

Women's History **MAGAZINE**

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Claudia Thompson on
Amalia and Annie: A Case Study in Women's Suffrage

Marjorie Feld on
Lillian D. Wald and the 'Female Dominion' of American Reform

Ellen Jacobs on
'Travelling "fellows"': Women Social Scientists in inter-war Britain

Vivienne Barker on
A Half-forgotten Heroine: Edmone Robert

PLUS:

Two Book Reviews

*Conference Notices/Calls
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women's
HISTORY
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14th Conference of the Women's History Network
**Women, Art and Culture:
Historical Perspectives**

September 2nd - 4th 2005, Southampton

Southampton Institute, Sir James Matthews Conference Centre, Southampton, Hants.



Women and the visual arts; painting, sculpture, architecture, and the decorative arts.

Women and the Arts and Crafts Movement/Home Decorating.

Women and the performing arts.

Women and the literary arts.

Women as art objects/images of women.

Women as mediators of culture.

Women as collectors and benefactors.

Plenary Speakers:

Frances Borzello on 'Women Artists: Self Portraits'

Marina Vaizey on '20th Century Women Collectors'

Janice Helland from Queens University, Kingston, Canada

Speakers, papers and a provisional programme will be posted at

www.womenshistorynetwork.org

as soon as they become available. Papers will be considered for special issues of:

Women's History Magazine & Women's History Review.

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Editorial

This edition of the *Women's History Magazine* marks a bit of a milestone—it is the tenth edition of the *Magazine*, which took over from, and combined many of the functions of, the former *Notebooks* and *Newsletter*. Elaine Chalus, Debbi Simonton and Heloise Brown were in at the start, joined by Jane Potter as Book Reviews Editor, and were primarily responsible for the new look, shape and approach. Both Elaine and Heloise moved on and Niki Pullin, a former newsletter editor, and Claire Jones joined the editorial team. As we move into the next ten (hundred?), Niki reluctantly has had to step down. We would like to thank her for her sterling work, sometimes under difficult circumstances, and for her work as *Newsletter* editor which helped give birth to the *Magazine*. She shall be missed and we wish her all the best for the future.

During its short history, the *Magazine* has tried to mark WHN conferences and also produce themed issues as they emerged from submissions. So the London, Royal Holloway and Aberdeen conferences each had an issue devoted to their papers. This issue however draws on a variety of sources and running through it is a sense of women's biographies. In the first years of second wave feminism, women's historians turned away from biography, partly seeing it as a male approach to the 'great men' who 'shaped the past', with an aim of discovering women's lives. This coincided with a period in which social history and especially the left turned to looking at social groups, and examined the lives and experiences of what many saw as 'the real people'. However, over the last decade, we have seen a growth in women's biographical (and autobiographical) treatments including collective biographies such as Sarah Tillyard's on the Lennox sisters, and, in a rather different way, the work of Amanda Vickery on the *Gentleman's Daughter*. Showing maturity in women's history and utilising sources and historical explanation in different ways, the new approach to biography and women's lives has opened up a number of doors to illustrate the nuances of how women operated in the past and took an active role in shaping their lives. Thus the articles by Marjorie Feld on Lillian Wald, social reformer, and Claudia Thompson on Annie and Amalia, two women of Wyoming, explore women's views and their experiences of the political worlds of reform and suffrage, and indeed for Claudia Thompson the dynamic of the emergence of the West. Turning East, the political worlds of a group of women who visited the Soviet Union in the spirit of understanding and making sense of the Soviet 'experiment' form the subjects of Ellen Jacob's article on *Travelling Fellows*.

Following the chronological thread and political subtext, Vivienne Barker's short piece on a local French Second World War heroine takes up yet another way that women interacted with their political realities. Joyce Walker's review of Gerda Lerner's *Grimké Sisters* fits neatly with these. Taken together, we have a rich and diverse analysis of women as actors in the political world, often described as a male space. We also have

good examples of how biographical approaches can reveal the kind of nuances that shaped women's approaches to their worlds.

The cover picture this month should be familiar as the poster girl for Conference 2005 – Women, Art & Culture. If you haven't registered yet, and have been telling yourself, 'I must remember to ...' now is the time to stop procrastinating. Forms were due by 2 July, but there should be space for attendees, though check with the conference committee about accommodation. The combination of women's history and developments in other historical traditions represented by art and culture should make this a vibrant and exciting event where the cross-fertilization of ideas encourages different patterns of thought. I had thought to summarize some of the themes here, but a look at the website shows just how diverse and innovative some of these sessions will be.

Claire Jones, Jane Potter and Debbi Simonton

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Amalia and Annie: A Case Study in Women's Suffrage

D. Claudia Thompson

American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

One day in early April, Amalia Post sat down in her Cheyenne, Wyoming, home to write a letter to her sister in Michigan. After lamenting her own poor health and detailing the family news, she concluded: 'I suppose you are aware that Women can hold any office in this territory ... I am intending to vote this next election'.¹ What makes this letter extraordinary was that Mrs. Post was writing in 1870, fifty years before women's suffrage became universal in the United States and fifty-eight years before it was enacted in Britain. Mrs. Post's situation differed because Wyoming Territory, where she lived, had already granted its women full rights of citizenship, including the right to vote.

This fact, though rare, was not really unexpected. American women had been agitating for the right to vote for a century. During the drive for American independence in the 1770s, politically astute colonial women had sought to include female voting rights in the new states' constitutions. They achieved no success. In the 1830s and 1840s, women's participation in the political process began to increase again when activists found a rallying point in anti-slavery campaigns. Yet although the Civil War ended with universal male suffrage, females were still excluded from the polls. Women who had campaigned heavily for the rights of former slaves had to begin all over to convince their legislators that they were worthy to have the rights they had gained for others. This campaign lasted from the end of the war in 1865 to the passage of the nineteenth amendment to the United States constitution in 1920.² There were, however, some partial victories in the meantime as individual states and territories finally extended voting rights to the women within their borders: Wyoming in 1869, Utah in 1870 (rescinded in 1887 and restored in 1896), Colorado in 1893, Idaho in 1896, five more states in 1912.³

Why did it take so long? Why did so many American women accept disenfranchisement for so many generations? Part of the answer can be found in the image of women as weaker vessels containing spirits too pure and delicate for the unpleasant necessities of business or politics. The idea that a woman's virtue would be corrupted by participation in partisan politics

had roots in Europe, as did the belief that woman's proper sphere was the home and family, rendering her desirably ignorant of the greater world. American women were taught not that they were inferior but that they were different: emotional and empathetic as opposed to men who were logical and competitive. They were, they were told, ideally suited to conduct their homes and rear their children, but no 'true woman' would be comfortable in the grosser world of public affairs.⁴

Image and tradition are powerful persuaders. Few girls were willing to risk the stigma of not being 'true women'. It is seldom easy to trace any individual's mental or emotional processes in altering or abandoning a deeply-held belief system, but in the following article, I will attempt to trace that process in one American woman.

Amalia Barney Simons was born January 30, 1826, in Johnson, Vermont. The family later moved to Michigan, and Amalia married Walker T. Nichols of Lexington, Michigan, in 1855.⁵ By 1858 the couple was living in Nebraska Territory. There, in September, 1858, Amalia's only child, a daughter, was born. This child's death a little over a year later devastated her mother.⁶ Then, in the spring of 1860, Walker Nichols departed on what Amalia believed would be a short business trip. '[H]ow much I do want to see him', Amalia wrote to her sister. '[Y]ou do not know how much I think of him since the death of the baby'.⁷ Amalia fretted, but she received no news until, seven weeks later, she learned of her husband's whereabouts from a traveller returning from Denver, Colorado, about 500 miles (or 650 kilometers) to the west. 'Walker has gone to the mines', she wrote.⁸ 'I did not know that he was going ... he left me without any money all alone among strangers ... but I suppose that he has done what he thought best'.⁹

Nichols occasionally sent money back to her, but Amalia apparently survived that winter by borrowing money from her father in order to return to her family in Michigan.¹⁰ In May or June of 1861 she travelled to Denver to be reunited with her husband. Denver, in the newly-formed Colorado Territory, was only a little over two years old, and it had the usual reputation of frontier towns. According to the evidence of Amalia's letters, at least some of this reputation was justified. '[I] dont [sic] know who is married nor who is not', she complained, 'there is no such thing as chastity'.¹¹ Her reunion with Walker, however, was apparently a happy one. He 'was beside himself with joy to see me',¹² she assured her sister.

Yet by April of the following year, Amalia's marriage was beginning to fall apart. Someone sent a warning to her family, because she replied with a letter of reassurance. 'You can not tell how badly I felt to think

you should get a letter like that you received in regard to Walker & myself – one thing it has shown me that ... I have a home to go to and those that love me'.¹³ But in spite of Amalia's denial, there was trouble. In September of 1862 Amalia Nichols was granted a divorce from her husband on the grounds of desertion and adultery. Walker Nichols did not appear at the divorce proceedings in Denver. Depositions indicate that he had left the territory in the company of another woman.¹⁴

It does not seem that Amalia went home after her divorce. Apparently she dreaded the judgements of casual acquaintances in Michigan. She begged her family not to 'tell any person anything about my affairs'.

I hate to have them know that Walker & I are separated ... The death of friends is nothing compared to change of feelings, deceit, treachery where you loved & trusted, & that one a husband, ... disgrace[,] abuse[,] all sorts of meannesses[,] living with another [sic] when you was living with him[,] steal[ing] your clothes for a Strumpet. [T]hink I have been called to pass through all of this[,] ... think how he treated me, the one he had sworn to love & cherish above all others[.]¹⁵

But if shame kept Amalia from returning to Michigan, it was the economic opportunities she found in Colorado that allowed her to stay. 'I have a hundred chickens which will bring a dollar apiece', she wrote to her father. 'I let out \$500 the first of April[. S]hall have \$600 the first of August[,] \$100 for the use. Dont [sic] you think that is doing very well! ... A person with a thousand dollars [can] go to the River & buy stock [and] can become rich in a little time'.¹⁶ Indeed, so long as her failed marriage could be kept secret, she anticipated that her next visit home would prove triumphal. 'I shall come fixed a little different from what I did before I should think[.] I have every thing nice & plenty of money & know enough [sic] to keep it'.¹⁷

In October of 1864, Amalia married Morton E. Post, a Denver acquaintance fourteen years her junior.¹⁸ 'Gentlemen here marry women ten or twelve years older [.] 'T]is just as common as the other way'.¹⁹ In 1867 Morton Post re-located to another brand new town: Cheyenne, about 130 miles to the north. Amalia joined him there sometime in July of 1868.²⁰

About a year and a half later, the first territorial assembly of the newly-formed Wyoming Territory (of which Cheyenne was now the capital) passed an act to grant women the right to vote and hold office, 'placing the

youngest territory on earth in the vanguard of civilization and progress'.²¹ Reasons asserted by the all-male legislators for their unusual decision ranged from conviction and a desire to do justice to publicity and a desire to encourage female immigration. One legislator later alleged that the passage of the act was a joke. Certainly the act did not seriously threaten male domination of territorial politics, since Wyoming contained six men for every adult woman.²² Whatever the motives, Wyoming had taken a step unique in western democracies at that time.

Until the passage of the suffrage act, Amalia showed very little interest in voting rights, but she was soon caught up in the experiment. The first tests of women's new civic responsibilities came before the election scheduled for September of 1870. Some judges ruled that, as jurors were selected from the voter rolls, women were now liable for jury service. Accordingly, women served on grand and petit juries from the spring of 1870 through the spring of 1871. After that, the weight of judicial opinion concluded that jury service was not a requirement of suffrage.²³

Among the women called to jury service was Amalia Post. She was not the only woman on the panel. Five other women, described by the local newspaper as 'wives of some of the leading citizens of Cheyenne', served on the same jury.²⁴ 'I was Foreman of the Jury', Amalia wrote,

& the man was condemned [sic] & sentenced to be hung[. W]e found him guilty of murder in the first degree as found in indictment[. H]e is to be hung on the 21 of April[.] I as foreman had to reply in ans[wer] to the judge ['A]re you all agreed?[' 'W]e are['] & hand in my report. There is no fun in sitting on a jury where there is [sic] murder cases to be tried[. T]his one that is to be hung killed two[.]²⁵

The brief experiment with women jurors may have been intended to discredit female suffrage. It did not do so, but it did have consequences. For one thing, the male jurors felt inhibited from smoking and spitting inside the jury box, reducing their level of comfort. In addition, it was believed that female jurors were stricter and less inclined to accept pleas of self-defense in murder cases. Amalia's testimony would seem to support that perception. Women, it was reported, also tended to impose heavier fines.²⁶ Overall, it seems that the women jurors simply applied the moral values of their home circle to society at large. As for the

September election, there is no reason to doubt that Amalia voted. There were about one thousand women eligible to vote in the territory, and most of them turned out to the polls.²⁷ The experience of Wyoming suggests that women largely saw no conflict between voting or jury service and woman's sphere.

For the most part, Wyoming women accepted suffrage when it was given to them but did not actively agitate to extend the privilege to their sisters in other areas. Amalia Post was a partial exception. In January of 1871, she travelled to Washington D.C. as a delegate from Wyoming to the annual lobbying conference of the National Woman Suffrage Association. There she conferred with such leaders of the national movement as Susan B. Anthony, Victoria Woodhull, and Isabella Beecher Hooker. 'I was made more of than any other Lady in convention', she boasted. But when Mrs. Hooker pressed her to stay on and 'besiege congress' she refused.²⁸ Whatever Amalia's reasons, they had nothing to do with deference to her husband's opinions. She no longer subordinated her judgement to a man's. Post, she told her sister, was 'very indignant as he thinks a Woman has no rights'.²⁹

The sister to whom so many of Amalia's letters were addressed was Ann Pettibone Simons, born November 3, 1828. Ann married Dr. George Kilbourne of Montpelier, Vermont, on June 22, 1851. Dr. Kilbourne died in April of 1856, and two months later Ann gave birth to a daughter, Annie. Annie and her mother made their home with Ann's and Amalia's father, William Simons, in Lexington, Michigan, through most of Annie's childhood.³⁰

The death of Amalia's only child apparently caused her to turn her maternal affections toward her widowed sister's daughter. Her letters are full of concern for Annie's progress, and she had been sending money to Ann since at least 1866 to pay for Annie's piano lessons.³¹ In 1873 Annie Kilbourne, seventeen years old, lively, and determined to have a good time, came to live with her aunt and uncle in Cheyenne. By then the Posts were well established in the top echelon of Cheyenne society. Morton Post was a Laramie County Commissioner and a leading banker and businessman.³² There were too few young unmarried women in Cheyenne for the number of single men in any case, and Annie's connections made her a particularly attractive match. 'I have had plenty of attention since [I] have been here', she informed her mother. '[M]ost every person has called on me'.³³

Annie attended 'calico balls', masquerades, and prayer meetings. She went riding, she went driving, and she danced. In between times she gave music lessons and

played for the Presbyterian church. When she was at home, she played cards or wrote letters. She lavished a good deal of time and thought on her clothes, and she accepted the attentions of numerous young men.³⁴ Annie was so popular that she could afford to be exclusive and, apparently, she sometimes took advantage of the privilege: '[S]he attended a surprise party last evening', Amalia wrote. 'I urged her to go ... as the young Ladies seemed to have the impression that she did not think they were quite the thing[. S]he says this morning she will not go to any more of them'.³⁵

Throughout the spring and summer, Annie continued to keep her mother posted on what she was wearing (a new Japanese cloth suit and a ready made linen suit) and who she was seeing: 'Mr Rogers ... is getting to be my stand-by', 'Judge Carey took me out riding', 'I went up [to] the Fort with Mr Coakley'. Occasionally, she even permitted herself to become conceited. 'I have more beaus and attention paid me then [sic] any other girl here'.³⁶ By the summer of 1875 Annie was anxious to get away. 'I have had three offers of Marriage in the last two or three weeks', she complained. 'I want to get home as I am bothered to death with the gentlemen'.³⁷

While she was back in Michigan, she corresponded with several young men in Cheyenne. But one of them now took precedence over the others. At some time after her return to Cheyenne in the winter of 1875-6, she reached an understanding with Adrian J. Parshall. Parshall, like Annie, came originally from Michigan. He was born in Ann Arbor in 1849 and graduated from the State University of Michigan after a course in civil engineering. In Cheyenne he worked as a draftsman in the office of the United States surveyor general. After becoming engaged to Annie, he moved to Custer City in the Black Hills of Dakota Territory to establish himself economically.³⁸

Amalia apparently did not approve of Parshall. Perhaps that was why Annie insisted that her engagement remain a secret in Cheyenne.³⁹ However, the secrecy had another benefit. It permitted Annie to continue to receive other young men. She visited in their homes and accepted expensive birthday presents from them.⁴⁰ Parshall hinted that this treatment of him 'seemed more like flirtation than true affection', but assured her that she was his "'beau ideal" of character and discrimination' and 'a true lady'.⁴¹ In the fall Parshall came to Cheyenne and escorted Annie part of the way home to Michigan. He urged her again not to accept too much attention from her other admirers. 'I know you will do right about the matter, and I shant get angry or jealous any more', he told her, adding, 'I think I had better tell Mrs P. that we are engaged[.]'.⁴² But Mrs. Post's knowledge of the engagement did not change Annie. She continued to

quarrel with him over what she perceived as his unfounded jealousy. 'If[,] Annie[,] you enjoy flirting and think you are doing nothing wrong', Parshall capitulated at last, 'why I most certainly shall have no objections. I have come to think myself very notional'.⁴³

In spite of Amalia's knowledge of the engagement, Parshall still felt that she was working against him. When Annie suggested that Parshall had overestimated her aunt's continued dislike of him, he protested. 'No, Annie, I have not. I think I know how she feels towards me. She says nothing bad about me[,] her attack is in a different form. It is ridicule ... I have felt the force of her strength [sic] in that direction not a few times'.⁴⁴ The Posts, however, did a good deal to make the marriage possible. By 1879 Parshall had a steady job in the First National Bank of Deadwood, an institution in which Morton Post held an interest, and he was at last making active plans for marriage. 'My wages will support us', he told Annie.⁴⁵ He refused to discuss the details of his business endeavors with her.

