society. Katharine later became conductor of the choir, which was renamed the Birmingham Clarion Singers. Katharine was a member of the

Communist Party's Cultural committee and wrote for the Party's music group bulletin, Music and Life in the 1950's. In 1977 she wrote a book *The Masonic Threat in Mozart*. She was one of only two women members on the Birmingham Trades Council.

In 1937, Thomson was appointed Professor of Greek at Birmingham University, a post he held until 1970. He managed to combine classical scholarship, publishing a series of books on Greek history, drama and poetry, with political activity. Thomson became a leading figure in the Birmingham Communist Party. He also gave lectures to various factory groups. He joined the party's National Executive committee in 1944, serving till at least 1956. He sat on the National Cultural Committee, chaired the Party's Universities staff group and was also on the council of the Marx Memorial Library.



Thomson pamphlet

In 1947, the Communist Party published a series of lectures by intellectuals given to the London district. Thomson contributed the introduction to the book – *the Communist Answer to the Challenge of Our Time.* Contributors included J D Bernal, Hyman Levy, J R Campbell and Randall Swinger. Thomson wrote "The time is not far hence when the exploitation of man by man will be a thing of the past. Then, free to devote all his energies to the enrichment of cultural and spiritual life, the individual will be really free." Thomson chaired a Communist Party cultural conference in 1952. In his contribution, he focused on the need to protect the nation's heritage of writers such as Shakespeare, Chaucer and Burns from a bourgeois culture that was increasingly 'decadent, reactionary and cosmopolitan'. Thomson also published a book on Marxism and Poetry in 1945. Thomson was something of a traditionalist. In 1951, he voted against the Party's adoption of a new policy statement – *the British Road to Socialism* - on the grounds that it did not give sufficient prominence to the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

With the Sino-Soviet split, Thomson favoured the Chinese communists. In 1955, he spent six months at Peking University, where he studied the links between Greek and Chinese philosophy. As a member of the China Policy study group, he wrote three volumes as introductions to Marxism: *From Marx to Mao* (1972), *Capitalism and After* (1973) and the *Human Essence* (1974). Thomson died in Birmingham in February 1987. Katharine died in June 2006, shortly after her hundredth birthday.

MI5 only appear to have started monitoring Thomson's activities in 1940, although he had joined the Party some time earlier. They recorded his activity in a number of organisations – the Peace Pledge Union, the India League, the Russia Today Society, the British-Romanian Friendship association, the Birmingham Trades Council and even a campaign to support a Birmingham day nursery. They received reports from local special branch officers across the midlands of Thomson's lectures to a wide range of groups. MI5 intercepted his mail and certainly tapped phone calls to which he was a party. As MI5 had planted a recording device at the Communist Party's headquarters, they had transcripts of Executive Committee meetings in which Thomson participated as well as of other meetings, such as the Party's finance committee, of which Thomson was a member at one time.
One document in the files refers to Thomson recommending for membership of the Party's National Cultural Committee, his brother -in-law, Jonathan Knight, a bacteriologist living at 65 Alleyn Park Road, West Dulwich, on the basis that Knight had written a study of Diderot and was knowledgeable of French culture. The last document in the MI5 file is dated 1949, though the file records use as late as 1981.

George Derwent THOMSON was born on 19th August, 1903, and his National Registration number is QATA.154/4. He is a Master of Arts of Cambridge University and also of the University of Birmingham, where he has been Professor of Greek since 1937. He is reputed to be extremely learned and a complete master of his subject.

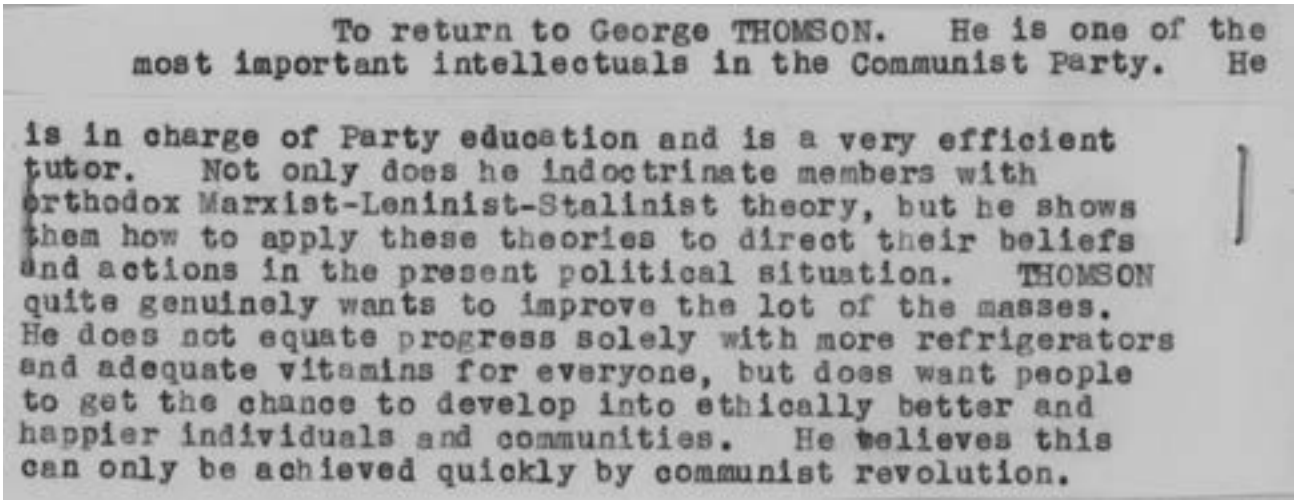
He is about 5'4" or 5" in height, very slim build, long gaunt face, sharpish nose and has a mop of darkish brown hair. He normally wears tweeds or a tweed coat and flannels, and has the appearance of a typical undergraduate.

It is understood that he is quite popular with his colleagues in the University as a man, but he is apt to be rather dogmatic in his political outlook and is constantly expressing definite left wing sentiments. He has been described as a typical wild Irishman - he is of Irish extraction - both in appearance and political out-look.

Report on Thomson by Birmingham Chief Constable in December 1943

"A Marxist leader in the 'Battle of Ideas', Professor George THOMSON, gave a brilliant outline of the dilemma in which bourgeois scientists and philosphers find themselves today. 'It is because their theory is divorced from practise' h declared. 'The ideological struggle is the class struggle as thought out in the minds of men.' He appealed to the British Marxists for keener dialectical thoug A grasp of dialectics was impossible without class consciousness - and it was impossible to become class-conscious without active participation in the strug of the working class.".

MI5 note on Thomson's 'Battle of Ideas speech' in February 1949



To return to George THOMSON. He is one of the most important intellectuals in the Communist Party. He is in charge of Party education and is a very efficient tutor. Not only does he indoctrinate members with orthodox Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist theory, but he shows them how to apply these theories to direct their beliefs and actions in the present political situation. THOMSON quite genuinely wants to improve the lot of the masses. He does not equate progress solely with more refrigerators and adequate vitamins for everyone, but does want people to get the chance to develop into ethically better and happier individuals and communities. He believes this can only be achieved quickly by communist revolution.

George THOMSON is becoming more and more rigid and dogmatic, forcing the members to conform to orthodoxy. THOMSON takes up a tolerant attitude to religion as subscribed to by the outer world, but he adopts an orthodox Leninist attitude to it inside the Party Group. He maintains that as Communism is based upon dialectical materialism it necessarily includes the belief in and the propagation of atheism, etc. He is a perfectly genuine believer in communism, and bases his policy on the theory of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin. THOMSON pursues the revolution because he sincerely believes it to be in the interests of the masses.

Report from a Communist meeting in Birmingham in 1949

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JONATHAN AND FRIDA KNIGHT: Free France and Communism

Jonathan and Frida Knight were both communists. In the late 1940's, they lived in 65 Alleyn Park. Frida was in 1949 joint secretary of the Dulwich Village branch of the Communist Party with Jean Shapiro.

Jonathan Knight, whose original name was Bert Cyril James Gabriel Knight, was a microbiologist. Born in 1904, he was educated at Reigate Grammar School and University College, London, graduating with a BSc and then an MSc in chemistry. He married Doris Kemp and worked at the London Hospital and then the Middlesex Hospital. During the Second World War, Knight worked at the Lister Institute and

the Wellcome laboratories. He was one of the founders of the Society of General Microbiology and in 1951 professor and head of the Department of Microbiology at Reading University.

Bert (Jonathan) Knight

In 1944, Knight and his first wife Doris Kemp (who appears also to have been a member of the Communist Party), whom he had married in 1929, divorced, having had three sons and two daughters, and he married Frideswide (Frida) Stewart. Frida was born in 1910, the daughter of Rev Hugh Fraser Stewart, theologian and scholar in French literature and dean of St John's college, Cambridge. Frida's mother had graduated with a first-class degree from Newham college. Frida learnt the piano and violin from a young age, but at the age of fourteen became ill and travelled to Europe, partly for health reasons and partly for her musical education. While in Frankfurt, she witnessed street clashes between Communists and Nazis, which she recounted shocked her into 'juvenile political awareness'. Returning to England, Frida enrolled at the Royal School of Music and then taught drama and music at the Manchester University settlement to local unemployed. She then became an extension lecturer in music and theatre in Hull. In 1935, she travelled to the Soviet Union on a British Drama League trip. She later organised a refugee relief committee for Spanish republicans and joined the Communist Party. She drove an ambulance from London to Murcia in Spain in 1937, helping refugee children. She also joined the Spanish republican press office, translating articles. Back in Britain, she organised fund-raising concerts for Basque refugee children. Frida's sister, Margaret, had married the classics professor and Communist, George Thomson in October 1934.

Frida Stewart Knight

In 1939, Frida was in France working with Spanish refugees when she enrolled as a student at the Sorbonne in Paris and decided to stay there in solidarity with both the French and the Spanish refugees, With the German occupation of Paris, Frida was imprisoned in Besancon in Caserne Vaubon and then in the Vittel internment camp for over a year but managed to escape to Marseilles in November 1941 and flee to England by way of Spain, Portugal and Ireland. with forged papers provided by the Resistance. She took with her a message to General De Gaulle in London, concealed in a cigarette packet. She then worked in London for a year with the Free French information department, as well as having a certificate for lecturing to troops, as a teacher of English to Norwegians, certificate

which was renewed in 1944. Frida then met Knight, presumably through communist circles. Frida then became at academic herself, first at Reading University, and from 1970 at Cambridge University.

Frida wrote a memoir based on her French adventures, *Dawn Escape*, which was published in 1943. In 1949, Frida was joint secretary of the Dulwich branch of the Communist Party, a branch which appears to have been newly formed, as previously the Knights had been members of the Camberwell branch. She travelled to China twice – in 1966 and again in 1973, the first trip involved travelling by the Trans-Siberia railway, arriving in Beijing just as the cultural revolution was starting. On her second visit, Frida attended a banquet to celebrate Women's Day, at which she was introduced to the Chinese premier, Chou en Lai. Frida's daughter, Sofka was teaching English in Shanghai and Frida helped with her book, *Window on Shanghai*, published in 1967. Frida became a member of the society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding.

In 1965, Frida wrote a series of articles on the French Resistance for *Marxism Today*, which were later in 1975, published as a book by Lawrence and Wishart. Frida's academic profession was as a musicologist, and she published a book on Beethoven. She translated plays and published musicological history and books on the late 18th century Cambridge unitarian and social reformer, Wiliam Frend, who was a friend of Joseph Priestley and a member of the radical London Corresponding Society and on the 18th century Manchester radical, Thomas Walker. She wrote a musical play '*A World to Gain'*, which was inspired by William Morris' pamphlet *Useful Work versus Useless Toil,* and told the story of the Lucas Aerospace combine established to make kidney machines instead of armaments. The play was performed by the Clarion singers at the Birmingham May Day festival in 1981. A novel *Teacher on Trial*, based on her own teaching experiences, was never published.

Bert Knight died in 1981. Frida continued to be politically active. Having moved from Dulwich to Cambridge, she helped to found the Cambridge Peace Council and was active in CND, organising a demonstration against cruse missile bases. She chaired her local *Morning Star* readers group. Frida chaired the Cambridge Cuba Solidarity Campaign and travelled to Cuba in 1992 to join the May Day parade in her wheelchair. She organised a campaign to send medical supplies to Cuba. She maintained her Communist Party membership until its dissolution in 1991 at which point, she became an honorary member of the Communist Party of Britain, rejecting the modernisers of the 'Democratic Left'. Frida died in October 1996, aged 85. Her memoirs - *Firing a Shot for Freedom*, were published in 2020.

The security service file on Frida Knight (then Stewart) opens in February 1940, though it also recorded earlier activities including Frida's visit to Russia in 1935. It may have been the fact that Frida's sister, Margaret, was an active Communist Party

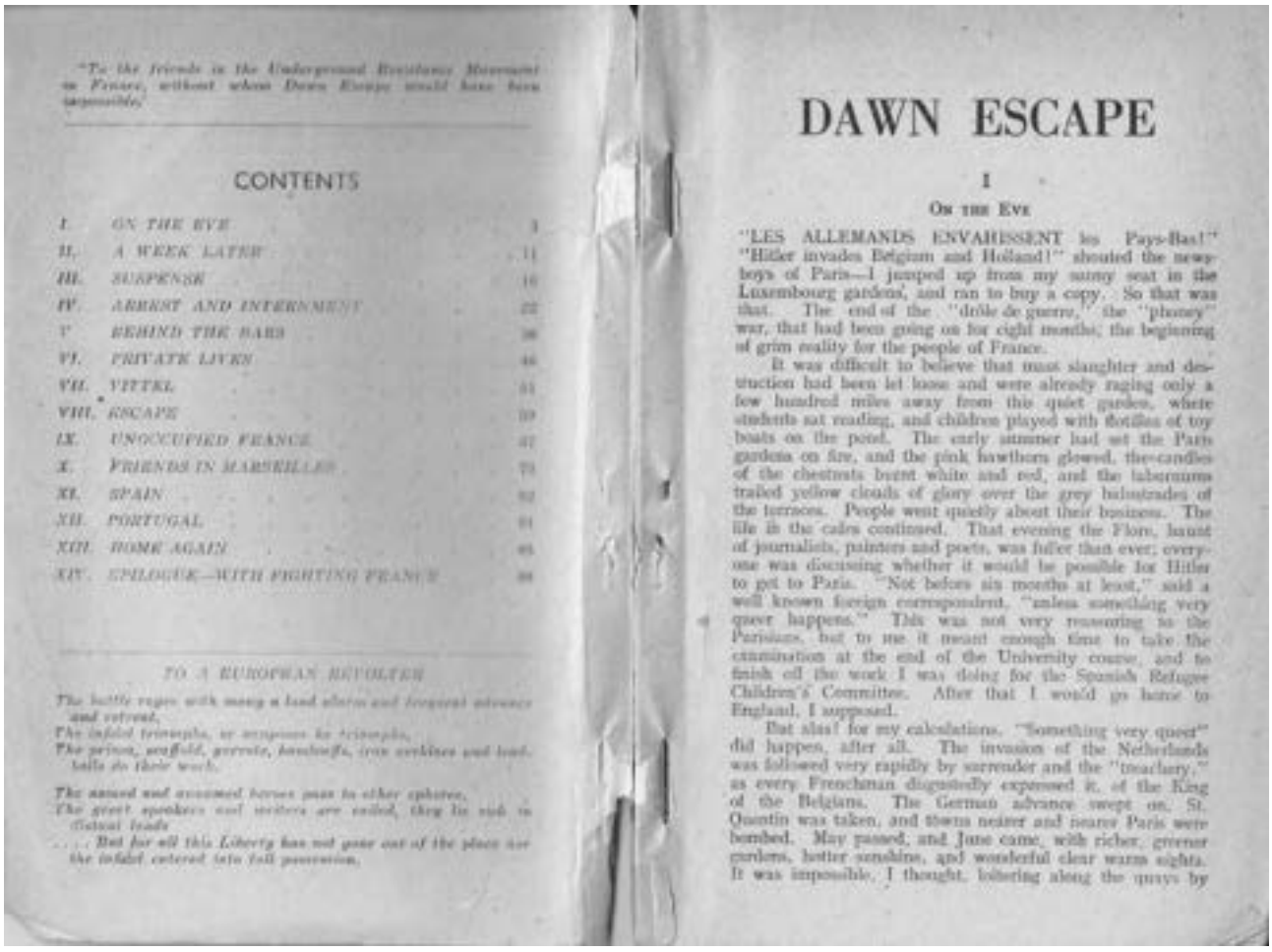
member or that her other sister, Katharine was married to leading Communist George Thomson that drew Frida to the attention of the security services. George Thomson and Margaret Stewart were both to have MI5 files, Margaret's dating from 1935, when she visited the Soviet Union. Frida's file opens by summarising her work with British Medical Aid to Spain and with refugees in Paris before being captured by the Germans.

