Women's History

The journal of the Women's History Network

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Articles by

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Plus

Five book reviews
Getting to know each other
Committee News

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Women's History Network Annual Conference, 2017

WOMEN AND THE WIDER WORLD

Friday 1 September – Saturday 2 September 2017

University of Birmingham

Image Credit: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Zurich, from LSE Library's collections.

Call for Papers

We invite established scholars, postgraduate researchers, independent scholars, museum curators and practitioners from a wide range of disciplines, working on any place or period, to contribute to this year's conference.

Potential topics relating to 'Women and the Wider World' could include:

Humanitarian activism, medieval warriors, the formation of professional identities in the international sphere, war work and philanthropy, mythological and folklore representations, migration, the Empire, suffrage through an international lens, travel writers and explorers, pilgrimages and religious travel, international diplomacy, anti-slavery campaigning, global artistic, literary, and intellectual networks, artistic and literary representations of women's internationalism, pacifism and international peace movements, letter writing, international communities of educated women and women's role in internationalising education, women on the crusades, the material culture and spaces of women's internationalism, exchanges between women across colonial & Cold War borders, theorizing international feminism.

We encourage those working in archaeology, museums studies, geography, history of science, technology and medicine, art history, environmental history and all forms of history for any period, focused on women, to send in proposals for themed 90 minute panels, individual 20 minute papers, 90-minute round tables/discussions, and posters. Museums and curators, both in the public and the voluntary sector, are encouraged to get involved by offering object-handling sessions, small exhibitions/displays/posters, as well as panels, roundtables or individual papers.

Proposals

- Panel proposals (90 minute) should include a session title, a named organiser as contact (who will be responsible for communicating with the remaining panel members), a session abstract of no more than 200-300 words and up to three 20-minute paper abstracts of 200-300 words. If the panel organiser is also proposed as a Chair and not speaking, please provide a short biography.
- Roundtable/workshop/object-handling session proposals (90 minute) should include a themed title, a named organiser as contact (who will be responsible for communicating with the remaining panel members), a session abstract of 500 words and brief biographies of all panellists.
- Individual 20-minute paper proposals should be no more than 200-300 words long and include a short biography.
- Poster proposals should be no more than 200-300 words long and include a short biography.

Authors/panel organisers will be notified regarding acceptance of their contribution after all submissions have been reviewed. Proposals should be submitted via email to programme-whn2017@contacts.bham.ac.uk by **Friday, 3 March, 2017**.

Editorial

Welcome to the Spring Issue of *Women's History* in which we focus on biography, in response to recent submissions about the lives of women ranging from a scientist to peace activists and an artist caught up in the horrors of Nazi Germany. Each of the five articles looks at the lives of one or two individuals. In so doing, they offer us insights into the challenges faced by women seeking to break out of traditional gender roles, or looking for acceptance in organisations which were not always keen to incorporate women's voices. The women whose lives are explored here created opportunities for themselves, and in so doing opened up possibilities for their contemporaries, as we see in articles on English Quaker Teresa Merz and Dutch peace activists Bertha von Suttner and Bertha Waszklewicz.

Biography and history have a difficult relationship, with historians suspicious that biographies glorify and fictionalise their subjects' lives. In this issue, we can sense that each author has developed a relationship with their subject, and considers her—in each case—to be exceptional and worthy of scholarly attention. We find merit in this, and believe that without going back to an earlier brand of women's history which focussed on 'great lives,' there is still much to be learned from the lives of individual women who struggled on their own behalf and on that of their fellow women. By placing individual lives under the academic spotlight, biographical approaches also help focus on questions of agency - which have long been central to women's history. Elizabeth O'Donnell touches on the benefits of using biography in women's history in her article 'Doing Good Quietly: The Life and Work of Teresa Merz.'

Two articles feature women who were willing to fight for female inclusion into organisations: Julie Wolfthorn, the German-Jewish artist who is the subject of Irene Gill's contribution, fought to have women admitted to the Royal Academy of Pictorial Art, while Peter Ayres' piece on Marian Farquarson is mostly concerned with Farquarson's years spent campaigning to have women admitted as fellows of the Linnean Society. For Farquarson, campaign success was not matched by personal triumph: when the Linnean finally admitted women, she was not one of them. Like many women, Marian Farquarson was punished for her willingness to fight against prevailing gender norms.

The articles on Helena Swanwick and on Bertha von Suttner and Bertha Waszklewicz invite us to think about the networks women worked within, and about the important ways in which war created opportunities for women to fight for peace and make a voice for women in politics. For O'Donnell, the impact of a woman's work on the lives of fellow women is more important than whether or not she sees herself as a feminist, a point she makes in relation to Teresa Merz's tireless volunteering to make life better for the women of Tyneside in the early twentieth century.

Biography can make for a very immediate and entertaining portrayal of a historical figure and for this reason it is frequently considered too 'popular' by academic writers. It is perhaps inevitable that biographies overstate the role of the individual and often the biographer develops an intimate relationship with her subject that can hinder objectivity. Nonetheless, biography seems to be a mainstay of women's history, judging from the enormous number of biographies we are sent to review. For this issue we have chosen a number of book reviews that demonstrate both the strengths and weaknesses of biographies for the historian. The subjects of the biographies are varied, though the majority remain 'great women': queens and other members of the ruling elite. Many are of less well-known women, written by family members and based on intimate sources such as letters and diaries. In these the biographer can present a one-dimensional view when family loyalty stifles objectivity. Others are hagiographic, while in contrast to many biographies of 'great men' few seek to demolish the reputation of the subject. A more recent and welcome development in women's and gender history is the increasing use of 'group biography'. The groups can be family members, or a group of professional or activists: in each case a deeper analysis can be gleaned from looking at a number of linked individuals rather than concentrating on one – possibly atypical – woman. It has proved a way to rescue more obscure women from the historical record: women whose individual lives may not be recorded as a whole but if taken as a group then a more complete picture emerges.

We hope you agree that while women's history and biography may be awkward bedfellows, the articles and book reviews in this issue highlight some of the more promising aspects of this relationship. In particular the articles demonstrate the fruitful way that biography can be used to foreground the lives and experiences of 'ordinary' or less well-known women.

In this issue, we want to welcome the return of Sue Hawkins to our team. We are delighted to have Sue back on board. As always, we want to finish by inviting you to get in touch if you have ideas for future issues, or articles you would like to contribute.

Jane Berney, Rosi Carr, Sue Hawkins, Catherine Lee, Naomi Pullin, Rachel Rich

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Cover: Julie Wolfthorn in her studio
Credit: Public Domain

Doing Good Quietly: The Life and Work of Teresa Merz (1879 – 1958) of Newcastle upon Tyne

Elizabeth A. O'Donnell

Independent researcher

Introduction

In 1937, Newcastle journalist James Spencer published a collection of pen portraits of local people and places. Chapter IV, 'They do good quietly', introduced Miss Teresa Merz, 'one of the most remarkable women in the North East'. 'Though few people are aware of her activities, she has been a lifelong social worker, and knows the underdog as well as anyone in the kingdom', wrote Spencer. 'With a wide tolerance of human frailties, her instinct is always to help rather than to punish.'[1]

I came across Spencer's book by chance, long after I had put together a detailed profile of over 600 women active in the 19th century north-east England Quaker community while examining the links between Quaker women and the development of 'first-wave feminism'.[2] I knew that Teresa Merz was one of the Newcastle female Friends who had built on the achievements of the previous generation to expand women's roles in the public sphere. Finding Spencer's tribute and account of some of her work inspired further investigation, but despite her substantial contribution to the development of social services on Tyneside during the early 20th century, her honouring by the Crown Prince of Serbia and the Red Cross for work with war victims in the Great War, her appointment as magistrate in 1921 and award of an OBE in 1929, I discovered that she is virtually invisible in historical accounts of the period. Online newspaper archives threw up many leads to her work in a wide range of local bodies, but there was little evidence of her inner life. Even making contact with family members yielded only fragments – no diaries and minimal social correspondence so her motivation and beliefs had to be pieced together from the perceptions of others and the organisations and networks to which she belonged.[3]

Teresa's marginalisation in historical accounts is shared with many of her contemporaries, who quietly laboured in unpaid, 'backroom', positions in social and political reform movements. Recently, however, studies of individual women, using local records, have revealed how this important generational cohort of (usually) single middle-class women revolutionised the theory and practice of urban social work in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[4] Martin asserts the validity of a biographical approach in historical enquiry, as 'a method that offers a "prism" through which to view the complex layers of society, culture and politics, a way of moving from the general to the particular and back again, of estimating character, motive, behaviour, intention.'[5] Caine also argues for biographical case studies, using the situation, experiences and life-courses of one woman to illuminate the broader situation of women in general.[6] By locating the life and career of Teresa Merz within her familial, social and associational networks, this article attempts to probe the origins of her ideas and the strategies she used to negotiate the constraints of her era. In doing so, it will place her firmly amongst those who pursued a broad political and social agenda to secure full citizenship for women.

'Bright and quick and full of energy'[7]: Childhood and youth

Teresa was born in Gateshead on the 28 May, 1879, the third child and only daughter of John Theodore Merz (Theo), an industrialist and academic of German parentage. Her mother, Alice, belonged to the largest and most influential Quaker dynasty in the region, the Richardsons. The couple met through Alice's brother, John Wigham Richardson, the shipbuilder, when Theo was employed by the Tharsis Sulphur and Copper works on Tyneside. Theo went on to found the Newcastle Electric Supply Company with Robert Spence Watson, Gateshead lawyer and leading Liberal who was married to Alice's sister, but his great passion was for philosophical enquiry. His *magnum opus,* a four-volume *History of European Thought in the 19th Century*, took thirty years to complete.[8] Theo's inability to accept the peace testimony meant he never became a Quaker, but he was happy for his children to avail themselves of the automatic membership to which they were entitled through his wife.

The census of 1881 shows the Merz family and four servants living in the Quarries, the house which Teresa would inhabit until shortly after the Second World War. A substantial dwelling in Newcastle's West End, many of Alice's relatives and other Friends lived within easy walking distance. Teresa and

Teresa Merz as a girl [no date].
By permission of Ben Beck

her brothers (Charles, the oldest, born in 1874, Norbert in 1877, and Ernest in 1881) enjoyed exceptionally close fellowship with their large extended family, with tennis tournaments, seaside excursions, skating in winter, and lots of parties. She even launched a steamship, the Tadorna, in August 1896 at the Neptune shipyard of her Uncle John.[9] A book of quotations she kept from the age of twelve, in which family, friends and visitors wrote favourite poems or prose passages, often embellished with a small sketch or watercolour, illustrates the intellectual milieu of the Quarries.[10] Academics such as Philip H. Wicksteed (1844-1927), economist and Unitarian theologian, as well as notable Friends, like A. Neave Bradshaw (1861-1940), outspoken Quaker reformer, and Eliza Wigham (1820-1899), Edinburgh anti-slavery campaigner and suffragist, are included. On Teresa's 24th birthday she was described by Alice in her 'Family Notes' as 'a rare girl – studious and competent in every way – quite unconventional – full of interests and bright and charming and loving'.[11] This source imparts precious glimpses of the family's domestic life, allowing a lively portrait of Teresa through the lens of her mother's love.

Alice's oldest sister, Anna Deborah, who had died in 1872, helped Emily Davies establish the first Cambridge women's college in 1868.[12] The life of another sister, Elizabeth, wife of Robert Spence Watson, most closely embodied Anna Deborah's ambitions, as she worked to increase women's presence in public life through, for example, the Women's Liberal Association.[13] Alice followed a much more conventional path, being preoccupied by the needs of her family with few 'public' activities. Whereas Elizabeth's five daughters all attended high school and colleges of further or higher education – Mabel, the oldest, for example, excelled in mathematics at Newnham College, Cambridge, and became the first Lady Tutor at Armstrong College in Newcastle – Teresa's formal education was, in the manner of many upper-middle-class girls of the period, piecemeal.[14] Educated by a governess at home alongside two of her brothers, Norbert and Ernest, as each boy in turn headed off to preparatory school, Teresa's home education continued, apart from a short spell at a local day school.

In 1895, with her cousin Mary, she was permitted to attend lectures at the art school. The following year, she showed a 'decided ability for mathematics' while studying at Durham College of Science in Newcastle.[15] An extended trip to Worms with Ernest, staying with German relatives, interrupted her studies. On their return, Ernest, who had just left school in York, was intensively tutored for the Cambridge entrance examination, while Teresa set to work cataloguing the 4,000 volumes in her father's library.[16]

'Keener than ever over studies'[17]: Newnham College and intellectual ambition

The Merz brothers all underwent higher level training or education to prepare for their careers. Charles, an electrical engineer, became a major figure in the development of electricity generating across the world, with Norbert as accountant to Charles' firm (Merz and McLennan), but Teresa was clearly not expected to take up any work that might require further study. Since 1901, she had been responsible for keeping house at the Quarries during her parents' many absences, and when Ernest, after gaining his degree, went to London to study law in September 1902, Teresa was busy pasting book plates into her father's library. Pursuing scholarly interests independently with the encouragement of local academics, in 1903 she won the Gladstone Prize for an essay on early Whig politicians.[18] Ernest pleaded on her behalf 'that she should be allowed to study at Newnham College for a year'. Her parents reluctantly agreed to 'spare the beloved child in October for [the] privilege' in October 1904.[19] She was to study philosophy, Ancient Greek history and economics, hoping that the latter would 'help her in solving difficult problems in work among the poor.' 'She has a gift for philanthropy – does it with zest and love and great tact', wrote Alice.[20] This is the first intimation in the 'Family Notes' of Teresa's commitment to what was to become her life's work – personal social service.

Teresa was undoubtedly inspired in this by previous generations of Friends who had done 'good works', but she also reflected a wider movement both within and outside Quakerism. The University Settlement movement had, from the 1880s, inspired privileged young graduates to live and work amongst the urban poor, while social surveys by Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree (also a Quaker) encouraged a more systematic approach to welfare within charitable circles. The Society of Friends was also changing; in September 1899, Teresa and Mary attended the Quaker Summer School in Birmingham, a 'rich feast for intellect and spirit and happy Christian fellowship', part of the drive following the Manchester Conference of 1895 to increase the Society's relevance to its younger members through more active engagement with the world.[21]

Newnham College was seen as a hot-bed of feminism, nurturing groups of 'new women' with shared ideals, who formed close and lasting friendships.[22] In April 1905, Teresa hosted a 'Reading Party' for some of her fellow students at Heugh Folds, the Lake District cottage built, appropriately enough, by her late aunt, 'first-wave feminist', Anna Deborah. But in June 1905, although 'her college friends wrote a Round Robin letter to us and… pleaded for another year… we keep to our first resolve', wrote Alice. 'She has been brave and good about it.'[23] At the age of twenty-six, like many unmarried middle-class women of the time, she was obliged to subordinate intellectual ambition to her family's needs, which were made more difficult to resist by being framed as loving and concerned.[24] '[It is a] luxury to have Teresa at Home – tho' Newnham will miss her', conceded her mother.[25]

'The wonder of everybody in her grand work'[26]: Early social work

Once home, Teresa began work with the Charity Organisation Society in Newcastle and was unanimously appointed its secretary the following year. Although obliged to cut down her office hours to half days a few months later at the 'urgent desire' of her parents, she quietly pursued and developed her vocation, local newspapers faithfully recording her growing portfolio of concerns.[27] Logan argues against the 'largely false dichotomy' assumed to have existed between 'professional' and 'amateur' work in this period, and although unpaid, Teresa kept abreast of new initiatives in social work, attending conferences and getting involved in national developments.[28] Even after the appointment of a paid COS secretary in Newcastle in March 1909, Teresa, as Honorary Secretary, worked just as hard, 'becoming more and more a public person, giving lectures to Guild of Help and other

workers on Guardians committees'.[29] Although there were still opportunities for holidays – in July 1908, for example, she spent a week in London with Ernest, 'to their mutual joy' – '[m]uch foggy weather and much distress on Tyneside' that winter made her 'extra busy'.[30]

In 1909, tragedy struck the Merz family. On 9 July, Ernest, the brother to whom Teresa was closest, hanged himself in his lodgings in London. His mother was baffled, as his recent letters home had been 'full of joys and future plans'.[31] In her grief, Teresa threw herself into work. An industrial lockout on Tyneside in November 1910 made her work 'more and more valued – she is entrusted with much coal and money for her poor distress in the town [as] great civil war continues between capital and labour', while a coal strike early in 1912 also meant 'many evening engagements and busy all day…helping great variety of misery and difficulty…extra busy with extra distress.' Half day working was no longer expected; by January 1913 she was sitting on so many committees that she was hardly at home. She was also able to draw on family money to support particular projects: from 1911, she rented a country cottage to be used for 'some of her poor people… [to be] refreshed in the country'.[32]

'A grand effort for their cause'[33]: Teresa's 'feminist' credentials

As well as becoming a vital part of the social service landscape on Tyneside, Teresa also developed close links with many of the leading women's rights activists in the area. In June 1911, she travelled to London with local suffragist Dr Mabel Campbell, to march in the 40,000 strong Women's Suffrage coronation procession. The following year, the two friends went walking in the Cheviots and two months later, Teresa opened Hope House, a lodging house for women and girls in Newcastle.[34] Signed transcripts of two of her lectures, dated 1911 and 1913, can be found in Northumberland Archives; a third, 'Lodging Houses for Women', unsigned, comprises a bold and unashamedly feminist statement.[35] It cannot be known for certain that Teresa's wrote this, but its preservation alongside the other lectures strongly suggests that, at the very least, she supported its sentiments.

The lecture opens with a quotation from Tennyson: 'Woman's cause is man's – they rise or sink together'. Industrial change, while freeing women economically, had 'increased the dangers to which [they are] exposed'. Not only were women's wages, being lower than men's, insufficient for adequate food and shelter, but being forced to migrate in search of work pushed 'many more of our unprotected sisters over the edge of the abyss'. There was a desperate shortage of decent accommodation for homeless women in Newcastle, for example, out of 62 common lodging houses, only one, 'in a most undesirable locality', catered for women – inevitably driving them 'to professional prostitution'. The newly-opened Hope House provided eleven clean beds for women and girls for a few pence a night, with self-catering facilities, hot baths and 'a nice cheerful room to sit in with books and papers', but much more was needed. The lecture concludes with a rallying cry for women's suffrage. Only when women had a voice in parliament would lower wages, sweated labour, trafficking in girls and violence against women be effectively addressed:

> Women are citizens of this country. Their health, happiness and convenience should be as important as that of any other section of society. Everywhere we see public money poured out like drains for objects in which men are interested; while reforms of first necessity for the well being of women are denied. Women earn less than men; their need is greater, their dangers of homelessness are more terrible….we must win our right to a voice in the councils of our country… Surely there is no denying the fact that with political power, women could tackle these problems which concern their sisters in a much more effective way.[36]

For the lecture's author, as for many other suffrage campaigners, achieving the vote was most certainly not an end in itself, but a tool in a wider struggle for social justice.

Unpaid middle-class female social workers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries often specialised in the care of women and children and Teresa had many such interests, for example as secretary of the Mother and Babies' Welcome Society.[37] However, her activities went far beyond the 'social housekeeping' which has been claimed for earlier female philanthropists.[38] By the early 20th century, the COS, established in 1869 to coordinate voluntary efforts to relieve poverty, was under attack for generating 'sentimental pity' in its workers and 'cringing dependence' amongst those they helped.[39] It was accused of rigidly applying the theory that 'the poor need not be poor if they choose to exert themselves', and of blocking progress by opposing increased state action to prevent poverty. Its philosophy, claimed its fiercest critics, sprang from the 'indolence and self-satisfaction of an easy and sheltered life' of its volunteers.[40] Teresa's 1911 lecture, 'Social Work from the Charity Organization Society's Point of View', acknowledged its poor reputation:

> It must be remembered that the name belongs to 35 years ago, to a time when there was a great need for some more systematic method of dealing with philanthropy… There is still the need for a systematic method, but possibly the idea of citizenship – the idea that each of us has a responsibility towards our fellows – has come to the fore and also the idea of mutual help in such work has come to be much more fully realised… [and as] an outcome of this newer spirit such societies as Guild of Help… have sprung into existence.[41]

The Guild of Help movement, begun in Bradford in 1904, emphasised *civic* responsibility for poverty, albeit using a voluntary organisation as a surrogate for municipal action.[42] Teresa, appreciating the need for different welfare organisations to cooperate, had a central role in planning a national conference of 400 delegates from the COS, Guilds of Help and Councils of Social Welfare in Newcastle in June 1914, 'the first occasion on which the various societies concerned have united in a joint conference.'[43] Despite her important part in its organisation, she was not a speaker at the conference, suggesting a preference for working behind the scenes. How far the work of bodies like the Guild actually differed from that of the COS is debateable, but it was the first step towards the eventual post-war amalgamation of the Newcastle COS and

Guild of Help, forming the Citizens' Service Society in 1920.[44]

'In the thick of help of every description'[45]: Welfare work during the Great War

When war broke out, 35 year old Teresa was an experienced case worker with a formidable reputation within Newcastle's social welfare community, so it is hardly surprising that the Lord Mayor sought her help to establish the local war relief fund. However, she also had German grandparents and was a member of a traditionally pacifist religious group. Because her father was born in Manchester, despite having spent most of his childhood and early adulthood in Germany, he was entitled to claim British nationality, although having his adopted nation at war with his German family inevitably caused anguish. 'Feeling in England against Germany very bitter and unrighteous', wrote Alice. '[E]veryone is weighted with sorrow and anxiety.'[46] Nevertheless, the family seems to have avoided any anti-Hun hostility. Charles Merz was even appointed Director of Experiments on the Board of Invention and Research at the Admiralty in January 1918. When he was accused of being of 'pure German extraction', the government reassured the House of Commons that both his parents were 'natural-born British subjects'.[47]

In December 1914, however, Teresa's newspaper appeal for funds to relieve distress amongst the wives and children of interned enemy aliens risked provoking anti-German aggression.[48] A woman married to a foreigner automatically assumed her husband's nationality, even if widowed or separated. The German government was expected to provide welfare to British-born wives of German internees in Britain, paid through the American Embassy, an arrangement reciprocated by the British government to support German-born wives of British subjects in Germany. Serious hardship followed its termination at the end of November 1914 and soon Teresa was dealing personally with applications for aid at the COS offices on Pilgrim Street.[49] Letters of protest against 'Assisting the Enemy Alien' swiftly followed her appeal. The COS was accused of being 'pro-German' for offering relief to the 'dependents of those of the same nation which is obsessed with the most intense hatred of this country… Has Miss Merz read the German Hymn of Hate against England?' Although no correspondents referred to her German antecedents, one, 'Citizen', suggested that those wealthy Germans who had made their fortune in Britain should support their countrymen's families.[50] Notwithstanding these attacks, Teresa continued her enemy alien relief work throughout the conflict.

Teresa was involved in a wide variety of wartime welfare initiatives. Her Working Girls' Boarding House was being used by 'munitions workers and tramway girls', she was on the management committee of a day nursery in the West End of Newcastle for the babies of women working in local factories, and initiated an interdenominational Patriotic Club for soldiers' wives and mothers, with singing classes and 'cheer up' sessions.[51] How comfortably did these war-related activities sit with the Quaker peace testimony?