That is something I always think is best for me to know only myself ... I believe [husband and wife] have their separate spheres of action, that each have their particular cares, and can attend them best However I love you just as much and perhaps a good deal more than I would, if you knew all about the running of mans [sic] business, and matters which I always thought no woman ought to bother with.⁴⁶

Annie intended to have 'quite a wedding'. Parshall would have preferred something smaller, but was willing to indulge her if she would forgo receiving presents. 'It is beneath me to have my wife accept a lot of trash not worth packing away ... just because it is fashionable', he objected.⁴⁷ The wedding took place in Cheyenne on the evening of 17 December 1879, at the First Congregational Church. Mr. and Mrs. Morton Post, as hosts, sent out two hundred and fifty invitations requesting the presence of friends at the ceremony with a reception to follow in their home. The *Cheyenne Daily Sun* reported the celebration and described in detail the numerous wedding gifts received by the young couple.⁴⁸ Very soon afterwards, twenty-three-year-old Annie Parshall and her husband left for his home in Deadwood, Dakota Territory,⁴⁹ a move which instantly disenfranchised the young bride.

Amalia Simons Post and Annie Kilbourne Parshall were both women of their time and of their culture. Both were raised with the idea of separate spheres, and both, from the evidence of their letters, embraced the doctrine as young women. For Amalia, however, the real world

collided unpleasantly with this ideal. Although she dutifully deferred to her first husband's judgement, he failed to make sound financial choices. Ultimately, rather than shielding her from the world, he abandoned her to it. According to the theory that women were incompetent to engage in the brutal struggle for survival on their own, Amalia should have become a helpless victim.

Rather than sinking to crime and prostitution, Amalia took up usury and livestock speculation and supported herself rather better than her husband had done. Even after she remarried, she retained financial independence by maintaining her property in her own name, a precaution possible to her because of the relatively liberal married women's property laws of Colorado and Wyoming.⁵⁰ It should also be noted that some of Amalia's success was due to the fact that she had been abandoned in a newly-settled country where women and capital were both rare. Cultural prejudice against women engaging in business was dissipated. She found eager business partners who were largely indifferent to the gender of their partner.⁵¹ But whatever the factors that assisted her, the result was that Amalia changed her mind about woman's sphere. She discovered first that she could not count on a man to protect her and then that she did not have to. She realised how dangerous the restraints of a gender role could be, and, gradually, she became active in the campaign to change them.

Why didn't Annie learn to value the power and independence that her aunt modelled for her? Partly, I think, because Annie discovered her own kind of power in Cheyenne. In Michigan she was a dutiful daughter and granddaughter living in genteel poverty and enduring a restricted social life.⁵² In Cheyenne, she was invited to the homes of the territorial governor and senator while she juggled the attentions of several young men and acted as social arbiter among the young ladies.⁵³ She even imposed her own, sometimes eccentric, ideas of propriety on her rather priggish favoured suitor. This kind of power did not require her to step outside of her accepted sphere. The expectations of her gender role supported rather than confined her. She could be as tyrannical as she liked, so long as she did not ask her husband where their money came from. Nor did anything in Annie's later life cause her to re-think her position. Parshall continued to support her and the daughter she bore him (and named Amalia).⁵⁴ By the 1890s he had returned to Wyoming, where he became treasurer of the city of Cheyenne in 1893, deputy state engineer from 1898 to 1901, and state engineer from 1911 to 1915.⁵⁵ His wife was never forced to discover what she could do without him.

Perhaps one reason women permitted themselves to be disenfranchised for so long was that the majority of women did not see a need for the kind of power that voting could bestow. For most, the Victorian ideal of separate spheres provided a comfortable security about their place and their importance in the world. The fact that the theory was flawed and could be disastrous if both parties did not live up to the ideal was apparent only to a few: those with personal experience of its failure and those (even more rare) who could imagine such a failure without experiencing it. Amalia was one of the former; but Annie was not one of the latter. Like most women, like most human beings, she proved unable to look beyond dogma to perceive a pain that she did not feel. Amalia wanted control of her life beyond her 'sphere' because she had experienced the unreality of the ideal. For Annie, the real and ideal worlds were closer. She felt no compulsion to struggle for a power that she did not need.

Notes

1. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming (hereafter AHC) Morton E. Post Family Papers, 1851-1900, Accession Number 1362, Amalia to Sister, Cheyenne, 4 Apr. 1870.
2. For the history of women's suffrage agitation in the United States, see Robert J. Dinkin, *Before Equal Suffrage: Women in Partisan Politics from Colonial Times to 1920* (Westport, Connecticut, 1995) and Ellen Carol Dubois, *Woman Suffrage & Women's Rights* (New York and London, 1998).
3. Dinkin, *Before Equal Suffrage*, 106, 120.
4. On the European roots of inequality, see Dinkin, *Before Equal Suffrage*, 7; see also Israel Kugler, *From Ladies to Women: the Organized Struggle for Woman's Rights in the Reconstruction Era* (Westport, Connecticut, 1987), 3-6. On woman's sphere, see Dubois, *Woman Suffrage & Women's Rights*, 32-3; and Mabel Collins Donnelly, *The American Victorian Woman: the Myth and the Reality* (Westport, Connecticut, 1986), 9, 137-9.
5. Cora Beach, *Women of Wyoming* (Casper, Wyoming, 1927), 170-1.
6. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Ann, Elkhorn City, N[eb]raska T[erritory], May 185[9]; 8 July [1859]; Amalia to Sister Ann, Omaha City, N. T., 19 Feb. 1860.
7. AHC, Post Family Papers, A. B. Nichols to Sister, 4 Mar. 1860.
8. This has reference to the gold rush excitement along Cherry Creek and into the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies, which was at its peak in 1860; see Stanley W. Zamonski and Teddy Keller, *The '59er's: Roaring Denver in the Gold Rush Days* (Frederick, Colorado, 1983).
9. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Ann, Omaha, N. T., 8 Apr. 1860.
10. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Father, Omaha N. T., 14 June 1860.
11. AHC, Post Family Papers, [unsigned] to Sister Ann, Denver City, 17 June 1861.
12. Ibid.
13. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister Ann, Denver City, Col. Territory, 13 Apr. 1862.
14. Colorado State Archives, Divorce Records, Amalia B. Nichols vs. Walker T. Nichols, Denver, 1 Sept. 1862.
15. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister Ann, Denver City, Col. Ter., 5 Sept. 1863.
16. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Farther [sic], Denver City, Col. Ter., 20 Apr. 1863.
17. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister Ann, Denver City, Col. Ter., 5 Sept. 1863.
18. Beach, *Women of Wyoming*, 171; Virginia Cole Trenholm (ed.), *Wyoming Blue Book, Volume 1* (Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1974) 286.
19. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister Ann, Denver City, Col. Territory, 13 Apr. 1862.
20. AHC, Post Family Papers, Morton to Wife, Denver, 9 Aug. 1867; M.E. Post to Wife, Cheyenne, 5 July 1868.
21. Edward M. Lee, territorial secretary, quoted in T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd edition, revised (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1978) 78.
22. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 80-1.
23. Ibid., 84-5.
24. *Cheyenne* (Wyoming) *Daily Leader*, 21 Mar. 1871.
25. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister, Cheyenne Wyoming, [Mar. 1871].
26. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 85.
27. Ibid.
28. Kugler, *From Ladies to Women*, 80; AHC, Post Family Papers, Unsigned (incomplete) to Sister, Cheyenne, 4 Feb. 1871.
29. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 4 Apr. 1870.
30. Beach, *Women of Wyoming*, 170-1.
31. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister, Denver City, Col. Ter., 23 Aug. 1866.
32. Trenholm, *Wyoming Blue Book*, 150, 286.
33. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie to mother, Cheyenne, 28 Nov. 1873.
34. Ibid.
35. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Sister, n. p., 4 Feb. 1874.
36. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie to mother, Cheyenne, 3 May 1874 and 14 June 1874. The fort referred to as Fort D. A.

Russell, a United States frontier army post.

37. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie to Mama, Cheyenne, 6 June 1875.

38. S. Bartlett, *History of Wyoming, Volume III* (Chicago, 1918) 201-2; AHC, Post Family Papers, Adrian to Annie, Custer City, D[akota] T[erritory], 13 Feb. 1876.

39. AHC, Post Family Papers, A. J. Parshall to Annie, Cheyenne, 14 Dec. 1876.

40. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie to Mother, Cheyenne, 24 June 1876.

41. AHC, Post Family Papers, A.J.P. to Annie, Custer City, D.T., 29 July 1876.

42. AHC, Post Family Papers, A.J. Parshall to Annie, Cheyenne, Wyo., 14 Dec. 1876.

43. AHC, Post Family Papers, Adrian to Annie, Custer City, D. T., 20 Feb. 1877.

44. AHC, Post Family Papers, Adrian to Annie, Deadwood, D. T., 27 Oct. 1878.

45. AHC, Post Family Papers, A.J.P. to Annie, Deadwood, Dakota, 24 July 1879.

46. *Ibid.*, 2 Jan. 1879.

47. *Ibid.*, 17 Oct. 1879.

48. *Cheyenne* (Wyoming) *Daily Sun*, 18 Dec. 1879; *Cheyenne* (Wyoming) *Daily Leader*, 18 Dec. 1879.

49. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie to mother, Deadwood, 26 Dec. 1879.

50. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Father, Cheyenne, Wyo., 29 Mar. 1876; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 78.

51. AHC, Post Family Papers, Amalia to Farther [sic], Denver City, Col. Ter., 20 Apr. 1863.

52. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie to mother, Jeddo, 28 Jan. 1872.

53. AHC, Post Family Papers, Annie Kilbourne to mother, Cheyenne, 2 Dec. 1874; Amalia to Sister, n. p., 4 Feb. 1874.

54. Beach, *Women of Wyoming*, 171.

55. Bartlett, *History of Wyoming*, 201-2; Trenholm, *Wyoming Blue Book*, 166.

Hometown Lessons: Lillian D. Wald and the ‘Female Dominion’ of American Reform

Marjorie N. Feld

Babson College, USA

Lillian D. Wald (1867-1940), American public health nurse and settlement house founder, was an American Progressive. Part of the Progressive Movement in the United States begun in the late nineteenth century, she dedicated herself to the expansion of public services necessary to meet the growing needs of an increasingly diverse and urban society under industrial capitalism.¹ She claimed membership in what Robyn Muncy has called the ‘female dominion in American Reform’, the largely women-centered network of middle-class activists who served as early architects for the social welfare state that would later be codified in Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal.² But unlike Jane Addams and many other women reformers, Wald did *not* come from a political family. Indeed, she stands apart from others in this female dominion as a second-generation ethnic, the daughter of German Jewish immigrants.

The fact that she was an American ethnic proved crucial to her social contributions. Her own family’s immigration and assimilation experiences provided her with ‘hometown lessons’ in gender, class, and ethnicity, lessons that shaped her life choices and her approach to Progressive reform. Within her family’s responses to new arrangements in industrial capitalism she found her first models of masculinity and femininity, class-based notions that were the German Jewish community’s means to assimilation. That community’s emphasis on universalism was the foundation on which she built her professional career.

Wald’s career began with her founding a settlement house and visiting nurses service in 1893. Settlement houses played a crucial role in the Progressive Movement, and they were central to the formation of this female dominion. The settlement movement began with Toynbee Hall, founded in London by Samuel Barnett and other university-educated men in 1884; its purpose was to bridge the gap and foster understanding between London’s educated and labouring classes, and to provide labourers with access to education and culture. In the United States, the settlement movement was sparked and staffed largely by privileged women. Muncy and other scholars have successfully argued that settlements both grew out of and challenged the ‘cult of

true womanhood' of white, middle-class women in this era: settlement women could engage in selfless, philanthropic service, invoking their 'naturally' moral and domestic natures; they also were independent of their families, and often of male leadership, and they claimed increasingly public roles in political conversations and struggles.

In their autobiographies, many of Wald's close friends and colleagues wrote of how they arrived at settlement work by way of singular, transformative experiences. Jane Addams wrote of witnessing a Spanish bullfight where she realized that she too was implicated in the brutality of humanity. At that moment she came to see her own 'self-deception' in thinking that she was an active contributor to humanity's nobler purposes.³ After that event, her narrative tells us, she adopted a universalist worldview – one that emphasized the bonds shared by all humanity – and acted upon it in founding Hull House in Chicago. With her settlement, she hoped to demonstrate the interdependence of the working and upper classes, of immigrants and the native born, and lessen the inequality of resources among those groups.

Like Addams, Lillian Wald spoke of her entrance into reform work as the product of one transformative event that helped her to formulate – and act on – her own emerging universalist worldview. In 1893, Wald had graduated from New York Hospital's training school for nurses and was enrolled at the Women's Medical College. She was asked to give a course in home nursing to immigrants on the Lower East Side. After the class, she was led by a small child to a crumbling tenement, where she found a desperately ill woman who had received no medical care. 'That morning's experience was a baptism of fire', she wrote in an often-quoted section of her first book, *The House on Henry Street* (1915). She continued:

On my way from the sickroom to my comfortable student quarters my mind was intent on my own responsibility. To my inexperience it seemed certain that conditions such as these were allowed because people did not know, and for me there was a challenge to know and to tell ... My naïve conviction remained that, if people knew things – and 'things' meant everything implied in the condition of the family – such horrors would cease to exist, and I rejoiced that I had had a training in the care of the sick that in itself would give me an organic relationship to the neighborhood in which this awakening had come.⁴

The gendered nature of Wald's universalism, so evident in this narrative, is clear. Wald's telling of her 'baptism of fire' offers rich material to study the link between her identity as a woman and her universalist impulses. First, the narrative masks her own, seemingly unfeminine, ambition to travel beyond the parameters of middle-class domesticity.⁵ Her nursing skills are offered up as a selfless societal contribution, as she announces her spiritual goal to preach what one historian calls the 'gospel of health'.⁶ Second, she draws a sharp contrast in gendered social meanings: her women's community of nurses has an 'organic' relationship with their neighbourhood of industrial labourers, while outside lies the increasingly mechanized, masculine, modern capitalistic society. This reification of 'natural' gender difference was key to the expansion of women's public roles in professionalizing fields like social work and nursing. Wald and her colleagues built on this difference to justify their access to professional authority and public power.

While a rich source for the meanings attributed to a figure's experience, autobiographical narratives like Wald's raise important questions about self-presentation. Agency for Wald and other women in this female dominion was produced not by one transformative event, but by sets of knowledge that included the social and political actions of their families. It included their education in life possibilities. Jane Addams's Quaker upbringing and the longtime political service of her father were integral building blocks in Addams's own lifelong dedication to universalism, to political and social reform.⁷

Wald also relied on the building blocks in her own varied experience. The key to her universalism, and by extension her Progressive activism, was the nineteenth-century immigration and assimilation of her family. Analyzing the narrative of her baptism within this context reveals the ways in which her life work built on her family history; it also reveals the ways in which she, in her female dominion, radically reinterpreted the hometown lessons she had received in Rochester, in northern New York State.

Scholars have long considered class and gender in studies of the origins of Progressivism. Yet they have ignored the degree to which the social currents of Progressivism were tied to a previous wave of immigrants, who strove to define their own American identities. Indeed, turn-of-the-twentieth-century Progressivism drew extensively from the cultural, political, and economic exchanges between old and new immigrants in America.⁸ The historical origins of Wald's universalism, one part of my larger ethnic biography of Wald, highlight the dynamic interplay among ethnicity, gender, and class.

This history begins with Wald's family in Germany, where they crafted a lifestyle that they would transport across the Atlantic to Wald's hometown. Prosperous and educated, the Wald family and their cohort in early nineteenth-century Germany were firmly invested in assimilation in a society whose working vision of the universal rights-bearing individual was a white, male Christian.⁹ Elite Jews in Germany mimicked the Protestant elite, altering their religious worship and lifestyles in the hopes of winning full acceptance and civic integration.¹⁰ With emancipation in mind, they formulated a culture that emphasized universalism, the bonds shared by people of all religions. Though many Jews in Germany hoped to retain some semblance of Jewish particularism, of religious group identity, evidence suggests that Wald's family endorsed complete assimilation; her mother's brother, for one, converted to Christianity.¹¹

Arriving in the United States around the time of the Revolutions of 1848, the Wald family and other German Jews began their 'encounter with emancipation'.¹² In this period of what Matthew Frye Jacobson calls their 'probationary whiteness', German Jews in the U.S. formed their own culture as a response to anti-Semitic exclusion and in order to assert identification.¹³ Their strivings toward acceptance and assimilation followed the patterns they had set in nineteenth-century Germany, especially in the organized religious movement of Reform Judaism: within their culture, they imitated the mainstream Anglo-Protestant elite. They continued to emphasize universalism, though it would be limited in important ways.

German Jews' endorsement of assimilation fit well within the liberal zeitgeist of Rochester, New York. Rochester was a bustling industrial city with a growing and powerful middle class. The origins of the city's liberal spirit lay in the Christian religious revivalism that swept through it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These revivals left in their wake liberal reform campaigns for charity, abolitionism, women's rights, temperance, and other causes, with women as central figures in each campaign.¹⁴ For wealthy Jews like the Walds, the city held the promise of integration into the white elite. Lillian Wald's activism grew out of the models of gender, class, and ethnic identity she saw in a community striving to realize this promise.

After interviewing Wald about her life, Robert Duffus, Wald's friend and first biographer, wrote that her family was 'seasoned in more than one national culture over and above their Hebraic substratum'.¹⁵ This family legacy, this transcendence 'above their Hebraic substratum' (to use Duffus's notion of this hierarchy), was in keeping with the desires and self-fashioning of much of

Rochester's Jewish population. Two institutions highlight the encounters of this community with Rochester's liberal spirit.

The first was Rochester's Temple Berith Kodesh, to which Wald's uncles and aunts – and for a time Wald's own immediate family – belonged. One of the most radical leaders of the German-founded Reform Movement in organized religious Judaism, Rabbi Max Landsberg, led the Temple. In 1876, at the dedication of a new Temple building, Landsberg captured well the universalist, assimilationist zeitgeist of his community: 'The Jewish temple [has] a new mission to fulfill', the rabbi proclaimed. 'It is to dispel prejudice; non-Jewish brethren can come and hear us pray and be surprised how little difference there is between [us]'.¹⁶ Landsberg advocated the complete assimilation of Jews into the Protestant mainstream.