Frida's false identity card

It is also noted that in September 1937 her sister, Margaret, who was sharing a flat with her at the time, contacted the communist Yvonne Knapp suggesting that Frida, who had just returned from Spain, should be approached as she was 'very enthusiastic There is a note on her involvement in the British Peace Council procession in 1938 when her car registration number was recorded. There is then a full report on a talk Frida gave at the Taylorian Institute in Oxford in May 1942 on her escape from France, in which she is reported as being left-wing but not explicitly promoting a Communist viewpoint. Frida was then noted to be working in Monsieur Briac's department at the London Free French Office, and the Free French security department in fact asked MI5 for a check on her. A Captain Beaumont of MI5 replied that while 'politically her views are of the left, we have nothing against her'. The file also has a record of a discussion by Communist party leaders including Harry Pollitt, Emile Burns and Andrew Rothstein in June 1943 about whether Frida Stewart could be involved in a project to increase communist penetration of the Free French office (the Communists were clearly critical of De Gaulle) and whether Frida was suitable to be warden of a proposed International Youth Centre. Emile Burns was not keen on involving Frida, preferring the role being given to Dorothy Woodman, who was Kingsley Martin's partner. There was confusion with Frida's sister Margaret, who was writing for the *Economist* and working with the Labour Research Department and had been secretary to the parliamentary committee on Spain. There was a suggestion that the Stewarts were too close to Labour and Liberal politicians. Margaret had been secretary to the Liberal MP, Wilfred Roberts, who had also been involved in Spanish relief and whom Frida had given as a reference in her application to renew her teaching certificate. After a relationship with Ian Mackay, industrial correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, Margaret married the *Daily Herald* journalist, Leslie Hunter, who was later to write an account of the struggle within the Labour Party between Nye Bevan and Hugh Gaitskell – *The Road to Brighton Pier*. In 1952, MI5 was to consider using Margaret, who was noted to be now moving in Labour circles, as an informant on her communist relatives and friends. However, after discussing with the

academic lawyer, Herbert Hart, who discussed it with his wife Jennifer, who was a close friend of Margaret, MI5 decided not to pursue this on the basis that Margaret might still be a communist. Margaret had been dismissed from a post at the Admiralty in 1942 because of her communist associations. One MI5 file note in October 1952 comments in relation to Margaret - "In appearance, she is a filthy slut."

MI5 could not find any record that Frida Stewart and Knight had got married though they were recorded as living together since 1944. It would appear that Frida changed her name from Stewart to Knight by deed poll. The file includes considerable communications between various government agencies in 1944 as to whether Frida's certificate allowing her to teach troops should be renewed in the light of her Communist Party membership. Despite some objections, the certificate was renewed.



"To the friends in the Underground Resistance Movement in France, without whom Dawn Escape would have been impossible."

CONTENTS

I. ON THE EVE 1
II. A WEEK LATER 11
III. SUSPENSE 16
IV. ARREST AND INTERNMENT 22
V. BEHIND THE BARS 36
VI. PRIVATE LIVES 46
VII. VITTEL 51
VIII. ESCAPE 59
IX. UNOCCUPIED FRANCE 67
X. FRIENDS IN MARSEILLES 73
XI. SPAIN 82
XII. PORTUGAL 91
XIII. HOME AGAIN 95
XIV. EPILOGUE—WITH FIGHTING FRANCE 98

TO A EUROPEAN REVOLTER

The battle rages with many a land alarm and frequent advance and retreat,
The infidel triumphs, or seemeth to triumph,
The prison, scaffold, garrote, handcuffs, iron necklace and lead balls do their work.

The unused and unnamed heroes pass to other spheres,
The great speakers and writers are exiled, they lie sick in distant lands
. . . But for all this Liberty has not gone out of the place nor the infidel entered into full possession.

DAWN ESCAPE

I

On the Eve

"LES ALLEMANDS ENVAHISSENT les Pays-Bas!" "Hitler invades Belgium and Holland!" shouted the newsboys of Paris—I jumped up from my sunny seat in the Luxembourg gardens, and ran to buy a copy. So that was that. The end of the "drôle de guerre," the "phoney" war, that had been going on for eight months; the beginning of grim reality for the people of France.

It was difficult to believe that mass slaughter and destruction had been let loose and were already raging only a few hundred miles away from this quiet garden, where students sat reading, and children played with flotillas of toy boats on the pond. The early summer had set the Paris gardens on fire, and the pink hawthorn glowed, the candles of the chestnuts burnt white and red, and the laburnums trailed yellow clouds of glory over the grey balustrades of the terraces. People went quietly about their business. The life in the cafés continued. That evening the Flore, haunt of journalists, painters and poets, was fuller than ever; everyone was discussing whether it would be possible for Hitler to get to Paris. "Not before six months at least," said a well known foreign correspondent, "unless something very queer happens." This was not very reassuring to the Parisians, but to me it meant enough time to take the examination at the end of the University course, and to finish off the work I was doing for the Spanish Refugee Children's Committee. After that I would go home to England, I supposed.

But alas! for my calculations. "Something very queer" did happen, after all. The invasion of the Netherlands was followed very rapidly by surrender and the "treachery," as every Frenchman disgustedly expressed it, of the King of the Belgians. The German advance swept on. St. Quentin was taken, and towns nearer and nearer Paris were bombed. May passed, and June came, with richer, greener gardens, hotter sunshine, and wonderful clear warm nights. It was impossible, I thought, loitering along the quays by

Frida Stewart: Dawn Escape (1943)

Frida, who now had a young baby, was at the time writing an article on French trade unions for Noreen Branson and had discussed with the communist publishing house, Lawrence and Wishart the possibility of a book on the subject. By April 1945, MI5 were recording that Frida now had two children – one of 3 months and one of 15 months. Frida was recorded as giving a political puppet show in the villages around

Cambridge and that she had also performed in *The Messiah*, which had required five-hour rehearsals. In May 1945, the MI5 records chief, Millicent Bagot circulated a briefing on Frida Stewart and her circle, including Penelope Brierly who had been interned with her in France and Andre Victor who had worked with her in Paris assisting Spanish republican refugees. The main addressee of the briefing is none other than MI5 officer, Kim Philby! Mi5 continued to intercept mail and tap phone conversations. One file note in July 1945 records Frida 'whooping with joy over the results of the election', which Labour had just won, before discussing who was going out to buy orange juice. Another file note records a discussion as to where the babies could be parked, so that the adults could 'go to the flicks'. Frida was also acting as an intermediary between the Communist party and the Labour MP and journalist, Tom Driberg, as Driberg's secretary, Rosemary Say (known as ‘Pat’), had been interned with Frida in France and escaped with her. Frida also had a discussion with Reuben Falber, an official at party headquarters, on the possibility of her working for the Party in a paid role, seemingly related to an international department bulletin, but this was not pursued. From the MI5 monitoring it is clear that Frida was well known to the Communist Party leadership and often approached in relation to communist contacts in France and Germany. At one point she sent an article on life in Dordogne in the 'red belt of rural France', for Bill Rust (who had been born in Camberwell and worked with Sylvia Pankhurst on *the Workers Dreadnought* during the First World War) for consideration for publication in the *Daily Worker*, which Rust edited. Frida had spent a few days in the area, returning for the first time since before the war, to find that the village of St Julien had a Communist mayor and a Communist dominated council.

WOMAN profile

Frida, the woman to fight Franco

Escaped From France

WOMAN

who dared and Hitler

Report on Frida's French Adventures

MI5 also recorded that in 1948 Frida was secretary of the British Council on German Democracy, taking over from Clare Yuille. The council organised a meeting at which the speaker was a German communist. It was noted that Frida's appointment had been approved by the Communist Party leadership, demonstrating that the Council was a Communist front organisation. In September 1949, Frida contributed an article on 'France in the Fight for Peace' in the Communist Party's *World News*

and Views. In July 1950, one unidentified source (given as B4C) told the MI5 investigator Maxwell Knight that Frida 'used to be used by the Party for missions abroad and other underground Party work'. In October 1950 it was however noted that 'with four children to leave behind' - too many for a babysitter, Frida could no longer attend meetings though she was still giving money for the cause ' it's needed more than ever will all this rearming of West Germany'. She had by now stepped down from her secretarial posts in the Dulwich Communist Party and the British German Democratic Council. This was the last entry in the MI5 file.

The file for Bert Knight, the file recording him as Jonathan Knight, was not opened until July 1943, with a report on his involvement in the Association of Scientific Workers, which was regarded as a Communist front organisation – he had just been elected to its executive committee and appointed as chairman of its international relations committee. The file note refers to the fact that he used 'Jonathan' as a nom-de-plume for his Communist activities. He also used the name 'Gabriel' for some of his contacts, causing MI5 considerable confusion. In 1949, it was noted that he was a friend of Allan Nunn May (the British Canada based atom bomb spy convicted in May 1946) - the Knights had apparently helped May to find somewhere to live in London in September 1945 as well as offering to put him up themselves at 5 Albany Terrace, off the Marylebone Road, where they were then living, an offer May declined. The Knights were also recorded as being active in the communist sponsored World Peace Council. Bert Knight was noted to be involved in the communist leading *Modern Quarterly* journal. Another file note from 1945 records that the Communist historians Dona Torr and Margaret Heinemann were annoyed that Knight had not organised a meeting of communist scientists to strength the scientific input into the *Modern Quarterly* as had been agreed. J D Bernal and Julian Huxley were asked to contribute instead.

MI5 were worried that Knight might be a spy and the defence establishment at Porton Down was warned not to let him have access to any sensitive material. It was noted that Knight had joined the Communist Party as early as 1930 and that he was a member of the Communist Party's national science bureau and its science group known as the Engels society. He had been a member of the Camberwell branch of the Communist Party in 1947, and of the Dulwich Village branch in 1950. It was noted that while there was no record of Knight being politically active in Reading, where he was now a professor, or trying to convert his reading students to communism, but that Frida had been spotted handing out communist leaflets in the town. Knight's correspondence at his Reading address was intercepted. This included correspondence with the communist writer and historian, Margot Heinemann, about gardening and correspondence with a Czech scientist – Knight had lectured in

Prague. One file note has Knight offering the communist historian Noreen Branson a spare ticket to see Britten's *Peter Grimes* as Frida was in Cambridge and unable to go. Telephone calls were also being monitored, for example conversations with the communist scientist, J D Bernal. In 1950, Knight is recorded as speaking at the Marx Memorial Library on J D Bernal's book on the 'Freedom of Necessity'. The bugging of Communist Party headquarters recorded a meeting between Knight and the Communist Party official, Bob Stewart, to discuss contacts in Prague. The MI5 file includes copy a Knight's accident insurance for the visit. Knight was also recorded as being involved in the Sigerist society, a Marxist medical society named after the Swiss medical sociologist and historian, Henry E Sigerist. In April 1949, Knight gave a talk to the society on 'Some Aspects of Bacterial Metabolism'. The file appears to have been closed in 1952, with MI5 coming to the conclusion that Knight was not spying.

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Graham Stevenson: Communist biographies website: Frida Knight
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Stewart, Frida *Dawn Escape* (1943)
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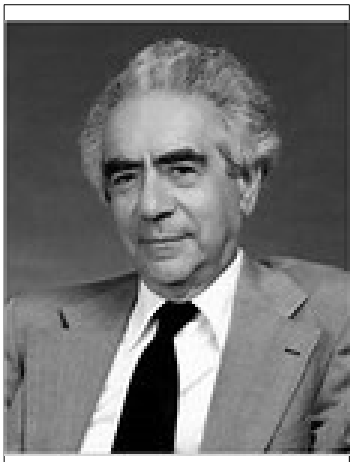
JEAN AND MONTE SHAPIRO: Communism and Self-Help

Jean Shapiro was a feminist journalist, who was at one time joint secretary of the Dulwich Village branch of the Communist Party. She may have lived at 56 Beckwith Road, as that address was used for the Communist Party branch. Born Jean Clarke in Carshalton in 1916, and educated at Commonweal Lodge school in Purley, she took a journalism course at University College London. Her first job was sub-editing the war memoirs of Prime Minister, David Lloyd George. She then wrote for *Farmer's Home*, which was the women's supplement to *Farmer and Stockbreeder*. She became family editor of *Good Housekeeping*, answering readers' letters. She married fellow journalist, Stewart Farrar

In the 1930's, inspired by the Spanish republicans, Clarke, joined the Communist Party. Farrar was also a member, writing for the *Daily Worker* and *Soviet Weekly*. Clarke and Farrar had two children. The first child, a girl, had spina bifida, and was taken away from the mother by the doctor. The baby was apparently left unfed and died, the mother, a non-believer, being pressurised into allowing the baby to be

christened. Apparently the doctor told Jean "Don't worry, you've got twenty more childbearing years before you, you'll be OK".

The marriage to Farrar broke down during the war, Farrar having had an affair with his secretary, and Jean fell in love with another communist, a Jewish airman called Monte Shapiro. Shapiro was a South African and had psychology degrees from Rhodes University and Cambridge University. In 1938, he had been secretary of the British Youth Peace Assembly and in 1940 in a Tenants Defence League. He had been under observation by MI5 since 1937. He volunteered for the RAF and was a navigator and bomb-aimer. He had been shot down over the Netherlands in 1943 and badly injured. He was in a prisoner of war camp and released in 1944. The couple married and had two children. Monte Shapiro became a clinical psychologist, working at the Institute of Psychiatry and introducing a new training programme at the Maudsley hospital. He was a colleague of Hans Eysenck though had a different approach. He was remembered as being' dogmatically opposed to dogma', arguing 'Behaviour therapy good; Psychoanalysis bad'. Jean Shapiro refurbished an old building as a nursery for working mothers. She also taught while bringing up her two children and also contributed to the *Daily Worker*, writing mainly on 'women's issues'.