In December 1916, Teresa was amongst a group of local Quakers who signed a notice in the *Newcastle Journal*, calling for a negotiated peace.[52] However, the war had caused much soul-searching within the Society of Friends. Many young men felt it was their patriotic duty to abandon the peace testimony and volunteer to fight, while at the other end of the spectrum, absolutist conscientious objectors were imprisoned for their beliefs. The majority probably followed a similar path to Teresa, helping victims of war, whether on the home front or abroad through the Friends' Ambulance Unit and the Friends War Victims Relief Committee (FWVRC), which was formed in early September 1914 to assist non-combatants in war zones suffering devastation and displacement.[53]

The FWVRC had approached Teresa to work with them in Holland in June 1915. She refused, probably because she felt she would be more useful at home, but by November had agreed to help Serbian refugees. 'It is hard to spare her', recorded Alice, 'but she feels "called" to this service.'[54] Religious justification, as well as the international emergency, had successfully overcome her parents' protective misgivings. She spent several months running a hostel for Serbs in Ajaccio, Corsica, earning the Medal of Merit from the Crown Prince of Serbia, which her parents were 'more pleased about… than she confesses to be.'[55] After a second period of FWVRC service in Paris from July to November 1918, she was also awarded a Red Cross diploma.

Through the FWVRC, Teresa's connections with other women's rights campaigners deepened. She travelled to Corsica with leading suffragist Kathleen Courtney, who had resigned from the executive of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies over their support for the war.[56] Teresa's wartime activities in Newcastle also entailed close association with local activists who found themselves able to widen opportunities for women during the war through the development of key services such as nursery provision. In August 1916, Teresa was part of a five-woman deputation from the Newcastle and District Patriots' League of Honour to the Newcastle Watch Committee, urging the employment of women police in the city.[57] Girls and young women were perceived as being exposed to increased moral peril in wartime; Teresa, said to be 'discouraged by drunkenness and immorality in the town', went on nightly patrols in addition to her heavy day-time work-load.[58] Whilst a direct statement of 'feminist' motivation is absent, her work with clubs and boarding houses for working girls, Mothers and Babies' Welcome Clubs, the day nursery and with the wives of enemy aliens can all be seen as part of a wider agenda to advance women's opportunities.

'Not the only possible social order'[59]: Post-war projects

Partial victory for suffragists came in the December 1918 general election, when women over the age of thirty were allowed to vote. Teresa, however, abstained, believing that 'neither candidate [was] the right man!'[60] Her aunt Elizabeth died in February 1919 and Teresa was central to the establishment of a settlement house at Bensham Grove, the Spence Watson's former home.[61] Inspired by 'a vision of men and women coming together… to share the joys of fellowship, study, and happy recreation', its first warden was Lettice Jowitt (also an FWVRC veteran).[62] She gathered a group of like-minded women as settlers, running courses including the Women Speakers' Class on Thursday afternoons, fostering women's confidence in debating and conducting meetings.[63] Teresa was on the executive committee and, by calling on the generosity of her wealthy relations and her own resources, was both its chief fund raiser and donor.[64]

Teresa was also a member from 1919 to 1921 of the

Friends' War and Social Order Committee (FWSOC), set up in 'the super-heated wartime atmosphere' of 1915 at the request of a radical group of Quakers who believed that 'Universal Brotherhood cannot be established under the present competitive system of industry.'[65]

> When war broke out, the feeling came that we were responsible, and that we had not been alive to the fact that our social order is inextricably mixed up with the roots of war, and that we cannot have a life based on competition that does not eventually lead to strife between nations.[66]

Kennedy has highlighted the role of radicalised female Friends, many of them veterans of the pre-war suffragist movement, in directing Quaker pacifist, socialist and feminist activities during the war.[67] In May 1918, London Yearly Meeting, after a vigorous debate, approved the committee's eight 'Foundations of a True Social Order', but its vision of profit-sharing and worker control of industry was far from being supported by the majority of Quakers.[68] In any case, Teresa was soon to withdraw from both FWSOC and the Society of Friends.

On 26 September 1920, Teresa was accepted into the Anglican Church by Bishop Wild in the chapel of his official residence, Benwell Towers. '[W]e regretfully accept her resignation', noted Newcastle Friends, 'and express our hope that she may find continued helpfulness in the church she has joined.'[69] Many in Teresa's family had rejected Quakerism before her, including her late aunt Anna Deborah, baptised into the Church of England in 1866.[70] It is possible that Teresa may have seen in the Established church an opportunity to exercise much wider influence, perhaps inspired by a number of radical priests working for social justice on Tyneside at this time, taking their Christian mission into the city's slums.[71] What is certain is that, whichever church she joined, her work was an expression of Christian citizenship, a means to 'effect a social transformation and a social reconstruction.'[72]

In April 1921, Teresa became one of six new women magistrates in Newcastle.[73] She also helped plan the Tyneside Crusade of 1923-4, to redefine the role of the Church in industrial society. Canon Leslie Hunter of Newcastle cathedral, who convened the subsequent northern Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship [COPEC] conference in 1924, condemned the complacency and ignorance of many affluent Christians. He called for a thorough social survey whose accuracy could not be disputed and whose conclusions would both arouse consciences and point the way to constructive social action.[74] Consequently, the Bureau of Social Research for Tyneside [BSR] was set up in 1925 to investigate social problems caused by economic depression and disseminate its findings through publications, conferences and lectures. Its recommendations led, in 1929, to the formation of the Tyneside Council of Social Services [TCSS], with Teresa, who had been on the Executive Committee of the BSR, as a Vice-President.

'The Rationalization of Social Services'[75]: the work of the TCSS

The TCSS was established to meet the crisis of appalling industrial depression by coordinating the activities of voluntary societies and collaborating with public authorities. Chiefly intended as an organising body, volunteers and paid staff also provided services not otherwise available. To help unemployed men make best use of their enforced leisure, clubs with workshops for handicrafts, allotments and recreational facilities were set up. The men converted a disused electric power station into a community centre, and reconditioned an old lifeboat for fishing, a healthy occupation with the added bonus of providing free food. There were camps in rural Northumberland, exhibitions of handiwork and drama competitions. The TCSS did not claim to be 'curing' the unemployment problem, but had 'done an immense deal to check demoralization, to add to the scanty resources of the men, and to extract some advantage out of disaster.'[76]

Its other important role was to educate the public about Tyneside's social problems and encourage 'the more prosperous parts of the area…[to] realize their obligations to the poorer parts'.[77] To this end, the West Line Committee was set up to enlist interest amongst the more affluent residents of Tynedale and a Social Studies School held at Bensham Grove early in 1931, 'to give young people from comfortable homes a more vivid impression of the conditions under which less fortunate people live'. Later that year the first Social Services Sunday, campaigned for by Teresa, was held, to raise money and impress on Christians what their duty should be.[78]

Teresa's position in the operation of the TCSS, 'the nerve centre of voluntary social work in the district', was pivotal.[79] The North East Electric Supply Company Ltd, co-founded by her father, charged a nominal rent for the Power House community centre and also lent rooms for committee meetings, while Bensham Grove Settlement was a natural partner for TCSS activities. The influence of Teresa and other women's rights campaigners working in the TCSS (one of whom, Norah Balls, had been a militant suffragette) is illustrated by the special attention paid to the Depression's impact on women. Despite the comparatively small number of unemployed women, the importance of their welfare was highlighted, with a women's camp held as early as 1931. The wives and daughters of unemployed men, it was felt, desperately needed an outlet 'to ease their nervous strain… For them, unemployment means more work, not less.'[80] A Women's Section of TCSS, chaired by Teresa, was set up in 1934, with keep-fit and folk-dancing classes, lectures on citizenship and 'make and mend' sessions in the women's clubs, where they could socialise away from home. '[Although] the strong domestic tradition …is fine and healthful, [it is]… often restricting. Many are finding a new field for their capacities'.[81]

In 1929, the TCSS established the Newcastle upon Tyne Housing Trust, a Public Utility Society, with Teresa on its management committee. Large houses in the city no longer occupied by their original well-to-do owners (who had moved out of the city to escape the spread of industry and an increased population) were converted into low rental flats.[82] By 1938, 60 properties had been secured, managed by Miss Agnes Jennings on the 'Octavia Hill System', with a special emphasis on 'bachelor flats' for business girls and women.[83]

'Auntie T': migration, babies and the 1929 exhibition

Teresa was awarded an OBE in 1928, 'for services in connection with the Newcastle Hostel for training boys for overseas settlement.' The Boys' Migration Hostel was opened

in a redundant police station in the east end of the city in June 1927 'to train and equip lads for farmwork in the Dominions'.[84] Teresa, the only woman on its Board of Management, had raised funds through a torrent of letters to interested parties appealing for support. The Empire Settlement Act of 1922 provided government subsidies towards kitting out the boys and for their passage overseas, while Boards of Guardians contributed to training costs. Visitors flocked from far and wide to inspect the hostel's 'pioneer work'. In its first year of operation, 69 boys aged 14 to 19 went to Canada and 80 to Australia. Schemes for the migration of children and young people to Britain's colonies had long been operating as a means of benefitting the colony while easing social problems at home.[85] Some emigrants flourished but all too many suffered trauma and abuse; for Teresa, however, migration was a means to diminish unemployment in the north-east. Of the 149 who sailed abroad in the first year, 30 had previously been employed in coalmines, 30 had been apprenticed to trades but were now unemployed, 20 had never worked and 69 were in 'blind alley' jobs. Two thirds were aged 16 or 17 and the full cooperation of their parents was demanded, unlike other schemes which assumed that children were being rescued from bad parents and therefore often did not inform families about their child's whereabouts, allowing the child to assume that their parents had died.[86] The publicity material included letters from grateful migrants to Miss Merz, who personally wrote to every boy: 'I think I am having the finest holiday of all. It is hard work, long hours, but it is a pleasure to work out here; the sun is shining, the birds singing, I think it is just lovely. I am as happy as a king out here!'[87]

Country Dancing Photograph by S. L. Gorer.
at the Women's Holiday, St. Hild's College, Durham.

TCSS 6th Annual Report [1934-5]
By permission of Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service.

The success of the boys' hostel led to the creation of another, training spinsters and childless widows aged 18 to 35 for domestic work. After an eight-week course in cooking, laundering, housework and needlework, they were given free passage and guaranteed work in the Dominions.[88] Teresa appealed to local Boards of Guardians for support, pointing out that there were approximately 3,000 women receiving unemployment benefit and over 6,000 in receipt of Guardians' Relief in Northumberland and Durham. 'I came across a number of girls at home, doing nothing, whose parents are on PL [Poor Law] relief', the majority being untrained adult daughters of unemployed miners, she wrote.[89] On 10 December 1928, the new hostel opened, with Teresa as its chairman [sic]. This enterprise can be seen as part of a special interest, first apparent in the founding of Hope House in 1912, in assisting women to be self-supporting.

In May 1914, Teresa had had responsibility for four houses two women's hostels, a cottage for unemployed people and her 'retreat' – a farm cottage in North Northumberland. After her mother's death in 1933, Teresa expanded this portfolio by converting the family home into a residential nursery for illegitimate babies and toddlers. Encouraging the mothers to visit as often as possible, she freed them up to earn a living. 'She has come across so many instances of tragedy in the case of the unmarried mother, and has seen so many wretched children condemned to hole-and-corner existences, that... she determined to give up her life to these unhappy mites.'[90]

By 1935, there were thirty residents, cared for by nine probationer nurses, a matron and two sisters. The mothers were expected to contribute to the cost, but if they could not, 'Auntie Teresa' took on most of the expense herself. A quarter of a century earlier, the nursery would have been vilified by the COS as an inducement to immorality, but despite some criticism at the time, Teresa persisted, viewing the 'work [as] her own, done out of love, and not as a charity.[91] In 1939, the nursery was evacuated to Heugh Folds, which had been owned by the Merz family since 1921.[92] This property had become another bolthole for Teresa and was also used by the extended family, many of whom still recall with great affection holidays spent there.

The dearth of women with the necessary experience to take on civic responsibilities led to the overburdening of those who could.[93] Teresa's demanding schedule is apparent through the copious letters she wrote on behalf of many organisations, her above-average attendance at committee meetings and the case-work undertaken right to the end of her life. She was frequently called on to contribute her expertise to new challenges, such as the 1929 North East Coast Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art, staged to encourage local industry and showcase the talents of the region. She acted as a guarantor for the event and was elected to chair the Executive Committee of the Women's Section at its first meeting in September 1928. Soon she was leading a deputation to request an extension to the allotted accommodation: 'Miss Merz said they were of the opinion that the space was inadequate and they would like to have the use of one of the small halls for demonstrations etc.'[94] She also initiated a crèche and ladies' rest room. There were displays of fine art and handicrafts, and a wide-ranging programme of lectures, intended to showcase the diversity of women's occupations and their growing value

to the community. Over the six months of the Exhibition, seventy female lecturers featured, including her old friends, Dr Mabel Campbell and Lettice Jowitt. The biggest audience was for Lady Bailey, who had completed a return solo flight to the USA.[95]

Some details of Teresa's personal life, whether she was investing in a pianola, 'a great novelty and pleasure after supper', or returning from a London trip with short hair, were recorded in her mother's 'Family Notes', but these tail off after 1920, ending altogether in 1922.[96] Her cousin Mary occasionally referred to Teresa in her diaries, writing of a visit to Heugh Folds in August 1939, when Teresa, joining Mary and family there, entertained the party by reading aloud: 'She is so sweet and kind: much "softer" than she was.'[97]

Apart from a few personal accounts, then, Teresa can only be 'known' through the organisations she worked within, particularly the TCSS. However, the creation of the welfare state entailed local government taking over many of the functions of the voluntary Councils for Social Service. The TCSS had received large government grants in the 1930s to deal with problems caused by mass unemployment, then again in wartime, when it was involved with evacuation and establishing the Citizens Advice Bureau. Post-war, the funding ceased and the staff of seventy in 1939 reduced to seven.[98] Teresa continued to devote herself to her casework and numerous causes; the Rose Joicey 'home for tired housewives', established under the auspices of the COS in 1913, for example, only kept going because of her continuing involvement.[99] She also became the second longest-serving magistrate in the city. The Quarries, no longer a nursery, was given to the Diocese as its Cathedral School. Teresa moved to a modest house a few streets away, living 'a frugal, almost ascetic life'; a former neighbour remembers her as 'an old-fashioned spinster type' – thin and gaunt and very reserved.[100] This may explain why her great-nephews and nieces felt meeting her was 'more a presentation in front of a royal personage than a family warmth.'[101] It was said that she kept the armchairs at Heugh Folds deliberately uncomfortable in order to promote good conversation after dinner, but she was generous in allowing her extended family to holiday there and as 'Auntie T' always remembered children's birthdays, signing her letters with 'a picture of an elegant teapot, either pouring or with a wisp of steam from the spout.'[102]

Conclusion

Teresa died at home on Wednesday 12 November 1958, having outlived all three of her brothers. She had been at work until two days before, despite feeling unwell. Her selfless dedication to social services was warmly praised in the local press, but while Merz Court, a large Newcastle university building, honours her father and brothers, Teresa is all but forgotten today.[103] Modesty kept her public profile low and she appears to have been indifferent to greater political recognition. Perhaps the sheer variety of welfare initiatives into which she poured her energies was too wide. Moreover, the inauguration of the welfare state and professionalisation of social work marginalised voluntarists like Teresa, who were often viewed as old-fashioned and irrelevant, although further investigation into the local context could shed some light on this issue.[104] Her work as a magistrate also remains to be fully explored.

Given that Teresa's own voice is more often absent than not, what drove and sustained her remains, to some extent, a matter of speculation. Without doubt, her humanitarianism sprang from religious faith, with her Quaker background affording an inheritance of female social activism and her entry into the Church of England occurring when several Newcastle clergy were exploring radical solutions to the city's economic and social problems. Her approach was professional but practical, with the empowerment of women a recurrent theme throughout, showing an awareness of gendered inequality and conscious action taken to redress the balance. In other words, Teresa was a feminist, whether or not she would have accepted the epithet.[105] She certainly worked alongside many others who had cut their political teeth in the suffrage movement and used their new position in the inter-war civic sphere to further women's opportunities. When she died, Miss Violet Taylor, veteran suffragist, provided a fitting tribute: 'She was a wonderful worker all her life… and she worked for so many causes. She always believed the best of people.'[106] As this brief biographical study has shown, the work of Teresa Merz is ripe for wider recognition.

Notes

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28. Anne Logan, 'Political Life in the Shadows', 367

29. TWA L4032, Family Notes, Nov. 1911

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In response to rising costs the Women's History Network is making a move towards a digital distribution of *Women's History*. It has therefore been decided to increase membership fees for all members wishing to continue to receive *Women's History* in hardcopy. This decision has been outlined in a recent E-mail sent to all members and the new membership fees can be found on the back cover or on our website. If you have any questions or queries please email - membership@womenshistorynetwork.org

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The Women's Champion. Mrs Farquharson of Haughton and Women's Struggle to Join Scientific Societies

Peter Ayres

Independent Scholar

Mrs Marian Farquharson (1846-1912) led the fight for suitably qualified women to be able to join scientific and learned societies. Here, they might have access to libraries and reference collections, meet, and discuss their science with like-minded men. The Linnean Society, like the Geological and Geographical Societies and, especially, the Royal Society, strongly resisted female membership. When, in 1904, the Linnean finally agreed to admit women Fellows, Marian was the only one rejected from a shortlist of sixteen candidates. Scientifically and socially, she was well qualified to be a Fellow and she had powerful supporters. However, Marian's proud, forthright manner could alienate others and, although several of the successful candidates had a wider involvement with women's causes than hers, the combination of her character and her challenge to the Linnean Society prevented sufficient male Fellows from supporting her candidature. When, in 1908, she was finally offered a Fellowship, a fatal illness prevented her accepting it.

The Linnean Society of London was founded in 1788. It is the world's oldest active Biological Society and still one of its most prestigious. On the evening of 18 May 1905 the Linnean held a splendid dinner at Prince's restaurant in Piccadilly to celebrate a landmark both in its own history and in women's progress towards equality in the sciences: their newly won right to be Fellows of the Society. The occasion was graced by Mary Russell, Duchess of Bedford, one of the fifteen women who had recently become Fellows. The dinner was notable also for the absence of a sixteenth woman, Mrs Marian Farquharson. Deeply committed to a belief that duly qualified women should be able to enjoy full fellowship in all scientific and learned societies, she had led the women's fight with the Linnean, but the male Fellows had excluded her by thirty-one votes 'for' to nineteen votes 'against' (just short of the required two-thirds majority).

The Linnean was not the first scientific society to admit women. Some, such as the Zoological Society (founded 1829) and the Botanical Society (founded 1836), had long been open to them. In 1885, Marian had been able to join the Royal Microscopical Society, albeit only the fifth woman to do so. Other societies, such as the Linnean and the Geological Society, with both of which she engaged in a struggle for equality, were not so welcoming – the Geological Society did not admit women until 1919. Most recalcitrant of all was the Royal Society, whose first female Fellows were not elected until 1945.

Little is known of the woman who, as is recognised in *A Bicentenary History of the Linnean Society*, was indubitably 'the women's champion'.[1] Here, Marian's life, particularly her social and scientific standing, is examined while searching for reasons for her exclusion. Was she, as some would have it, 'ladylike and temperate',[2] or, as others held, 'a dangerous female'[3]? Alternatively, was she simply one woman from whom a number of male Fellows extracted a price, as they reluctantly conceded equality – the right to Fellowship – to all women?

Life and family

Marian Sarah Ridley was born on 2 July 1846 at West Meon, Hampshire, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Nicholas James Ridley. She was a descendent of the Protestant martyr, Bishop Nicholas Ridley, of whom she wrote admiringly, he 'preferred to suffer death by burning rather than shirk the courage of his opinions'.[4]

Her father was vicar of St Thomas' church in the parish of East Woodhay, near Newbury, Berkshire, but he was no penurious clergyman. His grandfather was the second Baronet Ridley. The Rev. Nicholas James was able to pay for his seven sons to be educated at leading public schools, such as Eton or Winchester. Four went on to Oxford University and two to Cambridge. Nine servants were employed at the large family home, Hollington House, and the family also kept a smart London address, 7 Cambridge Square, Hyde Park. Indeed, Marian may have been living at the latter when she 'attended classes in London' following some earlier private education at home.[5] She and her two sisters never experienced the schools or universities enjoyed by their brothers.

Nothing is known about how Marian first became interested in biology. She may have been encouraged by her father who, in 1870, was listed as a member of the newly formed Newbury and District Field Club (NDFC). An invaluable starting point, in the form of a local flora, was certainly provided by a paper in volume one of the *Transactions* (1870-1) of the NDFC, by Henry Reeks, Fellow of the Linnean Society (FLS); it was entitled, 'A list of the flowering plants, ferns, and mosses observed in the parish of East Woodhay'.

Marian was by 1881 able to publish *A Pocket Guide to British Ferns* in which she acknowledged the help of Mr Britten of the British Museum and Dr Baker of Kew, both FLS, and of Dr Murie and Mr West at the Library of the Linnean Society.[6] She felt keenly that her work would have benefitted if she had had 'access to the Herbarium of Linnaeus', adding '… although I was told my election would have been easily carried, it could not be on account of my sex'.[7] On 29 October of the same year, however, she was elected a member of the Essex Field Club, in May 1882 presenting to that young club's growing reference library an album of thirty-eight herbarium sheets of British ferns.[8]

Her life changed fundamentally two years later when she married Robert Francis Ogilvie Farquharson (RFOF). She was thirty-seven years old; he was sixty and had two daughters by a previous marriage. His Haughton estate at Alford, twenty-five miles north-west of Aberdeen, extended to 4500 acres. He was a deputy Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire. Their wedding was at St John's church, Paddington, London, with a reception at 7 Cambridge Square. Among the fifty guests were Sir Thomas and Lady Farrer, and Sir Arthur and Lady Hobhouse (née Farrer). The connection to the Farrers was through Marian's grandfather, the Rev. Henry Colbourne Ridley, a barrister, who had married Mary Farrer, daughter of James Farrer, a lawyer who was building an extremely successful practice in Lincoln's

Marian Ridley, probably aged about 21.
By kind permission of the Linnean Society of London.

Inn Fields, London. The fact that both Sir Thomas and Sir Arthur were at the reception strongly suggests that as well as a kinship there was a friendship involving shared interests and ideals. Significantly, both men were part of an important Liberal network, which, among others, included Lord Avebury (formerly Sir John Lubbock), the influential banker, politician and biologist, whom it will be seen was a sponsor of Marian's application(s) to join the Linnean Society.

Lord Farrer FLS served as Vice-Chairman of London County Council when Avebury was its Chairman. Letters between the men reveal an intimate friendship. Lubbock worked with Lord Hobhouse, lawyer and judge, on many matters such as the Endowed Schools Act (1871). Hobhouse's interests included reformation of the property rights of married women; in 1870, he published an influential pamphlet, *On the forfeiture of property by married women*.[9] He was also the 'Arbitrator' appointed by parliament under the Epping Forest Act of 1878, inevitably becoming acquainted with the officers and activities of the Essex Field Club.[10]

After marriage, Marian moved to her husband's home, Haughton House, thereafter signing her letters and articles, 'Mrs. Farquharson of Haughton',[11] which might have been seen as an irritating affectation but was more likely a way of distinguishing her own branch of clan Farquharson from the many others in the north-east of Scotland. Her married years, 1883-90, were devoted largely to her husband and his estate. Nevertheless, she joined the Alford Field Club and East of Scotland Union of Naturalists' Societies. It was not long (1885-6) before she was publishing 'Notes on mosses of the north of Scotland'[12] – mosses were a new interest – and then a lengthier paper, 'Ferns and mosses of the Alford district'.[13] In September 1885, she presented a paper, 'The identification of British mosses' to the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), held that year in Aberdeen. The couple shared an interest in desmids, unicellular green algae found in freshwater. *Docidium farquharsonii* was named in honour of RFOF by its discoverer, John Roy, who stated that he was 'greatly indebted' to Mr Farquharson and 'his accomplished wife…for collections of Desmid material'.[14] Explaining why so much material came from around Newbury, Roy notes that 'For the last few years they had to pass the winter in the South of England', which may be an early hint of the ill health which was to dog Marian's life.