The Temple's prestigious German Jewish men's Eureka Club was the second institution that highlighted particularist and universalist tensions. Wald's uncles, her mother's brothers, were Club members.¹⁷ The Club was called 'one of the most wealthy and powerful social organizations in the United States' by the local (non-Jewish) press. When members refurbished their meeting space, the mainstream press again took note. The exhaustive descriptions of the new rooms highlighted both the reproduction of upper-class mores and the downplaying of Jewish difference. The newspaper made no mention of the Club's Jewish membership. And their conspicuous consumption was evident: 'expense was not considered', the paper recorded, in the selections of 'gorgeous furniture, satin curtains, steel engravings ... resplendent crystal chandeliers and large and dazzling mirrors'.¹⁸ What the members hoped to see in their 'dazzling mirrors' were elite Americans, and that was precisely what they hoped outsiders would see as well.

The conspicuous consumption of Wald's uncles was dependent on their economic success, and, importantly, so was their inclusion as businessmen in the white Protestant mainstream. As Jews' 'racial' difference was historically pathologized and seen as ill suited to the demands of modern society, Jewish masculinity was the site of often violent contests over Jewish acceptance and integration.¹⁹ European anti-Semitic portraits cast Jewish men as weak, indecisive, crass and overly conspicuous. In the United States, one brand of Jewish masculinity became linked not only to membership in the prosperous, assimilated upper-class but to individualism and class antagonism, preventing cross-class identification with newer, working-class Jewish immigrants.

Wald's uncles met with success in their ownership of downtown clothing firms. They strove to meet the nation's growing appetite for inexpensive, ready-made clothing by hiring hundreds of East European immigrant Jews as labourers. In the early 1880s, when Rochester's garment workers responded to degraded working conditions and low pay by forming a unit of the Knights of Labor union, Wald's uncles and other owners took strict anti-labour positions. They joined together in the Clothiers' Association (later the Clothiers' Exchange) to present a united opposition.²⁰ Ultimately, extreme pressure from the owners – including lockouts in 1891 and 1893 – severed the ties between workers and the Knights of Labor.²¹

The same community that emphasized the universal bonds between Jews and non-Jews around questions of assimilation into the mainstream culture drew stark class-based limits of exclusion to that universalism. As mainstream presses across the country labelled the unionists 'un-American', editorials in Rochester's *Jewish Tidings*, the newspaper of Temple Berith Kodesh, extended that argument to their own audience demographic. They heralded the Jewish managers for crushing the organizing attempts of the Jewish workers. In the past, the editors noted, owners had been 'led around by the nose by their employees', but now, they boasted, 'Now they act like men!' The *Tidings* congratulated the owners on 'their firmness and courage'.²² The workers' radicalism was, in fact, defined as antithetical to the masculinity of the owners. Of the workers, they asked: 'Is there any manhood in the[se] Jews?'²³ Management's success in crushing labour's organization marked their achievement of white middle-class American masculinity.²⁴

The wives of these businessmen, Wald's aunts, followed the examples of their Christian class counterparts. They took leadership positions in philanthropies as their first foray into the public realm, embodying a gentler alternative to the increasingly impersonal and mechanized world of industrial and competitive capitalism. Though Wald's mother was not involved in organized charity, family legends told of her generosity to the poor as well.²⁵ Of course such work did not fundamentally challenge this new world, nor did it challenge the limits of the community's universalism. Instead, their new social roles as charity workers with Rochester's poor softened the roughest edges of the new economic arrangements. Interestingly, her aunts' public charity work – in association with other German Jews, and on behalf of East European Jews – was probably with the families of those locked out of her uncles' factories.²⁶

While her aunts remained within the boundaries of Jewish Rochester, Wald's older sister offered another

model. Julia Wald married in 1888 at age twenty-three. Importantly, her husband, Charles Barry, belonged to one of the most prominent Christian families in Rochester. The *Tidings*, following Rabbi Max Landsberg's lead, embraced marriage between Jews and non-Jews as a means to Jews' complete assimilation. Certainly Julia Wald's marriage meant that she had permanently 'transcended' her 'Hebraic substratum'. Julia, Charles, and their three children – who were raised within the Catholic faith – lived not far from the Walds on East Avenue in a beautiful Georgian mansion.²⁷

The urban, comfortable living arrangements of Wald's parents, sister, aunts and uncles presented her with possible models. Reproducing her own childhood, she could marry, have children, and tend to a middle-class home. She could join the German Jewish community, holding her wedding at the extravagant Eureka Club, subsequently visiting there with her husband for social occasions. She might meet other Jewish ladies in a voluntary society. Or, if she married a non-Jew, she might choose to immerse herself in mainstream Protestant charity organizations.

Yet in 1891, just as tensions in the garment industry strikes began to crest, Wald opted to pursue a professional career in nursing, and to immerse herself in a women's professional network. As one of very few Jewish nurses within this Protestant Progressive network, she drew from her hometown lessons in downplaying ethnic difference. Relying on New York City's German Jewish community for funding and support, she nonetheless trafficked easily in this non-Jewish network of women reformers.

As a lesbian, Wald found in this community nearly all of her sustaining needs.²⁸ She used her lessons in conventional American gender roles as a starting point, de-emphasizing her ambition and crafting her career as an extension of women's natural roles as healers and helpmates. Flatly rejecting the leadership and companionship of men, and taking the possibilities for women one step further, Wald founded the Visiting Nurses Service and Henry Street Settlement in 1893 on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, which was overcrowded with the newest wave of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. This was the cohort of labourers who were locked out of her uncles' upstate factories.

Using Henry Street as her home base, and relying on her ever-broadening concept of universalism, Wald now also relied on her faith that 'knowing' of social ills would move individuals to act against the forces that divided people. She began her lifelong reform career in her immediate neighbourhood, lobbying for health care, playgrounds, clean milk stations, and public school nurses. As her 'neighbourhood' expanded, she joined

Jane Addams, Florence Kelley and others in her dominion to work for child welfare and women's protective legislation; nationally and then internationally, she spoke out against immigrant restriction, racism, militarism and the dangers of excessive nationalism. Her networks, too, expanded, as she allied with Russian Revolutionaries such as Catharine Breshkovskaia and like-minded politicians such as British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald.²⁹ Looking back on the journey through the tenements that led to her 'baptism,' she wrote: 'All the maladjustments of our social and economic relations seemed epitomized in this brief journey and what was found at the end of it.'³⁰

With these words Wald indicated how much the journey into Progressivism had changed her: she entered through the universalist lessons of her hometown, but the women of her dominion taught her to radically reinterpret that universalism. For her aunts and uncles, it had applied only to those like themselves, people who prospered under the growing system of industrial capitalism. But Wald's Manhattan lessons expanded the inclusiveness of this concept. Grounding their professionalism in the notions of moral responsibility and selfless service, her women's community built a stronger critique of capitalism and cross-class antagonism. And when workers called a strike action, as they did in Manhattan's garment industry in 1909, Wald not only lobbied to protect the right of the workers to strike – she also actively contributed to laws that regulated workplace safety.

The power of the women in the 'female dominion' was intricately tied to the massive waves of immigration to the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was not simply that they built their expertise on the gaps in social welfare that the immigrants' presence highlighted in cities across the country. Some of the energy for social welfare reform, such as that of Lillian Wald, drew from the strivings of a previous wave of immigration. Wald's family experiences with immigration and assimilation were a crucial point of reference as she helped to steer the nation toward the reforms of Franklin (and Eleanor) Roosevelt's New Deal.

Notes

1. I rely here on Linda Gordon's conclusions as to the 'common denominators' of Progressivism: a call for an expanded, interventionist government, one that relied on data gathered by social scientists for policy making. See 'If the Progressives Were Advising Us Today, Should We Listen?' *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 1 (April 2002), 109-121.

2. Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935* (New York, 1991). Muncy writes that the female dominion's work for child welfare 'helped to shape the

foundation of the American welfare state as laid in New Deal legislation such as the Social Security Act (1935) and the Fair Labor Standard Act (1938)' (125).

3. For an analysis of Addams's telling of the bullfight, see Gioia Diliberto, *A Useful Woman: The Early Life of Jane Addams* (New York, 1999), 124-126; Allen F. Davis, *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams* (New York, 1973), 47-49, 168-169.

4. Wald, *The House on Henry Street* (New York, 1915), 8.

5. Jill Ker Conway suggests that in their autobiographies, women tend to make their own ambition invisible by presenting themselves as impelled forward by some force outside of themselves, *When Memory Speaks: Reflections on Autobiography* (New York, 1998).

6. Barbara Melosh, *The Physician's Hand: Work Culture and Conflict in Nursing* (Philadelphia, 1982), 115, 113. Wald also used this term in *House on Henry Street*, 62.

7. Florence Kelley followed a similar trajectory. On the political involvement of her family, see Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work: The Rise of Women's Political Culture, 1830-1900* (New Haven, 1995).

8. For a study of the role of ethnics in Progressivism, see also James J. Connolly, *The Triumph of Ethnic Progressivism: Urban Political Culture in Boston, 1900-1925* (Cambridge, 1998).

9. Paula Hyman defines assimilation as having two parts: first, the acculturation of the minority group to the majority folk ways; second, civic integration, which is dependent on attitudinal shifts on the part of the majority and the minority, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representations of Women* (Seattle, 1995), 14; on German liberalism, see Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden* (Princeton, 1996), 58, 137-139.

10. David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840* (New York, 1987).

11. R. L. Duffus, *Lillian Wald: Neighbor and Crusader* (New York, 1938), 10.

12. Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia, 1984).

13. Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, 1998), 176.

14. Nancy Hewitt writes that women's public work allowed for a 'cultural redefinition of gender roles'. See Nancy A. Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872* (Ithaca, 1984), 39.

15. Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 1.

16. 'Dedication of a Synagogue', *Rochester Daily Union Advertiser*, 16 Sept. 1876; see also Stuart E. Rosenberg, *The Jewish Community in Rochester, 1843-1925* (New York, 1954), 91; and Peter Eisenstadt, *Affirming the Covenant: A*

History of Temple B'rith Kodesh, Rochester, New York, 1848-1998 (Syracuse, 1999).

17. As a travelling salesman, Wald's father was often absent from the household. He died in 1891. I count Wald's uncles as her other close models of American and Jewish masculinity.

18. 'The Eureka Club: A Wealthy and Influential Social Organization', *Rochester Union and Advertiser*, 14 Mar. 1887. On the membership of Morris Schwarz, Wald's uncle, see Isaac A. Wile, *The Jews of Rochester* (Rochester, 1912), 111.

19. See Sander L. Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender* (Princeton, 1993); Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York, 1991); Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History*.

20. Morris Schwarz was elected to the executive committee of the Clothiers' Association in June of 1883 ('Items in Brief', *Rochester Daily Union Advertiser*, 29 June 1883). On Wald's Uncle Henry Schwarz's membership, see 'Clothing Trade Matters', *Rochester Daily Union Advertiser*, 8 Dec. 1890. On the Knights of Labor, see Kim Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1993) and Leon Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (Urbana, 1983).

21. 'Manufacturers Speak: Statement from the Clothiers Exchange Committee', *Union Advertiser*, 26 Mar. 1891; 'Many Tailors Locked Out', *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 2 May 1893. See also Natalie F. Hawley, *The Labor Movement in Rochester: 1880-1898*, Master's Thesis, Department of History, University of Rochester, 1948, 207-212. The workers remained effectively unorganized until the Amalgamated arrived in 1914. Voss notes that 'employers' associations [like the Exchange] had a devastating effect on skilled-workers' locals', especially after 1886 (194, 199).

22. 'Now They Act Like Men!' Editorial, *The Jewish Tidings*, 13 Mar. 1891.

23. Editorial, *The Jewish Tidings*, 27 Mar. 1891.

24. Paula Hyman observes the gendered nature of the assimilation project for Jews in Westernized nations in the late nineteenth century. Women were increasingly responsible for the cultural transmission of Jewish values, and judged according to the next generation's private Jewishness. In losing the status accorded to traditional Jewish learning, Jewish men were judged according to their achievements in the broader society, primarily the family's social mobility. This framework certainly applies to Wald's extended family, Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History*.

25. Duffus, 6.

26. Mrs. Nathan Levi, Wald's aunt, was president of the (Jewish) Ladies' Aid Society and on the board of the Jewish Orphan Asylum, 'Ladies Aid Society', *The Jewish Tidings*, 7 Feb. 1890; 'Jewish Orphan Asylum', *The Jewish Tidings*, 13 April 1888).

27. Though the Wald family home no longer stands on East Avenue, the house where Julia and Charles Barry lived remains as number 1163.

28. One important exception to Wald's female world – which included colleagues, friends, and lovers – was her connection to Jacob H. Schiff, her first and primary benefactor. I write comprehensively about Wald's relationship to Schiff, which was grounded in their common connection as German Jews, in my larger work. Wald's sexuality is discussed in Blanche Weisen Cook, 'Female Support Networks and Political Activism: Lillian Wald, Crystal Eastman, Emma Goldman,' in *A Heritage of Her Own: Toward a New Social History of American Women*, Nancy F. Cott and Elizabeth H. Pleck, eds. (New York, 1979).

29. On Wald's internationalism, see my "'An Actual Working Out of Internationalism": Russian Politics, Zionism, and Lillian Wald's Ethnic Progressivism' *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* (April 2003): 119-149.

'Travelling "fellows"': Women social scientists and their political narratives in inter-war Britain

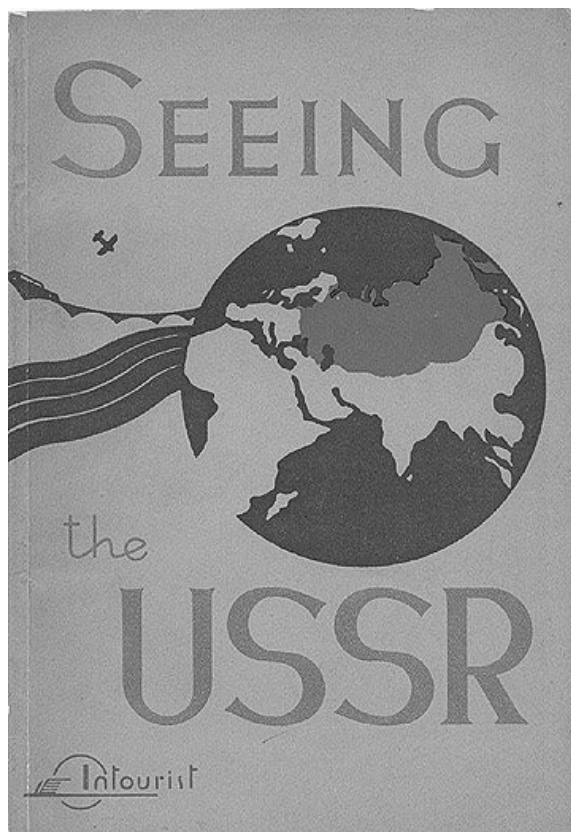
Ellen Jacobs

Université du Québec à Montréal

'People get what they expect out of foreign parts' –
Naomi Mitchison¹

Recent works in feminist and post-colonial studies have made the relationship of gender, race, and class prominent to the constructions of identities/subjectivities and to the narratives of Britain's metropolitan and imperial history. Feminist and post-colonial critics have called attention to 'discourses of difference' in women's travel and travel writings in the age of Empire.² Others have explored the 'worlds of women' who participated in internationalist women's movements in the inter-war period and still others provide biographical accounts of women's travels as journalists, partisans, photographers, and adventurers within and across imperial spaces in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, in the 'Red Vienna' struggle of 1934 and in Spain during the civil war.³ Less attention has been paid to women's political travel, travel-writing and political argument in the inter-war period.

This article is about the role of ideology and the claims of social science in women's political travel in the 1930s. By questioning the political, I hope to examine the role of



(Courtesy of David Levine)

gender, class and ideology in the construction of subjectivities, that is, as knowledge about self and Other, and in the construction of knowledge essential to maintaining the functioning of the nation-state and empire. I consider political travel, travel narratives and their diffusion, as part of an Enlightenment-rationalist project, characterised by the collection of empirical data, observation, and ‘personal study’ – an archive of knowledge – ‘the sum total of the known and knowable’ in service to the nation-state.⁴ The notion of ‘political’ is used here in its widest sense, as polity and as ideology – being connected to a party or political ideas as motivating forces. The parameters of travel examined are *destination*: the choice of travel and the planning of a route; *motivation* (to Beatrice Webb, a pilgrimage’; to Margaret Cole, ‘scientific inquiry’); and *diffusion* of findings, in various public forums, specialist texts, travel memoirs, essays, journalism, novels and radio broadcasts.

The particular concern of this article is to question the sort of knowledge created by women intellectuals associated with Britain’s non-Communist Left, as the result of their travel to the Soviet Union in 1932.⁵ To what extent was the study of Soviet Russia intended to bolster arguments for political and social programs of reform in Britain? How did changing political events in Europe as the decade progressed affect their narrative representations? To what extent did travel in the ‘contact

zone’ – defined by Mary Louise Pratt as the space ‘in which people, geographically and historically separate come into contact with each other,’ – affect the travellers’ tales?⁶ How is gender and gender-consciousness expressed in women’s representations of their travel?