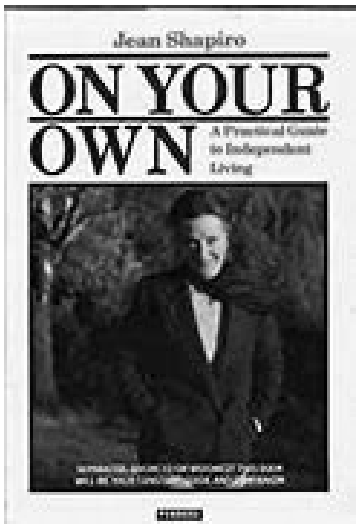


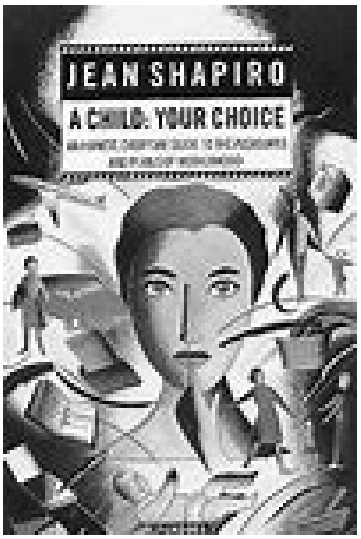
Monte Shapiro

In April 1949, the Dulwich branch of the Communist Party issued , under the names of Jean Shapiro and Frida Knight as joint secretaries, a statement criticising the Labour government's foreign policy for its opposition to the Soviet Union, arguing that the main threat to world peace came from the Western nations, led by the US and Britain, who had agreed the Atlantic Pact as the basis for the founding of NATO – the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. This was sent to political parties, churches and other organisations in the Dulwich area as well as to other local Communist party branches, with a copy and a covering letter to John Mahon, secretary of the London district of the Communist Party. A deputation to see Major Vernon, the Labour MP for Dulwich on 11th April had been arranged, and it was expected that with the other two Communist Party branches in the constituency, some thirty or so would attend. The delegation was to be followed by a public meeting on 'Do we support the Atlantic Pact?, the presumed answer being in the negative,, with the election of delegates to the forthcoming Peace congress in Paris. Shapiro hoped that the initiative would be the beginning of ' a broad front of all people of goodwill united for peace'. She expected that the statement would 'cause a good deal of interest and discussion. That is what we want'.

In her later years Jean Shapiro became an influential voice for feminism, using her earlier experience; her most important work being `*Ourselves, Growing Older'* (1989). She also wrote `*On Your Own'* (1985) a guide for separated, divorced and widowed women – which offered advice on coping with everything from a leaky roof to a new relationship – and `*Get The Best Out Of The Rest Of Your Life'* (1990). Jean Shapiro later became involved with the University of the Third Age in Bristol, where she ran a non-fiction writing group

Both the Shapiros left the Communist Party in 1956 after Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. Monte died in 2000. Jean in 2005. Her first husband, Stewart Farrar, having written novels and film scripts, became a leading advocate for the pagan Wicca religion.

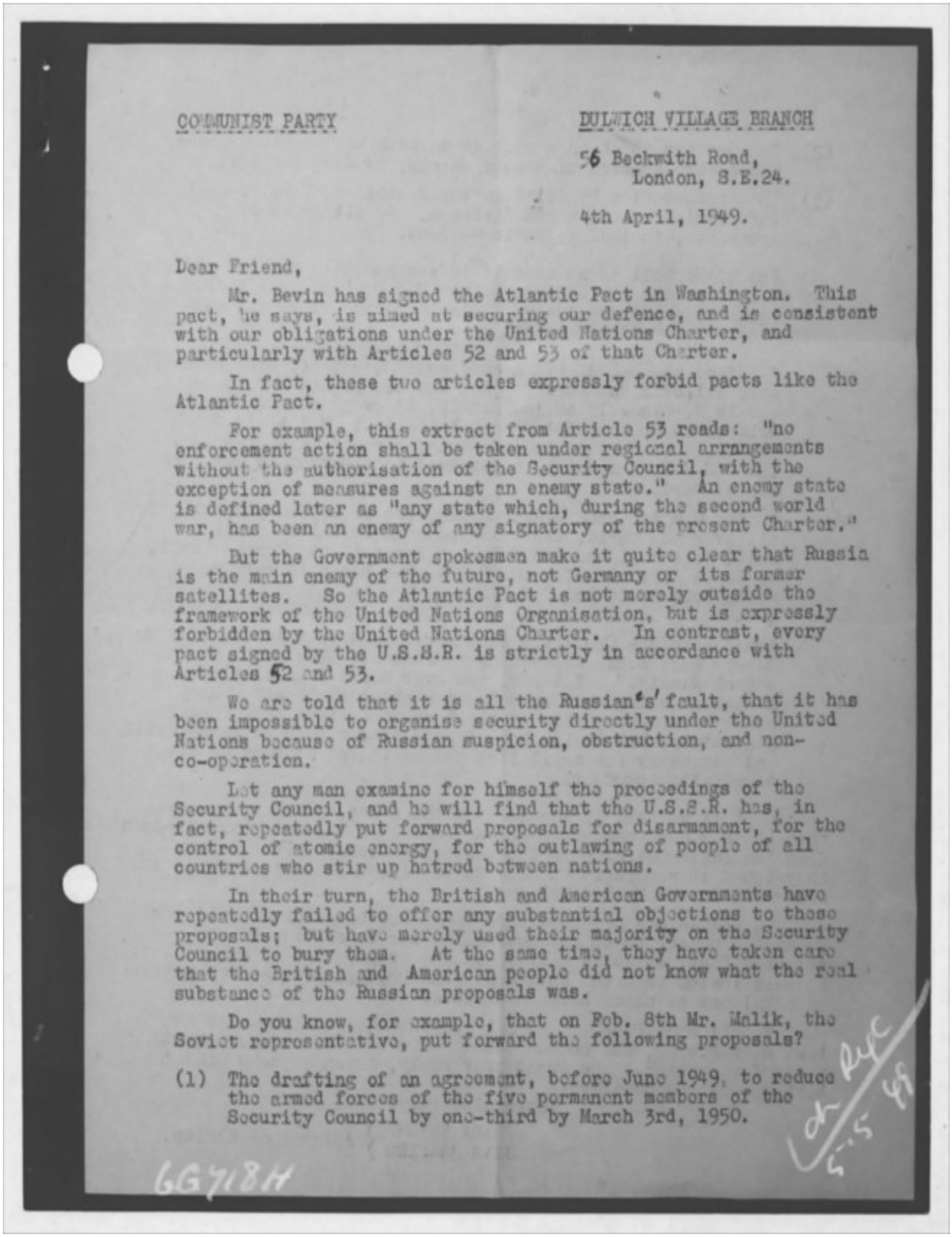




Source:

Obituary for Monte Shapiro in the Guardian by Stephen Morley 2 May 2000
Obituary for Jean Shapiro in the Guardian by Jean Nicholls. 19 May 2005
Graham Stevenson: Communist Biographies website. Entries for Jean Shapiro and Monte Shapiro
National Archives. MI5 File on Monte Shapiro KV2/4039; MI5 file on Frida Knight KV 22374-1

Dulwich Communist Party statement on Labour Government's Foreign Policy April 1949



COMMUNIST PARTY

DULWICH VILLAGE BRANCH

56 Beckwith Road,
London, S.E.24.

4th April, 1949.

Dear Friend,

Mr. Bevin has signed the Atlantic Pact in Washington. This pact, he says, is aimed at securing our defence, and is consistent with our obligations under the United Nations Charter, and particularly with Articles 52 and 53 of that Charter.

In fact, these two articles expressly forbid pacts like the Atlantic Pact.

For example, this extract from Article 53 reads: "no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements without the authorisation of the Security Council, with the exception of measures against an enemy state." An enemy state is defined later as "any state which, during the second world war, has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter."

But the Government spokesmen make it quite clear that Russia is the main enemy of the future, not Germany or its former satellites. So the Atlantic Pact is not merely outside the framework of the United Nations Organisation, but is expressly forbidden by the United Nations Charter. In contrast, every pact signed by the U.S.S.R. is strictly in accordance with Articles 52 and 53.

We are told that it is all the Russian's fault, that it has been impossible to organise security directly under the United Nations because of Russian suspicion, obstruction, and non-co-operation.

Let any man examine for himself the proceedings of the Security Council, and he will find that the U.S.S.R. has, in fact, repeatedly put forward proposals for disarmament, for the control of atomic energy, for the outlawing of people of all countries who stir up hatred between nations.

In their turn, the British and American Governments have repeatedly failed to offer any substantial objections to these proposals; but have merely used their majority on the Security Council to bury them. At the same time, they have taken care that the British and American people did not know what the real substance of the Russian proposals was.

Do you know, for example, that on Feb. 8th Mr. Malik, the Soviet representative, put forward the following proposals?

(1) The drafting of an agreement, before June 1949, to reduce the armed forces of the five permanent members of the Security Council by one-third by March 3rd, 1950.

6G/18H

(2) The drawing up of an agreement to prohibit atomic weapons, and secure control of atomic energy, by June 1st 1949.

(3) The presentation by all Security Council members of full information on their armed forces, and all types of armaments, including atomic weapons.

You might well argue that it is not possible for the ordinary man to examine the proceedings of the U.N.O., and that therefore the argument is not conclusive. In that case, here are some facts that are available to all of us:

* Since the end of the second world war there have been wars all over the world. The Western powers have been involved, directly or indirectly, in every one of them. Britain in Greece, Malaya and Palestine; U.S.A. in China and Greece; Holland in Indonesia; France in Indo-China. The U.S.S.R. has not been involved in fighting in any part of the world.

* The U.S.A. has acquired hundreds of military bases all over the world, including some in Britain. What would we say if the U.S.S.R. had bases in the Panama Canal, or South Africa? Yet the U.S.A. has bases in Turkey, which borders on the U.S.S.R.

* Gen. Bradley, U.S. Chief of Staff, declared to the Senate Armed Services Committee last April that Britain and Western Europe must serve America as a "foothold from which we can attack Russia." Yet have you ever heard of a similar statement being made by a Russian about the West? Many other prominent people of the Western Nations make warlike statements, but Stalin has often declared that it is possible and necessary for capitalist and socialist nations to live peacefully together.

We believe that if you look at the facts, you have to agree that the U.S.S.R. threatens no one, and that the main threat comes from the ruling circles of the Western nations. That is why they found it necessary to draw up the Atlantic Pact, outside the framework of the United Nations.

We Communists say that there must not be a third world war. We must demonstrate to the Government our opposition to the Atlantic Pact, which is a stage in the preparation of such a war. We must insist that the United Nations Organisation be strengthened as a bulwark of peace between nations.

We all want Peace. We ask you to consult with us on the best measures we, the common people, can take to ensure a lasting peace for mankind. We await your reply, which we hope will be both speedy and positive.

Yours sincerely,

FRIDA KNIGHT
JEAN SHAFIRO } Joint Secretaries.

6GY18.H

10. Post-war Labour

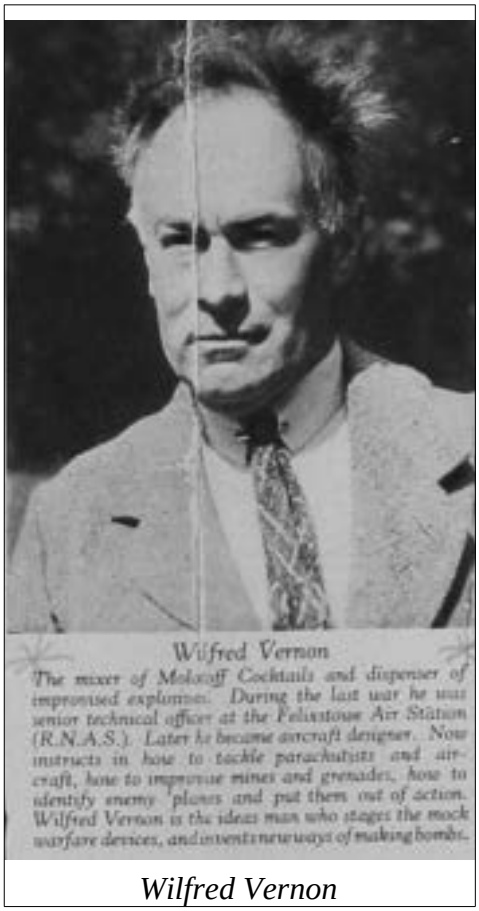
WILFRED VERNON: MP and Spy

Wilfred Vernon was MP for Dulwich between 1945 and 1951- the first Labour candidate to be elected for the constituency. He was also a Soviet agent, in that he provided confidential documents to the Soviets, though he was never publicly exposed. In searching for information on Vernon, who gets only passing mentions in books on the post-war Labour Party, I discovered that four volumes of MI5 files on Vernon were publicly available.

Vernon, who was born in October 1882 and was educated at the Stationers' Company Foundation School in Hornsey and then at the City and Guilds Technical College in City Road, London, had worked in electrical and mechanical engineering before the First World War. With the outbreak of war, he joined the Royal Naval Air Force as an engineering officer and was apparently involved in the development of flying boats. He was promoted to the rank of squadron commander and was demobilised in 1919 with the rank of Major, a title he used for the rest of his life. He worked for a private aircraft company before joining the inspection department of the Air Ministry in 1924, then transferring to the Royal Aircraft Establishment in Farnborough in 1925 as a technical officer grade II until 1937.

Vernon appears to have been politically active from 1921 and was a member of the League of Nations Union. In 1931 he set up an informal political study circle in Farnborough and joined the local Labour Party and Co-operative Society. The circle was known colloquially as the ABC club – 'Anarchists, Bolsheviks and Communists'. Vernon later became a member of the Socialist League, an organisation of left-wing Labour Party members initiated by Stafford Cripps in 1932. He was also involved in founding self-help groups for the unemployed in the Farnham area and wrote a self-published pamphlet on the' transition to socialism'. His activity clearly generated opposition from right-wingers and on 22nd August 1937, his house was burgled, and papers as well as money and various household items were stolen. The stolen papers included a pamphlet on 'Foreign Affairs in Parliament', published by the Union for Democratic Control of Foreign Policy, known as the 'UDC' and a pamphlet on 'the Communist Party'. Vernon claimed that the burglars were fascists, and apparently the burglars had a Fascist flag on their car windscreen. The burglars claimed that their intention was to expose Vernon as a 'prominent Communist worker'. One of the defendants, Ford, who was a soldier, alleged that Vernon had recruited him to distribute Communist propaganda among the troops in Aldershot, that he had been paid for this, and that Vernon had encouraged him to desert. The head of the Royal Aircraft Establishment however considered that the documents revealed in court

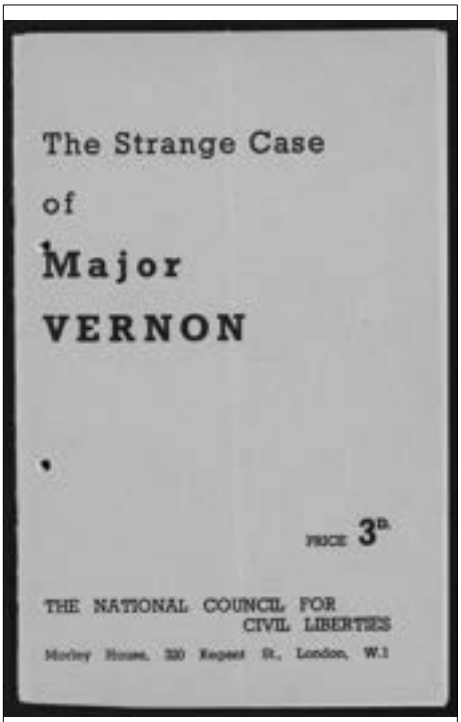
showed that Vernon 'had acted prejudicial to the service' and he was suspended from his job.