After seven years of happy marriage, her husband died following a bout of influenza.[15] In widowhood, she remained in Scotland, a country with which she had fallen in love.[16] From 1891, the year after her husband's death, her interest in algae revived, probably as a distraction from the grief and loneliness of widowhood. The archives of the Linnean Society include letters written over the next three years to Edward Morrell Holmes, an acknowledged expert on that group, and others on mosses.

Neither socially nor scientifically were there grounds for Marian's rejection by the Linnean. She was related to the baronetcy, and she had married a major landowner, so socially she was at least the equal of the men deciding upon her candidacy. Scientifically, she was well qualified to be a Fellow of the Linnean. Among the fifteen women admitted in 1904 were several laboratory scientists, a plantswoman (Miss Ellen Willmott of Warley Place), a flower painter (Mary Anne Stebbing, the wife of the Zoological Secretary) and the wife of the Treasurer (Catherine Crisp). Adding aristocratic weight was the Duchess of Bedford, a woman whose main connection with biology up to that point was an interest in the rare deer roaming her husband's Woburn Abbey estate. Her interest in ornithology seemingly post-dated her fellowship.[17]

The position of women: scientific and learned societies

Membership of scientific and learned societies was important not just because it gave women scientists equal status but because, in a number of practical ways, it facilitated their studies. It gave them access to libraries and to reference collections of, for example in Marian's case, ferns. Ideas could be exchanged and discussed with experts, and women could present their research papers in person.

In more than 100 letters to Aberdeen newspapers, Marian frequently made reference to papers she had presented at meetings on the subject of women's work, but without any suggestion that she was involved in any broader struggle to improve the lot of lower-class working women. Indeed, by 1909 she had become horrified by the militant activities of The Women's Social and Political Union, which she felt was harming the wider cause of women's equality.[18] Although she claimed as a friend Millicent Garrett Fawcett, leader of the peaceable

Suffragist movement, the only evidence of any contact with Fawcett was on the subject of nursing, rather than suffrage, and via the press.[19]

Marian's earliest paper on the position of women in science was prepared for the International Women's Congress held in London in July 1889, although due to her ill health it had to be read on Marian's behalf by Lady Marjorie Gordon, daughter of Lady Aberdeen.[20] Marian's obituary in the *Aberdeen Daily Journal* reveals that it was to be a frequent occurrence in succeeding years that papers were read on her behalf at meetings because she was not strong enough to attend.[21]

Marian's first attempt to join a leading scientific society was her application to join the Royal Microscopical Society (RMS). Presumably, she felt her interest in desmids qualified her to become an Ordinary Fellow. It is not known which of the required three members supported her application but page 568 of the *Proceedings* of the RMS record that at a meeting of 8 April 1885 she was admitted. She was not, as sometimes stated, the Society's first female Fellow for the *Report to Council, 1884,* noted that four ladies had already been made Fellows, among them Catherine Crisp, wife of Frank Crisp, one of the Secretaries of the Society. Catherine Crisp was among the first fifteen female Fellows of the Linnean Society. In addition, membership was only a partial success for, until 1909, women were not allowed to attend meetings of the Society or to take part in its discussions.

It is less clear why Marian's interests should have led her towards the Anthropological Institute (AI), nevertheless the records of the AI for 1900 show that she was among its Fellows. Perhaps it was simply that membership of as many societies as possible was important to her. She allowed this particular Fellowship to lapse after only two years. The AI's Chair of Council was the same Lord Avebury who was to sponsor her application to join the Linnean Society. Marian also challenged the Royal Geographical Society, something that, as will be seen, met with the severe disapproval of one eminent female geographer. Again, Avebury was involved and, in this case, so too was Lord Aberdeen. In *Life of John Lubbock*, written in 1914, only a year after his death, his biographer says, 'Sir John never sympathised with the exclusion of women from scientific societies, and spoke in favour of their admission to the Geographical Society'. An excerpt from a letter written to Avebury by Grant Duff, President of the Society, and dated 17 April 1893, is then quoted:

> One of those idiotic squabbles which now and then disturb learned Societies has broken out in the Geographical. The subject … is the admission of women to be Fellows…[22]

Anticipating a future meeting, Grant Duff adds 'Aberdeen will come and talk sense. I hope you will come and help him. With the two all will go well'. However, things did not 'go well' and it was not until 1913 that women were admitted to the Geographical Society.

Sir Archibald Geikie was a keen supporter of women's equality and it was he who, on 21 March 1901, brought Marian and another woman, neither of them geologists, to an Ordinary General Meeting of the Geological Society. Geikie was the Society's most eminent member and was making a point. Although since the mid-1880s women had been allowed to use the library and have their papers read – strictly in their absence – by male Fellows, they had made no progress in their attempts to gain membership.[23] Indeed, it was only in March 1900 that the Society's Council had a motion put before it that:

> It is not desirable that Fellows of the Society should be allowed to introduce ladies at the Ordinary General Meetings.[24]

Although the motion was defeated, the temperature of the dispute between pro- and anti-women factions had been raised significantly. The pro- camp won a partial victory in 1904 when the Society acknowledged practice and explicitly allowed Fellows to bring women guests to Ordinary meetings, allowing them for the first time to read their own papers. It was not until 1919, however, that women were admitted as full Fellows of the Geological Society.

Already committed to joining scientific societies as and when opportunities arose, Marian found encouragement in October 1899 when, as the journal *Nature* reported,[25] at the first annual general meeting of the Lady Warwick Agricultural Association for Women[26]:

> …the following resolution, supported by a paper by Mrs. Farquharson, was adopted:
>
> That it is desirable and important that duly qualified women should have the advantage of full fellowship in Scientific and other Learned Societies, e.g. the Royal, the Linnean and the Royal Microscopical.[27]

Newly empowered, Marian embarked on her battle with the Linnean and Royal Societies in 1900, petitioning them both for the admission of suitably qualified women as full Fellows. Each letter was accompanied by a cutting from the *Women's Agricultural Times* of November 1899, which reported the resolution of Lady Warwick's Association, a resolution that had been seconded by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson.[28]

The response of both societies was negative. The Royal replied that the eligibility of women 'must depend on the interpretation to be placed upon the Royal Charters under which the Society has been governed for more than three hundred years'. The Society's lawyers argued that a married woman could not be admitted in her own right because, in common law, her person was covered by that of her father or husband – they were less clear about the position of single women.[29] When three years later the Royal treated Pierre and Marie Curie so unequally, Marian expressed her outrage to the *Aberdeen Free Press*:

> As your readers are aware, Professor Curie, of Paris, was in regard to radium recently the joint-discoverer with Madam Curie, and had the honour of receiving from the Royal Society on the 30th of November, at the hands of its president, Sir William Huggins, the Society's Davy medal. Sir William gracefully alluding to the name of Madam Curie, who could not be present on account of her sex.[30]

Later in the letter, Marian expressed her hope that the Royal's discrimination against women would:

> … soon be ended by the courtesy and gallantry of the Royal Society following the example of the Linnean Society, which is effecting an alteration in its charter in order to render equal

opportunity of Fellowship to both sexes.

The Linnean Society Council placed a series of obstacles in the way of Marian's petition. In May 1901, she submitted a lengthy list of supporters, whose diverse backgrounds ranged from medicine to the army, and included two leading tropical botanists (her cousin, Henry Nicholas Ridley, Director of the Singapore Botanic Garden, and Sir George King, Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta). To each rebuff she responded, and each time a new objection was raised.[31] She changed her tactics, requesting that she and two friends, Grace Coleridge Frankland and Clara H. Whitmore be allowed to attend the General Meeting scheduled for November.[32] Permission was not given, in spite of the fact that as recently as 6 June Ethel Barton and Annie Lorrain Smith had been allowed to attend a General Meeting.[33]

With the support of her friends, she persisted and won. The proposal for a new Charter, incorporating the critical words, '… without distinction of sex', was approved by 54 votes to 17 on 15 January 1903. Revised byelaws were approved on 3 November 1904, and on 16 November 1904, the names of sixteen women were presented for election.[34]

Friends and supporters

Whether from the natural sciences or the wider world, Marian lacked neither direct help nor the support of like-minded associates. Each of the sixteen women was nominated by a unique group of Fellows, sometimes as few as three, sometimes as many as seven. Marian's 'Certificate' (of recommendation) was signed by Lords Avebury and Ripon, Henry John Elwes, Michael Foster, Joseph Reynolds Green, and William Carmichael McIntosh, each irrefutably a distinguished member of the Society. This poses the question why these particular men were involved.

It was through Lord Avebury that Marian had submitted her original petition to the Linnean in 1900. Lords Avebury and Ripon were influential Liberal politicians and both were longstanding members of the Linnean, the former having served as President from 1881-6. Avebury's connections were endless. Among his friends was the aforementioned Sir M.E. Grant Duff, President of Geographical Society, and also Sir Dudley Coutts Marjoribanks (1st Baron Tweedmouth), father of Ishbel, Lady Aberdeen. Whether Marian ever met Avebury is not known, though the Essex Field Club would have provided a natural place for their paths to cross for Avebury was among its founders in 1880.[35] In addition, they could have met when they both presented papers in the Biology Section of the BAAS meeting of 1885 in Aberdeen.

After her initial petition to the Linnean, Marian often submitted her requests through Joseph Reynolds Green, who from 1887 was Professor of Botany at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Entering Cambridge as a mature student, Green had studied botany under Sydney Vines (President of the Linnean Society in the critical years 1900-04) and animal morphology under Michael Foster, Professor of Physiology.[36] While Green's botany recommended him to the Pharmaceutical Society, it was pure rather than applied, so Edward Morrell Holmes was appointed as Lecturer in *Materia Medica* to teach the medicinal properties of plants, which Green could not. There is no evidence that Green knew Marian in person, rather than through the business of Council, but it would have been easy for him to learn about her from his colleague, Holmes. Whatever and however Green knew about Marian, it was enough for him to sign her Certificate.

Another signatory was Foster and again there is a connection to Sydney Vines. Ever since his arrival in Cambridge in 1870 Foster had built, both practically and intellectually, what became known as the Cambridge School of Physiology.[37] Foster helped many younger staff, newly appointed zoologists and botanists, to introduce practical teaching into their courses. One of those botanists was Vines. Foster was not only a father-figure for Green and Vines, he was also close to Avebury, succeeding the latter as Liberal MP for the University of London.

The fifth of Marian's backers was William Carmichael McIntosh, zoologist and Professor of Natural History at St Andrews University. The two were on cordial personal terms. On 1 August 1902, after lunch at Marian's home, McIntosh had addressed the Scottish Association for the Promotion of Women's Public Work, of which Marian was a founder.[38] The meeting was chaired by the local MP, Robert Farquharson (a potentially confusing name). McIntosh was not only sympathetic to this women's movement, he also signed the Certificates, supporting election to the Linnean, of Maria Ogilvie-Gordon and Grace Frankland who, from among the sixteen women proposed, were two of the most concerned with women's rights.

Marian's last backer was Henry John Elwes, a botanist, entomologist, and horticulturist. Elwes was a great traveller, often with his friend and brother-in-law Frederick DuCane Godman. He had proven his sympathy with women's involvement in the Linnean's activities when in December 1898 he had introduced two ladies to one of the Society's meetings at which they could hear him 'discourse on the flora and fauna of the Altai mountains', which he had recently visited. At that time, the presence of the women was not unprecedented but was nevertheless remarkable.[39]

In April 1901, Marian chose to direct her requests to Council via Godman and the Linnaean's Zoological Secretary, G.B. Howes – presumably chosen because they would be likely to be sympathetic.[40] The first signs that opposition was crumbling followed the meeting of 19 December 1901 when Reynolds Green, in re-submitting Marian's memorial, stated that 'a considerable number of Fellows favoured it'.[41]

In November 1900, Marcus Hartog FLS, Professor of Natural History at University College, Cork, had written to the Council of the Linnean urging it to revise its Charter to enable the admission of women. It seems there may have been a link between Hartog and Marian via Hartog's cousin, Hertha Ayrton (the first woman to read a paper before the Royal Society). From the age of nine, Hertha had been brought up by her aunt, Mrs Marion Hartog, who ran a school in London. Here she received a broad, liberal education, alongside her cousins, including Marcus.

A physicist and electrical engineer, Ayrton was the first woman to be nominated (by nine men) for a Fellowship of the Royal Society – unsuccessfully so. A thorn in the side of the older scientific establishment, she was, like Marian, outspoken. However, unlike Marian, Hertha was a militant, high-profile member of Mrs Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union.[42]

Hertha's and Marian's paths had crossed in 1899 when they were both involved in The International Congress of Women. While Ayrton presided over the Physical Science

section, delivering a paper, 'The suitability of women for work in the electrical industry', Marian contributed to the biological sciences section. Although her paper, 'Work for Women in the Biological Sciences', was intended to encourage young women to become scientists, there were some passages which might have had the opposite effect, as when she described her experiences with the Linnean Society when preparing her book on British ferns.

Other contributors to the biological sciences section of the Congress were Mrs Percy Frankland, 'Women and Bacteriology', and Miss Ethel Sargant, 'Women in Botanical Science'. Both were well-respected laboratory researchers and both were among the first fifteen female Fellows of the Linnean in spite of being associated with the wider movement for women's equality.

Grace Coleridge Frankland (née Toynbee)'s father was a well-respected aural surgeon whose Liberal view that suffrage should be extended was well known. His short-lived son and Grace's beloved brother, Arnold, was a brilliant economic historian whose energies were devoted to improving social welfare. Having grown up in a family with such a strong social conscience it is little wonder that Grace is remembered in Dundee, where her husband, Percy, held the chair of chemistry from 1888-94, not just for her microbiology but also for being a founding member of the Dundee Social Union whose aims included improving infant mortality among the poor. She was one of nineteen women who, in 1904, petitioned the Chemical Society for full membership, though without success.[43]

Ethel Sargant was a product of Miss Buss's North London Collegiate School, famous for providing girls with a science education equal to the best available to any boy, and of Girton College, Cambridge. However, in spite of having received a 'modern' education and being a botanical researcher of the highest calibre, Ethel chose an older pattern of life. Duty to her mother and a disabled sister dictated her life, a sacrifice that was eased by family wealth. She spent a year at the Jodrell Laboratory, Kew, working under the supervision of D.H. Scott (Botanical Secretary of the Linnean), but otherwise conducted all her research in her own privately-financed laboratory, first in Reigate, Surrey, and later in Cambridge. Ethel's older sister, Mary Sargant Florence, was a well-known suffragist and Ethel herself became actively involved in the Tunbridge Wells Suffrage Society, one of the earliest to be formed in England. Later she was an ardent supporter of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. Like Marian, she felt particularly keenly the unfairness of women's exclusion from learned societies. Contributing an article to the *Jubilee Record* (1900) of her old school, she used words that could have come from Marian's pen:

> Custom and some degree of prejudice close the doors of most of the learned societies against women. In that respect we are little better off than our predecessors of fifty years ago. But when we meet on neutral ground I have always found the attitude of scientific men most generous to women workers. We cannot but regret that we are so often excluded from the stimulus of comradeship.[44]

In 1899, the International Congress of Women was organised under the auspices of the International Council. President of that Council since 1893, the same year her husband, the 7th Earl of Aberdeen was appointed Governor-General of Canada, was Ishbel Hamilton-Gordon. Frustrated by her father's refusal to allow her to receive a university education, as in all likelihood had been Marian, Ishbel was a tireless worker – not just an aristocratic figurehead – for a number of women's organisations. Thus, after returning from Canada in 1898 she took on the huge task of editing the seven volumes of proceedings of the International Congress. Marian was related to Lady Aberdeen since the latter's sister, Mary Georgina, was married to Matthew White Ridley, the 1st Viscount Ridley. There were, thus, very good reasons why Marian's obituary should include Lady Aberdeen in her list of friends.[45]

Another named 'friend', active in the International Council, and its Corresponding Secretary from 1906 – working with the President but relieving her of much routine work – was Dr Maria Matilda Ogilvie Gordon. Born in 1864 at Monymusk, a hamlet only five miles from Alford, Maria was, like Marian, a daughter of a clergyman blessed with a large family. Unlike Marian, she was formally educated, when only nine years old having been sent to school in Edinburgh, and later studying at Edinburgh's Heriot-Watt College. She completed her undergraduate work at University College, London. In 1893, she was the first woman in the University to be awarded a DSc in Geology. Pursuing geological research in the Tyrol, Maria was subsequently awarded a PhD by the University of Munich and was thus the first woman to receive such a degree.

After marrying John Gordon, an Aberdeen physician, in 1895 she returned to live in that city until his death in 1919, working for the legal rights of working women, and to improve the health of poor mothers and their children. It was probably at about this time that she made the acquaintance of Marian Farquharson for, when a group of women which had coalesced around Marian, and which called itself the 'Women's International Progressive Union', was formalised in 1902 and renamed 'The Scottish Association for the Promotion of Women's Public Work', Marian was its President and Maria was its Secretary.[46] While the Association never flourished and seems to have disappeared with Marian's death, Maria continued her public works as well as her geology, in 1919 being among the first cohort of women to be made Fellows of the Geological Society.

Maria Ogilvie Gordon, Grace Frankland, and Ethel Sargant were among the first tranche of women to be made Fellows of the Linnean Society. They had not been excluded in spite of working for social justice, and in spite of the associations they had with the wider struggle for equal rights for women. This raises again the question, if they were admitted, why not Marian?

Opposition

All the evidence indicates that Marian was a strong-minded, self-confident woman. Her letters to the Aberdeen newspapers often strayed into what were widely regarded as men's territory. She wrote in defence of free trade, when the re-introduction of tariffs on imported goods was a political issue. Moreover, backed by 'my ancestor Bishop Ridley', she took on a group of Presbyterian and Church of Scotland ministers on subjects such as baptismal regeneration and the historical Christ.[47]

In botanical matters, she could be equally forthright. The abstract of her address to the 1885 meeting of the BAAS

finds her criticising Dr. Braithwaite's *British Moss-Flora*, a work of scholarship judged against which her own field guide is lightweight.[48]

Might her contemporaries then have seen her as too proud, too self-opinionated or just 'difficult'? Not according to her obituarist who explained her long list of friends as:

> … being due to the ladylike and temperate language of her addresses, as well as to the charm of her personality – the very antithesis of the accepted idea of a " blue stocking" or "new woman" – loveable, kind-hearted, unselfish, tolerant, broad-minded, generous, and sincere …[49]

Her stepdaughter did not entirely agree, however, asking readers of the *Aberdeen Free Press* of 11 December 1903 not to hold her responsible for letters signed 'Mrs Farquharson of Haughton':

> I have to submit to a good deal of inconvenience and annoyance through the sayings and doings of a lady who, in letters to the press, ... subscribes herself 'Marian S. Farquharson of Haughton' without having the smallest right to the designation. As my name so closely resembles Mrs Farquharson's (not of Haughton), I find myself sometimes credited with peculiar views about things ... which I in no way share.
>
> Maria O. Farquharson of Haughton.

Also not seemingly charmed by Marian were two significant figures, D.H. Scott and Ethel Sargant. It fell to the duty of Scott, Botanical Secretary, a kind and sociable man who naturally enjoyed female company, to receive the paperwork nominating a potential Fellow.[50] His diary entry for Thursday 15 December 1904 records coldly, '15 ladies elected. Mrs Farquharson rejected, 31 for 19 against'.[51] The normally kind-hearted Ethel Sargant, who has been presented as someone sympathetic in principle to Marian, and who was a direct beneficiary of her efforts, admitted to her protégée Agnes Robertson that she had negative feelings about Marian, 'I couldn't help rejoicing in Mrs F's non-election. It would be disastrous if they felt bound to elect every woman put up'.[52]

In making her argument for women Fellows, Marian may have made the mistake of aligning herself too much with the great and the good rather than with rank-and-file Fellows. Thus, as part of her battle, she had submitted to Council in May 1901 a list of twenty-three supporters, which included three lords, five knights, eight professors, a reverend, a doctor and just five with the plain title, 'Mr'. We will never know who voted against Marian but the Groves brothers might fit the bill. The sons of a railway clerk, their own careers were modest. Henry was a middle-rank civil servant and James in the Army and Navy Stores. Away from their jobs – and always working together – they were often known as 'Messrs. Groves'. They developed an unmatched expertise in the Characeae (green algae). According to James, his brother Henry was a Conservative in later years, who 'had little sympathy with the ideals of modern democracy'.[53] James, a Conservative like his brother, was definitely present (possibly Henry too) at the Special General Meeting held to discuss changing the Charter; James's presence is recorded because he unsuccessfully tried to stop discussion of a second amendment to the Constitution, such that the size of the Council should be enlarged.[54]

By attempting to join several societies Marian may – in the eyes of some – have displayed unwelcome political, rather than intellectual, motivation. In addition, not all women agreed with Marian that their sex should enjoy full fellowship in scientific and learned societies. One such was Mary Kingsley (1862-1900), traveller and explorer of West Africa. When in 1899 a number of women, seemingly led by Marian, made their bid to join the Royal Geographical Society, Mary described the applicants as 'shrieking females and androgyns', refusing to sign Marian's petition.[55] Using more temperate language, she replied to Marian's request:

> I feel I cannot add my name to your influential list. I have for many years heard this question about admitting ladies to learned societies discussed and my personal feeling is that I would not ask any Society to admit me. ... If we women distinguish ourselves in Science in sufficiently large numbers at a sufficiently high level, the great scientific societies will admit us ... or ... we will form our own of equal eminence. The great thing for us in this generation to do is to show a good output in high class original work.
>
> 26 November 1899[56]

Next day (27 November 1899), she copied to John Scott Keltie, Secretary of the Royal Geographical, her letter to Marian, adding, 'I do not wish to alarm you but I feel it is my duty as a friend to warn you that there is a dangerous female after you, I enclose details. I'm terrified of her'.[57] Four days later (1 December 1899), she wrote again to Keltie. Citing the Anthropological Institute as an example, Kingsley told him that she found the presence of ladies was 'hindersome to the gentlemen', inhibiting scientific discussion both because of the need for propriety and because of the interests of the ladies.[58]

Kingsley was closely associated with Albert Gunther (President of the Linnaean, 1896-1900) for he had helped to arrange finance for her expeditions. Gunther may have been another example of a Fellow who although not against the admission of women in principle – he was a supporter of both the Duchess of Bedford and Catherine Crisp – learned, or was taught, to dislike Marian Farquharson.

In conclusion, it was more than the challenge which Marian presented on behalf of women that prevented a critical number of male Fellows from supporting her candidacy, for fifteen women were approved. Marian, the messenger, may have been punished by some men simply for carrying the women's message, but her nature was an additional problem. The very characteristics which made Marian the 'women's champion', her courage, determination and forthright manner, alienated some men (and some women), leading to her being singled out for rejection.

A triumph that came too late

After the Linnean admitted the first women in 1904, there was a further steady trickle of female Fellows but the torrent feared by some men never materialised. Marian's case was finally reviewed in 1908 and she was offered a Fellowship. Lord Avebury and Joseph Reynolds Green again signed her Certificate. Edward Holmes supported her as, fittingly, did three of the women who had been the beneficiaries of her

efforts – Catherine Crisp, Grace Frankland and Ellen Willmott. However, Marian's fragile health had deteriorated further. Twice she had to ask Council to postpone the date when she might attend a meeting at which she could sign the Declaration that would formalise her Fellowship. She visited Nice in the hope that its gentler Mediterranean climate would restore her health. Sadly, it did not. The 'women's champion' died there on 20 April 1912, a Fellowship of the Linnean Society having eluded her.