The cohort of British women travellers to the Soviet Union discussed in this article were associated with the Universities of London, Oxford, Cambridge and the London School of Economics (LSE), and were variously engaged in the educationalist, political and social programmes of the Workers Educational Association, the Fabian Society, the Labour party and feminist associations. They were: Margaret Postgate Cole (1893-1980), Naomi Haldane Mitchison (1897-1999), Barbara Adam Wootton (1897-1988), and Mary Brinton Stocks (1891-1975). They were of the same generation, born in the 1890s, grown to maturity in the years surrounding the First World War, sharing privileges of social class, access to higher education and social networks of political activism.⁷

All four journeyed to Soviet Russia in the summer 1932 as part of Fabian and educationalist contingents of British cultural and intellectual workers intent upon witnessing, observing, studying the ‘new Russia’.⁸ They shared political sympathies and political activism: they worked for the revived Labour party of the 1930s, and the Fabian Society. Wootton, Stocks and Cole were closely associated with the university extension movement and the Workers Educational Association (WEA, all three lectured on economic subjects). Mitchison, Cole, and Stocks were strongly identified with campaigns for birth-control and family planning. Wootton extended the range of her research on labour and wages to a study of unemployment amongst women in England and Wales, published by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, an organization in which Stocks was most active.⁹

Wootton and Cole were children of Cambridge classical scholars and both were graduates of Girton College. Barbara Wootton, née Adam (later Baroness Wootton of Abinger) won First Class Honours with distinction in Economics at Girton College, Cambridge (1917), lecturing in University lecture-halls (a first for a woman) to Economics students in Cambridge before leaving for London and a post as researcher for the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party in 1922. She was a WEA lecturer and editor of its journal, *The Highway*, President of Morley College for Working Men and Women (1926-27) and Director of Studies for Tutorial Classes in the University of London (1927-1944). In 1926, she was appointed a magistrate in the Metropolitan Juvenile Courts at the age of twenty-nine,

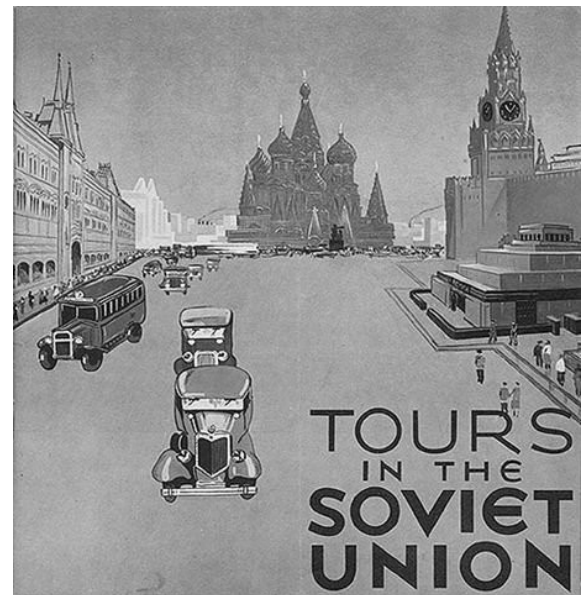
while still excluded from the suffrage that was then reserved for women over the age of thirty.

Margaret Postgate Cole, daughter of a Cambridge Professor of Latin and Edith Allen, herself educated at Girton College in the 1880s, won First Class Honours in Classics at Girton College in 1914. She taught students associated with the Workers Educational Association for over a quarter-century from 1925 to 1949, and with her husband, the economist G.D.H. Cole, helped to found the *Socialist Society for Inquiry and Propaganda* and served on various committees of the *New Fabian Research Bureau*. Both organizations were founded in 1931, she recalled, with the hope of 'rallying the intellectual Left and set it to thinking out a new Socialist policy when the Second Labour government was obviously barren of ideas'.¹⁰

Naomi Haldane Mitchison, born in Edinburgh, was a Haldane polymath – a member of the 'intellectual aristocracy' of families, which Noel Annan aptly described as a dominant force in Victorian and Edwardian society. Her father, John Scott Haldane and later her brother J.B.S. Haldane, were distinguished scientists. Her uncle, Lord Haldane, a Liberal politician, was Lord Chancellor in the first Labour Government (1924) and her aunt, Elizabeth Haldane, was an author and the first woman to be appointed Justice of the Peace in Scotland. Mitchison was already the author of two novels and a volume of short stories before her journey in 1932 (with approximately seventy books to follow during her long career). She was active in the movement to make birth-control legally accessible to all, and in numerous feminist and socialist causes, later devoting her energies to Scottish independence.

Mary Brinton Stocks, the daughter of a successful London physician, was an Economics graduate of the London School of Economics (1913), active in the *National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies* and its successor, the *National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship*. She ardently campaigned for family planning clinics and with Eleanor Rathbone for state provision of family allowances, while also devoting herself to educationalist projects of the WEA, writing the history of its first fifty years.

The impact of the Great War left an indelible mark upon their generation. Married in the years surrounding the Great War (Stocks in 1913, Mitchison, 1916, Wootton, 1917, Cole, 1918), Mitchison and Stocks' husbands suffered serious wounds on the Western front. Wootton, was married and widowed by the age of twenty, having lost her husband-of five weeks, Jack Wootton, as well as a brother and a favourite school-friend to the Great War. In the years following the 1919



(Courtesy of David Levine)

Paris peace settlement, they shared in efforts for an internationalist peace.¹¹ They witnessed the changed social and political realities of the late 1920s and early 1930s: economic crises, the Depression, poverty and unemployment, and the ineffectiveness of governments to find a way out, evident in the collapse of the Second Labour Government in 1931. 'Small wonder that many eyes were turned hopefully towards the Russian experiment,' Wootton remarked.¹²

1932 was a particularly interesting moment to be in the Soviet Union. For Britain's non-Communist Left, the attraction of travel to the Soviet Union was its promise of a working-model of a centrally planned economy and society – a laboratory of applied economic and social theory. The Soviet Union's First Five-Year plan, with its claim of full employment, collectivisation of agriculture and heavy industrialisation, inaugurated in 1928, was coming to an accelerated close. The Soviet government's interest in promoting travel from Western nations was not simply to invite an influx of cash-currency as is sometimes suggested, but more strategically, to be *seen* as a modern, industrial power of global proportion. *Intourist* tours to Soviet Russia were State-run, with carefully arranged tours set for specific destinations with Soviet-assigned guides and translators. Ironically, the attraction of Western intellectuals coincided with the full-Stalinization of the Soviet Union in the 1930s and Stalin's campaign to collectivise the peasants that cost millions of lives.¹³

In May 1932, Fabian socialists Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb, then 74 years of age, set off by Soviet freighter from London for a tour of the Soviet Union that lasted two months. Welcomed by Soviet officials in Leningrad [Lenin had translated their *History of Trade*

Unionism] and lodged in an official Soviet residence in Moscow, they visited factories, schools, and clinics. They prepared for their journey much as they had applied their 'methods of social study' throughout their careers. They read government documents and translations from contemporary Soviet newspapers and had discussions with Soviet exiles, including Prince D.S. Mirsky, who returned to the Soviet Union the same year, only to disappear in the purge of intellectuals in the late 1930s.¹⁴ During the journey, Beatrice Webb recorded in her diary that Soviet Russia 'represents a new civilization and a new culture with a new outlook on life' in personal conduct and in the relation of the individual to the community.¹⁵ They returned as enthusiastic supporters of Soviet Communism, lecturing to students in the Fabian summer school and in radio broadcasts.¹⁶ Their sympathy for a Soviet-style economy and society was evident upon their return with the publication of their book *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation?* their question mark converted to the affirmative in subsequent editions.¹⁷

They were followed in July and August 1932 by contingents of intellectuals associated with the London School of Economics, the University of London, the Fabian Society, the Labour Party and the Workers Educational Association. Several members of the New Fabian Research Bureau had been meeting and preparing for their 'mission of enquiry' for several months.¹⁸ They included: Margaret Cole, her brother, the historian, Raymond Postgate, Naomi Mitchison, her husband, Dick Mitchison, her cousin, Graeme Haldane, Hugh Dalton, historian H.L. (Lance) Beales, *New Statesman* editor, Kingsley Martin, Frederick Pethick-Lawrence, attorney D.N. Pritt and his wife, as well as Dorothy Woodman, an activist in the Union of Democratic Control, the architect Geoffrey Ridley, John Morgan, an agricultural 'expert', and two Oxford dons.

They recorded their journey in diary accounts¹⁹ and in essays published together in 1933 by the New Fabian Research Bureau and Victor Gollancz as *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, edited by Margaret Cole. Her husband, G.D.H. Cole, Chief of the Fabian Research Bureau, missed the journey, having fallen ill to diabetes shortly before the trip. He joined with Clement Attlee in writing the Introduction to the volume in which they insisted on the investigative, scientific nature of the trip. The studies, they claimed, were 'not mere tourist's impressions', but the record of 'a systematic attempt by a number of independent experts to get at the *truth* (emphasis added) about certain definite problems of Soviet life and organization.'²⁰

Margaret Cole and Naomi Mitchison explored issues affecting women and family health, maternity, contraception. Mitchison reported a meeting of the

Fabian contingent with Beatrice Webb before their trip. Pressed by Webb to describe the scientific object of her study, Mitchison, replied 'archaeology and abortion'.²¹ Interested in the fate of cultural workers after the revolution as well, Mitchison travelled to Crimea to explore Scythian archaeological sites. Margaret Cole travelled in a group accompanied by Dick Mitchison; Naomi accompanied her cousin, Graeme Haldane in another group. Naomi Mitchison reported the ensuing confusion of Intourist organisers: 'Intourist or whoever was organizing things got it into their heads that Graeme and I were brother and sister and could conveniently share a room.'²²

The Fabian contingent sailed from London's wharf in the shadow of Tower Bridge for Leningrad by Soviet ship. The geographic parameters of their tour included travel to Leningrad, Moscow and Ukraine. In Leningrad they visited health clinics, factories and co-ops; as well as the summer palace of the Czars, before travelling on to Moscow. In Moscow, lodged in central hotels catering to foreign tourists, they visited the symbolic and political heart of the regime, the Kremlin and Lenin's tomb, and more schools, factories, co-ops, and health clinics.

Wootton recorded her visits to factories and schools, reacting negatively to the regime's indoctrination of the young, a sentiment shared by Cole, Mitchison, Stocks, and Lance Beales.²³ Beales and Wootton reported verbatim, their encounter with students in a school located outside Moscow. Beales commented, 'And was it true that children in English schools were beaten with sticks?'²⁴ Wootton explained

In the schools which we visited, the children, obviously suitably coached, used to greet us with the remark 'So you come from England, where they beat the children.' It would have been agreeable to have been able to deny the second half of this statement, but as it was, the best we could do was to retort that in England we did not station a child with a fixed bayonet outside a children's home, as we commonly saw in Russia.²⁵

Margaret Cole's impression of Moscow was largely of heat, dust, and large holes in the road, naked little boys leaping in and out of the Moscow River and 'shops with very little in them'.²⁶ Moscow's dust may have reached exceptional levels as excavation for the building of the Moscow subway was underway. Although she appeared ill at ease with public displays of nudity, and appears to have found Soviet hygienic

standards below her own, she also expressed a degree of class-discomfort, noting that the group was driven to various institutions in Moscow in Lincoln town cars, a luxury rare for all but a few Soviet officials.²⁷ Mitchison appeared to be less shocked by the public displays of nudity, finding relief from the summer heat by swimming amongst nude bathers in southern Russia. Supervised encounters with ordinary citizens were less frequent.

Many of the more personal encounters with ordinary citizens reported by Mitchison, Cole, and Wootton occurred in the course of lengthy railway travel across Russia – a ‘contact zone’-in-motion. Unlike the ‘contact zone’ described by Mary Louise Pratt as the ‘space of colonial encounters, the space in which people geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations’, this was a ‘contact zone’ occurring in the space of travel away from ‘home’ and transcribed in the narratives of their journey as encounters with difference.²⁸

They travelled south from Moscow on a wide-gauge railway for a day and a half journey across the Russian agricultural plain to Ukraine, visiting Dnieperstroï, [Dniprohes] an enormous dam and hydroelectric station nearing completion on the Dnieper River. In Kharkov, capital of the Ukraine, there were visits to an electrical factory and to schools providing both Ukrainian and Russian cultural education. Mitchison reported that schools in Kharkov served a variety of ethno-linguistic communities – there were separate schools for Greek-Armenian, Yiddish-speaking, German and Tartar (sic) children.²⁹ This phase of tolerance for national cultures in non-Russian Soviet republics would soon come to a close.³⁰

Some travelled east: Hugh Dalton travelled to Magnitogorsk, a large industrial centre built from 1929-31 in the southern Urals, with coal and iron works essential to steel-production in the First Five-Year Plan. His experience of Soviet industrial and electrification projects informed his view of centralized planning which he subsequently argued in his Fabian essay.³¹

Wootton tired of the guided tour of endless factories, and mechanised industry; she ‘had come to Russia to see living conditions, not to trail round factories.’³² She succeeded in visiting a collective farm outside Kiev, which, she reported, allowed each member to keep one cow for private benefit. The impact of her journey, however brief, ‘made a great impression’. ‘As soon as I got home,’ she recalled in her autobiography, ‘I fell to analyzing the differences between the Russian economic system and our own and wondering where each of us should (or would) go from where we

were’.³³ The result was her book, *Plan or No Plan*, published by Gollancz in 1934 and cited by the Webbs in their book on Soviet Communism as a principal reference work for the study of economic planning.³⁴

In the Soviet system, Wootton admired the egalitarian possibilities for women and the collectivist ethos promoted for the common good, while she remained critical of the anarchic forces affecting prices, the limits of Soviet materialism which impoverished both aesthetic and spiritual possibilities, persecuted religious worship and the bourgeoisie, creating outcasts of those ‘publicly and officially branded by his social origin’.³⁵ ‘Full realisation of the Russian *economic* system’, she claimed, was a long way off, for though there were abundant material (natural) resources, there were few skilled industrial workers.³⁶

She cited her visit to a factory-school in Kharkov which produced electrical parts as an example of an enterprise which was successful not because of its efficiency, but because it held a State-directed monopoly of production and demand for its product. A planned economy, she continued, could manipulate the price mechanism of supply and demand and avoid unemployment. ‘A planned economy ... has a far better chance than an unplanned of finding *some* use for those resources which is reasonably satisfying to those who depend upon it for their living’.³⁷ Wootton much like Dalton, regarded planning as a rational solution to contemporary economic problems in Britain; both journeyed to the USSR to witness the effects of the First Five-Year Plan. Dalton affirmed his faith in planning for Britain: ‘I returned from the Soviet Union strengthened in my belief that, for a community as for an individual ... conscious planning of life is better than weak passivity and the same acceptance of traditional disabilities, that trial and error is better than error without trial.’³⁸

Though clearly hoping to find lessons to be learned for planning in Britain during her journey, Wootton was dubious about the Soviet ability to formulate a sound monetary policy. ‘I think we may say that, beyond the hope that they will before long be able to dispense with money altogether, the Russians have not troubled to formulate any reasoned monetary policy’.³⁹ Although she defended planning as a policy for Britain throughout the 1930s and 1940s, she grew doubtful that gradualist political tactics would achieve their goals. She expressed her doubts in fictional form – in a novel – rather than in scientific treatise. *London’s Burning*, written in 1934-35 and published by Allen and Unwin in 1936, portrays events in the not-too-distant future year, 1940. It is a ‘dystopian’ novel – a foreboding and cautionary tale of class warfare and political violence in the centre of the metropolis. In her autobiography, she later described the

context in which the book was written.

No sooner had I finished this book [*Plan*] than I was seized with a desire to answer myself. National Socialism had already raised its ugly head in Germany, and at home Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts were responsible for repeated anti-Jewish outbreaks. *Plan or No Plan* was essentially the work of a democratic socialist, of a liberal mind with a small 'l'; and in the bottom of my heart I had my doubts as to whether sweet reasonableness would prevail against the forces of evil. So I set to and answered myself – but in the form of a novel, *London's Burning*, described on the title page as 'a novel for the Decline and Fall of the Liberal Age'.⁴⁰

It is a novel of political ideas, with double-narratives drawn between scenes describing intimate spaces between people, and of family relations set in a pastoral East Anglian landscape, and those of hunger marchers, unemployed workers and urban distress inflamed by demagogues in London.

London's Burning follows the fate and fortune of the central character and liberal hero, Theodore Frinton, an Oxbridge-educated Latin scholar, in his daily activities, moving between the pastoral landscape of 'home' in Cambridge and his daily labours in London at the 'Works', as manager of a biscuit factory. The domestic idyll of 'home' in the East Anglian countryside is a portrait (perhaps caricature) of liberal domesticity including Frinton, his wife and daughter Kitty, dog Tinker, and their maid. Their domestic arrangement is starkly contrasted with the visceral misery of London's poor and unemployed inhabitants, with public displays of discontent and class confrontation. This would lead, in Wootton's dire forecast, to political chaos and physical destruction as London and its infrastructure fell prey to incendiary attacks, metaphoric and real.

Wootton represented not only scenes of class-divisions and conflict but also a critique of contemporary sexual politics. Theodore Frinton, family man, demonstrates an unexpressed attraction to a young, new woman, Hester Lomax, a fellow member of the 'League of National Service', but is unable to acknowledge to himself, nor to express any feeling or attraction. Any attraction Frinton thinks 'simply irrelevant'.⁴¹ Irrelevant that is, until the close of the novel when he learns that she has died a victim of the violence in London and he regrets his refusal of desire, the one thing of 'meaning' that would have 'given him fulfilment'.⁴² Frinton's daughter, Kitty,

seems the personification of liberal, bourgeois egoism – enjoying the sheltered domesticity of home in Cambridge, she is principally concerned with the care of her dog and the acquisition of a new car, which her fiancé (a car salesman of sorts) has recommended.

As a generational portrait, Kitty Frinton might be said to represent a sexually attractive, apolitical and rather egotistical young woman; a contrast to Hester, the sexually desirable young woman politically engaged with Theodore Frinton in liberal politics in London. Both young women differ in social class, ethnicity and ideology from the left-politics of the young Jewish woman, fired by Frinton early in the novel, the aptly named, 'Rose Salmon' who appears subsequently, in the company of unemployed demonstrators to challenge the platitudes of Frinton and his liberal cohorts.