Wilfred Vernon
The mixer of Molotoff Cocktails and dispenser of improvised explosives. During the last war he was senior technical officer at the Felixstowe Air Station (R.N.A.S.). Later he became aircraft designer. Now instructs in how to tackle parachutists and aircraft, how to improvise mines and grenades, how to identify enemy planes and put them out of action. Wilfred Vernon is the ideas man who stages the mock warfare devices, and invents new ways of making bombs.

Wilfred Vernon

When the burglary case came to trial, the alleged burglars were represented by Mr Lawton, who was a parliamentary candidate for Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists (BUF). Although Vernon was the victim of the burglary, Lawton was able to cross-question Vernon on his politics and reading material. Vernon admitted to being active in the Farnham Labour Party but denied being a Communist. His reading material included a number of Left Book Club volumes. Ford claimed that the purpose of the burglary was to seize Vernon's 'Bolshevist literature' and take it to the police station at Scotland Yard. Ford and his three co-defendants were found to be guilty of theft. However, the stolen papers included some notes relating to Vernon's work at the Royal Aircraft Establishment including a note on the vulnerability of cities to air attack, notes on aircraft type and engines, the accuracy of bomb dropping from a 1934 exercise and notes on different types of bomb sights. Vernon was then prosecuted by the Air Ministry under the Official Secrets Act for 'retaining information' and not taking proper care of information'. He was defended by D N Pritt, the left-wing lawyer and Labour MP for Hammersmith North, whose earlier legal achievements included the defence of Vietnamese communist, Ho Chi Minh, from extradition by the French from Hong Kong. Pritt was known as a leading 'fellow traveller' and supporter of Stalin and Soviet Russia, standing as an Independent against the official Labour candidate in 1940 and being expelled from the Labour Party in 1949. It is claimed by the historian, Nigel West, that Vernon had told Pritt that he was giving information to the Russians. At the trial, Vernon, who had pleaded guilty to the charges of retaining and not taking care of secret information , was convicted on the charges and fined £40. He was not charged with espionage, though MI5 must surely have had some suspicions. Vernon was then dismissed from his job. An appeal for reinstatement by Vernon's union, the Institution of Professional Civil Servants, failed. In rejecting the appeal, the Government made reference to the policy of not employing communists in military facilities, referring to the recent dismissal of a number of communists from the Royal Arsenal Dockyard in Woolwich. The National Council for Civil Liberties published a pamphlet *The Strange Case of Major Vernon*, written by its secretary, Ronald Kidd, from which

much of the above information is taken. The pamphlet which included a preface by W J Brown, secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association (himself a former Labour MP, who had then briefly joined Mosley's New Party in 1931, before standing as an Independent candidate) who argued that Vernon had been dismissed for his political views, and this was contrary to the 'maintenance of the traditions of the service in respect of political liberty'. Given the strong links between the Communist Party and the NCCL at the time, in publishing the pamphlet, the NCCL must have had some idea that they were in effect defending the indefensible.



The NCCL pamphlet

The reference to the Dockyard dismissals hints that there was more to the story than the NCCL acknowledged. It is however perhaps not irrelevant that at the time the Government, police and security services regarded the NCCL as a communist front organisation. It was not until 1948 that MI5 was able to confirm that Vernon's storing of technical material at his home was not just a lapse of procedure. A former soviet agent, a naturalised German and released wartime internee called Ernest David Weiss, informed the security services that, using the pseudonym Walter Lock, he had in 1936 and 1937 collaborated with Vernon, and a Farnborough colleague, Frederick Stephen Meredith, to provide this information to a Soviet agent known as Harry II. Weiss had photographed the documents before returning them to Vernon and Meredith. Mi5 files also refer to another intermediary in the espionage, known as 'Pauline', but identified as Germaine Schneider, who is recorded in MI5 files as a courier for the 'Rote Kapelle' (Red Orchestra) German anti-Nazi communist group. . The meetings and the copying of material apparently happened on a regular basis from May 1936 until shortly after the burglary. After the conviction and losing his job, Vernon was in difficult financial circumstances and had asked Weiss for assistance, at which point he was paid £50. This would imply that there were no earlier payments and that Vernon had previously supplied the material for reasons of political conviction, as he was later to assert. Weiss claimed that he had no further contact with Vernon after late 1937.The documents copied include blueprints of the Avro-Anson aircraft and notes on its performance. On being interviewed in 1952 by MI5's top interrogator, Jim Skardon, (who had interrogated atom spy Klaus Fuchs and the Cambridge spy ring members, Philby, Blunt and Cairncross), Vernon admitted to having spied for Soviet Russia in 1936 and 1937, having been recruited by Meredith arguing that while he was not a Communist, he

had many friends who were and that at the time of the Popular Front (the campaign that left wingers should collaborate with communists) he felt entitled to take the action he did as the then Government was acting ' in a way inimical to the country's interests'. MI5 failed to discover the identity of Harry II, though he was evidently not English as he had a strong foreign accent. Weiss said he had first met Harry II in Switzerland in Autumn 1935. Weiss would take the collected information to Harry II in Paris, the last meeting being in July 1937. Meredith said he had met Harry II in Dublin in 1935, and that Harry II had introduced him to Weiss in the Spring of 1936.

Meredith had had an MI5 file since 1926, when he had been active in the General Strike. He was known as a left-wing agitator and one of a group of Soviet sympathisers at Farnborough. Recorded as having communicated with the Communist *Daily Worker* newspaper, he was not thought to be a Communist Party member, although known for his 'revolutionary talk'. He had left the Farnborough establishment in 1938 and had become chief designer at Smith's Aircraft Instruments in Cricklewood. He was known for communist sympathies, and was closely monitored by MI5 who were concerned that he might be involved in an espionage role.

In March 1939, Vernon was secretary of the Eastern Counties Food Ship for Spain campaign, based in Cambridge, and giving lectures to Left Book Clubs around the country. In January 1940, MI5 recorded that he was having lunch in Kensington with Ivan Popov, the second secretary of the Russian embassy. It was noted that he spoke Russian. A warrant to intercept his post was obtained - at the time he was living at The Hollies, Holly Park Crouch End. In March 1940, Lewisham police passed to special branch a report by Inspector Taylor on communists in Brixton and East Dulwich, naming Vernon as organiser of communist meetings in Beechdale Road, Brixton. Vernon was recorded as living at Pembroke Villas, Pembroke Square, SW8. His colleagues were G Henderson of 9 Fairmount Road, Brixton and L Peck of 112 Christchurch Road, Brixton, both of whom worked for the East Dulwich branch of the London and Manchester Assurance Company at 4 Melbourne Grove, East Dulwich. Len Peck was a member of the London Trades Council and a playwright, having written plays on the Means Test and the Chartist movement.

With the start of war, Vernon had attempted to rejoin the RAF, but this was blocked given his previous conviction. However in July 1940, Vernon joined the 'unofficial' Home Guard school at Osterley Park, where he was a colleague of Tom Wintringham, former leading Communist and later a co-leader of the Christian socialist Common Wealth Party, initiated by the former Liberal MP, Richard Acland. Hugh Purcell's biography of Wintringham, *The Last English Revolutionary*, refers to Vernon as a 'mixer of Molotov cocktails, inventor of new bombs and rather mad'.

Vernon's group apparently involved a group of 'Basque bombers', Wintringham having fought on the republican side in the Spanish civil war as the first commander of the International Brigade. Vernon was featured in an article on the school in *Picture Post* in September 1940. The coverage led to a Mr Laurie in Northampton recognising Vernon and reporting to the police a conversation he had had with Vernon before the war on obtaining false passports, which suggested that Vernon had been in breach of the Official Secrets Act.

The explosives instructor

The Osterley Park school was closed in Spring 1941. In March, Wintringham had written to the left-wing Labour MP, George Strauss, suggesting ranks for his staff members, including the rank of Major for Vernon and his colleague Hugh Slater (another International Brigade veteran) and Lieutenant colonel for himself. After an extensive investigation, it was decided that Wintringham, Slater and Vernon should not be given commissions, in Vernon's case because of his past record. Vernon then apparently moved with Wintringham to the Home Guard school in Dorking, where he taught anti-aircraft marketry and warfare explosions and grenades. By 1944, Vernon was living in Southsea, Portsmouth, where he was a tutor for the Workers Education

Association and the regional committee for Adult Education in the Armed Forces. His subjects included popular science, elements of chemistry, geology, astronomy, aeroplane design, flying boats, the 'world today', European countries, India, China, the Versailles treaty and the Beveridge report. Vernon's certificate for lecturing in army education was cancelled on security grounds. Vernon appealed to the Labour MP, Leslie Haden Guest, but without success.

Vernon was in Southsea when he was contacted by Bertha Clark from Dulwich, which may have related to an invitation to be selected as Labour parliamentary candidate for Dulwich. In the election of 1945, Vernon defeated the sitting Conservative MP, Sir Bracewell Smith, with a narrow majority of 211. Labour had not previously won the seat and it is likely that Vernon had not actually expected to be elected.

Vernon appears to have had a fairly low profile in Parliament. Hansard has very few references to any substantial interventions. Vernon's maiden speech on 25th November 1945 was on world government and support for the United Nations, though he also argued the case for more aerodromes and retraining bombers and fighters to join a world police force, as with world government there would be no need for bombers and fighters. He also suggested that to protect industry and population from attack, both people and industry should be dispersed as widely as possible, suggesting they should be located underground beneath concrete shelters – He went on to suggest that " Not only must we think of moving this House to some other part of England—that is not good enough—but we have to consider the headquarters of our Empire being moved to some place as safe as it possibly can be. I should think of Northern Rhodesia or Tanganyika, or Arctic Canada, as sensible and suitable places for the centre of the British Empire." This must have been one of the most curious maiden speeches given.

Vernon also made a speech on defence policy which appears to have opposed increased British defence expenditure while supporting a UN army, so long as that was supported by all the Great Powers. On one occasion he spoke up to support Mao Tse Tung, who was fighting a civil war with Chiang Kai Shek's nationalists, apparently the only MP to do so. Vernon claimed that "the Chinese government are running one of the most ruthless and cruel police states in existence," and called for Britain to adopt "a policy of friendship and trade with the liberated areas" under Communist control. The MI5 files have records of his contacts with Jack Chen and Raymond Wong, who were Chinese communists based in London at the New China News Agency. Vernon was a member of the Parliamentary Far East committee.

Vernon was a member of the group of left-wing MPs who opposed Ernest Bevin's foreign policy. This was also the position of the Dulwich Communist Party. Vernon

came to public attention in April 1948 when he signed the Nenni telegram, supporting the Italian socialist Nenni who collaborated with the Italian communists. A number of the members of the group, including John Platts Mills, were expelled from the Labour Party, though Vernon was not, which implies that he signed the required undertaking to desist from such conduct in the future. The Dulwich Labour Party supported Vernon, the chairman C L Allen commenting that “we will back Major Vernon in whatever course of action he takes. We know he holds strong left-wing views”. Vernon was also a member of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee. He had apparently visited Russia in 1935, though he claimed that he also attended the Berlin Olympics in 1936. In 1947, he was noted by MI5 to be giving support to the Camberwell branch of the Communist Party, having agreed with the Communist Party's criticism of the Labour government's position on the Greek civil war, where Bevin was supporting the royalists against the communists. Vernon was also recorded as opposing the security components of the Atomic Energy Bill in August 1946. Vernon had also voted against the government on the issue of conscription in November 1946. MI5 was clearly closely following Vernon's political activity, both within and outside parliament.

The released MI5 files on Vernon start in 1938. However, the first released file is marked as Volume 9. The four volumes released include over 400 pages of documents, with the last entry being in 1952. The files however do refer to earlier material implying that there is significant unreleased material. Presumably much of this relates to the 1937 burglary and Official Secrets Act trial and it appears that MI5 had been following Vernon since as early as 1934. Much of the material in the released files refers to Vernon as having committed espionage which implies that the security services were aware that Vernon's keeping of confidential documents at home was more than just a procedural breach. One later file note records that he had been known to be involved in communist meetings and subversion as early as 1934. This makes in all the more curious that the security services did not actually interrogate Vernon until after the information received from Weiss in 1948.

In October 1948, Attlee as Prime Minister was informed of Vernon's past espionage activity. Attlee was reported as being surprised and shocked. He however decided that action should not be taken against Vernon, and that he should not be interrogated, given he was a sitting member of parliament. Vernon was therefore not interviewed by MI5 until 1952, when this restriction no longer applied. Meredith was however interviewed in January 1949 by Inspector Skardon. In the interview he was pressed for information on Weiss and curiously also on Dorothy Woodman, the Union for Democratic Control secretary and partner of *New Statesman* editor, Kingsley Amis. Meredith was clearly concerned that the Government was trying to

incriminate Vernon as part of a strategy of getting rid of 'fellow-travelling' MPs, some of whom had already been expelled from the Labour Party following the Nenni telegram incident.

MI5 continued to monitor Vernon after he lost his parliamentary seat in the October 1951 general election. This was primarily because of his membership of the executive committee of the association of Scientific Workers. Vernon was a member of the union's Atomic Science committee. Vernon also seems to have been in contact, either directly or indirectly, with Peter Kerrigan, the Communist Party industrial organiser. The union secretary till 1951 was the communist Ted Ainley, who on retiring from the union position on the grounds of ill health, chaired the Communist Party's economic committee. Vernon was in touch with Ainley about organising against a planned Atom Bomb exercise to be held in Camberwell. MI5 therefore put a tap on Vernon's phone – at that time he was living at 64 Kingshall Road, Beckenham.

Vernon continued to be politically active after losing his parliamentary seat. He was a member of Camberwell Borough Council and in 1952 was elected as member for Dulwich on the London County Council, serving until 1955. He again stood for the parliamentary seat in the 1955 election, again losing to Jenkins, but gaining 23,482 votes or 45% of the vote, close to his result four years earlier. It is curious that the Labour Party leadership, or at least Attlee as party leader, having knowledge of Vernon's past activities, allowed Vernon to continue in these representative roles and to stand again as parliamentary candidate in 1950,1951 and 1955. Whether or not the Dulwich Labour Party was aware that their candidate and former MP had confessed to spying for the Russians is not known, though at the time the local party seems to have shared some policy positions with the Communist party. If they were aware of Vernon's record, they must have assumed that it would not become public knowledge as this would surely have damaged Labour's chance of success in the election.

Vernon became involved in the designer Marcus Brumwell's progressive scientists' discussion group which helped to develop a Labour Party science policy, which was adopted by Harold Wilson in his 'white heat of technology' campaign. The group involved progressive scientists such as the biologist J D Bernal and the physicist Patrick Blackett, both of whom had been previously involved in the Communist Party's science group. Vernon was also asked to join a progressive discussion group on British foreign policy with the development economist Doreen Warriner and Will Warbey, the former and future Labour MP who was to be a leading opponent of British support for the American intervention in Vietnam. Vernon's wife was a magistrate.