Notes

1. Andrew Thomas Gage and William Thomas Stearn, *A Bicentenary History of the Linnean Society of London* (London, Academic Press for the Linnean Society,1988), 89.
2. 'Death of Mrs Farquharson of Haughton: A notable career', *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 13 May 1912.
3. Alison Blunt, *Travel, Gender and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (London, Guilford Press, 1994), 148.
4. Sarah Pedersen, 'Within their sphere? Correspondence to the Aberdeen daily newspapers, 1900-1918' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, 2004), 30-31.
5. Gina Douglas, 'Farquharson, Marian Sarah (1846-1912)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004)* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/55777, accessed 28 Feb. 2017].
6. Marian S. Ridley, *A Pocket Guide to British Ferns* (London, David Bogue, 1881).
7. Lady Aberdeen, ed., 'Women in Professions', being the Professional Section of the *International Congress of Women, London, July 1899* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1900), 184-5.
8. *Essex Field Club Journal* 2 (1882), 62. Founded as the Epping Forest and County of Essex Naturalists' Society Club on 10 January 1880, it became the Essex Field Club in 1882.
9. Arthur Hobhouse, *On the forfeiture of property by married women* (Manchester, Alexander Ireland & Co, 1870), available at Internet Archive [https://archive.org/details/onforfeitureofpr00hobh, accessed 28 Feb. 2017].
10. The Commons Preservation Society (CPS) stopped private landlords enclosing parts of the forest. Epping's future was vested in the Corporation of the City of London. William James Farrer, brother of Sir Thomas (created baronet 1883; 1st Baron Farrer 1893), married the sister of George John Shaw-Lefevre, barrister and founder of the CPS.
11. From 1885 onwards she pointedly added FRMS, for she had been admitted a Fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society.
12. *Scottish Naturalist*, 8 (1885-6), 381.
13. *Scottish Naturalist*, 10 (1889-90), 193-8.
14. John Roy, 'Freshwater algae of Enbridge lake and vicinity, Hampshire', *Journal of Botany*, 28 (1890), 334-8.
15. *Aberdeen Journal*, 7 May 1890.
16. Marian Farquharson, 'Letters to the Editor', *Aberdeen Free Press*, 9 Sep. 1909.
17. Meriel Buxton, *The High-Flying Duchess* (Leicester, Woodperry, 2008), 91.
18. Pedersen, 'Within their sphere?', 35.
19. Marian Farquharson, 'Letters to the Editor', *Aberdeen Free Press*, 2 June 1904. In a letter printed in the *Times*, 20 July 1908, Marian's name appears next to Fawcett's in a lengthy list. The subject is the registration, or equal professional status, of female nurses.
20. A paper, 'Women's Suffrage: Should it be Made a Test Question?' is wrongly attributed to Marian in the *Biographical Dictionary of Women in Science*, eds. Marian Ogilvie Bailey and Joy Dorothy Harvey (London, Routledge, 2000), 436. The published introduction to that paper, delivered to a meeting held in Dundee in 1899, says it was given (in person) by a Mrs Farquharson who was the daughter of the ex-Provost of Dundee, Alexander Mathewson.
21. 'Death of Mrs Farquharson of Haughton'.
22. Horace G. Hutchinson, *Life of Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury,* Vol. ii (London, MacMillan, 1914), 17.
23. Until that month he had been Director-General of the Geological Survey.
24. Gordon L. Herries Davies, *Whatever is Under the Earth: The Geological Society of London 1807-2007* (London, Geological Society, 2007), 160.
25. Anonymous, 'Notes', *Nature* 60 (1899), 621-5.
26. To educate women in agriculture and horticulture, 'Daisy' Warwick (mistress of the Prince of Wales) established Lady Warwick Hall in 1898, where women were taught by staff of Reading College, the forerunner of Reading University. In 1903 she set up the larger and independent Studley Horticultural and Agricultural College for Women, in Warwickshire.
27. As with Marian's experience of the Royal Microscopical Society, women's membership was not always 'full', suggesting that the wording of the resolution may have been taken directly from her paper.
28. Joan Mason, 'The Women Fellows' Jubilee', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 49 (1995), 126.
29. Mason, 'The Women Fellows' Jubilee', 126-7.
30. Marian Farquharson, letter to the *Aberdeen Free Press*, 15 December 1903.
31. Gage and Stearn, *A Bicentenary History*, 89-91.
32. An American writer who published one of the earliest books of feminist criticism, *Women's Works in English Fiction from the Restoration to the mid-Victorian Period* (London, G.P. Putnam, 1910).
33. On several occasions women had been allowed to attend a meeting when their research paper (sole or joint authorship with a man) was read, see Gage and Stearn, 89-90.
34. John Marsden, 'Charter and Bye-Laws', *The Linnean*, 19 (2003), 13-15.
35. Percy Thompson, 'A short history of the Essex Field Club', *Essex Field Cub Special Memoirs*, 7 (1930), 2.
36. W.J. O'Connor, *British Physiologists, 1885-1914: A Biographical Dictionary* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1991) 29.
37. G.L. Geison, *Michael Foster and the Cambridge School of Physiology* (Princeton, New Jersey, University Press, 1978). Foster was an expert on the genus *Iris*.
38. Archives of the University of St Andrews. ms.37098/26. Letter from Mrs Farquharson to Professor McIntosh, 23 July 1902.
39. Gage and Stearn, 89.
40. *Ibid*., 90.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Claire Jones, 'Bodies of controversy? Women and the Royal Society', *Herstoria Magazine*, Summer 2010, 40-42.
43. Marelene Rayner-Canham and Geoffrey Rayner-Canham, *Chemistry Was Their Life: Pioneer British Women Chemists 1880-1949* (London, Imperial College Press, 2008), 425.
44. Eleanor M. Hill and Sophie Bryant, *Frances Mary Buss Schools Jubilee Record* (London, Swan Sonnenscheim, 1900).

45. 'Death of Mrs Farquharson'.
46. Lindy Moore, personal communication via [info@women'shistoryscotland.org].
47. Pedersen, 'Within their sphere?'.
48. The first volume of Robert Braithwaite's *Flora* was published in 1887 but some sections were completed by 1880 and could be purchased separately.
49. Pedersen, 'Within their sphere?'.
50. F.W. Oliver, 'Obituary, Dukinfield Henry Scott (1854-1934)', *New Phytologist* 33 (1934), 73-6.
51. Archives of Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew.
52. Archives of Girton College, Cambridge, Letter from Ethel Sargant to Agnes Robertson, 20 Dec. 1904.' Robertson (later, Mrs Arber) was the first female biologist to be made a Fellow of the Royal Society
53. James Groves, 'Henry Groves (1855-1912)', *Journal of Botany*, 51 (1913), 73-9.
54. Marsden, 'Charter and Bye-Laws'.
55. Katherine Frank, *A Voyager Out: The Life of Mary Kingsley* (New York, Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2005), 256.
56. Blunt, *Travel, Gender and Imperialism*, 148.
57. *Ibid*., 157-8.
58. *Ibid*., 149.

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Helena Swanwick and the Coupling of Pacifism to the Struggle for Gender Equality

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'War is waged by men only, but it is not possible to wage it upon men only'.[1] This blunt assertion appeared in *Women and War* (1915), a pamphlet commissioned by the Union of Democratic Control (UDC) when First World War hostilities were approaching their blood-drenched nadir.[2] Its author, Helena Swanwick, the first woman member if the UDC, had a long association with the organisation during which time she was appointed to its Executive, wrote several key texts, edited the official journal, and compiled its first published history. A staunch feminist, Swanwick wrote: 'If destructive force is to continue to dominate the world, then man must continue to dominate woman, to his and her lasting injury'.[3] Although Swanwick's message appeared to resonate in the wake of the devastating war of 1914–1918, and she was appointed to the Order of the Companions of Honour in the New Years' Honours of 1931 in recognition of her efforts to maintain peace, increased militarisation in the lead up to WWII left her out of step with popular opinion.

Although she remained a steadfast suffragist, Swanwick's commitment to absolute pacifism and her belief that violence was incompatible with gender equality led her to break with those women's rights organisations that promoted violent action or supported war. Instead, Swanwick became a proponent of cross-border harmony and the cultivation of an 'international mind' among European citizens, an unpopular stance, particularly during the 1930s when the rise of National Socialism in Germany threatened Europe once again.[4] As a consequence, her campaign was treated with suspicion and her activities, along with those of fellow women pacifists, in contrast with the Pankhursts and their coterie, have rarely been given the prominence they deserve. The intention of this article is to bring Swanwick's life and her quest for lasting peace and cooperation to the attention of a twenty-first century readership at a time when her theories on international harmony have particular relevance; the recent Brexit debate in the UK comes immediately to mind.

In *The Future of the Women's Movement* (1913), Swanwick insisted that the campaign for peace and the campaign for equal rights for women had become inextricably linked. She articulated the penalties of war for women in dramatic terms:

> Men who go to war have the honour and the glory, the bands and the banners, the stars and medals and monuments and maybe the glorious death. Women die, and see their babies die, but theirs is no glory; nothing but horror and shame unspeakable, the slaying of those for whom they willingly risked their lives, when they brought them into the world, the destruction of all that is most precious to them.[5]

Yet, Swanwick was not a gender essentialist. She believed that women bore the brunt of war because they were the designated carers in society and she advocated cooperation with pacifist men. In practical terms, she encouraged men to become more involved in childrearing so that they would appreciate what was at stake and could relieve women of some of their domestic duties, which would allow them to become involved in the development of national policy. It was her firm belief that women would always demonstrate greater opposition to conflict than men since: 'they have had nothing to gain and all to lose in war'.[6]

Although *The Future of the Women's Movement* was unlikely to be read by those who could prevent the looming First World War (1914–1918), Swanwick launched a final bid to stay the warmonger's hand: 'When men go to war, who remains behind to administer affairs, to be father and mother in one?' she asked. 'When the men are killed, are their "responsibilities" killed with them?'[7] In *Woman and War*, published after the outbreak of hostilities, she painted a grim picture of the likely fate of women who were trapped in the war zones that had been created by then. 'The best that can be done for them', she wrote, 'is to round them up with the children, like cattle, sick

and old, the nursing mothers and the women with child, and turn them into concentration camps, to rot and go mad and die'.[8] She set out the realities of war in explicit terms, insisting: 'When aviators drop bombs, when guns bombard fortified towns, it is not possible to avoid the women and children who may chance to be in the way'.[9] Yet, women were given no opportunity to present the case for peace and security.

Feminist Awakening

Swanwick was born in Munich on 13 June 1864 and moved to England when she was four years-old. In 1878, aged fourteen, she began attending Notting Hill High School in London, where her feminist awakening had its origins in her discovery of John Stuart Mill's radical essay *The Subjugation of Women* (1869). By speaking out against the deep inequities endemic in patriarchal Victorian society she damaged her relationship with her parents, artist Oswald Sickert (1828–1885) and his wife Eleanor Louisa Henry (1830–1922). Swanwick expressed particular disappointment in her mother: 'A boy might be a person but not a girl', she complained in *I Have Been Young* (1935), her warm and illuminating autobiography:

> This was the ineradicable root of our differences. All my brothers had rights as persons; not I. Till I married [aged twenty-four], she never, in her heart, conceded me personal rights.[10]

Her father too offered little support. His refusal to pay her fees to Girton College, Cambridge obliged Swanwick to rely on a partial scholarship and the generosity of her godmother. She graduated with a degree in Moral Science in 1885, and accepted a post as a visiting lecturer in psychology at Westfield College for women; she also lectured on economics. Her first journalistic commission came from Oscar Wilde, who knew her father and befriended young Helena when he stayed with her family at their home in Neuville, near Dieppe, in 1878. Wilde, as editor of *The Woman's World* magazine, commissioned 'The Evolution of Economics' for his February 1889 issue. Afterwards, Swanwick became a longstanding contributor to the liberal *Manchester Guardian*, a newspaper that demonstrated strong editorial support for women's suffrage.

Non-violent Activism

As the century reached its close with women still denied voting rights, Swanwick shunned the Pankhursts' militant Women's Social and Political Union since it promoted militant feminist activism and encouraged young men to enlist. Instead, she was drawn to organisations dedicated to increasing women's participation in politics; she joined the Women's Trade Union League and the Women's Co-operative Guild, and she was appointed Honorable Secretary of the Manchester Women's Suffrage Association. In 1906, Swanwick joined the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) since it accommodated her commitment to non-violent activism. She was elected to its Executive and appointed editor of its weekly journal, *The Common Cause*. During 1908 alone, Swanwick addressed one hundred and fifty NUWSS meetings across England and Scotland.

Speaking in her role as NUWSS delegate to the National Woman Suffrage Alliance conference in Budapest in June 1913, Swanwick insisted that the struggle to extend women's

Helena Swanwick c. 1908
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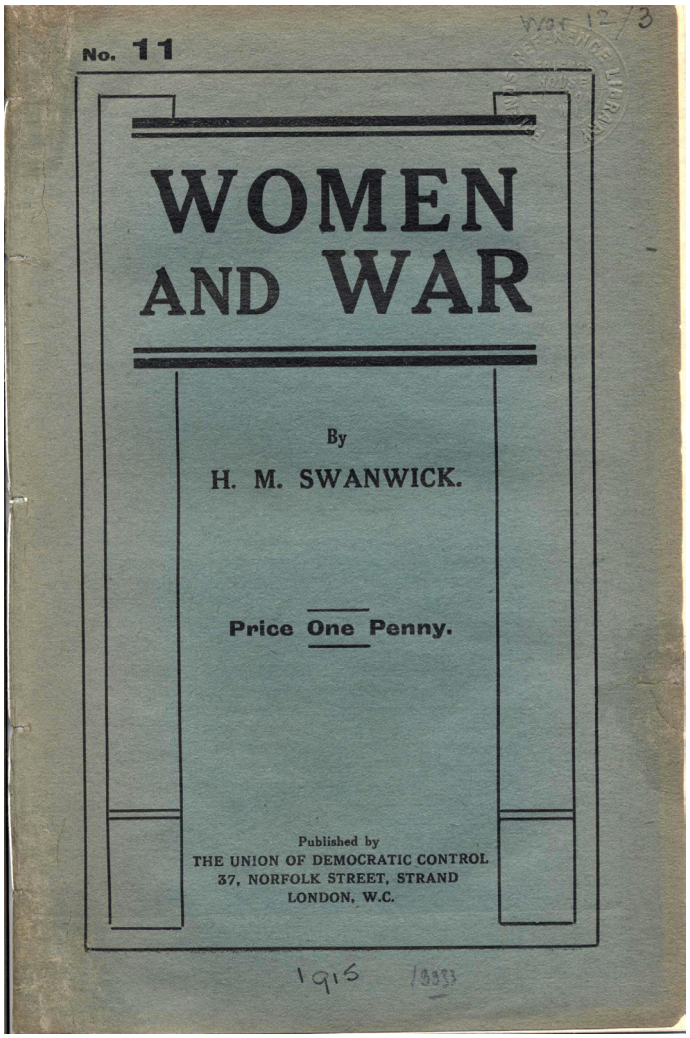
influence in the political sphere was linked inextricably to the promotion of pacifism. In *The Future of the Women's Movement* she urged women and men to pursue a mutually beneficial political agenda with pacifism at its core – a process she dubbed the 'disappearance of barbarism'.[11] Her autobiography *I have Been Young*, which contains a valuable account of the inadequately documented non-militant women's suffrage campaign, explains that, in working for the emancipation of women, she was also 'contributing to the cause of peace'.[12] She went further, insisting: 'Every suffrage society ought to be a pacifist society and realise that pacifist propaganda [i.e. policy and publicity] is an integral part of suffrage propaganda'.[13]

In August 1914, after attending a meeting at which it was proposed that women might strike in protest at war, Swanwick expressed concern, writing: 'all we said and did would be treated by the mass of our fellow-countrymen at best as 'twittering' (Mr. Asquith's word), at worst as treachery'.[14] Although she acknowledged it was 'so difficult in war time to say anything against war', she saw no alternative since it was 'difficult to get people in peace time to think seriously and continuously of the causes of war'.[15] In December 1914, in one of her more provocative actions, Swanwick, along with 100 fellow British women pacifists, put her name to an Open Christmas Letter to the women of Germany and Austria sent by 'their Manchester Suffragette Sisters'. This letter, which was answered two months later by 155 prominent German and



Cover of 'Women and War'
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Austrian pacifist women, stressed the commonality of their cause and the equivalent losses they faced.

This act, coupled with Swanwick's vocal condemnation of the increasing militarism of government policy, attracted violent abuse and brought her to the attention of the authorities; her phone was tapped and her mail was interfered with. In light of such scrutiny, *Women & War*, published in 1915, represented a brave and potentially treasonous statement in a time of war. In it Swanwick was unequivocal in her condemnation of the imposition of hostilities on women, who were blameless in their inception. 'Men make wars not women', she declared, adding:

> Not only do women not fight men, but they do not fight each other. Why? We are so used to this fact that very few of us have asked why. Is it because women chiefly desire security?[16]

It pained her that her efforts and the personal risks she ran were to no avail: 'It was lonely in those days', she admitted. 'We failed. We could not overtake the lies; the disastrous knock-out blow had the anticipated consequences from which the world will suffer for a century or more'.[17]

The Failures of the Press

The decision of the NUWSS to support the war effort and its refusal to send delegates to the International Women's Congress in April 1915 prompted Swanwick's resignation. One outcome of the Congress was the establishment of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Swanwick joined in May 1915 and was elected British chair, a role she occupied until 1922, although she later resigned in protest at the WILPF commitment to collective security, which she considered unworkable.

In *The War in its Effect upon Women* (1917), commissioned by the WILPF, Swanwick criticised the failure of the popular press to take account of the true concerns of women. She castigated one Labour newspaper for reporting that 'women would feel the pinch, because their supply of attar of roses would be curtailed'. Of another newspaper she wrote:

> When a great naval engagement took place, the front page of a progressive daily was taken up with portraits of the officers and men who had won distinction, and the back page with portraits of simpering mannequins in extravagantly fashionable hats; not frank advertisement, mind you, but exploitation of women under the guise of news supposed to be peculiarly interesting to the feeble-minded creatures.[18]

Swanwick detested the way in which belligerent men cited the supposed frailty of women when validating the atrocities they committed under the guise of protecting their security. In *Woman and War,* she pointed out the irony inherent in this:'Women and children are always put into the firing line of pro-war argumentation', she wrote, 'but it is obvious that the settlement of national quarrels by an international tribunal would provide far better security for women and children than the incessant menace of war which we call peace'.[19] To underline her point, she portrayed the dreadful reality in the starkest of terms, writing: 'Men cannot afford to protect motherhood adequately and to start their children well in life, because they must expend so much wealth in making engines to destroy the children of foreign nations'.[20]

Although Swanwick acknowledged that war was horrific for men too, she qualified this by insisting: 'Nothing that men suffer in war can compare in shuddering horror with what must be endured by a woman with child or a nursing mother who sees her home invaded'.[21] Although childless, she believed that mothers enjoyed a unique proprietorship over the male children they bore:

> Every man killed or mangled in war has been carried for months in his mother's body and has been tended and nourished for years of his life by women. He is the work of women: they have rights in him and in what he does with the life they have given and sustained.[22]

Continuing with this theme, she condemned the requirement, in the aftermath of war, for women to replace lives lost in battle, arguing: 'Militarist states always tend to degrade women to the position of breeders and slaves'.[23]

Swanwick also condemned the fact that women were required to make a prodigious contribution to national recovery during the short periods of uneasy peace that punctuated hostilities. 'Women have to make good the economic disasters of war', she complained, 'they go short, they work double tides, they pay war taxes and war prices, like men, and out of smaller incomes'.[24] She highlighted the damaging effects of war on 'the

luxury trades', which resulted in a loss of work for dressmakers and milliners. Similarly, she set out how the return of skilled men displaced women from their wartime occupations. She expended her greatest ire on behalf of:

> [T]he other half of the working women of the country – those who are humorously reckoned as not being 'employed persons', the working housewives, who faced a catastrophic rise in the price of necessities which they were expected to purchase out of a much reduced housekeeping allowance.[25]

While holding belligerent men largely responsible for war, Swanwick also apportioned blame to those women who encouraged brute force by idealising 'pugnacity in men', a negative characteristic rooted in what she described as 'fretful egotism'.[26] At the core of her crusade lay her conviction that society could only accommodate the needs of women by abandoning its 'physical force mentality'. To achieve this, enlightened women must demand equal citizenship and join forces with sympathetic men in a bid to 'teach [these] men to understand better the democratic creed which they profess'.[27]

Insisting that 'men's and women's interests are one', Swanwick argued 'man cannot afford to overlook the woman's point of view, and no one can describe it so well as the women themselves'.[28] She was keen to build alliances with pacifist men, declaring: 'It is the civilised men who are going to enfranchise women, and it is with such men that women should ally themselves'.[29]

Swanwick also believed that peace was contingent on prosperity built by all. 'One hopes', she wrote, 'that the reconstruction of society is going to be met by the whole people – men and women – with a sympathetic understanding of each other's circumstances'.[30] As Honorable Secretary of the Committee of Organized Women, she witnessed first-hand how working women became 'increasingly conscious of the satisfaction to be got from economic independence, of the sweetness of earned bread, of the dreary depression of subjection'.[31] Yet, she feared women would once again be excluded in the aftermath of war and wrote in *The War in its Effect upon Women*:

> There is almost certain to be an outcry for the restriction of work in various directions and one of the first cries (if we may judge from the past) will be to women: "Back to the Home!" This cry will be raised whether the women have a home or not.[32]

Addressing the inevitable counterargument that women were required for childcare, she countered: 'Unless men are prepared to socialise the responsibilities of parenthood, one does not see how women's labour is ever to be organized for the welfare of the whole'.[33] She called upon men to 'understand the enlargement and enhancement of life which women feel when they are able to live by their own productive work'.[34] To deprive women of work was 'to send them back to a moral imprisonment (to say nothing of physical and intellectual starvation), of which they have become now for the first time fully conscious'.[35] Yet, she warned of unscrupulous employers keen to exploit the 'cheapness' and 'docility' of women workers.[36]

Conditional Peace

Throughout four brutal years of war, Swanwick campaigned unceasingly for a negotiated settlement and called for the creation of an international organisation that would have as its remit the maintenance of peace and political stability: 'Peace has been a condition of unstable equilibrium in which there was no security even for the strongest', she insisted in *Woman and War*.[37] To this end, she pioneered the League of Nations Society, which foreshadowed the establishment of the League of Nations in 1919. Although the League of Nations went some way towards addressing Swanwick's concerns, she was dismayed at the conditionality of peace and vociferous in her opposition to the exclusion of defeated nations. In particular, she was highly critical of the decision to support the Treaty of Versailles since she believed that such a punitive settlement would sow seeds of instability and discontent.

In 1924, and again in 1929, Labour Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald appointed Swanwick, an active member of the British Labour Party, as substitute-delegate to the League of Nations. Yet, her scepticism alienated her from Labour Party colleagues: 'To my way of thinking', she wrote in *I Have Been Young*, 'there were two greatly crippling errors in the League as formed in 1919 – the exclusion of the vanquished powers and the inclusion of provisions for the waging of a League war'.[38] In *Sanctions of the League of Nations Covenant* (1928), which Swanwick co-authored for the London Council for Prevention of War, she condemned those resolutions that imposed harsh economic sanctions and allowed for the use of force against nations deemed hostile. Her pamphlets *Pooled Security: What Does It Mean?* (1934), *New Wars for Old* (1934) and *Frankenstein and His Monster* (1934) criticised the tenuous arrangements adopted to ensure peace.