Wootton's novel illustrates a turning point in interwar fiction, moving away from an optimistic narrative of an egalitarian society and the building of a 'new Jerusalem,' to a realist, anti-fascist stance. Wootton represents Frinton's growing awareness of the failure of liberal polity and society to adequately address contemporary economic and social problems. Frinton's moral rectitude, which prevents him from even slightly pursuing a more intimate companionship with Hester Lomax, is declared his most glaring failure. In an interview late in life, Wootton described the terms of the novel as anti-fascist, and pressed by her interviewer, she identified herself with Theodore Frinton's character. Frinton, though largely portrayed as ineffectual, loomed larger in her memory of the novel for his stance against chaos of both Left and Right than for his ineffectual liberalism.⁴³

Wootton's narrative occupies a liminal space between history and fiction, between reformist-ideology and revolutionary politics, between rational politics and a nightmare dreamscape of chaos and destruction.⁴⁴ It represents, as well, her own subjective position, between a gradualist socialism and revolutionary rhetoric. She remarked on her liminal position some forty years later:

Piecemeal socialism – proves not to be socialism at all; for socialism in the full sense of the public ownership and operation of all but the fringes of industry has always everywhere, been born of revolution. The inevitability of gradualness may be a safeguard against revolutionary violence: but it is also a safeguard against success.⁴⁵

Looking upon the Soviet landscape, physical and

metaphorical, Margaret Cole and Naomi Mitchison placed women in the forefront of their Soviet narratives, representing women not only as workers – the benchmark of Soviet and socialist discourse, but also within the context of their familial, domestic and private lives: as daughters, wives, lovers and mothers. The Bolshevik program for women's liberation began with the declaration of the complete equality of the sexes as labouring citizens of an egalitarian State. In its first years, by reform of marriage and family laws (1918, 1920), the Soviet government had promoted a transformation of the family, with women's traditional roles re-defined by the availability of state provision for maternal and child health care, feeding stations in nurseries (*crèches*), schools and factories, and state-provided clinics for contraceptive education as well as legal medical abortions, on demand.

During their journey in Soviet Russia, Cole and Mitchison gathered 'facts' which they observed directly in their visits to schools, clinics, factories, agricultural and archaeological sites and others they gleaned from contemporary Soviet-state documents, journalistic accounts and memoirs of fellow travellers. Many of the issues which they explored in the Soviet context were those most pertinent to contemporary socialist-feminist debate in Britain: the role and economic contribution of women as workers in home, industry and agriculture, and their right of full and equal citizenship. In their narratives of their journey, Cole and Mitchison drew attention to Soviet provisions for women's reproductive health, including the demand for family planning clinics, maternal and child welfare clinics, as well as infant day-care (*crèches*) and educational reform. Many were issues raised two-decades previously by women in the Fabian Women's Group and more recently, by women in the Labour Party caucus who argued that these issues be included in Labour's programme throughout the 1930s.⁴⁶

Margaret Cole experienced the journey 'like (in) a dream coming true'. Meeting with Soviet civil servants and directors, she found 'they talk like the Movement – one keeps forgetting to be surprised ... one has come home'.⁴⁷ Cole visited sites in Leningrad and Moscow, travelling south to Ukraine and the cities of Kharkov and Kiev. Geographically circumscribed in her actual view of sites in the 'new Russia', Cole commented upon the limitations of her research trip.

As a collection of views it does not seem much, and my Russia was physically very small – I never saw the Volga or the Crimea, or crossed the Urals. I could have seen more though, and carried more away, if I

had had more time to stand and stare. But I had not come to collect picture-postcard views. I had come to see a society and its institutions, and the recollections I brought back with me were recollections of the spirit of the country, not of its contours or its vegetation.⁴⁸

Cole's Fabian essay, 'Women and Children,' based upon her observations, interviews and secondary sources, reflects her belief that the potential of women to advance (as a class) was far greater in the Soviet Union. She repeated Soviet claims which emphasized the role of women as workers and as equals in Soviet polity, with the State assigning roles to women in the *public economy* as citizen, worker, and mother.

Cole wrote at length about the legal availability of abortion and methods of contraception, having visited clinics in Leningrad, Moscow and Ukraine.⁴⁹ Comparing the provision of child-care, educational and health facilities in Britain and Soviet Russia, she noted that while services in Britain were of a higher standard, women were underutilized as a resource. 'The point on which an English Socialist State would have most to learn from the Russians', she said, was not from its 'communal institutions' of school or clinic, but in the recognition of women as a resource.' She went on, 'We do, to a quite disastrous extent, leave the social potentialities of our women unutilised; and if we are going to achieve a Socialist society which is really exploiting natural resources so as to make a good standard of life for all, we shall need their co-operation.'⁵⁰ She remarked upon the excitement of the journey with an evident hope that similar social programs might yet be possible in Britain.

What we others saw was a country which was tremendously excited, with an excitement which could not possibly be feigned, over the huge social experiment which it was making and which it believed was the people's own experiment The whole effect, in social services at all events, was of an eager helter-skelter humanitarianism, modelled on the most hallowed Socialist traditions. Paid holidays for workers, paid rest for mothers during and after pregnancy, equal pay and equal opportunity for both sexes, equal marriage laws and easy divorce, abortion officially performed in State hospitals, free and equal education for all children ...⁵¹

Mary Stocks took a literary turn in her narrative of her travel 200 kilometres south of Moscow, past small villages to Tolstoy's home and village, 'Yasnaya Polyana'. She joined the Intourist tour, accompanied by husband, John Stocks, Professor of Philosophy at Manchester University and their daughter. Sharing her 'Impressions of a Russian Village' with a Workers Educational Association audience, she sounded a sanguine note in commenting upon the condition of Soviet peasantry and the collectivisation of agriculture. Although the peasants might collectively pool their animals and resources, no signs of collectivist 'techniques' and mechanisation were yet in place. In spite of Soviet propaganda, she wrote, it was a 'village with ghosts of the past'. It had the loosest form of 'Kolkhoz' (sic) or collective farm, minimal provisions in the co-operative store, and no signs of a central building or mechanised large-scale farming seen elsewhere. Collectivism was working its way slowly in this case, into villages 'or all its present dearth and friction tardiness and tyranny'.⁵² She later wrote that the journey 'left us critical of communism in action'.⁵³ Although she wrote several books based upon her political activism, she was far less voluble writing of her Russian journey.

Naomi Mitchison set out from London with a declared interest in 'archaeology and abortion.' After two weeks in Leningrad and Moscow visiting museums and family planning clinics where she discussed 'women's complaints' and the prevalence of venereal disease with officials, she went off the Intourist path, securing permission as a 'foreign archaeologist' to visit museum collections in the Crimea. In the company of her host and sponsor, archaeology Professor Marti, she viewed the excavation of Scythian burial mounds and catacombs near Kerch on the Black Sea.⁵⁴ Her experiences are recorded in her Fabian essay, 'Archaeology and Intellectual Workers', and also inform her 'modern' anti-Fascist novel, *We Have Been Warned* [1935].

In contrast to Margaret Cole's limited comments upon landscape and geography, Mitchison was very much aware of topography, literal and metaphoric. Her narratives are landscapes filled with people, flora and fauna. She described elements of home and family life, which she witnessed as a guest of the Professor and his extended family, with a daily search for food for the family by the Professor's sister. There were communal midday meals and little else. She noted the hardship for mothers of young children, 'constantly concerned for [providing] material aspects of life.' Women labouring in heavy industries might have child-care provided; for women in the less-well paid 'intellectual' professions, things were 'much more difficult'. Comparing the post-revolutionary situation of the professor and his sister she remarked, 'He had got something out of it all which his

sister, cumbered, perhaps, by serving, had on the whole not got'.⁵⁵

Mitchison was sensitive to the nuances of sexual and cultural politics at work in the egalitarian society. Intellectual workers, those associated with the anthropological digs and museums that she visited, were less well-off than the factory workers they had visited in Kharkov. The Professor's sister, a single-woman, assumed a traditional feminine-domestic role in seeking out provisions of food to care for her brother's family, queuing for hours each day to find scarce supplies and an occasional fish which sympathetic neighbours in the community might offer.

Although witnessing evidence of hunger and rationing, Mitchison, like Cole, emphasized the promise of Soviet life and labour in her Fabian essay, rather than offering public comment on the contemporary hardships that she witnessed. Revisiting the Soviet Union some forty years later, she spoke of this 'early visit to the Soviet Union' regretting her 'reluctance to report, even to see anything which was contrary to my political beliefs and what I supposed was happening in the U.S.S.R'.⁵⁶

Mitchison wrote her 'modern novel', *We Have Been Warned*, upon her return to Britain. Completed in 1933, it was refused by publishers Jonathan Cape and Gollancz. The explicit sexual dialogue and details of cross-class heterosexual relationships, including a rape and abortion, reportedly shocked both left-leaning editors and critics. It is a cautionary tale, written in the tones of socialist realism, short on plot, concentrating on contemporary issues: politics, economics, women's reproductive health, sexuality and heterosexual desire. Mitchison represents Britain divided by class and nationalist hostilities. Scottish nationalism appears inflected in tones of discontented, unemployed workers and families of the middle-classes largely ignorant of the distressed condition of working-class families of unemployed.

There is both sexual and political violence depicted across class lines. Her heroine, Isobel Dione Fraser, from a privileged Scottish family much like Mitchison's own, is portrayed as conflicted in political loyalties, moving between the attractions of the socialist Labour argument of the 'chattering classes' in Britain, a virile Scottish nationalism and a respect for the impassioned Communist youth culture encountered in the Soviet Union. She dedicated the novel 'to the comrades' with names and professions of actual contemporaries listed on her opening page.⁵⁷ She blended fictional with contemporary characters, with tales of Oxford encounters between contemporaries Douglas Cole, Maurice Bowra, and others.

Her fictional characters, their dialogues, activities and physical surroundings, appear to caricature, if not mirror, experiences based upon her real-life circle of friends and political acquaintances. Her central character, Isobel Dione Fraser, and husband Tom Galton, are engaged in his campaign as a Labour candidate in a working-class constituency in industrial England. Mitchison failed in her campaign for a Labour seat in 1935; her husband, Dick Mitchison later succeeded. In the novel, Tom Galton, in Oxford, discusses with G.D.H. Cole the work of the Society for Socialist Inquiry and Propaganda, much as the Mitchisons and Coles worked in support of the S.S.I.P. and the New Fabian Research Group. Campaigning on behalf of her Labour-candidate husband, Dione Fraser encounters unemployed workers in the district as well as Communist organizers from Clydeside, ultimately shielding and aiding the escape to Soviet Russia of a Scottish labourer and fellow traveller, Donald Maclean, who has assassinated a 'bourgeois' newspaper publisher in a fit of ideological and individualistic rage. The novel describes travel via Soviet ship to Leningrad, with visits to museums, factories, hospitals, nurseries, schools for abandoned children, maternal and child health clinics, and a vivid portrayal of an abortion conducted without anaesthetics on young Soviet women.

Mitchison appears to have had mixed feelings about the impact of the much discussed sexual liberation of women in the new Russia. In the novel, she portrays young Soviet women as strong, independent workingwomen, a collectivity of comrades and friends enjoying a liberated sexuality. They are 'new women' in the new Soviet society. Yet even within the positive parameters of the Soviet's social revolution, she sounds a cautious note, suggesting that the strong, liberated, joyous young women face pressures to marry, reproduce and stay at home in a confined domesticity, much as wives and mothers in a Western bourgeois context did. And older single women, such as the Professor's sister, remain within the domestic circle of the family of origin, sustained and sustaining the daily rigours of family life. Mirroring perhaps the lives of the Mitchisons, Dione Fraser's husband has an affair with one of the young Russian girls, while Dione returns to Britain and the economic and social upheavals and demonstrations of unemployed workers.

Mitchison's novel, *We Have Been Warned*, like Wootton's novel, occupies a liminal space between history and fiction, constructing in fiction a space between a private sphere secured by family, friends and privileges of class and a public sphere of sexual and political violence. Whereas Wootton's novel was set wholly within Britain, moving between a pastoral East

Anglian countryside and the distressed poor and unemployed visible in the teeming, crowded streets of the metropolis, Mitchison's narrative moves back and forth between scenes of Oxford and academe, Britain's unemployed working-class precincts, and Moscow's sexually liberated youth, at work constructing the 'new Russia.' Wootton's novel, published in 1936, suggests a coming catastrophe and crisis of government in Britain, brought about by the failure of liberal polity and government to respond adequately to economic challenges. Mitchison, perhaps less sanguine, reserves glimmers of optimism in her portrayal of characters *within* and *across* social classes in Britain who are still able to find common ground for dialogue, as well as her positive portrayal of Communist youth building the 'new Russia'. They 'have been warned' but London is not 'burning'.

Conclusion

The women who travelled to the Soviet Union in 1932 as part of the Fabian University of London and educationalist tours were motivated by personal choice and ideological purpose. The knowledge which they disseminated upon their return 'home' was a hybrid blend of information collected and observed in Soviet Russia, applied to questions of most concern in contemporary polity and economy in Britain. Margaret Cole described herself as in a 'dream', Stocks and Mitchison described a land between literary and archaeological past and present, and Wootton critically surveyed the impact of Soviet central planning on economy as well as cultural freedom.

Cole and Mitchison's Fabian studies, deemed 'expert' as applied social science, were elements of Western rationalism and ideas about the working of the Soviet system and its egalitarian possibilities for women, and used to support a Labour-socialist argument for centrally directed social and economic policies in Britain. It was a rationalist construct, part of an empiricist-rationalist faith in the power of ideas and ideology to realize political goals in a humane way. It was an attempt to apply methods of social study evident in the new (disciplines) of social and political science that informed the work of LSE, Fabian socialists and liberal Labour intellectuals in the early decades of the twentieth century. Their writings address the concerns of a left-liberal British audience in search of a solution to contemporary problems of poverty, unemployment – somewhat wary of a Soviet state model of planning and fearful of the growing menace of fascist-State ideologies as experienced on the Continent.

For Wootton, as well as for Mitchison, scientific analysis and rationalist argument did not sufficiently express their doubts and fears about the contemporary situation in Britain. They turned to the novel form, characterising their work in their subtitles as 'a novel', each creating a

subjective, liminal space between fiction and history, between civility and political demagoguery, between rationalist ideology and political violence.⁵⁸ Wootton represented chaos and social anarchy brought about by the failure of government in Britain to provide successful solutions to contemporary problems. The muted tones of liberal polity and civility would be overwhelmed by a maelstrom of violence and destruction.

The scenes of urban violence depicted by Mitchison and Wootton are of London and urban Britain, not Moscow. The images of violence expressed in their fiction can only make sense if viewed in the context of contemporary fears and class anxieties in Britain. The 'contact zone' was London; the journey was home.

Notes

1. Naomi Mitchison, *Mucking Around* (London, 1981), 61.
2. Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference* (London, 1991). See also Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive* (Oxford, 2003); Alison Blunt, *Travel, Gender and Imperialism* (NY, 1994); Nupur Chaudhuri and M. Strobel, *Western Women and Imperialism* (NY, 1992); Claire Midgley, ed. *Gender and Imperialism* (Manchester, 1998); Ann McClintock, *Dangerous Liaisons* (Minneapolis, 1997); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* (London, 1992); Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem* (Durham, N.C., 1996).
3. Leila J. Rupp, *Worlds of Women* (Princeton, 1997). Carol Miller, 'Geneva – the Key to Equality': Inter-war Feminists and the League of Nations', *Women's History Review*, 3 (1994), 219-45; Barbara Bush, 'Britain's Conscience on Africa: White Women, Race and Imperial Politics in Inter-War Britain', in *Gender and Imperialism*, ed. Midgley, 200-224. Recent studies of women's political narratives of the 1930s include: Angela Ingram and D. Patai, eds, *Rediscovering Forgotten Radicals: British Women Writers, 1899-1939* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1993); Janet Montefiore, *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s* (London, 1996); Elizabeth Maslen, *Political and Social Issues in British Women's Fiction 1928-1968* (London, 2001); M. Joannou, ed., *Women Writers of the Thirties. Gender, Politics and History* (Edinburgh, 1999); Anthony Shuttleworth, ed., *And in Our Time: Vision, Revision and British Writing of the 1930s* (Lewisburg, 2003); Andy Croft, *Red Letter Days* (London, 1990).
4. Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive. Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London, 1993), 44.
5. A vast literature of personalized memoirs, journalism, travel literature was generated by visitors to Soviet Russia. Harry W. Nerhood, *To Russia and Return* (Ohio, 1968) provides a bibliographic survey. Comparative studies by Paul Hollander and Martin Malia represent 'political pilgrims' as variously naïve, idealistic, utopian or gullible; Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims*, Michael Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999). Recent access to Soviet archives has invigorated the discussion; historian Michael David-Fox writes of the 'reverential pilgrimage' by inter-war intellectuals in 'The Fellow Travellers Revisited: The 'Cultured West'

through Soviet Eyes', *Journal of Modern History*, 75 (2003), 300 and M. David-Fox, 'From Illusory 'Society' to Intellectual Public: VOKS, International Travel and Party-Intelligentsia Relations in the Interwar Period', *Contemporary European History* 11, 1 (2002). Francois Hourmant offers a thoughtful suggestion of 'theatricality' or performativity implicit in the exchange between travellers and Soviet hosts in 'Entre simulacre et thèacratie' *Revue historique*, 302 (janvier-mars 2000), 121-57. In her study of French inter-war travellers to the USSR, Rachel Mazuy discusses a 'fracture' between reality as observed and reality as wished. *Croire plutôt que voir? Voyages en Russie soviétique (1919-1939)* (Paris, 2002).

6. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes* (London, 1992).
7. Their respective contributions to public life were recognized later in their careers, with honours bestowed on behalf of the nation. Wootton was amongst the first four women named to a Life Peerage in 1958, becoming Baroness Wootton of Abinger; Mary Stocks was elevated to a Life Peerage in 1966, as Baroness Stocks of Kensington, Margaret Cole and Naomi Mitchison were honoured respectively as Dames of the British Empire.
8. The title of a special issue of *The Highway*, journal of the Workers Educational Association, which appeared in December 1932 with contributions by Wootton, Mary Stocks, Margaret Cole, Sir John Russell, H.L. Beales and Kingsley Martin, editor of the *New Statesman*.
9. Barbara Wootton, 'Unemployment amongst Women: England and Wales', *The Women's Yearbook, 1923-1924. Compiled by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship* (London, 1924).
10. Margaret Cole, *Growing up into Revolution*. (London 1949), 144.
11. Wootton travelled as one of three European women delegates to an international economic conference of the League of Nations with funding from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Cole, Stocks and Mitchison were active in issues affecting the reconstruction of family life after the war, birth-control, family planning among the most salient.
12. Barbara Wootton, *In a World I Never Made* (London, 1967) 82.
13. Roland Stromberg, *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (NJ, 1997), 213; Richard Vinen, *A History in Fragments: Europe in the Twentieth Century* (London, 2000); Richard Stites, *The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, 1900-1945* in *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century*, eds Michael Howard and W.R. Louis (Oxford, 2002), 124.
14. The opening of Soviet archives revealed his arrest in the late 1930s and death in a prison camp in June 1939; Joseph Frank, 'The Tragedy of Prince Mirsky', *New York Review of Books* (12 June 2003), 64.
15. Beatrice Webb, *Diary*, 28 July 1932, in 'The Wheel of Life': *The Diary of Beatrice Webb, 1924-1943* eds Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie (Cambridge Mass, 1985), 275.