In one of Skardon's debriefs of his first interrogation of Vernon, the following was recorded:

"I gained the impression that VERNON is a straightforward and upright person according to the dictates of his own conscience. I think it is unlikely that he would be guilty of any petty meanness, and there is a simplicity about him which may have led MEREDITH to describe him as 'Christlike'. He is, I should say, a man of moderate education and not particularly intelligent. He has probably been a pretty honest though not very brilliant Member of Parliament".

It was however decided by MI5 that Vernon should not be exposed. Vernon was viewed as now being a sincere supporter of the Labour Party, and presumably no longer a threat to national security. It was therefore decided to 'let sleeping dogs lie' The last time the file was read was March 1975, at which point the file was closed and franked as 'historical'.

Vernon died in Bristol in 1975 at the age of 93.

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LESLIE HALE: Bevanite

Leslie Hale, who was Labour MP for Oldham between 1945 and 1958, lived in College Road, near Sydenham Hill station, until his death in 1985, at 'Bird How', since demolished to provide the site for the Dulwich Oaks development. Born in 1902 in Leicestershire, he was a solicitor in Coalville and Nuneaton before moving to London. He was elected as a member of Leicestershire County Council in 1926, on behalf of the Liberal Party, when he was only 23. In the same year he married Dorothy Ann Latham. He stood unsuccessfully for parliament as a Liberal in the Nottingham South constituency in the 1929 general election.

In the 1945 election, Hale was elected as Labour candidate to the two-member seat of Oldham, in partnership with Frank Fairhurst. In 1950, the constituency was divided into two, and Hale was elected MP for Oldham West, a seat he held until 1968, when he retired on the grounds of ill-health. In 1972, Hale was awarded a peerage and joined the House of Lords as Baron Hale of Oldham. His seat was then won by a Conservative barrister and QC, Bruce Campbell.

Hale was on the left of the Labour Party and signed the Bevanite *Keep Left* and *Keeping Left* statements in 1947 and 1950. He appears to have been one of the organisers of the Keep Left group, which included Richard Crossman, Ian Mikardo and Michael Foot. The main focus of the group was criticising the foreign policy of the Labour government with Ernest Bevin as foreign secretary on the basis that the policy was too pro-US and anti-Soviet. The group supported a 'third force 'social democratic approach to international relations, rather than taking one side or the other in the cold war. In 1956, Hale was outspoken in his attack on the Government's handling of the Suez crisis, accusing Prime Minister Eden and his Conservative government of being war criminals.

Leslie Hale

Hale also had an interest in the decolonisation of Africa. He was a close personal friend of the Labour MP, Fenner Brockway, who was a strong supporter of African nationalism. In 1951, Hale joined Brockway in a visit to Tunis for a trade union conference. In 1953, Hale accompanied Brockway on a visit to Kenya to try to get the nationalist and future leader of independent Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta, released from prison. This was during the Mau Mau emergency. Brockway's autobiography, *Outside the Right*, provides an account of the trip. The colonial leaders, notably Michael Blundell, a member of the colonial legislature, considered Brockway and Hale, as supporters of the nationalists, to be communists (which they were not). Apparently, Hale got off the plane in Nairobi in an open neck shirt and without socks, which was not expected of a British MP. Someone commented that Hale looked like a 'Poor White' and in fact three days later a helicopter dropped a pair of socks weighted with stones into the garden of the house where Brockway and Hale were staying. The two MPs were not welcomed by the colonial administration either and the governor insisted that they were accompanied by a military escort wherever they travelled. This was apparently to protect the MPs from the hostile European settlers rather than from the Mau Mau. The MPs had a series of unproductive meetings with colonial officials, including the governor Sir Evelyn Baring, but were not allowed to have meetings with representatives of Kenyan nationalist organisations. Hale and Brockway issued a statement saying that they did not support the Mau Mau violence, but this appears to have made little difference. The MPs managed to meet some Kenyans, though their visitors were sometimes arrested as they left – in one case a group of Kenyan trade unionists were arrested during the meeting. Kenyatta was kept in prison until 1959 and then under a restriction order in effect house arrest, until 1961, becoming President of an independent Kenya in 1963.

Hale was an active member of the Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF), established in 1954 and led by Fenner Brockway. Hale chaired its committees on East and West Africa, South Africa, South East Asia ad the Caribbean. Each of these committees included representatives of anti-colonial movements abroad as well as British MCF members. Hale also contributed to an MCF report on Iraq which criticised the Baathist regime led by Abd al-Karim Qassem.

Hale had a range of other interests. He was a supporter of the World Federalist Movement, which advocated a form of world government and attended the founding conference of the Association of Parliamentarians for World Government in 1951. The group campaigned for a more representative United Nations security council (not dominated by the five most powerful post-war nations – the US, UK, USSR, China and France) and for a World Court. In 1954, Hale was co-author with fellow Labour MPs, Richard Acland (former leader of the Common Wealth party) and Fenner Brockway (former chair of the Independent Labour Party) of a pamphlet *Waging Peace*, published by *Peace News*. The pamphlet rejected the alliance with the US, argued that Britain should be a third voice in international affairs between the US and the Soviet block and for a moral and spiritual revolution in British politics. Hale spent much of his time as an MP campaigning against capital punishment, publishing a series of books between 1955 and 1962 on persons hanged in error. Capital punishment for murder in England was suspended in 1965, after passage of a private member's bill sponsored by the Labour MP and lawyer, Sydney Silverman and finally abolished in 1969.

Hale was solicitor for the Spiritualists National Union. He argued for the repeal of the 1735 Witchcraft Act and in favour of the 1951 Fraudulent Mediums Act. The Act provided for 'the punishment of persons who fraudulently purport to act as, spiritualistic mediums or to exercise powers of telepathy, clairvoyance or other similar powers.' The principles of the Spiritualist National Union, which supported the network of Spiritualist churches, through including the training of spiritual healers, spirit mediums, public speakers and teachers, were.

"The Fatherhood of God.; 2. The Brotherhood of Man; 3. The Communion of Spirits and the Ministry of Angels; 4. The Continuous Existence of the Human Soul; 5. Personal Responsibility; 6. Compensation and Retribution Hereafter for all the Good & Evil Deeds done on Earth, and 7. Eternal Progress Open to every Human Soul".

Hale died in 1985.

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LEWIS, SAM and JOHN SILKIN: Labour Dynasty

Lewis Silkin

Lewis Silkin

Lewis Silkin was born in Poplar in 1889. His father was a teacher of Hebrew; the family had recently arrived from Lithuania. Although he won a mathematical scholarship to Worcester College, Oxford, the family could not afford for him to go to university, so he went to work in the East India docks. Starting as an articled clerk, he qualified as a solicitor, moving to Balham. Joining the Labour Party initially attracted by Robert Blatchford's *Merrie England*, Silkin stood unsuccessfully in two parliamentary elections – in 1922 for Wandsworth Central and in 1924 for Stoke Newington. In 1924, Silkin moved to 76 College Road in Dulwich, having bought his house from the Vestey butchery family. In 1925, he was elected to the London County Council as member for South East Southwark, together with the psychotherapist, Stella Churchill, capturing two seats from the Progressives. Stella Churchill, who lived in Chiswick, was Deputy Medical Officer or Health in St Pancras and a member of the Eugenics Society.

In 1930, Silkin became leader of the Labour Group on the LCC, succeeding Cecil Manning, who had himself taken over from Herbert Morrison when Morrison had become Minister of Transport in Macdonald's government. In 1931, Morrison lost his parliamentary seat and returned to the GLC, expecting to resume his old position. Silkin resisted and in a leadership vote hold in February 1932, Silkin defeated Morrison by 15 votes to 14. Morrison refused to serve as deputy leader. However in February 1933, Silkin gave way to Morrison, agreeing to step down to the deputy position. In May 1934, when Labour took control of the LCC for the first time, Morrison became leader, with Silkin chair of the housing committee, the deputy post having been abolished. There was a leadership group comprising Morrison, Silkin, Isaac Hayward, the chief whip and Charles Latham. In 1936, Silkin undertook a tour of Europe, on his return publishing a report on how European housing methods could be applied in London, arguing that flats rather than houses, were the best solution for densely populated areas within the existing LCC boundaries, which were limited to the boroughs now classified as Inner London.

The findings of the report were summarised by the *Surveyor* journal as follows:

1. As to slum clearance, it is good to learn that we are ahead of the continent.

2. In *layout* we have more precise details: blocks should not be more than 30 feet in depth, with an outlook on both sides, with the minimum of enclosed passage space. The blocks should be a distance apart equal to 10.5 their height-even more if possible; for where gardens are placed between the blocks they can well be three times their height apart. Complete quadrangles are not favoured and the south end should be open. Individual gardens for tenants should, be located where intervening space is sufficient. Railings should be avoided. The most striking suggestion is the mixture of block and cottage dwellings, where land is available, on the outskirts of London; but it occurs to us to ask: Why not go out a little farther and give up the necessity for blocks?
3. *Design and construction*. Mr. Silkin favours variety if it can be attained without increase of cost; otherwise standardization seems to be the rule. He speaks in favour of concrete instead of bricks, in the experience of Paris, and likes wide treatment of windows.
4. *Height* should be normally restricted to four storeys and only when the two upper are used as maisonettes should five storeys be built: otherwise lifts must be installed.
5. As to *access*, Mr. Silkin prefers the staircase to the outer balcony approach, differing with Mr. Wilson here.
6. He is in favour of storage rooms in half basements to prevent accumulations in the flats.
7. He likes the continental central heating of water for domestic use and thinks it would counterbalance its expense by saving of chimney flues and fuel, while improving the atmosphere.
8. As to laundries, it is suggested that one on each floor may be better than a large common wash house.
9. 'Amenities' are considered essential to the success of block dwellings.

In the 1935 general election, Silkin contested the Peckham seat, losing by 772 votes to the Conservative. David Beatty, who had captured the seat from Labour's John Beckett in 1931. However, in 1936, Beatty inherited the peerage of his father, Admiral Lord Beatty, and Silkin won the seat in the subsequent by-election, defeating the Conservative candidate, P G A Harvey, by the narrow majority of 100 votes. Silkin, like Morrison, combined his LCC and parliamentary roles. When Morrison became Minister for Supply in 1940, Latham rather than Silkin took over his LCC role. Silkin became chair of the LCC planning committee, a role in which he collaborated with the planner, Patrick Abercrombie, to prepare the County of London plan published in 1943 and the Greater London Plan, published in 1944. Silkin did

not have a national role within the wartime coalition government, though from 1944, he was a member of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee.

With Labour winning the 1945 general election, Silkin was appointed Minister of Town and Country Planning. This was a very important period in the history of British planning. While the framework for planning reform had been set during the wartime period by a series of reports- the Barlow report on the distribution of the industrial population, the Scott report on land use and the Uthwatt report on a development levy and the parallel Beveridge report on National Insurance, Silkin took the lead taking the required legislation through parliament. The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act remains the basis of the current town planning system, though there have been significant modifications over the last seventy-three years, with further changes proposed by the current Johnson government. It was the 1947 legislation that introduce the requirement for local authorities to prepare a plan for their area and which gave local authorities control over development rights. The legislation also introduced a levy on private development profits, a mechanism that has been subject to numerous changes by successive governments. Silkin was also responsible for the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, which led to the creation of national parks. He was also responsible for the New Towns Act and establishing the New Towns Committee under Lord Reith. The first post-war new town was developed in Stevenage, an initiative which was unpopular locally, with the development being labelled 'Silkingrad'.

In 1950, the Peckham seat was merged with the Camberwell North West seat held for Labour by Freda Corbett. Corbett was selected for the new constituency. Silkin tried to get selected to stand in Islington and Sheffield, but could not get back into the Commons. He was then given a peerage and sat in the Lords as Baron Silkin of Dulwich. Between 1955 and 1964, he was deputy Labour leader in the Lords. In 1950, his son John, established the law firm of Lewis Silkin in Peckham and Lewis Silkin joined the practice. In the Lords in 1966, Silkin presented a bill to reform the abortion laws, legislation which was enacted the following year.

Silkin returned to the post of deputy leader in the Lords in 1964. He was now 75 years old. He also became a governor of Dulwich college, where his three sons had been educated. He died in May 1972. Silkin was one of the great social reformers of the 1930's and the immediate post-war period. He was quiet and unassuming and a poor public speaker. He left no memoir and has not been the subject of any biography. The pre-war Labour administration of the LCC has been largely ignored by both contemporary left politicians and by historians and the post-war planning reforms tend to be seen as a specialist subject for planning historians. Lewis Silkin tends to appear as something of a footnote in the memoirs of more flamboyant figures

such as Hugh Dalton or in biographies of Morrison or Bevan, whose housing reforms get far more attention than Silkin's parallel planning reforms. Silkin also wrote vert little, apart from his LCC report on European housing, he wrote two Fabian pamphlets – one on *the Nation's Land* in 1943, subtitled (but only on the inside cover) *The Case for Nationalisation*, and then in 1946 *Our Plan for Land and Houses*. He also co-wrote a legal book with his son Sam in 1940.

His 1943 pamphlet concluded:

> *"Let us make quite certain that this time peace does not find us unprepared. Let us be ready with our machinery for planning so that when the period of reconstruction begins there will be no delay or hindrance; and we can proceed with the tremendous task that will face us, confident that we shall overcome the difficulties and obstacles which prevented good town and country planning in the past."*

Sam Silkin

Sam Silkin

Samuel Silkin was the second son of Lewis and Rosa Silkin. Born in 1918, he was educated at Dulwich College and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was called to the bar at the Middle Temple in 1941. He played cricket for Glamorgan. He served in the Royal Artillery during the war and achieved the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He presided at two trials of Japanese war criminals.

After the war, Silkin went into practice, specialising in planning law. He became a QC in 1963. He was a member of Camberwell borough council from 1953 to 1959 and chairman of the Society of Labour Lawyers. Living at 1 Alleyn Road, his father now in the Lords, he was selected to stand for Labour in the Dulwich constituency in the 1964 general election. The seat had been held by the Conservatives since the defeat of Labour's Wilfred Vernon in 1951. Vernon had failed to capture the seat in 1955 as had his successor as Labour candidate, Leslie Hill, a bus driver, in 1959. The sitting Conservative MP, Robert Jenkins had retired, and the new Conservative candidate was Martin Stevens, who had served on the LCC from 1955 to 1958 and had been a member of Camberwell Borough Council since 1959. Silkin recaptured the seat for Labour with a 2,095 majority over Stevens, with the Liberal candidate, Fred Redman in third place. A 'Christian socialist' candidate, Frederick Palmer, received only 264 votes. Stevens made an unsuccessful second attempt to win Dulwich in the 1966 general election, in which Silkin increased is majority, but was elected for the Fulham seat in 1979. Silkin held the Dulwich seat in successive elections – defeating Stevens again in

1966, defeating Patrick Mayhew in 1970 by a reduced majority of 895 votes (Mayhew was later to serve for 18 years in both Thatcher and Major governments); defeating Keith Raffan in February 1974 (Raffan was to sit for the Welsh seat of Delyn from 1983 to 1992), and then Eric Morley (the Miss World contest and Keep Dancing organiser who lived in Herne Hill) in October 1974 and 1979. In 1979, Silkin only defeated Morley by the narrow margin of 122 votes.