History Repeating Itself

Although she doubted the commitment of younger women, untouched by war and more interested in provoking a sexual revolution than maintaining peace, Swanwick was certain that women who had experienced one war would not countenance another. For a time this appeared to be the case and she was delighted to join the Women's Peace Pilgrimage to Hyde Park in June 1926. As inter-war tensions increased, Swanwick reiterated her commitment to peace in *Collective Insecurity* (1937) and *The Roots of Peace* (1938). Her uncompromising stance left her increasingly isolated and alienated feminist thinkers who were, as Julie Gottlieb puts it, 'struggling to come to terms with the intellectual, emotional and psychological shift from feminist-informed internationalism and pacifism to a rejection of appeasement and support for the war effort'.[39]

Moderate women members of the peace movement, including Liberal politician, feminist and internationalist Margery Corbett-Ashby, struggled with Swanwick's condemnation of the League of Nations. Other women who were increasingly convinced of the necessity to stand up to Hitler, among them Ellen Wilkinson, Violet Bonham-Carter, Jennie Adamson, and Dr. Edith Summerskill, found her unwillingness to countenance violence utterly unrealistic. Yet Swanwick argued that Hitler's foreign policies were similar to those of fellow imperialists and put forward a case for 'a federal Europe with communal control of all vital strategic areas.'[40]

Although close to reality now, this model was unthinkable in 1930s Britain.

Swanwick's stance as 'the most uncompromising appeaser' and 'one of Hitler's most outspoken apologists in Britain' put her in direct conflict with Eleanor Rathbone MP, a staunch opponent of appeasement who condemned her absolute pacifism, mistrust in the international system, and support for 'collective neutrality'.[41] Ironically, as Lucian Ashworth points out, 'pacifism led her [Swanwick] into the uncomfortable position of supporting the appeasement policies of the self-declared realists in the right-wing National Government'.[42] Among her dwindling number of supporters was Nobel Peace Prize laureate Emily Greene Balch, who shared her liberal feminist views.

During the 1930s, the rise of fascism and ineffectual attempts at appeasement rocked Swanwick's faith in international diplomacy. Her grief at the death of her husband of forty-three years, mathematician and lecturer Frederick Swanwick, combined with debilitating health problems of her own and her growing disillusionment with international affairs, fed into feelings of utter despair. On 16 November 1939, just weeks after the outbreak of World War II, Helena Swanwick, aged seventy-five, took an overdose of Veronal, a commercially available barbiturate, and ended her impressive life. She would have been horrified by what was to come.

Although significant progress in gender equality has been made since Swanwick's death, her forthright theories on the necessity of involving women in policy-making and public life resonate still. Representative democracy requires the equal participation of men and women, yet women remain significantly underrepresented in most national parliaments. Describing women as 'a pacifying force', Harvard University psychologist Steven Pinker echoed Swanwick's sentiments when he insisted, in 2008:

> As mothers, women have evolutionary incentives to maintain peaceful conditions in which to nurture their offspring and ensure that their genes survive into the next generation.[43]

Swanwick's most valuable contribution to feminist theory was her conviction that the campaign for women's rights and the campaign for stable, peaceful relations between nations could not and should not be separated. She predicated this belief on her certainty that women, mothers in particular, suffered more in times of war yet were rarely invited to participate in negotiations for peace. Her life's work has been validated by the irrefutable reality that the lasting peace she envisaged has yet to be achieved in many male-dominated jurisdictions. As former U.S. assistant secretary of defence Joseph Nye notes 'the parts of the world that lag in the decline of violence are also the parts that lag in the empowerment of women'.[44]

Notes

1. H.M. Swanwick, *Women and War* (London, The Union of Democratic Control, 1915), 1.
2. A pressure group established by Ramsey MacDonald in 1914 with the purpose of agitating for a less confrontational foreign policy and a toning down of militaristic jingoism.
3. Swanwick, *Women and War*, 4.
4. Jose Harris, 'Swanwick, Helena Maria Lucy (1864–1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. (Oxford, OUP, 2004).
5. H.M. Swanwick, *The Future of the Women's Movement* (London, Bell, 1913), 38-9.
6. Swanwick, *Women and War*, 6.
7. Swanwick, *Future of the Women's Movement*, 38-9.
8. Swanwick, *Women and War,* 1-2.
9. *Ibid.,* 1.
10. H.M. Swanwick, *I Have Been Young* (London, Victor Gollancz, 1935), 138.
11. Swanwick, *Future of the Women's Movement*, 41.
12. Swanwick, *I Have Been Young*, 264.
13. Swanwick, *Women and War*, 11.
14. Swanwick, *I Have Been Young*, 241.
15. Swanwick, *Women and War,* 9.
16. *Ibid.,* 7.
17. Swanwick, *I Have Been Young*, 274.
18. H.M. Swanwick, *The War in Its Effect Upon Women*, originally produced for the Women's International League in 1917 (Reprint: New York, Garland, 1971), 4.
19. Swanwick, *Women and War*, 7.
20. *Ibid.,* 3.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.,* 2.
23. *Ibid.,* 3.
24. *Ibid.,* 1.
25. *Ibid.,* 2.
26. *Ibid.,* 6.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.,* 14.
29. *Ibid.,* 11.
30. Swanwick, *The War in Its Effect Upon Women*, 4
31. *Ibid.,* 6.
32. *Ibid.,* 8.
33. *Ibid.,* 9.
34. *Ibid.,* 8.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*
37. Swanwick, *Women and War*, 7.
38. Swanwick, *I Have Been Young*, 266.
39. Julie V. Gottlieb, '"The Woman's Movement Took the Wrong Turning': British feminists, pacifism and the politics of appeasement' in *Women's History Review*, 23/3 (2014), 442.
40. Harris, 'Swanwick, Helena Maria Lucy (1864–1939)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.
41. Julie V. Gottlieb, *'Guilty Women', Foreign Policy, and Appeasement in Inter-War Britain* (London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 97.
42. Lucian Ashworth, 'Feminism, War and the Prospects of International Government – Helena Swanwick and the Lost Feminists of Interwar International Relations', *Limerick Papers in Politics and Public Administration* 2/12 (2008).
43. Joseph Nye, 'A more peaceful world if women in charge?' [globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/02/08/a-more-peaceful-world-if-women-in-charge/, accessed on 15 June 2016].
44. *Ibid.*

World Peace in the eyes of Bertha von Suttner and Bertha Waszklewicz

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Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Europe was experiencing an escalation in the arms race as never before. Military budgets were rising year after year and concern was growing internationally. In 1899, as the result of a Russian initiative, a large-scale international peace conference was organised in The Hague, in an attempt to slow down this militarisation. During the event, hopeful peace activists from all over the world assembled in the Dutch political capital to see whether the conference would achieve its aim to preserve peace. One of these activists was the renowned Austrian author of the anti-war novel *Die Waffen Nieder*, Bertha von Suttner (b.1843). She was at the centre of an international group of pacifist friends, who eagerly followed developments in the peace talks at her Hague salon. Von Suttner published her *Tagebuchblätter*, her diary on her stay in The Hague, just after the conference as a record of those promising summer days of 1899.[1]

Another female peace activist present at the time of the conference was the Dutch Bertha Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde (b.1850). Although not a direct member of Von Suttner's salon circle, they had some mutual friends, like the English journalist William Thomas Stead, a valued contact for them both. Waszklewicz promoted the peace conference from the very start. She was as optimistic as Von Suttner was and later wrote the preface to the Dutch translation of Von Suttner's diary.[2] In the Dutch press, she was often compared with Bertha von Suttner, but how similar were they actually? To answer the question this article firstly delineates Bertha von Suttner's salon, her standpoint on peace as well as that of her friends. Then, in the second part of this article, the focus will shift to Bertha Waszklewicz, her peace ideals and the special problems facing her in the Netherlands.

Little has been known until now about Waszklewicz's ideas and activities, no biographies had been published about her, in stark contrast to the number of detailed books on Von Suttner.[3] Furthermore, in current literature on women and world peace, women's contributions to The Hague Conference are described only superficially. The available literature focusses mainly on the first international Women's Peace Conference in the Netherlands in 1915, and the founding of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1919. The leaders of this League had close links with the Women's Rights Movement, the fight for the emancipation of women occurring simultaneously with the struggle for peace. This article will make clear that even before the outbreak of the First World War female peace activists like von Suttner and Waszklewicz were publicly raising their voices. At that time, their common and most urgent mission was to make a success of the conference in The Hague. Von Suttner also believed that the cause of women could profit from the realisation of their goals for peace and was certainly in favour of gender equality. Waszklewicz placed greater emphasis on certain tasks women in particular should fulfil. Not, however, as radical suffragists, but as peace-loving mothers who could exercise a strong moral influence on their children in the home.

Bertha von Suttner and the First Peace Conference in The Hague[4]

At the time of the peace conference Bertha von Suttner was president of the Austrian peace movement as well as vice-president of the international peace office in Bern. Her vision on peace had been deeply influenced by the works of the well-known academics of her time: Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin and Henry Thomas Buckle. Her favourite was the latter, since Buckle argued that the world was becoming increasingly harmonious due to the power of human intelligence and the invention of new technologies. For many years, she had been travelling through Europe to encourage the ideals of peace and meet prominent peace activists from all over the world. Some of them had become intimate friends and participated in her Hague salon. Among these were the Polish expert on modern warfare, Johann von Bloch, and the British journalist William Thomas Stead who also participated in her Hague salon. Writing about Von Suttner automatically entails writing about these friends too and her diary contains many fascinating details.

On 16 May, she and her husband arrived in The Hague where they stayed in the *Grand Central Hotel*, to be close to the official Peace Conference and to meet and speak with the delegates personally. Later, as the heat became oppressive in the city, they moved to the seaside hotel *The Kurhaus*. As a celebrated writer and a leading figure in the peace movement, Von Suttner could not be ignored. Indeed, she was invited to several official ceremonies and events, including the opening of the Conference at the Dutch Royal Palace. In her diary, she noted: 'I am the only woman who has access to the palace. I am very grateful for this, because it feels as a reward after all those years of hard fighting'.[5] However, Von Suttner must have realised that the conference, with twenty-six countries participating and launched by the Russian tsar, would face innumerable difficulties. The aim of the conference was highly ambitious; the ultimate goal was the founding of 'a real and durable peace'. Some months before, Von Suttner had interviewed the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. This interview was published in her diary and makes clear the great divergence of opinion between Von Suttner and the minister regarding the ultimate aim of the conference:

> 'We do not dare hope', said the earl Murawieff [Minister of Foreign Affairs] 'that the final aim will be reached at this conference…'
>
> 'It would already be satisfactory', so I interrupted him, 'if the countries would agree that they would not start a war the coming twenty, let's say, ten years'.
>
> 'Twenty years, ten years! Vous allez trop vite, madame. We will already be very glad if we agree on a period of three years'.[6]

Russia had formulated the aim of the conference more

Bertha Von Suttner
Credit: Public domain

precisely just before the talks started: the purpose was the limitation of the use of *new* weapons and the introduction of rules of war law. Von Suttner, who was much more interested in *ius contra bellum* than *ius ad bellum*, must have been disappointed.[7] However, her diary makes clear that, despite these setbacks, during the first days of the conference she remained optimistic. International newspapers were interviewing her almost daily and she had access to all sorts of official ceremonies. In one such ceremony, she was introduced to the nineteen-year-old Dutch Queen Wilhelmina. Although the queen did not particularly sympathise with the peace movement, she expressed herself in polite, diplomatic terms. In Von Suttner's diary we read:

> The young queen, with a friendly smile, asks me if this was my first visit to The Hague and if I like it there. Answering her question I said that my stay in Holland makes me feel very happy because of the elevated aim of the conference. The young queen then nodded and said that she was of the opinion that we all share this feeling.[8]

On the other hand, within the Dutch Ministry of War Von Suttner had a great admirer. He approached her with the words: 'May I introduce myself: my name is Kramer, Secretary of the Department of War and I'd like to say that I secretly share the ideal you so warmly stand up for in your novel (...) I am looking forward to seeing its realisation coming closer'.[9]

It is understandable that Von Suttner, after such amiable encounters, became convinced that interest in the peace movement was growing, also among politicians. 'Who had ever expected this?' she asked herself in her diary. 'But the miracle *has* happened', she writes, as if the peace activists had already triumphed.[10] Indeed, in The Hague Von Suttner was surrounded by people who shared similar hopes and expectations. They would gather almost daily in her salon to discuss the results of the conference. One regular visitor of Von Suttner's salon was Johann von Bloch, a specialist in the field of 'modern' weapons and author of *Die Zukunft der Krieg*. When he entered her salon it was as if they had already been friends for years:

> I only knew the author of the monumental work Der Krieg by his letters and works. Yet, when he entered our salon (...) we welcomed him like an old friend. He is about sixty years old, has a short, grey beard, a gentle and content appearance, good manners, and he is a natural, very interesting speaker.[11]

Von Bloch gave several lectures on modern warfare during the weeks he stayed in The Hague. He was, according to Von Suttner, a talented and successful orator. In detail and with an abundance of statistical data, he sketched the horrors of a new military conflict: a new war would be bloodier, more destructive and expensive than ever before. Von Suttner comments: 'it was not a series of sermons (...) neither did he try to impress his audience with eloquent words; it could have been a rigorous scientific discourse'.[12]

Von Suttner's circle of friends also included some journalists. One of them, the German journalist, bookseller and publisher, Alfred Hermann Fried, she had already known for many years. Fried, who after having read *Die Waffen Nieder* dedicated the rest of his life to the peace movement, had founded the *Deutsche Friedengesellschaf* and was the publisher of the German peace journal *Die Waffen Nieder*. At The Hague, he reported on the conference for several German newspapers, among them the *Berliner Zeitung*. According to Von Suttner, Fried was a passionate peace fighter, a man 'ganz Feuer und Flamme'. However, he stayed only briefly, leaving The Hague in the first week of June. Von Suttner was not surprised that he left so soon since he had no access to the official debates. The secrecy of the whole event – the debates took place behind closed doors – irritated her from the start of the conference.

The English journalist William Thomas Stead, editor of the international monthly *Review of Reviews*, was, like Fried, an ardent peace activist. Even before the start of the conference, he had made a tour around Europe to speak with several leading European politicians to find out if they were willing to back the peace initiative of the Russian tsar.[13] He had even organised an international 'crusade for peace' to St. Petersburg to offer the tsar letters of approval from all over the world. A 'wonderful person', so Von Suttner described him in her diary and, as usual, she noted his appearance too: 'he is a man with an apostolic head, a grey beard and a friendly face'.[14] Stead was a hectic journalist too, a man who breezed into the salon only now and then. Yet he was the one who provided the peace activists with important news on the conference, information passed to him by befriended delegates:

> 'So there you are again', I called out.
>
> 'You forget me completely! I expected that especially you, with your excellent connections with the delegates, would inform me...'
>
> 'I will not disappoint you; just today I have important and joyful news for you.'
>
> I took my notebook and started to write... [15]

The good news was that several plans were initiated at the conference to found a permanent court of arbitration. Therefore, there was reason for celebration. Finally, Von Suttner writes, there were 'positive, practical and clear plans'.

A very special person and a frequent visitor of Von Suttner's salon was the Dutch painter, Jan ten Kate. His paintings, exhibited during the conference in the Building of Arts and Sciences at The Hague, illustrated the horrors of war: the bloody massacre, dying soldiers, human misery. During the vernissage Von Suttner perceived her good old friend Von Bloch and suddenly, seeing him together with Ten Kate, she found herself distracted from the paintings by the remarkable contrast between the two men.[16] Von Bloch, the man of the 'real' anti-war movement who fought against war with data and facts, and Ten Kate who, with his shocking paintings, showed the world what would happen if war broke out. Nevertheless they were both fighting for the same goals.

Finally there was Benjamin Trueblood, the classical scholar and chair of the American Peace Movement. Von Suttner characterised Trueblood as a man of firm conviction, with a sense of humour; he was sometimes even 'the darling' of the evening.[17] His pacifist ideas were deeply influenced by Immanuel Kant. Like Kant, Trueblood was an advocate of a league of peace, a union of free countries with just one extremely important task: to prevent the outbreak of large-scale international conflicts. Trueblood hoped that the peace conference would become a permanent organisation; a union that in the near future could fulfil this task.

However, to some Von Suttner's ideals were an anathema. The socialists in particular were dismissive of her ideas of peace and her interest in a conference that totally neglected the problem of class struggle. They therefore organised an alternative meeting and invited 'everyone who is indignant about the nonchalant way the peace ideal was debated and treated these days'.[18] Von Suttner's irritated reaction was:

> All the real peace apostles, so also Von Bloch, Stead, Dr. Trueblood and me, had reason to be concerned about the invitation. War and peace are not class problems. The state of war we are now living in and the state of peace that is to come, are general phases of civilisation that have an impact on all social classes.[19]

The simple fact that Von Suttner was a woman would sometimes cause problems for her too. She was, for example, not invited to an official dinner organised by the French delegate Léon Bourgeois, since only men were welcome. Therefore, it was Arthur, her husband, who received an invitation instead. However, Von Suttner did not complain and noted pragmatically in her diary that 'you ought not to overestimate the utility of such meetings'.[20] The peace problem was definitely much more important, in her opinion, than that of gender. In one of her articles, titled 'World Peace from the Point of View of a Woman', she did argue that women could benefit from the peace movement. If the stated goals were realised, humanity would arrive at a higher moral level than ever before. Violence and suppression would give way to peace and freedom, and class and gender inequalities would disappear.[21]

Yet, during the weeks of the conference it became clear that her ideals would remain unfulfilled. The delegates failed to make agreements on the limitation of arms or the founding of an obligatory international arbitration system. In addition, although Von Suttner was convinced that history was on her side, she and her friends were sometimes slightly dispirited. When the weather also worsened, becoming windy and cold, she really became disheartened: 'there is reason to be unhappy (...). All hearts are cold. They are as cold as the icy air that comes in through the booming window. I shiver'.[22]

Von Suttner left The Hague on 7 July. On the day of departure, she was cheered by the warm farewell: 'many friends accompanied us to the station. The train compartment was full of goodbye bouquets. Goodbye, lovely city with your parks and dunes!' She added that, hopefully, as a court of arbitration was founded there, The Hague would become a place of pilgrimage for future generations.[23]

Bertha Waszklewicz, Women and Peace

Shortly after her stay in The Hague Von Suttner published her *Tagebuchblätter* and the Dutch peace activist Bertha Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde was asked to write the preface in the Dutch translation of this book (*Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*). Waszklewicz was not as internationally famous as Von Suttner, but she was definitely a well-known activist in the Netherlands. In this section her main peace ideas and activities will be sketched, as well as the problems facing her in the Netherlands.

Waszklewicz did not have to travel to the city of peace, as The Hague was called those days; she lived in the centre of the city, was married to a former colonial official and had founded her own peace organisation just before the start of the peace conference.[24] Her speeches and articles in the Dutch press – all preserved in her personal archive – show a special interest in international law.[25] This should not come as a surprise since she lived in a country that had been inspired for centuries by the philosophy of law. The Netherlands was renowned for its legal specialists (for example, Cornelis van Vollenhoven), promising law studies (Leiden University) and, not to forget, was the country of historical but still well-remembered pioneers of international thinking (Erasmus, Hugo Grotius). Personally, Waszklewicz had been inspired most by a famous peace activist from France, Frédéric Passy. In 1867 he had set up a league, a 'society of arbitration', to prevent the outbreak of war between France and Prussia.[26] Just before the peace conference in The Hague he had sent the Dutch queen a remarkable letter that impressed Waszklewicz with its candour: 'If I was a queen', he had written to Her Majesty, 'it would be an honour for me to connect this precious stone (a court of arbitration) to my throne'.

Not only in the academic but also in the literary world of the Netherlands the popularity of international thinking was remarkable. One of Waszklewicz's favourite writers – her 'Buckle' – was Louis Couperus who, in 1895, had published his novel *World Peace*. Even though it was fiction, Waszklewicz took the book very seriously.[27] She read his story about a peace-loving king of an imaginary country where a new era dawned: where visions of disarmament and arbitration circulated overall. In this fictional country, all children, from the moment they drank their first milk, were inspired by ideas of peace. A noble spirit reigned; the bloody history of humankind was finally over.[28]

In 1898 Waszklewicz, deeply concerned about the ongoing arms race and rising military budgets in the real world, founded her own organisation, the 'Dutch Female League for International Disarmament'. In the same year she delivered her first anti-war speech.[29] The title of this speech was significant: 'International Disarmament: a Women's affair and a Women's' interest.[30] Women, she explained, had an excellent opportunity to teach their children what to do when a quarrel broke out: to solve it not by fighting but by talking and thus make peace-loving human beings of their sons (the future politicians!). Waszklewicz's view on the important role of women in the fight against war and military aggression was inspired by the arguments of the French writer, Jules Bois. In a letter he wrote to her in which he referred to the pacifist ideals of Immanuel Kant, he wrote:

> Vous savez que Kant ne croyait pas à la possibilité

> d'établir cette universelle concorde sur les bases indestructibles de l'individuelle harmonie. Il ne croyait pas à une grande perfectabilité de l'homme. Mais il n'avait pas songé à la collaboration de la femme. Ce fait bouleverse tout, nous promet le "mirâcle social" en quelque sorte; c'est à dire, une évolution de notre petite humanité vers une humanité plus grande parce qu'elle sera plus complète.[31]

Kant indeed was of the opinion that human nature was certainly not peace loving but inclined to belligerence. Therefore a system of peace had to be created systematically; it would be a long and slow process. However, Bois believed that Kant had missed an important element: the process could be speeded up if women collaborated and made humanity more 'complete'. Waszklewicz reasoned more or less the same way. Up until 1870, when the French-Prussian war broke out, women had been passive; they had wept on the battlefields and nursed soldiers, but had not raised their voices against war. However, since then something had changed, women no longer mutely accepted the misery of war and wanted a better future for their children. Following Bois' arguments and her confidence of what women, as mothers, could achieve, she wrote: 'We are half of humanity so that other half must give in'.[32] Nevertheless, the fight for peace, for a world based on international law, was not to be as simple as Waszklewicz anticipated. Not only the socialists but also radical peace activists and their adherents in the Netherlands argued against her. Moreover, she was criticised as not being a 'true feminist'. Another objection was her sympathy towards Catholics.