16. Margaret Cole, *The Diary of Beatrice Webb* (NY, 1946), 148; Beatrice Webb, 'What I have learnt about Russia', BBC, 28 September 1932, in *The Letters of Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Pilgrimage 1912-1947*, ed. Norman Mackenzie (Cambridge and London, 1978), 380. Sidney Webb returned to the Soviet Union in 1934, accompanied by Beatrice's niece, Barbara Drake, to confirm 'facts' for the volume on Soviet communism.
17. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation?* (London, 1935).
18. Margaret Cole and Beatrice Webb discuss meetings of the SSIP in their diary accounts. Attlee and G.D.H. Cole discuss the philosophy behind the NFRB project in their introduction to *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Margaret I. Cole (London, 1933), 7-9.
19. Cole, *Growing up into Revolution* and *The Diary of Beatrice Webb*; Naomi Mitchison, *You May Well Ask. A Memoir, 1920-1940* (London, 1979); *Mucking Around: Five Continents over Fifty Years* (London, 1981), and 'Pages from a Russian Diary', *Modern Scot* 3 (October 1932), 223-36; Travel Diary (tss) National Library of Scotland. Jill Benton, *Naomi Mitchison* (London, 1990); Hugh Dalton, *The Fateful Years. Memoirs 1931-1945* (London, 1957); Ben Pimlott, *Hugh Dalton* (London, 1985).
20. *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole, 7.
21. Mitchison, *You May Well Ask*, 187.
22. Benton, *Naomi Mitchison*, 84. Mitchison, *You May Well Ask*, 188. Naomi Mitchison and Margaret Cole were friends, sharing political activism and family holidays together; both Coles and Mitchisons were said to be exponents of 'open marriages'.
23. Mary Stocks and Wootton specifically criticize the Soviet indoctrination of the young and the omnipresent posters reiterating the goals and glories of the First Five-Year Plan. Mary Stocks, 'Impressions of a Russian Village', *The Highway*, 25 (Dec 1932), 8-10.
24. H.L. Beales, 'The Political System', in *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole, 133.
25. Wootton, *In a World I Never Made*, 79.
26. Cole, *Growing up into Revolution*, 157-158.
27. *Ibid*, 157.
28. M.L. Pratt cited by Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem* (Durham, N.C, 1996), 234 and 4.
29. Naomi Mitchison, 'Archaeology and the Intellectual Worker', *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole, 198.
30. See Anne Applebaum, 'Pulling the Rug out from Under', *New York Review of Books* (12 Feb. 2004), 9-11.
31. Hugh Dalton, 'A General View of the Soviet Economy with Special Reference to Planning', in *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole, 13-34.
32. Wootton, *In a World I Never Made*, 81.
33. *Ibid*, 82.
34. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism. A New Civilisation?* (London, 1935), 603.
35. Barbara Wootton, *Plan or No Plan* (London, 1934), 258.
36. *Ibid*, 257.
37. *Ibid.*, 256.
38. Hugh Dalton, 'A General View of the Soviet Economy with Special Reference to Planning', in *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole., 34.
39. *Ibid.*, 210.
40. Wootton, *In a World I Never Made*, 83.
41. Barbara Wootton, *London's Burning* (London, 1936), 103.
42. *Ibid.*, 282.
43. Andy Croft, *Red Letter Days* (London, 1990), 226. Croft comments upon her later representation of the novel.
44. Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Women's Lives. The View from the Threshold* (Toronto, 1999) and Janet Montefiore, *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s* (London, 1996), 143, have inspired my thoughts on liminality and women's writing lives.
45. Wootton, *In a World I Never Made*, 184.
46. June Hannam and Karen Hunt, *Socialist Women: Britain 1880s to 1920s* (London, 2002) carefully delineate the changing relationship of feminist and socialist arguments in the inter-war period.
47. Betty Vernon, *Margaret Cole* (London, 1986), 86.
48. Margaret Cole, *Growing up Into Revolution*, 158.
49. Margaret I. Cole, 'Women and Children', in *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole., 184.
50. *Ibid.*, 205.
51. Cole, *Growing up Into Revolution*, 160.
52. Mary B. Stocks, 'Impressions of a Russian Village', *The Highway* (December 1932), 9-10.
53. Mary Stocks, *My Commonplace Book* (London, 1970), 220.
54. She toured Greek and Byzantine remains of the ancient city of Chersonnes on the western Crimean peninsula; Mitchison, 'Archaeology and the Intellectual Worker', *Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia*, ed. Cole.
55. *Ibid.*, 263.
56. Mitchison, *Mucking Around*, 76
57. Naomi Mitchison, *We Have Been Warned* (London, 1935), vii.
58. Katherine Burdekin, Ethel Mannin, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Storm Jameson and Virginia Woolf among others, published anti-Fascist narratives. What is emphasized here is the move from scientific discourse in travel accounts to fictional representation.

A Half-forgotten Heroine: Edmone Robert

Vivienne M. Barker

English Teacher, AIFCC, Caen

The grim granite stone implanted in the village green was simply the half-mile marker in a stumbling jog every morning from our house in Normandy. For days I didn't slow down enough to notice it was a memorial tablet; it took weeks longer for me to notice that the Edmond Robert was not Edmond but Edmone: a rare name, a rare woman it seemed.



Memorial stone to Edmone Robert in the village square.
(photo by author)

Place Edmone Robert
1912 -1945
Institutrice à St Aubin sur Algot
De 1937-1942
Résistante arrêtée dans sa classe
Déportée en Allemagne
Morte pour la France

Sparse and dramatic, those words inspired me to discover more, especially in this (2004) the sixtieth anniversary year of the Battle of Normandy; all the more so since this is now my home, and because I am a teacher too.

Sometime later, I bumped into a middle-aged woman in the doctor's waiting room. I remembered her from the village fete. She had been the schoolmistress until her retirement in 1990. Yes, she would love to talk to me about Edmone Robert and would I telephone her the next week to fix a date. Meanwhile I researched through books and the internet looking for any trace of Edmone Robert. I found references to resistance cells of different political persuasions in the area and the story of a Gisele

Guillemot who also was a resistance worker. She mentions her friend Edmone Robert because they were imprisoned and deported to Germany together and spent 200 days in labour camps and on forced marches together. Gisele survived to tell her story in her memoirs, but Edmone did not.

When I came to ring the retired schoolteacher, I had forgotten her surname, so I phoned the mayor of St Aubin as I knew he would know her. Of course he did. Monique Binet was a fascinating woman to interview. She was the village teacher for more than thirty years from 1956 until her retirement in 1990, when the school closed down. She was the sole teacher in charge of the education of twenty to thirty children, aged from five to eleven. There was not even a secretary in the school. She used the traditions of the countryside and people around her as resources, but initiated 'classes de neige' and 'classes de mer' when she took all the children to the mountains for lessons, or to the seaside. She is proud to have been the first in the area to install a computer in the classroom in 1980. Her working life has been dedicated to the education of the village children and her home was the schoolhouse attached to the school. I talked with her about her memories in her lovely, half-timbered Normandy house, near a little wood at the edge of the village.

When Monique arrived fresh from college in Caen in 1956, she had never heard of her predecessor of some twenty years before, but little by little, as the war became safely relegated to history, she realised she had a heroine on her doorstep, indeed, in her own home. Edmone Robert, like Monique, had lived in the schoolhouse and taught the one-class school on her own. Over the years, Monique's interest in the war-time teacher grew. She became aware of the unusually placed locks in the schoolhouse where Edmone had concealed resistance workers. In the attic, Monique found a copy of a letter sent by Edmone to the Mayor of St Aubin in 1940. The letter made pointed enquiries about the ration-tokens for shoes for children. Edmone had known that there were tokens to be had at the town-hall and yet some of her schoolchildren had no shoes. Edmone had scribbled on the copy 'No Reply'

On the occasion of the centenary of the school, Monique decided to campaign for a monument to Edmone Robert, and permission to name the school in her honour. However, in 1984, the mayor of Cambremer – St Aubin being dependent on the bigger village of Cambremer by then – stone-walled the application. His off-the-record remark to Monique was '*Elle avait fait de grosses erreurs*' [She made grave errors]. These *grave errors* could only have been the fact that Edmone had been a member of a communist



Edmone Robert*

resistance cell, which, around these bucolic conservative parts, raised eyebrows. So, in the early 1990s, when there was renewed interest in the Normandy Landings, Edmone's story was being overlooked.

In 1937, the twenty five year-old Edmone Robert was appointed schoolmistress of St Aubin sur Algot, a tiny scattered community of some 170 souls. She was already a member of the communist Front Populaire and committed to opposing fascism and Nazi expansion. In 1940, after the collapse of the French Army in face of the advancing Germans, she joined the *Organisation Speciale* in collecting weapons and munitions abandoned by the surrendering army. Later, Edmone was a member of the *Francs Tireurs* and the *Partisans Francais*. She concealed resistance workers in her schoolhouse; after the explosion and derailling of a train at nearby Airan, she hid the main protagonists. And she researched information for resistance activities. Edmone's brother worked in the sous-préfecture in Lisieux and was a sympathiser to the cause himself, but he worried constantly about his courageous but headstrong sister. He knew she passed on documents and co-ordinated a part of the resistance movement in the Calvados. He was powerless to protect her on that fatal day.

On 21 December 1941, the Special Police Brigade marched into the isolated village schoolroom and arrested Edmone in front of her pupils. Edmone panicked and slipped some incriminating documents into a pupil's satchel. The pupil's father happened to work in the Town hall in Cambremer with the mayor, who was a staunch Petainist and aggressively anti-communist. He sent the documents to the authorities. Her fate was sealed.

She was taken to Caen prison, where she remained until May 1943. Along with Gisele Guillemot, another resistance worker, she was taken to Fresnes, to the north-east of Paris, where a total of sixteen resistants were condemned to death. The fourteen men were summarily executed but the two women had their sentences commuted to deportation. There followed eighty-nine days of forced march, moving from one prison to another, or between transit camps and police stations until they reached Lübeck in Eastern Germany, passing through the notorious Dresden prison where political prisoners and homosexuals were routinely subjected to inhuman treatment including torture, 'experimentation' and execution.

In April 1944, Edmone and Gisele were separated. Edmone was taken to Jauer camp, south of Berlin, where she was put to work in a Siemens factory making winding equipment for delayed-action bombs. There she met Helene Prunier, who was to take the place of Gisele as her friend and helpmeet. The living and working conditions at Jauer were atrocious, and it wasn't long before Edmone caught tuberculosis. She had to continue working of course. Worse was to come when the Germans, on the retreat by January 1945, evacuated the camp and attempted to transfer the inmates on foot as the Allies were approaching. It was during this 'death march', which killed many young and old people, that the allies eventually picked up the group of bedraggled prisoners. Edmone was too weak to continue. In the ambulance at Karlsruhe near the border with Eastern France, Helene tried to rally her friend, who responded by asking for a sip of French wine. Helene somehow managed to give her some, but Edmone was very near death. Edmone's prison-camp clothes were so threadbare that she was almost naked. Helene took off her own dress and put it on her friend. The death was not recorded until they had safely reached Strasbourg on French territory.

Until 1997, Edmone's name was one of many on the war memorial in the churchyard at St Aubin, with only the words: *Victime civile de la guerre*. Only the persistence and dedication of Monique Binet, the last schoolmistress of St Aubin, brought the name of Edmone Robert to the forefront and culminated in the memorial ceremony, on 22 June 1997. The monument to Edmone Robert was placed on the square for future generations and the square was renamed *Place Edmone Robert*. Sadly, the school was never given her name. Classes had been moved into Cambremer, where Monique finished her teaching career.

The present mayor of St Aubin conducted the ceremony. He had been one of the pupils of Edmone Robert during the war and had witnessed the police entering the school. It was he I had rung to ask if he knew the retired schoolteacher's name. At the ceremony, the two women

who had shared Edmone's sufferings in exile, Gisele Guillemot and Helene Prunier, spoke of her immense courage and the ideals for which she died.

Savais-je donc qu'il me faudrait mourir
Moi, la petite institutrice,
Pour empêcher la France de périr
Pour que, plus belle, on la chérísse? ...

How was I to know that I would have to die,
The little village schoolmistress,
So that France would not perish altogether
But that, more lovely still, might be cherished? ...

(G. Hugue, local poet)

Note

* While we have made every effort to identify the source of this photo, we have been unsuccessful, and would be pleased to give credit if someone can identify it.

OBITUARY

Sue Innes (1948-2005)

Sue Innes, writer, feminist activist and historian, died in Edinburgh on 24 February 2005, after a six-month struggle with an inoperable brain tumour. Sue was deeply committed to feminist politics and to women's history, and her loss, at a time of great personal and professional fulfilment, has been widely mourned. Her friends and colleagues remember her dynamic energies, her enthusiasm for her subject and her unfailing interest in the history of women's lives.

Brought up in North Wales and Peterhead, Sue began an art school course in Aberdeen, but inspired by the radical movements of the 1960s, and feeling constrained by her life in the north of Scotland, she abandoned it in 1968 to travel to Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, participating in demonstrations against the Vietnam war there and at the Democratic Party Convention in Chicago in 1968. Returning to Scotland, she brought her revolutionary politics to her undergraduate life at St Andrews University where she studied English and philosophy, helped to run the St Andrews Arts Festival and to design and edit a student newspaper. It was there she met John Clifford, now a leading playwright, with whom she formed a lifelong partnership. After graduating in 1974 she worked mainly as a researcher and journalist, for, among others, BBC Radio Scotland, *The Scotsman* and *Scotland on Sunday*, covering for the latter many subjects relating to women's affairs. She also continued to enjoy sketching and painting, and did the occasional book

illustration. Her daughters, Rebecca and Katie were born in 1980 and 1985.

She came to women's history relatively late. In 1993 she started a part-time PhD at the University of Edinburgh with Bob Morris, in politics and social history, and after leaving *Scotland on Sunday* in 1995 she produced a wide variety of books, papers and reports mainly focused on the situation of women in the past and in the present, especially in Scotland. Her first book, *Making it Work. Women, Change and Challenge in the 1990s* (1995) 'a book about Britain written from the perspective of a Scot', focused on the themes which were to dominate her writing: the balance between work and family, categories which she believed could not be explored separately, and the changes and the continuities in women's lives. It is an immensely readable and intimate discussion, reflecting her own experience and the processes of research. There were many other articles, books and research reports on contemporary Scotland emerging from her employment as a research fellow at Edinburgh and Glasgow Caledonian Universities. They included *Children, Families and Learning* (1999), with Gill Scott, *Family, Care, and Women's Transition to Paid Work* (2002) and, with Morag Gillespie and Gill Scott, *Breaking Barriers: poverty, childcare and mothers' transitions to work* (2003).

Also in the 1990s, Sue was part of a women's movement which, building on the work done by earlier groups, aimed to create new momentum on women's issues as the prospect of a new Scottish Parliament emerged. In 1991/2, she helped found Engender, the women's research, information and networking voluntary organisation. She was a member of several Engender committees, shaping policy and development over more than a decade and contributing to the annual Engender *Gender Audit*. Engender commissioned her to research and write *Keeping Gender on the Agenda: participative democracy and gender equality in the Scottish Parliament* (1999), analysing opportunities opened up by constitutional change; she was of course delighted at the breakthrough of 37 per cent female membership for the new Scottish Parliament of 1999. Employed for a time as an official Reporter at the Scottish Parliament, she produced a research review for the Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee in 2002. Speaking at a conference in Italy in November 2002, she celebrated what had been achieved in Scotland – to some acclaim – but also emphasised how much the Scottish women's movement still had to do in identifying and countering gender inequality. Latterly, she job-shared as co-ordinator/development officer for Engender. Her job-share partner, Fiona McOwan, said at her funeral, 'Her passion for the women's movement

in Scotland is a bright torch to carry forward in her memory.'

In the PhD thesis which she submitted at Edinburgh in March 1998, 'Love and Work: Feminism, Family and Ideas of Equality and Citizenship', Sue brought together her commitment to feminist theory and politics, and her love of research, especially when that research was uncovering the writings, the ideas and the fighting campaigns of earlier Scottish feminists. She was interested in challenging the dichotomies of public and private, equality and difference, and in exploring that central challenge for feminism, the opposition between family responsibilities and gender equality. She wrote of the ways in which feminists of the interwar generation – Mabel Atkinson, Willa Muir, and the members of the Edinburgh Women Citizens' Association, among others – conceived of women's citizenship as neither simply egalitarian, modelled on a masculine model, nor rooted entirely in sexual difference. Her recent article in *Women's History Review*, published just before her death so that happily she had a chance to see it in print, gives the reader the flavour of her thesis.

Sue believed in women's history as a collaborative enterprise. She was involved in the renaissance of the Scottish Women's History Network (recently re-named Women's History Scotland) in late 1998, and became its vice-convenor soon after. She also became a committee member of the Women's History Network in 2003, but was forced to resign from both organisations due to her illness in the autumn of 2004. As SWHN gathered strength, Sue played a leading role in developing two major co-operative projects, both of which will be published by Edinburgh University Press in Spring 2006: the volume of essays, *Gender in Scottish History*, and *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*, of which she was one of the editors, with other SWHN steering group members Siân Reynolds, Elizabeth Ewan and Rose Pipes.