Sam Silkin served on the Royal Commission on the Penal System from 1965 to 1966. An enthusiastic European, he was a member of the British delegation to the Council of Europe from 1968 to 1970, where he was joined by the Labour MP for Buckingham, Robert Maxwell, who became a friend. Silkin later became a director of Maxwell's companies, Pergamon Press and the British Printing and Communications Corporation. In 1971, Silkin, despite sitting on Labour's front bench, defied a three-line whip to support Britain's entry into the European Economic Community. With Labour winning the 1964 General Election, Harold Wilson appointed Silkin as attorney -general, with Silkin also joining the Privy Council, but declining the customary knighthood. As attorney-general, Silkin got caught up in a number of legal controversies, including a retrospective immunity for the Clay Cross councillors, including David and Graham Skinner (brothers of the then Labour MP for Clay Cross, Dennis Skinner), who had been surcharged and disqualified for refusing to implement the Conservatives Housing Finance Act of 1972. Another controversy was over the publication of Richard Crossman's diaries which included reference to confidential discussions in the cabinet.

One of Silkin's parliamentary achievements was the 1967 Leasehold Reform Act, which enabled leaseholders of the Dulwich estate to acquire freeholds of their properties.

Silkin stood down in 1983 and became a life peer – as Baron Silkin of Dulwich – his older brother having declined their father's hereditary peerage. He became Labour front-bench spokesman on legal matters. Silkin died in 1988.

John Silkin

John Silkin was the third son of Lewis and Rosa Silkin, born in 1923. Like his brothers he was educated at Dulwich College. John then went to University College Wales and then Trinity Hall Cambridge, graduating in law. In the war, he saw service in the Far East and on qualifying as a solicitor, joined the family law form of Lewis Silkin in Peckham. He and his wife Rosamund lived at 1 Alleyn Road and then at 110 Dulwich Village from 1957.

John Silkin made a number of unsuccessful attempts to enter parliament, contesting Marylebone in 1950, West Woolwich in 1951, and South Nottingham in

1959. He finally succeeded, in 1963, winning Deptford, in a by-election following the death of Sir Leslie Plummer.

John Silkin

In 1966, Silkin was appointed Labour chief whip. In 1968, he became deputy leader of the Commons, and from 1969 to 1970 he was minister of public works. With Labour returning to power in 1974, Silkin became minister for planning and local government, equivalent to the position held by his father in the post-war administration. However, Silkin was unhappy in this role, an unhappiness perhaps partly related to a public controversy over his family's property investments in South Wales, and in 1976 moved to the Ministry of Agriculture. Silkin, unlike his brother, was on the left of the Labour Party and was an opponent of entry into the European Economic Community. He supported the journal *Tribune* and was a unilateralist. He supported an alternative economic policy based on import controls and the protection of Britain's industrial base and a withdrawal from the EEC. His role as Minister of Agriculture involved him with disputes with the EEC over fishing rights.

With the Labour defeat by Thatcher in 1979 and James Callaghan's resignation from the party leadership, Silkin, who had briefly been industry spokesman but was now Labour leader of the Commons, rather surprisingly stood for the party leadership in the contest between Denis Healey and Michael Foot. Peter Shore, who was also an opponent of the EEC also joined the contest. In the first round of voting Silkin received 38 votes to Healey's 112 and Foot's 83, with Shore at 32. With Silkin and Shore dropping out, Foot then defeated Healey by 139 votes to 129. This was the last leadership election in which voting was limited to members of the Parliamentary Labour Party. In September 1981, Silkin stood for the deputy leadership position against Healey and Tony Benn, in the first leadership contest to be determined by an electoral college of MPs, trade unions and party members. Silkin came third with 18% of the votes in the first round, with Healey narrowly defeating Benn in the second round.

Silkin stayed on the Labour front bench, but his two failed challenges had weakened his influence. He also found that despite his past support for the alternative economic strategy and *Tribune*, his opposition to Benn generated a challenge from the Bennite faction in the Deptford party who tried to deselect him. He was also caught in a battle between left factions for control of *Tribune,* which had been the journal of the moderate left which had included Silkin and Michael Foot. It was expected that Silkin would stand down in the 1987 general election and join his older

brother in the House of Lords. Silkin however died in April 1987, before the general election.

Robert Maxwell was one of the family law firm's clients. John Silkin, like his father, joined the board of Pergamon Press. He however died before Maxwell's fraudulent dealings were exposed.

A book Silkin had been writing when he died was published posthumously, with an epilogue by his researcher, Ann Carlton. *Changing Battlefields*, tracked what Silkin had seen as the failure of the Labour Party to prepare for government and argued for reforms to reduce factionalism within the party. Carlton commented that "John saw the Labour Party in government as a way of changing society: of giving everybody in Britain economic freedom and self-respect. Unlike many professional politicians, he cared more about this than his own political career."

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GEORGE BROWN: From Court Lane to Foreign Secretary

George Brown, Minister for Economic Affairs and foreign secretary under Harold Wilson lived for much of his political career at 77 Court Lane. He bought the new house in 1950 (the property on the site having being bombed in the blitz) and lived there till November 1963, moving to a flat in Bayswater- on the day that President Kennedy was assassinated. Brown was deputy leader of the Labour Party from 1960 to 1970, as well as briefly acting as leader in the interregnum between Hugh Gaitskell's death in 1963 and Wilson's election to the party leadership, a contest in which Brown was the losing candidate. Between 1966 and 1968, Brown, as first secretary of state, was in effect deputy Prime Minister. In contrast with many other significant political figures of his generation, his former residence still lacks a blue plaque. The reason for this is perhaps reflected in the sole biography of Brown, which is subtitled 'tired and emotional' – Brown had a reputation as an alcoholic, which certainly blighted the later years of his political career. An alternative reason could be

that he moved out just before he took up his position into Government. There is however a strong case for reassessing Brown's political legacy.

George Brown

Member of parliament for Belper in Derbyshire from 1945 to 1970, Brown was a South Londoner. Born in Peabody buildings in Duke Street (now Duchy Street) near Waterloo station, he grew up on the Peabody estate on Blackfriars Road. He attended the Gray Street elementary school and then the West Square Central school, leaving at the age of 15. Brown was one of the last working-class Labour politicians, coming into Labour politics through the trade union movement, to achieve a prominent position. With an Irish and Jewish background, Brown's father was a van driver for Lyons and the *Evening Standard*, later a fur salesman, but an active trade unionist who became a full-time employee of the Transport and General Workers Union. On leaving school, George Brown followed his father – first into the fur trade and then after taking classes through the Workers Education Association and the London County Council evening, became first a clerk in the TGWU office in Finsbury Park and then TGWU district organiser in Watford. Politically active from a young age, he joined the Labour League of Youth and campaigned for George Isaacs, the Labour candidate in Southwark North in the 1929 general election. Moving out of London, he was secretary of the St Albans Labour Party, coming to national prominence at the 1939 Labour Party Conference by making a vigorous speech supporting the expulsion of left-wingers Stafford Cripps, Aneurin Bevan and George Strauss (the latter being MP for Lambeth North) who were arguing for an alliance with Communists and 'other progressive forces' in a Popular Front. When George Dallas, former Scottish coalminer, MP and Labour Party chairman, decided to stand down as prospective parliamentary candidate for Belper, he proposed Brown as his successor and Brown having continued as a union official throughout the war, which exempted him from military service, became an MP in 1945 at the age of 30.

Brown soon became a leading member of the Labour Party's trade unionist right wing and a close ally of Arthur Deakin, who had succeeded Ernest Bevin as TGWU general secretary in 1940 when Bevin was appointed Minister of Labour in the wartime coalition, and of Herbert Morrison, fellow South Londoner (born in Stockwell and died in Peckham) the former London County Council leader who became Home Secretary and then succeeded Bevin as Foreign Secretary. By 1955, Brown was in the shadow cabinet as shadow minister of supply as well as chairing the trade union group within the Parliamentary Labour Party. In 1952, the future party leader, Hugh Gaitskell, commented in his diary that Brown had 'unlimited

courage and plenty of sense'. In 1956, Brown narrowly failed to succeed Gaitskell as party treasurer, being defeated by Gaitskell's great rival, Aneurin Bevan. Brown gained further notoriety as well giving an indication of his 'unlimited courage' when at a dinner with Soviet leaders Khrushchev and Bulganin on a fraternal visit to London in 1956, at which Khrushchev was critical of the British wartime record, Brown had the audacity to point out that it was the Russians who in 1939 signed a pact with Hitler, not the British. Brown was a strong anti-communist. By 1960, as Labour spokesman on defence, he was opposing the growing unilateralist movement led by CND within the Labour Party and supporting NATO. On Bevan's death, Brown became deputy leader, defeating Jim Callaghan and Fred Lee. However, when Gaitskell died in 1963, the right- wing vote was split between Brown and Callaghan, leading to the succession of Harold Wilson, at that time the champion of the party's left wing, and to Wilson's leadership of the Labour government elected the following year.

Brown was appointed to the new post of Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, in effect a new economic planning ministry, which took over significant functions from the Treasury, and immediately brought him into conflict with Jim Callaghan, who Wilson had appointed as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Perhaps Wilson's greatest skill was in dividing his main rivals. The National Plan produced by Brown and his ministry is perhaps the most significant attempt by a British government at long term economic planning. Drawing on French and Belgian as well as Russian experience (though criticised by Conservatives at the time and subsequently as Soviet inspired), the plan set national growth targets and a regionally basis framework for implementation. It however depended on trade union collaboration at a time when individual trade union leaders sought to protect free collective bargaining and were reluctant to agree any framework for controlling incomes as well as prices. However, in July 1966, sterling was under attack on the currency markets and could only be stabilised by a deflationary package of reductions in public expenditure. Brown supported the alternative of reducing the value of sterling, but this was not supported by Callaghan and Wilson. With the deflationary package, the ambitious growth plans of the National Plan were in effect shelved and Brown publicly humiliated. In his memoirs, Brown saw this as a betrayal by his colleagues. Brown was moved to the Foreign Office, which however he saw as revenge on Callaghan, who had also sought that role.

Brown was a fervent pro-European and argued the case for joining the Common Market. Gaitskell had opposed the Common Market, preferring the transatlantic partnership with the US. Brown was supported by other right-wingers such as Roy Jenkins and Denis Healey, though not by Douglas Jay, who was President of the

Board of Trade. Wilson was ambivalent, just as Jeremy Corbyn is today. On the Vietnam war, Brown was pro-American, in contrast with Wilson who succeeded in avoiding any British involvement in the war despite American pressure to provide troops to support the US. Brown also argued with Wilson on the issue of ending the embargo on arms sales to the apartheid South African regime. Brown and Denis Healey wanted to sell arms to South Africa. Michael Stewart who had succeeded Brown at the Economic Affairs ministry. was opposed. Wilson sided with Stewart. Wilson considered that Brown was using the issue to challenge his leadership. In March 1968, Brown who had by now lost the confidence of Wilson, having been excluded from an important meeting on the latest economic crisis (whether intentionally or by accident is uncertain), organised a meeting of half the cabinet to share their complaints about Wilson's leadership. This led to a direct confrontation with Wilson and Brown accusing each other of unacceptable behaviour. The meeting ended with Brown storming out saying he was resigning. Brown had a habit of threatening resignation when aggrieved - one commentator counted some 17 resignation threats. This time Wilson did not ask him back and his colleagues did not argue for his reinstatement. That was basically the end of Brown's political career, although Brown stayed as deputy leader of the Labour Party for two more years. He also stayed on the Labour Party's National Executive Committee long enough to block Wilson's attempt to appoint Anthony Greenwood as Labour's general secretary.

In the 1970 election, the Belper seat was lost to the Conservatives, as Edward Heath moved into government. Brown went into the Lords as Lord George-Brown of Jevington in Sussex, a village to which he had retired. In 1983 he publicly supported the social democratic breakaway from the Labour Party by the group of four - Roy Jenkins, David Owen, Shirley Williams and Bill Rodgers. In his final years, Brown moved to Cornwall, having left his wife of forty years, to share a home with his secretary. He died in 1985, perhaps not surprisingly, of cirrhosis of the liver. He had much in common with that earlier trade unionist Labour leader and Dulwich resident. Jimmy Thomas, who had been a senior minister in the Ramsay Macdonald Labour and National governments of the 1920's and early 1930's.

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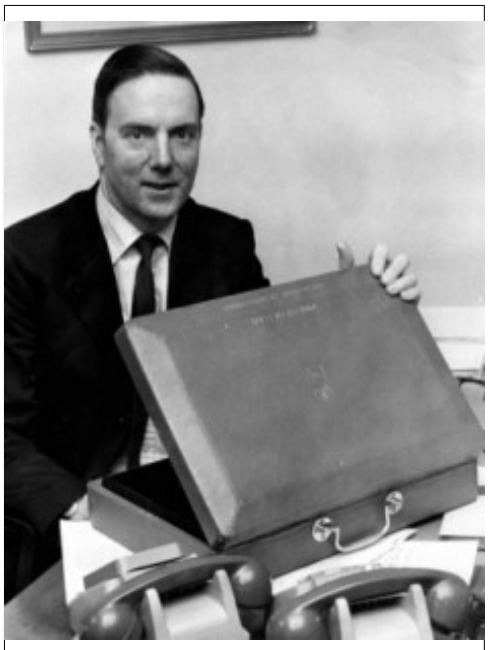
ALBERT BOOTH: Employment Minister

Albert Booth was a member of Wilson and Callaghan cabinets. He lived in Woodwarde Road for fifteen years from 1968.

Booth was born in 1928 in York, where his father was a caretaker at the York labour exchange and was also a wireless operator (some obituaries refer to him being born in Winchester). The family soon moved to Winchester, where Albert went to school, but then, after living in Willesden and then Scarborough, moved to South Shields. Booth went to South Shields marine school and then after leaving school at 13 and studying at evening classes at the Rutherford College of Technology in Newcastle, funded by a grant from the Coop, he trained to be an engineering draughtsman and then working at the Tyneside shipyards. An active trades unionist in the Draughtsmen and Allied Technicians' Association, by his early 20's he was attending the union's nation conference. He married Joan, whom he had met in the Labour League of Youth. He was on the League's national council and at the age of 24 was secretary of his constituency Labour Party. He was Labour election agent in the 1951 and 1955 general elections, a Tynemouth borough councillor from 1962 to 1965 and chaired the local Trades Council.



Booth as Minister

Booth fought Tynemouth in the 1964 election losing to the incumbent Conservative MP, Irene Ward, but significantly increasing the Labour vote. In 1966, he contested the fairly safe seat of Barrow in Furness and was elected, the incumbent Walter Monslow having been given a peerage. Booth was to hold the seat until 1983. Booth joined the Tribune group and became close to Michael Foot. He also took on the somewhat tedious task of chair of the select committee on statutory instruments or secondary legislation. In 1974, Foot became Secretary of State for Employment and chose Booth as his junior minister. Booth led on the employment provisions of the Race Discrimination and Sex Discrimination Acts and drafted the Employment Protection Act which supported collective bargaining. In 1976, with Wilson standing down as Prime Minister and Foot becoming leader of the House in the Callaghan administration, Booth joined the cabinet as Employment Secretary. He supported the notion of a Social Contract with the TUC to agree pay policy. This led to him being criticised by some on the left – Tony Benn described Booth as being a member of the 'captive left, nestling in the embrace of the right'. Booth however tried to get the pay

norm above the proposed 5%. Booth also opposed the conditions set by the International Monetary Fund for the loan to support the British economy, but unlike some other left-wing colleagues, did not resign over the issue. Booth remained loyal to his mentor, Michael Foot. The dispute between Government and unions over pay brought about the strikes, which became known as 'the winter of discontent'.