Most critical were the so-called 'Tolstoians' or 'Christian Anarchists'. They rejected her pragmatic (juridical) approach and accepted nothing but radical pacifistic ideas and pleas for total abolishment of armies. As principled pacifists, they were not impressed by the peace conference in The Hague and they distrusted the motives of the participants. What the politicians and diplomats had in mind, so they said, was not peace but only more power and so more armies and soldiers. This was naturally in complete contradiction to Waszklewicz's high expectations of the conference and she reacted in the press by personally attacking their hero Leo Tolstoy. Just the appearance of the famous Russian writer made clear, she wrote, that this was a man with 'hollow ideas' and 'unreal illusions'. What the world needed was not make-believe 'fantasy' but, so she repeated, a reliable 'foundation of law'.[33] She distanced herself from the Tolstoians even more by stating that national disarmament was not a necessity in a world based on such a solid (legal) foundation. Her own country, she believed, had the right to use military means, both in its defence and in colonial wars. Waszklewicz obviously reasoned from the viewpoint of her own country's (colonial) power and so did not reject Dutch military activities in faraway Atjeh.[34]

Waszklewicz was also criticised because of her traditional opinions with respect to feminism. Living in Victorian times, she did not question the role of women as housewives and mothers. She saw their main task to be in the home, close to their children, and to promote there, in that private world, the idea of peace and arbitration. In a biographical sketch of Waszklewicz by the Dutch writer Frans Netscher, it was said that it was a pity that she was not really a 'modern woman' and that, in spite of her pacifist activities, she did not support the more radical feminists of her time. She was even a bit old fashioned, commented Netscher, who had minutely studied her appearance which he considered rather more reminiscent of ladies in the Louis XIV period than of her own day. A compelling picture of Waszklewicz illustrates Netscher's view: here you see a classically and elegantly dressed woman with an unflinching gaze.[35] Others praised Waszklewicz for the very reason that she was not a radical feminist. The more she distanced herself from those 'godless' ladies, it was said, the more successful her fight for peace would be.[36] Yet Waszklewicz herself was certainly not a traditional housewife. After she had set up her own peace organisation, she devoted almost all her time to it, travelling, lecturing and visiting peace conferences abroad. This was the reason the journalist Karel Wybrands, a well-known anti-feminist, attacked her in a very personal way. He wrote:

> Do you know who I feel deeply for, every time we read that Mrs. Waszklewicz-Van Schilfgaarde opened a meeting or delivered a speech again? Mr. Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde! The poor man. We can be sure there are holes in his socks, the beef is too raw, his children are not clean (…) But maybe Mrs. W.v.S also abolished having children…[37]

Waszklewicz was indeed childless and, as a peace activist not living a conventional life, was clearly an easy target for critics such as Wybrands.

At the same time, Waszklewicz had to cope with criticism from Dutch Protestants who suspected her of Catholic sympathies. Waszklewicz, who would indeed eventually opt for Catholicism and become a staunch member of the Catholic Church in later years, was already in 1898 directing her ideas to Catholic women in particular. The fight for peace was a moral, a religious task, she argued: was it not the Catholic Church that mediated in the Spanish-American war?[38] This evoked an immediate reaction from Protestants. They retorted that the head of the Catholic Church was not as peace loving as Waszklewicz wanted people to believe and pacifism and religion had to be separated. Although Waszklewicz defended herself by stating that she was absolutely 'neutral' with respect to religion, that her organisation represented 'all colours', the damage had been done. A Dutch commentator compared her with Von Suttner, who had never based, so he said, her ideas on religious arguments, and made no secret of which of the two he respected most:

> I presume Mrs. Waszklewicz is a Catholic. I heard she had once been a Protestant before she had become a Catholic. If so, a renegade. So be extra careful!
>
> I don't know if Von Suttner was a Catholic. But we know her as a tireless, enthusiastic fighter against war, a woman with character and with unique courage, perseverance and energy.[39]

So the 'incident' with the Protestants, as Waszklewicz preferred to call it, undermined her reputation as a peace activist and she would continue to meet opposition from them in the following months. But it seems she even managed to offend the Catholics when she published an article in the Dutch press praising the growing support of people in the predominantly Catholic province of Noord-Brabant. In her article she said that this support was very special because this part of the

Netherlands was not very modern, intimating that it was a bit backward.[40] Subsequently she had to defend herself against those Catholics who felt offended.

In spite of all the criticism, Waszklewicz nevertheless succeeded in making her organisation a great success. In fact, it soon overshadowed the existing Dutch peace organisation, the 'General Dutch Peace League'.[41] A possible explanation for this success was that, almost simultaneously to the founding of the women's league, the conference plans of the Russian tsar circulated in the Netherlands. Apart from all (national) reasons the tsar launched this plan, the call for pacifism was suddenly in the air and Waszklewicz's organisation profited from this. Besides, Waszklewicz also had some influential contacts. One of these was William Thomas Stead – as has been seen a close friend of Von Suttner too – who enlisted her for his own activities on the continent. Thus she became the head of a Dutch committee that was to support Stead's 'crusade for peace', an international tour to back the proposal of the tsar by sending him letters of approval. The man who signed this letter and joined the Dutch committee was Waszklewicz's beloved writer Louis Couperus. But many others added their signatures, among them academics and local leaders (mayors) as well as several representatives of political and religious groups: Catholics, Protestants, Liberals and Socialists. This event was unique in a society in the grip of 'pillarization', which made broad alliances almost impossible.[42]

So Waszklewicz's star was rising, the result of international events but also of her own activities and personal initiative. She had dared to enter the public sphere, write articles in newspapers, debate with politicians and deliver public speeches. However, criticism of her continued too: it was said that her activities were directed only to the elite. For example, the letter of support for the Russian tsar was sent round to the mayor, the doctor and the vicar, people with a certain social status, not to the common man.[43] Besides, Waszklewicz's friend Stead, who was anything but a conventional journalist, did not have a good reputation in the Netherlands. Thus Waszklewicz's name was connected to a man with – as the highly conservative *Hollandia* wrote 'bad manners' and 'a questionable honesty'. Sometimes Waszklewicz herself would also be the target of criticism and, from reports in the Dutch press of the time, we learn that although fearful of public debates, at the same time, she would exude such self-confidence that no room was left for critical reactions from her audience. People did not doubt her good intentions but she definitely was not, it was said, a talented, inspiring speaker.[44]

Yet because she was the president of the Women's League and Stead's Dutch peace committee as well, she was honoured, as was Bertha von Suttner, with invitations for dinners and soirées. Besides, she was on good terms with the Russian delegate and president of the international conference, Baron de Staal. Thanks to him a copy of the letter to the tsar was put on the wall of the conference building, the royal palace, Huis ten Bosch, so that all politicians could read it (the original was sent to St. Petersburg).

The Two Berthas Compared

Waszklewicz and Von Suttner were both connected to the first peace conference in The Hague. They shared ideals and expectations, they both dreamed about a better, more harmonious world, sometimes even their contacts in the peace movement were the same and it seemed that especially Stead was of great importance for them both in the run up to, and during, the peace conference. All this explains why Waszklewicz was invited to introduce the Dutch translation of Von Suttner's *Tagebuchblätter*: they were close.[45] But there were certainly also clear differences between the two peace activists.

Bertha Waszklewicz
Credit: Public Domain

Firstly, they had different ideals and their activism was of contrasting duration. After all, Waszklewicz was a peace activist for just a very short period. Her activities started in 1898, when she was already forty-eight, and ended not long afterwards, in 1901, when she left the peace league she had founded. Von Suttner, who was also in her forties when she, as a writer, started her peace activities, remained loyal to the peace movement until the end of her life (1914). Her view on peace differed principally from Waszklewicz's: peace was definitely more for her than just a set of rules and the realisation of a court of arbitration. She certainly did not deny the importance of such a court after it was initiated by the peace conference in The Hague, but in her view it was only a first step in the direction of a more peaceful world. In contrast,

Waszklewicz was fascinated by the practice of arbitration in itself. She must have been satisfied when a Permanent Court of Arbitration was founded in the Peace Palace in The Hague that seemed to make arbitration the alternative for peace. This court even enlarged its powers after the First World War on the base of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Waszklewicz was able to witness all this up to her death in 1938, and see that the short period in which she had been an activist for peace and arbitration had not been in vain. The pragmatic approach she preferred, so close to legal philosophers such as Passy, found greater success than Von Suttner's life-long fight for a universal, durable peace. Waszklewicz, however, could never compete with Von Suttner's worldwide reputation as one of the greatest peace activists in history, who was rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905. Already in those years around the peace conference it was clear that Waszklewicz was no equal to the generally admired Von Suttner.

Waszklewicz was not only a pragmatic thinker but, contrary to Von Suttner, a passionate nationalist too. This is why Waszklewicz did not reject colonial wars (such as the Atjeh War) and wars in defence of territory. When the Boer War broke out at the end of the century, she was pro-Boer. The Boers were seen in the Netherlands as blood-related and strong feelings of national brotherhood made the war they fought against the English almost 'our war' to many Dutch people. Waszklewicz was particularly concerned about the fate of the South African women and children. In *Plea for the Grant of a Neutral Territory for the Boer Women and Children* she drew attention to the terrible conditions in the British concentration camps there and pleaded for a safe haven for them. Waszklewicz was also a supporter and admirer of Paul Kruger, the Boer Leader. In *Paul Kruger's Journey*, a book about Kruger's visit to Europe in 1900, she portrayed him as a fighter for peace, searching for justice for his people. And so she connected her special themes, peace and justice, to her love for her own country and to the cause of the Boers. Although the Boer War definitely aroused pacifists from all over the world, including Von Suttner and Stead, who strongly disagreed with the British politics in South Africa, they could not share such nationalistic feelings as expressed by Waszklewicz. They always showed a much stronger solidarity with the world as a whole, than with one specific nation.

There were several differences between Waszklewicz and Von Suttner with relation to their ideas on gender questions too. Waszklewicz realised the importance of male support only after Stead had launched his 'crusade for peace'. Before that time she was convinced that above all women, because of their important role in family life and their influence on young children, could best promote peace. This was a way of thinking partly based on traditional Victorian ideas concerning the role of women as housewives and partly on new ideas concerning women's special role, the moral mission they had to fulfil in society.[46] After she had accepted the role of men in the fight for peace, she nevertheless remained rather critical of them. This can be learned from her preface to the Dutch translation of Von Suttner's diary on the conference in which she showed her displeasure that only men were welcome to the opening ceremony of the peace conference. Somewhat irritated, she wrote: 'You saw them entering the conference building, those men who decided the future of the next generations'.[47] What perhaps bothered her too was that the only woman who – apart from the Dutch queen Wilhelmina – had access to the opening ceremony of the conference was Von Suttner. Maybe this was the reason she wrote that she was willing to write the preface of the diary but that she would actually have preferred to connect her name to 'any attempt' to make peace a reality. This would seem to imply that, to her, Von Suttner was definitely not more important than any other peace activist. Was this comment perhaps a sign of envy or just an innocent remark in her introduction to Von Suttner's book? Von Suttner, who was sometimes excluded from peace meetings herself, seemed to have been less interested in the politics of invitation as long as the ideal of peace was promoted.[48] After all, gender issues would spontaneously disappear in a world based on peace (see her article 'World Peace from the Point of View of a Woman'). In daily life too, Von Suttner showed herself more relaxed with men, as her descriptions of pleasant intercourse with the (male) visitors of her salon (Von Bloch, Fried, Stead, Ten Kate, Trueblood), also makes clear.

In the end Waszklewicz's role even became undermined by the gender problem. She decided not to continue her activities as president of the peace league after its fusion with the mixed *General Dutch Peace League* in 1901 and the loss of its exclusively female character. She simply 'did not want to be a member of an organisation in which men showed inferior opinions towards women, opinions with which the new century had broken'.[49] One wonders if Von Suttner, had she lived in the Netherlands, would have made the same decision.

Notes

1. Bertha von Suttner, *Die haager Friedensconferenz. Tagebuchblätter* (Dresden/Leipzig, E. Pierson's Verlag, 1900).
2. Bertha von Suttner, *Den Haag en de vredesconferentie*, trans. by J.C. van Riemsdijk (Amsterdam, Cohen, 1900).
3. Since so little is known about Waszklewicz, in this article additional information is provided about her life, based on the scarce literature available and her personal papers at the National Archive in The Hague. For the biography of Von Suttner see: Beatrix Kempf, *Suffragette for Peace: the Life of Bertha von Suttner* (London, Oswald Wolff, 1972); Brigitte Hamann, *Bertha von Suttner: ein Leben für den Frieden* (München, Piper, 1986). See for Bertha von Suttner's memoirs: *Lebenserinnerungen* (Berlin, Verlag der Nation Berlin, 1970).
4. See also my article 'Een Haagse salon met toekomstige Nobelprijswinnaars', *Working Paper Series*, 6 (2007) (Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, European Studies).
5. Von Suttner, *Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*, 14.
6. *Ibid*., appendix VIII.
7. Ove Bring, *Bertha von Suttner and International Law: ius contra bellum* (Symposium on Bertha von Suttner, The Hague, 2005) [www.berthavonsuttner.com/Papers/bring.pdf]
8. Von Suttner, *Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*, 35.
9. *Ibid.,* 36.
10. *Ibid.,* 37.
11. *Ibid.,* 17.
12. *Ibid.,* 116.
13. W.T. Stead, *The United States of Europe on the Eve of the Parliament of Men* (London, 'Review of Review' Office, 1899). About the European tour and Stead's stay at The Hague see: A.van Heerikhuizen, 'William Thomas Stead and the Peace Conference at The Hague' (The W.T. Stead Resource Site attackingthedevil.co.uk).
14. Von Suttner, *Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*, 25.
15. *Ibid.,* 43.

16. *Ibid.,* 63.
17. *Ibid.,* 42.
18. *Ibid.,* 18.
19. *Ibid.,* 20.
20. *Ibid.,* 197.
21. Bertha von Suttner, 'Wereldvrede vanuit het standpunt eener vrouw', in Bertha von Suttner, *Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*, 79-80.
22. Von Suttner, *Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*, 186
23. *Ibid.,* 198.
24. Frans Netscher, 'Karakterschets J.M.C.B. Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde', De Hollandsche Revue, 4, 1899, 29-47; Lilly Wanjon, Een vrouw voor vrede en vrijheid: de rol van Bertha Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde in de internationale beweging 1899-1902 (Amsterdam, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2009). Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism: Waging War on War in Europe, 1815-1914* (New York/Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), 62-3, 72-3, 98.
25. National Archive, The Hague (NL-HaNA), Collection 094 Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde, 1899-1916, entrance nr. 2.21.174, inv. nr. 4 (Register with Articles on Disarmament and the Start of the Boer War). Hereafter: NA, 094.
26. J.M.C.B. Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde, 'Frédéric Passy', in J. Kalff Jr. (ed.), *Mannen en vrouwen van beteekenis in onze dagen: levensschetsen en portretten* (Haarlem, Tjeenk Willink, 1900), 139-78.
27. Couperus, in the preface of this book, made clear that he definitely had no wish to be a political writer. He sympathised with the 'friends of peace', he admitted, but his book was pure art. This was a statement that the 'friends of peace', including Waszklewicz, must have found hard to believe.
28. Louis Couperus, *De Koningsromans* (Amsterdam, Uitgeverij 521, 2006), 267-74.
29. Waszklewicz first had been president of the Dutch department of the French 'Ligue des femmes pour le désarmement'. Conflicts between Waszklewicz and the president of this French league were the reason Waszklewicz founded her own organisation in 1898.
30. See for this speech and the league Waszklewicz founded: Ellen Bommeljé and Marij Derks, 'Internationale ontwapening: een vrouwenzaak en een vrouwenbelang? De Nederlandse Vrouwenbond ter Internationale ontwapening 1898-1901', Vredesstreven in Nederland 1894-1960 (Groningen, Studiecentrum voor Vredesvraagstukken, 1985), 24-42.
31. J.M.C.B. Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde, Internationale ontwapening: een vrouwenzaak en een vrouwenbelang (Amsterdam, W. Versluys, 1899), 24.
32. NA, 094: 'Het zwaard in de scheede'.
33. NA, 094: 'Tolstoy en de vredesconferentie'.
34. NA, 094: 'Strijd om de vrede'.
35. Netscher, 'Karakterschets J.M.C.B. Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde', 45-7.
36. NA, 094: 'Geen feministe'.
37. Gerard Termorshuizen, "Kleurloosheid is mij een gruwel": het fenomeen Karel Wybrands, Indisch journalist', in Gerard Termorshuizen (ed.), *Tropenstijl: amusement en verstrooiing in de (post)koloniale pers* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 2011), 227-49, 232.
38. NA, 094: 'Strijd om de vrede'.
39. NA, 094: 'Ontwapening'.
40. NA, 094: 'Onkiesch'.
41. Waszklewicz's organisation experienced a rapid growth from 234 members (in 1898) to 1200 members (in 1901). P.H. Kamphuis, Het Algemeene Nederlandsche Vredebond, 1871-1901: een verkenned onderzoek naar dertig jaar ijveren voor een vreedzame internationale samenleving (Den Haag, Koninklijke Landmacht, Sectie Militaire Geschiedenis, 1982), 163, 172.
42. 'Pillarisation' refers to the division of society into mututally exclusive political and religious groups. This was a phenomenon that became dominant in the Netherlands at the end of the nineteenth century.
43. NA, 094: 'Tekenen van vredes-adressen'.
44. NA, 094: 'Vredesmanifestatie'.
45. 'close' in the sense of sharing of each other's ideas. There is no evidence of close personal contact between Waszklewicz and Von Suttner.
46. Wanjon, *Een vrouw voor vrede en vrijheid*; Piet de Rooy, *Ons stipje op de waereldkaart: de politieke cultuur van Nederland in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 2014), 177.
47. J.M.C.B. Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde, 'Voorwoord', in Bertha von Suttner, *Den Haag en de Vredesconferentie*, vi.
48. According to Sandi Cooper, Von Suttner 'initially minimised any gender connection to the peace cause'. *Patriotric Pacifism*, 63.
49. J.M.C.B.Waszklewicz-van Schilfgaarde, *Evolutie*, 5 March 1902. Waszklewicz hoped to enhance the allure of her own peace league by this fusion. She soon realised 'she had lost the game for the dominant position'. See Kamphuis, *Het Algemeene Nederlandsche Vredebond*, 172.

'Dont forget us!': Julie Wolfthorn, artist (1864–1944)

Irene Gill

Independent Scholar

Those words: '*Vergessen Sie uns nicht'* (don't forget us) concluded a postcard written by Julie Wolfthorn to a friend on 17 October 1942 as she and her sister waited to be transported to a concentration camp.[1] Wolfthorn was of Jewish descent, but hardly conscious of the fact: she had no religious beliefs. She was born in 1864: by this time the great upsurge of human reason in the eighteenth century with, in Germany, thinkers and writers like the writer Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781) and his Jewish friend Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) had put a stop to the persecution of the Jews – at least to state-sponsored persecution. But anti-Semitic prejudice had not disappeared, as became apparent when Hitler reignited it. This led to the transportation of someone like Julie Wolfthorn to a concentration camp. Despite her plea, she *was* forgotten – except by family members – for decades. Recently, however, her life and work have been rescued from this obscurity. They have been the subject of extensive research and a published biography, while several exhibitions of her paintings have been mounted, including one last year (2016) in Ferch, near Potsdam. This article considers who Wolfthorn was and what made her special.

In an earlier article in *Womens History*, I described how women in Germany in the late nineteenth century began to demand the right to study in universities, using the example of my grandmother, Olga Hempel, who succeeded in studying medicine.[2] Julie Wolfthorn was Olga's cousin and friend and, like her, felt she had a right to have a career. Other women, not content in the sort of restricted life open to them:

> *A sort of cage bird life, born in a cage*
> *Accounting that to leap from perch to perch*
> *Was act and joy enough for any bird*[3]

were active in politics, as they were in Britain. They formed women's societies called *Frauenvereine*. From the 1860s some 136 *Frauenvereine* were banded together in a federation – *Bund deutscher Frauenvereine* – which published a magazine, *Die Frau,* from 1906.[4] Some individual women became prominent. Clara Zetkin (1857–1933), a member of parliament, was on the extreme left of the SPD (Social Democrat Party); in March 1911 she launched the International Womens Day we still observe worldwide.[5] The Communist Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919) was murdered by mercenaries working for the German state, along with Karl Liebknecht, in 1919. Such women were often, like the great expressionist artist Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945), passionately opposed to war.

Another area the caged birds aspired to was art: not dainty water colours and designs, but following new trends like impressionism, expressionism and art nouveau. They used oil paints and other media and painted out of doors, not just in studios. Historically, few women had broken into the male dominated world of art; the few that did were viewed as exceptions that proved the rule. One was the Italian Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-c.1656), a brilliant Baroque artist.[6] Another was Angelika Kauffman (1741–1807), an Austrian child prodigy who came to live in London.[7]

But from the 1880s onward the Women's Rights Movement led to more and more women in Germany aspiring to be true artists. Excluded from the male dominated Art Academies, they were getting together in groups to assert their right to paint and exhibit and make their living. Inevitably they were mocked and jeered at by some men, who called them '*Malweiber'* – painting wenches – and drew caricatures of them, as they did of other protagonists of the women's movement – some of whom didn't get married, some of whom sometimes wore men's clothing and some of whom were openly lesbian.[8]

Julie Wolfthorn was one of the *Malweiber.* Like her cousin Olga Hempel in medicine, she was determined to be successful in her chosen profession, art. She was born in 1864 in Thorn, now Torun, in what is now Poland but was then Prussia. She was the youngest of the five children of Mathilde and Julius Wolf. They were orphaned young: their father committed suicide and their mother died when Julie was only six. She and her two sisters were adopted by their maternal grandparents Neumann and moved to Berlin a decade later. All her life Julie was close to her oldest sister, Luise, who was a successful translator of English and Scandinavian literature. They lived together for decades and they died together in the Teresienstadt Concentration Camp.

Years later, when she was in her thirties and making a name for herself, Julie added her birthplace Thorn to her name, 'because there were so many people called Wolf' so she became known as Julie Wolfthorn. She had her first lessons in painting with Ernst Nelson, husband of one of her cousins – he had a studio where he taught female students. No women were allowed to take part in the teaching or exhibitions of the *Königliche Akademie der bildenden Künste* (Royal Academy of Pictorial Art) which clearly stated that female students '*finden keine Aufnahme'* – 'find no acceptance' – nor were women admitted in the *Verein Berliner Künstler* (Union of Berlin artists) – which did not accept any 'modern' paintings either. In 1904, she and others petitioned the Royal Academy for women to be admitted – and again in 1905, and again and again. But it was not until 1919 that they were at last accepted, thanks to the Equal Rights clause in the Weimar constitution.[9] Meanwhile, a number of male artists like Ernst Nelson made a good deal of money teaching women painting and drawing, charging seven or eight times as much as the academies. The students were often middle class young women whose parents were willing and able to pay.

Some women like Julie had a real gift and passion for art; they wanted to make a living with it, and to exhibit and sell their work on an equal footing with men. They started to join forces to fight for their rights. Julie Wolfthorn was actively engaged in this. The first Union for women artists named *Künstlerinnen-Verein München* (KVM) (Union of women artists in Munich) was founded in 1882 for mutual support. From 1884 it maintained a *Damenakademie* – a ladies' academy. Julie studied there, and her paintings were included in exhibitions in Munich in 1894 and 1895 and from 1900 until 1904. Another member was the expressionist Paula Modersohn-Becker, a non-Jewish artist who achieved international fame posthumously despite her short life (1876-1907). Such women's art unions opened in several places; Julie was on the committee for the one in Berlin as was Käthe Kollwitz, whose passionate images

and sculptures express her deeply felt socialism and pacifism. In 1905 the Lyceum Club – following the original one in England – was founded in Germany to enable women to engage in arts and intellectual studies. Kaiser Wilhelm II's Empress (*Kaiserin*), Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein herself was the Honorary President. Julie was on the management committee and attended lectures; she and Käthe Kollwitz and others organised exhibitions there.

After her studies with Nelson, in the early 1890s Julie Wolfthorn went to Paris to study in Colarossis private academy, as did a number of women artists. Her cousin Olga, who became a doctor later, visited her there, and was amazed and shocked at the freedom and loose morals she encountered.[10] Impressionism was at home in Paris, sweeping away the classically correct style of art and choosing instead everyday subjects: ordinary people at work or at play, street scenes, landscapes and nature, in all its moods, depicted with a free and personal use of the medium. In Paris, women were even allowed to participate in life drawing classes with nude male models![11] Julie and others returned to Germany and asserted their right to paint, exhibit and sell.

Always keen to broaden her art, Wolfthorn travelled a good deal. In 1900 she spent six months in Rome with a fellow woman artist, Adele von Fink, where models posed in the garden for them. Back in Berlin, they showed some of their Roman works in an exhibition. Nearer home, artists' colonies – some for women only – developed in various places with interesting scenery, such as Dachau near Munich (the sinister associations of that name came later), Worpswede near Bremen, and the island of Hiddensee. Women artists would stay and paint for a season; some settled permanently in these picturesque places.