With Jane Rendall she worked on a joint essay, 'Women, Gender and Politics in Scotland c. 1707-2000' for *Gender in Scottish History*, edited by Lynn Abrams, Eleanor Gordon, Deborah Simonton and Eileen Yeo, which aims to challenge familiar narratives of Scottish history through a gendered reading of the lives of Scottish women and men in the past. Sue brought her commitment to expanding the very definition of politics and her detailed knowledge of Scottish history to a very happy and stimulating collaboration (at least for Jane), with plenty of meetings over meals and drinks to talk about Scottish Chartist women, or the Women's Freedom League, or the will of Mary Burton. In 1909 Burton had left a

legacy to the Edinburgh women's suffrage society, to support its campaign 'for the admission of women to sit as members of parliament, either at Westminster or in a Scottish Parliament'. This was just the kind of continuity Sue relished. The essay has been inspired by her interest in Scottish women's distinctive relationship to 'civil society', and in the meanings of citizenship.

All Sue's friends and acquaintances knew about the *Biographical Dictionary*; she shared her passion with everyone she met. In so many ways it was the perfect project for her – scholarly, feminist, ground-breaking, and challenging the orthodoxy. As she put it in an article for *Etudes Ecossaises* 'Our task ... is to show how wrong Hugh MacDiarmid was in his declaration that "Scottish women of any historical importance or interest are curiously rare", but at the same time to question what counts as "of note" anyway'. The *Dictionary* was the perfect vehicle for Sue's incredibly wide range of talents and interests, from researching and writing to cajoling people to take part and, most important, simply *knowing* so many people who could contribute the necessary knowledge and expertise. It was also ideal in terms of how the work was done: as Sue once said to her co-editors, while she enjoyed doing academic research, she found academe a relatively lonely, isolated and over-competitive world; her preference was for working co-operatively, sharing ideas to achieve greater good. She loved talking, but she was also a very good listener.

What Sue relished in the *Dictionary* project was the adventure and exhilaration of finding out about so many extraordinary women; women who would otherwise have remained hidden and whose lives she felt with such passion should be revealed and given their rightful place on the record. Such was her enthusiasm that her fellow editors had to restrain her at times, as the number of words devoted to her favourite Scottish feminists – Sarah Mair, Eunice Murray, Helen Fraser – grew beyond reasonable limits and had to be cut back in the interest of the whole volume.

Sue remained engaged with both projects almost until her death. Even in the hospice, which cared for her in the last months, there were editorial meetings, textual discussions, and policy issues to be decided. The *Dictionary* will be dedicated to her as the most fitting legacy her colleagues can offer. Sue leaves her partner John Clifford, her daughters Rebecca and Katie and her mother, Jean Innes, and so many, many friends, who crowded out Edinburgh's Warriston Crematorium chapel to remember and to celebrate her life on Thursday 3 March 2005.

Rose Pipes and Jane Rendall

Book Reviews

Gerda Lerner

The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina: Pioneers for Women's Rights and Abolition

(Revised and Expanded Edition)

The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill and London, 2004

£17.50, 0 8078 5566 9 (paperback) pp.xix + 373

Review by Joyce A. Walker

University of Aberdeen

Gerda Lerner is one of the founding mothers of the writing of women's history, and her landmark work on the lives of Sarah and Angelina Grimké was originally published in hardback in 1967. This new, revised edition reflects Lerner's increasing awareness of the major significance of Sarah Grimké's feminist writings since the publication of that original edition.

The biography explores the lives and ideas of the only Southern women to become Abolitionists in the North and pioneers for women's rights. From the 1820s, these remarkable women turned their backs on home and family, repulsed by the slavery they saw all around them, including in their own home, in Charleston, South Carolina. Sarah, the elder sister, left for Philadelphia in 1821, to be followed by her younger sister, Angelina, in 1829. Both became practicing members of the Society of Friends (Quakers), attracted by that Church's uncompromising anti-slavery stance. This proved to be a troubled relationship, however, as the Quakers were just as traditionalist and immovable in some of their ideas concerning women's roles as most other bodies in American society at that time: the sisters eventually broke most of their bonds with the orthodox Quakers and moved on to Massachusetts, the hot-bed of Abolitionism in the 1830s.

In traditional histories of Abolitionism, if the Grimké sisters warrant mention at all, the focus is mainly on Angelina Grimké (as, indeed, it is in Lerner's earlier edition), who outraged society with her public speeches on behalf of the anti-slavery campaign and who had married Theodore Weld, one of the foremost Abolitionist thinkers. She was the first woman to address the Massachusetts State Legislature in 1838 in support of anti-slavery petitions, which had been put in front of that body. Lerner's opening chapter deals with this event, and with both public and media responses to it. However, we also learn that it was Sarah Grimké who had actually

penned the speech – our first real indication of her talents as writer and thinker. But Sarah Grimké was moving beyond 'simple' Abolitionism. A number of the more thoughtful American women who were involved with the Abolitionist movement had drawn uncomfortable parallels between their status as women and the status of the slaves they were endeavouring to set free: their lack of legal and political rights, the proscriptions on their actions and their beholden-ness to a white male patriarchy all, to these women, matched the restraints and restrictions placed on slaves.

It is in the further analysis of Sarah Grimké's developing feminist consciousness, and her role as both feminist thinker and writer, which was reached largely through her Abolitionist work and thought, that this new edition departs from its earlier form. Lerner has included a new appendix entitled 'The Manuscript Essays of Sarah Moore Grimké', which lets the reader see how Grimké's thinking evolved and how it was influenced by the work of Florence Nightingale and Anna Jameson in Britain, particularly in her essay *Sisters of Charity* – an interesting transatlantic intellectual exchange. But, as Lerner notes on pp. 285-6, Grimké was no mere slavish copier of ideas:

What seems most intriguing to me is that part of her essay in which Grimké departs from and elaborates on Jameson's argument. Here we can see the strong impact of the beliefs and values derived from the American Revolution and the thoroughly radical cast of Grimké's thought.

These new primary documents (some published for the first time), an essay by Lerner on her endeavours in tracking down the Sarah Grimké material, much of which appears in different form in her monograph, *The Feminist Thought of Sarah Grimké* (1998), and some textual amendments (reflecting research undertaken in the past thirty years), make this a valuable new edition of an old favourite. Personally, I have always found the narrative style Lerner has used in the book irritating; but for anyone interested in Abolitionist women and, as this book clearly shows, the development of a distinctly American feminist consciousness, this book is to be highly recommended.

Helena Wojtczak

Women of Victorian Sussex: their status, occupations, and dealings with the law, 1830-1870

Hastings: The Hastings Press, 2003. £9.99, ISBN 1-904-109-0505 (paperback), Pp. x + 246.

Review by Lesley A. Hall

Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine

This is a charming and delightful book, a demonstration that work undertaken as a labour of love may make genuine scholarly contributions. It is a fascinating study of women in mid-nineteenth century Sussex, and one of the many things it reveals is the extent to which it is possible to find out about women of all social classes from a wide variety of the surviving records. Possibly one group of women who feature to a lesser extent than some others are those who followed that (probably seldom occurring in nature) definition of a lady as one whose name appeared in the public record (in particular, in the newspapers) only when she was born, married and died. Wojtczak is acute on the reasons for the under-representation of the public presence of women in the records: even when a married woman was running a business, legally the owner of the business (for example, the licensee of a public house) was her husband. Census records repeatedly under-described the number of married women gainfully employed. Nonetheless it is possible, given her meticulous research, to establish, for example, that the day to day running and management of a number of businesses, which appear in legal and financial records as male-owned, was in fact in the hands of women.

The book is perhaps particularly strong on women of this middling sort, somewhere between the respectable working and the lower middle classes. These are very much the kind of women who would, even if married, be engaging in some form of paid occupation that was neither the genteel expedient of women of somewhat higher social status nor the rough trades verging into criminality and prostitution of the lower echelons of the 'lower orders'. They appear in newspaper advertisements and sometimes in news reports, if for example they were involved in legal action or (particularly in the case of public houses) became witnesses to affrays, in trade directories, in legal and local government records. These were not women engaged in industrial occupations: Sussex was a still largely agrarian county with, however, a vigorously developing service and leisure sector in its seashore towns.

However, Wojtczak does not neglect the ladies of

leisure, those engaged in the genteel middle-class sectors of education and the more upmarket forms of retail in fashion and haberdashery, the vast number of domestic servants (still, at that period, the major employment sector for women) or the rougher element of fishwives and prostitutes. She also has a strong section on women and crime, both as victims and as perpetrators. In a final chapter she looks at a number of early feminists closely associated with Sussex.

The book is copiously illustrated with the results of Wojtczak's delving into newspapers and other contemporary sources and she provides a number of useful appendices, including a list of the Sussex women who can be identified as having been engaged in various trades.

Some of the general comments on the position and status of British women during the period in question may be relatively familiar to many women's historians, but this book provides a valuable micro-study of the diverse lives of Victorian women, which gives life to the broader picture.

Reviewers needed for the following books:

Academic studies

McTavish, Lianne, *Childbirth and the Display of Authorship in Early Modern France* (Ashgate)

Arnold, Marianne & Brenda Schmähmann, eds. *Women Artists in South Africa 1910 – 1994* (Ashgate)

Novels

Evans, Margiad *The Wooden Doctor* (Honno)

Velada, Omma *The Makerby Scandal* (UKA Press)

Please contact Jane Potter at
bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org

Conference Reports

Conference Report

WHN (Midlands) 'Women, Health & Medicine'

The 'Women, Health and Medicine' conference was held at University College Worcester on May 14th. Over 30 delegates attended for a morning session.

Judith Lockhart (PhD student, University of Warwick) gave a paper on 'Sex (and Suffering) in the City: Patients and their care at the Women's Hospital, Birmingham 1870-1912'. This was followed by Elizabeth Toon (Wellcome Research Associate, University of Manchester) with "'Such Painful Treatment for Nothing': Women, Physicians and the experience of breast cancer therapy in Britain 1945-1965'. (If anyone has experience of treatment during this period, either their own or a close friend or relative, and would be prepared to talk about it, please contact Elizabeth, elizabeth.toon@man.ac.uk). Caroline Walker (Department of Historical Studies, University of Bristol) was ill and could not attend but sent her paper 'Therapeutic Contraception: Marie Stopes, Voluntary Birth Control Clinic and Public Health in Britain 1921-1945' so all delegates received a copy.

Suzy Scott from the Black Country Museum, Dudley, spoke about the new project which is being developed at the museum to set up a women's studies centre and will begin with a conference on October 17th 2005 'Forging Links: Women and Trade Unionism'. Contact Suzy Scott 012 1521 5608 for further details.

The 4th Annual WHN (Midlands Region) 6th Form Women's History Essay prize (£50) was awarded to a student from Hereford 6th form College.

The next conference is on November 5th at the School of Education, Birmingham University (see the notice in this issue).

Conference Report

WHN (Northern)

Since its relaunch at the 2004 conference in Hull, the Northern Women's History Network has established itself as a busy and vibrant group which has held two postgraduate study days to date with more planned.

Postgraduate Study Day, 21 May, University of York

The five papers presented covered different periods and regions. The first by Bethany Hamblen (University of York) explored, through an analysis of wills, the role that a network of friends and family played in the lives of medieval women in the hinterland of York. Lindsey

Mullard (University of Sussex) demonstrated in her paper on the radicalist Katherine Chidley that these networks had lost none of their importance in the seventeenth century. It was partly because of the existence of these networks, Mullard argued, that Chidley was able to publish her controversial political and religious tracts. The third paper looked at prostitutes in nineteenth-century Hull. Joanne Chilman (University of Hull) concentrated in her paper in particular on a penitentiary set up in the early part of the nineteenth century which aimed to either rescue prostitutes or prevent lower-class women from becoming prostitutes. Chilman corrected in her account earlier interpretations of nineteenth-century prostitution, most notably that the medical establishment did not become concerned about Venereal Diseases until the second half of the century.

Jonathan Mood (University of Durham) examined in his paper the ways in which journalists and government officials depicted women who worked in Newcastle's white-lead works in the nineteenth century. Like Chilman, he suggested that nineteenth-century public concerns were often displaced onto female sexuality. The last paper was presented by Charlie Wildman (University of Manchester) and explored the shopping practices of women in Liverpool and Manchester in the interwar years. The visual images that Wildman distributed raised a lot of questions, ranging from the democratization of consumption in this period to the usefulness of Mass Observation Reports to discover the role that clothing played in women's identity at the time. In sum, this study day exposed the audience to five very different but equally interesting topics and led to a discussion about various methodological problems involved in researching past women's lives.

For more information about the Northern WHN, please contact Dr Maureen Meikle at: maureen.meikle@sunderland.ac.uk

Conference Notices & Calls for Papers

Call for papers

History, Gender and Migration: (Atlantic world XIXth and XXth century)

A conference organised by the Centre d'Histoire Sociale du XXe Siècle (Université Paris I, Panthéon Sorbonne) and L'Équipe Réseaux, Savoirs, Territoires (École Normale Supérieure)

Location : Paris, École Normale Supérieure and Université Paris I

Dates : **27-29 March 2006**

Proposal submission deadline : **October 1 2005**

Gender History and International Migration History have been in recent years two very active and exciting fields of study. Despite some recent works, they still appear however to produce distinct narratives of History. This conference aims to facilitate cross-fertilization of gender and migration studies. Gender allows us to take a new look at concepts used by historians of migrations, and to refresh some of their usual themes. The migrant's experience is structured by gender, so are the memories and images of migrants and migrations. Migrations policy and the administration of migrants differ according to gender, so do migrant's political and social activities. In return, migrations affect the ways genders are defined and acted upon, within the host-society as well as in the home place.

We will examine any proposal that addresses these issues. Submissions made by post-graduate and post-doctorate students are specially encouraged, as well as proposals examining them within a well defined and precisely studied context and the ones addressing one of the themes below.

- 1) Genre and the migrant's experience : Life-cycle, Work, Social and Geographical trajectories
- 2) Images and Memory: Gendered tales of migrations, images of migrants
- 3) Social and Political activities: Unions, Associations, Ethnic institutions
- 4) Gender changed by migrations: Host and home society, migrant and non migrant populations
- 5) Administration and Policy: Selection of migrants, access to the job market, access to education

Proposals shall include

- A 6,000 character proposal
- A short cv
- Personal coordinates (email)
- If possible a previous paper or references of previous published work

Proposals need to be sent before **01/10/2005** to
Nicole.Fouche@ehess.fr

Languages : French or English. Authors whose institutions do not provide for their cost may be eligible for some help.

Contact: prygiel@ens.fr Philippe Rygiel, Centre d'histoire sociale du XXe siècle, 9 rue Mahler, 75004 Paris.

Event — New Dawn Women

An exhibition of work by women active in the Arts & Crafts and Suffrage movements at the dawn of the 20th century

Watts Gallery, Guildford 1 July—28 September 2005

In late 19th century Britain, a disproportionate ratio of females to males meant women could not depend on marriage as a career. The fashion for Arts & Crafts offered training and employment prospects. But women's work received scant encouragement or recognition from exclusive male Guilds. Women workers paid tax but had no voice in Parliament to safeguard their interests.

The turn of the century instilled hope that a new age of gender equality was about to dawn. But parliament continued to prevaricate on the issue of votes for women.

Frustrated angels grew subversive. Arts & Crafts skills became weapons of mass propaganda in women's campaign to win equal opportunity – and voting rights – with men.

New Dawn Women explores the role of women in the Arts & Crafts movement - and the role of Arts & Crafts in women's subsequent political emancipation.

Watts Gallery, Down Lane, Compton, Guildford, Surrey GU3 1DQ. Tel: 01483 810235. Email: wattsgallery@freeuk.com Web: www.wattsgallery.org.uk

Conference

Consecrated Women: Towards a History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland

September 16-17 2005, Cambridge

To be held in the Divinity Faculty, Cambridge University and Margaret Beaufort Institute, supported by the Economic History Society and the Royal Historical Society

Exploring the history of consecrated women from medieval to modern times, papers will focus on four themes: material culture in the convent; missionary ministry; oral history methodology and the authorial voice of consecrated women.

Guest lecturers: Dr Barbara Mann Wall (Purdue University) and Dr Ann Matthews (University of Ireland, Maynooth)

For conference programme and booking form consult
www.margaretbeaufort.cam.ac.uk

Contact Liz Jacobs, Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, 12 Grange Road, Cambridge CB3 9DU. (+44) 01223 741766, ecj27@cam.ac.uk

Call for Papers

Women's History Scotland

Gender, Politics and Citizenship: Scotland and Beyond

29 October 2005, Glasgow

This conference is designed to position Scottish women's and gender history within a broader comparative context. The relaunch of the Scottish Women's History Network as 'Women's History Scotland' offers the opportunity to engage historians of women and gender of all periods and geographies and from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds in a common dialogue within Scotland. We believe that the best history situates itself in a comparative context and that insights from both within and beyond Scotland benefit our understanding of developments here and vice versa.

The theme of gender, politics and citizenship has the potential to engage scholars of women and gender from a range of disciplines including history, politics, sociology and literature. We interpret the theme broadly. Definitions of the political and of citizenship may include engagement in civil society, the writing of the political, and political expression in formal and informal institutions and arenas.

We invite proposals (up to 500 words) for short papers on any aspect of the conference theme of 'gender, politics and citizenship'. Proposals may address any period and may focus on any geographical area although as an organisation of historians we are looking for papers with an historical perspective.

Please send proposals to Dr Perry Willson, DELC-Italian, University of Edinburgh, David Hume Tower, George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9JX.
Email: Perry.Willson@ed.ac.uk

Conference

Education in Rural Areas In the Interwar Period

Study Day, 17 September 2005

Museum of English Rural Life (MERL), Reading

The Interwar Rural History Research Group's Study Day will focus in particular on an exploration of MERL's new building with its enhanced resources for research about agriculture and country life. The afternoon session will include presentations on the archives held by MERL and a tour of the new premises.

Papers may be presented along the following themes: visual or literary representations of buildings, students or teachers; qualifications and developments in curriculum; the experiences of teachers in rural areas; gender and

rural education; training for agriculture or domestic service; art and drama education; institutional frameworks for education and books and educational materials.