Booth campaigning in 1983 General Election

With Labour losing the 1979 General election which brought Margaret Thatcher to power, Booth became Labour spokesperson on transport. Booth tried to find a middle way in the factional disputes in the party which followed the defeat. In the 1981 deputy leadership contest between Healey and Benn, Booth was one of 37 Labour MPs who abstained in the second round (after John Silkin had dropped out) which denied Benn the anticipated victory. In the 1983 election, the Social Democratic Party stood a candidate against Booth. This split the anti-Tory vote and Booth lost the seat to the Conservative Cecil Franks, who held the seat until recaptured for Labour by John Hutton in 1992. Booth's unilateralist position may not have helped his case given Barrow hosted the Vickers yard for the building of Polaris nuclear submarines. The head of Vickers claimed that a Labour victory would mean job losses. Booth had led a CND march through his constituency. There was also a campaign by Roman Catholics against Booth for his stance on abortion.

Out of parliament, Booth was elected to the post of Labour Party treasurer in 1984. He tried to get back into parliament contesting the Conservative held seat of Warrington South in 1987. He increased the Labour vote but still lost. He had apparently turned down the offer of a safe seat in order to fight a marginal seat. He also tuned down on principle the offer of a seat in the Lords. Instead Booth took up posts as transport director, firstly for South Yorkshire Transport Executive Council (the West Yorkshire County Council was abolished by Thatcher in 1986) and then for Hounslow council in London. Booth retired to Beckenham in Kent and died in Farnborough of prostate cancer in 2010, aged 82. The Guardian obituary commented that Booth, who was also a Methodist lay preacher, was hard working, diligent, sincere and trustworthy, self-effacing and modest. Albert Booth's niece, Janine Booth, is a socialist historian

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CHRISTOPHER PRICE: MP and Educationalist

Christopher Price, who was a Labour MP between 1966 and 1983, lived at 96 Dovercourt Road between 1967 and 1976. He was born in Leeds in 1932, his father an academic classicist and mother a health visitor. He joined the Labour Party at 16, encouraged by a fellow pupil, Gerald Kaufman, who also later became an MP. He went to Queens College, Oxford to study classics and chaired the Oxford University Labour Club in 1953 and subsequently the National Association of Labour Student Organisations. His Oxford friends included the journalist Anthony Howard, the television executive, Jeremy Isaacs and Rupert Murdoch. On graduating, Price became a teacher and moved to Yorkshire, becoming a classics master at Ecclestone Grammar School. In 1962, he was elected to Sheffield City Council, becoming vice-chair of the education committee the following year. Roy Hattersley was chairman of the housing committee. Price supported the introduction of comprehensive education in the city.

Christopher Price

Price contested the parliamentary seat of Shipley in the 1964 general election but lost to the sitting Conservative MP, Geoffrey Hirst. In 1966, at the suggestion of Hattersley, he contested the Birmingham Perry Barr seat, winning with a 4,000 majority over the sitting Conservative member. He was appointed parliamentary private secretary to Anthony Crosland at the department of education. In this role, he supported Crosland in promoting the new polytechnics. Price however lost his seat in the 1970 election which brought the Conservatives under Ted Heath to power. Out of parliament, Price worked as education correspondent for Thames TV and for the *New Statesman*, returning to parliament for the London seat of Lewisham West in February 1974, defeating the sitting MP, John Selwyn Gummer. Price was to hold the seat until 1983. He returned to his old position of PPS to the education minister, who was now Fred Mulley. He also led campaigns for reforming police interrogation procedures having campaigned for the release of three teenagers

convicted of a murder they did not commit, co-writing a book on the case- *The Confait Confessions.*

It was understood at the time that when Callaghan took over from Wilson as prime minister in 1976, he refused to promote Price to Minister because he had been a student at Oxford. Price however took the chair of the select committee on education, science and the arts, a position he held until 1983. He also attended the European parliament for a year – this was before direct elections were introduced.

Losing his seat in 1983 to John Maples, Price returned to teaching. In 1986, he was appointed director of Leeds Polytechnic and led its transition into Leeds Metropolitan University, serving as its vice-chancellor until 1994.

Price campaigned on a number of issues. He opposed the expulsion of residents of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean to make way for an American military base. He was a passionate supporter of the arts and member of the Arts Council as well as director of the London International Festival Theatre. He was also passionate about ensuring quality in education, serving on the council of the Open University. He was concerned at the separation between higher education and training, which he considered as reinforcing class divisions. In his interview for the History of Parliament oral history project, he commented on the fact that two pubs in Dulwich catered for different classes. Price campaigned for the return of the Elgin marbles to Greece. Having been a long-term contributor to the *New Statesman*, he took over as chairman of the journal between 1994 and 1995.

Price never joined any factional group or club within the Commons. In his oral history interview, he admitted to being something of a loner. He was clearly not comfortable with the club like atmosphere in parliament, or the fact that party whips could reward loyal MPs with overseas trips. He felt that this was possibly a reason why he had never been appointed to the cabinet. The fact that he always sat for a marginal seat was also a factor. He was clearly jealous of his colleague Hattersley who held a safe seat in Birmingham. He however saw himself as more of an educationalist and journalist than professional politician and did not regret that he had had a career outside parliament.

Christopher Price died in February 2015, having suffered a stroke two years earlier. He was survived by his wife, Annie, who still lives in Dulwich. Price's sister, Helen Jackson, also a teacher, was Labour MP for Sheffield Hillsborough from 1992 to 2005.

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11. Local Heroes

JACK AND EVELYN JONES: Socialist Activists

From 1963, Jack and Evelyn Jones lived at Ruskin Park House, off Denmark Hill, just inside the Dulwich constituency.

The young couple

Jack Jones was general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) from 1968 to 1978. Born in Liverpool in 1913 and named after the Irish trade unionist leader, James Larkin, he left school at 14, becoming an apprentice engineer and then a docker, like his father. He became a shop steward and then a delegate to the national docks group committee of the TGWU. He recorded that he had been converted to socialism through reading Robert Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists.* He was active in the anti-fascist movement in Liverpool, getting involved in fights with Oswald Mosley's blackshirts. Having been a member of the Territorial Army, he went to Spain in 1936 to support the republicans in the Spanish Civil War, becoming political commissar in the Major Attlee company of the British battalion of the International brigade, being wounded at the Battle of Ebro in 1938. Returning to Britain, he took up a pull time post with the TGWU in Coventry, later becoming regional secretary for the West Midlands.

Evelyn Taylor was from Knutsford and met Jones at the National Council of Labour colleges, where she worked. Joining the Communist Party in about 1931, she was involved in the mass trespass of Kinder Scout in the following year. Working in engineering factories in Manchester, she was fired for organising a strike. She was also an active ant-fascist and was fined £25 and sent to Strangeways prison for leading a protest against the fascists at the Manchester Free Trade Hall in 1933, following a private prosecution by Oswald Mosley. In 1936, Evelyn went to Moscow to work in the finance department of the Comintern. The job involved acting as a courier to underground Communist parties and anti-fascists groups in Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Italy. Evelyn was first married in 1934 to George

Brown, an Irish born Manchester communist who had studied at the Lenin school in Moscow in 1931, was Manchester district organiser for the Communist Party and was to be elected to the Communist Party national executive in 1935. Brown fought in Spain with the International brigade, like Jones acting as a political commissar, and was killed at the battle of Brunette near Madrid in April 1937. Evelyn had helped Brown in his unsuccessful campaign to be elected as a Communist to Manchester City council in 1934. In October 1938, Evelyn married Jack Jones, who had been a close friend of Brown.

In Coventry, Evelyn worked in an aero-engine factory, becoming a shop steward and union branch secretary. She joined the Labour Party – in Coventry during the war there was considerable collaboration between Communist Party and left-wing members of the Labour Party. After the war, Evelyn continued to collaborate with Communist linked organisations, including attending the Communist Party sponsored peace conference in Paris in 1948, Evelyn was in close contact with the American singer Paul Robeson, who was active in the peace movement. Evelyn was a Labour Party ward secretary, secretary of a branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and participated in the Aldermaston marches.

In 1963, Jack Jones was appointed assistant general secretary of the TGWU, and the family moved to London to Ruskin Park House. Evelyn became active in the Dulwich Labour Party, becoming a justice of the peace and a juvenile court magistrate, a post from which she was removed by Lord Hailsham when he was Lord Chancellor. Within the Labour Party, she was an active supporter of the left wing, at one point trying unsuccessfully to get the sitting MP, Sam Silkin, at that time attorney-general in the Wilson government, deselected and replaced by a more left-wing candidate.

At Party conference with Michael Foot

As assistant general secretary of the TGWU, Jack Jones became a member of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee. A supporter of the Institute for Workers Control, he chaired the Party's sub-committee on industrial democracy. As general secretary from 1968, together with Hugh Scanlon of the Amalgamated Engineers Union, he led the opposition to the Wilson government's prices and incomes policy. Jones became the economic spokesman for the Trades Union Congress and was the main author of the Social Contract agreement

between the TUC and the Wilson and Callaghan governments of 1974-79 which sought to limit unofficial strikes in exchange for increase employment rights for workers. Jones helped to establish the Arbitration Conciliation and Advisory Service (ACAS) in 1975. He was a leading member of the National Economic Development Council (NEDC) between 1969 and 1978. He campaigned for the UK to leave the European Economic Community (EEC) in the 1975 referendum.

On retirement from the TUC in 1978, Jack Jones became President of the National Pensioners convention and a vigorous advocate of the interests of pensioners. In 1981 he was nominated for the post of chancellor of London University, but lost the election to Princess Anne! He published his autobiography in 1986. Jones was president of the International Brigades Memorial Trust and unveiled their memorial in Newhaven in 2008.

Evelyn Jones died in 1999 at the age of 85. Jack Jones died in a care home in Peckham in April 2009 aged 96. The sheltered housing block in Reedham Street is named after him.

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SAM KING: From Empire Windrush To Mayor of Southwark

Sam King was born in Portland, Jamaica in 1926. He was Mayor of Southwark for 1983-4. Between 1958 and 1984, he lived at 2 Warmington Road, off Half Moon Lane, where a plaque in his memory was erected in 2010 after a public vote.

Memorial Plaque

King was working on his father's banana plantation when in 1944 he saw in the *Daily Gleaner* newspaper an advert recruiting for the Royal Air Force. Having completed training in Kingston, he sailed for Britain, being posted in Greenock, near Glasgow. He served at various bases as ground crew and then as a skilled aircraft fitter, being demobbed in 1947. He returned to Jamaica, but the family plantation had been devastated by a hurricane, so the following year he decided to reenlist in the RAF, booking a berth on the Empire Windrush. He served until 1953. He then applied to join the Metropolitan Police but was unsuccessful. It was not until 14 years later, that they recruited their first black officer. Sam and his brother then bought a house in Sears Street, Camberwell, having been turned down for a mortgage, they had to borrow

funds privately. On leaving the RAF, King was employed by the Post Office, for whom he worked for 34 years.

King trained as a lay preacher. He also promoted gospel music, helping to organise a gospel Songs of Praise at Southwark cathedral in 1985.In 1958, King helped the Brixton Jamaican communist, Claudia Jones launch the first major black newspaper in Britain, the *West Indian Gazette*. King acted as circulation manager. King was one of the organisers, with Jones, of the first Caribbean carnival in London, held at St Pancras Town Hall in 1959, an event which grew into the Notting Hill Carnival.

King was an active member of both his trade union, the postal workers, and the Labour Party. In 1982, he was elected a councillor for Bellenden ward, which covered part of East Dulwich. He was elected Mayor for the following year. He stood down from the council in 1986.

Sam King and his younger self

In 1996., King together with Arthur Torrington, founded the Windrush Foundation, to highlight the contributions of Britain's African and Caribbean communities, safeguard the memories of Britain's first post-war settlers, and promote good community relations. In 1998, on the 50th anniversary of the Windrush, King received an OBE. In the same year he published an autobiography *Climbing up the Rough Side of the Mountain*. In 2016, just before he died, King received the freedom of the

borough of Southwark. Just before he died in June 2016 aged 90., King received the freedom of the borough of Southwark.

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WILFRED WOOD: From Barbados to Bishop of Croydon

Wilfred Wood was born in Barbados in 1936. Abandoning his original intention to become a politician, Wood trained for the priesthood. He was ordained a deacon before migrating to England in 1962, serving as a priest at St Paul's cathedral, before being appointed curate at St Stephen's, Shepherds Bush. Wood became known for promoting racial justice and for arguing that the church should engage in anti-racist activism. He co-authored a book on the issue in 1968, with the title *Vicious Circle* and in 1971 was elected president of the Institute of Race Relations.

In 1974, he was appointed vicar of St Laurence, Catford. In 1977 he became dean of East Lewisham (with the rather anachronistic title of 'rural dean') and an honorary canon of Southwark cathedral. In 1982, he was appointed Archdeacon of Southwark, at which time he and his family lived at 1A Dog Kennel Hill in East Dulwich. In 1985, Wood was consecrated as Bishop of Croydon, the first Black bishop of the Church of England in the United Kingdom.

Wood took up a wide range of other appointments. He was a member of the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedures, which led to the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service. He served on the Archbishop's Commission on urban priority areas , which produced the *Faith in the City* report and led to the establishment of the Church Urban Fund. He was a lay magistrate from 1971 to 1982. He was the moderator of the World Council of Churches Programme to Combat Racism, which supported liberation movements challenging the apartheid regime in South Africa. He served on the board of the government's Housing Corporation (for whom this author worked at the time), where he was lead board member for South London and the Southern Home Counties and was a founder member of a number of housing associations.

In 2010, Wood published a further book: *Faith for a Glad Fool*, subtitled ' Britain's First Black Bishop Speaks on Racial Justice, Faith, Love and Sacrifice'.

In 2002, Wilfred Wood retired and returned to Barbados, where he still lives. This was apparently always his intention – he stayed somewhat longer in Britain than he had originally planned. He is now 84.

A recent blogpost on the SCM Press website by another published black cleric, A D A France-Williams summarised Wood's life and achievements, and is worth quoting in full:

"Back in the late sixties a young black clergyman arrived on English shores from the West Indian Island of Barbados. He only planned on staying a few years. He saw prejudice was rife which deepened a sense of calling for him to be involved in 'being the change he wanted to see in the world.'

He noticed black youths being treated poorly and at times criminally by law enforcement. He noticed bright young black people systemically and systematically prevented from mounting the first rung of the career ladder due to the bias. He witnessed the multiple barriers to housing for black families as they put up with abysmal living conditions and had little support from officials to fight their corner. The list goes on, he spotted the escalating debt as black families on meagre resources took loans with astronomical repayment schemes, which were tantamount to economic slavery. He saw a church with agreeable black people still so stunned from the shock of racism that they encountered shuffling in and out of their pews without interacting with their white peers.