Mme Yvonne Wilhelm by Julie Wolfthorn
Private Collection, reproduced by permission of the owner.

Julie Wolfthorn went to Hiddensee most summers, returning always to her flat in Berlin, not far from Berlin Zoo, at 50 Kurfürstenstrasse, where she lived with her sister Luise for over forty years. It was a block of flats, a quadrangular building like many others in the area, with an open area in the middle where a bit of grass and one or two spindly trees might survive despite being overshadowed by the flats – not really sufficient to justify calling the rear building '*Gartenhaus*'. Here Julie and Luise lived and worked. Luise lived above Julie, quietly getting on with her studies and her translations. Julie's flat was her studio, and here she entertained her many friends – whom she would also meet in a notorious writers and artists café called *Zum schwarzen Ferkel* (At the Sign of the Black Piglet) – or at meetings of the several artists organisations she helped to found and run with Käthe Kollwitz. These included the *Verbindung bildender Künstlerinnen,* (Association of Creative Women Artists) and the *Frauenkunstverband* (Womens Art Society). Another group, the *Berliner Secession,* led by Max Liebermann, was not exclusively for women, but for artists keen on the new styles of painting: *Jugendstil (*art nouveau), impressionism, expressionism, *Neue Sachlichkeit* (new functionalism) and *die Moderne* (modernism). The Weimar Republic was an exciting period with ferment of new cultural and social ideas and Julie was in the thick of it, with hardly enough time to worry about the extremists, right and left, fighting in the streets.

She was primarily a portrait painter, using her connections to paint famous people like the poet Richard Dehmel, whose second wife Ida was Julie's close friend, and the playwright Gerhard Hauptmann, who happened to have a house on Hiddensee. The sitters' fame helped promote her art. She painted unconventional, sensitive men – without beards![12] She was very successful. She was able to convey her sitters' personalities as well as their appearance. She painted left-leaning women favouring 'reform' clothing (sensible dresses as opposed to the fashionable corsets and bustles). Her children's portraits are delightful – she told the young sitters stories to prevent them getting bored. She had a close rapport with her cousin Olga's children.[13] She joined them on their country holidays and had fun with them. My mother, Olga's second daughter, remembered the dwarves' cave her mother and 'Tante Jullack' (as she called her) arranged, (or discovered) at a place called Walkemuhle, under a fallen branch of a tree. There was a cunning arrangement involving a hat pin to supply the dwarves with water and daily gifts of leaves for them to eat – which had always been consumed next day – which *proved* there were real dwarves there. Julie drew and painted

the children, the lake and the trees. Such pleasures continued when Olga and her husband Hugo Hempel built a holiday home at a lakeside village called Ferch, near Berlin. Staying there was particularly enjoyable during the War (1914–18) and the hard times that followed when food was in short supply, since they grew fruit and vegetables and kept hens, geese and bees.

Julie Wolfthorn took on any work that would earn her money: commercial art, posters, 'ex libris' cards, and brilliant covers for a magazine called *Jugend* (youth) in the art nouveau style, as well as illustrations for some of the contents. She opened her studio to teach painting, running regular classes for small groups of aspiring artists. Wolfthorn also took a keen interest in current affairs and new ideas, attending lectures and debates organised by a group called *Die Kommenden* (the next ones) and at the Lyceum Club, where she was a member of the management committee (*Vorstand).* There were lectures on topics of concern for women, as well as exhibitions which she organised and in which she exhibited her work.

In 1904, when she was forty, Wolfthorn married the art critic Rudolf Klein, who had been her partner for five years. He was some seven years her junior. They were happy for a time and enjoyed some holidays together, and, when they were first married and living together openly she felt inspired. But she found domestic duties irksome: 'Art is not well served if one's head is full of curtains, sheets etc.' she wrote to her friend Ida Dehmel. 'These petty problems are like gnats: they don't hurt, but they torment…'.[14] She and Klein separated after three years. In 1925 Klein committed suicide. She grieved for him, and felt guilty.

Everything changed after 30 January 1933 when Hitler became *Reichskanzler* and the Nazis rapidly took over the government. Until then, it had been possible to deplore the street battles, the demonstrations, the banners and marches and proclamations and carry on with one's own life; but as soon as they were in power the Nazis passed a *Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums*, or law for the restoration of the professional civil service. The term 'Civil Service' does not have the same ring as the German *Beamtentum*, which covers all sorts of professions, academic, medical, legal – and artistic. The word *Wiederherstellung* – restoration – implies that the professions had been damaged, or wrecked, and needed to be mended. And who was felt to be responsible for the deplorable state the professions were in? The Jews. In fact, many prominent positions in the universities, the theatre, journalism, music etc. were held by people of Jewish descent; so now all Jews had to be removed from all the professions.

Julie was directly affected from the start though she had never thought of herself as a Jew, or practised as one, like her cousin Olga and many other 'assimilated' people of Jewish descent. But now 'Jewish' artists were excluded from the *Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen*, so she had to leave the Union of Women Artists she had helped to organise. She also had to leave the *Lyceum.* The *Reichskunstkammer* – Imperial Chamber of Arts – issued a letter to twelve Jewish artists forbidding them to practise their profession. Julie, reporting this in a letter, commented: 'Who knows how long one will be able to work!' She had never been a practising Jew. In fact, she did continue to work for ten more years, but in increasingly constrained conditions.

Jews quickly organised a series of self-help institutions. In June 1933, they formed a *Kulturbund* (cultural union) and an artists' mutual assistance fund *Künstlerhilfe* (Aid for Artists). They put on plays, the first being Gotthold Ephraim Lessings *Nathan der Weise,* about an exemplary Jew. Wolfthorn's paintings were among those works by Jewish artists displayed in the foyer. She was also able to show her work in the Jewish Museum, and in November 1934 she was one of the Jewish artists who opened their studios to visitors and showed a selection of her works. Her subjects included crowds, a dramatic scene in a café, a narrow road in southern Germany, images of motherhood, reminiscences of Ascona, Hiddensee, the Deer Park in Berlin, portraits and flowers. She sold a number of paintings, at modest prices, and received a number of commissions.[15]

In 1935 Wolfthorn was included in an exhibition in the Jewish Museum, which had been opened in January 1933, where one of her paintings showing a pensive Jewish woman won a prize. Another of her paintings – a portrait – was presented to the Tel Aviv Museum in 1938. She was pleased – 'for I want there to be a place for me after my death. Everything here will end up on the rubbish tip or on the pyre.'[16]

By then, despite her successes, she was deeply pessimistic. Her non-Jewish friends were abandoning her. Käthe Kollwitz was an exception. She wanted to help her and to preserve her paintings. Another faithful friend, Anna Muthesius, visited with a cake. But *Kristallnacht* – the nationwide pogrom on 8 November 1938 – convinced Julie that she would not be able to live a normal decent life in Berlin ever again. In 1940, Jews were being moved out of Berlin into *Judenhauser* – premises used as holding bays prior to deportation. She was aware that numerous acquaintances had emigrated and began to consider that she too might do so, confident that with her ability and her reputation she would be able to set up a new life for herself. With her sister she started translating her reviews into English. 'Armed with a paintbrush and palette and a box full of pictures I'll conquer the world there' ('there' being the USA) she wrote cheerfully to her nieces, Olga's daughters, whom she had painted when they were little children, both of whom were now mothers of families and safely abroad, one in Denmark, one in Persia.[17] But in 1941 Jews were no longer allowed to emigrate. Instead, they started being deported out of Berlin, and the *Endlösung* – the Final Solution of the Jewish problem, that is extermination, was decided at Wannsee on 20 June 1942.

In 1942, she and Luise received deportation orders and had to fill in and sign a sixteen-page document detailing their possessions and their wealth. When their sister Martha Schäfer and her husband received their deportation order they committed suicide together.[18] Julie made herself a black dress, secreting the poison Veronal in the buttons – 'in case.'[19]

On 27 October 1942 they received letters stating that their entire property and wealth was to be confiscated 'for the benefit of the German State (*Reich*)' in accordance with a law passed on 25 November 1941. At the same time, their German nationality was taken from them. They had to leave their flats clean and tidy with gas, electricity and water bills settled. But 50 Kurfürstenstrasse was not cleared until 25 May 1943, when the entire contents were valued at 101.50 *Reichsmark* and sold to a dealer. By then, Gestapo men had collected them and taken them to an old people's home that served as a *Sammellager* – collection point – to await the journey to the concentration camp. They were allowed to take one suitcase and a rucksack for their belongings. They had handed in their keys. Here Julie wrote the hasty postcard to a friend, dated 17 October 1942, with which this article opened:

Dear friend Eeg,

This is my last greeting to you. We are waiting for the transport to Theresienstadt and are almost content to be rid of uncertainty at last. Dont forget us…

The sisters' destination was Theresienstadt – or Teresin – originally a fortress built in the eighteenth century to defend Sudetenland, the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia (which was annexed in the Munich Agreement in September 1938). In time, a small town grew up round the fortress, and this was the town the Führer 'gave to the Jews' – as a ghetto. It was chiefly for people over sixty-five years old, and was outside the original boundaries of the *Reich.* It was not an extermination camp like Auschwitz and others but retained many of the characteristics of a small town, with streets and even a shop. Thousands of people were imprisoned there. Some of the inmates set up a management committee and organised cultural activities such as lectures and concerts. A Red Cross delegation was persuaded that the camp and its inmates were well. In fact, they were mistaken. Isolation, hunger, cold, bad accommodation led to many deaths and many inmates were sent to Auschwitz.[20]

Luise died shortly after she and Julie arrived, perhaps of a stroke. Julie lived on until December 1944 and continued drawing portraits and even painting to the very end. These works are now housed in Tel Aviv and New York. She was not the only woman artist who happened to be of Jewish descent and was murdered by the Nazis. Another whose name is known was the landscape artist Käthe Loewenthal (1878-1942), another star of the KVM and Hiddensee scene, who was killed at the Izbica transition camp in 1942.[21]

In the decades since the end of the war, many Germans have struggled with the knowledge of what went on in their country during those twelve years of National Socialism. As part of this trend, since 1996, '*Stolpersteine*' – small commemorative plaques – have been embedded in the pavement outside the addresses where victims of the holocaust lived. There are actually three outside 'Kurfürstenstrasse 50' – or where that building used to be – for Julie Wolfthorn and Luise Wolf and for one other resident. There is a street in Berlin now named after her.

In addition, two women have been inspired to bring Julie Wolfthorn back into the light of day: Karin Schimmelpfennig worked like a detective, following up clues and locating paintings in private possession and occasionally included in art sales and auctions. She discovered my family connection and I have passed on all my mother's memories of 'Tante Jullack', recorded in my book, *Oma, Mu and Me.*[22] Heike Carstensen, when she was a student of art history at the University of Kiel, devoted years to research her life and work, for which she received her doctorate. The resulting book, *Leben und Werk der Malerin und Graphikerin Julie Wolfthorn* (Life and Work of the Artist and designer Julie Wolfthorn) gives the story of her life and activities, as well detailing hundreds of her paintings, drawings and designs – for some of which Carstensen only had verbal references – and 495 small colour reproductions of them.

Wolfthorn's paintings are now being collected and exhibitions being mounted to show them. One collector, Peter Kuhn, visited me last year (2016) to tell me there was to be a major exhibition of his collection of her works at Ferch – near the Hempel home where she often stayed with the family of her cousin, my grandmother Olga Hempel. This exhibition was a great success, accompanied by a fine illustrated catalogue.[23] Some of Julie Wolfthorn's works can be seen in the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, and in Israel the Tel Aviv Museum and the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem have some of her paintings. Through these initiatives, this victim of the holocaust has been brought back into the light of day.

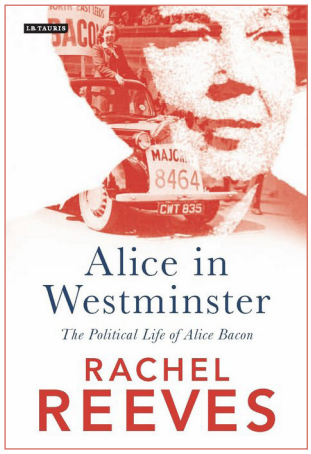
Notes

1. Post-card in the posession of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg, cited in Heike Carstensen, *Leben und Werk der Malerin und Graphikerin Julie Wolfthorn (1864-1944): Rekonstruktion eines Künstlerinnenlebens* (Tectum Verlag, Marburg, 2011), 12. This magnificent work of scholarship is the chief source for this article.
2. Irene Gill, 'How German women stormed the male bastion of the university at the turn of the twentieth century,' *Women's History Magazine* 64 (Autumn 2010), 22-29.
3. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh,* 1857.
4. Derrick Murphy, Terry Morris and Marey Fulbrook, *Germany 1848 – 1991*, (London, Collins, 2008).
5. Zetkin's proposal led to the first International Women's Day being observed on March 18, 1911. Nowadays it is observed on March 8.
6. See Mary D. Garrard, *Artemisia Gentileschi: The Image of the Female Hero in Italian Baroque Art* (Princeton University Press, 1991).
7. See Wendy Wassyng Roworth, 'Documenting Angelica Kauffman's Life and Art.' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37.3 (2004), 478-482.
8. For a recent study in German of the phenomenon of *Malweiber*, see Katja Behling and Anke Manigold, *Die Malweiber: Unerschrockene Künsterlinnen um 1900.* (Munich, Elisabeth Sandmann Verlag, 2009). For an example of lesbianism in the movement see my book, *Oma, Mu and Me* (Oxford, Yarnells Books, 2nd ed.2010, 26).
9. Carstensen, *Leben und Werk,* 93-94.
10. Irene Gill, *Oma, Mu and Me*, (Salisbury, Fivepin, 2006), 2-3, 58.
11. Gill, *Oma, Mu and Me*, 25.
12. Carstensen, *Leben und Werk,* 50.
13. See *Oma, Mu and Me*, Chapter 7.
14. Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Berlin: Letter from Julie Wolfthorn to Ida Dehmel.
15. Carstensen, *Leben und Werk,* 139.
16. Carstensen, *Leben und Werk,* 161.
17. Private collection, letter from Julie Wolfthorn to my mother, 19 February 1938. Quoted in Carstensen, *Leben und Werk*, 150.
18. Carstensen, *Leben und Werk,* 154.
19. Carstensen, *Leben und Werk,* 155
20. See 'Theresienstadt: Red Cross Visit' in *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, n.d.
[https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007463]
21. Behling and Manigold, *Die Malweiber.*
22. Gill, *Oma, Mu and Me.*
23. Julie Wolfthorn 'Der Mythos von Ferch – das Paradies auf Erden'. Ausstellung der Havellandischen Malerkolonie, Ferch 16 Juli – 30 Oktober 2016.

Book Reviews

Rachel Reeves, *Alice in Westminster, The Political Life of Alice Bacon,* London and New York, I B Tauris, 2017. £20 ISBN 978 1 78453 768 5 (hardback), pp. xviii+222.

Reviewed by Dr Paula Bartley
Independent scholar



In *Alice in Westminster* Rachel Reeves argues that Alice Bacon was one of the most significant figures of the mid-20th century. In making her case, Reeves reveals how as a member of the NEC (1941-70), as Minister of State at the Home Office (1964-7) and then at Education (1967-70), Alice Bacon oversaw the modernisation of the Labour party, the abolition of the death penalty, the legalisation of abortion and homosexuality and the move towards comprehensive education. Certainly, it is an impressive list of achievements for an MP who never held a Cabinet post.

In 1945 Alice Bacon, aged 35, entered Parliament as Labour MP for Leeds North West and represented the city until 1970 when she retired. She had jumped over enormous hurdles to reach Westminster: she was a woman, she was working-class, she belonged to a party which favoured trade union sponsored candidates and she had to contest a safely-held Conservative seat. Alice Bacon was a rarity in the House of Commons, one of twenty-one women out of 393 Labour MPs elected. For all her time in Parliament, the House of Commons was decidedly male with over 600 men and only a handful of women on the benches: women were meant to be in the house of their husbands not in the House of Commons. Reeves shows how only a very few exceptional women like Bacon were confident enough to overcome these conventional assumptions and to leap over the class and gender barriers that existed to stop them from doing so.

It was an exciting time to be elected: the Labour Party had just won a sweeping victory, winning an overall majority of 146. For the first time in its history, Labour was in full power. Alice Bacon was a member of the government which created the National Health Service, nationalised the Bank of England and key industries such as coal and iron, reformed education, repealed anti-union laws, built new council houses and re-organised social security. Bacon recalled that her first few months in Parliament were euphoric, seeing the policies that she had helped draft come to fruition.

By the 1950s the Labour Party, as now, was seriously divided between those who thought Labour had abandoned its socialist principles and those who argued for the need to recognise political reality otherwise it 'would simply guarantee Conservative electoral dominance and decades of Labour in the wilderness' (p66). Alice Bacon, Reeves points out, firmly picked her side. On the key issues of the day, notably those of nuclear weapons, the welfare state, and Clause IV, Alice Bacon was on the right-wing of the party, advocating the politics of the possible and opposing ultra-left dreamy idealism. In the 1950s Bacon warded off orchestrated attempts by the Trotskyists to de-select her and replace her with someone who was more sympathetic to the revolutionary left. Indeed, as her biographer argues, Alice Bacon was implacably opposed to Communists and Trotskyists and fought hard against the far-left who tried to infiltrate the constituency parties. Reeves is undoubtedly sympathetic to Bacon's stance, thinking it 'hardly surprising that Labour spent more than a decade out of power when so much energy was spent attacking fellow party members.'(p67)

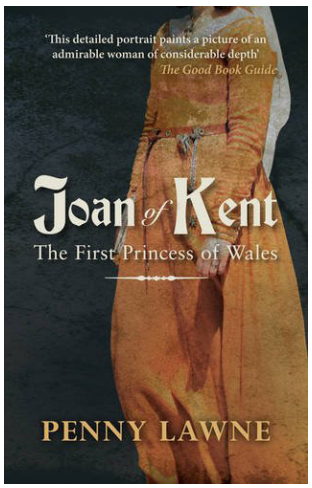
Politics, as Reeves points out, was never an abstract notion for Alice Bacon. Her feet were firmly placed in the Yorkshire earth, willing to slog through the less glamorous, functional, yet necessary, work of her constituency. Bacon held regular monthly meetings at the Leeds Corn Exchange for her constituents, attended local functions, spoke regularly at local party meetings, and 'would spend weekends at meetings, rallies and bazaars touring the Yorkshire region and the country with sandwiches, a flask and a rallying speech.' Not surprisingly, Bacon was regarded as a good constituency MP, excelling in the day-to-day demands of the job.

Rachel Reeves – the current Labour MP for the same Leeds seat - brings an insider's insight into how Alice Bacon came to be an MP, her rise in the Labour hierarchy and how, with careful, meticulous planning, she brought about a number of substantive changes in the law. Alice Bacon may never have climbed to the top of the ministerial tree but her care for her constituents and her practical, sensible approach to politics succeeded where more flamboyant and rhetorical MPs failed. Constituency heroines like Alice Bacon - and indeed like Rachel Reeves - willing to be a 'cog in the Labour machine' (p109) are needed more than ever: politicians who work unselfishly and without glory to improve the lives of their communities sometimes seem thin on the ground. Rachel Reeves has done a grand job in rescuing her parliamentary predecessor from the historical margins and restoring her to the centre of political history.

Penny Lawne, *Joan of Kent: First Princess of Wales*, Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2015. £20/$34.95, 978 1 4456 4465 3 (hardback), 978 1 4456 4471 4 (ebook), pp. 320

Reviewed by Ruth E. Richardson M.Phil.
Independent Scholar

Joan of Kent (c.1328-1385) was, according to Jean Froissart who knew her, 'in her time the most beautiful woman in all the realm of England and the most loved' (p. 6). The Chandos Herald, another contemporary, described her as beautiful, pleasant and wise (p. 7). Long after her death she would be designated the 'Fair Maid of Kent.' She was popular: the 1381 rebels respectfully allowed her to journey to London (pp 238-239). Joan's only surviving seal, from 1380, proclaimed her titles as 'Joan, Princess of [obscured but probably Aquitaine], Wales, Duchess of Cornwall and Countess of Cheshire and Kent' (plate



31). She was the first English Princess of Wales and the only Princess of Aquitaine. She would have become Queen of England if Prince Edward of Woodstock (the Black Prince) had not predeceased his father King Edward III. As the succession passed to their son, Richard II, Joan's final status was that of the King's mother. The evidence, though meagre, suggests she was an influential lady.

Unfortunately, and this is true of most Medieval women, records relating to Joan are sparse. Rarely mentioned in male dominated documentation, her accounts and personal papers have not survived. So, this, her first biography, has had to be written from documents largely relating to events impinging on her relationships with men, especially those concerning her marriage to Prince Edward. As a result, Joan's story as told in this biography has a core of fact, with supporting references, but is surrounded by layers of supposition. It is to the credit of Penny Lawne that she is able to construct a believably accurate, and very readable history from such sources. Unfortunately, the book needed careful proof-reading to avoid needless repetition and, indeed, contradictory statements and spellings. To give one random example: identifying personnel, which can be difficult when so many have similar names, is not helped by writing 'Isabella' and two sentences later 'Isabel' (p. 84) for the same lady.

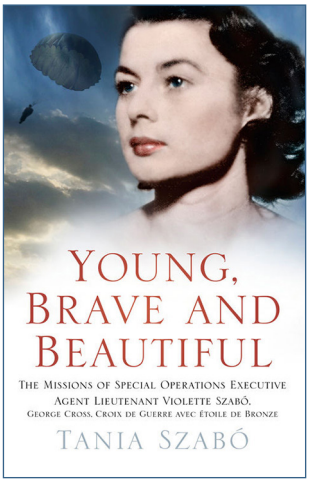
Joan's story is fascinating and deserves to be better known. As her father, Edmund Earl of Kent, was beheaded when she was about eighteen months old the crucial figure in her young life, and that of her two brothers, was their forceful mother, Margaret (Wake). Lawne suggests that Joan was not close to her mother, although it was Margaret's persistence that restored the family fortunes. Meanwhile Joan grew up in the kindly household of Queen Philippa and there are numerous mentions of friendships with the princesses, particularly with Isabella. Discovering the whereabouts of children in the Medieval period is as difficult as discovering those of most women but surmise can be used to reasonable effect. It can be assumed that the education given to the royal children was also given to their companions and here Lawne relies a great deal on Christine de Pizan (p. 265). Certainly, the royal households of the king and queen, and the aristocracy were very close-knit and held to common standards, training and beliefs.

Joan, although conforming to that expected of her in her various roles, had decided opinions of her own. When twelve years old she secretly married Sir Thomas Holand, only a second son and in his early twenties. Details of this match are recorded in the evidence on which the Papal Court of Clement VI based confirmation of the marriage in November 1349. What is surprising is that the marriage could have been overturned if Joan had agreed that it was forced upon her. This she never did, despite not seeing her putative husband for many years and having an arranged marriage to William Montague, son of the Earl of Salisbury, in 1341. The lack of children from this Montague match is taken to suggest that this was not consummated and there is much discussion concerning the possible motivations of all involved. A supporting factor for Joan's surmised position is that when she died she chose to be buried with Sir Thomas Holand and not with Prince Edward.

Although Joan was wealthy, the marriage of Edward III's heir should surely have been used to cement a political alliance, rather than just wealth. That Prince Edward married Joan within months of her husband's death suggests a love match and his terms of endearment in documents supports this. Joan fulfilled her role but her motivation may have been to secure the futures for her four Holand children. As Princess of Wales she had two further sons, the younger succeeding his grandfather as Richard II.