For more information please contact Dr Caitlin Adams, Witan International College, London Road, Reading RG1 5AQ. Email: adams@witancollege.org

For information about the Interwar Rural History Research Group, please contact Dr Jeremy Burchardt. Email j.f.s.burchard@reading.ac.uk

Conference

People and their Pasts

International inter-disciplinary Public History Conference

Ruskin College, Oxford

Friday-Saturday September 16/17 2005

This is the first international public history conference to be held in Britain. Bringing together public and community historians, museum curators, archivists, artists and activists, the conference will explore the relationship between the ways in which the past is both presented for people and people's own practices and sense of the past. It will include discussion of the role of art, memorials and buildings and developments in museums, education and the media.

Over 50 workshop presentations include war memorials, women's history in India, controversy in national museums, black history, an alternative clothes show, family history and many others. Speakers come from countries including Australia, Scotland, India, USA, Ukraine, New Zealand, Wales, Belarus, Denmark, Greece and England.

For further details and booking please visit www.ruskin.ac.uk

Admin enquiries: Melanie Reynolds, Conference Organiser, Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford OX1 2HE. Email: mreynolds@ruskin.ac.uk

General enquiries: Hilda Kean, Course Director MA in Public History. Email: hkean@ruskin.ac.uk

Publishing Opportunity

Toilet Papers: The Gendered Construction of Public Toilets

Editors: Olga Gershenson (University of Massachusetts-Amherst) & Barbara Penner (University College-London)

Deadline for paper/article submission: **January 15 2006**

We invite contributions for the edited collection *Toilet Papers: The Gendered Construction of Public Toilets*.

Public toilets are amenities with a functional, even a civic, purpose. Yet they also act as the unconscious of public spaces. They can be a haven: a place to regain composure, to 'check one's face,' or to have a private chat. But they are also sexually-charged and transgressive spaces that shelter illicit sexual practices and act as a cultural repository for taboos and fantasies.

This collection will work from the premise that public toilets, far from being banal or simply functional, are highly charged spaces, shaped by notions of propriety, hygiene and the binary gender division. Indeed, public toilets are among the very few openly segregated spaces in contemporary Western culture, and the physical differences between 'gentlemen' and 'ladies' remains central to (and is further naturalized by) their design. As such, they provide a fertile ground for critical work interrogating how conventional assumptions about the body, sexuality, privacy, and technology can be formed in public space and inscribed through design.

We welcome papers which explore the cultural meanings, histories, and ideologies of the public toilet as a gendered space. Any subject is appropriate: toilet design and signage, toilet humour and euphemisms, personal narratives and legal cases, as well as art sited in public toilets. We invite submissions in the format of traditional academic papers of no more than 7000 words (including footnotes).

We also welcome the submissions of design and art projects that expose the gendered nature of the 'functional' toilet spaces and objects.

Completed articles and projects should be directed to the editor, email:

Gershenson@judnea.umass.edu

All submissions must be received via electronic file no later than January 15, 2006. We encourage prospective authors to contact the editors with questions about submissions.

Conference

Inform Seminar xxxv

New Religious Movements and Gender

Saturday 26 November 2005, 9.30 am - 4.30 pm

The London School of Economics and Political Science

Religions play a major role in shaping notions of gender roles and sexuality. New religious movements, in tension with society, often challenge mainstream concepts of gender. In some cases, they may reinforce stricter, more conservative gender roles; yet others may offer more liberal or radically different gender roles. In addition, these gender roles may be believed to be divinely sanctioned and therefore to be non-negotiable. This Seminar will consider the issue of religion and gender from various perspectives, inviting members of new religious movements, former members, academics and others to share their views and experiences.

Registration - includes morning coffee, afternoon tea and buffet lunch.

Tickets booked in advance cost £35 each (£14 students/unwaged). Tickets booked after 14 November 2005 cost £40 each (£20 students/unwaged). To register, contact Inform by email: inform@lse.ac.uk, phone: 020 7955 7654, or post: Inform, LSE, Houghton St, London WC2A 2AE.

For further information see the Inform website at www.inform.ac.uk

INFORM is a registered charity (No. 801729) and is incorporated in England as a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Act (No. 2346855). Registered Office as above.

Conference

Sixteenth Annual workshop of the Women's Committee of the Economic History Society

Gender & Built Space

18-19 November 2005

Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet Street, London

(Supported by the Economic History Society and the Design History Society; organized by the Gender & Built Space Research Group at the University of Brighton)

The programme is as follows:

Friday 18th November (evening)

Animating Gender: A selection of films on the theme of Gender and Built Space chosen from the collections of

the South East Film and Video Archive (SEFVA) at the University of Brighton, introduced by Ine van Dooren, Moving Image Archivist at SEFVA. Followed by discussion.

Saturday 19th November, Presentations

The housewife and the home in early modern rural England

Jane Whittle, University of Exeter

Self-Made Men and the Civic: Histories of People and Places in the Late Nineteenth Century

Donna Loftus, The Open University

Tea for Two in the Second City of the Empire

Eileen Yeo, University of Strathclyde

A Woman's Place? The Communalisation of the Kitchen and Changing Gender Identities in Early Soviet Russia, 1923-1926

Viv Groskop, Independent Scholar

The Fennells Build Their Dream House: Furnishing Family in 1930s America

Shirley Teresa Wajda, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Promoting Catholic Family Values and Modern Domesticity in Belgium, 1945-1957

Fredie Floré, University of Ghent

For further information please contact Gill Scott at g.a.scott@brighton.ac.uk

Conference

Cultural History of Health and Beyond

Paris, 7 - 10 September 2005

Organised by the Society for the Social History of Medicine and the European Association for the History of Medicine and Health

Diverse cultural representations of the healthy body, behaviour, and practices of care are deeply intertwined with social relations in Europe today. It is not a new configuration. Since the early modern period, processes such as the acculturation of new immigrants from countryside to city, or from a foreign to a familiar culture, as well as resistance to assimilation, have been among the main issues of the process of medicalization. The conference explores lay and expert and the conflicting interests that structured this domain of life. For at least three centuries, the body and its preservation and health have become more and more integrated into a new European manner of governance which promoted health as a social and cultural value.

Behind the visible culture of health lie many different cultures, such as professional cultures, cultures of the market place, and cultures specific to the interaction of social classes or minority groups. For instance, what are the explanations for the itinerary of a patient in the health care system? What are the cultural aspects behind the definition of what is efficient delivery of health care? The conference also seeks to examine the dynamics of cultural change in the perception of body and health, including the role of the media and of the new imaging technologies. Moreover, historiographical issues will be raised about the ways in which cultural approaches have modified our knowledge about the history of health and what has changed in recent interactions between social and cultural perspectives. All the domains of medicine and health will be addressed: mental health, professional versus lay medical cultures, health services and administration, as well as individual preventive behaviour or scientific theories.

Details of the conference, registration form and an online booking form are available at: <http://www.eahmh.net>

Members of the Society for the Social History of Medicine qualify for a discounted conference fee. Bursaries are available for student members on request, with further details available at <http://www.sshm.org/bursaries.html> Details on how to join the Society and information about further membership benefits can be found at: <http://www.sshm.org/>

For further information about the conference, please contact Professor Patrice Bordelais, Patrice.Bourdelaais@ehess.fr

Feminist & Women's Studies Association

(UK & Ireland)

18th Annual Conference

King's College, University of Aberdeen

9-11 September 2005

GENDER AND VIOLENCE:

An Interdisciplinary Exploration

Confirmed plenary speakers are:

Vera Baird, Q.C., M.P.

Haleh Afshar (University of York)

Sharon Olds, American poet and writer

Further details and registration forms are available online at:

www.abdn.ac.uk/womens/conference.htm

Conference

WHN Midlands Region

in conjunction with the

History of Education Society

WOMEN & EDUCATION

5th November 2005, 9.30 - 2.30 (including lunch)

School of Education, University of Birmingham
(Edgbaston site)

Speakers:

Dr Joyce Goodman (Winchester University College) *Between Two Worlds: Women Teachers and Colonial Education*; **Dr Camilla Leach** (Winchester University College) *A Civil and Useful Life: Quaker Women, Education and the Development of Professional Identities*; **Dr Wendy Robinson** (University of Warwick) *Pupil Teachers* and **Siân Roberts** (Head of Birmingham City Archives) *Women in the Archives: Birmingham and Education*.

For further details please contact Professor Ruth Watts, School of Education, Birmingham University, Birmingham B15 2TT. Email: r.e.watts@bham.ac.uk

Conference

The Women Chainmakers Festival 2005

Forging Links: Women and Trade Unionism

Black Country *Living* Museum, Dudley, West-Midlands

Monday 17th October 2005

As part of the UK's first women's labour history festival, the Black Country *Living* Museum is hosting a one day conference on women and trade unionism. Focusing on women's collective organizations in the 19th and 20th centuries, the conference will explore how women's trade unionism impacted on the workplace. Did women trade unionists challenge the ideological notions of women workers? How does the legacy of leaders like Mary Macarthur, the founder of the National Federation of Women workers, resonate with today's labour movement?

Keynote speakers include: Professor Sheila Rowbotham, Dr Gerry Holloway and Professor Mary Davis, from the Working Lives Institute, London Metropolitan University.

Delegate rate: £40: Students and unwaged: £10. Price includes lunch and free entry to the Museum. For more

information, call Suzy Scott or Sunneta Patel on 0121 521 5608. (A registration form is downloadable from the conferences/events page at: www.womenshistorynetwork.org)

Conference Notices, Calls for Papers, etc., are regularly updated on our website:

www.womenshistorynetwork.org

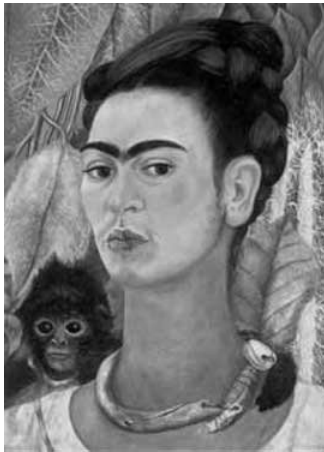
Keep up to date by checking it out!

PLEASE NOTE

WHN Regional Organisers can request current and back numbers of this magazine to sell at conferences. I have copies of most of the issues since the revamped magazine started with Issue 40 in February 2002. Issues cost £4 each, and are sent out to you on a sale or return basis. I also have available some Women's History Network T-shirts, in a range of sizes, in black or white cotton, and these can also be sent to you. They retail at £10 each.

Please contact Joyce Walker by e-mail: admin@womenshistorynetwork.org

or c/o History Dept., University of Aberdeen, Crombie Annexe, Meston Walk, Old Aberdeen AB24 3FX.



Frida Kahlo
9 JUNE - 9 OCTOBER 2005

Frida Kahlo

(Sponsored by HSBC, with support from Mexico
Tourism Board)

**Tate Modern, Level 4
9 June—9 October 2005**

Frida Kahlo is now regarded as one of the most influential and important artists of the 20th century. She lived and worked during a time of incredible social and cultural upheaval in Mexico. Featuring more than seventy pieces, the exhibition will enable a comprehensive investigation of her artistic career.

Drawing from key international collections, this is the first exhibition in Britain to be dedicated solely to the work of the artist. At the centre of an artistic and political elite, due to her marriage to the celebrated Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, Kahlo's life was packed with incident. Amongst her many friends and associates were Nelson Rockefeller, Sergei Eisenstein, Paulette Goddard, André Breton, Dolores del Rio and Georgia O'Keeffe. A life-long Communist sympathiser, Kahlo gave shelter to the exiled Leon Trotsky, whom she also counted among her many lovers.

Open every day from 10am—6pm (10pm Friday & Saturday) Admission £10 (concessions £8)

Secure booking at: www.tate.org.uk



Committee News

The Women's History Network is continuing to grow: our latest figures show us to have 336 members, 15 of whom are international. As a result, our finances remain healthy and the committee intends to consolidate and build on this with an important change to our organisational status.

Charity Status

From the next financial year, WHN is assuming charity status; as a non-profit making organisation this will allow us to claim back tax and these extra funds can then be used to the benefit of members and to promote women's history in accordance with WHN aims. All members will have a gift aid declaration and we urge you to complete and return it, as it is only if enough members do so that the WHN will benefit. (A membership form with gift aid is on the back page of this magazine.) Please be assured there will be no change or increase in your membership fees - filling in the form merely allows us to claim back tax. (Even if you do not pay tax, please complete the form - you may do so in the future!)

Women's Library

The committee have been in contact with the Women's Library with a view to forging closer links, which we hope will be a benefit to all our members who use the library. At the moment negotiations are on going regarding what form this liaison will take and we hope to be able to report back in the next issue of *Women's History Magazine*.

Women Against Pit Closures

The committee have donated £250 on behalf of the WHN to aid the construction of a new website which educates and celebrates women's contribution to the Miners' Strike. This money will be used to cover the travel expenses of a researcher collecting oral testimony. The web address is **www.wapc.org.uk**

Black Country Museum

You may have noticed the notice in this issue concerning the Black Country Museum's conference on women and trade unionism. The museum is keen to highlight women's involvement in industry and the committee is in negotiations with them as to how we can best offer our support. Watch this space!

Call for new committee members

As you will know, most steering committee members serve for 2 terms (of 2 years duration each) and then step down. This means that vacancies on committee occur naturally every year. New members are elected at our annual conference - but you do not need to be present at the conference in person to be elected. If you have the energy and time to serve, the existing committee would be very pleased to hear from you. We particularly need someone with web skills (or a willingness to learn) to take over, in due course, from our present web and email administrator. All candidates need to be nominated and seconded by members to be eligible to stand. For further information and an informal chat, please email our convenor, Maureen Meikle: convenor@womenshistorynetwork.org

Steering Committee Meeting

All members are very welcome at meetings of the Steering Committee. The next meeting is scheduled to take place at our annual conference (during which, of course, the AGM will also be held) on Friday September 2nd at 2 pm at the Southampton Institute. All meetings are publicised on the committee pages at www.womenshistorynetwork.org. If you intend to join us, please email enquiries@womenshistorynetwork.org first- just to ensure there have been no last minute changes to plan.



FUTURE MAGAZINE ISSUES

The Women's History Magazine is published three times a year:

SPRING; SUMMER; AUTUMN

From time to time we issue a call for papers for themed issues but, in practice, we will accept articles at any time.

These should be prepared and submitted as per instructions on the Women's History Network website:

www.womenshistorynetwork.org

All articles are sent for peer review, so authors should allow time for this process—which can be lengthy.

Authors must include their name, affiliation and email address on their papers

PUBLICITY

Our Publicity Officer

Claire Jones

can be contacted by email:

enquiries@womenshistorynetwork.org

or at 7 Penkett Road, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH45 7QE

She provides an invaluable service in publicising conferences, arranging media coverage of events, etc.. and should be contacted immediately such services are required.

What is the Women's History Network?

The WHN was founded in July 1991. It is a national association concerned with promoting women's history and encouraging women interested in history. WHN business is carried out by the National Steering Committee, which is elected by the membership and meets regularly several times each year. It organises the annual conference, manages the finance and membership, and co-ordinates activities in pursuit of the aims of the WHN.

Aims of the WHN

1. To encourage contact between all people interested in women's history—in education, the media or in private research
2. To collect and publish information relating to women's history
3. To identify and comment upon all issues relating to women's history
4. To promote research into all areas of women's history

What does the WHN do?

Annual Conference

Each year the WHN holds a national conference for WHN members and other. The conference provides everyone interested in women's history with a chance to meet and it has become an exciting forum where new research can be aired and recent developments in the field can be shared. The Annual General Meeting of the Network takes place at the conference. The AGM discusses issues of policy and elects the National Steering Committee.

WHN Publications

WHN members receive three copies per year of the *Women's History Magazine*, which contains: articles discussing research, sources and applications of women's history; reviews of books, conferences, meetings and exhibitions; and information on calls for papers, prizes and competitions, and publication opportunities.

Joining the WHN

Annual Membership Rates

Student/unwaged	£10	Overseas minimum	£30
Low income (*under £16,000 pa)	£15	UK Institutions	£35
High income	£30	Institutions overseas	£40

Membership application/renewal, Gift Aid Declaration and Banker's Order forms are available on the back cover.

WHN CONTACTS

To submit articles or news for the *Women's History Magazine*, please contact any of the editors at the addresses below:

Deborah Simonton, Department of English and Danish, University of Southern Denmark, Engstein 1, 6000 Kolding, Denmark. Email: magazine@womenshistorynetwork.org

Claire Jones, 7 Penkett Road, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH45 7QE.
Email: enquiries@womenshistorynetwork.org

For book reviews, please contact **Jane Potter**, Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies, The Richard Hamilton Building, Headington Hill Campus, Oxford, OX3 0BP.
Email: bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org

To update contact details, or for any membership inquiries (including subscriptions), please contact Fiona Reid, at the following address: HLAASS, University of Glamorgan, Trefforest, Wales, CF37 1DL.
Email: membership@womenshistorynetwork.org

Membership Application

I would like to *join / renew my subscription to the Women's History Network. I */ enclose a cheque payable to Women's History Network / have filled out & returned to my bank the Banker's Order Form / for £ _____. (* delete as applicable)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Tel (work): _____

Tick this box if you DO NOT want your name made available to publishers/conference organisers for publicity: ☐

Detach and return this form with, if applicable, your cheque to **Fiona Reid, at: HLASS, University of Glamorgan, Trefforest, Wales, CF37 1DL. Email: membership@womenshistorynetwork.org**

Gift aid declaration

Name of Charity: **Women's History Network**

Name :

Address:

.....
..... Post Code:

I am a UK taxpayer and I want the charity to treat all donations (including membership subscriptions) I have made since 6 April 2000, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as **Gift Aid donations**.

Signature: _____ Date/...../.....

Notes

1. If your declaration covers donations you may make in the future:
 - Please notify the charity if you change your name or address while the declaration is still in force
 - You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying the charity – it will then not apply to donations you make on or after the date of cancellation or such later date as you specify.
2. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year (currently 28p for each £1 you give).
3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration (see note 1).
4. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
5. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask the charity. Or you can ask your local tax office for leaflet IR113 Gift Aid.

Banker's Order

To (bank) _____

Address _____

Account no.: _____

Pay to the account of the Women's History Network, Account No. 91325692 at the National Westminster Bank, Stuckeys Branch, Bath (sort code 60-02-05), on _____ 200_, and annually thereafter, on 1 September, the sum of

(in figures) £ _____ (in words) _____.

Signature: _____