He noticed that society was unwilling though not unable to make a difference to the lives of black people. He wrote about the issues with a curate colleague at St Stephens Shepherds Bush in a book called Vicious Circle. The insights they had were penetrating. He saw it as a gospel imperative to create what we call the kingdom, or to establish God's shalom, a sense of all-round wholeness and completion for person and place. After describing and identifying the problems he set to work on resolving them…. He determined that he would source the funding for what he needed without a reliance on the existing social systems. So, what did he do? He set up a fund to support black families in need, established a credit union to create sustainable ongoing income, opened Saturday schools to supplement education, formed a successful job club, and established a housing agency which is still going, and more.

It was all funded independently and so kept its sense of agency and power to affect change and work with a culturally appropriate world-view. Statutory funding had strings attached, was top down, bureaucratic and in many cases demeaning. He, on the other hand, always began with the dignity of the person or persons in need.

Wilfred leant more towards the church and was a founder with others of ABC - The Association of Black Clergy. This was an ecumenical network of around 200

clergy of BAME backgrounds. Through that platform and strategic friendships he rose to become a bishop in 1985. He was Britain's first black bishop. I suspect he wanted a movement to scale up the astonishing endeavours he was the engine for. Technically, theologically, and theoretically it seemed the right move but he had not factored in that the rot of society's racism ran through the heart of the church as well.

He was frustrated at every turn. His role in helping produce the Faith in the City Report demonstrates a desire to have three strands of the seminary, advocacy in the society, and a reformed synod, all working in tandem to combat racism wherever it was found. However, the church structure was unable to contain his bold ambition, he became trapped within the edifice through which he hoped to liberate others.

Within the synod chambers his voice felt too loud, too strident. He spoke about General Synod copying 'slaveholder's thinking'. That rhetoric was not easily swallowed and he was not applauded for that speech, though he was applauded for others. He was seen as disloyal. Thankfully, he had white allies who held up his arms - like Moses on the mountain, with companions either side of him as he oversaw the battles. For Wilfred two of those comrades in arms were Canon John Collins and Bishop Trevor Huddleston whose experience of engaging in the battles against racism in the South of America and South Africa respectively had sensitized them to challenging racism on UK soil.

He also had a hinterland, a place not visible to those who sat and simmered. He was connected to the African-American Episcopalians (Anglicans) network and he was also a part of the Afro-Anglicanism project which was a network of global Anglicans of African descent or diaspora. Both of these groups specifically lent support to his efforts."

Sources:

https://scmpress.hymnsam.co.uk/blog/we-need-bishop-wilfred-woods-voice-more-than-ever
https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/bhm-firsts/bishop-wilfred-wood-the-church-of-englands-first-black-bishop/

TESSA JOWELL: The People's Politician

Tessa Jowell was born Tessa Palmer in Marylebone in 1947. Her father was a doctor and her mother a radiographer. Educated at an independent school in Aberdeen, she attended Aberdeen University, where she became student union president and subsequently the University of Edinburgh, where she obtained at MA in Social Administration. She became a social worker in Craigmillar in Edinburgh before moving to London to take up the post of child care officer for Lambeth council. She then trained as a psychiatric social worker at Goldsmiths College before

working at the Maudsley hospital. She then became an assistant director of the mental health charity, MIND.

Jowell joined the Labour Party at the age of 22 1n 1969. She was elected to Camden council in 1971, and became chair of the social services committee at the age of 25. In the same year, she married Roger Jowell, a South African and a Camden alderman, though they divorced in 1977. Roger Jowell later founded Social and Community Planning Research, and was awarded a knighthood. He died in 2011. In 1978, Tessa Jowell, who kept her husband's surname, stood for the Labour held parliamentary seat of Ilford North in a by-election, but lost the seat by 5.000 votes to the Conservative candidate, Vivian Bendall, who was to hold the seat until recaptured by Labour in 1997. In 1979, she contested the Ilford North seat for a second time, Bendall being returned with an increased majority.

In March 1979, Jowell married David Mills, a lawyer who was also a Labour councillor in Camden. David Mills' brother, John Mills was also a Labour councillor and leading Labour Party fundraiser, and was married to Dame Barbara Mills, Director of Public Prosecutions from 1992 to 1998. Tessa Jowell and David Mills had two children. The family stayed living in north London. Jowell continued to serve as a Camden councillor, and chaired the social services committee of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities between 1984 and 1986.

Tessa Jowell

In 1992, Tessa Jowell, having failed to win the Labour nomination for Bermondsey and then for Hampstead and Highgate, stood for the Dulwich parliamentary seat. The seat had been held by the Conservative, Gerald Bowden, since 1983 when Bowden had defeated the Labour candidate, Kate Hoey, by nearly 2,000 votes. He had defeated her again in 1987, with a majority of only 180 votes. In 1992, Jowell won the seat with a majority of over 2,000 votes. She was to hold the seat, which in 1997 was renamed Dulwich and West Norwood after a boundary change, until she resigned in 2015. Jowell was appointed to a series of roles on the Labour front bench – health spokesperson, spokesperson on women and opposition whip. With Labour being returned to power under Tony Blair in 1997, she was appointed a minister of state in the Department of Health, leading on public health. In 1998, she launched the Sure Start programme which had the aim of "giving children the best possible start in life through improvement of childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development. Jowell also had a major role in producing the Green Paper ' Our Healthier Nation' which focused on reducing health inequalities. She introduced a set

of health targets. In 1999, she moved to a similar role in the Department for Education and employment. Jowell once commented “I moved from social care to government because it is only in government that you can provide the big solutions.”

After the 2001 election, Jowell moved again, this time taking the cabinet role of Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, replacing Chris Smith. Jowell led on the 2003 Communications Act, which introduced a new media regulator, OFCOM . She also introduced a review of the National Lottery and a restructuring of Arts Council funding. In 2004 she promoted a series of 'super-casinos', which led to some criticism. In 2005, Jowell established a new BBC Trust to replace the long-established Board of Governors. Jowell was a close personal friend of Tony Blair – at one stage, she was reported as saying that ' She would jump under a bus for him'. When Gordon Brown took over as Prime Minister in 2007, Jowell was demoted and lost her cabinet post, but kept her Olympics portfolio as well as being appointed Paymaster General and Minister for London. In 2008, she lost her London remit to Tony McNulty, but in 2009 returned to the cabinet as Minister for the Cabinet Office. Jowell's reputation as a 'people's politician' led to her being given ministerial responsibility for support for the families of the British victims of the World Trade Centre attack in 2001 and those caught up in the London terrorist attacks in 2005.

Jowell is remembered mainly for her role in promoting the London 2012 Olympics. It was apparently her idea when she was Culture Secretary and initially her proposal had little support within the cabinet. Having persuaded Blair and other colleagues to support her, Jowell launched the bid for the Olympics in 2004. Despite Labour losing power in the 2010 general election, Jowell stayed on the Olympics Organising Committee. After the Olympics were completed, Jowell returned to the backbenches. She was however appointed a Dame and in 2015 was given a peerage.

Jowell was a loyal supporter of Blair and seen as part of the New Labour leadership group. As a cabinet member, she supported Blair's decision to invade Iraq in 2004, a position that led to divisions within the Dulwich Labour Party. Jowell was to continue to defend Blair's decision, even in the context of the findings of the Chilcot enquiry in 2016.

Jowell was a popular and hard working constituency MP, despite the fact that she did not live in the constituency. She also became involved in the Blue Labour movement, initiated by Lord Glasman, which sought to revive the right wing of the Labour party through a notion of citizen responsibility and contributed to their *Purple Book* publication. This was published in 2011, with the subtitle ' A Progressive Future for Labour'. Jowell also wrote articles and spoke at conferences for the Labour centrist pressure group, Progress.

After standing down from parliament, Jowell sought the Labour nomination for the London Mayoralty. Of the six candidates, Sadiq Khan won the nomination., with Jowell coming second. Khan went on to win the Mayoral election, taking over from Boris Johnson in 2016. Jowell subsequently took on a teaching role at the School of Health Policy and Management at Harvard University and was also appointed a Fellow of the Institute of Government in London. Jowell was then diagnosed with brain cancer. She used the last months of her life to advocate making more cancer treatment available on the National Health Service. She died in May 2018. A book based on interviews with Tessa was published in 2018- *The Power of Politicians*. The Tessa Jowell Health Centre is named in her memory

Sources:

Obituary in The Guardian by Julia Langdon
Obituary in the Independent
BBC Obituary
Jowell, Tessa *The Power of Politicians* (Haus publishing 2018)

ANNEX: RADICALS IN YOUR STREET

Clubs, political offices and meeting halls

Havil Street Peckham Camberwell Vestry, then Camberwell Town Hall from 1900; Southwark Town Hall from 1964
Independent Labour Party: 27 Whiteley Road (committee room in 1894), Hansler Hall, Hansler Street ILP office from 1912 (also office for South London No Conscription Fellowship)
Dulwich Labour Party 95 Grove Vale Office from 1929 to1997)
Dulwich and West Norwood Labour Party 264 Rosendale Road Office from 1997
Dulwich Working Men's Radical Club (East Dulwich Radical Club) Shawbury Hall, Shawbury Road from 1889
Peckham and Dulwich Radical Club 114 Rye Lane then 188 Rye Lane 1885-1896
Dulwich Reform Club (also office of Dulwich Radical and Liberal Association)
Norland House, Goose Green East Dulwich Road 1886-1901
(Dulwich Constitutional Club, 33 East Dulwich Road was a Conservative working men's club)
Public meeting halls:

Dulwich library, Lordship Lane
Dulwich Baths, East Dulwich Road

Where the radicals (and a few other local politicians) lived

(persons in **bold** included in biographies)
(Number NK is Number not known)

East Dulwich

Chesterfield Road Number 25 **Louise Michel** 1897-8?
Copleston Road Number NK **John Middleton Murry** 1890's to 1901
Placquet Road (now part of Copleston Road) **Louise Michel** 1893-7?
Crystal Palace Road Number 222 Francis Macdonald (treasurer Dulwich Independent Labour Party) 1894
Dog Kennel Hill Number 1A **Bishop Wilfred Wood**
Friern Road 'Ellesmere' **Alison Neilans** born here 1894
Goodrich Road Number 42 Edward Cray (secretary Dulwich Independent Labour Party 1894))
Keston Road Number 46 **Arthur Creech Jones MP** 1907-24?
Landcroft Road Number 25 Edward Cray (Secretary Dulwich Independent Labour Party 1904)
Lordship Lane 'Zelia' 264 **Alison Neilans**
Adon Mount (now Mount Adon Road) James Henderson (Liberal parliamentary candidate in 1887 and President of the Dulwich Reform Club)
Grove Tavern (formerly Green Man Tavern) Lord Thurlow (Lord Chancellor) before1792
Marmora Road Number 56 **John Morrison Davidson** 1900's
Oglander Road Number 86 **Henry Aldridge** to 1906
Tyrrell Road Number 2 **Allen and Phillis Skinner** 1890's to 1920
Worlingham Road Number NK **John Middleton Murry** 1901-1904

North Dulwich

Beckwith Road Number 56 **Jean Shapiro** 1940's
Denmark Hill Number 163 **John Ruskin** 1843-1872
Ruskin Park House **Jack and Evelyn Jones** from 1963
East Dulwich Road Number 191 **John and Alice Harris** 1910-1921
Half Moon Lane (formerly Ireland Green) Court Lodge **Brass Crosby** 1756-1772
Red Post Hill Number 79 **Arthur Creech Jone**s from 1924?
Ruskin Walk Number 5 **Mabel Styles** (Pacifist Research Bureau) from 1934
Warmington Road Number 2 **Councillor Sam King** 1958-1984

Dulwich Village

Beauval Road Number 51 **Maltman Barry** to 1909
Court Lane Number 77 **George Brown MP (later Lord George-Brown)** 1950-1963
'Eastlands' (site of Eastlands Crescent) Sir Frederick Hall MP (Conservative) 1905-1932
Dovercourt Road Number 96 **Christopher Price MP** 1967-76

Dulwich Village Number 110 **John Silkin MP** 1957-8
Camden House **Charles Voysey** 1870-73
Eynella Road Number 14 **Samuel Oliver** 1908-1916
Turney Road Number 154 **Edward Upward** 1945-1961
Woodwarde Road Number NK **Albert Booth MP** 1968-83

West Dulwich

Carson Road Number 28 **Alice Vickery, Charles Drysdale and George Drysdale** 1885-1923
Colby Road Number 39 **Annie Besant** from 1874
Farquar Road 11 The Terrace **Thomas Scott** from 1870 - ?
Ildersley Grove, Croxted Road No 4 **Ebenezer Howard** 1879-1885
Lancaster Avenue Number 55 **Mary Alger** 1878-1894
Thurlow Park Road Number 125 **Jimmy Thomas MP** 1920-1949
Estate of a thousand acres, stretching from Herne Hill to Streatham, with a house where corner of Elmcourt Road and Thurlow Park Road now is: Lord Thurlow (Lord Chancellor) 1792 -1806?

South Dulwich

Alleyn Park Number 65 **Jonathan and Frida Knight** 1940's
Alleyn Road Number 1 **Sam Silkin MP and John Silkin MP** 1951
Allison Grove Number 2 **George and Katherine Thomson** 1930's, 1940's, Number 7 William and Margaret Joyce (British Union of Fascists/National Socialist League) until 1939
College Road, Bird How **Leslie Hale MP ,Baron Hale** 1945-85?
Bell House Thomas Wright (Lord Mayor of London in 1785-6) 1766-98
St John's Wood House **James O'Mara MP** and **Agnes O'Mara** 1907-1914
Wood Hall **George Grote MP** and **Harriet Grote** 1832-37
Number 76 **Lewis Silkin MP** from 1924
Gallery Road 'Belair ' Evan Spicer (Liberal parliamentary candidate in December1910)
Kingswood Drive The Chalet No 4 (site of church) **Allan Octavian Hume** 1894-1912
Pond Cottages Number 11 **Percy and Lydia Horton** 1920's, 1930's
Sydenham Hill Number 41 'Beltwood' **Maria Saxton Sales** 1851-1914
The following Liberal and Labour parliamentary or LCC candidates included in biographies were not known to have lived in the Dulwich area: Harry Quelch, Charles Masterman, Charles Smith, Fred Hughes, Helen Bentwich, Jim Delahaye, Tessa Jowell. John Beckett MP apparently lived in Dulwich at some time, but no specific address has yet been identified. He did spend a number of years in Brixton prison.

Two Hundred Years of Dulwich Radicalism

by Duncan Bowie

Duncan Bowie has lived in the Dulwich area since 1984. He is a member of the Dulwich Society local history committee as well as being vice-chair of the Dulwich Village Labour Party branch and a former secretary of the South East London Fabians Society. He is co-chair of the Socialist History Society and for the last 15 years has been reviews editor and written a history column for the socialist journal *Chartist*. With degrees in history and town planning, Duncan has spent most of his professional career in planning and housing within local, regional and national government, with ten years teaching planning and housing in London universities.

Now semi-retired, he is an honorary research associate at the Bartlett School of Planning, UCL. His books include *Politics, Planning and Homes in a World City* (Routledge 2010), *Roots of the British Socialist Movement* (Socialist History Society 2014), *Radical Solutions to the Housing Supply Crisis* (Policy Press 2017), *The Radical and Socialist Tradition in British Planning* (Routledge 2017) and *Reform and Revolt in the City of Dreaming Spires* (University of Westminster Press 2018). His next book *Twentieth Century Socialism in Britain* is due to be published by the Socialist History Society in early 2022.

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