The lack of careful editing and proof-reading is frustrating but nonetheless this is a logical, readable account with thought-provoking interpretations based on the context of available evidence. Inferences are used from known facts to elucidate Joan's perceived character and personality. It is an admirable attempt to add to the corpus of material for this period.

Tania Szabo, *Young, Brave and Beautiful. The Missions of Special Operations Executive Agent Lieutenant Violette Szabo.*
Stroud, Glos: The History Press, 2015. £25. 9 780750 962094 (Hardback), pp.1 – 400
Reviewed by Sue Johnson
University of Worcester



This is both a fascinating and frustrating book. The Special Operations Executive (S.O.E). and its operatives are an interesting topic. As with Bletchley Park, the secret nature of the work has meant that so much is still unknown. The women in the S.O.E. are particularly fascinating. Like those in the Air Transport Auxiliary the nature of their work crossed gender boundaries. In the A.T.A. women were pilots, in the S.O.E. they were trained to bear arms and kill if necessary. They appeared to shrug off the role of life givers, carers and nurturers and become field operatives trained in the same survival techniques and skills as the male operatives. There was a chilling element to being in the S.O.E. The work was undertaken in occupied territory, often alone. Capture meant interrogation, perhaps torture, imprisonment and possibly execution. No conventions protected these operatives should they be captured. Their treatment was not necessarily based on their gender. So, there is a fascination in understanding more about these secret operatives, how they worked and why they did this work.

Young, Brave and Beautiful goes some way to explaining the `how` and the `why`. It is a daughter`s story about the brief life of the mother she barely knew. It is fascinating because it draws the reader in to the two assignments Violette Szabo undertook in France. After a rather confusing first chapter which attempts to offer a contextual background the

book settles in to detailing her first mission in Rouen. The difficulties and horrors of living under an occupying force are recreated. Szabo's movements are reconstructed in minute detail and the reader, with hindsight, wants to shout `Go home NOW! `. Tension builds throughout each chapter and the dangers of being an operative are made only too apparent. A vivid picture of wartime Rouen develops with the lack of food, bombing raids, security checks, air of suspicion, and for Szabo the danger of not knowing who she could trust. Hers was a lonely mission with the threat of discovery ever present. That became reality during her second mission. The details of her arrest, imprisonment, subsequent treatment and death are harrowing to read. She was a courageous, committed and determined woman who made a lasting impression on those she met and worked with. So the author`s aim 'to breathe life into Violette`(p.10) has most certainly been achieved. Also, there is some indication that she undertook this work to avenge the death of her husband earlier in the war.

However, this is not an academic book and here the frustration sets in, rightly or wrongly. Despite an impressive bibliography and archival research it lacks the paraphernalia of provenance. Constantly I wanted to know where information came from but there were no footnotes directing the reader to the relevant archives. Consequently, the book is best read with the author`s aims and approach firmly in mind. The author admits that `this is not a biography in the strict sense of the word` (p.10) but rather 'an informative and deeply researched reconstruction` (p.10). She notes that she has 'given living people roles they may not have played` (p.10) and dialogue is 'based on family anecdotes` (p.10)

It is a difficult book to review. It is a moving tribute to Szabo from her daughter who barely knew her. It firmly establishes this young operative as a force to be reckoned with and never forgotten. In his introduction, colleague Jean-Claude Guiet who knew her only briefly concluded, 'the feeling that I have missed her for so long is a tribute to the effect her personality, friendliness, concern and efficiency had on me and all the others who knew and dealt with her`. (p.16)

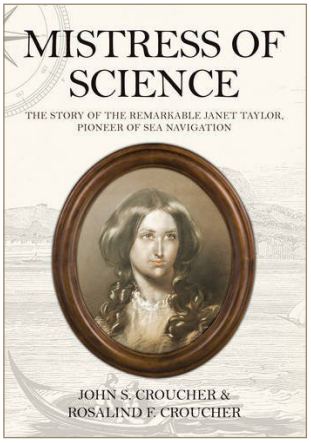
So, despite the frustration at not always knowing where the evidence came from I found myself drawn into the narrative and rather in awe of the bravery and initiative exhibited by S.O.E. operatives and French resisters.

John S. Croucher & Rosalind E. Croucher, *Mistress of Science. The story of the remarkable Janet Taylor, pioneer of sea navigation,* Amberley, 2016, £20, 978 1 4456 5985 5 (hardback), pp300, 52 illustrations.

Reviewed by Dr Nina Baker
Women's Engineering Society

Janet Taylor (1804-1870) was a remarkable person who had an extraordinary life. A former merchant navy navigating officer myself and engaged with the history of women in technical fields for a while, I was astonished that I had never heard of her before, so I was delighted to be able to learn about her. Expectations are one thing and the reality, of course, can be quite another, but I can say that I was not disappointed by this book.

The reader is led through the whole of Janet's life chronologically, opening with her family's background and her father's interest in and teaching of navigation and astronomy. Taylor showed precocious ability in maths and paid close attention to the astronomy he taught. His precious piece of lodestone gave her the chance to play with magnetic forces, foretelling her later work as a compass adjuster. At the age of 9, she was given a scholarship to the 'Royal school of embroidering females', through the personal patronage of Queen Charlotte. Despite its name, this school also taught more academic subjects including maths and astronomy. This schooling was sufficient for her to spend her late teens and early twenties as a governess, the only paid employment then open to middle class young women.



On the death of her father, she and her siblings set up a draper's business in London, giving Taylor exposure to the books, people and business environment which were to shape the rest of her life. Already thinking to use her inheritance to enable her to teach and write about navigation, her marriage to a former naval officer, George Taylor, gave her a 'fierce supporter' for her business ambitions "to write, to teach, to design, to solve things for … navigators" (p46) based near the docks of the 'Pool of London'.

Although the business lasted for many years, and into her widowhood, Taylor faced many obstacles from the masculine world of the navy, science and business. The reader is led through these many trials and feels each triumph and tribulation on her behalf. The battles were many and often fought in the public sphere of the letters page of the *Nautical Journal*. The less public, but in many ways more serious, battles she fought over the rights to obtain and sell Admiralty charts and to sell the most accurate possible charts, tell us much about how difficult it must have been for ships' captains to obtain accurate information when sailing the world's oceans, at a time when the accurate latitude and longitude of even quite large land masses was not certain.

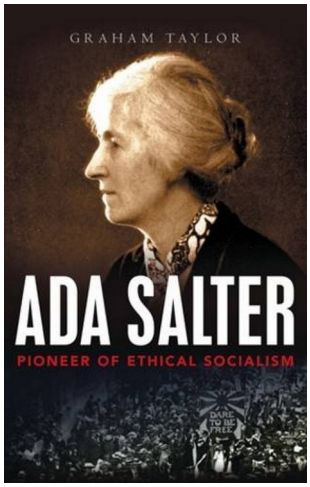
Her invention of a Mariner's Calculator, a cross between a sextant and a mechanical means of solving navigational maths problems, and an Artificial Horizon, were technical masterpieces but not sufficiently practical for her times. However, her books of instruction and nautical tables sold well and were most timely given the emerging need to train and examine ship's officers. Although these gained medals from foreign monarchs, it remained a source of wounded pride for Taylor that her own monarch and government never awarded her the same level of recognition, despite the support and friendship of such eminent figures as Admiral Beaufort and Sir George Airy. Belatedly, then, this book goes some way to correct that and bring this impressive woman into the foreground that she deserved.

Although written by two American academics and suitably referenced, the tone of the book is anything but dryly academic, probably since it has been written from their personal enthusiasms. Each period of Taylor's life and work is enhanced with social and historical context. The reader is given a clear feeling for her life and times, what it meant to be a

child, young woman, older wife and widow, how the history of the nation was unfolding through the Georgian and Victorian heyday of empire and the changing technologies of the maritime world so important to Janet's life's work. Each of the technical aspects of navigation, charts, magnetic compasses and instrumentation is given enough explanation for the lay reader to appreciate Janet's achievements.

This book would be of obvious interest to any reader interested in the remarkable lives of women in male-dominated spheres. I would also expect it to be of interest to those who, like myself, have been or are themselves ships' navigating officers, or who research the history of navigation and safety at sea. I can also recommend it to the general reader as it is an 'easy read' for any layperson with an interest in history.

Graham Taylor, *Ada Salter, Pioneer of Ethical Socialism*,
London, Lawrence and Wishart, 2016. £18.99,
978-1-910448-01-4 (paperback), pp. 298.
Reviewed by Sybil Oldfield.
Emeritus Reader in English and Women's History, University of Sussex.



This is an extraordinarily interesting and important biography for which we have had to wait no less than 150 years since its subject's birth. Hitherto Ada Salter,1866-1942, has been remembered as the devoted, socially engaged wife of the idealistic pacifist socialist South London doctor, Alfred Salter, MP, as recorded in Fenner Brockway's moving biography of Salter, *Bermondsey Story*, 1949. What Graham Taylor does here is redress the balance between the couple so that we can now get a truer understanding of Ada's real significance as a humanitarian, a social worker and a politician in her own right.

Graham Taylor's biography is the fruit of much original research and offers much that is new. We can now see where this exceptional human being, Ada Salter, came from. Taylor traces her roots as a farmer's daughter and young pacifist temperance worker in Raunds, Northamptonshire, then well known for the production of army boots. Taylor has also resurrected the passionately idealistic social rescue efforts of the 'Sisters of the People' whom Ada joined in London as part of the West Central Methodist Mission in 1896. Moving away from Methodist orthodoxy in 1897, Ada then began her lifelong commitment to the poor of Bermondsey. Her special gift, she realised, was to work with the roughest and toughest of teenage girls from the slums – the rag-sorters, wood-choppers, tin-solderers -, whom she invited into her own Settlement flat and taught reading, arithmetic, sewing, dressmaking, music, folk-singing, painting – and chess! Outsiders thought her Girls' Clubs a miracle.

Graham Taylor differs from Fenner Brockway in arguing that far from Ada being apolitical, it was Ada whose Christian *Socialism* had led to her to support such causes as the strikes of dockers and match-workers, women's suffrage and Home Rule for Ireland, well before she met her future husband, Dr. Alfred Salter. It was not he who converted her to socialism; rather it was he who needed to be won over by her political commitment to Bermondsey, before he could get her to agree to marry him. Their union then produced a remarkable *dual* career in social reform and left-wing political activism. Ada's special spheres of social service were the feeding of thousands of families of men and women out on strike, the elimination of local slum housing conditions, and the environmentalist transformation of Bermondsey through tree-planting and the use of churchyards and every other open space for flowers and playgrounds. 'Socialism in action, that is what she was' wrote one Quaker obituary.

Ada Salter was elected the first woman Labour councillor in London (Bermondsey 1909). She was elected President of the Women's Labour League in 1914. In 1922 she was elected as the first woman mayor in London and the first Labour woman mayor in the whole of Britain. Between 1925 and 1941 she was elected to the London County Council, topping the poll at each election and serving on its committees for Housing, Parks and Unemployment, at last helping to win the Green Belt for London in 1938.

But what has always moved me most about Ada Salter's life - and what Graham Taylor does not blench from confronting here - is not just her amazing achievements but also her recurrent experience of bitter failure. She failed to save the life of her only child, struck down by scarlet fever. She shared in the failure of the London dockers' strike in 1912. She failed to win over her Bermondsey neighbours to her opposition to World War 1. She failed to implement her dream of State and Council subsidised cottages with gardens in every city - instead of tenements. She died in 1942 knowing that her own home and almost of all of what she had achieved in the beautification of dreary Bermondsey had been burned to rubble in the Blitz on London's docks. Once again hatred and a righteous killing competition seemed to have won – but Ada Salter still never gave up her faith in the eventual rebirth of creativity and humaneness.

Now that it is our turn to fail in the prevention of war, in the succour of refugees, in the creation of a victorious British Labour Party that practises ethical socialism, how we still need that beacon of an unbroken Ada Salter. This is a book that every course in modern British women's history should include and every library with any pretension to coverage of the subject should possess.

Getting to Know Each Other

Name

Naomi Pullin

Position

Teaching Fellow in Early Modern British History, University of Warwick.

How long have you been a WHN member?

I became a WHN member when I joined the editorial team in 2015. I have loved being involved in the network and its activities so far!

What inspired your enthusiasm for women's history?

As an undergraduate student I found that I was always drawn to women's history. I studied at the University of Warwick where the legacy of E. P. Thompson was still strong and I was encouraged to think about and challenge traditional 'top-down' historical narratives. Studying and, at times, reclaiming the lives of women captivated my imagination. Work such as Phyllis Mack's *Visionary Women*, Laura Gowing's *Domestic Dangers* and the works of Judith Butler and Merry Wiesner opened my eyes to the ways in which women's identities were negotiated.

Following an essay I completed for my Master's degree, I developed a fascination about women in the early Quaker movement, because the movement encouraged women to preach and sometimes occupy prominent positions within the movement's hierarchy.

What are your special interests?

My primary research interests focus on women's involvement in radical religious movements. My PhD centred on women in the transatlantic Quaker community, which I'm currently turning into a monograph: *Gender, Identity and the Making of Transatlantic Quakerism, 1650-1750.* My book examines the place of women at all levels of the Quaker movement within the transatlantic Quaker community. My postdoctoral research will move beyond early Quakerism to explore the conception and construction of female enmity in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British Atlantic. This project opens up interesting new opportunities to engage with established narratives of early Enlightenment sociability, where women are known to have an especially important role.

Who is your heroine from history and why?

There are so many, but I think I would have to choose a pair of Quaker woman from my research. Their names are Katharine Evans and Sarah Cheevers and, in 1658, they left their husbands and children on a voyage to Alexandria to spread the Quaker faith abroad. However, they were detained by the Inquisition at Malta on the charge of blasphemy for nearly four years. They were imprisoned in a tiny cramped cell, without natural light and were so malnourished and ill that their hair fell out. They nevertheless refused to renounce their beliefs and formed a very close friendship, which was later documented in a published account. They are an important example of how religion was not always restrictive or repressive for women.

BOOKS RECEIVED AND CALL FOR REVIEWERS

The following titles are available for review, so if you like to review any of the titles listed below, please email me, Jane Berney, at bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org

You don't have to be an expert to review, if you have a general interest and knowledge of the relevant historical period or territory then that will count for a lot. The ability to summarise a work (within the word limit!) and write interestingly about it is the most important thing. Any suggestions for books to review are also welcome - just email me as above.

Nicola Gordon Bowe, *Wilhelmina Geddes. Life and Works* (Four Courts Press) – Geddes (1998-1955) was part of the Irish arts and Crafts movement and the British stained glass revival

Harry Stone, *That Monstrous Regiment. The Birth of Women's Political Emancipation* (Mereo Books)

Carol Dyhouse, *Heartthrobs. A History of Women and Desire* (OUP)

Anna Spurgeon, *Women and Children in the Factory. A Life of Adelaide Anderson 1863 -1936* (Aspect design)

Jennifer Roberts, *The Beauty of her Age. A Tale of Sex, Scandal and Money in Victorian England* (Amberley)

Tim Clarke, *The Countess. The Scandalous Life of Frances Villiers, Countess of Jersey* (Amberley)

Nick Holland, *In Search of Anne Bronte* (The History Press)

Deb Vanasse, *Wealth Woman. Kate Carmack and the Klondike Race for Gold* (University of Alaska Press)

Paul Chrystal, *Women at War in the Ancient World* (Amberley)

Lesley Poling-Kempes, *Ladies of the Canyon. A League of Extraordinary Women and their Adventures in the American Southwest* (University of Arizona Press)

Miriam E. David, *A Feminist Manifesto for Education* (Polity Books)

Camilla Mork Rostvik & Ella Louise Sutherland (eds), *Suffragette Legacy* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing)

WHN Book Prize 2017

An annual £500 prize for a first book in women's or gender history

The Women's History Network (UK) Book Prize is awarded for an author's first single-authored monograph that makes a significant contribution to women's history or gender history and is written in an accessible style. The book must be written in English and be published in the year prior to the award being made. To be eligible for the award, the author should be a member of the Women's History Network (UK) and be normally resident in the UK. The prize will be awarded in September 2017.

Entries (books published during 2015) should be submitted via the publisher by 31 March 2017.
For further information please contact June Hannam, chair of the panel of judges.
Email: bookprize@womenshistorynetwork.org

WHN Community History Prize 2017 sponsored by The History Press

An annual £500 prize for a Community History Project which has led to a documentary, pamphlet, book, exhibition, artefact or event completed between the 1st of January 2016 and 31st May 2017.
To be eligible for the award the project must focus on History by, about, or for Women in a local or community setting. Candidates must submit both evidence of the project in written or photographic form and a 500-1,000 word supporting statement explaining the aims and outcomes of the project.

Individuals or groups can nominate themselves or someone else by 31 May 2017; for further guidance or advice on the application process email Professor Maggie Andrews maggie.andrews@worc.ac.uk

Committee News

The Steering Committee met last on 5 November 2016 at the IHR, University of London. Four new members to the Committee were welcomed: Amy Dale, Gillian Murphy, Stephanie Spencer and Jenni Waugh.

Budget and Treasurer's report

The treasurer, Aurelia Annat, presented her budget report to the committee. The finances of the Network are looking healthy and we have £12,018 in our Current Account and £10,030 in our Savings Account. The provisional budget for 2016/17 is £12,200 and our income from subscriptions for last year was £11,621.

Membership Report – ENSURE THAT YOU ARE PAYING THE CORRECT FEES

Our Membership Secretary, Felicity Cawley presented the Membership Report. Membership is largely consistent with last year, although some members have switched from standard membership to lower income categories and few postgraduate students are taking out membership.

A point of concern for the committee was that in the membership renewal period September-October 2016 over 110 members were paying the incorrect membership fee. This means that the WHN is losing around £550 in incorrect fees.

Please check that you are paying the correct fees and if your information needs updating, get in touch with our membership secretary at **membership@womenshistorynetwork.org**

Annual Conference for 2017

Penny Tinkler reported on progress with planning the 2017 Conference on 'Women and the Wider World', September 2017, to be held at the University of Birmingham. There was some discussion at the meeting about having a WHN representative to give a welcome talk at the annual conference and to contact the organiser at Birmingham, Laura Beers, about the potential for a 'Wiki Movement'.

Following feedback from the 2016 Conference at Leeds Trinity University, the committee discussed ways in which we should be using the conference to raise the awareness and profile of the Women's History Network. Delegates identified the need for more space and for informal break-out sessions.

Bursaries for 2017 conference and administrative assistance for conference organisers

It was agreed that we would assign £1500 for conference bursaries. The committee agreed to offer non-members a bursary, along with one year's membership to the Network deducted from the cost. It was agreed that we will offer £750 to provide administrative support to the organisers for helpers such as postgraduate students, with a maximum of £500 to be awarded to any one person.

Additional spending and new ventures

There was a long discussion about developing new WHN ventures, with up to £2000 of the budget being available for new initiatives. Various suggestions were discussed with agreement on the following: 1) a postgraduate poster competition at the annual conference (2 prizes of £50 = £100); (2) raise small grant awards for Teaching/Research Staff to mount a one day conference relating to Women's History from £500 to £1000; (3) mount a new competition for a one-day postgraduate conference of £1000; (4) develop a bursary to support an Arts performance related to Women's History at the WHN conference (£250 fee) – provisionally to be named a 'Public Benefit Bursary'.

The journal

The journal is doing well in attracting copy and we have a number of themed issues lined up for 2017 and 2018. Lucy Bland stepped down from the journal in Autumn 2016 and Sue Hawkins has been recruited onto the Editorial Board.

If you are interested in contributing to the journal, please contact Catherine Lee, Lead Editor at **editor@womenshistorynetwork.org** to discuss.

£500 Competition for Teaching/Research Staff to mount one-day conference

It was confirmed that the competition will continued in 2017 and that the award will be raised to £1000.

Prizes

Sponsorship for the 2017 Community History Prize stills needs to be confirmed, but the prize will run again in 2017. West Midlands WHN activity - now have an active Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/WHNMidlands) and Twitter feed (@WHN_WM) for promoting WHN events and blog updates.

Social Media and blog

There was a short discussion about social media and the hope to develop an integrated strategy between the WHN blog and our social media platforms, especially twitter.

NEW TREASURER AND JOURNAL EDITOR WANTED

In 2017, Rachel Rich, a member of the Journal's editorial team, and Aurelia Annat, the Treasurer, are leaving the committee this year. We are looking for enthusiastic new recruits to replace them. For more information, contact: **convener@womenshistorynetwork.org**.

In November 2017, the committee meeting will need to begin preparations for recruiting a new chair.

Date of next meeting, 25 March 2017, IHR, Room N301 Pollard Room, 11.30am. All members are welcome.

Publishing in *Women's History*

Women's History welcomes contributions from experienced scholars and those at an earlier stage in their research careers. We aim to be inclusive and fully recognise that women's history is not only lodged in the academy. All submissions are subject to the usual peer review process.

Articles should be 3000-8000 words in length. Contributors are requested to submit articles in final form, carefully following the style guidelines available at:

www.womenshistorynetwork.org/whnmagazine/authorguide.html

Please email your submission, as a word attachment, to the editors at

editor@womenshistorynetwork.org

Women's History Network Contacts

Steering Committee Officers:

Membership, subscriptions, Felicity Cawley:
membership@womenshistorynetwork.org

or write to Ms Felicity Cawley, Postgrad Research Student, Economic & Social History, Lilybank House, University of Glasgow, G12 8RT

Finance, Aurelia Annat:
treasurer@womenshistorynetwork.org

Committee Convenor, June Purvis:
convenor@womenshistorynetwork.org

Conference Organisation & Deputy Convenor: Penny Tinkler

WHN Book Prize, Chair, June Hannam:
bookprize@womenshistorynetwork.org

UK Representative for International Federation for Research into Women's History, Karen Sayer:
ifrwh@womenshistorynetwork.org

Charity Representative, Alana Harris:
charityrep@womenshistorynetwork.org

Newsletter Editor, Gillian Murphy:
newsletter@womenshistorynetwork.org

WHN Blog, Robin Joyce:
womenshistorynetwork.org/category/blog/

Web Liaison and Social Media Co-ordinator, Lucinda Matthews-Jones :
liaison@womenshistorynetwork.org

Publicity: Stephanie Spencer; Postgraduate Representative, Amy Dale.

Journal Team:

Editors: Jane Berney, Rosalind Carr, Sue Hawkins, Catherine Lee, Naomi Pullin and Rachel Rich:
editor@womenshistorynetwork.org

For Journal submissions and peer review:
editor@womenshistorynetwork.org

For book reviews, Jane Berney:
bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org

To submit books for review please email the book reviews editor with details of the book to be reviewed.

For journal/magazine back issues and queries please email:
editor@womenshistorynetwork.org

To join the WHN just go to
***www.womenshistorynetwork.org** and follow the instructions.*
Payments and Gift-Aid declarations can all be
accessed online as well – see panel on page 12 for further details

What is the Women's History Network?

The WHN was founded in July 1991. It is a national charity 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 others. 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*, 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. The journal is delivered electronically in PDF form to all members via email. UK based members, however , can elect to receive a printed hardcopy of *Women's History* for an increased membership fee.

WHN membership

Annual Membership Rates *(/with journal hardcopy)*

Student or unwaged member	£15 / £20
Low income member (*under £20,000 pa)	£25 / £30
Standard member	£40 / £45
Overseas member	£40
Life Membership (with journal hardcopy)	£350
Retired Life Membership(with journal hardcopy)	£175

Charity Number: 1118201. Membership application/renewal, Gift Aid Declaration are all available at
www.womenshistorynetwork.org